

**An analysis of the reasons of Abu Muslim Khorasani's animosity towards Abbasid veteran Propagandists**

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**Abstract:** One of the Abu Muslim Khorasani's strange actions was to kill famous and veteran Abbasid Propagandists. Abu Muslim himself was called as the Propagandist and was the leader of Abbasid revolt in Khorasan at the time of its appearance. He was so much clever and took action with organized plans. In this article we intend to analyze and clarify Abu Muslim's plan and purposes of killing Propagandists who were more experienced than him in Abbasid propaganda and revolt. Abbasid veteran Propagandists did not consider Abu Muslim important even at the pinnacle of his honor and glory, because during his adolescence he was a slave who was bought by Abbasid propagandists and bestowed unto Abbasid imam and this caused their being ruined by Abu Muslim when the leader of black garments reached honor and gained power. Famous and old individuals such as Lahiz Tamimi, Qahtabah Ibn Shabib Tai, Abu Salamah Khalal and Sulayman Ibn Kathir Khuzai were ruined by Abu Muslim's plan.

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**Introduction**

Abu Muslim Khorasani, the famous Abbasid leader, played a major role in the fall of the Umayyads and establishment of the Abbasids. Many people tried to ruin the Umayyad dynasty and brought great armies together but weren't successful and were defeated at the end. Ibn Zobeyr, Ibn Ashath, Yazid Ibn Mohlab and Harith Ibn Sarij were the ones whose revolts were initially successful to some extent but were finally defeated and killed. However, Abu Muslim defeated the great Umayyad Empire whose territory was from Spain to Kashqar and China borders. In this way, he is compared with Ardashir and Iskandar. One of the Abu Muslim Khorasani's strange actions was to kill veteran and old Abbasid Propagandists. As a matter of fact, why did Abu Muslim kill those who suffered so much in people's propaganda? This article intends to discuss and analyze Abu Muslim's partly strange action and countermeasure, animosity towards the Abbasid veteran Propagandists.

**Abu Muslim's debut**

Abu Muslim Khorasani's origin

References mentioned Abu Muslim Khorasani as the Abbasid propagandist along with the great people like Ardashir, Iskandar, (Mojmal al-Tawarikh wa al-Qasas, n.d: 327 ). He was the Abbasid propagandist and hero, who brought victory to the Abbasids (Ibn Tiqtaqa, 1418/1997: 137). References have discussed about his origin and descent a lot and with no agreement on it, however his original name demonstrates his being mawla. Impressed by his great actions, some people quoted reports of his prominent descent (Mojmal al-Tawarikh wa al-Qasas, n.d:315). According to a report from the author of Akhbar al-

dawlah al-Abbasiyah, he was originally Isfahanian who had escaped of heavy taxes and took shelter to Edris Ibn Ma'qal Ajli and became his slave.(Akhbar al-dawlah al-Abbasiyah, 1391:263) or an Isfahanian born in Isa's house and grew up with his son(ibid,1391:253). Some consider his descent to be Khorasanian (Esfezari, 1388:5-174). Some other quoted him as Marvazi and of the inhabitants of center of Khorasan in Umayyad era (Ibn Abdrebe, 1404:7/281; KiaGilani, n.d: 115) who served Yousef Ibn Abi- Sofyan Baheli (Minhaj al-siraj, 1363:1/104). Some even accounted him as Kurdish. Some others also quoted him as the people of Khataranie savad kofe (tabari, 1967:7/360). Most of the emphasis of the references is on his being Marvazi. Abu Muslim himself didn't have any emphasis on his own descent; and in response to the Khorasanian piouses, asking him of his descent in the beginning of his revolt, he said, "my remnant is better than my descent" (ibid, 1967: 7/364). It seems that he belonged to one of the inferior races and mawali, however because of his great action - destroying the strong and wide government of the Umayyad- many of his supporters later made prominent descent for him.

