The Expansive Realm of Islam

(Chapter 14)

Overview
The religion of Islam emerged on the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century C.E. as a result of the vision and the teachings of Muhammad. His message attracted a rapidly expanding circle of devout believers, known as Muslims. After Muhammad's death, Arab conquerors spread the word of Islam throughout a vast territory extending from the Indus River to the Iberian Peninsula within one century. This rapid expansion of Islam contributed to the development of a massive trade and communication network in which goods and ideas spread freely. The realm of Islam became one of the most prosperous and cosmopolitan societies of the postclassical world. This new society was characterized by:

- Strong commitment to the monotheistic belief system, resting on the Five Pillars of Islam, first articulated by Muhammad and later elaborated on by scholars and mystics.
- The development of overland and maritime trade and communication routes that facilitated the spread of new crops, trade goods, and ideas, from improved techniques in agriculture to the writings of the classical Greek philosophers.
- Engagement with and sometimes adoption of various cultural traditions encountered by the far-flung realm and its trade contacts. Hence elements of Persian, Indian, Christian, and Greek cultures found their place into Islamic society and thought.

Reading Assignment: Pages 345-359 (answer the questions as you read the section; add to the outline with notes in the margins if you need to clarify more - much of this should be review from 7th grade history)

Introduction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the difference between the word “Islam” and the word “Muslim”?</th>
<th>In what ways was Islam influenced by other societies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A Prophet and His World

➤ Muhammad and his message

- Arabian peninsula was mostly desert
  - Nomadic Bedouin people organized in family and clan groups
  - *How did the Bedouin’s adapt to the harsh conditions of the Arabian desert?*
• Important in long-distance trade networks between China/India and Persia/Byzantium
• Why did the trade routes over land decline in popularity and what was the alternative that developed?

• Muhammad's early life
  • Muhammad ibn Abdullah born to a Mecca merchant family, 570 C.E.
  • Difficult early life, married a wealthy widow, Khadija, in 595
  • Became a merchant at age thirty and was exposed to various faiths

• Muhammad's spiritual transformation at age forty
  • There was only one true god, Allah ("the god")
  • Allah would soon bring judgment on the world
  • The archangel Gabriel delivered these revelations to Muhammad
• How did Muhammad’s background influence his beliefs and the early development of Islam?

• The Quran ("recitation")--holy book of Islam
  • Followers compiled Muhammad's revelations
  • Work of poetry and definitive authority on Islam
  • Other works include hadith (sayings and deeds of Muhammad)

➤ Muhammad's migration to Medina
• Conflict at Mecca
  • His teachings offended other believers, especially the ruling elite of Mecca
    ◆ How were Muhammad’s teachings different from other Arabs?

• Attacks on greed offended wealthy merchants
• Attacks on idolatry threatened shrines, especially the black rock at Ka'ba
  ◆ What is idolatry? (you many have to look it up)

• The hijra
  • Under persecution, Muhammad and followers fled to Medina, 622 C.E.
  • The move, known as hijra, was the starting point of the Islamic calendar
• The umma: cohesive community of Muslims in Medina
  • How did Muhammad support and run the umma?
• The "seal of the prophets"
  ● Muhammad called himself the "seal of the prophets"—the final prophet of Allah
  ● Held Hebrew scripture and New Testament in high esteem
    ♦ What was the relationship between Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in Muhammad’s view?

• Determined to spread Allah's wish to all humankind

➤ The establishment of Islam in Arabia
  • Muhammad's return to Mecca
    ● He and his followers conquered Mecca, 630
    ● Imposed a government dedicated to Allah
    ● Destroyed pagan shrines and built mosques
  • The Ka'ba was not destroyed; it became the site of the first pilgrimage in 632
  • The Five Pillars of Islam, or obligations taught by Muhammad
    ● What are the fundamental tenets of Islam?

• What are the different interpretations of jihad?

