

Islam



- Islam is the second most popular religion in the world with over a thousand million followers. Islam began in Arabia and was revealed to humanity by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Those who follow Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that there is only one God, called Allah, who speaks Arabic.
- The Muslim calendar has 354 days and is based on the 12 crescent moon cycles.



Islam Holy Book



The Koran

- The Muslim scripture is the **Holy Qur'an**. It is 'the word of God'. Muslim beliefs and practices are rooted in the Qur'an.
- Muslims treat the Qur'an with great respect because they believe that the Qur'an is from Allah, and every word and every letter is sacred.
- Muslims regard the Qur'an as the unaltered word of God.
- **It is read from right to left** and written in Arabic, the language of heaven.

- About as long as the New Testament
- 114 **suras**, arranged from longest to shortest
- Most suras are collections of Mohammed's teachings with no overall theme
- Suras are labeled by distinctive or unusual words found in each
- No historical chapters
- Strictly speaking, cannot be translated, only paraphrased



Islam Place of Worship

- The Muslim building for communal worship is called a **Mosque**. The word comes from the Arabic for "place of prostration".
- Worshipers are called to prayer **5 times a day** from minarets – towers on the mosque corners.
- They contain only designs, no people or animals or furniture.
- Normal day of **worship is Friday**.

الجمعة
التي هي يوم الجمعة

Mohammed

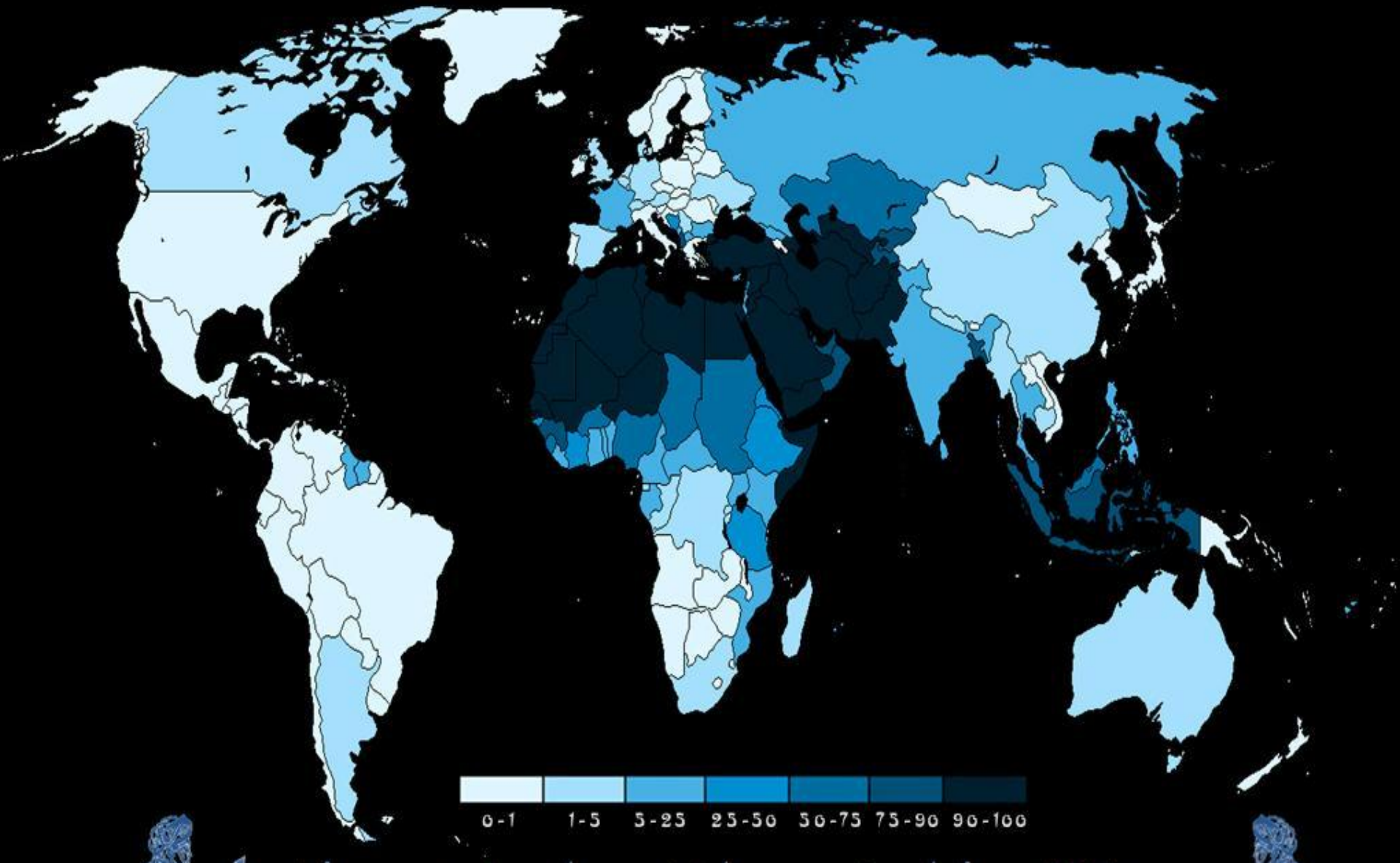
- Born about 570 in Mecca
 - About 610, claims to receive visions and messages.
 - These collected and written down about 650 as the Koran.
 - Flees to Medina, 622 (hegira)
 - Return to Mecca, 630
 - Unified Arabia by the time of his death in 632

