

Classical Islamic Leadership and The Consolidation of Power in The Umayyad Dynasty: A Study of The Reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik (86–96 AH)

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Abstract

This article examines the leadership of Al-Walid bin Abdul Malik in consolidating the power of the Umayyad Dynasty through political stability, territorial expansion, infrastructure development, as well as social and administrative integration. The study is based on the limited analytical research specifically addressing governance strategies during Al-Walid's reign. The findings reveal that Al-Walid's leadership successfully strengthened political legitimacy through systematic expansion, bureaucratic consolidation, and large-scale infrastructure development, both religious and social. In addition, policies of administrative standardization and Arabization played a significant role in reinforcing socio-political integration across diverse regions. These strategies not only created political stability but also fostered the advancement of Islamic civilization. Thus, effective leadership in the context of classical Islam was determined by the synergy between political authority, institutional development, and social integration. This study contributes to the development of Islamic leadership theory and provides practical implications for contemporary governance.

Keywords: *Islamic leadership, Umayyad Dynasty, political consolidation, governance*

Introduction

The study of leadership and state-building in the history of Islamic civilization constitutes a significant theme within the fields of historical and Islamic political studies. In a global context, numerous studies emphasize that the success of a civilization is largely determined by the capacity of its leaders to formulate effective political policies and to establish a well-structured system of governance.¹ Islam, in essence, places leadership as a fundamental aspect of communal life. Therefore, discussions on leadership have consistently remained a compelling subject, attracting sustained attention from various perspectives and scholarly traditions. Indeed, the history of human civilization can, in many respects, be understood as a continuous narrative of leadership.²

This phenomenon is also evident in the history of the Islamic caliphate, where political development and social transformation are inseparable from the role of

¹ Abdurrohim and Ely Fitriani, "Kepemimpinan Dalam Islam: Analisis Konsep 'Al-Tawazun' Dalam Al-Qur'an," *TADARUS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 2 (2025): 61–69.

² Subhan Mubarak, "Prinsip Kepemimpinan Islam Dalam Pandangan Al-Qur'an," *Al Mubafidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (2021): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.57163/almuhafidz.v1i1.2>.

caliphs in governing both state and society. The Umayyad Dynasty (661–750 CE) represents a pivotal period in Islamic history, marked by profound transformations in governance, particularly in the domains of state administration, territorial expansion, and infrastructural development that significantly contributed to the advancement of Islamic civilization.³

The historical trajectory of the Umayyad Dynasty demonstrates that the leadership of the caliphs played a decisive role in shaping the direction of the caliphate's development. Several caliphs are recognized as prominent figures whose contributions were instrumental in ensuring political stability and facilitating territorial expansion as part of broader governmental strategies aimed at strengthening political legitimacy while simultaneously enhancing societal welfare.⁴ This condition indicates that, under their leadership, the administrative system of governance underwent substantial consolidation, accompanied by policy reforms that fostered political and cultural integration across the diverse regions under Islamic rule.

One of the most significant periods of the Umayyad Dynasty was the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik (86–96 AH / 705–715 CE). During his rule, the Umayyad Caliphate reached one of its peaks of prosperity, marked by extensive territorial expansion and a wide range of state-building initiatives.⁵ Several new regions, including Al-Andalus in the West and Sindh in the Indian subcontinent, were successfully incorporated into Islamic rule.⁶ In addition, the development of various infrastructures such as mosques, roads, hospitals, and other public facilities, formed an integral part of state policies aimed at strengthening social stability and enhancing public welfare.⁷

The phenomenon of state development during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik demonstrates that political policies were not solely oriented toward territorial expansion but also toward the social and cultural development of society. The vast extent of Islamic territories, along with the proliferation of public facilities, serves as evidence that the Umayyad administration under Al-Walid placed

³ Surma Hayani and Nurhasanah Bakhtiar, "Arabisasi Pemerintahan Islam Pada Masa Khalifah Abdul Malik Bin Marwan," *JUSPI (Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam)* 3, no. 2 (2020): 204, <https://doi.org/10.30829/juspi.v3i2.6509>.

⁴ Anisha Febrianti et al., "Sejarah Islam Masa Dinasti Umayyah: Berdirinya, Pola Pemerintahan, Ekspansi Wilayah, Dan Peradaban Islam," *Jurnal Kajian Ilmiah Interdisipliner* 8, no. 12 (2024): 2118–7303.

⁵ Muhammad Ridho Nur, "REFORMING THE ISLAMIC ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM DURING THE UMAYYAD DYNASTY," *Khazanah: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 11 (2021): 1–15.

⁶ Nikmatul Wafiroh, Universitas Ibrahimy Sukorejo, and Jawa Timur Indonesia, "Education as a Strategic Instrument of Arabization and Islamization in the Umayyad Caliphate (661 – 750 CE)," *DAYAH: Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 1 (2026): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jie.v9i1.33811>.

⁷ Febrianti et al., "Sejarah Islam Masa Dinasti Umayyah: Berdirinya, Pola Pemerintahan, Ekspansi Wilayah, Dan Peradaban Islam."

considerable emphasis on the comprehensive advancement of Islamic civilization.⁸ Furthermore, his administration undertook the construction of road networks connecting various regions, as well as the establishment of factories, administrative buildings, and monumental mosques.⁹ These historical findings indicate that state-building efforts during this period were not merely symbolic, but also had tangible and lasting impacts on the lives of the people.