**Abu Muslim at the head of the Abbasid revolt**

When Abu Muslim was nominated as the leader of the cause in Khorasan by Ibrahim (Ibn Qahtabah Dinawari 1410: 2/156), he encountered the opposition of the great propagandists in that state. At that time Abu Muslim was 30 years old and Khorasanians were afraid he couldn't lead the important Bani Abbas revolt against the Umayyads. According to a report from Akhbar al-dawlah al-Abbasiyah, Sulayman Ibn Kathir was badly upset, insulted Abu Muslim and

threw inkwell to him (Akhbar al-dawlah al-'Abbasiyah, 1391: 1-270) resulting in his face bleeding (ibid, 1391: 271). After a while, in response to abu-Davoud, another Abbasid propagandist, for his opposition with Abu Muslim he said, "He was young and we were afraid he didn't have the power to lead the revolt" (tabari, 1967: 7/361). About this action of Sulayman it is written that maybe Ibn-Kathir was afraid of his losing headship or of the Abu Muslim's inexperience, it is also probable that he didn't want to be inferior to a mawla whose descent was obscure or maybe he was afraid that Abu Muslim couldn't keep the advantages of the supporters of the cause, or he was in mistake about Abu Muslim, as others were in mistake about Khadash (Daniel, 1367:47). Sulayman himself asked Ibrahim to send one of his tribe, since the revolt background was prepared (Tabari, 1967:7/353). Maybe he was upset of a mawla coming to lead the revolt instead of one of the prophet's household (Ahl Al-Bait)(AS). Abu Muslim was a mawla grown up by Ibrahim's pedagogy and was wholly submissive to him and besides had a keen mind. It is probable that Ibrahim didn't trust in his uncles or other people of his tribe, since they might have taken the power after leading the cause. In the other hand, Khorasanian's belief in Ahl Al-Bait's faultlessness would put the head of the Abbasid revolt in trouble. Choosing Abu Muslim didn't have such these side effects. Having been an adolescent and serving Isa and Ma'qal, Idris ajli's sons, like a slave, He was initially introduced to Mohammad Ibn Ali by Soleiman himself and his friends like Lahiz, Malik and Qahtabah (Belathari, 1417:4/119). The Abbasid propagandists admired Abu Muslim's high understanding and intelligence. They explained his qualities to Mohammad Ibn Ali and by his order, they bought Abu Muslim in return to Sham, and sent to Hemimeh for Abbasid imam (Dainawari, 1368: 338). According to a report from Tabari, they bestowed Abu Muslim unto him in their next visit with Mohammad Ibn Ali in Mecca and Sulayman said: it is your subordinate (Tabari, 1967:7/329). According to some other reports, he was bought by propagandists in Khorasan (Minhaj al-Siraj, 1363: 1/104). As it appears, Mohammad Ibn Ali himself wanted to train Abu Muslim as he wanted. After the death of Mohammad, Ibrahim was his supervisor and master and responsible to train him. When Abu Muslim started his revolt in Khorasan, it was rumored that a man of Ahl Al-Bait (AS) had come to Khorasan (Tabari, 1967: 7/355), and Ibrahim wrote in a letter to supporters and propagandists that Abu Muslim is of his tribe, listen to his orders and obey him (ibid, 1967: 7/353). Choosing Abu Muslim for the leading of the Abbasid propaganda and revolt was quite accurate and his assignment - with such an age and race- indicates

Ibrahim's tact. Abu Muslim's work in Khorasan and his fame, glory and esteem progressed a lot, his work was stabilized by his friendship and tenderness and became of highest altitude in shii view, to an extent that they would swear in his name and wouldn't break their oath and always spoke of him without getting tired (Dainawari, 1368: 343). Bal'ami writes about this: "his work progressed and his solemnity and glory entered the Khorasanian hearts and it is said that they would orate on the pulpits saying: 'O Allah, Do good for sultan Abu Muslim, the loyal of Ale Mohammad (SallaAllah alaihi wa alih)" (bal'ami, 1373:4/1026). Abu Muslim had many attendants in the era of his glory. According to a report from Muqaddasi, every day, three thousand mans of bread and one hundred muttons besides cows and fowls were baked in his kitchen (Muqaddasi, Motahar Ibn Taher, 6/94). In respect to this glory and magnificence, a group in Khorasan considered Abu Muslim as imam after Safah. A group believed his death and a group didn't believe it. They would say God's sole is blown in to him and he is better than Gabriel and Michael and other angels. They believed Abu Muslim was alive. Groups of them existed till Baghdadi era in the fourth century in Merv and Harat called barkokie (Baghdadi, 1367:186). This group was called Abu-Muslemieh and some of them accepted his imamat and Mahdaviat. (Abu al-Hasan Ash'ari, 1362: 20, 167). Doctor Mashkur has called some of the sects appeared after Abu Muslim's death in his support such as barkokie,sanbadye, barazbandie (Mashkur, Dictionary of Islamic sects, pp 2-21). Abu Muslim's influence in Khorasan and his popularity among people of that region couldn't be important for the experienced and veteran Abbasid propagandists, since unlike ordinary people they had seen his abasement and slavery era. They had bought him and bestowed unto the Abbasid imam. At that time they couldn't have thought of his prominent significance and altitude in future

