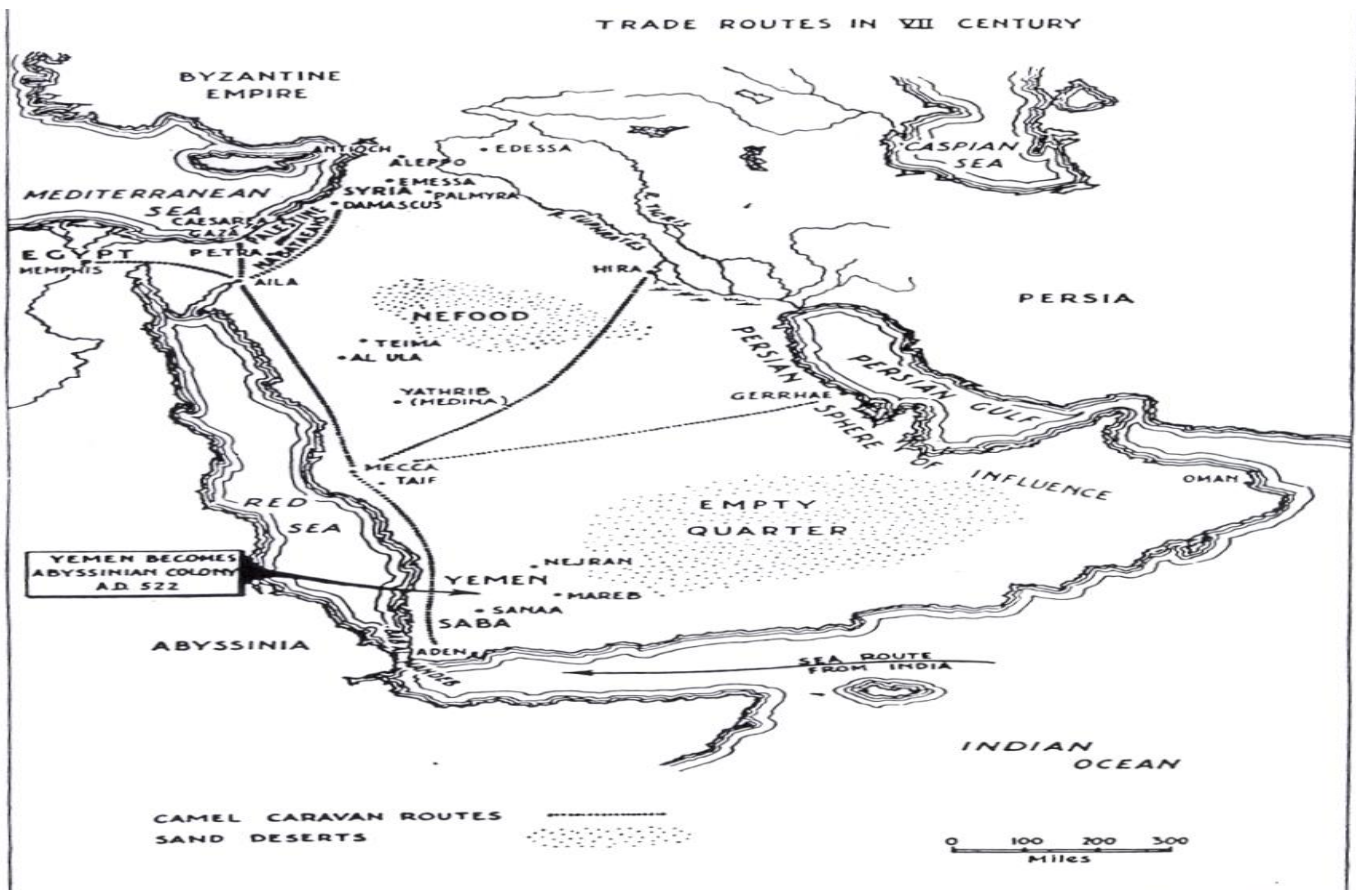


Chapter 1: Pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabia

1.1 Geography and Cultures of Pre-Islamic Arabia

Arabia is a peninsula situated in the southwestern tip of Asia bounded on the north by Jordan and Iraq, on the west by the Red Sea, on the south by the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and on the east by the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf. It consists of the modern states of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, the Island state of Bahrain and Kuwait. Currently, Arabs are majority in many countries including Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, and the countries of North Africa.

Most of the Arabian Peninsula is a desert land with extremely dry climate. However, the border areas stretching from south Palestine all along up to Iraq is a fertile land having more or less fair climate. Throughout the centuries, the greater majority of the Arabs were moving to these regions from the arid interior.



The better-watered territory of south-west Arabia witnessed the emergence of early kingdoms. The first was the Minaean Kingdom (1200 to 650 B.C), situated in the interior of the present Yemen, but probably included most of Southern Arabia. The second Kingdom, the Sabaeen (930 - 115 B.C), occupied substantially the same territory of the Minaean kingdom. The Himyarites (115 B.C to about 525 A.D) succeeded the Sabaeans as the leaders in Southern Arabia.

Moreover, several states are known to have existed in northern Arabia in the pre-Christian and early Christian era. Among these, the earliest was the Nabataean kingdom, which extended its hegemony as far north as Damascus, in present-day Syria, from about 9 B.C to 40 A.D. The ruins of Petra, the Nabataean capital city, attested to a high degree of a culture. The Nabataean form of writing developed into the Arabic script was another achievement of the Nabataeans.

Unlike the south Arabians, who were an urban group, the north Arabians of Najd and Hedjaz were mainly Bedouins (Arab nomads). Accordingly, the Bedouin Arabs were organized into tribes (Qabilah). The nucleus was the tent (*khamah*) which represented a family. A group of tents formed a *Hayy*. Members of the Hayy formed a clan (*Qawm*). The members of each clan were blood –related. Clans in turn formed a tribe (Qabilah).

The Bedouins had a kind of democratic leadership system. Accordingly, only the wisest and most experienced were elected as *Sheiks*. The Sheik was a tribal leader but his office was not hereditary. Tribal members led a communal life in which they shared in common all pasturage, water and agricultural land. Only the tent and its contents belonged to the individual.

The Arab nomads (Bedouins) generally lived in the desert around the Oases or in the mountainous region to the south. Pastoralism was the chief occupation of the Bedouins. Conflicts, arising from overlapping interest over the Oases and pasturelands, were common among the different clans and tribes.

Scattered throughout the peninsula along the ancient trade routes, there were small commercial towns such as Mecca and also agricultural communities such as Yathrib, later Medina. The chief importance of pre-Islamic Mecca, however, was neither agricultural nor commercial but religious. The city was the center of Arab polytheism. Pilgrims flocked to Mecca to worship the idols around the Ka'aba.

Before the appearance of Islam, the Arabs had religious beliefs and customs. The Arabs worshipped many objects including the moon, the sun, and the morning star. Mecca was a major religious and trading center even before the rise of Islam. The Ka'ba, surrounded by about 360 idols, in Mecca became a center of annual sacrifice and pilgrimage. The area surrounding Ka'ba was declared sacred. The Quraysh were the guardians of Ka'ba, which generated income for them because of its attraction of large pilgrims.

In the ancient period, different people invaded the Arabs. The Romans gained its control over the Nabataean kingdom in 106 A.D and made most of it as the Roman province of Arabia, which lasted little longer than a century. In the 4th century, the Abyssinian expanded into Arabia and conquered a large part of it. Likewise, other invading peoples were expanding to the peninsula. Through such interactions, Christianity and Judaism were established and to a considerable degree replaced the existing religious beliefs, which were based mainly on worshiping of several gods.

Two rival superpowers, the Byzantine and Sassanian (Persian) empires dominated the near east. In the 6th century A.D, the Persians began to extend their territory to Iraq and eastern Arabia. They drove the Aksumites from Yemen in about 580 A.D. Thereafter, they shifted the Red Sea commerce to the Persian Gulf. As a result, trade rivalry became clear between the Persians, who were expanding into the western Mediterranean world and the Byzantine who were in control of Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa. The rivalry led to war, where in 602 the Persians started attacking Byzantine territories and captured Antioch, Damascus and Jerusalem. Soon afterwards, they entered Alexandria and occupied Egypt. In 622, the Byzantine ruler started counter offensive. However, in 626, the Persian threatened Constantinople. Lastly, the Byzantine King, Heraclius defeated them and recaptured all the lost territories in 629. Because of this war, the Persian and Byzantine empires became weak and this created an opportune moment for the Arabs to become dominant.

1.2 Origins of Islam

Islam is one of the three major world religions, along with Judaism and Christianity that profess monotheism. Islam, more than any other factor, has given the Middle East its distinctive identity. The social, cultural and political life of almost all nations in the region bear the stamp of this monotheistic religion.

