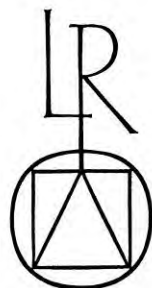


Ritter, Kauz, Hoffmann
Iran und iranisch geprägte Kulturen



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Gegründet von Georges Redard, herausgegeben von Nicholas Sims-Williams

Band 27

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herausgegeben von
Markus Ritter, Ralph Kauz
und Birgitt Hoffmann

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Studien zum
65. Geburtstag von Bert G. Fragner

herausgegeben von
Markus Ritter, Ralph Kauz
und Birgitt Hoffmann

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Vorwort

Als die Herausgeber beschlossen, Bert G. Fragner zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 27. November 2006 eine Festschrift zu widmen und im Juni 2005 ein entsprechendes Einladungsschreiben an Kollegen, Mitarbeiter, Schüler und Freunde des zu Ehrenden verschickten, waren sie sich wohl bewußt, daß der zeitliche Rahmen ausgesprochen eng gesetzt war. All denjenigen, die sich davon nicht abschrecken ließen und sich mit einem Beitrag beteiligt haben, sei an dieser Stelle herzlich gedankt. Das Manuskript konnte Bert Fragner in einer Feier an seinem Geburtstag überreicht werden. Da der Umfang des Bandes nicht beliebig anwachsen konnte, bitten wir jene um Verständnis, die ebenfalls gerne etwas beigetragen hätten, aber keine entsprechende Aufforderung erhalten haben.

Der Aufbau eines solchen Bandes wird immer Diskussionen hervorrufen. Wir haben uns für eine thematische Gruppierung entschieden, von der wir hoffen, daß sie den Interessen von Bert Fragner (siehe S. xii-xiv) gerecht wird. Sie entspricht dem ursprünglich angedachten Titel "Zwischen Thron und Küche". Der Band beginnt mit Beiträgen zur Geschichte und Historiographie und reicht über Literatur- und Sprachgeschichte, Kultur- und Religionsgeschichte zur Kunstgeschichte, um mit kulinarischen Themen das Fest der Schrift zu beenden. Innerhalb der Themengruppen folgt er im allgemeinen einer historisch-chronologischen Anordnung und einer Reihung von Iran zu anderen Regionen. Bei der Vielfalt der Themen schien es uns angebracht, jeweils dem Autor die Wahl des Systems der Transliteration zu überlassen.

Die Initiative dieses Unternehmens hat Markus Ritter getragen. Großer Dank gilt Caroline Nik Nafs, die die Texte in ein erstes einheitliches Format gebracht hat. Nicholas Sims-Williams, dem Herausgeber der *Beiträge zur Iranistik* und Ursula Reichert ist für die Bereitschaft zu danken, die Festschrift in dieser Reihe des Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlages aufzunehmen. Brigid O'Connor hat einzelne englischsprachige Beiträge durchgesehen. Giorgio Rota danken wir für Hinweise. Der Band hätte nicht erscheinen können ohne die finanzielle Unterstützung der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (Halle an der Saale), der Iran Heritage Foundation (London) und der Societas Iranologica Europaea (Rom), denen aufs herzlichste gedankt sei.

Die Herausgeber

Wien, im November 2007

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Klaus KREISER

**The Equestrian Statue of the Qajar Ruler
Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh in Teheran (1888) ***
(Tafel 9–10)

When Queen Victoria celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of her accession to the throne in the year 1887, the news of the *Jubilee* also reached the Persian capital Teheran.¹ The British monarch, who became with her advancing age more and more popular amongst her subjects, was as Empress of India (since 1876) a close though uncomfortable neighbour of Persia. The British Jubilee may have been an additional challenge for the entourage of the Persian ruler Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh (b. 1831, r. 1848-1896) to celebrate his forthcoming accession day of 1888 with special efforts. Besides, his fortieth year as king coincided roughly with the one-hundredth year of Qajar rule. Nādir Shāh was killed in 1747, but Qajar rule over the greater part of Persia began only after a longer contest of power in the late 1ed. century.

Scholars who have written on the elaborate court ceremonies in Safavid and Qajar Iran deal with the subject of the celebration of the actual accession to the throne in the context with other important festivities such as the Shāh's birthdays and the New Year (*navrūz*). Nevertheless, research literature seems to neglect the anniversaries, respectively the coronation dates. The round figure of ten years played a special role in the Irano-Turkish world. The terminus *qarn* can be identified with a century or a decade "or any multiple there of up to 120".² In our epoch *qarn* clearly stands for a period of 30 years. Qajar kings from Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh (r. 1797-1834) onwards inscribed their coins with the title *Sāhib-Qirān*, meaning "Lord of the auspicious constellation". However titles like *Sulṭān al-Az'am al-Khāqān al-Fakhīm Ṣāhib-Qirān Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh Qajar* had lost the millenarian and astrological associations relating to the advent of the *Mahdī* or as a belief in a period of full peace and happiness.

There is an indication of an extraordinary celebration of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh's *thirtieth* accession year. In 1877 the Shāh ordered the building of a new summer residence in the village of Niyāvarān on the northern slopes of Teheran. The still

* I thank Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom who gave me the opportunity to offer a first version of this paper at Boston College. Other friends and colleagues were exceptionally helpful at specific points. Dr. Eckhard Schiewek (United Nations) took the photographs of the Shāh's busts in Golestan palace. Dr. Ernst Petritsch (Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien) informed me about the Austrian diplomatic dispatches from Teheran. Prof. Anja Pistor (Kiel) sent a copy of *Akhtar* (Istanbul) with a notice on European statues. Prof. Christoph Werner (Freiburg) read an earlier version of the manuscript. Prof. Paul Luft (Manchester) gave me good advice on the rock relief of Mazanderan. Dr. Dorothée Guillemarce (Paris) obtained a document from the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts.

