



“Xrafstarân” in Sassanid Era: According to Written Sources and Sigillographic Evidence

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Abstract: “Evil animals” (MP. xrafstar, Av. xrafstra-) are harmful animals created by Ahriman to assist in destroying the world. Pahlavi scriptures present fragments of knowledge on various types of xrafstarân, some regulations and recommendations on how to crush them, and examples of divine reward for those believers who eradicate these evil animals. However, Pahlavi scriptures put urging stress on eliminating xrafstarân, sigillographic evidence from the Sassanid era points to the other direction, showing that in many cases, the Zoroastrian principle of destroying evil animals is ignored, to the extent that images of venomous animals could be seen on seals and sigils belonging to Zoroastrian priests and other elites of the Sassanid era. While in some cases, themes depicted on seals are by the religious recommendations of scriptures, owners’ personal preferences seem to remain the main factor in displaying images on seals. This question remains that depicting an evil animal on a personal seal contradicts religious regulations in Zoroastrianism. This opposition could be caused by diversity in interpretations of scriptures or by the co-existence of various factions of Zoroastrianism. The presence of other religions all over the Sassanid Empire could be one more cause of this discord. Through a comparison between depictions on seals and Pahlavi scriptures, the current study concludes that several images of xrafstarân depicted on seals are related to religions other than Zoroastrian Mithraism, Judaism, Christianity, and even Gnosticism. Moreover, most Zoroastrian scriptures mentioning xrafstarân are written only after the Sassanid era. It seems likely that after the collapse of Sassanid dynastys, some Zoroastrian priests rearranged the classification of beneficent animals created by Ahura and evil animals created by Ahriman. Nonetheless, the vital role of geography and cultural diversity of each region of the vast Sassanid Empire could not be overlooked while studying the presence or absence of animal themes in depictions.

Keywords: *Xrafstar, Sassanid Seals, Zoroastrianism, Pahlavi Scriptures.*

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Introduction

“The word *xrafstar* (Avestan *xrafstra-*, Pahlavi *xrafstar*) has been variously interpreted, and its exact meaning is much disputed. The traditional interpretation is that Zoroaster used it in the Gathas pejoratively for “the enemies of the religion” (Moazami, 2007: 302) But in the Younger Avesta and Pahlavi scriptures, the term is merely used in the sense of evil animals created by Ahriman (Bâgheri Hassan Kiâde & Sheibâni Fard 2015: 7). Bartholomae suggests that the term is derived by addition of the suffix *-stra* to *xrap-* (another form of *kærəp*); the word *xrap-* is both feminine and masculine, it means body and is derived from *kærəp*: to crawl (Bartholomae, 1904: column 538). H. W. Bailey suggested that the term is a derivation of an Indo-European verbal base **√(s)* or, *(s)kerp-*, *(s)krep-* “to bite, sting, cut” (Moazami, 2007: 302). The definition of the term in MacKenzie’s Pahlavi dictionary is vermin or noxious creature (MacKenzie, 1986: 94), and in Nyberg’s Pahlavi dictionary, Ahrimanic and harmful animals (Nyberg, 1974: 219). The term was in use even until three centuries after Islam (circa 10th century A.D.), but it was later replaced by the word *haşareh* (=insect) (Pourdavoud 2001: 178). Major contemporary Persian lexicons define the term almost alike. The glossary *Dehkhoda* defines *xrafstarân* as harmful insects created by Ahriman, the Evil Spirit, which have a sting and bring harm to humans by stinging them; vermin such as lice, snakes, scorpions, centipedes, spiders, tarantulas, wasps, bedbugs, ticks, fleas, mosquitos and ants (Dehkhoda 1962: 684-687). Mo’ein’s lexicon defines the term as vermin and harmful animals such as snakes, scorpions, or any other evil, dangerous creature (Mo’ein 2002: 485).

The most comprehensive description of *xrafstarân* could be found in Greater *Bundahishn*, the chapter “as regarding the nature of the noxious creatures”:

One says in the Scripture, “When the Evil Spirit entered, he intermingled the poison of the noxious creatures, the outgrowth of sins, such as that of the serpent, the scorpion, the large venomous lizard, the ant, the fly, the locust, and an immense number of others of this kind, with the waters, the earth, and the plants. When their growth came into being, they evolved out of these four begetters, and noxious creatures were on earth knee high” (Anklesaria, 1956: 126).

Bundahishn classifies *xrafstarân* into three groups:

“All the noxious creatures are of the three kinds: watery, earthy, and winged; they speak of the watery noxious creatures, the earthy noxious creatures, and the noxious winged creatures. Of the watery noxious creatures, the frog, the earthy, the many-headed dragon, and the winged serpent with wings are the worst” (Anklesaria, 1956: 126).

Vendidad, *Revâyat Pahlavi*, and *Dâdestân ī Dēnīg* put forth a long list of evil animals that Zoroastrians should destroy.

Bundahishn also asserts that destroying these evil creatures is obligatory in the religion:

“It is manifest that every good religion must certainly have one [= the weapon for killing the snake], that they may strike and kill noxious creatures and sinners in addition to that, and be the more righteous” (Anklesaria, 1956: 147).

A place where *xrafstarân* make their nest is called the most sorrowful piece of land (Doostkhah 2006: 677); because these creatures bring fear and harm and even destruction to those creatures created by Ahura Mazda (Anklesaria, 1956: 126). Pahlavi Scriptures designate a specific amount of divine reward for destroying each evil creature (Mirfakhraie 2006: 267-269); to the extent that one of the greatest festivals among Iranians was called the festival of “*xrafstar-koshi*” [= de-



stroying xrafstar] and was designated for this purpose. This festival celebrated even until the 19th century in the city of Kerman, is very old. Herodotus, the Greek historian contemporary to the Achaemenid empire, and Agathias, the Greek historian contemporary to the Sassanid empire, both mention this festival (Herodotus 2004: 221-222; Agathias, 1975: 59). Therefore, Pahlavi sources expressly point out the evil nature of xrafstarân and even give descriptive directions on destroying these animals to followers of the religion.