• Islamic law: the sharia, inspired by Quran
  ● Detailed guidance on proper behavior in almost every aspect of life
  ● Through the sharia, Islam became more than a religion, it became a way of life
The Expansion of Islam

➤ The early caliphs and the Umayyad dynasty
  • The caliph
    ○ Upon Muhammad's death, Abu Bakr served as caliph ("deputy")
    ○ Became head of the state, chief judge, religious leader, military commander
  • Dramatic expansion of Islam
    ○ Why was the Islamic empire so successful at conquering the Byzantine and Sasanid empires when they had more powerful armies?
    
    • After Muhammad died, what were the challenges faced by dar al-Islam and how were they resolved within the first century?

• The Shia
  ○ The Shia sect originally supported Ali and descendents as caliph
  ○ Versus the Sunnis ("traditionalists"), the Shias accepted legitimacy of early caliphs
  ○ Different beliefs: holy days for leaders, Ali infallible
  ○ Ongoing conflict between the two sects
  • The Umayyad dynasty (661-750 C.E.)
    ○ The dynasty temporarily solved problem of succession
    ○ Established capital city at Damascus in Syria
    ○ Ruled the dar al-Islam for the interests of Arabian military aristocracy
      ♦ Although the Umayyads' solved the succession problem, what issue(s) did they face?

• Policy toward conquered peoples
  ○ Arabs mostly allowed conquered peoples to observe their own religions - particularly Christians and Jews
    ♦ Levied jizya (head tax) on those who did not convert to Islam
    ♦ Even the non-Arab converts were discriminated against
  • What issues caused the decline of the Umayyad Dynasty?
➤ The Abbasid dynasty

- Abu al-Abbas, descendant of Muhammad's uncle
  - Allied with Shias and non-Arab Muslims
  - Won battle against Umayyad in 750 after annihilating the clan
  - How did Abu al-Abbas effectively eliminate the Umayyad clan?

- The Abbasid dynasty (750-1258 C.E.)
  - Showed no special favor to Arab military aristocracy
  - No longer conquering, but the empire still grew
  - What was significant about the battle of Talas River?

- In what ways was the Abbasid dynasty different from the Umayyad?

- Abbasid administration
  - Relyed heavily on Persian techniques of statecraft
    - Central authority ruled from the court at Baghdad
    - Appointed governors to rule provinces
  - Ulama ("people with religious knowledge") and qadis (judges) ruled locally
  - Established bureaucratic ministries in charge of taxation, finance, coinage and postal services
  - Maintained the network of roads
  - Harun al-Rashid (786-809 C.E.), high point of Abassid dynasty
    - In what ways is his reign considered a high point of the dynasty? What did he accomplish?

- Abbasid decline
  - Struggle for succession between Harun's sons led to civil war
  - Governors built their own power bases
  - Popular uprisings and peasant rebellions weakened the dynasty
  - A Persian noble seized control of Baghdad in 945
  - Later, the Saljuq Turks controlled the imperial family
  - How did the role of the caliph change under the control of the Saljuq Turks?
Economy and Society of the Early Islamic World (Pages 358-370)

- NOTE: *dar al-Islam* is an Arabic term meaning the “house of Islam” and it refers to lands under Islamic rule
- The Umayyad and Abbasid empires created a zone of trade, exchange, and communication stretching from India to Iberia (modern-day Spain & Portugal) – served as an economic stimulus in cities and rural areas

**New crops, agricultural experimentation, and urban growth**
- Spread of new foods and industrial crops
- Effects of new crops
  - Increased varieties and quantities of food
  - Richer and more varied diets
  - Industrial crops (cotton) became the basis for a thriving ____________ industry – indigo and henna dyes
- Agricultural experimentation
  - *What were some of the new agricultural experiments and what effect did they have on the Islamic empire?*

- Urban growth
  - Increasing agricultural production contributed to the rapid growth of cities
  - A new industry: ____________ manufacture
  - *From whom and how did the Arab gain this technology?*

- *What were the effects of this new industry?*

- *How did the growth of the realm of Islam contribute to agricultural, industrial, and urban development?*

