The medical and pharmaceutical use of oils in Persia dates back to ancient times. Prior to 637 AD (entrance of Islam to Iran), Persia was ruled by three main dynasties: Achaemenid (550–330 BC), Parthian (247 BC–224 AD) and Sassanid (224–637AD), which all have well documented histories. However, there is limited information concerning medical and pharmaceutical practices from these periods. One of the most important documents, Bondahesh, a Sassanid Pahlavi manuscript, classified all plant species into 11 groups, including oily herbs that were identified through their oily seeds. Examples of medicinal herbs mentioned in the Bondahesh include olive oil (Olea europaea L. (Oleaceae)), castor oil (Ricinus communis L. (Euphorbiaceae)) and hemp (Cannabis sativa L. (Cannabaceae)). Remnants of a tool used for oil extraction from seeds, dating to the Sassanid period, was discovered in Bishapur, an ancient city located in the Fars province of Iran. A design on a stone showing a man with an oil jar in one hand and a towel in the other exists in Persepolis (the Achaemenid capital, 500 BC). However, this figure may represent the cosmetic application of oils, which was widely practiced in ancient Persia, especially as demulcent agents used after bathing. Saffron (Crocus sativus L.) and labdanum oil (Cistus ladanifer L.) were used in the production of hand and face creams as early as 330 BC. Extraction of oil-soluble ingredients from medicinal plants was reported in ancient documents, such as lily oil extracts used as topical analgesics. Finally, it seems medicinal oils were one of the common formulations used in Persia for medical and cosmetic uses.