The Abbasid Dynasty The Golden Age Of Islamic Civilization

Women, Islam, and Ababdon IdentityThe Early Abbasid CaliphateThe CaliphateLost EnlightenmentWhen Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World

The Early Abbasid Caliphate

For over 700 years the international language of science was Arabic. In the tenth century, Harun al-Rashid's biographer, al-Mas'udi, wrote: Harun al-Rashid’s reign marked a golden age for the Islamic world. In every field imagination was sparked and a golden age was born. Few of these scientists, however, were known in the western world. Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, a polymath who outshined everyone in history except Leonardo da Vinci? The Syrian astronomer Ibn al-Shatir, whose manuscripts would inspire Copernicus’s heliocentric model of the solar system? Or the 13th-century Arab physician Ibn al-Nafis, who correctly described blood circulation 400 years before William Harvey? It is for such men that the Abbasid caliphate is remembered.

Lost Enlightenment

Adam Silverstein’s book offers a fascinating account of the official methods of communication employed in the Near East from pre-Islamic times through the Mamluk period. Postal systems were set up by rulers in order to maintain control over vast tracts of land. These systems, invented centuries before steam-engines or cars, enabled the swift circulation of different commodities - from letters, people and horses to exotic goods. The military empires transported them often included confidential reports from a ruler’s provinces, such postal systems doubled as espionage-networks through which news reached the central authorities quickly enough to allow a timely reaction to events. The book sheds light not only on the role of communications in Islamic history, but also on how raukonic culture contributed to the emprise-building in the Near East. This is a long-awaited contribution to the history of pre-modern communications systems in the Near-Eastern world.

When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World

The Islamic empire ascended spectacularly in the 7th century and exercised influence over a large geographic area until it fell to Mongol invaders in the 13th century. The rulers, called caliphs, ushered in a new era of intense cultural energy and practices that were distinct from and partially influenced by those of the areas it conquered. The reigns of these caliphs, which preceded that of the Abbasid caliphate, ushered in a period of cultural flowering that continued until the end of the Islamic Golden Age. In these captivating volumes, readers will learn about the expansion of Islamic influence and the flourishing of scholarship in science, math, and more, during this time.

The Islamic Golden Age and the Caliphates

The Islamic Golden Age refers to the period when Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid caliphate, was the intellectual and cultural center of the Islamic world. This period lasted from the 8th to the 13th century, and is characterized by significant advancements in various fields such as science, mathematics, literature, and art. The Abbasid caliphate was one of the longest-lasting political entities in Islamic history, ruling from 750 to 1258 AD. It was during this time that Baghdad became a hub of intellectual and cultural activity, attracting scholars and scientists from across the Islamic world.

The History and Achievements of the Islamic Golden Age

The early Abbasid Caliphate was an important period for Islam. The dynasty, based in Baghdad, ruled over a vast empire, stretching from the Indus Valley to Southern Russia and the East to Tunisia in the West; and presided over an age of brilliant cultural achievements. This study, first published in 1981, examines the Abbasid Caliphs from their coming to power in 750 AD, to the death of the Caliph al-Ma’mun in 832 AD, at the turn of the period when Turkish domination began. It looks at the political history of the period, and also the social and economic factors, how they formed the era and its political and cultural impact.

The Islamic Golden Age and the Caliphas

The endless informative history brings the classical Islamic world to life in this accessible written history. Amir K. Bennis's conception of the assumption that Islam somehow interrupted the smooth flow of Western civilization from its Graeco-Roman origins to its more recent European and American manifestations. Instead, she places Islamic civilization in the longer trajectory of Mediterranean civilizations and saws the Abbasid Empire (750–1258 CE) as the heir apparent and Graeco-Roman traditions. Al-Azhar the 'Abbasid caliphate stretched over the entire Middle East and part of North Africa, and influenced Islamic regimes as far west as Spain. Benniento's examination of the politics, society, and culture of the 'Abbasid period presents a picture of a society that nurtured many of the "civilized" values that Western civilization claims to represent, albeit in different premodern forms: from urban planning and international trade networks to religious pluralism and academic research. Benniento's argument counters the common Western view of Muslim culture as alien and offers a new perspective on the relationship between Western and Islamic cultures.

