

Nomination of

Hegmataneh and Historical Centre of Hamedan

For Inscription on World Heritage List

Executive Summary



UNESCO

World Heritage Convention

Tehran, Iran

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Preface

The nominated property, initiating at the time of the Medes and continuing to the present, with its exceptional historical and cultural specifications, constitutes part of the present Hamedan city. Hamedan city is the Centre of Hamedan province and a megacity located in the West of Iran. Being situated at the crossroad of important historical routes both in the past and present, Hamedan has always hosted populations from different ethnic groups and religions. It has long served as a place for the interaction of different schools of thought and a place for the transmission of rituals exercised by different ethnic groups and nations, who lived together in peaceful coexistence. The various Muslim mosques, Christian churches and Jewish synagogues, the organization of ceremonies specific to each religion, together with people of various ethnic origins living in peace, are altogether proof to this historical claim.

Hamedan city is among the oldest cities of antiquity and an olden Iranian city. It used to serve as the Capital of the Medes Empire. Moreover, during the reign of the Achamenids, Arsacids, Sassanids, Al-e Bouyeh and the Seljuqs, Hamedan thrived as one of the biggest Iranian cities (Mohammadifar, 2004).

The city is spread out along a geographical longitude of 28 to 48 degrees and 33 degrees to 48 minutes. The geographical latitude of the city is 45 to 34 degrees and 50 to 34 minutes. It is located in an altitude of 1870 m above sea level on the eastern slopes of the Alvand massif in a vast plain. From a climatic point of view, Hamedan is cold. At winter time temperatures drop to -32 degrees and summers are temperate with maximum temperature rising to +39 degrees.

Hegmataneh and the historical city of Hamedan have played an important role in the history of Iran. Hamedan has also had many influential cultural and economic interactions, which have positively impacted the geography of the region. It has thus been known as one of the main centres of economic and trade interactions in various periods in history. The continuity of life from the pre-historic era to the present and the modular urban design adjacent to the historical centre of the city is significant. Historical and archaeological analysis and studies also reveal the importance of this historical complex.

1. State Party

- Islamic Republic of Iran



Figure. 1: Iran. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)

3. Name of Nominated Property

- **Hegmataneh and Historical Centre of Hamedan**



Figure. 2: Aerial View. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 3: Monastery of St. Stephen. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 4: View of the Masjed Jame. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 5: View of the Esther and Mordekhay Mausoleum. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 6: Gonbad-e Alavian. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 7: General view over the Central sq.. (Source: Ali Eqra)



Figure. 8: Bazaar of Hamedan. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 9: Bazaar of Hamedan, Rasteh Chagusazan. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 10: Bazaar of Hamedan. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 11: Bazaar of Hamedan, Timche Sadari. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)

