

SPACH NEWSLETTER

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Established in September 1994, in response to a growing awareness of the vulnerability of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan, **SPACH** aims primarily to share information about the state of collections, historic monuments, archaeological sites and scholarships that have affected by the years of conflicts.

SPACH has fostered contact with both cultural organizations and individuals inside Afghanistan and institutions abroad with a proven interest in the culture of the country, with a view to sharing information about measures to limit destruction of this important part of the world's cultural heritage. To date, the activities undertaken by SPACH members have included:

. Dissemination of regular updates to the press and relevant international group concerning the state of the National Museum in Kabul, which suffered severe damage in 1993. Remedial works on the building were undertaken during 1994 to weatherproof the ruins and provide a degree of security for the surviving stores. At the same time, museum staff were able to retrieve hundreds of objects from the debris. More than 1,500 objects were recovered in Kabul by the National Commission for the Preservation and Retrieval of Afghanistan's Cultural and Historical Heritage and individuals; a limited number of objects have been recovered in Pakistan. In support of this, SPACH is working closely with the staff of the Ministry of Information and Culture and UNESCO to prepare a preliminary photo inventory of items that survived. By making available accurate information about missing objects, it is hoped to facilitate their recovery, either from within the country or abroad, with the support of relevant international organizations.

. Support for assessment missions to sites of historic importance in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-I Sharif, Jalalabad (Hadda), Ghazni, Ghor (Jam Minaret), Baghlan, Bamiyan, Fariyab, Badghis, Ai-Khanoum; dissemination of the resulting reports and photographs to the relevant institutions in Afghanistan and abroad.

. In response to loss of important documents related to historic sites in the country preparation of a photo catalogue of such sites, made up both of pre-war scholarship and updated material from site visits. Dissemination of this information to interested individuals and institutions in Afghanistan and abroad, as a means of developing an understanding of the priorities for remedial works and possible lobbying.

. Support for lectures and exhibitions, as a means of raising awareness about the richness and vulnerability of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. SPACH member continue to work closely with representatives of the Ministry of Information and Culture, the National Commission for the Preservation and Retrieval of Afghanistan's Cultural and Historical Heritage, the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and other cultural institutions worldwide in order to solicit advice and support for the preservation of the threatened culture of the country. Support for activities has come from concerned individuals, from the Afghanistan Emergency Trust Fund and from the governments of Greece, Cyprus and Portugal.



Post-Harappan gypsum seal, with engraved stylized ibex (diameter 3 cm), excavated in Shurtugai. Purchased by SPACH in 1997. Photo: Naseem Moghal

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Minar-i-Chakari (early centuries A.D.)
Inset Photo: APHCHA, January 1998
Main Photo: AP, April 1998

SPACH VISITS BAMIIAN BUDDHAS

SPACH's dream came true when, in early November 1997, a delegation flew across the already snow-capped Hindukush into the spectacular valley of Bamiiyan city. Some fifteen years since her last visit, Ms. Nancy H. Dupree writes:

BAMIIAN BUDDHAS ENDANGERED- CURRENT STATUS

(excerpts from article written by *Nancy H. Dupree* for Indo-koko-kenkyu, Rikkyo University, Japan)

Frequent reports of extensive damage to the standing Buddhas have been circulated widely over the past few years. Comparisons of their current state with photographs from the 1960's indicate that their condition is not particularly alarming.

Grave concern, however, centers around the presence of some 2,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who fled here from the violent clashes in and around Kabul since September 1996, and from Mazar-i-Sharif since May 1997. Now many IDP families live in the caves around the Buddhas. This recalls the large numbers of nomadic families who had made their homes in the caves for many years before the archaeologists began their explorations. It does not seem that the IDPs have chosen caves with significant artistic remains, but the potential for damage by playing children and idle adults is certainly there. The local authorities are most anxious to relocate these families and are ready to allocate land for this purpose. Assistance agencies hesitate, not wishing to encourage permanent settlement; for the moment they provide food, blankets and basic medical supplies, but little in the way of shelter.

As a protective measure to reduce vandalism, the authorities have demolished the main bazaar which was close to the foot of the Large Buddha. A new bazaar is being built some distance to the east on the banks of the river that bisects the valley. As another protective measure, the Office for Historical Monuments submitted a proposal to enclose with a wall the entire area in front of the Buddha cliff, with long-term possibilities of developing it into a park. The immediate benefit of such an enclosure would be to deny access to trucks bearing wheat and other commodities stored in the caves at the foot of the Large Buddha since the ammunition dumps were removed.

