

= Khurshid of Tabaristan =

Khurshid (Middle Persian : , Kh?rsh?d ; Tabari / Persian : ?????? ?????? , Sp?hbed Kh?rsh?d ' General Khorshid ' ; 734 ? 761) , erroneously designated Khurshid II by earlier scholars , was the last Dabuyid isphbadh of Tabaristan . He succeeded to the throne at an early age , and was supervised by his uncle as regent until he reached the age of fourteen . Khurshid tried to assert his independence from his vassalage to the Caliphate , supported various rebellions and maintained diplomatic contacts with Tang China . Finally , the Abbasids conquered his country in 759 ? 760 , and captured most members of his family . Khurshid fled to Daylam , where he ended his life .

= = Biography = =

Khurshid was born in 734 / 735 , the son of Dadhburzmihr or Dadmihr (died 740) and grandson of Farrukhan the Great (died ca . 728) , the first ruler (isphbadh) of the Dabuyid dynasty from whose reign coins are known . According to the traditional account , the Dabuyids had established themselves as the quasi @-@ independent rulers of Tabaristan in the 640s , during the tumults of the Muslim conquest of Persia and the collapse of the Sassanid Empire . They owed only the payment tribute and nominal vassalage to the Arab Caliphate , and managed , despite repeated Muslim attempts at invasion , to maintain their autonomy by exploiting the inaccessible terrain of their country . A more recent interpretation of the sources by P. Pourshariati , however , supports that Farrukhan was the one who actually established the family 's rule over Tabaristan , sometime in the 670s . In earlier works on the dynasty , Khurshid is named Khurshid II , due to erroneous interpretation of numismatic evidence , which led earlier scholars to interpolate a first Khurshid before Farrukhan , whose rule was thought to have begun ca . 710 .

Khurshid succeeded his father at the age of only six , and for eight years the regency was exercised by his uncle Farrukhan @-@ i Kuchak (" Farrukhan the Little ") . When Khurshid came of age , Farrukhan 's own sons refused to recognize his claim and tried to usurp the throne . Their plot was allegedly betrayed to Khurshid by a slave girl , Varmja Haraviya . With the help of the sons of his cousin Jushnas , Khurshid managed to defeat and imprison Farrukhan 's sons . He later took Varmja Haraviya as his wife , while the sons of Jushnas were given high positions in the state . The historian Ibn Isfandiyar gives a vivid description of the prosperity of Tabaristan at this time , which was a major centre for textile production (including silk) , and which traded with the Turks of Central Asia , probably via the Caspian Sea . Khurshid is said to have contributed to this prosperity by building numerous bazaars and caravanserais . Khurshid also tried to consolidate and even extend his royal power , and used the turmoil within the Umayyad Caliphate during the Third Islamic Civil War to this effect , rebelling against Caliph Marwan II (r . 744 ? 750) , and even sending an embassy to the Tang court in 746 , which recognized him (" king Hu @-@ lu @-@ ban ") as a vassal prince .

During the Abbasid Revolution , however , he was forced to submit to the Abbasid armies under Abu Muslim . As one of Abu Muslim 's vassals , he supported the latter in his quarrel with the Caliph al @-@ Mansur (r . 754 ? 775) . After the Caliph had Abu Muslim murdered in 755 , Khurshid supported the anti @-@ Abbasid rebellion of Sunbadh , who entrusted part of Abu Muslim 's treasure to Khurshid 's keeping . When Sunbadh 's revolt was defeated , Sunbadh fled to Tabaristan , but was killed there by one of Khurshid 's cousins , ostensibly because he had failed to show the man proper respect . It is possible , however , that the murder was instigated by Khurshid , in the hope of acquiring the remainder of Abu Muslim 's treasure . Al @-@ Mansur sent his son and heir , al @-@ Mahdi (r . 775 ? 785) , to recover the treasure of Abu Muslim . Khurshid denied having it , and al @-@ Mansur tried to unseat Khurshid by crowning one of his cousins as isphbadh . This did not have the desired effect of challenging the loyalty of Khurshid 's subjects , but Khurshid was eventually forced to accommodate the Abbasids by accepting an increase in the annual tribute , which brought it to the level paid to the Sassanids .

Soon after , nevertheless , Khurshid took advantage of the rebellion of Abd al @-@ Jabar ibn Abd al @-@ Rahman , the governor of Khurasan , to once again throw off allegiance to the Caliphate . Al

@-@ Mansur sent an army into Tabaristan , with the intention of completely subduing the country and making it a province . Khurshid fled to the fortress of al @-@ Tak in the mountains , where he was besieged in 759 ? 760 . Although Khurshid himself escaped to nearby Daylam , the fortress eventually fell , and with it his family fell into the hands of the Abbasids and brought to Baghdad . From Daylam , Khurshid tried to regain his kingdom . He raised an army from the mountain dwellers of the region , and invaded Tabaristan in 760 . Repulsed , he returned to Daylam . After learning of his family 's capture , he is said to have exclaimed " after this there is no inclination to life and joy , and death is the very solace and respite itself " , and took poison , probably in 761 .

Tabaristan became a regular province of the Caliphate , ruled from Amul by an Arab governor , although the local dynasties of the Bavandids , Karinids and Zarmihrids , formerly subject to the Dabuyids , continued to control the mountainous interior as tributary vassals of the Abbasid government . Coins were minted in Tabaristan in Khurshid 's name until 764 , whereafter the name of the Abbasid governor was substituted . As a result some earlier works also mention 767 as the date of Khurshid 's death .

= = Family = =

After their capture , Khurshid 's sons , the crown prince Dadmihr , Hormozd and Vandad @-@ Hormozd , received Arabic names , but otherwise their fate is unknown . According to Chinese sources , on the other hand , one of them was on embassy in the Tang court at the time Tabaristan was conquered . Khurshid 's daughters were distributed as concubines to members of the Abbasid dynasty . The names and genealogy of these princesses are confused , but one was taken by al @-@ Mansur himself and another by his brother , Abbas ibn Muhammad . Al @-@ Bakhtariyya , a daughter of Farrukhan @-@ i Kuchak , became the concubine of al @-@ Mahdi , and it is reported that another of al @-@ Mahdi 's concubines , Shakla , was a daughter of Khurshid . In 817 , during the Fourth Islamic Civil War , the populace of Baghdad turned to their sons to make them caliphs in opposition to al @-@ Ma 'mun (r . 813 ? 833) . Al @-@ Bakhtariyya 's son al @-@ Mansur ibn al @-@ Mahdi refused , but his half @-@ brother Ibrahim ibn al @-@ Mahdi accepted and ruled as anti @-@ caliph until 819 .