Interim Report on the "Preliminary Master Plan"

(Management Plan)

Results of the 2003-2004 Archaeological Survey and the Property Zoning Proposal for the Protection of the World Heritage Site "BAMIYAN"

National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo

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1. Objective of this Interim Report

This is an interim report on the preparation of a Preliminary Master Plan (or Preliminary Management Plan) that the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo is now preparing in close cooperation with the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan under contract with UNESCO, within the framework of UNESCO's Japanese Funds-in-Trust Project "Safeguarding of the Bamiyan Site", to be submitted to UNESCO by the end of 2004.

Bamiyan was inscribed on the World Heritage List as well on the List of World Heritage in Danger under the title "Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley" at the 27th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Paris in July 2003.

The nomination of Bamiyan for inclusion on the World Heritage List was done on an emergency basis considering the severe condition of the site resulting from the deliberate acts of destruction that had occurred there. Due to these emergency circumstances, although the site was inscribed as a cultural landscape, the extent of the nominated area —including both the core zones and the buffer zones— was very minimal, awaiting further research on the site from various aspects including scientific research on the heritage values as well as research on the development planning issues. The examination of an adequate site management system as well as a management plan was also subject to future development by the Afghanistan authorities with help from the international community.

The core task of this Preliminary Master Plan project is to conduct an archaeological survey to determine the area to be protected against negative development impact, as written in the official project description document as follows: "A Preliminary Master Plan is necessary to establish a basis for the long-term preservation of the Bamiyan Site. Archaeological sounding and exploration of the Bamiyan Valley and its surroundings should be carried out in order to specify the extent of the archaeological zone and the cultural area to be protected from the development of settlements, agriculture and other infrastructures."

The overall scope of the project is to review, based on the results of the above-mentioned archaeological and other surveys, the initial nomination of the property examined by the World Heritage Committee in 2003, including a review of the extent of the property, by preparing a proposal for the re-zoning of the protected areas and the
surrounding control areas considering the value of the site as a cultural landscape, and ultimately in close cooperation with the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan to conduct a baseline survey by finding and assessing the key issues necessary for the establishment of a management plan, the preparation and implementation of which is under the responsibility of the Afghanistan authority. The final report on the project is to be submitted to UNESCO by the end of 2004.

This report was prepared as an interim report on the project progress, to submit the results of the archaeological survey and a property zoning proposal for the protection of the site based on the survey in advance as requested by the Afghanistan authority, to be used in the preparation of the general master plan urgently required for the rehabilitation of Bamiyan.

It should be noted that the property of the World Heritage site of Bamiyan is composed of eight separate sites, including the Shahr-i Zuhak and Qallai Kaphari monuments located some distance to the east of the main Bamiyan valleys. This report includes the results of the archaeological survey and a property zoning proposal for the protection of the site based on the survey done only in the area of the attached maps of the Bamiyan, Foladi and Kakrak valleys, where the main areas of the World Heritage site are located.
2. Bamiyan and its History

2.1. Introduction

Bamiyan means "the place of shining light." There is great beauty in the variegated colors of its rugged lines of folded hills. At twilight, the subtle juxtaposition of glittering stars with the pale light of the setting sun suffuses Bamiyan with an air of mystery. A faint breeze seems to erase the boundary between this world and the world beyond. Bamiyan exists as a visible relic of the complex historical fusion arising out of the interaction of humans and the wonders of nature in this valley; it exists as both a living record of the human past and a living natural landscape.

With its unusual correspondence between the gradual but intense processes of natural change and the more rapid but equally dramatic changes wrought by the mankind, Bamiyan continues to have the capacity to profoundly move the spirits of those who visit it.

2.2. Natural setting

Rising to the north are the immense mountains of the Hindu Kush, easily topping 4,000 meters; to the south lies the rugged Kuh-e Baba (Koh-e Baba) Range, whose highest peak is Shah Foladi, at 5,143 meters. The Bamiyan Valley is situated on the narrow foothills between the two great ranges running in parallel.

The central valley of Bamiyan is located at 34°51' N, 67°48' E, at an elevation of 2,500 meters, and is watered by two rivers flowing down from sources in the Kuh-e Baba: the Kakrak River to the east and the Foladi River to the west. A number of villages have been established along the courses of these two rivers, the closest to the central valley being Kakrak on the lower reaches of the Kakrak River and Darra-i Tajik on the lower reaches of the Foladi. The principal archaeological sites are located in the long east-west central valley of Bamiyan and in the valleys of the Kakrak and Foladi rivers.

2.3. History of Bamiyan: from the first millennium BC to the early 20th century CE

At Bamiyan we encounter the Buddhist cave temples from several different periods. The nucleus of Bamiyan's cultural legacy was formed by the two colossal Buddha images carved at the eastern and western ends of a high cliff facing the central valley, and perhaps a thousand caves also cut into the cliff face and decorated with a rich
variety of murals. The Buddhist religious art of Bamiyan, which enjoyed a renaissance here in central Afghanistan after the collapse of the earlier Gandharan culture, was a unique synthesis appropriate to an area that has been called a cultural crossroads.

But the culture of Bamiyan did not blossom overnight. That it was a long, slow process is testified to by the stone chambers lining the wadis and the alluvial fans created here and there where the wadis enter the main valley—now forgotten and desolate stretches of sand, but once the winter grazing grounds for the semi-nomadic pastoral people who paved the way for Bamiyan culture. These remains of the life of the herdsmen who contributed to the development of Bamiyan culture, as well as the Muslim burial grounds for which many of them were later utilized, are deserving of comprehensive protection as cultural sites.

In addition, the legendary sites of Khoja Ghar, Yakhsuz, and Mir Hashem, with their sacred groves of chinor (plane) trees, continue to exist in the central valley, and also deserve protection as evidence of the continuity of Bamiyan culture through the Islamic period.

Bamiyan is located on what was once the border between the 12th and 17th tax collection districts [satrapies] (nomoi) of the Persian Empire under the Achaemenid dynasty of Darius I. However, though Achaemenid records contain the names of such ancient cities of Afghanistan as Haraiva (Herat), Baxtri (Bactria), Harauvati (Kandahar), and Thatagu (to the north of Kandahar), Bamiyan is not mentioned. Nor is there firm basis for the theory that Alexander turned south to enter Bactria via Bamiyan, rather than going over the Hawak pass to the north. To appear on the stage of history as a proper noun, this remote area would have to wait until the arrival of Buddhism from eastern India.

Around 305 B.C., Seleucus Nicator, who had inherited the eastern regions of the empire of Alexander the Great, ceded the Hindu Kush region to the rising Maurya dynasty of Sandracottus (Chandragupta). It was about fifty years later, in 261 B.C., that Chandragupta's grandson Ashoka dispatched the eminent monk Maharakkita as a Buddhist missionary to the area, just before Greco-Bactria declared its independence in the northern Hindu Kush. The Rock Edict of King Ashoka discovered at Kandahar is testimony to this.

When it was that Buddhism was first practiced in Bamiyan is unclear; but it quietly began to root itself firmly in the north and south of the Hindu Kush during the Kushan dynasty, and we know that from the second to the fourth centuries A.D., many Buddhist temples were established in the area.
In the northern Hindu Kush, the Buddhist archaeological sites closest to Bamiyan are the cave temples of Surkh Kotal (3rd to 4th centuries) and Haibak (4th to 5th centuries). To the south of the Hindu Kush, monasteries already flourished at Kapisa-Begram, Shotorak, and Paitava (2nd to 4th centuries) and Buddhist temples were established at Tepe Maranjan (4th to 5th centuries) in Kabul.

Given this context, it seems reasonable to assume that the creation of the Buddha images and the cave temples (samgharama) at Bamiyan had, at least, begun by the end of the fourth century. It is at this time that the name Bamiyan first begins to be seen in written records, for example, Chinese *Wei Shu*, as Fan Yang, and *Bundahisn* in pahlevi as Bamikan.

The first to record really accurate information regarding Bamiyan was the Chinese scholar-monk Xuan Zang (*Hsuan-tsang*) who travelled up the Balkh River and crossed the Hindu Kush, reaching Bamiyan in about 630. He was welcomed by the ruler of Bamiyan, whose palace he visited, and spent about fifteen days in Bamiyan. He wrote of what he saw and heard at that time in the incomparable documents of his travels, *Record of the West in the Great Tang Period* (*Da Tang xiyuji*, edited in 646).

According to Xuan Zang, the kingdom of Bamiyan was "more than two thousand li east to west, and more than three hundred li north to south," a long, narrow land following the topography of the river valley. The capital was "six or seven li in length, and at its center stood the palace. The site of this palace has yet to be confirmed. In the foothills northeast of the palace was a standing image of the Buddha 140 to 150 chi in height, which would correspond to the 55-meter West Buddha that survived until recently. To the east of this colossal image stood "a samgharama built by a former king," which probably stood in front of what is now known as Cave H, which contains Bamiyan's largest seated Buddha image. The remains of this samgharama have not yet been found. Xuan Zang goes on to note the existence of another standing Buddha over 100 chi in height to the east of the samgharama. This would be the 38-meter East Buddha. Since Xuan Zang tells us that there were scores of temples (samgharama) in the area, it is likely that at least half of the cave temples known today were in operation by his time.

Two colossal Buddhas which Xuan Zang admired might have been set up from the 5th to 6th century based on the grand conception of the Buddhist cosmology. The east colossal Buddha is the Sakya muni Buddha, the west colossal Buddha is Maitreya.

The rule of Hephthalite in Bamiyan is still very obscure. From the 6th to 7th centuries, under strong influence of the Western Turks, Bamiyan, which had gained importance as a strategic point on the east-west trade route, flourished as a Buddhist
center. The Buddhist murals decorating the ceilings and walls of the cave temples show great variety in iconographical design and color—Bamiyan might be a symbolic model of cultural diversity. When he left Bamiyan, Xuan Zang also left us with a mystery: he describes "a reclining figure of the Buddha about to enter Nirvana, more than one thousand *chi* in length, in a temple two or three *li* to the west of the capital." Could the remains of this immense image—some 300 meters long—really still be lying somewhere in the valley?

The Silla monk Hui Chao was the last to describe Bamiyan's appearance as a Buddhist city. In *Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India* (*Wang Wu Tianzhu Guo Zhiuan*), Hui Chao writes that when he arrived in Bamiyan from Ghazni in 726, the ruler belonged to an ethnic group called Hu, with no allegiance to any other nation, but strangely enough, he makes no mention of the colossal Buddhas seen by Xuan Zang. Nearly a century after Xuan Zang's visit, Bamiyan was still a Buddhist city, but Hui Chao notes that both the Hinayana and Mahayana traditions were being practiced in contrast to Xuan Zang's time, when the teachings had been exclusively Hinayana.

Not long after Hui Chao left Bamiyan, during the reign (754-775) of the second caliph of the Abbasid caliphate, al-Mansur, the king of Bamiyan surrendered to Islamic forces under Mazahim b. Bistam.

Thoroughgoing introduction of Islamic culture to Bamiyan began after Sultan Mahmud assumed control of the Ghaznavid dynasty (998–1030). With the arrival of Islamic culture, it is clear that the center of the ancient city was shifted from northwest of the valley towards the southeast, and the plain surrounding Shahr-i Bamiyan (later Shahr-i Gholghola). It is believed that the fortresses of Shahr-i Zohak at the eastern end of the valley and Shahr-i Khoshak at the northeastern end also took on new functions at this time. Under the Ghorid dynasty (1155–1212), Bamiyan probably assumed even greater significance. One can imagine the smoke rising here and there from the pottery kilns in the area around Shahr-i Bamiyan.

In 1221 the Mongol armies invaded Bamiyan, conquered the fortress at Shahr-i Bamiyan, vandalized the Buddhist sites, and left. Shar-i Bamiyan became known as Shahr-i Gholghola, and was abandoned. The population dwindled, and Bamiyan swiftly sank into obscurity.