More worrisome than human vandalism is the potential damage that may be caused by the dropping of bombs. The authorities state that the valley has been bombed from three to six times every month since the Taliban suffered their humiliating reverses in Mazar-i-Sharif in May 1997. In August, five bombs were dropped, one falling some 10 meters behind the head of the Large Buddha. The brittle cliff into which the figures were cut is a conglomerate of heterogeneous materials of various sized gravels, and clay with layers of sandstone blocks deposited in alternate layers. It is particularly susceptible to the ground shock waves caused by these 250 kg bombs. The authorities point to what they believe to be a fresh crack on a previously repaired area running along the back of the head of the Large Buddha where it meets the cliff wall.

The authorities also hold firmly to the conviction that the bomb that fell on 12 August was targeted at the Buddha itself, because human images are anathema to the Taliban. Observations suggest, however, that there are perhaps more tempting targets. The new Hezbe Wahdat guest house glistening under a coat of fresh whitewash stands on the other side of the valley, directly opposite the Large Buddha; the airstrip is located just behind the guest house. More telling is the anti-aircraft gun emplacement perched on the highest peak directly above the Large Buddha niche.

Each monumental figure is sheltered within a vaulted niche originally ornamented with paintings. It is the extensive deterioration of this art work which calls for urgent attention from experts. In many areas the plaster which carries the paintings has weakened and fallen since the 1960's; sections hang precariously, ready to fall with the slightest vibration or passage of a bird in flight.

The urgency is all the greater because of the fine sections that do remain. For instance, still in place on the ceiling wall toward the north is an unique fragment showing a kneeling figure balancing a tray of offerings on his head. A

voluptuous young woman scantily clad in not much more than heavy gold earrings, armlets, bracelets and a jeweled hip girdle still stands with outstretched arms although she is so pale it is difficult to see her.

Three medallions on the east wall containing stolid seated Buddhas in the Sassanian mode are in tolerable condition despite a missing strip straight through the one in the centre. Only the top portion of the royal personage in the innermost medallion of this group survives.

The upper portions of the east wall and much of the west wall have suffered grievously. The extant paintings depicting human figures, architectural and ornamental features in the Gupta style are still remarkable for their grace and delicacy.

Bamiyan receives heavy annual snows which melt in the spring and run down the face of the rock causing fissures and seepage into niches and shrines. The drains constructed in the past to channel surface water and snow-melt away from the facade are mostly in good condition and free of debris. Nevertheless, elaborate measures to consolidate the plaster and strengthen the painted surfaces require immediate priority remedial action.

In accordance with its advocacy role, SPACH has recommended the relocation of the anti-aircraft gun emplacement and written to the Taliban Minister of Culture in Kabul asking him to use his influence to make sure to further damage from bombing is caused to this preeminent cultural site. It has also began discussions with UNESCO and with members of the former Japanese mission in Bamiyan whose superb four-volume documentation edited by Professor Takayasu Higuchi, Bamiyan, Art and Archaeological Researches on the Buddhist Cave Temples in Afghanistan, 1970-1978, will form the foundation for the monumental task which lies ahead.

