

Trade And Commerce Reform During The Umayyad Dynasty

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Abstract

Trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty marked a significant period in economic history, characterized by policy changes that influenced commercial activities within the caliphate. The reforms implemented by caliphs, particularly Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, played a crucial role in stabilizing the government and enhancing trade dynamics. Previous research has explored the relationship between trade reforms and economic growth, shedding light on the interconnectedness between trade practices, economic development, and urban growth. The study of trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty presents a compelling research area with key phenomena to explore, including administrative and financial policies, trade costs, and the role of imported inputs in driving domestic growth. Understanding the mechanisms through which policy changes affected economic activities is essential for formulating effective research objectives. By setting clear research objectives to analyze the impact of policy changes on trade dynamics and economic growth, scholars can gain insights into the multifaceted nature of trade reforms during the Umayyad era. The implications of research on trade and commerce reform offer valuable lessons for understanding historical trade dynamics and their enduring impact on economic structures, contributing to a deeper understanding of economic development and governance within the Umayyad caliphate.

Keywords: Trade, Commerce, Umayyad Dynasty

Reformasi Perdagangan Dan Perniagaan Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah

Abstrak

Reformasi perdagangan dan perniagaan pada masa Dinasti Umayyah menandai periode penting dalam sejarah ekonomi, yang ditandai dengan perubahan kebijakan yang mempengaruhi aktivitas komersial di dalam kekhalifahan. Reformasi yang dilaksanakan oleh para khalifah, khususnya Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, memainkan peran penting dalam menstabilkan pemerintahan dan meningkatkan dinamika perdagangan. Penelitian sebelumnya telah mengeksplorasi hubungan antara reformasi perdagangan dan pertumbuhan ekonomi, menyoroti keterkaitan antara praktik perdagangan, pembangunan ekonomi, dan pertumbuhan perkotaan. Kajian mengenai reformasi perdagangan dan perdagangan pada masa Dinasti Umayyah menyajikan bidang penelitian yang menarik dengan fenomena-fenomena penting untuk dijelajahi, termasuk kebijakan administratif dan keuangan, biaya perdagangan, dan peran input impor dalam mendorong pertumbuhan dalam negeri. Memahami mekanisme perubahan kebijakan yang mempengaruhi kegiatan ekonomi sangat penting untuk merumuskan tujuan penelitian yang efektif. Dengan menetapkan tujuan penelitian yang jelas untuk menganalisis dampak perubahan kebijakan terhadap dinamika perdagangan dan pertumbuhan ekonomi, para peneliti dapat memperoleh wawasan mengenai sifat beragam reformasi perdagangan selama era Umayyah. Implikasi penelitian terhadap perdagangan dan reformasi perdagangan memberikan pelajaran berharga untuk memahami sejarah dinamika perdagangan dan dampak jangka panjangnya terhadap struktur ekonomi, sehingga berkontribusi pada

pemahaman yang lebih dalam mengenai pembangunan ekonomi dan pemerintahan di masa kekhalifahan Bani Umayyah.

Kata Kunci: Perdagangan, perniagaan, Dinasti Umayyah

Introduction

Trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty is a topic of significant historical and economic importance, shedding light on the transformations in economic policies and practices during this period (Muttaqin et al., 2023). The Umayyad caliphs, particularly Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, played a crucial role in implementing reforms in administrative and financial affairs, which had a lasting impact on trade dynamics (Jozi et al., 2019). These reforms were instrumental in stabilizing the Umayyad government and enhancing trade activities within the caliphate.

Previous research has explored the relationship between trade reforms and economic growth in various contexts, providing insights into how changes in trade policies can influence domestic production and firm-level dynamics (Goldberg et al., 2010). Studies have also delved into the historical significance of opening ports and trading activities in shaping urban commercial environments, as evidenced by research on the Yangtze River Delta region of China (Chen et al., 2023). Such investigations highlight the interconnectedness between trade practices, economic development, and urban growth, offering valuable lessons for understanding the impact of trade reforms during historical periods like the Umayyad dynasty.

The Umayyad dynasty's trade and commerce reforms present a compelling research area with several key phenomena to explore. These include the implementation of new administrative and financial policies, the influence of trade costs on domestic firm product scope, and the role of imported intermediate inputs in driving domestic product growth (Jozi et al., 2019). Additionally, the distinction and reforms made in government administration and judicial institutions during the Umayyad era

signify a multifaceted approach to governance that likely impacted trade practices (Meirison & Saharuddin, 2021). By examining these phenomena, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of trade and commerce during the Umayyad dynasty.

