Lecture 1: Historical Background and Petra

The Settlement of Petra

Introduction to Petra
- Founded by the Nabateans in the 4th century BC
- Military: very good defences
- Language: Spoke early Arabic, written in Aramaic
- Economics: relied on caravan trade
- Greatest prosperity when fell to the Romans in the 2nd century AD
- Position: important because it was the only place between central Arabia and the Jordan river with decent water supply

Settlement History
- Greek, Egyptian and Syrian elements of the culture of the city
- At the end of the 2nd century BC the Nabatean kingdom began
- We don’t really know who the Nabateans were, but were probably from somewhat in Arabia
- High point of Nabatean culture occurred around the turn of BC/AD
- In 106 AD the Romans annexed the Nabatean kingdom and absorbed it into the empire
- Sudden collapse of the city occurred in the 2nd century AD, possibly caused by plagued or drought
- It was replaced as a key regional centre by Palmyra

Economy of Petra
- Based on the control and movement of water
- Also was heavily reliant on caravan trade
- Important trade products included fruit, good cattle & sheep, copper, iron and saffron
- Local products: gold, silver, perfumes

Language and Religion
- Semitic base: Spoke Arabic written in Aramaic script, while Greek was used for trade
- Religion: original Nabatean religion was monotheistic, and included altar-based sacrifice
- The region had largely converted to Christianity by the 5th century, probably spread by the trade routes

Historical Background

Sassanian Empire
- This was a dynastic regime with elaborate court ritual and vast harems, which were largely maintained for their prestige
- Much of this court and harem ritual was transmitted to the later Arab empires
Judaism
- Judaism was very important in the middle eastern region around this time, with Jewish diasporas existing all over the mid east and north Africa
- Many rulers encouraged Jewish settlement and conversion, as this interwoven community encouraged trade

Christianity
- In Byzantium Identified with Roman empire after Constantine (d 337)
- Suffered heavy Roman persecution in the 3rd century
- Later split to an extent with the main body of the church over the relatively obscure doctrinal question of the Monophysite/Diophysite debate
- God the Father/ God the Son one incarnate nature, wholly God and wholly man (Monophysite); versus two natures separate but inseparably linked (Diophysite)

Zoroastrianism and Manicheanism
- Dualist trend cosmic struggle between god and evil deities
- Trend towards monotheism
- Monarch as lynchpin of social hierarchy

Conditions in Early Arabia

The Tribal System
- The desert region of Arabia lacked any significant states, and so was ruled by a network of tribes: Acephalous - no overall leadership
- These tribes had a tradition of familial revenge killing, which had the potential to either keep the peace fairly well or descent into incredible violence
- Individuals existed only as a part of inter-related groups
- A qabila was the largest group of people claiming descent from a common ancestor
- Such tribes were further subdivided genealogically into lineage or clan
- Full members of tribes were fighters

Languages of the Desert
- Semitic Akkadian (dead), Aramaic (barely alive), Hebrew, Arabic (alive)
- Earliest identifiable Arabic: tombstone at Nemara (Syr desert), AD 328
- Many dialects but Arabic was a common poetic language used for recital

Mecca and Religion
- Mecca was the centre of a trading economy guaranteed by haram and controlled by Quraysh
- Quraysh were the gods who were said to inhabit the shrine at Kaaba, where important religious festivals were held
- Kaaba was a religious site where fighting was banned 4 months of
- Quran says Abraham built Kaaba in Mecca
- Allah = High God, the most important of the Quraysh
- Note that these polytheistic gods were not seen as all powerful and hence deserting of worship late Allah of Islam or Jehovah of Christianity, but rather were simply resorted to by individuals for help with something in their lives
Themes of the Course

- Statehood and its link with religion
  - This is particularly important for Islam, as unlike Christianity, Islam grew up in a region with no state, and so Muhammed essentially had to construct one from scratch
  - This has meant that Islamic religion and state have been inextricably linked since the beginning
  - Another theme is the environment and how it shapes societies (e.g. water) 1408 301 583

Lecture 2: The Prophet and the Medinan State

Mohammed and the Origins of Islam

Mecca and the Kaaba

- All the Arabian tribes were in perpetual conflict with each other over grazing land and especially water resources
- It was thus very important to have the protection of one’s clan
- One exception to this feuding was the Kaaba, which was the residence of a number of important religious artifacts and totems, and hence became a site of religious pilgrimage where all tribes had to lay down their arms
- As a result, Mecca became an important trading site

Mohammed’s Early Life

- Mohammed was a merchant who was born in Mecca and was orphaned as a young age
- From a fairly young age he was very interested in religious questions, and talked with Christians and Jews
- It was during one of his times meditating in the desert that he had his first angelic vision
- Much of Mohammed’s subsequent teachings actually related a great deal to questions of social justice, which was one of the reasons they may have been popular
- Many of his earliest followers were from the lower ranks of society
- Many of the wealthy clan leaders and so on opposed his teachers as aberrant and dangerous, and odd that he taught the need to follow only a single god

Persecution and Exile

- There was a degree of persecution of Mohammed and his followers, but Mohammed was protected from real harm by his tribe (even though many of them were not actually his followers)
- Ironically, this persecution led to the establishment of the first Muslim community in Ethiopia under Christian protection
- By 622, Mohammed’s preaching had not been very successful, and the death of his wife led to his loss of protection by his clan
- This led to the leaders of Mecca trying to kill him, as he was thought to be a trouble maker and disrupting relations with other tribes
- This in turn led to the flight to Medina, where he was able to develop a more stable following

Composition of Medina’s population

- Pagan tribes: Aws and Khazraj (Muslims)
• Arabic speaking Jewish tribes: Qurayza, Qaynuqa, Nadir
• No single leadership: each tribe had its leaders
• One of the first major tasks of the Prophet was concluding an agreement between Muslims and Jews re mutual support, common defense, law and order etc, often referred to as the ‘Medinan constitution’

Battles with the Meccans
• Shortly afterwards there was a series of battles between Muslims and Meccans, for example Badr in 624
• In this battle the Muslims won, despite being outnumbered and out-armed
• Interestingly, as the Meccans were successful in a serious of battles, more and more tribes chose to embrace Islam or conclude peace treaties with Mohammed

The Triumph of Mohammed
• This eventually gave the prophet enough strength to march to Mecca in 630 and captured it without bloodshed
• He cleansed the Kaaba of idols, but chose to spare the lives of all the Meccans, leading to their mass conversion
• Islam spread rapidly in the last 5 years of the Prophet’s life
• When the Prophet died he had most of Arabia within his sphere of influence (either as allies or actual Muslim converts)

Establishment of the Arab Empire

The Impact of the Prophet’s Success
• The success of Mohammed marked a decisive break in thinking about politics and society
• Nation was transcended from the very beginning
• Transfer of power from empire to the Prophet and to the religious community (based on religious law)
• A new monotheism that addresses contemporary concerns of the tribal society
• Gave Arabs a new religion and a mission to conquer the world
• From polytheism to monotheism; from tribalism to nationhood to internationalism (does not mean end of the tribe: continued to be strong: examples)

