The Rise, Power, and Connection of the Islamic World, 600–1500

Chapter in Review

Key Terms

LO1 Bedouins
Tent-dwelling nomadic Arab pastoralists of the seventh century C.E. who wandered in search of oases, grazing lands, or trade caravans to raid.

Ka'ba
A huge sacred cube-shaped stone in the city of Mecca to which people made annual pilgrimages.

Quran
(“Recitation”) Islam’s holiest book; contains the official version of Muhammad’s revelations, and to believers is the inspired word of God.

Hadith
The remembered words and deeds of Muhammad, revered by many Muslims as a source of belief.

hijra
The emigration of Muslims from Mecca to Medina in 622.

ummma
The community of Muslim believers united around God’s message.

Allah
To Muslims the one and only, all-powerful God.

caliphate
An imperial state headed by an Islamic ruler, the caliph, considered the designated successor of the Prophet in civil affairs.

Ramadan
The thirty days of annual fasting when Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, and sex during daylight hours, to demonstrate sacrifice for their faith and understand the hunger of the poor.

haj
The Muslim pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca to worship with multitudes of other believers from around the world.

jihad
Effort to live as God intended; a spiritual, moral, and intellectual struggle to enhance personal faith and follow the Quran.

LO2 sultan
A Muslim ruler of only one country.

Shari’a
The Islamic legal code for the regulation of social, economic, and religious life.

madrasas
Religious boarding schools found all over the Muslim world.

Sunni
The main branch of Islam comprising those who accept the practices of the Prophet and the historical succession of caliphs.

LO3 What were the major concerns of Muslim thinkers and writers?

• Sufism, a mystical approach to Islam that emphasized flexibility and a personal connection with God, drew both Sunni and Shi’ite followers.
• Although the Quran and most Muslim societies restricted women, some Muslim societies did not, and both Muslims and non-Muslims have debated the origins and benefits of such practices as wearing a veil.
Shi’a
The branch of Islam that emphasizes the religious leaders descended from Muhammad through his son-in-law, Ali, whom they believe was the rightful successor to the Prophet.

LO3 Sufism
A mystical approach and practice within Islam that emphasized personal spiritual experience.

calligraphy
The artful writing of words.

LO4 Dar al-Islam
(“Abode of Islam”) The Islamic world stretching from Morocco to Indonesia and joined by both a common faith and trade; arose between the eighth and the seventeenth century.

millet
The nationality system through which the Ottomans allowed the leaders of religious and ethnic minorities to administer their own communities.

• Literature, especially poetry, was very important in Islamic culture, as was calligraphy, the artful writing of words.
• Several academic disciplines flourished in the Islamic world. The Scientific Revolution would not have occurred without the help of Islamic mathematicians, who passed on to Europe Indian mathematics.

LO4 Why do historians speak of Islam as a hemispheric culture?
• Trade routes spread Islam throughout the hemisphere, eventually creating Dar al-Islam, an Islamic world stretching from Indonesia to Morocco, in which Arabs constituted a minority of Muslims.
• The series of Christian Crusades to win back the Judeo-Christian Holy Land from Muslims led to long-lasting animosity.
• The Mongols, led by Genghis Khan and Hulegu, one of his grandsons, ruthlessly attacked Muslims in Central Asia and sacked Baghdad, but the Islamic tradition endured throughout Mongol rule.
• The arrival of gunpowder from China allowed Muslim military states, such as the Mamluks and the Timurids, to gain power, while the Ottoman Turks established an extremely successful empire in the territory of the former Byzantine Empire by allowing subject minorities to administer their own affairs.
• By conducting and preserving a great deal of scientific and philosophical learning, the Muslims contributed much to European culture.