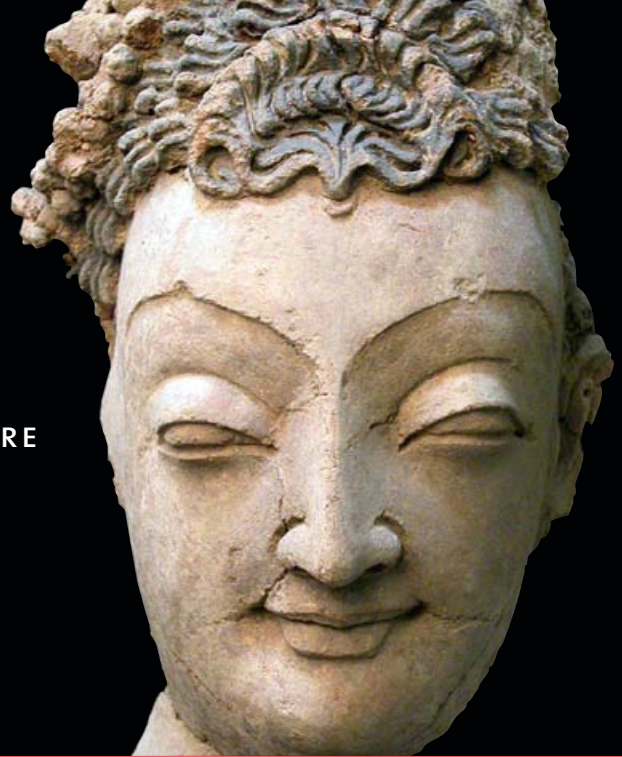


FROM THE PAST AND FOR THE FUTURE



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World
Heritage
Convention

Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan

JAM AND HERAT







WITH THE SUPPORT OF ITALIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



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FROM THE PAST AND FOR THE FUTURE

Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan

JAM AND HERAT



View of the eastern front of the Citadel of Herat (1960). PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

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1. CHAPTER I. ‘Safeguarding Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage’

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The Minaret of Jam (1975). PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Foreword

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

FOR MILLENNIA, Afghanistan has been a meeting point and crossroads for a wide variety of peoples and cultures, leaving a heritage that is uniquely rich and diverse. This heritage is important for the people of Afghanistan, as a wellspring of strength and belonging. It carries meaning also for people across the world, as part of the common history of humanity, embodying values that are outstanding and universal.

This heritage has faced sharp threats, even devastation, as the country has gone through more than two decades of conflict. Many of Afghanistan's remarkable monuments and archaeological remains have been damaged or fallen victim to looting. This is a loss to the people of Afghanistan, to their social cohesion, and to humanity as a whole.

Safeguarding this heritage stands at the heart of UNESCO's mandate. This heritage is vital for the wellbeing of communities today and tomorrow, at the social, economic, ecological, and spiritual levels. It is a rich source of cultural diversity in a world that is increasingly interconnected. It is also a powerful vector for unity, reconciliation, tolerance and peace. After situations of conflict, cultural heritage can provide continuity and hope, as well as the strength that communities need to rebuild for a better future.

UNESCO has been active in conserving and safeguarding Afghan monuments and archaeological sites since the 1960s. Working with the Afghan authorities and the international community, our engagement has stepped up as threats have increased, including the destruction of the Buddhas of the Valley of Bamiyan in 2001.

This book is an overview of heritage safeguarding projects financed through the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust that UNESCO has undertaken in Afghanistan. Told by internationally renowned experts with first-hand knowledge, this is the fascinating story of the World Heritage site of Jam, the ancient cities of Herat and Bactria, the Mughal garden of Bagh-e Babur and Band-e Amir, the country's first national park. All of this highlights the leading role that UNESCO has played in supporting Afghanistan's authorities and specialists in their efforts to preserve outstanding monuments and sites.

I hope that this publication will contribute to shaping a new vision of Afghanistan's heritage and its future. By giving greater visibility to UNESCO's achievements, I trust that this work will also encourage all of our official and civil society partners to support further actions to preserve Afghanistan's heritage.

I am very grateful to the Afghan authorities for their unwavering commitment to supporting these safeguarding activities. I wish to thank all donors for the invaluable contributions that they have made to support UNESCO in improving the state of conservation of Afghanistan's cultural heritage. I am especially grateful to the Government of Italy, which has made this publication possible. My last words of thanks go to the Afghan and international experts, whose commitment to safeguarding Afghanistan's cultural heritage has produced such impressive results. Their hard work and unrelenting dedication shows what can be done to protect Afghanistan's irreplaceable culture heritage and to allow it to play a prominent role in the country's reconstruction.



Irina Bokova



Afghanistan (1970s). PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Congratulatory Remarks

H.E. Kacem FAZELLY, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GIANT STATUES OF THE BUDDHA in Bamiyan was an act of intolerance that UNESCO fought against on the international level by working to promote dialogue and respect for cultural diversity. Fortunately, other sites in Afghanistan, along with other examples of the country's historical and archaeological heritage, have survived, even if they have been damaged by natural hazards and the passage of time. The Minaret of Jam and the minarets of the Old City of Herat, for example, of inestimable importance owing to the values they represent, have benefited from constant care and regular campaigns of conservation from UNESCO.

Other sites, such as the Mosque of No Gonbad, the most ancient of the Abbasids period, wait for such a care and more attention from the international community, notably from UNESCO World Heritage Centre. More generally, the historical heritage of Afghanistan is still in need of further international assistance, even as the lack of security in the country has sometimes prevented work from being carried out, and the difficulties of access to certain sites and the often challenging climatic conditions have sometimes frustrated certain conservation campaigns.

Such challenges have often been brought to the world's attention, and the Permanent Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO has consistently highlighted the expectations of local communities for whom cultural and economic considerations are often closely linked. Funding is available, and it is to be hoped that the international community will help to provide the kind of technical assistance that will meet the hopes of these communities. Afghanistan, a post-conflict country, considers the placing of a proper emphasis on its historical heritage to be both a sign of international solidarity and a mark of the importance of cultural diversity. ■



H.E. Kacem FAZELLY

Note from the Editor

THIS PUBLICATION was originally conceived to promote the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan*, which was concluded in 2013. The project allowed UNESCO to carry out emergency conservation work, particularly on the Minaret of Jam and the Fifth Minaret of Herat. After decades of neglect due to civil conflicts, the state of these two monuments was seriously deteriorating with the latter being on the verge of collapse.

At the same time, despite UNESCO's long history of actions to safeguard the cultural heritage of Afghanistan that goes back over half a century, few materials have up to now been available to describe it. It was therefore decided to extend the scope of the original publication to include material which traces UNESCO's conservation efforts in the country as a whole. In this respect, it is hoped that this publication may serve as an exercise in institutional memory—recording the work that has been carried out over the past fifty years by UNESCO to help preserve Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

Since the 1960s, regardless of the changing political situation in Afghanistan, UNESCO's work in the country has been marked by striking continuity. The 1970s saw the inception of the landmark UNDP/UNESCO Joint Project for *Capacity-Building in the Field of Cultural Heritage Conservation in Afghanistan*, a pilot project designed to prepare the *International Safeguarding Campaign for the Old City of Herat*. While this UNDP/UNESCO project was undoubtedly a success, civil conflict in the country followed by the outbreak of the Soviet war in Afghanistan in December 1979 prevented the official launch of this important International Safeguarding Campaign.

In the 1980s, despite on-going conflict in the country, UNESCO continued working in Afghanistan, dispatching preparatory missions to Kabul and Herat for the International Safeguarding Campaign in order to update its action plan. However, while these missions were able to reach Kabul and hold fruitful meetings with the Government of Afghanistan, they were not able to reach Herat which was then caught up in armed conflict.

The 1990s constitute one of the most turbulent periods in recent Afghan history, particularly marked by the rule of the

Taliban regime starting in September 1996. Nevertheless, UNESCO remained committed to Afghanistan, trying to protect its cultural heritage despite the limitations of operating from outside the country by working mainly through Non-Governmental Organizations. It is this continued commitment on the part of UNESCO that Chapter I of this publication records.

As the documents in the UNESCO archives, including original reports, letters, internal memos and the like, were still in the process of being organized, the task of tracing all of its activities in Afghanistan from the 1960s onwards in detail was challenging. Yet, the objective of the publication was not to present every detail of these activities. Instead, the idea was to outline the main actions of UNESCO in Afghanistan over the past half century in the hope of providing a compelling picture of its five decades of actions and co-operation in the country.

In addition, the publication aims to illustrate Afghanistan's rich and colourful diversity by presenting the sites currently included in its Tentative List for World Heritage, along with a brief cultural history of the country. Four sites, namely Bagh-e Babur, also known as Babur's Garden, Balkh, Band-e Amir, and the Old City of Herat, have been placed on Afghanistan's Tentative List. All these sites have played crucial roles not only in the culture and history of the country but that of the whole region as well.

The current Tentative List can certainly be more representative. A number of sites which do not appear on it were initially submitted for nomination to the World Heritage List by the former Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in 1981 and 1982, shortly after the country became a State Party to the World Heritage Convention in 1979. The sites submitted for nomination at that time included the Old City and Monuments of Herat, the Archaeological Site of Ai-Khanum, the Site and Monuments of Ghazni, the Mosque of Haji Piyada, also known as No Gonbad, the Stupa and Monastery of Guldarra, the Site and Monuments of Lashkari Bazar-Bust, the Archaeological Site of Kurkh Kotal, the Minaret of Jam, and the Bamiyan Valley which includes the Sites of Fuladi, Kakrak, Shahr-i Ghulghulah and Shahr-i Zuhak. Needless to say, these nomination dossiers could not be adequately followed-up at the time due to the turbulent situation in the country.

Two of these sites, the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam and the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley, were inscribed on the World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger in 2002 and 2003, respectively. The Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley was inscribed as a serial property consisting of several distinct sites within the valley and its environs, as was originally proposed in 1981.

Many of the other sites have unfortunately been seriously damaged as a result of the two decades of conflict. For example, reports indicate that not much remains at the site of Ai-Khanum, excavated by the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* in 1964 and considered as one of the few unearthed sites bearing witness to the Hellenistic period in Afghanistan. Urgent attention would therefore be needed if sites such as this are to be safeguarded.

Reviewing all these aforementioned sites naturally leads to a reflection on the current Tentative List for Afghanistan. The Tentative List is a useful planning tool for States Parties to the World Heritage Convention since it can function as a means for achieving the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List—an approach which aims to make the World Heritage List truly representative of the World’s various cultures and civilizations. With this in mind, it might be desirable to establish a thorough national inventory of the monuments and sites of Afghanistan in order to make its current Tentative List more comprehensive and representative.

Most of the sites on the Tentative List have hosted development projects that suggest how such initiatives can help not only in safeguarding cultural heritage but, when combined with carefully designed local community participation, can yield economic benefits for the local communities concerned as well. Lessons learned from such projects can also be replicated around Afghanistan and beyond. For example, projects in the Old City of Herat, well known for its rich heritage of traditional handicraft, notably glassware, tiles, and carpentry, have shown how local communities can directly benefit and how work to safeguard traditional handicrafts and cultural heritage sites and monuments can closely involve and assist such communities. UNESCO will soon be launching a project in this vein in this historic city. The Bagh-e Babur, or Babur’s Garden, has also become an important leisure destination for Kabul residents after the rehabilitation project carried out by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, further proving how such undertakings reward the local population directly. By featuring various activities carried out by other development agencies and international research teams with which UNESCO has been closely co-operating in safeguarding Afghanistan’s cultural heritage, this publication bears witness to the firm commitment of the international community to preserve this heritage for future generations.

Despite the wealth of information contained in this publication, it is still limited in scope given the full range of activities carried out by UNESCO in Afghanistan, particularly since 2002. These activities could well be the subject of a separate publication in the future.

As noted earlier, the present publication was first and foremost conceived as an exercise in institutional memory by tracing UNESCO’s history in safeguarding Afghan cultural heritage, and also as a way of promoting the achievements of the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan*, as described in Chapters I and II, respectively. Through Chapter III, the publication further aims to highlight the great potential the country possesses in achieving sustainable development, particularly by using its rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage in the Tentative List as driving forces. It is hoped then that the publication will draw greater attention from the international community to the current and future conservation needs of Afghanistan’s cultural and natural heritage sites, hence contributing to the further mobilization of much needed international resources for whatever safeguarding actions that may be necessary.

Special thanks are extended to the authors of the articles in this publication for their contributions. For their valuable cooperation, much appreciation is also given to the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan*, the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente, the Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale, the Musée Guimet, RWTH Aachen Technical University, the University of Strasbourg, the University of Vienna, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The utmost gratitude is due to Professor Andrea Bruno for making his photographic archive available to UNESCO, without which this publication would not have been possible. ■



CULTURAL TIMELINE

Afghanistan: Mirror of the World and Crossroads of Cultures

Pierre CAMBON | Chief Curator, Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Paris

AFGHANISTAN stands at the crossroads of different worlds. Situated between Iran, India and the northern steppes, the land of nomads, the extraordinary richness of the country's heritage bears witness to its location and has done so from the dawn of history to the beginnings of the contemporary period. It was in 1922 that King Amanullah sought to modernize the country on the model of reforms carried out by Kemal Ataturk in Turkey, while at the same time using the country's archaeology and past history as the cement for its modern identity.

Afghanistan can be divided schematically into two parts, one on each side of the Hindu Kush Mountains. To the north, there is Afghan Bactria, opening onto the plains of the Eurasian steppe between the coasts of the Black Sea and the Altai Mountains, an area made up of limestone and clay. To the south, there is the Kabul region, that of Kapisa, which leads to the gates of India along the ancient highway that leads from Bactria to Taxila. This area is mostly composed of shale or gypsum. The armies of Alexander the Great passed through Balkh, and it was there that Alexander married Roxana as part of his dream of uniting East and West within a vast empire. Kabul now hosts the tomb of Babur, founder of the Mughal Dynasty, whose cousin also ruled Herat, making the latter city into one of the most important artistic capitals of the Islamic World at the time.

However, Afghan history is far more ancient even than this. Beginning in the prehistoric period, it shows that Afghanistan long functioned not only as a bridge between distant lands, but also as a particularly dynamic home for creativity and genuine originality.

The Bronze Age

Dating back from even before the Aryan migrations, whose echoes resound throughout the *Vedas* and which could have taken place in part through Afghan territory (1,000–600 BCE) (Fig. 1), the oldest sites in Afghanistan date to prehistoric times and from the Neolithic period onwards, or around 7,000–5,000 BCE. The site of Aq Kupruk on the outskirts of Balkh, for example, was shown to date from this period by Louis Dupree in 1962 and 1965.

However, the first evidence of a sensibility specific to Afghanistan comes from the Bronze Age in the form of the Mundigak site near Kandahar, which bears witness to the Helmand Culture, as does the site of Shahr-i-Sokhta on the Iranian



Fig. 1 | Petroglyphs, Afghanistan (2005).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 2 | The Balkh Citadel.

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

border. Mundigak was excavated by Jean-Marie Casal between 1951 and 1958, and it testifies to a long period of human habitation, as well as to links with the Iranian plateau, for example through the ceramic objects found at the site. These include vases shaped like brandy glasses that feature refined, vegetable-type decoration on a plain background. Flourishing around 3,300–2,500 BCE, the site bears witness to the high level of urban development attained at the time, notably through its palace architecture and through finds made at the site, including stone seals with graphic decoration, figurines drawing on animal motifs and geometric arrowheads.

While such discoveries were for a long time isolated ones, recent research has shown that the north of Afghanistan, Afghan Bactria, underwent remarkable growth during more recent times (around 2,000–1,900 BCE), being part of a much larger cultural area that covered Iran and the east of Turkmenistan. The dynamism of this vast region can be explained by its strategic role, linking it through commercial exchanges to distant trading partners, such as the Indus Civilization to the east and Sumer to the west. The lapis lazuli mines described by Marco Polo are located in Badakhshan, and the high value that this semi-precious stone once enjoyed throughout the Middle East was one of the reasons for this region's wealth. Such commercial exchanges have been suggested by often accidental discoveries, the most important of which has been the discovery of the so-called 'Bactrian goddesses'—curvaceous, quasi-geometric-type statuettes wearing 'kaunakes', a robe-like form of clothing probably made of goat skin typical of Mesopotamia during the period when Ur flourished.

Greeks and Achaemenids

While the region was part of the Persian Empire during the Achaemenid period after the conquest of Cyrus in the sixth century BCE, as the Oxus Treasure has shown, archaeological remains from this time have nevertheless been difficult to come by. However, things have become clearer as a result of excavations recently carried out by the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) in the Balkh region (Fig. 2) under the direction of Roland Besenval.

Persian levels exist in the citadel and fortress not far from Tashkurgan, which once commanded passes through the Hindu Kush on the ancient route to India. These levels predate the belief, supported by the ancient Greek historians and later Latin authors, that the history of the region only began with the conquest of Alexander the Great in 330–327 BCE, which threw light on what was then a hitherto 'unknown' area of Asia. In fact, numerous remains exist from Alexander's expedition to the gates of India, including his founding of the cities of Herat, Kandahar, Begram and Ai Khanoum. The last-named city, the 'City of the Lady Moon' on the banks of the Amu Darya River, is the most famous of these, and it was excavated by Paul Bernard between 1965 and 1982.

Laid out in the form of a Hellenistic Greek city with a palace and administrative complex, Ai Khanoum bears witness to the attachment of the Greek conquerors to the principles of Hellenistic life (Fig. 3). It had a gymnasium, a theatre, a public fountain and a Hermes pillar—a 'heroon' dedicated to the heroic founder of the city from which the Delphic maxims that he himself had copied from the ancient Greek site of Delphi were later carefully copied down by Clearchus of Soli. The remains of often impressively dimensioned columns, decorated with superb Corinthian-style capitals on the Asian model, bear witness to the city's once-imposing architecture (Fig. 4).

The city was not without oriental influences, however, as is shown by the Temple with Indented Niches or the Cybele Plaque, which employs a composite style of decoration. Located on the frontiers of the sedentary world, Ai Khanoum would once have functioned to block the movement of barbarians, underlining the fact that Alexander imitated the Achaemenid example, stopping where the Persians had stopped before him and not

responding to provocations from the nomads. Such challenges are reported by a number of ancient authors, the Scythian ambassador, for example, challenging Alexander to try to make the nomads surrender to him.

Coins of superb quality survived from this Bactrian kingdom of a 'thousand cities', which became independent in 250 BCE during the Seleucid period. The finest example of these is the exceptionally large coin of Eucratides that is now kept in the Cabinet des médailles at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. The altar dedicated to the god Oxus that has been discovered on the other side of the River in what is now Tajikistan, like the Inscription of Sophytos found south of the Hindu Kush, also shows the extensive influence that Greek civilization and Greek ways of thinking once enjoyed on Afghan territory. This was so to such a degree that the Edict of Ashoka drawn up by the Mauryan sovereign in 273–237 BCE and found not far from Kandahar was originally written in Greek.

Excavations carried out by the DAFA at the site of Balkh have also revealed the sort of remains from the Greek period that Alfred Foucher once sought for in vain in the 1920s. Alexander married Roxana in this city before it became the capital of a kingdom that launched the conquest of India and gave rise to the foundation of the Indo-Greek kingdoms in the Peshawar and Taxila regions under the rule of Demetrios (200–190 BCE).

Nomadic invasions

Greek Bactria, divided by internal quarrels and endless rivalries for power, disappeared with the advent of nomadic invasions, the result of population movements on the Chinese borders, with the Xiongnu, pushed back by the Han, moving westwards and pushing in turn against the Yueh-chih in Chinese Turkestan. The Kushans came from here, and they pushed the Scythians and the Saka before them to the west and to the borders of Bactria. Excavations at Tillia Tepe not far from Sheberghan carried out in 1978 by Victor Sarianidi have thrown new light on this nomadic world of which very little was previously known aside from what is reported in the works of ancient Greek or Latin authors.

Six princely tombs on the site of an ancient fortress dating back to the Bronze Age have revealed the existence of a Scythian art of a quality and refinement that could not previously have been

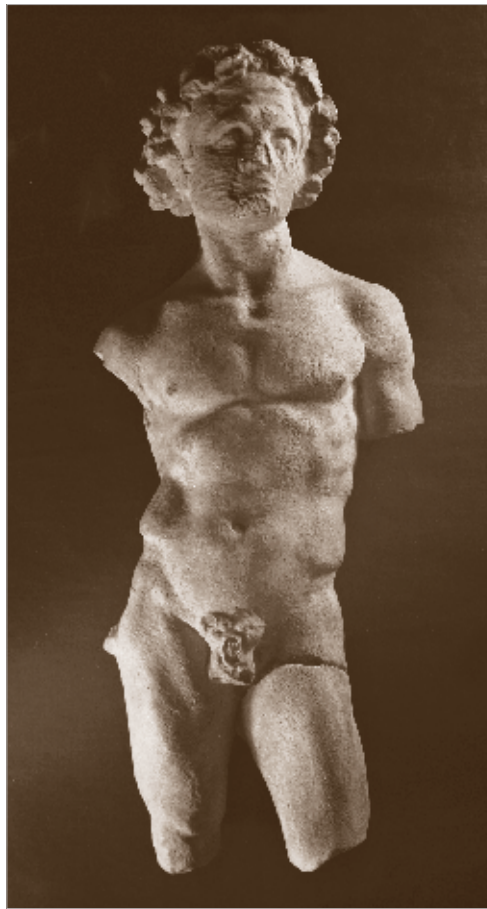


Fig.3 | Youth wearing a laurel wreath, Ai Khanoum.

PHOTO: © MUSÉE GUIMET/
DAFA FUNDS



Fig.4 | Corinthian capital, Ai Khanoum.

PHOTO: © MUSÉE GUIMET/
DAFA FUNDS

imagined. This art is far more Hellenistic in influence than it is Iranian, despite what one might have expected, and it reveals the high degree of sophistication among the elites of these nomadic



Fig. 5 | Leogryphs and dragons, Tilia Tepe (Paris, Musée Guimet).
PHOTO: © T. OLIVIER

Fig. 6 | The monumental stairway at Surkh Kotal.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 7 | The altar at Surkh Kotal.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 8 | The site of Surkh Kotal.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

Fig. 9 | Bactria, the Rabatak region.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 10 | Entrance to the Rabatak site.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

Fig. 11 | The ancient site of Begram with the Hindukush in the distance.
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

peoples whose identity is still controversial even today, it not being known whether they were Saka, Yueh-chih or even Proto-Kushan. The gold jewelry, of pure design, is striking for its simplicity and elegance: one could almost say it is striking for its modernity since, incrustated with semi-precious stones, it takes the form of naturalistic animal shapes. It also shows a taste for the fantastic, as is shown by the dragons on the sheath of a prince's dagger found in the tombs (Fig. 5).

The design of the flower-like crown of the young princess found in the tombs has sometimes been seen as a distant echo of the gold crowns of the Korean Silla Kingdom far to the east. The six Chinese mirrors found in the tombs also show that there were real connections between these nomadic peoples and the Han Empire.

The Kushan Empire was made up of such nomadic peoples with Afghanistan at its centre, as is attested to by the acropolis of Surkh Kotal (Fig. 6), built by Kanishka to the north of the Hindu Kush. There was an art that was Graeco-Iranian in form (Fig. 7), indicating that the new conquerors were 'non-Mediterranean descendants of the Greeks' (Fig. 8), to adapt the words of Daniel Schlumberger. The statues of the Kushan emperor and prince today in the National Museum in Kabul come from Surkh Kotal. These were restored in 2003 (Fig. 9) after they were smashed during an attack in March 2001. The Rabatak Inscription was also discovered not far from here during the Afghan civil war (Fig. 10), this providing the key to Kushan chronology (Fig. 11).

Is the Begram Treasure, found at the site of Begram (Fig. 12) near Kabul in 1937 by the DAFA, also from the Kushan period? Or does it date from the previous Christian period when various short-lived powers, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, and Yueh-chih, succeeded one another? Furniture decorated with Indian ivory plaques, the most ancient known (Fig. 13), Han-period lacquer work and a whole mass of materials coming from the Mediterranean region, including 'Graeco-Roman' glassware, plaster medallions with Hellenistic themes and alabaster, porphyry and crystal vases, as well as bronze work reminiscent of Pompeii, were found grouped together in two rooms at Begram, emphasizing the connections between the region and far-distant worlds, including China, India and the Middle East, the latter being reached either by land or via the Persian Gulf.



Fig. 12 | Ivory from the Begram Treasure (Paris, Musée Guimet).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

Fig. 13 | Statue of Kanishka undergoing restoration work, Kabul (2003).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

Even though Alexander the Great himself would by then have been nothing more than a distant memory, connections with the Hellenistic world would still have existed, and the influence of the latter remains astonishingly strong in the Graeco-Afghan stuccowork of the Buddhist period.

The Buddhist period

The relationship between the early beginnings of Afghan Buddhist art and the first Kushan rulers is still the subject of debate. Kushan currency exhibits a complete eclecticism in the range of Iranian-type divinities it shows, as well as a deep attachment to Kushan nomadic roots. Yet, it is nonetheless true that Buddhism flourished under the new dynasty and under its successors, as is shown by the arrival in China of the first translators of the major Buddhist texts, who are described as having come from this Kushan region or from Central Asia.

The site *par excellence* of the Buddhist period is that of Hadda near Jelalabad (Fig. 14). Composed of the remains of dozens of monasteries whose activity can be dated from between the first and the seventh centuries CE, the site's importance was first recognized by Charles Masson in the 1830s before being excavated by Jules Barthoux and the DAFA between 1926 and 1928 (Fig. 15). It was then excavated for a second time by the Afghan Institute of

Fig.14 | Stupa K 20, Hadda (Paris, Musée Guimet).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig.15 | Fresco Vihara B 56, Hadda (Paris, Musée Guimet).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig.16 | Stupa TK 95, Hadda (Paris, Musée Guimet).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig.17 | The Bamiyan Valley (May 2002).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Archaeology under the direction of Sh. Mostamindi and Zemaryalai Tarzi between 1960 and 1970.

The excavations revealed thousands of examples of Graeco-Buddhist stuccowork that is far more Hellenistic in inspiration than those found at Taxila near Islamabad and that emphasize, far more than is the case in Gandhara, the fusion of Greek and Indian traditions (Fig. 16). The objects found at Hadda include Buddhas with perfect profiles, their faces a rounded oval, their eyes slightly almond-shaped and mostly half-closed with far-off expressions, their noses straight and their hair curled in natural fashion. With these large numbers of astonishingly realistic figures were found: pious or ascetic figures, barbarians, warriors of every type, princesses and demons. Over and above the classical references employed in these figures, they are also reminiscent of the European Middle Ages or even the Renaissance.

One group of figures found at the monastery of Tapa-Shotor shows the Buddha teaching between the figures of Vajrapani, looking much like Hercules, and Hariti, looking like Demeter. In the following niche, a figure of the Buddha flanked by Vajrapani was found, the latter looking this time like Alexander, together with a group of figures of monks that could have come straight out of the Roman repertoire.



