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ABDURAHMAN I - FOUNDER OF THE EMIRATE OF CORDOVA

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article examines the political situation in Andalusia and the formation of the Umayyad branch of the European dynasty - the Emirate of Cordoba - through the person of Abd al-Rahman I. Abd al-Rahman I, who escaped execution as a result of the seizure of power in the East by the Abbasids, traveled a long way to Andalusia and established his power there. The article analyzes his policy of centralizing the state, strengthening the borders, creating a tax and army system, as well as his great architectural activity, which laid the foundation for the construction of the Great Mosque of Cordoba.

It is also revealed, based on an analysis of available sources and literature, that Abdurrahman I's political successors continued during the reign of Hisham I, that military campaigns and internal administration were strengthened, and that the state-building initiated by Abdurrahman I reached its peak with the proclamation of the Caliphate of Cordoba by Abdurrahman III in 929.

Introduction. The region of Andalusia (southern Spain) was in deep political crisis by the middle of the 8th century. Although in the first years after the conquest by Arab troops, centralized government seemed to have been formed here, over time, competition between local rulers intensified, and the struggle for power between different tribes began to escalate. The division of the Arabs into two large groups, the Yemeni and the Qais, the discontent of the Berber troops, and disagreements with the local population increasingly weakened the country. As a result of these internal conflicts, the governors ruling in Andalusia often changed, each trying to protect only the interests of his tribe. Such fragmentation of power weakened the position of the central government and destabilized the region.

Especially after the Berber revolts, the political system completely collapsed, and the need to establish an independent order in Andalusia under the leadership of a strong leader became acute. Thus, favorable but extremely difficult conditions arose for the formation of a new state in Andalusia. On the one hand, this fragmentation, competition and instability, and on the other hand, the demand for a strong centralized authority made this region in need of a political leader. It was this political vacuum in Andalusia that later laid the foundation for the formation of a new state.

Methods and materials. Historically, in the Arab Caliphate, by 750, the new Abbasids took power in place of the Umayyad dynasty. In this historical process, the uprisings in Khorasan and Transoxiana led by Abu Muslim contributed to the change of dynasty. The power was taken by Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah, one of the Abbasids. This caliph is mentioned in some literature with the title of Abu al-Abbas al-Qankhor. The reason for this is that all the representatives of the Umayyad dynasty were exterminated by order of Abbas. In the process of such a struggle for power, dynastic conflicts, and internal strife, almost all members of the Umayyad dynasty were executed. However, by the will of fate, only one of the princes, Abdurrahman, escaped death. He fled to distant Spain, where he soon declared himself an independent emir [7].

The full name of this person, who entered history as Abdurrahman I, was Abdurrahman ibn Muawiyah ibn Hisham ibn Abdulmalik, and he was born in Damascus (Syria) in 731. Prince Abdurrahman was one of the representatives of the Umayyad dynasty. When the Abbasids almost completely destroyed the Umayyad dynasty in 750, Abdurrahman I was 20 years old. He fled along the Palestine - Egypt - Maghreb route. During this period, he took the controversial route to Cordoba. His brother was strangled to death, leaving only him alive. Historians have called this escape "the most dramatic escape in Islamic history" [3]. He was nicknamed "Ad-

Dakhil" in the literature of the time, meaning "The Enterer", for his entry into Andalusia and his rise to power.

Results and discussion. Abd al-Rahman I, during his exile, traveled a long way to North Africa, and later to Spain. Abd al-Rahman ibn Muawiyah initially tried to establish a state in North Africa. He also made several military campaigns to the Atlantic Ocean. However, these attempts failed, and he decided to move his activities to Spain.

In the fall of 755, the future ruler landed on the Spanish coast, near Al-Munecar, east of Malaga, and moved against the Arab ruler of Spain, Amir Yusuf. He defeated Amir Yusuf in a battle near Cordoba and managed to capture the city without resistance. Thus, in 756, he seized power in Andalusia (Spain) and established the Emirate of Cordoba.

