



GUEST LECTURE

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The Persian Art of War

This paper will examine the visual and expressive cultures of war in Persia and the ancient Iranian world. I first establish the wider context by exploring the major themes and changes in the representation of war and violence under the Achae-menids. I will then turn to late antiquity and investigate how the Sasanian dynasty contextualized the genesis, process and outcome of warfare within the empire’s developing sacred cosmology of kingship, both victories and defeats. My argument here is that warfare was a performative endeavor at certain moments of Iranian history, especially that of the Sasanians. Warfare played an important role in defining the king of king’s cosmic place. The king campaigned not only for military necessity but performatively to enact his astral and mythological role and display himself as such to kings, nobles and the army.



*Cameo of Shapur I humiliating Emperor Valerianus, 260 AD
(Cabinet des Médailles, Paris)*

FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH, 2017

10:00 | Seminarraum 1

(Atrium – Zentrum für Alte Kulturen, Langer Weg 11)