The Notion of Ummah
• This term described a universalist spiritual network, transcending tribes, clans, difference between Muslims and others
• The emerging community was universal, commercial and citied
• Individuals and tribes were absorbed into the wider group
• Expansion through the doctrine of jihad
• The new society was trans-tribal and trans-national
• The sharia provided the basis for interacting with one another on an equal basis
• Simplicity of the message, understandable to all levels of the community

The ‘Rightly Guided’ Caliphs
• Abu Bakr (632-634, 2 years): Close friend and among the first believers; prophet married to his daughter Ayisha
• Umar (634-644, 10 years): Among the first believers; prophet married to his daughter Hafsa
• Uthman (644-656, 13 years): Among the first believers; married to two daughters of the Prophet
• Ali (656-661, 5 years): Believed in the Prophet as a child; cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet

Political Succession to the Prophet
• Immediately after the prophet’s death there was a dispute about whether a Meccan or Medinan should be the successor
• Others argued that it should be kept in the prophet’s family

Reunification Under Abu Bakr’s
• Abu Bakr’s first challenge was to keep the Medinan Muslims and family of the Prophet on side
• Following the prophet’s death there was a general rebellion among Arabs, with only Medina and Mecca remaining in support of Abu Bakr
• Despite some advice to the contrary, Abu Bakr’s directed several armies to bring back in the rebellious tribes
• One by one the rebellious tribes were brought under control within about a year

Establishment of Arab-Islamic Caliphate
• Following this success, Abu Bakr redirected the energy of the Arabs after the rebellion towards Sassanid and Byzantine empires
• Success of initial minor raids encouraged further involvement, which laid the foundation for further campaigns and eventually conquests
• Formed a committee to put together the Qur’an in the form of a book
• Umar was the key advisor to Abu Bakr, and was appointed as his successor
• He was the real founder of the Islamic Caliphate; he supported and continued with the military campaigns against the Persian and Byzantine empires

Umar’s Reforms
• Umar also conducted a number of important reforms that really brought structure to the empire for the first time
• Expanded the Islamic Caliphate and brought under Muslim control the Sassanid and Byzantine territories
• Established a central Register for pensions for the fighters, their families and other Muslims
• Established a professional military establishment able to spend regular periods away from home in the expansion effort
• Established the principle of seniority in Islam as a basis for government support
• Did not allow Arab fighters to settle among the conquered
• Established garrison towns such as Kufa and Basra
• Organised each garrison town along the tribal lines with each tribe having a leader
• Retained much of the administrative structures of the Sassanids and Byzantines
• Attempted to establish an Islamic coin largely following Sassanid and Byzantine coins
• Appointed administrators of justice (qadi)
• Laid the foundation for the Arab-Islamic Caliphate
Nature of the Expansion
- Largely a military-political exercise
- Religions of the people of the conquered regions remained intact: no conversion (this took about two centuries to complete)
- Many towns simply submitted to Muslim armies without any fighting
- Administrative structures and even previous administrators were left intact
- Even languages of the administrations were left intact – after all the Arabs had no experience with running anything

Early Internal Dissention

Uthman as Caliph
- Umar was stabbed by a Persian resident in Madina and died a few days later
- Uthman was chosen as his successor, and expansion continued for a time during his rule
- However, in the second half of his rule he perhaps unwittingly allowed his clan (Umayyads) to gain more political power
- Partially as a result, he lost the support of many senior Companions (Muslims), thereby leading to a rebellion against Uthman
- Rebels came to Medina and demanded that Uthman leave office
- Uthman refused and later was murdered by the rebels

Ali Faces Rebellion
- Ali was appointed as the new Caliph
- Ali did not manage to get the support of many groups, particularly the Umayyads
- Prophet’s wife Ayesha led a campaign against Ali in the Battle of Camel of 656 in which Ayesha and supporters were defeated
- The next year the Umayyad governor in Syria (Mu’awiya) led an army against Ali’s army in the Battle of Siffin – there was no clear victory to either party
- Both agreed to let two senior figures to arbitrate
- There was, however, a division among Ali’s forces because of his acceptance of arbitration
- This in turn led to the emergence of the first religio-political group (Kharijites), who assassinated Ali

The Collapse of Unity
- Soon after that Mu’awiya established the Umayyad rule based in Damascus
- Mu’awiya managed to bring all parts of the Caliphate together under his rule
- But the civil wars left deep scars in the psyche of Muslims and led to a lot of divisions within the community
- Why this sudden collapse?
- Ibn Khaldun’s cyclical theory: hardy tribesmen, fresh from the desert, invade towns in the plains and over time succumbed to city ways and lost their tribal cohesion
Lecture 3: The Umayyads

The Islamic Conquests

The Conquest of Iraq
- The Persians had been weakened by the Byzantine-Persian Wars and bad floods in 620
- Nonetheless they fought back intensely, and even defeated the Muslims a few times, such as the battle of the Bridge
- Nonetheless, by the end of 638 the Muslims had control of most of Mesopotamia
- Following the conquest, new garrison towns such as al-Kufa and Basra were established
- Other tribes were actually paid off in certain areas, as there simply were not enough Muslims to garrison everywhere

Conquest of Egypt
- Egypt was the richest province of the Byzantine empire, but had become estranged from Constantinople on the basis of religious disagreements
- As such, there was little opposition in Egypt except for Alexandria

Africa and Spain
- The Berbers of North Africa put up a great deal of opposition to the Muslims until they were incorporated into the empire
- Constantinople was raided on several occasions, but was never taken
- North Africa and later Spain were largely conquered as personal endeavours by particular generals and governors, much as had been the case for Egypt
- Tariq bin Ziyad’s invasion of Spain 715 was largely carried out by Berbers, but their treatment as inferior by the Arab Muslims led to discontent and a Khariji revolt by the Berbers in Tangiers in 740

Who Should Rule?

Civil war in Arabia
- Uthman (644-656) was a controversial selection for caliph, as many regarded it as just a means by which the Quraysh tribe could retain power
- He actually changed his title (controversially) from khalifat al-rusul (vice-regent of the Prophet) to khalifat Allah (vice-regent of God)
- His murder in 656 led to the rise of Ali to the caliphate, but he too was a controversial figure
- Muawiya, Governor of Syria, eventually defeated Ali and established the new Umayyad dynasty

The Sunnis
- Muawiya turned a coalition of tribes into a centralised monarchy
- Under this arrangement, the caliph was primarily a military and civil leader, ensuring order on earth for god’s kingdom, rather than god’s kingdom itself

The Shi’is
- They considered the Umayyads to be illegitimate
- They believed the Caliph cannot not be “chosen”, but was confined to Ali’s descendants
- Husayn was killed at Karbala 80 AH, and it was believed that he was succeeded by a number of imams (spiritual leaders) until the 12th imam disappeared in the 9th century.
- It is believed that this imam will one day return and restore the world to a glorious state - Mahdi as precursor of millennium.