**The formation of a hemispheric trading zone**
- Overland trade
  - Trade revived ____________ roads
  - Umayyad and Abbasid rulers maintained roads for military and administration
- Camels and caravans
  - Overland trade traveled mostly by camel caravan
  - Caravanserais in Islamic cities
  - *What is a caravanserais?*
• Maritime trade
  ● Arab and Persian mariners borrowed the ____________ from the Chinese
  ● Borrowed the ____________ sail from southeast Asian and Indian mariners - improved ship maneuverability
  ● Borrowed ____________ from the Hellenistic mariners - able to calculate latitude
  ● *Who was Ramisht and what did he do with his fortunes?*

• Banks
  ● Operated on larger scale and provided extensive services
  ● Letters of credit, or ____________, functioned as bank checks
• The organization of trade
  ● Entrepreneurs often pooled their resources in group investments
  ● *What were the advantages of these types of group investments?*

• Traders even went to West Africa, Russia, Scandinavia
  ● *What factors contributed to the expansion of Islamic overland and maritime trade?*

• **Al-Andalus** with its capital city **Cordoba**
  ● This area was Islamic Spain, conquered by Muslim Berbers
  ● Claimed independence from the Abbasid dynasty
  ● Products of al-Andalus enjoyed a reputation for excellence
  ● *What are some of the products of al-Andalus? Describe the capital city of Cordoba.*

➤ **The changing status of women**
  ● Arab women (pre-Muhammad) – could inherit property, divorce husbands, engage in business ventures
  ● The Quran and women
    ● The Quran enhanced security of women; they were not property of men but equal to men before Allah with their own rights and needs; Muhammad’s kindness to his own wives served as an examples (after his first wife died, it is believed he had more than 11 wives)
• However, the Quran and sharia also reinforced male domination
  ♦ In what ways did they reinforce a patriarchal society?

• Veiling of women
  ● Adopted veiling of women from Mesopotamia and Persia
    ♦ What was the purpose of veiling?

• Women's rights provided by the Quran were reduced through later interpretations

❖ Islamic values and cultural exchanges
  ➢ The formation of an Islamic cultural tradition
    • The Quran and sharia were main sources to formulate moral guidelines
    • Promotion of Islamic values
      ● Ulama, qadis, and missionaries were main agents
      ● Education also promoted Islamic values
      ● What types of education were available for Muslims?

• Sufis, or Islamic mystics
  ● Most effective __________________________
  ● Encouraged devotion to Allah by passionate __________________________ or dancing
  ● ______________ believed that human reason was too frail and confusing
  ● Sufis led ___________ and ___________ lives, won respect of the people
  ● Encouraged followers to revere Allah in __________________________
  ● __________________________ those who associated Allah with other beliefs
  ● Why were Sufis sometimes mistrusted?

• How were Sufis able to attract many converts?

• What people and institutions helped to promote and spread the values of Islam?
• The hajj
  • The __________________ became the symbol of Islamic cultural unity
  • Pilgrims helped to spread Islamic beliefs and values
  • What is the significance of the hajj to Islamic religion and culture?

### Persian, Indian and Greek Influences on Islam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In what specific ways was each culture an influence on Islamic society?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Who was Ibn Rushd and what impact did he have on the spread of Islam?*
### The Geography of Islam

**Holy Places:**
- Mecca – the holiest site; Muhammad’s birthplace and home to the Ka’ba, or Black Rock
- Medina – the city to which Muhammad fled during the Hijra
- Jerusalem – according to Islamic tradition, Muhammad ascended to heaven from here

### Comparison of Shia, Sunni and Sufi Factions of Islam

**Succession**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Succession</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad</td>
<td>570-632 CE</td>
<td>Ruled and lived in Arabia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abu Bakr</td>
<td>First Caliph</td>
<td>Principle leader of prayer selected by Muhammad, friend and father of Muhammad’s youngest wife, assassinated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umar</td>
<td>Second Caliph</td>
<td>Assassinated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uthman</td>
<td>Third Caliph</td>
<td>Assassinated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>Fourth Caliph</td>
<td>Ruled for 7 years, Muhammad’s cousin, husband of his favorite daughter Fatima.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasan</td>
<td>Eldest son of Ali, renounced his rights to the caliphate but was poisoned anyway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husayn</td>
<td>Second son of Ali, fought against Umayyad control, was beheaded after losing battle of Karbala (680 CE), considered heroic martyr by Shia Muslims.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shia Faction of Islam**

- 10-15% of all Muslims
- Shia means “faction,” refers to “faction of Ali.”
- Iran center and home of most Shia, 88% of Iranians are Shia (Shi’i). In Iraqi 96% are Muslim and over 50% of them are Shia (Shi’i), though Iraq was, until the 2nd Gulf War, ruled by the minority Sunnis. President Saddam Husayn was a Sunni.