Around the year A.D 570 Muhammad, the founding Prophet of Islam, was born in Mecca in to one of the Quraysh tribe of Meccan Arabs. At the age of forty, Prophet Muhammad began to preach Islam, and received a series of revelation from God beginning in 610 A.D. The Angel Gabriel spoke this revelation of Allah to the Prophet. The divine Words spoken to Prophet Muhammad were written in the Quran, the Holy Book of the Muslims, and are held by Muslims to be God's direct and inalterable words and are the principal source of Islamic belief and practice.

Prophet Muhammad received his first revelation during the month of Ramadan. His wife (Khadija), his cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib, his friend Abu Bakr, and the young merchant Uthman ibn Affan from the powerful Umayyad family became the first converts and at the end, he began to preach in public in 613, reciting the verses of his revelations, which came to be called the Qur'an. He proclaimed that 'God is one' that complete surrender to him (Islam) is the only way. The term Islam itself, often translated as "Submission", refers to the decision by the Muslim ("one who submits or surrenders") to abide both in mind and body by the will of God (Allah). Completing the Quran is the vast record of Prophet Muhammad's life, known as the Hadith, which consists of how the Prophet thought, spoke and conducted his affairs.

His initial efforts in propagating Islam (submission to the will of Allah) were less successful. Prophet Muhammad denounced the polytheism of his fellow Meccans. Because the town's economy was based in part, on a thriving pilgrimage business to the shrines in the area, Prophet Muhammad's condemnation of believing in these gods/goddesses earned him the hostility of the town's leaders.

In attempting to bring social reform, Prophet Muhammad advocated the need to improve the conditions of slaves, orphans, women and the poor and replace tribal loyalties with the fellowship of Islamic faith. In his first years, he made few converts but many enemies. His teachings of reform and social equality aroused the hatred of the rich merchants who dominated Mecca. They also disliked the Prophet's attack of the gods in Mecca due to fear of loss of their income and began to kill some of the followers of Islam. In 615, the prophet ordered some of his followers including his daughter and her husband to travel to the Christian Kingdom of Aksum, where they were received and given protection from the king. Moreover, the Quraysh agreed not to buy, sell or intermarry with Muslims, including those who protected or sympathized with them.

As the opposition was beginning to develop into fierce persecution, Prophet Muhammad was invited by the Arabs of Medina to seek refuge. In 622, the Prophet and a group of followers accepted the invitation. This move from Mecca to Medina (*hijra*) marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar in 622. Those who migrated from Mecca along with the Prophet became known as *Muhajirun* (emigrants). In Medina, he met the *Ansars* (Helpers) and was welcomed and given a supreme authority. He renamed Yathrib as Medinat al-Nabi (city of the Prophet) shortly Medina.

In Medina, Prophet Muhammad established the first Muslim community consisting of the Meccan emigrants (the *Muhajirun*) and the Medina inhabitants (the *Ansars*). The newly formed community was referred to as the *Sahaba* - the companions of the Prophet.

The Meccans persisted in their hostility and demanded the expulsion of Prophet Muhammad and his Meccan followers. A group who had submitted to Islam but were secretly working against it supported them in Medina. Jewish tribes that were residing in Medina also aided this group. After consolidating his power in Medina, Prophet Muhammad marched to Mecca to fight against his opponents. In 624, the first major Battle took place at Badr, in which the Muslims, despite their inferiority in number and weapons, soundly defeated the Meccans. In 625, in the next major Battle of Uhud, though the Meccans had the advantage, they were failed to achieve a decisive victory. A Meccan army besieged Medina in 627 but still failed to take the city.

Finally, in 630, the Meccans peacefully submitted to Prophet Muhammad and he treated the city generously, declared a general amnesty. He now enforced the principles of Islam and established the foundation of Islamic empire. He ordered the destruction of the idols in Ka'aba and turned it into the holiest shrine of Islam rededicating it to Allah. He is also said to have granted the Jews and Christians religious autonomy as "peoples of the Book".

1.3 Belief and practices of Islam

In the Arabic language, the word *Islam* means "surrender" or "submission"—submission to the will of God. A follower of Islam is called a *Muslim*, which in Arabic means "one who surrenders to God." Islam's central teaching is that there is only one all-powerful, all-knowing God, and this God created the universe. The religion of Islam teaches that there is one God, and that Muhammad is the last in a series of Prophets and messengers.

The duties of Muslims form the five pillars of Islam, which set forth the acts necessary to demonstrate and reinforce the faith. These are the testimony of Faith (*shahada*), *salat* (daily prayer), *zakat* (almsgiving), *sawm* (fasting), and *hajj* (pilgrimage).

The requirement of this Testimony (*Shahada*) is the submission and declaration that "There is no true god except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." This makes Islam one of the monotheist religions.

The believer is to pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual washings each day at dawn (*Subhi*), midday (*Zhur*), mid-afternoon (*Asir*), sunset (*Maghreb*), and nightfall (*Isha*). Whenever possible, men pray in congregation at the mosque with an imam, or prayer leader, and on Fridays they make a special effort to do so. Women may also attend public worship at the mosque, where they are separated from the men, although women usually pray at home.

Zakat (*Sadaqa*) is a financial act of worship, which is due on the wealth kept in possession for one year. A certain percentage is taken from every kind of property to be given to the poor to enable them meet their needs.

The ninth month of the Muslim calendar is Ramadan, a period of obligatory fasting in commemoration of Prophet Muhammad's receipt of God's revelation. Throughout the month, all but the sick and weak, pregnant or lactating women, soldiers on duty, travelers on necessary journeys, and young children are enjoined from eating, or drinking during the daylight hours.

All Muslims, at least once in their lifetimes, are strongly encouraged to make the *hajj* to Mecca to participate in special rites held there during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. Prophet Muhammad instituted this requirement to emphasize sites associated with God and Abraham (Ibrahim), considered the founder of monotheism and father of the Arabs through his son Ismail.

Articles of *Iman* (belief): In Islam, there are six principles of *Iman*. These are:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| A. The belief in Allah | D. The belief in the Messengers |
| B. Belief in the Angels | E. The belief in the Final Day |
| C. The belief in the divine scriptures | F. The belief in Al-Qadar |

Chapter 2: Arab Conquest and Expansion

2.1 Succession Struggle and Islamic Sects

When Prophet Muhammad died in 632 A.D, Islam was left without a leader, for the Prophet had designated no successor, or caliph. Instead, Abu Bakr was assigned into the position. He and his three immediate successors- subsequently known as the Rashidun- Umar, Uthman, and Ali (the latter being the husband of Fatima, Muhammad's daughter), came to be accepted by most Muslims as Prophet Muhammad's legal heirs.

Most of Abu Bakr's short reign was spent putting down local rebellions against Islamic rule. Abu Bakr took part in some of the fighting, but the main military leadership was provided by Khalid ibn al-Walid. At the end of these wars, Medina's authority was extended over all of Arabia and the inclusion of all of Arabia in the *ummah*, or community of Islam.

Abu Bakr died late in August 634 and was succeeded as second caliph by Umar ibn al-Khattab. Umar took the title of *amir-al-mum-inin* (Arabic for "commander of the believers").

Umar died in November 644. He was succeeded by Uthman ibn Affan. Like Prophet Muhammad, Uthman belonged to the Quraysh tribe, however to a different clan, the Umayyads, who had been prominent in Mecca before Prophet Muhammad.

Under Uthman, conquests slowed and the garrison towns experienced unrest. Uthman, who represented the merchant class of Mecca, knew little of warfare and faced opposition from the military.

In 656 groups of dissatisfied soldiers converged on Medina and rioted against Uthman. Fearful that an army from Syria was coming to help the caliph, the soldiers broke into Uthman's home in June 656 and murdered him. They then prevailed upon Ali, who was the son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad, to accept the caliphate. The Umayyad clan under Muawiya opposed Ali.

Muawiyah refused to recognize Ali as caliph and engaged Ali's forces in a battle at Siffin, in northern Syria, in 657. The battle was turning in Ali's favor when he agreed to Muawiyah's request to submit to arbitration the issue of whether Uthman had brought his death upon himself through his own mistakes, or had been unjustly killed. The decision, reached in 658, went against Ali, who refused to accept the decision and tried to resume the battle. Meanwhile, a number of Ali's supporters had deserted him, declaring that they could no longer follow Ali.

Ali pursued the war against Muawiyah but was faced with opposition from every direction. Ali was murdered by a Kharijite in January 661. Muawiyah proclaimed himself caliph, bringing an end to the period of “the rightly guided caliphs” and ushering in the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty.