Current excavations carried out around Kabul by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology directed by Nader Rassouli and Zaffar Paiman have shown that this school of stucco work extended south of the Hindu Kush and that it continued to flourish well after the Kushan period. The Buddhist period continued well after the Kushan dynasties ended, as is clear from the schist school that is typical of Kapisa, which seemed to favour the theme of the double miracle of fire and water, and the sites in the Bamiyan Valley (Fig. 17), such as Kakrak, Foladi and the cliff housing the giant statues of the Buddha that were destroyed in 2001 (Fig. 18). The latter also hosts a monastic complex carved out of the rock whose paintings have suffered particularly during recent years. Thanks to Carbon-14 dating, the two monumental statues of the Buddha, one originally 35 m and the other 53 m high, can be dated to around the sixth century CE. The surrounding painted decoration, with its images of the Buddha and early mandalas, dates to the Chionite-Ephthalite period, or that of the western Turks, and shows borrowings from Gupta art as well as from the Sassanid world.

With the end of Buddhist art in Afghanistan came the beginnings of the art of Upper Asia, that of Kashmir, Swat or Nepal, which is marked by a taste for strongly contrasting colours, what Benjamin Rowland has aptly called 'an exasperation of grace'. Examples here include the gracious, sometimes rather suave, figures of the Buddha and of Bodhisattvas modeled in clay found at the site of Fondukistan and excavated by the DAFA in 1937. The beautiful painted figure of Maitreya in the Kabul Museum is the best example of this style, thanks to the freshness of its colours and the grace of the drawn outlines.

From this time onwards, a move towards a more mannered style can be observed, one that aimed to attract the viewer's attention, and at the same time Hinduism, until then almost completely absent from the region, began to regain favour. The Durga Mahisasuramardini from Tapa Sardar near Ghazni, excavated by an Italian team in the 1970s, is probably the most spectacular example of this re-emergence, even if other examples also attest to it, such as the white marble work of the Hindu Shahi period, which includes the figures of Surya found at Khai Khaneh near Kabul.

Fig. 18 | The cliff of the Buddha statues (May 2002).

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 19 and 20 |
Haji Piyada.

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON

The Islamic period

While the movement from Buddhism to Islam took place over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries, the whole of the region not becoming completely Islamized until the tenth century, it was nevertheless from Khorassan that the 'Abbasid Revolution' started in 750, and the oldest oriental-style mosque typical of the new caliphate is to be found in Afghan Bactria (Fig. 19). This mosque, Haji Piyada, is an elegant brick construction that harmoniously combines the use of vaulting with decoration carved with much skill and finesse (Fig. 20).

As the power of the caliphs in Baghdad faded in the region, new dynasties emerged such as the Samanids (874–999), the Ghaznavids (tenth to eleventh centuries), and later the Ghurids (twelfth century). Ceramics and architecture reflected these developments. Afghanistan also remained open to

the steppes, and it was a Turk, Mahmud of Ghazni, who definitively introduced Islam into Afghan territory, making Ghazni the centre of a particularly brilliant kingdom that engaged in a merciless campaign against religious heretics.

The monuments in Ghazni, like the palace of Lashkari Bazar excavated by Daniel Schlumberger between 1949 and 1952, whose mural paintings suggest direct links with Central Asia, bear witness to this. However, it is to the Ghurids, not the Ghaznavids, that the Minaret of Jam should be attributed, now listed as a World Heritage Site, this being a symbol of Afghanistan during the Islamic period because of its towering elegance and its location in difficult mountain terrain. Because of difficulties of access, it was only in 1957 that the Minaret was studied by a DAFA team led by Andre Maricq. It has since become an essential reference for the understanding of Islamic architecture.

After the passage of the Mongols through Afghan territory, led by Genghis Khan (1167–1227) who put all living creatures in the Bamiyan Valley to the sword as part of a campaign of reprisals after an ambush, and the end of the Turco-Mongol Empire in the region that, under Tamerlane (1336–1405), had seen the cities of Sistan turned into desert and the transformation of Tar-o Sar into a haunted palace submerged beneath the sands, came the Mughal period. The Mughal ruler Babur (1483–1530) was praising the charms of Kabul at the same time that his cousin, Husayn Mirza Bayqara (1469–1506), was the ruler of Herat. It was during this period that the style of miniature painting excelled in by the painter Behzad flourished, the latter being seen even today as an almost legendary figure in the Islamic world.

While Mughal rule began with a dawning of tolerance, curiosity of spirit and creativity, it ended in sectarian fanaticism when Aurangzeb (1658–1707) ordered the idols in Bamiyan to be bombarded. Herat at this time had already been under Iranian control since 1510. However, in 1747 Afghanistan won its freedom under the Durrani tribe, and the country began a period of fierce independence. It was never colonized, and it has never submitted to a foreign power. The Hazrat Ali Mausoleum in Mazar-i Sharif, constructed in 1481 and since restored, with its flocks of white doves against a background of blue tiles, together with its dome and the elegant silhouette of its minaret, is an image of the peace that was typical of Afghanistan in the modern period (Fig. 21), even if the country had to repel British attempts at control during the latter country's struggle with Russia for influence in the region.

The third Anglo-Afghan War ended in 1919 with the Treaty of Rawalpindi, and this put an end to a succession of bloody episodes, the new monarch, Amanullah (1919–1929), seemingly initiating a completely new period that sought to reconcile Islam and modernity. Opening up the country to co-operation with the outside world, while at the same time taking stock of the heritage of the past, Amanullah developed Kabul by creating a new city that was carefully planned and featured carefully designed perspectives.

While much has been destroyed, lost or looted during the 20 years of often extremely violent conflict that Afghanistan has experienced since the end of the 1970s, clandestine excavations,



sometimes uncontrolled, have also revealed whole areas of history that are still little known. Such excavations have yielded Islamic ceramics from the pre-Mongol period of a richness and vitality that was formerly little known, and Buddhist monasteries from the Hephthalite period and Kushan-Sassanid sites, among them that of Mes Aynak, one of the best known, are currently being excavated.

This re-launching of archaeological activities and of international co-operation carried out in a spirit of openness and trust and involving French, Italian, German and Japanese teams has shown that Afghanistan has been able to re-establish contact with its own history and with its traditions of openness to other worlds. This is in line with one of the sources of the country's charm, which has lain above all in its capacity to serve as a meeting place for the arts throughout its history. ■

Fig. 21 | Mausoleum of Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa, Balkh.

PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



CHAPTER 1

Safeguarding Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage

Assembly of scaffolding to reach the entrance of the
Minaret No.3 of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa, Herat
(1977-79). PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

A Brief History of UNESCO's Safeguarding of the Afghan Cultural Heritage¹

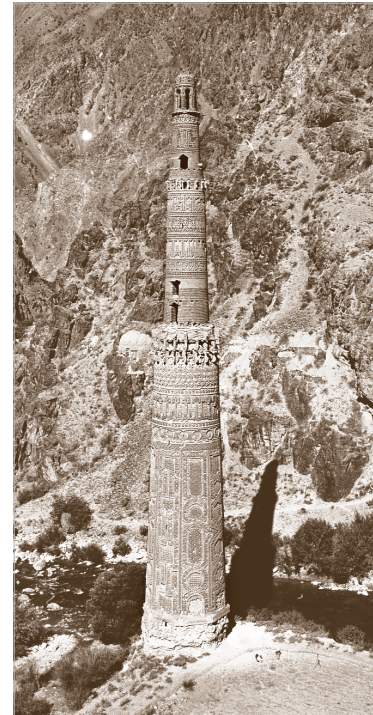
Junhi HAN | World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector

SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, Afghanistan has stood at the crossroads of East and West, with ideas, religions and cultural forms traveling across the country that include Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam. Alexander the Great brought classical Greek culture and civilization to the region, making Bactria and the neighbouring areas the last stronghold of Hellenism even after the fall of the Hellenistic city-states in the West.

From the Achaemenids and the Bactrians to the Kushans, Sassanids, and Timurids, various dynasties that once flourished in this land have left behind a remarkable legacy in the form of monuments and sites, as well as traditional arts and handicrafts – all of which have made Afghanistan today a rich and diverse country. It is this legacy that UNESCO, together with a variety of Afghan and international partners, has been working over the past half century to preserve and safeguard for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

1960s: Establishment of UNESCO-Afghan Co-operation

UNESCO's efforts to help safeguard Afghanistan's cultural heritage go back to the 1960s, when the Government of Afghanistan at the time requested the Organization's help in conserving and safeguarding the country's monuments and archaeological sites.² Early activities focused on surveying and making inventories of Afghanistan's cultural heritage, while at the same time drawing up longer-term conservation and safeguarding plans for various monuments, including those at Herat and Jam. One of the very first UNESCO missions to the country was to the site of Jam. This mission was entrusted to Italian architect and conservation specialist, Andrea Bruno,³ a contributor to this publication, who had already worked at the Minaret of Jam within the framework of a bilateral Italian-Afghan project.⁴



The Minaret of Jam was rediscovered in 1957 by a team from the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) and has since then been considered a masterpiece of Islamic architecture.⁵ Bruno's mission to the country on behalf of UNESCO opened more than half a century of co-operation between the Organization and the Afghan Government in the conservation and safeguarding of the country's cultural sites and monuments.

Although most of UNESCO's activities in the 1960s were focused on surveying the country's cultural heritage sites, Bruno was also able to carry out hands-on emergency conservation work with the assistance of local villagers when he undertook missions to the site of Jam in 1962 and 1963. When the road from Kabul to Herat was constructed in

Fig.1 | Base of the Minaret of Jam showing erosion caused by the rivers (1962).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig.2 | The Minaret of Jam (1961).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 3a, b and c | Monochrome decoration on the octagonal base of the Minaret of Jam (1960).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig. 4 | Inside the Minaret of Jam: a pair of entwined staircases forming a double helix (1962).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 5 | Citadel Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin (1960).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 6 | View of the eastern front of the Citadel of Herat (1960).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



1965, a project carried out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in co-operation with the Afghan Government, UNESCO's work in sites such as Jam and Herat was greatly facilitated.

By that time, the first UNESCO International Safeguarding Campaign, launched to protect the Nubian temples in Egypt which were under threat of being submerged due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam, was successfully being carried out. This inspired many countries, including Afghanistan, to ask for UNESCO's assistance in safeguarding their endangered sites and monuments. Accordingly, the discussions to launch an international campaign for the Old City of Herat began between UNESCO and the Government of Afghanistan.



1970s: Preparation of the International Safeguarding Campaign for the Old City of Herat

As a preparatory measure for the international campaign, the Afghan Government approved a *National Cultural Policy for the preservation and enhancement of the cultural values of the nation* in 1973. The Old City of Herat was selected for the launch of a pilot project within the framework of this National Cultural Policy.

The UNESCO General-Conference, at its nineteenth session held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1976, adopted a resolution authorizing the Director-General of

the Organization to prepare an Action Plan and undertake an international safeguarding campaign to mobilize the international community for the preservation and rehabilitation of the Old City of Herat. The Afghan Government actively co-operated with this development by establishing a National Co-ordinating Office for the campaign within the Ministry of Information and Culture the following year.

A landmark project called the *Restoration of Monuments in Herat/Strengthening the Government's capability for the Preservation of Historical Monuments*,⁶ a joint UNDP/UNESCO pilot project, was initiated in 1976 in preparation for the planned

Fig.7 and 8 | Timurid Tower before restoration, Citadel of Herat (1975).
PHOTOS: © A. BRUNO

Fig.9 | Signboard of the joint UNDP/UNESCO project (1978).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig.10 a and b | UNESCO delegations along with the Afghan officials visiting the UNDP/UNESCO project at the Citadel of Herat (1977–79).
PHOTOS: © A. BRUNO

Fig.11 | Citadel ramparts during restoration work (1978-79). PHOTO: ©A. BRUNO



Fig.12 | Afghan workers during restoration works, Citadel of Herat (1978-79). PHOTO: ©A. BRUNO



Fig.13 | Assembly of scaffolding to reach the entrance of the Minaret No.3 of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa, Herat (1977-79). PHOTO: ©A. BRUNO



International Campaign for Herat. The Project aimed to train Afghan architects, heritage experts, and technicians in the restoration and conservation of the historic monuments. The training was meant to strengthen the capacity of the General-Directorate of Archaeology and the Directorate of Museums of the Ministry of Information and Culture of the Afghan Government, such that Afghan experts could then plan and implement future work of the same scale within the planned International Safeguarding Campaign for Herat.

Part of the Project's on-site training programme included work on the restoration of the ancient citadel in Herat, Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin, and the Madrasa of Sultan Husain Baiqara,⁷ as well as the establishment of a protective inventory of the cultural heritage of Herat Province.⁸ Prior to the restoration activities, an archaeological excavation⁹ was also carried out in the sites of Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin and the Madrasa of Sultan Husain Baiqara.

The restoration of the ancient citadel Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin in Herat, which began in 1976, was successfully concluded by March 1979. The work on the Madrasa of Sultan Husain Baiqara and its four Minarets began with a preliminary archaeological survey in April 1977, followed by various tests carried out on the foundation of its Minarets, the latter proving their stability. Consequently, conservation work focused on strengthening their structure. From March 1978, a programme was initiated to make an inventory of the monuments in and around Herat, led by Italian architect Franco Franchini. However, the civil conflict in Herat led by



Fig.14 | Afghan workers during excavations at the base of the Minaret No.3 of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa, Herat (1978).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig.15 | Afghan workers at the restoration site, Citadel of Herat (1978).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig.16 | Afghan workers at the restoration site, Citadel of Herat (1978).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig.17 | Afghan workers rebuilding collapsed vaulting in the Citadel of Herat (1978-79).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Ismail Khan in March 1979 against the communist government that took power in the Saur Revolution in April 1978, as well as the ensuing outbreak of the war in Afghanistan, interrupted the work. It became impossible to continue and all the activities in Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin and the Madrasa of Sultan Husain Baiqara were stopped.

Meanwhile, conservation work continued at the site of Jam in the 1970s. In 1974, a UNESCO mission conducted the first drilling around the Minaret of Jam in order to draw up a restoration plan.¹⁰ The recommendations emerging from this mission included the reinforcement of the river banks, an archaeological investigation, and the need to strengthen the foundations. In 1978, on the basis of these recommendations, UNESCO planned an

emergency intervention in co-operation with the Government of Afghanistan, particularly to reinforce the river banks by installing metal gabions. The gabions were to be filled with stones from the site not only to protect the base of the Minaret against river erosion, but also to facilitate archaeological surveys designed to obtain better information about the site prior to starting work.

By the end of 1979, the gabions that were imported from Europe had already reached the site of Jam, while the stones to fill them had by then been collected from areas near the Minaret. However, the war broke out and the collected materials had to be abandoned. It would be twenty years before UNESCO could return to work on the site once again.



Fig.18 | Craftsman at work in the mosaics school at the Friday Mosque, Herat.
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig.19 | View of the cliffs with numerous carved sanctuaries, Bamiyan Valley (1960).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



1980s: Monitoring the Situation During the War Period

In spite of the war in Afghanistan that lasted throughout the 1980s, UNESCO was able to continue its preparatory work for the launching of the International Safeguarding Campaign for Herat. Several technical missions were dispatched

to Afghanistan from 1982 to 1986¹¹ to prepare the campaign and to update its Action Plan. However, while the UNESCO missions were able to meet with the Afghan authorities in Kabul, they were not able to visit Herat itself due to the security situation in the region.

The initial Action Plan of the campaign was targeted at rehabilitating the cultural significance of the city of Herat as well as its surrounding area through the restoration and rehabilitation of its outstanding monuments. This included a master plan that aimed to assist the municipality of Herat Province in effectively controlling the development of the city while preserving its historical features through the restoration of major monuments such as the Madrasa of Sultan Husain Baiqara and its Minarets, and Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin.

Unfortunately, the International Safeguarding Campaign for Herat could not be officially launched due to the conflict that continued to affect Afghanistan.

1989: Re-launch of UNESCO Activities

After the withdrawal of the Soviet Troops from Afghanistan, completed by February 1989 in accordance with the Geneva Accords signed ten months earlier, the international community faced new challenges in how to rebuild a country devastated by a decade of civil conflict and war. Various United Nations agencies, including UNESCO, set up relief strategies for Afghanistan and reactivated their operations in the country. In the field of cultural heritage, UNESCO immediately sent assessment missions to Balkh, Bamiyan, Herat, and Mazar-I Sharif.

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was then designated as the UN Co-ordinator for Afghanistan, and the United Nations Co-ordination Office for Afghanistan (UNOCHA) was established in Geneva. UNESCO was invited to join efforts to rebuild Afghanistan, in particular in the fields of education and culture, and close co-operation was established between UNESCO and UNOCHA in 1989. In a message sent in April 1990 to Federico Mayor, the UNESCO Director-General at that time, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan appealed that “despite the pressing need for relief commodities and rehabilitation projects in Afghanistan, I feel that the United Nations should never lose sight of the country’s unique cultural heritage.”

Activities carried out by UNESCO within the joint UNESCO/UNOCHA Framework were aimed at supporting the process of economic and social rehabilitation of the Afghan people through the integration of activities targeting the country's cultural heritage. The direction of social and economic development in Afghanistan could only emerge from the pattern of its centuries-old civilization, which had been moulded over time by its ethnically and culturally diverse population. As a result, UNESCO's cultural activities in Afghanistan were drawn up based on the conviction that, in order to develop the culture of tomorrow, the culture of the past would need to be preserved and appreciated. Culture was seen as a determinant factor and a moving force for the achievement of this goal.

For this purpose, in parallel with programmes for the rehabilitation of monuments and sites, revitalisation of the country's traditional crafts industry was initiated. Large numbers of training workshops were organized accompanied by a survey and inventory of Afghan handicrafts. One example of these activities was a training workshop on Afghan traditional carpets held in Mazar-I Sharif in 1990, in co-operation with the Afghan Carpet Exporters Guild. The aim of this UNESCO-supported workshop was to improve the quality of traditional Afghan carpets and revitalize their designs for future generations as this had been seriously damaged and was about to be lost due to the decade of conflict. Another objective of the workshop was to help provide income-generating activities for the local population, with workshop trainees that include members of disadvantaged groups such as disabled people.

UNESCO also continued to provide assistance to the National Museum in Kabul by carrying out a damage assessment, and dispatching missions for surveying important monuments and sites such as those in the Bamiyan Valley and Herat. A UNESCO mission to the site of Bamiyan during this period had already taken note of the urgent need to conserve and safeguard various important Islamic and pre-Islamic sites in the valley, such as Shahr-I Ghulghulakor, the 'whispering city', the Kakrak Buddha to the east of Bamiyan, and Shahr-i Zuhak, also known as 'Zuhak's city',¹² all of which had been made part of the Cultural Landscape of the Bamiyan Valley World Heritage property in 2003.



Fig. 20 | Wall paintings in the niche of the western giant statue of the Buddha, Bamiyan Valley (1960).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 21 and 22 | Views of the bazaar, Bamiyan village (1960).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

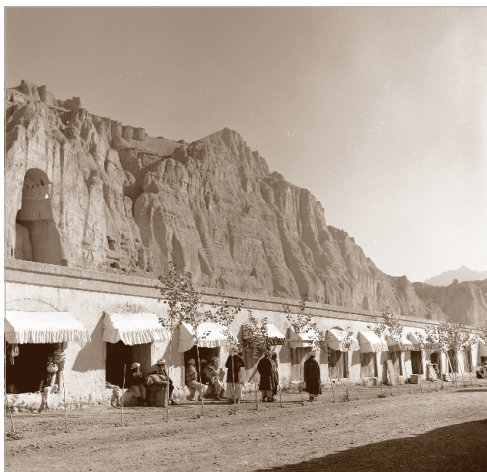


Fig. 23 | Inside the museum – cleaning the reconstructed mosque and mihrab, built for the Ghurid Kings at their winter palace of Lashkari, Bazar, Hilmand province, ca eleventh century AD. (1995).
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 24 | Inside the museum – Conservator M. Sherazudin Safi examining what remains of the Gandhara collection (1995).
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



Fig. 25 | Inside the museum’s main store room – wooden effigies from Kafiristan (today’s Nuristan) depicting ancestors and effigies (1995).
PHOTO: © P. CAMBON



1992 -2001: UNESCO’s International Appeals Under the Continuing Civil Conflict and its Operation Through Non-Government Organizations

With the fall of the Government of President Najibullah in 1992, the Islamic State of Afghanistan was created by the Peshawar Accords, in which the different Afghan political entities made a peace and power-sharing agreement. Accordingly, an interim government was appointed for a transitional period. However, shortly afterwards, Afghanistan plunged once again into the chaos of civil war.

In 1995, when the National Museum was hit by rockets during the armed conflict between different factions fighting in Kabul, UNESCO promptly sent a technical mission.¹³ The mission carried out a damage assessment of the Museum and also assisted in making an inventory of its collection, with a view to moving them to a safer place in order to prevent their destruction. In addition, a digital database was created.

Following the establishment of the Taliban regime in 1996, UNESCO was no longer able to operate in the country as the regime was not recognized by the United Nations and the international community. Nevertheless, in spite of tremendous difficulties, the Organization did not cease its endeavours to safeguard the country’s cultural heritage during this difficult period.

Indeed, the Organization intensified its efforts. On 16 September 1997, Federico Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO at that time, launched an International Appeal to Safeguard the Afghan Cultural Heritage, in which he stated, “In response to calls from the representatives of Member States,



International Organizations... I appeal again to those directly concerned and to the international community to ensure that the cultural heritage of Afghanistan is respected and preserved for the benefit of present and future generations. I will raise the issue at all levels inside and outside the United Nations System.”

Following this appeal, UNESCO drew up the *Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Afghan Cultural Heritage* in 1997. Italy was one of the countries that promptly responded to the appeal, establishing two UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust for safeguarding Afghanistan's cultural heritage. During this period of occupation by the Taliban, UNESCO operated emergency rescue activities for endangered monuments and museum pieces through the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH), a Non-Governmental Organization established in 1994 in Islamabad, Pakistan by a group of concerned individuals in response to the growing awareness of the vulnerability of Afghan cultural heritage. SPACH remained as one of UNESCO's major partners in executing its programme for cultural heritage in Afghanistan during the Taliban period.

Among the missions carried out during these years as part of the UNESCO/SPACH co-operation, one in particular deserves mention. In 1999, Andrea Bruno undertook a mission to the Minaret of Jam accompanied by Akbari, an Afghan engineer trained by the former in the 1970s within the framework of the UNDP/UNESCO project in Herat. At that time, tensions were high throughout Afghanistan due to the on-going conflict, and in the Jam Valley, troops of the Northern Alliance and the Taliban faced each other across the Hari Rud river. The



Fig.26 | Mission to Jam (1999).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig.27 | View of the Women's park with newly planted trees.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/T. URBAN

UNESCO mission carried a kind of 'Laissez-Passer', signed with finger prints by the members of both the Northern Alliance and the Taliban, permitting the bearer to visit the Minaret of Jam. Negotiations had to take place with both parties prior to the mission. The mission itself was carried out at considerable personal risk to all those involved, but thankfully its objectives were achieved and its members returned safely – partly owing to the assistance received from people of the nearby village.

Meanwhile, the UNESCO/SPACH co-operation also led to the rehabilitation of the area surrounding the Mausoleum of Gawharshad in Herat, known as the 'women's park' due to the women and children who often went there to walk and rest. In close co-operation with the municipality of Herat under the control of the Taliban regime, the surrounding wall was rebuilt and an existing well rehabilitated. The park was re-planted with over 9,000 trees – 2,850 of which were fruit trees such as mulberry and *banosh*. Planting trees also greatly contributed to the protection of the surrounding monuments, including Mausoleum and Minarets, from the notorious '120-day winds' that strongly blow through



Fig.28 | View of the Gawharshad Mausoleum in the foreground and the four minarets of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa in the background, Herat (1975).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Herat in summer. This operation, funded by the UNESCO Italy Funds-in-Trust for its greater part, also received many contributions from other organizations. SPACH, for example, made a contribution with its own funding, the World Food Programme contributed 100 metric tons of wheat, while other NGOs gave equipment and trees. Several hundred trees planted in the park were donated by the Department of Monuments in Herat, as well as by local Afghan NGOs.

By October 2000, the UNESCO/SPACH co-operation, funded by the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust, had inventoried the remaining objects in the National Museum in Kabul. Over 6,520 pieces had been recorded, many of which have subsequently disappeared or been destroyed. Other emergency activities were concurrently carried out under this

UNESCO/SPACH co-operation elsewhere in the country, such as at the site of Jam, where a temporary protective wall was built along the Jam and Hari Rud rivers.¹⁴

In the meantime, the overall situation in Afghanistan had grown harsher and the conflict between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban was getting closer to Kabul. On 26 February 2001, the Taliban regime, under pressure from the situation, issued an edict ordering the destruction of “all statues and non-Islamic shrines” in Afghanistan. As soon as this had been published, UNESCO, acting with Arab and Muslim countries that had provided strong support for its appeal against the edict, used all means at its disposal to prevent the destruction of Afghanistan’s cultural heritage. A special envoy and delegation composed of numerous Islamic religious leaders and Ulemas—specialists in Islamic law—were sent to meet the Taliban leaders in Kandahar. For this purpose, the Emir of Qatar made an aircraft available.

However, despite moral, political and religious interventions, in addition to widespread condemnation from the highest religious authorities of Islam, the Taliban destroyed the giant Buddha statues at Bamiyan in March 2001, as well as a large number of pre-Islamic objects throughout Afghanistan.

UNESCO immediately condemned the destruction of the Buddha statues. On 12 March 2001, Koïchiro Matsuura, the Director-General of the Organization at that time, stated through a press release that, “The Taliban have committed a crime against culture... The Buddhas of Bamiyan were not inscribed on the World Heritage List but deserved to be and their destruction represents a true cultural crime... Everything possible must be done to stop

Fig.29 | View of the Gawharshad Mausoleum, Herat (Unknown date).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO





Fig. 30 | The Citadel, Herat (2003).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

further destruction. I have asked my special envoy to explore all avenues that may allow for the safeguarding of the other treasures of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic heritage.”

This action of the Taliban regime that destroyed part of the heritage of the Afghan people, and indeed of the whole of humanity, led UNESCO to organize discussions at the international level in an attempt to prevent any such crimes in the future. These discussions resulted in the landmark *UNESCO Declaration Concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage* in 2003.

2002: New Beginnings

After the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, the Interim Government of Afghanistan was established. Meanwhile, the National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul, as well as many of the country's monuments and sites, had been damaged, some of them irreparably, by more than two decades of civil conflict and war. The Museum had been looted while some of its collections had been dispersed or hidden in places like the Ministry of Information and Culture or the National Bank of Afghanistan, prior to the arrival of the Taliban in the capital in 1996. Sites such as Bamiyan, Herat and Jam, had been damaged or looted.

