

Kings would appeal to her and sacrifice before her to bring abundance and fertility for nature, humans and animals.



Fig. 10. Anahita and Ahura Mazda granting crown to Khosrow Parviz in Taq-e Bostan. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 57.

Evidence and documents indicate the high status of women in Sasanian era including rock art, coins and stamps of this era.



Fig. 11. The figure of Anahita while blessing the Medal of Shapur I – Tang-e Qandil. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 57.

Endnote

*. This paper is rewriting of the paper "The status of women in Sasanian art" that has been published in Manzar magazine (Volume 1, Number 3, and winter 2009).

1. Babar: Bavari an aquatic animal, is called Fiber in Latin. The animal should not be mistaken with a tiger that lives on land and in Arabic called Namar (Doostkhah, 1982: 168).

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Fig. 7. Bahram Gur while hunting, the figure on a tray. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 57.



Fig.8. Anahita granting crown to Nersi - Naqsh-e- Rustam. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 57.



Fig. 9. Colorful Recreation of Taq-e Bostan. Painting: Rasoul Kashi, 2016

Conclusion

The status of women in Sasanian era has been based on the model Anahita fertility goddess of chastity and the Guardian of pure waters. Ancient Persians believed woman as a sacred symbol with affection and compassion, love and fertility, purity and beauty. Women in Sasanian

era had a great position as far as they reached a sacred and governmental position. The goddess Anahita is a dear, pure and beautiful Miss who has been the symbol of flowing waters, creation, Ahura Mazda true friend and model and supporter of women, Queen and virtuous women, and even



Fig. 5. Anahita, Sassanid tray. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 56.

is wavy wear like water waves and her crown is similar to the descriptions of Mehr Yasht of Avesta (Fig. 8).

• Anahita and Ahura Mazda crown granting to Khosrow Parviz in Tang-e- Bostan

Khosrow II, Sasanian last great king, had received glory from Ahura Mazda while Anahita is also prepared to grant glory, on the other side of Khosrow Parviz. Balanced position of Anahita and Ahura Mazda is quite evident in the scene. This shows that goddess of waters and pure Miss who is the symbol of blessing and fertility is next to King and symbolically flows water from a jug and wears a ring of pearl which is one of the marks of Anahita and related to water, and had a pearl crown on head and a pearl necklace which all are the symbols of water and waters' goddess. In Khosrow dress, also pearls are seen as droplets (Figs. 9 & 10).

• The figure of Anahita while blessing Shapur I – Tang-e- Qandil

The figure was made on the orders of Shapur I, son of Ardashir; who stood in the middle and laid his hand on his sword handle for respect is Shapur

and who stood behind him is his first son, Hormuz. Before Shapur there is a lady with beautiful flower on her head awarding a flower to Shapur (Fig. 11). It has been customary in ancient Iran that the elder and greater has given gifts to the younger. In this way, we can realize that this woman has had an excellent position. So she Anahita is the goddess of waters. Her full name was "Ardvysour Anahita" means "pure and strong Roaring River". Anahita was the goddess of waters, and water in a place like Iran meant all life. Anahita, has been also considered the goddess of love. It is noteworthy that some Western scholars have compared Anahita with goddesses such as "Ishtar" and "Diana", but in fact such a comparison is fundamentally wrong. Because Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess, believed in free love. Diana, hunting goddess is also against Anahita. Anahita duties, in addition to giving milk to women, and in other words to whole creatures are reducing pain and facilitating childbirth, while Diana, is suffering factor of women at the time of childbirth. Anahita after Ahura Mazda has been considered as the greatest goddess in Iran in Sasanian era. The flower that was given by Anahita to Shapur in the fifth figure is pomegranate flower, herbal symbol of Anahita. Her divine symbol is moon and her land symbol is in the form of a beautiful Miss.



