Since the 1970s, the study of early Islamic history has been transformed by new methods and sources. Volume 1 of The New Cambridge History of Islam, which surveys the political and cultural history of Islam from its Late Antique origins until the eleventh century, brings together contributions from leading scholars in the field. The book is divided into four parts. The first provides an overview of physical and political geography of the Late Antique Middle East. The second charts the rise of Islam and the emergence of the Islamic political order under the Umayyad and the Abbasid caliphs of the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, followed by the dissolution of the empire in the tenth and eleventh. ‘Regionalism’, the overlapping histories of the empire’s provinces, is the focus of part three, while part four provides a fully up-to-date discussion of the sources and controversies of early Islamic history, including a survey of numismatics, archaeology and material culture.

CHASE F. ROBINSON, formerly Professor of Islamic History at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, is currently Distinguished Professor of History and Provost at the Graduate Centre, the City University of New York. He is the author of The Legacy of the Prophet: The Middle East and Islam, 600–1300 (forthcoming), Islamic Historiography (2003) and Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest: The Transformation of Northern Mesopotamia (2000).
The New Cambridge History of Islam offers a comprehensive history of Islamic civilisation, tracing its development from its beginnings in seventh-century Arabia to its wide and varied presence in the globalised world of today. Under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad, the Muslim community coalesced from a scattered, desert population and, following his death, emerged from Arabia to conquer an empire which, by the early eighth century, stretched from India in the east to Spain in the west. By the eighteenth century, despite political fragmentation, the Muslim world extended from West Africa to South-East Asia. Today, Muslims are also found in significant numbers in Europe and the Americas, and make up about one-fifth of the world’s population.

To reflect this geographical distribution and the cultural, social and religious diversity of the peoples of the Muslim world, The New Cambridge History of Islam is divided into six volumes. Four cover historical developments, and two are devoted to themes that cut across geographical and chronological divisions – themes ranging from social, political and economic relations to the arts, literature and learning. Each volume begins with a panoramic introduction setting the scene for the ensuing chapters and examining relationships with adjacent civilisations. Two of the volumes – one historical, the other thematic – are dedicated to the developments of the last two centuries, and show how Muslims, united for so many years in their allegiance to an overarching and distinct tradition, have sought to come to terms with the emergence of Western hegemony and the transition to modernity.

The time is right for this new synthesis reflecting developments in scholarship over the last generation. The New Cambridge History of Islam is an ambitious enterprise directed and written by a team combining established authorities and innovative younger scholars. It will be the standard reference for students, scholars and all those with enquiring minds for years to come.
THE NEW CAMBRIDGE
HISTORY OF
ISLAM

VOLUME 1
The Formation of the Islamic World
Sixth to Eleventh Centuries

Edited by
CHASE F. ROBINSON
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Contributors

MICHAEL BONNER is Professor of Medieval Islamic History in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan. His publications on jihad and the medieval Islamic frontiers include Aristocratic violence and holy war: Studies on the jihad and the Arab-Byzantine frontier (New Haven, 1996) and Jihad in Islamic history: Doctrines and practice (Princeton, 2006). His work on social and economic issues in the medieval Near East has resulted in several publications including Poverty and charity in Middle Eastern contexts (co-edited with Amy Singer and Mine Ener) (Albany, 2003).


PAUL M. COBB is Associate Professor of Islamic History at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of White banners: Contention in ‘Abbasid Syria, 750–880 (Albany, 2001) and Usama ibn Munqidh: Warrior-poet of the age of Crusades (Oxford, 2005).

ELTON L. DANIEL is Professor in the Department of History, University of Hawaii at Manoa. His publications include The political and social history of Khurasan under Abbasid rule 747–820 (Minneapolis, 1979) and The history of Iran (London, 2001). He has written several articles on ‘Abbásid history and the History of al-Ṭabarî, among which are ‘The ‘Ahl al-Taqaddum’ and the Problem of the Constituency of the Abbasid Revolution in the Merv Oasis’ (1996) and ‘Manuscripts and editions of Bal‘ami’s Tarjamat-yi Tarikh-i Tabarî’ (1990).