Nevertheless, academic studies on the Umayyad Dynasty continue to predominantly focus on general historical narratives. Many scholars examine the dynasty within a chronological framework without undertaking an in-depth analysis of how leadership strategies and state-building policies were systematically designed and implemented by the rulers of the period. In fact, a comprehensive understanding of political policies and state development is essential to explain how a government can establish stability and foster civilizational progress within complex social and political contexts.¹⁰

Moreover, a significant portion of the existing literature tends to emphasize prominent figures such as Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, while studies that specifically examine political policies and state-building during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik remain relatively limited.¹¹ In contrast, the period of Al-Walid's rule represents a crucial phase in the history of the Umayyad Dynasty, characterized by a notable convergence of political expansion and the advancement of Islamic civilization. This condition indicates the presence of a research gap that warrants further scholarly investigation through historical and qualitative approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of political strategies and state development during this period.¹²

Furthermore, most previous studies tend to prioritize chronological historical accounts rather than offering in-depth analyses of leadership patterns, governance strategies, and their implications for the development of Islamic civilization. In fact, the study of historical leadership holds substantial relevance in understanding how political, social, and cultural policies influence the trajectory of a civilization. Based

⁸ Himmatul Aulia Azzahro et al., "Jejak Dan Sejarah Munculnya Ilmu Kesehatan Dan Pendidikan Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah," *Jurnal Seumubeuet: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (2024): 149–60, <https://ejournal.ymal.or.id/index.php/jsmbt/article/view/114>.

⁹ Taufik Rachman, "Bani Umayyah Dilihat Dari Tiga Fase (Fase Terbentuk, Kejayaan Dan Kemunduran)," *JUSPI: Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam* Vol. 2 No., no. 1 (2018): 86–98, <http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/juspi/article/view/1079>.

¹⁰ Linda Wati and Amril M., "Dinamika Politik, Ekonomi, Dan Administrasi Dinasti Umayyah," *Takuana: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains, Dan Humaniora* 4(1), no. 1 (2024): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.56113/takuana.v4i1.129>.

¹¹ Friska Nduru, INayatul Saadah Athifah, and Tariatil, "The Concept Of Leadership Strengthening By Umar Bin Abdul Aziz In The Umayyah Dynasty," *Educational Leadership: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 4, no. 2 (2024): 242–55.

¹² Zevass Alif Gibran, Kholailil Mahfudzah, and M. Yahya Ashari, "Sejarah Pemikiran Dan Sosial Pendidikan Islam Bani Umayyah," *Nusantara Journal of Multidisciplinary Science* 1, no. 12 (2024): 872–80.

on these considerations, the author is therefore motivated to further examine the leadership of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik and his contributions to the development and advancement of the Umayyad Dynasty.

Method

This study employs a descriptive method with a library research approach. Data sources are derived from various historical literatures, including books, encyclopedias, scholarly articles, websites, and other written sources relevant to the study of the Umayyad Dynasty and Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik. The descriptive method is selected as it aims to provide a systematic account of the leadership of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik and the state-building processes of the Umayyad Caliphate during his reign.

The collected data are subsequently analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach, focusing on the content analysis of existing literature to gain an in-depth understanding of Al-Walid's leadership and the consolidation of Umayyad power during his period. This approach enables the researcher to explore information from multiple perspectives presented within the selected sources. The literature used in this study is carefully selected based on its credibility and relevance to the research topic.

This research does not involve fieldwork or direct observation; rather, it relies entirely on a library-based approach. Therefore, the reliability and validity of the data depend on the quality and accuracy of the selected sources. All obtained information is systematically compared and synthesized to produce a comprehensive conclusion regarding the development of the state and the consolidation of power within the Umayyad Caliphate during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik.

Result and Discussion

The Condition of Umayyad Governance during the Reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik: Political Consolidation and Governmental Stability

Historically, the Umayyad Dynasty represents a crucial phase in the transformation of the Islamic system of governance from a relatively consultative and semi-democratic model during the era of the Rashidun Caliphate toward a more centralized and dynastic form of rule, often characterized as *hereditary monarchy*.¹³ This transformation led to the emergence of a more complex governmental structure that required organized management, including the establishment of provincial administrative systems, the strengthening of political communication networks, and the development of a more systematic state bureaucracy. This system subsequently

¹³ Yussi Mutia Puspitasari, Yuliharti, and Yanti, "Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Pada Masa Umayyah," *Kutubkhanah* 20, no. 2 (2021): 152, <https://doi.org/10.24014/kutubkhanah.v20i2.13349>.

enabled the central administration of the Umayyad Dynasty, based in Damascus, to effectively govern a vast territorial domain extending from North Africa to Central Asia.¹⁴

The leadership of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik was characterized by deliberate efforts of political consolidation aimed at strengthening the stability of governance within the Umayyad Dynasty. This consolidation was carried out through the reinforcement of the bureaucratic system established by his predecessor, particularly Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan.¹⁵ As his successor, Al-Walid continued and expanded the administrative policies introduced by his father, such as strengthening provincial governance structures and enhancing coordination between the caliphal center in Damascus and other administrative regions.¹⁶ The consolidation and stabilization efforts initiated by Abd al-Malik thus provided a solid foundation for Al-Walid to sustain and further develop these achievements.