Fig. 6. The figure of Bahram II and Queen while hunting in Mashhad. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 56



Fig. 3. Pourandokht coin, the child of Khosrow Parviz. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 55.

rock art and coins, women have been depicted by other covering, more than it. So the fig. of the plate is a copy of plates exported by countries such as Caucasus and Siberia, and then the regions' artists have represented Anahita in accordance with their cultural criteria.

Women higher than men

In Sasanian figs. women in addition to being at the same level and wife of the king, sometimes have been also depicted higher than men. This view in Sasanian era can be an emphasis on high status of women, especially court women as presented in the following examples:

•The fig. of Bahram II and Queen hunting in Mashhad

The first person on the right is Bahram II, and the next one is his wife, who unlike imaging tradition in ancient Iran has been depicted bigger than King. Before the two, Crown Prince has been depicted smaller. The larger size of the woman represents her respect. The name of this lady is "Shapurdokhtak", Bahram's cousin. In some other Sasanian coins she is considered as "Queen of Queens". The queen head is slightly higher than the king head with remarkable makeup and jewelry.

Mars is killing lions, killed a lion by one hand and moved toward another lion. He held his wife by other

hand to support. The Lady hair is braided and has a crown on her head. Her makeup is remarkable. Her necklace and posture are just like some figs. of Anahita. The person between them, wearing a hat with a scissors sign is probably Sasanian Kartir great priest (Fig. 6).

• **Bahram Gur while hunting, the fig. on a tray**
Bahram is seen riding a horse along with someone behind him hunting. The person, we do not know whether male or female, had a high position who accompanied the king on the hunt, but he is drawn smaller (in some sources the person is considered Azadeh, Bahram sweetheart, but since Sasanian women position was high and in previous figs. The person was drawn the same as or even bigger than King we can conclude that the person is not Azadeh); (Fig. 7).

Anahita, granting glory

Anahita status is to the extent that even the king considers his legitimacy by receiving glory from Anahita. Perhaps honoring the women is originated from this period regarding high status of Anahita.

• Anahita granting crown to Nersi - Naqsh-e-Rustam

Nersi is receiving glory from Anahita. Anahita dress



Fig. 4. The figure of King and Queen or Anahita on a metal plate. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 56.



Fig. 1. The figure of Ahura Mazda granting crown to Artashir - Naqsh-e- Rostam. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 54.

Here, Bahram III, Crown prince, other son of King and Kartir priest are present and behind Bahram three members of royal family are not present (Fig.2).

• The fig. of queen on coin

The fig. on coin (Fig. 3) is "Pourandokht" who is the sister of "Shiroyeh" the son of Khosrow Parviz and Maryam -daughter of Christian King of Rome. In this fig., Pouran has a beautiful crown with four precious jewels and on top of her crown a royal wing is also seen. The royal Wing is attributed to Anahita. Puran is depicted with very large eyes, which in ancient Iran, and Babylon were considered as a sign and window

to the soul. Pourandokht, after the killing done by Shiroyeh, his brother became the king of Iran. For this reason, coins with her fig. were made.

Anahita the model of Sasanian women

Anahita is distinct in public beliefs especially Sasanian women, to the extent that women even by modeling her in terms of dress and make up attempted to identify the goddess, that perhaps in this way they can enhance and depict their position up to Anahita's. This modeling is the extent that in some figs. distinction of women from Anahita is difficult:

•The fig. of king and queen or Anahita on metal plate

King is sitting on a bed and a lady is before him. Wavy dress and ribbons behind her head are like Anahita's. At the top, the fig. of pomegranate flower, herbal symbol of Anahita, is seen. King holds royal glory with hand and the lady has raised three fingers, as the style of that era probably the symbol of good act- speech- thought. The fig. is interpreted in other way that the king gave a gift to the queen, in which case the lady is depicted in the form of the goddess Anahita and by the goddess dress and crown (Fig. 4). Anahita partially covered dress in Fig. 5 shows that this plate has not been made in Iran because in



Fig. 2. The figure of Bahram II in the family and elders - Naqsh-e- Rostam. Source: Avarzamani, 2009: 55.