¹ The poet Abu-l-Qāsim Farhang celebrated Queen Victoria's golden jubilee with a *qaṣīda* (Evg. E. Bertels, *Očerk Istorii Persidkoj Literatury* (Leningrad, 1928), pp. 87-88 cited by Jan Rypka, *Iranische Literaturgeschichte* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1959), p. 318.

² F[rancis Joseph] Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (London: Marston, 1892), p. 966.

existing palace with a great Hall of Mirrors functions to-day as a cultural centre and is called Kāh-i Šāhib-Qarāniya. According to the annalist and statesman Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān (d. 1896) the name is derived from the word *qarn* in the sense of "thirty years of the reign of the Shah". One *qarn* or ten years later, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, better known by his honorific title *I'timād as-Saltāna* ("Reliance of the Government"), produced the important "Memorabilia and Monuments" (*al-Ma'āthir wa-l-Āthār*) for the fortieth anniversary of his lord and master.³ This work is an essential, yet not completely reliable source for our special theme.

By September 1888, the Shāh would have occupied the peacock throne not for 50, but still a respectable 40 years. He had a fair chance to surpass the Ottoman Sultan Süleymān the Magnificent, who had reigned for 46 years (1520-1566). However, Nāṣir ad-Dīn could not know that he would end up as a victim of an assassin a few years later (1st May 1896). The long-ruling Ottoman Sultan °Abdülḥamīd II, Nāṣir ad-Dīn's western neighbour, had been raised to the throne in 1876. He was to celebrate his 2ed. anniversary in 1901, five years after the Shāh was shot to death. A comparison with the ceremonies arranged for this "most bourgeois king" (Vambéry) on the Ottoman throne and those for the Shāh would be attractive but is not part of my topic.

One may also ask if forty years of Nasrid rule with its "narcissistic profligacy" – as Abbas Amanat⁴ put it – presented a good reason for celebrations. The Shāh was confronted with more than one serious problem. I shall restrict myself to the mentioning of the Turkmens unrest and the quarrels with the so-called Reuter concession (1872), a foreign monopoly on many Iranian resources. All these inconveniences did not detract the royal household from the search for Jubilee presents to the Shāh, who had already crammed his palaces with Oriental and European "treasure or trifles" – like the nurseries of rich spoiled children.⁵

It was certainly a top brass organizing committee, which assembled in a Teheran palace in the year 1887, or a year earlier, formed by enthusiastic young princes and men-of-the-world as well as by morose grey bearded sceptics. We do not know who finally exclaimed "Let us commission a statue (*mujassama*) for our ruler." We cannot even exclude the possibility that the Shāh himself was the source of inspiration for the main present at his jubilee. (Tafel 9)

Nonetheless, I suggest that it was finally Kāmṛān Mīrzā who took the initiative as a member of the organizing committee. He was the younger and favourite son of the Shāh and holder of the honourable title *Nā'ib as-Saltāna* ("Substitute of the Government"). It is possible that the director of the arsenal, Aqā Rizā Khān had declared that he was able to cast an equestrian statue in gilded metal.⁶ The sculptor

³ Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān I'timād as-Saltāna, *Kitāb al-Ma'āthir wa-l-Āthār* (Teheran 1306/1889). I consulted the 2nd ed. by Iraj Afshār, *Chihil sāl-i tārikh-i Īrān* (1363-1368/1984-1989).

⁴ Abbas Amanat, "Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, VII (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 1003-1005.

⁵ George N[athaniel] Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* (London: Longmans, 1892), 2 vols. (Reprint 1966), I, p. 315.

⁶ His name is also mentioned in a text of Sharaf, I'timād as-Saltāna, *Kitāb al-Ma'āthir wa-l-Āthār*, II, p. 664: "*ba chodan rikhtand*" following *Khātirāt*, p. 562. Steingass, *Dictionary*, p. 402: "*chaudan*, Cast metal; raw iron".

(*mujassama-sāz*) was the "architect" Mīrzā °Alī Akbar Mi°mār, who was the first Qajar court photographer, and can be identified on a photograph from the Golestān Palace album which shows him posing at the feet of the statue after the completion. But we are unable to say if the statue was a dutiful surprise by his entourage or a royal commission.⁷

At this point, I have to interrupt the narrative of the preparations for an equestrian statue with the insertion of another story, which happened approximately ten years *earlier*. It does not seem very noteworthy but has to be told since many, if not all Iranian and Western authors from the late 1ed. century to our day mixed up two plots, which have only one sculpture of the Shāh as common denominator. The facts will also illustrate that the Shāh had a clear meaning about his representation in the public sphere.

The main actor in this second (yet chronologically earlier) story is the Conte di Monteforte, the Italian-born Austrian police chief of Teheran, who had been appointed in 1878, when a modern police force "modelled after the European concept" was created.⁸ During his twelve-year term of service the Conte was not only responsible for security issues and price control (*idāre-i iḥtisāb*) but also for the urban sanitation (*tanẓīf*). His office was a splendid two-storied building near *Darvāza-i Davlat*, the main ceremonial city gate of Nasridian Teheran in the northern quarter of the capital.⁹ In 1881 or 1882, a couple of years after his appointment,¹⁰ the Conte placed a sculpture, literally a "picture in relief" (*ṣūrat-i mujassama*), undoubtedly a bust, of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh "in front of Lālazār", the long garden-like alley connecting the splendid *Darvāza-i Davlat* with the old centre. This was a rapidly developing and fashionable district where the majority of the embassies had moved after the building of the new city walls (*ḥisār-i Nāṣirī*) by the Shāh in the early 1870s.