Sometimes, though the Arabic geographers mentioned the name of Bamiyan, the real situation of Bamiyan has been in the mist.

When, after a long silence, Bamiyan emerges once again unto the stage of history, it is unfortunately to the sound of cannon fire. In 1647 as the Mughal future emperor
Aurangzeb retreated from Balkh to Kabul, he vented his frustration by having his artillery fire on the colossal Buddha. The legs of West Buddha were heavily damaged in this onslaught.

In the 19th century, Europeans such as Alexander Burnes and Charles Masson visited Bamiyan and learned of the existence of the colossal sculptures without even realizing they were of Buddhist origin. In 1885 Talbot, Simpson, and Maitland arrived in Bamiyan and surveyed the two colossal Buddhas and Caves B, D, and E (JRAS XVIII, 1886). Their investigation had been inspired by Xuan Zang's writings. In 1886, a summary of their findings was published in the Illustrated London News, accompanied with a full-page drawing of the west colossal Buddha by Byroo Baksh, a student of the Lahore School of Art, and caused a great sensation.

However, the first full-scale archaeological investigation of Bamiyan began with the founding of DAFA (Délegation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan), under the supervision of its first director, Alfred Foucher. In November 1922, having completed an initial survey, Foucher wrote to Emile Senart, chairman of the Société Asiatique de Paris, emphasizing the importance of the sites at Bamiyan. This single letter opened a new page in Bamiyan's history (Journal Asiatique, April-June 1923).

In 1922, a survey was conducted by the architect André Godard and his wife Yedda, joined by the archaeologist Joseph Hackin, and the first phase of the investigations at Bamiyan was concluded. The results were published in 1928 as Les Antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān, a work of monumental significance, as it inaugurates the history of archaeological research at Bamiyan.

In 1929, Hackin revisited Afghanistan, accompanied by his wife, Ria, and the architect Jean Carl.

Arriving at Bamiyan, they made important discoveries of murals at Bamiyan and Kakrak and conducted the first excavation of Cave G to the east of the East Buddha, uncovering wall paintings and fragments of Buddhist manuscripts. The excavation provided new and important materials for the study of Bamiyan, and its results were published in 1933 as Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bāmiyān. In 1932, an expedition sponsored by Citroën reached Bamiyan, as did the Japanese art historian Odaka Sennosuke of the Tokyo Art Research Institute (later the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties), who took a large number of valuable photographs of the sites.

In 1933, Hackin and Carl conducted the first surveys of Caves J and K; these were published in 1959 as Diverses recherches archéologiques en Afghanistan.
In 1936, a team from Harvard University led by Benjamin Roland conducted research at Bamiyan, publishing new discoveries concerning the iconographic interpretation of the ceiling murals in the niche of the East Buddha. They also sampled fragments of the wall paintings in the caves surrounding the East Buddha, and carried out the first analysis of their pigments. The first comprehensive archaeological map of the Bamiyan sites was completed by Muniec the same year.

Beginning in 1939, Ria Hackin, with the cooperation of curator Ahmad Ali Kohzad of the Kabul Museum, began to collect folktales passed on by the people of Bamiyan concerning sites sacred to Islam in the area as well as legends associated with Shahr-i Gholghola. This work was published in 1959 as *Légendes et coutumes afghanes*.

In 1952, the door was opened to broader international involvement in archaeological research in Afghanistan, and a number of new studies of Bamiyan were undertaken. In 1964 and 1969 a team from Japan's Nagoya University conducted comprehensive measurement surveys of all the wall paintings and caves (*Bamiyan — Report of the Survey of 1969, 1971*). In 1973, a Kyoto University team commenced a comprehensive photographic survey (*Bamiyan, 1983*), and in 1975 and 1977 a team from Seijo University studied the murals in all the caves, including Cave K (*Preliminary Report of Archaeological Survey at Bamiyan (1975-1977), 1979*). For almost a decade from 1969 to 1978, the Archaeological Survey of India, operating with support from UNESCO, carried out a major program for restoration and preservation of the Bamiyan sites, involving work on the two colossal Buddhas and their neighboring caves, cleaning and stabilizing their wall paintings, etc. And finally, the studies of Bamiyan by Dr. Zemaryalai Tarzi, Director of the Afghan Archaeological Institute at that time, established in 1967 (*L'Architecture et le Décor rupestre des Grottes de Bamiyan, 1977*), and by Deborah Klimburg-Salter (*The Kingdom of Bamiyan, 1989*) should be mentioned.

All of these surveys and reports have added an astonishing amount of new information to the earlier work by DAFA, and have provided a solid documentary basis for further Bamiyan research. Unfortunately, just as these different international efforts to survey and research the Bamiyan sites were reaching a peak, the clouds of war once again enveloped Bamiyan.

The unchecked flow of looted antiquities out of war-torn Afghanistan served as one indicator of the dire state into which the country had fallen.

2.4. Bamiyan between 1994 and 2004

2.4.1. The Movement to Preserve Cultural Treasures
In the autumn of 1994, Nancy Dupree was one of the earliest to perceive the crisis inherent in the outflow of Afghanistan's cultural properties, and established the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH) in Islamabad, Pakistan. SPACH began activities such as the preservation of looted artifacts and the collection and publication of information regarding their whereabouts. It is thanks to Nancy Dupree's farsighted and courageous action that the majority of these objects survived the war. SAPCH has also mounted an emergency appeal for the preservation of the Bamiyan Buddhist sites and did everything in its power to make public the facts surrounding the looting and export of important cultural properties.

2.4.2. Before and After the Destruction of the Great Buddhas

The biggest issue was the preservation of the Bamiyan sites. In 1997, when Bamiyan fell to the Taliban, Commander Wahid announced his intention to destroy the sites, and had holes cut into the rock above the West Buddha for the placement of explosives. In response, UNESCO mounted an appeal for "international cooperation for the safeguarding of Afghanistan's cultural heritage," and the Japanese Society for West Asian Archaeology adopted a resolution calling for an early end to the Afghan civil war and the protection of Afghanistan's cultural assets from destruction, desecration, and looting.

In the summer of 2000, in the face of growing international criticism, the Taliban regime hardened its stance, and on February 26, 2001, the Taliban leaders issued a statement saying that "It has been decided that all of the idols in this country will be destroyed." Completely ignoring their historical significance and their irreplaceable cultural value and importance, they prepared a stockpile of explosives and set about their barbarous act.

The colossal East and West Buddhas were not the only victims. A 6.7-meter standing Buddha carved out of the hillside in Kakrak, another valley in the vicinity, and Bamiyan's second largest seated Buddha, were also blown up. This meticulous and thoroughgoing destruction was an unlawful act that turned its back on world opinion. The wanton destruction of cultural treasures by the Taliban can only be remembered as a deeply irrational act.

Immediately after the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas, a Japan Committee for the Protection of Displaced Cultural Property was established under UNESCO auspices, and began activities to protect cultural treasures endangered by exportation under the Taliban regime, treating these illicitly exported artifacts as "refugees" and succeeded in protecting some fragments of the mural painting from Bamiyan.
The tragedy of Bamiyan did not end with the destruction of the Great Buddhas. In the autumn of 2002, a joint Japan–UNESCO fact-finding mission was forced to conclude that 80 percent of the gorgeous Bamiyan wall paintings, with their profound connection via the Silk Road to the murals of India and Western China, had also been lost—in fact, deliberately annihilated.

2.4.3. International Efforts to Rescue Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage

Spurred on by a keen sense of their inability to prevent the demolition of the Great Buddhas at Bamiyan, UNESCO, SPACII, and the people of Afghanistan are redoubling their efforts to develop and implement specific programs for the restoration and preservation of Afghanistan's cultural heritage, including illicitly exported artifacts, and to build an international network to assist in this cause.

In June 2003, the first plenary session of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage was convened at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The goal of this organization, in the context of the return of peace to the people of Afghanistan and with a view towards the encouragement of the country's long-term development, is to promote the safeguarding of both the tangible and intangible aspects of Afghanistan's cultural heritage, and by so doing, to assist the Afghan people in restoring their historical and cultural identity and support their determined progress towards autonomy. It also is working with the government of Afghanistan to assist in the formulation of official cultural policies that will approach the preservation of the country's cultural heritage both in terms of immediate emergency measures and long-range planning.

In this regard, the repair of the Kabul Museum itself, the restoration and reconstruction of damaged artifacts, and the restoration of the Buddhist sites at Bamiyan, and the Islamic architecture of Herat and Jam have been identified as top-priority issues. In July 2003 the World Heritage Committee inscribed the cultural landscape and archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley on both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger.

2.5. Conclusion

Bamiyan has lost its glorious Great Buddhas and the murals in the surrounding caves, but many caves with their beautiful wall paintings remain, and the diversity of their construction continues to give them irreplaceable value from the standpoint of religious, cultural, and architectural history. The history of Bamiyan, including its sacred Islamic sites, has much to teach us about the capacity of the human spirit to give
birth to impressive cultural achievements, and deserves to be appreciated with open hearts and minds, transcending all differences of nation and religion.


This seminar was organized by UNESCO and the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan. The participants of the seminar consist of the international/national institutions and experts from twenty countries that include the Guimet National Museum of Asiatic Art (Guimet Musée National des Arts Asiatiques) and the British Museum. Many observers from Afghanistan also came to the seminar. The total number of participants was 103.

The aims of the seminar were to discuss: a) the importance and problems of rehabilitating the Afghanistan's endangered cultural heritage, and b) practical and manageable plans for conducting such rehabilitation. The presentations of the seminar were largely along the following themes:

A) The current status of cultural heritage in Afghanistan
B) The aid, restoration and conservation thus far conducted
C) Future prospects on the rehabilitation

The first major focus of the seminar was the reconstruction of the destroyed two Giant Buddha statues. As presented in a keynote lecture of Prof. Ikuo Hirayama, the majority of experts were against the reconstruction of the statues. The experts preferred to maintain the current destroyed condition. However, the Afghan side requested strongly to the participants of the seminar for the reconstruction plan. The discussion was not able to reach a conclusion on the first day and continued to be discussed on the second day. Finally experts agreed that “…the first emergency priority is the stabilization of the cliff face and the niches and caves carved into it which are in a serious state of conservation and a matter of grave immediate concern. The decision to engage in reconstruction of the Buddhist statues of Bamiyan is a matter to be settled by the Government and people of Afghanistan…” (UNESCO and MICA 2002: 8, IV.14). Rather than simply an academic matter, the reconstruction of the statues seems to become a political or economic issue, involving ambitions of various people, institutions, and companies. During this seminar, the Japanese government declared to provide US$ 700,000 to the UNESCO Japan Funds-in-Trust for the safeguarding project of the Bamiyan site. The participants of the seminar agreed that the future conservation activities in Bamiyan will utilize this funding.
3.2. The Japan-UNESCO Joint Mission to the Bamiyan site

The Japan-UNESCO joint mission worked for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site between 30 September and 5 October 2002. The mission was dispatched based on the declaration of the Japanese government at “the International Seminar on the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage” and was funded by the UNESCO Japan Fund-in-Trust (see above).

The aims of the 2002 season were three-fold:

1) Document the condition of the destroyed Giant Buddha statues for the future preservation methods.
2) Document the current status of mural paintings and discuss their preservation methods.
3) Based on the field research, draw a preliminary revised UNESCO plan for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site.

The mission visited the valleys of Bamiyan, Foladi, and Kakrak, and the following three conclusions were reached.

1) The destruction of the two Giant Buddha statues by the Taliban regime has not only enlarged the former cracks on the Great Cliff, but also created new cracks. The cracks near the niche of the Eastern Giant Buddha may cause a partial collapse of the Great Cliff. The enforcement of the Great Cliff is thus essential and is the utmost priority of the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site. In addition, many of the mural paintings in other Buddhist caves are in risk of severe detachment. These also must be conserved swiftly.

