

= Al @-@ Harith ibn Surayj =

Abu Hatim al @-@ Harith ibn Surayj ibn Yazid ibn Sawa ibn Ward ibn Murra ibn Sufyan ibn Mujashi ( Arabic : ??? ????? ????? ?? ) was an Arab leader of a large @-@ scale social rebellion against the Umayyad Caliphate in Khurasan and Transoxiana . Harith 's rebellion began in 734 and represented the grievances of both the local Arab settlers as well as the native Iranian converts ( mawali ) , who were not recognized as equal to the Arab Muslims , against the Umayyad regime . Harith based his revolt on religious grounds and won over a large part of both the Arab settlers and the native population , but failed twice to capture the provincial capital of Marw . The rebellion was finally suppressed by Asad ibn Abdallah al @-@ Qasri in 736 . Along with a few supporters , Harith managed to escape capture and allied himself with the heathen Turgesh . Harith accompanied the Turgesh khagan Suluk in his invasion deep into Arab territory , which was decisively beaten back in the Battle of Kharistan in 737 . With Turgesh power collapsing thereafter , Harith remained in Transoxiana supported by the native princes . Asad 's successor , Nasr ibn Sayyar , campaigned against Harith and his native supporters , but eventually , hoping to use him to bolster his position in the Arab intertribal rivalries , Nasr secured for Harith a pardon from the Caliph . Harith returned to Marw in 745 . Soon however he raised a sizeable armed force and challenged Nasr 's authority , until he was killed in a clash with his ally Juday ' al @-@ Kirmani in 746 . His revolt weakened Arab power in Central Asia and facilitated the beginning of the Abbasid Revolution that would overthrow the Umayyads .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and start of the rebellion = = =

Harith was from the Tamim tribe belonging to the north Arab ( Mudari ) tribal supergroup , and hailed from Basra , where his father , Surayj , lived . He is first mentioned in 729 , when he distinguished himself for his bravery and self @-@ sacrifice against the Turgesh , saving the Arab army from annihilation at Baykand near Bukhara . Harith is next mentioned in 733 , when he led a protest in Lower Tokharistan against the commandeering of supplies from the province , already plagued by drought and famine , to feed the capital of Khurasan at Marw , by the governor Junayd ibn Abd al @-@ Rahman al @-@ Murri . Junayd had Harith flogged , but after Junayd died in early 734 , the discontent erupted into an open rebellion , with Harith at its head .

The motives and nature of Harith 's rebellion are debated . His public demands were phrased in religious terms , demanding the end of injustice through the " application of the Book and the sunna " by the government . Harith himself is said to have been a member of the obscure pietistic group known as Murji 'a , and to have led an ascetic life . In the words of the Arabist Meir J. Kister , he apparently had " a feeling of mission " and aimed to establish a " just government resembling that of the Prophet and the first Caliphs " . His movement shared many ideological and symbolic elements with contemporary Shi 'ite and Kharijite agitation directed against the Umayyad regime , including the use of black flags hearkening back to the banner of the Prophet and even the demand for theocratic rule by a member of the Prophet 's family . Harith 's movement was marked by an unusual idealism , however , and it is recorded that his adherents tried to persuade their opponents to join them through moral and religious invocations even during battles .

Harith advocated various reforms , the most prominent being the full legal equality of the native non @-@ Arab converts ( mawali ) with the Arab Muslims , echoing a long @-@ standing demand of the former , in conformity with the precepts of Islam . This had been attempted twice before , by the Caliph Umar II ( r . 717 ? 720 ) and by the governors Asad ibn Abdallah al @-@ Qasri and Ashras ibn Abdallah al @-@ Sulami , but both times the resulting rise in conversions and concomitant drop in revenue ( as the numerous mawali would not have to pay the poll tax ) put an end to this , leading to a first rebellion in 728 under Abu al @-@ Sayda ' Salih ibn Tarif . Many of the groups and individuals associated with this first uprising would also participate in Harith 's movement . Harith

