

Research Article

EDUCATION STRATEGY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF IRAN BASTAN

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ABSTRACT

Museums socially serve significant purposes and are an expression of community that really do provide education and learning, help people to develop a sense of self worth and pride and has an important duty to attract new and wider audiences within all levels, the general, specific, individuals and groups of the community. Museums are responsible to present a story and produce resources for learning through the activities of display and interpretation, using objects, audio visual, models, reconstruction of objects, photographs and paintings as the reference materials are needful for educational purposes to build up a complete story. This research looks at the brief history of the Iran Bastan museum and discusses the scope of its individual collections. This research also describes the policy of Iran Bastan Museum and over educational services and representation methods. An effort has been made to list out the current educational activities of this museum and analyze the same. Also this paper aimed at critically analyzing the evaluation functions of the Iran Bastan Museum. This information along with suggestions definitely would be useful to authorities to adopt these for corrective measures for the betterment and improvement of the museums.

INTRODUCTION

With the beginning of archaeological excavations by Europeans, particularly the French mission led by Jacques de Morgan, at Susa in 1897, the Iranian began realizing the importance of their country's cultural heritage. The unconditional monopoly of the French side was abrogated in 1927 and the French were only allowed to continue excavating at Susa. Also Iran having decided to create a National Museum and library, the exclusivity of its design and execution was given to the French. French engineer Andre Godard traveled to Iran to carry out the project, officially beginning his work in 1929. With the beginning of archaeological excavations by Europeans particularly the French archaeologists, Iran began constructing the first ever museum of national stature. It was almost eighty years back. Iran Bastan museum of Iran not only became conglomerate of objects of national heritage but also as the foremost largest Museum of Iran. Thus, it has been the country's largest archaeological and historical museum. The Museum also ranks among the large museum of the world. For the interims in the form of volumes with diversity and quality of the artifacts in its custody, it is considered the country's mother museum. Amongst its foremost aims and objectives, is preservation, research, exhibition and to pass works of art to future generations to make them acquainted with their heritage and handing over them the responsibility for its conservation. This research looks at the brief history of the Iran Bastan museum and discusses the scope of its individual collections. This research also describes the policy of Iran Bastan Museum and over educational services and representation methods. An effort has been made to list out the current educational activities of this museum and analyze the same. Also this paper aimed at critically analyzing the evaluation functions of the Iran Bastan Museum. This information along with suggestions definitely would be useful to authorities to adopt these for corrective measures for the betterment and improvement of the museums.

“Today, the building of the museum is part of the historical and cultural heritage of the city of Tehran.” “In the out lined plans, it was proposed that the objects, works of architectural style of the museum building should correspond to themes works, their of art, and handicraft be displayed and also be in harmony with Persian history therefore the faced and the entrance doorway of the museum were constructed in the style of the Tagh-e-Kasra (the Arch of Kesra in the ruins of the Sassanian Palace of Madain).

Taghe-Kasra was the name of the famous place in Tiss-Fun which was the resident of Sasanian kings. Its porch was 37 meters high and 43 meters wide (Mohammad Reza Karegar, 2001).

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Formation and a Brief History about the Iran Bastan Museum



Figure 1: Outside view of Iran Bastan Museum

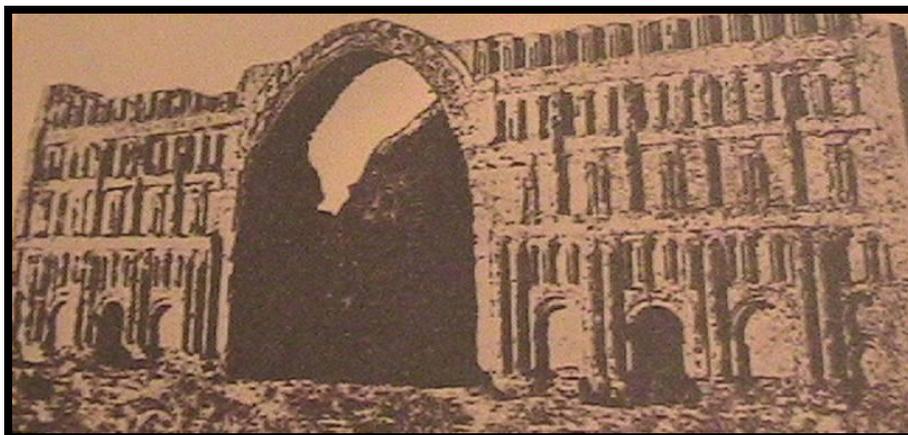


Figure 2: Tag-e KasrTiss-Funn (Historical Atlas of Iran)

This arch has become the symbol and logo of the museum (Cario la Torre, 2007). In the royal Sasanian palace, the eyvan (arch) was a large hall for reception and giving audience. In fact it was the place for official reception of the king when the curtain was drawn open it revealed the presence of the king. The ayvan represented the diaphragm between internal and external worlds but was also a passage, and the semi – darkness in which it was immersed called to mind the other parts of the building to which it led (Torre, 2007)