- Myth :
Most Muslims are Arabs who live in the Middle East

- Reality:

Of more than 1 billion Muslims worldwide, only about 1/5 are Arabs.

The world of Islam



The Pillars of Islam

1. Creed
2. Five daily prayers
3. Alms
4. Fasting during Ramadan
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)

Haji denotes one who has made the Hajj

Sources of Islamic Doctrine

- Koran (from root meaning read or study)
- Hadith (tradition): traditional sayings of Mohammed and other early followers
- Tradition of the Mahdi
- Sharia (way): Codified Islamic Law



Schism about 700 A.D.

- Reasons:
 - Succession to Caliphate (*Kalifa*, successor; successor of Mohammed)
 - Incorporation of non-Koranic elements into Islam
 - Worldliness of Caliphs, discrimination against non-Arab Muslims
- Shiites (***shia***: party or faction) about 10% (mostly Iran)
 - Fundamentalist?
- Sunnites (***Sunna***: beaten path) about 90%

Shiites



Main Festival

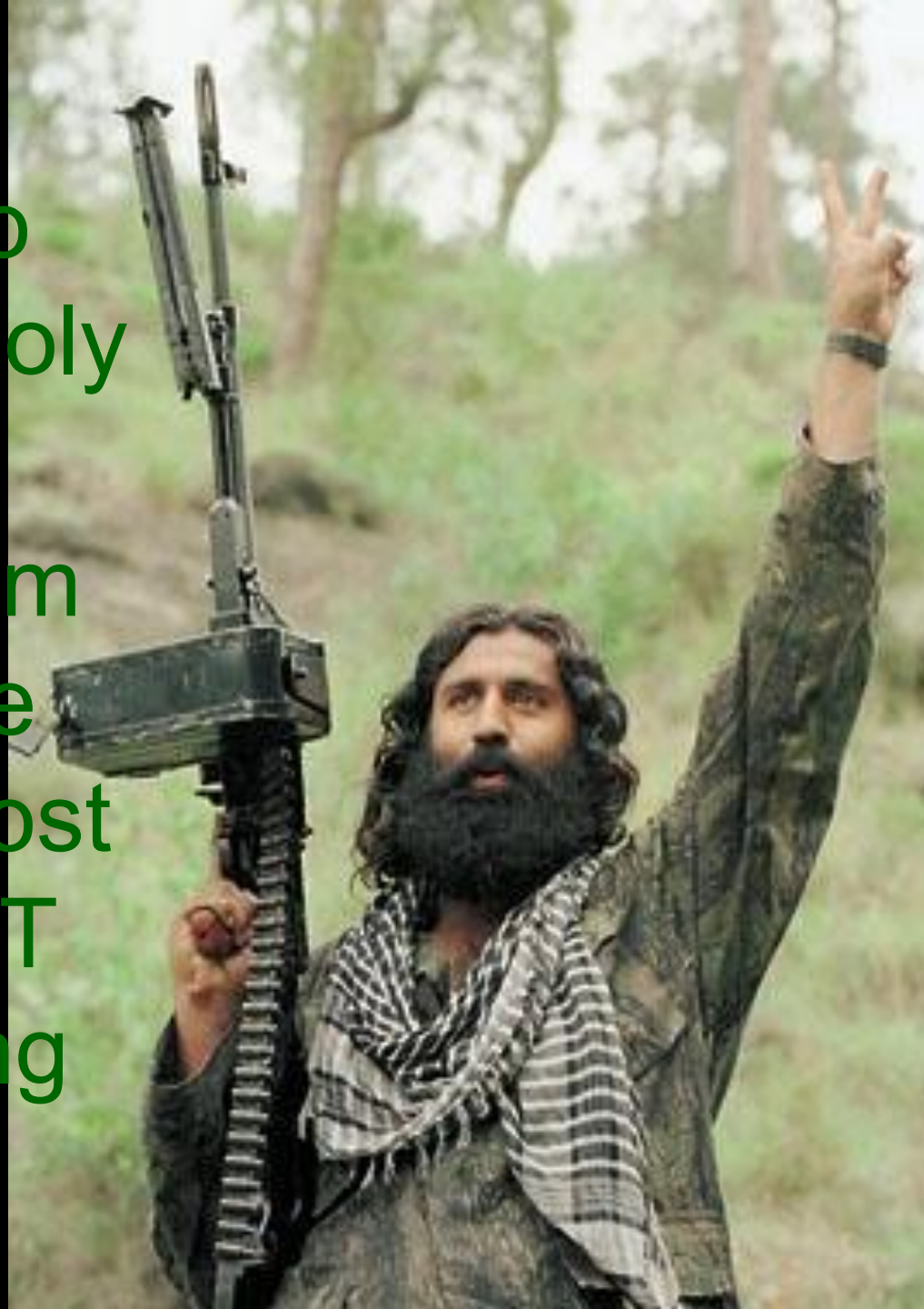
Hijja:

The month of pilgrimage during which all Muslims, at least once in their life, should try to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and worship at the **Kaaba**



Myth: Muslims believe it is o.k. to kill civilians in a holy war (“jihad”).

Reality: Only Muslim extremists believe this. (Just like most Christians do NOT believe in bombing abortion clinics.)



Myth: Most Muslim women wear veils over their faces and are treated very badly.

Reality: Muslim women have many different styles of dress. (Very few cultures require women to cover their faces.)

- The treatment of women varies from country to country and family to family.
- Some Muslim countries, like Pakistan, have had female prime ministers.

Pakistani dress (left); Saudi Arabian (right)



Iranian woman



Somali (left); West African (right)



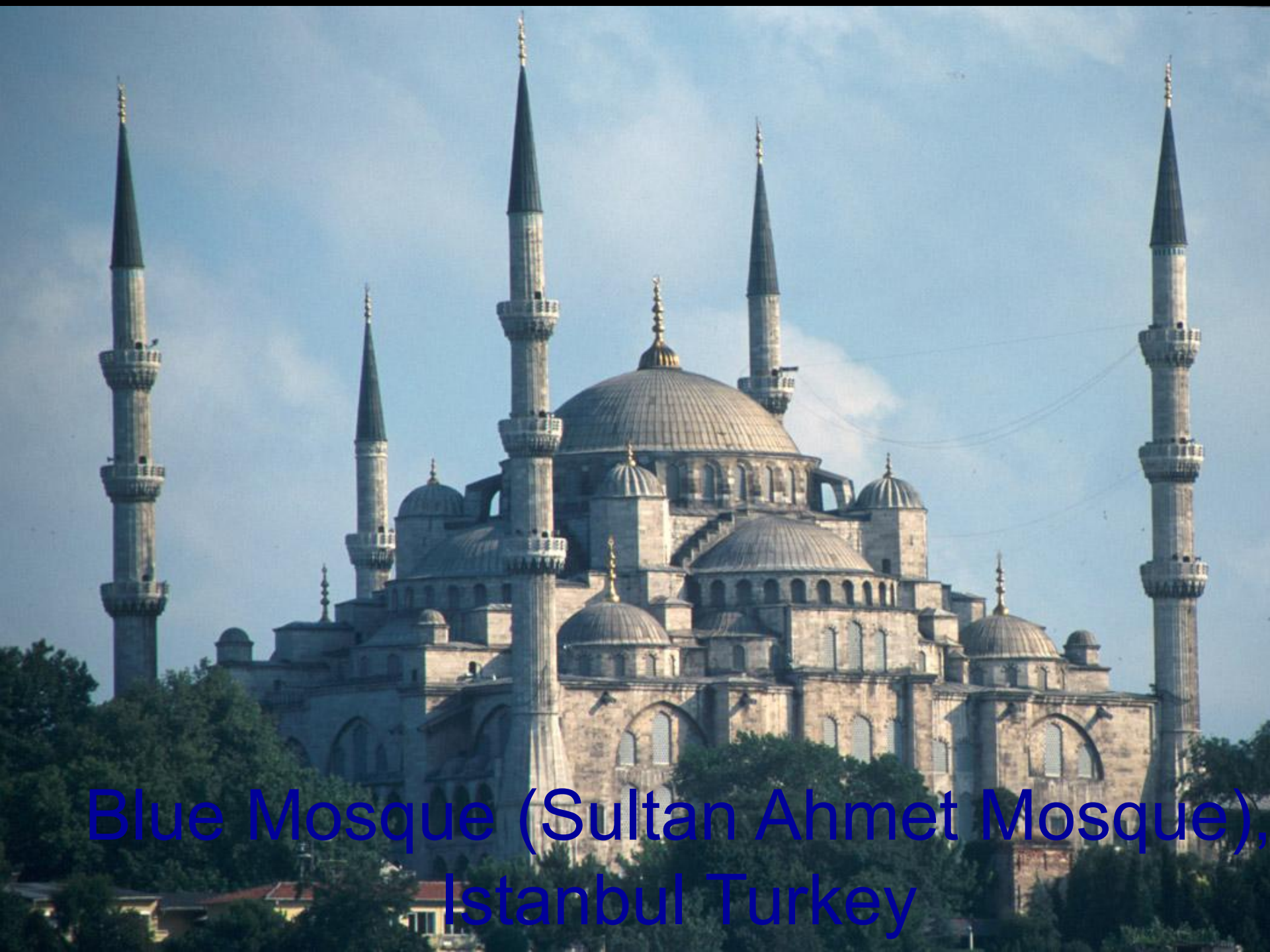
Malaysian (left); Indian/ Bangladeshi (right)