Thus, the Emirate of Cordoba-Kurdoba, established on May 15, 756, arose on the basis of the above sequence of events. From that date, the ruler Abd al-Rahman declared himself to be called the "emir". According to the information obtained as a result of the research, Abd al-Rahman I solemnly entered Cordoba and was declared the emir there, and the state al-Andalus was in some sense transformed into an independent kingdom of the exiled Umayyad dynasty.

At that time, the Arab tribes of Yemen and Qais were at war in Andalusia. Abd al-Rahman I took advantage of this disintegration. He took the Berbers to his side, concluded treaties with the local Arab emirs, and in 756 entered Cordoba and declared himself the emir. From that moment on, the Umayyads were restored, but now they were not in the Arab Caliphate, but in Andalusia[4].

Thus, the Umayyad dynasty was founded by Abd al-Rahman I in the middle of the 8th century, the Emirate of Cordoba, which existed until 929. If we look further into the past of the ruler, during the coup in Damascus in the late 40s of the 8th century, his entire family was killed by his enemies. At that time, he managed to escape and hide in the mountains west of Damascus. His mother was originally from North Africa, and from her he heard wonderful stories about Andalusia as a child. During the massacre, Abd al-Rahman made a dangerous journey, crossing the Nile River and a vast desert to enter a distant country.

In later times, Abd al-Rahman, fleeing from the persecution of the Abbasids, personally fought against the caliph's troops in several battles. However, he was forced to retreat, as he had fewer forces than them. In one of the fiercest episodes of the battle, he was surrounded by enemies for two months. In such a situation, there was no hope of help. At this point, Abd al-Rahman decided to act quickly and, with the help of 700 chosen warriors, delivered a surprise attack on the enemy. The attack was so swift that it confused the enemy and forced them to

retreat to Africa [1]. As a result, the battle was decided in favor of the future ruler Abd al-Rahman.

Abd al-Rahman officially assumed the title of Emir of Cordoba and all of Spain on 15 May 756 and tried to govern the state with justice for 32 years (756–788). The early years of his rule were marked by several wars, first with Yusuf, and then with various local tribes that constantly resisted the new emir's actions. It took more than twenty-five years for Abd al-Rahman ibn Muawiyah ibn Hisham ibn Abdulmalik to initially unify a number of viceroyalties of Al-Andalus, including Toledo, Zaragoza, Pamplona, and Barcelona [4]. The work done was not in vain, and the state was firmly established. Ruler Abd al-Rahman I worked tirelessly to consolidate his position. In order to gain the respect of his subjects, gain prestige, and organize the state administration perfectly, he summoned members of his family and former allies to Spain. Through these connections, he also created an army of mercenaries. The ruler of the young state relied on these same mercenaries to defend his throne.

If we pay attention to the development of events, it is worth noting Abd al-Rahman's conflict with Charlemagne. In the 70s of the 8th century, Charlemagne was in the Iberian Peninsula, and when he invaded Spain, Saragossa refused to submit to the ruler and closed its gates to Charlemagne. After that, Charlemagne began to besiege the city. In the heat of the battle, news of the Saxon rebellion forced Charlemagne to return to Germany. As a result, the Iberian Peninsula survived Charlemagne's attack[2].

During the reign of Abd al-Rahman I, although there is information that he pursued a conciliatory policy, especially towards his enemies, he constantly struggled with uprisings and intrigues. After the unsuccessful uprising of the former governor in 759, Abdurrahman I no longer gave his enemies any chance, he was able to destroy them. In addition, the Moroccan Berbers, who had previously helped him in his campaign to Cordoba, later turned against him and started battles. The disagreements and destructive battles between them continued until 776, and finally the consolidated power of Abdurrahman I was established.

As is known, just as each state, administrative unit has its own central city, capital, Abdurrahman I chose the city of Cordoba as the capital of his state. As a result of large-scale reforms and measures taken in the interests of society, this city became a political, economic and cultural center. The ruler Abdurrahman was supported by influential people of Cordoba in a place that was interpreted as a new territory for him. After assuming power, Abd al-Rahman I initially lived in several palaces and villas on the outskirts of Cordoba, most notably in a palace called al-Rusafa[5]. We believe that al-Rusafa may have originally been a Roman villa or a Roman-Visigothic estate.