“Archaeological activities by several teams of Europe, notably those of a French archeological team, led by Jacque de Morgan, which had began its work in Susa (south of Iran) in 1897 attracted Iranian people’s attention to the importance of ancient legacies of their culture and civilization to the people of the world. On the other hand the destruction and looting of precious objects and antiquities, as well as the exclusive grant for excavation in Susa to foreigners caused the Iranian patriots to raise their voices in protest against these foreigners who were taking away the rich cultural heritage of this land. Following such protests, on October 18, 1927, Iran’s national consultative assembly (the parliament) introduced amendments in agreements signed in 1895 and in 1900 between Iran and France. Accordingly it was allowed the French team to carry out only the Susa excavations. In exchange, the Iranian government agreed that France should provide technical know-

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how to open a museum and library in Tehran and for this a French citizen be appointed as its director for three consecutive terms lasting for 15 years. Towards end of these activities, renowned French architect and archaeologist Andre Godard came to Iran in 1929. He was assigned official task of the project of construction and establishment of a museum and library” (Kargar, 2001). It is that with the establishment of Iran Bastan Museum the archaeological department also came into existence and there foreign and Iranian archaeologists embarked upon joint excavation projects.

“Once the archaeological service of Iran had been instituted in the autumn of 1928 and as soon as the (law concerning) the discovery and conservation of antiquities was approved along with the “rules of application” a complete reorganization of scientific and commercial excavation was also under taken under the direct supervision of Andre Godard. An inventory of historical sites and monuments was prepared and the elements thus classified where singled out for protection and restoration. It is in the context of these activities that the archaeological service then set out to realize the museum which would reunite, classify and exhibit the historical and archeological collection of the nation” (Torre, 2007).

With the establishment of Iran Bastan museum, archaeological excavations were encouraged. In 1930, the parliament past the Antiquities Act and in 1937, the department of antiquities was renamed Archaeology Department and after the arrival of Andre Godard, the affairs of the activities of that department which were assigned to him.

“The period between 1937 and 1972 from the inception of the museum, witnessed the excavation of the most important archaeological sites in Iran by American, British Swedish, German and French archaeological teams. During the same period, the publication of the result of those excavations, leading it to new discoveries, showed the importance of the Iranian people in the growth of the world culture and their contributions to its maturity” (Kargar, 2001). “From 1937 to 1985 the scientific, technical, exhibition and administrative organization of the museum remained in fact with the museum management itself which continued until 1986 to be under scientific, administrative and financial supervision of archaeology department of Iran. In 1972, this organization which was later on renamed as “Iran’s Archaeology Centre” was having a close relationship between archaeology departments. The said organization was in charge of archaeologically excavations and ancient Persia museum. In fact, they were complementary to each other. Under acts passed by the government, the museum was assigned the responsibility of procuring and preserving objects from archaeological teams, their registrations, maintenance, providing identity cards, photographing, classification, and introducing the objects through exhibition” (Ibid).

“The five world’s congresses in archaeological achievements in Iran and Persian arts held in Philadelphia (1926), in London (1931), in Leningrad (1935), in New York (1961) and in Iran (Tehran, Shiraz and Isfahan, 1968) were based upon the results of archaeological exactions in Tehran. During those congresses the findings, which constituted the items of ancient Persia museum, were introduced and displayed to the participants, who in return, delivered several instructive lectures. The congresses contributed to the promotion of the objects of the museum and vastly helped to expand the familiarity of people all over the world with those objects” (Ibid).

Chronology of Iran Bastan Museum according to its Collections

Chronology of ancient Iran provided on the basis of academic archaeological studies on the Iranian sites and its neighborhoods, like Mesopotamia, Anatoly, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Location of the Museum

National Museum of Iran located in the city center around historical sites. The centre is close to the subway system and bus station.

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Collections and Method of Display of Objects

We have discussed about the history of archaeology, inception of the museum dealing with the archaeological collections. Now we will elaborate on the educational system of Iran Bastan Museum.

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Table 1: Chronological table cultural (Archaeological) periods of Iran Bastan Museum (Broucher of Iran Bastan Museum)-2003

Lower Paleolithic	2/000/000-200/000 B.C.
Middle Paleolithic	200/000-40/000 B.C.
Upper Paleolithic & Mesolithic	40/000-12-10/000 B.C.
Neolithic	12/000-6000 B.C.
Chalcolithic	6000-3000 B.C.
Proto literature	3/000-1900 B.C.
Early Bronze Age	3/000-2/600 B.C.
Late Bronze Age	2600-1500 B.C.
Iron Age I	1500-1250 B.C.
Iron Age II	1250-850 B.C.
Iron Age III	850-550 B.C.
Median period	705-550 B.C.
Achamenid period	550-330 B.C.
Seleucid period	324-248 B.C.
Parthian period	248-226 A.D.
Sasanian period	226-651 A.D.

While elaborating on the SWOT analysis of the educational system, we will focus on the strength weakness, opportunities and threats. Education is not exclusively or perhaps even primarily the province of the education staff but the collection itself and the way the various presentation techniques are utilized to present the collection, speak of the quality of the Educational system of archeological museum the exhibits in Iran Bastan Museum are arranged in a chronological order to chart course of evolutionary process of human cultures. The theme of artifacts preserved in the museum is monuments of ancient Iranian heritage which are on exhibit in a chronological order and regional to chart the course of evolution. The beginning is from the first stone tools made by man in Iran about half a million to one million years ago, up to historic cultural monuments of late Sassanid period (551 AD).