**The Kharijijis**
- No lawful caliphs after Abu Bakr and Umar.
- Judgement belongs to God alone, as voted on by the Muslim community.
- Authority derived from divine source, and hence earthly revolt was permissible.
- Earthly allegiance is essentially contractual, dependent upon his good behavior to the prophet’s laws.

**Basis for Islamic Civilisation**

**Damascus as the Capital**
- Damascus became the Muslim capital because it wasn’t in Iraq or Arabia.
- The conquest of Iraq was more difficult and led to a frontier society.
- Civil war in Arabia made the peninsula politically unreliable.
- In contrast, Syria was rich and easily conquered; most of the cities surrendered through Christian bishops – the Byzantines basically just withdrew.
- As a result of this political role of the Christian church, it would not have been in the interest of the Muslims to persecute the Christians.

**Sources of Islamic Law**
- First came the Qur’an, including the Meccan Suras dogma and duties, Medinan Suras (problems of politics and rule), and later suras (normative material).
- When this was not sufficient, one turned to the Sunna (stories of how the Prophet lived his life), as recorded in the hadith (accounts of prophet’s life and sayings).
- This was reliant on a methodology of truth to ensure accuracy, thus the development of the isnad (chain of authorities/witnesses).
- When further advice was needed, analogy was made been the relevant circumstance and the particular circumstance mentioned in the Hadith or Quran.
- This in turn was dependent upon the consensus of learned, and hence the rise of Islamic scholars.

**Economy**
- Based on the introduction of a new Islamic currency.
- Dinar=denarius (gold).
- Dirham=drachma (silver).
- Jizya referred to the polltax on non Muslims.
- Land taxes.

**The Great Mosque of Damascus**
- Built by the Umayyads around 700 AD.
- Largely financed by the poll tax levied on non-Muslims, and constructed by experts from all over the known world.
Nonetheless, as an Islamic building it clearly represented Muslim and Umayyad imperial superiority.

There was actually a good deal of criticism at the time for the mosque owing to its enormous expense and apparent move away from Mecca as the centre of Islam.

Contents of the Mosque

- Some traditions in the Hadith actually state that prayers in Damascus (and other cities) were worth thousands of times more than prayers anywhere else.
- Like similar structures, it contains a highly elaborate Mihrab (niche marking the direction of Mecca) and a Minbar (“pulpit” for delivering the khutba (sermon on Friday).
- Finding the direction of Mecca from any given location was very important for early Muslims, and required significant use of astronomy and mathematics.
- The walls were decorated with mosaics which depicted landscapes surrounding the mosque, partly representational and partly religious symbolism.

Lecture 4: The Abbasids

Characteristics of the Dynasty

Baghdad as the Capital

- Baghdad was built where it was because it was good strategic position and because it wasn’t in Damascus or Kufa.
- It was built as a new capital for the Abbasids, and was surrounded by three massive concentric walls, for protection and to demonstrate power.
- For instance, the main wall was 34m high and 50m wide at the base.
- The caliph’s residence was located right at the centre.
- It was also located on the Tigris river, providing for good communications.
- It was important to move the capital away from Damascus, as this was the power centre of the Umayyads, whom the Abassids had massacred to obtain power.

The Abbasid Dynasty

- During the abbasid period, relations with the Byzantines were generally quite good.
- This period saw the rise of the Arabic language as a unifying feature of the empire, and also the development as a distinct script.
- Also a period of industrial development, such as the development of glass-making technology.

Importance of the Court

- Frequent disagreements between the chamberlain (hajib) and the minister (wazir or vizier).
- Persified Court culture: harem, well-educated concubines providing literature and poetry.
- The court was fabulously wealthy, but was also at times quiet corrupt.
- Primacy of administration over military.

Military and Mysticism

- In some sense, jihad was a self-serving way for the military to perpetuate itself whilst also providing justification that while they were expanding the kingdom they were serving god.
• This jihad ethic was also related to the rise of ascetic mysticism, the reaction to rising luxury in the courts
• This in turn gave rise to the Ribats, which were sort of fortified monestaries inhabited by ascetic scholar-warriors
• Hasan al-Basri in 711: "Sufism is to possess nothing and to be possessed by nothing"
• One practice of these Sufis was repetition of particular prayers, sometimes while doing particular breathing rythms that helped to engender religious experiences
• Some of these mystics were actually women

Fragmentation of the Abbasid Caliphate

The Aghlabids in Tunisia
• These were the first to break away from the Abbasids
• Many of the state institutions and even symbols (e.g. like the colour black) were adopted from the Abbasids
• The state was fairly stable until the 9th century: officials well paid, taxes light, army looked after
• Partly this was possible because of raids such as the 827 invasion of Sicily
• However, the dynasty collapsed at the end of the 9th century as a result of internal rivalries
• Also significant was a series of incapable emperors: Muham II, Ibrahim II and Raqqada

Heterodoxy on the Margins
• The Idrisids were a Moroccan state that supported a highly heterodox form of Islam
• It was inhabited by Berbers
• The capital of Fez slowly became a refuge for political and religious refugees of the Abbasid and Umayyad kingdoms

Fragmentation at the Centre
• Caliph al-Mu’tasim (833-842) gained power in a violent struggle, and decided to built a new capital at Samarra
• Traditional arab soldiers were replaced by mercenary slave soldiers, largely from central asia, who proved to be much less reliable
• The size and opulence of the site of Samarra reflects a concept of Islamic kingship where the glory of the ruler was reflected in the size and luxury of his works
• However, despite the broad avenues, parade grounds, palaces and huge mosques, the city was not a centre of trade or scholarship, and produced little of value

Lecture 5: Science, Philosophy and Theology

Islamic Philosophy

Consolidation in the Seventh to Eight Centuries
• Unified caliphate under Umayyads and Abbasids
• Arabization of the administration
• Standard pan-Islamic currency
• New standing army
- Taxation and revenue standardised and consolidated
- Administration of justice
- Major projects: great mosques, palaces, cities, monuments

**Religious Trends**
- At the same time, there was a significant degree of internal conflict between Muslims, and the consequent emergence of a number of groupings
- The increase in wealth available to many Muslims led to a counter-reaction, which took the form of the mystical, otherworldly movement that shunned worldly wealth
- Conversion of many Jews, Christians and others to Islam brought in new perspectives and backgrounds to the Islamic tradition, thereby leading to new religious doctrines and scriptural interpretations

**Theological Debates**
- This flood of knowledge in turn led to the rise of various debates amongst Muslim scholars concerning the nature of the universe, god, the origin of the universe, etc
- For example, Al-Razi (c. 935) rejected many key doctrines/beliefs common among most Islamic scholars
- Key issues included predestination, freewill, the status of non-believers and sinners, God’s attributes and how to describe them, who is a true Muslim?
- Theological doctrine is very important in Christianity, while law is somewhat more important in Judaism and Islam
- Another broad distinction was between those schools that strongly emphasised absolute free will, and those who argued that everything (including our actions) was already predetermined by god
- There were similarly opposing views about the roles of human reason in theology and law
- Different schools like Mu`tazila and Ash`arism rose and fell over time, though the first few centuries and the past two centuries were the most dynamic

**Science and Scholarship**

**The Rise of Islamic Science**
- From the eighth century on, Baghdad was the intellectual centre of the Islamic world, attracting all the best scholars and engineers from all over the Empire
- As a result, Jewish, Persian, Byzantine and Islamic knowledge was all brought together into one place
- There was actually great competition for the best positions
- Aristotle and Plato were embraced by Arab scholars, at a time when these were considered to be blasphemous by the Christian church of the time

**Arab Contributions to Knowledge**
- After incorporating much of the knowledge of the classical world, the Arabic scientists began to expand knowledge, developing new fields such as algebra
- The Arabs also made significant advances and medicine, founding the first modern-like hospitals, including mental hospitals
They made progress in understanding anatomy, founded the basis of the germ theory of disease (though it wasn’t called that), and made important developments in optical surgery.

