

Class Notes

What Is Religion?

Proposed definitions:

- Action or conduct indicating a belief in, reverence for, and desire to please a divine ruling power, the exercise or practice of rites or observances implying this ... a particular system of faith worship (Oxford English Dictionary).
- A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them (Emil Durkheim).
- Religion alone confronts the individual with the most momentous option this world can present. It calls the soul to the highest adventure it can undertake, a proposed journey across the jungles, peaks, and deserts of the human spirit (Huston Smith).
- The feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine (William James).
- Religion is for you at one time a way of thinking, a faith, a peculiar way of contemplating the world, and of combining what meets us in the world: at another, it is a way of acting, a peculiar desire and love, a special kind of conduct and character (Friedrich Schleiermacher).
- The sacred is *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (Rudolph Otto).
- Add idea of inner enlightenment or mysticism to Otto's definition (Ninian Smart).
- The term "religion" is meant to be neutral and apply to all cases, leaving out a faith commitment in the method of study. However, it still imports a host of assumptions that can distort the object of study; chief among them the assumption that "religion" is about human responses to the divine (Timothy Fitzgerald).
- A religion is a dynamic cultural complex with positive or negative impact that stakes a claim to legitimacy based on a foundational connection to reports of hierophany. (Victoria Kennick Urubshurow)

Necessary components of religion:

- adherents
- beliefs
- practices
- some concept of a reality or realities beyond ordinary human experience

sacred and profane—distinction between world of ordinary experience & experience of the divine (cf. proposed description of religion: some concept of reality or realities beyond ordinary human experience)—several manifestations of sacredness in religious traditions:

- sacred time (Rosh Hashanah, Advent, Ramadan)
- sacred space (Holy Land, Uluru/Ayers Rock, Black Hills)
- sacred symbols & artifacts
- sacred interactions (e.g., worship, sacrifice, ritual, ghost dance)
- sacred personages
- sacred metatime/metaspaces (before creation of universe, heaven & hell, Brahman, dimensions outside those normally perceived by humans)

Zoroastrianism

founded by Zoroaster (Zarathustra), born sometime before 600 BCE, perhaps as early as 1000 or even earlier (1800 BCE?)—born into priestly family of Medes—reformer of older Iranian religion very similar to Vedic religion in India

Zoroastrian & Vedic cultures split, & over time etymologically related words came to have radically different meanings in two cultures—*daevas* are evil or false gods in Zoroastrianism, while *devas* in Vedic religion are gods in general (cf. *deus* in Latin, *θεός* and Zeus in Greek)—*ahuras* are most important gods, with Ahura Mazda the chief in Zoroastrianism, while *asuras* in Vedic religion are older gods in conflict with *devas*—Zarathustra honored the *yazatas*, beings worthy of worship or veneration, with Ahura Mazda being most worthy

“creed” of the Good Religion: Good thoughts, good words, good deeds

doctrines of Zoroastrianism:

- Ahura Mazda supreme deity, creator of all—Ahura = “light/lord” Mazda = “wisdom”—name transformed into Ohrmazd by Sassanian period
- Zoroaster true prophet of Ahura Mazda
- Ahura Mazda opposed by evil spirit Angra Mainyu, supported by good (holy) spirit Spenta Mainyu—Angra Mainyu transformed into Ahriman by Sasanian period
- Amesha Spentas and yazatas on side of Ahura Mazda battle Angra Mainyu & evil *daevas*
- individuals have freedom of choice between good & evil (free will as opposed to predestination or fate)
- Ahura Mazda will ultimately triumph over evil, & humans will be judged on basis of their deeds

Ahura Mazda has six Amesha Spentas (Holy Immortals), or divine sparks (or emanations):

1. Vohu Manah: Good Thought/Purpose
2. Asha Vahishta: Highest Truth/Righteousness
3. Xshathra Vairya: Desirable Dominion
4. Spenta Armaiti: Holy Devotion
5. Haurvatat: Wholeness/Health
6. Ameretat: Immortality/Life

religion characterized by emphasis on monotheism, dualism, emphasis on spiritual struggle between good & evil in spiritual realm (angels & demons)—worship centers around sacred fire, symbol of Ahura Mazda (no sacrificial animals)

dualism important in Zoroastrianism, esp. during certain periods like under Sasanian rule (hence rise of Zurvanism, which actually originated in Achaemenid times)—contrast between *menog* (spiritual, lit. thought) & *getig* (physical, lit. bones)—*asha* (truth) & *druj* (falsehood)—Spenta Mainyu (holy spirit) & Angra Mainyu (satan)

fravashi is guardian spirit who sends urvan (soul) into material world (i.e., a body) to fight battle of good vs. evil—on 4th day after death, urvan returns to its fravashi—fravashi originally souls of the departed, so perhaps remnant of ancestor worship from earlier Iranian religion

upon death all souls must cross the Chinvat Bridge (bridge of judgment), guarded by two four-eyed dogs (cf. similar Vedic myth of Yama)—to wicked person the bridge appears narrow, & demon Vizaresh will drag his soul to the House of Lies—to good person the good spirit Daena will lead his soul to House of Song, where they are united with Ahura Mazda—final purification at end of world year (12,000 years), when world is renewed, the *frashkard*—resurrection of dead

acc. to Bundahishn (Pahlavi), world history divided into 4 period of 3000 years (cf. Norse religion):

1. Ahura Mazda created world in spirit form—Angra Mainyu arose & threatened war—Ahura Mazda proposed limit of 9000 years, to which Angra Mainyu agreed, then created demons (daevas) to invade earth—Ahura Mazda recited prayer revealing final outcome of war & Angra Mainyu's ultimate defeat, so he fell back in stupor of fear
2. 3000 years in stupor, with demons trying to raise him—finally successful & invade earth, killing primeval bull & androgenous proto-human Gayomard—from these deaths arose all animal & plant life, as well as Mashya & Mashyana, the first male & female—world now in a “mixed” state
3. 1000 years of wars against daevas, 1000 years reign of evil king, 1000 years human wars—at end of period arose Zarathustra & his follower & patron Vishtaspa
4. Seed of Zarathustra preserved in Lake Frazdan—maidens will swim in lake at end of each 1000 years & conceive savior—final savior Saoshyant will lead final

battle against Druj (falsehood)—Saoshyant will then resurrect dead through power of Ahura Mazda, whose bodies will be restored to eternal perfection (i.e., universalism, ἀποκαταστασις)

official religion of Persian empire in its three manifestations:

- Achaemenid Empire (552-330 BCE): founded by Cyrus the Great, ended by Alexander the Great—Zoroastrianism the official religion, but Cyrus allowed all subject peoples to worship their own gods, & asked all his people, regardless of religion, to pray for him—called “God’s anointed” in Isa 45:1—Cyrus’ devotion to Ahura Mazda called into question by some because of his pragmatism with regard to other religions—Cyrus & son Cambyses opposed by Magi, originally a group of Median priests—when Cambyses was on campaign in Egypt, imposter named Gaumata pretended to be Cambyses’ dead brother Bardiya (Smerdis in Greek) & ruled for about 7 months, supported by Magi & many people (because he granted three-year tax holiday)—Cambyses died on way back to Persia, but Darius I overthrew Gaumata & claimed the throne—Zoroastrian religion flourished during Achaemenid period, & many parts of Avesta written—Darius III defeated by Alexander in 330—perhaps as much as 3/4 of Avesta lost at this time—rest reconstructed from oral tradition—although Old Persian official language of empire, lingua franca was Aramaic, used to communicate with subject peoples & other nations
- *Seleucid Empire (312-62 BCE): founded by Seleucus, one of Alexander’s generals—much of Persia Hellenized, with people adopting Greek language & culture, esp. in W—resurgence of native Persian power led to creation of Arsacid Empire—this is not one of the three manifestations of the Persian Empire, but rather an intermediate period of Greek dominance over Persia—after the rise of the Arsacids, the Seleucid and Arsacid Empires overlapped, with Arsacids controlling the E & Seleucids the W*
- Arsacid (Parthian) Empire (248 BCE-224 CE): period of syncretism—kings opposed by Magi (priests) & eventually overthrown
- Sasanian Empire (224-651 CE): restoration of traditional Zoroastrianism, persecution of Jews, Christians, Manicheans, & “heretical” movements like Zurvanism—Zurvanism is extremely dualistic form of Zoroastrianism that posited divinity Zurvan (time) as first principle & creator deity, who created the opposites Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu as twin brothers—Sasanian empire overthrown by Muslim invaders from Arabian peninsula

after Arab conquest, many Zoroastrians gradually converted to Islam over the next two centuries, but important Zoroastrian works, including commentaries on Avesta & various traditions, written in Middle Persian (Pahlavi)—*jizya* (tax on non-Muslims) imposed on Zoroastrians, & new laws encouraged conversion to Islam—in 9th & 10th C many Zoroastrians migrated to India & became known as Parsis—those in Iran known as Iranis—Parsis became larger, better educated, & wealthier group

Zoroastrian's scripture called the Avesta, written in Avestan, a language related to Sanskrit, comparable to Indo-Aryan Vedas in age (Old Iranian, a branch of Indo-Iranian group of languages, part of IE)—oldest portions of Avesta are the Gathas, the hymns of Zarathustra, which are embedded in the Yasna

structure of Avesta:

- Yasna: primary liturgical collection, including the Gathas, hymns attributed to Zarathustra himself
- Visperad: liturgical material that supplements Yasna
- Vendidad: moral laws, ways to combat evil spirits, creation & catastrophe myths
- Yashts: 12 hymns dedicated to divinities or divine concepts
- Siroza: 30 divinities presiding over days of month
- Khordeh Avesta (little Avesta): prayer book for general (lay) use
- Fragments

Pahlavi (Middle Persian) commentary on Avesta called Denkard—other Pahlavi texts as well, such as Bundahishn (creation myth, etc.)—written after fall of Sasanian Empire to Muslims in 651

cleanliness or purity of earth & fire especially important—until mid to late 20th C, traditional means of disposing of corpses was to put them on top of sacred tower (Tower of Silence) for vultures to devour, so as not to pollute earth with burial or fire with cremation

Judaism

ignore section on Ha-Shem, second paragraph in textbook

ignore comment that prophecy ceased with fall of Solomon's temple, and also comment that there were no prophets between Deborah and Amos (Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah)—prophets didn't primarily tell future but spoke to their own generation & challenged them to change their ways—spoke truth to power

distinction among terms Hebrew, Israel, Jew

Hebrew Bible also called Tanakh

Genesis: creation stories, patriarchs—historicity of events prior to period of divided kingdoms (after 922 BCE) debated by modern scholars

Moses, the **burning bush**, the **exodus**, & the giving of the **law**—most important character in story of Israel's history recorded in HB—exodus the defining event of ancient Israelite faith, at least in reckoning of STP scholars—as result of deliverance from Egypt & subsequent gift of Torah, Israel saw themselves as children of God, the chosen people

450 year power vacuum: Israelites & Philistines ~1200 BCE

Babylonian exile—establishment of **synagogue**, central institution of Judaism in diaspora & after destruction of temple, everywhere—**absolute monotheism**

Cyrus the Great & return, **Second Temple Period**—Satan, angels & demons, differentiated afterlife, **messiah** (Davidic king)

Alexander the Great (d. 323 BCE), Diadochi (after 301 BCE kingdoms of Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, & Seleucus)

Antiochus Epiphanes & Maccabean Revolt: Mattathias, Judas Maccabeus, Jonathan, Simon—started 167 BCE, temple rededicated 164 BCE (Hannukah)

Jewish independence & Hasmonean rule officially began in 141 BCE

Romans & Herod the Great—Pompey 63 BCE—Herod deposed last Hasmonean ruler in 37 BCE

Sadducees (no afterlife, free will, rejected Oral Law in favor of Torah), Essenes (predestination, separate sacred calendar), Pharisees (resurrection, messianic age, free will but God has foreknowledge, Oral Law), Christianity

Zealots & **First Jewish Revolt** against Rome (66-73)—destruction of temple, massacre at Masada

fall of Second Temple the second great catastrophe to afflict the Jews—the first, the Babylonian exile & destruction of Solomon's Temple, led to creation of synagogue, absolute monotheism, creation of canon of scripture (Tanakh), messianic hope, emergence of diverse Judaisms—second led to closing of the canon, emphasis on study of scripture, codification of oral law (Mishna & Talmud), self-identity as people of diaspora, emergence of rabbinic Judaism

Yohanan ben Zakkai & Yavne—while Jerusalem besieged by Romans & controlled by Zealots, had himself smuggled out of city in coffin—made his way to Roman general Vespasian (others say Titus), convincing him of his peaceful intentions (& predicting his elevation to emperor) & securing safety of himself & other Jewish leaders in coastal city of Yavne, which became center of Palestinian Judaism & home of Sanhedrin, the ruling Jewish council

Kitos War (115-117): rebellion of Jews in diaspora against Roman garrisons in their cities & provinces, in response to sporadic persecutions of Jews

Simeon bar Kokhba & **Third Jewish Revolt** (132-135)—Hadrian’s decision to rebuild Jerusalem as **Aelia Capitolina**, with temple to Jupiter, led to revolt—Jews excluded from city until 4th C, when Constantine allows them to enter once a year to pray at the Western Wall—very small Jewish population over next 1300 years, ranging from none to a few families—1000 Jews settle in Jerusalem, following Judah the Pious, in 1700

Mishna & era of Tannaim—oral teachings of Tannaim codified by R. Judah haNasi about 220 CE, second in authority only to Tanakh—divided into six tractates: Seeds, Festival, Women, Damages, Holy Things, and Purities—although extensive, not complete record of oral traditions from this era, so supplemented by **Tosefta** (“addition”), which contains same orders & tractates as Mishna & repeats some material while offering additions & variants of other material

two types of material: **halakha** (legal material) and **aggadah** (folklore, anecdotes, exhortation, etc.)

