Ibn al-Qutiyyah and Ahmad al-Razi were both members of the court circle in the early days of Abd al-Rahman III and they reflected opinions and interests of the Umayyad house and the courtiers.\textsuperscript{28}

By 716 virtually all the peninsula had been conquered by, or at least received an unopposed visit from, the Muslim troops. Leading men of the Visigothic state actively and rapidly sought incorporation into the new elite. The sons of Witiza retained a vast amount of their personal wealth and are found advising the Muslim governors.\textsuperscript{29}

Conquest and booty had been a major, possibly the major, source of revenue for the government and an outlet for the energies of ambitious or dissatisfied Muslims. When the chance of easy pickings dried up, competition for resources within al-Andalus and North Africa intensified and gave rise to open civil war.\textsuperscript{30}

Abd al-Rahman had few obvious advantages; he was only twenty-six years old and had no experience of government and no significant financial resources, and neither he nor any member of his family had ever visited al-Andalus before. However, he did have a number of political assets; Hi ancestors had been caliphs of the entire Muslim world; he himself came from the prestigious Prophet’s tribe of Quraysh and Qurayshis were felt to be above and somewhat separate from the Qays/Yemen dispute, able to attract support from both sides. There was also the Syrian connection; the Umayyads had ruled the Islamic world from Syria with Syrian support and a large number of Arabs in al-Andalus boasted Syrian origins. Many of these people had a tradition of loyalty to the Umayyad house and would have rigorously rejected claims of the rival Abbasid dynasty. Abd al-Rahman was the only leader who could appeal across and above tribal loyalties to a wide cross-section of Arab society in Spain.\textsuperscript{31}

Mawali

No family had more mawali than the Umayyads and therefore he could count on the devotion of a coherent group of supported whose loyalty extended beyond the bounds of tribal solidarity. These Malawi were the backbone of the Umayyad state and provided generals and bureaucrats to the Umayyads for the next three centuries.\textsuperscript{32}

The system of \textit{quadis} may well have encouraged the sense of religious and cultural unity which would otherwise have been lacking.\textsuperscript{33}

Poll-tax paid by Christians and Jews probably formed an important part of the amir’s income.

The circumstantial evidence suggests that the second half of the ninth century was a period of rapid conversion to Islam with large numbers, rather than a few elite individuals like the Banu Qasi of earlier generations converting.\textsuperscript{34}

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