To disseminate all this knowledge, the Arabs adopted paper that they discovered from the Chinese in Central Asia, and was subsequently transmitted to Europe through Spain.

Three key academic centres: Alexandria in Egypt, School of Gundishapur (Sassanid), Syria (Antioch and Edessa).

Textual Translations

- Texts were translated from Greek, Sanskrit, Syriac, Pahlavi into Arabic.
- This is perhaps the most remarkable instances of cultural transmissions in human history.
- It was driven by an inner need to know, not by outward state compulsion.
- It began in the late Ummayad period, and really got going in the Abbasid era.
- Ma'mun as the champion of translations - establishment of House of Wisdom in Baghdad.

Three Broad Areas of Knowledge

- Interestingly, there was no real distinction through much of Islamic history between secular and religious knowledge – they tended to be studied together in schools often funded by religious endowments.
- Philosophical-scientific.
- Legal-theological.
- Mystical-spiritual.

Introduction to Sufism

Background to Sufism

- Sufis say that Sufism has its origins with the prophet, though this is not the mainstream view.
- Sufism had its roots in the new emphasis that began to develop in Islam on asceticism in the 8th and 9th centuries.
- Around the 12th and 13th centuries was the formation of the first Sufi orders, along with their various organisations and rituals, etc.
- Sufi orders were very influential in the Muslim world from the 13th to 19th centuries, though their influence declined greatly in the 20th century.

What is Sufism?

- Sufism is an umbrella term for the ascetic and mystical movements within Islam.
- The word “Sufi” first appears in the 8th century CE probably in connection with the coarse wool that many ascetics wore.
- It is the name by which Islamic mysticism came to be known in the 8th or 9th century CE.
- Sufi beliefs or schools of thought are present in theological, legal, and socio-political branches of Islam.
- The most organised form of Sufism are the Sufi orders, though many Sufis do not belong to a particular group, while many Muslims practise Sufi practices without labelling themselves as such.
- Central concepts of Sufism include the total reliance on God, and the perpetual remembrance of God despite the distractions of the world.
- ‘Orthodox’ sufism: moderate in its claims.
‘Unorthodox’ sufism: claims of dissolution into the divine (Bistami and Hallaj): declaration of unity with God

The Sufi Path to God

- Sufis see themselves to be on a spiritual journey toward God
- This journey: the Path (tariqah): through Law (Shari‘ah)
- The general belief: they are on the pathway to God and they will become ‘close to God’ but in Paradise
- Sufi believes it is possible to experience this closeness while one is alive
- The main obstacles to getting closer to God derive primarily from one’s self (nafs)
- These include anger, lust, anxiety, boredom, depression, and self-pity so that one feels like a powerless victim
- Emphasis upon the struggle to overcome the dominance that one’s nafs has over him/her through remembering and surrendering actively to God
- The ultimate goal is to achieve a state of paradise close to, but not identical with, god
- Sufis also believe that a degree of this feeling of oneness with god can be felt while alive

Steps on the Sufi Path

- Repentance
- Abstinence and renunciation
- Reliance on God
- Outward poverty
- Patience and gratitude
- Fear and hope
- Love and annihilation
- The Master – Disciple relationship is also very important in following these steps, as otherwise one could be led astray by the devil

What Sufis Do

- Spiritual exercises
- Music, chant
- Recitation of the Qur’an
- Remembering God
- Worship of God -> ‘Love’ of God

The Love of God

- For the Sufi who is enraptured with the love of God (who is the source of all existence), all of existence is extraordinarily beautiful.
- In contrast, one who is not in love with God to this degree will not see what is so awesome/beautiful about existence
- The Sufi worships God because God is suitable for worshipping, not out of desire for reward or fear
- The Sufi Rabi‘ah al-‘Adawiya said: “O God, if I am worshipping you out of fear of Your hellfire, cast me into it. And if I am worshipping you out of desire for Your paradise, prohibit me from entering it. And if I am worshipping You for the sake of Your noble face, do not prohibit me from seeing You.”
Lecture 6: Trade and Travel

Economy and Trade

Sijilmasa
- This is a city located in the wadi Ziz in Tafilalt, south-eastern Morocco
- It was founded in 757 and abandoned in 1393; there is not much there today but some ruins
- In the last 200 years it had a population of about 30,000
- Its was significant as the main desert entrepot of Northern Africa, particularly involved in the trade of salt, copper, gold and brass
- Exported dates, henna, spices, indigo, cotton, sugar, and alum galls for tanning
- Its population was mostly made up of Berber converts to Kharijism, ruled by descendents of Arabs from Mesopotamia

Muslim Geography
- The city was also famous among Muslim geographers, who made frequent and glowing reference to it
- Such geographers and travelers wrote extensive and highly accurate accounts concerning virtually all aspects of what we would now called human and physical geography, though they said very little (and even less of it accurate) about the non-Islamic world

An Islamic Common Market
- With the formation of the Islamic empire land and sea trade routes brought under a common monetary and political system
- This facilitated trade and exchange, especially of highly priced goods like spices and gold
- The Arab Gold dinar was used in large parts of the world owing to its stable value
- Even when political unity was broken, Islamic law applied virtually uniformly throughout the Islamic world

Agricultural Exchange
- There was also substantial interchange and movement of grain seed, including Sorghum, Rice, Hard wheat and Sugar cane (which was not known in pre-islamic times)
- Plants were also introduced as medicines

Travel

The Hajj
- This was highly organized into large caravans that travelled along particular re-established routes
- The caravans were essentially traveling cities, with their own security, leaders, judges, traders, etc
- Damascus and Cairo served as the major congregation points
- Seeing off and assistance of the Hajj was a source of prestige for local rulers

Travelling Scholars
- Learned scholars, especially religions ones, were some of the most mobile muslims
There was great competition amongst rulers for the most learned scholars, as they needed them to serve as legal officials.

Also, many scholars travelled from city to city learning from each eminent local scholar in turn.