There are still Sassanian seals and sigils with depictions of those animals, which the scriptures consider evil. The current study tries to compare and investigate the descriptions of xrafstarân as recorded in the written sources to sigillographic evidence of the era. Nevertheless, only those cases are brought to consider that there is a consentaneous certainty about the identification of the depiction, and the animal is not mistaken for another. Among all animal themes seen on Sassanian seals, only eight of the evil animals could be found depicted, which could not be mistaken for any other animal. The lack of interest in depicting other evil animals rests on various reasons. Following religious regulations, lack of attractiveness of the theme on a seal, personal taste of owner or engraver, unfamiliarity of engraver to a creature's form, and inability of an engraver to engrave a piece are only a few among many reasons. For example, we may pay attention to the general fact that insects, as a prominent group of xrafstarân, have never been a popular theme all along the historical era of Iran in the first place, and visual representations of them are rare (Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 2020: 46); hence considering purely religious reasons for the lack of word of insects is quite far-fetched.¹

Some Xrafstarân Which Became Beneficial

According to Bundahishn, although Ahriman creates xrafstarân, they are constructed by Ahura Mazda's models:

"As their essence, the lustre of the eyes, and the wind of life are Ohrmazdean, and as their growth of sinfulness and evil desire in the world is Ahrimanean" (Anklesaria, 1956: 126).

Therefore, it is no surprise that Ahura Mazda changed some of these creatures, such as honey bees and silkworms, in a manner that they have now benefits for humans:

"Their bodies enter into the composition of remedies with a mixture of drugs, and the benefit of the creatures arises from there. For their being is from the four Ohrmazdean elements and begetters" (Anklesaria, 1956: 126).

Such clerical dogmas could be paradoxically adverse over a long period, mainly due to cultural diversities, geographical vastness, and constant changes and transformations in religious and mythological texts, to the extent that some animals associated with Ahriman are represented as animals associated with Ahura Mazda in some other readers. Many Zoroastrian scriptures, especially those regarded to be created after the fall of the Sassanid Empire, experienced some alterations in their beliefs regarding animals. Some evil animals picked up some beneficial characteristics.

Themes of Xrafstarân on Sassanian Seals

Bear: In religious and mythical texts from the Sassanid era, the bear is frequently considered an evil animal yet regarded as one species of people. This puzzlement is explained in Bunda-

1. In his book *The Meadows of Gold* (Murūj aḍ-Ḍahab wa-Ma'ādin al-Jawhar, Arabic: *مُرُوجُ الذَّهَبِ وَمَعَادِينُ الْجَوْهَرِ*), Al-Masudi (Arabic: *الْمَسْهُودِيّ*) mentions a seal carrying a depiction of an insect on it that belonged to the Sassanid king, Khosrow II (Khosrow Parviz) (Masudi, 2003: 273). Considering sigillographic & archaeological evidence, we should be cautious to affirm this.

hishn:

“[...], in all twenty-five races, arose from the seed of Gayomard; such as that of those living on land, that of those living in water, the ‘var’-eared, the ‘var’-eyed, the one-legged, those, too, who have wings like the bat, those of the jungle having tail who have hair on the body, like animals whom they call the bear, [...]” (Anklesaria, 1956: 106).

Bear is the fruit of coitus between Yima (Jamshid) and a she-dev (Pari), and therefore, considered evil (Anklesaria, 1956: 109; Mirfakhraie, 2006: 224 & 379). In a mythological report, Fereydun uses his mace to slay a div that is in the form of a bear (Hinnels, 1989: 59). Göbl, without putting forward the sufficient argument, assumes that the theme of bear on Sassanian seals is equivalent to that of boar which belongs to the class of Zoroastrian priesthood (Mobed). He further concludes that depictions of both bear and boar belong distinctively to the Zoroastrian priest (Göbl, 2005: 64). The bear theme could also be a reference to the zodiac (Friedenberg, 2008: 17). Brunner assumes that using depictions of bear on Sassanian seals is mainly based on the natural characteristics of the animal, such as big size and strength (Brunner, 1978: 90). Bear as the central theme on a seal could also be seen among the Judaist communities of the time (Fig. 2).

In the representation of the bear’s head on Sassanian seals, the fangs are always depicted in a certain way. This is the main clue in recognizing the bear’s head on these seals. In the representation of a bear on seals, the beast is usually depicted with a narrow snout, like a boar, but is easily recognizable by its circular ears (Brunner, 1978: 102). Bear is shown in various positions, including being hunted by humans or in combat with humans (Fig. 5 and 6). In one particular case, the beast’s head is connected to some beneficial sacred animals by a few curved lines (Fig. 8). Another exciting example is a seal on which a bear is depicted next to a canine figure. The seal belongs to a magi named Farrokh-dâd, son of Bourâd (Fig. 3). These examples are openly in opposition to Zoroastrian scriptures. According to the sigillographic evidence, the bear has mostly a positive nature. It is often in the Pahlavi sources written after Islam that it is classified as one of the evil animals.

Scorpion

Although the scorpion is considered a poisonous evil creature in Zoroastrian religious scriptures (Anklesaria, 1956: 76), it is repeatedly depicted on Sassanian seals. The scorpion is commonly displayed on the seals alongside many divine and sacred symbols and figures, such as chamrosh, lion, cow, sun, moon, and Mithraic cross. The scorpion on Sassanian seals could easily be considered a symbol related to the cults of Mithra of the time (Soudavar, 2014: 79-81). The scorpion is mainly used as the central theme on seals next to the snake as the peripheral theme. In some cases where the scorpion takes a secondary role on a seal, it is depicted next to humans, animals, beasts, or other symbols. The only examples in the scriptures are the seals representing the rooster destroying the scorpion to demonstrate the excellent and beneficial nature of the rooster (Fig. 17). In Western Mithraism’s iconography, the scorpion is beneficial. And in the Iranian cults of Mithra, the scorpion also has a particular place (Brunner, 1978: 73). Consequently, the depiction of a scorpion on Sassanian seals could be considered carrying a symbolic relation to Mithra. It is, furthermore, noticed that wherever the description of the scorpion and a name of a god are accompanied, the inscription almost always contains a word related to Mithra (Soudavar, 2014: 81).