FRED M. DONNER is Professor of Near Eastern History in the Oriental Institute and Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. He is the author of The early Islamic conquests (Princeton, 1981), Narratives of Islamic origins (Princeton, 1997) and Muhammad and the believers: At the origins of Islam (Cambridge, MA, 2010). He has published a translation of a section of al-Ṭabarî’s History, The conquest of Arabia (Albany, 1992), and numerous articles on early Islamic history.
List of contributors

Tayeb El-Hibri is Associate Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His book *Reinterpreting Islamic historiography: Harun al-Rashid and the narrative of the Abbasid caliphate* (Cambridge, 1999) was awarded an Albert Hourani Book Award Honorable Mention at the 2000 Middle East Studies Association of North America Annual Meeting.


Stefan Heidemann is Hochschuldozent at the Institute for Languages and Cultures of the Middle East, Jena University. His publications include *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (AD 1261)* (Leiden, 1994) and *Die Renaissance der Städte* (Leiden, 2002). He has edited or co-edited *Raqqa II: Die islamische Stadt* (Mainz, 2003), *Sylloge der Münzen des Kaukasus und Osteuropas im Orientalischen Münzkabinett Jena* (Wiesbaden, 2005) and *Islamische Numismatik in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden, 2000).

R. Stephen Humphreys is Professor of History and Islamic Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His previous books include *From Saladin to the Mongols* (Albany, 1977), *Islamic history: A framework for inquiry* (Princeton, 1991), *Between memory and desire: The Middle East in a troubled age* (Berkeley, 1999) and *Mu`awiyah Ibn Abu Sufyan: From Arabia to empire* (Oxford, 2006), along with numerous articles and essays on the history of medieval Syria and Egypt, Arabic historiography, and a variety of other topics.


Ella Landau-Tasser is Professor at the Institute for Asian and African Studies at the Hebrew University. She translated and annotated al-Tabari’s *Dhayl al-mudhayyal, Biographies of companions and their successors* (Albany, 1998), and has also written on Islamic historiography, *hadith*, Arabian tribal society and Islamic warfare.

List of contributors

Eduardo Manzano Moreno is Research Professor at the Instituto de Historia of the Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales (CSIC-Madrid). He is the author of Conquistadores, emires y califás: Los Omeyas y la formación de al-Andalus (Barcelona, 2006), Historia de las sociedades musulmanas en la Edad Media (Madrid, 1993) and La frontera de al-Andalus en época de los Omeyas (Madrid, 1991).

Marcus Milwright is Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Archaeology in the Department of History in Art at the University of Victoria, Canada. He is the author of The fortress of the raven: Karak in the middle Islamic period (1100–1650) (Leiden, 2008) and An introduction to Islamic archaeology (Edinburgh, forthcoming).

Chase F. Robinson is Distinguished Professor of History and Provost of the Graduate Center, The City University of New York. He is the author of Abd al-Malik (Oxford, 2005), Islamic historiography (Cambridge, 2003) and Empire and elites after the Muslim conquest: The transformation of northern Mesopotamia (Cambridge, 2000), amongst other edited volumes and articles on early Islamic history.

Mark Whittow is University Lecturer in Byzantine Studies at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. His publications on the history and archaeology of the Late Antique and medieval world include The making of orthodox Byzantium, 600–1025 (Basingstoke, 1996), ‘Recent research on the Late Antique city in Asia Minor: The second half of the 6th c. revisited’ (2001) and ‘Ruling the late Roman and early Byzantine city: A continuous history’ (1990). He has carried out field work in Turkey and Jordan.