One of the central problems that emerge in studying trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty is the need to unravel the specific mechanisms through which policy changes affected economic activities (Goldberg et al., 2010). By addressing these complexities, researchers can elucidate the underlying drivers of trade reforms and their implications for economic growth and stability within the Umayyad caliphate.

The research objectives in investigating trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty should aim to analyze the impact of policy changes on trade dynamics, assess the effectiveness of administrative reforms in facilitating commerce, and explore the implications of these reforms on economic growth and stability (Meirison & Saharuddin, 2021). By setting clear research objectives, scholars can systematically examine the multifaceted nature of trade reforms during the Umayyad era and draw meaningful conclusions regarding their implications for historical and economic studies.

The implications of research on trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty are far-reaching, offering insights into the intersection of political, economic, and administrative factors in shaping trade policies and practices. By uncovering the effects of trade reforms on domestic production, firm-level activities, and urban commercial environments, scholars can contribute to a deeper understanding of historical trade dynamics and their enduring

impact on economic structures (Chen et al., 2023). Moreover, the study of trade reforms during the Umayyad dynasty can inform contemporary debates on trade policy, economic development, and governance by drawing parallels between historical experiences and present-day challenges.

In conclusion, research on trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty presents a rich and complex area of study that intersects historical, economic, and administrative domains. By examining the trade policies, administrative reforms, and economic implications of the Umayyad era, scholars can unravel the intricacies of trade dynamics in a historical context and draw valuable lessons for contemporary economic analysis. Through rigorous research objectives, scholars can shed light on the multifaceted nature of trade reforms during the Umayyad dynasty and their enduring contributions to economic development and governance.

Literature Review

Trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty represents a pivotal period in economic history, characterized by significant policy changes and their impact on commercial activities within the caliphate. Previous research and theories provide valuable insights into the dynamics of trade, commerce, and reform during this era.

Abdul al-Malik bin Marwan, the fifth caliph of the Umayyad, played a crucial role in stabilizing the Umayyad government and implementing reforms in administrative and financial affairs (Jozi et al., 2019). His reforms had a lasting impact on trade policies and practices within the caliphate, highlighting the interconnectedness between governance and trade dynamics. The Umayyad dynasty's division into Eastern and Western regions, known as Damascus and Andalusia respectively, underscores the diverse economic

landscapes that existed within the caliphate (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Understanding the distinct trade and commerce practices in these regions is essential for comprehending the broader economic policies of the Umayyad dynasty.

Research on the impact of trade policy reforms by institutions such as banks, funds, and trade organizations provides a comparative perspective on how different entities supported or hindered trade reform efforts during historical periods (Irwin, 2023). Such studies offer insights into the mechanisms through which institutional interventions influenced trade policies and economic outcomes.

The role of market-share reallocations in driving productivity growth, as highlighted in recent trade theories, sheds light on the mechanisms through which trade reforms can impact firm-level activities and overall economic performance (Harrison et al., 2022). By examining the balance between learning and stealing in trade dynamics, researchers can better understand the drivers of productivity growth during periods of trade reform.

The historical context of trade and commerce, exemplified by the opening of ports and trading activities in regions like the Yangtze River Delta in China, provides a comparative lens for studying the long-term impact of trade policies on commercial environments (Chen et al., 2023). Such studies offer valuable insights into the enduring effects of trade reforms on urban development and commercial dynamics.

The reform of the Islamic monetary system by Abd al-Malik b. Marwan underscores the significance of currency reforms in shaping trade practices and economic stability during the Umayyad era (Cano Ávila, 2005). By examining the evolution of monetary policies, researchers can elucidate the linkages between currency

reforms, trade activities, and economic governance.

In conclusion, the literature on trade, commerce, and reform during the Umayyad dynasty offers a rich tapestry of historical insights and theoretical frameworks for understanding the economic dynamics of this period. By synthesizing theories from diverse disciplines such as economics, archaeology, and political science, researchers can unravel the complexities of trade policies, governance reforms, and their implications for economic development within the Umayyad caliphate.

