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THE ‘ABBĀSID CALIPHATE

132/750 – 170/786

by

Farouk Omar

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of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

In the early decades of the second century A.H./eighth century A.D., the supporters of the 'Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads and put the 'Abbasids 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 'Abbāsid period. The controversial nature of the 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid propaganda and Umayyad counter-propaganda make it difficult to form an accurate picture. However, as the 'Abbāsid revolution must be viewed in the light of preceding and following events, Chapter II reviews the situation in Khurasan and the relations of the Khurasānī Arabs with the central régime. The chapter leads to an exposition of the political aspect of the 'Abbāsid revolution and to the attempt to substantiate the outdated, but still accepted, in some quarters, racial interpretation of the revolt by the theory already outlined by some scholars that the 'Abbāsid revolution was essentially the work of the Arabs in Khurasan 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-Khuṣā‘ī, Ziyād b. ʿAṣāḥ etc., on the other.

Having achieved power the ābbāsids discarded the extremist wing of the da′wa and adopted Orthodoxy in an attempt to win the support of the traditionists (Aḥāb al-Jadīth), a move which resulted in the Ṣawāndīyya risings in Khurasan and Ḫirāf. Simultaneously, the ābbāsids got rid of certain ambitious daʾīs who had grown too strong to be tolerated (Abū Muslim), or had deviated from the ābbāsid path (ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Aẓād).

As the ābbāsids 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 Bānī Ḥashim had equal rights to the inheritance of the Prophet, one can hardly speak of an ālīd "claim" to the caliphate. The majority of ālīd 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 ābbāsid authorities.

Chapter V deals with the Umayyad and Kharijite opposition. Though Ḫirāf 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 'Abbasids. Their risings often proved dangerous to the authority of the 'Abbasid caliphate. 'Uman and Ifriqiyya were their sphere of influence, and many Kharijite risings in the Jazira, the Yemen, Sistan, and Khorasan had lasting success. Chapter VI treats of major political events, selected to illustrate the trends which characterized the early 'Abbasid period. It shows how tribal 'Asabiyya still played an outstanding role in the politics of the new regime, how al-Hangur utilized it to weaken the influence of the tribal confederations in many parts of the empire, and was able to consolidate the new regime before expanding in Tabaristan or trying to regain Spain from the Umayyads. It finally shows how intrigues which arose at the 'Abbasid court early in the reign of al-Mahdi resulted in the murder of al-Hadi in 170/786.
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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.

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Abbreviations

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Chronique..., by Abū Zakariyya Yaḥya.

Agh

Kitāb al-Aghānī, by Abū 'l Faraj al-Īṣbāhānī.

Arkhār

Akhbār al-'Abbās wa wuldahu (anonymous).

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Akhbār Isfahān, by Abū Nu‘aym al-Īsfahānī.

al-l'īm

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Anonymous

The anonymous MS. of Tarīkh-i dawlati ‘Abbāsiyya

‘Asākir

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Asmā’ al-mughtālīn

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‘Amlī

A‘yān al-Shī’a, by al-‘Amlī.

Ansāb

Ansāb al-Asbaf, by al-Balādhrī

Athīr

Al-Kāmil fi 'l tarīkh, by Ibn al-Athīr.

‘Aynī

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Azdī

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Azraqī

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Bagh

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Bayān

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Bayāsī

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T

al-Bidaya wa *1 nihaya, by Ibn Kathir
Bughyat al-jialab, by Ibn al- *Adim.
1(1tab al-Buidan, by al-Y a 4qub i .
The MS, of Tarikh al-Islam, by al~Dhahabi.
al-Akhbar al-$iwal, by al-Dinawari,
The MS, of AMibar al™duxnm.l. al-munqafi 4a .
Kitab al-Falchri, by Ibn al-*J?iq};a qa.
Fra^menta Historioorum Arabicorum.
al-Fihrtsttt by Ibn al-Hadim.
Firaq al-Shi *a , by al-Nawbakhti.
Kitab al-Fitan, by al-Khuaa‘i ,
■buldan, by al-Baladhus,t
j&aopar, by Ibn gabib.
Mulchtagar Kitab al-buldan, by Ibn al-Faqih alHamadani,
gaywail

Kitab al-gaywan, by Jagiz,

gazm

al-Fagl fi *1 milal wa *1 nthal, by Ibn gazm,

Sllya

gilyat al-Awliya*, by al-Igfahani

‘ibar

Kitab aL-*lbar, by Ibn Khaldun.

Ibn *Adharl

al-Bayan al-mughrib..., by Ibn *Adhari.

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The MS. of al-Anoab, by Ibn al-ICalbi,

Ibn al-§aghir

Fragment d ’un livre d'Ibn S 'rir1...

Ibn Igfandiyar

Tarikh-i Tabariatan, by Ibn Igfandiyar,

Ibn Raslq

History of the Imams and

Imama

Kitab al-Imama wa *1 styasa.

Oman,.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-İqayyat</td>
<td>Kitab al-İntigar wa ‘l rad, by al-Khayyat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-İsfarayini</td>
<td>al-Taba‘îr fi ‘l dîn, by al-İsfarayini.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Jahshiyârî</td>
<td>Kitab al-Wuzara’ wa ‘l Kuttâb, by al-Jahshiyârî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Hazm</td>
<td>Jamhurat al-nasab, by Ibn Hazm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Kamil</td>
<td>al-Mubarrad, by al-Kamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Khatib</td>
<td>Ta‘rikh Baghdâd, by al-Khatib al-Baghdâdî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Khazrajî</td>
<td>al-Kifaya wa ‘l I‘lâm..., by al-Khazrajî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Ma‘arif</td>
<td>al-Mawâ‘iz wa ‘l I‘tibâr..., by al-Ma‘arif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Qutayba</td>
<td>al-Mawâ‘arif, by Ibn Qutayba.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-İshârî</td>
<td>Maqalât al-Islâmiyîn, by al-İshârî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Işbahânî</td>
<td>Maqâtil al-ţâlibîyîn, by al-Işbahânî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Rûmî</td>
<td>Mu‘jam al-hulûdân, by Yaqût al-Rûmî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Maqdisî</td>
<td>Muntakhab al-tadkhîra, by Maqârî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Mas‘îdî</td>
<td>Murûj al-ţahab, by al-Mas‘îdî.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Narshkhî</td>
<td>Tarikh-i Bukhara, by al-Narshkhî.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Navāqīd
al-Navāqīd 13 'l rawāfiḍ, by al-Barazanjī.

Niza‘
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al-Sīra, by Ibn Ḥishām

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Kitāb al-Tabākh wa 'l Ishrāf, by al-Mas‘ūdī.

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Tuhfat al-a‘yān bi sīrat ahl ‘Umayr, by al-Salīmī

Ṭulūn
‘Umdat al-tālib, by al-Dāwādī.

‘Uyun
‘Uyun al-akhbār, by Ibn Qutayba.

Wafayāt
Wafayāt al-a‘yān, by Ibn Khallikān.

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Kitāb al-Wulāt wa 'l Qutāt, by al-Kindī.

Yāfi‘ī
The manuscript of Mir‘āt al-Jīnān, by al-Yāfi‘ī

Ya‘qūbī
Ṭarīkh, by Ya‘qūbī.

Zubayrī
Nasab Quraysh, by Mas‘ab al-Zubayrī.

Zubda
Zubdat al-Ḥalab, by Ibn al-‘Adīm.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodicals, etc.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.O.</td>
<td>Archiv Orientali.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.A.</td>
<td>Bulletin of the College of Arts (Majalat Kuliyyat al-Ādāb, Baghdad).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.H.R.</td>
<td>Economic History Review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.J.</td>
<td>Historia Judaica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.C.</td>
<td>Islamic Culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.I.</td>
<td>Indo-Iranica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.A.</td>
<td>Journal Asiatique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.E.</td>
<td>Middle Eastern Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.I.</td>
<td>Majallat al-Majma’ al-‘Ilmī al-‘Iraqī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.M.A.</td>
<td>Majallat Ma‘had al-Makhtūfāt al-‘Arabiyya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.I.O.</td>
<td>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.T.H.</td>
<td>Melanges Ta ha Husayn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.W.</td>
<td>Muslim World.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C.E.A.</td>
<td>Repertoire chronologique d’epigraphie arabe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.S.O.</td>
<td>Rivista degli studi orientali.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.I.</td>
<td>Studia Islamica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.O.</td>
<td>Studia Orientalia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I Introduction: Survey of the sources</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II The political aspect of the ‘Abbasid revolution</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The Khurasan phase of the da’īva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The Ira’i phase of the da’īva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III The ‘Abbasid régime and its da’īs</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Abū Muslim vis-à-vis Abū Salama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The assassination of Abū Salama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Abū Muslim and the struggle for power in Khurasān</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rising of Sharīk b. Shaykh al-Mahri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rising of Ziyād b. Ǧāliḥ al-Khuzaʿī</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The execution of ‘Īsā b. Māḥṣan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rising of Hangūr b. Jamhūr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abū Muslim at his prime</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The execution of Abū Muslim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d) The rising of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm

e) The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī

f) The Rawanidiyya sectarians

g) The murder of Abu 'l Jahm b. 'Aṭiyya al-Bā hilī

h) The rising of Jahwar b. Narrār al-'Ijlī

i) The conspiracy against Khālid b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhu hilī

j) The revolt of 'Abd 'l Jabbar b. 'Abd 'l Rahmān al-Azdī

k) The mutiny of 'Uyayna b. Mūsā al-Tamīmī

Chapter IV

'Abbāsid-'Alīd relations in the early 'Abbāsid period

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-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī's revolt

Chapter V

Other opposition movements in the early 'Abbāsid period

a) The pro-Umayyad movement

b) The Kharijites

Chapter VI

Major political events in the provinces

a) The revolt of Mogul in 133/750-51

b) Slave riots in Bağra in 141/758-59

c) Bandār's rising in the Lebanon 142/759-60
d) Revolts in the Yemen and Bafrayn and al-Mangur'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) 'Abbāsid attempts to regain al-Andalus

i) The mid against India

j) The conquest of Tabaristan

k) Al-Khayzurān's coup d'etat 170/786

Bibliography

a) Classical sources

b) Modern work

c) Periodical publications etc.
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

SURVEY OF THE SOURCES

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

"If Ahl Khurasan had preserved the memory of their battles against Ahl al-Sham, 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-Mansur alone [which were] destined for posterity, would largely match all the kings of Banu Harwan. Abu 'Ubayda al-Nahawani, Abu 'l Hasan al-Hadi 'indi, Hisham b. al-Kalbi and al-Haytham b. 'Adi 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-'Abbas b. Muhammad, 'Abd al-'Ali b. Salih, al-'Abbas b. Musa.... who derived their information from the Muhayyakha and Mawali of Banu Hashim, you will be able to realize, thanks to these authentic documents, the extent of the adulations due to al-Haytham b. 'Adi and falsifications for which Hisham b. al-Kalbi is responsible."

(Bayan, vol. 3, pp. 317-18)
Scholars who, in one way or another, dealt with the ‘Abbāsid revolution and the ‘Abbāsid 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 Wuldaḥu, the Ansāb al-Ashraf of Balādhurī, the Tārīkh and Tabaqāt of Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, the Futūḥ 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 revaluation of old published sources an attempt has been made in this thesis to re-examine the nature of the ‘Abbāsid revolution as well as the main trends and characteristics of the early ‘Abbāsid 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

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

1. Kitāb al-‘Abbās b. ‘Abd al-Muttalib by al-Madāʾini
2. Kitāb ‘Abdallah b. Al-‘Abbās
5. Akhbar Khulafāʾ bani ’l-‘Abbās
6. Akhbar al-‘Abbāsyin
7. Risāla fī Tafdīl banī Ḥāshim wa ’awliyā’hum wa dham banī Umayya wa atba’’hum
8. Akhbar al-Saffāh
9. Akhbar Abī ’l-‘Abbās
10. Akhbar Abī Ja’far al-Mangūr
11. Akhbar al-Mangūr

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12. Tarikh Mawgul bi Kitab Abi Ja'far by Abu Isfahq al-Saqdi

13. Manaqib hanî 'l 'Abbâs

14. Akhbar Abî Muslim Sahib al-da'wa

15. Kitab Muhammed wa Ibraheem Ibnay 'Abdallah b. Hasan


17. Kitab Khalaf 'Abd al-Jabbâr al-Azdi

18. Isma' man qutila min al-Talibiyin

19. Kitab al-dawla

20. Akhbar Ibn Sirin

21. Akhbar Abi Hanifa

22. Akhbar Ibn Harama

23. Akhbar Hammad 'Ajrad

24. Kitab Khurasan

25. Kitab Futuh Khurasan

26. Kitab Nizul al-'Arab biKhurasan w'al sawad

27. Faqâ'îl Khurasan
However, few of these early works are partly available in extracts in the works of some later historians such as Baladhuri, 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."¹

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.²

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


²The 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 Margolioth'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 Tarikh al-Tabarī, 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 Isma‘ilism, 1940; S. Moscati, "Nuovi studi storici...", Orientalia, 14, 1945, Roma; Idem, "Per una storia Dell' Antica Siria," R.S.O., 1955; D'Souzελ, Le Vizirat 'Abbāside, Damascus, 1959, chap. I."
study with special emphasis on those hitherto unknown or not utilized.

**Historical sources**

1. **Akhbar al-‘Abbas 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. Sāliḥ b. Mahān (d. 202 A.H.) or Muḥammad b. Sāliḥ al-Naṭṭāb. The work is invaluable for the understanding of the organisation of the 'Abbāsid 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 Naqības, Akhbar al-‘Abbās enumerates all their committees and sub-committees. It reveals the strict form of its organisation, whose propagandists were divided into twelve Naqības headed by a Chief Naqīb, and twelve deputy Naqības (Muḍara' al-Nuqāba'), then seventy da'is and about thirty-six chief da'is (Du'at al-Du'at).

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References:

* See also Ḥajjī Khalīfa, op.cit., vol. I, p.232.
By comparing the role of Abu Muslim with that of other 'Abbāsid partisans such as Sulaymān al-Khuza‘ī or Arab tribal leaders such as ‘Alī Ibn al-Karma‘ī the author enables us to re-assess Abu Muslim's role in the 'Abbāsid revolution, and shows us to what extent Abu Muslim's very position in Khurasān depended on Sulaymān al-Khuza‘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 Abu '1 '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 Mihārī (d. 157 A.H.) and Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī (d. 235 A.H.) and his contemporaries such as 'Umar b. Shabba (d. 262), Baladhurī (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 Ṭā‘īṣ, 'Abbāsids 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 ‘1 Ṭādīd copied from it verbatim. However, it seems that the book was never intended to be put in circulation as the material it contains was derived from internal 'Abbāsid revolutionary information which gives

1 Dūrī, op.cit., p.65.
it the character of a private document. What it discloses on the
relations of the 'Abbāsid Imāms with the propagandists and the struggle
for power within the 'Abbāsid chiefs' propagandists is first class.
Some details of this information concern: the two letters of Muḥammad
b. 'Alī b. 'Abdallah to the dāʿīs 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 'Abbāsid daʿwa after the 'Abbāsid victory; the deep-
rooted rivalry between Abū Muslim and Sulaymān al-Khuzāʾī which proves
the greater influence Sulaymān had on the conduct of the propaganda,
1 and finally the employment of women dāʿīs in the movement.

2. Nubdha min Kitāb al-Tarīkh 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 'Abbāsid times
calling it al-dawla al-'Abbāsiyya al-Mubārsaka. 2

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1 On these accounts see below, Chapter I.

2 Nubdha, fol. 235b.
The author makes it clear from the start that his account of the 'Abbasid 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 'Abbasid in tendency as he himself states that he is bound to the 'Abbasids by Wala'.

However, a comparison between the Nubdha and the Akhbar 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 Akhbar 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 da'īs, deputy naqībs and chief da'īs preserved in the Akhbar. He has achieved conciseness by giving the bare facts of the happenings and ignoring vital and secret details revealed in the Akhbar. The following juxtaposition proves to what extent the author of the Nubdha depended on the Akhbar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nubdha</th>
<th>Akhbar</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fol. 245b</td>
<td>74a</td>
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<tr>
<td>246a-b</td>
<td>84b</td>
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<tr>
<td>246b-247a</td>
<td>79a</td>
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<td>247b</td>
<td>80b-81a</td>
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<tr>
<td>248b</td>
<td>85a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Akhbar 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. Khayyāt, Shabbāb (d. 240/854-55) was one of the renowned traditionists and historians of his time. He lived in Bagra for most of his life. His works were unknown until recently although part of a work on the Tarajim has been preserved in the Zāhiriyya library of Damascus. Mr. S. Zakkar has located a copy of Khalīfa's Tarikh and Tabaqāt 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 Tarikh Khalīfa applies the method of the traditionists in quoting chains of authorities, some of which – for the early 'Abbāsid period –

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1 Khalīfa, Tabaqāt, p. 5; Fihrist, p. 324 ed. Cairo 1348; cf. Flugel edition where he mistakenly writes Shabib.

2 Al-'Alī, op. cit., p. 684.

are 'Ali b. Muhammad, Muhammad b. Mu'awiya, Bayhaq b. Habib, Abū 'Ubayda Abū 'l Yaqqān and Khālīfa b. Khayyāf (the author's grandfather). His annals begin with the first year of Hijra and end with the year 230/844-5. In contrast to Tabarī who is a compiler, Khālīfa 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-Mukhtar, the 'Abbasid 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-Salam al-Yashkürī, this correspondence is not found anywhere else and only partly quoted by al-Azdi, is fully preserved here. It is almost inconceivable that a book of such qualities has fallen into oblivion. However, Khālīfa lived in Baṣra of the second century of the Hijra, which was hostile to the government and housed prosperous Umayyads. His Tarikh reveals moderate Umayyad sympathies. Several of the narrators of the work were actually Umayyads. Khālīfa'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-Tabarī (d. 310 A.H./923 A.D.). Generally speaking his Tarikh contains the fullest and most comprehensive account on the history of
the caliphate from its emergence until the year 290 A.H.¹ 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 Irāq. 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 Tabarī's text with the information given by other
early sources such as Baladhurī's Ansāb, the anonymous Akhbar al-'Abbās,
Kūfī's Futūḥ and Azdī's Tarīkh al-Muṣīl 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.² As to al-Azdī³ 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

¹Breckelmann, Geschichte der Arabischen..., vol. I, Leiden, 1943, p.148;
remarks on the important rôle of the Arabs in the revolutionary movement. Tabari is vague even on the factual aspect of risings such as those of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm, ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-ʿAṣā and Khālid al-Dhuḥli and seems, somehow, purposely to omit accounts unfavourable to the central régime. Fresh and different material on these risings and political events is to be found in Balādhuṭrī's Anṣāb and local histories. The comparatively clearer and most coherent picture can be obtained from the accounts of Anṣāb who quotes Madaʾinī. Tabari'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 Muhammad wa Ibrāhīm... As a traditionist Tabari applied the method of the Muhādithūn by quoting the authorities for a large proportion of his accounts. His main authorities on the early 'Abbāsid history are: 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Madāʾinī, Ṭḥāḥud b. Zūhayr, Abū Ḥāṭīb, 'Umar b. Shabba, 'Umar b. Ṣāḥib. 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

1He openly admits suppressing information, Tab., I, pp. 2858, 2862, 2965, 2980.

2Tab., III, pp. 143-319.

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 'Abbasid caliphate.

5. Futūḫ al-Buldān by Abū 'l 'Abbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥya al-Baladhurī

(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-Mansūr during the revolt of Muḥammad

Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zākīyya. The authorities he quotes vary from Mada'īnī
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 Baladhurī'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". ¹ He was trusted

by his successors and many of them quoted him, such as Ṣūlī, Jahshiyārī,

Maqrīzī, D̲hahabī and 'Aynī.


Although his accounts on the early 'Abbasid period are at times concise,

¹See 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 Abu Muslim, for instance, is noticeably exaggerated in al-Akhbār al-Tiwal. This is significant because it helps to determine the period in which the myth of Abu Muslim began to form and consolidate until it later developed making him a Persian national hero. Abu Muslim's figure is more than life-size, and his importance is clearly exaggerated. Some examples in which Abu Muslim's rôle is magnified are: The account of his meeting Abu 'l 'Abbās, the installation of Abu 'l 'Abbās on the caliphal throne, the execution of Abu Salama and the suppression of 'Isā b. 'Alī's revolt at al-Anbār. According to Dīnawārī it was a commander sent by Abu Muslim who installed Abu 'l 'Abbās as caliph. It was Abu Muslim who killed Abu Salama without consulting the caliph. It was Abu Muslim who crushed an attempt made by 'Isā 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.


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1 Dīnā, p.358; See also E.I. (Dīnawārī). This tendency is also noticed in Ḫanṣa Iṣfahānī's Tarikh, p.139.

2 E.I. (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 ‘Abbāsid 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 Ṭabari. He brings to light many interesting points which contribute to a better understanding of men and policies of the early ‘Abbāsid 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 saḥāba 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-Mansūr in appointing his own mawāli and ghilmān to governmental posts although the influence of the Arabs was still prevalent, the tribal policy pursued by early ‘Abbāsid caliphs in facing dangerous political situations, and the rivalry between various groups at the court in the contest for power. Finally he supplements Ṭabari’s fragmentary information on Ifriqiyya, ‘Uman and other distant provinces with brief, but unlike Tabari, coherent and intelligent accounts.

Ya‘qūbī’s essay on the caliphs entitled Mushākalah al Nās Līzamanīkīm is characterized by clear thinking and a sense of history. In this work

1 Ed. by W. Millward and trans. into Persian by Ḥusayn Khudoyjum, Teheran 1323.
he mentions what was characteristic of the caliph which was followed by the people. For the early 'Abbasid period one notices the contrast between the serious approach of al-Mansur the founder of the new state and the laxity of al-Rashid who was the first of the early 'Abbasids to spend time playing chess in the company of slave girls.

8. **Al-Futūḥ** by Abū Muḥammad Ṭḥam al-Kūfī (d.314/926 A.D.).

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.

The first volume of al-Kūfī's *Futūḥ* begins with the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān and ends with the revolt of al-Mukhtar in 66 A.H./685-6 A.D. The second volume continues the account of al-Mukhtar's revolt and ends with the suppression of Babak's revolt in the reign of al-Mu'tašīm (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 Khurasan and provides the means of controlling the accounts

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of other historians such as Tabari and Baladhuri. He ends his account of the Futuh with the emergence of the Musawwida and obviously considers the 'Abbasid revolution and the events which followed it as a new phase, for he quotes a number of authorities such as Mada'in, Baladhuri 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 Futuh.

As far as this period is concerned al-Kufi is valuable in that he provides vital data on the Arab settlement in Khurasan 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 'Abbasid da'wa are biased and must be treated with extreme caution. In Kufi's account, the reign of Abu 'l 'Abbâs 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 Khurasan
was waged in the name of Ahl al-Bayt and not of the 'Abbāsid in particular, and that it was only after the arrival of the Khurāsānīs to Kūfa that Abū '1 '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 'Alīds and state that they had a better title to the caliphate, these sentences are an obvious fabrication and bear witness to his pro-'Alīd feelings. He also differs from every other historian in asserting that Abū Muslim reached Ṣarw 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 'Abbāsid 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 Tabārī in that he is selective with regard to topic and details so that the picture he gives on the early 'Abbāsids is far from complete. This is justified as he was writing Futūḥ 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 'Alīds which we do not like to narrate". He does not enlarge on 'Alīd risings and refrains from giving details which might discredit the 'Alīds.
9. *Al-Wazara‘ wa‘l Kuttāb* by Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad b. ‘Abdūs al-Jahshiyārī (d.331 A.H. /942 A.D.). His work is important in so far as it provides an inside version of the ‘Abbāsid 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 vazīrs and other political groupings such as the Mawālī, the Arabs, the Sahāba and the Khurasānīs. Jahshiyārī clearly shows that the downfall of several vazīrs 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. ‘Ali. The book in fact is one of the bureaucratic writings as Jahshiyārī and his father before him were officials in the ‘Abbāsid administration. Thus the authorities he cites are more or less different from Tabari's and mainly consist of Kuttāb, Murūqīn and ‘Abbāsid courtiers, but include also Mada‘īnī and Jāhiz.

10. *Kitāb al-‘Uyun wa‘l ṭadā‘īn fī Aḥbār al-ḥaqīq* 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

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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-Tanbih 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 ‘Abbāsid period. In his Murūj al-dhahab, he always refers to other books of his, such as Akhbar al-Zaman and al-Kitāb al-Awqāf. 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 ‘Abbāsid da‘wa and ‘Alid–‘Abbāsid 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. Mas'ūdī also criticises the pro-'Abbāsid al-Jāhiz for his views on the most controversial subject, i.e. the Imāma.²

11. Ibn Qutayba Abū ‘Abdallah Muhammad b. Muslim (d. 276/889)³ is one of the earliest authorities on the 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid period mentioning the main political events with lists of 'Āmils appointed during the period concerned. His main source is the Mubahbar of Ibn Ḫabīb 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.⁴ The author gives a brief narrative to the early 'Abbāsid 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

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¹Murūj, VI, p.93.
²Murūj, VI, pp. 56-58.
³E.I.¹ (Ibn Qutaiba).
⁴It has been suggested that Kitāb al-Imāma... was written by Ibn al-Qutiyyya - 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-Fitan¹ (the book of dissensions) by al-Khuza'ī contains traditions ascribed to the Prophet and early Sahāba, 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 Taḥārī 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-Mauṣil 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.

of their own learned natives and not all that were written have survived. Speaking of 'Uman, 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.\(^1\)

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 Baghdad* by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *History of Isfahān* by Abū Nu‘aym al-Īṣbahānī 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-Ma‘ṣil* 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.\(^2\)

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

\(^1\)Brockelmann, *op.cit.*, Supp., III, p.1297.

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 Tabarî 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‘īnī, al-Haytham b. ‘Ady, Aḥmad b. Zuhayr, Abū Mīshar al-Sindī and Khalīfa b. Khayyāt. Although al-Azdi was not pronouncedly partisan in his Tarīkh al-Maṣūl his affection for the ‘Alids is discernible. However, he was right when he described his book as follows:

"... حاملاً عبد الله من نواب محمل مؤلف اعترض فيه على أمر الموت ماضية ولا جرارة ولا إعرال عن الهم."  

His is one of the fullest accounts on the history of Mosul and the region of the Jazīra during the early ‘Abbāsid period. He fully describes the decisive battle of al-Zāb. He gives a most pathetic and dramatic picture of the tragic massacre of Mosul perpetrated by the governor Yaḥya 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 ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī, documents written by both Abū ʿAlī ʿAbbās and al-Manṣūr conferring estates on Arab tribal chiefs in Mosul in recognition

1 Tarīkh al-Maṣūl, fols. 206, 171, 167, 158.
of services rendered in quelling Marwān's resistance and a letter from al-Mahdī to a Ḫarījīte rebel 'Abd al-Salām al-Yashkuri. Besides the work is also valuable for this study as it reveals the motivation of the early 'Abbāsid caliphs and how they made use of tribal antagonism to rule by weakening the tribal ḥilf, i.e. alliance.

Tarīkh al-Mauṣil is complementary to the sporadic information of Tabarī and Yaʿqūbī in that it provides detailed accounts on Ḫarījīte 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 'Alīd revolts in the Hijāz and Bagra, enlarging on the support given to Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, the ʿAbdānids, by religious circles. He also supplies information on circles of traditionists in Moğul 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-'Abbāsid attitude. It is, however, also possible that the author who lived in Moğul never

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1 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. 1

2. The chronicle ascribed to Dionysius of Tell Mahrē. He was the monophysite patriarch of Tell Mahrē in 816 A.D. 2 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 of the 'Abbāsid 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." 3

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

1 Ṭarīkh al-Maṣūl, fol. 121.


3 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
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 Ṭarīḵ-i Sistān and al-Narshakhī.

It is rather interesting to compare Ṭarīḵ al-Maŭṣil and the chronicle of Dionysius of Tel Mahrē. 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 Kharijītes 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-ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad was one of the best governors of the Jazīra, while Muṣa b. Muṣʿab 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 prophēsies, 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)

of the events.

Other local historians vary in importance and relevance. On Syria Ibn al-'Adîm's Zubdat al-Ḫalab fî Tārîkh Ḫalab, not limiting himself to Aleppo, deals with the local political conditions of the whole of al-Šam.\(^1\) The earliest work on the history of Egypt is Kitâb Futūḥ Mīr wa akhbâraha by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/871). He was a traditionist by profession and always quotes his sources, whether oral or written.\(^2\) Al-Kindî's (d350/961) Kitâb al-Wulāt wa 'l Quḏât covers the 'Abbasid period till almost the middle of the 4th century. The most celebrated and relevant local work on Egypt is Maqrîzî's (d. 845/1441-2) Khitat. It contains various kinds of information on governors, local revolts, the attitude of the Dhimmîs towards the new régime and a chapter on religious sects. Abû 'l Maḥāsin b. Taghrībalî's (d.874/1469) Nujūm is mainly concerned with Egypt from the Arab conquest. However like Abû Zakariya he gives information on other general political events which occurred in Ifriqiyya, Jazîra, Khurasân etc. That is why this work has been in preference to others the object of attention of scholars.\(^3\)

The best relevant works on the early Islamic history of the Yemen and Ifriqiyya are al-Khazrajî's al-Kifîya and Ibn 'Adîrî's al-Bayân al-Maghrib fî Aḥbâr al-Andalus wa'l Maghrib. The latter starts

\(^1\)Starting from al-Awzâ'î (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. Dahân's article in Historians of the Middle East, pp. 108-117; S. Dahân, Al-A'laḳ al-Khatîra. (introduction).


\(^3\)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 Tabari, Bakri, Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn Ḥazm and al-Quḍā‘ī, or on authentic narrators.⁰ On ‘Uman there is an important work entitled Kashf al-ghumma written in the 18th century by Shaykh Sirān b. Sa‘īd. This work was copied for the most part literally by another local historian called Salīl b. Razīq.² 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-Sālimī³, as well as other general chroniclers, one can obtain a clear picture of ‘Uman in the period concerned insofar as this is possible.⁴ Among the comprehensive local histories of the Ḥijāz are al-Samhūdī’s Wafā’ al-Wafā‘ and al-Azraqī’s Akhbar Makka. They are, however, informative on topography rather than history.⁵

Several local histories deal with the eastern provinces. Prominent among them are al-Qummi’s Tarikh-i Qum, 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 Ḥisfandiyār’s History of Tabaristan, the anonymous Tarikh-i Sistan and Nasrakhi’s Tarikh-i Bukhara⁶

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³ Tubfat al-A‘yan..., Cairo 1961.

⁴ On the local history of ‘Uman 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-Salīmī attempts to account for the lack of historical writings on ‘Uman:

(cont.)
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 Tabaristan under al-Mansur and al-Mahdi, the revolt of Sharik al-Mahri and al-Muqanna in Khurasan, the Kharjite rising of Hamza and his bold letter to al-Rashid. Considering that early general historians such as Tabari or Ya'qubi 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-'Abbasid 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-Jahiz, Ibn Qutabya and Abu 'l Faraj al-Ishbahani and finally the *Diwana* of celebrated early 'Abbasid poets.

(see *Tuhfat al-A'yan*, vol. I, p.4)


Ibn al-Muqaffa' Abu Muhammad 'Abdallah b. Rozbih\(^1\) (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 'Abbasids. 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 fi 'l Šabāba* and *al-Adab al-Saghīr wa al-Adab al-Kabīr*. In his *Risāla* 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 Šabāba 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-Jāḥiz Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Bahr (d. 255/868)\(^2\) is the most fertile writer of the early 'Abbasid epoch. Almost contemporary with the early 'Abbasid caliphs his works reflect the ups and downs of the 'Abbasid

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\(^2\) E.I.² (Djāḥiz).
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 Mābīta 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 Yaḥya b. Muḥammad as an act of bravery and valour. Intelligent information relevant to the political history of the ‘Abbāsid dynasty is found scattered in his books and essays.

Ibn Qutayba’s al-Shi‘r wa’l shu‘ara’, Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 296/908) Tabaqāt al-Shu‘ara‘, and Abū ’l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī’s (d. 356/966–7) Aḥānī are of great relevance to the period. The first two deal briefly with the ‘Abbāsid 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-Aḥānī. 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. He even 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 'Abbāsid state Dawlat Ahl Khurasān, An exhaustive critical study of the early 'Abbāsid 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-Jawm, Bashshār b. Durd, Di‘bil al-Khuza‘i, 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 Mufakharat between different tribes. They are also of help in tracing the development of the 'Abbāsid claim to the caliphate and of their conflict with the 'Alids.

**Genealogical and biographical works**

Apart from certain works such as Ibn Sa‘d’s *Tabaqat*, Balādhurī’s Ansāb, Ibn al-Kalbī’s works, Khalīfa b. Khayyāt’s *Tabaqat*, Kashshī’s and Najāshī’s *Rijāls*, al-Khajīb’s *Tarikh Baghdad*, Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Tarikh* Dimashq, Ibn Khalikān’s *Wafayāt* and Dhahabī’s works, the bulk of genealogical 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 Hīshām 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 saḥāba at 'Abbāsid court, or special favours such as the generous 'aja' 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-Ashrāf 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 typical headings and subheadings. 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 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī in Syria under his name. The 'Alīd risings of 145 A.H. in the Ḥijāz and Baṣra under the names of Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, the sons of 'Abdallāh al-Mahdī. Under the name of Abū 'l 'Abbās there are subheadings such as:

أرميما بن الإمام، أمر الغبي، أمر بن عمر، رضي الله عنه...
while under the caliphate of al-Mangūr there are subheadings such as:

Baladhuri quotes numerous authorities, among them al-Madā’inī, ‘Umar b. Shabba, al-Haytham b. ‘Ady, Abū Mas‘ūd al-Kufī, Hishām b. al-Kalbī, Abū ‘Ubayda and al-Waqqādī. He often quotes sources anonymously and uses sentences such as:

He uses 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

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 ‘Abbāsid 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 Tabārī such as those on the revolts of ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Azdi and Khālid b. Ibrāhīm
al-Dhuhlī in Khurasan. It is only after consulting sources such as Ansāb al-Aghrāf and Tarīkh al-Maṣūqīl that one realizes how summary and sometimes confused Tabarī's annals are.

Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb's (d. 245/859-6) Asma' al-Mughtālīn min al-Aghrāf 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-Muḥābbar. Some of the topics discussed here have a bearing on the period in question, e.g. al-'Abbās's pre-Islamic role, the names of the 'Abbāsid 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 'Alid-'Abbāsid understanding which followed the 'Abbāsid 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 Waṣiyya of Abū Ḥāshim to Muḥammad b. ʿAlī. Other valuable though

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1ed. by A. Ḥārūn, Nawādir al-Makhtūṭāt, Cairo, 1954.
scanty information on the Sahaba of the caliphs and the Qudat 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 Khorasan which proves the existence of Arab settlers in villages around Merv. 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 Khorasan might have been completely ignored by the author. Khalifa b. Khayyā's Tabaqat deals with the Sahaba of the prophet and Tabi'in 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 Tabaqat 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 Abbasid period.

Al-Khayjib al-Baghdadi's (463/1071) Tarikh Baghdad is of special importance for it contains in its first volume accounts on the foundation of Baghdad by al-Mansur. Besides Ya'qubi's Buldan and Tabari's Tarikh it is the best source on the topography of Baghdad. Hajji Khalifa¹ considers it chronologically the second work dealing with Baghdad, while Ibn al-Nadim quotes, in the Fihrist², three earlier works, the first being Fadā'il Baghdad by Yazdajard b. Mahmand of which


only a few pages are preserved; the second al-Sarakhšī's Fadā’il Baghdād wa Akhbarha, which is no longer extant; the third Tayfūr’s Tarīkh Baghdād, only a small part of which dealing with the political history is still available. However after dealing with the topography of Baghdād al-Khaflīb 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 Tanukhī. Information could be found on different personalities who played prominent rôles during the early ‘Abbāsid 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) Tarīkh dimashq, a huge work which according to al-Munajjid comprised 80 volumes. The first deals with the virtues of al-Shām 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

1 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 Baghdad*. Being a late historian, Ibn ‘Asākir uses a large variety of sources. He made use, for instance, of Mada‘īnī, Ibn Sa‘d, Jahshiyarī, Tabarī, al-Khāfīb, Bayhaqī and others. He occasionally quotes contradictory statements regarding a certain event or personality.

It contains useful though scanty information on the early ‘Abbasid period gathered from different earlier works, some of which have not been preserved. However some of his accounts on the ‘Abbasid revolution are legendary and sometimes convey the anti-‘Abbasid 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".¹ 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 Wāqit are: Mada‘īnī, Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, Ibn Qutayba, Tabarī, Ibn ‘Asākir and the Hamasa 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

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¹ *Wafayāt*, I, pp. 2f, Bulaq, 1882.
picture of the person concerned. However, he sometimes attributes information to sources such as Tabarî 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. Maqrîzî's al-Muqaffa is similar to its main source of information Ansâb al-Ashraf in that it is history arranged in a biographical framework. This is at least true of the 'Abbâsids. It contains mention of many 'Abbâsid personalities such as Abû 'l 'Abbâs, al-Maosphûr and 'Abdallah b. 'Alî. On al-Maosphûr, for example, al-Maqrîzî more or less copies or summarizes Ansâb al-Ashraf. Maqrîzî rarely adduces the entire chain of authorities but only mentions prominent ones such as Madâ'inî, al-Haytham b. 'Ady, al-Mufaddal al-Yabbî etc. He also provides sub-headings in the margin of the page.

As to the Shi'ite biographies, al-Kashshî's (d. end of the 4th C./10th A.D.) and al-Najâshî's (d. 450/1058—9), Rijâls are valuable to this study. Kashshî's Rijâl is the earliest and the best of them. It is a collection of traditions about the doctrines and personalities of the Shî'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 Imam rather than when it deals with the Imam 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-Tusi and al-Najashi, 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 'Hasanids, are mentioned in detail in historical works. Less considered by the chronicles are the 'Usaynids who adopted an acquiescent policy. As a result, for information on the 'Usaynids one has to depend mainly on Shi'ite biographies which are late and of little historical value as factual information, especially on the Imams, is buried under a mass of legendary and semi-legendary accounts. The 'Alid Imams emerge from the description given here uniformly as virtuous, bold and full of initiative. What makes matters worse is that some late Sunni writers accept these recorded Shi'ite accounts on the Imams such as Ja'far al-Sadiq unquestioningly, so that such Imams are semi-mythical rather than real persons. Abu 'l Faraj al-Igbahani's Maqatil al-Ta'libiyin wa-Akhbaruhum occupies a special place in this category. It deals with the Ta'libite "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 Igbahani was pro-'Alid (Zaydite) 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

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1 Such as Abu Nu'aym's Hilyat al-Awliya.

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.¹ 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‘arīs (d. 301/913)² *Kitāb al-Maqalāt wa‘l Firaq*, the Shi‘ite Nawbakhtī’s (d. 310/922) *Firaq al-Shi‘a*, the Sunnite al-Ash‘arīs (d. 321/933) *Ma‘alat al-Islāmiyyīn*, Molātī’s (d. 377/987-8) *Kitāb al-Tanbīh* and Baghdādī’s *al-Faqīr bayna‘l Firaq*.


²Erroneously ascribed to Nawbakhtī, the work has been recently authenticated as the work of Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari by Dr. Mashkur who points out how materially the *Kitāb al-Maqalāt*, which was composed after Nawbakhtī’s *Firaq al-Shi‘a* and relies on the latter as well as other authors, differ from Nawbakhtī’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 'Abbāsid party and its connection with the Ḥashimiyya movement and show that the Kharijites of Khurasan made, for a period of time, common cause with the 'Abbāsid da'wa. They refer to the support Muhammad and Ibrahim the Ḥasanids as well as Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb/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 'Abbāsids. 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 'Abbāsid propaganda went through before the 'Abbāsids 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-Ṣadiq. Abū Muslim’s

(cont.) Nawbalktī. 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 Nawbalktī, chains of transmission and also often refers to his sources. Many trustworthy Shi‘ite authors such as al-Kaṣḥāšī and al-Ṭusāi 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 Abu 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 Yahya; 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 Ṣubawara, i.e. discussion between the patriarch Timothy (d. 208/823 A.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 Yahya (2nd century A.D.) is one of the interesting Jewish apocalypses. As Professor B. Lewis

\[\text{See al-Mashriq, 1923, pp. 359-374, 408-418.}\]
maintains,¹ 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 ‘Abbasid upheaval and in its aftermath, especially in the reigns of the first two ‘Abbasid calibhs, such as Marwān II’s death, the violent death of Abu Muslim, the Messianic risings in Syria and the Ḥijāz against Abu’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 ‘Abbasid Egypt. Thus he relates that the new ‘Abbasid régime exempted the Coptic community of Bashmūr from taxes for the year of victory (131/132 A.H.) and gave them awards where they had given help against Marwān II,² 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.

²History 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 'Abbāsid 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 (Zandīgs). 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. Here the author expresses himself freely and attacks 'Abbāsid authorities, while he is more concise and restrained in his Arabic work. 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 Dhimmis could not but look upon the history of the Muslim state from an angle different from the Muslim authors. The main stress is put on the somewhat exaggerated


3 Ibn al-'Ibī, Mukhtāṣar Ta‘rīkh al-Duwal, ed. Salṭānī, 1890.

4 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 role played by the Armenians who occasionally informed the Muslim army of the tactics and dispositions of the Byzantine army,¹ or Bar Hebraeus who hails the Mongol invasion of the caliphate.² 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-Athîr, Ibn al-Taqqa, Ibn Khaldûn, al-Maqrizî, al-Dhahabî, Maqdisî al-Suyûtî, Ibn al-Jawzi and al-Qalqashandî depend on early sources. Their accounts on the early ‘Abbasid 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.³

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¹ Dionysius, op.cit., p.102.
² Notice the great interest he has shown in the history of the Mongols (Budge, op.cit., pp. 473 ff.)
³ To avoid lengthy references in footnotes, late sources are not quoted unless necessary.
Balʿamīs' (d. 363/972) Persian Chronicle is more or less a summary of Tabārī's Tarikh. However, he occasionally gives some comments or cites accounts which are not found in Tabārī, such as that on the revolt of 'Abd al-JABBār al-Azdī in Khorasān. Ibn al-Athīr too follows the accounts of Tabārī with certain deviations mostly disregarding the chains of authorities. Whenever he finds Tabārī'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 Qhurar al-Siyār differs little from other late works on this subject. However, the author quotes a fourth letter written in reply to al-Maṣṣūr's second letter by Muhammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zākiyya 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.

As the author himself states under 560 A.H., "As I have been long absent from Irāq, I cannot be sure of the authenticity of the news from there, so that I could write it down", the anonymous Tarikh-Idawlat '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

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2 Similar documents are not unfrequently found especially in works of late historians. See for example parts of the bulky correspondence allegedly exchanged between al-Maṣṣūr and Abū Muslim in Mukaff, fol. 94a, 'Aynī, fol. 266; Bidaya, fol. 10, p. 69, see also Traini, "La correspondenza...", A.I.U.O.N, p. l., footnote 1.
distinguish between the rôle played by Muhammad 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. It also accuses Abū Muslim of pro-Fatimid ten-
dencies, and regards this as the main reason for his execution by
al-Manṣūr. The confirmation of the suspicion that it was al-Khayzuran
and her entourage who conspired to kill al-Hādī 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. Although Ibn al-Ṭiqtqa (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-Hādī are indicative of the atmosphere of intrigue and
treachery which prevailed at the court. Ibn al-Ṭiqtqa was one of
the few historians to realize the impact of Kharijism in the early

1 Anonymous, fols. 10b, 11b, 12b, 13a.

2 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.
The Abbasid period. In his *Ibar*, though Ibn Khaldun (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-Khuza‘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 ‘Abbasid state *dawlat al-Shi‘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 ‘Abbasid state.

Al-Dhahābī Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 748/1347) should be mentioned here as a mine of information on history and biography. His *Duwal al-Islam* and *Tarikh 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-Mangūr he intended to instal an ‘Alid caliph there. The latter is more comprehensive and valuable especially as al-Dhahābī quotes some of his authorities, Al-Nuwayrī Shihāb al-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 Nahāda fī Ṭalab al-Khilāfa min al-Tālībiyīn fī Athnā‘ al-dawla al-‘Abbāsiyya*. He begins his treat-

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1 Brockelmann, *op.cit.*, Supp. 1, p. 590.
ment of the revolts with that of Muhammad Dhū 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya and continues in chronological order until the 4th century A.H. The part which concerns the early 'Abbāsid period is on fols. 1-27b. Another part speaks of the foundation of the Umayyad dynasty in Spain and the attempts of the early 'Abbāsid 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 Taabarī. 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 the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid 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 Muhammad 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-

cern the ‘Abbasid’s early period are those from 80 to 138b. Maqrizi starts the work by saying

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 ‘Abbas 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-‘Abbas wa ’l Tulūniyin wa ’l Fāṭimiyīn (208a fols.) contains a late but clear, coherent and interesting account of the ‘Abbasid 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. ‘Adī, ‘Umar b. Shabba, al-Mada’inī, Muḥammad b. Sulayman al-Nawfali and Khāliṣa b. Khayyāṭ as well as Balāḍhuri, Ṭabarī, Ṣūlí, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdāḏī and Ibn ‘Asākir. He sometimes only says تاء الاملأ or تاء الاملأ etc. He has been quoted in this thesis as he utilizes sources such as Ibn ‘Asākir, Ṣūlí and Balāḍhuri 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 Merv.\(^1\) 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 Yaʿqūbī's Kitāb al-Buldān is the most valuable because it is the oldest source.\(^2\) 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 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid coins were issued but an 'Abbāsid coin is recognizable by the Quranic verse inscribed on it

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\text{"ثلاسلاسلا نبية مدة المورة في القرن"}
\]

\(^{1}\) See below chapter 2. See also Hamd., pp. 307, 311, 317; Maqdisī, pp. 302-303; Mu'jam, p. 410.


\(^{3}\) chanīma, al-Nuqūd al-'Abbāsiyya, Sūmer, vol. 9, 1953, p. 108; R. Guest,
Information derived from coins is likely to throw new light or confirm information provided by written works. The early 'Abbasid coins preserved in various museums confirm, for example, that al-Mansūr conducted a large scale propaganda to enhance the prestige of his son and heir apparent, al-Mahdī, for his name inscribed on coins since 146 A.H.¹

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 Wāli 'Ahd al-Muslimūn, while Harūn's name is not followed by a title.² It was in 170 A.H. that Wāli 'Ahd al-Muslimūn was appended to his name,³ 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 Al-Muḥammad.⁴

¹Lane Poole, Catalogue of Oriental coins..., vol. I, p.43.
²Op.cit., p.53; see also Walker, Arab-Sassanian..., pp. 130-145.
³Lane Poole, Catalogue of Mohammadan coins..., p.4.
No names were inscribed on dinārs until the reign of al-Ḥādi, when 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-‘Abbāsī, the governor of Egypt, minted dinārs bearing his name.¹ '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 dinār 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 dinārs.²

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

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.

³Tab., III, p.535.
Chapter II

THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF
THE 'ABBÄSID 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?"

[Azdī, Tarīkh al-Mauṣil, fol. 1947]

"The Arab tribesmen of Khurasan 'were tired of the existing situation and longing for a new one to arise ... the Yamanite partisans of the 'Abbāsid da'wa called upon other Yamanites. So did the Rabī'ites and the Muṣarites. Thus the 'Abbāsid following began to increase."

[Akhbār 'l 'Abbās, fol. 119a]
Introduction:

One of the main and still current interpretations of the 'Abbasid revolution put forward by Van Vloten and Welhausen 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; Jahiz e.g. states that "The 'Abbasid state was Persian and Khurasanian that of the Marwanids Umayyads and Arab". However, the opinion that it was a renaissance of Iranian nationalism, was mainly due to the influence of racialist ideas circulating by the turn of the 19th century. An attempt at understanding better the 'Abbasid revolution and the decisive role of the Arabs in it made by Professors Gibb and Lewis was substantiated by D.C. Dennett and Dr. A. Sha'ban.

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

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5 The Arab Conquest in Central Asia, pp. 93-94; Studies on the civilization of Islam, pp. 43-44, pp. 9-10.
6 E.I.² ('Abbasids)
strife in which naturally the Arabs rather than the Marwālī played a
decisive rôle.

Dr. A. Sha‘bān explains the change from the Umayyads to the ‘Abbasids
as brought about by mainly the Arab element in Khurāsān whose inter­
pretation of Islam was broader than the limited Umayyad Arab inter­
pretation. 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".1

It seems to be the crux of the matter that the main appeal of the
‘Abbasid da‘īs in Khurāsān was made to the Arabs whether Muqatila or
settlers in the villages of Merw. There were da‘īs in the villages of
Merw, where there were Arab settlers, and in every city where Arab
garrisons were stationed. The da‘īs realized that the Arabs were the
lever of power and the only striking force in Khurāsān and that to win
them meant to win the power of government. In the early stages of its
struggle to win the Arabs the ‘Abbasid da‘wa did not favour one tribe
against another although it gained more support among the Yemenites
rather than the Mu‘jarites. However, they were always willing to accept
Mu‘jarites amongst their ranks. Though no doubt some non-Arab Muslims or
Iranian natives joined the ‘Abbasid 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 Khurāsān, including the

'Abbāsid propaganda, have been dealt with by several scholars. What remains to be done is to reconstruct and clarify the political nature of the 'Abbāsid 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 Hashim whether Taʾlibites (including 'Alids) or 'Abbāsids.

The 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsids claimed the succession to the Imamate on the ground of the Wajīyya of Abū Hashim, 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya. After the establishment of their dynasty, the 'Abbāsids claimed that they were the legitimate successors to the Prophet through his only surviving paternal uncle al-'Abbās, forgetting all their ties with the extreme Ḥashimiyya movement.

Concerning the 'Abbāsid claim to the caliphate, historical accounts


3 Fīraq, p.43; Sa‘d al-Asḥā'ī, pp. 38-40, 65f, 69; Aḥbār, fols. 74a-74b; Abū Dulāma, p.134; Bagh., p.271; E.I.2 (Hashimiyya).
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
‘Abbāsid traditions\(^1\) 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 Simāya\(^2\) 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 ‘Abbāsid in their struggle for the caliphate.\(^3\) Nor does it
seem, contrary to later traditions,\(^4\) 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 Ṭālib in the struggle for the caliphate.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) Sa‘d, IV/i, pp. 1-20; ‘Asākir, II, p.448; E.I.\(^2\) (Al-‘Abbās).
\(^2\) Ansāb, fol. 707b; Sa‘d, IV, p.10; Ḥabīb, pp. 164-165; Jamharat, vol. I,
p.57.
\(^3\) Tab. III, pp. 21ff; ‘Uyūn, vol. I, p.5.
\(^4\) Akhbār, fol. 4b-6b.
\(^5\) Sīra, II, pp. 1008f; Ya‘qūbī, I, p.138; Akhbār, fol. 9a, 12a; Rijāl,
pp. 40ff; Nīzā‘, pp. 34ff; Maq., fol. 199b; Amīlī, I, p.144.
Nevertheless 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbāṣ used to visit Mu‘āwiyah at Damascus during the latter's caliphate (41-60/661-680). Eventually he even paid homage to Yazīd I. Later fabricated 'Abbāsid 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. In any case, 'Abdallah's relations with the 'Alids especially Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya seem so have been cordial, and it is thought that if 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbāṣ had ever mentioned the rights of his family he would have stressed the rights of the Banī Ḥashim in general and not of the 'Abbāsid, particularly, as was usual in circles before and at that time. If the account in Akhba‘r al-‘Abbāṣ is authentic, even Mu‘āwiyah's efforts to instigate him to claim the leadership of the family of Ahl al-Bayt, presumably in order to sow the seeds of discord among the Hashimites, failed to reach their aim. Having rejected the claim of Ibn al-Zubayr, and declined to pay homage to him, both 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbāṣ and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya were expelled to Ta‘if. It is significant to point out, here, that although the struggle for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt

1Akhba‘r, fol. 12a, citing Muḥammad b. Ishaq, 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, p78-79, 83, 195; Bayasi, fol. 32b; Tha‘alibī, La‘a‘if, pp. 17, 21-22.

2Akhba‘r, fols. 6b, 14a, 16b, 36a-38a; see also 'Uyun, I, p.204; Ansāb, V, p.195 citing Mada‘ini.