Through a letter dated 30 January 2002, UNESCO was officially requested by the Interim Government of Afghanistan to co-ordinate all international activities to safeguard the Afghan cultural heritage. To this end, UNESCO proposed, with the agreement of the Afghan Government, to establish an International Co-ordination Committee for Afghanistan. Its statutes were approved by the Executive Board of the Organization in October 2002.



Fig. 31 | UNESCO delegation visiting the mosaics school at the Friday Mosque, Herat (2002).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

UNESCO opened its national office for Afghanistan in Kabul in 2002. In the same year, it organized the first international conference to assess the situation of different sites, set priorities, secure funding, and prepare a framework for future action for rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. This conference, held in the presence of Prince Mirwais and President Hamid Karzai, brought together more than one hundred international experts and representatives of major institutions and donor countries. The conference resulted in pledges of more than US\$7 million to safeguard Afghanistan's cultural heritage, with the participants agreeing that any plans for the reconstruction of the giant statues of the Buddha at Bamiyan would need further discussion at a later stage.



Fig. 32 | UNESCO mission to Jam (2002).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

UNESCO promptly organized activities to preserve the remains of the destroyed giant statues of the Buddha at Bamiyan and their now-empty niches, as well as other endangered sites. Damage assessments were drawn up, as were short and long-term plans for the conservation and safeguarding of damaged monuments and sites, including the National Museum. These assessment missions eventually allowed UNESCO to undertake emergency activities to safeguard the National Museum and other important sites, notably Bamiyan, Herat, and Jam.¹⁵ An emergency mission was dispatched to the Minaret of Jam, for example, in order to install a temporary metal and wooden gabion in the Hari Rud and Jam rivers. A new roof and windows were

installed at the National Museum as a matter of priority, and previous work undertaken in 1995 and 1996 for a general inventory of the Kabul Museum's collection also continued.

The first session of the International Co-ordination Committee for Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan took place in June 2003 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, resulting in a set of comprehensive recommendations for safeguarding Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

Parallel to various emergency missions, assistance was also provided for efforts to inscribe important Afghan cultural heritage sites on the World Heritage List. In 2002, the 'Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam' was inscribed simultaneously on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger.¹⁶ The following year, the 'Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of Bamiyan Valley' was inscribed on both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger.¹⁷

Since then, UNESCO has been continuing to support the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to safeguard the country's cultural and natural heritage in close co-operation with the international community. This has been done through the Organization's Regular Programme and other mechanisms including the UNESCO Funds-in-Trust scheme. Funds-in-Trust projects were set up notably in co-operation with the Governments of Greece, Italy, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States.

Fig. 33 | The lower part of the Fifth Minaret during survey work, Herat (2002).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig. 34 | Upper part of the Fifth Minaret showing wartime destruction, Herat (2002).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

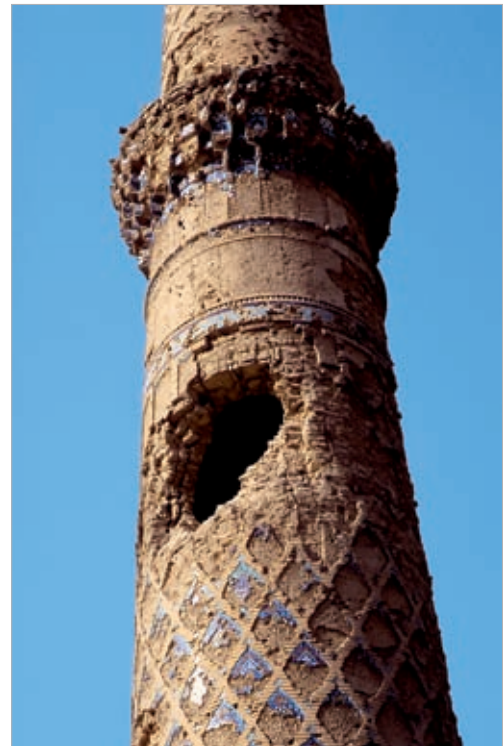




Fig. 35 | International experts taking part in the Third Expert Working Group Meeting for Jam and Herat in Turin (September 2012).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO

Some remarkable achievements since 2002 should be highlighted. Within the framework of the agreement signed between UNESCO and the Foundation Bibliotheca Afghanica, a Swiss foundation created in 1975, and following an official request from the Afghan Government, the Organization facilitated in September 2006 the repatriation of some 1,400 archaeological and ethnographic objects kept in the ‘Afghanistan Museum-in-Exile,’ a repository established by the aforementioned foundation. The whole operation was supported by the Swiss National Commission and benefitted from the technical assistance of experts from the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

In 2006, UNESCO co-operated with the late Professor F. Tissot, a French archaeologist, to publish an illustrated *Catalogue of the National Museum of Afghanistan, 1931-1985*, currently the only exhaustive inventory of the National Museum in existence. The catalogue describes all the museum’s collections before the destruction that took place under the Taliban regime.

Meanwhile, the niches in the cliffs in Bamiyan, formerly occupied by the giant statues of the Buddha and damaged by the explosives used by the Taliban regime, have been considerably consolidated through the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust.

At the site of Jam, the base of the tilting Minaret became considerably stabilized thanks to the consolidation work carried out under the UNESCO/Italy and UNESCO/Switzerland Funds-in-Trust projects. Furthermore, protective walls shielding the site from erosion due to the Hari Rud and Jam rivers were reinforced thanks to contributions from the Afghan

Government, in conjunction with the UNESCO/Italy and UNESCO/Switzerland Funds-in-Trust.

In Herat, the Fifth Minaret which was leaning dangerously had also been stabilized through emergency conservation work—specifically by anchoring the structure with metal cables thanks to the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust.

Furthermore, the safeguarding and conservation activities carried out by UNESCO and the international community at sites such as Bamiyan, Herat, and Jam resulted in the establishment of the Expert Working Group mechanism. As of 2014, twelve Expert Working Group meetings had taken place for the ‘Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley’ World Heritage Site, while three have taken place for the ‘Old City of Herat’ and the ‘Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam’. These Expert Working Group meetings provided opportunities to review the tangible outcomes of the safeguarding activities carried out not only by UNESCO but also by other bilateral projects, and to recommend appropriate future activities at these sites.

In 2011, UNESCO commemorated the tenth anniversary of the destruction of the Buddha statues of Bamiyan Valley by organizing an International Forum entitled, *Towards Cultural Rapprochement and Tolerance*, in which the Afghan Minister of Information and Culture and the Governor of the Bamiyan Province took part, along with the Director-General of UNESCO, the Presidents of the Organization’s General-Conference and Executive Board, as well as other representatives from the international community.

The forum provided an occasion to discuss appropriate remedial measures to safeguard the damaged Buddha niches for future generations. It also made possible a decennial assessment of the actions undertaken by UNESCO over the past ten years so that a fresh new chapter for another decade of the Organization's action for Afghanistan may begin.

UNESCO, along with the international community, will continue its efforts to assist the Government of Afghanistan in safeguarding its cultural heritage, and also to promote the value and highlight the

richness and diversity of the country's culture. In order for this to take place under optimal conditions, it is important that comprehensive cultural policies are developed that can address the issues across the full range of the cultural spectrum. This includes tangible and intangible cultural heritage, cultural diversity, and creative industries, among others. All these should be encompassed by capacity-building programmes to ensure that all efforts will be sustainable for the benefit of future generations in Afghanistan. ■

ENDNOTES

1. The article was elaborated on the basis of archive research at UNESCO which included internal documents, such as technical reports, briefings, and letters. Wherever possible, detailed references for each mission or activity have been provided.
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10. Bruno, A 1974, *Report on the restoration programme of the Minaret of Jam, Afghanistan*, UNESCO internal report
11. Undertaken by A. Bruno, UNESCO Internal Reports 1982, 1983 and 1986
12. Carried out by Dr Abdul Wasay Najimi
13. Undertaken by Mr. Pierre Cambon from Musée Guimet, Paris
14. Several emergency missions were dispatched in 2000 within the framework of co-operation with SPACH, in order to carry out the recommendations made by A. Bruno during his mission undertaken in 1999. Jawed, 2001, *Final Narrative Report*, 2001, HAFO (Helping Afghanistan Farmers Organization)
15. Jawed, HAFO (Helping Afghanistan Farmers Organization) 2002-2003
16. The Minaret and Archaeological remains of Jam were put on the World Heritage List, under criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv), in recognition of the Outstanding Universal Value of it bearing witness to the short-lived but influential Ghurid Empire which dominated the Region from the eleventh to the thirteenth century CE. Furthermore, the Minaret was acknowledged as being an outstanding example of Islamic architecture in the region, and playing a significant role in its further dissemination (26COM23.2)
17. The World Heritage Committee recognized the Bamiyan Valley as an exceptional cultural landscape, resulting from the interaction between man and nature, as well as an outstanding representation of the Buddhist art of the Kushan Empire, developed in the region from first century CE to eighth century CE. The Committee also recognized its spiritual value as a centre of pilgrimage in Buddhism over many centuries. It was inscribed under the criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), and (vi) (27COM8C.43)

Memories of Safeguarding Herat and Jam

Andrea BRUNO | Architect, Studio arch. Andrea BRUNO

MY WORK AS A CONSULTANT in Afghanistan, first for the Afghan Government and then for UNESCO, began fifty years ago with a request from the Afghan Government to carry out an inventory of the country's monuments. These constituted an immense open-air museum, and, scattered across a vast country, they largely remained to be discovered, protected and listed. The carrying out of emergency work, the protection of archaeological excavations, the first experiments in conserving structures built of mud brick, and the appropriate display of pieces found during the excavation of ancient monuments were all symbols of the continuity between past and present, showing the need to recognize and display that past's meaning and value.

Working on the architectural and archaeological remains of Afghanistan allowed me to study in greater depth a heritage precariously balanced between the challenges of conservation and the risk of destruction. The monuments, aspects of the country's memory, needed to be protected and restored. However, today they are still threatened by warfare, and decades of war in Afghanistan have deeply marked the country, even if many of its precious testimonies of wealth and cultural diversity, both of which have long characterized the country, have survived. They serve as a kind of shared memory, one that can solidify the country's national identity in the same way as its political and social traditions.

For this reason, at the heart of my work as a consultant to UNESCO in protecting the Afghan heritage has been a firm belief in the need to safeguard these witnesses of the country's diverse past, while respecting the local culture. In my fifty years of work carried out in the country, I have sought not to impose preconceived ideas from western architecture, but rather to try to integrate my work into the native culture, in order to underline the value of the succeeding forms of authenticity that have existed in the country and to connect them, without prior judgment, to present customs (Fig. 1).



Main projects that I have co-ordinated in Afghanistan include the restoration of the Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin Citadel, the fortified citadel of Herat, and the minarets of the Gawharshad Musalla Complex near Herat (1974-1980), the safeguarding and restoration of the Bamiyan Valley and the cliffs in which the giant statues of the Buddha were carved (1960-2011), and the restoration of the Minaret of Jam, a project that began in 1961 but that only saw the consolidation of the base of the Minaret completed. Working on the conservation of a heritage as considerable as that of Afghanistan was all the more valuable to me since not only did it give me the opportunity to help restore the 'material support' of the country's cultural memory, but it also allowed me to take part in training local craftsmen, who worked on the sites on an on-going basis.

The first phase of the development of Afghanistan's previously sparse infrastructure took place from the 1960s onwards, with the expansion of the country's road network and the building of power stations. New airports, schools and hospitals were built and tourism to the country was developed

Fig. 1 | Children and merry-go-rounds, Afghanistan (1960).
SKETCH: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 2 | Tourist information panel, Bamiyan village (1973).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 3 | Assembling a tent for tourists, Bamiyan Valley (1973).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 4 | Signboard of the joint UNDP/UNESCO project (1978).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

(Fig. 2 & 3). Such an ambitious programme aimed to lay the foundations for social and economic development, this in turn improving the lives of the inhabitants of the country’s urban centres and the lives of those who lived in smaller inhabited areas scattered across a vast and not always very hospitable country.

During the same decade, already so full of promising activities, the various foreign archaeological missions that already operated in Afghanistan, among them the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan (DAFA)*, also maintained a more or less constant presence. The latter had already made major contributions to Afghan archaeology, and the arrival in the country of the *Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO)* extended the area of work from archaeological research to the conservation of the excavation areas and the restoration of architectural monuments and encouraged the development of a local culture of the safeguarding of heritage. The new importance given to historical and artistic memory and to the re-evaluation of the country’s heritage, long buried and forgotten, brought more and more tourists to Afghanistan and placed it on the major Asian tourist routes.

Many European companies were working in Afghanistan on various projects, including schools, hospitals, new embassies, small industrial plants and various kinds of infrastructure, and the country was opening up to visitors. The magic of tourism was conquering the imagination of Afghan and foreign tour operators, and all the indicators promising the rapid and sustainable development of initiatives to safeguard the national heritage seemed to be in

place. However, following this decade, which had been so full of initiatives and hopes for the future, there came another during which the first signs of political, social and economic instability began to make themselves felt, these later weighing heavily on cultural projects in the country.

One of the most important projects to safeguard Afghanistan’s cultural heritage during formative years was the project to restore the monuments of the city of Herat, among them the Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin Citadel and the six minarets of the Gawharshad Musalla Complex, part of the UNDP/UNESCO programme for *Strengthening Governmental Capability for the Preservation of Historical Monuments*. I was involved in this project from 1974 to the end of 1980 as co-ordinator of a multi-disciplinary team made up of architects, archaeologists and conservators (Fig. 4). Its objectives included those having major inter-cultural potential, among them working with local institutions to develop their competencies, training local craftsmen to work in the museums sector or on the restoration of monuments and archaeological sites through the setting up of specialized schools and training laboratories, and the drafting of an inventory of Afghan cultural heritage using modern scientific methods and calling for the implementation of laws protecting the country’s historical and artistic heritage.

The programme also included organizing the sites being worked on under the project for tourism purposes and developing related economic activities, all the while promoting the development of similar initiatives elsewhere in the country.



The Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin Citadel, the fortified citadel of the city of Herat, is built of mud brick, which is a relatively fragile material despite the large scale of the building. Situated in the centre of the old city and on the elevated area that dominates it, the Citadel was the first site to be worked on under the programme (Fig. 5 & 6).

Among the many episodes of destruction that the building had suffered from, those brought about by Genghis Khan and Tamerlane at the end of the thirteenth century were particularly important. After all of them, reconstruction work subsequently took place, almost always using materials found on site. Before the launch of the UNDP/UNESCO programme, the most recent damage to the Citadel had taken place in 1953, when the garrison using it had begun to dismantle the structure in order to use the material to build a new military site on the outskirts of the city. Work continued for several months before it was stopped by the Afghan Government, which then started to work with UNESCO on the Citadel's restoration.

Some 250 m long and 70 m wide, the Citadel fortress is made up of a rectangular higher part, the older, and a lower part that is irregularly shaped. Consolidation and restoration work beginning in 1976 was preceded by archaeological excavations that showed that beneath the northern wall there were previously unknown sloping foundations built of brick and stone on which the entire complex rested. The conservation work was divided into two parts. In the higher part of the Citadel, the work focused on archaeological excavations that would reveal existing structures. In the lower part, the



Fig. 5 | A man writing a letter, Herat (1974).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

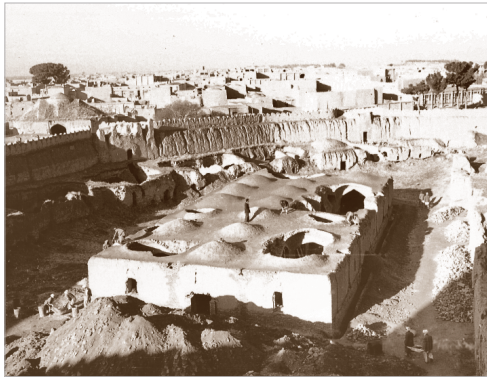


Fig. 6 | Southern ramparts of the Upper Citadel at Herat seen from the southeast before restoration work (1974).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 7 | Military Museum before restoration work, Herat Citadel (1975).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

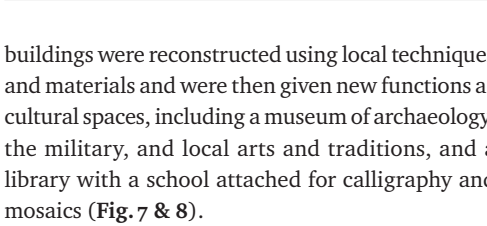


Fig. 8 | Military Museum after restoration work, Herat Citadel (1979).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

buildings were reconstructed using local techniques and materials and were then given new functions as cultural spaces, including a museum of archaeology, the military, and local arts and traditions, and a library with a school attached for calligraphy and mosaics (Fig. 7 & 8).

Fig. 9 | Afghan workers rebuilding the collapsed vaults of a building in the Herat Citadel (1978-79).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 10 | The Mausoleum of Gawharshad in the foreground and the four minarets of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa in the background.

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 11 | Minarets of the Husain Baiqara Madrasa (1962).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 12 | Surveying the Fifth Minaret (1975).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Despite the fact that the work was carried out without the employment of modern techniques, it was possible to attain satisfactory results thanks to the enthusiasm of the 250 Afghan workers who worked on the project. The decision was made to work in this way because it would be the best means of enhancing the workers' cultural awareness and building their knowledge, and it would not import expensive ways of working or technology from abroad that was unrelated to the local context. Arches were never built using reinforced cement or prefabricated elements, for example, since the local masons were perfectly well able to make them using mud brick. Though work was interrupted by the beginning of the Soviet occupation, it was later carried through by local Afghan craftsmen who had been adequately trained to work autonomously on most phases of the project (Fig. 9).

The same UNDP/UNESCO programme also included another important building complex, this time that of Gawharshad Musalla Complex, a group of six fifteenth century minarets 2 km from Herat (Fig. 10 & 11). Originally composed of mosques, Qur'anic schools and other religious buildings, the Complex was built on the orders of members of the ruling Timurid Dynasty. The Gawharshad Musalla project, preceded by archaeological excavations and structural checks, included the archaeological and environmental rehabilitation of the area, the consolidation of the minarets, which were in a precarious and unstable state, and the restoration of the brick and ceramic decoration (Fig. 12, 13 & 14).



Many years after the conclusion of this first phase of the project, many workers who had worked on it as site managers, masons, carpenters, and so on were still working in Herat. During their training on their project they had acquired the necessary mindset and ability to work on large-scale projects such that they were subsequently well able to work on smaller projects run by various NGOs. Such small, but important, initiatives allowed a minimum of operational capacity to persist despite the absence of political stability, and they show how the aims and objectives of the project were attained.

The complex story of the restoration of the Minaret of Jam, one of the most extraordinary monuments of early Islamic art, formed the background to my work in Afghanistan from 1960 to 2006. This imposing and enigmatic monument is among the most important examples of early Islamic architecture and is one of the tallest minarets in the world. Built between 1163 and 1207, it is a priceless masterpiece, being the only structure in a reasonable state of conservation that has come down to us from the wealth and sophistication of the Ghurid civilization that dominated the region in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Fig. 15 & 16). The only monument to have survived the destruction wrought by Genghis Khan in the region, the Minaret was lost for more than seven centuries. Rediscovered in 1944, knowledge of it was again lost until 1957, when its continuing existence was confirmed by French archaeologist André Maricq.



Fig. 13 | Afghan workers during excavations at the base of the Third Minaret, Husain Baiqara Madrasa, Herat (1978).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig. 14 | Stone columns found during excavations around the base of the Fourth Minaret, Husain Baiqara Madrasa (1977-79).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

The Minaret is built on an octagonal base of baked bricks held together with mortar. It is 70 m high and contains two spiral staircases. The exterior surface is covered by complex monochrome decoration in baked brick relief with blue enamel ceramic sections containing Qur'anic verses written in Kufic characters.

Fig. 15 | The Minaret of Jam (1975).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO





Fig.16 | The Minaret of Jam (1999).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

In 1961, I was asked by the ISMEO and the Afghan Government to make an assessment of the state of conservation of the Minaret, which had begun to lean significantly due to erosion caused by the two rivers flowing past its base. Accordingly, the first safeguarding operations carried out at the site in 1963 involved the construction of a provisional dam across the rivers made of stone and wood found at the site. In 1974, UNESCO, answering a request from the Afghan Government, launched an appeal in order to carry out more detailed study for restoring the Minaret. Some preliminary work was done, including further safeguarding of the Minaret by constructing a more permanent dam,

this time made of metal cages filled with stones, thus enabling possible future work on the foundations of the Minaret.

In September 1979, while the stones to fill the metal cages were still being collected, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan began, halting further development of the project. Twenty years later, I took up my work as a consultant to UNESCO once again with a mission to Afghanistan, the objective being to try to get to the Minaret in order to check on its stability and to compare its present state with what it had been in 1979, when the last official measurements had been made. Getting to the Minaret, only possible by extending the visit until after sunset, came as the result of long and delicate negotiations between the commander of the Taliban forces in the village of Jam and the opposition forces located on the opposite side of the Hari Rud River, these being 40m away and in a continuous state of alert.

Events in this valley, once chosen by the Ghurid emperors as an outpost of their empire and dominated by the Minaret of Jam, were once again playing a role in determining the political stability of Afghanistan, since the forces then fighting each other for control of the country had taken up position on the ancient defensive lines built by the Ghurids to defend their empire. However, the Hari Rud river that divided the two acted not only as a boundary line, but also as a line of exchanges and contacts between them. Illicit excavations carried out in the area some time before the mission had brought to light various treasures, including gold coins and other objects, for example, and these had been whisked across the river and out of the area, one local village notable told me at the time. It was perhaps due to such unofficial arrangements between the two opposing sides that I was able to visit the Minaret in clandestine fashion on the afternoon of 2 August, 1999.

Not for the first time in its long history, the Minaret once again appeared to be the sole survivor and only witness of the destruction that had been carried out in the area, this returning the site to the condition it had been in at the beginning of the 1960s. After twenty years in which various initiatives had been taken to protect and restore the Minaret and to carry out scientific research in the area as a whole, there had followed another twenty years, 1979-1999, during which senseless destruction had once again damaged what had previously been successfully safeguarded.



Fig. 17 and 18 | Afghan workers during strengthening work on the Minaret of Jam (2006).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

The work done to protect the monument during the first twenty years had been possible thanks to the good will of the governors of the region from 1963 to 1979. Constructing a building for craftsmen working on the base of the Minaret to protect it from water damage had been one of the preliminary steps necessary before any work on the monument itself could begin. This building had been totally destroyed, along with the tanks for drinking water and the electricity generator. The local bridge built at the same time in wood and stone that had allowed the Hari Rud river to be crossed throughout the year had also completely disappeared at the time of the 1999 mission. The same thing was true of the metal cages given by UNESCO for urgent damming work, these having once been piled up around the base of the Minaret ready to be used.

The threat of more illicit excavations was also present. If these had been carried out near the Minaret, or, worse still, inside it, they would have definitely threatened its survival. Overall, the situation in 1999 was similar to what it had been in 1960, and the monument was once again totally cut off from the outside world. After thirty years of work at the site and on the monument, it would now be necessary to begin all over again, this time in a situation of armed conflict.

Since the 1999 mission and despite the terrible war that has been ravaging the country, many activities have been carried out. Following research and hydro-geological test-drills, confirmed by detailed topographic measurements carried out during UNESCO missions in 2002 and 2003, work was

carried out to reconstruct the masonry structure of the Minaret and to reinforce its base under the supervision of the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture. This work, completed in 2006, was carried out using traditional brick-making techniques that have been used in the country for millennia, and at the same time Afghan workers working on the project received training and the skills of Afghan experts were updated (Fig. 17, 18, 19 & 20). The Minaret is currently under permanent video surveillance, in the expectation that one day definitive consolidation work can be carried out.



Fig. 19 | The Minaret of Jam during strengthening work (2006).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

Fig. 20 | The Minaret of Jam after strengthening work (2006).

PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



However, new threats of damage are still appearing, and at the end of the present conflict, when larger work can once again take place within the framework of the protection of the country's architectural heritage, a long period of the 'restoration of the restoration work' will have to begin. This will be a frustrating experience, but it will also be a necessary one.

It may also be too soon to be optimistic that the brutality that led to the destruction of the giant statues of the Buddha at Bamiyan has been finally overcome. These important examples of the rich cultural heritage of Afghanistan constituted an important field of research for me from 1960 to the present, and my recent proposal to restore the niche of the larger of the statues and its surroundings, while not in any way proposing the reconstruction of the giant statues themselves, was approved by UNESCO representatives and the Afghan authorities when it was presented in Paris in March 2011. Safeguarding the empty niche of the Buddha would in itself be an act of restoration.

In a country that has been torn apart by continual conflicts, the word 'restoration' takes on new meanings, even in the light of what I have personally seen and experienced in Afghanistan. In this context, it means not only restoring monuments that have been damaged, but also re-establishing the kind of socio-economic peace that is necessary to render work on safeguarding the cultural heritage meaningful. This work cannot be considered urgent or a matter of priority in a country that lacks the essentials, including the right to a peaceful existence (Fig. 21 & 22). ■

Translated from French by David TRESILIAN



Fig. 21 | Wooden bridge over the Hari Rud river built in the 1970s.
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO



Fig. 22 | 'Only when weapons of war are turned into instruments of peace can we begin to be optimistic for the future': near the Minaret of Jam (1999).
PHOTO: © A. BRUNO

The image shows a tall, cylindrical minaret with intricate carvings, standing in a rocky, arid landscape. In the foreground, a white SUV is parked on the left, and a person is standing on the right, looking through a camera mounted on a tripod. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

CHAPTER 2

Emergency Consolidation of the Monuments in Jam and Herat

UNESCO/Italy Funds-In-Trust Project

World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector¹

IN MARCH OF 2003, the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan*, was launched in order to safeguard two extraordinary examples of Afghan cultural heritage. The Minaret of Jam required stabilization and the Fifth Minaret in the Old City of Herat also needed to be immediately secured.

The Minaret of Jam

In the case of the Minaret of Jam, a series of preparatory missions to the monument were carried out under the regular budget of UNESCO prior to 2003. In August of 2002, a team led by Geologist Andrea Borgia assessed the foundations of the leaning Minaret as well as the geological hazards threatening the site. The Minaret's stunning location, the floor of a deep valley where the Hari Rud and Jam rivers converge, has unfortunately contributed to the structure's instability since its construction in the twelfth century CE (Fig. 1). The assessment revealed that an abundance of archaeological remains were still present on the riverbanks and the steep valley slopes, and that the ornately decorated hexagonal Minaret itself was sustaining damage. Included in the team's subsequent recommendations were comprehensive geological and seismic surveys of the site, as well as a detailed study of the Minaret's foundation in order that it may be properly consolidated.

