Pakistan to Preserve Buddhist Caves

As the natural beauty of Pakistan's federal capital Islamabad is fading rapidly due to wide constructions and development activities, the city now faces an archaeologi- cal beauty of the city by approving a plan to protect the 2,400-year-old caves.

The remains of more than 2,400-year-old Buddhist-era caves are lying silent and deserted on the northeastern side of Islamabad as the murmur of Buddhism appears on the walls of the ancient remnant of the Kala Shahkot Hill, Saalr Hill and Golestanak Hill have been registered on the National Heritage List.

The stories in the legendary section are more complex than the poem's opening narratives. Dissension between king and hero is a recurrent motif in the Shahnameh. The reign of Jamshid, the fourth king, was notable for the introduction of crafts and the organization of society. Jamshid amassed into four classes—priests, warriors, farmers, and manual laborers—a division that remained axiomatic in later theories of political organization and had its counterpart in the Indian caste system. Rostam lives a long life, serving seven kings, and his character undergoes substantial changes. In the early stories he is a mythological hero, enjoying supernatural protection and emerging triumphant from all conflicts. But after his involvement with Tahmineh and the birth of her son Sohrab, Rostam leaves the world of the heroic, and becomes ensnared in the human. His adventures are now shadowed by anguish and a sense of im- ponderable fate. He inadvertently kills his son Sohrab, he is unable to save the distressed Aeros, whom he regards as a son; he is presented with an impossible dilemma, the choice of seven major emperors over with Farrokhzad. The legions of Rostam's char-acter is indicative of the generational evolu- tion of narrative in the Shahnameh.