#### **Abu Muslim and animosity towards veteran Propagandists**

It seems that with the increase of Abu Muslim's popularity among the Khorasanians, he gradually decided to destroy those who had seen his abasement and slavery era and had bought him. Khorasanian's obedience from Abu Muslim and his genius could fulfill his thoughts and plans after defeating Nasr and taking Merv. Before taking the center of Khorasan this action was dangerous, since it would cause separation of the Abbasid supporters and disobedience of other propagandists from him. At the beginning of his entrance to Khorasan and leading the propagandists, Abu Muslim acutely showed equanimity and amenity in response to the oppositions of Sulayman Ibn Kathir. (Akhbar al-dawlah al-Abbasiyah, 1391: 271) and by

using God's verses would emphasize: "Would you kill a man because he says: My Lord is Allah, and has brought you clear proofs from your Lord?" (Ghafer, 28). But when Nasr Ibn Sayyar escaped and Abu Muslim took Merv, the conditions has changed and he could destroy his opposers in power. In this way, he killed Lahiz Ibn Qariz Tamimi, Qahtabah Ibn Shabib Tai, Abu Salamah Khalal and Sulayman Ibn Kathir Khuzai.

#### **A) Abu Muslim's excuse for killing Lahiz Ibn Qariz Tamimi**

Lahiz Ibn Qariz Tamimi was of Tamim trib and one of the famous propagandists of the Abbasid cause from the beginning of its propaganda in Khorasan. His descent and name states his tamimi origin and not being ajam. Lahiz Ibn Qariz Ibn Sari Ibn Kahen Ibn Zeid Ibn Asbeh (Belathari, 1417/1996: 12/397; Ibn Asaker Dameshqi, 1415: 64/35). As soon as he found the background and necessary excuse for killing Lahiz Ibn Qariz, Abu Muslim didn't hesitate (Yaqubi, n.d: 2/342). Later he seemed to condole in his being killed and considered Nasr's magic the reason for killing one the most important Abbasid propagandists (Tabari, 1967: 7/382). It is far from a person like Abu Muslim who carried out his plans in tact and foresight, to do this action emotionally, and immediately condole of it indeed. Lahiz worked in developing the Abbasid propaganda a lot and suffered much captivity. He was one of the twelfth chieftains in the Abbasid propaganda who was nominated by Bakir Ibn Mahan and Abu Mohammad al-Sadeq to spread the Abbasid propaganda in Khorasan in the beginning of the propaganda (Akhbar al-dawlah al-'Abbasiyah, 1391: 271; Tabari, 1967: 6/562). Just in one stage, in crime of inviting people to Al-Reza, he was scourged three hundred stripes, by the order of Khorasan's governor, Asad Ibn Abdollah Qasri (Belathari, 1417: 4/117; Muqaddasi, Motahar Ibn Taher, n.d: 6/60; Ibn Jawzi, 1412/1992: 7/175). Abu Muslim was very young when Lahiz was scourged. When Lahiz and other Abbasid veteran propagandists such as Sulayman, Qahtabah and Malik Ibn Heitham went to hemimie sham to visit the Abbasid imam, Abu Muslim was an adolescence in waset's prison serving Isa Ibn Ma'qal Ajli. Some reports quoted his low age besides his weeping at the time of visiting the propagandists with prisoners (Tabari, 1967: 7/199). Isa Ibn Ma'qal had been jailed by Yousef Ibn Umar Saqafi (Akhbar al-dawlah al-'Abbasiyah, 1391: 255). According to some of the reports, Abu Muslim was bestowed unto Ibrahim by Lahiz and other propagandists like Sulayman as well as twenty thousand dinars and two hundred thousand dirhams and a lot of goods (Ibn Athir, 1385/1965: 5/339). Abu Muslim was born in hundred and two hegira (Muqadasi, Motahar Ibn Taher, n.d: 6/95). Thus, he

