

copyright in following page

PhD - 1967.

Farduk Omar

ProQuest Number: 10731350

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10731350

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

To be returned to the  
GENERAL REGISTRAR  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON  
100, GOWER STREET, W.C.1  
London University Library

OMAR (F.)  
Ph.D. 1967.

/ subsidiary  
papers

(History).

CT 14/6/67

1.

University of London

S. O. A. S.

THE 'ABBĀSID CALIPHATE

132/750 - 170/786

b y

Farouk Omar

Thesis submitted for the degree

o f

Doctor of Philosophy

January 1967.



Abstract

In the early decades of the second century A.H./eighth century A.D., the supporters of the 'Abbāsids overthrew the Umayyads and put the 'Abbāsids in power in a revolution which not only substituted one dynasty for another, but had significant and far-reaching political, religious and social consequences.

Since this was a formative period in Muslim historiography, one is faced by an overwhelming wealth of material, including numerous contradictory accounts which must be conscientiously sifted. Moreover, as is unavoidable in a period of transition and revolution, there are various loyalties to be unravelled and guarded against. Chapter I shows how historians dealt with the early 'Abbāsīd period. The controversial nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution with its messianic aspect, the secrecy with which certain doctrines and principles were concealed from the uninitiated, the deceptive character of the occasional slogans destined for general consumption and the conflicting statements of 'Abbāsīd propaganda and Umayyad counter-propaganda make it difficult to form an accurate picture. However, as the 'Abbāsīd revolution must be viewed in the light of preceding and following events, Chapter II reviews the situation in Khurasān and the relations of the Khurasānī Arabs with the central régime. The chapter leads to an exposition of the political aspect of the 'Abbāsīd revolution and to the attempt to substantiate the outdated, but still accepted, in some quarters, racial interpretation of the revolt by the theory already outlined by some scholars that the 'Abbāsīd revolution was essentially the work of the Arabs in Khurasān and was conducted, throughout

most of its stages, by Arab tribal groups whose role was predominant in the revolution. Chapter III deals with a recurrent feature of every revolution, namely internal rivalries among the revolutionaries, as is evident in the conflict between Abū Muslim on the one hand, and Abū Salama, Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī, Ziyād b. Šāliḥ etc., on the other.

Having achieved power the 'Abbāsids discarded the extremist wing of the da'wa and adopted Orthodoxy in an attempt to win the support of the traditionists (Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth), a move which resulted in the Rāwandīyya risings in Khurasān and Irāq. Simultaneously, the 'Abbāsids got rid of certain ambitious dā'īs who had grown too strong to be tolerated (Abū Muslim), or had deviated from the 'Abbāsīd path ('Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī).

As the 'Abbāsids failed to fulfil the hopes and expectations of the lower strata of society, other messianic and revolutionary movements arose and attracted disappointed elements. These opposition movements are dealt with in Chapters IV and V. Chapter IV shows that as all Banī Hashim had equal rights to the inheritance of the Prophet, one can hardly speak of an 'Alid "claim" to the caliphate. The majority of 'Alid sympathizers were, in fact, fighting not so much to enforce this claim, as to improve their own lot and give vent to their hatred of the 'Abbāsīd authorities.

Chapter V deals with the Umayyad and Kharijite opposition. Though Irāq regained its position as the centre of the empire at the expense of Syria, the Syrians did not yield, and expressed their resentment in a series of risings, some of which were connected with the Sofyānī myth, while others had no messianic connotations.

The Kharijites were, contrary to the generally accepted view, still

active under the 'Abbāsids. Their risings often proved dangerous to the authority of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate. 'Umān and Ifriqiyya were their sphere of influence, and many Kharijite risings in the Jazīra, the Yaman, Sīstān, and Khurasān had lasting success. Chapter VI treats of major political events, selected to illustrate the trends which characterized the early 'Abbāsīd period. It shows how tribal 'Asabiyya still played an outstanding rôle in the politics of the new régime, how al-Manṣūr utilized it to weaken the influence of the tribal confederations in many parts of the empire, and was able to consolidate the new régime before expanding in Ṭabaristān or trying to regain Spain from the Umayyads. It finally shows how intrigues which arose at the 'Abbāsīd court early in the reign of al-Mahdī resulted in the murder of al-Hādī in 170/786.

Acknowledgements

In the first place, I should like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Bernard Lewis, to whom I am greatly indebted for the inspiring guidance, help and encouragement he provided in all the years of my research.

I am also grateful to Professor S. al-'Alī for making the manuscript of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās available to me; to Miss F. al-Nabrāwī, for permitting me to utilize her copies of the manuscripts of al-Bayāsī and al-Khazrajī; to Mr. M. Sharoon, for making part of the manuscript of Ansāb al-Ashraf available to me; to Mr. S. Zakkār, for lending me his manuscript of Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ's Tārīkh.

Thanks are also due to the Ahmad III Library, Istanbul, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Mass. and University Microfilm, I.N.C. Michigan, U.S.A., for putting at my disposal photographs of various manuscripts and theses.

I should also like to thank Dr. Anna I. Falk for her translations of German and Italian works, the staffs of the Libraries of S.O.A.S., the British Museum, the Senate House, the India Office, the Institute of Historical Research, and the Andersen Room (Cambridge University Library) for their ready help and unfailing patience.

Finally, I thank my parents, for their support and encouragement.

F. Omar.



AbbreviationsSources

Abū Zakariyya	<u>Chronique...</u> , by Abū Zakariyya Yaḥya.
<u>Agh</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u> , by Abū 'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī.
<u>Akhbār</u>	<u>Akhbār al-'Abbās wa wuldahu</u> (anonymous).
<u>Akhbār Iṣfahān</u>	<u>Akhbār Iṣfahān</u> , by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī.
<u>al-'lām</u>	<u>al-I'lām bi a'lām baytu 'l lāhi 'l harām</u> , by al-Nahrawālī al-Ḥanafī.
anonymous	The anonymous MS. of <u>Tārīkh-i dawlati 'Abbāsiyya</u>
'Asākir	<u>Tārīkh Dimashq</u> , by Ibn 'Asākir.
<u>Asmā' al-mughtālīn</u>	<u>Asmā' al-mughtālīn min al-Ashraf...</u> , by Ibn Ḥabīb.
'Āmilī	<u>A'yān al-Shī'a</u> , by al-'Āmilī.
<u>Ansāb</u>	<u>Ansāb al-Ashraf</u> , by al-Balādhurī
<u>Athīr</u>	<u>al-Kāmil fī 'l tārīkh</u> , by Ibn al-Athīr
'Aynī	<u>Dawlat Banī 'l 'Abbās wa 'l Tulūniyīn wa 'l</u> <u>Fāṭimiyyīn</u> , by al-'Aynī.
Azdī	<u>Tārīkh al-Maḡsil</u> , by Abū Zakariyya al-Azdī.
Azraqī	<u>Akhbār Makka</u> , by al-Azraqī.
<u>Bad'</u>	<u>al-Bad' wa 'l tārīkh</u> , by al-Maqdisī.
<u>Bagh.</u>	<u>al-Farq bayn al-firaq</u> , by al-Baghdādī.
Bal'amī	<u>Tarjama-i tārīkh-i Tabrī</u> , by al-Bal'amī (French trans.)
<u>Bayān</u>	<u>al-Bayān wa 'l tabyīn</u> , by Jāḥiz.
Bayāsī	<u>al-'Arab fī 'l ḥurūb fī Ṣadr al-Islām</u> , by al-Bayāsī.

<u>Bidāya</u>	<u>al-Bidāya wa 'l nihāya</u> , by Ibn Kathīr
<u>Bughya</u>	<u>Bughyat al-ṭalab</u> , by Ibn al-'Adīm.
<u>Buldān</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Buldān</u> , by al-Ya'qūbī.
<u>Dhahabī</u>	The MS. of <u>Tārīkh al-Islām</u> , by al-Dhahabī.
<u>Dīna.</u>	<u>al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl</u> , by al-Dīnawārī.
<u>Duwwal</u>	The MS. of <u>Akhbār al-duwwal al-munqaṭi'a</u> .
<u>Fakhri</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Fakhri</u> , by Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa.
<u>F.H.A.</u>	<u>Fragmenta Historicorum Arabicorum.</u>
<u>Fihrisit</u>	<u>al-Fihrisit</u> , by Ibn al-Nadīm.
<u>Firaq</u>	<u>Firaq al-Shī'a</u> , by al-Nawbakhtī.
<u>Fitan</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Fitan</u> , by al-Khuzā'i.
<u>Futūh</u>	<u>Futūh al-buldān</u> , by al-Balādhurī
<u>Ḥabīb</u>	<u>al-Muḥabbar</u> , by Ibn Ḥabīb.
<u>Hamad.</u>	<u>Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-buldān</u> , by Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadānī.
<u>Ḥaywān</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Ḥaywān</u> , by Jāhiz.
<u>Ḥazm</u>	<u>al-Faṣl fī 'l milal wa 'l niḥal</u> , by Ibn Ḥazm.
<u>Hilya</u>	<u>Hilyat al-Awliyā'</u> , by al-Iṣfahānī
<u>'Ibar</u>	<u>Kitāb al-'Ibar</u> , by Ibn Khaldūn.
<u>Ibn 'Adhārī</u>	<u>al-Bayān al-mughrib...</u> , by Ibn 'Adhārī.
<u>Ibn al-Kalbī</u>	The MS. of <u>al-Ansāb</u> , by Ibn al-Kalbī.
<u>Ibn al-Ṣaghīr</u>	<u>Fragment d'un livre d'Ibn S'rīr'...</u>
<u>Ibn Iṣfandiyār</u>	<u>Tārīkh-i Ṭabaristān</u> , by Ibn Iṣfandiyār.
<u>Ibn Raziq</u>	<u>History of the Imams and Sayyids of Oman..</u>
<u>Imāma</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Imāma wa 'l siyāsa.</u>

<u>Intisār</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Intisār wa 'l rad</u> , by al-Khayyāṭ.
<u>'Iqd</u>	<u>al-'Iqd al-farīd</u> , by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih.
<u>Isfar.</u>	<u>al-Tabṣīr fī 'l dīn</u> , by al-Isfarāyīnī.
<u>Jah.</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa 'l Kuttāb</u> , by al-Jahshiyārī
<u>Jamharat</u>	<u>Jamharat al-nasab</u> , by Ibn Hazm.
<u>Kāmil</u>	<u>al-Mubarrad</u> , by al-Kāmil
<u>Kashf al-ghumma</u>	<u>Kashf al-ghumma al-jāmi 'liakhbār al-umma</u> , by Sirḥān b. Sa'īd.
<u>Khaṭīb</u>	<u>Tārīkh Baghdād</u> , by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.
<u>Khazrajī</u>	<u>al-Kifāya wa 'l I'lām...</u> , by al-Khazrajī.
<u>Khiṭaṭ</u>	<u>al-Mawā'iz wa 'l I'tibār...</u> , by al-Maqrizī.
<u>Kūfī</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Futūḥ</u> , by Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī.
<u>Lubāb</u>	<u>al-Lubāb fī ma'rifat al-ansāb</u> , by Ibn al-Athīr.
<u>Ma'ārif</u>	<u>al-Ma'ārif</u> , by Ibn Qutayba.
<u>Ma'd</u>	<u>Kitāb Nasab ma'd wa 'l yaman al-kabīr</u> , by Ibn al-Kalbī.
<u>Maqālāt</u>	<u>Maqālāt al-Islāmiyīn</u> , by al-Ash'arī.
<u>Maqātil</u>	<u>Maqātil al-ṭalibiyīn</u> , by al-Iṣbahānī.
<u>Manāqib</u>	<u>Manāqib al-Turk</u> , by Jāhiz.
<u>Maqdisī</u>	<u>Aḥsan al taqāsīm</u> , by al-Maqqdisī.
<u>Mu'jam</u>	<u>Mu'jam al-buldān</u> , by Yāqūt al-Rūmī
<u>Muntakhab</u>	<u>Muntakhab al-tadhkira</u> , by Maqrizī.
<u>Muq.</u>	<u>al-Muqaffa al-Kabīr</u> , by Maqrizī.
<u>Murt.</u>	<u>Tabaqāt al-Mu'tazilla</u> , by Ibn al-Murtaḍa
<u>Murūj.</u>	<u>Murūj al-dhahab</u> , by al-Mas'ūdī.
<u>Narshkhī</u>	<u>Tārīkh-i Bukhāra</u> , by al-Narshkhī.

<u>Nawāqid</u>	<u>al-Nawāqid li 'l rawāfid</u> , by al-Barazanji.
<u>Nizā'</u>	<u>al-Nizā' wa 'l takhāsum</u> , by Maqrīzi.
<u>Nubdha</u>	The anonymous <u>Nubdha min Kitāb al-tārīkh</u>
<u>Nujūm</u>	<u>al-Nujūm al-Zāhira</u> , by Ibn Taghribaldī.
<u>Rijāl</u>	<u>al-Rijāl</u> , by al-Kashshī
<u>Sa'd</u>	<u>Tabaqāt</u> , Ibn Sa'd.
<u>Sa'd al-Ash'arī</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Naqālāt wa 'l firaq</u> .
<u>Severus</u>	<u>History of the patriarchs of the Coptic Church.</u>
<u>Shafā' al-gharam</u>	<u>Shafā' al-gharam bi akhbār al-balad al-ḥaram</u> , by al-Fāsī.
<u>Shah.</u>	<u>al-Milal wa 'l niḥal</u> , by al-Shahristānī.
<u>Sīra</u>	<u>al-Sīra</u> , by Ibn Hishām
<u>Tab.</u>	<u>Tārīkh al-rusul wa 'l mulūk</u> , by al-Tabarī.
<u>Tanbīh</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l Ishrāf</u> , by al-Nas'udī.
<u>Tuhfat al-a'yān</u>	<u>Tuhfat al-a'yān bi sirat ahl 'Umān</u> , by al-Sālimī
<u>Tulūn</u>	<u>'Umarā' Miṣr fi 'l Islām</u> , by Ibn Ṭulūn
<u>'Umdat</u>	<u>'Umdat al-tālib</u> , by al-Dāwūdī.
<u>'Uyūn</u>	<u>'Uyūn al-akhbār</u> , by Ibn Qutayba.
<u>Wafayāt</u>	<u>Wafayāt al-a'yān</u> , by Ibn Khallikān.
<u>Wulāt</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Wulāt wa 'l Quḍāt</u> , by al-Kindī.
<u>Yāfi'ī</u>	The manuscript of <u>Mir'āt al-Jinān</u> , by al-Yāfi'ī
<u>Ya'qūbī</u>	<u>Tārīkh</u> , by Ya'qūbī.
<u>Zubayrī</u>	<u>Nasab Quraysh</u> , by Mus'ab al-Zubayrī.
<u>Zubda</u>	<u>Zubdat al-Ḥalab</u> , by Ibn al-'Adīm.

Periodicals, etc.

A.I.E.O.	Annales de l'institut des Études Orientales.
A.I.U.O.N.	Annali (R.) Institute orientale di Napoli.
A.J.S.L.	American Journal of Semitic language and literature.
A.O.	Archiv Orientální.
A.U.T.F.	Ankara Universitesi Dilve Tarih Cografya Fakültesi Dergisi.
B.C.A.	Bulletin of the College of Arts (Majalat Kuliyyat al-Ādāb, Baghdad).
B.I.F.A.O.	Bulletin di l'institut français d'archéologie orientale.
B.S.O.A.S.	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
E.H.R.	Economic History Review.
H.J.	<i>Historia Judaica</i>
I.C.O.	International Congress of Orientalists.
I.C.	Islamic Culture.
I.I.	Indo-Iranica.
J.A.O.S.	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
J.A.	Journal Asiatique.
J.B.A.S.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of the Bengal.
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.W.H.	Journal of the World History.
M.E.E.	Middle Eastern Studies.
M.I.	Majallat al-Majma' al-'ilmī al-'Irāqī.
M.M.A.	Majallat Ma'had al-Makḥḥūḥāt al-'Arabiyya.

M.I.O.	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung.
M.T.H.	Mélanges Tā ha Husayn.
M.W.	Muslim World.
R.A.A.D.	Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Arabī.
R.C.E.A.	Repertoire chronologique d'epigraphie arabe.
R.S.O.	Rivista degli studi orientali.
S.I.	Studia Islamica.
S.O.	Studia Orientalia.
W.Z.K.M.	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.
Z.D.M.G.	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft.

Contents

	<u>page</u>
Abstract .. .. .	2
Acknowledgements .. .. .	5
Abbreviations .. .. .	6
Contents ... .. .	12
Chapter I Introduction: Survey of the sources	15
Chapter II The political aspect of the 'Abbāsīd revolution .. .. .	71
✓ a) Introduction	
b) The <u>Khurasānī</u> phase of the <u>da'wa</u>	
c) The <u>Irāqī</u> phase of the <u>da'wa</u> ..	
✓ d) Conclusion	
Chapter III The 'Abbāsīd régime and its <u>dā'īs</u> ...	165
a) Abū Muslim vis-à-vis Abū Salama	
b) The assassination of Abū Salama	
c) Abū Muslim and the struggle for power in <u>Khurasān</u>	
The rising of <u>Sharīk b. Shaykh al-Mahrī</u>	
The rising of Ziyād b. <u>Ṣāliḥ al-Khuza'ī</u>	
The execution of 'Isā b. <u>Māhān</u>	
The rising of <u>Manḡūr b. Jamhūr</u>	
Abū Muslim at his prime	
The execution of Abū Muslim	

- d) The rising of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm
- e) The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī
- f) The Rāwanidiyya sectarians
- g) The murder of Abū 'l Jahm b. 'Aṭiyya al-Bahilī
- h) The rising of Jahwar b. Marrār al-'Ijlī
- i) The conspiracy against Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī
- j), The revolt of 'Abd 'l Jabbār b. 'Abd 'l Raḥmān al-Azdī
- k) The mutiny of 'Uyayna b. Mūsā al-Tamīmī

## Chapter IV

'Abbāsīd-'Alīd relations in the early  
'Abbāsīd period .. .. .

252

- a) The claim of Ahl al-Bayt
- b) Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya's revolt
- c) Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdallah's revolt
- d) The period of reconciliation
- e) Al-Ḥusaya b. 'Alī's revolt

## Chapter V

Other opposition movements in the early  
'Abbāsīd period .. .. .

305

- a) The pro-Umayyad movement
- b) The Kharijites

## Chapter VI

Major political events in the provinces

367

- a) The revolt of Moṣūl in 133/750-51
- b) Slave riots in Baṣra in 141/758-59
- c) Bandār's rising in the Lebanon 142/759-60



- d) Revolts in the Yemen and Bahrayn and al-Manqūr's tribal policy
- e) A naval attack on Jadda by al-Kurk in 153/770
- f) Coptic and Bedouin disturbances in Egypt
- g) The subjugation of Armenia and the war with Khazaria.
- h) 'Abbāsīd attempts to regain al-Andalus
- i) The mid against India
- j) The conquest of Ṭabaristān
- k) Al-Khayzurān's coup d'état 170/786

## Bibliography

..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	409
a)	Classical sources							
b)	Modern work							
c)	Periodical publications etc.							

Chapter IINTRODUCTIONSURVEY OF THE SOURCES

The following passage, marred by the obvious flattery by which it is inspired, represents an attempt by al-Jāhiz to exalt the 'Abbāsīd achievements and to discredit anti-'Abbāsīd historians:

"If Ahl Khurasān had preserved the memory of their battles against Ahl al-Shām, of the political skill of their kings and the policies of their prominent figures, and of the noble ideas they expressed, the words, the deeds and the achievements of al-Manṣūr alone [which were] destined for posterity, would largely match all the kings of Banī Marwan. Abū 'Ubayda al-Nahawī, Abū 'l Ḥasan al-Mada'īnī, Hishām b. al-Kalbī and al-Haytham b. 'Adī have collected divergent traditions and fragmentary sayings; what they have achieved represents only a hybrid part of a coherent whole. At any rate, when we refer to what remains of the accounts of al-'Abbās b. Muḥammad, 'Abd al-Malik b. Ṣāliḥ, al-'Abbās b. Mūsā.... who derived their information from the Mashyakha and Mawālī of Banī Ḥashim, you will be able to realize, thanks to these authentic documents, the extent of the adulations due to al-Haytham b. 'Adī and falsifications for which Hishām b. al-Kalbī is responsible."

[Bāyan, vol. 3, pp. 317-18]

Scholars<sup>1</sup> who, in one way or another, dealt with the 'Abbāsīd revolution and the 'Abbāsīd caliphate in its early days often depended for their information on the easily accessible chronicles. Since then other chronicles, heresiographies and biographical dictionaries as well as the rich invaluable material preserved in subsequently discovered manuscripts such as the anonymous Akhbār al-'Abbās wa Wuldahu, the Ansāb al-Ashraf of Balādhurī, the Tārīkh and Tabaqāt of Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, the Futūh of Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī and the Tārīkh al-Mausil of Abū Zakariyya al-Azdī, which in one way or another throw new light on the period in question.

On the basis of these and other manuscripts as well as the re-valuation of old published sources an attempt has been made in this thesis to re-examine the nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution as well as the main trends and characteristics of the early 'Abbāsīd caliphate. Significant and decisive events of the first two centuries of the Hijra have been treated by the pioneers among the Muslim Rāwīs and historians

---

<sup>1</sup>G. Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, 5 vols., 1846; J. Wellhausen, Das Arabische Reich und sein Sturz..., 1902; Van Vloten, La Domantion arabe..., 1894; Khudari, Muhadarat fi Tarikh al-Dawla al-'Abbasiyya, 1938; Durī, Al-'Asr al-'Abbasi al-Awwal, 1945.

in concise works on general history or particular events. A large number of these works, which are listed in Ibn al-Nadīm's Fihrist,<sup>1</sup> are devoted to the 'Abbāsīd period. It will suffice to refer here to those which were of particular relevance to the early 'Abbāsīd period and would be of great value if they were extant.

1. Kitāb al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib by al-Madā'inī
2. Kitāb 'Abdallah b. Al-'Abbās " "
3. Kitāb 'Alī b. 'Abdallah b. Al-'Abbās " "
4. Kitāb Muḥammād b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah " "
5. Akhbār Khulafā' banī 'l 'Abbās " Muḥammad b. 'Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib
6. Akhbār al-'Abbāsyīn " Samaka<sup>2</sup>
7. Risāla fī Tafdīl banī Hāshim wa 'awliyā'hum wa dham banī Umayya wa atba'uhum " Ibn al-'Imād al-Thaqafī
8. Akhbār al-Saffāḥ " al-Madā'inī
9. Akhbār Abī 'l 'Abbās " Ahmad b. al-Ḥārith al-Khazzāz
10. Akhbār Abī Ja'far al-Manṣūr " Ibn 'Abda
11. Akhbār al-Manṣūr " 'Umar b. Shabba

<sup>1</sup>Fihrist, vol. I, pp. 89ff; Al-'Alī, 'Ilm al-Tārīkh 'Inda al-Muslimīn, pp. 373 ff. (The Arabic translation of Rosenthal's History of Muslim historiography, with valuable additions); see also Ḥajji Khalifa, Kashf al-Zunun, vol. I, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup>On Ahmad b. Ismā'il b. Samaka see also al-Tūsī's Fihrist Najaf, 1961, p. 55, where his book is entitled Kitāb al-'Abbāsī.

عن كتبه العباسي وهو كتاب عظيم نحو عشرة آلاف ورقة في اخبار الخلفاء والدولة  
العباسية مستوفي لم يصنف مثله في هذا الفن.

12. Tārīkh Mawṣūl bi Kitāb Abī Ja'far by Abū Ishāq al-Saqṭī  
 وقد صنفه أبو إسحاق السقطي من أخبار أبي جعفر وأصحابه شيئا كثيرا
13. Manāqib hanī 'l 'Abbās " Muḥammad b. al-'Abbās al-Yazīdī
14. Akhbār Abī Muslim Ṣāhib  
al-da'wa " al-Marzubānī
15. Kitāb Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm Ibnay  
'Abdallah b. Ḥasan " 'Umar b. Shabba
16. Kitāb Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm  
Ibnay 'Abdallah b. Ḥasan " Abū 'Ubayda
17. Kitāb Khilāf 'Abd al-Jabbār  
al-Azdī " al-Madā'inī
18. Ismā' man qutila min al-  
Tālibiyīn " al-Madā'inī
19. Kitāb al-dawla " al-Rāwandī
20. Akhbār Ibn Sīrīn " al-Madā'inī
21. Akhbār Abī Ḥanīfa " al-Marzabānī
22. Akhbār Ibn Harama " al-Zubayr b. Bakkār
23. Akhbār Ḥammād 'Ajrad " Ishāq al-Mawṣilī
24. Kitāb Khurasān " Abū 'Ubayda
25. Kitāb Futūḥ Khurasān " al-Madā'inī
26. Kitāb Nizūl al-'Arab bikhurasān  
wa'l sawād " al-Haytham b. 'Addī
27. Faḍā'il Khurasān " al-Balkhī

However, few of these early works are partly available in extracts in the works of some later historians such as Balādhurī, Ya'qūbī, Dīnawārī, Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī and Tabarī. Speaking on Arabic historians Springling says "On the whole they are surprisingly full and fair even when their report is not very complimentary to themselves and their people. More than most historians in other languages they enable those of us who can see it to write history not merely as a register of dead facts but as living human reality."<sup>1</sup> This may be so but the full and contradictory accounts preserved in them renders it hard for the student of history to extract the truth from the confusing mixture of reports and fabrications he is faced with, and the earlier the period the less manageable the material. For the period under study the sources at our disposal are of various kinds: annalistic, literary, local, sectarian, geneological, biographical and geographical.<sup>2</sup>

The following is a rapid survey of the major sources of this

---

<sup>1</sup>"From Persian to Arabic", A.J.S.L., vol. 56, 1939, p.207.

<sup>2</sup>The sources consulted in this thesis have already been examined in different works. However, most of these surveys are either general surveys of Muslim historiography (such as Margoloth's Lectures on Arabic historians, 1930; B. Lewis and P. M. Holt, Historians of the Middle East, London 1962; Rosenthal, History of Muslim historiography), or monographs on certain historians and their works (such as J. 'Ali's Mawārid Tārikh al-Ṭabarī, see bibliography). Those works have also been examined from the viewpoint of their relevance to specific periods, reigns or events (such as Sadighī, Les mouvements religieux..., 1938; B. Lewis, The origins of Ismā'ilism, 1940; S. Moscati, "Nuovi studi storici...", Orientalia, 14, 1945, Roma; Idem, "Per una storia dell' Anticasī'a", R.S.O., 1955; D Souzdel, Le Vizirat 'Abbāside, Damascus, 1959, chap. I.

study with special emphasis on those hitherto unknown or not utilized.

### Historical sources

1. Akhbār al-‘Abbās Wa Wildahu This work, preserved in the library of the Institute of Higher Islamic Studies in Baghdad, is still in manuscript. The first pages are missing; the name of the author is unknown. Professor Al-Dūrī believes that the book was written in the middle of the third century of the Hijra and suggests the possibility of the authorship of Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Maḥān (d. 202 A.H.) or Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-Naṭṭāq.<sup>1</sup> The work is invaluable for the understanding of the organisation of the ‘Abbāsīd movement in Khurasān including the tactics adopted there, the importance of Arab tribal leaders, the Arab settlers in the villages of Marw and the Arab key figures appointed to administer centres of strategic importance in this province. With its abundant information on the inner circles of the da‘wa it possesses the value of a contemporary document of the revolutionary movement. While Tabarī only mentions the committee of the twelve Naqībs, Akhbār al-‘Abbās enumerates all their committees and sub-committees. It reveals the strict form of its organisation, whose propagandists were divided into twelve Naqībs headed by a Chief Naqīb, and twelve deputy Naqībs (Nuḍarā’ al-Nuqabā’), then seventy dā‘īs and about thirty-six chief dā‘īs (Du‘āt al-Du‘āt).

---

<sup>1</sup> Da‘aw’ Jadīd., B.C.A., 1957, p.65; See also Ḥajjī Khalifa, op.cit., vol. I, p.283, al-Ṣafadī, al-Wafī bi ‘l Wafiyat, ed. 1931, vol. I, p.51

By comparing the rôle of Abū Muslim with that of other 'Abbāsīd partisans such as Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī or Arab tribal leaders such as 'Alī Ibn al-Karmānī the author enables us to re-assess Abū Muslim's rôle in the 'Abbāsīd revolution, and shows us to what extent Abū Muslim's very position in Khurasān depended on Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī and his circle.

Akhbār al-'Abbās which comprises 204 fols. is actually an annalistical work in biographical form concerned, as the title indicates, with al-'Abbās and his descendants. It ends in the bequest of the Imamate by Ibrāhīm to Abū 'l 'Abbās and quotes the text of Ibrāhīm's will, with final notes on Ibrāhīm's sons.

The author relies on trustworthy authorities such as his predecessors, Abū Mikhāf (d. 157 A.H.) and Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī (d. 235 A.H.) and his contemporaries such as 'Umar b. Shabba (d. 262), Balādhurī (d. 279 A.H.) and al-'Abbās b. Hishām b. al-Kalbī. On the details of the revolutionary propaganda the work mainly depends on partisans of the revolt such as dā'īs, 'Abbāsīds and eye-witnesses.

One rightly wonders why later historians never refer to the book or the author although some such as Dhahabī, Mubarrad and Ibn Abī 'l Ḥadīd copied from it verbatim.<sup>1</sup> However, it seems that the book was never intended to be put in circulation as the material it contains was derived from internal 'Abbāsīd revolutionary information which gives

---

<sup>1</sup> Dūrī, op.cit., p.65.



it the character of a private document. What it discloses on the relations of the 'Abbāsīd Imāms with the propagandists and the struggle for power within the 'Abbāsīd chiefs' propagandists is first class. Some details of this information concern: the two letters of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah to the dā'īs after the execution of Khidāsh, one version seems to have been for the inner circle the other for the public, the facts of the promise of Ibrāhīm the Imām to both Abū Muslim and Abū Salama to divide a great part of the empire between them which partly accounts for the struggle for power between these two exponents of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa after the 'Abbāsīd victory; the deep-rooted rivalry between Abū Muslim and Sulaymān al-Khuzā'i which proves the greater influence Sulaymān had on the conduct of the propaganda,<sup>1</sup> and finally the employment of women dā'īs in the movement.

2. Nubdha min Kitāb al-Tārīkh by an anonymous author of the 11th century. A photocopy of the manuscript work has been published with Russian translation, introduction and commentary by P.A.Gryaznevich of the Orientalist Institute in Moscow. The work is part of a larger whole, as is shown by a remark on the first page which refers to the previous treatment of the Orthodox and Umayyad periods of the caliphate and announces the immediately following account of the 'Abbāsīd times calling it al-dawla al-'Abbāsiyya al-Mubāraka.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> On these accounts see below, Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> Nubdha, fol. 235b.

The author makes it clear from the start that his account of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate will be concise "although the proximity of its occurrence as well as its good deeds and virtues might tempt [one] to give a detailed account." The author is obviously 'Abbāsīd in tendency as he himself states that he is bound to the 'Abbāsīds by Walā,<sup>1</sup>

However, a comparison between the Nubdha and the Akhbār al-'Abbās reveals that the former is a brief adaptation of the latter. The author of the Nubdha has reduced to 294 fols. the bulky accounts of the Akhbār by quoting only the main authority instead of the whole chain of transmitters, and by combining different accounts and giving one well-digested account. He also omits the long lists of the dā'īs, deputy naqībs and chief dā'īs preserved in the Akhbār. He has achieved conciseness by giving the bare facts of the happenings and ignoring vital and secret details revealed in the Akhbār. The following juxtaposition proves to what extent the author of the Nubdha depended on the Akhbār.

<u>Nubdha</u>	<u>Akhbār</u>
fol. 245b	74a
" 246a-b	84b
" 246b-247a	79a
" 247b	80b-81a
" 248b	85a

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., fol. 236b.

إنه ينتسب إلي ولده لهذا البيت الشريف

<u>Nubdha</u>	<u>Akhbār</u>
fol. 249b	88a
" 254a	102b
" 254b	106a
" 282b	183a
" 290a	202b

The last instance of a coincidence between the two works is the account of Ibrāhīm's death in the last two fols. 290a/202a. Here the Akhbār ends, while Nubdha proceeds to narrate the conspiracy of Abū Salama and the proclamation of Abū 'l 'Abbās. The abrupt manner in which both sources finish prove that both manuscripts are incomplete.

3. Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, Shabbāb<sup>1</sup> (d. 240/854-55) was one of the renowned traditionists and historians of his time. He lived in Baṣra for most of his life. His works were unknown until recently although part of a work on the Tarājim<sup>2</sup> has been preserved in the Zāhiriyya library of Damascus.<sup>3</sup> Mr. S. Zakkār has located a copy of Khalīfa's Tārīkh and Ṭabaqāt in the Awqāf Library at Morocco, and has undertaken the task of editing both works which are soon to be published in Damascus. In his Tārīkh Khalīfa applies the method of the traditionists in quoting chains of authorities, some of which - for the early 'Abbāsīd period -

---

<sup>1</sup> Khalīfa, Ṭabaqāt, p.5; Fihrist, p.324 ed. Cairo 1348; cf. Flugel edition where he mistakenly writes Shabbāb.

<sup>2</sup> Al-'Alī, op.cit., p.684.

<sup>3</sup> Y. al-'Ushsh, Fihrist al-Maktaba al-Zāhiriyya, 1947, p.199.

are 'Alī b. Muḥammad, Muḥammad b. Mu'āwiya, Bayhās b. Ḥabīb, Abū 'Ubayda Abū 'l Yaqqān and Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ (the author's grandfather). His annals begin with the first year of Ḥijra and end with the year 230/844-5. In contrast to Tabarī who is a compiler, Khalīfa is selective and brief, concentrating on specific vital events, some of them turning points in Islamic history such as the murder of 'Uthmān, the revolt of al-Mukhtār, the 'Abbāsīd da'wa, the troubles in Khurasān and Arab-Byzantine relations. Every account of the reign of a caliph is concluded by a list of governors of provinces, qadīs, chiefs of police and directors of the diwāns. Of outstanding value is the account of the correspondence between the caliph al-Mahdī and the Kharijite rebel 'Abd 'l-Salām al-Yashkurī, this correspondence is not found anywhere else and only partly quoted by al-Azdī, is fully preserved here. It is almost inconceivable that a book of such qualities has fallen into oblivion. However, Khalīfa lived in Baṣra of the second century of the Ḥijra, which was hostile to the government and housed prosperous Umayyads. His Tārīkh reveals moderate Umayyad sympathies. Several of the narrators of the work were actually Umayyads. Khalīfa's citation of the letter of the Kharijite 'Abd 'l Salām to al-Mahdī must have been another source of annoyance for the authorities and an additional reason for the unpopularity of his work especially in Irāq.

4. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 A.H./923 A.D.). Generally speaking his Tārīkh contains the fullest and most comprehensive account on the history of

the caliphate from its emergence until the year 290 A.H.<sup>1</sup> For the period of the early 'Abbāsids his narrative of the events fails to provide a clear and coherent picture of the political situation in the empire. His main concern is with the heartland of the caliphate Irāk. He gives more attention to the eastern parts of the empire than the western parts such as Syria, Egypt and Ifriqiyya. He rarely mentions the Kharijite risings in the turbulent jazīra, and dismisses the Kharijites of 'Umān or Ifriqiyya in a few lines. That is why Ibn 'l-Athīr who mostly depends on Tabarī finds himself obliged to resort to other sources such as Abū Zakariyya al-Azdī on matters such as local risings and events.

A comparison of Tabrī's text with the information given by other early sources such as Balādhurī's Ansāb, the anonymous Akhbār al-'Abbās, Kūfī's Futūḥ and Azdī's Tārīkh al-Mouṣil clearly shows how cursory and vague he is in his treatment of certain events. Kūfī is superior to him in that he takes the trouble to elucidate the situation in Khurasān in the Umayyad period and pays sufficient attention to the tribal feuds and grievances of the Arabs.<sup>2</sup> As to al-Azdī<sup>3</sup> he has fully recognized the significance of the rôle some Arab tribes of the Jazīra played in the struggle between Umayyads and 'Abbāsids, in throwing their lot in with the advancing Khurasānī army. In more than one occasion he makes brilliant

---

<sup>1</sup>Breckelmann, Geschichte der Arabischen..., vol. I, Leiden, 1943, p.148; E.I.<sup>1</sup>, (Tabarī), (Tārīkh).

<sup>2</sup>Sha'bān, The social and economic background of the 'Abbāsīd revolution..., Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1960.

<sup>3</sup>Tārīkh al-Mauṣil, MSS. Dublin, fols. 107ff., 118, 124.

remarks on the important rôle of the Arabs in the revolutionary movement. Tabarī is vague even on the factual aspect of risings such as those of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm, 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī and Khālīd al-Dhuhlī and seems, somehow, purposely to omit accounts unfavourable to the central régime.<sup>1</sup> Fresh and different material on these risings and political events is to be found in Balādhurī's Ansāb and local histories. The comparatively clearer and most coherent picture can be obtained from the accounts of Ansāb who quotes Madā'inī. Tabarī's most detailed accounts on the 'Alids are those connected with the struggle for power between the Ḥasanids and the 'Abbāsids where he registers every detail of facts and correspondence with meticulous care. Though he gives more than one facet of the picture, he seems to have fully utilized 'Umar b. Shabba's book Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm...<sup>2</sup>

As a traditionist Tabarī applied the method of the Muḥadithūn by quoting the authorities for a large proportion of his accounts. His main authorities on the early 'Abbāsīd history are: 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Madā'inī, Aḥmad b. Zuhayr, Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb, 'Umar b. Shabba, 'Umar b. Rāshīd.<sup>3</sup> He sometimes combines several accounts in one version adducing the chain of transmitters. This disregard of narrators is especially obvious in dealing with political events in distant provinces. It is at any rate precisely due to the method of presenting more than one version of a particular event and providing the account with the chain

<sup>1</sup>He openly admits suppressing information, Tab., I, pp. 2858, 2862, 2965, 2980.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, pp. 143-319.

<sup>3</sup>J. 'Alī, "Mawārid Tarīkh al-Tabarī," M.M.I., 1954, 1961.

of authorities which renders it both comprehensive and trustworthy that Tabari's history with all its defects, remains one of the important sources on the early 'Abbāsīd caliphate.

5. Futūḥ al-Buldān by Abū 'l 'Abbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥya al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892 A.D.). In this work he deals in the first place with the administrative aspect of the provinces conquered by the Arabs. However scattered historical information can be found in the accounts on events in remote provinces such as Armenia, Khurasān and the Byzantine frontiers. He is also rather illuminating on the treatment of Ahl al-dhimma and the policies adopted by caliphs towards certain revolts such as the economic boycott of the Ḥijāz by orders of al-Manṣūr during the revolt of Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya. The authorities he quotes vary from Madā'inī to Wāqidī, Hishām b. al-Kalbī and Abū 'Ubayda. As has been shown by many scholars and lastly by Goitein it is impossible to discover any partisan tendency in Balādhurī's works. He was "a partisan of one class only his own class of authors who wish to be interesting and who therefore cannot resist a sensation and even a touch of scandal".<sup>1</sup> He was trusted by his successors and many of them quoted him, such as Ṣūlī, Jahshiyārī, Maqrīzī, Dhahabī and 'Aynī.

6. Al-Akhbār al-Tiwāl by Aḥmad b. Dā'ūd al-Dīnawārī (d. 282/895). Although his accounts on the early 'Abbāsīd period are at times concise,

---

<sup>1</sup>See the introduction of the Jerusalem edition of Ansāb al-Ashraf, 1936.

confused and unconfirmed by other early sources, they are useful as they contain some original information utilized in the course of the present thesis. Certain confused or exaggerated accounts are easily detectable. The image of Abū Muslim,<sup>1</sup> for instance, is noticeably exaggerated in al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl. This is significant because it helps to determine the period in which the myth of Abū Muslim began to form and consolidate until it later developed making him a Persian national hero. Abū Muslim's figure is more than life-size, and his importance is clearly exaggerated. Some examples in which Abū Muslim's rôle is magnified are: The account of his meeting Abū 'l 'Abbās, the installation of Abū 'l 'Abbās on the caliphal throne, the execution of Abū Salama and the suppression of 'Īsā b. 'Alī's revolt at al-Anbār. According to Dīnawārī it was a commander sent by Abū Muslim who installed Abū 'l 'Abbās as caliph. It was Abū Muslim who killed Abū Salama without consulting the caliph. It was Abū Muslim who crushed an attempt made by 'Īsā b. 'Alī at al-Anbār to seize the power from al-Manṣūr. It is worth noting that Dīnawārī ignores many noticeable political events such as al-Khallal's conspiracy against the 'Abbāsids, the revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī, the Barmacids etc. The names of his sources are frequently omitted.

7. Al-Ya'qūbī, Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb b. Ja'far b. Wahab b. Wāḍiḥ (d. 284/895).<sup>2</sup> An Arab historian and geographer. He was a moderate

---

<sup>1</sup>Dīna, p.358; See also E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Dīnawārī). This tendency is also noticed in Ḥamza Iṣfahānī's Tarīkh, p.139.

<sup>2</sup>E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Ya'qūbī).



pro-'Alid by sympathy but this feeling did not influence him in his writing of history. Though concise his accounts on the early 'Abbāsīd era are clear, unbiased and coherent. Although he does not often refer to his authorities, it is obvious that he derived some of his information from sources other than Ṭabarī. He brings to light many interesting points which contribute to a better understanding of men and policies of the early 'Abbāsīd period. His version, for example, on the revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī is commendable in that he stresses the fact that Abū Muslim was from the very beginning suspicious of the intentions of the caliph towards him. Moreover the lists he gives of the governors, the qādīs and the sahāba of every caliph is indicative of the high proportion of Arabs at court and in the administration. He emphasizes the initiative of the caliph al-Manṣūr in appointing his own Mawālī and ghilmān to governmental posts although the influence of the Arabs was still prevalent, the tribal policy pursued by early 'Abbāsīd caliphs in facing dangerous political situations, and the rivalry between various groups at the court in the contest for power. Finally he supplements Ṭabarī's fragmentary information on Ifriqiyya, 'Uman and other distant provinces with brief, but unlike Ṭabarī, coherent and intelligent accounts.

Ya'qūbī's essay on the caliphs entitled Mushākalat 'l Nās Lizamānikim<sup>1</sup> is characterized by clear thinking and a sense of history. In this work

<sup>1</sup> Ed. by W. Millward and trans. into Persian by Ḥusayn Khudoyjum, Teheran 1323.

قال الشيخ احمد بن يعقوب بن يعقوب بن واضح  
« فان المسلمين في كل عصر تبعوا للخليفة يسكنون سبيله وينصبون مناصبه  
ويصلون على قدر ما يرون منه ولا يخرجون عن افهامه وانصالة واقواله »

*imitated*

he mentions what was characteristic of the caliph which was followed by the people. For the early 'Abbāsīd period one notices the contrast between the serious approach of al-Manṣūr the founder of the new state and the laxity of al-Rashīd who was the first of the early 'Abbāsīds to spend time playing chess in the company of slave girls.

8. Al-Futūḥ by Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad b. A'tham al-Kūfī (d.314/926 A.D.).<sup>1</sup> He was an Arab historian who lived in the 3rd century A.H./9th century A.D. Though he was a contemporary of many renowned historians of his days nothing was known of his life or work until recently.<sup>2</sup>

The first volume of al-Kūfī's Futūḥ begins with the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān and ends with the revolt of al-Mukhtār in 66 A.H./685-6 A.D. The second volume continues the account of al-Mukhtār's revolt and ends with the suppression of Bābak's revolt in the reign of al-Mu'taṣim (218-227). The first volume consists of 270 fols. while the second volume consists of 278 fols. As it is still in a manuscript form, this work has been utilized by a few scholars. As al-Kūfī states at the very beginning that his work is a combination of several versions he has consulted, he refrains from referring in the course of the book to the authorities cited in the introduction.

Al-Kūfī is one of the earliest extant sources on the history of the Arabs in Khurasān and provides the means of controlling the accounts

---

<sup>1</sup>Brockelmann, Op.cit., vol. I, p.150, supp., 1, p.220; the Persian translation of the Arabic origin is published in Bombay 1300 A.H.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.Storey, Persian literature, I, pp. 207-209; A.N.Kurat, Kitāb al-Futūḥ, A.Ū.T.F., vol. 7, 1949, pp. 255-282; Sha'ban, op.cit., pp. viii-xiii, The XII, I.C.O., 1961.

of other historians such as Ṭabarī and Balādhurī. He ends his account of the Futūh with the emergence of the Musawwida and obviously considers the 'Abbāsīd revolution and the events which followed it as a new phase, for he quotes a number of authorities such as Madā'inī, Balādhurī and al-Haytham b. 'Ady some of which are different from those adduced at the beginning of the book. He evidently intends to convey the impression that it is a question of another part of the book which has nothing to do with the Futūh.

... الي ان ظهرت المسودة في ارض خراسان مع ابي مسلم وردنا زوال بني امية  
 فهذا اكرمك الله آخر الصواع ونبتدي بعد هذا في اخبار نصر بن سيار  
 والكرمانى و ابي مسلم ..

As far as this period is concerned al-Kūfī is valuable in that he provides vital data on the Arab settlement in Khurasān and fresh material on provinces such as Armenia. Besides his information on political events is complementary to other sources and provides useful opportunities for control and comparison. On the other hand his sympathies are clearly pro-'Alid. His accounts on the early 'Abbāsīd da'wa are biased and must be treated with extreme caution. In Kūfī's account, the reign of Abū 'l 'Abbās is surrounded by an aura of vengeance on the Umayyads for the persecution of Ahl al-Bayt. His bias is so evident whenever the 'Alids are concerned. He gives the impression that the revolt of Khurasān

---

was waged in the name of Ahl al-Bayt and not of the 'Abbāsīd in particular, and that it was only after the arrival of the Khurasānīs to Kūfa that Abū 'l 'Abbās was chosen by Abū Salama as the best among the Hashimites. He never refers to the conspiracy of Abū Salama. Interesting is that al-Kūfī quotes as other historians do the letter of Abū Muslim to al-Manṣūr adding - unlike other historians - a few sentences which praise the 'Alids and state that they had a better title to the caliphate, these sentences are an obvious fabrication and bear witness to his pro-'Alid feelings. He also differs from every other historian in asserting that Abū Muslim reached Marw after his quarrel with al-Manṣūr, and only then returned to al-Madā'in for his fatal meeting with the latter. On the whole his accounts on the political events during the early 'Abbāsīd period are sometimes superficial and not quite trustworthy, the more so as he only quotes his main sources, not the whole chain of authorities. His style of narration differs from that of Tabarī in that he is selective with regard to topic and details so that the picture he gives on the early 'Abbāsīds is far from complete. This is justified as he was writing Futūh and not Tārīkh. His accounts are short especially from the reign of al-Mahdī onwards. Speaking on the reign of al-Hādī he says "there are some accounts that tell about his relations with the 'Alids which we do not like to narrate". He does not enlarge on 'Alid risings and refrains from giving details which might discredit the 'Alids.

9. Al-Wazārā' wa'l Kuttāb by Abū 'Abd Allah Muḥammad b. 'Abdūs al-Jahshiyārī (d.331 A.H./942 A.D.).<sup>1</sup> His work is important in so far as it provides an inside version of the 'Abbāsīd court and administration derived from officials and court associates. Although it has more importance for the administrative institutions it also contains material on the political situation, especially the intrigues between the wazīrs and other political groupings such as the Mawālī, the Arabs, the Saḥāba and the Khurasānīs. Jahshiyārī clearly shows that the downfall of several wazīrs was due to intrigues of this kind. Jahshiyārī also enlarges on subjects like the death of Ibn al-Muqaffa' and cites part of the Amān he composed for 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. The book in fact is one of the bureaucratic writings as Jahshiyārī and his father before him were officials in the 'Abbāsīd administration. Thus the authorities he cites are more or less different from Tabarī's and mainly consist of Kuttāb, Warrāqīn and 'Abbāsīd courtiers, but include also Madā'inī and Jāhiz.

10. Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa'l ḥadā'iq fī Akhbār al-ḥaqā'iq by an anonymous author. It starts with the reign of al-Walīd b. Yazīd when the Umayyad dynasty had already begun to crumble, and ends with the reign of al-Mu'taṣim. It is valuable in that the author does not rely for his information only on known historical works, so that a comparison of his

---

<sup>1</sup>Brockelmann, op.cit., suppl. vol. I, p.219; Sourdél, Le Vizirat, pp. 8f; idem, Jahshiyārī, Mélanges Louis Massignon, Vol. III, 1957.

version with those of Ṭabarī or Ya'qūbī is especially fruitful. He rarely quotes his authorities.

11. Al-Mas'ūdī, Abū 'l Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 345/956)  
 He states in his Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa'l Ishrāf that the object of his work is not to give a detailed account, but a simple and succinct narrative which could be remembered by the reader. Thus he only gives an outline of the important events in the early 'Abbāsīd period. In his Murūj al-dhahab, he always refers to other books of his, such as Akhbār al-Zamān and al-Kitāb al-Awsat. He selects episodes which attracted his attention which results in an incorporation of legends and anecdotes current at the time into his text. This sometimes impairs the trustworthiness of his account, a thing which is the more dangerous as his elegant style may induce the reader to accept accounts and details which are less authentic. In his Murūj he provides somewhat detailed data on the origins and the development of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa and 'Alid-'Abbāsīd relation. However, he cites his authorities though not so fully as Ṭabarī. His works consist of rather disconnected though useful anecdotes but cannot be described as a coherent annalistic history. Although his writings are not affected by partisanship, moderate pro-'Alid leanings can occasionally be detected. On the attempt of Abū Salama to transfer the caliphate to the 'Alids, he alleges that the Wazīr of Āl Muḥammad could not find among the

'Abbāsids a single suitable figure. He therefore called upon the prominent 'Alids to accept the caliphate.<sup>1</sup> Mas'ūdī also criticises the pro-'Abbāsīd al-Jāhiz for his views on the most controversial subject, i.e. the Imāma.<sup>2</sup>

11. Ibn Qutayba Abū 'Abdallah Muḥammad b. Muslim (d. 276/889)<sup>3</sup> is one of the earliest authorities on the 'Abbāsīd period. However most of his works are not, strictly speaking, history but belong to the category called Adab literature which deals with history as part of its educational purposes. One of his works with historical connotations is al-Ma'ārif which is an encyclopaedic work in which he briefly outlines the 'Abbāsīd period mentioning the main political events with lists of 'Amils appointed during the period concerned. His main source is the Muḥabbar of Ibn Ḥabīb although he also derived some information from other sources and from his Shuyūkh.

It will not be amiss to mention here the Kitāb al-Imāma wa'l Siyāsa which is erroneously ascribed to Ibn Qutayba.<sup>4</sup> The author gives a brief narrative to the early 'Abbāsīd period with occasional original information. However, one should be cautious in utilizing Kitāb al-Imāma wa'l Siyāsa as it was the author's aim to reproduce anecdotes in a way that it would impress the reader and serve as a maxim. His work also contains accounts unconfirmed by any other historian. He

---

<sup>1</sup> Murūj, VI, p.93.

<sup>2</sup> Murūj, VI, pp. 56-58.

<sup>3</sup> E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Ibn Qutaiba).

<sup>4</sup> It has been suggested that Kitāb al-Imāma... was written by Ibn al-Qūṭaybiyya - that is in the Umayyad Andalus (see G. Lecomte, Ibn Qutayba..., pp.174-6). This may account for the presence of strange unconfirmed accounts  
(cont.)

sometimes quotes his sources of information especially al-Haytham

b. 'Ady, but often confines himself to the term "they said"

12. The manuscript Kitāb al-Fitan<sup>1</sup> (the book of dissensions) by al-Khuzā'ī contains traditions ascribed to the Prophet and early Ṣaḥāba, and referring to the civil wars and revolts in early Muslim history. Though it is by its nature a book on traditions it is reviewed here together with the historical sources as most of these predictions - especially those of the decline of the Umayyads and the advent of the 'Abbāsids - were made ex post and bear signs of historical experience on which the author has evidently drawn.

#### Local histories

General chronicles such as Ya'qūbī and Ṭabarī show more interest in the imperial province of Irāq and its surrounding districts rather than distant provinces which they only mention on the occasion of significant incidents or rebellions. Even then the information they provide is vague and scanty. It is for this reason that our information on Kharijite activities during the early 'Abbāsid period is so fragmentary. It is here that information derived from local histories such as Tārīkh al-Mausil and Tārīkh-i Sīstān is most vital. However, not all Muslim provinces and cities were lucky in having their history recorded by one

---

(cont.) in the work. If this suggestion is true it could be argued either that the author was influenced by his pro-Umayyad tendency or that he felt less constrained in expressing himself as he lived outside the sphere of 'Abbāsid influence.

<sup>1</sup> Khajīb, vol. 13, pp. 306 ff; Brockelmann, op.cit., Supp., I, p.257; (Arabic trans., Cairo 1962, p.157); Fr. Krenkow, The book of Strife, I.C., III, pp. 561-68.



of their own learned natives and not all that were written have survived. Speaking of 'Umān, for example, Brockelmann justly states that its internal conditions remained unknown to the rest of the Islamic world until the 11th century, so that he is only able to find names of authors from that time onwards.<sup>1</sup>

It is worth noting that some local histories of cities or provinces are by no means annals but biographies of prominent people who lived or visited the city or the province concerned. Typical examples of that are the History of Baghdād by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, History of Isfahān by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī and History of Damascus by Ibn 'Asākir. From these works sporadic historical information can be extracted from a mass of irrelevant data by which it is buried.

1. The local history of the greatest importance for the study of this period is Tārīkh al-Mauṣil of Abū Zakariyya Yazīd b. Muḥammad b. Iyās b. al-Qāsim al-Azdī (d.334/945). Its only extant part is volume two, which comprises of 361 fols., and covers the period from the year 101 A.H. to 224 A.H. The manuscript utilized in this study is that of the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.<sup>2</sup>

Although, as its title indicates, the work is a local history, it deals nevertheless with the whole history of the Muslim empire in a

---

<sup>1</sup>Brockelmann, op.cit., Supp., III, p.1297.

<sup>2</sup>Arbury, Catalogue of Arabic and Persian..., Vol. 1, p.11; A. Ḥabība, A study on Abu Zakariya's work..., Ph. D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1965.

chronological order. It has been ranged among the local histories because the events outside Mosul or the Jazīra area are only treated in detail when they are, in some way or another, relevant to Mosul. He proceeds in the annalistical manner arranging his material according to the years with headings and topics. He quotes his authorities as often as Tabarī if not more than him. They are written works, traditions handed down by chains of transmitters and accounts of living eye witnesses. He quotes for example al-Madā'inī, al-Haytham b. 'Ady, Ahmad b. Zuhayr, Abū Miṣhar al-Sindī and Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ. Although al-Azdī was not pronouncedly partisan in his Tārīkh al-Mauṣil his affection for the 'Alids is discernible.<sup>1</sup> However, he was right when he described his book as follows:

« .. ولم اعمل هذا الكتاب من كتاب معمول مؤلف اعمدت فيه على امر الموصل  
خاصة وانما جمعت من كتب شتى وقد ذكرت ما وجدت ولم اعدل عن الصدق »

His is one of the fullest accounts on the history of Mosul and the region of the Jazīra during the early 'Abbāsīd period. He fully describes the decisive battle of al-Zāb. He gives a most pathetic and dramatic picture of the tragic massacre of Moṣul perpetuated by the governor Yahya b. Muḥammad in 133 A.H. We owe to him the complete text of official letters such as the Aman given by al-Manṣūr to his uncle 'Abdallah b. 'Alī, documents written by both Abū 'l 'Abbās and al-Manṣūr conferring estates on Arab tribal chiefs in Mosul in recognition

<sup>1</sup> Tārīkh al-Mauṣil, fols. 206, 171, 167, 158.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 217.

of services rendered in quelling Marwān's resistance and a letter from al-Mahdī to a Kharijite rebel 'Abd al-Salām al-Yashkurī. Besides the work is also valuable for this study as it reveals the motivation of the early 'Abbāsīd caliphs and how they made use of tribal antagonism to rule by weakening the tribal hilf, i.e. alliance.

Tārīkh al-Mauṣil is complementary to the sporadic information of Tabarī and Ya'qūbī in that it provides detailed accounts on Kharijite and other risings in the Jazīra and even other districts of the empire. It is particularly in these details that Ibn al-Athīr is indebted to al-Azdī. He also relates events of general importance such as the rebellion of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm in Syria, the 'Alid revolts in the Ḥijāz and Baḡra, enlarging on the support given to Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, the Ḥasanids, by religious circles. He also supplies information on circles of traditionists in Moṣul and other cities.

It is difficult to account for the neglect of this so useful work by contemporary or late historians, some of whom, such as Ibn al-Athīr, quote from him without even mentioning his name. It has been suggested that the ruling circles and their associates boycotted the work due to its anti-'Abbāsīd attitude.<sup>1</sup> It is, however, also possible that the author who lived in Moṣul never

---

<sup>1</sup>Ḥabība, op.cit., p.27.

came into contact with those in power who consequently disregarded his work. Moreover, although markedly non-partisan in his accounts he accused the 'Abbāsids in connection with the massacre of Moṣul of being non-Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

2. The chronicle ascribed to Dionysius of Tell Mahré. He was the monophysite patriarch of Tell Mahré in 816 A.D.<sup>2</sup> His work which is one of the few contemporary still extant works, deals specifically with the conditions of the Jazīra in that period. Originally written in Syriac it is a local chronicle chronologically arranged. The framework is divided not only by years in question but also by headings referring to the incidents described. He seems to have been the eye-witness of the tremendous upheaval which was the aftermath<sup>3</sup> of the 'Abbāsīd revolution. The rather gloomy picture he gives of the conditions of life of the people of the Jazīra is preceded by the following statement:

"We propose to tell everything and to transmit its memory to those who will come after us in the world so that they should have a memory of the burden under which their ancestors were bowed and take care lest they themselves should be oppressed."<sup>4</sup>

However, his work must be approached with caution for his hostility towards the Muslim central régime induces him to make several sweeping statements. It is often noticed that local historians express anti-central

<sup>1</sup> Tārīkh al-Mauṣil, fol. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Segal, Syriac chronicles., in Historians of the Middle East, pp. 253f. C. Cahen, fiscalé, propriété..., Arabica, 1964. J. B. Chabott, Chronique de Denys de Tell-Mahré, introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Although Dionysius's chronicle is not an apocalyptic work it, somehow, had the same purposes of apocalypses. These purposes were as Professor Lewis maintains "To console the oppressed with hopes of imminent triumph, to justify the ways of God to men by showing that their sufferings were  
(cont.)

government sympathies and side with local rebels exposing the grievances which led to their rebellions. This tendency is traced in some of the accounts of al-Azdī, Dionysius, the author of Tārīkh-i Sīstān and al-Narshakhī.

It is rather interesting to compare Tārīkh al-Maṣīl and the chronicle of Dionysius of Tel Mahré. They both describe the last battle fought by Marwān II and the subsequent turbulent situation in the Jazīra caused by the unruly tribal elements and Kharijites as well as by the misrule and oppressive taxation imposed by the central régime. They both agree that it was heavy taxation that compelled some of the population to leave their villages and cities. Dionysius gives more details and somehow exaggerates the persecution and stigmatization of Christians. They both argue that al-'Abbās b. Muḥammad was one of the best governors of the Jazīra, while Mūsa b. Muṣ'ab treated the people very harshly. They both give some information on the confrontation with the Byzantines. However Dionysius is more concerned with the economic and social conditions of the Jazīra while al-Azdī puts more stress on the political history although remarks on the economy of the district do occur. Dionysius is strictly locally orientated while al-Azdī has a wider horizon. Dionysius' accounts teem with lengthy quotations from the Bible and apocalyptic prophecies, which not only cause confusion but also obscure the causation not arbitrary but part of a divinely ordained scheme of things." (B. Lewis, "An apocalyptic vision...", B.S.O.A.S., vol. 13, p.308)

<sup>4</sup>Dionysius, op.cit., Chabott trans., p.116.

of the events.

Other local historians vary in importance and relevance. On Syria Ibn al-'Adīm's Zubdat al-Ḥalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab, not limiting himself to Aleppo, deals with the local political conditions of the whole of al-Shām.<sup>1</sup> The earliest work on the history of Egypt is Kitāb Futūḥ Miṣr wa akhbārāha by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/871). He was a traditionist by profession and always quotes his sources, whether oral or written.<sup>2</sup> Al-Kindī's (d.350/961) Kitāb al-Wulāt wa 'l Qudāt covers the 'Abbāsīd period till almost the middle of the 4th century. The most celebrated and relevant local work on Egypt is Maqrīzī's (d. 845/1441-2) Khiṭaṭ. It contains various kinds of information on governors, local revolts, the attitude of the Dhimmīs towards the new régime and a chapter on religious sects. Abū 'l Maḥāsin b. Taghribaldī's (d.874/1469) Nujūm is mainly concerned with Egypt from the Arab conquest. However like Abū Zakariya he gives information on other general political events which occurred in Ifriqiyya, Jazīra, Khurasān etc. That is why this work has been in preference to others the object of attention of scholars.<sup>3</sup>

The best relevant works on the early Islamic history of the Yemen and Ifriqiyya are al-Khazraǵī's al-Kifāya and Ibn 'Adhārī's al-Bayān al-Maghrib fī Akhbār al-Andalus wa'l Maghrib. The latter starts

<sup>1</sup>Starting from al-Awzā'ī (d. 157 A.H.) who is said to have written a book on the history of Syria many authors wrote on the local history of Syria or one of its cities. Many of these works are either lost or still in form of manuscript. (For the origin and development of the local Syrian histories see S. Dahan's article in Historians of the Middle East, pp. 108-117; S. Dahan, Al-A'laq al-Khaṭira.. (introduction).

<sup>2</sup>See R. Brunschvig, "Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥ'akam..." A.I.E.O., Tome VI, 1942-47, pp. 108-155.

<sup>3</sup>See preface of the English translation of part one., by W. Popper.

with the Arab conquest and finishes with the year 667 A.H. The author depends either on written sources such as Tabarī, Bakrī, Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn Ḥazm and al-Quḍā'ī, or on authentic narrators.<sup>1</sup> On 'Umān there is an important work entitled Kashf al-ghumma written in the 18th century by Shaykh Sirḥān b. Sa'īd. This work was copied for the most part literally by another local historian called Salīl b. Razīq.<sup>2</sup> The latter being a fanatic Ibaḍite, disregards many facts which might discredit the Kharijite Imāms. By comparing the accounts of both works with the accounts of another local historian, namely al-Salimī<sup>3</sup>, as well as other general chroniclers, one can obtain a clear picture of 'Umān in the period concerned insofar as this is possible.<sup>4</sup> Among the comprehensive local histories of the Ḥijāz are al-Samhūdī's Wafā' al-Wafa.. and al-Azraqī's Akhbār Makka. They are, however, informative on topography rather than history.<sup>5</sup>

Several local histories deal with the eastern provinces. Prominent among them are al-Qummi's Tārīkh-i Qumm, the Persian translation of part of a lost Arabic original containing scanty political information especially on 'Alid figures. However, its greatest importance lies in the information on revenue and taxation; Ibn Iṣfandiyyār's History of Tabarīstan, the anonymous Tārīkh-i Sīstān and Narshakhi's Tārīkh-i Bukhāra<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Adhārī, Leiden, 1948, vol. I, pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Imams., trans. by G. P. Bodger, London, 1871.

<sup>3</sup> Tuḥfat al-A'yān.., Cairo 1961.

<sup>4</sup> On the local history of 'Umān see L.V. Vaglieri, L'Imamato..., pp. 247-50; S.B. Miles, The countries and tribes of the Persian Gulf, Vol. I, p.16. This is how the local Ibaḍite historian al-Salimī attempts to account for the lack of historical writings on 'Umān:

all of these are of certain limited importance to this study. They provide detailed or complementary accounts on political events which occurred in the provinces. Among them are: the revolt of Ṭabaristān under al-Manṣūr and al-Mahdī, the revolt of Sharīk al-Mahrī and al-Muqanna' in Khurasān, the Kharijite rising of Ḥamza and his bold letter to al-Rashīd. Considering that early general historians such as Tabarī or Ya'qūbī give only general outline of incidents in remote provinces, the accounts of local historians supply the complementary detail. Although some of the local historians are prejudiced against the central régime one can obtain a fairly close idea by comparing the accounts of both general and local historians. One should, however, be on one's guard against their anti-'Abbāsīd bias. With few exceptions, it should be admitted, the information supplied by local historians is rarely of the kind to satisfy the curiosity of a student of history or requirements of modern research.

#### Literary works

The most important literary works relevant to this period are the works of Ibn al-Muqaffa', al-Jāhīz, Ibn Qutabya and Abū 'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī and finally the Diwāns of celebrated early 'Abbāsīd poets.

(cont.)

د... إذ لم يكن التاريخ من فضل الصحاب بل كان اشتغالهم باقامة العدل وتأثير العلم الرشيد وبيان مآلهم من بيانه للناس اخذوا بالاهم فالهم فذلك لا تجد لهم سيرة حقة ولا تاريخاً شاملاً.

(see Tuhfat al-A'yān, vol. I, p.4)

<sup>5</sup> On the local history of the Hijāz see F. Wüstenfeld, Die chroniken der stadt Mekka, Leipzig 1859; S. al-'Alī, "al-Mu'alafāt al-'Arabiyya 'an al-Madīna wa 'l Hijāz", B.C.A., 1962, pp. 118-157.

<sup>6</sup> See R. N. Frye, "City Chronicles", Avicenna Commemoration Volume, 1956, pp. 89-92.



Ibn al-Muqaffa' Abū Muhammad 'Abdallah b. Rozbih<sup>1</sup> (d. 139/756) was a Persian by origin and a Manichian by religion until he was converted to Islam late in his life after the advent of the 'Abbāsids. He was one of the most celebrated writers in Arabic prose adab. He admired Persian civilization and culture which he regarded as an ideal to be followed by the society of his own time. His most important works are Risāla fī 'l Ṣahāba and al-Adab-al-Saghīr-wa-<sup>al</sup> Adab al-Kabīr. In his Risala which was addressed to al-Manṣūr he gives the latter advice on the right attitude of the ruler towards various groups of society and army. It is most revelatory of the politics of the time. It also points out to the importance of the rôle played by the Ṣahāba of the caliph, most of whom were Arabs with great tribal followings, in the politics of the day and gives precepts on polity and ethics. Interesting is the advice to the ruling class to seek the help of the people of knowledge, the 'Ulama, in running the affairs of the state. It was due to these and many other daring ideas rather than to his alleged Zandaqa that his death is to be ascribed.

Al-Jāhiz Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Bahr (d. 255/868)<sup>2</sup> is the most fertile writer of the early 'Abbāsīd epoch. Almost contemporary with the early 'Abbāsīd caliphs his works reflect the ups and downs of the 'Abbāsīd

---

<sup>1</sup>Goiten, "Turning point...", I.C., 1949; Sourdell, "La Biographie d'Ibn d. Muqaffa'", Arabica, 1954, pp. 307-323; Dawūd, A comparative study..., Ph.D. thesis, 1964,

<sup>2</sup>E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Djāhiz).

régime after the great revolution in Khurasān. He touches on any and every topic he likes and is brilliant in presenting his arguments. His works deal with Adab, Mu'tazila theology, sects and politico-religious polemics but his favourite subject was the Imāma, in the treatment of which he shows sympathy for the 'Abbāsids. He attacked bitterly the Shī'a, the pro-Umayyad Nābita and the Shu'ubiyya. He tried to represent the achievement of the 'Abbāsids as superior to those of the Umayyads, but goes too far in describing the bloody massacre of Mosul by Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad as an act of bravery and valour. Intelligent information relevant to the political history of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty is found scattered in his books and essays.

Ibn Qutayba's al-Shi'r wa'l shu'arā', Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 296/908) Tabaqāt al-Shu'arā', and Abū 'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's (d. 356/966-7) Aghānī are of great relevance to the period. The first two deal briefly with the 'Abbāsīd plots among others. The third, though nominally dealing with poetry, gives numerous accounts of political events among them on the struggle for the succession, and manifold intrigues and rivalries between various political groupings in the court. Despite Iṣbahānī's Umayyad descent he was 'Alid in sympathy. He lived under the patronage of the Shi'ite Buyids especially the wazīr al-Muhallabī. He was also welcomed by Sayf al-Dawla to whom it is said he presented his work Kitāb al-Aghānī. As to the question of the authenticity of his accounts he often gives his authorities which enables us to check on the information he provides. Heaven sometimes does not depend on his source of information

but goes further to investigate the matter by himself and records his own view about it. He calls the 'Abbāsīd state Dawlat Ahl Khurasān. An exhaustive critical study of the early 'Abbāsīd poets and the impact of the politics of the period on them has not yet been made. Nevertheless the diwāns of al-Kumayt, Abū Dulāma Zand b. al-Jawn, Bashshār b. Burd, Di'bil al-Khuzā'ī, Muslim b. al-Walīd and others contain verses relating to various political events such as the crushing of rebellions, campaigns against the Byzantines, the influence and power of individual wazirs or courtiers, the struggle between different political groupings, and the continued existence of Mufakharāt between different tribes. They are also of help in tracing the development of the 'Abbāsīd claim to the caliphate and of their conflict with the 'Alids.

#### Geneological and biographical works

Apart from certain works such as Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqāt, Balādhurī's Ansāb, Ibn al-Kalbī's works, Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ's Tabaqāt, Kashshī's and Najāshī's Rijāls, al-Kh aṭīb's Tārīkh Baghdād, Ibn 'Asākir's Tārīkh Dimashq, Ibn Khalikān's Wafayāt and Dhahabī's works, the bulk of geneological and Sunnite or Shi'ite biographical literature is too late to be of much value for this thesis. Tedious work is necessary to disentangle the few historical informations from the mass of irrelevant data. What is worse these informations are copied from earlier sources and there are very few fresh details or comments.

As for early genealogical works they are important in that they not only contain information on personal data of many of the personalities of the early 'Abbāsid period, but also provide few interesting lines on their political or social career. The fact that works of Ibn al-Kalbī and his son Hishām as well as Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī and Balādhurī are early works adds weight to their short notes on each personality and permits checking of the information found in later sources. It is from these works that one derives vital information on facts such as the presence of a great number of Arab sahāba at 'Abbāsid court, or special favours such as the generous 'ata by al-Mahdī on the people of the Ḥijāz. They are also helpful in clearing up the confusion still reigning on the issue of the elimination of the Umayyads by the 'Abbāsids, the cruelty of which is somehow exaggerated by many sources.

Al-Balādhurī's Ansāb al-Ashraf is a historical work arranged according to genealogical criteria. Events of historical importance are fitted into the genealogical framework so that names of persons provide the headings under which there are topical headings and sub-headings. Thus the 'Abbāsid propaganda is dealt with under Muḥammad b. 'Alī, the 'Abbāsid revolution under Ibrāhīm the Imām and Abū 'l 'Abbās, the rising of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī in Syria under his name. The 'Alid risings of 145 A.H. in the Ḥijāz and Baṣra under the names of Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, the sons of 'Abdallah al-Mahdī. Under the name of Abū 'l 'Abbās there are subheadings such as:

أمر يمام بن إبراهيم ، أمر الضيائي ، أمر ابن هبيرة وقتله ...

while under the caliphate of al-Mansūr there are subheadings such as:

أمرابي داود خالد بن إبراهيم ، أمر سديف ، أمر ابن المقفع ، أمرابي سلم .

Balādhurī quotes numerous authorities, among them al-Madā'inī, 'Umar b. Shabba, al-Haytham b. 'Ady, Abū Mas'ūd al-Kūfī, Hishām b. al-Kalbī, Abū 'Ubayda and al-Wāqidī. He often quotes sources anonymously and uses sentences such as:

حدثني بعض الراشدين ، حدثني جماعة من المشايخ ، حدثني بعض اصحابنا ، قالوا ، حدثت ، وقال غير اليتيم .

He uses قالوا many times when speaking of 'Alid revolts, probably because the transmitters did not wish their names to be known. He also sometimes quotes his main authority such as Madā'inī adding عن شيخه . This is due to the fact that the authorities of the quoted narrator were so well known at that time that an explicit mention of the whole chain is considered superfluous. He also sometimes combines two or more versions in one statement, in which case he cites the authorities at the beginning. Some of his combined accounts however are summarized.

On the early 'Abbāsīd period especially on the reigns of the first two caliphs, Ansāb al-Ashraf is invaluable; its accounts are most helpful as a check on other sources when it is a question of events such as the 'Alid revolts. It is also eminently useful in that it sheds light on some too brief and vague accounts of Tabarī such as those on the revolts of 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī and Khālid b. Ibrāhīm

al-Dhuhlī in Khurasān. It is only after consulting sources such as Ansāb al-Ashraf and Tārīkh al-Maṣūl that one realizes how summary and sometimes confused Tabarī's annals are.

Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb's (d. 245/859-6) Asmā' al-Muḡhtālīn min al-Ashraf<sup>1</sup> deals with a large number of prominent figures who were assassinated in the disturbed transitional period which is here our concern. The fact that the author lived in the early 3rd century A.H. adds to the value of this and other works written by him, such as his "miscellanies" known as al-Muḥabbar. Some of the topics discussed here have a bearing on the period in question, e.g. al-'Abbās's pre-Islamic rôle, the names of the 'Abbāsīd Naqībs and accounts of sporadic political events.

Unfortunately for our knowledge of history Ibn Sa'd's (d. 230/844/5) Tabaqāt only gives detailed information on pious and religious figures, while disregarding personalities who though important politicians or military men, had more worldly leanings. What renders the historical information found in the Tabaqāt valuable is that it is one of the earliest biographical works. Ibn Sa'd gives us an idea of the short-lived cordial 'Alīd-'Abbāsīd understanding which followed the 'Abbāsīd victory, when the new régime was referred to as Dawlat Banī Ḥāshim and their partisans as Shī'a. He also confirms the authenticity of the Waṣīyya of Abū Ḥāshim to Muḥammad b. 'Alī. Other valuable though

---

<sup>1</sup>ed. by A. Ḥarūn, Nawādir al-Makḥḥūḥāt, Cairo, 1954.

scanty information on the Sahāba of the caliphs and the Quḍat who were known for their piety could be found . . .

But the most important asset of the work is that it provides one of the earliest informations on Arab settlers in Khurasān which proves the existence of Arab settlers in villages around Merw. Fortunately there was a proportion of religious figures among those early settlers, for Ibn Sa'd mentions no one except pious men. Had they only been warriors and statesmen, the scanty information on early Arab settlers in the villages of Khurasān might have been completely ignored by the author. Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ's Ṭabaqāt deals with the Sahāba of the prophet and Tābi'īn whose names are arranged according to the cities and provinces they lived in or visited with traditions they transmitted from the Prophet. He seems to have finished the Ṭabaqāt in 326 A.H. shortly before his death. Due to its brevity, the work has little to offer on the political history of the early 'Abbāsīd period.

Al-Khayyāṭ al-Baghdadī's (463/1071) Tārīkh Baghdād is of special importance for it contains in its first volume accounts on the foundation of Baghdad by al-Manṣūr. Besides Ya'qūbī's Buldān and Tabarī's Tārīkh it is the best source on the topography of Baghdad. Hajjī Khalīfa<sup>1</sup> considers it chronologically the second work dealing with Baghdad, while Ibn al-Nadīm quotes, in the Fihrist<sup>2</sup>, three earlier works, the first being Faḍā'il Baghdād by Yazdajard b. Maḥmand of which

---

<sup>1</sup> Hajjī Khalīfa, Kashf al-Zunūn, vol. I, p.288. The first being Tayfur's Tārīkh Baghdād (op.cit., vol. 2, p.142).

<sup>2</sup> Fihrist, vol. I, pp. 129,146.

only a few pages are preserved; the second al-Sārakhsī's Paḍā'il Baghdād wa Akhbārha, which is no longer extant; the third Ṭayfūr's Tārīkh Baghdād, only a small part of which dealing with the political history is still available. However after dealing with the topography of Baghdād al-Khaṭīb proceeds to give a biographical data on all important personalities who visited, lived in or even passed through Baghdad. He arranges his biographies alphabetically, and usually quotes his authorities among which there are Wakī', Naftawayh and Tanūkhī. Information could be found on different personalities who played prominent rôles during the early 'Abbāsīd period. This work was held in high esteem by learned circles of the time, and led Ibn Khallikān to say "Had he written nothing but his history, it would have been sufficient for his reputation".

Ibn 'Asākir's (d. 571/1176) Tārīkh dimashq, a huge work which according to al-Munajjid comprised 80 volumes. The first deals with the virtues of al-Shām<sup>1</sup> and its conquest by the Arabs; the second is devoted to the topography of Damascus and also contains the beginning of the biographies. But Ibn 'Asākir in his biographies does not limit himself to people of local origin or visitors of Damascus, but includes all Syrians and important visitors to the province. As a traditionist he paid a good deal of attention to the chain of authorities. As a result the book is rather tedious and monotonous. In its arrangement

---

<sup>1</sup>For Ibn al-'Adīm's Bughya al-ṭalab, see Historians of the Middle East, pp. 112 ff.



as well as the emphasis put on topographical data, Tārīkh Dimashq resembles its predecessor Tārīkh Baghdād. Being a late historian, Ibn 'Asākir uses a large variety of sources. He made use, for instance, of Madā'inī, Ibn Sa'd, Jahshiyārī, Tabarī, al-Khaṭīb, Bayhaqī and others. He occasionally quotes contradictory statements regarding a certain event or personality.

It contains useful though scanty information on the early 'Abbāsīd period gathered from different earlier works, some of which have not been preserved. However some of his accounts on the 'Abbāsīd revolution are legendary and sometimes convey the anti-'Abbāsīd version of the events.

Ibn Khallikān's (d. 681/1282) Wafayāt al-A'yān is arranged according to the alphabetical order because in the words of the author himself, "It is easier than arranging it according to the years".<sup>1</sup> He deals with all sorts of people and his method is to cite several sources on each personality he includes in his work. His material is well-selected from carefully vetted sources. For example his authorities on Yazīd b. Hubayra the renowned governor of Wāṣīt are: Madā'inī, KHalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, Ibn Qutayba, Tabarī, Ibn 'Asākir and the Hamāsa of Abū Tamām. He made a great use of local as well as general histories of Damascus. His entries are coherent, concise and convey a fair

---

<sup>1</sup>Wafayat, I, pp. 2f, Bulāq, 1882.

picture of the person concerned. However, he sometimes attributes information to sources such as Tabarī which are not to be found in the actual work. In view of the meticulous care with which he treats his sources, it could be assumed that the works in question were originally larger than in the form in which they are now known. Maqrīzī's al-Muqaffa is similar to its main source of information Ansāb al-Ashraf in that it is history arranged in a biographical framework. This is at least true of the 'Abbāsids. It contains mention of many 'Abbāsīd personalities such as Abū 'l 'Abbās, al-Manṣūr and 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī. On al-Manṣūr, for example, al-Maqrīzī more or less copies or summarizes Ansāb al-Ashraf. Maqrīzī rarely adduces the entire chain of authorities but only mentions prominent ones such as Madā'ini, al-Haytham b. 'Ady, al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī etc. He also provides sub-headings in the margin of the page.

As to the Shi'ite biographies, al-Kashshī's (d. end of the 4th C./ 10th A.D.) and al-Najāshī's (d. 450/1058-9), Rijāl are valuable to this study. Kashshī's Rijāl is the earliest and the best of them. It is a collection of traditions about the doctrines and personalities of the Shi'a movement in the early formative period. It is more valuable when it speaks of "Shi'ite" partisans and their activities and circles round the Imām rather than when it deals with the Imām himself as it relates accounts which are not mentioned by other Shi'ite works. That

is the reason for certain reservations with which the work is looked upon by other Shi'ite authors such as al-Ṭūsī and al-Najāshī, a fact which renders the work even more valuable and trustworthy from the historical viewpoint.

The militant and activist 'Alids, i.e. the Zaydids and the Ḥasanids, are mentioned in detail in historical works. Less considered by the chronicles are the Ḥusaynids who adopted an acquiescent policy. As a result, for information on the Ḥusaynids one has to depend mainly on Shi'ite biographies which are late and of little historical value as factual information, especially on the Imāms, is buried under a mass of legendary and semi-legendary accounts. The 'Alid Imāms emerge from the description given here uniformly as virtuous, bold and full of initiative. What makes matters worse is that some late Sunnī writers<sup>1</sup> accept these recorded Shi'ite accounts on the Imāms such as Ja'far al-Ṣādiq unquestioningly, so that such Imāms are semi-mythical rather than real persons. Abū 'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's Meqātil al-Ṭalibiyīn wa-Akhbaruhum occupies a special place in this category. It deals with the Talibite "martyrs" who were killed in one way or another and ends with the seventieth martyr who died in the reign of al-Muqtadir 908-932. Although Iṣbahānī was pro-'Alid (Zaydite)<sup>2</sup> by tendency he does not seem to be biased in his historical accounts as he quotes his authorities and gives more than one version of

---

<sup>1</sup> Such as Abū Nu'aym's Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'.

<sup>2</sup> E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Iṣbahānī); Brockelmann, op.cit., vol. I, pp. 152-153, supp. I, p. 225.

the event. Nevertheless one should be cautious in dealing with his work especially when dealing with Ḥasanid risings of the Ḥijāz and Baṣra or the battle of Fakhkh.

#### Heresiographies and sectarian works

Most of heresiographic and sectarian sources have only been accessible for a score of years or so. They were, therefore, not yet available to the historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Most of these works are late and mainly concerned with the sects, their doctrines, their development, divisions and subdivisions. They concentrate on the enumeration of the heresies, the classification of their errors and their subsequent refutation. They are mostly prejudiced in their approach. Heresiographers such as Ibn Ḥazm (d. 459/1064) who state that he does not want to use against the heretics other arguments than those derived from their own explicit statements are rare indeed. Earlier works such as the Shi'ite Sa'd b. 'Abdallah al-Ash'arī (d. 301/913),<sup>2</sup> Kitāb al-Maqālāt wa'l Firaq, the Shi'ite Nawbakhtī's (d. 310/922) Firaq al-Shi'a, the Sunnite al-Ash'arī's (d. 321/933) Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn, Molātī's (d. 377/987-8) Kitāb al-Tanbīh and Baghdādī's al-Farq bayna'l Firaq.

<sup>1</sup> See the remarks of Moscatti, "Per una storia Dell'antica Sī'a," R.S.O., 1955, pp. 251-267; idem, "Studi su Abu Muslim", II, Rendiconti Lincei, 1949, 474-495. See also the review of Ibn al-Murtada's (d. 840/1437) Tabaqāt al-Mu'tazila in B.S.O.A.S., XXV, 1962, pp. 347 f.

<sup>2</sup> Erroneously ascribed to Nawbakhtī, the work has been recently authenticated as the work of Sa'd al-Ash'arī by Dr. Mashkūr who points out how materially the Kitāb al-Maqālāt, which was composed after Nawbakhtī's Firaq al-Shi'a and relies on the latter as well as other authors, differ from Naubakhtī's work. In fact it contains much information not found in

contains items of historical information, but they are few and far between. They speak of the origins of the 'Abbāsīd party and its connection with the Hāshimīyya movement and show that the Kharijites of Khurasān made, for a period of time, common cause with the 'Abbāsīd da'wa. They refer to the support Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm the Ḥasanids as well as Abū 'l Kharrāb/<sup>found</sup>in the sectarian and religious movements. They point out that even though the Ḥusaynids were non-political in their tendencies, the activities of their extremist wing did not escape the keen and cautious eye of the 'Abbāsīds. Several revolutionary or extremist partisans of the Ḥusaynids were imprisoned or executed by the authorities. Most of the heresiographies are written by Sunnī writers, caution therefore is indicated in accepting their data on "heterodox" sects. Most of them tend to forget, for example, the extremist phase the 'Abbāsīd propaganda went through before the 'Abbāsīds finally re-defined themselves as orthodox, and accuse only Khidāsh or Abū Muslim or others of having expressed extremist ideas.

As only to be expected in late sources there is a certain amount of confusion about personal or place names. They also contain some remarks which can only be termed as frivolous such as the attribution of pro-'Alid tendencies to Abū Muslim or the entirely unsupported assertion that he offered the caliphate to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Abū Muslim's

---

(cont.) Nawbakhtī. Sa'ad al-Ash'arī was one of the great Shi'ite traditionists. His method is typical of the traditionists in that he quotes unlike Nawbakhtī, chains of transmission and also often refers to his sources. Many trustworthy Shi'ite authors such as al-Kashshī and al-Ṭūsī rely on Sa'ad al-Ash'arī and quote his book.

environment and his upbringing might suggest these possibilities but there is nothing in early authentic accounts which would point to Abū Muslim 'Alid sympathies. The offer of the caliphate to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq can only be regarded as an invention to enhance al-Ṣādiq's prestige.

### Dhimmi sources

The period of our concern is mentioned by a number of contemporary, semi-contemporary and late Dhimmi sources. The contemporary and semi-contemporary ones comprise works and treatises written by Dionysius, Severus Ibn al-Muqaffa, Timothy the Nestorian patriarch and Rabbi Simon ben Yaḥyā; among the late chronicles are those written by Michael the Syrian and Bar-Hebraeus and others.

Dionysius's chronicle has already been dealt with in the section on local history.

The text of the Muhāwara<sup>1</sup> i.e. discussion between the patriarch Timothy (d. 208/823A.D.) and the caliph al-Mahdī is one of the earliest Christian polemics against the Muslims. It throws some light on al-Mahdī's attitude towards the Christians for Timothy praises the kindness of the caliph towards him.

The "prayer" of Rabbi Simon ben Yaḥyā (2nd century A.D.) is one of the interesting Jewish apocalypses. As Professor B. Lewis

---

<sup>1</sup>See al-Mashriq, 1923, pp. 359-374, 408-418.

maintains,<sup>1</sup> part of it was written during the wave of Messianic hopes connected with the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. It relates events which occurred during the 'Abbāsīd upheaval and in its aftermath, especially in the reigns of the first two 'Abbāsīd caliphs, such as Marwān II's death, the violent death of Abū Muslim, the Messianic risings in Syria and the Ḥijāz against Abū'l 'Abbās and Abū Ja'far. Although one cannot expect accuracy in what is after all an apocalyptic and not historical narrative, it is felt that several of its accounts which deal with the period concerned contain a certain element of historicity.

Severus Ibn al-Muqaffa's (d. end of the 4th C. A.H.) History of the Coptic patriarchs of Alexandria deals with political events in Egypt against the background of successive patriarchs who headed the Coptic community. Nevertheless it contains details complementary to early Muslim accounts and illuminating remarks on the political events and fiscal conditions in early 'Abbāsīd Egypt. Thus he relates that the new 'Abbāsīd régime exempted the Coptic community of Bashmūr from taxes for the year of victory (131/132 A.H.) and gave them rewards where they had given help against Marwān II,<sup>2</sup> but after a short period, fiscal burdens became heavy again. His narrative is the more important as it depends on certain contemporary Coptic and Greek documents preserved in churches and monasteries.

---

<sup>1</sup>"An apocalyptic vision," B.S.O.A.S., vol. 13, 1951, p.310.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Coptic..., pp.188f, 197.

The chronicle of Michael the Syrian (d. 596/1199) though late, contains some fresh information especially on the persecution of the Christians by the 'Abbāsīd authorities in the reign of al-Mahdī. According to Michael the Syrian, some Christians were accused of heresy, but what is rather interesting is that their persecution is represented as part of the general persecution of Manicheans (Zandīqs).<sup>1</sup> However, this view may be to some extent exaggerated. He also gives some political details on the Arab-Byzantine conflict and comments on the life at the court in al-Mahdī's reign which is portrayed as luxurious and rather dissolute. Abū 'l Faraj Gregorius (d. 685/1268) has written two works on general history, the more important of which is in Syriac.<sup>2</sup> Here the author expresses himself freely and attacks 'Abbāsīd authorities, while he is more concise and restrained in his Arabic work.<sup>3</sup> His accounts are generally brief and give on certain events, such as the treatment of the Christians, merely summaries of corresponding passages in Michael the Syrian. For the later period, he depends on Ibn al-Athīr. Generally speaking, these authors being Dhimmīs could not but look upon the history of the Muslim state from an angle different from the Muslim authors.<sup>4</sup> The main stress is put on the somewhat exaggerated

---

<sup>1</sup> Chronique de Michel le Syrien, ed., J.B.Chabat, p.3; G. Vajda, Les Zindigs..., R.S.O., 1937-40, p.229.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. and Translated into English by W. Budge, The chronography of Gregory..., London, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-'Ibrī, Mukhtaṣar Tā' rīkh al-Duwal, ed. Saḥānī, 1890.

<sup>4</sup> On these Syriac chronicles Professor Segal says "In the Islamic period these chroniclers are no longer to be relied upon for a record of the major events of their times. They lived the separate life of



expression of the sufferings and hopes of their co-religionaries. Some of them, such as Dionysius of Tell Mahré who is favourably disposed towards the Byzantines and attacks the equivocal rôle played by the Armenians who occasionally informed the Muslim army of the tactics and dispositions of the Byzantine army,<sup>1</sup> or Bar Hebraeus who hails the Mongol invasion of the caliphate.<sup>2</sup> Despite this partiality as well as other defects such as vagueness of events or distortion of the names and relationships between prominent figures, their accounts are worth considering as they are either complementary or occasionally supply new information, especially on their own localities and denominations.

#### Other late historians

Generally speaking, late historians such as Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn al-Tiqṭaqa, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Maqrīzī, al-Dhahabī, Maqdisī al-Suyūfī, Ibn al-Jawzī and al-Qalqashandī depend on early sources. Their accounts on the early 'Abbāsīd period are more often than not summary. They are more or less free adaptations of earlier accounts and are full of misread names of persons and places.<sup>3</sup>

---

(cont.) a minority community, isolated from the courts of kings and princes by political inferiority, passive and uninterested - even disillusioned - spectators of the passage of events. (See Historians of the Middle East, p.251).

<sup>1</sup>Dionysius, op.cit., p.102.

<sup>2</sup>Notice the great interest he has shown in the history of the Mongols (Budge, op.cit., pp. 473 ff.)

<sup>3</sup>To avoid lengthy references in footnotes, late sources are not quoted unless necessary.

Bal'amīs' (d. 363/972) Persian Chronicle<sup>1</sup> is more or less a summary of Tabarī's Tārīkh. However, he occasionally gives some comments or cites accounts which are not found in Tabarī, such as that on the revolt of 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī in Khrasān. Ibn al-Athīr too follows the accounts of Tabarī with certain deviations mostly disregarding the chains of authorities. Whenever he finds Tabarī's version lacking he adds information from other sources such as Abū Zakiriya al-Azdī on e.g. the Kharijite revolts in Jazīra and on other political events especially on the western part of the empire. An anonymous manuscript of the 4th century called Ghurar al-Siyār differs little from other late works on this subject. However, the author quotes a fourth letter written in reply to al-Manṣūr's second letter by Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya which is not mentioned by earlier historians and can well have been the work of later pro-Alid narrators and was inspired by party politics.<sup>2</sup>

As the author himself states under 560 A.H., "As I have been long absent from Irāk, I cannot be sure of the [authenticity of the] news from there, so that I could write it down", the anonymous Tārīkh-idawlati'Abbāsiyya was probably written in the early 2nd half of the sixth century A.H. Being a late historian the anonymous author finds it difficult to

---

<sup>1</sup>French translation by M.H.Zotenberg, London 1867.

<sup>2</sup>Similar documents are not unfrequently found especially in works of late historians. See for example parts of the bulky correspondence allegedly exchanged between al-Manṣūr and Abū Muslim in Mugaff, fol. 94a, Aynī, fol. 266; Bidāya, fol. 10, p.69, see also Traini, "La corrispondenza...", A.I.U.O.N., p.1., footnote 1.

distinguish between the rôle played by Muḥammad b. 'Alī and Ibrāhīm the Imām, Abū Muslim and Abū Salama. Moreover he exaggerates the rôle played by Abū Muslim and attributes to him a part in every crucial decision.<sup>1</sup> It also accuses Abū Muslim of pro-Fāṭimid tendencies, and regards this as the main reason for his execution by al-Manṣūr. The confirmation of the suspicion that it was al-Khayzurān and her entourage who conspired to kill al-Ḥādī is also interesting. What detracts from the importance of the work is that the author does not quote his authorities and his sympathies are clearly with the 'Abbāsids.<sup>2</sup> Although Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa (d. 701/1301) is late his accounts in al-Fakhrī are coherent and his remarks on the 'Abbāsid régime and the charter of the caliphs are intelligent. Certain veiled hints he gives when speaking of obscure political events such as the murder of Abū Salama and the mysterious death of the caliph al-Ḥādī are indicative of the atmosphere of intrigue and treachery which prevailed at the court. Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa was one of the few historians to realize the impact of Kharijism in the early

---

<sup>1</sup> Anonymous, fols. 10b, 11b, 12b, 13a.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fols. 1a, 9b. Though the work is, to all intents and purposes, an Arabic work, the title has Turkish connotations and has apparently been added later, especially as the script of the title differs from that of the text proper, unless the author himself was of Turkish origin but wrote, as usual, in Arabic. The circumstance that the manuscript contains a tradition ascribed to the Prophet to the effect that Turks would be among the supporters of the 'Abbāsids (fol. 9b) supports the latter opinion.

'Abbāsīd period. In his 'Ibar, though Ibn Khaldūn (d. 804/1406) follows Ibn al-Athīr, the work contains some fresh information and comments on the period in question. He relates, e.g., that Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī was executed by Abū Muslim because he protested against the assassination of Abū Salama, an account not confirmed by early sources though worth considering. It is remarkable that he calls the 'Abbāsīd state dawlat al-Shī'a. Ibn Khaldūn is more critical and objective in his Muqaddima. Characteristic of his insight is the realization that the Arabs played a predominant rôle in the early 'Abbāsīd state.

Al-Dhahabī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 748/1347) should be mentioned here as a mine of information on history and biography. His Duwal al-Islam and Tārīkh al-Islām al-Kabīr are worthy of note. Both are arranged in chronological order. The former is the only source to state that when Abū Muslim decided to return to Khurasān after the quarrel with al-Manṣūr he intended to instal an 'Alid caliph there. The latter is more comprehensive and valuable especially as al-Dhahabī quotes some of his authorities, Al-Nuwayrī<sup>1</sup> Shihāb 'l-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd 'l-Wahhāb (d. 732/1331-2), parts of whose encyclopaedic work, Nihāyat al-Arab..., are preserved in the B.N. One of them is entitled Akhbār man Nahaja fī Talab al-Khilāfa min al-Ṭālibiyīn fī Athnā' al-dawla al-'Abbāsiyya. He begins his treat-

---

<sup>1</sup> Brockelmann, op.cit., Supp. 1, p.590.

ment of the revolts with that of Muḥammad Dhū 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya and continues in chronological order until the 4th century A.H. The part which concerns the early 'Abbāsīd period is on fols. 1-27b. Another part speaks of the foundation of the Umayyad dynasty in Spain and the attempts of the early 'Abbāsīd caliphs to regain it. The only merit of his accounts is that it gives a coherent though brief picture of the events for it contains no new information; al-Nuwayrī relies on earlier sources such as Ṭabarī. Similar in character is al-Khazrajī's (d. 803/1400-1) al-'Asjad al-Masbūk which in its early Islamic part, deals only with the 'Alid risings against<sup>1</sup> the Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd authorities. However, Khazrajī's accounts are derived from earlier sources which are rarely referred to and have thus no special merit. A number of initial pages of the manuscript are missing, so that it begins with the rising of Zayd b. 'Alī which is followed by that of Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm the Ḥasanids. The pro-'Alid sympathisers of the author are obvious.

Al-Maqrīzī's Muntakhab al-Tadhkira is extant in a manuscript from in the B.N. It is in two parts, one containing brief biographical notes on each caliph and his reign according to the caliphs, and the other a history, according to chronological order. The manuscript comprises 165 fols. The events dealt with are selected and the accounts depend on earlier sources without quoting them. The fols. which con-

---

<sup>1</sup> F. Sayyid, Fihrist al-Makḥḥūḥat al-Muṣawara, vol. 3, p.212 (see the important footnote).

cern the 'Abbāsīd's early period are those from 80 to 138b. Maqrīzī starts the work by saying

”بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله طالق الهم وصيدها ... وجاعل الازمان بيننا دولاً  
وضراً متى يكون بعضاً لبعض عبراً ... وبعد فهذا كتاب انتخبته من كتابي  
المسمى بالذاكرة : فاقول اعلم ان ابلغ المواعظ التفكر في القرون السالفة  
والاعتبار بانقراض صل بعد صل وفناء قبيل اثر قبيل“

This proves that this work is a summary of a previous book of his, and that it was his aim to select anecdotes which are advisory and admonitory in character. Fresh and interesting remarks such as his comments on the personality of Muḥammad b. Abū 'l 'Abbās and that of al-Manṣūr by which he knew the nature of men occur in the work.

Maḥmūd al-'Aynī's (d. 895 A.H./1490 A.D.) Dawlat banī al-'Abbās wa 'l Tulūniyīn wa 'l Fāṭimiyyīn (208a fols.) contains a late but clear, coherent and interesting account of the 'Abbāsīd era. Al-'Aynī seems to have selected his material with the instinct of a historian. Moreover, his book is immensely readable. He quotes his sources which are either very early accounts or books composed by his predecessors. Among his authorities there are al-Haytham b. 'Ady, 'Umar b. Shabba, al-Mada'īnī, Muḥammad b. Sulayman al-Nawfalī and Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ as well as Balādhurī, Ṭabarī, Ṣūlī, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī and Ibn 'Asākir. He sometimes only says قال امر السير or قبيل etc. He has been quoted in this thesis as he utilizes sources such as Ibn 'Asākir, Ṣūlī and Balādhurī which are hitherto unpublished.

