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# Sēnmurw

## Journal of Iranian Studies

2

2023



Sēnmurw – Journal of Iranian Studies

2023



ROMA  
ISTITUTO PER L'ORIENTE  
CARLO ALFONSO NALLINO

**Logo on the front cover:**

*Sēnmurw* from the so-called *s. Marci casula*, red silk, Iran 7th–8th century, Abbadia San Salvatore, Siena [after Dolcini, L. (Ed.) (1992). *La casula di san Marco papa. Sciamiti orientali alla corte carolingia*, Firenze].

Hand drawing by Andrea L. Corsi, digital rendering by Serenella Mancini (© 2022).

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**SĒNMURW**  
**JOURNAL OF IRANIAN STUDIES**

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ISSN 2974-8674

ISBN 979-12-81044-25-8

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**Volume**

**2**

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- Domenico Agostini** 1–20  
Reevaluating the Redaction of the Zoroastrian Apocalypse in Early Islamic North-East Iran
- Fabrizio Anticoli** 21–44  
Following the Thread: Godard’s Position in the Historiography of the Iranian Mosque
- Carlo G. Cereti** 45–65  
Seals from the Heerameck Collection
- Lorenz Korn** 67–95  
The Minaret of Jar Kurgan and Its Inscriptions
- Carlo Marchetti** 97–134  
Dīnavar: Scenes from a City
- Gianfilippo Terribili** 135–189  
The Sacred Mountain in the Arsacid-Sasanian Landscape of Western Zagros. Spaces, Narrative Patterns, and Numinous Manifestations
- Massimiliano Vassalli** 191–219  
European Travellers’ Accounts of the Zoroastrians in Iran (1800–1850)

**Gioele Zisa**

221–268

Performative and Thematic Continuity in Persian Oral Storytelling Arts (*naqqāli*):  
From the Timurid Period to the Present Day

# **Abstracts**

# **Reevaluating the Redaction of the Zoroastrian Apocalypse in Early Islamic North-East Iran**

Domenico Agostini

*Tel Aviv University*

Zoroastrian apocalyptic literature has undergone a series of significant reworking ranging from the end of the sixth century to the Turkish and Mongol invasions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. An important phase of this editorial work occurred during the social and political upheavals following the Abbasid revolution, when diverse Iranian messianic movements appeared in Iran. Ninth and tenth-century Pahlavi texts detail several historical or pseudo-historical accounts, which are incorporated into apocalyptic narratives and occur in Tabarestān and Khorasan. This article aims to provide further details for the identification and revaluation of some figures and events in these accounts and to examine the possibility that there were common narrative models in the Muslim world that Zoroastrian authors employed to write their texts.



# **Following the Thread: Godard's Position in the Historiography of the Iranian Mosque**

Fabrizio Anticoli

*University of West Bohemia, Plzeň*

André Godard's work in Iranian art and architecture provides a benchmark in developing a comprehensive approach to Islamic architecture, in particular mosques, as Godard is responsible for the development of some theoretical tenets adopted in interpreting this class of buildings. The French scholar's work contains some aspects that were also present in the works of travellers who, especially from the mid-19th century onwards, went beyond a mere description of the buildings. The assumptions put forward by these early scholars are deeply rooted in the cultural background in which they developed. Thus, given this strict relationship, and a cultural background that is no longer valid, those studies are also no longer considered valid. This paper discusses the connection between Godard's theories on Islamic architecture and these studies. The persistence of some elements from these oeuvres indicates how Godard was attached to earlier positions and how his work relies on some assumptions discredited by later scholarship.

## **Seals from the Heerameck Collection**

Carlo G. Cereti

*Sapienza University of Rome*

Sixteen previously unpublished seals belonging to the Heerameck collection will be presented in this article. The majority of these objects, thirteen out of sixteen, are Sasanian seals, both inscribed and non-inscribed; one carries an Islamic inscription, the remaining two belong to the Classic tradition, though we cannot determine where they were made.

# **The Minaret of Jar Kurgan and Its Inscriptions**

Lorenz Korn

*University of Bamberg*

The Minaret of Jar Kurgan is well-known in the history of Islamic architecture, as a work of the Saljuq period with far-reaching connections from Central Asia to Anatolia. It has been dated to the years 502 or 503 AH / 1108–1110 CE, based on one of its three Arabic inscriptions. The present article suggests a revised reading for this inscription, according to which no dating more specific than to the sixth/twelfth century can be proved due to weathering. However, on the basis of stylistic comparison with geographically related buildings, especially in present-day Afghanistan, it argues for an attribution to the mid-sixth/twelfth century.

# **Dīnavar: Scenes from a City**

Carlo Marchetti

*Sapienza University of Rome*

The city of Dīnavar played an important role in the historical region of Media for centuries. However, literary sources, modern explorations' accounts, and archaeological findings about this city have never been compared systematically. This article aims to provide a general reference guide for a better comprehension of the period when Dīnavar was a thriving settlement. Additionally, it also seeks to correct some inaccuracies frequently repeated in previous literature.

# **The Sacred Mountain in the Arsacid–Sasanian Landscape of Western Zagros. Spaces, Narrative Patterns, and Numinous Manifestations**

Gianfilippo Terribili

*Sapienza University of Rome*

In Iran and neighbouring regions, the sanctity of the mountains is illustrated by sources of different typologies and origins. This paper aims to contextualize the long-term presence of mythical/ritual schemes within a socio-cultural milieu and its specific territory. The perspective entails the semiotics of landscape, focusing on the interaction between symbolic elements and socio-cultural interpretations of the physical space. In this framework, the macro-region of western Zagros in the Arsacid-Sasanian period is a promising case study.

# **European Travellers' Accounts of the Zoroastrians in Iran (1800–1850)**

Massimiliano Vassalli

*Sapienza University of Rome*

In this paper, I analyse the accounts of the European travellers, who have had contact with Zoroastrians of their era or who provide information regarding their conditions in the period between 1800 and 1850. My goal is to provide a critical description of the leading Europeans who have travelled to Iran in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to highlight those who are useful to the studies of Zoroastrianism.

# **Performative and Thematic Continuity in Persian Oral Storytelling Arts (*naqqāli*): from the Timurid Period to the Present Day**

Gioele Zisa

*University of Vienna*

Through the analysis of historical sources from the Timurid and Safavid periods onwards and ethnographic fieldwork on the storytelling art *naqqāli*, the article shows how many of its performative and narrative elements persist over the centuries and are still present in contemporary performances. The narrative techniques were already present in popular romances, they were discussed in Kāšefī's work *Fotovvat-nāme-ye solṭānī*, and persisted throughout the Qajar era. The educational and edifying function of such stories is stressed in Timurid and Safavid sources, as well as by Qajar-era foreign travellers and contemporary *naqqāls*.

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Finito di stampare nel mese di dicembre 2023 presso la Tipografia Salesiana Roma  
Istituto Salesiano Pio XI – Via Umbertide 11 – 00181 Roma  
Tel. +39 067827819 – Fax +39 067848333 – Email: [tipolito@donbosco.it](mailto:tipolito@donbosco.it)

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Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Roma n° 119/2022 del 27/09/2022

ISSN 2974-8674

ISBN 979-12-81044-25-8

Rivista specialistica soggetta a procedura di *double-blind peer review*

Periodicità annuale

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