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Volume xxvii

The 'Abbasid Revolution

translated and annotated

by

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After years of developing in secret the Abbasid agents finally come out into the open against the Ummayyads in this section.

back to the 'Abbasid Shi'ah in Khurasan and order them to openly proclaim the revolution and put on the black color.¹⁴⁵

Abu Muslim Preaches the 'Abbasid Revolution in Khurasan

'Ali b. Muhammad reported the following from his shaykhs: Abu Muslim kept making visits to Khurasan, until finally the tribal feuds broke out there. Then when the local authority began to unravel, Sulayman b. Kathir wrote to Abu Salamah al-Khallal requesting him to write to Ibrahim and ask him to send a man of the people of his House. Abu Salamah thus wrote to Ibrahim, and he sent Abu Muslim.¹⁴⁶ In the year 129 (746-747), Ibrahim wrote to Abu Muslim asking him to come to him so that he might obtain a report from him. Abu Muslim left halfway through Jumada II (early March 747) with seventy of the 'Abbasid agents (*nuqaba'*).¹⁴⁷ When they had come as far as Dandanqan in Khurasan,¹⁴⁸ Kamil—or Abu Kamil—stopped him and asked where they were going. "On pilgrimage," they said. Then Abu Muslim took him aside and summoned him to their cause. He responded favorably and let them alone. Abu Muslim continued on to Abiward and stayed there some days, and then proceeded to Nasa,¹⁴⁹ where 'Asim b. Qays al-Sulami was the governor for Nasr b. Sayyar al-Laythi. As he drew near, he sent al-Fadl b. Sulayman al-Tusi with a message to Asid b. 'Abdallah al-Khuza'i¹⁵⁰ to inform him that he was coming.

[1950]

¹⁴⁵ See n. 72 above.

¹⁴⁶ See Sharon, *'Aliyat*, 127-38. The *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 271ff, is particularly rich in its treatment of Abu Muslim's relations with Sulayman b. Kathir. See also Tabari, II/3, 1960ff. [J.L.]

¹⁴⁷ See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 290ff; *FHA*, 176ff. The agents designated as *naqibs* were divided into two groups, a council of twelve which retained primary control, chosen exclusively from agents in Marw, the major revolutionary station in Khurasan; the individuals were part of a larger group of seventy that included operatives from various regional centers. For details see Sharon, *'Aliyat*, 105-17. (J.L.)

¹⁴⁸ Dandanqan was a town southwest of Marw on the road to Sarakhs. See LeStrange, *Lands*, 400.

¹⁴⁹ Abiward or Biward is on the edge of the Marw desert west of Dandanqan off the main road to Sarakhs. Nasa or Nisa is in a fertile valley west of Abiward. See LeStrange, *Lands*, 394. The 'Abbasids had *naqibs* in these towns. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218-19. The text gives a full listing of the 'Abbasid agents.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Tusi was a *naqib* from Abiward and Asid al-Khuza'i was the agent from Nasa. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218-19.

Al-Fadl went on and stopped at a village of Nasa where he met a man from the Shi'ah who knew him. He asked for Asid, but the man rebuffed him. Then al-Fadl said, "O 'Abdallah, what is wrong in my asking where is the man's house?" The man replied, "There has been evil in this village. Two men were brought before the governor and slandered. It was said that they were propagandists. They were taken, and al-Ahjam b. 'Abdallah al-Khuza'i, Ghaylan b. Fadalah, Ghalib b. Sa'id and al-Muhajir b. 'Uthman were taken too."¹⁵¹ At this, al-Fadl went back to Abu Muslim and informed him. He left the road and took another through the villages lower down, and sent Tarkhan al-Jammal to Asid saying, "Ask him to come to me with as many of the ('Abbasid) Shi'ah as he can, and beware of speaking to anyone you do not know." Tarkhan went to Asid and invited him, and he told him where Abu Muslim was staying. At this, Asid came to him, and Abu Muslim asked him what had happened. He replied, "Yes, it is true; al-Azhar b. Shu'ayb and 'Abd al-Malik b. Sa'd came with letters from the Imam for you. They left the letters with me and started back, and they were taken;"¹⁵² I do not know who betrayed them. The governor sent them to 'Asim b. Qays, and he had al-Muhajir b. 'Uthman and other leading men of the Shi'ah beaten. "Where are the letters?" Abu Muslim asked. "At my house," Asid said. "Bring them to me," said Abu Muslim, (so he brought him the letters and he read them).¹⁵³

[1951]

Then he went on to Qumis,¹⁵⁴ which was governed by Bayhas b. Budayl al-'Ijli, and Bayhas came to them and said, "Where are you going?" "On pilgrimage," they said. "Do you have a good horse you

¹⁵¹ Al-Ahjam and Ghaylan b. Fadalah were *naqibs*. Al-Muhajir was a lesser functionary, belonging to a group known as the Propagandists of the Propagandists (*du'at al-du'at*). They seem to have been substitutes for a larger group of seventy known as the *ducat*. The *ducat* were undoubtedly subordinate to the *naqibs*. Ghalib b. Sa'id (or Sa'd) was an 'Abbasid agent whose function cannot be determined. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218-19, 222, 291. The account would seem to indicate that the authorities were extremely anxious at this time. This would explain the circuitous routes followed by Abu Muslim and his associates. (J.L.)

