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ADAMJI PROJECT

*From the Excavation (1972-1978)
to the Archive (2003-2010)
in the Masjid-e Jom'eh, Isfahan*

Bruno Genito and Fariba Saiedi Anaraki (eds.)

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To the memory of Umberto Scerrato

Nulla è altrettanto intuibile come la vocazione al sacrificio: chi ne è provvisto è già maestro di vita, senza neppure saperlo

Ermanno Rea (1995) *Mistero Napoletano*, p.14. Torino

And to the memory of Eugenio Galdieri

As this volume was going to press we learned of the unexpected death of Prof. Arch. Eugenio Galdieri. Not only was He an eminent scholar, but also a dear friend to all of the contributors of this volume. The importance of His studies towards the theme of this volume on the Restoration and Archaeology of the masjed-e Jom is amply testified to by the papers of various scholars who have relied on His works. The editors feel it just and fitting to dedicate this volume to His memory as well.

Iran and Italy, two great cultures and civilizations of the world, are both well aware of the importance of their long lived relationships. Their background of scientific co-operation in the field of architectural restoration and archaeological research in Persepolis and Arg-e Bam clearly show which magnificent results have been created through the scientific collaboration of the two countries. Their good relationship may be developed in the fields of monument restoration, antique exhibition holding, archaeological research, and re-use of ancient buildings as targets for tourism. Among the European countries, Italy has special status for the development of the cultural co-operation with the Iranian officials and citizens. Iran and Italy's co-operation may create a dual power capable of influencing the global culture. Considering the existing cultural project and potentials, it seemed necessary to sign and perform a cultural convention between two countries. In my visit to Franco Frattini, Foreign Minister, and Sandro Bondi, Minister of Culture, in Rome 2010, we focused on an increase in the cultural contacts between the two countries. Both countries insist that they should work hard to give depth to their cultural relationships. We believe that the cultural issues are the best tools to heal economic and political interactions, and the two countries are eager to develop their relations through the means of culture. It seems that now is the time to create stability in the bilateral cultural interactions and renew the cultural contract which had expired in 2004. Finally we emphasize the enhancement of exchanges in the cultural grounds and tourism and declare that there are good bases and opportunities for the investment in the tourism industry of various areas of Iran. The co-operative work of the Italian Embassy in Tehran and the Research Center of Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization in the publication of the present volume, which contains the archaeological investigations in the *masjed- e Jom'e* of Isfahan, deserves to be appreciated. We hope that former works in the archaeological research and restoration, the modernization of the Iran Bastan Museum, and the collaboration in the field of the monumental resistance against the earthquakes will be continued and both

countries encompass solutions against the illicit trafficking of the historical relics in their conventions. The collaboration between the two countries in the fight against trafficking of illicit antique relics should create an excellent pattern for more cultural interactions in the global and international arenas.

Hamid Baghaei
Deputy President of IRI and Head of Iranian
Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism
Organization

www.ketab.ir

Isfahan is a sister city to Florence, both sharing the privilege of possessing a valuable cultural heritage. Both cities have experienced the rule of important and nearly contemporary dynasties, that of the Safavids Kings of Iran (1501 - 1722) and that of the Medici Lords of Florence and later Grand Dukes of Tuscany (1434-1737). The two families greatly sponsored the arts and culture, leaving a great legacy to their capitals that today count among the most beautiful cities of the world. The present volume shows the first results of a crucial archaeological project, which studied the Friday Mosque of Isfahan, certainly one of the most important Islamic monuments in Iran. Between 1972 and 1978 Prof. Umberto Scerrato led excavations in the monument itself, building on an intuition by Arch. Eugenio Galdieri, who at the end of the sixties had began to work at the restoration project of the Mosque. A second phase of the project, aimed at creating a digital archive of the findings, took place between 2003 and 2010 under the joint direction of Dr. Fariba Shieiri Anaraki and Prof. Bruno Genito. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strongly supported this initiative, realized thanks to the collaboration between the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO), the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (IsIAO) and the Università degli Studi di Napoli, "l'Orientale" (UNO). It is the Italian firm intention to continue to support the fruitful collaboration between ICHHTO and the various Italian organizations active in the field of cultural heritage, both in the city of Isfahan and in other regions of this wonderful country. On this occasion, I am pleased to warmly thank Mr. Hamid Baghaei, President's Deputy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Head of ICHHTO, Gherardo Gnoli, President of IsIAO, Ahmad Mirza Kuchak Khoshnevis, Head of the Research Institute of the ICHHTO, Arash Lashkari, Head of ICAR, and Esfandiyar Heydaripur, Head of ICHHTO of Isfahan, who all greatly have contributed to the success of this project. I also wish to thank all the scholars and specialists who have made this project possible, though their names are too many to be listed here.