Afghani women wearing burqas



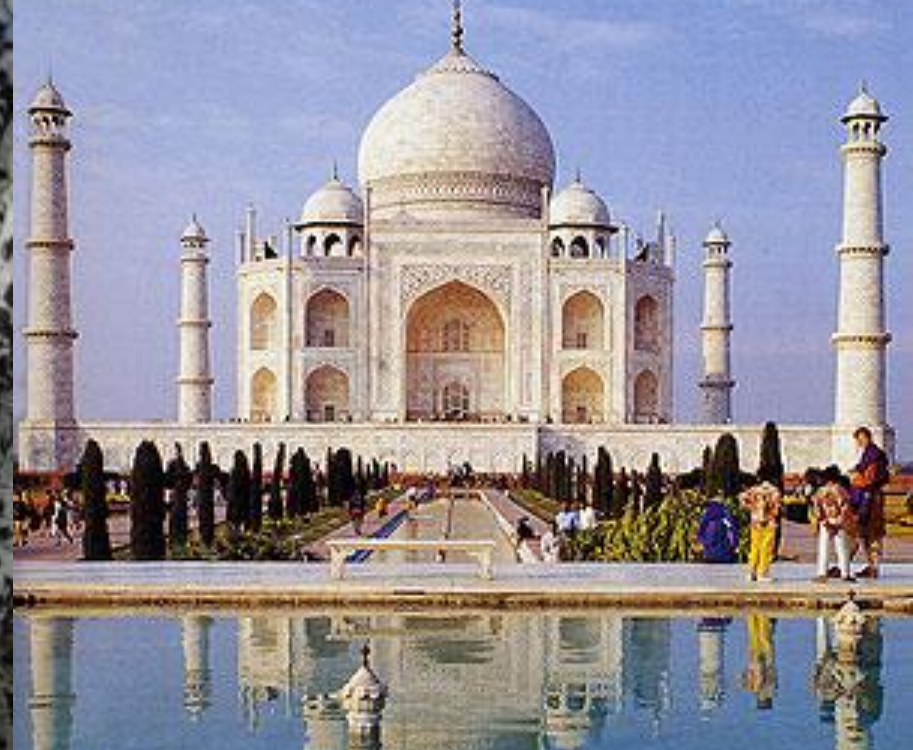




Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Mosque),
Istanbul Turkey

Mosque in Malaysia





Conclusions:

- Islam is an important religion, which shares many beliefs and practices with Christianity and Judaism.
- Muslims live in many different countries. Islam is especially widespread in Africa, Asia, and southeastern Europe (the Balkans).
- Islam has had a great impact on world art and culture.