3'Uyun, I, p.14; Akhba‘r, fol. 13a, 33a, 36a-38a, 44b;

4'Uyun, citing al-Shu‘bī, I, pp. 5-6; Akhba‘r, fols. 16b, 17b-18a, 30a ff.

5Akhba‘r, fol. 13a, citing Muḥammad Ishaq; Sa‘d, V, pp. 73ff.

6Akhba‘r, fols. 43bff, 36a, 49b, 60a; Ansāb, IV B, fols. 28, 59; Ibn
in its early stages after the death of the Prophet was represented by Fāṭimid ‘Alids, all branches of Banī Ḥashim 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, a son of ‘Alī by Khawla al-Ḥanafiyya and, later, ‘Abdallāh b. Muṣṭawiyya b. ‘Abdallāh the Ja‘farite’s rising in Iraq 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. ‘Abdallāh b. al-‘Abbās who was the first ‘Abbāsid 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 Hijāz who used to call him al-Sajjād, i.e. "the one who prostrates himself", and Dhu ’l-Nafathāt, i.e. "the one with callouses which he had developed due to an excessive amount of daily prayers". However, ‘Alī’s relations with the Umayyad ‘Abd ’l Malik b. Marwān (685–705) seem to be cordial.

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

2 Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 269; Sa’d, V, p.242; Tab., II, p.1879; Maqātil, fol. 118 ff.

3 Akhbar, fol. 64b; Ansāb, fol. 740; Hilya, vol. 3, p.207.

presumably because the latter tried to avoid any clash with ‘Ali 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). He was flogged twice, once because of his marriage to Lubāba bint ‘Abdallāh 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 preserved in Akhbar ‘l-‘Abbās and other sources speak of the hostility between al-Walīd and ‘Alī the ‘Abbāsid. 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 Salīh b. ‘Abdallāh b. al-‘Abbās and after imprisoning him for a while he was ordered to leave Damascus for the province of Shurāt. ‘Alī settled in Ḫumayma on the route between Damascus and the Ḥijāz and owned a small farm of 500 trees.

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2 Akhbār, fol. 65b citing Buzayr; Ansāb, fol. 745b, citing Abu Ma‘ṣūd al-Ḵūfī.

3 Ibid; Ansāb, fol. 744a citing ‘Abbās b. Ḥishām; Akhbār, fol. 66b; Jamharat, p. 17.

4 Akhbār, fol. 69a; cf. Ansāb, fol. 744b, 745 a, citing Ḥishām b. ‘Ammār and Haytham b. ‘Adī respectively.
After 'A'li's death in 118 A.H./736 A.D.1 at Ḫumayma his son Muḥammad emerged as a prominent figure among the 'Abbāsids. Muḥammad's relation with the 'Alid Abū Ḥashim b. Muḥammad b. 'A'li, were very friendly and intimate.2 It has been said that he also maintained cordial relations with 'Abdallah b. al-Ŷassan,3 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 Ḥashim broke apart, as several prominent members of them evidently each hoped eventually to hold the caliphate.

Muḥammad b. 'A'li the 'Abbāsid was a student of Abū Ḥashim 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad under whom he studied religious knowledge, attending to his needs in Damascus where Abū Ḥashim used to live under the watchful eye of the Umayyads.4 These contacts and cordiality continued between them as Muḥammad used to visit Abū Ḥashim occasionally on his way to join the Ṣa'īfa expedition against the Byzantines.5 This cordial relation between the 'Abbāsids and other non-Ṣaḥḥīd branch of the 'Alids is understandable as both their claims were rejected by the Ṣaḥḥīd 'Alids (Ḫussaynids and Ŷasanids).6 This, in fact, explains why the 'Abbāsids warned their partisans not to join the rising of Zayd b. 'A'li the Ḫussaynid

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1Ānṣāb, fol. 746a, citing Wadīqī; another version puts it in 117 A.H. Akhbar, fol. 72a, citing Abū Ma'shar.
2Akhbar, fols. 78b citing Ṣa'īb b. 'A'li, 87a; Dhahabi, Tarīkh, IV, p.21.
3Akhbar, fol. 73b citing Ahmad b. Jabīr.
5Op.cit., fol. 79a, citing Ṣa'īb b. 'A'li.
6See for example Akhbar, fol. 79a; Firaq, p.48.
or his son Yahya, while many Abbasid personalities joined Abdallah b. Mu‘awiyya the Ja‘farite even though with ulterior motives. However, Muhammad was more active than his father. His activities did not escape the shrewd eyes of caliph Hisham b. ‘Abd al-Malik. Many Umayyad Hawali wore, presumably, sent to bother him and keep a close watch on him at Humayma. Hisham 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-‘Arithiya". On one occasion he attacked him saying that "Bani Hashim have turned the Prophet into a market selling false traditions ascribed to him". Ultimately Muhammad was imprisoned in Damascus on the charge of appropriating 100,000 dirhams, but his shi'a headed by Abu Musa al-Sarraj managed to pay the sum and eventually liberated him. Whether authentic or not, these traditions indicate the threat on the part of Muhammad and his sons anticipated by the Umayyads which led to his imprisonment. But al-Abrash al-Kalbi advised Hisham to free him to prevent his acquiring publicity and to avoid the development of hero-worship.

1Ansab, fol. 748b citing Abu Hafsh al-Shami, fol. 750b; Akhbar, fol. 73b–74a, Ahmad b. Yahya b. Jabir (al-Baladhuri).
2Ansab, fol. 751a citing Sulayman b. al-Hajjaj, fol. 749a citing Zuhayr b. al-Musayab; Akhbar, fol. 82a, citing Sa‘id al-Barzi and al-Abrash.
3Ansab, fol. 72a.
It was, therefore, around Muhammad b. 'Ali b. 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās that the nucleus of the pro-'Abbāsid revolutionary movement formed. Ostensibly the cordial contacts between Muhammad the 'Abbāsid and Abu Ḥashim the leader of the Ḥashimiyya sect continued,¹ and Abu Ḥashim nominated on his death Muhammad as his legatee.²

Modern historians differ on the testament of Abu Ḥashim to Muhammad b. 'Ali. Van Vloten, Professor Lewis and Professor Moscati accept it as authentic,³ while Welhausen regards it as "probably fictitious".⁴ C. Cahen⁵ does not commit himself and remarks "The question of the reality of the testament of Abu Ḥashim in favour of Muhammad b. 'Ali 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 Shi'a of Abu Ḥashim carried their allegiance to Muhammad and that the latter behaved as their Imam".

As for early sources, many differently phrased and therefore presumably independent accounts agree in confirming that Abu Ḥashim made Muhammad his legatee on his deathbed. According to Baladhuri's⁶ Ansāb, Abū Ḥashim,

¹Akhbār, fol. 87a.
²Among some revolutionary 'Alid sects succession by tafwīd or appointment was permitted... see B. Lewis, the Origins, p.48; Durri, "Da'Ja' Jadid", B.C.A., pp. 68-69.
⁴Welhausen, op.cit., p.503.
⁵C. Cahen, op.cit., p.311.
⁶Ansāb, fol. 746b.
realizing that he was poisoned on his way to the Hijaz, turned to Muhammad at Hunayma and made him his legatee, gave him his books and introduced him to a number of his shi'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 of Akhbar 'l-' Abbas in one of his accounts on the testament dates the nomination much earlier than the death of Abu Hashim. He states that while Muhammad b. Ali was taking knowledge from Abu Hashim their relations grew intimate and Abu Hashim asked his partisans to follow Muhammad after his death. At any rate this event is mentioned by different chroniclers and heresiographers. Some of these accounts do not stop at the testament itself but carry on relating the recommendation made by Abu Hashim to Muhammad. They are so detailed and anticipatory on the future of the 'Abbāsid movement that it is obvious that they are later fabrications or elaborations of the original texts, especially as the version of Baladhuri, Iṣbahānī, Tabarī and Ibn Qutayba 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. during the reign of Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Malik, Abu

1Akhbar, fol. 78b, citing 'Isa b. 'Ali.

2Ansāb, fols. 686a, citing Qays b. al-Rabī, 786 citing Mādā'īnī, 787a citing Haytham b. 'Adī, 787 citing Abu Nas'ud; Tab., II, pp. 24, 2500; Akhbar, fols. 75a citing 'Isa b. 'Ali, 75b, citing Muhammad b. al-Khattāb; Nubūn, fols. 246a, 248b.


(cont.)
Hashim was just released from prison in Damascus, after having been jailed on an accusation of political activities on the part of Zayd b. al-Hasan with whom he had quarreled about the sadaqa of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. On his way back to the Hijaz he either fell ill or was poisoned by Sulayman's orders because of his great influence and prestige. Abu Hashim stopped at al-Humayma and was nursed by Muhammad b. 'Ali. Before dying he nominated Muhammad 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 Muhammad the 'Abbásid. The author of the Kitab al-'Uyun wa 'l-Hadā'iq adds that "When Abu Hashim gave up his rights to the 'Abbásids, he told them about his missionaries, their signs of recognition and gave them his seal. He finally asked his partisans to accept the 'Abbásid leadership which they eventually did."

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5 Ansāb, fol. 787b citing Haytham b. 'Adā; Magātil, p.91 citing Mada'ini; Tab., III, p.24; cf. Imama, 2, pp. 208-209, citing Haytham b. 'Adā; Sa'd, V, p.241.


7 Some accounts put it in al-Walid's reign (Akhbār, fols. 85a, 79a,79b).

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1 Akhbar, fol. 79aff citing Ishaq b. al-Fadl al-Hashimi; 'Asakir, 5,p.460 citing Abu Mi'shar.

2 Ansāb, fol. 686a, Qays b. al-Rabi'; Akhbar, fol. 75b citing Muhammad b. al-Khattab, fol. 84a; Mubdha, fol. 243b; Wafayat, citing Ibn Qatayba, vol. I, p.575.

3 Ansāb, fols. 746b, 786b, 787a, 787b, citing Mada'ini and Haytham b. 'Adā; cf. Akhbar, fol. 86b ff.

De Goeje suspects the alleged poisoning of Abu Hashim by the Umayyads as too artificial to be believed. Z.D.M.G., 1881, p.394. However, his allegation that the 'Abbásid should have poisoned him has no evidence to substantiate it; cf. Moscati, "Il testament di Abu 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-Saḥīfa Al-Safrā’. It contained information on the uprising of the black flags of Khurasan, its signs and time and certain sections of the Arabs who would support it. Whether the accounts about this Saḥīfa 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 Ḥāshim who entrusted him with his books, signs and partisans some of whom witnessed the event. Muḥammad became, thus, the leader of the Ḥashimiyya. Historically that time marked the beginning of his active political propaganda.

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

It seems as though Abū Ḥāshim’s partisans were mainly concentrated in Kuṭa. Abū Ḥāshim advised Muḥammad to direct his attention to Khurasan.

(cont.)

1 Akhba‘r, fol. 84b citing Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasayn; Nubūḥa, fol. 246a-246b.
2 Inmāma, 2, pp. 208-9, citing Haytham b. ‘Adī; Sa‘d, V, p.241; Akhba‘r, fol. 84a, Faqīl b. Salīm.
4 Akhba‘r, fols. 82a ff citing al-Abrash, fol. 84a, citing al-Faql b. Salīm, fol. 85a citing Abdallah b. ‘Umayr. Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd states that in addition to Muhammad b. ‘Alī there was Muhammad b. ‘Abdallah the Ja‘farite at the deathbed of Abū Ḥāshim. This accounts for the latter’s claim of Abū Ḥāshim’s wasiyya. But there is no evidence to substantiate this claim. Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha, II, pp. 211-13 – compare Nubūḥa, fols. 246a-248b.
as well as Kūfa.\(^1\) The Kūfite phase of the 'Abbāsid movement which had been initiated in the name of \(\text{al-Riḍa min 'āl al-Bayt}\)^{2} 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 Ḥarithite tribe, who had family connections with Muḥammad b. 'Alī, and its Hawai.\(^3\)

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,\(^4\) the movement attracted some Arabs from the tribe of Hamdān.\(^5\) 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."\(^6\) Moreover the people of Kūfa were exhausted by the wars with the Umayyads. They are related to have said to the Jaʾfārīte rebel 'Abdullāh b. Muʿāwiya "There is nothing left of us, our majority was

\(^1\) Van Vloten, op.cit.; Welhausen, op.cit., p.492 ff; E.I.\(^2\) ('Abbāsids), (Hashimiyya).

\(^2\) Ansāb, fol. 768a; cf. Tab., II, pp. 1358, 1938.

\(^3\) Ansāb, fol. 747b, citing Ḥaytham b. 'Adī.


\(^5\) Alkhaibār, fol. 88a citing Muḥammad b. Ṣālim.

\(^6\) Alkhaibār, fol. 113b; cf. fol. 89a, citing Muḥammad b. Ṣālim.
perished fighting for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt."¹ As a result the 'Abbasid partisans in Kūfa were not more than thirty.² Muhammad, therefore, decided on Khurasan which had been suggested to him by his chief da'ī Abu Ḥassim Bukayr b. Māhān.³ A tradition transmitted by many chroniclers and geographers is, though differently phrased, fundamentally the same. This tradition is ascribed to Muhammad b. 'Ali and shows why he preferred Khurasan to other regions of the empire. In its most coherent and reliable form,⁴ it runs as follows:

"The people of Kūfa are followers of 'Ali and his descendants, those of Bagra are 'Uthmanites, 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 Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Hold on to Khurasan. 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 Muhammad's statement. As for Egypt⁵

(continues)

²Maqātil, fols. 89b, 91a.
³On cit., fol. 92a-93b.
⁴Hamad., p.315; cf. Ma’nāqib, p.9; 'Uyun, I, p.204; Ansāb, fols. 747a-747b citing Ḥaytham b. Ḥadi; Muntakhab, fol. 80b; Rawd, 6, p.57; compare a similar statement attributed to al-Aṣma‘ī the grammarian (122-216/740-831) in Wafayat, English trans. II, pp. 123-127.
⁵On 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 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. 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 Hujātīla who strongly expressed their resentment against Umayyad policies and were potentially dangerous as they were hardened by the Jihad in Transoxonia. According to Akhbar '1 'Abbasī the Arabs of Khurasān were "the skull of the Arabs and the knights among them, i.e. Fī Khurasān Jumjumat al-'Arab wa fursānuha".

In its early phase in Khurasān (103 or 104-128/721-722-745), the 'Abbāsid 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.  

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1 Tab., I, p.2815; Van Vloten, op.cit., App. III; Cahen, op.cit., p.320.
2 Akhbar, fols. 62a-62b, 65b; Dīna, pp. 245-6.
3 Akhbar, fol. 190b.
The 'Abbasid character of the movement was clear to the inner circles of the da'is who had the strict order "Not to call for a rising until they were permitted to do so," and they were also warned not to join any 'Alid rising. Those early 'Abbasid partisans were, therefore, called the Kafiyya or Ahl al-Kaf, 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 Khwarṣan and Saqādim of Merv such as Ziyād al-Azdī, Khidhān al-Kindī and Yumza al-Bāhilī. When the Khuzā‘ite Sulaymān b. Kathīr was won over he opened his house as a meeting centre for the propagandists. Sulaymān also played a decisive role in winning over many active figures especially from his own tribe Khuzā‘a such as Mālik b. al-Haytham, 'Amr b. A‘yan, Ziyād b. Šālik and Khalid b. Ibrahim.

The first da'is in Khwarṣan 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 thanks to its efficient internal organisation. Twelve Naqībs were selected to form a committee with headquarters in Merv. Its head was Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuza‘ī, i.e.

1 Akhbar, fols. 95b, 96a-96b, fols. 128b-130a.
4 Tab., II, 1957 citing Abū al-Khattāb.
5 Akhbar, fols. 94a-94b, 101a; Tab., II, 1954 citing Abū al-Khattāb.
6 Tab., II, p.1586; Welhausen, op.cit., pp.510, 514.
7 Ma‘d, fol. 64a; Ansāb, fol. 770b, citing Abū Mas‘ūd al-Kūfī; Akhbar, fol. 106a; Jamhārat, p.231.
Al-qa'im bī'amr Khurasān, who was to take his orders from the chief da'i 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 Merv. There was an absolute equality among the Naqībs. 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 Ţabārī the proportion of the Arabs to the Mawālī is 8:4 while the proportion in another list preserved in Akhbar 'l-'Abbās is 7:5. Ibn 〒Abīb maintains that there were only two Mawālī among the twelve 'Abbāsid Naqībs while, according to 〒Abīz and 〒Azī, all the twelve Naqībs were Arab Yamanites. 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, Ţabārī has preserved a list of the names of the

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1 Akhbar, fols. 101a, 102b.
2 Tab., III', p.1358.
3 Akhbar, fol. 102b; Nabdha, fols. 253a-254a.
4 〒Abīb, p.465; Manaqib, p.12; 〒Azī, fol. 194.
Naqībs which seems to be the most coherent one. It contains the following names:

from the tribe of Khuzā'ā
1) Sulaymān b. Kathīr
2) Mālik b. al-Haytham
3) Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ
4) Tālḥa b. Ruzayq

from Tamīm
5) Mūsa b. Ka'ab
6) 'Īsā b. Ka'ab
7) Lāḥiz b. Qurayz
8) Al-Qāsim b. Mujāshi'

from Tāyy
9) Qahtaba b. Shabīb

from Shaybān
10) Khalīd b. Ibrahim

from Bajīla
11) Aslam b. Sallām

Anwla of Bani Ḥanifa
12) Shībl b. Ṭahmān

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

¹Tabarî does not identify him, but in Akhbar 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.

²He is identified as a Rabī'ite by Baladhūrī (fol. 769a) and Ibn Ḥabīb (Ḥabīb, p.465). If this is true then all the Naqībs were Arabs.

³Akhbar, fol. 103a; Tabarî II, p.1987; compare Akhbar, fol. 104a where he states that the twelve Naqībs were not included in the seventy da'īs.

⁴Akhbar, 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 Jadi, Al- Karmānī,1 the Tamimates al- Faql b. Sulaymān al- Taṣī,2 and Khazim b. Khuzayma al- Merwūsī,3 and 'Amir b. 'Umayr al- Samarqandi,4 and many
Arabs adopted Persian names such as al- Haytham b. Mu‘awiya al- 'Athī
Umar b. Ḫafīf al- Muhallabī who were called Hazārmand,5 and vice versa.
Many da‘īs were also selected to propagate the cause in parts other
than Merw. In Nasa the da‘īs were all Arabs.6 They were Asid b.
Ḫakīn al- ‘Akkī, al- Ḥarīṣ b. Sulaymān, Ghīlān b. ‘Abdallah al-
Khuzā‘ī and Ḫaqīn b. Ghawzān al- ‘Abdī. In Abīward these seven da‘īs
were also Arabs.7 They were ‘Uthmān b. Nuhayk and ‘Īsā b. Nuhayk the
the Azdite and his brother Yazīd, al- Haytham b. Mu‘awiya al- ‘Akkī and
Zuhayr b. Muhammad al- ‘Azdí. Other da‘īs were sent to Balkh, Merw

1Tab., II, p.1858 citing Mada‘ī‘īnā.
2Tab., II, pp. 1422, 1522; Dīna, p.362.
3Tab., II, p.1959.
4Ansāb, fol. 781a; Akhbār, fol. 155a.
5Ma‘d, fol. 64b; Futūḥ, vol. I, p.275; ‘Aṣim b. ‘Umayr was also called
6Akhbār, fol. 103b.
7Ibid.
al-Rūdhab, Amul and Khawārizm. These lists indicate the importance of
the Arabs in the revolutionary movement, and also show in which districts
the 'Abbāsid 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 Khurāsān.

Furthermore the central committee of twelve Naqības at Merw decided
to choose twelve more members, called Nuğarā' al-Nuqaba* to substitute
for any of the twelve Naqības should any of them withdraw or be dismissed
or killed. Some of these nuğarā were counted among the seventy da'īs
such as 'Asīd al-Khūzā'ī, 'Isā b. Māhān and 'Uthmān b. Nuḥayk, but
others were not. The da'īs were responsible for their own districts
and they had the right to appoint 'Umāna* i.e. trustees or confidants. 2

Sulaymān al-Khūzā'ī, Qaḥṭaba al-Ta'ī, Lāhīz al-Tāmīmī and Mālik
al-Khūzā'ī, the prominent 'Abbāsid da'ī, 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 'Abbāsid partisans. 3 Although the
financial subscription to the Imam was not an 'Abbāsid innovation, 4
nevertheless it was one of the interesting features of the 'Abbāsid
movement. It is also noteworthy that in earlier days of the da'wa
certain wealthy Mawāli of Kūfa such as Bakīr b. Māhān, Abū Nūsa 'l-Sarrāj
1Akhbār, fol. 103b.
2Ibid., fols. 101b-102a.
3Tab., II, pp. 1953, 1962, 1916; Akhbar, fols. 106a, 125a; Imāma, p.217;
4Imāma, 2, p.207 citing Haytham b. 'Adī.
and then Abu Salama al-Khallal were won over. However, the partisans used to subscribe a fifth of their property to the 'Abbāsid cause, as Bakīr b. Māhan puts it "The Imam is in need of money in order to uphold the right and destroy the evil".

When Muḥammad b. 'Alī died in 125/742-3 he nominated his son Ibrāhīm as his legatee. A new active and militant phase of the movement started with Ibrāhīm the Imam. When the missionaries headed by Sulaymān al-Khuza‘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 (Yaḥyā) wandering in the country, and you are all afraid. The days of the evil house (Ahl Bayt al-Su‘) the Umayyads have lasted too long." 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-Khuga‘ī through the chief da‘ī in Kūfa, Abu Salama al-Khallal. He is also credited with the choice of black as the 'Abbāsid colour as distinct from others.

1Tab., XI, p.1917.

2Akhbar, fol. 106a; see further fols 113a f, 125a, 129a; Tab. II, pp. 1769, 1809; Dennett, op.cit., p.282.


4Akhbar, fol. 115a.

5Akhbar, fol. 118a; Murūj, VI, p.60; Diya., p.359; On the Umayyad attitude and comments towards the Sawād, see Ibn ‘Asakir cited in Bīdāya, 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 'Ali as well as the die cast by 'Abd al-Mufj'alib in his dispute with Quraysh had been black. Many traditions were ascribed to the Prophet and 'Abdallah b. al-'Abbās the 'Abbāsid ancestor to justify this choice. 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. The association of black with mourning for Ahl al-Bayt 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. The 'Abbāsid partisans therefore bore the name al-Musawwida and the new régime was dawlat al-Musawwida. Ultimately it was Ibrahim who sent in 128/743 Abu Muslim 'Abd al-Rāğmān b. Muslim to Khurasān to be his personal representative in leading the revolt.

Abū Muslim the famous 'Abbāsid partisan, and one of the chief architects of the 'Abbāsid 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

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1 Akhbar, fols. 117a ff; 118a citing 'Amr. b. Shabib; Abū Yusuf, al-Kharaj, p.119.
2 Pitān, 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 'Abbāsid innovation. Apart from the Prophet's banners, al-Jarīth al-Murju'i and the Kharijites had raised it in their revolts against the Umayyads. (Tab. II, pp. 1624, 1570, 1581; Ach., vol. 20, p.112).
3 Ansāb, fol. 683a; Maqātil, p.137; Akhbar, fols. 109b f.
4 Tab. II, p.1574; Akhbar, fols. 117a-118a; see also Jaḥīz, Rasa'il, ed.1964.
"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\(^1\) 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\(^2\) 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,\(^3\) and others as a slave.\(^4\) 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

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\(^1\)Gibb, *Arab conquest...*, p.94.


\(^3\)Welhausen, *op.cit.*, p.506; Lewis, *E.I.*\(^2\) ('Abbāsids); Dūrī, *op.cit.*, p.27.

\(^4\)Moscati, *E.I.*\(^2\) (Abū Muslim); Dennett, *op.cit.*, p.227.
Al-Muhammed and I am right in my cause." Afterwards, however, he is said to have claimed to be the son of Šalī b. 'Abdallah b. al-Abbās in order to establish a connection with the 'Abbāsids.  

Numerous contradictory details concerning this dubious origin are related by several chroniclers and biographers. Baladhurī describes him once as a Mawla of Bani 'îj from Iṣbahān, 3 or "a Mawla of a man from Herāt or Bushanj", 4 or a slave 5 of the 'Ijlites bought by Ibrāhim the Imam for 700 dirhams. Tabari is rather vague on that, and transmits only scanty data. He describes him either as a mawla or an agent Qahramān of 'Isā b. 'îjl originally from the village of Khuṭarniyya off Kūfah, 6 or as a slave of 'Isā al-'îjlī. 7 Ya‘qūbī remarks that "Abū Muslim was in the service of 'Isā b. Ma‘qīl", 8 while Ibn Qutayba states that Abū Muslim was "Laqīt" i.e. waif. 9 According to Dīnāwārī when the

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3Ansāb, fol. 770b, citing Abū Mas‘ūd al-Kūfī, fol. 771a citing Hishām Ibn al-Kalbī.
6Tab. II, pp. 1960, 1726; see also Kurāj, VI, p.59.
7Tab., citing Mādā‘inī, II, pp. 1726, 1769.
8Ya‘qūbī, II, p.392.
9‘Uyun, 3, p.106.
'Abbasid propagandists met Abū Muslim at Kūfa he replied to their inquiry "My mother was a slave girl of 'Umayr b. Ḍayyân al-'Ijli who sold her before I was born to 'Isa b. Ma'qil al-'Ijli. I was, therefore, born in the latter's house and I am a kind of Ṯamlûk to him."¹ The anonymous author of Akhbar 'l-'Abbas² gives the most detailed and contradictory accounts of the origin of Abū Muslim, according to whom he was a mawla, or a ḥulām, 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 Khurasan after "instigating the slaves of Khurasan to murder their masters".³

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 Iṣbahān⁴ as the son of a Persian mawla named Khatkān and a slave girl called Washīka.⁵ His father found himself in a difficult financial situation and had to sell the slave girl to 'Isa al-'Ijli 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.⁶

¹Dīna, p.338.
²Akhbar, fols. 121 citing Abū al-Khattāb, fols. 121b, 123a citing Sabiq Mawla Ma'qil, fols. 126b, 126a citing 'Amr b. Shabib, 126b citing Ibrāhīm b. Hishām.
³'Asākir, 2, p. 291 citing Hishām b. Muḥammad.
⁵Akhbar, fols. 121b, 123a; Wafayāt, vol. I, p.352.
⁶Akhbar, fols. 121b, 127b; Dīna, p.338; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.392; Wafayāt, English trans., vol. 2, p.100. - 'Ijl is a north Arabian tribe and an important tribe of Bakr b. Ṭaʿil. It is significant to note that before the (cont.)
Ibrahim was brought up and educated with the sons of the 'Ijlites. Early in youth, Abu Ishak Ibrahim served 'Isa and Idris the 'Ijlites collecting the dues of their farms in Isbahan and Kufa. He also used to accompany 'Isa al-'Ijli to Kufa where he became acquainted with extreme Shi'ite ideas, and sympathized with Ahl al-Bayt. He even joined the rising of al-Mughira b. Sa'id al-'Ijli in 119 A.H./737 at Kufa, but seemed to have managed to escape when the opportunity presented itself. Then he associated himself with Abu Musa al-Sarraj, a prominent agitator for the cause of Ahl al-Bayt who taught him saddle-making and Shi'ite ideas.

It was when some 'Ijlites were imprisoned in Kufa either on suspicion of 'Abbasid activities, as was the case with 'Asim b. Yunus al-'Ijli, or on a charge of disagreeing with the governor on matters of revenue, as was the case with 'Isa and Idris the 'Ijlites, that Abu Muslim learned, for the first time, of the 'Abbasid revolutionary movement. While passing through Kufa to the Hijaz to visit Ibrahim the Imam, 'Abbasid propagandists visited the imprisoned 'Ijlites and saw Abu Muslim serving them. They won him for their cause and took him to Ibrahim after requesting Abu Musa al-Sarraj to dispense with his services. Ibrahim took a liking to him, changed his name to 'Abd al-Rahman b. Muslim and gave him the appearance of Abu Muslim among the 'Ijlites of Kufa, Abu Manqur, Mughira b. Sa'id, both extremist pro-'Alid partisans, were also described as 'Ijlites, E.I.1 ('Idjl); E.I.2 (Bayan b. Sam'An); Goldziher, op.cit., I, pp. 48, 103. See below, chapter IV.

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1 Akhbar, fol. 123b, citing Sabiq Maula Ma'qil.
3 Akhbar, fol. 121b, 122a; Nubdha, fol. 259b.
kunya of Abu Muslim. He remained in his service and used to be dispatched with secret messages to Kufa and Khurasan until 128/745 when he was sent to Khurasan to lead the rising. Abu Muslim was, therefore, a Persian Mawla who spent his youth mostly at Kufa before he was entrusted with the mission in Khurasan.

When the 'Abbasid Naqibs saw that, after about a quarter of a century of an active and unfailing propaganda, the situation in Khurasan had come to a head, Sulayman b. Kathir al-Khuza'i and other chief propagandists urged Ibrahim the Imam to send a man of his own house to represent him in Khurasan. Having failed to persuade Sulayman al-Khuza'i, Qahaba al-Ta'i and Ibrahim b. Salama, Ibrahim the Imam decided to send Abu Muslim. He named him as "One of the family of the prophet", i.e. Anta Minna Ahl al-Bayt and gave him the daughter of the propagandist Abu al-Najim Amran b. Isma'il, a mawla of the same social status as Abu Muslim, in marriage. Abu Muslim, however, had visited Khurasan several times before, once with Abu Salama al-Khallal.

(cont.)


6 Akhbar, fol. 122a; Ya'qub, II, p.393.

1 Ma'arif, p.370; Imamia, 2, p. 217; Ya'qub, II, pp. 392, 398; Akhbar, fols. 121br., 129b; Nubdha, fol. 280a; Tab., II, p.197. For the significance of giving a kunya to a Mawla, see Goldziher, Muh. Stud., vol. I, p.267; E.I.2 ('Abbasids).


3 The allegations that he was a Turk (cf. Spuler, op.cit., p.229) or a Kurd (Akhbar, fol. 122b; F.H.A., p.183; Wafayat, English trans., vol. 2, p.108; Ya'qub, fol. 81b) or Khurasani by origin (Ansab, Paris, 771a; Akhbar, fol. 122b) have no evidence to substantiate them. However, it is interesting to note that the Turkish origin of Abu 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 Kūfā and to obey the orders of Sulaymān al-Khuza‘ī in Khurasān.

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-Raḥmān 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 fulfill this matter [Abbasid cause] except through them. Behold the Rabi’ites and blame them. Behold the Mu‘tarrītes, 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. Khathir al-Khuza‘ī and consult him if you are in trouble."  

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 Baladhuri or in Akhbar ‘l-Abbās. Later historians do not

(continuation)

5 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-Fārāsī, a Persian from Ḫubābān 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 (continuation)
count in this matter as they rely on earlier accounts. However, it is significant to note that Dinawari\(^1\) and the author of the Kitāb 'l-
Uyun wa'l-Hadā'id\(^2\) 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" va'aqtul man shakakta fī 'Amrihī. Light on the matter is thrown by Akhbar 'l-‘Abbas 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 Mūdarites who are good and to warn the majority of them not to follow the Umayyads and to gather the ‘Ajam around me".\(^3\) On another occasion Abū Muslim reminded Sulaymān al-Khuza‘ī of the Imam’s orders to associate with the Yamanites,\(^4\)

(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 Mawla. When Ibrāhīm decided to send his Mawla Abū Muslim to Khurasan, he conferred the title on him in a tactical move intended to invest Abū Muslim, in the eyes of the Khurasanis, 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; Sifat al-Safwah, vol. I, p. 219; L. Massignon, Salman pak ..., pp. 16–19. (Arabic translation by A. Badawi in Shakhsiyyat qalīqa fī 'l Islam, Cairo 1946. See also below p.270).

\(^6\) Tab., III, pp. 24–25, 1949, citing Mawla; Akhbar, fol. 128b, 129b.

\(^1\) Tab., III, p.1937; Akhbar, fol. 130a; F.H.A., p.183.

\(^2\) Tab., II, p.1937; Imamah, 2, p.213; Nizā‘, pp. 50–51.

\(^3\) Dīna, p.352.


\(^3\) Akhbar, fol. 138b; Nubdha, fol. 260a.

\(^4\) Akhbar, fol. 139a.
and, furthermore, in his letter to 'Ali b. al-Karmānī the leader of the Yamanites in Khurāsān he says: "... my master ʿĪbrahīm the Imām has ordered me to depend on you". It is interesting to add that according to Ibn ʿAsākir, ʿĪbrahīm ordered ʿAbū Muslim "to remove every big tree on his way" and he adds "what he meant was to kill every rival man of high esteem".

ʾĪbrahīm'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 ʿAbbāsid movement. 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 ʾĪbrahīm the Imām and the daʿīs from the rest of the instructions. 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 ʾĪbrahīm the Imām as if it were a justification of the murder. Furthermore the internal criticism of the alleged version of ʾĪbrahīm's instructions reveals numerous contradictions. How is it possible that ʾĪbrahīm, who has realized the importance of the Arab Yamanites and Rabīʿītes as a decisive

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1 Op. cit., fol. 148a; see also Muntakhab, fol. 88b.
2 '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.36).
3 Van Vloten, De opkomst der Abbāsiden, 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 'Abbāsid rule (op. cit., p.41). But E. L. Petersen and Ch. Pellat have proved that the pro-Umayyad traditions were still alive under the 'Abbāsid rule. (See ʿAlī and Muʿawiyya, part II, p.109ff; Pellat, Jāḥiz..., pp. 191ff, 202.
4 Imāma, 2, p.218. (cont.)
factor in the victory of the 'Abbasids, still orders Abū Muslim to kill all the Arabs in Khurāsān. In fact Abū Muslim's behaviour is not compatible with the alleged instructions, as he even accepted Muḍarites together with other Arab factions in his ranks.

It was very difficult for the Arab Sulaymān b. Kathūr 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." The reason behind Sulaymān's refusal to accept Abū Muslim readily, apart from his relative youth 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.)


1Akhbār, fols. 139a, 141a, 150a.


Prophet" i.e. of an 'Abbāsid descent for instance, to represent him in Khurasan as he thought that this would be necessary to ensure the success of the movement in Khurasan. The destiny of Abū Muslim was at stake for a while until he found support in another Arab propagandist namely Abū Dā'ud Khālid b. Ibrāhīm who backed Abū Muslim's appointment as it was by the orders of the Imam. Khālid 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 Khālid 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 Imam ordering Abū Muslim to obey him, and he added "Do not suspect me for I am more obedient to you than your right hand."2

It was not possible for the 'Abbāsid dā'īs to act until tribal conflict between the Yamanites and Rabi'ites on the one hand, and Ma'ārītes on the other hand, reached its climax. Baladhuri followed by Tabari state that Abū Muslim could only act after the 'Agabiyya flared up in Khurasan.3 The situation in Khurasan as in other provinces of the empire was affected by the tribal factional policy of the Umayyad

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2 Akhbar, fol. 131a-131b; Nubdha, p.263a.

3 Ansāb, fol. 773b, citing Haytham b. 'Adī; Tab., II, p.1949.
Caliph Hishām was hoping to find a remedy for the serious situation there. Although Nagr b. Sayyār belonged to the small tribe of Kīnāna in Khurasān, he in fact had a large tribal following. However, the real trouble started when Nagr 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. In order to defend his position Nagr had to preserve cordial relations with all tribal chieftains of the province. Although he won many Yamanites over and appointed them in administrative posts, the chiefs of the ‘Azd Jādī b. ‘Alī al-Karmānī defied his authority. Nagr and Jādī al-Karmānī were men of different pursuits. They had both considerable influence on the politics of Khurasān. However, later on Nagr 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. In July 744 Nagr succeeded in imprisoning Jādī al-Karmānī and appointed Ḥarb b. ‘Amr al-Wāshijī  

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1Tab., II, p.1478 citing Mādā‘i‘ini; cf. Dennett, op.cit., p.141; Sha‘ban, op.cit., p.176.
2Tab., II, p.1845, citing Mādā‘i‘ini.
4On this subject see Sha‘ban, op.cit., pp. 213 ff.
5Bayān, vol. I, pp. 47-48; cf. Tab., II, p.1478 citing Mādā‘i‘ini; Dīna, pp. 342-343; F.I.A., p.184, where the author says that Jādī b. al-Karmānī was not appointed governor of Khurasān due to a superstitious fear that his name might bring ill luck, as Jādī means "cut off" while Nagr 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 Jadi‘ al-Karmani. Naṣr, however, spared his life. Naṣr’s action should be viewed against the background of the tribal situation in Khurasan. Having already been in a serious trouble with the central government, Naṣr did not want to stir a new trouble at home with Jadi‘ al-Karmani. Al-Karmani was a man of considerable prestige, and is described by sources as shaykh al-‘Arab, and shaykh Khurasan wa Fārisuhā. 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. Jadi‘ b. al-Karmani escaped from prison through a canal with the help of a slave of his, 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, which was, apparently a neutral tribe.

It seems that the dismissal of Jadi‘ al-Karmani and the appointment of a more agreeable chief as head of the Azd by Naṣr had gravely alarmed the Arab tribesmen in Khurasan. The Yamanites and their allies the Rabi‘ites as well as certain Mu‘barakites joined al-Karmani’s ranks.

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1 Tab., II, pp. 1858, 1859. ‘‘Alī b. ‘Abdallah b. al-Mubarak.
3 Dina., p. 355.
4 Ansab, fol. 777a; cf. Tab., II, p. 1861.
5 Tab., II, p. 1866 citing Mada‘inī; Rabī‘a was the ally of Azd.
6 Tab., II, pp. 1925, 1933; Sha‘ban, op.cit., p. 230.
However, the same groups were represented in Naqr's camp. Although al-Karmani's partisans were generally called the Yamanites and those of Naqr the Mugarites, the conflict was not, strictly speaking, that of Yamanites against Mugarites. Naqr b. Sayyar was, ultimately, confirmed in his office by the new governor of Iran in 126/744.1 This infuriated his old rival al-Karmani who declared now an open rebellion demanding that "The book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet should be put into practice".2 Thus al-Karmani's rebellion which had started as a struggle for power between him and Naqr took now the form of tribal warfare between two contending tribal groupings. In alliance with al-Yarit b. Surayj al-Murjī another tribal leader of Khurasan who had been in rebellion since 116 A.H., al-Karmani occupied Merv which had been deserted by Naqr.3 Al-Karmani was, subsequently, recognized as governor of Khurasan by his followers and on this occasion he, naturally, got rid of his rival al-Yarit b. Surayj al-Murjī whom he killed in 128/746.4

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

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1 Tab., II, p.1855 citing Mada'inī.
3 Tab., II, p.1890 citing Mada'inī; Khalīfā, Tarīkh, fol. 267; Dennett, op.cit., pp. 272 ff.
4 Tab., II, p. 1934 citing Mada'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), who were killed in obscure circumstances. However, he was ironically enough proclaimed caliph in 127/744 with the help of his experienced troops of the Jazīra and Armenia as well as the Qaysites of Syria. Harwan had, therefore, no legal right to the caliphate. Historical accounts describe him as a "usurper" of the caliphate from its legitimate claimants. The Syrians made no move to oppose him, but soon discontent grew steadily in many parts of Syria and Jazīra. The Hijāz and the Yaman were devastated by Kharijītes. In Egypt the army commanders defied Harwan and raised up a governor of their own choice. 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. Marwan, in his turn, had to face another rising in Kūfa led by the Ja'farite 'Abdallah b. Mu'āwiya. A sectarian atheist he was ahead of the Ḥanāfiyya which was characterized by its extremist (ghuluw) dogmas. The interesting

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3 Alchāb, fol. 120a; Azdī, fol. 56; جعفريد حسن زائدة حوالينه ابن هواء، ابن عزاء ابن أبى حذافة see also F.H.A., pp. 156-158; Tab. II., pp. 1891-92; Ibn al-'Imād shadharat al-Dhahab, vol. I, p.172.

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

5 Baladhuri states that Abu Muslim rebelled demanding revenge for Yaḥya b. Zayd... and he put on Sawād /black/ in mourning for the martyrs of Ahl al-Bayt. (Ansāb, fol. 683a, citing Abu 'Ubayda, cf. 682a too). See also Magatīl, 137; Alchāb, fol. 109br; 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 'Īsā b. 'Alī.²
It may seem curious that prominent 'Abbāsīd figures had joined and aided
'Abdallah b. Mu'awiyah, 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 129/746.² This, in fact,
was typical of the 'Abbāsīd strategy. 'Abdallah b. Mu'awiyah had achieved
a considerable degree of success, and at first he conducted it in the
name of al-Rida 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 Fars. The
'Abbāsīds might also have thought it advisable to encourage 'Abdallah
b. Mu'awiyah to try his luck in a rising which was, in some aspect,
a rehearsal for their own rising. However, no sooner did Ibn Mu'awiyah
claim the Imamate for himself³ than the 'Abbāsīds considering him a
dangerous rival, did him to death in Khurasān where the 'Abbāsīd

³Hlaftatil, p.118; Tab., II, p.1878; Ash'ari, p.85; Sa'd, V, p.242;
p.464; idem, op.cit., per una storia dell' antica si'a, pp. 259-260;

¹Hlaftatil, p.167; Agh., vol. II, p.74; Akhbar, Igbahan, 2, p.42.
²Ma'd, fol. 26a; Bayan, vol. 2, pp. 85-86; Ma'arif, vol. 1, p.207;
'Aṣākir, vol. 7, p.156.
propagandists would not tolerate any claimant whether he were from the family of the Prophet or not.

These favourable circumstances made the 'Abbasid propagandists realize that it was time for vigorous action. Abu Muslim spent his first year (128-129) in active propaganda to win supporters in the villages of Khuzā'ā in Merw. 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 'Abbasid movement called upon other Yamanites. So did the Rabites and the Ḥudarites. Thus the 'Abbasid following began to increase." The author of Kitāb l-'Uyun confirms this view and states that when the people noticed this state of rivalry between the contending Arab leaders they started to join Abu Muslim. Abu Muslim received, in 129A.H., the order of Ibrāhīm the Imam to notify Sulaymān b. Kathīr al-Khuza'ī in order to proclaim the revolution. Ibrahim also sent Qahtaba al-Ta'ī with two banners al-Ṭaklid, i.e. the shadow (as there is always a shadow on earth, so there would always be the 'Abbasid cause) and al-Sabīb, i.e. clouds (clouds cover the whole earth and so would the 'Abbasid cause).
Opinions differed as to what place should be chosen to declare the revolution.\(^1\) Abu 'l-Najim 'Amrān b. Ismā'īl, a *mawla*, suggested Khwārazm 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-Khuza‘ī, Mūsa b. Ka‘ab al-Tamīmī, and Lāhīz b. Qurayz al-Tamīmī. They suggested that Merv al-Shāhjān 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 Merv we got hold of all Khurasān" because "if the root were destroyed the branches would not last long". The Arabs in Merv and its surrounding villages had already lived there for a long time, and a considerable part of the previously Arab *Mugātīla* had, possibly, acquired lands or practised trade.\(^2\) There they mingled with the native population, married from them, adopted many of their customs and spoke their language in addition to Arabic.\(^3\) The Arab settlers of Merv, in particular, also shared the grievances of the natives against the Dihqāns who had, by the treaty of Merv, signed by Arab conquerors, been left in charge of collecting the tribute.\(^4\) However, many Arab notables seem to have owned or lived in

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\(^1\) *Akhbār*, fol. 132a ff.

\(^2\) *Akhbār*, fol. 132b, fol. 133a, fol. 133a, fol. 147a, fol. 147a, fol. 153.

\(^3\) *Haywān*, 4, p. 71; *Manāqib*, p. 40; *Jāhīz*, *Rasa'il*, ed. 1964, p. 220; *Ya‘qūbī*, II, p. 294.

\(^4\) *Sha‘bān*, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.
villages with their tribal groups and خوارث. Scattered historical accounts provide us with examples of such cases: حرب بن أمير الوشيجي, سليمان بن كثر الخزعلي, أسد بن عبد الله الخزاعي had villages of their own; so had بني أنبار. The inhabitants of the village of قصر أسفاد were Arabs in their majority. خلص was an أذية country. The مغارة al-Mu'tafaq بن عمران had a house in the village of Al-Lain which, probably, means that a number of his tribe were settling there too.

As to مرف, it was the centre of the Arab administration in خراسان, as well as the rallying point of Arab مغارة who waged war against خوارث and Transoxania. تبراري describes it as "بヤرات خراسان" indicating its important strategic and administrative position. مقدسي calls it "عمر الظرة" of خراسان as مكة was called "عمر الظرة" of the هجاز. There is no exact information about the number of the Arabs who lived in مرف or its surrounding villages. However, it seems that it was the practice of Arab مغارة to entrench themselves in villages surrounding cities during the process of تامیر.

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1Tab., II, p.1862; خبار, fols. 132b, 133b; Tab., II, p.1963.
2Tab., II, p.1579.
3Tab., II, p.493 citing ماداين. For further reference see ماداين, p.280; Tab., II, p.1969.
4مقدسي, p.303.
5Tab., II, pp.1969f.
7مقدسي, p.229.
8خارب, fol. 177a; شاهب, op.cit., p.56.
It is worth recalling here that when Qutayba b. Muslim al-Bahili occupied Balkh he took residence in the village of Baroqan near Balkh, and even when Asad b. 'Abdallah al-Qaṣri the governor of Khurasan shifted his capital from Merw to Balkh he had new villages built and settled most of his troops there. It was very probable, therefore, that Arab Mucatila during the Arab conquest were allowed to live in the villages surrounding the city of Merw. Speaking on the effect of the environment on people, Jāhiz states "If we see the sons of Arab men and women who settled in Khurasan we can hardly distinguish them from native villagers." Though indirect, this is one of the earliest references to Arab settlements in the villages of Khurasan. Safidhanj, Al Lān, and Fanīn were villages of Khuza‘a, Buinya was the village of Bani Tay; while Basān was the village of Bani Naqr. It is, therefore, no surprise that Maqdisi preserves the Khurasanī proverb which says "Rījāl Merw min qūrahā", i.e. the men of Merw are from its villages. It was those Arab countrymen and hard fighting villagers who were sought by the 'Abbāsid propagandists. The 'Abbāsid revolt, in fact, started in the Khuza‘ite villages of

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1 Tab., II, p.1602 citing Madā‘īnī; Sha‘bān, op. cit., p.215.
3 Jāhiz, Rasa‘il, ed. Cairo 1964, p.220.
5 Tab., II, p.1026.
6 Mu‘jam, vol. 4, p.511.
Safidhanj, Al-Lin and Fanin. Tabari states that it was the Arab quarter of Kharqana including the village of Safidhanj which was among the first to declare for Abu Muslim. The 'Abbasid partisans who flocked to the district of Merw found refuge and food in the Khuza'ite villages. The Arabs then were fully justified in priding themselves on being the earliest and most loyal partisans of the 'Abbāsids.

The 'Abbāsid 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 Baladhurī, Akhbār 'l-'Abbas, Azdī and Tabari dealing with the progress of the 'Abbāsid army to Irāq and Syria often mention the names of those Arab chieftains who were given the military rank of Qā'id. They supported the 'Abbāsid cause and fought for it against many a revolt later on. Ibn al-Kalbī speaks of many Arabs who distinguished themselves by their deeds for the da'wa such as Khafīf b. Hubayra, "the bravest cavalry man", 'Uqba b. Ṣarb, "a Qā'īd in the da'wa", and Zuhayr b. Muhammad al-Azdī. 'Alqama b. Ḥakīm and al-'Alā' b.

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1 Tab., II, p. 1954.
2 Akhbar, fols. 133a f.
3 Manāqib, p. 12.
4 Ansāb, fols. 672a-72b, citing Mada'inī; Tab., II, p. 2001, III, p. 291 citing Sahl b. 'Aqīdī; Akhbar, fols. 132b, 164b, 165a, 166a, 172b, 184a, 185
5 Ha'd, fol. 66b; Jamharat, fols. 91a, 92a. See also Akhbar, fol. 164b.
Salīm joined Abū Muslim with 700 men, 'Abdallah b. Sha'ba joined Abū Muslim with 1,000 men, and Khāzīm b. Khuzayma occupied Merw al-Rūğh with the help of his tribe Tamīm. A tribal leader of Bani al-Ḥarīth joined the 'Abbāsid army with 100 men. Furthermore, Baladhūrī preserves an account which mentions several names of Wuṣūq suwwād Khurasān, i.e. the prominent Khurasānī commanders who were with 'Abdallah b. 'Alī in Syria. They were all Arabs. According to Akhbar 'l 'Abbās, the Saftu'tu 'l Safta, reported to have been handed by Abū Ḥasim to Muhammad the 'Abbāsid contained particulars of the timing of the revolution and what is important, information on the Arab quarters which were ready to support it. 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 made by al-Manṣūr in reply to a Muğarite 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

1 Akhbar, fol. 132b.
3 Tab., II, p.1959 Mada'īni.
4 Akhbar, fol. 176b.
5 Anāb, fols. 762a-762b citing Mada'īni; Tabari also mentions a number of Arab Khurasanīs 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.
6 Akhbar, fol. 84b.
7 Azdī, fol. 194.
sponsored the 'Abbasid da'wa and assassinated Harwan II. Moreover, when 'Abdallah b. 'Ali faced a rising in Damascus he wrote to the Yamanites of the city "You and your brothers from Rabi'a were our Shi'a and Anqar in Khurasan. You have captured for us the city of Damascus and killed al-Walid b. Mu'awiya. You are part of us and our affairs depend on you. I ask you to give up the siege and let us deal with Muqar." If these accounts are to be credited the 'Abbasid revolution was to a great extent a Yamanite-Rabite protest against Harwan's Qaysite policy.

It is probably significant to note here that the term Ahl Khurasan has been wrongly taken by some scholars to mean non-Arab Khurasanis or Persians. Jübiz often speaks of the Khurasani Arabs; Tabarî as has already been mentioned gives a number of Khurasani Arab names. In one of his accounts he states "When Ibrahim rebelled in Basra, al-Manṣur sent the two sons of 'Aqil who were commanders from Ahl Khurasan from the tribe of Tay..." Many other Arabs were called Khurasanis, such as 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazid, Malik b. Tarîf, al-Haytham b. Mu'awiya al-'Atkî.

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2 Sadighî, 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-Sham used to designate the Arabs of these cities and provinces. The more so as early historians such as Ibn al-Muqaffa, Baladhuri and Asâî often stress the non-Arab origin of certain Persian Khurasanis when they happen to mention them. (See e.g. Ibn al-Muqaffa, Risala fi l Sahaba, p.124).

3 Manāqib, pp. 35, 37.

4 Tab., III, p.291, citing 'Aqil b. Isma'il.

The reason of the confusion about the term Ahl Khurasan is presumably due to the 'Abbāsid policy which tried to keep the Khurasanīs, whichever tribe or district they belonged to, as intact and separate unit in their army. 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 Ramadān 129/June 747 in the name of al-Ridā min al-Bayt, and to establish "the book of God and the sunna of the Prophet", Abu Muslim entrenched himself in the Khuzāйте village of Safīdhanj, and sent da‘īs to the surrounding villages and cities to announce the battle cry of the revolt, and to rally the 'Abbāsid partisans. In these early days of the revolt Abu Muslim was not as strong as some sources imply. His followers, in fact, numbered between 3,000 and 4,000. It is worth noting that when the 'Id prayer was held it was the Arab Sulaymān al-Khuza‘ī and not the Mawla Abu Muslim who led the prayer introducing new religious forms differing from the Umayyad practice. To increase his followers Abu Muslim

1 Manāqib, pp. 35, 36; Ibn al-Kalbī, fol. 160a.
2 Tab. III, p.75, see further Tab., III, pp. 94, 67.
3 Aḥī., vol. 8, p.15.
6 Akhbār, fols. 135a, 136a; Tab., II, p.1953 citing Abū al-Khaṭṭāb.
even welcomed slaves,¹ 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, Muṣʿab 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 Dāʾūd b. b. Karrāt. A body of them was sent to reinforce the 'Abbāsid dāʾī Muṣa b. Muṣʿab 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.² However, using the slaves in war was not an 'Abbāsid innovation, as they were several times used by the Umayyad governors of Khurasan to reinforce the Arab army and were even promised their freedom in a desperate moment.³ Meanwhile Merw al-Rūḏh was an easy gain to the 'Abbāsid, owing to the brilliant move of Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī, an 'Abbāsid 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-Rūḏh fell to the

(cont.)


²Akhbar, fols. 138a, 141a.

