



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Palace of Baldu

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



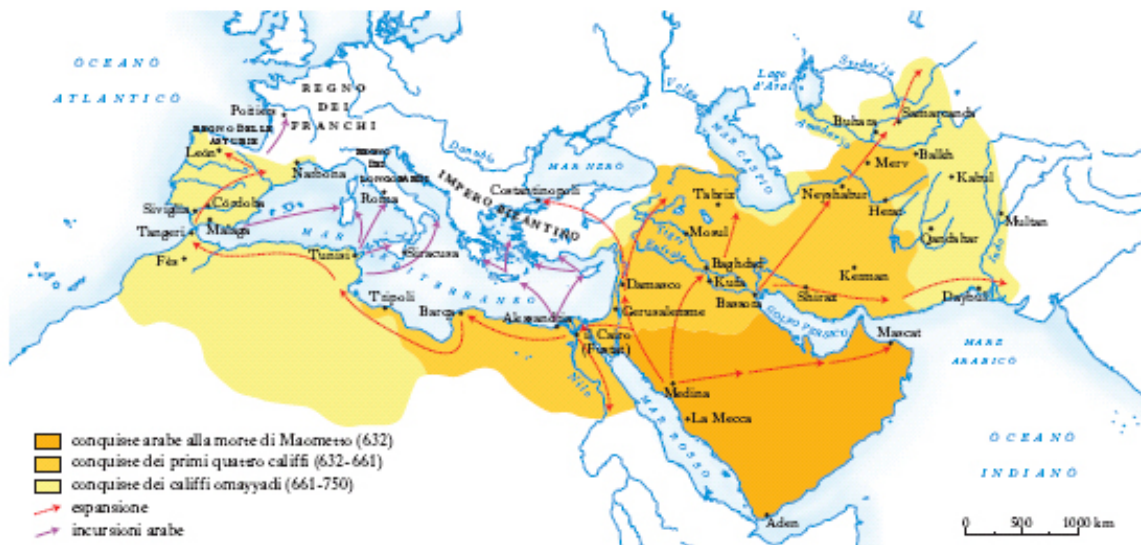
## ■ The Arabs

The presence of Arab goods in the complex of the Palace of Baldu raises questions concerning the socio-economic relations between the Islamic world and Sardinia, at a time when the Mediterranean basin was a place of intense exchanges between western and eastern states.



**Fig. 1** - Vitreous fragment with enamelled Arabic inscription found in the palace of Baldu (photo by F. Pinna).

The Arab nation was born in the seventh century when Muhammad founded Islamic religion under which all people that joined it were politically unified. At his death in 632 AD, the state expanded through rapid conquests which affected Persia, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, the coast of North Africa, Spain, reaching the French lands where the Islamic advance was defeated in 732 (fig. 2).