2) At least 80% of the mural paintings, which were recorded before the Soviet invasion, are now lost or destroyed. The mural paintings on the ceilings of the niches of the two Giant Buddhas are also completely lost. This is not only caused by the Taliban’s destruction of the statues, but also due to a large-scale looting which occurred after the collapse of the Taliban regime. The mural paintings now left at the Bamiyan site are in very poor condition and many of them are in risk of detachment. Numerous small fragments of murals scatter on the floor of the caves which received heavy looting. To prevent such looting, the entrance of the caves should be temporarily sealed. It is also necessary to collect the fragments of murals which are scattered on the floors of the caves. These fragments should be stored in a safe place for the future conservation of
the mural paintings. The preservation and conservation of the mural paintings which still remain in situ in the caves must be considered.

3) For the archaeological investigation of the Bamiyan site, we must produce detailed topographic and site maps of the Bamiyan region, including the Bamiyan, Foladi and Kakrak Valleys. In addition, a detailed map of the Great Cliff should be produced for the preservation and research of the Buddhist caves. Furthermore, in order to determine the extent of the Bamiyan site, a thorough archaeological survey is required. Many caves around the known-Buddhist caves still remained unrecorded. It is also important to know the extent of the Bamiyan site for the future preservation plan of the Bamiyan region.

Based on the above results of the mission, the UNESCO plan for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site was revised and on 2nd June 2003, the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan and UNESCO made a contract on the plan.

3.3 The Expert Working Group on the Preservation of the Bamiyan Site

The working group was organized by UNESCO and ICOMOS at Munich, Germany from 21st to 22nd November 2002. A total of 27 international experts and UNESCO officers participated the working group. Such gathering of international experts should have occurred after the foundation of the “International Coordination Committee” which was announced at the Kabul meeting in May 2002 (see above). However, due to the urgency of the preservation of the Bamiyan site, this working group was held before the foundation of the “International Coordination Committee”.

The main agendas of the working group included a) consolidation of Great Cliff and other Buddhist caves, b) preservation of mural paintings, c) storing and anastelosis of the fragments of the destroyed Buddha Colossi, d) archaeological research, e) producing a list of sites and monuments in the Bamiyan site, and f) producing the declaration for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site. The participants of the working group discussed each agenda with great enthusiasm. The most debated agenda was on the consolidation of the Great Cliff and other Buddhist caves and on the anastelosis of the fragments of the destroyed Buddha Colossi.

The consolidating method was first presented by Prof. C. Margottini (Università di Modena) based on the information collected during the Japan-UNESCO joint mission (see above). The opinion of Prof. Margottini differed from that of the ICOMOS mission who visited the Bamiyan site before the Japan-UNESCO joint mission. Prof. Margottini
suggested a method using anchors and nails, while the ICOMOS mission suggested a method using special adhesive. The meeting did not reach a final agreement and the discussion was left for the future expert working group.

Various opinions were offered on the issue of anastelosis since this is closely related to the issue of reconstructing the destroyed Buddha Colossi. The participants agreed on the point that the reconstruction should not be considered as an option. Rather the fragments for the destroyed Giant Buddha should be moved to a safe place to conduct the consolidation of the Great Cliff and other Buddhist caves smoothly.

The discussions at the expert working group reflected the international interests on the “reconstruction” of the Buddha Colossi. Based on the UNESCO preservation and conservation scheme, we should conduct the work which is urgently required. Parallel to the execution of such work, we should offer detailed plans for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan sites including the issue of “reconstruction” of the Buddha Colossi and archaeological excavations.

3.4. The Task Force for the Safeguarding Project of the Bamiyan Site

This is an unofficial task force organized by the Multilateral Cultural Cooperation Division of the Cultural Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The aim of the task force is to establish a close contact among the Japanese experts from the national and private intuitions concerning the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site. This is to prepare for the technical issues during the operation of the safeguarding project.

The first meeting was held on 22nd January 2003. The participants discussed the plan for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site based on the information collected by the Japan-UNESCO mission (see above). After the safeguarding project is in operation, the task force is offering the reports of the project’s progress. Until December 2004, five meetings have so far been held.

3.5. Agreement for the “UNESCO Japan Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Heritage: Project proposal on the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan site”

On 2nd June 2003, a signing ceremony of the agreement on the project proposal for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site was held in front of the destroyed East Giant Buddha. The agreement was made between the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan and UNESCO. His Excellency Kinichi Komano, the Japanese Ambassador to Afghanistan also joined the ceremony. This agreement on the project proposal was based on the result of the Japan-UNESCO joint mission (see above). The budget of the
The project was announced as $1,815,967 and will last for three years between 2003 and 2005. The agreement consists of three main tasks as follows:

1) **Preservation of Mural Paintings**

Approximately 80% of the mural paintings were lost since 1979. Although it is generally considered as an act of the Taliban regime, the main cause is due to looting. The fragments of destroyed murals are now scattered on the floors of the caves and in risk of receiving secondary destruction by people stepping on the fragments. It is vital to collect these mural fragments and store them in a safe place. It is also necessary to temporarily seal the entrances of the caves to avoid further damage to the mural paintings which still remain in situ.

2) **Preparation of Preliminary Master Plan**

It is crucial to produce a “preliminary master plan” for the reconstruction and preservation of the Bamiyan site, especially to conduct the safeguarding project smoothly. The preliminary master plan should be comprehensive and contain unambiguous guidelines on future safeguarding activities in Afghanistan. It will also provide a standard of conservation and protection of the cultural heritage in the course of regional development, which is an important factor for the post-war reconstruction of Afghanistan. The cultural heritage of the Bamiyan region is the main source for their tourism industry and has the potential to develop the regional economy. However, there is a possibility that as the tourism industry develops, the local cultural landscape and the cultural heritage will be in danger of destruction. On the other hand, the preliminary master plan should incorporate the requirements of the governmental and provincial institutions of Afghanistan as much as possible. For the preparation of the preliminary master plan, detailed topographic maps and elevation plans will be produced.

3) **Consolidation of Great Cliff, Niches, and Remains of the Statues**

The destruction of the two Giant Buddha statues has caused new cracks in the niches of the Giant Buddhas and the Great Cliff. It also caused the earlier cracks to widen. In particular, a large crack on the upper left of the niche of the East Buddha may result in a large cave-in and requires urgent and primary consolidation.

The project of the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site will be conducted by the international institutions and experts through making contracts with UNESCO. The first two tasks will be conducted by the NRICP and the last task by the Ing. Givanni Rodio.
& C. Impresa Construzioni Speciali (Italy). In addition, PASCO Co. (Japan) will produce the topographic maps and the elevation plans mentioned in the second task.

3.6 First plenary session of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage

This International Coordination Committee took place at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris from 16th to 18th June 2003. The Committee was first planned to take place in Kabul, however, an unforeseen security problem in Afghanistan had forced to move its location to Paris.

The Committee first discussed the procedure and the judgement standards for listing the “Cultural landscape and archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley” as a World Heritage Site. A UNESCO officer explained the safeguarding project of the Bamiyan site funded by the UNESCO Japanese Funds-in-Trust. The Bibliotheca Afghanica in Switzerland reported on the project of a virtual 3D reconstruction of the two Buddha Colossi. The participants agreed that the clearing of land mines is the first priority for any future activities in Bamiyan.

3.7 The First Mission for the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan Site”

The first mission for the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan site” was conducted jointly by the NRICP, Tokyo and the Afghanistan Ministry of Information and Culture between 12 July and 11 August 2003. The first mission conducted following three tasks.

1) Plenary study for the “preliminary master plan” on the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site.

The mission members exchanged opinions with the Ministry of Information and Culture, the local government of Bamiyan, and other related organizations and institutions. They have confirmed the mission members for the future cooperation with these organizations and institutions.

2) Collecting the fragments of the mural paintings and temporal closure of the Buddhist caves.

A) Nine Buddhist caves (20 chambers) have been surveyed: Caves West-III, F(a-b), M, A (upper c, lower), B (a-b), B1 (d), C (a, b, and ante-room), D, and D1. Large fragments were collected from Caves West, F(c), and M all of which are difficult to access. However, only small fragments were collected from the caves which have easy

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access. Caves F(a), F(c), M, A, 16 and 17 were temporarily closed. Caves 16 and its neighbouring Cave 17 were closed together since the mural paintings which are now covered with thick layers of soot are located in Cave 16.

B) From Caves M and F, around 50 to 60 fragments of Buddhist manuscripts were found during the cleaning of the floors. There was a new discovery of Buddhist manuscripts since the 1930s in the Bamiyan site. The fragments were found in a groove for placing the wooden framework for a door. The type of the Buddhist manuscripts was the so-called “bark manuscript” and was made of thin skins of bark stacked together. The largest fragment measured 5 x 2 cm, although the majority of the fragments were diminutive. The manuscript was written in Sanskrit using the “Gilgit-Bamiyan First-letter style” which is dated to the 7th century CE. From the letter style and the contents of the manuscripts, they may be philosophical rather than Buddhist manuscripts. Apart from the manuscript fragments, potsherds including lustre wares were collected.

The discovery of the fragments of Buddhist manuscripts suggests that the debris in the Buddhist caves contains ancient debris. The decipherment and analysis of the Buddhist manuscripts will contribute to the understanding of the Buddhism and Buddhist activities conducted at the Bamiyan site.

3.8. The Second Mission for the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan Site”

The second mission for the “safeguarding of the Bamiyan site” was conducted jointly by the NRICP, Tokyo and the Afghanistan Ministry of Information and Culture between 27 September and 26 October 2003.

The second mission continued the tasks of the first mission, namely a) collecting the fragments of the mural paintings, and b) the temporal closure of the selective Buddhist caves. The Buddhist caves in the Bamiyan, the Foladi, and the Kakrak valleys were visited and cleaning was conducted. Relatively large numbers of mural fragments were collected from Caves I, N(a), J(d), J(e), and J(g). The following 33 caves in the three Valleys were temporarily closed after cleaning:

A) Bamiyan Valley (total of seven cave groups, 21 caves): Caves XI, ZI, I, H(a-b), N(a-b, c, h, i), J(a-g), and E(a-d, j-l). For Caves E(j-l), only the entrance area was cleaned.

B) Foladi Valley (total of seven caves): Caves 2-6 and 16.

C) Kakraku Valley (total of four caves): Caves 42-45.
During the second mission, more fragments of Buddhist manuscripts were collected during the cleaning of the caves. The fragments were found from Caves Z1, J(b), and J(c). The letter style and the contents of manuscripts were similar to the ones discovered during the first mission. Additionally, several fragments of Koran were collected from Cave I, which had a sitting Buddha statue. The discovery of the Koran indicates that the cave was used as a mosque after the decline of Buddhism in the Bamiyan site.

Traditionally the date of the Buddhist mural paintings has been investigated through iconographic viewpoint. However, the date of the murals is still disputed among scholars. In order to obtain more precise information on the dating, 40 radiocarbon samples were taken from 28 caves. The samples consist of chaff (39 samples) and a fragment of wood (1 sample) which are found in the lender of the mural paintings. The analysis of the samples is currently undertaken at the Nagoya University Center for Chronological Research.

The work of two missions succeeded in collecting major fragments of mural paintings and in the temporal closure of selected caves which require urgent protection. Only Cave K, which is located in a high place and cannot be accessed for security reasons was left for a later date. Collected fragments of murals will be catalogued and treated with first-aid conservation. A plan for the protection and conservation of mural paintings which are still in situ in the caves has to be urgently discussed. The result of the two missions will be published shortly.

3.9. Geophysical survey of the Bamiyan site: The first season

On behalf of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the NRICP conducted a geophysical survey of the Bamiyan site jointly with the Ministry of Information and Culture. The survey was carried out between 1st and 22nd October 2003. An non-destructive ground penetrating radar was used to investigate the subsurface structures in front of the Great Cliff. The aim of the survey was to grasp an overall aspect of the subsurface structures and use the result for the preparation of the “preliminary master plan”. The result is expected to be useful for determining a protective zone of archaeological sites from local and development. On the academic side, the mission hopes to discover the remains of palaces, temples and the giant sleeping Buddha.