Moreover, the consolidation and stabilization policies implemented by Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan not only functioned as a response to political fragmentation following internal conflicts, but also established a robust structural foundation for the continuity of Umayyad rule. In this context, these achievements created stable institutional preconditions that were subsequently utilized effectively by Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik. Building upon this consolidated foundation, Al-Walid was able to shift the focus of governance from internal stabilization to external expansion and infrastructural development, thereby broadening political legitimacy while reinforcing Umayyad hegemony. Accordingly, the continuity between the policies of Abd al-Malik and the developmental acceleration under Al-Walid reflects a pattern of political transition that was not discontinuous, but rather evolutionary and strategic within the broader framework of early Islamic state formation.

Political stability during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik cannot be separated from the government's success in suppressing various potential internal conflicts that had emerged during the earlier period of the Umayyad Dynasty. This relatively stable political environment provided the government with the opportunity to focus more intensively on strengthening state authority while simultaneously expanding the influence of the caliphate across different regions. The absence of significant movements seeking to overthrow Al-Walid's leadership

¹⁴ Zuariyah et al., "Sejarah Peradaban Islam Masa Dinasti Umayyah (661-750 M)," *Gemi Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian* 5, no. 2 (2026): 130–48.

¹⁵ Rina Fauziah Jufri, "Transformasi Kekuasaan Dan Kebudayaan Di Era Umayyah: Dari Arabisasi Hingga Pusat Peradaban Damaskus," *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Theosofi Dan Peradaban Islam* 7 (2025): 150–66.

¹⁶ Muhammad Ibrahim Rantau, Heru Permana Putra, and Peter Suwarno, "A Historical Political Analysis of Administrative Reform and Decentralization in the Umayyad Dynasty Government in Damascus (670-750 M)," *Jurnal Tapis: Jurnal Teropong Aspirasi Politik Islam* 21, no. 1 (2025): 162–83, <https://doi.org/10.24042/thh1g914>.

may be regarded as an indicator of the effectiveness of his governance.¹⁷ This condition was closely linked to his policies, which could reinforce stability and securing broad public acceptance of his rule.

The system of governance under Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik was characterized by a relatively well-organized structure oriented toward public welfare and the maintenance of state security. In exercising his authority, Al-Walid not only inherited the leadership capabilities of his father, Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, but also demonstrated the capacity to sustain and further develop policies that strengthened the state. He appointed competent provincial governors, administrative officials, and military commanders to ensure the effective functioning of governance.

These officials remained under the direct supervision of the caliph, while also receiving recognition for their performance and achievements in carrying out their duties. In addition, Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik undertook administrative reforms to reorganize the structure of government in a more systematic and efficient manner.

Broadly, this administrative structure was divided into five principal domains: (1) *an-Nizam al-Siyasi*, which governed the political system and state policies; (2) *an-Nizam al-Idari*, which concerned administrative organization and governance; (3) *an-Nizam al-Mali*, which managed state finance and economic affairs; (4) *an-Nizam al-Qada'i*, which dealt with the judicial system and the administration of justice; and (5) *an-Nizam al-Harbi*, which regulated military and defense affairs.¹⁸

Through such institutional arrangements, governance during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik became more structured and capable of sustaining both political and administrative stability within the Umayyad Dynasty. These elements constituted key factors underlying the success of Al-Walid's administration. State reforms included the strengthening of bureaucratic structures, the centralization of administrative authority, and the reorganization of the fiscal system into a more systematic framework. Collectively, these measures provided a solid institutional foundation for political stability during his reign.¹⁹

In the broader context of Al-Walid's governance, political stability was also influenced by the government's ability to maintain continuity with previously established administrative policies. One of the most significant policies was the adoption of Arabic as the official language of state administration.²⁰ His policy aimed to unify the bureaucratic system across the diverse regions of the caliphate.

¹⁷ Susmihara, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2013).

¹⁸ A. Hasjmy, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975).

¹⁹ Wati and M, "Dinamika Politik, Ekonomi, Dan Administrasi Dinasti Umayyah."

²⁰ Hayani and Bakhtiar, "Arabisasi Pemerintahan Islam Pada Masa Khalifah Abdul Malik Bin Marwan."

The Arabization of administration not only facilitated more effective governmental coordination but also reinforced the political and cultural identity of the Umayyad state within the broader framework of Islamic governance.²¹

During the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, the policy of Arabization also played a crucial role in expanding the spread of Islam in non-Arab regions. This policy was closely linked to political expansion, which extended Islamic rule across both eastern and western territories. Through this process, non-Arab communities, commonly referred to as *mawali*, became increasingly engaged in the study and internalization of Islamic teachings, with some eventually emerging as prominent scholars. In this context, Arabic functioned as the primary medium for the transmission and dissemination of religious knowledge.²²

The policy of Arabization during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik represented both a continuation and an intensification of the politico-cultural project initiated under Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. Analytically, this policy operated along two primary dimensions: as an instrument of administrative integration and as a hegemonic medium in the construction of a centralized Islamic identity.

