Chapter 6: The Rise and Spread of Islam

Arabs and Islam- Submission to the Will of Allah
Rise of Muslim State: 600-1000 Ad
   - Middle East, 7th century—massive expansion through a combination of aggressive trade and war

Arabian Peninsula
   - Mecca (urban center)
   - Tribes
   - Desert
   - Christianity, Judaism, polytheism
   - Nomadic

- Not a monotheistic society for the most part
- Before Muhammad/mohamed/muhamed M.E. was tribal
- Meca was the only city
- Religions were Christianity, Judaism, and polytheistic

Culture influences on Islam
- Persia because of administration and governance and literature
- India because of mathematics, science, medicine, “Hindi” numbers
- Greece because of philosophy, esp. Aristotle
- The Judeo-Christian World because of monotheism and religious tradition
- The Silk and Royal Roads, diversity of ideas and desire for money.

The Koran
- as long as the New Testament
- 114 suras, arranged from the longest to the shortest
- Most suras are collections of Muhammad’s teaching with no theme
- Cannot be translated, only paraphrased
- Defines what Arabic is

The Origins
- Muhammad received revelation from the angel Gabriel in the cave of Hira in 610—622. HijrahâMuhammad flees Mecca for Medina, the beginning of the Muslim calendar

(1 A.H.)*
The Sharia
   - Codification of Islamic law
   - Based on Quran, hadith, logical school of analysis
   - Extends beyond ritual to all areas of human activity
   - Outlines how to live life

Five Pillars of Islam
1. God is Allah- Muhammad is his prophet
2. Salat- pray 5 times a day facing Mecca
3. Zakat- alms- giving 2.5% of income
4. Sawm- Ramadan- fasting
5. Hajj- pilgrimage to Mecca (2-3 million every year)
Muhammad returns to Mecca
   - Attacks Mecca (630)
   - Converts up to Islam
   - Destruction- pagan sites replaces w/ mosques
     (Ka’aba preserved in honor of importance to Mecca)
Mt Moriah Rock - Muhammad ascended into heaven
Dome of the Rock Mosque (Jerusalem)
3 holy sites:
   - Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem

When Muhammad died, Saudi Arabia was dominantly Muslim
4 Selected Successors (caliphs)
   - Abu Bakr- caused split between Sunnis and Shi’ites
   - Ali Bin Abitalib- Abu’s rival elected (656-661); caused huge fight, ended democracy

**Why did it spread so quickly and convert so many people?!**

1 Inherent Appeal
   - Simplicity - rights for women
   - Equality - high moral teachings

2 Jihad
   - Military skill
   - Tolerance
   - Good government

3 Conversion Incentives
   - Tax on “people of the book” (Christians, Jews, Hindus, etc)
   - Forced conversion of pagans

4 Trade
   - Indonesia and sub-Saharan Africa

5 Expansion
   - Highly successful attacks on Byzantine (Sassanid territories)
   - Difficulties leading rapidly expanding territory

**Caliph & Succession Problems**
No clear successor to Muhammad identified
Abu Bakr chosen to lead
Led war against villagers who abandoned Islam post Muhammad’s death

Schism (700 AD)

Reasons:

- Who should succeed to Caliphate?
- Incorporation of non-Koranic elements into Islam—worldlier
- Worldliness of caliphs, discrimination against non-Arab Muslims

Shi’ites

10%

- shia=party or faction
- Radical fundamentalists
- Mostly Iran

Sunnis

- Sunna= beaten path
- 90%

Umayyad Dynasty (661-750 AD)

- Meccan merchant class
- Capital- Damascus, Syria
- Associated w/ Arab military aristocracy

Expansion:

- All N. Africa (Atlantic)
- W. Europe
- Central Asia
- Wall of China

711 AD: conquer Spain and Portugal

Expansion into W. Europe blocked in France by Charles Martial (732)

Caliphs brutally liquidate all rivals

Bloom of architecture, arts, agriculture, and science

Policy towards conquered peoples:

- Favoritism of Arab military rulers causes discontent
- Limited social mobility of non-Arab Muslims
- Umayyad luxurious living causes further decline in moral authority

*this was a general pattern of China, Rome, India in Golden Ages

Abassid Dynasty (750-1258)
Abu al-Abbas Sunni Arab allie w/ Shia, non-Arab Muslims
Seizes control- Persia, Mesopotamia
Defeats Umayyad army (750)(invite to banquet then massacre)
Empire center moves to Iraq and Iran
Baghdad becomes center of world at 2 million
Science, art, architecture, learning, wealth
Lighted streets, public baths, public libraries, hospitals everywhere

2nd Umayyah Dynasty in Spain (9th century)
Cordoba competes w/ Baghdad

Decline
Civil war between sons of rulers
Regional revolts for independence
Caliphs become puppets of Persian nobility
Turks gain influence until Turkish Sultan was real power behind throne

Economy of early Islamic World
Spread food/ industrial crops
Routes: India to Spain
Western diet adapt to new variety
New crops adapted to different growing season
Agricultural sciences develop
Cotton, paper industries develop
Major cities emerge: Baghdad and Cordoba, Spain were the largest

Formation of Hemispheric Trading Zone
Historical precedent of Arabic trade
Muslim Empire encompasses silk route
Camel caravans
Maritime trade

Banking and trade
Scale of trade causes banks to develop
Sakk- checks
Uniformity of Islamic law throughout (dar al-Islam and Islamic Empire)
Promotes trade
Joint ventures and stock companies are common

Changing status of women
Quran improves status
Outlaw female infanticide
Brides, not husbands, claim dowries
Male dominance still preserved
Patrilineal descent
Polygamy permitted, polyandry forbidden
Veil use continued

Effects of Islam
Preserved classical learning: Greece, Rome, India, some China
Innovations- astronomy, math
Link between East and West
“Arabic” numbers from India
Trigonometry from India
Ironically, sanctuary for Judaism

Contributions
Alcohol benzine alfalfa almanac
Alkali boron algorithm azimuth
Alchemy zircon algebra most star names

Spread of Islam
Jihad
3 levels:
Personal: soul
Verbal
Physical

Influences on Islam
Persia
Administration and government
Literature
India
Mathematics, science, medicine
Greece
Philosophy (Aristotle)
Judeo-Christian World
Monotheism and religious traditions
Silk and Royal roads
Diversity of ideas and desire for money

The Koran

Considered the definitive forms of Arabic
Strictly speaking, cannot be translated, only paraphrased
114 suras: longest to shortest
Given to Muhammad by Gabriel
622- Hijrah- Muhammad flees Mecca for Medina *beginning of Muslim calendar