In November of 2002, a UNESCO mission led by Structural Engineer Mario Santana Quintero and Architect Tarcis Stevens set out to produce a database of the site's main features. Aside from creating a preliminary plan with locations of terrain and aquatic elements in the immediate surroundings, the team also measured the noticeable inclination of the Minaret. This mission is particularly noteworthy

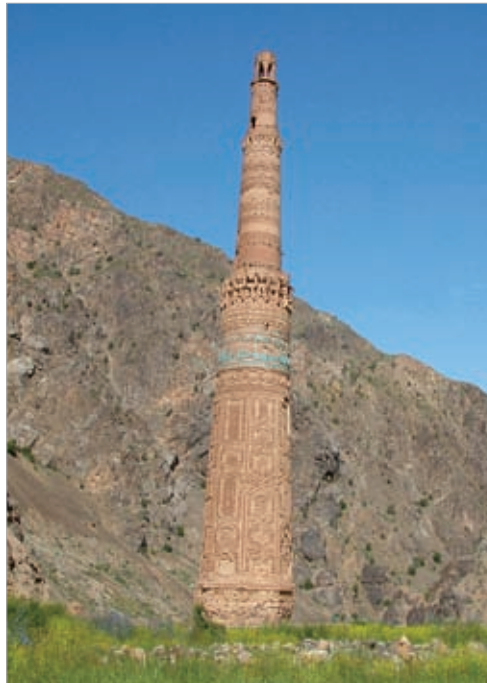


Fig. 1 | The Minaret of Jam.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/A. BRUNO

in that it involved the training of local experts in the use of sophisticated survey equipment such as the total station. To this end, a set of survey equipment was donated to the Afghan Government to build its capability in using such advanced measuring tools, thereby allowing the country's experts to monitor the State of Conservation not just of the Minaret of Jam but that of the numerous heritage sites throughout Afghanistan as well.

Emergency Restoration of the Gabions

The output of these preparatory missions vitally contributed to the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust co-operation effort and the formulation of its tasks—classified according to their urgency by the undertaking's first Expert Working Group Meeting

1. The article was written by J. Han and M.A. Liwanag on the basis of technical reports provided by the World Heritage Centre.



Fig. 2 | Repair work on the damaged gabions around the Minaret of Jam (2003).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/F. LANGLOIS

Fig. 3 | Project house in the Jam site (2003).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/F. LANGLOIS



Fig. 4 | Vehicle access to the Minaret of Jam (2004). PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI



Fig. 5 | Experts and Afghan officials discuss the proposed road between the Bedan and Jam Valleys (2004).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI



held in Paris. The project got underway in April of 2003 with a team of UNESCO experts fixing the site's gabions which were damaged by floods the year before (Fig. 2). This crucial and timely intervention secured the Minaret and made possible the repair work done in succeeding years which further strengthened the structure's base. It was also during this time that the on-site project house was constructed (Fig. 3). More missions to protect the property soon followed, in part with assistance from the UNESCO/Switzerland Funds-in-Trust project, *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Site of Jam*.

Scientific Surveys and Archaeological Assessments

Further soil investigations, structural analyses, and seismic hazard assessments were carried out between July and September of 2003 by teams led by Architect Andrea Bruno and Structural Engineer Giorgio Macchi, the latter being the designer of the stabilization method for the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The seismic hazard assessment in particular yielded the revelation that the Minaret might face a critical situation in case of a major earthquake. As such, a method for the reinforcement of the Minaret's base was envisaged and subsequently recommended by Macchi.

Concurrent with these scientific surveys, a preliminary archaeological study of the site was conducted by the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (IsIAO). The IsIAO team's non-destructive surface exploration of the area, however, was hindered by road construction and extensive looting to the point that the mission's objectives had to be altered. An environmental impact assessment of the Jam river's west bank was enacted instead, and the depth of the archaeological deposits around the Minaret was also established in preparation for future excavations. The mission's findings, foremost of which was the discovery that post-thirteenth century CE occupation of the surroundings was minimal and that objects contemporary with the Minaret were only a meter underground, added to the growing body of knowledge that was helping to protect the site.

Road Construction Advisory Mission

The road construction in the Minaret's vicinity, on the other hand, was the subject of the next expedition. In February of 2004, UNESCO, together

with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Government of Afghanistan, undertook a mission to evaluate options for the proposed road connecting the Jam and Bedan Valleys. Based on studies taking the World Heritage Convention, national legislation, and needs of the local population into account, the UNESCO team was able to provide the technical advice that the Afghan Government needed in deciding on the road configuration most feasible for protecting the property (Fig. 4 & 5).

Restoration and Reinforcement of the Base of the Minaret

More missions that expanded upon all the work thus far were carried out in 2005. From May to June, the UNESCO mission composed of Andrea Bruno, Geological Engineers Claudio Margottini and Luciana Orlando, as well as representatives from UNESCO and the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan (MoIC) undertook geophysical surveys of the Minaret's foundation and studies of the masonry at the structure's base—the latter for the accurate replication of the original bricks' appearance and compression strength as it was decided that new ones would be needed both for reinforcement and restoration purposes. In August, the Minaret of Jam Archaeological Project, led by Archaeologist David Thomas in collaboration with UNESCO, the National Afghan Institute of Archaeology and the Afghan Government, unearthed more compelling archaeological remains, including a large edifice, possibly a mosque or madrasa, on the Hari Rud river embankment.

In October of 2005, the mission to commence reinforcing the Minaret's base through the replicated masonry got underway. The team led by Andrea Bruno strengthened the Minaret's south, east, and west sides with the new bricks—produced in Herat under the supervision of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and installed on the structure by local masons. Soil consolidation, up to 75 cm below ground level in some areas, was carried out on the south, east, and west parts of the structure as well. This was not done on the northern part of the Minaret as this side was under stress due to its inclination.

The masonry work at the Minaret's base continued in July and August of 2006. The mission during this time excavated around all but one wall of the hexagonal structure as this area proved unstable. This wall's exterior, where the Minaret's entrance is



Fig. 6 a, b, c and d |
 – One side of the Minaret of Jam prior to consolidation.
 – Views of the Minaret after the strengthening work.
 – Afghan worker during strengthening work on the Minaret of Jam (2006).

PHOTOS: © UNESCO/A. BRUNO

located, was in turn left unfinished so that future trenches could be made to test the masonry's quality. Ultimately, the masonry work not only reinforced the structure's base but also remained faithful to its original appearance (Fig. 6). In addition, topographic measurements of the Minaret obtained by the team, after a comparison with results from the November 2002 preparatory mission, showed that no further inclination had occurred (Fig. 7 & 8)—encouraging proof that the efforts under the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project to stabilize this World Heritage property were bearing fruit.

Emergency River Defences Advisory Mission

Because extensive flooding throughout the Ghor Province in 2007 necessitated the rehabilitation of the protective gabions and the building of new ones, a basic analysis of how the local climate affects the Hari Rud river was conducted by the Beta Studio of Italy. This firm in turn provided the design of the new gabions to be built on an emergency basis. A UNESCO mission led by Claudio Margottini then headed to Kabul to advise local experts on these matters. He also provided off-site supervision during the construction of the new gabions, a project funded by the Afghan Government (Fig. 9 & 10).

Detailed Topographic Map Production

In 2007, the thirty-first session of the World Heritage Committee outlined Corrective Measures that would lead to the property's removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Subsequently, all operational activities were aimed at assisting the Afghan Government in implementing these measures. One of UNESCO's achievements in this regard was the creation of a detailed topographic map of the property. Because the site was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2002 on an emergency basis, the preliminary map of the property used for its inscription could not be made in the proper scale and therefore could not accurately define its boundaries. Since such a map showing the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone was needed for the long-term conservation and management of the site, it was therefore necessary to supersede the preliminary map with a detailed topographic map. Creating a more detailed topographic map proved difficult, however, given the deteriorating security in the country after 2007.

The opportunity to create the detailed topographic map without having to conduct field surveys finally came in 2012 when the World Heritage Centre made use of the newly available GeoEye Satellite as proposed by the RWTH Aachen University in



Fig. 7 a and b | Comparative monitoring on the inclination of the Minaret (2006 and 2002).
TOP: © UNESCO/T. STEVENS
NEXT: © UNESCO/M. SANTANA



Fig. 8 | Geophysical survey of the Minaret of Jam (2006).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/A. BRUNO



Germany. Stereo-imaging technology gave this satellite a very precise remote-mapping capability that—combined with the University’s exhaustive research on existing academic materials pertaining to the Minaret, the surrounding areas, and all the information about the site accumulated during the previous missions—allowed the production of a highly accurate topographic map featuring all of the property’s structures and archaeological remains (Fig. 11). As a result, the proper boundaries of the property were defined and a modified buffer zone was proposed. In 2012, this detailed topographic map was submitted by UNESCO to the Afghan Government for their submission to the World Heritage Committee.

Hydrological Studies of the Hari Rud and Jam Rivers

Hydrological studies of both the Hari Rud and Jam rivers had to be conducted because the reconstruction of the gabion walls in 2003 and again in 2008, though successful in temporarily halting the further erosion of the rivers, were undertaken on an emergency basis and designed with limited hydrological data—circumstances true for all similar rebuilding efforts since the 1980s. This is primarily because conditions at the site, in particular due to armed conflict over the past decades, rarely permitted the collection of information on the behavior of both rivers necessary for an effective long-term design. Additionally, given that soil erosion caused by the



Fig. 9 | Overview of construction work during the River Defense Project (2007).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/T. STEVENS

Fig. 10 | Stone masonry construction during the River Defense Project (2007).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/T. STEVENS



Fig. 11 | New technology: detailed view from the Orthorectified satellite image (World View 2) of the area of the Minaret of Jam.
PHOTO: © DIGITAL GLOBE/TRIGIS/ACDC

Fig.12 | Mausoleum of Gawharshad and the remaining Five Minarets in Herat (2003).

PHOTO: ©UNESCO/F.LANGLAIS



confluence of both rivers is known to increase the Minaret's inclination, it was essential to have a thorough understanding of how the rivers' currents affect the structure.

In 2012, the Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and Water Resources Management, RWTH Aachen Technical University, offered UNESCO a basic and preliminary hydrological research on the behavior of the two rivers by using the same images and data obtained by the GeoEye Satellite for the topographical mapping of the site. Although the study was preliminary in nature given the limited data, its results nonetheless showed that the Hari Rud river's discharge and catchment were seven times higher than that of the Jam river. Such findings will prove vital in improving the gabions' design so that they will no longer require rebuilding after every flood. A more in-depth hydrological analysis that follows through on this preliminary study is needed to ultimately create the most suitable, sustainable and lasting flood control measures and maintenance procedures for inclusion in the site's long-term conservation and management plan.

The Fifth Minaret of Herat

Similar to the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam World Heritage property, UNESCO undertook a series of assessment missions to Herat prior to the launching of the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project. Just as they did for the Minaret of Jam site, these preparatory missions of March and November of 2002 also paved the way for the positive results from the conservation measures implemented to protect the Fifth Minaret of Herat as well as the other significant monuments of this historic city.

In March of 2002, the preparatory expedition led by Structural Engineer Marco Menegotto to the Old City Of Herat, long considered the center for arts and culture in the region, aimed to identify its noteworthy heritage sites and make recommendations for their proper restoration. These include the Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin, the Masjid-e Jami, the Mausoleum Complex of Khwaja Abdulla Ansari, and the Musalla Complex comprised of a mosque, the Mausoleum of Gawharshad, the five minarets and the remains of the Madrasa of Sultan Hussain Baiqara (**Fig. 12**).

The assessment revealed that, despite additional war damage, four of the minarets were not in danger of collapse. However, due to its excessive inclination, the Fifth Minaret of Herat was deemed a threat to public safety. Emergency measures were then recommended that, upon completion, could lead to a more stable condition for the Minaret. In November of 2002, a UNESCO preparatory mission also went to Herat to create a database of the property's monuments. The team similarly produced a preliminary plan of the immediate vicinity, including locations of historic structures and ruins, while the inclination of the Fifth Minaret was measured as well. A photographic survey of the area was also undertaken and natural targets were measured for future photogrammetric restitution. Another output of the mission was a study of the Fifth Minaret, including sectional drawings of its main axis of inclination. The results of the measurements and study of the structure would prove to be beneficial during the subsequent emergency stabilization measures implemented under the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project.



Fig.13 a and b |

LEFT: A large hole at mid-height and vertical and horizontal cracks on the Fifth Minaret (2003)
 RIGHT: Remedy work for the identified structural problem (2003).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/F. LANGLOIS



Fig.14 a and b |

LEFT: Emergency stabilization of the Fifth Minaret: Installation of wooden belts to protect the shaft of the Minaret (2003).
 RIGHT: After the emergency stabilization: steel stays around the shaft of the Fifth Minaret and anchoring these to concrete blocks embedded in the ground.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/ALGA

RIGHT: After the emergency stabilization: steel stays around the shaft of the Fifth Minaret and anchoring these to concrete blocks embedded in the ground.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/

J. SOROSH-WALI

Emergency Structural Stabilization Measures for the Fifth Minaret

Upon the start of the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, the team of Andrea Bruno and Giorgio Macchi conducted studies and commenced emergency stabilization work on the Fifth Minaret of Herat from July to September of 2003. Apart from its dramatic tilt and cracks due to both rotation and

compression, it was noted that the Minaret also had a large hole at mid-height caused by a missile. Additionally, the ground on its western side where the door is located was severely eroded. The structure's off-center measurement of 2.7 m, three times as much as it was in 1977, manifested in a cross-sectional crack reaching one-third of its diameter as the masonry was subject to very high pressure.



Fig.15 | Archaeological excavation of the Lost Minaret in the north-east area of the Madrasa (2010).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/T. URBAN



Fig.16 | Documenting the archaeological excavations (2010).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/T. URBAN

The temporary stabilization measures designed by Macchi were implemented by the Italian engineering firm ALGA. The work started with the embedding of concrete blocks in the soil up to 25m from the Minaret, covering an area of 15 degrees on each side of the direction of its tilt. These blocks were then connected to the structure using high-tensile steel stays which, after the application of force through jacks, reduced the inclination enough to close the crack at the structure’s base and bring its masonry back to a state of total compression (Fig. 13 & 14). This emergency intervention succeeded in securing the Minaret for the time being. From July to August of 2006, a UNESCO mission headed by Andrea Bruno and accompanied by MoIC representatives conducted studies at the Fifth Minaret of Herat. In comparison with the survey done four years earlier, the results showed no indication of increase in the Minaret’s inclination and no new cracks at its base—undoubtedly due to the emergency measures that were carried out.

Towards Long-Term Solutions for the Fifth Minaret

To further assess the structure’s foundation, the team recommended that excavations be made to search the nearby area for the base of the fallen twin of the Fifth Minaret. It was deemed that finding the remains of the former’s foundation would shed light on the latter’s design, since both were known to be part of the Gawharshad Mausoleum building. The team also proposed that the hole caused by the

missile be repaired through masonry authentic in appearance to strengthen the structure, while the damaged area of the Minaret’s eastern base, still suffering from overloading, be restored gradually under the strict supervision of international experts.

– ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

To permanently stabilize the Fifth Minaret and prevent any further damage to it, long-term conservation plans had to be put into effect. As such, activities at the site from 2010 onward were focused on achieving these aims. Based on the recommendations of the 2006 mission, UNESCO dispatched another mission to commence the restoration work to close the hole in the Minaret’s wall in September of 2010. Shortly after, the dig for the Minaret’s missing twin was started in co-operation with Dr Urban and Partners, an organization specializing in archaeology and documentation (Fig. 15 & 16). The topographical map of the entire Gawharshad structure, produced as a prerequisite for this undertaking, also made it possible to examine its elements pertinent to the Fifth Minaret.

– GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY ASSESSMENTS

At around the same time, geotechnical investigations such as electric tomography were conducted to determine the properties of the soil directly below the Minaret. The work, carried out by the Afghan engineering firm Omran, under the

**Fig.17 a and b |**

LEFT: Inclined drilling below the foundations of the Fifth Minaret to measure their depth (2010).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI

RIGHT: Collection of core material from the drilling at the foundation of the Fifth Minaret (2010).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI

supervision of UNESCO expert Claudio Margottini and co-ordinated by the UNESCO Kabul office, revealed important aspects of the underground conditions surrounding the structure's foundation (Fig. 17 & 18). In conjunction with these geophysical surveys, an assessment of the Minaret's structural integrity was simultaneously carried out by UNESCO expert, Structural Engineer Alberto Lodigiani (Fig. 19). Apart from the structure as a whole, the study also revealed the conditions of the steel stays and determined that follow up work was necessary to prolong their lifespan (Fig. 20). As a result, UNESCO immediately dispatched a mission to reduce the tension in the structure's lower stays in 2011. As this mission also identified stays that were corroded due to water infiltration, UNESCO subsequently replaced the deteriorating ones the following year.

– PRODUCTION OF LONG-TERM CONSERVATION PROPOSALS

In 2012, to build on the positive outputs of the previous UNESCO missions to the Fifth Minaret of Herat particularly after 2010, UNESCO tasked Ziegert Seiler Ingenieure GmbH, an architectural and engineering firm from Germany specializing in cultural heritage, and Alberto Lodigiani, formerly associated with ALGA, with further developing feasible and sustainable conservation solutions for the structure. Aside from elaborating long-term solutions for the Minaret, Ziegert Seiler Ingenieure GmbH also conducted an unprecedented structural

analysis of the structure based on all technical reports produced by previous UNESCO missions to the monument. Aided by their comprehensive review of the existing data on the property, the firm's scientific study exposed once again the crucial fact that, given a strong but plausible wind velocity of twenty-five meters per second, the portion of the structure above the topmost steel stays remained critically vulnerable to collapse. Hence, the structure as a whole was still perilously susceptible to falling over. Subsequently, Ziegert Seiler Ingenieure GmbH recommended immediately reducing the structure's inclination, and produced two proposals, entitled *Support by Means of Masonry Buttresses and Two-step Straightening Procedure*. On the other hand, Engineer Lodigiani also drew up four proposals for the structure's long-term stabilization and conservation.

All of the six proposals were presented during the *Third Expert Working Group Meeting for the Old City of Herat and the Archaeological Remains of Jam World Heritage property* held in Turin, Italy in 2012, bringing the attention of the Government of Afghanistan to the critical state of the Fifth Minaret of Herat and were later submitted officially to the Government of Afghanistan for their immediate implementation. These long-term conservation plans need to be put into action as soon as possible to ensure that the Fifth Minaret of Herat remains a towering example of Afghanistan's rich cultural heritage.

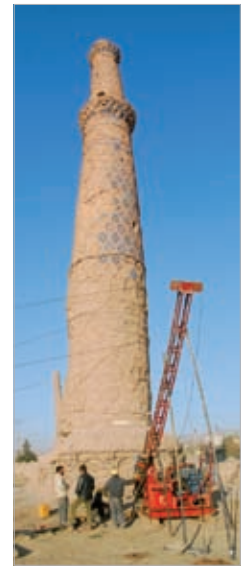


Fig.18 | Drilling boreholes near the base of the Fifth Minaret to investigate the properties of the soil (2010). PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI



Fig.19 | Inspection of the stays supporting the Fifth Minaret (2010).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/
C. MARGOTTINI

Conclusion and Perspectives

The UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan*, as its title indicates, had the primary objective of rescuing highly endangered monuments in Herat and Jam through emergency operations. In this respect, it should be acknowledged that the project, which concluded in 2013, has largely achieved its initial targets and, in the case of the Fifth Minaret of Herat, even paved ways for a further long-term conservation of the monument.

For the Minaret of Jam, various emergency operations were undertaken between 2003 and 2006 that halted further leaning of the Minaret and considerably helped stabilize the structure. This was proven by the UNESCO monitoring mission of 2006 led by Mario Quintero and Tarcis Steven, the results of which showed that no further inclination occurred since their first measurements made in 2002.

At a later stage, when it became impossible to dispatch international experts to the site of Jam due to the volatile security situation prevalent in the Ghor region, UNESCO shifted its efforts into off-site activities. Most notable of these activities was the production of the long-awaited detailed topography of the property thanks to the use of the latest remote-sensing technology.

This constitutes a significant outcome of the project, in addition to the emergency work that halted further leaning of the Minaret, as it allowed for the first time since its inscription on the World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger in 2002 the clear demarcation of boundaries of the World Heritage property—one of the five elements for the Desired State of Conservation requested by the World Heritage Committee at its thirty first Session in 2007. Just as significant is the preliminary hydraulic research that was carried out, thus providing for the first time an accurate insight into the water current behaviour of the Hari Rud and



Fig. 20 | LEFT: Corroded stays of the Fifth Minaret (2010).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/
A. LODIGIANI
RIGHT: Replacement of the corroded stays of the Fifth Minaret (2012).
PHOTO: © UNESCO/
K. KHAIRZADA

Jam rivers. These insights are crucial to designing the most appropriate gabions for withstanding the strong floods that regularly occur in the Ghor region. Further hydraulic research as well as the installation of a monitoring system that can detect any further inclination of the Minaret would be the next steps. These tasks should be framed by the establishment of a conservation and management plan that addresses various crucial issues pertaining not only to the Minaret of Jam, but also to the property's archaeological remains as a whole. This holistic manner of conservation and management is in line with the recommendations formulated by the Third Expert Working Group for Herat and Jam held in 2012.

The environment of the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam World Heritage property, specifically the remoteness of its location and the security situation in the Ghor region, unfortunately poses a great challenge for the Government of Afghanistan as well as the international community in effectively undertaking systematic and necessary in-situ conservation activities. A new strategy is therefore needed, preferably concentrating on building national capacity in various fields of conservation, due to the impossibilities of undertaking any international expert missions—a situation that has prevailed since 2007.

For the Fifth Minaret of Herat, after the emergency operation of anchoring the dangerously leaning structure with steel cables that prevented the monument from falling in 2003, the priority was then given to the elaboration of a long-term solution. Hence, activities such as geophysical analyses, archaeological surveys, and structural integrity assessments were undertaken, all of which contributed to understanding not only the state of its foundation but also the reasons for its tilting. The results of these studies were the crucial elements for

developing a sustainable and long-term solution. By the end of the project, all scientific data that had been obtained formed the basis for a set of longer term solutions that were eventually submitted to the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture.

In this vein, the second phase of the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, established in 2013 at the UNESCO Office in Kabul as a follow-up undertaking, is of great significance as it allows the Government of Afghanistan and UNESCO to implement these long-term solutions for the Fifth Minaret of Herat. These solutions need to be applied as soon as possible given the critical state of the Fifth Minaret as shown by the study made by Ziegert Seiler Ingenieure GmbH in 2012.

Finally a comprehensive management plan should be established on the basis of an archaeological survey within the Musalla Complex, encompassing the Fifth Minaret, for a more holistic approach for the site. This should naturally include the permanent closure of the road going through the Sultan Hussain Baiqara Madrassa which would allow the Gawharshad Mausoleum to be re-integrated within the Musalla Complex with its Minarets. This approach would treat all the property's elements as a single archaeological ensemble in a wider context which is in line with the recommendations made by the Third Expert Working Group Meeting in 2012. ■

Scientific Surveys of the Fifth Minaret in Herat

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Fig.1 | The Fifth Minaret in Herat (from left to right; 1915, 1933, 1975 and 1993). The position of the photographer is different in each shot, but the general trend of inclination is clear.

PHOTOS: © MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, AFGHANISTAN - DIRECTOR OF MUSEUMS AND ARCHAEOLOGY, HERAT

THE FIFTH MINARET IN HERAT is a brickwork tower 42 m high with a diameter of only 5 m at the base. It is built of hard bricks and once stood at the corner of the now demolished Musalla Complex. It is now isolated in the garden of the Mausoleum of Gawharshad. The surface of the Minaret bears an elegant kashi decoration of a geometrical pattern filled in with blue tiles.

The Minaret today is on the verge of collapse. This opinion, expressed by all the experts that have had the opportunity to inspect it, was confirmed by the assessment performed by Macchi (2005) and the geometrical survey done by Santana and Stevens (2002), as well as by the direct site measurements made using precision instruments during the 2003 UNESCO mission to Herat. The monument is out-of-plumb by 2.70 m, and a large horizontal crack is present at a height of 3 m from the base. Structural analysis has shown that the Minaret is cracked in cross section for about one third of the diameter, and the edge of the masonry is subject to very high compression of 1.2 MPa. The data shows that even a very modest earthquake or strong wind could cause the collapse of the Minaret, as has already happened to the other four minarets of the Musalla Complex, which were still standing in 1915.

The reasons for the present tilting of the Minaret are not clear. According to Macchi

(2005), it is probably due to a succession of earthquakes, and the evolution of the tilting of the tower over time may help us to understand the reason for its inclination. According to the few available photographs and the little historical information, it is possible to say that the out-of-plumb was only 0.90 m in 1974 (Bruno, 1981). Topographic investigations implemented by Santana and Stevens (2002) showed that the out-of-plumb was 2.43 m in 2002 and that a large horizontal crack was present 3 m from the base. Historical photographs of the site, made available through the kind co-operation of the Director of Monuments in Herat, show the monument as having been almost stable in the period from 1915 to 1975 and only later evidently out-of-plumb (Fig. 1).

Despite the different positions used to photograph the Minaret in this sequence of images, it is clear that the Minaret became significantly out-of-plumb between 1975 and 1993. Further evidence is provided on the Minaret's topography by Bruno (1981) and Santana and Stevens (2002) (Fig. 2), and here the changing verticality is quite evident. Moreover, the structure may not have been altogether linear when it was built, with its verticality changing during the original construction period and suggesting initial problems of bearing capacity and earthquakes even during this early period (Bruno, 1981). Modern

topographic surveys (Santana and Stevens, 2002) have minimized the importance of such a lack of linearity in the vertical axes of the construction.

According to eyewitnesses, in the period between 1985 and 1990 the Musalla Complex was exactly on the conflict lines between the Russian forces and the Afghan Mujahidin. As a result, no maintenance plan could be implemented at the site or to manage the Hari Rud river that crosses the area. The result was a general and continuous flooding of the site, with water flowing almost below the Minaret itself. Figure 3 shows the road crossing through the site in which the Hari Rud river was previously flowing through the remains.

Other damage to the Minaret sustained during the period of civil conflict in Afghanistan included an opening in the shaft caused by a missile. This was restored in 2010 within the framework of the UNESCO Italy Funds-in-Trust project, Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan.

In 2011, a mission was undertaken to Herat in order to discover whether geological constraints could explain the present condition of the Minaret. Four exploratory drillings were executed, as well as 28 SPTs (standard penetration tests). Two leaning boreholes were executed in order to check the depth of the Minaret's foundations,

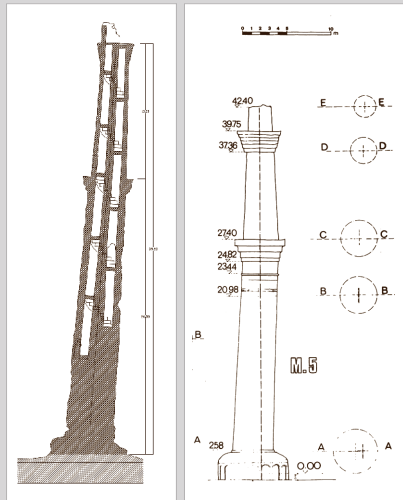


Fig. 2 | Topographic reconstructions of the Fifth Minaret.

