



## ARTĒŠTĀRĀN SĀLĀR

**ARTĒŠTĀRĀN SĀLĀR**, “chief of the warriors,” a high-ranking title in Sasanian times (see *Artēštār*): The first reference to this office in the account derived from the *Xwadāy-nāmag* is in connection with Mihr-Narseh (the chief minister of Yazdegerd I), Wahrām I (Gōr), and Yazdegerd II in the first half of the 5th century. Mihr-Narseh had three sons, of whom the eldest was the *hērbedān hērbed* (chief temple-priest), the second was the chief tax-collector, with the title *wāst(a)ryōšān sālār* (chief of the cultivators), and the third was the commander-in-chief of the army, with the title *artēštārān sālār* (Ṭabarī, I, p. 869; tr. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, pp. 110f.). Ṭabarī adds that the rank was higher than that of *spāhbed* (general), and lower than that of *argbed* (a high-ranking official), a title reserved for members of the Sasanian royal family.

The titles *wāst(a)ryōšān sālār* and *artēštārān sālār* both hark back to the Avestan designations of the social classes (*vāstryō fšuyant* “cattle-breeder,” *raθaēštā* “warrior”). They are likely to have been coined together and, since there is no earlier evidence for them, to have been instituted by Mihr-Narseh. On the testimony of Procopius, *artēštārān sālār*, distorted as *adrastadāran salānēs* (*De bello persico*, ed. G. Wirth, 1.6.18 and 1.11.25, 38) appears to have been the title of “a generalissimo invested with quite exceptional powers” in the first decades of the 6th century (Th. Nöldeke). Procopius’ statement that the office was last held by Seósēs (Siyāwuš), who was executed in the reign of Kawād I, deserves more credence than his added statement (*ibid.*, 1.6.19) that Seósēs was also its first and only holder. In the *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābagān*



(ed. Kh. D. S. Irani, p. 97.3, cf. H. S. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi I*, Wiesbaden, 1964, p. 16.8, and Nöldeke in *Bezenbergers Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen*, 1878, p. 38 n. 1 and p. 67 n. 3), the office is dated back to the reign of Ardašīr I (226.241), but this means only that its late or post-Sasanian author or revisor still knew the term.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Given in the text.

See also Christensen, *Iran Sass.*, pp. 131f.

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