All scholars possessed a document called the Ijaza or “certificate of study”, which contained information concerning whom they had studied under, and in turn whom they had studied under, etc.

Madrasa also began to be founded as lodges and locations for scholars to study.

**Literature of Travel**

- These were literary accounts of journeys that focused on information about different parts of the Islamic world, including accommodation, safety, etc.
- These accounts were largely factual, seldom including much biographical information.
- Most of those who went on such ‘tours of the world’ were relatively well-off.

**Ibn Battuta**

- He left Tangier for Mecca in 1325.
- In total he travelled 73,000 miles in 30 years, taking various legal positions along the way.
- He visited N. Africa, Mecca, Medina, Yemen, Mogadishu, East Africa, the Persian Gulf, Anatolia, Delhi, the Maldives, Ceylon, Bengal, China, Andalusia and Timbuktu.
- His enormously long book dictated upon his return home was called A Gift to the Observers concerning the Curiosities of the cities and the marvels encountered in travels.
- He used his scholarship and knowledge of Arabic to impress locals and gain important positions.

**Lecture 7: The Shi’a Century**

- Exam does not require citations or extra reading beside the tutorials and readings.

**Shi’i Ismailism**

**Introduction**

- The Fatimids were sevener or Ismaili Shiites, which means they were a minority of a minority.
- They were actually descendants of the last (seventh) imam, who was taken up by god.
- Thus, their genealogical heritage served as a source as religious and political legitimacy for the Fatimids.

**Role of the Imam**

- He was the intermediary or intercessor between the prophet and mankind.
- The idea was that he possessed hidden knowledge that none else could know.
- Only he, being related to the prophet through Ali’s line, could serve in this mediation role.
- "I believe that the imam, especially chosen by God as the bearer of a part of the divine being, is the leader to Salvation."
- He was divinely inspired and infallible, the fountain of knowledge and authority, and his commands required total obedience.
What was the Hidden Knowledge?
- These were given in the secret `Ahd (pledge)
- Devotion to shahada
- Focus on the last judgement
- Emphasis on the zakat and fasting
- Promotion of the Jihad

Origins of the Shi'i Century

Decline of the Abbasids
- By the end of the 9th century the Abbasid dynasty had become essentially bankrupt, and became essentially to be run by its ministers
- There were nine years of anarchy in Samarra 861-870 with a huge slave revolt
- This led to the decline in order and the establishment of a number of Shiite states in the east
- The dynasty came to an effective end in 945, when the Buwayhids took Baghdad

Qarmathians
- Began with Hamdan Qaramita in the Kufa rebellion against the 16th Abbasid Caliph (892-902)
- They held the rather extreme view that because the Imam was now hidden, anyone could be Imam – total equality of believers
- They besieged Damascus in 903 before being defeated in 910
- In the 930s, however, they raided Mecca and captured the Black stone
- Subsequently they founded a kingdom in eastern Arabia and continued to be a nuisance to surrounding states

The Ubaydallah
- They began with successful propaganda in Ifriqiya
- In 909 they defeated the Aghlabids and their leader Ubaydallah declared himself caliph
- His coins carried triumphalist Shiite messages: "the proof of God has arrived" (obverse), "the enemies of God are dispersed" (reverse)
- In 912 they left Kairouan to found a new capital at Mahdia

The City Mahdia
- Mahdia is a Tunisian coastal city with 37,000 inhabitants, southeast of Sousse
- Tunis, the capital, is actually not particularly old, dating to the 17th century
- It is named after the expected Shiite redeemer
- Mahdia was founded by the Fatimids under the Caliph Abdallah al-Mahdi in 921 and made the capital city of Ifriqiya
- Its location was crucial to controlling the narrow sea route between Sicily and North Africa
- Being located on a narrow peninsula, it was also very securely located
- It was surrounded by a massive wall, with most of the population living outside of this
- This defensive position was necessary because of the large number of nearby enemies: Sunnis in Kairouane, the Spanish Umayyads and the Abbasids
The Fatimids in Egypt

Conquest of Egypt
- The longstanding goal of the Fatimids was always to conquer Egypt, one of the great centres of the Islamic world
- In 969, Al-Mu’izz finally took Egypt
- A new military camp outside Fustat became al-Qahira (City Victorious) 972

Fatimid Ideology
- The Fatimids represented a new era in cosmic history
- Historical cycles meant the inevitability of the rise of the Fatimids
- Under the Fatimids, the Imam was no longer hidden
- He was an absolute ruler uniting religious and political authority
- Emphasis on walaya (devotion to imam) and tahara (purification)
- Necessity of Imamate
- Ruler must be just

Characteristics of Fatimid Mosque Architecture
- Projected portals in mosques on side facing mihrab
- Domes over mihrabs for ceremonies
- Keel-shaped arches in porticoes and arcades
- Fine stucco decoration, especially in mihrabs and qibla walls
- Iconographic inscriptions, especially on the entrance facade
- Buildings, especially mosques, were also frequently covered with inscriptions, including propaganda slogans and quranic verses

Lecture 8: Christians, Mongols and Turks

Internal Disunity in the Ummah

Three Caliphates
- The whole point of a caliph was to lead the Islamic community on earth, so the fact that by the 10th century there were three caliphates indicates how divided the Muslim world had become
- Also, within each caliphate, the caliphs had significantly less power, with the wazirs being in real control

Political Instability
- In Syria there was so much fluctuation in control that literally hundreds of castles were built, many of them changing hands with startling regularity
- Sometimes these fortresses were actually bought and sold by different factions for various purposes

Fortress of Shayzar
- This is located at the Orontes crossing 20 km north-east of Hama
- Its strategic position meant that it repeatedly changed hands
• Shaizar fell to the Arabs in 638 and frequently passed from Arab to Byzantine control
• It was sacked in 969 by Byzantine emperor Nicephorus II, and was captured by Basil II in 999
• It was lost to the Banu Munqidh in 1081 when 'Ali ibn Munqidh bought it from the bishop. The Byzantines besieged it numerous times after this but failed to recover it
• In the early 12th century it was raided numerous times by the Assassins
• Shaizar was destroyed by an earthquake in 1170 and the ruins were taken by Saladin in 1174
• They were rebuilt again, but in 1241 the city was sacked by the Khwarezmians
• The Mameluk sultan Baibars captured and rebuilt it in 1260
• It was subsequently captured and demolished by the Mongols

The Assassins
• The rise of the Assassins grew out of the collapse of Fatimids
• They were of the religious sect of Nizari Ismailis
• They mostly frequented remote and inaccessible mountain areas in Iraq, Syria and Iran

Christians, Mamluks and Mongols

The Crusades
• There was a great outcry amongst certain religious circles following the loss of Jerusalem, such as religiously significant city, to the Christians
• Some argued that a spiritual and military Jihad was needed to fight off the Christians
• Others argued that the loss was a punishment from god for lack of obedience
• Jihad was presented as both an external military and also a personal spiritual struggle, the latter even more important because of the lack of centralised Islamic political leadership

