

D. The Birth of Triumphal Islam

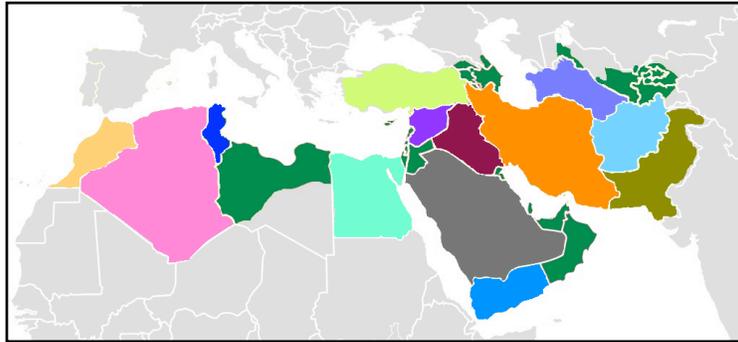
1. Islamic culture began as a *triumphal* religious culture. (The concept “triumphal” means *expecting* triumph or *confident* of victory.)
2. The idea of a religious triumph is a part of the religion itself. Muhammad claimed to have received a third and final message from God, which replaces Judaism and Christianity. In Islamic culture, Christians and Jews were expected to convert to Islam, to acknowledge the supposed final word of God, and they must pay special taxes if they don't. People of all other faiths have no rights except the right to convert to Islam.
3. The hejira (Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina) is the beginning of the first “jihad” (holy war): the Muslim *Conquest of Arabia* (c.622-632 AD).
4. He had been forced to leave, so when Muhammad returned from Medina he *conquered* Mecca, and he began a religious war to spread his new belief. He was thus two things at the same time: a prophet and a warlord.
5. After conquering Arabia, Muhammad then famously sent two letters to the emperors of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) and Persian empires. The letters had the same theme: *convert or be conquered*.
6. Muhammad did not live to enact these conquests himself, because he died in 632 AD, but his successors, known as “califs,” continued to conquer in the name of their religion.
7. Waves of conquest spread both westward, across North Africa and up into Iberia (Spain and Portugal today), and eastward into India. Both regions were invaded c.711 AD, soon after which Islamic culture reached its maximum extent.



A map of Arabia, with present day borders indicated, shows the locations of Mecca and Medina, where the story of Islam begins.



The Muslim empire or “Caliphate” created by Muhammad and his successors (the “califs”) stretched from Iberia in the West to India in the East.



Islamic culture today is *disintegrated*. It consists of many different countries that are overpowered by non-Muslim neighboring countries and whose fate is essentially controlled by the United States as world police power.