Figure 3: Students looking at the plastic map of Iran in the entrance hall of the Iran Bastan Museum

Before starting to visiting at the entrance of museum, guides explain the geographical and historical situation of Iranian plateau on the map to learn more about location of cultural and historical sites and old civilizations.

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Visitors learn about the Iranian plateau of the land surrounded by high mountains which is dotted with warm low lands.

In this phase visitors would learn about Iranian plateau that is a land surrounded by high mountains and is dotted with warm lowlands. Two important mountain ranges, each with peaks over 5000 meters high, stretch from the north western corner of the plateau, the current azerbaijan province, to the south and east. The eastern branch, Alborz boasts the highest peak of the two ranges, Mt.Damavand. The second mountain range, Zagros, stretches from the North West to the south and deviates to the east north of the Persian Gulf. Inside the country, there are two major deserts, one of them, Dasht-e Kavir, at about the east of modern Tehran and at the foot of the Alborz range, is covered with sand and is mainly uninhabited. The smaller desert, Lut, is not as dry as the larger one and provides enough resources for the survival of small communities. These three areas, corresponding respectively to the Caspian coast, Khuzistan, and to Fars, have thus provided some of the earliest settlements on the Iranian plateau. The teacher or guide describes here exactly on the map prehistoric settlements on the feet of mountains, major rivers and territories of civilizations during the long history of Iran.

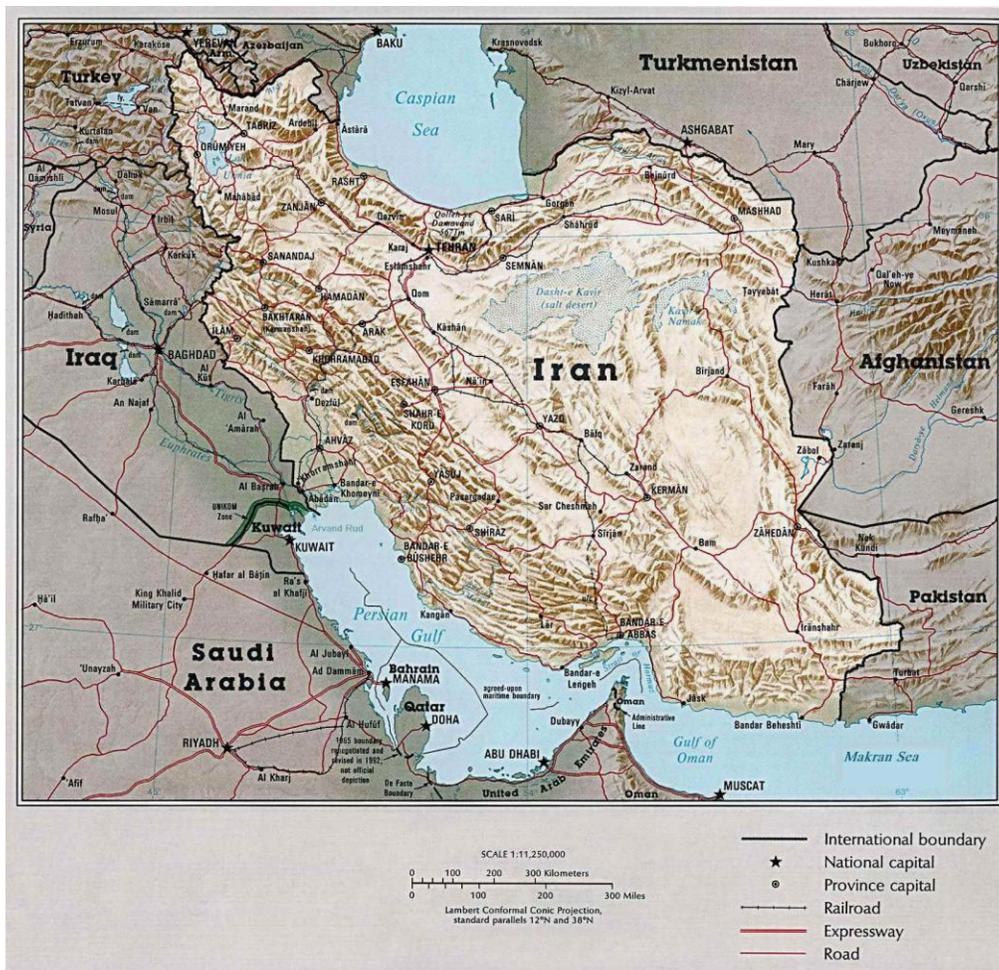


Figure 4: Map of Iranian plateau showing settlements, mountain chains and deserts

The space is important contextual learning experience for the visitors. The educational services of this area could be enhanced by providing the video projections of the archaeological sites from where the cultural relics are placed in the galleries. The presentation of the archaeological collections in the galleries is in the chronological sequence from prehistoric to historic periods.

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Lower Paleolithic

It is evidenced on the Iranian plateau as early as the lower Paleolithic named Ladizian culture. “This culture was revealed in the result of excavations that were carried out in 1966 and 1967 by a group from the University of Minnesota, under the supervision of Gary Hume in the Ladiz and Meshkid areas in Beluchistan. Another region in Iran where some of the oldest signs of habitation have been found is the basin of the Kashf River (Kashf Rood) in Khorasan, which was studied by two scientists named A.Ariaei and C.Thibault in 1974 and 1975. It was around this river that the first evidence of man in the plateau, almost eight hundred thousand years old, was found” (Musavi, 2001).



