

Kharijites In Khorasan (Based On History Of Sistan's Materials)

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Annotation: The years of the rule of the Arab caliphate in Central Asia were difficult because of the foreign movement that was active in these areas. In this article, the history of foreign scholars against the caliphate and its viceroys in Khorasan and Movarounnahr is analyzed by foreign scientists, scientific research conducted during the years of the Russian Empire, the Soviet era, and the years of independence.

Key words and phrases: Orientalists of the Russian Empire, English scholars, Khurasan, Movaroonnahr, Kharijites, Rafe' ibn Lays, Seistan, Hamza Khariji, Kharis ibn Surayj.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Kharijite sect of early Islam arose out of the conflict between 'Ali b. Abi Tāleb (r. 656-61) and Mo'āwiya b. Abi Sufyān (r. 661-80), the fourth and the fifth caliph respectively, when their opposing armies met at Šeffīn in 657. An intransigent element in 'Ali's forces withdrew their allegiance (Ar. *ḵaraja* to leave) when he agreed to arbitration with the leader of the Omayyad family. They formed the theological and political movement of the Kharijites (Ar. *ḵawārej* dissenters), contending that in such situations, judgment (*taḥkim*) belonged to God alone.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the article, using methods such as the principle of historicity, comparative analysis, systematization, classification, and problem-chronological methods, an attempt was made to reveal the information on the history of the movement of Kharijites in Khurasan contained in historical sources, which is considered the main goal of the research.

Driven out of their original stronghold among the Arab tribesmen of lower Iraq, the most uncompromising groups of the Kharijites withdrew into southwestern Persia under the leadership of Nāfe' b. Azraq (d. 685). His followers came to form the most fanatical of the sub-sects of the movement, the Azāreqa. From bases in Ahvāz, they threatened Basra but also pushed further eastwards into Fārs and Kerman and were active as far as Isfahan and Ray (Balāḍori, p. 118). The Zobayrid governor of Basra, 'Abdallāh b. Ḥāreṭ Ḥāsemi, sent an army against Nāfe', and he was killed at Dulāb in Ahvāz in 685 (Yāqut, II, p. 485). Nāfe''s successor as leader (in their parlance, "caliph") was Qaṭari b. Foḵā'a (d. ca. 697-98), who held out in Fārs and the mountainous regions of Kerman against Omayyad forces for a considerable period. He issued his own coins with Arabic and Pahlavi legends (Walker, pp. 112-13), using his self-assumed title of *Amir al-mo'menin* at places such as Ardašir-Ḵorra, Bišāpur, and Dārābgerd (see DĀRĀB). An army led by Mohallab b. Abi Šofra (d. 702 or 703) pursued Qaṭari into Ṭabarestān and killed him there between 696 and 698, while the remnants of his followers were



annihilated at Qumes (Tabari, II, pp. 1003-07, 1018-21, tr. XXII, pp. 149-54, 162-65; Sadighi, pp. 21-22; Spuler, pp. 167-69).

3. RESULTS

In the latter part of Omayyad rule, the epicenter of Kharijite activity was in Upper Mesopotamia, i.e. northern Iraq and the Jazira, though Kharijite partisans persisted in the mountainous regions of southern Persia. At the time of the Abbasid Revolution in 747 and 748, a policy of pure opportunism gave support to the insurgent Abbasids (see 'Abbasid caliphate) against the Omayyad forces retreating westwards. From Kerman, the Kharijites were particularly successful in establishing a presence in Sistān, more in the rural areas than in Zarang, the capital of the caliphal governors, although this does not necessarily imply a special appeal to local unrest or the existence of any other social factors. Kharijite groups formed at this time essentially an ethnically Arab, spiritually aristocratic movement. They are mentioned as active in Sistān among Arab settlers from the tribes of Bakr b. Wā'el during the latter part of the governorship of Naṣr b. Sayyār (d. 748) in Khorasan (Sadighi, pp. 39-40; Bosworth, 1968a, p. 75). After his leader Ḥaḥḥāk b. Qays Ṣaybāni had died in battle, the Kharijite chief Ṣaybān b. 'Abd-al-'Aziz Yaškori fled from Iraq and the Jazira to Sistān, and tried to raise support in Zarang before he in turn was killed (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, p. 133, tr. pp. 105-106; Bosworth, 1968a, p. 76).