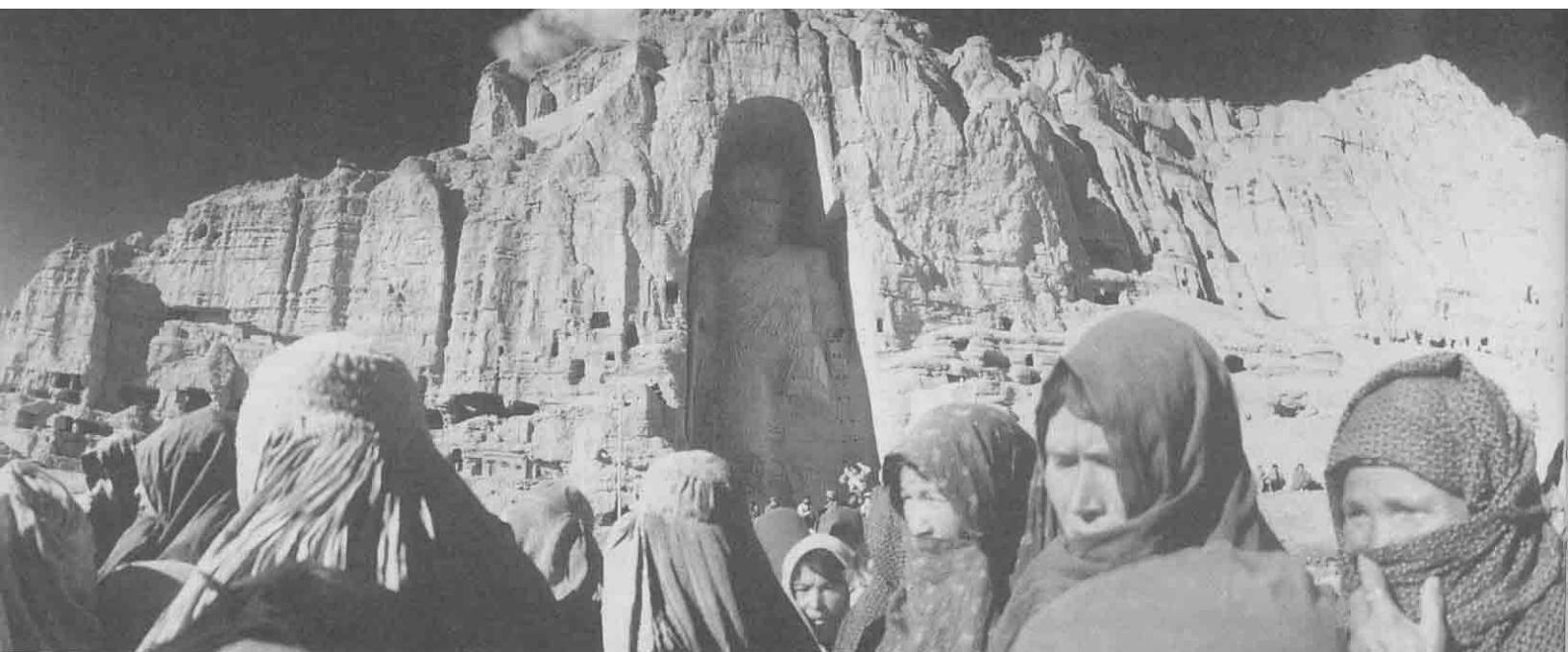


Photo: Brigitte Neubacher

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL ON BEHALF OF BUDDHAS

Prof. Ikuo Hirayama, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador from Japan and previously benefactor to the Kabul Museum, issued an appeal in 1997 to protect the Bamiyan Buddhas. His initiative was supported by the Directors of the Musée Guimet, Paris; Museum fuer Ostasiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museum zu Berlin; Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C., Dunhuang Academy and Tokyo National Museum.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROF. A.H. DANI

by Aasim Akhtar and Brigitte Neubacher

Q: Are there any obvious parallels between the political/military developments in Afghanistan and the illegal trade of artifacts? Is there a link between the two?

A: Actually the illegal trade of artifacts goes back to the pre-war days in Afghanistan. In the post war-days, however, it increased and, after the fall of Najibullah, it escalated even further. The material that came here before the war was not from the Kabul Museum, but from private collections. Families that came to Pakistan from Kabul and Herat sold their possessions, like costly

rugs, illustrated manuscripts and bronze ware.

After the Taliban takeover of Herat, large quantities of antiques started pouring into Pakistan from in and around Herat. And it was only after the killing of Mazari, who was in control of Darulaman, that material started coming from the Kabul Museum. That was the first time that I saw Begram ivory pieces from the Museum's collection. I immediately identified them as pieces from Nancy Dupree's "Guide to the Kabul Museum". No one knew the original source and it was commonly believed that they had been acquired in Mazar-i-Sharif. The pieces may have been taken to Mazar-i-Sharif and from there smuggled out to the tribal areas. Then they were brought to me to identify the authenticity, and to assess their value and importance.

Q: How many ivory pieces have been coming in through this channel?

A: In the first instance, I counted eight ivories. Naseerullah Babar, the ex-interior minister, called me up and brought the ivories to me. I showed him Dupree's book and identified some of the pieces reproduced in it. More material kept flowing in, in bits and pieces: a big ivory lid was brought to my house by Naseerullah Babar. He managed to get approval from the Government of Pakistan (GOP) that such material should not leave the region and that funds for its purchase should be made available. As a result the Government of Pakistan earmarked a sum of three crore rupees, an equivalent to nearly 30

million rupees. A meeting was held at the Ministry of Culture to fix the price of this lid. I also informed SPACH and asked its Chairman, Pierre Lafrance, to

contact UNESCO in Paris. SPACH agreed to contribute a nominal amount. The GOP approved the purchase, but unfortunately the price offered was Rs 500,000, whereas the price demanded was Rs 3,000,000. For a long time after that, the ivory lid remained in the tribal area. As for the other ivory pieces, they were sent across to London, and according to my information, about five or six of them were purchased by an Arab businessman. They should be in the safe custody of a bank in London now.

Apart from the ivories, I also saw several other objects from Afghanistan: a Shiva figure in marble, inscriptions and sculptures, in fact, I saw many sculptures in Quetta at the house of a well-known Afghan leader who invited me to identify them. Some of these sculptures bore serial numbers from the Kabul Museum, while many others did not. According to him, he had more material in houses in Karachi and London. When the police raid due to charges of drug-peddling harbored against him was conducted, sculptures not drugs were found in abundance.

Q: who are the buyers?

A: Mostly foreign diplomats. Although it is not easy for them to lug antiquities out of Pakistan, they do succeed. According to the Antiquities Act, Government of Pakistan, antiquities cannot be exported without permission. May other foreigners who come on business trips to Pakistan are also potential buyers.