Figure 5: Paleolithic Stone Tools gallery in the prehistory hall of Iran Bastan Museum

Middle Paleolithic

The oldest well documented evidence of human settlement in some deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites, mainly located in the Zagros Mountains, is datable to the middle Paleolithic or Mousterian flint-tool industry related to the Neanderthal period is characterized by a more advanced production of flint-stone in the middle Paleolithic period (Genito and Kargar, 2006). Professor Carleton S.Coon, an American archaeologist conducted his first exploration regarding the Middle Paleolithic period in several ancient caves in Iran including Kamarband and Huto near Behshahr, Shekarchiyan in Bisotun, Tamtame; on the outskirts of Orumiye and Khunik in southern Khorasan near the border of Afghanistan (Musavi, 2001).

Upper Paleolithic

The most important technique for producing flint-stone tools Neo (upper) Paleolithic period in Iran is called Baradustian. Radiocarbon dates suggest that this is one of the industries for producing flint-stone tools in the Neo-Paleolithic period; it may have begun as early as 36,000 BC. However, its relationship with neighboring industries remains unclear (Genito and Kargar, 2006).

Mesolithic or Epi Paleolithic: Possibly, after some cultural and typological discontinuity, perhaps caused by the extreme cold of the last phase of the Wurm glaciations, the Baradustian was replaced by a local late Paleolithic industry called the Zarzian.

Suggestions

The galleries of Paleolithic section show the arrangement of the stone tools from lower Paleolithic to end of Mesolithic period without any collaborative descriptions about of the environment and the makers of these tools. This display is therefore, static. It would be appropriate that panels with pictures of evolution of human kind may be added.

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Neolithic

With the development of the first villages in northern Mesopotamia we also witness the birth of pre-historic villages in Iran.



Figure 6: Interior view of the present prehistoric gallery of Iran Bastan Museum

“They include the Tepe Sarab and Tepe Asiab sites in Kermanshah, Ganj Darreh in Harsin, Tepe Guran in the Holeylan area, the Haji Firuz site in western Azerbaijan, the Abdolhosein site in Kermanshah province, Musian and Ali Kosh in Dehloran, Sang Chakhmaq in Shahrud, Zaghe in the Qazvin plain, the first layers of habitation in Sialk, Kashan and the Choghabanut and Bone Fazeli sites in the northern parts of the Khusistan plain” (Musavi, 2001).

Suggestions

Neolithic period was a revolution. Men who were earlier wanderer had learned to develop the sedentary life style. It is therefore important to make the presentation technique dynamic. Also reconstruction technique may be adopted by showing methods of early agriculture, settlement patterns in Iranian plateau. The painted pottery of the Neolith period may throw some light on the total myth belief) of the earlier settlers. So more contemplated display may be added. Panel of the archeological sites from where the discoveries were may be added to the presentation by the didactic display. There should be a chronological display of the archaeological sites.

There are several and varieties of symbols and images of animals painted on the potteries. They may be the totems of Neolithic believes. It is necessary to describe meanings and concepts of those symbols and meaning

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of totems as a early religion of humankind. After Paleolithic period, Neolithic and Chalcolithic period exhibited in the prehistory gallery. The oldest materials on the beginning of this period belong to central plateau of Iran, like Cheshmeh Ali, Esmaeilabad, Ghomrood and etc. While there are a lot of sites that are older than those sites, like Gangedarreh, Asiab, tepe Sarab, Dehloran sites and Susa plain sites like Choghamish, Chogha Banut, and Jafarabad etc. They have to classify materials in chronological order. Some archaeological sites on the Iranian plateau are important and can present more information about history and cultures of ancient Iran, but in spite of the existence of materials in the departments of the museum they were not exhibited in the galleries, like Shahre Sukhte, in Sistan and Baluchestan, Tale Eblis, Tepe Shahdad in Kerman, Tepe Guran, in Lorestan Gangdarreh, Gudin Tepe in Kermanshah etc. Iran Bastan Museum should organize for each one of these areas one gallery for introducing the cultures on the basis of chronology of the area.

Chalcolithic

During the later part of this period, there is clear evidence of the emergence of exceptionally large sites among the small villages. The transformations leading to the first political states are poorly understood and can be perceived only faintly in dramatic changes in the pattern of settlement and in shifts in ceramic chronology, the use of writing, and the symbols on seals that were pressed into clay (Malek Shahmirzadi and Birjandi, 1996). One of the most important sites where traces of copper were first discovered is Tal-e Eblis in Kerman. This ancient mound is situated in the Bardsir valley east of the Kerman. The important pre-historic Iranian culture, which developed during this period, between the sixth and fourth millennia BC are as follows:

Tepe Sialk (Iran Bastan, 2003; Genito Bruno and Kargar Mohammad Reza, 2006) in Kashan, And Tepe Gian (Kargar Mohammad Reza, 2006) in Nahavand, Tepe cheshme Ali (Ia and b), Tepe Esmail Abad in Savejbolagh, Tepe Hissar A, B-Ia, b, c), Tepe Eblis in Kerman, Tepe Yahya (VI, Vac, IVc), Tal-e Bakun in Fars, Susa (I and II), Tepe Sagzabad and Tepe Qabrestan in the Qazvin plain (Musavi, 2001).

