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آبناء، یا بنوالاحرار، یا ابناء فارسی، نام فرزندان گروهی از ایرانیان که به دوران پادشاهی خسرو انوشیروان به یاری سیف بن ذی یزن گسیل شدند و یمن را گشودند و از آن پس در این سرزمین ماندگار شدند.

نام و خاستگاه: نام ابناء (پسران) درباره فرزندان این ایرانیان از آن رو به کار رفت که پدران و مادران آنان هم نژاد نبودند، اما نام دیگر «بنو الاحرار»، پیشینه‌ای کهن‌تر دارد و ویژه ایشان نیست، زیرا عربها

— Ebn a

می‌دیدند و هم از این رو در این خاندان زمینه قیامهایی مانند قیام بستم فراهم بود (کولسنیکف، ۱۶۵)، همچنین در دودمان بزرگ مهران نیز مخالفان برجسته‌ای مانند بهرام چوبین پرورش یافتند (کریستن سن، ۴۶۴). با اینهمه دلیل زندانی شدن این گروه روشن نیست. اشاره گذرای دینوری (ص ۶۴) به زندانی شدن وهرز به کیفر راهزنی تأمل برانگیز است، زیرا گزارشهای دیگر او را از شمار زندانیان جدا دانسته‌اند. برخی احتمال داده‌اند که ایشان را به گناه مزدکی بودن به زندان افکنده باشند (آذرنوش، ۲۶۳)، اما برای تأیید چنین احتمالی دلیل یا قرینه‌ای نیرومند در دست نیست. بی‌گمان خسرو انوشیروان که با ریختن خون مزدکیان به پادشاهی رسیده بود (کریستن سن، ۳۸۴، ۳۸۵) حتی احتمال برپایی یک فرمانروایی مزدک آیین را به هیچ روی بر نمی‌تافت، زیرا نیک می‌دانست که نیرو گرفتن مزدکیان در یمن به ناپودی اقتدار امپراتوری ساسانی در حیره و گسترش دامنه نفوذ ییزانس در شبه جزیره عرب می‌انجامد (همو، ۳۸۳؛ پیگولوسکایا، العرب علی حدود بیزنطة و ایران، ۱۰۸، ۱۰۹). شاید بتوان گفت که این زندانیان گروهی از سرکشان دیلمی بودند، زیرا دیلمیان از دیرباز به استقلال می‌زیستند و حتی گاه پناه شورشیان می‌شدند (دینوری، ۱۰۱)؛ با اینهمه هنگامی که میان ایران و دشمنان جنگی در می‌گرفت، داوطلبانه به مزدوری در سپاه روی می‌آوردند (پروکوپوس، کتاب VIII، فصل 14، بند 5-7؛ مارکوارت، 136). و سخن مسعودی (التنبیه و الاشراف، ۲۶۰) در این باره که وهرز به هنگام گسیل شدن به یمن رتبه وهرز گرفت، تأمل برانگیز می‌نماید. بنابراین شاید این زندانیان از جمله سرکشانی بودند که خسرو انوشیروان برای مهار دیلمیان می‌بایست به بند کشیده باشد، و گسیل آنان به یمن یکی از سیاستهای ویژه وی در زمینه کوچاندن طایفه‌های مغلوب در چارچوب هدفهای نظامی بوده است. به هر روی، از سخن ثعالبی (ص ۶۱۶) می‌توان دریافت که دست کم یکی از علت‌های اصلی استفاده از زندانیان صرفه‌جویی در هزینه جنگی بوده است.

نام وهرز فرمانده این زندانیان در مآخذ به صورتهای گوناگون آمده است: حمزة اصفهانی (۴۶، ۱۰۹) او را خرزاد پسر نرسی از فرزندان بهافریدون پسر ساسان پسر بهمن پسر اسفندیار نامیده است (قس: ابن بلخی، ۹۵). مآخذ دیگر نیز نام خرزاد پسر نرسی را آورده‌اند، اما وی را فرزند جاماسب پسر فیروزشاه شمرده‌اند (مسعودی، التنبیه