Abd al-Rahman I, who is considered a just ruler, saw the state consolidate and a rapprochement between Arab and native Spanish elements. He brought culture and learning from the capital of the Islamic world to the heart of Andalusia. After the arrival of the Umayyads, the city of Andalusia was influenced by Eastern cultures. Throughout his reign, Abd al-Rahman I also showed interest in the culture of the Syrian region.

As history has not always followed a straight path, Abd al-Rahman I's reign and the reforms he implemented were not well received by his Christian neighbors. They saw him as a foreign ruler. Another interesting aspect is that the Christians feared the expansion of the Arab dynasty into Western Europe and therefore did not have a warm relationship with the ruler. In the Christian view, the territory of Spain served as a kind of fulcrum for the expansion of the future Emirate of Cordoba [6].

As a continuation of the construction work, in 785, the emir Abd al-Rahman I purchased from the Christian community of Cordoba the site of a church built in the 5th century during the Visigothic rule and which had been in ruins. Then, the emir began to build a large mosque on the site of the church. According to researchers, masters from Baghdad and Byzantium may have participated in the construction of this structure[10]. From this it can be seen that during the reign of the ruler Abd al-Rahman I, mosques were built to spread Islam and create spacious conditions for believers.

The lack of information and material remains about the first mosque in Cordoba prompted Andalusian historians to create a narrative enriched with legends and epics, later inspired by tales of eastern conquests. Through this, they sought to establish a direct connection between Cordoba and Damascus and strengthen the political and religious claims of the Andalusian Umayyads. In this sense, the legend of the Church of San Vicente arose - information that Muslims and Christians prayed together in it, and later the Christian part was confiscated to build a mosque. This story is very similar to the stories of Eastern authors about the origin and use of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. So far, the existence of a Visigothic church mentioned in the texts of archaeological finds under the Mosque of Cordoba has not been confirmed, but many pre-Islamic and Christian structures have been recorded here[6].

As a result of the desire to spread Islam, increase the number of believers, create comfortable conditions for them, and become one of the centers of world Islam, Abd al-Rahman I founded a large mosque in Cordoba, one of the most important monuments of architecture in the Western Islamic world. The mosque was distinguished by its huge hall, consisting of rows of columns connected by two-story arches. The arches were made of red brick and light-colored stones. Later, this mosque was further expanded in 836 during the reign of Abd al-Rahman II.

Another of the ruler's ongoing reforms is related to the agricultural sector. Thanks to new technologies for irrigation brought to Cordoba by Abd al-Rahman, exotic fruits began to be grown in Andalusia. In particular, fruits such as avocados and pomegranates, oranges and lemons began to be cultivated, which were not previously grown in Europe. The reforms carried out in this area, new cultivated plants and fruits, and crops began to bring significant income to the Emirate of Cordoba in agriculture. The income and funds received were spent on improving the country, further improving the living conditions of the population, and ensuring the stability of their household life system.

So, the greatest merits of Abd al-Rahman I are:

- Established an independent state in Andalusia;
- A strong emirate independent of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad.

Military reforms (army structure):

- Slavic Guard (saqaliba);
- Berber cavalry;
- Mercenaries from the East.

These forces became the most reliable army of Andalusia.

During his reign, the construction of the "Great Mosque of Cordoba" began. The mosque began to be built in 784-786, and today it is the greatest symbol of Andalusian culture.

Economic developments:

- The creation of a system of irrigation canals;
- The expansion of olive, fig, and lemon groves;
- The development of crafts and silk[2].

If we consider the personality of the ruler Abd al-Rahman I, historians describe him as a courageous, patient, profound politician, a man who won not only with force, but also with diplomacy. The memoirs also mention that he was a highly cultured, poetic, and knowledgeable person.

From the above information, it can be concluded that as a result of the actions of Abd al-Rahman I, the Spanish branch of the Umayyad dynasty was founded in the middle of the 8th century. As the Emirate of Cordoba, a state was formed in world statehood, which carried out stages of development. A reality that can be interpreted as a fact of life occurred in 788. The ruler of this new emirate, Abd al-Rahman I, died in 788. The ruler Abd al-Rahman I had children named Abd al-Rahman II, Aban, Abdullah, Al-Walid, and Yahya. They later ruled the Umayyad dynasty in Spain for several centuries[9].