RIGHT: © A. BRUNO, 1981

LEFT: © UNESCO/M. SANTANA AND T. STEVENS, 2002

Fig. 3 | The Musalla Complex and the road crossing through the middle.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/C. MARGOTTINI

and 35 samples were analysed in order to discover their physical properties and soil-engineering classification. A further 29 samples were investigated in terms of permeability and moisture content, and 12 dynamic analysis tests on both soil and structure were conducted using a portable velocimeter. These tests represented significant examples of Afghan expertise, since the drillings, SPTs and laboratory tests were conducted by an Afghan company.

According to the 2011 study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

(1) The foundations of the Minaret extend 5.25 m below the ground and are composed of well-tied stone with mortar;

(2) The foundations are not regular, but, as was likely in the case of the now-collapsed Sixth Minaret investigated by Urban (2010), they exhibited different geometries in relation to the presence of the Madrasa wall. The Minaret exhibits a footing plane at 5.25 m from the surface, while the Madrasa wall has a less deep footing plane;

(3) The Minaret's foundations and the stone foundations of the Madrasa wall are joined without gaps, but with a considerable difference in the absolute depth of their respective bases. It can thus be stated that the construction ditch for the Minaret's

foundations was dug first and then the Minaret's stone foundations were built to a height of approximately 1.5 m, with both the Minaret's and the Madrasa wall's foundations subsequently being constructed simultaneously;

(4) The leaning of the Minaret developed in a significant fashion between 1981 and 2002, going from 0.9 m out-of-plumb in 1974 to 2.43 m in 2002. There were no major earthquakes recorded in this period;

(5) According to the boreholes made during the 2011 mission, the local materials used show important irregularities typical of an alluvial deposit. No compressible soils were identified in the investigated area;

(6) The bearing capacity of the local material is in present conditions about five times that in ultimate conditions, with the allowable difference being in general three times the ultimate one;

(7) The present static condition of the structure does not allow further inclination, since it is close to collapse. It is unlikely that the Minaret would have survived had it not been secured with steel cables;

(8) Simulating worst-occurring conditions, in terms of water saturation and geotechnical properties, the acceleration of the Minaret's inclination can be explained in terms of the water saturation of the soil, as occurred in the period between 1985 and 1990.

At present, it seems likely that the Minaret has suffered damage for many reasons, including the earthquake in 1933 and the decreasing bearing capacity in 1985 to 1990. As a consequence of this, there is now a need to consolidate the Minaret using properly designed reinforcement. The existing steel cables provided a reliable solution for the short-term survival of the Minaret. However, in order to secure it for the longer term, consolidation of the masonry will be necessary. ■

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CHAPTER 3

Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development

HERAT

Tentative List

The Architecture, Arts and Handicrafts

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HERAT, the capital of Herat province in western Afghanistan, should also be known as the world-famous capital of the historical Iranian region of Khorasan, where ‘the sun rises’. The city was once the unrivalled ‘Pearl of Khorasan’, and no other city, including Mashhad (where Mohammad Reza, the Eighth Imam of the Twelve Shias, is buried) was in a position to challenge Herat’s unique importance as a centre of culture and learning over many centuries. This was particularly the case during the fifteenth century, and the city enjoyed a remarkable afterlife in the sixth century. At this time, Herat was a strongly fortified town laid out like a square with sides of some 2.4 km in length (Fig. 1).

In the second half of the twelfth century, Herat gained importance due to the major conquests made by the rulers of the Ghurid Dynasty. These had more or less suddenly risen to power and had advanced from strongholds in the mountains east of Herat. After the cataclysm in 1221 caused by the invasion led by the Mongol leader Genghis Khan, Herat regained some of its former importance under the local Kart (Kurt) Dynasty (1245-1389 CE). The Timurids, descendants of Timur Leng who had caused a disaster in Herat similar to those of the Mongol conquests in 1381 and 1383, then made Herat a great centre of culture and learning during the reign of Shah Rukh, Timur Leng’s favourite son, and his very active wife Gawharshad. After a stormy interlude following the death of Shah Rukh in 1447, Sultan Husain Baiqara, advised and assisted by his friend and informal minister of culture Amir Ali Shir Nawae, whose mausoleum in Herat was destroyed in the early 2000s, revived high cultural life in the city.

This was the ‘golden age’ of Herat, and it saw the building of many monumental buildings, the Musalla Complex among them, and numerous gardens near or along the *khiaban*, an avenue leading north from the city’s northern gate. It was also the period that saw the establishment of the



city’s ‘book academy’, which was famous worldwide. This ‘golden age’ ended with the death of Sultan Husain Baiqara in 1506 and the city’s conquest by the Uzbeks one year later. It was a period that transmitted strong and lasting cultural influences to the eastern part of the Islamic world, in particular with respect to architecture, architectural decoration, book illustration in the form of miniature painting, and calligraphy.

Babur, the famous founder of the Moghul Dynasty in India, was an eyewitness to Herat’s artistic achievements shortly before the town fell victim to the Uzbeks. ‘The whole habitable world has not seen such a town as Herat has become under Sultan Husain Mirza,’ Babur wrote in his autobiography,

Fig. 1 | Herat Citadel (Ark) (1957).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



Fig. 2 | Herat, Masjid-e Jami' (The Friday Mosque) (1957).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG

Fig. 3 | Herat, Musalla Complex (1957).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



'whose orders and efforts have increased its splendour and beauty as ten to one, or rather as twenty to one.' Soon afterwards, and as a result of their conquest of the city in 1510, the Safavids, rulers of the new Persian dynasty founded in 1501, were able to draw on plentiful artistic resources.

Persia lost Herat to Afghanistan in the eighteenth century, and despite strong efforts by the country's Qajar rulers it failed to reconquer it. During the nearly ten-month Qajar siege of Herat in 1837-38, the British officer E. Pottinger defended the city until the siege was lifted as a result of political pressure by the British.

Many of the city's Timurid buildings were still standing at that time, in however ruinous a state, including the Musalla Complex outside the city's northern walls. This was originally a magnificent cluster of religious buildings that probably inspired the (closely related) Timurid rulers of Samarkand to start a similar undertaking in the latter city's famous Rigistan Square. In 1885, the Musalla buildings fell victim to military considerations aimed at eliminating any potentially protective buildings in the expectation of a Russian attack, which, however, never materialized. Only a few pictures of the buildings now exist, giving a vague indication of the size and extensive decoration of the original structures. These consisted of a mosque and two madrasas next to or around an open square. Following their destruction at the end of the nineteenth century, only the ten then still standing minarets of the Musalla Complex were spared, and there were still nine of these when the German military officer Oskar Niedermayer took photographs of them in 1917.

The destruction of the Musalla Complex was the worst episode in all the losses that Herat had suffered over the centuries. However, other episodes were to follow, including the destruction of the formerly domed mausoleum of the Ghurid ruler Ghiyath ad-Din (1163-1203), attached to the northern lateral side of the Masjid-e Jami. This was judged to be in too ruinous a state to be preserved in the 1940s, though photographs taken at the time attest to the ruin's beauty and the refinement of its decoration.

This history of destruction should be taken into account when considering the architectural remains of Herat today, which include the following structures (Fig. 2,3,4 & 5):

The Masjid-e Jami'. This is most probably an originally Seljukid building dating back to the late eleventh century that was later repaired by the Ghurid ruler Ghiyath ad-Din, under whose rule Delhi and later much of northern India was conquered for the first time by Muslim forces in 1193. The mosque's large four-*iwan* ground plan appears to be original, and traces of the Seljukid/Ghurid decorations and inscriptions have survived in and near the main *iwan* and main *mihrab* and in particular on the former left side (southern) entrance of the facade, which also shows later (Timurid) alterations. Nearly all the mosque's extensive tiled decoration is new, having been carried out in the 1930s and 1940s by a tile workshop located inside the building. This workshop is still in existence today, though it has been moved to the left entrance area.



Fig. 4 | Khoja Chisht, Ghurid ruins (1958).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



Fig. 5 | Minaret of Jam (1958).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG

The Musalla Complex. Five of its minarets are still standing today, with four of them, badly damaged during the Afghan civil war, standing at the corners of the large madrasa built by Sultan Husain Baiqara. The fifth minaret, formerly belonging with a second one to the Madrasa of Gawharshad, is also badly damaged and is leaning eastwards. At present supported by cables, it is in danger of collapse. A sixth minaret, the most extensively decorated of all, was still standing in the 1970s, and it was one of the four minarets that once stood at the corners of the large Gawharshad mosque, called a *musalla*. It collapsed during the Afghan civil war, and only the stump now remains. In the centre of the Musalla Complex is the Mausoleum of Gawharshad (murdered 1457), who also sponsored the mosque that bears her name at the Mausoleum of Imam Reza in Mashhad in Iran. The ribbed dome of the mausoleum, the upper cupola of the building's double-domed structure, still featured much of its exquisite original decoration and inscriptions in the 1970s, but only part of this has now survived. The building has recently been restored.

The Citadel of Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin. The citadel, also known as the *Ark* and located within the city, dates back to the centuries predating the Ghurid rulers and possibly even to Alexander the Great. It had fallen into a very ruinous state before two episodes of restoration led up to its present finished and rather 'made-up' state. The first restoration campaign, carried out in the 1970s, was sponsored by UNESCO, and the second, directed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, was sponsored by the US

State Department. Recent archaeological digs, in particular to the north of the *Ark* sometime after the digs undertaken by Andrea Bruno, have yielded various objects that are now on display in a museum inside the citadel that was opened in 2012, together with restored Islamic and other objects from a local collection. This recent work was carried out with the assistance of a German team of experts directed by Ute Franke.

Excellent views of the city's historic areas can be had from the citadel, and in front of it a garden and square were built in the more recent past, particularly in the years after the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, on the orders of Ismail Khan, an ex-warlord and the then Governor of Herat. The former bazaar area next to the citadel was demolished, and an underground shopping area was built to accommodate merchants who had lost their shops. Today the garden, which is closed to the public, is in a desolate condition. Both the square and the garden are characteristic features of the negative contemporary tendency to destroy buildings standing next to important historic sites as acts of 'decontextualization', or the removal of architectural context.

The Shrine of Shahzade Abdullah. Also located within the city perimeter, the Shrine of Shahzade Abdullah dates back to the time of Sultan Husain Baiqara and is an important and well-preserved cultural site. Located next to the city wall and facing north, it is surrounded by a large cemetery.

The Water Reservoir of Houz-e Chahrsuq. This important building inside the city and located next to the central crossroads was built around 1634 on the orders of one of Herat's Safavid governors. It was recently restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

The Mausoleum of Ansari. This mausoleum, located some 5km north of Herat at Gazargah, was built for the mystical poet Khwaja Abdullah Ansari (died 1088). The poet's marble tomb, enclosed by a wooden cage-like structure, stands in front of a large *iwān* that forms the higher end of a four-*iwān* structure surrounding a courtyard with cell-like rooms on both lateral sides. The ground plan recalls that of a madrasa, and the building may well have been conceived for religious studies before it was made into a cemetery. The courtyard and many of the cells in the lateral wings are full of tombs, among them the finely carved sarcophagi of notables like Husain Baiqara, the last Timurid ruler of Herat, and members of his family. The courtyard also contains the tomb of the Afghan ruler Amir Dost Mohammad, who died in 1863 shortly after having taken the town from the local ruler, Sultan Ahmad Khan, after a ten-month-siege.

Noteworthy features of the building include the decoration of the large *iwān*, which bears faience mosaics and *banai*-style brick patterns (possibly the first in that style), as well as wall paintings in the domed vestibule at the entrance and in the attached domed building called *Zarnegar-khanah*. The site dates back mainly to the second half of the sixteenth century, with some modifications introduced by the Safavids in the seventeenth, and it is well worth visiting, being a particularly pleasing historical monument. Close to the cemetery is a twelve-sided Timurid building known as the *Namakdan*, or salt depot, which once served to accommodate members of the Ansariye Sufi Brotherhood. This was recently restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

The Mausoleum of Abu'l Walid. This domed mausoleum, built for the saint Abu'l Walid, dates back to the fourteenth or fifteenth century and is located some 2 to 3 km northwest of Herat at Azadan. The building features very recent wall paintings inside the mausoleum itself, recalling those at Gazargah, and there is a beautiful *mihrab* in the adjoining mosque. Much of the building was demolished and rebuilt in the twentieth century, meaning that it has lost much of its historic value. The present condition of the structure is unknown.

Mausoleum of an Unknown Saint at Kohsan. This slim, domed building with a double cupola like that of the Mausoleum of Gawharshad is located some 150 km west of Herat and is dedicated to an unknown saint. Very little of the building's original faience decoration is still in place, and it is adjoined by a mosque. The building has long been in a ruinous state, and it was possibly further damaged during the Afghan civil war. Some important decoration survives, though the structure's recent rebuilding has given it a rather 'naked' look.

Ruined Structures at Chisht-e Sharif. Two impressive domed, but very ruinous, structures are located at Chisht-e Sharif on the right bank of the Hari Rud river some 175 km east of Herat. Both are distinguished by beautiful brickwork in the style of the later twelfth century, meaning that they must date to the Ghurid period. These structures bear witness to the architectural commissions of the late Ghurid Dynasty, of which only some examples remain, the most important being the Minaret of Jam.

The Minaret of Jam. This minaret, located some 310 km east of Herat on the left bank of the Hari Rud River, is not only the most important Islamic monument in Afghanistan, but it is also one of the most important in the Islamic world as a whole. It is impressively monumental, and it constitutes a unique, extraordinarily richly decorated and inscribed statement of power. There was ample reason for such a statement to be made after the Ghurids had overthrown the Ghaznevid Empire, towards its end more or less reduced to the Punjab, and had conquered the Kingdom of Delhi in 1193. It must have been in a very triumphal mood that the minaret, and, it can be assumed, the now completely vanished mosque that once stood next to it, were built to glorify Allah, addressed in the long nineteenth *sura* of the *Qur'an*, and Ghiyath ad-Din, the then Ghurid king, mentioned in the inscription as having built the minaret. The victories of the latter's top military commander, Qutub ad-Din Aibeg, made him the first Muslim conqueror of large parts of northern India in 1192-1196 CE.

The minaret is 'enigmatic,' to use the term proposed by Andrea Bruno, in that it was built in a very remote place and within a narrow, gorge-like valley, making it seem absurd in view of the *azan*-function of a minaret. The question remains whether Jam can be identified as the Ghurid capital



of Firuzkuh given the very few remains of buildings in the minaret's vicinity. When the present writer visited the minaret in 1958, one year after its virtual discovery by the Belgian epigrapher André Maricq (who had already heard reports of it, but only in very general terms), it was already noticeable that the building was leaning towards the river, and there are now serious concerns regarding its stability. Excavations have determined its height to be 65 m. As a result, the Minaret of Jam is one of the tallest minarets in the world and is surpassed only by the Qutub Minar in Delhi.

The Handicrafts of Herat

Among local Herat handicrafts, some deserve special mention. These include: (1) glazed and unglazed earthenware; (2) glassware; (3) raw silk; (4) silk turbans and cotton shawls; and, of course, (5) carpets. The fine art of miniature painting constitutes a separate phenomenon (Fig. 6,7,8,9 & 10).

(1) The production of ceramics such as glazed bowls and unglazed pots and bottles (among the latter small flasks used as 'piggy banks' by children) is much reduced in Herat today and can be found only in very few workshops. The present writer visited one such workshop in 2012 in the district of Chahr Bagh on the southern outskirts of Herat and was told that this was the only workshop that has an outlet shop. Ceramic tiles are made in the workshop of the Masjid-e Jami', located next to the Ghurid/Timurid entrance mentioned above. The making of faience mosaics is also practised. The products of these workshops are used in the ongoing repair of the extensive tiled decoration of the mosque.



Fig. 6 and 7 | Herat, Tile workshop (1957). PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG

Fig. 8 | Glassware of Herat. PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



Fig. 9 | Weaving of Silk Turban (2012). PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



Fig. 10 | Herat, Pottery Shop (2012). PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG



Fig. 11 | Herat, Façade of the Masjid-e Jami' (1957).

PHOTO: © M. KLIMBURG

- (2) The blue glassware of Herat, especially drinking glasses, bottles and vases, has long been famous, and it is still produced, at least by the workshop of Haji Sultan Hamidy, who has eight apprentices blowing glass in a shop next to the Masjid-e Jami' and, more recently, also in a workshop inside the citadel. This workshop is also active in painting the blue glass vessels with a variety of gold-coloured designs.
- (3) Raw silk is produced in a workshop called Pelakeshi that is owned by Abd al-Latif and is located on the street leading from the Chahar-suk Square in the city centre to the west. The owner is a Herati returnee from Iran, and it was in the latter country that he founded his workshop, later transferring it to Herat. There is no shortage of mulberry bushes around Herat, whose leaves are eaten by silk worms.
- (4) There are four handlooms in Herat used for weaving the predominantly white turbans called *lungi* that are made exclusively of Herati silk. A single turban takes two days of work to make, and it is sold for Afs 3.000 or around US\$ 60. One of the turban workshops, owned by Khalifa Ghulam, is on the Jade-ye Shemali close to the Masjid-e Jami'. On the same street there are a number of handlooms used to weave multicoloured shawls made out of cotton.
- (5) In the past carpets knotted in Herat and surrounding areas could easily be distinguished as *Herati*, *Firuzkuhi*, *Taimani*, *Baluch*, and (more expensive) *Mauri*, the latter being made by Tekke Turkoman refugees who had settled in Herat and had come from Merv and other places in the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the smaller *Mauri* rugs were knotted according to a 1960s design called 'Zaher Shahi.' Most *Herati* carpets were and still are knotted in large workshops equipped with vertical looms. They feature flower designs and thus recall typical Persian-style carpets. However, modern influences have of course interfered with the traditional designs, making the classification of the carpets more difficult. An extraordinary development in carpet design, probably starting in Herat in the middle of the 1980s and lasting only some five-to-ten years, led to the production of 'war carpets' showing fighter jets, tanks, armoured vehicles and Kalashnikovs.

Much can be said about Herati manuscript illustration and calligraphy, which developed in the city's famous 'book academy' under Shah Rukh in the fifteenth century and then gained an even greater reputation under Sultan Husain Baiqara. It strongly influenced the miniature painting that took place under the Safavids to the west, the Uzbeks at Samarkand to the north, and the Moghul rulers in India. In the work of Kamal ad-Din Behzad (ca. 1455-1534/35), who became widely known, the Herati art of miniature painting reached its peak. When the Safavids under Shah Ismail I took Herat from the Uzbeks who had conquered the city only three years before, they 'invited' Behzad to move to Tabriz, then the Safavid capital. While there, he and his followers built up a school of miniature painting, later moving it to Qazwin. During the reign of Shah Tahmasp I, the second Safavid ruler of Iran, this school produced exquisite illuminated manuscripts that represent the apogee of Islamic miniature painting.

Herati manuscript illustration and calligraphy were also influential in India. The founder of the Moghul Dynasty, Babur, was impressed by them during his visit to the city before the Uzbek conquest in 1507, and after his rule had been established in India in 1526, he and his successors several times invited artists from Herat to Delhi (Fig. 11). ■

HERAT

Tentative List

Urban Conservation in the City of Herat

Aga Khan Trust for Culture – Afghanistan

SINCE ITS ORIGINS as an outpost of the Achaemenid Empire, the city of Herat has had a turbulent history, demonstrated by the repeated strengthening of the Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin Citadel and the building of a walled settlement by the Ghaznavids. Situated at the crossroads of regional trade and in a rich and irrigated agricultural area, the region has long been a prize for successive invaders. Herat became a centre for Islamic culture and learning during the reign of Timur, whose successors commissioned several monumental buildings, but it later fell into decline under the Mughals. Considered part of Persia during the Safavid era in the eighteenth century, it was not until 1863 that Herat was incorporated into the emerging Afghan state.

The distinctive rectilinear layout of the city was delineated by massive earth walls that protected the bazaars and residential quarters that lay within. These walls defined the extent of the city until the middle of the twentieth century, when administrative buildings were constructed outside the walls to the north-east. The historic quarters were still home to some 60,000 people when unrest broke out in 1979, resulting in the depopulation of the western quarters of the city. Traditional buildings fell into disrepair or collapsed, and infrastructure was looted or damaged. It was not until 1992 that the clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance began, enabling families to resettle in the war-affected historic quarters and begin the process of rebuilding.

As a result of a rapid increase in the city's population since 2002, pressure on the central residential neighbourhoods has intensified, even though the state of the infrastructure and the few public facilities have resulted in poor living conditions for most inhabitants. In many cases, returnee families who had become accustomed to modern dwellings while in exile have demolished their traditional homes and in the absence of building controls have built incongruous concrete structures, dozens of



which now rise above the skyline of the Old City. Residential areas that adjoin the main roads are rapidly being commercialized, with the construction of multi-storey 'markets' that have had both an environmental and a visual impact on the historic fabric.

In order to address these transformations and in partnership with the local authorities and the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture, since 2005 the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's (AKTC) programme in Herat has involved activities for documentation and building conservation and upgrading in parallel with measures to strengthen the capacity of and the co-ordination between key institutions. Given the pace of change, one of the first priorities was to map the historic fabric and establish systems for monitoring demolitions and new construction. The prime focus of the conservation work, supported by the Governments of Germany, the United States, and Norway and through the Prince Claus Fund, has been on two clusters of the historic fabric extending across the Bar Durrani and Abdullah Mesri quarters, where activities have been carried out to

Fig.1 | The Char Suq cistern complex was restored by AKTC as part of an urban conservation programme supported by the German Government.

PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC



Fig.2 | Conservation and structural consolidation work was undertaken on the Abdullah Ansari Shrine Complex in Gazurgah with funding from the German Government. The work ensured the safeguarding of one of the most important religious sites in Herat.

PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC

Fig.3 | Restoration work on the Qala-e Ikhtyaruddin Citadel in Herat was carried out by AKTC from 2008 to 2011 with support from the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation of the US Embassy.

PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC

conserve key public buildings – mosques, cisterns and bazaars – as well as historic houses.

A system of small-scale grants and building advice has also been established aimed at enabling some fifty owners of traditional homes to undertake basic repairs, and this has resulted in improved living conditions while at the same time protecting the integrity of the historic fabric. As well as safeguarding historic property, the projects have provided a platform for the training of traditional craftsmen, while also demonstrating the potential of conservation and adaptive re-use in a context where there is a growing tendency to demolish historic property and redevelop.

However, the upgrading of infrastructure is also critical to the future of the Old City of Herat. In order to contribute to the improvement of the inhabitants’ living conditions, nearly 5km of underground and surface drains have been repaired or rebuilt, and more than 6,000 square metres of pedestrian alleyways and streets paved to facilitate access through the historic fabric. Together with the building conservation work, since 2005 this has generated more than 240,000 workdays of skilled and unskilled labour, largely drawn from residents of the Old City. Such investment has directly benefited at least half of the population of the Old City, prompting community-implemented improvements in some quarters that were not covered under the AKTC’s urban conservation programme.

Aside from the physical challenges facing the historic fabric and the need for additional investment to render the Old City more habitable, the issue of the management of the urban environment is now more critical than ever. The AKTC has provided technical assistance to a Commission for the Safeguarding and Development of the Old City of Herat comprising representatives from key institutions and professional bodies. While some progress has been made in involving the communities themselves in the safeguarding of historic property, the absence of effective leadership has handicapped these initiatives.

The challenge for the AKTC programme has been to find a balance between meeting often urgent conservation needs, while at the same time addressing poor living conditions and simultaneously strengthening institutional capacity. This requires work at a variety of levels: with central government in Kabul to promote administrative reform and accountability; with local government to promote the rule of law, effective co-ordination and basic professional standards; among the wider Afghan professional community to raise awareness and build partnerships; among community representatives to assist in the implementation of rehabilitation work; and among donors and international organizations to draw attention to the threats posed to the fragile historic fabric of the Old City of Herat. ■

BALKH

Tentative List

Balkh-Bactria

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Bactra and the Bactrian Region

Bordered to the south by the Hindu Kush and to the north by the Hissar Mountains, Bactria is a low-lying area situated in southern Central Asia in the north of Afghanistan. It is crossed by the Amu Darya River, flowing from east to west, and while the northernmost part of Bactria is divided between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, the larger part of the Bactrian plain is located in Afghanistan. The area's historic capital, Balkh in Afghanistan, became less and less important during the Islamic period, being replaced by the city of Mazar-i Sharif, which has since become the most important economic centre in northern Afghanistan.



The Ancient History of Bactra

The Bactrian region was unknown to archaeologists until the end of the nineteenth century, and only a few western travelers were able to enter a region that was nevertheless of great interest to the western scientific community thanks to the preaching of Zoroaster in the region in ancient times and the conquest of Alexander the Great in 325 BCE. However, the reports sent back by the early European travelers to the region left the questions of western specialists unanswered.



The Site and Surroundings Monuments

The historical site of Bactra is surrounded by nearly 10 km of fortifications, these delimiting an upper town, the *Bala Hissa* (Fig. 1) with an acropolis, or *ark* (Fig. 2), and a lower town that is the site of the present city. There is no evidence of recent occupation in the upper town, and, aside from the fortifications, nothing remains of the ancient monuments.

In the lower town, very few ancient monuments have survived the various invasions and periods of

abandonment that have taken place since ancient times, or the more modern periods of destruction. Only part of the late Timurid Mausoleum of Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa (Fig. 3) now survives, along with a single arch of the madrasa built by Sa'ïd Sobhan Quli Khan in 1702. In the north-east part of Balkh, the Mausoleum of Khwaja Akkashah Wali, which dates to the end of the Timurid period, has recently been

Fig. 1 | Fortifications of the *Bala Hissa* (upper town) of Bactra.

PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL

Fig. 2 | Citadel of the *Bala Hissa* of Bactra.

PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL



Fig. 3 | Mausoleum of Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL

Fig. 4 | Southern fortifications of the lower town of Bactra.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL



Fig. 5 | Southwestern fortifications of the lower town with the Borj-e Ayyaran in the background.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL



Fig. 6 | The Haji Piyada/ No Gonbad Mosque.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL



reconstructed. Many other mausoleums can be found in the gardens and countryside that surround the town.

The ‘ancient route to India from Bactra to Taxila,’ made famous by the French archaeologist Alfred Foucher, once started from the Darvaza-e Baba Koh Gate, the city’s southern gateway, which has now been destroyed. This route once joined the region to the Indian subcontinent, following the course of the Balkhab River through the Cheshme Shafa gorge (Figs. 4 & 5). Leaving Balkh on this road today, visitors will notice the remains of a large stupa, the Tepe Rustam, to the west, this having been excavated by Foucher in 1924, and a large terrace to the east, the Takhti Rustam, the function of which has yet to be identified but whose building techniques link it to the pre-Islamic period.

However, the most remarkable building in this southern area of the town is the Mosque of Haji Piyada/No Gonbad, which dates to the first half of the ninth century CE (Fig. 6). This monument, with its exceptional stucco decoration, was only identified in 1966.