تمامی ایرانیان را از دیرباز «احرار» و «بنو الاحرار» می‌خواندند. در شعرهای ابودؤاد ابادی، لقیط بن معمر (با یعمر)، عدی بن زید حیری از شاعران جاهلی (ابن هشام، ۶۹/۱، ۷۰؛ مسعودی، التنبیه و الاشراف، ۲۰۵؛ ابن قتیبه، الشعر والشعراء، ۱۲۹/۱، ۱۳۰) و شعرهای اعشی (ص ۸۶)، بکیر بن اصم و اعشی بنی ربیعہ پیرامون نبرد ذوقار (طبری، ۱۰۳۵/۱ - ۱۰۳۷؛ ابوالفرج، ۷۸/۲۴)، و شعر امیة بن ابی الصلت در ستایش سیف بن ذی یزن (وهب بن منبه، ۳۱۷، ۳۱۸)، نیز در شعرهای شاعران عرب پس از اسلام مانند بختری (۹۱۹/۲) و شاعران ایرانی نژاد همچون بشار بن برد (۳۰۳/۲؛ ابوالفرج، ۱۶۶/۳)، ابونواس (۱۲۷، ۱۹۳؛ ابن عبدربه، ۴۰۹/۳)، اسحاق موصلی موسیقی‌دان و شاعر ایرانی نژاد (ابوالفرج، ۲۷۸/۵) و مهیار دلمی (۴۰۶/۱) شواهدی در این باره می‌توان یافت (نیز نک: همدانی، الاکلیل، ۱۸۰/۸؛ وهب بن منبه، ۳۱۷؛ مسعودی، مروج، ۶۳/۲).

بر پایه نوشته ابن فقیه، عربها در دوران پیش از اسلام پارسیان را «احرار» می‌نامیدند، از آن رو که دیگران را به بندگی و خدمتگزاری می‌گرفتند و خود به بندگی و خدمتگزاری دیگران در نمی‌آمدند (نیز نک: سهیلی، ۳۲۰/۱). در این سخن جای درنگ هست، زیرا ایرانیان خود خویشان را آزادان و آزادگان می‌خواندند (ابن حزم، الفصل فی الملل، ۱۱۵/۲؛ قس: کیا، ۱ - ۷؛ «ایر» و «ایران» در زبان پهلوی به معنای «آزاد» یا «آزاده» و «سرزمین آزادان» یا «آزادبوم»). در شاهنامه فردوسی نیز واژه‌های «آزاده» و «آزاد مرد» و «آزادگان» بارها به جای ایرانی و ایرانیان به کار رفته است (مثلاً نک: ۱۶۳۷/۶، ۲۲۲۹/۷، ۲۶۱۰/۸، ۲۶۲۷، ۲۸۴۳/۹) و نام «احرار» را بی‌گمان باید برگردان عربی «آزادان» و «آزادگان» شمرد، اما ابن حزم (همانجا) دو واژه «احرار» و «ابناء» را به گونه‌ای مترادف به کار برده است و بنابراین شاید «زادگان = آزادگان» یا «زادان = آزادان» نخست به «ابناء» برگردانده شده (کیا، ۱۲) و سپس درباره پسران سربازان ایرانی در یمن به کار رفته باشد. همچنین واژه «آزاد» را در اینجا نباید در برابر واژه «بنده» گرفت، بلکه بیش‌تر باید آن را به معنای «شریف» و «نژاده» و «پاکزاد» دانست (نولدکه، ۳۹۷). کاربرد ترکیب «حرا الاحرار» به معنایی مترادف با «شریف الاشراف» نیز تأییدی بر این نکته تواند بود (ثعالبی، ۴۰۹؛ ابن اثیر، ۲۸۴/۱؛ قس: پیگولوسکایا، شهرهای ایران، ۴۵۵ - ۴۵۷).

درباره تبار و خاستگاه ابناء سخن گونه‌گون گفته‌اند. تقریباً همه مآخذ (بجز ابن قتیبه، المعارف، ۶۳۸، ۶۶۴) نوشته‌اند که خسرو انوشیروان زندانیان مرگ ارزانی را به فرماندهی وهرز به یمن گسیل داشت. شعر کما بیش کهنی که مسعودی (مروج، ۵۶/۲، ۵۷) آورده است، آنان را از خاندانهای ساسان و مهران (مهرسن) بر شمرده، و حمزة اصفهانی (ص ۴۶) اغلب ایشان را فرزندان ساسان و بهمن پسر اسفندیار دانسته است. شاید بتوان پذیرفت که شماری و حتی بسیاری از آنان این تبارنامه اشرافی را پس از گشودن یمن و برخورداری از

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ABNĀ' "sons" in Arabic, used as a term for the offspring of Persian soldiers and officials in the Yemen and of Arab mothers. These people were known thus in the lifetime of the Prophet (ca. 580-632 A.D.) and survived as a distinct ethnic and social group in the first century or so of Islam.