The Abuyyids
• This empire was built up by Saladin in the late 12th century, and culminated in the recapture of Jerusalem in 1187
• In 1171 Saladin abolished the Fatimid Caliphate
• Shi’ism replaced by Sunnism
• His empire, however, had an army increasingly manned by mamluk slaves, who were loyal only to the army

The Mamluks
• After Saladin died, his relatives proved too weak to reinforce his rule, and the mamlukses gained in power
• To finance his conquests, Saladin had also undermined the currency through devaluation
• In 1250 a women conspired with the military to overthrow the Abuyyids, at a time of great danger when Egypt was under attack from the crusaders
• A woman in power was seen as a symbol of the collapse of order and the state
• Mamluk control was consolidated in 1260 by Baybars
• They then proceeded to mop up the remainder of the Crusader states in Syria
• In 1291 they took Acre, Tyre, Sidon and Haifa and ended the Latin Kingdom

Impact of the Mongols
• Baybars also defeated the Mongols, thereby preserving the independence of Egypt
• The Mongols defeated the Assassins and also finally ended the Abbasid caliphate
This raised a number of pressing theological questions about the loyalties, duties and political responsibilities of the pious Muslim.

Not only were they under threat by Christians, but also by heterodox Muslim sects and new converts who were not truly converted to Islam (e.g. the Mongols).

Lecture 9: Law and Scholarship

Introduction to Islamic Law

What is Islamic Law?

- Islamic law is a much broader concept than ‘law’ in the Anglo-American sense.
- For example, Islamic legal texts contain admonitions for religious performance, and even such apparently trivial matters as how to wash oneself and treat one’s family.
- Islamic law is divided between ‘musts’, ‘must nots’, ‘recommendations’, and ‘simply permissible’, the latter category being things that don’t matter either way.
- This focus on law is similar to the focus on law and custom in Judaism.

The Scope of Islamic law

- Islamic law, or Shari’ah, is holistic in its approach to guide the individual in most daily matters.
- Shari’ah rules and regulates all public and private behavior: personal hygiene, diet, sexual conduct, child rearing, specific rules for prayers, fasting, giving to the poor, and many other religious matters.
- Shari’ah can also be used in larger situations: laws relating war and defense, environment, taxation, economic management.
- This Law is viewed by the Muslim world as a vehicle to solve all problems civil, criminal and international.

The Nature of Islamic Law

- Islamic law is highly diverse; for example while all sects accept the oneness of god and prayer five times per day, can be interpreted and/or carried out in very different ways.
- The development of Islamic law after the death of the prophet was highly dependent upon interpretation of the prophet’s sayings, and understanding the context in which the Koran was written.

Major Groupings of Islam

- The Islamic world can be divided on three major axes.
- Religio-political: this focuses on the question of who should be pre-eminent in the Muslim world, and is divided between Sunnies, Shia and Kharijites.
- Theological: debates between theological schools mostly concern various philosophical questions on the nature of god and his relationship with man; divided into traditionalists, mutazilites and ashatites.
- Legal: this is the second most important axis, and is divided between four major Sunni schools plus a Shiite school; debates mostly concern the relative importance of reason and revelation or reading of texts.
Sources of Islamic Law

The Quran

- The first and primary source of Shariah is the Qur’an - the final arbitrator and there is no other appeal.
- Its authority lies in the fact that for a Muslim it is the word of God
- Unlike English, Arabic has changed little since the time of the prophet, so this makes examination of the Quran somewhat easier
- On the other hand, the Quran is clearly not a legal text; of its 6000 or so verses, only a few hundred in any way relate to the law
- These are mainly the law of inheritance, punishments for crimes such as theft, murder, defamation, adultery, etc
- As such, most of Islamic law derives not from the Quran directly, but from interpretations of the Quran and Hadith by later scholars mixed with a lot of pre-existing non-Islamic customs

Sunnah (Hadith)

- The Sunnah is composed of the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed, and contains stories and anecdotes, called Hadith
- The Quran may not often deal with a particular issue in detail, while the Sunnah often elaborates on that or may deal with an issue not covered by the Qur’an
- For instance, the Prophet interpreted Qur’anic instructions and applied them in a number of situations, as contained in the Hadith
- Early questions of importance included the validity of various Hadith and other traditions, identification of who counted as a believer, and the relationship between the state and the individual Muslim
- Because so many Hadith appeared in the few centuries after the prophet, it was extremely important that their legitimacy and reliability be determined
- Indeed, their authority was considered so great (if genuine) that all sorts of religious and political groups fabricated or altered Hadith to support their viewpoints
- Scholars of the third and forth centuries after the prophet thus had to laboriously sift through all these stories and their chains of transmission and hence judge their validity

Consensus (Ijma)

- This is a very useful but problematic principle, as not all scholars agreed on it, and it was often hard to determine how it could be determined whether or not there was a consensus
- Issues on which there is unanimous agreement among Muslim scholars acquire an authoritative status
- Such consensus, however, must be in line with the Qur’an an Sunnah instructions
- Consensus is a gradual process: from individual opinions to a collective opinion [crystallisation]. Once that is reached, the collective opinion acquires this authoritative status.

Analogy (Qiyas)

- Analogy is based on the idea of a precedent in the authoritative sources of law
- It is based on the similarity of a new problem to an earlier problem
- Example: Drinking wine is prohibited in the Qur’an. No decision re. consuming drugs.
• Decision concerning the consumption of drugs can be arrived on the basis of similarity between the effect of consumption of wine and the effect of consumption of drugs.
• A very large number of decisions made in Islamic law are based on analogy

Other Sources
• Local custom
• Public interest

The Development of Law

Post-Prophetic period (632-660)
• Emergence of new issues: territorial expansion; wealth; administration; new situations
• As a result, there was increased need for personal interpretation of Qur’an
• Reference to the precedent and interpretation of the precedent, if needed
• Rise of personal reasoned opinion of the caliphs and senior companions by interpretation of the Qur’anic texts and Hadith, analogy and by checking similar cases lead to the proliferation of differing opinions on many issues
• At this time there was little formal mechanism or tradition for interpretation of the Quran or transmission of the law

The Umayyad Period (661-750)
• Transition from oral to written transmission of religious disciplines and laws
• Hadith collection and transmission formalized
• Methods of interpretation of the Qur’an/Hadith developed
• Office of qadi was becoming more important than a legal secretary;
• Move from personal opinion to a more text-based system following some principles and methods; hence the increased importance of a professional class of people developing Islamic law

The Abbasid Period (750 onwards)
• Schools of law established: Maliki school; Hanafi school; Shafi’I school; Hanbali school; Ja`fari school
• Methods of developing law also established; this was generally the activity of private scholars, and not the state
• Regional differences incorporated into the body of Islamic law
• Major legal texts (both on methodology and law) written

Shariah and the State
• During the early period, the Muslim government was indistinguishable from the public body as there were many senior Companions who participated in the religious, legislative and executive functions
• During the Umayyad period, however, government became vested in the ruling family (distinct from the public)
• Lay authorities (not specialists in law) interpreted and applied Shariah
• As opposed to this, leaders of the religious community based in Medina began to construct a body of Islamic law
• Early Abbasids gave full recognition to the law developed by the religious authorities (ulama)
The justice system became more professional, and a formal class of judges/scholars emerged. Later rulers in the Abbasid period began to enact special laws of their own from time to time to cope with exigencies; thus a new body of law emerged to supplement the Shariah. During the Ottoman period, large-scale lay legislation (qanun) by the state was enacted.