The geophysical survey was conducted on the slopes and flat surfaces in front of the two Buddha Colossi. The survey area measures approximately 32 ha (1.7 km east-west, and 100 to 300 m north-south) and the straight distance of 17,868 m was walked. The distance between the measuring points were 25 m and a 200 MHz antenna was used.
The radar was able to reach approximately 4 m below the surface. A GPS was used to locate the starting and finishing points of the survey track.

The survey has identified a thick layer of soil (ca. 1.5 to 2.0 m) accumulated in the area in front of the Great Cliff. The soil was obviously derived from the erosion of the cliff face and the run-off soil from the wadi valleys. The ancient features lie below the soil. Several building complexes have been identified in a large area. Around 2 m below the surface, building structures were concentrated in three locations: 1) the area southwest of the West Giant Buddha, 2) near the edge of an alluvial fan between the two Giant Buddhas, and 3) in the vicinity of the first stupa.

In conclusion, the survey did not provide conclusive evidence for the location of the "capital", the "Buddha on his death bed (Parinirvana Buddha)", and the "temple complex" which are mentioned in Xuan Zang's Da Tang Xi Yu Ji. However, from the description of Xuan Zang and the results of the geophysical prospection, the location of the "capital" was thought to be to the southwest of the West Giant Buddha, while the "Parinirvana Buddha" and the "temple complex" were probably built near the edge of an alluvial fan between the two Giant Buddhas.

The future surveys will extend the area to the east and west of the Great Cliff. An intensive survey will also be carried out in the area southwest of the West Giant Buddha and near the edge of the alluvial fan between the two Giant Buddhas. Furthermore, a small sounding is planned to testify the results of the geophysical survey.


The UNESCO/ICOMOS expert working group was held in Munich from 18th to 20th December 2003. The first two days (18th and 19th) were spent discussing the consolidation of a crack at the upper right part of the niche of East Buddha Colossus. A preliminary consolidation was carried out by a team from the Rodio Co., Ltd. (Italy) led by Prof. C. Margottini (see above). The team approached the upper right part of the niche from the top of the Great Cliff using clamming rope. Anchors and nails were attached to the cliff face by drilling. Since setting up scaffolding inside the niche was unsafe due to the possibility of further collapsing of the remnants of the Giant Buddha statue, the team took the method of approaching the crack from the top of the Great Cliff. The consolidation was also done in Cave B1, which is located to the east of the East Buddha Colossus. Here, a net of wires were attached to the cliff face to prevent from collapsing. A geological group from the Achen University (Germany) has proposed a plan to analyse the fragments of the destroyed Buddha Colossus. This is to
identify the original location of a fragment by comparing the difference in magnetic susceptibility of both the rock layers of the niche and the fragments.

Although all scholars and experts do not agree on the consolidation and protection methods mentioned above, the Italian method brought a little surprise to the participants, particularly in its unique method and scale of consolidation.

On the second day (19th Dec), the reports and discussions were on the conservation of mural paintings and the preliminary master plan (protection and utilization plan) for the Bamiyan site. These two issues have been tackled by the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties. The NRICP reported that all the Buddhist caves, except Cave K, were cleaned and fragments of mural paintings were collected. Additionally, some caves were closed temporarily. The working group requested for the further consideration of conservation methods and storage places for the mural paintings, which are currently stored at the Center for the Conservation of Historical Monuments, Bamiyan Branch. Overall, the Japanese swift reaction and activities at the Bamiyan site were highly praised by the participants of the expert working group. For the "preliminary master plan", the working group strongly asked for the swift preparation of the draft by incorporating the demands of the Afghan authorities.

On the last day (20th Dec), the results of the archaeological projects in the Bamiyan site were presented. First, Prof. Z. Tarzi (the March Bloch University of Strasbourg; former Director of Archaeology and Preservation of Historical Monuments of Afghanistan and the former Director General of the Archaeological Institute of Kabul) reported the soundings of the stupa, which he conducted in the summer of 2003. Prof. Tarzi hoped to discover the "Buddha on his death bed" (Buddha in Parinirvana), mentioned in Xuan Zang’s Da Tang Xi Yu Ji. Sounding revealed a Buddhist temple around 2-3 m below the current surface. Several heads of Bodhisattva have been unearthed in the temple. Interestingly around 2-3 m below the surface a layer of natural accumulation was observed. Although several objects dated to the Ghur Dynasty (A.D. 12-13th century) were found in this layer, no substantial building structures were identified. The result of the sounding well corresponds with the geophysical prospection (see above). Probably this layer was accumulated during a landslide caused by the partial destruction of the Great Cliff.

Other presentations of the archaeological projects included the geophysical prospection by the NRICP (see above) and the registivity survey by the ICOMOS and the archaeological survey by the DAFA. Other organisations and institutions offered further supports to the Japanese activities at the Bamiyan site. Some institutions suggested a plan for the joint mission with Japan.
The second expert working group offered a place for exchange opinions and information on the safeguarding of the Bamiyan site. Furthermore, a framework for the various organisations and institutions to work under the flag of UNESCO for the safeguarding project was established.

3.11. The Third Mission for the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan Site”

The third mission for the “Safeguarding of the Bamiyan site” was conducted jointly by the NRICP, Tokyo and the Afghanistan Ministry of Information and Culture from 15th to 29th June, 2004. The mission was funded by the UNESCO Japan Funds-in-Trust for Preservation of the World Cultural Heritages. The mission was engaged in three tasks: a) preliminary talks for the “preliminary master plan” with related Afghan authorities, b) an archaeological survey in the Bamiyan Valley, and c) protection of mural paintings in cave sites. One of the highlights of the third season was the discoveries of new mural paintings and a stupa during the archaeological survey. Furthermore, for the first time in thirty years, Cave K was investigated for the protection of the mural paintings.

3.11.1. Preparation for the “preliminary master plan” of the Bamiyan site

The Bamiyan site was listed as a World Heritage in July 2003 at the 27th World Heritage Committee. The decision was rather made hastily due to its urgent requirement. Due to its urgency, the preservation and buffer zones, and the heritage management plan of the Bamiyan site was insufficient. Therefore, the World Heritage Committee has asked the government of Afghanistan for the preparation of a “master plan” for conservation and heritage management plan of the Bamiyan site. To support the government of Afghanistan for drawing such master plan, the third mission of the Bamiyan site has worked for the establishment of preservation and buffer zones of the Bamiyan site. Through the results of the archaeological survey, the Afghan and Japanese sides have managed to obtain important information for the establishment of above zones. The preservation zone will include not only the cliff which two giant Buddhas are located, but also the surrounding landscape of the cliff which include many valleys.

The long-term war-like condition in Afghanistan, especially in the last 20 years, has destroyed the legal and organisational systems to protect the Bamiyan site and to control local development in the Bamiyan Valley. To preserve a cultural landscape of the Bamiyan Valley and enhance local development, it is essential to establish mutual relationships not only with organisations for heritage management, but also with
organisations engaged in urban planning, transportation, agriculture, etc. However, the local government of Bamiyan severely lacks financial and human resources to conduct such activity. Through the discussions with the local government, we have concluded that the draft of the "master plan" should incorporate A) establishment of comprehensive legal and organisational systems which allow both the local area development and the preservation of the site, B) capacity building of human resources for such legal and organisational systems, and C) efficient international coordination plan of various national/international organisations which will be working in the Bamiyan Valley.

3.11.2. Archaeological survey

The results of the archaeological survey are as follows:

a) Archaeological site map of the Bamiyan Valley

The last archaeological site map of the Bamiyan Valley was made by J. Meunie of the Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA) in 1936. We have produced a new site map of the Valley which includes newly discovered sites and other archaeological information. The map will be used for the future archaeological investigations and heritage management of the Bamiyan Valley.

b) New mural paintings

New mural paintings were discovered in two of the Buddhist caves of the Da’uti area, which is located c. 1 km east of the East Giant Buddha. The caves were labelled Da-A1 and Da-A2, respectively. Cave Da-A 1 has a Bodhisattva mural painting of in the room for prayer and meditation. This cave has a unique ceiling style. The mural painting is in poor condition since the cave had been used as a house until recently. We have sealed temporarily the entrance of the grotto in order to prevent further damage on the mural painting. New mural painting has not been found in the Bamiyan Valley since the discovery in Cave N by the mission from the Nagoya University approximately 40 years ago.

c) New stūpa

A new stūpa in the Bamiyan Valley was discovered to the northeast of Shahr-i Gholghola (see below). The stūpa was constructed from cobblestones using mud as bonding material. It measured 24 x 16 m with ca. 2.5 m in height. The stūpa was surrounded by a large squared enclosure of ca. 100 x 70 m in size. The whole complex may represent a Buddhist temple.
A fortress site of Shahr-i Gholghola has been dated to the Islamic period. The new discovery of a possible Buddhist temple near the site suggests that the area around Shahr-i Gholghola was also inhabited when the Buddhism prospered in the Bamiyan Valley. Furthermore, this discovery indicates that the Buddhist remains may extend in a large area of the Valley than previously known. Future archaeological surveys in the Valley is hoped to reveal the new distribution of the Buddhist and other archaeological remains in the Valley.

d) Ancient cemeteries

The Bamiyan region is well-known for its Buddhist caves and mural paintings. However, apart from the investigation of Buddhist caves, the everyday life of past humans in the Bamiyan region has been largely neglected. The 2004 survey has discovered a number of cemeteries for the first time in the Bamiyan region. This achievement will contribute to the future investigation of past human activities there including the Buddhist period.

For the first time, a possible Zoroastrian cemetery was found in the Zargaran area which is located to the east of the Great Cliff. According to the locals, a pot-burial with an entire human skeleton was discovered from the cemetery. Such burial pattern strongly indicates the presence of Zoroastrianism. Xuan Zang wrote in *Da Tang Xi Yu Ji* that “the Heaven God enables travelling merchants to see good omen and also to receive divine punishments in order to seek fortunes from them”. The Heaven God in this passage is considered as the Sun God which is depicted in the mural paintings of the niche of the East Giant Buddha. If the presence of Zoroastrian tombs is confirmed by future investigations, then Zoroastrianism, which worshipped Mithra as the main God, was present in the Bamiyan region. Furthermore, the discovery of this cemetery indicates not only various beliefs and religions that were present among the indigenous population before the arrival of Buddhism, but also provides clues to how Buddhism was influenced by local beliefs and religions.

e) Location of Xuan Zang’s the ‘capital’

Since we now have grasped the overall distribution of caves in the Bamiyan Valley including the Great Cliff, it is possible to speculate the location of the Xuan Zang’s “capital” of the Bamiyan kingdom. He described the length of the capital to be around six to seven li (ca. 2.5-3.5 km). The caves of the northern part of the Bamiyan Valley concentrate on the area between Zargaran and Sang-e Chaspan, which has ca. 4 km in
distance. Although slightly longer than Xuan Zang's description, the most likely location of the "capital" is the area between Zargaran and Sang-e Chaspan. Further investigation of the area may provide evidence of the "capital".

3.11.3. Protection of the mural paintings

As a part for the “protection of the mural paintings”, the mission carried out an archaeological investigation of Cave K, which has not been studied properly since 1974. This is because Cave K is located in a very high part of the Great Cliff and was difficult to access. Fortunately, the Kitano Construction Co. (Japan) generously rent us the scaffolding equipments which made possible for the investigation of Cave K. Unfortunately, several detached murals were found in the cave. Some of the detached mural paintings from Cave K are now under the protection of the Japan Committee of the Protection of Displace Cultural Property (Chairman: Prof. Ikuo Hirayama). Ironically, the mural paintings of the Cave K become one of the best preserved murals in the Bamiyan site because the majority of mural paintings have disappeared from the site. The Cave K is now temporary closed after cleaning Rooms K2 and K3. Cave K requires an urgent intervention for the conservation of mural paintings as well as protection of the cave itself.