Pakistanis cannot afford to pay large amounts of money and museums in Pakistan do not buy material coming from a dubious source. Although there is a committee organized by the National Museum in Karachi that reviews the purchases of antiquities brought to the Museum.



Photo: Brigitte Neubacher

Q: How can Pakistan and Afghanistan work together to stop the illegal trading of their artifacts?

A: According to existing laws in Pakistan, no antiquity can be exported nor moved across the provincial borders. The police and customs officials need to implement these laws. We do know that some antiquities have been caught by the customs. But we also know that illegal trade of antiquities cannot be carried out without the clandestine connivance of the officials. It is possible that the two countries work together, but I am not sure whether a similar law exists in Afghanistan. In the absence of any such law, Afghanistan could make use of our Antiquities Act and reach agreement with Pakistan to ensure the seizure of antiquities. A further problem is that the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan have no control over the tribal zones.



Ivory lid of jewelry casket; 44 cm high; from India
Found in Begram, north of the Kabul; 2nd century A.D.
Card produced by Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
Photo : Louis Dupree

INVENTORY OF KABUL MUSEUM

by Carla Grissmann

SPACH has always been assured that the 20 trunks at the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Telya Tepe gold hoard at the Royal Palace were secure and intact, yet authorization to make photocopies of the inventory lists inside the trunks and to verify if the Telya Tepe cases were still in place was never forthcoming. In October 1997, SPACH met with the Minister of Information and Culture. Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, who assured SPACH that his Ministry was willing to discuss long-term projects for the rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum, which included inspection of the 20 trunks and the Telya Tepe hoard.

These 20 trunks were understood to have been packed by a few staff members of the Kabul Museum at night and clandestinely, in a desperate attempt to save the most precious objects and secrete them in the Ministry. One copy of the inventory was kept in the Museum and consequently burned during a front-line attack; the second copy was put inside each trunk in the Ministry, and it is this inventory that SPACH has been so anxious to see.



Kabul Museum

Photo: Darla Milne

SPACH MEETS WITH MR. FEDERICO MAYOR, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

During his visit to Islamabad in September 1997, Director-General Mayor also met with the Executive Committee of SPACH. The President of SPACH, Amb. Enrico de Maio, urged UNESCO to resume its active involvement in Afghanistan's "forgotten cultural heritage". Apropos UNESCO, the Paris based organization, having launched an Emergency Action Plan for the safeguarding of Afghan cultural heritage, SPACH has submitted a proposal for allocation USD 60,000 - to carry out minor emergency repairs to five monuments of cultural and historic importance in different parts of Afghanistan. Mr. Mayor issued a statement – see below. During Mr. Mayor's visit, SPACH also had first contacts with the heads of ICOMOS, ICCROM and ICOM. Some follow-up has taken place: ICOM offered to publish – a la Angkor Vat – a publication of "100 Missing Objects from Kabul Museum". Once the inventory of Kabul Museum is more complete, such a publication may indeed help in the recovery of missing objects – as it did successfully for Angkor Vat.

Appeal by Mr. Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO, for international solidarity for the protection of Afghanistan's cultural heritage (Islamabad, 16 September 1997)

Afghanistan - situated a crucial junction on the ancient Silk Roads - has been a crossroads of cultures from time immemorial. Its unique cultural heritage reflects a history marked by the complex influences of Achaemenid Persia, Alexandrian Greece, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. It includes among its many treasures the eastern most Greek city of the 3rd and 2nd century B.C. at Ai Khanoum, the 4th and 5th century Buddhist monuments of the Bamiyan Valley, the 9th century Nine Domes Mosque of Haji Piyada, the 12th century Minaret of Jam, and the walled city, mosques and mausoleums of Herat.

This age-old heritage – part of the memory and identity of Afghanistan – has increasingly suffered from the conflicts and disasters that have plagued the country in recent times. The irreplaceable collections of the Kabul Museum, which came under attack during the siege of Kabul in May 1993, have been subject of theft and vandalism. Major archaeological sites such as Ai Khanoum are being systematically plundered. The Buddhas of Bamiyan - the "marvelous valley" described by the Chinese pilgrim Fa Hsien in 400 A.D. – are today surrounded by mine fields. Threats have even been issued against the sacred Buddhist monuments themselves, singled out by individuals for political exploitation. Recent bombing of the Bamiyan region has further widened the crack in the back of the large Buddha.

In response to calls from the representatives of Member States, international organizations, foundations and associations, from cultural and scientific communities, from religious bodies and from personalities and individuals worldwide. 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.

The people of Afghanistan have suffered long and terribly in the struggles – involving both internal and external forces – that have wrecked their country for almost two decades. When the longed-for day comes when the fighting stops, the precious cultural heritage of Afghanistan will be one of the foundations on which a peaceful society can be constructed. Let all those who today exercise any kind of authority in Afghanistan practice and impose respect for the common cultural patrimony, remembering there can be no reconciliation without tolerance and mutual understanding. Likewise let all those within the international community in a position to influence people and events in Afghanistan employ their best endeavors to safeguard heritage that belongs ultimately to all humanity. In this context let me pay tribute to the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH) with which UNESCO plans to increase its collaboration. We shall pursue this cooperation in the fields of training, on all levels, and raising awareness within Afghanistan and the world at large on these crucial issues.

