AP World History
Chapter Primer
Part III: *An Age of Accelerating Connection*, 500 to 1500
Chapter 9: *The Worlds of Islam: Afro-Eurasian Connections*, 600 to 1500

Learning Targets
• To examine the causes behind the spread of Islam
• To explore the dynamism of the Islamic world as the most influential of the third-wave civilizations
• To consider the religious divisions within Islam and how they affected political development
• To consider Islam as a source of cultural encounters with Christian, African, and Hindu cultures
• To increase student awareness of the accomplishments of the Islamic world in the period 600–1500 C.E.

Big Picture Questions
1. How might you account for the immense religious and political/military success of Islam in its early centuries?
2. In what ways might Islamic civilization be described as cosmopolitan, international, or global?
3. "Islam was simultaneously both a single world of shared meaning and interaction and a series of separate, distinct, and conflicting communities." What evidence could you provide to support both sides of this argument?
4. What changes did Islamic expansion generate in those societies that encountered it, and how was Islam itself transformed by those encounters?
5. In what ways did the civilization of Islam draw on other civilizations in the Afro-Eurasian world? And in what respects did it shape or transform those civilizations?

Margin Review Questions
1. In what ways did the early history of Islam reflect its Arabian origins?
3. What did the Quran expect from those who followed its teachings?
4. How was Arabia transformed by the rise of Islam?
5. Why were Arabs able to construct such a huge empire so quickly?
6. What accounts for the widespread conversion to Islam?
7. What is the difference between Sunni and Shia Islam?
8. In what ways were Sufi Muslims critical of mainstream Islam?
9. How did the rise of Islam change the lives of women?
10. What similarities and differences can you identify in the spread of Islam to India, Anatolia, West Africa, and Spain?
11. In what ways was Anatolia changed by its incorporation into the Islamic world?
12. What makes it possible to speak of the Islamic world as a distinct and coherent civilization?
13. In what ways was the world of Islam a “cosmopolitan civilization”?

Key Terms

Abbasid caliphate: Dynasty of caliphs who ruled an increasingly fragmented Islamic state from 750 to 1258, eventually becoming little more than figureheads. (pron. ah-BASS-id)

Al-Andalus: Arabic name for Spain (literally “the land of the Vandals”), most of which was conquered by Arab and Berber forces in the early eighth century C.E. (pron. al-AND-ah-loos)

al-Ghazali: Great Muslim theologian, legal scholar, and Sufi mystic (1058–1111) who was credited with incorporating Sufism into mainstream Islamic thought. (pron. al-gha-ZAHL-ee)

Anatolia: Ancient name of Asia Minor, part of the Byzantine Empire that was gradually overrun by the Turks and that now is the Republic of Turkey. (pron. an-ah-TOLE-ee-yah)

hijra: The “flight” of Muhammad and his original seventy followers from Mecca to Yathrib (later Medina) in 622 C.E.; the journey marks the starting point of the Islamic calendar. (pron. HUJ-ruh)

House of Wisdom: An academic center for research and translation of foreign texts that was established in Baghdad in 830 C.E. by the Abbasid caliph al-Mamun.

Ibn Battuta: Fourteenth-century Arab traveler (1304–1368) who wrote about his extensive journeys throughout the Islamic world. (pron. IB-uhn ba- TOO-tuh)

Ibn Sina: One of the greatest polymaths of the Islamic world (980–1037), a Persian who wrote prolifically on scientific (especially medical) and philosophical issues; he is often known as “Avicenna,” the Latinized form of his name. (pron. ibn SEE-nah)
jizya: Special tax paid by dhimmis in Muslim-ruled territory in return for freedom to practice their own religion. (pron. jeez-YAH)
madrassas: Formal colleges for higher instruction in the teachings of Islam as well as in secular subjects, founded throughout the Islamic world beginning in the eleventh century. (pron. MAHdras-ahs)
Mansa Musa: Muslim King of Mali (ca. 1280–ca. 1337) who famously undertook a pilgrimage from his West African homeland to the holy city of Mecca (pron. MAN-sa MOO-sa).
Pillars of Islam: The five core practices required of Muslims: a profession of faith, regular prayer, charitable giving, fasting during Ramadan, and a pilgrimage to Mecca (if financially and physically possible).
Quran: Also transliterated as Qur’ân and Koran, this is the most holy text of Islam, recording the revelations given to the prophet Muhammad. (pron. kuh- RAHN)
sharia: Islamic law, dealing with all matters of both secular and religious life. (pron. sha-REE-ah)
Sikhism: A significant syncretic religion that evolved in India, blending elements of Islam and Hinduism; founded by Guru Nanak (1469–1539). (pron. SEEK-ism)
Timbuktu: Great city of West Africa, noted as a center of Islamic scholarship in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. (pron. tim-buk-TOO)
ulama: Islamic religious scholars. (pron. oo-lehMAH)
Umayyad caliphate: Family of caliphs who ruled the Islamic world from 661 to 750 C.E. (pron. oo-MY-ad)
umma: The community of all believers in Islam. (pron. UM-mah)