Suggestions

As during this period profound socio economic, political and cultural changes occurred, and settlements begun to develop in many regions with a few larger villages growing among smaller ones, so it is necessary to illustrate the general characters of this chronological phases are evidenced by the description of the proto-state social structures, figures and objects which illustrate the production and use of mud bricks, formation process of Tepe by the specialization of craft activities by the introduction of techniques and of series production of potteries and bronze artifacts, terracotta figurines models and plans of houses, villages and temples, tablets, seals and symbols. Some Chalcolithic sites in the Iranian plateau are special in the light of cultural varieties, like Tepe Cheshme Ali in Rey, Sialk in Kashan, Hissar in Damghan, Gian in Nahavand, Susa in khusistan, Tall-e Ebliss in Kerman, Tall-e Bakun in Fars, Dalma and Pisdili in Northern Azerbaijan, it is necessary to devote special space or gallery in Iran Bastan Museum.

Bronze Age

“The Bronze Age began about 2800 BC ending sometimes around 1300BC. With the discovery of Iron and is divided into three periods: the early, Middle and Late period” (Musavi, 2000). “Socioeconomic and political organization was highly varied across the Iranian plateau, with a pronounced division between its eastern and its western regions. Some large areas with socio-economically differentiated populations were prominent in the north as in Turang Tepe and Tepe Hissar, in the east in Shahr-i Sukhta, in the south Malyan, in the southwest. In the larger inner Zagros valley, settlement systems consisted of relatively large sites, such as Godin Tepe, in the center of larger valleys surrounding villages. In contrast, the smaller and drier and outer Zagros valleys and the piedmont of Luristan had a strongly nomadic pastoral economy, with a paucity of settlements and isolated cemeteries apparently not associated with nearby settlements. Industrial areas within large settlements were devoted to specialized crafts: copper smelting and /or ‘bronze’ artifact production (Shahr-I Sukhta, Tepe Hissar and Godin), pottery making, lapis lazuli and other semiprecious stone bead production (Tepe Hissar, Shahr-I Sukhta, Shahdad), stone vessels, bitumen and bitumen vessels and carved chlorite vessels (Tepe Yahya). Iron Age: The Iron Age on the Iranian plateau distinguished by scholars in various ways and periods, according to pertinent geographical areas. “A division of the Iron age into Iron age I (1000-1500 BC), Iron Age II(800-1000

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BC) and Iron Age III (950-800 BC) is the most acceptable division in the Iron Age cultural period of Iran” (Genito and Kargar, 2006). Some of the most famous sites and ancient cemeteries belonging to the grey pottery culture are north –east of Iran: Tepe Hissar in Damghan, Yarim Tepe in Gonbad-e Qabus, Turang Tepe and Shah Tepe in Gorgan, the Tehran plain, the Qeytariye cemetery and the ancient area of Kahrizak, the Pishva cemetery and Tepe Shoghali in Varamin, the Khorvin and Chendar cemeteries in Gorgan, the edge of the central desert Tepe Sialk in Kashan” (Musavi, 2001). Northern Iran: Kelardasht, Estalakhjan and Qal-e Kut in Deylaman Marlik: in this site Artifacts unearthed are of particular importance.

Suggestions

This period represents one of the most controversial and complex points of the entire history of ancient Iran. This section should display collections on the basis of Iranian (Arian) migrations into the plateau, and general character of artifacts, architecture, buried ceremonies and rituals and religious thoughts. In this period the new form of potteries, bronze arts appeared and new towns with new plans of buildings appeared. This section should display these new phenomena of this period. There are some important Iron Age sites like Hassanlu, Marlik, Turang Tepe, Shah Tepe, Goy Tepe, Yaniq Tepe that represent cultures of Iron Age. It is necessary to organize galleries for these sites and display remains of cultural materials in the galleries. There are valuable golden and silver collections from different sites such as collections of Ziwiye, Amarlu and Amlash, Marlik, Klardasht, Kalmakareh, Arjan, Pasargad, Persepolis, Hamadan, and golden cup of Hassanlu, Marvdasht silver cup etc. It is suggested to exhibit those collections in the special showcases for visitors. The quality of the exhibits may be enhanced.

Elamite Period

“One of the important cultural and political events of the third millennium is the rise of the Elamite Kingdom which played an important role in the political and cultural history of Iran.” (Musavi Seyyed Mahmud, 41). “The history of the Elamite dynasty is divided into three periods: the Old, Middle and late Elamite periods. The Elamites played an important role in shaping the Persian culture and civilization. They are the founders of the first vast independent dynasty and it was due to them that ancient Persia entered a new historic era. The Elamites left behind a vast and valuable collection of relics and monuments such as: the ancient site of the Haft Tepe, Chogha Zanbil and Susa” (Ibid, 46).

