I. Rise of Islam

Origins:

Arabian Peninsula  
Most Arabs settled  
Bedouin Nomads – minority  
--Caravan trade: Yemen to Mesopotamia and Mediterranean

Brought Arabs in contact with Byzantines and Sasanids

Bedouins – polytheistic  
Society – natural forces and celestial bodies  
Familiar with Christianity

Mecca – caravan cities between Yemen and Syria

Nomads – worshiped idols in small cubical shrine = Ka’ba

Islam “Submission”.  
Islam → Religion.

Muslim → Person who practices the religion.

Origins:  
Arabian Peninsula.  
Desert Life.  
Nomadic herders (Bedouins).  
Trading centers  
(Oasis towns).  
--Mecca.  
--Yathrib (Medina).  
↓  
“The city of the Prophet”

Muhammad:  
(570-632 AD)  
Orphan  
Merchant  
Married Wealthy widow = Khadija

610 Revelations from Angel Gabriel
Muhammad (570-632).

Vision.
On a retreat, Angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad.
Follow one true God (Allah).
Preach to the people.

One God: Allah
Some thought Muhammad was possessed with a spirit

Muhammad’s Revelations considered final revelations
(Following and superseding revelations of Noah, Moses, and Jesus

Umma – single community of believers
Mohammad fled Mecca to Medina in 622
Hejira – Migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD.
622 AD – 1st Year of the Islamic Calendar.
In Medina, Muhammad built a strong army.

In Medina, umma developed core of Islamic State. Spread to rest of Arabia, Africa, Europe, Middle East, and Central Asia
In 630 AD, Muhammad attacked Mecca.
By 632 AD (Muhammad’s death), Islam had spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

Muhammad died 632

Successor: Abu Bakr (Caliph)
Tasks: Standardization of religion
Consolidation of Islamic State

The Age of Conquest (632-750).
Arab military victories conquered Damascus and Jerusalem.
Conquered the Persian Empire and then Northern Africa.
In 711, Moslems entered Spain.

Reestablished Moslem authority
Development of Quran
Succession Issue occurred after the 3rd Caliph Uthman’s assassination

Civil War

**Caliph** – successor to Muhammad as political and religious leader of the Moslems.

Rightly Guided Caliphs:
- Abu Bakr (632-634).
- Umar I (634-644).
- Uthman (644-656).
- Ali (656-661).

Uthman’s clan (Umayya) OR Muhammad’s first cousin and son-in-law Ali

Umayya won – Umayyad Caliphate (661)

Ummayya – Sunnis

Ali – Shiites

Ali also had militant sect of followers too: Kharijites

800+ Million Moslems today

Rise and fall of Caliphate (632-1258)

7th Century – Syria, Egypt, and Sasanid Empire

Late 7th – 8th Century – Tunisia, Spain, Algeria, Morocco, and Sind

Reasons for Rapid Expansion:
Moslem leaders talented and structure of Arab societies
Some historians feel religious fanaticism, weakness of foes, lust for booty too

Byzantine Empire and Persian Empire fought one another to exhaustion.

People welcomed the Arabs as liberators.

Arab fighting skills:
- Arab camel.
- Horse cavalry.
- Desert Warfare.
- Aggressive tactics.

Common Faith in Islam.

Moslem Treatment of Conquered People.

Tax on non-Moslems.
Tolerance of other religions.

Arabs – regular paid armies

Military camps and garrison towns – did not overrun countryside

They dominated and taxed – did not try to convert

Umayyad and Early Abbasid Caliphate (661-850)
Umayyad (661-750)
Capital = Damascus
Ruled Arab empire – not Moslem Empire
Ruled in secular manner
Sunni Dynasty
Ruled through Byzantine and Sasanid apparatus
Moslem bureaucrats and Arabic language
Minted first coins
Extensive postal system
Extensive public works projects
Built exquisite mosques
Reasons for downfall of dynasty:
New converts wanted equal status with Arab warriors
Pious Moslems felt Umayyad family behaved immorally
Shiites and Kharijites contested rulers
Arabs outside Syria did not like influence of Syrian Arabs on dynasty
Rebellions overthrew Umayyad in 750
(1 branch left in Spain)

Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258)
Capital = Baghdad
Family of Abbas – Uncle of Muhammad
Renewed religious leadership
Shiite Dynasty
Rulership and royal ceremony from Sasanids
Literature and learning
Greek text translation
Arab poetry
Major increase of non-Moslem converts to Islam (9th Century)

Political Fragmentation: 850-1050
Abbasids – vast empire led to decline (850s)
--Transportation and communications difficult
--Dissatisfaction of non-Moslems with political and economic system that was centered in Baghdad
Local revolts led to smaller Moslem states: No taxes to Caliphs in Baghdad
Baghdad – Caliphs relied on Turkish slave troops – Mamluks
Mamluks took control of Caliphate (9th Century)
Fell to Shiites (945)
Spain: Umayyads – held power over diverse population and cultures (Islam, Roman,
    German, Jewish)
Formed unique Islamic civilization:
Urbanization, introduction of citrus crops, Irrigation and agriculture, major Moslem and
    Jewish intellectual activity
Underlying political diversity – one strong religious identity = ulama

Assault From Within and Without (1050-1258)
Seljuk Turks established Seljuk Sultanate – Central Asia
Afghanistan to Baghdad and took Anatolia from Byzantines (1071)

Baghdad collapsed:
Reasons: irrigation system of Tigris-Euphrates Rivers Declined, Revenue declined, Food
    resources declined

Crusades pressured Islamic lands
Moslems united under Saladin (Ayyubid Dynasty) and drove Christians out
Disunity continued after Saladin
Turkish invasion in 1250
Mongol invasion (13th Century) (1258)