A note on transliteration and pronunciation

Since many of the languages used by Muslims are written in the Arabic or other non-Latin scripts, these languages appear in transliteration. The transliteration of Arabic and Persian is based upon the conventions used by The encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition, with the following modifications. For the fifth letter of the Arabic alphabet (jīm), j is used (not dj), as in jumla. For the twenty-first letter (qāf), q is used (not k), as in qāfī. Digraphs such as th, dh, gh, kh and sh are not underlined. For terms and names in other languages, the individual chapter contributors employ systems of transliteration that are standard for those languages. Where there are well-accepted Anglicised versions of proper nouns or terms (e.g. Baghdad, Mecca), these are used instead of strict transliterations.

As far as the pronunciation of Arabic is concerned, some letters can be represented by single English letters that are pronounced much as they are in English (b, j, f, etc.); one exception is q, which is a ‘k’ sound produced at the very back of the throat, and another is the ‘r’, which is the ‘flap’ of the Spanish ‘r’. Others are represented by more than one letter. Some of these are straightforward (th, sh), but others are not (kh is pronounced like ‘j’ in Spanish, gh is similar to the uvular ‘r’ of most French speakers, and dh is ‘th’ of ‘the’, rather than of ‘thing’). There are also pairs of letters that are distinguished by a dot placed underneath one of them: thus t, s, d, z and their ‘emphatic’ counterparts t, s, d, and z, and which give the surrounding vowels a thicker, duller sound (thus ‘sad’, but ‘sun’); z may also be pronounced as dh.

The ‘ is the hamza, the glottal stop, as in the Cockney ‘bu’er’ (‘butter’); the ‘ is the ‘ayn, a voiced pharyngeal fricative that can be left unpronounced, which is what many non-Arab speakers do when it occurs in Arabic loan-words; and the ‘a voiceless pharyngeal fricative that can be pronounced as an ‘h’ in all positions, just as non-Arabs do in Arabic loanwords. Doubled consonants are lengthened, as in the English ‘hot tub’.
A note on transliteration and pronunciation

The vowels are written as a, i, and u, with ā, ĩ and ū signifying longer versions; thus bit and beat. W and y can function as either consonants or, when preceded by a short vowel, as part of a diphthong.

Persian uses the same alphabet as Arabic, with four extra letters: p, ch, zh (as in ‘pleasure’) and g (always hard, as in ‘get’).
A note on dating

The Islamic calendar is lunar, and divided into twelve months of twenty-nine or thirty days each: Muḥarram, Ṣafar, Rabī’ I, Rabī’ II, Jumādā I, Jumādā II, Rajab, Sha’bān, Ramadān (the month of the fast), Shawwāl, Dhū al-Qa’da, and Dhū al-Ḥijja (the month of the Pilgrimage). Years are numbered from the hijra (‘emigration’) of the Prophet Muḥammad from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina), conventionally dated to 16 July 622 of the Common (or Christian) Era; this dating is known as hijrī, and marked by ‘AH’. As the lunar year is normally eleven days shorter than the solar year, the Islamic months move in relation to the solar calendar, and hijrī years do not correspond consistently with Western ones; AH 1429, for example, both started and finished within 2008 CE (so indicated as ‘1429/2008’), but this is exceptional, and most overlap with two Common Era years, and so ‘460/1067’.
## Chronology

- **224**: Defeat of the Parthian king Artabanus V by Ardashir I; Sasanian dynasty takes power in Iran
- **260**: Shapur I's victory at Edessa; capture of the Roman emperor Valerian
- **284–301**: Reign of Emperor Diocletian; Roman army is enlarged and administration reformed
- **298**: 'Peace of disgrace' concluded between Romans and Sasanians
- **306–37**: Emperor Constantine I; conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity
- **363**: Emperor Julian's Persian expedition
- **378**: Catastrophic Roman defeat by the Goths at Adrianople
- **387**: Partition of Armenia
- **410**: Rome is sacked by the Goths, led by Alaric
- **439**: Vandals conquer Carthage
- **484**: Shāh Firūz is defeated by the Hepthalites
- **527–65**: Reign of Justinian; administrative reforms and military victories
- **528–9**: al-Hārith ibn Jabala made supreme phylarch by Justinian
- **531–79**: Reign of Shāh Khusrau I; social, economic and administrative reforms undertaken
- **540**: 'Eternal peace' between Romans and Sasanians, agreed in 532, is broken by Khusrau
- **572**: Sasanian advance into southern Arabia
- **c. 575**: Birth of Muhammad in Mecca
- **602**: Assassination of the last Lakhmid ruler Nu'mān III
Chronology