Talmuds & era of Amoraim: Jerusalem (or Palestinian) Talmud completed between 350 & 400, larger Babylonian Talmud completed between 500 & 700—commentary on selected tractates of Mishna, though neither complete—demonstrate how Mishna’s rulings derive from biblical text, explore logical principles behind Mishna’s statements & how these principles might be applied in different cases, resolve contradictions between different statements of Mishna or between Mishna & other traditions

Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaki (**Rashi**, 1040-1105, France): wrote first extensive commentary on Talmud, also on Tanakh

Maimonides (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, 1138-1204) born in Córdoba, but his family driven out of Al-Andalus by fundamentalist Almohads who gained control shortly after Maimonides’ birth—settled in Cairo, where he became expert in both medicine & Jewish law serving as physician in court of Saladin—Talmudic scholar, extracted list of 613 commandments, along with 13 articles of Jewish faith:

1. Belief in the existence of the Creator, be He Blessed, who is perfect in every manner of existence and is the Primary Cause of all that exists.
2. The belief in God’s absolute and unparalleled unity.
3. The belief in God’s noncorporeality, nor that He will be affected by any physical occurrences, such as movement, or rest, or dwelling.
4. The belief in God’s eternity.
5. The imperative to worship Him exclusively and no foreign false gods.
6. The belief that God communicates with man through prophecy.
7. The belief that the prophecy of Moses our teacher has priority.
8. The belief in the divine origin of the Torah.
9. The belief in the immutability of the Torah.
10. The belief in divine omniscience and providence.
11. The belief in divine reward and retribution.
12. The belief in the arrival of the Messiah and the messianic era.
13. The belief in the resurrection of the dead.

late in life wrote *Guide for the Perplexed*, which sought to reconcile philosophy & literal sense of Torah, as well as to expound on works of medieval Jewish mysticism—drew on Muslim philosophy, pagan philosophy, & Aristotle (relying in part on commentaries of Averroes)—Maimonides believed that true knowledge leads to love, the passionless imitation of divine action found in biblical prophets & lawgivers—opposed by some conservative Jewish scholars, but maintained positive reputation among Jews, & also Muslims & Christians, after his death & beyond Middle Ages

Jewish mysticism: medieval Jewish mysticism centered around two biblical passages: creation (Gen 1) & Ezekiel’s vision of a chariot (Ezek 1)—speculation about mystical meaning of these passages from beginning of rabbinic period & probably earlier, but first written down in texts from 200-700 CE (Hekhalot literature, “palaces”), often called Merkabah mysticism—mystical speculation discouraged in Talmud, & only permitted to mature scholars—those with mystical bent, including Maimonides, continued to explore boundaries of mysticism, however, developing into **Kabbalah** in High & Late Middle Ages—foundational text the **Zohar**, written in 13th C—Kabbalah combines Hebrew scriptures, Jewish tradition, & medieval philosophy to explore relationship between uncreated God (called Ein Sof, “no end”) and the created universe

- Ein-Sof: the infinite, invisible essence of God, rarely discussed in kabbalistic texts
- keter elyon: supreme crown
- hokhmah: wisdom
- binah: understanding, discernment
- hesed: lovingkindness, mercy
- din or gevurah: judgment or power
- tiferet: glory, beauty
- nezah: eternity, victory
- hod: majesty
- yesod: foundation of the world
- shekhinah or malkhut: divine presence, kingdom

Isaac Luria (1534-1572, Safed, Galilee) was leading rabbi & mystic, father of modern Kabbalah—impressed by reading Zohar & withdrew from family, visiting them only on Sabbath & saying as few words as possible—Safed was leading center of kabbalistic studies, & he quickly became popular teacher—one of his pupils was Rabbi Hayyim Vital, who spread Luria’s teachings after his death & saw himself as messiah

two large groupings of Jews in Europe: **Sephardi** Jews in Iberian Peninsula (spoke Ladino) & **Ashkenazi** Jews in E Europe & Germany (spoke Yiddish)—large numbers of Jews also in Palestine, Babylonia, Yemen, N Africa, & Ethiopia—expulsion from Spain (1492) & Portugal (1497) led many to go E to Palestine & other areas within Ottoman Empire

Sabbatai Zevi (1626-1676, Smyrna) studied Talmud, but most interested in Jewish mysticism, esp. work of Isaac Luria, so started practicing Kabbalah—in accordance with prediction in Zohar that messiah would return in 1648, he began proclaiming his identity as messiah & pronouncing sacred tetragrammaton, forbidden to all but high priest in

temple on Day of Atonement, & attracting disciples—although expelled from Smyrna & rejected by leading rabbis in other cities, Sabbatai attracted many followers over the next several years—traveled to Jerusalem & Cairo, then returned to Smyrna, where he expelled the traditional rabbi—traveled to Istanbul, where he was imprisoned—faced with the choice between death & conversion to Islam, he converted, along with many of his followers—many followers believed it was a scheme to convert Muslims, while Muslim rulers believed Sabbatai was converting more Jews to Islam—eventually exiled & died, but followers who consider him messiah continue to present day (maybe 100,000)

Hasidism arose in E Europe, led by Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer **Baal Shem Tov** (c. 1700-1760, Ukraine)—pious man who emphasized emotion over intellect, simple devotion over Talmudic erudition—had consciousness of God’s presence in all things, esp. nature (cf. Romantic movement as reaction to rationalism)

at about the same time **Moses Mendelssohn** arose (father of Reform Judaism, 1729-1786, Germany), studied philosophy & math—wrote philosophical treatises on immortality of the soul & other topics—in later life, after a serious illness, began writing exclusively in support of Judaism & the Jewish community, applying philosophical reason to the beliefs of Judaism—his brand of rational Judaism became the movement of Reform Judaism

4 broad movements within modern Judaism: Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist (thus partially recreating the Judaisms that existed in the 1st C)

Orthodox Jews follow ancient, traditional practices—keep kosher, observe Sabbath regulations such as not driving, observe major Jewish holidays, focus on study of Torah and Talmud—believe both written & oral law given to Moses on Mt. Sinai—exclusively male clergy—Hasidism is a form of Orthodox Judaism

Reform Judaism follows lead of Moses Mendelssohn, rejecting (or making optional) many traditional Jewish practices, including keeping kosher—Torah study uses methods of modern scholarship (e.g., historical criticism) & doesn’t take all events recorded in Bible as historically accurate—values science & rational thought—male & female clergy

Conservative Judaism a reaction against what many saw as the excesses of Reform Judaism—followers keep kosher & observe Sabbath, though not necessarily as scrupulously as Orthodox (e.g., having separate pots & pans for meat & milk dishes)—male & female clergy

Reconstructionist Judaism the most recent & smallest Jewish group—reject idea of personal God, but value Jewish laws & customs, which they feel free to adapt to modern points of view—male & female clergy

3 traditional feasts:

- Passover (Pesah): Nisan 15 (March-April)—recalls deliverance from Egypt under Moses, preservation of firstborn from angel of death—unleavened bread, cups of

wine, empty chair & cup of wine for Elijah (forerunner of messiah)—Song of Songs read

- Weeks (Shavuot): Sivan 7 (May-June), 7 weeks after Passover—first-fruits of harvest—book of Ruth read
- Booths (Sukkoth): Tishri 15 (Sep-Oct)—harvest festival, commemorates Israel's years in wilderness after exodus—book of Qohelet read

High Holy Days:

- New Year (Rosh Hashanah): Tishri 1 (Sep-Oct)—blowing shofar, prayer
- Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur): Tishri 10 (Sep-Oct)—only fast day prescribed in Tanakh, introspection, prayer, sexual abstinence

other holy days:

- Sabbath: prayers, lighting candles, no work, family meal, synagogue
- Ninth of Ab (July-August): day of fasting in commemoration of destruction of temples & exile of Jews from Eretz Israel—Lamentations read
- Hannukah: Kislev 25 (Nov-Dec): celebrates rededication of temple under Judas Maccabeus, gifts, lighting of Menorah
- Purim: Adar 14 (Feb-March): celebrates deliverance of Jews from plot to destroy them in ancient Persian Empire—gifts, charity to poor—book of Esther read

bar/bat mitzvah—son/daughter of commandment—coming of age ritual, involving reading of Hebrew, gifts, family celebration

Theodor Herzl (1860-1904, Austria-Hungary) & Zionism—studied law, became journalist/writer—secular Jew, considered himself an atheist—saw rising anti-Semitism in Europe & concluded that it couldn't be overcome, only avoided, so advocated mass movement of Jews to traditional Jewish homeland, then part of Ottoman Empire (*Der Judenstaat*, 1896)—opposed by many religious Jews, who didn't like his anti-clerical ideas and thought the movement threatened full Jewish integration into European society

Jewish reactions to Shoah (Holocaust):

- God's punishment for sin (unspecified, rise of Reform & other new forms of Judaism, Zionism [Jews should have waited for the messiah])
- Jews were innocent victims, sacrificed to test their faith (e.g., Binding of Isaac)
- Jews suffer to bear the sins of other people (Suffering Servant)
- God hides himself from world
- test of belief in God's existence (Job)
- God didn't cause Holocaust, people did, because of free will

- Holocaust proves that God doesn't exist
- Holocaust has destroyed the covenant between God and Israel, so Jews now take on a new, voluntary relationship to God
- Jews need to rethink their ideas of God, because perhaps God is not all-powerful or all-knowing, and thus neither responsible for Holocaust nor able to prevent it from happening
- some Jews have chosen to keep silent, as the only thinkable response to the unthinkable

Christianity

Christianity began as reform movement in Judaism, based on identification of Jesus of Nazareth as long-awaited messiah (Gk= Christ)—earliest Christians Jews, like Jesus, but by end of 1st C Christianity had become predominantly Gentile (non-Jewish) religion—three main branches: **Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant**—other smaller groups as well, both ancient & modern

Jesus: born sometime around 6 BCE, if correlation with Herod the Great accepted, at any rate sometime between about 10 BCE and 10 CE—grew up in Nazareth, a town in hill country of Galilee—spoke Aramaic, and possibly some Greek or Hebrew as well—identified as carpenter or craftsman, so from lower class of Jews, i.e., a peasant—baptized by John the Baptist at beginning of public ministry, which lasted anywhere from one (Synoptics) to three (John) years—died around 30 CE, crucified by Romans during governorship of Pontius Pilate—Jesus' followers claimed that Jesus had been raised from dead by power of God & had appeared to many people, starting with Mary Magdalene, but also Jesus' disciples (the Twelve), his brother James, & others—outside NT, also mentioned by Jewish historian Josephus & Roman historians Tacitus & Suetonius

after Jesus' death (& resurrection), Christianity led in Jerusalem by **James**, brother of Jesus, & disciples, who spread gospel (good news) of God's love for humankind as demonstrated in Jesus' life, death, & resurrection first to Jews & soon to Gentiles as well—foremost disciple was **Simon Peter**, the leader of the Twelve—an early Jewish convert to Christianity was **Paul** (aka Saul) of Tarsus, whose experience with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus transformed his life—although Jew, he soon specialized in taking gospel to Gentiles, to the extent that he became known as the Apostle to the Gentiles—Paul & others were so successful in the Gentile mission that Gentiles outnumbered Jews among Christians within 100 years of Jesus' death

within two generation of Jesus' death, the following teachings about Jesus widely accepted among Christians:

- identity as messiah in accordance with OT scripture
- in unique relationship with God
- virgin birth in Bethlehem
- sinless life
- miracle worker & healer
- crucifixion as Atonement for sins of the world

- resurrection from the dead as proof of victory over death and Satan
- ascension to right hand of God in heaven
- eventual return to earth to bring an end to human history
- later Christians saw Jesus as both fully divine and fully human, second person in divine Trinity

the **Virgin Mary**, mother of Jesus, conceived by power of Holy Spirit, without marital relations with husband Joseph—two different versions of story of Mary’s miraculous conception & Jesus’ birth in gospels of Matthew & Luke—later tradition spoke of Mary’s perpetual virginity, her Immaculate Conception (i.e., Mary without sin as well as Jesus), & her bodily ascension to heaven—these doctrines official doctrines of RCC & widely accepted among Orthodox, but rejected by Protestants

Christians accept existence of good angels & evil demons, who follow either God or Satan—Catholic & Orthodox Christians identify various deceased Christians as saints who live in heaven & make intercession with God for living Christians

Jesus seen as fulfillment of various OT prophecies about messiah:

- Your [David’s] house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever (2 Sam 7:16)
- wonderful child: Isa 7:14 (virgin birth, Immanuel), Isa 9:2-7 (Prince of Peace), Isa 11:1-9 (righteous ruler)
- suffering servant (Isa 42:1-9; 52:13-53:12; Ps 22:1-22a)
- ruling king (Num 24:17-19; Ps 2:7-9; Ps 110:1-4; Mic 5:2-5a; Jer 23:5-6; Zech 9:9-10)

earliest Christians accepted Hebrew Bible as scripture (Law & Prophets, along with unspecified other books) but also gradually came to accept other, specifically Christian writings, which came to be called NT—these books written in Greek in 1st & perhaps early 2nd C & attributed to people like Jesus’ disciples Matthew, John, & Peter; other early Christians such as Mark, Luke, Paul, & Jesus’ brothers James, & Jude—Jesus himself wrote no books—earliest NT writings the letters of Paul (50-64)—Mark the earliest gospel (65-75), followed by Mt & Lk (80s), then John (90s)—Mk begins with Jesus’ baptism, Mt & Lk with birth, Jn with Jesus’ preexistence & instrumentality in creation

these books not immediately accepted as scripture & no concept of Christian canon until mid-2nd C, because earliest Christians expected Jesus’ imminent return—around 150 **Marcion** proposed canon consisting of Luke & 10 letters of Paul (rejected OT & God of OT as demiurge, believed Jesus the son of previously unknown God, descended from heaven)—another 2nd C Christian named **Montanus** accepted OT & identified himself as continuing prophetic voice of authority equal to apostles—Christians in traditions that were forerunners of orthodoxy (the Great Church) rejected Marcion’s canon as too limited & Montanus’s as too expansive—accepted four gospels, Acts, 13 letters of Paul, & few other books, over which debate continued for several centuries before being

finalized for most Christians by about 6th C—Hebrews, Revelation, & shorter letters like 2 Peter, Jude, 2-3 John last to be universally accepted

other important early Christian writings included letters of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, letter of Polycarp to Corinthians & Martyrdom of Polycarp, Epistle of Barnabas, letters attributed to Clement of Rome, & a few others such as Shepherd of Hermas—these books ultimately excluded from canon, though accepted as valuable—many additional writings by early Christians, including many gospels (maybe 3 dozen or so known today) such as Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Mary (Magdalene), Gospel of Judas, Gospel of the Hebrews, Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Peter, Apocalypse of Peter, Preaching of Peter, etc., etc.