**Sunni Faction of Islam**

- Majority of Muslims
- Sunni means “tradition,” adheres to orthodox tradition
- Grew out of Umayyad dynasty. World-wide most Muslims are Sunni.

**Sufis/Sufism**

- Suf means “wool,” a “devotional movement,” considered the Mystics of Islam.
- Developed in reaction against the excesses of the Sultans and Caliphs (who wore silks, satins), specifically the Caliphate of Damascus in the Umayyad dynasty, Sufis wore coarse wool garments in protest.

### Succession and Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Succession and Leadership</th>
<th>Shia</th>
<th>Sunni</th>
<th>Sufis/Sufism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believe in Ali and the Imams as rightful successors of Muhammad, but not in first 3 Caliphs (listed above). Ali was first of 12 successive legitimate Imams. Succession was to be hereditary.</td>
<td>10-15% of all Muslims</td>
<td>Majority of Muslims</td>
<td>Suf means “wool,” a “devotional movement,” considered the Mystics of Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge each of the first four Caliphs as rightful successors to Muhammad.</td>
<td>Shia means “faction,” refers to “faction of Ali.”</td>
<td>Sunni means “tradition,” adheres to orthodox tradition</td>
<td>Developed in reaction against the excesses of the Sultans and Caliphs (who wore silks, satins), specifically the Caliphate of Damascus in the Umayyad dynasty, Sufis wore coarse wool garments in protest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value deliberate simplicity, sought involvement of the emotions rather than just a formalistic following of the rules.</td>
<td>Iran center and home of most Shia, 88% of Iranians are Shia (Shi’i). In Iraqi 96% are Muslim and over 50% of them are Shia (Shi’i), though Iraq was, until the 2nd Gulf War, ruled by the minority Sunnis. President Saddam Husayn was a Sunni.</td>
<td>Grew out of Umayyad dynasty. World-wide most Muslims are Sunni.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Look forward to Messianic return of the last recognized Imam. Muhammad al-Mahdi, last Imam, disappeared 900 CE, went into "hidden realm", was sinless. Ayatollah Khomeini (1900-1989) believed by many to be the return of the last Imam.

| Characteristic is the continual exposition and reinterpretation of doctrine by the clerics. | Believe in entire body (canon) of life and teachings of Muhammad as found in Qur’an and hadiths (sayings and traditions of Muhammad). Sayings and traditions are interpreted by scholars in Islamic schools. | Qur’an is full of symbolism, each verse has from 7 to 70 meanings. Believe in three approaches to the divine: mysticism of Love (heart knowledge), Ecstatic (visionary knowledge) and intuitive discernment (mental knowledge). |
| Imam holds an exalted position, Ayatollah refers to most important Imams. | Imam is a prayer leader. Sunnis approach God directly, there is no clerical hierarchy. | Sufi Shaikhs are the masters. |
| Scholalrs carry on debate in Islamic Schools. Science of Tradition refers to Islamic scholarship and the determination of the value of specific writings (rated sound, good, weak, or infirm) | Believe in fana (extinction) of separateness from God and "remembering" that "there is nothing but God." | Influenced by Gnosticism (life is a spiritual journey—want to know God/Allah now not just after death), The Enneads (from Egypt, e.g. believed the Cosmos emerged from the One and life is the Soul’s journey back), and Hindu Mysticism |
| Fundamentalist approach to Islam, interpretation by clerics | Qur’an applies to everyday life, public life is shaped by the Qur’an. Saudi Arabia considered model of proper Islamic state | Called “the Heart of Islam,” highest experience in life is experience with Allah, can get face to face with Allah/God |