These circumstances caused the emergence of the three Islamic sects. The first and smallest faction was the Kharijites. After the murder of the third caliph, Uthman, and the succession of Ali as the fourth caliph, Muawiyah, the governor of Syria, sought to avenge the murder of Uthman. After fighting the indecisive Battle of Siffin (July 657) against Muawiyah’s forces, Ali was forced to agree to arbitration. This concession aroused the anger of a large group of ‘Ali’s followers, who protested that “judgment belongs to God alone”. A small number of these opponents withdrew (*kharajū*) to the village of Ḥarura under the leadership of IbnWahb and, when arbitration proved disastrous to Ali, were joined near Nahrawan by a larger group.

These Kharijites opposed equally Ali’s claims and Muawiyah. In the Battle of Nahrawan (July 658), IbnWahb and most of his followers were killed by Ali, but the Kharijite movement persisted in a series of uprisings that plagued both Ali and Muawiyah.

The major break was between the Shia Ali, the “partisans of Ali” (later known as the Shia Muslims or Shias), and those who accepted Muawiyah as caliph. The latter group comprised the majority of Muslims, and became known as the Sunnis. The Shias called for the caliphate to revert to Ali’s family, believing that Ali was unjustly deposed and in fact had been chosen by God to succeed Muhammad himself.

The fundamental difference between Sunni and Shia Muslims is the Shia doctrine of the imamate as distinct from the Sunni caliphate. The caliph was the selected and elected successor of the Prophet. By contrast, for the Shia, leadership of the Muslim community is vested in the Imam (leader), who is the divinely inspired, sinless, religious-political leader of the community. He must be a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and Ali, the first Imam.

2.2 Emergence of Caliphate (Dynasties)

2.2.1 The Umayyad Caliphate

After the death of Ali, Mu’awiyah defeated the Kharijite revolts and got recognition as a caliph even by Ali’s son Hasan Ibn Ali in 661. Then Mu’awiyah established the Umayyad Dynasty that

ruled from 661-750. The dynasty derived its name from Umayya ibn Abd Shamas, the great grandfather of Mu'awiyah. The Umayyad dynasty transferred the seat of the caliphate from Medina to Damascus.

The Shi'as continued to criticize Mu'awiyah especially when he designated his son Yazid as his successor. Thus, when Mu'awiyah arranged that his son Yazid would succeed him upon his death, which came in 680, Husain ibn Ali refused to swear an allegiance to Yazid. As a result, Husain was killed at the battle of Karbala in 680, an event still mourned by the Shi'as.

During the caliphate of Yazid, the Muslim conquests continued. Under Yazid, Uqba ibn Nafi became the governor of North Africa in 682, won battles against the Berbers and the Byzantines, and was able to reach the Atlantic coast.

During the reign of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (685–705), all important records were translated into Arabic. A special currency was also minted which led to war with the Byzantine empire under Justinian II in 692. They fought at the battle of Sebastopol in Asia Minor. The defeat of the Byzantines enabled the new currency to get wider circulation in the Muslim world. Abd al-Malik also made Arabic the state language and organized a regular postal service.

Another Caliph, Al-Walid took the Islamic world to its furthest extents. He conquered Egypt from the Byzantine Empire, moved into Carthage and his armies crossed the straits of Gibraltar and began to conquer Spain. Spain was conquered in 711 but further conquests were finally stopped at the battle of Tours in 732 in southern France.

In the east, Islamic armies under Muhammad bin Qasim made it as far as the Indus valley. Thus under Al-Walid the caliphate empire stretched from Spain to India. Al-Walid focused on building a well-organized army and his reign is considered as the apex of the Islamic power.

In 744 Marwan II came to power and ruled until 750. He was the last Umayyad ruler to rule from Damascus and was killed in 750.

In general, the Umayyads fought Turkish tribes in central Asia, sent an expedition into Sindh, India, and reached the borders of China.

Despite the accomplishments of Umayyad rule, by the eighth century (720) anti-Umayyad sentiment spread and intensified. It included a variety of disaffected factions. Opposition came from non-Arab Muslims who denounced their second-class status vis-à-vis Arab Muslims as

contrary to Islamic egalitarianism. In addition, Kharijites and Shi'a opposed the Umayyad rule. Arab Muslims in Mecca, Medina, and Iraq resented the privileged status of Syrian families. Finally, devout Muslims (both Arab and non-Arab) viewed the luxury lifestyle and social privilege as departure from their established, Islamic way of life.

Opposition forces condemned Umayyad practice and policies as un-Islamic innovations and called for a return to the Quran and the practices of the Prophet. In 750, the Umayyads fell, and Abu al-Abbas, a descendant of the Prophet's uncle al-Abbas, was proclaimed caliph.

2.2.2 The Abbasid Caliphate

The Abbasid dynasty lasted from 750 to 1258. In 750, Abu al- Abbas, the founder of the Abbasid caliphate launched a massive rebellion against the Umayyad rule and achieved victory at the battle of Zab. The capital was moved from Damascus to Baghdad, known in Arabic as the City of Peace. From 750 to 800s the Abbasids transformed the Islamic state into an empire. Even under the Abbasids expansion continued in the east into the Ganges Valleys and in the west into the Sub-Saharan Africa after 1000 A.D including to Kanem, Gao and Mali.

The Abbasid Empire was a highly centralized in its administration. Under Abbasid rule, the Islamic community would become an empire remembered not only for its wealth and political power, but also for its extraordinary cultural activity and accomplishments. Abbasid rule of the Islamic community ushered in an era of strong centralized government, great economic prosperity, and a remarkable civilization.

The Abbasids took great care to publicly align their government with Islam. They became the great patrons of an emerging religious class, the *ulama* (religious scholars). They supported the development of Islamic scholarship and disciplines, built mosques, and established schools.

In a departure from the past, Abbasid success was based not on conquest, but on trade, commerce, industry, and agriculture. The enormous wealth and resources of the caliphs enabled them to become great patrons of art and culture, and thus provide the more significant and lasting legacy of the Abbasid period, Islamic civilization. The Abbasids gave substantial support to legal development. The early law schools, which had begun only during the late Umayyad period (ca. 720), flourished under the *ulama*. By the eighth century, the *ulama* had become professional elite of religious leaders. Their prestige and authority rested on a reputation for learning in Islamic studies: the Quran, traditions of the Prophet, law. Because of their expertise, they became

theologians, educators in Muslim society, the interpreters and guardians of Islamic law and tradition.

The Abbasids were committed patrons of culture and the arts. The process of Arabization, begun during the late Umayyad period, was completed by the end of the ninth century. Arabic language and tradition penetrated and modified the cultures of conquered territories. Arabic replaced local languages becoming the language of common discourse, government, and culture throughout much of the empire.

Governing a vast empire extending from the Atlantic to central Asia proved impossible. Abbasid political unity deteriorated rapidly since the second half of the 9th century as religious (Khariji and Shi'a) and regional differences, and particularly competing political aspirations, precipitated a series of revolts and secessionist movements. In Morocco, Tunisia, Iran, Syria, and Iraq itself, local governors, who were often army commanders, asserted their independence as heads of semiautonomous states. These regional rulers (*amirs*) continued to give nominal allegiance to the caliph, exercised actual rule over their territories and established their own hereditary dynasties. By 945, the disintegration of a universal caliphate was evident when the Buyids, a Shi'a dynasty from Western Persia, invaded Baghdad and seized power.

Although Shi'a, they did not change the Sunni orientation of the empire and left the caliph on his throne as a nominal leader of the empire. The Abbasids continued to reign but not rule. With an Abbasid on the throne as a symbol of legitimate government and Muslim unity, real power passed to a series of Persian (Buyid) and Turkic (Seljuq) military dynasties or sultanates. The sultan as chief of the commanders governed a politically fragmented empire.

From time to time, the Abbasid caliphates lost their power and came under immense pressure from the Crusades as well as the Mongol invasion. Its authority never became fully established in the west. In 756 Abdar-Rahman founded a second Umayyad line in Spain which lasted until 1031. In the 780s Idris Ibn Abdallah, a descendant of Ali's son Hasan, fled from Abbasid persecution and created an independent kingdom in Morocco. In the 800s, the Abbasid governors of Tunisia and Egypt broke away from Baghdad and formed their own states. From 929 to 1031, there were three competing caliphates at one time: the Abbasids in Iraq, an Umayyad caliphate in Spain, and the Fatimids in North Africa and, from 969 in Egypt.