I take it for granted, that the bust was the product of a western artist. The Shāh had visited a number of European countries in 1873 and 1878 and attracted the attention of several sculptors keen to obtain lucrative commissions. In this respect, he shared the experience of *Sultān* °Abdül°azīz and Ismā°il Pasha of Egypt, when they had visited (independently!) the Paris World Exhibition in 1867. The well established French sculptor Gustave Adolphe Désiré Crauk (1827-1905: *sculpteur officiel et portraitist recherché*) had exhibited "un très beau buste en bronze argenté du shah de Perse Nasser-Ed-din" in the Salon of 1874. Crauk must have received already in 1873 a commission for a *Médaille en plâtre patine terre cuite* of the Shāh. In 1899/1900 the artist

⁷ Reza Sheikh writes, without mentioning the name, that "the head of the artillery [...] commissioned the casting of the statue."

⁸ M. [William]. M. Floor, "The Police in Qājār Persia", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 123 (1973), pp. 293-315, 312-313; Mahdī Bāmdād, *Sharḥ-i ḥāl-i rijāl-i Īrān*, 3rd ed., IV (1343/1964-5), pp. 272-274; Nāṣir Nadjmī, *Tihārān dar °ahd-i Nāṣirī* (Teheran, 1364), pp. 374-385.

⁹ See map and photo in Hendrik Dunlop, *Perzië: Voorheen en Thans* (Haarlem: Bohn, 1912).

¹⁰ E[hsan] Yarshater, "Observations on Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah", in Edmund Bosworth and Carole Hillenbrand (eds.), *Qajar Iran: Political, social and cultural change 1800-1925* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1983), pp. 3-13. The bust of Naṣr al-Dīn is mentioned for example by C. E. Curinier, *Dictionnaire national des contemporains* (Paris: Office gén. d'éd. de librairie & d'impr., 1901-1918).

gave the medallion and the bust to the museum in his native Valenciennes.¹¹ But there is evidence that two versions of the bust, one in marble and one in bronze, were sent to the Persian capital.¹²

The marble is certainly the signed copy of the bust, which is displayed today in the Golestān palace at Teheran (Tafel 10a). The Golestān bust is obviously part of a project for a "gallery of the ancestors" starting with Fath ʿAlī Shāh.¹³ There exists also the head of Muḥammad Shāh (r. 1834-1848), the immediate predecessor of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh, created by Benedetto Civiletti (1846-1899).¹⁴ This bust has the following inscription:

Com[modore] Benedetto Civiletti / Dell Istituto di Francia i Membre Di Diverse Academie Di Europa / Decorato Della Legione D'Onore / Fece in Palermo 1889

Civiletti was in the early 1870s at the peak of his prestige. When he exposed his sculpture "Canaris" in Vienna in 1873 he earned an immense applause. This was the year when the Shāh travelled for the first time to Europe and visited a great number of European capitals including Vienna and Paris. It is not known when and where the Shāh commissioned the busts. But it is clear that the Crauk's Nāṣir ad-Dīn arrived soon after 1873 in Teheran.

The Shāh was all but hostile to the diffusion of his picture. He collected European artworks and "supported and encouraged the most talented Persian artists".¹⁵ In 1855 he established the "Order of the Royal Portrait" (*Nishān-i Timthāl-i Humāyūn*) bestowed on the Grand Vizier and "distinguished military commanders."¹⁶ The Shāh's face also adorned banknotes ("payable at Tabriz only").¹⁷

A rock relief signed by "*kamtarīn* ʿAlī Akbar" in the vicinity of Teheran is the most monumental example of his self-celebration and self-commemoration.¹⁸ The occasion was the opening of the road from Teheran to Amol (Mazandaran) constructed by the Tyrolean "Khān" Gasteiger¹⁹ (who is not mentioned on the relief). It was finished in

¹¹ Jean-Claude Poinignon, *Sortir de sa réserve: le fonds valenciennois de sculpture XIXe et XXe siècles au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Valenciennes; catalogue raisonné* (Valenciennes: Assoc. des Amis des Arts de Valenciennes et du Hainaut Français, 1992), pp. 129-130.

¹² Poinignon, *Sortir de sa réserve*, p. 129: "Un marbre fut envoyé au palais impérial de Téhéran. Un second exemplaire en bronze serait également à Téhéran".

¹³ We find the gallery of the members of another "upstart" dynasty in the palace of the Egyptian princess Shivekiar (Philipp Mansel, *Sultans in Splendor* [London: Deutsch, 1988], p. 176).

¹⁴ Angelo de Gubernatis, *Dizionario degli artisti italiani viventi* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1889-1892), pp. 202-210; Vincenzo Vicario, *Gli Scultori Italiani de Neoclassicismo al Liberty* (Lodi: Lodigraf, 1990), pp. 218-220; Manio de Micheli, *La Scultura dell'Ottocento* (Torino: UTET, 1992), pp. 255-257; Patera, Benedetto (ed.), *Dizionario degli Artisti Siciliani* (Palermo: Novecento, 1994), pp. 65-67.

¹⁵ Layla S. Diba in *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch 1785-1925* (London: Tauris, 1998), pp. 239-241.

¹⁶ J[acob] M. Landau, "Nishān 1", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), vol. 8, pp. 57-62.

¹⁷ M[uḥammad] Ḥasan Baigī, *Tihrān-i qadīm* (Tihrān: Int. Quqnūs, 1366/1987), p. 395.

¹⁸ At Tang-i Boride, ca. 22 km north of Pulus and 71 km south of Amol on the connection of Teheran with the Caspian Sea. Reproduction of the inscription and photograph in Manuchir Sutuda, *Az Āstārā tā Āstārābād* (Tihrān: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1358/1979), pp. 451-453, ill. 278.

¹⁹ Reinhard Pohanka und Ingrid Thurner, *Der Khan aus Tirol: Albert Joseph Gasteiger, Freiherr von Ravenstein und Kobach, Diplomat, Ingenieur und Forschungsreisender am persischen Hof <1823-1890>* (Wien: Bundesverlag, 1988); Helmut Slaby, "Gasteiger", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 10 (2001), pp. 320-321.