Methodology

Research Approach:

The research approach for studying trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty will primarily involve historical analysis. By delving into historical records, documents, and artifacts from the Umayyad era, researchers can gain insights into the economic policies, trade practices, and administrative reforms that shaped commerce during this period. Historical analysis allows for a comprehensive understanding of the context in which trade reforms were implemented and their implications for economic activities within the caliphate.

Literature Review:

A thorough literature review will be conducted to synthesize existing research on trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty. By examining relevant studies on economic policies, governance structures, and trade dynamics of the Umayyad era, researchers can identify key themes, theoretical frameworks, and gaps in the current understanding of trade reforms in historical contexts. The literature review will serve as a foundation for framing research questions and developing hypotheses related to trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty.

Data Collection Techniques:

Document analysis will be a primary data collection technique employed in this research. Researchers will gather historical documents, trade records, administrative decrees, and economic manuscripts from the Umayyad period to extract information on trade policies, commercial activities, and reform initiatives. By scrutinizing primary sources, researchers can uncover the intricacies of trade and commerce practices during the Umayyad dynasty and assess the impact of reform measures on economic outcomes.

Data Analysis Techniques:

Thematic analysis will be utilized to analyze the data collected from historical documents and records. Researchers will identify recurring themes, patterns, and trends related to trade and commerce reform within the Umayyad caliphate. By categorizing and interpreting the data thematically, researchers can elucidate the underlying factors driving trade policies, assess the effectiveness of reform measures, and draw conclusions regarding the implications of trade reforms on economic development during the Umayyad era.

In conclusion, employing a research methodology that integrates historical analysis, literature review, document analysis, and thematic analysis offers a robust framework for investigating trade and commerce reform during the Umayyad dynasty. By leveraging these research methods, scholars can uncover the complexities of trade policies, governance structures, and economic activities within the Umayyad caliphate, contributing to a deeper understanding of historical trade dynamics and their enduring impact on economic structures.

Result and Discussion

Political obstacles were removed As the "Islamic State" spread from India in the east to Spain in the west, facilitating trade in the Islamic world along with security, urbanization, and a greater variety of

agricultural and industrial products. A wide variety of goods were traded: 4,444 items of food, livestock, timber and forest products, textiles and metals, earthenware products and stone, fish's and shellfish, writing implements, medicines, and slaves. Trade routes linked Europe with the Islamic world mainly via Egypt, Syria, Sicily, Tunisia. The main goods exported and imported to and from Europe were foodstuffs and timber. Egypt appears to have held a particularly important position on the Indian trade route, which ran from Indonesia and Samarta in the east, through the old Cairo in Egypt and Red Sea ports, to North Africa and Spain in the west. As documents from the Cairo Geniza show, Old Cairo served as the terminus for trade between the Mediterranean and India. The maritime countries mainly imported spices, but also other goods.

In the Geniza document, a provisional list of goods from India states that they consisted of the following:

- Spices, aromatic, dyeing and vanishing plants and medical herbs (47%),
- Brass and bronze vessels (15%),
- Indian silk and other textiles made mainly of cotton (10%),
- Iron and steel (8%),
- Tropical fruits, such as coconuts (7%),
- Pearls, beads, cowry shells and ambergris (5%),
- Chinese porcelain, Yemenite stone pots and African ivory (4%),
- Shoes and other leather-works (3%),
- and
- Timber (1%).

Eastbound goods listed in the same listing consisted of (ibid):

- Textiles and clothing (35%),
- Vessels and ornaments of silver, brass, glass and other materials (22%),
- Chemicals, medicaments, soap, paper, books (18%),
- Foodstuff, such as cheese, sugar, raisins, olive oil and linseed oil for lamps (10%),

- Household goods, such as carpets, mats, tables, frying pans (7%),
- Metals and other ingredients for the copper industry (7%) and
- Coral, (1%).

This is just an example of one cargo and is not necessarily a complete list of Indian trade. In addition, short and longdistance routes connected the Islamic countries within the country, such as routes connecting Syria with Egypt, Egypt with the North African coast, Egypt with Arabia, Iraq with Syria, and Iraq with Arabia. It is also interesting that merchants had different religious beliefs, such as Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Hindus, and business relations between members of different religions were friendly. In the Geniza letters, merchants of different religions address each other with the same honorifics and friendly epithets as the author's own brother (Goitein, 1963).