Jam Minaret
Photo: Piet Vochten

HABITAT RESUMES REHABILITATION OF KABUL MUSEUM AND BABUR'S GARDEN

by Gregory J. Wilson and Bashir Ahmad Faiz, UNCHS (Habitat)

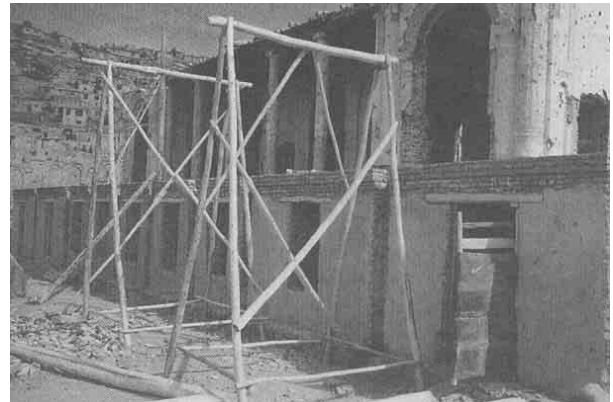
In October 1997 UNCHS (Habitat) took up again its rehabilitation work on the Kabul Museum building, this time under the ECHO-funded project "Recycling of Destroyed Building Materials".

In consultation with the Museum staff and the Ministry of Information and Culture the area around the Museum was made secure by rebuilding the surrounding walls and gates, and a booth was provided for guards. Building material was recycled for the reconstruction of an office for the Museum staff. Trenches were filled and military remnants removed. The entrance pillars, nearly 100 meters away from the Museum, were lifted by crane back to their original positions to recreate the entrance portico. In spring 1998, more work will be done to repair parts of the roof.

During the recycling some valuable objects were discovered in the debris: over 40 pieces of gold with emeralds and other stones were returned to the storerooms.

Babur's gardens, about 15 hectares in total, used to be the favorite recreation area for Kabulis... until 1992 when the area became the frontline. After 12 months of fighting the garden was almost completely destroyed. Hundreds of beautiful old trees were cut or burnt. The pavilion, used for weddings and parties, was reduced to rubble and the greenhouse, swimming pool and changing rooms were covered by soil.

The rehabilitation of the Moghul garden will be in two phases: the first, currently ongoing, includes a topographic survey of the area, landscape design, reconstruction of water supply and irrigation, structural stabilization of the pavilion (see below) and new garden gates. The second phase will include reconstruction of the pavilion, repair of Babur's tomb, the mosque and the guard room. A new water supply network will be added.



Photos: Habitat

IS PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY A HUMAN RIGHT?

by Steven Wolfson, UNHCR, SPACH member since 1997

When we speak of 'culture', we are all relatively sure of what we mean: the distinctive language, modes of communication, knowledge, practices, dress, educational norms, artistic, scientific and intellectual achievements, inventions and the like of a particular society. What constitutes the 'products' of culture -- cultural property-- is more difficult. It is much like art: today's junk is tomorrow's artifact; today's everyday objects are tomorrow's museum pieces; today's efforts to produce the necessities of life (cooking implements, tent poles, clothing) make up tomorrow's history of a people. So how can we claim that the preservation of cultural property is, indeed, a human right?

International law is often clear on principles, but murky in definitions. Human rights, a component of international law, suffer from the same predicament. While it is possible to state, with absolute conviction, that the protection of cultural property is a human right, proving the statement, or searching for its codification, may indeed be difficult. And, indeed, what does it matter whether the protection of cultural property is a human right, if we have no ability to enforce it? In this respect, human rights violations are much like bad weather: every one talks about it, but no one ever does anything about it.

What do international instruments say about cultural property? *The 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (which together with the *1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* forms the *International Bill of Rights*) provides, at Article 15, that everyone has the right to take part in cultural life and to benefit from cultural achievement. State Parties are entrusted with the duty to take measures to protect culture, including "those necessary for the *conservation*, the development and the diffusion of science and culture". Any violation of the substantive provisions of the *International Bill of Rights* constitutes a violation of fundamental human rights.

So, cultural property is at least notionally protected in international law. What's more, from the foregoing, a simple and irrefutable argument arises: cultural property is essential to universally-accepted principles such as freedom of expression, religion, and association. By the same token, State actions which violate human rights usually include attacks against or in favor of one national, racial, ethnic, religious or social group. The extremity of threats against culture, when perpetrated by violence against members of one particular group, is genocide. Therefore, the destruction of cultural property is, of itself, a violation of human rights.