¹⁵² Al-Azhar b. Shu'ayb was a native of Marw who traveled with Bukayr b. Mahan in the eastern provinces soliciting support and monies for the revolutionary movement. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 223-24. It would appear from this text that he then served as a carrier from the Imam to the revolutionary centers in Khurasan. [J.L.]

¹⁵³ These words are missing in the text and are supplied by the Cairo edition.

¹⁵⁴ That is to say the small province (or the capital of the province) adjacent to Khurasan. See LeStrange, *Lands*, 364ff.

would sell?" he asked. "As for selling, no," said Abu Muslim, "but take any of our animals you wish." "Show them to me," he said. They showed them, and he admired a light bay-horse. Abu Muslim then said, "It is yours." To this he replied, "No, I'll not accept it without a price." "You be the judge of its worth," Abu Muslim said. "Seven hundred [dirhams]," he said. "It is yours," said Abu Muslim. While Abu Muslim was in Qumis a letter came from the Imam, and another for Sulayman b. Kathir. The one to Abu Muslim said, "I have sent you a flag of victory. Return from wherever my letter finds you, and send me Qahtabah with whatever you have to deliver to me during the Pilgrimage Season." At this, Abu Muslim returned to Khurasan, and sent Qahtabah to the Imam. When they were in Nasa, the leader of an armed party confronted them in a village, and said, "Who are you?" "We intended to make the Pilgrimage," they said, "and we heard something about the road which frightened us." He brought them to 'Asim b. Qays al-Sulami who questioned them. They gave him the same answer, and he said, ("Be off." And he ordered)¹⁵⁵ al-Mufaddal b. Sharqi al-Sulami, who was in charge of security, to expel them from the area. Then Abu Muslim took this man aside and revealed their business to him. He responded favorably and said, "Go at your ease, and do not hurry." He remained with them until they left.

Abu Muslim came to Marw on the first day of Ramadan (May 16, 747), and handed the Imam's letter to Sulayman b. Kathir. The letter stated, "Proclaim your summons without delay; the time has come." They showed high esteem to Abu Muslim, and said, "He's a man of the People of the House [*ahl al-bayt*]."¹⁵⁶ They called on people to obey the Banu 'Abbas, and sent to their partisans whether near or far, commanding them to reveal what was happening, and calling on them for support. Abu Muslim settled in one of the vii-

[1952]

¹⁵⁵ These words are missing in the text and are supplied by the Cairo edition.

¹⁵⁶ *Ahl al-bayt* in pre-Islamic times meant the immediate family of a tribal leader. The term appears twice in the Qur'an, once in a context which allows one to suppose that the family of the Prophet is indicated (33, 33). The Shi'ah of 'Ali have usually interpreted this through a tradition, the *hadith al-kisa'*, which limits it to the family of 'Ali. The Shi'ah of the 'Abbasids used another, the *hadith al-thaqalayn*, whereby "people of the house" is extended to include the family of 'Abbas, of 'Ali, and of his two brothers 'Aqil and Ja'far, as well as their mawlas. In still another *hadith*, Salman al-Farisi, a mawla of the Prophet, is declared to be of the *ahl al-bayt*. See *EF²* s.v. *Ahl al-bayt*.

lages of the (Arab tribe of) Khuza'ah called Safidhanj.¹⁵⁷ At this time Shayban¹⁵⁸ and al-Kirmani were fighting Nasr b. Sayyar together, so Abu Muslim circulated his summons to people, and his affair became manifest. The people said, "A man has come from the Banu Hashim." They came to him from all directions. On the day of 'Id al-Fitr (ca. June 15, 747), he appeared at the village of Khalid b. Ibrahim.¹⁵⁹ Qasim b. Mujashi' al-Mara'i led the people in prayer. Then Abu Muslim moved and settled at the village of Alin, also called Allin,¹⁶⁰ belonging to the Khuza'ah. In one day, the people of sixty villages joined him, and he stayed there forty-two days. Abu Muslim's first victory¹⁶¹ was at the hands of Musa b. Ka'b al-Tamimi at Abiward while he was occupied with the killing of 'Asim b. Qays. Then victory came at Marwarrudh.¹⁶²