From a positive perspective, Arabization proved effective in establishing administrative uniformity across the vast territories of the Umayyad Dynasty. The standardization of Arabic in bureaucratic practices, education, and religious life enabled more efficient consolidation of power while simultaneously accelerating the transmission of Islamic teachings. In this context, the use of Arabic as a religious lingua franca facilitated the emergence of a new intellectual class from among the *mawali*, who became not only recipients of knowledge but also active producers of Islamic scholarship. This indicates that Arabization functioned as an integrative bridge between the political center and non-Arab societies.

Nevertheless, this policy also entailed structural challenges that warrant critical examination. First, Arabization was not entirely culturally neutral, rather, it tended to reproduce Arab ethnic dominance within the socio-political structure. Although the *mawali* were granted access to Islam as a system of belief, they often remained in a subordinate position within the hierarchy of power. In other words, the process of Islamization did not always proceed in parallel with processes of social egalitarianism.

Second, Arabization had the potential to erode local diversity, both in terms of language and intellectual traditions. The emphasis on Arabic as the sole authoritative medium for understanding Islam could constrain contextually grounded expressions of Islam in non-Arab regions. In the long term, this tendency

²¹ Tiara Istighfari and Tenny Sudjatnika, "Gerakan Arabisasi Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah: Dampak Terhadap Masyarakat Islam Dan Non-Islam," *Jejak Digital: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 1, no. 4b (2025): 1694–1703, <https://doi.org/10.63822/kkzpx337>.

²² Wilista Quinta Ashara, "Sejarah Arabisasi Dan Dampak Sosiokultural Di Masa Dinasti Umayyah (661-750 M)" (IAIN Purwokerto, 2021).

risked generating tension between the universal character of Islam and the particularity of local cultures.

Third, from the perspective of political power, Arabization can also be interpreted as a strategy of legitimization employed by the Umayyad Dynasty. By strongly associating Islam with Arabic language and culture, the regime sought to reinforce its claim to authority as the authentic representative of the caliphate. Consequently, this policy was not merely religious in nature, but also ideological, as it functioned to sustain the dominance of Arab elites within the state structure.

Thus, the policy of Arabization during the Umayyad period can be characterized as ambivalent. On the one hand, it promoted integration and the intellectual development of Islamic civilization; on the other hand, it reproduced social inequalities and encouraged cultural homogenization. This analysis demonstrates that Arabization should not be understood solely as a cultural process, but rather as part of a complex and multidimensional strategy of power.

In addition, political consolidation during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik is also evident in the strengthening of provincial administrative structures through the appointment of governors endowed with clear administrative authority. This system enabled the central government to maintain effective political control over territories located far from the seat of power. These governors were responsible for regional administration, tax collection, and the maintenance of security. Such a multi-layered administrative structure indicates that the Umayyad Dynasty had developed a relatively advanced system of governance for an imperial state of its time.²³

The stability of governance during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik was also supported by relatively stable economic and fiscal management. Given the vast territorial expanse of the Umayyad Dynasty, the state derived substantial revenue from taxation systems, including *jizyah*, as well as from the management of resources across its dominions.²⁴ Well-organized financial administration constituted a key factor in sustaining the continuity of governance and enabling the effective implementation of political and developmental policies.

State revenue was also generated from agriculture, trade, industry, and various forms of taxation, particularly levies imposed on conquered regions. Damascus, as the capital of the caliphate, was known for its considerable agricultural potential. During Al-Walid's reign, trade flourished through both overland and maritime routes. Overland trade relied on caravan systems, with camels serving as the primary mode of transportation, as was common among Arab

²³ Wati and M, "Dinamika Politik, Ekonomi, Dan Administrasi Dinasti Umayyah."

²⁴ Ian Rakhmawan Suherli et al., "Menelisik Kebijakan Fiskal Di Masa Kejayaan Islam: Studi Dinasti Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah," *Syarikat: Jurnal Rumpun Ekonomi Syariah* 6, no. 1 (2023): 148–58, [https://doi.org/10.25299/syarikat.2023.vol6\(1\).10722](https://doi.org/10.25299/syarikat.2023.vol6(1).10722).

societies, while maritime trade utilized sailing vessels. Commercial activity in the Indian Ocean had already been vibrant prior to the advent of Islam, particularly through ports in the Persian Gulf and Yemen. Following the incorporation of Sindh into Islamic rule, trade expanded further due to enhanced maritime security ensured under Al-Walid's administration.²⁵

The government also implemented fiscal policies requiring all landowners, both Muslim and non-Muslim, to pay land taxes. Meanwhile, personal taxation was not imposed on Muslims but was applied to non-Muslims (*dhimmis*) as part of a system that guaranteed their protection and allowed them to practice their way of life under the authority of the state.²⁶

