

## CHAPTER 2: The Development of Islamic Civilization to the Fifteenth Century

### 20 Multiple-Choice Questions

For these questions, select the most appropriate response.

1. What process created the most significant agricultural revolution in world history between the adoption of sedentary agriculture and the European discovery of the Americas?

- A) The transfer of crops from China to the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin
- \*B) The transfer of crops from India to the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin**
- C) The transfer of crops from Africa to the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin
- D) The transfer of crops from Europe to the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin

2. Through their conquests and settlement of diverse climatic regions and the establishment of vast trading networks, the Arabs served as catalysts for \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) intense overpopulation
- \*B) an agricultural revolution**
- C) commercial stagnation
- D) political instability

3. The Muslim day of communal worship is

- A) Sunday
- B) Saturday
- C) Wednesday
- \*D) Friday**

4. With whom did Muhammad associate the origins of the shrine Ka'ba in Mecca?

- \*A) Abraham**
- B) Gabriel
- C) The ummah
- D) Early Baghdad merchants

5. Muslims who believed that the successors to Muhammad should come from within his own family and who believed Muhammad chose his son-in-law and cousin, Ali, to succeed him as caliph are \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) Sunnis
- B) Wahhabis
- C) fundamentalists
- \*D) Shi'as**

6. The Five Pillars of Faith include prayer, fasting, the pilgrimage to Mecca, alms (charity), and \_\_\_\_\_.

A) *jihad*

**\*B) the proclamation of faith**

C) *sunnah*

D) adherence to *shari'ah*

7. In 1258 the Mongol invasions destroyed \_\_\_\_\_, which was formerly an important center of commercial and intellectual life, as well as the symbolic center of Islam at the time.

A) Mecca

B) Medina

C) Damascus

**\*D) Baghdad**

8. In 1260, which forces defeated the Mongols?

**\*A) the Mamluks**

B) the Seljuks

C) the armies of Timur Lang

D) the Quraysh

9. At the beginning of the ninth century, which city was under the Abbasid administration?

A) Tripoli

B) Fez

C) Tunis

**\*D) Samarkand**

10. During the Abbasid Empire, high Islamic society's intellectual adventures were limited to poetry and the arts.

A) False. High Islamic society preferred Greek philosophy over poetry and the arts.

**\*B) False. Scholars, mathematicians, chemists, physicians and others were recruited by Abbasid administrators and made appearances in high courts.**

C) True. Only religious poetry and art were allowed to be transported along the caravan routes and sea-lanes.

D) True. Secular ideas were not a part of high Islamic society.

11. Which city came to be seen as a global center of commerce, art, and intellect between the ninth and thirteenth centuries?

**\*A) Baghdad**

B) Damascus

C) Mecca

D) Jerusalem

12. The Abbasid conquests of diverse climatic regions and the establishment of vast trading networks led to which of the following developments?

- A) The growth of large urban centers
- B) The development of an international market
- C) An agricultural revolution
- \*D) All of the answers are correct

13. Which of the following does NOT accurately describe the Islamic concept of *jihad*?

- \*A) It is one of the five pillars of faith in Islam
- B) It has been invoked by modern movements as an instrument of political protest
- C) It can refer to an individual's internal struggle against sinful inclinations
- D) It can refer to exceptional efforts performed on behalf of the Islamic community

14. Muslims believe that Muhammad is:

- A) The only prophet of God
- \*B) The last prophet of God
- C) The first prophet of God
- D) A physical manifestation of God on Earth

15. Which of the following most accurately describes Sufism?

- \*A) It began as an ascetic movement among individuals who opposed the worldliness of the Umayyad court
- B) It focused on formal intellectualism rather than emotional religious experience
- C) Its doctrines were taught in *madrasahs*, where they developed a uniformity that was transmitted across the Islamic world
- D) All of the answers are correct

16. Which of the following men is considered the first prophet in Islam?

- \*A) Abraham
- B) Jesus
- C) Muhammad
- D) Ali

17. Which of the following made significant scholarly contributions to revitalizing ancient Greek works during the reign of al-Ma'mun?