as Christianity began to spread among Greek-speaking world & other Gentiles, question of Christianity's relation to Judaism & Greco-Roman philosophical systems arose—**Tertullian**, lawyer from N Africa at end of 2nd C, asked “what is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem? Between the Academy [of Plato] and the Church?” rejecting value of Greek philosophy for Christians—2nd C Christians like **Justin Martyr** & **Clement of Alexandria** saw Christianity as pinnacle of philosophies, but still saw philosophy as schoolmaster for Greeks, just as law had been schoolmaster for Jews—**Origen** of Alexandria in early 3rd C agreed on value of philosophical traditions such as Platonism & Stoicism, but he put more emphasis on importance of scripture, both OT & NT, which was still being finalized

incorrect to speak of **orthodoxy & heresy** in first three Christian centuries, because wide diversity of opinion & practice, ranging from **Docetists**, who said Jesus was purely divine & only seemed to have a physical body, to **Ebionites**, a Jewish-Christian group who said Jesus was purely human, to **Gnostics**, who said Jesus had imparted secret wisdom to his followers that taught how to let the divine spark of the soul escape the physical confines of the body & attain salvation—earliest form of Christianity in many places reflected a form that would later be considered heretical—proof of impossibility of speaking of orthodoxy in earliest Christianity is that important early Christian leaders like Tertullian & Origen had ideas that were later condemned as heretical, though they themselves were not condemned (though denied sainthood)

for one form of Christianity to achieve ascendancy, it would require four things:

- ancient pedigree
- sizeable following
- persuasive communication tools
- effective enforcement mechanism

church in Rome had the first three from the 1st C & the fourth by the time of emperor Constantine in the early 4th C: Peter & Paul; largest city in empire so most Christians; creed, canon, apostolic succession; power of the state—besides Rome, other important early centers of Christianity included Alexandria, Antioch, & later Constantinople

conflict among Christians over matters of doctrine carried out via debates, letters, & other forms of writing—conflict with Roman Empire, which considered Christianity an illegal religion led to sporadic outbreaks of localized persecution in first 200+ years, such as **Nero's** persecution of Christians in Rome, which resulted in deaths of Peter & Paul, & waves of persecution that took lives of Christians in Gaul, Antioch, & Smyrna—no great empire-wide persecutions of Christians until **Crisis of Third Century** (235-284), when 25 Roman emperors ruled over period of 50 years—unrest sometimes blamed on rapid growth of Christianity, which was depriving traditional Roman gods of worshipers—first empire-wide persecution under **Decius** (249-251), then Valerian (253-260), after which widespread persecution stopped for 40+ years—**Great Persecution of Diocletian** broke out in 303 & continued until 311, when co-emperors Galerius & Licinius issue **Edict of Toleration**, followed in 313 by Constantine & Licinius's **Edict of Milan**, which made Christianity a legal religion, and in fact the favored religion (though not yet the official religion)—Constantine, who had converted to Christianity at time of Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 (dream of chi-rho), rebuilt churches, restored confiscated property, restored Christians to public office, & had copies of Christian scriptures created at empire's expense—after Constantine became sole emperor in 324, he summoned council of bishops to **Nicaea** in 325 to settle matters of doctrinal difference among Christians, such as date of Easter, question of bishops transferring from see to see, & esp. question of relationship between divine & human in Christ (Arianism said Jesus first created being, though greatest of creation—majority of Christians said Jesus uncreated & coeternal with God)—produced Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten (γεννηθέντα), not made, being of one substance (ὁμοούσιον, *consubstantialem*) with the Father. By whom all things were made, both which be in heaven and in earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down [from heaven] and was incarnate and was made man. He suffered and the third day he rose again, and ascended into heaven. And he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And [we believe] in the Holy Spirit.

Augustine: greatest Christian thinker in post-Constantinian era for at least 800 years—developed doctrine of **Trinity**, defined as three persons in one substance—wrote *City of God* on eve of barbarians overrunning remnants of W Roman Empire, telling Christians to put their hope in the celestial city rather than in human institutions like Rome—voluminous writer, but perhaps most influential was *Confessions*, which begins with sentence “Our heart is inquiet until it finds rest in you”—first great autobiography ever written—also interesting discussion of time & eternity in relation to God & universe in book 11

Council of Chalcedon (451): after Nicaea discussion of relationship of divine & human in Christ continued, with different people & groups advocating different points of view (see DivineHuman.pdf)—orthodox position defined at Chalcedon, saying that Christ had a fully human nature and a fully divine nature, “without confusion, without mutability, without division, without separation”

Charlemagne: fall of W Roman Empire to Germanic tribes (last emperor overthrown in 476) didn't end power of Christianity, because first Goths, then several other Germanic tribes had already become Christian—most powerful Germanic tribe the Franks became Christian when **Clovis** converted in 496, eventually leading to Christianization of Europe—Clovis's greatest successor as king of the Franks was Charlemagne, who was crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas Day 800

Byzantine Empire: Constantine had moved capital from Rome to Byzantium, renaming it Constantinople, in 330, & E Roman & Byzantine Empires persisted until 1453—greatest Byzantine emperor **Justinian** (527-565), who codified Roman law for use in his empire—Byzantine emperors the dominant power in E Christendom, appointing patriarchs of Constantinople, unlike in W, where bishops of Rome (popes) eventually more powerful than individual kings or even emperors

monasticism: because of its connection with strains of Greek philosophy that were dualistic, seeing soul as good but body as evil (similar to Gnosticism & Manicheism), Christianity has had strong ascetic streak from at least 2nd C, possibly even 1st (Paul: "I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified," 1 Cor 9:27)—mass movement of Christians to desert in 3rd C, because they saw Christians living in cities & towns too lax—at first great individual ascetics like **Anthony** of Egypt (lived 85 years in desert, to age of 105) & **Simeon Stylites** (37 years on pole outside Aleppo)—gave way to **communities** founded, following strict rules like those of Benedict & Basil the Great—new orders & monasteries founded when earlier orders & monasteries seen as too lax (e.g., Cluniacs & Cistercians)—13th C saw rise of first two **mendicant orders**, outside monasteries: **Franciscans** & **Dominicans**—joined in 16th C by **Jesuits**

rise of **papacy:** although RCC claims Peter as first pope, church in Rome founded more than 20 years before Peter's arrival by unknown people, although both Peter & Paul martyred in Rome about 64 after Great Fire—earliest leaders of Roman church ruled collegially, but eventually a single bishop emerged as in other places—first bishop worthy of title pope **Leo I the Great** (440-461), who asserted his authority over other bishops in W and E alike, & also convinced Attila the Hun to turn away from city of Rome—bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, & Constantinople recognized authority of bishop of Rome over W bishops, but not over E bishops—in aftermath of fall of Rome to barbarians, bishop of Rome the only authority standing from earlier times—several powerful popes like **Gregory I the Great** (590-604), reformer of Christian liturgy who sent first Christian missionary (Augustine of Canterbury) to England in 597, led W church—later medieval popes included **Pope Gregory VII** (1073-1085), who reformed the papacy & forced HRE Henry IV to kneel in snow outside castle in Canossa in N Italy for three days to lift order of excommunication, & **Pope Boniface VIII** (1294-1303), who claimed that outside church of Rome there was no salvation & that every person should be subject to pope (placed in 8th Circle of Hell by Dante, among simoniacs)