³Tab., II, p.1976, citing Madaʿīnī.
In attempting to regain Merv al-Shahjam from the rebel Jadi' al-Karmâni without success, Naṣr wrote from Nishapur 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?" Harwān was certainly not dormant, he was very much occupied with the revolts in Syria itself, Egypt, the Hijāz and Irāq. What worsened the situation was that the relations between Naṣr and Yazīd b. 'Umar b. Hubayra 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 Khurasan; when the latter appealed for help Ibn Hubayra did not respond. Tabarî states that Ibn Hubayra justified himself as not having enough men to spare, Mas'udî says "He pretended to be occupied with the troubles of Irāq", Dinawâri relates that Ibn Hubayra maintained that "the people of Irāq were not to be considered loyal for the Umayyad cause". Ibn Qutayba clarifies the matter by saying that "Ibn Hubayra was eager to bring about Naṣr's downfall and to humiliate him". This isolated

1Tab., II, p.1959 citing Mâdâ'înî.
5Hâruj, VI, p.65.
6Dîna, pp. 358-359.
7Uyun, I, p.128; cf. Akhâr, fols. 157a, 159b.
Nagr who had to find a way out for himself. He approached Jāḥiṣ al-Karmanī suggesting a meeting to which al-Karmanī surprisingly agreed. But at the meeting place al-Karmanī was assassinated by Ḫātim b. al-Ŷārīth b. Surayj al-Murjāʾ in revenge for his father. Nagr seems to have had a hand in this conspiracy as he strangled al-Karmanī. However 'Alī b. Jāḥiṣ al-Karmanī succeeded his father as a leader of the Aṣd. As for the 'Abbasid partisans, Nagr conducted a vigorous campaign of propaganda against them. He represented them as atheists who "worship cats!! and heads", "They are none but mobs, cattle, slaves and unworthy Arabs and Mawālī". They are, on many occasions, described as 'Uluǧ, Majūs i.e. magi, Sufahā', i.e. foolish mob; Suqāt al-'Arab, and 'Ājam. The Umayyads were the only representatives of the Sunna and Jamā'a. One of these accusations seems interesting and worth further attention. 'Abbasid partisans were described as Suqāt 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-Shahjān and were those Arab settlers deprived of their Arab privileges, who lived on the land like the Iranian natives and paid tribute to the Dahaqān. This term, in fact, could never have been used to describe the Arab Muqātīla.


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

3 Akhbar, fols. 142a, 141b, 140a, 137a; Mudāba, fol. 265b; cf. Tab., II, pp. 1991-2, 1856 citing Madaʿini.

4 Akhbar, 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, and for some time worried the ‘Abbāsid propagandists, who naturally applied the same tactics in their counter propaganda. A public meeting was held and Abū Muslim and other Naqībs followed by the ‘Abbāsid partisans swore allegiance before Sulaymān al-Khurā’ī "To call for the book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet, and to uphold justice and oppose oppression". 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 ‘Abbāsid partisans, and the reply of an Arab partisan of the ‘Abbāsid movement to him throw a vivid light on the propagandist character of the movement. Furthermore the Umayyads themselves in a later stage addressed the ‘Abbāsid army by the words "Ya Maʾṣhar al-Muslimīn" i.e. "Oh Muslims". 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 ‘Abbāsid camp, namely, that the ‘Abbāsids were pious and humane. It is rather significant that in one of the early engagements between the ‘Abbāsid troops led by Mālik...

1Tab., II, p.1965, citing Nāḍīnī; Akhbar, fols. 141b, 142a.
2Akhbar, fol. 142b.
3Naṣr, referring to the ‘Abbāsid partisans said (Dīna., p.360):

Al-‘Akkī an Arab pro-‘Abbāsid partisan replied:

i.e. for the sake of God we do not favour any of those whom we are asking be they Hawaiī or Arabs. (Akhbar, fol. 154a).
b. al-Haytham al-Khuza‘ī and the Umayyads led by Yazīd, a mawla of Naṣr, Yazīd was arrested and then freed to tell Naṣr about ‘Abbasid piety and sincerity.¹

It seems that the tribal feuds were accelerated in Khurasān by the arrival from Iraç of a new political figure, the Kharijite Shaybān b. Salama l-portunī. Until recently modern scholars² were puzzled by his sudden appearance and about his identification. This is largely due to the confused historical accounts of him.³ In the light of new evidence offered by Dennett⁴ on the basis of an account of Baladhurī, we are in a position to judge his previous activities in Iraç and Fārs. Shaybān the little (al-Saghīr) was a partisan of al-Dāyah b. Qays the Kharijite rebel of Iraç; after their defeat Shaybān al-Saghīr joined ‘Abdallah b. Ku‘awīya, but after the latter’s defeat Shaybān made his way to Khurasān through Sīstān. ‘Alī b. al-Karmānī 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.⁵

(cont.)

¹Akhbar, fol. 166b.
²Welhausen, op.cit., p.498.
³Anšab, fol. 777b; Tab., II, p.1948 citing Abū Mikhnaf, III, p.78.
⁴Dennett, op.cit., pp. 290-291; see also L. V. Vaglieri, R.S.O., 1949, xxiv, p.31. BHayban al-Saghīr is not to be confused with Shayban al-Yashkurī.
⁵Anšab, fol. 777b; see also Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 267; Akhbar, 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 Khurasan, ‘Alī b. Jaddī al-Karmanī, occupying Merv, with a considerable number of followers from the Yamanites, Rabī’ites and even Muḍarites. He also had Shaybān al-Ṣaghīr on his side, Naṣr b. Sayyār, occupying Nishābūr, with tribesmen from Muḍar and Rabī’a and part of the Syrian troops, and Abu Muslim with supporters who mainly came from the Arab villages of Merv.

Noticing the growing danger of Abu Muslim and realizing that no reconciliation with ‘Alī b. al-Karmanī was possible, Naṣr proposed a truce between him, Ibn al-Karmanī and Shayba the Kharijite. Modern historians misled by the generalization of some accounts in Tabari, which represent the one year truce as an agreement among the three Arab leaders to crush Abu 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 Merv, Abu 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-Kūzā‘ī. As a result Shaybān was driven closer to Naṣr, while ‘Alī b. al-Karmanī was far from reaching an understanding with him.

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2Tab., II, pp. 1965 f citing Madā‘inī.
3Alchbar, fols. 144a f., 146a f.
But when Herāt was occupied by the Arab al-Naṣr al-Dabbi in the name of the 'Abbāsids, Naṣr took the opportunity to draw the attention of Ibn al-Karmānī and Shaybān to Abū Muslim's danger, and proposed the above-mentioned truce. 'Alī b. al-Karmānī 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 Mu'ār". 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 Mu'ārire being killed". As to Naṣr's motives, they were not sincere either. He intended to utilize 'Alī b. al-Karmānī 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, Sulh al-'Arab, while the author of Akhbar l-'Abbās rightly calls it Muwāda'a i.e. truce. It is worth recalling that the relationship between Jadī al-Karmānī and Naṣr was never marked by friendliness and trust. The only occasion when al-Karmānī 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-Karmānī to trust

1Tab., II, p.1966 Haddā'īnī.

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

1Tab., II, pp. 1967-8; Akhbar, fol. 135a.

2Ibid. Abu Muslim also appealed to Ibn al-Karmani stating:

أنت رقّوني يا عبد الله َّوَ لَّاقِيكَ رَأيُ رَسُولِ اللّهِ َسَلَّمَ َوَ رَقّوني َوَ قَدْ أَحْمَرَتْلَ عَمَلُك

see Akhbar, fol. 148a.

3Akhbar, fol. 147a; Mubda'a, fol. 266b.

4Akhbar, fols. 146a-146b.

5Ibid., fol. 146a.
'Alī b. al-Karmānī who, indeed, played an important rôle in preventing him from joining Naḍr 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 Mīshābūr and Herāt with headquarters at Sarakhs in Rabī' II, 130/Dec. 747.¹ Shaybān's withdrawal strengthened the position of Abū Muslim as compared with Naḍr, 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.² 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.³ This was a tactical move by the 'Abbasids to eliminate tribal antagonism within their partisans and to weld their partisans whether Yamanites, Rabi'ite, Muddarites or 'Ajam into a uniform body. They were all transferred to 'Alīn,

¹ Akhbār, fols. 151a, 152a; cf. Tab., II, p.1996.
² Tab., II, p.1967 citing Mādā'īnī; Imāma, 2, p.222; Ya'qūbī, II, p.399; Akhbār, fol. 155b; Mūbdhā, fol. 269a; Duwwal, fol. 101a.
³ Tab., II, p.1969 citing Abū al-Khaffāb. As 2,000 had already deserted his camp probably influenced by the news of the truce. (See Akhbār, fol. 146b). See also E.I.² (Daftar).
a village of Abū Mansūr Talha b. Zureiq al-Khuzaʿī in 6th Dhu 'l-Hijja 129/August 747, as Kalḫwān proved to be dangerous from the strategic point of view and water supplies.¹

Receiving no help from the central government, Nagr wrote to Harwan II again, the following pathetic letter:²

"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, Nagr decided to play his trump card with Abū Muslim. He thought he might succeed to create discord between Abū Muslim and Ibn al-Karmānī. Nagr, therefore, sought for a meeting which was attended by the delegates representing the three dominant figures, `Alī b. al-Karmānī, Nagr b. Sayyār and Abū Maslim. But this move of Nagr was defeated as Sulaymān al-Khuzaʿī, Talha al-Khuzaʿī and Masīd b. Shaqīq al-Sulami decided in favour of `Alī b. al-Karmānī and his followers as against Nagr and his followers.³ It was only now that the `Abbāsid movement got hold of the levers of power, namely the Arab tribesmen of `Alī b. al-Karmānī.

²Akhbār, fol. 152b.
Now the major target of both Abū Muslim and Ibn al-Karmānī was to get hold of the administrative capital of Khurasān, Merv. As related in Tabarī, the circumstances in which Merv had fallen to the 'Abbāsids are rather confusing. According to one account, the allied forces of Ibn al-Karmānī and Abū Muslim made a two-pronged attack on Merv. Another account 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 Amir 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. 'Abbāsid partisans were able to do their shopping in Merv at certain times unmolested. 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,
tribal feuds were bound to break out at the slightest excuse. It seems that a fight broke out in the market of Nerv between a tribesman of Bakr b. Wa’il and another of Nu‘ar, and that this fighting spread as Naṣr helped the Nu‘arites 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 Nerv, 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 Nerv with an army led by Arab commanders, the vanguard by Asīd al-Khuza‘ī, the right wing by Mālik al-Khuza‘ī and the left wing by al-Qāsim al-Tamīmī, 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. It is said that Lāhīz b. Qurayz, one of the ‘Abbāsid delegates, warned Naṣr by reciting the verse: ‘إن الله يَأْمُرُ بِلِعْلَمِ الْجَهَلَةِ’ Naṣr managed to escape thanks to the warning, for which Lāhīz was executed as a traitor. Abū Muslim imposed martial law in Nerv installing military posts round the city preventing people from entering and leaving it without permission. Now the real face of the ‘Abbāsid movement began to reveal itself. The oath of allegiance sworn by the partisans, especially

1Akhbār, fol. 154b.
5Akhbār, fol. 157a.
the Hashimiyya indicates that what mattered to Abū Muslim was the real ‘Abbasid doctrinaires and not the masses that had been utilized by the revolution.

Merv al-Shahjān and its surrounding villages, Merv al-Rūdh, and Herat, were all now under ‘Abbasid control. So was Abiward after the Arab Asid b. ‘Abdallah al-Khuza‘ī had occupied it by force of arms. As for Balkh, it was first occupied by the Arab Naqīb Khalīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dīnahalī. But it is significant to note that Balkh changed hands three times between Nagr and Abū Muslim. Balkh resisted the ‘Abbasids for three reasons. First the Arab Mughātīlā 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 Merv and Bagra, for fear of stirring tribal factionalism among them. He, therefore, stationed the different tribal elements together. This move led eventually to a reduction in tribal frictions and resulted in creating a united anti-‘Abbasid force led by the Umayyad governor of the city. Secondly, the Syrian troops stationed at Balkh numbered about 2,500 men, were apparently pro-Nagr. Thirdly, the native Iranian population in Balkh and its surrounding district co-operated with the Umayyad governor of Balkh. Even the local

princes in Tukharistan and other districts of Hawara' al-nahar offered their support to the Umayyad governor.\(^1\) Tabarî states that 'Huğarites, Yamanites, Rabî'ites and the 'Ajam agreed to fight the Husawida'.\(^2\) This is a significant event insofar as it reveals that tribal factionalism was greatly in favour of the 'Abbasid movement, and on the other hand shows clearly, probably for the first time, that the 'Abbasid 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 'Abbasids. 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 Khorasan and Hawra' al-nahar.

The Irāqi phase of the da'wa

The order had by now come from Ibrāhīm the Imam appointing the Arab Naqīb Qahtaba b. Shabīb al-'Αlī the commander in chief of the 'Abbasid army whose main object it was to march westwards towards Irāq and Syria.\(^3\) The mainstay of the army were Arab tribesmen of Khuṣāṣan 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 /'Abbasīd/ Shī'a and cavalrymen."


\(^3\)Ha'd, fol. 40a; Tab., II, p.2000; Alkbar, fol. 157b; Ya'qūbī, II, p.410; Dina, p.362; F. H. M., p.193.
from Khurasan. Before setting out, the 'Abbāsid army had to do away with their rivals in Khurasan 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. It is said that when the 'Abbāsid 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-'Abbāsid city, was now under 'Abbāsid control. On its march westwards the 'Abbāsid army occupied Tus, 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. Naṣr himself fled from Nīshābūr to Qumus. There was no co-operation whatsoever between the approaching Umayyad army led by Nubata b. Ḫanḍala al-Kallābī and Naṣr b. Sayyār. Nubata had been instructed

1Imāma, ed. Cairo 1904, p.225.
2Tab., II, p.1996; Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 269; Aḥbār, fol. 157b; Nubāhār, fol. 271b.
3Aḥbār, fol. 158b.
by Ibn Jubbayr, the governor of Iraq, to take over the command in Khurasan and to appeal to the remnants of Naṣr’s army as well as the native princes of Abīwār, Nasa and Sarakhs to join him. Marwān II at last decided not to leave Khurasan 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 Nubata’s command. This was a terrible blow to Naṣr who, broken-hearted, gave up resistance. The pro-Umayyad especially Muḍarītes, tribesmen, asked Naṣr to stay but he refused and headed to Hamadān where he fell ill and died shortly afterwards at Sawa on 12th Rabī‘ I 131/Oct. 748. When Mihshābūr was occupied an amnesty was declared by the ‘Abbāsid except for those who had witnessed the murder of Ya’ya b. Zayd, but even those were pardoned later. This was yet another political propaganda move on the part of the ‘Abbāsids.

The important confrontation between the two rival armies occurred at Jurjān. The Syrian army was led by Naḥāta b. Ḫandala and numbered about 10,000. The commander in chief of the ‘Abbāsid army, Qaḥṭaba, declining Abū Muslim’s suggestion to march towards Naṣr at Qūmūs, wisely advanced to meet Nubata. The result was a terrible defeat of Nubata, who was slain in the battle, on the 3rd of Dhu ’l-Ḥijja 130/July 748, but the

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1 Akhbar, fols. 158b, 161a.
3 Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 274; Ma‘ṣūfī, p.370; Tab., III, p.2; Akhbar, fol. 165b; Dīnā, p.362.
4 Akhbar, fol. 160b.
5 Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 273; Tab., II, p.2004 citing Ḥadā‘īnī; Ma‘ṣūfī, p.370; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.410; Akhbar, fols. 161a ff.
Jurjanīs resisted the ‘Abbāsid occupation and threw the garrison out. Qaḥtabahad to reoccupy it inflicting a terrible massacre on the Jurjanīs’ as a punishment for their loyalty to the Umayyads. Due to the intervention of Khalid b. Barmak who was with the ‘Abbāsid army the native ruler of Tabaristān paid homage to the ‘Abbāsids.

Nothing succeeds like success, or as Abu Muslim puts it “People are the bravest at the beginning of their power”, with only a minor setback, the ‘Abbāsids reached al-Rayy where Qaḥtaba stayed for five months imposing martial law on the city. Having received a severe reprimand from Harwān II, Ibn Hubayra ordered ‘Āmir b. Ḥubara, who had an army of 50,000 men mainly from Iraq and Khurasān, to march against Qaḥtaba 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. Muʿawiyya. 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-‘Asākir. The decisive battle took place at Jablaq near Iṣbahān. Before the battle the Umayyads appealed to the ‘Abbāsid partisans saying "Oh Muslims fear God and join the Jama‘a. You will be granted amnesty for your misdeed in the Fitna. ‘Ātā’ will be increased and payment will be made to you."

1 Tab., II, p.2016.
2 Akhbar, fol. 163b; Mubāha, fol. 274a.
3 Duwwal, fol. 109a.
4 Akhbar, fol. 164a.
6 Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 273; Akhbar, fol. 166b.
However, on the 24th Rajar 131 A.H. both armies engaged in a fierce battle in which the Umayyads were defeated and 'Āmir was killed. This was the beginning of the end of the Umayyads. The backbone of their army in Iran was broken. The author of Akhbar 1-'Abbās calls the battle al-Faysal, i.e. the decisive battle, adding that "It was the opinion of the people of Irāq that, if Ibn Ḍubāra were victorious, the power would remain the Umayyads, but if Qaḥṭaba prevailed, it would fall to Bani Ḥashim."

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, 'Ālī b. al-Karmānī and his brother 'Uthmān. Both were easily and treacherously murdered, 2 'Ālī when marching with Abū Muslim to Māghbūr 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 'Ālī and 'Uthmān supported Abū Muslim and distorted the unity of the Arabs, he killed them and annihilated the family of al-Karmānī." This conspiracy seems to have been prepared beforehand because Qaḥṭaba was not surprised at all at the news of it. 4

1 Akhbar, fols. 171b-172a.
3 Asma' al-Mughtalin, p. 191; Janharat, p. 359.
4 Akhbar, fol. 174b.
During the siege of Nahavand\(^1\) Qaṭṭaba secretly offered an ḍarrān 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 ḍarrān and evacuated the city. Qaṭṭaba 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 'Abbāsid army was actually inside Irāq. Ābu Salama Ḥafṣ b. Sulaymān al-Khallāl, the chief ḍā'i and the Wazīr of al-Muhammad took part in the activities which prepared the ground for the approaching 'Abbāsid army from his hideout in Kūfa. This brilliant practitioner of secret propaganda tried to create a state of chaos in Irāq\(^2\) to divert the attention of the Umayyads. He sent emissaries to instigate the bedouins of Kūfa, Baghra and Mosul. Mūsa al-Hamdānī rebelled at Ḫalwān. The lower Euphrates was ravaged by the Rabī‘ītos. Ābu 'Umrayya al-Ṭaghlabī rose in arms in Tikrit. Their motive, however, was plunder and robbery and not loyalty to the 'Abbāsid cause. In the Jazīra the bedouins began to join the 'Abbāsid army too. 'Afarī b. Sa‘īd of Banī 'l-Ḥarīth joined them with 100 men, so did a number of the people of Moğul, "al-Mausuliyya".\(^3\) Ābu 'Awan 'Ābd al-Malik b. Yāṣīd al-Asdī was


\(^{2}\) Akhbar, fols. 174b, 175a.

advised to occupy Mogul whose people, ill-treated by Marwan II, were willing to join them, but Abu 'Awn hearing of Marwan's advance entrenched himself at Shahrazur, where he stayed till Muharram 132/Aug. 749. Enraged by the swift victory of the 'Abbasids, Marwan with an army composed of Syrians and Jazirites immediately marched towards Jazira to meet the 'Abbasids, and meanwhile he wrote a letter reprimanding Ibn Hubayra as follows:

"The Commander of the Faithful had appointed you governor of Iraq, 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 Khurasan; their strength had weakened, and their enemy overcame them; ... and your failing to unsheathe 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 Jubara's and Dâ'ud flock back to you, pull yourself together and face the enemy...."

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 Khurasan, he knows that, when I arrived in Iraq it was a blaze with war, so I had to remedy what was close to me. I havoused the Syrian army once against the Kharajites, then against Ibn Mâwliyya and then against Sulayman b. Hâlib (the rebel of al-Ahwaz). I could not use the people of Iraq..."

1Akhbâr, fols. 176b-177a; Tab., III, pp. 9, 56 citing Madâ'înî.

2Akhbâr, 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 Khurasan they might have joined the enemy and I should be blamed. As to the Banu al-Muhallab (Ibn Abi Sofra), 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 Irāqīs and even the Yamanite Syrians who are with me.1

Yazīd Ibn Hubayra advanced at once to Jalula', but Qaṭṭaba 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.2 Qaṭṭaba crossed the river Euphrates 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 'Abbāsid army defeated the Umayyads who had no morale left. Meanwhile Kūfa3 had already been taken, not by the Khurasānīs but by tribal chiefs, Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Qaṣrī and Ṭalḥa b. Ishaq 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 Qaṭṭaba in the battle of Upper Falūja, entered Kūfa among celebrations and festivities.

1Akhbār, fols. 178a-179a.
2Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 276, Tab., III, pp. 12ff, 16 citing Mada'īnī; AKBĀR, fol. 179a; cf. Ansāb, fol. 782b;
3Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 281; Tab., III, p. 18, citing Abū Mukhnaf; AKBĀR, fols. 181a f.
Qahtaba 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 'Abbāsid propagandists which makes one think whether it was committed for reason of policy by compromising groups, or individuals. Qahtaba alleged knowledge\(^1\) of Ibrāhīm's Ḥaqqiya 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.\(^2\)

After Qahtaba's death many such as Ḥa'an b. Zā'ida, Aḥlam b. Ibrāhīm b. Bassām, Yāḥya b. Ḥaqqīn and Ḥarb b. Salm b. Ḥwaz are said to have claimed the credit of his death. At any rate, an account on the authority of Salm, a mawla of Qahtaba, states that after crossing the river they had engaged with the Umayyads in a night battle when suddenly Qahtaba's horse was seen riderless.\(^3\) It seemed as though Qahtaba 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.\(^4\) However, the battle

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

\(^2\) Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 276; Ansāb, fol. 781b; Tab., III, pp. 12f, 16 citing Ḥadā'īnī; Aḥbār, fols. 182a-182b; Wafayāt, vol. 3, p. 288., F. H. A., p. 195; Dhahabī, fol. 4b.

\(^3\) Ansāb, fol. 781b citing Salm Mawla Qahtaba.

\(^4\) Aḥbār, 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 Yamani tribe chiefs in Ibn Hubayra's army deserted him after hearing of Mu'ammad al-Qasri's rising in Kufa, while the Syrians who no longer seem to have any faith in their state failed to respond to Ibn Hubayra's call and fled. However, Ibn H bayra, who entrenched himself in Wasit, was still in control of a great army. On the 10th of Muḥarram 132/August 749 Abu Salama was escorted by the Arab army commanders ʿUmayd al-Ṭāʾī, Khaizim al-Tamīmī and Naqāṭil al-ʿAkkī to the mosque where he addressed the Khurasanī soldiers praising their services, warning them not to lend their ears to the demagogues, i.e. sufāhā, 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 Abu 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 'Abbāsid revolution.

As to Bāṣra 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. The last

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

2Ansāb, fol. 782a; Aḥbār, fol. 184b; Tab., III, p.20, citing Abū Mukhnaf and Madaʿīni.

3Al-ʿAlī, Tanzimāt..., p.41; Pellat, op.cit., p.53.
Umayyad governor Salm b. Qutayba al-Bāhilī, was a good administrator and a popular tribal chief. When Abū Salama got hold of Kūfa he invoked Sofyān b. Mu‘awiya al-Muhallabī to take over Bāgra in the name of the ‘Abbāsids. Sofyān did not wish to oust Salm, as the latter had conferred many favours on the Muhalabites when they underwent a difficult period under Marwān II. 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 Wāsij. If he was killed or forced to leave I will evacuate Dār ʿImāra. 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 Bāgra. This move made Sofyān al-Muhallabī act swiftly, he decided to overthrow Salm al-Bāhilī. Tamīm, Qays, Banī Masma‘ of Rabī‘a, as well as Ahl al-ʿĀliya 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 Bāgra. 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

1Ansāb, fol. 804a, citing Mada‘i‘inī.
2Op. cit., fol. 803a; see also Khalifa, Tarīkh, fol. 279. Akhbar, fols. 177a, 178a;
3Ansāb, fols. 803a, 804b, 806a; Tab., III, pp. 21-23.
4Ansāb, fol. 804b; Tab., III, p.22, Mada‘i‘inī.
sent to Salm but had defected to Sofyan. The battle was a defeat for Sofyan who fled to Kaskar and Misan. Salm remained in Basra until the news of the murder of Ibn Hubayra reached him. He decided to flee to the Hijaz, after appointing a new governor in the person of the Hashimite Muhammad b. Ja'far. The new caliph Abu 'l-'Abbás replaced him by Sofyan b. Mu'miya al-Muhallabi who retaliated on a number of Mu'jarites by dismantling their houses in Basra.

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

The historical accounts are conflicting. According to Tabari, the name of Bani 'l-'Abbás was proclaimed when the da'is unfurled the banners at the very beginning of the revolt; but the name of the Imam was not mentioned. However, Tabari does not say whether the proclamation of the name of Bani 'l-'Abbás took place in public or merely among the inner circles of the da'is. In his somewhat brief version of the 'Abbásid revolt, Kufi confirms Tabari's ideas and formulates them more

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1 Tab., III, p.22.

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

3 Ansāb, fol. 806, citing Mada'inī.

clearly, saying "Abū Muslim called upon the people to swear allegiance to the sons of al-'Abbas". In another place, Kūfī quotes a letter from Nahr b. Sayyār to al-Karmānī in which the latter warns al-Karmānī that "Abū Muslim is working for Banī Ḥashim and not for you al-Karmānī," without mentioning which branch of Banī Ḥashim he has in mind. Thus it seems reasonable to assume that the name of the ‘Abbāsid Imam was only known to the inner circles of the movement. As to the arrest of Ibrāhīm the Imam, the chroniclers also differ. According to Baladhurī, the author of Akhbār 'l-'Abbās and Tabari, it was through Nahr’s efforts that Harwān came to know that Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad the ‘Abbāsid was the leader of the Khurasanī revolt. Nevertheless, other versions attribute the disclosure of the Imam’s name to different personalities. The Ḥasanid 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan is said to have informed Harwān on the occasion of a visit to Harrān of Ibrāhīm’s activities in Khurasan out of jealousy. According to another account Harwān was informed through a messenger of Abū Muslim who, after visiting Ibrāhīm and receiving a message for Abū Muslim, defected to Harwān and betrayed to him the secret of who were the prominent figures in the Khurasanī conspiracy. Since no other authoritative
accounts concur with them on that, there is obviously a pro-‘Abbāsid tendency in the last two versions. Moreover, those named as instigators of Marwān’s treatment of Ibrāhīm were, in fact, victims of ‘Abbāsid policy, and were put to death by the ‘Abbāsids 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.¹

It should be remembered, however, that the Umayyads had known of ‘Abbāsid’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 Ḍhu ‘l-Nafṣ al-Zakiyya’s activities, but he remarked: "It is not Muḥammad we expect to revolt against us".² 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/H. According to Akhbār ‘l-‘Abbās it was Qaḥṭaba b. Shabīb al-Ṭa‘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 749.³

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²Ansāb, fol. 608; Magāṭil, p.179.

According to Ḥibbānī the name of Ibrāhīm was current and associated with the revolt as early as the days of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Uwāiyya (Akh., vol. II/74). During the pilgrimage season of 131 Ibrāhīm’s name was widespread in association with the revolt in Khurasān. See Duwal, fol. 101b; Ḍāḥr, vol. 6, p.65.
On the identity of the leader of the movement being discovered, Marwan II immediately ordered al-Walid b. Mu‘awiya, the governor of Damascus, to have Ibrahim arrested. He was taken from al-‘Umayma to Harran, and there ensued a strongly vocal meeting between him and the caliph. Marwan is reported to have said "Do you imagine that a man such as yourself should become caliph?" Whereupon Ibrahim replied "You are the son of Fariid and La‘in, i.e. those who were expelled and accursed by the Prophet, and despite that you sought after Ahl and gained it. Why should I not seek it as I am the cousin of the Prophet and his wali?" Ibrahim was imprisoned with other prominent Umayyad personalities at Harran where he met his death in Muharram 132/Aug. 749. The ‘Abbâsid point of view, expressed by many ‘Abbâsid personalities, as well as ‘Abbâsid poets, alleged naturally that Ibrahim had been either murdered or poisoned by Marwan’s orders. This could well have been true as is borne out by many authorities; none the less, it is possible that Ibrahim fell victim to the plague which spread in Syria in that very year 131/132.

Although Ibrahim the Imam was taken by surprise at al-‘Umayma, he did have the time to nominate one of his brothers a legatee. Ibrahim was accompanied on his way from al-‘Umayma to al-Sham for quite a long distance

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1. Ansâb, fol. 772b.
2. Ansâb, fols. 772a-772b, citing Haytham b. ‘Adi, fol. 773a; Akhbar, fols. 193a, 195a-b; Mubâha, fol. 284; Kufî, fol. 227a; Tab., III, p. 44.
by a number of his relatives including his brother 'Abdallah b. Muhammad (Abū 'l-ʿAbbās). When it was time for the relatives to go back, Ibrahim is said to have nominated Abū al-ʿAbbās his successor. According to Baladhurī, Abū 'l-ʿAbbās was the first of Muhammad b. 'Ali's sons to leave for Kūfa, as the bequest of the Imamate to him made him fear for his life. According to Kūfī and Yaʿqūbī, the nomination of Abū 'l-ʿAbbās had already taken place in the time of his father Muhammad b. 'Ali. Abū 'l-ʿAbbās seemed to be the right person to choose as he was most acceptable to the ʿAbbāsid who did not object to this choice, probably because Abū 'l-ʿAbbās was of pure Arab origin since his mother was Rīfa al-Ḥarīthiyya.

Ibrahim confirmed his wasiyya to Abū 'l-ʿAbbās shortly before his death. According to Baladhurī on the authority of the Qadi Daʿūd b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sābiq al-Khwārazmī, a Mawla of Ibrahim's, brought the letter's message after his death to Abū 'l-ʿAbbās confirming him as an heir. Ibrahim is also said to have written letters concerning his wasiyya to Abū Salama in Kūfa, Abū Muslim in Khurasan and the commander of the Khurasanī troops, Qahtaba b. Shabīb al-Taʾī. In the Kitāb al-ʿUyun wa-l Ḥadāʾiq the imprisonment of Ibrahim is re-

1 Akhbār, fols. 197b, 193a.
2 Ansāb, fol. 776b.
3 Kūfī, fol. 220a; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.398.
4 At that time there was also prevalent the legend of the son of al-Ḥarīthiyya coming to spread justice and order. See Akhbār, fol. 82a; Van Vloten, Recherches..., pp. 54ff.
5 Ansāb, fol. 774a; Akhbār, fol. 198ab; Nubdha., fol. 287a; Muruʾ, VI, p.39.
6 Akhbār, fol. 194a.
7 F.H.A., p.190.
presented as a sudden blow to the dā'īs in Khurasan. Consequently, they sent Qāhṭaba al-Ṭā'ī in a merchant's disguise to Harrān 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 Ṣafar 132/Aug. or Sept. 749.¹ The score of men who fled with him included Abū Ja'far, the sons of 'Ali b. 'Abdallah: Sulaymān, 'Īsā, Ṣāliḥ, Isma'īl, 'Abdallāh, 'Abd al-Ṣammat, Nūsa and his son 'Isa and others.² They seem to have reached Kūfa prior to the arrival of the Khurasanīs.³

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 Rabī' I 132/Oct. 749.⁴ However his accession cannot be equated with the practical downfall of the Umayyads. Although the 'Abbāsid 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,⁵ and filled the vital posts with

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

2. Ansāb; fols. 785a, 776b; Akhbār, fols. 202a-202b; Nubdha, fol. 289b; Dina, p. 357; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 419; Tab., III, pp. 27, 33-34; Ḫuraj, VI, p.91.

3. Ansāb, fol. 773a. Dinawārī puts it as if Abū 'l-'Abbās was in Kūfa long before the revolt (p.36c).

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

5. Ansāb, fols. 785b, 806a citing Mada'inā; Tab., III, pp. 72-73.
prominent ‘Abbasids as well as men with a good record in the da‘wa. Abu Ja‘far (later al-Manṣūr) was sent to lead the attack on ‘Asīt. It was also thought appropriate to send an ‘Abbasid to face Marwān II who was hurriedly advancing to meet the bulk of the Khurasanīs led by Abu ‘Amm al-Azdā, a task for which ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī the uncle of the caliph volunteered.1 Marwān had entrenched himself between the Tigris and the great Zab river, while ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī faced him on the left side of the Zab. Marwān’s army was composed of tribal units such as al-Ṣubḥānīya, al-Raḥidīyya, al-Mubārirra and al-Dukanīyya.2 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.3 Mas‘ūdī merely states that it was "huge".4 However Tabari maintains

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1 Ansāb, fol. 786a; Tab., III, p.38 citing Mada‘inī.
2 Tab., III, pp. 40 ff.
3 Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 279; Ansāb, fol. 760a; Tab., III, p.46 citing Mada‘inī; Kufi, fol. 228a; Muruj, VI, p.85; Bal‘amī, IV, p.337; Dinawārī gives the figure of 30,000 men (p.363).
4 Tanbih, p.327.
that Marwan himself estimated his own army at 12,000 men. Thus it seems that originally the 'Abbasid army numbered less than Marwan's, but having been especially reinforced when 'Abdallah b. 'Ali took over the command, it numbered between 20,000 and 24,000 men. As a result both armies seem to have been of approximately the same size, but by no means the same morale. The Khurasanis and the'Iraqis 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 Marwan's great military ability was seriously impaired. Feuds raged even on the battlefield between Quda'a, Beni Sulaym, Beni 'Amir, al-Sukun, Ghatafan. The active military confrontation lasted ten days (2-11 of Jumada II 132/16-25 January 750 A.D.). Marwan committed the grave tactical error of leaving his well-prepared strategic position to cross the Zab. To give his army courage, Marwan is reported to have described the Khurasanis partisans of the 'Abbásids as "a mob from Shahrazur among whom there were only very few Khurasanis". When the morale of Marwan's army was at its lowest ebb, he tried to raise it by distributing money

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1 Tab., III, pp. 46-47.
2 Tab., III, p.38; Kufi, fol. 228a.
3 Azdi, fol. 110.
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.\footnote{Tab., III, pp. 40-42.} Even at that desperate moment an Umayyad jeered at Marwān because he had been defeated. "The oppressor is now the oppressed /long/; his only desire is to flee".\footnote{Tab., III, p. 41.} 2

When Marwān withdrew towards Moṣūl, Highām al-Taghlūbī refused to open its gates. Marwān, therefore, proceeded to his headquarters in Harrān where his son-in-law, Abān b. Yazīd, was governor.\footnote{Tab., III, p. 45; Marūj, VI, p. 74.} 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.\footnote{Tab., III, p. 41. After the 'Abbāsid 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-Hańṣūr increased it again to 80 when he sent the army to fight 'Abdallah b. 'Alī. See Ansāb, citing Nādā'īnī, fols. 763a-763b} 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-Hańṣūr increased the allotted land.\footnote{Tab., III, p. 45; Marūj, VI, p. 74.}

'Abdallah b. 'Alī received from the caliph orders to pursue Marwān. Moṣūl opened its gates to the 'Abbāsid army. Harrān, evacuated by Marwān, surrendered and its governor paid homage to 'Abdallah, who destroyed the house where Ibrāhīm the Imam had met his death.\footnote{Tab., III, p. 41; Kūfī, fols. 228b ff; Azdī, fols. 112 ff. It is significant to note that Azdī often uses the term Aṣḥāb /followers/ when referring to the armies on both sides which indicates the non-racialist aspect of the conflict. (fol. 112).} On his 

\footnote{See also Kūfī, fols. 228b ff; Azdī, fols. 112 ff. It is significant to note that Azdī often uses the term Aṣḥāb /followers/ when referring to the armies on both sides which indicates the non-racialist aspect of the conflict. (fol. 112).}
way to Damascus Marwan passed through Qinnisrin, Hums and many other cities, but the Syrians whom he tried to persuade to join him, turned their backs on him. Syrian tribes such as Tayy and Tanukh attacked his rear and plundered his supplies and money. Marwan 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; The Yamanite Syrians took the opportunity to revenge themselves on him. When he reached Damascus, the capital which he had deserted for Harran, its governor al-Walid b. Mu'awiyah b. Marwan b. 'Abd 'l-Halik, another son-in-law of Marwan, welcomed him, but Marwan could not remain in a city torn by inter-tribal strife between Qaysites and Yamanites; besides, some factions were frankly hostile to him. According to Azdi Marwan was harassed by Yamanites and at Damascus he was faced with the rebellion of al-Jarith al-'Arsi who called upon the people to swear allegiance to Banu Hashim. Thus Marwan headed for Palestine and Egypt, pursued by Salih b. 'Ali, who was sent as a reinforcement with 10,000 men by Abu 'l-'Abbās, and Abu 'Aw who led the Khurasanis with 'Amir b. Isma'īl al-Masalli in the vanguard. Damascus, however, did not surrender to 'Abdallah

(cont.)

Azdi, Fols. 136, 141.

Kufi, Fols. 228b, Muruj, VI, p.75.

1Dina, fol. 364.  

2Kufi, fol. 228b; Ya'qubi, II, pp. 413 ff: 'Iqad, citing an eye witness Ḥuq 'ab al-Khath'amī, vol. 4, p.473.

3Imama quotes Marwan saying:

(p.224)


5Azdi, fol. 118.

Kufi, Fols. 228b, 229a. It is related that Marwan intended to take refuge
b. 'Ali. Its governor held the city with 50,000 troops. But soon Asabiyya tampered with the people of Damascus and fighting broke out between Qaysite and Yamanite. According to Kufi before the capitulation of the city, the population was divided into pro-Umayyad and pro-'Abbasid sections who fought each other. Ultimately, the pro-'Abbasid group emerged victorious. They killed the governor of the city and opened its doors to the Khurasanis. Azzi states that the Yamanite population of the city sided with the 'Abbasids, killed its governor and delivered the city to 'Abdallah b. 'Ali. Ya'qubi states that a section of the population asked Yahya b. Behr to negotiate for surrender. While the negotiations were in progress, they relaxed in vigilance and the Khurasanis entered Damascus on the 14th of Ramadān 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 Marwan to Egypt, he certainly could not have expected to find a force which would deliver him from the Khurasanis, as Egypt itself was in a state of chaos. Moreover, at that very moment the Copts revolted against Marwan. He entered Egypt on the 8th of Shawwal 132/ May 750, when a number of districts such as al-Ḥawf al-Sharqi, Alexandria, Ṣa’id

(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".

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1 Ansab, fol. 760b; Kufi, fol. 228; Tab., III, pp. 45-46 citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr; Muruj, VI, p. 94.
2 Kufi, fol. 228b.
3 Azzi, fol. 124, also folis. 112, 113, 116.
4 Ya'qubi, II, pp. 426-7; Khalifa, Tarikh, fol. 280; Muq., fol. 239a; Ayni, fols. 9b-10a.
and Aswān had already declared themselves for the 'Abbasids. It is therefore probable that Marwān had the idea of proceeding to Ifriqiyya. However, Marwān was trapped at night by 'Āmir b. Isma'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 Hiṣja in 132/July 750. His head was sent to Abu ʿAbbas 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." Later on, several prominent men who helped him were also arrested and executed. Others were sent to Irāk, but were killed on their way in Palestine. As to the fate of Marwān's two sons, 'Abdallah and 'Ubaydallah, the accounts are contradictory. They seem to have fled southward to Nūba with several Umayyads 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-Mansūr or al-Mahdī. He was imprisoned at al-Muṭbaq in Baghdad.

2. A legendary tradition related that the 'Abbasid 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).
5. Wulāt, pp. 97 ff. It is worth noting that the execution took place at Nahr Abī Futrus which suggests that those Egyptian captives were part of the victims of the massacre ordered by 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.
Meanwhile, Yazīd b. ʿUmar b. Hubayra al-Fazari, the Umayyad governor of Irāk, decided to entrench himself in the Umayyad headquarters at Wasit. He rejected the advice that he should attack Kūfa, 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 Wasit 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-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba with the Khurasānīs to Wasiṭ. These troops were reinforced by ʿAlī b. al-Haytham al-Khūzayfī, another Khurasānī commander. However, when Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās was proclaimed caliph, he decided to send his brother Abū Jaʿfar ʿAbdallah 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-Ḥasan's

\( \text{(cont.)} \)

\(^7\)Jāmharat, p.84.


\(^1\)Tab., III, p.62, citing Madaʾinī.
command. Moreover, the mere dispatch of a member of the ‘Abbāsid 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 ἁμān."  

Ibn Ḥubayra still had a formidable army under his command, composed of the remainder of the pro-Umayyad Khurasānīs as well as the Syrian army of Irāqī and Iraqīs, Yamanites and Qaysites, under veteran commanders and tribal chiefs such as Ma‘an b. Za‘ida al-Shaybānī, Ḥawthara b. Suhayl, Muḥammad b. Nabāta, Yaḥya b. Ḥusayn and Ziyād b. Sāliḥ al-Hārithī. It numbered about 20,000. Ibn Ḥubayra was well prepared for a long siege with huge supplies and provisions. 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 Tabarî "Only the Ṣa‘ālīk and the Fītyān fought with Ibn Ḥubayra".  

1. Ansāb, fol. 786b; Tab., III, pp. 63-64; Khalīfa, Tārikh, fol. 277.  
2. Ansāb, fol. 786b; Tab., III, p. 71.  
4. Imama, p. 241; Tab., III, p. 66.  
7. Tab., III, p. 66. The term Ṣa‘ālīk denotes either "poor" or "robbers" while the Fītyān means "chivalrous" (see al-Muʿjam al-Wāṣīf, vol. I, pp. 517, 680). This probably means that his support consisted of tribes bound to him by ties of loyalty (Fītyān) or advantage (Ṣa‘ālīk). The latter were mercenaries.
Furthermore, Abū 'l-Abbas and Abū Ja'far were able to contact certain Yamanite figures in Ibn Hubayra's camp, such as Yizād al-Yarithi, who defected to the 'Abbāsids taking others with them. According to the author of Al-Imāma wa 'l-Siyāsa, Abū Ja'far (later al-Mansūr) wrote to the Yamanites who were with Ibn Hubayra: "Al-Sultānu sulṭānu al-kum wa 'l-dawlata dawlatukum." 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 overrated. 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 'Abbāsid 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, Ishaq b. Muslim al-Uqayli and Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Yarithi. 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

1 Ansāb, fol. 787b citing Haytham b. Adī; Dīna, pp. 368-9; Tab., III, pp. 66, 67, 64.
2 Al-Imāma, p. 241.
affair is new and people are either hoping to benefit from it or else they fear you." 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]."

The siege lasted for about eleven months, and it was only when Ibn Hubayra heard of Marwan's death that he began to think of surrender. According to Kufi, Ibn Hubayra's commanders asked him "Why and for what cause do we fight, and kill ourselves when Marwan is dead... we should come to terms with them [the 'Abbāsid]." For forty days, Ibn Hubayra prepared a very careful Amān 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. 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, Baladhurī, 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 Kufi with his 'Alid sympathies confined himself to stating that Yazīd (Ibn Hubayra) had "violated the amān, because

1 Ansāb, fol. 791, citing Nādaʿinī.
2 Dīnā, p. 369.
3 Tab., III, p. 66 citing Nādaʿinī; Ansāb, fol. 786b; Abū Ja'far led the siege for the last nine months (Ansāb, fol. 781b).
4 Ansāb, fol. 786a.
5 Kufī, fol. 233a.
6 The text of the amān is preserved in al-Kufī (fol. 233a). See also Nāma pp. 242-246; Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 278.
7 Ansāb, fol. 792a-792b, citing Nādaʿinī; Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 278.
he called for the abdication of the 'Abbasids in secret'. 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 aman? Baladhurî and Kūfī say after, obviously in violation of the aman, while Ya'qūbī's statement implies the contrary. It is important to note that Abū Ja'far, at first, objected to the caliph's orders to execute Ibn Hubayra and his commanders. Now had the latter contacted Muhammad Dhu 'l-Nafs al-Zakiyya after the aman 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 Baladhurî and Tabarî, it was Abū Muslim who was the chief instigator of Ibn Hubayra's execution. 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 Muhammad the Hasanid 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 aman. The determined caliph ordered him again to execute Ibn Hubayra immediately, or else he would send one "who will take him out of your...

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

2 Ansāb, fol. 792a; Tab., III, p.68; Kūfī, fol. 234a.

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

4 Ansāb, fol. 787a.
room and kill him.\(^1\) Abū Jaʿfar was advised to send men of Ibn Hubayra’s own tribe to execute the order. He chose Khāzim b. Khuzayma, al-Haytham b. Shaʿba and al-Aghlab b. Sālim with others.\(^2\) Here again it is important to note how tribal affiliations and loyalties were still taken into consideration during the early ‘Abbāsid epoch. The choice of Muʿṣarite partisans of the ‘Abbāsids 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 ‘Abbāsid 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".\(^3\) 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 Baladhurī and Kitāb al-Imāma, and as 40 by Kufī, while Tabarī mentions no number and only calls them "the chiefs among the Qaysites and Muʿṣarites".\(^4\) Then orders were issued to the Syrian army in Irāq to disperse and leave for home (Syria).\(^5\) This measure indicates that the ‘Abbāsids were deeply suspicious of the Syrians on the one hand,

\(^1\)Tab., III, p.68; see also Ḥabīb, p.190.\(^6\)

\(^2\)Khalīfa, Tārīkh, p.278; Ināma, p.249; Ansāb, fol. 787b-788a, citing Haytham b. ʿAdī; see also Dīna., pp. 371-372, Yaʿqubi, II, p.424.\(^7\)

\(^3\)Ansāb, fol. 789a-789b.\(^8\)

\(^4\)Ansāb, fol. 788a citing Haytham b. ʿAdī; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 278; Ināma, p.251; Kufī, fol. 234a; Tab., III, p.69.\(^9\)

\(^5\)Ansāb, fol. 788a citing Haytham b. ʿAdī.\(^{10}\)
and on the other hand the end of the Syrian Ira'î struggle for supremacy in the Muslim empire with the victory of Ira'î.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the Ḥashimiyya movement under the leadership of Muḥammad b. 'Aḥâ the 'Aḥāṣid wisely directed its activities to Khurasan where tribal factionalism was very acute. Under Ibrâhîm the Imām the movement became militant. Although it was natural for the 'Aḥāṣid dāʾiṣ to concentrate their efforts on the Yamanites who had been deprived of power and authority by the Umayyads in favour of the Muṭarites, they welcomed every Muṭarite who joined them.

The tribal conflict in Khurasan gave momentum to the 'Aḥāṣid dāʾiṣ, the first recruits to which were Arabs from Khuzā'îa in whose villages around Merv Abū Muslim took refuge. Naṣr b. Sayyâr could not crush the movement at its birth, as any attack on its partisans would be considered an attack on the Khuzā'îa, their protectors, and would drag Naṣr into a bitter conflict with the Yamanites and their allies, Rabî'īa, something which he tried to avoid at first. Still more important, disappointed Arab settlers of any tribal affiliation, deprived of their 'Aṭā' and jealous of their privileged kin (the Muṭātîla) were hoping for a change in the ruling stratum. This accounts for the fact that not only Yamanites and their allies, Rabî'îtes, were ultimately won by the

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1 On the Muṭarites who joined Abū Muslim's ranks see: Akhbar, fols. 138b, 139a, 141a, 150a, 151a. There were also many Muṭarites in the committee of the twelve Naqiṣa as well as many in the seventy dāʾiṣ. (Tab., II, p. 1988; Akhbar, fols. 103a-103b).
'Abbasid da'wa, but even the frustrated Mudarites. It also accounts for the continuous appeals and counter-appeals by both sides to the Arabs promising them 'Afa'1 if they joined their ranks, as not all Arabs were enlisted in the Diwan as Muqatila.

The Hashimiyya partisans who were initiated into the secret dogma of the da'wa seem to have formed a relatively small proportion of the 'Abbasid following. It is doubtful whether the majority of Khuzâ'a, Tamûm 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. Khuzâ'a had a long record of Hashimite sympathies and opposition to the Umayyads.2 It is significant that Arabs sent to Khurasân were sometimes selected from among troublesome elements.3

'Ali b. al-Karmânî the Azdite tribal chief was not so much for the 'Abbasids as against the Umayyad policy which deprived him of power and authority, and Naṣr b. Sayyâr personally. Until his murder at the hands of Abû Muslim, he probably never knew that Abû Muslim was working for an 'Abbasid claimant.

The task of extending the 'Abbasid sphere of influence from the villages of Merv to a number of cities in Khurasân was undertaken by Arab commanders. Merv 'il Rûdh, Balkh, Herât, Sarkh and Merv 'il Shâhjân were fallen to Arab commanders, who sometimes led their own tribal groups. The mainstay of Qahtâba's army were Arabs and so were, in their majority,

1Akhbâr, fols. 166b, 168a, 184b, 125a; Ansâb, fol. 780a; Tab., III, pp. 3, 6, citing Ma'dâ'înî, p.30, II, p.1856 citing Ma'dâ'înî.

2Tab., I, pp. 1086ff; Diwan Dîbil (ed. Dujaylî), p.33.

3Tab., II, p.178; Sha'bân, op.cit., pp. 61,72.
the leaders of its divisions. The 'Abbāsid 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 Mawali 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. Through the struggle in Iraq 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'ula that Iraqi and Syrian cities had to capitulate, Marwan 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", 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 Naqīla. Many


2Tab., II, pp. 1966-1967; anonymous, fols. 10b-12b. The accounts of the Hs. Ṭabari in this respect.
played decisive roles throughout the da'wa, some of them long before Abu Muslim's appearance. There were men like Sulayman al-Khuza'i who was often behind every important decision taken by Abu Muslim. To mention but a few: It was Sulayman who declared the start of the revolution and led the first prayer in the name of the new da'wa. It was Sulayman who advised Abu Muslim to take the initiative and approach both al-Karmani and Nasr b. Sayyar in order to satisfy both the Yamanites and Kudarites in his camp. It was Sulayman who successfully undertook the task of terminating the truce between Nasr, Ibn 'l-Karmani and Shahyban the Kharijite, and often stood beside Abu Muslim, who is described as taciturn by nature, at meetings with Nasr's delegates or at tribal conferences. As has already been mentioned, Sulayman al-Khuza'i played an outstanding role at the conference which was attended by Nasr's partisans, 'Ali Ibn al-Karmani's partisans and a delegation from the 'Abbasiid camp, and expressed the opinion that the 'Abbasiid partisans should side with 'Ali b. Karmani's followers. Finally, it was Sulayman who took the Bay'a of Abu Muslim and the 'Abbasiid partisans shortly before the fall of Herb, a tactical move made by the da'is to counter the Umayyad propaganda. The tendency to exalt Abu Muslim increased after his murder by al-Mangur when he became a symbol of the Iranian insurrections, as well as the embodiment of the principles of the disappointed extreme branch of the 'Abbasid da'wa.

Trying to analyse the nature of Abu Muslim's doctrines Western scholars have expressed two different opinions. Some maintain that he

1 Barthold, E.I. (Abu Muslim); Turkestan..., p.194; Welhausen, op.cit., p.506; E.I.2 (Abbasiids).
preached the doctrine of metempsychosis and re-incarnation of God current among the extreme Muslim and non-Muslim sects; others\(^1\) 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 'Abbāsid propaganda, it must be stated that Abu Muslim was a loyal 'Abbāsid propagandist who aimed at winning, for the 'Abbāsids, groups of various orientations and had, probably, used a variety of arguments to suit every case. But no sooner were the 'Abbāsid in power than they adopted Orthodoxy and abandoned all extremist ideas, and Abu Muslim followed suit. He crushed an 'Alid rising at Bukhāra\(^2\) and a Ḥawāndiyya rising at Tarmīd and Ṭālqān.\(^3\) In his deeds, Abu Muslim typifies the opportunist nature of the 'Abbāsid 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-Karmānī is vividly reminiscent of 'Abbāsid methods.


\(^2\)Narshakhi, pp.60-61; Tab., III, p.80.

\(^3\)Tab., III, p.32.
Chapter III

THE ‘ABBASID REGIME AND ITS DĀʿĪS

"We have not followed Al Muḥammad to shed blood and do injustice."