According to Abu al-Khattab: Abu Muslim returned to the territory of Marw from Qumis, having first sent Qahtabah b. Shabib (al-Ta'i) with the money and other things he had with him for the Imam Ibrahim b. Muhammad.¹⁶³ He arrived on Tuesday, the ninth of Sha'ban 129 (April 27, 747), and settled in a village called Fanin with Abu al-Hakam 'Isa b. A'yan the *naqib*.¹⁶⁴ This was the village of Abu Dawud the *naqib*. From there he sent Abu Dawud, accompanied by 'Amr b. A'yan to Tukharistan and the areas this side of [1953]

¹⁵⁷ Safidhanj, following the text. The reading is problematic. Note the variants in the apparatus. The Khuza'ah's origins were disputed, but they were frequently reckoned an offshoot of the Azd. See *EP²* s.v. Khuza'a.

¹⁵⁸ Not to be confused with Shayban b. 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Yashkuri who is mentioned above, this is Shayban b. Salamah al-Haruri. See Wellhausen, *Arab Kingdom*, 395, 490, 498, 529, 537.

¹⁵⁹ This is Abu Dawud Khalid b. Ibrahim al-Shaybani al-Bakri, one of the 'Abbasid *naqibs*; see *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 216. The village is later identified as Fanin. See n. 164 below.

¹⁶⁰ Yaqut, *Mu'jam*, IV, 375 lists Allin as a village in Marw. There is no entry for Alin or Balin. Note Tabari, II/3, 1969, which gives a reading of Alin for Abu Muslim's headquarters and 1965, which gives Balin. LeStrange, *Lands*, 399 refers to a Balin Gate in Marw.

¹⁶¹ Details of Abu Muslim's initial campaign are found in the *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 299ff.

¹⁶² Not to be confused with Marw, Marwarrudh was situated about 160 miles from the former. See LeStrange, *Lands*, 404.

¹⁶³ The revolutionaries transferred large sums of money and valuables to the Imam during their periodic visits with him.

¹⁶⁴ A report that Abu Muslim stayed at the house of 'Isa b. A'yan occurs in the entry on Fanin in Yaqut. He indicates that Fanin was one of the villages of Marw. See *Mu'jam*, III, 921.

Balkh, to proclaim publicly the call (to revolution) during the month of Ramadan 129 (May 16-June 14, 747). He also sent al-Nadr b. Subayh. al-Tamimi with Sharik b. Ghadi al-Tamimi¹⁶⁵ to Marwarrudh to proclaim the propaganda during Ramadan, and he sent Abu 'Asim 'Abd al-Rahman b. Sulaym¹⁶⁶ to Talaqan. He sent Abu al-Jahm b. 'Atiyyah to 'Ala' b. Hurayth¹⁶⁷ in Khwarizm to proclaim the call publicly on the twenty-fourth of Ramadan (June 8, 747). If their enemy should move against them before the appointed time, exposing them to injury and suffering, he permitted them to defend themselves and to bare their swords, unsheathing them in struggle against the enemies of God. Those whom the enemy distracted from rising at the appointed time would suffer no harm if they did it at a later time.

Then Abu Muslim moved from the house of Abu al-Hakam 'Isa b. A'yan and stayed with Sulayman b. Kathir al-Khuza'i in his village, called Safidhanj in the quarter (*rab'*) of Kharqan, on the second night of Ramadan (May 17, 747). On Wednesday night, the twenty-fifth of Ramadan (June 9, 747), he unfurled the banner, sent to him by the Imam and called "The Shadow," on a lance fourteen cubits high, and he fastened the flag, sent by the Imam and called "The Clouds," on a lance thirteen cubits high, reciting the verse, "Permission is given to those who fight because they have been wronged; surely God is able to assist them."¹⁶⁸ Then he and Sulayman b. Kathir and Sulayman's brothers and mawlas and those among the people of Safidhanj who responded put on black garments. These included Ghaylan b. 'Abdallah al-Khuza'i, who was Sulayman's brother-in-law through his sister Umm 'Amr bt. Kathir, and Humayd b. Razin and his brother 'Uthman b. Razin.¹⁶⁹ All the Shi'ah from the dis-

[1954]

¹⁶⁵ These two were listed as *naqibs*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 217-18.

¹⁶⁶ Perhaps the Abu 'Asim who is listed among the *du'at al-du'at* in the revolutionary organization. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 223. The *Akhbar*, 221 also lists an 'Abd al-Rahman b. Sulayman who was a *da'i*, hence a member of a more prestigious network of agents. The *du'at al-du'at* were most likely the substitutes for the *ducat* just as the *nuzara' al-nuqaba'* substituted for the *naqibs*. (J.L.)

¹⁶⁷ He is listed among the *naqibs*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 215.

¹⁶⁸ Qur. 22:39.