1295 h./1878 and antedates our equestrian statue by a full decade. This outstanding last reminder of the revival of Achaemenid and Sasanian artistic traditions under the Qajars²⁰ was executed after an (still unpublished) oil painting in the magazine (*anbar*) of the Golestān Palace. The quality of the painting is said to be much higher than the aesthetically not very demanding rock relief (Tafel 10b).²¹

The rock relief shows the very unusual frontal view of the Shāh on horseback between two groups of respectively five persons as attendants on foot. The dramatic visual shortening is indeed a very significant departure from the norm in Western and Eastern art, which usually shows the ruler in profile and riding on a trotting horse. At any rate, the group image centred on the Shāh with his entourage makes an effort to show the "fragile balance between the [...] conservative camp and [...] the reformist wing."²² "Suitenbilder"²³ or paintings with courtiers played an important role in "the creation of regal image" under the Qajar dynasty, where "a distinct style of painting evolved in which Persian and European modes of representation were synthesized".²⁴ The names and titles of the courtiers are inscribed in cartouches above their heads. A long poem, equally in the form of inscribed tables, surrounds the group.²⁵

Let us return to the Lālazār bust set up by the Police chief Monteforte. One can only speculate if it was one of the two works by Crauk, which had been sent to Teheran. We know from a singular source that the Shāh did not dislike this "picture", but that he found the site unsuitable. Aḥmad Suhailī Khvansārī published a small letter in facsimile in which the Shāh bluntly orders the removal of the "sculptured image" (*sūrat-i mujassama*) during the year 1299/1881-1882. He did not send the memorandum directly to his police chief but he used the official channel via the governor of Teheran, who was none other than his already mentioned son, Kamrān Mīrzā, Nā'ib as-Salṭana, the governor of Teheran.²⁶

The Shah expressed his ill humour about the location with the words "I am not pleased" (*kār-i khūb nist*) and justified his decision with the presence of the mob (*malā-i ʿāmm*), including children, which was gathering at Lālazār. Implicitly he says that people are not paying due respect to the representation of his person. The Shāh finally gave the order to replace the "picture" with a flowerpot (*guldāna*) – an indication, that the bust had been placed on a column. At the end of his letter he makes the disposition that the bust should be transferred to one of the palaces of the crown prince Kamrān Mīrzā. I emphasize again that the Shah did not object the *mujassama*²⁷ as a three-dimensional representation of his image, but the irreverent treatment by the people.

²⁰ Baigī, *Tīhrān-i qadīm*, p. 452.

²¹ Communication by Dr. H. von Gall (Berlin).

²² Abbas Amanat, "Nāsir al-Dīn Shāh".

²³ Rainer Schoch, *Das Herrscherbild in der Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts* (München: Prestel, 1975).

²⁴ Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islamic Arts* (London: Phaidon 1997), p. 418.

²⁵ Prof. Luft (Manchester) prepares a publication of the inscriptions.

²⁶ The Shāh's note was also published by Qāsim Ganī, *Yāddāshthā-i Duktur Qāsim Ganī*, ed. M. J. Mah-jūb, fasc. 9 (Teheran 1992), p. 411.

²⁷ The word *mujassama* (lit. "embodiment") is still the common term for "statue" in modern Persian. Diaspora newspapers of the period such as *Akhtar* (1875-1895/6) in Istanbul used it regularly when they reported (like their Ottoman counterparts) on unveilings of public monuments (*iftitāh-i mujassama*) in

One can touch on the point, that the Shāh had seen many monuments during his extended travels in Europe, including rulers on horseback on high pedestals. His diaries even contain some specific entries. The Shāh was for example well aware that the place of a ruler on a column could be sometimes rather unstable. In Paris, he noted that Napoleon was torn down from his monument at Place Vendôme in the days of the Commune as a repellent symbol of monarchy. But his diary devotes more lines to the beautiful statuary in the gardens of Versailles and in the palace of the Louvre.

There were also some marble statues of Venus... one of which has been beautifully carved, but both its arms are broken away at about the middle of the upper-arm.²⁸

Let us return to the equestrian statue modelled, cast and unveiled in Teheran. The photograph of the opening ceremony was taken on 30 April 1887 or later. This was, in any case, the date noted by the I^ctimād as-Saltāna when the Shāh went to the Arsenal to inspect (*sarkashi*) his statue. His Majesty was very pleased and considered placing it in the centre of the Maydān-i Tūpkhāna, "the principal square or public place of the Persian capital".²⁹ This scheme was not carried out, since – again according to one source – the Shāh "changed his mind" and decided to transfer the statue to the "Imperial gardens".

The "Imperial gardens" covered a "broad circular field about 1000 m in diameter situated on the outskirts of the city near one of its west gates".³⁰ Naṣir ad-Dīn converted the field, also used for horse races, into a park with a pond and a central island, on which his equestrian statue was to be erected. The photographic picture taken in the arsenal after completion reminds us of the rock relief on the Amol road in one respect. It shows the Shāh on horseback surrounded by his retinue. Indeed the ruler is represented twice – in metal and in flesh.

Before dealing with the question of the prototype for the equestrian statue, I shall discuss in short the problem of the casting technology. Only one contemporary source states the nature of the metal as "raw iron" or "cast metal". Modern books whose compilers had to rely on pictures speak of *bronzī*. It is perhaps tempting to believe in cast iron, which was used for many purposes by the second half of the nineteenth century. We know certainly that the iron founders of the arsenal of Teheran produced in the 1890ies "copies of florid European statuettes for the decoration of gardens and public [!] places",³¹ but it is very doubtful if these artisans dealt with such monumental

Europe; see also the words *Mujassamahā-i Gholghola dar Afghanistan* under the description of the unfortunate Bamyān Buddhas in the Shāh's official "newspaper" *Sharaf* (Dhilhijja 1302/October 1885).

