

**DECLINE AND COLLAPSE OF THE ABBASID DYNASTY**

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**Abstrak**

Tujuan dari penulisan ini adalah mendeskripsikan penyebab kemunduran hingga mengakibatkan hancurnya dinasti Abbasiyah. Fokus pembahasan dalam tulisan yaitu mengulas lebih dalam baik meliputi faktor internal maupun eksternalnya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan deskriptif kualitatif menggunakan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research) dengan mengambil sumber-sumber yang relevan dari buku maupun artikel jurnal. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh yaitu kondisi pada masa pemerintahan Dinasti Abbasiyah. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kajian kepustakaan dengan mengumpulkan data primer dan sekunder yang relevan dengan topik Dinasti Abbasiyah meliputi aspek kemunduran dan kehancurannya. Kemunduran dan Kehancuran Dinasti Abbasiyah disebabkan beberapa faktor internal dan eksternal. Hakikatnya faktor-faktor kemunduran ini sudah terlihat pada periode pertama namun karena khalifah pada masa itu kuat maka ia tidak dapat berkembang. Adapun faktor internal datang dari dalam kekhalfahan, yaitu bermula dari berdirinya Dinasti Abbasiyah bekerjasama dengan orang Persia sehingga terjadi perebutan kekuasaan yang mengedepankan bangsa masing-masing, lemahnya khalifah sehingga tidak mampu dapat membendung berdirinya dinasti-dinasti kecil didalam kekhalfahan dan khalifah hanya sebagai lambang saja, terbentuknya dinasti-dinasti kecil juga disebabkan perpecahan antar keyakinan yang ada di dinasti yaitu perdebatan syi'ah dengan ahlussunnah dan perdebatan mengenai Al-Qur'an bersifat qadim atau hadits, Adapun faktor eksternal yaitu dengan adanya perang salib dan penyerangan dari bangsa Mongol yang mengakibatkan hancurnya Dinasti Abbasiyah. Kehancuran dinasti Abbasiyah ini tentunya berdampak pada dunia Islam kemudian baik dari segi ilmu pengetahuan, politik dan ekonomi.

**Kata kunci:** Kemunduran, Kehancuran, Dinasti Abbasiyah.

**Abstract**

*The purpose of this writing is to describe the causes of the decline that resulted in the destruction of the Abbasid dynasty. The focus of the discussion in the writing is to review in more depth both internal and external factors. The research method used is descriptive qualitative using a library research approach by taking relevant sources from books and journal articles. The results of the research obtained are the conditions during the reign of the Abbasid Dynasty. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies by collecting primary and secondary data that are relevant to the topic of the Abbasid Dynasty including aspects of its decline and destruction. The decline and destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty were caused by several internal and external factors. In essence, these factors of decline were already visible in the first period, but because the caliph at that time was strong, it could not develop. As for internal factors came from within the caliphate, namely starting from the establishment of the Abbasid Dynasty in collaboration with the Persians so that there was a struggle for power that prioritized each nation, the weakness of the caliph so that he was unable to stem the establishment of small dynasties within the caliphate and the caliph was only a symbol, the formation of small dynasties was also caused by divisions between beliefs in the dynasty, namely the debate between Shiites and Ahlussunnah and the debate about the Qur'an being qadim or hadith. As for external factors, namely the existence of the crusades and attacks from the Mongols which resulted in the destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty. The destruction of the Abbasid dynasty certainly had an impact on the Islamic world later, both in terms of science, politics and economy.*

*Keywords: Decline, Destruction, Abbasid Dynasty.*

**Introduction**

In history, Islam has experienced a golden age in various aspects, precisely during the reign of the Abbasid Dynasty whose capital was in Baghdad. The Abbasids occupy an important position in Islamic history, because the glory of Islam reached its peak in a long period of time. This dynasty began to rule in 132-656 H, coinciding with the years 750-1258 H. This dynasty was the most brilliant period.