The Foundation of the DAFA

The foundation of the D el egation arch eologique fran aise en Afghanistan (DAFA) in 1923 should have enabled French archaeologists to respond to the expectations of the international scientific community concerning the ancient Greek presence in Bactria. However, the results of the first archaeological mission to Bactra, conducted by the first director of the DAFA, Foucher, in 1924-25, were disappointing, leading to the idea of a ‘Bactrian mirage’ as far as the ancient Greek presence in Central Asia was concerned. This mirage only disappeared in 1965 with the discovery of Ai Khanoum in eastern Bactria, though Bactra itself, which had once been the Hellenistic capital, remained inaccessible.

Further research by French and Soviet archaeologists in the 1970s led to the discovery of Bronze Age populations in the area (Dashli and Shortughai, etc.). In 1982, the DAFA itself was closed at the request of the Afghan Government of the time. Following looting carried out in Bactra in the 1990s, various Hellenistic architectural pieces were brought to light, and these important discoveries re-launched debate about the capital of Bactria in the Graeco-Bactrian period and made further work more urgent.



Fig. 7 | Tepe Zargaran: architectural blocks.
PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL

Fig. 8 | Tepe Zargaran: Buddhist capital.
PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL

Fig. 9 | Tepe Zargaran: Kushano-Sassanid mural painting.
PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL

Following the end of the Taliban regime, the DAFA reopened in Kabul in 2002, and archaeological work in Bactra restarted in 2004 as part of a Franco-Afghan co-operation agreement between the DAFA and Afghan archaeologists at the National Institute of Archaeology of Afghanistan.

The first priority of this work was to shed light on the context of the Hellenistic architectural elements found during the illegal excavation work, investigation revealing that this had taken place at the site of Tepe Zargaran around the walls of the eastern enclosure of the lower town. The blocks in question came from a collection that had been reused in ancient times and that were located some 6 to 8 m below the current ground level (Fig. 7). Hellenistic and Bactro-Achaemenid ceramic pieces were later found in excavations carried out in the same area in 2008. Bactro-Achaemenid occupation of the area had already been identified by the 2004 mission to the *Bala Hissa* in Bactra, and this had been confirmed by archaeological investigation. However, this was the first time that Greek presence had been attested to by stratigraphic investigation in the Bactrian capital itself.

In order to study the fortifications of the lower town that mainly date to the Kushan period, archaeological investigation was begun at the same time in the north-east area of the lower town. Fragments of mural painting dating to the end of the Kushano-Sassanid period (fifth to seventh centuries CE, Fig. 9), were also found in a building in Tepe Zargaran.

The discovery of the site of Cheshme Shafa in 2004 at the point where the Balkhab River joins the plain 25 km south of Bactra added to knowledge of the Bactrian hinterland. This immense fortified site, the foundations of which are currently dated to the Bactro-Achaemenid period, once controlled the Cheshme Shafa gorge and the ancient road to the south via Hazaradjat (Figs. 10 & 11). The oldest fire-altar known to originate from Afghanistan, also dating to the Bactro-Achaemenid period, was found and excavated here by the mission (Fig. 12).

Fig. 10 | Cheshme Shafa Gorge looking towards the south.
PHOTO: © R. BESEVAL





Fig.11 | Cheshme Shafa: aerial view of the Bactro-Achaemenid lower town.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL



Fig.12 | Cheshme Shafa: area of the fire-altar.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL

Fig.13 | Remains of Bactro-Achaemenid aqueduct to the north of Altin Dilyar.
PHOTO: © R. BESENVAL

The DAFA has also been responsible for the protection and restoration of the Mosque of Haji Piyada, which was earlier threatened with destruction. However, efforts are still underway to find financing for the major programme of consolidation, restoration and protection that this building urgently requires.

The Bactrian mission is also drawing up an archaeological map of Bactria. Since 2006-7, more than 200 ancient and more modern archaeological sites have been visited, positioned cartographically and surveyed. The most important recent discovery has been that attesting to human habitation of the dune area along the Amu Darya River during the Bactro-Achaemenid period, an area that was once thought to have been entirely uninhabited during ancient times (Fig. 13).



Translated from French by David TRESILIAN

THE SAD NEWS OF THE SUDDEN DEATH OF ROLAND BESENVAL reached the editor as this publication went to press. An eminent archaeologist and scholar in Central Asian studies, he reopened the DAFA in 2002 and headed the mission until 2009. During this time, he discovered and identified the site of Hellenistic Bactria in Balkh, vestiges that DAFA founder, Alfred Foucher, and his successors have long been searching for since the 1920s. He made tremendous contributions to the study of the prehistory and the archaeology in Central Asia, as well as of the Indian sub-continent and the Arabian Peninsula. He was also instrumental in the nomination of Sarazm in the UNESCO World Heritage List as the first site of Tajikistan in 2010. Roland Besenval passed away on 29 September 2014 while on mission in Sarazm. Together with all those who knew him, we pay tribute to him and his outstanding contributions to the study of the region.

BALKH

Tentative List

The Abbasid Mosque in Balkh

Aga Khan Trust for Culture – Afghanistan

THE NO GONBAD OR HAJI PIYADA MOSQUE is believed by many historians and archaeologists to be one of the earliest Islamic-era religious structures in Afghanistan and possibly in the wider region. Historians Lisa Golombek, who wrote an article on the Mosque in 1969 following her visit to the site three years earlier, and Galina A. Pougatchenkova, who visited the monument in 1967 and wrote an article on the Mosque the following year, are widely credited with making the monument known to the outside world. While there seem to be differences on the exact date of the construction of the Mosque, many agree that the monument hails from the Abbasid era and attribute the timeframe for its construction to the early part of the eighth century CE, possibly with subsequent interventions extending to the first half of the ninth century.

Located 3.9 km south of the centre of modern Balkh, the monument and its remaining stucco decoration is a highly important and exquisite example of early Islamic-era architecture. Measuring approximately 400 square m (external walls of 19.5 x 20 m), the Mosque is located on a relatively flat site some 20 m to the south of a large shallow-water reservoir flanked by a number of mature plane trees. A wall enclosing the 4.2 ha site of No Gonbad was built in 2006 by the Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan (DAFA).

The name 'No Gonbad' (nine domes) is derived from the number of masonry domes that once covered the Mosque. Significantly, the internal walls, columns, and arches were decorated with exquisite stucco motifs, including highly articulated geometric floral patterns that bear resemblance to other Abbasid-era buildings as far afield as Samarra in Mesopotamia. Originally resting on sixteen columns, of which six were free-standing with the remaining embedded into the outer enclosure walls, all of the Mosque's nine domes have since collapsed, raising the floor level by 1.5 m on average.



What remains today of this 1,200-year-old structure are large sections of the outer enclosure walls, within which three of the four free-standing circular columns, measuring approximately 1.5 m in diameter, are connected by two perpendicular arches spanning a 4.2 m distance. Left exposed to the elements for decades, resulting in severe erosion of the structure and further damage to the fine stucco decoration, it was not until 1972 that the remains of the Mosque were protected when a large metal hanger was erected above the site by the Agency for Technical Co-operation and Development (ACTED) with UNESCO funding. This metal structure was retrofitted with a geo-textile curtain wall by DAFA in 2006 that aimed at limiting further damage to the remains of the Mosque from rain carried into the building by strong northwesterly winds.

Fig.1 | In order to facilitate the consolidation work, the delicate remains of the No Gonbad Mosque were strengthened and a lightweight scaffolding structure was built as to enable access.

PHOTO: © AKTC

In 2009, experts visiting the site concluded that the two damaged arches spanning the remaining columns were in urgent need of structural repair and consolidation. In partnership with the Afghan authorities, DAFA, the World Monuments Fund, the Associazione Giovanni Secco Suardo and the University of Florence, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) initiated a multi-year conservation project aimed at stabilizing and safeguarding key sections of the remaining architecture of this

important monument. Following a two-year analysis and pilot study programme supported by the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, a comprehensive plan for structural retrofitting was prepared by AKTC and tested on a full-size replica of the columns and arches. This then received technical endorsement from the Afghan Government and project partners.

Funded by the US Embassy in Afghanistan, a team of Afghan and international experts and craftsmen led by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) has been meticulously implementing work on the structure since mid-2011. This has entailed the consolidation and repair of the unique stucco decoration, the structural repair and strengthening of the damaged masonry columns and arches, and modest enhancements to the surrounding landscape.

Further discussion is currently underway on extending the scope of the conservation project to include consolidation work on the fragile outer enclosure walls, also containing exquisite stucco decoration, which are in urgent need of repair and strengthening. A second phase of the work will ensure that the No Gonbad Mosque is safeguarded for future generations of Afghans and scholars alike, paving the way for further scientific research and investigations that are expected to reveal additional information on the history and construction of this unique monument. ■



Fig. 2 | Before structural consolidation work could commence, the exquisite stucco decoration adorning the surfaces of the building had to be stabilized and protected.

PHOTO: © AKTC

Fig. 3 | Afghan craftsmen were provided with extensive training in conservation techniques.

PHOTO: © AKTC



BAGH-E BABUR

Tentative List

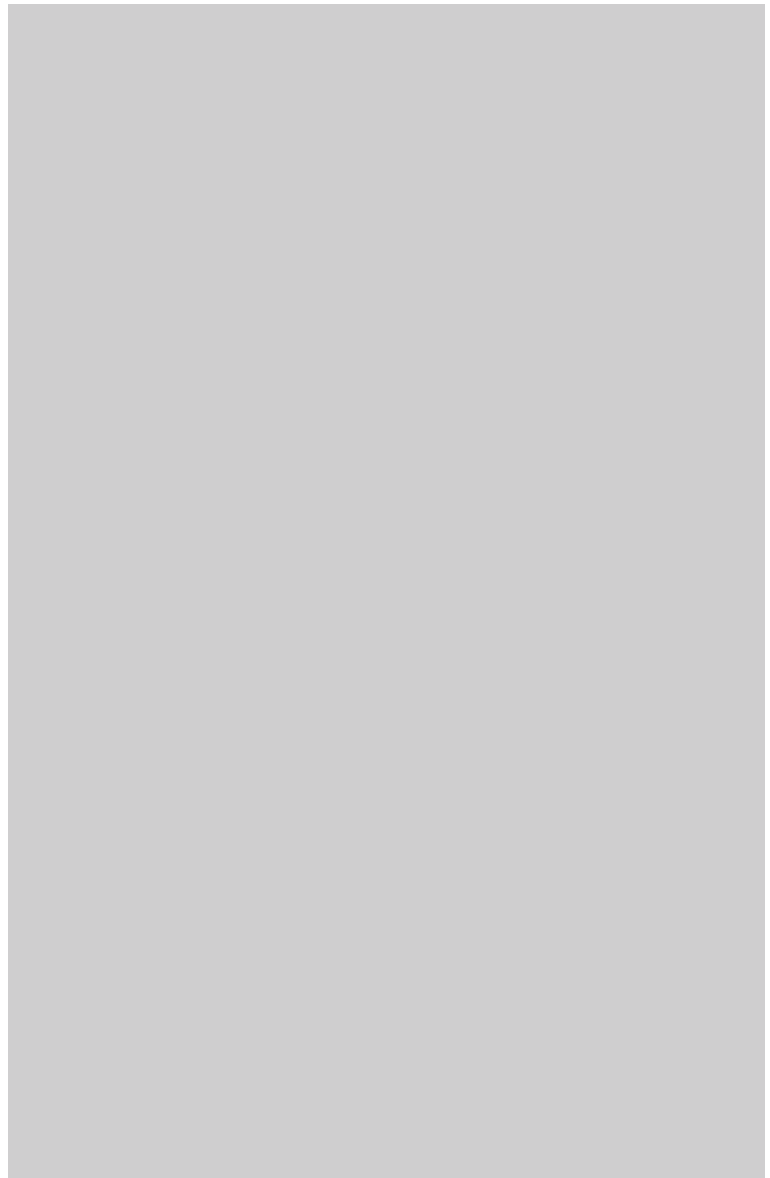
Babur's Garden

World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector

SITUATED ON A HILLSIDE southwest of Kabul's old city, Bagh-e Babur is a landscaped garden laid out over 11 hectares of 15 stepped orchard terraces, with views across the Kabul River out towards the snow-capped mountains that surround Kabul. It features the tomb of the garden's creator, Zahir ad-Din Muhammad Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty, and a small mosque later commissioned by the Emperor, Shah Jahan. The garden's central axis points towards Mecca, supported by water channels, pools, and basins that divide the space into four quarters. These divisions are lined by tree and flower species that have been selected intentionally in the *chahar bagh* design.

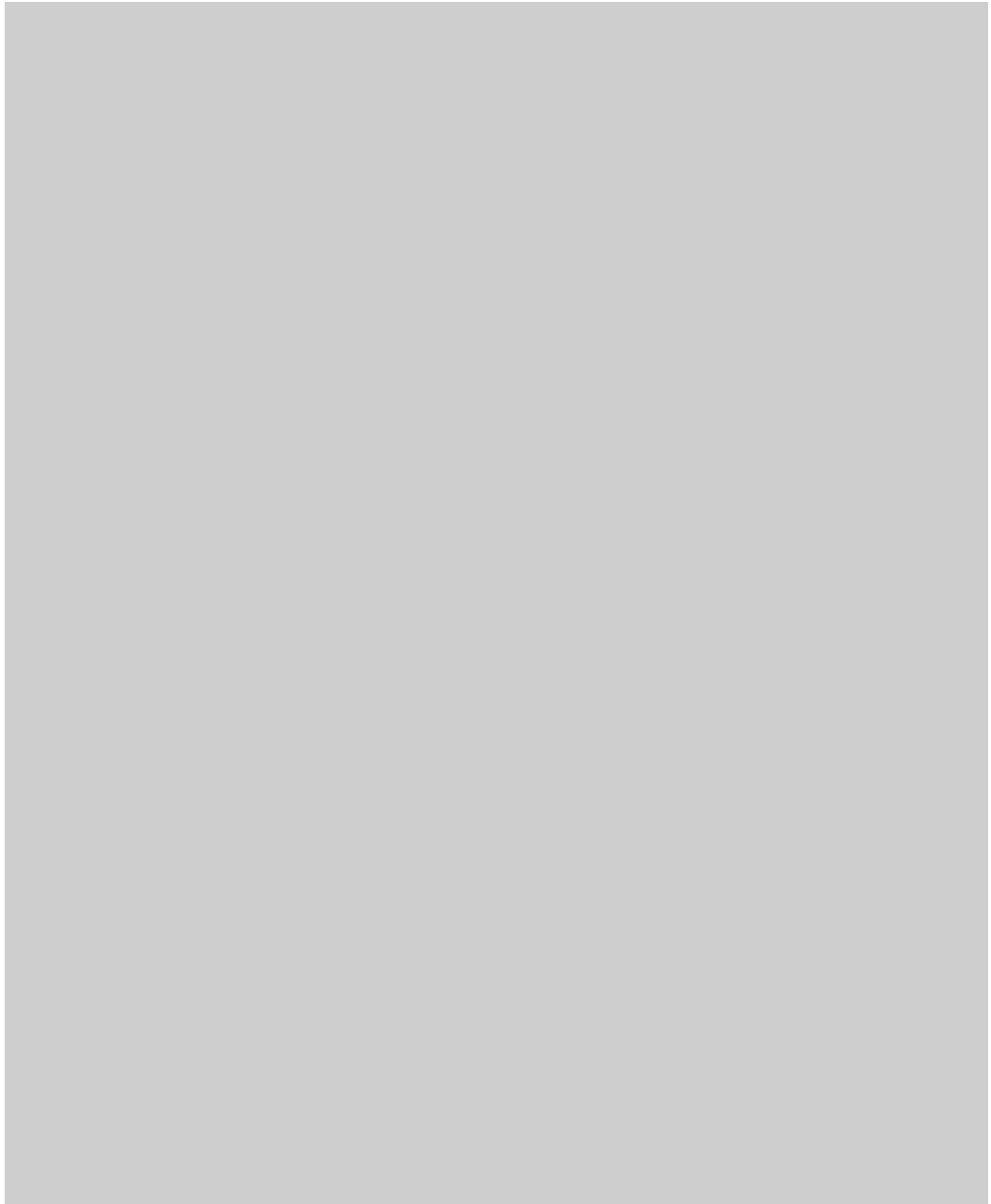
Babur's garden, built from 1528 onwards, is the only preserved landscape garden in the region which reflects subsequent development stages and shows shifts in function, style and concepts from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries: from a Timurid pleasure garden to a Mughal garden, to a nineteenth century representational garden and a twentieth century public park. The original Persian and Timurid features have been maintained to this day, making Bagh-e Babur an exceptional living testimony to the concepts of these traditions. Later features of the Mughal period, such as its perimeter wall, gateway, caravanserai marketplace, water pools with fountains on each terrace, and marble-lined water channels, mark the site as the precursor of famous Mughal tomb gardens such as the Taj Mahal.

Laid out by Babur as a pleasure garden, the grounds were designed for the purpose of meditation and reflection, conducting court business, entertainment and the holding of royal audiences. As was his wish, Babur was buried within the garden, on the fourteenth terrace surrounded by a screen of marble lattice work. Pilgrims soon came to pay their respects and his successor eventually built a mosque just southwest of Babur's grave. Succeeding rulers



[Fig.1] | Due to copyright restrictions, the picture is available only in the printed publication.

[Fig. 2] | Due to copyright restrictions, the picture is available only in the printed publication.



of Afghanistan also left their imprint on Bagh-e Babur. In the late nineteenth century, Amir Abdur Rahman transformed its upper terraces and used the premises as a guesthouse for foreign visitors. During the second quarter of the twentieth century, Nadir Shah also altered the garden’s landscape and built architecture, patterning the changes after European designs and making it function as a public park.

Thus, the original pleasure gardens metamorphosed not just into a tomb garden for the head

of the Mughal dynasty, but a place of veneration and political symbolism as well. Different aspects of the resident culture’s development, including religion, politics and aesthetics, were cultivated to such a degree in Bagh-e Babur that the ensemble was placed on the Tentative List for the Afghanistan’s World Heritage – recognition of the site as an outstanding example of an evolved cultural landscape (**Fig. 1 & 2**). ■

BAGH-E BABUR

Tentative List

The Legacy of Babur's Favourite Garden

Aga Khan Trust for Culture – Afghanistan

THE GARDEN OF BABUR (BAGH-E BABUR) was laid out in the early sixteenth century by the emperor Zahir ad-Din Muhammad Babur Padshah Ghazi, the founder of the Mughal Dynasty whose rule extended from central Asia to India. A detailed account of Babur's life and conquests is provided in his memoirs, the *Baburnama*, in which he mentions being influenced by the Timurid gardens he visited in Samarkand and Herat. Upon capturing Kabul in 1504 CE, Babur set about building his Garden above the fertile Chardehi Plain, using it to plan and launch military campaigns and celebrate victories, hold royal audiences, dispense punishments, read poetry and entertain.

When Babur died in Agra in 1530, in accordance with his wishes his body was exhumed and transported to Kabul, where his remains were buried on an upper terrace of the Garden in 1540. His successors came to pay their respects to the grave, with Babur's great-grandson Jahangir instructing that a platform, or *chabutra*, be laid around the grave, an inscribed headstone be erected and that the Garden be enclosed by walls during a visit in 1607. Shah Jahan later dedicated a marble mosque during a visit to the site in 1647.

In the late nineteenth century, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan constructed a number of buildings for his court in the Garden, thereby transforming an environment that had until then been defined largely by trees and water. The Bagh-e Babur was much transformed and in a poor state of repair by the time that inter-factional fighting broke out in Kabul in 1992. The conflict quickly engulfed the area around the Garden, which lay on the front-lines between the factional fighters, and the latter cut down the trees to limit cover, stripped and set fire to the buildings and looted the water pumps.

In March 2002, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) signed a 'Memorandum of Agreement' with the then Transitional Administration of Afghanistan



for a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation of the Babur Garden. The project was carried out through the AKTC's Historic Cities Programme (HCP), with co-funding from the Governments of Germany, the United States and Norway. The goal was to restore the original character of the landscape and to conserve key buildings, while at the same time ensuring that the Garden, the largest public open space in Kabul, would continue to be a focus for recreation and cultural programmes for the inhabitants of the city.

The restoration work was carried out within the context of a wider area development project initiated in early 2004 that aimed at improving the

Fig. 1 | The 11 ha Garden of Babur, situated along the western slopes of the Sher Darwaza Mountain in Kabul, is the city's largest green public space and one of its most important historic sites.

PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC

Fig. 2 | The water channel at the heart of the Garden was reconstructed following the extensive archaeological remains. Due in part to its religious and symbolic associations with paradise, it might have influenced the Moghul emperor's wish to be laid to rest in this site.
 PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC



Fig. 3 | Visited by more than two million Afghans since the completion of the restoration work in 2008, the historic landscape and complex of monuments has been maintained to international standards by the personnel of the Bagh-e Babur Trust.
 PHOTOGRAPHER: CHRISTIAN RICHTERS / PHOTO: © AKTC



living conditions of the 10,000 or so people living in the immediate vicinity of the Bagh-e Babur through improving storm water drainage, water supplies and access. An important aspect of the work was to build the capacity of key municipal staff at the district level, so that they would be in a better position to oversee current and future upgrading initiatives. Upon the completion of the landscaping, conservation and upgrading work in early 2008, more than 735,000 man/days of work had been generated, employing on average 350 skilled and unskilled labourers from the surrounding communities while providing on-the-job training for hundreds of Afghans.

Since the management of the restored Garden posed further challenges, a tripartite 'Memorandum of Understanding' was signed in 2008 between the Kabul Municipality, the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture and the AKTC, which established the independent Bagh-e Babur Trust (BBT). Tasked with overall responsibility for effectively managing and maintaining the site, the 80 full-time staff of the BBT have ensured that the Bagh-e Babur remains accessible to the more than two million Afghan and international visitors that have visited it since 2008 and that revenue collected through such visits and the hire of facilities is reinvested in the operation of the site. This has resulted in the financial self-sustainability of operations since 2010.

Aiming to ensure that the historic landscape and buildings of the Garden are safeguarded for future generations, the Bagh-e Babur rehabilitation programme has also helped foster a better understanding of the integrated approach to cultural-heritage preservation and wider socio-economic regeneration. Many visitors to the Bagh-e Babur today remark on how the site represents for them a symbol of the cultural recovery of Afghanistan. The challenge is to retain the unique character of the landscape and monuments, while at the same time ensuring continued access for the public. ■

BAND-E AMIR

Tentative List

The First National Park in Afghanistan

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FAMOUS FOR THE VARIED COLOURS of their waters, which range from dark blue to turquoise, the lakes of Band-e Amir (Commander's Dam) are reachable by road 75 km west of Bamiyan near the city of Yakawlang in the Hindu Kush of central Afghanistan. They form one of the most beautiful natural environments in the whole of Afghanistan, covering more than 6,000 square km, or some 50 times the size of Italy's Lake Como, and making up the largest sweet-water reservoir in the country.

The lakes are surrounded by the barren Koh-e Baba Mountains, and, separated by natural dams, they stretch out across the Mountain valleys at a height of approximately 3,000 m above sea level. Though the lakes are filled with clear, fresh water, the banks do not feature any vegetation or settlements. There are six lakes altogether, the Afghan National Park covering the Band-e Ghulaman (Lake of Grandeur), Band-e Paneer (Lake of Cheese), Band-e Pundeea (Lake of Wild Mint), Band-e

Fig. 1 | Band-e Amir.

PHOTO: © M. KHALILI



Zulfiqar (Lake of the Sword of Ali), Band-e Barbar, and Band-e Haibat (Lake of the Great Dam).

What looks like a miracle at the lakes is in fact the work of thousands of years. At the end of the chain of lakes, the small Band-e Haibat lake near Dehe Qasi is dammed by a natural barrier, with a dam some 12 m high holding back the water in the lakes and leaving half the valley dry. The dam was built by the lake itself as a result of the highly calcareous water overflowing the edge of the dam and slowly building it up through regular calcareous deposits. This travertine wall, built by the lake itself over thousands of years, joins the remains of former dams visible at the sides of the valley, showing that previous dams of the same kind must once also have existed in the area and later been broken up due to tectonic activity (Fig. 1).

This natural dam has given rise to many legends, some of them attributing it to a miracle. In most of the stories, Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed, appears in the guise of a slave or in other forms before a tyrannical infidel king. Challenged by the king to control the raging Band-e Amir River, Ali swings his sword and cuts off a mountain top to create the first lake, Band-e Zulfiqar. He then digs up trees and shrubs, building a dam that creates Band-e Pundeeta. Local women bring him cheese, which he uses in yet another attempt to dam the water, resulting in the white-bottomed Band-e Paneer. Finally, Ali hurls rocks and boulders into the valley to form Band-e Haibat, ultimately controlling the river. Once he has succeeded in this miraculous feat, Ali reveals his true identity and the infidel king converts to Islam.

Another legend says that during the era before Islam was introduced into Bamiyan, the waters from the lake flowed onto agricultural land. The king of the time assigned workers to dam the lake, but they were unable to do so. When Ali arrived on the scene, he broke off a large chunk of rock from the mountain with his sword, using it to make the dam. A shrine commemorating Ali's miracle was erected at the site in 1904, and it can still be seen on the sacred shores of Band-e Haibat. Even today the lakes are a pilgrimage site for pilgrims from across the region, especially for the Shia Hazara.

In September 2004, shortly after the inscription of the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Band-e-Amir was placed on the Tentative List under criteria (vii) (containing

superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance); (viii) (representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of land-forms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features); (ix) (representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals); and (x) (containing the most important and significant natural habitats for the in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation) (Fig. 2).

The application to the Tentative List was submitted by the Afghan Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture, which noted that 'Band-e Amir is a naturally created group of lakes with special geological formations and structure, as well as a natural and unique beauty. The depth is not known; the colour is pure blue. It has an historical and natural background that has not been disturbed up to now. Band-e Amir is important to attract local and international tourists, and it is protected as a National Park of Afghanistan.'

Band-e Amir's actual protection as an Afghan National Park only took place in April 2009, and the process was greatly assisted by the US Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In a statement, the WCS said that the lakes were under growing threats from pollution and human-caused degradation and the creation of the National Park would provide the site with the recognition needed to develop Band-e Amir as an international tourist destination and assist it in obtaining UNESCO World Heritage status.

The designation would create the groundwork to create an Afghan Protected Area System that could include the biodiverse trans-boundary area in the Pamir Mountains shared by Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and Tajikistan, the WCS said. It would be managed by Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, and the Band-e Amir Protected Area Committee, a network of 13 villages lying within the Park providing local input to management decisions and helping to ensure that the Park



helped provide employment and tourism-derived revenue to local communities and that they played a key role in protecting this world-class landscape.

