Carlo G. Cereti. "From Middle to New Persian: Written Materials from Northern Iran and Khorasan"

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REFERENCES

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- 1 After the Arab-Muslim conquest (c. 650 CE), what we know of Middle Persian literacy in the territory known as Ērānšahr is still little documented. Precisely, there is little evidence about linguistic developments during the first two centuries but for an extract allegedly written by ibn al-Muqaffa. Most of scholars' debate on this passage is based on the studied evidence – mainly, the inscriptions found on the south western part of the Sasanian empire. Sure enough, Pahlavi alphabet was still attested until the 11th century, and not used only in Zoroastrian literature, but also in inscriptions, economic documents, coins and so on. On the other side, the earliest attestation of New Persian is in the 8th century.
- 2 The reconstruction of this linguistic development and the surviving of Middle and New Persian side by side, will highlight the life of these various communities living closely together even with such different linguistic traditions. To provide the answers to these questions, Cereti lists Middle Persian inscriptions found in the northern territories, i.e., stretching from the Caucasus to Khorasan. Thanks to these examples, he identifies the idioms listed by ibn al-Muqaffa. Suchlike studies on the so-known 'do qarn-e sokut', i.e., two centuries of silence, are much needed for reconstructing a broader picture of the transition.

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