The establishment of the Abbasid Dynasty began with the collapse of the Umayyad Dynasty in Damascus. During the Umayyad dynasty, the government focused on expansion or expansion of the territory, while during the Umayyad dynasty it was more oriented towards fostering scientific and cultural civilization because the territory at that time was already vast so that this period was known as " The Golden Age ", the reason it is said to be the golden age is one of the establishments of madrasahs, libraries, and research centers that encourage translations and development

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of world sciences (Farozdaq, Abdillah Theofany; Alindra, Bagoes Malik, 2024). During the Abbasid dynasty, Muslims became a symbol of scientific progress throughout the world. Although it cannot be denied that the glory and civilization during the Abbasid era were the result of the development of what had been arranged by Muslims previously since the beginning of the rise of Islam (Edianto, 2017). The peak of the Abbasid Dynasty was during the time of Harun al-Rasyid (786-809). Science was very developed, with the movement of translating Greek manuscripts. Which eventually gave birth to reliable and well-known scholars later, such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina. In addition, the Baitul Hikmah library was built so that science developed rapidly such as philosophy, mathematics and literature (Prayogi, Arisandi, 2023).

According to Muhammad Nashir, the Abbasid Caliphate was formed through a fairly long process and using a reliable revolutionary strategy. First, through underground power by Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Abbas. Second, through continuous and secret propaganda efforts about the rights of the Caliphate which should be in the hands of the Hashim dynasty, not the Umayyad dynasty. Third, the use of non-Arab Muslims who had long been considered second class. Fourth, open propaganda led by Abu Muslim Al-Khurasani (Nashir, 2012).

Over time, the Abbasid Dynasty began to decline due to several internal and external factors. With the decline, the Abbasid Dynasty had to experience destruction in 1258 due to the Mongol attack with the last caliph, Al-Mu'tashim.

Based on the description above, the author would like to review in more depth the conditions, events and factors that caused the destruction of the Abbasid dynasty which had stood for five centuries.

This research approach uses a qualitative research method with a library research type . Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies by collecting primary and secondary data relevant to the topic of the Abbasid Dynasty including aspects of its decline and destruction. The data obtained are then reduced and analyzed using content analysis and descriptive analysis methods . The results of the study are expected to provide conclusions that are in accordance with the focus of this study, namely "factors causing the decline and destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty".

### **Research Method**

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### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **The Decline of the Abbasid Dynasty**

The Abbasid dynasty caliphate was divided into several periods in which each period saw changes in the holder of power, the system of government and military policy. In essence, the things that caused the decline of the Abbasid dynasty did not appear suddenly, but the seeds were already visible in the first period, but because it had a very strong caliph in this period, the seeds were silent and could not develop (May, 2016). In history, it can be seen that if the caliph is strong, then the ministers tend to act as civil servants, but if the caliph is weak, then they will be the ones in power to run the government.

In the first period the Abbasid dynasty achieved rapid development, this encouraged the caliph's family and officials to live in luxury so that the wheels of government were disrupted and the people became poor. These conditions gave the Turkish army appointed by Al-Mu'tashim the opportunity to take over the government so that power came under their hands and the existence of the caliph began to fade. This was the beginning of the collapse of the Abbasid dynasty. Caliph Al-Mutawakkil as the first caliph in this period was a weak person so it was easy for the Turks to seize the government, after caliph Al-Mutawakkil died, they chose and appointed the caliph.

During this period, many caliphs died in unnatural conditions. They were killed and also forcibly removed from the throne, the authority of the caliphs declined sharply. Until the time when the Turkish army was weak, so that in the regions there emerged strong figures who freed themselves from central power and then founded small dynasties. This was the beginning of the disintegration in the political history of the Abbasid dynasty.

To be clearer, Badri Yatim groups the factors causing the decline of the Abbasid dynasty into two (Yatim, 2020). First, Internal Factors *Competition Between*

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*Nations* The initial process of the establishment of the Abbasid dynasty, namely the Bani Abbas who allied with the Persians, this was motivated by the similar fate of the two groups, namely both being oppressed during the reign of the Bani Umayyad. After the Abbasid caliphate was established, the Bani Abbas continued to maintain the alliance.