Alberto Bradamini
Ambassador of Italy

With great pleasure and personal satisfaction I am writing these short notes on the occasion of the publication of the first preliminary scientific work of the joint Italian/Iranian ADAMI project (Archaeological Digital Archive of the Masjid-e Jom'eh, Isfahan), which started in 2003 and ended in 2010. This project follows the excavation directed by the late Umberto Scerrato from 1972 to 1978 of last century. A number of Institutions offered their precious contribution to the realization of the joint work, the Italian "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (MAE), the "Sazeman-e Miras Farhanghi Sanaye'-e Dasti va Gardeshgari", Teheran, the "Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente", Rome (ISIAO) which I have the honor to direct, the "Università degli Studi di Napoli l'Orientale", (UNO), the "Sazeman-e Miras Farhanghi Sanaye'-e Dasti va Gardeshgari", Isfahan and the Iranian Centre for the Archaeological Research (ICAR). To all of them our most sincere thanks for the effort, amount and quality of work. A special mention goes to the Ambassador Alberto Bradanini who particularly promoted this collection of papers. The initial results of the project here presented will be followed in the shortest possible time by the entire publication of the excavations and the related materials.

Gherardo Gnoli
President of
Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente

masjed- e Jom'e and with admiration for the beauties of the dome I found myself increasingly in love with Isfahan and Iran. Because of this feeling I testate that my body be buried in this sacred land". We are grateful to Professor Bruno Genito who was the director of joint Italian-Iranian archaeological activity in *masjed- e Jom'e* over the last 7 years. We would also like to thank Dr. Saeidi Anaraki who had worked side by side with Professor Genito as the head of the Iranian team. Without their endeavours the project could not have been as successful and today we would not have such an archaeological collection. By the publication of this volume, which contains a complex of archaeological studies on the *masjed- e Jom'e* of Isfahan, we will prepare a basis for future generations to use the results of these works. It should be noted that the significance of the *masjed- e Jom'e's* archaeological data is far wider reaching than this volume alone. Through further historical studies the recognition of the geographical extent of the area, the modes of production, economic values, and technologies used by the ancient people might be discovered and valuable information, which museum objects are not able to offer will be produced. hitherto about 80 thousand sherds gathered from *masjed- e Jom'e* excavations have been fully processed and studied. The considerable volume of objects found at the Mosque's excavations, and the various architectural styles in the *masjed- e Jom'e* caused this monument to become one of the most valuable site in the world. In 2011 this monument is being considered as a World Heritage site by UNESCO. The Research Centre of Iranian Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization in the frame of a convention is honoured that it could share with the Italian Embassy the publication of this volume. This volume prepared in English could also be useful on a global scale. We are on the way to publishing a Persian version of this book which is expected to be done in the near future. Best wishes for all who are interested in the history of Iran and with the hope of the continuation of Iran-Italy cultural collaboration.

Ahmad Mirzakouchak Khoshnevis
Head of Research Center of Iranian
Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism
Organization

The *masjed- e Jom' e* of Isfahan, celebrated as “The Encyclopedia of Persian Architecture” is one of the everlasting masterpieces of the architecture in Iran. Under the rule of Malek Shah Saljuqi Isfahan became the capital of an emperor who claimed his domain and authority over the Islamic world. So a number of great monuments, among which the *masjed- e Jom' e* was the most important, were built to testify to such a greatness. Therefore the best masons, carpenters, stoneworkers, tile workers, stucco artists, and brick workers were gathered together to create the most important congregational holy place of the Saljuq emperor. *Masjed-e Jom' e* has played an important role on the religious landscape of Isfahan since at least the 8th century and quite possibly even earlier as archaeological evidence suggests. This mosque was founded in the 8th century on the remains of a possible religious Sasanian construction and in the Abbasid, Saljuq, post-Mongol, Mozaffarid, Timurid, Safavid, and Qajar times major or minor building activity as well as restoration work took place within its premises. The centrality of the *masjed- e Jom' e* in the Persian architecture in general, and in the subsequent history of monuments in Isfahan in particular, is illustrated by the fact that successive rulers and patrons left their imprint on this mosque. In the process, however, the mosque complex became an irregularly shaped entity that seems to have grown organically around its constituent parts and into the fabric of the city. What distinguishes the mosque is its integration into the urban fabric through the many gates and entrances that weave it with the city's activities and blur the boundaries between city space and mosque space. This is also a result of a cumulative history of construction and reconstruction resulting in a mosque that comprises an assemblage of structures built in different periods of time. *Masjed-e Jom' e* was not a merely religious centre. It is mentioned that this place was equipped with a library (*dār-al-kotob*), housing books that were chosen by scholars of the past, covering almost every discipline of knowledge and all registered in a three-volume catalogue. On the ritual importance of the place also it is enough to say that each time no less than five thousand people congregated for prayer. The Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO) in collaboration with the National Organization for the Conservation of the Monuments of Iran carried out restoration activities in *masjed- e*