Suggestions

Process of writing was an important interface of this period. Therefore, a separate section in this gallery may be added to show the development of writing process. Elamite seals, sealing and tablets, symbols of Elamite religion, Gods and reconstruction of Elamite temples like Chogha Zanbil may be displayed. Also this section should devote a gallery for process of writing from proto-Elamite to Neo Elamite. Also it is necessary to display Elamite seals and sealing and tablets in the showcases. The historical perspective in the galleries need to be rearranged. The historical period begins from Achaemenid period but several exhibits belonging to Elamite dynasties are displayed before Achaemenid period. There are collections of inscriptions, seals, tablets, political systems; city plans from the civilization in the museum therefore historical spectrum may be clearly reflected in the presentation. This will strengthen the educational system.

Median Period

Median were organized the first Arian government in Iran and they ruled about 150 years in Iran. Unfortunately in spite of excavation of several sites by archaeologists like Godin Tepe, in Kangavar, Hassanlu IV, Babajan, Tepe, Nushijan Tepe, Tepe Ozbaki near Tehran, that reveal, above all, architectural structures of notable interest for the quality and the importance of the social, political and religious buildings, there is no gallery or showcases for Median dynasty in Iran Bastan Museum. Historic section can display artifacts, models photos and reports about Median monuments.

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Figure 7: General view of historic section of Iran Bastan Museum

Achamenid Period

“The Persians were one of the Arian clans who entered Iran through the western boundaries of the Caspian Sea at the same time of the Medes, settling down in the south–western regions of Lake Urmia. After a while because of the vast number of different groups living in the region and the lack of security they moved towards the south and south-eastern areas of the country, they set up a small independent government led by the head of the clan or Achaemenes. The advent of Achaemenids might be considered as one dynasty replacing the other. Victory of Cyrus and his successors over Median state in 550 B.C. created a huge empire extending from Indus and Oxus banks to Aegean Sea and Egyptian border. Association and co-existence of various nations gave rise to an art which was influenced by culture and civilization of dependent people while maintaining its own Persian style and traits” (www.nationalmuseumofiran.com)-2006.

Suggestions

The geographical map of Achaemenid Empire, sketches of kings, capital and states empires may substantiate the display. Since, Pasargad was the first capital; therefore the display in this section may start from Pasargad instead of Perpolis. Reconstruction of the political policy and the religion of Achaemenids may be done by models of Bisutun inscription as reconstruction of the tomb of Darius I at Naqsh-e-Rostam Model and Farman of Cyrus may also be reconstructed here, since the original is with British Museum.

It is necessary to provide the models of architectural monuments of Achaemenid Empire like Persepolis, Susa, Pasargad and Dahane-ie Gholaman and illustrate the roads, private houses, and public buildings which will be useful for visitors in analyzing the special architecture of the Achaemenid period. It is a historical fact that after Lydian’s Darius I the third king of Achaemenid Empire for first time took action to produce coin in ancient Iran.

Unfortunately there is no any coin and seal in the Achaemenid section. It is recommended that Iran Bastan Museum to devote a place to display coins and seals of Achaemenid Empire. A film about civilization of Achaemenid Empire from emergence to decline may be shown. The Achaemenid section begins from the time of Persepolis (Takht Jamshid), the period of Darius the great, while the Achaemenid Empire begins from the time of Pasargad, the first capital City of Achaemenid Empire i.e. is the time of Cyrus the great, founder of Achaemenid Empire. Iran Bastan Museum has to start Achaemenid Empire from Cyrus period and

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exhibit materials of Pasargad site in this section. This section may provide a collection to describe and explain characteristics of Hellenistic civilization and culture and its impact on Iranian civilization.

Seleucid Period

Presence of Alexander and his diadochi (Seleucidae) entailed mutual spread of Hellenic civilization in Iran and penetrated eastern culture in Greek elements. Though limited in number, museum's artifacts of this period are of great value. Most prominent among sluced monuments, is a lapidary inscription of Antiochus III and bronze figurines of Greek deities unearthed in Nahavand and bronze mask of Antiochus IV from Shami temple in Izeh (Khuzistan).

Parthian Period

“When Arsacians brought all Iran under their rule. The political rule of the Greco – Macedonians over Iran met its end and the rich Iranian culture was revived. The national museum of Iran boasts rich collections of artifacts unearthed at Nihavand, Shami, Masjid Soleiman, Sar-masjid, Bardeh Nishandeh, Susa in Khuzistan and archaeological sites in Gilan, and Mazinderan provinces”(National Museum of Iran, 2003). One of most valuable monuments of this period is the unique bronze statue of a Parthian prince unearthed in Shami temple. “That is a unique and impressive bronze figure in the full round of a Parthian warrior, superbly cast, the head made separately. Its quality and significance were justly appraised by Dr.Bronstein, who finds it not of Western inspiration, as M.Godard had thought, but genuinely Iranian.” The accentuated symmetry of the face and hair, the grand simplicity of the modeling, and the decorative monumentality of the entire conception bear the stamp of the Iranian tradition, and are in precise opposition to the stylistic canon-so dramatic and asymmetric in its tendency – of the Hellenistic art” (Pope, 1946).

Suggestions

It is recommended Maps, sketches of kings, country division policy, states, capital cities and famous cities may be displayed at the gallery entrance .Parthian civilization may be introduced by a description of the origin of Parthian and the first capital of the kingdom. Document of graves belonging to this dynasty in Germe in Azerbaijan and rock graves in Khark Island, Persian Gulf and relieves and illustrating with panels and photos may be presented.

