

Islamic Caliphs

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What is a Caliph? What is a Caliphate?

Caliph



- A Caliph was considered the successor to Muhammad and was both the political and religious leader of the Muslim world.
- The word Caliph comes from the arabic word khalifa, which means “successor” or “next in line”.
- Now a days this term is no longer in use, it was a word used to describe a ruler of the Islamic Empire during the post classical period

Caliphate

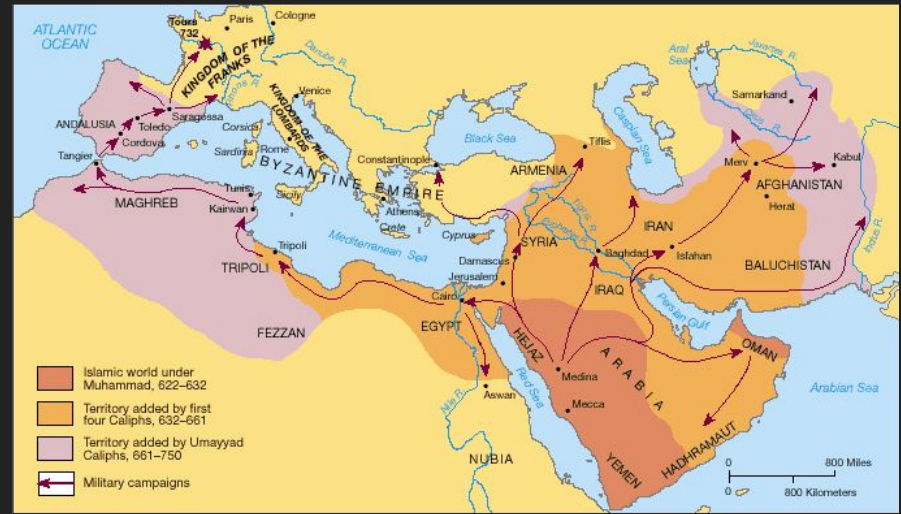
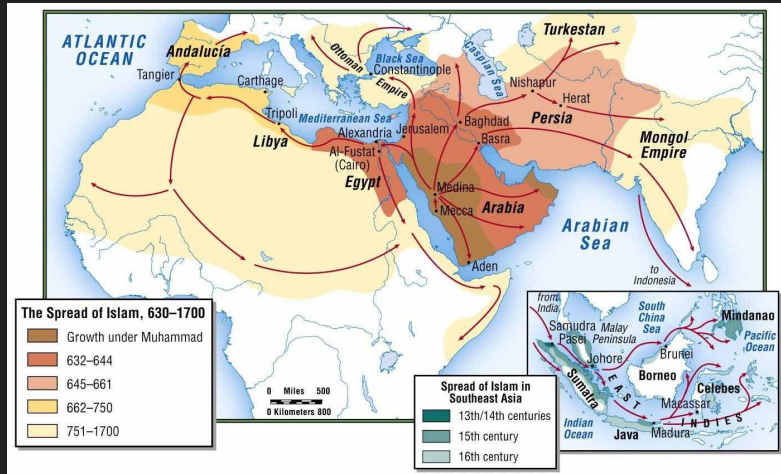
- A caliphate is an Islamic State under the leadership of an Caliph.
- The caliphates that ruled during this era owned large land empires that stretched from Spain to North Africa, the Middle East, and into Asia and Eastern Europe.



Caliph's spread of Islam

The chief Muslim civil and religious ruler regarded as the successor of Muhammad, **caliphs ruled primarily in Mecca and Medina and spread their caliphates as far as Spain, Northern Egypt, and Arabia.** After the Ottoman conquest of 1517, the title was held by several Ottoman sultans during the course of the empire's reign until it was abolished in 1924 by Atatürk.

These caliphs gained power in these regions by marrying into ruling families of various kingdoms to gain their land and then making those lands into vassal states (a territory that sends taxes in exchange for protection).



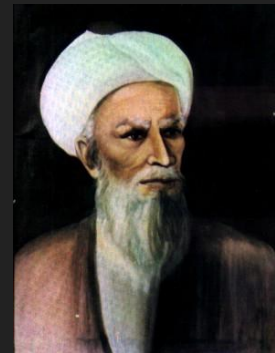
Duties of the Caliph

Military Duties:

- Maintain fortresses with supplies so enemies can't take them by surprise
- Wage war against other countries
- Carry out judgements between two people in a lawsuit
- Make payments at the right time and determine salaries due from the treasury.
- Collect the charity from the people and the goods claimed in war.
- Determine payments to other civilizations and the people.
- Employ trustworthy servants for his tasks
- Defend the kingdom's land
- Enforce legal penalties and preserve the rights of the people
- Supervise the affairs of the kingdom

Religious Duties:

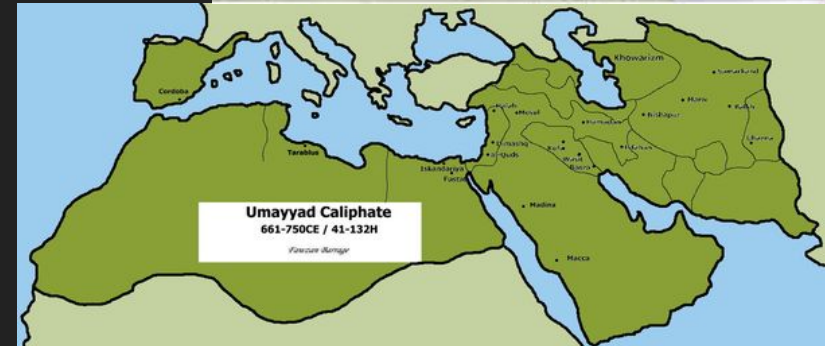
- Keep and maintain the beliefs of Islam and protect them against outside blasphemy.
- Make sure the people do not stray from the beliefs of Islam.
- Wage "holy wars" known as jihads against those who do not accept Islam
- Safeguard the faith and law of Islam
- Protect the commandments of God within their kingdom



The Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates

The Umayyad and Abbasid Empires took over many different Islamic caliphates between 661 and 1258 CE. Since they controlled such a large area, they had to consolidate and maintain their power. They did so by:

- Making Arabic the official language of the land
- Setting up a common currency in all the caliphates
- Dividing the empire into provinces with a governor heading each province so that the large land area would be easier to rule
- Setting up six different diwans, or committees, to head one part of government (Revenue, Communications, Records, Postal Service, Justice, and Military)



Why did the Caliph have so much power in Muslim society?

What was the impact of Caliphates on our world today?