

V. Islamic Culture and the World We Live In

A. Islamic Culture under the World Police Power

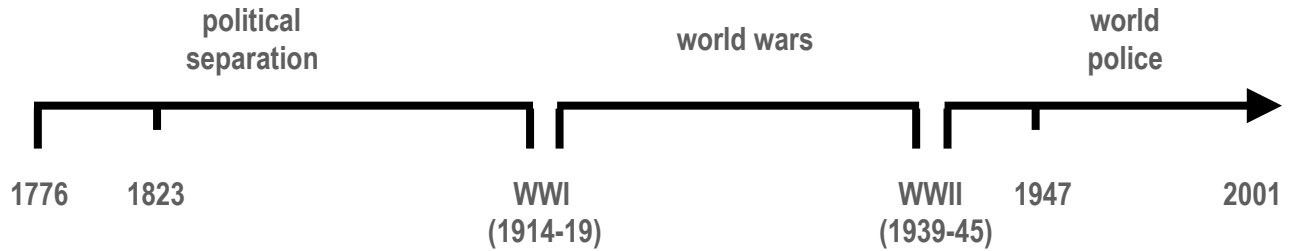
1. The key to the role of Islamic Culture in shaping the world as a cardinal culture today is its interaction with the world police power: the United States.
2. In order to understand how American and Islamic history go together, we must learn the story of America as the world police power.

B. The Story of the World Police Power

1. When the United States was born in **1776**, the founding fathers wanted to create a unique country dedicated to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”
2. In order to protect the rights of Americans, the founders believed that the United States must remain apart from other nations’ politics and wars. This policy of “political separation” became the **Monroe Doctrine** of **1823**, announced by president James Monroe. Monroe said that America would stay out of other people’s wars.
3. The Monroe Doctrine was the rule America followed until **World War I**.
4. During that European war, the United States stayed apart, until president Wilson proposed a new mission for Americans: to make the world “*safe for democracy*.” America then intervened in the war and help bring it to an end.
5. The cost to America—117,000 Americans dead—was so terrible that Americans returned to political separation again.
6. Even though Americans wanted to stay political separate from the world, the United States was attacked by Japan in **World War II** and thus dragged into the war.
7. After the war, the United States has a new problem. Without America’s protection, Western Europe and much of Asia would have been forced to accept communism (a form of government with no freedom or rights), and Americans felt they could not permit such an outcome. America’s president Harry Truman announced the **Truman Doctrine** of **1947**, to make the world *safe from communism*.
8. As part of the Truman Doctrine, America began to police the Islamic Middle East.
9. In that region, people did not want communism, so America’s offered protection was generally well received, but its control of the flow of oil, and especially its help to the newly formed democratic nation of Israel, all combined to generate a lot of resentment towards the world police power.
10. As we will explore in the Islamic history below, a renewal of the belief in a religious triumph over the world arose, and America did not stop it. This caused a rise in terrorism, and, since **9/11, 2001**, the “War on Terror.”

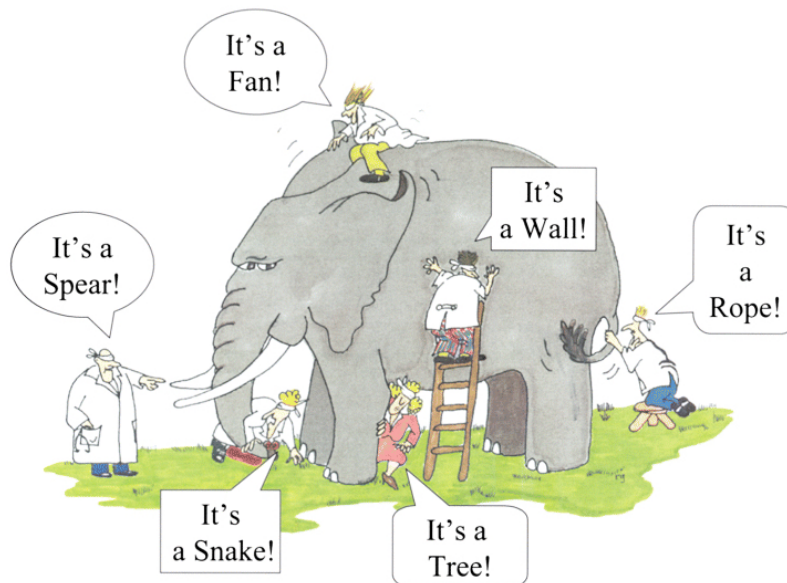
C. Summary Timeline of the Cardinal Anchor Facts of American History