The prudence of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik in appointing competent governors significantly contributed to his success in both administrative and political domains. Through the support of these regional leaders, he was able to effectively govern the vast territories of the Umayyad Dynasty from the central authority in Damascus, while also maintaining stability among the population. This challenge was particularly complex given the diversity of the Umayyad territories, which encompassed various ethnic groups, languages, cultures, and traditions. Nevertheless, through a structured administrative system, Al-Walid succeeded in integrating this diversity within a unified framework of Islamic governance.²⁷

This condition demonstrates that political stability during Al-Walid's reign was strongly supported by the government's success in establishing robust and well-organized state institutions. Political consolidation achieved through the strengthening of bureaucracy, the integration of regional administration, and the maintenance of economic stability constituted key factors that enabled the Umayyad Dynasty to sustain its rule and expand its influence across diverse regions. Accordingly, the leadership of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik can be understood as a phase of power consolidation that reinforced the institutional foundations of the Umayyad state in the broader history of Islamic governance.

Territorial Expansion as a Strategy of Political Legitimacy

In the political context of the caliphate, the success of territorial expansion functioned as a key instrument of legitimacy for the central government in Damascus. Such expansion demonstrated the caliph's capacity to mobilize military power while maintaining authority over vast and diverse regions.

²⁵ Abu Haif, "Al-Walid Ibnu Abdul Malik (Prestasi Membangun Civil Society)," *Jurnal Adabiyah* 10, no. 1 (2010): 27–37.

²⁶ Erik Yudistira, M.Eza Helyatha Begovic, and Husni Tamrin, "Sistem Pemerintahan Dalam Masa Bani Umayyah," *Sol Justica* 5, no. 2 (2022): 176–81.

²⁷ Abdussayfi Muhammad Abdul Lathif, *Bangkit Dan Runtuhnya Khilafah Bani Umayyah* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2016), 370.

During the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik (705–715 CE), territorial expansion became one of the most significant strategies for reinforcing the political legitimacy of the Umayyad Dynasty. In this period, Islamic rule reached one of its greatest extents, stretching from the Iberian Peninsula in the west to Central Asia and the frontiers of the Indian subcontinent in the east. This expansion was not solely driven by military objectives, but also functioned as a political instrument to strengthen the authority of the caliphate and to demonstrate the supremacy of Umayyad power within the Islamic world.²⁸

Under Al-Walid's leadership, military expansion was conducted systematically through the appointment of commanders vested with strategic authority to lead campaigns in newly targeted regions. Prominent figures involved in these expansions included Musa ibn Nusayr in North Africa, Tariq ibn Ziyad in the conquest of Al-Andalus, Muhammad ibn Qasim in the Indian subcontinent, and Qutayba ibn Muslim in Central Asia. This strategy illustrates that the Umayyad government effectively integrated military power with the administrative structure of the caliphate as part of a broader process of political consolidation.²⁹

One of the most significant expansions during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik was the conquest of Al-Andalus in 711 CE, led by Tariq ibn Ziyad.³⁰ Tariq successfully defeated the Visigoth kingdom, thereby paving the way for the establishment of Islamic rule in the Iberian Peninsula. This event is widely regarded as a crucial turning point in medieval European history, beginning with the landing of Muslim forces at Gibraltar and culminating in victory at the Battle of Guadalete.³¹

This success not only had political and military implications, but also generated profound social and cultural transformations in the region. It exemplifies the Umayyad strategy of political expansion in extending Islamic influence into new territories. The conquest of Al-Andalus marked the emergence of a major center of Islamic civilization in Western Europe, which later flourished in the fields of science, culture, and governance.³² Over time, Al-Andalus developed into a

²⁸ Anisha Febrianti et al., "Sejarah Islam Masa Dinasti Umayyah: Berdirinya, Pola Pemerintahan, Ekspansi Wilayah, Dan Peradaban Islam," *Jurnal Kajian Ilmiah Interdisipliner* 8, no. 12 (2024).

²⁹ Fatima Amer Ali and Rahim Khalef Akla, "The Islamic Conquests during the Umayyad Caliphate under Walid Ibn Abd Al-Malik (86-96 AH / 705-714 CE) Are Elucidated through What Al-Dhahabi Mentioned in His Book 'History of Islam and the Deaths of the Celebrities and Luminaries' (748 AH / 1347 CE)," *Mustansiriyah Journal of Humanities* 2 (2024): 326–36.

³⁰ Muhammad Akbar Ritonga and Johan Septian Putera Hamzah, "Strategi Thariq Bin Ziyad Menaklukkan Andalusia 711-714 M," *Journal of Islamic History* 1, no. 2 (2021): 138–69, <https://doi.org/10.53088/jih.v1i2.102>.

³¹ Nameera Shafwatul Mutmainnah and Tenny Sudjatnika, "Jejak Sejarah: Penaklukan Andalusia Dan Dampaknya Terhadap Peradaban Islam," *Cendekia Pendidikan* 16, no. 9 (2025): 1–4.