1001 Inventions

A picture-includes medieval accounts *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading. Like many historical figures, Harun al-Rashid's biography has become part reality and part myth. An individual and factual account of the Abbasid caliphate is the best known to many individuals because of his role in famous literature like One Thousand and One Nights, not necessarily because of his political policies. This is unusual because Harun al-Rashid was perhaps the most famous of the Abbasid caliphs due to his role in bringing economic prosperity, destroying one of the most
powerful Islamic families of the 9th century CE, and ending the Abbasid Dynasty for good. The reputation of Harun al-Rashid is a controversial one over 1,000 years later. Although historians are often biased to admit this, there is no question that like other social and cultural subjects, to include the opinions and influences of the society in which it was written, and for centuries, numerous cultures worldwide (primarily Europe, Australasia, North America, and sometimes Latin and South America) contested that Islamic societies could not possess the intellectual progress and discourse Western society attributed to their modern descendants. “It was a common view among biographers of the Abbasid period that the Islamic world was intellectually backward compared to the rest of the world. Muslims not only could not have produced the Enlightenment and Industrial Evolution but also required European tutelage.” In short, European intellectuals believed Muslims, due to their religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, lacked the capacity to be productive and decried the translation standards — and were true intellectually and culturally backward. This interpretation of Islamic culture and society transcended intellectual barriers and swept into the history and literature produced by scholars of the Western world, and in time, Harun al-Rashid became the figure through which the Western world applied its ideas of Arab culture, Islam, and the power of the caliphates. The difficulty for historians and modern audiences, then, is trying to determine what about Harun al-Rashid is fact and what is fiction, produced over time by biased sources or legends. By the 21st century, much of the factual information about Harun al-Rashid has been distorted by folk tales and the exaggerations of medieval historians of all religions and walks of life. Even with numerous pop culture appearances, the actual history of the Abbasid caliph is difficult to determine because of the wealth of misinformation throughout Eastern and Western media alike. When Harun al-Rashid died in the early 9th century, the Abbasid Empire was already at the peak of its power. Nevertheless, his son and successor, al-Ma'mun, had great ambitions. Al-Ma'mun would reverse the support of some of the nobility families and make a claim for the throne, and after a two-year siege of the capital in Baghdad, al-Mutanabbi and al-Ma'mun took the throne in 813. He ruled for the following 20 years in relative peace throughout his reign. In addition, Harun al-Rashid buried his hand in the sands of the desert, and built down local rebellions sparked by the Byzantines. Al-Ma'mun, to repay his allies, would create an autonomous Khorasan region in northeast Persia filled with Persian noble families. While scholars can still debate his legacy, none can argue that while Harun al-Rashid did not politically advance the Abbasid Caliphate and may actually be blamed for its eventual destruction, his emphasis on arts and culture brought the caliphate into the Islamic Golden Age and created the romanticized image of the Arab ruler in folk tales throughout Eastern and Western cultures.

Postal Systems in the Pre-Medieval World

The House of Wisdom

The Middle East

When the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads in 750 CE and ushered in Islam’s Golden Age, ideas about gender and sexuality were central to the process by which the caliphate achieved self-defined and articulated its systems of power and thought. Nadia Maria El-Chikh’s study reveals the importance of women to the writing of early Islamic history.

The Book of Golden Meadows

The article by Dr Wei Lan, “The First Chinese Travel Record on the Arab World——Commercial and Diplomatic Communications during the Islamic Golden Age” published by King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in its bulletin, Gharat (No. 7 Ra’i -I - 1438; December 2016 - January 2017), is composed of three articles, which are all translations and interpretations from official Chinese historical books recording events during the Tang dynasty (618-937 CE). The first is about Du Huan’s Jingshi (The Travel Record), who was the first Chinese man who travelled the Arab world; the second article is about Jian Dan’s “Guangzhou tonghai yidao” (The Maritime Route to Alien Countries from Guangzhou); and the third is about the Deah (Arab) official visits to the Chinese Tang court, which are recorded in Cifu Yuangui [Archival Palace as Great Oracle Tortoise]. All of these provide modern readers true stories concerning the relationships and communications between the Arab world and China in history.

Lost History

Step back to one of the most important yet overlooked periods in human history. Your tour of the Golden Age of Islamic Civilization begins with the who, what, why, where, when, and how of this great period and its impact. Explore the Abbasid Empire and see how it bridged the ancient world and the Renaissance.

Harun Al-Rashid

The emergence of an Islamic political rationalism in Britain has been one of the most dramatic developments in post-war immigration and integration, the complex relations that exist between Britain and Islam and the true extent of social and economic inequalities that affect Muslims.

Canon of Medicine Complete 5 Volume Set

The history of the early Abbasid Caliphate has long been studied as a factual or interpretive synthesis of various accounts preserved in the medieval Islamic chronicles. Tayeb El-Hibri’s book breaks with the traditional approach, applying a literary-critical reading to examine the lives of the caliphs. By focusing on the reigns of Harun al-Rashid and his successors, the study demonstrates how the various historical accounts were not in fact intended as historical narratives, but were written by the order of the Abbasid state as propaganda manuals, stressing the caliph’s role as the spiritual leader of the Muslim world. This book provides new insights into the texts, illuminating the complex literary and political forces that shaped the Abbasid empire.