2.3 Arab Expansion and Motives for expansion beyond Arabia

Islam and the Arabic language had been able to give the Arabs unity and a sense of brotherhood. Islam sparked the first unity the Arabs had known, enabling them to overcome divisive local loyalties and to form an effective fighting force superior to any in the region. The Arabs were highly skilled horsemen. They were also in search of good land and wealth beyond the desert they inhabited. Once they had seen with what ease all local opposition was overcome, the Arabs undertook to carry their mission beyond local borders and to probe the non-Arab territory to the north. The Arabs recent successes in Arabia and the near east were taken by them to be signs of their strength.

Abu Bakr looked to extend Islamic territory northward into present-day Iraq and Syria. The Arab Muslims successfully fought both the Byzantines and the Sassanids, whose forces were drained by years of warfare. Abu Bakr's forces captured territory in southern Iraq, threatening the major Persian cities on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and also began to push into Byzantine Syria.

Abu Bakr's successor, Umar first sought to expand into Byzantine territory to the north. In September 635, the Muslims captured Damascus, and almost a year later the Byzantine force under Emperor Heraclius was defeated, signaling the end of effective Byzantine rule in the Fertile Crescent. Jerusalem, which would become the third most important Islamic city after Medina and Mecca, was taken in 638.

To the northeast, Muslim forces achieved similar success against the Persian Sassanids in present-day Iraq. The Muslims pushed eastward, and by 642 they had captured the present-day southwestern Iran.

Meanwhile, to the west, an army of Muslims under General Amr ibn al-As had launched an attack against Egypt. In November 641, Alexandria surrendered to the Muslims. Umar established a garrison town near the head of the Nile River delta. This became Al Fustat, the first capital of Muslim Egypt and the precursor of Cairo.

The Muslim armies were successful in conquering new lands for a number of reasons. Firstly, with the rise of Islam, the tribes and cities in Arabia became unified and managed to combine their armies in a single, powerful fighting force. Secondly, the Middle East had been suffering for years under the harsh and often corrupt rule of the Byzantines. Thirdly, the Muslim Arab armies did not so much conquer the rest of the Middle East as walk into the people's open arms.

The Middle Easterners would often rebel against their Byzantine rulers when they heard the Muslims were coming- something that greatly aided their conquests. Fourthly, their enemies (the Persians and the Byzantines) were weak because they had already been fighting a long war with each other. Lastly, the Byzantines themselves were fighting battles within their own state and among politicians.

2.4 Effects of the Arab conquest

The military victories of armies from the Arabian Peninsula heralded the expansion of the Arabs' culture and Islam. The conquests were followed by a large-scale migration of families from Arabia into the lands of the Middle East. The conquering Arabs had already possessed a complex and sophisticated society. Emigrants from Yemen brought with them agricultural, urban, and monarchical traditions.

Two fundamental policies were implemented during the reign of the second caliph Umar (634–44): the Bedouins would not be allowed to damage agricultural production of the conquered lands and the leadership would cooperate with the local elites. To that end, the Arab-Muslim armies were settled in segregated quarters or new garrison towns such as Basra, Kufa and Fustat.

At first, many provinces retained a large degree of autonomy under the terms of agreements made with Arab commanders. As the time passed, the conquerors sought to increase their control over local affairs and make existing administrative machinery work for the new regime. This involved several types of reorganization. In the Mediterranean region, city-states which traditionally governed themselves and their surrounding areas were replaced by a territorial bureaucracy separating town and rural administration.

In Egypt, fiscally independent estates and municipalities were abolished in favor of a simplified administrative system. In the early eighth century, Syrian Arabs began to replace Coptic functionaries and communal levies gave way to individual taxation.

In Iran, the administrative reorganization and construction of protective walls encouraged cluster of quarters and villages into large cities. Local notables of Iran, who at first had almost complete autonomy, were incorporated into the central bureaucracy by the Abbasid period.

According to Bernard Lewis, the change from Byzantine to Arab rule was "welcomed by many among the subject peoples, who found the new yoke far lighter than the old, both in taxation and in other matters".

Difficulties in tax collection soon appeared. Egyptian Copts, for example, who had been skilled in tax evasion since Roman times, were able to avoid paying the taxes by entering monasteries, which were initially exempt from taxation, or simply by leaving the district where they were registered. This prompted imposition of taxes on monks and introduction of movement controls.

The Arab conquerors did not repeat the mistake made by the Byzantine and Sasanian empires, who had tried and failed to impose an official religion on subject populations, which had caused resentments that made the Muslim conquests more acceptable to them. Instead, the rulers of the new empire generally respected the traditional middle-Eastern pattern of religious pluralism. After the end of military operations, the early caliphate was characterized by religious tolerance. The first Umayyad caliph Muawiyah sought to reassure the conquered peoples that he was not hostile to their religions and made an effort to gain support from Christian Arab elites.

During the reign of Abd al-Malik (685–705), public display of Islam by the state was made when Quranic verses and references to Prophet Muhammad became prominent on coins and official documents. This change was motivated by a desire to unify the Muslim community and rally them against their chief common enemy, the Byzantine empire.

A further change of policy occurred during the reign of Umar II (717–720). The disastrous failure of the siege of Constantinople in 718, which was accompanied by massive Arab casualties, led to a point of popular hostility among Muslims toward Byzantium and Christians in general.

Chapter 3: From Abbasid to the Outset of Islamic Empires

3.1. Civilization of the Medieval Middle East

Muslims of the Middle East brought to Europe as well as Africa an immense amount of civilization. Muslim society was unique in developing branches of learning, philosophy, astronomy and medicine. Five Islamic philosophers were of truly international status: al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd. The earliest Arab philosopher was al-Kindi. He was born in Iraq during the 9th century. He merged philosophy and theology, holding the world of intelligence as a supreme. He also wrote on medicine and astrology and was translator of Greek works. He regarded mathematics as the basis of both science and philosophic investigations.

In the 10th century, al-Farabi, a Turk, outlined his philosophy in a discourse describing a model city where happiness governed all. Al-Ghazali born in 1059 in Persia, and he convinced that ultimate truth could be attained only through revelation. IbnSina's (980-1037) numerous works, also rooted in Aristotle, greatly influenced Medieval European philosophers such as Aberald, Albertus Magnus, and St. Thomas Aquinas. Ibn Rushd, born in 1126 in Spain, wrote about philosophy, mathematics, law, and theology, building upon his predecessors, al-Farabi and Ibn-Sina.

Throughout the era of the medieval Islam, most Muslim philosophers and scientists studied medicine, and many were physicians. The most outstanding physician was al-Razi (865-925). His writings greatly influenced European medical thought. He compiled the first medical encyclopedia (more than twenty volumes) giving a complete account of all Greek, Syriac, and Arabic medical knowledge at the time. Ibn Sina, the philosopher, produced the most famous Muslim medical works in the eleventh century. He recognized the contagious nature of some diseases and that they could be spread through water. His *Canon of Medicine* (al-Kanun) was the chief medical book of the Middle East and Western Europe from the 12th-13th century.

Building on Indian and Greek works, Islamic civilization greatly advanced the study of mathematics by transmitting and simplifying Greek arithmetic, introducing Arabic numerals and the decimal system. Arab use of zero and the digit to denote units of tens, hundreds, thousands and so on made mathematics useful in everyday life. The Arab Mathematicians carried on algebra, geometry and trigonometry to the west.

Through the study of planets, stars, and constellations, the Arabs determined the earth's diameter and circumference and measured the length of the Mediterranean. They gave Arabic names to many stars and constellations and contributed words.

Arabic works on chemistry introduced such as alkali, alcohol, and antimony into modern usage. In physics, theoretical and applied mechanics, experiments related in particular to irrigation and the flow of water were useful Arab contributions. Most significant in physics were experiments in optics by faulty Euclid and Ptolemy's theory that the eye produces visual rays and replacing with the theory that vision comes from the impacts of light rays.

Geography was another area where the Muslim world outshined. The most famous geographer born in the 12th century was al-Idrisi, who visited Spain, North Africa and Anatolia. He drew up maps, which for their time, were extremely accurate. There were many other Muslim writers and travelers-Ibrahim ibn Yaqub, 9th century, Ibn Jubair, 12th century and Ibn Batuta, in the 14th century.

In historical writings, the long genealogies of the Arab tribes traced back the changes in political groupings, alliances, and Bedouin federations and confederations. The best known of the medieval Muslim historians was Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). Although born in Tunisia, he was valued and held high positions in Granada in Spain, in Algeria, and in Cairo.

3.2. The Crusades

During the middle Ages, Christians considered Palestine as the Holy Land. The Arabs conquered Palestine in the mid seventh century. Although most Arabs were the followers of Islam, they often tolerated other religions such as Christianity and Judaism. For centuries, Christian pilgrims visiting Palestine met with less interference from the Arab rulers. European merchants could generally do business there.

