

Il Novissimo Ramusio

Conferenze ISMEO

2

Four Lectures
on the ISMEO Activities
in the Masjed-e Jom‘e of Isfahan

edited by Bruno Genito



ISMEO

This volume was published with a grant from the “Progetto MIUR Studi e ricerche sulle culture dell’Asia e dell’Africa: tradizione e continuità, rivitalizzazione e divulgazione.”

TUTTI I DIRITTI RISERVATI

ISBN 9788866871385

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Via Piave, 7 – 00187 Roma
Tel. 0039/06/4817656 – Fax 0039/06/48912574
e-mail: info@scienzelettere.com
www.scienzelettere.com

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www.ismeo.eu

Layout by Beniamino Melascchi (text), Marco Baldi (plates)

PREFACE

Located in the historic centre of Esfahan, the Masjed-e Jom'è ('Friday Mosque') can be seen as a stunning illustration of the evolution of mosque architecture over twelve centuries, starting in 841 CE, and now is one of the major Iranian sites inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List.

The Italian restoration activities carried out in Esfahan during the 1970s were planned and organised in collaboration with the Service for the Restoration and Preservation of the Historical Monuments of Iran (now Iranian Cultural Handicraft and Tourism Heritage Organisation) (ICHTHO) and the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO, afterwards IsIAO). The restoration activities headed by Arch. Prof. Eugenio Galdieri and the excavation activities headed by Prof. Umberto Scerrato in the Friday Mosque were aimed in particular at identifying the earlier constructional phases of the building: amongst them the Abbasid, Buyid and Saljuq.

Historical circumstances did not allow for long time (1979-1998) any Italian team to continue working at Esfahan. Only between 1999 and 2002 an Italian IsIAO team, under the invitation of ICHO (now ICHTHO) and with the direction of the late Prof. U. Scerrato went back to Esfahan, starting again the work in the Mosque jointly with the Iranian colleagues.

Many years after the end of the actual excavations, a joint Iranian-Italian Project named ADAMJI (A.rchaeological D.igital A.rchive M.asjed-e J.om'è I.sfahan) has been aimed at providing a gradual transformation of the whole set of original data and information (written, graphic, photographic etc.) in a digital archive. The Italian/Iranian Project jointly coordinated and directed from the Iranian

side by Dr. Faribah Saeidi Anaraki and from the Italian side by Prof. Bruno Genito, started in 2003 and ended in 2010.

A number of Institutions offered their precious contribution to the realization of the joint work, the Italian Ministero degli Affari Esteri (MAECI), the Sazeman-e Miras Farhangi Sanaye Dasti va Gardeshgari, Tehran, the Sazeman-e Miras Farhangi Sanaye Dasti va Gardeshgari, Esfahan and the Iranian Centre for the Archaeological Research (ICAR), the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Rome (IsIAO), the Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale (UniOr).

The idea of realizing a volume to illustrate to a wide public the activities of the Project was first imagined by Ambassador Alberto Bradanini who during the celebration day of 25th February 2010 suggested to publish in the shortest time a collection of papers related to the scientific work done in the Masjed-e Jom’e. IsIAO decided to do that, making use of some papers (never published) devoted to an exhibition held in the National Museum of Iran, Tehran in December 2005, and adding further contributions in order to have a more complete collection of subjects.

The volume, Adamji Project. From the Excavation (1972-1978) to the Archive (2003-2010) in the Masjed-e Jom’e, Isfahan, Tehran 2010, was edited jointly by Faribah Saeidi Anaraki and Bruno Genito, printed in Tehran and jointly published by the Italian Embassy, Tehran, ICHTHO and IsIAO.

Since many circumstances hampered a wide circulation of the book both in Iran and in Italy, ISMEO decided to republish some of the essays (originarily conceived as public lectures), mostly in an updated version, in his series “Conferenze ISMEO,” devoted to the dissemination of high level scientific knowledge in Italy, also in the hope to contribute to the knowledge of this monument without equal in all the world.

ADRIANO V. ROSSI
President, ISMEO

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