Great Schism: different languages in E & W (Greek vs. Latin), different cultures, & increasingly outlandish claims by popes led to Great Schism in 1054, when pope &

patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated one another—schism never healed, though mutual anthemas lifted in recent years

scholasticism: rise of cathedral schools & then universities in 12th C gave opportunity for brilliant thinkers like **Peter Abelard** to gather students & teach for a living—Abelard wrote *Sic et Non*, in which he collected varied opinions of earlier Christian thinkers about various philosophical & theological subjects, setting the stage for scholasticism (better known by most people today for his love affair with Heloise)—greatest scholastic teacher was **Thomas Aquinas** of University of Paris, who wrote *Summa Theologica* about 1274, which dealt with many different theological issues (existence of God, eternity of soul, etc.) following formula still used today in forensic debate: statements, counterstatements, arguments in favor of each & against each, etc.

fall of Byzantine Empire: fell to Ottoman Turks in 1453 after centuries of Muslim expansion

Protestant Reformation: widespread call for reform within church led **Martin Luther**, an Augustinian monk & professor at University of Wittenburg, to post *95 Theses* on door of church on Oct 31, 1517, calling for debate over such issues as whether indulgences were effective & whether pope had power to forgive sins—escaped arrest & protected by powerful allies, esp. Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony—translated Bible into German, so many people heard Bible in their own language for first time (other earlier attempts like Wycliffe in England incomplete)—**John Calvin** in Geneva established second Protestant stronghold, began Reformed movement within Protestantism—general agreement with Luther in many areas, but more emphasis on predestination & saw Christ as only symbolically present in Eucharist—spread throughout N Europe, & eventually dominant in N America as well—**Church of England** formed in 1534, when King Henry VIII wanted a divorce from his wife Catherine of Aragon so he could marry Anne Boleyn—English Civil War & Cromwell’s Protectorate (1642-1660) furthered cause of Protestants in England—further diversity among Protestants with formation of groups like Methodists, Baptists, Disciples of Christ

Vatican I & II—RCC reacted to Protestant Reformation by reforming papacy again, establishing canon of scripture that included deuterocanonical/apocryphal books, & condemning Protestants as heretics (**Council of Trent**, 1545-1563)—**Vatican I** (1869-1870) declared papal infallibility, thus making reunion with Orthodox & Protestants more difficult—**Vatican II** (1962-1965) reached out to other Christians & even people of other faiths, acknowledging their sincerity of belief & their possession of some elements of truth—condemned anti-Semitism—established liturgy in vernacular languages

Protestant Christianity continued to develop in different & often conflicting ways—Liberalism & Neo-Orthodoxy accepted modern methods of reading Bible & aspects of modern culture—Fundamentalism rejected all forms of modernism & proclaimed infallibility of Bible—Pentecostalism saw new movement of Holy Spirit in life of church, manifested especially in practice of speaking in tongues (Azusa Street Revival, 1906)—more recently many Protestant churches have become more inclusive of women and

LGBT community, including female & gay priests & bishops in some denominations—other Protestant groups, such as Evangelicals, reject both

ecumenical movement: movement among Protestants to find common beliefs & practices led to birth of Ecumenical Movement, which gave birth to WCC in 1948—now includes most mainstream Protestant denominations (but not SBC, largest Protestant group in US) & Orthodox churches, with RCC having observer status

Islam

Islam an Arabic word meaning submission, and Muslim the participial form, “one who submits”

in early 7th C some inhabitants of Arabian peninsula accepted Judaism, Christianity (Monophysite & Nestorian), Zoroastrianism, as well as traditional Arab religion—traditional religion worshiped spirits associated with natural features (stones, trees, etc.)—also believed in *jinn* (genies), invisible beings that could help or harm humans or inspire a diviner or poet—also recognized range of higher gods, with chief named Allah (cf. Canaanite El)—Kaaba a sanctuary for Allah in Mecca, an important city on caravan trade route between Yemen in S (also indirectly Ethiopia) and Persian & Byzantine Empires in N & important pilgrimage site for many Arab tribes—sanctuaries for other gods also in Mecca

Muhammad born in 570 in Mecca into Quraysh tribe—father died before his birth, mother when he was young child, so raised by grandfather, then later his uncle—at 25 Muhammad married Khadija, wealthy widow in the caravan trade, who was 40—several children, but no other wives (a common practice) during Khadija’s lifetime, though several afterwards—in 610, at age 40, began to have visions of angel Gabriel with messages from Allah, the chief Arabic god, who revealed himself as the one true God, identified with the God of Jews & Christians—although afraid at first, assured by Khadija & a Christian relative that revelation from angel Gabriel—began to gather followers, such as Khadija, his cousin Ali ibn Abu Talib (the uncle who raised him & leader of Muhammad’s clan, the Hashemites or Banu Hashim), and his friend Abu Bakr—Sunnis consider Abu Talib an unbeliever, though a protector of Muhammad, while Shia consider him a faithful Muslim

after death of both Abu Talib and Khadija in 619, Muhammad sought another place to live, but unable to find any—in 622 representatives of Yathrib, a city 230 N of Mecca, asked Muhammad to come as mediator in tribal disputes—Muhammad & most of his followers left Mecca for Yathrib, narrowly avoiding an assassination attempt—this event called the *Hijra* (emigration), and became year 1 in the Muslim calendar—city later called Madinat al-Nabi (city of the Prophet), or Medina for short—gradually came to rule Medina, organizing its tribes into a union called an *umma*, a community based on common faith & commitment rather than heredity or geography (& thus a challenge to tribal loyalties)—began raiding caravans bound for Mecca in order to attain financial support & reduce influence of Mecca—several battles with Meccan troops over next few years—agreed to 10-year truce in 628, allowing Muslims to make pilgrimage to Mecca

without opposition—Muhammad continued to spread message of Islam to surrounding tribes, with result that in 630 Muhammad was able to capture Mecca, which put up little resistance—Muhammad became ruler of Mecca, & other surrounding tribes pledged allegiance to Muhammad & Islam—pagan tribes banned from pilgrimage to Mecca—Muhammad died two years later in 632

according to most Muslims, as well as most modern scholars, Muhammad did not name a successor, so when he died the leaders of the community appointed **Abu Bakr**, Muhammad's friend, to be the first caliph (successor) over *umma* (community)—during his rule rest of Arabian tribes accepted Islam

succeeded by **Umar** (634-644), Abu Bakr's designated successor—under his rule Muslim armies captures Syria (inc. Jerusalem) & Egypt from Byzantine Empire & Iraq & part of Iran from Sasanian Empire—Umar assassinated by a Persian slave

succeeded by **Uthman** (644-656), a member of the Umayyad clan, one of the last Meccan clans to acknowledge Islam during Muhammad's lifetime—completed conquest of Sasanian Empire in 651—Uthman had Quran compiled in present form & differing copies destroyed—accused by enemies of favoring members of his clan, & revolt occurred in 656, during which Uthman was killed—this led to civil war (*fitna*, temptation or trial)