The same argument can be made in Islam. While the preservation of cultural property honors individuals and peoples, the theft of cultural property surely falls within the prohibitions against stealing and covetousness contained in the Holy Koran. In the modern context, Islamic States have taken a very dim view of attacks on culture. For example, the *1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam*, a resolution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, is replete with implicit reference to the protection of the culture. Genocide, of course, is expressly prohibited, as is the destruction of civilian installations in times of war. Individuals are entitled to the protection of their good name and honor in life and in death, and peoples have the right to preserve their independent identity and exercise control over their wealth and natural resources. Most particularly, Article 16 of the *Cairo Declaration* provides that everyone "shall have the right to enjoy the fruits of scientific, literary, artistic or technical production and the right to protect the moral and material interests stemming there from".

Human rights are not merely about protecting "the dignity and worth of the human person", to use the language of the Charter of the United Nations. Violations of human rights create social disharmony, confrontation and flows of refugees, and may ultimately lead to threats to international peace and security. The same can equally be said about the theft or destruction of cultural property. Misappropriation of cultural property can lead to tension between otherwise friendly States. Witness, however, the potential for violence which erupts when threats against cultural heritage sites occur - especially in times of armed conflict. In November 1993, when Bosnian Croats destroyed the 400 year old bridge over the Neretva River in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina); or throughout the summer of 1997, when a local Taliban commander threatened to destroy the Buddhas of Bamiyan, there is no doubt that an intensification of hostilities resulted. The reason is plain: an attack on cultural property is an attack on the identity and heritage of its guardians.

For these reasons, the General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly called for the return of cultural properties to their countries of origin. For examples, on 2 February 1996, General Assembly Resolution A/RES/50/56, representing international consensus, reaffirmed that "the restitution to a country of its *objects d'art*, monuments, museum pieces, archives, manuscripts, documents and any other cultural or artistic treasures contributes to the strengthening of international cooperation and to the preservation and

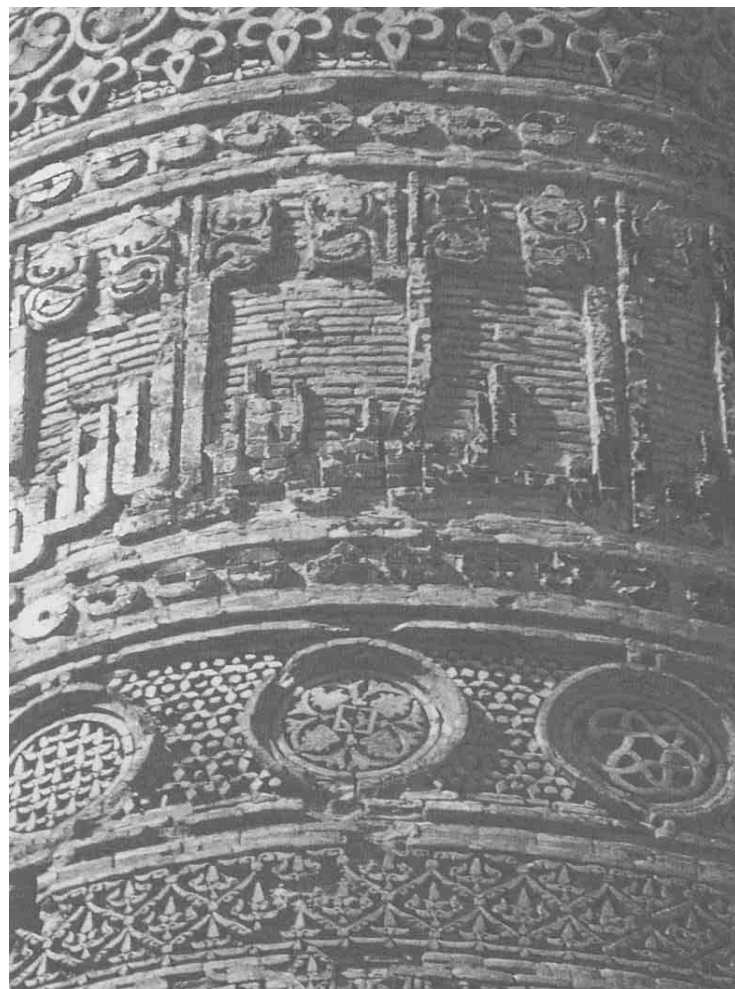
flowering of universal cultural values though fruitful cooperation between developed and developing countries". In its resolution (A/RES/51/195 of 13 February 1997 on "emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", the General Assembly felt compelled to draw a link between cultural property and peace, calling on "all Afghan parties to take appropriate steps to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property of Afghan nation".

