

Analysis and Consideration of Sociological Effect in Sasanian Period and its Relation with Symbolic Motifs in Sasanian art

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Abstract

Since the Sassanid era, many reliefs and seals have left and by reviewing their designs, the mythical and religious attitudes of those people can be understood. The purpose of this article is to decode and interpret the symbolic paintings and to review and study the myths, concepts, and religious rituals of this period. The question is that what the divine and human origin of the symbolic paintings and myths on reliefs, and seals over the Sasanian period is? In this regard, historical and archaeological evidences have been matched with each other, and checked using a technique called "Iconology". The result is that the powerful influence of mythical and religious attitudes of Zoroastrianism religion can be observed in divine and human symbolic paintings and myths in this period.

Keywords: Sasanian, Mythology, Sociological, Art.

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1. Introduction

Man uses symbolism to express concepts and concepts that cannot be expressed in plain language and to translate this symbolic language, one should refer to the commonly used myths of that age and try to recognize them. Because the language of myth is the symbolic language, and in artwork, it becomes a symbolic form and a magical function. Also, as to why the use of symbols, one can also consider that the man of the ancient age for the sacred display of some things or objects has led to the creation of symbols (Dadvar and Mansuri, 2007: 65).

In the Sassanid period, there was a close relationship between religion and government. This entanglement is mostly due to legitimacy of the formation of the imperial system was formed, through the use of symbolic and mythological elements in artistic artifacts built in the Sasanian era (Pop and Ackerman, 2008:143).

In the case of the motifs of the gods in the Sassanid prominent figures, it should be said that there is a direct relationship between the myths and rituals people have had that time. Among the issues to be mentioned in this period is the emergence of a multiplicity of religions and traditions, each of which, during its social life, has found adherents and advocates. The official religion of that period was Zoroastrianism, but Christianity, Manichaeanism, Zoroastrianism, Mesdakhia, and other religions were also freely prevalent. One can look at the traces of these religious attitudes in the designs of the mythological gods in the Sassanid prominences and seals.

In the Sassanid period, the great outcry of the iconoclastic mythology and mysticism can be somehow intertwined with religious beliefs, people and the proximity of religion and state in that historical period. Therefore, avoiding the reduction of sculptures and stamps in the Sassanid period to decorative and purely aesthetic elements and decoding them in order to obtain a proper understanding of the worldview and the beliefs of the people of the time are necessary. Indeed, the study of these instruments opens the door through which the level and quality of the Sassanid people's beliefs and the relationship between the government and people will be possible.

2. Research method

This research is of fundamental-type research and is based on the nature and method of historical-comparative research. In this research, a historical and archaeological aspect has been accorded to each other in order to achieve scientific and logical results. The collection of information in this research is also in the form of a documentary (library) and with the help of a method called "Iconology". By

applying the methods of pictorial or iconography and neogrammatism or iconography, there is a kind of combination between semiotics, social studies belonging to that age and anthropology. Iconography, by referencing the signs to cultural texts, refers to an understanding of how a motif can broadly explain cultural attitudes (Panofsky, 2009, p 26).

3. Review of Literature

In relation to the Sassanian art, researches have been carried out by Iranian and foreign scholars who in most cases have described the reliefs and stamps and designs. And in some cases, the concepts of reliefs and seals are also mentioned. James Hall has written in the Dictionary of Numbers of Symbols in the Art of East and West that the ancient man has created myths, symbols and rituals for the expression of the unknowns that he faced. Encoding or symbolism is an ancient knowledge tool and the oldest and most principled way of expressing concepts. The symbol is simply something that is used in place of something else or indicating it or implying it (Hall, 2014: 14).

Kasier, in his book, *Tongue and Myth*, states that if the form of the myth has a total systematic unity, the destiny of each of these forms will depend on another fate (Kasier, 2011: 54).

In his book *Mythology and Art*, Sattari states that mythological themes include ghosts, tufts, minivan living creatures, actors or elements of events. Crypto scopes are myths. Symbols are elemental materials that provide the texture of myth (Sattari, 2004: 24).