In the eleventh century, however, the Seljuk Turks conquered Palestine and attacked Asia Minor. When the Turks threatened Constantinople, the capital city of the Byzantine Empire, in the late eleventh century, the Byzantine Emperor appealed to the Pope in Rome. Because Christian pilgrims to Palestine came home with reports of persecutions at the hands of the Turks, the Byzantine Emperor's appeal for help found a warm reception in Europe.

Pope Urban II was eager to regain the Holy Land from the Muslims. He called a great meeting of the church leaders and French nobles at Clermont, France, in 1095. At the meeting, he urged the powerful feudal nobles to stop fighting among themselves and to join in one Great War against the Muslims.

The Crusaders launched most of their attack from France. They fought seven major Crusades over a period of almost two centuries. The most significant were the First and Third Crusades.

The First Crusade(1096 – 1099) was a well-organized military expedition. The First Crusade drove the Muslims from parts of the Palestine and gained control of Jerusalem.

The Second Crusade (1147 – 1149)was started after the Turks had recaptured some territories and threatened the kingdom of Jerusalem. However, the Crusaders returned home without successful victory.

The Third Crusadewas started in 1189 and ended in 1192. Although this Crusade failed to recapture Jerusalem, the two sides reached an agreement for safe passage of Christian pilgrims.

Effects of the Crusades

- I. **Broadened the People's Outlook:** The Crusaders were exposed to the Muslim and Byzantine civilizations, which were considerably superior to their own. They observed powerful governments, great cities, flourishing trade, prosperous industry, and progress in the arts and sciences. Upon returning home, they introduced new ideas and knowledge.
- II. **Stimulated Trade and Towns:** The Crusades increased European demand for Eastern products such as spices, sugar, silk, rugs, paper, glass, and precious stones. Accordingly, throughout Western Europe, especially in Italy:-
 - Trade increased
 - Money replaced barter,
 - Towns grew in number and size, and
 - The bourgeoisie, middle class, acquired wealth and influence.
- III. **Strengthened the King's Central Governments:** The Crusades strengthened the kings' powers by:-

- Weakening the nobility, some nobles sold their lands to raise money for their expeditions, thereby losing feudal power.
 - Stimulating trade, since trade requires law and order, the rising merchant class opposed the feudal lords and supported the kings.
- IV. **Weakened the Serfdom:** The Crusades enabled many Serfs to escape from feudalism.
- Some Serfs gained freedom by joining the Crusades
 - Other Serfs paid for the use of lord's land in money rather than in products and services
 - Still other Serfs fled to the growing cities
- V. **Encouraged Learning:** The Crusades stimulated European interest in education by showing that the Muslims had:-
- Preserved and utilized Greco-Roman knowledge
 - Maintained great universities, and
 - Advanced in mathematics, science, literature, and art

Chapter 4: The Emergence of Islamic Empires

4.1 Ottoman Empire

During the seventh century, one of the Turkish tribes, the Seljuks, began to penetrate the borders of the Middle East. Within 300 years, they had gained control of Turkestan grasslands. As their contacts became more intimate with the developed regions around Bukhara, the Seljuk nomads embraced Islam. The Abbasid dynasty used many of the new converts as soldiers.

While the Arabs lost strength, the Seljuk became more powerful until they took over the Abbasid capital at Baghdad in 1055. After conquering Iran and Iraq, the Seljuk Turks defeated the Byzantines in 1071, driving the Eastern Christian Empire out from Anatolia and the Levant. After seizing Baghdad, the Seljuks permitted the Abbasid caliphs to retain their title. The real rulers, however, were the Seljuk grand sultans, for the caliphate was reduced to a mere shadow of its former authority.

Two centuries later the Seljuks were overthrown by successive waves of Mongols from Central Asia. In 1258, Baghdad fell to the Mongols, who murdered the caliph, slaughtered most of his entourage, and wreaked great destruction on the city. The Mongols also destroyed Iraq's irrigation system. After the decline of the Seljuk power in the 13th century, the Ottomans moved to north-west of Anatolia and continued to fight against the Byzantines led by Osman (r.1299-1326). They were continuously reinforced by the new arrivals of Turkmens who were volunteers to serve as *ghazis* (warriors). This military experience led the establishment of the Ottoman dynasty over several Turkish principalities (emirates).

The origin of the Ottomans is obscured except to legendary explanation. It is little known about them before the beginning of the 14th century. The leader of what was probably a fragment of a Turkish tribe, displaced by the Mongol disorders, Ertogrul settled in northwestern Anatolia. In 1288 Ertogrul's son, Osman, began a policy of expansion at the Byzantine expense. By 1326, Bursa in northwestern Anatolia was captured and was made the first Ottoman capital city. Osman died shortly after the capture of Bursa, but his policy of expansion was carried on by his successors. The Ottomans once established, remained imperial rulers for over 600 years, until 1922.

By 1366, the Ottomans not only had driven the Byzantines out of Anatolia but also had secured sufficient control of the Southern Balkans to make Adrianople their new capital. A few isolated political, including Constantinople, the Byzantine capital, managed to escaped from capture by the Ottomans. The imperial city finally fell May 29, 1453 to Sultan Mehmet II. It remained the capital of the Turkish Muslim Empire of the Ottomans.

From its Anatolian heartland, the Ottoman Empire spread over three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa. In 1516-1517, the armies of Sultan Selim I captured Syria- including Palestine and Egypt. His successor, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), expanded the empire through Iraq up to the present borders of Iran, and penetrated into Central Europe, making Hungary part of his domains. Ottoman Turkey reached the zenith of its territorial conquests by 1683, when it stretched from the gates of Vienna to Iran and included parts of southern Russia. In the Arabian Peninsula, the conquests reached halfway down the western shore of the Persian Gulf and included the eastern Red Sea coast as far south as the Arabian Sea. North Africa as far west as Morocco was also within the empire.

The Ottoman government and Society

Within the extensive Ottoman Empire lived a diversity of religious, national, and ethnic groups: Turks, Tatars, Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Berbers, Mamluks, Bosnians, Albanians, Hungarians, South Slavs, Rumanians, Copts, Georgians, and Jews.

At the apex of the empire stood the sultan-caliph, who was both a secular ruler and religious symbol. The Ottoman Turks acquired the Arab title of caliph, or successor to the Prophet, when they conquered Egypt in 1517. The surviving members of the Abbasid family had moved to Egypt after the Mongols killed the last Baghdad caliph in 1258. Sultan Selim I persuaded the Abbasid Successor to give up his hereditary rights to the Ottoman throne and dynasty.

The imperial household or *Seray* (palace) was at the center of the Ruling Institution. The *seray* became a training college for administrators and officers who governed the sultan's domains as well as the sultan's personal residence. In addition to the sultan's private quarters, a palace in itself, the *seray* included the throne council chambers, the royal stables, kitchens, baths, dormitories for palace functionaries, and an elite study group of future administrators. Each of these divisions was housed in separate buildings, grouped in three courts according to importance, and a high wall surrounded the entire compound.

The Ruling Institution, an imperial Ottoman creation, was centralized bureaucracy whose efficiency depended upon the personal character of the sultan, or his chief deputy, the grand *vizier*. The grand *vizier* was, in effect, a kind of prime minister, but one responsible only to the sultan. How much of the sultan's authority he would exercise naturally depended on each sultan's decision to rule or merely to reign. As he could be dismissed at the will by the sultan, there were obvious pitfalls for strong, independent grand *vizier* who would agree to challenge the sultan's authority. Opposition to his policies or jealous rivalry often brought about the dismissal of the chief minister.

In addition to the grand *vizier*, the top administration of the ruling institution included two *defterdars* (treasurers), one for Europe and one for Asia; a *nishanci* (secretary); two *kadiaskers* (judge with

jurisdiction over most the hierarchy's members), representing Europe and Asia; two *beylerbeys* (governors general of Europe and Asia); *aga* (leader of the Janissaries or Turkish soldiers); and the *kaptan pasha* (lord high admiral). Each of these highest-ranking administrators presided over a complex bureaucracy. They held a *divan* (cabinet meeting) four times a week, at which the sultan were generally present.

The sultan's administrators were primarily concerned with the maintenance of internal security, the collection of taxes, and the expansion of the empire or the preservation of Ottoman frontiers. They appointed provincial governors, tax officials and assigned different sections of the army various police duties.

One of the more extraordinary aspects of the imperial Ottoman administration was its military character. Every administrator in the Ruling Institution had undergone military training from an early age. Indeed, for centuries, the ruling elite were obliged to ride to war under either sultan or grand *vezir*.

