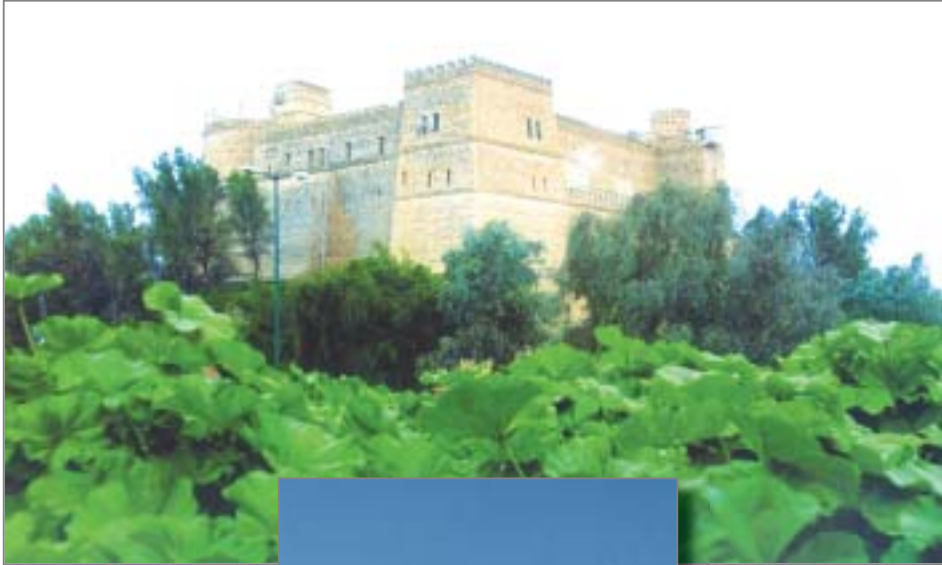


The Age of Elamites



The Iranian Plateau did not experience the rise of urban civilization in the late 4th and early 3rd millennia on the Mesopotamia, but the lowland Khuzestan where the Elamite Civilization emerged.

Geographically, Elam included more than Khuzestan; it was a combination of the lowlands and the immediate highland areas to the north and to the east. Elamite strength was based on an ability to hold these various areas together under a central government, which permitted the maximum interchange of the natural resources unique to each region.

According to Iranvisitor website, the Age of Elamites is divided by historians into three distinct periods:

> 1. Old Elam (2600-1900 BC)

Earthen tablets record the names of two dynasties dating from this period, the Awan dynasty (2600-2100 BC) and the Simash dynasty (2100-1900 BC). Wars with Mesopotamia, particularly the city of Ur, had already begun, both sides wishing to safeguard their access to raw materials. Records state that the Sumerian king Shulgi of the 3rd dynasty of Ur (created 2094-2047 BC) captured Susa but Elam eventually rebelled and in turn overthrew the Sumerians.

> 2. Middle Elam (1900-1100 BC)

Wars between Elam and Sumer continued during this period. In 1746 BC the world's first lawmaker, Hammurabi, crushed Elam and captured Susa. Before long, however, his son, Samsuiluna, was badly defeated by King Kutir Nakhunte I of the Elamites that was remembered 1,000 years later in an inscription of the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal.

In the 13th century BC another



king of this period, Untash Gal, built the city of Choghanbil on the banks of the Ulai River. The kings of Elam, known as 'god-rulers', had strong links with religion and would come to the city for important religious ceremonies.

The relative weakness of the Assyrian Empire at the beginning of the 13th century BC inspired King Shutruk-Nahunte to move to Babylon. He captured the city and seized the Stela inscribed with the laws of Hammurabi, removing it to Susa where it was excavated some 3,000 years later.

However, Elamite power in central Mesopotamia was never well consolidated and King Nebuchadnezzar I of Babylon (created 1124-1103 BC) eventually resulted in the defeat of Elamites that effectively brought an end to the Middle Elam period.

> 3. Late Elam (800-620 BC)

Of the three centuries between the end of Middle Elam and the beginning of this new period, we know nothing at all. By the time Elam reappears in the archeological record, the central authority of Susa has receded and separately ruled principalities are in the ascendancy.

The 8th and 7th centuries BC saw a new wave of Assyrian expansion and attempts by Elam to interfere with Mesopotamian affairs, often in alliance with Babylon. However, limited successes in this policy were not enough to prevent Assyrian advances. Meaningful central authority had almost totally collapsed by the time the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal destroyed Susa. He went on to destroy Choghanbil, killing almost the entire population of the city.

Ancient Yazd City Located

After several years of research, cultural heritage experts managed to pinpoint the original site of the city of Yazd in the pre-Islam era.

Director of Yazd Cultural Heritage Department said the primary site of present-day Yazd is between 10 to 12 kilometers from its present site, CHN reported.

"The experts managed to identify monuments dating back to Achaemenid, Ashkanid and Sassanid eras, including works of architecture, pottery, furnace and even glasswork, in the ancient city of Yazd which is located over an area of 500 hectares," Mohammad Hossein Khademzadeh said.

He opined that archeologists managed to discover pottery works dating back to the pre-Achaemenid era.

"If studies show aqueducts played a major role in the development of the ancient city of Yazd, it will be a great breakthrough in the history of aqueducts in Iran," he said.

Khademzadeh pointed out that studies by experts show that the oldest aqueduct system was used in Bam city and during the Achaemenid era.

However, some experts believe that future excavations will lead them to the exact date of the construction of aqueduct, which is probably before the Achaemenid dynasty.

In Case You Missed

Heritage to Be Digitized

Iran is planning to provide a heritage database by digitizing the ancient inscriptions belonging to the Achaemenid, Parthian, Sassanid and Elamite eras.

The work on the creation of the digital database will start with the monuments of Achaemenid era (550 BC-330 BC), including Bisotoun and Takht-e Jamshid as the first phase of a project which is to continue with the Parthian (250 BC-226 AD), Sassanid (226-651



AD) and Elamite (2700-700 BC) inscriptions, reported CHN.

The project will include photos, translations, photography and additional data about the inscriptions to reveal the unsaid history and unearthed ancient heritage of Persia to the modern world.

The creation of the comprehensive digital databank is expected to be completed by the beginning of the next Iranian year (begins March 21, 2009).

Praise for Iranian Art

The wife of the South Korean prime minister, Soja Hong Han, said she was deeply impressed by Iranian art during a visit to Iran's pavilion at the international painting and jewelry exhibition entitled "Masterpieces of World Art".

Hong Han said that visiting Iran's pavilion was a win-



dow to a different world, adding that she decided to buy some Iranian paintings, reported Mehr News Agency.

Artists, sculptors and jewelers from 14 countries worldwide including Poland, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Iran, Russia, China, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, the Saudi Arabia, and France are taking part in this cultural event.

The three-day exhibition in Ashgabat Exhibition Center ended April 18.

Tourism Cooperation With Oman

Iranian Ambassador in Muscat Morteza Rahimi held talks with Omani Minister of Tourism on issues of mutual interest.

At the meeting held on Saturday, Rahimi called for boosting bilateral ties in tourism and joint investment.

He also demanded establishment of direct air link between the two countries, reported IRNA.



The Iranian envoy also submitted an invitation from the head of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei to the Omani minister Rajiha bint Abd Al-Amir to visit Iran.

Abd Al-Amir, for her part, accepted the invitation, calling for bolstering the two countries' relations.