Among Abd al-Rahman's successors, it is necessary to highlight the activities of Abd al-Rahman III. During his reign, it was announced that a large caliphate had been established in place of the emirate. At the age of twenty-three, in 913, Abd al-Rahman III ascended the throne of the Emirate of Cordoba and was faced with the need to restore the integrity of the Emirate of Cordoba, which had lost a large part of its possessions under the influence of internal conflicts. During his reign, such cities as Badajoz, Toledo and Zaragoza, as well as almost the entire Emirate of Southern Cordoba, were united under the Umayyads from the subordination of the Emirate of Cordoba.

In order to ensure the security of the state borders, achieve stability in the country, and strengthen power, the army led by Abd al-Rahman III fought battles with the troops of the viceroyalties of Castile, Navarre and Leon in 916-920 and defeated them. There were also a number of battles between the two, during which the capital of Navarre, Pamplona, was captured. As a result of numerous battles, the rulers defeated by Abd al-Rahman III forcibly handed over their possessions to him and entered the service of the emir. Successive victories, triumphal campaigns, and systematic reforms allowed Abd al-Rahman III to declare himself caliph in 929. This process meant the declaration of the religious independence of the Caliphate of Cordoba from Baghdad. Thus, the city of Cordoba became the capital of the caliphate [8]. If we give more interesting information about the emir of Cordoba, Abd al-Rahman I (ad-Dohil), below, we will find that when Abd al-Rahman I arrived in Andalusia, he missed the East so much that when he saw a date palm tree in Cordoba that looked like his homeland, he shed tears and wrote his famous poem: "I am also lonely, far from my homeland, like this date palm..."[11]. He was the only surviving heir to the Umayyad dynasty in the East, which was destroyed by the Abbasids, and is considered the only Muslim ruler to have crossed into Europe and reestablished the dynasty on a new continent, Andalusia. When he was young, he managed to escape by swimming across the Tigris River, while his brother died because he could not swim. He was only 25 years old when he arrived in Andalusia, but he managed to resolve conflicts between Arab tribes, Berbers, and local Spanish Muslims, unifying the entire country, and creating a strong central state. Abd al-Rahman I won over many of his enemies not through battle, but through wisdom and diplomacy. He financed the construction of the Great Mosque of Cordoba from his own personal wealth, not from the state treasury. According to legend, he arrived in Andalusia with almost nothing but "a sword and a mind", but it was this intelligence that elevated him to the status of the founder of the European Muslim state. Arab historians, even his enemy, the Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'far Mansur, praised him as "Saqr Quraysh" – "The Falcon of Quraysh"[1]. Abd al-Rahman I was not only a military leader, but also a literary ruler

who was fond of writing poetry, and several of his lyrical works have been preserved in Eastern sources.

Conclusion. To summarize, Abd al-Rahman I was a political figure who occupied a prominent place in the history of the Muslim Middle Ages, and his activities are the most important example of the Arab-Syrian political culture that moved from East to West. He miraculously escaped the massacre of the Umayyad dynasty by the Abbasids, reached Andalusia on a long and arduous journey, and established an independent political center there - the Emirate of Cordoba. Abd al-Rahman I was not only a ruler, but also a skilled strategist and a statesman with strong diplomatic potential. He managed to unite various Arab and Berber tribes around him and eliminate internal conflicts. He created a centralized state administration and turned Cordoba into the political, cultural and economic center of the Western Islamic world. Abd al-Rahman I's reign served not only political stability, but also the development of science and culture. Under his leadership, Cordoba rose rapidly and later became one of the most influential scientific centers in Europe. This process was further expanded, especially by his successors. The political legacy of Abd al-Rahman I was consolidated during the reign of his son Hisham I, and the cultural rise continued during the reign of Abd al-Rahman II. In particular, during the reign of Abd al-Rahman III, the Caliphate of Cordoba was proclaimed, and Andalusia rose to its highest political and scientific peak. Thus, Abd al-Rahman I is a historical figure who not only founded a state, but also laid the foundation for a process of scientific and educational revival that lasted for centuries.

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