The Abbasids

The Sunni Caliphate Created by a Shi‘a Revolt
Husaynis
  • Ismailis (Seveners)
  Ismail’s (d. 760) son
    : Muhammad ibn Isma’il

  • Imamis (Twelvers)
  Hasan al-Askari’s (d. 874) son
    : Abu’l-Kasim Muhammad

  **Muhammad al-Muntazar**

  MAHDI: a messianic deliverer who will fill the Earth with justice and equity, restore true religion, and usher in a short golden age lasting seven, eight, or nine years before the end of the world. The Quran does not mention him, and almost no reliable *hadith* (saying, tradition attributed to the Prophet Muhammad) concerning the Mahdi can be adduced. Many orthodox Sunni theologians accordingly question Mahdist beliefs, but such beliefs form a necessary part of Shi’i doctrine
According to the Seven Shi'a Ismail was the Seventh Imam.
According to the Twelver Shi‘a, Musa al-Kazim was the Seventh Imam and he was followed by five more imams until Hasan al-Askari, the Twelvth Imam.
In 685-7, @Kufa Mukhtar: “Al-Hanafiya is the Mahdi”

Muhammad ibn Ali began fermenting the revolt saying that al-Hanafiya’s son, Abu Hashim designated him
In 685-7, @Kufa Mukhtar: “Al-Hanafiya is the Mahdi”

Muhammad ibn Ali fermenting the revolt

743 CE, Death of Hisham the Umayyad caliph
In 685-7, @ Kufa Mukhtar: “Al-Hanafiya is the Mahdi”

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In 749 CE, @ Khorasan Abu Muslim 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muslim al-Khorasani
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Parallel paths

Hashim

'Abd al-Muttalib

'Abd Allah

Abu Talib

'Abbas

Muhammad the Prophet (d. 632)

Fatima

Ali al-Hanafiya

'Ali

'Abd Allah

Hasan (d. 669)

Husayn (d. 680)

Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiya (d. 700)

Muhammad (d. 743)

designated (?)

Abu Hashim (d. 716)

Zaynab

Ali Zayn al-Abidin

Ibrahim (d. 749)

al-Saffah (d. 754)

al-Mansur (d. 775)

al-Mahdi (d. 785)

al-Hadi

Harun al-Rashid (d. 809)

Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 765)

Muhammad al-Baqir (d. 737)

Zayd (d. 740)

Isma'il (d. 760)

Musa al-Kazim (d. 799)
Ummaya at the End of Their Rule
Intermission: The Fatimids

• Islamization
  – Early Expansions (Mid-seventh century)
  – Away from Central Authority
    • Kharijites (661 CE)
    • Devout and radical
The Fatimid Caliphate

- The long journey of Abd Allah
  - An Isma‘ili in Syria
  - 899 CE “I am the Imam”
  - 902 CE left Syria
  - A brief stay in Egypt
  - 905 among the Kharijites in Sijilmasa
  - Constant fight with independent groups for authority (until d. 934 CE)
GENEALOGY OF THE ABBASIDS

Abbas

Muhammad

Ibrahim

al-Mansur (754)

al-Saffah (749)

al-Mahdi (775)

Harun al-Rashid (786)

al-Hadi (785)

al-Amin (809)

al-Ma'mun (813)

al-Mut`asim (833)

Muhammad

al-Wathiq (842)

al-Mutawakkil (847)

al-Musta`in (862)

al-Muhtadi (869)

al-Muntasir (861)

al-Mu`tazz (866)

al-Mu'tamid (870)

al-Muwaqqat (876)

al-Mu`tadid (892)

al-Muktasim (902)

al-Muqtadid (908)

al-Qahir (932)

al-Mustakfi (944)

al-Radi (934)

al-Mutiaqi (940)

**Dates given are dates of accession**
FROM UMAYYADS (661-750) TO ABBASIDS

- From territorial expansion to cultural/intellectual explorations
- From a cosmopolitan society to a cosmopolitan administration

Consequences:
1. Institutional and doctrinal formation
2. Cultural affluence
3. Separation of faith and state
Building a Capital: Baghdad