

WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE?

Abbasid caliphate: Dynasty of caliphs who ruled an increasingly fragmented Islamic state from 750 to 1258, eventually becoming little more than figureheads. (*pron.* ah-BASS-id)

Al-Andalus: Arabic name for Spain (literally “the land of the Vandals”), most of which was conquered by Arab and Berber forces in the early eighth century C.E. (*pron.* al-AND-ah-loos)

al-Ghazali: Great Muslim theologian, legal scholar, and Sufi mystic (1058–1111) who was credited with incorporating Sufism into mainstream Islamic thought. (*pron.* al-gha-ZAHL-ee)

Anatolia: Ancient name of Asia Minor, part of the Byzantine Empire that was gradually overrun by the Turks and that now is the Republic of Turkey. (*pron.* an-ah-TOLE-ee-yah)

hijra: The “flight” of Muhammad and his original seventy followers from Mecca to Yathrib (later Medina) in 622 C.E.; the journey marks the starting point of the Islamic calendar. (*pron.* HIJ-ruh)

House of Wisdom: An academic center for research and translation of foreign texts that was established in Baghdad in 830 C.E. by the Abbasid caliph al-Mamun.

Ibn Battuta: Fourteenth-century Arab traveler (1304–1368) who wrote about his extensive journeys throughout the Islamic world. (*pron.* IB-uhn ba- TOO-tuh)

Ibn Sina: One of the greatest polymaths of the Islamic world (980–1037), a Persian who wrote prolifically on scientific (especially medical) and philosophical issues; he is often known as “Avicenna,” the Latinized form of his name. (*pron.* ibn SEE-nah)

jizya: Special tax paid by dhimmis in Muslim-ruled territory in return for freedom to practice their own religion. (*pron.* jeez-YAH)

madrassas: Formal colleges for higher instruction in the teachings of Islam as well as in secular subjects, founded throughout the Islamic world beginning in the eleventh century. (*pron.* MAH-dras-ahs)

Mansa Musa: Muslim King of Mali (ca. 1280–ca. 1337) who famously undertook a pilgrimage from his West African homeland to the holy city of Mecca (*pron.* MAN-sa MOO-sa).

Pillars of Islam: The five core practices required of Muslims: a profession of faith, regular prayer,

charitable giving, fasting during Ramadan, and a pilgrimage to Mecca (if financially and physically possible).

Quran: Also transliterated as Qur’án and Koran, this is the most holy text of Islam, recording the revelations given to the prophet Muhammad. (*pron.* kuh- RAHN)

sharia: Islamic law, dealing with all matters of both secular and religious life. (*pron.* sha-REE-ah)

Sikhism: A significant syncretic religion that evolved in India, blending elements of Islam and Hinduism; founded by Guru Nanak (1469–1539). (*pron.* SEEK-ism)

Timbuktu: Great city of West Africa, noted as a center of Islamic scholarship in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. (*pron.* tim-buk-TOO)

ulama: Islamic religious scholars. (*pron.* oo-leh-MAH)

Umayyad caliphate: Family of caliphs who ruled the Islamic world from 661 to 750 C.E. (*pron.* oo-MY-ad)

umma: The community of all believers in Islam. (*pron.* UM-mah)