At this time, competition between nations became a trigger for mutual power. The Persians were never satisfied and wanted a dynasty with kings and officials from Persia as well. Meanwhile, the Arabs thought that the blood flowing in their bodies was special blood which they considered lowly to non-Arabs in the Islamic world. The tendency of each nation to dominate power has been felt since the beginning of the Abbasid Caliphate (Amini, 2010). But because the caliph was strong he was still able to maintain political stability. After Al-Mutawakkil was replaced by a weak caliph, the Turkish army was unstoppable and in fact since then the power of the Bani Abbas has ended, power is in the hands of the Turks. Then this position was seized by the Buwaih Dynasty, the Persian nation, in the third period and then switched to the Seljuk Dynasty (Nasution, 2019). *The Caliph's Incompetence* Just as in the Umayyad Dynasty, they appointed people who were incapable of carrying out their duties properly, so too in the Abbasid Dynasty, the caliphs after Al-Mu'tasim were further enriched by their moral depravity so that they spent more time partying than taking care of the country. *The emergence of small dynasties* In addition to the development of knowledge, the decline of the Abbasid dynasty was caused by debates in theology, for example the issue of the Qur'an. Here the question arises, "Is the Qur'an qadim or hadith ?" (Frazilla, 2022).

Because of this conflict, a rule emerged that people who say the Qur'an is eternal are considered polytheists. People who are polytheists are not allowed to become government officials, so there was a selection of people who believed in this, if they said eternal it meant they were considered polytheists and were put in prison. Ibn Hambal remained steadfast in his position and was imprisoned. During his imprisonment he was tortured with various tortures but he still did not shake his belief so that many people finally followed his opinion. Seeing this, the government conducted a mihnah (testing of faith or beliefs). Finally, Mu'tazilah was canceled as the official state school and replaced with Ash'ariyah brought by Abu Hasan Al-Ash'ari, this is where the divisions and disintegration began to occur within the Abbasid dynasty, the government was no longer strong and small dynasties emerged. The main cause of the emergence of small dynasties that became independent was the struggle for power in the central government, namely between the Persians

and the Turks, which resulted in followers from several outlying provinces starting to break free from the power of the Abbasids.

*The vastness of the territory and the weakness of the economy*, The Abbasid territory was very large both in the East and West of Baghdad. For a weak caliph it was very difficult to control a large territory if not supported by a strong economy. So the central government seemed paralyzed in controlling its territories because of the weak economy. In the first period the Abbasids were a rich government, funds coming in were greater than those going out so Baitul Mal was full of treasures. Baitul mal assets are obtained from al-kharaj (a kind of land tax). After entering a decline, state revenues decreased due to the narrowing of the territory of power, many riots that disrupted the people's economy, tax relief, and many small dynasties that became independent and no longer paid tribute. Meanwhile, expenditures increased because the lives of the caliphs and officials became more luxurious, the types of expenditures became more diverse and officials committed corruption.

Second External Factors, namely those originating from outside the dynasty, the factors that caused the Abbasid Dynasty to weaken and collapse were, *Crusade* The defeat of the Roman army had planted the seeds of hatred among Christians towards Muslims. This hatred increased after the Seljuk Dynasty, which controlled Baitul Maqdis, implemented regulations that were considered difficult for Christians who wanted to make pilgrimages there. Therefore, Pope Urban II in 1095 AD called on European Christians to wage a holy war, known as the Crusades. The crusades took place in several waves that claimed many victims. This divided the government's concentration, giving rise to many weaknesses and making it easy for outsiders to destroy the dynasty (Yakub, 2015). *Mongolian attacks on Muslim lands and ended the Abbasid dynasty*, The Mongolian people are a nation originating from Central Asia. Between Lake Baikal and the Altai mountains which are sub-mountains centered between Russia and China. Consisting of tribes united by Genghis Khan. They are nomadic people who live in camps. Like the life of previous nomads, they enjoyed war, raiding, hunting and raising livestock and lived around lakes and rivers.

Their background greatly influences their character and personality. They obey their leaders, rules and religion. They eat all kinds of animals even though they are dead. Basically they are very primitive herding tribes and their ideology is animism. Therefore, rain never falls for years in their area so that the Mongols invade various nations to rob and plunder. The invasions carried out were not intended to spread faith but to cause damage alone. They have evil thoughts, namely changing peaceful cities,

fertile lands into primitive civilization grassland cities as their first place of residence. Genghis Khan was known as the strongest conqueror and he was determined to rule the world. He trained 10,000 intelligent and responsive soldiers, 1000 of whom were chosen to be the palace guards and bodyguards of Genghis Khan as the supreme leader. He had destroyed the Islamic countries and regions from Central Asia to Syria with his violent and barbaric politics, after his death he was replaced by his grandson Hulagu Khan.