¹⁶⁹ Like his brother-in-law, Sulayman b. Kathir, Ghaylan al-Khuza'i is listed among the *naqibs*. The *Akhbar al-Dawlah* lists an 'Umayr b. Razin, the brother of Humayd b. Razin, the mawla of the Khuza'ah. This 'Umayr was one of the *du'at al-du'at*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218, 222.

trict of Kharqan lit fires that night, which was the prearranged signal, and they began to gather to Abu Muslim the next morning. The interpretation of the two names "The Shadow" and "The Clouds" was 'as the clouds cover the earth, so would the 'Abbasid preaching, and as the earth is never without a shadow, so it would never be without an 'Abbasid caliph to the end of time.

The propagandists (*du'at*) of Marw came to Abu Muslim with all those who had answered their call. The first to come were the early settlers¹⁷⁰ who were with Abu al-Waddah al-Hurmuzfarri 'Isa b. Shubayl, consisting of nine hundred men and four horsemen.¹⁷¹ Among the people of Hurmuzfarrah were Sulayman b. Hassan with his brother Yazdan b. Hassan, al-Haytham b. Yazid b. Kaysan, Buway' the mawla of Nasr b. Mu'awiyah, Abu al-Khalid al-Hasan, Jarda, and Muhammad b. 'Alwan. Then came the early settlers who were with Abu al-Qasim Muhriz b. Ibrahim al-Jubani, with thirteen hundred men on foot and sixteen horsemen. Also with them were the propagandists Abu al-'Abbas al-Marwazi, Khidham b. 'Ammar and Hamzah b. Rutaym.¹⁷² The early settlers (of the first group) began to shout "God is great!" and those with Muhriz b. Ibrahim would answer from their side, "God is Great!" They kept this up until they entered Abu Muslim's camp at Safidhanj. This was on Saturday (June 12, 747), two days after Abu Muslim's public proclamation. Abu Muslim gave orders that the fort of Safidhanj be repaired, fortified, and set in order. When the 'Id came in Safidhanj, Abu Muslim told Sulayman b. Kathir to lead him and the ('Abbasid) Shi'ah in prayer. He set up a minbar for him in the camp, and told him to begin the prayer before the *khutbah* address without the call to prayer or the *iqamah*.¹⁷³ The Umayyads used to begin with the *khutbah*

[1955]

¹⁷⁰ The text is *ahl al-Suqadim*; see Ibn al-Athir, V, 273: *ahl al-taqadum*. Wellhausen, *Arab Kingdom*, 522-23 reads Suqadim, as a place name, though no such place is known. Shaban, *Abbasid Revolution*, 158, reads *taqadum*, to mean "the old [Arab] settlers in Marw."

¹⁷¹ The early supporters of the 'Abbasids were not part of the active fighting force operating in Khurasan, hence their small number of horsemen. The Arab fighters had aligned with al-Kirmani or Nasr b. Sayyar. The later addition of the Arab tribal forces to the 'Abbasid camp enabled Abu Muslim to challenge the professional armies of the Umayyads. (J.L.)

¹⁷² The text is Zunaym; read Rutaym, as in the *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 222, where he is listed as one of the *ducat al-du'at*.

¹⁷³ The *iqamah* is the ritual proclamation that the prayer has begun.

and the call to prayer, and then they had the ritual prayer; the *iqamah* was added on Friday. On feastsdays and Fridays they used to deliver the *khutbah* seated in the minbars. But Abu Muslim told Sulayman b. Kathir to call "God is Great!" six consecutive times with the first prostration, then to recite (the Qur'an portions), and afterward to bow down on the seventh "God is Great!" In the second prostration, he was to call it out five consecutive times, then recite, and bow down on the sixth call. He was to begin the *khutbah* with "God is Great!" and close it with a recitation from the Qur'an. The Banu Umayyah used to employ four calls of "God is Great!" in the first prostration on a feast day, and three in the second.

[1956]

When Sulayman b. Kathir completed the prayer and the *khutbah*, Abu Muslim and the Shi'ah went off to a feast spread for them by Abu Muslim. They feasted rejoicing in anticipation of future success (*mustabshirin*).