However, there are many challenges. The Band-e Amir National Park is in one of Afghanistan's poorest regions, even as it is one that is critical to biodiversity conservation and economic development. With more than 80 per cent of Afghans dependent on the country's natural resources, long-term economic and political stability relies on sustainably managing those resources. There is still a danger that habitat destruction is continuing in the area through the collection of firewood, overgrazing, overhunting, fishing through blasting the lakes with hand grenades, and pollution.

This fragile biological environment can only be maintained with government assistance, the primary goal being to support the local inhabitants,

while also preserving this exceptional environment for others to enjoy. Owing to its location some 215 km from the Afghan capital Kabul, the Band-e Amir National Park attracts visitors from all over the country, as well as some hardy tourists from abroad. The immense natural beauty and cool summer temperatures of the area make it a popular destination.

The development of the Bamiyan Province is a regular topic on the agenda of the UNESCO Bamiyan Working Group, of which Governor of the Province of Bamiyan is a regular member. The idea of moving the local airfield from Bamiyan to Shibatu some 35km further west has long been discussed, and this has now been agreed in principle by the Afghan Government. Were the local airfield to be located in Shibatu, Band-e Amir would be more accessible to visitors, and a tourism centre with accommodation

Fig. 2 | Band-e Amir.
PHOTO: © M. KHALILI

and associated infrastructure could be developed near the airport in order to avoid overloading both Bamiyan and the Band-e Amir National Park. There is no accommodation at the lakes themselves, and as the environment within the Park is highly fragile, infrastructure for natural and cultural tourism should be kept to a minimum.

A regional development management plan should now be developed as soon as possible as part of the Park's nomination as a potential World Heritage Site. Band-e Amir is close to Bamiyan, and the two sites should be planned together, with local communities benefitting from the economic advantages of increasing tourism.

The WCS in particular has set out the following goals for the area's conservation: the

implementation of the Band-e Amir management plan through the Band-e Amir Protected Area Committee, a community-government partnership; the establishment of more protected areas on the Hazarajat Plateau, including the Ajar Valley Wildlife Reserve; the promotion of Band-e Amir as a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site, strengthening its protection; the development of a wildlife corridor, sustainably managed by local communities, between Band-e Amir and the Ajar Valley, enabling wildlife to move and repopulate areas within the region; and the creation of the Band-e Amir National Park as a model to establish other community-managed protected areas, such as in the Big Pamir Reserve region of the Wakhan in north-eastern Afghanistan. ■

Fig. 3 | Band-e Amir.
PHOTO: © M. JANSEN



GHAZNI

Rediscovering the Past, Looking into the Future by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan

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SAPEGUARDING CULTURAL HERITAGE means defining cultural identity, and this is unquestionably a crucial issue for contemporary Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the safeguarding of cultural heritage is frequently perceived as a mere matter of technical management. Instead, the latter is only the last and most visible stage of a long process that starts a long time before and involves many different disciplines and people. Any physical object, monument or space, or any human expression and tradition, which we consider worth protecting and handing down to the next generations is such because it has been rediscovered, interpreted, recognized as meaningful, exhibited in public spaces, illustrated in school books, and, eventually, included in our collective memory. This report on the activities of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan describes the initial stages of this process, when forgotten things start being rescued from oblivion.

Main Discoveries

The Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan (MAIA) was born in 1957 as one of the first and foremost archaeological projects of the Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East (IsMEO), later the Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient (IsIAO). However, during the fifty years of its existence the MAIA has not always been able to engage in actual fieldwork, due to the political events which have marked the history of the country since the late 1970s.

The MAIA started its activities in Ghazni, the city that was the capital of the Ghaznavids (from 977 to 1163 CE) and later of the Ghurids (between 1173 and 1203). The primary aim was the rediscovery of the city's Islamic tangible heritage, until then only known from written sources and a very few visible remains. Two sites were excavated on the plain of Dasht-i Manara, a private house dating from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries and seemingly



hurriedly abandoned after some unexpected event, which was named the 'House of the Lustreware' after the perfectly preserved lustreware painted vessels that were found in a niche in the house (Fig. 1), and a sultan's palace from the Ghaznavid period (eleventh to twelfth centuries). These sites provided new insights into the early and mediaeval Islamic art and architecture of Afghanistan, as did the wealth of architectural decorative elements found reused in later religious buildings during dedicated surveys. As later studies went on to demonstrate, the impact of the models elaborated or refined in Ghazni had far-reaching impacts on the artistic culture of the Indian subcontinent.

Fig. 1 | Ghazni (1957): House of the Lustreware. Niche containing lustreware ceramics.

PHOTO: © ISIAO

Fig. 2 | Tapa Sardar: a polychrome clay statue (First to third or fourth centuries CE).

PHOTO: © ISIAO



Fig. 3 | Tapa Sardar: a polychrome clay statue (Seventh and eighth centuries CE).

PHOTO: © ISIAO



Nevertheless, it soon became clear the cultural past of Ghazni also had a rich and much earlier stratification. Surveys carried out in the area in search of pre-Islamic remains soon provided proof that Buddhism had also once flourished in Ghazni, as was shown by the remains found at the hill of Tapa Sardar. The religious and political prestige of this settlement, besides being fully evidenced by the archaeological remains, is also confirmed by two written sources. According to an inscription found on a pot at the site, Tapa Sardar was once known as the *Kanika mahārāja vihāra* (the temple of the Great King Kanishka), reinforcing the hypothesis that the *mahārāja vihāra* of Tapa Sardar may well correspond to the *Shah Bahar*, a site which according to the *Kitab al-buldan*, an historical and geographical account written by al-Ya'qubi in the ninth century, was destroyed in 795 CE.

While the sculptures from the earlier phases of the site attest to close ties with the Gandharan tradition of northwest Pakistan (from the first to third or fourth centuries CE), which was characterized by pronounced Hellenistic features (Fig. 2), new artistic (and doctrinal?) trends seem to have introduced remarkable changes in the later period (Fig. 3). These are especially reflected in the emphasis put on the visibility of the cultic images, which is greatly enhanced by their colossal size and gilded surfaces. The documentation collected from this site and the relevant scientific literature produced so far are now providing helpful reference points for on-going archaeological investigations. The significant analogies in objects, iconographies and lay-outs between Tapa Sardar and other Afghan sites currently under excavation, such as Tepe Narenj and Mes Aynak, will certainly contribute to a clearer definition of Afghan artistic and cultural traditions and their impact on surrounding areas.

Among the many other activities of the MAIA in the area of Ghazni, mention must be made of the discovery of Homay Qal'a in 1974, an ancient monastic complex excavated from the rock at the eastern limits of the Dasht-i Tamaki site 45 km north of Qarabagh-i Ghazni. However, the MAIA also carried out surveys and excavations in other areas, which not only further confirmed the archaeological and cultural richness of Afghanistan, but also provided important information about periods and typologies still scarcely known about for the entire Indian subcontinent.



Explorations carried out in 1962 in Badakhshan in a circumscribed area around Hazar Sum brought to light evidence of Upper Palaeolithic megalithic monuments (Fig. 4) and striking examples of urban settlements from the historical period characterized by a mix of free-standing and rock-cut architecture. A few kilometres away, the site of Darra-i Kalon revealed phases of human occupation that can be traced back to the Late Pleistocene and Early Olocene ages and one of the very few vestiges so far known of the Aceramic Neolithic in the area stretching from India to Iran. A further enlightening discovery was a bilingual inscription, in Greek and Aramaic, engraved on a rock at Sarpuza (Kandahar) and containing an edict issued by the Mauryan King Asoka (third century BCE), the first ruler to unify the Indian subcontinent and an important propagator of Buddhism.



Return to Afghanistan

The Italian Archaeological Mission returned to Afghanistan in 2002 and began systematically assessing and restoring both the archaeological sites (Tapa Sardar and the Ghaznavid Palace) and the artefacts found there in the 1960s and 1970s. Although the war had caused severe damage to the sites, nearly 85 per cent of the objects were recovered. Most had remained in the Mission's storerooms in Ghazni, while some had been transferred to the National Museum in Kabul by the local authorities. They were saved both by the care taken during the excavations and the Afghan people's efforts to preserve them.

New excavations were undertaken in 2003. A short campaign was carried out near the Ghurid Minaret of Jam, the most famous Islamic monument in Afghanistan. Funded by the Italian Government under the auspices of the UNESCO project described in Chapter 2 of the current publication, the investigation brought to light important archaeological evidence regarding the city, which has been identified from literary sources as the principal capital of the Ghurid sultans. Work was also resumed at Tapa Sardar, with the aim of identifying the Tapa Sardar monastery's earliest phases, but a worsening of security conditions once again caused the interruption of fieldwork. A survey of the Kharwar site in Logar, financed by the National Geographic Society, also revealed extensive evidence of an opulent urban settlement surrounded by Buddhist remains, unfortunately heavily looted by illegal excavators (Fig. 5).

Fig. 4 | A polychrome clay statue from Kharwar.

PHOTO: © ISIAO

Fig. 5 | Hazar Sum: a megalithic circle.

PHOTO: © ISIAO

Fig. 6 | Rawza (1966):
the 'Abd al-Razzaq
Mausoleum after
restoration.
PHOTO: © ISIAO



The Museum of Islamic Art in Rawza

After having restored the Timurid 'Abd al-Razzaq Mausoleum in the village of Rawza (Fig. 6), in 1966 the Italian team set up the Rawza Museum of Islamic Art in the same Mausoleum, in order to display the most important discoveries – mainly dating back to the Ghaznavid period – from the archaeological excavations as well as the surveys of mosques and other sanctuaries carried out around Ghazni.

Closed for thirty years, thanks to funds granted by UNESCO and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Museum has now been restored anew with the assistance of the Afghan Department of Historic Monuments. Work is presently in progress toward reopening it, and thus handing over once again to the Afghan people and to the world some unique masterpieces that fortunately survived intact the devastations of recent decades. To celebrate the naming of Ghazni as Capital of Islamic Culture for the Asian Region for the Year 2013, a booklet entitled *The Rawza Museum at Ghazni. A Brief Guide to the Islamic Collections* has been produced. ■

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The IsIAO was closed in November 2011 as part of a drastic spending review. Since then, the MAIA's institutional base has been the University of Naples 'L'Orientale'.

GHAZNI

The Ghazni City Wall Restoration Project: Latest Technology on Remote Sensing

Georgios TOUBEKIS, Karsten LEY and Michael JANSEN | Aachen Center for Documentation and Conservation



Fig. 1 | Endangered tower in Sector 21 before starting works (2011).
PHOTO: © MAHDI/ACDC



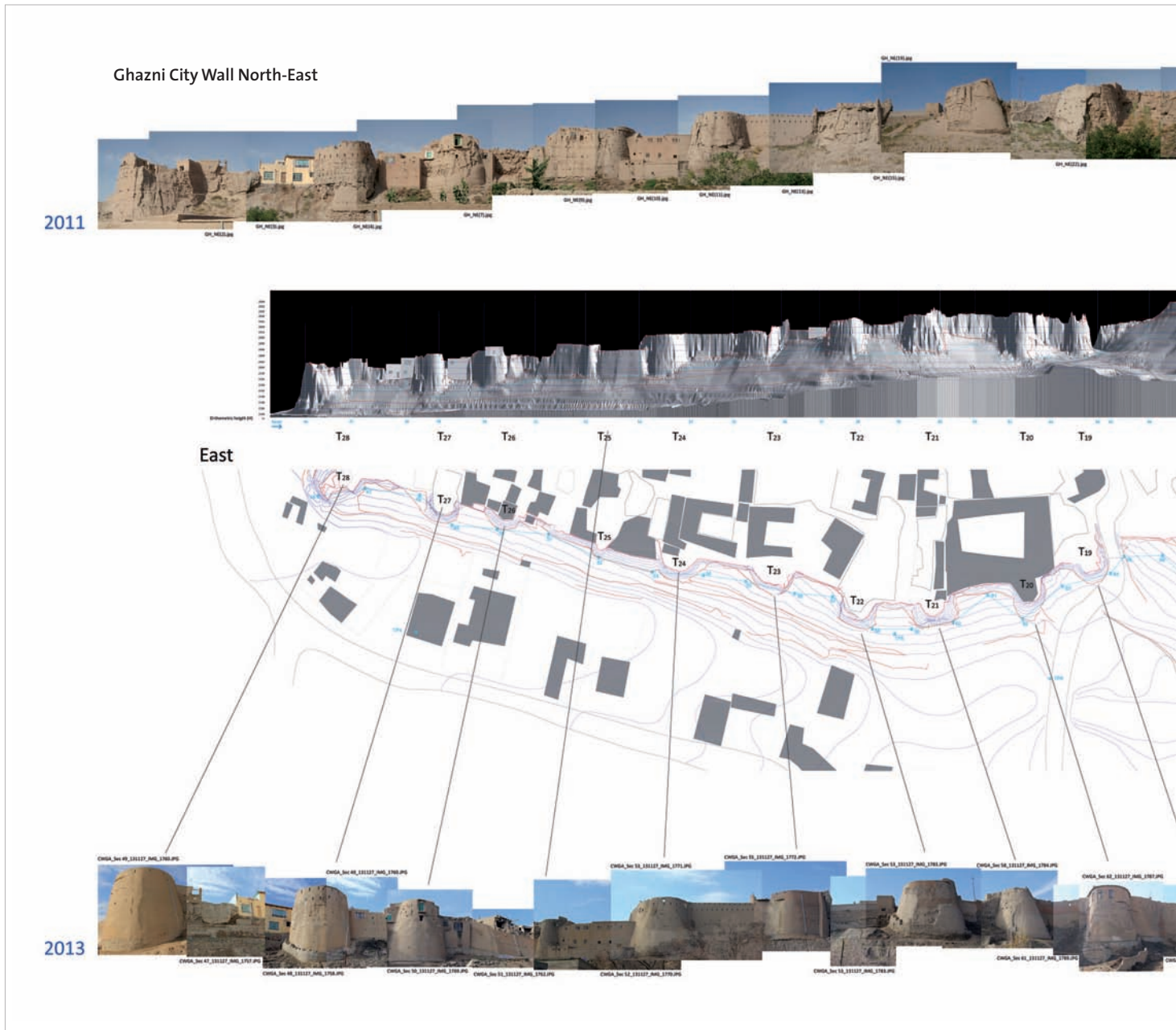
Fig. 2 | Consolidated tower in Section 21 (beginning of 2013).
PHOTO: © MAHDI/ACDC

THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF GHAZNI is located around 150 km south-west of the capital Kabul on a plateau of the central-eastern plains of Afghanistan at around 2200 m above sea level. With a history dating back to Buddhist times, the area of Ghazni has been subject to many military conquests. During its heyday, it was the centre of the Ghaznavid Empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE, which stretched from eastern Persia through Samarkand and up to the northern part of India.

Looking down from the hills over the modern town of Ghazni, the approximately 2 km of monumental walls surrounding the Old City has defied attacks of all kinds over the centuries. Although the city's main gates have long since been demolished to ease access to its labyrinth of narrow alleyways, most of the ramparts and towers have survived. While the city's former grandeur is exemplified in the many historic depictions of the Bala Hissa of Ghazni looming majestically over the landscape, today the deplorable condition of the city walls, like that of many other historical places in Afghanistan, symbolizes the situation of the country after years of unrest and conflict (Fig. 1).

The Commemoration of the legacy of Mahmud of Ghazni as a patron of the arts, poetry and philosophy led the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) to proclaim the City of Ghazni as the Capital of Islamic Culture in the Asian Region for the Year 2013 at the Fourth Conference of Culture Ministers of the Organization held in December 2004 in Algiers. This proclamation was an expression of the diversity of cultural values that abide by moral principles, and it aimed at the establishment of a true 'Culture of Peace' among civilizations and peoples. In light of the recent history of Afghanistan, adhering to this goal will be as ambitious as it is promising for a country that is still facing the on-going loss of its social coherence and cultural identity.

The project for the *Emergency Restoration of the Historic Walls of the Old City of Ghazni* was launched in 2010 as an important component of the Capital of Islamic Culture celebrations carried out under the auspices of the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture. In the original idea put forward by Prof Dr Michael Jansen of RWTH Aachen University in Germany, it was proposed that the project should



promote cultural values as well as the efforts made to rehabilitate the city’s cultural identity by involving as many local residents as possible in the activities. Under the slogan ‘from Afghans for Afghans,’ a great deal of local craftsmanship has been mobilized in a large-scale conservation project for Ghazni that aims to carry out the emergency restoration of the city’s historic walls.

The historic city walls were identified as

an incubator that could introduce the people of Ghazni to the notion of the stewardship of their own cultural heritage by promoting traditional and sustainable building techniques using locally available mud materials in a project that would have an important community focus. In close co-operation with the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture, the project team at the Aachen Center for Documentation and Conservation drew up a

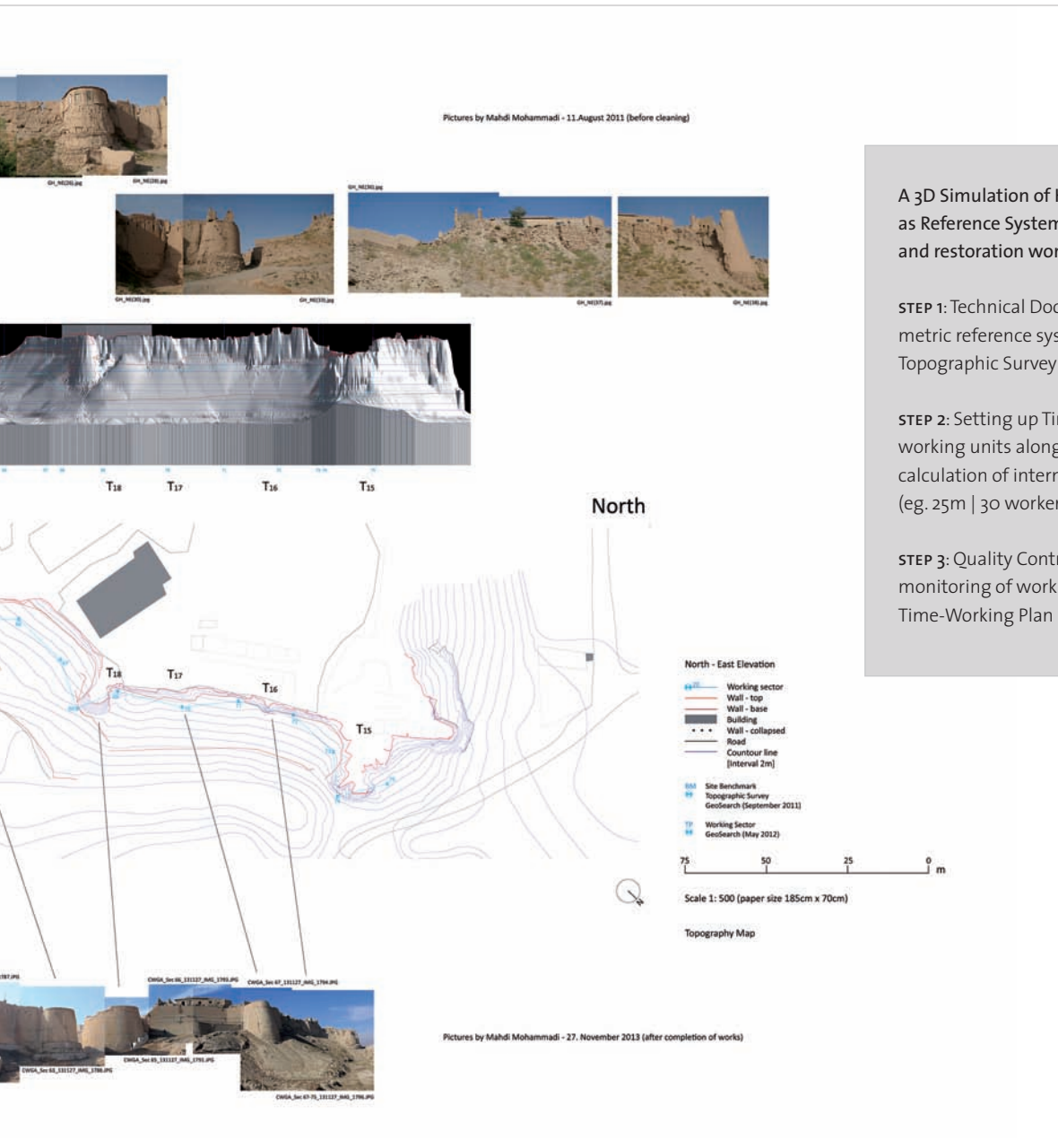


Fig. 3 | New Methodology for Remote Management of conservation projects.
PHOTO: © ACDC

A 3D Simulation of Historic Remains as Reference System for the conservation and restoration works requires:

STEP 1: Technical Documentation for persistent metric reference system (Satellite Image | Topographic Survey | Photographic Analysis)

STEP 2: Setting up Time Working Plan for working units along the structure and calculation of intermediate workloads per unit (eg. 25m | 30 workers | 30 days per sector unit)

STEP 3: Quality Control by continuous weekly monitoring of work progress according Time-Working Plan

feasibility study that led to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs funding the emergency conservation of large parts of the endangered city walls.

Restrictions on movement imposed due to the security situation in the region did not allow a permanent presence in the field, and as a result new methodologies had to be adopted in order to achieve the envisioned goals. High-resolution satellite stereo imagery was used to generate the exact

topography around the city walls (Fig. 3). Working closely with Afghan engineers, local measurements were obtained and included in the interpretation of the satellite images. A complete set of documentation showing the condition of the walls in drawings and in pictures was put together and distributed among all the partners involved to serve as a co-ordination and planning tool for the execution of the work (Fig. 4).

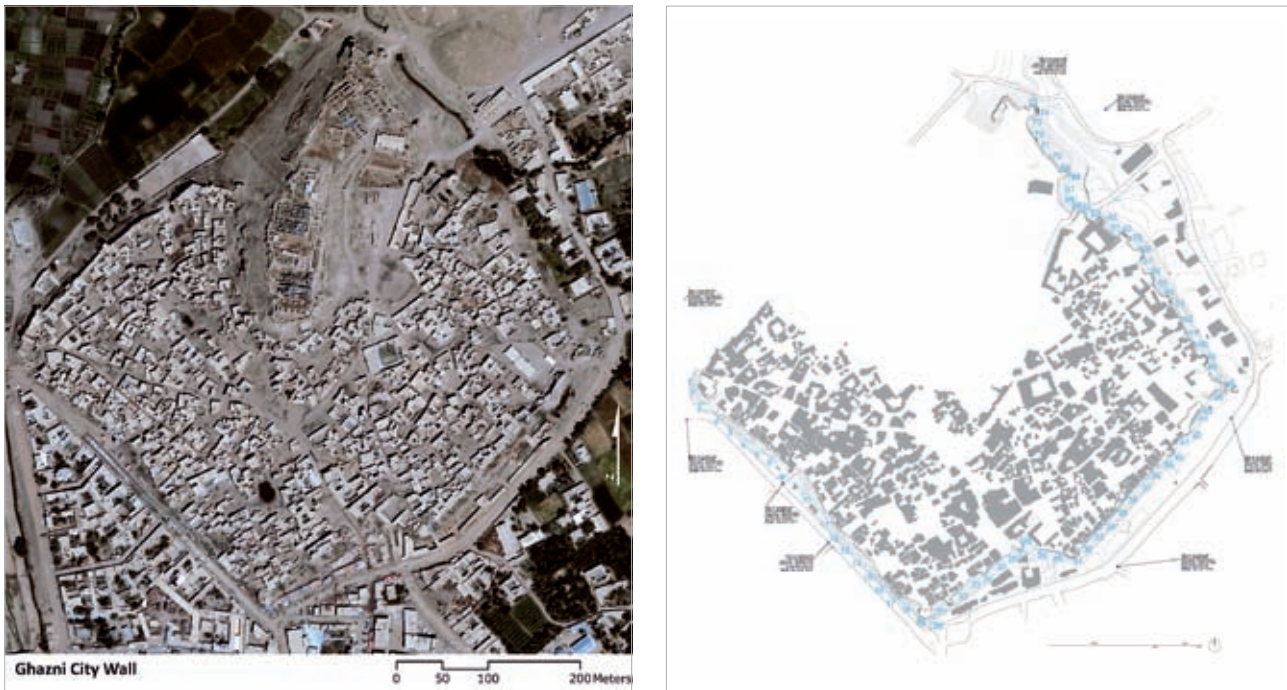


Fig. 4 | (LEFT) Orthorectified Satellite Image of Old City of Ghazni (PHOTO: © GEOEYE-1/ACDC) and (RIGHT) plan extraction of topography and built areas (PHOTO: © ACDC).

A comprehensive system of reporting was established between the international team and the highly motivated engineers of the Department of Historical Monuments in Kabul and Ghazni. Work started in 2011, and by its end in 2013 around 800m of endangered wall portions will have been treated successfully. Beside the restrictions on movement, weather conditions and the availability of brick material of an appropriate quality also slowed down the work. Some of the towers were in such a delicate condition that local engineers had to invent sophisticated ways to partially disassemble them in order to improve their structural integrity and then to reconstruct them afterwards. Overall, interventions on the existing historical structures were kept to a minimum in order to maintain the authenticity of the materials and construction techniques used.

The goal was to carry out emergency conservation work and not to engage in the reconstruction of lost parts of the walls except in cases where this was deemed necessary to achieve the structural stability of the existing historical material. Furthermore, the continuous cycle of monitoring and reporting employed in the project, based on the shared set of documentation materials used, introduced new standards within the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture that can be followed in other projects in future.

Several hundred local workers have been involved in the on-going conservation work in Ghazni. The stone foundations have been repaired in order to prevent further landslides, and the mud-brick structures have been consolidated in order to stabilise the most-endangered parts of the towers and walls.

Insufficient water drainage from the houses behind the walls was identified as one of the factors leading to the deterioration and destabilization of the city walls, and the city's council and mayor may want to address this problem, which is also affecting the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Old City. A major project has also been announced recently to address the pressing need to improve sanitation in the Old City. The restoration activities on the city walls have made a substantial and sustainable contribution to efforts to rehabilitate the Old City, giving an incentive for the use of locally available mud material and traditional building techniques.

The activities carried out on the city walls have also been cherished by the wider population of Ghazni as a vital contribution to the celebrations of the Capital of Islamic Culture in 2013. The ultimate goal of this emergency conservation programme, however, should be the stimulation of further activities 'from Afghans for Afghans' beyond the immediate celebration period. ■

BAMIYAN

Excavations in the Bamiyan Valley

Zemaryalai TARZI | Professor, University of Strasbourg

BAMIYAN is an internationally famous site, but it is not only celebrated for its immense archaeological remains. In addition to these, Bamiyan is also renowned for the beauty of its landscape, which, despite the uncertainties of modern urban civilization, has retained its ecological purity and natural beauty intact, both of which are propitious for carrying out projects that reflect the devotion of the local population. Bamiyan is a mountainous site in a unique location to the east of central Afghanistan at the heart of the Hindu Kush Mountains, which are themselves an extension of the Himalayas. It is an inescapable stopping-off point at the crossroads of ancient roads that once linked Kapisa to Bactria and Zaboulistan to Tokharistan. On a larger scale, Bamiyan also links India to China and the eastern Iranian plateau to Tibet.