Another possible function of the scorpion theme on seals could be the one related to the zodiac and the belief that every particular zodiac sign impacts specific human organs. In this case, the image of the scorpion is related to genitalia (Bivar, 1969: 27). Scorpion is also observed on some seals with the theme of Gayomard (Fig. 15) and on some seals known as a group with Gayomard,



which are crowded by human and animal figures (Brunner, 1978: 72) (Fig. 41 and 58). Soudavar tries to relate these images to the festival of Kuseh, which was celebrated among herdsmen afterward the mid-winter (Soudavar, 2014: 84-86).

Moreover, scorpions could be a central theme in seals belonging to the Judaist community of the Sassanid era (Fig. 10). In general, the scorpion theme in Sassanid Empire is an excellent example of the impact of geographical and cultural factors on the usage of a graphic piece. Although scorpion is a recurring theme on seals by this time, it is, for example, never used as the central theme in Abu Nasr Palace (Qasr-i-Abu Nasr) and scarcely used as a minor theme (Frye, 1973) (Fig. 16: from Abu Nasr Palace). It is, hence, presumable that the scorpion theme gained more popularity in some particular provinces or inside some specific cultures.

Elephant

This animal holds a twofold nature. In some Pahlavi scriptures, the elephant has an evil spirit (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 284; Tafazzoli, 1975: 43 & 125-126). Bundahishn classifies the elephant as a lousy beast, which, besides the lion, can be tamed (Anklesaria, 1956: 129) and benefits man's advantage. In some other sources, the elephant is considered a reasonable creature. In one account, at the end of the world, Bahrâm varjâvand goes from Kabul or India toward Iran to help Iranians in their fight against the sinful and the enemies while riding his ornamented white elephant and accompanied by thousand elephants (Amouzgâr 1999: 83). Besides, some sources use a white elephant as a symbol of strength and kingship (Farahvashi 1999: 7). Epithets related to elephant are also utilized in Denkard to refer to heroism and strength.

Depiction of the elephant is not a common theme on Sassanian seals. Still, where it is found, visible features of the beast, such as colossal size and powerfulness, were considered (Brunner, 1978: 90). The inscription found in Qale Torshâb near the city Kashan is an excellent example showing the status of this animal in Sassanid era, where it is used as an epithet to the king Yazdegerd III (Solat, 2011: 101). The elephant is also used on a scribe's seal (Fig. 18). In one interesting case, the beast's body is carrying a human head (Fig. 21). In another case, an elephant is riding a chariot, the chariot is dragged by some rodents (mice?) (Fig. 20). This motif might be imported or copied from common themes in eastern frontiers of the Sassanid Empire. The deity Ganesha is usually depicted as an elephant accompanied by a rodent. According to the sigillographic and archaeological evidence, the elephant has beneficial nature, and only in some written sources created after Islam is it classified as an evil animal.

Felidae

A) Tiger, Panther, and Cheetah

According to Bundahishn, tiger, panther, and cheetah are one of the wolf species (Anklesaria, 1956: 128-129). During the millennium of Ushedar, all wolf species gathered together at the same place, copulated, and produced a giant "wolf". The Zoroastrian believers will destroy this beast (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 313-314). As for the cheetah, this animal is known as the fruit of coitus between Yima's sister and a div, and hence, considered an evil animal (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 224). Another source emphasizes the importance of slaying beasts such as lions and panthers (Dhabhar, 1909: 93). It is even indicated that killing one hundred cheetahs has a divine reward equal to that of one whole year of Yasht Ab and Gathas (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 268). Themes of tiger, panther, and cheetah could be found frequently on Sassanian seals, although not as frequent as those of lion. It usually takes much work to accurately identify the depicted beast due to the low quality of engravements. Only in very few examples the depicted animal could be accurately determined. Animals, such as tigers, panthers, and cheetahs, are classified as evil animals only



in sources created after Islam. Probably during the Sassanid era, these animals were not considered evil. At this time, they were picked up on the merits of their natural features.

B) Lion

One of the most common themes on Sassanian seals is undoubtedly the lion. Zoroastrianism denounces the lion as an evil animal, and Bundahishn classifies the lion under the wolf species (Anklesaria, 1956: 128-129). During the millennium of Ushedar, all wolf species gathered together at the same place copulated together, and produced a giant “wolf”. The Zoroastrian believers will destroy this beast (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 313-314). Nevertheless, this did not striped lion of its royal manner and heroic character. Pursuing traditions far more ancient than the Sassanian one, the lion is the most common animal theme (Friedenberg, 2008: 17). Characteristics such as stiffness, courage, forcefulness, and aggression are some reasons for the popularity of this theme alongside the history of Iran. Lion is the most frequent theme among animal seal impressions of Takht-e Sulaiman (Göbl, 2005: 62). Even though the lion has a prominent status in both Roman Mithraism and Iranian cults of Mithra, inscriptions on seals fall short of confirming such importance (Bivar, 1969: 26). However, the lion remains the main symbol of the sun, and its presence on seals, beside scorpion, confirms its relation to Mithra (Soudavar, 2014: 81). In Mithraism, the lion has a connection to Mithra, and wherever visual representation demonstrates lion devouring cow, the content is a symbol of Mithra’s abundant benediction. However, this aspect of Mithra’s benediction, represented as a lion, was not adopted in Manichaeism. Zoroastrianism also considers the lion an animal created by Ahriman (Brunner, 1978: 94). Lion, eventually, turned out to be a symbol of evil in both Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism (Bahâr, 2007: 62). Lion is represented in Bundahishn as one of the foul beasts.

“[...] [Beasts are] not in the manner of noxious creatures. There are even some whom men avoid on account of fear, and there are some who are delighted with desire, such as the elephant and the lion, [...]” (Anklesaria, 1956: 129).

Another source praises slaying beasts such as lions (Dhabhar, 1909: 93). Slaying a lion brings divine reward for the man (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 269). Nevertheless, it seems that engraving lion on seals brought good luck to the owner and was not considered to “interfere with the animal’s royal status and heroic significance” (Brunner, 1978: 94). Zoroastrian sources have no explicit descriptions relating the lion to the mythological or astrological context. However, it is still likely that depictions of a lion without wings could be connected to astrological inclinations.