²⁸ Carole Hillenbrand (intr.), *The Diary of H. M. The Shah of Persia during his tour through Europe in A. D. 1873* (reprint Costa Mesa: Mazda, 1995), p. 246. We witness the admiration of the Shāh for the Venus di Milo; See for earlier translations and editions Bozorg Alavi, "Schah Nāṣer o'Din", in *Kindlers Neues Literatur-Lexikon* (München: Kindler, 1991) XII, p. 237-238.

²⁹ George N[athaniel] Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, 1892), I, p. 307.

³⁰ A.-A. Sa'īdī Sīrjānī, "Bāg-e Šāh", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1989) pp. 402-403.

³¹ Curzon, *Persia*, I, p. 602 description of the "Tup Meidan", p. 307: "In the middle of the square is a great tank, fenced round by an iron railing, with some cast-iron statuettes [...]". At the entrance of the Russian embassy were two life sized boys with lanterns (Hendrik Dunlop, *Perzië*, p. 490); see also Yaḥyā Dhukā'

objects as a life size sculpture.³² Even if the arsenal produced besides weapons iron elements for street furniture, we have to accept that horse and rider are bronze castings. This leads immediately to the question of the training of the sculptors and, equally essential, of the metal workers or founders.

The highly complicated task of casting an equestrian statue needs a long experience. The practice within a cannon foundry was a necessary but not sufficient precondition. All other known royal statues in the Islamic East between the 1870s and the 1940s originate in establishments in Paris (Muḥammad ʿAlī in Alexandria, Ibrāhīm Pasha in Cairo), Munich (ʿAbdūlʿazīz in Istanbul), or Rome (Faizal in Baghdad).³³ We must in any case acknowledge the successful achievement of metal technology in the Teheran of 1888. Iʿtimād as-Salṭana writes under the heading "Casting and erecting (*afrahktān*) of the first statue of the Lord of glorious constellations by the hands of Iranian masters" in his *Memorabilia* that the "art of founding statues (*mujassamāt*)" was previously unknown in Iran before.³⁴ He extols in this chapter overlooked by most authors (Algar,³⁵ Abrahamian,³⁶ Yarshater,³⁷ and Diba³⁸) the casting of the *mujassama* of the *Šāhib-Qirān* by Iranian masters (*ba-dast-i asātid-i Īrānī*). He takes it as a sign and proof of extraordinary progress, a proof of progress and its erection (*naṣb*) as testimony of [modern, European] culture (using *tamaddun* in the sense of the Ottoman Tanẓimāt writers as "mission civilisatrice"). An extremely difficult procedure as the casting of a bronze statue had to be supervised by an experienced foreigner or a Persian trained abroad.

The actual unveiling took place on 10 *Safar* 1306 in the Bāġ-i Shāh. The day corresponding to the 16. October 1888 – and the site are confirmed by a report of the

and Muḥammad Ḥasan Simsār (eds.), *Tihrān dar tasvīr* (Teheran: Sorūsh, 1369/1990-1) vol. 1, pl. 9-16 statuettes, boy as candle holder, pl. 11-16 "Statue of Agha Mohammed Khan Khajeh" also as a candle or gas light holder.

³² Jacqueline Fearn, *Cast Iron* (Princes Risborough, 1990), p. 29: "Very few round objects can be moulded in less than three pieces, scarcely anything in fact that has any protuberances on it; round shot, or figures of oval section, are the only figures which can be cast out of a two-part mould."

³³ Klaus Kreiser, "Public Monuments in Turkey and Egypt, 1840-1916", *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World* 14 (1997), pp. 103-117.

³⁴ Iʿtimād ad-Dawla, *Ma ʿ āthir*, I, p. 146.

³⁵ Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran 1785-1906: The role of the Ulama in the Qajar Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969): "In Muḥarram-Šafar, 1306/October, 1888, Nāṣir ud-Dīn Shāh was obliged to bow again to the persuasive force of clerical objections. As a further gratification for his love of ostentation, he had caused a statue of himself to be moulded and gilded in the artillery arsenal at Teheran, intending to expose it to the admiration of the populace in some public square. The ulama objected, the three-dimensional representations of human beings having been forbidden by Islam, and ultimately the statue had to be erected in the seclusion of the royal garden near Darvāza-yi Qazvīn."

³⁶ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran: Between two Revolutions* (Princeton: University Press, 1982), p. 41: "When the *ulama* in Tehran demonstrated in outrage against the construction of a statue depicting Naser al-Din Shah, the government promptly removed the bust and admitted that such monuments violated the Islamic prohibition against three-dimensional representations of human beings."

³⁷ Yarshater, "Observations", p. 6.

³⁸ Diba, *Royal Persian Paintings*, p. 44: "When Nasir al-Din Shah overstepped the bounds of traditional kingship in 1888 by commissioning a European-style equestrian statue for himself, however the religious authorities protested violently." Diba refers to Algar, *Religion and State* and Iʿtimād as-Salṭana.

English envoy in Persia, Henry Drummond Wolff.³⁹

Yesterday the Corps Diplomatique were invited to attend at some gardens recently constructed near the Kasim [Kasvin] gate to witness the unveiling of an equestrian statue of the Shah, designed by a Persian named Mirza Ali Akbar and cast at the Royal arsenal.