As is well-known, the Bamiyan Valley contains many important sites, first among them being the colossal statues of the Buddha surrounded by innumerable caves carved into the cliff face whose 140 m height dominates the northern side of the Valley. In addition, there are the monuments in the Kakrak Valley to the east and those in the Foladi Valley to the south-west of the giant statues of the Buddha. To these large ensembles should be added the remains of the Buddhist-period royal city, which lie to the west of the 55 m statue of the Buddha at a place called Sorkhqol, and the majestic citadels of Shahr-i Zuhak to the east at the meeting point of the roads to Hajigak and Shebar. There are also the imposing ruins of Ghulghulah, which, long ago and above all during the Islamic period, served as the Ghurid capital of Tapa Almas, destroyed forever by Genghis Khan.

The remains of Bamiyan caused the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang to marvel and to leave behind him a poignant account of his journey to Bamiyan that is very precious to historians and archaeologists today. Following the account given by Xuanzang,



Fig.1 Map of Bamiyan showing the archaeological sites identified by the author's team in red. Sites excavated by the same team between 2002 and 2010 are marked in black and include:

- MO** (eastern monastery), a Buddhist site excavated from 2002 onwards and located southeast of the base of the cliff containing the 38 m statue of the Buddha;
- MR** (royal monastery), a Buddhist site excavated from 2007 and located at the base of the cliff between the niches containing the giant statues of the Buddha;
- TA** (Tape Almas), a site from the Islamic period and part of the Ghurid capital situated on the alluvial terrace to the west of the Gholghola citadel;
- VR1** (royal city, site no.1), a Buddhist and Islamic period site at the edge of the rocky built-up area;
- VR2** (royal city, site no. 2), a Buddhist and Islamic period site to the west of the 55 m statue of the Buddha. An Islamic period glass workshop was discovered on this site during excavations in 2006;
- VR4** (royal city, site no. 4) located immediately to the north of the Kabul-Band-e Amir highway. Stratigraphic excavations at this site were carried out in 2007;
- VR5** (royal city, site no. 5) located south of the Kabul-Band-e Amir highway in the arable land of Taie Boti. This site was excavated in order to study the southern limits of the royal city.

DRAWING: © Z. TARZI

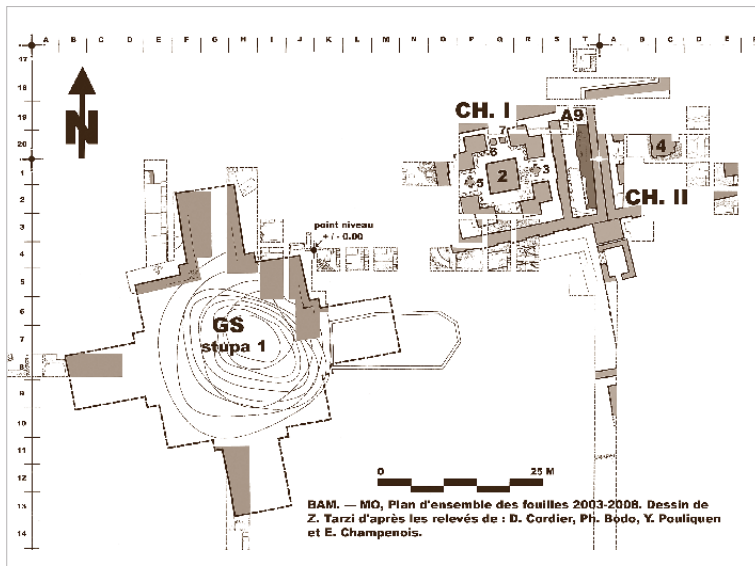


Fig.2 | Plan of excavations carried out at the eastern monastery site southeast of the niche containing the 38 m statue of the Buddha.
DRAWING: © Z. TARZI

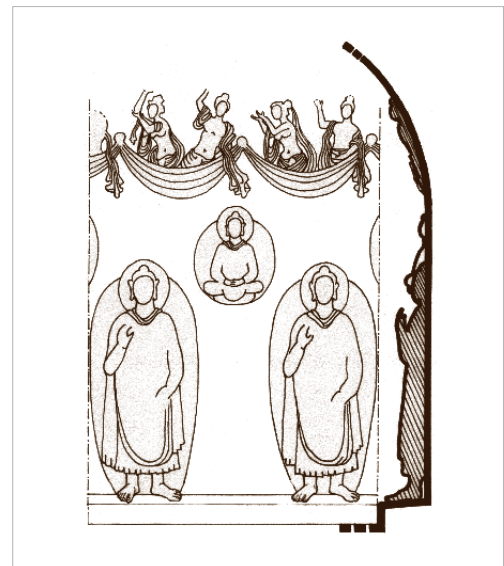


Fig.3 | Reconstruction of clay figures found on the western wall of gallery A9 of the eastern monastery site.
DRAWING: © Z. TARZI

Fig.4 | The right hand of the 15 m reclining statue of the Buddha found in gallery A9 of the eastern monastery site.
PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

archaeological investigations in the Bamian Valley began in the nineteenth century, and they have continued in various stages up to the present day. As far as the Buddhist period is concerned, such investigations have among other things sought to inventory the statues and caves at Bamian. Large-scale archaeological excavations were entrusted to the present author by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2002, above all with the aim of finding the thousand-foot-long statue of the reclining Buddha. Since then, the aim has been to try to identify and excavate various sites. In spite of the difficult conditions under which the work has been carried out, satisfactory results have been obtained.

The first site explored and excavated in 2002 was that of the eastern monastery (MO) (Fig.1), located south-east of the 38 m statue of the Buddha and thus two or three *li* (one or one-and-a-half km) east of the



royal city (VR) or Buddhist capital of Bamian. The site is thought to date from between the second and ninth centuries CE and is therefore a pre-Islamic site (Fig.2). Remarkable Buddhist monuments have been discovered in this monastery, including galleries like that numbered A9 (Fig.3) in which large numbers of modelled clay sculptures have been found, underlining the importance of the Bamian School as one of the most important in Central Asia at the time (Fig.5). Indeed, the art found at the eastern monastery is the proper inheritor of that of Gandhara, being a landmark in the transmission of artistic ideas from India to Central Asia and as far away as China, Korea and Japan. Protected by the arch of the same A9 gallery, a 15 m long statue of the reclining Buddha was found, though this was unfortunately very damaged (Fig.4).

In addition, excavation of the caityas in the eastern monastery also yielded six stupas of different forms and sizes. The second stupa, of exceptional shape and located in the middle of the first caitya, is of north-west Indian type and is coated with limestone-based stucco (Fig.6). All around it there are low benches at the base of the walls, on which stand dozens of statues of the Buddha. Votive stupas No. 3 and No. 5 (Fig.7) of cruciform shape, display affinities with those from Tape Sardar in Ghazni and from Adjina Tapa in Tajikistan. To the west of the two caityas is the largest stupa in Bamian. This monumental stupa was looted at various times over the centuries, though excavations have been able to reconstruct its plan (Fig.8): this stupa, also of cruciform plan, once measured some 55 m from side



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Fig. 5a | Clay head from a large statue of the standing Buddha found on the west wall of gallery Ag of the eastern monastery.

PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

Fig. 5b and c | Clay heads from statues of the seated Buddha found on the west wall of gallery Ag of the eastern monastery.

PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

Fig. 5d and e | Clay heads of praying deities from the upper sections of the east and west walls below roof level.

PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

Fig. 5f | Clay head of a late Kushan period from gallery 9 of the eastern monastery.

PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

to side, and investigations and comparative studies have indicated that it once stood over 70 m high (Fig. 9). The stupa is built from a mixture of clay-based mortar, rubble and loose stone, the whole covered with limestone block facing. The monument was at first covered over with stucco, and then, during repair work carried out from the beginning of the seventh century CE onwards, with hastily set clay.

In his account, Xuanzang also speaks of a monastery (MR) built either by the first king or the previous king of the country, located to the east of the 55m Buddha and the west of the 38 m Buddha. This site has been identified and excavated, necessitating working through many metres of gravel carried down from the cliff by water from melting snow and spring rains. For purely practical reasons, the site has been named the royal monastery, or the monastery of the previous king, and it is a very

large site. It has been provisionally dated as having flourished between the fifth and the ninth centuries CE, and it is therefore also a pre-Islamic site. Despite its very damaged state, excavations carried out at the site from 2006 onwards have yielded important discoveries from its western part, where a north-western section of a caitya, termed the northern construction, has been discovered (Fig. 10).

The centre of the north-western cell of the caitya is occupied by a stupa of novel form made of clay and painted red. The second-tier tambour of this stupa is decorated with columns, relating it to Mediterranean-style monuments (Fig. 11). To the south of the western part of the royal monastery, excavations have revealed the remains of another large stupa around 23m wide and built from rubble and clay mortar with limestone block facing. The whole construction has been covered

Fig. 6 | Caitya No. 1 of the eastern monastery, in the centre of which is stupa No. 2 surrounded by stupas No. 3, 5, 6 and 7, and a series of benches supporting large statues of the standing Buddha.
PHOTO: © Z. TARZI



Fig. 7 | Votive stupa No. 5 in caitya No. 1 of the eastern monastery. The stupa is made of clay and is in the shape of a cross.
PHOTO: © Z. TARZI



Fig. 8 | Stupa No. 1 of the eastern monastery during excavation of the north stairway.
PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

first with stucco and then with a clay coating (Fig. 12 & 13). Other excavations have been carried out at the site, and these have helped to provide knowledge of Hephtalite and Turkic funerary rites. A number of skeletons have been found, either placed directly on the earth or in tombs or funerary urns. It has



been the skeletons of children above all that have attracted the attention of excavators.

In order to understand the connections that once existed between lay and religious communities better, five excavation sites were set up within the royal city (VR1-VR5). Once again, for purely practical reasons the name of royal city was chosen to refer to these sites, the whole site once having served as the royal capital of Bamiyan. The site flourished between the sixth and ninth centuries CE for the pre-Islamic period and between the ninth and thirteenth centuries CE for the Islamic period. The first of the four sub-sites excavated at the royal city was chosen to study the passage from cave-dwelling to living in a built environment, and a ceramics workshop was discovered at this sub-site in the Islamic layers dating to the Ghurid period. This yielded remarkable finds in the form of richly

Fig. 9 | Reconstitution of stupa No. 1 of the eastern monastery.
DRAWING: © Z. TARZI

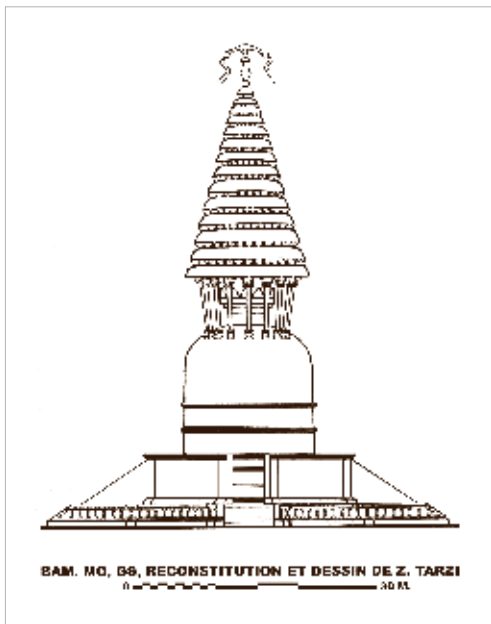


Fig. 10 | The royal monastery, a large site located almost equidistant between the two niches of the giant statues of the Buddha.
DRAWING: © Z. TARZI

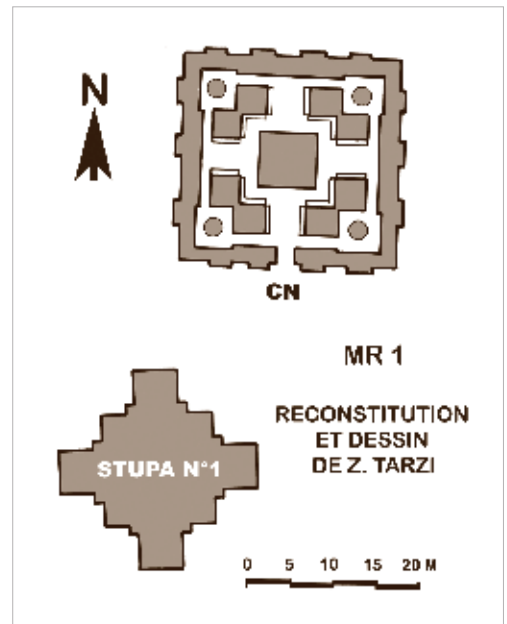




Fig.11 | Royal monastery: view of the excavations from north to south with the circular No. 2 stupa in the foreground. PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

Fig.12 | Royal monastery: excavation of the large No.1 stupa and clearance of the north-east projection of the north stairway. PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

decorated glazed pottery vases. Excavations at the second sub-site revealed a workshop for making glassware, which yielded many important finds in the shape of differently coloured fragments of glass. Excavations carried out at the fourth of the sub-sites were made with stratigraphic investigations in mind, while those at the fifth sub-site aimed to fix the southern boundaries of the former royal city.

In the light of experience gained in excavating the first of the royal city sub-sites and what this yielded in terms of knowledge of Islamic ceramics, excavations were then begun at the former Ghurid capital of Bamiyan at Tape Almas (TA). This served as the Ghurid capital from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries CE, and it was built on the sediment terrace that serves as the present market area of Bamiyan, situated between the former residence of the governor and the Ghulghulah citadel.

Unfortunately, excavations at this site have only yielded a group of tombs dating to the Islamic period, though these are very important in gaining a better understanding of the archaeology of Bamiyan and for knowledge of the different burial practices of the ancient populations of the Valley.

There has not been space in this short article to discuss the results of other investigations in Bamiyan. However, the discovery of an ancient village and a monastery at Kakrak should be mentioned. It is also worth pointing out that of all the teams working in Bamiyan since 2002, the present team has achieved the most in terms of substantial results, something that it is hoped future generations will recognize. ■

Translated from French by David TRESILIAN



Fig.13 | Restoration of stupa No. 1 of the royal monastery. PHOTO: © Z. TARZI

BAMIYAN

Activities of the French Archaeological Mission to Afghanistan

Philippe MARQUIS | Director, Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan

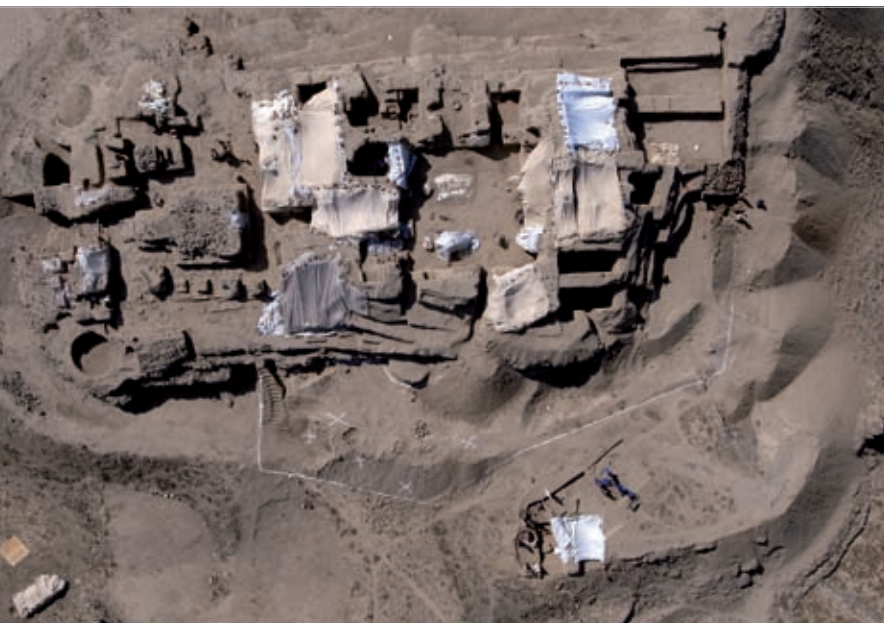


Fig.1 | Aerial view of Kafiriat Tepe Buddhist monastery in Mes Aynak (Logar/Afghanistan).

PHOTO: © ICONEM/DAFA

THE DÉLÉGATION ARCHÉOLOGIQUE FRANÇAISE en Afghanistan (DAFA) was set up in 1922 and was active in Afghanistan until 1982, when it was obliged to call a halt to its activities in the country. In 2003, the Afghan and French Governments decided to re-establish the DAFA, and the task of doing so was entrusted to Roland Besenval.

While the new DAFA was able to draw on a long historical tradition, it nevertheless also had to refer to developments in archaeology that had taken place over the intervening years, as well as developments in cultural and academic research policies. While the DAFA is above all a research institution, it has also developed training and co-operation activities to meet the needs both of its Afghan interlocutors and of those involved in managing French co-operation in Afghanistan. The activities of the DAFA can be divided into three main areas.

1. Research Activities

The DAFA was set up to carry out archaeological study of Afghanistan, and it has carried out this mission essentially by providing technical and sometimes academic support to the French and foreign teams working in the country, particularly to the German team working at Herat and directed by Franke. This support may be logistical, in the form of providing guesthouses or other assistance, or financial, such as meeting part of the costs of missions. It may also take the form of human resources, with members of the DAFA, or team members recruited by the DAFA, working for other archaeological teams, for example at Bactra and Herat.

2. Co-operation Activities

This aspect of the DAFA's work has been developed particularly over the last few years, and has been designed to meet the explicit requests of the Afghan authorities, which lack properly trained specialists able to manage Afghan cultural heritage. The DAFA's co-operation activities take place in the following areas:

(A) Production and Updating of an Archaeological Map of Afghanistan

An archaeological map is the only way to ensure the scientific management of archaeological heritage. It is also the only way in which the state of conservation of archaeological zones located in areas where field visits are impossible can be verified, thanks to regularly taken satellite photographs. A preliminary digital map has been produced for various areas of the Balkh province, and from here it should be possible to extend this pilot project to the whole of Afghanistan using the same technology.

(B) Assistance with Archaeological Safeguarding Operations

Despite the unfavourable political situation in the country, numerous projects are currently underway in Afghanistan. While the improvement or building of the country's infrastructure and the beginnings of the exploitation of its mineral resources are likely to bring great benefits to Afghanistan in the future, these things also present certain challenges to the Afghan authorities in charge of cultural heritage. The latter lack properly trained specialists able to develop policies designed to manage archaeological sites threatened by various forms of development, whether urban, rural, industrial or having to do with the construction of roads or highways. As a result, the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture has requested the DAFA to work at sites such as that of Mes Aynak in Logar province, where a mining project has been built near a very important archaeological site. In addition to ancient mining works, this site also houses at least two Buddhist monasteries.

The DAFA's role here has been to assist the Afghan Institute of Archaeology in designing a scientific programme of safeguarding excavations that takes the impact of construction work on archaeological zones into account. It has also been to help draw up an action plan that includes not only the excavations themselves, but also the interpretation of finds made during the excavations and their presentation to the public.

More generally, the DAFA has been ready to intervene at the request of the Afghan authorities to provide technical expertise on any other development projects that require archaeological advice.

(C) Reconstruction of the Afghan Institute of Archaeology Building

The Afghan Institute of Archaeology building is located in the Dar ul Aman area of Kabul, and while it was considerably damaged during the conflicts in the country, it is still a remarkable building in its own right. The DAFA has drawn up proposals, supported by the French Foreign Ministry, to restore this building and to set up laboratories and offices for the staff of the Institute of Archaeology in the compound where finds from various archaeological excavations are deposited. Work on the reconstruction of the Afghan Institute of Archaeology is scheduled to begin in 2014.



3. Training Activities

The Afghan Government lacks qualified personnel, and the Ministry of Information and Culture is not immune to this problem. The DAFA is working to remedy this in two main ways: firstly, by providing training grants to young Afghan professionals for six-month periods; and secondly, by providing support to the archaeology department of the University of Kabul and practical training experience at excavation sites. This year, experience of this sort is being provided at the site of Mes Aynak.

Since its re-founding 10 years ago, the DAFA has become an important actor on the Afghan cultural scene. The recruitment by the United States Embassy in Afghanistan of a specialist in cultural heritage and the German Embassy's recruitment of a specialist in museum development show that states providing aid to Afghanistan are very much aware of the importance of the country's cultural heritage.

It is to be hoped that this awareness will also lead to greater involvement in human and material terms, given the major nature of the challenges that remain to be met (Fig. 1 & 2). ■

Fig. 2 | Stupas in a Buddhist monastery at Mes Aynak.

PHOTO: © DAFA

Translated from French by David TRESILIAN

SPECIAL OVERVIEW 1

International Forum
'Towards Cultural
Rapprochement and
Tolerance' at UNESCO
Headquarters.

PHOTO: © UNESCO



Habiba Sarabi, Governor
of the Province of
Bamiyan at the
International Forum.

PHOTO: © UNESCO

ON THE SECOND OF MARCH, 2011, UNESCO commemorated at its Headquarters in Paris the tenth anniversary of the tragic destruction of the two giant Buddha statues in the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan with an International Forum entitled *Towards Cultural Rapprochement and Tolerance*. The forum served as a solemn remembrance of the tragic loss of the Buddha statues and provided UNESCO with an occasion to urge the international community to act and further protect the cultural heritage of humanity from damage or destruction, as well as from political appropriation or theft.

The forum was presided over by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and Sayed Makhдум Raheen, Minister of Information and Culture of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Present were Afghan representatives Mohammad Kacem Fazelly, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO, and Habiba Sarabi, Governor of the Province of Bamiyan. Also gracing the forum were Davidson Hepburn, President of the General Conference of UNESCO, and Eleonora Mitrofanova, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO. Important Member States partners, including donors such as Japan, Italy and Switzerland,

Ten Years On – International Forum Towards Cultural Rapprochement and Tolerance (2 March 2011)



represented by their ambassadors, were in attendance as well, together with numerous international dignitaries and experts on the preservation of cultural heritage.

At the forum, the Director-General of UNESCO reminded those present of the efforts made by UNESCO in preventing the destruction of the Buddha statues, as well as the work that it has subsequently done to protect the world's cultural heritage through landmark instruments such as the *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2001, and the *Declaration Concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage*, adopted in 2003.

She also recalled UNESCO's actions to protect the Afghan cultural heritage ever since the tragic events of 2001. These include the establishment of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage which was set up in co-operation with the Afghan Government in 2003, as well as the inscription of the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley on the UNESCO World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger during the same year.

The Director-General also emphasized that “culture has cohesive power,” and that it can “bring people together, regardless of their diversity.” It has a binding effect that challenges intolerant regimes, as exemplified by the Buddha statues in the Bamiyan Valley. Since the sixth century CE, these statues have demonstrated that culture unites and fosters dialogue between cultures, religions, and races. This fact, she asserts, constitutes “one of the most powerful arguments against the concept of a clash of civilizations.”

Discussions at the forum reaffirmed the vitality of cultural heritage and its potential to bring together cultures and promote tolerance. The forum also provided an opportunity to assess the activities undertaken by UNESCO over the past ten years, as well as launch a new chapter in its actions in favour of Afghanistan's cultural heritage. ■

World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector

SPECIAL OVERVIEW 2

The Third Expert Working Group Meeting for Herat and Jam held in the Museo di Arte Orientale (MAO), Turin.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO



Delegation of Afghanistan including the Ambassador, the Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO and the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO



The Third Expert Working Group Meeting for the Old City of Herat and the Archaeological Remains of the Jam World Heritage property in Afghanistan (4-6 September 2012)



THE THIRD EXPERT WORKING GROUP MEETING for the Old City of Herat and the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of the Jam World Heritage property met at the Museo di Arte Orientale (MAO) in Turin, Italy, from 4 to 6 September 2012. The meeting brought together more than 30 world-famous experts and high-ranking officials from the Government of Afghanistan, as well as representatives of donor countries, such as Italy and the United States.

The Third Expert Working Group Meeting presented the fruitful outcomes of a decade's safeguarding actions relating to the conservation of the monuments and sites at Herat and Jam under the UNESCO/Italy, Switzerland and Norway Funds-in-Trust projects and adopted a set of comprehensive recommendations for both sites for immediate and long-term strategies. The meeting also reviewed bilateral scholarly and conservation activities carried out in Afghanistan by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and German, French and Italian research teams. It played a significant co-ordinating role for international co-operation in conservation of Afghan cultural heritage, in line with the mandate entrusted to UNESCO by

the Afghan Government. The meeting also provided fresh impetus to further fund-raising for safeguarding actions for the sites of Herat and Jam.

The Working Group Meeting was organized thanks to generous funding from the Government of Italy through the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust project, *Emergency Consolidation and Restoration of the Monuments in Herat and Jam in Afghanistan*. The event was organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Museo di Arte Orientale (MAO), Turin, in close collaboration with the Permanent Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO. ■

World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector

SPECIAL OVERVIEW 3

Entrance to the UNESCO
Photo Exhibition at MAO.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO



FACING PAGE

LEFT: A. Bruno speaking about his photos at the opening of the Exhibition. (Left from A. Bruno: Ambassador of Afghanistan, UNESCO representative and Mayor of Turin).

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO

RIGHT: Official opening of the exhibition: Director of MAO, Mayor of Turin, Ambassador of Afghanistan and Representative of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

PHOTO: © UNESCO/MAO

Ian Dull and Sophie Mephram, interns at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, assisted with the publication of this booklet.

Photographic Exhibition

UNESCO's Activities in Afghanistan – Jam and Herat in the Pictures of Andrea Bruno (4 September – 7 October 2012)



AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS entitled *UNESCO's Activities in Afghanistan – Jam and Herat in the Pictures of Andrea Bruno* was shown at the Museo d'Arte Orientale (MAO) in Turin, Italy, on the occasion of the Third Expert Working Group Meeting.

The photographs of this exhibition featured the fruitful outcomes achieved through safeguarding activities undertaken by UNESCO for the Minaret of Jam and the City of Herat in Afghanistan from the 1960s to the present day (2012). These photographs also bear witness to UNESCO's leading role in conserving and safeguarding Afghan monuments and archaeological sites in co-operation with the Afghan authorities and the international community.

An official opening was presided over by Piero Fassino, Mayor of Turin, Mohammad Kacem Fazelly, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to UNESCO, Franco Ricca, Director of MAO and Junhi Han, Representative of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, at MAO at 18:30 on 4 September, 2012.

This exhibition received great attention from the general public, renewing the interest of the international community in the outstanding heritage values of Afghanistan. The increasing popularity of the exhibition led not only to the extension of its duration at MAO, but also to the enhancement of the visibility of UNESCO's achievements in safeguarding Afghanistan's cultural heritage. This exhibition was made possible thanks to the contribution of the Government of Italy. ■

World Heritage Centre, Culture Sector



Afghanistan (2003). PHOTO: © A. BRUNO







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