

## DBQ 6: Spread of Islamic Civilization

### **Historical Context:**

From its beginnings in Arabia to its extensive empire encompassing the Middle East, parts of Asia, North Africa, and parts of Europe, the spread of Islam in the late 600's and 700's has drawn much study. The spread of Islamic beliefs and civilization have been described from a variety of perspectives.

- ◆ **Directions:** The following question is based on the accompanying documents in Part A. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view. Be sure to:
  1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
  2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes. Answer the questions which follow each document.
  3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the question.
  4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
  5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. The essay should be logically presented and should include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge outside of the documents.

**Question:** *How did Islamic civilization spread to encompass such an extensive empire? What practices or methods were used to spread Islam?*

- ◆ **Part A:** The following documents will help you understand the methods used to spread Islam. Examine each document carefully, and answer the questions that follow.

### **Document 1**

In this excerpt, Mohammed gives choices to the leader of a Christian Arab tribe.

Believe or else pay tribute [money] . . . obey the Lord and His Apostle [Mohammed], and he will defend you. . . . But if ye oppose and displease them . . . I will fight against you and take captive your little ones and slay the elder. . . .

What alternatives does Mohammed offer to the leader of the Christian Arab tribe?

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*(continued)*

## DBQ 6: Spread of Islamic Civilization *(continued)*

### Document 2

This quotation from the Quran offers specific directions.

Ye shall do battle with them, or they shall profess Islam . . . whosoever shall obey God and His Apostle, He shall bring him into the gardens of [Paradise]; but whosoever shall turn back, He will punish him. . . .

What does Mohammed offer to Muslims who follow him? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

### Document 3

This excerpt from *History of the Arabs*, by Philip K. Hitti, explains the Muslim view on equality. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1946.)

We have witnessed a people [Muslims] to each and every one of whom death is preferable to life, and humility to prominence, and to none of whom this world has the least attraction. Their leader is like one of them: the low cannot be distinguished from the high, nor the master from the slave. And when the prayer time comes, all wash their hands and feet and humbly pray.

How does this writer describe the Muslim people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Document 4

This description of the Battle of Tours in 732, from *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* by Sir Edward Crecy (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.), provides a perspective on the Muslim fighting style.

The Moslems struck their enemies and laid waste to the country and took captives without number . . . everything gave way to their scimitars [swords]. . . . All the nations of the Franks trembled as that terrible army . . . attacked Tours . . . and the fury and cruelty of the Moslems towards the inhabitants of the city were like the fury and cruelty of raging tigers.

How does this writer describe the methods and conquests of the Muslim army at the Battle of Tours?  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(continued)*

## DBQ 6: Spread of Islamic Civilization *(continued)*

### Document 5

This excerpt suggests that there are options to conversion depending on the religion of the people facing conversion. (From J. J. Saunders, "The Caliph Omar: Arab Imperialist," in *History Today*, March, 1961, pp. 180–181.)

Koranic revelation commanded them to "Fight in the cause of God against those who fight you, but do not be the aggressors." The early Muslims thus fought their heathen enemies. . . . war against unbelievers was sanctioned by divine revelation and the example of the Prophet. But many Arabs were Jews or Christians: What was to be done with them? Mohammed respected the older monotheistic faiths . . . he called them "People of the Book" . . . they were not forced into Islam but were allowed to retain their ancestral religion on payment of tribute.

According to this writer, why was conversion required? \_\_\_\_\_

How were Jews and Christians to be treated? \_\_\_\_\_

### Document 6

In this excerpt from *The Spirit of Islam*, by a Muslim writer, Syed Ameer Ali (London: Chatto and Windus, 1964), the expansion of Islam is defended and that of Christianity criticized.

Islam never interfered with the dogmas of any moral faith, never persecuted . . . Islam "grasped the sword" in self defense; Christianity grasped it in order to stifle freedom of thought and liberty of belief. Wherever Christianity prevailed, no other religion could be followed without molestation. The Moslems, on the other hand, required from others a simple guarantee of peace, tribute in return for protection, of perfect equality—on condition of the acceptance of Islam. . . .