The letter ends with the words:

The statue though not very novel in design shows considerable skill and has been well executed. The Shāh appears much pleased with this production of native talent.⁴⁰

A German diplomat sends a similar description of the unveiling to Berlin:

Am 17 dieses Monats fand in dem nördlich von Teheran, unmittelbar vor dem Kazwin Rennplatz gelegenen Königlichen Garten *Bagh-e asp dawuni* [asb dawāni] die feierliche Enthüllung des Reiterstandbildes des Schahs in Gegenwart Seiner Majestät, der Prinzen des Königlichen Hauses, des in großer Uniform erschienenen diplomatischen Korps und der Würdenträger des Reiches statt. Seine Majestät wies in sinnigen an das Diplomatische Korps gerichteten Worten mit sichtlich hoher Befriedigung darauf hin, darauf hin, dass dies das erste einem persischen Herrscher errichtete, von einem persischen Künstler modellierte und in Persien gegossene Standbild sei.

The author of *Ma'āthir wa-l-Athār*⁴¹ attests also to the presence of envoys (*sufarā*), ministers (*wuzarā*) and other "classes" (*ṭabaqāt*). After the official greeting there was a short speech (*khuṭba-i mukhtaṣar*), by the Nā'ib as-Saltāna The unveiling itself consisted of the removal of a covering fixed at the head of the statue with the help of ropes, a procedure which was not accomplished without delay. After this part the visitors had to endure a *qaṣida*, extolling the Shāh by the *Shams ash-shu'arā* (poet laureate)⁴² and a religious sermon until those present were delivered by the discharge of a cannon-shot. Bleibtreu has the wrong day (obviously misprint) but he is credible since his short report contains all the elements of our English, German, and Persian sources supplemented by the mention of military marches and the presence of soldiers:

Seit sechs Jahren ist zu Teheran in einem königlichen Garten vor dem Kazviner Stadtthore das Denkmal Nasreddins <fig. 32> in Lebensgröße zu Pferde zu sehen. Es wurde in dem Artillerie-Arsenal zu Teheran gegossen und dann vergoldet. Anfangs war beabsichtigt, das Denkmal auf einem der öffentlichen Plätze zu errichten, da jedoch die Mollahs, die sich im allgemeinen eines bedeutenden Einflusses im Lande erfreuen, dem Plan gegenüber sich mißbilligend verhielten, beschloß man, das Denkmal in einem der eigenen Gärten des Schahs vor den westlichen Thoren Tehrans aufzustellen. Die Enthüllung fand am 4. [sic] Oktober 1888 im Beisein des diplomatischen Corps, aller persischen Würdenträger, des Hofstaats und der Truppen statt. Als auf das vom Schah gegebene Zeichen der verhüllende Vorhang fiel, spielte die Militärmusik, und die Hofpoeten verlasen ihre Festgedichte. Nach Besichtigung des Denkmals wurden die sämtlichen Eingeladenen in prachtvoll geschmückte Zelte geführt und bewirtet. In dem genannten Arsenal werden gegenwärtig unter Leitung einiger europäischer Meister nicht ohne Erfolg verschiedene Gußarbeiten ausgeführt.

This ceremony was none other than the first full unveiling in an Islamic country for a *living*

³⁹ He was appointed December 1887 and remained in his post until 1891. The only source cited by Abrahamian is I'timād as-Saltāna, *Ma'āthir*, II, p. 107.

⁴⁰ Public Record Office, FO 60/493 "*Despatches, Aug.-Sept. 1888*". My thanks go to Prof. Colin Heywood (Email 23. 1. 2002). With his assistance it was possible to correct Algar, *Religion* p. 182 note 72 (FO 60/498 and October instead of December). Algar shows only Bleibtreu as a source for the opposition of the Ulama.

⁴¹ *Ma'āthir wa-l-Athār*, II, p. 664.

⁴² Abdol-Ḥusain Mīrzā Shams ash-Shu'arā (Mahdī Bāmdād, *Sharḥ-i ḥāl rijāl-i Īrān*, II, p. 58).

ruler organized in the epoch of European *statuomanie*.⁴³ But one must not forget that the principal ceremonial features – salutation, acclamation, and oration – were parts of the traditional Persian court ceremonial.

Nevertheless the annalist Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān did not approve of the procedure although he admired the statue as a work of local technology. There is a rather cryptic remark in *Mā'āthir wa-l-Athār*, obviously written by one of the "secretaries" in charge of the compilation. He says that the ʿIṭimād as-Salṭana had noted down in his personal recollections⁴⁴ that he did not approve of public festivities for this occasion and that the erection of statues was prohibited for the Islamic nation. And he continues that the Turkish Sultan Maḥmūd [II] had tried to ornate his coins with his own picture (*ṣūrat*) but was opposed by his Shaykh al-Islām and other Ulama who charged him with unbelief (*takfīr*). Finally Sultan Maḥmūd had to yield and collect in the coins with his portrait. There is no evidence of such an event in Ottoman history, but I am afraid that some readers have derived from this erroneous historical digression the opposition of the Persian Ulama.

The question of the sculpture, which provided the basic concept for the rider and his horse, seems to be less difficult although there was no tradition of freestanding sculptures either in the private or public domain. Whereas Faṭḥ ʿAlī Shāh was "frequently depicted on horseback engaged in a hunt or leading his troops into battle",⁴⁵ Nāṣir ad-Dīn's sculpture could not represent a successful military commander and the motive of the royal hunter was in a way *démodé*. The choice of a modern or contemporary equestrian imagery is evident. The Shāh rides a horse, which seems to be startled by something, but he keeps his head and demonstrates his ability to rule.⁴⁶ Contemporary observers must have been aware of the close resemblance of the horse with Antoine-Louis Baryes (1795-1875) famous bronzes.

Baryes's *Cheval Turc* was available according to sales catalogues with *antérieur gauche levé* (raised forefoot) or *antérieur droit levé* in different sizes. The Turkish Horse was one of the sculptor's most celebrated items and many reductions were cast in his workshop. Sultan ʿAbdülʿazīz and Ottoman high officials had purchased this horse for their gardens on the Bosphorus. A modification of the horse is the *Guerrier Tartare arrêtant son cheval* originally called a Chinese rider (*Cavalier chinois*, 1847).⁴⁷ There is even a resemblance with his well liked "Ape riding a Gnu". Since these statues could be blown up or reduced according to where it would be used,⁴⁸ the Teheran horse may be considered as an enlargement of a serial decorative piece intended for interiors. Another feature is the uneven, rock-strewn base. If I am not wrong, this is an invention of Falconet for his illustrious Peter the Great in Saint Petersburg.