### Geographical works

Generally speaking these works describe the provinces in the time of their authors. However, bits of earlier historical information, remarks, or quotations of popular proverbs help to elucidate some issues such as the Arab settlement in the villages round Merw.<sup>1</sup> On the foundation of Baghdad and its early history, the geographical works with the exception of Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadānī either copy earlier sources or describe Baghdad as it was in their own times. It is for this reason that Ya'qūbī's Kitāb al-Buldān is the most valuable because it is the oldest source.<sup>2</sup> He himself stresses that his description is based on Baghdad as it actually was in the time of al-Manṣūr. However the geographers are not to be blamed for the lack of historical information; it was not their aim at all to write history.

### Numismatics and inscriptions

Early 'Abbāsīd caliphs did not inscribe their names on the coins. However, as the date of minting was recorded on the coins, they can be attributed to particular caliphs. In the transitional year of 132/749-50 both Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd coins were issued but an 'Abbāsīd coin is recognizable by the Quranic verse inscribed on it

"قل لا اِلهَ اِلاَّ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ اِمْرٌ اَوَّلُ المَوْرَةِ فِي القَرْيِ"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below chapter 2. See also Hamd., pp. 307, 311, 317; Maqdisī, pp. 302-303; Mu'jam, p.410.

<sup>2</sup> On sources for the topography of Baghdad see p. 52; see also J. Lassner, "Notes on the Topography of Baghdad", J.A.O.S., 1963, pp. 458-469.

<sup>3</sup> Chanīma. al-Nuqūd al-'Abbāsiyya, Sāmer, vol. 9, 1953, p.108; R. Guest, J.A.O.S., 1954, n.554.

Information derived from coins is likely to throw new light or confirm information provided by written works. The early 'Abbāsid coins preserved in various museums confirm, for example, that al-Manṣūr conducted a large scale propaganda to enhance the prestige of his son and heir apparent, al-Mahdī, for he had al-Mahdī's name inscribed on coins since 146 A.H.<sup>1</sup>

بالحري سنة ست وأربعين  
عما أمر به المهدي محمد بن أمير المؤمنين

This precedent was followed by later caliphs and the names of the heirs apparent continued to appear in the lifetime of their fathers. Mūsa al-Hādī is given on his coins the title of Walī 'Ahd al-Muslimīn, while Hārūn's name is not followed by a title.<sup>2</sup> It was in 170 A.H. that Walī 'Ahd al-Muslimīn was appended to his name,<sup>3</sup> a fact which indicates that the final breach between the two brothers had not yet taken place. Governors used to inscribe their names on the coins since the days of Abū Muslim's governorship in Khurasān, a usage which helps to ascertain the exact period of office of certain governors. It is from the inscription on a coin that we know that the title of Abū Muslim was Amir Āl-Muhammad.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lane Poole, Catalogue of Oriental coins..., vol. I, p.43.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., p.53; see also Walker, Arab-Sassanian..., pp. 130-145.

<sup>3</sup> Lane Poole, Catalogue of Mohammadan coins..., p.4.

<sup>4</sup> J.R.A.S., 1932, p.554.



No names were inscribed on *dīnārs* until the reign of al-*Hādī*, when 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-'Abbāsī, the governor of Egypt, minted *dīnārs* bearing his name.<sup>1</sup> 'Alī b. Sulaymān is represented by some accounts as an ambitious aspirant to the caliphate. The fact that he had inscribed his name on the *dīnār* seems to confirm this allegation, and may have been the cause of his dismissal. The semi-hereditary dynasty of al-Sarrīb. al-Ḥakam (200-211) in Egypt and the Aghlabids of Ifriqiyya also used to inscribe their names on the *dīnārs*.<sup>2</sup>

As regards inscription on buildings, we are told that al-Mahdī removed al-Walīd's name from the mosque of the prophet in Madīna.<sup>3</sup> Otherwise, all Irāqī extant inscriptions come from a period later than early 'Abbāsīd times.<sup>4</sup>

Finally it should be pointed out that other occasional comments on the sources and their methods in dealing with the events in question can be found in the body of the thesis.

---

<sup>1</sup>N. al-Naqshabandī, "al-dīnār al-'Abbāsī" Sömer, vol. 2, 1946, p.238.

<sup>2</sup>op.cit., Sömer, vol. 3, 1947, p.275.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.535.

<sup>4</sup>B. Fransīs, Sömer, vol. 4, 1948, p.110; see also R.C.E.A., 1932, vol.1, pp.29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39 ff.

Chapter II

THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF  
THE 'ABBĀSID REVOLUTION

"The caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr affirmed in reply to a Qaysite protest that he preferred the Yamanites, saying: '... Are we not right if we recognize their [the Yamanites] support for us and their endeavour to conduct our propaganda and to establish our régime, and reward them for it?"

ʿAzdī, Tārīkh al-Maṣīl, fol. 194

"The Arab tribesmen of Khurasān 'were tired of the [existing] situation and longing for a new one to arise ... the Yamanite partisans of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa called upon other Yamanites. So did the Rabi'ites and the Muḍarites. Thus the 'Abbāsīd following began to increase."

ʿAkhbār 'l 'Abbās, fol. 119a

Introduction:

One of the main and still current interpretations of the 'Abbāsīd revolution put forward by Van Vloten and Welhausen<sup>1</sup> in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is that it was mainly a national struggle of the Iranians against the oppressive rule of the Arab ruling class. There is some evidence in support of this view in contemporary Arabic literature; Jāhiz e.g. states that "The 'Abbāsīd state was Persian and Khurasanian that of the Marwānīds Umayyads and Arab".<sup>2</sup> However, the opinion that it was a renaissance of Iranian nationalism,<sup>3</sup> was mainly due to the influence of racialist ideas circulating by the turn of the 19th century.<sup>4</sup> An attempt at understanding better the 'Abbāsīd revolution and the decisive rôle of the Arabs in it made by Professors Gibb<sup>5</sup> and Lewis<sup>6</sup> was substantiated by D.C.Dennett and Dr. A. Sha'bān.

D. C. Dennett<sup>7</sup> refutes the outdated ideas of Van Vloten and Welhausen and concludes by emphasizing the political rather than the religious nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution, and representing it as an Arab tribal

---

<sup>1</sup> Van Vloten, G., Recherches sur la domination Arab, Amsterdam, 1894, p.1; Welhausen, The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, tr. M.G.Weir, 1927.

<sup>2</sup> Bayān, vol. 3, p.366.

<sup>3</sup> Van Vloten, op.cit., pp. 34ff; cf. G. Wiet, "L'empire néo-Byzantin des Omayyades," J.W.H., 1953, p.68ff.

<sup>4</sup> B. Lewis, The Arabs in history, 1958, pp. 80-81; "Some observation on the significance of heresy in the history of Islam", S.I., 1953, pp. 44-45.

<sup>5</sup> The Arab Conquest in Central Asia, pp. 93-94; Studies on the civilization of Islam, pp. 43-44, pp. 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbāsīds)

<sup>7</sup> Marwān b. Muhammad, Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University 1939.

strife in which naturally the Arabs rather than the Marwālī played a decisive rôle.

Dr. A. Sha'ban explains the change from the Umayyads to the 'Abbāsids as brought about by mainly the Arab element in Khurasān whose interpretation of Islam was broader than the limited Umayyad Arab interpretation. Those Arabs were the settlers of Merw and its surrounding villages who "had lost their privileges as members of the Arab ruling class and who also were grieved by their situation as subjects of the non-Muslim aristocracy of Merw".<sup>1</sup>

It seems to be the crux of the matter that the main appeal of the 'Abbāsīd dā'īs in Khurasān was made to the Arabs whether Muqātīla or settlers in the villages of Merw. There were dā'īs in the villages of Merw, where there were Arab settlers, and in every city where Arab garrisons were stationed. The dā'īs realized that the Arabs were the lever of power and the only striking force in Khurasān and that to win them meant to win the power of government. In the early stages of its struggle to win the Arabs the 'Abbāsīd da'wa did not favour one tribe against another although it gained more support among the Yamanites rather than the Muḍarites. However, they were always willing to accept Muḍarites amongst their ranks. Though no doubt some non-Arab Muslims or Iranian natives joined the 'Abbāsīd movement, their rôle was not comparable with the decisive rôle of the Arabs. The main historical events of the last quarter of a century of the Umayyad rule in Khurasān, including the

---

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., p.iv.

'Abbāsīd propaganda, have been dealt with by several scholars.<sup>1</sup>

What remains to be done is to reconstruct and clarify the political nature of the 'Abbāsīd movement and expose the important rôle played by the Arabs in the revolution.

The Khurasānī phase of the da'wa

The family of al-'Abbās the paternal uncle of the Prophet was one of the branches of Ahl al-Bayt which, in its broadest sense, included all the Banī Hāshim whether Ṭālibites (including 'Alids) or 'Abbāsīds.<sup>2</sup>

The 'Abbāsīd claim to the caliphate went through two different stages: During the revolutionary period which was a period of compromise, the movement was represented as, generally, working for the Ahl al-Bayt of whom the 'Abbāsīds claimed the succession to the Imamate on the ground of the Waṣīyya of Abū Hāshim, 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya. After the establishment of their dynasty, the 'Abbāsīds claimed that they were the legitimate successors to the Prophet through his only surviving paternal uncle al-'Abbās,<sup>3</sup> forgetting all their ties with the extreme Hāshimīyya movement.

Concerning the 'Abbāsīd claim to the caliphate, historical accounts

<sup>1</sup>G. Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, Mannheim, 1846; Van Vloten, op.cit.; Welhausen, op.cit.; Lewis, op.cit.; Dūrī, Al 'Aṣa al-'Abbāsī al-'Awwal, Baghdad; Moscātī, Abū Muslim I-III Rendiconti Lincei, 1949, 1950, pp. 323ff, 474ff, 89ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibn Ḥanbal, IV, p.367, citing Zayd b. al-Arqam.

<sup>3</sup>Fīraq, p.43; Sa'd al-Ash'arī, pp. 38-40, 65f, 69; Akhbār, fols. 74a-74b; Abū Dulāma, p.134; Bagh., p.271; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Hāshimīyya).

do not state explicitly that al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib who survived the Prophet, or his son 'Abdallah, had any claim to the caliphate. Al-'Abbās was not an early Muslim, as he was converted shortly before the conquest of Mecca in 8 A.H./630 A.D. He, therefore, despite later 'Abbāsīd traditions<sup>1</sup> which are generally extensively exaggerated and which depict him as a sincere friend of the Prophet who had rendered him great services before the conquest of Mecca and had finally worked out a reconciliation between him and Quraysh, did not play a prominent part in the early history of Islam. Nevertheless the Prophet confirmed on him the privilege of the Sigāya<sup>2</sup> i.e. dispensing water to pilgrims. This important religious status of al-'Abbās in pre-Islamic and Islamic times, and his close relationship with the Prophet enhanced his prestige and gained him the reverence of the people and was later to be counted on by the 'Abbāsīd in their struggle for the caliphate.<sup>3</sup> Nor does it seem, contrary to later traditions,<sup>4</sup> that 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās ever entertained political ambitions for himself or his descendants. He indulged in religious studies and became one of the prominent traditionists of the Ḥijāz in the first century. Both 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās and his father took the side of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb in the struggle for the caliphate.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Sa'd, IV/i, pp. 1-20; 'Asākīr, II, p.448; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Al-'Abbās).

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 707b; Sa'd, IV, p.10; Ḥabīb, pp. 164-165; Jamharat, vol. I, p.57.

<sup>3</sup>Tab. III, pp. 211f; 'Uyūn, vol. I, p.5.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fols. 4b-6b.

<sup>5</sup>Sīra, II, pp. 1008f; Ya'qūbī, I, p.138; Akhbār, fols. 9a, 12a; Rijāl, pp. 40ff; Nizā', pp. 34ff; Muq., fol. 199b; Amīlī, I, p.144.

Nevertheless 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās used to visit Mu'āwīya at Damascus during the latter's caliphate (41-60/661-680). Eventually he even paid homage to Yazīd I.<sup>1</sup> Later fabricated 'Abbāsīd traditions tried to justify this amicable relation with the Umayyads by depicting him as the defender of 'Alī, at the Umayyad court. They also show him as having voiced bold political ambitions for himself and his descendants.<sup>2</sup> In any case, 'Abdallah's relations with the 'Alids especially Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya seem so have been cordial,<sup>3</sup> and it is thought that if 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās had ever mentioned the rights of his family he would have stressed the rights of the Banī Hāshim in general and not of the 'Abbāsīds, particularly,<sup>4</sup> as was usual in circles before and at that time. If the account in Akhbār al-'Abbās is authentic, even Mu'āwīya's efforts to instigate him to claim the leadership of the family of Ahl al-Bayt,<sup>5</sup> presumably in order to sow the seeds of discord among the Hāshimites, failed to reach their aim. Having rejected the claim of Ibn al-Zubayr, and declined to pay homage to him, both 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya were expelled to Ṭā'if.<sup>6</sup> It is significant to point out, here, that although the struggle for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 12a, citing Muḥammad b. Ishāq fol. 35b citing Ja'far b. 'Abdallah al-'Alawī; Nubdha, fols. 240b, 242b; Ansāb, fol. 724b, vol. IV, B, p.3. For cordial relations between 'Alid personalities and Umayyad caliphs see Ibn Sa'd, Vol. V, p.; 78-79, 83, 195; Bayāsī, fol. 32b; Tha'ālibī, Laṭā'if, pp. 17, 21-22.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 6b, 14a, 16b, 36a-38a; see also 'Uyūn, I, p.204; Ansāb, V, p.195 citing Mada'ini.

<sup>3</sup> 'Uyūn, I, p.14; Akhbār, fol. 13a, 33a, 36s-38a, 44b;

<sup>4</sup> 'Uyūn, citing al-Shu'bi, I, pp. 5-6; Akhbār, fols. 16b, 17b-18a, 30a ff.

<sup>5</sup> Akhbār, fol. 13a, citing Muḥammad Ishāq; Sa'd, V, pp. 73f.

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fols. 43bff, 36a, 49b, 60a; Ansāb, IV B, fols. 28, 59; Ibn (cont.)

in its early stages after the death of the Prophet was represented by Fāṭimid 'Alids, all branches of Banī Hāshim had equal rights to inherit the Prophet and could rebel in the name of Ahl al-Bayt. Al-Mukhtār's rising at Kūfa in the name of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya,<sup>1</sup> a son of 'Alī by Khawla al-Ḥanafiyya and, later, 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiyya b. 'Abdallah the Ja'farite's<sup>2</sup> rising in Irāk and Persia had opened a new door. Now it could be argued that there was no reason why the 'Abbāsids should not rebel in the name of Ahl al-Bayt if a non-Fāṭimid 'Alid and even a Ja'farite had done so.

It was, therefore, 'Alī b. 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās who was the first 'Abbāsīd to have ever expressed political ambitions and was consequently looked upon by the Umayyads as a potentially dangerous figure. He frequented the Umayyad court and his relations with the Umayyad caliphs had their ups and down. He also attracted the people of the Ḥijāz who used to call him al-Sajjād, i.e. "the one who prostrates himself", and Dhū 'l-Nafathāt, i.e. "the one with callouses which he had developed due to an excessive amount of daily prayers".<sup>3</sup> However, 'Alī's relations with the Umayyad 'Abd 'l Malīk b. Marwān (685-705) seem to be cordial,<sup>4</sup>

---

(cont.) al-Kalbī, fol. 9a; Akhbār, fols. 59b, 60a; Muq., fol. 208b citing Abū Mikhrāf; Duwwal, fol. 99b.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya's example shows that only the male parentage in the Arab society was of real importance. See E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya); Cahen, op.cit., p.313.

<sup>2</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 269; Sa'd, V, p.242; Tab., II, p.1879; Maqātil, fol. 118 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 64b; Ansāb, fol. 740; Hilya, vol. 3, p.207.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, vol. XI, pp. 226, 254, citing Madā'inī.



presumably because the latter tried to avoid any clash with 'Alī which would only enhance his prestige among the people. But the fact that the Umayyad caliphs after 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān had the feeling of extreme provocation indicates that the 'Abbāsids were giving vent to active political ambitions. 'Alī suffered most during al-Walīd's reign (705-715).<sup>1</sup> He was flogged twice, once because of his marriage to Lūbāba bint 'Abdallah b. Ja'far who had been divorced by 'Abd al-Malik, as al-Walīd accused him of purposely trying to humiliate the memory of his father. The second time when he was suspected of political activities, he was given 500 strokes, and then was paraded on a camel facing its back. Many other accounts<sup>2</sup> preserved in Akhbār 'l-'Abbās and other sources speak of the hostility between al-Walīd and 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd. Though the authenticity of these accounts may be doubted, the fact that 'Alī was considered a dangerous political figure was obvious. Consequently al-Walīd accused him of murdering his brother Salīḡ b. 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās<sup>3</sup> and after imprisoning him for a while he was ordered to leave Damascus for the province of Shurāt. 'Alī settled in Ḥumayma<sup>4</sup> on the route between Damascus and the Ḥijāz and owned a small farm of 500 trees.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, vol. IVB, p.76; Ansāb, fols. 744a, 745 b, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Sa'd, V, p.229; Akhbār, fol. 62b citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Wafayat, citing Ṭabari, vol. I, p.579; Duwwal, citing Ibn al-Kalbi, fol. 99a.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 65b citing Ruzayr; Ansāb, fol. 745b, citing Abū Naṣ'ūd al-Kūfī.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid; Ansāb, fol. 744a citing 'Abbās b. Ḥishām; Akhbār, fol. 66b; Jamharat, p.17.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 69a; cf. Ansāb, fol. 744b, 745 a, citing Hisham b. 'Ammār and Haytham b. 'Adī respectively.

After 'Alī's death in 118 A.H./736 A.D.<sup>1</sup> at Ḥumayma his son Muḥammad emerged as a prominent figure among the 'Abbāsids. Muḥammad's relation with the 'Alid Abū Ḥāshim b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī, were very friendly and intimate.<sup>2</sup> It has been said that he also maintained cordial relations with 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥassan,<sup>3</sup> but it is to be noted that cordial relations were not usual among the Ahl al-Bayt. As long as the Umayyads were strong, the Ahl al-Bayt were generally united but as the Umayyads weakened the Banī Ḥāshim broke apart, as several prominent members of them evidently each hoped eventually to hold the caliphate.

Muḥammad b. 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd was a student of Abū Ḥāshim 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad under whom he studied religious knowledge, attending to his needs in Damascus where Abū Ḥāshim used to live under the watchful eye of the Umayyads.<sup>4</sup> These contacts and cordiality continued between them as Muḥammad used to visit Abū Ḥāshim occasionally on his way to join the Ṣā'ifa expedition against the Byzantines.<sup>5</sup> This cordial relation between the 'Abbāsids and other non-Fāṭimid branch of the 'Alids is understandable as both their claims were rejected by the Fāṭimid 'Alids (Ḥussaynids and Ḥasanids).<sup>6</sup> This, in fact, explains why the 'Abbāsids warned their partisans not to join the rising of Zayd b. 'Alī the Ḥussaynid

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 746a, citing Wādiq; another version puts it in 117 A.H. Akhbar, fol. 72a, citing Abu Ma'shar.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbar, fols. 78b citing 'Isā b. 'Alī, 87a; Dhahabī, Tārīkh, IV, p.21.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbar, fol. 73b citing Ahmad b. Jābir.

<sup>4</sup> Op.cit., fol. 78b, citing 'Isā b. 'Alī, fol. 82a, citing Sa'īd al-Barzī.

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., fol. 79a, citing 'Isā b. 'Alī.

<sup>6</sup> See for example Akhbar, fol. 79a; Firaq, p.48.

or his son Yahya, while many 'Abbāsīd personalities joined 'Abdallāh b. Mu'āwīya the Ja'farite even though with ulterior motives. However, Muḥammad was more active than his father. His activities did not escape the shrewd eyes of caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. Many Umayyad Mawālī were, presumably, sent to bother him and keep a close watch on him at Ḥumayma.<sup>1</sup> Hishām also used to tease him whenever he had a request, saying: "Wait for the realm which you expect and on which you relate traditions ascribed to the Prophet and put up your youngsters as candidates for it", "Wait for the black flags and your debt will be paid", or "Wait for Ibn al-Ḥārithiyya".<sup>2</sup> On one occasion he attacked him saying that "Banī Hāshim have turned the Prophet into a market [selling false traditions ascribed to him]".<sup>3</sup> Ultimately Muḥammad was imprisoned in Damascus on the charge of appropriating 100,000 dirhams, but his shī'a headed by Abū Mūsa al-Sarāj managed to pay the sum and eventually liberated him.<sup>4</sup> Whether authentic or not, these traditions indicate the threat on the part of Muḥammad and his sons anticipated by the Umayyads which led to his imprisonment. But al-Abrash al-Kalbī advised Hishām to free him<sup>5</sup> to prevent his acquiring publicity and to avoid the development of hero-worship.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 748b citing Abū Ḥafṣ al-Shāmī, fol. 750b; Akhbār, fols. 73b-74a, Ahmad b. Yahya b. Jābir (al-Baladhurī).

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 751a citing Sulaymān b. al-Ḥajāj, fol. 749a citing Zuhayr b. al-Musayab; Akhbār, fol. 82a, citing Sa'īd al-Barzī and al-Abrash.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 72a.

<sup>4</sup> Op.cit., fol. 749a-749b, Zuhayr b. al-Musayab.

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., fols. 749b-750a, Hishām b. 'Ammār.

It was, therefore, around Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās that the nucleus of the pro-'Abbāsīd revolutionary movement formed. Ostensibly the cordial contacts between Muḥammad the 'Abbāsīd and Abū Hāshim the leader of the Hāshimiyya sect continued,<sup>1</sup> and Abū Hāshim nominated on his death Muḥammad as his legate.<sup>2</sup>

Modern historians differ on the testament of Abū Hāshim to Muḥammad b. 'Alī. Van Vloten, Professor Lewis and Professor Moscatī accept it as authentic,<sup>3</sup> while Welhausen regards it as "probably fictitious".<sup>4</sup> C. Cahen<sup>5</sup> does not commit himself and remarks "The question of the reality of the testament of Abū Hāshim in favour of Muḥammad b. 'Alī no longer has the importance today that it seemed to have until quite recently." Then he adds "In fact it is scarcely possible now to doubt that the men of the Shī'a of Abū Hāshim carried their allegiance to Muḥammad and that the latter behaved as their Imam".

As for early sources, many differently phrased and therefore presumably independent accounts agree in confirming that Abū Hāshim made Muḥammad his legate on his deathbed. According to Balādhurī's<sup>6</sup> Ansāb, Abū Hāshim,

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 87a.

<sup>2</sup> Among some revolutionary 'Alid sects succession by tafwīd, or appointment was permitted.. see B. Lewis, the Origins, p.48; Dūrī, "ḍa' Jadīd", B.C.A., pp. 68-69.

<sup>3</sup> Van Vloten, Opkomst der 'Abbāsiden, p.18f; B. Lewis, The Arabs..., p.78, E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abbasids); Moscatī, "Il Testamento de Abū Hāshim," R.S.O., 1952, pp. 9f, "per una storia dell' antica sī'a", op.cit., p.259.

<sup>4</sup> Welhausen, op.cit., p.503.

<sup>5</sup> C. Cahen, op.cit., p.311.

<sup>6</sup> Ansāb, fol. 746b.

realizing that he was poisoned on his way to the Hijāz, turned to Muḥammad at Ḥumayma and made him his legatee, gave him his books and introduced him to a number of his shī'a. He also told him that "We thought that the Imamate and the affair were in us but now there is no doubt that you are the Imam and the caliphate is in your sons". But the author<sup>1</sup> of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās in one of his accounts on the testament dates the nomination much earlier than the death of Abū Hāshim. He states that while Muḥammad b. 'Alī was taking knowledge from Abū Hāshim their relations grew intimate and Abū Hāshim asked his partisans to follow Muḥammad after his death. At any rate this event is mentioned by different chroniclers<sup>2</sup> and heresiographers.<sup>3</sup> Some of these accounts do not stop at the testament itself but carry on relating the recommendation made by Abū Hāshim to Muḥammad. They are so detailed and anticipatory<sup>4</sup> on the future of the 'Abbāsīd movement that it is obvious that they are later fabrications or elaborations of the original texts, especially as the version<sup>5</sup> of Balādhurī, Iṣbahānī, Tabarī and Ibn Qutaiba and Ibn Sa'd do not mention this anticipatory information.

It is, therefore, very probable that, in the year 97 A.H./715 A.D. or 98/716 A.D.<sup>6</sup> during the reign of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik,<sup>7</sup> Abū

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 78b, citing 'Isa b. 'Alī.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 686a, citing Qays b. al-Rabī', 786 citing Madā'inī, 787a citing Haytham b. 'Adī, 787 citing Abū Nas'ūd; Tab., II, pp. 24, 2500; Akhbār, fols. 75a citing 'Isa b. 'Alī, 75b, citing Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭṭāb; Nubdha, fols. 246a, 248b.

<sup>3</sup> Firaq, pp. 29-30; Sa'd al-Ash'arī, pp. 39-40; Maqālāt, pp. 5, 21-22; Shah., pp. 10-11, 112-113; Iṣfar., pp. 19, 72-73; Bagh., pp. 28, 227; Ibn Ḥazm, "The heterodoxies," J.A.O.S., 28, II, pp. 89, 128.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.356; Iqd., IV, p.376, see Cairo ed., 2, p.230; Tanbīh, p.338, Muntakhab, fol. 80a.

Hāshim was just released from prison in Damascus, after having been jailed on an accusation of political activities on the part of Zayd b. al-Ḥasan with whom he had quarrelled about the Ṣadaqa of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.<sup>1</sup> On his way back to the Ḥijāz he either fell ill<sup>2</sup> or was poisoned<sup>3</sup> by Sulaymān's orders because of his great influence and prestige. Abū Hāshim stopped at al-Ḥumayma and was nursed by Muḥammad b. 'Alī. Before dying he nominated Muḥammad his legatee and told him of the movement under his command. He also ordered his chief partisans who were with him in this journey to follow Muḥammad the 'Abbāsīd.<sup>4</sup> The author of the Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa 'l-Ḥadā'iq adds that "When Abū Hāshim gave up his rights to the 'Abbāsīds, he told them about his missionaries, their signs of recognition and gave them his seal. He finally asked his partisans to accept the 'Abbāsīd leadership which they eventually did."<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 787b citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Maqātil, p.91 citing Madā'inī; Tab., III, p.24; cf. Imama, 2, pp. 208-209, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Sa'd, V, p.241.

<sup>6</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.358; Wafayāt, citing Tabarī, vol. 2, p.230.

<sup>7</sup> Some accounts put it in al-Walīd's reign (Akhbār, fols. 85a, 79a, 79b).

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 79aff citing Iṣḥāq b. al-Faḍl al-Ḥāshimī; 'Asākir, 5, p.460 citing Abū Mi'shar.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 686a, Qays b. al-Rabī'; Akhbār, fol. 75b citing Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭṭāb, fol. 84a; Nubdha, fol. 248b; Wafayāt, citing Ibn Qatayba, vol. I, p.575.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fols. 746b, 786b, 787a, 787b, citing Madā'inī and Haytham b. 'Adī; cf. Akhbār, fol. 86b ff.

De Gōlje suspects the alleged poisoning of Abū Hāshim by the Umayyads as too artificial to be believed. Z.D.M.G., 1881, p.394. However, his allegation that the 'Abbāsīd should have poisoned him has no evidence to substantiate it. cf. Moscati, "Il testament di Abū Hashim," R.S.O., 1952, p.15.

(cont.)

"One of the signs which were handed over to Muḥammad was a yellow letter i.e. Al-Sahīfa al-Ṣafra'.<sup>1</sup> It contained information on the uprising of the black flags of Khurasān, its signs and time and certain sections of the Arabs who would support it. Whether the accounts about this Sahīfa are true or not, Ibn Qutayba and Ibn Sa'd simply state that Muḥammad b. 'Alī was the one to work for the matter (caliphate) after Abū Hāshim who entrusted him with his books, signs and partisans some of whom witnessed the event.<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad became, thus, the leader of the Hāshimiyya. Historically that time marked the beginning of his active political propaganda.

The sectarian connections of the 'Abbāsīd revolutionary movement with the Hāshimiyya as well as the first period of the da'wa have been examined and stressed by Van Vloten, Welhausen and Professor Lewis.<sup>3</sup> It is not the concern of this study to re-examine the nature of the 'Abbāsīd movement, but rather to reconstruct and reassess certain aspects in its development with special emphasis on its political aspect.

It seems as though Abū Hāshim's partisans were mainly concentrated in Kūfa.<sup>4</sup> Abū Hāshim advised Muḥammad to direct his attention to Khurasān

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fols. 82a ff citing al-Abrash, fol. 84a, citing al-Faḍl b. Salīm, fol. 85a citing 'Abdallah b. 'Umayr. Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd states that in addition to Muḥammad b. 'Alī there was Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah the Ja'farite at the deathbed of Abū Hāshim. This accounts for the latter's claim of Abū Hāshim's wasiyya. But there is no evidence to substantiate this claim. Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha, II, pp. 211-13 - compare Nubḥa, fols. 248a-248b.

<sup>5</sup> F.H.A., p.180; cf. Tanbīh, p.338; Muntakhab, fols. 80a-80b.

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 84b citing Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasayn; Nubḥa, fols. 246a-246b.

<sup>2</sup> Imāma, 2, pp. 208-9, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Sa'd, V, p.241; Akhbār, fol. 84a, Faḍl b. Salīm. (cont.)

as well as Kūfa.<sup>1</sup> The Kūfite phase of the 'Abbāsīd movement which had been initiated in the name of al-Rīḍa min 'āl al-Bayt<sup>2</sup> was so passive and so cautious in recruiting partisans that very little was known about it, which accounts for the lack of information. The nucleus of the propaganda was formed among the Banī Musaliyya, a Ḥarīthite tribe, who had family connections with Muḥammad b. 'Alī, and its Mawālī.<sup>3</sup> In addition to Banī Musaliyya, which seem to have been trusted by Muḥammad very much as he recommended them to his son Ibrāhīm on his deathbed,<sup>4</sup> the movement attracted some Arabs from the tribe of Hamdān.<sup>5</sup> Kūfa was, in fact, not a suitable place for the revolt because of its 'Alid tendencies and the untrustworthiness of its inhabitants, observed many a time in the past during 'Alid risings. Muḥammad b. 'Alī is said to have exhorted his missionaries "Do not recruit many members from the people of Kūfa, and accept but people of the right nature". He added "Beware of the people of Kūfa... for no one can count on their help."<sup>6</sup> Moreover the people of Kūfa were exhausted by the wars with the Umayyads. They are related to have said to the Ja'farite rebel 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya "There is nothing left of us, our majority was

---

(cont.)

<sup>3</sup> Van Vloten, op.cit.; Welhausen, op.cit., p.492 ff; E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbāsīds), (Hashīmiyya).

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 747b, citing Ḥaytham b. 'Adī.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 768a; cf. Tab, II, pp. 1358, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 89b; Tab., III, p.24 citing Madā'inī, II, p.1988 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 88a citing Muḥammad b. Sālim.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 113b; cf. fol. 89a, citing Muḥammad b. Sālim.

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., fol. 88b. citing Ibrāhīm b. Sa'lama.

(cont.)



perished fighting for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt."<sup>1</sup> As a result the 'Abbāsid partisans in Kūfa were not more than thirty.<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad, therefore, decided on Khurasān which had been suggested to him by his chief dā'ī Abū Hāshim Bukayr b. Māhān.<sup>3</sup> A tradition transmitted by many chroniclers and geographers is, though differently phrased, fundamentally the same. This tradition is ascribed to Muḥammad b. 'Alī and shows why he preferred Khurasān to other regions of the empire. In its most coherent and reliable form,<sup>4</sup> it runs as follows:

"The people of Kūfa are followers of 'Alī and his descendants, those of Baṣra are 'Uthmānites, who say 'Better to be the murdered Abdallah than the murderer 'Abdallah', the people of al-Jazīra are Kharijites, they are degenerate Arabs, half Christian Muslims. The Syrians obey only Mu'āwiya and the Umayyads, they are the enemies of all Muslims. The people of Mecca and Medina think only of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Hold on to Khurasān. There, one finds a numerous and strong people. They have generous hearts which passion does not divide nor fear will trouble, an army of brave and powerfully built men with bearded faces and formidable voices who inspire terror. After all I have good hopes in the East where the sun rises."

This statement defines clearly the conditions in the empire in the late Umayyad period. It is interesting to note that neither Egypt nor Ifriqiyya are mentioned in Muḥammad's statement. As for Egypt<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fols. 89b, 93b.

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, p.121, 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Nawfalī.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 89b, 91a.

<sup>3</sup> Op.cit., fol. 92a-93b.

<sup>4</sup> Hamad., p.315; cf. Manāqib, p.9; 'Uyūn, I, p.204; Ansāb, fols. 747a-747b citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Muntakhab, fol. 80b; Bad', 6, p.57; compare a similar statement attributed to al-Aṣma'ī the grammarian (122-216/740-831) in Wafayāt, English trans. II, pp. 123-127.

<sup>5</sup> On the nature of the people of Egypt see the opinion of Hamadānī (p.175); Maqdisī (p.34), Muqadima (see index).

it was a place too near to al-Shām, the centre of the Umayyads, to be counted on as the headquarters of a revolt, especially if compared with Khurasān. While in Ifriqiyya<sup>1</sup> the struggle took a different turn, for the Berbers, resenting the Arab rule, had adopted Kharijism to express their opposition to the Arabs as early as the reign of Hishām (724-743). It is significant that the Umayyads feared Khurasān already in the reign of 'Abd al-Malik.<sup>2</sup> Why Khurasān and not other provinces inspired this fear is not easy to account for. It is probably because Khurasān was the centre of the Arab Muqātila who strongly expressed their resentment against Umayyad policies and were potentially dangerous as they were hardened by the Jihād in Transoxonia. According to Akhbār 'l 'Abbās<sup>3</sup> the Arabs of Khurasān were "the skull of the Arabs and the knights among them, i.e. Fī Khurasān Junjumat al-'Arab wa fursānuha".

In its early phase in Khurasān (103 or 104-128/721-722-745), the 'Abbāsīd propaganda approached first and foremost the Arabs who represented the real striking force in Khurasān. It appealed to them by using such slogans as "the vengeance of Ahl al-Bayt", stressing that they (Ahl al-Bayt) had a better title to the caliphate than the Umayyads whose "tyrannic and oppressive" rule must be brought to an end.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tab., I, p.2815; Van Vloten, op.cit., App. III; Cahen, op.cit., p.320.

<sup>2</sup>Akhbār, fols. 62a-62b, 65b; Dīna, pp. 245-6.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fol. 190b.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., fol. 93a citing 'Isā b. Ḥamza; Nubdha, fol. 252b; Dīna, p. 337. Cf. F.H.A., p.62.

The 'Abbāsīd character of the movement was clear to the inner circles of the dā'īs who had the strict order "Not to call for a rising until they were permitted to do so,"<sup>1</sup> and they were also warned not to join any 'Alid rising.<sup>2</sup> Those early 'Abbāsīd partisans were, therefore, called the Kafīyya or Ahl al-Kaf,<sup>3</sup> i.e. indicating the orders not to rise in arms unless it was necessary and to obey their leaders blindly. They were mainly Arabs from the Arab quarters of Kharqān and Saqādīm of Merw such as Ziyād al-Azdī, Khidhān al-Kindī and Ḥamza al-Bāhilī.<sup>4</sup> When the Khuza'ite Sulaymān b. Kathīr was won over he opened his house as a meeting centre for the propagandists. Sulaymān also played a decisive rôle in winning over many active figures especially from his own tribe Khuza'a such as Mālik b. al-Haytham, 'Amr b. A'yan, Ziyād b. Ṣālik and Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm.<sup>5</sup>

The first dā'īs in Khuṣasān did not have much success, and in its early period the da'wa was under constant surveillance on the part of the Umayyads. Nevertheless, it survived<sup>6</sup> thanks to its efficient internal organisation. Twelve Naqībs were selected to form a committee with headquarters in Merw. Its head was Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuza'i, i.e.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 95b, 96a-96b, fols. 128b-130a.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fols. 93b, 115b.

<sup>3</sup> Op.cit., fols. 95b ff; Tab., II, p.1957 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb; Muq., fol. 80b.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., II, 1957 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>5</sup> Akhbār, fols. 94a-94b, 101a; Tab., II, 1954 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>6</sup> Tab., II, p.1586; Welhausen, op.cit., pp.510, 514.

<sup>7</sup> Ma'd, fol. 64a; Ansāb, fol. 770b, citing Abū Mas'ūd al-Kūfī; Akhbār, fol. 106a; Jamharat, p.231.

Al-qā'im bī'amr Khurasān, who was to take his orders from the chief dā'ī in Kūfa. The connections with Kūfa were, therefore, not severed. The main responsibility of the committee of the twelve seems to have been to organise the da'wa all over Khurasān with special responsibility on Merw. There was an absolute equality among the Naqībs.<sup>1</sup> Several lists of their names are preserved in historical accounts, which show that they were Arabs in their majority. The difference in some of the names in different accounts is understandable, as some of the Naqībs might have been replaced for reasons of policy or withdrawn due to illness or death. In one of the lists transmitted by Ṭabarī<sup>2</sup> the proportion of the Arabs to the Mawālī is 8:4 while the proportion in another list preserved in Akhbār 'l-'Abbās<sup>3</sup> is 7:5. Ibn Ḥabīb maintains that there were only two Mawālī among the twelve 'Abbāsīd Naqībs while, according to Jāḥiz and Azdī, all the twelve Naqībs were Arab Yamanites.<sup>4</sup> The variations are often due to the uncertainty as to the identity of a certain Naqīb or to changes in the definition of this identity, as one Naqīb is described as a mawla by one and an Arab by another chronicler. However, Ṭabarī<sup>5</sup> has preserved a list of the names of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 101a, 102b.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.1358.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 102b; Nubdha, fols. 253a-254a.

<sup>4</sup> Ḥabīb, p.465; Manāqīb, p.12; Azdī, fol. 194.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., III, p.1988, citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

Naqibs which seems to be the most coherent one. It contains the following names:

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| from the tribe of <u>Khuzā'a</u> | 1) Sulaymān b. Kathīr            |
|                                  | 2) Mālik b. al-Haytham           |
|                                  | 3) Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ                |
|                                  | 4) Ṭalḥa b. Ruzayq               |
| from Tamīm                       | 5) Mūsa b. Ka'b                  |
|                                  | 6) 'Isā b. Ka'b                  |
|                                  | 7) Lāḥiz b. Qurayz               |
|                                  | 8) Al-Qāsim b. Mujāshī'          |
| from Ṭayy                        | 9) Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb             |
| from <u>Shaybān</u>              | 10) Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm            |
| from Bajīla                      | 11) Aslam b. Sallām <sup>1</sup> |
| Amwla of Banī Ḥanīfa             | 12) Shibl b. Ṭahmān <sup>2</sup> |

Apart from those twelve Naqibs there were fifty eight dā'īs scattered throughout Khurasān.<sup>3</sup> Forty of them came from Merw itself, of whom it can be safely assumed that the majority were Arabs.<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that unless the identification of a dā'ī is given by the source, it is difficult to identify him. It is true that sometimes the name of

<sup>1</sup>Tabarī does not identify him, but in Akhbār he is mentioned as a Bajlīte (see. fol. 140b; see also Agh., where probably the same man is mentioned as a Kufite (13, p.6); cf. Dennett, op.cit., p.281.

<sup>2</sup>He is identified as a Rabī'ite by Balādhurī (fol. 769a) and Ibn Ḥabīb (Ḥabīb, p.465). If this is true then all the Naqibs were Arabs.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fol. 103a; Tabarī II, p.1987; compare Akhbār, fol. 104a where he states that the twelve Naqibs were not included in the seventy dā'īs.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fols. 103a-104a.

a person indicates his nationality and we see, in fact, some purely Arab or Persian names in the lists, but one realizes that it is rash to judge by that as many well-known Arabs were named after Persian towns they lived in or were born in such as the Azdite Jadī' b. 'Alī al-Karmanī,<sup>1</sup> the Tamimites al-Faḍl b. Sulaymān al-Ṭūsī<sup>2</sup> and Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Merwūzī<sup>3</sup> and 'Amir b. 'Umayr al-Samarqandī,<sup>4</sup> and many Arabs adopted Persian names such as al-Haytham b. Mu'āwiya al-'Atkī 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-Muhallabī who were called Hazārmard,<sup>5</sup> and vice versa. Many dā'īs were also selected to propagate the cause in parts other than Merw. In Nasā the dā'īs were all Arabs.<sup>6</sup> They were Asīd b. 'Abdallah al-Khuzā'ī, al-'Aḥjam b. 'Abdallah al-Khuzā'ī, Muqātil b. Ḥakīm al-'Akkī, al-Ḥarīsh b. Sulaymān, Ghīlān b. 'Abdallah al-Khuzā'ī and Maḥqin b. Ghazwān al-'Abdī. In Abīward these seven dā'īs were also Arabs.<sup>7</sup> They were 'Uthmān b. Nuḥayk and 'Isā b. Nuḥayk the 'Akkites, al-Faḍl b. Sulaymān al-Ṭā'ī, 'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān the Azdite and his brother Yazīd, al-Haytham b. Mu'āwiya al-'Akkī and Zuhayr b. Muḥammad al-'Azdī. Other dā'īs were sent to Balkh, Merw

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1858 citing Madā'īnī.

<sup>2</sup>Tab. II, pp. 1422, 1522; Dīna, p.362.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, p.1959.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 781a; Akhbār, fol. 155a.

<sup>5</sup>Ma'd, fol. 64b; Futūh, vol. I, p.275; 'Aṣim b. 'Umayr was also called Hazarmurd. See Tab., II, p.1691, indices p.406; Khalifā, Tarīkh, fol.288.

<sup>6</sup>Akhbār, fol. 103b.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

al-Rūdh, Āmul and Khawārizm.<sup>1</sup> These lists indicate the importance of the Arabs in the revolutionary movement, and also show in which districts the 'Abbāsīd propaganda was concentrated. It is obvious from the names that it was aimed mainly at Arab settlers in Merw and the Arab Muqātila stationed in other garrison cities of Khurasān.

Furthermore the central committee of twelve Nagībs at Merw decided to choose twelve more members, called Nudarā' al-Nuqabā' to substitute for any of the twelve Nagībs should any of them withdraw or be dismissed or killed. Some of these nudarā' were counted among the seventy dā'īs such as 'Asīd al-Khuzā'ī, 'Isā b. Māhān and 'Uthmān b. Nuḥayk, but others were not. The dā'īs were responsible for their own districts and they had the right to appoint 'Umanā' i.e. trustees or confidants.<sup>2</sup>

Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī, Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī, Lāḥiz al-Tamīmī and Mālik al-Khuzā'ī, the prominent 'Abbāsīd dā'īs, used to pay visits to the Imam especially during the pilgrimage season and to present him with sums of money as a contribution from the 'Abbāsīd partisans.<sup>3</sup> Although the financial subscription to the Imam was not an 'Abbāsīd innovation,<sup>4</sup> nevertheless it was one of the interesting features of the 'Abbāsīd movement. It is also noteworthy that in earlier days of the da'wa certain wealthy Mawālī of Kūfa such as Bakīr b. Māhān, Abū Mūsa 'l-Sarrāj

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 103b.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., fols. 101b-102a.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, pp. 1953, 1962, 1916; Akhbār, fols. 106a, 125a; Imāma, p.217; Dīna, p.344; Ya'qūbī, II, p.398; F.H.A., pp. 182,190.

<sup>4</sup> Imāma, 2, p.207 citing Haytham b. 'Adī.

and then Abū Salama al-Khallāl were won over. However, the partisans used to subscribe a fifth of their property to the 'Abbāsīd cause,<sup>1</sup> as Bakīr b. Māhān puts it "The Imam is in need of money in order to uphold the right and destroy the evil".<sup>2</sup>

When Muḥammad b. 'Alī died in 125/742-3 he nominated his son Ibrāhīm as his legatee.<sup>3</sup> A new active and militant phase of the movement started with Ibrāhīm the Imām. When the missionaries headed by Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī met Ibrāhīm they urged him to declare the rising, and exclaimed "How long will the wild birds feed on the flesh of your family (Ahl al-Bayt) and its blood be spilled? We have left Zayd (b. 'Alī) strangled in the Kināsa and his son (Yaḥya) wandering in the country, and you are all afraid. The days of the evil house (Ahl Bayt al-Sū') [the Umayyads] have lasted too long."<sup>4</sup> Credit must be given to Ibrāhīm for this vibrant and active phase of the movement. He kept in close touch with Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī through the chief dā'ī in Kūfa, Abū Salama al-Khallāl. He is also credited with the choice of black as the 'Abbāsīd colour as distinct from others.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1917.

<sup>2</sup>Akhbār, fol. 106a; see further fols 113a f, 125a, 129a; Tab. II, pp. 1769, 1869; Dennett, op.cit., p.282.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 770b citing Abū Ma'sūd al-Kūfī; Imāma, vol. 2, p.209; Ya'qubī, II, p.398; Tanbih, p.337; F.H.A., p.182.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fol. 115a.

<sup>5</sup>Akhbār, fol. 118a; Murūj, VI, p.60; Dīna., p.359; On the Umayyad attitude and comments towards the Sawād, see Ibn 'Asākir cited in Bidāya, vol. 10, p.51; Al-Mukāfāt, p.70.



To justify the choice of black several other explanations were put forward such as that the banners of the prophet and of 'Alī as well as the die cast by 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib in his dispute with Quraysh had been black. Many traditions were ascribed to the Prophet and 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās the 'Abbāsīd ancestor to justify this choice.<sup>1</sup> One also must not forget the eschatological significance of this colour. Legends and Malāhim were circulated at that time referring to the black banners which would be hoisted in the east indicating the end of the Umayyad's rule.<sup>2</sup> The association of black with mourning for Ahl al-Bayt<sup>3</sup> who were killed by the Umayyads seem unfounded and it is more likely to have been a symbol of protest against oppressors deviating from justice, with additional implications that hopes would be achieved and a new era realized.<sup>4</sup> The 'Abbāsīd partisans therefore bore the name al-Musawwida and the new régime was dawlat 'l Musawwida. Ultimately it was Ibrāhīm who sent in 128/745 Abū Muslim 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muslim to Khurasān to be his personal representative in leading the revolt.

Abū Muslim the famous 'Abbāsīd partisan, and one of the chief architects of the 'Abbāsīd victory seems to have been a myth not only to us or to the Muslim historians who wrote the history of Islam shortly after his death, but even to his contemporaries. C. Cahen writes<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 117a ff; 118a citing 'Amr. b. Shabīb; Abū Yūsuf, al-Kharāj, p.119.

<sup>2</sup> Fitan, fols. 48b, 49a, 51b ff; Van Vloten, Rechers...., pp. 46ff; B. Lewis, An apocalyptic, op.cit., p.314. The adoption of black was, therefore, not an 'Abbāsīd innovation. Apart from the Prophet's banners, al-Ḥarith al-Murju'ī and the Kharijites had raised it in their revolts against the Umayyads. (Tab. II, pp. 1624, 1570, 1981; Agh., vol. 20, p.112).

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 683a; Maqātil, p.137; Akhbār, fols. 109b f.

<sup>4</sup> Tab. II, p.1574; Akhbār, fols. 117a-118a; see also Jaḥīz, Rasā'il, ed.1964. p.203.

"It is an extraordinary fact that the man to whom the 'Abbāsids owed their victory, the man who enjoyed such prestige in his own time and in later times, the man whose many deeds are related by chroniclers, remains for us what he was in his own time, an enigma." Not only his political rôle in the 'Abbāsīd movement has been challenged, but also his origin and social status. The mystery is, probably, largely attributable to happenings after his murder in 137/754 by al-Manṣūr. Both pro and anti-'Abbāsīd traditions tended to exaggerate or belittle the rôle he played. On the other hand, Abū Muslim became a martyr in the eyes of the disappointed Iranians, and as Professor Gibb<sup>1</sup> states, "The tradition of the enthusiasm of the Iranians for Abū Muslim is true only of the period after his success." This obscurity has no doubt led Frye<sup>2</sup> to say "The origins of Abū Muslim cannot definitely be determined from Islamic sources." Modern scholars are divided on Abū Muslim's origin, some define him as a Persian Mawla,<sup>3</sup> and others as a slave.<sup>4</sup> What complicates the situation is Abū Muslim's own silence on this subject during the dā'wa, probably for political reasons. The only statement concerning his origin which is attributed to him represents him as saying "I am a man from among the Muslims. I do not belong to one tribe against the other... But my faith is Islam and allegiance to

---

(cont.) إن المسودة اهل في الصيون وامير للبحرور من المبيضة

<sup>5</sup>Cahen, op.cit., p.326; Gh. Yusūfī, Abū Muslim...., pp. 4-5.

<sup>1</sup>Gibb, Arab conquest..., p.94.

<sup>2</sup>Frye, "The rôle of Abū Muslim in the 'Abbāsīd revolt", M.W., 1947, p.28.

<sup>3</sup>Welhausen, op.cit., p.506; Lewis, E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbāsīds); Dūrī, op.cit., p.27.

<sup>4</sup>Moscatti, E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abū Muslim); Dennett, op.cit., p.227.

Al-Muhammad and I am right in my cause."<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, however, he is said to have claimed to be the son of Ṣalīḥ b. 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās in order to establish a connection with the 'Abbāsids.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous contradictory details concerning this dubious origin are related by several chroniclers and biographers. Balādhurī describes him once as a Mawla of Banī 'Ijl from Iṣbahān,<sup>3</sup> or "a Mawla of a man from Herāt or Bushanj",<sup>4</sup> or a slave<sup>5</sup> of the 'Ijlites bought by Ibrāhīm the Imam for 700 dirhams. Tabarī is rather vague on that, and transmits only scanty data. He describes him either as a mawla or an agent Qahramān of 'Īsā b. 'Ijl originally from the village of Khuṣarniyya off Kūfa,<sup>6</sup> or as a slave of 'Īsā al-'Ijlī.<sup>7</sup> Ya'qūbī remarks that "Abū Muslim was in the service of 'Īsā b. Ma'qil",<sup>8</sup> while Ibn Qutayba states that Abū Muslim was "Laqīt" i.e. waif.<sup>9</sup> According to Dīnāwārī when the

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 137b., citing Aslam b. Ṣabīḥ; cf. Ansāb, fol. 745b, citing Abū Masūd; Tab., II, p.1965.

<sup>2</sup> Tab. III, p.114; F.H.A., p.183; Jamharat, p.17; 'Ibar, vol. 3, p.217.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 770b, citing Abū Mas'ūd al-Kūfī, fol. 771a citing Hishām Ibn al-Kalbī.

<sup>4</sup> Op.cit., fol. 771a citing 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mūsa b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm,

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., fols.771b-772a, citing a son of Qaḥṭaba.

<sup>6</sup> Tab. II, pp. 1960, 1726; see also Murūj, VI, p.59.

<sup>7</sup> Tab., citing Madā'inī, II, pp. 1726, 1769.

<sup>8</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.392.

<sup>9</sup> 'Uyūn, 3, p.106.

'Abbāsīd propagandists met Abū Muslim at Kūfa he replied to their inquiry "My mother was a slave girl of 'Umayr b. Buḥayn al-'Ijlī who sold her before I was born to 'Isā b. Ma'qil al-'Ijlī. I was, therefore, born in the latter's house and I am a kind of Mamlūk to him."<sup>1</sup> The anonymous author of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās<sup>2</sup> gives the most detailed and contradictory accounts of the origin of Abū Muslim, according to whom he was a mawla, or a ghulam, or a slave. Finally it is interesting to quote an Umayyad point of view on the origin of Abū Muslim, according to which he was "none but a saddlemaker slave" who held power in Khurasān after "instigating the slaves of Khurasān to murder their masters".<sup>3</sup>

If one is to accept the version on which most traditions seem to agree, one must assume that Abū Muslim was born in a village near Iṣbahān<sup>4</sup> as the son of a Persian mawla named Khatkān and a slave girl called Washīka.<sup>5</sup> His father found himself in a difficult financial situation and had to sell the slave girl to 'Isā al-'Ijlī who owned a number of farms in the vicinity of Iṣbahān. The slave girl was pregnant and gave birth to a boy who was named Ibrāhīm by the 'Ijlites.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dīna, p.338.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 121 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb, fols. 121b, 123a citing Sābiq Mawla Ma'qil, fols. 126b, 128a citing 'Amr b. Shabīb, 126b citing Ibrāhīm b. Hishām.

<sup>3</sup> 'Asākīr, 2, p. 291 citing Hishām b. Muḥammad.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 123a; F.H.A., p.183; Wafayāt, vol. 2, p.102. Ibn Iṣfandiyar describes him as "a villager of a humble origin and low position" (II, p.110).

<sup>5</sup> Akhbār, fols. 121b, 123a; Wafayāt, vol. I, p.352.

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fols. 121b, 127b; Dīna, p.338; Ya'qūbī, II, p.392; Wafayāt, English trans., vol. 2, p.100. - 'Ijl is a north Arabian tribe and an important tribe of Bakr b. Wā'il. It is significant to note that before the

Ibrāhīm was brought up and educated with the sons of the 'Ijlites. Early in youth, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm served 'Īsā and Idrīs the 'Ijlites collecting the dues of their farms in Iṣbahān and Kūfa. He also used to accompany 'Īsā al-'Ijlī to Kūfa where he became acquainted with extreme Shi'ite ideas, and sympathized with Ahl al-Bayt.<sup>1</sup> He even joined the rising of al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijli in 119 A.H./737 at Kūfa,<sup>2</sup> but seemed to have managed to escape when the opportunity presented itself. Then he associated himself with Abū Mūsā al-Sarrāj, a prominent agitator for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt who taught him saddle-making and Shi'ite ideas.<sup>3</sup>

It was when some 'Ijlites were imprisoned in Kūfa either on suspicion of 'Abbāsīd activities, as was the case with 'Aṣim b. Yūnus al-'Ijli,<sup>4</sup> or on a charge of disagreeing with the governor on matters of revenue, as was the case with 'Īsā and Idrīs the 'Ijlites,<sup>5</sup> that Abū Muslim learned, for the first time, of the 'Abbāsīd revolutionary movement. While passing through Kūfa to the Ḥijāz to visit Ibrāhīm the Imām, 'Abbāsīd propagandists visited the imprisoned 'Ijlites and saw Abū Muslim serving them. They won him for their cause and took him to Ibrāhīm after requesting Abū Mūsā al-Sarrāj to dispense with his services.<sup>6</sup> Ibrāhīm took a liking to him, changed his name to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muslim and gave him the

---

(cont.) appearance of Abū Muslim among the 'Ijlites of Kūfa, Abū Maṣūūr, Mughīra b. Sa'īd, both extremist pro-'Alid partisans, were also described as 'Ijlites, E.I.<sup>1</sup> ('Idjl); E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Bayān b. Sam'ān); Goldziher, op.cit., I, pp. 48, 103. See below, chapter IV.

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 123b, citing Sābiq Mawla Ma'qil.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., II, p. 1620, citing Abū Zayd; Moscati, "Studi su Abū Muslim," II, op.cit. pp. 478, 480.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fols. 121b, 122a; Nubdha, fol. 259b.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 770b, citing Abū Mas'ūd al-Kūfī, Tab., II, p. 1727; cf. Dīna., p. 228.

kunya of Abū Muslim.<sup>1</sup> He remained in his service and used to be dispatched with secret messages to Kūfa and Khurasān<sup>2</sup> until 128/745 when he was sent to Khurasān to lead the rising. Abū Muslim was, therefore, a Persian Mawla<sup>3</sup> who spent his youth mostly at Kūfa before he was entrusted with the mission in Khurasān.

When the 'Abbāsīd Naqībs saw that, after about a quarter of a century of an active and unfailing propaganda, the situation in Khurasān had come to a head, Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī and other chief propagandists urged Ibrāhīm the Imām to send a man of his own house to represent him in Khurasān.<sup>4</sup> Having failed to persuade Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī, Qahṭaba al-Tā'ī and Ibrāhīm b. Salama, Ibrāhīm the Imām decided to send Abū Muslim. He named him as "One of the family of the prophet ", i.e. Anta Minnā Ahl al-Bayt and gave him the daughter of the propagandist Abū al-Najim 'Amrān b. Ismā'īl, a mawla of the same social status as Abū Muslim, in marriage.<sup>5</sup> Abū Muslim, however, had visited Khurasān several times before, once with Abū Salama al-Khallal.<sup>6</sup>

(cont.)

<sup>5</sup>Tab., II, p.1727; Akhbār, fols. 122a, 124a; Wafayāt, English trans., vol. 2, p.101.

<sup>6</sup>Akhbār, fol. 122a; Ya'qūbī, II, p.393.

<sup>1</sup>Ma'ārif, p.370; Imāma, 2, p. 217; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 392, 398; Akhbār, fols. 121bf., 129b; Nubdha, fol. 260a; Tab., II, p.1937. For the significance of giving a kunya to a Mawla, see Goldziher, Muh. Stud., vol. I, p.267; E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbasids).

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, pp. 24-25 citing Madā'inī; Akhbār, fol. 125a; Nubdha, fol. 260b; Dīna, p.339; F.H.A., p. 183; Wafayāt, vol. 2, p.102.

<sup>3</sup>The allegations that he was a Turk (cf. Spuler, op.cit., p.229) or a Kurd (Akhbār, fol. 122b; F.H.A., p.183; Wafayāt, English trans., vol. 2, p.108; Yafī'ī, fol. 81b) or Khurasānī by origin (Ansāb, Paris, 771a; Akhbar, fol. 122b) have no evidence to substantiate them. However, it is interesting to note that the Turkish origin of Abū Muslim was probably due

(cont.)

He must have been highly trusted by Ibrāhīm to be appointed as his personal representative. Nevertheless he was ordered to remain in constant touch with Abū Salama al-Khallāl in Kūfa and to obey the orders of Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī in Khurasān.<sup>1</sup>

Historical accounts preserve several versions of the instructions given by Ibrāhīm the Imām to Abū Muslim on the occasion of his Khurasānī mission. According to the version of Tabarī and Ibn Qutayba Ibrāhīm said:

"Oh 'Abd al-Rahmān you are one of us the Ahl al-Bayt, learn my instructions. Behold the Yamanites, honour them and settle among them for verily God will not fulfil this matter [Abbāsīd cause] except through them. Behold the Rabi'ites and blame them. Behold the Muḍarites, they are the close enemy, slay him whose affair you doubt... and if you were able not to leave an Arabic speaking tongue then do that, and everyone who reaches five feet [in height] and you accuse him kill him. Do not disobey Sulaymān b. Khathīr al-Khuzā'ī and consult him if you are in trouble."<sup>2</sup>

The above version of Ibrāhīm's instructions is by no means unanimously agreed upon by Muslim historians, and cannot therefore be accepted at its face value. It occurs in Tabarī without a chain of authorities and in Ibn Qutayba in a vague and somewhat incoherent form. It is not mentioned in Balādhurī or in Akhbār 'l-Abbās. Later historians do not

---

(cont.) to the epic literature of the guilds of the Akhīs, which made of Abū Muslim a Turkish national hero (see Melikoff-Sayyar, "Abu Muslim partisan des Akhīs", I.C.O., 1957).

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 771a; Tab., II, p.1949 citing al-Madā'ini; cf. Akhbār, fol. 125a; Wafayat, English trans., vol. 2, p.102.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., II, p.1960; see also Ansāb, fol. 771a. This title was already in use before Abū Muslim. It was conferred by the Prophet on Salman al-Fārsī, a Persian from Iṣbahan whom the Prophet had adopted as his mawla. It is reported that both the Prophet and 'Alī had regarded Salman as one of the Ahl al-Bayt. However, as Massignon maintains this move by the Prophet should be interpreted as the expression of personal liking for an early partisan of Islam and did not possess the religious significance this kind

count in this matter as they rely on earlier accounts. However, it is significant to note that Dināwārī<sup>1</sup> and the author of the Kitāb 'l-Uyūn wa'l-Hadā'iq<sup>2</sup> do not mention the alleged order to kill Arabs indiscriminately. The former states that the orders were to kill any Arab who refused to join, while the latter asserts that the orders were to kill "All the suspects" wa-'aqtul man shakakta fī 'Amrihī. Light on the matter is thrown by Akhbār 'l-'Abbās which quotes Abū Muslim as saying "The Imam ordered me to live among the Yamanites, to be friendly with Rabī'a and not to avoid those Mudarites who are good and to warn the majority of them not to follow the Umayyads and to gather the 'Ajam around me".<sup>3</sup> On another occasion Abū Muslim reminded Sulaymān al-Khuzā'i of the Imam's orders to associate with the Yamanites,<sup>4</sup>

---

(cont.) of adoption seems to have later acquired. For the extremists the title implied that the bearer shared the secret religious knowledge of his Imam. Several Hashimites gave it to a number of their Mawālī. When Ibrāhīm decided to send his Mawla Abū Muslim to Khurasān, he conferred the title on him in a tactical move intended to invest Abū Muslim, in the eyes of the Khurasānīs, with the qualities of trustworthiness, religious knowledge and devotion to the cause of Ahl al-Bayt. (See Sa'd, IV, pp. 53-57, 59, 81; Ṣifat al-Ṣafwa, vol. I, p.219; L. Massignon, Salman pak . . . . ., pp. 16-19. (Arabic translation by A. Badawī in Shakhsīyyat qalīqa fī 'l-Islam, Cairo 1946. See also below p210).

<sup>6</sup> Tab., III, pp. 24-25, 1949, citing Madā'inī; Akhbār, fols.128b, 129b.

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, p.1937; Akhbār, fol. 130a; F.H.A., p.183.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., II, p.1937; Imāma, 2, p.213; Nizā', pp. 50-51.

<sup>1</sup> Dīna, p.352.

<sup>2</sup> F.H.A., p.184.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 138b; Nubdha, fol. 260a.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 139a.



and, furthermore, in his letter to 'Alī b. al-Karmānī the leader of the Yamanites in Khurasān he says: "... my master /Ibrāhīm the Imām/ has ordered me to depend on you".<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to add that according to Ibn 'Asākir, Ibrāhīm ordered Abū Muslim "to remove every big tree on his way" and he adds "what he meant was to kill every /rival/ man of high esteem".<sup>2</sup>

Ibrāhīm's instructions as formulated in Ibn Qutayba's and Tabarī's versions have been accepted by some modern historians and taken as an evidence of the anti-Arab tendency of the 'Abbāsīd movement.<sup>3</sup> The version seems to be partly fabricated. The fabrication, probably of pro-Umayyad origin, is easily detectable as it is separated in the account by a conversation between Ibrāhīm the Imām and the da'īs from the rest of the instructions.<sup>4</sup> What confirms the assumption that it is of a fabrication is that its recurrence in another tradition where it is a question of the arrest and murder of Ibrāhīm the Imām as if it were a justification of the murder.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore the internal criticism of the alleged version of Ibrāhīm's instructions reveals numerous contradictions. How is it possible that Ibrāhīm, who has realized the importance of the Arab Yamanites and Rabī'ites as a decisive

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., fol. 148a; see also Muntakhab, fol. 88b.

<sup>2</sup> 'Asākir, vol. 2, pp. 291-292, citing Hishām b. Muḥammad. Professor C. Cahen also states that the Imām's order was to kill all the rival claimants to the caliphate (op.cit., p.30).

<sup>3</sup> Van Vloten, De opkomst der Abbāsīden, p.103; Welhausen, op.cit., p.534; Spuler, op.cit., p.41. Spuler accepts it on the ground that a fabricated piece of this kind would hardly still have been mentioned by Tabarī under the 'Abbāsīd rule (op.cit., p.41). But E. L. Petersen and Ch. Pellat have proved that the pro-Umayyad traditions were still alive under the 'Abbāsīd rule. (See 'Alī and Mu'awiyya, part II, p.109ff; Pellat, Jāhiz..., pp. 191ff, 202.

<sup>4</sup> Imama, 2, p.218.

factor in the victory of the 'Abbāsids, still orders Abū Muslim to kill all the Arabs in Khurasān. In fact Abū Muslim's behaviour is not compatible with the alleged instructions, as he even accepted Muḍarites<sup>1</sup> together with other Arab factions in his ranks.

It was very difficult for the Arab Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī to accept Abū Muslim as the representative of the Imām. To put it in his own words: "We had suffered a bad [time]; terrified, sleepless, some of us even lost hands and legs, others had their eyes and tongues taken out. We have lived under every kind of persecution and flogging and imprisonment were the easiest punishment we suffered. As we started to breathe life and the fruits of our planting ripened this unknown person appeared to us, we do not know who he was neither where he was from. By God I had known the da'wa before he was born."<sup>2</sup> The reason behind Sulaymān's refusal to accept Abū Muslim readily, apart from his relative youth<sup>3</sup> and, as Sulaymān thought, lack of experience which might endanger the future of the da'wa, there was, perhaps, the fact that Sulaymān had asked the Imām Ibrāhīm to send "a man of the family of the

---

(cont.)

<sup>5</sup> Tab., III, pp. 25-26, citing 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Rashīd; Athīr, vol. 5, p. 313.

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 139a, 141a, 150a.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., fol. 130b; cf. Tab., II, pp. 1937, 1960.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, p. 1960. According to Nubdha (fol. 260a) he was only in his early twenties. cf. Wafayāt, English trans., vol. 2, p. 104. Yāfi'ī, Mss., fol. 81a.

Prophet" i.e. of an 'Abbāsīd descent for instance, to represent him in Khurasān as he thought that this would be necessary to ensure the success of the movement in Khurasān. The destiny of Abū Muslim was at stake for a while until he found support in another Arab propagandist namely Abū Dā'ūd Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm who backed Abū Muslim's appointment as it was by the orders of the Imām.<sup>1</sup> Khālīd was seconded by other dā'īs who resented the haughtiness of Sulaymān and thought that it would be "much better and more proper if an alien were their leader rather than the one among them". Sulaymān yielded to the decision and Abū Muslim was accepted and settled first in a village where Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm lived. However, it was clear to Abū Muslim from the very beginning that a friendly approach to Sulaymān was vital for the success of his enterprise. He, therefore, showed Sulaymān the letter from the Imām ordering Abū Muslim to obey him, and headed "Do not suspect me for I am more obedient to you than your right hand."<sup>2</sup>

It was not possible for the 'Abbāsīd dā'īs to act until tribal conflict between the Yamanites and Rabi'ites on the one hand, and Muḡarites on the other hand, reached its climax. Balādhurī followed by Tabarī state that Abū Muslim could only act after the 'Asabiyya flared up in Khurasān.<sup>3</sup> The situation in Khurasān as in other provinces of the empire was affected by the tribal factional policy of the Umayyad

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 130b; Nubdha, fol. 268; Imāma, vol. 2, p.217; Tab., II, pp. 1961-1962.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 131a-131b; Nubdha, p.263a.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 773b, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Tab., II, p.1949.

caliphs. By appointing Naṣr b. Sayyār as governor of Khurasān,<sup>1</sup> Caliph Hishām was hoping to find a remedy for the serious situation there. Although Naṣr b. Sayyār belonged to the small tribe of Kināna in Khurasān, he in fact had a large tribal following. However, the real trouble started when Naṣr b. Sayyār was recalled from Khurasān in 125/742. But the murder of the caliph al-Walīd II enabled him to defy the newly appointed governor Manzūr b. Jahwar and remain in office.<sup>2</sup> In order to defend his position Naṣr had to preserve cordial relations with all tribal chieftains of the province. Although he won many Yamanites over and appointed them in administrative posts,<sup>3</sup> the chiefs of the 'Azd Jadī' b. 'Alī al-Karmānī defied his authority. Naṣr and Jadī' al-Karmānī were men of different pursuits. They had both considerable influence on the politics of Khurasān.<sup>4</sup> However, later on Naṣr seems to have stood a better chance to obtain the governorship of Khurasān, to which they both aspired, as he was, apart from his influence within a large tribal grouping, a capable administrator and a man of tactics in war.<sup>5</sup> In July 744 Naṣr succeeded in imprisoning Jadī' al-Karmānī and appointed Ḥarb b. 'Amr al-Wāshijī

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1478 citing Madā'inī; cf. Dennett, op.cit., p.141; Sha'ban, op.cit., p.176.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, p.1845, citing Madā'inī.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1847-1848, citing Madā'inī, cf. Dennett, op.cit., p.267.

<sup>4</sup>On this subject see Sha'ban, op.cit., pp. 213 ff.

<sup>5</sup>Bayān, vol. I, pp. 47-48; cf. Tab., II, p.1478 citing Madā'inī; Dīna, pp. 342-343; F.H.A., p.184, where the author says that Jadī' b. al-Karmānī was not appointed governor of Khurasān due to a superstitious fear that his name might bring ill luck, as Jadī' means "cut off" while Naṣr means "victory".

as a leader of the Azd, but the latter was not able to cope with the task, and was replaced by Jamīl b. al-Nu'mān who proposed to kill Jadī' al-Karmānī. Naṣr, however, spared his life.<sup>1</sup> Naṣr's actinn should be viewed against the background of the tribal situation in Khurasān. Having already been in a serious trouble with the central government, Naṣr did not want to stir a new trouble at home with Jadī' al-Karmānī. Al-Karmānī was a man of considerable prestige, and is described by sources as shaykh al-'Arab, and shaykh Khurasān wa fārisuhā.<sup>2</sup> He commanded the blind obedience of a considerable number of mainly Yamanite followers. It is even said that he once refused to ally himself with Naṣr in marriage relations as Naṣr was not his social equal.<sup>3</sup> Jadī' b. al-Karmānī escaped from prison through a canal with the help of a slave of his,<sup>4</sup> and continued in his defiance to Naṣr's authority demanding his withdrawal from the political scene and the appointment of a governor from Bakr b. Wā'il, a Rabi'ite tribe,<sup>5</sup> which was, apparently a neutral tribe.

It seems that the dismissal of Jadī' al-Karmānī and the appointment of a more agreeable chief as head of the Azd by Naṣr had gravely alarmed the Arab tribesmen in Khurasān. The Yamanites and their allies the Rabi'ites as well as certain Muḍarites joined al-Karmānī's ranks.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1858, 1859. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah b. al-Mubārak.

<sup>2</sup>Ma'd, fol. 67a; Imāma, vol. 2, p.218; Tab., II, p.1829; F.H.A., p.186; Dina., p.355.

<sup>3</sup>Dina., p.355.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 777a; cf. Tab., II, p.1861.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., II, p.1866 citing Madā'inī; Rabi'a was the ally of Azd.

<sup>6</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1925, 1933; Sha'han, op.cit., p.230.

However, the same groups were represented in Naṣr's camp. Although al-Karmānī's partisans were generally called the Yamanites and those of Naṣr the Muḍarites, the conflict was not, strictly speaking, that of Yamanites against Muḍarites. Naṣr b. Sayyār was, ultimately, confirmed in his office by the new governor of Irāq in 126/744.<sup>1</sup> This infuriated his old rival al-Karmānī who declared now an open rebellion demanding that "The book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet should be put into practice".<sup>2</sup> Thus al-Karmānī's rebellion which had started as a struggle for power between him and Naṣr took now the form of tribal warfare between two contending tribal groupings. In alliance with al-Ḥārith b. Surayj al-Murjū'ī another tribal leader of Khurasān who had been in rebellion since 116 A.H., al-Karmānī occupied Merw which had been deserted by Naṣr.<sup>3</sup> Al-Karmānī was, subsequently, recognized as governor of Khurasān by his followers and on this occasion he, naturally, got rid of his rival al-Ḥārith b. Surayj al-Murjū'ī whom he killed in 128/746.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile chaos reigned in the central province of Syria. Marwān b. Muḥammad's legal claim to the caliphate rested on uncertain foundations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Tab., II, p.1855 citing Madā'inī.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., p.1930, cf. p.1858.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, p.1890 citing Madā'inī; Khalīfā, Tārīkh, fol. 267; Dennett, op.cit., pp. 272 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., II, p. 1934 citing Madā'inī.

He had, in fact, risen on behalf of the legitimate claimants to the caliphate, the sons of the murdered caliph al-Walīd II (743-744),<sup>1</sup> who were killed in obscure circumstances. However, he was ironically enough proclaimed caliph in 127/744<sup>2</sup> with the help of his experienced troops of the Jazīra and Armenia as well as the Qaysites of Syria. Marwān had, therefore, no legal right to the caliphate. Historical accounts describe him as a "usurper" of the caliphate from its legitimate claimants.<sup>3</sup> The Syrians made no move to oppose him, but soon discontent grew steadily in many parts of Syria and Jazīra. The Ḥijāz and the Yaman were devastated by Kharijites. In Egypt the army commanders defied Marwān and raised up a governor of their own choice.<sup>4</sup> In the ever resentful province of Irāq, as well as in the eastern provinces, the death of Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn and that of his son Yaḥya stirred up a great deal of resentment, and the vengeance for them became the very basic motive for the anti-Umayyad propaganda.<sup>5</sup> Marwān, in his turn, had to face another rising in Kūfa led by the Ja'farite 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya.<sup>6</sup> A sectarian at heart he was ahead of the Janāhiyya which was characterized by its extremist (ghuluww) dogmas. The interesting

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., p.1874.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., p.1890 citing 'Abd 'l Wahhāb b. Ibrāhīm. On the legal status of Marwan as caliph, see Dennett, op.cit., p.231.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 120a; Azdī, fol. 56; نجل مروان ذلك عجة له رادى الخليفة see also F.H.A., pp. 156-158; Tab. II., pp. 1891-92; Ibn al-'Imād shadharāt al-Dhahab, vol. I, p.172.

<sup>4</sup> On the chaotic situation of the empire, see Welhausen, op.cit., p.371ff; Dennett, op.cit., p.226ff.

<sup>5</sup> Balādhurī states that Abū Muslim rebelled demanding revenge for Yaḥya b. Zayd... and he put on Sawād /black/ in mourning for the martyrs of Ahl al-Bayt. (Ansab, fol. 683a, citing Abū Ubayda. cf. 682a too). See also Maqatil, 137; Akhbar, fols.109bf; Dina., p.345. (cont.)

point of this rising, as far as this study is concerned, is that it was joined by several 'Abbāsids such as 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad (Abū Ja'far), 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad (Abū 'l-'Abbās) and 'Isā b. 'Alī.<sup>1</sup> It may seem curious that prominent 'Abbāsīd figures had joined and aided 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwīya, and yet the very same man, after his final defeat at the hands of the Syrians, was ultimately murdered by the chief 'Abbāsīd propagandist Abū Muslim in 129/746.<sup>2</sup> This, in fact, was typical of the 'Abbāsīd strategy. 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwīya had achieved a considerable degree of success, and at first he conducted it in the name of al-Riḍa min ahl al-Bayt which resembles one of the 'Abbāsīd revolutionary slogans. Thus this 'Abbāsīd expedient was aimed at extending the Umayyad army and diverting their attention from Khurasān, the centre of 'Abbāsīd subversive activities, to Irāq and Fārs. The 'Abbāsīds might also have thought it advisable to encourage 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwīya to try his luck in a rising which was, in some aspect, a rehearsal for their own rising. However, no sooner did Ibn Mu'āwīya claim the Imamate for himself<sup>3</sup> than the 'Abbāsīds considering him a dangerous rival, did him to death in Khurasān where the 'Abbāsīd

(cont.)

<sup>6</sup> Maqātil, p.118; Tab., II, p.1878; Ash'arī, p.85; Sa'd, V, p.242; Agh., vol. II, p.74. cf. Moscatti, "studi su Abū Muslim" II, op.cit., p.484; idem, op.cit., per una storia dell' antica si'a, pp. 259-260; Cahen, op.cit., pp. 316-317.

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, p.167; Agh., vol. II, p.74; Akhbār, Iḡbahān, 2, p.42.

<sup>2</sup> Ma'd, fol. 26a; Bayān, vol. 2, pp. 85-86; Na'arīf, vol. I, p.207; Asākir, vol. 7, p.156.

<sup>3</sup> Agh., vol. II, p.74, Muḥammad b. Ja'far b. al-Walīd.



propagandists would not tolerate any claimant whether he were from the family of the Prophet or not.

These favourable circumstances made the 'Abbāsīd propagandists realize that it was time for vigorous action. Abū Muslim spent his first year (128-129) in active propaganda to win supporters in the villages of Khuzā'a in Merw.<sup>1</sup> The struggle between Ibn al-Karmānī and Naṣr b. Sayyār had reached a stalemate and the Arab tribesmen of both factions were "tried with the existing situation and longing for a new one to arise... The Yamanite partisans of the 'Abbāsīd movement called upon other Yamanites. So did the Rabites and the Muḍarites. Thus the 'Abbāsīd following began to increase."<sup>2</sup> The author of Kitāb 'l-'Uyūn<sup>3</sup> confirms this view and states that when the people noticed this state of rivalry between the contending Arab leaders they started to join Abū Muslim. Abū Muslim received, in 129A.H., the order of Ibrāhīm the Imām to notify Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī in order to proclaim the revolution.<sup>4</sup> Ibrāhīm also sent Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī with two banners al-Zīl, i.e. the shadow (as there is always a shadow on earth, so there would always be the 'Abbāsīd cause) and al-Saḥāb, i.e. clouds (clouds cover the whole earth and so would the 'Abbāsīd cause).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1952, Madā'inī; Akhbār, fol. 132b.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., fols. 119a, see also 151a.

<sup>3</sup>F.H.A., p.188.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., II, p.1952, citing Madā'inī.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., II, p.1954; F.H.A., p.186.

Opinions differed as to what place should be chosen to declare the revolution.<sup>1</sup> Abū 'l-Najim 'Amrān b. Ismā'īl, a mawla, suggested Khwarazim as the district was far away from Naṣr's army and once the revolution was declared 'Abbāsid partisans would join in before the Syrian army would reach them. This suggestion was strongly opposed by the Arabs Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī, Mūsa b. Ka'ab al-Tamīmī, and Lāḥiz b. Qurayz al-Tamīmī. They suggested that Merw al-Shāhjan was the most suitable place for the revolt, probably due to its unique geographical position, surrounded by villages inhabited by Arab settlers who were the main target of the 'Abbāsid propaganda. Furthermore the Umayyad government is weak and "Once we got hold of Merw we got hold of all Khurasān" because "if the root were destroyed the branches would not last long". The Arabs in Merw and its surrounding villages had already lived there for a long time, and a considerable part of the previously Arab Muqātila had, possibly, acquired lands or practised trade.<sup>2</sup> There they mingled with the native population, married from them, adopted many of their customs and spoke their language in addition to Arabic.<sup>3</sup> The Arab settlers of Merw, in particular, also shared the grievances of the natives against the Dihqāns who had, by the treaty of Merw, signed by Arab conquerors, been left in charge of collecting the tribute.<sup>4</sup> However, many Arab notables seem to have owned or lived in

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 132a ff.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 132b, قری ضراعه fol. 133a قصور ضراعه fol. 153 قری بنی تمیم  
 و سایر اعیان مصر fol. 147a, سرقتی بنی عذر قری قویق fol. 132a سرور با خلقا بیدار من افرواننا  
 See also Sha'bān, op.cit., pp. 53, 76, 154.

<sup>3</sup> Haywān, 4, p. 71; Manāqib, p. 40; Jahiz, Rasā'il, ed. 1964, p. 220; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 294.

<sup>4</sup> Sha'bān, op.cit., pp. 30-31.

villages with their tribal groups and Mawālī. Scattered historical accounts provide us with examples of such cases: Ḥarb b. 'Amir al-Wāshijī, Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī, Asīd b. 'Abdallah al-Khuzā'ī had villages of their own;<sup>1</sup> so had Banī al-'Anbar.<sup>2</sup> The inhabitants of the village of Qaṣr Asfād were Arabs in their majority.<sup>3</sup> Khulm was an Azdite country.<sup>4</sup> The Muḍarite al-Muḥtafaz b. 'Uthmān had a house in the village of Al-Līn<sup>5</sup> which, probably, means that a number of his tribe were settling there too.

As to Merw, it was the centre of the Arab administration in Khurasān, as well as the rallying point of Arab Muḡātīla who waged war against Māwarā' al-Nahar and Transoxania. Tabarī describes it as "Bayḍat Khurasān"<sup>6</sup> indicating its important strategic and administrative position. Maqḍīsī calls it "Umm al-Qura"<sup>7</sup> of Khurasān as Mecca was called Umm al-Qura of the Ḥijāz. There is no exact information about the number of the Arabs who lived in Merw or its surrounding villages. However, it seems that it was the practice of Arab Muḡātīla to entrench themselves in villages surrounding cities during the process of Tamsīr.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1862; Akhbār, fols. 132b, 133b; Tab., II, p.1963.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, p.1579.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, p.493 citing Madā'inī. For further reference see Buldān, p.280; Tab., II, p.1969.

<sup>4</sup>Maqḍīsī, p.303.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., II, pp.1969f.

<sup>6</sup>Tab., II, p.1558; Al-'Alī, Al-'Arab fī Khurasān, B.C.A., 1959, p.65.

<sup>7</sup>Maqḍīsī, p.229.

<sup>8</sup>Akhbār, fol. 177a; Sha'bān, op.cit., p.56.

It is worth recalling here that when Qutayba b. Muslim al-Bāhilī occupied Balkh he took residence in the village of Baroqān near Balkh, and even when Asad b. 'Abdallah al-Qaṣrī the governor of Khurasān shifted his capital from Merw to Balkh he had new villages built and settled most of his troops there.<sup>1</sup> It was very probable, therefore, that Arab Muqātila during the Arab conquest were allowed to live in the villages surrounding the city of Merw.<sup>2</sup> Speaking on the effect of the environment on people, Jāhiz states "If we see the sons of Arab men and women who settled in Khurasān we can hardly distinguish them from native villagers".<sup>3</sup> Though indirect, this is one of the earliest references to Arab settlements in the villages of Khurasān. Safīdhānj, Al Līn, and Fanīn were villages of Khuzā'a,<sup>4</sup> Bunya was the village of Banī Tay; while Basān was the village of Banī Naṣr.<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, no surprise that Maqdisī preserves the Khurasānī proverb which says "Rijāl Merw min qurāha",<sup>6</sup> i.e. the men of Merw are from its villages. It was those Arab countrymen and hard fighting villagers who were sought by the 'Abbāsīd propagandists. The 'Abbāsīd revolt, in fact, started in the Khuzā'ite villages of

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1602 citing Madā'inī; Sha'bān, op.cit., p.215.

<sup>2</sup>When Ibn al-Athīr refers to the village of Sinjān he states:

وهو قرية على باب صمر ويقال لها درستان وبرطان عسكر الاسلام اول ورودهم صمر  
see Lubāb, vol. I, p.569.

<sup>3</sup>Jāhiz, Rasā'il, ed. Cairo 1964, p.220.

قد زرى الناس ابناء العرب والاعرابيات الذين وقصوا الي خراسان فترسك النهم علوم الرى

<sup>4</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1579, 1952, 1964; Akhbār, fol. 32b.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., II, p.1026.

<sup>6</sup>Mu'jam, vol. 4, p.511.

Safīdhānj, Al-Līn and Fanīn. Tabarī states that it was the Arab quarter of Kharqāna including the village of Safīdhānj which was among the first to declare for Abū Muslim.<sup>1</sup> The 'Abbāsīd partisans who flocked to the district of Merw found refuge and food in the Khuza'ite villages.<sup>2</sup> The Arabs then were fully justified in priding themselves on being the earliest and most loyal partisans of the 'Abbāsīds.<sup>3</sup>

The 'Abbāsīd propagandists cleverly realized the importance and the military strength of these Arab tribal groups which blindly followed their chieftains, and utilized them for the cause. Once won over, those tribal chieftains were joined by their followers en masse. Historical accounts in Balādhurī, Akhbār 'l-'Abbās, Azdī and Ṭabarī dealing with the progress of the 'Abbāsīd army to Irāq and Syria often mention the names of those Arab chieftains who were given the military rank of Qā'id.<sup>4</sup> They supported the 'Abbāsīd cause and fought for it against many a revolt later on. Ibn al-Kalbī<sup>5</sup> speaks of many Arabs who distinguished themselves by their deeds for the da'wa such as Khafāf b. Hubayra, "the bravest cavalry man", 'Uqba b. Ḥarb, "a Qā'id in the da'wa", and Zuhayr b. Muhammad al-Azdī. 'Alqama b. Ḥakīm and al-'Alā' b.

<sup>1</sup> Tab., II, p.1954.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols.133a f.

<sup>3</sup> Manāqib, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fols. 672a-72b, citing Madā'inī; Tab., II, p.2001, III, p.291 citing Sahl b. 'Aqīdī; Akhbār, fols. 132b, 164b, 165a, 166a, 172b, 184a, 185

<sup>5</sup> Ma'd, fol. 66b; Jamharat, fols. 91a, 92a. See also Akhbār, fol. 164b.

« رجل اثرا النقباء والامن صميم العرب ... ربه عن هذا الذي باشر قتيل مروان ومن هزم ابن هبيرة ومن قتل ابن ضياره ومن قتل نباته بن منظله الاعراب الدعوى والصميم من اهل الدولة »

Sālīm joined Abū Muslim with 700 men,<sup>1</sup> 'Abdallah b. Sha'ba joined Abū Muslim with 1,000 men,<sup>2</sup> and Khāzim b. Khuzayma occupied Merw al-Rūḍh with the help of his tribe Tamīm.<sup>3</sup> A tribal leader of Banī al-Ḥārith joined the 'Abbāsīd army with 100 men.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Balādhurī preserves an account which mentions several names of Wuḥūquwād Khurasān, i.e. the prominent Khurasānī commanders who were with 'Abdallah b. 'Alī in Syria. They were all Arabs.<sup>5</sup> According to Akhbār 'l 'Abbās, the Sahīfatu 'l Safrā', reported to have been handed by Abū Hāshim to Muḥammad the 'Abbāsīd contained particulars of the timing of the revolution and what is important, information on the Arab quarters which were ready to support it <sup>6</sup> وأي أمير العرب انظر. Being more or less a local historian, Azdī disregards the detrimental tribal feuds in Khurasān, though he emphasises the internal strife between tribal confederations as the important aspect of Muslim politics of that time. He relates a statement<sup>7</sup> made by al-Manṣūr in reply to a Muḍarite protest that he favoured the Yamanites. Al-Manṣūr maintains that Marwān II favoured the Qaysites and neglected the Yamanites, which resulted in a rising of the Yamanites in every region. Finally the Yamanites

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 132b.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 146a.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, p.1959 Madā'inī.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 176b.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fols. 762a-762b citing Madā'inī; Tabarī also mentions a number of Arab Khurasānīs in many different accounts. Apart from the well-known personalities of an Arab origin, see II, p.2001, III, pp. 5, 7, 67, 94, 136, 137.

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fol. 84b.

<sup>7</sup> Azdī, fol. 194.

sponsored the 'Abbāsīd da'wa and assassinated Marwān II. Moreover, when 'Abdallah b. 'Alī faced a rising in Damascus he wrote to the Yamanites of the city "You and your brothers from Rabī'a were our Shī'a and Anṣār in Khurasān. You have captured for us the city of Damascus and killed al-Walīd b. Mu'āwiya. You are part of us and our affairs depend on you. l ask you 7 to give up lthe siege7 and let us deal with Muḡār."<sup>1</sup> If these accounts are to be credited the 'Abbāsīd revolution was to a great extent a Yamanite-Rabite protest against Marwān's Qaysite policy.

It is probably significant to note here that the term Ahl Khurasān has been wrongly taken by some scholars<sup>2</sup> to mean non-Arab Khurasānīs or Persians. Jāhīz often speaks of the Khurasānī Arabs;<sup>3</sup> Tabarī as has already been mentioned gives a number of Khurasānī Arab names. In one of his accounts he states "When Ibrāhīm rebelled in Baṣra, al-Manṣūr sent the two sons of 'Aqīl who were commanders from Ahl Khurasān from the tribe of Ṭay..."<sup>4</sup> Many other Arabs were called Khurasānīs, such as 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd, Mālik b. Ṭarīf, al-Haytham b. Mu'āwiya al-'Atkī,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., fol. 124, see also 112-113, 116.

<sup>2</sup>Sadighī, op.cit., p.48; Wiet, J.W.H., 1953, pp. 68ff. One cannot help noticing that the term Ahl Khurasan as used by early chroniclers almost certainly denotes the Arab settlers of Khurasan in the same way as the terms Ahl al-Baṣra, Ahl al-Kūfa and Ahl al-Shām used to designate the Arabs of these cities and provinces. The more so as early historians such as Ibn al-Muqaffa', Balādhurī and Azdī often stress the non-Arab origin of certain Persian Khurasanīs when they happen to mention them. (See e.g. Ibn al-Muqaffa', Risala fī 'l Saḡaba, p.124).

<sup>3</sup>Nanāqib, pp. 35, 37.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.291, citing 'Aqīl b. Ismā'īl.

<sup>5</sup>Op.cit., p.137.

Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī,<sup>1</sup> Bassām b. Ibrāhīm<sup>2</sup> and al-'Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf.<sup>3</sup> The reason of the confusion about the term Ahl Khurasān is presumably due to the 'Abbāsīd policy which tried to keep the Khurasānīs, whichever tribe or district they belonged to, as intact and separate unit in their army.<sup>4</sup> Consequently they were regarded later as a Persian unit in contrast to the other units which bore Arab tribal names. ✓

After proclaiming the revolt on the 25th Ramaḍān 129/June 747<sup>5</sup> in the name of al-Riḍā min āl al-Bayt, and to establish "the book of God and the sunna of the Prophet", Abū Muslim entrenched himself in the Khuzāite village of Safīdhanj, and sent ḍā'īs to the surrounding villages and cities to announce the battle cry of the revolt, and to rally the 'Abbāsīd partisans.<sup>6</sup> In these early days of the revolt Abū Muslim was not as strong as some sources imply.<sup>7</sup> His followers, in fact, numbered between 3,000 and 4,000.<sup>8</sup> It is worth noting that when the 'Īd prayer was held it was the Arab Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī and not the Mawla Abū Muslim who led the prayer introducing new religious forms differing from the Umayyad practice.<sup>9</sup> To increase his followers Abū Muslim

---

<sup>1</sup> Manāqib, pp. 35, 36; Ibn al-Kalbī, fol. 160a.

<sup>2</sup> Tab. III, p.75, see further Tab., III, pp. 94, 67.

<sup>3</sup> Agh., vol. 8, p.15.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, p.366 citing Khālid b. Yazīd.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., II, p.1954 citing Abū al-Khaffāb.

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fols. 135a, 136a; Tab., II, p.1953 citing Abū al-Khaffāb.

<sup>7</sup> Tab., II, pp.1475, 1499, 1962, 1952; Dīna, pp. 355, 344, 359-60, 335; F.H.A., p.188.

<sup>8</sup> Akhbār, fol. 134b; Nubdha, fol. 264a; Tab., II, p.1955, cf. Imāma, 2, p.219.  
(cont.)



even welcomed slaves,<sup>1</sup> who began deserting their masters, to join him. When their masters demanded their return Abū Muslim denied any responsibility and left it to the slaves to decide. They, not unnaturally, opted to stay, saying "Our masters are Āl Muḥammad". Subsequently, Muṣ'ab b. Qays was appointed for the sole purpose of recruiting slaves and Abū Muslim then organised them in military units under the command of the Arab Dā'ūd b. b. Karrāt. A body of them was sent to reinforce the 'Abbāsīd dā'ī Mūsā b. Muṣ'ab at Abīward, and also to Nasā. They seem to have inflicted heavy casualties among the Umayyad troops and the natives of these cities, a fact which was utilized by Naṣr's propaganda and Abū Muslim, naturally, tried to disassociate himself from these acts of devastation and revenge.<sup>2</sup> However, using the slaves in war was not an 'Abbāsīd innovation, as they were several times used by the Umayyad governors of Khurasān to reinforce the Arab army and were even promised their freedom in a desperate moment.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile Merw al-Rūdh was an easy gain to the 'Abbāsīd, owing to the brilliant move of Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī, an 'Abbāsīd partisan from Tamīm, who played upon the tribal sympathies of his tribe saying "I am one of you and I wish to gain control of Merw. If I took it, then it will be yours as well as mine." In this way Merw al-Rūdh fell to the

---

(cont.)

<sup>9</sup>Tab., II, p.1955 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭab, F.H.A., p.187.

<sup>1</sup>Akhbār, fol. 136b; Nubdha, fol. 264b; cf. Tab., II, pp. 1968-1969 citing Mada'inī; 'Asakir, 2, p.291, citing Hishām b. Muḥammad; B. Lewis, "An apocalyptic...", op.cit., pp. 308 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Akhbār, fols. 138a, 141a.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, p.1976, citing Mada'inī.

'Abbāsids.<sup>1</sup>

In attempting to regain Merw al-Shahjān from the rebel Jadī' al-Karmanī without success, Naṣr wrote from Nīshapūr to Marwān II asking for help and warning the caliph of the great dangers lying ahead. He ended his letter by exclaiming: "Is Umayya awake or sleeping?"<sup>2</sup> Marwān was certainly not dormant, he was very much occupied with the revolts in Syria itself, Egypt, the Hijāz and Irāk.<sup>3</sup> What worsened the situation was that the relations between Naṣr and Yazīd b. 'Umar b. Hubaya seemed to be those of jealousy and rivalry. If Ibn Hubayra had had his own way he would not have allowed Naṣr to be the governor of Khurasān; when the latter appealed for help Ibn Hubayra did not respond. Tabarī states that Ibn Hubayra justified himself as not having enough men to spare<sup>4</sup>, Mas'ūdī<sup>5</sup> says "He pretended to be occupied with the troubles of Irāk", Dīnawārī<sup>6</sup> relates that Ibn Hubayra maintained that "the people of Irāk were not to be considered loyal [for the Umayyad cause]". Ibn Qutayba<sup>7</sup> clarifies the matter by saying that "Ibn Hubayra was eager to bring about Naṣr's downfall and to humiliate him". This isolated

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1959 citing Madā'inī.

<sup>2</sup>Bayān, I, p.158; Agh., 7, p.128; Ya'qūbī, II, p.408; Tab., II, p.1973.

<sup>3</sup>Imāma, 2, p.220, cf. Dennett, op.cit., pp. 292 ff; Welhausen, op.cit., pp. 379 ff.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., II, p.1974.

<sup>5</sup>Murūj, VI, p.65.

<sup>6</sup>Dīna, pp. 358-359.

<sup>7</sup>Uyūn, I, p.128; cf. Akhbār, fols. 157a, 159b.

Naṣr who had to find a way out for himself. He approached Jadī' al-Karmānī suggesting a meeting to which al-Karmānī surprisingly agreed. But at the meeting place al-Karmānī was assassinated by Ḥātim b. al-Ḥārith b. Surayj al-Murj'ī in revenge for his father. Naṣr seems to have had a hand in this conspiracy as he strangled al-Karmānī.<sup>1</sup> However 'Alī b. Jadī' al-Karmānī succeeded his father as a leader of the Azd. As for the 'Abbāsid partisans, Naṣr conducted a vigorous campaign of propaganda against them. He represented them as atheists who "worship cats!! and heads",<sup>2</sup> "They are none but mobs, cattle, slaves and unworthy Arabs and Mawālī". They are, on many occasions, described as 'ULūj, Majūs i.e. magian , Sufahā', i.e. foolish mob; Suḡāt al-'Arab, and 'Ajam'.<sup>3</sup> The Umayyads were the only representatives of the Sunna and Jamā'a.<sup>4</sup> One of these accusations seems interesting and worth further attention. 'Abbāsid partisans were described as Suḡāt al-'Arab i.e. the lower Arabs or the dregs of society. This was certainly true of the early followers of Abū Muslim who flocked to him from the villages of Merw al-Shāhjan and were those Arab settlers deprived of their Arab privileges, who lived on the land like the Iranian natives and paid tribute to the Dahāqīn. This term, in fact, could never have been used to describe the Arab Muqātīla.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1975; cf. Ya'qūbī, II, p.407; Ansāb, fol. 777b.

<sup>2</sup>If the account of Dionysius of Tell Mahré is correct, "Head worshippers" may also refer to Manicheans. (Dionysius, op.cit., pp. 69f).

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fols. 142a, 141b, 140a, 137a; Nubdhā, fol. 265b; cf. Tab., II, pp. 1991-2, 1856 citing Madā'inī.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fols. 166b, 180a; van Vloten, op.cit., pp. 35, 72.

This religio-political propaganda made some kind of appeal to the religiously inclined and the common people,<sup>1</sup> and for some time worried the 'Abbāsīd propagandists, who naturally applied the same tactics in their counter propaganda. A public meeting was held and Abū Muslim and other Naqībīs followed by the 'Abbāsīd partisans swore allegiance before Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī "To call for the book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet, and to uphold justice and oppose oppression".<sup>2</sup> These accusations and counter-accusations were merely for propaganda reasons, as Naṣr and Abū Muslim continuously approached each other for an agreed reconciliation. The famous verses of Naṣr appealing to the tribes to unite against the 'Abbāsīd partisans, and the reply of an Arab partisan of the 'Abbāsīd movement to him throw a vivid light on the propagandist character of the movement.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore the Umayyads themselves in a later stage addressed the 'Abbāsīd army by the words "Ya Ma'shar al-Muslimīn" i.e. "Oh Muslims".<sup>4</sup> Another tactical move by Abū Muslim intended to counter Naṣr's propaganda was to treat the captives well and to free them so that they might go back and tell their fellow-tribesmen in the Umayyad camp what they had observed in the 'Abbāsīd camp, namely, that the 'Abbāsīds were pious and humane. It is rather significant that in one of the early engagements between the 'Abbāsīd troops led by Mālīk

<sup>1</sup> Tab., II, p.1965, citing Madā'ini; Akhbār, fols. 141b, 142a.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 142b.