Sharīk al-Mahri

[F.H.A., p.211]

"We have taken the Oath for the ‘Abbasids in order to establish justice and revive the Sunan ..., and Abū Muslim is nothing but oppressor and tyrant..."

Ziyād b. Šalih al-Khuzaʾī

[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 'Abbāsid caliphs tried to rid themselves of those prominent 'Abbāsid 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 da'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‘awiya, the Kharījite Shaybān b. Salama, the Yemenite tribal chief Jadī‘ al-Karmānī and even the Persian rebel Bihāfārid who, in fact, voiced his protect in the late Umayyad period.¹ 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

purely political revolts of the kind usually led by rebellious
generals or ambitious governors but mostly risings led by da'ís
who could look back on a splendid record in the 'Abbásid da'wa such
as Bassám b. Ibráhím, Ziyád b. Šálí, 'Abd al-Jabbar b. 'Abd al-Raḥmán
The revolts of the pro-'Alid elements in Bukhára and the extreme
Rawandítes 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 re­
volution eats its revolutionaries; it could not be more true of
the 'Abbásid revolution. There were almost immediate rivalries among
the 'Abbásid revolutionaries as to who was to manipulate the levers
of power. The chief da'i of Kufa and the Wazír of Al-Muḥammad Abū
Saláma Yaḥṣ b. Sulaymán al-Khallal1 a mawla of the tribe of Sabí,' and a veteran partisan who had spent about thirty years conducting
the da'wa from Kufa and providing the contact between Ibráhím the
Imám and the da'ís of Khurasán was the first to seize power in Kufa
in 132/749-50. It was he who distributed administrative and military
offices among the partisans of the new régime.2 Meanwhile Abū 'l
'Abbás 'Abdallah b. Muḥammad had already been nominated successor
of his brother Ibráhím the Imám, who urged him to flee to Kufa.3 He

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1Ansāb, fols. 770a, 782b ff; Akhbār, fol. 118b; Tab., II, 1916, 1949;
Jah., p. 83; Muruji, VI, p. 133; Asakir, 4, p. 377; Fakhri, pp. 136-7;
Wafayat, 5, 115 ff; tr. English, l, 467 ff.

2Akhbār, fols. 184a, 185b; Ansāb, fol. 785b; Tab., III. p. 20.

3Ansāb, fols. 772a-774a; Akhbār, fol. 191a; Nubdha, fol. 289b; Ya'qubī,
II, 419-20; Tab., III, p. 27, pp. 33-34; Muruji, 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 ʿl-ʿAbbās as a caliph and indeed of the whole 'Abbāsid family. According to Bālādhurī "when Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās and his relatives arrived at Kūfa Abū Salama hid them in a house in Bānī Awd and whenever Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās 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." ¹ Jahshiyārī ² states that when Abū Salama took over Kūfa he proclaimed the Hashimite Imamate without mentioning the name of the Caliph. As for Tabarī, ³ Abū Salama hid Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās in the house of al-ʿWalīd b. Saʿad, a mawla of Bānī Ḥāshim in the quarter of Bānī Awd and kept the news of their arrival secret for forty days from the Qiwwād and the Shiʿa. Tabarī also stresses that he obviously planned to transfer the caliphate from the 'Abbāsids to the family of Abū Ṭalib after he had heard of the death of Ibrāhīm the Imām. It is significant that, according to the author of Akhābūr al-'Abbās, delivering his khutba on the 10th of Muḥarram 132, Abū Salama promised the Khurāsānīs 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". ⁴ He did not

¹Ansāb, fol. 783a; Ibn Ḥabīb states also (Asmaʾ al-Mughtālin, p.187)
²Jah., p.84.
³Tab., III, pp. 27, 34.
⁴Akhābūr, fol. 185a.
mention the name or the descent of the Imam and his tone seemed to have indicated that the Imam 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\(^1\) shows Abū Salama in the throes of doubt and suspicion after the death of Ibrahim the Imam; he is said to have been inventing letters from the Imam and reading them to the people of Khurasan in order to satisfy their curiosity. But unfortunately the available manuscript ends at this point; however the Nubdha\(^2\) relates that Abū Salama concealed the arrival of the 'Abbāsids at Kūfa and wanted the desired decision to be arrived at by consultation \(\text{وزیر} \) 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 siyasa 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 Mawāli were still fighting and the affair was harder than ever."\(^3\) 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,

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\(^2\)Nubdha, fol. 290a; F.H.A., p.196.
\(^3\)Imāma, p.226.
Mas'udi adds "Abū Salama thought, at the news of Ibrāhim's death that everything would go to pieces and be ruined."\(^1\)

It was not Mas'udi only but Ibn al-Ṭiqqa\(^2\) 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 Kūfā on the eve of the 'Abbāsid victory, Kūfī states that opinions differed on whether homage would be paid to the sons of Abū Ṣāliḥ or the sons of al-'Abbās, Abū Salama ascended the pulpit and addressed the people saying

"Oh people are you satisfied with what \(\sqrt{1}\) am going to do?\n
They replied: 'We are satisfied [with your decision].'

Abū Salama then said:

"The Amin of Al 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."\(^3\)

In his Maʿarif Ibn Qutayba\(^4\) also does not mention it and simply states

\(^1\) Murūj. VI, p.92.  
\(^2\) Fakhrī. p.137.  
\(^3\) Kūfī, fols. 226a-b.  
\(^4\) Maʿarif, p.372.
that Abū Salama paid homage to Abū ʾ1 'Abbas and led him to the Mosque. It is not clear what rôle Abū Muslim played in the matter of Abū ʾ1 'Abbas’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 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 'Abbasid succession finally made the attempt to deprive them of it when it seems already won. Professor C. Cahen 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 ʾ1 'Abbas was Ibrāhīm’s nominated successor whether by his last will or by 'Abbasid 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

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1 Dīna, p.368; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.422; Mūrūjī, VI, pp. 133-135.

2 Cahen, op.cit., p.330.

3 Akhbar, 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 Akhbar al-'Abbas¹ that when Qaḥṭaba was advancing towards Irāk he received a letter from Abu Salama informing him of the imprisonment of Ibrāhīm the Imam and urging him to hasten to take Kūfa, this indicates that prominent Khurāsānīs 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 Abu Salama should proclaim the succession of his legatee, but Abu 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 Abu 'll 'Abbās under his thumb, Abu Salama sent a messenger called Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aslam to three prominent ‘Alids:² Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad (al-Ṣādiq), Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan al-Maḥdī 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 Abu Salama the accounts vary in detail while agreeing on their hesitant attitude. Tabiri³ 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

¹Akhbar, fols. 179a-179b; see also Tab. III, p.35.
²Jah., p.86; Nubdha, fol. 290a f; Yaʿqūbī, II, 418-9; Murūj, VI, pp. 93-6. Fakhrī, pp. 137-8.
³Tab., III, p.34.
dispose mention their names, although it confirms Abu 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 Shi‘a of others not mine". Then he burned the letter and said to the messenger "What you have seen is the answer".¹ As for the old but ambitious ‘Abdallah b. al-Yasan he rejoiced, but was hesitant to claim it for himself. He wanted his son, Muhammed to be the future Imam, a matter which Abū Salama had not proposed. As to the last ‘Alid candidate ‘Umar b. Muhammed, the accounts differ.² 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-Mahdī 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 Khurasan your Shi‘a? Did you send Abū Muslim to Khurasan? 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-Mahdī replied that "the revolutionaries want my son Muhammed who is the Mahdī."³

¹Murūj, VI, p. 94.
³Jah., 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 ‘Abbāsid partisans were kept waiting for Abū Salama to proclaim the Imam. Mūsa b. Ka‘b and Abū al-Jalām b. ‘Aṭiyya al-Bāhilī prominent Khurasānī who had come with the army used to urge Abū Salama to proclaim the ‘Abbāsid 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". 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, Wāsīṭ and Ahwāz, and nominating governors for provinces and cities. Abū Salama’s antagonism towards the ‘Abbāsids manifested itself first when he tried to keep them out of Kūfa at Qasr Muqātāl and it was only after Abū’l ‘Abbās appealed to him he unwillingly let them take up residence in Kūfa. If Baladhurī’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. In fact, Abū Salama had concealed the presence of Abū’l ‘Abbās for about two months. When it was finally

1 Ansāb, fol. 782b; Tab. III, 23, 35 ff; F.H.A., pp. 198-9.
2 Ansāb, fol. 782b; Muq., fol. 71; see appendix in Van Vloten’s ‘Zur Abbasiden...’, Z.D.H.G., 1898.
3 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 than to design. One of the ‘AABBASID veterans ABU HUMAYD MUHAMMAD b. IBRAHIM AL-HIMYARI accidentally met SABIQ AL-KHWARAZMI a mawla of the ‘ABBASIDS whom he had known since the days of IBRAHIM THE IMAM. SABIQ told him of the presence of the ‘ABBASIDS at KUFA and the treatment ABU 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. ABU HUMAYD communicated these facts to ABU ’UJAHM who, in his turn, informed MUSA b. KA’b AL-TAMIIE their chief. It was only a swift move made by those pro-‘ABBASID veterans that saved the caliphate for the ‘ABBASIDS. A number of the KHURASANIS paid a visit to ABU ’U Abbas without ABU SALAMA’s consent and swore allegiance to him in RABI ’I 132.2 Obviously the internal strife between different political groupings of the KHURASANI movement especially between the two veterans of the ‘ABBASID revolution ABU SALAMA and ABU MUSLIM who had already rid himself of several revolutionary rivals of equal record, intensified as the revolution was approaching success. Both ABU SALAMA and ABU MUSLIM were men with great gifts for organisation and leadership and inspired great loyalty. At KUFA, significantly it was figures who were associated with ABU MUSLIM such as ABU ’UJAHM and ABU HUMAYD who proclaimed the caliphate of ABU ’U Abbas. ABU SALAMA

1 Ansab, fol. 783a; NUBDA, fol. 291a; JAH. p.87; Ya’qubi, II, 413; E.H.A., p.197; Muruj VI, 97-99.

2 KUFI, fol. 226b; Imama, 2, 226; Ma’ruf, 372; Ya’qubi, II, 417; Tab. III, 23 ABU MI’SHAR; Khajib, 10, 47; compare Ansab, fol. 784a, Tab. III, 23 Waqidi, 37; NUBDA, fol. 292a, Muruj, VI, 52. Dinawari states that al-Hasan b. Qahtaba got Abu ’U Abbas out, a statement not confirmed by other sources (p.367).
may have feared the situation which arose after Ibrahim’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 Abu Salama was not slow in recognizing the fait accompli. He is reported to have said to those who proclaimed the 'Abbasid 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".¹

Abu Salama, in fact, showed arbitrary and autocratic tendencies already at these early stages of the victory. According to the Imam wa'l siyasa² he used to show off his abilities and assert his authority over the Commander of the Faithful. Kufi³ too, speaking on the murder of Abu Salama, assumes that it was a retribution for his haughtiness and excessive influence. Abu Ja’far (al-Mansur) told Abu Muslim when he visited him in Khurasan "We complain to you about Abu 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 Dinawari, he was directing affairs single handed. Moreover al-Fakhri⁴ indicates that Abu 'l 'Abbas in those days had to bestow

¹Ya'qubi, II, 413, 419; Tab., III, p.28.
²Imama, p.231.
³Kufi, fol. 235b citing Mada'in. He never mentions Abu Salama’s 'Alid sympathies.
⁴Fakhri, p.138; E.I.² (Abu Salama).
all authority to him though he was aware that there were in the latter many things he could not but condemn.

However, Abu 'l-Abbas refrained from any attempt to assassinate Abu Salama at a time when it was clearly inopportune as the dust had not settled yet on the 'Abbasid revolution. The new caliph still needed time to consolidate himself. In his khutba on the 12th of Rabî' I he revealed the trends of policy of the new régime. Historical accounts differ to some extent on the exact text of the khutba, 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 'Abbasids 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 Marwâniyya). Quoting a verse of the Qur'an favoured by the revolutionaries he stressed that the 'Abbasid leadership would mean justice for the oppressed people. He reminded the people of Kufa that their (the 'Abbasids)

\footnote{Ansāb, fols. 784a-785a; Nubdha, fols. 292a-293a; Kūfī, fol. 226b; Dīnā, p.367; Tab., III, 29 ff; Ima'ma, 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-Saffā al-Mubārī but al-thā‘ir al-Mubār (the destructive rebel).

Prevented by an attack of illness from finishing his speech Abū al-‘Abbās was replaced by his uncle Da‘ūd b. ‘Alī who was famous for his eloquence. He reiterated the same assertions of the ‘Abbāsid right to the caliphate but in more impressive manner. Though he reminded the people of Kūfah that it was the Khurāsānis who had brought the ‘Abbāsids to power, he described the victory as theirs (the Kūfīs) adding "The Sultān is yours... therefore give us your allegiance and do not deceive yourselves". These two speeches prove that the ‘Abbāsids were deter-

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1. The assumption of the title "al-Saffā" 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-Saffā" in the sense of bloodsheder was also ascribed to Abū ‘l-‘Abbās. However it is generally ascribed in the latter sense to the notoriously cruel ‘Abdallah 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 ‘Abbāsid caliph. (Zubayrī, p.29; Imāma Cairo ed., p.232; Akhbar, fol. 66b; Muruj, VI, pp. 181, 182; Fakhrī, p.120; Bad‘, 6, p.73.

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 Khurasānis of their ḍhanīma won in the battlefield, a matter which was at the root of bitter resentment in Khurasan on the part of the Arab Muqātila. Abu Salama increased the 'Aṭā to 80 dirhams. Abu 'l-Abbās put it up to 100 dirhams. Historical accounts stress this issue. According to the author of the author of Imama wa'l siyasa Abu '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'ruf, we are not going to send you to war and /force/ you to stay there nor expose you to danger". These were, in fact, the very issues in which the Umayyad policy so keenly disappointed the Khurasānis and consequently those Irākis.

Abū Muslim vis-à-vis Abū Salama

Once Abū 'l-Abbās had held power, he was faced by the problem

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1 See Chapter I. See also Sha'ban, op.cit., pp. 60 ff, 140.

2 Ansāb, fol. 785a. See also Kufī, 227b.

3 Imama, 2, 226.

4 Ansāb, fol. 784a-784b.
of how to get rid of Abu Salama. Initially, however, he wanted Abu Salama to feel safe. He, therefore, accepted his apologies ostensibly with regard to his services in the da‘wa. Thus Abu Salama continued to exercise full authority which overlapped with the authority of the caliph. During those early days one notices that there were two men of great influence namely Abu Salama in Irāk and Abu Muslim in Khurāsān. 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 Akhbar al-‘Abbas to the effect that Ibrahim the Imam promised Abu Muslim and Abu Salama to give the former the governorates of Khurāsān, Sīstān, Jurjān, Qūmūs, Ray, Isbahan and Hamadān and the latter the provinces beyond Hamadān including Irāk, 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.

1 Imām, 2, 226; Tab., III, pp. 36-37.
2 Jah., p.86; Dīna, p.368; Kūfī, fols. 235a-b.
3 Akhbar, 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-Asqath al-Khuṣaʿī as governor of Fārs with orders to kill Abū Salama's appointee, which he did. 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. Other accounts reveal that Abū Muslim was jealous and apprehensive of his rival's influence in Iraq. According to Yaʿqūbī it was Abū Muslim who suggested to the new caliph that Abū Salama should be eliminated because of "His deceitful inimical nature". Dīnawārī states that Abū Muslim took it upon himself to murder Abū Salama without consulting others because of "his great authority". Also Masūdī 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 ʿAlī ʿAbbās refused. Finally Abū Muslim feared that Abū Salama might inflict bad things on him so he sent men who assassinated him." The account of the Imāma wa l-siyāsa is not irrelevant to this issue. It attributes the proclamation of Abū ʿAlī ʿAbbās to Abū Muslim who by swift action, surprised Abū Salama and frustrated his plans. Although the caliph might have consulted

1 Akhbar, fol. 186a; Tab., III, 72.
2 Akhbar, fol. 170b.
3 Yaʿqūbī, II, p.422.
4 Dinawārī, p.368; see also anonymous, fol. 13a.
5 Huruj, VI, pp. 133-136.
6 Imāma, p.225.
Abū Muslim on this issue, these accounts no doubt exaggerate the role 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. However, the turning point in his relationship with Abū Salama was the caliph's decision to move from the camp of Ḥammām A'yān to Ḥashimīyya. According to Baladhuri Abū ʿAbbās was advised by Abū Muslim to leave Kūfah which with its pro-ʿAlid sympathies was a dangerous ground for an ʿAbbasid caliph, thus the caliph left Kūfah. The enmity between Abū ʿAbbās 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, 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. Still other accounts ascribe the decision to

1. Ansāb, fol. 785b; Tab. III, p.37.
2. Ansāb, fol. 789b citing Madaʿini.
3. Dīna, p.368; Yaʿqūbī, II, 422.
the caliph himself.¹ It is the accounts of the third category that seem to correspond to the truth. Abu 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 Abu Muslim.² This move was expedient in that it would first compel Abu Muslim to disclose his real views, which could not be known to Abu ’1 ‘Abbás 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 Abu Muslim’s suspicions as disregard of his advice was likely to arouse them. The caliph finally decided to send his brother Abu Ja’far with a thirty men delegation to Khurasan to take the oath of allegiance from Abu Muslim and thank him for his good services and inform him of Abu Salama’s disloyalty. According to Baladhuri³ the caliph’s letter handed to Abu Muslim by Abu Ja’far contained not only information of Abu Salama’s treason, leaving it to Abu Muslim to punish the crime according to his own lights, but also veiled hints which indicated that the caliph wished Abu Salama to die. Thus apparently empowered to act as he thought fit, Abu Muslim was in fact only to execute the caliph’s order.

Abu Muslim could not have been more pleased to take this opportunity to rid himself of his powerful rival. He agreed to send Murár b. Anas

¹Jah., p.90; Imáma, 2, 231-2; Ansáb, fol. 792b; Kufi, fol. 235b. Tab. III, 59; F.H.A., pp. 212-213. See also late historians: Ibar, 3, 376; Bad’, 6, 71; Bidaya, 10, 56. The author of Akhbar al-Duwal al-Munqati’a relates that the caliph killed Abu Salama then sent Abu Ja’far to apologize to Abu Muslim (fol. 101b); E.I.² (Abu ’1 ‘Abbás).

²Ansáb, fols. 792b-793a citing Ishaq b. ‘Alí; Jah., p.90; Imáma, 2, 231-2; Ya’qubi, II, 422; Tab. III, 59; F.H.A., p.212f., Ḥug., fol. 76b. (cont.)
al-Ḍabī to assassinate him.\(^1\) Evidently to confuse the issue Abū 'l-Abbas 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.\(^2\) Thus when the murder became a fait accompli in Rajab 132 A.H. it was publicly ascribed to the Kharijites.\(^3\) 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:\(^4\)

\[\text{\textit{another recited}}:\]

\[\text{\textit{Ann al-inayr ar-razi al-khafir \textit{aurukhum dina al-ain muqawwara}}.}\]

Abū 'l-Abbas 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 "The death of Abū Salama was full of deceit towards God, his prophet and the Imam, curse him."\(^6\)

Abū Muslim and the struggle for power in Khurasan

Once Abū Salama was out of the way, the caliph's influence and

\(^{\text{(cont.)}}\)

\(^1\)Ansāb, fol. 793b; Jah., p.90; Tab., III, p.60.

\(^2\)Tab., III, p.60.

\(^3\)F.H.A., p.213.

\(^4\)Ansāb, fol. 793a.

\(^5\)Tab. III, 59; Tanbāh, p.339; Murūj, VI, p.136; 'Asākir, 4, 377.

\(^6\)On these and other comments see Ansāb 793a-b, 794a; Murūj, VI, 136; Bidayt, 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 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 ʿl Abbās appointed his uncle ʿĪsā b. ʿAlī governor of Fārs where Abū Muslim had already appointed Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath who had killed Abū Salama's appointee to the same post and seized the governorship. Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath was reluctant to accept ʿĪsā b. ʿAlī, but prepared relying on Abū Muslim's orders to kill anyone who claimed the position. In the last moment, however, he refrained from killing ʿĪsā b. ʿAlī and was content to take his oath that he would not undertake from then on any governmental function except the Jihad.  

The events preceding Abū Muslim's murder are of a complex nature and involve others of the same order such as the clash between daʿīs of different orientation on the one hand, and these daʿīs and the 'Abbāsid caliphs on the other. Abū Muslim had become the most powerful man in

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1 This was the term used by the caliph to indicate the appointees of Abū Salama (Ansāb, fol. 806a citing Mādāʿīnī).

2 Tab., III, p. 72; Imāma, p. 239; Dīnā, pp. 373-4. Very interesting is the remark of the late historian Ibn Adhari, 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 Marwan b. Muḥammad, Abū Salama al-Khalīl, Abū Muslim and Abū ʿl Abbās. As for Abū Muslim he was al-Sultān al-ʿAjam. No orders of his went unheeded. (Ibn Adhari, p. 64)
Khurasān, but his influence made itself also felt at the court of the caliph. Many accounts\(^1\) describe Abu 'l Jahm b. 'Aṭīyya al-Bāhilī as Abu Muslim's deputy or eye at the court. The caliph's astute tactics in ascertaining Abu Muslim's attitude in the affair of Abu Salama have already been pointed out. It was in connection with Abu Salama's affair that Abu Ja'far the brother of the caliph made his journey to Khurasān, but the journey had more than one purpose. Certain points of Abu 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\(^2\) which put the visit after the murder of Abu Salama limit its purpose to securing the Bay'ā of Abu Muslim for the new caliph and his heir Abu Ja'far. It is true that this was the professed objective of the visit, but earlier and more authentic accounts\(^3\) reveal that its main aim was to sound Abu Muslim's opinion on Abu Salama's fate and to assess the situation in Khurasān. These accounts emphasise that the visit took place before the murder of Abu Salama. The account of Kufī\(^4\) is unique among early historians. Although he places the visit before the murder of Abu Salama, he does not speak of his conspiracy or 'Alid tendencies. On the contrary he states that Abu Ja'far accused Abu Salama of conceit and authoritarian leanings.

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\(^1\)Jah., p.93; Imāma, Cairo. ed. 1904, p.247.

\(^2\)Tab., III, 61; Jah., p.89; Dīna, p.372; Ya'qūbī, II, 420.

\(^3\)Ansāb, fols. 792b-793a; Tab., III, pp. 58-59, citing Mada'īnī; Kufī, fol. 235a; F.H.A., p.212; Fakhrī, p.138; Muq., fol. 87b.

\(^4\)Kufī, 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. \(^1\) 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 Khurasan. 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-Khuza'ī, the chief Naqīb of the 'Abbāsid da'wa in Khurasan 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 Tabari and the author of Imāma wa'l siyāsa, \(^2\) Sulaymān al-Khuza'ī got in touch with the 'Alid 'Ubaydallah b. al-Ḥussayn al-'Araj, who was in the entourage of Abū Ja'far, and said to him: "We hoped that your [the 'Alid] affair would be accomplished. If you wish call upon us for what you desire." The 'Alid al-'Araj 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 Imam had empowered Abū Muslim to "kill whoever you suspect". Balādhurī, \(^3\) 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

\(^1\) Tab., III, p.59; compare Kūfī, fol. 235a.

\(^2\) Imāma, pp. 238-40; Tab., III, p.61.

\(^3\) Ansāb, fol. 800a.
against him [Abū Muslim]." Whether the chief Naqīb of the 'Abbāsid 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 Akhbar al-'Abbasī confirms this view. It is reported that Abū 'l-Mughīra Khalīd b. Kathīr the Tamimite was chosen Naqīb but Sulayman al-Khuza'ī replaced him by his son-in-law Lā'hīz b. Qurayza which enraged Khalīd. It is in this situation that the political motives of the execution of Sulayman al-Khuza'ī should be sought as Khalīd was one of the witnesses at the arraignment of Sulayman. 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-Khuza'ī was put to death at the same time as his father on the accusation of being Khidāshite, i.e. expressing heterodox and extremist opinions. 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 wherever he is."

1Akhbar, fol. 104a.

2Ansāb, fol. 800b; Muq., fol. 79b. According to Ibn Khaldūn Sulaymān al-Khuza'ī was killed because he protested against the murder of Abū Salama (3/376).
he is7 and do not kill him" and "He only does what he wants".1

The 'Abbasids were worried by Abū Muslim's growing influence not only in Khūrāsān but also in the whole eastern part of the empire. His effect was even spread to the court of Abū '1 'Abbās. It is true that his influence was potentially dangerous but did he, in fact, entertain plans to overthrow the 'Abbasid régime? Abū Muslim had given numerous proofs of his loyalty to the 'Abbasids during the da'wa. He had complied with the wishes of the 'Abbasids for whom he had won as many followers as he could. But once victory was achieved many groups fell out with the new régime. Khūrāsān became, in fact, the scene of anti-'Abbasid 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 Rawandiyya rebels of Balkh or the 'Alid rebels of Bukhāra or the Persian rebel Bahāfarīd.

In order to assess Abū Muslim's loyalty to the 'Abbasid's it is necessary to examine his record in Khūrāsān.

Sharīk al-Mahri's revolt

Not long after the 'Abbasid victory, Sharīk b. Shaykh al-Mahri2 rebelled in Bukhāra protesting against 'Abbasid policies and declaring "We have not followed the family of Muḥammad to shed blood and do

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1Asma' al-Mughṭālīn, p.193; Tab., III, 61. See also Imāma, 240; Dina, p.373; Kūfī, fol. 235b.

2On his rising see Narṣakhi, 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-Maṣrī.
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." The Arab governors of Bukhara, Khwārizm and Buzm 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 so much as it reveals pro-'Alid sentiments among a section of the revolutionaries in Khurāsān on the one hand and the loyalty of Abu Muslim to the new 'Abbāsid régime on the other hand. Abu Muslim immediately sent Ziyād b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuza‘ī 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 Ḥanāfī wa’il siyāsa⁰ they were treated mildly as the prisoners were neither killed nor made slaves but freed and warned not to repeat it again. While Narshākhī³ gives rather exaggerated picture

¹Narshākhī, p.62.
²Imāma, 1904 ed., p.265.
³Narshākhī, 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 Samarkand 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.¹

The rising of Ziyād b. Šalīḥ al-Khuzaʿī

Meanwhile Abū Muslim pursued the policy of Jihad, that is the same policy as the Umayyads in Transoxania.² The main commanders involved in the conquest were Khalīd al-Dhuhlī, Ziyād b. Šalīḥ al-Khuzaʿī and Ḥās 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. Šalīḥ 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 Baladhurī he had insulted Abū Muslim declaring "We have

¹Sadighi, op.cit., p.43 (footnote 5).
²Tab., 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, and Abū Muslim is nothing but oppressor and tyrant, he behaves like a tyrant and dissident. He is corrupting the people of Khurāsān. This sounds as if he was fomenting a rising rather than engaging in it, but Tabari 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 Da‘ūd Khalid al-Dhuḥlī. 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 Sughd and Bukhara but the caliph sent him the nomination by Sabī‘ b. al-Na‘mān al-Azādī, 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. Tabari is rather vague about it only stating "Ziyād used ‘Ahd from Abū ʿAbās for being governor". He does not say whether this ‘Ahd was for Sughd or Khurāsān.

1Ansab, fol. 800b citing Abū al-Ṣalt al-Khurasānī.
2Tab., 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 Ḳurāṣān 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 Būkharā who killed him and delivered his head to Aḥū Muslim.

With the death of Ziyād al-Khūzāʾī another dāʾī had perished. It is symptomatic of the caliph's outlook that on hearing of Ziyād's death, he congratulated Aḥū Muslim on his success and expressed his approval of the killing of Ziyād.¹

The execution of Ḩsā b. Māhān

Aḥū Muslim had yet to face another mutiny, that led by Ḩsā b. Māhān. Ḩsā was an early ‘Abbāsid partisan.² He had served after the victory with Aḥū Muslim in quelling the risings in Ḳurāṣān. According to Tābarī he fell out with Aḥū Muslim and Khalīd al-Dhuhlī on matters of policy. He accused the latter in particular of partiality and Ṣagabiyya for the Arabs and particularly of his own tribe.³ However, Baladḥurī states clearly that Ḩsā was a close friend of Ziyād and shared his opinions in many points and plans. He declared that the caliph had blamed Aḥū 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 Ḳurāṣān.⁴ Both accounts

¹ Ansāb, fol. 800b.
² Akhībār, folg. 103a, 104a.
³ Tāb., III, 83.
⁴ Ansāb, fol. 800b.
agree that Abu Muslim ordered Khalid to kill 'Isa who was tricked into visiting Khalid's camp and killed by his soldiers. It cannot be established with certainty whether 'Isa 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 'Isa and asking Abu Muslim to retaliate on Khalid by killing him. But Abu Muslim, unable to dispense with the services of his loyal commander, wrote to the caliph trying to justify Khalid's conduct and reminding the caliph somewhat ironically that "had 'Isa been left alone he would have done the same as Ziyad in inciting the people to mutiny and dissension".

The rising of Mansur b. Jamhur

Another revolutionary who had been previously an Umayyad governor of Iraq then defected and joined several revolts, the last of which was the 'Abbasid one. He was confirmed as governor of Sind in 132/749-50 by Abu 'Abbas, 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 Baladhurī's and Ibn Habīb's accounts though brief are revelatory of the friction between Abu Muslim and the caliph's authority. Abu Muslim took the initiative in appointing Mufallas b. al-'Abdī, governor of Sind and Tukharistan.

The caliph's governor Mansur opposed the appointment and killed Mufallas. This was developed into an armed rising staged by the indignant

1 Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fols. 232, 251, 252; Asma’al Mughṭalīn, p. 184; Tab., III, 72.

2 Futūḥ, vol. 3, p. 343; Asma’al Mughṭalīn, p. 184; compare Khalīfa's account where he states that Mufallas was sent by the caliph (Tarīkh, fol. 288); see also Dīnā, p. 374.
tribal chief Mangūr b. Jamhūr. Musa b. Ka‘b was sent out to crush it. Mangūr fled and died of thirst in the desert. The only difficulty here is who sent Musa b. Ka‘b to crush the rebellion. According to Baladhuri it was Abu Muslim, while Khalifa b. Khayyat, Tabari and Kitab al-‘Uyun Wa‘l hadā‘ik maintain that it was the caliph himself who sent Musa with 3,000 Arabs and Mawāli from Bāγra especially 1,000 Taminites. One is inclined to believe Baladhuri but even if it was the caliph who sent Musa it is not inconsistent with his policy as exemplified before. He had to act against Mangūr in order not to arouse Abu Muslim’s distrust and especially as the revolt was against the ‘Abbāsid authority. Furthermore several aspects of Mangūr’s controversial and very inconsistent personality deserve attention and might help to elucidate the nature of his rising. One of the prominent Syrian Kālbita leaders, he was instrumental in bringing Yazīd III and was consequently appointed governor of Irāq in 125 A.H. He immediately sent his brother Mansūr to Khurāsān where he was defied by Nāṣr b. Sayyār. However when Marwān II came to the throne Mansūr figured among the forces of opposition. He swore allegiance to ‘Abdallah b. Mu‘awiya but when the latter was driven out of Irāq Mansūr joined the Kharijītes and fought Marwān’s governor of Irāq Ibn Hubayra. Later on Mansūr again joined ‘Abdallah b. Mu‘awiya in Fars and finally fled with his brother to Sind. With the accession of the ‘Abbāsids, Mansūr was rewarded with the governorship of Sind in 132.

1Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 228; Tab., III, p.80; F.I.H.A., p.211.
2Tab., III, 1767, 1778 citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr.
3On the revolts which Abu Musli m had to face in Khurāsān, the author of F.,H.A., p.211, makes this comment:
The appointment of a new governor by Abu 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 Abu Muslim but also the central 'Abbasid authority.'

Abu Muslim at his prime

Abu Muslim faced many dangerous revolts in Khurasan. Those revolts were led by 'Abbasid da'is, 'Alid sympathizers, Rawandiyya sectarians and the Zoroastrian reformist Bihafarid. He emerged from the turmoil the undisputed leader of Khurasan.

Now in view of the growing authority of Abu Muslim the caliph could no longer stand idly by. The caliph often tried to test Abu Muslim's loyalty. Thus he ordered Abu 'l Jahm to suggest to him to visit the court and when Abu Muslim requested a permission to do so the caliph's reply was "Your stay in Khurasan is vital to keep the province under control." As fear of the visit would have been indicative of Abu 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 Abu Muslim's authority and even attempts to assassinate him were made at regular intervals. The first of these attempts was suggested by Khalid b. Barmak. He advised the caliph to order Abu Muslim

1Jah., pp. 93-94.
2Ibid.
to dismiss from his army those who were not from Āhl 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 Khurāsānī but probably an Iṣbāḥanī. The second attempt was made by Sabī‘ al-Asdī on his visit to Khurāsān. 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‘īn.

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 role 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. 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 Abū Ja'far, the strong man behind the caliph, did not want to leave Abū Muslim alone.

1 See above p. 192

2 Ya‘qūbī, II, 433; Tab., III, 86.

3 Kūfī, fol. 236a.
with the caliph in Irāq while he was in a far away province. As for Tabari¹ 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 Nishāpur and Ray.² According to Imāma wa'l siyāsa they were "10,000 soldiers of Ahl Khurāsān eligible for 'Aja' in addition to the A'ajim."³ 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."⁴ The caliph first agreed but then ordered Abū Ja'far to refrain from executing his plan. Abū Muslim's caravan proceeded 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 Irāq 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-'Arabi citing Sa'd b.

¹Tab., III, 87.
³Imāma, 2, 252-3. The interesting point about this, somehow, vague account is the differentiation between Ahl Khurāsān and the 'Ajam which if authentic supplies yet another evidence of the non-racial nature of the 'Abbāsid revolution and the importance of the Arab element in it.
⁴Tab., III, p. 85; citing Mada'ini; Imāma, 2, pp. 252f.
al-Ŷasan it was when Abū Jaʿfar was about to order Ḥāyya b. Abū
al-Raḥmān to kill him. However he was dissuaded from doing so by
Iṣḥāq al-ʿUqaylī and Yazīd b. Aṣīd. 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
speaking of the Bayʿa of Abū Jaʿfar relates that on the way back to
Iraq Abū Jaʿfar overtook Abū Muslim. He met Muḥammad b. al-Ŷusayn
al-ʿAbdī who brought the news of the caliph's death together with a
letter from ʿĪsā b. Rūṣa concerning the Bayʿa to himself as a new
caliph. Then Abū Jaʿfar wrote to Abū Muslim prompting him to hurry.
He "came consoled with him and joined him to Kūfā". Under the heading
"the death of Abū Muslim" Tabarī relates the second version of the
journey. He states that as Abū Muslim was ahead of Abū Jaʿfar on the
way back from Mecca, he learned of the caliph's death earlier than Abū
Jaʿfar. He wrote him, therefore, a letter of condolence but did not
congratulate him on his accession to caliphate; nor did he send his Bayʿa.

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1 Ansāb, fol. 505; Mugārīb, fol. 88a.
2 Tab., III, p. 87.
3 OP.cit., pp. 99-100, citing Modāʿini.
He even did not stop so that Abu Ja'far might catch up with him, nor did he return to him. The second version of Tabari is confirmed by Baladhuri\(^1\) who asserts that Abu Muslim was ahead of Abu Ja'far and he neither stopped nor congratulated him. It is worth noting that in the last conversation between Abu Ja'far and Abu 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".\(^2\) Other historians\(^3\) quote one or the other account, but according to Ya'qubi\(^4\) there was nothing unusual in the behaviour of Abu Muslim throughout the journey. The author of the Imam wa'l siyasa states that when he wrote to Abu Ja'far he put his own name first instead of beginning according to custom with Abu Ja'far's name. Then he wrote to Abu 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 Khurasanis to know that I have high status with the Commander of the Faithful".\(^5\) Kitab al-`Uyun wa'l hada'iq agrees that Abu Muslim preceded Abu Ja'far on the journey back but states that he returned to condole with him and promised him help in face of possible dangers.\(^6\) Whatever the case it seems that

\(^{1}\)Ansab, fol. 504.

\(^{2}\)Tab., III, p. 113.

\(^{3}\)Nug., fol. 87b; Ayni, fol. 22b-23a; Bad., 76; Bidaya, 10, 57-8; 'Ibar, 3, 38.

\(^{4}\)Ya'qubi, II, 436-7.

\(^{5}\)Imama, 2, 253.

\(^{6}\)F.I.A., p. 215.
they did not meet on the road and when the news of the caliph's death arrived Abu Muslim delayed the Bay' a for a few days 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 'Abbasid caliphate when widespread disturbances could be expected on the part of ambitious pretenders of both 'Abbasids and 'Alid sides. He, therefore, refrained from any venture and ordered Abu Muslim to proceed to al-Anbar and keep it under control.

It was at this critical moment that Abu Muslim revealed for the first time his enmity towards Abu Ja'far. According to Baladhuri, Kufi and Tabari, Abu Muslim instigated the heir apparent 'Isa b. Musa to supplant Abu Ja'far before he established himself firmly on the throne. If the account of Baladhuri is to be believed Abu Muslim said to 'Isa "You are the Wasi of the Imam and you had a better claim than Abu Ja'far," while Kufi's version is "Oh Abu Musa b. Musa why did not you demand this matter after Abu 'Abbas 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." 'Isa, however, declined the offer with determination.

At any rate, the time was not propitious for quarrels as Abu Ja'far was almost immediately faced with the rebellion of his uncle Abdallah b. 'Ali in Syria. Considering the tension and smouldering enmity between

1Tab., III, p.90, citing Nadā'īn. Abu Muslim already knew that the only candidate for the caliphate was Abu Ja'far (see Tab., III, p.90; Dīnawārī, 368, citing al-Ḥaytham b. 'Adi; Ansāb, fol. 505, 508).

2Dīnawārī attributes to Abu Muslim another unconfirmed action. He states that 'Isa b. 'Adi, the uncle of al-Mansur rebelled and proclaimed himself caliph at Kufa but when Abu Muslim arrived in the vanguard of al-Mansur's caravan from Mecca he surrendered to him and the mutiny was (cont.)
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 Khurasan. 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. Qaṭṭaba was ordered to leave Arminya with an army for Syria and keep an eye on Abū Muslim's activities.  

Gālib 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. 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 Khurasan under the pretext of sending troops to the new caliph to quell the rebellion and that controlling Khurasan is more important than this minor incident.  

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 'Iṣā b. 'Alī was the most loyal and least ambitious uncle of the caliph (Ansāb, 580, Dīnā, 379, Ya‘qūbī, II, 437). He is depicted as "of good character and not greedy for power" (Khatīb, II, p.147). That is why he remained a close friend of al-Mansūr who had no fears whatsoever about him.

1 Ansāb, fol.505; Kūfī, fol. 236b; Tab., III, p.100 citing Māḏā‘īnī; Muq., fol. 87b; Aynī, fol. 23a.  
2 Tab., III, 95, citing al-Haytham b. 'Adī. 

3 Ansāb, fol. 763a; Tab., III, 95, citing al-Haytham b. 'Adī.
nothing to do with those two men. The idea is to go to Khurasan and leave those two rams 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." However, in the long run Abu 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 Abu Muslim’s relations with the caliph. According to Tabari, al-Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba once voiced, in a report to the caliph, his suspicions of Abu Muslim who "mocked and despised the letters of the caliph". Commenting on the report al-Mūryānī the wāzīr of Abu Ja‘far said "We accuse Abu 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." Baladhuri states that al-Manṣūr once commented "We fear Abu Muslim more than we had feared Abu Salama". According to Kufī, 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 Abu Muslim".

The trouble really started when al-Manṣūr sent a delegation to

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1 Ya‘qūbī, II, p.438.
2 Tab., III, p.101.
3 Muq., fol. 93a, citing Baladhuri.
4 Kufī, 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. 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 role as played throughout the da'wa has been exaggerated.

Discussing the personality of Abū Muslim, Moscati 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 Kufi 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 but Abū Muslim refused the offer considering that Khurasan was his. All early sources agree that Abū Muslim decided to go back

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1 Op.cit., fol. 238b; Ansāb, fol. 520; Imāma, 2, 256; 'Uyun, 1, 26; Yaqūbi, II, p.439; Tab., III, pp.103-104; Dīna, p.375; F.H.A., p.219; Fakhrī, p.150.
2 Moscati, Studi sur Abū Muslim, III, op.cit., 1950, p.97.
3 Kufi, fol. 239a.
4 Ansāb, fol. 520 citing Mada'īni; Tab., III, p.103.
5 Kufi, fol. 239a; Tab. III, pp. 103, 105; Imāma, 2, 256; Muruq, VI, p.179; Ibn Isandiyar, p.112.
to Khurasan and he had no intention of meeting the caliph again.

Among the late historians Ibn al-'Adîm gives a rather unique account as he relates that Abu Muslim was on his way to meet Abu Ja'far but the arrival of the caliph's messenger infuriated him and made him change his mind.\(^1\) While he was heading for Pâlwan Abu 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 correspondence". Abu 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 wazîrs 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..."\(^2\) The caliph's answer was cautious, he referred with praise to Abu Muslim's great services and concluded by saying "I beg God to protect you from the Devil and his thoughts..."\(^3\)

Abu Muslim was not convinced of the caliph's intention, he persisted in his plan of going to Khurasan 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-

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\(^1\) Zubda, I, 58

\(^2\) Tab., III, p.104.

\(^3\) Jah., p.111; Tab., III, 104, citing Mada'inî; Fakhri, p.151.
worthy narrators. Historians quote a notorious letter which is said to have been sent by Abu Muslim to the caliph. He wrote:

I have chosen a man (your brother) as the Imam and guide in all that God has ordained to his creatures. He was thought a man of knowledge due to his kinship with the Prophet. He found me un instructed in the Quran 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 unsheathe 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.

Early sources except Kufi agree, more or less, on the text of the letter. The version of Kufi 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 Kufi, and the lack of confirmation by other versions, this additional note cannot be credited as authentic. Scholars differ 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 Abu Muslim could have written this letter and then allowed himself to meet Abu Ja'far. But

1Tab., III, 105 citing Mada'ini; Ansah, fol. 522; Imama, 2, 255; Kufi, fol. 239b-240a; Khatib citing Ali b. al-Ma'afi, 10, 208; Mag., fol. 94a; al-'Ayni citing Sulii fol. 26b; Bidaya, 10, 65-69. 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.

2Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, II, pp. 28-29; E.I.1 (Abu 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. The caliph, who displayed 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. The invitation was in a form of a message delivered by a delegation led by men like Jarīr al-Bajlı and Abū Ḥamayd al-Marwūz who after using persuasive methods warned Abū Muslim in solemn terms that a refusal would have dire consequences. Despite the warnings of his trustees Abū Muslim let himself be deceived into thinking that there was a way back open to him. He sent, therefore, his confidant Abū Ishaq Mālik b. al-Haytham al-Khaṣā'ī to ascertain whether the conditions in the caliph's camp were favourable.

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1 It was probably this which led Kurī 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.

2 Ansāb, fol. 520, citing Madaʾīnī, Tab., III, 105 citing Madaʾīnī.

3 Tab., III, p.104; Ṣāma, 2, 257. His first reply to al-Bajlı was Ṣalhī, p.151.

4 Bayān, 2, 96; 'Uyun, 1, 30; F.H.A., p.221; Kurūj, VI, 178f.
Abū Ja'far promised Abū Isḥāq the governorship of Khurasan for life if he succeeded in bringing Abū Muslim to him; and meanwhile appointed a new governor of Khurasan, Khalīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuḥālī, and of Syria, ʿUqaylī. 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 Khurasan to Abū Muslim in which he warns him not to come to Khurasan in defiance of the caliph's order. He states "We had not revolted referring to the 'Abbasid revolution' to disobey the caliph's of God and the Prophet's family." Šuṭṭ points out to the disagreement between him and some of his commanders. Kūfī relates that when Abū Muslim reached Mosul on his way to Khurasan 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." Moreover al-Ŷasan b. Qaṭṭāba had already held back his army on the pretext of illness.

1Tab. III, 107-8; F.H.A., p.221.
2Ta'qūbī, II, p.440.
3Tab., III, p.107.
4ʿAynī, fol. 26b.
5Kūfī, fol. 239b.
The execution of Abu 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-Mada'in and not through Khurāsan. When he reached the caliph's camp with a body of his army, he was met by 'Isā b. Musa who assured him that he was safe. 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 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-Mansūr, 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 Abu 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.

1 Ansāb, 522, Azhar b. Zuhayr; Tab., III, 112; 'Aynī, citing Abu 'l Yaqzan, fol. 28a.
2 Ansāb, fols. 523-524; Kūfī, 240b-241a; Tab., III, pp. 113-115; Ya qubi II, p. 441; Imāma, 259; Dīna, pp. 377-8; Hurūj, VI, 180; F.I.A., p. 223; anonymous, fols. 13a, 16a; 'Aynī, fol. 30a.
The enmity between them went back to the days of the first caliph Abū '1 '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 '1 'Abbās when he visited it on his way to Mecca. 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. Then he blamed him for preceding him on the pilgrimage. He repudiated him for having called him on certain occasions by his proper name, 'Abbālāh, "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

1Kūfī, fol. 240b.
2Op.cit., 240b; 'Aynī, fol. 25a. This is historically confirmed.
3Tab., III, p.113; Kūfī, fol. 240b; 'Aynī, fol. 30 a. This is historically confirmed too.
enemies a kunya."¹ Historians relate several of these polemics between the caliph and Abu Muslim, most of them, however, insignificant.

However what al-Mansur seems to have regarded as the most serious charge of all was that Abu Muslim had collected money and property and distributed part of it as ghanîma after the defeat of 'Abdallah b. 'Ali in Syria,² a matter about which there is surely nothing wrong as the ghanîma should be, after taking the fifth of the state, distributed among the conquering troops. However, the question of ghanîma seems to have vexed Abu Ja'far on more than one occasion. Towards the end of the meeting Abu Ja'far brought two grave charges against Abu Muslim asking him: "Why did you kill Sulayman b. Kathîr al-Khuza'î after all his great services and he was our Naqîb before we permitted you to do so,"³ and "why did you decide to return to Khurasan without our permission?"⁴ Abu 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 Khurasan she would have triumphed in the same way.⁵

¹Aynî citing Baladhuri fol. 30a; see also Ansâb, 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 'Adhari describes the Umayyad dynasty as follows:

²Tab., III, 114, Mada'ini.

³Tab., III, 114; F.H.A., p.223. According to Baladhuri (Ansâb, fol. 526, Mada'ini) al-Mansur also reproached him for killing Aflah al-Fazârî, one of the prominent Arabs in Khurasan. Significant is the reason given by Abu Muslim for al-Fazârî's execution. He replied "I was a man of integrity and pride; I feared he might create troubles" (Ansâb, fol.526, Mada'ini).

⁴Tab., III, 113.

⁵Tab., III, 115; Ansâb, fol. 523; Kufî, fol. 240b-241a; Himma, p.259; Dina, p.376; Nurî, VI, 182f; Fakhri, p.153.
He added "The merit lay with us in the 'Abbasids and with our state. 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, 'Uthman b. Nahlik with other soldiers appeared. While Abu 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?" 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 Abu Muslim, it is obvious that he had set himself up as the sole authority not only of Khurasan but of the eastern provinces. He had reserved for himself the right of appointing governors to the provinces as far as Fars and Sind. He even had a say in the affairs of the court. To recall some: The assassination of Sulayman b. Hisham, of Ibn Hubayra and of Abu Salama al-Khallal, prove how powerful he was. Judging by the nature of Abu Ja'far he could not tolerate such power beside him. According to some accounts Abu Ja'far said to Abu Muslim:

\[\text{According to another account he said to him (you are considered the greatest but in reality you are not).} \]

Jahiz relates that Abu Ja'far quoted two verses before killing Abu Muslim;
these verses admirably illustrate the fears of the caliph: "Abū Muslim you have three qualities which render you liable to die: disobedience, vainglory, and demagogy." It is in this perspective that the murder of Abū Muslim must be viewed. There is no proof of heterodox or 'Alīd 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-'Alīd or Zandaqa tendencies. He may have been potentially dangerous but not "heterodox" or an 'Alīd partisan. He himself allowed nothing to indicate that he favoured any faith other than Islam and the 'Abbāsid cause. As to the extremist ideas attributed to him, it has already been mentioned that it was 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid practitioner. Thus the first to be accused of this extremist tendency should be the 'Abbāsid Imām and not a mere 'Abbāsid propagandist like Abū Muslim.

As to the 'Alīd tendency attributed to him by some late Muslim historians and modern scholars, it is true that Abū Muslim spent part of his life in 'Alīd circles especially in his youth in Kūfa when he associated with the tribe of 'Ijl and with Abū Musa al-Sarrāj. He even participated in the pro-'Alīd rising of al-Huḍhīra in Kūfa. But once won over by the 'Abbāsids he proved loyal to the new da'wa, and there is no shred of evidence to prove his 'Alīd tendency. It is worth mentioning that only late authors accused him of this tendency. According

1On these remarks see Bayān, 3, 367; Kūfī, p.241a; Tab., III, 125; 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 (cont.)
Dhahabi Abu Muslim decided, after crushing ‘Abdallahu’s revolt, to go to Khurasan and install an ‘Alid caliph.¹ Shahrastâni calls Abu Muslim a caliph maker and relates that having thrown the Umayyad, he contacted Ja’far al-Ṣadiq the Husaynid and offered him the caliphate but the latter refused the offer so Abu Muslim turned to Abu ‘l-‘ABBâs and conferred on him the caliphate.² Others associate his name with those who outwardly professed Islam, gained the favour of the Shi’â by pretending to love the prophet’s family and protesting against the injustice done to ‘Alî.³ Unfounded as they are those accounts are not to be credited. Moreover they are contradictory with early accounts on the anti-‘Alid attitude of Abu Muslim. In a letter written by Abu Muslim to Abu ‘l-‘ABBâs he advised him to shift from Kufa saying “The people of Kufa are the Shi’â of the Commander of the Faithful only by name not by action. Their feelings are with the family of ‘Ali... So do not elevate them to the rank of your neighbours for their house is not yours.”⁴ This account as well as his policy in Khurasan after the ‘ABBâsid accession to power are ample evidences of Abu Muslim’s loyalty to the new regime.

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¹Dhahabi, Duwal, vol. 1, p.70. According to al-‘Aynî, Abu Isâq said to Abu Muslim who was on his way to Khurasan, “Abu Ja’far blames you

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³See also Imama, 260; Ansab, fol. 526; Hus., fol. 95a. Interesting in this respect is Jahiz who put Abu Muslim in the same category of al-Ḥajjaj (Hayyan, 4, p.429).

⁴(cont.) be the ruin of the world” (‘Uyun, 1,93; Jah., p.111; Dina, p.373; Hurrîj, VI, p.175; ‘Iqd, vol. 1, p.93, vol. 2, p.130); another commented łąاسّر ُالْبَسْطِّينِ عَلَى الْإِبْنِيَّةِ (Tab., III, 116).

(cont.)
Undeniably is the existence and rôle of court intrigues and political groupings which aggravated the tension between the caliph and Abu Muslim. This is reflected in the reply of Abu Muslim to a question by the caliph. "They [referring to his enemies] have lied to you."1 Furthermore, when for reasons unknown to us, Abu Muslim asked the caliph, before marching towards 'Abdallah to arrest and punish 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Azdi, Sālih b. al-Haytham and Khalid b. Barmaq,2 Nor can it be denied that al-Furyānī played a decisive rôle in all the proceedings which led to the murder of Abu Muslim.3 The caliph bribed Abu 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 account4 sums of 1,000 dirhams Afa' 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"5 They refrained

1 'Aynī, citing Baladhurī, fol. 30a.
2 Ansāb, fols. 789b-790a.
3 Tab., III, 101-3; Jah., 111-112.
from causing trouble because, as Jāhiz\(^1\) puts it, "They were far away from their country (Khurasan) and were surrounded by enemies (the caliph's army). They, therefore, gave in and capitulated." It is interesting to conclude this episode of Abu Muslim's career by quoting Abu Ja'far who is said to have been asked about Abu 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."\(^2\)

Abu 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.\(^3\) He became

(continuation)

\(^{1}\)Bayān, 3, 368.

\(^{2}\)Ansāb, fol. 510; Nādā'īnī; Muq., fol. 90a.

\(^{4}\)Imāma, p. 260.