How does this Muslim writer view the expansion of Islam? \_\_\_\_\_

What specific words make you aware of his contrasting view of Christianity? \_\_\_\_\_

How and why does his viewpoint differ from that expressed in Document 5? \_\_\_\_\_

*(continued)*

## DBQ 6: Spread of Islamic Civilization *(continued)*

### Document 7

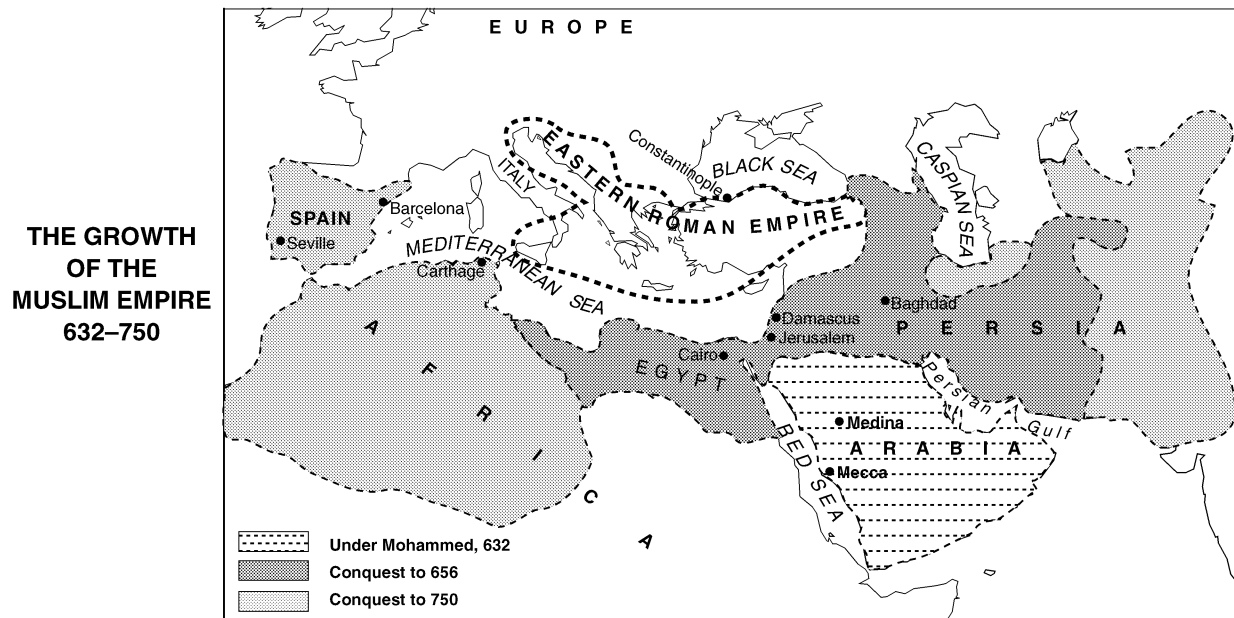
Philip K. Hitti, in *History of the Arabs* (MacMillan, 1946), offers another explanation for conquest.

The passion to go to heaven in the next life may have been operative with some, but the desire for the comforts and luxuries of the civilized regions of the Fertile Crescent was just as strong in the case of many. . . . The campaigns seem to have started as raids to provide new outlets for the warring tribes, the objective in most cases being booty [riches] and not the gaining of a permanent foothold. . . . The movement acquired momentum as the warriors passed from victory to victory . . . the creation of the Arab empire followed inevitably.

According to this writer, how is the expansion of Islam explained? \_\_\_\_\_

How does his explanation differ from those expressed in Documents 5 and 6? \_\_\_\_\_

### Document 8



This map shows the growth of Islam between 632 and 750. Describe what the map reveals about the extensive area included in the Muslim Empire by 750. \_\_\_\_\_

◆ **Part B—Essay**

*How did Islamic civilization spread to encompass such an extensive empire?  
What practices or methods were used to spread Islam?*