Sassanid Period

Exhibit from the Sasanid Empire, founded by Ardashir I, after defeat of Artabanus V in 226 Ad. Sasanid art, while seeking revival of Achaemenid art, are in continuation of Parthian culture. This art went beyond eastern borders of the empire, and as a thriving and dynamic tradition brought a huge territory, from Far East to Atlantic shores under its impact.

Suggestions

This section may start with map of Sasanian political domain and diagram of Sasanian kings, country division policies and capital cities on panels. As Estakhr was the origin of Sasanian Empire,so,it is reasonable to demonstrate the function and characteristics of city and remains of this city like pottery, fragments of architectural decorations, well-known rock relieves like Naqsh-e Rostam, Naqsh-e Rajab, well-known inscriptions like Kabe-ie Zartosht, religious and political symbols.Several wars and campaigns occurred during this period, therefore reconstruction of few war scenes of the period as part of interpretative presentation will strengthen the educational system.

The religion of Sassanian played a fundamental role in political cultural and economic system of Sassanian. It is recommended to represent the characteristics of religion and religious centers like Anahita temple of Estakhr, Anahita temple of Bishapure and Azargoshasp temple in Takht Soleiman with the audio visual aids. The philosophy of religious reformist movements like Manavi and Mazdaki during this dynasty may be described on display panels. Music and musicians had important role on Sassanian society particularly on Sassanian court and there are several music, musicians and minstrels remains of this period. A gallery case may be added on this theme. The end of this section may explain the reasons of collapse of Sassanian dynasty by film, slides and writings on the panels thus integrating audio visual system of presentation.

Central Space Gallery: “The central space of the gallery is dedicated to introducing artifacts of clear geographical provenance and date. These are from Luristan region and some other from regions like

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Kirmanshah and Elam. Ageing from the 3rd millennium to the first millennium B.C... This collection includes ceramic, bronze and a few stone, bone and shell objects, among them, bronze artifacts are of world renown for their diversity, creativity, workmanship and elegance, fascinating many researchers, collections and great museums, world over” (www.nationalmuseumofiran.com)-2006.

Seal Section: Seals and seal impressions, considered among most important cultural material in disciplines of history and archaeology are, in the same manner as other world museums, preserved in an independent department. In a showcase a selection of these, generally used in comparative studies of ancient society's characteristic art, culture and civilization are on exhibit. The earliest one is from the fourth millennium B.C. and made from baked clay, gypsum, marble, limestone and steatite, in shape of button, stamp or crouching animals. Most of them have simple geometric designs, insect themes and sun disk, human and animal figures, mostly unearthed from Susa Sialk (Kashan), Tepe Hisar (Damghan) and Tepe Giyan. Another kind of seals, Cylindrical in form are stones like cornelian, lapis lazuli, jade, white and black marble stones.

Seals have diverse patterns like hunting and fishing farming animal and human and anthropomorphic figures a long with legionary and mythical scenes attesting to gods and goddesses worship. The earliest seal preserved in the museum is from the fourth millennium B.C. and was unearthed in excavations at Susa. In other ancient sites like Tepe Hisar, Tepe Sialk, Shahdad in Kirman, Shahr Sukhteh in Zabol; Tchoghazanbil, Marlik in Roudbar, Susa seals were found.

Recommendations for Betterment of Representing of Iranian Culture in Iran Bastan Museum

Reconstruction

Reconstruction in the archaeological museums is necessary, because one of the main goals of archaeology is reconstruction of cultures and civilizations. In the words of Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn about reconstruction:” If our aim is to learn about the human past, there remains the major issue of what we hope to learn. Traditional approaches tended to regard the objective of archaeology mainly as reconstruction: piecing together the jigsaw. But today it is not enough simply to re –create the material culture of remote periods, or to complete the picture for more recent ones. Further objective has been termed “the reconstruction of the life ways of the people responsible for the archaeological remains.” We are certainly interested in having a clear picture of how people lived, and how they exploited their environment. But we also seek to understand why they lived that way: why they had those patterns of behavior, and how their life ways and material culture came to take the form they did” (Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, 2000).

Suggestions

As mentioned, reconstruction is a main element in the archaeological museums not only for objects but also for lifestyle of humans in the past, and how they made their tools and their homes and environments. Unfortunately there is no any reconstruction work in the Iran Bastan Museum. They can reconstruct Homo erectus, Neanderthals and Homo Sapience lifestyle and environment and ways of tool making in the museum. Also they can reconstruct the texture of prehistoric villages and architecture and model of famous temples and some important wars in the ancient times and reconstructing one or two graves that in the prehistory and beginning of history period unearthed lot of graves along with objects in the several sites of Iran, they will learn information about their culture, religion and believes and for historic period it is recommended to reconstruct the Durantash the religious city of Elamits that at present registered in UNESCO model of Perspolis (Takht Jamshid) as model the capital city of Achaemenids and the Bishapur the capital city of Sasanids, that those are most important monuments that can introduce to visitors history of ancient Iran.

Diorama

“Diorama is effective in the archaeological museums to portray domestic life in the past and archaeological sites. And it is of great educational value to accelerate the ecosystem in which the specimen has developed and thus the diorama gives an idea of what things are actually like” (Prabhas Kumar Singh, 2005). At present there is no Diorama program in the Iran Bastan Museum.