The Sasanians made Iraq an integral part of their empire, and Persians settled there in appreciable numbers (cf. M. G. Morony, "The Effects of the Muslim conquest on the Persian Population of Iraq," *Iran* 14, 1976, pp. 41-59). Starting from this base, they had a long tradition of attempting to extend their influence along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf into the Arabian peninsula. Political control of the unruly Beduin tribes of Najd was necessary for the protection of the desert fringes of Iraq and the safe conduct of caravans from Iraq to the Hejāz cities and the Yemen; here on the fringes of lower and central Iraq, the Sasanians generally worked through their vassals, the Arab Lakhmid kings of Hira. Further, it was necessary to control the coast of Bahrayn and Oman, in order to protect from piracy ships bringing goods from India and the Far East to Obolla at the head of the Gulf and to prevent such cargoes being clandestinely landed along the Gulf shores, where the payment of customs dues might be evaded. Hence, Šāpūr II (309-79) led Persian troops into Yamāma (east central Arabia) in retaliation for Arab raids across the Gulf; and colonies of Persian officials and soldiers were subsequently planted along the coastlands, where their Zoroastrian faith and practices may have had some

influence among the indigenous inhabitants. Oman was especially important strategically; hence there was a Persian garrison at the tip of the Mosandam peninsula, commanding the narrow entrance to the Gulf from the Indian Ocean, and similar garrisons in the *baīna* or coastland of Oman at places like Šohār and Rostāq.

In the 6th century, however, the Sasanians made a determined attempt to extend their influence throughout Arabia as far as the Hejāz in the west and the Yemen in the south. They seem to have endeavored to collect taxes in Medina through the intermediacy of the Jewish tribes there; and the Mazdakite doctrines espoused by King Kavād seemed to have awakened a response among certain individuals in Mecca, where *zendīqs* are found at the time of Moḥammad's rise.

The Yemen offered a particularly favorable field for Persian intervention at this time. Political fragmentation in what had always been a land of petty princelings and powerful local nobles below the Himyarite kings increased with the decline of the Himyarite monarchy; also, with the decline of the old South Arabian indigenous polytheism, sectarian conflicts arose between the local Monophysite Christian population and the partisans of Judaism. The religious clash between the Christians of Najrān and the Judaist king Yūsuf As'ar, called Dū Novās, led to massive intervention by the emperor of Ethiopia, the Christians' natural protector, in 525. For nearly half a century south Arabia became an Ethiopian protectorate under one Abraha and his son Masrūq, who retained power there despite intermittent pressure from the Lakhmids and their Persian suzerains. We know of diplomatic contacts between Abraha and Ḳosrow I from Abraha's lengthy inscription in South Arabian on the dam at Ma'rab in the Yemen. It is dated in the year 658 of the Sabean era (believed by recent scholarship to have started ca. 109 B.C., cf. J. Ryckmans, *La persécution des chrétiens himyarites au sixième siècle*, Istanbul, 1956, yielding a date for the inscription of ca. 549 A.D.), and records the arrival of a delegation from the "King of Fārs" (see S. Smith, "Events in Arabia in the 6th century A. D." *BSOAS* 16, 1954, p. 440).

The Ethiopian occupation of the Yemen continued until about 570, when a Yemeni national reaction was provoked against Masrūq b. Abraha. The leader of this patriotic movement was a scion of the Himyarite royal line, Abū Morra Sayf b. Dū Yazan. He first tried vainly to get help from the Byzantines and Lakhmids, but then began direct negotiations with Ḳosrow I. The king was reluctant to intervene in a region so distant from Persia, but in the end agreed to send a force of eight hundred cavalymen, in one version men of good birth who had been consigned to prison but were now given a chance to redeem themselves by achieving victory. The force sailed around the coasts of the Arabian peninsula; and, although two of the eight ships were wrecked, the rest landed in Hadramaut. Under their leader Vahrēz, they defeated and killed Masrūq and marched into the Yemeni capital of Šan'ā'. On the crest of a popular reaction against the Ethiopians,