The Kharijites had hated the Omayyads as their opponents and pursuers, but now came to hate the Abbasids hardly less. Kharijite groups continued to be important in the religious and political situation of Kerman, Sistān, and the eastern fringes of Khorasan such as Bādġis and Quhestān, remote as these were from the center of caliphal authority in Baghdad. Whereas earlier Kharijites had essentially constituted an Arab movement, the stage was now set for a great Kharijite outbreak in the east, which emerged in 795 and 796, extended over thirty years, and was headed by an Iranian: Ḥamza b. Āḍarak (d. 828) came from the region of Rokkaj in what is now southeastern Afghanistan, while his partisans apparently stemmed from the branch of the Kharijites known as the 'Ajāreda, and came to form their own subgroup of the Ḥamziya. Between 797 and 798, Ḥamza's adherents proclaimed him *Amir al-mo'menin*. He combated Kharijite rivals in Kerman and Sistān, and his attacks on the towns of Khorasan became so serious that the caliph Hārūn-al-Rašid (r. 786-809) in 808 resolved to march against him in person. But Hārūn died in Khorasan in the following year, and the disorder in Iraq and the civil warfare amongst his heirs ensured that Ḥamza was long left undisturbed. According to *Tāriḳ-e Sistān* (pp. 174-76, tr. pp. 138-40), whose attitude is, however, distinctly favorable to Ḥamza and his cause, one of Ma'mun's governors, Layt b. Faḏl, reached something like a *modus vivendi* with Ḥamza and his partisans in Sistān. Only in 828 did Ḥamza at last die (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, pp. 179-80, tr. p. 143; Sadighi, pp. 54-57; Spuler, pp. 169-70; Bosworth, 1968a, pp. 91-104).

This was by no means the end of Kharijite groups on these eastern fringes of the Islamic lands. In Sistān, Kharijites continued to elect war leaders and to cause trouble. Between 852 and 854, they rose under their leader 'Ammār b. Yāser, and it was not until 865 that the Saffarid Ya'qub b. Layt (r. 861-79) was able to kill him (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, p. 207, tr. pp. 164-65; Bosworth, 1968, pp. 115-16; idem, 1994, pp. 78-79). Other Kharijite groups remained strong in the regions of Herat and Bādġis. In 873, Ya'qub solved the problem by incorporating them into his own army as a special contingent (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, pp. 217-18, tr. pp. 172-73; Bosworth, 1968b, pp. 543-44). Its name *Jayš al-šorāt* (lit. Army of those who sell) reflected that the Kharijites saw

themselves as those who, echoing the Qur'ān, sell (Ar. *šarā*) their souls to God in return for the promise of Paradise.

4. CONCLUSION

After this time, militant Kharijite groups seem to have declined, though pockets of peaceful adherents appear to have survived. The geographer Moqaddasi (fl. 960-90) mentioned around 985 that the Karuk in Bādġis were still predominantly made up of Kharijites (p. 323). His unknown contemporary (*Hudūd*, p. 91) described the inhabitants of Gardiz in eastern Afghanistan as Kharijites, and its line of local amirs was possibly also Kharijite (Bosworth, 1968a, p. 104). Yāqut (1179-1229) relied on Eṣṭakri (d. after 952) when he stated that the Kharijites of Sistān were still a distinct group and distinguishable from the mass of orthodox Muslims by their piety, their special dress (unfortunately not specified), and their commercial probity (III, p. 190). These Kharijites were clearly no longer violently activist but instead quietist (cf. Ar. *qā'ed*, pl. *qa'ada* seated, which can take on the meaning “to abstain from direct confrontation with opponents”), and after the 10th century they disappear from further mention in the sources (Bosworth, 1994, pp. 79-80).

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