⁴³ Maurice Agulhon: "La statuomanie et l'Histoire", in *Ethnologie Française* (1978), pp. 145-172.

⁴⁴ *Rūznāma-i Khatirāt-i ʿIṭimād as-Salṭana*, (ed.) Iradj Afshar (Tīhrān: Amīr Kabīr, 1377/1999), p. 597.

⁴⁵ Maryam Ekhtiar in *Royal Persian Painting*, p. 247.

⁴⁶ Compare Walter A. Liedtke, *The royal horse and rider: Painting, sculpture, and horsemanship 1500-1800* (New York: Abaris, 1989), p. 327.

⁴⁷ Pierre Kjellberg, *Les bronzes du XIXe siècle: dictionnaire des sculpteurs* (Paris : Les Ed. de l'Amateur, 1989), p. 67.

⁴⁸ Ruth Mirolli, *Nineteenth century French sculpture: Monuments for the Middle Class. J. B. Speed Art Museum Louisville, Kentucky, November 2 through December 5, 1971* (Louisville, 1971), p. 23.

The lack of an inscription and of reliefs on the pedestal is evident. We have instead heraldic motives, the universal lion head and the sword-and-lion image. According to the Mīrzā Ġulām Ḥusain, author of *Afzal at-Tavārikh* (written in 1899) a marble table was added some months later. It had to replace the conventional narrative relief, which usually explains the intentions of the donors or committees. The marble slab is an Iranian version of Augustus' *res gestae*, Nāṣir ad-Dīn is styled "Imperator" of all countries of Iran. The text summarizes the works of progress, which the Shāh had performed in forty years of glorious rule. For the modern reader the juxtaposition of pious performances such as the pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines of Iraq on the one hand and the introduction of photography, kerosene lamps and electricity (*charāgh-i gāz va barqīya*) on the other may be surprising. Abstract key words are "security", "justice" and "power" (*amniyat, 'adl, himmat*). The text enumerates three or four leading personalities by name and title. Like in other state documents the year is given in the old Turco-mongol form (*siṣan/mouse*) corresponding to 1888.

The erection of an equestrian statue was interpreted by some authors as overstepping of "the bounds of traditional kingship by commissioning a European-style equestrian statue" thus symbolizing "foreign intervention in Persian affairs". According to Layla Diba the statue "became a hated symbol of Qajar rule and was subsequently torn down." But horse and rider survived more than forty years in the Royal Garden. An oil painting shows its distant grandeur.⁴⁹ Rizā Shāh melted down the statue (in 1928?) and it [the statue] is said to have been recycled again in metal for the cannon-foundry. The equestrian statue of the new ruler dominated the Maydān-i Tūpkhāne, which was called now Maydān-i Sipāh⁵⁰ between 1928 and the Islamic revolution in 1978.

We can summarize: The bronze statue of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh in Teheran was the first equestrian statue for an Islamic ruler erected during his life time. Its unveiling on October 1ed. 1888 coincided with the 4ed. anniversary of his rule. The ceremony was witnessed by high officials and the diplomatic corps. In a speech, the Shāh underlined the fact that it was a work of Iranian craftsmanship. The paper shows that Nāṣir ad-Dīn had commissioned earlier (1873/4) a portrait bust in Europe. This work was exhibited for a limited time on a column in Lālazār on the initiative of the police director Monteforte. Research literature claims that the equestrian statue of 1888 met opposition by the Ulama. The sources consulted do not exclude religious concerns, but this may be directed towards the *form* of the inauguration ceremony. The Iranian practice of *réclame royale* was not completely different from that of the Ottomans and Egyptians, which began like in Iran, with the diffusion of royal portraits and culminated with the commission of statues for the semi-private space or modern urban settings. A special feature of the contemporary voices is the proud emphasis on the Iranian contribution to a work of art and craft (*honar*) created independently from European models.

⁴⁹ Donald N. Wilber, *Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions* (Rutland: Tuttle, 1962), p. 160, pl. 71.

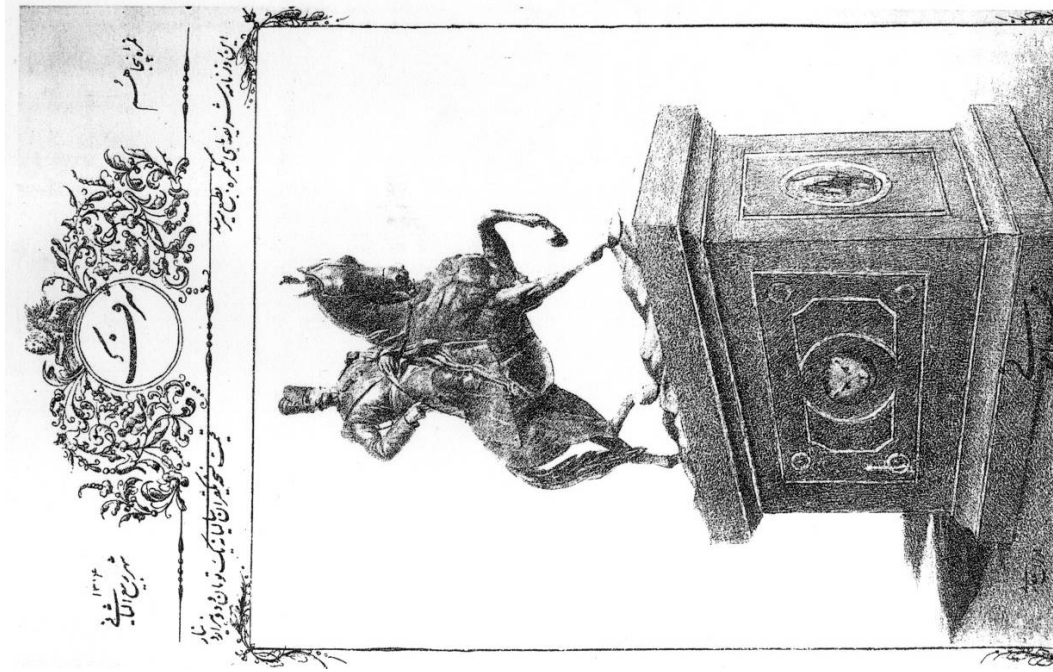
⁵⁰ The actual name is Maydān-i Imām: "The protagonists who shaped modern Tehran", in Chahryar Adle and Bernard Hourcade (eds.), *Téhéran capitale bicentenaire* (Paris/Téhéran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1992) p. 100. fig. 4.