While Abu Muslim was entrenching himself, he would write to Nasr b. Sayyar, addressing him as "the Amir Nasr." When he had grown powerful by means of the ('Abbasid) Shi'ah who gathered in his camp, he disclosed himself and wrote to Nasr, "As for what follows, truly God, blessed be His names and exalted be His mention, reproaches certain folk in the Qur'an saying, 'They swore the most binding oaths by God that if a warner came to them they would be more guided than any community, but when a warner came it only increased them in aversion, waxing arrogant in the land and plotting evil; but evil plots encompass only those who make them. Do they expect anything but the way of the ancients? You will find no changing in God's way, nor any evading of the way of God.'"¹⁷⁴

Nasr was much astonished at the letter, and that Abu Muslim had shown himself. He closed one eye (and pondered long)¹⁷⁵ and said, "This letter has one answer." When Abu Muslim was settled in his camp at Makhwan,¹⁷⁶ he ordered Muhriz b. Ibrahim¹⁷⁷ to dig a defensive trench at Jiranj and gather together his followers with those of the Shi'ah who were so inclined and cut off the communications of Nasr b. Sayyar with Marwarudh, Balkh and the districts of

¹⁷⁴ Qur. 35:42-43.

¹⁷⁵ This phrase is missing in text and is supplied by the Cairo edition.

¹⁷⁶ For Makhwan, see Yaqut, *Mu'jam*, IV, 380. Jiranj was a small town (*bulaydah*) in the vicinity of Marw. See Yaqut, II, 175.

¹⁷⁷ Muhriz b. Ibrahim was a *naqib*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 217.

Tukharistan. Muhriz b. Ibrahim did that, and about a thousand men gathered at his camp which was surrounded by a moat. Abu Muslim also ordered Abu Salih Kamil b. Muzaffar¹⁷⁸ to send a man to Muhriz b. Ibrahim's camp to review the troops there and enter them in a register with their names, their fathers' names and their villages.¹⁷⁹ He thus sent Abu Salih Humayd al-Azraq to do that. Humayd, who was a scribe, counted 804 able-bodied men in Muhriz's camp. Among the well-known officers there were Ziyad b. Sayyar al-Azdi in the quarter of Kharqan, from the village called Asbiwadiq; Khidham b. 'Ammar al-Kindi of the quarter of the early settlers,¹⁸⁰ from a village called al-Awayiq; Hanifah b. Qays of the early settlers' quarter, from the village called al-Shanj; 'Abdawayh al-Jardamadh b. 'Abd al-Karim, of the people of Harat, who used to bring sheep to Marw; Hamzah b. Rutaym¹⁸¹ al-Bahili of the Kharqan quarter, from the village called Miladhjird;¹⁸² Abu Hashim Khalifah b. Mihran of the quarter of the early settlers, from the village of Juban;¹⁸³ Abu Khadijah Jilan b. al-Sughdi, and Abu Nu'aym Musa b. Subayh.¹⁸⁴

[1957]

Muhriz b. Ibrahim remained entrenched in his camp until Abu Muslim entered the walls of Marw, vacated the camp at Makhuwan and camped at Marsarjas on the way to Naysabur. Muhriz b. Ibrahim then reinforced Abu Muslim with his troops.

One of the events that occurred while Abu Muslim was at Safidhanj was that Nasr b. Sayyar sent a mawla of his called Yazid with a large force of cavalry to fight Abu Muslim eighteen days after his public proclamation, and Abu Muslim sent Malik b. Haytham al-Khuza'i together with Mus'ab b. Qays¹⁸⁵ out against him. They met at the village called Alin, and Malik called on them to follow

¹⁷⁸ Abu Salih was one of the highest ranking operatives in the revolutionary apparatus. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 215.

¹⁷⁹ That is, the military roll was based on geographical rather than tribal affiliation, an 'Abbasid principle. See n. 217 below.

¹⁸⁰ The text is *rah' al-Suqadim*; it should be read *tab' al-taqadum*, following Ibn Athir. References to early settlers below are similarly based on this reading. Also, see n. 170 above.

¹⁸¹ The text is Zunaym; it should be read Rutaym. See n. 172 above.

¹⁸² The text is Hatladjur; it should be read Miladhjird, as in the Cairo edition.

¹⁸³ See Yaqut, *Mu'jam*, II, 139.

¹⁸⁴ Vocalization is conjectural here.

¹⁸⁵ For Malik b. Haytham, see the entry in Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 181-83. Mus'ab b. Qays was a *naqib*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218.

the Chosen One (*al-Rida*) from the family of God's messenger, God bless him and give him peace. They were too haughty for that, so Malik fought them with a battle line—he had about two hundred men—from daybreak until the time of the afternoon prayer.