was 30 years old when taking Merv and killing Lahiz, at this time he was had dominated the center of Khorasan, Merv and started at killing the specified propagandists. Lahiz was the first Abbasid veteran propagandist who was destroyed by the leader of black garments. He was one of the famous Abbasid propagandists in Khorasan since Abu Muslim's childhood. Abu Muslim's influence among the supporters after taking Merv was to an extent that when Boshir Ibn Sakhr, brother of one of the ordinary propagandists, saw Abu Muslim's anger, suggested to kill Lahiz (Ibn Asaker Dameshqi, 1415: 27/131) and Abu Muslim accepted.

#### **B) Killing Qahtabah and its relation with Abu Muslim's plan**

Even sudden disappearance of Qahtabah Ibn Shabib in the middle of battle with Ibn Habireh (Dinawari, 1368: 369; Khalifa Ibn Khayyat, 1415/1995:261; Balami, 1373:4/1030; Masoudi, n.d: 283) can be according to Abu Muslim's plan. According to some references, after the battle his body was found in a stream as well as Harb Ibn Salam Ibn Ahvaz and was rumored that they killed each other (Tabari, 1967:7/415; Ibn Khaldun, 1408/1988: 3/159; Ibn Athir, 1965/1385: 5/404), it is probable that his falling in Forat or the surrounding streams was related to Abu Muslim's thought and plan for destroying veteran propagandists who had seen Abu Muslim's adolescence and slavery era. Even some predictions by Abbasid imam in Qahtabah's words were quoted that he would be the only one to disappear next to Forat River in the battle (Yaqubi, n.d: 2/344). In some other references it is said that Qahtabah was lost and it wasn't clear what happened to him; and his son, Hasan, undertook the army's leading (Dainawari, 1368:369). Qahtabah's sudden disappearance during the battle is also abnormal. If the Umayyad supporters had killed him, they would have been inspirited and at least would have quoted about killing the great Abbasid general. The battle scene after the quarrel was also in the Abbasid's hand and naturally Qahtabah must have been killed and probably lost with their plan and by the ordered people of Abu Muslim.

#### **C) Abu Muslim's agreement in killing Abu Salamah**

One of the other great propagandists of the cause killed by Abu Muslim was Abu Salamah Khalal. Unlike Lahiz, Qahtabah, Sulayman and kermani's son, he wasn't originally Arabic and was an Iranian from mawali of Bani Harith Ibn Ka'b (Ibn Tiqtaqa, 1418: 150). Yet, he had seen the slavery and abasement era of Abu Muslim and the leader of black garments tended to destroy him too. Abu Muslim's agreement on killing Abu Salamah (Yaqubi, n.d: 352) must have been for this purpose. Even some of the references

state that when Abu Muslim felt Abu Salamah gained much influence in the Saffah's government, without consulting the caliph or noting that, he sent one of his generals named Marvan Zabi to Kufa to kill Abu Salamah while exiting Abu Al-Abbas Saffah and to return to Khorasan immediately (Dinawari, 1368:370). According to some of the references, Abu Muslim was bought by Abu Salamah's money (Akhbar al-dawlah al-'Abbasiyah, 1391: 266). Another report mentions that Abu Muslim was bought by Bakir in four hundred dirhams (Tabari, 1967: 7/198). Bakir wasn't alive at the time of Abu Muslim's leading and glory to be killed. Later Mansur, seeking for an excuse for misnaming Abu Muslim, considered his killing Lahiz and Sulayman an unforgivable sin for Abu Muslim (Khatib Baghdadi, 1417: 10/207). Mansur blamed Abu Muslim why you killed Sulayman who had tried in our propaganda so much and was important before your being proposed in the propaganda? (Tabari, 1967:7/491; Ibn Khaldun, 1988: 3/231). of course beside this, he counted many other crimes for him.