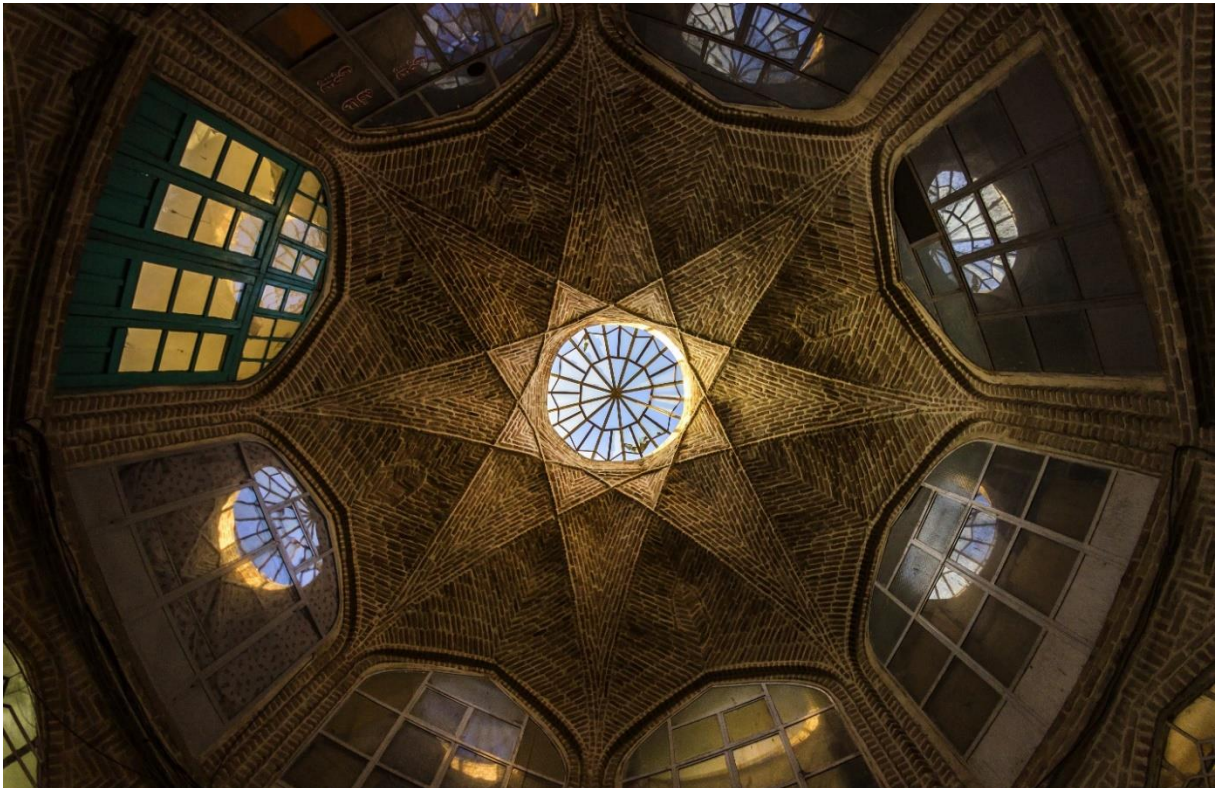


Figure. 12: Bazaar of Hamedan. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 13: Bazaar of Hamedan, Saray-e Hajsafar Khani. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 14: Bazaar of Hamedan. (Source: Archive of HHCH Base)



Figure. 15: Tomb of Bu-Ali Sina. (Source: Eynollah Khazaei)



Figure. 15: Zurkhaneh Hamekasi. (Source: Eynollah Khazaei)

4. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

No	Nominated Property	Coordinates of Central Point	Nominated property (ha)	Buffer Zone (ha)	Map Ref
1	Hegmataneh and Historical Centre of Hamedan	34°48'8.60"N 48°31'0.07"E	75	287	II, III

Table. 1: Coordinates of Central Point

5. Textual description of the boundary (ies) of the nominated property

Nominated Property

Stretching in an almost North-South direction, Hegmataneh and historical center lie in the center of Hamedan. It contains various elements, including Hegmataneh ancient site, the old market and relevant elements, historical landmarks and access routes.

Hegmataneh ancient site lying in the northeastern part of the area is stretched in the southeast-northwest direction. The market and the historical center constitute the middle part of the area, while Avicenna pathway starting at Imam Square ends up at Avicenna Mausoleum. This pathway along with its historical walls form the southern part of the site.

Points No. N1 to N3 display Alvand Boulevard in the north and northeastern parts of Hegmataneh while points N3 to N6 on the map display its southern section which is adjacent to the eastern side of the market and close to Isar Boulevard.

