

# The high relief pattern of Bamiyan statues

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## Abstract

Ornament in architecture can be introduced by architecture-related arts which plays a key role in identifying our architecture. Architectural ornaments have been used for various purposes at different periods of history. Sometimes these ornaments have been used to induce the grandeur and greatness of the building to astound the viewers and sometimes they have induced spiritual and religious feelings in people. These ornaments in various forms such as sculpture, molding, painting, tiling, etc. with geometric, plant, animal, and human motifs and patterns connect each viewer to the transcendental world and arouse their curiosity. These ornaments include the smallest architectural components using various materials in the simplest possible way to the most general and major parts of the building. Analyzing the traditions, ideas, beliefs, and their roots are necessary to accurately study and assess architectural ornaments. These roots are for the formation of these designs and also the awareness of historical rules is required. The present research studies the architectural ornaments of Bamiyan status as one of the most prominent architectural indicators of Buddhism in Afghanistan by field method and descriptive-analytical and using previously conducted studies. This paper identifies different types of ornaments and assesses the impact of the ornaments of temples on the architecture of the region.

## Background research

In the past, Professor Hackin categorized the plans of Bamiyan statues (J. Hackin, 1933). Nancy Dupree studied these statues and Japanese researchers also carried out studies and works in this regard in Bamiyan for many years.

## Methodology

In the present study, the researcher digitized and categorized the types of ornaments of Bamiyan statues using the available images by accurate measurements applying AutoCAD, Rhino software. The purpose is to specify their types; therefore, we can understand the high relief pattern of Bamiyan statues and determine their geometry.

Geometric shapes in temples are divided into two categories: the first category is simple geometric patterns such as squares and circles, and the basic geometric shapes, the second category are nodes which includes a set of geometric shapes coordinated and arranged together with symmetric order and screws and breakers (Amir Ghiasvand; 1382, p. 29). The symbolic values of these shapes can be comprehended by interpreting and deciphering special numbers and shapes used in these reliefs.



Figure 1. geometric ornaments of a temple Ceiling

## Findings

Buddhism, like any other religion, was developed and spread to neighboring lands after being established in its geography. Although this religion originated centuries before Islam and Christianity, its remaining works and impacts can be seen in the following decades in Islamic regions and some Islamic works. Buddhism in the Kushan period was spread from all over India (the initial origin of Buddhism) to the north and beyond the Hindu Kush and then was stabilized in western Central Asia. There are numerous Buddhist tombs from this period, some of which have been excavated in Turkistan and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan; However, preserved and considered as the guardian of this religion until the advent of Islam (Fehervari et al., 2005, 127). The available documents, the depicted images on the body of the temples, and the initial formation of the ornamental roles indicate a direct relationship between the beliefs of the early inhabitants of Buddhist temples, their lifestyle, human settlement, and the architectural form of temples. Taking this assumption into account, Buddhism not only affected the life, customs, religion, traditions, and culture of people in Bamiyan but also its impacts were observed on the architecture and especially the construction of religious buildings in this area.



Figure 2. Ornament and roof of cave A, 2017



Figure 3. Ornament and roof of cave A, 1932

## Result

According to studies, this type of roof and ornament can be seen throughout Afghanistan. Dupree showed this type of roof has been seen in Folangi valley in Bamiyan as well as in Nuristan and Wakhan valley, in the wood form, not stone (Nancy Hatch Dupree, 1962). In the present paper, all types of roofs are categorized by digitizing and identifying them to indicate their effects on Bamiyan architecture as much as possible. Finally, it should be noted that the study of ornaments related to Bamiyan statues temples has not been the concentration of research yet. This is the first study conducted on this topic which represents its novelty. Studies that cover the entire architectural array of statues temples with a holistic view have been less seen, and we hope that it will be the beginning to discover all the mysteries that existed in the lives of our ancestors.

## References

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