Religion, Learning and Science in the Abbasid Period

This book explores what life was like for everyday people in the Islamic Golden Age. Using primary sources and information from archeological discoveries, it uncovers some fascinating insights and exposes some myths. Supported by timelines, maps and references to important events and people, children will really feel they are on a time-travelling journey when reading this book.

Three Great Abbasid Poets

Translated for the first time into English here, the Latin was translated in the 12th century and into Hebrew in 1276. Hereafter the Canon served as the chief guide to medical science in the West and is said to have influenced Leonardo da Vinci. Its encyclopedic content, its systematic arrangement and philosophical plan soon worked its way into a position of pre-eminence in the medical literature of Europe, displacing the works of Galen and becoming the textbook for medical education in the schools of Europe. The text was used in the medical schools at Montpellier and Leuven as late as 1685. Experimental medicine the Canon of Medicine was the first book dealing with evidence-based medicine, experimental medicine, clinical trials, randomized controlled trials, efficacy tests, risk factor analysis, and the like physiology, the Canon introduced the medicinal use of Taxus baccata L. He used it as a cardiac remedy. This was the first known use of a calcium channel blocker drug.

Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire

Traces the story of the celebrated late-eighth and early-ninth caliph from The Thousand and One Nights against a backdrop of Baghdad’s cosmopolitan culture and its complex influence on the Byzantine Empire and Frankish kingdom of Charlemagne. By the award-winning author of Wide as the Waters, 35,000 first printing.

The History and Achievements of the Islamic Golden Age

The History and Achievements of the Islamic Golden Age

Yaron Ayalon explores the Ottoman Empire’s history of natural disasters and its responses on a state, communal, and individual level.

The History and Achievements of the Islamic Golden Age

During the Abbasid Empire, Baghdad’s House of Wisdom was the world’s preeminent center for translation and original research. Find out why translation flourished in this era, and meet two of the Golden Age’s most important translators: Hunayn ibn Ishaq and al-Khwarizmi. Then consider the intellectual legacy of the Arabic translation movement.

Daily Life in the Islamic Golden Age

The Court of the Caliphs

skilled in geometry, ingenious devices (fīlāk), music and astronomy. According to Ibn al-Nadim and Ibn Khallâq’s weakest subject was astronomy, but this seems to conflict with the opinions of Ibn Yunus and al-Biruni, both good judges, who spoke highly of the accuracy of the Banu Musa’s astronomical observations. Muhammad, who was the most influential of the brothers, specialised in geometry and astronomy, especially in the development of theorems concerning the measurement of round and polygonal objects. His encyclopedic content, its systematic arrangement and philosophical plan soon worked its way as a position of pre-eminence in the medical literature of Europe, displacing the works of Galen and becoming the textbook for medical education in the schools of Europe. The text was read in the medical schools at Montpellier and Leuven as late as 1685. Experimental medicine the Canon of Medicine was the first book dealing with evidence-based medicine, experimental medicine, clinical trials, randomized controlled trials, efficacy tests, risk factor analysis, and the like physiology, the Canon introduced the medicinal use of Taxus baccata L. He used it as a cardiac remedy. This was the first known use of a calcium channel blocker drug.

The Translation Movement of the Abbasid Period, which lasted for almost three hundred years, was a unique event in world history. During this period, much of the intellectual tradition of the Greeks, Persians, and Indians was translated into Arabic—a language with no prior history of translation or of science, medicine, or philosophy. This book investigates the cultural and political conflicts that translation brought into the Middle East and North Africa, providing a fresh perspective on the translation of Arabic and Latin manuscripts into Arabic, the role of the Abbasid court in the translation movement, and the impact of this movement on the development of Islamic science and philosophy.
The Abbasid Caliphate

The Golden Age of Islam

A compelling study of the little known contributions of Islam's cultural, artistic, and scientific accomplishments to Western civilization looks not only at the historic achievements of the Muslim world and the role of inspired leaders who encouraged intellectual inquiry, championed tolerance, and sponsored artistic and literary endeavors, but also at the ancient enmy that fuels today's conflicts. Reprint.