Lion is primarily depicted in scenes devouring cow or antelope and, in some cases, eating deer or mouflon (Fig. 21-26). In a few examples, the lion is depicted devouring a winged horse (Brunner, 1978: 94-96) (Fig. 41). Lion is also shown being hunted by or fighting humans (Fig. 47-48). There is, noticeably, a theme from the Sassanid era in which a man is standing beside two lions (Fig. 46). Some of these examples refer to the story of Daniel in the lions’ den. Daniel’s story was a respectful story among both Judaist and Christian communities. However, Gyselen dismisses the idea that Daniel in the lions’ den is a Christian theme by putting forward two scarce examples where the inscription in Sassanian Pahlavi reads: “Reliance on the gods”. She explains that this is in apparent contradiction to Christian doctrine. He suggests that the Daniel theme is a continuation of heroic traditions and may have some Judo-Christian content. After all, it should be pointed out that, contrary to brave rules where the hero is depicted challenging the beast, here in Daniel, themes on seals, the human is not touching or holding animals. This seems to be more by the biblical account of Daniel’s story (Friedenberg, 2008: 24). The Daniel theme is also a significant theme on seals belonging to the Judaist community (Fig. 30).



A lion is also depicted while suckling its cubs (Fig. 33). But in one very extraordinary case, a lion is depicted suckling two human babies (Fig. 42). This could be an attempt to adapt the Roman account of a wolf breastfeeding Romulus and Remus into Sassanian culture. In some examples, the bust or head of the lion is connected to the figure or leader of some other beneficial animals (Fig. 43-45). In others, the lion's head stands next to the human head (Fig. 49) or some other helpful animal (Fig. 27 and 45). Some seals carrying lion themes also contain a name of a Zoroastrian priest (Fig. 29 & 32). These recent examples are in overt opposition to Zoroastrian instructive regulations. Finally, according to evidence, the lion appears on seals in most cases because of its physical features. This animal is famous to Zoroastrian priests and the Christian, Judaist, and Mithraist elite. Although on many seals lion is depicted being hunted, and in some Pahlavi sources created after Islam (such as *Bundahishn* and *Revâyat Pahlavi*), there is an emphasis on slaying this beast, it could be concluded that the lion theme is one of the prevalent themes in Sassanid era and lacked a malicious content.

Serpent and Dragon

A) Serpent:

The serpent is a carnation of Ahriman himself:

"[The Evil Spirit] like a serpent, he (forthwith wished) to drag the Sky underneath the Earth (and to break it)" (Anklesaria, 1956: 76).

Bundahishn advises against slaying this creature:

"One says that the noxious creatures are all sorcerers and the serpent is the most sorcerous, and does not die unless they kill it" (Anklesaria, 1956: 127).

Bundahishn explains that the winged serpent is the evillest of all (Anklesaria, 1956: 126). Most scriptures encourage believers to destroy this creature. During the millennium of Ushedarmah, all serpent species gather together at the same place, and all copulate together and produce a giant "serpent". The Zoroastrian believers will destroy this beast (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 316). *Vendidad* teaches that the dragon or red serpent is a calamity for the land of Iranweh (Doostkhah, 2006: 659). It further instructs that as a penalty for smiting a water dog; one should kill ten thousand "snakes of those that go upon the belly" and ten thousand "snakes with the shape of a dog" (Doostkhah, 2006: 817-818). A serpent is present on seals representing a group with Gayomard, crowded by numerous animal and human figures (Brunner, 1978: 72) (Fig. 16 and 53). Serpent is also on seals with the theme of Gayomard, usually wrapping around the monster's staff. *Soudavar* relates this theme to the festival of Kuseh, a festival celebrated among herders after the mid-winter (Fig. 39 and 50). He further points out the relation between the serpent and the so-called 'Mithraic' creatures by considering the iconography of Mithra alongside an examination of the appearance of the theme of the serpent in sources from Iran's historical period and neighbouring lands (*Soudavar*, 2014: 86).

The serpent's evil nature is demonstrated in images where it attacks beneficial animals (Fig. 59 & 64). This *xrafstar* could hardly be found as the central theme of seals. In some examples, the serpent forms a part of the peripheral ring that encircles the prominent depiction or the peripheral circle around the seal (Fig. 13 & 37). In some examples, this evil animal surrounds the whole peripheral area of the seal. In these cases, the serpent is usually depicted as swallowing its tail (Fig. 61-63). This representation of the serpent could be identified as the symbol of the ouroboros. This theme was a symbol of life, death, and rebirth in Egypt, Greece, and Rome and was very common among followers of Hermeticism, Gnosticism, and Alchemy (Guiley, 2006: 233-235). Since followers of these factions were among the people of the Sassanid Empire, these



seals likely belonged to them.

B) Dragon

Sassanian scriptures classify dragons as serpent species. Dragon is known to be one of the evillest animals (Anklesaria, 1956: 126). It is usually depicted as a two-headed serpent (Fig. 60) or a multi-headed one. Among Sassanian seals, one particular theme could be found in which the god Bahrâm, or maybe Hercules or Garshâsb, is depicted fighting a multi-headed serpent, most likely Hydra (Fig. 61). In another one, a hero is shown fighting a serpent-man (Fig. 62). In some other images, specific to Sassanid era, a monster with the head of a dragon is depicted swallowing a bull, or a bird, or attacking an escaping horse. This theme could be related to the evil nature of dragons (Fig. 64-65).

Wolf

Written sources introduce the wolf as a lethal evil animal. Wolf is the animal who tried to devour newborn Zoroaster but failed the divine's grace, and his jaws stuck together (Rashed-Mohassel, 2010: 221-222). In a mythological account, Zoroaster is killed by the hands of a man from the hostile country of Turan, who was either turned into a wolf or had the ways of a wolf (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 313 & 482).

One says in the Scripture, "The Evil Spirit produced the dark and thievish wolf, the worthiest of darkness [...]" (Anklesaria, 1956: 128).

During the millennium of Ushedar, all wolf species gathered together at the same place, copulated, and produced a giant "wolf". The Zoroastrian believers will destroy this beast (Mirfakhraie, 2006: 313-314). All scriptures instruct us to slay this beast (Dhabhar, 1909: 93; Doostkhah 2006: 811). This is probably why the wolf is not a common theme on Sassanian seals. Wolf themes commonly depict a she-wolf suckling two offspring of another creature. A frequent theme in mythological narratives is that a she-beast breastfeeds a human baby. The most famous ones in Iran are the stories of Zoroaster and Cyrus the Great, besides the favorite Roman tale of Romulus and Remus (Amouzgar & Tafazzoli, 2010: 37). It is noteworthy that as for seals, the babies are not necessarily human; the she-wolf could be suckling two wolf cubs or any other animal cubs (Azarpay, 1988: 354-355) (Fig. 66-69).

