

The Islamic Empire

- I. The Growth of Islam
 - a. The Islamic conquests
 - i. Muhammad's death
 - ii. Succeeded by his father-in-law, Abu-Bakr
 1. The *caliph* (deputy of the Prophet)
 2. Military campaign against those who followed Muhammad but would not follow Abu-Bakr
 - iii. Umar
 1. Syria, Antioch, Damascus, and Jerusalem fall (636)
 2. Egypt falls (646)
 3. Persia subdued (651)
 4. Visigothic Spain (711)
 - iv. Explanations for expansion
 1. Search for territory and booty
 2. Weakness of their neighbors
 3. Did not demand conversions
 4. Muslims preferable to old rulers
- II. The Shiite–Sunni schism
 - a. Caliph Uthman replaces Umar (644)
 - i. A weak ruler
 - ii. Belonged to the wealthy Umayyad family
 - iii. Murdered in 656
 - b. Opponents rally around Ali
 - i. Family ties to the Prophet
 - ii. Murdered; Uthman's party emerged triumphant
 - c. The creation of Shi'a Minority religious party
 - i. Insisted that only descendants of Ali and Fatimah (his wife) could rule the Muslim community (the *umma*)
 - ii. Did not accept binding religious customs (*sunna*)
 - iii. Sunnis accepted religious customs as binding
 - iv. Shiite–Sunni schism continues in the present day
- III. Umayyads and Abbasids
 - a. Westward-looking Umayyads
 - i. Capital at Damascus
 - ii. A Byzantine successor state?
 - iii. Goal was to conquer Constantinople
 - b. Eastward-looking Abbasids
 - i. Rule stressed Persian elements rather than Byzantine
 - ii. New capital at Baghdad
 - iii. *The Arabian Nights*
 - iv. Harun al-Rashid (786–809)
 - v. After 750, Umayyad dynasty rules only in Spain
 - vi. Poor relations between Umayyads and Abbasids
 - c. Cordoba and Baghdad in competition.
- IV. Trade and industry

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- a. Major trade routes
 - i. Masters of the caravan routes
 - ii. Sea routes lost to the West (tenth and eleventh centuries)
 - b. Important industries
 - i. Baghdad: glassware, jewelry, pottery, silks
 - ii. Morocco and Spain: leather-working
 - iii. Toledo: swords
 - iv. Paper—brought about a revolution in record-keeping
- V. Muslim society and culture, 900–1250
- a. Cosmopolitan and dynamic society
 - b. Geographic and social mobility
 - i. At Baghdad and Cordoba, careers were open to those with talent
 - c. Treatment of women
 - i. Preserving male “honor”
 - ii. The Qu’ran allowed a man four wives – an historic improvement
- VI. Learned men
- a. *Ulama*—learned men who studied religion and religious law
 - b. *Sufis*—religious mystics, stressed contemplation and ecstasy.
- VII. Number of positive outcomes from interaction between Latin West and Islamic world
- a. Interaction with Muslims has significant impact on European learning, literature, music, and art
 - b. Transformation in Christian theology
 - c. Islamic world significantly advanced in medicine and science
 - d. Confirmed Hellenistic findings that earth revolves around sun
 - e. Discovered contagious nature of TB, noted that disease could be spread through contaminated water and soil
 - f. Significant developments in math; develop decimal arithmetic; develop accounting systems on which trade and commerce are based
- VIII. Hugu and the Mongol invasion
- a. http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/04/25/050425fa_fact4