#### **D) Abu Muslim's superficial and actual reason to kill Sulayman Ibn Kathir**

Sulayman Ibn Kathir was more proposed and typical than the other propagandists. He belonged to Khuzai tribe and his descent in the references is as below: Sulayman Ibn Kathir Ibn Umayyad Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abdollah (Jahiz, 1410:190). He owned a village in Khorasan (Akhbar al-dawlah al-'Abbasiyah, 1391:274). Leading the cause was proposed to him but he rejected. At first, he objected young Abu Muslim's leading on the Abbasid cause. Abu Davoud, another propagandist tried to put Sulayman on agreement and not to disobey and oppose Ibrahim's order, however killing Sulayman by Abu Muslim had another reason. Sulayman's objections from Abu Muslim were completely unfounded and by the time of Abu Mansur it was proved to everyone that Abu Muslim was an extraordinarily sharp and smart leader. However what wouldn't be exit from Sulayman's mind - and would be just ascertained with his elimination - was the slavery of childhood of black garments' leader. At the beginning of the revolt, Abu Muslim respected Sulayman a lot and at the beginning of the cause, being imam of congregation (imam jamaat) for Abbasid supporters was on his charge (Ibid, 1391:277). Abu Muslim killed Sulayman in doubt and accusation publicly at the time of Safah caliphate when Mansur, Safah's prince, had come to visit him. Abu Muslim said to Sulayman, did you remember I told you imam had ordered me to kill any one you suspected. Sulayman answered yes. Abu Muslim said; "I suspect you". Abu Muslim didn't listen to Ibn Kathir's insistence and supplication and swear and killed him (tabari, 1967: 7/450). Sulayman was Lahiz's father in law (Ibn Asaker Dameshqi, 1415:

22/356). When Lahiz was killed by Abu Muslim, the authority of the black garment's leader was so high that Sulayman couldn't object. Abu Muslim had dominated Merv, center of Khorasan. At this time and after that until mansur's coming to Khorasan, there was no conspiracy of Sulayman against Abu Muslim and caliph or prince didn't order him about this. The Umayyad government was completely destroyed and no danger was threatening the Abbasids and Abu Muslim. Yet, a good chance for applying Abu Muslim's plan was prepared for killing the veteran Abbasid propagandist. Abu Muslim emphasized himself that only suspicion and not mistake was the reason for this decision of Khorasan's leader. Of course, in one of the more recent references (Bayan Al-Adyan), it is noted that Sulayman had said to one of the Alawis (Ubeidollah A'raj) that we were mistaken and we must have transferred the caliphate from the Umayyads to the Alawis and not to the Abbasids and because of Abu Muslim's informing of Sulayman's view, he was killed (Abu Al-maali Hoseini Alawi; 1376: 7). However this subject, can't be correct. Firstly, when Mansur chastised Abu Muslim that why you killed Ibn Kathir Khuzai, he didn't mention Sulayman's words against the Abbasid at all. Secondly, if Sulayman hadn't been really the Abbasid supporter, he wouldn't have suffered in the propaganda so much, and during the thirty years of his efforts he would have communicated with some of the Alawis. Thirdly, if such thought had stroke to his mind after the Abbasid victory, he wouldn't said that to an Alawi who didn't have a good relation with the Alawis and had relations with the caliph Safah and received valuable gifts from him (ibid, 1376: 8). Ubeidollah had escaped to Khorasan in the fear of being killed by Nafs al-Zakieh.

#### **Conclusion**

According to the evidence presented in this article, we conclude that killing veteran Abbasid propagandists in the era of Abu Muslim's glory wasn't sudden or from Abu Muslim's hasty decisions. rather, it was done by Abu Muslim's plan organizedly. The main reason for this action of the leader of the black garments in killing the propagandists was that Abu Muslim had understood their contemptuous view to him. The veteran propagandists were all older than Abu Muslim and had more activities and experiences in the Abbasid rise. They had bought Abu Muslim when he was a slave and had bestowed him unto the Abbasid imam, Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn Abdollah Abbasi. Abu Muslim was grown up under the pedagogy of Mohammad and his son, Ibrahim. Abu Muslim's popularity among the Khorasanians and his extraordinary influence couldn't increase his esteem among the propagandists like Lahiz, Qahtabah and

Sulayman and this was the reason for killing those by Abu Muslim with different excuses.

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