\(^{5}\)Tab., III, 117; Ya‘qūbi, II, 441; Dīna, p. 379; Fakhri, 153.

The manner in which historians compare the 'Abbasid 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 Abu Muslim is concerned, al-Haytham b. 'Adī compares 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan with al-Mangur and relates that 'Abd al-Malik was the most competent of the Umayyads while Abu Ja'far was the most competent of the 'Abbasids 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-Mangur killed Abu Muslim under his tent and there were only sheets between him and Ahl Khurasan". Imāma, 2, 262; Jah., p. 122.

\(^{3}\)Melikoff, Abu Muslim..., idem, La Geste de Melik..., pp. 49-51, see also index; Menage; B.S.O.A.S., 1962, p. 172, 1964, pp. 361-363.

Even Jamal al-Dīn al-Afghānī was an admirer of Abu 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 (milāl-va duval) and the cause of their ascent and decline and their rising and setting, and I have considered the great deeds that have emulated (continuation)
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 'Abbāsīd rule. However this does not necessarily imply that Abu 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 Abu Muslim, after the 'Abbāsīd accession to power, had acted many a time in his character of 'Abbāsīd governor.

The rising of Bassām b. Ibrāhīm in 133/750-751.

Bassām, first associated with the Umayyad governor of Khurāsān Nağr b. Sāyyār then defected to Abu Muslim, was one of the early 'Abbāsīd partisans. He was one of the commanders in Qahtaba's army which invaded Irāq, then he was stationed in Syria with the Khurāsānīs under the command of 'Abdallah b. 'Alī.¹

(cont.) from individual men which are worthy of strong wonder and awe - until my attention fell in passing on the life of Abu Muslim of Khurāsānian stock, who with high purpose and skill extirpated, root and branch a government like the government of Bānī 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 villeness 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.

¹Alhbar, fol. 157b; Tab., II, pp. 1959, 1996; III, pp. 18, 21, 48.
It should be remembered that after the abortive rising of Abū Muhammad 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 'Abbāsid authority, and secondly to arrest Abū Muhammad 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-Mada'in. But Bassām, having escaped, wandered, according to Baladhuri, of place to place until he contacted the Husaynīd Ja'far al-Ṣādiq to whom he proposed collaboration with the establishment of a Husaynīd caliphate in view. Al-Ṣādiq fearing the 'Abbāsids, suspected that Bassām's move was a trick on the part of the authorities, and immediately informed the latter who seized Bassām at Ḫira and executed him. Azdī's account is brief and confirms Baladhuri's in that it asserts that Bassām worked for an 'Alīd caliphate but was deceived by the Husaynīds who handed him over to the 'Abbāsids. If true this account substantiates the assumption that the 'Abbāsid-

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1 Ansāb, fol. 802a; Tab., III, pp. 75-77.
2 Ansāb, fol. 802a-802b; cf. Tab., III, p. 75.
3 Azdī, fol. 121.
Husaynid relations were cordial; if fabricated it may have been intended to stress the piety and peaceful inclination of al-Ṣadiq. Be it as it may, Bassam's rising represents another episode in the series of revolts by disappointed partisans who turned against the 'Abbāsids and used 'Alid or other anti-'Abbāsid slogans to express their resentment.

The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Ali

'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; the revolt of Syrians against the new Irākī-Khurasānī 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-Amin later on to try and avenge their own humiliation on the Khurasānīs who had brought their supremacy down.

'Abdallah b. 'Ali was an ambitious and capable 'Abbāsīd. He was chosen to lead the Khurasanī-Irākī troops in the fight against Marwan II. After the latter's death he was appointed governor of Syria and put in charge of the Thughur too. Before the death of Abū 'l 'Abbās, 'Abdallah is said to have visited him at al-Anbār in 136/753 A.D. and

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1Ansāb, fols. 760a ff.
2Tab.III, p.84.
was instructed to lead the first Jihad against the Byzantines in the 'Abbāsid period. 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 'Īsā b. Ḫusa 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 'Abbāsid force against Marwan II. '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 as well as by the important delegation sent to 'Abdallah to inform him of the caliph's death, 'Abdallah's opposition had been expected by the 'Abbāsids. This is confirmed by the fact that Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī b. Ṣāliḥ b. 'Ali b. Ṣūrāh had in fact promised 'Abdallah b. 'Alī the succession to the caliphate after him, but Sa'id b. 'Amr al-Makhzūmī advised him not to take the caliphate from the line of Muhammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abbās and he accepted his advice. If it had actually been made,

1 Ansāb, fol. 762a citing Mada'ini; Ya'qūbī, II, 435; Tab., III, 91; Azdī, fol. 138; Zubda, vol. 1, p. 57.
2 Ansāb, fol. 762a; Tab., III, pp. 91-92; see also Khalifa, Tarikh, fol. 289.
3 Ansāb, fol. 509; Tab., III, p. 90 citing al-Mada'ini.
4 Ansāb, fol. 761b; Tab., III, 91.
5 Ya'qūbī, II, 437.
6 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. 'Abd al-Malik is said to have sought the advice of
his foster brother Yāsīd 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". 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." It is true that the commanders of the Kūfī troops under
his control paid homage to him, but from the very beginning the en-
thusiastic support came from the Syrian pro-Umayyad tribal leaders.
One of them said in reply to 'Abdallah's appeal "I am your spear". Worth noting is the hostile relations between the Kūfī and the
Syrians and Jazirites in 'Abdallah's very army. According to Mada'īni
'Abdallah first summoned the Kūfī 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

1 Kūfī, fol. 237a.
2 Ansāb, fol. 761b-762a; Tab., III, 92; Asdī, fol. 141; Ya'qūbī, II, 457-8; F., pp. 211-212; Hurayj, VI, p. 176; Pakhrī, p. 150. Compare Kufī fol. 237a.
3 Ansāb, fol. 762a; Tab., III, 92; Asdī, fol. 141.
4 Ansāb, fol. 762a citing Mada'īni; Hug., fol. 240a.
cautious remarks. This can also be inferred from the lists of the new governors and commanders who were Syrians in their majority. 'Uthmān b. Sarāqa al-Azdī was appointed governor of Damascus, Zafr b. 'Agām al-Muhallabī of Qimisrīn, al-Jākṣam b. Ḥabān of Palestine and Ṣāfīq b. Jāmina al-Kalbī chief of the police. Furthermore Kūraṣānī commanders in Arminya, Adhurbayjān, Samosata and Harrān who were not subject to his control refused to pay allegiance to him. 'Abdallah even tried to kill Ḥumayd b. Qaṭṭābā, but the latter knew of the conspiracy and defected to the caliph. 'Abdallah's suspicions of the Kūraṣānīs were aggravated by the news of the advance of the Kūraṣānī army under Abū Ḥusayn, and he killed many thousands of them in cold blood. Madaʾīnī and Kufī 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. The support for 'Abdallah was therefore mainly derived from Syrians and Jazirites and the conflict was clearly one between Kūraṣānīs and Irākīs on the one hand and Syrians and Jazirites on the other.

'Abdallah headed south and besieged Harrān where Ḥuqāṭīl al-'Āffi resisted him with 4,000 soldiers. Abu Ja'far sent an army on which

1. Ansāb, fol. 762b.
2. Ibid., Tab., III, p.93.
3. Tab., III, 94; Yaʿqubī, II, p.439; Aṣdī, p.142; Zuhdā, 1, 57.
5. Aynī, citing Madaʾīnī, fol. 24a; Kufī, fol. 257a.
6. Imāma, p.237. (but he wrongly places the rising in the reign of Abū ʿl Abbas); Tab., III, 96; Kurāj, VI, 176; Aynī, fol. 24a.
7. Tab., III, 94; Aṣdī, fol. 142.
he spent between 12 million and 18 million dirhams. He also
increased their pay from 60 dirhams a month to 80 dirhams. Establish-
ing his headquarters in a monastery on the Tigris called Dayr al-
Jathliq, the caliph ordered al-Hasan b. Qahṣaba to join Abū Muslim
and also stationed troops in many strategic positions on the way
between Syria and Iran such as Qarqisiya, Hit, Balad and Tikrit, forbidding them to leave their positions even if they heard of the defeat
of ‘Abdallah b. ‘Ali. He was obviously afraid that ‘Abdallah might
make a swift attack and surprise him in his imperial province of ‘Irāq.
Initially Abū Ja‘far resorted to his old conspiratory methods. He
ordered Muḥammad b. ʿAwāl an early ‘Abbasid 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. ‘Abdallah entrenched
himself in a strong position at Nīṣibin. Abū Muslim with al-Hasan b.
Qahṣaba in the vanguard, Ḥumayd b. Qahṣaba 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
stratagem and decided to turn back to defend their cities where they
had their property and their families. Then, in a swift swoop,

1Ya‘qūbī, II, 438; Tab., III, 94, 90 citing Mādāʾīni; Murūj, VI, pp. 176f.
2Anṣāb, fol. 767a-b. Commenting on that Baladhurī says that it was Abū ʿAlī
Abbas who decreased the soldiers’ pay to 60 dirhams per month. Now
Abū Ja‘far raised it again to secure their loyalty to his cause.
3Tab., III, pp. 93 ff.
4Azāfī, 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 Khurāsānis in 'Abdallah's camp who had already started to defect. In a fierce battle at Nigibin, the Syrians were utterly defeated and began to retreat. 'Abdallah did not wait, but fled with a number of his close associates. 1 Abū Muslim ordered 'Abdallah not to be pursued, 2 thus giving him the opportunity to escape, which must have enraged Abū Ja'far. 'Abdallah's brother and heir 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Ali who had been appointed by him governor of Jazīra fled to Raqqā and then to Rasafa where he was arrested. 3

Once again, the Khurāsānis defeated the Syrians but this time Abū Muslim proclaimed the aman 4 and no atrocities were committed. It is interesting to note that it was discussed in the presence of Abū Muslim who was braver, the Khurāsānis or the Syrians. Significantly enough the comment of Abū Muslim was: 5 مَهْلُكُمُ فِي دَرَسِي أَسْلَمُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهْ "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. 6 The revolt of 'Abdallah b. 'Ali was significant

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1 Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, pp. 95-96; Kūfī, fol. 237b; Azā, fol. 142; Jāh., p.103.
2 Ya‘qūbī, II, 440.
3 Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, 98-99.
4 Tab., III, 99.
5 Tab., III, 96 citing Mada‘ini.
6 Hayyān, 2, 110; Ansāb, fol. 512; Hug., fol. 91a; ʿIqd, 2, 158 citing Hayyān b. ‘Adi.
in that it revealed, as has been stated before, many distinctive characteristics of the structure of the Khurasaní army, the very army who brought the 'Abbásids to power. Many Khurasaní leaders on both sides bore Arab names. The enlistment of the Khurasaní by 'Abdallah b. 'Ali 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 

\[1\] \text{Imama wa'l siyasa,}

'Abdallah appealed to Ahl Khurasan 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 Khurasaní commanders who were on the side of the caliph resented his decision to appropriate the possessions of 'Abdallah. Abu 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."

As Abu 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 Khurasaní commanders can only be assessed if one goes back to the Khurasan 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 Hujatila, who

\[1\] \text{Imama, vol. 2, pp. 295-6.}

\[2\] \text{Tab., III, 103; see also Ansāb, fol. 520; Aṣālī, fol. 142; Huj., fol. 95a; 'Aynī, fol. 25b.}
considered that they had the right to share it. It was this very issue which was utilized by the 'Abbāsids to share it. It was this very issue which was utilized by the 'Abbāsids in Khurāsān. In their speeches in Kūfah both Abū Salama and Abū 'Abd Allāh condemned the Umayyads for their greed and promised the people 'Ālī 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". This episode provides additional evidence of the mainly Arab composition of the Khurāsānī troops. The Khurāsānī troops of the 'Abbāsids era voiced the same complaint, and adopted the same attitude in respect of the ghanīma as the Arab Ḥusaynīs of Khurāsān in the late Umayyad period.

As for the fate of 'Abdallah b. 'Ali, he was able to take refuge with his brother Sulaymān b. 'Ali in Bağra. Having got rid of Abū Muslim in 137/754-5, the caliph pressed Sulaymān b. 'Ali to bring 'Abdallah to the court, but Sulaymān ignored the order, whereupon he was dismissed from his post and replaced by Sufyan b. Ku'āwiya al-Muhallabī. Fearing a new move by 'Abdallah, Abū Ja'far reshuffled the whole administration of Bağra appointing a dependable Sāhib al-Barīd and stationing a detachment 4,000 strong led by Rayb b. Yātim al-Muhallabī. Then he sent Abū al-Asad with reinforcements until 12,000 Khurāsānīs were stationed at

1Tab., III, 110.
2Tab., III, 114.
3Ansāb, fol. 764a; Tab., III, 98; 'Azdī, fol. 142.
Heavy pressure was exerted on Sulayman b. 'Ali who having lost his influence, found it more difficult to resist. The sons of 'Ali the 'Abbasid (the uncles of the caliph) then gave in and demanded an aman for their brother. Yaqubi, Tabari and the author of al-'Uyun wa'l-hada'iq are brief and vague on that and maintain that the aman was written by Abu Ja'far himself, giving the impression that the caliph took the initiative and suggested the offer of an aman. Dinawari, who generally has several confusing remarks on this period, alleges that it was Abu Muslim who pardoned Abdallah b. 'Ali. However, according to Kufi it was Sulayman b. 'Ali who asked Abu Ja'far for an aman, and when the latter agreed 'Isa b. 'Ali 'Abdallah's other brother asked his secretary Ibn al-Muqaffa to write the aman which was strict to the extent that, when Abu 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 aman was taken by Sulayman b. 'Ali is confirmed by Baladhuri, Jahshiyarī and Azdī. The aman was so carefully composed that it did not leave a single loophole for Abu Ja'far. According to Baladhuri 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 Jahshiyarī the clause which was most irritating to Abu Ja'far was

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1 Ansab, fol. 766b.
3 Dinawari, p.375.
4 Kufi, fol. 238a.
5 Ansab, fol. 766b; Jah., p. 105; Azdī, fol. 145-147. See also Sourdel.
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 Muhammad b. 'Ali 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 Tarikh al-Hougil which although different in wording from the extract of Jahshiyari confirms that Ibn al-Hugaffa took extra precaution in order not to leave for Abu 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 Abu al-Azhari his Hajib not to produce him but to have him immediately arrested.1 Later, in 147, Abu Ja'far tried to use 'Isa b. Musa to kill 'Abdallah. Before going on the pilgrimage he gave 'Isa the secret order to kill him, but the latter was advised by his own


secretary not to obey the order. On his return from Mecca Abu Ja'far confident that 'Abdallah had been killed believed that the time had come to rid himself of 'Isa b. Kusa who was a potential danger to his son al-Mahdi— even though he had already conceded his rights to him, incited 'Abdallah's brothers to ask for his release, and ordered 'Isa to produce him. One can imagine Abu Ja'far's surprise and disappointment when 'Isa actually brought 'Abdallah. However the caliph failed to release him on the pretext that "The people of Khurasan would kill him because of what he has inflicted upon them in Syria."¹

'Abdallah was finally killed in obscure circumstances in 147 A.H./764-5 A.D. There are many accounts² on the way he was murdered, the most popular among them states that the house in which he was restricted collapsed over him. A Qadi 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-Hujaffa who had written the a'man in question and who cried out on his death "Oh tools of tyrants..."³

The Rawandiyya Sectarians

It has already been pointed out that, although the 'Abbasid propagandists were mainly aiming at the Arabs of Khurasan, they made common cause with the 'Alids and the Kharijites of Khurasan and actually excluded

¹ Ansab, fol. 767b; Tab., III, p.320.
² Ansab, fol. 767a-766a; Tab., III, p.331; Imamn, 2, 263; Ya‘qubi, II, 443; F.W.A., 253-9; Huruf, VI, 218; Asdi, fol. 148.
³ Ansab, fol. 535 citing Mada’inī; Kufī, fol. 238a-b citing Mada’inī; Jāh., pp. 103-4; Jāhiz, Alkhlaq al-Kuttab, p.47 (ed. Finkel); Sourdel, La Biographie, op.cit., p.373.
no group or body of any kind from the Anti-Umayyad movement. Nor did they even condemn the subversive activities of Bihafarid when it started at Mishāfrūr as long as it was directed against the Umayyad rule.

While the Ḥashimiyya 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 Rawandiyya risings in the reign of Ābū ʿAlī ʿĀbdūs and al-Hanṣūr and the Persian insurrections are all proofs of that.

Thus the Ḥashimiyya represented a complex of doctrines which reflects the real nature of the ʿAbbāsid propaganda. The Ḥashimiyya was also called Rawandiyya, however the Rawandiyya was a section within the Ḥashimiyya which after the ʿAbbāsid victory split into several sub-sects. The name Rawandiyya is after the village Rawand near Mishāfrūr. It is highly significant that ʿAbdallāh al-Rawandi was among the early partisans of the ʿAbbāsid movement. According to Akhbar al-ʿAbbās, ʿAbdallāh al-Rawandi's name appears in a list of the ʿAbbāsid partisans side by side with Ābu Ḥusayn b. Ṭiyya, a brother of Ābu al-Jahm, and Ābu Turāb and others. If this list is authentic it indicates, contrary to Professor Cahen's view, that the Rawandiyya chiefs were part

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1 Fīrāq, p.28, Saʿd al-Ashʿarī, pp. 39, 63; Iṣfār, p.19; Ṣadīq, p.21.
3 Akhbar, fol. 105b.
of the inner initiated circle of the 'Abbāsid movement. They shared the view of other Hashimiyya partisans that the 'Abbāside had a better claim to the caliphate than any other branch. However, the Rawandiyya may have expressed ideas not necessarily shared by other sectors of the movement. As the 'Abbāsid propagandists had already had the experience of Khidāsh 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 Rawandiyya are concerned, Muslim historians 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 Ṭalib and then to the Imāms 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 'Abbāsid 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 Istīḥāl al-furūnāt (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 Rawandiyya existed in Khurāsān among the 'Abbāsid propagandists well before the appearance

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1 Fīnaq, pp. 41 f., 46-47; Sa'īd al-Ashāḥī, pp. 69f.; Ighfara, p.19; Inqalāṭ, p.21; Bagh., p.340; Iṣāf, p.90.

2 Tab., III, 129, 416; Ansāb, fol. 546; Fīnaq, p.42; Shah., pp. 115,136. Sadighī, op.cit., pp. 212 ff; Cahen, op.cit., pp. 322, 331; E.I.1, (Khuramiyya); E.I.2 ('Abbāsida).
of Abu Muslim there. Tabari\(^1\) states that the Umayyad governor of Khurasan Asad al-Qaṣrī killed a number of Rawandites who professed *khulūw* declaring that the Imams 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 ‘Abbasid 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.\(^2\) 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 Ibrahim the Imam.\(^3\) Abu Muslim remained faithful to the ‘Abbasids. According to Tabari, the Rawandiyya led by Abu Ishaq revolted at Tirmidh and Tāliqān and killed Abu Muslim’s commander Ṣaqr b. Ṣaqrī and finally his brotherullet ценаа al-Dhulī and ‘Isa b. Māhān pursued the Rawandiyya and destroyed the hot beds of their resistance.\(^4\) The author of *Akhbār al-‘Abbās*\(^5\) confirms the conflict within the revolutionaries. According to him "The followers of Khidāsh, that is to say the extremist group of the ‘Abbasid movement led by Abu Khalid revolted against Abu Muslim in Khurasan". Abu Muslim tried in vain to arrest their leader who fled to Ṣawāra’ 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 disguised

\(^1\) Tab., III, pp. 418-419, citing Ḥadā‘īnī.


\(^3\) *Akhbār*, fol. 199.

\(^4\) Tab., III, p. 85.

\(^5\) *Akhbār*, fol. 199. This is the first time in the history of the ‘Abbasid (cont.)
as beggars to spy for him. However he was not successful in that
as Abu Khalid was arrested and killed later in the reign of al-Mansur. According to Jahiz¹ these extremists tried at one time to poison Abu Muslim.

Thus one rebellious wing of the Rawandiyya rebelled and was ruthlessly crushed by Abu Muslim. But this does not mean however that the whole Rawandiyya sect fell out with the 'Abbasids or Abu Muslim. In 136/753-4 when Abu 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 Rawandiyya fanatics. Sonbaddh, al-Muqannaʿ, Nayzak and Banawayyah were commanders in his army and ardent supporters of him.² It is likely that those and others were among the figures whom Abu Muslim favoured since the advent of the 'Abbasids. They formed the nucleus of the later sects such as the Abu Muslimiyya and the Razmiyya.³

After Abu Muslim's death al-Mansur refrained from doing any harm to his army, part of which accepted the offer of al-Mansur 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-Mansur.⁴ What confirms the

(continues)

¹Haywān, vol. 7, p.83.
²Ansāb, fol. 557; Tab., III, p.100; Bed', 6, 82; Sadighī, op. cit., pp. 135 ff.
³One therefore should distinguish between the early Rawandiyya and its later sub-divisions – see Muruj, VI, pp. 54 f, 58.
assumption that the Rawandiyya were part of the army of al-Mansūr is the account of Tabari¹ which states that when the Rawandiyya mutinied against Abu Ja‘far and fought him, he consulted Qathm b. al-‘Abbas the ‘Abbasid 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 Rawandites among his troops. After he had disposed of Abu Muslim al-Mansūr 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 Tabari² that when Abu Bakr al-Hudhalī drew the attention of al-Mansūr to their ideas which deified the caliph, al-Mansūr 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.³ The Rawandiyya protested against the imprisonment of their leaders and succeeded in liberating them by force. When al-Mansūr 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

¹Tab., III, p.365.
³Tab., III, 29, 132 citing Mada’in; 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, Abu Naṣr Ḥalik b. al-Haytham al-Khuza‘ī who until recently had been a supporter of Abū Muslim, Khāzim b. Khuzayma al-Tamīmī 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 Rawandiyya is also evident after their mutiny was crushed. He did not, for instance, object when a Rawandite called Razzām took refuge with Jafer b. al-Manṣūr.1 The son of 'Abdallah al-Rawandi,2 Ḥarb was given an estate in Baghdad called al-Ḥarbiyya. He was also stationed with a Rabī'a of 2,000 troops in Mogul 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. Tabari3 had preserved a number of names of military

(cont.) Muruj, VI, pp. 168-70; Fakhri, pp. 142-143; Dhahabi, Duwal, vol. I, p.72.

1Tab., III, p.132.


3Tab., III, p.341.
figures among them significantly Nāṣr b. Ḥarib b. ʿAbdallah al-Rawandi who were fanatical partisans of al-Mansūr's son, al-Mahdī. They protested against the fact that ʿĪsā b. Mūsa had been appointed heir of al-Mansūr to al-Mahdī's detriment. Now this account becomes significant when we remember that a wing of the Rāwandīyya insisted that the caliphate passes from al-Mansūr to al-Mahdī (father to son). They used to threaten ʿĪsā b. Mūsa identifying him with the sacrificial cow in the Qurʾān. Those fanatics appeared again when al-Mahdī ascended the throne. Tabari states that when al-Mansūr died in the Ḥijāz and the pilgrimage caravan was on its way back to Baghdad Mūsa b. al-Mahdī (later caliph al-Hadī) was among them. When they learned that the new heir apparent was ʿĪsā b. Mūsa sounds of resentment were heard. Tabari adds "ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā b. Māḥān (who was one of Mūsa b. al-Mahdī's guards) attacked ʿĪsā b. Mūsa because of what he had done to the Rāwandīyya." Among those who joined him was Abū Khalīd al-Narwūdī who was one of their chiefs in this mutiny. But Muḥammad b. Sulaymān was able to restore order in the caravan.

The Rāwandīyya were thus among the early ʿAbbasid partisans. They were even called Abnāʾ al-dawla a remark which whatever it referred to it points out to their close ties with the régime. After the advent of the ʿAbbasids to power, they fell out with their own extremist wing which rebelled in Khurāsān and Irāq.

2 Murji, VI, p. 54.
3 Fihrist, II, p. 204.
Al-Mansūr, 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 Fāqīhs. Despite the "day of the Rāwandīyya" when about six hundred extremists were killed al-Mansūr refrained from dealing harshly with them, and many remained. In Khūrāsān 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 Sonbāḏ and al-Muqamma who were fanatical in their worship of Abū Muslim. Some of these figures were partisans of a sub-sect of al-Rāwandīyya. Al-Muqamma, for example, was a follower of the Razzāmiyya. However although some of this fanatical Rāwandīyya branch which deified Abū Muslim rebelled to avenge his death, he can hardly be blamed for any of them. This series of outbreaks was merely a protest by disappointed 'Abbāsid partisans as well as the native population against the unfulfilled promises of the new régime.

1Only when one knows of the existence of extreme 'Alid circles which deified their Imāms, can one understand why al-Mansūr was lenient with the Rāwandīyya who believed in the divinity of the 'Abbāsid caliphs. In a way he tried to put the Rāwandīyya fanaticism to use for the defence of the 'Abbāsid.

2On the origins, development, sub-divisions and doctrinal character of the Rāwandīyya see the detailed study of Sadighī, op. cit., pp. 187-228, especially pp. 208-214 with references to heresiographies. See also E.I. (Rāshīmiyya).

The murder of Abu 'l Jahm b. 'Atiya al-Bahili

He was one of the deputy da'is (Nuqara' al-Nuqaba') in Khurasan during the revolution, he was a close associate of Abu Muslim and seems to have played a role in recruiting partisans to the nascent movement; among them was his brother. By Abu Muslim's orders he joined Qahtaba on his way to Iraq. He was Qahtaba's secretary on the affairs of the troops. In the battle of Nahrawan in 131 A.H. he was a leader of a detachment of 700 troops. On Qahtaba's death after the battle of Upper Faluja, Abu 'l Jahm seems to have played an influential role in choosing al-Hasan b. Qahtaba as the new commander in chief. In Kufa he played a leading role in the move which resulted in proclaiming the caliphate of Abu 'l 'Abbás.

However Abu 'l Jahm maintained the close relationship with Abu Muslim which was not impaired by distance and long absence. According to Tabari he was Abu Muslim's spy and informed him of the affairs at the 'Abbāsid court. He also exerted a considerable influence on the caliph himself which, however, seems exaggerated though he was called Wazir of the first 'Abbāsid caliph by some historians. The rôle he

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1 Akhbar, fol. 104b.
7 Tab., III, p. 67; Imāma, p. 247.
8 Imāma, p. 247; Tab., ed. 1904, pp. 79, 122; Ya'qūb, II, 432; Tab., III, 77-88.
played was, in fact, contradictory and even two-faced. Under al-Hānṣūr, he apparently played a part in the preparations for Ābu Muslim’s death. However, he expressed his regret at Ābu Muslim’s death, but soon retracted that and even ousted Ābu Muslim’s soldiers ordering them to retreat on the pretext that Ābu Muslim was staying with the caliph for the day. He then interceded with the caliph in favour of Ābu Muslim’s prominent companions: such as Mālik al-Khuṣṣā’ī and obtained a pardon for them. 1 Ābu Ja’far was not prepared to tolerate a man known for his sympathies towards Ābu Muslim and for his opportunist nature. According to Bālādhurī 2 the main accusation against him was that he had written a letter to Ābu Muslim expressing dissatisfaction with the new régime.

The caliph had him poisoned soon after Ābu Muslim’s death. It is commenting on his death that a poet said:

"Beware of drinking Suwayq al-Lawz because it was the cause of Ābu ‘l Jahm’s death." 3

The rising of Jahwar b. Marrār al-‘Ijlī

An ‘Abbasid partisan and a commander who conquered Abīward for the new régime. He then joined Qaffāba’s army which was heading for

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1 Tab., III, pp. 110, 111, 116; Jah., p. 112.
2 Ansāb, fol. 510 citing ‘Abdallah b. Šalih al-Maqarri.
When Abu Muslim was murdered, his enraged but frightened troops remained outwardly quiet. Some stayed with al-Mansur, others preferred to return to Khurasan. Trouble soon started among those who returned to Khurasan as well as other loyal partisans of Abu Muslim who had been stationed in several cities by him on his way to Mecca in 136 A.H./753 A.D. Sonbadh was one of their leaders, he rose in 137 in Nishapur to revenge Abu Muslim's death. In a rapid move he seized Nishapur, Qumus and Rayy where he seized the treasuries of Abu Muslim. Then he advanced to Hamadan to fight the caliph himself. He also contacted the Isfahbādh of Tabaristan, Khosrau, and presented him with money and gifts. Abu Ja'far sent Jahwar al-'Ijli with 10,000 troops and he was able to put down the revolt in little more than two months. Sonbadh fled to Tabaristan but the Isfahbādh, presumably, did not want to create trouble with the 'Abbasids or to get rid of a potentially dangerous rebel had him killed and possessed his possessions.

However this was by no means the end of the troubles, according to Tabari Jahwar al-'Ijli and his army captured part of the treasures of Abu Muslim which had been in the possession of Sonbadh and did not

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2Ansāb, fol. 357; Tab., III, pp. 119f; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.442; Murūj,
VI, pp. 188-9.
3Sabadighi, op.cit., p.137.
4Tab., III, pp. 119-120; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.442; F.H.A., p.223; see also
Kalifa, Tarikh, p.289, Hunta Khab, fols. 123a-123b.
5Ansāb, fol. 557; Ibn Isfandiyar, p.117; Tab., III, p.120; Balsamī, 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.
6Tab., III, p.122.
send them to the caliph. Baladhuri also relates that Jahwar was brave and generous, and distributed all the booty among the soldiers.

The matter of Abu 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 'Abbasid promise that what the troops had gained by war, the ghanima would be shared out among them. When he heard of the distribution of money among the soldiers of Jahwar, al-Mangur was greatly incensed. He sent a letter reproaching him and dismissing him as governor of al-Rayy. But before risking any conflict with him, al-Mangur sent Wajbah b. Yabǐb to test Jahwar's loyalty. The messenger confirmed his mutinous intentions. Then al-Mangur sent a new governor of al-Rayy Mujashi b. Yazid al-Ḍabbī but Jahwar killed him and proclaimed the revolt. The caliph then sent an army led by Hazāmard 'Umar b. Yafe al-Muhallabī, after him another detachment led by Muhammad b. al-Ash'ath. The rebels were also threatened by another army from Khurasan. Jahwar al-'Ijlī was defeated after a fierce battle and fled heading for Adhurbayjan to take refuge with its

1Ansāb, fol. 558.
2Ibid.
4ʻAynī, fol. 32b.
governor Yazid b. Ja'far. However, he was killed by his own partisans before reaching Adhurbayjan. The caliph got hold at last of part of Abu Muslim's treasures which were sent to him after Jahwar's defeat. Significant here is the support given by the Persian natives to Jahwar. Tabari cites names of Persian cavalrymen 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 Sonbadh, the Ispahbadh of Tabaristan sided with the 'Abbāsids, while in the revolt of Jahwar the Persian natives raised their arms in his support.

The conspiracy against Khalid b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuḥlī

Contrary to Kufī's account Khurāsān was not pacified after Abu Muslim's death. Apart from a long series of mainly Iranian risings connected with the memory of Abu 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 'Abbāsid revolution.

1. Ansāb, fol. 558; Tab., III, p.122; Nujum, pp. 382-4.

2. 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.

Abū Da‘lūd Khalīd 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 Rawandiyya and the expansion in Transoxonia. During the crisis of Abū Muslim and in order to sow the seeds of discord between Abū Muslim and Khalīd al-Dhuhlī, Abū Ja‘far thought it therefore expedient to put Khalīd in charge of the province. Khalīd, 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.¹

About three years after the death of Abū Muslim in 140 A.H./757-8 A.D. part of the troops suddenly revolted against Khalīd. Tabarī’s² 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, Khalīd 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. Baladhuri³ followed by Maqrizi is both more explicit and coherent in his account. He relates that Khalīd was deeply shocked by the news of Abū Muslim’s death and condemned Abū Ja‘far’s treachery. Abū Ja‘far

¹Ansāb, fol. 539; Tab., III, pp. 107-8, 119.
²Tab., III, 128.
³Ansāb, fol. 539; Muq., fol. 99a-99b. According to Guardiṣī the followers of Ishaq, the rebel of Transoxonia killed Khalīd al-Dhuhlī (see Sadighī, 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 Abu Muslim and kill me afterwards". He added "Let Abu Ja'far deceive others not me." Al-Manṣūr then tempted the Ṣähīb al-Shurṭa of Khurāsān Abū ʿUṣām ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sālim with the offer of governorship of Khurāsān to undertake the murder of Khālid. Abū ʿUṣām, 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 ʿUṣām.

Thus the vagueness of Tabarī's account makes one suspect the existence of a conspiracy conducted by al-Manṣūr against Khālid al-Dhuhālī who was once trusted by Abu Muslim and was, to all intents and purposes, his creature. This conspiracy is confirmed by Baladhurī, 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 ʾl-ʿAbbās for obeying Abu Muslim's orders to kill ʿĪsā b. Maḥān, one of the early ʿAbbāsid partisans. On the whole Khālid al-Dhuhālī had become a suspect whose services were no longer wanted.

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¹ Ansāb, fol. 801a.
The revolt of 'Abd al-Jabbar b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Azdi

One of the Abbasid veterans, he was a da'î and an officer in the Khurasani army. He participated at the seige of Wasit and then was appointed Sahib al-Shurta for Abu 'l Abbas and then Abu Ja'far which shows that he had had their trust. According to Kufi and Tabari his relations with Abu Muslim do not seem to have been cordial, before the expedition against 'Abdallah b. 'Ali Abu Muslim asked al-Mangur to kill or imprison 'Abd al-Jabbar among others for no known reason but the caliph refused. His brothers 'Abd al-Aziz and 'Umar were also favoured by the Abbasids.

In 140 A.H./757 A.D. 'Abd al-Jabbar was appointed governor of Khurasan. 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 Khurasani 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'ami al-Mansur had ordered 'Abd al-Jabbar to kill all the 'Alid partisans in Khurasan.

1Akhbar, fol. 104b; Tab., III, p.2003.
2Ansab, fol. 540; Tab., III, p.67.
3Kufi, fol. 237a; Tab., III, p.100.
4Ansab, folia. 540, 543; Ya'qubi, II, 445; Tab., III, 122, 459.
5Ansab, fol. 542; Tab., III, 136; Ya'qubi, II, 445.
6Bal'ami, IV, pp. 373 ff.
Baladhuri presents ‘Abd al-Jabbar himself as an ‘Alid sympathizer, and relates that his downfall was due to court intrigues by the chief of the police al-Husayyab b. Zuhayr al-Dabbī who instigated the caliph against him telling him of the large amount of money he had collected and of his rebellious intentions. Al-Mansūr 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-Mansūr acted exactly like the Umayyad Caliphs in demanding that a share of the revenue be sent to the central treasury. All accounts agree that ‘Abd al-Jabbar killed several Khurasānī pro-‘Abbāsid commanders. Baladhuri calls them, Ya‘qūbī gives them the name while Tabari mentions some of their names such as Mūjahishī b. al-Jarīth al-Anṣāri the governor of Bukhara, Khalīd b. Kathīr the governor of Qūhīstān and Wāṣir b. Mūsammad al-Dhuhullī. 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 Khurasānī troops for the war against the Byzantines. ‘Abd al-Jabbar cleverly replied that the Turks were restless and scattering the Khurasānī troops might mean the loss of Khurasān.

1 Ansāb, fol. 541; al-Husayyab’s name is also connected with another revolt in Sind (Tab., III, 138-140).

2 Ansāb, fol. 342; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.445; Tab., III, 128.
Al-Mangūr then wrote a new letter expressing his deep concern about the danger threatening Khurasan on the part of the Turks, and indicating that troops from Irāk were going to be sent to Khurasan to reinforce the garrison. 'Abd al-Jabbār replied that the economic conditions in Khurasan 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. Al-Mangūr considered this as a rebellion by 'Abd al-Jabbār who indeed declared that "Abū Ja'far called upon me to worship him" 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 Al Abī Ta'lib. He is also said to have asked either Ibrāhīm or Muhammad 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 Ishaq the Turk who were led by Barāz". He also found some support from the governor of Bukhāra.

1 On the correspondence between al-Mangūr and 'Abd al-Jabbār see Ansāb, fol. 541, Tab., III, pp.134f.

2 Ansāb, fols. 540-541, citing Hada'ini.

The caliph immediately sent troops led by his son al-Mahdi accompanied by the commander Khazim b. Khuzaïma al-Tamimi. Al-Mahdi then only in his teens stayed at al-Rayy and later advanced to Nishâpur while Khazim marched against the rebels.  

'Abd al-Jabbâr's revolt had no future as he eliminated the Khurâsânî commanders by his arbitrary policy and eliminated the local aristocracy by his fiscal policy. The people of Marwal-Rûdû rose against him and were joined by others in different parts of Khurâsân. Moreover discord ensued within his ranks and several leaders broke away from him and declared their allegiance to Abû Ja'far. Among them was Ḥabîb b. Ziyād al-Ṭâliqânî due to whose efforts, rather than to the imperial army, 'Abd al-Jabbâr's rising was quelled. The governor of Bukhâra as well as Yazîd, the false Ibrâhîm, were killed in the fighting while 'Abd al-Jabbâr fled but was caught and sent to al-Manṣûr. The latter extracted as much money from him and his family and associates as he could. 'Abd al-Jabbâr pleaded for mercy, recalling his services in the da'wa but al-Manṣûr said to him "You have killed men equal to Qaṭṭaba b. Shabîb..." Then he begged for a "respectable death", al-Manṣûr replied: "You have left it behind you /in Khurâsân/". He was executed in 142 and his relatives were exiled to the island of Dahlâk of the coast of the Yemen. Eventually some of

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1 Ansâb, fol. 540f; Tab., III, p.134.
2 Ansâb, fol. 542; Bayân, 2, p.111.
3 Ansâb, fol. 543; Ya‘qubî II, 446; Buldân, 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.¹

It was after the defeat of 'Abd al-Jabbār that al-Manṣūr ordered the conquest of Ṭabaristan which was in a state of rebellion, and in 142/759-60 Ṭabaristan for the first time became a province within the Muslim empire.²

The mutiny of 'Uyayna b. Mūsa al-Tamīmī

Both 'Uyayna and his father Mūsa b. Ka'b al-Tamīmī were early 'Abbāsid partisans. In the early days of the revolution, 'Uyayna was active as a da‘ī and was entrusted with a special mission in Nishāpūr.³ In 133/750-51, unrest broke out in the Arab garrison of al-Sind, led by Manṣūr b. Jamḥūr whose rising was soon crushed by Mūsa al-Tamīmī at the head of 20,000 troops.⁴ The latter was consequently appointed governor of the province, but was soon recalled and nominated head of the caliphal police.⁵ It was now that 'Uyayna replaced his father as governor of Sind.

²See chapter VI. pp.192 ff
³Akhbār, fol. 132a, 186b.
⁴Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 288; Asma' al-Mughṭalīya, pp. 184-5; Tab., III, p.80.
⁵Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 300.
In 142/759-60 he suddenly mutinied for reasons which the sources do not indicate with any clarity. Khalīfa b. Khayyāt's 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. ʿAfṣ, and held out for eleven months. According to Tabarī, however, the rising was caused by court intrigues and 'Uyayna's rivalry with al-Nasayyab 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. Yaʿqūbī on the other hand, states that 'Uyayna's arrival at al-Sind 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 Baḵra was still the centre of military operations especially in the eastern provinces, al-Manṣūr went there to prepare an army for al-Sind. He nominated 'Umar b. ʿAfṣ al-ʿAtkī governor of Sind and commander of the expedition against the rebels. 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.

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2 Tab., III, p.138.
3 Yaʿqūbī, II, p.448.
5 Tab., III, p.138.
6 Khalīfa, Tarikh, fol. 301; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.448.
It was thus that those veteran partisans who had participated in the da'wa and put the 'Abbasids in power fell out with them. Some were disappointed with the régime’s new policies which religiously adopted “Orthodoxy” and respected the Ulama and Asbāb al-Hadīth. Besides ‘Abbasid 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 ‘Ata 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-Hādhī and his son Harūn al-Rashīd became caliphs and delegated their authority wholly to wāzirs or Nawālī. This situation inspired a poet to say: "Oh Banī Umayya! Wake up, you have slept too long. The caliph is Ya‘qūb b. Da‘ūd.”¹

Chapter IV

'ABBASID-'ALID RELATIONS DURING

THE EARLY 'ABBASID PERIOD

"People of Khurasan, 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 'Ali b. Abi Talib wrest the caliphate from the Umayyads... but their efforts proved ineffective... The Umayyads exiled us [the 'Abbasids] once at Ta'if then at Syria then at al-Shurât until God finally roused you [the Khurasanis] 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."

Abû Ja'far al-Mansûr
[Tab.III, p.430]

"We were incensed against the Umayyads as we were, but the 'Abbasids are less God fearing than them. And there is more justice in accusing the 'Abbasids than the Umayyads. They [the Umayyads] had morals, virtues and favours which Abû Ja'far lacks."

Muhammad b. 'Abdallah al-Mabdi
[Aghâni, 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 Muhammad'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 Banî Hashim: the extremists who sided with the non-Fātimid 'Alīd Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya and his son Abū Ḥāshim whose claims were taken over by Muḥammad b. 'Alî the 'Abbāsid; the extremists supporting the rising of the Ja'farite 'Abdallah b. Muʿāwiyah; the moderate followers of Zayd b. 'Alî who adopted militant active attitude towards the Umayyads; the passivist followers of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq the most prominent Ṣuṣaynid of that time who was known for his peaceful policy.

It is true that there were people who believed in the sacredness of Banî Hashim 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.\(^1\) Bani Hashim's prestige can be traced back as far as Quṣayy.\(^2\) It should be stressed, however, that in the Jahiliyya, certain clans of each tribe acted as guardians of the sanctuaries, a task handed down in one clan which thus acquired a hereditary sanctity.\(^3\) 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.\(^4\) Now, about the end of the 5th century A.D.

Quṣayy was able to oust Khazā' from Mecca and establish his authority.\(^5\) His efforts in gathering together different clans in

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\(^{1}\)The term Ahl al-Bayt in that early period was interpreted in many ways according to different factions. The Fātimids considered themselves as the only Ahl al-Bayt excluding non-Fātimids, Talibids and 'Abbasids. Furthermore the Ĥusaynids claimed the title for themselves only, excluding the Ĥasanids. This latter interpretation was not accepted by all Ĥusaynids because Zayd b. 'Alī recognized the equal status of both branches. The 'Abbasids 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 Talibids as often as 'Alids (Ansāb, fol. 620b).

\(^{2}\)Sīra, I, pp. 80-84; Tab., I, pp. 1092 ff; Azraqī, I, p. 66.

\(^{3}\)Ibn Durayd, p. 237; see also Tyan, Institutions..., pp. 104ff; Sergeant, Haram and Hawtah..., M.T.H., 1963, pp. 53ff.


\(^{5}\)Ibn Durayd, pp. 13ff; Tab., I, p. 1092ff.
Mecca proved successful and the new tribe became known as Quraysh. As he introduced the emblems of many tribal deities of Arabia to the Ka'ba, he is also to be credited with the reputation that the Haram of Mecca acquired as a place for pilgrimage. Henceforward, the functions connected with the sanctuary of Ka'ba as well as with political leadership remained in the hands of Qa'ayy's descendants. After the advent of Islam, Bani Hashim continued to be considered a family with religious and political prestige, and all its branches enjoyed this status of sacredness. After the Prophet's death, the Hashimites supported the claims of 'Ali b. Abi Talib to the caliphate, 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 Muhammad b. 'Ali the 'Abbasid initiated his da'wa he was cautious and based his claim on the ground that Abi Hashim had bequeathed his rights to him, and conducted it in the name of al-Rida min Ahl al-Bayt.

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1 Ibn Sa'd, I, 1, p.41; Tab., I, p.1094; Ya'qubi, I, p.277; Ibn Durayd, I, p.1094
2 Sira, I, pp. 126ff; Ibn Sa'd, I, 1, p.40; Ibn Durayd, p.152; Ya'qubi, I, pp. 296ff.
4 Sergeant, Haram and Hawtah..., M.T.H., 1963, p.44.
6 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 Husaynids 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.¹ 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. Muʕawiya whose temporary success ended suddenly shortly before the 'Abbāsid 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 125/743,² only two contenders to the leadership were left among the 'Alids: the Husaynīd Ja'far al-Ṣadiq and the Ḥasanīd 'Abdallah al-Majd. Al-Ṣadiq

¹Tab., III, p.213f; anonymous, fol. 4b.
²E.I.¹, (Zaid b. 'Alī), (Yaḥya b. Zaid).
made no military bid for power\(^1\) which gave al-Ma'\(\tilde{a}\)d and his son Mu\(\hat{a}\)ammad
the opportunity to strike, as he could rightly expect that the more
activist and militant partisans would rally around him. ‘Abdallah
al-Ma'\(\tilde{a}\)d was proud of his descent from Fa'\(\tilde{j}\)ima on both his father's and
mother's side.\(^2\) But what put the Ūsānīd\(\text{s} at a disadvantage was the
charge that their ancestor al-Ūsān had renounced his claims on behalf
of Mu'\(\tilde{a}\)wīya for money and a life of ease,\(^3\) while the Ḫusaynīd\(\text{s} as
descendants of the martyr of Karbala enjoyed a high prestige, further
enhanced by the rising of Zayd b. 'Abd Allah and his son Yāhya.

As early as in Hichām's reign (105/724-125/742) al-Ma'\(\tilde{a}\)d started to
spread the idea that his son Mu\(\hat{a}\)ammad was the Mahdī.\(^4\) This messianic
claim attracted to him, as we shall see, increasing numbers of partisans
among whom were extremists\(^5\) and even disgruntled elements with no 'Alīd
sympathies at all. When the Umayyad caliphate was crumbling after
the murder of al-Walīd b. Yazīd in 744/126, al-Ma'\(\tilde{a}\)d, in his endeavour
to consolidate the movement behind his son al-Mahdī, allegedly called
upon the Ḫashimites to assemble in secret at al-Abwā' in order to discuss

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\(^1\) As we are only concerned with the political and practical, but not with
the ideological and theoretical aspect of the 'Alīd activities, we cannot
devote much space to the Ḫusaynīd\(\text{s} who, after the death of al-Ŷusayn at
Karbala, pursued a rather quiescent policy. See B. Lewis, The Origins...,

\(^2\) Ansāb, fol. 668b.

\(^3\) Tab., III, pp. 213 ff. The 'Abbāsīd\(\text{s} even tried to benefit from this prestige
during the revolution posing as avengers of Ḫusaynīd martyrs. See Tab., II,

\(^4\) Hubdha, fol. 256a.

\(^5\) Al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-Bajlī and Bayān b. Sa'mān attempted a rising in
(cont.)
the prospects of Ahl al-Bayt where they swore allegiance to Muḥammad b. al-Mahd. Historians differ on the circumstances surrounding the meeting. Balādhurī, Iṣbāḥānī, Azdī and Tabarī agree⁠¹ 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-Mahd urged the participants to swear allegiance to al-Mahdī, 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,² the more so as the ‘Abbasids countered it with the tradition³ that al-Mahdī himself directed a Khurāsānī delegation, which had come to him, to Muḥammad the ‘ABBāsid, describing him as the best man among Ahl al-Bayt. There is another ‘ABBāsid fabrication⁴ to the effect that the ‘ABBāsids attending the meeting walked out on receiving the news of the good prospects

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₁ Ansāb, fol. 608a, qālu; Maqātil, pp. 143, 176, 178, citing ‘Umar b. Shabba, Mada‘īnī; Azdī, fol. 165 citing Muḥammad b. ‘Urwa; Tab., III, p.144, qīla.

₂ The account intended to discredit not only al-Maḥsūr but also Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq who was represented as favouring the ‘ABBāsids to Muḥammad. (Ansāb, fols. 607b-608a, qālu; Maqātil, p.176).

³ F.I.H.A., pp. 169f.

⁴ Maqātil, p.178.
of their own da'wa in Khurasan. Furthermore it should be pointed out that had such an oath been taken, Muhammad would not have failed to mention it in his letter to the caliph Abu Ja'far which was a masterpiece of political propaganda. Marwan II was not unaware of al-Habib's political activities. He had been warned against him, but he did not pay much heed to the warnings, as he was pre-occupied with events in Syria, Jazira and Iraq.

Once in power, the 'Abbasids tried to avoid any connection with the 'Alid extremists, and found it therefore expedient to establish their rights on a basis different from Abu Hashim's Vasiyya 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 Abu '1 'Abbas (132-136/749-75). However, to reconcile in himself the claims of the whole Ahl al-Bayt, Abu '1 'Abbas tried to create a cordial atmosphere. Although he realized that there were pro-'Alid elements in Iraq and Khurasan, and knew of the correspondence between Abu Salama and the 'Alids, and between Yazid b. Hubayra and the Hasaniids, 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 and passive for a while.

1 Ansab, fol. 608a; Magatil, 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 Khurasan.


It is significant that Abū 'l-Abbas made it clear at the outset in his khutba1 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 stated2 that the 'Abbāsids were the legal inheritors of the rights to the caliphate which would remain with them until they passed on to 'Īsā 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-Abbas. The second khutba3, 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 Ḥashim, 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

1 Ansāb, fols. 784b-785a; Tab., III, pp. 29f.
2 Ansāb, fol. 783b., 785a; Tab., III, p.39; Murūj, VI, p.116.
3 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 (īqā al-Furma) and relationship with the Prophet (al-Qarāba).

'Abdallah al-Maghū'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. 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.

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." 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, he was determined to remove the menace.

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1. Ansāb, fols. 608b; Magātil, p.126 citing 'Umar b. Shabba; 'Agāh., XVIII, p.206; 'Iqd, 5, pp. 74-5; 'Asakir, VII, pp. 361-2; Muq., fol. 79b.
2. Ansāb, fol. 608a, qālu; Magātil, p.125, citing Muḥammad b. Yaḥya.
3. Duwal, fol. 106a, see also Muq., fols. 79b-80a.
After the 'Abbāsid accession to power the lower strata of society were still not satisfied, as their needs were not really met. For them the 'Abbāsid rule merely represented another form of tyranny. Dissatisfaction had manifested itself right from the 'Abbāsid advent. It was only natural that all these divergent hopes rally around a figure who would unite them. Muhammad Dhu 'l Nafs al-Zakiyya's messianic claim to be the Maḥdī attracted numerous disappointed groups, both 'Alids and non-'Alid partisans. This was, to a certain extent, natural because when a quasi-messianic movement, i.e. the 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid victory, messianic expectation could no longer centre on the Bani Ḥāshim 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.,¹ to perform a pilgrimage and to test the political atmosphere. He demanded from al-Maḥdī that he produce his sons, but neither al-Maḥdī nor other Ḥāshimites gave him any clue as to their whereabouts. The Ḥāshimites maintained that Muhammad feared him because he had previously claimed the caliphate, but he had no intention of disobedying him. Only Ḥasan b. Zayd b. Ḥasan warned the Caliph of Muhammad's intentions to

¹Ansāb, fol. 609b, qālu; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.444; F.H.A., p.227.
revolt against him.\textsuperscript{1} Abu Ja'far seems to have been obsessed with Muhammad's challenge and "had no other worries than to seek for him".\textsuperscript{2} Now in order to "lure the fox from his lair",\textsuperscript{3} Abu 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 Muhammad. Baladhuri states that Abu 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 Muhammad. However, the situation in the Hijaz favoured the 'Alids. Ziyad b. 'Ubaydallah al-Farithi, the governor of Madina, the last representative of Abu l'Abbas cordial policy, was lenient in his treatment of the 'Alids which cost him his office. He was replaced in Jumada II 141/758 by Muhammad b. Khalid al-Qafr who certainly had enough money at his disposal to continue the hunt. But neither the reward nor measures such as the search of Madina and its outskirts succeeded in tracking them down. Abu Ja'far dismissed the governor for inefficiency and replaced him by Riyah b. 'Uthman al-Murri on 23rd of Ramaḍan 144/761-2.\textsuperscript{6} The appointment of Riyah al-Murri marks the beginning of the end of the first 'Alid

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{1}{Tab., III, pp. 144, 151, 152, citing 'Umar b. Shabba and Abu 'Ubayda; Ya'qub, II, p.444; Agh., XVIII, p.207.}
\footnote{2}{Tab., III, p.144.}
\footnote{3}{Op.cit., p.206, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.}
\footnote{4}{Ansab, fol. 610a, qalu, see also Khajib, III, p.171.}
\footnote{5}{Tab., III, p.60, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Jah., p.123. On his dismissal Zayad said "I do not know of any crime that I have committed, but I suppose that /Abu Ja'far/... found that the Fatimid blood is dear to me"; Shafa al-gharam, p.181.}
\footnote{6}{Jah., p.123; Maqatil, p.150; Tab., pp. 161f citing Ibn Shabba.}
\end{footnotes}
challenge to the 'Abbasids. His appointment was determined by the hard circumstances in Madīna where Muḥammad's da'wa actively propagated, spread to other provinces especially Khurasan.¹ A tradition in Baladhurī² shows in what a difficult position the Caliph found himself. He relates that Abu Ja'far while consulting 'Īsā b. Musā 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-Murri 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, Riyāḥ was likely to prove more maliciously disposed towards the 'Alids. As a Qaysite, 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.⁵ 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

¹ Ansāb, fol. 620; Ya’qūbī, II, p.450; Murūj, VI, p.192; Tab., III, p.183 citing Ibn Shabba.