[1958]

Salih b. Sulayman al-Dabbi,¹⁸⁶ Ibrahim b. Yazid and Ziyad b. 'Isa had joined Abu Muslim, so he sent them to Malik b. Haytham. They came to him at the time of the afternoon prayer, and he was strengthened by their presence. Then Yazid the mawla of Nasr b. Sayyar said to his followers, "If we let them alone this evening, reinforcements will come to them, so attack these people." And they did. Then Abu Nasr (Malik b. Haytham) dismounted to fight on foot, and incited his followers saying, "Truly, I trust that God will cut off a part of the unbelievers,¹⁸⁷ so strike them well and truly." Both parties kept on fighting. Thirty-four men of the Marwanid party were killed, and eight were taken prisoner. 'Abdallah al-Ta'i attacked Yazid, the mawla of Nasr and the leader of the enemy group; they captured him, and his followers fled. Abu Nasr sent 'Abdallah al-Ta'i and his prisoner with some men of the Shi'ah, along with some prisoners and the heads (of the slain), while he remained in his camp at Safidhanj. In the delegation were Abu Hammad al-Marwazi and Abu 'Anr al-A'jami. Then Abu Muslim ordered the heads to be displayed on the gate of the wall in his camp. He sent Yazid al-Aslami to Abu Ishaq Khalid b. 'Uthman and ordered him to treat wounds that Yazid the mawla of Nasr had received, and to treat him with great kindness and consideration. He wrote to Abu Nasr to come to him. When Nasr's mawla Yazid was healed of his wounds, Abu Muslim called him and said, "If you wish to stay with us and join our cause, then God will have guided you rightly. If you do not, then go back to your master in safety; but give us God's oath not to fight against us or to lie about us, and to say of us [only] what you have seen." Yazid chose to return to his master, so he sent him on his way. Then Abu Muslim said, "This man will avert from us those men of piety and morality who assert that we have departed from Islam."

[1959]

Yazid came to Nasr b. Sayyar, who told him, "No welcome to

¹⁸⁶ A substitute *naqib* who became one of the great field commanders of the early 'Abbasid armies. His family had a long and meritorious role in the affairs of state.

¹⁸⁷ Based on Qur. 3:127.

you; by God, I think the enemy only let you live in order to make you an argument against us." "And by God, it's just as you think," said Yazid. "What's more, they have made me swear not to lie about them, so I'll tell you that they pray the prayers at the proper time, with a call to prayer and *iqamah*; they recite the Scripture, they make frequent mention of God, and they call men to God's Messenger. I reckon their business will succeed, and were you not my master who freed me from slavery, I'd not have come back to you; I'd have stayed with them." This was the first battle between the ('Abbasid) Shi'ah and the partisans of the Banu Marwan.

In this year, Khazim b. Khuzaymah¹⁸⁸ prevailed over Marwarrudh, and Nasr b. Sayyar's governor there was killed. Khazim sent a letter with his son Khuzaymah to Abu Muslim announcing the victory.

The Account of Khazim b. Khuzaymah's Victory Over Marwarrudh

According to 'Ali b. Muhammad—Abu al-Hasan al-Jushami,¹⁸⁹ Zuhayr b. Hunayd and Hasan b. Rashid: When Khazim b. Khuzaymah was ready to set out for Marwarrudh, leaders of the Tamim wanted to prevent him, but he said, "I am a man of your tribe, with Marw as my object. Perhaps I shall be victorious, in which case it will be yours; if I am slain, then you will be done with me." So they let him alone, and he went out and camped in a village called Kanj Rustah.¹⁹⁰ Then Nadr b. Subayh,¹⁹¹ and Bassam b. Ibrahim came to him from Abu Muslim. When it was evening, Khazim attacked the people of Marwarrudh by night, and Bishr b. Ja'far al-Sa'di who was Nasr b. Sayyar's governor in Marwarrudh was slain. This was in the beginning of Dhu al-Qa'dah (mid-July 747), and Khazim sent news of the victory to Abu Muslim by Khuzaymah b. Khazim, 'Abdallah b. Sa'id and Shabib b. Waj.

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¹⁸⁸ Khazim b. Khuzaymah al-Tamimi was a deputy *naqib* from Marwarrudh, an important later general: see Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 180-81.

¹⁸⁹ The text is al-Husmi, emended to al-Jushami by the Cairo edition.

¹⁹⁰ The text gives "Kanj Rustah," however the textual apparatus lists the variant Kanj Rustaq, and Yaqt, *Mu'jam, II*, 308, lists a Kanjrstaq, which LeStrange describes as a district between Badghis and Marwarrudh.

¹⁹¹ Ibn Subayh was a *naqib*. See *Akhbar al-Dawlah*, 218.

This is the moment when the Abbasids finally declare who is actually going to be the Caliph.

you going, and what is your story?" Abu al-'Abbas told him their story, and said that they were heading for Kufah to make their appearance there and openly proclaim their authority. Dawud told him, "Abu al-'Abbas, you are coming to Kufah when the shaykh of the Umayyads, Marwan b. Muhammad, is at Harran to oversee Iraq along with the armies of Syria and the Jazirah. And Yazid b. 'Umar b. Hubayrah, the shaykh of the Arabs, is already in Iraq with the cavalry³⁸⁵ of the Arabs!" Abu al-'Abbas replied, "O uncle,³⁸⁶ Abu al-Ghana'im says, 'He who loves life will be humbled.'" And he [34] quoted the words of al-A'sha:

"Tis no kind of death if I die not powerless,
and a shame if what destroys a life is not its own demon.

