

## EDITORIAL

# Global Duty: Attempts to Stop Destroying Historical Documents in Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia is one of the oldest cradles of human civilization in the world. It is located between Tigris and Euphrates rivers (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Mesopotamia

The history of civilization in this era dates back to Prehistory around 10000 years ago. During this long history, too many civilizations, such as Akkadian Empire (~2350–2100 BC); Ur (3rd millennia BC); Assyrian kingdom (24th to 7th century BC); Babylonia (19th to 6th century BC), were grown in this era. Later, this era was ruled by ancient Persian Empires (550BC to 637AD), including Achaemenid Empire (550-330BC), Parthian (247BC-224AD) and Sassanid (224-637AD) kingdoms. The

Arman Zargaran<sup>1,2</sup>

- 1- Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Center, and Department of Phytopharmaceuticals (Traditional Pharmacy), School of Pharmacy, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran.
- 2- Research Office for the History of Persian Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran.

**Correspondence:**

Arman Zargaran  
Deputy Editor in Chief, the Journal of Research on History of Medicine  
zargarana@sums.ac.ir



capital of Persia was Ctesiphon during Parthian and Sassanid dynasties. Also it was considered as the political and scientific centers of Islamic caliphate in the medieval age.

Beside the political importance of Mesopotamia, it had always important scientific roles by locating great scientific centers in the region. Regarding the long deep history of science in this land, a lot of important historical evidence is kept there.

Archeological findings provide the most important evidence to discover the history of medical sciences. Hence, finding archeological articles and also discovering new evidence in Mesopotamia can be the main key to restoring the history of world medical sciences.

Unfortunately, after the US attack to Iraq on 20 March 2003, a lot of historical evidence in the Baghdad museum (as one of the five main archeological museums in the world) was destroyed or looted because of the anarchy during and after the war. Also, Babylonia, as one of the greatest old remained sites (in which the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, was located) was used as military base during the war by US forces. It caused irreparable damages to this historical site.

After the passage of more than 10 years from Iraq war, Iraq is still far from being a safe country. Now, the radical terrorists, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) started to destroy the great historical evidence in the region. Recently, a video was shared in networks, showing that Hatra, a historical city and site belonging to Parthian empire (figure 2) was destroyed by ISIL fighters on 7 March 2015.



*Figure 2. Hatra, photographed in 1988*

Each historical evidence acts as a crucial document preserving human's background and history. Nowadays, because of these terrible destructions we are losing our historical tokens of civilization. It is expected to raise a global movement to oppose the destruction of the history of humanity in Mesopotamia. It belongs to the whole world and is the duty of all nations to preserve this cradle of civilization.