with Parthians who were not their twin created a combined culture and art in which mark of worshipping Anahita are very obvious. Even when Zoroastrianism became court official order and the role of Ahura Mazda was very important but still gods of water and sun, Anahita and Mithra were present as Ahura Mazda fellows and their temples were established and in Sasanian era Iranian women were depicted in the form of Anahita, the goddess of waters and the symbol of goodness, fertility and lighting that in Aban her Yasht descriptions remained: I salute to all Mazda created good water. Truly it is the best provision and prosperity. Prosperity is for those who are truly righteous and demanding the best. Glory, wellness, sustainability, success, prosperity, comfort, graceful children, long life and paradise of pure and righteous and lighting all sorts of comforting are for those who praise you. (Aban Yasht: 1982, 169 and 170).

In another part of Aban Yasht, Anahita is described as a young, shapely, tall, and beautiful Miss (with a kind and gentle, yet strong face): Anahita with her long that her face, hair and dress are adorned with jewels especially a crown of pearl, holding harness in her hand that is the symbol of wind, rain, dew and cloud. Her silver dress is made of 30 or 300 Babars that shines like gold and silver. Anahita is patron of pregnant women facilitating their childbirth when delivery and clean and increase their milk. She cares sheep and bring much blessing to them. She has thousands of rivers and lakes each as long as forty days of jockey men (Ibid: 1982: 124, 161 and 168 and adapted and analysis on the basis of Sasanian figs. in Taq-e-Bostan, Tang-e- Rajab, Tang-e- Qandil and relying on the book Recreating Sasanian colorful rock art, unpublished: 62).

Iranian women have been manifested as Anahita goddess of love and fertile in the art of this era. We can consider the image of women in Sasanian arts inspired by pure and creator Anahita and guardian of waters.

In addition to rock art, the fig. of Anahita is seen on Sasanian coins and stamps and silver and gold vessels during this period.

In "Bondahesh" about gods of water: Anahita is of water nature, and when Tishtar made rain, the

seas were created from it (Bahar, 2011: 64 - 65) and gods of water and rain that are the symbol of abundance and blessing have always had a special position in Iran.

High position of Sasanian women

Women, especially court women in Sasanian era were of the utmost dignity and in their special occasions men were allowed (the presence of Ahura Mazda reveals the importance of those meetings to us), additionally imaging the women on coins and stamps, as the king and queen, also emphasizes such a position. Women like men are seen in religious-political and court art in the form of the queen and goddess, so images of women in the art of this time are manifested in the form of queen and goddess of water and fertility.

In the examples, we can point out the works of rock art, coins and silver and gold vessels during this period:

• Ahura Mazda granting crown to Ardeshir - Naqsh-e- Rajab

A woman is seen on the right. She is "Dink" Ardeshir's wife. Her dress is like the king's. This fig. is the first fig. of women in Sasanian figs. She had a hat on her head and probably respects Ahura Mazda by hands. Her presence in a group where Ahura Mazda participated is a sign of her high social status. Bahram is standing in the middle of this fig. Before him, is a lady with braided hair, is his wife. Behind her, Crown prince is seen. The next person raised his hand in salute is a priest called "Kartir" and behind him is another son of Bahram (Fig.1).

• The fig. of Bahram II in the family and elders - Naqsh-e- Rostam

Bahram II is standing at the center full-height and puts his hand on his sworn handle. King family were involved on the left.

We see Queen Dink, ruler of Iran and the mother of Pirouz, and Hormuz III with a hat, that the hat recently was seen in Kurdistan region on ladies' head. The hat has been decorated with gold, silver and precious metals.

