

## The Rise and Fall of Empires

There have been many empires: Egyptian, Hittite, Israeli, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian, Roman, Byzantine, Sassanid, the Caliphate, Seljuk, Crusader, Saladin's, Mongol, Ottoman, to list a few. Empires, the occupation or control of many nations by one, is an ongoing feature of history. In recent times the colonial empires: Hitler's Germany, the United Socialist States of Russia, and the Japanese empire rose and fell.

Empires spread languages and sometimes religions. Many nations have both an original language and one or more languages inherited from empires and migrations.

Language Imposed	Nations
English	60
English      French	Canada
English      Hindi	India
English      Spanish	America
French	28
Spanish	22

Religions spread themselves by their own appeal and with the aid of missionaries as well as by migrations of people.

Religion	Nations
Christianity	120
Islam	47
Buddhism	16
Hindu	3

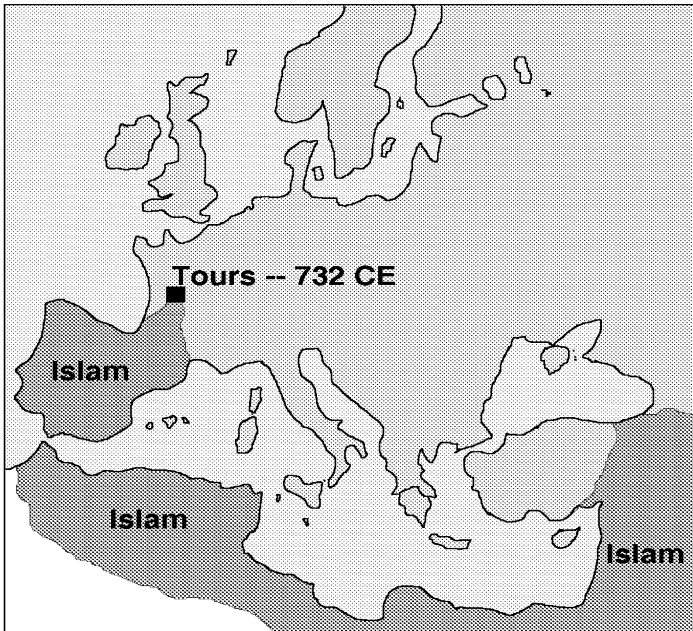
The languages and Catholicism of Latin America were placed there by the Spanish and Portuguese empires.

## The Spread of Religion

The spread of Judaism was a movement of people, often driven from land to land. The initial spread of Christianity was not a movement of people, but a movement of an idea: a religion. Movement of Christians as a people followed the discovery of a “New World.”

Islam was adopted by nations conquered by the followers of Muhammed. North Africa, Spain, and the Middle East became Muslim. The conquest was stopped in France.

### Islam’s First Empire



**Began in Arabia in 632 C.E.**

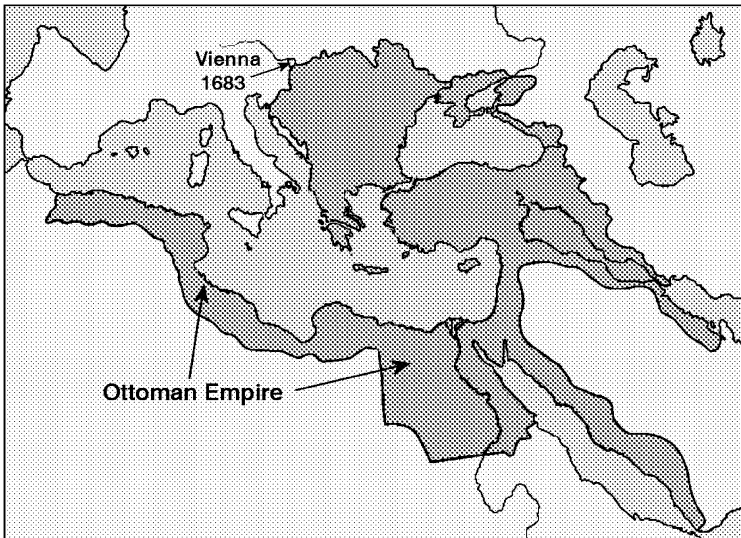
**Blocked at Tours in 732 C.E.**

**Advance into Europe diverted by Crusades**

**Declined then returned as the Ottoman Empire**

Constantinople fell to the Islamic Ottomans in 1453 and Islam again threatened to conquer Europe. The expansion of this second Caliphate of Islam eventually ended at the gates of Vienna on September 12, 1683. The elite warrior class of Janisseries was destroyed by the Sultan on June 16, 1826 as the Ottoman empire began a slow decline until the end of the Caliphate on March 3, 1924. The Ottoman Empire lasted 600 years.