In fact, points N1 to N6 show the northeastern parts of the site. As we start at point N6 heading towards south, we pass by "Hamekasi Zorkhaneh" and "Shohada Boulevard", leaving the western part of the market at point N9, we reach a pathway in the southern part of Imam Square. As we keep going, at point N10 we get to Takhti Boulevard and "Mokhaberat Alley" where at point N15 by passing the properties in the eastern side of Bu-Ali Sina Boulevard, we finally reach point N16 in which the Square and Tomb of Bu-Ali Sina are located in its southern part. The boundary line of the site passes around Bu-Ali Sina Square at point N18 and enters Kolanj Alley in the north where at point N21 it encircles the western side of Avicenna Road. The boundary line which continues in the north and passes Kargoshai and Sepeh Banks finally reaches the western part of the market.

At point N29, moving on the northwest side of bazaar and along Jarahan and Anvari Alleys, we get close to Alavian Dome at the northwest end of the site. As we head eastward, at the southern side of Ein-ol-Ghozat Square, we leave behind the northern wall of Bazar and get back to the starting point No. N1.

Buffer Zone

The boundary line, which encircles the entire site, starts in the west at point B1 at Imamzadeh Abdollah Square. This line proceeds to Zeinol-Abedin Square, then passes through Palestine Square, goes along Palestine Boulevard and finally gets to Badi Al-Zaman Hamadani Boulevard at point B4, a long travel path which delineates the northern border of the site. Points B5 to B8, at Golan and Chitsazan Boulevards mark the eastern part of the site. Points B8 to B12 which pass through Madani and Khajeh Rashid Boulevards and the southern side of Bu-Ali Sina Square mark the southern boundary of the site. Points B12 to B1, along Khajeh Rashid and Ayatollah Kashani Boulevards mark the western side of the site.