Jom'eh. Archaeological and architectural investigations of the 1960s and 1970s, carried out by the Italian team of researchers led by Eugenio Galdieri and Umberto Scerrato, have revealed the parameters and the general configuration of this early mosque. This was a hypostyle building, a classical mosque type developed out of the model of the house-mosque of the Prophet Mohammad. The upcoming volume covers relatively vast topics mainly related to the previous excavations of *masjed- e Jom'eh* Isfahan by IsMEO and the material gathered during that research project. As we will see, the contributors draw their attention not only to the direct issues related to *masjed- e Jom'eh* but also to the wider objects such as the prehistory settlements of Isfahan plain in one hand and the method used by specialists to make an archaeological archive on the other. It is worth to note that a translated version of this volume to Persian has been prepared by the writer of this introduction which is hoped to be published in near future. Publication of this book is the result of a close collaborative work of an international research institution with the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization and one of the rare and precious research works on the art and archaeology of the ancient city of Isfahan.

Arash Lashkari
Head of Iranian Center for
Archaeological Research

The language of culture is a tongue that knows no borders, whose results are stable and lasting relations across geographical and linguistic boundaries and represent one of the mainstays of human relations. The cultural endeavor common to all countries in the world and to the people of those nations, assures continuity and dynamicity to the human culture. Intellectual debate is the result of the researches, of the thought and of the arguments of researchers and its fundamental value lies in providing answers to questions and thus opening the way for an increase in the stature of the culture and knowledge, thus marking a lasting result in the pages of books and history. The present book is a symbol of the language without boundaries of culture and of the result of a community of researchers whose mission is to increase human knowledge. Past has always been the light illuminating the path to future. A correct understanding of the protagonists of the past and accepting their advice allows the right decision for today's and tomorrow's path to be taken. May your effort be durable!

*Esfandiyar Heydaripur
Head of Iranian Cultural Heritage,
Handicrafts and Tourism Organization,
Isfahan*

PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that we present this first scientific work of the joint Italian/Iranian ADAMJI project (Archaeological Digital Archive of the Masjid-e Jom'eh, Isfahan), which has seen committed more than forty people from 2003 to 2010 (Iranians and Italians). The project financially supported by the Italian "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (MAE), the "Sazeman-e Miras Farhanghi Sanaye'-e Dasti va Gardeshgari", Tehran, Iran (Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization) (ICHHTO), Teheran, the "Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente", Rome (IsIAO), the "Università degli Studi di Napoli l'Orientale", (UNO), the ICHHTO, Isfahan and the "Iranian Centre for the Archaeological Research" (ICAR), as it is known, follows the excavation seasons conducted and directed in the monument by Umberto Scerrato from 1972 to 1978.

We would never have imagined, then, that, after thirty two years, and almost twenty of interruption, we could have put a first step to the final draft of the excavation and publication of the materials from one of the most important architectural monument of Iran and of the Islamic world! We cannot forget, here, those who were much more worthy than us in the previous work done in the monument: firstly Eugenio Galdieri and Umberto Scerrato. The first one with his genial work conducted in the 70s, pioneered the excavation that Giuseppe Tucci, the President of IsMEO (now IsIAO) proposed in 1972 to the second.

None of us would have imagined that even many who had worked in the excavation project of Isfahan have struggled to return to Iran; some passed away, Umberto Scerrato, Raimondo Boenni, Francesca Callori di Vignale, others have abandoned the research activity, Giovanna Ventrone, others for different reasons could not join us and play regularly their own work in the place, as Maria Vittoria Fontana, Francesco Noci. Ugo Bisteghi willingly was

involved in three of the work season in 2005, 2007 and 2009 and to him go our personal thanks for his kind work attitude and generosity!

It was, in fact, the case to create a new generation of potential scholars, some of whom may already have been recognized *in mice*, others have simply played regularly with the task that was entrusted with no future to study. To all of them deserve our most sincere thanks for the effort, fatigue, quantity and quality of work.

The idea of realizing this volume was first imagined by the Ambassador Alberto Bradanini who during the celebration day of the last 25th february 2010 suggested us to organize in the shortest time possible a collection of papers related to the scientific work done in the *masjed-e Jom'e*, Isfahan. Promptly we decided to do that, utilizing some of the papers (never published) devoted to an exhibition held in the National Museum of Iran, Teheran in December 2005. To those papers other contributions, namely those by Eugenio Galdieri, Roberta Giunta, Luciano Rendina, were added in order to have a more complete collection of authors, both involved directly into the work, and for knowledge and importance able to give their own original scientific contribution.