**The Modern Period**

- Today, Shari`ah has been replaced by Western laws in many countries.
- Shari`ah remained influential mainly in personal matters except in Saudi Arabia, Iran and to some extent Pakistan and Sudan.
- However, many countries still pay lip service to the Shari`ah.
- But there is a strong movement in the Islamic world, which wants to reverse this.

**Lecture 10: Medieval Morocco**

**The Almoravid Dynasty**

**Historical Background**

- The Almoravids were a Berber dynasty of North Africa, who lived between the current Senegal and south of Western Sahara.
- It is associated with the nomadic Berber tribes of Sanhaja and Lamtuna. From the eleventh century to the twelfth century, their empire was extended over present-day Morocco, Mauritania, southern Spain, western Algeria and a part of what is now Mali.
- In the early Muslim period, the most powerful of the tribes of the Sahara near the Sénégal River region were the Lamtuna, who had converted to Islam in the ninth century.

**Origins of the Dynasty**

- In about 1039, a chief of the Sanhaja, Yahya ibn Ibrahim, returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca bringing with him a Sanhadja theologian, Abdallah ibn Yassin, to teach a more orthodox Islam.
- Rejected by the Sanhaja two years later, after the death of Ibn Ibrahim, Ibn Yassin and some of his Sanhadja followers retired to a secluded place where they built a fortified religious center, a ribat, which attracted many Sanhadja.
- In 1042, Ibn Yassin's followers launched a jihad, or holy war, against the nonbelievers and the heretics among the Sanhadja, beginning what became known as the Almoravid movement.
- The initial aim of the Almoravids was to establish a political community in which the ethical and juridical principles of Islam would be strictly applied.
- By around the 1080s, they ruled a territory from Spain to Mali.

**City of Marrakesh**

- Marrakesh was a large inland city located in central Morocco.
- It served as an important trading centre and capital of a number of Islamic empires of the region.
- Prior to the advent of the Almoravids in the 11th century, the area was ruled from the city of Aghmat.
- The Almoravid leader, Abu-Bakr Ibn-Umar decided Aghmat was becoming overcrowded and chose to build a new capital at Marrakesh.
- It was located just north of the Atlas mountains, along the gold trade routes to the south
- It was also heavily fortified with substantial walls and ‘dog-leg’ entrances

**Almoravid Doctrines**
- The Almoravids interpreted the Koran literally, which led to certain problems as the Koran speaks of such things as god seeing and hearing
- They imposed a highly restrictive legalistic Islamic code on their empire, which was not particularly popular with the people
- They did not, however, make any claims to universality: ruler called himself *Amir al-Muslimin* (Commander of Muslims) not *Amir al-Mu’minin* (Commander of the Faithful)

**Economy and Culture**
- The Almoravid economy benefitted from the legalism of the dynasty, as they kept to the low tax rates specified in the Koran
- They also benefited from trans-Saharan trade
- In terms of Culture, Marrakesh became a vibrant centre, with Andalusian scholars and elaborate mosques being constructed

**The Almohad Dynasty**

**Prophetic Paradigm Again**
- Like the Almoravids, the Almohads found their initial inspiration in Islamic reform. Their spiritual leader, the Moroccan Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Tumart, sought to reform Almoravid decadence. Rejected in Marrakech and other cities, he turned to his Masmuda tribe in the Atlas Mountains for support. Because of their emphasis on the unity of God, his followers were known as Al Muwahhidun (unitarians, or Almohads).
- Although declaring himself mahdi, imam, and *masum* (infallible leader sent by God), Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Tumart consulted with a council of ten of his oldest disciples
- Influenced by the Berber tradition of representative government, he later added an assembly composed of fifty leaders from various tribes

**The Almohad Empire**
- The Almohad rebellion began in 1125 with attacks on Moroccan cities, including Sus and Marrakech
- The Almohads took control of Morocco in 1146, captured Algiers around 1151, and by 1160 had completed the conquest of the central Maghrib and advanced to Tripolitania
- After the death of the original founder, however, dynastic rule replaced rule based on religious virtue

**Almohad Doctrines**
- Less legalism than the Almoravids
- God is pure spirit, absolute and one – rejected anthropomorphism of god
- *Quran & hadith* alone decide the law
- Separation of sexes, no music or luxury
Collapse of the Empire

- This was occasioned by two major processes: attacks from nomads from the east called the Banu Hilal, and loss of valuable tax-bearing lands to the Christians in Spain
- The Banu Hilal greatly disrupted agriculture in North Africa, further hampering the economy
- By around 1250, the dynasty collapsed

The Marinid Dynasty

Origins of the Dynasty

- The Marinid dynasty was a Berber dynasty that overtook the Almohads in controlling Morocco in 1244, and most of the Maghreb from the mid-14th century to the 15th century
- They were also instrumental in supporting the Kingdom of Granada in Al-Andalus in the 13th and 14th centuries
- The last Marinid fortress in the Iberian Peninsula fell to Castile in 1344, while in Morocco they were replaced by the Wattasids in 1465

Ibn Khaldun

- Ibn Khaldun was a North African polymath born in North Africa in present-day Tunisia
- He was born in Tunis in 1332 to an educated family of Spanish ancestry
- Following the Marinid invasion of Tunis he moved to Fez, and became involved in the politics there
- Over the course of his career in government, he moved from one court to another, each time finding the ruler grossly ineffective and incompetent
- After some time at this, he retired to the desert and wrote a number of books reflecting on his experience, which we would now describe as history and social scientific analysis

His Theory of the State

- He saw the state as the basic subject of history
- He advocated a cyclical theory of civilizations, such that when a society becomes a great civilization, its high point is followed by a period of decay
- This means that the next cohesive group that conquers the diminished civilization is, by comparison, a group of barbarians
- Once the barbarians solidify their control over the conquered society, however, they become attracted to its more refined aspects, such as literacy and arts, and either assimilate into or appropriate such cultural practices, thus losing their distinct identity and unity
- Then, eventually, the former barbarians will be conquered by a new set of barbarians, who will repeat the process

Lecture 11: Muslim Spain

The Alhambra

- The Alhambra is a palace and fortress complex constructed during the mid 14th century by the Moorish rulers of the Emirate of Granada in Al-Andalus
- It was a highly decorative complex, but not particularly expensive in comparison to past efforts, owing to the isolation and small size of the kingdom at that time
The Alhambra’s Moorish palaces were built for the last Muslim Emirs in Spain and its court, of the Nasrid dynasty. After the Reconquista, some portions were used by the Christian rulers, and the Palace of Charles V in 1527 was built inside the Alhambra within the Nasrid fortifications. After being allowed to fall into disrepair for centuries, the Alhambra was rediscovered in the 19th century by European scholars and travelers, with restorations commencing. It is now one of Spain’s major tourist attractions, exhibiting the country’s most significant and well known Islamic architecture.

