

A personal web of information

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## Loading required package: lualatex
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## Warning in library(package, lib.loc = lib.loc, character.only = TRUE,  
## logical.return = TRUE, : there is no package called 'lualatex'
```



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*A selection of information*

## Arab caliphs and the Shi'a split

From: Hitti, *History of the Arabs*

The first four caliphs were known as the “orthodox caliphs”. They held sway from Medina.

- Abu Bakr (r. 632-634)
- 'Umar (r. 634-644)
  - appointed a six-member board of electors to decide on next caliph; stated that his son was not to be his successor
  - this showed that the old Arabian idea of the tribal chief had triumphed over the idea of the hereditary ruler
- 'Uthman (r. 644-656)
  - there was a protest against 'Uthman and he was killed
  - 'Aishah, Muhammad's favourite wife, had been involved in it in some way
- 'Ali (r. 656-661)
  - 'Ali was Muhammad's first cousin and husband of Muhammad's favourite daughter, Fatimah; they had two sons, Hasan and Husayn
  - the party he represented had long maintained 'Ali was the legitimate successor to Muhammad!

- almost the whole Muslim world accepted his succession as caliph
- some were opposed to him - 'Aishah, now “the mother of the believers”, joined up with these opponents in Basra; she hated him because of an earlier personal dispute between them where he'd questioned her integrity
- the two sides confronted each other at Basra; the “battle of the camel” (named from 'Aisha's mount) ensued; 'Ali won; 'Aisha, still treated as “first lady”, was sent back to Medina
- 'Ali moved his capital to Kufa not long after he became caliph

This was the first “civil war”.

Mu'awiyah, governor of Syria and relative of 'Uthman, emerged to avenge the killing of 'Uthman.

Mu'awiyah refused to accept 'Ali as caliph and challenged 'Ali to produce 'Uthman's killer, saying that, if he didn't produce the killer, he'd be an accomplice to the murder and ineligible to be caliph.

This also raised the question about whether Iraq or Syria would dominate Islamic affairs.

The two sides faced off near Raqqa (in present day northern Syria) in 657. There was a very drawn-out arbitration process, the details of which are unclear. In this process, which ended in 659, 'Ali lost status and Mu'awiyah gained some.

After 'Ali was killed in 661, Mu'awiyah became caliph, having been the caliph in waiting (but already accepted by some) since 659. He'd actually been proclaimed caliph in Jerusalem in 660. 'Ali was buried at al-Najaf, now a major Muslim pilgrimage centre.

Mu'awiyah (r. 661-680) established Damascus as the capital of the Muslim empire. He nominated his son, Yazid, as his successor. This introduced the hereditary principle into the caliphate.

Mu'awiyah was the first of the Umayyad caliphs (661-750).

The Iraqis refused to accept Mu'awiyah as caliph and put up Hasan, 'Ali and Fatimah's elder son, as 'Ali's true successor. Hasan wasn't particularly interested and was bought off by Mu'awiyah.

When Yazid succeeded his father, Mu'awiyah in 680, Iraqis pushed Husayn to challenge Yazid.

On 10th Muharram, 680, Husayn and a group of a couple of hundred relatives and followers were confronted by forces loyal to Yazid. Husayn's group refused to surrender and were all killed.

Shi'ism was born on 10th Muharram, as a result of Husayn's death.

Shi'ites hold strongly to the idea that the imamship began with 'Ali.