

Geography



Geography

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Fulfilling the duties of formal prayers and Pilgrimage, Muslims needed to find the direction and routes leading to al Ka'ba from virtually any spot on the globe. Ka'ba, the house of Abraham in Mecca, is the point at which Muslims face when they perform prayers. This is known as "Qibla." To find Qibla from any part of the globe, Muslims invented the compass and developed the sciences of geography and geometry.

The duty of Pilgrimage to Mecca, that which Muslims must make at least once in his or her lifetime, is directly responsible for the development of the science of geography. Muslims from as far as Malaysia and Indonesia, from Europe and Africa found their ways to Mecca. Arab pilots and the wealth of geographical maps and books developed in the period from 7th century to the 15th century were the engines from which the European discoveries of the 15th century were made.

Battutah (Batutah), b 24 February 1304 in Tangier, d 1368 in Fès was an Arab traveler and merchant. From 1325 to 1353 he visited many countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa, including the southern regions of present-day Ukraine. Ibn Battutah's 14th century masterpieces provided a detailed view of the geography of the ancient world.

This is a map of the world made by the Muslim geographer Jihani in the 10th century of the Christian era. The names have been translated from Arabic. Many Muslim civilizations have been seafaring and relied heavily on maps. For that reason, Muslim societies also studied astronomy intensely and invented the modern naval sextant.



His accurate maps of Europe, Africa, and Asia were used for over 400 years and were known to Columbus. His atlas described all known plant medicines in six languages.