

# ***Khvarenah: A Myth at the Service of Dominance***

**(Based on Max Webber's theory of Charismatic Leadership)**

Saba Gholami<sup>1</sup> and Reza Mehrafarin<sup>2</sup>

Myths are mysterious and sacred narrations which speak of the worldview of an ethnic group regarding its being at a specific stage of development. In fact, myths are at the service of creating meaning and symbolize a nation's culture and beliefs. In Iranian literature, *Khvarenah* or divine glory mediates between the world and Paradise, that is, matter and God, and connects Man's developed soul to the divine eternal power. The myth of *Khvarenah*, which has been mentioned in *Avestan* texts and *Shahnameh*, embodies a number of political and religious concepts and implied meanings which have played a role in the essence and structure of the political and social life of Iran. The studies of social events in this country and the relationships between the ruling powers and Iranian people in the course of history demonstrate a kind of dominance which Max Webber calls Charismatic leadership. In this paper, the authors have tried to examine the use of the divine glory of power in various historical periods through a study of the reasons behind the existence of the philosophy of *Khvarenah* or divine glory and comparing it with Webber's theory of charismatic leadership. The findings indicate that divine glory was in fact exploited as a religious tool in order to consolidate and legitimize dominance over society.

## **Key Terms**

divine glory

dominance

charismatic ruler

legitimacy

Max Webber

---

<sup>1</sup> PhD candidate of Archeology, University of Mazandaran (corresponding author), saba\_gholami69@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup> Professor at Archeology Department, University of Mazandaran, reza.mehrafarin@gmail.com