³² Rahmat Iqbal and Agus Mahfudin Setiawan, "Perpustakaan Islam Cordoba: Kiblat Peradaban Ilmu Pengetahuan Di Era Dinasti Bani Umayyah Li 961-976 M," *Batuthab: Jurnal Sejarah Padaban Islam* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.38073/batuthab.v3i1.1386>.

prominent hub of intellectual and cultural advancement, playing a vital role in the transmission and development of knowledge in Europe.³³

In addition to western expansion, the administration of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik also undertook major campaigns in the eastern regions, particularly in Central Asia and Sindh. These expansions were led by Qutayba ibn Muslim and Muhammad ibn Qasim, who succeeded in extending the influence of the caliphate into territories that had previously lain outside the political sphere of the Islamic world.³⁴ The eastern expansion during Al-Walid's reign was not merely an expression of territorial ambition, but rather a multidimensional strategy reflecting the interplay of power, economic interests, and political legitimacy within the Umayyad state. While its success demonstrated a high level of administrative and organizational capacity, it also introduced structural challenges that would later affect the long-term sustainability of the empire.

The success of these expansions demonstrates the capacity of the Umayyad Dynasty to implement effective military strategies while simultaneously expanding networks of trade and interregional communication. This indicates that territorial expansion functioned not merely as an extension of political authority, but also as a strategic effort to strengthen the economic and geopolitical position of the caliphate.

The findings of this study reveal that territorial expansion during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik possessed a strong political dimension in the process of consolidating Umayyad power. The successful conquest of new territories enhanced the legitimacy of the caliph in the eyes of the Muslim community, while also reinforcing the political standing of the Umayyad Dynasty as a dominant power in the Islamic world during the eighth century.

Accordingly, territorial expansion under Al-Walid should not be understood solely as a military strategy, but also as a political instrument that functioned to reinforce the legitimacy of authority and to expand the influence of Islamic civilization across diverse regions of the world.

Infrastructure Development as a Symbol of State Power

The findings of this study indicate that infrastructure development during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik constituted a crucial instrument for strengthening political legitimacy and demonstrating the governing capacity of the Umayyad Dynasty. Infrastructure functioned not only as a means of public service

³³ Aiman Abu Khair, Jihan Fahira, and Bahaking Rama, "Abdurrahman Ad-Dakhil Dan Thariq Bin Ziyad: Kebijakan Politiknya Serta Khalifah Yang Berpengaruh Di Andalusia," *ULIL ALBAB: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 4, no. 1 (2024): 23–32.

³⁴ Ali and Akla, "The Islamic Conquests during the Umayyad Caliphate under Walid Ibn Abd Al-Malik (86-96 AH/705-714 CE) Are Elucidated through What Al-Dhahabi Mentioned in His Book 'History of Islam and the Deaths of the Celebrities and Luminaries' (748 AH / 1347 CE)."

provision, but also as a symbol of civilizational progress and state authority. In this context, the development policies implemented by Al-Walid reflect a systematic effort by the government to reinforce administrative structures, social life, and the religious identity of Muslim communities across the caliphate.

The construction of various public facilities illustrates the active role of the state in organizing social life while simultaneously enhancing the image of Umayyad power as a dominant political force of its time. One of the most monumental construction projects during Al-Walid's reign was the building of the Umayyad Mosque. Constructed between approximately 706 and 715 CE, this mosque became one of the most magnificent religious structures in early Islamic history. Its grand architectural design, the use of high-quality materials, and intricate mosaic decorations reflect the economic strength and technological capability of the Umayyad state. Therefore, the existence of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus can be understood as a symbol of Islamic political grandeur, as well as a representation of the integration of Byzantine, Roman, and Islamic architectural traditions that flourished during this period.³⁵

During the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, mosques functioned as primary centers of education. These institutions served as venues for intermediate to advanced learning, offering subjects such as the Qur'an, exegesis (tafsir), ḥadith, jurisprudence (fiqh), as well as other disciplines including language, literature, and mathematics. Major mosques such as Al-Masjid an-Nabawi and Masjid al-Haram became key references for students of knowledge, demonstrating the central role of mosques in the development of education during the Umayyad period.³⁶

During the reign of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, the development of Masjid al-Haram was enhanced by elevating its walls and adding enclosures to improve the comfort of worshippers. These efforts were later refined by his son, Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, who paid particular attention to architectural aesthetics, including the addition of arched doors and windows with intricate carvings, as well as columns made of granite. These developments reflect Al-Walid's concern for strengthening both the religious and symbolic significance of the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, a legacy that was subsequently continued by the caliphs of the Abbasid Caliphate.³⁷

The Dome of the Rock, originally constructed by Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan in Jerusalem, was further enhanced during the reign of Al-Walid with various decorative ornaments and embellishments. In addition, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which

³⁵ Itsnawati Nurrohmah Saputri, "Perkembangan Kubah Batu, Masjid Damaskus, Perluasan Masjid Al-Haram Dan Masjid Nabawi Pada Masa Khalifah Abdul Malik Bin Marwan Dan Walid Bin Abdul Malik," *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 2, no. 2 (2017): 195–220.

³⁶ Thohir Ajid, *Perkembangan Peradaban Di Kawasan Dunia Islam; Melacak Akar-Akar Sejarah, Sosial, Politik, Dan Budaya Umat Islam* (Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2004), 72.