In general, the theme of the she-wolf breastfeeding two babies on Sassanian seals is very similar to the Roman coins in both style and form; and are certainly designed by Roman artisans (Frye, 1973: 44). Consequently, these seals seem to be representations of the story of Romulus and Remus (Brunner, 1978: 76). Since the theme is also found on a seal belonging to a scribe (Fig. 68), it presumably did not carry any negative connotations. In some seals, a hero (Fereydoun?) is depicted fighting a wolf (?) (Fig. 68 & 70). This may be a reference to the evil nature of this beast. In one peculiar recurring theme, wolf (?) is depicted dancing with a human and some other animals (Fig. 16). Gyselen tends to put these themes, where a wolf is usually present and is commonly referred to as a group with Gayomard, into the category of magical seals which had a usage as talisman or amulets (Gyselen, 1995). In conclusion, the wolf seems to show a positive nature toward seals when it is depicted suckling. But in any other situation, visual representations seem to be by the written sources in describing the evil nature of the wolf.

Analysis and Conclusion

Among the evil animals, xrafstarân is only a bear that Bundahishn considers a human species.

However, the bear is known in the scripture as the fruit of coitus between Yima and a female fairy and hence, classified as an evil animal. No sign of harmfulness is observed on Sassanian seals depicting a bear. One particular seal belonging to a Magi named Farrokh-dâd, son of Bourâd, represents a bear next to a canine animal (Fig. 3). What this seal illustrates is in opposition to the written religious sources. Here we have a good example that shows the bear was not depicted as an evil symbol but enjoyed positive attention from elites and even Sassanian Zoroastrian priests.

The scorpion, sometimes depicted next to the lion, is a significant icon among those related to the cults of Mithra. And the extensive use of scorpions on Sassanian seals is explainable by its relation to this religion. Themes where a rooster is depicted hunting a scorpion are by religious writings and demonstrate the rooster's beneficial nature versus the scorpion's evil one. These depictions could belong to those followers of Zoroastrianism who believed the scorpion was among the creations of Ahriman. Some images of a scorpion on seals could also be related to zodiac signs or spells associated with genitalia. These superstitions were popular among different groups and communities throughout Sassanid Empire, including Zoroastrians.

As for the elephant, the animal is used as an epithet for the Sassanid king, Yazdgerd III, and it is also depicted on a seal belonging to a scribe. Therefore, this animal is beneficial rather than evil; as stated in written sources, only in some sources written after Islam is that elephant classified as an xrafstar.

Animals, such as tigers, panthers, and cheetahs, are considered evil only in sources written after Islam. In all likelihood, rather than being viewed as xrafstar during the Sassanid era, they were regarded by their natural features.

The lion is the most depicted animal on Sassanian seals. Most of these themes have a relation to Mithraism. Apart from its natural features and strength, the lion has a prominent status in the symbolism of Mithra. The lion, as a symbol for the sun, especially when it comes next to the scorpion, is a clear motif related to this god. It is also an unmistakable mark of the seal owner's intention to show off this relationship. Moreover, depictions of a lion devouring a bull could be regarded as related to Mithraism. In one example, this theme is depicted on a seal next to an inscription of the word "Magi" (Fig. 38).

Another theme on Sassanian seals involving lions is the one where a man is between two lions. Inscriptions on these seals usually reveal that they belong to Judaist or Christian communities. This theme is most likely a representation of the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Therefore, these representations are hard to be connected to a Zoroastrian community of the time. They are most likely linked to other religions present in the Sassanid society. One very peculiar theme with mythological motifs is a depiction of lion suckling two human babies. This particular theme could signify attempts to borrow and adopt the Roman legend of Romulus and Remus into the culture of the Sassanid society.

Themes, where the lion's head is depicted next to leaders of other beneficial animals, could assert that role-shifting of the animal mentioned in the scriptures; namely, when the lion is tamed, it could become one of the valuable animals. A significant part of lion themes depicted on seals, rather than being by written sources in displaying an evil animal, exhibit the prominent status this animal enjoyed in the Sassanian society. Depictions on seals reveal that besides Zoroastrianism, the lion is related to the cults of Mithra and even Judaism and Christianity. The lion theme was considerably popular among Zoroastrian priests (Frye, 1973; Göbl, 2005). This indicates that, at least during the Sassanid era, the lion motif was not evil.

According to Sassanian scriptures, the serpent is one of the worst evil animals. It is scarcely

depicted as the central theme of Sassanian seals. Although some relations between Mithraism, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, and Alchemy and the music of serpent on seals could not be ruled out, it is mainly depicted as a brutal animal attacking beneficial ones.

Dragon is usually depicted either while attacking beneficial animals or while being hunted by a hero. This demonstrates that the dragon is an evil animal.

Wolf's depictions are significantly related to the Roman myth of Romulus and Remus. Depicting this evil beast suckling two human babies is most likely associated with Roman mythology, well-known in the Sassanian society. These examples are also very close to Roman coins in engraving styles. In one exceptional instance, a seal carrying this theme belongs to an administrative officer named Goshnasb, the scribe (Fig. 68). Most wolf depictions on seals show the evil nature of the animal. Wolf theme is also present on some seals, which were probably talismans and amulets. In some other cases, the wolf is attacked by a hero.

In general, remarkable discords and apparent disagreements could be observed by comparing written scriptures to Sassanian seals. More specifically, the depictions of roosters destroying scorpions and heroes slaying lions, bears, wolves, and serpents are the only themes in the descriptions of the written scriptures. In every other example, the animal theme can be interpreted as a beneficial animal. Some inscriptions even indicate the positive mentality of some elites of the society and of the Zoroastrian priests toward these animals. It should be noted that during the Sassanid era and inside the religion we now call Zoroastrianism, different schools of thought and even contrary doctrines co-existed. To the extent that the religious narrative, which was chosen by the Sassanid king Ardashir Bâbakân and declared by him as the official religion of the Empire, was even considered a deviation and a perversion by some other Zoroastrian priests and was not successful in gaining widespread acceptance (Daryaei, 2012: 61). It is, therefore, likely that what some group of Zoroastrian priests declared as forbidden, some other found desirable. It should be noted, however, that Zoroastrian sources have problems concerning the interpretation, compilation, and age of the texts they recount. The only decisive conclusion this study seems to draw is that the Sassanian administration did not show any prohibition or strictness regarding using themes that followers of various religions would favour. Different factions of Zoroastrians, regardless of their denominations, along with followers of Christianity, Judaism, Mithraism, Gnosticism, and many others, were all free to use their favourite themes on their seals.