- \*A) Ibn Rushd
- B) Mu'awiyah
- C) Galen
- D) Ibn Battuta

18. Paper manufacturing spread throughout the world of Islam in the late eighth century by way of:

- A) Merchants from China
- B) Minor changes made to the existing parchment and papyrus technology
- \*C) Arab victory over a Chinese naval force**
- D) None of the answers is correct

19. The majority of Shi'a Muslims believe:

- A) That Abu Bakr was the rightful immediate successor to Muhammad
- B) The imamate has continued uninterrupted to the present day
- \*C) The Twelfth Imam disappeared in the ninth century and is expected to return at some point before Judgment Day**
- D) The Hidden Imam is the Ayatollah Khomeini who led the Iranian Revolution of 1979

20. Which of the following empires is seen as having set the stage for the Ottomans later coming to power in Anatolia?

- A) The Mongols
- B) The Mamluks
- C) The Qajars
- \*D) The Seljuks**

### **5 true/false questions**

**For these questions, indicate whether the statement is either *True* or *False*.**

1. According to the Quran, if they can afford it, all Muslims should make the pilgrimage to Mecca and its shrine at least once in their lives.

- \*A) True**
- B) False

2. The fall of the Abbasid Empire in 1258 led to a "dark age" of Islamic culture, because no regional empires/dynasties existed alongside the Abbasid Empire.

- A) True
- \*B) False**

3. Inheritance regulations in the Quran instituted major advances for women by establishing fixed shares of the deceased's estate to wives, daughters, sisters, and grandmothers.

- \*A) True**
- B) False

4. The threat to the Islamic world posed by the European Crusaders in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was greater than that posed by the Mongol conquests of the thirteenth century.

- A) True

\*B) False

5. Sunnis consider Imams to be divinely inspired vessels through which God provided his uninterrupted guidance to human society.

A) True

\*B) False

### **5 fill-in-the-blank questions**

**For these questions, select the correct word or phrase to complete the statement.**

1. Given the breadth of Islam's presence, unique regional practices and interpretations emerged. The \_\_\_\_\_ unites all interpretations of Islam by issuing its core requirements.

A) Quran

2. Disputes over the succession to the caliphate led to a Muslim \_\_\_\_\_ that pitted the supporters of Ali against founders of the Umayyad dynasty.

A) civil war

3. Shi'as consider \_\_\_\_\_ to be divinely inspired; they are the vessels through which God provided his uninterrupted guidance to human society.

A) Imams

4. During the ninth century, \_\_\_\_\_, or Islamic mysticism, evolved into a devotional movement centered on the love of God.

A) Sufism

5. The \_\_\_\_\_, a confederation of Turkish tribes, established domination over Iran by the middle of the eleventh century.

A) Seljuks

### **10 Short Answer Questions**

**For these questions, provide a short, paragraph-length response.**

1. Name and briefly explain the four sources that contribute to *shari'ah*.

A) (1) The Quran. Because it does not address every question that might arise within a society, other sources of law are observed, including (2) the words and actions of the Prophet (*sunnah*), as related to later generations in stories in Hadith. These accounts help assess and guide proper conduct in the lives of Muslims. (3) *Qiyas*, or analogy, is another source of law in addition to the Quran. (4) The consensus of the community (*ijma*) serves as the final supplementary source of *shari'ah*.

2. Explain the obligation of *jihad*.

A) *Jihad* literally means to strive or struggle on the path to God. In its varied definitions, it can refer to an internal struggle against sinful behavior. Alternatively, it has been adopted by some in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Sayyid Qutb and bin Laden, for example) as a term for armed struggle against non-Muslims for the purpose of expanding or defending territory under Muslim rule.

### 3. Briefly describe the Five Pillars of Islam.

A) First is the Proclamation of Faith (*shahadah*), which recognizes the acceptance of Muhammad's role as the final Prophet of God, the Seal of the Prophets, the last in the long line of human beings who had received and transmitted God's word. Second is prayer (*salat*), the act of performing the ritual prayer five times daily at intervals from dawn to sunset. Third is fasting (*sawm*), the practice of abstaining from food, drink, and sexual activity from dawn to dusk during the month of Ramadan, the month in which Muhammad received the first revelations. Fourth is the Pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*), a journey every Muslim—if able—is expected to make. Muhammad integrated the Ka'ba, the existing shrine of Mecca, into Islam, designating it as the key sanctuary of the new faith. Fifth is alms (*zakat*), which is the duty to be charitable to the less fortunate.