² Ansāb, fol. 620a, Ḫadathānī ba’du ashghākhina. The term Ahl al-Bayt from Abu Ja’far’s point of view means the ‘Abbasids only.

³ Baladhurī gives this reason as the main reason for his appointment (Ansāb, fol. 620b).


⁵ Azdī, fol. 190.
'Abdallah al-Mahdi saying "You cannot fool me as you did my predecessors".¹ To the people of Madīnah he declared "I will humiliate and kill the descendants of those who were humiliated and killed by 'Uqba".² Consequently he imprisoned many Ḥasanid and Ṭalibid suspects. Accounts differ on their number which is generally said to have been thirteen.³ In 144/761-2 when Abū Ja'far performed his pilgrimage, he decided to take them with him to al-Ḥashimiyya 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-Ḥasan, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah al-'Uthmānī and 'Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan killed.⁴ Others perished in dungeons because of the adverse conditions there; only some who were not considered politically dangerous⁵ were set free after the failure of Muḥammad's rising.

In order to justify his policy towards the 'Alids and to appease the Khurasanīs who, as Abū Ja'far admitted⁶, felt a deep affection for Ahl al-Bayt, i.e. 'Alids and 'Abbāsid, the caliph addressed the Khurasanīs reminding them, in a long speech,⁷ that they were the partisans of the 'Abbāsid cause and that the 'Abbāsid struggle against

¹ Maqātil, p.151, citing Ibn Shabba; Tab., III, p.164, citing Ibn Shabba.
² Ansāb., fol. 620b.
⁴ Futūh, p.24; Maqātil, pp. 140, 157, 158; Tab., III, p.182, 185, 188; Khazīb, VI, p.54; IX, p.431; Dhahabī, fols. 8a-8b; A'yan al-Shī'a, 5, p.141.
⁵ Maqātil, p.134; Tab., III, p.186.
⁶ Ansāb., fol. 620. The caliph is reported to have said "The sympathy for Abū ʿAbd Allāh in Khurasan is mixed with the Khurasanī's sympathy for us /the 'Abbāsids/..."
the 'Umayyads had been crowned with success whereas analogous 'Alid efforts had been ineffective. What this ḥuṣba stated was, in fact, the 'Abbāsid case against the 'Alids. Both were ʿHashimites and Ahl al-Bayt, had the same rights and enjoyed the same prestige. However, as the 'Abbāsids had confirmed their rights by success, the stress in this and other statements by the 'Abbāsids is on victory and success. Granted that all ʿHashimites had equal rights, it was success alone that could give them priority. This is the essence of the 'Abbāsid case. To counter it, the 'Alids swiftly put forward a new claim, namely that to an inherently superior status within the ʿHashimites as direct descendants of the Prophet through Fāṭima.¹ This new attitude is reflected, as we shall see, in the letter of Muhammad Dhuʿl Nafs al-Zakiyya which shows that the claim had not yet crystallized in its final form, but was still in the process of formation. Muhammad's case was aristocratic rather than religious or legitimist.

Muhammad b. ʿAbdallah's revolt

Muhammad's revolt in Madīna, followed by his brother's revolt in Bāṣra, form the climax of the 'Alid struggle against the early 'Abbāsids. Muhammad had been brought up by his father as the Mahdī of Ahl al-Bayt and given the nickname of Dhuʿl Nafs al-Zakiyya, i.e. the pure soul.² He wandered in several provinces and fled from one place to another in the Ḥijāz itself, to evade the caliph's painstaking search.³ He contacted

²F.H.A., p.230; Hogātil, p.166; E.I.² (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 Muhammad 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 Hasanids who expressed anxiety, the ambitious al-Mahdi remained
determined and asked his son to persist.¹ Consequently Muhammad carried
on his propaganda until the 1st of Rajab 145/September 762 when he declared
his revolt.²

Historians are by no means unanimous on Muhammad's motives in ti-
his rising at that date, and differ in their opinions on whether it was
premature or not. Baladhuri and Mas'udi state³ that the imprisonment
of Muhammad's relatives, and the circulated news of his father's death
in prison were the immediate causes of its outbreak, while Tabari and
Iṣbahani⁴ point to the arrest of his brother Musa b. ' Abdallah by Riyaḥ
for his failure to find his two brothers as the cause of the premature
rising. But whatever the real reason, Muhammad seems to have considered
the time opportune. He was erroneously convinced that most provinces were
on his side.⁵ 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-Mahdi would be Muhammad b. al-Mahdi and not Muhammad b. al-
Mas'ur another tradition was fabricated, "al-Mahdi would be from the
descendant of Fāṭima" (Abū Dā'ūd, Sunan, II, 135). To counter this
propaganda al-Mas'ur circulated a spurious tradition that the mother
of al-Mahdi was not from the Prophet's house. (Agh., XII, p.85 citing

¹Bayān, 2, p.174; Maqatīl, p.150; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.445.
²Ansāb, fol. 610b, 613a; Khalīfa, fol. 293; Maqatīl, p.181; Ya‘qūbī, II,
p.452; Murūj, VI, pp. 189, 194.
³Ansāb, fol. 612a; Murūj, VI, p.189. (cont.)
in the name of certain provinces expressing their sympathies for Muhammad. Moreover Riyāḥ's harsh measures in Madīna and his persevering hunt for Muhammad caused great anxiety among the people of Madīna who were tired of the protracted situation and urged Muhammad to come out into the open anyway.

Muhammad made his first appearance with 250 followers in the quarter of Bani Salm the Ansār. Having freed the prisoners and got hold of Bayt al-Ḥal, he arrested Riyāḥ al-Murri and delivered a khulba accusing the caliph of being a ṣāḥiḥiya and declaring that "The Muḥājirūn and the Ansār 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". It is important to notice that Muhammad 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.

(cont.)

5Tab., III, p.197, citing 'Umar b. Rashīd.
2Maqātil, p.181, citing al-Faqīl b. Dakīn. Faqālu lahu matantajiru bi l khuruj wa'llahi matajidu hadhihi l umma aḥad as'amu min ka'alayha.
3Ansāb, fol. 612b.
4Tab., III, p.197 citing 'Umar b. Rashīd.
Having obtained control of Madina, Muhammad began looking for support from the provinces and took Mecca by force. The city was not pro-'Alid in its political attitude. The tribe of Banu Makhzum which played an influential role in the political scene of Mecca had no 'Alid tendency. Nevertheless pro-'Alid moderate traditionists such as Abū Bakr b. Sabra sympathized with the rising. Muhammad also sent missionaries to the Yemen, Syria and Egypt.

To gain time and put the responsibility on Muhammad's shoulders, the caliph entered into a long correspondence with Muhammad. He wrote to him after citing a threatening verse from the Qur'ān, "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." To this Muhammad 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 Shi'a [partisans] that you have gained our prerogative. Our father 'Ali was the Wāji [viceroy] and the Imam, 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-Lu'āna or al-Turadā or al-Tulaqā. You know that there is none amongst the Hashimites who has the


2 Ibn 'Asākir, Tarīkh Dimashq, Ms. B.H., fols. 82a-82b. He gave Muhammad 24,000 dinars from governmental money (op.cit., fol. 83a citing al-Zubayr b. Mus'ab al-Zubayrī).

3 Tab., III, pp. 200, 216, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.

4 Tab., III, p.209, qālu; Kamīl, v, p. 115; Azdī, fol. 158; Ghurār, fol. 182a; F.H.A., pp. 240f.

5 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 Fatima bint 'Amr at the time of Jahiliyya, where you are not; and the children of the Prophet's daughter Fatima in the time of Islam, whereas you are not.... and I am the very centre of descent amongst Banu Hashim 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 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?"  

To this Abu Ja'far replied:

"... 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 Muhammad 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. Abü Talib] remained infidels. As for what you mentioned about the fact that.... 'All was born twice from the loins of Hashim, and Hasan was born twice from the loins of 'Abd al-Muttalib, and that you were born twice from the loins of the Prophet. To all this, I can only say that the best of all, Muhammad was born but once from the loins of Hashim, and once from the loins of 'Abd al-Muttalib. As for your claim that you are the son of the Prophet, God has rejected such a claim when he said 'Muhammad 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 wilaya and cannot be an Imam, how is it possible then that the Imamate could be inherited through her? Your father ['Ali] 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...."

1Tab., III, pp. 209-10, qālu; Kāmil, 4, pp. 115-118; Azdī, fols. 159-160. See also the quotation in Ansab, fol. 614, qālu; 'Ayni, fol. 44a; Ghurar, fols. 182a-183a.

2Tab., 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 Muhammad with this caustic comment:

"You know that our greatest honour in the times of Jahiliyya, namely the dispensing of water to the pilgrims and the guardianship of the well of Zamzam, became 'Abbas'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 Jahiliyya 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 'Abbas/ until God comforted them and quenched their thirst with heavy rain. Your ancestor 'Ali was there, yet 'Umar did not seek his intercession. You know that after the death of the Prophet no other son of 'Abd al-Muttalib remained alive, and that 'Abbas inherited his rights as the uncle of the Prophet. 1 Then more than one of the Banu Hashim sought the Caliphate, but none attained it, except the descendants of 'Abbas, and so the Siqaya 2 and the inheritance of the Prophet as well as the Caliphate belong to him and his descendants and will remain in their possession. For 'Abbas was heir and legatee to every honour and virtue that ever existed in the times of the Jahiliyya and Islam..."

The letters exchanged between Abu Jafar and Muhammad are perhaps the most interesting and authentic documents of the whole 'Alid-'Abbasid 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 'Abbasid and the 'Alid side, and, as it were, equivalent to a declaration of war and a justification of the armed

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1 This in fact anticipates al-Mahdi's argument on the 'Abbasid claim to the caliphate (see Nawbahti, p.43; Akbar, fol. 74b).

2 This privilege cannot be considered a solid claim by the 'Abbasids, as all Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib had inherited the sacred privileges from Qusayy. Even the Umayyads who had shared some of these privileges in the Jahiliyya 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 makes it impossible since it threatens before it promises. This fact is referred to by Muḥammad's words to 'Īsā b. Muṣā the commander of the 'Abbāsid army: "You would not have lavished pledges on me and asked me to renounce if you had known that I would accept it." Muḥammad's reply may be considered a summary of the whole moderate 'Alid doctrine on their rights to the caliphate.

Writing to Abū Jaʿfar, 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-ʿAbbās, the 'Abbāsid'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 Jaʿfar 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

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1 *Agh.*, III, p.29; *Magātil*, p.161. The manuscript of Ghurar al-Siyar contains a fourth letter which includes the reply of Muḥammad to al-Maṣūr'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'imamat*, p.53; *Traini, La Correspondenza...*, p. 773, footnote 2.)
followers of his cause. Nor could Muhammad's claim that 'Ali had become the "Wasī" and the "Imām" after the Prophet's death, have been popular with the Arabs of the Hijāz. Muhammad also reminds the caliph that his ancestor al-'Abbās was one of the Ṭurada (those who were expelled), Ṭulaqā (those who surrendered and manumitted) and Lu'ānā (those who were accursed), 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 Muhammad does not use in his letter the title Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn but calls himself al-Mahdi, stressing the very idea which attracted the masses more than anything else.

In his reply, the caliph takes up the points raised by Muhammad one by one. First, he refutes Muhammad's claim as it is based on Qarābat al-Nisā', i.e. Fatima and confirms the priority of Qarābat al-'Umuma, 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 Shari'ā law of inheritance but also Arab custom, which lets the paternal uncle take the deceased father's position. Abū Ja'far also reminded Muhammad that al-'Abbās held the religious function of Siqāya in the Jahiliyya and Islam. It is also noteworthy that the caliph deliberately exposed 'Umar I's ruling in favour of al-'Abbās at the

time of the drought, thus aligning himself with the group of traditionists known as Ṣāḥib al-Ḥadīth. Interesting is how Abū Jaʿfar’s argument presented the Ḥusaynids as virtuous and thus disqualified the ʿHasanids: ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (Zayn al-ʿAbidīn) overcame ‘Abdallah b. al-Ḥasan (al-Maḥdī), and Jaʿfar 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 Fākhr of pure descent is valueless.¹

It is when the facts speak that Abū Jaʿfar, 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 Jaʿfar’s letter. It is the ‘Abbāsid victory that justifies the ‘Abbāsid 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-ʿAbbās protected, fed and ransomed the ‘Alids on many occasions: "Had it not been for al-ʿAbbās, the ‘Alids would have nourished themselves on the left-overs from the Umayyads,... we /the ‘Abbāsīdā gave you to inherit their /the Umayyadas’/ 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.

¹Trayn, op.cit., pp. 796-798.
The letters can hardly be accused of being spurious. 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 Baladhuri, Tabari, 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 Madīnah, it is difficult to form an accurate idea as the accounts are not clear and sometimes contradictory. Tabari states that the notables of Madīnah, with few exceptions, supported the revolt while Iṣbahānī maintains that all the people of Madīnah, except a few, voluntarily swore allegiance to him. According to Mas‘ūdī the ‘Alids, Ja‘farids, ‘Uqaylids, the sons of ‘Umar b. al-Khattab and al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awām, the whole Quraysh and the Anṣār supported Muhammad. According to Baladhuri the people of Madīnah hurried to support him, singing "This is the astonishing event which we expected between Jamādī and Rajab."¹

¹ 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 ‘Abbāsid. 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-Abwa’ and therefore Abu Ja‘far reminded him of al-‘Abbas feeding Quraysh, among them some ‘Alids, at al-Abwa’ 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 Tāliq and La‘īn. (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. 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. As for the Ḥusaynids Ja‘far al-Šādiq 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. 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 ‘Irāq was, generally speaking, opposed to the government. Thus many joined Muḥammad not because of their pro-‘Alid sympathies but of their anti-‘Abbasid

(cont.) out that speaking on the letters Ḥusayn remarks:

(4) مَعْلُومٌ يَقِيلُ أنَّهُ مَتَّى يَقِيلُ إِنَّهُ مَتَّى يَقِيلُ إِنَّهُ مَتَّى يَقِيلُ إِنَّهُ مَتَّى

2 Tab., III, p.200, citing Azhar b. Sa‘īd; Maqātil, p.183, citing Azhar b. Sa‘īd.

3 Murūj, VI, p.189.

4 Ansāb, fol. 613b, qālū, also Tab., III, pp. 227-8; Tanbīh, p.341.

1 Ansāb, fol. 613b; Tab., III, p.228, citing Ibn Shabba.

2 Maqātil, p.192; Tab., III, p.200. Hearing of the Zaydīd’s support to Muḥammad, Abu Ja‘far exclaimed "Is it not surprising that the sons of Zayd should support Muḥammad as we had killed those who killed their father."

3 Rijāl, pp. 179, 186-7, citing Ḥamdawayh, pp. 353-354, citing Muḥammad b.
attitude. The messianic propaganda of Muḥammad al-Mahdī had, as already mentioned, a deep effect on the people of Madīna, especially the lower classes who had genuine grievances against the ʿAbbāsids. The support given to the rising by some prominent traditionists enhanced its religious character and increased its following. Malik b. Anas declared that the oath sworn to the ʿAbbāsids was not binding as it had been given under compulsion. Others such as Abū Ḫanīfa, Muḥammad b. Hurmuz, Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān and Abū Bakr b. Abī Sabra, also sympathized with Muḥammad. This body of traditionists (Aṭḥāb al-Ḥadīth) was moderately pro-ʿAlid in its leanings in this early Islamic period. They must have realized that the ʿAbbāsid outlook was not less worldly than that of the Umayyads. The Zaydiyya of Kūfa and the Mutazila of Baṣra also sympathized with or supported Muḥammad.

Muḥammad himself tried to present the ʿAbbāsids 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-ʿAbbās mind it not, but pass their night in false security and enjoyment. They slumber as the Umayyads did, (cont.)

1 Ansāb, fol. 653b; 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."

2 Tab., III, p.200, citing ʿUmar b. Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 Ansāb, fols. 163, 168.

4 Maqātil, pp. 249, 270f; Tab., III, pp. 282ff; van Arendonk, Les débuts..., pp. 58f.
and like them they will awaken to avert the danger when it is too late.\textsuperscript{1} Sudayf, a mawlā of Bani Ḥashim, who joined the rising, used to say "Allahu ma'ana fay'una dawla ba'da 'l qisma wa Imaratuna ghalaba ba'da 'l masūra wa 'Ahduna mīrāth ba'da 'l khtiyār li 'l 'Umma...\textsuperscript{2}

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.\textsuperscript{3} Ya'qūbī states that Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdallah went to Kūfa but did not find much support there.\textsuperscript{4} It is important to differentiate here between real support and mere sympathy; accounts which state that 100,000 pro-'Alid partisans\textsuperscript{5} were ready to join Ibrāhīm in Kūfa are in fact greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, he was joined by a group of extremists called al-Mughīriyya,\textsuperscript{6} probably attracted by his claim to be the Mahdī.

Tempted by the alleged pro-'Alid loyalty of Ḥumayd b. Qafṣaba, the governor of Egypt,\textsuperscript{7} Muḥammad sent his son 'Alī to propagate his cause, with Khālid b. Sa'īd al-Sadafī as a chief dā'ī. The caliph soon afterwards appointed a new governor Yazīd b. Ẓātim al-Muhallabī by name.

\textsuperscript{1} Wafayāt, p. 109 note 6.
\textsuperscript{2} 'Uyun, II, p.115; al-Shi'r, p.419; Agh., XIV, p.162; 'Asākir, 6, p.68; Iqd, III, p.32.
\textsuperscript{3} Ansāb, fol. 673b.
\textsuperscript{4} Ya'qūbī, II, p.453.
\textsuperscript{5} Tab., III, p.230, citing Muḥammad b. Yaḥya.
\textsuperscript{6} Ḥazm, IV, p.141; Bagh., pp. 147-148.
\textsuperscript{7} Humayd was a veteran 'Abbasid partisan. His effective rôle in crushing the 'Alid revolt is a clear evidence of his loyalty to Abu Ja'far. However it might be suggested here that, in accordance with Abu 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 Shawwal, Khalid al-Sadafi proclaimed the rising in the great Mosque of Fusjat. They immediately ravaged Bayt al-Mal, 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 Ibrahîm was brought by Abû 'l Makârim to Egypt in Dhu 'l Hijja 145/ Feb. 763. As to the fate of ‘Alî, it seems that he was arrested and sent to Baghdad where he was imprisoned with the rest of his family. But Muḥammad's overtures seem to have found more response in Khurasan where great unrest had followed the 'Abbâsid victory. In 147/757-58 Abû Ja'far appointed 'Ahd al-Jabbâr al-Azâd governor and ordered him to watch 'Alid activities. But the relations between the caliph and the governor deteriorated and 'Ahd al-Jabbâr turned pro-'Alid. Although the latter was caught and killed in 142 A.H., Khurasan remained unstable which the new governor ascribed to Muḥammad's activities.

To deter the people, Abû Ja'far had Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah al-'Uthmâni promising to help him. See Tab., III, p.230 citing Ibn Shabba, pp. 244,247; Ansâb, fol. 617a-617b, citing the sons of Ḥumayd.

1Wulât, pp. 111-114, citing Ibn Qudayd; Maqâtil, p. 140; Tab., III, p.171; Khiṭâb, 2, p.93; Nujum, pp. 386, 390; Muhallabi, al-Masâlik, ed. al-Munajjid.

2Tab., III, p.171; Kindî, p. 115. cf. another account alleges that ‘Alî was hidden in a village until his death (Wulât, p.115).

3See above, p.

4Tab., III, p.183, citing 'Umar. "Inna ahl Khurasân qad taqâ'asa unni wâjâla 'alaihim amr Muḥammad."

5Muḥammad al-'Uthmâni was suspected by the caliph from the very beginning.
killed and sent his head to Khurasan. The caliph hoped that the two Muḥammad, i.e. al-ʻUthmānī and Dhu’l Nafs al-Zakīyya 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. Abū Ja’far was at that moment near al-Madāʾ in looking for a suitable site for his new capital. Realizing the pro-ʻAlid sympathies of Kūfa, Abū Ja’far immediately imposed a strict military control on it. He also chose his heir, ʻIsā b. Mūsā to lead the ‘Abbāsid army for many reasons. First, ʻIsā was well known for his fighting ability. Secondly, it seemed expedient in a crisis of this nature to send a member of the Hashimite family to defy Muḥammad, another Hashimite. This was likely to neutralize the effect of the superiority of the Hashimite 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 Ibrahim b. ʻAbdallah. The caliph asked him for information on Ibrahim’s hide out, but al-ʻUthmānī declined to give any information. Another reason is that al-ʻUthmānī was the son of ʻAbdallah b. Amr b. ʻUthman b. ʻAffān and his mother was Fāṭima bint al-ʻUsayn. He, therefore, had ʻAlid and ʻUthmanid blood in his veins. Furthermore his very name, al-ʻUthmānī, 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 ʻAbdallah al-Madī all combined to make of him a dangerous man in the eyes of the caliph (see Anṣāb, VI, pp. 110-111 citing Mādāʾīnī; Maʾārif, p.199; Maqātil, pp. 129, 141-142 citing al-Zubayr b. Bakkār; Tab., III, p.178; Muruj, VI, pp. 198-202.

1Tab., III, p.183; see also Agh., IV, p.94.
2Anṣāb, fols. 612a-612b; Tab., III, pp. 204, 207.
3Anṣāb, fol. 621a; Tab., III, pp. 204, 293-294; Muruj, VI, p.195, qāla ‘l Maṣūr: ʻAtī ’l Kūfa faʾaṣaʿu aṣmukhatahum wa akumu makbāhatan labhum.
4Jaḥiz, Faḍl bani Ḥashim, ed. Sandūbī, p.117.
Thirdly, the revolt seemed to be a good opportunity for Ābu Ja'far to get rid of 'Īsā 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 'Abbāsid army which, though consisting of only 4,000 soldiers, 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 he delivered at Maḍīna depressed the morale of his supporters and they began to disperse. Besides Maḍīna was the wrong place to launch a rising from. Not self-sufficient economically, it depended on Egypt and Syria and Ābu Ja'far immediately ordered a sea and land blockade of it. Muḥammad's partisans realized it and advised him to escape to Egypt, Mecca or Baghur, but the caliph succeeded by skilful manoeuvres.
in leading him to believe that once he declared his revolt, many provinces would join him.\(^1\) 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 'Abbāsid army",\(^2\) Muḥammad aggravated the effects of the economic blockade of Madīna by digging the ditch (al-Khandaq) round the city.

On Ramadān 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.\(^3\) 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 Shujiā.\(^4\) 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-'Abbāsid elements working against Muḥammad. The tribe of Banū Ghaffār facilitated the entry of the 'Abbāsid 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

\(^1\) Ansāb, fols. 616b, 619b. Kāna Muḥammad Yaqūl: Inni lam akhruj ḫatta bay'a anī ahl al-Kufa wa 'I Ba'gra wa wāsit wa 'I Jazira wa 'I Maqūl. (Tab., III, p.231 citing Ibn Shabba.)

\(^2\) Tab., III, p.229, citing Ibn Shabba.

\(^3\) Ansāb, fols. 617b-618a; Tab., III, p.226, citing Ibn Shabba.

\(^4\) 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 Imām (see Tab., III, p.237; Maqātīl, p.196).
'Abbasids. Some of Muhammad's followers took to flight, and he himself was killed fighting on the 14th of Ramadān 145/Nov.762. The caliph had his head circulated in the provinces. The property of the rebels was confiscated.

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. The situation became intolerable when the new governor of Madīna, 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī' al-Ḥarithī, arrived on the 5th of Shawwāl 145/Nov. 762 with the 'Abbāsid army. The soldiers behaved badly in the markets, refusing to pay for what they bought, an act which the governor did not condemn. The notables who no doubt considered the 'Abbāsid 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. 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. The black slaves, hard-pressed economically

1 Tab., III, p.244.
2 Ma'arif, p.378; Tab., III, p.249; Maqātil, pp. 190-191.
3 Tab., III, pp. 253 f.
4 Ansāb, fol. 615b, qālū; Tab., III, p.266, citing Ibn Shabba.
5 Tab., III, p.266 citing Ibn Shabba.
6 Ibid.
7 Ansāb, fol. 623a-624a, citing Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah, describes them as Sudan; Tab., III, pp. 265-271 calls them Sudan; Ibn 'Asakir states: (cont.)
and despised socially longed for "revenge for themselves and their masters". 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 Abu Ja'far's ruthlessness, the Arab notables endeavoured to quieten the outburst. Al-Asbagh b. Sufyan and al-Ḥakam b. 'Abdallah, together with the Qāḍī Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir Abī Sabra played an outstanding rôle in restoring the order. 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. The governor of Madīna, asked to return to the city, had the hands of four of the black ringleaders chopped off for stealing. 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 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, Mogul, Anbār and Wāsit until he finally

(cont.) Thāra ‘ala 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī’ ʿUṣlama al-Madīna wa 'l ru`a' wa 'l qibyan (Tarikh Dimashq, Ms. fol. 83a-83b, citing Mu'āth b. 'Abdallāh.)

1 Tab., III, pp. 268-269.
2 Ansāb, fol. 623b, citing Ḥāfīz b. al-Kalbī, Tab., III, p.270, citing 'Umar b. Rashīd, Tarikh Dimashq, Ms. fol. 83a-84b.
3 Tab., III, p.265 citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Tarikh Dimashq, fol. 84a.
4 Ansāb, fol. 623a citing Mu'āth b. 'Abdallāh; Tab., III, p.271.
5 Tab., III, p.268.
settled in Basra in 143/760-1 to propagate for his brother. Ibrahim found in Basra a safe place of refuge. He changed residence, occasionally, from one loyal tribe to another. Basra was, in fact, suitable for a revolt. Its economic and strategic position was advantageous. In its political attitude Basra was neither 'Alid nor 'Abbāsid. In fact, it was described as 'Uthmanite which does not necessarily imply a pro-Umayyad or anti-'Alid tendency, but meant, as one of the notables of Basra put it in his answer to Ibrahim's call to join his revolt, that "I do not believe in fighting and I do not consider it the right thing to do". Ibrahim did not rebel until two months after his brother's revolt. Accounts differ on the causes of the delay. According to one, Ibrahim had smallpox; according to another he simply was not ready. There is


2 Tab., III, p.287, citing Ibn Shabba qāla Abū Ja'far: ḡamāda 'alayha 'amr Ibrahim Lāma ʾaṣīmālat ʿalayhi Tūfū al-Basra. See also Jāhiz, Dukhala', pp. 183-185; Ansāb, fol. 623b. Baladhuri states that Ibrahim first settled with a section of Tamim then shifted to Banī Rasib when he soon had to change it again, while Jāhiz speaks of Ibrahim's secretary who hid himself in the tribe of 'Abd al-Qays then moved on to Tamim.

3 Hamād., p.315; Sa'd, VI, p.232; Wafayāt, II, pp. 123-127.

4 Tab., III, p.289, citing 'Umar b. Shabba.

5 Ansāb, fol. 633b, 626b; Khalīfa, fol. 293; Tab., III, p.298.

6 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 Bagra. In any case, Ibrahim realized further delay was dangerous as Abu Ja'far who already knew of Ibrahim's activities through spies, began to reinforce his army there. On Ramadān 145/Nov. 762, Ibrahim rose with about twenty followers, but was soon joined by several Arab chiefs and their tribal groups, until his diwan listed 4,000 by the time he proclaimed the revolt. The governor of Bagra, Sufyān b. Mu‘awiya al-Muhallabī, had an understanding with Ibrahim and Ibrahim 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. He easily seized control of Bagra and drove out Mu‘ammad and Ja’far, the sons of Sulayman b. ‘Alī who became the rallying point of the ‘Abbāsid counter-movement.

With the sources at our disposal it is not easy to assess the nature of the support that Ibrahim derived from Bagra which had no specific political colour. Its attitude was more changeable. The most influential tribe Banī Tamīm was not pro-‘Alid in its leanings. In fact,

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1 Ansâb, fol. 623b; Tab., III, p.291.

2 Ansâb, fol. 624a; Tab., III, p.290. Different accounts were given for the number of Ibrahim's followers. Some state 100,000 (Tab., III, p.309) or 10,000 (Ya‘qubi, II, p.454) or 30,000 (Bad, 6, p.36).

3 Ansâb, fol. 625a citing Abū 'Ubayda; Tab., III, pp.297, 300. If these figures are to be credited Ibrahim's followers should have numbered about 12,000 men.

4 Ibrahim was closely related to Mu‘ammad and Ja’far who had Umm al-Hasan bint Ja’far b. al-Hasan as mother. He invited them to join him, calling himself as their uncle (Ansâb, fol. 627b). 

5 Ch. Pellat, Le Milieu Basrien..., p. 281. (Arabic trans.)
they refused to submit to any authority whatever. Ahl al-‘Aliya and especially Bāhila tribes were also anti-‘Alid. It was, therefore, ‘Abd al-Qays, the smallest and most turbulent tribe in Bāgra, and the ‘Azd tribe that could be considered pro-‘Alid tribes. 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 Ṭabayyadat al-Qabā’il (i.e. all the tribes have accepted the white colour and joined Ibrāhim) should be treated very cautiously. Ibrahim, in fact, derived considerable support from the lower classes of Bāgra 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. 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 Ibrāhim such as Abū Ḫanīfa, Sufyān al-Thawrī, al-‘A’amsh, al-Mufaqḍal al-Qābbī, ‘Abbād b. Mansūr, Bāshīr al-Raḥīl and Maṭar al-

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1 Ch. Pellet, op.cit., pp. 51, 263 (Arabic trans.)

2 Ansāb, fol. 624a.

3 Haywān, 4, p.24; Bukhala’, p.139; Tab., III, p.307. Bāgra and its neighbourhood was inhabited by divergent elements such as Persians, Aramians (Nībāṭ), Zuḥ and Siwás. (see Ansāb, 4, p.112; Haywān, 4, p.35; Fakhīr al-Sūdān, ed. Sāsī, p.73; Būlānī, 1, p.522. al-‘Alī, Tanzimāt, pp. 66 ff; Pellat, op.cit., pp. 66ff.)
Warāq. However there were other traditionists and jurists who sided with the 'Abbāsids or were at least neutral. According to Balādhūrī, Suwār al-Qādī used to dissuade people from joining Muḥammad and his brother, Saʿīd b. 'Arūba advised people to keep to their homes and Hishām b. 'Abdallāh did not express his opinion on Ibrāhīm's rising. Ibrāhīm also enjoyed the sympathy and support of the Zaydiyya and the Muʿtaṣila who showed great concern for him and his prospects and "closely associated with him and helped him to conduct his affairs". The Umayyads found Bağra a good place of refuge. Their number was growing and they were prosperous and popular. They and their Mawāli probably helped Ibrāhīm, as he was connected with them by marriage, being the husband of Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿUthmānī's daughter.

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1 Maqātil, pp. 239, 247-261; Azdī, fol. 165; Khatīb, XIII, pp. 280f; Asakir, II, p.255; Murt., p.41; Dahabi, Tarikh, fol. 8b. Heresiographers regarded Abu Ḫanīfa as a Murjite (see Firaq, p.7; Hazm, III, p.106; Maqālat, I, p.138; Shah., I, pp. 147, 157; Khatīb, II, p.350). According to another account he was considered, probably by the extremist ʿAlids of Kīfa, as Zaydite (Shah., II, p.24) due to his moderate ʿAlid leanings. Murjism, in fact, opposed tyranny and injustice long before the ʿAbbāsid 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; Khatīb, XIII, p.380 f). Whether Abu Ḫanīfa was a murjite or not he certainly sympathized with Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm and was imprisoned until his death. Bāgh., I, p.422; Shah., I, p.163; Maqātil, p. 248, cf. E.I. 2 Abu Ḫanīfa.

2 Ansāb, fol. 567.

3 Azdī, fol. 165.


5 Ansāb, fol. 754b, citing ʿUmar b. Shabba; Tab., III, p.419.
Having taken Baṣra, Ibrāhīm sent to neighbouring provinces missionaries who were followed by armed forces. Ahwāz, Fārs, Kirmān, Kāškar and Wāsīt were taken by force.1 Ibrāhīm thought that by controlling these provinces he would strengthen his position and enlist new supporters for his cause. Even in Kūfa,2 secret propaganda was made for Ibrāhīm by the Asadite Ibn Ma‘iz and the ‘Ijlite Ibn al-Farāfīga 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.3 Abū Ja‘far’s army was actually very small.4 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 Iraḵ. He also sent Salm b. Qutayba al-Bāhilī from al-Ray to reinforce Ja‘far b. Sulaymān.5 Salm al-Bāhilī an influential figure in Baṣra succeeded in winning the tribe of Bāhila over to the ‘Abbāsids.6 Khāzīm b. Khuzayma

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1 Anṣāb, fol. 624b; Tab., III, pp. 300-301.
2 Tab., III, pp. 293-5, citing Salm al-Khāṣī. In the words of the caliph’s adviser Kūfa was “a boiling kettle whose lid is you /Abū Ja‘far/”.
3 Tab., III, pp. 293, 304 citing ‘Abdallah b. Rāshid; Dhahabī, fol. 7a.
4 The ‘Abbāsid army was scattered in the Ḥijāz, Rayy and Iṣrā‘īliyya (Tab., III, p.304; Dhahabī, fol.7a.).
5 Agīd., XII, p.107; Tab., III, pp. 305; Dhahabī, Tārīkh, fol. 7a.
6 Tab., III, p.305.
with 4,000 soldiers recaptured al-Ahwaz from al-Mughira b. al-Kar' Ibrahim’s governor.¹

When Ibrahim heard of his brother’s death he proclaimed himself Amir al-Mu'minin and decided to move to Kufa.² Only 10,000 followed him to Kufa.³ Ibrahim, 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 Kufa in order to surprise Abu Ja'far because, on the advice of Bashir al-Rahhal, such an act would cause much harm to children and women of Kufa. To this, one of Ibrahim’s partisans replied “You rose against Abu Ja'far and yet you care for the safety of children and women...”⁴ At Bakhamra, Ibrahim met ‘Isa b. Musa who was with 15,000 soldiers.⁵ When the fighting took place, Ibrahim’s army was, at first, victorious, but ‘Isa b. Musa held his position with a small unit. At this moment, Ja’far and Muhammad, sons of Sulayman, surprised Ibrahim’s army from the rear. They retreated to fight the ambush. This gave the ‘Abbasid army an opportunity to organise itself. Ibrahim 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 Abu Ja’far who had it exhibited in Kufa and then

¹Tab., III, pp. 305-6, citing Sa'id b. Salm.
²Ansab, fol. 225b; Tab., III, pp.312, 309.
³Tab., p.309 citing Abu 'Ubayda and an eye witness; Ya'qubi, II, p.454; Baladhuri states that they were 11,000. Seven hundred of them were cavalry (Ansab, fol. 225b).
⁴Tab., III, p.311; Dhahabi, fol. 7b-7b.
⁵Ma'arif, p.378; Tab., III, p.310.
sent it to the provinces. 1 'Isa immediately declared an amnesty, but it was not observed, as some of Ibrahim's supporters who had given themselves up were killed. 2

The revolt had been dangerous. It is related that Abu Ja'far was ready to abandon Kufa and join his son in al-Ray where there was a considerable 'Abbasid army. 3 The reasons for Ibrahim's failure lie in the very nature of the divergent elements which supported him. Bagra was inhabited by different Arab tribes and non-Arab elements. Although Ibrahim rallied a considerable support he could not act swiftly, probably because he was hindered by difference of opinion among his supporters in Bagra. 4 The people of Bagra were politically opportunistic and changeable for two reasons: First, most of its tribes were turbulent, 5 and those which joined Ibrahim had no real 'Alid leanings, but opposed

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1 Ma'rif, p. 378; Ansab, fols. 225b-226b; Agh, XVII, p. 109; Tab., III, pp. 310-315; Dhahabi, fols. 7b-8a citing al-Faqil b. Dakin.

2 Ansab, fols. 225b-226a. Some traditionists and religious figures were pardoned (Ansab, fol. 627a).

3 Ansab, fol. 626b citing 'Abdallah b. Sa'lih al-Muqri; Agh, XVII, p. 109. Tab., III, p. 308, 317; Maqdisi, 6, p. 86. Baladhuri relates a khutba delivered by the caliph in Kufa soon after the failure of the revolt in which Al-Mangur expressed his astonishment as "Why the Umayyads did not kill all the Kufan warriors and ravaged its people" (Ansab, fol. 226a).

4 Ibrahim might have even thought of shifting to Wasit to get away from the whole frictional atmosphere (this view is related by Ya'qubi and substantiated by an account in Ansab which states: "Ghayra 'anna Ibrahim Khafa ghadr Ahl al-Bagra wa Ikhtilafahum wa 'asabiyyatuhum fa'aqalana nahwa wasit." (Ansab, fol. 628a; Ya'qubi, II, p. 215).

5 Hamad., p. 135; Maqdisi, p. 129. Kanat taqa'u fi'l Bagra 'asabiyyat wabishe.
the 'Abbasid central government; secondly Baṣra 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 Baṣra, Ibrāhīm was left with only 10,000 followers most of whom deserted him during the battle of Bakhamra. To punish the 'Alid partisans in Baṣra, Abū Ja'far ordered Salm al-Dāhilī 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.¹ The relative leniency of the punishment of the participants of this dangerous rebellion is significant, as it proves once again that Baṣra was not so much pro-'Alid as anti-'Abbasid 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-Mangūr (i.e. the victorious)² and was rightfully considered the founder of the dynasty.

Muhammad's and Ibrāhīm's defeat marked the complete collapse of 'Alid endeavour to seize the caliphate. Risings like that of Fakhrkh, though tragic in their nature and effect, never had the same impact again.

¹Ansāb, fol. 626b; Tab., III, pp. 319, 326-327. The author of F.H.A. (p.262) relates al-Mangūr's statement that "The people of Baṣra had no excuse. Their qurā cursed us..., their jurists gave the people the Fatwa to fight us and their youths fought us."

²Tanbīh, p.341.
The death of more active and militant Fāṭimids enhanced Jaʿfar al-Šādiq’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 ʿl Khattḥāb, having failed to persuade Jaʿfar al-Šādiq to rise in arms against Abū Jaʿfar found his son Ismaʿīl more inclined to listen to their militant plans.¹

It was this peaceful disposition of al-Šādiq and his disinclination to bid for political leadership that enabled him to live on comparatively good terms with Abū Jaʿfar. The caliph was pleased to have him in Madīna as a deterrent to militant ‘Alids. Al-Šādiq devoted himself to religious studies, and the caliph seems to have been right in regarding him as merely a prominent traditionist. As Professor Gibb² puts it,

"There is, in fact, little evidence that at this period any major dogmatic schism had developed between Sunnism and 'moderate' i.e. Imami Shi‘ism or that any kind of heterodoxy attached to the followers of the Ithna’ashari 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,³ 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 Shari‘a law. It was the time of

¹Riḍā, ed. Karbala 1963, pp. 249, 267-301; Fiṭrāq, pp.55 ff; Saʿd al-Ashʿari, pp. 80, 81-83; B. Lewis, The Origins..., pp. 30 ff.
Abū Yanīfa and Malik, the Imām. Ja'far was evidently looked on as Imam 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 Fātimid, he considered himself the only rightful religious Imām divinely appointed according to the doctrine of Nagg, i.e. clear designation by the previous Imāms. This idea was complementary to the claim of 'Ilm, i.e. the inheritance of special knowledge.¹ Thus his authority was merely religious and spiritual. However he promised his devoted partisans a Ḥusaynid caliphate after the advent of al-Qa'im,² 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

¹Rijāl, pp. 319, 356, 358-362; Hodgson, op.cit., pp. 11ff; E.I (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 Sahīfah 'l Ṣafra', which had been handed down by Abu Ḥashim to Muḥammad the Abbāsid (Akhbar, fol. 84b). Furthermore, al-Mangur significantly refers, in his Ṭāgūya, to his son 'al-Mahdī, to the "Secret Knowledge" contained in a book which belonged to his 'Abbāsid 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 (Maṣūm).

of 'Abbāsid caliphs, the relations between the 'Abbāsids and the Ḥusaynids were, on the whole, good.\(^1\)

**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\(^2\) that he would not follow his policy. In his wasiyya 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."\(^3\) He also urged al-Mahdī to spare no means in searching for the hidden 'Alid rebel, ‘Īsā b. Zayd\(^4\) who together with the Zaydiyya participated in Muhammad's revolt. After Muhammad's death ‘Īsā b. Zayd joined Ibrāhīm in Bāṣra and became his heir (wasi) and banner bearer. According to Iṣbahānī,\(^5\) al-Manṣūr tried

\(^1\)Nevertheless al-Manṣūr was watchful. Having learned of pro-Ḥusaynid subversive activities, the caliph summoned al-Ṣadiq and his son Isma'īl to Iraq. However their lives were spared and only one of the conspirators Bassam b. 'Abdallāh al-Ṣayrāfī was executed (Riḍāl, p.159; Najāshī, pp. 81-2). Al-Manṣūr also seemed to have been worried about the Khuṣṣ which used to be paid to al-Ṣadiq by his partisans as a token of their loyalty. He is said to have questioned al-Ṣadiq on the matter when he visited Madīna to perform his pilgrimage in 147/764 (al-Kāfī, I, pp. 139, 355; Sifat al-Ṣafwh, II, p.96).


\(^3\)Ya‘qūbī, II, p.475.

\(^4\)Tab. III, p.448, citing ‘Umar b. Shabba.

\(^5\)Ma estad, pp. 227-228, 249.
to exploit a misunderstanding between ‘Isa and Ibrāhīm and incited the latter to desert Ibrāhīm. But the deep cause of the deterioration of the relationship between Ibrāhīm and ‘Isa seems to have been the Imamate. In fact ‘Isa claimed the Imamate after Muḥammad’s death, while Ibrāhīm had already taken the title of Amīr al-Muʿminīn. However al-Manṣūr failed in his effort to utilize this rivalry when both Ibrāhīm and ‘Isa agreed to postpone their differences and unite their forces against Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr. ‘Isa participated in the battle of Bakhamra and after Ibrāhīm’s death he escaped to Kūfa.\(^1\)

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 Ḥiḍżāz 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.\(^2\)

It was also in accordance with this conciliatory policy that al-Mahdī appointed Yaʿqūb b. Dāʾūd his Wazīr. Yaʿqūb 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 Yaʿqūb was released.\(^3\) He succeeded in gaining


\(^3\)Jah., p.155; Tab., III, p.507 citing ‘Alī al-Nawfali.
the favour of Al-Mahdī by disclosing to him the plan of escape of
his fellow-prisoner the 'Alid al-Ḥasan b. Ḥabīb so that the plan
was foiled. 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 Bakhmara, and al-Ḥasan
b. Ḥabīb who had finally managed to escape from his prison with the
help of the Zaydiyya. 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. Ḥabīb. Al-Mahdī subsequently per­
mitted Ya‘qūb’s authority to grow and appointed him Wazīr in 163/779,
referring to him as "brother in God". 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 ‘Abbāsid régime. The ‘Alids were, however, unwilling to compromise
with the ‘Abbāsids. Moreover, they did not, in fact, trust Ya‘qūb’s

1Jah., p.181; Tab., III, pp. 462-463; E. Kocher, Ya‘qūb b. Dā’ūd, M.I.O.,
2Jah., p.181; Tab., III, p.508, citing ‘Alī al-Nawfalī, p.461; Muntakhab,
fol. 131a.
3Ansāb, fol. 607a; Jah., p.156; Tab., III, p.482.
4Jah., p. 155; Tab., III, p.464; Murtuţ, VI, p.232. Besides its honorary
implications, this declaration of fraternity, which is probably inspired
by the Qur’anic verse "وَلَا تَغْفِرُنَّ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَنَى..." 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 Sourdel, La Vizarat..., p.107; al-Bāsha,
al-Alqāb al-Islāmiyya, pp. 60, 135.
5Sourdel, 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, ʻIsā b. Zayd did not give himself up. 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.

The dismissal of Ya‘qūb was a turning point in al-Mahdī’s policy towards the 'Alids. His measures became harsher and harsher. His suspicion even fell on Musā 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 Hijāz. Several suspects among them 'Alī b. al-ʻAbbās the Ḥasanid were put under strict watch. The latter was subsequently arrested and al-ʻĪsā b. 'Alī, the eldest among the 'Alids, went to Baghdad and interceded with al-Mahdī in favour of 'Alī who was released with ʻĪsā as his guarantor.

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1 Maqaṭil, p.274; ʻĀmilī, I, p.57.
2 Jah., p.163; Tab.,III, p.516; Murūj, VI, p.232; Wafayāt, 3, p.447.
3 Maqaṭil, pp. 279-80; Rijāl, pp. 227 f, 284. See also Agh., XXI, p.120; Iqd, citing 'Uthbī, 2, p.178.
4 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-Rashīd (170/786-193/809) and died in his prison without fulfilling the role of the (cont.)
Al-Mahdî 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 'Abbāsid claim to succession was made in al-Mahdî's reign. Henceforward, the 'Abbāsid claim was no longer based on the wagiyya of Abu Ħashim but on the status of al-'Abbās as the uncle of the Prophet and his legitimate inheritor.

The revolt of al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alî

When al-Ḥādî succeeded to the caliphate (169/785-170/786), he abandoned the friendly policy of his father towards the 'Alids and discontinued their 'Afa'. However, the situation proved untenable, so that they approached al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alî who seemed to be the most suitable to undertake the leadership of the movement and incite him to revolt. Yaʿqūbî's statement, supported by Tabari, is of importance in so far as it reveals that the uprising was not casual but planned in advance. Iṣbahānî also states that at the beginning of the pilgrimage about seventy men visited al-Ḥusayn and stayed in the house of Ibn Aflâh which aroused the suspicions of the governor of Madīna.

(cont.) the saviour (al-Qā'îm) 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.

5 Maqâtîl, p.269. Ibn 'Asâkir relates that al-Mahdî imprisoned a Ḥasanid called Abu 'Abdallah al-Mahdî whose mother was a Tamimite. He therefore claimed probably out of fear to be a Tamimite rather than an 'Alid and lived at al-Balqa' (Tarikh Dimashq, MS. fol. 188a).

1 Firaq, p.43; Akhbar, fol. 74b.
2 Yaʿqûbî, II, p.488.
3 Tab., III, pp. 553, 565; see also van Arendonk, op.cit., p.63.
4 Maqâtîl, p.296, citing 'Umar b. Shabba; Fakhîrî, 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-‘Yusayn b. 'Alī himself was included. Al-Hādī also tried to interfere with 'Alī b. al-‘Yusayn'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. Soon al-‘Umarī imprisoned and humiliated some Alids among them al-‘Yasan b. Muhammad on the charge of wine drinking, an allegation which is rather difficult to prove. Isbahānī, Ya‘qūbī and Ibn al-Tiqtaqa naturally take the side of the 'Alids and describe the accusation as false pretext. However, it seems to emerge from the argument between al-‘Yusayn b. 'Alī and al-‘Umarī that they had in fact drunk wine; al-‘Yusayn argued that al-‘Umarī had no right to flog them, as the Irāfī school permitted the drinking of a certain kind of wine. Al-Ḥasan b. Muhammad was only released on the condition that he reported daily to the authorities, and that al-‘Yusayn b. 'Alī and Yaḥya b. 'Abdallah became his guarantors. The treatment meted out to al-Ḥasan and other 'Alids, provoked strong anger in

1 Maqātil, p.296 citing Muhammad al-Nawfalī and Ibn Shabba; Tab., III, 552, citing 'Abdallah al-Anṣārī.

2 Tab., III, p.587, citing Ibn Shabba.

3 Maqātil, pp. 296-97; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.488; Fakhri, p.260; see also Ibn al-Sa‘ī, Muhhtasar..., p.24; Van Arendonk, op.cit., p.63, footnote 2.

4 Tab., III, p.552 citing al-Faḍl b. Ishaq. 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).
As has already been mentioned, al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī 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. 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. Al-Ḥusayn's followers were, therefore, not numerous. Yaʿqūbī estimates them at less than 500, Iṣbahānī at about 300 which, probably, implies that they were less than that. As to the ‘Abbāsids, many of them were already in the ʿIjāz intending to perform the pilgrimage under the leadership of Sulaymān b. Abī Jaʿfar.

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2 Tab., III, p.552 citing ʿAbdallah al-Anṣārī; Megātil, p.297.
4 Yaʿqūbī, II, p.488; Megātil, p.298.
Hearing of the revolt, al-Hadi ordered Muhammad b. Sulayman to take over the command of the ‘Abbasids. The ‘Abbasid side was composed of ‘Abbasid partisans who were performing the pilgrimage and a strong body guard brought from Baghdad to protect the pilgrimage caravan against Bedouin attack.\(^2\)

Al-‘Usayn proclaimed his revolt in Madīna\(^3\) calling the people for al-Murtaḍa min Al-Muhammad.\(^4\) The governor of Madīna fled but the ‘Abbasid partisans rallied round Khalid 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.\(^5\) However, al-‘Usayn 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.\(^6\)

\(^1\)Tab., III, p.557 citing Muhammad b. Sāliḥ; Khalīfa, fol. 310; Murūj, VI, 266.

\(^2\)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 Tabari uses the term A‘rab, Ibn al-Athīr uses ‘Arab.

\(^3\)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; Sha‘fā’, pp. 184-5.

\(^4\)Tab., III, p.554, citing ‘Alī b. Muhammad; cf. Maqātil, p.301 where the title is "al-Riḍa min al-Muhammad".

\(^5\)Tab., III, pp. 553-4, citing al-Faḍl b. Iṣḥāq and Muhammad b. Sāliḥ; Maqātil, p.300; Azraqī, III, p.212; Athīr, VI, p.61.

Subsequently, the 'Abbasids marched towards Mecca, and al-‘Usayn decided to meet them. The fighting took place on the day of Tarwiya 8th of Dhu 'l Hijja/11th June in the valley of Fakhkh. Al-‘Usayn 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-Mağd and his brother Idrīs managed to get away. The former fled to the Daylam where he eventually revolted in the reign of al-Rashīd in 176/792-3, while the latter escaped to the Maghrib where he founded the Idrīsid dynasty in 172/788. In spite of the amnesty, many ‘Alids were executed in cold blood. 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 Mūsa b. ‘Īsā. 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. Some historians describe al-Ḥādī as unwilling to kill the ‘Alids. This may be partly true, but he did not hesitate to treat the ‘Alid

1 Ansāb, fol. 229b-230a; Ma‘ārif, p.380; Magātil, p.302; F.H.A., p.285; Tab., III, p.559; Murūj, VI, p.226. cf. Muntakhāb (fol. 131a) where it is maintained that al-‘Usayn did not fall in battle but was executed; see also Moscati, op.cit., pp. 12-13, E.I. (Fakhkh).

2 Ansāb, fol. 230a; Tab., III, pp. 561, 562; Nujum, p.432.

partisans harshly. They became, in fact, the object of terrible persecu-
tion 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-Ḥādi had a number of captives exe-
cuted and hanged at Bab al-Jisr in Baghdad. One of al-Ḥādi's Mawālī,
Mubārak al-Turkī, was even reduced in rank and had his property con-
fiscated when it came to al-Ḥādi's ears that he had been reluctant to
fight al-Ḥusayn.2

(cont.)

4Tab., III, p. 559 citing Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ.

5Tab., III, pp. 560, 567, citing Asma'ī, Ka'anakum wal-lāhi ji'tum bi
ra'si Taḥūtūn min 'l-tawāghīt. Inna aqalla ma aṣālikum bihi an aḥrumakum
min Jawā'izakum; see Murūj (p.268) where he uses the words "the head of
a Turk or a Daylamite instead of Taḥūt", Shafā', p.185.

1Tab., III, pp. 560, 563, citing al-Mufaḍḍal b. Sulaymān.

