

Umayyad Empire: Achievements:

The Umayyad Empire was a towering monument of the early medieval world, and its achievements are being reevaluated and expanded. Some achievements of the Umayyads include:

Expansion:

The Umayyad Empire vastly increased the size of the Islamic world. Its armies captured territory from Spain to India, taking control of many important cities including Bukhara, Samarkand, Khwarezm, and Tashkent.

Islamisation of Central Asia:

The conquests of the Umayyads had profound, long-term effects on the religious and cultural life of the regions they conquered. In particular, the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and West Asia adopted Islam.

Development of Islam:

Many of the elements that we now think of as fundamental to Islam developed during the Umayyad period. For example, the Qur'an was compiled during this period. Furthermore, the Haj annual pilgrimage to Mecca began during the rule of the Umayyads. The late period of the Umayyads also saw the beginning of the formal transmission of the Hadith - the reports about the life and times of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.

Infrastructure:

Despite expanding rapidly, the Umayyad Empire managed to control its territory effectively by developing quality infrastructure. One of the central achievements of the Umayyads was the creation of a postal system, allowing communication to flow easily throughout their empire. Another important system was their financial infrastructure - a banking system that was based on credit.

Cultural achievements:

The Umayyads built some of the most stunning architecture the world has known. They blended previous architectural styles with inspiration from Byzantine and Mesopotamian decorations, to create a fusion of east and west-inspired design.

The Umayyads also pioneered new types of Islamic worship buildings. Before this point, Islamic mosques had been make-shift and simple. However, the Umayyads

introduced distinctive new features, including more aisles, decorative panelling, mihrabs,

and minarets. Two of the crowning architectural achievements of this era were the creation of the Great Mosque of Damascus and the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem.

Arabization:

It is known that the Caliph Omar Ibn Al-Khattab left the administration of the conquered foreign countries in the sense that he kept editing the bureaus in the language of its people: the Diwan of Al-Sham wrote in Roman, the Diwan of Iraq and Persia in Persian, and the Diwan of Egypt in Coptic. But Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, after the matter was settled for him, that the Arabic language alone be the language of all the bureaucracies, while the transfer of the Diwan of Egypt was delayed at the beginning of the reign of al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik.

This step was followed by another step aimed at strengthening the Arab rule by controlling its economy. So Abd al-Malik bin Marwan ordered the coin to be struck and engraved, and he forbade others to strike it. This coin was known as the “Islamic Sekkat” and the currency unit did not change with its Arabization, so the golden dinar, the silver dirham and the pieces of the dirham remained, such as the daniq, the Mithqal and the volos.