

al-Ḥārith b. Suraydj (or ‘Umayr) b. Yazīd b. Sawā (or Sawwār) b. Ward b. Murra b. Sufyān b. Mudjāshī[‘], Abū Ḥātim, leader of a rebellious movement in Khurāsān against the Umayyad administration. His father, Suraydj, had his abode in the quarter of the Banū Mudjāshī[‘] in Baṣra and received a yearly ‘aṭā’ of 700 *dirham*.

Ḥārith is mentioned as one of the courageous warriors in the battle against the forces of the Khākān at Paykand in 111/729. He was flogged on the order of the governor of Khurāsān, al-Djunayd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Murrī, having opposed the latter's injustice. The verse referring to this event says that “he refused to be a *djanība* (i.e., a horse driven alongside) of the Murra when they went astray and their *imām* committed iniquities”. He rebelled in 116/734. Aided by the native forces of Djūzdjān, Fāryāb and Ṭalkān, Ḥārith captured Balkh and marched at the head of a force, which grew to the figure of 60,000, against Marw, defended by the new governor, ‘Āṣim b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Hilālī. The defeat of Ḥārith at Marw reduced the number of his followers to 3000. The news that he was being dismissed by the Caliph, Hishām, and replaced by Asad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḳasrī drove ‘Āṣim to negotiate with Ḥārith. The basis of their agreement was to be their common call to Hishām to put a stop to iniquity; if he refused, Ḥārith and ‘Āṣim would revolt against his rule.

After his arrival the new governor, Asad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḳasrī, succeeded by vigorous action in recapturing Balkh and compelled Ḥārith to cross the Oxus. Ḥārith, aided by the forces of the local leaders, laid siege to Tirmidh, but failed to conquer the city and was compelled to retreat to the fortress of Tabūshkān in Ṭukhāristān. A force sent by Asad under the command of Djuday[‘] al-Kirmānī besieged the fortress; the adherents of Ḥārith insisted on leaving and surrendered to the besieging force. Some of them were decapitated; the women were sold as slaves (118/736).

Ḥārith with his force joined the Khākān of the Türgesh. He fought valiantly on the Khākān's side in the encounter of Kharistān and defended his retreat when his army was defeated (119/737). Ḥārith assisted the Khākān in the preparations for a new expedition and received from the Khākān 5000 horses. The Khākān was, however, murdered and the power of the Türgesh collapsed. Asad died in 120/738.

The new governor, Naṣr b. Sayyār, marched in 122/740 with an army against Shāsh, which served as a base for the forces of Ḥārith. There was an encounter between the troops of Naṣr and Ḥārith but the battle between the forces of Shāsh and the army of Naṣr was prevented by an agreement between them, by which the ruler of Shāsh would deport Ḥārith to Fārāb. The assumption of H. A. R. Gibb that the object of the expedition against Shāsh was the expulsion of Ḥārith is plausible. Naṣr apprehended that the dangerous rebel might incite the Turkish rulers to lead a new expedition against him. These fears would seem to be reasonable in view of the instability of the central government after the death of Hishām, the tensions between the Muḍarīs and the Yemenīs in Khurāsān, as well as the dissatisfaction of the native rulers with the policy of Naṣr in Transoxania. This explains why Naṣr pleaded with the Caliph, Yazīd b. al-Walīd, to pardon Ḥārith. The letter of safe-conduct granted to Ḥārith by the Caliph promised to return the confiscated property of the adherents of Ḥārith and to act according to the ordinances of "The Book and the Sunna".

When Ḥārith came back to Marw in 127/745 he reiterated the demand to act in accordance with the ordinances of "The Book and the Sunna". He justified his struggle against the administration and his secession from the community by the statement that "the few who obey God are many and the many who disobey God are few". He was welcomed by Naṣr and the people of Marw; his son Muḥammad and his daughter al-Alūf, who were detained, were released. Naṣr offered to appoint him as governor of a

district, but he refused. He divided the gifts given to him by Naṣr among his adherents. He demanded of Naṣr that he should appoint as officials only decent and righteous people.

Shortly after his arrival, Ḥārith was joined by 3000 Tamīmīs who gave him the oath of allegiance. He encamped outside Marw, and instructed D̲jahm b. Ṣafwān to read his “*sīra*”, setting himself up against Naṣr. D̲juday^ʿ al-Kirmānī joined Ḥārith for a short time. However, they fell out, their forces clashed and Ḥārith was killed in 128/746.

Ḥārith is mentioned as a Murd̲jī^ʿ. His secretary was D̲jahm b. Ṣafwān. In his political activity he followed in the steps of Abu ʿl-Ṣaydā^ʿ, who fought for the rights of the *mawālī*; some of the companions of Abu ʿl-Ṣaydā^ʿ fought on the side of Ḥārith. Ḥārith and his followers are the only group in early Islam which seceded from the community and aided the unbelievers against their brethren with the aim of establishing a government acting according to the ordinances of the Ḳur^ʿān and the Sunna. In the force of Ḥārith are mentioned “*ahl al-baṣāʿir*”, people of a religious conviction, whom Ḥārith used to consult. When Ḥārith returned, he came back with his *ḳāḏī*. The black flags raised by Ḥārith seem to have been an imitation of the *sunna* of the Prophet. A special feature of this peculiar group was the habit of appealing to the enemy during the battle to join them by using moral and religious arguments. Ḥārith seems to have had a feeling of mission. He apparently lived an ascetic life and wanted to establish a just government resembling that of the Prophet and the first Caliphs. He demanded that the principle of election of the *Shūrā* should be followed. A satirical verse recited after his death claims that he hoped to be a Caliph: “The son of a saddle (Ibn Sard̲j) hopes to be a Caliph: How remote are the means of the Caliphate from a saddle”.

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