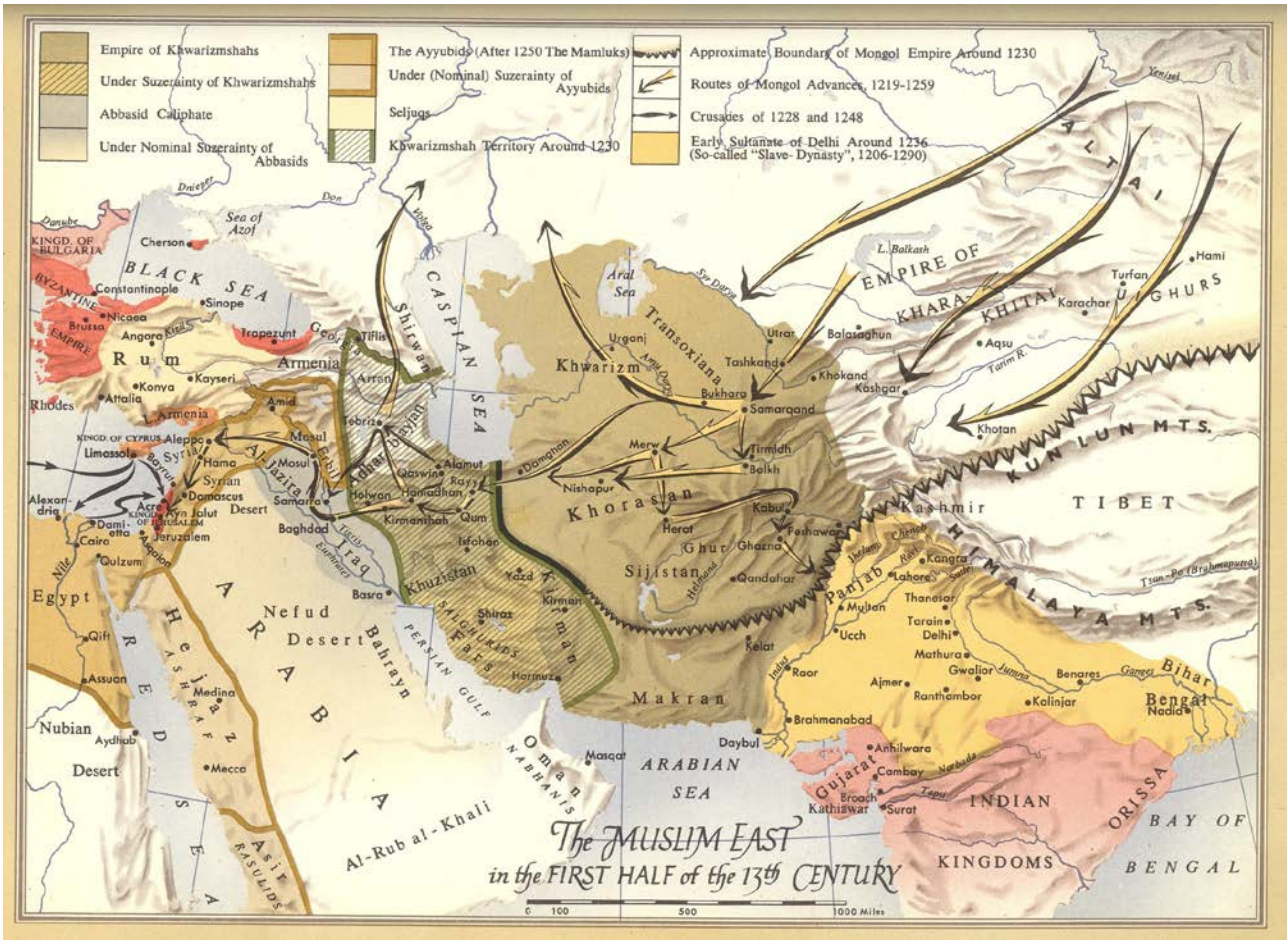


**Fig. 2** - The Arab expansion (from <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/arabi/>).

After the conquest of the African coast in the late seventh century, Sardinia, still ruled by Byzantium, became a useful territory for the expansion of Islam.

The Arabs used the island ports for strategic reasons and to purchase the material and human resources necessary to continue military operations and to support the regions already under rule; also, the island was subject to payment of the *Giz'yah*, a war allowance, therefore a kind of payment for people and good that was a true act of subjection. In Sardinia, the Arab invasions definitively ended in the early eleventh century, thanks to the intervention of Pisa and Genoa, when they were freed of Byzantine dominion and had already declared its independence by setting up the four *Giudicati*.

Thereafter, separate states were created from the debris of the Islamic empire: the ethnic element mingled with that of the subjugated populations, remaining present in the Mediterranean and the Near East until the thirteenth century, when it ended because of the Mongolian invasion (fig. 3); the 16th-18th centuries saw the peak economic and spiritual decline of the Arabic world.



**Fig. 3** - Map of the Muslim East during the first half of the thirteenth century (from <http://doncurzionitologia.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/mongols.jpg>).

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Claudia Cocco and Dr. Francesca Collu

## ■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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## ■ Periodicals and magazines

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- B.S.S.H.N.C** *Bulletin de la Société des sciences historiques et naturelles de la Corse*, Bastia, I, 1881 e ss.
- RiMe** *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea* (CNR) I, 2008 e ss.



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## La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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