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Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals







A. Bear		
No.	Description	Figure
1	Bear's head. Moon's crescent is also visible on the seal. Carnelian. Dome. 0.8*1.24*1.24. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 498 :1399, Fig 2183.	
2	A bear is walking. Inscription: (Hebrew). The father (?) Chalcedony. Bezel. 2*1.1*1.7. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 498 :1399, Fig 2192.	
3	A bear is walking, and a canine animal is next to the bear. Inscription: (Pahlavi). Plhwd't ZY mgw ZY bwr'ts(l)m'n, "Farrox-dād, magus, son of Bōrād -(sarm)" Agate. Dome. 1.9*1.93*1.39. Gignoux & Gyselen, 89-88 :1982, pl XIII, Fig 30.8.	
4	A bear is sleeping. Inscription: (Pahlavi). panāh ō yazdān..., "reliance on the gods ..." Jasper. Dome. 1.57*1.74*1.27. Gyselen, 109 :1993, pl XVIII, Fig 30.D.7.	
5	A man is fighting a bear rising on its back feet; the man is holding one of the bear's hands by one hand and holding a sword towards the beast in the other hand. Inscription: (Pahlavi). 'NH wymyn snpl'm, "it's me, vēmēn, son of samb-rām?" Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.77*2.83*2.34. Gignoux & Gyselen, 55 :1982, pl VI, Fig 13.9.	
6	A man with a spear is fighting a bear rising on its back feet; the moon's crescent and a star are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). gwšnspy [ZY?...]h..., "...-gušnasp, son of...?" Chalcedony. Dome. 2.03*2.21*1.57. Gignoux & Gyselen, 55 :1982, pl VI, Fig 13.10.	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

7	<p>An eagle is attacking a sleeping bear. Inscription: (Pahlavi). maštag.... šty, "maštag....". Carnelian. Bezel. 1.16*1.54*0.3. Gyselen, 142 :1993, pl XXXV, Fig 33.34.</p>	
8	<p>A bear's head, a cow's head, a mouflon's head, and a Persian onager's? Heads are connected with curved lines. Onyx. Bezel. 0.5* 0.8*1.2. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 527 :1399, Fig 2631</p>	
B. Scorpion		
No.	Description	Figure
9	<p>A scorpion, a moon's crescent, and a star are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). mtr'twłwšnsy lwb'n HZYTN, "look at the soul of Mihr-Ādur-Višnasp!" Agate. Dome. 2.17*2.3*1.92. Gignoux & Gyselen, 108 :1982, Fig 30.94.</p>	
10	<p>Moon's crescent and a star; a scorpion is visible at the bottom of the seal. Inscription: (Hebrew). Abba bar Malka(?), "Abba son of Malka(?)" Sardonyx. 1.78 Friedenberg, 51 :2009, Fig 42.</p>	
11	<p>A scorpion inside a triangle; at the triangle's vertex, the moon's crescent and two ribbons are engraved. Carnelian. Ellipsoid. 1.2*1.4*2.1. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 536 :1399, Fig 2759.</p>	
12	<p>Two scorpions of different sizes; a star is also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). dānīr, "Dānīr" Onyx. Bezel. 0.78*0.97. Gyselen, 143 :1993, pl XXXVI, Fig 33.57.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals







13	A scorpion. A serpent encircled all around the scorpion. Lapis lazuli. 0.28. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 506 :1399, Fig 2320.	
14	A man is holding a flower; a scorpion is in front of the man; the moon's crescent, a star, and a plant branch are also visible on the seal. Cornelian. Bezel. 0.3*1.3*1. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 462 :1399, Fig 1559.	
15	Gayomard (?) holds a staff in hand; a dog accompanies him; a serpent wraps around one of the staff, and a scorpion is on the other. Agate. Conoid. 3.36*3.36*2.99. Gyselen, 81 :1993, pl IV, Fig 10.D.2.	
16	Gayomard (?) with a man and a wolf (?) standing on its back feet; all figures are holding hands and dancing; the wolf (?) has a staff in its hand; a scorpion, a rooster, and a dog (?) are also visible on the seal. Chalcedony. 1.6. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 485 :1399, Fig 1976.	
17	A rooster is walking and hunting a scorpion. Inscription: (Pahlavi). [t] wl'wh[l]mzd ZY mgw ZY 'twl'whlmzd'n, "Ādur-Ohrmazd, magus, son of Ādur-Ohrmazd" Chalcedony. Dome. 1.9*1.96*1.4. Gignoux & Gyselen, 103 :1982, pl XVI, Fig 30.71.	
C. Elephant		
No.	Description	Figure
18	An elephant's head. Inscription: (Pahlavi). mštky l'y dpywr, "Muštag, scribe of Rey." Garnet, almandine. 1.09*1.5*0.89. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 506 :1399, Fig 2308.	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals




19	<p>An elephant is walking. Inscription: (Pahlavi). hrtwyh ZY nrsh'n, "Xrad-veh, son of Narseh." Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.64*2.5*2.04. Gignoux & Gyselen, 92 :1982, pl XIV, Fig 30.24.</p>	
20	<p>An elephant on a chariot drawn by four mice? Inscription: (Pahlavi). l'sty, "Truthful" Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.65*2.2*1.73. Gyselen, 113-112 :2007, Fig 33.3.</p>	
21	<p>An elephant that its body is fused into a human's upper body; a scorpion and a star are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). Sydwprnw, "Sêd-farr" Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.54*2.18*1.78. Gignoux & Gyselen, 140 :1982, pl XXIII, Fig 40.64.</p>	
22	<p>A creature mixed up of some animals' features; the creature has an elephant's head; its body has a lion's head; its back has a human's face on it, and it has feet like a bird. Inscription: (Pahlavi). pē[rōz] (va)rēn abestān ō yazdān, "pē[rōz?]- (va)rīn(?) reliance on the gods" Cornelian. Bezel. 1.16*1.2*0.25. Gyselen, 152 :1993, pl XL, Fig 40.C.12.</p>	
D. Felidae		
No.	Description	Figure
23	<p>A tiger is walking. Inscription: (Pahlavi). mardōy, "Mardōy" Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.14*1.64*1.35. Gyselen, 109 :1993, pl XVIII, Fig 30.D.1.</p>	
24	<p>A panther/cheetah is hunting a mouflon; both animals are standing on their back feet. Inscription: (Pahlavi). lywmtly ZY dwstkn, "Rev-Mihr, son of Dōstāg" Jasper. Ellipsoid. 1.64*2.1*1.9. Gignoux & Gyselen, 122 :1982, pl XIX, Fig 33.13.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