The volume is organized into two distinct parts, the first related to the general history, archaeology, art history and epigraphy of the monument and of the related territory, the second, to the premises and terms of the ADAM archive and the initial results on the analysis and study on the main classes of materials coming from the excavation. The part of the master is certainly made by the ceramic *corpus* with about 500.000 fragments, by far the most documented material. Not less important are the wall paintings, the glasses, etc., giving a worthy accompaniment to the already complex picture of the various production materials.

Not yet processed remain the many stuccoes fragments which also play an important architectural, technical, art-historical and some of which also epigraphic role, since not yet completely recorded and analyzed.

It is necessary to keep in mind and well understand the sense of the presence and the distribution of such a large quantity of materials in the area where the *masjed-e Jom'e* was set up. That area had two separate stories and settlement events: the northern probably

related to the somewhat pre-mosque or even pre-Islamic villages, and the southern, instead, for the most part merged in the architectural history of the monument, starting especially from the Abbasid, Buyid and Saljuq times and beyond.

Apart from the staff of the two teams participating to the realization of this volume, particularly welcome are some contributions from Italian and Iranian side of scholars who were not directly involved in the project: Mohsen Javeri, Ahmad Salehi Kakhki, Abdullah Jabalameli, Eugenio Galdieri and Robert Giunta. They from their part have given respectively a particular contribution to the territorial context in which the mosque was located, and to the architectural and epigraphic aspects of the monument.

It is not the case to expect definitive results from this preliminary work; we are just at the beginning and it is noteworthy to know that the real breakthrough in the modern archaeological research is represented by the study and the interpretation of the data, rather than by any single admirable discovery. It is our hope that in a couple of years all the catalogue will be finished and the publication of the excavation and the materials from the *ma'jed-e Jom'e* will come out.

Bruno Genito

and

Fariba Saiedi Anaraki

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We cannot exempt ourselves from expressing our deepest thanks to those who have made this work possible in these years: first of all to ISIAO and its President Prof. Gherardo Gnoli, to Giancarlo Garganiti, and Umberto Sinatti, general Directors and to the staff, in particular Maria Rita Pulitani and Marina Ervoli; to ICHHTO, and the different Heads who during these years have been in charge, Mohammad Reza Beheshii, Hossein Marashi, Esfandiyar Rahim Mashai and Hamid Bagaei; to the Embassy of Italy and Ambassadors Riccardo Sessa and Roberto Toscano, who have both given their strong contribution to the initial phase of the project and to its realization, and now to HE Alberto Padoa-Schioppa who strongly wanted this volume to be realized and very kindly attended the closing ceremony of the activity held in the beautiful setting of the Hotel Abbasi in Isfahan the 25th February 2010, where the President of the Isfahan Province Alireza Zaker Isfahan was also present. To him and His staff we turn our heartfelt thanks.

Profound gratitude is also due to the different Italian cultural attachés, Angelo Michele Piemontese, who followed only the premises of the project, which, instead, started during the intense and fruitful activity of Felicetta Ferraro, and was completed with Carlo Cereti both my dear friends and pupils, the Counsellors Stefano Beltrame and Alessandro Monti, and the first secretary and cultural responsible, Lucia Landolfi; without their daily and constant support we would have achieved much less.

Of course we cannot forget other Iranian authorities, Ahmad Mirza Kuchak Khoshnaveh, the present Head of the Research Centre of ICHHTO and the Heads of ICAR, the late Massoud Azarnoush, Hassan Fazeli Nashli, Mohammad Mortezaee and Arash Lashkari, and the personnel of its staff, in particular Mr. Farim Alizadeh, Misses Mojgan Seyyedini, Maryam Dara. Special thanks are also due to others scholars and institutional staff from the Italian and the Iranian side, Jalil Gholizadeh, and Seyed Taha Hashemi Toghraljerdi, former Heads of the Research Center of the ICHHTO, Mohammad Reza Kargar, the former director of the National Museum of Tehran, Masoud Vatandoust, former Director of the Management Office of the Cultural Affairs and International Relations of ICHHTO, the architect Professor Abdullah Jabalameli, Mohsen Daveri, Naser Turki respectively responsible for the Archaeological section and deputy director of the local office of ICHHTO, Amir Ebrahim Richtegaran, official translator and helper in the different moments of the activity, and Lotfullah Najafi, draftsman, and the late Ayatollahzadeh Bagher Shirazi.

Last but not least the most of gratitude goes to the different Heads of the ICHHTO of Isfahan, Syfolah Aminian, Hossein Ali Vakil Ali Abadi, Said Baktosh, Hasan Ravanfar, Ahmad Aminpur, Esfandiyar Heydaripur.

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