was seen as a champion of the rights of the ʿajam ( non @-@ Arabs , especially Iranians ) , many of whom flocked to his banner , but he also had a large following from the disaffected among the Arabs themselves , especially his fellow Tamim and the Azd . Disaffection was widespread among the Khurasani Arabs due to the heavy casualties suffered against the Turgesh at the Battle of the Defile in 731 , as well as the dissemination of anti @-@ Umayyad propaganda by proto @-@ Shi 'ite groups . This was exacerbated by the resentment felt at the introduction of 20 @,@ 000 Iraqi troops into the province in the aftermath of the Defile , and the parallel order of Caliph Hisham ibn Abd al @-@ Malik ( r . 723 ? 743 ) to disperse the older Arab settlers from Marw to other settlements so as to improve their defence against the Turgesh .

Thus it was that when the news of Junayd 's death reached the small town of Andkhuy in Guzgan , one of the remotest Arab outposts , the local Arab garrison followed Harith in rebellion . Junayd 's successor , Asim ibn Abdallah al @-@ Hilali , who had just arrived at Marw , tried to placate the rebels and sent emissaries to them , but Harith simply imprisoned them . As the revolt spread through the surrounding countryside , Harith , with a force of 4 @,@ 000 men , marched on Balkh , the chief city of Tokharistan , held by Nasr ibn Sayyar with 10 @,@ 000 troops . Although Nasr did not support Harith 's movement , such was the level of disaffection among the Khurasanis that he and his men offered little opposition . Balkh was captured by Harith 's men with ease , while Nasr and his troops withdrew from the scene and gave their support to neither Harith nor Asim . Soon after that , the Arab garrison at Marw al @-@ Rudh also joined with Harith 's forces . The autonomous native Hephthalite princes of Guzgan , Faryab and Talqan also seized the opportunity to join the revolt with their forces , hoping to re @-@ establish their independence and perhaps reduce the Arab power in Khurasan to a dependent principality around Marw .

Harith now turned his sights on Marw and set out for the capital , where also he had sympathizers . However , Asim managed to cement the loyalty of the wavering Khurasanis by threatening to abandon the city for Naysabur on the western fringes of Khurasan . There he would rely on the Qaysi tribesmen whose loyalty to the Umayyad regime was known , and ask for reinforcements from Syria . Coupled with the presence of the numerous natives in Harith 's army , which lent it the appearance of a foreign army , the local Arab elites chose to rally behind Asim . As it neared Marw , Harith 's army had swelled to some 60 @,@ 000 men as the mawali flocked to his banner , according to the report of al @-@ Tabari . Asim 's force was considerably smaller , and less eager : he had to pay them extra money in order to induce them to fight . Nevertheless , he marched out of Marw and took up positions behind a canal at Zarg , destroying its bridges . As Harith 's army approached and repaired the bridges , more than 2 @,@ 000 Arabs from his ranks deserted to Asim , evidently mistrusting the intentions of the native troops of Harith 's army . In the subsequent battle , Asim gained a major victory , as many of Harith 's troops drowned in the canal . As a result of this failure , most of the mawali and native princes abandoned Harith , whose army was reduced to a loyal core of some 3 @,@ 000 men . This forced Harith to accept a peace offer from Asim ? who likewise could not count on the continued support of the Khurasani Arabs now that the danger from the natives had passed ? and retired to Andkhuy . However , in the next year Harith renewed his revolt and marched again on Marw . Asim could not persuade the Khurasanis to fight for him , and was left with only some 1 @,@ 000 Syrians and Jazirans from his personal guard . Harith 's forces were not much larger either , being reduced to the garrison of Marw al @-@ Rudh . In the ensuing battle at the village of al @-@ Dandanqan near Marw , Asim again emerged victorious , forcing Harith to flee to Marw al @-@ Rudh .

