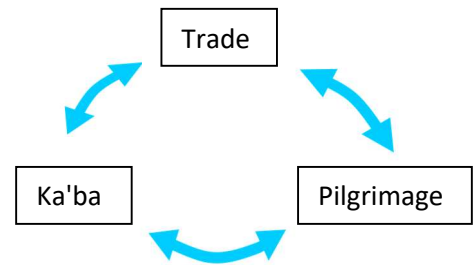


# ISLAM: PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

## MECCA AT MUHAMMAD'S BIRTH

- Trading Centre
- Ka'ba: Polytheism & pilgrimage
  - Monotheists present as well
  - Quraysh clan as keeper of the keys
- Tribal society
- Orality prized



## HIJRA (Flee Mecca for Medina)

- Starts Islamic calendar
- Shift from mere piety to full way of life (social, legal, political)
- Qur'an shifts from poetry to prose (tackles law, practical matters)
- Muhammad becomes *de facto* political and military ruler
- Muhammad marries 11 to 13 wives

## MUHAMMAD'S IMPACT

- Founded a major religion (and profoundly shaped it, including theology and law)
- Spoke one of history's most influential books
- Founded an empire

## SECTS: SHI'A

- See M's male descendants as true heirs (often as infallible interpreters of Qur'an)
- Have unique law, hadith, and writings (by Ali)
- Has many subdivisions - largest sect (Twelvers) await the hidden imam (messianic figure)

## SECTS: SUFIS

- Mystics using poetry, chant & rhythmic movements
- Revere saints, attend their shrines for healing, etc. (interreligious pilgrimage sites in India)
- Viewed as idolators by some other Muslims (attacked by extremists)



## QUR'AN

- Means "Recitation" – Arabic version seen as Allah's speech
- Stories on compilation vary
- Organization is liturgical (not chronological or thematic)
- **Oral beauty** key to initial acceptance and ongoing impact
- Focal point of Islam (like Jesus for Christians)
- Other key sources are hadith (M's sayings/deeds) and shariah

## MODERN ISSUES

- Women's bodies become turf wars between liberals and conservatives
- Secularism often imposed from above and was not freeing (e.g. Turkey, Iran, Egypt)
- Current forms of fundamentalism are recent
  - Oppressive secular dictators spawned extremist religious opposition
  - Severe Wahhabi Muslim sect emerged in Saudi Arabia
    - Saudis exported their version via oil wealth and air travel for hajj