

# ISLAMIC HISTORY



The Abbasids

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10 April 2016



## Significant periods

Year (AD)		
570-632		The Prophet (pbuh)
632 - 661	✓	The Khulafae Rashidun
661-750	✓	The Umayyids
751-983		The Abbasids
984-1289		The Seljuks and the Fatimids
1290-1918		The Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals



## Khalifa: Definition

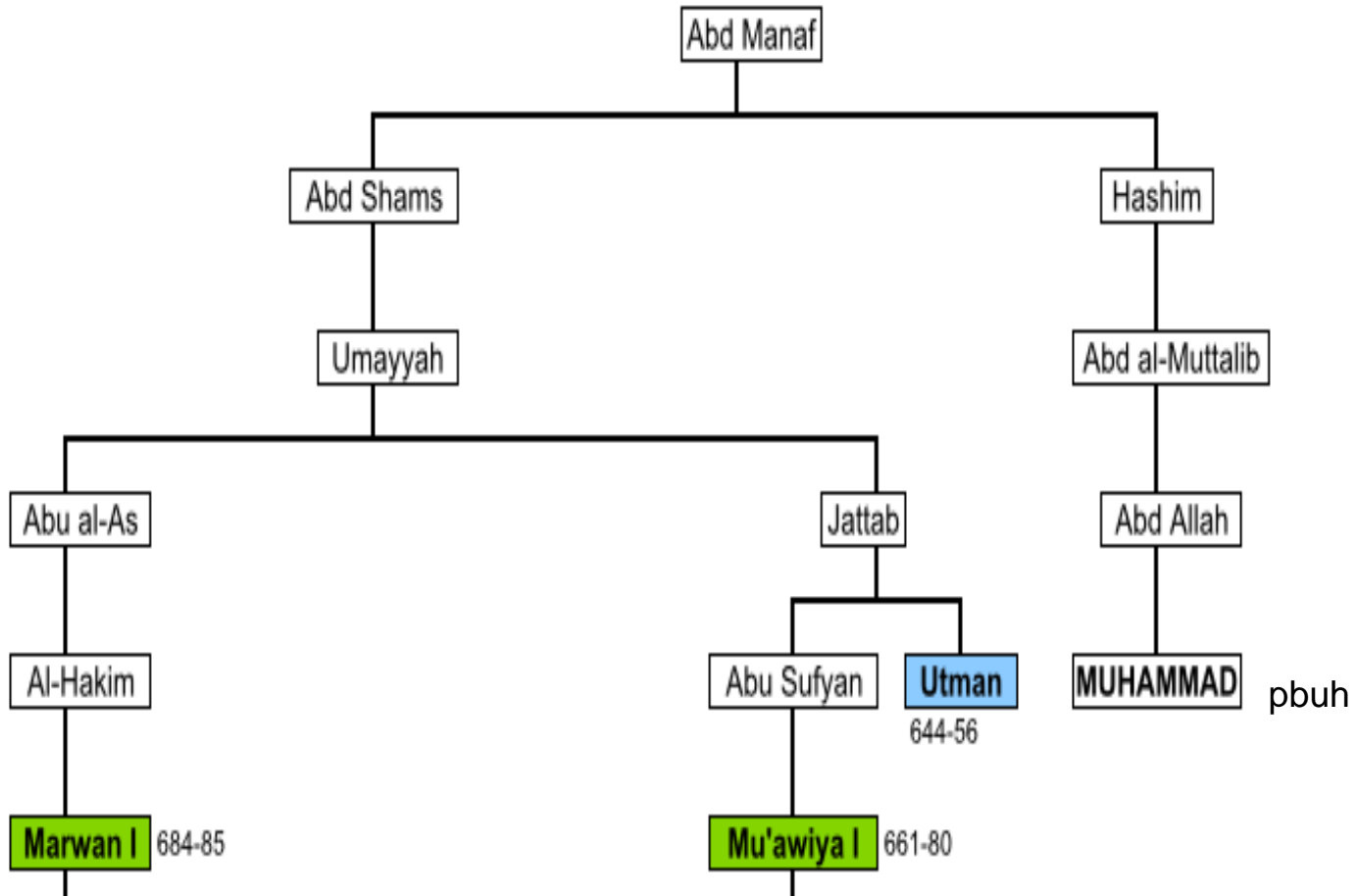
- A Khalifa is the successor (in a line of successors) to Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) position as the political, military, and administrative leader of the Muslims.
- The prophetic role of the Rasul-Allah (pbuh) is strictly not included in this definition, as the Qur'an and Hadith clearly state that He (pbuh) was the last of the prophets.