References

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4. Archaeological investigation of the Bamiyan site

4.1. Natural and archaeological overview of the Bamiyan region

4.1.1. Natural setting of the Bamiyan region

The Bamiyan region consists of three valleys: the Bamiyan, the Foladi, and the Kakrak Valleys. Three rivers (the Bamiyan, the Foladi, and the Kakrak) flow though each valley, respectively. The northern part of the Bamiyan region is a mountainous area where water sources are scarce. The southern part of the region consists of water-rich fertile valleys. The water sources derive from the rivers which have their headwaters at the flanks of the Shah Foladi and the Kuh-e Baba Mountains. Numerous small wadis run through each valley. In Persian, the word “valley” is called *darra*, which means a valley with water sources that is suitable for habitation. The “wadi” is called *qol* or *qowl* in Persian which means a dry valley not suitable for living space. As these native terms show, the Bamiyan region can be clearly separated into places that are suitable for habitation, and those which are not.

Xuan Zang, a monk from China who visited the Bamiyan kingdom around 629, wrote about the characteristics of the region as follows:

"The Bamiyan kingdom measures 2000 *li* from east to west and 300 *li* from north to south. It lies in a snowy mountain. People live in mountains and valleys owing to regional topography. The capital of the kingdom is located near a cliff and measures 6 to 7 *li* across the valley. A high cliff lies to the north of the capital. The kingdom has grain, but is scarce in flowers and fruits. The kingdom is suitable for pastoral life and has many sheep and horses. The cold climate is severe and the customs of people are primitive. People often wear leather or woollen clothing suitable for its climate" (translated by S. Kuwayama).

Hui Chao, a monk from Silla (Korea) who visited the Bamiyan kingdom between 726 and 727, wrote as follows:

"The Bamiyan kingdom can be reached in seven days from the Dzaul kingdom travelling to the north. The kingdom is known for its sheep, horses, cotton textiles, and plentiful grape production. The region is snowy and the climate is cold. The majority of inhabitants live in the mountains" (translated by S. Kuwayama).
According to the descriptions of both Xuan Zang and Hui Chiao, the Bamiyan kingdom was located in a mountainous area and the climate was cold and snowy. People of the kingdom inhabited in both mountains and valleys. Such descriptions give important clues for the understanding of settlements and the numerous Buddhist caves that still exist in the Bamiyan region. Probably these descriptions imply that the people of the region not only engaged in agriculture, but also moved seasonally along the valleys accompanied by their flocks.

4.2. Cave sites

4.2.1. Cave sites in the Bamiyan region from an archaeological perspective

The cave sites in the Bamiyan Valley are distributed mainly in two locations: at the Great Cliff, where the two Giant Buddha stand, and on the slopes of the other small cliffs and mountains. The use of caves as dwellings probably existed well before the introduction of Buddhism to the region. Probably, people inhabited in caves as a means of adaptation to the cold climate of the region. Thus, it is presumptuous to assume that caves were constructed and used only during the Buddhist period. If a long-term use of the caves is assumed from an archaeological perspective, then the construction and use of caves will be understood in a wider historical context.

4.2.2. Typology of the caves

The caves are classified into four groups based on their floor plans: a) rectangular, b) square, c) octagonal, and d) circular. The types of ceilings correspond to the floor plans. Square, octagonal and circular caves have “Laternendecke” or domed ceilings. Rectangular type caves often have simple vaulted ceilings.

The Buddhist caves at the Great Cliff, the Foladi Valley, and the Kakrak Valley contain all four types of floor plans. Other caves, which do not have Buddhist mural paintings, have been generally classified as the rectangular type. This implies that the square, octagonal and circular types were related to Buddhists. The rectangular type, on the other hand, was simply constructed for residential use and was in use for a much longer period until recent times. During the Buddhist period, the rectangular type may have been used mainly as common dwellings and quarters for monks.

4.2.3. Orientations of the caves

The entrances of the caves generally face southeast, south, or southwest. Such orientation indicates that optimal sunlight exposure was sought especially during the autumn and winter. Although the summer can be very hot in the Bamiyan region, it was
more urgent necessity to prepare for the coldness of winter. The region is located on an altitude of over 2,500 m and, as mentioned above, Xuan Zang’s account imply the harshness of the winter. The exception to such is the caves in Qol Dasht-e Mulla Ghulam and Kart-e Solh where caves are oriented to the north and the west, respectively. The number of caves in Qol Dasht-e Mulla Ghulam is scarce, while Kart-e Solh has abundant caves. Both locations are small valleys with scarce water sources. Currently it is not possible to provide clear answers why these caves were constructed differently from others. One possibility is that the Buddhist communities dwelled in the locations at the marginal areas of the Bamiyan region less suitable for habitation.

4.2.4. Distribution of the cave sites

Cave sites are generally found on the slopes at the entrances of the wadi valleys and along the river valleys. Thus, the cave sites are distributed in the shape of the Greek letter “Λ” at the entrance of each wadi valley. The cave sites are usually not situated inside the wadi valleys. It is assumed that caves were formed at the entrance of the valleys to avoid sudden floods or landslides and to seek optimal sunlight. At first glance, the caves on the northern slope of the Bamiyan Valley appear to form a single group. However, careful observation reveals that the caves are formed at the entrances of small wadi valleys.

Exceptions to the above trend are the caves at Gurwana Bala in the Foladi Valley, on the west bank of the Shafr-i Gholghola, at Zargarana, and on the Great Cliff. In these four locations, there are no wadi valleys and caves extend out in a long band. The Buddhist caves in the Foladi Valley can be found in the deep end of the valley. Like the caves in the Kakrak Valley, these caves were thought to be used as places of meditation for monks and not for dwellings.

4.2.5. Cave sites as winter camps

The distribution of caves in the Bamiyan region can be understood as a large winter camp for pastoral nomads. For example, in the Foladi and the Kakrak Valleys no caves exist in the upstream areas beyond the Qala-i Ghamay and Khawar wadi valleys, respectively. The caves are located at the lower parts of the Foladi and the Kakrak Valley. This indicates that the both locations were used as winter camps for pastoral nomads who moved along the both valleys.

As mentioned above, in the Bamiyan Valley, caves are located at the entrances of the wadi valleys which extend towards the north. Before the civil war, local people moved along the wadi valleys with their flock to reach summer camps in the upper part
of the valleys where they spent around four months. In other words, the people of the
Bamiyan region traditionally spent the winter in caves in the downstream areas of wadi
valleys and spent the summer in tents in the upstream areas of the wadi valleys.
However, the Soviet invasion and the long-lasting civil war have forced people to much
transhumance.

The traditional lifestyle of the people of the Bamiyan region is a crucial key to
understand the function and distribution of cave sites. We need to not only collect
further information on the lifestyle of the people, but also protect the entire region from
further destruction and development.

4.2.6. Xuan Zang's “capital” of the Bamiyan kingdom
Since we now have grasped the overall distribution of caves in the Bamiyan Valley
including the Great Cliff, it is possible to speculate the location of the Xuan Zang’s
“capital” of the Bamiyan kingdom. He described the length of the capital to be around 6
to 7 li (ca. 2.5-3.5 km). The caves of the northern part of the Bamiyan Valley
concentrate on the area between Zargaran and Sang-e Chaspan, which has ca. 4 km in
distance. Although slightly longer than Xuan Zang’s description, the most likely
location of the “capital” is the area between Zargaran and Sang-e Chaspan. Further
investigation of the area may provide evidence of the “capital”.

4.3. Cemetery sites
4.3.1. Implication of the discovery of cemetery sites in the Bamiyan region
The Bamiyan region is well-known for its Buddhist caves and mural paintings.
However, apart from the investigation of Buddhist caves, the everyday life of past
humans of the Bamiyan region has been largely neglected. The 2004 survey has
discovered a number of cemeteries for the first time in the Bamiyan region. This
achievement will contribute to the future investigation of past human activities there
including the Buddhist period.

4.3.2. Relation between the cemeteries and the cave sites
Cemetery sites are generally found further down the slopes below the cave sites near
the edges of the alluvial fans. The cemeteries were formed either on terraces or gentle
slopes. Each cemetery seems to correspond to a group of cave sites which was a winter
camp. This relationship between the cemetery and cave sites probably emerged well
before the Buddhist period and continued into the present. An interesting phenomenon
is that the cemeteries of refugees who migrated into the Bamiyan region after the civil war did not use traditional cemeteries, but formed new cemeteries on top of the hills.

4.3.3. *A possible Zoroastrian cemetery site at Zargaran*

For the first time, a possible Zoroastrian cemetery site was found in the Zargaran area which is located to the east of the Great Cliff. According to the locals, a pot-burial with an entire human skeleton was discovered from the cemetery. Such burial pattern strongly indicates the presence of Zoroastrianism. Xuan Zang wrote in *Da Tang Xi Yu Ji* that “the Heaven God enables travelling merchants to see good omen and also to receive divine punishments in order to seek fortunes from them”. The Heaven God in this passage is considered as the Sun God which is depicted in the mural paintings of the niche of the East Giant Buddha. If the presence of Zoroastrian tombs is confirmed by future investigations, then Zoroastrianism, which worshipped Mithra as the main God, was present in the Bamiyan region. Furthermore, the discovery of this cemetery indicates not only various beliefs and religions that were present among the indigenous population before the arrival of Buddhism, but also provides clues to how Buddhism was influenced by local beliefs and religions.

4.3.4. *Protection of cemetery sites*

Cemetery sites in the Bamiyan region are now endangered by the construction of roads. This is most apparent in the Foladi Valley. As mentioned above, cemeteries are normally formed on terraces or gentle slopes that require less effort for local people to construct roads by connecting such locations. Because cemetery sites can provide important information not only for the cave sites, but also for the local beliefs and social customs, it is vital to protect cemetery sites from destruction.

4.4. *Watchtowers*

Past investigations of the Bamiyan region have identified several remains of watchtowers on the surrounding highlands. During the 2004 survey, new watchtowers were identified at Khawar in the Kakrak Valley and at Kabutak in the Khoja Gar wadi valley. These two watchtowers can be considered as a set. Interestingly no cave sites were found further upstream from the watchtowers, although several cave sites exist around the watchtowers. In general, the watchtowers are located in a remote area away from the cave sites. It is considered that these watchtowers once functioned as guarding points along the border of the Bamiyan kingdom. Further investigation of the surrounding highlands can provide information on the defence system of the kingdom.
4.5. Potsherd scatters

During the 2004 survey, potsherd scatters are identified only at the following two areas. One area is located on a gentle slope south of the main road at Sorkhqol-e Pa’in which is between the Qol-e Tatar and Sorkhqol. Both glazed wares and pottery were found at the location. However, there is a possibility that potsherds did not originate in the location in which they were discovered. Local residents claimed that the soil of the area was brought from elsewhere. The other area is located in an area southeast of the East Giant Buddha. Potsherds were found in a field south of the stupa and at a cemetery site. The dating of the potsherds is uncertain at the moment.

4.6. New stupa

A new stupa in the Bamiyan Valley was discovered to the northeast of Shahr-i Gholghola (see below). The stupa was constructed from cobblestones using mud as bonding material. It measured 24 x 16 m with ca. 2.5 m in height. The stupa was surrounded by a large squared enclosure of ca. 100 x 70 m in size. The whole complex may represent a Buddhist temple.

4.7. Places of pilgrimage or mausoleums

During the 2004 survey, places of pilgrimage or mausoleums were discovered at Yakhsuz, which is located between the two Giant Buddhas, and at Mir Hashem in the Guruwana area. Although the dating of the remains is unknown, they are important historical remains for the understanding of the religious activities in the Bamiyan region.

4.8. Subsurface remains in front of the Great Cliff

In October 2003, the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties and the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan conducted a geophysical prospection using ground-penetrating radar.