Suggestions

For prehistory section, Iran Bastan museum can create diorama for presenting human cultures and their environment for the famous caves like Bistun, which were that excavated by S. Karlton. Coon, showing

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open places and shelters, hunting scenes, tool makers, human groups and their families. For historic period it is recommended to create a diorama showing the minting process, and mint centers in the ancient Iran. Similarly diorama may be planned for tablets, seals and inscriptions displays.

Modeling

Modeling is one of the most valuable educational system elements in the museum, particularly archaeological museums. Models are very valuable aid to interpretation. Iran Bastan Museum procures replicas of different objects from private sector and keeps them in Museum shop for sale. There are several replicas from prehistory sections to Sassanid period in the Iran Bastan Museum Shop.

Department of Photography

The photography department of Iran Bastan museum is a well developed unit. All collections have been photographed in the said studio. The photography department of National museum of Iran, in addition to its activities, participated in archaeological researches and different regional excavations it also has all the recording process of different excavations and discoveries. The pictorial achieves of the museum consists of pictures divisions which present technical characteristics of objects for other divisions of museum. Apart from maintaining a photo archive, this section also undertakes collaborative activities with other countries. Recording process of restoration exchanging information with other archaeological organizations, institutes and museums in the world and its other responsibilities. Photography unit is well developed and is the major strength of Iran Bastan Museum in the presentation techniques.

Audio Visual Facility

Showing films and slides in archaeological museums are important part of the presentation technique. But there is no film and slides library in the Iran Bastan museum.

Suggestions

Audio-visual materials help visitor to grasp easily the content of the museum collections particularly the archaeological collection. Audio visual systems may be installed both in prehistory and historic sections. Introductory slides and film about prehistory collections, situation of sites and sorts of objects, their excavations, conservation and restoration may be shown in prehistory sections. The historic section, visitors will see films and slides about formation of civilizations, characteristics of dynasties their political policy, kinds of writings, architecture, wars, arts migrations, routes and relations between other civilizations and reason of declines.

Iran Bastan Museum presently lacks education units. This Museum may plan a education unit to improve the publication, marketing, workshops and seminars and lectures, website, loan services, discovery room, mobile exhibitions, training programs, consulting governing bodies, museums staff, external specialists' developing pilot projects, writing education programs, coaching school teachers, coaching volunteers, developing education programs for different target audiences, cooperation with different institutions, coordination of guide tours, traveling exhibitions, school class visits, loan services to the schools, training courses to the teachers, illustrated lectures, motion pictures, publications, etc .

Conclusion

Iran Bastan Museum has a rich potential for education. Despite of some lack of facilities like computer site, educational department and audio-visual facilities etc. exhibition of chronology and historical eras from prehistory to downfall of Sassanid era has been through depiction of unique objects that were procured by way of exploration and unearthing from different layers of hills and other sites. Exhibition of the classified objects such as potteries, seals tablets, coins, tools, relics etc. were put into consecutive and chronological manner as were procure from prehistory to Sassanid era. Iran Bastan Museum has rich and vital data and material to impart and provide training of historical lessons to school and university students as well for adult people to learn more about their historical and cultural identity. Statistics show that Museum has been basically major centre for receiving education in museology for having rich deposits in the aforesaid areas. Interestingly majority of the visitors are from students, scholars interested in related educational and research areas. It is also noteworthy that other audiences or visitors seem to be unaware about its possessions. There may be lack of conditional expectations and communication for various reasons.

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The presentation techniques as the part of education system in Iran Bastan museum are well developed and applied in some areas but in few other areas like reconstruction, they need to be strengthened. Discovery room should be made in the Iran Bastan Museum. They can provide that right in front of the library. In this center they can collect objects and models of museum objects like coins, seals, potteries, sculptures, inscriptions, terracotta figures, photographs of the details lamps, glassware to learn, examine and touch artistic objects. Providing books about the museum, and museum collections, puzzles, games, museum objects, ancient arts, and ancient Iran dynasties, and questions visitors might have about particular specimens will help. In this section students can design decorations of pottery fragments which obtained from several archaeological sites. This section with regard to those programs will increase their information about ancient Iran and strengthen of identification of visitors and give them national pride.

The development of computer systems that can also involve sound and video is creating a whole new medium of interactive displays in museums. So far these systems have been mostly used to provide information about the exhibits-information that increasingly includes moving pictures and sound as well as still pictures and text. The most exciting developments are those that give the visitor choices. For example those that apply computer game techniques to historical situations. The opportunities for museum use of these new techniques are enormous. It is recommended that Iran Bastan in future renovation project provide install computer systems in the Iran Bastan galleries.

For better using of audio visual for educational purpose it is recommended that in the entrance of the Museum install video projection that broadcasting from ceiling on a wall Iranian geographic situation from prehistory to end of Sassanid's era. This will learn to all visitors before visiting the Museum general information about ancient Iran also planning video projection system for prehistoric section to present all of prehistoric sites that excavated by archaeologists and their reports by film and slide and recommended installing also video projection system in the historic period to present civilizations and their characteristics in the light of culture, art, economy, literature, politics etc, to visitors. These will make Iran Bastan as a dynamic museum with educational purposes.

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