The religious or Muslim Institution paralleled the Ruling Institution. At the top of the hierarchy stood the *mufti* of Istanbul or *sheik ul Islam*. The *sheik ul Islam*'s legal opinions were generally respected. No sultan could issue a law before obtaining a legal opinion from the *sheik ulIslam* stating that the intended law was compatible with the *sharia*.

All Ottoman citizens were divided into nations on the basis of religion. Until the reign of Suleiman I, the Ottoman government recognized four nations: the Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, and Jewish. The head of the Muslim millets was naturally the *sheik ul Islam*. The leaders of the Greek Orthodox and Armenian nations were the patriarchs of their respective churches. The Armenian nation was also to include all those Christians who were not Greek Orthodox. The chief rabbi represented the Jewish nation. Each nation was permitted wide autonomy to develop its religious, cultural, and educational life. Each used its own language and was under the jurisdiction of its own legal system.

As the Ottoman Empire proclaimed itself a Muslim empire, the Muslim nation understandably held a favored position within the empire. Non-Muslims could not hold imperial position unless they converted to Islam. In addition, the non-Muslims were required to pay a special tax called the *cizya*. The patriarchs and the chief rabbi were responsible for the annual collection of the *cizya* from their respective millet and its remittance to the sultan. All three nation leaders required residing in the capital, and it was largely through them that the Ottoman government conducted its relations with non-Muslims.

During the reign of Suleiman I, fifth nation was recognized. This nation was generally made up of Catholics. The fifth nation was originated with the first treaty signed between Suleiman I and Francis I of France in 1536. This agreement granted reciprocity of treatment to French and Ottoman merchants selling

goods and establishing residence in either area. The French ambassador was looked upon as the head of this fifth nation.

The Decline of the Ottomans and Traditional Reform

The whole government structure depended for its efficiency upon the character and determination of one man-the sultan. It is true that the grand vizier could assume many of the essential functions of the sultan, but only with the sultan's approval and wholehearted support. The sultan was the crown of the empire. He appointed higher officials based on favoritism.

By the 17th century, a new tradition of appointing a sultan was started: all the sons of the reigning sultan were kept in the palace each in separate quarters called *kafes* (cage), and the succession was to go automatically to the oldest living son. This new system unfortunately ensured that no sultan from the 17th century on would have any knowledge of or training in government affairs until he came to power.

Corruption in high officials infected their subordinates, spread to the Religious Institution, and wreaked the military system.

Many of the outlying provinces of the empire-such as Egypt, Yemen, the coastal provinces of the Arabian Peninsula, eastern Turkey and even Moldavia and Wallachia (part of modern Romania)- had always been controlled lightly from Istanbul, for they had been allowed to retain pre-Ottoman ruling hierarchies provided only that requisite taxes were sent to the capital. With both relation and corruption at the center, many of these provinces became semi-independent.

The general decay of Ottoman governmental institutions coincided with the rise of more powerful European nation states. By the end of the 17th century, the Ottoman Empire was under concerted attack by the Europeans.

In the eighteenth century, the decline of the Ottoman Empire militarily and politically became clear and the Empire was also economically stagnant. Its frontiers in Europe were pushed back particularly by Russia. In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was threatened by the power of Russia, Austria, and by the Balkans nationalities. The Balkan peoples, inspired by nationalism, desired independence. They also detested Turkish rule for the following reasons.

- Autocracy:- absolute power was in the hand of the Sultan
- Corruption:- disorder existed in many parts of the Empire
- Cruelty: -unusual cruelty was used to suppress rebellious subjects

The Turkish suffered from serious economic competition with the Europeans who went ahead in manufacturing industries and commercial activities. The military technologies of the westerners got supremacy over that of the Turkish.

The defeat of the Crimean Tartars who were ally of the Ottomans affected the Empire. This was because the expansionist Russians aimed at controlling Istanbul and the Bosphorus to acquire ways to the coast of the Mediterranean. In the beginning of the 19th century, Muhammad Ali proclaimed the virtual autonomy of Egypt. The Greeks revolted and secured their independence in 1829. The French occupied Algeria. The Balkan peoples revolted against the Turkish rule. The Turkish participation in the WWI caused for the loss of her Arab provinces. The European powers designed to control the Turkish territories but that provoked the Turkish Nationalist Struggle resulted in the emergence of the Modern Turkey.

Official reaction to this decline came in phases—that of Traditional Reform (1566-1807), when efforts were made to restore the old institutions, and that of Modern Reform (1807-1918), when the old ways were abandoned and new ones, imported from the West, were adopted.

The movement that became known as the Young Turks (1908-1918) was an amalgam of three separate protest groups, one an exile community of long standing, the second a collection of discontented civil servants and students, and the third a coalition of disaffected army officers stationed in Ottoman Europe.

The most ambitious reformers, the Young Turks (officially called the Committee for Union and Progress), seized power in the Ottoman Empire in 1908. Led by Ismail Enver (Enver Pasha) and Ahmed Kemal (Kemal Pasha); and a radical lawyer, Mehmed Talat (Talat Pasha), the Young Turks initially established a constitutional monarchy, but soon became a ruling junta, with Talat as Grand Vizier and Enver as War Minister, which tried to force a radical modernization program onto the Ottoman Empire.

The plan had several mistakes. First, it involved imposing the Turkish language and centralized government on a multi-lingual and loosely governed empire. Secondly, it drove the empire ever deeper into debt. Thirdly, when Enver formed an alliance with Germany, which he saw as the most advanced military power in Europe, it lost the empire the support of Britain, which had protected the Ottomans against Russian encroachment all through the 19th century.

Thus, the Young Turks failed to stop breakup of the Empire:

- In 1908, they could not prevented Bulgarian independence;

- In 1911-1912, Turkey was defeated by Italy and was forced to cede Tripoli;
- In 1912-1913, Turkish forces were defeated by the Balkan states;
- In 1914-1918, Turkey joined Germany against Allies and again met defeat.

After World War I, Turkish nationalists, led by army officer Mustafa Kemal, rejected the severe peace treaty offered in 1920 and continued to fight until they secured more favorable terms. In 1923, by the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey surrendered only her non-Turkish territories but retained her Turkish areas: Constantinople and Asia Minor. Turkey, no more an Empire, was now reduced to a national state.

4.2 The Mughal Empire

The Mughal Empire was an imperial power in the Indian subcontinent from about 1526 to 1757 (though it lingered for another century). The Mughal Empire was established by a conqueror from central Asia called Babur. Babur established himself at Kabul in Afghanistan in 1504 then invaded northern India. In 1526, by the use of cannon, Babur won a battle in northern India and overthrew the Delhi Muslim Sultanate, which had been ruling much of northern India before the arrival of the Mughal.

The Mughal Empire established in India by Babur had its capital at Delhi and extended its territory over the great Indus-Ganges plain of northern India, which was the richest and the most populous part of India.

In the seventeenth century, Mughal power was extended to the center and south of India. The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent under the Emperor Aurungzeb, 1658-1707, who established Mughal power over the whole Indian sub-continent except the extreme southeast and the Marath Confederacy of provinces in the central Indus, which the Mughal never effectively conquered.

For administration, Mughal Empire was divided into provinces, sub-provinces and districts. Below these levels of administration, the villages were administered by local headmen. At Delhi, there were four government departments: finance, war, the judiciary and supply. At the provincial, sub-province and district levels these departments were repeated.

One reason for early Mughal success was that the great ruler Akbar (1556-1606) adopted a wise policy of conciliating the Hindu majority. Under Akbar, the Empire was run by Muslim-Hind cooperation. Under his rule, India enjoyed much cultural and economic progress as well as religious harmony. The reign of Shah Jahan, the fifth emperor, was the golden age of Mughal architecture and the

arts. He erected many splendid monuments, the most famous of which is the legendary TajMahal at Agra, as well as the Pearl Mosque, the Red Fort, the Jama Masjid of Delhi, and the Lahore Fort.

The Indian economy became prosperous because of the creation of a road system and a uniform currency, together with the unification of the country. Manufactured goods and peasant-grown cash crops were sold throughout the world. Key industries included shipbuilding (the Indian shipbuilding industry was as advanced as the European, and Indians sold ships to European firms), textiles, and steel.

Cities and towns boomed under the Mughals; however, for the most part, they were military and political centers, not manufacturing or commerce centers. Only those guilds which produced goods for the bureaucracy made goods in the towns; most industry was based in rural areas. The Mughals also built Maktabas in every province under their authority, where youth were taught the Quran and Islamic law in their indigenous languages.

Mughal astronomers continued to make advances in observational astronomy. Most of the instruments and observational techniques used at the Mughal observatories were mainly derived from the Islamic civilization. In particular, one of the most remarkable astronomical instruments invented in Mughal India is the seamless celestial globe.

