



Lost Civilizations: Syria : The Umayyad dynasty

HD



Directed by Jacques VICHET

French Version
English Version

A documentary of 52'

High Definition
Digital Betacam 16/9

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The Umayyad dynasty was one of the longest and the most legendary dynasties in Mediterranean history.

From 661 to 750, this dynasty of Caliphs governed the Muslim world, which extended from Central Asia to Spain.

Mohammed and the Umayyads shared a common ancestor 'Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy.

His son Hāšim was the founder of the Banū Hāšim clan, to which the prophet belonged, while his other son 'Abd Šams was the founder of the Umayyad dynasty through his son 'Umayya.

Around 746, the Abbasid powers launched an open insurrection against the Umayyad rulers.

The two armies met at the Battle of the Zab in early 750, and the Umayyads were defeated.

Within the year, Damas was taken, Marwān II had fled to Egypt where he was killed, and 'Abū Al-'Abbās As-Saffāh, chief of the Abbasids, was proclaimed Caliph in Koufa.

That marked the end of the Umayyad Caliphate, and the start of the Abbasid Caliphate.

This great civilization left in its wake a magnificent heritage including, for example, the great Umayyad mosque in Damas, which became the capital of the arabo-islamic empire.

The ruins of the Umayyad castles teach us a great deal about the lives of the princes, and their quest for pleasures of all sorts, even the most sensual.

Very varied in style, the castles range from small hunting lodges with adjoining baths, sets of villas grouped within a surrounding wall, pleasure palaces equipped with hamam, mosque and caravanserai, to vast residences designed to host the entire Court.

Tracing the steps of this lost civilization can teach us about a whole new way of life.