

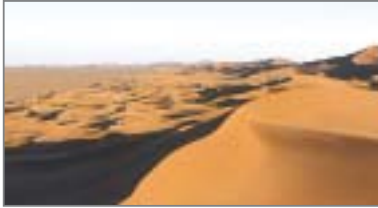
In Focus

Lout Desert: Earth's Hottest Spot

Iran has many tourism attractions. Lout Desert, the world's hottest place, is one of the tourism destinations.

Some 70 degrees Celsius (158 degrees Fahrenheit) in the shade in Lout desert is the hottest temperature recorded for a desert, reported Press TV.

The desert is so awe-inspiring that penetrating its unfathomable charm and mystery remains a long desire for ecotourists.



The desert, stretching for hundreds of kilometers across northeast of Kerman Province, is visited by a large number of tourists every year. Kerman, famous for its dry and burning temperature, as well as numerous places of historical and architectural interests, is located in the southeast of the country.

"The desert is under black volcanic lava layers, which is the prime cause of such extreme climatic conditions," says Parviz Kardovani, a geography professor at Tehran University.

Kardovani believes that being lowland is another cause of the desert's extremely hot and dry weather.

"The desert's hot weather has left no possibility for life - even bacterial life. A dead animal in the desert will not decompose; it will rather get dried by the searing heat from the sun," the professor added.

Yazd Attracts Austrian Curator

Curator of Austria's Museum of History and Arts said that Yazd province is unparalleled in terms of tourism potentials and capacities.

In a meeting with Azizollah Seifi, head of Yazd's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department, Wilfrid Zaipal said Yazd is a suitable region for interaction with Austria, reported CHN.

"Culture and civilization of Yazd is charming and the city's historic monuments have magnificent architectural style," Zaipal added.



Seifi, for his part, said that museums play an important role in boosting public awareness in various areas.

"Expansion of museums eventually leads to increase in cultural-oriented research," he added.

Seifi called for safeguarding artifacts of the past generations for future generations, improving mutual understanding between nations and boosting the level of knowledge of researchers.

During his tour, Zaipal visited various historical sites, such as Grand Mosque, Haydarzadeh Coin and Anthropology Museum, Zoroastrian fire temples, Water Museum and Eslamieh village.

Iranologists

Meet in Yerevan

Armenia is hosting a conference on the unity and diversity of Iran and the Caucasus region to examine the impact of Iran on the region.

Iranologists from across the world met at the international conference titled 'Iran and the Caucasus: Unity and Diversity' to examine various cultural aspects of the region, reported Press TV.

The conference held on June 6-8 addressed the main principles of cultural unity, diversity, interaction and the peaceful coexistence of various civilizations of the region.

Achaemenid Education System

Little is known about the education of children during the Achaemenid period. In two Elamite documents from Persepolis drafted in the 23rd regal year of Darius (499 BC), Persian boys (who are copying texts are mentioned (Hallock, nos. 871, 1137); the texts in question are records of the issue of grain to twenty-nine individuals and drinks to sixteen.

According to Cais-soas website, it is possible that the boys were learning Persian cuneiform script, which was probably known only to a few scribes, as it was used mainly for royal triumphal inscriptions. Most of nobles and high-level Persian civil servants were literate, and writing played a key role in standard Persian education. The Persians also used foreign scribes (writing chiefly in Aramaic) in the state chancery.

Greek sources provide some idea of typical Persian education. According to Herodotus, Persian boys were not allowed to meet their fathers until the age of five; until then they lived with women. From ages five to twenty they were trained in horsemanship, swordsmanship, archery, and telling the truth (Herodotus, 1.136).

Persians regarded lying as the worst of offenses, whereas prowess in arms was the mark of manliness. Xenophon wrote in *Cyropaedia* that until the age of sixteen or seventeen years the sons of Persian nobles were brought up at the royal court, practicing riding, archery, throwing the spear, and hunting.

