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- 1 The cave of Qūri Qaleh with a small mouth opening in southwards is located on the southern slope of Šāhū mountain, 31 km south-east of Pāvēh in Kermānšāh province. In 1997, a treasury was accidentally discovered as a result of redesigning the entrance to improve access to the cave. The treasury included: eight silver vessels, 15 coins, and two pithoi very similar to the Parthian storage jars (p. 230). Then in 2001, some of the silver vessels with the Middle Persian inscription were studied (D. Akbarzadeh, “Katibehay Pahlavi: Sang Negareh, Sekeh, Mohr, Asar-e Mohr, Zarf Nebeshteh”, *Pazineh*, 1381/ 2002; D. Akbarzadeh, T. Daryaei, and J. Lerner. “Two Recently Discovered Inscribed Sasanian Silver Bowls”, *Bulletin of Asia Institute* 15, 2001. 71-74.).

- 2 In this paper, the authors study the finds with an introduction about Mithraism (the allegedly Mithra archaeological and architectural finds in Iran) and Mithra to convince the readers that the cave was a religious place belonging to the Mithra. Furthermore, the authors describe and classify this collection of finds into two groups, coins and silver vessels:
- 3 The first group is 15 coins. The material of all coins recognized as dirhams; three out of 15 coins are Late Sasanian, one related to a Tabaristan ruler, one Arab-Sasanian, four dated to the *Umayyad* and six dated to the Abbasid periods.
- 4 The second group is silver vessels, they are made of silver alloy with high impurities, shaped by cold hammering, and decorated using different methods. They concluded that these vessels are a collection of votive objects for a temple which were manufactured in Iranian workshops and that some of the gilded silver vessels are the symbol of Mitra. the majority of the motifs on the Qūri Qaleh silver vessels are religious and the inscription and iconography on them indicate they have been used in ritual ceremonies. The symbols on these vessels (such as the images of a hawk hunting a bird and lion motifs are all symbols of Mithraism) indicate that they belonged to a Mithraism sanctuary, which, like most of the known cases in Iran, was situated in a cave.
- 5 Based on the coins, the authors claim that from the late Sasanian until the first two centuries of the Islamic period (7th -9th centuries AD), this cave was a Mithraic temple before it was abandoned. Due to the advent of Islam and the restrictions on worshipping local deities and Iranian gods, a cave such as Qūri Qaleh could have been a safe temple for the remaining Mithraists during this period. It is likely that the Arab dominance and spread of Islam was the main reason for the abandonment of the cave (pp. 247- 249).
- 6 Although this paper contains a good quality illustration, drawing, and description of objects, the finds came from an unknown and unsecured context as the authors stated (p. 230 footnote 29). In addition, the cave has no architectural evidence. It must be considered that the content of the inscriptions on the metalworks in the Sasanian period is affirmative and is not only limited to a few numbers of vessels of this cave which the authors believed these inscriptions show the votive function of the vessels. The iconography and motifs of these vessels are also common in the Sasanian period which were widely used in metalworks, seal, bulla, stucco, textile, etc.
- 7 Apart from the discussion which attempts to connect this collection and their iconography to Mithraism, it has some errata and mistakes, for example, Sasanid Pahlavi (the correct form is Middle Persian), or on p. 230, they pointed out “Unfortunately, despite all our efforts, we were not able to gain access to the coins to obtain more information. The current information is based on the photographs taken by Fereshteh Rahimi”. Now, the question is: How the authors could determine the material of the coins, especially Arab-Sasanian or Islamic coins without seeing them? It seems that many of them are copper coins rather than silver, especially those with green patination which is obvious in the images.
- 8 Lastly, it would better for the authors to introduced finds from the art historical and archeological perspective instead of trying to correlate this simple treasury to Mithraism and Mithra.

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