<sup>3</sup> Naṣr, referring to the 'Abbāsīd partisans said (Dīna., p.360):

ليسوا ابي عرب منا فخرهم ولا صميم الدوالي ان هم نسبوا

Al-'Akkī an Arab pro-'Abbāsīd partisan replied:

لنا ثباتي على الرض من امر فبقا نطالب من موالي ومن عرب

i.e. for the sake of God we do not favour any of those whom we are asking be they Hawālī or Arabs. (Akhbār, fol. 154a).

(cont.)

b. al-Haytham al-Khuzā'ī and the Umayyads led by Yazīd, a mawla of Naṣr, Yazīd was arrested and then freed to tell Naṣr about 'Abbāsīd piety and sincerity.<sup>1</sup>

It seems that the tribal feuds were accelerated in Khurasān by the arrival from Irāk of a new political figure, the Kharijite Shaybān b. Salama l-Ḥarūwrī. Until recently modern scholars<sup>2</sup> were puzzled by his sudden appearance and about his identification. This is largely due to the confused historical accounts of him.<sup>3</sup> In the light of new evidence offered by Dennett<sup>4</sup> on the basis of an account of Balādhurī, we are in a position to judge his previous activities in Irāk and Fārs. Shaybān the little (al-Ṣaghīr) was a partisan of al-Ḍaḥāk b. Qays the Kharijite rebel of Irāk; after their defeat Shaybān al-Ṣaghīr joined 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya, but after the latter's defeat Shaybān made his way to Khurasān through Sīstān. 'Alī b. al-Karīmānī took the opportunity of exploiting the presence of this new adventurer by seeking his collaboration against "the supporters of the Satan", i.e. the Umayyads.<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fol. 166b.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p. 1957 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>2</sup>Welhausen, op.cit., p.498.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 777b; Tab., II, p.1948 citing Abū Mikhnaf, III, p.78.

<sup>4</sup>Dennett, op.cit., pp. 290-291; see also L. V. Vaglieri, R.S.O., 1949, xxiv, p.31. Shaybān al-Ṣaghīr is not to be confused with Shaybān al-Yashkurī.

<sup>5</sup>Ansāb, fol. 777b; see also Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 267; Akhbār, fols. 144a ff; Tab., II, p.1992; F.H.A., pp. 165-166.

In the summer of 747 there seem to be three prominent powers in Khurasān, 'Alī b. Jadī' al-Karmānī, occupying Merw, with a considerable number of followers from the Yamanites, Rabi'ites and even Muḍarites. He also had Shaybān al-Ṣaghīr on his side; Naṣr b. Sayyār, occupying Nīshābūr, with tribesmen from Muḍar and Rabi'a and part of the Syrian troops and Abū Muslim with supporters who mainly came from the Arab villages of Merw.

Noticing the growing danger of Abū Muslim and realizing that no reconciliation with 'Alī b. al-Karmānī was possible, Naṣr proposed a truce between him, Ibn al-Karmānī and Shaybān the Kharijite. Modern historians misled by the generalization of some accounts in Tabarī,<sup>1</sup> which represent the one year truce as an agreement among the three Arab leaders to crush Abū Muslim, have over-emphasized this unsuccessful diplomatic move by Naṣr. In fact, the truce was only apparent. What had been reached was not an agreement between allies, as the enmity smouldered on, but only a temporary truce. The political atmosphere was very tense. At a meeting with a religious group of the people of Merw, Abū Muslim threatened, by a slip of the tongue, to kill Naṣr b. Sayyār and Shaybān the Kharijite, a mistake criticized later by Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Kuzā'ī.<sup>2</sup> As a result Shaybān was driven closer to Naṣr,<sup>3</sup> while 'Alī b. al-Karmānī was far from reaching an understanding with him.

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1964, 1984; Athīr, vol. 5, p.279.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1965 f citing Nadā'inī.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fols. 144a f., 146a f.

But when Herāt was occupied by the Arab al-Naṣr al-Dabbī in the name of the 'Abbāsids, Naṣr took the opportunity to draw the attention of Ibn al-Karīmānī and Shaybān to Abū Muslim's danger, and proposed the above-mentioned truce. 'Alī b. al-Karīmānī and Shaybān endeavoured to utilize the situation to destroy Naṣr's followers. They realized that if they came to terms, temporarily, with Naṣr, Abū Muslim would fight Naṣr because "the authority is in Muḍar". If they do not sign the truce, on the other hand, Abū Muslim would become reconciled with Naṣr and attack them. So the truce was only a stratagem to make Naṣr and Abū Muslim attack each other, in order that "Their eyes would rejoice at their [the Muḍarite] being killed".<sup>1</sup> As to Naṣr's motives, they were not sincere either. He intended to utilize 'Alī b. al-Karīmānī and Shaybān to put an end to Abū Muslim, which he could have done if the truce had been successful. This, in fact, was the motive behind that temporary truce which has wrongly been called in some accounts of Tabarī, Sulḥ al-'Arab, while the author of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās rightly calls it Muwāda'a i.e. truce.<sup>2</sup> It is worth recalling that the relationship between Jadī' al-Karīmānī and Naṣr was never marked by friendliness and trust. The only occasion when al-Karīmānī put his trust in Naṣr he had to pay very dearly for it in terms of his own life. It was, therefore, impossible for 'Alī, the son of the murdered Jadī' al-Karīmānī to trust

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1966 Madā'inī.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, p.1980 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb, p.1965 Akhbār, fol. 145a. On the meaning of Sulḥ and Muwāda'a, see I. Muṣṭafa, al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. I, pp. 522, 1032.

اصطلاح القوم: زال ما بينهم من خلاف .. واتفقوا . وادع: هادنه وثارته

Naṣr. However, Naṣr's move put the 'Abbāsid propagandists in a precarious position. In accordance with the truce Naṣr regained Merw, and Abū Muslim on the advice of Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī presumably in order to avoid a clash with Naṣr, withdrew to Makhwān on 9th Dhū 'l-Qi'da 129/July 747.<sup>1</sup> Sulaymān al-Khazā'ī, a master of strategy and tactics,<sup>2</sup> made at once a move to save the situation. By reminding 'Alī b. al-Karmānī of the longing of his father for the day when Āl Muhammad would be able to rise in revolt against the Umayyads, and by instilling in him a feeling of revenge for his father, Sulaymān was able to persuade him to break the truce. And so Naṣr's warnings that "Abū Muslim would wipe all of us" proved of no avail.<sup>3</sup> Naṣr, now, attempted to persuade Shaybān the Kharijite, who had, apparently, respected the terms of the truce, to attack 'Alī b. al-Karmānī and Abū Muslim, but failed for lack of trust between them.<sup>4</sup> Shaybān's followers, in fact, suspected Naṣr of foul play by engaging them in warfare in order to exhaust their strength and then attack them from the rear.<sup>5</sup> It is significant to note that Shaybān and his followers did not take root in Khurasān as they were rebel refugees from Irāq. Shaybān found himself now in a precarious position: he was not allied himself to Abū Muslim, neither could he trust a loyal Umayyad governor like Naṣr. The only alternative left to him was

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1967-8; Akhbār, fol. 135a.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Abū Muslim also appealed to Ibn al-Karmānī stating:

« أنت وقومك انصار الحق قدماً فانتم اوتيتم رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) وغرقتوه وقتل امرئيه  
صاحبي بان استظركم والقى امرئيه اليكم »

see Akhbār, fol. 148a.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fol. 147a; Nubdha, fol. 266b.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fols. 146a-146b.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., fol. 146a.



'Alī b. al-Karmānī who, indeed, played an important rôle in preventing him from joining Naṣr and advised Abū Muslim to make a friendly gesture towards him to enable him to maintain his neutrality at that crucial juncture. Presumably, in order to make him feel that he was sharing in the responsibility, 'Alī b. al-Karmānī assigned to Shaybān the task of collecting the tribute of the whole district between Nīshābūr and Herāt with headquarters at Sarakhs in Rabi' II, 130/Dec. 747.<sup>1</sup> Shaybān's withdrawal strengthened the position of Abū Muslim as compared with Naṣr, as Shaybān represented a rather unpredictable element in the political scene.

Not to lose time, Abū Muslim took the initiative and recognized 'Alī b. al-Karmānī as governor of Khurasān. He aligned himself with 'Alī and used to pray behind him and salute him as governor.<sup>2</sup> This was a brilliant move by Abū Muslim as 'Alī b. al-Karmānī hungered for power and it would have been dangerous for Abū Muslim to contend with him at this moment. Abū Muslim had, in fact, only 7,000 followers whose names and that of their villages were taken down into the register.<sup>3</sup> This was a tactical move by the 'Abbāsids to eliminate tribal antagonism within their partisans and to weld their partisans whether Yamanites, Rabi'ite, Muḍarites or 'Ajam into a uniform body. They were all transferred to 'Alīn,

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 151a, 152a; cf. Tab., II, p.1996.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., II, p.1967 citing Mada'ini; Imāna, 2, p.222; Ya'qūbī, II, p.399; Akhbār, fol. 155b; Nubdha, fol. 269a; Duwwal, fol. 101a.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, p.1969 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb. As 2,000 had already deserted his camp probably influenced by the news of the truce. (See Akhbār, fol. 146b). See also E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Daftar).

a village of Abū Maṣṣūr Ṭalḥa b. Zurayq al-Khuzā'ī in 6th Dhu 'l-Hijja 129/August 747, as Maḥwān proved to be dangerous from the strategic point of view and water supplies.<sup>1</sup>

Receiving no help from the central government, Naṣr wrote to Marwān II again, the following pathetic letter:<sup>2</sup>

"I am writing to the Commander of the Faithful and I have used every thing that I had in man, money and tricks to face his enemy. Had you sent me 1,000 Syrian troops they would have been enough to face the oppressors

I am writing to the Commander of the Faithful as I have been thrown out of my authority and standing on the doorstep of my house; and if no help arrives and I am ordered to depend on Ibn Hubayra I shall be removed even from my doorstep and I will never return to it till the day of judgment."

While desperately waiting for help, Naṣr decided to play his trump card with Abū Muslim. He thought he might succeed to create discord between Abū Muslim and Ibn al-Karmānī. Naṣr, therefore, sought for a meeting which was attended by the delegates representing the three dominant figures, 'Alī b. al-Karmānī, Naṣr b. Sayyār and Abū Muslim. But this move of Naṣr was defeated as Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī, Ṭalḥa al-Khuzā'ī and Mazīd b. Shaqīq al-Sulamī decided in favour of 'Alī b. al-Karmānī and his followers as against Naṣr and his followers.<sup>3</sup> It was only now that the 'Abbāsīd movement got hold of the levers of power, namely the Arab tribesmen of 'Alī b. al-Karmānī.

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1969 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>2</sup>Akhbār, fol. 152b.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, p.1986 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

Now the major target of both Abū Muslim and Ibn al-Karmānī was to get hold of the administrative capital of Khurasān, Merw. As related in Tabarī, the circumstances in which Merw had fallen to the 'Abbāsids are rather confusing. According to one account,<sup>1</sup> the allied forces of Ibn al-Karmānī and Abū Muslim made a two-pronged attack on Merw. Another account<sup>2</sup> states that Abū Muslim was still suspicious of Ibn al-Karmānī and asked him to attack. However, when seen in its true perspective, there is no vagueness at all about Abū Muslim's attitude, it was plainly equivocal. Despite his alliance with 'Alī b. al-Karmānī, he avoided all possibilities of a conflict with Naṣr b. Sayyār; he tried not to figure as a major party in the conflict, as he had recognized 'Alī b. al-Karmānī as Amīr of Khurasān; but it was he himself who, after the end of the tribal conference, sent a convoy led by the Arab al-Qāsim b. Mujāshi' al-Tamīmī to escort Naṣr's delegation to a place of safety.<sup>3</sup> 'Abbāsīd partisans were able to do their shopping in Merw at certain times unmolested.<sup>4</sup> All this shows that Abū Muslim was presumably still hoping to win over Naṣr's followers to his side, or perhaps thought that it would be expedient not to sever all contacts with Naṣr and leave him some hope and expectation. However, since the whole situation was dominated by tribal jealousies,

---

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., p.1984.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., p.1987, citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 268-9.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., II, p.1986, citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fol. 154b.

tribal feuds were bound to break out at the slightest excuse. It seems that a fight broke out<sup>1</sup> in the market of Merw between a tribesman of Bakr b. Wā'il and another of Muḍar, and that this fighting spread as Naṣr helped the Muḍarites while Ibn al-Karmānī supported his allies, the Rabī'ites. 'Alī b. al-Karmānī then appealed to Abū Muslim to join in the attack at Merw, but the latter delayed it until he was sure that Ibn al-Karmānī's followers were engaged in a fierce battle against Naṣr's troops. On the 9th Jumāda II, 130/February 14, 748, Abū Muslim entered Merw with an army led by Arab commanders, the vanguard by Asīd al-Khuzā'ī, the right wing by Mālik al-Khuzā'ī and the left wing by al-Qāsim al-Tamīmī,<sup>2</sup> and stopped the fighting. Subsequently, he sent a delegation to Naṣr, inviting him to a meeting and promising him an amnesty. Naṣr tried to delay it and eventually succeeded in escaping to Nishābūr.<sup>3</sup> It is said that Lāhiz b. Qurayz, one of the 'Abbāsīd delegates, warned Naṣr by reciting the verse: "إِنَّ الْمُرَّاتَمُونَ بِكَ لَيَقْتُلُونَكَ"<sup>4</sup> Naṣr managed to escape thanks to the warning, for which Lāhiz was executed as a traitor.<sup>4</sup> Abū Muslim imposed martial law in Merw installing military posts round the city preventing people from entering and leaving it without permission.<sup>5</sup> Now the real face of the 'Abbāsīd movement began to reveal itself. The oath of allegiance sworn by the partisans, especially

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 154b.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., II, p.1987 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>3</sup> Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 269; Imāma, 2, p.222; Akhbār, fol. 157a; Zubayrī, p.442 Tab. II, p.1991, citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, fol. 85b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.409; Tab., II, p.1990.

<sup>5</sup> Akhbār, fol. 157a.

the Hāshimiyya<sup>1</sup> indicates that what mattered to Abū Muslim was the real 'Abbāsīd doctrinaires and not the masses that had been utilized by the revolution.

Merw al-Shāhjān and its surrounding villages, Merw al-Rūdh, and Herat, were all now under 'Abbāsīd control. So was Abiwārd after the Arab Asīd b. 'Abdallah al-Khuzā'<sup>2</sup> had occupied it by force of arms. As for Balkh, it was first occupied by the Arab Naqīb Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhālī.<sup>3</sup> But it is significant to note that Balkh changed hands three times between Naṣr and Abū Muslim. Balkh resisted the 'Abbāsīds for three reasons. First the Arab Muqātila stationed there had been unified. Tabarī tells us that when 'Asad b. 'Abdallah al-Qasrī stationed the Arabs in Balkh in 107/725-26 he was advised not to divide them into fifths, as had been the custom in Merw and Baṣra, for fear of stirring tribal factionalism among them. He, therefore, stationed the different tribal elements together.<sup>4</sup> This move led eventually to a reduction in tribal frictions and resulted in creating a united anti-'Abbāsīd force led by the Umayyad governor of the city. Secondly, the Syrian troops stationed at Balkh, numbered about 2,500 men,<sup>5</sup> were apparently pro-Naṣr. Thirdly, the native Iranian population in Balkh and its surrounding district co-operated with the Umayyad governor of Balkh. Even the local

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p. 1989, citing Abū al-Khaffāb.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., p.1969 citing Madā'inī.

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit., pp. 1997f.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., II, p.1490; cf. Al-'Alī, "Al-'Arab fi Khurasān," B.C.A., 1959, pp. 73ff.

<sup>5</sup>Op.cit., II, p.1590.

princes in Tukhārīstān and other districts of Mawarā' al-nahar offered their support to the Umayyad governor.<sup>1</sup> Tabarī states that "Mudārītes, Yamanites, Rabī'ites and the 'Ajam agreed to fight the Musawida".<sup>2</sup>

This is a significant event insofar as it reveals that tribal factionalism was greatly in favour of the 'Abbāsīd movement, and on the other hand shows clearly, probably for the first time, that the 'Abbāsīd movement was not a Persian non-Arab revolution against the Arabs as the native Iranians, princes and population, sided with the Umayyads. Non-Arabs fought shoulder to shoulder with the Arabs to regain Balkh from the 'Abbāsīds. There is, in fact, no strong historical evidence in support of the assumption that there was any sense of deep dissatisfaction with the Umayyad rule, which would have led to a complete upheaval against them in the cities of Khurasān and Māwra' al-nahar.

#### The Irāqī phase of the da'wa

The order had by now come from Ibrāhīm the Imām appointing the Arab Naqīb Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb al-Ṭā'ī the commander in chief of the 'Abbāsīd army whose main object it was to march westwards towards Irāq and Syria.<sup>3</sup> The mainstay of the army were Arab tribesmen of Khurasān led by their chieftains. The author of al-Imāma wa'l Siyās assesses their number at 30,000 men, and adds "They were Yamanites and ['Abbāsīd] Shī'a and cavalymen.

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., II, p.1997.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., II, p.1998.

<sup>3</sup> Ma'd, fol. 40a; Tab., II, p.2000; Alkhbar, fol. 157b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.410; Dina, p.362; F.H.A., p.193.

from Khurasān".<sup>1</sup> Before setting out, the 'Abbāsīd army had to do away with their rivals in Khurasān in order to safeguard their rear. Shaybān the Kharijite who refused to take the oath of allegiance to Abū Muslim and demanded that Abū Muslim should pay homage to him was suddenly attacked and killed together with his followers of Bakr b. Wā'il.<sup>2</sup> It is said that when the 'Abbāsīd army reached Shaybān's headquarters in Sarakhs, the latter reminded them of Abū Muslim's pledge not to attack him. Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī and Bassām b. Ibrāhīm replied that they were heading for Herāt. However, they suddenly launched an attack on Sarakhs. A great number of Kharijites were killed, and the massacre was unusually cruel due to Bassām's factional feelings, when Abū Muslim learned of this he immediately replaced Bassām. Sarakhs, the strong anti-'Abbāsīd city, was now under 'Abbāsīd control. On its march westwards the 'Abbāsīd army occupied Tūs, having first crushed the resistance of the Arab Khurasānī' followers of Naṣr and a contingent from the people of Nīshābūr led by Naṣr's son, Tamīm, who was killed in the battle.<sup>3</sup> Naṣr himself fled from Nīshābūr to Qūmus.<sup>4</sup> There was no co-operation whatsoever between the approaching Umayyad army led by Nubāta b. Ḥanḍala al-Kallābī and Naṣr b. Sayyār. Nubāta had been instructed

---

<sup>1</sup>Imāma, ed. Cairo 1904, p.225.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, p.1996; Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 269; Akhbār, fol. 157b; Nubdha, fol. 271b.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fol. 158b.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., fol. 159b; cf. Tab., II, p.2004 citing Madā'inī.

by Ibn Ḥubayra, the governor of Irāk, to take over the command in Khurasān and to appeal to the remnants of Naṣr's army as well as the native princes of Abīwād, Nasa and Sarakhs to join him.<sup>1</sup> Marwān II at last decided not to leave Khurasān in the hands of tribal chiefs but to put it under the control of a military commander backed by Syrian troops. He, therefore, asked Naṣr to step down and accept Nubāta's command.<sup>2</sup> This was a terrible blow to Naṣr who, broken-hearted, gave up resistance. The pro-Umayyad especially Muḍarites, tribesmen, asked Naṣr to stay but he refused and headed to Hamadān where he fell ill and died shortly afterwards at Sawa on 12th Rabi' I 131/Oct. 748.<sup>3</sup> When Nīshābūr was occupied an amnesty was declared by the 'Abbāsids except for those who had witnessed the murder of Yahya b. Zayd, but even those were pardoned later.<sup>4</sup> This was yet another political propaganda move on the part of the 'Abbāsids.

The important confrontation between the two rival armies occurred at Jurjān.<sup>5</sup> The Syrian army was led by Nabāta b. Ḥaṇḍala and numbered about 10,000. The commander in chief of the 'Abbāsīd army, Qaḥṭaba, declining Abū Muslim's suggestion to march towards Naṣr at Qūmus, wisely advanced to meet Nubāta. The result was a terrible defeat of Nubāta, who was slain in the battle, on the 3rd of Dhu 'l-Hijja 130/July 748, but the

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 158b, 161a.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 159b.

<sup>3</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 274; Na'arīf, p.370; Tab., III, p.2; Akhbār, fol. 163b; Dina, p.362.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 160b.

<sup>5</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 273; Tab., II, p.2004 citing Madā'inī; Na'arīf, p.370; Ya'qubī, II, p.410; Akhbār, fols. 161a ff.



Jurjānīs resisted the 'Abbāsīd occupation and threw the garrison out. Qaḥṭabahad to reoccupy it inflicting a terrible massacre on the Jurjānīs' as a punishment for their loyalty to the Umayyads.<sup>1</sup> Due to the intervention of Khālīd b. Barmak who was with the 'Abbāsīd army the native ruler of Ṭabaristān paid homage to the 'Abbāsīds.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing succeeds like success, or as Abū Muslim puts it "People are the bravest at the beginning of their power",<sup>3</sup> with only a minor set back, the 'Abbāsīds reached al-Rayy where Qaḥṭaba stayed for five months imposing martial law on the city.<sup>4</sup> Having received a severe reprimand from Marwān II, Ibn Hubayra ordered 'Āmir b. Ḍubāra, who had an army of 50,000 men mainly from Irāk and Khurasān, to march against Qaḥṭaba and abandon his previous plan of invading Khurasān, through Sīstān. 'Āmir had never suffered a defeat in his campaigns against the Kharijites and 'Abdallah b. Mu'awīya. Furthermore he was now reinforced by Dā'ūd b. Yazīd b. Hubayra with more Syrian and Jazirite troops. His huge army was rightly called 'Askar al-'Asākīr. The decisive battle took place at Jablaq near Iḡbahān.<sup>5</sup> Before the battle the Umayyads appealed to the 'Abbāsīd partisans saying "Oh Muslims fear God and join the Jamā'a. You will be granted amnesty for your misdeed in the Fitna. 'Ātā' will be increased and payment will be made to you."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tab., II, p.2016.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 163b; Nubdha, fol. 274a.

<sup>3</sup> Duwwal, fol. 109a.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 164a.

<sup>5</sup> Ma'arīf, p.370; Tab., II, p.2004; Ya'qūbī, II, p.408ff; Akhbār, fol. 166a. Ibn 'Asakir says that 'Āmir called upon the Syrian army saying: (Vol. 7, p.155 citing 'Utbi)

<sup>6</sup> Khalifa, Tarīkh, fol. 273; Akhbār, fol. 166b.

However, on the 24rd Rajar 131 A.H. both armies engaged in a fierce battle in which the Umayyads were defeated and 'Amir was killed. This was the beginning of the end of the Umayyads. The backbone of their army in Iran was broken. The author of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās<sup>1</sup> calls the battle al-Faysal, i.e. the decisive battle, adding that "It was the opinion of the people of Irāq that, if Ibn Dūbāra were victorious, the power would remain the Umayyads, but if Qaḥṭaba prevailed, it would fall to Banī Hāshim."

The 'Abbāsīd revolution was now in its full swing in the eastern provinces. When Abū Muslim heard of Qaḥṭaba's victory he realized that the right moment had come in order to do away with the last obstacle in the way of the revolution, namely, 'Alī b. al-Karmānī and his brother 'Uthmān. Both were easily and treacherously murdered,<sup>2</sup> 'Alī when marching with Abū Muslim to Nīshābūr and 'Uthmān in Herāt where he was governor of the city. Many of Ibn al-Karmānī's intimate associates were killed with him too. This is another aspect of the political nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution, as Ibn Ḥazm puts it, "After 'Alī and 'Uthmān supported Abū Muslim and distorted the unity of the Arabs, he killed them and annihilated the family of al-Karmānī."<sup>3</sup> This conspiracy seems to have been prepared beforehand because Qaḥṭaba was not surprised at all at the news of it.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 171b-172a.

<sup>2</sup> Asmā' al-Muhtalīn, p.191; Imāma, vol. 2, p.222; Ansāb, fol. 778b; Tab., II, pp. 1999-2000; Akhbār, fol. 165b; Nubdha, fol. 276a; F.H.A., p.192; Duwwal, fol. 101b.

<sup>3</sup> Asmā' al-Muhtalīn, p.191; Jamharat, p.359.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 174b.

During the seige of Nahāwand<sup>1</sup> Qaḥṭaba secretly offered an amān to the Khurasānīs who joined the Umayyad army stationed at the city, but they flatly refused it and remained loyal to the Umayyads. After losing all hope to win them he got in touch with the Palestinian division of the Syrian army and played on their tribal sympathies until they accepted the amān and evacuated the city. Qaḥṭaba then occupied the city and massacred all the 3,000 Khurasānīs in it to the last man. In a swift move as there was no force to face it, the 'Abbāsīd army was actually inside Irāk. Abū Salama Ḥafṣ b. Sulaymān al-Khallāl, the chief dā'ī and the Wazīr of Āl-Muḥammad took part in the activities which prepared the ground for the approaching 'Abbāsīd army from his hideout in Kūfa. This brilliant practitioner of secret propaganda tried to create a state of chaos in Irāk<sup>2</sup> to divert the attention of the Umayyads. He sent emissaries to instigate the bedouins of Kūfa, Baḡra and Mosul. Mūsa al-Ḥamdānī rebelled at Ḥalwān. The lower Euphrates was ravaged by the Rabi'ites. Abū 'Umayya al-Taghlubī rose in arms in Tikrīt. Their motive, however, was plunder and robbery and not loyalty to the 'Abbāsīd cause. In the Jazīra the bedouins began to join the 'Abbāsīd army too. 'Afāf b. Sa'īd of Banī 'l-Ḥārith joined them with 100 men, so did a number of the people of Moṣūl, "al-Mausuliyya".<sup>3</sup> Abū 'Awan 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd al-Azdī was

<sup>1</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 274; Ma'arīf, p. 370; Tab., II, p. 2005, III, p. 7; Akhbār, fols. 173a-174a; F.H.A., p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 174b, 175a.

<sup>3</sup> Op.cit., fol. 176 b.

advised to occupy Moṣul whose people, ill-treated by Marwān II, were willing to join them, but Abū 'Awn hearing of Marwān's advance entrenched himself at Shahrazūr, where he stayed till Muḥarram 132/Aug. 749.<sup>1</sup> Enraged by the swift victory of the 'Abbāsids, Marwān with an army composed of Syrians and Jazirites immediately marched towards Jazīra to meet the 'Abbāsids, and meanwhile he wrote a letter reprimanding Ibn Hubayra as follows:

"The Commander of the Faithful had appointed you governor of Irāq expecting you to be equal to the task [up to it], but you disappointed him in many respects such as in delaying help to his loyal citizens in Khurasān; their strength had weakened, and their enemy overcame them; ... and your failing to unsheath the sword against discordant Muhallabites, and your neglect of soldiers without being severe with the suspects among them. And your negligence to cut out the tongues of the Syrians who spoke what the Commander of the Faithful hates [to hear]; and your appropriation of the money of the Muslims. Yet this is the best you can do in face of the enemy? ... If the remnants of Ibn Ḍubāra's and Dā'ud flocked back to you, pull yourself together and face the enemy...."<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Hubayra, replied:

"I have understood the letter of the Commander of the Faithful. I have not spared an effort advising him and not deviated from the right [path]... As to the Commander of the Faithful's mention of my delay in helping [those] who are in Khurasān, he knows that, when I arrived in Irāq it was a blaze with war, so I had to remedy what was close to me. I have used the Syrian army once against the Kharijites, then against Ibn Mu'awiyya and then against Sulaymān b. Ḥabīb (the rebel of al-Ahwaz). I could not use the people of Irāq [in the

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 176b-177a; Tab., III, pp. 9, 38 citing Maḍā'ini.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 177a f.

army/for, as the Commander of the Faithful knows, they deceive him and his state. Had I used them to help our people in Khurasān they might have joined the enemy and I should be blamed. As to the Banū al-Muhallab (Ibn Abī Ṣofra), I have noticed that they are in an influential position among the Yamanites and I, therefore, hated to invoke them as that would provoke the Yamanite Irākīs and even the Yamanite Syrians who are with me."<sup>1</sup>

Yazīd Ibn Hubayra advanced at once to Jalulā', but Qaḥṭaba took the advice of Abū Salama and was reluctant to engage in a battle there. Instead he marched towards Kūfa followed by Yazīd b. Hubayra, and on August 27th, 740 the battle took place there in the region called Upper Falūja.<sup>2</sup> Qaḥṭaba crossed the river Euphrātes from the west bank to the east bank and the two armies clashed there. In the course of the battle both adversaries suffered setbacks and ultimately the 'Abbāsīd army defeated the Umayyads who had no morale left. Meanwhile Kūfa<sup>3</sup> had already been taken, not by the Khurasānīs but by tribal chiefs, Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Qaṣrī and Ṭalḥa b. Iṣḥāq b. Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Kindī, with the help of Yamanites and tribal groups of Bajīla and Bajdal who were deserters from the Umayyad camp. The victorious army, which had lost its veteran commander Qaḥṭaba in the battle of Upper Falūja, entered Kūfa among celebrations and festivities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 178a-179a.

<sup>2</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 276, Tab., III, pp. 12ff, 16 citing Nadā'ini; Akhbār, fol. 179a; cf. Ansāb, fol. 782b;

<sup>3</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 281; Tab., III, p.18, citing Abū Mukhnaf; Akhbār, fols. 181a f.

Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī's death is one of many events of this period historical accounts on which are contradictory to such an extent that reasoning becomes futile. It is a mystery which leads to speculation or doubts which can be historically dangerous. It may have been one of a series of murders of prominent 'Abbāsīd propagandists which makes one think whether it was committed for reason of policy by conspiring groups, or individuals. Qaḥṭaba alleged knowledge<sup>1</sup> of Ibrāhīm's Wasiyya to his brother 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad (later caliph Abū 'l-'Abbās) may have had something to do with his death. Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, Balādhurī and Tabarī followed by other chroniclers and biographers transmit several conflicting accounts.<sup>2</sup>

After Qaḥṭaba's death many such as Ma'an b. Zā'ida, Aḥlam b. Ibrāhīm b. Bassām, Yahya b. Ḥaṣīn and Ḥarb b. Salm b. Aḥwaz are said to have claimed the credit of his death. At any rate, an account on the authority of Salm, a mawla of Qaḥṭaba, states that after crossing the river they had engaged with the Umayyads in a night battle when suddenly Qaḥṭaba's horse was seen riderless.<sup>3</sup> It seemed as though Qaḥṭaba had been probably fatally wounded or drowned. He was succeeded as commander in chief by his son al-Ḥasan. But through concern for the morale of the troops the bad news was concealed until the battle was over.<sup>4</sup> However, the battle

<sup>1</sup>F.H.A., p.190.. It is worth mentioning that the same man who relates Qaḥṭaba's death is involved in a conspiracy to murder al-Saffāḥ by order of Abū Salama (see Ansāb, fol. 782b).

<sup>2</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 276; Ansāb, fol. 781b; Tab., III, pp. 12f, 16 citing Madā'ini; Akhbār, fols. 182a-182b; Wafayāt, vol. 3, p.288., F.H.A., p.195; Dhahābī, fol. 4b.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 781b citing Salm Mawla Qaḥṭaba.

<sup>4</sup>Akhbār, fol. 183b; F.H.A., p.195.

of Upper Faluja was by no means decisive for despite the fierceness of the fighting both sides seem to have kept their strength, the only difference being that the morale of Ibn Hubayra's troops had suffered badly. Many Yamanite tribal chiefs in Ibn Hubayra's army deserted him after hearing of Muḥammad al-Qasrī's rising in Kūfa,, while the Syrians who no longer seem to have any faith in their state failed to respond to Ibn Hubayra's call and fled.<sup>1</sup> However, Ibn H̄ bayra, who entrenched himself in Wāsiṭ, was still in control of a great army. On the 10th of Muḥarram 132/August 749<sup>2</sup> Abū Salama was escorted by the Arab army commanders Ḥumayd al-Ṭā'ī, Khāzim al-Tamīmī and Muqātil al-'Akkī to the mosque where he addressed the Khurasānī soldiers praising their services, warning them not to lend their ears to the demagogues, i.e. sufahā', and promising to increase their pay to 80 dirhams a month with offers and gifts to the officers and commanders. It is significant to state that Abū Salama avoided any mention of the name of the new Imām or the family to which he belonged. The main trend of his address was materialistic and not religious or spiritual, a fact which throws full light on the political nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution.

As to Baḡra it is important to note that its political tendencies were changeable owing to the great majority of Tamimite inhabitants whose resentment of a central government of any kind was well-known.<sup>3</sup> The last

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 184a; F.H.A., pp. 195f; Ḥawthara b. Suhayl al-Bāhilī tried to regain Kūfa but his Syrian army which had no morale left dispersed. He had to take refuge in Wasit.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 782a; Akhbār, fol. 184b; Tab., III, p.20, citing Abū Mukhnaf and Madā'inī.

<sup>3</sup> Al-'Alī, Tanzīmat., p.41; Pellat, op.cit., p.53.

Umayyad governor Salm b. Qutayba al-Bāhilī, was a good administrator and a popular tribal chief.<sup>1</sup> When Abū Salama got hold of Kūfa he invoked Sofyān b. Mu'āwiya al-Muhallabī to take over Baḡra in the name of the 'Abbāsids. Sofyān did not wish to oust Salm, as the latter had conferred many favours on the Muhallabites when they underwent a difficult period under Marwān II.<sup>2</sup> He, therefore, asked him to give up the governorship. Salm al-Bāhilī refused and wrote to him "Let us make a truce and wait to see what will become of Ibn Hubayra in Wāsiṭ. If he was killed or forced to leave I will evacuate Dār 'l-Imāra. As for now you know that neither Marwān nor Ibn Hubayra are killed or defeated." Reluctantly they came to terms. Now Abū Salama persuaded other tribal chiefs to rebel and promised them the governorship of Baḡra.<sup>3</sup> This move made Sofyān al-Muhallabī act swiftly, he decided to overthrow Salm al-Bāhilī. Tamīm, Qays, Banī Nasma' of Rabī'a, as well as Ahl al-'Āliya and a number of Quraysh and Thaqīf all sided with the Umayyad governor Salm al-Bāhilī. The latter was also supported by the Syrian troops and the Umayyads of Baḡra.<sup>4</sup> As for Sofyān, he was joined by Azd and their allies Bakr b. Wā'il as well as 'Abd al-Qays. He was also joined by the commander of 2,000 Kalbites who had originally been

---

<sup>1</sup>Ansāb, fol. 804a, citing Madā'inī.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., fol. 803a; see also Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 279. Akhbār, fols. 177a, 178a;.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fols. 803a, 804b, 806a; Tab., III, pp. 21-23.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 804b; Tab., III, p.22, Madā'inī.



sent to Salm but had defected to Sofyān.<sup>1</sup> The battle was a defeat for Sofyān who fled to Kaskar and Mīsān. Salm remained in Baṣra until the news of the murder of Ibn Hubayra reached him. He decided to flee to the Ḥijāz, after appointing a new governor in the person of the Hashimite Muḥammad b. Ja'far.<sup>2</sup> The new caliph Abū 'l-'Abbās replaced him by Sofyān b. Mu'āwiya al-Muhallabī who retaliated on a number of Muḍarites by dismantling their houses in Baṣra.<sup>3</sup>

It was by this time that the 'Abbāsīd da'wa suffered a heavy blow by the arrest and death of its head Ibrāhīm the Imām. This poses the question how the Umayyad authorities were able to discover who was the head of this secret movement, and whether Ibrāhīm himself had, in fact, nominated his brother Abū 'l-'Abbās his successor.

The historical accounts are conflicting. According to Tabarī,<sup>4</sup> the name of Banī 'l-'Abbās was proclaimed when the dā'īs unfurled the banners at the very beginning of the revolt; but the name of the Imām was not mentioned. However, Tabarī does not say whether the proclamation of the name of Banī 'l-'Abbās took place in public or merely among the inner circles of the dā'īs. In his somewhat brief version of the 'Abbāsīd revolt, Kūfī confirms Tabarī's ideas and formulates them more

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.22.

<sup>2</sup>It is said that Salm al-Bāhilī appointed a Hashimite to succeed him in the governorship, as a friendly gesture which would plead for him with the 'Abbāsīds. In fact, it was the practice of the Umayyads to nominate a Hashimite or a Qurayshite as governor of Baṣra in time of crisis. See Pellat, op.cit., p.258.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 806, citing Madā'inī.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., II, p.1952, citing Madā'inī, p. 1954 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.

clearly, saying "Abū Muslim called upon the people [ to swear allegiance ] to the sons of al-'Abbās".<sup>1</sup> In another place, Kūfī quotes a letter from Naṣr b. Sayyār to al-Karmānī in which the latter warns al-Karmānī that "Abū Muslim is working for Banī Hāshim and not for you [al-Karmānī]",<sup>2</sup> without mentioning which branch of Banī Hāshim he has in mind. Thus it seems reasonable to assume that the name of the 'Abbāsīd Imām was only known to the inner circles of the movement. As to the arrest of Ibrāhīm the Imām, the chroniclers also differ. According to Balādhurī, the author of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās and Tabarī, it was through Naṣr's efforts that Marwān came to know that Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad the 'Abbāsīd was the leader of the Khurasānī revolt.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, other versions attribute the disclosure of the Imām's name to different personalities. The Ḥasanid 'Abdallāh b. al-Ḥasan<sup>4</sup> is said to have informed Marwān on the occasion of a visit to Ḥarrān of Ibrāhīm's activities in Khurasān out of jealousy. According to another account Marwān was informed through a messenger of Abū Muslim who, after visiting Ibrāhīm and receiving a message for Abū Muslim, defected to Marwān and betrayed to him the secret of who were the prominent figures in the Khurasānī conspiracy.<sup>5</sup> Since no other authoritative

<sup>1</sup> Kūfī, fols. 220a-221a.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 222a. *ربك يا علي لا تغتر يا مسلم واصحابه فانهم يريدونك الاصلك... انما يريدونك لبني قاسم*  
In the correspondence which took place between Shaybān the Kharijite and al-Karmānī in Khurasān, the name of Banī al-'Abbās also occurs. (see Akhbār, fol. 147a).

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 772b; Akhbār, fol. 193a.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fols. 192a-192b, 194a; Nubdha, fols. 284a-285b.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., II, p.1974; Nubdha, fol. 285; Akhbār, fol. 195a, who gives the name of the messenger as 'Abd 'l-Karīm b. Abī 'l-'Awja'.

accounts concur with them on that, there is obviously a pro-'Abbāsīd tendency in the last two versions. Moreover, those named as instigators of Marwān's treatment of Ibrāhīm were, in fact, victims of 'Abbāsīd policy, and were put to death by the 'Abbāsīds for dynastic or political reasons. Ya'qūbī, followed by Ibn 'Asākir, states simply that Marwān was informed of the name of Ibrāhīm without mentioning the source of that information.<sup>1</sup>

It should be remembered, however, that the Umayyads had known of 'Abbāsīd's subversive activities since the reigns of 'Abd al-Malik and Walīd I. It is, therefore, not surprising that Ibrāhīm the Imām should have been the number one suspect in Marwān's eyes. Once Marwān is said to have been warned of Muḥammad Dhu 'l-Nafṣ al-Zakiyya's activities, but he remarked: "It is not Muḥammad we expect to revolt against us".<sup>2</sup> Moreover it seems unbelievable that the name of the Imām could still have remained secret after the series of victories of the early summer of 749/131. According to Akhbār 'l-'Abbās it was Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb al-Ṭā'ī, the commander of the Khurasānī army who was prevailed upon to have Ibrāhīm's name proclaimed by an Umayyad agent after the victory of Jurān in the early summer of 749.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 398, 409; 'Asākir, vol. 2, p.288 citing Ismā'īl al-Khaṭībī.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 608; Maqātil, p.179.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 193a; Nubdha, fol. 285a; see 'Asākir, vol. 2, p.288.

ظراسمه والذلف ورتف مروان على حزم

According to Iṣbahānī the name of Ibrāhīm was current and associated with the revolt as early as the days of 'Abdallāh b. Mu'āwiya (Agh., vol. II/74). During the pilgrimage season of 131 Ibrāhīm's name was widespread in association with the revolt in Khurasān. See Duwwal, fol. 101b; Bad', vol. 6, p.65.

On the identity of the leader of the movement being discovered, Marwān II immediately ordered al-Walīd b. Mu'āwiya, the governor of Damascus, to have Ibrāhīm arrested. He was taken from al-Ḥumayma to Ḥarrān, and there ensued a strongly vocal meeting between him and the caliph. Marwān is reported to have said "Do you imagine that a man such as yourself should become caliph?" Whereupon Ibrāhīm replied "You are the son of Tarīd and La'īn, i.e. those who were expelled and accursed by the Prophet, and despite that you sought after it and gained it. Why should I not seek it as I am the cousin of the Prophet and his walī?"<sup>1</sup> Ibrāhīm was imprisoned with other prominent Umayyad personalities at Ḥarrān where he met his death in Muḥarram 132/Aug. 749. The 'Abbāsīd point of view, expressed by many 'Abbāsīd personalities, as well as 'Abbāsīd poets, alleged naturally that Ibrāhīm had been either murdered or poisoned by Marwān's orders.<sup>2</sup> This could well have been true as is borne out by many authorities; none the less, it is possible that Ibrāhīm fell victim to the plague which spread in Syria in that very year 131/132.<sup>3</sup>

Although Ibrāhīm the Imām was taken by surprise at al-Ḥumayma, he did have the time to nominate one of his brothers a legatee. Ibrāhīm was accompanied on his way from Ḥumayma to al-Shām for quite a long distance

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 772b.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 772a-772b, citing Haytham b. 'Adī, fol. 773a; Akhbār, fols. 193a, 195a-b; Nubdha, fol. 284; Kufī, fol. 227a; Tab., III, p.44.

<sup>3</sup> Sa'd, vol. VIII, p.60; Tab., III, pp. 42-4, citing Aḥmad b. Zuhāyir.

by a number of his relatives including his brother 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad (Abū 'l-'Abbās). When it was time for the relatives to go back, Ibrāhīm is said to have nominated Abū al-'Abbās his successor.<sup>1</sup> According to Balādhurī, Abū 'l-'Abbās was the first of Muḥammad b. 'Alī's sons to leave for Kūfa, as the bequest of the Imamate to him made him fear for his life.<sup>2</sup> According to Kūfī and Ya'qūbī, the nomination of Abū 'l-'Abbās had already taken place in the time of his father Muḥammad b. 'Alī.<sup>3</sup> Abū 'l-'Abbās seemed to be the right person to choose as he was most acceptable to the 'Abbāsids who did not object to this choice, probably because 'Abū 'l-'Abbās was of pure Arab origin since his mother was Rīḥa al-Ḥārithiyya.<sup>4</sup>

Ibrāhīm confirmed his Wasiyya to Abū 'l-'Abbās shortly before his death. According to Balādhurī on the authority of the Qadī Dā'ūd b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sābiq al-Khwarazmī, a Mawla of Ibrāhīm's, brought the latter's message after his death to Abū 'l-'Abbās confirming him as an heir.<sup>5</sup> Ibrāhīm is also said to have written letters concerning his wasiyya to Abū Salama in Kūfa, Abū Muslim in Khurasān and the commander of the Khurasānī troops, Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb al-Ṭā'ī.<sup>6</sup> In the Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa'l Ḥadā'iq<sup>7</sup> the imprisonment of Ibrāhīm is re-

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 197b, 193a.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 776b.

رمان اولين ابيه ضرورياً كونه على نفسه لغير الامة اليه

<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fol. 220a; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 398.

<sup>4</sup> At that time there was also prevalent the legend of the son of al-Ḥārithiyya coming to spread justice and order. See Akhbār, fol. 82a; Van Vloten, Recherches..., pp. 54ff.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 774a; Akhbār, fol. 198ab; Nubdha., fol. 287a; Murūj, VI, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Akhbār, fol. 194a.

<sup>7</sup> F.H.A., p. 190.

presented as a sudden blow to the dā'īs in Khurasān. Consequently, they sent Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī in a merchant's disguise to Ḥarrān where he learned from Ibrāhīm that he had appointed Abū 'l-'Abbās his legatee.

When Ibrāhīm was arrested, he urged 'Abū 'l-'Abbās to flee with his relatives to Kūfa which he did in Muḥarram or Ṣāfar 132/Aug. or Sept. 749.<sup>1</sup> The score of men who fled with him included Abū Ja'far, the sons of 'Alī b. 'Abdallah: Sulaymān, 'Isā, Ṣāliḥ, Ismā'īl, 'Abdallah, 'Abd al-Ṣammad, Mūsa and his son 'Isā and others.<sup>2</sup> They seem to have reached Kūfa prior to the arrival of the Khurasānīs.<sup>3</sup>

After a delay of more than one month which was due to Abū Salama's change of mind, Abū 'l-'Abbās was proclaimed caliph in Rabi' I 132/Oct. 749.<sup>4</sup> However his accession cannot be equated with the practical downfall of the Umayyads. Although the 'Abbāsīd army had gained a number of decisive battles on its way to Irāq, many other obstacles were yet to come. The battle of Upper Falūja was by no means decisive as both parties claimed victory. It is significant, however, in that it demonstrated to what extent the Syrian army was demoralized.

Once he had begun to operate the levers of power himself, Abū 'l-'Abbās nominated a new list of governors dismissing some of those appointed by Abū Salama as suspects,<sup>5</sup> and filled the vital posts with

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 785a; Tab., III, pp. 27, 34; Ya'qūbī, II, p.413. See also Akhbar, fol. 202b; Nubdha, fol. 289b.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb; fols. 785a, 776b; Akhbar, fols. 202a-202b; Nubdha, fol. 289b; Dīna, p. 357; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 419; Tab., III, pp. 27, 33-34; Muruj, VI, p.91.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 773a. Dīnawārī puts it as if Abū 'l-'Abbās was in Kūfa long before the revolt (p.360).

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 784a; Ya'qūbī, II, p.418; Tab., III, p.23; Kūfī, fol. 226b.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fols. 785b, 806a citing Madā'inī; Tab., III, pp. 72-73.

prominent 'Abbāsids as well as men with a good record in the da'wa. Abū Ja'far (later al-Mansūr) was sent to lead the attack on Wasit. It was also thought appropriate to send an 'Abbāsīd to face Marwān II who was hurriedly advancing to meet the bulk of the Khurasānīs led by Abū 'Awn al-Azdī, a task for which 'Abdallah b. 'Alī the uncle of the caliph volunteered.<sup>1</sup> Marwān had entrenched himself between the Tigris and the great Zab river, while 'Abdallah b. 'Alī faced him on the left side of the Zab. Marwān's army was composed of tribal units such as al-Shahsiyya, al-Rāshidiyya, al-Muhamirra and al-Dukāniyya.<sup>2</sup> Those divisions were loyal to their tribal chiefs who were, presumably, maintained and well-paid by Marwān. The relationship between Marwān and those tribal chiefs is not explained by our sources but their loyalty to Marwān was presumably due not to reasons of faith in the Umayyad caliphate, but to mercenary considerations. To these units one must add also the Bedouins and other irregular tribal elements who joined Marwān in the Jazīra. As to the number of Marwān's army, several accounts give the obviously exaggerated figure of more than 100,000 men.<sup>3</sup> Mas'ūdī merely states that it was "huge".<sup>4</sup> However Tabarī maintains

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 786a; Tab., III, p.38 citing Madā'ini.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, pp. 40 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Khalifā, Tārīkh, fol. 279; Ansāb, fol. 760a; Tab., III, p.46 citing Madā'ini; Kufi, fol. 228a; Muru'j, VI, p.85; Bal'amī, IV, p.337; Dinawari gives the figure of 30,000 men (p.363).

<sup>4</sup> Tanbih, p.327.

that Marwān himself estimated his own army at 12,000 men.<sup>1</sup> Thus it seems that originally the 'Abbāsīd army numbered less than Marwān's, but having been especially reinforced when 'Abdallah b. 'Alī took over the command, it numbered between 20,000 and 24,000 men.<sup>2</sup> As a result both armies seem to have been of approximately the same size, but by no means the same morale. The Khurasānīs and the Irāqīs were fighting for a promising new cause, while the Syrian allegiance was at a low ebb, as they had lost faith in the cause of their dynasty. In addition to that, the Syrian Qaysite tribes formed a great part of his army. This, in fact, was its chief weakness, especially as it was torn by tribal jealousies by which Marwān's great military ability was seriously impaired. Feuds raged even on the battlefield between Quḍā'a, Banī Sulaym, Banī 'A mīr, al-Sukūn, Ghaṭafān. The active military confrontation lasted ten days (2-11 of Jumāda II 132/16-25 January 750 A.D.). Marwān committed the grave tactical error of leaving his well-prepared strategic position to cross the Zāb. To give his army courage, Marwān is reported to have described the Khurasānī partisans of the 'Abbāsīds as "a mob from Shahrazūr among whom there were only very few Khurasānīs".<sup>3</sup> When the morale of Marwān's army was at its lowest ebb, he tried to raise it by distributing money

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 46-47.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p. 38; Kūfī, fol. 228a.

<sup>3</sup>Azdī, fol. 110.

وليس منهم من اول خراسان من اول الصحابة



among the soldiers, who actually threw themselves upon it and grabbed it. He sent his son to prevent further pillage, but the latter was accompanied by his banner which made soldiers think that he was taking flight. They fled in such disarray that the number of the drowned exceeded that of those actually killed.<sup>1</sup> Even at that desperate moment an Umayyad jeered at Marwān because he had been defeated. "The oppressor is now the oppressed [one]; his only desire is to flee".<sup>2</sup>

When Marwān withdrew towards Moṣūl, Hishām al-Taghlabī refused to open its gates. Marwān, therefore, proceeded to his headquarters in Ḥarrān where his son-in-law, Abān b. Yazīd, was governor.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, Abū 'l-'Abbās ordered every one who participated in the battle to be given 500 dirhams and increased their salaries to 80 dirhams a month.<sup>4</sup> As a reward for their services in pursuing Marwān II Abū 'l-'Abbās allotted cultivable lands to tribal chiefs of Moṣūl, such as Wā'il al-Azdī and his brothers. On his accession al-Manṣūr increased the allotted land.<sup>5</sup>

'Abdallah b. 'Alī received from the caliph orders to pursue Marwan. Moṣūl opened its gates to the 'Abbāsīd army. Ḥarrān, evacuated by Marwān, surrendered and its governor paid homage to 'Abdallah, who destroyed the house where Ibrāhīm the Imam had met his death.<sup>6</sup> On his

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 40-42.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.41, citing Madā'inī. عاد الظلم ظلماته الرب الحى الغر بمران ضلته له  
See also Kūfī, fols. 228b f; Azdī, fols. 112 ff. It is significant to note that Azdī often uses the term Ashāb [followers] when referring to the armies on both sides which indicates the non-racialist aspect of the conflict. (fol. 112).

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.45; Murūj, VI, p.74.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.41. After the 'Abbāsīd accession the salary of the soldier was increased to 80 dirhams a month. But in 135 A.H. Abū 'l-'Abbās decreased it to 60. However, al-Manṣūr increased it again to 80 when he sent the army to fight 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. See Ansāb, citing Madā'inī, fols. 763a-763b

way to Damascus Marwān passed through Qinnisrin, Hums and many other cities, but the Syrians whom he tried to persuade to join him, turned their backs on him.<sup>1</sup> Syrian tribes such as Tayy and Tanūkh attacked his rear and plundered his supplies and money.<sup>2</sup> Marwān was in a precarious position. He was now reaping the fruits of his tribal policy. It seems that he was deceived in the trust he had put in the Qaysites;<sup>3</sup> The Yamanite Syrians took the opportunity to revenge themselves on him. When he reached Damascus, the capital which he had deserted for Ḥarrān, its governor al-Walīd b. Mu'āwiya b. Marwān b. 'Abd 'l-Malik, another son-in-law of Marwān, welcomed him, but Marwān could not remain in a city torn by inter-tribal strife between Qaysites and Yamanites; besides, some factions were frankly hostile to him.<sup>4</sup> According to Azdī<sup>5</sup> Marwān was harassed by Yamanites and at Damascus he was faced with the rebellion of al-Ḥārith al-Ḥarsī who called upon the people to swear allegiance to Banī Hāshim. Thus Marwān headed for Palestine and Egypt, pursued by Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī, who was sent as a reinforcement with 10,000 men by Abū 'l-'Abbās, and Abū 'Awn who led the Khurasānīs with 'Amir b. Ismā'īl al-Masallī in the vanguard.<sup>6</sup> Damascus, however, did not surrender to 'Abdallah

<sup>5</sup> (cont.)

Azdī, fols. 136, 141.

<sup>6</sup> Kūfī, fol. 228b; Murūj, VI, p.75.

<sup>1</sup> Dīna, fol. 364. *رجل مروان يستنصر من الشام فخرجون عنه ويلاون الرب*

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 228b; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 413 ff: 'Iqd, citing an eye witness Muṣ'ab al-Khath'amī, vol. 4, p.473.

<sup>3</sup> Imāma quotes Marwān saying:

(p.224) " *لا اخرجتني عن قيس انما اخرج الراس ما تبني منهم امر وذلك انا ورضينا الامر في غير موضع* "

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.414; Tab., III, p.45 citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>5</sup> Azdī, fol. 118.

<sup>6</sup> Kūfī, fols. 228b, 229a. It is related that Marwān intended to take refuge  
(cont.)

b. 'Alī. Its governor held the city with 50,000 troops.<sup>1</sup> But soon 'Asabiyya tampered with the people of Damascus and fighting broke out between Qaysite and Yamanite. According to Kūfī<sup>2</sup> before the capitulation of the city, the population was divided into pro-Umayyad and pro-'Abbāsīd sections who fought each other. Ultimately, the pro-'Abbāsīd group emerged victorious. They killed the governor of the city and opened its doors to the Khurasānīs. Azdī<sup>3</sup> states that the Yamanite population of the city sided with the 'Abbāsīds, killed its governor and delivered the city to 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. Ya'qūbī<sup>4</sup> states that a section of the population asked Yahya b. Baḥr to negotiate for surrender. While the negotiations were in progress, they relaxed in vigilance and the Khurasānīs entered Damascus on the 14th of Ramaḍān 132/26th of April 750 by force. The walls of the city were destroyed and it was pillaged for three hours. Whatever may have been the reasons which led Marwān to Egypt, he certainly could not have expected to find a force which would deliver him from the Khurasānīs, as Egypt itself was in a state of chaos. Moreover, at that very moment the Copts revolted against Marwān. He entered Egypt on the 8th of Shawwāl 132/ May 750, when a number of districts such as al-Ḥawf al-Sharqī, Alexandria, Ṣa'īd

---

(cont.) in Byzantium, but he abandoned the idea on the advice of his counsellor. This sounds highly improbable as the caliph of Islam, however desperate, he was, would never have dared, at that time, to look for shelter in the camp of the "unbelievers".

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 760b; Kūfī, fol. 228; Tab., III, pp. 45-46 citing Aḥmad B. Zuhayr; Murūj, VI, p.94.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 228b.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fol. 124, also fols. 112, 113, 116.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 426-7; Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 280; Muq., fol. 239a; Aynī, fols. 9b-10a.

and Aswān had already declared themselves for the 'Abbāsids.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore probable that Marwān had the idea of proceeding to Ifriqiyya.<sup>2</sup> However, Marwān was trapped at night by 'Amir b. Ismā'īl and Sha'ba b. Kathīr al-Māzinī with the cavalry of Mosul, at a church of Buṣīr and was killed fighting on Dhū 'l Ḥijja in 132/July 750.<sup>3</sup> His head was sent to Abū 'l 'Abbās with a message which stated "We have followed Marwān al-Ja'dī to the residence of Pharaoh the enemy of God. He was killed in the city of his counterpart Pharaoh Dhu 'l-Awtād. God has freed the people and the country from him."<sup>4</sup> Later on, several prominent men who helped him were also arrested and executed. Others were sent to Irāq, but were killed on their way in Palestine.<sup>5</sup> As to the fate of Marwān's two sons, 'Abdallah and 'Ubaydallah, the accounts are contradictory.<sup>6</sup> They seem to have fled southward to Nūba with several Umayyads<sup>7</sup> and a number of partisans. Only 'Abdallah survived the hardships of the journey and crossed again to Arabia where he was arrested either in the reign of al-Manṣūr or al-Mahdī. He was imprisoned at al-Muḥbaq in Baghdad.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wulāt, pp. 95ff; Severus, p.156; Khīṭāṭ, vol. I, p.128, vol. 4, p.29.

<sup>2</sup> A legendary tradition related that the 'Abbāsīd control would not exceed beyond the Zāb which was not, as Marwān mistakenly thought, the Zāb of the Jazīra but that of Ifriqiyya. (see Imāma, ed. Cairo 1904, p.228).

<sup>3</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 280; Tab., III, p.51, citing Madā'inī; Azdī, fol.136. On Buṣīr see H.E. Amélineau, "La mort du caliph...", J.A., 1914, pp. 421-49.

<sup>4</sup> Kūfī, fol. 229b.

<sup>5</sup> Wulāt, pp. 97 ff. It is worth noting that the execution took place at Nahr Abī Fuṭrus which suggests that those Egyptian captives were part of the victims of the massacre ordered by 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.

<sup>6</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.421; Tab., III, p.46, citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr; see also Ma'arif, p.372; Iqd, vol. 4, pp. 471, 472; Khāṭib, vol. 10, p.150.  
(cont.)

Meanwhile, Yazīd b. 'Umar b. Hubayra al-Fazārī, the Umayyad governor of Irāk, decided to entrench himself in the Umayyad headquarters at Wāsiṭ. He rejected the advice that he should attack Kūfa,<sup>1</sup> evidently because he thought that he needed more time building up the fighting spirit of his army which was dangerously low. He also refused to join Marwān's troops in the Jazīra for fear of providing Marwān with a possible opportunity to punish him, as the latter was not satisfied with his conduct of past affairs. By entrenching himself at Wāsiṭ he rendered inactive a considerable section of Marwān's supporters, his only choice in the circumstances.

When Abū Salama al-Khallāl took over at Kūfa, he sent al-Ḥasān b. Qaḥṭaba with the Khurasānīs to Wāsiṭ. These troops were reinforced by Mālik b. al-Haytham al-Khuẓā'ī, another Khurasānī commander. However, when Abū 'l-'Abbās was proclaimed caliph, he decided to send his brother Abū Ja'far 'Abdallah to lead the attack against Ibn Hubayra because he recognized the rivalry among the military commanders of the Khurasānī troops and the resentment of some of them against al-Ḥassan's

---

<sup>7</sup> (cont.)

<sup>7</sup> Jamharat, p.84.

<sup>8</sup> Tab., III, p.485; 'Asākīr, vol. 4, p.47; 'Iqd, vol. 4, pp. 471-472.

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, p.62, citing Madā'ini.

command.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the mere dispatch of a member of the 'Abbāsīd family was likely to raise the morale of the army. To conciliate al-Ḥasan, the caliph wrote "The army is yours [al-Ḥasan] and its commanders are under your control. I only sent my brother to rally the people and inspire their confidence and to give a guarantee to Ibn Ḥubayra should he wish for an amān."<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Ḥubayra still had a formidable army under his command, composed of the remainder of the pro-Umayyad Khurasānīs<sup>3</sup> as well as the Syrian army of Irāq and Irāqīs, Yamanites and Qaysites,<sup>4</sup> under veteran commanders and tribal chiefs such as Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī, Ḥawthara b. Suhayl, Muḥammad b. Nabāta, Yahya b. Ḥusayn and Ziyād b. Sāliḥ al-Ḥārithī. It numbered about 20,000.<sup>5</sup> Ibn Ḥubayra was well prepared for a long siege with huge supplies and provisions.<sup>6</sup> The great weakness of this army was evidently the tribal sympathies of its troops. The Yamanites who had been ill-treated by Marwān were determined not to help his cause. The Qaysites, who seem to have lost faith in the crumbling Umayyad régime, decided not to fight unless the Yamanites did. Thus in the words of Tabarī "Only the Sa'alīk and the Fityān fought with Ibn Ḥubayra".<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 786b; Ta'b., III, pp. 63-64; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 277.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 786b.; Tab., III, p.71.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.62, citing Madā'inī; Dīna., p.371.

<sup>4</sup> Imāma, p. 241; Tab., III, p.66.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.423; cf. Dīna, p.370 (30,000).

<sup>6</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233a; Dīna, p.370; Ya'qūbī, II, p.423.

<sup>7</sup> Tab., III, p.66. The term Sa'alīk denotes either "poor" or "robbers" while the Fityān means "chivalrous" ذوالجيرة (see al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. I, pp. 517, 680). This probably means that his support consisted of tribes bound to him by ties of loyalty (Fityān) or advantage (Sa'alīk). The latter were mercenaries.

Furthermore, Abū 'l-'Abbās and Abū Ja'far were able to contact certain Yamanite figures in Ibn Hubayra's camp, such as Yizād al-Ḥārithī, who defected to the 'Abbāsids taking others with them.<sup>1</sup> According to the author of al-Imāma wa 'l-Siyāsa, Abū Ja'far (later al-Manṣūr) wrote to the Yamanites who were with Ibn Hubayra "Al-Sultānuṣultānukum wa 'l dawlata dawlatukum".<sup>2</sup> The paramount importance of the tribal chiefs and commanders on whose loyalty the fate of the two camps, the Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids, was very greatly dependant can simply not be over-rated. In fact, the allegiance of those tribal chiefs could tip the balance either way. Their importance has already been exemplified during the series of battles between 'Abbāsīd and Umayyad troops. On this occasion, the tribal chiefs largely favoured the promising new dynasty of the Family of the Prophet as they had had their fill of the old Umayyad régime. There is no better evidence of this state of things than the words of two veteran Umayyad Commanders and tribal chiefs, Iṣḥāq b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī and Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥārithī. The former told Abū Ja'far after the fall of Wāsit "God has saved /you/ You were not sufficiently strong yourself and there were around you the Qaysites and others who obey Ibn Hubayra and lay down their lives for him... But your

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 787b citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Dīna, pp. 368-9; Tab., III, pp. 66, 67, 64.

<sup>2</sup> Imāma, p. 241.

السُّلْطَانُ وَالرَّيْءُ وَالرُّبُوعُ وَالرُّبُوعُ

affair [state] is new and people are either hoping [to benefit from it] or else they fear you."<sup>1</sup> The latter is reported to have said "I am most grateful to Ibn Hubayra, but I do not see why I should stay [to defend] a weak and crumbling realm [i.e. the Umayyad state]."<sup>2</sup>

The siege lasted for about eleven months,<sup>3</sup> and it was only when Ibn Hubayra heard of Marwān's death that he began to think of surrender.<sup>4</sup> According to Kūfī<sup>5</sup> Ibn Hubayra's commanders asked him "Why and for what [cause] do we fight, and kill ourselves when Marwān is dead... we should come to terms with them [the 'Abbāsids]." For forty days, Ibn Hubayra prepared a very careful amān<sup>6</sup> which was accepted by the 'Abbāsids. But once he had surrendered the 'Abbāsids could not tolerate him. He was a typical Arab tribal chief, proud with a large following. He treated Abū Ja'far as an equal.<sup>7</sup> He was, therefore, considered a firebrand and a potential danger to the existing régime and it was thought best to do away with him. Here one is confronted with conflicting historical accounts. Ibn Ḥabīb, Balādhurī, Tabarī and Ya'qūbī state that Ibn Hubayra contacted the Ḥasanid Muḥammad Dhu 'l-Nafs al-Zakiyya and promised him support if he claimed the caliphate, while Kūfī with his 'Alid sympathies confined himself to stating that Yazīd [ibn Hubayra] had "violated the amān because

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 791, citing Madā'ini.

<sup>2</sup> Dina, p.369.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.66 citing Madā'ini; Ansāb, fol. 786b; Abū Ja'far led the siege for the last nine months (Ansāb, fol. 781b).

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 786a.

<sup>5</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233a.

<sup>6</sup> The text of the amān is preserved in al-Kūfī (fol. 233a). See also Imāma pp. 242-246; Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 278.

<sup>7</sup> Ansāb, fol. 792a-792b, citing Madā'ini; Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 278.



he called for the abdication of the 'Abbāsids in secret".<sup>1</sup> He does not reveal Ibn Hubayra's secret contacts with the 'Alids. At any rate, the important question is were these contacts made before or after the amān? Balādhurī and Kūfī say after, obviously in violation of the amān, while Ya'qūbī's statement implies the contrary. It is important to note that Abū Ja'far, at first, objected<sup>2</sup> to the caliph's orders to execute Ibn Hubayra and his commanders. Now had the latter contacted Muḥammad Dhu 'l-Nafs al-Zakiyya after the amān and violated its terms, Abū Ja'far would not have hesitated to execute him. It is interesting to point out that, according to a version in Balādhurī and Tabarī, it was Abū Muslim who was the chief instigator of Ibn Hubayra's execution.<sup>3</sup> However, Ibn Hubayra was not so much a real as a potential danger, and Abū Muslim seems to have recognized that; thus Ibn Hubayra had to be removed for reasons of policy. Even though he may really have contacted Muḥammad the Ḥasanid during the siege, as a ground for his murder, it was only a pretext.

Abū Ja'far tried to delay the execution and urged his brother the caliph to disregard Abū Muslim's advice, but to respect the amān.<sup>4</sup> The determined caliph ordered him again to execute Ibn Hubayra immediately, or else he would send one "who will take him [Ibn Hubayra] out of your

<sup>1</sup> Ḥabīb, pp. 189-190; Ansāb, fol. 792a; Tab., III, p.66; Ya'qūbī, II, p.424; Kūfī, fol. 233a.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 792a; Tab., III, p.68; Kūfī, fol. 234a.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 787a; Tab., III, p.67; see also Imāma, p.247.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 787a.

room and kill him."<sup>1</sup> Abū Ja'far was advised to send men of Ibn Hubayra's own tribe to execute the order. He chose Khāzim b. Khuzayma, al-Haytham b. Sha'ba and al-Aghlab b. Sālim with others.<sup>2</sup> Here again it is important to note how tribal affiliations and loyalties were still taken into consideration during the early 'Abbāsīd epoch. The choice of Muḍarite partisans of the 'Abbāsīds seemed opportune, because if Yamanites had been chosen to perform the execution it would have resulted in a tribal feud and consequently a split within the 'Abbāsīd ranks. Khāzim al-Tamīmī is reported to have said "By God I have volunteered to kill Ibn Hubayra in case a Yamanite were given the order to execute him, and this Yamanite then boasted of killing Ibn Hubayra".<sup>3</sup> Both his son and his secretary were killed with Ibn Hubayra. His more prominent commanders were arrested and many of them executed. Their numbers are given as 50 by Balādhurī and Kitāb al-Imāma, and as 40 by Kūfī, while Ṭabarī mentions no number and only calls them "the chiefs among the Qaysites and Muḍarites".<sup>4</sup> Then orders were issued to the Syrian army in Irāq to disperse and leave for home (Syria).<sup>5</sup> This measure indicates that the 'Abbāsīds were deeply suspicious of the Syrians on the one hand,

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.68; see also Ḥabīb, p.190. ان انت فعلت والامر على عنك الحسن فمطبه

<sup>2</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, p.278; Imāma, p.249; Ansāb, fol. 787b-788a, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; see also Dīna., pp. 371-372, Ya'qubī, II, p.424.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fols. 789a-789b.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 788a citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 278; Imāma, p.251; Kūfī, fol. 234a; Tab., III, p.69.

<sup>5</sup>Ansāb, fol. 788a citing Haytham b. 'Adī.

and on the other hand the end of the Syrian Irāqī struggle for supremacy in the Muslim empire with the victory of Irāk.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the Hāshimiyya movement under the leadership of Muḥammad b. 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd wisely directed its activities to Khurasān where tribal factionalism was very acute. Under Ibrāhīm the Imām the movement became militant. Although it was natural for the 'Abbāsīd dā'īs to concentrate their efforts on the Yamanites who had been deprived of power and authority by the Umayyads in favour of the Muḍarites,<sup>1</sup> they welcomed every Muḍarite who joined them.

The tribal conflict in Khurasān gave momentum to the 'Abbāsīd da'wa, the first recruits to which were Arabs from Khuzā'a in whose villages around Merv Abū Muslim took refuge. Naṣr b. Sayyār could not crush the movement at its birth, as any attack on its partisans would be considered an attack on the Khuzā'a, their protectors, and would drag Naṣr into a bitter conflict with the Yamanites and their allies, Rabī'a, something which he tried to avoid at first. Still more important, disappointed Arab settlers of any tribal affiliation, deprived of their 'Atā' and jealous of their privileged kin (the Muqātila) were hoping for a change in the ruling stratum. This accounts for the fact that not only Yamanites and their allies, Rabī'ites, were ultimately won by the

---

<sup>1</sup>On the Muḍarites who joined Abū Muslim's ranks see: Akhbār, fols. 138b, 139a, 141a, 150a, 151a. There were also many Muḍarites in the committee of the twelve Naqība as well as many in the seventy dā'īs. (Tab., II, p. 1988; Akhbār, fols. 103a-103b).

'Abbāsīd da'wa, but even the frustrated Muḡarites. It also accounts for the continuous appeals and counter-appeals by both sides to the Arabs promising them 'Aḡā'<sup>1</sup> if they joined their ranks, as not all Arabs were enlisted in the Dīwān as Muḡatila.

The Hāshimīyya partisans who were initiated into the secret dogma of the da'wa seem to have formed a relatively small proportion of the 'Abbāsīd following. It is doubtful whether the majority of Khuẓā'a, Tamīm or Bakr knew anything about the dogmatic foundation of the movement. Those tribes were noted for their unruly nature and resentment of the central régime. Khuẓā'a had a long record of Hāshimite sympathies and opposition to the Umayyads.<sup>2</sup> It is significant that Arabs sent to Khurasān were sometimes selected from among troublesome elements.<sup>3</sup> 'Alī b. al-Karīmānī the Azdite tribal chief was not so much for the 'Abbāsīds as against the Umayyad policy which deprived him of power and authority, and Naṣr b. Sayyār personally. Until his murder at the hands of Abū Muslim, he probably never knew that Abū Muslim was working for an 'Abbāsīd claimant.

The task of extending the 'Abbāsīd sphere of influence from the villages of Merw to a number of cities in Khurasān was undertaken by Arab commanders. Merw 'l Rūdh, Balkh, Herāt, Sarkh and Merw 'l Shāhjān were fallen to Arab commanders, who sometimes led their own tribal groups. The mainstay of Qaḡḡaba's army were Arabs and so were, in their majority,

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fols. 166b, 168a, 184b, 125a; Ansāb, fol. 780a; Tab., III, pp. 3, 6, citing Mada'ini, p.30, II, p.1856 citing Mada'ini.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., I, pp. 1086ff; Dīwān Di'bil (ed. Dujaylī), p.33.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., II, p.178; Sha'bān, op.cit., pp. 61,72.

the leaders of its divisions. The 'Abbāsīd revolution was thus almost entirely an Arab affair. Non-Arab Muslims and Iranian natives did participate in the movement but their rôle was neither decisive nor inspired by national feeling. They fought as loyal Mawālī of the Arabs, i.e. freedmen who owed allegiance to their masters. They are, therefore, seen fighting on both sides. Their rôle was less outstanding than that of the Arabs and they were only mentioned last in the lists.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the struggle in Irāk and Syria tribal chiefs played a vital rôle the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. It was because of the support they gave to the new and promising da'wa that Irākī and Syrian cities had to capitulate, Marwān II was defeated and victory was finally achieved.

Abū Muslim's rôle in the da'wa has been exaggerated, as it was a well-known tendency of classical chroniclers to identify the state with the monarch and the development of a movement or a sect with the career of its leader, as in this case the da'wa with its leader Abū Muslim. That is why accounts attribute most crucial decisions during the da'wa and the revolution to Abū Muslim or simply to the "agents of Abū Muslim",<sup>2</sup> without mentioning their names or the rôle they played in the movement. Consequently the full light is focused on the person of Abū Muslim. It is significant that the work in the da'wa was collective, a kind of committee work, and there was no preference for one man against another in the committee of twelve Naqībs. Many

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1993, 1994, 1998.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., II, pp. 1966-1967; anonymous, fols. 10b-12b. The accounts of the Hss. Akhbar al-'Abbās are more precise and coherent than Tabarī in this respect.

played decisive rôles throughout the da'wa, some of them long before Abū Muslim's appearance. There were men like Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī who was often behind every important decision taken by Abū Muslim. To mention but a few: It was Sulaymān who declared the start of the revolution and led the first prayer in the name of the new da'wa. It was Sulaymān who advised Abū Muslim to take the initiative and approach both al-Karmānī and Naṣr b. Sayyār in order to satisfy both the Yamanites and Muḍarites in his camp. It was Sulaymān who successfully undertook the task of terminating the truce between Naṣr, Ibn 'l-Karmānī and Shahybān the Kharijite, and often stood beside Abū Muslim, who is described as taciturn by nature, at meetings with Naṣr's delegates or at tribal conferences. As has already been mentioned, Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī played an outstanding rôle at the conference which was attended by Naṣr's partisans, 'Alī Ibn al-Karmānī's partisans and a delegation from the 'Abbāsīd camp, and expressed the opinion that the 'Abbāsīd partisans should side with 'Alī b. Karmānī's followers. Finally, it was Sulaymān who took the Bay'a of Abū Muslim and the 'Abbāsīd partisans shortly before the fall of Merw, a tactical move made by the dā'īs to counter the Umayyad propaganda. The tendency to exalt Abū Muslim increased after his murder by al-Manṣūr when he became a symbol of the Iranian insurrections, as well as the embodiment of the principles of the disappointed extreme branch of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa.

Trying to analyse the nature of Abū Muslim's doctrines Western scholars have expressed two different opinions. Some<sup>1</sup> maintain that he

<sup>1</sup>Barthold, E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Abū Muslim); Turkestan..., p.194; Welhausen, op.cit., p.506; E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbāsīds).

preached the doctrine of metempsychosis and re-incarnation of God current among the extreme Muslim and non-Muslim sects; others<sup>1</sup> see nothing in his activities which would put his loyalty to Islam in doubt. Though this thesis is not concerned with the religious aspect of the 'Abbāsīd propaganda, it must be stated that Abū Muslim was a loyal 'Abbāsīd propagandist who aimed at winning, for the 'Abbāsīds, groups of various orientations and had, probably, used a variety of arguments to suit every case. But no sooner were the 'Abbāsīd in power than they adopted Orthodoxy and abandoned all extremist ideas, and Abū Muslim followed suit. He crushed an 'Alid rising at Bukhāra<sup>2</sup> and a Rāwandiyya rising at Tarmīdh and Tālqān.<sup>3</sup> In his deeds, Abū Muslim typifies the opportunist nature of the 'Abbāsīd movement. That he exploited the memory of 'Alid martyrs, first helped and then murdered 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya the Ja'farite, conspired against the Khajirite Shaybān b. Salama and the sons of al-Karmanī is vividly reminiscent of 'Abbāsīd methods.

---

<sup>1</sup>Frye, op.cit., p.37; Moscati, Abū Muslim, II, op.cit., pp. 11ff; Cahen, op.cit., pp. 328, 331.

<sup>2</sup>Narshakhi, pp. 60-61; Tab., III, p.80.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.82.

## Chapter III

THE 'ABBĀSID RÉGIME AND ITS DĀ'ĪS

"We have not followed Āl Muḥammad to shed blood and do injustice."

Sharīk al-Mahrī  
/F.H.A., p.211/

"We have taken the Oath [for the 'Abbāsids] in order to establish justice and revive the Sunan ..., and Abū Muslim is nothing but oppressor and tyrant..."

Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuẓā'ī  
/Ansāb, fol. 800b/



Once the 'Abbāsids had got a firm hold of the government and began manipulating power, they abandoned, as it has already been mentioned, all revolutionary and extremist ideas and suppressed every group or revolutionary individual who rose in arms protesting against the new political or religious policies they had adopted. Furthermore, the 'Abbāsīd caliphs tried to rid themselves of those prominent 'Abbāsīd partisans who had had their share in bringing about the revolution, because they considered them as being a danger to their own authority. It has been mentioned above that it was the method of the 'Abbāsīd dā'īs not only to welcome new and even different ideas and adherents of various kinds but also to stir up trouble against the Umayyad authorities as well and wherever they could, thus they encouraged the extremist Ṭalibite 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwīya, the Kharijite Shaybān b. Salama, the Yamenite tribal chief Jadī' al-Karmanī and even the Persian rebel Bihāfarīd who, in fact, voiced his protest in the late Umayyad period.<sup>1</sup> But once victory was achieved, the loyal 'Abbāsīd governor Abū Muslim got rid of them one by one. However, these latent tendencies and affiliations surely did not disappear overnight. It is striking how soon those revolutionary groups and individuals asserted themselves by staging revolts in many parts of the empire especially in its eastern part. These were by no means

---

<sup>1</sup> Ṣadīghī, op.cit., pp. 117-118; M. Houtsma, Bih'afīd, W.Z.K.M., 3, 1889, p.30.

purely political revolts of the kind usually led by rebellious generals or ambitious governors but mostly risings led by dā'īs who could look back on a splendid record in the 'Abbāsīd da'wa such as Bassām b. Ibrāhīm, Ziyād b. Šāliḥ, 'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-'Azdī, Jahwar b. Murrār al-'Ijli, Khālid b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī. The revolts of the pro-'Alid elements in Bukhāra and the extreme Rawandites in Balkh and Tirmadh reveal the disappointment of these sections of the revolutionaries with the policy of the régime they had helped to put in power.

To start from the beginning. It is a commonplace that a revolution eats its revolutionaries; it could not be more true of the 'Abbāsīd revolution. There were almost immediate rivalries among the 'Abbāsīd revolutionaries as to who was to manipulate the levers of power. The chief dā'ī of Kūfa and the Wazīr of 'Al-Muḥammad Abū Salama Ḥafṣ b. Sulaymān al-Khallāl<sup>1</sup> a mawla of the tribe of Sabī' and a veteran partisan who had spent about thirty years conducting the da'wa from Kūfa and providing the contact between Ibrāhīm the Imām and the dā'īs of Khurasān was the first to seize power in Kūfa in 132/749-50. It was he who distributed administrative and military offices among the partisans of the new régime.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile Abū 'l 'Abbās 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad had already been nominated successor of his brother Ibrāhīm the Imām, who urged him to flee to Kūfa.<sup>3</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 770a, 782b ff; Akhbar, fol. 118b; Tab., II, 1916, 1949; Jah., p.83; Muruj, VI, p.133; Asakir, 4, p.377; Fakhrī, pp. 136-7; Wafayāt, 5, 113 ff;tr.English, 1, 467 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbar, fols. 184a, 185b; Ansāb, fol. 785b; Tab., III. p.20.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fols. 772a-774a; Akhbar, fol. 191a; Nubdha, fol. 289b; Ya'qūbī, II, 419-20; Tab., III, p.27, pp. 33-34; Muruj, VI, p.89, pp. 91-92; Asakir, 3, 36.

arrived at Kūfa in Ṣafar 132 accompanied by his relatives. Abū Salama had served Ibrāhīm the Imām, but seemed, after the latter's death, to have had second thoughts on the desirability of Abū 'l-Abbās as a caliph and indeed of the whole 'Abbāsī family. According to Balādhurī "when Abū 'l-'Abbās and his relatives arrived at Kūfa Abū Salama hid them in a house in Banī Awd and whenever Abū 'l-'Abbās asked him about the time of their appearance in public he used to tell him not yet... and he intended to take the Imamate from them and give it to the sons of Fāṭima."<sup>1</sup> Jahshiyārī<sup>2</sup> states that when Abū Salama took over Kūfa he proclaimed the Hashimite Imamate without mentioning the name of the Caliph. As for Tabarī,<sup>3</sup> Abū Salama hid Abū 'l-'Abbās in the house of al-Walīd b. Sa'ad, a mawla of Banī Hāshim in the quarter of Banī Awd and kept the news of their arrival secret for forty days from the Quwwād and the Shī'a. Tabarī also stresses that he obviously planned to transfer the caliphate from the 'Abbāsids to the family of Abū Ṭālib after he had heard of the death of Ibrāhīm the Imām. It is significant that, according to the author of Akhbār al-'Abbās, delivering his khuṭba on the 10th of Muḥarram 132, Abū Salama promised the Khurasānīs a raise in pay and added "And you can imagine that, a little later, when your Imām is among you, you will get from him more than you expect".<sup>4</sup> He did not

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 783a; Ibn Ḥabīb states also (Asma' al-Mughṭalīn, p.187)

كان ابو سلمة يريدوا ان يخلعوا عليه

<sup>2</sup> Jah., p.84.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 27, 34.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 185a.

mention the name or the descent of the Imām and his tone seemed to have indicated that the Imām he had in mind was not among them as Abū 'l 'Abbās was but would come from outside Kūfa. This is plain proof that he had decided not to acknowledge Abū 'l 'Abbās. Another account<sup>1</sup> shows Abū Salama in the throes of doubt and suspicion after the death of Ibrāhīm the Imām; he is said to have been inventing letters from the Imām and reading them to the people of Khurasān in order to satisfy their curiosity. But unfortunately the available manuscript ends at this point; however the Nubdha<sup>2</sup> relates that Abū Salama concealed the arrival of the 'Abbāsids at Kūfa and wanted the desired decision to be arrived at by consultation *مشورى* between 'Abbāsids and 'Alids, then he performed a complete volte face in favour of the 'Alids. Other historians also agree that Abū Salama had 'Alid sympathies. The author of the Imāma wa'l siyāsa states that "Abū Salama intended to bestow the caliphate on the sons of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and prevented the appearance of Abū 'l 'Abbās under the pretext that the matter had not matured yet, as the Umayyad Mawālī were still fighting and the affair was harder than ever."<sup>3</sup> Also Mas'ūdī relates that Abū Salama had the 'Abbāsids kept among Banī Awd and had them watched by an agent. After he relates that Abū Salama changed his mind in favour of the 'Alids,

---

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., fol. 199a.

<sup>2</sup> Nubdha, fol. 290a; F.H.A., p.196.

<sup>3</sup> Imāma, p.226.

Mas'ūdī adds "Abū Salama thought, at the news of Ibrāhīm's death that everything would go to pieces and be ruined."<sup>1</sup> فان انتقام الامر ✓

It was not Mas'ūdī only but Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa<sup>2</sup> also who tried to give the impression that Abū Salama's decision was due to the lack among the 'Abbāsids of a man to match the hour. Kūfī never touches the subject of Abū Salama's conspiracy. After describing the tense political atmosphere in Kūfa on the eve of the 'Abbāsīd victory, Kūfī states that opinions differed on whether homage would be paid to the sons of Abū Ṭālib or the sons of al-'Abbās, Abū Salama ascended the pulpit and addressed the people saying

"Oh people are you satisfied with what [I] am going to do? They replied: 'We are satisfied [with your decision].'"

Abū Salama then said:

"The Amīn of Āl Muḥammad Abū Muslim wrote ordering me to install a Hashimite Imam."

Then Abū Salama is said to have gone on praising the 'Abbāsids, and to have finally said:

"I have chosen for you 'Abdullah b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī [Abū 'l 'Abbās] Do you agree?"

and the people shouted:

"Yes we agree."<sup>3</sup>

In his Ma'arīf Ibn Qutayba<sup>4</sup> also does not mention it and simply states

<sup>1</sup> Murūj, VI, p.92.

<sup>2</sup> Fakhrī, p.137.

<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fols. 226a-b.

<sup>4</sup> Ma'arīf, p.372.

لا سبر اهل بن العباس عنم عن العبد عنهم الي بن علي

that Abū Salama paid homage to Abū 'l 'Abbās and led him to the Mosque. It is not clear what rôle Abū Muslim played in the matter of Abū 'l 'Abbās's succession; nor have the possible implications of the rivalry between Abū Salama and Abū Muslim on who would hold the reins of power yet been sufficiently investigated. It is interesting to note in this respect that several accounts<sup>1</sup> attribute the accusations of conspiracy, enmity and bad faith towards the new régime raised against Abū Salama to Abū Muslim who informed the caliph of his treasonable intention and either is said to have suggested to the caliph that he should be killed or decided to kill him himself after failing to persuade the caliph. However, at the moment, it would suffice to say that most historians maintain that it was Abū Salama who after striving for many years for 'Abbāsid succession finally made the attempt to deprive them of it when it seems already won. Professor C. Cahen<sup>2</sup> says "It is related that having a premonition of his death, Ibrāhīm had sent word to his brother making him heir. Is the fact exact? In any case it is doubtful whether Abū Salama was informed..." but this argument is not convincing as Abū Salama did know that Abū 'l 'Abbās was Ibrāhīm's nominated successor<sup>3</sup> whether by his last will or by 'Abbāsid consent. As little convincing are the accounts of Kūfī and Ibn Qutayba. The former's pro-'Alid sentiments which render his account superficial can not be ignored, while

---

<sup>1</sup> Dīna, p.368; Ya'qūbī, II, p.422; Murūj, VI, pp. 133-135.

<sup>2</sup> Cahen, op.cit., p.330.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 113b; Nubdha, fol. 255b.

the latter's account is too brief and vague to be sufficiently informative. Interesting in this respect is the account of Akhbār al-'Abbās<sup>1</sup> that when Qaḥṭaba was advancing towards Irāk he received a letter from Abū Salama informing him of the imprisonment of Ibrāhīm the Imām and urging him to hasten to take Kūfa, this indicates that prominent Khura-  
sānīs had knowledge of Ibrāhīm's arrest and might have contemplated the question of his successor. On hearing of his death after their occupation of Kūfa they insisted that Abū Salama should proclaim the succession of his legatee, but Abū Salama though fully cognizant of the identity of the latter hedged and prevaricated with the intention of transferring it to the 'Alids. While trying to keep Abū 'l 'Abbās under his thumb, Abū Salama sent a messenger called Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aslam to three prominent 'Alids:<sup>2</sup> Ja'far b. Muḥammad (al-Ṣādiq), 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan al-Maḥḍ and 'Umar b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan. He ordered him to see them in that order and not to go to the next until his predecessor had refused. On the attitude of the 'Alids towards the offer of Abū Salama the accounts vary in detail while agreeing on their hesitant attitude. Tabirī<sup>3</sup> is brief and mentions neither the names of the 'Alids in question nor the spirit in which they received it. Neither does the part of Ansāb 'l-Ashraf at our

<sup>1</sup>Akhbār, fols. 179a-179b; see also Tab. III, p.35.

<sup>2</sup>Jah., p.86; Nubdha, fol. 29oa f; Ya'qūbī, II, 418-9; Muraj, VI, pp. 93-6. Fakhri, pp. 137-8.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.34.

بنا له في الدعاء الى اولاد العباس راضى الدعاء لعليهم

disposal mention their names, although it confirms Abū Salama's 'Alid sympathies.

According to the consensus of Ya'qūbī, Jahshiyarī, Mus'ūdī and Nubdha, al-Ṣādiq's reply was a blunt refusal. He said "I am not your leader, I have nothing to do with Abū Salama he is the Shī'a of others not mine". Then he burned the letter and said to the messenger "What you have seen is the answer".<sup>1</sup> As for the old but ambitious 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan he rejoiced, but was hesitant to claim it for himself. He wanted his son, Muḥammad to be the future Imam, a matter which Abū Salama had not proposed. As to the last 'Alid candidate 'Umar b. Muḥammad, the accounts differ.<sup>2</sup> According to one he could not be found. According to another he refused to accept the offer under the pretext that he could not reply to Abū Salama as he did not know him. However, 'Abdallah al-Maḥḍ having accepted the offer willingly there was no need for the messenger to go to the third candidate. As a matter of course the 'Alids immediately began to quarrel. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq warned 'Abdallah not to accept the offer saying "And when were the people of Khurasān your Shī'a? Did you send Abū Muslim to Khurasān? Did you order him to wear the Sawād? Were you the sender of those troops who came to Irāk... did you know anyone among them?" 'Abdallah al-Maḥḍ replied that "the revolutionaries want my son Muḥammad who is the Mahdī..."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Murūj, VI, p.94.

<sup>2</sup> F.H.A., p.196; Fakhri, p.138.

<sup>3</sup> Jah., p.86; Murūj, VI, pp. 95-6; Fakhri, pp. 137-8.



It is obvious that the 'Alids were either suspicious or hesitant. Moreover Abū Salama's offer had taken them by surprise and they had neither a candidate nor a plan of action. Even at this crucial moment each of them seems to have suspected the other of being envious.

Meanwhile the 'Abbāsīd partisans were kept waiting for Abū Salama to proclaim the Imam. Mūsa b. Ka'b and Abū al Jalm b. 'Aṭīyya al-Bāhilī prominent Khurasānī who had come with the army used to urge Abū Salama to proclaim the 'Abbāsīd Imam but Abū Salama declined time and again using excuses such as: "He has not come yet" or "This is not the right time for him to appear".<sup>1</sup> All that time Abū Salama was consolidating his position in Kūfa by seizing the treasury, collecting the Kharāj, sending troops to deal with Umayyad pockets of resistance at Baṣra, Wāsiṭ and Ahwāz, and nominating governors for provinces and cities. Abū Salama's antagonism towards the 'Abbāsīds manifested itself first when he tried to keep them out of Kūfa at Qasr Muqātil and it was only after Abū 'l 'Abbās appealed to him he unwillingly let them take up residence in Kūfa. If Balādhūrī's account is to be believed, Abū Salama even made an attempt to assassinate Abū 'l 'Abbās when the latter called on him to urge him not to postpone the proclamation of his caliphate any longer.<sup>2</sup> In fact, Abū Salama had concealed the presence of Abu 'l 'Abbās for about two months.<sup>3</sup> When it was finally

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 782b; Tab. III, 23, 35 ff; F.H.A., pp. 198-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 782b; Muq., fol. 71; see appendix in Van Vloten's 'Zur Abbasiden...', Z.D.M.G., 1898.

<sup>3</sup> Jah., p.87; Ya'qūbī, II, p.413; Murūj, VI, p.97. Other sources say it was forty days (see Nubdha, fol. 219a; Tab. III, 27, 34 ff.)

proclaimed it was due more to an accident<sup>1</sup> than to design. One of the 'Abbāsīd veterans Abū Ḥumayd Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥimyarī accidentally met Sābiq al-Khwārazmī a mawla of the 'Abbāsīds whom he had known since the days of Ibrāhīm the Imām. Sābiq told him of the presence of the 'Abbāsīds at Kūfa and the treatment Abū Salama had meted out to them which had been harsh to the extent that even withheld from them one hundred dinars they needed to give the camel drivers their wages. Abū Ḥumayd communicated these facts to Abū 'l-Jahm who, in his turn, informed Mūsa b. Ka'b al-Tamīnī their chief. It was only a swift move made by those pro-'Abbāsīd veterans that saved the caliphate for the 'Abbāsīds. A number of the Khurāsānīs paid a visit to Abū 'l-'Abbās without Abū Salama's consent and swore allegiance to him in Rabī' I 132.<sup>2</sup> Obviously the internal strife between different political groupings of the Khurāsānī movement especially between the two veterans of the 'Abbāsīd revolution Abū Salama and Abū Muslim who had already rid himself of several revolutionary rivals of equal record, intensified as the revolution was approaching success. Both Abū Salama and Abū Muslim were men with great gifts for organisation and leadership and inspired great loyalty. At Kūfa, significantly it was figures who were associated with Abū Muslim such as Abū 'l-Jahm and Abū Ḥumayd who proclaimed the caliphate of Abū 'l-'Abbās. Abū Salama

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 783a; Nubdha, fol. 291a; Jah. p.87; Ya'qūbī, II, 413; F.H.A., p.197; Muruḥ VI, 97-99.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 226b; Imāma, 2, 226; Ma'rūf, 372; Ya'qūbī, II, 417; Tab. III, 23 Abū Mi'shar; Khafīb, 10, 47; compare Ansāb, fol. 784a, Tab. III, 23 Maqīdī, 37; Nubdha, fol. 292a, Muruḥ, VI, 52. Dīnawarī states that al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥḡaba got Abū 'l-'Abbās out, a statement not confirmed by other sources (p.367).

may have feared the situation which arose after Ibrāhīm's death. He may have been apprehensive that the latter's successor might not recognize him and deprive him of his authority or he might alternatively have thought that it was preferable to choose another, even an 'Alid Caliph who would be a puppet in his hands. However, once the caliph had been proclaimed Abū Salama was not slow in recognizing the fait accompli. He is reported to have said to those who proclaimed the 'Abbāsīd caliphate "You have rushed, but I hope it will be of good augury". He tactfully remarked on another occasion: "I was only trying to get matters straight".<sup>1</sup>

Abū Salama, in fact, showed arbitrary and autocratic tendencies already at these early stages of the victory. According to the Imāma wa'l siyāsa<sup>2</sup> he used to show off his abilities and assert his authority over the Commander of the Faithful. Kūfī<sup>3</sup> too, speaking on the murder of Abū Salama, assumes that it was a retribution for his haughtiness and excessive influence. Abū Ja'far (al-Manṣūr) told Abū Muslim when he visited him in Khurāsān "We complain to you about Abū Salama who was arrogant to the Commander of the Faithful. He does not consider the caliphate as anything. He objects to us in an undesirable way....". According to Dīnawārī, he was directing affairs single handed. Moreover al-Fakhrī<sup>4</sup> indicates that Abū 'l 'Abbās in those days had to bestow

<sup>1</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, 413, 419; Tab., III, p.28.

<sup>2</sup>Imāma, p.231.

<sup>3</sup>Kūfī, fol. 235b citing Madā'inī. He never mentions Abū Salama's 'Alid sympathies.

<sup>4</sup>Fakhrī, p.138; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abū Salama).

all authority to him though he was aware that there were in the latter many things he could not but condemn.

However, Abū 'l 'Abbās refrained from any attempt to assassinate Abū Salama at a time when it was clearly inopportune as the dust had not settled yet on the 'Abbāsīd revolution. The new caliph still needed time to consolidate himself. In his khuṭba<sup>1</sup> on the 12th of Rabī' I he revealed the trends of policy of the new régime. Historical accounts differ to some extent on the exact text of the khuṭba, however the main theme is the same. He declared that the revolution had been embarked upon for the sake of Islam and in defence of its principles which the Umayyads had failed to apply. He emphasized that the 'Abbāsīds were close relatives of the Prophet from whom they descended through the male line. Thus they were the real Ahl al-Bayt and had the right to claim the inheritance of the Prophet as if the office of the caliphate was one of the Prophet's possessions. He consequently attacked the extremist 'Alids (the Saba'iyya) as well as the pro-Umayyads (the Marwāniyya). Quoting a verse of the Qur'an favoured by the revolutionaries

« وزير ان نحن على الذين استضعفوا في الارض وبعلم الله وبعلم الوارثين »

he stressed that the 'Abbāsīd leadership would mean justice for the oppressed people. He reminded the people of Kūfa that their (the 'Abbāsīds)

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 784a-785a; Nubdha, fols. 292a-293a; Kūfī, fol. 226b; Dīna, p.367; Tab., III, 29 ff; Imāna, 2, 226; F.H.A., p.200; Murūj, VI, 98-99.

legitimate right, i.e. the caliphate, has returned to them and it would remain in their hands until the end of the world. He also presented the victory as the victory of the people of Irāk over the people of al-Shām, and praised their stubborn resistance and endurance of the Umayyad oppression. He promised them an increase in their 'Atā' to 100 Dirhams, but with their 'Alid sympathies in mind he did not forget to remind them that he is not only al-Saffāh al-Mubīh<sup>1</sup> but al-thā'ir al-Mubīr (the destructive rebel).

Prevented by an attack of illness from finishing his speech Abū al-'Abbās was replaced by his uncle Dā'ūd b. 'Alī who was famous for his eloquence.<sup>2</sup> He reiterated the same assertions of the 'Abbāsīd right to the caliphate but in more impressive manner. Though he reminded the people of Kūfa that it was the Khurasānīs who had brought the 'Abbāsīds to power, he described the victory as theirs (the Kūfīs) adding "The Sulṭān is yours... therefore give us your allegiance and do not deceive yourselves". These two speeches prove that the 'Abbāsīds were deter-

---

<sup>1</sup>The assumption of the title "al-Saffāh" was a gesture of generosity rather than of enmity on the part of the caliph. It had also some Messianic connotations. But the title of "al-Saffāh" in the sense of bloodshedder was also ascribed to Abū 'l - 'Abbās. However it is generally ascribed in the latter sense to the notoriously cruel 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī the uncle of Abū 'l 'Abbās whom it suits better than the caliph himself. It must have been used first for Abū 'l 'Abbās by some later historians who were at a loss for an epithet for the first 'Abbāsīd caliph. (Zubayrī, p.29; Imāma Cairo ed., p.232; Akhbar, fol. 66a; Muruḡ, VI, pp. 181, 182; Fakhri, p.120; Bad', 6, p.73.

<sup>2</sup>Haywān, vol. 1, p.301; Tab., III, pp. 32-33; 'Asākīr, vol. 5, pp. 203-205.

mined not to give 'Alid sympathizers any opportunity to fish in troubled waters. After establishing their claims and attacking other claims their speeches consisted of friendly gestures, promises and warnings. Another important point stressed by the khujba was 'Aṭā' which has been increased to 100 dirhams. This seems to have been the crux of the speech. It must be pointed out here that the Umayyads decreased and sometimes denied the 'Aṭā' to the people of Kūfa. They also used to rob the Khurasānīs of their ghanīma won in the battlefield, a matter which was at the root of bitter resentment in Khurasān on the part of the Arab Muqātila.<sup>1</sup> Abū Salama increased the 'Aṭā' to 80 dirhams. Abū 'l 'Abbās put it up to 100 dirhams.<sup>2</sup> Historical accounts stress this issue. According to the author<sup>3</sup> of Imāma wa'l siyāsa Abū 'l 'Abbās promised them to distribute the Fay' as "It ought to be". In another speech several days later the same caliph declared "We promise you the 'Aṭā' and Ṣadaqa and Ma'rūf, we are not going to send you to war and [force] you to stay there غير مجبرين ولا نصا nor expose you to danger".<sup>4</sup> These were, in fact, the very issues in which the Umayyad policy so keenly disappointed the Khurasānīs and consequently those Irākīs.