The decoration of the palace makes heavy use of tessellating and symmetrical patterns.

The Conquest of Iberia

Iberia was conquered as a result of the turmoil in the Islamic empire and remained separate thereafter. The conquest in 711 as the largely personal affair of Tariq ibn Malik and his Berber army; they did not receive permission from Damascus. He was assisted by one of the Visigothic princes. The advance continued across the peninsula until it was stopped by Charles Martel in 732. There was a whole range of local factional politics that took place in the peninsula that could not be controlled by the central caliphate.

Umayyad Spain

In 756 Abd al-Rahman I fled Abbasid massacres and declared the Emirate of al-Andalus. The Umayyads survived in Spain because they were autonomous, and depended on the existence of a split caliphate. Efficient administration: they took advantage of the infrastructure left behind by the Romans. A notable architectural remnant of this period is the great Mosque of Cordoba. Considerable trade was generated as a result of its diverse population and relatively good treatment of minorities like Jews, many of whom rose to positions of great power and wealth. The introduction of new crops like sugar cane also benefitted agriculture. The cities of Andalus also produced quality manufactured goods such as swords.

The Reconquista

Various political dissensions and rebellions eventually led to the collapse of the Umayyad dynasty in 1031 and the rise of many small ‘Taifa kingdoms’. The weakness of these units was one factor permitting Christian reconquest of the peninsula. Expansion of Christian transhumant herding was also a major factor leading to the reconquest. Whilst the muslim kingdoms were disunited, the Christian kingdoms benefitted from alliance and support from Christians in northern europe. In 1085 al-Mu’tamid of Seville asked for support from Almoravids, and they and their successors the Almohads ‘held the line’ against the Christians for the next few centuries. This lasted until the Almohads were defeated in 1212, and within a few decades most of the peninsula had been lost to the christians.
Cultural Developments

- The political turmoil did not mean that al-Andalus was a cultural backwater
- Indeed, art, literature, mathematics, theology, etc, all flourished
- Interestingly, many of the Christians in the peninsula actually spoke Arabic, and even wrote early Spanish using Arabic characters
- The economic and cultural connection of Spain with Africa under the Almoravids and Almohads also promoted trade, economic growth and cultural flourishing
- In particular there were important developments in Sufism, for example those of Ibn `Arabi (1165-1240)

Granada as the Last Redoubt

- Grenada was a new sort of Islamic state
- It was not based on kinship but political alliance, combining basically all those Muslim elements that were left in the region
- The key to its survival was the fact that its population was mostly Muslim, and so was highly loyal to the state
- The kingdom also attracted support from Muslim migrants from the rest of the peninsula, forming a sort of ‘free Muslim state’
- Artillery
- Highpoint under Yusuf 1333-1354 & Muhammad V 1354-91

Why Granada Collapsed

- Cut off from North Africa in 1487 by the loss of Malaga
- As a result, the economy could not sustain high population of refugees from persecution in Christian kingdoms to the north
- The siege of the city in 1490 led to massive starvation in the city
- In 1491, Capitulations were signed that promised security for property, only Quranic taxes, Mosques and Shari'a could continue, and everyone free to leave who wanted to
- These promises were soon broken, however, and it was clear to all that this defeat meant the end of Islamic Spain

Lecture 12: The Ottomans

Rumeli Hisari

- This is a fortress built on the European side of the Bosporus
- It was built by Mehmet II in four months in spring of 1452 across from the Anadolu hisari built by grandfather Bayezit I (1389-1402)
- The site was vacant except for two cisterns and Byzantine ruins in vicinity supplied stone
  Waterway at narrowest point of the strait (660m)
- There were 400 men stationed there in 1452, prevented passage of ships with canon fire during the siege of Constantinople
- It lost strategic importance after fall of Constantinople in 1453 and became a storage facility and prison
The Turkish Expansion
- The Turkish tribes originated around the Aral sea
- In the mid 9th century they moved into Afghanistan
- In 1055 these Saljuqs took Baghdad, followed by the defeat of the Byzantines in 1071, and the subsequent conquest of Anatolia by ghazi groups
- The Seljuk sultanate that they established lay at the end of the silk trade routes from Asia
- Following the Mongol raids in the 13th century, the sultanate of Rum was broken up and came to be ruled by a large number of small Turkish states ruled by warlords

The Emergence of the Ottoman principality
- The Ottomans were one of these small Ghazi statelets in Anatolia near the Byzantine frontier
- Like the other states, their main goals were to expand their grazing lands, and to continue the crusade against the Christians
- Over the course of the 14th century they gradually expanded across Anatolia and into the Balkans, obtaining a sizeable empire by 1402

Bayezit's Rule
- Bayezit I (1389-1401) was an important emperor who besieged Constantinople 1394
- He centralised the Ottoman state
- The ghazi soldiers were replaced by a slave army formed from prisoners of war and boys taken from Christian villages and raised as Muslims to become soldiers (devshirme)
- However, in 1402 Timur or Tamerlane defeated Bayezit near Ankara and broke the power of the Ottomans in Anatolia

Reconstitution of the Empire
- Mehmet I and his son Murat II (1421-1451) campaigned to rebuild the empire
- They introduced a new slaves army and administration called the yeni çeri (new troops, anglicised as Janissaries)
- The advantage of these troops was that they were loyal only to the sultan, with no competing local allegiance
- In 1422 Mehmet besieged Constantinople without taking it – but the siege was tightening
- In 1453 Mehmet II, Mehmet the Conqueror (1451-1481), finally took the city
- The Empire then further expanded into Egypt and Syria under Selim the Grim
- Selim was also the sultan who began the practice of murdering all his brothers in order to prevent rebellion – this proved to be a surprisingly effective strategy

Süleyman “The Magnificent”
- He expanded the empire into Hungary, Mesopotamia and North Africa
- He also presided over an economic Golden Age, partly owing to the increased demand for grain from Europe
- Famine was brought under control
- Immigration – especially Jews and Muslims from Spain
- Law and order prevailed throughout the empire
- Campaign of mosque building by Mimar Sinan in Istanbul and elsewhere
Süleyman “The lawgiver”

- He oversaw the development of a new Kanûname compilation in 1525
- This was no break with the previous sharia decrees, but rather lay down how existing law should be applied
- The stated purpose to end crime, which could no longer be repressed by the "sword of the tongue of the guardians of holy law" Instead what was needed was the "tongue of the sword of the authorities charged with inflicting severe punishment"
- Regulations to control officials were imposed
- Capital punishment for “constant criminals” and counterfeitters
- Based on the ‘circle of equity’ defining the role of government and its relationship with law, the military, population, etc