6. A4 or A3 size map(s) of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone

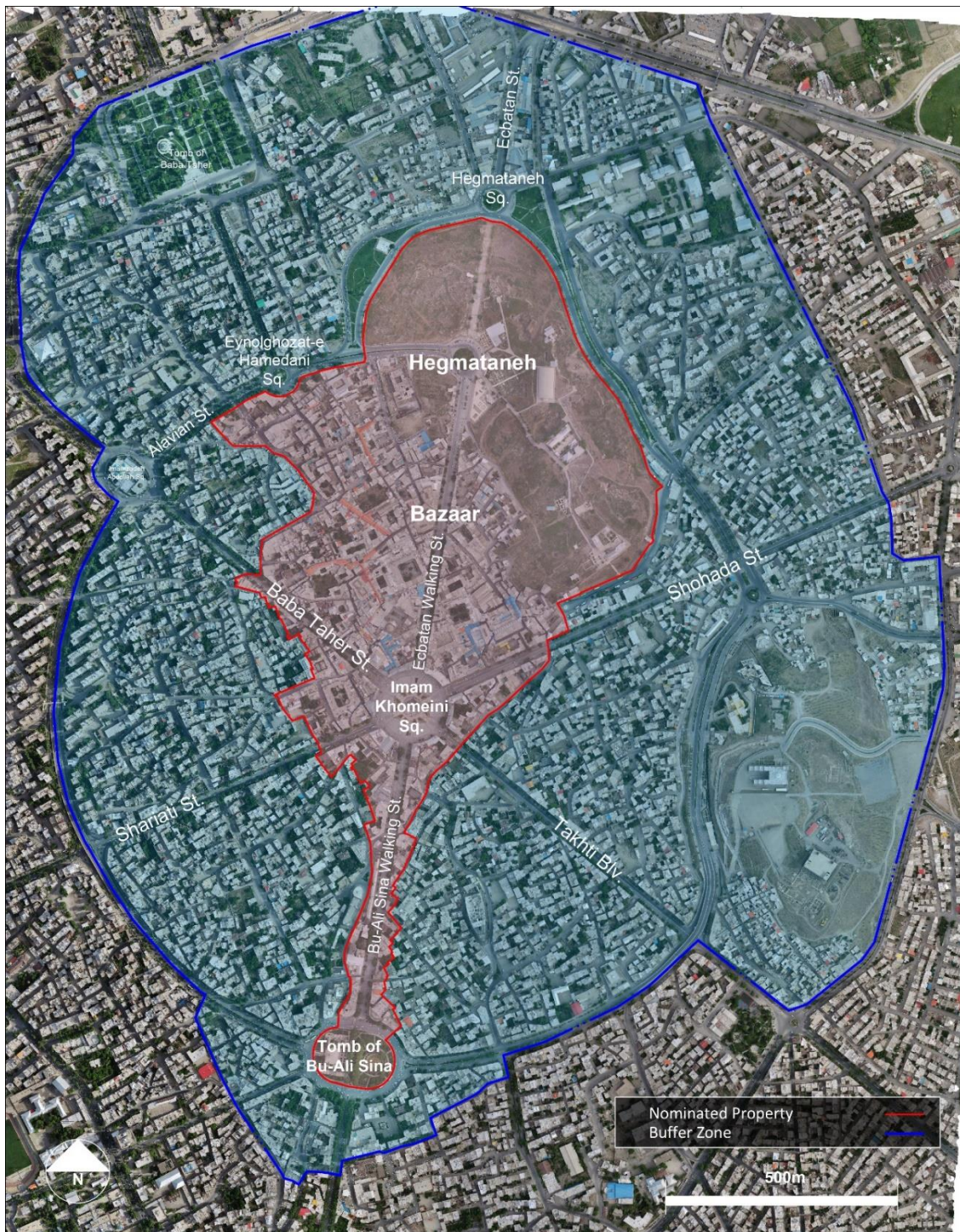


Figure. 17: Aerial photo showing Nominated property and proposed buffer zone

7. Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)

Hegmataneh and Historical Centre of Hamedan is nominated to be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv).

Criterion (ii) Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

Criterion (iii) Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

Criterion (iv) Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

8. Cultural Landscape: (NO)

The Property is not nominated as a cultural landscape.

9. Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief Synthesis

About 2700 years ago, it was designated as the capital of the Medes Empire but maintained its key role in the Achaemenid, Parthian, Sasanian and post-Islamic periods until today. It has served as one of the major governments centre for thousands of years.

The Aryan tribes who settled in the Zagros Mountains and/or in its high plains, managed to establish the Median state. They were among the first tribes to culminate a historical transition from the stage of simple rural and nomadic societies to an urban society. The spatial organization and physical manifestation of this transition was the creation of the first city-state in the Iranian Plateau, which embodied the union of the rural/nomadic and urban communities. In historical texts and written sources surviving from previous periods (especially the writings of Greek historians such as Herodotus, Polybius, Ctesias, Justin and Xenophon, as well as historians of other nations and Islamic ones) the crucial and influential role of Hamedan in historical, religious, social and political events has been mentioned abundantly.

The property contains Hegmataneh archaeological site, residential areas, *Bazaar*, the central square, historical landmarks and contemporary architectural properties located on Hegmataneh axis as far as the Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna) mausoleum.

According to written documents and archaeological evidence, not only the (Great) Khorasan Road but also the Lapis Lazuli Road of the Babylonian and Assyrian era, the Achaemenid Royal Road, the Silk Road of the Parthian and Sasanian era, and the Pilgrimage Paths of the Islamic era all passed through Hamedan. As a result of this important position and status, Hamedan became a place where Muslims, Jews and Armenians lived together, which is evidenced by the existence of mosques, churches and synagogues, including the Grand Mosque, Esther and Mordecai's tombs, as well as Gregory Stephen and Angel churches near each other.

Thanks to this rich cultural and social background, throughout its history Hamedan has been the birthplace of many famous wise men and scholars such as Abu Ali Sina (Avicenna), Baba Taher, Ayn al-Quzat-e Hamedani, Khawaja Rashid al-din Fazlollah-e Hamedani and others. Without doubt these great men played a significant role in the continuation and formation of the intangible heritage of the city, especially during the Islamic and contemporary periods.