#### Abū Muslim vis-à-vis Abū Salama

Once Abū 'l 'Abbās had held power, he was faced by the problem

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter I. See also Sha'bān, op.cit., pp. 60 f , 140.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 785a. See also Kūfī, 227b.

<sup>3</sup>Imāma , 2, 226.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fols. 784a-784b.

of how to get rid of Abū Salama. Initially, however, he wanted Abū Salama to feel safe. He, therefore, accepted his apologies ostensibly with regard to his services in the da'wa.<sup>1</sup> Thus Abū Salama continued to exercise full authority which overlapped with the authority of the caliph.<sup>2</sup> During those early days one notices that there were two men of great influence namely Abū Salama in Irāq and Abū Muslim in Khurasān. The struggle for greater sphere of influence between the two veterans was inevitable. However it is not easy to trace this rivalry especially as Muslim historians try to focus everything round the ruling caliph. One, therefore, must read between the lines of the sources to reconstruct the conflict between the political groupings which represented the two leaders. To trace the rivalry to its origins it is necessary to go back to the days of the da'wa. Strikingly important is the account of Akhbār al-'Abbās<sup>3</sup> to the effect that Ibrāhīm the Imām promised Abū Muslim and Abū Salama to give the former the governorates of Khurasān, Sīstān, Jurjān, Qūmus, Ray, Isbahān and Hamadān and the latter the provinces beyond Hamadān including Irāq, al-Shām and Jazīra if the revolution succeeded. Whether this account is authentic or not - and it seems a later projection - it reflects accurately the real situation on the advent of the victory. As the account puts it, the empire was divided into two spheres of influence. It obviously became the point at issue where the authority of the one ceased and that of the other started.

---

<sup>1</sup> Imāma, 2, 226; Tab., III, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> Jah., p.86; Dīna, p.368; Kūfī, fols. 235a-b.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 130a.

Each supposedly felt the growing influence of the other. When Abū Salama appointed a governor to Fārs Abū Muslim felt that Abū Salama had exceeded his authority and sent Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Khuzā'i as governor of Fārs with orders to kill Abū Salama's appointee, which he did.<sup>1</sup> The new governor of Kirmān Tamīm b. 'Umar al-Tamīmī was directly appointed by Abū Muslim. On arrival he killed the Umayyad governor and seized the province.<sup>2</sup> Other accounts reveal that Abū Muslim was jealous and apprehensive of his rival's influence in Iraq. According to Ya'qūbī it was Abū Muslim who suggested to the new caliph that Abū Salama should be eliminated because of "His deceitful inimical nature".<sup>3</sup> Dīnawārī states that Abū Muslim took it upon himself to murder Abū Salama without consulting others because of "his great authority".<sup>4</sup> Also Mas'ūdī agrees that the first suggestion to murder Abū Salama was put forward by Abū Muslim. He goes on "But despite Abū Muslim's insistence Abū 'l 'Abbās refused. Finally Abū Muslim feared that Abū Salama might inflict bad things on him so he sent men who assassinated him."<sup>5</sup> The account of the Imāna wa'l siyāsa is not irrelevant to this issue. It attributes the proclamation of Abū 'l 'Abbās to Abū Muslim who by swift action, surprised Abū Salama and frustrated his plans.<sup>6</sup> Although the caliph might have consulted

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 186a; Tab., III, 72.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fol. 170b.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.422. *خبر السيرة*

<sup>4</sup> Dīna, p.368; see also anonymous, fol. 13a.

<sup>5</sup> Murūj, VI, pp. 133-136.

<sup>6</sup> Imāna, p.225.



Abū Muslim on this issue, these accounts no doubt exaggerate the rôle of Abū Muslim in the murder of Abū Salama. There is little likelihood that he asked the caliph to kill Abū Salama or sent assassins to kill him without consulting the caliph. However all these accounts are illustrative of the hostility between the two rivals.

#### The assassination of Abū Salama

The caliph's authority seems to have grown slowly. He gradually appointed new governors mostly consisting of his own relatives.<sup>1</sup> However, the turning point in his relationship with Abū Salama was the caliph's decision to move from the camp of Ḥammām A'yan to Ḥashimiyya. According to Balādhuri<sup>2</sup> Abū 'l 'Abbās was advised by Abū Muslim to leave Kūfa which with its pro-'Alid sympathies was a dangerous ground for an a 'Abbāsīd caliph, thus the caliph left Kūfa. The enmity between Abū 'l 'Abbās and Abū Salama became open, but still the caliph was not sure how to deal with Abū Salama. Historical accounts differ on the murder of Abū Salama. Some,<sup>3</sup> as mentioned above, attribute the idea as well as the execution to Abū Muslim who sent out Marār al-Ḍabbī with the consent of the caliph. Others maintain that it was Abū Muslim who, having failed to induce the caliph to have Abū Salama killed, took the initiative and sent one of his men to kill Abū Salama without the actual permission of the caliph.<sup>4</sup> Still other accounts ascribe the decision to

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 785b; Tab. III, p.37.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 789b citing Nadā'inī.

<sup>3</sup> Dīna, p.368; Ya'qūbī, II, 422.

<sup>4</sup> Murūj, VI, pp. 134-136; 'Asākīr, 4, 377.

the caliph himself.<sup>1</sup> It is the accounts of the third category that seem to correspond to the truth. Abū Salama's great authority and extensive influence were cogent enough reasons for the caliph to want to be rid of him, and thus it must be assumed that the resolution was his. However, he was advised by his relatives to consult Abū Muslim.<sup>2</sup> This move was expedient in that it would first compel Abū Muslim to disclose his real views, which could not be known to Abū 'l 'Abbās with absolute certainty as men used to change their allegiance in those days with some rapidity, and secondly because it was as likely to allay Abū Muslim's suspicions as disregard of his advice was likely to arouse them. The caliph finally decided to send his brother Abū Ja'far with a thirty men delegation to Khurasān to take the oath of allegiance from Abū Muslim and thank him for his good services and inform him of Abū Salama's disloyalty. According to Balādhurī<sup>3</sup> the caliph's letter handed to Abū Muslim by Abū Ja'far contained not only information of Abū Salama's treason, leaving it to Abū Muslim to punish the crime according to his own lights, but also veiled hints which indicated that the caliph wished Abū Salama to die. Thus apparently empowered to act as he thought fit, Abū Muslim was in fact only to execute the caliph's order.

Abū Muslim could not have been more pleased to take this opportunity to rid himself of his powerful rival. He agreed to send Murār b. Anas

<sup>1</sup>Jah., p.90; Imāma, 2, 231-2; Ansāb, fol. 792b; Kūfī, fol. 235b. Tab. III, 59; F.H.A., pp. 212-213. See also late historians: Ibar, 3, 376; Bad', 6, 71; Bidayā, 10, 56. The author of Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqāṭi'a relates that the caliph killed Abū Salama then sent Abū Ja'far to apologize to Abū Muslim (fol. 101b); E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abū 'l 'Abbās).

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fols. 792b-793a citing Ishaq b. 'Alī; Jah., p.90; Imāma, 2, 231-2; Ya'qubī, II, 422; Tab. III, 59; F.H.A., p.212f., Muq., fol. 76b. (cont.)

al-Dabbī to assassinate him.<sup>1</sup> Evidently to confuse the issue Abū 'l 'Abbās who had already given directives veiled as they were to Abū Salama's executioner, made a show of his friendship for Abū Salama, bestowing on him various favours the latter was not likely to enjoy any more,<sup>2</sup> thus when the murder became a fait accompli in Rajab 132 A.H. it was publicly ascribed to the Kharijites.<sup>3</sup> Abū Salama al-Khallāl was killed at the peak of his power by the very dynasty he had served.

This stirred the imagination of contemporary poets, one of whom said:<sup>4</sup>

وَيْلٌكَ مِنْ لَمَانَ مِنْذُ الْوُجُوهِ عَالِيًا      يَتَّبِعِي حَتَّى تَنْصَبَ غَيْرَ آلِ

another recited:<sup>5</sup>

ان الوزير وزير آل محمد      اودى ضمن شئناك لمان وزيراً

Abū 'l 'Abbās is reported to have said: "Let him go to Hell, him and the likes of him. Why should we regret his death." As for Abū Muslim he declared in front of the Quwwād "Ḥafṣ [Abū Salama] was full of deceit towards God, his prophet and the Imām, curse him."<sup>6</sup>

#### Abū Muslim and the struggle for power in Khurasān

Once Abū Salama was out of the way, the caliph's influence and

(cont.)

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 792b-793b, citing al-Muffaḍal al-Dabbī; Fakhri, p.138. Cf. Jahshiyārī and F.H.A. where they state that the correspondence took place before Abu Ja'far's visit to Khurasān (Jah., 1926 ed., 91; F.H.A., p.212).

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 793b; Jah., p.90; Tab., III, p.60.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.60.

<sup>3</sup> F.H.A., p.213.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 793a.

<sup>5</sup> Tab. III, 59; Tanbih, p.339; Murūj, VI, p.136; 'Asākīr, 4, 377.

<sup>6</sup> On these and other comments see Ansāb 793a-b, 794a; Murūj, VI, 136; Bidaya, 10, 56.

authority were enhanced and consolidated. He made extensive changes in the governorships of the provinces dismissing those who had been appointed by Abū Salama <sup>عَلِ الْاَنْتِ</sup><sup>1</sup> and mostly appointing prominent members of his own family and those who had supported him in the affair of Abū Salama. But it was not long before his authority clashed with that of Abū Muslim. The first symptoms of this conflict can be observed when Abū 'l 'Abbās appointed his uncle 'Isā b. 'Alī governor of Fārs where Abū Muslim had already appointed Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath who had killed Abū Salama's appointee to the same post and seized the governorship. Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath was reluctant to accept 'Isā b. 'Alī, but prepared relying on Abū Muslim's orders to kill anyone who claimed the position. In the last moment, however, he refrained from killing 'Isā b. 'Alī and was content to take his oath that he would not undertake from then on any governmental function except the Jihād.<sup>2</sup>

The events preceding Abū Muslim's murder are of a complex nature and involve others of the same order such as the clash between dā'īs of different orientation on the one hand, and these dā'īs and the 'Abbāsid caliphs on the other. Abū Muslim had become the most powerful man in

<sup>1</sup>This was the term used by the caliph to indicate the appointees of Abū Salama (Ansāb, fol. 806a citing Madā'inī).

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.72; Imāma, p.239; Dīna, pp. 373-4. Very interesting is the remark of the late historian Ibn 'Adhārī, which aptly illustrates the chaos which developed in the aftermath of the revolution (131-132): There were four amirs, each of whom appointed governors to the provinces in this year. They were Marwān b. Muḥammad, Abū Salama al-Khallāl, Abū Muslim and Abū 'l 'Abbās. As for Abū Muslim he was al-Sulṭān al-A'ḍam. No orders of his went unheeded. (Ibn 'Adhārī, p.64)

Khurasān, but his influence made itself also felt at the court of the caliph. Many accounts<sup>1</sup> describe Abū 'l Jahm b. 'Aṭīyya al-Bāhilī as Abū Muslim's deputy or eye at the court. The caliph's astute tactics in ascertaining Abū Muslim's attitude in the affair of Abū Salama have already been pointed out. It was in connection with Abū Salama's affair that Abū Ja'far the brother of the caliph made his journey to Khurasān, but the journey had more than one purpose. Certain points of Abū Ja'far's journey will have to be elucidated in more detail.

The historical accounts contradict each other on the purpose and the timing of this visit. Those accounts<sup>2</sup> which put the visit after the murder of Abū Salama limit its purpose to securing the Bay'a of Abū Muslim for the new caliph and his heir Abū Ja'far. It is true that this was the professed objective of the visit, but earlier and more authentic accounts<sup>3</sup> reveal that its main aim was to sound Abū Muslim's opinion on Abū Salama's fate and to assess the situation in Khurasān. These accounts emphasise that the visit took place before the murder of Abū Salama. The account of Kūfī<sup>4</sup> is unique among early historians. Although he places the visit before the murder of Abū Salama, he does not speak of his conspiracy or 'Alid tendencies. On the contrary he states that Abū Ja'far accused Abū Salama of conceit and authoritarian leanings.

---

<sup>1</sup>Jah., p.93; Imāma, Cairo. ed. 1904, p.247.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, 61; Jah., p.89; Dīna, p.372; Ya'qūbī, II, 420.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fols. 792b-793a; Tab., III, pp. 58-59, citing Madā'inī; Kūfī, fol. 235a; F.H.A., p.212; Fakhrī, p.138; Muq., fol. 87b.

<sup>4</sup>Kūfī, fol. 235b.

Abū Muslim did not seem to have welcomed the visit of Abū Ja'far from the very beginning and Abū Ja'far felt the tension throughout his journey.<sup>1</sup> What is most important in this context is that Abū Ja'far was able on that occasion to assess closely the extent of Abū Muslim's influence in Khurasān. During his stay there a serious event occurred which is characteristic of the arbitrary rule of Abū Muslim, namely the execution of Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuzā'ī, the chief Naqīb of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa in Khurasān and his son Muḥammad who was one of the deputy Naqībs in the movement. Abū Muslim had put them to death without consulting the caliph or even Abū Ja'far who was present. According to Ṭabarī and the author of Imāma wa'l siyāsa,<sup>2</sup> Sulaymān al-Khazā'ī got in touch with the 'Alid 'Ubaydallah b. al-Ḥussayn al-A'raj, who was in the entourage of Abū Ja'far, and said to him: "We hoped that your [the 'Alids'] affair would be accomplished. If you wish call upon us for what you desire." The 'Alid al-A'raj suspected that this move was inspired by Abū Muslim. He, therefore, communicated to the latter what he had been told. Abū Muslim then immediately killed Sulaymān on the pretext that Ibrāhīm the Imām had empowered Abū Muslim to "kill whoever you suspect". Balādhurī,<sup>3</sup> on the contrary, relates that Sulaymān got in touch with Abū Ja'far and said "We hoped that your affair would be accomplished and so it did, thanks to God. If you so wish we shall turn

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.59; compare Kūfī, fol. 235a.

<sup>2</sup>Imāma, pp. 238-40; Tab., III, p.61.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 800a.

against him [Abū Muslim]." Whether the chief Naqīb of the 'Abbāsīd da'wa had contacted al-A'raj or Abū Ja'far is not certain, but it is certain that the suspicion and rivalry between Sulaymān and Abū Muslim were deeprooted. They went back to the time of the da'wa and once victory was achieved it was natural that those two veterans would contest the authority in Khurasān. A unique and interesting account preserved in Akhbār al-'Abbās<sup>1</sup> confirms this view. It is reported that Abū 'l Mughīra Khālīd b. Kathīr the Tamimite was chosen Naqīb but Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī replaced him by his son-in-law Lāhiz b. Qurayza which enraged Khālīd. It is in this situation that the political motives of the execution of Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī should be sought as Khālīd was one of the witnesses at the arraignment of Sulaymān. The accusations, probably fabricated by Abū Muslim's partisans, served to provide the opportunity for him to get rid of a dangerous and influential rival. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī was put to death at the same time as his father on the accusation of being Khīdashite, i.e. expressing heterodox and extremist opinions.<sup>2</sup> Now this is significant as it was the first time that this accusation was raised in public to remove a prominent figure from the political scene. The news of the execution of the two veteran da'īs must have shocked Abū Ja'far, however he had to keep quiet. It is said that when he returned to Irāq he told his brother the caliph "you are no caliph and your affair is nothing if you leave Abū Muslim [where he

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 104a.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 800b; Muq., fol. 79b. According to Ibn Khaldūn Sulaymān al-Khuzā'ī was killed because he protested against the murder of Abū Salama (3/376).

he is<sup>7</sup> and do not kill him" and "He only does what he wants".<sup>1</sup>

The 'Abbāsids were worried by Abū Muslim's growing influence not only in Khurāsān but also in the whole eastern part of the empire. His effect was even spread to the court of Abū 'l 'Abbās. It is true that his influence was potentially dangerous but did he, in fact, entertain plans to overthrow the 'Abbāsīd régime? Abū Muslim had given numerous proofs of his loyalty to the 'Abbāsids during the da'wa. He had complied with the wishes of the 'Abbāsids for whom he had won as many followers as he could. But once victory was achieved many groups fell out with the new régime. Khurāsān became, in fact, the scene of anti-'Abbāsīd activities. He proved his loyalty by crushing the malcontents. Although it could be argued that in so doing Abū Muslim was fighting to preserve his governorship, but it is obvious that he could have attempted a compromise with the Rāwandīyya rebels of Balkh or the 'Alīd rebels of Bukhāra or the Persian rebel Bahāfarīd.

In order to assess Abū Muslim's loyalty to the 'Abbāsīd's it is necessary to examine his record in Khurāsān.

#### Sharīk al-Mahrī's revolt

Not long after the 'Abbāsīd victory, Sharīk b. Shaykh al-Mahrī<sup>2</sup> rebelled in Bukhāra protesting against 'Abbāsīd policies and declaring "We have not followed the family of Muḥammad to shed blood and do

<sup>1</sup> Asmā' al-Muḡhtālīn, p.193; Tab., III, 61. See also Imāma, 240; Dīna, p.373; Kufī, fol. 235b.

<sup>2</sup> On his rising see Narshakī, pp. 62 ff; Imāma, 2, 265; Ya'qūbī, II, 425; F.H.A., p.211; Tab., III, p.74. See also Nujum, p.360 where he is called Sharīk al-Maḡrī.



injustice." Historical accounts do not speak much of his aims but it seems that he was not only one of the early 'Abbāsid partisans, but also one of the first to be disappointed with their policies. His movement seems to have been popular and gained force. It had a clear 'Alid colour. Sharīk al-Mahrī had expected the 'Alids to be chosen caliphs. He declared when he addressed his partisans "We are now free from the affliction of the Marwānids. The plague of the house of 'Abbās does not necessarily affect us. The children of the Prophet must be the successors of the Prophet."<sup>1</sup> The Arab governors of Bukhara, Khwārizm and Bazm paid him allegiance. The 'Abbāsids were faced for the first time by the very same political forces which they had brought to bear on the Umayyads. The revolt of Bukhara is significant in so much as it reveals pro-'Alid sentiments among a section of the revolutionaries in Khurāsān on the one hand and the loyalty of Abū Muslim to the new 'Abbāsid régime on the other hand. Abū Muslim immediately sent Ziyād b. Šāliḥ al-Khuzā'i who, at first, faced major difficulties, but when Qutayba b. Tughshāda Bukhār Khudāh intervened on the side of Ziyād the balance was tipped in the latter's favour. Ziyād was able to crush the rising. As to the treatment of the rebels we possess conflicting accounts. According to Imāma wa'l siyāsa<sup>2</sup> they were treated mildly as the prisoners were neither killed nor made slaves but freed and warned not to repeat it again. While Narshakhī<sup>3</sup> gives rather exaggerated picture

---

<sup>1</sup> Narshakhī, p.62.

<sup>2</sup> Imāma, 1904 ed., p.265.

<sup>3</sup> Narshakhī, pp. 64-65.

of bloodbath. He states that the city was set on fire for three days and nights, many prominent men were hanged and a general massacre ensued.

Ziyād then marched towards Somarqand where he crushed other hotbeds of dissatisfaction. It is not irrelevant to the tactics of Abū Muslim to note that the prince of Bukhāra who played a leading rôle in crushing the 'Alid rebellion was killed later by Abū Muslim on the grounds that he had conspired with Sharīk.<sup>1</sup>

#### The rising of Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuẓā'ī

Meanwhile Abū Muslim pursued the policy of Jihād, that is the same policy as the Umayyads in Transoxania.<sup>2</sup> The main commanders involved in the conquest were Khālīd al-Dhuhlī, Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuẓā'ī and 'īsā b. Māhān. Khuttal, Kish and Ṣughd were invaded, however what is important in this context is that Transoxania was at the time in the grip of internal antagonisms between the heads of single small principalities who turned for help to China or to the Arabs and the policy of conquest would almost have drawn Abū Muslim into dreary conflict with these principalities and with China, had it not been for fresh troubles in Khurāsān, namely the rebellion of Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ the governor of Ṣughd and Bukhāra which diverted his attention at the operative moment. The causes of Ziyād's rising are not clearly indicated by the sources. According to Balādhurī he had insulted Abū Muslim declaring "We have

---

<sup>1</sup>Sadighi, op.cit., p.43 (footnote 5).

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, 80-81, 73; Barthold, Turkistan... pp. 193 ff; Gibb, op.cit., pp. 94 f.

taken the oath in order to establish justice and revive the Sunna X  
 احياء السنن, and Abū Muslim is nothing but oppressor and tyrant,  
 he behaves like a tyrant and dissident. He is corrupting the people  
 of Khurāsān".<sup>1</sup> This sounds as if he was fomenting a rising rather  
 than engaging in it, but Tabarī<sup>2</sup> followed by other late sources state  
 that Ziyād, in fact, openly rebelled in Balkh, and Abū Muslim immediately  
 advanced to quell the rising supported by his right hand man, Abū Dā'ūd  
 X Khālid al-Dhuhlī. What is significant about both the accounts is that  
 they permit the inference of the existence of a conflict between the  
 authority of the caliph and that of Abū Muslim. The latter had already  
 appointed Ziyād governor of Ṣughd and Bukhāra but the caliph sent him  
 X the nomination by Sabī' b. al-Na'mān al-Azdī, with instructions to  
 Sabī' to kill Abū Muslim if he had the opportunity. Sabī' accompanied  
 Abū Muslim on his campaign against Ziyād but before he could execute  
 his orders some of Ziyād's commanders defected to Abū Muslim and disclosed  
 to him the existence of contacts between Sabī' and their leader. It  
 even seems that the very Sabī' had been the go-between between the  
 caliph and Ziyād before the latter revolted against Abū Muslim and  
 promised him the governorship of Khurāsān, thus indirectly promoting  
 the rebellion against Abū Muslim's authority. Tabarī is rather vague  
 about it only stating "Ziyād used 'Ahd from Abū 'l 'Abbās for being  
 governor". He does not say whether this 'Ahd was for Ṣughd or Khurāsān,

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 800b citing Abū al-Ṣalt al-Khurasānī.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.81f; Bad', 6, 75; Ibar, vol. 3, 382.

however this is indicated clearly in Ansāb which confirms that Ziyād claimed the governorship of Khurāsān by virtue of the caliph's nomination. After the defection of part of his commanders, Ziyād's rising was easily crushed. He himself fled to the Dihqān of Bukhāra who killed him and delivered his head to Abū Muslim.

With the death of Ziyād al-Khuzā'ī another dā'ī had perished. It is symptomatic of the caliph's outlook that on hearing of Ziyād's death, he congratulated Abū Muslim on his success and expressed his approval of the killing of Ziyād.<sup>1</sup>

#### The execution of 'Īsā b. Māhān

Abū Muslim had yet to face another mutiny, that led by 'Īsā b. Māhān. 'Īsā was an early 'Abbāsīd partisan.<sup>2</sup> He had served after the victory with Abū Muslim in quelling the risings in Khurāsān. According to Tabarī he fell out with Abū Muslim and Khālīd al-Dhuhlī on matters of policy. He accused the latter in particular of partiality and 'Asabiyya for the Arabs and particularly of his own tribe.<sup>3</sup> However, Balādhurī states clearly that 'Īsā was a close friend of Ziyād and shared his opinions in many points and plans. He declared that the caliph had blamed Abū Muslim and detested his treatment of Ziyād who had done great deeds in establishing the new régime. He also claimed that he was the caliph's nominee for the governorship of Khurāsān.<sup>4</sup> Both accounts

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 800b.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār, fols. 103a, 104a.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, 83.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 800b.

agree that Abū Muslim ordered Khālīd to kill 'Īsā who was tricked into visiting Khālīd's camp and killed by his soldiers. It cannot be established with certainty whether 'Īsā was acting with the approval of the caliph, however when the caliph heard of his murder he wrote a letter violently condemning the murder of 'Īsā and asking Abū Muslim to retaliate on Khālīd by killing him. But Abū Muslim, unable to dispense with the services of his loyal commander, wrote to the caliph trying to justify Khālīd's conduct and reminding the caliph somewhat ironically that "had 'Īsā been left alone he would have done the same as Ziyād in inciting the people to mutiny and dissension".

#### The rising of Mansūr b. Jamhūr

Another revolutionary who had been previously an Umayyad governor of Irāq then defected and joined several revolts, the last of which was the 'Abbāsīd one. He was confirmed as governor of Sind in 132/749-50 by x Abū 'l 'Abbās<sup>1</sup>, but it was not long when he rose in arms. Historical accounts usually deal rather summarily with such minor events which occur in the fringes of the empire; but Balādhurī's<sup>2</sup> and Ibn Ḥabīb's accounts though brief are revelatory of the friction between Abū Muslim and the caliph's authority. Abū Muslim took the initiative in appointing Mufallas b. al-'Abdī, governor of Sind and Tukhāristān. The caliph's governor Mansūr opposed the appointment and killed Mufallas. This was developed into an armed rising staged by the indignant

---

<sup>1</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 232, 251, 252; Asmā' al al-Mughṭalyīn, p.184; Tab., III, 72.

<sup>2</sup> Futūḥ, vol. 3, p.343; Asmā' al Mughṭalyīn, p.184; compare Khalīfa's account where he states that Mufallas was sent by the caliph (Tārīkh, fol. 288); see also Dīna, p.374.

tribal chief Maṣṣūr b. Jamhūr. Mūsa b. Ka'ab was sent out to crush it. Maṣṣūr fled and died of thirst in the desert. The only difficulty here is who sent Mūsa b. Ka'ab to crush the rebellion. According to Balādhurī it was Abū Muslim, while Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, Ṭabarī and Kitāb al-'Uyūn Wa'l hadā'ik maintain<sup>1</sup> that it was the caliph himself who sent Mūsa with 3,000 Arabs and Mawālī from Baṣra especially 1,000 Taminites. One is inclined to believe Balādhurī but even if it was the caliph who sent Mūsa it is not inconsistent with his policy as exemplified before. He had to act against Maṣṣūr in order not to arouse Abū Muslim's distrust and especially as the revolt was against the 'Abbāsīd authority. Furthermore several aspects of Maṣṣūr's controversial and very inconsistent personality deserve attention and might help to elucidate the nature of his rising. One of the prominent Syrian Kalbite leaders,<sup>2</sup> he was instrumental in bringing Yazīd III <sup>de Poona</sup> and was consequently appointed governor of Irāk in 125 A.H. He immediately sent his brother Maṣṣūr to Khurāsān where he was defied by Naṣr b. Sayyār. However when Marwān II came to the throne Maṣṣūr figured among the forces of opposition. He swore allegiance to 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya but when the latter was driven out of Irāk Maṣṣūr joined the Kharijites and fought Marwān's governor of Irāk Ibn Hubayra. Later on Maṣṣūr again joined 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya in Fārs and finally fled with his brother to Sind. With the accession of the 'Abbāsīds, Maṣṣūr was rewarded with the governorship of Sind in 132.

<sup>1</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 228; Tab., III, p.80; F.H.A., p.211.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, 1767, 1778 citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>3</sup> On the revolts which Abū Muslim had to face in Khurāsān, the author of F.H.A., p.211, makes this comment:

The appointment of a new governor by Abū Muslim seems to have injured the pride of this old Kalbite leader who spent most of his life defying the central Umayyad régime. He defied not only Abū Muslim but also the central 'Abbāsīd authority.<sup>?</sup>

#### Abū Muslim at his prime

Abū Muslim faced many dangerous revolts in Khurāsān. Those revolts were led by 'Abbāsīd dā'īs, 'Alīd sympathizers, Rāwandiyya sectarians and the Zoroastrian reformist Bihāfarīd. He emerged from the turmoil the undisputed leader of Khurasān.

Now in view of the growing authority of Abū Muslim the caliph could no longer stand idly by. The caliph often tried to test Abū Muslim's loyalty. Thus he ordered Abū 'l Jahm to suggest to him to visit the court and when Abū Muslim requested a permission to do so the caliph's reply was "Your stay in Khurāsān is vital to keep the province under control"<sup>1</sup> As fear of the visit would have been indicative of Abū Muslim's guilty conscience or bad intentions this request served, for a time, to assure the caliph of his loyalty. While the caliph was looking for the opportunity to present itself he tried many times to undermine Abū Muslim's authority and even attempts to assassinate him were made at regular intervals. The first of these attempts was suggested by Khālid b. Barmak.<sup>2</sup> He advised the caliph to order Abū Muslim

---

<sup>1</sup>Jah., pp. 93-94.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

to dismiss from his army those who were not from Ahi Khurāsān. But Abū Muslim soon realized the ulterior motive behind the order, namely to create tension among his troops, and refrained from implementing it. It is worth noting that Abū Muslim himself was not a Khurasanite but probably an Iṣbahanite. The second attempt was made by Sabī' al-Azdī on his visit to Khurāsān.<sup>1</sup> However, he was killed by Abū Muslim instead of killing him. Attempts on Abū Muslim's life continued, as will be seen in due course, until the long awaited opportunity presented itself in a rather strange circumstance in al-Madā'in.

To start from the beginning, however, it is worth noting that on Abū Muslim's life and death one is confronted with accounts of a diverse and contradictory nature. What complicates the matter is that, despite their conflicting nature, these accounts can be traced to authentic narrators and sometimes the same main authority or transmitter. One also must be aware of the fact that Abū Muslim's rôle has frequently been exaggerated, especially when he became a myth after his death. In the year 136 Abū Muslim requested the caliph to permit him to perform the pilgrimage and visit the court.<sup>2</sup> On hearing of Abū Muslim's intended journey, Abū Ja'far (al-Mansūr) the brother of the caliph and the governor of the Jazīra, Armenia and Adharbayjān suddenly appeared at the court. According to Kūfī<sup>3</sup> Abū Ja'far, the strong man behind the caliph, did not want to leave Abū Muslim alone

---

<sup>1</sup>See above p. 192

<sup>2</sup>Ya'qubī, II, 433; Tab., III, 86.

<sup>3</sup>Kūfī, fol. 236a.



with the caliph in Irāk while he was in a far away province. As for Tabarī<sup>1</sup> he implies that it was Abū 'l 'Abbās who called upon Abū Ja'far and asked him to demand the task of leading the pilgrimage which minimized considerably the influence of Abū Muslim who wanted himself to lead the pilgrimage caravan. Despite the orders of the caliph to bring only 1,000 soldiers and limited provisions on the ground that he was in his own country and among his own people, and the road to Mecca did not admit heavy armies, Abū Muslim took 8,000 soldiers whom he stationed between Nishāpūr and Ray.<sup>2</sup> According to Imāma wa'l siyāsa they were "10,000 soldiers of Ahl Khurāsān eligible for 'Aḥā' in addition to the A'ājim".<sup>3</sup> It was now that Abū Ja'far suggested to the caliph to take the opportunity to kill Abū Muslim saying "Oh Commander of the faithful, obey me and kill Abū Muslim by God he has treason in mind."<sup>4</sup> The caliph first agreed but then ordered Abū Ja'far to refrain from executing his plan. Abū Muslim's caravan preceded that of the caliph's brother and his journey to Mecca was characterized by an extravagant display of generosity which was bound to enrage Abū Ja'far as it was bound to over-shadow him.

But on the way back to Irāk when the tension between Abū Ja'far and Abū Muslim had reached its climax, Abū Ja'far took up the idea to assassinate Abū Muslim again. According to Ibn al-A'rābī citing Sa'd b.

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, 87.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., 86.

<sup>3</sup>Imāma, 2, 252-3. The interesting point about this, somehow, vague account is the differentiation between Ahl Khurasan and the 'Ajam which if authentic supplies yet another evidence of the non-racial nature of the 'Abbāsīd revolution and the importance of the Arab element in it.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.85, citing Madā'inī; Imāma, 2, pp. 252f.

al-Ḥasan it was when Abū Ja'far was about to order 'Aḥīyya b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān to kill him.<sup>1</sup> However he was dissuaded from doing so by Ishāq al-'Uqaylī and Yazīd b. Asīd. In trying to see what has really happened on this journey one is met with numerous conflicting accounts. These contradictions are due in part to the fact that the assassination of Abū Muslim actually took place soon afterwards. Trying to trace the causes of his murder historians have in one way or another maintained that Abū Muslim committed mischievous deeds during this journey. Tabarī quotes two trustworthy accounts of the journey. The first<sup>2</sup> speaking of the Bay'a of Abū Ja'far relates that on the way back to Irāq Abū Ja'far overtook Abū Muslim. He met Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-'Abdī who brought the news of the caliph's death together with a letter from 'Īsā b. Mūsā concerning the Bay'a to himself as a new caliph. Then Abū Ja'far wrote to Abū Muslim prompting him to hurry. He "came condoled with him and joined him to Kūfa". Under the heading "the death of Abū Muslim" Tabarī relates the second version<sup>3</sup> of the journey. He states that as Abū Muslim was ahead of Abū Ja'far on the way back from Mecca, he learned of the caliph's death earlier than Abū Ja'far. He wrote him, therefore, a letter of condolence but did not congratulate him on his accession to caliphate; nor did he send his Bay'a.

<sup>1</sup>Ansāb, fol. 505; Muq., fol. 88a.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.87.

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit., pp.99-100, citing Modā'inī.

He even did not stop so that Abū Ja'far might catch up with him, nor did he return to him. The second version of Tabarī is confirmed by Balādhūri<sup>1</sup> who asserts that Abū Muslim was ahead of Abū Ja'far and he neither stopped nor congratulated him. It is worth noting that in the last conversation between Abū Ja'far and Abū Muslim, the latter was blamed "... and you did not stop so that we could catch up with you neither did you return to [meet] us".<sup>2</sup> Other historians<sup>3</sup> quote one or the other account, but according to Ya'qūbī<sup>4</sup> there was nothing unusual in the behaviour of Abū Muslim throughout the journey. The author of the Imāma wa'l siyāsa states that when he wrote to Abū Ja'far he put his own name first instead of beginning according to custom with Abū Ja'far's name. Then he wrote to Abū Ja'far privately "Do not be shocked by what is at the beginning of the letter. I am [loyal] to you, but I want the Khurasānis to know that I have [high] status with the Commander of the Faithful".<sup>5</sup> Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa'l hadā'iq agrees that Abū Muslim preceded Abū Ja'far on the journey back but states that he returned to condole with him and promised him help in face of possible dangers.<sup>6</sup> Whatever the case it seems that

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 504.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.113.

<sup>3</sup> Muq., fol. 87b *تقريره فورا على نفسه لا امان فقد عليه*; Aynī, fol. 22b-23a; Bad, 76; Bidayā, 10, 57-8; Ibar, 3, 38.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, 436-7.

<sup>5</sup> Imāma, 2, 253.

<sup>6</sup> F.H.A., p.215.

they did not meet on the road and when the news of the caliph's death arrived Abū Muslim delayed the Bay'a for a few days<sup>1</sup> which is indicative of a certain reluctance to take this step. But the new caliph, though enraged, had to be patient at this crucial juncture of the history of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate when widespread disturbances could be expected on the part of ambitious pretenders of both 'Abbāsīds and 'Alīd sides. He, therefore, refrained from any venture and ordered Abū Muslim to proceed to al-Anbār and keep it under control.<sup>2</sup>

It was at this critical moment that Abū Muslim revealed for the first time his enmity towards Abū Ja'far. According to Balādhuri, Kūfī and Tabarī, Abū Muslim instigated the heir apparent 'Īsā b. Mūsa to supplant Abū Ja'far before he established himself firmly on the throne.<sup>3</sup> If the account of Balādhuri is to be believed Abū Muslim said to 'Īsā "You are the Wasi of the Imām and you had a better claim than Abū Ja'far," while Kūfī's version is "Oh Abū Mūsa ['Īsā b. Mūsa] why did not you [demand] this matter after Abū 'l 'Abbās and you are fit for it." He even offered his help saying "If you want I shall dethrone him and take the oath to you". 'Īsā, however, declined the offer with determination.

At any rate, the time was not propitious for quarrels as Abū Ja'far was almost immediately faced with the rebellion of his uncle 'Abdallah b. 'Alī in Syria. Considering the tension and smouldering enmity between

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.90, citing Madā'inī. Abū Muslim already knew that the only candidate for the caliphate was Abū Ja'far (see Tab., III, p.90; Dīna, 368, citing al-Ḥaytham b. 'Adī; Ansab, fol. 505, 508).

<sup>2</sup>Dīnawārī attributes to Abū Muslim another unconfirmed action. He states that 'Īsā b. 'Alī, the uncle of al-Manṣūr rebelled and proclaimed himself caliph at Kufa but when Abū Muslim arrived in the vanguard of al-Manṣūr's caravan from Mecca he surrendered to him and the mutiny was

Abū Ja'far and Abū Muslim it is surprising that the former trusted Abū Muslim in the war against a rebel claimant. This, in fact, was a shrewd move by the Caliph to deflect Abū Muslim from his intention of proceeding to Khurāsān. Furthermore it is obvious that Abū Ja'far would have benefited whoever was killed in the conflict. It is interesting to note that though Abū Ja'far gave Abū Muslim command of his troops he did not give him absolute authority over all the forces marched towards Syria. Al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba was ordered to leave Arminya with an army for Syria and keep an eye on Abū Muslim's activities.<sup>1</sup> Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī the other uncle of Abū Ja'far and the then governor of Palestine and Balqā' was also ordered to join in the march against the rebels.<sup>2</sup> As a result Abū Muslim was by no means single handed in tackling the rebels. As to Abū Muslim he was initially none too eager to undertake the task because by that time he must have already had suspicions of the caliph's intentions. He tried to go to Khurāsān under the pretext of sending troops to the new caliph to quell the rebellion and that controlling Khurāsān is more important than this minor incident.<sup>3</sup> But he is reported to have said to his secretary "I have

---

(cont.) crushed. This allegation is not confirmed by other early accounts. Ironically enough 'Isā b. 'Alī was the most loyal and least ambitious uncle of the caliph (Ansāb, 580, Dīna, 379, Ya'qūbī, II, 437). He is depicted as "of good character and not greedy for power" وكان من أئمة أئمة فرسان ظمرك بالجنود (Khatīb, II, p.147). That is why he remained a close friend of al-Manṣūr who had no fears whatsoever about him.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 505; Kūfī, fol. 236b; Tab., III, p.100 citing Madā'inī; Muq., fol. 87b; Aynī, fol. 23a.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 763b; Tab., III, 95, citing al-Ḥaytham b. 'Adī.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.84. He was, afterwards, rewarded with the governorship of Aleppo Qinnisrin and Hims (Zubda I, 58). S. al-Dahhān depending on the ms. of Bughya al-Talab relates that he was appointed governor of all Syria (ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 763a.

nothing to do with those two men. The idea is to go to Khurasān and leave those two rams [quarrelling] with each other, whoever is victorious he will write to us and we shall take the oath to him. So he will see that we have done him a favour."<sup>1</sup> However, in the long run Abū Muslim must have realized that to undertake the task was the only way to escape the caliph in whose hands he was. The result of the Syrian campaign, which will be discussed later on, was a total defeat for 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. What concerns us at the moment, however, is Abū Muslim's relations with the caliph. According to Tabarī, al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba once voiced, in a report to the caliph, his suspicions of Abū Muslim who "mocked and despised the letters of the caliph". Commenting on the report al-Mūryānī the wazīr of Abū Ja'far said "We accuse Abū Muslim more than 'Abdallah b. 'Alī but we hope for one thing. We know that Ahl Khurasan have no liking for 'Abdallah who killed 17,000 of them."<sup>2</sup> Balādhurī states that al-Manṣūr once commented "We fear Abū Muslim more than we had feared Abū Salama".<sup>3</sup> According to Kūfī, al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba once sent a report to the caliph stating "Oh Commander of the Faithful I tell you that the Satan who used to prompt 'Abdallah b. 'Alī has shifted to the head of Abū Muslim".<sup>4</sup>

The trouble really started when al-Manṣūr sent a delegation to

---

<sup>1</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.438.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.101.

<sup>3</sup>Muq., fol. 93a, citing Balādhurī.

<sup>4</sup>Kūfī, fol. 239a.

count the money and assess the value of the property taken from 'Abdallah. This gesture met with resentment on the part of Abū Muslim and the military Commanders. Abū Muslim took up a harsh and threatening posture calling the caliph "Ibn Sallama" by name of his Berber mother.<sup>1</sup> This was, if true, the second time that Abū Muslim revealed publicly his hatred of the caliph. It is worth noting that Abū Muslim gave vent to his temper at a moment when one could not help admiring the dignity with which the caliph controlled his. This supports the assertion made earlier in this thesis that Abū Muslim's rôle as played throughout the da'wa has been exaggerated. Discussing the personality of Abū Muslim, Moscati<sup>2</sup> rightly observes that the traditional conception of Abū Muslim must be modified, and that he was in reality both less calculating and less capable than has hitherto been assumed.

The caliph acted quickly; according to Kūfī<sup>3</sup> he ordered his secretary to write Abū Muslim a polite letter saying "I have forgiven him and left all the money to him and I shall double it..." He also appointed Abū Muslim governor of Syria and Egypt ordering him to stay in Syria<sup>4</sup> but Abū Muslim refused the offer considering that Khurasān was his. All early sources agree<sup>5</sup> that Abū Muslim decided to go back

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., fol. 238b; Ansāb, fol. 520; Imāma, 2, 256; 'Uyūn, 1, 26; Ya'qubī, II, p.439; Tab., III, pp.103-104; Dina, p.375; F.H.A., p.219; Fakhri, p.150.

<sup>2</sup> Moscati, Studi sur Abū Muslim, III, op.cit., .1950, p.97.

<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fol. 239a.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 520 citing Madā'ini; Tab., III, p.103.

<sup>5</sup> Kūfī, fol. 239a تاريخ ابراهيم بن محمد بن ابي طالب; Tab. III, pp. 103, 105, عن عمير بن عبد الله بن مهران; Imāma, 2, 256; Murūj, VI, p.179; Ibn Isfandiyar, p.112. سراغاً سابقاً

to Khurāsān and he had no intention of meeting the caliph again. Among the late historians Ibn al-'Adīm gives a rather unique account as he relates that Abū Muslim was on his way to meet Abū Ja'far but the arrival of the caliph's messenger infuriated him and made him change his mind.<sup>1</sup> While he was heading for Ḥalwān Abū Muslim received another letter from the caliph summoning him for a meeting as he wanted to consult him "on a matter which could not be settled by corespondence". Abū Muslim's reply is indicative of his fears of the caliph's plans. He wrote: "There is no enemy left to the Commander of the Faithful and we used to relate of the Sasanid kings that if the mob is quiet the wazīrs are frightened. We do not intend to stay away from you but we shall be faithful to your oath of allegiance if you are. We shall be loyal and obedient but from far away where there is safety...."<sup>2</sup> The caliph's answer was cautious, he referred with praise to Abū Muslim's great services and concluded by saying "I beg God to protect you from the Devil and his thoughts..."<sup>3</sup>

Abū Muslim was not convinced of the caliph's intention, he persisted in his plan of going to Khurāsān as soon as possible. This moment marks the beginning of a second series of letters between them which would be quite improbable were it not confirmed by early trust-

---

<sup>1</sup>Zubda, 1, 58 ظان في طريقه الى النضر وكان حينئذ يقطن في بلد يسمى داسقوش  
It is not known with certainty what this famed and contentious treasure actually consisted of. Muslim historians are vague and only use the words Amwāl and Khazā'in (Ansab, fols. 564, 764b; Kūfī, fol. 238a; Tab., III, pp. 87, 114, 102).

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.104.

<sup>3</sup>Jah., p.111; Tab., III, 104, citing Madā'inī; Fakhrī, p.151.



worthy narrators. Historians quote a notorious letter which is said to have been sent by Abū Muslim to the caliph. He wrote:

I have chosen a man (your brother) as the Imām and guide in all that God has ordained to his creatures. He was an thoughtful a man of knowledge due to his kinship with the Prophet. He found me uninstructed in the Qor'an so he perverted the sense of the holy book hoping to gain some worldly aims... Then he led me into error indicating to me the wrong path as the right one. He ordered me to unsheath my sword, never have pity or accept excuses, and not to forgive those who committed mistakes. I acted in this way in order to establish your rule until God has made you known to those who once ignored you. Then God has saved me by means of repentance. Whether he forgives - as he is known to have done - or punishes me for the deeds of my hands, it will be an act of justice."<sup>1</sup>

Early sources except Kūfī agree, more or less, on the text of the letter. The version of Kūfī does not differ considerably except in one important point where he adds to the text "I have suppressed others of the family of the Prophet obviously referring to the 'Alids whose status and claim were better than yours" if one considers the 'Alid sympathies of Kūfī, and the lack of confirmation by other versions, this additional note cannot be credited as authentic. Scholars differ<sup>2</sup> in their attitude towards the letter, Weil accepts it as "a highly important document", while Barthold expresses his doubts about it. As for Moscati he states "It is thus highly probable that the letter was authentic". It is very difficult to see how Abū Muslim could have written this letter and then allowed himself to meet Abū Ja'far. But

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, 105 citing Madā'inī; Ansāb, fol. 522; Imāma, 2, 253; Kūfī, fol. 239b-240a; Khaṭīb citing 'Alī b. al-Ma'afī, 10, 208; Muq., fol. 94a; al-'Aynī citing Ṣulī fol. 26b; Bidāya, 10, 68-69. This letter also throws a light on the manner the 'Abbasid da'wa was conducted, and confirms the idea that the 'Abbasids exploited all concepts even non-Islamic ones for their benefit.

<sup>2</sup>Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, II, pp. 28-29; E.I.I (Abū Muslim); Moscati op.cit., III, p.98.

if this letter is authentic it shows Abū Muslim in a rather disturbed psychological condition. His pride and dignity were deeply hurt by the attitude of the new caliph. He gave vent to his feeling in an angry moment and the letter was the result. This interpretation is probable as he had been until that moment suspicious of the caliph and determined to proceed to Khurāsān where he would be safe.<sup>1</sup> The caliph, who displayed a great self control, cunningly refrained from cutting the thin thread which joined him to Abū Muslim who stumbled from disillusionment to disillusionment.

Judging by the development of the events one sees that Abū Ja'far had determined on practical steps in preference to correspondence. He requested several Hashimites among them 'Isā b. Mūsa who was a close friend of Abū Muslim to invite Abū Muslim to the court and assure him of the caliph's good intention.<sup>2</sup> The invitation was in a form of a message delivered by a delegation led by men like Jarīr al-Bajlī and Abū Ḥamayd al-Marwūzī who after using persuasive methods warned Abū Muslim in solemn terms that a refusal would have dire consequences.<sup>3</sup> Despite the warnings of his trustees<sup>4</sup> Abū Muslim let himself be deceived into thinking that there was a way back open to him. He sent, therefore, his confidant Abū Ishāq Mālik b. al-Haytham al-Khazā'ī to ascertain whether the conditions in the caliph's camp were favourable.

<sup>1</sup> It was probably this which led Kūfī to suggest that he wrote the letter after he had arrived at Merv in Khurāsān (fol. 239b), an allegation not confirmed by any other early sources.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 520, citing Madā'inī, Tab., III, 105 citing Modā'inī.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.104; Imāma, 2, 257. His first reply to al-Bajlī was Bayān, p.151.

<sup>4</sup> Bayān, 2, 96; Uyūn, 1, 30; F.H.A., p.221; Murūj, VI, 178f.

Abū Ja'far promised Abū Ishāq the governorship of Khurāsān for life if he succeeded in bringing Abū Muslim to him; and meanwhile appointed a new governor of Khurāsān, Khālid b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī,<sup>1</sup> and of Syria, Hishām al-'Uqaylī.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that, contrary to some accounts, by now Abū Muslim's position was undermined and he was not absolutely sure of the loyalty of his commanders. Tabarī transmits a letter from the new governor of Khurāsān to Abū Muslim in which he warns him not to come to Khurāsān in defiance of the caliph's order. He states "We had not revolted [referring to the 'Abbāsīd revolution] to disobey the caliph's of God and the Prophet's family".<sup>3</sup> Ṣūlī points out to the disagreement between him and some of his commanders.<sup>4</sup> Kūfī relates that when Abū Muslim reached Mosul on his way to Khurāsān a group of his companions who favoured Abū Ja'far asked him for permission to perform the pilgrimage. Abū Muslim replied "It is not the time for pilgrimage but who wants to leave let him leave."<sup>5</sup> Moreover al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥḥāba had already held back his army on the pretext of illness.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab. III, 107-8; F.H.A., p.221.

<sup>2</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.440.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.107.

<sup>4</sup>'Aynī, fol. 26b.

<sup>5</sup>Kūfī, fol. 239b.

<sup>6</sup>Op.cit., fol. 239a.

The execution of Abū Muslim

Abū Muslim was deluded into believing that there was a way of regaining the caliph's favour by a show of loyalty. For that purpose it was necessary to meet the caliph in person. In brief, the caliph's ruse had misled him into thinking that the way of escape and safety led through al-Madā'in and not through Khurāsān. When he reached the caliph's camp with a body of his army, he was met by 'Īsā b. Mūsa who assured him that he was safe.<sup>1</sup> The first meeting with the caliph was indeed friendly, but at the second meeting the caliph raised against him accusations of an interesting and significant nature. As to the accusations themselves they are quoted by most early and late historians<sup>2</sup> and are by no means always the same. Though it must be borne in mind that our sources abound in interpolations and fabrications, and although some of the accusations may never have been raised by al-Manṣūr, most of them are historically motivated. It seems as though the historians had collected them all together and made them the subject of the conversation between the caliph and Abū Muslim especially as Arab narrators and historians are inclined by nature to indulge in polemics and repartees. The words of Abū Ja'far are, however, significant in that they indicate that his fears were old and deep-rooted and not merely aroused by the act of recent disobedience. It also corresponds to the caliph's real attitude throughout all these years.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, 522, Azhar b. Zuhayr; Tab., III, 112; 'Aynī, citing Abū 'l Yaqzan, fol. 28a.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 523-524; Kūfī, 240b-241a; Tab., III, pp. 113-115; Ya'qubī II, p. 441; Imāma, 259; Dīna, pp. 377-8; Murūj, VI, 180; F.H.A., p. 223; anonymous, fols. 13a, 16a; 'Aynī, fol. 30a.

The enmity between them went back to the days of the first caliph Abū 'l 'Abbās and Abū Muslim did not certainly wish for a caliph like Abū Ja'far who could not tolerate unlimited power on the part of a governor like Abū Muslim who desired to be the only repository of power. In short the accusations indicate that the dispute was political in nature, it was a struggle for power.

It would not however be amiss to deal with some of these changes made by the caliph with reference to the historicity, if any, of them, so that an idea could be formed on the course of the conversation. Al-Mansūr rebuked Abū Muslim for failing to greet him at the court of Abū 'l 'Abbās when he visited it on his way to Mecca.<sup>1</sup> This incident seems to be true as it had been related by several sources. He also reminded him that it was he who had instigated 'Isā b. Mūsa to rebel against him.<sup>2</sup> Then he blamed him for preceding him on the pilgrimage.<sup>3</sup> He repudiated him for having called him on certain occasions by his proper name, 'Abdallah, "was there no other title I am called by?" Abū Ja'far asked. Abū Muslim's alleged reply is interesting as the argument he adduces to justify his action is contrary to the usual Arab practice to show respect by the use of the kunya. He said "I have found that God, referring to his prophet says: Muḥammad, while he says referring to his enemy: Abū Lahab. Thus he called his prophet by his name while he gave his

---

<sup>1</sup>Kūfī, fol. 240b.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., 240b; 'Aynī, fol. 25a. This is historically confirmed.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.113; Kūfī, fol. 240b; 'Aynī, fol. 30 a. This is historically confirmed too.

enemy a kunya."<sup>1</sup> Historians relate several of these polemics between the caliph and Abū Muslim, most of them, however, insignificant.

However what al-Manṣūr seems to have regarded as the most serious charge of all was that Abū Muslim had collected money and property and distributed part of it as ghanīma after the defeat of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī in Syria,<sup>2</sup> a matter about which there is surely nothing wrong as the ghanīma should be, after taking the fifth of the state, distributed among the conquering troops. However, the question of ghanīma seems to have vexed Abū Ja'far on more than one occasion. Towards the end of the meeting Abū Ja'far brought two grave charges against Abū Muslim asking him: "Why did you kill Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuẓā'ī after all his great services and he was our Naqīb before we permitted you to do so,"<sup>3</sup> and "why did you decide to return to Khurāsān without our permission?"<sup>4</sup> Abū Muslim became apologetic; he reminded the caliph of his services in creating and consolidating the dynasty to which the caliph replied that if they had sent a slave girl in his place to Khurāsān she would have triumphed in the same way.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aynī citing Balādhurī fol. 30a; see also Ansāb, fol. 523; Tab., III, 59. The 'Abbasids, unlike the Umayyads, adopted titles and courtly ceremonies (al-Taj, pp. 37ff; Tah alibi, Lata'if, p.19). The historian Ibn 'Adhārī describes the Umayyad dynasty as follows:

وطلعت على خلافة دولة عربية لم يتخذوا قاعة ولا قصر ولا قصر في دارهم وبيتهم  
التي كانت لهم قبل فخرتهم ولا خلفوا المسلمين ان يظهروهم بالعبودية والملك والقبول  
( 'Adhārī, p.63).  
يد ولا رجل

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, 114, Mada'ini.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, 114; F.H.A., p.223. According to Balādhurī (Ansāb, fol. 526, Mada'ini) al-Manṣūr also reproached him for killing Aflah al-Fazārī, one of the prominent Arabs in Khurāsān. Significant is the reason given by Abū Muslim for al-Fazārī's execution. He replied "He was a man of integrity and pride: I feared he might create troubles" (Ansāb, fol. 526,

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, 113.

Mada'ini)

<sup>5</sup> Tab., III, 115; Ansāb, fol. 523; Kūfī, fol. 240b-241a; Imāna, p.258; Dīna, p.376; Muru'j, VI, 182f; Fakhri, p.153.

He added "The merit lay with us [the 'Abbāsids] and with our state. <sup>Caliph al-Mu'tazz</sup> If it had been for you alone you could not have cut a string". The caliph was determined to kill him. He clapped and, as already had been planned, 'Uthmān b. Nahīk with other soldiers appeared. While Abū Muslim was being hit he begged for pardon and asked the caliph to spare his life for his enemies. The latter replied "What greater enemy have I other than you?"<sup>1</sup> He was slain and his body was thrown in the Tigris.

Whatever might be thought of the picture presented to us by Muslim histories on the murder of Abū Muslim, it is obvious that he had set himself up as the sole authority not only of Khurāsān but of the eastern provinces. He had reserved for himself the right of appointing governors to the provinces as far as Fārs and Sind. He even had a say in the affairs of the court. To recall some: The assassination of Sulaymān b. Hishām, of Ibn Hubayra and of Abū Salama al-Khallāl, prove how powerful he was. Judging by the nature of Abū Ja'far he could not tolerate such power beside him. According to some accounts Abū Ja'far said to Abū Muslim

According to another account he said to him

(you are considered the greatest but in reality you are not). Jāhiz relates that Abū Ja'far quoted two verses before killing Abū Muslim;

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.115.  
p.193.

وأي عروبي أهدى منك

; Asmā' al-Muhtalīn,

these verses admirably illustrate the fears of the caliph: "Abū Muslim you have three qualities which render you liable to die: disobediences, vainglory, and demagogy."<sup>1</sup> It is in this perspective that the murder of Abū Muslim must be viewed. There is no proof of heterodox or 'Alid accusations alleged by early or modern writers. It is significant that among the mass of charges allegedly raised by the caliph there is not a single one of pro-'Alid or Zandaqa tendencies. He may have been potentially dangerous but not "heterodox" or an 'Alid partisan. He himself allowed nothing to indicate that he favoured any faith other than Islam and the 'Abbāsīd cause. As to the extremist ideas attributed to him, it has already been mentioned that it was 'Abbāsīd policy to compromise with every possible group in order to win followers. If Abū Muslim himself pursued this policy, he did so as a loyal 'Abbāsīd practitioner. Thus the first to be accused of this extremist tendency should be the 'Abbāsīd Imām and not a mere 'Abbāsīd propagandist like Abū Muslim.

As to the 'Alid tendency attributed to him by some late Muslim historians and modern scholars,<sup>2</sup> it is true that Abū Muslim spent part of his life in 'Alid circles especially in his youth in Kūfa when he associated with the tribe of 'Ijl and with Abū Mūsā al-Sarrāj. He even participated in the pro-'Alid rising of al-Mughīra in Kūfa. But once won over by the 'Abbāsīds he proved loyal to the new da'wa, and there is no shred of evidence to prove his 'Alid tendency. It is worth mentioning that only late authors accused him of this tendency. According

<sup>1</sup>On these remarks see Bayān, 3, 367; Kūfī, p.241a; Tab., III, 195; Ya'qūbī, II, p.441. Other comments on the assassination of Abū Muslim reveal clearly the political nature of the struggle. One of the caliph's close associates said to him "If there were other gods beside God it would



Dhahabī Abū Muslim decided, after crushing 'Abdallah's revolt, to go to Khurāsān and install an 'Alid caliph.<sup>1</sup> Shahristānī calls Abū Muslim a caliph maker and relates that having thrown the Umayyad, he contacted Ja'far al-Ṣādiq the Husaynid and offered him the caliphate but the latter refused the offer so Abū Muslim turned to Abū 'l 'Abbās and conferred on him the caliphate.<sup>2</sup> Others associate his name with those who outwardly professed Islam, gained the favour of the Shī'a by pretending to love the prophet's family and protesting against the injustice done to 'Alī.<sup>3</sup> Unfounded as they are those accounts are not to be credited. Moreover they are contradictory with early accounts on the anti-'Alid attitude of Abū Muslim. In a letter written by Abū Muslim to Abū 'l 'Abbās he advised him to shift from Kūfa saying "The people of Kūfa are the Shī'a of the Commander of the Faithful only by name not by action. Their feelings are with the family of 'Alī... So do not elevate them to the rank of your neighbours for their house is not yours."<sup>4</sup> This account as well as his policy in Khurāsān after the 'Abbāsīd accession to power are ample evidences of Abū Muslim's loyalty to the new regime.

---

(cont.) be the ruin of the world" (Uyun, 1,93; Jah., p.111; Dina, p.373; Murūj, VI, p.175; Iqd., vol. 1, p.93, vol. 2, p.130); another commented يا امير المؤمنين عدو هذا اليوم الى يوم اخره (Tab., III, 116). See also Imama, 260; Ansab, fol. 526; Nuq., fol. 95a. Interesting in this respect is Jahiz who put Abū Muslim in the same category of al-Ḥajjāj (Ḥaywan, 4, p.429).

<sup>2</sup> Blochet, Le messianisme..., pp. 42-43; Weil, op.cit., II, p.19; Zaydan, Abu Muslim, pp. 373 ff; Al-Mudawar, Hadarat al-Islam, p.32.

<sup>1</sup> Dhahabī, Duwal, vol. 1, p.70. According to al-'Aynī, Abū Ishāq said to Abū Muslim who was on his way to Khurāsān, "Abū Ja'far blames you

Undeniable is the existence and rôle of court intrigues and political groupings which aggravated the tension between the caliph and Abū Muslim. This is reflected in the reply of Abū Muslim to a question by the caliph. "They [referring to his enemies] have lied to you."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, when for reasons unknown to us, Abū Muslim asked the caliph, before marching towards 'Abdallah to arrest and punish 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī, Ṣāliḥ b. al-Haytham and Khālīd b. Barmak.<sup>2</sup> Nor can it be denied that al-Mūnyānī played a decisive rôle in all the proceedings which led to the murder of Abū Muslim.<sup>3</sup> The caliph bribed Abū Muslim's army and offered to incorporate them in his army after he had murdered their leader to avoid a possible revolt on their part. According to one account<sup>4</sup> sums of 1,000 dirhams 'Aḥa' to some of them and 500 to others were offered and they were left free to choose whether to stay with the caliph or return to Khurāsān. Some of them commented "We sold our master for dirhams".<sup>5</sup> They refrained

(cont.) for old matters *يكنن عليا امرأ قريه* If you had installed a Talibite caliph you would have taken the right measure. If you had accepted the governorship of Syria al-Jazīra and Sawā' if you would have had the opportunity to choose a man from the sons of Faṭīma and instal him as an Imām, which would win over people to your side and oppose to Abū Ja'far a rival of equal status." ('Aynī citing Ṣulī, fol. 26b). This is another account which is not to be found anywhere else and even if it were authentic it would be only a suggestion to which Abū Muslim did not respond. (see also Shah., pp. 114-115; anonymous, fol. 15b

*الادان ليعبر ابو*

<sup>1</sup> Shah., pp. 114-115.

<sup>2</sup> Ḥazm., I, 90, II, 114; Bagh., p.225; Bidayā, vol. 10, 71.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fols. 789b-790a.

<sup>4</sup> 'Aynī, citing Balādhurī, fol. 30a.

<sup>5</sup> Kūfī, fol. 237a.

<sup>6</sup> Tab., III, 101-3; Jah., 111-112.

from causing trouble because, as Jāhiz<sup>1</sup> puts it, "They were far away from their country [Khurasān] and were surrounded by enemies [the caliph's army]. They, therefore, gave in and capitulated." It is interesting to conclude this episode of Abū Muslim's career by quoting Abū Ja'far who is said to have been asked about Abū Muslim's affair when he commented "If your enemy stretches out his hand to you cut it if you can, and if you cannot then kiss it."<sup>2</sup>

Abū Muslim's life ended, but his memory survived especially in the eastern provinces of the empire. Many Persian rebels adopted his name as an excuse to justify their risings. He became a myth around which many exaggerated stories were woven.<sup>3</sup> He became

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Imāma, p.260.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, 117; Ya'qūbi, II, 441; Dīna, p.379; Fakhri, 153.

<sup>1</sup>Bayān, 3, 368.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 510, Madā'ini; Muq., fol. 90a.

إذاً عمرتك اليك يوم كان املاك ان تطهر والد فقيد

The manner in which historians compare the 'Abbāsīd caliphs with the Umayyads is interesting. This trend is noticeable in the writings of Jāhiz as well as in scattered historical accounts. In so far as the episode of Abū Muslim is concerned, al-Haytham b. 'Adī compares 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān with al-Manṣūr and relates that 'Abd al-Malik was the most competent of the Umayyads while Abū Ja'far was the most competent of the 'Abbāsīds and adds, "But can not you see that 'Abd al-Malik killed 'Amr b. Sa'īd in his castle with the doors closed while al-Manṣūr killed Abū Muslim under his tent and there were only sheets between him and Ahl Khurasān". Imāma, 2, 262; Jah., p.122.

<sup>3</sup>Melikoff, Abū Muslim..., idem, La Geste de Melik..., pp. 49-51, see also index; Ménage, B.S.O.A.S., 1962, p.172, 1964, pp. 361-363.

Even Jamal al-Din al-Afghanī was an admirer of Abū Muslim. He writes: "In order to find a means of delivery from these terrible difficulties I have studied the condition of former peoples and states (milal va duval) and the cause of their ascent and decline and their rising and setting, and I have considered the great deeds that have emanated

(cont.)

a Persian martyr whose death had to be avenged. The symbol of deliverance for the disappointed masses who claimed that he would come back himself or send a prophet to save them from the 'Abbāsid rule. However this does not necessarily imply that Abū Muslim believed in their doctrines or had ever been in close personal contact with these subversive groups. Each of these revolts was based on a complex of extreme Iranian and Islamic doctrines against which Abū Muslim, after the 'Abbāsid accession to power, had acted many a time in his character of 'Abbāsid governor.

The rising of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm in 133/750-751.

Bassām, first associated with the Umayyad governor of Khurāsān Naḡr b. Sayyār then defected to Abū Muslim, was one of the early 'Abbāsid partisans. He was one of the commanders in Qaḡḡaba's army which invaded Irāq, then he was stationed in Syria with the Khurāsānīs under the command of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.<sup>1</sup>

---

(cont.) from individual men which are worthy of strong wonder and awe - until my attention fell in passing on the life of Abū Muslim of Khurāsānian stock, who with high purpose and skill extirpated, root and branch a government like the government of Banī Umayya, at the peak of power and the height of fortune, and who scraped their proud face into the dust of baseness.... The flame of revolution was lit in my heart, and the devotion and skill of the Khurasanian made life and ease forbidden (haram) for me. I knew that to consider deeds difficult is nothing but meanness of spirit and baseness and vileness of nature and that every difficult thing is simpler to possessors of resolution and every trouble is accepted by those with zeal." See N.R.Keddie "The pan-Islamic appeal," M.E.S., vol. 3, 1966.

---

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 157b; Tab., II, pp. 1959, 1996; III, pp. 18, 21, 48.

It should be remembered that after the abortive rising of Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī in northern Syria, the latter retreated and took refuge in Tadmur. Presumably Bassām was sent to Tadmur, first to crush the resistance of this Kalbite city which had hitherto, due to its isolated geographical situation far in the desert, been defying the 'Abbāsīd authority, and secondly to arrest Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī.

After occupying Tadmur Bassām rebelled against 'Abdallah b. 'Alī with whom he had some differences. However Bassām does not seem to have been trusted by the Kalbites of Tadmur with whom he had a few skirmishes. His Khurāsānī troops also began to abandon him and he was defeated by Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīnī at al-Madā'in.<sup>1</sup> But Bassām, having escaped, wandered, according to Balādhurī,<sup>2</sup> from place to place until he contacted the Ḥusaynid Ja'far al-Ṣādiq to whom he proposed collaboration with the establishment of a Ḥusaynid caliphate in view. Al-Ṣādiq fearing the 'Abbāsīds, suspected that Bassām's move was a trick on the part of the authorities, and immediately informed the latter who seized Bassām at Hīra and executed him. Azdī's<sup>3</sup> account is brief and confirms Balādhurī's in that it asserts that Bassām worked for an 'Alid caliphate but was deceived by the Ḥusaynids who handed him over to the 'Abbāsīds. If true this account substantiates the assumption that the 'Abbāsīd-

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 802a; Tab., III, pp. 75-77.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 802a-802b; cf. Tab., III, p.75.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fol. 121.

Husaynid relations were cordial; if fabricated it may have been intended to stress the piety and peaceful inclination of al-Ṣādiq. Be it as it may, Bassām's rising represents another episode in the series of revolts by disappointed partisans who turned against the 'Abbāsids and used 'Alid or other anti-'Abbāsīd slogans to express their resentment.

The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī

'Abdallah's revolt had three important characteristics. It was the revolt of a prominent 'Abbāsīd who claimed the succession to the throne as a rival to his nephew Abū Ja'far; the revolt of an 'Abbāsīd partisan whose activity in promoting the cause of da'wa was well recognized;<sup>1</sup> the revolt of Syrians against the new Irāqī-Khurāsānī régime. The desperate Syrians paid no attention to the fact that the leader was an 'Abbāsīd figure, they were happy to use him as al-Amīn later on to try and avenge their own humiliation on the Khurāsānīs who had brought their supremacy down.

'Abdallah b. 'Alī was an ambitious and capable 'Abbāsīd. He was chosen to lead the Khurāsānī-Iraqī troops in the fight against Marwān II. After the latter's death he was appointed governor of Syria and put in charge of the Thughūr too.<sup>2</sup> Before the death of Abū 'l 'Abbās, 'Abdallah is said to have visited him at al-Anbār in 136/753 A.D. and

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 760a ff.

It is also reported that he was arrested after the failure of Ibn Mu'awiya's revolt for his participation in it then released by Marwān (Ansāb, fol. 767b).

<sup>2</sup> Tab. III, p. 84.

was instructed to lead the first Jihād against the Byzantines in the 'Abbāsīd period.<sup>1</sup> He was well on his way to the frontiers when the news of the caliph's death was broken to him by two messengers from 'Isā b. Mūsā declaring that the new caliph was Abū Ja'far 'Abdallah, the brother of Abū 'l 'Abbās. 'Abdallah b. 'Alī then proclaimed himself caliph claiming that Abū 'l 'Abbās had already promised him the succession to the caliphate when he undertook to lead the 'Abbāsīd force against Marwān II.<sup>2</sup> 'Abdallah's claim to the caliphate is difficult to establish. To judge by the fears expressed by the new caliph Abū Ja'far and his companions on their way back from Mecca<sup>3</sup> as well as by the important delegation sent to 'Abdallah to inform him of the caliph's death,<sup>4</sup> 'Abdallah's opposition had been expected by the 'Abbāsīds. This is confirmed by the fact that Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī had been ordered before 'Abdallah's revolt to march to Syria and take the oath from 'Abdallah.<sup>5</sup> Now it is significant that according to Balādhurī<sup>6</sup> Abū 'l 'Abbās had in fact promised 'Abdallah b. 'Alī the succession to the caliphate after him, but Sa'īd b. 'Amr al-Makhzūmī advised him not to take the caliphate from the line of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah b. 'Al-'Abbās and he accepted his advice. If it had actually been made,

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762a citing Madā'inī; Ya'qūbī, II, 435; Tab., III, 91; Azdi, fol. 138; Zubda, vol. 1, p.57.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762a; Tab., III, pp. 91-92; see also Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 289.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 509; Tab., III, p.90 citing al-Madā'inī.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 761b; Tab., III, 91.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, 437.

<sup>6</sup> Ansāb, fol. 808b citing 'Abdallah b. Ṣāliḥ.

this promise may have been given privately and have been known to the inner circle of the 'Abbāsids and would indeed explain their fears of 'Abdallah after Abū 'l 'Abbās' death.

'Abdallah b. 'Alī is said to have sought the advice of his foster brother Yazīd who told him "You had a better claim to this matter [the caliphate] because you are an uncle and the uncle is like the father".<sup>1</sup> If this account is true 'Abdallah's adviser seems to have suggested to him to use the same argument on which the 'Abbāsids based their claim in general. However, 'Abdallah did not raise this argument publicly; in the khujba he said " Abū 'l 'Abbās summoned his relatives and offered the succession to the one who undertook the task of fighting Marwān. It was on that condition I did what I did."<sup>2</sup> It is true that the commanders of the Khurāsānī troops under his control paid homage to him,<sup>3</sup> but from the very beginning the enthusiastic support came from the Syrian pro-Umayyad tribal leaders. One of them said in reply to 'Abdallah's appeal "I am your spear".<sup>4</sup> Worth noting is the hostile relations between the Khurāsānīs and the Syrians and Jazirites in 'Abdallah's very army. According to Nadā'inī 'Abdallah first summoned the Khurāsānī leaders who took the oath to him without enthusiasm. Then he summoned the Syrian and Jazirite leaders who supported him in their majority though some of them made

---

<sup>1</sup> Kufī, fol. 237a.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 761b-762a; Tab., III, 92; Azdī, fol. 141; Ya'qubī, II, 437-8; F.H.A., pp. 211-212; Muruj, VI, p.176; Fakhrī, p.150. Compare Kufī fol. 237a.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762a; Tab., III, 92; Azdī, fol. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762a citing Nadā'inī; Muq., fol. 240a.



cautious remarks. This can also be inferred from the lists<sup>1</sup> of the new governors and commanders who were Syrians in their majority.

'Uthmān b. Sarāqa al-Azdī was appointed governor of Damascus, Zafr b.

'Aṣim al-Muhallabī of Qimīsrīn, al-Ḥakkam b. Ḍab'ān of Palestine

and Maṣṣūr b. Ja'ūna al-Kalbī chief of the police. Furthermore

Khurāsānī commanders in Arminiya, Adhurbayjān, Samosata and Ḥarrān<sup>2</sup>

who were not subject to his control refused to pay allegiance to him.

'Abdallah even tried to kill Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba<sup>3</sup>, but the latter knew of the conspiracy and defected to the caliph. 'Abdallah's suspicions

of the Khurāsānīs were aggravated by the news of the advance of the Khurāsānī army under Abū Muslim, and he killed many thousands of them in cold blood.<sup>4</sup> Madā'inī and Kūfī state that in the ranks of 'Abdallah

the people of al-Shām formed the majority of the troops and cavalry.

All the mosques of al-Shām proclaimed him as caliph.<sup>5</sup> The support

for 'Abdallah was therefore mainly derived from Syrians and Jazirites<sup>6</sup>

and the conflict was clearly one between Khurāsānīs and Irāqīs on the one hand and Syrians and Jazirites on the other.

'Abdallah headed south and besieged Ḥarrān where Muqātil al-Akkī resisted him with 4,000 soldiers.<sup>7</sup> Abū Ja'far sent an army on which

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762b.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Tab., III, p.93.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, 94; Ya'qūbī, II, p.439; Azdī, p.142; Zubda, I, 57.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, 94; Imāma, 2, 255-6.

<sup>5</sup> Aynī, citing Madā'inī, fol. 24a; Kūfī, fol. 237a. بعض ظلمة كثير من امرائهم وادبي  
لما على من ارتكبوا بالخلافة

<sup>6</sup> Imāma, p.237, تصويب سوالي بنو امية والحمد لله (but he wrongly places the rising in the reign of Abū 'l 'Abbās); Tab., III, 96; Muruḥ, VI, 176; Aynī, fol. 24a.

<sup>7</sup> Tab., III, 94; Azdī, fol. 142.

he spent between 12 million and 18 million dirhams.<sup>1</sup> He also increased their pay from 60 dirhams a month to 80 dirhams.<sup>2</sup> Establishing his headquarters in a monastery on the Tigris called Dayr al-Jathliq, the caliph ordered al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba to join Abū Muslim and also stationed troops in many strategic positions on the way between Syria and Irāq such as Qarqāsiya, Hīt, Balad and Tikrīt, forbidding them to leave their positions even if they heard of the defeat of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.<sup>3</sup> He was obviously afraid that 'Abdallah might make a swift attack and surprise him in his imperial province of 'Irāq. Initially Abū Jā'far resorted to his old conspiratory methods. He ordered Muḥammad b. Ṣawl an early 'Abbāsīd partisan to join the ranks of 'Abdallah pretending to offer support to his claim. But this failed to deceive 'Abdallah who killed the spy immediately.<sup>4</sup> 'Abdallah entrenched himself in a strong position at Niṣībīn. Abū Muslim with al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba in the vanguard, Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba in the right wing and Khāzim al-Tamīmī on the left wing cleverly deceived the Syrians by declaring that he had no intention of fighting them and had only come to take up his appointment as governor of Syria. Hearing of his approach the Syrians defied 'Abdallah's efforts to warn them against the obvious strategem and decided to turn back to defend their cities where they had their property and their families. Then, in a swift sloop,

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, 438; Tab., III, 94, 90 citing Maḍā'inī; Murūj, VI, pp. 176f.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 763a-b. Commenting on that Balādhurī says that it was Abū 'l-'Abbas who decreased the soldiers' pay to 60 dirhams per month. Now Abū Jā'far raised it again to secure their loyalty to his cause.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 93 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Azdī, fol. 142.

Abū Muslim occupied 'Abdallah's previous strategic position. The war lasted for about four months in the course of which Abū Muslim was able to contact the rest of the Khurāsānīs in 'Abdallah's camp who had already started to defect. In a fierce battle at Niṣībīn, the Syrians were utterly defeated and began to retreat. 'Abdallah did not wait, but fled with a number of his close associates.<sup>1</sup> Abū Muslim ordered 'Abdallah not to be pursued,<sup>2</sup> thus giving him the opportunity to escape, which must have enraged Abū Ja'far. 'Abdallah's brother and heir 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Alī who had been appointed by him governor of Jazīra fled to Raqqa and then to Raḡāfa where he was arrested.<sup>3</sup>

Once again, the Khurāsānīs defeated the Syrians but this time Abū Muslim proclaimed the aman<sup>4</sup> and no atrocities were committed. It is interesting to note that it was discussed in the presence of Abū Muslim who was braver, the Khurāsānīs or the Syrians. Significantly enough the comment of Abū Muslim was:<sup>5</sup> كل قوم في دولتهم اشد الناس  
A Syrian delegate, who came to apologize to the caliph, described 'Abdallah's revolt as Fitna and admitted their full involvement in it. The caliph accepted the apology and returned to some of them the property he had confiscated.<sup>6</sup> The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī was significant

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, pp. 95-96; Kūfī, fol. 237b; Azdī, fol. 142; Jah., p.103.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, 440.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, 98-99.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, 99.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., III, 96 citing Madā'inī.

<sup>6</sup> Bayān, 2, 110; Ansāb, fol. 512; Muq., fol. 91a; Iqd, 2, 158 citing Haytham b. 'Adī.

in that it revealed, as has been stated before, many distinctive characteristics of the structure of the Khurāsānī army, the very army who brought the 'Abbāsids to power. Many Khurāsānī leaders on both sides bore Arab names. The enlistment of the Khurāsānīs by 'Abdallah b. 'Alī together with the Yamanites is also significant in so far as it indicates their connection mainly with the tribal confederation of Yaman. According to the author of Imāma wa'l siyāsa,<sup>1</sup> 'Abdallah appealed to Ahl Khurāsān and listed them together with the Syrian Yemites and showered them with extravagant gifts, but then returned and killed them. Still more important is that the Khurāsānī commanders who were on the side of the caliph resented his decision to appropriate the possessions of 'Abdallah. Abū Muslim and his army commanders protested declaring that 'Abdallah's property was ghanīma and the caliph was only entitled to one fifth, adding "The rest is ours".<sup>2</sup>

ان اموال عبد الله بن علي انما هي غنيمة وما يذهب للكلية من اموالهم ظلم  
سأل الكلية عما في ايدينا ؟

As Abū Ja'far feared the consequences, he wrote a letter giving all the money to them with a promise to double it for them. The extent and significance of this disagreement between the caliph and the Khurāsānī commanders can only be assessed if one goes back to the Khurāsān of the late Umayyad period where disagreement about the ghanīma was one of the causes of the conflict between the Umayyad caliph, who tried to acquire as much of it as possible, and the Muqātila, who

<sup>1</sup> Imāna, vol. 2, pp. 255-6.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, 103; see also Ansāb, fol. 520; Azdī, fol. 142; Huq., fol. 93a; Aynī, fol. 25b.

considered that they had the right to share it. It was this very issue which was utilized by the 'Abbāsīd propagandists in Khurāsān.<sup>1</sup> In their speeches in Kūfa both Abū Salama and Abū 'l 'Abbās condemned the Umayyads for their greed and promised the people 'Aḡā' and a right to the ghanīma. However, all sources agree that Abū Muslim rejected the demands of Abū Ja'far and distributed part of the possessions as booty among the troops. In their last meeting Abū Ja'far asked Abū Muslim to account for 'Abdallah's property, he replied "I distributed it among the army in order to strengthen your cause".<sup>2</sup> This episode provides additional evidence of the mainly Arab composition of the Khurāsānī troops. The Khurāsānī troops of the 'Abbāsīd era voiced the same complaint, and adopted the same attitude in respect of the ghanīma as the Arab Muqātila of Khurāsān in the late Umayyad period.

As for the fate of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī, he was able to take refuge with his brother Sulaymān b. 'Alī in Baṣra.<sup>3</sup> Having got rid of Abū Muslim in 137/754-5, the caliph pressed Sulaymān b. 'Alī to bring 'Abdallah to the court but Sulaymān ignored the order, whereupon he was dismissed from his post and replaced by Sufyān b. Mu'āwiya al-Muhallabī. Fearing a new move by 'Abdallah, Abū Ja'far reshuffled the whole administration of Baṣra appointing a dependable Ṣāhib al-Barīd and stationing a detachment 4,000 strong led by Rawḥ b. Ḥātim al-Muhallabī. Then he sent Abū al-Asad with reinforcements until 12,000 Khurāsānīs were stationed at

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, 110.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, 114.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, 98; 'Azdī, fol. 142.

Basra.<sup>1</sup> Heavy pressure was exerted on Sulaymān b. 'Alī who having lost his influence, found it more difficult to resist. The sons of 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd (the uncles of the caliph) then gave in and demanded an amān for their brother. Ya'qūbī, Tabarī and the author of al-'Uyūn wa'l hadā'iq are brief and vague on that and maintain that the amān was written by Abū Ja'far himself, giving the impression that the caliph took the initiative and suggested the offer of an amān.<sup>2</sup> Dinawārī, who generally has several confusing remarks on this period, alleges that it was Abū Muslim who pardoned 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.<sup>3</sup> However, according to Kūfī<sup>4</sup> it was Sulaymān b. 'Alī who asked Abū Ja'far for an amān, and when the latter agreed 'Isā b. 'Alī 'Abdallah's other brother asked his secretary Ibn al-Muqaffa' to write the amān which was strict to the extent that, when Abū Ja'far read it, he enquired who had composed it, and when he knew that it was Ibn al-Muqaffa' he commented "Have not we got anybody who would rid us of him?" That the initiative for the amān was taken by Sulaymān b. 'Alī is confirmed by Balādhurī, Jahshiyārī and Azdī.<sup>5</sup> The amān was so carefully composed that it did not leave a single loophole for Abū Ja'far. According to Balādhurī the caliph was angered by the sentence "If the Commander of the Faithful does not fulfil the commitments to him [ 'Abdallah ] may he be deprived [ of his rights ] and the Muslims will be free of their oath to him." According to Jahshiyārī the clause which was most irritating to Abū Ja'far was

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 766b.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.442; Tab., III, 126-127; F.H.A., p.226.

<sup>3</sup> Dīna, p.375.

<sup>4</sup> Kūfī, fol. 238a.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 766b; Jah., p. 103; Azdī, fols. 145-147. See also Sourdcl,

that he was asked to add with his own hand a few lines at the bottom of the aman: "If, secretly or in public or by any manoeuvre directly or indirectly or by any ruse whatsoever, I make 'Abdallah or one of those he brings with him, any injury small or great or if I cause them any harm may I be repudiated by Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah and may the whole community of the Muslims consider itself free to deny the oath of allegiance to me, to fight me and to emancipate itself from my protection... May it be their duty not to obey me any more but to give their help to any who resist me... I have written this promise in my own hand and without intentions to the contrary. May God except it from me and watch over its execution." It is important to point out that the whole text of the aman is preserved in Tārīkh al-Muḥṣil which although different in wording from the extract of Jahshiyārī confirms that Ibn al-Muqaffa' took extra precaution in order not to leave for Abū Ja'far a room for a trick. The caliph, whose main preoccupation it was to get hold of 'Abdallah, accepted this aman on the condition that he saw 'Abdallah with his own eyes. But when 'Abdallah was brought to him he ordered Abū al-Azhar his Ḥājib not to produce him but to have him immediately arrested.<sup>1</sup> Later, in 147, Abū Ja'far tried to use 'Isā b. Nūsa to kill 'Abdallah. Before going on the pilgrimage he gave 'Isā the secret order to kill him, but the latter was advised by his own

---

(cont.) 'La Biographie d'Ibn al-Muqaffa', Arabica, 1954, pp. 319 ff.

<sup>1</sup>Ansab, fol. 767a; Tab., III, pp. 328-30; Jah., 130; F.H.A., pp. 257-8.

secretary not to obey the order. On his return from Mecca Abū Ja'far confident that 'Abdallah had been killed believed that the time had come to rid himself of 'Isā b. Mūsā who was a potential danger to his son al-Mahdī - even though he had already conceded his rights to him, incited 'Abdallah's brothers to ask for his release, and ordered 'Isā to produce him. One can imagine Abū Ja'far's surprise and disappointment when 'Isā actually brought 'Abdallah. However the caliph failed to release him on the pretext that "The people of Khurāsān would kill him because of what he has inflicted upon them [in Syria]."<sup>1</sup>

'Abdallah was finally killed in obscure circumstances in 147 A.H./764-5 A.D. There are many accounts<sup>2</sup> on the way he was murdered, the most popular among them states that the house in which he was restricted collapsed over him. A Qāḍī was sent to testify that he had died a natural death and not by force. It was not only 'Abdallah was killed but also the unfortunate secretary Ibn al-Muqaffa' who had written the aman in question and who cried out on his death "Oh tools of tyrants.."

3  
الطبرستان

### The Rāwandiyya Sectarrians

It has already been pointed out that, although the 'Abbāsīd propagandists were mainly aiming at the Arabs of Khurāsān, they made common cause with the 'Alids and the Kharijites of Khurāsān and actually excluded

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 767b; Tab., III, p.320.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 767a-768a; Tab., III, p.331; Imāma, 2, 263; Ya'qūbī, II, 443; F.H.A., 253-9; Muruḡ, VI, 218; Azdī, fol. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 535 citing Madā'inī; Kūfī, fols. 238a-b citing Madā'inī; Jah., pp. 103-4; Jāhiz, Akhlaq al-Kuttāb, p.47 (ed. Finkel); Sourdēl, La Biographie, op.cit., p.313.



no group or body of any kind from the Anti-Umayyad movement. Nor did they even condemn the subversive activities of Bihāfarīd when it started at Nīshāpūr as long as it was directed against the Umayyad rule.

While the Hāshimiyya propaganda movement concentrated on items like Umayyad tyranny, the revenge for Ahl al-Bayt who had the best claim to the Imamate, and the call for the Book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet, it also admitted groups of Muslim or non-Muslim extremist tendencies and made use of their ideas. The episode of Khidāsh, the Rāwandiyya risings in the reign of Abū 'l 'Abbās and al-Manṣūr and the Persian insurrections are all proofs of that.

Thus the Hāshimiyya represented a complex of doctrines which reflects the real nature of the 'Abbāsīd propaganda. The Hāshimiyya was also called Rāwandiyya, however the Rāwandiyya was a section within the Hāshimiyya which after the 'Abbāsīd victory split into several sub-sects.<sup>1</sup> Its name Rāwandiyya is after the village Rāwand near Nīshāpūr.<sup>2</sup> It is highly significant that 'Abdallah al-Rāwandī was among the early partisans of the 'Abbāsīd movement. According to Akhbār al-'Abbās, 'Abdallah al-Rāwandī's name appears in a list of the 'Abbāsīd partisans side by side with Abū Khuzayma Mūsā b. 'Aṭīyya, a brother of Abū al-Jahm, and Abū Turāb and others.<sup>3</sup> If this list is authentic it indicates, contrary to Professor Cahen's view, that the Rāwandiyya chiefs were part

---

<sup>1</sup>Firaq, p.28, Sa'd al-Ashfari, pp. 39, 63; Iṣfar, p.19; Maqālāt, p.21.

<sup>2</sup>Sadighi, op.cit., p.210.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbar, fol. 105b.

of the inner initiated circle of the 'Abbāsīd movement. They shared the view of other Hāshimiyya partisans that the 'Abbāsīds had a better claim to the caliphate than any other branch.<sup>1</sup> However, the Rāwandiyya may have expressed ideas not necessarily shared by other sectors of the movement. As the 'Abbāsīd propagandists had already had the experience of Khīdash they must have been extremely cautious in addressing each group and in expressing only ideas which suited it.

As far as the doctrines of the Rāwandiyya are concerned, Muslim historians<sup>2</sup> attribute to them extreme ideas which are usually associated with sects such as Kaysāniyya and Khuramiyya. They are said to have believed in the transmigration of souls (metempsychosis). They claimed that the divine soul had passed from the prophets to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and then to the Imams one after the other till Ibrāhīm the Imām. They also professed the doctrine of the incarnation of the divine being: one Rawandite sub-sect regarded the 'Abbāsīd Caliph as God and Abū Muslim as his prophet; another considered Abū Muslim as the incarnation of the deity. Historical accounts also accuse them of Istihlāl al-horomāt (declaring permissible what is forbidden) such as the communal sharing of women which probably goes back to the Khuramiyya belief, and also the belief that knowing the identity of the Imām is faith in itself and exempts from religious obligations. The Rāwandiyya existed in Khurāsān among the 'Abbāsīd propagandists well before the appearance

<sup>1</sup>Firaq, pp. 41 f, 46-47; Sa'd al-Asharī, pp. 69f; Igfara, p.19; Muqalat, p.21; Bagh., p.340; Haz n, p.90.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, 129, 418; Ansāb, fol. 548; Firaq, p.42; Shah., pp. 115,136. Sadighī, op.cit., pp. 212 ff; Cahen, op.cit., pp. 322, 331; E.I.<sup>1</sup>, (Khuramiyya); E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abbāsīds).

of Abū Muslim there. Tabarī<sup>1</sup> states that the Umayyad governor of Khurāsān Asad al-Qasrī killed a number of Rawandites who professed ghuluww declaring that the Imāms were Gods and they were libertine in their ideas. The da'wa made use of them until victory was achieved.

However, only one wing of these extremists remained loyal to the 'Abbāsīd régime. They were the 'Abbāsiyya who believed that the prophet had bequeathed the Imamate to his uncle al-'Abbās and to the latter's descendants after him.<sup>2</sup> Others fell out with them after they had seized power presumably because they were disappointed with their new policies. Others still rejoined the 'Alids after the death of Ibrāhīm the Imām.<sup>3</sup> Abū Muslim remained faithful to the 'Abbāsīds. According to Tabarī, the Rāwandiyya led by Abū Ishāq revolted at Tirmidh and Tāliqān and killed Abū Muslim's commander Naṣr b. Rāshid in 135; Khālid al-Dhuhli and 'Isā b. Māhān pursued the Rāwandiyya and destroyed the hot beds of their resistance.<sup>4</sup> The author of Akhbār al-'Abbās<sup>5</sup> confirms the conflict within the revolutionaries. According to him "The followers of Khidāsh, that is to say the extremist group of the 'Abbāsīd movement led by Abū Khālid revolted against Abū Muslim in Khurāsān". Abū Muslim tried in vain to arrest their leader who fled to Māwarā' al-Nahr. A new device Abu Muslim tried out to get hold of him is not without interest. He sent women partisans of the da'wa بنات من أهل الرعدة disguised

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 418-419, citing Madā'ini.

<sup>2</sup>Sa'd al-Ash'arī, pp. 39, 69-70; Firaq, p. 42; Khiṭaṭ, vol. 4, 173.

<sup>3</sup>Akhbār, fol. 199.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.85.

<sup>5</sup>Akhbār, fol. 199. This is the first time in the history of the 'Abbāsīd (cont.)

as beggars to spy for him. However he was not successful in that as Abū Khālid was arrested and killed later in the reign of al-Manṣūr. According to Jāhiz<sup>1</sup> these extremists tried at one time to poison Abū Muslim.

Thus one rebellious wing of the Rāwandiyya rebelled and was ruthlessly crushed by Abū Muslim. But this does not mean however that the whole Rāwandiyya sect fell out with the 'Abbāsids or Abū Muslim. In 136/753-4 when Abū Muslim went on the pilgrimage to Mecca he is said to have started with 8,000 troops; it is probable that they included a group of Rāwandiyya fanatics. Sonbādh, al-Muqanna', Nayzak and Banawayyah were commanders in his army and ardent supporters of him.<sup>2</sup> It is likely that those and others were among the figures whom Abū Muslim favoured since the advent of the 'Abbāsids. They formed the nucleus of the later sects such as the Abū Muslimiyya and the Razāmiyya.<sup>3</sup> After Abū Muslim's death al-Manṣūr refrained from doing any harm to his army, part of which accepted the offer of al-Manṣūr and stayed in the capital. It was probably those who stayed at al-Hashimiyya who revolted in 141 A.H./758 A.D. against al-Manṣūr.<sup>4</sup> What confirms the

---

(cont.) da'wa that the rôle of the women is mentioned. Although the account of Akhbar al-'Abbas is vague and somewhat incoherent, still it is clear that women were employed in the da'wa. Abū Muslim tried to utilize them even after the victory, this time against a mutiny within the revolutionary movement. It is the first time that the 'Abbāsīd da'wa is said to have utilized women in their subversive activities long before the Faṭimids who were not original in that, as has been assumed, but only imitators.

<sup>1</sup> Haywān, vol. 7, p.83.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 557; Tab., III, p.100; Bad', 6, 82; Sadighī, op.cit., pp. 135 ff.

<sup>3</sup> One therefore should distinguish between the early Rāwandiyya and its later sub-divisions - see Muruj, VI, pp. 54 f, 58.

assumption that the Rāwandiyya were part of the army of al-Manṣūr is the account of Tabarī<sup>1</sup> which states that when the Rāwandiyya mutinied against Abū Ja'far and fought him, he consulted Qathm b. al-'Abbās the 'Abbāsīd who was an elderly man, saying "Do not you see what [trouble] we are in as these troops have mutinied against us. I fear they will all unite against us and the affair will slip from our hands. What do you think?" This indicates that there were Rāwandites among his troops. After he had disposed of Abū Muslim al-Manṣūr showed no great zeal in suppressing them and their ideas. What is more indicative that he tolerated their existence and condoned their heresies while they remained his loyal servants is the account of Tabarī<sup>2</sup> that when Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī drew the attention of al-Manṣūr to their ideas which deified the caliph, al-Manṣūr replied after a pause "I prefer them to be loyal to us and be sent to Hell by God than to be disobedient to us and be sent to paradise." But when things reached the limit the caliph had two hundred of them arrested, presumably to restrain them.<sup>3</sup> The Rāwandiyya protested against the imprisonment of their leaders and succeeded in liberating them by force. When al-Manṣūr heard of this sudden mutiny in his own capital he was taken by surprise and his position was precarious. He even did not have a horse ready to ride. However, there were only six hundred of them and the people of the city

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 548; Tab., III, 129ff. According to Ibn al-'Adīm the Rawandiyya riots of 141 were not limited to al-Hāshimiyya. He states that some of them created disturbances in Ḥalb and Ḥarran (Zubda, vol. 1, p.59).

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.365.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., p.132.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, 29, 132 citing Madā'ini; Ansāb, fol. 548; Dīna, p.380; (cont.)

were called upon to join in the fighting against them. The critical situation was rescued by the efforts of veteran Arabs such as the previous Umayyad commander Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī who was consequently shown favours by al-Manṣūr, Abū Naṣr Mālik b. al-Haytham al-Khuzā'ī who until recently had been a supporter of Abū Muslim, Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamimī and 'Uthmān b. Nahīk. Ma'an al-Shaybānī pleaded with the caliph not to expose himself but to distribute money to persuade the people to join in the fighting, but the caliph preferred to rely on his personal influence rather than money. He went out and supervised the fighting, although later he regretted having exposed himself saying: "A stray arrow could have killed me".

The caliph's leniency or probably lack of sincerity towards the Rāwandīyya is also evident after their mutiny was crushed. He did not, for instance, object when a Rāwandite called Razzām took refuge with Jaḥfar b. al-Manṣūr.<sup>1</sup> The son of 'Abdallah al-Rāwandī,<sup>2</sup> Ḥarb was given an estate in Bāghdad called al-Ḥarbiyya. He was also stationed with a Rābiḥa of 2,000 troops in Moṣul in 147. Although the accounts at our disposal are vague it could be said that those extremist fanatical partisans seem to have exercised renewed activity whenever the question of succession arose. Tabarī<sup>3</sup> had preserved a number of names of military

---

(cont.) Muruḥ, VI, pp. 168-70; Fakhri, pp. 142-143; Dhahabī, Duwal, vol. 1, p.72.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.132.

<sup>2</sup>See Tab., III, pp. 328, 296, 353; Buldān, 232; Khaṭīb, I, p.85.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.341.

figures among them significantly Naṣr b. Ḥarb b. 'Abdallah al-Rawandī who were fanatical partisans of al-Manṣūr's son, al-Mahdī. They protested against the fact that 'Isā b. Mūsa had been appointed heir of al-Manṣūr to al-Mahdi's detriment. Now this account becomes significant when we remember that a wing of the Rāwandiyya insisted that the caliphate passes from al-Manṣūr to al-Mahdī (father to son). They used to threaten 'Isā b. Mūsa identifying him with the sacrificial cow in the Qor'an. Those fanatics appeared again when al-Mahdī ascended the throne. Tabarī<sup>1</sup> states that when al-Manṣūr died in the Ḥijāz and the pilgrimage caravan was on its way back to Baghdād Mūsa b. al-Mahdī (later caliph al-Hādī) was among them. When they learned that the new heir apparent was 'Isā b. Mūsa sounds of resentment were heard. Tabarī adds " 'Alī b. 'Isā b. Nāḥān (who was one of Mūsa b. al-Mahdī's guards) attacked 'Isā b. Mūsa because of what he had done to the Rāwandiyya." Among those who joined him was Abū Khālid al-Marwūdhī who was one of their chiefs in this mutiny. But Muḥammad b. Sulaymān was able to restore order in the caravan.

The Rāwandiyya were thus among the early 'Abbāsīd partisans <sup>سبي بني العباس</sup><sup>2</sup> They were even called Abnā' al-dawla<sup>3</sup> a remark which whatever it referred to it points out to their close ties with the régime. After the advent of the 'Abbāsīds to power, they fell out with their own extremist wing which rebelled in Khurāsān and Irāq.

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., pp. 455-456.

<sup>2</sup> Murūj, VI, p.54.

<sup>3</sup> Fihrist, II, p.204.

Al-Manṣūr, though he hoped to reach a compromise with them, found it very difficult to permit them to circulate their ideas publicly because he did not wish to face the hostility of the religious traditionists and Faqīhs. Despite the "day of the Rāwandiyya" when about six hundred extremists were killed al-Manṣūr refrained from dealing harshly<sup>1</sup> with them, and many remained. In Khurāsān Abū Muslim seems to have increased his popularity and influence. He seems to have made close associates among the natives Muslims and non-Muslims, presumably out of political expediency rather than rebellious intentions. No doubt this made him more influential and potentially dangerous in the eyes of the caliph. There were figures in his entourage such as Sonbād and al-Muqamma' who were fanatical in their worship of Abū Muslim. Some of these figures were partisans of a sub-sect of al-Rāwandiyya.<sup>2</sup> Al-Muqamma', for example, was a follower of the Razzāmiyya. However although some of this fanatical Rāwandiyya branch which deified Abū Muslim<sup>3</sup> rebelled to avenge his death, he can hardly be blamed for any of them. This series of outbreaks was merely a protest by disappointed 'Abbāsīd partisans as well as the native population against the unfulfilled promises of the new régime.