time. His description of occasions when he asked for sweets or barley or chicken from the grandees of Baghdad, or when he ridicules the cloth merchants and wheat sellers (al-Ablah, fol. 43b, fol. 44a), or when he asks his nephew for a gift for his wife, known as al-Sitt Yāqūt, and the like, all breathe spirit and vitality into his poems. As far as we know, the only person to have studied al-Ablah's *Dīwān* is Muzhir 'Abd al-Sūdānī. However, his remarks about al-Ablah are found included among his discussions of other poets of the 6th/12th century, scattered throughout his book. In general, his study suggests that al-Ablah, Ibn al-Ta'āwīdhī, and Ibn al-Mu'allim are the true representatives of literature in Iraq at that time, and because their works combine old and new styles, and traditional themes are expressed in novel vocabulary, they can be described as 'innovative conservatives' ('Abd al-Sūdānī, 59, 62). As far as meaning is concerned, al-Ablah's poetry is rather facile and lacks intellectual substance, and many of his verses consist of high-flown but meaningless expressions ('Abd al-Sūdānī, 105, 106). Even the *qaṣīda* which he composed late in life in praise of the caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (al-Ablah, fols. 9-10), and which is known as '*aṣmā*' (precious) and '*yaṭīmat al-dahr*' (unique in its time), suffers from these same defects. However, his skill in exploiting figures of speech and his creativity in combining words make his poems rhythmical, musical and harmonious, and as a result enormously popular with many people. 'Imād al-Dīn was the only one of the early writers to fully appreciate this point.

The majority of his poems are panegyric *qaṣīdas*, most of which are dedicated to the vizier Ibn Hubayra (al-Ablah, fols. 60, 64, 65, 69, 94). These *qaṣīdas* begin, like other classical *qaṣīdas*, with a *taghazzul* (that is to say, pleasing images that are usually drawn from a conventional repertory). However, since he was apparently inclined to young

boys (al-Ṣafadī, 2/245), he often began his *qaṣīdas* with a *taghazzul* depicting masculine beauty (al-Ablah, fols. 62-70, 73, 78, 148, 154). Even the panegyric dedicated to Aqdā al-Qudāt (al-Ablah, fol. 20a) begins in this manner ('Abd al-Sūdānī, 99, 262). Another principal theme of his poems is satire, which, contrary to 'Imād al-Dīn's view, is full of irreverent and audacious vocabulary ('Abd al-Sūdānī, 61, 110, 279, 280). The *khamriyya* genre, employing the symbolism of wine, is a favourite of al-Ablah ('Abd al-Sūdānī, 227, 228, 235, 243, 250, 252). On the other hand, there is not a single poem in his *Dīwān* on the subject of religion, piety, ethics, wisdom or history.

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Abnā', or Banū al-Ahrār, referring to the Abnā' peoples of Fārs, is the name for the descendants of a group of Persians who were sent on a military campaign to invade Yemen in order to assist Sayf b. Dhī Yazan, during the reign of Khusraw Anūshīrawān (r. 531-578/9). These people eventually settled in Yemen on a permanent basis.

MADE WITH EBLER DOKÜMAN
27 Ocak 2010

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SANDRA CAMPBELL

Abnā’

The term *abnā’* means literally “sons” and is used to refer to several groups. It applies most prominently in a technical sense to two groups. The earlier usage denotes the descendants of the Sāsānian force dispatched to Yemen in the middle of the sixth century C.E. After conquering the area the warriors settled down and started families. These *abnā’* converted to Islam shortly after the rise of Muḥammad, and al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) mentions them in his *Ta’rīkh* (2:1971).

For ‘Abbāsīd studies, the more usual use of the word is in the phrase *abnā’ al-dawla* (“sons of the dynasty”). They are commonly referred to as the backbone of the ‘Abbāsīd military. They have been defined as an ethnically Arab, geographically Khurāsānian elite that came to prominence with the ‘Abbāsīd dynasty and were essential in bringing it to power. They served the new ‘Abbāsīd *dawla* with a fervor characteristic of the utterly committed. The new dynasty needed them for its maintenance and preservation; without this support it would have collapsed. During the fourth *fitna* (195–8/811–3), the Baghdadis had sided with al-Amīn against his brother, al-Ma’mūn. The necessity of finding a counter-balance for a group proven disloyal by their rejection of al-Ma’mūn (r. 198–218/813–833) meant that the *abnā’* were eventually replaced by the Turkish troops of al-Mu’taṣim (r. 218–27/833–42), especially after the caliph’s move to Sāmarrā’. The roots of this definition in its fully developed form can be traced to an influential paper by David Ayalon written in 1964 but not published until 1994; it is cited by most of the fundamental works on the ‘Abbāsīds published since its first appearance. Despite the apparent certainty of conventional interpretation, Ayalon indicated in that article that the status of the *abnā’* is somewhat murky. An alternative view notes that the *abnā’* appear in the sources most prominently during the civil war between al-Amīn (r. 193–198/809–813) and al-Ma’mūn, where they are clearly defined as the military elite resident in Baghdad, which could claim ties to the regime dating back to the original ‘Abbāsīd supporters and the revolution. Before that conflict, however, references to a group fitting that description appear only sporadically in the sources. The terms *ahl Khurāsān* and *abnā’*