Despite his victories , Asim 's position was still perilous . He was essentially reduced to Marw and the western , Qaysi regions of Khurasan around Naysabur . In addition , as he explained in a letter to the Caliph , as a Syrian , he faced difficulty in persuading the Khurasanis and even the Iraqi troops to fight under him against one of their own . Asim further requested that Khurasan be placed under the governor of Iraq , Khalid ibn Abdallah al @-@ Qasri , and that Syrian troops be dispatched into the province . In response , Khalid 's brother Asad ibn Abdallah al @-@ Qasri , who had already served before as governor of Khurasan , was sent to replace him . News of this , combined probably with pressure from the Khurasanis of Marw , led Asim to again conclude a truce with Harith . According to some accounts , he even agreed to join Harith in demanding from the

Caliph the " application of the Book and the sunna " , and revolt should the Caliph refuse . Shaban rejects this story altogether , but Blankinship regards it as reliable , although he too considers it a mere tactical ploy to gain time by Asim .

= = = End of the rebellion , the Turgesh intervention and exile = = =

Asad arrived in Khurasan with 20 @, @ 000 Syrian troops , and immediately took the offensive against Harith . Asad 's campaign was costly , but after his first successes the Khurasani Arabs began to flock to him . Asad 's success was aided by his long @-@ standing personal relations with the local Arab tribal leaders , as well as by the continuing tribal rivalries : as a Yamani opposed to the Mudari Harith , he could count on the support of his fellow tribesmen ? thus most of the Rabi 'ah , the traditional enemies of Harith 's Tamim tribe , son defected to him . Asad divided his forces , sending the Kufan and Syrian troops under Abd al @-@ Rahman ibn Na 'yum towards Marw Rudh , where Harith 's main army was located , while he himself with the Basrans and remaining Khurasanis marched on the fortresses of Amul and Zamm . The rebel forces at Amul surrendered and were pardoned , and the garrison of Balkh followed soon after . Harith himself abandoned Marw Rudh and retreated across the Oxus before Abd al @-@ Rahman , finding refuge with the princes of Tokharistan . With their aid , he laid siege to the major crossing point over the Oxus at Tirmidh . In the face of Harith 's forces , Asad 's troops dared not cross the Oxus but retreated to Balkh . However , the Tirmidh garrison managed to defeat Harith , who was weakened after a quarrel with the king of Khuttal , and who now retired eastwards to the mountains of Badakhshan . Asad followed up this success by persuading the garrison of Zamm to surrender on promises of amnesty and double pay , and by an unsuccessful expedition to recover Samarqand , which had been lost in the aftermath of the Defile .

In the next year , 736 , Asad 's forces cleared the mountains of Upper Tokharistan from the remnants of Harith 's supporters . The fortress of Tabushkhan , where many of Harith 's followers and relatives had found refuge , was besieged by Juday ' al @-@ Kirmani . After they surrendered , most of the men were executed , while the rest were sold into slavery . Harith himself on the other hand continued to escape capture . In 737 , Asad led his troops again north of the Oxus in a retaliatory campaign against Khuttal , whose ruler had allied himself with both Harith and the Turgesh . While the Arab troops were dispersed ravaging the countryside , the Turgesh khagan Suluk , responding to the pleas for help by the Khuttalan king , launched an attack that precipitated a headlong flight back by Asad 's army across the Oxus . The Turgesh followed after them and attacked and captured the Arab baggage train on 1 October , before both sides settled for winter quarters . Harith now emerged from hiding and joined the khagan .

Harith now counselled the khagan to take advantage of the dispersal of the Arab army to its winter quarters , and resume his advance . Following Harith 's advice , in early December the khagan led the Turgesh army , 30 @, @ 000 strong and comprising contingents from virtually every native ruler of Transoxiana and Upper Tokharistan , south , bypassing Balkh , into Guzgan , hoping to raise the Hephthalite princes of Lower Tokharistan in revolt as well . In this he failed , as the king of Guzgan joined Asad , who was approaching with what forces he could muster . Asad 's advance caught the khagan and Harith off guard : Asad came upon them near Kharistan when they were accompanied by only 4 @, @ 000 men , the rest having scattered to plunder and forage . In the ensuing Battle of Kharistan , Asad routed the Turgesh . Harith , who fought with distinction , and the khagan barely escaped themselves and fled north over the Oxus . Asad 's victory at Kharistan saved Arab rule in Central Asia . The Turgesh detachments south of the Oxus were largely destroyed piecemeal by Juday ' al @-@ Kirmani , ending the threat to Khurasan , and the loyalty of the native rulers of Tokharistan was cemented . The khagan ? s prestige took a serious hit , which encouraged his domestic rivals , who were backed secretly by the Chinese . In early 738 , the tarkhan Kursul assassinated Suluk , whereupon the Turgesh realm collapsed in civil war . Asad too died soon after , and was succeeded by Nasr ibn Sayyar in July 738 .