---

<sup>1</sup> Only when one knows of the existence of extreme 'Alīd circles which deified their Imāms, can one understand why al-Manṣūr was lenient with the Rāwandiyya who believed in the divinity of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs. In a way he tried to put the Rāwandiyya fanaticism to use for the defence of the 'Abbāsīd.

<sup>2</sup> On the origins, development, sub-divisions and doctrinal character of the Rāwandiyya see the detailed study of Sadighī, *op.cit.*, pp. 187-228, especially pp. 208-214 with references to heresiographies. See also E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Hashimiyya).

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 85, 108, 101.



The murder of Abū 'l Jahm b. 'Atīyya al-Bāhīlī

He was one of the deputy dā'īs (Nuḡarā' al-Nuḡabā')<sup>1</sup> in Khurāsān during the revolution, he was a close associate of Abū Muslim and seems to have played a role in recruiting partisans to the nascent movement; among them was his brother.<sup>2</sup> By Abū Muslim's orders he joined Qaḥṭaba on his way to Irāq. He was Qaḥṭaba's secretary on the affairs of the troops.<sup>3</sup> In the battle of Nahrawān in 131 A.H. he was a leader of a detachment of 700 troops.<sup>4</sup> On Qaḥṭaba's death after the battle of Upper Falūja, Abū 'l Jahm seems to have played an influential rôle in choosing al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba as the new commander in chief.<sup>5</sup> In Kūfa he played a leading rôle in the move which resulted in proclaiming the caliphate of Abū 'l 'Abbās.<sup>6</sup>

However Abū 'l Jahm maintained the close relationship with Abū Muslim which was not impaired by distance and long absence. According to Tabarī he was Abū Muslim's spy and informed him of the affairs at the 'Abbāsīd court.<sup>7</sup> He also exerted a considerable influence on the caliph himself which, however, seems exaggerated though he was called Wazīr of the first 'Abbāsīd caliph by some historians.<sup>8</sup> The rôle he

<sup>1</sup> Alḥbār, fol. 104b.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 105b.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.2001, II, 1953, 1968.

<sup>4</sup> Op.cit., III, pp. 3-4, citing Madā'inī.

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., p.15.

<sup>6</sup> Ansāb, fol. 510, citing 'Abdallāh b. Ṣāliḥ al-Maqarrī; Tab., III, pp. 27-28, 35-36.

<sup>7</sup> Tab., III, p.67; Imāma, p.247.

<sup>8</sup> Tab., III, p.247; Jah., ed.1904, pp.79,122; Ya'qūbī, II, 432; Tab., III, 77-88.

played was, in fact, contradictory and even two-faced. Under al-Manṣūr he apparently played a part in the preparations for Abū Muslim's death. However, he expressed his regret at Abū Muslim's death, but soon retracted that and even ousted Abū Muslim's soldiers ordering them to retreat on the pretext that Abū Muslim was staying with the caliph for the day. He then interceded with the caliph in favour of Abū Muslim's prominent companions such as Mālik al-Khuzā'ī and obtained a pardon for them.<sup>1</sup> Abū Ja'far was not prepared to tolerate a man known for his sympathies towards Abū Muslim and for his opportunist nature. According to Balādhurī<sup>2</sup> the main causation against him was that he had written a letter to Abū Muslim expressing dissatisfaction with the new régime. ما على هذا بايناهم وانما بايناهم على العرب

The caliph had him poisoned soon after Abū Muslim's death. It is commenting on his death that a poet said:

احذر سويح اللوز لا تشرفه فان سويح اللوز اودى ابا الموم

"Beware of drinking Suwayḡ al-Lawz because it was the cause of Abū 'l Jahm's death."

#### The rising of Jahwar b. Marrār al-'Ijlī

An 'Abbasid partisan and a commander who conquered Abiward for the new régime. He then joined Qaṭṭaba's army which was heading for

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 110, 111, 116; Jah., p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>Ansab, fol. 510 citing 'Abdallah b. Ṣāliḥ al-Maqarrī.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; Jah., p. 156, ed. 1904; Fakhri, pp. 138-9.

Irāq.<sup>1</sup> When Abū Muslim was murdered, his enraged but frightened troops remained outwardly quiet. Some stayed with al-Manṣūr, others preferred to return to Khurāsān. Trouble soon started among those who returned to Khurāsān as well as other loyal partisans of Abū Muslim who had been stationed in several cities by him on his way to Mecca in 136 A.H./753A.D. Sonbādh was one of their leaders, he rose in 137 in Nīshāpūr to revenge Abū Muslim's death. In a rapid move he seized Nīshāpūr, Qūmus and Rayy where he seized the treasuries of Abū Muslim.<sup>2</sup> Then he advanced to Hamadān to fight the caliph himself. He also contacted the Iṣpahbādh of Ṭabaristān, Khōrshīd, and presented him with money and gifts.<sup>3</sup> Abū Ja'far sent Jahwar al-'Ijlī with 10,000 troops and he was able to put down the revolt in little more than two months.<sup>4</sup> Sonbādh fled to Ṭabaristān but the Iṣpahbādh, presumably, did not want to create trouble with the 'Abbāsids or to get rid of a potentially dangerous rebel had him killed and possessed his possessions.<sup>5</sup>

However this was by no means the end of the troubles, according to Tabarī<sup>6</sup> Jahwar al-'Ijlī and his army captured part of the treasures of Abū Muslim which had been in the possession of Sonbādh and did not

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, pp. 2000, 2001.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 357; Tab., III, pp. 119f; Ya'qūbī, II, p.442; Murūj, VI, pp. 188-9.

<sup>3</sup>Ṣadīghī, op.cit., p.137.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, pp. 119-120; Ya'qūbī, II, p.442; F.H.A., p.223; see also Kalifa, Tarīkh, p.289, Munta.Khab, fols. 123a-123b.

<sup>5</sup>Ansāb, fol. 557; Ibn Iṣfandiyār, p.117; Tab., III, p.120; Bal'mī, IV, p. 367. Compare Ya'qūbī (II, p.442) and Mas'ūdī (VI, pp. 188-89) who allege that he was killed in the battle.

<sup>6</sup>Tab., III, p.122.

send them to the caliph. Balādhurī<sup>1</sup> also relates that Jahwar was brave and generous, and distributed all the booty among the soldiers. The matter of Abū Muslim's treasure seems to recur as the bone of contention in several revolts, as the commander who obtains possession of it is never willing to hand it over to the caliph, but considers it his and his army's rightful booty. The troops seem to have insisted that it should be shared among them, while the caliph tried to grab as much as he could of it. However it was an 'Abbāsīd promise that what the troops had gained by war, the ghanīma would be shared out among them. When he heard of the distribution of money among the soldiers of Jahwar, al-Manṣūr was greatly incensed. He sent a letter reproaching him and dismissing him as governor of al-Rayy.<sup>2</sup> But before risking any conflict with him al-Manṣūr sent Waḍḍāḥ b. Ḥabīb to test Jahwar's loyalty. The messenger confirmed his mutinous intentions.<sup>3</sup> Then al-Manṣūr sent a new governor of al-Rayy Mujāshī' b. Yazīd al-Ḍabbī but Jahwar killed him and proclaimed the revolt.<sup>4</sup> The caliph then sent an army led by Hazāmard 'Umar b. Ḥafs al-Muhallabī, after him another detachment led by Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath. The rebels were also threatened by another army from Khurāsān. Jahwar al-'Ijlī was defeated after a fierce battle and fled heading for Adhurbayjān to take refuge with its

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 558.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Imāma, vol. 1, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Aynī, fol. 32b.

governor Yazīd b. Ḥatīm al-Muhallabī, a Yamanite, whom, he hoped would intercede for him with Abū Ja'far. However, he was killed by his own partisans before reaching Adhurbayjān.<sup>1</sup> The caliph got hold at last of part of Abū Muslim's treasures which were sent to him after Jahwar's defeat. Significant here is the support given by the Persian natives to Jahwar. Tabarī<sup>2</sup> cites names of Persian cavalymen who joined Jahwar. This is indicative of the dissatisfaction of the Persian natives with the new régime. It also shows how it is still premature to speak of a Persian "national" struggle against the Arab rule. In the rising of Sonbādh, the Ispahbādh of Ṭabaristān sided with the 'Abbāsids, while in the revolt of Jahwar the Persian natives raised their arms in his support.

The conspiracy against Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī

Contrary to Kūfī's<sup>3</sup> account Khurāsān was not pacified after Abū Muslim's death. Apart from a long series of mainly Iranian risings connected with the memory of Abū Muslim and manifesting the disappointment of the natives with the political and economic policy of the new régime, the central government had to face a number of revolts by the Arab governors of the province who had been, in fact, the very authors of the 'Abbāsīd revolution.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 558; Tab., III, p.122; Nujūm, pp. 382-4.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.122. This shows that the lower order of the society in Iran, to express their dissatisfaction, were willing to join any rebel whether an Iranian or an Arab.

<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fol. 241b.

Abū Dā'ūd Khālid b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī was appointed governor of Khurāsān shortly before Abū Muslim's death and then confirmed in office in 137/754-55. He had been the right hand of Abū Muslim throughout the revolutionary period and afterwards, and trusted with many important tasks especially the quelling of the Rāwandiyya and the expansion in Transoxonia. During the crisis of Abū Muslim and in order to sow the seeds of discord between Abū Muslim and Khālid al-Dhuhlī, Abū Ja'far thought it therefore expedient to put Khālid in charge of the province. Khālid, having been appointed governor of Khurāsān, wrote to Abū Muslim requesting him to obey the caliph and not to return to Khurāsān without his permission.<sup>1</sup>

About three years after the death of Abū Muslim in 140 A.H./757-8 A.D. part of the troops suddenly revolted against Khālid. Tabarī's<sup>2</sup> vague account states no reason for the rebellion, and only mentions that the mutineers marched towards the governor's house. Hearing of the noise of the approaching crowd, Khālid stepped on to the balcony to ascertain the cause of the trouble and fell to his death. His chief of police took over as deputy governor until the new governor arrived. Balādhuri<sup>3</sup> followed by Maqrizi is both more explicit and coherent in his account. He relates that Khālid was deeply shocked by the news of Abū Muslim's death and condemned Abū Ja'far's treachery. Abū Ja'far

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 539; Tab., III, pp. 107-8, 119.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, 128.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 539; Muq., fol. 99a-99b. According to Guardizi the followers of Ishaq, the rebel of Transoxonia killed Khālid al-Dhuhlī (see Sadighi, op.cit., p.144).

later asked him to come to Irāk, but he refrained from it saying "He [the caliph] wants to ask me about the affairs and money of Abū Muslim and kill me afterwards". He added "Let Abū Ja'far deceive others not me." Al-Manṣūr then tempted the Sāhib al-Shurṭa of Khurāsān Abū 'uṣām 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sālim with the offer of governorship of Khurāsān to undertake the murder of Khālid. Abū 'Usām, in turn, incited the people of the quarter of Kushāmin Khālid's residence to create a disturbance so that he could kill Khālid when he came out. Trying to find the cause of the trouble Khālid, who had weak eyesight, went to the balcony to look and fell to his death. The people took the oath of allegiance to al-Manṣūr before the deputy governor Abū 'Uṣām.

Thus the vagueness of Tabarī's account makes one suspect the existence of a conspiracy conducted by al-Manṣūr against Khālid al-Dhuhli who was once trusted by Abū Muslim and was, to all intents and purposes, his creature. This conspiracy is confirmed by Balādhurī, although Khālid's death was not caused by the conspirators. It is significant to mention here that Khālid had already been condemned to death by the previous caliph Abū 'l 'Abbās for obeying Abū Muslim's orders to kill 'Isā b. Māhān, one of the early 'Abbāsīd partisans.<sup>1</sup> On the whole Khālid al-Dhuhli had become a suspect whose services were no longer wanted.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ansāb, fol. 801a.

The revolt of 'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Azdī

One of the 'Abbāsīd veterans, he was a dā'ī and an officer in the Khurāsānī army.<sup>1</sup> He participated at the seige of Wāṣīt and then was appointed Ṣāhib al-Shurṭa for Abū 'l 'Abbās and then Abū Ja'far which shows that he had had their trust.<sup>2</sup> According to Kūfī and Tabarī<sup>3</sup> his relations with Abū Muslim do not seem to have been cordial, before the expedition against 'Abdallah b. 'Alī Abū Muslim asked al-Manṣūr to kill or imprison 'Abd al-Jabbār among others for no known reason but the caliph refused. His brothers 'Abd al-Azīz and 'Umar were also favoured by the 'Abbāsīds.<sup>4</sup>

In 140 A.H./757 A.D. 'Abd al-Jabbār was appointed governor of Khurāsān.<sup>5</sup> Initially his conduct of the affairs and taxations seems to have been regarded as efficient. Then he is said to have exerted a heavy pressure on the officers of the previous governors to extort a certain amount of money from them. His harsh measures and persecutions included both the local aristocracy and the Khurāsānī figures who were accused of 'Alid sympathies. The root to the new disturbances is to be sought in the policy of the caliph. According to Bal'amī al-Manṣūr had ordered 'Abd al-Jabbār to kill all the 'Alid partisans in Khurāsān.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār, fol. 104b; Tab., III, p.2003.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 540; Tab., III, p.67.


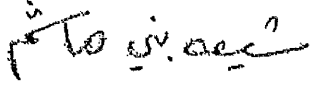
<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fol. 237a; Tab., III, p.100.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fols. 540, 543; Ya'qūbī, II, 445; Tab., III, 122, 459.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 542; Tab., III, 136; Ya'qūbī, II, 445.

<sup>6</sup> Bal'amī, IV, pp. 378 ff.



Baladhurī<sup>1</sup> presents 'Abd al-Jabbār himself as an 'Alid sympathizer, and relates that his downfall was due to court intrigues by the chief of the police al-Musayyab b. Zuhayr al-Ḍabbī who instigated the caliph against him telling him of the large amount of money he had collected and of his rebellious intentions. Al-Manṣūr demanded that a certain amount of the revenue should be sent to the central treasury. Once again the old thorny matter was raised whether revenue should remain in the province or be sent to the central government. Al-Mnaṣūr acted exactly like the Umayyad Caliphs in demanding that a share of the revenue be sent to the central treasury. All accounts<sup>2</sup> agree that 'Abd al-Jabbār killed several Khurāsānī pro-'Abbāsīd commanders. Baladhurī calls them , Ya'qūbī gives them the name  while Tabarī mentions some of their names such as Mujāshī' b. al-Ḥārith al-Anṣārī the governor of Bukhara, Khālīd b. Kathīr the governor of Qūhistān and Ḥarīsh b. Muḥammad al-Dhuhlī. They were all killed or persecuted under the pretext of 'Alid sympathies. The caliph was cautious not to drive him to open revolt. On the advice of his wazīr Abū Ayyūb al-Mūryānī he decided to deprive him of the greater part of his army, to crush him the more easily. He, therefore, sent a letter ordering him to send Khurāsānī troops for the war against the Byzantines. 'Abd al-Jabbār cleverly replied that the Turks were restive and scattering the Khurāsānī troops might mean the loss of Khurāsān.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 541; al-Musayyab's name is also connected with another revolt in Sind (Tab., III, 138-140).

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 342; Yaq'ūbī, II, p.445; Tab., III, 128.

Al-Manṣūr then wrote a new letter expressing his deep concern about the danger threatening Khurāsān on the part of the Turks, and indicating that troops from Irāk were going to be sent to Khurāsān to reinforce the garrison. 'Abd al-Jabbār replied that the economic conditions in Khurāsān were bad in that year and the prices of commodities very high assuring him that the existing garrison was sufficient for the defence purposes and that if further troops were to arrive supplies would be insufficient.<sup>1</sup> Al-Manṣūr considered this as a rebellion by 'Abd al-Jabbār who indeed declared that "Abū Ja'far called upon me to worship him ان ابا عبد الله دعا الي عبادة"<sup>2</sup> and raised in arms.

Now 'Abd al-Jabbār appeared as a staunch 'Alid supporter, whether this loyalty was new and pretentious or old and sincere it is not quite certain. However according to Ansāb, which is the only source that deals in detail with the revolt, 'Abd al-Jabbār's 'Alid sympathies were old but suppressed, but when he fell out with the caliph he gave vent to his feelings calling upon the people to swear allegiance to Āl Abī Ṭalīb. He is also said to have asked either Ibrāhīm or Muḥammad the Ḥasanid to join him, meanwhile trying to pass off a man called Yazīd for Ibrāhīm and put on white cloth. He also had made "a common cause with the followers of Ishāq [the Turk] who were led by Barāz".<sup>3</sup> He also found some support from the governor of Bukhāra.

<sup>1</sup>On the correspondence between al-Manṣūr and 'Abd al-Jabbār see Ansāb, fol. 541, Tab., III, pp.134f.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fols. 540-541, citing Madā'ini.

<sup>3</sup>Sadighi, op.cit., p.153.

The caliph immediately sent troops led by his son al-Mahdī accompanied by the commander Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī. Al-Mahdī then only in his teens stayed at al-Rayy and later advanced to Nīshāpūr while Khāzim marched against the rebels.<sup>1</sup> 'Abd al-Jabbār's revolt had no future as he eliminated the Khurāsānī commanders by his arbitrary policy and eliminated the local aristocracy by his fiscal policy. The people of Marwal-Rūdh rose against him and were joined by others in different parts of Khurāsān. Moreover discord ensued within his ranks and several leaders broke away from him and declared their allegiance to Abū Ja'far. Among them was Ḥabīb b. Ziyād al-Ṭāliqānī due to whose efforts, rather than to the imperial army, 'Abd al-Jabbār's rising was quelled. The governor of Bukhāra as well as Yazīd, the false Ibrāhīm, were killed in the fighting while 'Abd al-Jabbār fled but was caught and sent to al-Manṣūr. The latter extracted as much money from him and his family and associates as he could. 'Abd al-Jabbār pleaded for mercy, recalling his services in the da'wa but al-Manṣūr said to him "You have killed men equal to Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb..." Then he begged for a "respectable death", al-Manṣūr replied: "You have left it behind you [in Khurāsān]"<sup>2</sup> He was executed in 142 and his relatives were exiled to the island of Dahlak of the coast of the Yemen. Eventually some of

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 540f; Tab., III, p.134.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 542; Bayān, 2, p.111.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 543; Ya'qūbī II, 446; Buldān, p.250; Tab., III, p.135.

them managed to escape and even regained favour with the 'Abbāsids. They also seem to have held influential positions in Egypt in the second half of the second century of the Hijra.<sup>1</sup>

It was after the defeat of 'Abd al-Jabbār that al-Manṣūr ordered the conquest of Ṭabaristān which was in a state of rebellion, and in 142/759-60 Ṭabaristān for the first time became a province within the Muslim empire.<sup>2</sup>

The mutiny of 'Uyayna b. Mūsā al-Tamīmī

Both 'Uyayna and his father Mūsā b. Ka'b al-Tamīmī were early 'Abbāsīd partisans. In the early days of the revolution, 'Uyayna was active as a dā'ī and was entrusted with a special mission in Nīshāpūr.<sup>3</sup> In 133/750-51, unrest broke out in the Arab garrison of al-Sind, led by Manṣūr b. Jamhūr whose rising was soon crushed by Mūsā al-Tamīmī at the head of 20,000 troops.<sup>4</sup> The latter was consequently appointed governor of the province, but was soon recalled and nominated head of the caliphal police.<sup>5</sup> It was now that 'Uyayna replaced his father as governor of Sind.

---

<sup>1</sup> Wulāt, 165; R. Guest, 'Relation between Persia and Egypt', Browne Festschrift, 1922, pp. 168-9.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter VI. pp. 392 ff

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār, fol. 132a, 186b.

<sup>4</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 288; Asmā' al-Muhtāliya, pp. 184-5; Tab., III, p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 300.

In 142/759-60 he suddenly mutinied for reasons which the sources do not indicate with any clarity. Khalīfa b. Khayyāf's<sup>1</sup> brief account attributes his rising to his dismissal from the governorship. He states that 'Uyayna defied al-Manṣūr's order replacing him by 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ, and held out for eleven months. According to Tabarī, however, the rising was caused by court intrigues and 'Uyayna's rivalry with al-Musayab b. Zuhayr al-Dhabhī the man who had succeeded 'Uyayna's father as head of the police, and lived in constant fear of losing it to 'Uyayna. Ya'qūbī<sup>3</sup> on the other hand, states that 'Uyayna's arrival at al-Sīnd was followed by a tribal conflict, and that 'Uyayna ordered a massacre of the Yamanites and then rebelled himself. These accounts are not conflicting, and may be complementary to each other.

As Baṣra was still the centre of military operations especially in the eastern provinces,<sup>4</sup> al-Manṣūr went there to prepare an army for al-Sīnd. He nominated 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-'Atkī governor of Sīnd and commander of the expedition against the rebels.<sup>5</sup> Deserted by most of his followers, 'Uyayna had to surrender. He was sent to the caliph, fled on his way to Sīstān, but was trapped by the Yamanites who killed him in retaliation for the massacre.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., fols. 300-301.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.138.

<sup>3</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.448.

<sup>4</sup>Op.cit., p.480.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.138.

<sup>6</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 301; Ya'qūbī, II, p.448.

It was thus that those veteran partisans who had participated in the da'wa and put the 'Abbāsids in power fell out with them. Some were disappointed with the régime's new policies which religiously adopted "Orthodoxy" and respected the 'Ulama and Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth. Besides 'Abbāsīd administrative and fiscal policy in its early days did not differ much from that of the Umayyads. Their promises that the soldiers have the right to share the booty and the provinces have the right to spend their revenue and the citizens have the right to get the 'Aṭa' were largely unfulfilled. Court intrigues, rivalries, conflict of interests between the revolutionaries themselves also played their part in the struggle for authority and influence. It was not long before the men who had worked for the realization of the new régime were all banished and figures who had no record in the da'wa got hold of the power. A little later figures like al-Mahdī and his son Hārūn al-Rashīd became caliphs and delegated their authority wholly to wazīrs or Hawālī. This situation inspired a poet to say: "Oh Banī Umayya wake up, you have slept too long. The caliph is Ya'qūb b. Dā'ūd."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Agh., vol. 3, p.70; Diwān Bashshār, ed. B. al-'Alawī 1963, p.91.

## Chapter IV

'ABBĀSID--'ALID RELATIONS DURINGTHE EARLY 'ABBASĪD PERIOD

"People of Khurāsān, you are our followers, our supporters and the missionaries of our cause. If your oath had been given to others it would not have been addressed to better sovereigns than we are. By God, we have let the sons of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib wrest the caliphate from the Umayyads... but their efforts proved ineffective... The Umayyads exiled us [the 'Abbāsids] once at Ṭā'if then at Syria then at al-Shurāt until God finally roused you [the Khurāsānis] our followers and allies and through you he has revived our glory and fortified our power. God has made your truth triumph against the partisans of error, and has manifested our legitimate rights and has given back to us our power and the heritage of the prophet."

Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr  
[Ṭab.III, p.430]

"We were incensed against the Umayyads as we were, but the 'Abbāsids are less God fearing than them. And there is more justice in accusing the 'Abbāsids than the Umayyads. They [the Umayyads] had morals, virtues and favours which Abū Ja'far lacks."

Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-Mahdī  
[Aghānī, X, p.106]

### The claim of Ahl-al-Bayt

The decline of the Umayyad dynasty began in the first half of the 8th century A.D./the first half of the 2nd century A.H. Already at that early time, several Hashimite personalities developed independently of each other similar political ambitions, and embarked on a persistent endeavour to wrest the power from the Umayyads. It is not the concern of this study to trace the development of the Hashimite opposition movement in Umayyad times. It will suffice to state that Muḥammad's legitimate successor was not necessarily expected to be a descendant of a specific branch of Ahl al-Bayt. Consequently, the opposition movement manifested itself in different trends attached to different representatives of Banī Hāshim: the extremists who sided with the non-Faṭimid 'Alid Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya and his son Abū Hāshim whose claims were taken over by Muḥammad b. 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd; the extremists supporting the rising of the Ja'farite 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya; the moderate followers of Zayd b. 'Alī who adopted militant active attitude towards the Umayyads; the passivist followers of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq the most prominent Ḥusaynid of that time who was known for his peaceful policy.

It is true that there were people who believed in the sacredness of Banī Hāshim and their claim to authority over the Umma, in other words that the prophet should be succeeded by a Hashimite, but considerable dissension existed, at that early time, as to which branch



of the Hashimites were the real Ahl al-Bayt.<sup>1</sup> Banī Hāshim's prestige can be traced back as far as Qusayy.<sup>2</sup> It should be stressed, however, that in the Jāhiliyya, certain clans of each tribe acted as guardians of the sanctuaries, a task handed down in one clan which thus acquired a hereditary sanctity.<sup>3</sup> This guardianship of a sanctuary, 'Bayt', was connected with a rather highly esteemed Arab conception, 'sharaf', i.e. nobility of descent. That these two qualities were inseparable is evident from the fact that the guardians of sanctuaries were simultaneously tribal chiefs.<sup>4</sup> Now, about the end of the 5th century A.D.

Qusayy was able to oust Khazā'a from Mecca and establish his authority.<sup>5</sup> His efforts in gathering together different clans in

---

<sup>1</sup>The term Ahl al-Bayt in that early period was interpreted in many ways according to different factions. The Fāṭimids considered themselves as the only Ahl al-Bayt excluding non-Fāṭimids, Tālibids and Abbāsids. Furthermore the Ḥusaynids claimed the title for themselves only, excluding the Ḥasanids. This latter interpretation was not accepted by all Ḥusaynids because Zayd b. 'Alī recognized the equal status of both branches. The Abbāsids also claimed this title on the ground of their priestly status and close paternal relationship with the Prophet (Tab., III, pp. 29f). They called their Hashimite opponents Tālibids as often as Alids (Ansāb, fol. 620b).

<sup>2</sup>Sīra, I, pp. 80-84; Tab., I, pp. 1092 ff; Azraqī, I, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup>Ibn Durayd, p. 237; see also Tyan, Institutions..., pp. 104ff; Sergeant, Harām and Hawtah..., M.T.H., 1963, pp. 53ff.

<sup>4</sup>Op.cit., pp. 175, 283; Tab., I, p. 1028.

<sup>5</sup>Ibn Durayd, pp. 13ff; Tab., I, p. 1092ff.

Mecca proved successful and the new tribe became known as Quraysh.<sup>1</sup> As he introduced the emblems of many tribal deities of Arabia to the Ka'ba,<sup>2</sup> he is also to be credited with the reputation that the haram of Mecca acquired as a place for pilgrimage. Henceforward, the functions<sup>3</sup> connected with the sanctuary of Ka'ba as well as with political leadership remained in the hands of Quṣayy's descendants. After the advent of Islam, Banī Hāshim continued to be considered a family with religious and political prestige, and all its branches enjoyed this status of sacredness.<sup>4</sup> After the Prophet's death, the Hāshimites supported the claims of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib to the caliphate,<sup>5</sup> but they did not remain united against their opponents: each branch of them claimed the caliphate for itself, and the claim of one branch was completely illegitimate in the eyes of others.

When Muḥammad b. 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd initiated his da'wa he was cautious and based his claim on the ground that Abū Hāshim had bequeathed his rights to him, and conducted it in the name of al-Riḍa min Ahl al-Bayt.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sa'd, I, 1, p.41; Tab., I, p.1094; Ya'qūbī, I, p.277; Ibn Durayd, I, p.1094.

<sup>2</sup> Sīra, I, pp. 126ff; Ibn Sa'd, I, 1, p.40; Ibn Durayd, p.152; Ya'qūbī, I, pp. 296ff.

<sup>3</sup> The functions were: al-Hijāba, al-Wilāya, al-Siqaya, al-Rifāda, al-Riyāsa, al-Liwā'. See Sīra, I, p.83; II, p.821; Ibn Sa'd, I/1, p.44, Simt 'l Nujūm, Vol. I, p.205; al-Muḥabbar, p.164.

<sup>4</sup> Sergeant, Haram and Hawtah..., M.T.H., 1963, p.44.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, V, p.21; Tab., I, p.2778; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (al-'Abbās).

<sup>6</sup> See above, Chapter II.

Once the 'Abbāsids had established themselves in power, they began to look upon the 'Alids as a potential danger. The latter, in their turn, considered the 'Abbāsids usurpers. The struggle for the caliphate entered on a new phase, in which it became the strife between two Hashimite factions: The 'Abbāsids and the 'Alids. However, the 'Alids themselves by no means concurred in one common cause or leadership. Most of the Ḥusaynids denied the Ḥasanids a share in the Imamate and claimed that only al-Ḥusayn's descendants were entitled to the heritage of the Prophet, since al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn's eldest brother had renounced the caliphate and transferred all his rights to al-Ḥusayn.<sup>1</sup> Some maintained that only the descendants of 'Alī through Fāṭima had a right to the leadership, while others extended it to all descendants of 'Alī such as Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya and even one Ja'farite 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya whose temporary success ended suddenly shortly before the 'Abbāsīd victory. This also proves that the loyalties of 'Alid partisans at that time were not unequivocally orientated towards a particular 'Alid branch. They transferred their allegiance from one prominent 'Alid to another with the greatest ease.

After the death of Zayd b. 'Alī in 122/740 and his son Yaḥya in 125/743,<sup>2</sup> only two contenders to the leadership were left among the 'Alids: the Ḥusaynid Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and the Ḥasanid 'Abdallah al-Maḥd. Al-Ṣādiq

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.213f; anonymous, fol. 4b.

<sup>2</sup>E.I.<sup>1</sup>, (Zaid b. 'Alī), (Yaḥya b. Zaid).

made no military bid for power<sup>1</sup> which gave al-Mahd and his son Muhammad the opportunity to strike, as he could rightly expect that the more activist and militant partisans would rally around him. 'Abdallah al-Mahd was proud of his descent from Fājima on both his father's and mother's side.<sup>2</sup> But what put the Ḥasanids at a disadvantage was the charge that their ancestor al-Ḥasan had renounced his claims on behalf of Mu'awiya for money and a life of ease,<sup>3</sup> while the Ḥusaynids as descendants of the martyr of Karbala enjoyed a high prestige, further enhanced by the rising of Zayd b. 'Alī and his son Yaḥya.

As early as in Hishām's reign (105/724-125/742) al-Mahd started to spread the idea that his son Muhammad was the Mahdī.<sup>4</sup> This messianic claim attracted to him, as we shall see, increasing numbers of partisans among whom were extremists<sup>5</sup> and even disgruntled elements with no 'Alid sympathies at all. When the Umayyad caliphate was crumbling after the murder of al-Walīd b. Yazīd in 744/126, al-Mahd, in his endeavour to consolidate the movement behind his son al-Mahdī, allegedly called upon the Ḥashimites to assemble in secret at al-Abwā' in order to discuss

---

<sup>1</sup> As we are only concerned with the political and practical, but not with the ideological and theoretical aspect of the 'Alids' activities, we cannot devote much space to the Ḥusaynids who, after the death of al-Ḥusayn at Karbala, pursued a rather quiescent policy. See B. Lewis, The Origins..., pp. 23ff; Hodgson, "How the Shī'a", J.A.O.S., pp. 1-13; Jafri, The early development..., Ph.D. Thesis, S.O.A.S., 1966.

<sup>2</sup> Ansab, fol. 668b.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 213 f. The 'Abbāsids even tried to benefit from this prestige during the revolution posing as avengers of Husaynid martyrs. See Tab., II, 1963, III, 214, 434, 366f; F.H.A., p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> Nubdha, fol. 256a.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-Bajlī and Bayān b. Sam'ān attempted a rising in  
(cont.)

the prospects of Ahl al-Bayt where they swore allegiance to Muhammad b. al-Maḥḍ. Historians differ on the circumstances surrounding the meeting. Balādhurī, Iṣbahānī, Azdī and Tabarī agree<sup>1</sup> that it actually took place without agreeing, however, on the persons of the participants or their attitudes and opinions. Nevertheless the survival of the Umayyads was so doubtful that the hopes of the Hashimids were justified and it may be that this meeting actually took place and that al-Maḥḍ urged the participants to swear allegiance to al-Maḥḍī, a suggestion which resulted in a rift so that the meeting was adjourned without a decision. It is more probable, however, that the account is a Ḥasanid invention,<sup>2</sup> the more so as the 'Abbāsids countered it with the tradition<sup>3</sup> that al-Maḥḍ himself directed a Khurāsānī delegation, which had come to him, to Muhammad the 'Abbāsīd, describing him as the best man among Ahl al-Bayt. There is another 'Abbāsīd fabrication<sup>4</sup> to the effect that the 'Abbāsīds attending the meeting walked out on receiving the news of the good prospects

---

(cont.) Kūfa in 119/737 in the name of Muhammad b. 'Abdallah (see Nawbakhtī, p.52, Sa'd al-Ash'arī, pp. 72, 33-4; Rijāl, p.148; Tab., II, p.1619; E.I.<sup>2</sup>, Bayān b. Sam'an). Later on a section of al-Mughīriyya participated in Muhammad's revolt in 145/ (Nawbakhtī, p.52; Bagh., pp.36 f).

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 608a, qālū; Maqātil, pp. 143, 176, 178, citing 'Umar b. Shabba, Mada'ini; Azdī, fol. 165 citing Muhammad b. 'Urwa; Tab., III, p.144, qīla.

<sup>2</sup> The account intended to discredit not only al-Maḥḍūr but also Ja'far al-Ṣādiq who was represented as favouring the 'Abbāsīds to Muhammad. (Ansāb, fols. 607b-608a, qālū; Maqātil, p.176).

<sup>3</sup> F.H.A., pp. 169f.

<sup>4</sup> Maqātil, p.178.

of their own da'wa in Khurāsān. Furthermore it should be pointed out that had such an oath been taken, Muḥammad would not have failed to mention it in his letter to the caliph Abū Ja'far which was a masterpiece of political propaganda. Marwān II was not unaware of al-Maḥdī's political activities. He had been warned against him, but he did not pay much heed<sup>1</sup> to the warnings, as he was pre-occupied with events in Syria, Jazīra and Irāq.

Once in power, the 'Abbāsids tried to avoid any connection with the 'Alid extremists, and found it therefore expedient to establish their rights on a basis different from Abū Hāshim's Waṣiyya which conveniently fell into oblivion. This early breach with the extremist wing of the movement resulted in a series of risings as early as the reign of Abū 'l 'Abbās (132-136/749-75). However, to reconcile in himself the claims of the whole Ahl al-Bayt, Abū 'l 'Abbās tried to create a cordial atmosphere. Although he realized that there were pro-'Alid elements in Irāq and Khurāsān,<sup>2</sup> and knew of the correspondence between Abū Salama and the 'Alids, and between Yazīd b. Hubayra and the Ḥasanids, he endeavoured to appease the 'Alids in order to give the new dawla time to take root. After the revolution the 'Alid themselves frustrated, remained frightened<sup>3</sup> and passive for a while.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 608a; Maqātil, p.179. It is worth noting that current traditions at the time had it that the dangers threatening the Umayyads would come from the East, i.e. from Khurāsān.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 680a; F.H.A., p.233; Tab., II, p.1713, III, pp. 146, 178; Maqātil, p.127, citing Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah.

<sup>3</sup> Agh ., X, p.105.

It is significant that Abū 'l 'Abbās made it clear at the outset in his khutba<sup>1</sup> that the caliphate would remain in the hands of the 'Abbāsids to whom he applied the term Ahl al-Bayt. He denied that the 'Alids were more worthy of the caliphate in a new tactical move to discredit them and identified them with the Saba'iyya. This view was emphasized by his uncle Dā'ūd b. 'Alī in two of his speeches which were characteristic of the reconciliatory policy. One held at Kūfa stated<sup>2</sup> that the 'Abbāsids were the legal inheritors of the rights to the caliphate which would remain with them until they passed on to 'Isā b. Maryam, but described 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib as one of the only two legal caliphs in Islam, the other being his cousin Abū 'l 'Abbās. The second khutba<sup>3</sup>, held at Mecca, was also a mixture of threats and smoothness, after asserting that the caliphate had now returned to the hands of its rightful inheritors, i.e. Ahl al-Bayt, he warned the 'Alids and their partisans that unless they obeyed the authority the 'Abbāsids were ready to press them and take away their livelihood. Dā'ūd's speech was followed by Sudayf b. Maymūn, a Mawla of Banī Hāshim, who declared that the whole community agreed to be put in the charge of the Haram of Ka'ba, al-'Abbās, who was considered the father of the Prophet after his father's death. This is one of the earliest occasions on which the

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 784b-785a; Tab., III, pp. 29f.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 783b., 785a; Tab., III, p.39; Murūj, VI, p.116.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.422; Iqd., 4, p.101. See also Ansāb, fol. 751a.

'Abbāsids stressed that their claim to the caliphate was based on both priestly status (Ḥaqq al-Ḥurma) and relationship with the Prophet (al-Qarāba).

'Abdallah al-Maḥdī's attitude throughout the reign of Abū 'l 'Abbās indicates that he was determined to continue the struggle to the end. In fact, he seized every opportunity to show his dissatisfaction with the 'Abbāsids.<sup>1</sup> Since his two sons Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, themselves aspirants to the caliphate, had gone into hiding, the caliph attempted to elicit in vain information about their whereabouts from their father.<sup>2</sup>

Abū 'l 'Abbās's attitude towards the 'Alids is aptly subsumed in his reply to his brother Abū Ja'far, who urged him to use force against them, "Generous people disregard [the misdeeds of others] though they know [of them]."<sup>3</sup> However this attitude was certainly not that of Abū Ja'far who assumed the caliphate in 136/754. He had never concealed his suspicions of the 'Alids. Furthermore, he was enraged by the refusal of Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm to come out of hiding and swear allegiance to him. It was his aim to secure the power for himself and his descendants. Realizing that the 'Alids had become one of the rallying points of the opposition,<sup>4</sup> he was determined to remove the menace.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 608b; Maḡātil, p.126 citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Agh., XVIII, p.206; Iqd., 5, pp. 74-5; Asākir, VII, pp. 361-2; Muq., fol. 79b.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 608a, qālu; Maḡātil, p.125, citing Muḥammad b. Yahya.

<sup>3</sup> Duwal, fol. 106a, see also Muq., fols. 79b-80a.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 610a, qālu, fol. 620a 'an ashyākhina'; F.H.A., p.246; Muruḡ, 3, p.221; Iqd., 3, p.202.



After the 'Abbāsīd accession to power the lower strata of society were still not satisfied, as their needs were not really met. For them the 'Abbāsīd rule merely represented another form of tyranny. Dissatisfaction had manifested itself right from the 'Abbāsīd advent. It was only natural that all these divergent hopes rally around a figure who would unite them. Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya's messianic claim to be the Maḥdī attracted numerous disappointed groups, both 'Alid and non-'Alid partisans. This was, to a certain extent, natural because when a quasi-messianic movement, i.e. the 'Abbāsīd da'wa, achieves power, some of its followers, disappointed at its inevitable failure to fulfil their expectations, will break away in quest of new messiahs. With the 'Abbāsīd victory, messianic expectation could no longer centre on the Banī Hāshim as such, because they had become the party of power. The obvious alternative were the 'Alids. It is this rather than any feeling that their "right" to the caliphate had been usurped that caused the new wave of pro-'Alid sentiments and movements.

Abū Ja'far did, in fact, visit the Ḥijāz twice, in 136 A.H. and 140 A.H.,<sup>1</sup> to perform a pilgrimage and to test the political atmosphere. He demanded from al-Maḥd that he produce his sons, but neither al-Maḥd nor other Hāshimites gave him any clue as to their whereabouts. The Hāshimites maintained that Muḥammad feared him because he had previously claimed the caliphate, but he had no intention of disobeying him. Only Ḥasan b. Zayd b. Ḥasan warned the Caliph of Muḥammad's intentions to

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 609b, qālu; Ya'qūbī, II, p.444; F.H.A., p.227.

revolt against him.<sup>1</sup> Abū Ja'far seems to have been obsessed with Muḥammad's challenge and "had no other worries than to seek for him".<sup>2</sup> Now in order to "lure the fox from his lair",<sup>3</sup> Abū Ja'far realized that new and vigorous measures must be adopted. Spies were sent in the guise of merchants or 'Alid partisans to look for Muḥammad. Balādhurī<sup>4</sup> states that Abū Ja'far sent 'Uqba b. Salm disguised as a seller of 'Itr and 'Uqba employed slaves to sell it and listen to the news about Muḥammad. However, the situation in the Ḥijāz favoured the 'Alids. Ziyād b. 'Ubaydallah al-Ḥārithī, the governor of Madīna, the last representative of Abū 'l 'Abbās cordial policy, was lenient in his treatment of the 'Alids which cost him his office. He was replaced in Jumādī II 141<sup>5</sup>/758 by Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Qaṣrī who certainly had enough money at his disposal to continue the hunt. But neither the reward nor measures such as the search of Madīna and its outskirts succeeded in tracking them down. Abū Ja'far dismissed the governor for inefficiency and replaced him by Riyāḥ b. 'Uthmān al-Nurri on 23rd of Ramaḡān 144/761-2.<sup>6</sup> The appointment of Riyāḥ al-Nurri marks the beginning of the end of the first 'Alid

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 144, 151, 152, citing 'Umar b. Shabba and Abū 'Ubayda; Ya'qubī, II, p.444; Agh., XVIII, p.207.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.144.

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit., p.206, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 610a, qālu, see also Khaṭīb, III, p.171.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.,60, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Jah., p.123. On his dismissal Zayād said "I do not know of any crime that I have committed, but I suppose that /Abū Ja'far/... found that the Fāṭimid blood is dear to me"; Shafā' al-gharam, p.181.

<sup>6</sup>Jah., p.123; Maqātil, p.150; Tab., pp. 161f citing Ibn Shabba.

challenge to the 'Abbāsids. His appointment was determined by the hard circumstances in Madīna where Muḥammad's da'wa actively propagated, spread to other provinces especially Khurāsān.<sup>1</sup> A tradition in Balādhurī<sup>2</sup> shows in what a difficult position the Caliph found himself. He relates that Abū Ja'far while consulting 'Isā b. Mūsā about the worsening situation voiced the opinion that it would be safer for him to imprison all close relatives of Muḥammad who were looking for an opportunity to attack him. It was obvious that the caliph had determined to apply harsher measures. This led ultimately to the choice of Riyāḥ al-Murrī as governor of Madīna. He had three qualities which made him appear eligible for the post. He was a Syrian, a Qaysite and of humble origin. As a Syrian<sup>3</sup> Riyāḥ was likely to prove more maliciously disposed towards the 'Alids. As a Qaysite,<sup>4</sup> he belonged to the same tribe as Muslim b. 'Uqba the commander of the Syrian army which had ruthlessly suppressed the rising of Madīna in 64/683. Moreover the Qaysites were then at a disadvantage as they were regarded as Umayyad's supporters. The Yamanites, generally speaking, were preferred to them for governorships.<sup>5</sup> As, due to his humble origin, his appointment would have been inconceivable in ordinary circumstances, Riyāḥ was bound to remain subservient to the wishes of the caliph. When he arrived at Madīna he warned

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 620; Ya'qūbī, II, p.450; Murūj, VI, p.192; Tab., III, p.183 citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 620a, Ḥadathanī ba'ḍu ašhyākhina. The term Ahl al-Bayt from Abū Ja'far's point of view means the 'Abbāsids only.

<sup>3</sup> Balādhurī gives this reason as the main reason for his appointment (Ansāb, fol. 620b).

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, 165, citing Ibn Shabba, "qāla 'l Manḡūr: Ama tadulanī 'ala fatan min Qays Ughnihi wa Usharrifahu; Jah., pp. 122-124.

<sup>5</sup> Azdī, fol. 190.

'Abdallah al-Mahdī saying "You cannot fool me as you did my predecessors".<sup>1</sup> To the people of Madīna he declared "I will humiliate and kill the descendants of those who were humiliated and killed by 'Uqba".<sup>2</sup> Consequently he imprisoned many Ḥasanid and Ṭalibid suspects. Accounts differ on their number which is generally said to have been thirteen.<sup>3</sup> In 144/761-2 when Abū Ja'far performed his pilgrimage, he decided to take them with him to al-Ḥāshimīyya where they were imprisoned. Concerning their fate, history and legend are inseparably interwoven. It seems certain, though, that Abū Ja'far had Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥasān, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah al-'Uthmānī and 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan killed.<sup>4</sup> Others perished in dungeons because of the adverse conditions there; only some who were not considered politically dangerous<sup>5</sup> were set free after the failure of Muḥammad's rising.

In order to justify his policy towards the 'Alids and to appease the Khurāsānīs who, as Abū Ja'far admitted<sup>6</sup>, felt a deep affection for Ahl al-Bayt, i.e. 'Alids and 'Abbāsids alike, the caliph addressed the Khurāsānīs reminding them, in a long speech,<sup>7</sup> that they were the partisans of the 'Abbāsīd cause and that the 'Abbāsīd struggle against

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, p.151, citing Ibn Shabba; Tab., III, p.164, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb., fol. 620b.

<sup>3</sup> Ma'arīf, p.213; Maqātil, pp. 128-141; F.H.A., p.237; Ya'qūbī, II, p.450; Tab., III, p.171; Murūj, VI, pp. 198-202.

<sup>4</sup> Futūḥ, p.24; Maqātil, pp. 140, 157, 158; Tab., III, p.182, 185, 188; Khaṭīb, VI, p.54; IX, p.431; Dhahabī, fols. 8a-8b; A'yān al-Shī'a, 5, p.141.

<sup>5</sup> Maqātil, p.134; Tab., III, p.186.

<sup>6</sup> Ansāb, fol. 620. The caliph is reported to have said "The sympathy for Al Abī Ṭalīb in Khurāsān is mixed with the Khurāsānī's sympathy for us /the 'Abbāsīds/..."

<sup>7</sup> Tab., III, pp. 430-432, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; cf. Murūj, VI, pp. 203-7.

the 'Umayyads had been crowned with success whereas analogous 'Alid efforts had been ineffective. What this khujba stated was, in fact, the 'Abbāsīd case against the 'Alids. Both were Hāshimites and Ahl al-Bayt, had the same rights and enjoyed the same prestige. However, as the 'Abbāsīds had confirmed their rights by success, the stress in this and other statements by the 'Abbāsīds is on victory and success. Granted that all Hāshimites had equal rights, it was success alone that could give them priority. This is the essence of the 'Abbāsīd case. To counter it, the 'Alids swiftly put forward a new claim, namely that to an inherently superior status within the Hāshimites as direct descendants of the Prophet through Fāṭima.<sup>1</sup> This new attitude is reflected, as we shall see, in the letter of Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya which shows that the claim had not yet crystallized in its final form, but was still in the process of formation. Muḥammad's case was aristocratic rather than religious or legitimist.

#### Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah's revolt

Muḥammad's revolt in Madīna, followed by his brother's revolt in Baṣra, form the climax of the 'Alid struggle against the early 'Abbāsīds. Muḥammad had been brought up by his father as the Mahdī of Ahl al-Bayt and given the nickname of Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya, i.e. the pure soul.<sup>2</sup> He wandered in several provinces and fled from one place to another in the Ḥijāz itself, to evade the caliph's painstaking search.<sup>3</sup> He contacted

<sup>1</sup>See Cahen, "Points de vue", R.H., 1963, pp. 314, 318-19.

<sup>2</sup>F.H.A., p.230; Mogātil, p.166; E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Alids): Traini, AIVON, 1964, pp. 776 ff. Traditions that al-Mahdī would come from the house of the prophet, and that his name would be Muḥammad and his father's name 'Abdallah were invented and ascribed to the prophet. To stress that  
(cont.)

his imprisoned father, asking his advice and expressing his will to give up the struggle in order to save his relative's life. But contrary to other Ḥasanids who expressed anxiety, the ambitious al-Mahdī remained determined and asked his son to persist.<sup>1</sup> Consequently Muḥammad carried on his propaganda until the 1st of Rajāb 145/September 762 when he declared his revolt.<sup>2</sup>

Historians are by no means unanimous on Muḥammad's motives in timing his rising at that date, and differ in their opinions on whether it was premature or not. Balādhurī and Mas'ūdī state<sup>3</sup> that the imprisonment of Muḥammad's relatives, and the circulated news of his father's death in prison were the immediate causes of its outbreak, while Tabarī and Iṣbahānī<sup>4</sup> point to the arrest of his brother Mūsa b. 'Abdallāh by Riyāḥ for his failure to find his two brothers as the cause of the premature rising. But whatever the real reason, Muḥammad seems to have considered the time opportune. He was erroneously convinced that most provinces were on his side.<sup>5</sup> In fact the caliph in his eagerness to force him into the open, had precipitated the outbreak by ordering provincial governors and army officers to promise him their support. Even he himself forged letters

---

(cont.) al-Mahdī would be Muḥammad b. al-Mahdī and not Muḥammad b. al-Manṣūr another tradition was fabricated, "al-Mahdī would be from the descendant of Fāṭima" (Abū Dā'ūd, Sunan, II, 135). To counter this propaganda al-Manṣūr circulated a spurious tradition that the mother of al-Mahdī was not from the Prophet's house. (Agh., XII, p.85 citing al-Faḍl b. Iyās al-Hudhālī).

ان النبي (ص) قال " المهدي منا محمد بن عبد الله وامه من غيرنا يملأها عدل كما ملئت جوراً " ٤

<sup>3</sup> Maḡātil, p.161; Tab., III, p.187; 'Āmilī, 5, p.313.

<sup>1</sup> Bayān, 2, p.174; Maḡātil, p.150; Ya'qūbī, II, p.445.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 610b, 613a; Khalīfa, fol. 293; Maḡātil, p.181; Ya'qūbī, II, p.452; Murūj, VI, pp. 189, 194.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 612a; Murūj, VI, p.189.

(cont.)

in the name of certain provinces expressing their sympathies for Muḥammad.<sup>1</sup> Moreover Riyāḥ's harsh measures in Madīna and his persevering hunt for Muḥammad caused great anxiety among the people of Madīna who were tired of the protracted situation and urged Muḥammad to come out into the open anyway.<sup>2</sup>

Muḥammad made his first appearance with 250 followers in the quarter of Banī Salm the Anṣār.<sup>3</sup> Having freed the prisoners and got hold of Bayt al-Māl, he arrested Riyāḥ al-Murri and delivered a khuṭba accusing the caliph of being a ṭāghiya and declaring that "The Muḥ'ājirūn and the Anṣār have a better claim to be custodians of this religion [i.e. to be caliphs]... Oh people I did not rise amongst you because you are strong but I have chosen you for myself. I did not come here until all the provinces had sworn allegiance to me".<sup>4</sup> It is important to notice that Muḥammad did not claim the caliphate for himself in his first speech. This move on his part was probably motivated by his wish to win over all discontented elements. However he afterwards took the oath as caliph.<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.198, citing 'Umar b. Rāshid; Maqātil, pp. 180-181. Wa kana Sababu 'ajalatihī bi'l Khuruj.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.197, citing 'Umar b. Rāshid.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.156, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Maqātil, p.186. Traini, "La Correspondenza", A.I.U.O.N., 1964, p.776.

<sup>2</sup>Maqātil, p.181, citing al-Faḍl b. Dakīn. Faḡālu laḥū matantaḡirū bi'l khuruj wa'llahī mataḡidu hadhihi'l umma aḡad as'amū min ka'alayha.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 612b.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.197 citing 'Umar b. Rāshid.

<sup>5</sup>Op.cit., p.298.

Having obtained control of Madīna, Muḥammad began looking for support from the provinces and took Mecca by force.<sup>1</sup> The city was not pro-ʿAlid in its political attitude. The tribe of Banu Makhzūm which played an influential rôle in the political scene of Mecca had no ʿAlid tendency. Nevertheless pro-ʿAlid moderate traditionalists such as Abū Bakr b. Sabra sympathized with the rising.<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad also sent missionaries to the Yemen, Syria and Egypt.<sup>3</sup>

To gain time and put the responsibility on Muḥammad's shoulders, the caliph entered into a long correspondence with Muḥammad. He wrote to him after citing a threatening verse from the Qurʾān, "I thereby give you the pledge of Allah and his Prophet.... if you repent before I am able to crush you, I will give safety to you, your brothers, relatives and partisans."<sup>4</sup> To this Muḥammad sent the following reply:

"I offer you the same amnesty that you have offered me. The right to the power [the caliphate] is ours, and it is through us you have claimed it. It is with the help of our Shīʿa [partisans] that you have gained our prerogative. Our father ʿAlī was the Wasi [vicegerent] and the Imām, how is it then that you appropriate his inheritance while we are still alive. You know that no one who claimed this matter had the same descent and honour and status as we have. We are not the sons of al-Luʿanā or al-Turadā or al-Tulaqā.<sup>5</sup> You know that there is none amongst the Hashimites who has the

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., p.219, citing ʿUmar b. Shabba; Shafāʾ al-gharām, p.182.

<sup>2</sup>Ibn ʿAsākir, Tārīkh Dimashq, Ms. B.N., fols. 82a-82b. He gave Muḥammad 24,000 dinars from governmental money (op.cit., fol. 83a citing al-Zubayr b. Musʿab al-Zubayrī).

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, pp. 200, 216, citing ʿUmar b. Shabba.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.209, qālu; Kāmil, v, p. 115; Azdī, fol. 158; Ghurar, fol. 182a; F.H.A., pp. 240f.

<sup>5</sup>See below, p. 273



same points of excellence and prides himself on the like of our descent, our past, and our honour. We are the children of Fāṭima bint 'Amr at the time of Jāhiliyya, where you are not; and the children of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima in the time of Islam, whereas you are not..... and I am the very centre of descent amongst Banū Hāshim and the best of them all as regards parentage. No Persian did I have for mother and no slave-girls were my maternal ancestors.... I was twice born from the loins of the Prophet... amongst my grandfathers I have the highly esteemed in paradise and the least tormented in hell; so I am the son of the best of the good and the best of the bad... As for the amnesty you have given me, may I ask what kind of amnesty it is? Is it the same that you gave to Ibn Hubayra or to your uncle 'Abdallah or the one that was given to 'Abu Muslim?''<sup>1</sup>

To this Abū Ja'far replied:<sup>2</sup>

"... I have received your letter... But most of your pride is on the women's side which could only deceive the mob and the common. God has not made mothers like uncles, fathers and the responsible relatives. ... God sent Muḥammad [as his Prophet] who had four uncles, two of them turned Muslims, one of whom was my father; the other two, one of whom was your father [i.e. Abū Ṭalib] remained infidels... As for what you mentioned about the fact that.... 'Alī was born twice from the loins of Hāshim, and Ḥasan was born twice from the loins of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, and that you were born twice from the loins of the Prophet [to all this, I can only say] that the best of all, Muḥammad, was born but once from the loins of Hāshim, and once from the loins of 'Abd al Muṭṭalib... As for your claim that you are the son of the Prophet, God has rejected such a claim when he said 'Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of God and the seal of the prophets'. But you are the children of his daughter. It is, in fact, a close relationship, but she is a woman who cannot inherit the wilāya and cannot be an Imam, how is it possible then that the Imamate could be inherited through her? Your father [Alī] tried all means to attain the Imamate through her, and sent her to fight his battle out for him. But people insisted on holding the two sheikhs in preference to him..."

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 209-10, qālu; Kāmil, 4, pp. 115-118; Azdī, fols. 159-160. See also the quotation in Ansab, fol. 614, qālu; 'Aynī, fol. 44a; Ghurar, fols. 182a-183a.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.219; Kāmil, 4, p. 118; Azdī, fols. 161-163; Ghurar, fol. 183a. See also Ansab, fol. 615a, where the letter is briefly cited.

The caliph then went on to enumerate the 'Alid failures to seize the caliphate for themselves and defied Muḥammad with this caustic comment:

"You know that our greatest honour in the times of Jāhiliyya, namely the dispensing of water to the pilgrims and the guardianship of the well of Zamzam, became 'Abbās's privilege alone among his brothers. Your father litigated with us for this privilege, but 'Umar gave judgment in our favour. Thus we have never ceased to be in possession of this honour in the times of Jāhiliyya as well as of Islam. And when the people of Medina were threatened with drought, 'Umar sought the favour of his God and appealed to him through our ancestor [ 'Abbās/ until God comforted them and quenched their thirst with heavy rain. Your ancestor 'Alī was there, yet 'Umar did not seek his intercession. You know that after the death of the Prophet no other son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib remained alive, and that 'Abbās inherited his rights as the uncle [of the Prophet].<sup>1</sup> Then more than one of the Banī Hashim sought the Caliphate, but none attained it, except the descendants of 'Abbās, and so the Siqāya<sup>2</sup> and the inheritance of the Prophet as well as the Caliphate belong to him and his descendants and will remain in their possession. For 'Abbās was heir and legatee to every honour and virtue that ever existed in the times of the Jāhiliyya and Islam..."

The letters exchanged between Abū Ja'far and Muḥammad are perhaps the most interesting and authentic documents of the whole 'Alid-'Abbāsīd relationship. They are invaluable as they reflected the opinions of the two prominent contenders on the controversial issue of the succession to the caliphate. They were also a masterpiece of political propaganda on both the 'Abbāsīd and the 'Alid side, and, as it were, equivalent to a declaration of war and a justification of the armed

---

<sup>1</sup>This in fact anticipates al-Mahdi's argument on the 'Abbāsīd claim to the caliphate (see Nawbakhtī, p.43; Akhār, fol. 74b).

<sup>2</sup>This privilege cannot be considered a solid claim by the 'Abbāsīds, as all Banī 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib had inherited the sacred privileges from Qusayy. Even the Umayyads who had shared some of these privileges in the Jāhiliyya for some time could have claimed the caliphate on these grounds.

conflict. It was clear from the very beginning that neither the caliph nor Muḥammad expected the other to surrender in consequence of a letter sent to him by his opponent. In fact, the caliph's first letter is characterized by the tone of strain which precedes war. Though it proposes reconciliation it renders it impossible since it threatens before it promises. This fact is referred to by Muḥammad's words to 'Īsā b. Mūsā the commander of the 'Abbāsīd army: "You would not have [lavished pledges on me] and asked me to renounce if you had known that I would accept it."<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad's reply may be considered a summary of the whole moderate 'Alid doctrine on their rights to the caliphate. Writing to Abū Ja'far, Muḥammad based his claim not only on his descent from 'Alī, but also from Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet. The 'Alids had to develop this new conception because al-'Abbās, the 'Abbāsīd's ancestor, was the Prophet's uncle, a status more closely associated with the Prophet than 'Alī. Muḥammad also prides himself on being the son of a free Arab woman, a remark which must have angered Abū Ja'far who was the son of a Berber slave girl. It tallies with the aristocratic conception of the Umayyads who excluded the sons of slave girls such as Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik from the succession. This point in Muḥammad's argument cannot have been very popular with the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Agh.*, III, p.29; *Maḡātil*, p.161. The manuscript of *Ghurur al-Siyar* contains a fourth letter which includes the reply of Muḥammad to al-Manṣūr's second letter. Both van Arendonk and Traini justly refute any authenticity of the letter in question which was most probably the work of 'Alid partisans. (See *Les débuts de l'inamat*, p.53; Traini, "La Correspondenza...", p. 773, footnote 2.)

Mawālī followers of his cause. Nor could Muḥammad's claim that 'Alī had become the "Waṣī" and the "Imām" after the Prophet's death, have been popular with the Arabs of the Ḥijāz. Muḥammad also reminds the caliph that his ancestor al-'Abbās was one of the Turadā' (those who were expelled), Ḥulaqā' (those who surrendered and manumitted) and Lu'anā' (those who were accursed),<sup>1</sup> terms applied to those who resisted the Prophet and fought against him and had been converted to Islam only after the conquest of Mecca in 630 A.D. Al-'Abbās, in fact, had been taken captive in the battle of Badr. Finally, it is interesting to note that Muḥammad does not use in his letter the title Amīr al-Mu'minīn but calls himself al-Mahdī, stressing the very idea which attracted the masses more than anything else.

In his reply, the caliph takes up the points raised by Muḥammad one by one. First, he refutes Muḥammad's claim as it is based on Qarābat al-Nisā', i.e. Fātima and confirms the priority of Qarābat al-'Umūma, i.e. al-'Abbās. It was a brilliant attempt by Abū Ja'far to get his case justified on legal, religious and customary grounds. The uncle's title to the inheritance of the Prophet was better as it was based not only on Sharī'a law of inheritance but also Arab custom, which lets the paternal uncle take the deceased father's position. Abū Ja'far also reminded Muḥammad that al-'Abbās held the religious function of Siqāya in the Jāhiliyya and Islam. It is also noteworthy that the caliph deliberately exposed 'Umar I's ruling in favour of al-'Abbās at the

---

<sup>1</sup>Traini, "La Corrispondenza...", ALUON, 1964, p. 778, footnote 28.

time of the drought, thus aligning himself with the group of traditionalists known as Ashāb al-Ḥadīth. Interesting is how Abū Ja'far's argument presented the Ḥusaynids as virtuous and thus disqualified the Ḥasanids: 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (Zayn al-'Ābidīn) overcame 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan (al-Mahd), and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq Muḥammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zaqiyya. As the former were sons of slave girls and the latter of pure Arab blood, Muḥammad's Fakhr of pure descent is valueless.<sup>1</sup>

It is when the facts speak that Abū Ja'far, the practical realist, strikes his heaviest blows against Muḥammad, the idealist dreamer. It is the contrast between the inefficiency of the 'Alids and their repeated failures to obtain the caliphate for themselves when compared with the triumph of the 'Abbāsids that is in fact the tenor of Abū Ja'far's letter. It is the 'Abbāsīd victory that justifies the 'Abbāsīd claim to represent the house of the Prophet and hold power. The caliph proves at the end of his letter that he can be as haughty and proud as Muḥammad when he stresses that al-'Abbās protected, fed and ransomed the 'Alids on many occasions: "Had it not been for al-'Abbās, the 'Alids would have nourished themselves on the left-overs from the Umayyads, ... we [the 'Abbāsīds] gave you to inherit their [the Umayyads'] lands and homes, we honoured your ancestors and recognized their superior merits." He finally reminded him that the 'Abbāsīds avenged the martyrs of the 'Alids who proved incapable of avenging their own dead.

---

<sup>1</sup>Traini, op.cit., pp. 796-798.

The letters can hardly be accused of being spurious.<sup>1</sup> Closer scrutiny of the correspondence reveals that the structure of both letters is parallel. The very gradation with which the caliph counters Muhammad's arguments point by point is powerful internal evidence of their authenticity. Internal proof of this is furnished by the mention of the letter in early sources such as Balādhurī, Tabarī, Azdī and al-Mubarrad. Obviously Ya'qūbī and Iṣbahānī were reluctant to quote them due to their 'Alid sympathies.

As to the nature of the support that Muhammad found in Madīna, it is difficult to form an accurate idea as the accounts are not clear and sometimes contradictory. Tabarī states that the notables of Madīna, with few exceptions, supported the revolt while Iṣbahānī maintains that all the people of Madīna, except a few, voluntarily swore allegiance to him.<sup>2</sup> According to Mas'ūdī<sup>3</sup> the 'Alids, Ja'farids, 'Uqaylids, the sons of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and al-Zubayr b. al-'Awām, the whole Quraysh and the Anṣār supported Muhammad. According to Balādhurī the people of Madīna hurried to support him, singing "This is [the astonishing event] which we expected between Jamādī and Rajab."<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>On the authenticity of the letters see Traini, *op.cit.*, pp. 785-793. However Traini assumes that part of Muhammad's letter was eliminated by transmitters through regard for the 'Abbasids. The purged paragraph, says Traini, deals with the Bay'a of the Hashimites, among them Abu Ja'far, to Muhammad. "The passage relating to Badr [in Abu Ja'far's letter] cannot at best be only a pathetic quotation by Abu Ja'far without a corresponding passage in Muhammad's letter." He suggests that Muhammad had mentioned the Bay'a at al-Abwā' and therefore Abu Ja'far reminded him of al-'Abbas feeding Quraysh, among them some 'Alids, at al-Abwā' on the way to Badr and ransoming them soon after the battle of Badr - a speculative assumption which is hardly acceptable especially if we bear in mind that Muhammad did refer to Badr in his letter when he accused Abu Ja'far of being the son of Talīq and La'in. (See Traini, *op.cit.* p. 797). On the other hand it might be significant to point

The tribes of Juhayna, Muzayna, Sulaym, Banū Bakr, Aslam and Ghifār supported him.<sup>1</sup> Most 'Alids, especially the sons of Zayd b. 'Alī, the sons of Mu'āwiya b. 'Abdallah, the sons of al-Ḥasan b. Zayd b. al-Ḥasan and 'Alī b. Zayd, joined him.<sup>2</sup> As for the Ḥusaynids Ja'far al-Ṣādiq did not participate in political activities during the revolt. He continued warning his relations and partisans against a premature rising. He was outwardly opposed to the Ḥasanid political plans and considered them his rivals in spiritual leadership. During the revolt he refused to swear the bay'a to Muḥammad, spreading the tradition that Muḥammad would be killed and that his revolt would fail.<sup>3</sup> Though at first glance the support Muḥammad found in Madīna seems to have been considerable, the impression of whole tribes hurrying to Muḥammad's support is deceptive. It may have been true of certain groups among the tribes but not of whole tribes. Furthermore, the Ḥijāz which had already lost its importance as the centre of the empire to Syria and then Irāk was, generally speaking, opposed to the government. Thus many joined Muḥammad not because of their pro-'Alid sympathies but of their anti-'Abbāsid

(cont.) out that speaking on the letters Azdī remarks:

« فأنبأني محمد بن يزيد عن عمر بن عيسى عن محمد بن يحيى قال سمعت هذه الرسالة من محمد بن يحيى  
 وكان يعجبها وصارت من كتاب ابن البراء وسمعت ابن أبي حرب  
 وكان يعجبها »

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.200, citing Azhar b. Sa'īd; Maqātil, p.183, citing Azhar b. Sa'īd.

<sup>3</sup> Murūj, VI, p.189.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 613b, qālū, also Tab., III, pp. 227-8; Tanbīh, p.341.

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 613b; Tab., III, p.228, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>2</sup> Maqātil, p.192; Tab., III, p.200. Hearing of the Zaydid's support to Muḥammad, Abū Ja'far exclaimed "Is it not surprising that the sons of Zayd should support Muḥammad as we had killed those who killed their father."

<sup>3</sup> Rijāl, pp. 179, 186-7, citing Ḥamdawayh, pp. 353-354, citing Muḥammad b. (cont.)

attitude. The messianic propaganda of Muḥammad al-Mahdī<sup>1</sup> had, as already mentioned, a deep effect on the people of Madīna, especially the lower classes who had genuine grievances against the 'Abbāsids. The support given to the rising by some prominent traditionists enhanced its religious character and increased its following. Mālīk b. Anas declared that the oath sworn to the 'Abbāsids was not binding as it had been given under compulsion.<sup>2</sup> Others such as Abū Ḥanīfa, Muḥammad b. Hurmuz, Muḥammad b. 'Ajlān and Abū Bakr b. Abī Sabra, also sympathized with Muḥammad.<sup>3</sup> This body of traditionists (Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth) was moderately pro-'Alid in its leanings in this early Islamic period. They must have realized that the 'Abbāsīd outlook was not less worldly than that of the Umayyads. The Zaydiyya of Kūfa and the Muṭazila of Baṣra also sympathized with or supported Muḥammad.<sup>4</sup>

Muḥammad himself tried to present the 'Abbāsids as impious tyrants and usurpers, oblivious of duty and pleasure-loving. He is quoted as saying "I see a fire blazing on the heights and lighting up the country around. The sons of al-'Abbās mind it not, but pass their night in false security and enjoyment. They slumber as the Umayyads did,

---

(cont.) b. Mas'ūd; Maqātil, p.192; Tab., III, p.254. Ismā'īl b. 'Abdallah the Ja'farid and al-Ḥasan b. Zayd the Ḥasanid also declined to support Muḥammad (Maqātil, p.192; Tab., III, p.200).

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 613b; Maqātil, p.142 citing Ibn Shabba; Tab, III, p.159, citing Ibn Shabba. "The people of Madīna cried: al-Mahdī al-Mahdī when Muḥammad showed himself among them."

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.200, citing 'Umar b. Rāshid.

<sup>3</sup> Azdi, fols. 163, 168.

<sup>4</sup> Maqātil, pp. 249, 270f; Tab., III, pp. 282ff; van Arendonk, Les debuts..., pp. 58f.



and like them they will awaken to avert the danger when it is too late."<sup>1</sup> Sudayf, a mawlā of Banī Hāshim, who joined the rising, used to say "Allahuma qad s̄ara fay'una dawla ba'da 'l qisma wa Imāratuna ghalaba ba'da 'l mashūra wa 'Ahduna mirāth ba'da 'l khtiyār li 'l 'Umma.."<sup>2</sup>

Although Kūfa was the centre of the pro-'Alid movement, its political leanings were in fact more extremist than moderate. In fact, 'Abdallah al-Mahd did not value their support.<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī states that Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdallah went to Kūfa but did not find much support there.<sup>4</sup> It is important to differentiate here between real support and mere sympathy; accounts which state that 100,000 pro-'Alid partisans<sup>5</sup> were ready to join Ibrāhīm in Kūfa are in fact greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, he was joined by a group of extremists called al-Mughīriyya,<sup>6</sup> probably attracted by his claim to be the Mahdī.

Tempted by the alleged pro-'Alid loyalty of Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba, the governor of Egypt,<sup>7</sup> Muḥammad sent his son 'Alī to propagate his cause, with Khālīd b. Sa'īd al-Sadafī as a chief dā'ī. The caliph soon afterwards appointed a new governor Yazīd b. Ḥātim al-Muhallabī by name.

<sup>1</sup> Wafayāt, p. 109 note 6.

<sup>2</sup> 'Uyun, II, p.115; al-Shi'r, p.419; Agh., XIV, p.162; 'Asākir, 6, p.68; 'Iqd, III, p.32.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 673b.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.453.

<sup>5</sup> Tab., III, p.230, citing Muḥammad b. Yaḥya.

<sup>6</sup> Ḥazm, IV, p.141; Bagh., pp. 147-148.

<sup>7</sup> Ḥumayd was a veteran 'Abbāsīd partisan. His effective rôle in crushing the 'Alid revolt is a clear evidence of his loyalty to Abū Ja'far. However it might be suggested here that, in accordance with Abū Ja'far's plan to get Muḥammad out of his hiding place he ordered Ḥumayd to write to Muḥammad  
(cont.)

He pursued a harsh policy towards the 'Alids who were forced to hide for a while. Many suspects were arrested. Finally, on the 10th of Shawwāl, Khālid al-Saḡafī proclaimed the rising in the great Mosque of Fuṣṭāṭ. They immediately ravaged Bayt al-Māl, but the rising does not seem to have found much support. Most of the influential figures stayed away. It was, therefore, easily suppressed after a few skirmishes at which about thirteen 'Alid partisans were killed. The excitement finally subsided when the head of Ibrāhīm was brought by Abū 'l Makārim to Egypt in Dhu 'l Ḥijja 145/ Feb. 763<sup>1</sup>. As to the fate of 'Alī, it seems that he was arrested and sent to Baghdad where he was imprisoned with the rest of his family.<sup>2</sup> But Muḥammad's overtures seem to have found more response in Khurāsān where great unrest had followed the 'Abbāsīd victory. In 149/757-58 Abū Ja'far appointed 'Ahd al-Jabbār al-Azdī governor and ordered him to watch 'Alid activities. But the relations between the caliph and the governor deteriorated and 'Ahd al-Jabbār turned pro-'Alid. Although the latter was caught and killed in 142 A.H.,<sup>3</sup> Khurāsān remained unstable which the new governor ascribed to Muḥammad's activities.<sup>4</sup> To deter the people, Abū Ja'far had Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah al-'Uthmānī<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.) promising to help him. See Tab., III, p.230 citing Ibn Shabba, pp. 244,247; Ansab, fol. 617a-617b, citing the sons of Ḥumayd.

<sup>1</sup>Wulāt, pp. 111-114, citing Ibn Qudayd; Maḡātil, p. 140; Tab., III, p.171; Khifāṭ, 2, p.93; Nujūm, pp. 386, 390; Muhallabī, al-Masālik, ed. al-Munajjid,

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.171; Kindī, p. 115. cf. another account alleges that 'Alī was hidden in a village until his death (Wulāt, p.115).

<sup>3</sup>See above, p.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.183, citing 'Umar. "Inna ahl Khurasān qad taqā'asu 'annī waḡala 'alahim amr Muḥammad."

<sup>5</sup>Muḥammad al-'Uthmānī was suspected by the caliph from the very beginning. (cont.)

killed and sent his head to Khurasān.<sup>1</sup> The caliph hoped that the two Muḥammads, i.e. al-Uthmānī and Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya would be confused due to the accidental similarity of their names, and that the alleged death of the latter would be accepted as a fact.

Though much desired, Muḥammad's appearance must have surprised the caliph. However, he remained undisturbed.<sup>2</sup> Abū Ja'far was at that moment near al-Madā'in looking for a suitable site for his new capital. Realizing the pro-'Alid sympathies of Kūfa, Abū Ja'far immediately imposed a strict military control on it.<sup>3</sup> He also chose his heir, 'Isā b. Mūsā to lead the 'Abbāsīd army for many reasons. First, 'Isā was well known for his fighting ability.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, it seemed expedient in a crisis of this nature to send a member of the Hāshimite family to defy Muḥammad, another Hāshimite. This was likely to neutralize the effect of the superiority of the Hāshimite claim as represented by Muḥammad

---

(cont.) He was flogged by Abū Ja'far's orders. Many reasons were given for his arrest and execution. The obvious one is that his daughter was the wife of Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdallah. The caliph asked him for information on Ibrāhīm's hide out, but al-Uthmānī declined to give any information. Another reason is that al-Uthmānī was the son of 'Abdallah b. 'Amr b. 'Uthman b. 'Affan and his mother was Fāṭima bint al-Yusayn. He, therefore, had 'Alid and 'Uthmanid blood in his veins. Furthermore his very name, al-Uthmānī, could give so much inspiration to the people who were influenced by the current messianic traditions. Last but not least his close intimate association with his step brother 'Abdallah al-Naḥḍī all combined to make of him a dangerous man in the eyes of the caliph (see Ansāb, VI, pp. 110-111 citing Madā'ini, Ma'arif, p.199; Maqātil, pp. 129, 141-142 citing al-Zubayr b. Bakkar; Tab., III, p.178; Murūj, VI, pp. 198-202.

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, p.183; see also Agh., IV, p.94.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 612a-612b; Tab., III, pp. 204, 207.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 621a; Tab., III, pp. 204, 293-294; Murūj, VI, p.195, qāla 'l Manḡur: Āti 'l Kūfa fa'aṣṭa'u aḡmukhatahum wa akumu makbahatan labum.

<sup>4</sup> Jāhiz, Faḡl banī Hāshim, ed. Sandūbī, p.117.

Thirdly, the revolt seemed to be a good opportunity for Abū Ja'far to get rid of 'Isā b. Mūsā who was the only potentially dangerous rival to his son al-Mahdī in the line of succession to the caliphate. The support for Muḥammad dwindled at the news of the approach of the 'Abbāsīd army which, though consisting of only 4,000 soldiers,<sup>1</sup> was experienced and well-trained and led by able generals such as Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba and Kuthayr b. Ḥusayn.

Although courageous, Muḥammad lacked the foresight and tactical knowledge. He sent a strong group of his supporters to control Mecca thus separating from them at a time when he needed them most. Furthermore, the khutba<sup>2</sup> he delivered at Madīna depressed the morale of his supporters and they began to disperse. Besides Madīna was the wrong place to launch a rising from. Not self-sufficient economically, it depended on Egypt and Syria and Abū Ja'far immediately ordered a sea and land blockade of it.<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad's partisans realized it and advised him to escape to Egypt, Mecca or Baṣra,<sup>4</sup> but the caliph succeeded by skilful manoeuvres

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 615b; Maqātil, p.185; Tab., III, p.223. Ya'qūbī (II, p.452) describes it as Jaysh 'adīn while Mas'ūdī put the number as 4,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry. Muruj, VI, p.122.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.229. According to another account (op.cit., p.230) where the word Bada occurs in Muḥammad's speech. He says: Waqaḍ bada lī an 'adhana lakum wa afruja 'ankum al-Manāqib. "It has occurred to me /in the divine sense of the term/ to excuse you from your obligation." This idea was accepted as a convenient explanation of the failure of Muḥammad (see E.I.<sup>2</sup> Bada). This indicates that Muḥammad expected failure before confronting the 'Abbāsīd army and tried to justify it. It might also indicate that the account is an invention to justify the defeat of Muḥammad.

<sup>3</sup> Futūḥ, I, p.253; Tab., III, pp. 280, 224, 217, 201; Muq., fol. 107b;

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, pp. 201, 228, 241.

in leading him to believe that once he declared his revolt, many provinces would join him.<sup>1</sup> Obsessed by his religious idealism and influenced by a group of zealous followers who "cared more for the safety of their lives than to confront the terrible 'Abbāsīd army",<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad aggravated the effects of the economic blockade of Madīna by digging the ditch (al-Khandaq) round the city.

On Ramaḍān 12th 145 A.H./November 762, 'Īsā b. Mūsā camped at al-Jurf, where he entered into secret correspondence with many notables of Madīna including some 'Alids. Many of them left the city with their families and some even joined 'Īsā, a move which created a sense of insecurity and led to a large scale evacuation of Madīna.<sup>3</sup> When the actual fighting took place, Muḥammad was left with only a small number of his followers, mainly drawn from the tribe of Juhayna and Banū Shujā.<sup>4</sup> Although they fought very bravely, there was no question of Muḥammad's triumph over a well-trained army at least several times larger in number. In Madīna itself there were pro-'Abbāsīd elements working against Muḥammad. The tribe of Banu Ghaffār facilitated the entry of the 'Abbāsīd army into the city. Meanwhile a black banner was installed on the minaret of the mosque which created the false impression that Madīna had fallen to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 616b, 619b. Kāna Muḥammad Yaḡūl: Innī lam akhruj ḥatta baya'ani ahl al-Kufa wa 'I Baḡra wa wasit wa 'I Jazīra wa 'I Maḡḡil. (Tab., III, p.231 citing Ibn Shabba.)

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.229, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fols. 617b-618a; Tab., III, p.226, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, pp. 240, 244: some accounts give the number of Muḥammad's followers as 300. This should be treated cautiously because, according to Zaydiyya principle it is the minimum number of followers for an 'Alid to be recognized as an Imam (see Tab., III, p.237; Maḡatīl, p.196).

'Abbāsids.<sup>1</sup> Some of Muḥammad's followers took to flight, and he himself was killed fighting on the 14th of Ramaḡān 145/Nov. 762

The caliph had his head circulated in the provinces. The property of the rebels was confiscated.<sup>3</sup>

After the rising Madīna was reduced to a state of utter confusion owing to the caliph's economic and political measures. It was obvious that the lower classes, including a large proportion of black slaves, and the fairly prosperous group of merchants and traders, were most affected by these measures.<sup>4</sup> The situation became intolerable when the new governor of Madīna, 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī' al-Ḥārithī, arrived on the 5th of Shawwāl 145/Nov. 762 with the 'Abbāsīd army. The soldiers behaved badly in the markets, refusing to pay for what they bought, an act which the governor did not condemn.<sup>5</sup> The notables who no doubt considered the 'Abbāsīd army an army of occupation, felt indignant. They encouraged their mawālī and slaves to resist the abuses. The disturbances started when the butchers killed a soldier who did not pay for his purchase.<sup>6</sup> The trouble resulting from the sense of dissatisfaction felt by the Arab notables eventually developed into an outburst of black slaves and the mob of Madīna.<sup>7</sup> The black slaves, hard-pressed economically

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.244.

<sup>2</sup>Ma'ārif, p.378; Tab., III, p.249; Maḡātil, pp. 190-191.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, pp. 253 f.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 615b, qālu; Tab., III, p.266, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.266 citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ansāb, fol. 623a-624a, citing Muḡ'ab b. 'Abdallah, describes them as Sūdān Waru'a; Tab., III, pp. 265-271 calls them Sūdān; Ibn 'Asakir states:

and despised socially longed for "revenge for themselves and their masters".<sup>1</sup> They killed a number of soldiers and ousted the new governor from the city. They also plundered the governmental stores where provisions for the army were stored. Fearing Abū Ja'far's ruthlessness, the Arab notables endeavoured to quieten the outburst. Al-Aṣḡagh b. Sufyān and al-Ḥakam b. 'Abdallah, together with the Qāḏī Muḥammad b. Abī Sabra played an outstanding rôle in restoring the order.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Abī Sabra, an 'Alid sympathizer, was in prison at that time; he was freed by black slaves and taken to the mosque to lead the prayer. He, however, advised the people to keep order and obey the caliph.<sup>3</sup> The governor of Madīna, asked to return to the city, had the hands of four of the black ringleaders chopped off for stealing.<sup>4</sup> Rather than political in character, the outburst seems to have been motivated by economic and social factors as well as the sense of passion and loyalty.<sup>5</sup> (Hamiyya) felt by the slaves for their indignant masters.

#### The revolt of Ibrāhīm

Like his brother Muḥammad, Ibrāhīm spent years wandering from Madīna to Aden, Syria, al-Sind, Moṣul, Anbār and Wāsīt until he finally

---

(cont.) Thāra 'ala 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī' Sūdān al-Madīna wa 'l ru'a' wa 'l sibyan (Tārīkh Dimashq, MS. fols. 83a-83b, citing Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah.)

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 268-269.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 623b, citing Hishām b. al-Kalbī, Tab., III, p.270, citing 'Umar b. Rashid, Tārīkh Dimashq, Ms. fols. 83a-84b.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.265 citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Tārīkh Dimashq, fol. 84a.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 623a citing Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah; Tab., III, p.271.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.268.

settled in Baṣra in 143/760-1 to propagate for his brother.<sup>1</sup> Ibrāhīm found in Baṣra a safe place of refuge. He changed residence, occasionally, from one loyal tribe to another.<sup>2</sup> Baṣra was, in fact, suitable for a revolt. Its economic and strategic position was advantageous. In its political attitude Baṣra was neither 'Alid nor 'Abbāsīd. In fact, it was described as 'Uthmanite<sup>3</sup> which does not necessarily imply a pro-Umayyad or anti-'Alid tendency, but meant, as one of the notables of Baṣra put it in his answer to Ibrāhīm's call to join his revolt, that "I do not believe in fighting and I do not consider it the right thing to do".<sup>4</sup>

Ibrāhīm did not rebel until two months after his brother's revolt.<sup>5</sup> Accounts differ on the causes of the delay. According to one, Ibrāhīm had smallpox; according to another he simply was not ready.<sup>6</sup> There is

---

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., pp. 282-286; Athīr, V, 430. Another account gives the date of his final settlement in Baṣra as 145/762-63 (Tab. III, p.298); Van Arendonk, op.cit., pp. 57f.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.287, citing Ibn Shabba, qāla Abū Ja'far: ghamaḡa 'alaya 'amr Ibrāhīm Lama Ishtamalat 'alayhi Tufuf al-Baṣra. See also Jāhiz, Bukhala', pp. 183-185; Ansab, fol. 623b. Balādhuri states that Ibrāhīm first settled with a section of Tamīm then shifted to Banī Rasīb when he soon had to change it again, while Jāhiz speaks of Ibrāhīm's secretary who hid himself in the tribe of 'Abd al-Qays then moved on to Tamīm.

<sup>3</sup> Hamād., p.315; Sa'd, VI, p.232; Wafayāt, II, pp. 123-127.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, p.289, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.

<sup>5</sup> Ansab, fol. 633b, 626b; Khalīfa, fol. 293; Tab., III, p.298.

<sup>6</sup> Tab., III, pp. 189, 290.



no doubt that he was worried and regarded revolutionary gestures as premature at that time. This could be understandable if it is considered in the light of fickleness of the people of Baḡra. In any case, Ibrāhīm realized further delay was dangerous as Abū Ja'far who already knew of Ibrāhīm's activities through spies, began to reinforce his army there.<sup>1</sup> On Ramaḡān 145/Nov. 762, Ibrāhīm rose with about twenty followers, but was soon joined by several Arab chiefs and their tribal groups, until his diwān listed 4,000 by the time he proclaimed the revolt.<sup>2</sup> The governor of Baḡra, Sufyān b. Mu'āwiya al-Muhallabī, had an understanding with Ibrāhīm and Ibrāhīm easily took over dār al-Imāra and Bayt al-Māl where he found 600,000 dirhams which he distributed among his followers, fifty dirhams each.<sup>3</sup> He easily seized control of Baḡra and drove out Muḡammad and Ja'far, the sons of Sulayman b. 'Alī who became the rallying point of the 'Abbāsīd counter-movement.<sup>4</sup>

With the sources at our disposal it is not easy to assess the nature of the support that Ibrāhīm derived from Baḡra which had no specific political colour.<sup>5</sup> Its attitude was more changeable. The most influential tribe Banī Tamīm was not pro-'Alīd in its leanings. In fact,

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 623b; Tab., III, p.291.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 624a; Tab., III, p.290. Different accounts were given for the number of Ibrāhīm's followers. Some state 100,000 (Tab., III, p.309) or 10,000 (Ya'qūbī, II, p.454) or 30,000 (Bad', 6, p.86).

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 625a citing Abū 'Ubayda; Tab., III, pp.297, 300. If these figures are to be credited Ibrāhīm's followers should have numbered about 12,000 men.

<sup>4</sup> Ibrāhīm was closely related to Muḡammad and Ja'far who had Umm al-ḡasan bint Ja'far b. al-ḡasan as mother. He invited them to join him, calling himself as their uncle (Ansāb, fol. 627b.).

<sup>5</sup> Ch. Pellat, Le Milieu Basrien..., p. 281. (Arabic trans.)

they refused to submit to any authority whatever. Ahl al-‘Āliya and especially Bāhila tribes were also anti-‘Alid. It was, therefore, ‘Abd al-Qays, the smallest and most turbulent tribe in Baḡra, and the ‘Azd tribe that could be considered pro-‘Alid tribes.<sup>1</sup> Anyhow, this definition is by no means clear. The political orientation of these tribes was changeable. Personal tendencies and political circumstances drove part of the tribes and population to side with the ‘Alids. Statements like Wabayyaḡat al-Qabā’il (i.e. all the tribes have accepted the white colour and joined Ibrāhīm) should be treated very cautiously.<sup>2</sup> Ibrāhīm, in fact, derived considerable support from the lower classes of Baḡra and the whole Sawād, a fact which Abū Ja‘far himself admitted. The lower classes, Arabs and non-Arabs, were depressed economically, discontented socially and ready to join any opposition against the government.<sup>3</sup> The people were also attracted by the religious character of the revolt, still enhanced by the great number of traditionists who joined or sympathized with Ibrāhīm such as Abū Ḥanīfa, Sufyān al-Thawrī, al-A‘maṣh, al-Mufaḡḡal al-Ḍabbī, ‘Abbād b. Maṣūr, Baṣīr al-Raḡḡal and Maḡar al-

---

<sup>1</sup>Ch. Pellet, op.cit., pp. 51, 263 (Arabic trans.)

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 624a.

<sup>3</sup>Haywān, 4, p.24; Bukhālā, p.139; Tab., III, p.307. Baḡra and its neighbourhood was inhabited by divergent elements such as Persians, Aramians (Nībṭ), Zuḡ and Slaves. (see Ansāb, 4, p.112; Haywān, 4, p.35; Fakhr al-Sudān, ed. Sāsī, p.73; Bulḡan, I, p.522. al-‘Ali, Tanzimāt, pp. 66 ff; Pellat, op.cit., pp. 66ff.

Warāq.<sup>1</sup> However there were other traditionists and jurists who sided with the 'Abbāsids or were at least neutral. According to Balādhūrī,<sup>2</sup> Suwār al-Qāḍī used to dissuade people from joining Muḥammad and his brother, Sa'īd b. 'Arūba advised people to keep to their homes and Hishām b. 'Abdallāh did not express his opinion on Ibrāhīm's rising.<sup>3</sup> Ibrāhīm also enjoyed the sympathy and support of the Zaydiyya and the Mu'tazila who showed great concern for him and his prospects and "closely associated with him and helped him to conduct his affairs".<sup>4</sup> The Umayyads found Baṣra a good place of refuge. Their number was growing and they were prosperous and popular.<sup>5</sup> They and their Mawālī probably helped Ibrāhīm, as he was connected with them by marriage, being the husband of Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-'Uthmānī's daughter.

---

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, pp. 239, 247-261; Azdī, fol. 165; Khāṭib, XIII, pp. 280f; Asakir, II, p.255; Murt., p.41; Dhahabī, Tārīkh, fol. 8b. Heresiographers regarded Abu Ḥanīfa as a Murjite (see Firaq, p.7; Hazm, III, p.106; Maqālat, I, p.138; Shah., I, pp. 147, 157; Khīṭāṭ, II, p.350). According to another account he was considered, probably by the extremist 'Alids of Kūfa, as Zaydite (Shah., II, p.24) due to his moderate 'Alid leanings. Murjism, in fact, opposed tyranny and injustice long before the 'Abbāsīd accession to power (van Vloten, op.cit., pp. 31-2). They believed that it was their duty to oppose tyranny by force (Maqālit, II, p.452; Khāṭib, XIII, pp.380 f). Whether Abū Ḥanīfa was a murjite or not he certainly sympathized with Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm and was imprisoned until his death. Bagh., I, p.422; Shah., I, p.163; Maqātil, p. 248, cf. E.I.2 Abū Ḥanīfa.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 567.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fol. 165.

<sup>4</sup> Codex, Leiden, 1974, cited by van Vloten in "Zur 'Abbāsīdengeschichte", Z.D.M.G., 52, 1898, p.216, footnote 2; van Arendonk, op.cit., p.58.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 754b, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Tab., III, p.419.

Having taken Baṣra, Ibrāhīm sent to neighbouring provinces missionaries who were followed by armed forces. Ahwāz, Fārs, Kirmān, Kaskar and Wāsīt were taken by force.<sup>1</sup> Ibrāhīm thought that by controlling these provinces he would strengthen his position and enlist new supporters for his cause. Even in Kūfa,<sup>2</sup> secret propaganda was made for Ibrāhīm by the Asadite Ibn Ma'iz and the 'Ijlite Ibn al-Farāfṣa who was preparing an uprising in Ibrāhīm's name but was unable to stage it, prevented by the measures adopted by Abū Ja'far. The latter declared a curfew and divided his 1,300 men into three parts patrolling the city. He used to have fires lit in many places of his camp so that the Kufites would assume that he had a great army in readiness.<sup>3</sup> Abū Ja'far's army was actually very small.<sup>4</sup> When Ibrāhīm's reluctance to advance to Kūfa gave him the opportunity to rally his scattered army he acted swiftly. He ordered 'Isā b. Mūsa, who had already subdued Muḥammad's revolt and was on his way to Mecca, to hurry back to Irāq. He also sent Salm b. Qutayba al-Bāhilī from al-Ray to reinforce Ja'far b. Sulaymān.<sup>5</sup> Salm al-Bāhilī an influential figure in Baṣra succeeded in winning the tribe of Bāhila over to the 'Abbāsids.<sup>6</sup> Khāzīm b. Khuzayma

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 624b; Tab., III, pp. 300-301.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, pp. 293-5, citing Salm al-Khaṣī. In the words of the caliph's adviser Kūfa was "a boiling kettle whose lid is you /Abū Ja'far/".

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 293, 304 citing 'Abdallah b. Rāshid; Dhahabī, fol. 7a.

<sup>4</sup> The 'Abbāsīd army was scattered in the Ḥijāz, Rayy and Ifriqiyya (Tab., III, p.304; Dhahabī, fol.7a.).

<sup>5</sup> Agh., XII, p.107; Tab., III, pp. 305; Dhahabī, Tārīkh, fol. 7a.

<sup>6</sup> Tab., III, p.305.

with 4,000 soldiers recaptured al-Ahwāz from al-Mughīra b. al-Kar' Ibrāhīm's governor.<sup>1</sup>

When Ibrāhīm heard of his brother's death he proclaimed himself Amīr al-Mu'minīn and decided to move to Kūfa.<sup>2</sup> Only 10,000 followed him to Kūfa.<sup>3</sup> Ibrāhīm, influenced by certain pious elements among his followers, turned down many beneficial suggestions by experienced men of war who knew well the topography of the area and advised him to follow an unknown route to Kūfa in order to surprise Abū Ja'far because, on the advice of Bashīr al-Raḥḥāl, such an act would cause much harm to children and women of Kūfa. To this, one of Ibrāhīm's partisans replied "You rose against Abū Ja'far and yet you care for the safety of children and women..."<sup>4</sup> At Bākhama, Ibrāhīm met 'Isā b. Mūsā who was with 15,000 soldiers.<sup>5</sup> When the fighting took place, Ibrāhīm's army was, at first, victorious, but 'Isā b. Mūsā held his position with a small unit. At this moment, Ja'far and Muḥammad, sons of Sulaymān, surprised Ibrāhīm's army from the rear. They retreated to fight the ambush. This gave the 'Abbāsīd army an opportunity to organise itself. Ibrāhīm now had to fight on two fronts. His followers started to desert him except for about 500, most of them were Zaydiyya. He was finally killed by an arrow on Monday, the 25th of Dhu 'l Qa'da 145 A.H./763, and his head was sent to Abū Ja'far who had it exhibited in Kūfa and then

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 305-6, citing Sa'id b. Salm.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 225b; Tab., III, pp.312, 309.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., p.309 citing Abū 'Ubayda and an eye witness; Ya'qūbī, II, p.454; Balādhurī states that they were 11,000. Seven hundred of them were cavalry (Ansāb, fol. 225b).

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.311; Dhahabī, fols. 7a-7b.

<sup>5</sup>Ma'arif, p.378; Tab., III, p.310.

sent it to the provinces.<sup>1</sup> 'Īsā immediately declared an amnesty, but it was not observed, as some of Ibrāhīm's supporters who had given themselves up were killed.<sup>2</sup>

The revolt had been dangerous. It is related that Abū Ja'far was ready to abandon Kūfa and join his son in al-Ray where there was a considerable 'Abbāsīd army.<sup>3</sup> The reasons for Ibrāhīm's failure lie in the very nature of the divergent elements which supported him. Baṣra was inhabited by different Arab tribes and non-Arab elements. Although Ibrāhīm rallied a considerable support he could not act swiftly, probably because he was hindered by difference of opinion among his supporters in Baṣra.<sup>4</sup> The people of Baṣra were politically opportunistic and changeable for two reasons: First, most of its tribes were turbulent,<sup>5</sup> and those which joined Ibrāhīm had no real 'Alid leanings, but opposed

<sup>1</sup> Ma'arīf, p.378; Ansāb, fols. 225b-226b; Agh., XVII, p.109; Tab., III, pp. 310-315; Dhahabī, fols. 7b-8a citing al-Faḍl b. Dakīn.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols. 225b-226a. Some traditionists and religious figures were pardoned (Ansāb, fol. 627a).

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 626b citing 'Abdallāh b. Ṣālih al-Muqrī; Agh., XVII, p.109. Tab., III, p.308, 317; Maqdisī, 6, p.86. Balādhurī relates a khūṭba delivered by the caliph in Kūfa soon after the failure of the revolt in which Al-Manṣūr expressed his astonishment as "Why the Umayyads did not kill all the Kufan warriors and ravaged its people" (Ansāb, fol. 226a).

<sup>4</sup> Ibrāhīm might have even thought of shifting to Wāṣit to get away from the whole frictional atmosphere (this view is related by Ya'qūbi and substantiated by an account in Ansāb which states: "Ghayra 'anna Ibrāhīm Khafa ghadr Ahl al-Baṣra wa Ikhtilafahum wa 'aṣabiyyatahum fa' aqbala nahwa wasiṭ." (Ansāb, fol. 628a; Ya'qūbi, II, p.215).

<sup>5</sup> Hamad., p.135; Maqdisī, p.129. Kānat taqa'u fī'l Baṣra 'aṣabiyyāt wahīsha.

the 'Abbāsīd central government; secondly Baḡra was becoming a commercial centre and its inhabitants especially the merchants preferred stability to the vicissitudes of politics, and were unwilling to risk participation in a revolt unless its prospects were exceptionally good. Ibrāhīm's revolt must have had initially good prospects since many people were attracted to join it. However, when the rising of Madīna was crushed, and 'Īsā was advancing towards Baḡra, Ibrāhīm was left with only 10,000 followers most of whom deserted him during the battle of Bākhama. To punish the 'Alid partisans in Baḡra, Abū Ja'far ordered Salm al-Bāhili to destroy the rebel's houses and cut down their trees. Salm failed to comply with the orders and was dismissed by Abū Ja'far. But the new governor contented himself with destroying the houses of some pro-'Alid notables.<sup>1</sup> The relative leniency of the punishment of the participants of this dangerous rebellion is significant, as it proves once again that Baḡra was not so much pro-'Alid as anti-'Abbāsīd in its leanings. Having prevailed Abū Ja'far was, finally, able to consolidate the power in the house of al-'Abbās and took the title al-Manṣūr (i.e. the victorious)<sup>2</sup> and was rightfully considered the founder of the dynasty.

Muḥammad's and Ibrāhīm's defeat marked the complete collapse of 'Alid endeavour to seize the caliphate. Risings like that of Fakhkh, though tragic in their nature and effect, never had the same impact again.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 626b; Tab., III, pp. 319, 326-327. The author of F.H.A. (p.262) relates al-Manṣūr's statement that "The people of Baḡra had no excuse. Their qurā' cursed us..., their jurists gave the people the Fatwa to fight us and their youths fought us."

<sup>2</sup> Tanbīh, p.341.