Numerous international efforts to protect cultural property have met with very limited success. These include such treaties and resolutions as the 1948 *American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man*, the 1949 *Geneva Conventions*, the 1954 *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*, the 1972 *UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, the 1976 *Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples* ("the Algiers Declaration") and the 1981 *Organization of Africans Unity Banjul Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*. Most significant of these efforts, perhaps, in the 1970 *UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*, to which, most regrettably, fewer than one third of the Member States of the United Nations are signatory.

So, is the protection of cultural property to remain like bad weather? SPACH is dedicated to ensuring that it is not so. Do you part: don't buy it, don't transport it, don't damage it. If you have it, return it.

ASSOCIATION FOR PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF AFGHANISTAN (APHCHA)

A group of Afghan professionals established APHCHA in October 1997 with the purpose of preserving the country's heritage, stop illegal excavations, stop smuggling, recover looted artifacts, restore historic monuments, create cultural awareness and carry out excavations and research.



Jam Minaret Photo: Piet Vochten

CURRENT MEMBERS OF SPACH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

H. E. Mr. Enrico Gerardo de Maio, Ambassador of Italy, Chairman
 Ms. Nancy Hatch Dupree, ACBAR/ARIC, Vice-Chair
 Mr. Alfredo Witshci-Cestari, UNDP/UNOCHA Treasurer
 H.E. Mr. Dimitri Loundras, Ambassador of Greece
 H.E. Mr. Minoru Kubota, Ambassador of the Japan
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 Ms. Carla Grissmann, London
 Mr. Hiroshi Takahashi, UNSMA
 Mr. Jolyon Leslie, UNDP
 Ms. Brigitte Neubacher, UNOCHA

Thank you!

Since the establishment of SPACH in September 1994, many people around the world have responded to our work with enthusiasm and commitment. We are at a point now when we can proudly say that we have a broad base of support thanks to many dedicated people determined to preserve Afghanistan's cultural heritage. SPACH would like to thank the following SPACH members and friends for their support over the years:

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Please renew!

We are in the process of updating our membership. If your membership has lapsed, please fill out the attached membership form indicating that you wish to renew and mail it along with your membership fee. The membership fee is a yearly fee and we will also be contacting directly those members whose membership is due. Please renew, as a small NGO we depend on the funds raised through our membership fee.

Call for resources

SPACH is in the process of building up its resource center. If you have any articles, publications, books or any other information resources relevant to SPACH 's work that you may be able to donate please let us know.

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON CULTURAL HERITAGE OF AFGHANISTAN

The World Heritage Committee, convened in Naples from 1st to 6th December 1997 at its 21st Session,

Concerned at news reports about threats to the cultural heritage of Afghanistan, particularly the Buddhist statues in Bamiyan,

Stressing the need to consider this heritage, for its inestimable value, not only as part of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan but as part of the cultural heritage of humankind,

Recalling the appeal made by the Director General of UNESCO in September 1997 in Islamabad for international solidarity for the protection of the Afghan cultural heritage,

Bearing in mind the rights and duties of all State Parties to the Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage,

1. Reaffirms the sovereign rights and responsibilities, towards the international community, of each State for the protection of its own cultural and natural heritage;
2. Calls upon the international community to provide all the possible assistance needed to protect and conserve the cultural heritage of Afghanistan under threat;
3. Invites any kind of authority in Afghanistan to take appropriate measures in order to safeguard the cultural heritage of the country;
4. Further invites any kind of authority in Afghanistan to cooperate with UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee with a view to ensuring effective protection of its cultural heritage;
5. Requests the Secretariat of World Heritage Committee to take appropriate steps to foster international awareness of the outstanding value of Afghanistan cultural heritage and to cooperate with the SPACH (Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage) and other partners for safeguarding that heritage;
6. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter

The World Heritage Committee is composed of 21 representatives of the 152 State Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and is responsible for the inclusion of sites on the World Heritage List.

NORWAY, SWEDEN AND GREECE SUPPORT SPACH

In December 1997 the Government of Norway provided a most generous grant to SPACH to be used for Bamiyan and the Jam Minaret. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) made another cash contribution to SPACH following Ms. Dupree's lectures in Sweden in September 1997. SCA also produced five postcards with images of Afghan antiquities which are being sold in support of SPACH. And last, but not least, Greece, one of the most faithful supporters of SPACH, handed over its fifth \$10,000 contribution.

SPACH is extremely grateful to these Governments and also to all its supporting members around the world. May we remind all SPACH members, whose membership fee was paid more than one year ago, to send us another one.....!