The main results of the survey are as follows:

a) The prospection has identified a thick layer of soil (ca. 1.5-2.0 m) accumulated in the area in front of the Great Cliff. The soil was obviously derived from the erosion of the cliff face and the run-off soil from the wadi valleys. The ancient features lie below the soil.
b) Several building complexes have been identified in a large area. Around 2 m below the surface, building structures were concentrated in three locations: 1) the area southwest of the West Giant Buddha, 2) near the edge of an alluvial fan between the two Giant Buddhas, and 3) in the vicinity of the first stupa.

c) Geophysical prospection did not identify the location of the “capital”, the “Buddha on his death bed (Parinirvana Buddha)”, and the “temple complex” which are mentioned in Xuan Zang’s Da Tang Xi Yu Ji. However, from the description of Xuan Zang and the results of the geophysical prospection, the location of the “capital” was thought to be to the southwest of the West Giant Buddha, while the “Parinirvana Buddha” and the “temple complex” were probably built near the edge of an alluvial fan between the two Giant Buddhas.

The above results indicate that there are clearly subsurface remains in the area in front of the Great Cliff. Thus it is required that the area be registered as a protective area in the Bamiyan Valley.

4.9. Archaeological sites in the Bamiyan region

4.9.1. Area between Jogra Khel and Khaja Ghar

From the east to west, archaeological remains in the area are found at Jogra Khel, Qol-e Mu’alleem, Zargaran, Da’uti, and Khaja Ghar. Remains mainly consist of caves and cemeteries. At Zargaran, there is a cemetery site and a place where Buddhist manuscripts were said to be discovered. At Da’uti, a cave site (Cave Da-A) with new Buddhist mural paintings was discovered. There are the first mural paintings discovered in the Bamiyan region in the last forty years. Additionally, in the upper part of the Qol Hoja Gar, the site of Kabutak has been identified (see above).

4.9.2. The Great Cliff

The Great Cliff is the core of the Buddhist remains in the Bamiyan region. The dating of the archaeological remains at the Great Cliff is still disputed. However, scholars believe that they are dated between the 5th and the 8th centuries. The Great Cliff consists of two Giant Buddhas (the East Buddha is c. 38 m high and the West Buddha is c. 55 m high), several sitting Buddhas, over 1,000 caves, and spectacular mural paintings inside the caves. Unfortunately, the remains including the two Giant Buddhas and hundreds of mural paintings have been severely damaged or destroyed by the Taliban regime.
The conservation of the mural paintings at the Great Cliff is part of the safeguarding project of the Bamiyan site conducted jointly by the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, Japan and the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture. The survey of mural paintings has revealed that the cave sites were not only used during the Buddhist period, but also during the Islamic period. The cleaning of the cave sites has unearthed Buddhist artefacts as well as Islamic glazed wares dated back to the 12th century. The Great Cliff was gradually abandoned during the Islamic period, although the exact period of the abandonment is currently uncertain.

4.9.3. Area between Qol-e Tatar and Baydak

The Qol-e Tatar Valley is located to the west of the Great Cliff and forms the western extent of the Buddhist remains of the Great Cliff. To the further west of the valley, archaeological remains are found at Qol-e Tatar, Sorkhql Pa’in, Sorkhql Bala, Syyid Kamal-ud-din, Kolalha, Sang-e Chaspan, and Baydak. Remains include caves, cemeteries and areas of potsherd scatters. The most abundant remain is the cave site. Several traces of soil moving were found between Qol-e Tatar and Baydak, suggesting that some cave sites may have been destroyed. The cave sites are particularly concentrated at Sorkhql Pa’in, Sorkhql Bala, and Syyid Kamal-ud-din. These areas are located close to the above mentioned location of the “capital”. The number of cave sites dramatically decreases to the west of the Sang-e Chaspan Valley. This may suggests that the Xuan Zang’s “capital” of the Bamiyan kingdom laid at least to the east of the Sang-e Chaspan valley.

4.9.4. Area of Dasht-e Mulla Ghulam

No cave sites were found here except for several caves in Kart-e Solh and Qol-e Dasht-e Mulla Ghulam. The area is located on the southern slope of Dasht-e Mulla Ghulam and was probably not suitable for constructing settlements.

4.9.5. Area between Qala-i Ghamay and Gurwana Bala

The Foladi Valley is one of the longest valleys in the Bamiyan region. The lower part of the Valley has been surveyed thus far. Archaeological remains were found at Qala-i Ghamay, Sang-e Uj, Ahingar, Tarnawa, and Gurwana Bala. Between Qala-i Ghamay and Tarnawa, the caves are distributed at the entrances of the wadi valleys. At Gurwana Bala, numerous caves were found on the steep slope facing the Foladi Valley. Cemetery sites which correspond to those caves were also discovered. As mentioned above, archaeological remains in the Foladi Valley are currently endangered by the
construction of roads. The protection of the archaeological remains in the Valley must be considered seriously.

The Buddhist caves in the Foladi Valley are located in Ahingar where around 35 caves are carved in a deep part of the wadi valley. Among them, mural paintings remain in five caves. These caves are in danger of collapsing and require urgent conservation and protection.

4.9.6. Shahr-i Gholghola and its vicinity

Shahr-i Gholghola, the “town of grief”, is a fortress site located on a natural hill southeast of the new stupa (see above). Numerous caves exist to the west and southwest of Shahr-i Gholghola. Scholars believe that Shahr-i Gholghola is dated to the Islamic period. However, since the new stupa was formed near the site, there is a possibility that the site was occupied in earlier periods. We have identified a squared projection at the northern part of the site. This projection probably represents the remains of a tower or bastion. According to the locals, some tripod kiln stands were found in a field west of the site. Shahr-i Gholghola requires more thorough investigation since it has largely been neglected by scholars. Unfortunately, the area around Shahr-i Gholghola has become a minefield. For the protection of the site as well as its use as tourist resource, mine-clearing is desperately needed.

4.9.7. Nawabad

The area is located to the south of Shahr-i Gholghola and to the north of a ridge which separates Qol-e Khoshkak and the Kakrak Valley. Several caves have been found in the area.

4.9.8. The Kakrak Valley

The archaeological remains in the Kakrak Valley are found on the western slope of the valley. From south to north, the remains include Khawar, Chapqat, the Kakrak cave site, and several un-named sites at the entrances of wadi valleys. As mentioned above, two watchtowers are identified at Kharwar.

The Kakrak cave site is famous for the standing Buddha of 6.7 m height and Buddhist mural paintings. A total of 81 caves are so far found at the site. Unfortunately, the majority of mural paintings have been dismantled and some are now stored at the Kabual National Museum and the Gúmíet Musée National des Arts Asiatiques. The standing Buddha was completely destroyed by the Taliban regime. Five watchtowers were identified at the Kakrak cave site.
4.10. Cultural landscape of the Bamiyan region

Clear streams through a verdant valley, people engaged in farming and cattle breeding, and in contrast, dry valleys and stark treeless mountains but with exquisite hues... All this constitutes the stage forming the landscape of Bamiyan Valley and its inhabitants.

No one can tell now how the cultural landscape of Bamiyan Valley in ancient times differs from what we see today, but belief has it that in the 7th to 8th centuries, when Xuan Zang and Hui-chao visited the valley, its present landscape had essentially developed. Xuan Zang described Bamiyan Valley as “among snowy mountains. Surrounded by peaks and nestling in valleys, people live according to the region's topographical features... They have wheat but do not have many flowers, fruit, etc. Since the valley is suitable for cattle breeding, they raise sheep and horses. The climate is very cold but their manners are gallant. They wear animal skins and woolens, because they are best for life there.” Hui-chao wrote, “They use woven cotton fabrics for outer wear, animal skins for coats, and felt for upper garments. The land produces sheep, horses and cotton, as well as plenty of grapes. As they have much snow and it is extremely cold, people live in mountain caves.”

The descriptions show that rock-cut-caves found at various places in Bamiyan Valley were not dug for Buddhist purposes but as dwellings for the people back then to survive the severe cold of snowy winters. This observation is supported by the fact that not only in the large cliff on the northern side of the valley where the two lost giant Buddha statues were carved, but also at the entrance of the parched valley and in the lower region of the river along the sun-baked slope, caves remain.

Certain points merit note regarding individual rock-cut-caves and groups of caves. Since even today, a settlement is named after the dry valley, in the past, a group of caves at the entrance of the dry valley possibly formed a settlement or some type of commune. If so, evidently an ancient cemetery associated with the caves must be the final resting place of the cave-dwellers. Thus, the caves at the valley entrance coupled with the nearby cemetery constituted a base of living for the people of that era.

Let us consider the sort of lifestyle the people had. The descriptions of Xuan Zang and Hui-chao referring to topographical features conducive to cattle breeding and the raising of sheep and horses attract attention. Reportedly, prior to the Soviet invasion, shepherds and herds of domestic livestock often passed through the Bamiyan Valley. The invasion and ensuing civil war caused the people to leave the area with their livestock to escape the hostilities, after which livestock breeding in the Bamiyan Valley
sharply declined. As traces of this appear even today, presumably transhumance, a form of livestock breeding based on the transfer of livestock according to season, took prominence in earlier times. Evidently, the people once lived in the rock-cut-caves in the lower area of the dry valley, or used the valley as a dwelling place for the period from autumn to the following spring—that is, they wintered there and relocated to summer quarters in the upper region of the valley, where they bred livestock during the brief summer. While some family members remained to engage in agriculture and manage their property, others moved with their livestock according to season.

Both Xuan Zang and Hui-chao wrote about the lifestyle of the people of those days, but their descriptions differ. Xuan Zang recounted that they had wheat but little with respect to flowers and fruit, while Hui-chao wrote that the land produced sheep, horses and cotton, as well as abundant grapes. Why the discrepancy? This dissimilarity in narratives regarding the kind of crops cultivated can be ascribed to the arrangement of irrigation ditches. The time interval between the visits of Xuan Zang and Hui-chao was 100 years. Possibly water channel development made rapid progress during the period, with the lifestyle having focus on transhumance evolving into one based on both agriculture and transhumance. This change might have enabled bringing prosperity to the valley with the flourishing of Buddhism in the background. Opinion has it that such a situation has continued until today, while the agricultural produce has changed to potatoes. In that sense, we can say that the landscape of Bamiyan Valley today had already formed in that early period.

Many say that Buddhism appeared in Bamiyan Valley in the middle of 6th century with the shift of trade route linking the Indian Subcontinent and Central Asia toward China. What effects did this religion bring to the cultural landscape of Bamiyan Valley?

According to Xuan Zang, “The religious devotion among the people is outstanding compared with neighbouring countries. They remain faithful to the Three Treasures (Buddha, Law and Priesthood) at the top, down to various gods, and respect them most sincerely. Not only to the regional inhabitants but also to passing merchants, Deva showed good signs or a curse (divine wrath), thus inducing them to seek dharma.” From this description, we infer that, in addition to Buddhism, indigenous faiths such as Deva were widely practiced. A Zoroastrian-like tomb discovered in the Zargarahaan District serves to confirm this. At this stage, there is no knowing how Buddhism appeared and flourished in this region. Nevertheless, Buddhism apparently was merely one of several foreign heresies.
Xuan Zang, who came from the west of Bamiyan Valley, first visited the Royal Castle. He wrote of a standing stone statue (West Giant Buddha) in a corner of the mountain northeast of the Royal Castle. Thus, presumably the civic center of Bamiyan with the Castle in the center lay west of the Giant Buddha, near present Solkol with its rock-cut caves, during the first half of 7th century or possibly even earlier. A formidable cliff at the center of the northern side of Bamiyan Valley, a place where a number of Buddhist ruins including both giant Buddha statues remain, is deeply cut and distant from any water source, making it unsuitable for living. Most likely, this tract with its cliff was left as a so-called blank space, enabling creation of a Buddhist center. Speculation has it that Buddhism, which appeared as one of the foreign heresies and took root in this place, thus avoiding conflict with residents holding different indigenous religions, survived. Later, Buddhism was placed under the protection of a ruler of this region, and the Giant Buddha (West) was built near the town center, with the entire cliff becoming the regional hub of Buddhism. Moreover, although the age is unknown, convictions have it that Buddhist centers like this took form in regions that had Kakrak Caves and Forahdi Caves in the center. In fact, not only giant Buddha statues and sitting Buddha statues carved in the rock and rock-cut-caves, but also halls and reclining Buddha statues, and two stupas located across the valley constituted elements of the cultural landscape of the valley in those early years.