603–28 Last great war between Romans and Sasanians, the latter occupying Syria and Egypt
610–41 Reign of Emperor Heraclius
610 Muhammad delivers first revelations in Mecca
1/622 The ‘Emigration’ (hijra) of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina
628 The Sasanian shah Khusrau is murdered; civil war in Ctesiphon ensues
630 Emperor Heraclius restores True Cross to Jerusalem
11/632 Death of Muhammad in Medina
11–13/632–4 Reign of first caliph, Abu Bakr; the ‘wars of apostasy’ break out
31/651 Assassination of the last Sasanian king, Yazdegerd III, at Marw
35/656 First civil war (fitna) begins, triggered by the assassination of ‘Uthman; the battle of the Camel
35–40/656–61 Reign of ‘Ali ibn Abi ‘Abd Allah al-Talib, which ends with his assassination
41–60/661–80 Reign of the (Sufyanid) Umayyad Mu’awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan
61/680 Killing of al-Hasayn, the Prophet’s grandson, at Karbalá’ by Umayyad forces
64–73/683–92 Second civil war: the Sufyanids fall, Ibn al-Zubayr rules the caliphate from Mecca and the Marwānids; Umayyads come to power
73–86/692–705 Reign of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān
79/698 Conquest of Carthage
86–96/705–15 Reign of al-Walid, first of four sons of ‘Abd al-Malik to rule; Qutayba ibn Muslim leads conquests in Transoxania and Central Asia
92/711 ‘Abd Allah ibn Ziyad crosses the Strait of Gibraltar, and Iberia soon falls to Muslims
98–9/716–17 Failed siege of Constantinople
Reign of ‘Umar II, later considered the fifth of the ‘rightly guided’ caliphs

Revolt of Yazid ibn al-Muhallab

Muslim campaigns beyond the Indus

Muslim defeat in Transoxania on the ‘Day of Thirst’; Muslims now on defensive in the east

Muslim army defeated near Poitiers by Charles Martel

Berber revolt; Umayyad authority dissolves in North Africa and Spain; revolt led by Zayd ibn ‘Ali, a grandson of al-Ḥusayn

Reign of Marwān II, last Umayyad caliph

Abū Muslim leads the Ḥashimiyah in rebellion, conquering Marw in early 130/748

The ‘Abbāsid Abū al-‘Abbās acclaimed as caliph in Kūfa

Umayyad caliphate falls to ‘Abbāsid–Ḥashimī armies; Marwān killed in Egypt

Umayyad counter-revolts in Syria and al-Jazira

Reign of al-Mansūr; Abū Muslim is murdered


Rebellion of the ‘Alid Muḥammad, ‘the Pure Soul’; construction of Baghdad begins

Reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd

‘Decade of the Barmakids’; vizieral family dominate ‘Abbāsid administration and culture

Hārūn al-Rashīd makes al-Raqqa his capital

Civil war between Hārūn’s two sons, al-ʿAmīn and al-Maʿmūn; Baghdad besieged

Reign of al-ʿAmīn; large numbers of Turkish slave-soldiers are introduced into the army from the 820s

Appointment of Tāhir ibn al-Ḥusayn as governor of Khurāsān; beginning of Tāhirid rule

Reign of al-Muʿtaṣim; caliphal court is moved to Sāmarrāʾ, where it remains until 892