The death of more active and militant Fāṭimids enhanced Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's opportunity to attain the leadership of the 'Alids and their sympathisers. However, as has already been mentioned, his acquiescent policy and lack of interest in politics made him refuse Abū Salama's offer to proclaim him caliph. Men such as Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb, having failed to persuade Ja'far al-Ṣādiq to rise in arms against Abū Ja'far found his son Isma'īl more inclined to listen to their militant plans.<sup>1</sup> It was this peaceful disposition of al-Ṣādiq and his disinclination to bid for political leadership that enabled him to live on comparatively good terms with Abū Ja'far. The caliph was pleased to have him in Madīna as a deterrent to militant 'Alids. Al-Ṣādiq devoted himself to religious studies, and the caliph seems to have been right in regarding him as merely a prominent traditionist. As Professor Gibb<sup>2</sup> puts it,

"There is, in fact, little evidence that at this period any major dogmatic schism had developed between Sunnism and 'moderate' i.e. Imāmī Shi'ism or that any kind of heterodoxy attached to the followers of the Ithna'asharī Imams. Nobody seems to have been concerned to discourage it, or to have been penalized because of it, provided that it remained on a platonic or non-political plane."

Hodgson,<sup>3</sup> on his part, observes that

"This was the time of the rise of Ḥadīth and the attempt to construct total systems of the pious life - which eventually issued in the full Sharī'a law. It was the time of

---

<sup>1</sup> Rijāl, ed. Karbala 1963, pp. 249, 267-301; Firaq, pp. 55 ff; Sa'd al-Ash'arī, pp. 80, 81-83; B. Lewis, The Origins..., pp. 30 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Gibb, Government and Islam, L'Élaboration de l'Islam, Paris, 1961, p. 118; see also M. Watt, The Rafiḍites, Oriens, XVII, pp. 112-3.

<sup>3</sup> Hodgson, "How did the Shi'a", J.A.O.S., p. 11.



Abū Ḥanīfa and Mālik, the Imām. Ja'far was evidently looked on as Imām like them concerned with working out the proper details of how the pious should solve the various cases in conscience that might arise."

Within his circle Ja'far al-Ṣādiq claimed the spiritual leadership of the community. Being a Fāṭimid, he considered himself the only rightful religious Imām divinely appointed according to the doctrine of Nass, i.e. clear designation by the previous Imāms. This idea was complementary to the claim of 'Ilm, i.e. the inheritance of special knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Thus his authority was merely religious and spiritual. However he promised his devoted partisans a Ḥusaynid caliphate after the advent of al-Qā'im,<sup>2</sup> i.e. the Seventh Imām, thus avoiding the responsibility of leading the revolt against the 'Abbāsids. According to his way of thinking it was not necessary to rebel in order to become a ruler. He therefore disapproved of Ismā'īl's association with the militant extremists, and deprived him of his right to succession. Instead, he nominated as his successor his younger son, Mūsa al-Kāzim, mainly because of his quiet character and peaceful disposition. Politically, the Ḥusaynids did not score any record and even if later fabrications represent al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāzim as bold and courageous in the presence

---

<sup>1</sup> Rijāl, pp. 319, 356, 358-362; Hodgson, op.cit., pp. 11ff; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Dja'far al-Ṣādiq). The 'Abbāsids who opposed all 'Alid assertions claim by claim, insisted on the possession of a special knowledge preserved in the Ṣahīfat 'l Ṣafra' which had been handed down by Abū Ḥāshim to Muḥammad the 'Abbasid (Akhbar, fol. 84b). Furthermore, al-Manṣur significantly refers, in his Waṣīyya, to his son 'al-Mahdī, to the "Secret Knowledge" contained in a book which belonged to his 'Abbāsīd ancestors (Tab., III, p.443). This was evidently directed against the 'Alids especially the Ḥusaynids who claimed the possession of 'Ilm transmitted to them from the Prophet which made them infallible (Ma'ṣum).

<sup>2</sup> Rijāl, pp. 140-141; al-Mufīd, al-Ṭrshād, ed. 1962, pp. 288ff.

of 'Abbāsid caliphs, the relations between the 'Abbāsids and the Husaynids were, on the whole, good.<sup>1</sup>

#### A period of reconciliation

The reign of al-Mahdī (158/775-169/785) was, in general, a period of reconciliation. He tried to satisfy all the discontented elements and especially the 'Alids. Perhaps it is appropriate to mention here that al-Mahdī's character was different from that of his father who had himself foreseen<sup>2</sup> that he would not follow his policy. In his waṣīyya to al-Mahdī, al-Manṣūr said "I have left you three categories of people: the poor who expect you to enrich them, the frightened who expect you to protect them and the imprisoned who expect you to liberate them. When you become caliph let them taste happiness but not to excess."<sup>3</sup> He also urged al-Mahdī to spare no means in searching for the hidden 'Alid rebel, 'Isā b. Zayd<sup>4</sup> who together with the Zaydiyya participated in Muḥammad's revolt. After Muḥammad's death 'isā b. Zayd joined Ibrāhīm in Basra and became his heir (waṣī) and banner bearer. According to Iṣbahānī,<sup>5</sup> al-Manṣūr tried

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless al-Manṣūr was watchful. Having learned of pro-Husaynid subversive activities, the caliph summoned al-Ṣādiq and his son Isma'īl to Iraq. However their lives were spared and only one of the conspirators Bassam b. 'Abdallah al-Ṣayrafī was executed (Riḡal, p.159; Najashī, pp. 81-2). Al-Manṣūr also seemed to have been worried about the Khums which used to be paid to al-Ṣādiq by his partisans as a token of their loyalty. He is said to have questioned al-Ṣādiq on the matter when he visited Madīna to perform his pilgrimage in 147/764 (al-Kāfi, I, pp. 139, 355; Ṣifat al-Ṣafwa, II, p.96).

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.443, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Dietrich, Das politische, Der Islam, 1952, pp. 143ff.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.475.

<sup>4</sup> Tab. III, p.448, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.

<sup>5</sup> Maqātil, pp. 227-228, 249.

to exploit a misunderstanding between 'Īsā and Ibrāhīm and incited the latter to desert Ibrāhīm. But the deep cause of the deterioration of the relationship between Ibrāhīm and 'Īsā seems to have been the Imamate. In fact 'Īsā claimed the Imamate after Muḥammad's death, while Ibrāhīm had already taken the title of Amīr 'l Mu'minīn. However al-Manṣūr failed in his effort to utilize this rivalry when both Ibrāhīm and 'Īsā agreed to postpone their differences and unite their forces against Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr. 'Īsā participated in the battle of Bākhāmra and after Ibrāhīm's death he escaped to Kūfa.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Mahdī was willing to maintain cordial relations with the 'Alids. On his pilgrimage in 160/777 he astonished the people of Mecca and Madīna by giving them generous gifts. He also ordered the governor of Egypt to resume the supplies of grain and other provisions for the Ḥijāz which had been cut off by al-Manṣūr after Muḥammad's revolt, returned the confiscated properties to 'Alid participants in the latter and released political prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

It was also in accordance with this conciliatory policy that al-Mahdī appointed Ya'qūb b. Dā'ūd his Wazīr. Ya'qūb had associated himself with the Ḥasanid rebels and had been imprisoned by al-Manṣūr after the failure of their revolt. In al-Mahdī's reign, a general amnesty was granted in 159/775, and Ya'qūb was released.<sup>3</sup> He succeeded in gaining

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., pp. 232, 271f citing Ibn Shabba, 281, citing al-Nawfalī.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, pp. 257, 280, citing Ḥammād al-Turkī. On al-Mahdī's friendly gestures see further: Agh., III, p.15; Maqātil, p.263; Ya'qūbī, II, p.476; Tab., III, p.482; Ṣafadī, al-Wafī, 4, p.105; al-I'lām, pp. 99,109.

<sup>3</sup>Jah., p.155; Tab., III, p.507 citing 'Alī al-Nawfalī.

the favour of al-Mahdī by disclosing to him the plan of escape of his fellow-prisoner the 'Alid al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm so that the plan was foiled.<sup>1</sup> Al-Mahdī was only too eager to avail himself of the services of a man of Ya'qūb's abilities, whose early connections with the 'Alids could help to trace the active ones amongst them, and to establish cordial relations with the others. Obviously the caliph chose Ya'qūb for political reasons. Now the search was intensified for 'Īsā b. Zayd who had fled from the battle of Bakhamra, and al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm who had finally managed to escape from his prison with the help of the Zaydiyya.<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūb promised al-Mahdī to do his best to find them, and when he accompanied him on his pilgrimage to Mecca in 160/777, he produced al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm.<sup>3</sup> Al-Mahdī subsequently permitted Ya'qūb's authority to grow and appointed him Wazīr in 163/779, referring to him as "brother in God".<sup>4</sup> Al-Mahdī seems to have taken these steps with the explicit purpose of showing the 'Alids what generosity he was capable of towards those who were willing to ally themselves with the 'Abbāsīd régime.<sup>5</sup> The 'Alids were, however, unwilling to compromise with the 'Abbāsīds. Moreover, they did not, in fact, trust Ya'qūb's

<sup>1</sup>Jah., p.181; Tab., III, pp. 462-463; E. Kocher, Ya'qūb b. Dā'ūd, M.I.O., III, 1955, p.382.

<sup>2</sup>Jah., p.181; Tab., III, p.508, citing 'Alī al-Nawfalī, p.461; Muntakhab, fol. 131a.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 607a; Jah., p.156; Tab., III, p.482.

<sup>4</sup>Jah., p. 155; Tab., III, p.464; Murūj, VI, p.232. Besides its honorary implications, this declaration of fraternity, which is probably inspired by the Qur'anic verse «إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ» must be considered against the reconciliatory policy of al-Mahdī. It signified a declaration of amnesty for all enemies of the régime, and was particularly intended as a tactical move to win the 'Alids. See Sourdél, La Vizarat..., p.107; al-Bāsha, al-Alqāb al-Islāmiyya, pp. 60, 135.

<sup>5</sup>Sourdél, op.cit., p.108.

opportunist nature, as he had utilized the 'Alid question to promote his own career. Despite the presents and assurances of al-Mahdī which he had obtained through Ya'qūb, 'Īsā b. Zayd did not give himself up.<sup>1</sup> As Ya'qūb's efforts failed to achieve their object, al-Mahdī's relations with him grew cooler and cooler and it is said that he decided to put him to the test. He entrusted him with an 'Alid prisoner and promised to reward him if he killed the prisoner. But Ya'qūb took pity on the prisoner and facilitated his escape. This brought about his downfall. He was imprisoned and all the governors who had been nominated by him were dismissed.<sup>2</sup>

The dismissal of Ya'qūb was a turning point in al-Mahdī's policy towards the 'Alids. His measures became harsher and harsher.<sup>3</sup> His suspicion even fell on Mūsā al-Kāzim, who seems to have kept totally out of politics, probably regarding him as potentially dangerous. Al-Mahdī had him arrested and imprisoned in Baghdad until he was suddenly released and permitted to return to the Ḥijāz.<sup>4</sup> Several suspects among them 'Alī b. al-'Abbās the Ḥasanid were put under strict watch. The latter was subsequently arrested and al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, the eldest among the 'Alids, went to Baghdād and interceded with al-Mahdī in favour of 'Alī who was released with Ḥusayn as his guarantor.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, p.274; 'Āmilī, I, p.57.

<sup>2</sup> Jah., p.163; Tab., III, p.516; Murūj, VI, p.232; Wafayāt, 3, p.447.

<sup>3</sup> Maqātil, pp. 279-80; Rijāl, pp. 227 f, 284. See also Agh., XXI, p.120; Iqd, citing 'Utbi, 2, p.178.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, p.533 citing al-Rabī' b. Yūnus; Khaṭīb, XIII, p.27; Dhahabī, fol. 39b. Indeed al-Kāzim led a politically less active life than his father. Nor was he interested in the field of religious knowledge. Nevertheless he was also imprisoned by the suspicious al-Rashid (170/786-193/809) and died in his prison without fulfilling the rôle of the  
(cont.)

Al-Mahdī did not survive the failure of his conciliatory policy towards the 'Alids long enough to put his new plans into practice. These may have aimed at a totally reversed policy. It is significant, however, that an important change in the formulation of the 'Abbāsīd claim to succession was made in al-Mahdī's reign.<sup>1</sup> Henceforward the 'Abbāsīd claim was no longer based on the wasiyya of Abū Hāshim but on the status of al-'Abbās as the uncle of the Prophet and his legitimate inheritor.

The revolt of al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī

When al-Hādī succeeded to the caliphate (169/785-170/786), he abandoned the friendly policy of his father towards the 'Alids and discontinued their 'Aḥā'.<sup>2</sup> However, the situation proved untenable, so that they approached al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī who seemed to be the most suitable to undertake the leadership of the movement and incited him to revolt. Ya'qūbī's statement, supported by Tabarī,<sup>3</sup> is of importance in so far as it reveals that the uprising was not casual but planned in advance. Iṣbahānī<sup>4</sup> also states that at the beginning of the pilgrimage about seventy men visited al-Ḥusayn and stayed in the house of Ibn Aflah which aroused the suspicions of the governor of Madīna.

---

(cont.) the saviour (al-Qā'im) which was expected of him as the Seventh Imam. Despite the numerous miracles attributed to him by his partisans after his death, his posthumous influence was small.

<sup>5</sup> Maqātil, p.269. Ibn 'Asākir relates that al-Mahdī imprisoned a Ḥasanid called Abu 'Abdallah al-Mahḍ whose mother was a Tamimite. He therefore claimed probably out of fear to be a Tamimite than an 'Alid and lived at al-Balqa' (Tārīkh Dimashq, MS. fol. 188a).

<sup>1</sup> Firaq, p.43; Akhbār, fol. 74b.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.488.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 553, 565; see also van Arendonk, op.cit., p.63.

<sup>4</sup> Maqātil, p.296, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Fakhri, p.172.

When 'Umar b. 'Abdallah al-'Umarī was appointed governor of Madīna in 169/785, he used strict measures against the 'Alids, so that each of them had to be the guarantor of the other, and even al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī himself was included.<sup>1</sup> Al-Ḥādī also tried to interfere with 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn's plan to marry Raqiyya bint 'Umar al-Mahdī's widow. 'Alī justified his intention by stating that there was nothing in Islam to prevent a marriage with anybody's widow, and actually married her.<sup>2</sup> Soon al-'Umarī imprisoned and humiliated some 'Alids among them al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad on the charge of wine drinking, an allegation which is rather difficult to prove. Iṣbahānī, Ya'qūbī and Ibn al-Tiqṭaqa naturally take the side of the 'Alids and describe the accusation as false pretext.<sup>3</sup> However, it seems to emerge from the argument between al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī and al-'Umarī that they had in fact drunk wine; al-Ḥusayn argued that al-'Umarī had no right to flog them, as the Irāqī school permitted the drinking of a certain kind of wine.<sup>4</sup> Al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad was only released on the condition that he reported daily to the authorities, and that al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī and Yahya b. 'Abdallah became his guarantors. The treatment meted out to al-Ḥasan and other 'Alids, provoked strong anger in

---

<sup>1</sup> Maqātil, p.296 citing Muḥammad al-Nawfalī and Ibn Shabba; Tab., III, 552, citing 'Abdallah al-Ansarī.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.587, citing Ibn Shabba.

<sup>3</sup> Maqātil, pp. 296-97; Ya'qūbī, II, p.488; Fakhrī, p.260; see also Ibn al-Sa'ī, Mukhtaṣar., p.24; Van Arendonk, op.cit., p.63, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, p.552 citing al-Faḍl b. Ishāq. Weil has accepted the allegation and presented it as a laxity of morals among those who claimed to be the most rigid observers of religious law (II, pp.123f).

the 'Alid circles of Madīna.<sup>1</sup> As has already been mentioned, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī was already preparing for the revolt which was to take place in the coming pilgrimage season. He contacted the 'Alid partisans of Kūfa who had come to Madīna under the pretext of performing the pilgrimage. It was at that time that the 'Alīd al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad failed to present himself to the authorities for three days. The governor of Madīna called upon his guarantor to produce him. The subsequent angry exchange of words seems to have exacerbated the situation and precipitated the already planned revolt.<sup>2</sup> This hasty decision probably contributed to its failure.

The revolt found, in fact, no support among the people of Madīna. The main supporters were the twenty-six 'Alids who, in their majority, joined al-Ḥusayn. Other supporters were mainly Kūfites, probably Zaydiyya, who had already been pouring into Mecca as the revolt was planned for the time of the pilgrimage.<sup>3</sup> Al-Ḥusayn's followers were, therefore, not numerous, Ya'qūbī estimates them at less than 500, Iṣbahānī at about 300 which, probably, implies that they were less than that.<sup>4</sup> As to the 'Abbāsids, many of them were already in the Ḥijāz intending to perform the pilgrimage under the leadership of Sulaymān b. Abī Ja'far.

---

<sup>1</sup> Moscati, "Le califat d'al-Ḥadī", S.O., XII, 1946, p.9.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.552 citing 'Abdallah al-Anṣārī; Maqātil, p.297.

<sup>3</sup> Maqātil, pp. 296-7, 299, 305, citing 'Umar b. Shabba, Muḥammad al-Nawfallī and Madā'inī; Tab., III, pp. 552, 563 citing al-Mufaḍḍal b. Ṣalīb.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.488; Maqātil, p.298.



Hearing of the revolt, al-Ḥadī ordered Muḥammad b. Sulaymān to take over the command of the 'Abbāsids.<sup>1</sup> The 'Abbāsīd side was composed of 'Abbāsīd partisans who were performing the pilgrimage and a strong body guard brought from Baghdād to protect the pilgrimage caravan against Bedouin attack.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Ḥusayn proclaimed his revolt in Madīna<sup>3</sup> calling the people for al-Murṭaja min Āl Muḥammad.<sup>4</sup> The governor of Madīna fled but the 'Abbāsīd partisans rallied round Khālīd al-Barbarī, one of the officers, and attacked the Mosque where the rebels had entrenched themselves, but al-Barbarī was killed and his followers were driven out.<sup>5</sup> However, al-Ḥusayn who had found no support in Madīna had to leave for Mecca. Since the Meccans exhibited an equal lack of sympathy, he announced in order to recruit followers that every slave who joined him was a free man. This act created discontent among the notables of Mecca and he had to return some slaves to their owners.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p. 557 citing Muḥammad b. Sālīḥ; Khalifā, fol. 310; Murūj, VI, 266.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p. 557; Mas'ūdī estimates their number as 4,000 soldiers (Murūj, VI, p. 266). On the bedouins' activities in this district see Tab. III, p. 559; Athīr, VI, pp. 51-52. It is interesting to notice that while Tabarī uses the term A'rāb, Ibn al-Athīr uses 'Arab.

<sup>3</sup>On the revolt see: Bayān, 3, p. 357; Ma'ārif, pp. 380-81; Dinā, p. 382; F.H.A., pp. 284-5; Maqātil, pp. 295-308; Tab., III, 551-68; Shafā', pp. 184-5.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p. 554, citing 'Alī b. Muḥammad; cf. Maqātil, p. 301 where the title is "al-Riḍa min āl Muḥammad".

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, pp. 553-4, citing al-Faḍl b. Ishāq and Muḥammad b. Sālīḥ; Maqātil, p. 300; Asraqī, III, p. 212; Athīr, VI, p. 61.

<sup>6</sup>Tab., III, pp. 555-557, citing 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad, Nāṣir al-Jumhūrī and Muḥammad b. Sālīḥ. One of the notables said to al-Ḥusayn, "'Amaddata ila mamalik lam tamlukahum fa'a taqtahum. Bima tastahilu Dhalika?" Shafā', pp. 184-5.

Subsequently, the 'Abbāsids marched towards Mecca, and al-Ḥusayn decided to meet them. The fighting took place on the day of Tarwiya 8th of Dhu 'l Ḥijja/11th June in the valley of Fakhkh.<sup>1</sup> Al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī was killed and more than a hundred 'Alid partisans were massacred. The rest escaped by mixing with the pilgrims. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān declared an amnesty and nobody was pursued. It was in the battle of Fakhkh that Yaḥya b. 'Abdallah al-Maḥq and his brother Idrīs managed to get away. The former fled to the Daylam where he eventually revolted in the reign of al-Raḥīd in 176/792-3, while the latter escaped to the Maghrib where he founded the Idrisid dynasty in 172/788.<sup>2</sup> In spite of the amnesty, many 'Alids were executed in cold blood.<sup>3</sup> Trusting the Aman, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad who had been the cause of the revolt, surrendered voluntarily, but he was executed by the orders of Mūsā b. 'Isā. Both al-Ḥādī and Muḥammad b. Sulaymān were indignant when they heard of the execution of al-Ḥasan, and Mūsā's property was confiscated by al-Ḥādī's orders.<sup>4</sup> Some historians describe al-Ḥādī as unwilling to kill the 'Alids.<sup>5</sup> This may be partly true, but he did not hesitate to treat the 'Alid

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 229b-230a; Ma'arīf, p.380; Maqātil, p.302; F.H.A., p.285; Tab., III, p.559; Muruj, VI, p.226. cf. Muntakhab (fol. 131a) where it is maintained that al-Ḥusayn did not fall in battle but was executed; see also Moscatti, op.cit., pp. 12-13, E.I.,<sup>2</sup> (Fakhkh).

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 230a; Tab., III, pp. 561, 562; Nujūm, p.432.

<sup>3</sup> Due to the heavy loss among the 'Alids in Fakhkh, the event was considered by the 'Alid partisans as the most tragic one after Karbala in 60 A.H. (Tab. III, p.559, Maqātil, pp. 302-304). Although Mūsā al-Kāzim declined to support al-Ḥusayn's revolt (Maqātil, p.299), some accounts represent him as being persecuted by al-Ḥādī (al-Fuḡul al-Muḥimma, fol. 168b; 'Amīlī, 4/2, p.31). On al-Kāzim's relations with the 'Abbasids see further: Maqātil, pp. 331-6; Firaq, pp. 67, 71-72; Rijāl, pp. 262, 365-70, 372, 226 ff; Tab., III, p.649; Athīr, VI, pp. 58-59; Wafayat, 3, p.463 (English trans.), Cairo ed. vol. 3/p.13; 'Amīlī, vol. I, p.58, Vol. 4, pt. 2, pp. 3-7. al-Mufīd, al-Irshad, pp. 288ff.

partisans harshly. They became, in fact, the object of terrible persecution in Madīna and Kūfa. At Madīna, their houses and trees were destroyed, and their properties confiscated; at Kūfa, they were made to suffer under strict control. Despite the pledge given to them that their freedom would be returned, al-Hādī had a number of captives executed and hanged at Bāb al-Jisr in Baghdad.<sup>1</sup> One of al-Hādī's Mawālī, Mubāarak al-Turkī, was even reduced in rank and had his property confiscated when it came to al-Hādī's ears that he had been reluctant to fight al-Ḥusayn.<sup>2</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.559 citing Muḥammad b. Ṣālih.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, pp. 560, 567, citing Aṣma'ī, Ka'anakum wal'lāhi ji'tum bī ra'si Taghutīn min 'l-tawāghīt. Inna aqalla ma ajzikum bihi an aḥrumakum min Jawa'izakum; see Muruj (p.268) where he uses the words "the head of a Turk or a Daylamite instead of Taghur", Shafā', p.185.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 560, 563, citing al-Mufaḍḍal b. Sulaymān.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., p.563; F.H.A., p.287.

## Chapter V

OTHER OPPOSITION MOVEMENTSIN THE EARLY 'ABBĀSĪD PERIOD

## (a) The pro-Umayyād opposition movement

"When the Syrian Qaysite tribal chief Manṣūr b. Ja'una al-'Amirī heard the caliph al-Manṣūr who was addressing the Syrians saying 'Praise God who has taken the plague from you in our reign.', he replied "Surely God is too just to give us both you /the 'Abbāsids/ and plague."

/Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh  
Dimashq, III, 391/

The Syrians who had failed to respond to Marwān's appeals were soon to realize that, with the passing of the Umayyads, they had lost their privileged position. Though indignant, they resigned themselves to their fate for a while but soon risings broke out in many places in Syria and the Jazīra.

The 'Abbāsids are charged by several historians with having committed, in their obsession with revenge for their own and their cousins the 'Alids' wrongs, drastic and sensational acts intended to be symbolic. The conflicting and confused accounts of the chroniclers differ on the attitude of the early 'Abbāsids towards the Umayyads and their partisans. This confusion is partly due to various pro-'Abbāsīd, pro-'Alid and pro-Umayyad sympathies which in one way or another affected the narrative in that transitional period. For instance, 'Abbāsīd and even pro-'Alid accounts ascribe the acts of the caliphs to motives of revenge for the martyrs of Ahl al-Bayt such as Zayd, Yaḥya and Ibrāhīm the Imām. Sometimes pro-'Alid accounts eager to discredit the 'Abbāsids present them as tolerant towards the Umayyads but cruel towards the 'Alids. Pro-Umayyad accounts try to magnify the cruelties of the 'Abbāsids and exaggerate the extent to which the Umayyads were victimized. Conversely several scattered but accidental accounts bear witness to the responsible policy of the 'Abbāsids, especially after the transitional period. Thus it is very difficult to deduce the truth from such involved accounts. The generalization, vagueness and

1

repetitiveness of earlier accounts present another difficulty. Certain events are attributed to more than one person. The descriptions of the scenes of "massacres" in different places such as Abī Fuḡrus and Ḥīra are often so similar that they must be treated with caution as they may be different versions of one event. The discrepancies in the number of the victims and their names also point in that direction. Reports represent Abū 'l 'Abbās, Dā'ūd b. 'Alī the governor of the Ḥijāz and Sulaymān b. 'Alī the governor of Baḡra in two contrasting ways, as passionate, tolerant and protective towards the Umayyads, and on the other hand as terrible avengers. Kūfī's<sup>2</sup> pro-'Alid sympathies are apparent in this respect. He stresses the rôle of early 'Abbāsids as avengers of 'Alid martyrs. However there is an element of superficiality and generalization in his accounts in this respect. Early chroniclers disagree on this topic. Later<sup>3</sup> chroniclers exaggerate the picture of the massacres and persecutions.

As to modern scholars the balance is more tipped in favour of the Umayyads who are pitied. Al-Zayyāt and Kurd 'Alī<sup>4</sup> accuse the 'Abbāsids of

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 280; Azdī, fols. 116, 119; Akhbār Majmū'a, vol. I, p.47. Ibn 'Adhārī, vol. I, pp. 63ff. Muq., fol. 53a.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fols. 232a, 234b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.425. Yawmun Ka Yawmī 'l Ḥusayn /b. 'Alī/ wa la Sawā'.

<sup>3</sup> Athīr, vol. V, pp. 329 ff; Fakhri, Cairo ed., pp. 120-121; Muq., fol. 53a; al-I'lam, p.86. Akhbār Majmū'a, pp. 46-54.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Tashayyū'li Mu'awiya..., Mashriq, 1928, p.441; Khiṭaṭ al-Shām, pp. 173-174. See also Mazā'im..., Mashriq, 1948, p.161.

executing a large scale plan of bloodshed and atrocities against the Umayyads. Welhausen<sup>1</sup> depending almost exclusively on Tabarī as his chief source naturally accepted that certain incidents such as that of Nahr Abī Fuḡus, and that at Abū 'l 'Abbās' court had really happened, but suspected additional descriptive details of the accounts of these massacres which are not mentioned in Tabarī. Lammens in his sympathy for the Umayyads, had exaggerated the persecution suffered by them and presented Syria at the advent of the 'Abbāsids as a blood bath. He stated that the 'Abbāsids literally executed the plan suggested by a poet: "Unsheathe your sword raise the whip, May God not find an Umayyad on earth any more".<sup>2</sup> Spuler<sup>3</sup> sees in these cruelties the reason why the caliph Abū 'l 'Abbās was named al-Saffāḥ. Al-Jūmard<sup>4</sup> explains the "great purge" in terms of "Persians against Arabs", he stresses that Sh'ūbī hands were behind the scene conducting the massacres. Moscati<sup>5</sup> believes that the massacre of the Umayyads is constituted by four different episodes: that of Damascus, that of Nahr Abī Fuḡrus, that of the Ḥijāz and that of Baḡra. He ex-

---

<sup>1</sup>The Arab Kingdom., pp. 562ff; see also Dūnī, 'Aḡr., p.59.

<sup>2</sup>Le Sofīānī, B.I.F.A.O., vol. 21, 1923, p.132.

<sup>3</sup>Irān., p.45.

<sup>4</sup>Abū Ja'far al-Mansūr. pp. 118-128.

<sup>5</sup>"Le Massacre des Umayyades....," Arch. Or., 1950, pp. 101-102.

plains "The fall of the Umayyads was the signal which unleashed vengeance wherever they found themselves and not in one place only, they were tracked down and killed".

Regarding the massacre of Nahr Abī Fuḡrus which took place late in 132/750, Balādhurī<sup>1</sup> states that 'Abdallah b. 'Alī granted aman to the Umayyads, summoned them to Nahr Abī Fuḡrus and had them killed. Tabarī<sup>2</sup> briefly mentions that 72 Umayyads were killed there. A detailed account of the massacre is related by the author of the Imāma wa'l Siyāsa, Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī.<sup>3</sup> According to them, 'Abdallah b. 'Alī invited about 80 Umayyads and when they came to the party he presented them with gifts. But while the poet al-'Abdī recited his qasīda, he had them battered to death by the Khurasānīs. Then 'Abdallah had them covered with sheets and had his meal served on them while some of them were still groaning in mortal agony. Among them were veteran Umayyads such as 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. Sulaymān b. 'Abd 'l-Malik and 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mu'āwiya b. Hishām. The latter, however, was warned and fled.

All authorities agree that the massacre of Nahr Abī Fuḡrus did take place, but they differ on the number of the victims. Ansāb and Aghānī do not give numbers at all,<sup>4</sup> Tabarī followed by Ibn 'Asākir cited by al-

---

<sup>1</sup>Ansāb, fols. 761a-761b; Muq., fol. 239b.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.51.

<sup>3</sup>Imāma, pp. 231-235; Ya'qūbī, II, p.425; Murūj, VI, p.75; Tanbīh, p.329; Moscati, "Les Massacre...." op.cit., pp. 100-101.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 761b; Agh., vol. 4, p.94.



'Aynī give the number as 72,<sup>1</sup> while Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn Qutayba and Ya'qūbī, followed by others, assess it at around 80.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, only a few names of the victims are mentioned by the chroniclers. The geneologists mention a series of names of victims of Abī Fuṣrus, but their total number amount to about half the figure given by the chroniclers.<sup>3</sup> They geneologists also mention other victims of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī without the explicit mention of Nahr Abī Fuṣrus,<sup>4</sup> but in no case does the total number of the names reach that given by the chroniclers. As to the name of the perpetrator, nearly all authorities agree that it was 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.<sup>5</sup> But was the massacre perpetrated by the caliph's orders or on 'Abdallah's own initiative? According to Kūfī, Ya'qūbī and the author of al-'Uyūn wa'l hadā'iq, it was the caliph who ordered 'Abdallah to execute every Umayyad he caught.<sup>6</sup> Although this policy was advantageous for the new state which was trying to establish itself, it is difficult to believe, judging by the nature of Abū 'l 'Abbās whose mildness, patience and willingness to compromise are stressed by many historians,<sup>7</sup> that he was capable of such an act. These accounts had the stamp of pro-'Alid fabrications.

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.51; 'Aynī, fol. 10b; Fakhrī, p.134.

<sup>2</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 280, Ḥabīb, p.485; 'Uyūn, I, p.207; Imāma, p.235; Ma'arif, p.272; Dīna, p.364; F.H.A., p.207; Khayyāṭ, vol. 8, p.10.

<sup>3</sup>Jamharat, pp. 80, 81, 82, 83, 95, 96, 120, 430.

<sup>4</sup>Op.cit., p.82; Zubayrī, vol. 1, p.165.

<sup>5</sup>Compare 'Uyūn where the name of al-Mansūr is given as the perpetrator, but subsequently mentions that of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī which proves that the former's name was a mistake. (I, pp. 206-7). According to Dīnawārī (p.364) the perpetrator was 'Abd al-Malik al-Azdī.

<sup>6</sup>Kūfī, fol. 230b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.427; F.H.A., p.206.

<sup>7</sup>Imāma, p.235; Bād, vol. 6, p.99.

It is more probable that 'Abdallah acted on his own initiative<sup>1</sup> in putting the Umayyads to death. It was Abū 'l 'Abbās who wrote to his uncle 'Abdallah ordering him not to kill any Umayyad without his permission.<sup>2</sup>

In Damascus 'Abdallah also seems to have taken a symbolic and sensational revenge on the bodies of the late Umayyad caliphs. Tabarī is silent about that; Balādhurī, Kūfī and Ya'qūbī agree that 'Abdallah violated the tombs of all Umayyad caliphs with the exception of 'Umar II,<sup>3</sup> but found nothing in the graves except bones and skulls, apart from Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik whose body was more or less intact. To revenge his grandfather, 'Alī the 'Abbāsīd whom Hishām had once flogged, 'Abdallah flogged Hishām's body. Then he burnt the bones of the Umayyad caliphs and threw their ashes in the air. This symbolic act was mainly political, intended as a revenge for the Hashimite "martyrs", but no doubt it enraged the Syrians who considered the Umayyad dynasty their own dynasty and the Umayyad caliphs as the caliphs of Islam. Their anger is exemplified by a woman from Damascus who shouted "Oh, 'Abdallah, the sheep is not hurt by flogging after slaughter".<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>See Ansāb, fol. 80lb; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 28, 285.

<sup>2</sup>Imāma, p.235.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 761b; Kūfī, fol. 230b., citing Madā'inī; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 427-8; Murūj, V, pp. 471f.

<sup>4</sup>Aynī, citing 'Umar b. Shabba, fol. 10.a.

The fall of Damascus was followed by a massacre and pillage for three days. Dīnawārī attributes it to the orders of Abū 'Awn al-Azdī while Ibn Ḥabīb, Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī state that its perpetrator was 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.<sup>1</sup> However Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī disagree on the time of Damascus' pillage; the former place it before and the latter after the events of Nahr Abī Fuḡrus. The former appears more acceptable as the 'Abbāsids conquered Damascus before Palestine when they were pursuing Marwān II. However the people of Damascus bear an equal share of the responsibility for these riots as according to Kūfī and Azdī,<sup>2</sup> the fighting started between the two rival groups Yamen and Qays even before the Khurasānī army entered the city.

In the Ḥijāz the governor Dā'ūd b. 'Alī is said to have killed a number of Umayyads by order of Abū 'l 'Abbās.<sup>3</sup> It seems strangely incongruous with Dā'ūd's proclaimed policy on his arrival at Mecca which was marked with assurances and friendly overtures<sup>4</sup> that he suddenly killed a number of Umayyads at Baḡ Marr without even indicating their numbers, their names or what they were accused of. Ya'qūbī<sup>5</sup> simply states that Dā'ūd promised aman to all people of the Ḥijāz, but then turned to the Umayyads and killed a number of them in Mecca. Then he

---

<sup>1</sup> Ḥabīb, pp. 485-6; Dīna, p.364; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 42-5-7; Murūj, V, pp. 471f, VI, pp. 75f.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 228b; Azdī, fol. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 751; Kūfī, fol. 230; Tab, III, p.73; Tanbīh, p.329, where the number of the victims is 80, the same as the episode of Nahr Abī Fuḡrus. See also 'Iqd, citing Aṣma'ī, vol. 2, p.188.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, fol. 751a.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 421-422.

sent another group with irons to Tā'if where they were executed or imprisoned. At Madīna he did the same. Dā'ūd also sent Ḥammād b. al-Abrāṣ to al-Muthanna b. Yazīd b. Hubayra in al-Yamāma and had him assassinated.<sup>1</sup> What renders the Mecca massacre more complicated is that this episode has two features in common with the incident of Nahr Abū Fuḡrus, namely the assembly of the Umayyads and the entry of a poet whose name, it should be pointed out, is different from that at Nahr Abī Fuḡrus. At any rate, the vagueness of the accounts as related by historians arouses doubts as to the authenticity of the details of the event which must have happened on a smaller scale. Earlier genealogists mention single victims,<sup>2</sup> which seems to confirm this view.

Baḡra, as has already been mentioned, resented the 'Abbāsīd authority from the very beginning. The unrest did not cease. The first 'Abbāsīd governor Sofyān b. Mu'āwiya al-Muhallabī was dismissed in favour of 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-Muhallabī who was replaced by Sulaymān b. 'Alī. The latter was mild by nature. Balādhurī and Tabarī<sup>3</sup> stress his fair treatment of the Umayyads, a great number of them were already living there. Balādhurī states "They were not so safe anywhere as in

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 751b, qālū.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, fol. 19b; Zubayrī, pl83; Jamharat, p.69, 74; See Agh. (4, p.94) mentions only one victim, while Khalifa mentions seven victims (Tārīkh, fol. 285).

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 804b; Tab., III, p.21.

Baṣra".<sup>1</sup> He gave shelter to many Umayyads, as well as Umayyad partisans.<sup>2</sup> The caliph wrote to him ordering him to confiscate the property of the family of Ziyād b. Abī Sofyān Sulaymān asked the head of the family of Ziyād to surrender part of his property to him as he wished "To prevent suspicions and demands on the part of Abū 'l 'Abbās".<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, Aghānī contains a tradition on the ill treatment meted out by Sulaymān b. 'Alī to the Umayyads, who were dragged by their legs and left to die in the streets of Baṣra.<sup>4</sup> Later chroniclers copy the same account with much elaboration.<sup>5</sup> Although this could have happened in the early days of the 'Abbāsīd régime in Baṣra when the Umayyad partisans were still active it is inconceivable that it could have happened under Sulaymān's governorship. Several Umayyads, in fact, were still living and prospering under Sulaymān's governorship. If the account of 'Utbī is to be believed Sulaymān even procured a general amnesty from the caliph to the effect that every Umayyad who took refuge with Sulaymān would be safe. That is why Abū Muslim used to call Sulaymān Kahf al-'Ubbāq<sup>6</sup> (i.e. the cave of those who run away).

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 753b.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 754a; Futūh, vol. I, p.429; 'Iqd, vol. 2, p.151, citing 'Amr b. Mu'āwiya.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 753b.

<sup>4</sup> Agh., vol. 4, p.95.

<sup>5</sup> Athīr, vol. 5, p.175; Abū 'l Fida, vol. 2, p.224; Akhbār Majmū'a, vol. 1, pp. 46f.

<sup>6</sup> 'Iqd, citing al-'Utbī on the authority of 'Amr b. Mu'āwiya, vol. 2, p.151.

According to Kūfī<sup>1</sup> a group of Umayyads fled to Irāq to take refuge with Abū 'l 'Abbās. They, headed by Sulaymān b. Hishām b. 'Abd al-Mālik, visited Abū 'l 'Abbās declaring their loyalty. They recalled their close kinship and the caliph did not deter them from frequenting his court. However, it was not long before Sudayf b. Maymūn the poet and the Mawla of Banī Hashim visited the 'Abbāsīd court. The 'Alīds, wishing to avenge their martyrs, persuaded Sudayf to recite a qaṣīda with the object of provoking the caliph to kill the Umayyads. The tone of the qaṣīda was aggressive and recalled the killing of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, Zayd b 'Alī and Ibrāhīm the Imām, and also implied to the caliph that the Umayyad outward show of goodwill was prompted by their fear and that at heart they hated the 'Abbāsīds. The poet urged the caliph to dispose of old and young alike, which the caliph consequently did. Kūfī gives their number as being the same as that of the victims of Nahr Abī Fuṣrus, about 80, then, significantly, he goes on to relate the same acts which occurred at the massacre of Nahr Abī Fuṣrus, namely the laying of the table cloths over the dead bodies and then the repast, an obvious confusion of the two events. Iṣbahānī<sup>2</sup> also relates the details of the Nahr Abī Fuṣrus incident as if it happened at the caliph's court, with few additional details such as the courageous reply of one of the Umayyads present. According to Kūfī they were all killed with the ex-

---

<sup>1</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233b, 234b.

<sup>2</sup> Agh., vol. 4, pp. 93-94, 95-6.

ception of Sulaymān b. Hishām and his two sons, while Iṣbahānī mentions 'Abd al-'Azid b. 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz as the only survivor. Later historians<sup>1</sup> only copy the same version from early accounts, but it is interesting to point out that Ibn al-Athīr is puzzled by the confusion. He attributes the massacre of about 80 Umayyads to 'Abdallah b. 'Ali but adds "It is said that the perpetrator was the caliph Abū 'l 'Abbās and not 'Abdallah b. 'Alī."

Consequently we have two alternatives: either, that no execution was ordered at the court of Abū 'l 'Abbās or else that it is a question of two different episodes. The second alternative is more probable. First because it is supported by the authority of al-Haytham b. 'Adī, secondly because the names mentioned, such as the poet Sudayf b. Maymūn and Sulaymān b. Hishām do not coincide, and thirdly because the scene al-Hīra is different. It seems therefore that an actual incident at Abū 'l 'Abbās' court has been partly confused with that of Nahr Abī Fuṣrus by the erroneous attribution of several elements of the episode of Nahr Abī Fuṣrus.<sup>2</sup> However, in so far as these two incidents are concerned, the confusion is due, not to the attribution of a single fact to several persons in different places, but to the attribution of several elements of one fact to another similar fact. In all probability, the name of the perpetrator, "'Abdallah" which was the name of both the caliph and his uncle and the laqab

---

<sup>1</sup> Kāmil, vol. 4, p.8; Athīr, vol. V, p.175; Iqd. II, pp. 355-7; Fakhri, pp. 132-33.

<sup>2</sup> Moscati, "Le Massacre...", op.cit., pp. 101 f.

"al-Saffāh" which was again ascribed to both of them have partly led to the confusion. Also likely to cause confusion was the affinity of the episodes, the presence of several poets and the citation of fragments of unknown provenance. The episode of Hira, however, keeps all its characteristic elements, the perpetrator al-Saffāh, the victims Sulaymān b. Hishām with several Umayyads and the poet Sudayf b. Maymūn.

Sulaymān b. Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik the Umayyad rebel against Marwān II was first given amān and was favoured by Abū 'l 'Abbās.<sup>1</sup> However, this amān was not long lived. Despite the assistance he lent during the crucial moments of the 'Abbāsid revolution,<sup>2</sup> he was considered a potentially dangerous Umayyad as he had ambitions to the caliphate in Marwan's time.<sup>3</sup> Kūfī relates that after the poet Sudayf had recited his above mentioned aggressive poem Sulayman b. Hishām was filled with apprehension and sought to discover the caliph's attitude. The conversation terminated by the caliph ordering Abū al-Jahm, his chief of police, and 'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Azdī, his chief of guards, to execute Sulaymān and his two sons.<sup>4</sup> Balādhurī<sup>5</sup> attributes the prompting for the execution to Abū Muslim who wrote to the caliph "If you treat enemy and friend alike, how /lit. when/ shall the loyal

---

<sup>1</sup> Apart from Sulaymān b. Hishām and his sons, the caliph is said to have executed two or three Umayyads who had been taken captives after the fall of Damascus. (Khalifa, Tārīkh, fol. 280; Habīb, p.486).

<sup>2</sup> Imāna, p. 230; Ansāb, fol. 795b; Kūfī, fols. 231b, 232b.

<sup>3</sup> Imāna, pp. 227-30; See also Tab., II, 1980; 'Asākir, vol. 6, p.286.

<sup>4</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233a; Habīb, p.486; Fakhri, p.133.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 796a, citing Haytham b. 'Adī.



[man] hope for favour from you and how shall the enemy be afraid of you?" It is rather interesting to note that a late historian, Ibn Taghribardī<sup>1</sup> confirms Balādhurī's view of Abū Muslim's rôle in Sulaymān's execution in a rather different way. He states that Abū Muslim wrote to the caliph "A branch has been left of the cursed tree [the Umayyads]" referring to Sulaymān, but when the caliph did not take heed Abū Muslim persuaded Sudayf to recite the qasīda which was the cause of Sulaymān's death. One wonders whether this was another of the intrigues fictitiously attributed to Abū Muslim, or whether Abū Muslim was really involved in it since the executioner was Abū al-Jahm<sup>2</sup> who was known to be his right hand at the caliph's court. The question arises who operated the levers of power at that time, the caliph in Irāk or Abū Muslim in Khurāsan. It is certainly safe to say that Abū Muslim who was by now the dominant figure in Khurāsan seems to have had much to say in the policy of the state. It is, therefore, not surprising that Abū Muslim instigated the caliph to the murder of the Umayyad Sulaymān b. Hishām.

Al-Sufyānī and the pro-Umayyad risings in Syria:

Owing to its central position in the Umayyad empire Syria had for almost a century enjoyed certain privileges. . . But not very long

---

<sup>1</sup> Nujūm, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233a.

after the 'Abbāsīd victory the Syrians came to realize that they had lost their special status in the Islamic empire. In fact, the Umayyad ties with Syria went back to the time of the Jāhiliyya. As a commercial family in the Ḥijāz, the Umayyads had a vital interest in Syria. In Islamic times, the Arab conquest of Syria was led almost exclusively by Umayyad commanders, and shortly afterwards Mu'āwiyā b. Abī Sofyān ruled the province as a governor then as a caliph of the whole Arab empire.

With the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty, the Syrians felt frustrated and even suspected as supporters of the superseded dynasty. The power had shifted to Irāq and Syria was no longer the main province but one of the provinces. This change had many important, especially economic, consequences. Although the cities of the Jazīra and al-Shām had paid lip service to the powerful Khurāsānīs who were pursuing Marwān many of them now turned against the 'Abbāsīds and closed their gates to the newly appointed governors Abū Ja'far (later al-Manṣūr) and 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. The Syrians were not against the Umayyads in general, but against Marwān in particular who, deeply conscious of <sup>the</sup> unconventional, not to say questionable way in which he had attained power, turned against all potential rivals of his own family and applied, in his last years, tribal policies, throwing in his lot with the Qaysites against the Yamanites. The Kalbites who had been the mainstay of the Umayyads were gravely discontented with Marwān's intensive tribal policy and refused him their support at a critical moment.

Once Marwān had gone, the Syrians entertained new hopes of regaining their lost privileged position and reinstalling an Umayyad caliph. New messianic hopes appeared among the Syrians. The myth of al-Sofyānī, i.e. the Saviour of the Syrians which had already appeared probably after Mu'āwiya the II's death and the take-over of power by the Marwānids in 64/683, re-emerged among them and was fostered mainly by the Kalbites.<sup>1</sup> However, the resentment of the Syrians expressed itself not only in sectarian risings but also in such risings of purely political nature.

The first rising against the 'Abbāsids was political without any connection with the Sofyānī; it occurred in the district of al-Balqā' and Ḥawrān, and was led by one of Marwān's commanders Ḥabīb b. Murra al-Murri. The reason for his rising was merely that he feared for himself and his tribe. Tribal chiefs such as Ḥabīb al-Murri were, at that transitional period, anxious for the survival of their followers and their welfare. 'Abdallah b. 'Alī the governor of Syria besieged the rebels but soon had to come to terms with them when he heard of the dangerous rising of Qinnissin and Aleppo.<sup>2</sup> Trying to account for the latter rising, chroniclers attributed it to the insolence of one of the Khurasānī commanders who dared to propose marriage to a daughter of Maslama b. 'Abd 'l-Malik or to his insulting behaviour towards them.<sup>3</sup> This enraged one

<sup>1</sup>On the traditions concerning al-Sofyānī, see Fitan, fols. 75a ff. For the origin of the myth of Sofyānī, see H. Lammens, "Le Sofiani", op.cit. pp. 136, 141; see also Guidi, "Origin dei Yazidi..." R.S.O., 1932, pp. 274ff.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, pp. 55-6 citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.52; Ansāb, fol.801a.

of Marwān's close associates Abū al-Ward Majza' a b. al-Kawthar al-Kallābī who raised his white banners against the 'Abbāsids. Whether true or not this incident was only a pretext for a disappointed Syrian tribal chieftain to justify his rebellion. He called upon other Syrian cities to join in the rising. Ḥimṣ and the Kalbite tribes of Tadmur (Palmira) immediately joined. Abū Muḥammad Ziyād b. 'Abdallah b. Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyā, who led the Kalbites of Tadmur, was proclaimed as the Sofyānī,<sup>1</sup> the awaited saviour who would restore the Umayyads to power and deliver the Syrians from their oppressed position. In his exaggerated description of Syria under the 'Abbāsids Lammens<sup>2</sup> attributes Abū Muḥammad's assumption of the leadership of the revolt not so much as to his personal merits as to the contention that "They/Syrians/ must have noticed that the 'Abbāsids had not left them too much choice. At that time it would have been difficult to discover in Syria two Marwānids who were of the age to carry arms." The claim is difficult to accept for only a short time later Marwānids led or appeared in risings in Syria itself.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī was an active political figure of the late Umayyad epoch.<sup>4</sup> He was very conscious of the deteriorating status of the Umayyad state and was desperately trying to restore order in Syria. In the chaotic situation which had arisen after

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 51-45, citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr; Ansāb, fol. 801a.

<sup>2</sup>Lammeus, op.cit., p.132.

<sup>3</sup>See below, p.326

<sup>4</sup>?

the murder of al-Walīd II he rightly foresaw that Marwān was the best man to save the Umayyad throne, it was, therefore, due to his own initiative that Marwān was installed on the throne.<sup>1</sup> But Abū Muḥammad's relations with Marwān deteriorated and the suspicious Marwān imprisoned Abū Muḥammad with other Umayyad princes. Abū Muḥammad did not free himself when he had the opportunity after the defeat of Marwān at the battle of great Zāb. But the latter freed him on his withdrawal before the Khurasānīs.<sup>2</sup> The clever politician Abū Muḥammad retreated to Tadmur and concealed himself for a while to avoid the ups and downs of the political upheaval at that critical time. The choice of Abū Muḥammad to the leadership of the present revolt was, therefore, due to personality rather than the absence of other Marwānid figures. The Sofyānī legend<sup>3</sup> was more popular among the Kalbites of Syria and was of course limited to the descendants of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya since the latter had a Kalbite mother.

By the middle of 132/751 prospects of the revolt seemed to be bright, Syria rose against the 'Abbāsīd authority. Balqā', Damascus, Qimīsrīn, Ḥims, Ḥalab and Tadmur, as well as other cities of the Jazīra, were in a state of fury. Both the leading figures of the rising, Abū

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., II, p.1892.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.43, citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>3</sup>Lammens, op.cit., pp. 140-141.

Muhammad and Abū al-Ward, agreed to join hands. The caliph ordered 'Abdallah b. 'Alī to proceed immediately against the rebels and as the Khurasānī troops were scattered over many cities of the Jazīra and Syria the caliph sent from Irāk new reinforcements of 7,000 led by 'Abd al-Šammad b. 'Alī and 5,000 led by Dhu'yb b. al-'Ash'ath.<sup>1</sup> It was obviously an Irākī-Khurasānī occupation of Syria and the Syrians seemed determined to defy the 'Abbāsids. The first engagements between the two camps were in favour of the Syrians who defeated the 'Abbāsīd vanguard led by 'Abd al-Šammad b. 'Alī. But 'Abdallah b. 'Alī with his Khurasānī commanders such as Humayd al-Ṭā'ī, Basṣām b. Ibrāhīm and Khaffāf al-Māzinī crushed the Sofyānī rising at Marj al-Alkham in the last days of 133/July 751.<sup>2</sup> Abū al-Ward was killed in the battle with several hundred of his close associates, while Abū Muhammad retreated to Tadmur where he took refuge among his Kalbite supporters. Although militarily, the chances of the movement might have looked initially bright, its internal weakness was evident. There was first the rivalry between the tribal chief Abū al-Ward Majza'a al-Kalābī and Abū Muhammad al-Sofyānī. The former, a Qaysite tribal chief, wanted to have the upper hand over Abū Muhammad, while utilizing his reputation to gather more support for the revolt. In fact he intended to keep Abū Muhammad as a figurehead. But the shrewd politician and brave man

<sup>1</sup>Tab., citing Madā'inī, III, p.54; see also Ansāb, fols. 801b.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.53, citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr.

Abū Muḥammad was too ambitious to let himself be used in that way. Once he reached Qinnisrīn from Tadmur he got hold of the whole movement, keeping Abū al-Ward as commander of the army. Tabarī calls Abū al-Ward al-Mutawālī li amr al-‘Askar wa Ṣāhib al-qitāl and Ibn al-‘Adīm gives him the title of Mudabbir al-jaysh.<sup>1</sup> There was secondly the tribal divisions and antagonisms within the 40,000 troops who faced the united ‘Abbāsīd army. The left wing of Abū Muḥammad's army consisted of Kalbites under al-Aṣḡagh b. Dhu‘āla al-Kalbī, and the right wing of Qaysites led by Abū al-Ward.<sup>2</sup> It must also be noted that the Qaysites of Qinnisrīn were the mainstay of Marwān's power in Syria,<sup>3</sup> and the inter-tribal antagonism between the Qaysite and the Kalbite Syrians was too deeply rooted to be reconciled. This was apparent even after the defeat. Abū Muḥammad followed only by Kalbite partisans retreated unmolested to Tadmur. Both armies suffered heavy losses and ‘Abdallah refrained from punishing the rebel cities which surrendered readily.<sup>4</sup>

Politically the rising of al-Sofyānī had dangerous consequences and far reaching effects on the ‘Abbāsīd authority over Syria and Jazīra as it gave a new ray of hope to the Umayyad partisans in many other cities. In Damascus ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-A‘la al-Azdī rebelled against

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.53; Zubda, vol. I, p.55. While al-Sofyānī is called Ra‘īs and Muqaddam al-Jaysh wa Ṣāhibahū, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>Ansāb, fol. 801b.

<sup>3</sup>D. Dennett, op.cit., pp. 233f, 241ff.

<sup>4</sup>Tab. III, p.54, citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr. Umayyad risings against the ‘Abbāsīds are often called Tabyīd, i.e. the hoisting of the white banners, but this term was by no means confined to the Umayyad rebels. Muslim historians tend to throw together most rebels against ‘Abbāsīd authority in one category calling them Mubayyida and their rising Tabyīd. However some Umayyad rebels especially in Syria, chose red. (cont.)

the 'Abbāsīd governor of the city 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Ṭā'ī and massacred a great part of the Khurasānī garrison which was 4,000 strong, and plundered their provisions.<sup>1</sup> In the Jazīra,<sup>2</sup> Raqqa, Qarqīsiya, al-Ruhha, Sumaysāt and Dārā threw off the Abbāsīd yoke. Umayyad partisans gathered round Ishāq b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī, a popular tribal chief and Marwān's previous governor of Armenia who had his headquarters at Sumaysāt. He was helped by his brother and fellow rebel Bakkar al-'Uqaylī as well as the tribal chief of the ever resentful tribe Rabī'a. Bedouins readily joined the rebels and increased the bulk of their number. The 'Abbāsīd governor Abū Ja'far 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad was in a precarious position as the Khurasānī garrison of Ḥarrān was besieged by the rebels who were led by the Umayyad Muḥammad b. Muslama b. 'Abd al-Malik.<sup>3</sup> However, after crushing the Sofyānī rising 'Abdallah b. 'Alī was ordered to give help to the Khurasānī army in Jazīra.<sup>4</sup> The two characteristics of the pro-Umayyad Jazirite risings were that they lacked organisation, and that they were short-lived flaring up as swiftly as they subsided. Tabarī states, describing the rebels, "The rebels were undisciplined, scattered, and had neither a qa'id nor a head round which they could gather".<sup>5</sup> However, Ishāq al-'Uqaylī with 60,000 followers resisted the seige at Sumaysāt for seven months until he was convinced

---

(cont.) According to Balādhurī followed by Maqrizī, Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī adopted red when he revolted in 132. However, one finds accounts which describe the banner of al-Sofyānī rising as white. This confusion relates to the twofold aspect of that rising which had two prominent figures, Abū Muḥammad with Yamanite, and Abū 'l Ward with Qaysite support. The adoption of white by Abū 'l Ward is indicative of the friction existing between the two leaders.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.53.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, pp. 56-58 citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr; Ansāb, fols. 790a-790b.

<sup>3</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.425.



of the death of Marwān, then he surrendered and received the aman.<sup>1</sup> Abū Ja'far found it expedient to spare such an influential tribal chief and to gain his loyalty rather than to kill him. Ishāq al-'Uqaylī became one of the closest associates of the caliph at the court.

Meanwhile, according to Ibn al-'Adīm, another Sofyanid, al-'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah b. Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya, rebelled at Aleppo.<sup>2</sup> He put on red clothes. His rising, however, was soon crushed by Muqātil al-'Akkī, a Khurasānī commander who was sent by Abū Ja'far from Ḥarrān and took Aleppo by force. Another Marwānid, Abān b. Mu'āwiya b. Hishām with 4,000 followers rebelled at Sumaysāḥ. 'Abdallah b. 'Alī crushed him and took the city by force.<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to note that in their desperate defiance of the 'Abbāsīd authorities Umayyads joined even Kharijite rebellions,<sup>4</sup> on the other hand it had become the practice of every rising in Syria and Jazīra to choose an Umayyad and use him as a symbol of the revolt. Thus, when Bakr b. Ḥumayd al-Shaybānī rose against Abū Ja'far the 'Abbāsīd governor of the Jazīra he was joined by Muḥammad b. Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-'Azīz the Umayyad who was killed in the battle with the 'Abbāsīd troops.<sup>5</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.57.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.56 citing Aḥmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>1</sup>Op.cit., p.57.

<sup>2</sup>Zubda, vol. I, pp. 55-56.

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit., p.56.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fol. 790b.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.; cf. Tab., III, p.57.

It seems that the resentful Syria exercised a strange influence over several prominent 'Abbāsid partisans for they acquired mutinous tendencies and turned against the central régime in Irāq. Bassām b. Ibrāhīm, 'Abdallah b. 'Alī and Abū Muslim with several Khurāsānī commanders all rebelled respectively in Syria. Although these revolts have been dealt with elsewhere, it would not be amiss to note that the death of Abū 'l 'Abbās in 136/753-4 gave rise to fresh hopes. A new wave of unrest swept the province and culminated in the rising of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī which was adopted by the Syrians themselves. 'Abdallah's revolt was almost entirely a Syrian rising against the forces of Irāq and Khurāsān, not only by its location and sympathies but also by the forces it comprised. It emerges from Balādhurī<sup>1</sup> that the Syrian commanders in 'Abdallah's ranks encouraged him to rebel. Those commanders were, in fact, the same commanders who led the risings in Syria at the advent of the 'Abbāsid to power, such as Bakkar b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī and 'Uthmān b. Sarāqa al-Azdi, while several Khurāsānī commanders tried to warn him of the dissensions among the 'Abbāsids which would have an adverse effect on the fate of the new dynasty. It looked almost as if there were a common interest between 'Abdallah b. 'Alī and the Syrians. They both used each other to their own advantage; 'Abdallah to win the caliphate, the Syrians to take revenge on the Khurāsānīs and, presumably, through 'Abdallah to regain the lost status of their province from Irāq. But, as has already been shown, the chances for 'Abdallah b. 'Alī to be raised to power by

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 762a, citing Madā'inī.

such as anti-'Abbāsīd people were very meagre indeed.

However, it was in Egypt that the Marwānīd Daḥīyya b. Muṣ'ab b. al-Aṣḥab b. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam rebelled and claimed the caliphate.<sup>1</sup> His rising, in fact, started at al-Ṣa'īd in 165/781-2 but the 'Abbāsīd governor Ibrāhīm b. Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī (165/781-167/783) did not pay much attention to it. Al-Mahdī dismissed Ibrāhīm, and appointed Mūsa b. Muṣ'ab al-Khath'amī, but the latter's aim seems to have been to extract heavy taxes from the people, a policy which led to a revolt in al-Ḥawf al-Sharqī. Moreover, Daḥīyya seems to have had the support of the majority of the Arab tribe of Tajīb.<sup>2</sup>

Mūsa b. Muṣ'ab was not a popular governor and he did not have the support of tribal chiefs nor of religious figures such as al-Layth b. Sa'd nor of the army commanders who abandoned him on the battlefield.<sup>3</sup> In the battle of the 9th of Shawwāl in 168/784-85 Mūsa was killed and was succeeded by Usāma b. 'Amr whose efforts to crush Daḥīyya's rising were also in vain. Al-Mahdī was enraged by the persistence of the rebellion and chose the 'Abbāsīd al-Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī whose appointment was now confirmed by al-Ḥādī who had ascended the throne (169/785 A.D.).<sup>4</sup> Al-Faḍl left Syria for Egypt with loyal army units. He first

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, vol. V, p.185; Wulāt, pp. 123-130; Khiṭaṭ, vol. 2, pp. 93ff; Nujum, pp. 442, 447.

<sup>2</sup> Wulāt, p.126.

<sup>3</sup> Wulāt, pp. 124-125, 128; Khiṭaṭ, vol. 2, pp. 94f.

<sup>4</sup> Wulāt, pp. 129-130; Khiṭaṭ, vol. 2, p.95.

worked with energy to quell the disturbances in the Hawf before trying to face Daḥiyya in the south. Daḥiyya forces were obliged to retreat for the first time after having been defeated in several engagements. Finally Daḥiyya himself was captured and executed in Jamādī II 169. Egypt was secure and al-Faḍl rightly used to boast of having quelled inveterate disturbances.<sup>1</sup> Daḥiyya seems to have been an agitator rather than a rebel with clear cut objective. He figures in previous political disturbances.<sup>2</sup> His recent rising was obviously a rising of discontent with an Umayyad figure to symbolize that discontent. The real leaders were tribal chiefs of Tajīb and Azd such as Yūsuf b. Naṣīr al-Tajībī and Faṭḥ b. al-Ṣalṭ al-Azdī.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore there was no coherence among his partisans, besides the tribal element it included all other discontented groups such as the Berbers.<sup>4</sup>

It is worth noting that rebels with purely political allegiance to the Umayyads continued to rebel from time to time, e.g. Iṣḥāq b. Ismā'īl b. Shu'ayb rebelled in the reign of al-Mu'taṣim and seized Jazrān.<sup>5</sup> The Sofyānī movement<sup>6</sup> which was purely Syrian and more or less connected with the Yamanites also continued to express itself occasionally until it lost

---

<sup>1</sup> Khiṭaṭ, vol. 2, p.95; vol. 4, p.34.

<sup>2</sup> See for example the 'Alid disturbances of 144-145 (Wulāt, p.112)

<sup>3</sup> Wulāt, pp. 128-129.

<sup>4</sup> Op.cit., p. 130. Daḥiyya's head was exhibited at a public place in Baghdad

<sup>5</sup> Futūḥ, III, p.296 (Beirut edition).

<sup>6</sup> Asākir, vol. 6, pp. 125-126; Tab., III, pp. 1319, 2277; Lammens, op.cit., pp. 136-137; Kurd 'Alī, Khiṭaṭ al-Shām, pp. 183-185. See also on the question of possible connections between the Yazidis and the pro-Umayyad ghulw. Guidi, R.S.O., xiii, 1932, pp. 266-300.

all its religio-political meaning and only survived in the Hadīth collections.<sup>1</sup>

Judging in retrospect it should be stressed that as the 'Abbāsids had seized power by force with the help of a well-prepared da'wa, it was natural that they took every precautionary measure to keep the power in their hands. They were well aware that a remnant of the Umayyads would persist on fighting hoping to regain their lost power, as Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>4</sup> maintained that "people who lose authority do not lose the taste for it". Moreover, it was Ibn Khaldūn who pointed out that "a new state needs, at the advent of its power, to use force".<sup>2</sup> However, one can find examples of 'Abbāsīd tolerance exemplified by occasional scattered episodes, such as granting pardon to Syrian rebel cities, winning over influential Umayyad partisans, reported quite sporadically by chroniclers. It is this kind of unconsciously provided evidence that is most influential and authentic. It is our intention now to enumerate such latent evidence which points out to the 'Abbāsīd friendly overtures and expediency rather than their cruelties.

To begin with it is significant that the dramatic and cruel acts of the 'Abbāsīds took place, in fact, during the transitional period<sup>3</sup> notably

---

<sup>1</sup>Lammens, op.cit., p.143; Guidi, R.S.O., xiii, 1932, pp. 274ff.

<sup>2</sup>Risāla fī'l Ṣahāba, p.129. Muqaddima, vol. 2, p.633. The establishment of a new Umayyad power in Spain did in fact worry the 'Abbasids and must have influenced their attitude towards the members of the Umayyad family; see chapter VI. pp.387ff

<sup>3</sup>An account in Aghānī indeed recognizes that this period was an exceptionally instable period and calls it al-Fawra (vol. X, p.104).

in the lifetime of Marwān II when many of his prominent supporters were still holding out in different strongholds in Irāk, Jazīra and Syria itself. In our earlier accounts these cruel acts are disputed and confused not only in their details but even in their very occurrence. The fate of several Umayyad personalities is disputed. Authorities are, in fact, divided as to the perpetrators whether Marwān II, Abū 'l-'Abbās or Abdallah b. 'Alī or whether the victims met their death fighting in the battlefield at the great Zāb or Damascus.<sup>1</sup> The publicity of some of these deeds is due to their symbolic nature such as the desecration of the Umayyad tombs, the destruction of royal castles, a destruction which did not involve the community as it was only directed against centres<sup>2</sup> which had a political meaning. After all, late Muslim historians as well as some modern scholars speaking of 'Abbāsīd atrocities and large scale bloodshed in Syria tend to forget that the very same Syrians had shortly before the 'Abbāsīd accession suffered large scale losses at Marwān's own hands and many Umayyad personalities were killed or persecuted either by Marwān himself or by the Syrians themselves.<sup>3</sup> The body of Yazīd III is said to have been taken out of his grave and burnt by the Syrians, so that the 'Abbāsīd partisans were only following, so to say, a precedent set by the Syrians.

---

<sup>1</sup> Several examples of this kind are found throughout the historical accounts. The striking example in this respect is Abān b. Mu'āwiya and al-Walīd b. Mu'āwiya. See Ansāb, fol. 760a; Kufī, fol. 228b; Murūj, VI, p.

<sup>2</sup> Graber, "Umayyad palace...", S.I., 1963, p.11; see also Haywān, vol. 1, p.73; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p.116; Ibn Khurdadhiba, p.241.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp.43; II, 1910, 1913.

Umayyads are represented as being executed at the court of early 'Abbāsīd caliphs such as Abū 'l-'Abbās and al-Mahdī,<sup>1</sup> but if these accounts were authentic they would prove first and foremost the tolerance of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs who kept Umayyads at their court as close associates. Indeed several Umayyads were sahāba of Abū 'l-'Abbās, al-Mnaṣūr and al-Mahdī.<sup>2</sup>

One should remember that 'Abdallah's cruel acts in Syria took place when he was met with stubborn resistance on the part of the Syrians. He had hardly crushed one rebellion when he heard of a new one. If the account in Ansāb<sup>3</sup> is to be believed the massacre of Nahr Abī Fuṣṭus was ordered when 'Abdallah b. 'Alī was in a precarious position. During his stay in Palestine he learned of fresh outbreaks in his rear in Qinnisrin and Ḥims, he was enraged and consequently ordered the execution of a number of Umayyads. What happened was often less the fault of the caliph than due to the shortcomings of provincial governors. Previous Umayyad governors trying to gain 'Abbāsīd favour had turned against the Umayyads and killed them. 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān al-Fihri the governor of Ifriqiyya can be named as an example. Ifriqiyya was a little later the scene of violence conducted by the 'Abbāsīd governor Nuḥammad b. al Ash'ath al-Khuzā'i. He, presumably, had to face a pro-Umayyad disturbance, but managed with the help of the Khurasānī garrison to crush the rebels. Then he had all

---

<sup>1</sup> Kūfī, fol. 233a, 234b; Agh., vol. IX, p140.

<sup>2</sup> Zubayrī, pp. 290, 218; Wulāt, p.353; Muhallābī, Masālik, (in M.M.M. 4, 1948, pp. 57 ff.); Agh., 4, pp. 94-95; Tanūkhī, Mustajād, pp. 12-14; Tab., III, p.44): Jamharat, pp. 234, 235, 108, 76.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fol. 801a-801b; see also Tab., III, p.54.

bearers of Umayyad names, such as Mu'āwiya, Sofyān and Marwān, he found among the rebels executed apparently considering them potentially dangerous. For that reason he was immediately dismissed by al-Manṣūr.<sup>1</sup>

The memory of the Umayyads survived in the minds of their sympathizers, pro-Umayyad voices were sounded in the court, as well as society. In the words of an Umayyad partisan Abū Bakr b. 'Ayyāsh "The Umayyads did much good to the people".<sup>2</sup> Another Umayyad partisan said "We were with people [the Umayyads] who mixed with us".<sup>3</sup> Al-Manṣūr himself is reported to have stated "Favour them [the Umayyads] so they will experience under our rule what we experienced under theirs, and will be as well disposed towards us as we had been towards them..."<sup>4</sup> This account, whether authentic or not, does indicate the attitude of al-Manṣūr towards the Umayyads. Al-Manṣūr held high opinion of Mu'āwiya, 'Abd al-Malik and Hishām.<sup>5</sup> The last named was his favourite as a capable organism and a good administrator. Significantly al-Manṣūr seems to have been inspired in his policy by the Umayyad caliphs. In his critical moments, e.g. when he had to face Abū Muslim he compared himself with 'Abd 'l-Malik b. Marwān who had managed successfully to survive the difficult period at the inception of his reign. The latter too gave amnesty to many Umayyads

---

<sup>1</sup> Futūh, vol. 1, pp. 271-272, 275.

<sup>2</sup> Khaṭīb, vol. XIV, p.375; see also Kūfī, fols. 229b-230a.

<sup>3</sup> Asākir, vol. 4, p.47.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, fol. 95a; Amendroz, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.879.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, p. 172 (ed. Ahlwardt); Ansāb, fol. 553; Jahāzī, p.81; Ya'qūbī, II, p.466; Tab., III, p.401; Muruj, VI, p.167; Muq., fol.90b; Duwwal, fol. 110b.



such as Zayd b. 'l-Aṣḡagh, Muḡammad b. al-Ḥakam, Ibrāhīm b. Suhayl and 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān b. 'l Aṣḡagh who had fled with many others to Ifriqiyya in the time of the upheaval.<sup>1</sup> When the hiding place of Abū Muḡammad al-Sofyānī, the rebel of Syria who had fled to the Ḥijāz, was discovered by the 'Abbāsīd governor Ziyād al-Ḥārithī, the latter sent soldiers to arrest him. But the courageous Abū Muḡammad did not give in and fought unto death. Al-Manṣūr pardoned his partisans and freed his two sons.<sup>2</sup> It was also al-Manṣūr's policy to win over pro-Umayyad tribal chiefs and influential figures. One of them was Ishāq b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī who with typical unabashed Arab arrogance and pride defended the Umayyads at the 'Abbāsīd court.<sup>3</sup> He was favoured, it is said, because of his integrity in not standing his ground until he knew of the death of Marwān to whom he had sworn allegiance. In point of fact he had a considerable tribal following and was an influential figure in the Jazīra. Among other pro-Umayyad chieftains who were favoured by the 'Abbāsīds were: Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī, Manṣūr b. Jamhūr, Salm b. Qutayba al-Bāhīlī, Bakkār b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī and his brother 'Abd al-'Azīz, Talḡa b. Ishāq al-Kindī and al-Awzā'ī the faqīh.<sup>4</sup> In Baṣra the Umayyads seem to have enjoyed freedom and prosperity as early as the governorship of Sulaymān b. 'Alī.<sup>5</sup> If the account of the pro-'Abbāsīd

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.54 citing Aḡmad B. Zuhayr. Wulāt, citing Ibn 'Aqīr, p.99.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.54 citing Aḡmad b. Zuhayr.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fols. 794b-795a citing Madā'inī; Muq., citing Madā'inī, fol. 90a; Jamharat, p.275.

<sup>4</sup>Ansāb, fols. 806a, 806b, citing Abū 'Ubayda, fol. 782b; Tab., III, pp.65,73, 394-7; Iqd, vol. I, pp.161-163, vol.2, pp.166,129; Ibn al-Ḍaya, Mukāfat, p.155; Jamharat, p.428; Bughya, B.N., citing 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan, fols.93b,89a.

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.49 citing Aḡmad b. Thābit.

Jāhiz is authentic the Umayyads were haughtier than the Hāshimites in the Hāshimite realm.<sup>1</sup> The basis of Lammen's generalizations about the extermination of the Umayyads are thus questionable as, furthermore, many accounts speak of Umayyad offspring flourishing in Baṣra, al-Shām, al-Kūfa and Ifriqiyya.<sup>2</sup> Umayyads still enjoyed the privileges of having a rank (Martaba) and some of them only lost it in the reign of al-Musta'in in 250/864-5.<sup>3</sup>

Socially the Umayyads were indeed the equals of the 'Abbāsids. The latter did not miss the opportunity and showed their friendly intentions in this way too. Al-Manṣūr married Al-'Āliya bint 'Abd al-Raḥmān of the family of Abī 'l 'Iyṣ and had her sister married to his son Ja'far. Al-Mahdī, al-Rashīd and Muḥammad b. Sulaymān all had Umayyad wives too.<sup>4</sup> In poetry too one could find sufficient proofs of the restrained 'Abbāsīd policy towards the Umayyads. This is evident in the poem of Bashshār b. Burd.<sup>5</sup> Pro-Umayyad poets continued to express their views and occasionally praised the Umayyads without incurring 'Abbāsīd disfavour.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Rasā'il, (ed. Sandūbī), p.107.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, vol. 4, II, pp. 71, 74, 75-77, 147, 148, 153; al-Yamānī, Tārīkh al-Yaman, pp. 1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.1533; on Martaba see Futūh, vol. 2, p.416.

<sup>4</sup> Ansāb, vol. 4, II, p.169, 153; Jamharat, p.76.

<sup>5</sup> Dīwān, vol. 2, pp. 301-2.

<sup>6</sup> On the complaints of poets such as Abū 'l 'Abbās al-A'ma, Ibn al-Mawla, Ibn Harama and Bashshār b. Burd, see Agh., 4, pp. 91, 102ff; 'Asākir, 2, p.234; Haywan, I, p.300; Tab., III, p.508; Murūj, vol. 3, p.210.

Once the revolution was over and the 'Abbāsids firmly established, they tried to win the pro-Umayyad tribal groups and figures. Episodes of this kind though related at random by chroniclers imply the probability of the reverse or, at least, modify the alleged purge of the Umayyads. The 'Abbāsids seem to have preferred within limits of possibility expediency to force. This friendly policy is observable in Ibn al-Muqaffa's Risāla fi 'l Ṣahāba where the author advises al-Mansūr to adopt a fresh policy towards the Umayyads, to trust a group of them and regain their confidence. Ibn al-Muqaffa' suggests that the caliph should choose a group of them, and make them his close associates (khaṣṣa). This move, Ibn al-Muqaffa' continues, would divide the Syrians and make some of them pro-'Abbāsids. Ibn al-Muqaffa' then reminds the caliph that this policy was the very policy the Umayyad had adopted in Irāq. He also advises the caliph to distribute their Fay' among them, and enlist them in their Diwān. As to the danger of mutiny on their part Ibn al-Muqaffa' assures the caliph that "If justice were done to them they would not be expected to commit mistakes [and do] wrong."<sup>1</sup> Now Ibn al-Muqaffa' could not have recommended this approach had the political atmosphere not been propitious.

The essays of Jāhiz also throw a vivid light on the political climate since the 'Abbāsīd victory. Loyal to the 'Abbāsids, Jāhiz's tone was, naturally, different from that of Ibn al-Muqaffa'. Jāhiz states "the deeds and speeches of al-Mansūr... alone would suffice to match [the deeds of]

---

<sup>1</sup> Risāla fi 'l Ṣahāba, p.129. See also Goitein, "A turning point..." I.C., 1949, pp. 120ff.

the kings of Banī Marwān."<sup>1</sup> From this very example where Jāhiz attacks the Umayyads and desperately tries to show that the 'Abbāsids were superior to them in deeds and virtues one can deduce that the Umayyads though they lost their power did not lose their prestige. Nor did they lose the sympathy of a big and increasing group of the society.

Not only Jāhiz but many other Muslim historians tried to discredit the Umayyads,<sup>2</sup> but despite the deliberate denigration a section of the society respected their memory. To follow the development of the pro-Umayyad movement would exceed chronologically, at least, the limits of this survey. However, it is worth noting that the survival of the Umayyad memory was not only due to the continued loyalty to the Umayyads, but also to an attitude adopted by an "orthodox" section of the community which had no connection with the 'Abbāsids. This section was called Nābita, i.e. the rising generation. Those Nābita, according to Pellat,<sup>3</sup> were young Muslims born at the beginning of the 3rd century. Being anti-'Abbāsīd, anti-'Alīd and anti-Mu'tazila, they found their ideal in Mu'āwīya and were inspired, thereby, in their stand against the 'Abbāsids. Thus the Nābita were that section of society who revered the memory of the Umayyad caliphs. This association and common cause between this "orthodox" section and the pro-Umayyad movement worried the Mu'tazilite

---

<sup>1</sup> Bayān, vol. 3, pp. 217-218; Faḍl Banī Hāshim, p.91.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Zayyāt, Mazā'im..., al Mashriq, 1948, pp. 161-168.

<sup>3</sup> La "Nābita" de Djāhiz, p.304; idem, "Le culte de Mu'āwīya", S.I., VI, 1956.

pro-'Abbāsīd Jāhīz who accused the Nābīta of "impiety and guilt" since they refused to call the conduct of the Umayyads impious.<sup>1</sup>

Although Jāhīz wrote several decades after the 'Abbāsīd accession when the pro-Umayyad sympathies had crystallized out as politico-religious cult, his writings reflect the whole development of the pro-Umayyad movement since the advent of the 'Abbāsīds. Umayyad sympathizers were of two categories: the first and earlier had a genuine loyalty to the Umayyads, the second and later chose Mu'āwīya as their ideal because "he was the only one whom they could glorify to belittle their adversaries".<sup>2</sup> This was evident in the Karāmiyya and the Ḥanābila movements of the 3rd century.<sup>3</sup>

In conclusion the enmity and resentment of the Syrians towards the 'Abbāsīds were ever present. This enmity was never so vivid as it was during the civil war between al-Amīn and al-Mu'mūn. Al-Amīn appealed to the Syrians for support in his struggle against Ma'mūn. However, it should have been clear to him from the start that they would not support him wholeheartedly as the previous example of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī showed. A Syrian who addressed his fellow soldiers warning them not to involve themselves in Amīn-Ma'mūn struggle for power said "There is death in the moustaches and hoods of the 'Abbāsīd soldiers...."

---

<sup>1</sup>Pellat, La "Nabita"..., p.306.

<sup>2</sup>Pellat, "Jāhīz à Bagdad et à Sāmarrā", R.S.O., 1952, pp. 45 ff; (Arabic trans. by I. Keilani), Damascus, 1961, p.391.

<sup>3</sup>On the Karāmiyya, see M.W., 1960, pp. 5-14; on the Ḥanābila see, Zayyāt, al-Mashriq, 1928, pp. 410 ff; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Ḥanābila); Pellat, op.cit., S.I., 1936, pp. 53-66.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.844.

(b) The Kharijites

"The Kharijite rebel al-Yashkuri wrote to al-Mahdi 'From 'Abd 'l Salam b. Hashim to Muhammad b. 'Abdallah. Peace be with him who follows the right path and avoids oppression and has been proclaimed caliph in the right way. You have not followed the right path, nor have you avoided oppression. Nor have you been rightly proclaimed caliph. I have received your letter expressing your surprise at my revolt. I shall not leave you in ignorance lit. your blind state, although you have deceived yourself. You know that I have rebelled because you have left the Umma misled and confused; you have neither applied its laws nor given it its rights... Glory be to God!! was all that not an obscenity when perpetrated by one who claims to be the caliph of God'...."

Khalifa b. Khayyat, Tarikh, fols.309-310

Scholars, with few exceptions, incline to the opinion that Kharijism, as a movement of opposition, was in the early 'Abbāsid period either dead or crumbling without real active resistance to the new regime.<sup>1</sup> This under-estimation of Kharijite activities is indeed largely due to the absence of annalistical information on them. It is to be remembered, however, that even the scattered scanty information on the development of the Kharijite movement is one sided and highly unfair to them. Contrary to Umayyad times Kharijite activities developed, during the early 'Abbāsid period, not in the heart of the empire but in marginal and distant provinces such as Ifriqiyya, 'Umān, Jazīra, Sīstān and the fringes of Khurāsān. It is presumably for this reason that chroniclers such as Tabarī do not relate details of Kharijite risings. More details are to be found in local histories of Mosul, Sīstān, 'Umān, Yamān and al-Maghrib as well as some late historians such as Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn Khaldūn and al-Nuwayrī where one can see the persistence of Kharijism in these provinces and consequently their danger to 'Abbāsid authority. Apart from the above mentioned historians it is highly significant that the early historian al-Balādhurī has recognized the importance of the Kharijite risings in the early 'Abbāsid period. In his Ansāb<sup>2</sup> he devotes several pages to the enumeration of the Kharijite nomadic risings in the

---

<sup>1</sup> E.I.<sup>1</sup>, Kharijism; J. W. Wellhausen, Die religiös-politischen opposition-porterinnen... (Arabic trans.), p.145; A. Amin, Duḥā 'l Islam, 3, p.335; M. Watt, Kharijite thought, der Islam, 1961, pp. 230 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fols., 558-562.

in the reign of al-Manṣūr. Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa<sup>1</sup> a late historian repeats this fact saying that among the causes of the weakness of the 'Abbasids were the continued rebellions of the Kharijites because of which "al-Manṣūr could not for a moment drink a sweet saliva". What complicates the issue furthermore is that Kharijite risings were readily joined by bedouins who did not profess Kharijism, so that the A'rāb and shurāt became almost inseparable. Balādhurī for example speaks of

أهل السنة والجماعة والفرار من الأعراب والشراة<sup>2</sup> This indeed accounts

for the overwhelming nomadic character of Kharijism in most stages of its development. Finally historians also contributed to the difficulty of tracing the Kharijite activities in this specific period as the word Khārijī is sometimes applied by them to denote a rebel.<sup>3</sup> This might suggest that the word Khārijī had lost its original sectarian implications and had come to denote a rebel against the state who did not profess the doctrine of Khārijism. But the allegation is easily refuted with regard to most Kharijite risings discussed in this chapter, as their character as well as the conduct of their leaders and the exchanges of correspondence between them and that caliph exhibit a strongly sectarian character.

The Kharijites had had a large measure of success in the last days of the Umayyad dynasty.<sup>4</sup> They controlled large parts of the Jazīra, Irāq,

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p.25; see also Muḥammad Amīn al-'Umari, Manhal al-Awliya'.... Ms. B.M. (No. OR.2429), fol. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ansāb, fol. 558.

<sup>3</sup> Especially by late historians.

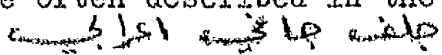
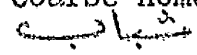
<sup>4</sup> Marwān II sent his son and heir to lead the campaign against them in the Jazīra. The seriousness of the undertaking is clearly shown in  
(cont.)



Hijāz and the Yamen. Marwān II had devoted all his energies to quell them and thanks to his efforts their strength was broken in the Hijāz and the Jazīra. The Kharijites were driven southwards to 'Umān and the Yamen and eastwards to Fars where a section of them joined 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya and after the failure of the latter's enterprise they retreated to Sīstān and Khurāsān where they contributed to the final victory of the 'Abbāsids. However, Shaybān al-Ṣaghīr the Kharijite leader in Khurāsān immediately fell out with the 'Abbāsīd dā'īs. Abū Muslim demanded that Shaybān should swear allegiance to the new régime while Shaybān raised the same demand with regard to Abū Muslim. Consequently Shaybān was attacked by surprise and killed and his followers who were mainly Rabi'ites scattered.<sup>1</sup>

The Kharijites looked at the 'Abbāsīd régime with the same antagonistic eye as the previous régime. They considered the 'Abbāsids usurpers of the caliphate which should be an elective office and bestowed on the best of society, whether Arab or non-Arab. Barely a year had passed after the accession of Abū 'l 'Abbās when the Kharijites came out in active opposition in many provinces. Burayka b. Humayd al-Shaybānī rebelled against Abū Ja'far the governor of Jazīra and was joined by Umayyad figures such as Muḥammad b. Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-'Azīz. After his

---

(cont.) the instruction given by Marwān to his son before the latter's departure in which the caliph warns him to be cautious and always ready for a Kharijite surprise attack. It is worth noting that the Kharijites are often described in the Umayyad period as harsh coarse nomads  or inexperienced men  which indicates their rigid nomadic characteristic and ever-lasting struggle against authority (Ma'd, fol. 28b; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 270-73; Tab., II, p.1942ff; Shafa' al-gharam, pp. 178f; Kurd 'Alī, Rasā'il, pp. 173 ff)

<sup>1</sup> See chapter II. See also, Vaglieri, "L'Imāmato ibādīta", A.I.O.N., 1949, p.253.

defeat in the battlefield Burayka fortified himself at Jabal Dārā where he was besieged and finally killed by Maqātil Al-'Akkī.<sup>1</sup>

In Armenia and Adhurbayjān Musāfir b. Kathīr al-Shaybānī who had been appointed governor of these provinces by the Kharijite al-Dhahhāk b. Qays al-Shaybānī, was still holding out. Abū 'l 'Abbās sent Muḥammad b. Ṣawl to crush his resistance. Musāfir was killed with a number of his followers while the remainder fled to the mountains of Sīstān.<sup>2</sup> As to 'Umān it was the Kharijite defeat of 129/746 in the Ḥijāz<sup>3</sup> which gave the impetus to the Ibāḍite Imamate of 'Umān. 'Umān is a mountainous region and therefore difficult of access. On its western border the desert stretched to the inland of Arabia which provided the nomadic inhabitants with an alternative escape if they were attacked. The 'Umanites must have been excellent navigators. They were adventurers enough to risk longer voyages to trade with India and the south east of Asia.<sup>4</sup> The 'Abbāsīd paid greater attention to the eastern provinces, conducted naval campaigns against India and gave a new impetus to the Jihād in Trans-oxania. Thus it was vital for the 'Abbāsīds to control the strategic spots on the maritime route to the east such as 'Umān to ensure the safety of the sea route for military and commercial reasons. Although

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 790b; Muq., fol. 86a.

<sup>2</sup> Futūḥ, I, p.246; Kūfī, fol. 235b.

<sup>3</sup> Kūfī, fol. 236a.

<sup>4</sup> Veccia Vaglieri, "L'Imamato Ibāḍita dell' 'Omān", A.I.O., 1949, p.15.

Muslim governors exercised certain authority in 'Umān, it is probable that this authority did not cover the whole province and only exercised over certain cities and strongholds. The first 'Abbāsīd governor Janāh b. 'Abādah al-Hunnā'ī does not seem to have been the master of the whole province. He treated the Ibāḍiyya Kharijites so mildly that they were in fact in control of most of 'Umān.<sup>1</sup>

In 135 A.H./752 A.D. the Ibāḍiyya elected the Azdite al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd Imām. He was a just ruler and played a considerable part in spreading the Kharijite doctrines from his capital Nezwa.<sup>2</sup> However, another Kharijite group, the Ṣufriyya, headed by Shaybān b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Yashkurī had already settled in the island of Ibn Kawān off the shore of 'Umān.<sup>3</sup> To crush the mounting danger of the Kharijites Abū 'l 'Abbās sent a force of 700 soldiers led by Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī in 134/751-2 A.D. The number of his troops seems to have been small especially if one considers the character of his Kharijite enemy who were known to be fierce on the battlefield. However, this is understandable if we know that the caliph was in fact punishing the commander Khāzim for his killing of some tribesmen of Banī al-Ḥārith the caliph's uncles. But Khāzim's forces were reinforced by a member of his tribe Tamīm and the people of Merw al-Rūdh.<sup>4</sup> Due to the difficulties of access to the country by land the troops had to be transported by ship.

<sup>1</sup> Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; English trans. by Ross, J.B.A.S., 1874, p.121; Ibn Rāziq, p.7.

<sup>2</sup> Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; Ross, op.cit., p.121; Ibn Rāziq, p.7; Tab., III, p.78.

<sup>3</sup> Ansāb, fols. 783b-784a (quoted by Dunnett, op.cit., p.291.)

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, pp. 75, 78.

The governor of Basra Sulaymān b. 'Alī provided them with ships to sail for the island of Ibn Kawān where Khāzim sent a division led by Naqlā b. Na'aym al-Nahshalī to fight Shaybān al-Yashkurī who retreated for 'Umān followed by the 'Abbāsīd navy.<sup>1</sup> Shaybān the Ṣufrite and al-Julanda the 'Ibāḍite attempted a reconciliation but failed eventually and the ensuing fight between the two factions ended in Shaybān's defeat and death.<sup>2</sup> On his arrival at 'Umān's shore Khāzim al-Tamīmī approached al-Julanda informing him that now Shaybān was killed he had no desire to fight him and asked him to swear allegiance for the caliph. Al-Julanda refused bluntly and the hostilities began. The Kharijites were defeated and almost the whole army perished in the battle of Juffār in which al-Julanda himself was killed.<sup>3</sup> However the campaign does not seem to have led to spectacular achievement. The Ibāḍiyya Imamate seemed to have survived the blows of the 'Abbāsīd army and after a period of unrest of which tribal antagonisms and vendettas were the ominent feature,<sup>4</sup> the Ibāḍites deposed their unpopular Imam Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah b. 'Affān and paid allegiance to the new Kharijite Imam 'Abd al-Wārith b. Ka'ab al-Azdī who acquired the epithet of al-Shārī as he proclaimed that he would rather die for the sake of

---

<sup>1</sup> Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; Ross, p.122; Tab., III, p.78.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., II, pp. 1949, 1946, III, p.77.

<sup>3</sup> Kashf al-ghumma, pp. 16-17; Ross, p.122; Ibn Razīq, p.8; Tuhfat al-A'yān, p.103; Tab., III, pp. 78-79.

<sup>4</sup> Kashf al-ghumma, p.19; Ibn Razīq, p.10; Tuhfat al-A'yān, pp. 109-11.

his principles than yield or flee.<sup>1</sup> Thus 'Uman though nominally under 'Abbāsīd authority virtually retained its autonomy.

In al-Manṣūr's reign, the Jazīra was the scene of strong Kharijite risings. Although Moṣul was no longer a Kharijite centre many Kharijite risings during this period started in its vicinity. Anti-'Abbāsīd in their sentiments the people of the city often sympathized with the Kharijites and gave them support or shelter. Consequently the 'Abbāsīds reinforced the garrison of Mosul by stationing a Rābiṭa for the purpose of quelling Kharijite insurrections.<sup>2</sup> The number of the garrison varied according to circumstances, but this did not prevent the resentful population from being a source of trouble. Mosul was never trusted by the early 'Abbāsīd caliphs who tried to exterminate its people and destroyed its walls.<sup>3</sup> In 137 A.H./754-5 A.D. a Kharijite rising broke out in the Jazīra led by Muḥabbād b. Ḥarmala al-Shaybānī<sup>4</sup> of the tribe of Rabī'a which had been the core of Kharijite activities since the Umayyad period. His rising was the most typical one as it was readily joined by not only bedouins who had no political conviction but also by Kharijites from other provinces who flocked to the place of unrest, thus increasing the volume of the rebellion.<sup>5</sup> The 'Abbāsīd authorities

---

<sup>1</sup>The epithet of al-Shārī is the opposite of al-dāfi'ī. The latter is synonymous with the Shi'ite Taqiyya (dissimulation). This Kharijite dissimulation is not in conflict with Ibaḍite principles. Nevertheless, campaigning against adversaries in order to spread Kharijite doctrines was considered one of the great merits and duties of the Imam. (Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; Tuhfat al-A'yan, p.106.

<sup>2</sup>Azdī, fol. 170; Tab., III, p.354; Kūfī, fol. 242a.

<sup>3</sup>Azdī, fol. 180; Tab., III, p.645.

<sup>4</sup>Ma'd, fol. 5b; Ansāb, fols. 559-60; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 290; Tab., III, p.120, Waqidī's account put it in 138 A.H.; Azdī, fol. 145. See also Nujum, p.377; Ibar, 3, p.356.

<sup>5</sup>Azdī, fol.145; Ansāb, fols. 558, 559.

were unable to apprehend Mulabbad who roamed the Jazīra area all through the year 137 A.H./754-5 defeating several 'Abbāsīd armies led by veterans such as Yazīd al-Muhallabī, al-Muhalhal b. Ṣafwān and Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba who tried to buy him off with 100,000 dirhams. Mulabbad accepted the offer and gave up the siege of Ḥumayd's army.<sup>1</sup> Mulabbad also occupied Mosul and threw the 'Abbāsīd governor out and then advanced southwards defeating another 'Abbāsīd detachment in Tikrīt. Mulabbad's rising grew dangerously and paralysed the central government control not only over the Jazīra but Adhurbayjān and Armenia as communications were cut off and 'Abbāsīd garrisons were slaughtered. In 138 A.H./755-6 A.D. al-Manṣūr sent a new army led by 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Azdī who was also defeated,<sup>2</sup> and consequently the caliph chose the two commanders, who distinguished themselves at the battle of 'Umān, namely Khāzīm b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī and Naḍla b. Nu'aym al-Nahshalī at the head of about 8,000 men. Khāzīm made Mosul the base for his military operations. After a fierce pursuit Mulabbād was trapped and killed with a number of his followers; the rest took to flight.

It was from Mosul that the Kharijite 'Aḥiyya b. Ba'thar al-Taḡhlubī started his rising with 100 partisans.<sup>3</sup> However, he did not stay in the town but took the route southwards aiming at al-Sūs where he intended, it is alleged, to rob a transport of governmental money. Frustrated in this

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fols. 559-560.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., fol. 560.

<sup>3</sup> Op.cit., fols. 560-561.

undertaking he engaged in a battle with the governor of al-Sūs where about 200 citizens of al-Sūs were killed. Eventually on his way back to Mosul 'Aṭīyya was ambushed by Abū Ḥumayd al-Merwūzī and killed, together with his followers. In 148 A.H./765 A.D. Ḥassān b. Yaḥya al-Wadī'ī al-Hamdānī<sup>1</sup>, a native of Mosul, rose in rebellion in a village on the outskirts of the city. The fact that Ḥassān was from the tribe of Hamdān seems to have surprized al-Manṣūr as this tribe was not known for its Kharijite sympathies. Only then he was told of Ḥassān's relationship with the renowned Kharijite theologian Ḥafs b. Ashīm.<sup>2</sup> Ḥassān al-Hamdānī attacked the 'Abbāsīd army in the Rawābiq of Mosul defeating the 'Abbāsīd commander al-Ṣaḡar b. Najda al-Azdī and plundering the markets near the city. Ḥassān's rising is yet another indication of the nomadic nature of Kharijism. As bedouins, they were known for their inclination to plunder and devastation which was motivated by the wish both to benefit materially and to demonstrate their resentment to the central régime. Interesting was that tribal feuds were still customary with Ḥassān's Kharijite movement. It is related that after a battle with the government forces Ḥassān spared the lives of Hamdanites while killing Qaysites.<sup>3</sup> This resulted in a split within his ranks which was fostered by Kharijite theologians who were in his army. His rising, in fact, waned as many left him because of his tribal favouritism. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Azdī, fols. 176-180; Ansāb, fol. 561, calls him Ḥassān b. ḡhassān al-Hamdānī. Athīr, V, p.447; Ibar, vol. 3, pp. 358-359, calls him Ḥassān b. Mujalid al-Hamdānī.

<sup>2</sup> Azdī, fols. 179-180.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fol. 177.

rising of Ḥassān is also interesting in that it reveals certain connections between Ḥassān and the Kharijites of 'Umān.<sup>1</sup> Probably on his way to al-Sind, Ḥassān got in touch with them intending to make common cause but his offer was refused.

It was after this insurrection and another series of unrest that al-Manṣūr summoned the jurists Abū Ḥanīfa, Ibn Abī Layla and Ibn Shabrama to sanction the extermination of the people of Moṣūl.<sup>2</sup> However Abū Ḥanīfa managed to persuade him to abandon his plan. Instead he appointed Khālid b. Barmak governor of the city to put it in order.<sup>3</sup> In the following year 149 A.H./766-7 A.D. al-Manṣūr intended to visit Moṣūl but he desisted from his undertaking and stopped in Ḥadītha al-Mauṣil.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from these risings the reign of al-Manṣūr witnessed another series of sporadic and shortlived Kharijite risings in the Jazīra itself as well as other provinces such as upper Egypt and Abyssinia and Fārs.<sup>5</sup> It is significant that in dealing with Kharijite hot-beds, al-Manṣūr made use of tribal feuds and antagonisms. It has already been mentioned that having been defeated in the Hijāz a section of the Kharijites retreated to the Yamen.<sup>6</sup> Now al-Manṣūr appointed Ma'an

---

<sup>1</sup> Athīr, V, p.235, ed. Cairo.

<sup>2</sup> Azdī, fol. 180-182; Athīr, V, p.236; Ibar, 3, p.360.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fols. 182-183; Athīr, V, pp. 448 Leyden ed.

<sup>4</sup> Azdī, fol. 183; Tab., III, p.354. On Ḥadīth at 'l Mauṣil see Mu'jam, II, p.222.

<sup>5</sup> Ansāb, fol. 561; Nujūm, p.392.

<sup>6</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 270 f; Tab., III, p.1942f; Khazrajī, B.M. fols. 15b-16a.



b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī governor of the Yemen in 141/758-9 with orders to inflict harsh punishment on the unruly population.<sup>1</sup> Ma'an staged a terrible massacre of the Yamanites. In retaliation to Ma'an's exterminations and with the consent of al-Manṣūr, 'Uqba b. Salm al-Hunnā'ī the Azdite governor of the Yamāma and Baḥrayn inflicted heavy losses on the Rabi'ites there in 151/768.<sup>2</sup> In so doing al-Manṣūr had two objects in mind. One was to quell the Kharijite activities in the Yemen; the other to break up the alliance between the Yamanites and the Rabi'ites which, if continued, would threaten the central government authority especially in these distant tribal provinces. Al-Manṣūr achieved his purpose, but the two governors who were instrumental in achieving it were both assassinated later on by Kharijite or native avengers.<sup>3</sup>

The Kharijites found less resistance in Ifriqiyya due to its internal conditions and its greater distance from the central régime. In 132/749-50 'Abd 'l Raḥmān b. Ḥabīb al-Fihri the governor of Ifriqiyya had declared himself for the 'Abbāsids. Though he was confirmed in his post by the new régime, his relations with the central government soon deteriorated as he was unwilling to meet its fiscal demands and resented its authority.<sup>4</sup> This situation obliged Abū 'l 'Abbās to put the province

---

<sup>1</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 291; Azdī, fol. 152; Khazrajī, fols. 16b-17a; Tab., III, p.133.