<p>25</p>	<p>Profile of a lion's head. Chalcedony. Dome. 2.34*2.4*1.81. Gignoux & Gyselen, 111 :1982, pl XVIII, Fig 30.107.</p>	
<p>26</p>	<p>Profile of a lion's head. Chalcedony. Dome. 2.34*2.4*1.81. Gignoux & Gyselen, 111 :1982, pl XVIII, Fig 30.107.</p>	
<p>27</p>	<p>A lion mask; a star is visible on top of the head. Inscription: (Pahlavi). [p]n'hy `l yzd'n klpk TB, "reliance on the gods is a good act." Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.73*2.27*1.83. Gignoux & Gyselen, 141 :1982, pl XXIV, Fig 40.71.</p>	
<p>28</p>	<p>Two lion heads connected in a way that each one is upside down to the other; two Persian onagers? Heads are on each side of the lion heads. 1*1.4*1.3. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 501 :1399, Fig 2230.</p>	
<p>29</p>	<p>A lion is walking; the moon's crescent and a monogram are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). m'h dyny ZY mgw ZW zwrw'nd't/ m'hdyt zy mgw zy zwrw nd t n, "Mahdad the magus, son of Zurvan-dad" Agate. Dome. 1.9*1.9. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 502 :1399, Fig 2244.</p>	
<p>30</p>	<p>A lion is walking. Inscription: (Hebrew). Hadā bar Hiyyā , "Hada son of Hiyyā" Banded Chalcedony. 1.6. Friedenberg, 46 :2008, Fig 34.</p>	
<p>31</p>	<p>A lion is walking. Inscription: (Hebrew). Hadā bar Hiyyā , "Hada son of Hiyyā" Banded Chalcedony. 1.6. Friedenberg, 46 :2008, Fig 34.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

<p>32</p>	<p>A lion is sleeping; a scorpion is also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). bā(m) ī mog ī mahan, "bām, magus, son of mäh" Jasper. Conoid. 2.18*2.18*1.82. Gyselen, 112 :1993, pl XIX, Fig 30.E.35.</p>	
<p>33</p>	<p>A lion is suckling its cub. Inscription: (Pahlavi). y/ zty'?' "god is?" Heliotrope. Ellipsoid. 1.3*1.3*1.6. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 503 :1399, Fig 2268.</p>	
<p>34</p>	<p>A couple of lions (male and female?); the female is lying on the ground, and the male is standing in front of her; the moon's crescent and two stars are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). ? Chalcedony. Dome. 1.87*2.14*1.54. Gyselen, 134 :1993, pl XXX, Fig 30.X.2.</p>	
<p>35</p>	<p>Two lions are rising on their back feet. Inscription: (Pahlavi). vīrzan, "vīrzan"(?). Jasper. Dome. 1.77*1.9*1.5. Gyselen, 135 :1993, pl XXX, Fig 30.X.3.</p>	
<p>36</p>	<p>A lion is hunting an antelope. Inscription: (Pahlavi). <hy, "Brother." Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.7*1.8*2.3. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 503 :1399, Fig 2272.</p>	
<p>37</p>	<p>A lion attacks a mouflon from behind; the mouflon sits and carries a ribbon on its neck. Agate. 1.8*2.3*1.8. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 504 :1399, Fig 2276.</p>	



Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals








<p>38</p>	<p>A lion is attacking a cow from behind. Inscription: (Pahlavi). ī mog, “ ..., magus” Gyselen, 140 :1993, pl XXXIII, Fig 33.12.</p>	
<p>39</p>	<p>A lion sprang upward and left (right when impressed) at the hindquarters of a kneeling stag; the deer carries a ribbon on its neck. Inscription: Chalcedony. Bezel. 1.9*1.2*1.4. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 505 :1399, Fig 2301.</p>	
<p>40</p>	<p>Two lions are rising on their back feet; an eagle is flying over the lion's head. Agate. Ellipsoid. 2.3*1.7*2.8. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 505 :1399, Fig 2304.</p>	
<p>41</p>	<p>A lion is attacking a winged horse from behind. Hematite. Dome. 1.67*1.9*1.36. Gyselen, 143 :1993, pl XXXVI, Fig 34.1.</p>	
<p>42</p>	<p>A lion is suckling two human babies; the moon's crescent and an unfilled circle are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi).? Agate. 1.7*2. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 506 :1399, Fig 2307.</p>	
<p>43</p>	<p>The upper bodies of a lion and a mouflon are connected upside down to each other from the waist. Cornelian. Bezel. 0.8*1.1*1.6. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 525 :1399, Fig 2607.</p>	
<p>44</p>	<p>The upper bodies of a lion and a cow are connected upside down to each other from the waist. Agate. Bezel. 1.14*1.26*0.7. Gyselen, 138 :1993, pl XXXII, Fig 30.Y.25.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals








45	A geometrical form shaped by connecting a lion's head, an antelope's head, and two other indistinguishable animals; the moon's crescent and a star are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi). <p<st>n, "abestân(?)" Chalcedony. Ellipsoid. 1.2*1.74*1.44. Gyselen, 113-112 :2007, Fig 30.J.2.	
46	Daniel (?) is standing between two lions. Cornelian. Bezel. 0.2*1.4*1.4. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 451 :1399, Fig 1409.	
47	A woman is fighting a lion rising on its back feet; the woman is controlling the beast by seizing its hand. Inscription: (Pahlavi). 'pst'n 'L yzd'n, "reliance on the gods." Agate. Ellipsoid. 1.78*2.2*1.8. Gignoux & Gyselen, 54 :1982, pl VI, Fig 13.5.	
48	A man armed with a spear is fighting a lion. Limonite. Dome. 1.43*1.97*2.01. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 458 :1399, Fig 1508.	
49	A man's bust over a lion's head; the man has earrings and a necklace, and the lion's head has two wings on both sides. Chalcedony. Ellipsoid. 1.55*2.48*1.99. Gyselen, 104 :1993, pl XVI, Fig 20.I.4.	
E. Serpent and Dragon		
No.	Description	Figure
50	A serpent is coiling next to a tree. Inscription: (Pahlavi). (r?)ādag. Cornelian. Ellipsoid. 1.4*2.47*1.93. Gyselen, 134 :1993, pl XXX, Fig 30.T.18.	
51	Human's eye; there is a serpent, a bird, a scorpion, another animal (?), and some arrows around the eye. Jasper. Bezel. 1.85*1.85*0.91. Gyselen, 139 :1993, pl XXXIII, Fig 31.6.	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

<p>52</p>	<p>A human is raising his hands (in prayer?), an eagle is carrying a cow's head, and a serpent and an undistinguishable animal are also present. Chalcedony. Ellipsoid. 2.5*3.1*2.45. Gignoux & Gyselen, 49 :1982, pl V, Fig 10.54.</p>	
<p>53</p>	<p>Gayomard (?) is accompanied by two other humans and walking; a serpent, a running camel, a rooster, a downward-facing dog (?), and some other undistinguishable animals are also present. Agate. Dome. 2.1*2.2. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 485 :1399, Fig 1971.</p>	
<p>54</p>	<p>A giant (Gayomard?) is standing at the center of the seal; two serpents are wrapping around his staffs, and a rooster is standing atop each team; two dogs (?), two geese (?), two scorpions, a cat (?), a rabbit, and another undistinguishable animal are also visible on the seal; a wolf is suckling two human babies; moon' crescent and a star are also at the top of the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi).? Agate. Bezel. 3.3. Gyselen, 37 :1995, Fig 2B.</p>	
<p>55</p>	<p>A mouflon sits, and a serpent (?) is coiling around its feet. Inscription: (Pahlavi). 'phwr, "Ab-Khvar." Cornelian. Bezel. 0.1*1. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 495 :1399, Fig 2139.</p>	
<p>56</p>	<p>Four birds are sitting on a tree; a serpent is climbing the tree. Agate. Dome. 1.4*1.55*1.25. Gyselen, 119-118 :2007, Fig 50.5.</p>	
<p>57</p>	<p>A human that a serpent is wrapping around him. Gyselen, 53 :1995, Fig 1.</p>	
<p>58</p>	<p>A lion is walking; a serpent biting its tail encircles the lion; the moon's crescent and a star are also visible on the seal. Hematite. Dome. 1*1.3*1.4. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 501 :1399, Fig 2239.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

<p>59</p>	<p>A monogram encircled by a serpent (?); the serpent is biting its tail. Cornelian. Ellipsoid. 1.1*1*1.3. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 537 :1399, Fig 2783.</p>	
<p>60</p>	<p>A buffalo stands to the left (right when impressed) with a two-headed snake wound around its feet. Inscription: (Pahlavi). ? Agate. Ellipsoid. 3*2.3*1.8. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 507 :1399, Fig 2344.</p>	
<p>61</p>	<p>A rider with an aura around his head attacks a multi-headed serpent with his spear. Inscription: (Pahlavi). m[‘h]d[‘t], “mahdad” Chalcedony. Dome. 1.5*2. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 448 :1399, Fig 1374.</p>	
<p>62</p>	<p>A naked man is holding a branch in his hand and is fighting a monster with a human head; two serpents grow out of the monster’s body. Moon’s crescent and two stars are also visible on the seal. Jasper. Bezel. 1.85*1.85*0.91. Gyselen, 87 :1993, pl VIII, Fig 14.2.</p>	
<p>63</p>	<p>A dragon’s head. Cornelian. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 479 :1399, Fig 1863.</p>	
<p>64</p>	<p>A monster’s head (a dragon?) is swallowing a cow. Inscription: (Pahlavi). r’y? Cornelian. Bezel. 0.3*0.9*1.1. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 479 :1399, Fig 1867.</p>	
<p>65</p>	<p>A dragon with two heads at each end and a curved and twisted winged body attack a horse from above. The horse runs to the left with its head turned to the right. Chalcedony. Ellipsoid. 2.19*1.76*2.78. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 479 :1399, Fig 1864.</p>	

Table 1: Description of Sassanid Seals

F. Wolf		
No.	Description	Figure
66	A wolf is suckling a human baby. A cross is also at the top of the seal. Sardonyx. Bezel. 1.88*2.13*0.44. Gignoux & Gyselen, 117 :1982, pl XIX, Fig 31.1.	
67	A wolf is suckling two human babies. Inscription: (Pahlavi).? Chalcedony. Bezel. Gyselen, 43 :1995, Fig 46B.	
68	A wolf is suckling a human baby and its cub; at the top of the seal, fighting scene of a hero against a beast (wolf?) that is rising on its back feet. Inscription: (Pahlavi). Goshnasp dibir, Sâsân. Agate. Dome. Gyselen,39 :1995, Fig 42.	
69	A wolf is suckling its two cubs; the moon's crescent and a star are also visible on the seal. Inscription: (Pahlavi).? Gyselen,38 :1995, Fig 36B.	
70	A hero (Fereydoun?) is attacking a wolf (?) with his bull-headed mace; the beast is standing on his back feet, and its genitalia are revealed. Jadeite. Double seal. 2*1.8*2.2. Brunner, 76-75 :1978, Fig 153a.	
71	A man armed with spear attacks a wolf (?); the moon's crescent and a star are also visible on the seal. Chalcedony. Dome. 1.4*1.73*1.24. Gyselen, 97 :2007, Fig 13.1.	
72	A mouflon and a cow are sitting on either side of a tree; a wolf (?) is moving toward the cow. Chalcedony. 1.5*2.59. Ekhtesasi & Khanmoradi, 495 :1399, Fig 2149.	