They hoped to take control of Baghdad and destroy the Abbasid dynasty which was in a weak condition because of the split between the Ahlussunnah caliph and the Shiite Amir Umara. In 1253, Hulagu, Genghis Khan's grandson, moved and the Mongols led a large army to eradicate the Assassin group (Hasyasyin) and attack the Abbasid Caliphate. They swept away everything that they passed and that obstructed their journey; invaded all the small kingdoms that were trying to grow on the ruins of Shah Khawarizm's empire. Hulagu invited Caliph al-Musta'shim<sup>3</sup> (1242-1258) to work together to destroy the Hasyasyin Ismaili group. But the invitation went unanswered.

In 1256, a large number of the Hashashin fortresses had been captured without the slightest difficulty, and infants were brutally slaughtered. In September of the following year, advancing towards the famous Khorasan highway, Hulagu sent an ultimatum to the caliph to surrender and demanded that the outer city walls be torn down. But the caliph remained unresponsive. In January 1258, Hulagu's men moved effectively to tear down the walls of the capital. Soon their efforts bore fruit when one of the fortress towers collapsed. The Abbasid vizier at the time, Ibn al-Alqami, came to ask for a grace period, but Hulagu refused. Likewise, all warnings that threatened anyone who dared to disturb the "city of peace" or damage the Abbasid caliphate were useless. Hulagu was told that "if the caliph is killed, the universe will be in chaos, the sun will hide its face, the rain will stop falling, and there will be no more vegetation." But Hulagu knew better about this, thanks to the services of his astrologer.

By February 10, his troops had pushed into the city, and the caliph and 300 officials and qadis hastily offered the city unconditional surrender. Ten days later, they were all killed. The city itself was looted and burned. The majority of the population, including the caliph's family, were massacred. The stench emanating from the unburied corpses lying on the streets forced Hulagu to withdraw from the city for several days. Perhaps he intended to use Baghdad as his residence, so that he would not destroy the entire city as he did other cities. The head of the Nestor family received a special gift. A number of schools and mosques were vacated or rebuilt. For

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the first time in history, the Muslim world was left without a caliph whose name was casually mentioned in Friday prayers (Hitti, 2002). The mastermind behind the murder of the caliph was the betrayal of Ibn Al-Alqami and Nashiruddin Al-Thusi, the data on the deaths was two million people and those who survived Jews, Christians, people who asked for protection from the Mongols, and people who took refuge in Al-Alqami's house, as well as the conglomerates who distributed their wealth to the Mongols (Pulungan, 2018). With the fall of the city of Baghdad to the Mongols, the Abbasid power was destroyed along with the destruction of various remains of Islamic science and civilization that had been built by the caliphs. This final Mongol army attack led to the destruction of the Abbasid dynasty in 1258 AD.

As a dynasty that existed for five centuries, the fall of the Abbasid dynasty certainly had an impact on the Islamic world with the destruction of the Baitul Mal as a center for translating various kinds of knowledge, but the knowledge that had been brought out of the Abbasid dynasty could still be developed by Islamic figures outside Baghdad. The impact of the destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty on the contemporary Islamic world can also be seen from various aspects. From the aspect of science, it is always lagging behind in the field of science to the western world. In the political aspect, at that time the Muslims were led by the sun-worshipper Khulagu Khan, causing the contemporary era of the power of Islam as a superpower to disappear. Because it no longer uses the caliphate system, Muslims are divided and easily colonized by Western nations. In the economic sector after the destruction of the Abbasids, Muslims experienced poverty and the economy was controlled by Western nations until now (Amin, 2016).

### **Simpulan**

The decline and destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty were caused by several internal and external factors. Internal factors came from within the Caliphate, namely starting from the establishment of the Abbasid Dynasty in collaboration with the Persians so that there was a struggle for power that prioritized each nation, the weakness of the Caliph so that he was unable to stem the establishment of small dynasties within the Caliphate and the Caliph was only a symbol, the vastness of the territory of power so that there was an economic decline that was initially rich due to several things weakening the income of funds, and the emergence of religious conflicts, namely the emergence of the Zindiq movement which spread the teachings of Menuism, Zoroastrianism, Mazdakism and competition between beliefs and debates on the nature of the Qur'an, this is the most important thing in a country, if the scholars



have debated. As for external factors, namely the existence of the Crusades and attacks from the Mongols which resulted in the destruction of the Abbasid Dynasty,

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