

Enriching Knowledge Series for the Secondary History Curriculum:
Rise and Development of the Islamic Civilisation up to the 19th century
Lecture 1: The origins, teachings and development of Islam (New)
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Dr Peter A. Cunich

Department of History, University of Hong Kong

Lecture Outline:

1. THE CONTEXT

- the fall of Hellenistic and Roman civilisations
 - “darkness” in Europe; “light” in the Middle East
 - the three heirs of Classical Roman civilization
 - 1.) barbarian kingdoms of Western Europe
 - 2.) the Byzantine Empire of Eastern Europe
 - 3.) the Islamic civilization of the Middle East
 - the religions of the ancient Mediterranean world
 - 1.) pagan religions
 - 2.) Zoroastrianism
 - 3.) Judaism
 - 4.) Christianity

2. THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE AND ARABIA

- a major Eurasian power for a thousand years (AD 330-1453)
- Byzantine society, state, economy, religion
- expansion of political control throughout the Near East
- theocratic state & schism with the Roman Church (1054 AD)
- cultural achievements of the Byzantines
- Arabia before Islam

3. THE ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

- Islam as a religious force
- Muhammad the Prophet (c.570-632 AD)
- monotheism

- principal teachings and beliefs
- the Quran/Koran
- religious practices of early Moslems
- social implications of Islam
- Mecca
- Sunnis and Shi'ites
- 'fundamentalism' and 'fanaticism'?
- conversion, incorporation and toleration
- Islam as a political force
- initial successes in Arabia
- rapid expansion (636-711 AD)
- successes against Byzantine & Persian empires
- Umayyad & Abbasid Islam
- universalist tendencies of Islamism
- the caliphate
- Islam and the state
- conquest in the Western Mediterranean (Spain)
- Islam as a cultural force
- preservation of classical learning
- Moorish style
- the reaction of the Roman and Eastern Christian churches
- Islam and the Jews

4. ISLAM AND THE WEST

- the barbarian invasions and the fall of Rome
- the European 'Dark Ages'
- the Roman church and Western civilisation
- conquest in the western Mediterranean
- the Iberian peninsula (Spain) under Islam
- the *reconquista*
- the Crusades in the Near East
- relations with the Latin kingdoms of the Near East
- the military orders in Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta
- Constantinople as a Christian outpost
- the Mediterranean as a frontier

5. CONCLUSION

- Islamic expansion to East and West

- conflict between East and West
- Islam as a universalist religion

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