Using a three-part template for dividing up American history similar to the one we have used for Japan, we can illustrate the basic progression of America’s relationship to the world in the following way:

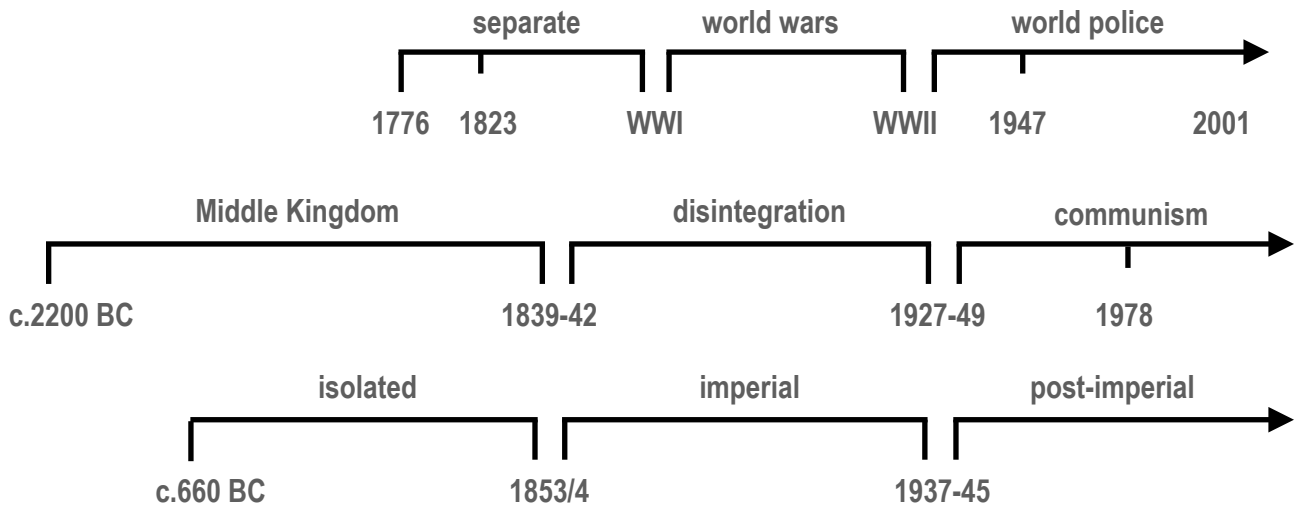


D. Organizing *World* History

1. A famous and amusing fable that originated in India is known as “The Blind Men and the Elephant.” It captures the predicament that emerges as one tries to study something as big and complex as world history using conventional means.
2. As the story goes, a group of blind “wise men,” never having witnessed an elephant before, resolved to encounter one. As each of them grabbed a part of it, they came to very different assessments of what an elephant is.
3. By touch alone, each was able to grasp only part of what an elephant is. Unwilling or unable to appreciate the need to *integrate* their separate experiences, none of them could understand what an elephant actually is.



4. The fable is an apt description of how people experience the complexity of history. They study one part — usually a part that matters to them on some emotional level — and insist on the truth of what they know about that *part*, without being able to incorporate the partial truths of others into their understanding. Consequently, no one can see the “elephant” when it comes to history. We are stuck with an unintegrated jumble, i.e. a “spear-snake-fan-tree-wall-rope” (see the illustration on the next page).
5. The following diagram summarizes the *cardinal anchor facts* of each of the three main histories we have studied so far: America, China, and Japan.



6. This is like a separate “spear,” “snake,” and “fan.” We need *an elephant!*
7. Because the United States is the most powerful country in the world, affect all the others, we can use its role as the “word police” to link all the histories into one, where the American part of history are labeled in blue.

