

Rudan ready to attract tourism investors



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The city of Rudan in the southern province of Hormuzgan, which is referred to as the Paradise of the South, has unique potentials in various fields, especially agriculture and horticulture.

In order to develop the economy of the region various groups of tourists are expected to travel to the region. The measure is expected to help introduce the investment opportunities of the city situated 100 kilometers from the pro-

vincial capital of Bandar Abbas.

This city is bordered by Hajjiabad in the north, Faryab in the northeast, Kahnuij and Manojan in the east, and Minab in the southeast. With its pleasant climate, the area has been named Rudan, which literally means rivers, because of its flowing rivers and agricultural and horticultural lands.

In an interview with IRNA, Rudan's governor, Abdulreza Salari, referred to some natural attractions of the region including the Naz-

dasht plain, the beautiful gardens of Berentin and Jaghin villages, and the waterfalls of Badafshan.

He added that several photographers from the National Iranian Photographers' Society have been invited to take pictures of the region's tourism attractions, while adding their photos and photo clips will be displayed for public view in the airports of Hormuzgan and other provinces of the country.

The governor noted that plans have been drawn up to use the potential of so-

cial networks for introducing various tourism attractions of Rudan.

Several old castles in Rudan and its surrounding areas show that the region has been settled by human beings since a long time ago. With its beautiful landscapes, palm groves, citrus orchards and pristine nature, the region can turn into a tourism hub of the country.

Its underground and surface water resources are on a relatively high level and this promotes agricultural activity in the area.



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Sassanid art and culture

In almost all fields of culture of the Sassanid Era one can discern clear links with the culture of previous periods — not only with that of the Achaemenids but also the Hellenistic Period.

The artistic imagery and ideas of Sassanid works exerted a perceptible influence over a vast territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and in turn one can distinguish features from the art of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern Turkestan, even China, in works of art from Iran.

The dominant theme of early Sassanid art was the proclamation of the state's power. From the very beginning of the Sassanid Era, official portraits of the Sassanid king and his courtiers as well as his military triumphs were the images most often seen. In essence, Sassanid art begins with the creation of the iconography of the official portrait and the triumphal composition. Religious art also follows the same line as official art. From the very beginning, its basic subjects were anthropomorphic portrayals (also, in their way, official portraits) of the major Zoroastrian deities — Ahura Mazda, Mithras and Anahita, depictions

of the interior of the monarch's coronation temple and portrayals of the king's investiture by these main deities.

Such works of art reflected the fundamental nature of power cherished by Iran's rulers in a language of clearly understood symbols.

The canonic form of the interior of the king's coronation temple shows an altar on which a fire blazes, sometimes flanked by the figures of the king, the design being almost the same as in Achaemenid reliefs; the altar is occasionally on the dais of a throne constructed just like those of the Achaemenid rulers. This altar appears on reliefs and coins as well as on gems.

These official works reflected the initial period of development of the Sassanid monarchy's state ideology.

The religious theme becomes more complex at the end of the third century CE, as if it had become obscured by the introduction into the official portrait iconography of incarnations of Zoroastrian deities of a lower order.

Strictly speaking, the emergence of such imagery marks the beginning of a new theme, that of



Naqsh-e Rostam, investiture relief of Ardashir I, the founder of the Sassanid Empire

Zoroastrian symbolism. The earliest pieces only present these incarnations themselves or their promoters, but very soon they give way to a different type of composition, above all to scenes of the royal hunt which are also widespread at the end of the third century CE. Subsequently all themes that fol-

lowed developed along different lines.

At the end of the fourth century CE the state political theme gradually loses its significance. Rock reliefs, the chief monuments exhibiting this theme, are no longer produced: Thirty reliefs are attributed to the period from 230 CE to the beginning of

the fourth century, but only two to the period from the first decade of the fourth century to the beginning of the sixth century. The official portrait of the king appears primarily on coins, the official portraits of courtiers mainly on gems.

Zoroastrian symbolism, with various symbols of the guardian

deities, occupies an ever greater place on the crowns of the king. The scene of the altar flanked by the figures of the king and a deity on the reverse of Sassanid coins gradually becomes a canonical image, but one which has already lost its meaning.

The link with Achaemenid culture is apparent in many spheres. One could point out, for example, that in official manifestos of the Sassanid kings the standard formula of Achaemenid royal inscriptions is employed.

Nowadays it has become evident that Sassanian state Zoroastrianism was initially nothing but the Zoroastrianism of Parsa of the Parthian, or even the late Achaemenid, age. In the formation of Sassanid art the Parthian contribution was no less important than that of the Achaemenids and of post-Achaemenid Parsa. A certain number of reliefs and wall-paintings, as well as coins of the Parthian age, have the same composition and sometimes the same portrait iconography.

The contribution of the late Hellenistic art of Mesopotamia to Sassanid art is also extremely significant.

The above is a lightly edited version of part of a chapter entitled, 'Persian Art: From Antiquity to the 19th Century' from a book entitled, 'The Lost Treasures, Persian Art', written by Vladimir Lukonin and Anatoli Ivanov, published by Parkstone International.