³⁷ Susmihara, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, 231.

had previously been initiated by Umar ibn al-Khattab, was renovated and refined. These efforts demonstrate that Al-Walid not only prioritized architectural development with aesthetic value, but also showed a strong commitment to the preservation and enhancement of Islamic holy sites. Consequently, spiritual significance and artistic expression were integrated harmoniously within his broader development policies.

The influence of Greek culture is also evident in the development of art during the period of the Umayyad Dynasty. When Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik took control of a Roman church in Damascus in 705 CE, the structure was converted into the Umayyad Mosque. During its construction, the main hall and dome supports were executed by Greek artisans sent by the ruler of Constantinople. Furthermore, Greek influence is also reflected in the presence of Greek inscriptions alongside Arabic on the walls of Qusayr Amra, which dates to the reign of Al-Walid.³⁸

During the Umayyad period, mosque construction expanded rapidly across various Islamic regions and functioned not only as places of worship but also as centers of education. Al-Masjid an-Nabawi in Medina and Masjid al-Haram in Mecca particularly during the reign of Al-Walid (707–714 CE) served as primary references for seekers of knowledge and can be regarded as the largest centers of learning of their time. In addition, the Zaytuna Mosque also developed as one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions that continues to function to this day.³⁹

This phenomenon indicates that mosques in the Umayyad era played a strategic role as intellectual institutions that integrated both religious and educational functions. By positioning mosques as centers of knowledge, Umayyad authority not only reinforced its religious legitimacy but also laid the foundation for a scholarly tradition that contributed significantly to the broader development of Islamic civilization.

During the period of the Umayyad Dynasty, the development of Islamic architecture reflected a synthesis of Roman, Persian, and Arab influences. One prominent example is the Umayyad Mosque, constructed under Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, which is renowned for its elaborate walls and intricate carvings. This structure later became an important model for the evolution of mosque architecture across the Islamic world, particularly through its use of arches, quadrangular minarets, and the incorporation of the *maqṣurah* within the mosque's architectural design.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ahmad Syafi'i Mufadzilah Riyadi, "Dialog Antara Islam Dan Yunani Masa Dinasti Umayyah-Dinasti Abbasiyah," *Al-Isnad: Journal of Islamic Civilization History and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2022): 40–51, <https://doi.org/10.22515/isnad.v3i1.5306>.

³⁹ Nurlaila, Zalnur, and Zulmuqim, "Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah," *Al-Tarbiyah: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 2 (2023): 44–54.

⁴⁰ Aldi Cahya Maulidan, Faishal Sahru Rhamadan, and Devi Rahma, "Sejarah Peradaban Bani Umayyah Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Penyebaran Islam Di Nusantara," *Jurnal Artefak* 11, no. 2 (2024): 159–80.

Beyond the construction of monumental religious buildings, infrastructure policies during Al-Walid's reign also included the development of social welfare facilities such as hospitals. Historical sources indicate that during his rule, a healthcare institution known as a *bimaristan* was established in Damascus.⁴¹ This institution functioned not only as a center for medical treatment but also as an early hub for the advancement of medical knowledge within Islamic civilization.

The establishment of such healthcare facilities demonstrates that Al-Walid's development policies were not solely oriented toward religious symbolism, but also toward the improvement of social welfare. Some historical accounts further suggest that the government provided special care for individuals suffering from diseases, such as leprosy, through the establishment of state-funded treatment centers.⁴²

Moreover, infrastructure development during Al-Walid's reign was closely linked to the strengthening of Damascus as the political and civilizational center of the Umayyad state. As the capital of the caliphate, Damascus evolved into a major hub of administration, trade, and culture in the Middle East. These developments indicate that the political stability achieved by the Umayyad government enabled the effective allocation of resources for urban development and public services, thereby reinforcing the broader foundations of state power and societal advancement.⁴³

Thus, infrastructure development during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik can be understood as an integral component of the state's strategy for consolidating power. Through the construction of monumental mosques, the establishment of healthcare institutions, and the development of Damascus as the administrative center, the government of the Umayyad Dynasty not only strengthened the social and economic structures of society but also constructed a symbolic legitimacy for Islamic authority. The infrastructure developed during this period demonstrates that material progress and the reinforcement of religious identity operated simultaneously in shaping the character of classical Islamic civilization under the Umayyads.

The implications of these findings suggest that infrastructure development remains highly relevant for contemporary leadership. Infrastructure should not be understood merely as a technical endeavor, but also as a crucial instrument for building public trust and strengthening social cohesion. However, a fundamental consideration must be addressed: the success of development is largely determined by the equitable distribution of its benefits. When development outcomes are not

⁴¹ Abuddin Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011), 137.

⁴² Rasyidah Athur Rahmani, "Ekologi Kota Damaskus Dan Perubahan-Perubahannya Pada Masa Pemerintahan Al-Walid Bin ABD Malik (685-715M)" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2019), 137.

⁴³ Ellya Roza, "Kontribusi Bani Asakir Pada Masa Keemasan Islam Di Damaskus," *Nazharat: Jurnal Kebudayaan* 30, no. 2 (2024): 123–34.

experienced fairly across all segments of society, infrastructure may instead exacerbate social inequality. Therefore, an important lesson from the era of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik is that physical development must be accompanied by a clear political vision one that seeks to create a stable, integrated society with strong public confidence in governance.

