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World Heritage Site of the Sasanian Archaeological Landscape of Fars: Approaches to Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The Sasanian Empire was one of the two major ancient Iranian empires that shaped a significant part of the history of the ancient Near East. For four centuries, this empire ruled over various parts of Asia and was considered a serious rival to the Roman Empire. Firūzābād, Bishapūr, and Sarvestān were the homeland of the first rulers of this dynasty. Sustainable development strategies, informed by archaeological approaches, have been derived from this landscape, both as values of Sasanian cultural heritage and as tools for sustainable development. The author has identified these values as the criteria for the inscription of the Sasanian Archaeological Landscape of Fars on the World Heritage List and ultimately proposes that the key to the vitality and sustainable development of the Sasanian landscape lies in preserving these values through inter-university scientific collaboration within the framework of a coherent academic project. These criteria are as follows: the Sasanian Archaeological Landscape of Fars reflects the continuation of Achaemenid and Parthian ritual and cultural traditions, cultural exchange with the art and architecture of ancient Rome, and a significant influence on urban planning, architecture, and artistic approaches in Islamic-period Iran. This magnificent archaeological landscape presents outstanding and complete examples of an efficient and effective network for land use and the sustainable exploitation of ecosystem resources in harmony with the environment. Techniques, innovations, and a distinctive architectural style, such as the construction of domes on square plans, represent the Sasanian Empire's most fundamental contribution to Iranian architecture in the Middle East.

Keywords: Archaeological Landscape; OUV; World Heritage; Sasanian; Sustainable Development; Approaches and Objectives

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