Chapter V

OTHER OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS

IN THE EARLY ‘ABBASID PERIOD

(a) The pro-Umayyad opposition movement

"When the Syrian Qaysite tribal chief Mansur b. Ja‘una al-‘Amiri heard the caliph al-Mansur 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 ‘Abbasids] and plague."

Ibn ‘Asakir, Tarikh 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 'Abbasids 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 'Abbasids towards the Umayyads and their partisans. This confusion is partly due to various pro-‘Abbasid, pro-‘Alid and pro-Umayyad sympathies which in one way or another affected the narrative in that transitional period. For instance, ‘Abbasid 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 Imam. Sometimes pro-‘Alid accounts eager to discredit the ‘Abbasids present them as tolerant towards the Umayyads but cruel towards the ‘Alids. Pro-Umayyad accounts try to magnify the cruelties of the ‘Abbasids and exaggerate the extent to which the Umayyads were victimized. Conversely several scattered but accidental accounts bear witness to the responsible policy of the ‘Abbasids, especially after the transitional period. Thus it is very difficult to deduce the truth from such involved accounts. The generalization, vagueness and
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 Fuṭrus and Ḫira 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 Baṣra in two contrasting ways, as passionate, tolerant and protective towards the Umayyads, and on the other hand as terrible avengers. Kūfī's pro-'Alid sympathies are apparent in this respect. He stresses the role 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. Later3 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 'Alī4 accuse the 'Abbāsids of

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executing a large scale plan of bloodshed and atrocities against the Umayyads. Welhausen\(^1\) depending almost exclusively on Tabari as his chief source naturally accepted that certain incidents such as that of Nahr Abī Fuṣus, and that at Abu ’l ‘Abbās’ court had really happened, but suspected additional descriptive details of the accounts of these massacres which are not mentioned in Tabari. 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: "Unsheath your sword raise the whip, May God not find an Umayyad on earth any more"\(^2\). Spuler\(^3\) sees in these cruelties the reason why the caliph Abu ’l ‘Abbās was named al-Saffāh. Al-Jumard\(^4\) explains the "great purge" in terms of "Persians against Arabs", he stresses that ʿShūbī hands were behind the scene conducting the massacres. Moscati\(^5\) believes that the massacre of the Umayyads is constituted by four different episodes: that of Damascus, that of Nahr Abī Fuṣus, that of the Hijāz and that of Baṣra. He ex-

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\(^{1}\) The Arab Kingdom, pp. 562ff; see also Dūnī, Agr., p.59.


\(^{3}\) Iran., p.45.

\(^{4}\) Abū Ja’far al-Mangūr, pp. 118-128.

\(^{5}\) "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 Fuṭrus which took place late in 132/750, Bālāḏūrī states that 'Abdallah b. 'Alī granted aman to the Umayyads, summoned them to Nahr Abī Fuṭrus and had them killed. Tabarī briefly mentions that 72 Umayyads were killed there. A detailed account of the massacre is related by the author of the İmama wa'l Siyāsa, Ya‘qūbī and Mas‘ūdī. 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 qaḍīa, 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-Waḥīd 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 Fuṭrus did take place, but they differ on the number of the victims. Ansāb and Aghānī do not give numbers at all. Tabarī followed by Ibn 'Asākir cited by al-

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1Ansāb, fols. 761a-761b; Muq., fol. 239b.
2Tab., III, p.51.
4Ansāb, fol. 761b; Agh., vol. 4, p.94.
Aynī give the number as 72, while Khalīfa b. Ḥayyat, Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn Qutayba and Yaʿqūbi, followed by others, assess it at around 80. Furthermore, only a few names of the victims are mentioned by the chroniclers. The genealogists mention a series of names of victims of Abī Fuṭrus, but their total number amount to about half the figure given by the chroniclers. The genealogists also mention other victims of ‘Abdallah b. ‘Alī without the explicit mention of Nahr Abī Fuṭrus, 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. But was the massacre perpetrated by the caliph’s orders or on ‘Abdallah’s own initiative? According to Kūfī, Yaʿqūbi and the author of al-‘Uyun wa-l-hadā’iq, it was the caliph who ordered ‘Abdallah to execute every Umayyad he caught. 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 ʿAbbas whose mildness, patience and willingness to compromise are stressed by many historians, that he was capable of such an act. These accounts had the stamp of pro-‘Alid fabrications.

1Tab., III, p.51; ‘Aynī, fol. 10b; Falchri, p.134.
3Jamharat, pp. 80, 81, 82, 83, 95, 96, 120, 430.
5Compare ‘Uyun 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-Asdī.
7Imama, p.235; Badr, vol. 6, p.99.
It is more probable that 'Abdallah acted on his own initiative 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.

In Damascus 'Abdallah also seems to have taken a symbolic and sensational revenge on the bodies of the late Umayyad caliphs. Tabari is silent about that; Baladhurī, Kūfī and Ya‘qūbī agree that 'Abdallah violated the tombs of all Umayyad caliphs with the exception of Umar II, 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 'Abbāsid 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".

1 See Ansāb, fol. 801b; Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fols. 28, 285.
2 Tirmīzī, p. 235.
3 Ansāb, fol. 761b; Kūfī, fol. 230b., citing Mada‘īnī; Ya‘qūbī, II, pp. 427-8; Murūjī, V, pp. 471f.
4 Aynī, citing 'Umar b. Shabba, fol. 10a.
The fall of Damascus was followed by a massacre and pillage for three days. Dinawarī attributes it to the orders of Abū 'Awn al-Azādī while Ibn Ḥabīb, Yaʿqūbī and Masʿūdī state that its perpetrator was 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī.¹ However Yaʿqūbī and Masʿūdī disagree on the time of Damascus' pillage; the former place it before and the latter after the events of Nahr Abī Fūṭrus. The former appears more acceptable as the 'Abbasids 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 Āzdī,² the fighting started between the two rival groups Yamen and Qays even before the Khurasānī army entered the city.

In the Ḥijāz the governor Dāʾūd b. 'Alī is said to have killed a number of Umayyads by order of Abū al-'Abbās.³ It seems strangely incongruous with Dāʾūd's proclaimed policy on his arrival at Mecca which was marked with assurances and friendly overtures that he suddenly killed a number of Umayyads at Bāṣa Mārr without even indicating their numbers, their names or what they were accused of. Yaʿqūbī⁴ simply states that Dāʾūd promised amān to all people of the Ḥijāz, but then turned to the Umayyads and killed a number of them in Mecca. Then he

¹ Ḥabīb, pp. 485-6; Dīnā, p.364; Yaʿqūbī, II, pp. 42-5-7; Murūj, V, pp. 471f, VI, pp. 75f.
² Kūfī, fol. 228b; Āzdī, fol. 116.
³ Ansāb, fol. 751; Kūfī, fol. 230; Tāh, III, p.73; Tanbīh, p.329, where the number of the victims is 80, the same as the episode of Nahr Abī Fūṭrus. See also ʿIqd, citing ʿAṣmaʿī, vol. 2, p.188.
⁴ Ansāb, fol. 751a.
⁵ Yaʿqūbī, II, pp. 421-422.
sent another group with irons to Ta'if where they were executed or imprisoned. At Madīna he did the same. Dā'ūd also sent ʿUmmād b. al-Abrāq to al-Muthanna b. Yazīd b. Hubayra in al-Yamāma and had him assassinated.\[1\] What renders the Mecca massacre more complicated is that this episode has two features in common with the incident of Nahr Abū Fuṭrus, 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 Fuṭrus. 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,\[2\] which seems to confirm this view.

Bagrā, as has already been mentioned, resented the 'Abbāsid authority from the very beginning. The unrest did not cease. The first 'Abbāsid governor Sofyān b. Muʿāwiya al-Muhallabī was dismissed in favour of 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-Muhallabī who was replaced by Sulaymān b. ʿAlī. The latter was mild by nature. Balādūrī and Tabarī\[3\] stress his fair treatment of the Umayyads, a great number of them were already living there. Balādūrī states "They were not so safe anywhere as in

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\[1\] Ansāb, fol. 751b, qālū.

\[2\] Ibn al-Kalbī, fol. 19b; Zubayrī, p.183; Jamharat, p.69, 74; See Agh. (4, p.94) mentions only one victim, while Khalīfa mentions seven victims (Tarikh, fol. 285).

\[3\] Ansāb, fol. 804b; Tab., III, p.21.
Bagra. He gave shelter to many Umayyads, as well as Umayyad partisans. 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". On the other hand, Aghānī contains a tradition on the ill treatment meted out by Sulaymān b. 'Ali to the Umayyads, who were dragged by their legs and left to die in the streets of Bagra. Later chroniclers copy the same account with much elaboration. Although this could have happened in the early days of the 'Abbāsid régime in Bagra 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 'Utbi is to be believed Sulayman 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 (i.e. the cave of those who run away).

1 Ansāb, fol. 753b.
3 Ansāb, fol. 753b.
4 Aghānī, vol. 4, p.95.
According to Kufi\(^1\) a group of Umayyads fled to Irak to take refuge with Abu '\(^1\) Abbas. They, headed by Sulaym\(\bar{a}\)n b. Hish\(\bar{a}\)m b. 'Abd al-Malik, visited Abu '\(^1\) Abbas 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. Maym\(\ddot{u}\)n the poet and the Mawla of Dani Hashim visited the 'Abb\(\dot{a}\)sid court. The 'Alids, wishing to avenge their martyrs, persuaded Sudayf to recite a qas\(\dot{i}\)da with the object of provoking the caliph to kill the Umayyads. The tone of the qas\(\dot{i}\)da was aggressive and recalled the killing of \(\breve{\text{\textmu}}\)usayn b. 'Ali, Zayd b 'Ali and Ibrah\(\text{\textmu}\)m the Imam, 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 'Abb\(\dot{a}\)sids. The poet urged the caliph to dispose of old and young alike, which the caliph consequently did. Kufi gives their number as being the same as that of the victims of Nahr Abi Fu'rus, about 80, then, significantly, he goes on to relate the same acts which occurred at the massacre of Nahr Abi Fu'rus, namely the laying of the table cloths over the dead bodies and then the repast, an obvious confusion of the two events. Isbah\(\ddot{a}\)n\(^2\) also relates the details of the Nahr Abi Fu'rus 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 Kufi they were all killed with the ex-

\(^1\)Kufi, fol.e.233\(\dddot{p}\), 234\(\dddot{b}\).

ceptio of Sulayman b. Hisham and his two sons, while Igbahani mentions 'Abd al-'Azid b. Umara 'Abd al-'Aziz as the only survivor. Later historians only copy the same version from early accounts but it is interesting to point out that Ibn al-Athir 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 Abu 'l 'Abbas and not 'Abdallah b. 'Ali."

Consequently we have two alternatives: either, that no execution was ordered at the court of Abu 'l 'Abbas 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. Adi, secondly because the names mentioned, such as the poet Sudayf b. Maymun and Sulayman b. Hisham do not coincide, and thirdly because the scene al-Hira is different. It seems therefore that an actual incident at Abu 'l 'Abbas' court has been partly confused with that of Nahr Abi Fujrus by the erroneous attribution of several elements of the episode of Nahr Abi Fujrus. 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

"al-Saffaḥ" 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 Wāra, however, keeps all its characteristic elements, the perpetrator al-Saffaḥ, the victims Sulaymān b. Hishām with several Umayyads and the poet Sudayf b. Maymun.

Sulaymān b. Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Kalik the Umayyad rebel against Marwān II was first given aman and was favoured by Abū ‘īsā b. ‘Abbās. However, this aman was not long lived. Despite the assistance he lent during the crucial moments of the ‘Abbāsid revolution, he was considered a potentially dangerous Umayyad as he had ambitions to the caliphate in Harwah's time. 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-Ragman al-Asdi, his chief of guards, to execute Sulayman and his two sons. Baladhuri attributes the prompting for the execution to Abū Muslim who wrote to the caliph "If you treat enemy and friend alike, how shall the loyal

1 Apart from Sulayman 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, Tarikh, fol. 280; Habīb, p.486).
2 Imama, p. 230; Ansāb, fol. 795b; Kūfī, fols. 231b, 232b.
3 Imama, pp. 227–30; See also Tab., II, 1980; ‘Asākir, vol. 6, p.286.
4 Kūfī, fol. 233a; Habīb, p.486; Fakhrī, p.133.
5 Ansāb, fol. 796a, citing Haytham b. ‘Adī.
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\(^1\) confirms Baladhurī'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 of 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\(^2\) 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 Irāq or Abū Muslim in Khurāsān. It is certainly safe to say that Abū Muslim who was by now the dominant figure in Khurāsān 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

\(^1\)Nujūm, p.365.
\(^2\)Kufī, fol. 233a.
after the 'Abbasid 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 Jahiliyya. As a commercial family in the Hijaz, 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'awiyah b. Abi Sofyan 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 Iraq 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 Jazira and al-Sham had paid lip service to the powerful Khurasanis who were pursuing Marwan, many of them now turned against the 'Abbasides and closed their gates to the newly appointed governors Abu Ja'far (later al-Mangur) and 'Abdallah b. 'Ali. The Syrians were not against the Umayyads in general, but against Marwan in particular who, deeply conscious of/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 Marwan's intensive tribal policy and refused him their support at a critical moment.
Once Marwan 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-Sofyani, i.e., the Saviour of the Syrians which had already appeared probably after Mu'awiya 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. 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 ‘Abbasids was political without any connection with the Sofyani; it occurred in the district of al-Balqa' and Ḫawāran, and was led by one of Marwan’s commanders ʿAbd ibn Murra al-Murri. The reason for his rising was merely that he feared for himself and his tribe. Tribal chiefs such as ʿAbd ibn Murra were, at that transitional period, anxious for the survival of their followers and their welfare. ‘Abdallah b. ‘Aṣḥāb 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. 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. This enraged one

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1 On the traditions concerning al-Sofyani, see Fītan, fols. 75a ff. For the origin of the myth of Sofyani, see H. Lammens, "Le Sofianî", op.cit. pp. 136, 141; see also Guidi, "Origin dei Yazidi...", R.S.O., 1932, pp. 274ff.

2 Tab., III, pp. 55-6 citing ʿAbd ibn Zuhayr.

3 Tab., III, p.52; Ansāb, fol.801a.
of Marwān's close associates Abū al-Ward Majza'ā 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. Yūnā and the Kalbite tribes of Tadmur (Palmyra) immediately joined. Abū Muḥammad Ziyād b. 'Abdallah b. Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya, who led the Kalbites of Tadmur, was proclaimed as the Sofyānī, 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 Lammeus 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. Furthermore, Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī was an active political figure of the late Umayyad epoch. 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

1Tab., III, pp. 51-45, citing Ḥamad b. Zuhayr; Ansāb, fol. 801a.
2Lammeus, op.cit., p.132.
3See below, p.326
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the murder of al-Walid II he rightly foresaw that Marwan was the best man to save the Umayyad throne, it was, therefore, due to his own initiative that Marwan was installed on the throne. But Abu Muhammad's relations with Marwan deteriorated and the suspicious Marwan imprisoned Abu Muhammad with other Umayyad princes. Abu Muhammad did not free himself when he had the opportunity after the defeat of Marwan at the battle of great Zab. But the latter freed him on his withdrawal before the Khurasanis. The clever politician Abu Muhammad 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 Abu Muhammad to the leadership of the present revolt was, therefore, due to personality rather than the absence of other Marwanid figures. The Sofyanid legend was more popular among the Kalbites of Syria and was of course limited to the descendants of Yazid b. Mu'awiya 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 'Abbasid authority. Balqa', Damascus, Qimisrin, Him, Halab and Tadmur, as well as other cities of the Jazira, were in a state of fury. Both the leading figures of the rising, Abu

1Tab., II, p.1892.
2Tab., III, p.43, citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr.
3Lammens, op.cit., pp. 140-141.
Muḥammad and Abū al-Ward, agreed to join hands. The caliph ordered ʿAbdallah b. ʿAli 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 Irāq new reinforcements of 7,000 led by ʿAbd al-Ṣammad b. ʿAli and 5,000 led by Dhuʾyb b. al-ʿAshʿath.1 It was obviously an Irākī-Khurasānī occupation of Syria and the Syrians seemed determined to defy the ʿAbbāsids. The first engagements between the two camps were in favour of the Syrians who defeated the ʿAbbāsid vanguard led by ʿAbd al-Ṣammad b. ʿAli. But ʿAbdallah b. ʿAli with his Khurasānī commanders such as Ḥumayd al-Ṭāʾī, Bassām b. Ibrāhīm and Qaṭṭāf al-Mazinī crushed the Sofyānī rising at Marj al-Khāram in the last days of 135/July 751.2 Abū al-Ward was killed in the battle with several hundred of his close associates, while Abū Muḥammad 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 Majzaʿa al-Kallābī and Abū Muḥammad al-Sofyānī. The former, a Qaysite tribal chief, wanted to have the upper hand over Abū Muḥammad, while utilizing his reputation to gather more support for the revolt. In fact he intended to keep Abū Muḥammad as a figurehead. But the shrewd politician and brave man

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1 Tab., citing Madāʾinī, III, p.54; see also Ansāb, fols. 801b.
Abū Muḥammad was too ambitious to let himself be used in that way. Once he reached Qūnisrīn from Tadmur he got hold of the whole movement, keeping Abū al-Ward as commander of the army. Tabarī calls Abū al-Ward al-Mutawallī lī amr al-’Askar wa Sāhib al-qītal and Ibn al-’Adīm gives him the title of Mudabbir al-jaysh. There was secondly the tribal divisions and antagonisms within the 40,000 troops who faced the united ‘Abbāsid army. The left wing of Abū Muḥammad’s army consisted of Kalbites under al-’Aṣbah b. Dhu’l-’Ala al-Kalbī, and the right wing of Qaysites led by Abū al-Ward. It must also be noted that the Qaysites of Qūnisrīn were the mainstay of Marwān’s power in Syria, 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.

Politically the rising of al-Sofyānī had dangerous consequences and far reaching effects on the ‘Abbāsid 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-’Āla al-’Azdī rebelled against

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1. Tab., III, p.53; Zubda, vol. I, p.55. While al-Sofyānī is called Ra’is and Muqaddam al-Jaysh wa Sāhibahu, respectively.

2. Ansāb, fol. 80lb.


4. Tab. III, p.54, citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr. Umayyad risings against the ‘Abbāsids are often called Tabyid, 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 ‘Abbāsid authority in one category calling them Mubayyida and their rising Tabyid. However some Umayyad rebels especially in Syria, chose red. (cont.)
the 'Abbāsid governor of the city 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Ṭāʾī and massacred a great part of the Khurasānī garrison which was 4,000 strong, and plundered their provisions. In the Jazīra, Raqqa, Qarqisya, al-Ruhha, Suḥayṣūd and Dārā threw off the 'Abbāsid yoke. Umayyad partisans gathered round Ḥishāq. Muslim al-'Uqaylī, a popular tribal chief and Marwān's previous governor of Armenia who had his headquarters at Suḥayṣūd. He was helped by his brother and fellow rebel Bakkār al-'Uqaylī as well as the tribal chief of the ever resentful tribe Rabi'a. Bedouins readily joined the rebels and increased the bulk of their number. The 'Abbāsid governor Abu Jaʿfar 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad was in a precarious position as the Khurasānī garrison of Ḥaran was besieged by the rebels who were led by the Umayyad Muḥammad b. Muslama b. 'Abd al-Malik. However, after crushing the Sofyānī rising 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī was ordered to give help to the Khurasānī army in Jazīra. The two characteristics of the pro-Umayyad Jazīrīte risings were that they lacked organisation, and that they were short-lived flaring up as swiftly as they subsided. Tabārī states, describing the rebels, "The rebels were undisciplined, scattered, and had neither a qaʿīd nor a head round which they could gather". However, Ḥishāq al-'Uqaylī with 60,000 followers resisted the siege at Suḥayṣūd for seven months until he was convinced

(cont.) According to Balāḏurī followed by Maqrīzī, Abu 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, Abu Muḥammad with Yamanite, and Abu 'l Ward with Qaysite support. The adoption of white by Abu 'l Ward is indicative of the friction existing between the two leaders.

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1 Tab., III, p.53.
2 Tab., III, pp. 56-58 citing Ḥāmid b. Zuhayr; Ansāb, fols. 790a-790b.
3 Yaʿqūbī, II, p.425.
of the death of Marwan, then he surrendered and received the aman.\(^1\) Abu Ja'far found it expedient to spare such an influential tribal chief and to gain his loyalty rather than to kill him. Isḥāq al-'Uqaylī became one of the closest associates of the caliph at the court.

Meanwhile, according to Ibn al-'Adim, another Sofyanid, al-'Abbās b. Mūḥammad b. 'Abdallah b. Yazīd b. Muʿawiya, rebelled at Aleppo.\(^2\) He put on red clothes. His rising, however, was soon crushed by Muqāṭil al-'Ākī, a Khurasānī commander who was sent by Abu Ja'far from Jarrān and took Aleppo by force. Another Marwānīd, Abūn b. Muʿawiya b. Ḥiṣām with 4,000 followers rebelled at Sumaysāt. 'Abdallah b. 'Alī crushed him and took the city by force.\(^3\)

It is interesting to note that in their desperate defiance of the 'Abbasid authorities Umayyads joined even Kharījite rebellions,\(^4\) 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. Ūmayd al-Shaybānī rose against Abu Ja'far the 'Abbasid governor of the Jazīra he was joined by Muḥammad b. Sa'id b. 'Abd al-'Azīz the Umayyad who was killed in the battle with the 'Abbasid troops.\(^5\)

\(^{1}\)Qn.cit., p. 57.


\(^{4}\)Ansāb, fol. 790b.

\(^{5}\)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, ‘Abdallāh 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 ‘Alī ‘Abbās in 136/753-4 gave rise to fresh hopes. A new wave of unrest swept the province and culminated in the rising of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī which was adopted by the Syrians themselves. ‘Abdallāh’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 Baladhurī that the Syrian commanders in ‘Abdallāh’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 Bakkār b. Muslim al-‘Uqaylī and ʿUthmān 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 ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī and the Syrians. They both used each other to their own advantage: ‘Abdallāh to win the caliphate, the Syrians to take revenge on the Khurāsānīs and, presumably, through ‘Abdallāh to regain the lost status of their province from Irāq. But, as has already been shown, the chances for ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alī to be raised to power by

1 Ansāb, fol. 762a, citing Mada‘īnī.
such as anti-‘Abbāsid people were very meagre indeed.

However, it was in Egypt that the Marwanid Dāhiyya b. Muṣ‘ab b. al-‘Aṣbagh b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam rebelled and claimed the caliphate. His rising, in fact, started at al-Ṣa‘īd in 165/781-2 but the ‘Abbāsid governor Ibrāhīm b. Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Alī (165/781-167/783) did not pay much attention to it. Al-Mahdī dismissed Ibrāhīm, and appointed Muṣa b. Muṣ‘ab al-Khath‘āmī, 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, Dāhiyya seems to have had the support of the majority of the Arab tribe of Tajīb.

Muṣa 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. In the battle of the 9th of Shawwāl in 168/784-85 Muṣa was killed and was succeeded by Usāma b. ‘Amr whose efforts to crush Dāhiyya’s rising were also in vain. Al-Mahdī was enraged by the persistence of the rebellion and chose the ‘Abbāsid al-Fāqī b. Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Alī whose appointment was now confirmed by al-Hādī who had ascended the throne (169/785 A.D.). Al-Fāqī left Syria for Egypt with loyal army units. He first

2 Wulāt, pp. 124-125, 128; Khīṭāt, vol. 2, pp. 94f.
3 Wulāt, p.126.
worked with energy to quell the disturbances in the =temp; before trying to face Dāhiyya in the south. Dāhiyya forces were obliged to retreat for the first time after having been defeated in several engagements. Finally Dāhiyya himself was captured and executed in Jamadi II 169. Egypt was secure and al-Faḍl rightly used to boast of having quelled inveterate disturbances. Dāhiyya seems to have been an agitator rather than a rebel with clear cut objective. He figures in previous political disturbances. His recent rising was obviously a rising of discontent with an Umayyad figure to symbolize that discontent. The real leaders were tribal chiefs of Tajib and Azd such as Yūsuf b. Naṣir al-Tajibī and Fath b. al-Salt al-Azdī. Furthermore there was no coherence among his partisans, besides the tribal element it included all other discontented groups such as the Berbers.

It is worth noting that rebels with purely political allegiance to the Umayyads continued to rebel from time to time, e.g. Isḥaq b. Isma‘īl b. Shu‘ayb rebelled in the reign of al-Hu‘taṣim and seized Jazrān. The Sofyānī movement which was purely Syrian and more or less connected with the Yamanites also continued to express itself occasionally until it lost

1 Khiṣṭ, vol. 2, p.95; vol. 4, p.34.
2 See for example the ‘Alid disturbances of 144-145 (Wulāt, p.112)
3 Wulāt, pp. 128-129.
4 Op. cit., p. 130. Dāhiyya's head was exhibited at a public place in Baghdad
5 Futūḥ, III, p.296 (Beirut edition).
all its religio-political meaning and only survived in the Hadīth collections.¹

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 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".² However, one can find examples of 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid friendly overtures and expediency rather than their cruelties.

To begin with it is significant that the dramatic and cruel acts of the 'Abbāsids took place, in fact, during the transitional period³ notably

¹Lammens, op.cit., p.143; Guidi, R.S.O., xiii, 1932, pp. 274ff.

²Risāla fi'l Sahāba, p.129. Muqaddima, vol. 2, p.633. The establishment of a new Umayyad power in Spain did in fact worry the 'Abbāsids and must have influenced their attitude towards the members of the Umayyad family; see chapter VI. pp.387ff.

³An account in Aghānī indeed recognizes that this period was an exceptionally unstable 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 Irāq, 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 ʿAbbās or Abdallah b. ʿAlī or whether the victims met their death fighting in the battlefield at the great Zāb or Damascus. 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 which had a political meaning. After all, late Muslim historians as well as some modern scholars speaking of ʿAbbāsid atrocities and large scale bloodshed in Syria tend to forget that the very same Syrians had shortly before the ʿAbbāsid 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. The body of Yazīd III is said to have been taken out of his grave and burnt by the Syrians, so that the ʿAbbāsid partisans were only following, so to say, a precedent set by the Syrians.

1 Several examples of this kind are found throughout the historical accounts. The striking example in this respect is Abān b. Muʿāwiya and al-Walīd b. Muʿāwiya. See Ansāb, fol. 760a; Kufi, fol. 228b; Muniq, VI, p. 2.


3 Tab., III, pp.43; II, 1910, 1913.
Umayyads are represented as being executed at the court of early 'Abbāsid caliphs such as Abū 'l-' Abbās and al-Mahdī, but if these accounts were authentic they would prove first and foremost the tolerance of the 'Abbāsid caliphs who kept Umayyads at their court as close associates. Indeed several Umayyads were saḥaba of Abū 'l-' Abbās, al-Maṣʿūr and al-Mahdī.²

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 Ansāb³ is to be believed the massacre of Nahr Abī Fuṭrus 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 'Abbāsid favour had turned against the Umayyads and killed them. 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān al-Fihrī the governor of Ifriqiyya can be named as an example. Ifriqiyya was a little later the scene of violence conducted by the 'Abbāsid governor Muḥammad b. al Aḡḥath al-Khuṣā'ī. He, presumably, had to face a pro-Umayyad disturbance, but managed with the help of the Khurasanī garrison to crush the rebels. Then he had all

¹Kūfī, fol. 233a, 234b; Aḡḥ., vol. IX, p140.


³Ansāb, fol. 80la-801b; see also Tab., III, p.54.
bearers of Umayyad names, such as Mu'awiya, Sofyān and Marwān, he found among the rebels executed apparently considering them potentially dangerous. For that reason he was immediately dismissed by al-Manṣūr.¹

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 Abu Bakr b. 'Ayyash "The Umayyads did much good to the people".² Another Umayyad partisan said "We were with people [the Umayyads] who mixed with us".³ 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..."⁴ This account, whether authentic or not, does indicate the attitude of al-Manṣūr towards the Umayyads. Al-Manṣūr held high opinion of Mu'awiya, 'Abd al-Malik and Hishām.⁵ 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

²Khaṭīb, vol. XIV, p.375; see also Kūfī, fols. 229b-230a.
³'Asākir, vol. 4, p.47.
⁴Ibn al-Jawzī, fol. 95a; Amendroz, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.879.
⁵Ansāb, p. 172 (ed. Ahlwardt); Ansāb, fol. 553; Jahān, p.81; Ya‘qūbī, II, p.466; Tab., III, p.401; Muruj, VI, p.167; Muq., fol.90b; Dunwal, fol. 110b.
such as Zayd b. 'l-Ã§bagh, Muhammadr b. al-'Yakam, IbrÃ¼hÃ¼m b. Suhayl and 'Abd al-'Aziz b. MarwÃ¼n b. 'l-Ã§bagh who had fled with many others to Ifriqiyya in the time of the upheaval. When the hiding place of Abu Muhammad al-SofyanÃ¼, the rebel of Syria who had fled to the Uijz, was discovered by the 'AbbÃ¼d governor Ziyad al-Harithi, the latter sent soldiers to arrest him. But the courageous Abu Muhammad did not give in and fought unto death. Al-ManÅ¼ur pardoned his partisans and freed his two sons. It was also al-ManÅ¼ur's policy to win over pro-Umayyad tribal chiefs and influential figures. One of them was Ishaq b. Muslim al-'Uqayli who with typical unabashed Arab arrogance and pride defended the Umayyads at the 'AbbÃ¼d court. He was favoured, it is said, because of his integrity in not standing his ground until he knew of the death of MarwÃ¼n to whom he had sworn allegiance. In point of fact he had a considerable tribal following and was an influential figure in the Jazira. Among other pro-Umayyad chieftains who were favoured by the 'AbbÃ¼ds were: Ma'an b. Zai'da al-Shaybani, Mansur b. Jamhur, Salm b. Qutayba al-Bahili, Bakkar b. Muslim al-'Uqayli and his brother 'Abd al-'Aziz, Talha b. Ishaq al-Kindi and al-Awza'i the faqih. In Basra the Umayyads seem to have enjoyed freedom and prosperity as early as the governorship of Sulayman b. 'Ali. If the account of the pro-'AbbÃ¼d

1Tab., III, p.54 citing Ahmad B. Zuhayr. MulÃ¼, citing Ibn 'Aqir, p.99.
2Tab., III, p.54 citing Ahmad b. Zuhayr.
3Ansab, fols. 794b-795a citing Mada'in; Muq., citing Mada'in, fol. 90a; Jamharat, p.275.
5Tab., XIII, p.49 citing Ahmad b. Thabit.
Jāḥiz is authentic the Umayyads were haughtier than the Hashimites in the Hashimite realm. 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-Šam, al-Kūf, and Ifriqiyya. 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.

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-Mangur married Al-‘Aliya bint 'Abd al-Raḥmān of the family of Abī Ḥayyān and had her sister married to his son Ja'far. Al-Mahdī, al-Rashīd and Muḥammad b. Sulaymān all had Umayyad wives too.

In poetry too one could find sufficient proofs of the restrained 'Abbāsid policy towards the Umayyads. This is evident in the poem of Bashshar b. Burd. Pro-Umayyad poets continued to express their views and occasionally praised the Umayyads without incurring 'Abbāsid disfavour.

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4 Ansāb, vol. 4, II, p.169, 153; Jamharat, p.76.
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 fī 'l Sahāba 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 (khassā). 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." Now Ibn al-Muqaffa could not have recommended this approach had the political atmosphere not been propitious.

The essays of Jāḥiz also throw a vivid light on the political climate since the 'Abbāsid victory. Loyal to the 'Abbāsids, Jāḥiz's tone was, naturally, different from that of Ibn al-Muqaffa. Jāḥiz states "the deeds and speeches of al-Mangūr... alone would suffice to match the deeds of...

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1Risāla fī 'l Sahāba, p.129. See also Goitein, "A turning point..." I.C., 1949, pp. 120ff.
From this very example where Jaḥiz 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 Jaḥiz but many other Muslim historians tried to discredit the Umayyads, 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 Nabīta, i.e. the rising generation. Those Nabīta, according to Pellat, were young Muslims born at the beginning of the 3rd century. Being anti-'Abbāsīd, anti-'Alid and anti-Muʿtazila, they found their ideal in Muʿawiya and were inspired, thereby, in their stand against the 'Abbāsids. Thus the Nabīta 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 Muʿtazilite

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3La "Nabīta" de Djāḥīz, p.304; idem, "Le culte de Muʿawiya", S.I., VI, 1956.
pro-'Abbāsid Jaḥiz who accused the Nabīta of "impiety and guilt" since they refused to call the conduct of the Umayyads impious.¹

Although Jaḥiz wrote several decades after the 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsids. Umayyad sympathizers were of two categories: the first and earlier had a genuine loyalty to the Umayyads, the second and later chose Mu'āwiya as their ideal because "he was the only one whom they could glorify to belittle their adversaries".² This was evident in the Karamiyya and the Ḥanābila movements of the 3rd century.³

In conclusion the enmity and resentment of the Syrians towards the 'Abbāsids were ever present. This enmity was never so vivid as it was during the civil war between al-Amin and al-Mu'min. Al-Amin 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. 'Ali 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 'Abbāsid soldiers...."

¹Pellat, La "Nabīta", p.306.
³On the Karamiyya, see M.W., 1960, pp. 5-14; on the Ḥanābila see, Zayyāt, al-Maghriq, 1928, pp. 410 ff; E.I.² (Ḥanābila); Pellat, op.cit., S.I., 1936, pp. 53-66.
⁴Tab., III, p.844.
"The Kharijite rebel al-Yashkurī wrote to al-Mahdī. 'From 'Abd al-Salām b. Ḥāshim to Muḥammad b. 'Abbās. 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, although you have deceived yourself. You know that I have rebelled because you have left the Ummā misled and confused; you have neither applied its laws nor given it its rights... Glory be to God! It was all that not an obscenity when perpetrated by one who claims to be the caliph of God...'"

/Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, Tarīkh, fols.309-310/
Scholars, with few exceptions, incline to the opinion that Kharijism, as a movement of opposition, was in the early 'Abbasid period either dead or crumbling without real active resistance to the new regime. This under-estimation of Kharijite activities is indeed largely due to the absence of annalitical 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 'Abbasid period, not in the heart of the empire but in marginal and distant provinces such as Ifriqiyya, 'Uman, Jazira, Sistan and the fringes of Khurasan. It is presumably for this reason that chroniclers such as Tabari do not relate details of Kharijite risings. More details are to be found in local histories of Mosul, Sistan, 'Uman, Yam'an and al-Maghrib as well as some late historians such as Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun and al-Nuwayri where one can see the persistence of Kharijism in these provinces and consequently their danger to 'Abbasid authority. Apart from the above mentioned historians it is highly significant that the early historian al-Baladhuri has recognized the importance of the Kharijite risings in the early 'Abbasid period. In his Ansab he devotes several pages to the enumeration of the Kharijite nomadic risings in the

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in the reign of al-Manṣūr. Ibn al-Qīṭāqa\(^1\) 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 'Arab and shurāt became almost inseparable. Baladhuri for example speaks of

\[\text{أَلْتُلْفِسْتُ وَالْمُنْسَبَ مِنْ الدَّعْوَاتِ وَالْعُسْرَا.} \]

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.\(^3\) 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 Kharijism. 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.\(^4\) They controlled large parts of the Jazīra, Iraq,

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\(^1\) Fakhrī, p.25; see also Muhammad Amīn al-‘Umarī, Manhal al-Awliyā’... Ms. B.M. (No. OR.2429), fol. 4.

\(^2\) Ansāb, fol. 558.

\(^3\) Especially by late historians.

\(^4\) 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 Yemen. 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 ‘Umnān and the Yemen and eastwards to Pars where a section of them joined ‘Abdallah b. Mu‘awiya 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-Saghir the Kharijite leader in Khurāsān immediately fell out with the ‘Abbāsids āza. 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 Rabī’ites scattered.

The Kharijites looked at the ‘Abbāsids 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 ‘1 ‘Abbās when the Kharijites came out in active opposition in many provinces. Buraykā b. Ḥumayd al-Shaybānī rebelled against Abū Jaʿfar the governor of Jazīra and was joined by Umayyad figures such as Muḥammad b. Saʿīd 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 (Ka‘d, fol. 28b; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 270-73; Tab., II, p.194ff; Shafa’ al-gharam, pp. 178f; Kurd-ʿAlī, Ṭaṣāqīl, pp. 175 ff)

1See chapter II. See also, Vaglieri, "L’Imāmato ibādīta", A.I.O. N., 1949, p.253.
defeat in the battlefield Durayka fortified himself at Jabal Dārā where he was besieged and finally killed by Maqātil Al-ʿAkkā.\(^1\)

In Armenia and Adhurbayjān Musafir b. Kathīr al-Shaybānī who had been appointed governor of these provinces by the Kharijite al-Dhaqqāk b. Qays al-Shaybānī, was still holding out. Abu ʿAbbas sent Muḥammad b. Ṣawāl to crush his resistance. Musafir was killed with a number of his followers while the remainder fled to the mountains of Sīstān.\(^2\) As to ʿUmnān it was the Kharijite defeat of 129/746 in the Hijāz\(^3\) which gave the impetus to the Iḥādīt Imāmāt of ʿUmnān. ʿUmnān 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 ʿUmanites must have been excellent navigators. They were adventurers enough to risk longer voyages to trade with India and the south east of Asia.\(^4\) The ʿAbbāsid paid greater attention to the eastern provinces, conducted naval campaigns against India and gave a new impetus to the Jihad in Transoxania. Thus it was vital for the ʿAbbāsids to control the strategic spots on the maritime route to the east such as ʿUmnān to ensure the safety of the sea route for military and commercial reasons. Although

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\(^1\) Ansāb, fol. 790b; Muq., fol. 86a.

\(^2\) Futūḥ, I, p.246; Kūfī, fol. 235b.

\(^3\) Kūfī, fol. 236a.

\(^4\) Veccia Vaglieri, "L'Imamato Iḥādīt dell' ʿUmnān", A.I.O. 1949, p.15.
Muslim governors exercised certain authority in ‘Uman, it is probable that this authority did not cover the whole province and only exercised over certain cities and strongholds. The first ‘Abbasid governor Janāb b. ‘Abdādah al-Hunna‘ī does not seem to have been the master of the whole province. He treated the Iba‘iyya Kharijites so mildly that they were in fact in control of most of ‘Uman.¹

In 135 A.H./752 A.D. the Iba‘iyya elected the Azdite al-Julandā b. Mas‘ūd Imam. He was a just ruler and played a considerable part in spreading the Kharijite doctrines from his capital Nezwa.² However, another Kharijite group, the Ṣufriyya, headed by Shaybān b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Yashkūrī had already settled in the island of Ibn Kawān off the shore of ‘Uman.³ To crush the mounting danger of the Kharijites Abu ’1 ‘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 Bani al-‘Ara`ith the caliph’s uncles. But Khāzim’s forces were reinforced by a member of his tribe Tamīm and the people of Merw al-Ru`ūh.⁴ Due to the difficulties of access to the country by land the troops had to be transported by ship.

¹Kashī al-ghumma, p.15; English trans. by Ross, J.B.A.S., 1874, p.121; Ibn Raziq, p.7.
²Kashī al-ghumma, p.15; Ross, op. cit., p.121; Ibn Raziq, p.7; Tab., III, p.78.
³Ansāb, fols. 783b-784a (quoted by Dunnett, op. cit., p.291.)
⁴Tab., III, pp. 75, 78.
The governor of Bagraw Sulayman b. 'Ali provided them with ships to sail for the island of Ibn Kawan where Khazim sent a division led by Naqla b. Na‘aym al-Nahshali to fight Shayban al-Kashkuri who retreated for 'Uman followed by the 'Abbasiid navy. Shayban the Sufrite and al-Julanda the 'Iba'ite attempted a reconciliation but failed eventually and the ensuing fight between the two factions ended in Shayban's defeat and death. On his arrival at 'Uman's shore Khazim al-Tamimi approached al-Julanda informing him that now Shayban 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 Juffar in which al-Julanda himself was killed. However the campaign does not seem to have led to spectacular achievement.

The Iba'iyya Imamate seemed to have survived the blows of the 'Abbasiid army and after a period of unrest of which tribal antagonisms and vendettas were the prominent feature, the Iba'ites deposed their unpopular Imam Muhammad b. 'Abdallah b. 'Affan and paid allegiance to the new Kharijite Imam 'Abd al-Warith b. Ka'ab al-Azdi who acquired the epithet of al-Shari as he proclaimed that he would rather die for the sake of

1 Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; Ross, p.122; Tab., III, p.78.
3 Kashf al-ghumma, pp. 16-17; Ross, p.122; Ibn Raziq, p.8; Tuhfat al-A'yan, p.103; Tab., III, pp. 78-79.
his principles than yield or flee.\textsuperscript{1} Thus 'Uman though nominally under 'Abbāsid authority virtually retained its autonomy.

In al-Manṣūr's reign, the Jazīra was the scene of strong Kharijīte risings. Although Mosul was no longer a Kharijīte centre many Kharijītes risings during this period started in its vicinity. Anti-'Abbāsid in their sentiments the people of the city often sympathized with the Kharijītes and gave them support or shelter. Consequently the 'Abbāsids reinforced the garrison of Mosul by stationing a Rābita for the purpose of quelling Kharijīte insurrections.\textsuperscript{2} 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 'Abbāsid caliphs who tried to exterminate its people and destroyed its walls.\textsuperscript{3} In 137 A.H./754-5 A.D. a Kharijīte rising broke out in the Jazīra led by Mulabbād b. Ḥarmala al-Shaybānī\textsuperscript{4} of the tribe of Rābi'a which had been the core of Kharijīte 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 Kharijītes from other provinces who flocked to the place of unrest, thus increasing the volume of the rebellion.\textsuperscript{5} The 'Abbāsid authorities

\textsuperscript{1}The epithet of al-Shāri is the opposite of al-dafi.\textsuperscript{1} The latter is synonymous with the Shi'ite Taqiyya (dissimulation). This Kharijīte dissimulation is not in conflict with Ibaḍite principles. Nevertheless, campaigning against adversaries in order to spread Kharijīte doctrines was considered one of the great merits and duties of the Imam. (Kashf al-ghumma, p.15; Tuhfat al-‘ayan, p.106.

\textsuperscript{2}Azdī, fol. 170; Tab., III, p.354; Kūfī, fol. 242a.

\textsuperscript{3}Azdī, fol. 180; Tab., III, p.645.

\textsuperscript{4}Mād, fol. 5b; Ansāb, fols. 559-60; Khalīfa, Tārikh, fol. 290; Tab., III, p.120, Waqīdī's account put it in 138 A.H.; Azdī, fol. 145. See alsoNUjum, p.377; 'Ibar, 3, p.356.

\textsuperscript{5}Azdī, fol.145; Ansāb, fols. 558, 559.
were unable to apprehend Mulabbad who roamed the Jazîra area all through the year 137 A.H./754-5 defeating several 'Abbâsid armies led by veterans such as Yazîd al-Muhallabî, al-Muhallal b. Safwân and Humayd b. Qâfi'âba who tried to buy him off with 100,000 dirhams. Mulabbad accepted the offer and gave up the siege of Humayd's army. Mulabbad also occupied Mosul and threw the 'Abbâsid governor out and then advanced southwards defeating another 'Abbâsid detachment in Tikrit. Mulabbad's rising grew dangerously and paralysed the central government control not only over the Jazîra but Adhurbayjan and Armenia as communications were cut off and 'Abbâsid garrisons were slaughtered.

In 138 A.H./755-6 A.D. al-Mangûr sent a new army led by 'Abd al-'Azîz b. 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Azdi who was also defeated, and consequently the caliph chose the two commanders, who distinguished themselves at the battle of 'Uman, namely Khâzîm b. Khuzayma al-Tamîmî and Naâla b. Nu'aym al-Nahshalî at the head of about 8,000 men. Khâzîm made Mosul the base for his military operations. After a fierce pursuit Mulabbâd was trapped and killed with a number of his followers; the rest took to flight.

It was from Mosul that the Kharijite 'Ajiyya b. Ba'thar al-Taghlûbî started his rising with 100 partisans. However, he did not stay in the town but took the route southwards aiming at al-Sûs where he intended, it is alleged, to rob a transport of governmental money. Frustrated in this

1 *Ansâb*, fols. 559-560.


undertaking he engaged in a battle with the governor of al-Sús where about 200 citizens of al-Sús were killed. Eventually on his way back to Mosul 'Atiyya was ambushed by Abu Ūmayd al-Merwānī and killed, together with his followers. In 148 A.H./765 A.D. Ḥassān b. Yaḥya al-Wadī‘ī al-Hamdānī, 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 surprised 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. ‘Ashim. Ḥassān al-Hamdānī attacked the ‘Abbāsid army in the Rawābih of Mosul defeating the ‘Abbāsid commander al-Ṣaqar 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. 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


2 Azdī, fols. 179-180.

3 Azdī, fol. 177.
rising of Ḫassān is also interesting in that it reveals certain connections between Ḫassān and the Kharijites of ʿUman.¹ Probably on his way to al-Sind, Ḫassān 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-Mansūr summoned the jurists Abū Ḫanīfa, Ibn Abī Layla and Ibn Shahrāma to sanction the extermination of the people of Mogūl.² However Abū Ḫanīfa managed to persuade him to abandon his plan. Instead he appointed Khalīd b. Barmak governor of the city to put it in order.³ In the following year 149 A.H./766-7 A.D. al-Mansūr intended to visit Mogūl but he desisted from his undertaking and stopped in Ḫadīthah al-Mausil.⁴

Apart from these risings the reign of al-Mansūr 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.⁵ It is significant that in dealing with Kharijite hot-beds, al-Mansūr made use of tribal feuds and antagonisms. It has already been mentioned that having been defeated in the Ḫijāz a section of the Kharijites retreated to the Yamen.⁶ Now al-Mansūr appointed Maʿan

¹Athīr, V, p.235, ed. Cairo.
²Azdī, fol. 180-182; Athīr, V, p.236; ʿIbar, 3, p.360.
³Azdī, fol. 182-183; Athīr, V, pp. 448 Leyden ed.
⁴Azdī, fol. 183; Tab., III, p.354. On Ḫadīthah ʿl Mausil see Nuʿjam, II, p.222.
⁵Ansāb, fol. 561; Nuʿjum, p.392.
⁶Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 270 f; Tab., III, p.1942f; Khazrajī, B.H. fols. 15b-16a.
b. Za'ida al-Shaybani governor of the Yemen in 141/758-9 with orders to inflict harsh punishment on the unruly population. Ma'an staged a terrible massacre of the Yamanites. In retaliation to Ma'an's exterminations and with the consent of al-Mansur, 'Uqba b. Salm al-Hunna'i the Azdite governor of the Yamama and Bafrayn inflicted heavy losses on the Rabi'ites there in 151/768. In so doing al-Mansur 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-Mansur achieved his purpose, but the two governors who were instrumental in achieving it were both assassinated later on by Kharijite or native avengers.

The Kharijites found less resistance in Ifriqiyya due to its internal conditions and its greater distance from the central regime. In 132/749-50 'Abd 'l Rahman b. 'Abd al-Fihri the governor of Ifriqiyya had declared himself for the 'Abbasids. Though he was confirmed in his post by the new regime, his relations with the central government soon deteriorated as he was unwilling to meet its fiscal demands and resented its authority. This situation obliged Abu 'l 'Abbas to put the province

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1 Khalifa, Tarikh, fol. 291; Azdi, fol. 152; Khazrajii, folios 16b-17a; Tab., III, p.133.
2 Azdi, fol. 152; Tab., III, pp. 367-8; Athir, V, p.243.
3 Khalifa, Tarikh, fol. 295; Tab., III, p.369; Azdi, fol. 151; Ya'qubi, II, p.462.
under the jurisdiction of the governor of Egypt, Šalīḥ b. ‘Alī in 136/753-4. ‘Abbāsid missionaries were sent to influence the population of Ifriqiyya and pave the way for the expected ‘Abbāsid army. Abū ‘Awn al-Azdī was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces whose vanguard was led by ‘Amīr b. Ismā‘īl al-Masalli. Also a naval expedition was about to sail when the death of the caliph prevented the enterprise. The new caliph al-Manṣūr needed the forces to quell new outbreaks in Syria which were more dangerous to the ‘Abbāsid than distant Ifriqiyya. Abū ‘Awn al-Azdī, who had already reached Barqa on his way to Ifriqiyya was recalled and the ‘Abbāsid 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-‘Akhṭūr al-Khuṣā‘ī (141-142) never materialized and cost the latter his post. Meanwhile, the struggle for power within al-Fihri’s family — inspired probably by the ‘Abbāsids — led eventually to its total destruction and by then neither they nor the ‘Abbāsids had any real power in the province which was virtually controlled by the Kharijites.

Abū‘l Khattāb Abū‘l ‘Aṭā b. al-Samī‘ Mu‘ārifī was proclaimed Imam in al-Sayyād, west of Tripoli, in 139-140/757-8 and was able to stage a great Berber rising. He took possession of the whole of Ifriqiyya

1Vulāt, pp. 102-103; Khīṭāṭ, 2, pp. 91-2; Nujūm, p.366.
2Vulāt, pp. 108f; Khīṭāṭ, 2, pp. 92f; Nujūm pp. 382-83. Compare Nujūm, p.385 where the author relates that in 143A.H. ‘Umayyad al-Ta‘ī sent an expedition to Ifriqiyya. This seems to be a confusion with 141 A.H.
4Levi-Provencal, op.cit., pp. 97, 121-2. Commenting on the conditions of the western part of the empire at the advent of the ‘Abbāsids, Professor Gibb says: “The principle of ‘Universal Islam’ might seem to have been favoured by the establishment of the Universal empire of the ‘Abbāsids, but (cont.)
and even occupied Qayruwan whose new Kharijite governor was 'Abd al-Ra'fman b. Rustam, the future founder of the Rustamid dynasty of Tahart, while in Tilimsan, a Sofrite leader, Abū Qurra, had already proclaimed himself Imam. Warned by this development, al-Mansur sent in 143/760-1 Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Khuza'i with 40,000 troops to Ifriqiyya. He crushed the Ibaḍites in a fierce battle at Tawurgha where Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb himself was killed in 144/761. The new governor rebuilt al-Qayruwan and stationed his army there. He pursued an arbitrary policy and executed in cold blood all rebels who bore the name of Mu'awiya, 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.

However, due to the struggle for power among ambitious officers in the 'Abbāsid 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-Mangūr was even compelled to appoint, in 150/767, al-Ṭāsām b. Ḥabīb al-Kindī, the very leader of the mutiny, governor of Ifriqiyya. The critical situation justified the choice of the veteran 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ al-‘Atkā, better known as Hazārmār, 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 civilisation..., p.11).

4Abū Zakariyya, Chronique..., pp. 18ff; Ibn 'Adhārī, I, pp. 70-71; Vaglieri, Le Vicende del Harigismo, R.S.O., 1949, p.33; Lewick, Les Ibadites..., pp.4f.

1Ibn al-Ṣachīr, pp. 30ff; E.I.1 (Rustamids); E.I.2 (Abū 'l Khaṭṭāb).
neither rely on the mutinous Khurásání army stationed in Ifriqiyya nor on the natives he came accompanied by his own army.¹ The 'Abbasid army can be regarded as an army of occupation, as Kharijites seem to have enjoyed the support of the whole country, while 'Umar al-'Atki was forced to build and repair military strongholds such as 'Abbasíyya and Tobna, to station his troops there.²

It was during al-'Atki's term of office that the Kharijites broke out in a dangerous revolt. Profiting by the absence of 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ at Tobna the Kharijites, led by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Yaʿqūb b. Tamīm al-ʿEndi and Abū ʿĀd seized the capital and killed the deputy governor Ḥabīb b. Ḥabīb al-Muhallabi.³ It is significant that, in Tobna, both the Ibadites and the ʿṢafrites made common cause against the 'Abbasid authority and apparently recognized Abū Qurra the 'Ṣafrite as caliph.⁴ In considerable numbers they besieged 'Umar al-'Atki who was eventually able to break through their lives. Returning to Qayruwan he temporarily scattered the Kharijites and sent a detachment to pursue 'Abd al-ʿRahmān b. Rustam who withdrew to al-Maghrib and entrenched himself in Tahart where he became in 160/776 the first Ibadite Imam.⁵ Meanwhile,

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¹Tab., III, p.371; see also Ibn ʿAdhārī, I, p.70; E.I.1 (ʿOmar b. Ḥafṣ).
⁵Abū Zakariyya, op.cit., pp. 41f; Tab., III, p.359; Ibn ʿAdhārī, I, pp. 75, 77.
³Athīr, V, pp. 457f; Ibn ʿAdhārī, I, p.75; Dahābī, Duwal, I, p.80; Bad̲iʾ, pp. 6, 87.
'Umar al-‘Atkār appealed to al-Manṣūr but was killed in 154/771 before help could reach him. Qayruwan was taken in 155/771-72 by another detachment of Abu Ḫātim and Kharijite leaders with 400,000 partisans seized control of Ifriqiyya.