Then Dawud turned to his son Musa and said, "By God, your cousin's right, so let us go back with him and either live graciously or die nobly." At this they all turned back together. 'Isa b. Musa used to say when he mentioned their exodus from Humayah to Kufah, "A party of fourteen men left their homes and families to stake our claim; mighty was their purpose, great were their spirits, and strong their hearts."

The Remaining Reports of Events of this Year

Completion of the account of the oath of allegiance that was given to Abu al-'Abbas 'Abdallah b. Muhammad b. 'Ali, and what came of his authority: As Abu Ja'far said, we have previously mentioned (information) concerning Abu al-'Abbas 'Abdallah b. Muhammad b. 'Ali on the authority of certain scholars. We have also mentioned something of his affair and that of Abu Salamah. A reason that the Caliphate of Abu al-'Abbas was confirmed is what I now mention. When word reached Abu Salamah that Marwan b. Muhammad had killed Ibrahim, who had been called the Imam, he thought it proper to declare for the descendants of 'Abbas. Thus he suppressed any declaration for others. When Abu al-'Abbas arrived in Kufah, Abu Salamah had settled him and the people of his house who came with

³⁸⁵ The text is *halbah*, "fast horses," Perhaps read *jillah*, "great men," as in *Akh-bar al-Dawlah*, 410-11.

³⁸⁶ The text is *fa-qala Abu al-Ghana'im*. Ibn Athir supplies *fa-qala ya 'amni*.

him in the house of al-Walid b. Sa'd among the Banu Awd. When Abu Salamah was asked about the Imam, he would say, "Don't be hasty." This situation continued while he was at his camp at Hammam A'yan, until Abu Humayd went out to go to the Kunasah³⁸⁷ and met a servant of Ibrahim called Sabiq al-Khwarizmi. He recognized him, for he used to come to them in Syria. Now he asked him, "What is the Imam Ibrahim doing?" Sabiq then informed him that Marwan had treacherously slain him and that Ibrahim had bequeathed his authority to his brother Abu al-'Abbas, appointing him as his successor. Moreover, Abu al-'Abbas had come to Kufah with most of the people of his family. Abu Humayd begged Sabiq to set off with him to the 'Abbasids. Sabiq told him, "The appointment between us is tomorrow morning in this place;" he was reluctant to show him where the 'Abbasids were without their permission. The following day, Abu Humayd went out to the place where he had promised to meet Sabiq. He found him, and went off with him to Abu al-'Abbas and the men of his family. When he entered where they were, Abu Humayd asked, "Which of them is the Caliph?" Then Dawud b. 'Ali said, "Here is your Imam and Caliph," pointing to Abu al-'Abbas. Abu Humayd then greeted him with the title of Caliph, and kissed his hands and his feet, saying, "We are at your command." He also condoled with him on the death of the Imam Ibrahim.

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Ibrahim b. Salamah had entered the army of Abu Salamah in disguise. He went to Abu al-Jahm and asked him for protection. Then he informed him that he was the messenger of Abu al-'Abbas and the people of his house. He also told him who was in the group and where they were. He added that Abu al-'Abbas had sent him to Abu Salamah to ask him for a hundred dinars with which to pay the cameldriver for the camels that brought them to Kufah, but Abu Salamah had not sent them the money. Abu Humayd also went back to Abu al-Jahm and informed them of their situation. Abu al-Jahm and Abu Humayd together with Ibrahim b. Salamah went on foot until they entered where Musa b. Ka'b was. Abu al-Jahm told him the story, and what Ibrahim b. Salamah had related to him. Musa then said, "Hasten to send him the dinars, and see that the

³⁸⁷ One of the major quarters of Kufah on the western side of the town. See Yaqut, *Mu'jam*, s.v. Kunasah, and LeStrange, *Lands*, 75.

man gets there." So Abu al-Jahm went off and handed the money over to Ibrahim b. Salamah. He put him on a mule and sent two men with him to see him into Kufah. Then Abu al-Jahm told Abu Salamah, "It is rumored in the army that Marwan b. Muhammad has slain the Imam. If he has been slain, then his brother Abu al-'Abbas is the successor and the Imam after him." Abu Salamah replied, [36] "Abu al-Jahm, stop Abu Humayd from entering Kufah, for these people spread falsehood and corruption."