Social and Administrative Integration of the Caliphate

The reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik was marked not only by extensive territorial expansion, but also by significant efforts toward social and administrative integration aimed at maintaining the stability of a caliphate composed of diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious groups. The vast territories of the Umayyad Dynasty extended from North Africa and the Middle East to Central Asia and the Iberian Peninsula. Such geographical and social diversity necessitated an administrative system capable of integrating populations within a unified and organized framework of governance. In this context, social and administrative integration emerged as a crucial strategy for sustaining political stability.

One of the key policies supporting this integration was the implementation of a more standardized administrative system across the caliphate. The Umayyad state developed a bureaucratic structure composed of various administrative institutions responsible for taxation, legal systems, and communication between the central government and provincial authorities. This multi-layered administrative system enabled the central government in Damascus to oversee vast territories while maintaining effective coordination at the local level. Through such an organized bureaucratic system, territorial and societal integration could be achieved more efficiently within the framework of the caliphate.⁴⁴

In addition to administrative integration, the Umayyad government also implemented a policy of Arabization as part of its broader strategy for social and political integration. This policy involved the adoption of Arabic as the official language of administration and bureaucratic activities. Beyond facilitating communication across regions, Arabization functioned as a means of constructing a relatively unified political and cultural identity within the caliphate. The use of a common administrative language strengthened bureaucratic coordination while fostering social cohesion among populations of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.⁴⁵

Furthermore, social integration was also shaped by interactions between Arab groups and non-Arab populations, commonly referred to as *mawali* non-Arab converts to Islam who became part of the Muslim community within the caliphate.

⁴⁴ Wati and M, "Dinamika Politik, Ekonomi, Dan Administrasi Dinasti Umayyah."

⁴⁵ Jufri, "Transformasi Kekuasaan Dan Kebudayaan Di Era Umayyah: Dari Arabisasi Hingga Pusat Peradaban Damaskus."

The presence of the *mawali* introduced new social dynamics within Umayyad society. Although initial distinctions in social status existed between Arabs and non-Arabs, ongoing interactions in areas such as trade, administration, and religious activities gradually contributed to the formation of a more complex and integrated social structure. This dynamic demonstrates that social integration within the caliphate was not solely the result of political policies, but also of continuous social interaction in everyday life.⁴⁶

In addition to administrative and social policies, the integration of the caliphate was further reinforced through the development of religious and social institutions that functioned as centers of communal activity. Mosques, for instance, served not only as places of worship but also as hubs for education, intellectual discourse, and social interaction. The presence of such institutions contributed to strengthening the collective identity of Muslim communities across different regions of the caliphate, while simultaneously facilitating social integration among groups of diverse backgrounds. Thus, social integration during the period of the Umayyad Dynasty was not merely administrative in nature, but also closely related to the formation of cultural and religious identity within Muslim society.⁴⁷

The findings of this study indicate that social and administrative integration during the reign of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik constituted a crucial factor in sustaining the stability of Umayyad rule. This integration was achieved through a combination of bureaucratic reforms, policies of administrative Arabization, and the establishment of social and religious institutions that strengthened societal cohesion. Accordingly, the ability of the Umayyad Dynasty to maintain control over its vast territories did not rely solely on military strength or territorial expansion, but also on the government's capacity to develop effective administrative systems and relatively stable social integration within the caliphate.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the leadership of Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik represents a pivotal phase in the consolidation of power within the Umayyad Dynasty, supported by a combination of political stability, territorial expansion, infrastructure development, and social-administrative integration. The main findings highlight that the success of Al-Walid's rule was not solely rooted in territorial expansion, but also in his ability to establish strong institutional foundations through the strengthening of bureaucracy, infrastructure development as a symbol of state power and civilizational progress, administrative

⁴⁶ Alfia Yusnita Safiitri et al., "Peradaban Dan Kebudayaan Islam Pada Masa Khalifah Bani Umayyah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tampusai* 9, no. 3 (2025): 32195–203, <https://jptam.org/index.php/jptam>.

⁴⁷ Mohamad Rasyid Ridho et al., "Menelaah Sejarah Peradaban Islam Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah," *Kultura: Jurna Ilmu Hukum, Sosial, Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 11 (2024): 595–98.

standardization, and organized economic management. These elements collectively enabled the creation of a relatively stable political order despite the vast and diverse nature of the caliphate.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the enrichment of classical Islamic leadership studies by emphasizing the importance of synergy between political authority, administrative policy, and social development in shaping a civilization. Practically, the findings suggest that effective governance is determined by a leader's capacity to integrate political strategies with development policies oriented toward public welfare. From a policy perspective, the study indicates that state stability can be achieved through the strengthening of institutions, effective resource management, and inclusive development.

This research, however, is limited by its reliance on a library-based approach, which depends heavily on the availability and interpretation of historical sources. Therefore, future studies are recommended to adopt comparative approaches with other leadership periods within the Umayyad Dynasty or other Islamic dynasties, as well as to utilize a wider range of primary sources to produce more in-depth analyses. In this way, the study of leadership and state-building in Islamic history can continue to develop in a more comprehensive manner.

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