## The Khulafae Rashidun (632- 661)

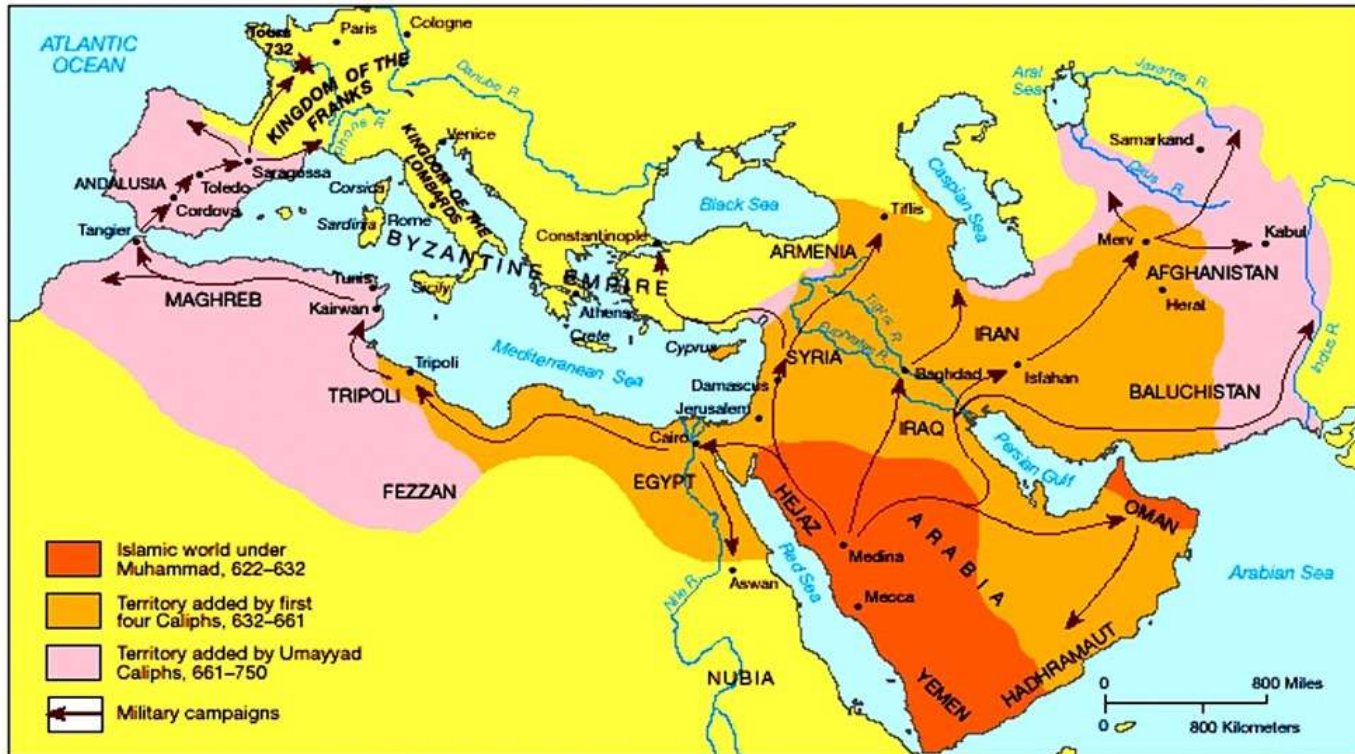
- Humility and Simplicity
- Complete Commitment to the Quran and the Sunnah
- Preserve, Consolidate and Expand the islamic Empire
- Eventually captive of power and wealth
  - Parochial interests – Bani Hashim, Bani Shams
  - Political expediency
- The Prophet (pbuh) , "Once the sword is unsheathed among my followers, it will not be sheathed until the Last Day."


# The Umayyids (661 – 750): Origins





# The Spread of Islam 622-750 AD



 The Spread of Islam. The rapid spread of Islam created within a century a unified cultural and economic zone from India to the Atlantic Ocean within.

## The Umayyids: Legacy

- First Muslim Dynasty: transformed the caliphate from a religious institution to a dynastic one.
- Largest empire at the time
- Administrative innovations
  - Revenue, Postal and Justice systems
  - Arabaization – language, coinage
- Construction of the Dome of the Rock
- Khalifat Rasul Allah or Khalifat Allah ?
- Discriminatory Social Organization

# The Abbasids: The Beginning

- Revolt against Umayyids
  - The treatment of Mawalis and non-Muslims
  - Hereditary dynasty
- Abbasids create coalition of Persian Mawali, Eastern Arabs and Shiites
  - Persian General Abu Muslim's victories allow Abul Abbas Al Saffah to defeat the Umayyids (750 AD)



# The Beginning of an Empire



# The Abbasids: Golden Age (775 – 861)

- Reigns of Al-Mansour, Harun Al Rashid, Al-Mamun
- Baghdad, Samarra – Global intellectual center for science, philosophy, medicine and education
- Access to many different cultures and philosophies as empire expanded.

# The Abbasids: The Zenith



## Bayt al-Hikma – House of Wisdom

- Gather the cumulative knowledge of human history in one place, and in one language—Arabic.
  - Introduction of Paper
  - Algebra (Al-Khwarizmi), Geometry, astronomy (Al Biruni, Mansur)
  - Pendulum (AL-Masri,900 Ad)
  - Number Zero (Bin-Ahmad,976 Ad), Negative Numbers (1100)
- New crops, Improved Irrigation

# The Abbasids – A Slow Fall from Glory (861-1258)

- Big empire, big problems
  - The Growth of quasi-independent Sultanates
  - Alienation of the Caliph – the creation of Vizier and the Mamluks
- By 930, drastic reduction in territory, only religious figureheads
- The advance of the Mongols and the Osmaniyes (Ottomans)

# The Abbasids: Decline 1000 AD



# Lessons

- Righteous rulers interested in public welfare created the golden age.
- Effective control over a large empire was not possible
  - Separation of the Ruler from the people created misperceptions which led to rebellions
- Movement away from a representative process to dynastic regimes proved to be untenable
- The search for legitimacy in an Islamic state