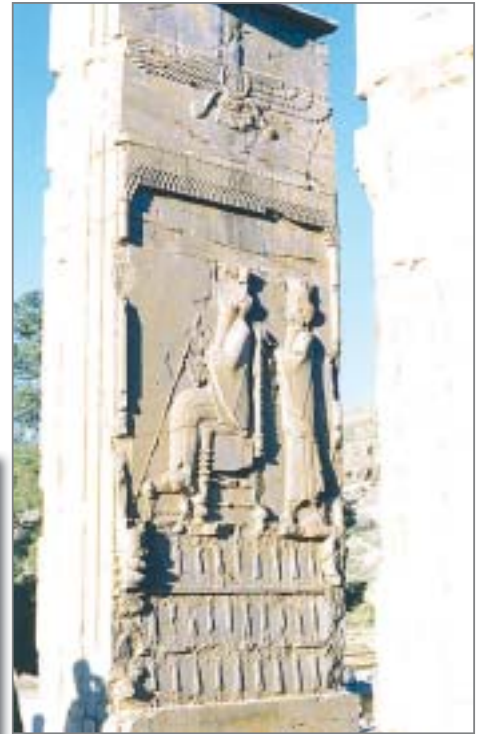
They were also instructed in justice, obedience, endurance, and



self-restraint. Clearly, apart from ethical guidance, the aim of Persian education was to produce efficient soldiers. This conclusion is confirmed by the tomb inscription of Darius: "Trained am I both with hands and with feet. As a horseman I am a good horseman. As a Bowman I am a good Bowman both afoot and on horseback. As a spearman I am a good spearman both afoot and on horseback" (DNb 40-45; Kent, *Old Persian*, pp. 139-40).

In Alcibiades (attributed to Plato, 1.120-23) it is noted that Persian princes were assigned at the age of fourteen years to four eminent Persians, called respectively the "wisest," "most just," "most temperate," and "bravest," who tutored them in the worship of the gods, government, temperance, and courage, respectively. Plutarch (*Artaxerxes* 3.3) mentioned a priest who taught "the wisdom of the Magi" to Cyrus the Younger (q.v. vi).

There is practically no information on education in the eastern satrapies of the Achaemenid empire, but the evidence for Babylonia and Egypt, where traditional educational systems continued under Persian rule, is extensive. In both provinces formal education was restricted to boys. Reading and writing, as well as some grammar, mathematics, and astronomy, were taught in scribal schools. In Achaemenid Babylonia literacy also was widespread among the



non-Iranian population; scribes were numerous and included the sons of shepherds, fishermen, weavers, and the like.

Many school texts have survived from Mesopotamia. They include Sumerian-Babylonian dictionaries, tablets with cuneiform signs and collections of examples of grammatical usage and exercises (Oppenheim, pp. 244-49).

The literacy rate was even higher among the Achaemenid military colonists in Elephantine in Egypt (qq.v.), where witnesses to contracts in Aramaic usually signed their own names (Naveh, p. 22). Darius I ordered the restoration of the medical school at Sais in Egypt.

It seems, however, that among the Egyptians education remained the privilege of the nobility: The Egyptian dignitary Ujahorresne declared that there were no children of "nobodies" among the students in this medical school (Posener, pp. 1-2, 22).

Part of Caravansary Renovated

Head of Fars Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department said that some parts of Izadkhist Caravansary were renovated in line with the policy of protecting historic edifices and within the framework of projected plans.

According to IRNA, Mohammad Reza Barzegar added, "This caravansary is almost in good conditions. References are made to the caravansary in various historic itineraries."

The official did not elaborate on the budget allocated for the undertaking.

The caravansary is located in the eastern valley of Izadkhist Castle. It was built during the reign of the Safavid king, Shah Abbas. The main balcony and entrance gate are situated in the western side of the edifice. Among the important construction materials used in the edifice are brick and stone. Stone has been used in the basement while bricks have been used in the upper sections.