Capital Cities of Arab Islam

From a preeminent scholar of Islamic history, the authoritative history of caliphs from their beginnings in the 7th century to the modern day In Caliphate, Islamic historian Hugh Kennedy dissects the idea of the caliphate and its history, and explores how it became used and abused today. Contrary to popular belief, there is no one enduring definition of a caliph; rather, the idea of the caliph has been the subject of constant debate and transformation over time. Kennedy offers a grand history of the caliphate since the beginning of Islam to its modern incarnations. Originating in the tumultuous years following the death of the Prophet in 632, the caliphate, a politico-religious system, flourished in the great days of the Umayyads of Damascus and the Abbasids of Baghdad. From the seventh-century Orthodox caliphs to the nineteenth-century Ottomans, Kennedy explores the tolerant rule of Umar, recounts the traumatic murder of the caliph Uthman, dubbed a tyrant by many, and reveals in the flourishing arts of the golden eras of Abbasid Baghdad and Moorish Andalucia. Kennedy also examines the modern fate of the caliphate, unraveling the British political schemes to spur dissent against the Ottomans and the ominous efforts of Islamists, including ISL, to reinvent the history of the caliphate for their own malevolent political ends. In exploring and explaining the great variety of caliphs who have ruled throughout the ages, Kennedy challenges the very narrow views of the caliphate propagated by extremist groups today. An authoritative new account of the dynasties of Arab leaders throughout the Islamic Golden Age, Caliphate traces the history and misrepresentations of one of the world's most potent political ideas.

The Caliph's Splendor

The Middle East's river systems and irrigation methods were vital for the Abbasid Empire to thrive. After learning about the geography and agricultural techniques of the Golden Age, you'll turn your attention to the link between agriculture and politics - and round out your study of water with a look at some beautiful gardens.

The First Chinese Travel Record on the Arab World

Consorts of the Caliphs is a seventh/thirteenth-century compilation of anecdotes about thirty-eight women who were, as the title suggests, consorts to those in power, most of them concubines of the early Abbasid caliphs and wives of latter-day caliphs and sultans. This slim but illuminating volume is one of the few surviving texts by Ibn al-Saʿi (d. 674 H/1276 AD). Ibn al-Saʿi was a prolific Baghdadi scholar who chronicled the academic and political elites of his city, and whose career straddled the final years of the Abbasid dynasty and the period following the cataclysmic Mongol invasion of 658 H/1258 AD.

In God's Path

In a sweeping and vivid survey, renowned historian Bernard Lewis charts the history of the Middle East over the last 2,000 years, from the birth of Christianity through the modern era, focusing on the successive transformations that have shaped it. Drawing on material from a multitude of sources, including the work of archeologists and scholars, Lewis chronologically traces the political, economical, social, and cultural development of the Middle East, from Hellenization in antiquity to the impact of westernization on Islamic culture. Meticulously researched, this enlightening narrative explores the patterns of history that have repeated themselves in the Holy East. From the ancient conflicts to the current geographical and religious disputes between the Araba and the Israelis, Lewis examines the abilities of this region to unite and solve its problems and asks it, in the future, these unresolved conflicts will ultimately lead to the ethnic and cultural factionalism that tore apart the former Yugoslavia. Elegantly written, scholarly yet accessible, The Middle East is the most comprehensive single volume history of the region ever written from the world's foremost authority on the Middle East.

The Mediæval Islamic Underworld

Professor Hugh Kennedy makes no apology for the 'fair share of booze and sex' involved in The Court of the Caliphas. Every element of his story is drawn from the original Arabic texts: 'the writers of the ninth and tenth centuries knew their rulers had their fair share of human flacks and were quite happy to describe them. To produce a sanitized and whitewashed version of history does no service to our understanding of the caliphate.' In this fast-paced and colourful narrative, Professor Hugh Kennedy takes us back to Baghdad and Samarra and the glory days of the Caliphate. From a rebellion planned in a remote desert town to the foundation of Baghdad in AD 792, the rule of the Abbasid dynasty was looked back on as the golden era of the Islamic Conquest. The muslim world was ruled by a single sovereign, who waged holy war against the Byzantines and protected the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. For what was to be the last time in history, a mighty empire was based on the ancient Mesopotamian heartland that had once supported the Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians. The Caliphs formed the model for succeeding muslim regimes. From military conquerors to patronizing poets, building palaces, and the formal structure of the court - harems, viziers, eunuchs and the tales of the Arabian Nights - the Abbasid Caliphate and offered a historical ideal for later empires and their rulers to aspire to. Yet the true story of this fascinating empire has been written outside the academic world. And it deserves to be reasserted: it is an epic story in every sense, with larger-than-life rulers, exotic slave girls, inventive tortures, and enough court intrigue to frighten a Borgia.

The Caliphate

A groundbreaking work that delivers a fresh account of the Arab conquests, incorporating the latest research in Late Antique history

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