Matteo Compareti. « Ancient Iranian Decorative Textiles: New Evidence from Archaeological Investigations and Private Collections »

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REFERENCES

Matteo Compareti. « Ancient Iranian Decorative Textiles: New Evidence from Archaeological Investigations and Private Collections ». *The Silk Road*, vol. 13 (2015), p. 36-44.

- 1 The object of this study consists of two textile fragments, which are in a private collection and have a main decoration of pearl roundels containing respectively one single or two composite creatures with a dog's head, wings and a peacock's tail. Both fabrics are radio-carbon dated, respectively to the 9th-10th century and to the beginning of the 8th - end of the 9th century.
- 2 M. Comparetti elaborates on the iconography of the composite winged creature, which is often referred to as *simurgh* in Farsi (*senmurv* in Pahlavi, *saena maregha* in Avestan). According to the author, the identification of this composite animal as the *simurgh* of Iranian mythology cannot be justified, as the *simurgh* is always represented as a bird (for example in pre-Islamic Sogdian paintings or in Iranian book illustrations of Islamic periods), just as it was described in written sources. Therefore, he puts forward the term "pseudo-*simurgh*" to be used for this fantastic creature.

- 3 The author relates both fabrics on stylistic base to the group of the so-called “Zandaniji silks” and proposes to situate them in Sogdiana after Islamization, more precisely in the Samanid emirates during the 9th-10th centuries.
  - 4 If Compareti’s research could be completed with analyzes of the weaving technology and the dies and also with a study of the other decorative motifs on the textiles (so not only the medallions with the fantastic creatures), more decisive answers could be given concerning the origin of both textiles.
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