Dadvar and Mansouri in an article entitled "Study on the myths and symbols of Iran and India in the ancient era of ancient Iranian myths" state that ancient myths are not limited to cosmic battles and abstract concepts and ritual related characters to pay. But they also deal with legendary heroes, the king, the brave hero and the first physician. All this is about man and society, and the world and the holy place in ancient myths that Zoroastrians, and in some cases Hinduism, have described (Dadvar, Mansouri, 2007: 28-29).

In Armstrong's short history book, it is argued that myths are about the origin of things and have been created for unknowns, and it should also be added that myth was not merely a story to entertain (Armstrong, 2012: 1-3).

John Hinels writes in the *Book of Understanding the Mythology of Iran* that in the Zoroastrian religion, the myth and ritual are completely intertwined; it supports and justifies another (Hinels, 2013: 183-185). It should be noted that many researchers

have worked in this field, such as Ackerman (2008), Prada (1997), Girshman (2012) and Rubel Goebel (2005), each of them tried to identify their role and function in the Sassanid era.

4. Introduction of Sassanian arts

4.1. Reliefs

The role of the crowned part of the goddess in the role of Rustam (Image 1) depicts Artaxerh's victory over the disciples in a better way. The Ashkan Shah under the horse of Ardeshir, and the demon who represents darkness and evil, has fallen under the hoof of the horse of Ahura Mazda. This is a graphical representation of the anti-partisan spirits of the Sasanian kings.



Image 1. Naghshe Rustam: Shapur I victory over the Roman Emperor
(Source: Girshman, 2012, 146)

4.2. Seals

In the Sassanid period, engraving on precious or semi-precious stones has become very common. Sassanid seals and flowers are discovered from five important warehouses: Ghasr Abu Nasr near Shiraz, about 500 seals, Takht-e Soleiman in Azerbaijan about 300 seals, from Agh Tape or Old Turkmenistan is about 30th of October from the Kabudan Hill in Gorgan over 60 o'clock and also in a warehouse in Douine Armenia in which it has found more than 100 stamps. New sites containing seals and the effects of seals from Armenia have been discovered in recent years. It should be noted that these stamps belong to the Sassanid period and the early Islamic period (Ishraqi and Naderi Qarababa, 2008: 13).

The administrative stamp was made for priests and clerics of fire temples or officials such as the statistician, and the case of their use may have been those stamps since the reign of Qobad I have become more prevalent than before, and in terms of form, administrative seals have been larger than non-administrative ones (Perkhanian,1997: 214).

Also, due to the effect of the flies obtained on glomeruli in places like Takht-e-Solomon and Qasr Awes-esr from the period Sassanid, a group of people believe that these glimmers are labeled as packages or doors to confirm their quality or confirmation (Huff,1987: 378).

One of the remarkable points in Sasanian seals is the importance of myths and related symbols that these myths, mostly Zoroastrian myths, therefore, can be seen on the stamps that depict the Zoroastrian traditions and customs, and they almost reflect the religious and mythological attitude of the people of the Sasanian age.

4.3. The Image of Mythological God

4.3.1. Far Symbols

This concept refers to the universal expression of the force which is granted by the Lord to the chosen people and enters into the ability to perceive the need for the tangible bodies of "Farrah" in every position and position as a mythical-religious force. It finds superiority and mastery, such as light, fire, sun, the ring of authority of Simorgh, Shahin, pearl, lotus flower, and Quch (Riyazi, 1997: 89).

This role in the set of symbols of light has a multiple state, in a direction the symbol of the fire, and in another direction the sun's image, and also according to its identity, is a mystery of the presence of the "far". Chalipa also serves as the base of the Sassanid fireworks on a space that contains light and light rays. Another manifestation is the "oven" of a ring or circle, taken from the appearance of the sun and the circulation of the sky and the wheel of time which is influenced by the periodic perception of time and its circulation in Zoroastrianism passing from this perspective, we arrive at "Zervan" and the "Zarvan-parasty" ritual which was a pre-Zoroastrian goddess attributed to Far.

4.3.2. Farvahar

Farvahar in the Zoroastrian religion is the force that Ahura Mazda has sent from the sky to keep the good creature from the sky and it is the force that is created throughout its creation (Riyazi, 1997: 149). One of the hidden and spiritual forces that exist in all the creatures and creatures of the infinite world is that the soul is the being

in the body of man, and the whole essence of the world. In Taghe Bostan of Ahura Mazda, the star element has been rooted. The idea of creating Ahura Mazda's roles was through the same symbolic images (Ahmadi, 2006: 46).