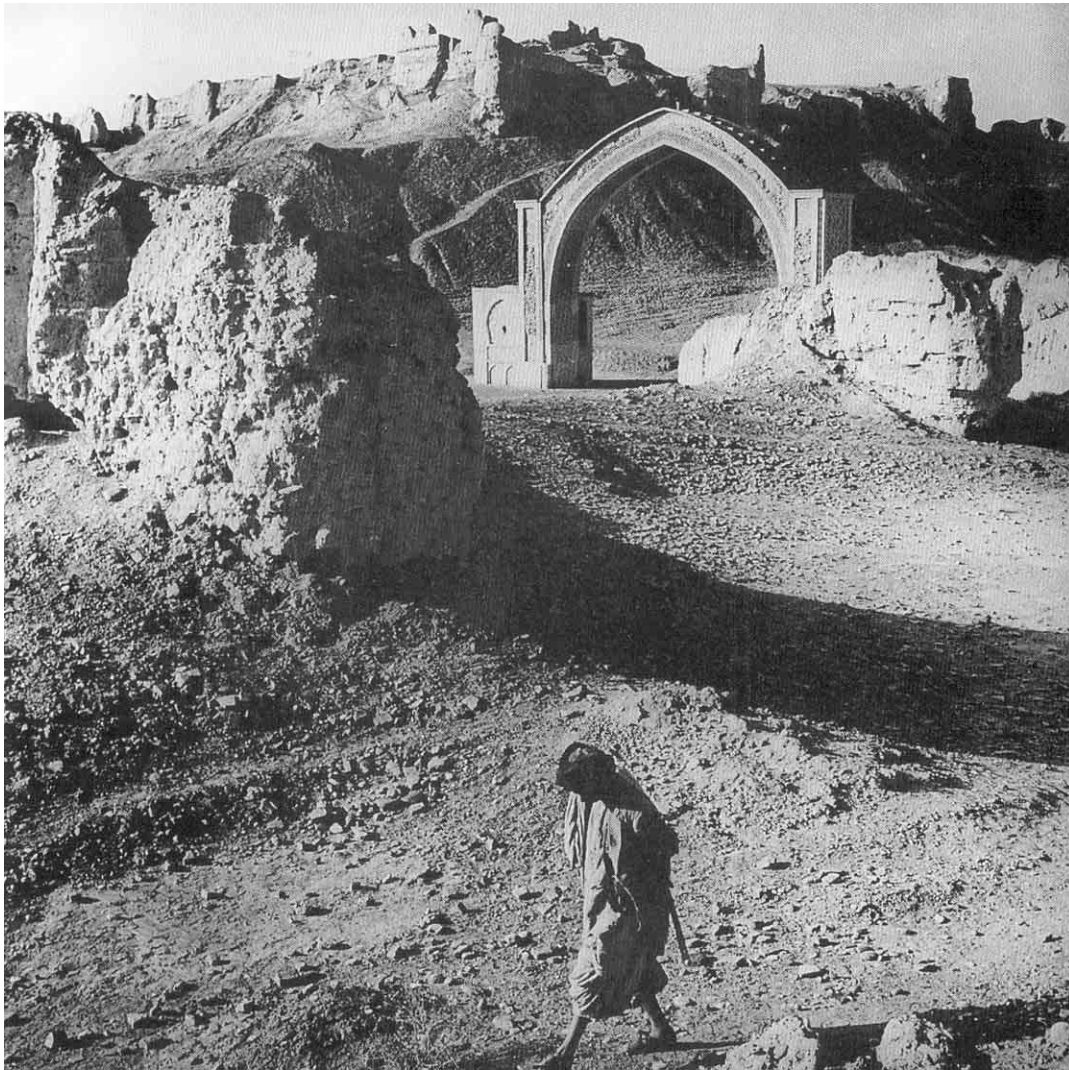


Photo: Inger and Erik Hansen(1965)

The wonderful arch spanning 80 feet is the most remarkable monument in ancient Bost, the Ghaznavid winter capital during the 11th -12th century A.D., 10 km south of Lashkargah, Helmand Province. It is thought by some experts to have been constructed as a ceremonial arch across the principal approach to the citadel. The city was burned and looted in 1151 by the Ghorids.

According to information gathered locally by Eng. Jawed, it was restored by Indian archaeologists during the reign of Daud in the 1970s.

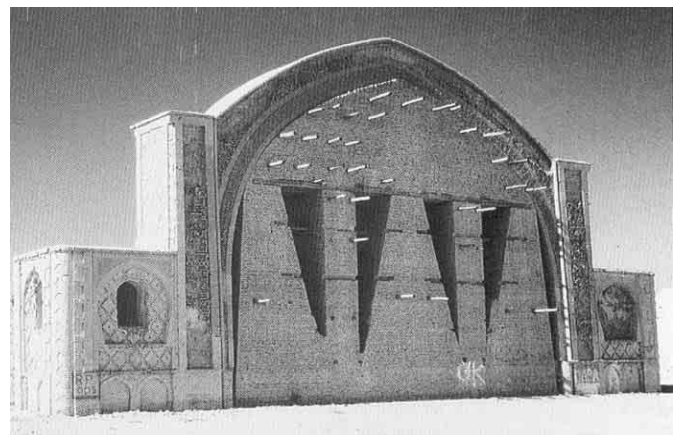


Photo: Eng. Jawed (1965)