### 4. Compare and contrast the status of women in pre-Islamic Arabia and the status of women after Quranic reforms.

A) Quranic reforms concentrated on the areas of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The Quran adjusted dowry payments to profit the bride, thus giving her the legal right to own material wealth. While polygamy was unchecked in pre-Islamic Arabia, the Quran makes note of taking only the number of wives (four) one male can treat equally. The Quran also grants *some* divorce rights to women, and *some* inheritance and economic rights. None of these points are without contention or debate, however.

### 5. Explain the Shi'a/Sunni divide.

A) The Sunni/Shi'a divide is the result of a difference of opinion re: who should hold political leadership in the Islamic community and what the religious dimension of that leadership should be. Sunni Muslims constitute the vast majority of Muslims in the world, and they accept the legality of the selected caliphs. Alternatively, Shi'a Muslims contend that with the exception of Ali and his descendants, all the caliphs (unrelated to the Prophet) were usurpers of power and position.

### 6. Who are the *ulama*? What role do they perform?

A) The *ulama* are religious scholars, jurists, and legal experts who all consult with and make use of the different parts of *shari'ah*—the Quran, the *sunnah*, and *qiyas* - to help form the *ijma*, or consensus of the religious community. They can also be comprised of mosque teachers and prayer leaders. Altogether, they act as official guardians of the scholarly tradition of Islam, upholding traditional religious doctrine as well as regulating the evolution of the religion over time.

7. How did the status of women in the Arabian Peninsula change with the advent of Islam in the territory?

A) Islam altered in a limited yet significant and overall positive way the experience of most women in the Arabian Peninsula. It limited the number of wives a man could have, to a maximum of four—something that was previously unregulated and unlimited. This was premised on the notion that a man can only have as many wives as he can take care of and treat equally. For the first time, some divorce rights were extended to women, although the ability to initiate divorce remained primarily with men, as the process for women to do so was limited and more complex. The Quran mandated that dowry be made payable to the bride alone rather than to her family. It also allowed women to keep this wealth in the case of divorce. For the first time in the region, women were able to inherit property, as wives, daughters, sisters, and grandmothers were entitled to fixed shares of the deceased's estate. Although their shares were less than that of male heirs, this was a profound change in a time and place in which previously, women had no right to inherit and own property.

8. What is *shari'ah*? From which four sources are its precepts derived?

A) The *shari'ah* is the all-embracing sacred law of the Islamic community. It came about in an attempt to reconcile the divine ordinances made in Mecca and Medina for the Quran with that of a human-made code of conduct for vast empires stretching from Spain to Central Asia. In other words, it was an attempt to reconcile God's word with increasingly complex human societies. It is derived from the Quran, the *sunnah* (derived from *hadith*), *qiyas*, and *ijma*.

9. What is sufism? How did it begin and how did it develop over the years?

A) Sufism is Islamic mysticism; it represents a variety of emotional religious experiences. Sufism began as an ascetic movement among those who opposed the materialism of the Umayyad court in Damascus. In the ninth century, it evolved into a devotional movement centered on the love of God. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, groups of Sufis who practiced the same ritual and followed the same master formed themselves into structured brotherhoods (*tariqahs*).

10. Briefly describe the effects that the Mongol invasions had on the Islamic world.

A) The Mongols wreaked significant, devastating political, military, and cultural havoc on the Islamic world. By the mid-thirteenth century, Genghis Khan had led the Mongols to consolidate control over the entirety of Iran. Perhaps the climax of the Mongol invasions was Genghis's son Hulagu's forces' toppling of Baghdad in 1258. This had the greatest long-term impact on the region—Baghdad, previously the commercial, artistic, economic, and intellectual center of the Islamic (and arguably, entire) world was relegated to an insignificant provincial city. Yet, the Mongols failed to annihilate the political Islamic world entirely. Just two years later, another Turkish group centered in Cairo, the Mamluks, defeat the Mongol forces, preventing them from expanding to Egypt.

## **2 Essay Questions**

1. Explain the source of the division between Sunnis and Shi'as? How has this affected the way in which each group respectively views religious leadership?
2. Did the fall of the Abbasid Empire in 1258 lead to a "dark age" of Islamic culture? Explain.