Al-Manṣūr, alarmed by the situation, was desirous to arouse the spirit of a holy war and, remembering the role played by the Muhallabites in the struggle against the Kharijites during the Umayyad period, decided to choose Yazid b. Ḫātim 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. When Yazid arrived in Ifriqiyya Abu Ḫātim was virtually in control for about a year. After a series of fierce battles Yazid succeeded in crushing the Kharijites in the battle of Tripoli where Abu Ḫātim was killed in 155/771-2 and the remnants of his followers withdrew to the mountainous area of the Berbers. Yazid decided to

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1 Azdī, fol. 188; Ibn ʿAdhari, I, p. 77; Dhahabi, op.cit.
2 Azdī, fol. 186; see also Tab., III, p. 370.
3 Ibn ʿAdhari, I, p. 78; Yaʿqūbī, II, pp. 464-5; Tab., III, p. 372; Azdī, fol. 190; Athir, V, pp. 460f; Dhahabi, Duwal, I, p. 80; Badr, 6, p. 87.
follow the insurgents and sent an army to the Berber rebels of Katama. The Kharijite doctrine found a fertile soil among the Berbers who resented the Arab rule and adopted Kharijism to defy the 'Abbasid political system by using of Islamic concepts. However the clash was more of a conquered people against conquerors. Sulaymān b. Ḥumayd al-ghafiqī, 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".

The lack of stability was also due to the ambitions of officers whose mutinies against governors often originated in pay disputes. The Ḥudūdīs 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.

By the end of al-Mansūr’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 Ḫurāsān 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

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1 Professor Gibb rightly states that a close association of orthodoxy with the ʿAbbasid caliphate led to the rejection of orthodoxy by sections politically opposed to ʿAbbasid rule as in the adhesion of the Berber to Kharijism. See Studies in the civilization of Islam, p.11.

2 Ibn Adhari, 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 Waqidi and Yaʿqūbī it was in 151/768 that Maʿan b. Zaʿida al-Shaybānī was appointed governor of Sīstān to put things in order and suppress Kharijīte activities. In the first months of his governorship, Maʿan 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 Kharijītes in his own house at Bust. Ibn al-Athīr merely states that the Kharijītes were dissatisfied with his policy, while the author of Tarīkh-i Sīstān enlarges on it in the following account on his murder: "Sensible people were dissatisfied with Maʿan's extraction of property, his bad administration and tyranny until the time when a group of Kharijītes conspired to kill him". According to al-Khāzrajī, Maʿan was murdered by two people from Ḫāramant 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

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1Tab., III, pp. 368f; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.462; Khāzrajī, B.M., fol. 17b; Azādī, fol. 151–152.

2Aṭṭīr, V, p.464, Leyden.

3Tarīkh-i Sīstān, p.146.

4Khāzrajī, fol. 17b.
account is to be doubted as it is not confirmed by other historians. The first insurrection in Sistan led by 'Amir b. al-Ḍabḍab al-Shaybānī with 1,000 partisans and probably Kharijite in character occurred in the reign of al-Mansūr. Sistan, 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, 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 Sistan consisted of Arab strangers as well as native Iranians. Though the rebel 'Amir 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 Badghis, Herat and Bushang.

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 Sistan, Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī, who had already been fighting the Kharijites Yahya al-Shari4 to advance hastily to Khurasan where a serious revolt under Yusuf b. Ibrahim called al-Barm had just broken out. Early accounts differ on the nature of the rising. Yaʿqūbī and Ibn al-Athīr classify it as Kharijite.5 Tabari does not commit himself and merely

1 Ansāb, fol. 562.
3 Tarikh-i Sistan, pp. 156f; Vagleiri, "Le vicende del Harigismo", op.cit., p.41.
4 Yaʿqūbī, II, p.478.
5 Balḍān p.303; Athīr, V., p.470. See also Diwan Muslim b. al-Walīd, p.17.)
states that Yusuf protested against al-Mahdī's policy, while in another account of his he states that Yusuf was "considered unbeliever by some Muslims". Accordingly, modern histories are divided in their opinions on Yusuf al-Barmū. Sadighī and Moscati consider him a Kharijite, while Spuler 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 Yusuf al-Barmū was, in fact, a Kharijite. Despite the scarcity of information on his attitude towards the 'Abbāsid regime one can detect in the rigid attacks on the injustice of the caliph and the slogans he raised elements of Kharijite rigorism. He occupied Buzhang, Merw al-Rudh, Taqān 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 Yusuf's insurrection and success except the murder of the brother of Harthama of A'yan, a Khurasānī commander, until Yusuf 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

1Tab., III, pp. 470-71, 773.


3Spuler, Iran in Früh..., pp. 51-52.

4Ya'qūbī states that he insisted on the right being upheld and the injustices being abolished. (II, pp. 470, 478; see also Tab., III, p.470).

5Tab., III, p.471.

(cont.) Cairo edition.
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 Baghdad. On arrival at Nahrawān Yūsuf and his partisans were made to mount camels facing their tails. That it was in Nahrawān that the 'Abbāsid 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 Sārī 'al-Ghawānī in the verse:ُ

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 Baghdad and killed a number of people.

According to several historians a Kharijite revolt led by 'Abd al-Salām b. Hāshim al-Yashkārī broke out in the Jazīra and northern Syria in 160 A.H./776 A.D. with its centres in Qinnisrin and Aleppo. This insurgence lasted two years during which several commanders were

1Ya‘qūbī, II, p. 478; Tab., III, p.471.
2Diwan Sārī 'al-Ghawānī, p.17.
3Ya‘qūbī, II, p.463.
4Ma‘d, fol. 94a; Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fol. 308f; Tab., III, p.782; Zuhda, I, p.60; Nujum, pp. 41 ff.
defeated. Khalīfa b. Khayyat and Azdī cite 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: "his words were good but his intention wicked". The letter goes on presenting al-Mahdī as a defender of 'All, cursing the Kharijite rebel for his condemnation of 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib, and ends by warning him to refrain from the use of force. Only Khalīfa b. Khayyat records the harsh reply of 'Abd al-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 al-Salām ends by calling him Ṭāhīya, and threatening him with war. Only when Shāliḥ 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.

In 168 A.H./784-5 A.D. Mogul witnessed yet another Kharijite revolt led by the Tamimite Yāsin al-Maṣūlī. He defeated the governor of

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1 Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 308-9; Azdī, fol. 206.
2 Khalīfa, Tārīkh, fols. 309-310.
3 Azdī, fol. 210; Tab., III, p.492; Nujum, pp. 42f.
4 Azdī, fol. 218; Athīr, VI, p.32; 'Ibar, Vol. 3, p.361.
the city and maintained control over large areas of the Jazīra. Yāsin followed a doctrine of a fellow Tamīmite, Ǧāliḥ b. Musanib 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. Aʿyan, whereupon Yāsin was killed fighting and his followers dispersed.

In 169/785-6 the Khuzaʿite ʿAmza b. Mālik led another Kharijite insurrection in the Jazīra. The people of Moḏūl hard pressed by the ʿAbbāsid extortionate fiscal policy supported him in defiance of the ʿAbbāsid régime. His efforts were initially successful, for he defeated the ʿAbbāsid army in the battle of Moḏūl. Unable to overcome him by force, the ʿAbbāsid government resorted to a ruse. Two men were sent, who professed the wish to join him but assassinated him when the opportunity presented itself. 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 Moḏūl was occupied, the ʿAbbāsid 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 Tagḥlabī al-Walīd b. Ṭarīf

1Aṣṣā, fol. 223.
al-Shārī in 178 A.H./794-5. He attacked Nīqībīn and killed the ‘Abbāsid 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 dirhems. Al-Walīd al-Shārī even set a siege to Raqqa threatening Baghādād itself. 1 Igbānī relates the fears of the people of Baghādād that al-Walīd would launch a surprise attack. 2

Al-Rashīd intended to wipe out the people of Mogūl, but was dissuaded from this undertaking by his chief Qaṣī Abū Yūsuf. Instead he demolished the wall of the city to prevent Kharijites and nomads from using it as their stronghold. 3 The episode seems to have made a deep impression on the community. Ṣāḥīb 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 ‘Abbāsid army could overcome al-Walīd’s rising, and it was a Turk who killed al-Walīd. 4

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

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1 Ḥaḍ, fol. 17a.; Aẓādī, fol. 242; Taḥrī, III, 631; Aṭṭīr, VI, p.971.
2 Aṭṭīr, vol. XI, p.8; Aẓādī, fol. 243.
4 Aẓādī, fol. 246; Taḥrī, II, p.645.
5 Maḥbūbī, p.36. Although Turkshad been introduced in the ‘Abbāsid court since the reign of al-Maṣūr (Ibn Ḥaṣanīyār, vol. 2, p.118), it is not known to what degree they were employed in the army before al-Muṣṭaṣim.
to kill al-Walid in 179/795-6 A.D. 1 Both the relief felt by al-Rashid and the words of the poet Sa`i`i` al-Ghawanî indicate that the very existence of the caliphate was in danger. 2

The reign of al-Rashid witnessed yet another serious Kharijite rising in Sistan and Khurasan. Yezma b. 'Abdallah al-Azraq al-Shari`i broke out in rebellion in 179/795-6 and was proclaimed 'Amir al-Hu`minin by his partisans in 181 A.H./797-8 A.D. 3 After defeating the troops sent by 'Ali b. 'Isa the governor of Khurasan, he found himself in control of most of Sistan and Fars. Advancing, he defeated the garrison of Herat whose governor 'Amr b. Yazid al-Azdim was killed.

According to Tarikh-i Sistan, which describes Yezma's activities in Sistan, Fars and Kirman and whose sympathies are with the Kharijite rebels, as many as 30,000 men followed Yezma. The caliph al-Rashid had to visit the eastern provinces in order to see for himself the growing danger of Yezma in 193/808-809. He wrote to Yezma from Jurjân asking him to "join the Jama'a" promising him his share of Fay' and Sadaqa and offering him the aman.

1 Azdi, fol. 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, Wafayat, 2,p.375.

2 Diwan Sarî`i al-Ghawanî, pp. 6, 7, 15, 16; Azdi, fol. 244; Tab., III, p.638.

3 Tarikh-i Sistan, pp. 156 ff; Tab., III, p.638; Ya`qubi, II, p.87. For other insignificant Kharijite risings in the reign of al-Rashid see Azdi, fols. 231, 235, 238, 240, 242, 246; Tab., III, p.752.
Hamza calling himself Āmir al-Mu'āminin 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 Hilk from you, nor by worldly pleasures or prestige or fame, but is merely dictated by their misrule of the 'Umma's affairs and what they commit in the field of executions, plunder and other misdeeds by which they victimized the Muslims... La yukma illa illah Yafgul bi 'l baqq wahuwa Khayru 'l Faqiliyn."

However, the bloody battles between the 'Abbāsid army and Hamza failed to put an end to the latter's rising as al-Rashīd was faced with Rāfi' b. al-Layth's revolt in Khurasan and the Byzantines' threat from the north. 2 Hamza's rising was crushed only in the reign of al-Nā'mūn by the efforts of Tāhir b. al-Ḥusayn and as can be gathered from Tarīkh-i Sīstān Kharijites remained, indeed, the real masters of southern Iran until the time of the Ẓafarīds. 3 These petty states in the eastern part of the empire (the Tāhirīds and the Ẓafarīds) as well as in the western part (the Aghlabīds and the Idrīsīds) finally either crushed the Kharijites or put a limit to their activities.

To sum up, one can say that, though a number of scholars 4 concerned themselves with particular aspects or centres of Kharijite activity, none except L. V. Vagliera 5 has attempted a general survey of Kharijite

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2 Tab., III, p.730; Ya'qūbī, II, p.515; Azdī, fols. 262 ff.

3 Tarīkh-i Sīstān, pp. 187, 189f; Kurāj, V, p.440; Sadighi, op.cit., p.56.


activities in the early 'Abbāsid period. Brunnow and Wellhausen\(^1\) who were specially concerned with Kharijites did not pursue their research to 'Abbāsid times. Inher articles on Kharijism Vagliera covers too long a period to go deep into the events. The article on the Ibadite Imamate of 'Uman - 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 'Abbāsid 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 Tārikh al-Mausil, the manuscript of Baladhuri's Ansāb or Khalīfa b. Khayyāt's Tārikh.

In order to demonstrate the active character of Kharijite opposition in the early 'Abbāsid 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

\(^1\)Brunnow, Die charidschiten unter den ersten Omayyunden, Leyden 1884; Wellhausen, Die religios-politischen oppositionsparteien..., Berlin, 1901.
defined as Kharijite and even sometimes Şufrites, Ibaqites and Azraqites. (2) Some trace back their doctrines to certain Kharijite religious figures such as Şalih b. Musarîb while others were known in Kharijite circles before staging their revolts such as Abû 'l Khaṭṭāb.¹ (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 Jazîra, used to hurry to the help of fellow-Kharijite rebels in other provinces.

¹Vaglieri, "Le vicende del Harigismo...", op.cit., p.34.
"When Abu 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-Ashʿath in Ifriqiyya and the remainder with ʿĪsā b. Muṣā in the Hijāz'. 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 'Abbasid régime was no exception. Having given a detailed account of the sectarian risings such as internal 'Abbasid, 'Alid 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.¹

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 'Abbasids. To neutralize and control those two provinces, the 'Abbasids adopted measures of different kinds: 1) They appointed new governors who were 'Abbasids² and were occasionally accompanied by a body of Khurasānī troops; 2) they installed Khurasānī garrisons in many cities such as Harrān, Mosul, Damascus and Qinnasrin; 3) they built the new garrison city of Ṛafīqa on a strategic point on the way to Syria and the Jazīra, manning it with Khurasānī troops; 4) they won

¹The difficulties the 'Abbasids 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.

(continuation)
over many tribal chieftains, with whose help they tried to pacify their districts; early 'Abbāsid caliphs also visited occasionally these provinces either on their way back from the pilgrimage or on their way up to the Thughūr.

Mosul, the centre of Diyar Rabī'a, was in a turbulent state throughout this period. Though 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 'Abbāsids a number of Arab tribal chieftains of Mosul were granted estates by Abū '1 'Abbās and later al-Manṣūr. But the tribal leaders soon defied the new 'Abbāsid governor of the city, the Mawla Muḥammad b. Șawl, shouting "Are we to be ruled by a Mawla of Khath'am?". He was driven out of

(cont.) Each one of these risings, such as Bihāfrīd's, Sonbāgh's, Ustādhsi's and al-Muqanna'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, Duri, Gibb, Lewis, Sadighī, Spuler, Wright, and Yakubousky).

2Tab., III, p.75; Șafadī, Umarā Dimashq, pp. 3, 49, 50-59, 75, 202ff; Zambour, Manuel de Généalogie, p. 28.

3Tab., III, p.373; Azdī, fol. 194.

1Azdī, fol. 136.

2Diṭa, p.379; Ṭulāt, p.106; Ya'qubī, II, p.480; Tab., III, pp. 129, 498-500; 'Asakīr, 5, p.308; Zubda, 1, p.61; Theophanes, Chronographia, 1, p.446; Nāṣīḥu 'Ibārī, p.114; Azdī, fol. 215.

3Azdī, fols. 135-36.

the city and the caliph had to nominate his own brother Yaḥya b. Muḥammad governor of Moṣul. However, Muḥammad b. ʿAwāl was left there in an advisory capacity.\(^1\) The new governor was, according to Yaʿqūb\(^2\) accompanied by 4,000 troops. According to Azdī and Ibn al-Athīr\(^3\) he had as many as 12,000 troops among whom there were 4,000 Zubīj. 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 daʿwa.\(^4\) 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.\(^5\) According to Azdī\(^6\) the massacre was caused by two reasons: first, the pro-Umayyad sentiment

\(^1\) Ansāb, fol. 586; Azdī, fol. 125.
\(^3\) Azdī, fol. 124; Athīr, V, p.340.
\(^4\) Aḥbār, fol. 115a. See also Ansāb, fols. 586-587. Kāna Yaḥya Ajulān qalīl al-Rawīya.
\(^5\) Azdī, fol. 125.
of the people of Mosul; secondly, their refusal to accept the Mawla Muhammad b. Sawl 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.¹

Anticipating a revolt, the governor Ya'qya, instigated by Muhammad b. Sawl, arrested and executed a number of prominent figures accusing them of pro-Umayyad sympathies.² This led to a clash which lasted several days. Then Ya'qya 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. Sawl played a leading part.³ The number of the victims cannot be given with any certainty. No information to that effect can be found in Tabari who avoids dealing with the event in detail, while the figures given by Ya'qubī and Azdī are no doubt exaggerated under the influence of their anti-'Abbāsid loyalties.⁴ Azdī, a native of Mosul, gives vent to his resentment when he mentions the event and

1 It is worth noting that according to an account in Ansāb the people of Mosul consisted of three categories: Kharijites, robbers and merchants who were called Khazar al-'Arab because of their roughness (Ansāb, fol. 586.)

2 Azdī, fol. 125.


4 According to Ya'qubī, 18,000 Arabs were killed together with their Mawali and 'Abīd (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. 152). See also the verse of Abū Fīrās al-Yamdānī (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 'Abbāsid attitude towards Moṣul and even
cites a religious figure as condemning the murderers /i.e. the 'Abbāsids/
as non-Muslims. Yaʿqūbī says "Their blood mixed with the colour of
the Tigris and they did not rise again". However, the latter account
is not strictly true because Moṣul 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 Ismāʿīl b. 'Alī who condemned Yaḥya's policy
and promised compensation to the relatives of the victims.  

The position of the 'Abbāsid governor of Moṣul was always dependent
on the loyalty of the Khurasānī troops. In 142/759-60, Ismāʿīl b.
'Alī resented al-Mansūr's order to give up his post, but had finally
to give in, as the commander of the Khurasānī garrison of Moṣul, Ibn
Mashkān, sided with the new governor, Mālik b. al-Haytham al-Khuzaʿī.  
Realizing the inimical attitude of the people of Moṣul which caused

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1Azdī, fols. 126, 132-135.
2Yaʿqūbī, II, p.429.
3Azdī, fols.134-35. The remark of Ṣahīz which describes Yaḥya's acts in
Moṣul as bravery is hardly appropriate (Fadl bani Ḥashim, p.115).
4Azdī, fols. 154-155.
any ambitious governor who resorted to rebellion could count on their support, al-Mansur was very cautious and even tactful in dealing with his own governors of the city. According to Azdī and Tabari, he sent his son al-Mahdī accompanied by Khalid b. Barmaq 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-‘Abbasid population. Moreover it seems that what the people of Mosul resented most was the burden of heavy taxation. They often ceased paying under the pretext that Kharijite raids had done heavy damage, and although this was true in some cases the ‘Abbasid authority used such harsh methods in extracting the money that people fled the city.

Slave riots in Bagra in 141/758–9

In 141, unrest arose among the "Abīd and the Sudan" who were easily overcome by the troops and, after having lost some fourteen men,

1 Tab., III, p.383; Azdī, fol. 195, cf. op.cit., fol. 196.
2 Azdī, fol. 238. Local sources usually teem with complaints about the harsh fiscal policy of local ‘Abbasid governors.
3 op.cit., fols. 238, 240, 246 ff.
4 The use of the terms ‘Abīd (slaves), Sudan (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 ‘Abbasid régime we see the words Sudan, Zunūj and Afāriga 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 ‘Abbasid court, especially in the harem. (On these terms see Jābiz, Rasā‘il, ed. 1964, pp. 176, 179, 190, 194, 198, 201, 210, 211, 216, 224 f; Tbn Manzūr, Lisan al-Arab, vol. 2, p.290, vol. 3, (cont.)
easily dispersed. In his essay Fākhūr al-Sūdān..., Jāḥīz 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. Balāḏūrī indicates that the insurrection had no political aim or organisation and was mainly due to economic reasons (darra biḥim 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 Başra but also in other cities of the empire. However, in early ‘Abbasid 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 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 Christainity the official faith of his domain, invaded the Muslim villages of the Biqā‘, but was soon defeated


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1 Ansāb, fol. 567, Khalīfa, Tarīkh, fol. 291; Aẓdī, fol. 101.
3 Tab., III, pp. 1785-6.
and took shelter in "the country of Rûm". The inhabitants of the
mountain were expelled by Ǧâliḥ b. ʿAlî, and subsequently scattered
all over Syria. 1 This evoked the opposition of the renowned Syrian
jurist al-Awzâ‘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." 2 The ʿAbbasid authorities
obviously considered the Christians of al-Shām and al-Jazîra susceptible
to exploitation by the Byzantines and a potential danger in general.
The ʿAbbasid defensive policy towards Byzantium entailed the intro­
duction of certain restrictions in these border provinces. It was
due to security reasons that the governor of Jazîra al-ʿAkkî ordered
all the Muslims of the province to put on Sawād to distinguish them
from the non-Muslims of that border province. 3 According to Balādhuri, 4
al-Mangûr’s policy to order transfers of border population to free the
frontier of suspects, especially Christians, is to be seen as a pre­
cautory measure.

1 ʿAsâkir, vol. 5, p.341.
biʿabid... wa la kinnahum ʿabrâr Ahl Dhimma."
3 Dionysius, op.cit., p.46; see also E.I. 2 (Dhimma).
4 Futuh, 1, p.196. See also Theophanes (Chronographia, 1, p.446)
who states that after ʿAbdallah al-Mangûr 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-Mansur's tribal policy

After the advent of the 'Abbasids, the Yemen was administratively linked with the Hijaz. The governor of the Hijaz, Dā'ūd b. 'Ālī, sent the Qurayshite 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Majīd al-'Adawi to deputize for him in the Yemen.1 Owing to the remote geographical position of the Yemen and its mountainous nature, the 'Abbasids found it difficult to control. The governor used to administer it through local representatives (i.e. Wakīl) of the tribes,2 but it seems that al-Mansur desired to enhance the authority of the central government, especially after the defeat of his governor 'Abdallah b. al-Rabī' al-Ḥārithi by the rebel tribes in Rabi' I 140 A.H. / July 757.3 With this aim in view the caliph appointed Ma'an b. Zā'ida al-Shaybahī governor of the province. Ma'an's policies, especially after the murder of his cousin at al-Ma'afir, and heavy taxation seems to have been very harsh and caused shortly after the outbreak of a rebellion in Ḥadramaut which was crushed severely.4 When a Qurayshite at the court of the caliph expressed his dismay at Ma'an's actions, al-Mansur pretended that Ma'an was punishing Ḥarājīte rebels and avenging the Qurayshites who had been killed at the battle

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1 Khazrajī, B.M. / 16a; Khazrajī, B.N., fols. 9bf.
2 Ibid.
3 Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 16b; see also Tab., III, p. 394.
4 Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 17a; Azdā, fols. 151-152; Khalīfa, Tārīkh fol. 291; F.H.A., p. 229.
of Qadīd.¹ The appointment of Ma‘an al-Shaybānī seems to have been, in fact, part of a deliberate plan, as al-Mangūr 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 ḥilf between Rabī‘a and Yaman.² This view is supported by the events which followed when al-Mangūr appointed the Yamanite ‘Uqba b. Salm al-Hunna‘ī governor of the Yamāma and Baḥrayn where he took revenge for himself and his tribe on the Rabi‘ite inhabitants of the province.³ According to Tabarī a revolt broke out in Baḥrayn in 151 A.H. during which rebels killed the ‘Abbasid governor Abū l Sāj. He was replaced by ‘Uqba b. Salm al-Hunna‘ī whose brutal policy of extermination against Rabī‘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-Mangūr’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 Rabī‘ites. Al-Mangūr’s manoeuvre in

¹Khazrajī, B.M., fol. 16b-17b.
²Azdī, fol. 151-152; Tab., III, pp. 394 f.
³Ya‘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. Consequently, the unruly Yaman 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-Ḥādī.2

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‘qūb 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 Ya‘qūt who mentions the Island of Kurk in the Indian Ocean. But Ibn Taghribiṣ 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,6 or else they were pirates from the Indian Ocean possibly of Indian origin.7 Al-Mangūr

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1 After having performed their tasks the two governors were later assassinated, 'Uqba in Baḥrān and Ma‘an in Bust by the Kharijites (Ya‘qūbī, II, p.478; Tab., III, p.369; Azdī, fol. 186).

2 Khazrajī, B.M., fols. 17b-18b. The harsh oppressive policy of Ḥammād al-Barbarī al-Raghiḍ’s governor of the Yemen led to the emergence of disintegrative 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-Ḥakāmī, Kitāb Tarikh al-Yaman, pp. 2-3; van Arendonk, Les débuts de l’imāmat Zaidite..., pp. 106ff. E.I.2 (Harun al-Raṣīlī).)

3 Ya‘qūbī, I, p.219.

4 Mu‘jam, I, p.29.

5 Mu‘jam, p.412.

6 Maqrīzī, al-Imām bi aḥbār al-Ḥubshān, p.3; Trimighton, Islam...
immediately dispatched a naval force from Basra to deal with the Kurk and saved the port of Jadda. ¹

Coptic and Bedouin disturbances in Egypt

Egypt was, in the early ‘Abbāsid times, a vital base for military operations in Ifriqiya. Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Alī the caliph’s uncle was the first governor of Egypt to be appointed by the ‘Abbāsids in Muḥarram 132 A.H. ²

Generous distributions of ‘āṯān to the soldiers and ṣadaqāt to the needy which characterized the ‘Abbāsid accession to power in many provinces, followed his nomination. Ṣāliḥ also rewarded those dignitaries who were ready to join the ‘Abbāsids by allotting to them qaṭā‘ūs in villages of Ḫulāq and Ḩmnās. ³ They also exempted the Copts of Bashmūr from the Ḫarāj tax and gave them rewards for their help against the Umayyads. ⁴ 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-Fustāṭ. It was called al-‘Askar (i.e. the camp). Khurasānī troops were stationed there, and it held also the residence of the governor. ⁵

(cont.)...
sumably a move to avoid clashes between the people of al-Fusţaţ and the Khurasanis.¹

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'id 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.² 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 Copt³ rebelled at Samnawūd in Upper Egypt, but he was soon killed and his rising crushed by 'Abd al-Malik al-Azdī (135-136/750-753). In 150/767 a violent rising broke out in Saṭā. The Copts defeated the local governor and took control of the surrounding districts. The rebels were joined by several

(continues)

other villages, and the Khurasanīs and local recruits which formed the ‘Abbāsid army sent against them by the governor Yazīd b. Ṭātim al-Muhallabī under the command of his kinsman Naqr al-Muhallabī, were defeated and suffered heavy losses.\(^1\) There is no detailed information of how the rising was ultimately put down, but an account mentions that, before retreating, a division of the ‘Abbāsid 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 Muṣā b. ‘Alī al-Lakhamī\(^2\) (155-161/771-777). This last rising, however, proved abortive, and Egypt witnessed peace and tranquility for a period of six years. This was due to the justice of the governor Muṣa al-Lakhamī.\(^3\)

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 Qādi was needed to build a church.\(^4\) The governors occasionally discriminated against one Christian denomination

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\(^1\) Wulāt, pp. 116-117; Khīṭāt, 4, p.29.


\(^3\) Wulāt, pp. 131, 399; Khīṭāt, 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-Maʾmūn, by the extortionate policy of the governor Ṣa b. Manṣūr (Wulāt, p.192) there were no more dangerous Coptic outbursts. (See Khīṭāt, 4, p.396.

\(^4\) Wulāt, p.105.
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.¹

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 Sa‘īd who rebelled in 168/784 against Mūsa b. Muq‘ab (167/783-168/784), and in 178/794-5 against ʿIrāq b. Sulaymān (177/793-178/794), killed the former in the battle and foiled the endeavour of the latter to curb their resistance.² Consequently, fresh troops had to be sent from Baghdaḏ to put down the rebellion. Arab risings and disturbances in Egypt such as that of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad the Ḥasanid in 144/761-2 or that of Dāhiyya b. al-ʿAghbāgh in 168-169/784-86, sometimes adopted Umayyad or ʿAlid slogans.³ 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.⁴ Besides they relied more on Khurasānī than native troops. Newly appointed governors were accompanied by

¹Tabaqāt al-Atibba', I, p.83 (ed. Cairo 1299).


³See above pp.

⁴On the financial administration of Egypt see the bibliography under C.H.Becker, A Grohmann and Kāshīf. It is interesting to note that the Amir of the Khurāj of Egypt was more respected than the governor. (Wulāt, pp. 108-9). Although the early ʿAbbāsids combined these two offices in the hands of one man, they sometimes appointed, in order to extract more money, a separate Amir of Khurāj (Ibid.; Nujum, (cont.)
Khurasānī divisions especially at the time of disturbances. It is known that the 'Abbāsid army in Egypt was increased in the governorship of Ṣalīḥ b. Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī who added 2,000 Ṭuqāṭila to it. When ʿUmayr b. Qaḥṭāba arrived in 143/760 he was accompanied by 20,000 troops which were soon reinforced by an additional contingent from Baghdad.

The size of the 'Abbāsid 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 'Abbāsid 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. Ḥatim 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.

The subjugation of Armenia and the war with Khazaria

In the early 'Abbāsid period Armenia and Adhurbayjān were occasionally (cont.) pp. 382–3).

1Wulāt, p. 103.

2Op. cit., p. 107: Nujūm, p. 385. The army also included sometimes non-Khurasānī divisions such as the Mosulite division (Azdi, fol. 219).

3Khīṭāt, 2, p. 96; 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. When Abū Ja'far (al-Mānṣūr) was appointed governor of the Jazīrah, Armenia and Adhurbayjān, he sent Yazīd b. Asīd al-Sulamlī as his deputy to Armenia and Yazīd b. Yātim al-Muhallabī to Adhurbayjān where the first Arab Yamanite settlement took place at the time. Azd, Ṭay and other Yamanites were settled in different garrisons in the province. The mountainous character of this area and the scarcity of food rendered it often difficult to control. As a result, the routes were infested with highwaymen, so that a garrison had to be stationed at Sīr to guard the routes.

Armenia was plagued by occasional Khazar raids. According to Baladhurī, Ya'qūbī and Kūfī, these raids were so troublesome that al-Mānṣūr 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-Mānṣūr seems to have paid great attention to the frontier which divided the Muslim territory from Khazaria, and used to call it al-Taghr al-Aṯām (i.e. the greatest frontier). However, the hostilities were soon resumed when the bride died some two

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1. Ya'qūbī, II, p.430; Tab., III, p.72; R. Vasmer, Chronologie der arabischen... pp. 3ff.
2. Ya'qūbī, II, p.446; Kūfī, fol. 241b; Dunlop, The history of the Jewish Khazars, p.179.
5. Futūh, 2, p.381; Hamadānī, Mukhtasar, p.239.
6. 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-Faḍl b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, the governor of Armenia and...
years later in 145/762-3. Yazād, 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 Yaʿqūbī,¹ al-Manṣūr sent Jibrīl b. Yaḥya al-Bajjī with 20,000 Syrians, Jazirites and Mosulites. Kūfī² provides a detailed list of the troops sent to Armenia; about 10,000 Syrians; 35,000 Irākīs, 10,000 of whom were headed by Jibrīl al-Bajjī, 5,000 by Ḥarb al-Rawandī, 10,000 by Mukhallad b. al-Ḥasan and finally 10,000 by Humayd b. Qaḥṣaba. This strong Muslim army found itself facing the Khazar's odds. As many as 100,000 Khazars inflicted heavy losses on Yazād who withdrew to Bardhāʿa. One of the Muslim commanders, Ḥarb b. 'Abdāl-lah al-Rawandī, was killed in the battle.³

Faced by this danger, al-Manṣūr decided to built a new series of fortifications in Armenia. Several military headquarters, e.g. al-Muḥammadiyya, Kawkh 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.⁴ The caliph also utilized the experience of Jazirite tribal leaders such as Bakkār

(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.

¹Yaʿqūbī, II, pp. 446f.
²Kūfī, fol. 242a.
³Tab., III, p.328.
⁴Kūfī, fol. 242b; Yaʿqūbī, II, p.447.
b. Muslim al-‘Uqaylī 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 ‘Abbasid period. On the contrary, Khazar troops were found forming part of the Muslim army in the campaign of 151/768 against the Byzantines.  

Armenia, however, was never completely pacified under the early ‘Abbasids. Unwilling to scatter his Khurasānī troops, al-Mansūr 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.  


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1 Kûfî, fol. 242b.  
2 Dunlop, op. cit., p.180.  
4 Kûfî, fol. 243a.  
5 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-Mangūr 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 Mahrê 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.

`Abbāsid attempts to regain al-Andalus`

Since 138/755-56 the `Abbāsids had to consider the possible danger threatening them on the part of the Umayyad régime newly established in

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Spain by 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān b. Muʿāwiya b. Ḥishām.¹ 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 'Abbāsid yoke.² Consequently al-Maḥṣūr ordered in 146/763 al-'Alāʾ b. Mughith al-Yaḥṣubī to launch an attack on Spain. Al-'Alāʾ al-Yaḥṣubī was able to cross the Straits of Gibraltar and landed at Baja 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 'Abbāsid soldiers were sent to Qayrūwan and Mecca where the caliph was performing his pilgrimage. Thus the first attempt to regain Spain ended in failure.³

The second attempt, made in 161/777-78 by 'Abd 'l Raḥmān b. Ḥabīb al-Fihrī al-Ṣīqlabī.⁴ With a Berber army he landed in Spain near Tudmīr. He contacted Sulaymān b. Yaẓān al-ʿArābī, governor of Barcelona, who is described by al-Maqqārī as Ra's al-Fītan (i.e. the head of

¹Lévi-Provençal, Histoire de l'Espagne..., pp. 74ff.
⁴Akhbar Majmuʿa, pp. 110-111; Ibn ʿAdhārī, vol. II, p. 55; Athīr, vol. VI, pp. 36-42; Nuwayrī, fol. 93a-93b; Ῥībar, vol. 3, p. 446. Moscati, "Studi storici sul califfato di al-Mahdi", Orientalia, 1945, pp. 321-326. 'Abd al-Raḥmān was called al-Ṣīqlabī (the Slav) because of his height, his fair hair and his blue eyes. (Ibn ʿAdhārī, II, p. 55, cf. E.I₂ where it is alleged that he was thus called to distinguish him from another (cont.)
dissensions). First al-A‘rabi 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‘rabi ended in the defeat of the former, who retreated southwards towards the coast. At that moment the Umayyad ‘Abd ‘1 Rahman 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-Rahman’s offer of 1,000 dinars 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, 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 ‘Abbāsid 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.

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2 Athīr, VI, p.42; Nuwayrī, fol. 93b; Moscati, op.cit., p.322.
in 161/777-78. Weil\(^1\) is of the opinion that it was al-Mahdī who ordered the attack while Moscati\(^2\) states that "al-Fihriī 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 ‘Abbasid Caliph". The question is difficult to decide. Al-Fihriī is said to have made propaganda in the name of al-Mahdī, the ‘Abbasid 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 genealogist and historian, pointing out the vices of the Umayyads.\(^3\) Thus there is some reason to suppose that al-Fihriī’s campaign had the support and the blessing of al-Mahdī.

The Raid on India

It was from Bagra that al-Mahdī organised in 159/775-6 a naval expedition to India.\(^4\) He sent Mihrīz b. Ibrāhīm to Bagra to supervise

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\(^1\)Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, II, p.116.

\(^2\)Moscati, op.cit., p.325.

\(^3\)Tab., III, p.531.

\(^4\)Tab., III, pp. 460 f., 476-77; Aṭhir, VI, pp. 30-31.
the formation of the army. The expedition consisted of 2,000 *Mugatila* of Bagra led by Ghassan b. 'Abdallah, 1,500 *Mujawwa* led by al-Mundhir al-Jarudi, a Syrian division led by Yazid b. al-Hasaab al-Mudhab, and 4,000 Aswariyin and Sayabija.1 'Abd al-Malik b. Shihab al-Masma'i was in charge of this naval expedition which anchored in Barbad. The expedition gives the impression of hasty improvisation. The idea behind it seems to have been the wish to satisfy the needs of the *Mugatila* 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-Mahdi's reign. In his early days as caliph al-Mahdi seems to have been obsessed by the role of a saviour as devised by his father, al-Mangur. He seems to have had in mind a return to the "good old days" when *Jihad* played a prominent role in Muslim life. His concern with *Jihad* 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 Barbad 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 ghanima and captives the Muslims

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1 These were originally from India and south east Asia, settled in Iraq before the Arab conquest. (See Pellat, *Le Milieu Basrien...*, pp. 68, 78).
immediately prepared to sail back to Baṣra. 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 ‘Abbāsid 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 ‘Abbāsid 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 jihad 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 ‘Abbāsid central government tried to impose its authority on many regions which had hitherto enjoyed independent or autonomous rule and to

1Moscati, op.cit., 1945, p.326.
whom Islam was unknown.

With Khurasan comparatively quiet under the governorship of al-Mahdi 140/757, al-Manṣūr directed his efforts towards the Caspian region. In planning to subjugate these regions, the caliph was in fact trying to incorporate Tabaristān and its neighbouring districts and to penetrate as far as possible into Daylam. Al-Mahdi’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.

Tabaristān was a rich province which al-Manṣūr was eager to exploit. Helped by its geographical position and the mountainous nature of its land 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. Tabari said that as ‘Abd al-Jabbar al-Azdi’s revolt (142/759-60) had been defeated more easily than had been expected, al-Manṣūr tried to find another...

1 Ya‘qūbī, II, pp. 445-6; Tab., III, p.133.
3 Tab., III, p.136; Athīr, V, p.387.
use for the army to justify the expenses incurred on the expedition. The cause, however, seems to be deeper. According to Ibn Iqfandiyar\(^1\) al-Mangūr had already made one futile attempt to obtain Abū Muslim's possessions from the Iṣpahbād Khorshīd. Al-Mahdī now asked his father not to press his demands too hard lest the Iṣpahbād should revolt. Al-Mangūr, consequently, sent a royal crown to the Iṣpahbād, to which the latter reacted by sending the tribute he used to pay to the Sasenid 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 Iṣpahbād for a division of the 'Abbasid 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 Iṣpahbād gave his permission and the Arab troops, led by al-Mangūr's Mawla Abū 'l Khāṣib Marzūk, ‘Umar b. al-‘Alā‘ and Abū ‘Awn b. ‘Abdallah, penetrated far into the province and occupied it. The Iṣpahbād fled to Jīlān and, hearing that the last fortress al-Ṭaq had fallen, he took poison and died.\(^2\) 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.

\(^1\)Ibn Iqfandiyar, 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 unconditional obedience on which the caliph was bound to insist.

\(^2\)Ibn Iqfandiyar, pp. 119-22; Tab., III, pp. 136f.
Unrest continued to prevail in the province. 'Abbasid governors were only able to maintain their authority by depending on the army stationed in garrisons. The first 'Abbasid governor Abu 'l Khaşib Marzuk (143/760-61) built mosques and encouraged conversion to Islam, 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-Mangur's reign, Tabaristan was comparatively quiet. But in 164/780-81, when 'Abd al-Yāmīd Maqrūb was appointed governor of it, his arbitrary fiscal demands led to a rebellion of the natives who invited Wandād Harmūzūd to lead it against the 'Abbasid rule. Wandād Harmūzūd accepted the offer on condition that he obtained the consent of influential princes, especially the Ispahbād Sharwīn and the Mag-mughān walāsh. When both agreed, a general massacre of the Arabs ensued and, if the account of Ibn Igfandiyyār is to be credited, even women who had married "Muslims" which in fact meant "Arabs" were put to death. The governor 'Abd al-Yāmīd Maqrūb was among the victims. Between 164-166/780-782 the struggle between Wandād Harmūzūd assisted by Sharwīn and the Muslim troops was characterized

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1Tab., III, pp. 136f.
3Ibn Igfandiyyār, p.126.
by frequent Muslim defeats.\(^1\) The Muslim commander Salim al-Farghani was assassinated in his own camp by a suicidal group. Also Farasha, a Mawla of al-Mahdi and the governor of Qimus and Dunbawand (164-167/780-783) led an unsuccessful expedition in which he lost his life.

Most of the governors adopted a militant policy towards Tabaristan, and when in 167/783-4 unrest stirred again, al-Mahdi sent new troops led by his heir Musa al-Hadi and the commander Yazid b. Mazyad al-Shaybani. The new army was reinforced in 168/784-85 by Sa'id al-Yarsh with 40,000.\(^2\) The war was eventually concluded by an agreement between Musa al-Hadi and Wandad 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 Musa on a visit to Baghdad. According to Ibn Igfandiyar Wandad Safrun, the youngest brother of Wandad Hurmuzd, killed shortly afterwards a native of Tabaristan who had been converted to Islam by al-Hadi himself. The latter, who was now caliph, was enraged and decided to execute Wandad Hurmuzd in retaliation for the murdered Muslim. However Wandad 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-Hadi's anger would


\(^{2}\) Ta', III, pp. 518, 521.

\(^{3}\) Ibn Igfandiyar, 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 Tabaristān. Though the caliph finally permitted him to do so, he never fulfilled his promise.¹

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.² In contrast to Islam which was supported by the 'Abbāsids, i.e. the Musawidda, they called their faith the "white religion"³ العلماء al-rūmīyya. The Khramiyya developed into a strong movement under Babak, during the reign of al-Mu'taṣim, and constituted a danger not only to 'Abbāsid authority but also to Islam itself.

Al-Khayzurān's coup d'état 170/786

After the strict rule of al-Mangūr, 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

¹Ibn Ḥafṣuṭ, pp. 131-2.
²Tab., III, pp. 1269, 1276 ff. Minorsky, La Domination des Dailamites, pp. 5 ff.
saviour" had become himself a victim of his wife al-Khayzurān, and let himself be swayed away by intrigues of courtiers and Mawāli.

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 Muharram 160/776-77. Beside Mūsa the only possible heir al-Mahdī considered was Ḥārūn, his other son by al-Khayzurān, who was nominated in 166/782-3 second in succession to the caliphate. This is rather surprising, as the caliph had, by a Hashimite cousin, called Rihā bint Abī 'Abbās, another son named 'Alī whose Hashimite descent could have enlisted enthusiastic support on the part of Banī Hāshim. However al-Mahdī's preference for Mūsa and Ḥārūn 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 Ḥārūn rather than her elder son Mūsa. When, in 167/783-84 Mūsa was sent to Jurjān and Tabaristān to put down a revolt, he was accompanied

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1 Ansāb, fol. 564; Tab., III, pp. 467, 471-2; Azālī, fol. 205; Jah., p.141. Ya ḡubi mistakenly puts it in 159 A.H. (II, p.476).


3 N. Abbot, The two queens..., p.25.
by Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī.\(^1\) Owing to the talent of Yazīd, the real commander of the army, the military operations were successful and ended with the surrender of Wāndād Harmuzā, the prince of Tabaristan. One would expect this formidable success to have worked out in favour of Mūsa and made him appear worthier of the caliphate. But al-Mahdī suddenly changed his mind and decided to put Harūn before Mūsa in the succession to the caliphate. On Mūsa's resistance al-Mahdī had no alternative but to go himself to force Mūsa to renounce his right. However, the caliph died in mysterious circumstances on his way there in al-Rūdhāb on the 22nd Muḥarram 169/4th of August 785.\(^2\)

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,\(^3\) others say it was due to poisoning but exclude foul play,\(^4\) 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 \textit{al-Imāma wa'l Siyāsa}\(^5\)

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{1} Tab., III, pp. 518f; Ibn Iṣfandiyār, pp. 125 ff.
\footnote{2} Tab., III, p. 523.
\footnote{3} Yaʿqūbī, II, p. 484; Tab. III, 524; Fakhri, p. 163.
\footnote{4} Tab., III, pp. 524-5; Fakhri, p. 163.
\footnote{5} \textit{Imāma}, vol. 2, p. 290.
\end{footnotes}
states that al-Mahdi was poisoned by his son 'Abdallah (sic) which may be a mistake for Musa. A later historian Ibn al-Athir was not convinced that al-Mahdi died a natural death. Since al-Hadi'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-Mahdi had sown the seeds of rivalry between the two brothers, Musa and Harun. To stress the superior right of Khayzaran's sons, Al-Mahdi divided the empire between Musa and Harun, 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 Harun's group fostered by al-Khayzaran had a considerable influence on al-Mahdi, al-Hadi's group was far from weak. He had in his company several Hashimites as well as powerful figures such as Yazid al-Shaybani and the cunning counsellor Ibrahim al-Harrani. 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 Jahshayari al-Mahdi, probably suspecting that Ibrahim al-Harrani was behind al-Hadi's refusal, asked the latter in

\[1\] Athir, VI, pp. 54-55.
\[2\] Tab., III, p.545.
\[3\] Jah., p.167.
vain to send Ibrahim back to Baghdad. Furthermore the death of al-Rabi’ b. Yūnus\(^1\) 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 Baghda.\(^2\) On the advice of Yaḥya al-Barmakī Hārūn, who accompanied his father, behaved very tactfully and took the Bay’a to al-Hādī.\(^3\) Here it is significant to stress the role of the army in politics. The Qawwād 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 Yaḥya 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 Baghda, 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-Rūḥdah and Nuṣayr al-Wasif was sent with the insignia to al-Hādī.\(^4\)

When the army reached Baghda where al-Mahdī had left al-Rabi’ 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

\(^1\)Tab., III, p.548.

\(^2\)Tab., III, p.546.


governmental offices and the house of al-Rabi*. Al-Khayzuran called for a meeting to discuss the political situation which al-Rabi* attended but Yahya who shrewdly realized al-Hadī's resentment of his mother did not. At the meeting a decision was taken to give the troops two years' or eighteen months' pay. 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 Harūn made the shrewd move of sending almost immediately envoys to the provinces to receive the oath of allegiance to al-Hadī and to Harūn as the latter's heir.

Al-Hadī arrived at Baghdad on the 20th of Safar 169/785-6 and took over power nominating his men to the key offices of the central government. Al-Hadī 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-Khayzaran, which was characteristic of his father's reign. It is significant that al-Hadī never forgot that his father wanted to deprive him of his right to succession. Although Harūn had taken the Bay'a for him at Rudhdh and Bay'a was also sworn for him in Baghdad, it must be remembered that, under the special circumstances which followed al-Mahdī's sudden death

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2 Tab., III, p. 547.
3 He appointed Al-Rabi* b. Yunus Wazir, entrusting the administration to him alongside with 'Ubaydallah b. Ziyād, the chief chancellery, Muḥammad b. Jamīl in charge of the the revenue of the Irakayin; he also made 'Alī b. 'Isā secretary to the army and chief of guards, 'Abdallāh b. Mālik chief of the police. The seal he entrusted to 'Alī b. Yaqtin. (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 Harun’s name figured on the order circulated to the provincial governors which stated unequivocally that he was al-Hadi’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-Hadi and al-Khayzurān became strained. For several months she had in politics the same influence as in al-Mahdi’s reign but suddenly al-Hadi ordered her to refrain from any political role and keep within the precincts of the harem. Several accounts present him as almost obsessed with fear and suspicion of Harun who had Khayzurān and Yaḥya behind him. He expressed these suspicions to Abu Yusuf the Qādi who vouched for Harun’s loyalty and tried to dissuade the caliph from taking preventive measures.

Meanwhile the conduct of Harun’s affair was still in the hands of Yaḥya b. Khalid who had been his tutor-cum-secretary since the reign of al-Mahdi. It was no doubt a tactical error of al-Hadi to keep the shrewd, tactful Yaḥya as secretary of Harun, for when shortly later he decided to nominate heir his son Ja’far, Harun would have given in had Yaḥya not prevented him from doing so. Many commanders such as Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī, Muḥammad b. Farrūkh al-Kindī, Abu ‘Īsma, ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Māhūn and ‘Abdallah b. Mālik encouraged al-Hadi to go through

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1 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; Fakhrī, p.173).

2 Khayzurān had been a slave girl from the Yemen, freed and married by Mahdi in 159 A.H. On her origin see Tab., III, p.466; Murji, VI, p.239. Tanbih, pp. 344f.; Khaṭīb, vo., 14, pp.5, 430; N. Abbott, The two queens..., pp.22-26.

3 Al-Mukāfāt, pp. 52-53 citing Yusuf b. Ibrāhīm. (cont.)
with his plan. Some even seem to have sworn allegiance to Ja'far as heir. 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 Katib Ismā'īl b. Ṣabīḥ appointed a Katib in the central administration who kept him informed about the intentions of al-Hādī's group. 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 himself would persuade Hārūn to give in.  

(cont.)


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(cont.)


1Yaḥya, II, p.489  

2Tab., III, pp. 574-575.
If Yαβια succeeded in convincing al-Ḥadi his success can only have been temporary for according to Tabari pressure was again brought to bear on Ḥārūn who to avoid it left for a hunting trip and stayed at Qaqr Muqātil. But this manoeuvre was of little avail for he was summoned back to court and arrested together with Yαβια al-Barmakī.

At this juncture the situation becomes mysterious. According to al-‘Uyun wa’l Ḥadīq Harthama b. A’yan had already received the orders to kill the imprisoned Ḥārūn and Yαβια when al-Ḥadi suddenly died in obscure circumstances. Conflicting accounts depict his death either as natural or a murder by his mother or accidental poisoning through the fault of a slave girl. The second account is the most probable as it is transmitted by trustworthy narrators. Significant is Azdī’s 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 Ḥārūn than al-Ḥadi.

This statement seems to suggest that al-Khayzurān had a hand in al-Ḥadi’s

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1 Tab., III, p.515.
2 F.H.A., pp. 286f; see also E.I. (HARTHAMA b. A’yan).
3 Tab., III, p.578, citing al-Fāqīl b. Dakīn.
4 Tab., III, pp. 578-579; F.H.A., p.288; Fakhīrī, p.173. The mystery and suspicion still deepens when one considers that Ḥadi’s body was not taken for burial in the Qurayshite cemetery but was buried on the spot.
6 Azdī, fol. 224.
premature death. When al-Hādī returned from a trip to Ḫadīthah 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 Ḥārun, had reached its climax. According to Tabarī and the author of al-ʿUyun waʾl Ḥadāʾiq 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-ʿUyun describes her activities on the crucial day. It was she was prevailed upon Harthama b. Ayān to delay the execution of Ḥārun and Yahyā admitting that she had overheard al-Hādī giving him the orders. According to Yaʿqūbī and to Tabarī¹ she personally informed Yahyā of al-Hādī's death. Tabarī² 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 Yahyā 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 Bayʿa to Ḥārun al-Rashīd.

After al-Hādī's death the plan to elevate Jaʿfar 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

¹Yaʿqūbī, II, p.490; Tab., III, p.578.
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 Khazim b. Khuzayma al-Tamimi 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 Harun and therefore absolved everybody of the oath they had sworn in his favour. Al-Hadi was buried on the spot in the gardens of his castle at 'Isa Abadh in Rabii' I in 170/ September 786.

Thus Harun al-Rashid 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. His first measure as caliph was to revenge himself on those who had encouraged al-Hadi's plan, such as Abu 'Igma who had humiliated him once by making Ja'far precede him and addressing the latter as Wali'il 'Abd; Ibrahim al-Harrani and Sallam al-Abrash who were arrested and their property confiscated. Khayzuran suggested that all those who

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4 Tab., III, p.602.
had sided with al-Hādi 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."¹ 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-Ṣahṣah. However, Muḥammad b. Farrūkh was later arrested and brought to Baghdad where he was executed in 171/787-8.² Al-Hādi 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.³

¹Jah., p.176.
²Tab., III, p.606.
³E.I.² (Ḥarūn al-Rashīd).
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Чтобы лучше понять проблему, начнем с обзора существующих данных. Несмотря на то что многие исследователи уже освещали этот вопрос, наши результаты демонстрируют некоторые особенности, которые не были отмечены ранее.

В ходе эксперимента мы использовали методику, основанную на... и получили следующие результаты. Как видно из графиков, изменения в условиях эксперимента привели к значительным изменениям в... и... Как мы предполагали, это подтверждает нашу гипотезу и открывает новые перспективы для дальнейших исследований...