4.3.3. Anahita

Of the gods that were very important in the Sassanid period, because Ardeshir Papakan and his nephews were the priest of the Anahita Temple. The position of this goddess is more than ever celebrated. His flower is a flower of the lotus and the flower of the sun. It is featured with the crown of the congressman and in fact the character of the mother of the god of Anahita is crowned. The inscriptions of the Sassanid covenant represent Anahita's majesty in this period (Karimi, 2003: 114).

Niloofer and Pomegranate are his manifestations (Soudavar, 2005: 78). In the relief of Naghshe Rostam near Persepolis, Nersi Shah Sassanid receives the ring of monarchy and ocher from Anahita (Image 2).

There are two roles of Venus in the vault of Bostan, one on the head and the other inside the arc; the inside of the arc in four meters high. Venus depicts this pearl corolla image with a long, hanging dangling on his feet and a heavy robe on his shoulder, the edge of which is embroidered with pearl strands, and reminiscent of the character of Venus in the Aban Yasht, It has its own (Soudavar, 2006: 78) (Image3).



Image 2. Naghshe Rostam: The scene of the Knight's Tale of the Goddess of Anahita
(Source: Girshman, 2012, 236)



Image 3. The Tower of Bostan: The first phase of the Taj of Ahura Mazda with the presence of the Anahita Goddess (Source: Girshman, 2012, 183)

Figurine is a woman in motifs. The woman who wears a tall shirt Sarband also; she has a jumper in her hand and on his back is also a star of eight full moon, because it is a symbol of Anahita, as well as the presence of symbols such as the moon and is also associated with fertility. The eight-pointed star of Anahita and the moon are also symbolic symbols of fertility associated with the moon's cold and rainy roads which in fact causes the rain to fall. And so it brings blessings and fertility. And in front of her is the role of a plant. The role of the plant that was carved in front of the woman also suggests the relation between the role of this seal and fertility and fertility. It is possible that the owner of this seal is one who has chosen such a role for gratitude for the worship or praise of the god Anahita, and it is likely that the owner has a role because the Sassanian women had a special significance to Anahita, and they had an affinity with this goddess who may have been able to raise their position to Anahita (Dadvar and Mansouri, 2006: 55) (Image4).



Image 4. Sassanid seal sitting with a woman who holds a jumper
(Source:<http://www.sigilla.at/HtmlEn/index.html>)

4.3.4. Mitra

The Mehr god is the symbol of the covenant, the blessed god, the god of war, the symbol of light and the sun, as well as a sign of love and it has been a friendship symbol and therefore the role of this goddess has been carved on Sassanid stones and seals. Mitra is a god who establishes order in the world; in Ancient Iran, the name of the god Mitra was called Mehr, and there were certain poems dedicated to this god which is called Mahrishat, and it probably dates back to 450 BC (Hinelz,2013: 121).

The wheel itself is a symbol of the world. In the ritual of mitraism, the ring is itself a symbol of the wheel. The ring and basically the circle of the holy form and its center is the center of unity and equality and originality from which everything originates (Dadvar and Mansouri, 2006:124). In the relief of Taq Bostan, we see the role of Ardashir II, who is missing the crown (or on the right). The stamp is on the left side; it has the sun's rays on its head and it stands on its lily symbol which is a sacred symbol. Seals are seen in Moody's clothing, but Artaxerxes II and Ormuzd are like Fatehi heroes standing on the enemy's body recessed (Image. 5). The right person is Shapur II, and the middle man is Ardeshir II (Hinles, 2004: 152).



Image 5. The Tagh Bostan: The scene of Ardeshir II's treadmill scene and the view of his victory on the enemy (Source: Flandin, 1981: 218)

One example of the role of the moon was obtained on the flat sign of the Sassanid period (Qasr Abu Nasr Fars) (Riyazi, 2014: 205). Another role of the crescent of the moon, along with the mysterious signs on the lazuli, is seen in the Wes-Hun collection.

