



حبر أبيض
WHITE INK



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Shapur II “Dhū'l-Aktāf”

Shapur II is one of the Persian kings who was chosen to be a king while he was in his mother's womb. His father, Hormuz, is the king of the Sasanian empire. Shapur inherited the throne and the largest part of the country in Iraq and parts of Iran, that were under the control of the Arabs who settled there. Due to the ambitions of the Romans and others in their empire, he went out at an early age to fight, and everyone who fell under his arms had his shoulder pierced, that is why he was known as “Dhū'l-Aktāf”, in an indication of his might as he mutilated the prisoners of war and their dead.

As for the Persians during the reign of Shapur II, they were not stable, as coups took place among them and wars against the Arabs were initiated, for example, his campaign against Bahrain and the Gulf coast was part of an expanded military campaign that he carried out to eliminate the influence of the Arab tribes that inhabited the southern coasts of Iran. The Arabs reached Iran by sea, resided there and settled long before Shapur II.

The Persian empire, at the time of the Arabs settlement, was vulnerable and its leaders were fighting. When Shapur took over, he restored the central authority of the empire, and waged war on the feudal lords and those who disputed him over power. His first campaign against the Arabs of Iran was a fierce and violent campaign, then he descended towards the south, and his armies crossed to Bahrain and the opposite Arab coasts, and he stroke and oppressed the Arabs. The people of the Gulf coast marched from Al Khat, Bahrain, Kazma and Oman, to the opposite coasts: the southern coasts of the land of the Persians.

They also fled to it from the kingdom of Maysan, so they went deeply towards the eastward to Elam, i.e., Khuzestan, then the southern parts of Persia. **This was determined by Curtius Rufus, who lived in the first half of the third century AD when he wrote: “The Arabs were then in Kerman and in Persia, their presence in these places must have been long before this era, and this supports what was mentioned in Tarikh al-Tabari and others about the presence of Arabs in Iran before the establishment of the Sasanian government.**

Shapur established a powerful fleet in the Arabian Gulf, to maintain the borders of his empire and trade in this water, with the contribution of the Gulf Arabs in sailing and trading between India, Ceylon, Arabian Peninsula and Iraq.

Some historical narrations, including the detailed history of the Arabs before Islam, and the narrations of informers confirm that Shapur was part of the fleet that arrived to Bahrain to take revenge on the Arabs who were attacking the southern coasts of his government overlooking the Gulf.

In a narration reported by the Iraqi historian al-Tabari, in which he said: “Shapur, after he massacred the Arabs and expelled them from the areas they had gone to, anywhere near the areas of Persia, Bahrain and al-Yamamah, he conciliated the Arabs and allowed some of the tribes of Taghlib, Abd al-Qais, Bakr bin Wael Kerman, Taj and Ahwaz to settle. This was after his war with the Romans. It seems that the political situation forced him to conciliate the Arabs, after he realized how difficult it is to continue the policy of violence and force for an indefinite period, and the danger he realized from underestimating the tribes. Most likely, the lesson he learned from Uthaina" was the reason why he changed his policy.

These narrations state that they were extensive campaigns, covering distant lands, that began with those who descended into the land of Persia from among the Arabs, and the narration of the Syrian historian Amianus about the wars of Shapur II, supports al-Tabari's narration about those wars and documents most of these wars.

Those brutal wars took place in a land inhabited mostly by Arab clans.....