It has yet to surface how the decline of Buddhism and the advance of Islamic forces affected changes in the cultural landscape, or if the decline of Buddhism abruptly brought major revisions. Possibly, with the decline of Buddhism, its elements gradually disappeared, but the people continue to use rock-cut caves including the Buddhist variety as residences. Remnants of the Koran and of Islamic pottery left in the Buddhist caves present evidence.

However, rock-cut caves, carved in layered sandstone and conglomerate stone, gradually collapsed under the influence of rain and wind. Then, as the local inhabitants extended and reconstructed the caves, and they removed sandstone to use for polishing utensils, the collapse further accelerated. As confirmed through underground surveys, a 1.5 to 2.0 meter thick layer of earth and sand accumulated on the surface of the large cliff and covering the ancient relics is ascribed to earth and sand from the collapse of caves and cliffs instead of earth and sand flowed from the mountain behind the large cliff. Owing to the collapse of caves, the cliff lost importance as a dwelling place, and the buildings assumed to have existed there found themselves buried deep in the ground.

Sitting near the large cliff of Bamiyan Valley and listening well, we can hear the sound of sand flowing down with the occasional wind. While not clearly visible, the
landscape of Bamiyan Valley changes continuously even now. This, then, is the time to consider what we can do to preserve the cultural landscape of Bamiyan Valley, as created by hardworking people of yore and handed down to us by Nature.
5. Statement of significance: a review of the initial nomination of Bamiyan at the time of inscription on the World Heritage List in 2003 and the World Heritage values as a cultural landscape

5.1. Initial nomination of Bamiyan at the time of inscription on the World Heritage List in 2003

Bamiyan was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003 as a serial property with the following value assessment and content.

Brief Description:
The cultural landscape and archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley represent the artistic and religious developments which from the 1st to the 13th centuries characterized ancient Bakhtria, integrating various cultural influences into the Gandhara school of Buddhist art. The area contains numerous Buddhist monastic ensembles and sanctuaries, as well as fortified edifices from the Islamic period. The site is also testimony to the tragic destruction by the Taliban of the two standing Buddha statues, which shook the world in March 2001.

Justification for Inscription:
Criterion (i): The Buddha statues and the cave art in the Bamiyan Valley are outstanding representation of the Gandharan School of Buddhist art in the Central Asian region.
Criterion (ii): The artistic and architectural remains of the Bamiyan Valley, an important Buddhist centre on the Silk Road, are exceptional testimony to the interchange of Indian, Hellenistic, Roman and Sasanian influences as the basis for the development of a particular artistic expression in the Gandharan School. To this can be added the Islamic influence in a later period.
Criterion (iii): The Bamiyan Valley bears exceptional testimony to a Central Asian-region cultural tradition which has disappeared.
Criterion (iv): The Bamiyan Valley is an outstanding example of a cultural landscape which illustrates a significant period in the history of Buddhism.
Criterion (vi): The Bamiyan Valley is the most monumental expression of Buddhism. It was an important centre of pilgrimage for many centuries. Due to their symbolic
value, the monuments have suffered at different times in their existence, including the deliberate destruction in 2001, an event which shook the whole world.

**Outstanding universal value (General statement) in the ICOMOS evaluation document:**

Bamiyan Valley is an exceptional cultural landscape, resulting from the interaction between man and nature especially from the 1st to 13th centuries CE. It is an outstanding representation of Buddhist art as it developed under the Kushan Empire from the 1st century CE, reaching its climax in the 4th to 8th centuries. The standing Buddha statues of the 3rd to 6th centuries were particularly representative of this art. The valley contains a large number of monastic ensembles and some 1000 caves; many of which have been richly decorated with paintings and sculptures.

The Gandharan School of Buddhist art, of which the examples in the Bamiyan Valley are outstanding representations, drew from the Hellenistic, Roman and Sasanian art traditions. The Buddha was represented with a youthful Apollo-like face, dressed in the manner of Roman Imperial statues. This school had important influence from India, though it differed in its cultural expressions. The general trend was toward an idealized image. The Gandharan craftsmen made an important contribution to Buddhist art in their painted compositions related to Buddha’s life.

Islamic religion was introduced in the region in the 11th century, and has contributed to the enrichment of the Valley through the construction of a number of fortified cities.

**Category of the property:**

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in the World Heritage Convention the property is a site.

In terms of the Operation Guideline for the Implementation of the World heritage Convention the property is a cultural landscape under the criterion ii ‘organically evolved landscape’

In the nomination dossier submitted by the State Party, the features of the cultural landscape of the property were explained as follows: The Bamiyan Valley is a landscape which has evolved through geological formation and human intervention, and the process of evolution in their form and component features are still visible today.
Even today, one can witness the landscape being continuously used, retaining an active social role in the contemporary society of the local communities.

List of the sites composing the serial property:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Buffer Zone (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bamiyan Cliff including niches of the 38 meter Buddha, seated Buddhas, 55 meter Buddha and surrounding caves</td>
<td>105.00</td>
<td>225.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakrak Valley caves including the niche of the standing Buddha</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>33.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qoul-i Akram Caves in the Foladi Valley</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>40.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalai Ghamai Caves in the Foladi Valley</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahr-i-Zohak</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qallay Kaphari A</td>
<td>0.0625</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qallay Kaphari B</td>
<td>0.0640</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahr-i-Gholghola</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>13.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>158.9265</strong></td>
<td><strong>341.95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boundaries of the property:

See Map 3

5.2. World Heritage value of Bamiyan as an organically evolved cultural landscape

The assessment of World Heritage values at the time of inscription in 2003, as indicated in the preceding section, was mainly set around the artistic and historic value of the numerous Buddhist caves and their art, of which the central figures are the East and the West Buddha statues as well as the archaeological remains of the Islamic period which appeared after the Buddhist period.
Including the East and West colossal Buddha Statues and the mural paintings which have unfortunately disappeared, the artistic and historic value of the physical remains of these Buddhist sites are the most important elements which compose the outstanding universal value, without any doubt.

It is considered that the sites of the Islamic period are equally important to describe the history of Bamiyan, but these sites have meaning which spans only the period of history of Bamiyan from the time after the decline of Buddhism in the area.

Praise should be given to the foresight of the Afghanistan authorities who nominated this limitlessly beautiful valley of Bamiyan, which means "the place of shining light" in the local language, in addition to the physical human achievements which created the wonder of the eminent Buddhist culture that flourished in this remote area, as illustrated by the two colossal Buddha statues and the numerous Buddhist caves.

However, the boundaries of the nominated sites -- including both the core and buffer zones -- are very limited as shown in Map 3, although it is well understood that the nomination was done on an emergency basis. The further development of value assessments of the property as an organically-evolved landscape and the setting of the boundaries of the property in this assessment are subject to future scientific surveys.

The 2003-2004 archaeological survey added to the historical understanding of Bamiyan as an additional perspective by conducting the survey on the geographical conditions and settings of the caves based on the understanding that the caves were created not only as religious facilities but also as dwellings where people lived. The knowledge that the caves existed originally as dwellings and caves for religious functions came in the later stage of the valley history, illustrating that the flat area of the valley has been used solely for agricultural purposes and not for human dwellings throughout history, and that the agricultural landscape, together with the caves on the mountainside which still remain today, were historical -- dating back to the period when the Buddhist culture reached its most flourishing level with a large population living in this area.

The second stupa identified in the northwest of Shahr-i-Gholghola indicated that Buddhist sites also existed in and around this hill which had been understood and studied only as a site of the Islamic period. It is necessary to protect the sites in the Bamiyan valley, Foladi Valley, Kakrak Valley and Shahr-i-Gholghola, connecting them together with agricultural landscapes between them, viewing them all as an integrated whole as opposed to separate sites.
5.3. Cultural Landscape of Bamiyan - the current situation

The Bamiyan Valley, located 120 kilometers to the west of Kabul, is a long east-west valley bounded on the north by the Hindu Kush and on the south by mountains in the 5,000-meter range. Running south from the central valley are two smaller valleys, the Kakrak and the Foladi. The Quaternary-period rock of the area has been eroded by the river, forming terraced hillsides along its course. A high, arid region at an elevation of 2,500 meters, it has great variations between summer and winter temperatures, the latter averaging 7.4° C. It gets virtually no rain—an average of 163 millimeters annually—and there is no winter snow accumulation.

Given this dry alpine climate, the hillsides are barren, but on the valley floor and riverside terraces fields are cultivated, and from spring to early summer are carpeted in green. The principle crops are wheat and potatoes, grown in rotation. The potato flowers bloom in early summer, and as the summer wheat ripens a tapestry of green and gold is created. What makes agriculture possible in this arid land are irrigation canals utilizing snowmelt. The water brought down the mountainsides by this network of canals from its sources high above, and shared out to each field in turn by the farmers, carries the promise of a rich harvest. Poplars grow along the canals, and line their course down the hillsides.

These agricultural lands are occupied at present by small settlements and individual earthen farmhouses (constructed of sun-dried brick and mud). Scattered among them are a few larger buildings with towers at the four corners. In old photographs (early 19th c.) only these larger structures appear, and it can be assumed that they were once residences, probably of local landlords. Now almost all of them are abandoned and have fallen into disrepair. Some houses have also been built upon the hillsides, and the remains of residential caves are scattered among those of the cave temples.

The landscape of the Bamiyan Valley is composed of snowy 5,000-meter peaks in the distance, low brown hills closer by, and then, forming the valley itself, the cliffs into which the niches of the colossal Buddhas and the cave temples have been cut. The hill of Sharh-i-Ghoghola towers over the center of the valley, while fields dotted here and there with houses occupy the bottomland and the riverside terraces.

It is not clear when the irrigation canals were built, making agriculture possible, however, it can be assumed that the canals were in use since it is known that there was agricultural production in the 8th century from the accounts of Xuan Zang's visit to Bamiyan in the 7th century and Hui Chao's visit in the 8th century. In this age of Buddhist faith the basic landscape of temples carved into the rocky cliffs and fronted by farmland had already evolved, and that in the Islamic eras to come, the irrigation system
and fields were further developed, new settlements were formed, and the area gradually took on its present appearance.

Because of this, the agricultural landscape we see today is not simply a thing of beauty; its history is of a piece with that of the ruins of Bamiyan, Foladi, and Kakrak, and both the ruins and the farmland can be seen as aspects of a cultural landscape that should be valued in its totality.
6. Property Zoning Proposal
for the Protection of the World Heritage Site Bamiyan

6.1. Preparation of the Property Zoning Proposal

The extent of the initial nomination of the property at the time of inscription in 2003 was very limited as it was a serial nomination composed of eight separate archaeological sites with its own core and buffer zones. As the nomination had to be done quickly on an emergency basis, there is concern that the existing boundaries of the archaeological remains do not adequately cover the areas of archaeological importance. The necessity of further archaeological surveys has been already pointed out in the nomination dossier. The archaeological survey done by the Institute in cooperation with the Afghanistan authority, the results of which are contained in this report, corresponds to this requirement.

This zoning proposal was prepared through reviewing the existing boundaries with the understanding that not only the archaeological remains but also the landscapes of the entire valley contain value as heritage. It was considered that it was necessary to conduct the survey on the distribution of not only the archaeological remains but also historic buildings, other heritage items such as worship places, houses and commercial areas as well as agriculture and transportation infrastructures, and to examine the conditions of the valley comprehensively from various points of view including the development projects done for the rehabilitation of the area after the waning of political disturbances.

