



## ABDĀLĪ

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**ABDĀLĪ**, ancient name of a large tribe, or more particularly of a group of Afghan tribes, better known by the name of Dorrānī since the reign of Aḥmad Šāh Dorrānī (1747-72). This tribal confederation groups the Pashtun clans of the west, which are to be distinguished from the Ġilzī (sing. Ġilzay), comprising those of the east. The eponymous ancestor of the Abdālī is said to be Abdāl, son of Tarīn, son of Ẓaršbūn. Tradition claims that Abdāl bore this surname (*laqab*) because he had been in the service of one of the *abdāl* (q.v.), who represent the fifth degree in the hierarchy of Sufi saints. It is not possible to ascertain if this is only popular etymology or reflects historical reality.

The Abdālī are divided into two branches: (a) The Zīrak, who, especially in the region of Qandahār, include the clans of the Pōpalzī, the Alīkozī, the Bārakzī, and the Acəkzī. The last king of Afghanistan (1933-73), Moḥammad Zāher Šāh, was a Moḥammadzī of the clan of the Bārakzī. The Moḥammadzī had reigned since 1826, just as the Saddōzī, an offspring of the Pōpalzī, had reigned from 1747 to 1818. This illustrates their long political power. (b.) The Panjṗāo, which include the Nūrzi, the Alizī and the Ešḥāqzī or Sākzī, reside for the most part in the west of the country (Helmand, Farāh, Sīstān and Herat).

For the history of the Abdālī, see [Dorrānī](#); for bibliography, see Paštūn.