On the second night, Ibrahim b. Salamah came to Abu al-Jahm and Musa b. Ka'b and delivered to them a letter from Abu al-'Abbas and the people of his family. He visited the officers and the Shi'ah that same night. They then gathered in the house of Musa b. Ka'b. Among them were 'Abd al-Hamid b. Rib'i, Salamah b. Muhammad, 'Abdallah al-Ta'i, Ishaq b. Ibrahim, Sharahil, 'Abdallah b. Bassam and other officers. They disagreed as to whether to go see Abu al-'Abbas and those of his family. Then they stole away the next morning into Kufah, led by Musa b. Ka'b, Abu al-Jahm and Abu Humayd al-Himyari—that is, Muhammad b. Ibrahim. They came at last to the house of al-Walid b. Sa'd, and went in. Musa b. Ka'b and Abu al-Jahm said, "Which of you is Abu al-'Abbas?" At this the people pointed him out. They then wished him peace and condoled with him on the death of the Imam Ibrahim. Afterward they went off to the camp leaving behind with him Abu Humayd, Abu Muqatil, Sulayman b. al-Aswad, Muhammad b. al-Husayn, Muhammad b. al-Harith, Nahar b. Husayn, Yusuf b. Muhammad and Abu Hurayrah Muhammad b. Farrukh.

Abu Salamah then sent to Abu al-Jahm to come to him. The latter had let him know that he had gone into Kufah. "Where were you?" Abu Salamah asked. "I was with my Imam," Abu al-Jahm replied. Abu al-Jahm went out and called Hajib b. Saddam and sent him to Kufah, saying, "Go in and salute Abu al-'Abbas as Caliph." He sent word to Abu Humayd and his friends, "If Abu Salamah comes to you, let him in only by himself. If he enters and offers allegiance, then let him go his way; otherwise, cut off his head." They had not waited long before Abu Salamah came, went in by himself, and greeted Abu al-'Abbas with the title of Caliph. Abu al-'Abbas ordered him to go back to his camp, and he went off that night. The people waited for morning wearing their weapons and in formation, waiting for — al-'Abbas to emerge. They gave him horses, and he [37]

and the members of his family who were with him rode until they entered the governor's palace of Kufah on Friday, the twelfth night of Rabi' II (November 28, 729). He then entered the mosque from the governor's palace and went up into the minbar, where he praised God and magnified Him, mentioning the mightiness of the Lord and the excellence of the Prophet. He then traced authority to the rule and the succession (to the Prophet) down to himself. He promised the people good times to come, and then was quiet.

Dawud b. 'Ali who was in the minbar three steps lower than Abu al-'Abbas then spoke. He praised God and glorified Him and spoke benedictions on the Prophet. Then he said, "Ye people, truly there has been no Caliph after God's Messenger save 'Ali b. Abi Talib and this Commander of the Faithful who now sits behind me." Abu al-'Abbas then came down and left. He made his camp at Hammam Aryan in the camp of Abu Salamah, staying with him in the same chamber, with a curtain between them. The chamberlain (*hajib*) of Abu al-'Abbas at this time was 'Abdallah b. Bassam. Abu al-'Abbas left his paternal uncle Dawud b. 'ali to govern Kufah and its province and sent his uncle 'Abdallah b. 'Ali to Abu 'Awn b. Yazid. He sent his nephew 'Isa b. Musa to al-Hasan b. Qahtabah who was at this time at Wasit besieging Ibn Hubayrah. He also sent Yahya b. Ja'far b. Tammam b. 'Abbas to Humayd b. Qahtabah at Mada'in, Abu al-Yaqdhan 'Uthman b. 'Urwah b. Muhammad b. 'Ammar b. Yasir to Bassam b. Ibrahim b. Bassam at Ahwaz, and Salamah b. 'Amr b. 'Uthman to Malik b. Tarif.³⁸⁸ Abu al-'Abbas stayed with the army for some months, and then moved and settled at (the new) Hashimite City (Madinah al-Hashimiyyah) in the fortress at Kufah.³⁸⁹ He had disguised his intention to Abu Salamah before he moved, until Abu Salamah learned of it.

In this year, Marwan b. Muhammad was put to flight at the Zab.³⁹⁰ [38]

³⁸⁸ The 'Abbasid family thus began the transition from a secretive revolutionary leadership into a ruling family. See Lassner, *'Abbasid Rule*, 7ff. (J.L.)

³⁸⁹ This appears to be a broken text. It is hard to believe that Abu al-'Abbas would have chosen to establish his government in the city itself. He had in similar circumstances, abandoned the Kufans and gone to Hammam A'yan. It is more likely that what was originally intended was a place in the general vicinity of Kufah. The text apparatus suggests such a reading. See Lassner, *'Abbasid Rule*, 152-53. (J.L.)

³⁹⁰ See Ibn Khayyat, H, 427ff; Azdi, 126ff; *FHA*, 201ff; Ya'qubi, *Ta'rikh*, II, 413ff; Mas'udi, *Muruj* VI, 85ff; *Tanbih*, 327.