<sup>2</sup> Azdī, fol. 152; Tab., III, pp. 367-8; Athīr, V, p.243.

<sup>3</sup> Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 295; Tab., III, p.369; Azdī, fol. 151; Ya'qūbī, II, p.462.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn 'Adhārī, vol. I, p.64; Athīr, V, pp. 235f; Marcais, Berbérie musulmane, p.45; Lévi-Provençal, Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane, I, pp. 97, 121 f.

under the jurisdiction of the governor of Egypt, Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī in 136/753-4. 'Abbāsīd missionaries were sent to influence the population of Ifriqiyya and pave the way for the expected 'Abbāsīd army. Abū 'Awn al-Azdī was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces whose vanguard was led by 'Amir b. Ismā'īl al-Masallī. Also a naval expedition was about to sail when the death of the caliph prevented the enterprise.<sup>1</sup> The new caliph al-Manṣūr needed the forces to quell new outbreaks in Syria which were more dangerous to the 'Abbāsīds than distant Ifriqiyya. Abū 'Awn al-Azdī, who had already reached Barqa on his way to Ifriqiyya was recalled and the 'Abbāsīd plans in the province were frustrated at the very eve of fulfilment. New attempts to invade Ifriqiyya from Egypt in the governorship of Muḥammad b. al-'Ash'ath al-Khuzā'ī (141-142) never materialized and cost the latter his post.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, the struggle for power within al-Fihri's family - inspired probably by the 'Abbāsīds - led eventually to its total destruction and by then neither they nor the 'Abbāsīds had any real power in the province which was virtually controlled by the Kharijites.<sup>3</sup>

Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb 'Abd 'l A'la b. al-Samḥ 'l Mu'āfrī was proclaimed Imam in al-Ṣayyād, west of Tripoli, in 139-140/757-8 and was able to stage a great Berber rising.<sup>4</sup> He took possession of the whole of Ifriqiyya

<sup>1</sup> Wulāt, pp. 102-103; Khiṭaṭ, 2, pp. 91-2; Nujūm, p.366.

<sup>2</sup> Wulāt, pp. 108f; Khiṭaṭ, 2, pp.92f; Nujūm pp. 382-83. Compare Nujūm, p.385 where the author relates that in 143A.H. Ḥumayd al-Ta'ī sent an expedition to Ifriqiyya. This seems to be a confusion with 141 A.H.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.403; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, pp. 67-70; Marcais, op.cit., p.48. Levi-Provencal, op.cit., pp. 97, 121-2. Commenting on the conditions of the western part of the empire at the advent of the 'Abbāsīds, Professor Gibb says: "The principle of 'Universal Islam' might seem to have been favoured by the establishment of the Universal empire of the Abbasīds, but  
(cont.)

and even occupied Qayruwān whose new Kharijite governor was 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Rustam, the future founder of the Rustamid dynasty of Tāhart,<sup>1</sup> while in Tilimsān, a Sofrite leader, Abū Qurra, had already proclaimed himself Imam.<sup>2</sup> Warned by this development, al-Manṣūr sent in 143/760-1 Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Khuzā'ī with 40,000 troops to Ifriqiyya. He crushed the Ibādites in a fierce battle at Tawūrgħa where Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb himself was killed in 144/761.<sup>3</sup> The new governor rebuilt al-Qayruwān and stationed his army there. He pursued an arbitrary policy and executed in cold blood all rebels who bore the name of Mu'āwiya, Sofyān or Marwān. This may well indicate that a section of the natives had expressed Umayyad sympathies; on the other hand the accusation may only have been used as a pretext for the summary execution of the rebels.<sup>4</sup>

However, due to the struggle for power among ambitious officers in the 'Abbāsīd army unrest continued and the central government was not able to control Ifriqiyya. Governors replaced each other at short intervals and at one time, al-Manṣūr was even compelled to appoint, in 150/767, al-Ḥasan b. Ḥabīb al-Kindī, the very leader of the mutiny, governor of Ifriqiyya.<sup>5</sup> The critical situation justified the choice of the veteran 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-'Atkī, better known as Hazārmard, who was nominated governor of Ifriqiyya in 151/768. As the latter obviously could

---

(cont.) the rapid social and economic development of Iraq and Persia was not paralleled in Syria and the African provinces where the Arab tribal structure persisted with little change and solutions worked out in the former might be inapplicable to the latter. (Studies on the civilization..., p.11).

<sup>4</sup>Abū Zakariyya, Chronique..., pp. 18ff; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, pp. 70-71; Vaglieri, Le Vicende del Harigisme, R.S.O., 1949, p.33; Lewick, Les Ibādites..., pp.4f.

<sup>1</sup>Ibn al-Saghīr, pp. 30f; E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Rustamids); E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb).

neither rely on the mutinous Khurasānī army stationed in Ifriqiyya nor on the natives he came accompanied by his own army.<sup>1</sup> The 'Abbāsīd army can be regarded as an army of occupation, as Kharijites seem to have enjoyed the support of the whole country, while 'Umar al-'Atkī was forced to build and repair military strongholds such as 'Abbāsiyya and Ṭobna, to station his troops there.<sup>2</sup>

It was during al-'Atkī's term of office that the Kharijites broke out in a dangerous revolt. Profitting by the absence of 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ at Ṭobna the Kharijites, led by Abū Ḥātim Ya'qūb b. Tamīm al-Kindī and Abū 'Ad' seized the capital and killed the deputy governor Ḥabīb b. Ḥabīb al-Muhallabī.<sup>3</sup> It is significant that, in Ṭobna, both the Ibādites and the Ṣofrites made common cause against the 'Abbāsīd authority and apparently recognized Abū Qurra the Ṣofrite as caliph.<sup>4</sup> In considerable numbers they besieged 'Umar al-'Atkī who was eventually able to break through their lives. Returning to Qayruwān he temporarily scattered the Kharijites and sent a detachment to pursue 'Abd 'l Raḥmān b. Rustam who withdrew to al-Maghrīb and entrenched himself in Tāhart where he became in 160/776 the first Ibādite Imam.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile,

---

(cont.)

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.371; see also Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p.70; E.I.<sup>1</sup> ('Omar b. Ḥafṣ).

<sup>3</sup> Khalīfa, fol. 292; Abū Zakariyya, op.cit., pp. 37ff; Ya'qūbī, II, p.464; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p.72.

<sup>4</sup> Futūh, vol. I, p.275; Al-Wafī bi 'l wafayāt, vol. 2, p.228.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.465; Tab., III, p.370; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, pp. 62, 72f.

<sup>1</sup> Abū Zakariyya, op.cit., pp. 41f; Tab., III, p.359; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, pp. 75, 77.

<sup>2</sup> Futūh, vol. I, p.275; Athīr, V, p.241.

<sup>3</sup> Athīr, V, pp. 457f; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p.75; Dhahabī, Duwal, I, p.80; Bad', pp. 6, 87. (cont.)

'Umar al-'Atkī appealed to al-Manṣūr but was killed in 154/771 before help could reach him.<sup>1</sup> Qayruwān was taken in 155/771-72 by another detachment of Abū Ḥātim and Kharijite leaders with 400,000 partisans seized control of Ifriqiyya.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Manṣūr, alarmed by the situation, was desirous to arouse the spirit of a holy war and, remembering the rôle played by the Muhallabites in the struggle against the Kharijites during the Umayyad period, decided to choose Yazīd b. Ḥātim al-Muhallabī for the leader of the 50,000 strong army to be sent to Ifriqiyya. He recruited troops from al-Shām and the Jazīra and lavished much care on the preparations on which he is said to have spent 63 million dirhams. To stress the importance of the undertaking the caliph accompanied the army to Jerusalem in 154/771.<sup>3</sup> When Yazīd arrived in Ifriqiyya Abū Ḥātim was virtually in control for about a year. After a series of fierce battles Yazīd succeeded in crushing the Kharijites in the battle of Tripoli where Abū Ḥātim was killed in 155/771-2 and the remnants of his followers withdrew to the mountainous<sup>4</sup> area of the Berbers. Yazīd decided to

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, pp. 370-371; Azdī, fol. 188; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p. 77; Dhahabī, op. cit. I, p. 80.  
<sup>5</sup>Lewicki, Les Ibādites..., pp. 5f.

<sup>1</sup>Azdī, fol. 186.

<sup>2</sup>Azdī, fol. 188; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p. 76; see also Tab., III, p. 370.

<sup>3</sup>Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p. 78; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 464-5; Tab., III, p. 372; Azdī, fol. 190; Athīr, V, pp. 460f; Dhahabī, Duwal, I, p. 80; Bad', 6, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup>Ibn 'Adhārī, I, p. 79; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 464; Azdī, fol. 190. E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Abū Ḥātim).

follow the insurgents and sent an army to the Berber rebels of Katāma. The Kharijite doctrine found a fertile soil among the Berbers who resented the Arab rule and adopted Kharijism to defy the 'Abbāsīd political system by using of Islamic concepts.<sup>1</sup> However the clash was more of a conquered people against conquerors. Sulaymān b. Ḥumayd al-ghāfiqī one of the Arab officers who died in 160 A.H. gave expression to his contempt for the Berbers: "We did not shrink from their attack because they are fierce. What is there about a Berber that we [Arabs] could fear".<sup>2</sup>

The lack of stability was also due to the ambitions of officers whose mutinies against governors often originated in pay disputes. The Muqātila continued to live in garrison cities in complete separation from the population. They failed to control the country, especially the mountainous Berber areas, isolated fortresses and parts of the shore inhabited by Christians.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of al-Manṣūr's reign Kharijite activities were also noticeable in the eastern part of the empire, especially in Sīstān, Fārs, Kirmān and the fringes of Khurasān. It is worth pointing out that by the end of the Umayyad régime Kharijite partisans in Fārs and Sīstān were mainly Arabs driven out of Irāk and the Jazīra. They were therefore strangers to the eastern provinces. However, Kharijism by its doctrine of equality and elective caliphate was bound to attract the

<sup>1</sup> Professor Gibb rightly states that a close association of orthodoxy with the 'Abbāsīd caliphate led to the rejection of orthodoxy by sections politically opposed to 'Abbāsīd rule as in the adhesion of the Berber to Kharijism. See Studies in the civilization of Islam, p.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Adhārī, I, pp. 37,72; see also Melanges Taha Husayn, p.3.

non-Arabs in the eastern provinces. Besides as an opposition movement it gave the opportunity to Iranians disappointed with the new régime to express their resentment.

According to Wāqidī and Ya'qūbī it was in 151/768 that Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī was appointed governor of Sīstān to put things in order and suppress Kharijite activities.<sup>1</sup> In the first months of his governorship, Ma'an pacified the area and carried the war to the eastern autonomous regions of Sīstān where he even subdued Prince Ratbīl. But when he had been there for barely a year, he was assassinated by a group of Kharijites in his own house at Bust. Ibn al-Athīr<sup>2</sup> merely states that the Kharijites were dissatisfied with his policy, while the author of Tārīkh-i Sīstān enlarges on it in the following account on his murder: "Sensible people were dissatisfied with Ma'an's extraction of property, his bad administration and tyranny until the time when a group of Kharijites conspired to kill him".<sup>3</sup> According to al-Khazrajī<sup>4</sup> Ma'an was murdered by two people from Ḥaḍramaut who followed him and killed him in Sīstān in revenge for their fathers who had been victims of the great massacre he had conducted. The latter

(cont.)

وَأَنَّ أَرْدْنَا ذَلَّ قَوْمٌ زَطَّارُوا  
عَلَيْنَا وَأَبْرَأُوا كُفُوهَ وَتَلَبَّأُوا

<sup>3</sup> Futūh, vol. I, p.227.

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, pp. 368f; Ya'qūbī, II, p.462; Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 17b; Azdi, fol. 151-152.

<sup>2</sup> Athīr, V, p.464, Leyden.

<sup>3</sup> Tārīkh-i Sīstān, p.146.

<sup>4</sup> Khazrajī, fol. 17b.

account is to be doubted as it is not confirmed by other historians. The first insurrection in Sīstān led by 'Āmir b. al-Ḍaḥḍaḥ al-Shaybānī with 1,000 partisans and probably Kharijite in character occurred in the reign of al-Manṣūr.<sup>1</sup> Sīstān, in fact, was uniquely suited for the spread of Kharijite ideas. It was one of the Iranian provinces in which Zoroastrian traditions had been preserved,<sup>2</sup> so that more conservative elements there opposed the infiltration of Islam and the imposition of the Arab rule by joining the Kharijite movement. Thus the rank and file of Kharijism in Sīstān consisted of Arab strangers as well as native Iranians. Though the rebel 'Āmir was killed after a short time the Kharijite movement gathered head and became dangerous in the reign of al-Rashīd (170-193/786-809) extending to Badghīs, Herat and Bushang.<sup>3</sup>

The reign of al-Mahdī was no less troubled by Kharijite insurrections. In 160 A.H./776 A.D. the caliph ordered the governor of Sīstān, Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī, who had already been fighting the Kharijites: Yahya al-Sharī<sup>4</sup> to advance hastily to Khurāsān where a serious revolt under Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm called al-Barm had just broken out. Early accounts differ on the nature of the rising. Ya'qūbī and Ibn al-Athīr classify it as Kharijite.<sup>5</sup> Tabarī does not commit himself and merely

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 562.

<sup>2</sup> Sadighī, op.cit., p.80; on the spread of Kharijism among the non-Arabs see W. Thomson, "Kharijism and the Kharijites" in D.B.Macdonald presentation volume, 1933, pp. 374-389; M. Watt, Kharijite thought..., op.cit., pp. 230-231.

<sup>3</sup> Tārīkh-i Sīstān, pp. 156f; Vagleiri, "Le vicende del Harigismo", op.cit., p.41.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.478.

<sup>5</sup> Buldān p.303; Athīr, V., p.470. See also Diwān Muslim b. al-Walīd, p.17. (cont.)



states that Yūsuf protested against al-Mahdī's policy, while in another account of his he states that Yūsuf was "considered unbeliever by some Muslims" <sup>1</sup> *وهو عند بعض المسلمين كافر*. Accordingly, modern histories are divided in their opinions on Yūsuf al-Barmā. Sadighī and Moscati consider him a Kharijite,<sup>2</sup> while Spuler<sup>3</sup> is not explicit about it and merely describes his rising as one of the "outbreaks of religiously dissatisfied masses". It is however very probable that Yūsuf al-Barmā was, in fact, a Kharijite. Despite the scarcity of information on his attitude towards the 'Abbāsīd régime one can detect in the rigid attacks on the injustice of the caliph and the slogans he raised elements of Kharijite rigorism.<sup>4</sup> He occupied Bushang, Merw al-Rūdh, Ṭalqān and Jurjān; his movement attracted considerable numbers and must have been quite strong as the troops of Khurasān had already failed to crush him. Little is known of Yūsuf's insurrection and success except the murder of the brother of Harthama of A'yan, a Khurasānī commander,<sup>5</sup> until Yūsuf was finally subjected by Yazīd al-Shaybānī. Ya'qūbī says in his account of the battle that when Yazīd had noticed that the Kharijites were beginning to retreat he raised a red banner calling upon them to

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 470-71, 773.

<sup>2</sup>Sadighī, *op.cit.*, p.174; Moscati, "Studi storici...", Orientalia, 1945, pp. 332f.

<sup>3</sup>Spuler, Iran in Fruh..., pp. 51-52.

<sup>4</sup>Ya'qūbī states that he insisted on the right being upheld and the injustices being abolished. *الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر* (II, pp. 470, 478; see also Tab., III, p.470).

<sup>5</sup>Tab., III, p.471.

gather round it and promising amnesty to whoever did so. The appeal was successful and Yūsuf, deserted by many of his followers, was arrested and sent to Baghdād. On arrival at Nahrawān Yūsuf and his partisans were made to mount camels facing their tails.<sup>1</sup> That it was in Nahrawān that the 'Abbāsīd authorities began to treat the prisoners with contempt is another indication of their Kharijite connections. For it had been in Nahrawān that Kharijism first emerged as a movement of opposition to the authority, and suffered its first defeat in 38 A.H./658-9. The triumph which consolidated Yazīd's position was commemorated by the poet Ṣarī' al-Ghawānī in the verse:<sup>2</sup>

ويوسف الممدود صحتك  
بكر يلفظ الابرار ذي زجل

However a group of Kharijite dare-devils determined to revenge their followers on Yazīd penetrated into Baghdad and one day trapped Yazīd on the bridge. In a hand to hand battle Yazīd was miraculously saved. According to Ya'qūbī it was the only occasion on which Kharijites entered Baghdād and killed a number of people.<sup>3</sup>

According to several historians a Kharijite revolt led by 'Abd al-Salām b. Hāshim al-Yashkarī broke out in the Jazīra and northern Syria in 160 A.H./776 A.D. with its centres in Qinnisrin and Aleppo.<sup>4</sup> This insurgence lasted two years during which several commanders were

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p. 478; Tab., III, p.471.

<sup>2</sup> Diwān Ṣarī' al-ghawānī, p.17.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.463.

<sup>4</sup> Ma'd, fol. 94a; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 308f; Tab., III, p.782; Zubda, I, p.60; Nujum, pp. 41 ff.

defeated. Khalīfa b. Khayyāt and Azdi cite<sup>1</sup> a letter alleged to have been sent by al-Mahdī to 'Abd al-Salām reminding him of his disobedience to God and the caliph of God, accusing him that his intention belied his words:

تَكَلَّمَ بِكَلِمَاتٍ صَوَابَةٍ لَكِنِّي بِهَا بَاطِلٌ "his words were

good but his intention wicked". The letter goes on presenting al-Mahdī as a defender of 'Alī, cursing the Kharijite rebel for his condemnation of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb, and ends by warning him to refrain from the use of force. Only Khalīfa b. Khayyāt<sup>2</sup> records the harsh reply of 'Abd 'l salām to the caliph in which the Kharijite leader professes to be surprised at al-Mahdī's claim to be the caliph of God while deviating from the right path, committing acts of tyranny and injustice, leading the Umma astray, flouting his promises and being pre-occupied with hunting, building, drinking and singing. "The 'Ajam [the Sasanids] used to resent lesser wrongs than this." 'Abd 'l Salām ends by calling him Ṭāghiyā, and threatening him with war. Only when Shahāb b. Wājj al-Merwūzī was sent against 'Abd al-Salām with a large army whose morale he kept up by additional pay of 1,000 per head, did the forces of the central government succeed in crushing the revolt and killing 'Abd al-Salām at Qinnisrin.<sup>3</sup>

In 168 A.H./784-5 A.D. Moṣūl witnessed yet another Kharijite revolt led by the Tamimite Yāsīn al-Maṣīlī.<sup>4</sup> He defeated the governor of

<sup>1</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 308-9; Azdī, fol. 206.

<sup>2</sup>Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 309-310.

<sup>3</sup>Azdī, fol. 210; Tab., III, p.492; Nujūm, pp. 42f.

<sup>4</sup>Azdī, fol. 218; Athīr, VI, p.52; 'Ibar, Vol. 3, p.361.

the city and maintained control over large areas of the Jazīra. Yāsīn followed a doctrine of a fellow Tamimite, Ṣāliḥ b. Musarīḥ who had been killed in 76 A.H./695-6 A.D. The central government had to send troops led by Muḥammad b. Farrūkh and Harthma b. A'yan, whereupon Yāsīn was killed fighting and his followers dispersed.

In 169/785-6 the Khuza'ite Ḥamza b. Mālīk led another Kharijite insurrection in the Jazīra. The people of Moṣūl hard pressed by the 'Abbāsīd extortionate fiscal policy supported him in defiance of the 'Abbāsīd régime. His efforts were initially successful, for he defeated the 'Abbāsīd army in the battle of Moṣūl. Unable to overcome him by force, the 'Abbāsīd government resorted to a ruse. Two men were sent, who professed the wish to join him but assassinated him when the opportunity presented itself.<sup>1</sup> Like similar Kharijite insurrections this rising depended for its cohesion mainly on the figure of the leader and once he had perished his followers dispersed until another leader of equal temerity would present himself. It was probably the weakness of Kharijism in the Jazīra that all insurrections with few exceptions, though numerous were of short duration. No sooner did an insurrection materialize than it died down. Events often took similar course: first Moṣūl was occupied, the 'Abbāsīd governor was thrown out and a tribute imposed on the population of the city; only then were other regions occupied. An exception is observable in the rising of the Taghlabī al-Walīd b. Ṭarīf

---

<sup>1</sup>Azdī, fol. 223.

al-Shārī in 178 A.H./794-5.<sup>1</sup> He attacked Niṣībīn and killed the 'Abbāsīd governor Ibrāhīm b. Khāzim. After wandering in Armenia and Adhurbayjān he returned to Jazīra and besieged Balad which capitulated paying a ransom of 100,000 dirhams.<sup>2</sup> Al-Walīd al-Shārī even set a seige to Raqqa threatening Baghdād itself. Iṣbahānī relates the fears of the people of Baghdād that al-Walīd would launch a surprise attack.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Rashīd intended to wipe out the people of Moḡūl, but was dissuaded from this undertaking by his chief Qaḡī Abū Yūsuf. Instead he demolished the wall of the city to prevent Kharijites and nomads from using it as their stronghold.<sup>4</sup> The episode seems to have made a deep impression on the community. Jāhiz expresses his admiration to the Kharijite bravery by comparing them with the Turks for whom he had a special regard. He also stresses that only the Turks in the 'Abbāsīd army could overcome al-Walīd's rising, and it was a Turk who killed al-Walīd.<sup>5</sup>

Al-Rashīd sent Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī against him. The latter who belonged to the same tribe as the rebel al-Walīd tried to settle the matter with negotiation. This involved a delay in putting an end to the revolt which led to court intrigues against Yazīd and aroused the suspicion of the caliph. Eventually Yazīd al-Shaybānī was able

---

<sup>1</sup>Ma'ā, fol. 17a.; Azdī, fol. 242; Tab., III, 631; Athīr, VI, p.971.

<sup>2</sup>Agh., vol. XI, p.8; Azdī, fol. 243.

<sup>3</sup>Agh., Vol. XI, p.8., see also Wafayāt, vol. 2, p.374, ed. Cairo.

<sup>4</sup>Azdī, fol. 246; Tab. II, p.645.

<sup>5</sup>Manāqib, p.36. Although Turks had been introduced in the 'Abbāsīd court since the reign of al-Manṣūr (Ibn Iṣfandiyār, vol. 2, p.118), it is not known to what degree they were employed in the army before al-Mu'taṣim.

to kill al-Walīd in 179/795-6 A.D.<sup>1</sup> Both the relief felt by al-Rashīd and the words of the poet Ṣarī' al-Ghawānī indicate that the very existence of the caliphate was in danger.<sup>2</sup>

The reign of al-Rashīd witnessed yet another serious Kharijite rising in Sīstān and Khurāsān. Ḥamza b. 'Abdallāh al-Azraq al-Shārī broke out in rebellion in 179/795-6 and was proclaimed Amīr al-Mu'minīn by his partisans in 181 A.H./797-8 A.D.<sup>3</sup> After defeating the troops sent by 'Alī b. 'Īsā the governor of Khurasān, he found himself in control of most of Sīstān and Fārs. Advancing, he defeated the garrison of Herāt whose governor 'Amr b. Yazīd al-Azdī was killed. According to Tārīkh-i Sīstān, which describes Ḥamza's activities in Sīstān, Fārs and Kirmān and whose sympathies are with the Kharijite rebels, as many as 30,000 men followed Ḥamza. The caliph al-Rashīd had to visit the eastern provinces in order to see for himself the growing danger of Ḥamza in 193/808-809. He wrote to Ḥamza from Jurjān asking him to "join the Jamā'a" promising him his share of Fay' and Ṣadaqa and offering him the aman.

وَأَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَرْجِعُكَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ رَسُولِهِ وَرَيْتِكَ عَلَى طَاعَتِهِ وَيُنَادِيكَ عَنِ  
مَعْشَرَتِهِ. وَتَعْرِفُ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِي كَانَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ عَمَالِهِ فِي خُرَاسَانَ وَجِسْتَانَ وَفَارِسَ  
وَكِرْمَانَ مِنَ الْخَلْقِ وَصَفَةَ الدِّمَاءِ فَاصْبِرْ النَّظْرَةَ وَالْإِصْبَابَ فَيُضَاهِيهِ صِدْقًا وَجَمْعًا وَطَمَعًا  
وَرَدَّ الْقَتْلَ وَأَدْخَالَ السُّلْطَنَةَ وَالْعَاقِبَةَ وَالْهَيْبَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَطَمَعًا بِأَضْلَالِهِمْ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ  
وَالطَّمَعُ نَهْيُهُمْ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ وَالصَّبْرُ وَالْحَقُّ وَالْعَمَلُ .."

<sup>1</sup> Azdī, fols. 242-3; Agh., XI, pp. 8-9; Tab., III, p. 638. The confrontation between the two Rabi'ites inspired a poet to say:

(Tab., III, p. 638, Wafayāt, 2, p. 375).  
لَا يَفْقَهُ الْكَبِيرُ الْوَالِدَ الْكَبِيرَ

<sup>2</sup> Diwān Sarī' al-Ghawānī, pp. 6, 7, 15, 16; Azdī, fol. 244; Tab., III, p. 638.

<sup>3</sup> Tārīkh-i Sīstān, pp. 156 ff; Tab., III, p. 638; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 87. For other insignificant Kharijite risings in the reign of al-Rashīd see Azdī, fols. 231, 235, 238, 240, 242, 246; Tab., III, p. 732.

Ḥamza calling himself Amīr al-Mu'aminīn replied:

"I have received your letter calling me [to abide] by the Book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet... As to the Book of God to which I myself summon [others], and with the instructions of which I am satisfied, I would take no other verdict. As to my fight against your governors it is not motivated by the [ambition] to wrest the Mulk from you, nor by worldly pleasures or prestige or fame, but is merely dictated by their [the governors] misrule of the Amma's affairs and what they commit in the field of executions, plunder and other misdeeds by which they victimized the Muslims... Lā hukma illa lillāh Yafṣul bi 'l haqq wahuwa Khayru 'l Faṣiliyn."<sup>1</sup>

However, the bloody battles between the 'Abbāsids' army and Ḥamza failed to put an end to the latter's rising as al-Rashīd was faced with Rāfi' b. al-Layth's revolt in Khurasān and the Byzantines' threat from the north.<sup>2</sup> Ḥamza's rising was crushed only in the reign of al-Na'mūn by the efforts of Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn and as can be gathered from Tārīkh-i Sīstān Kharijites remained, indeed, the real masters of souther Iran until the time of the Ṣafārids.<sup>3</sup> These petty states in the eastern part of the empire (the Ṭāhirids and the Ṣafārids) as well as in the western part (the Aghlabids and the Idrisids) finally either crushed the Kharijites or put a limit to their activities.

To sum up, one can say that, though a number of scholars<sup>4</sup> concerned themselves with particular aspects or centres of Kharijite activity, none except L. V. Vagliera<sup>5</sup> has attempted a general survey of Kharijite

<sup>1</sup> Tārīkh-i Sīstān, pp. 156ff. On the letters exchanged between Ḥamza al-Sharī and al-Rashīd see Scorcia, "La scambio di lettere....", A.I.O.N. 1964, pp. 623-645.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.730; Ya'qūbī, II, p.515; Azdī, fols. 262 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Tārīkh-i Sīstān, pp. 187, 189f; Murūj, V, p.440; Sadighi, op.cit., p.56.

<sup>4</sup> See bibliography under: G. Marcais, W. Thompson, M. Watt, T. Lewicki, G. Scaria and E.A.Salem.

<sup>5</sup> Vaglieri, "Le vicende del Hārgismo...", R.S.O., 1949; idem, "L'Imamato Ibaḍita...", A.I.O.N. 1949.

activities in the early 'Abbāsīd period. Brunnow and Wellhausen<sup>1</sup> who were specially concerned with Kharijites did not pursue their research to 'Abbāsīd times. In her articles on Kharijism Vagliera covers too long a period to go deep into the events. The article on the Ibādīte Imanate of 'Umān - only about four pages of it are devoted to the period of our concern. As to the article on the vicissitudes of Kharijism in the 'Abbāsīd era, the author limits her research territorially to the Jazīra and the eastern provinces of the Muslim empire. Besides, she did not utilize several local and general works such as Azdī's Tārīkh al-Mausil, the manuscript of Balādhurī's Ansāb or Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ's Tārīkh.

In order to demonstrate the active character of Kharijite opposition in the early 'Abbāsīd period and to avoid underestimating their effect on the new régime, it has been attempted, in this chapter, to give an overall picture of Kharijite risings over the whole period in question and in all the provinces of the empire. The Kharijites exhausted the government financially as well as militarily and even twice threatened its very capital, Baghdād. Kharijite attacks were still feared as their name was still used as cover for political assassination, e.g. Abū Salama's assassination was attributed to them.

No doubt, all the above mentioned risings strongly exhibit many of the politico-religious characteristics of the Kharijite sect. This is borne out by a number of facts such as: (1) Rebel leaders are often

---

<sup>1</sup> Brunnow, Die charidschiten unter den ersten Omayyaden, Leyden 1884; Wellhausen, Die religio-politischen oppositionspartelen..., Berlin, 1901.



defined as Kharijite and even sometimes Şufrites, Ibādites and Azraqites. (2) Some trace back their doctrines to certain Kharijite religious figures such as Şāliḥ b. Musariḥ while others were known in Kharijite circles before staging their revolts such as Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb.<sup>1</sup> (3) among the partisans of these movements there were Kharijite fuqaha and quarrels occurred within some Kharijite groups due to the neglect of certain Kharijite doctrines. (4) Partisans of Kharijism from many provinces, especially the Jazīra, used to hurry to the help of fellow-Kharijite rebels in other provinces.

---

<sup>1</sup>Vaglieri, "Le vicende del Hārigismo...", op.cit., p.34.

Chapter VIMAJOR POLITICAL EVENTS IN THE EARLY 'ABBĀSID PERIOD

"When Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr learnt of the dangerous Ḥasanid revolt in Baṣra, he exclaimed 'By God, I do not know what to do. .. I have only 2,000 men as I have scattered my army: 30,000 with al-Mahdī in al-Rayy, 40,000 with Muḥammad b. al-Aḥ'ath in Ifriqiyya and the remainder with 'Īsā b. Mūsā [in the Hijaz]. By God, if I ever survive this [crisis], I will always keep 30,000 at my camp."

[Tab., III, pp. 304-305]

The advent of a new régime usually gives rise to reaction in various forms. The 'Abbāsīd régime was no exception. Having given a detailed account of the sectarian risings such as internal 'Abbāsīd, 'Alīd Kharijite and Umayyad movements we shall, in the following chapter, attempt to examine certain significant political events in the context of the political conditions of the localities in which they arose and where they spread.<sup>1</sup>

#### The revolt of Mosul in 133/750-751

In the early days of the new régime, al-Shām the Umayyad centre, and al-Jazīra the centre of tribal unrest both caused equal trouble to the 'Abbāsīds. To neutralize and control these two provinces, the 'Abbāsīds adopted measures of different kinds: 1) They appointed new governors who were 'Abbāsīds<sup>2</sup> and were occasionally accompanied by a body of Khurasānī troops; 2) they installed Khurasānī garrisons in many cities such as Ḥarrān, Moṣul, Damascus and Qinnisrīn; 3) they built the new garrison city of Rāfiqa on a strategic point on the way to Syria and the Jazīra, manning it with Khurasānī troops,<sup>3</sup> 4) they won

---

<sup>1</sup>The difficulties the 'Abbāsīds had to face were both greater and more numerous in the eastern rather than the western part of the empire. The natives in Iran turned against the new régime which failed to satisfy the very hopes it had evoked by its accession, and joined now movements which promised more satisfaction. The series of insurrections in Iran have been examined in detail by several scholars. What should be stressed here is that they were eminently syncretistic.

(cont.)

over many tribal chieftains, with whose help they tried to pacify their districts;<sup>1</sup> 5) early 'Abbāsīd caliphs also visited occasionally these provinces either on their way back from the pilgrimage or on their way up to the Thughūr.<sup>2</sup>

Mosul, the centre of Diyār Rabī'a, was in a turbulent state throughout this period. Though it had been a centre of the Kharijites in the Jazīra during the Umayyad period, it lost that vital position due to Marwān's efforts. However, the Arab population of the city, exhausted by Marwān's campaigns, remained resentful of his policy and opened the gates of the city to the Khurasānī army which was pursuing the fleeing caliph. In recognition of the support given to the 'Abbāsīds a number of Arab tribal chieftains of Mosul were granted estates by Abū 'l 'Abbās and later al-Manṣūr.<sup>3</sup> But the tribal leaders soon defied the new 'Abbāsīd governor of the city, the Mawla Muḥammad b. Ṣawl, shouting "Are we to be ruled by a Mawla of Khath'am?"<sup>4</sup> He was driven out of

---

(cont.) Each one of these risings, such as Bihāfrīd's, Sonbādh's, Ustādhsī's and al-Muḡanna's, was a complex in itself, to which economic, political, social, psychological and even religious factors had contributed. However no single motive of decisive influence can be pinpointed with any certainty. (On these risings see bibliography under Bausani, Barthold, Dūrī, Gibb, Lewis, Sadighī, Spuler, Wright, and Yakubovsky).

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p.75; Ṣafadī, Umarā' Dimashq, pp. 3, 49, 50-59, 75, 202ff; Zambour, Manuel de Généologie,... p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.373; Azdī, fol. 194.

<sup>1</sup> Azdī, fol. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Dīna, p.379; Wulāt, p.106; Ya'qūbī, II, p.480; Tab., III, pp. 129, 498-500; Asakir, 5, p.308; Zubda, 1, p.61; Theophanes, Chronographia, 1, p.446; Mahasin al-Masa'i, p.114; Azdī, fol. 215.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fols. 135-36.

<sup>4</sup> Azdī, fol. 125; Athīr, V., p.340. 'Ibar, III, p.378 (ed. Beirut 1957).

the city and the caliph had to nominate his own brother Yaḥya b. Muḥammad governor of Moṣul. However, Muḥammad b. Ṣawl was left there in an advisory capacity.<sup>1</sup> The new governor was, according to Ya'qūbī<sup>2</sup> accompanied by 4,000 troops. According to Azdī and Ibn al-Athīr<sup>3</sup> he had as many as 12,000 troops among whom there were 4,000 Zunūj.

Tension developed between the population of Mosul and the Khurasānī army, and a clash was inevitable especially as Yaḥya was known to be irresponsible in his behaviour in the early days of the da'wa.<sup>4</sup> To appoint him governor of this unruly and antagonistic city was therefore a wrong move on the part of the caliph. The strained situation came to a breaking point as early as 133/750-1. It is related that a woman accidentally poured some water from the roof of her house on a Khurasānī soldier, and that the ensuing quarrel led to the revolt and consequently the massacre.<sup>5</sup> According to Azdī<sup>6</sup> the massacre was caused by two reasons: first, the pro-Umayyad sentiment

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 586; Azdī, fol. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, III, pp. 428-9.

<sup>3</sup> Azdī, fol. 124; Athīr, V, p.340.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār, fol. 115a. See also Ansāb, fols. 586-587. Kāna Yaḥya 'Ajulan qalil al-Rawiya.

<sup>5</sup> Azdī, fol. 125.

<sup>6</sup> Op.cit., fols. 120, 125-126.

of the people of Mosul; secondly, their refusal to accept the Mawla Muhammad b. Şawl as their governor. Though a proportion of the population in Mosul might have evinced pro-Umayyad sentiments the reason of the present outburst should be sought in the resentment of the inhabitants of the city against the measures applied by the new régime no less than in their general unruly character.<sup>1</sup>

Anticipating a revolt, the governor Yaḥya, instigated by Muhammad b. Şawl, arrested and executed a number of prominent figures accusing them of pro-Umayyad sympathies.<sup>2</sup> This led to a clash which lasted several days. Then Yaḥya resorted to a trick and proclaimed an amnesty for those who would take refuge in the great mosque. When the people had entered the mosque in great numbers a massacre ensued in which Muhammad b. Şawl played a leading part.<sup>3</sup> The number of the victims cannot be given with any certainty. No information to that effect can be found in Tabarī who avoids dealing with the event in detail, while the figures given by Ya'qūbī and Azdī are no doubt exaggerated under the influence of their anti-'Abbāsid loyalties.<sup>4</sup> Azdī, a native of Moṣul, gives vent to his resentment when he mentions the event and

---

<sup>1</sup>It is worth noting that according to an account in Ansāb the people of Moṣul consisted of three categories: Kharijites, robbers and merchants who were called Khazar al-'Arab because of their roughness (Ansāb, fol. 586.)

<sup>2</sup>Azdī, fol. 125.

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit., fols. 126, 142; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 286.

<sup>4</sup>According to Ya'qūbī, 18,000 Arabs were killed together with their Mawālī and 'Abid (II, p.429). While Azdī followed by Ibn al-Athīr relate that the number of the victims was 11,000 (fol. 128; p.341), another account in Azdī puts the figure of the victims as high as 30,000 (Azdī, fol. 132). See also the verse of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d.357) commemorating the massacre (Diwan, 256 ff).

his account on the massacre must be taken with a grain of salt. He deals with the massacre in detail, citing the names of prominent men who were killed, and poems said in their praise; he also states that many quarters remained in ruins for many years after the massacre. He is most indignant at the 'Abbāsīd attitude towards Moḡul and even cites a religious figure as condemning the murderers [i.e. the 'Abbāsīds] as non-Muslims.<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī says "Their blood mixed with the colour of the Tigris and they did not rise again".<sup>2</sup> However, the latter account is not strictly true because Moḡul continued to be the centre of the troubles despite or perhaps because of the deep impression the massacre had made on its population. Nor did the situation change when Abū 'l 'Abbās dismissed both Yaḥya and Muḥammad b. Ṣawl from their offices and appointed his uncle Ismā'īl b. 'Alī who condemned Yaḥya's policy and promised compensation to the relatives of the victims.<sup>3</sup>

The position of the 'Abbāsīd governor of Moḡul was always dependent on the loyalty of the Khurasānī troops. In 142/759-60, Ismā'īl b. 'Alī resented al-Manṣūr's order to give up his post, but had finally to give in, as the commander of the Khurasānī garrison of Moḡul, Ibn Mashkān, sided with the new governor, Mālīk b. al-Haytham al-Khuzā'ī.<sup>4</sup> Realizing the inimical attitude of the people of Moḡul which caused

---

<sup>1</sup>Azdī, fols. 126, 132-135.

<sup>2</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.429.

<sup>3</sup>Azdī, fols. 134-35. The remark of Jāḥiz which describes Yaḥya's acts in Moḡul as bravery is hardly appropriate (Faḍl banī Hāshim, p.115).

<sup>4</sup>Azdī, fols. 154-155.

any ambitious governor who resorted to rebellion could count on their support al-Manṣūr was very cautious and even tactful in dealing with his own governors of the city. According to Azdī and Tabarī,<sup>1</sup> he sent his son al-Mahdī accompanied by Khālīd b. Barmak to Mosul in 158/774-5 ostensibly in transit to Raqqa but in reality with secret orders to arrest the governor Mūsa b. Ka'ab, a task in which al-Mahdī acquitted himself successfully. It can be seen that the caliph preferred to deal with the matter in a less straightforward way as he suspected that the governor would resist and be backed by the anti-'Abbāsīd population. More-over it seems that what the people of Mosul resented most was the burden of heavy taxation.<sup>2</sup> They often ceased paying under the pretext that Kharijite raids had done heavy damage, and although this was true in some cases the 'Abbāsīd authority used such harsh methods in extracting the money that people fled the city.<sup>3</sup>

#### Slave riots in Baḡra in 141/758-9

In 141, unrest arose among the "Abīd and the Sudān"<sup>4</sup> who were easily overcome by the troops and, after having lost some fourteen men,

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.383; Azdī, fol. 195, cf. op.cit., fol. 196.

<sup>2</sup>Azdī, fol. 238. Local sources usually teem with complaints about the harsh fiscal policy of local 'Abbāsīd governors.

<sup>3</sup>op.cit., fols. 238, 240, 246 ff.

<sup>4</sup>The use of the terms Abīd (slaves), Sudān (blackmen), Zunūj (negroes) by early historians is loose. They are substitutable and used to denote black slaves. However their connotation was social rather than racial. After the establishment of the 'Abbāsīd régime we see the words Sudān, Zunūj and Afāriqa used alternatively to denote a minor unit in the Abbasid army. (Azdī, fol. 129, Tab., III, 269, 305, 907, 873, 1005). Apart from that they served at the 'Abbāsīd court, especially in the harem. (On these terms see Jāhīz, Rasā'il, ed. 1964, pp. 178, 179, 190, 194, 198, 201, 210, 211, 216, 224 f; Ibn Manẓūr, Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 2, p.290, vol. 3, (cont.)



easily dispersed.<sup>1</sup> In his essay Fakhr al-Sudān...,<sup>2</sup> Jāhiz states that they were forty in number and that their rising had spread over parts of the lower Euphrates where they drove the people to flight and perpetuated a large scale massacre at Ubulla. Balādhurī indicates that the insurrection had no political aim or organisation and was mainly due to economic reasons (darra bihim al-Jū' wa'l faqr). Slaves lived in conditions of utter want and exploitation, and this incident is only one of the series of occasional outbursts which occurred not only in Baḡra but also in other cities of the empire. However, in early 'Abbāsīd times, lack of organisation among the slaves and the strength of the central government prevented large-scale revolts, but in later times when the central government was weak and the slaves found a leader, their risings such as in 255/869<sup>3</sup> assumed dangerous proportions and threatened Baghdad itself.

#### Bandār's rising in the Lebanon

A Christian rising broke out in the mountain of Lebanon in 142/759-60 or 143/760-61. The leader of the rebels Bandār, who declared himself a king and proclaimed Christianity the official faith of his domain, invaded the Muslim villages of the Biqā', but was soon defeated.

---

(cont.) pp. 224, 270; al-Mu'jam al-Wasīf, vol. I, pp. 464, 404; vol. 2, p.585; Pellat, Le Milieu Basrien..., p.78; E.I.<sup>2</sup> ('Abd).

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 567, Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 291; Azdī, fol. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Jāhiz, Rasā'il, ed., 1964, p.195.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 1785-6.

and took shelter in "the country of Rūm". The inhabitants of the mountain were expelled by Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī, and subsequently scattered all over Syria.<sup>1</sup> This evoked the opposition of the renowned Syrian jurist al-Awzā'ī. In an impassioned plea he wrote: "Why do you punish the whole [Christian] population for the mistakes of a few? ... They are not slaves to be taken at will from one country to the other, but free men and Ahl Dhimma."<sup>2</sup> The 'Abbāsīd authorities obviously considered the Christians of al-Shām and al-Jazīra susceptible to exploitation by the Byzantines and a potential danger in general. The 'Abbāsīd defensive policy towards Byzantium entailed the introduction of certain restrictions in these border provinces. It was due to security reasons that the governor of Jazīra al-'Akkī ordered all the Muslims of the province to put on Sawād to distinguish them from the non-Muslims of that border province.<sup>3</sup> According to Balādhurī,<sup>4</sup> al-Manṣūr's policy to order transfers of border population to free the frontier of suspects, especially Christians, is to be seen as a precautionary measure.

---

<sup>1</sup> 'Asākir, vol. 5, p.341.

<sup>2</sup> Futūḥ, p.222; Ibn 'Ubayd, al-Amwāl, pp. 170-171. "Fa'innahum laysū bi'abid... wa la kinnahum ahrār Ahl Dhimma."

<sup>3</sup> Dionysius, op.cit., p.46; see also E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Dhimma).

<sup>4</sup> Futūḥ, 1, p.196. See also Theophanes (Chronographia, 1, p.446) who states that after 'Abdallah [al-Manṣūr] returned to Jerusalem, he started to persecute the Christians and Jews. Many of the Christians fled by sea to Byzantine territory.

Revolts in the Yemen and Bahrayn and al-Mansūr's tribal policy

After the advent of the 'Abbāsids, the Yemen was administratively linked with the Ḥijāz. The governor of the Ḥijāz, Dā'ūd b. 'Alī, sent the Qurayshite 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Majīd al-'Adawī to deputize for him in the Yemen.<sup>1</sup> Owing to the remote geographical position of the Yemen and its mountainous nature, the 'Abbāsids found it difficult to control. The governor used to administer it through local representatives (i.e. Wakīl) of the tribes,<sup>2</sup> but it seems that al-Mansūr desired to enhance the authority of the central government, especially after the defeat of his governor 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī' al-Ḥārithī by the rebel tribes in Rabī' I 140 A.H./July 757.<sup>3</sup> With this aim in view the caliph appointed Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybānī governor of the province. Ma'an's policies, especially after the murder of his cousin at al-Ma'āfir, and heavy taxation seems to have been very harsh and caused shortly after the outbreak of a rebellion in Ḥaḍramaut which was crushed severely.<sup>4</sup> When a Qurayshite at the court of the caliph expressed his dismay at Ma'an's actions, al-Mansūr pretended that Ma'an was punishing Kharijite rebels and avenging the Qurayshites who had been killed at the battle

---

<sup>1</sup> Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 16a; Khazrajī, B.N., fols. 9bf.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 16b; see also Tab., III, p.394.

<sup>4</sup> Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 17a; Azdī, fols. 151-152; Khalīfa, Tārīkh fol. 291; F.H.A., p.229.

of Qadīd.<sup>1</sup> The appointment of Ma'an al-Shaybānī seems to have been, in fact, part of a deliberate plan, as al-Manṣūr had already realized the importance of tribal alliances in politics. Ma'an who was a Rabi'ite, was nominated governor of a predominantly Yamanite province with orders to break the Hilf between Rabi'a and Yaman.<sup>2</sup> This view is supported by the events which followed when al-Manṣūr appointed the Yamanite 'Uqba b. Salm al-Hunnā'ī governor of the Yamāna and Baḥrayn where he took revenge for himself and his tribe on the Rabi'ite inhabitants of the province.<sup>3</sup> According to Tabarī a revolt broke out in Baḥrayn in 151 A.H. during which rebels killed the 'Abbāsīd governor Abū 'l Sāj. He was replaced by 'Uqba b. Salm al-Hunnā'ī whose brutal policy of extermination against Rabi'a is said to have been inspired by Agābiyya. It was to have been a revenge for massacre of the Yamanites by Ma'an al-Shaybānī in the Yemen. Numerous Bedouins were killed, others taken captive and sent to Baghdād. This is of great significance as it exemplifies the trend of al-Manṣūr's policy, who was determined not to let any tribe grow in power, and played them out against each other. In this particular case, both governors staged heavy massacres, Ma'an among the Yamanites and 'Uqba among the Rabi'ites. Al-Manṣūr's manoeuvre in

---

<sup>1</sup>Khazrajī, B.M., fols. 16b-17b.

<sup>2</sup>Azdī, fols. 151-152; Tab., III, pp. 394 f.

<sup>3</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.463; Azdī, fol. 186; Tab., III, pp. 367-8; Athīr, V, p.462.

destroying the old alliance between Rabīla and Yaman was entirely successful.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the unruly Yamen not only suffered harsh caliphal treatment, but was also torn by internal strife. There were conflicts between the people of Ṣan'a and of al-Jand in the reigns of al-Mahdī and al-Hādī.<sup>2</sup>

A naval attack on Jadda by al-Kurk in 153/770

The origin of al-Kurk is obscure and even their name is doubtful, as it occurs in different forms. Speaking of the sixth Abyssinian kingdom, Ya'qūbī<sup>3</sup> hints at its proximity to al-Sind and the people of al-Kurak who are "to be counted with and whose hearts are united". This account is confirmed by Yāqūt<sup>4</sup> who mentions the Island of Kurk in the Indian Ocean. But Ibn Taghribaldī<sup>5</sup> states that it was the Abyssinians who attacked the port of Jadda in 153 A.H. Thus the Kurk could either have come from Abyssinia, as there had been a previous attack by Abyssinian pirates in the reign of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik,<sup>6</sup> or else they were pirates from the Indian Ocean possibly of Indian origin.<sup>7</sup> Al-Manṣūr

<sup>1</sup>After having performed their tasks the two governors were later assassinated, 'Uqba in Baghdād by a bedouin from Baḥrayn and Ma'an in Bust by the Kharijites (Ya'qūbī, II, p.478; Tab., III, p.369; Azdī, fol. 186).

<sup>2</sup>Khazrajī, B.M., fols. 17b-18b. The harsh oppressive policy of Ḥammād al-Barbarī al-Rashīd's governor of the Yemen led to the emergence of dis-integratory tendencies. The Yemen though it paid, for a time, lip service to the 'Abbasids, was one of the first provinces to break away when the Ziyādids seized control in 202/817-18 (al-Ḥakamī, Kitāb Tarīkh al-Yaman, pp. 2-3; van Arendonk, Les debuts de l'imamat Zaidite..., pp. 106ff. E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Harun al-Rashīd).

<sup>3</sup>Ya'qūbī, I, p.219.

<sup>4</sup>Mu'jam, I, p.29.

<sup>5</sup>Nujūm, p.412.

<sup>6</sup>Maqrīzī, al-Ilmām bi akhbār al-Ḥubshān, p.3; Trimighton, Islam in

immediately dispatched a naval force from Baṣra to deal with the Kurk and saved the port of Jadda.<sup>1</sup>

### Coptic and Bedouin disturbances in Egypt

Egypt was, in the early 'Abbāsīd times, a vital base for military operations in Ifrīqiyya. Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī the caliph's uncle was the first governor of Egypt to be appointed by the 'Abbāsīds in Muḥarram 132 A.H.<sup>2</sup> Generous distributions of 'aṭā' to the soldiers and Ṣadaqāt to the needy which characterized the 'Abbāsīd accession to power in many provinces, followed his nomination. Ṣāliḥ also rewarded those dignitaries who were ready to join the 'Abbāsīds by allotting to them qaṭī'as in villages of Būlāq and Aḥnās.<sup>3</sup> They also exempted the Copts of Bashmūr from the Kharāj tax and gave them rewards for their help against the Umayyads.<sup>4</sup> When the critical situation in Syria obliged the caliph to recall Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī from Egypt in Sha'bān 133 A.H., Ṣāliḥ made Abū 'Awn 'Abd al-Malik al-Azdī governor of Egypt. Al-Azdī had a new garrison city built in the north east of al-Fuṣṭāṭ. It was called al-'Askar (i.e. the camp). Khurasānī troops were stationed there, and it held also the residence of the governor.<sup>5</sup> The establishment of al-'Askar was pre-

---

(cont.) Ethiopia, pp. 51, 60.

<sup>7</sup>H.M.Elliott, The History of India..., London, 1867, vol. I, pp. 429-30, 508-11 vol. II, p.246; G. F. Haurani, Arab Seafaring, Princeton University Press, 1951, p.70.

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.359; F.H.A., p.261.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.50; Khiṭāṭ, 2, p.88; Nujūm, pp. 351-2.

<sup>3</sup>Khiṭāṭ, 2, pp. 88-89; 4, p.9; Suyūṭī, 2p.176.

<sup>4</sup>Severus, V, pp. 187-188.

<sup>5</sup>Wulāt, p.100; Khiṭāṭ, vol. 2, pp. 88-89, 91, vol. 4, p.2; Suyūṭī,

sumably a move to avoid clashes between the people of al-Fusṭāṭ and the Khurasānīs.<sup>1</sup>

Internally, Egypt had more than one problem to contend with. The Copts, hardpressed by taxation and occasionally discriminated against, rebelled many a time. The turbulent, predominantly Qaysite region of al-Ḥawf al-Sharqī as well as the Bedouins of al-Ṣa'īd were continuous trouble spots. The subjects, whether Arabs or Copts, had one thing in common, namely their grievances against the bureaucracy. Thus they formed the core of every rebellion, and more than once joined hands against the governmental forces. Heavily taxed by the Umayyads, the Copts were already in rebellion when Marwān II entered Egypt and helped to crush Marwān's resistance.<sup>2</sup> They naturally expected the advent of the 'Abbāsids to result in an improvement of their position but were soon disappointed. They expressed their resentment in a series of risings, some of which were rather violent.

It was as early as 133/750-751 that Abū Mīna the Copt<sup>3</sup> rebelled at Samnawūd in Upper Egypt, but he was soon killed and his rising crushed by 'Abd al-Malik al-Azdī (133-136/750-753). In 150/767 a violent rising broke out in Saḥā. The Copts defeated the local governor and took control of the surrounding districts. The rebels were joined by several

---

(cont.) Husan al-Muhādara, vol. 2, p.176. Tūlūn, p.14. E.I.<sup>1</sup>  
(Cairo, Egypt); E.I.<sup>2</sup>, (Egypt).

<sup>1</sup>Incidents of such kind did occur. See Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p.240; Wulāt, p.356; cf. al-Shayyāt, Tarīkh Misr al-Islamiyya, vol. I, pp. 54f.

<sup>2</sup>Imāma, 2, pp. 229-230; Khiṭāṭ, 4, p.395; Severus, V, pp. 172-3.

<sup>3</sup>Wulāt, p.102; Khiṭāṭ, 4, p.395; Nujūm, p.361.

other villages, and the Khurasānīs and local recruits which formed the 'Abbāsīd army sent against them by the governor Yazīd b. Ḥātim al-Muhallabī under the command of his kinsman Naṣr al-Muhallabī, were defeated and suffered heavy losses.<sup>1</sup> There is no detailed information of how the rising was ultimately put down, but an account mentions that, before retreating, a division of the 'Abbāsīd army succeeded in setting the camp of the Copts on fire. The rising seems to have subsequently subsided only to break out again in 156/772-3 in Balhīt under the governor Mūsā b. 'Alī al-Lakhamī<sup>2</sup> (155-161/771-777). This last rising, however, proved abortive, and Egypt witnessed peace and tranquillity for a period of six years. This was due to the justice of the governor Mūsā al-Lakhamī.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from fiscal demands, the Copts were subject from time to time to a measure of discrimination. At times their churches were destroyed and their property plundered or confiscated, though these were, according to Maqrīzī, merely reprisals for incriminating Christian actions. The consent of a Qādī was needed to build a church.<sup>4</sup> The governors occasionally discriminated against one Christian denomination

---

<sup>1</sup> Wulāt, pp. 116-117; Khiṭaṭ, 4, p.29.

<sup>2</sup> Wulāt, pp. 119-120; Khiṭaṭ, vol. 4, pp. 396, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Wulāt, pp. 131, 399; Khiṭaṭ, 4, p.396. It is worth noting that except for the serious revolt in 226/840 which was caused, as it is indicated by the statement of caliph al-Ma'mūn, by the extortionate policy of the governor 'Īsā b. Maṣṣūr (Wulāt, p.192) there were no more dangerous Coptic outbursts. (See Khiṭaṭ, 4, p.396.

... من حينئذ ذلت القبط في جميع ارض مصر ولم يقدر احد منهم بعد ذلك الخروج على السلطان

<sup>4</sup> Wulāt, p.103.



in favour of another. On one occasion the Melekite patriarch asked the caliph to reward him, for services rendered, by the restoration of the property of his denomination which was in the hands of the Jacobites, and his plea was successful.<sup>1</sup>

As has already been pointed out, disturbances in Egypt were caused apart from the Copts by the unruly Qaysite tribes of the Ḥawf and the nomads of Ṣa'īd who rebelled in 168/784 against Mūsa b. Muṣ'ab (167/783-168/784), and in 178/794-5 against Iṣḥāq b. Sulaymān (177/793 -178/794), killed the former in the battle and foiled the endeavour of the latter to curb their resistance.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, fresh troops had to be sent from Baghdād to put down the rebellion. Arab risings and disturbances in Egypt such as that of 'Alī b. Muḥammad the Ḥasanid in 144/761-2 or that of Daḥiyya b. al-Aṣḥagh in 168-169/784-86, sometimes adopted Umayyad or 'Alid slogans.<sup>3</sup> However the real cause of these risings was economic rather than political. The tribes were resentful of heavy taxation and authority exercised by the governor. The fact that governors were usually in charge of both military and financial administration made them more powerful as well as arbitrary.<sup>4</sup> Besides they relied more on Khurasānī than native troops. Newly appointed governors were accompanied by

---

<sup>1</sup> Tabaqāt al-Aṭibbā', I, p.83 (ed. Cairo 1299).

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.483; Tab., III, pp. 629-30; Khīṭāṭ, vol. I, p.128; Azdi, fol. 219.

<sup>3</sup> See above pp.

<sup>4</sup> On the financial administration of Egypt see the bibliography under C.H.Becker, A Grohmann and Kashif. It is interesting to note that the Amīr of the Kharaḥj of Egypt was more respected than the governor. (Wulat, pp. 108-9). Although the early 'Abbāsids combined these two offices in the hands of one man, they sometimes appointed, in order to extract more money, a separate Amīr of Kharaḥj (Ibid.; Nujūm,

Khurasānī divisions especially at the time of disturbances. It is known that the 'Abbāsīd army in Egypt was increased in the governorship of Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī who added 2,000 Muqātila to it.<sup>1</sup> When Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba arrived in 143/760 he was accompanied by 20,000 troops which were soon reinforced by an additional contingent from Baghdad.<sup>2</sup>

The size of the 'Abbāsīd garrisons stationed in Egypt was obviously connected with the caliph's plan to subjugate Ifriqiyya where the Kharijites had a free hand. It was obvious that Egypt was regarded as the basis of all military operations in Ifriqiyya and had to harbour 'Abbāsīd armies on their way there. Consequently the economic burden on the people of Egypt was increased not only by its military commitments but also by economic ones, the more so as Egypt had to feed the Ḥijāz by exports of food stuffs, especially grain. Taking these difficulties into consideration, it is surprising that the governor Yazīd b. Ḥātim al-Muhallabī (144/761-152/769) could exceed his limits and successfully crush the Abyssinian rebel Abū Maymūn. He even brought Barqa for the first time under his jurisdiction in 148/765-6.<sup>3</sup>

The subjugation of Armenia and the war with Khazaria

In the early 'Abbāsīd period Armenia and Adhurbayjān were occasionally

---

(cont.) pp. 382-3).

<sup>1</sup> Wulāt, p.103.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., p.107; Nujūm, p.385. The army also included sometimes non-Khurasānī divisions such as the Mosulite division (Azdi, fol. 219).

<sup>3</sup> Khijāṭ, 2, p.93; Nujūm, p.116. The army stationed in Egypt also dealt with disturbances in Palestine in 133 A.G. (See Wulāt, p.100; Nujūm, p.366).

administered by one governor.<sup>1</sup> When Abū Ja'far (al-Manṣūr) was appointed governor of the Jazīra, Armenia and Adhurbayjān, he sent Yazīd b. Asīd al-Sulamī as his deputy to Armenia and Yazīd b. Ḥatim al-Muhallabī to Adhurbayjān<sup>2</sup> where the first Arab Yamanite settlement took place at the time. Azd, Tay and other Yamanites were settled in different garrisons in the province.<sup>3</sup> The mountainous character of this area and the scarcity of food rendered it often difficult to control.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the routes were infested with highwaymen, so that a garrison had to be stationed at Sīsr to guard the routes.<sup>5</sup>

Armenia was plagued by occasional Khazar raids. According to Balādhuri, Ya'qūbī and Kūfī,<sup>6</sup> these raids were so troublesome that al-Manṣūr advised his governor to establish cordial relations with the Khazar by seeking marriage with the daughter of the Khazar's king, a marriage which actually took place. Al-Mansūr seems to have paid great attention to the frontier which divided the Muslim territory from Khazaria, and used to call it al-Taḡhr al-A'ḡam (i.e. the greatest frontier).<sup>7</sup> However, the hostilities were soon resumed when the bride died some two

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.430; Tab., III, p.72; R. Vasmer, Chronologie der arabischen..., pp. 3ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.446; Kūfī, fol. 241b; Dunlop, The history of the Jewish Khazars, p.179.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, p.446.

<sup>4</sup> On the disturbances in the late Umayyad period see Movsēs Kalankatuaci, The history of the Caucasians Albanians, p.207; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Armenia).

<sup>5</sup> Futūh, 2, p.381; Hamadānī, Mukhtaṣar, p.239.

<sup>6</sup> Futūh, p.210; Ya'qūbī, II, p.446; Kūfī, fol. 241b. An account in Tabarī relates that the marriage took place in 183 A.H. in the reign of al-Rashīd between al-Faḡl b. Yahya al-Barmakī, the governor of Armenia and  
(cont.)

years later in 145/762-3. Yazīd, with 7,000 cavalry, was unable to sustain the attack of Rās Tarkhān the commander of the Khazar and had to appeal for reinforcements. According to Ya'qūbī,<sup>1</sup> al-Manṣūr sent Jibrīl b. Yaḥya al-Bajlī with 20,000 Syrians, Jazirites and Mosulites. Kūfī<sup>2</sup> provides a detailed list of the troops sent to Armenia; about 10,000 Syrians; 35,000 Irāqīs, 10,000 of whom were headed by Jibrīl al-Bajlī, 5,000 by Ḥarb al-Rawandī, 10,000 by Mukhallad b. al-Ḥasan and finally 10,000 by Humayd b. Qaḥṭaba. This strong Muslim army found itself facing the Khazar's odds. As many as 100,000 Khazars inflicted heavy losses on Yazīd who withdrew to Bardha'a. One of the Muslim commanders, Ḥarb b. 'Abdallah al-Rawandī, was killed in the battle.<sup>3</sup>

Faced by this danger, al-Manṣūr decided to build a new series of fortifications in Armenia. Several military headquarters, e.g. al-Muḥammadiyya, Karkh and Bābwāq were erected there by skilled masons and 7,000 prisoners. The new garrisons were manned by Muqātila who consisted mainly of Syrians and Jazirites; the pay they received was exactly equal in amount to what used to be paid by the Umayyads.<sup>4</sup> The caliph also utilized the experience of Jazirite tribal leaders such as Bakkar

---

(cont.) and the daughter of the king of the Khazars (Tab., III, p.647). This account belongs probably to the reign of al-Manṣūr. See Dunlop, op.cit., p.180.

<sup>7</sup> Muq., fol. 92b.

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 446f.

<sup>2</sup> Kūfī, fol. 242a.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p.328.

<sup>4</sup> Kūfī, fol. 242b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.447.

b. Muslim al-'Uqaylī<sup>1</sup> who had been instrumental in checking disturbances in this area during the later Umayyad period. But there were no other great battles with Khazaria in the early 'Abbāsīd period. On the contrary, Khazar troops were found forming part of the Muslim army in the campaign of 151/768 against the Byzantines.<sup>2</sup> Armenia, however, was never completely pacified under the early 'Abbāsīds. Unwilling to scatter his Khurasānī troops, al-Manṣūr did not use them to quell disturbances in remote provinces unless it was necessitated by serious danger. An emergency of this kind arose in 147-148 A.H. when Khurasānī troops were sent to Armenia to reinforce the garrisons.<sup>3</sup> Again, when the Sannariyya<sup>4</sup> rising broke out in 148/765-6 under the governorship of al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī, the caliph sent four Khurasānī commanders with 30,000 cavalry, 'Amir b. Ismā'īl al-Masallī al-Jurjānī, 'Isā b. Musā al-Khurasānī, al-Faḍl b. Dīnār and Muqātil b. Ṣāliḥ to put down the revolt. Al-Ḥasan al-Ṭā'ī appointed his sons Qaḥṭaba, Ibrāhīm and Muḥammad subgovernors of the Armenian districts. According to Kūfī,<sup>5</sup> Muḥammad's extortionate fiscal demands provoked a rising of the Christian Armenians led by the patriarch Mūshābdh. A new army

---

<sup>1</sup> Kūfī, fol. 242b.

<sup>2</sup> Dunlop, op.cit., p.180.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, pp. 328, 352; Ya'qūbī, II, p.447; Kūfī, fols. 242b-243a.

<sup>4</sup> Kūfī, fol. 243a.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

arrived from Irāk and put down the revolt. The Muslim troops plundered churches where they found, as Kūfī states, not only money but also arms. It was surely to accelerate the process of integration of the province into the Muslim empire by strengthening Arab control that al-Mansūr initiated a systematically organised settlement of Arabs in Armenia. They settled, presumably together with their families, in the newly built garrison cities. Moreover it should be borne in mind that Armenia had a common frontier with the Byzantine empire, so that there was always the danger that the Christian Armenians would receive support and encouragement from the Byzantine authorities or help the Byzantine army in its fight against the Arabs. As Dionysius of Tell Mahrē<sup>1</sup> points out, this was by no means frequent, and the Armenians occasionally sided with the Muslims against Byzantium, or informed the Muslims of the movements of the Byzantine army, thus enabling the Muslims to inflict heavy losses on them in unexpected attacks. His judgment on the Armenians, no doubt inspired by sectarian prejudice, is that they lived by dishonesty and were double-dealers, who frequently changed their allegiance in the Arab-Byzantine conflict.

'Abbāsīd attempts to regain al-Andalus

Since 138/755-56 the 'Abbāsīds had to consider the possible danger threatening them on the part of the Umayyad régime newly established in

---

<sup>1</sup>Dionysius, op.cit., pp. 101-102.

Spain by 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān b. Mu'āwiya b. Hishām.<sup>1</sup> For the 'Abbāsids, the Umayyad prince of al-Andalus was not only a rebel in a remote province of the empire, but he was a potential danger to the existence of the new régime as the pro-Umayyad population of Syria considered him their deliverer from the 'Abbāsids. A number of current traditions speak of the Umayyads of al-Andalus as the would-be saviours of Syria from the 'Abbāsīd yoke.<sup>2</sup> Consequently al-Manḡūr ordered in 146/763 al-'Alā' b. Muḡhīth al-Yaḥsubī to launch an attack on Spain. Al-'Alā' al-Yaḥsubī was able to cross the Straits of Gibraltar and landed at Bāja where he found sympathizers and deployed the black banner of the 'Abbāsids. But he was soon defeated and his army decimated in the battle of Seville. Many of the heads of the killed 'Abbāsīd soldiers were sent to Qayruwān and Mecca where the caliph was performing his pilgrimage. Thus the first attempt to regain Spain ended in failure.<sup>3</sup>

The second attempt, made in 161/777-78 by 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān b. Ḥabīb al-Fihri al-Ṣiglabī.<sup>4</sup> With a Berber army he landed in Spain near Tudmīr. He contacted Sulaymān b. Yaḡzān al-A'rābī, governor of Barcelona, who is described by al-Maqqarī as Ra's al-Fitan (i.e. the head of

<sup>1</sup> Lévi-Provençal, Histoire de l'Espagne..., pp. 74ff.

<sup>2</sup> Lammens, "La Sofiani", B.I.F.A.O., 1923, pp. 141, 143.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Kūtiya, pp. 32-34; Akhbār Majmū'a, pp. 101-103; Ibn 'Adhārī, vol. II, pp. 51-52; Athīr, vol. V, p.440, ed. Brill, 1871; Nuwayrī, fol. 92a; Muḡ., fols. 54a-54b; Maqqarī, vol. I, pp. 214-215; Kutubī, Uyun al-Tawarīkh, fol. 2b. See also Lévi-Provençal, op.cit., p.78.

<sup>4</sup> Akhbār Majmū'a, pp. 110-111; Ibn 'Adhārī, vol. II, p.55; Athīr, vol. VI, pp. 36-42; Nuwayrī, fol. 93a-93b; Ibar, vol. 3, p.446. Moscatti, "Studi storici sul califfato di al-Mahdī", Orientalia, 1945, pp. 321-326. 'Abd al-Raḥmān was called al-Ṣiglabī (the Slav) because of his height, his fair hair and his blue eyes. (Ibn 'Adhārī, II, p.55, cf. E.I.<sup>2</sup> where it is alleged that he was thus called to distinguish him from another (cont.)

dissensions).<sup>1</sup> First al-A'rabī seems to have been in two minds about it, but then refused to support the invader. The resulting clash between al-Fihri and al-A'rabī ended in the defeat of the former, who retreated southwards towards the coast. At that moment the Umayyad 'Abd 'l Raḥmān attacked the exhausted army of al-Fihri whose ships he had already destroyed. Al-Fihri entrenched himself in the outskirts of Valencia, but his resistance was not of long duration as he was murdered by a Berber named Miskar who had been induced by 'Abd al-Raḥmān's offer of 1,000 dīnārs for the head of al-Fihri.

The Umayyad prince now took the initiative and planned a retaliatory naval attack on the centre of Umayyad sympathies, Syria, in 163/779-80,<sup>2</sup> but he had to face internal troubles in Barcelona and Saragossa led by Sulaymān al-Anṣārī and desisted from his undertaking.

Thus the precautionary measures of the early 'Abbāsids were justified, the more so as there was always the threat of a fifth column being formed in Syria itself to work for the restoration of the Umayyad régime. As to the part played by the two 'Abbāsīd caliphs in the Spanish campaigns, there is no doubt that the first campaign of 146/763 went back to the initiative of al-Manṣūr himself. However, there is some disagreement among the scholars as to who was the originator of the second campaign

---

(cont.) person of the same name.

<sup>1</sup>Maqqarī, vol. II, p.33; R. Dozy, Histoire des musulmans d'Espagne, I, pp. 375 ff. Lévi Provençal, op.cit., p.86.

<sup>2</sup>Athīr, VI, p.42; Nuwayrī, fol. 93b; Moscātī, op.cit., p.322.



in 161/777-78. Weil<sup>1</sup> is of the opinion that it was al-Mahdī who ordered the attack while Moscati<sup>2</sup> states that "al-Fihri acted independently and that his exploit is to be considered rather as an episode in the struggle between the Fihrites and the Umayyads for dominion in Spain than direct initiative of the 'Abbāsīd Caliph". The question is difficult to decide. Al-Fihri is said to have made propaganda in the name of al-Mahdī, the 'Abbāsīd caliph. However, independent action by influential men or governors in remote parts of the empire could be taken without consulting the central régime. Nevertheless there is some correspondence to suggest that al-Mahdī evinced certain concern in al-Andalus. It is reported that the latter exchanged harsh letters with the Umayyad prince, among these letters one written by Hishām al-Kalbī, the geneologist and historian, pointing out the vices of the Umayyads.<sup>3</sup> Thus there is some reason to suppose that al-Fihri's campaign had the support and the blessing of al-Mahdī.

#### The Raid on India.

It was from Baṣra that al-Mahdī organised in 159/775-6 a naval expedition to India.<sup>4</sup> He sent Mihriz b. Ibrāhīm to Baṣra to supervise

---

<sup>1</sup>Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, II, p.116.

<sup>2</sup>Moscati, op.cit., p.325.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.531.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, pp. 460 f., 476-77; Athīr, VI, pp. 30-31.

the formation of the army. The expedition consisted of 2,000 Muqātila of Baṣra led by Ghassān b. 'Abdallah, 1,500 Muḥaww'a led by al-Mundir al-Jārūdī, a Syrian division led by Yazīd b. al-Ḥabbāb al-Mudhāhī, and 4,000 Aswāriyīn and Sayābiya.<sup>1</sup> 'Abd al-Malik b. Shihāb al-Masma'i was in charge of this naval expedition which anchored in Bārbad. The expedition gives the impression of hasty improvisation. The idea behind it seems to have been the wish to satisfy the needs of the Muqātila by raids on rich infidel territories from which they used to return with plentiful booty. However, this expedition should also be viewed within the framework of al-Mahdī's reign. In his early days as caliph al-Mahdī seems to have been obsessed by the rôle of a saviour as devised by his father, al Manṣūr. He seems to have had in mind a return to the "good old days" when Jihād played a prominent rôle in Muslim life. His concern with Jihād in the north against Byzantium and in the east against Transoxonia and India bears witness to this fact. However, neither the Byzantium nor the Indian confrontation had fruitful results. As to the Indian expedition of 159 A.H./775 A.D. the Muslims attacked the city of Bārbad and finally penetrated into it. The inhabitants took refuge in their religious sanctuary and remained there even though it was set on fire. That the expedition was intended as a raid (i.e. ghazwa) is obvious since having taken the ghanīma and captives the Muslims

---

<sup>1</sup>These were originally from India and south east Asia, settled in Irāk before the Arab conquest. (See Pellat, Le Milieu Basrien..., pp. 68, 78).

immediately prepared to sail back to Baṣra.<sup>1</sup> But the stormy sea prevented the return of the Muslims and an epidemic, which affected the mouth, spread among them and in a short time killed about 1,000 men. They hurried to Baṣra, but another disaster was awaiting them in the Persian Gulf when a storm destroyed part of the fleet. Only a few ships reached Baṣra in safety.

This disastrous expedition also reveals a number of interesting facts. 1) The people of al-Shām still represented a fighting body which the 'Abbāsids tried to utilize not only in campaigns against India but also other campaigns. This is yet another indication of the change of policy towards the Syrians whose troops had been disbanded after the fall of Wāṣit in 132 A.H. 2) The number of non-Arabs in Baṣra seems to have been great. The 'Abbāsids made use of this element too in arranging military expeditions. 3) It may have been one of the motives behind al-Mahdī's Indian expedition to occupy the unruly elements in fighting a jihād rather than creating trouble for the central government.

#### The conquest of Tabaristan

The conflict between the central government and the local princes of the region of the Caspian Sea was, primarily, a war of occupation. The 'Abbāsīd central government tried to impose its authority on many regions which had hitherto enjoyed independent or autonomous rule and to

---

<sup>1</sup>Moscatti, op.cit., 1945, p.326.

whom Islam was unknown.

With Khurasān comparatively quiet under the governorship of al-Mahdī 140/757,<sup>1</sup> al-Manṣūr directed his efforts towards the Caspian region. In planning to subjugate these regions, the caliph was in fact trying to incorporate Ṭabaristān and its neighbouring districts and to penetrate as far as possible into Daylam. Al-Mahdī's long residence at his headquarters in Rayy (140-151/757-768) indicates that the caliph attached great importance to the unrest in the eastern part, and that he was determined to impose the authority of the central régime in several autonomous or independent regions. Islam had little or no effect in the Caspian provinces, as people still clung to their ancient faith and fire temples still existed in many parts.

Ṭabaristān was a rich province which al-Manṣūr was eager to exploit. Helped by its geographical position and the mountainous nature of its land<sup>2</sup> which made the terrain almost impassable, it had hitherto resisted Arab penetration. Its local princes had exercised a great influence on the people, and ruled effectively for centuries. Tabarī<sup>3</sup> says that as 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdī's revolt (142/759-60) had been defeated more easily than had been expected, al-Manṣūr tried to find another

<sup>1</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 445-6; Tab., III, p.133.

<sup>2</sup>See R. Vasmer, Die Eroberung Tabaristons durch die Araber..., pp. 86ff; Sadighī, op.cit., p.26; Rabino, "Les préfets du califat...", J.A., 1939, pp. 224-56.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.136; Athīr, V, p.387.

ولا ظفر المهدي ببلاد البهار بغير تعب ولا مباشرة قتال كرمه المنصور ان تبطل تلك  
النفقات التي افق على المهدي فطلب اليه ان يفرط طبرستان.

use for the army to justify the expenses incurred on the expedition. The cause, however, seems to be deeper. According to Ibn Iṣfandiyār<sup>1</sup> al-Manṣūr had already made one futile attempt to obtain Abū Muslim's possessions from the Iṣṣahbādih Khorshīd. Al-Mahdī now asked his father not to press his demands too hard lest the Iṣṣahbādih should revolt. Al-Manṣūr, consequently, sent a royal crown to the Iṣṣahbādih, to which the latter reacted by sending the tribute he used to pay to the Sasanid kings. But the caliph was not satisfied with that, as what he wanted was direct rule over Ṭabaristān. He therefore resorted to a trick and ordered al-Mahdī to seek the permission of the Iṣṣahbādih for a division of the 'Abbāsīd army to pass through Ṭabaristān on its way to Khurasān under the pretext that the passage of such great number of troops would lead to a shortage of food if they all took one route. The unsuspecting Iṣṣahbādih gave his permission and the Arab troops, led by al-Manṣūr's Mawla Abū 'l Khaṣīb Marzūk, 'Umar b. al-'Alā' and Abū 'Awn b. 'Abdallah, penetrated far into the province and occupied it. The Iṣṣahbādih fled to Jīlān and, hearing that the last fortress al-Ṭāq had fallen, he took poison and died.<sup>2</sup> It was mainly owing to the effort of 'Umar b. al-'Alā' that Ṭabaristān came under direct Arab control. The conquest however cannot be equated with complete subjugation.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Iṣfandiyār, p.118.

Interesting is the manner in which Abū Muslim's possessions and treasure emerge over and over again in most controversies between the caliph and rebels. It seems as if the possession of Abū Muslim's inheritance had had a symbolic significance which makes its surrender an act of unconditionnal obedience on which the caliph was bound to insist.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Iṣfandiyār, pp. 119-22; Tab., III, pp. 136f.

Unrest continued to prevail in the province. 'Abbāsīd governors were only able to maintain their authority by depending on the army stationed in garrisons. The first 'Abbāsīd governor Abū 'l Khaṣīb Marzūk (143/760-61) built mosques and encouraged conversion to Islam,<sup>1</sup> but these efforts met with considerable difficulties as the natives adhered not only to their faith and traditions, but also to their local princes whose influence seems to have been tolerated by Muslim governors.

For the rest of al-Manṣūr's reign, Ṭabaristān was comparatively quiet. But in 164/780-81, when 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Maḍrūb was appointed governor of it, his arbitrary fiscal demands led to a rebellion of the natives who invited Wandād Harmuzd to lead it against the 'Abbāsīd rule.<sup>2</sup> Wandād Hurmuzd accepted the offer on condition that he obtained the consent of influential princes, especially the Iṣṭahbādh Sharwīn and the Maṣ-mughān walāsh. When both agreed, a general massacre of the Arabs ensued and, if the account of Ibn Iṣfandiyār<sup>3</sup> is to be credited, even women who had married "Muslims" which in fact meant "Arabs" were put to death. The governor 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Maḍrūb was among the victims. Between 164-166/780-782 the struggle between Wandād Hurmuzd assisted by Sharwīn and the Muslim troops was characterized

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 136f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibn. Iṣfandiyār, pp. 122 f; Moscati, op.cit., pp. 347 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Ibn Iṣfandiyār, p.126.

by frequent Muslim defeats.<sup>1</sup> The Muslim commander Sālim al-Farḡhānī was assassinated in his own camp by a suicidal group. Also Farāsha, a Mawla of al-Mahdī and the governor of Qūmus and Dunbāwand (164-167/780-783) led an unsuccessful expedition in which he lost his life. Most of the governors adopted a militant policy towards Ṭabaristān, and when in 167/783-4 unrest stirred again, al-Mahdī sent new troops led by his heir Mūsā al-Hādī and the commander Yazīd b. Mazyād al-Shaybānī. The new army was reinforced in 168/784-85 by Sa'īd al-Ḥarshī with 40,000.<sup>2</sup> The war was eventually concluded by an agreement<sup>3</sup> between Mūsā al-Hādī and Wandād Murmuzd who surrendered on a promise of pardon to the effect that the latter would desist from his militant activities, but maintain his authority over the mountains. He also agreed to accompany Mūsā on a visit to Baghdād. According to Ibn Iṣfandiyār Wandād Ṣafrān, the youngest brother of Wandād Hurmuzd, killed shortly afterwards a native of Ṭabaristān who had been converted to Islam by al-Hādī himself. The latter, who was now caliph, was enraged and decided to execute Wandād Hurmuzd in retaliation for the murdered Muslim. However Wandād Hurmuzd succeeded in convincing the caliph that it had been his brother's primary intention to get rid of himself, his elder brother, who had foreseen that al-Hādī's anger would

---

<sup>1</sup> Op.cit., pp. 126 ff; Tab., III, pp. 500, 503, 517, 520; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 479; F.H.A., p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, pp. 518, 521.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Iṣfandiyār, p. 131. Moscati, S.O., 1946, pp. 8-9; Spuler, Iran, p. 50.

turn against him and put him to death. He promised al-Hādī to execute the murderer if he was permitted to return to Ṭabaristān. Though the caliph finally permitted him to do so, he never fulfilled his promise.<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, the regions of the Caspian Sea put up a stubborn resistance to the Muslim authority. Some local princes embraced Islam for merely political reasons, as conversion enabled them to keep their positions. However their deeds reveal that they had persisted in their attachment to their old faith.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to Islam which was supported by the 'Abbāsids, i.e. the Musawidda, they called their faith the "white religion"<sup>3</sup> الدين الأبيض. The Khramiyya developed into a strong movement under Bābak, during the reign of al-Mu'taṣim, and constituted a danger not only to 'Abbāsīd authority but also to Islam itself.

#### Al-Khayzurān's coup d'état 170/786

After the strict rule of al-Manṣūr, al-Mahdī's reign (158/775-169/785) appeared mild. But, as years went by, it became increasingly apparent that the caliph was not only mild but weak and that the "expected

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Isfandiyyār, pp. 131-2.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, pp. 1269, 1276 ff. Minorsky, La Domination des Dailamites, pp. 5 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Tab., III, p. 1311. The Muhammira and Khuramiyya which started in Jurjān as early as 162 A.H. under the leadership of 'Abd 'l-Qaḥḥār (Tab., III, p. 493; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 479; Dīna, p. 382) developed into a strong movement under Bābak and Mazyar in the reign of al-Mu'taṣim (218-227/833-42). On Bābak's revolt, see Sadighī, op.cit., pp. 229 ff; Ōm̄san, The reign of al-Mu'taṣim, Ph. D. Thesis, 1963; E. M. Wright, Bābak of Badh̄h, M.W., 1948, pp. 43-131; E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Bābak).



saviour" had become himself a victim of his wife al-Khayzurān, and let himself be swayed away by intrigues of courtiers and Mawālī.

Be it as it may, barely one year of al-Mahdī's reign had passed when he decided to nominate his son Mūsa his heir. Thus he set aside once more the claims of 'Īsa b. Mūsa whom he subjected to humiliations until he gave in on the 4th of Muḥarram 160/776-77.<sup>1</sup> Beside Mūsa the only possible heir al-Mahdī considered was Hārūn, his other son by al-Khayzurān, who was nominated in 166/782-3 second in succession to the caliphate.<sup>2</sup> This is rather surprising, as the caliph had, by a Hashimite cousin, called Rīḡa bint Abī 'l 'Abbās, another son named 'Alī whose Hashimite descent could have enlisted enthusiastic support on the part of Banī Hashim.<sup>3</sup> However al-Mahdī's preference for Mūsa and Hārūn shows how strong an influence al-Khayzurān exercised upon him.

The issue, however, was far from settled. Al-Mahdī's weakness of character made him, as has been stated, an easy victim of pressure of various court intrigues and of his wife al-Khayzurān who favoured Hārūn rather than her elder son Mūsa. When, in 167/783-84 Mūsa was sent to Jurjān and Ṭabaristān to put down a revolt, he was accompanied

---

<sup>1</sup> Ansāb, fol. 564; Tab., III, pp. 467, 471-2; Azdī, fol. 205; Jah., p.141. Ya'qubī mistakenly puts it in 159 A.H. (II, p.476).

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, pp. 503-506; compare Dīnawārī where he puts the nomination of al-Hādī and Hārūn at the same time in 162 A.H. (p.382). See Moscatti, op.cit., pp. 160f.

<sup>3</sup> N. Abbot, The two queens..., p.25.

by Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī.<sup>1</sup> Owing to the talent of Yazīd, the real commander of the army, the military operations were successful and ended with the surrender of Wandaḍ Harmuzd the prince of Ṭabaristān. One would expect this formidable success to have worked out in favour of Mūsā and made him appear worthier of the caliphate. But al-Mahdī suddenly changed his mind and decided to put Hārūn before Mūsā in the succession to the caliphate. On Mūsā's resistance al-Mahdī had no alternative but to go himself to force Mūsā to renounce his right. However, the caliph died in mysterious circumstances on his way there in al-Rūdhḍh on the 22nd Muḥarram 169/4th of August 785.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Mahdī's sudden change of mind and the mystery surrounding his death present one of the most obscure episodes of this period. As to his death at the age of 36, conflicting accounts render it still more suspect. Some accounts relate a hunting accident as the reason,<sup>3</sup> others say it was due to poisoning but exclude foul play,<sup>4</sup> but all agree that it was sudden and it took many of his companions by surprise. However, one cannot help suspecting that al-Hādī's supporters may have conspired to put an end to the caliph's life. The author of al-Imāma wa'l Siyāsa<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, pp. 518f; Ibn Iṣfandiyār, pp. 125 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.523.

<sup>3</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.484; Tab. III, 524; Fakhri, p.163.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, pp. 524-5; Fakhri, p.163.

<sup>5</sup>Imāma, vol. 2, p.290.

states that al-Mahdī was poisoned by his son 'Abdallah (sic) which may be a mistake for Mūsa. A later historian Ibn al-Athīr was not convinced that al-Mahdī died a natural death.<sup>1</sup> Since al-Hādī's group immediately seized power the lack of information may be due to their having been able to remove all traces.

In retrospect, we notice that al-Mahdī had sown the seeds of rivalry between the two brothers, Mūsa and Hārūn. To stress the superior right of Khayzrān's sons, al-Mahdī divided the empire between Mūsa and Hārūn,<sup>2</sup> giving the former the eastern provinces and the latter the western provinces. In this he committed a grave mistake as the two brothers became the gathering point of two rival political factions. Although Hārūn's group fostered by al-Khayzrān had a considerable influence on al-Mahdī, al-Hādī's group was far from weak. He had in his company several Hashimites as well as powerful figures such as Yazīd al-Shaybānī and the cunning counsellor Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarrānī. It is only with the help of scattered information on the prominent personalities of these political groupings that light can be thrown on the court politics of that time. According to Jahshayārī<sup>3</sup> al-Mahdī, probably suspecting that Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarrānī was behind al-Hādī's refusal, asked the latter in

---

<sup>1</sup> Athīr, VI, pp. 54-55.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p. 545.

<sup>3</sup> Jah., p. 167.

vain to send Ibrāhīm back to Baghdad. Furthermore the death of al-Rabī' b. Yānus<sup>1</sup> shortly after the accession of al-Hādī was probably due to the latter's approval of al-Mahdī's plans favouring Hārūn and his reported attendance at meetings called by Khayzurān before al-Hādī's arrival in Baghdād.<sup>2</sup> On the advice of Yahya al-Barmakī Hārūn, who accompanied his father, behaved very tactfully and took the Bay'a to al-Hādī.<sup>3</sup> Here it is significant to stress the rôle of the army in politics. The Quwwād have already been instrumental in al-Mahdī's nomination. The latter made further use of them in the execution of his plans. On al-Mahdī's death Yahya al-Barmakī also advised Hārūn to make gifts of money to the soldiers to the amount of 200 dirhams each and order a return to Baghdād, a gesture which they would appreciate as it meant a return to their families. On the other hand, al-Mahdī's death was kept secret from them and a mutiny was temporarily avoided. Al-Mahdī was buried at al-Rūdhdh and Nuṣayr al-Waṣīf was sent with the insignia to al-Hādī.<sup>4</sup>

When the army reached Baghdad where al-Mahdī had left al-Rabī' b. Yūnus as his deputy, they learnt of al-Mahdī's death and mutinied seizing the opportunity to demand more pay. They caused damage to some

---

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.548.

<sup>2</sup>Tab., III, p.546.

<sup>3</sup>Ansāb, fol. 584; Jah., p.167; Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 487-488; Tab., III, p.545; Azdī, fol. 222; Agh., vol. 21, p.128; Murūj, VI, pp. 262-263; Khafīb, vol. 13, p.21. Sourdel, Le Vizariat..., pp. 134 f.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.545; Ansāb, fol. 584; Jah., p.167; Mu'jam, Vol. I, p.230, Vol. II, p.775.

governmental offices and the house of al-Rabī'. Al-Khayzurān called for a meeting to discuss the political situation which al-Rabī' attended but Yahya who shrewdly realized al-Hādī's resentment of his mother did not. At the meeting a decision was taken to give the troops two years' or eighteen months' pay.<sup>1</sup> The mutiny did not seem to have any political colour as sources agree that the troops' main concern was pay, and it seems that it had become customary for the troops to be given additional pay on the occasion of the accession of the new caliph. The figures behind Hārūn made the shrewd move of sending almost immediately envoys to the provinces to receive the oath of allegiance to al-Hādī and to Hārūn as the latter's heir.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Hādī arrived at Baghdād on the 20th of Ṣafar 169/785-6 and took over power nominating his men to the key offices of the central government.<sup>3</sup> Al-Hādī was obviously determined to grasp the caliphal authority, which he was about to lose, without giving way to court intrigues or the interference of women, especially his mother, al-Khayzarān, which was characteristic of his father's reign. It is significant that al-Hādī never forgot that his father wanted to deprive him of his right to succession. Although Hārūn had taken the Bay'a for him at Rudhdh and Bay'a was also sworn for him in Baghdād, it must be remembered that, under the special circumstances which followed al-Mahdī's sudden death

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, pp. 544-546, 547; F.H.A., pp. 282 f.

<sup>2</sup> Tab., III, p. 547.

<sup>3</sup> He appointed Al-Rabī' b. Yunus Wazīr, entrusting the administration to him alongside with 'Ubaydallah b. Ziyād, the chief chancellery, Muḥammad b. Jamīl in charge of the the revenue of the Irāqayin; he also made 'Alī b. 'Isā secretary to the army and chief of guards, 'Abdallah b. Malīk chief of the police. The seal he entrusted to 'Alī b. Yaḡḡīn. (Tab. III, pp. 547-8, see also Moscati, S.O., 1946, p. 18.)

there was hardly an alternative to his proclamation as caliph as he was the legitimate heir. However Hārūn's name figured on the order circulated to the provincial governors which stated unequivocally that he was al-Hādī's heir, and that the Bay'a at Baghdad had been taken from the troops in both their names.

It was not long until the relations between al-Hādī and al-Khayzurān became strained. For several months she had in politics the same influence as in al-Mahdī's reign but suddenly al-Hādī ordered her to refrain from any political rôle and keep within the precincts of the harem.<sup>1</sup> Several accounts present him as almost obsessed with fear and suspicion of Hārūn who had Khayzurān<sup>2</sup> and Yahya behind him. He expressed these suspicions to Abū Yūsuf the Qāḍī who vouched for Hārūn's loyalty and tried to dissuade the caliph from taking preventive measures.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile the conduct of Hārūn's affair was still in the hands of Yahya b. Khalīd who had been his tutor-cum-secretary since the reign of al-Mahdī. It was no doubt a tactical error of al-Hādī to keep the shrewd, tactful Yahya as secretary of Hārūn, for when shortly later he decided to nominate heir his son Ja'far, Hārūn would have given in had Yahya not prevented him from doing so.<sup>4</sup> Many commanders such as Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī, Muḥammad b. Farrūkh al-Kindī, Abū 'Iṣma, 'Alī b. 'Isā b. Māhān and 'Abdallāh b. Mālik encouraged al-Hādī to go through

<sup>1</sup> Tab., III, p.569; Azdī, fol. 224. If some accounts are to be believed he even tried to poison her but failed in his attempt. (Tab., III, p.570; Fakhri, p.173).

<sup>2</sup> Khayzurān had been a slave girl from the Yemen, freed and married by Mahdī in 159 A.H. On her origin see Tab., III, pp.466, 599; Murūj, VI, p.289. Tanbih, pp. 344f.; Khatīb, vo., 14, pp.5, 430; N. Abbott, The two queens..., pp.22-26.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Mukāfāt, pp. 52-53 citing Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm.

with his plan. Some even seem to have sworn allegiance to Ja'far as heir.<sup>1</sup> Hārūn suffered numerous humiliations and was deprived of the prerogatives of the heir apparent. People avoided associating with him for fear of losing the favour of al-Hādī. Only Yaḥya stood firmly by Hārūn. He succeeded in winning over to his side Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarrānī through whom he succeeded in getting his Kātib Ismā'īl b. Ṣabīḥ appointed a Kātib in the central administration who kept him informed about the intentions of al-Hādī's group.<sup>2</sup> Knowing Yaḥya's influence upon Hārūn, al-Hādī asked him to persuade Hārūn to renounce his rights. Yaḥya tried very tactfully to convince the caliph that the violation of an oath after so short a time would have disastrous consequences. He suggested to leave Hārūn's rights untouched and pointing to Ja'far's tender age and the difficulty of having him accepted caliph in case of al-Hādī's sudden death, he advised the caliph to nominate him second in succession.

Yaḥya then cleverly drew the attention of the caliph to those 'Abbasid princes who were anxiously trying to wrest the caliphate from the ruling line. Yaḥya then pledged with the caliph that if he waited until Ja'far was of age then he [Yaḥya] himself would persuade Hārūn to give in.<sup>3</sup>

---

(cont.)

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, p.573; E.I.<sup>1</sup> (Yaḥya b. Khālid); Moscati, S.O., XIII, 1946, pp. 19 ff.

<sup>1</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.489  
Tab., III, p.572; F.H.A., p.285.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, pp. 574-575.

If Yahya succeeded in convincing al-Hādī his success can only have been temporary for according to Tabarī pressure was again brought to bear on Hārūn who to avoid it left for a hunting trip and stayed at Qaṣr Muqātil.<sup>1</sup> But this manoeuvre was of little avail for he was summoned back to court and arrested together with Yahya al-Barmakī.

At this juncture the situation becomes mysterious. According to al-'Uyūn wa'l Hādā'iq<sup>2</sup> Harthama b. A'yan had already received the orders to kill the imprisoned Hārūn and Yahya when al-Hādī suddenly died in obscure circumstances. Conflicting accounts depict his death either as natural<sup>3</sup> or a murder by his mother<sup>4</sup> or accidental poisoning through the fault of a slave girl.<sup>5</sup> The second account is the most probable as it is transmitted by trustworthy narrators. Significant is Azdī's<sup>6</sup> revelatory remark which points to the equivocal rôle played by al-Khayzurān in this event: "There is no need to tell" preceded by the statement that she was more in favour of Hārūn than al-Hādī. This statement seems to suggest that al-Khayzurān had a hand in al-Hādī's

<sup>1</sup>Tab., III, p.515.

<sup>2</sup>F.H.A., pp. 286f; see also E.I.<sup>2</sup> (Harthama b. A'yan).

<sup>3</sup>Tab., III, p.578, citing al-Faḍl b. Dakīn.

<sup>4</sup>Tab., III, pp. 578-579; F.H.A., p.288; Fakhrī, p.173. The mystery and suspicion still deepens when one considers that Hādī's body was not taken for burial in the Qurayshite cemetery but was buried on the spot.

<sup>5</sup>Yazdī, Tārīkh al-Baramak, ed. Gh. Schefer, pp. 12 ff; Moscati, op.cit., p.23.

<sup>6</sup>Azdī, fol. 224. وطان سوزا [الخيران] في امره [الزاري] ما اغني عنه وعن ذم



premature death. When al-Hādī returned from a trip to Ḥadītha barely twenty-six years of age and in good physical condition the tension between him and his mother increased by her anxiety for her imprisoned favourite Hārūn, had reached its climax. According to Tabarī and the author of al-'Uyūn wa 'l Ḥadā'iq al-Hādī suddenly fell ill and during this illness - of which it is not said what had brought it on - Khayzurān is related to have ordered her servants to suffocate or poison him. The author of al-'Uyūn describes her activities on the crucial day. It was she was prevailed upon Harthama b. A'yan to delay the execution of Hārūn and Yaḥya admitting that she had overheard al-Hādī giving him the orders. According to Ya'qūbī and to Tabarī<sup>1</sup> she personally informed Yaḥya of al-Hādī's death. Tabarī<sup>2</sup> presents her as calm and indifferent at the news of her son's death. He relates that she distributed gifts of money as if it had been a cause for rejoicing. Tabarī also relates that before al-Hādī's death she told Yaḥya to keep in readiness for "al-Hādī is dying" and ordered him to prepare a proclamation to be sent to the provinces summoning people to swear the Bay'a to Hārūn al-Rashīd.

After al-Hādī's death the plan to elevate Ja'far to the caliphate was foiled by a coup d'état in which both Khayzurān and several courtiers and servants were involved. Neither the names of the plotters nor details

---

<sup>1</sup>Ya'qūbī, II, p.490; Tab., III, p.578.

<sup>2</sup>Op.cit., pp. 578-9.

of the plot are known, simply because the conspirators seized power and were able to conceal the facts. What is known is the part played by the commander Harthama b. A'yan and Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī who, accompanied by 5,000 soldiers, arrested Ja'far and had him proclaim to the people next day that he had no right to the caliphate which belonged to his uncle Hārūn and therefore absolved everybody of the oath they had sworn in his favour.<sup>1</sup> Al-Hādī was buried on the spot in the gardens of his castle at 'Īsa Abādh in Rabī ' I in 170/ September 786.<sup>2</sup>

Thus Hārūn al-Rashīd was raised to power not by his own efforts but by the machinations of his mother and Yahya. It is therefore no surprise that he put the whole administration in the hands of Yahya.<sup>3</sup> His first measure as caliph was to revenge himself on those who had encouraged al-Hādī's plan, such as Abū 'Īsma who had humiliated him once by making Ja'far precede him and addressing the latter as Walī 'l 'Ahd;<sup>4</sup> Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarrānī and Sallām al-Abrash who were arrested and their property confiscated.<sup>5</sup> Khayzurān suggested that all those who

---

<sup>1</sup> F.H.A., pp. 290-291; Tab., III, p.569.

<sup>2</sup> F.H.A., p.289.

<sup>3</sup> E.I.<sup>2</sup>, (Barmacides); Sourdell, op.cit., vol. I, pp. 134ff.

<sup>4</sup> Tab., III, p.602.