The miḥna: the caliphs impose the doctrine of the ‘createdness’ of the Qurʿān
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>232/847</td>
<td>Turkish commanders participate in council to decide caliphal succession</td>
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<tr>
<td>247/861</td>
<td>Al-Mutawakkil is murdered in Sámarra’</td>
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<tr>
<td>251/865</td>
<td>Civil war in Iraq between al-Mustā’īn and al-Mu’tazz</td>
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<tr>
<td>254/868</td>
<td>Ibn Tūlūn arrives in Egypt and begins to establish his rule there</td>
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<tr>
<td>255/869</td>
<td>Outbreak of Zanj revolt in southern Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>262/876</td>
<td>Ya’qūb the Coppersmith is defeated near Baghdad</td>
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<tr>
<td>265/878</td>
<td>Defeat of the Zanj in the swamps of southern Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>295/908</td>
<td>Accession of al-Muqtadir to the caliphate, followed by the revolt of Ibn al-Mu’tazz</td>
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<tr>
<td>297/909</td>
<td>The Fātimid ‘Abd Allāh the mahdī is declared caliph in North Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>309/922</td>
<td>Execution of the mystic al-Ḥallāj</td>
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<tr>
<td>317/930</td>
<td>The Qarāṭa attack Mecca and seize the Black Stone</td>
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<td>320/932</td>
<td>Death of al-Muqtadir</td>
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<td>323/935</td>
<td>Death of Mardāvij ibn Ziyār, warlord of northern Iran</td>
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<td>325/936</td>
<td>Ibn Rā’īq becomes amīr al-umārā’ in Baghdad</td>
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<td>334/946</td>
<td>Ahmad ibn Büya Mu’tizz al-Dawla enters Baghdad; end of the independent ‘Abbāsid caliphate</td>
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<tr>
<td>350/961</td>
<td>‘Ali ibn Mazyad al-Asadī establishes Mazyadid rule in Ḥilla and central Iraq</td>
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<td>366/977</td>
<td>Sebüktegin seizes power in Ghazna</td>
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<td>367–72/978–83</td>
<td>Rule of the Būyid ‘Adud al-Dawla in Iraq</td>
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<td>380/990</td>
<td>al-Ḥasan ibn Marwān establishes Marwānid rule in Mayyāfāriqīn and Amida</td>
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<tr>
<td>381–422/991–1031</td>
<td>Reign of al-Qādir, resurgence of ‘Abbāsid authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>389/999</td>
<td>Ghaznavids secure power in Khurāsān</td>
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<tr>
<td>420/1029</td>
<td>Issuing of the ‘Qādiri creed’ by the caliph al-Qādir; Mahmūd of Ghazna takes Rayy and ends Būyid rule there</td>
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<tr>
<td>421/1030</td>
<td>Death of Maḥmūd of Ghazna</td>
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<tr>
<td>440/1048</td>
<td>End of Būyid rule in Baghdad</td>
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<tr>
<td>442/1050</td>
<td>Death of Qirwāsh ibn Muqallad al-‘Uqaylī</td>
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Abbreviations

BAR  British Archaeological Reports
BASOR  Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BGA  Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum
BSOAS  Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
CII  Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum
CSCO  Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
EI  Encyclopaedia Iranica
EIr  Encyclopaedia Iranica, London and Boston, 1982–
IJMES  International Journal of Middle East Studies
JA  Journal Asiatique
JAOS  Journal of the American Oriental Society
JESHO  Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JNES  Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JRAS  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSAI  Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam
JSS  Journal of Semitic Studies
MW  Muslim World
OrOcc  Oriens et Occidens
REI  Revue des études islamiques
RSO  Rivista degli Studi Orientali
SI  Studia Islamica
ZDMG  Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
The political geography of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern world, c. 575

2. Byzantine empire at the death of Justinian, 565 C.E.
3. The expansion of Islam in the east