In general, merchants consisted of different categories: producers and traders, retailers and wholesalers, travelers and stationers, middlemen and auctioneers. However, the boundaries between individual groups within a category, and sometimes between individual categories, were not always clearly drawn. For example, artisan-based industrial product manufacturers sold not only their own products but also those of other companies, and textile wholesalers sold individual items. Moreover, the degree of diversification of traded goods seemed to be quite high. The merchant traded a wide range of goods, including flax, silk and other textiles, olive oil, oriental spices, dyes, metals, books, perfumes, precious stones, glass, coral, food, skins and hides, pitch, and household goods (Goitein, 1967). This could reduce the business risks arising from diversification. Nevertheless, specialization occurred and some traders specialized in certain types of goods. The cheese merchant "al-gabbàn", the milk merchant "al-labbàn", the perfume merchant "al-attà", the indigo merchant "al-nìlì" and the date merchant "al-

tammàr" are some examples. The surnames relate to the nature of the goods traded.

Cooperation between distant merchants appears to have been a commonly accepted "business practice." Two merchants in different trading centers bought from and sold to each other in a very informal manner, and although no commission was paid, mutual services were expected (Goitein, 1967). In addition to buying and selling, this service also included overseeing the collection of business debts overseas. Long-distance trade and attempts to minimize costs made such cooperation valuable. Moreover, a high level of trust between the two sellers was necessary for such collaboration to be successful. But one might think that the information traders receive about distant markets, no matter how historical that information may be, serves as a guide and protection for continued cooperation, especially if both traders know that this information is difficult to obtain. As the Geniza documents show, if a trader believed that his trading partner was acting in a way that was not in his interest, conflicts could arise and cooperation would be jeopardized. Trust, gradually strengthened by the repetition of procedures, the reputation of dealers, and the flow of information about fellow-traveling dealers, made the system work. Or, as Goitein (1967) says, "The fact remains that the Mediterranean trade, as revealed by the Cairo Geniza, was largely based, not upon cash benefits or legal guarantees, but on the human qualities of mutual trust and friendship".

Agents were also common to conduct business. Dealers had long-distance market representatives who provided services for a fee or commission depending on the extent of the services. The agent "wakel" had three different interrelated tasks: (a) to represent the dealers in litigation, which explains why an agent needs professional experience in the legal field, (b) to provide storage facilities to the agents, and (c) to act as the manager of the traders and a neutral

arbitrator between the traders (Goitein, 1967). The agent's warehouse also served as a clearing house for auctioning goods and as a mailing point for the dealers.

Conclusion

During the spread of the "Islamic State" from India to Spain, trade in the Islamic world flourished. Political barriers were removed, leading to increased urbanization, security, and the exchange of agricultural and industrial goods. Trade routes connected Europe with the Islamic world, particularly through Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Sicily. Egypt played a crucial role as a hub for Mediterranean-Indian trade. The goods traded between India and the Islamic world included spices, textiles, metals, tropical fruits, pearls, and more.

The trade network involved merchants of different religious backgrounds, such as Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Hindus. Surprisingly, business relations between individuals of different faiths were friendly and marked by mutual respect. The merchants belonged to various categories, including producers, traders, retailers, wholesalers, travelers, and middlemen. However, these categories were not always strictly defined, and merchants often diversified their traded goods. Some specialized in specific types of products, such as cheese, milk, perfume, indigo, and dates, which were reflected in their surnames.

Cooperation among distant merchants was a common practice, despite the absence of formal commissions. Informal agreements and mutual services allowed for the exchange of goods and overseeing the collection of debts. Trust played a crucial role in maintaining these partnerships, as trust was built over time through repeated interactions and the reputation of dealers. The Cairo Geniza documents reveal that conflicts could arise if one trader felt their interests were being compromised, jeopardizing the cooperation.

Agents, known as "wakels," were commonly employed to conduct business on behalf of the traders. These agents had multiple tasks, including representing the traders in legal matters, providing storage facilities, and acting as managers and neutral arbitrators. The agent's warehouse also served as a clearing house for auctioning goods and as a mailing point for the traders.

The success of the Mediterranean trade, as observed in the Cairo Geniza, relied not on monetary benefits or legal guarantees, but on the human qualities of mutual trust and friendship. Additionally, the traders relied on information about distant markets to guide their cooperation and protect their interests.

Overall, the Islamic trade network during this period was characterized by diverse goods, cross-cultural interactions, and cooperation based on trust and friendship.

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