4.3.5. Bahram (Varsarghane)

The Bahram goddess in the days of the Sasanians was the guardian and ruler of the goddess. This god is an abstract existence of an idea. Varsarghane means a breakdown of resistance. In the songs that belong to this god and is called Bahram Yasht, he is represented with ten incarnations (Hinles, 2013: 41).

One of the reasons for this Sassanid goddess is the name of several Sassanid kings of Bahram, and Bahram was the name of the greatest sacred ritual sacrificial group. One of the seals belonging to the Sassanid era has the role of a camel, one of the ten embodiments of the Bahram goddess (Image 6).



Image 6. Sassanid seal with the role of a camel that can be a visual representation of the goddess of Bahram (Source: <http://www.metmuseum.org>)

4.3.6. Azar

Azar goddess is considered by the son of Ahura Mazda and is a visible sign of his presence and a symbol of the true order of Ahura Mazda. (Hinlez, 2013: 47 and Amozegar, 1996: 35). Fire is a symbol of the sun and symbolizes the light and heat, as well as the symbol of life and for the reasons of its usefulness; it is the most complete sign of God among the Zoroastrians (Dadvar and Mansouri, 2006: 120-118). It is symbolized as a fire or as a figure in the fire which appears on the works of the Sassanid era, and perhaps it can be said that it is a symbol of the god of Azar as well as of Farah Izadi (Image 7).



Image 7. The Sassanid seal with the role of the God fire (Source: Girshman, 2011: 243)

4.3.7. Tishtar

The god of Tishtar, as a symbol of fertility and rain, was of great significance in the Sassanid period, and thus played an important role in the art of the Sassanid era, and found in the works of this period which related to the role of animals such as horses and cattle. A sample of this seal is presented based on the horseback riding on the margin of which the usual phrase "his god is Yazdan" means to entrench faith in God, and perhaps it can be said that this symbolizes the symbol of the goddess of the Tisper, the goddess of rain (Image 8). Also, the role of the star can be seen on the Sassanid reliefs and Sassanid seals from the goddess of Tysher (Dadvar and Mansouri, 2006: 118-116).



Image8. The Sassanid seal from the opal and the role of the horse, which on the margin of this phrase is his Optimism, is a God-centered one), and can be a symbol of the goddess of the god (Source: [http://www.sigilla.at/HtmlEn/index .html](http://www.sigilla.at/HtmlEn/index.html))

4.3.8. Kiomars (Giomorthane)

Kiomars is the first father of human race based on Zoroastrian mythology. He is considered to be the first human being that all the people have emerged from his seed, but he is also considered a divine being, since the son of Jurmada and Septanjmat (earth) are. The role of Kiomars in the Sassanid Seals is repeated many times and is in fact a symbol of the first man and the beginning of human creation, and he is the first person to revive on the Day of Judgment, and the owners of such seals seek to demonstrate the primordial human life and the commemoration of the first Human beings were Kiomars, or maybe they reminded that all people were born from his seed (Gholizadeh, 2014: 112-114).

5. Results

The Sassanid artist, in the roles of the mythological goddesses, is reluctant to express the reality, but is aiming at the aftermath. The spiritual concepts played an important role in the creation of the motifs of the mythological gods during this period, and the kings, using this spiritual force of the symbolic elements that were related to the people's beliefs and tried to legitimize their power; in other words, in the Sassanid rule, the king of the vale God was in the earth, and he linked himself to theology, and in this way he appeared to himself right. In the motifs of the mythological goddesses of this period, one can observe the powerful influence of the mythical and religious attitudes of Zoroastrianism, and most of the symbols used in it are Zoroastrian symbols that can be symbols related to Farah Yazidi and Fertility, one of the most important symbolic concepts of this design. The god of Anahita was also much more important in this period than before, because Ardeshir Papakan and prayer have been the priest of Anahita's temple, the status of this goddess is more and more celebrated. Of course, many symbols must also be taken from other cultures and religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, Mithraism, and so on. In Zoroastrian mythology, the goddesses and Amasaspandans are at the head of the creatures of Ahura Mazda, each representing one of the characteristics of Ahura Mazda. These gods are each tasked officer on behalf of Ahura Mazda, each of whom was a symbol of a special social character, that one can observe the influence of this attitude in the motifs of the mythological gods of this period and the ancient age has justified and interpreted all his actions and ideas with mythology as well as in art.

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