The discovery of an exceptional urban complex in the Hegmataneh ancient site with a modular structure denotes the innovation and excellence of urban planning as well as an intelligent and prospective architectural design during the Parthian period. Expansion of the city with a Persian pattern around the ancient site in the Islamic period; also, its growth in the contemporary period and at the same time preservation of its historical and cultural values in different periods shows the continuous vitality of Hamedan.

The important role of Hegmataneh, its *Bazaar* and other vital elements of the city have always attracted the attention of different rulers who tried to contribute to its growth and development, a trend which has continued in the Islamic era too, especially during the Seljuk and Safavid reign until the reign of Qajar, Pahlavi and the Islamic Republic. The most recent urban changes and developments in the central part of the city have taken place under the rule of Pahlavi dynasty with the construction of the city's central square and new streets. Alongside the smart interaction of residents with their surroundings in a harsh mountainous environment, Hamedan has witnessed the peaceful coexistence of people from different ethnicities and religions throughout its history.

b) Justification for Criteria

Criterion(ii): Hegmataneh along with the centre of the historical city of Hamedan has enjoyed a sophisticated and creative type and a unique system of urban planning and modular architecture from the first millennium BC. Also, it has presented an outstanding and unique example of the continuity of an urban settlement in a mountainous region passing through the Median, Achaemenid, Parthian, Sassanid periods and despite expansion during the Islamic and contemporary times. Since a long time ago the city of Hamedan has been welcoming different ethnic groups with different languages and religions and has witnessed the peaceful coexistence of Muslims, Jews and Christians throughout history.

Criterion(iii): Since the first millennium BC, the urban habitat of Hegmataneh has passed through many historical episodes particularly the Median, Achaemenid, Parthian, Sasanian and Islamic periods to the present era. Gradually it has gone under a continuous development which with artistic, technological, architectural and urban innovations have resulted in the formation of a sustainable city called Hamedan.

Criterion(iv): Hegmataneh and Historical centre of Hamedan is an urban architectural ensemble of outstanding values. contains many historical layers from the first millennium BC (Iron Age) to the present day, which together with cultural finds from different historical and Islamic periods comprises a long history of formation process, urban life and Iranian culture. Among the characteristics of the ancient city of Hegmataneh is its creative urban plan as well as its modular and regular architecture which is relatively unprecedented among historical cities

c) Statement of Integrity

Hegmataneh and Historical centre of Hamedan (HHCH) contains all the elements that justify its OUV. More than 2700 years ago, HHCH has continued to live and dynamically despite the urban changes, but with the preservation of ancient core and historical development of the city. The boundaries of HHCH has been chosen in such a way that it presents the continuity and visual, structural and functional integrity of the historical centre from the ancient period to the present day. Although the contemporary city has made changes in the historical city, today it expresses the contemporary history of Hamedan, which is part of Iran's heritage.

d) Statement of authenticity

The form and design of the HHCH has enjoyed a unique identity throughout history and the urban constructions were based on the use of local materials. The historical city of Hamedan has maintained its main function as an urban habitat for 2700 years. The traditional and technical systems of urban construction have evolved over time in accordance with relevant experience. Review of aerial image shows that location and setting of the nominated property with all its important components has remained in its original state. Retaining the dynamics of the historical centre, forcefully represents the continuity of the historical identity and spirit in this city.

e) Requirements for protection and management

The nominated property has been registered under number 33654 on the List of National Monuments of Iran, also all of its outstanding monuments have already been registered separately on this list in the past. Therefore, the proposed property in its entirety is legally under full protection of the registration act of national monuments and related laws, including the core zone and buffer zone regulations, the Special Ratified Plan of the historical centre, the Management Plan, as well as the short, medium, and long-term conservation plan to preserve the values and respect the authenticity and integrity of the site. It has been for about two decades that a permanent multidisciplinary national base has been established by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts for the comprehensive conservation of the ancient site of Hegmataneh and the historical centre of Hamedan.

10. Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

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