Sake Dean Mahomed had learned much of Mughal Alchemy and understood the techniques used to produce various alkali and soaps to produce shampoo.

Aurangzeb's death in 1707 marked the decline of the Empire. Particularly, after the death of Emperor Bahadur (1707-1712), the Mughal Emperors were incompetent and feeble. By the mid-18th century, the Marathas had ravaged the Mughal provinces from the Deccan to Bengal, and internal dissatisfaction (as well as separatist agendas from the Rajput, Sikhs, and Jats) arose due to the weakness of the Mughal Empire's administrative and economic systems. In 1739, a weakened Mughal Empire was defeated in the Battle of Karnal by the forces of Nader Shah. Mughal power was severely limited. For the next century, the Mughal emperors had authority only over Delhi. The last emperor, Bahadur Shah II had authority over only the city of Shahjahanabad. He supported the Indian rebellion of 1857 and was overthrown by the British, and was sent into exile in 1858 for the complex mutiny.

4.3 Safavid dynasty (1501-1732)

Safavid history begins with the establishment of the Safaviyya by its eponymous founder Safi-ad-Din (1252–1334). The Safavid dynasty was one of the most significant ruling dynasties of Iran. They ruled one of the greatest Persian empires after the Muslim conquest of Persia. In the late thirteenth century, a member of the Safavid family founded a Sunni -Sufi religious brotherhood in Azerbaijan, the Turkish speaking region on northwestern Iran. The brotherhood attracted a large number of followers among the Turkish pastoral tribes of the area and by the late fifteenth century its influence had expanded into Anatolia and Syria. At their height, they controlled all of modern Iran, Azerbaijan and Armenia, most of Iraq, Georgia, Afghanistan, and the Caucasus, as well as parts of Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey.

In 1494, a seven-year old boy named Ismail succeeded his brother as head of the order and eventually transformed it into an imperial institution. Ismail seized Azerbaijan in 1501 and he proclaimed himself Shah, King. He brought the whole Persia under his control and established the Safavid monarchy. Shi'ism was taken as a state religion in the dynasty. This period is very important in the Persian history where Shi'ism was consolidated over Sunnis, which had been dominant there before that period.

The reign of Shah Abbas I marks the highest political power in the dynasty and the revival of Safavid culture. They showed their achievements in architecture by beautifying their capital city Isfahan. At this time, the Ottomans were repulsed from Azerbaijan. The Persians strengthened their control over eastern Caucasus and the Gulf of Persia. Shah Abbas attempted to make a diplomatic relation with Europe. He recruited his guards and warriors from the converts in Georgia and Circassia. He won the support of groups of Turkmens.

Despite their demise in 1732, the legacy that they left behind was the revival of Persia as an economic stronghold between East and West, the establishment of an efficient state and bureaucracy based upon "checks and balances", their architectural innovations and their patronage for fine arts. The Safavids have also left their mark down to the present era by spreading Shi'a Islam in Iran, as well as major parts of the Caucasus, South Asia, Central Asia, and Anatolia.

The most dangerous enemy of the Safavids was the Ottomans. At the height of the Ottomans power, Selim I defeated the Safavids at Chaldiran in 1514. The battle was where the Ottomans showed their superiority in firearms over the Safavids. Territories like Kurdistan, Diyarbakir, and Baghdad went to the hands of Ottomans from the Safavids. The Safavids shifted their capital from Tabriz to Qazwin, then to Isfahan for the sake of their own security.

The death of Shah Abbas II in 1666 was followed by the decline of the Safavid dynasty. The Safavid rule was extended as far as Afghanistan. However, later Mir Wais, the Safavid governor in Afghanistan declared himself to be independent of the Safavids in early 18th century. His son Mahmud invaded Persia in 1722. The rise of Nadir Shah and Afghan ruler succeeded in occupying much of the Persian territories. Thereafter, members of the Safavids became nominal rulers while their effective rule ended in 1732.

Chapter Five: The Middle East and the West before WWI

The region was a center of ancient civilizations. The major civilizations that appeared in the area included the Sumerian, Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and other civilizations. All of them made invaluable contributions in the civilization of the ancient world. The region was also an important center of major religions of the world that appeared one after the other. They were Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The latter two are the most widely expanded religions in the world. The area also witnessed the formation of major empires. These included the Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Mongol, Tatar, Turkish and others, which created a fusion of culture and civilization in the region.

During the medieval period, the European Crusaders attempted to free the holy land from the hands of the Muslims and hence, it became the major center of the wars of crusades. The wars resulted in the opening of Asia to the western contact and a free flow trade with Western Europe. Later on, Napoleon of France was able to reach the banks of the Nile and occupy some parts of Palestine. In the 19th century the Middle East was seen as a major gate way to Asia and became strategically important for the western powers. Russia was also interested in the region and began to expand Turkey and Iran. With the gradual decline of the Ottoman power the western nations began to be concerned about the Eastern Question (i. e the various problems created by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire). The Eastern Question culminated in the Crimean war of 1853 and led to the rise of many Balkan nationalist movements.

The opening of the Suez canal in 1869 also increased the importance of the Middle east as it enabled ships to make voyage from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and vice versa. The era from 1875-1914 may be called the Age of imperialism not only because it developed a new kind of imperialism but also a number of rulers officially declared themselves emperors. In Europe, the rulers of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Turkey and Britain claimed this title. The period is obviously the era of a new type of empire and colonialism.

World War I transformed the Middle East in ways it had not seen for centuries. The Europeans, who had colonized much of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, completed the takeover with the territories of Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. The modern boundaries of the Middle East emerged from the war. So did modern Arab nationalist movements and embryonic

Islamic movements. With the onset of WWI, the French and the British sent armies and agents into the Middle East, to foment revolts in the Arabian Peninsula and to seize Iraq, Syria and Palestine. In 1916, French and British diplomats secretly reached the Sykes-Picot agreement, carving up the Middle East into spheres of influence for their respective countries. That agreement was replaced by Treaty of Sevres in 1920 which established a mandate system of French and British control, supported by the new League of Nations. Under the mandate system, Syria and Lebanon went to the French. The British took over Palestine and three Ottoman provinces of Mesopotamia and created modern-day Iraq.

During this period, the Ottoman Empire, which had dominated the Middle East for centuries, had been disintegrating. Since the end of the seventeenth century, its northern frontiers had been pushed back to the Balkan Peninsula and Transcaucasia by the advance of the Russia and the Habsburg empires. The Christian subject peoples of the Balkans had already transformed into the collection of more or less independent states. Most of the remote regions of the empire in North Africa and the Middle East had not been under the regular effective Ottoman rule for a long time. They were increasingly passed into the hands of the British and the French imperialists. By 1900, everything from the western borders of Egypt and the Sudan into the Persian Gulf was likely to come under the British rule or influence.

For a long period of time, the British followed the policy of preventing any European power from dominating the Ottoman Empire. The British believed that the domination of the Ottoman Empire would be threatening their interest in the Middle East and India. On the eve of the First World War, the British had dominated most parts of the Middle East. In relative terms, Russia was not strong threat to Britain and France had established cordial relations.

In the early 20thc, a new power started to involve in the Middle East. This was Germany. The Germans began an extensive political and economic penetration of the Middle East in general and Ottoman Turkey in particular. The Young Turks, whose influence and popular in the Ottoman Empire was growing, were inclined towards Germany. These Young Turks were organized under Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) since 1890s having controlled the government of the empire in 1908 and became a decisive group. Since 1913 they changed the foreign policy of empire in favor of Germany. Britain considered these interests in the Middle

East as danger. Similarly, the French were unhappy with the growing influence of the Germans in the Middle East.

Germany, therefore, began to compete with France and Britain in the Middle East. Later on, the Germans got an important ally in their struggle against French and the British in the Middle East. This ally was Austro-Hungary. German's interest in the Middle East was basically economic. On the other hand, Austro-Hungary was interested in the domination of the territories of the Balkans. Such different interests in the Middle East made the Germans and Austro-Hungary to work in alliance. Germans' alliance with Austro-Hungary drove Russia into the arms of French and the British.

The discovery of petroleum oil escalated the contest over the Middle East among the Europeans. Especially the discovery of oil aggravated the condition between Germany and Britain. In addition to Britain and Germany, the Turkey Petroleum Company, the Agro-Iranian Oil Company and the Anglo-Saxon Oil Company began to compete for oil concession in the Middle East. A few months before the beginning of First World War Germany recognized the British interests and supremacy in Kuwait, the Persian Gulf coast and the Anglo-Berlin-Baghdad railway line. All these were efforts to avoid conflicts in the Middle East. However, all these efforts were not successful.