<sup>5</sup> Op.cit., p.603.

had sided with al-Hādī should be executed, but this massacre was averted by the advice of Yaḥya to send them to war: "If they defend themselves, it will keep them busy and if they perished, you Khayzurān have got rid of them."<sup>1</sup> It was in accordance with this policy that the commander Muḥammad b. Farrūkh al-Kindī was sent to deal with the Kharijite rebel of Jazīra al-Ṣaṣaḥ. However, Muḥammad b. Farrūkh was later arrested and brought to Baghdad where he was executed in 171/787-8.<sup>2</sup> Al-Hādī fell victim of court intrigues and the hidden struggle for power among political groupings. It had been his intention to rule effectively and he had made it clear that he would brook no interference but he was overwhelmed by Khayzurān and her faction. Al-Rashīd on the other hand was ready to submit to the group which brought him to power. However, in his policy towards the dynastic succession, al-Rashīd does not seem to have learned from his hard experience.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Jah., p.176.

<sup>2</sup>Tab ., III, p.606.

<sup>3</sup>E.I. <sup>2</sup> (Hārūn al-Rashīd).

Bibliography

1. Sources (note: MSS. are indicated  
with an asterisk)
2. Modern works
3. Articles in periodicals etc.

1. Sources

Abū Dulāma, Zand b. 'l-Jawn (d. 160/776-7). Dīwān, Algiers, 1922.

Abū 'l-Faraj 'l-Iṣfahānī, 'Alī b. 'l-Ḥusayn (d. 356/967)

i) Kitāb al-Aghānī, Būlāq, 1284-5, 20 vols;  
vol. 21, Leyden, 1306; Index, Leyden, 1900.

ii) Maqātil al-tālibiyyīn, Najaf, 1353/1934;  
Najaf, 1965.

Abū Nu'aym, Ahmad b. 'Abdallah al-Iṣbahānī (d. 430/1039)

i) Hilyat al-awliyā', Cairo, 1938

ii) Kitāb Dhikr akhbār Iṣbahān, Leyden, 1931.

Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Armanī (d. 6th c. A.H. / 12th c. A.D.)

The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and some  
neighbouring countries, attributed to Abū Ṣāliḥ,  
ed. and trans. by B.T.A. Evetts, Oxford, 1895.

Abū Ya'lā, Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn 'l-Farrā' (d. 458/1065)

Tabaqāt al-hanābil, Damascus, 1350.

Abū Yūsuf, Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm (d. 182/798). Kitāb al-Kharāj, Cairo, 1933/1352

Abū Zakariya al-Azdī, Yazīd b. Muḥammad (d. 334/945). Tārīkh al-Maṣūl,

vol. 2, MS. The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

(No. 3030). An identical photographed copy of this  
manuscript is preserved in the library of S.O.A.S.

(No. S.G.VII.163)

Abū Zakariya Yahya b. Abī Bakr (end of the 5th c./11th c.)

Al-Siyar wa akhbār al-a'imma, trans. with comments  
by S. Mosqueray, Algiers, 1878.

\* Akhbar al-'Abbās wa wuldahu, anonymous, MS. preserved in the Institute of Higher Islamic Studies, Baghdad.

Akhbār majmū'a, anonymous, Colección de obras arábigas de Histoire y Geografía que publica la Real Academia de la Historia, Tome 1, Madrid, 1867.

\* 'Alī b. Nūsa b. Ṭawūs (d. 7th/13th. . .) Kitāb al-Ṭarā'if fī madhāhib al-ṭwā'if (MS. B.M. No. O R 3574)

al-Ash'arī, 'Alī b. Ismā'īl (d. 324/935-6). Maqālāt al-Islāmiyīn wa-ikhtilāf al-Muṣallīn, Istanbul, 1929.

al-Ash'arī, Sa'd b. 'Abdallah al-Qummī (d. 301/913). Kitāb al-Firaq wa'l maqālāt, Teheran, 1963.

al-Astarabādhī, Muḥammad Amīn, Minhāj 'l-maqāl, Teheran, 1306.

\* al-'Aynī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 895/1490)

Dawlat banī 'l-'Abbās wa 'l Ṭulūniyyin wa 'l Fāṭimiyīn, MS., B.N., Paris (No. 5761 Arabe).

al-Azraqī, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah (d. 204/819). Akhbār Makka, Leipzig, 1858.

al-Baḥdādī, 'Abd 'l-Qāhin b. Ṭāhir (d. 429/1037). Kitāb al-Farq bayn 'l-firaq, Cairo, 1328/1910.

al-Balādhurī, Aḥmad b. Yaḥya b. Jābir (d. 279/892).

- i) Ansāb 'l-ashraf, vol. XI, Greifswald, 1883; vol. V, Jerusalem, 1936; vol. IVB, Jerusalem, 1938.
- ii) \* Ansāb 'l-ashraf, MS., B.N., Paris, fols. 746a-810b, (no. 6068 Arabe)
- iii) \* Op. cit., MS., Istanbul, fols. 493-587.
- iv) Futūḥ 'l-buldān, Leyden, 1866, Cairo, 1956.

al-Bal'amī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 362/972). Tarjama-i tarīkh-i tābarī, Cawnpore, 1324/1906. (French trans. by H. Zotenberg, Paris, 1867-1874).

al-Bāqillānī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad (d. 403/1012-13). al-Tamhīd fī 'l rad'ala 'l mulḥida 'l mu'aḥila wa 'l rāfiḍa wa 'l Khawārij wa 'l mu'tazila, Cairo 1947.

\* al-Barazanjī, Sherīf Muḥammad b. Rasūl (d. 995/1587). al-Navāqid li 'l rawāfid wa 'l nawāfid, MS., B.N., Paris (no. 1459 Arabe). See De Slane, Catalogue..., p.280.

Bashshār b. Burd (d. 168/784). Dīwān, Cairo, 1954.

\* al-Bayāsī, Jamāl al-Dīn Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī (d. 654/1256) al-'Arab fī 'l ḥurūb fī ṣadr 'l Islām, MS., Ma'had al-Makhfūḥāt al-'Arabiyya (no. Tarīkh, 399). See Brockleman, op.cit., I, p.342.

al-Bayhaqī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad (4th C./10th C.). al-Maḥāsin wa 'l masāwi', Leipzig, 1900-1902; also Cairo, 1906.

al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 748/1348).

i) Duwal 'l-Islam, Hyderabad, 1327.

ii) Tadhkirat 'l-ḥuffāz, Hyderabad, 1333/1915-18.

iii) Siyar a'lām 'l-nubalā', Cairo, 1956-57.

iv) \* Tarīkh 'l-Islam 'l-Kabīr, MS. B.M. (no.23,278)

Di'bil b. 'Alī al-Khuzā'ī (d. 246/860-61). Dīwān, Kentucky, 1961; Najaf, 1962.

al-Dīnawārī, Abū Ḥanīfa, Aḥmad b. Dā'ūd (d. about 282/895). Kitāb al-Akhbār 'l-ḥiṣāl, Leyden, 1888.

Dionysius, Chronique de Denys de Tell Mahrô, trans. J.B.Chabot, Paris, 1895.

al-Fāsī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nakkī (d. 992/1584)

- i) \* al-Zuhūr 'l-muqtatafa min tārīkh makka 'l-musharrafa (MS., B.M. no. O R 9448)
- ii) Shafā' 'l-gharām bi akhbār 'l-balad 'l-harrām, Leipzig, 1858.

\* Ghurar 'l-siyar, anonymous (4th C./10th C.) M.S. Bodleian Library, Oxford (no. MS. D'Orville 542), see Bibliothecae Bodleianae..., 1787, part II, p.123.

al-Ḥakamī, Najm al-dīn 'Amāra b. 'Alī.

Kitāb Tārīkh 'l-Yaman, London, 1309/1892.

Ḥanẓa al-Iṣfahānī, Abū 'Abdallāh b. al-Ḥasan (d.360/970)

Tawārīkh sinī mulūk al-arḍ wa 'l-anbiyā', Leipzig, 1844.

\* Ibn 'l-Abbār, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh 'l-Quḍā'ī (d. 658/1260)

I'tāb 'l-kuttāb, (MS. B.M. O R 6641); also Paris, 1954.

Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abdallāh (d. 242/856-7)

Futūḥ Misr, New Haven, 1922; Algiers 1947.

Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d.328/940). al-'Iqd 'l-farīd, Cairo, 1940.

Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Hibat 'l allah (d. 655/1258).

Sharḥ nahj 'l-balāgha, Cairo, 1329/1911.

(See M.I.I., vol. 9, 1962.)



Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim (d. 668/1270). 'Uyūn 'l-anbā'

fī ṭabaqāt 'l-aṭibbā', Königsberg, 1884.

Ibn 'Adhārī, Abū 'Abdallah Muḥammad al-Musākishī (7th C./13th C.)

al-Bayān al-Mughrib, Leyden, 1948/51.

Ibn al-'Adīm Kamāl 'l-dīn Abū 'l-Qāsim, 'Umar b. Aḥmad (d. 660/1262)

i) Zubdat al-ḥalab min tārīkh ḥalab, Damascus, 1951, 1954.

ii)\* Buḥyat al-ḥalab, M.S., B.N., Paris (no. 2138 Arabe).

Ibn A'ṭham al-Kūfī, Aḥmad b. 'Uthmān (d. 314/926).

i) \* al-Futūh, MS., Sari, Library of Ahmet III, Istanbul (no. 2956), 2 vols.

ii) al-Futūh, (Persian trans. by M.A. al-Mustawfī, Bombay, 1300).

Ibn al-Aṭhār, 'Izz 'l-Dīn, 'Alī b. Muḥammad (d. 630/1233).

i) al-Kāmil fī 'l tārīkh, Leyden, 1851-76.

ii) al-Lubāb fī Ma'rifat al-ansāb, Cairo, 1357-69.

Ibn 'Asākir, 'Alī b, Ḥasan (d. 571/1176)

i) Tārīkh Dimashq, Damascus, 1333.

ii) \* Op.cit., M.S. in one volume, B.N., Paris (no. 2137 Arabe).

Ibn al-Dāya, Aḥmad b. Yūsuf (d. 945 or 951 A.H.) al-Mukāfāt, Cairo,

1914; Cairo 1941.

\* Ibn 'l-Dayba', 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī (d. 944/1537-38). Qurrat al-'Uyūn

fī alḥbār 'l-Yaman 'l maymān, MS. B.N. (O R 3022).

Ibn Durayd, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 321/933). al-Ishtiqāq, Gottengen, 1854; also Cairo 1958.

Ibn al-Faqīh al-Ḥamadānī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (about 289/902).

Kitāb al-Buldān, Leyden, 1885.

Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245/859).

i) Kitāb al-Muḥabbar, Hyderabad, 1942.

ii) Asmā' 'l-muḥtāliyīn min 'l-ashraf  
Cairo, 1954 in Nawādir al-Makhfūḥāt's series.

Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 852/1448).

i) Kitāb al-Isāba fī ma'rifat al-sahāba, Cairo, 1328.

ii) Tahdhīb 'l-tahdhīb, Hyderabad, 1325-7.

iii) Lisān 'l-mizān, Hyderabad, 1329.

Ibn Ḥamdūn, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 562/1167).

i) \* Tadhkira, MSS. B.M. (O R 3179)

ii) Op.cit., Cairo, 1927.

Ibn Ḥawqal, Abū 'l Qāsim al-Naṣībī (d. 367/979). Kitāb al-Masālik wa 'l mamālik, Leyden, 1872.

Ibn Ḥayyūn, Qāḍī Nu'mān b. Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr (d. 363/974)

\* Sharḥ al-akhbār fī tarīkh al-a'imma 'l-abrār,  
parts 13 and 14, MS. S.O.A.S. (no. 25752).

Ibn Ḥazm, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī b. Aḥmad (d. 456/1064).

i) Kitāb al-Faḥl fī 'l milal wa 'l niḥal,  
Cairo, 1317-20. (English trans. by I.

Freidländer, "The heterodoxies of the Shi'ites "

in J.A.O.S., 1907, 1908).

ii) Jamharat ansāb al-'Arab, Cairo, 1948.

Ibn al-'Ibrī, (Bar-Hebraeus) Gregory Abū 'l Faraj (d. 681/1286)

i) Mukhtaṣar tāriḫ al-duwal, Beirut, 1890.

ii) The chronography of Gregory Abū 'l Faraj, ed.  
and trans. by E. A. Wallis Bridge, Oxford, 1932.

Ibn Isfandiyyār, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, Tāriḫ-i-Tabaristān (compiled  
about 613/1216), Teheran, 1942 (Trans. by E.G.  
Browne, London, 1905).

Ibn 'l-Jawzī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī (d. 597/1200)

i) al-Muntaẓam fī 'l-tāriḫ, Hyderabad, 1358/  
1938.

ii) Ṣifat al-Ṣafwa, Hyderabad, 1355.

iii) Manāqib Baghdād, Baghdad, 1342.

iv) \* An anonymous manuscript attributed to Ibn  
'l-Jawzī. B.M. (no. 7,320), fols. 81b-115b.  
See J.R.A.S., 1906, pp. 851 ff.

\* Ibn 'l-Kalbī, Hishām b. Muḥammad (d. 3th/9th).

i) Nasab Na'ad wa 'l Yaman al-kabīr, MS. B.H.  
(no. add. 22376). This work could be one of  
Muḥammad b. al-Kalbī's works narrated by his son  
Hishām.

ii) Jamharat al-nasab, MS. B.M. (no. 1202).

Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'īl b. 'Umar (d. 774/1373). al-Bidāya wa 'l nihāya, Cairo,  
1932.

Ibn Khalidūn, 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad (d. 804/1406).

- i) Kitāb al-'Ibar, Cairo, 1284-67.
- ii) al-Muqaddima, Beirut, 1886; Cairo 1957  
(trans. by F. Rosenthal, London, 1958).

Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 681/1282).

Wafayāt 'l-a'yān, 2 vols. Cairo, 1299/1882;  
ed. Wustenfeld, 13 vols, 1835-45; trans. M.G.  
De Slane, 4 vols. 1843-71; another ed. A. Rijā'ī,  
1936.

Ibn Khurdādhbih, 'Ubaydallah b. 'Abd Allah (d. about 300/912)

Kitāb al-Masālik, Leyden, 1889.

Ibn Manzūr, Muḥammad b. al-Mukarramī (d. 711/1311)

Lisān al-'Arab, Beirut, 1955-6

Ibn al-Muqaffa' (Severus) (4th/10th C.). Tārīkh 'l-baḥāriqa 'l-miṣriyya,

vol. II/pt. 1 (Arabic); pt. II, III, English  
translation. Cairo 1943.

Ibn al-Muqaffa', 'Abdallah Rozbih (d. 139/756).

- i) al-Adāb 'l-Kabīr, ed. in Rasā'il al-Bulaghā',  
Cairo 1946; also Beirut 1960.
- ii) al-Adab 'l-Ṣaghīr (attributed to Ibn al-Muqaf-  
fa'), see Rasā'il al-Bulaghā'; also  
Beirut 1960.
- iii) Risāla fī 'l-Ṣahāba  
see Rasā'il al-Bulaghā', also Beirut 1960.
- iv) Kitāb Kalīla wa-dimma, Cairo, 1948.

Ibn al-Murtada, Ahmad b. Yahya al-Zaydi (d. 840/1437)

Tabaqat al-mu'tazila, Beirut, 1961.

(see B.S.O.A.S., 1962, pp. 347-8).

Ibn al-Mu'tazz, 'Abdallah (d. 296/908). Tabaqat al-shu'ara' 'l muhdathin,  
Cairo, 1955.

Ibn al-Nadim, Muhammad b. Ishaq (d. 377/987). Kitab al-Fihrist, Leipzig,  
1871-2; Cairo 1347.

Ibn Qutayba, 'Abdallah b. Muslim (d. 276/889)

i) Kitab al-Shir wa 'l-shu'ara', Leyden, 1904.

ii) 'Uyun 'l-akhbar, Cairo, 1925.

iii) Kitab al-Ma'arif, Göttingen, 1850; Cairo, 1960.

iv) Kitab al-'Arab, see M. Kurd 'Ali, Rasa'il al  
Bulaghā'.

v) Adab 'l-Katib, Leyden, 1900.

vi) Ikhtilaf 'l-lafz wal radd 'ala-'l Jahamiyya wa'l  
mushabbiha. Cairo, 1349/1930.

vii) Kitab 'l-Imama wa 'l siyasa, Cairo 1322/1904  
(attributed to Ibn Qutayba).

\* viii) Risala fi'l radd 'ala 'l-mu'tazila, MS.S.O.A.S.  
(no. Sg.V.411).

Ibn Rustah, Ahmad b. 'Umar (d. about 310/922). al-A'laq 'l-nafisa, Leyden,  
1892.

Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad (d. 230/845). Kitab al-Tabaqat, Leyden, 1905.

Ibn al-Shabbagh, Nur 'l din 'Ali b. Muhammad. \* Kitab al-Fusu'l al-  
Muhimma fi ma'rifat al-A'imma (MS. B.N., Paris no.  
5832): Najaf ed. 1348.

Ibn al-Ṣaghīr (d. about 300/912). Fragment d'un livre D'Ibn S'Rir,

Bulletin de Correspondance Africaine, 1885,

Tome III, Algiers.

Ibn Sallām, Qāsim, Abū 'Ubayd (d. 223/837-8). Kitāb 'l-Amwāl, Cairo, 1353/  
1935.

Ibn Shaddād, 'Izz al-Dīn (d. 684/1288). al-'Alāq al-Khaṭīra, Damascus, 1953.

Ibn Ṭayfūr, Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir, (d. 280/893). Kitāb Baghdād, Leipzig, 1904.

Ibn Taghribirdī, Abū 'l Maḥāsīn Yusūf (d. 874/1469). al-Nujūm 'l-Zāhira,  
Leyden, 1851; Cairo, 1929-39.

Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa, Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ṭabaṭaba (d. 709/1309).

al-Fakhrī, Paris 1895; Cairo 1317 (English trans.

by C.E.J.P. Whitting, London, 1947).

Ibn Ṭulūn, Shams 'l-dīn Muḥammad (d. 953/1546). Umarā' Miṣr fī 'l Islām,  
(Rasā'il wa nuṣūṣ (1)). Beirut, 1963.

Ibn 'Unba (or 'Utba) al-'Alawī, Jamāl 'l-Dīn Aḥmad (d. 828/1424).

'Umdat 'l-ṭālib fī ansāb āl Abī Ṭālib,

Najaf, 1961.

al-Isfrāyīnī, Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir (d. 471/1078). al-Ṭabsīr Bi 'l dīn,

Cairo, 1939-40.

al-Iṣṭakhrī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad (end of 4th/10th).

Kitāb 'l-Masālik wa 'l mamālik, Leyden, 1927.

al-Jāhiz, 'Amr b. Baḥr (d. 255/868).

i) al-Bayān wa 'l-tabyīn, Cairo, 1948.

ii) al-Ḥayawān, Cairo, 1905-7; Cairo, 1938-47.

iii) al-Bukhālā', ed. T. al-Ḥajirī, Cairo, 1958.

- iv) al-'Uthmāniyya, ed. A. M. Hārūn, Cairo, 1955.
- v) Thalāthat rasā'il, ed. De Goeje, Leyden, 1903.
- vi) Three Essays, ed. J. Finkel, Cairo, 1344/1926.
- vii) Rasā'il, ed. Sandūbī, Cairo, 1933.
- viii) Majmu'at rasā'il, ed. M. Sāsī al-Maghribī, Cairo, 1906.
- ix) Kitāb 'l-Tabassur bi'l tijāra, Cairo, 1933  
(attributed to Jāhiz).
- x) Kitāb al-Tāj fī akhlāq al-Mulūk, ed. A. Zakīpasha, Cairo, 1914 (attributed to Jāhiz).
- xi) Nafyy 'l-tashbīh (published by Pellat), al-Mashriq, 1953.
- xii) Min kalām 'l-Jāhiz, Lughat al-'Arab, vol. 2.
- xiii) Risāla fī Ithbāt Imāmat Amīr 'l-Mu'mīn 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, Lughat al-'Arab, vol. 7.
- xiv) Risāla ila Abī 'Abdallah, Lughat al-'Arab, vol. 9.
- xv) Traite de Djāhiz sur les Nābita (ed. by M.G. Van Vloten). I.O.C., Session XI, Sect. 3, Paris, 1897, pp. 115-123.
- xvi) Risāla fī 'l ḥakamayn, al-Mashriq, 52, 1908, pp. 417 ff.
- \* xvii) Kitāb Mukhtarāt min fuṣūl al-Jāhiz, MS., B.M. (O R 3138).
- xviii) Risāla lam tunshar li 'l-Jāhiz, ed. by Ch. Pellat, al-Mashriq, 1953.

al-Jahshiyārī, Muḥammad b. 'Abdūs (d. 331/942). al-Wuzarā' wa 'l kuttāb,  
Cairo, 1938.

\* Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ (d. 241/855-56).

i) Kitāb 'l-Tārīkh, MS. Maktabat al-awqāf,  
al-Maghrib.

ii) al-Tabaqāt, MS. Maktabat al-awqāf, al-Maghrib.

al-Kashshī, Muḥammad b. 'Umar (d. 4th/10th C.) Ma'rifat akhbār 'l-rijāl,  
Najaf, 1964.

al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 463/1071)

Tārīkh Baghdād, Cairo, 1349/1931.

al-Khawārizmī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 376/895). Mafātīh 'l 'Ulūm, Leyden, 1895.

al-Khayyāṭ, 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad al-Mu'tazilī (d. about 300/912)

Kitāb al-'Intiṣār wa 'l-radd 'ala Ibn al-Rāwndī

'l-mulhid, with an introduction by Nyberg, Beirut,

1957; Cairo, 1925.

al-Khazrajī, 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan. Ibn Wahhās (d. 812/1409-10).

i) \* al-Kifāya wa 'l 'lām fiman walā 'l Yaman  
wa sakanaha min al-a'lām (B.M. MS. No. 6941;  
B.N.MS. no. 5832).

ii) \* al-'Asjad 'l-masbūk, MS. Ma'had al-Makhtūṭāt al-  
'Arabiyya, Cairo (F. Sayyid, Fihrist al-Makhtūṭāt,  
vol. 2, pp. 212-13.

\* al-Kuzā'ī, Nu'aym b. Ḥammād al-Marwūzī (d. 228/843), Kitāb al-Fitan,  
MS. B.M. (O R 9449).



al-Kindī, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf (d. 350/961).

i) Kitāb al-Umarā' (al-Wulāt) wa-Kitāb al-Qudāt,  
Leyden, 1912.

ii) Kitāb al-Qudāt, Paris, 1908.

\* Kitāb Akhbār 'l-duwal 'l-munqaḥi'a, attributed to 'Alī b. Zāfir al-Azdī,  
B.M. MS. O R 3685 (see also Brockleman, op.cit.,  
supp. I, p.314)

\* Kitāb al-Ta'ajjub, anonymous, the author lived in the 5th C. A.H. (I.O.L.  
MS. no. 1258).

Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa 'l hadā'iq, anonymous, in Fragmenta Historicorum  
arabicorum, I, Leyden, 1869.

Kulīnī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb (d. 329/939). Uṣūl 'l-kāfī, Lucknow, 1302.

al-Kumayt b. Zayd (d.126/743). al-Hāshimiyyāt, Leyden, 1904; Cairo, 1950.

al-Kutubī, Muḥammad b. Shākir (d.764/1363). Fawāt al-wafayāt, Cairo, 1283.

Mahāsin al-Masā'ī fī manāqib al-Imām Abī 'Amr al-Awzā'ī, anonymous,  
Damascus, 1312.

al-Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir (d.1111/1700). Bihār 'l-anwār, Teheran, 1302-15.

al-Nakki, 'Abd 'l-Malik b. Ḥusayn al-'Uṣāmī (d.1111/1700).

Simṭ al-nujūm, Cairo, 1380.

al-Nālatī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 377/987). Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l radd,  
Istanbul, 1936.

al-Maqdisī, Muṭṭahar b. Tāhir (d. 355/966). al-Bad' wa 'l tarīkh, Paris,  
1899-1906.

al-Maqqārī, Ahmad b. Muḥammad (d. 1041/1632). Analectes sur l'histoire et la Littérature des Arabes d'Espagne, Leyden, 1855-1861.

al-Maqrīzī, Ahmad b. 'Alī (d. 845/1442).

- i) Khiṭaṭ, Cairo, 1270/1853; another ed. 1959.
- ii) \* al-Muqaffa, MS., B.N. (no. Arabe 2144).
- iii) \* Muntakhab 'l-tadhkira, MS. B.N., Paris (no. Arabe 1514).
- iv) al-Nizā' wa 'l takhaṣum bayn Banī Umayya wa Banī Hāshim, Najaf, 1368 A.H.
- v) al-Bayān wa 'l I'rāb 'amma bi'ardi miṣr mina 'l a'rāb, Cairo 1961.
- vi) al-Dhahab al-masbūk fī dhikri man ḥajja min 'l khulafā' wa 'l mulūk, Cairo, 1955.

Mas'ūdī, 'Alī b. al-Ḥuseyn (d. 345/956).

- i) Murūj al-Dhahab (ed. and trans. by C.B. de Meynard) Paris, 1873.
- ii) Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-ishrāf, ed. de Goije, Leyden, 1894.

Michael the Syrian (d. 1199). Chronique (ed. and trans. by J.B. Chabot), Paris, 1904.

al-Mīlawī, Yūsuf b. Muḥammad (d. 1130/1718)

- \* Aḥsan 'l-masālik li akhbār 'l-Barāmik, MS. B.N., (no. Arabe 2107).

Nowse Dosxirançi, The History of the Caucasian Albanians, trans.

C.J.F. Dowsett, London, 1961.

al-Mubarrad, Muḥammad b. Yazīd (d. 285/898), al-Kāmil, Leipzig, 1874;

Cairo, 1956.

al-Mufīd, Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān (d. 413/1022). Kitāb al-ʿIrshād, Najaf, 1962.

al-Muqaddasī, Shams al-Dīn, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 4th/10th C.).

Kitāb Aḥsan 'l-taqāsīm fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm,

Leyden, 1906.

Muslim b. al-Walīd (d. 208/823), Dīwān, Leyden, 1875. (See Guidi's

index of al-Aghānī).

al-Nahrawālī, Quṭb 'l dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī (d. 990/1582).

al-I'lām bi a'lām baytu 'llāh 'l-ḥaram,

Leipzig, 1861.

Najāshī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 450/1058). Kitāb al-Rijāl, Bombay, 1917.

al-Narshakī, Muḥammad b. Ja'far (d. 348/959), Tārīkh-i-Bukhāra, Teheran, 1939.

(English trans. by R.N. Frye, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1954).

al-Nawbakhtī, al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā (d. about 300/912).

Kitāb Firaq al-Shī'a, Najaf, 1959 and ed. Ritter

1931, Istanbul.

Nizām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092). The Siyāsat-Nāma or Siyar al-Mulūk,

(English trans., H. Drake, London, 1960).

Nubdha min Kitāb al-tārīkh, anonymous. A facsimile of the MS. with

translation and commentary in Russian is published in 1960 by the Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow.

al-Nuwayrī, Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 732/1331-2).

- i) \* Akhbār man nahaḍa fī ṭalab 'l-khilāfa min 'l-ṭālibiyīn, MS., B.N., Paris (no. Arabe 1576).
- ii) Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn 'l-adab, part 22, (Histoire de los Musulmanes de Espana y Africa), Granada 1919.
- iii) Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn 'l-adab, Cairo, 1923-1955.

al-Qalqashandī, Aḥmad b. 'Abdallah (d. 821/1418).

- i) Ma'āthir al-ināfa fī ma'ālim al-khilāfa, Quwayt, 1964.
- ii) Ṣubḥ 'l-A'shā, Cairo, 1919-20.

al-Qiftī, 'Alī b. Yūsuf al-Shaybānī (d. 646/1248). Tārīkh 'l-ḥukamā', Leipzig, 1320.

Qudāma b. Ja'far (337/948), Kitāb al-Kharāj, Leyden, 1889.

al-Qummī, Ḥasan b. Muḥammad (d. 9th C/15h C.) Tārīkh-i Qumm, Teheran, 1935. (A Persian trans. of the Arabic original, ed. by S.J.Tehrānī).

\* Risāla fī 'l-taqiyya, anonymous treatise on the Shi'ite doctrine of Taqiyya, (MS. in I.O.L. no. Delhī 554d)

al-Ṣābi', Hilāl b. al-Muḥassin (d. 448/1056-57), Rusūm dār al-Khilāfa, Baghdād, 1964.

al-Ṣafadī, Khalīl b. Aybak (d. 764/1363).

- i) al-Wafī bi 'l-wafāyat, Istanbul, 1931-59.
- ii) 'Umara' Dimashq fī 'l-Islam, Damascus, 1955.

Sa'īd b. Baṭrīq (d. 4th C./10thC.). al-Tārīkh al-Majmū' 'ala 'l-Taḥqīq,  
Béirut, 1905.

al-Sakhāwī, Muḥammad b. Ahmad (d.902/1497) . al-I'lān bi 'l tawbīkh  
li man dhamma ahl al-tārīkh, Cairo, 1934-35;  
Baghdad, 1963.

Salīl b. Razīq, (d. 19th C. A.D.), History of the Imams and Seyyids of Omān,  
(d. 661/1856) (trans. G.P.Badger, London, 1971.

al-Sālimī, 'Abdallah b. Ḥumayd (d. 1913), Tuhfat al-a'yān bi sirat ahl  
'Umān, Cairo, 1961.

al-Sam'ānī, 'Abd 'l Karīm b. Muḥammad (d. 562/1167-67). Kitāb al-Ansāb,  
London, 1912.

al-Samhūdī, 'Alī b. 'Abdallah (d.911/1505). Khulāṣat wafā' 'l wafā',  
Bulāq, 1285.

al-Shahrastānī, Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm (d. 548/1153). Kitāb al-Milāl  
wa'l-nihal, Leipzig, 1923.

Shaykh Sirḥān b. Sa'īd,

i) Kashf al-ghumma al-Jāmi' li akhbār al-'umma,  
(Chapter 33, ed. by H. Klein 1938, under the  
title Akhbār ahl 'Umān). English trans. by  
E.C.Ross, Annals of 'Oman, J.B.A.S., 43,  
1874, pp. 111-135.

ii) \* Kashf al-ghumma..., MS. B.M. (no. O R 8076)  
see also (MS. B.M. no. O R 6568).

Shīrāzī, Abū Ishāq (d. 476/1084. Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā', Baghdad, 1356.

Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, Yūsuf b. Qizoghlu (d. 644/1257). Kitāb Mir'at al-Zamān, vols. 6 and 7, MS. B.M.no. Add. 23,277.

al-Ṣūlī, Muḥammad b. Yahya (d. 335/916).

- i) Adāb al-Kuttāb, Cairo, 1341/1923.
- ii) Akhbār al-Shu'arā' al-Muḥdathīn, London, 1934.
- iii) Ash'ar awlād al-khulafā', London, 1936.

al-Suyūṭī, 'Abd al-Rahmān (d. 911/1505).

- i) Akhbār al-khulafā', Cairo, 1887.
- ii) al-Mustadrif min akhbār al-Jawārī, Damascus, 1963, in Rasā'il wa nuṣūs (2).

al-Tabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr (d. 310/923).

Tārīkh al-russul wa 'l mulūk, Leyden, 1881.

Tabarī, 'Alī b. Rabbān (3rd/9th C). Kitāb al-Dīn wa'l dawla, Manchester, 1922.

Tanūkhī, al-Muḥassin b. 'Alī (d. 384/994)

- i) al-Faraj ba'da 'l-shidda, Cairo, 1938.
- ii) Nishwār al-muḥādara, pt. I, London, 1921.  
pt. VIII, Damascus, 1930, ed. D.S.Margoliouth.
- iii) al-Mustajād, ed. K. 'Alī, Damascus, 1946.

Tārīkh-i Sīstān, anonymous, Teheran, 1314.

Tārīkh-i dawlat-i 'Abbāsīyya, anonymous MS. written by the end of the 6th/  
12th C., Bāyazīd Library, Istanbul, no.2360.

Tha'ālibī, 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad (d. 429/1037-38). Lajā'if al-ma'arif,  
Cairo, 1960.

al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 458/1066), Fihrist kutub al-Shī'a,  
Calcutta, 1853-55.

Wakī', Muḥammad b. Khalaf (d. 306/918). Akhbār al-quḍāt, Cairo, 1947.

al-Wāsi'ī, 'Abd al-Wāsi' b. Yahya al-Yamānī (wrote the book in 1326 A.H./1908)

Tārīkh al-Yaman, Cairo, 1346.

Yahya b. Ādam al-Qurāshī (d. 203/818). Kitāb al-Kharāj, Leyden, 1958.

al-Ya'qūbī, Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb Ishāq (d. 284/897).

- i) Tārīkh, Leyden, 1883.
- ii) Kitāb al-Buldān, Leyden, 1892.
- iii) Mushākalat al-nās lī zamanihim, Teheran, 1323.

Yāqūt al-Rūmī, al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229)

- i) Mu'jam al-buldān, Leipzig, 1866/73.
- ii) Irshād al-arīb ila ma'rifat al-adīb, Leyden, 1907-31.

al-Zajjājī, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Ishāq (d. 337/948), al-Amālī, Cairo, 1324.

al-Zubayrī, Abū 'Abdallah al-Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah (d. 236/851).

Nasab Quraysh, Cairo, 1953.

## 2. Modern Works

Abbott, N., Two Queens of Baghdad, New York, 1946.

Abū Zahra, M., al-Mudhāhib al-Islāmiyya, Cairo, 1950.

Agha Buzurg al-Tihirānī, al-Dharī'a ila taṣānīf al-Shī'a, Najaf, 1936.

Aḥmad, M., al-Mas'ūdī Millenary Commemoration volume, Aligarh, 1960.

Aḥmad, M. H., al-Khilāfa wa'l dawla fī 'l-'aṣr al-'Abbāsī, Cairo, 1959.

Al-Kāshif al-ghijā', M. H., Aḡl 'l-Shī'a wa' uṣūliha, Beirut, 1931.

- 'Alī, M. K., i) Umara 'l-bayan, Damascus, 1925-6.  
 ii) Umara' 'l-bayan, Cairo, 1937.  
 iii) Rasa'il al-bulaghā', Cairo, 1957.
- al-'Alī, S.A. i) al-Tanẓīmāt al-Ijtimā'īyya wa'l Iqtisādiyya fī 'l Basra fi 'l qarn al-awwal al-Hijrī, Baghdad, 1953.  
 ii) 'Ilm al-tārīkh 'Inda 'l-Muslimīn, Baghdad, 1953. (See Fr. Rosenthal).
- al 'Amilī, M., A'yān al-Shī'a, Damascus, 1936.
- 'Annān, M.A., Tārīkh al-Jam'īyyāt al-Sirriyya wz 'l harakāt al-haddāna, Cairo, 1926.
- Arabic and Islamic Studies in honour of Sir H.A.R.Gibb, published by E. J. Brill, Leyden, 1965.
- Arberry, A.J., The Chester Beatty Library, a handbook of the Arabic manuscripts, Dublin, 1955.
- Arendonk, C. van, De Opkomst van het Zaidietische Imamāt in Yemen, Leyden, 1919. (French trans. J. Ryckmans, Leyden, 1960)
- Arnold, Sir Thomas, W., The Caliphate, Oxford, 1924.
- al-Ashqār, A. H., al-Saffāh wa 'l Mansūr, Beirut, 1960.
- al-'Azzāwī, 'A. i) Tārīkh al-ḍarā'ib al-'Irāqiyya, Baghdad, 1909.  
 ii) 'Ashā'ir al-'Iraq, Baghdad, 1937.  
 iii) al-Ta'rīf bi'l mu'arrikhīn..., Baghdad, 1957.
- Baghdād, Volume spécial, publié à l'occasion du Mille Deux Centime Anniversaire de la Fondation, Leyden, 1962.



- Barthold, W., Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion, 2nd ed., London, 1928.
- Bausani, A., Persia religiosa da Zaratustra a Bahā u'llāh, Milano, 1959.
- Blochot, E.,
- i) Catalogue de Manuscrits Arabes, Nouvelles Acquisitions, 1884-1924, Paris, 1925.
  - ii) Le messianisme dans l'hétérodoxie musulmane, Paris, 1903.
- Bouvat, L., Les Barmécides d'après les auteurs arabes et persans, Paris, 1909.
- Brockelmann, C.,
- i) Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur, 2 vols., Leyden, 1898. Supplement 3 vols. 1937-43. 2nd ed., 2 vols. Leyden, 1943-9.
  - ii) History of the Islamic peoples, New York, 1947.
- Browne, B. G., A Literary History of Persia, Cambridge, 1909-1930.
- al-Bustānī, B., Muntegayāt udabā' 'l-'Arab fī 'l 'Uṣūr al-'Abbāsiyya, Beirut, 1948.
- Butcher, E. L., The story of the Church of Egypt, 2 vols., London, 1897.
- Chejne, A. G., Succession to the Rule in Islam, Lahore, 1960.
- Christensen, A., L'Iran sous les Sassanides, Copenhagen, 1936  
(Arabic trans. by Y. al-Khashshāb, Cairo, 1957).
- Cohn, N., The pursuit of the Millennium, London, 1962.
- Creswell, K.A.C.,
- i) Fortification in Islam before A.D.1250, London, 1952.
  - ii) A short Account of early Muslim Architecture, London, 1958.

- Dawood, A.H., A comparative study of Arabic and Persian Mirrors for Princes from the second to the sixth century A.H., Ph. D. Thesis, S.O.A.S., 1965.
- Dennett, D.C. i) Marwān Ibn Muhammad, Ph.D. Thesis Harvard University, 1939.
- ii) Conversion and poll-tax in early Islam, Harvard University Press, 1950.
- De Slane, M., Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, 1883-95.
- Donaldson, D.M., The Shi'ite Religion, London, 1933.
- Dunlop, D.M., The history of the Jewish Khazars, Princeton, 1954.
- Dūrī, A., i) al-'Asr al-'Abbāsī 'l-awwal, Baghdad, 1945.
- ii) Tārīkh al-'Irāq al-Iqtisādī, Baghdad, 1948.
- iii) Muqaddima fī tārīkh Sadr al-Islam, Baghdad, 1949.
- iv) al-Nuzum al-Islāmiyya, Baghdad, 1950.
- v) al-Judhūr al-tārīkhiyya li 'l shu'ūbiyya, Beirut, 1962.
- vi) al-Judhūr al-tārīkhiyya li 'l Qawmiyyat al-'Arabiyya, Beirut, 1960.
- vii) Baḥth fī nash'at 'ilm 'l tārīkh 'Inda 'l 'Arab, Beirut, 1960.
- Eghbāl, 'A., Khānedāne Nurbakhti, Teheran, 1933.
- Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st edition, Leyden, 1913.
- Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition, Luzac & Co., 1960 in progress.

- Fahmy, A.M., Muslim sea power in the Eastern Mediterranean (7th to the 10th century A.D.), London, 1950.
- Farrūkh, U.           i) 'Abdallah b. al-Muqaffa', Beirut, 1941.  
                           ii) Bashshār b. Burd, Beirut, 1946.
- Fattal, R., La statut des non-musulmans en pays d'Islam au Moyen Age, Beirut, 1958.
- Fischel, W. J., The Jews in the economic and political life of Medieval Islam, London, 1937.
- Frye, R. N., The Heritage of Persia, London, 1962.
- Gibb, H.A.R.           i) The Arab conquests in Central Asia, London, 1923.  
                           ii) Studies on the civilization of Islam, London, 1962.
- Goitein, S.D., Studies in Islamic history and institution, Leyden, 1966.
- Goldziher, I., Muhammedanische Studien, 2 vols. Halle, 1889-90, new edition, Hildesheim, 1961.
- Grohmann, A., Arabic papyri in the Egyptian Library, Cairo, 1934.
- Grunebaum, G.E., Medieval Islam, Chicago, 1946.
- Ḥabība, A., A study on Abū Zakariyā's work., Ph.D. Thesis, Cambridge University, 1965.
- Ḥasan al-Bāsha, al-Alqāb al-Islamiyya fī 'l tarīkh wa 'l vathā'iq wa 'l āthār, Cairo, 1957.
- Ḥasan, M.A., Abū Muslim al-Khurasānī, Mashāhīr al-'Arab series, 8, Cairo, 1958.
- Hijāb, M.N., Maḍāhir al-Shu'ūbiyya fī 'l Adab al-'Arabī, Cairo, 1961.
- Ḥusayn, Ḥ., Hadīth al-Arbi 'ā', Cairo, 1925.  
                           , Hadīth al-Arbi 'ā', Cairo, 1925.

- Jafri, S.H.M., The early development of legitimate Shi'ism, Ph. D. Thesis,  
S.O.A.S., 1966.
- al-Jawāri, A., al-Shi'r fī Baghdād, Baghdad, 1956.
- al-Jūnād, A., Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr, Beirut, 1963.
- Kaḥḥāla, U. R., Mu'jam qabā'il al-'Arab, Damascus, 1949.
- Kāshif, S.I., Misr fī fajr al-Islām, Cairo, 1947.
- Khulouṣī, S.D., Shi'ism and its influence on Arabic literature, Ph.D.Thesis,  
S.O.A.S., 1947.
- Khurasānī, M.gh., 'Abdallah b. al-Muqaffa', Cairo, 1965.
- von Kremer, A., Orient under the Caliphs, trans. into English by K. Bukhah,  
Calcutta, 1920.
- Lambton, A.K.S., Landlord and peasants in Persia, Oxford, 1953.
- Lane Poole, S.
- i) Catalogue of Oriental coins in the British Museum,  
vols. I, IX, London, 1875.
  - ii) Catalogue of the Mohammadan coins preserved in  
the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Oxford 1888.
  - iii) The Mohammadan dynasties, Paris, 1925.
- Le Strange, G.
- i) The lands of the Eastern Caliphate, Cambridge,  
1930.
  - ii) Baghdad during the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate, Oxford,  
1924.
- Lévi-Provençal, E., Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane, vol. I, 1944.  
Études Historiques, publiées par l'Institut  
Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.

- Lewicki, T., Les Ibadites en Tunisie au Moyen Age, Accademia palacca di scienze e lettere, Biblioteca di Roma, Roma, 1958.
- Lewis, Bernard i) The Origins of Ismā'ilism, Cambridge, 1940.  
ii) The Arabs in history, London, 1950.
- Lewis, B. and Holt, P.M., Historians of the Middle East, London, 1962.
- Løkkegaard, F., Islamic Taxation in the classic period., Copenhagen, 1950.
- al-Maḡdīsī, A., 'Umara' al-Shi'r al-'Arabī fī 'l 'agr al-'Abbāsī, Beirut, 1961.
- Marçais, G., La Berbère musulmane, Paris, 1946.
- Margolioth, D.S., Lectures on Arabic Historians, Calcutta, 1930.
- Ma'rūf, N., 'Urūbat 'l mudun al-Islāmiyya, Baghdād, 1964.
- Nassignon, L. i) La passion d'al Hallāj, martyr mystique de l'Islam, Paris, 1922.  
ii) Salm'an P'ak et les premices spirituelles de l'Islam Iranian, Paris, 1934 (Arabic trans. by A. Badawī in Shakhsiyāt qalīqa fī 'l Islam, Cairo, 1946.
- McGovern, W.M. The early empires of Central Asia, Chapil Hill, 1939.
- Mélikoff-Sayar, I., i) La Geste de Melik Danismand, Paris, 1960.  
(see B.S.O.A.S., XXVII, 1, 1964, pp. 361-63).  
ii) Abū Muslim le "porte-Hache" du Khorasan, Paris, 1962.
- Miz, A., Die Renaissance des Islams, Heidelberg, 1922. (English trans. by K. Bukhsh, Renaissance in Islam, Patna, 1937).

Miles, S.B., The countries and tribes of the Persian Gulf, London, 1919.

Minorsky, V. F., La Domination des Dailamites, Paris, 1932.

(Publications de la Societé des Études Iranienes  
et de l'Art Persan.)

Mu'izz al-dīn al Qazwīnī, Ansāb al-gabā'il al-'Irākiyya, Najaf, 1918.

al-Munajjid, S., A'lām al-tārīkh wa'l Jughrāfiya 'Inda 'l 'Arab, parts I,  
II, III, Beirut, 1959-63.

Mūsa, M.Y. i) Tārīkh al-fiqh al-Islāmī, 1964.

ii) Abū Hanīfa, Cairo, 1957.

Muṣṭafa, Sh., Fī 'l tārīkh al-'Abbāsī, Damascus, 1957.

Najum, W.T. i) Studies on the writings of al-Jāhiz, Ph.D.Thesis,  
S.O.A.S., 1958.

ii) al-Jāhiz wa'l hadāra 'l 'Abbāsiyya, Baghdad, 1965.

al-Naqshabandī, N.M., al-Dīnār al-Islāmī fī 'l Mathaf al 'Irāki, vol. I,  
Baghdad, 1953.

Nichelson, R.A., A literary history of the Arabs, Cambridge, 1953.

Noldeke, Th., Sketches from eastern History (English trans. by J.S.Black),  
London, 1892.

Ostrogorsky, G., History of the Byzantine State (English trans. by J.Hussey),  
Oxford, 1956.

Pellat, Ch., Le Milieu Basrien et de Formation du Gāhiz, Paris, 1953.

(Arabic trans. by I. al-Kilānī, Damascus, 1961).

Petersen, E.L., 'Alī and Mu'āviya, Copenhagen, 1964.

al-Qummī, A., Safīnat al-Bihār, Najaf, 1355. A competent index of al-  
Majlisī's Bihār al-anvār.

Rajkowski, W.W., Early Shi'ism in Iraq, Ph. D. Thesis, S.O.A.S., 1955.

al-Rayes, M.D., al-Kharāj fī 'l dawla 'l Islāmiyya, Cairo, 1957.

Rifā'ī, A.F., 'Asr al-Ha'mūn, Cairo, 1928.

Rosenthal, F.            i) A History of Muslim Historiography, Leyden,  
1952 (Arabic trans. by al-'Alī)

ii) Technique and approach of the Muslim scholarship,  
Rome, 1947.

Rustam, A., Abū Ja'far al-Mansūr, Cairo, 1965.

Sadighi, G.H., Les mouvements religieux Iraniens du 11<sup>e</sup> et 111<sup>e</sup> siècles  
de l'Hégire, Paris, 1938.

Salem, E. A., Political theory and institutions of the Khawārij

(The John Hopkins University Studies in  
Historical and Political Science, Series LXXIV,  
No. 2, 1956)

Sauvaget, J., Introduction a l'Histoire de l'Orient Musulman, 2nd ed.

C. Cahen, Paris, 1961.

Sayyid, F., Fihris al-Makhtūfāt al-Muṣawwara, 3 vols., Cairo, 1954 -1959.

Schacht, J.            i) The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence,  
Oxford, 1950.

ii) An Introduction to Islamic law, Oxford, 1964.

Sharīf, M.B., al-Sira' bayn al-'Arab wa 'l Mawālī, Cairo, 1945.

al-Shayyāl, J., Tārīkh Misr al-Islāmiyya, Alexandria, 1967.

al-Shībī, K.N., al-Sila bayn al Taṣawwuf wa 'l Tashayyī, Baghdad, 1963.

Sourdcl, D., Le vizirat 'Abbāsīd, Damascus, 1959-1960.

Spuler, B., Iran in früh-Islamischer Zeit, Wiesbaden, 1952.

Storey, C.A., Persian literature, London, 1935.

Thābit, N., al-Jundiyya fī 'l dawla al-'Abbāsiyya, Baghdad, 1956.

Tritton, A.S. i) Muslim Theology, London, 1947.

ii) The Caliphs and their non-Muslim subjects,  
Oxford, 1930.

Tyan, E., Institutions du Droit public Musulman, 1954, 1957.

Vajda, G. i) Répertoire des catalogues et inventaire de  
manuscripts Arabes, Paris, 1949 (Institut de  
Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes II)

ii) Index général des manuscrits arabes Musulmans  
de la bibliothèques nationale de Paris, Paris,  
1953.

Van Vloten, G. i) De Opkomst der Abbasiden in Chorasan, Leyden,  
1890.

ii) Recherches sur la Domination Arab, Amsterdam,  
1894. (Arabic trans. by H.I. Hasan, Cairo 1934).

Vasiliev, A.A. i) Byzance et les Arabes, Bruxelles, 1935.

ii) History of the Byzantine Empire, 2 vols.,  
Madison, 1958.

Vasmer, R., Chronologie der arabischen statthalter von Armanien unter  
den Abbasiden, von assaffah bis zur Krönung Ashots I,  
750-887, Leningrad, 1931.

Walker, J., A catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins, London, 1941.



- Watt, M. i) Islamic Surveys, I, Islamic philosophy and theology, Edinburgh, 1962.
- ii) Free Will and predestination, Edinburgh, 1962.
- Weil, G., Geschichte der Chalifen, Mannheim, 1866.
- Welhausen, i) The Arab Kingdom and its fall, Calcutta, 1922.
- ii) Die religiös-politischen Opposition Sparteien im alten Islam (Arabic trans. by A. Badawī, al-Khawārij wa 'l Shi'a, Cairo, 1958).
- Wensink, A.J., The Muslim Creed, Cambridge, 1932.
- Yusufī, gh., Abū Muslim, Sardār Khurasān, Teheran, 1944.
- Zachner, R.C., The dawn and twilight of Zoroastrianism, London, 1960.
- Zakī, A.K., al-Ḥayāt al-adibiyya fī 'l Baṣra ila nihāyat al-qarn al-thānī al-hijrī, Damascus, 1961.
- Zaydan, J. i) The Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids, translated into English by D.S. Margoliouth, London, 1907.
- ii) Abū Muslim al-Khurasānī, Cairo, 1933.
3. Articles in periodicals, festschrifts etc.
- Āl-Yāsīn, M.H., "al-Mashhad al-Kāzimī fī 'l 'Aṣr al-'Abbāsī", Sōmer, vol. 18, parts I and II, 1962.
- 'Alī, J. "Mawārid Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī", M.M.I.I., 1954, 1961.
- 'Alī, M.K., "Mumayyizāt Banī Umayya", R.A.A.D., XV, XVI, 1937-41, pp. 456-52.
- al-'Alī, S.A. i) "Khiṭaṭ al-Baṣra", Sōmer, II, 8, 1952, pp. 72-83.
- ii) "Manṭaqat al-Ḥīra", B.C.A., 1962.
- iii) "Istīṭān al-'Arab fī Khurasān", B.C.A., 1959.

iv) "al-Mu'alafāt al-'Arabiyya 'an al-Madīna wa'l Hijāz", B.C.A., 1965.

v) "Baghdad in the time of al-Manṣūr" (a paper delivered at the conference on Muslim cities, Oxford, 1965.

Amedroz, H.F., "On the meaning of the Laqab 'Al-Saffāh'", J.R.A.S., 1907, pp. 660-663.

Amélineau, M.E., "Les derniers jours et la mort du Khalifa Merawān", J.A., II, 1914, pp. 421-49.

Ashtor, E., "Essai sur les prix et les salairés dans l'empire Califien", R.S.O., 36, 1961, pp. 16-69.

'Awwād, M., "al-qism al-dā'i' min al-wazarā' wa 'l Kuttāb", R.A.A.D., 18, 1943, pp. 318-20, 435-38.

Ayalon, D., "The military reforms of the Caliph al-Mu'tasim. Their background and consequences". Unpublished paper.

Belayev, V.I., "The Leningrad manuscript of the History of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate by aṣ-ṣūlī", I.C.O., Moscow, 1957, pp. 292-297.

Bosworth, C.E., "The rise of the Karāmiyyah in Khurasān", M.W., 50, 1960, pp. 5-14.

Brooks, E.W. i) "Byzantines and Arabs in the time of the early 'Abbāsīd", E.H.R., XV, 1900; XVI, 1901.

ii) "The Arabs in Asia Minor from Arabic sources", J.H.S., 18, 1898.

Cahen, C. i) "Points de vue sur la 'Révolution 'abbāsīde'" in R.H., 1963.

- ii) "Fiscalité, Propriété, Antagonismes sociaux en Haute-Mésopotamie, au temps des premiers Abbassides d'après Denys Tell Mahre", Arabica, I, 1954, pp. 56-52.
- iii) "Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urban...", Arabica, V, VI, 1958-1959, pp. 225-50, 25-26.
- iv) "A fiscal survey of Medieval Yemen", Arabica, 1957, pp. 25-29.
- v) "Les chroniques Arabes concernant la Syrie, l'Égypte et la Mésopotamie...", R.E.I., 10, 1936, pp. 333-362.

Canard, M., "Les Expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'Histoire et dans la Légende", J.A., 1926.

Cheikho, Fr., "al-Muhāwara al-dīniyya allatī Jarat bayna 'l Khalīfa al-Mahdī wa 'l-Māthūs al-Jāthliq", al-Mashriq, 1923, pp. 329-374; 408-418. (see also M.W., 1931, 21, pp. 38-45).

De Somogy, J., "Adh-Dhahabī 'Tārīkh al-Islam'", J.R.A.S., 1936, pp. 595-604.

Dietrich, A., "Das politische Testament des Zweitigen 'Abbāsiden Kalifen al-Manṣūr", Der Islam, 1952, pp. 133-165.

al-Diwajī, S., "Khīṭaṭ al-Mawṣil", Somer, vol. 7, 1951, pp. 222-36.

Durī, A.

- i) "al-Zuhri", B.S.O.A.S., 1957, XIX, pp. 1-12.
- ii) "Ḍaw' Jadīd 'ala 'l da'wa 'l-'Abbāsiyya", B.C.A., 1961.

iii) "Niḡām al-ḡarā'ib fī Khurasān fī Ṣadr al-Islām",  
B.C.A., 1964.

Fateḡ, M.Kh., "Taxation in Persia," B.S.O.A.S., IV, 1926/28, pp. 723-743.

Fischel, W.J. i) "Bait al-Māl al-Khāssa", I.C.O., Rome, XIX,  
1935, pp. 538-41.

ii) "The Jews of Central Asia (Khurasān) in  
Medieval Hebrew and Islamic literature", H.J.,  
7, 1945, pp. 29 ff.

Friedlaender, I., "The Heterodoxics of the Shi'ites in the presentation  
of Ibn Hazm", J.A.O.S., XXVII,

Frye, R.N. i) "The rôle of Abū Muslim", M.W., 1947, 37,  
pp. 28-38.

ii) "The 'Abbāsīd Conspiracy and modern revolution  
theory", Indo-Iranica, III, 1952-53, pp. 9-14.

iii) "Turks in Khurasan and Transoxania at the time  
of the Arab conquest", M.W., 35, 1945, pp. 308-  
15.

iv) "History of Bukhāra, a review", R.S.O., 30, 1955.

v) "City chronicles of central Asia and Khurasān  
(Avicenna Commemorative Volume, Calcutta, 1956,  
pp. 89-92)

Frye, R.N., and Sajili, "Turks in the Middle East before the Saljūqs",  
J.A.O.A., 63, 1943, pp. 194-207.

Fyze, A.A., "Qādī Nu'mān", J.R.A.S., 1934.

- Gabrieli, Fr.
- i) "Al-Ma'mūn e gli 'Alidi", Morgeul Texte und Forschungen, II, 1929, Leipzig.
  - ii) "La succession di Hārūn ar-Rashīd e la guerra fra al-Amin e al-Ma'mūn", R.S.O., XI, 1928, pp. 341-97.
  - iii) "L'opera di Ibn al-Muqaffa'", R.S.O., XIII, 1931-32.

Ghanīma, Y., "al-Nuqūd al-'Abbāsiyya", Somer, 9, 1953.

- Gibb, H.A.R.,
- i) "The Argument from design, A Mu'tazilite treatise attributed to Jahiz," I. Goldziher. Mem. Volume, I, pp. 150-62.
  - ii) "Chinese records of the Arabs in Central Asia", B.S.O.S., II, 1922, pp. 613-622.
  - iii) "Government and Islam under the early 'Abbāsid," Elaborations d l'Islam, VIII, pp. 115-127, Press Université de France 1961-62.
  - iv) "The fiscal rescript of 'Umar II", Arabica, II, 1955, pp. 1-16.
  - v) "The Caliphates and the Arab states", in a History of the Crusades, vol. I, 1958, pp. 81-98.

Goije, J. de, "Al-Balādhurī's Ansāb al-Ashraf", Z.D.M.G., 38, 1884.

- Goitein, S.D.
- i) "The origin of the vizirate and its true character", I.C., XVI, 1942, pp. 255-263, 380-92.

- ii) "A turning point in the history of the Muslim state", I.C., 28, 1949, pp. 120-135.
- iii) "The rise of the Near Eastern Bourgeoisie in early Islamic times", J.W.H., III, 1956  
(Review and reply by A. Belyaw, J.W.H., IV, 1957-8)
- iv) "The place of Balādhurī's Ansāb al-Ashraf in Arabic historiography", I.C.O., 1935, pp. 603-606.
- Goldziher, I. i) "Ombre de Dieu, Khalifa de Dieu", R.H.E., XXXV, 1897.  
ii) Ṣāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Ḳuddūs, I.C.O., London, 1893, II, pp. 104-29.
- Graber, O., "Umayyad 'palace' and the 'Abbasid revolution", S.I., XVIII, 1963.
- Gregoire, H., "Les Armenians entre Byzance et l'Islam", Byzantion, X, 1935.
- Grunebaum, G.E. i) "Three Arabic poets of the early 'Abbasid Age", Orientalia, vol. 17, 1948, vol. 19, 1950, vol. 22, 1953.  
ii) "Muslim civilisation in the 'Abbasid period", Cambridge Medieval History (new ed. 1966).
- Guost, R. i) "Relations between Persia and Egypt under Islam", Browne Festschrift, 1922.  
ii) "A coin of Abū Muslim", J.R.A.S., 1932, pp. 554-6

- Hodgson, M.G.S., "How did the early Shi'a become a sectarian?"  
J.A.O.S., 75, 1955, pp. 1-13.
- Houtsma, M.            i) "Bih'afri'd", W.Z.K.M., 3, 1889, pp. 30-37.  
                          ii) "Die Hashwiya", Zeit für Associalligi, XXVI,  
                          pp. 196-202.
- al-Hussaynī, A.M., "The Umayyad policy in Khurasān", Journal University  
of Peshawar, 4, 1955, pp. 1-21.
- Iranī, M.S., "Khosasan after the Arab conquest", All India Oriental  
Conference, 13, 1946, pp. 530-37.
- Ivanow, W., "The Early Shi'ite movement", J.B.B.R.A.S., 1939.
- Köcher, E., "Ya'qūb b. Da'ūd, Wezir al-Mahdi" in Mitteilungen des Instituts  
für Orientforschung, III, 1955.
- Krenkow, F., "The book of strife", I.C., III, 1929, pp. 561-568.
- Kurat, A.N., "Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad b. A'tham al-Kūfī's Kitāb al-Futūḥ",  
A.U.T.F., vols. 6, 7, 1949, pp. 255-282.
- Lambton, A.K.S.        i) "An account of the Tārīkh-i Qumun,"  
                          B.S.O.A., 12, 1948.  
                          ii) "The Persian theory of government", S.I.,  
                          1956-57.
- Lammens, H., "Le 'Sofiani'", B.I.F.A.D, 21, 1923.
- Laoust, H.            "Le Hanbalisme sous le califat de Baghdad",  
                          R.E.I., 27, 1959, pp. 67-74.
- Lassner, J.            i) "Notes on the Topography of Baghdad", J.A.O.S.,  
                          vol. 83, 1963.

- ii) "Some speculative thoughts on the search for an 'Abbāsīd capital", part I, M.W., 1965; part II, M.W. 1966.
- iii) "Why did Caliph al-Manṣūr build Ar-Ruṣāfa?", J.N.E.S., vol. XXIV, 1965.
- iv) "The caliph's personal domain", Kunst des Orients, IV, 1964.
- v) "Massignon and Baghdad: The complexities of growth in an imperial city", J.E.S.I.O., vol. IX, 1966, pp.1-27.
- Lewis, B. i) "An apocalyptic vision of Islamic History", B.S.O.A.S., 13, 1950, pp. 308-338.
- ii) "Some observations on the significance of Heresy in the History of Islam", S.I., vol. I, 1953 pp. 43-63.
- iii) "Government, society and economic life under the 'Abbāsīds and Fatimīds" in Cambridge Medieval History (new ed. 1966, pp. 639-661).
- Lichtenstadter, E., "From particularism to unity", I.C., 1949, pp. 251-80.
- Margolioth, D.S., "On Mahdīs and Mahdism", Proceedings of the British Academy, 1915.
- Mélikoff-Sayor, I., "Abū Muslim, Patron des Alhīs", I.C.O., 1957, pp. 419-421.
- Moscatti, S. i) "Studi su Abu Muslim", Rendiconti Lincei, ser. VII, IV, 1949, pp. 323-335, 474-495; ser. V, 1950, pp. 89-105.



- ii) "La rivolta di 'Abd al-Gabbār contro il califfo al-Manṣūr", Rendiconti Lincei, ser. VIII, II, 1947, pp. 613-615.
- iii) "Studi storici sul califfato di al-Mahdi", Orientalia, XIV, 1945, pp. 300-354.
- iv) "Nuovi studi storici sul califfato di al-Mahdi", Orientalia, XV, 1946, pp. 155-179.
- v) "Le Califat d'al-Hādī", Studia Orientalia, XIII, 4, 1946, pp. 1-28.
- vi) "Il Testament di Abū Hashim", R.S.O., XXVII, 1952, pp. 28ff.
- vii) "Le Massacre des Umayyades..", Archiv Orientalni, 1950, pp. 88-115.
- viii) "Per una storia dela 'Antica Si'a", R.S.O., 1955, pp. 251-267.

Mukhlis, A. "Tārīkh Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī", R.A.A.D., 6, III, 1926, pp.142-3.

Nadvi, S.S., "The Origin of the Basmakids", I.C., VI, 1932.

- Nallino, C.,
- i) "Sul Nome di Qadariti," R.S.O., VII, 1916-1918, pp. 461-66 (Arabic trans. by A. Badawī in al-Turāth al-Yunānī fi 'l Madāra al-'Arabiyya).
- ii) "Sull 'Origin de Nome die Mu'taziliti", R.S.O., VII, 1916-18, pp. 429-454 (Arabic trans. by A. Badawī, op.cit.).
- al-Naqshabandī, N. i) "al-Dīnār al-'Abbāsī", Somer, vol. 2, 1946, pp. 235-56.

- ii) "al-Dīnār al-Islāmī", Somer, vol. 2, 1945,  
pp. 115-133; vol. 3, 1947, pp. 270-75.
- Nyberg, H.S., "Zum Kampf Zwischen Islam und Manichäismus", O.L.Z.,  
XXXII, 1929, pp. 426-434.
- Pellat, Ch. i) "La 'Nabita' de Djāhiz", A.L.E.O., X, 1952,  
pp. 302-325.
- ii) "Gāhiz à Bagdad et Samarrā", R.S.O., XXVII,  
1952. (Arabic trans. by I. Kīlānī in al-  
Jāhiz, Damascus, 1961).
- iii) "Le culte de Mu'āwiya au III<sup>e</sup> siècle de  
l'hégire", S.I., VI, 1956, pp. 53-66.
- iv) "La Imānat dans la Doctrine de Gāhiz",  
S.I., 1961, pp. 23-53.
- v) "Essai d'inventaire de l'oeuvre Gāhizienne",  
Arabica, I, 1954, pp. 84-88.
- al-Qazzāz, W., "al-Dirham al-'Abbāsī", Somer, vol. 18, 1962, pp. 128-140.
- Quatremère, H., "Avènement des 'Abbāsides au Khalifat", Nouveau Journal  
Asiatique, XVI, 1835.
- Rabino, H.L., "Les préfets du califat au Tabaristan...", J.A., 1939,  
pp. 237-274.
- Rabinowitz, L.L., "Notes on the Jews of Central Asia...", H.J., 8, 1948,  
pp. 61-66.
- Rogers, E. T., "Notice on the Dinārs of the 'Abbāsīde Dynasty", J.R.A.S.,  
1875, pp. 281-82.

- Scarcia, G., "Lo scambio di lettere tra Hārūn al-Rasīd e Ḥamza al-Ḥarigī secondo il 'Tā'riḥ-i Sistan'", A.I.U.O.N., XIV, 1964, pp. 623-45.
- Schacht, J., "A revaluation of Islamic Traditions", J.R.A.S., 1949, pp. 143-54.
- Serjeant, R.B., "Ḥaram and Ḥawtah, the sacred enclave in Arabia", Melanges Tāha Husayn, Cairo 1963.
- Sha'īra, M.A., "al-Murābiḥūn fī 'l thughūr al-bariyya 'l 'Arabiyya al-Rūmiyya", Melanges Tāha Husayn, Cairo, 1963.
- al-Shībī, K.M., "al-Taḥiyya", Majallat Jami'at 'l Iskandariyya, XVI, 1962-3.
- Sourdrel, D.,
- i) "Bagdad, capital du nouvel empire 'abbāside" in BAGDĀD, volume spécial, Leyden, 1962.
  - ii) "La biographie d'Ibn al-Muqaffa' d'après les sources anciennes", Arabica, I, 1954, pp. 307-323.
  - iii) Jahshiyāri, al-Wuzarā' wa'l kuttāb", Melanges Louis Massignon, III, 1957, Damascus.
  - iv) "Problèmes de l'histoire du vizirat 'abbāside (132/749 à 324/936)", I.C.O., 1957.
- Sprengling, M., "From Persian to Arabic", A.J.S.L., LVI, 1939, pp. 175-224, 324-336.
- Spuler, B., "Iran: the persistent Heritage", in Unity and Variety of Muslim Civilisation, ed. G.E. von Grunbaum, Chicago, 1955, pp. 168-182.
- Strauss, E., "The social isolation of Ahl adh-Dhimma", E.O., a la Memoire de Paul Hirscher, Budapest, 1950, pp. 73-94.

- Tarkhan, I.A., "Al-Islām wa 'l mamālik al-Islāmiyya fī 'l Ḥabasha fī 'l-  
'Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā", Majallat al-Jam'īyya 'l-misriyya  
li 'l dirāsāt al-tārīkhīyya, vol. 8, 1959.
- Tavadia, J.C., "Iran in the first centuries of Islam.", Journal University  
of Bombay, 1954, pp. 106-117.
- Thomson, W., "Khārijitism and the Kharijites", D.B. Macdonald presentation  
volume, 1933, pp. 373-389.
- Traini, R., "La Corrispondenza tra al-Manṣūr e Muḥammad 'an-Nafs az-  
zakiyya'", A.I.U.O.N., 1964, pp. 773-798.
- Vaglieri, L.U.
- i) "L'imāmato Ibādīta dell' 'Omān", A.I.U.O.N., 3,  
1949.
  - ii) "Le vicende del Ḥāriḡismo in epoca 'Abbaside",  
R.S.O., 24, 1949.
- Vajda, G., "Les Zindiqs en pays d'Islam au début de la période 'abbaside",  
R.S.O., XVII, 1938, pp. 173-229.
- van Vloten, G.
- i) "Zur 'Abbasiden Geschichte", Z.D.M.G., 52,  
1898, pp. 213-226.
  - ii) "Schismus und Motazilismus in Baṣra" Z.D.M.G.,  
53, 1899.
- Vasmer, R., "Die Eroberung Tabristān durch die Araber zur Zeit des Chalifen  
al-Manṣūr", Islamica, 3, 1927, pp. 86-150.
- Watt, M.
- i) "Shi'ism under the Umayyads", J.R.A.S.,  
1960, pp. 169 ff.
  - ii) "Kharijite thought in the Umayyad period", Der  
Islam, 1961, pp. 215-31.

- iii) "The Rafiḍites", Oriens, XVI, 1961.
- iv) "The political thought of the Mu'tazilah",  
J.R.A.S., 1962, pp. 38-57.
- v) "The reappraisal of 'Abbāsīd Shi'ism", in  
Arabic and Islamic Studies in honour of H.A.R.  
Gibb, E.J. Brill, 1965.

Wiet, G., "L'empire néo-byzantin des Omayyades et l'empire néo-Sassanide des 'Abbāsides", in Cahiers d'histoire mondiale, I, 1953, pp. 63-71.

Wright, E.M., "Symbols of Iranian persistence...", N.W., 38, 1948, pp. 43-59, 124-131.

Yakubovsky, A.Y., "Vosstaniye Mukanni", S.V., V, 1948, pp. 35-54.

- Zayyāt, H.
- i) "al-Tashayyu' li Mu'āwiya fī 'ah al-'Abbāsiyīn,"  
al-Mashriq, 1928, pp. 410-415.
  - ii) "Nazā'im al-mu'rrikhīn al-'Abbāsiyīn fī waḡf  
sharah al-Umawiyīn," al-Mashriq, 1948, pp. 161-168.

trative unit called al-'awāshim [a.w.] with a centre in Māndi. In 181/997, al-Raḡhid profited by the Byzantine internal troubles as well as their conflict with the Bulgarians, and took the fortress of al-Safāfī, while a division of his army penetrated as far as Anqyā. The empress Irene (Dether known in Muslim sources as 'Udānusa [i.e., Augustā], then already the real ruler of the Byzantine State (797-802), demanded a peace treaty which al-Raḡhid first refused and subsequently accepted because of the Kaḡzar menace. But when Nicephorus ascended the throne in 802, hostilities were resumed and al-Raḡhid himself led the Muslim army in 187/809 and 190/806. In the second expedition al-Raḡhid met with considerable success, taking Heraclea and Tyana. Nicephorus, threatened by the Bulgarians from the east, had to accept a very humiliating peace-treaty by which he had to pay personal poll tax on behalf of himself and his son.

Having chosen Ṭarīk as their residence, the 'Abba-sids had lost interest in the Mediterranean fleet. Al-Raḡhid was the first 'Abbasid Caliph to pay attention to naval power. Successful raids on Cyprus in 199/809 and Rhodes in 197/807 had no lasting effect. It might seem surprising that by the end of al-Raḡhid's reign the situation on the frontiers was virtually unchanged; the campaigns were, in fact, bedevilled by many problems such as difficulties of supply and the harshness of the weather. Encouraged by the weakness of the central government in Armenia, where a slow process of Arab colonization was in progress, the Ḳhazars made occasional raids on Muslim territories. Only the efforts of Yazīd b. Mazyād al-Slay-bārī and Khayzara b. Ḳhāzīm succeeded in controlling the situation. An exchange of embassies and gifts is alleged to have taken place between Harun al-Raḡhid and Charlemagne, which resulted in giving Charlemagne rights of protection over Jerusalem. Nothing has yet been found in Arabic sources to substantiate this allegation, and although they may have had political interests in common, there seems to be no truth in it.

The later period of al-Raḡhid's reign reveals a certain lack of competence in him as a ruler. Some of his decisions, such as the covenant of the Kaḡba (186/802), make him at least partly responsible for the civil war and the disintegration of the empire. It was again in Khurāsān that the trouble started. Al-Raḡhid did not heed the reports of 'Alī b. 'Isā b. Māhān's murmur and contented himself with the precious gifts he sent; but when Raḡf b. al-Layḡh's revolt became dangerous, 'Alī was finally disposed of in 191/806. This did not put an end to the revolt of Raḡf, whose authority had increased by 191/807-8. In spite of 'Iḡ, near al-Raḡhid, accompanied by his two sons al-Ma'mūn and Sāḡh, marched against the rebel with a considerable Ṭarīf army (Gabrīf). *Le succession de Harun al-Rashid*, in RSO, xi, 349), but he had to halt at Ṭis in Safar 193/November 808 as his health began to deteriorate. Meanwhile the Khurāmīyya [a.w.] came out in his rear in several areas, especially in Ispanah. Al-Raḡhid died on 3 Dhu'lḡada II 193/24 March 809.

Opinions on his character are contradictory. He has been represented by various chroniclers as pious and disolute, statesmanlike and incompetent at the same time. In fact, politically, his reign was not a period of ideal stability. Moreover, he virtually dismembered the empire by the unwise decision to appoint his sons at 'Amān [a.w.], al-Ma'mūn [a.w.] and al-Mu'tamim, and thus initiated his decline. This move by al-Raḡhid may have been

inspired by the wish to safeguard not only the succession of his direct descendants against the ambitions of many 'Aḡid and 'Abbasid contenders, but also to ensure 'Abbasid authority over all the provinces; but this can hardly have been the right approach. Economically, the commercial activities, which reached as far as China, made al-Raḡhid's name known to the whole world of the time, and increased the splendour of his court, which was a centre of art and culture.

*Bibliography*: The chief source is Ṭabarī, iii, 599-764; Ibn al-'Aḡr gives a summarized version of Ṭabarī with fresh information here and there (al-Kamūl, vi, 65-152). Other sources are Ya'qūbī, ii, 401-524; Balḡhurī, *Fatḡḡ*, ed. al-Munajjid, 1956 (index); *Dihāshīrī*, Cairo 1958, 177-288; Mas'ūdī, *Murūʿat*, vi, 287-414; Isḡāḡ, *Makāshif*, ed. Naḡdī, 1934, 308-361; and *Fragmenta Historiarum Arabiorum*, ed. de Goege, 1875, 278-89, 290-319. Information will be found in other later histories, and also in al-Dhahabī's *Tarīkh al-Isḡām*, MS British Museum Add. 23,278 with incomplete chronological sequence, fol. 36 r, 36v, 408-704; some local histories are useful in this respect such as al-Aḡarī's *Al-Bihar* (Mabān 1839); *Tarīkh al-Sīstān*, ed. Malik al-Shū'arā Bahār, Tehran 1314 (where the author's sympathies are strongly against the central regime); al-Narshabī's *Tarīkh al-Balḡḡ*, Tehran 1939; *Makrīsī's Khayḡ*, ed. 1853; and *Kunūmī's Tarīkh al-'Umm*, etc. Modern works: Apart from the general works on the Caliphate see E. H. Palmer, *Harun al-Rashid*, London 1881 (in many ways out of date); H. St. J. B. Phipps, *Harun al-Rashid*, Edinburgh 1933 (dependent on secondary sources and intended for the general reader); N. Abbot, *Two Queens of Baghdad*, Chicago 1940 (exposing the role played by Ḳhayzara and Zuhayra on the political scene and at the court); A. Joumaḡ, *Harun al-Rashid*, 2 vols. 1956 (an attempt to present the reign of al-Raḡhid as an ethnic struggle between Arabs and Persians); L. Bouvat, *Les Barmakides*, Paris 1912; F. Gabrieli, *Le successions de Harun al-Rashid e la guerra fra al-Amin e al-Ma'mun*, in RSO, xi (196-28), 341-297; D. Sourdel, *Le politique religieuse au Califat 'Abbaside de Mā'mūn*, in REL, xxx (1959), 28-30; On relations with the Byzantines see *Cambridge Medieval history*, iv, 124-127; E. W. Brooks, *The Byzantines and Arabs in the times of the early 'Abbasids*, in EHR, xv (1900), 728-47, xvi (1901), 82-92; G. Ostrogorsky, tr. J. Hussey, *History of the Byzantine State*, Oxford 1956, 165-9, 173; A. A. Vesiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, 1961 (see index); idem, *Byzance et les Arabes* (Introduction). On the relations with Charlemagne see: F. F. Schmidt, *Karl der Grosse und Harun al-Rashid*, in *Jahrbuch*, iii (1912), 409-21; E. Jourans, *The alleged Frankish pretence in Palestine*, in AHR, 1927, 241-61; H. B. Bitterman, *Harun al-Rashid's gift of an organ to Charlemagne*, in *Speculum*, iv (1929), 215-7; Boukier, *Harun al-Rashid and Charles the Great*, 1931 (see Appendix and bibliography); S. Runciman, *Charlemagne and Palestine*, in EHR, 1935, 606-19; M. Khādūrī, *al-Sīd al-'Abbasīyīn*, Beirut 1953; *al-Raḡhid wa Ḳhayzara*, Baghdad 1939. See also Le Strange, *Baghdad during the 'Abbasid Caliphate*, Oxford 1914.

AL-HARDUNIYYA (in modern Turkish Harunîyye) was in the Middle Ages a fortress town of the marches of the Diyarra, *al-dīyar al-dīkārīyya* between Ma'rāshī and 'Ayn Zarba, to the east of the middle

employ them as herdsmen. When they can do so, they readily emigrate to the towns in the North where they work mainly as gardeners, well-diggers and water-carriers.

It was partly from the Harāḡm, brought from Mauritania, that the Moroccan sultan Ma'mūlay Isma'īl [a.w.] recruited his "Neger guards", *dīyār al-Balḡḡ*, vulgar *Balḡḡ* (cf. al-Nasīrī, *al-Tarīkh*, tr. Tunney, in *JM*, ix (1906), 74-8).

The exact etymology of *harāḡm* is unknown, as is that of the corresponding Berber term, *aharāḡm* (pl. *iharāḡm*). The Berber dialect of the Twarg has the word *aharāḡm* "imitator". But it is possible that the term does not refer to the colour of the skin. In the Arabic dialects of the Maghrib the adjective *harāḡm* is not applied exclusively to human beings. In the different regions, it is variously applied to a horse of mixed breed (Mauritania), an ungrafted tree, a whiting (Algeria) or a holding of land that is not free (Zaḡr, in Morocco). It might be connected with what was originally a term of abuse, to be compared with the Berber names for a species of lizard, *roḡ ḡhān*.

An Almohad prince, the *sayyid* Abū Za'ūd, son of sultan Yūsuf b. 'Aḡd al-Mu'tamim, bore the epithet al-Harāḡm, but unfortunately the historians do not explain its significance (Ibn Khaldūn, *Hist. des Berbères*, tr. de Slane, ii, 205, 236).

As for the Arabic eponyms hitherto suggested, these are quite unconvincing. They are — 1. *harāḡm* "plogmen", when they cultivated only with the hoe; 2. *har ḡm* "free man of secondary rank" or "man who had become free, a freedman". These are neither phonetically nor semantically possible.

We should add that in certain regions of the Maghrib, the word *keḡn*(*ḡebī*) (pl. *ḡān*(*ḡabān*)), lit. "native of the South-East" or *ḡhān*, is almost synonymous with *Harāḡm*.

*Bibliography*: E. Leouts, *Étude sur les transformations du Maroc central*, in *Haspéty's xlviii* (1934), 154; Ph. Margais, *Note sur le mot harāḡm*, in *Bulletin de l'Association algérienne*, Algiers, no. 4, April 1931; A. Leriche, *Les Gardiens Mauritaniques*, *ibid.*, no. 6, October 1931; two other articles have been condensed by Cayot-Rey, *Le Sahara français*, 1953, 158-70; Merc. D. Jacques-Meuilly, *Hiérarchie sociale au Maroc précoloniale*, in *Hespéty's*, xiv (1958), 232; K. Mauny, *Tribales algé. de l'ouest africain au moyen âge*, Dakar 1951, index; M. Ould Daddah, in *GIECS* (26/1/1965).

(G. S. CURTIS)

HARḤAMA n. 'A'YAN / a general and governor of the 'Abbasid period, a native of Khurāsān. As a supporter of 'Iḡ b. Miḡā [a.w.] in the reign of al-Mansūr, he was brought to Baghdad in chains and remained in obscurity throughout the reign of al-Maḡdī. He then became the confidential adviser of al-Hādī who is even said to have ordered him to kill Ḥarūn, and was stopped from doing so only by al-Khayzara's intervention. However, on the death of al-Hādī, it was he who brought Ḥarūn out of prison and took part in his enthronement. The new caliph, consequently entrusted him with important offices, appointing him to be governor of Palestine, then of Hirkīya, whence he was recalled to take over command of the guard under the orders of Ḳaḡr b. Yalḡā al-Barmakī. Next he took a share in the arrest of the Barmakīs and became one of the most prominent military leaders. After the uprising of Raḡf b. al-Layḡh [a.w.], he was given the governorship of Khurāsān and was in Samarkand when the caliph died in 193/809. In the ensuing

struggle between al-Ma'mūn and al-'Amīn he sided with the former and, together with Ṭarīk b. al-Ḥusayn [a.w.], was given command of the troops which laid siege to Baghdad in Dhu 'l-Ḥijḡa 196/August 812. Although still faithful to al-Ma'mūn, he vainly tried to procure the escape from Baghdad of the defeated caliph, al-'Amīn, who was captured by Ṭarīk's soldiers while making away in a boat. Ḥarḡama played a major part in restoring calm in Ṭarīk after the revolt of Abū 'l-Sarḡā [a.w.].

On being appointed governor of Ḳāḡba and Syria, he decided not to take up his post but instead to go to Ma'wā to see al-Ma'mūn and to put him in touch with the situation; but al-Paḡl b. Sāḡ [a.w.], who had been described by Ḥarḡama as *ḡawḡḡ* and accused of committing acts of tyranny, had him arrested and imprisoned, with the caliph's approval; some days later he was put to death by his rival, in Dhu 'l-Ḥijḡa 200/June 816. His son Ḥarūn b. Ḥarḡama, then governor of Armenia, tried to lead a revolt, but the attempt was cut short by his death; however, it is said that the punishment meted out to Ḥarḡama was not unconnected with the affair of Babak [a.w.].

*Bibliography*: Balḡḡhūrī, *Fatḡḡ*, index; Māḡh. b. Ḥaḡhīb, *Muḡāḡḡ*, 488-9; Ṭabarī, iii, 712-24 and *posson*; Dībāḡ, *Bulḡḡḡ*, ed. Ḥaḡhībī, 320-1; Mās'ūdī, *Murūʿat*, index; Dihāshīrī, *Murūʿat*, index; Ibn Khayyāḡa, *Mas'ūdī*, ed. 'Uḡsāḡ, 305 ff.; *al-Ghāḡ*, ii, 190, xvii, 467; Ibn al-'Aḡrī, v, 467, vi, 94-7, 138-44, 212-8, 220, 223 and *posson*; Ibn Khaldūn, *Berbers*, trans. de Slane, i, 391; 394, 398; M. Ben Cheneb, *Civiles des romains de l'Afrique*, Algiers 1920, 14, and bibli.; *Journal Berbères*, i, 404; F. Gabrieli, in RSO, xi (1928), 341-97; *posson*; D. Sourdel, *Yarḡūf*, index. (Ch. PELLIOT)

HARUD [see ḡar rūḡ].

HARUN n. 'AMRĀN, the Aaron of the Bible. The Arabic form of the name derives from the Syro-Palestinian. The Ḳur'ān, which mentions him from the second Meccan period onwards, places him in its lines of prophets, associating him, as does the book of Exodus, with Moses at the time of the flight from Egypt [see *enr*, xviii] and accords him a role in the making of the Golden Calf, in which, however, the initiative is attributed to the 'Sahān'. [a.w.],

Ṭun Ḥazan, on the other hand, severely criticized the Biblical account, which he regarded as falsified. Ḥarūn is also the brother of Maryam [a.w.], but this name is given in the *Qur'an* only to the mother of Jesus [see 75A]. The death of Ḥarūn is accompanied in later tradition by legendary details which come from the Jewish Agegda, while Muslim legend has probably influenced the Judeo-Christian version of a later date. The legend may be summarized thus: Miḡā and Ḥarūn one day discovered a cave from which a light was gleaming. They entered it, and there found a golden throne inscribed with the words: "For him whom it fits". As it seemed too small for Miḡā, Ḥarūn seated himself in it; when the angel of death forthwith appeared and took his soul. Being born three years earlier than Moses, he was then 127 years old. When Moses returned to the Israelites, they asked him about his brother and, hearing of his death, accused him of having murdered him. Angels then appeared bearing the bier of Ḥarūn and proclaimed: "Do not suspect Miḡā of such a crime". In another version, Miḡā led the Israelites to the grave of Ḥarūn and the latter, on being recalled to life, declared his brother's innocence. According to one tradition, the seventy nothings of Israel carried away by the "cathayans" (*māḡā*, *Ḳur'ān*, VII, 155/154)

Parouk Omar  
For Doctor of Philosophy -  
University of London  
25

Ph.D.  
1967  
OMAR  
(CF)



were killed for having accused Moses of the murder of his brother, but they were afterwards brought back to life and became prophets.—At Salhihd [g.z.] a footprint of Härün was shown.—In the history of Härün was shown.—In the history of Härün is a *bhidjia* or a *wesf* together with Mäsa.

*Bibliographie*: The verses of the Kur'än listed in the index of R. Blechère. *Le Coran*, s.v.: Ibn Kutayba, *Ma'säraf*, ed. Ukaišä, 43-4; Yä'köb, *Historiae*, I, 40-1 (G. Smit, *Biblii in Legendis*, 49-50); Tabari, I, 448, 473-93, 502; idem, *Tafsir*, new edition, III, 80-152 (old edition, ix, 31-53); Mas'üdi, *Murüdd*, I, 93-5 (trans. Ch. Pellat, I, 39, §§ 87-89); K. al-Bal'a wa 'al-hä'fä, III, 92/93; Bal'sam, *La Chronique de Tabari*, I, 296, 317 ff.; 345, 336, 391, 395 f.; 543; Tha'äbi, *Ar'ä'is al-mä'idätis*, 100, 123-5, 146; Kisa'i, ed. Eisenberg, 222 f., 238; Ibn Hazzam, *Fisal*, Cairo 1317, I, 161 (1317 impression, I, 140); Ka'fi Nu'män, *Asäs al-hä'fä*, ed. A. Tanner, Beirut 1960, 106; Corbin-Mo'in, *Commentaire de la Quäsidä ismädliema*, Tehran-Paris 1955, 109; Haraväi, *Quäsidä des Lieux de Pölering*, ed. J. Sourdel-Thomé, 17, trans., 43; J. Horowitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 149; A. Jeffery, *The Joränic vocabulary of the Qur'än*, 283 f.; D. Sidersky, *Les origines des légendes musulmanes* . . . , 81, 102; H. Speyer, *Die biblischen Erzählungen* . . . , 260 f., 323-6; M. Gaudéroy-Denombreyer, *Mohamed*, index, s.v. Aaron/Härün; Jewish sources summarized by A. Marmorstein, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, I, cols. 13-16; H. Schwarzbaum, *Jewish, Christian, Moslem and Falasha legends of the death of Aaron, the High Priest*, in *Favohis*, v. 185-227.

**HÄRÜN B. KHUMARAWÄTH** (see TÜBINN).

HÄRÜN B. YAHYA, a person known only from an account left by him and inserted in the *Kitab al-A'älä al-nafisa* of Ibn Rusia (ed. De Goeje, in *BGA*, VII, 119-30). Nothing is known of his origin. According to J. Marquart, he was a Syrian, and a Christian—a fact which would have hastened his release during his stay in Constantinople (*Streifzüge*, 207). Taken prisoner in Palestine by the Byzantines, he was transferred across Asia Minor, to Byzantium, and was probably placed in one of the prisons reserved for Muslim prisoners for these prisoners of *REI*, 1947, 49 n. 4). Released by the authorities and awaiting his final liberation, he had time to visit parts of the town and to study closely the famous monuments there. His description contains archaeological information of the highest interest and can be considered one of the most—if not the most—important of all accounts left by visitors to the Byzantine capital in the Middle Ages. After the reason of the Arab prisoners Härün b. Yahya left Constantinople for Saltihriya (Thessalonica), from where he travelled to Venice and later Rome, of which too he left a description.

The date of his stay in Byzantium is disputed. According to Marquart and Vasiliev it took place between 267/880 and 276/890. G. Ostrogorsky thinks it was during the winter of 912-3, during the short reign of the Emperor Alexander (*Zum Résebiricht des Härün-ibn-Jahya*, in *Sem. Kondakov*, V (1932), 254), a date accepted also by H. Grégoire (*Un captif arabe à la cour des Empereurs Alexandre, in Byzantion*, VII (1932), 666-73). As for V. Minorsky, he places it at about the year 900 (*Häädä al-Sä'm*, 419, n. 2).

Härün b. Yahya's account was translated and commented upon for the first time in German by J. Marquart (*op. cit.*, 206-37) then, in English, by A. Vasiliev (*Härün-ibn-Jahya and his description of*

*Constantinople*, in *Sem. Kondakov*, V (1932), 149-63); there are three French translations: the first by Méhmed-izeddin (*Un Prisonnier arabe à Byzance au IX<sup>e</sup> siècle: Härün-ibn-Jahya*, in *REI*, 1947, 41-62); the second by M. Canard in *Vasiliev's Byzance et les Arabes*, II/2 (1950), 382-94) and the third by G. Vliet, in *Ibn Rusteh, Les adärs p'rticiäz*, 134-16.

*Bibliographie*: In addition to the works mentioned: V. Minorsky, *Häädä*, XVII, 418 ff.; Méhmed-izeddin *zur historischen Geographie*, Leipzig-Vienna 1929, 88 ff.; J. Sauvaget, *Chronique de Dämas al-hä-Jasari*, Paris 1949, 29.

**HÄRÜN AL-RÄSHID**, HÄRÜN B. MURÄMÄD

b. 'ABD ALLÄH, the fifth 'Abbäsüd caliph, is, thanks to the "Arabian Nights", an almost legendary figure, so that the "good Härün al-Räshid" of the "golden prime" of the 'Abbäsüds has obscured his true historical personality. His reign, which saw many incidents of critical importance, was a turning point in the history of the 'Abbäsüd Caliphate; it marked the decline in administrative efficiency and initiated the political disintegration of the Islamic empire.

He was born in al-Räy in Muharram 149/February 766 (an older account in Tabari, III, 599, puts it as early as Dhu'l-Hijja 145/March 763). He was the third son of al-Mahdi, and his second son by al-Khayrätun [g.z.], a slave girl from the Yemen who, being freed and married by al-Mahdi in 159/775-6, played an influential role in the reign of both her husband and her son. The 'Abbäsüd Court at which Härün spent his carefree and scene youth surrounded by eunuchs (see KEA43) and *Mazäb* [g.z.] was beginning to show signs of laxity and splendour. His early upbringing rendered him susceptible to influence, especially that exerted by his mother and by his secretary-tutor Yahya b. Khälid (see ARA344a). Early in his youth Härün was appointed the leader of two expeditions against the Byzantines, in 163/779-80 and 165/781-2, when he was accompanied by high ranking officials and veteran generals. The former culminated in the capture of Samälü, the latter was a marked success, in that the 'Abbäsüd army reached for the first and last time the coast of the Bosphorus. It cannot be assumed that Härün, hardly more than a boy, played a leading role in these expeditions. However, he was appointed governor of Iräkiya, Egypt, Syria, Armenia and Adharbaydän, with Yahya b. Khälid in charge of the actual administration, and second in succession to the throne in 166/782, ostensibly on the strength of these victories, but in reality because of the instigation of his mother and Yahya b. Khälid, in order to enhance his prestige and pave his way to the throne. In the struggle between various political groupings, each identifying itself with an *amir* through whom it sought to achieve absolute power, intrigues were a common weapon at al-Mahdi's court. These intrigues showed their effect when al-Mahdi ultimately decided to nominate Härün the first in succession; but he died in obscure circumstances in 169/785 before fulfilling his wish. Under al-Hädi [g.z.], Härün, ill-treated and humiliated, would have renounced his claim to the Caliphate but for the encouragement of Yahya b. Khälid.

However, Härün was proclaimed Caliph, after the mysterious death of al-Hädi which was due to a court conspiracy, on 15 Rab'i I 170/14 September 786. He was then in his early twenties, and his accession to the throne was due to fortuitous as well as fortunate circumstances in which he had no real

share. It was therefore a matter of course that the grateful Härün should bestow the right to govern on Yahya b. Khälid, together with his two sons al-Fadl and Dja'far, remained in power for about 17 years. Their downfall in Muharram 187/January 803 marked, more or less, the end of the importance of the visiers as initiators of policies and not merely heads of the administration. Political necessity drew al-Räshid to rely more and more on his *mazäb* and eunuchs, who were entirely dependent on the Caliph and therefore loyal to him. They, in fact, proved equal to their task in many decisive moments (Tabari, III, 678, 682, 705, 716, etc.) and played an important rôle in controlling other political groupings.

Despite the glorious picture of the golden age, Härün's reign was, in fact, a long sequence of political disturbances arising up in the eastern parts as well as the western parts of the empire. Syria, a province inhabited by unruly tribes with Umayyad sympathies, never ceased to be the bitter enemy of the 'Abbäsüds. Frequent fights between the two rival factions, the Yamänis and the Müdäris, eventually developed into a war with the 'Abbäsüd army, because governors used to take sides with one faction against the other. The feuds continued with brief intervals until 180/796, when the situation became so serious that al-Räshid had to send Dja'far b. Yahya, who succeeded in quietening the situation and disarming the tribes. Al-Räshid's party to al-Räkkä [g.z.] at about the time he moved to al-Madina in Syria (Tabari, III, 706). As to the Egyptian risings of 172/788 and 178/794-5, they were mainly due to maladministration and arbitrary taxation, as Egypt had to subsidize the 'Abbäsüd army fighting in Iräkiya. But Harhama b. 'A'yan was able to restore peace to Egypt. Instability in Iräkiya started after the death of the competent governor Yazid b. Hädim al-Muhallabi [g.z.] in 179/786, and successive governors failed to restore order. Harhama b. 'A'yan [g.z.] was able to subdue 'Abd Alläh b. al-Djardüd's rebellion in Käyrawän in 178/794-5, but disturbances blazed up again in 180/797 and al-Räshid consented to bestow the governorship of Iräkiya on Ibrahim b. al-Aghlab [g.z.] only in return for an annual payment of 40,000 dhars. The process of disintegration, which had already started in Spain with the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty (158/755) and in al-Mağrib with the foundation of the Idrisid dynasty (172/788), was aggravated in Iräkiya by the foundation of the Aghlabid [g.z.] dynasty (184/800), alleviated in the last case however by financial benefits to the central treasury. Finally the Yemen was a place of unrest owing to its remoteness and its mountainous nature; al-Räshid's governor and Mawä' Hamud al-Barbari employed a harsh policy towards the people of the Yemen, who therefore revolted under al-Haysam al-Hamadani in 179/795. Thanks to local support, the revolt lasted for nine years and resulted in al-Haysam and many of his followers being sent to al-Räshid, who had them strangled. The lot of the Yemenis improved only when Hammüd was dismissed after 13 years of governorship.

The causes of the unrest in the eastern part of the empire were more complicated. The unrest was partly due to the disappointment of the lower classes, whose condition was not improved by the advent of the 'Abbäsüds. Moreover, the 'Abbäsüds had to contend with a population more attached to their old local tradition than to Islam, and sometimes, as was the case with large parts of Daylam and Iberia, completely unaffected by it. Al-Räshid

himself converted 400 Tabaristans to Islam in 189/805 (Tabari, III, 705, 1014-15). The dissatisfied faction manifested itself in the form of 'Älid or Käläh-righ risings. It was as early as 176/792-3 that the Hasanid Yahya b. 'Abd Alläh al-Mahdi [g.z.] rebelled in Daylam and won considerable support from the native princes and the people. Al-Räshid sent al-Fadl b. Yahya al-Barmaki, who through diplomacy and promises of amnesty persuaded Yahya to give in. But Yahya's submission did not entirely satisfy al-Räshid, who a little later found a pretext to have the amnesty annulled and threw Yahya into prison (*Mä'ärib*, 309-22). The number of the Khäfirifis was considerable in Kirmän as well as in Färs and Sästän; they continued in their hostile attitude towards the new régime, and during the reign of al-Räshid seem to have recovered from the heavy blow inflicted upon them in the late Umayyad period. There was a series of revolts, the most serious being that of al-Wälid b. Tarif al-Shäri [g.z.], and that of Hamza b. 'Abd Alläh al-Shäri. The former, with headquarters in Näshibän, took place in 178/794 in the entirety tribal province of al-Djazar and defeated successive 'Abbäsüd armies. Then al-Räshid sent Yazid b. Marzad al-Shaybani, of the same tribe as al-Wälid, whom he killed in 179/795. The latter broke out in Sistiän when Hamza occupied Harät in 179/795 and extended his authority to Kirmän and Färs, and al-Räshid was unable to subdue the rebels (Sadighi, *Les mouvements religieux* . . . , 52-5). Khuräsän became the scene of a series of local risings due to the incompetence of the successive governors with the exception of al-Fadl b. Sulaymän al-Täsi and al-Fadl al-Barmaki (Bar-bold, *Turkistan*, 203.). The situation worsened when 'Äli Ibn Süsän Müdän was appointed governor in 180/795-6. His notorious deeds caused two serious revolts, namely that of Abu'l-Khasib Wahayb b. 'Abd Alläh in 185/801 at Näsa, and that of Rätit' b. al-Layth b. Nasr b. Savyär [g.z.] in 190/806 at Saman-kand.

In his religious policy al-Räshid stressed the religious character of the Caliphate, and continued the anti-'Älid and anti-zandäqä policy of his predecessors. He initiated his reign by a general amnesty, but the potentially dangerous 'Älids and the *Zindäqis* were excluded from it. His suspicious included even the politically inactive and pious Müsä al-Kä'im [g.z.] who was suddenly arrested and sent to Bagära, then to Bagädäd. Although it was alleged that al-Kä'im was killed by al-Räshid's orders (*Mä'ärib*, 333; 'Uyun al-Hidä'ät al-Rä'idä, 66, 71 ff.) it seems more likely that his death in 183/790 was natural (Tabari, III, 649). Al-Räshid's attitude towards the *dihimms* seems to have been stricter than that of his predecessors. In 191/806 he ordered churches along the Muslim-Byzantine frontiers to be demolished, and ordered the *dihimms* of Bagädäd to wear different clothes from those of the Muslims and to ride different animals (Tabari, III, 712-3; *Tärikät al-Mawäzanä*, ed. Arnold, 31-2; Patai, *Le Soudan* . . . , 66). His motive in so doing may have been to win over Muslim public opinion or else the necessity to be on guard against foreign spies.

A great part of al-Räshid's fame was due to his interest in the wars against the Byzantines. In waging *dihimms* against the infidels, Härün was in fact fulfilling one of the important duties of the Caliph in the eyes of Muslims. Border attacks and counter-attacks occurred with almost annual regularity, but the interesting aspect of al-Räshid's expeditions was his personal participation in a number of them. He organized the border area as a separate adminis-