Introduction

Women have long had a special position in Iranian culture and civilization. Prehistory, during matriarchy, then in historical period and especially Sasanian era women have had an excellent position. The role of women in form of the queen and court women has been manifested by the model Anahita fertility goddesses and protector of pure waters. In ancient Iran, the role of water goddess has been very important so that worshiping and praying Anahita was so strong that Sasanian kings were obliged to sacrifice and dedicate to Anahita court and great

temples had been held in Iran for the goddess. Power, glory and grandeur of Anahita were in such a way that women and especially the queen adorned themselves as the goddess and waters' symbol, and decency, fertility, prosperity, purity, beauty and health were transferred from Anahita to Iranian women. Praying water and worshiping the goddess of water was so extensive in Iranian culture that has continued in Islamic era and so far we observe its manifestations in everyday life and ritual.

The status of women in ancient times

Women who were the main creators of the family and its consistency and sustainability had much respect and dignity. From long time ago and after severe frost that people came out of caves for a new life, women were pioneered in building homes and protecting their children. Women who had several children after coming out of the cave made the first shelter by their hands. Men and older boys would go away to find food that was the fruits or roots, leaves and flowers of the plants. Since mothers immediately brought a child after a child, children were to stand on their own feet since two years and follow their group because their mother had another child in her arms. During the housing, children were beside the mother and older sisters and everyone was under the command of the grandmother and she was the king of their habitat. (From Joneidi, 2013: 155 and 156)

Women in matriarchy period had great power and glory, and then were also the symbol of purity, fertility and resist, growing up brave men.

Virtuous women gave birth to and grew up great men, women have always played an important role over time in the family and home, and in a sense we can say that women are the body of the family and home and men are the roof and shelter. Iranian women long ago had great dignity when worshiping the goddess of affection and moon was common and widespread during Zoroastrianism. In a large part of Avesta, written before Zoroaster, Angel

"Sepandarmaz represents March and celebrating Sepandarmazgan on March 5th indicated the dignity of women in Iran. The female goddesses were considered as the symbol of Iran's women. Sepandarmaz, Mother of Earth and its holder, supported pious women who had great wisdom and called her "Arshmiti" or "Armita" means Holy Wisdom (Sepandar), one of the symbols of Sepandarmaz, Musk willow flower that grows late March. Women's customary rituals can be resting to five days in March after February 5. In those days men did tasks of women so that women have been awarded. On "Mazdgiran" or "Mojdehgiran", men were also offering gifts to women. In worshiping goddesses such as "Nanaya" and "Anahita", Artemis sometimes is considered equivalent to Anahita All reflect the presence, value and credibility of women and manifestation of the position in myth and gods of fertility, purity and chastity who are associated with water and its associated elements. The figures of many goddesses and queens, especially in Sasanian era on coins, stamps and rock art are the claim evidence.

Women in Sasanian era relying on figures

Sasanian who were Persian and considered themselves as the heir of Achaemenids according to their culture and beliefs and in conflict

“Anahita” the Model of Iranian Women with an Emphasis on Sasanian Culture and Art*

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Abstract

Women in Iranian culture are considered as a symbol of affection and love, creation and fertility, purity and chastity. From long time ago, the family form and foundation have been on the shoulders of women, mothers who by hard work, dedication, tact and farseeing managed men and children, by wisdom and God's grace and the power of affection and sympathy organized their home and family. Discovering hundreds of statues from archaeological digs in Shoush, Tappeh Sarab in Kermanshah, Toorang Tappeh and other parts of Iran and then worshipping fertility goddesses throughout the history indicated respect and celebration of women as her constructive and life-giving force. Fortunately, good and holy beliefs' hometown is never forgotten in the history context but always rising and survive in the hearts and lives of the people progressively. Respecting queens, goddesses, saints and saints and holy women was since the generation of Imams and hundreds of shrines in Iranian-Islamic land are marks of continuity, honor and respect for the woman in pure and bright history context over the millennia and centuries.

The remaining figures, coins and stamps, as well as figures of containers and objects and fabrics of the period are considered as important sources that have depicted political-religious history and culture of Sasanian.

Keywords

Anahita, Woman, Sassanian, Fertility, Rituals and Fertile, Art and Culture, The history of Iran.