This zoning proposal was prepared in close cooperation with the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan based on the scientific findings from the archaeological survey and other surveys which the Institute conducted with the Ministry in 2003-2004, as well as on interviews with the municipal authorities of Bamiyan.

Due to the long period of political disturbance spanning more than two decades, there is no zoning control system based on planning regulations, such as a city planning law. Since the land-ownership records were destroyed during the internal conflict, it remains quite difficult to reestablish accurate information on land ownership while there are still many unknown landowners who either escaped from the area or who died during the political disturbances.

The immediate vicinities of the important core areas of the archaeological remains are protected by the Afghanistan Law for the Cultural Properties, but maps of the actual
boundaries have not yet been published. The extent of the core zones nominated by the Afghanistan authority at the time of inscription correspond to the potential extent of the area protected by the law. There are no systems or categories which would be able to protect areas as heritage, such as conservation areas or landscape areas.

This zoning proposal was prepared under the condition that there are no existing zoning control systems on which to base the proposal, either in the planning regulations or the heritage protection regulations.

6.2. Outline of the Zoning Proposal

The landscape of Bamiyan is composed of the archaeological remains and other various landscape-forming elements which are lying on top of one another in a complex matter. The survey on the landscape-forming elements and their distribution was conducted. Key viewpoints were identified and the zoning decisions were made with the purpose of protecting the areas where these elements enhance the unity of the landscape in the views from these viewpoints. The areas not included in the maps and the satellite photos attached were excluded by the zoning plan.

It is important to note that this zoning proposal is based on the current knowledge of the archaeological remains and the surrounding landscape, and that the proposal is to be revised anytime as occasion demands according to new findings during the further development of archaeological studies and other studies.

The zoning is set out by proposing five zones. These are:

- **archaeological protection zones**: the areas where important archaeological remains are concentrated and are to be protected accordingly,
- **agricultural landscape protection zones**: the areas which compose the core part of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan, united with the landscape of the archaeological remains and are to be protected as they are now as much as possible,
- **local bazaar / public facilities zones under special protection**: the areas located in and around the direct vicinity of the agricultural landscape protection zones, and where controls on building design are required,
- **town development control zone**: the airport area and the vicinity to the south, considered as a development zone which will have less impact on the protection of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan, although specific controls on building design are required,
natural landscape conservation zone: the surrounding mountainous area composing the background landscape of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan. The development of these areas need to be controlled in order not to destroy the landscape

Maps of the heritage places to be protected, and other elements in the landscape:

Map 4 indicates the distribution of the archaeological sites identified by the 2003-2004 archaeological survey.

Map 5 indicates the other heritage places such as Traditional Buildings, Religious Places, Important View Points, etc. identified by the survey on the landscape.

Map 6 indicates the major public facilities forming the landscape

Zoning Maps

The zoning proposals are shown in the following maps:

Map 7a: Map indicating the Proposed Zoning for the Protection of the Cultural Landscape of Bamiyan, superimposed on a satellite photo

Map 7b: Map indicating the Proposed Zoning for the Protection of the Cultural Landscape of Bamiyan, superimposed on a topographical map

Map 7-1: Archaeological Protection Zone

Map 7-2: Agricultural Landscape Protection Zone

Map 7-3: Local Bazaar / Public Facilities Zone under Special Control

Map 7-4: Town Development Control Zone

Map 7-5: Natural Landscape Conservation Zone
Appendix: Tentative Proposal Zoning Controls — details of provisions for each zone —

The following proposal on the details of zoning control was prepared as an example and on a tentative basis for use during the transitional period of the nation's legal and administrative framework. Further study of the requirements corresponding to the actual situation is necessary.

1. Archaeological Protection Zone

The areas of important archaeological remains are concentrated.

1-1. Archaeological surveys are required when the approved projects contain underground works (e.g. foundation works).

1-2. The following categories of work are not to be recommended for execution, excluding those necessary for the maintenance, conservation or rehabilitation of the cultural properties: the improvement of landscape, the health and safety of local peoples or emergency measures to be taken in the case of disaster.

   (a) Change of land use (e.g. from farmland to residential land, or from residential land to parking lots)
   (b) Construction of new roads
   (c) Widening of existing roads, excluding any minimum intervention necessary for ensuring traffic safety
   (d) Re-routing of existing roads
   (e) Land reclamation by landfill or drainage
   (f) Landfill or re-routing of existing rivers or canals
   (g) Demolition of traditional buildings and other properties of heritage value (Listed cultural properties)
   (h) Any works of buildings and structures that do not conform to the guidelines indicated in the section 1-5
   (i) Construction of large-scale parking facilities
   (j) Construction of commercial signage, excluding public signage necessary for daily life such as traffic signs, signs for tourism, etc
(k) The collection of earth, rocks or minerals
(l) The cutting trees, excluding the thinning or trimming necessary for maintenance or the felling of dead/hazardous trees, etc.

1-3. It is recommended that the following categories of public works are executed, and that design and colors of the new structures consider the conservation of and harmony with the traditional landscape.

(a) Paving work and road shoulder improvement works
(b) Construction of electric power poles, street lamps, and light poles
(c) Riverbank works
(d) Traffic signage
(e) Other public works

1-4. When carrying out the following public works which involve underground work, the features of the land are to be restored to the original state which existed before the works. In addition, it is recommended that the design and color of the facilities above ground consider the conservation of and harmony with the traditional landscape.

(a) Water supply and drainage systems
(b) Other underground public works

1-5. For construction work including new construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs, it is recommended that the following guidelines be observed:

(a) New construction is allowed only on properties where buildings or foundations are in existence, or in areas surrounded by existing walls.
(b) The height must be less than 7 meters.
(c) New or remodeled building designs should follow the local traditional architectural styles.
(d) Exterior colors should be in harmony with the local earthen colors
(e) The roof should be a flat roof, finished in earthen colors.
(f) Materials which reflect sunlight, such as unpainted sheet metal, for roofs or exterior walls.
(g) Signage (including commercial signs, neon signs, etc.) should not exceed the building roof height.
(h) Parking spaces should be constructed inside the site walls.
1-6. For listed cultural properties (buildings and other structures), it is recommended that the following guidelines be applied:
(a) Architectural surveys and documentation should be carried out before any work.
(b) Buildings should be restored and utilized without any damage to heritage value.
(c) Advice should be sought from relevant authorities.

2. Agricultural Landscape Protection Zone

United with the landscape of the archaeological remains, the existing state of the areas which compose the core part of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan are to be protected as much as possible. The traditional buildings or other places of historic value such as religious places or natural monuments trees in the area should be listed as cultural properties and be protected as such.

2-1. The following categories of work are not to be recommended for execution, excluding those necessary for the maintenance, conservation or rehabilitation of the cultural properties: the improvement of landscape, the health and safety of local peoples or emergency measures to be taken in the case of disaster.
(a) Change of land use (e.g. from farmland to residential land, from residential land to parking lots)
(b) Construction of new roads
(c) Widening existing roads, excluding minimum intervention necessary for traffic safety
(d) Re-routing of existing roads
(e) Land reclamation by landfill or drainage
(f) Landfill or re-routing of existing rivers or canals
(g) Demolition of traditional buildings and other properties of heritage value (Listed cultural properties)
(h) New construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs of buildings and other structures
(i) Construction of large-scale parking facilities
(j) Construction of commercial signage, excluding those necessary for the daily life such as traffic signs, signs for tourism, etc.
(k) The collection of earth, rocks or minerals
(l) The cutting trees, excluding the thinning or trimming necessary for maintenance or the felling of dead/hazardous trees, etc.
2-2. It is recommended that the following categories of public works are executed, and that design and colors of new structures consider the conservation of and harmony with the traditional landscape:
   (a) Paving work and road shoulder improvement works
   (b) Construction of electric power poles, street lamps, and light poles
   (c) Riverbank works
   (d) Traffic signage
   (e) Other public works

2-3. When carrying out the following public works which involve underground work, it is recommended that the features of the land are to be restored to the original state. In addition, it is recommended that design and color of the facilities above ground consider the conservation of and harmony with the traditional landscape:
   (a) Water supply and drainage systems
   (b) Other underground public works

2-4. For construction work including new construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs, it is recommended that the following guidelines be observed:
   (a) The height must be less than 7 meters.
   (b) New or remodeled building designs should follow the local traditional architectural styles.
   (c) Exterior colors should be in harmony with the local earthen colors.
   (d) The roof should be a flat roof, finished in earthen colors.
   (e) Materials which reflect sunlight, such as unpainted sheet metal, should not be utilized for roofs or outer walls.
   (f) Signage (including commercial signs, neon signs, etc.) should not exceed the building roof height.
   (g) Parking spaces should be constructed inside the site walls.

2-5. For listed cultural heritage (buildings and other structures), it is recommended that the following guidelines be applied:
   (a) Architectural surveys and documentation should be carried out before any work.
   (b) Buildings should be restored and utilized without any damage to heritage value.
(c) It is recommended to seek the advice from the relevant authority.

3. Local bazaar / public facilities zones under special protection
Special protections is required for the areas located in and around the direct vicinity of the agricultural landscape protection zones, and anywhere that strict controls on building design are needed.

3-1. It is recommended that the following guidelines be observed for construction work including new construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs:
   (a) The height should be less than 7 meters.
   (b) New or remodeled building designs should follow the local traditional architectural styles.
   (c) Exterior colors should be in harmony with the local earthen colors.
   (d) The roof should be a flat roof, finished in earthen colors.
   (e) Materials which reflect sunshine, such as unpainted sheet metal, should not be utilized for roofs or outer walls.
   (f) Signage (including commercial signs, neon signs, etc.) should not exceed the building roof height.

4. Town development control zone:
Although the airport area and its vicinity are considered to be a potential development zone that will have less impact on the protection of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan, specific controls on building design are recommended.

4-1. It is recommended that the following guidelines be observed for construction work including new construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs:
   (a) The height should be less than 10 meters.
   (b) Exterior colors should be in harmony with the local earthen colors.
   (c) Materials which reflect sunlight, such as unpainted sheet metal, should not be utilized for roofs or exterior walls.
   (d) Signage (including commercial signs, neon signs, etc.) should not obstruct the views from the east and west colossal Buddha cave areas.

4-2. Construction of airport facilities such as runways and control towers is recognized as a necessary part of functional urban development, but it is recommended
that the designs follow the guidelines so as not to obstruct the views from the east and west colossal Buddha cave areas.

4-3. Construction of infrastructure such as motorways, railways, power lines and power poles, towers for TV towers or cell-phone antennas, etc. are considered necessary for the development of Bamiyan, but it is recommended that the locations and designs be carefully selected so as not to obstruct the views from the east and west colossal Buddha cave areas.

5. Natural landscape conservation zone

The surrounding mountainous area comprises the background of the cultural landscape of Bamiyan.

5-1. The developments especially in the areas viewable from the key viewpoints need to be controlled in order not to destroy the natural landscape.

5-2. It is recommended that the following guidelines be observed for construction work including of new construction, additions, rebuilding, relocation, alteration or repairs:

(a) The height should be less than 7 meters.
(b) New or remodeled building design should follow the local traditional architectural styles.
(c) Exterior colors should be in harmony with the local earthen colors
(d) The roof should be a flat roof, finished in earthen colors.
(e) Materials which reflect sun light, such as unpainted sheet metal, should not be utilized for roofs or outer walls.
(f) Signage (including commercial signs, neon signs, etc.) should not exceed the building roof height.

5-3. Construction of infrastructure such as motorways, railways, power lines and power poles, towers for TV towers or cell-phone antennas, etc. are considered necessary for the development of Bamiyan, but the locations and designs should be carefully selected so as not to obstruct the views of the valley landscape.