



0. THE WORLD IN 610 C.E. - Story Preface

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Muhammad was upset about all the pagan gods whom contemporary people worshipped. This illustration depicts the destruction of such idols. Currently maintained at the BNF, in Paris, it has this description (translated into English from French):

"Baz, Hamla-i haydari (*A Story of the Life of Muhammad*). Entry of Mohammed into Mecca and destruction of idols. From Kashmir, 1808. BNF, Manuscripts, suppl. Persian 1030 f. 305V-306. Muhammad won several military victories, including that of Badr over the Meccans, then had to fight in the very interior of Medina, first with the 'hypocrites'—those new converts whose lukewarmness was a weakness for the community—then with the Jewish tribes. With these victories assured, Muhammad organized the rules of the new community, inspired by the revelations he received. In this manuscript, the Prophet is never represented figuratively; he is only symbolized by a flame."

At the time, the Greek and Roman world was in disrepair. The Catholic Church was going through struggles. Pagan worship was prominent. The *Koran Commentary*, at page 4 (C.14), describes the pre-Islamic world of 610:

*For the glory of Hellas, and her freedom and wisdom had departed;
Rome's great systems of law, organisation, and universal citizenship
Had sunk into the mire of ecclesiastical formalism,
And dogmatism, and exclusive arrogance;
The living fire of Persia's Prophet [Zoroaster] scarce smouldered
In her votaries of luxury;
In India, countless castes and kingdoms
Cancelled the unity of Buddha's teaching;
The wounds of China had not yet been healed by Tang culture;
And Japan was still a disciple of China.*

Muslims believe the time was right for a renewing of spiritual matters. At page 5 (C. 15), the *Commentary* says:

*Then, in the sacred city of pagan Arabia,
Shone a light that spread in all directions.
It was centrally placed for the bounds of the world
Of men's habitations in Asia, Europe, and Africa.
It made the Arabs the leading nation of culture and science,
Of organised enterprise, law and arts,
With a zeal for the conquest of Nature and her mysteries.*

"Spread in all directions" is certainly a good description of what happened. And the speed of the spreading was extraordinary. Within a short time after Muhammad's death, the Islamic faith extended well beyond the Arabian Peninsula, into Africa and Europe.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-WORLD-IN-610-C.E.-Muhammad-the-Prophet)

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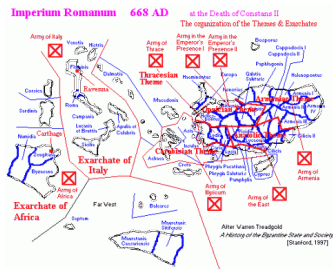


Roman World - Animated Map

Image online, courtesy University of Szeged (in Hungary).

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Map Depicting Roman Empire at the Time of Muhammad

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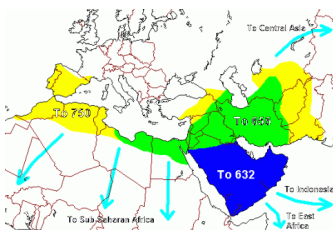
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Map of the Pre-Islamic World

Map image online, courtesy University of Calgary.

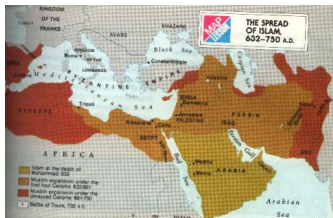
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Spread of Islam Between 632-750

Image by Professor Steven Dutch, University of Wisconsin at Green Bay. Online, courtesy Professor Dutch.

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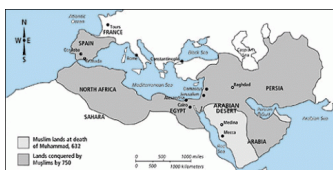


Spread of Islam to the Battle of Tours

Map image online, courtesy Bow School District, Bow, New Hampshire.

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Muslim Lands Conquered by 750 A.D.

Image online, courtesy Prentice Hall School.

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