Nothing is known of Harith 's activities during the next two years , but he evidently remained in northern Transoxiana , based at al @-@ Shash ( Tashkent ) and in close contact with the Turgesh .

In 740 or 741 , after having consolidated his authority in Khurasan and carried out tax reforms that eased the social unrest , Nasr ibn Sayyar advanced into the middle Jaxartes valley , making for Shash . His campaign was part of Nasr 's efforts to re-establish Arab control over Transoxiana , but , according to H.A.R. Gibb and Kister , the main objective was the expulsion of Harith from Shash , who might still unite the Turgesh and the native princes against the Arabs . In the event , Nasr was prevented from crossing the Jaxartes by an army composed of Turgesh , troops from Shash and Harith 's followers , and was forced to withdraw after a negotiated settlement , which among other terms stipulated the removal of Harith and his adherents to the remote town of Farab .

= = = Return to Khurasan , second rebellion and death = = =

Nasr 's campaigns and reforms consolidated Muslim rule over Khurasan and much of Transoxiana , but his success was fragile : the native princes resented their loss of autonomy and the increasing assimilation of their people by their Arab conquerors and sent embassies to the Chinese court for aid , while the rivalry between the Mudari and Yamani tribal groups , evident across the Muslim world , still divided the Arabs themselves . On the accession of the pro-Yemenite caliph Yazid III in 744 , the Khurasani Yemenites supported Juday ' al-Kirmani 's candidature as governor , and when this did not come about , they rebelled . Consequently , Nasr felt it necessary to bring Harith and his adherents back , to both strengthen his own position ? Harith and his followers had a long history of enmity towards al-Kirmani ? and remove a potential source for another foreign invasion . Nasr secured a full pardon for Harith and his supporters from Yazid . Their confiscated property was returned , and the Caliph even promised to rule " according to the Book and the sunna " .

When Harith arrived at Marw in early July 745 , however , the situation had changed : Yazid was dead , a full-blown civil war had erupted in Syria , and Nasr ibn Sayyar , although still occupying the position of governor , lacked authority . Although he recognized Marwan II ( r . 744 ? 750 ) , most of his own followers did not accept Marwan as Caliph . Harith was quick to distance himself from Nasr : he refused the offer of a district governorship , and distributed the gifts he received among his supporters . Harith vocally denounced Marwan II , and was soon joined by 3000 of his fellow Tamimis , while his secretary , Jahm ibn Safwan , drummed up further support . Within a short time , he had become a graver threat to Nasr than al-Kirmani . After attempts to negotiate an agreement proved fruitless , Nasr attacked Harith 's forces in March 746 , and scored a first victory over them , in which Jahm ibn Safwan fell . At this point , al-Kirmani joined forces with Harith , and together they forced Nasr to abandon Marw and withdraw to Naysabur . The two allies entered the capital of Khurasan , but within days fell out and began fighting each other . In these clashes , Harith was killed , leaving al-Kirmani the master of the city . The conflict between Nasr and al-Kirmani continued , but was soon overtaken by events : exploiting the conditions of civil war , the Abbasids under Abu Muslim launched their own anti-Umayyad revolt in Khurasan . Nasr ibn Sayyar tried to conclude an alliance with al-Kirmani , but failed when the latter was murdered by one of Harith 's sons in revenge . Abu Muslim managed to exploit the situation to his advantage , and in early 748 , his men entered Marw , the first step in a war that would lead to the fall of the Umayyad dynasty and its replacement with the Abbasids two years later .