

## IV Islam

### A Origins of Islam

1. Islam was the 3<sup>rd</sup> major universalizing religion to develop.
2. Originated in Mecca, Saudi Arabia around 600 ce through its prophet, Muhammad

### B Diffusion of Islam

1. Muhammad carried Islam to Media, Saudi Arabia, from where it diffused globally.
2. 1.2 billion adherents, it is the second-largest religion
3. The fastest growing religion
4. Islam's successful diffusion led to the Crusades, which were efforts by Christians in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries to "take back" and "save" lands from the diffusing Muslims.
5. Islam is also a substantial part of European and North American cultures in this era of globalization.

### C Primary Branches of Islam

1. Though some Muslims believe there are no branches in Islam, many see two branches: Sunni and Shiite.
2. Sunni Muslims (Sunni means "orthodox") account for about 85 percent of Muslims. Sunnis dominate in the Arabic speaking areas of Bangladesh and Pakistan.
3. Shiite Muslims are the majority in Iran and Iraq, though Sunnis controlled the government of Iraq under former President Saddam Hussein.  
Ex 15% Believe more strictly that only direct descendants of Muhammad.

## D. Cultural Landscape Features of Islam

1. Islam is a monotheistic religion with a holy book called the Koran. (Quran)
2. The most prominent feature of Islamic cultural landscape is the mosque, a center of Muslim worship. It is often the center of a Muslim town's focus and often has four minarets or towers used to call worshippers.
3. Islam's prohibition of depicting human form in architecture is the primary reason so many mosques are ornately designed with geometric patterns.
4. One of the 5 pillars of Islam (which are somewhat analogous to the 10 commandments) requires most Muslims to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the holiest site to Muslims, where Muhammad was born.
5. The second holiest site to Muslim is Medina, where Muslims believe Muhammad moved after receiving his knowledge of Islam.
6. The 3rd holiest site is the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, where Muslims believe Muhammad received his divine inspiration from Allah or God.