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- Rota**, Giorgio (Wien, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Iranistik) S. 54-63
- Rührdanz**, Karin (University of Toronto / Royal Ontario Museum, Professor / Curator of Islamic Art) S. 377-388, Taf. 6-8
- Sadovski**, Velizar (Wien, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Iranistik) S. 242-255
- Szuppe**, Maria (Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Mondes iraniens et indiens) S. 94-105
- Wentker**, Sibylle (Wien, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Iranistik) S. 221-231
- Werner**, Christoph (Marburg, Philipps-Universität, Professor für Iranistik) S. 284-296
- Zipoli**, Riccardo (Università di Venezia "Ca Foscari", Dipartimento di Studi Eurasiatici) S. 187-197

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b Lithograph of the sculpture by ʿAlī Akbar, in *Sharaf* 50 (Teheran Rabi II 1306/beg. 5.12.1880).

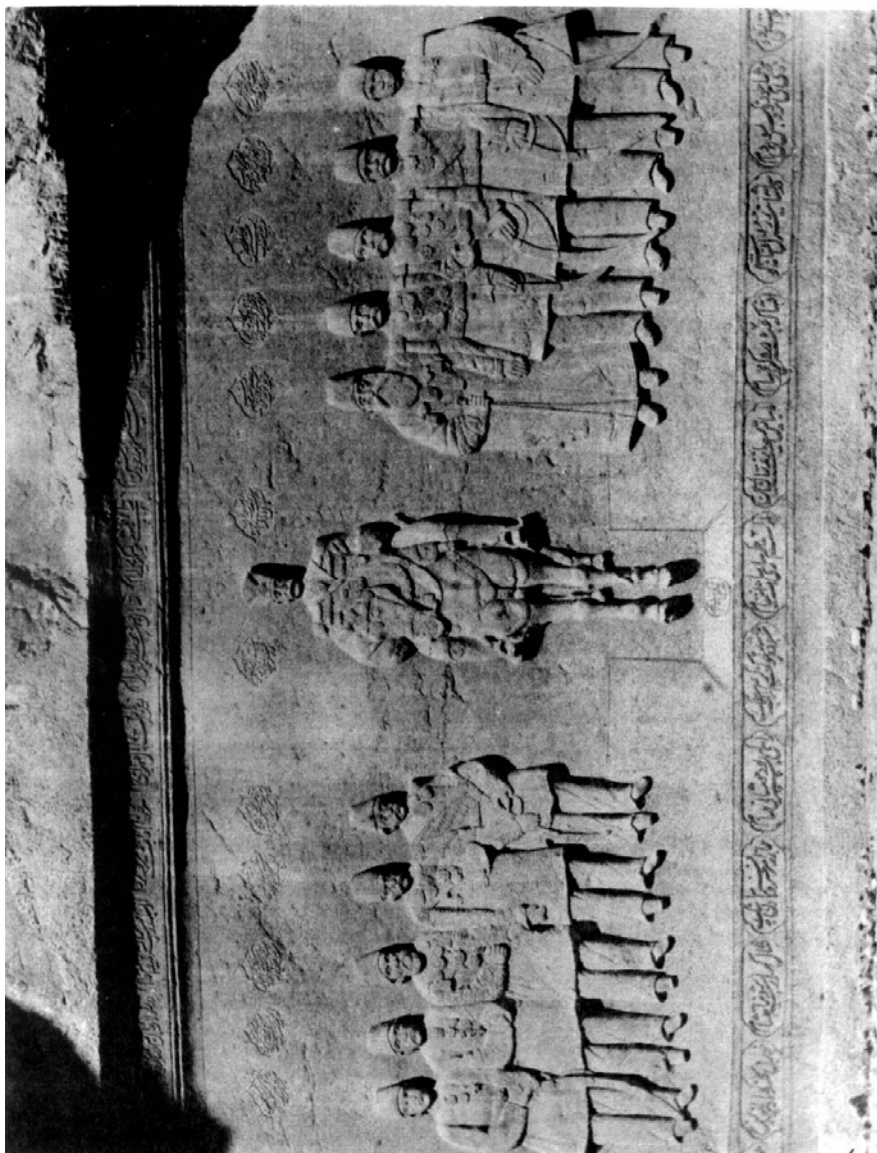


a Shah and entourage with the statue in the Tūpkhāna, Teheran 1888 (after: Fredrick N. Bohrer, *Sevrugin and the Perisan Image: Photographs of Iran, 1870-1930* [Seattle 1999], p. 60)

Equestrian statue of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh, contemporary images.



a Bust of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh by Gustave Crauk (1873), Golestān Palace (Photo E. Schiewek).



b Rock relief of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh with entourage at the Amol-road in Māzanderān, 1878 (after: Suttūde, *Az Āstārā*, V, ill. 278).