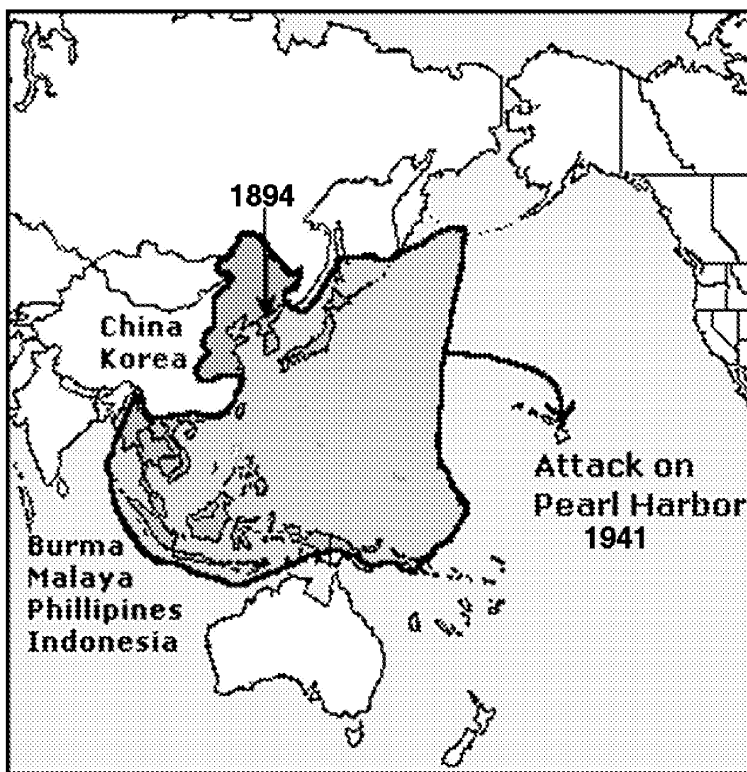
### The Ottoman Empire



**Began in 1290, captured Istanbul in 1453**  
**Blocked by Vienna in 1683**  
**Massacred the elite Janissaries in 1826**  
**Became the “The Sick Man of Europe”**  
**Replaced by Turkey in 1924 after World War 1**

The Japanese Empire had an impulsive life over a time of 350 years. Its abrupt end in 1945 marked the end of the Age of Empires as the world moved into the *Age of Rebellion*. The British recognized this change. The French resisted through their battles of Vietnam and Algiers. And after all the trampling of the land of Israel by empires, the Jews have returned to their Biblical homeland.

**Japan's Empire in 1942**  
**History: Korea 1592, Taiwan 1895,**  
**Nanking 1937, Southeast Asia 1942**  
**Empire fell in defeat in 1945**



## **The American Empire – a New Kind ?**

America's bases in most nations are by agreement, not occupation. Iraq and, to a lesser degree, Afghanistan are exceptions in 2008. Nations agree to the presence of American military bases for economic reasons and, in some cases, for their guarantee of defense. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, N.A.T.O., gave permission for American bases in Europe to inhibit expansion by the U.S.S.R. American bases in Saudi Arabia after Iraq occupied Kuwait were an accommodation in fear of further Iraqi expansion.

### **True Model or False Model?**

America's manifest destiny is to rule the world—or at least a large part of the world.

America has an obligation to lead the world to Democracy.

This is no longer the world of great armies marching to conquer far lands and build great empires. A different model may be needed. Terrorism is conducted by dissatisfied people, by frustrated young men—guerrillas bent on overthrowing the establishment, whatever it is.

### **True Model or False Model?**

The struggle against insurgents—the “war against terrorism”—can be won by armies, navies, and police.

“Empire” now means controlling many quarrels in many widespread places. For this model the American dispersal over many bases is the Empire for the future. Whether America should have such an Empire is another matter.

There are alternative kinds of “empire.” Empire may mean the power to destroy, to bomb and to shoot on a great scale: to

impose “shock and awe”—in the words of an American secretary of defense—killing countless women, children, and men as well as destroying military targets.

Empire might mean the power to impose its “unalienable rights”—the rights to “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”—on all people everywhere rather than let them work out their own destiny.

An empire, having in its minds correct models of the world—including full knowledge of the limitations of its power and the nature of foreign cultures—would be a first in history.

Empire might mean the power to provide aid when and where aid is needed, whether the problem is natural: earthquake, hurricane, volcano, tsunami, disease, drought, flood, or human: tyrannical oppression, genocide, ethnic cleansing, barbaric customs.

### **Summary**

Migrations and Empires are works in progress. There are no sure predictions of how they will evolve.

The most obvious and perhaps most important migrations are those from Latin America to the United States and from the Muslim world to Europe. Will they change their new homeland? Or will they adapt to the modern societies of America and Europe? Will the spread of the Islamic Ummah to Europe send Europe into a second Dark Age? Will the Latino migration change the United States into a badly-governed South American nation? Can the “American melting pot” function both in America and in Europe?

There is now an American Empire of a scattered and uncertain sort. How will it behave and how will it evolve? Does it have false models of the world that lead it to fall, perhaps into a failed state?