Muslims in Medina chose **Ali** ibn Abu Talib, Muhammad's cousin & son-in-law (married to his daughter Fatima)—many Muslims believed Ali should have been first caliph, because he was a member of Muhammad's family & named by prophet—Aisha, Muhammad's youngest & favorite wife (after death of Khadija), wanted Ali to punish those who had murdered Uthman, but Ali unable or unwilling to do so, so Aisha backed members of Umayyad clan who did punish assassins—Ali assassinated in 661, & Muawiya, a member of the Umayyad clan, chosen caliph by majority—Ali was last of the four **rightly guided caliphs**

at this point minority of Muslims, the Shia, split off from larger community—they supported Ali as caliph/imam (guide) from beginning

under Muslim rule, Jews and Christians fared well, as they were identified as “people of the book”—eventually spread into E Europe & Anatolia

revelations from Allah passed down orally at first, but written down after Muhammad's death in authoritative form about 650—standard form accepted today edited during reign of Uthman, who destroyed copies with variant readings, although some exist today (inc. palimpsests)—unlike other religious traditions, Quran viewed as being direct revelation from God through angel Gabriel to Muhammad, who memorized content & passed it on to his followers in oral form before it was written down—divided into 114 chapters, or suras, organized from longest to shortest, except for short introductory sura 1—for Muslims, true study of Quran must be in Arabic, for translations into other languages offer only imperfect guidance to the faithful—in Muslim tradition, every prophet's message confirmed by a miracle, & Muhammad's miracle was the Quran—for Muslims,

the Quran, as the very words of God, is the point at which God is most fully present in the world (as opposed to Christianity, which views Christ as the incarnation of God)—many Muslims view Quran as uncreated rather than created, thus paralleling early debates about Christ in Christianity—similar to traditional Jewish understanding of Torah of Moses—Arabic word for verse in Quran is *aya*, which also means sign or miracle

Muhammad viewed by Muslims as last and greatest in long line of prophets, starting with Adam and including many from the Hebrew Bible, such as Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishaq (Isaac), Ismail (Ishmael), Musa (Moses), Daniel, Yahya (John the Baptist), and Isa (Jesus, who is born of a virgin but not divine part of Trinity)—25 named prophets in Quran—not an object of worship: “I am a human being like you. It is revealed to me that your God is one God. Let him who hopes to meet his Lord do what is right and worship none beside him” (18:111)—when speaking of Muhammad, Muslims typically say, “May Allah bless him and grant him peace,” whereas for other prophets & companions of Muhammad, “Peace be upon him” and “God be pleased with him,” bzw.—sometimes called “the best of creation” & viewed as sinless by many Muslims, including refusal to participate in Meccan idolatry before his call to be a prophet

sunna means “a trodden path,” & used to refer to words & deeds of prophet Muhammad, distinct from Quran, which are direct words of God, but important & normative for Muslims nonetheless—these *sunnan* preserved in thousands of *hadiths*, traditional reports about Muhammad backed up by chains of authority (p. 73) (cf. Mishna & Talmud, some medieval Christian commentaries & *Sic et Non*)—include commentary on Quran, legal mandates, prescribed rituals, descriptions of Prophet’s character, notes about creation or eschatology, theological comments, etc.—number of hadiths multiplied in first two centuries after Muhammad & gathered into several collections—later scholars examined them (maybe 200,000 hadiths) & divided them into sound, good, and weak, in descending order of reliability—some sound hadiths further identified as certain

Five Pillars of Islam:

- creed (*shahada*): There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of God
- prayer: five times daily, facing Mecca (specifically the Kaaba)—dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, just after sunset, evening
- almsgiving (*zakah*): traditionally 2.5% of wealth above a certain minimum
- fasting during Ramadan—ends with *Id at-Fitr* feast
- pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca once in lifetime, if possible

another important concept was *jihad*, which meant struggle, but some took to mean holy war

God (Allah) is One and has no partner—“He is Allah, One, Allah, the everlasting refuge, he has not begotten nor has he been begotten, and equal to him is none”—99 names for God (some variations in lists of 99 names), including Merciful, Compassionate, Helper—doctrine of oneness of God called *tawhid*—opposite is *shirk*, ascribing partners to Allah

(polytheism), such as the three daughters attributed to Allah in traditional Meccan pre-Islamic tradition

faith (*iman*) the most important requirement for humans—in Quran, Muhammad's followers most frequently called *mumin*, those who are faithful

prophets central to Muslim theology—25 named prophets in Quran, mostly corresponding to people named in HB & Jesus—many others not named (one tradition says 124,000)—Ibrahim particularly important, because he rejected his father's idolatry & recognized the *tawhid* of God

Muslims see angels as servants & messengers of God—*jinn*, beings made of invisible fire, may be good or bad & may help or harm humans—Quran records story of group of *jinn* converted by hearing Quran recited—one named *jinni* is **Iblis** (devil) or Shaytan (Satan), who refused God's command for all created beings to bow down to Adam, so thrown out of heaven but allowed to tempt humans

final judgment on Last Day results in people being sent either to Paradise or the Fire (hell)—traditionally men granted the company of 72 virgins (good hadith; Quran doesn't specify number), while women are granted one husband

Muawiya founder of **Umayyad dynasty** in 661—idea was that there should be a single ruler of entire Muslim *umma*, and at first that was largely the case, but extensive geographic expansion eventually led to more than one caliph at a time, even among Sunnis

after death of Ali, Shia supported first Hassan, then Husayn, Ali's sons—Shia continued to support members of Muhammad's family as imams until 12th imam, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan, who was hidden by God in 941 but will return as **Mahdi** (messianic figure) alongside Isa (Jesus)

Ali's second son **Husayn** revolted against Muawiya and was killed in battle at Karbala in Iraq in 680—other attempted rebellions also failed, & caliphs continued to come from descendants and relatives of Muawiya—Abd al-Malik strengthened the institution of the state (as opposed to the caliph as an individual) and made Arabic the official language of the Umayyad Empire—he also built the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem—although empire extensive, outside Arabia most subjects were not yet Muslims—they were called *dhimmis*, who had to pay *jizya* (tax on non-Muslims) but were allowed self-rule—during Umayyad period Muslim scholars studied Quran & hadith, & also began to develop Islamic law (*fiqh*), theology (*kalam*), and philosophy (*falsafah*)

in 711 **Tariq ibn Ziyad** led a raiding party from Gibraltar into the Iberian Peninsula, defeating the Visigothic king Roderic—subsequent raids found little substantive resistance, & by 717 they had conquered most of the peninsula & even crossed the Pyrenees, finally meeting resistance from Odo, Duke of Aquitaine, at the Battle of Toulouse in 721 and Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace, at the Battle of Tours in 732—land was called Al-Andalus—initially part of Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus, later

Caliphate of Córdoba—only Christian kingdom to survive was the small Kingdom of Asturias in the far N—parts of Iberian Peninsula remained in Muslim hands until 1492

