

Obstacles to global registration of Hegmataneh removed



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Most obstacles which hindered the registration of "Hegmataneh and Hamedan's Historical Center" on UNESCO's List have been removed, said head of the Public Relations Department of Hamedan Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Organization. Hegmataneh archeological site is located in the suburban area of Hamedan, containing 50 acres of the city. This historical collection is of great value.

Mohsen Janjan noted that UNESCO's inspectors are expected to arrive in the city of Hamedan, the capital of the western province of Hamedan, in the coming weeks. "The old asphalt was removed from the interior parts of Hegmataneh and a number of guide signs were installed in various parts of the area," he noted. "Most sections of Hamedan's old bazaar have been renovated, or are presently under restoration. The historical houses of Boali, Ekbatan and Imam

Khomeini neighborhoods of Hamedan are presently being renovated as well." The official added that a number of restoration projects were implemented in Jaame Mosque of Hamedan, Esther and Mordekhai Tomb, a Jewish pilgrimage site, as well. Expressing satisfaction over the cooperation of other executive organizations of the province, he said that 90 percent of locals are aware of the great significance of the global registration of Hegmataneh.

Ekbatana is widely believed to have been a mysterious capital of the Medes. According to ancient Greek writers, the city was founded in about 678 BCE by Deioces, who was the first king of the Medes. French Assyriologist Charles Fossey (1869-1946 CE) directed the first excavation in Hegmataneh for six months in 1913. Erich Friedrich Schmidt (1897-1964 CE), who was a German and US-naturalized archaeologist, took some aerial photos from Hamedan between 1935 and 1937 CE.

Therapeutic water springs of Ardebil attractive for Iranian and foreign tourists



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As a subcategory of nature tourism, water tourism can draw a large number of travelers to Ardebil Province. They take a trip to the region to use its therapeutic, recreational, or sports facilities. Head of the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization said the natural therapeutic water springs of Ardebil should be equipped with modern facilities to host people coming from across the country and the world, IRNA wrote. Referring to the establishment of the National Tourism Committee, Hassan Mohammadi Adib added that regarding the country's existing potentials, the health tourism sector has received much

attention in recent years. "With respect to its unique position in terms of having hot and cold mineral water springs, clean and pleasant weather, and amazing natural landscapes, Ardebil Province can become a pioneers in the field of health tourism in the world," he said. He noted that Ardebil has drawn the attention of tourists from regional countries for several years, adding that the province was among the main destinations of health tourists before the outbreak of COVID-19. Mohammadi Adib noted that more than 1.6 million health tourists crossed Bileh Savar border terminal to arrive in the province during the year to mid-March 2020, pointing out that proper planning would

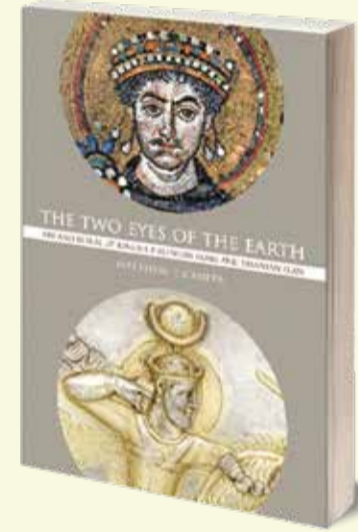
help the health tourism sector of Ardebil Province to prosper further. The official said that 32 offices are active in the field of Health Tourism in Ardebil Province, noting that four hospitals, which have International Patients Department (IPD), are eligible to accept medical tourists arriving from foreign countries. The mineral springs of various cities of the province host millions of Iranian and foreign tourists every year. Known as "The Land of Heavenly Springs," Ardebil Province has more than 110 springs, 75 of which are thermal; however, the spring are mostly used traditionally. Studies show that the hot springs of Ardebil Province, originating from Sablan

Mountain, have unique healing powers, and even their traditional use can help relieve pain and cure some diseases. Due to the establishment of several hydrotherapy complexes and development of hotels and accommodations in the province, especially in the city of Sarein, water tourism has been developed significantly during the past three decades. The thermal springs of Nir, Meshginshahr and Khalkhal attract travelers from various parts of the country, thus significant opportunities are available for the development of water tourism there. Meanwhile, numerous waterfalls scattered throughout the province are among the other natural sites which are highly attractive to tourists.

Agonistic exchange between Roman and Sassanid empires

Of all of the challenges the Sassanid and Roman empires faced, the constant existence of another universal king was one of the most vexing. Another structured system of aristocratic legitimacy could seriously threaten or destabilize the kosmokrator's own courtly hierarchy. The sovereigns therefore expended a great deal of energy and creativity on establishing or maintaining the coherency of their ritual and visual tools of dominance in the face of symbolic capital generated and controlled by their competitor. Thus the sovereigns aimed their ritual and visual assertions not only at each other, but back to their own courts. The other king could be cast as usurper and enemy or partner and equal, coexisted with contradictory messages presented simultaneously to internal and external audiences.

ical statements. The use of the term "exchange" is not meant to imply that the "goods" exchanged were inert substances, valuable or useful, yet ultimately interchangeable with any other precious or useful commodity. While this sort of trade took place and was very important to both empires' economies, it does not fully account for the agency inherent in the exchanged statements, images, and ideas themselves. At the highest level of exchange, the cultural material that moved between the courts was itself potentially significant and carried a message or meaning that persistently challenged the courts, tempting them to integrate it or demanding that they defuse and counter it. Like most other Roman and Sassanid court productions, material and practices



The Romans and Sassanid kings interacted with each other, exchanged ideas and images in a competitive and violently hostile atmosphere, even in circumstances where they substantially adopted and integrated their opponent's cultural material. For this reason the processes of Roman-Sassanid cross-cultural interaction are best described as agonistic exchange. The Roman and Sassanid relationship evolved over time, beginning and persisting in a spirit of outright hostility for seventy decades before transforming into a more formalized and familiar, though often no less hostile, system in the late third century. Belligerent at its inception in the third century, Roman-Sassanid interaction soon developed a more creative and reciprocal quality, with diplomacy and its artistic and ceremonial expressions often supplementing or sublimating military action. Once the two cultures became familiar with each other, Roman-Sassanid relations, be they benign or hostile, became a collaborative, or better, conversational process of give and take, consisting of statements and counterstatements. Like a conversation, the process often could unfold one-sidedly, with one realm selectively and unevenly producing or consuming cultural material and polem-

deployed in their interactions functioned within the web of signification established by the court cultures and departed from their conventions. Finally, it is important to point out that at the highest levels, a host culture did not passively receive the goods offered. The material, activities, or ideas that moved between courts were powerful statements, but the act of taking was just as potent as that of giving. The two courts' fraught relationship unfolded through a complex process of give and take, the hallmark of which was a never-ending struggle to manipulate and shape the other's identity while taking, diffusing, and redeploying the other's polemical material. The two sovereigns sought to shape their own identity and that of their opponent in order to gain an advantage, such as instigating a war obtaining cooperation or clemency, or mobilizing elements of their own or their competitor's society. These rhetorical approaches were very much involved with other more direct instruments for the empires' defense or aggrandizement, such as the application of physical force or payment of subsidies, and often times enveloped and articulated these more expressions of power.