Chapter Six: Middle East and the First World War

The crisis that led to the World War First began with the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand on June 28, 1914 in Serbia and Austro-Hungary started war following these events. When war started in the Balkans, Ottoman Turkey and Germany concluded the treaty of alliance and military convention on August 2, 1914. The treaty clearly demonstrated the Ottoman Turkey had allied itself with the central powers.

The British Admiral who was formerly commanding the Ottomans navy was dismissed from his post and German Admiral began to command the Ottoman navy. The Ottoman navy attacked the Russian naval fleet in the Black Sea on October 29, 1914. Therefore, Russia declared war on Ottoman Turkey on November 4, 1914. On November 5, 1914, France and Britain declared war on Ottoman Turkey.

6.1 War Aims and Political Strategies

Germany: the Germans wanted Ottoman Turkey to play supplementary role in diverting the military energy of Britain and Russia from the main theatre of war in Europe. They calculated that Ottoman Turkish advance in the Middle East would pave the way for the extension of Germany's interest and influence in the Middle East. If this plan succeeded, Britain's position in India would be affected. Germany's war aims in the Middle East were clearly demonstrated in the **Zimmerman Plan**. The Zimmerman Plan first aimed at the domination of the Middle East. Then its ultimate goal was to force Britain out of India. This was to be affected through two ways:

- a) First, Germany planned to support Indian nationalist agents against British colonialism. It intended to make a wide spread propaganda work among the Muslim and Hindu populations of India
- b) Secondly, Germany planned to attack India together with Ottoman Turkey

Germany wanted Ottoman Turkey to close the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles straights for the allied power. In addition, Ottoman Turkey was expected to occupy the Suez Canal area and the straight of Babel Mandeb. With regard to Russia, Ottoman Turkey was expected to attack the Caucasus. Thus, the Germans hoped to immobilize a significant portion of Russian army. Germans also had the aim of turning Iran against the British Empire. The Germans are said to

remind the Iranians that both of them belong to the same racial stock, Arian. Using the Iranian Democratic Party, the Germans were able to stir up anti-British and anti-Russian feelings all over the Iran. The British as well as the Russians understood the potential danger of this and tried to conquer Iran and occupy Tehran.

Ottoman Empire's War Aims and Political Strategies: Ottoman Turkey's war aims in the Middle East were four.

1. Ottoman Turkey was highly worried about the continuous and growing influence of the Europeans in the Middle East in general and its territory in particular. The cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of the region also was a factor that made Europeans involvement very easy. Therefore, since 1913, Turkey began to extend the influence of the Turkish language and culture all over its empire. The Ottomans believed that it would create a national feeling all over the empire and reduce the involvement of the Europeans.
2. The Ottomans aimed at the re-conquest of the lost territories in the Balkans and North Africa. They were highly interested in conquering Egypt. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had made Egypt economically and strategically very important. Thus, the Ottomans greatly wanted to annex Egypt.
3. Ottoman Turkey planned to conquer Turkish inhabited areas that were under Russian rule. Turks primarily inhabited the Caucasus and Turkestan. The control of these territories would benefit the Ottoman Turkey immensely. It would increase the military potential of the Ottoman Turkey since the Turks were ready to fight for the empire, not for Russians. Moreover, Caucasus was very important strategically. Control of the Caucasus would create a direct link between the Iranian front and the Caspian on one hand and the Black Sea and the Balkan front on the other.
4. Ottoman Turkey aimed at re-establishing the sultan's authority all over the Muslim of the Middle East. A successful implementation of this plan could result in the development of loyalty to the Ottomans among the Arabs of the Middle East.

Russia's War Aims and Political Strategies: Russia's war aims and strategies were totally oriented to territorial gains and winning the leadership of the Slav peoples. Russia wanted to control the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straights. The control of these two straights would insure Russia supremacy on the Black Sea and open a direct access to the Mediterranean for Russia.

Russia grand interest and goal, however, was the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire and control of Anatolia. Russia was also interested in the annexing of the territories of northern Iran. The Russians were also striving to the leadership of the Slav peoples by giving ideological and material support to the Balkans nationalists who were struggling against the domination of both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungary Empire.

Britain War Aims and political Strategies: Britain was close diplomatic and military ally of the Ottomans for a long period. For a long period, Britain wanted the Ottoman Empire as an ally to keep its interests in the Middle East. Once Ottoman Turkey joined the Central Powers, Britain aimed at ending the very existence of the Ottoman Empire. The extinction of the Ottoman Empire would open the Middle East for Britain. Taking the lion share from the Middle East, Britain was ready to reach at reasonable agreement with Russia, France and Italy.

6.2 War Time Secret Treaties and Agreements

Based on the war aims and political strategies the allied states of Europe had made several agreements and treaties during the WWI. Some of them were:

The Constantinople Agreements: After the war broke out in the summer of 1914, the Allies—Britain, France and Russia—held many discussions regarding the future of the Ottoman Empire, now fighting on the side of Germany and the Central Powers, and its vast expanse of territory in the Middle East, Arabia and southern-central Europe. The agreement was made among Russia, France and Britain on March 18/1915. The agreement gave Russia the following points and benefits.

- a. Annex Constantinople (Istanbul) but it was to be free for the allies
- b. Annex the western coast of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles entirely
- c. Control the sea of Marmara and its islands
- d. Conquer southern Thrace and Asia Minor

In turn for this, Russia agreed to recognize the following claims that Britain and France made in:

- Constantinople to become a free for the allies
- Recognize the special rights of Britain and France in Asiatic Turkey with a separate treaty to be signed in future.

- The Muslim Holy places (Mecca and Medina) to be detached from Turkey and with other Arabia form an independent State and the division of Iranian's territory into Britain and Russia sphere of influence.

The Constantinople agreement marked the end of a century old British policy regarding Ottoman Empire (at least preventing any power from dominating the empire). Russia's long dream of controlling the territories under the Ottoman rule and direct access to the Mediterranean Sea was at least fulfilled on paper.

Sykes-Picot agreement: On May 19, 1916, representatives of Great Britain and France secretly reach an accord, known as the Sykes-Picot agreement, by which most of the Arab lands under the rule of the Ottoman Empire are to be divided into British and French spheres of influence following the end of World War I. Under Sykes-Picot, the Syrian coast and much of modern-day Lebanon went to France; Britain would take direct control over central and southern Mesopotamia, around the Baghdad and Basra provinces. Palestine would have an international administration, as other Christian powers, namely Russia, held an interest in this region. The rest of the territory in question—a huge area including modern-day Syria, Mosul in northern Iraq, and Jordan—would have local Arab chiefs under French supervision in the north and British in the south. In addition, Britain and France would retain free passage and trade in the other's zone of influence.

6.4 Post war peace settlements in the Middle East

The Treaty of Sevres in 1920 – was so harsh that it must have come as a shock to people in the Middle East. Mainly Britain and France created the Treaty of Sevres. Middle Eastern leaders were mostly excluded for the decision-making process. According to the Treaty of Sevres, the Arab lands were separated from the Ottoman Empire, but that did not mean that Arab nationalists got the large, independent Arab state that they expected. Except for the Kingdom of the Hijaz, which became independent (and several years later joined with other territories to become part of Saudi Arabia), the Arabs did not achieve real independence. Instead, France and Britain divided the region among themselves: the French declaring a “mandate” over Syria and Lebanon; Britain a mandate over Iraq and Palestine.

The Kurdish people were even more disappointed by the settlement. After some initial talk of creating a small Kurdish state (from territories that are now part of Turkey), plans for even a limited Kurdistan were soon argued. Kurdish lands were divided among Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. Today, the Kurds are the largest group of people in the world without their own country.

It was in Turkey, however, that opposition to the Treaty of Sevres led to another war. The treaty was a totally unacceptable blow to Turkish nationalists. They might have accepted the fact that the treaty ended the Ottoman Empire and took away all its Arab territories. However, they could never accept that the treaty divided Turkey itself. Greece, Italy, and France occupied sections of Turkey—proper, the Turkish Straits were put under international control, and France and Britain were considering giving large sections of territory to the Kurds in the southeast and the Armenians in the northeast.

The revolt against the Allies, which began even before the ink was dry on the Treaty of Sevres, became known in Turkey as the “War of Independence.” Led by Mustafa Kemal, later called “Atatürk,” the fighting caused the Allies to withdraw occupying forces from Anatolia. In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne finally ended the last conflict that was part of the First World War. The borders of today’s Turkey came about. The resulting population exchanges—forced expulsions of ½ million Turks (Muslims) from Greece and of 1 ½ million Greeks (Christians) from western Turkey—became part of the agreement.