Umayyads succeeded in 750 by **Abbasids**, another Arab clan indirectly tied to Muhammad, who revolted against Umayyads—treated both Arab and non-Arab Muslims equally (unlike Umayyads, who favored Arabs), & moved capital from Damascus to **Baghdad**—Caliph **Harun al-Rashid** (796-809) established library called Bayt al-Hikma, “house of wisdom,” in Baghdad, & science & arts flourished—Greek & Syriac philosophical works translated into Arabic, including works of Aristotle—in 9th & 10th C independent caliphates & sultanates arose, sometimes paying lip service to Abbasid caliphs and sometimes not—rival caliphates both Sunni & Shia—Fatimids were Shia group that ruled over Egypt for 200 years from 969 to 1171

in 1099 army of W Christians (called Franks by Muslims) captured Jerusalem & held it for about 90 years—also established Crusader states around Antioch, Edessa, and Tripoli—Jerusalem recaptured in 1187 by **Saladin** (Salah al-Din), the Fatimid ruler of Egypt & Syria & and Kurd—Saladin impressed W Christian rulers, who described him as model of chivalry—Saladin eventually aligned his dynasty (**Ayyubid**) with Sunnis—Christian armies encountered a culture much more advanced in arts, sciences, philosophy, & mathematics than their own, & their contacts with Muslims both in E & in Al-Andalus led to so-called Renaissance of 12th C & then Florentine Renaissance of 14th C—Muslims eventually driven out of Al-Andalus (the Reconquista) & Sicily, but retained foothold in parts of E Europe—meanwhile expanded further S in Africa (& down E coast) & N & E in Asia

Avicenna (Ibn Sina, 980-1037) a Persian prodigy, who mastered logic, math, physics, & medicine while still in his teens—published first of 5 encyclopedias in his lifetime when he was 20—in great demand as physician, working in courts of sultans—later philosophical encyclopedia treated logic, physics, math, & metaphysics—included ideas from Aristotle but also significant developments of those ideas—translated into Latin in Toledo in 1150, introducing ideas of Aristotle into W—placed by Dante among virtuous pagans in Limbo

Averroes (ibn Rushd, 1126-1198) born in Córdoba, center of scholarly interaction among Muslims, Jews, & Christians—wrote defenses of philosophy in Muslim setting, which was attacked by conservative scholars as contrary to the faith—produced 38 commentaries on writings of Aristotle, & thus was known in W as “The Interpreter” or “The Commentator” (of Aristotle, himself known as “The Philosopher” from 13th C)—wrote three types of commentaries on each book of Aristotle: short (summary), long (commentary on every sentence), & medium (popularized version of long commentary)—translated into Hebrew & Latin in W starting in 13th C—placed by Dante among virtuous pagans in Limbo

Muhammad ibn Musa **al-Khwarizmi** (c. 780-c. 850) a Persian mathematician, adopted Hindu number system by 825 in his book *On the Calculation with Hindu Numerals*, based on work of Indian mathematicians about 500—used nine different symbols (later adding 0) & positional notation to represent numbers & do calculations—also wrote *The*

Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing, inventing algebra (*al-jabr* = completion)—translated into Latin by Robert of Chester about 1140—allowed geometric ideas of Greeks (still current in medieval Europe, based on construction of circles & measurements) to be expressed using notation that could in turn be manipulated using standard arithmetic & higher order math—idea of “completion” comes from algorithms (based on al-Khwarizmi) for solving linear equations by moving quantities from one side of equation to the other—also introduced notion of quadratic equations & gave methods for solving them (modern arithmetic & algebraic notation not invented until modern period)—also calculated trigonometric tables

Muslim mystics the Sufis arose in Middle Ages—Sufis seek to turn away from sin, love of this world, search for fame, obedience to Satanic influence—Sufis pay attention to certain *hadiths* of mystical nature—different orders of Sufis trace their origins either to Muhammad or to one of his immediate successors (the Rightly Guided caliphs)—although Sufism embraced by many within both Sunni & Shia traditions, opposed by strict versions of Islam such as Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia

Rumi (1207-1273) a Persian poet, judge, Sufi mystic—invention of whirling dance attributed to Rumi—believed that music, poetry, & dance were paths leading to God—said love is the only precept of religion

in early 13th C Mongols under Genghis Khan invaded from E, sacking Baghdad & executing last Abbasid caliph—Mongols originally Nestorian Christian, Buddhist, or shamanistic, but converted to Islam by late 13th C—another group of nomads E of Muslim lands, the Turks, converted to Islam, founded Ottoman Empire, & defeated Byzantine Empire, capturing Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1453—Ottomans peaked under Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), then long period of decline, until empire disbanded after WWI—various Arab tribes revolted against Ottoman Turks in 1916-18, inspired by British officer T. E. Lawrence, & declared independence, eventually resulting in formation of Saudi Arabia—also in aftermath of dissolution of Ottoman Empire was Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922), led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, first president of Turkey and “father” of the Turks—Iranian Revolution in 1979 led to establishment of Islamic state under leadership of **Ayatollah Khomeini**—other revolutions (Arab Spring) have led to political shakeups & democratic movements, but not yet any stable Arab democracies in Middle East or N Africa

Islam dominant today in SW & SC Asia, Pakistan, N & E Africa, & Indonesia, the most populous predominantly Muslim country—Sunnis comprise between 85 & 90% of Muslims worldwide, & Shia 10 or 15%

Muhammad’s “**Night Journey**” to Jerusalem & the seven heavens on white horse Al-Buraq on one night in the year before the Hijra—short version in Quran, longer version in hadiths—Muhammad is taken by Jibril (Gabriel) first from Mecca to the farthest mosque, Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem (this part of journey is called **Isra**) & from there to the various gates of heaven (this part of journey the **Miraj**, or ladder), where he meets Adam, Isa (Jesus) & Yahyah (JB), Yusuf (Joseph), Idris (identified with Enoch), Harun (Aaron), Musa (Moses), Ibrahim (Abraham)—Jibril then shows him the house of Allah with

70,000 angels who pray there daily, only to be replaced by 70,000 more the next day—then saw tree called Sidrat al-Muntaha that marks the boundary of heaven beyond which no created being can pass (metaphorical of boundary of human wisdom about Allah)—Allah then told Muhammad that his followers should pray 50 times per day—on his return Muhammad encountered Musa, who told him that 50 was too many for his people, based on his own experience, and that he should ask Allah to reduce the number—Muhammad returned to Allah, who reduced the number of prayers to 40, then 30, 20, 10, and eventually 5—Jerusalem the third holiest city in Islam, after Mecca and Medina—celebrated as Lailat al Miraj, “the night of the ladder,” by Muslims

shariah is literally “a path to water,” & means God’s will for humans—*fiqh* is understanding, so human understanding of *shariah*—5 valuations of *shariah*: obligatory, recommended, permissible, reprehensible, forbidden (*haram*)

some Muslims carry a *misbaha* or *sibha*, a string of prayer beads similar to Christian rosary—usually 33 or 99 beads to recite 99 names of Allah

Muslims traditionally eat only *halal* foods, primarily avoiding pork and eating other meat that has been slaughtered according to certain procedures such as slitting the throat and draining the blood

Muslims traditionally avoid alcohol—hadith about Muhammad being offered glass of wine & glass of milk by angel Gabriel during his Night Journey, & Muhammad wisely chose milk—Gabriel says, “If you had chosen wine, your nation would have gone astray”