

The Begram Hoard and its Context

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Preface

This is a revised version of a dissertation defended on the 18th of December, 2017 at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München in Klassische Archäologie. Revisions have been implemented in light of my examiner's comments, important new data made available to me since that date, some significant recent publications, and to incorporate references to work about aspects of this material that I have since developed in separate publications.

This document has been submitted to the repository Elektronische Hochschulschriften der LMU München to fulfil my Druckpflicht, in place of an expanded monograph I had been working on with the aim to meet that obligation. However, as the situation in Afghanistan continued to develop, and a once-in-a-century pandemic emerged, it ultimately became clear that traditionally publishing my ideal version of this book in a timely manner would be impossible. Although I am thus obliged to disseminate this document in its present form, it comes with the promise (or warning?) that these will not be my final words on the subject.

For the present document, I have been unable to include images of unpublished archival material, and accordingly I take a slightly more minimalist approach to illustrations than anticipated. Emphatically, this means that I do not present a comprehensive visual catalogue of the hoard objects, but readers will nonetheless be given a structured impression of the contents of this corpus, and can also find references to pre-existing illustrations and photographs of the hoard objects – whether published or to be found in archives – in my inventory (Chapter 4).

A word on romanisation: Cyrillic names are in BGN/PCGN 1947 (unless the author exclusively uses another romanisation system for their name when writing in English, in which case that version is used). The issue of site names across the multilingual space under study is more complicated, as many sites have become known through foreign scholarship with their local names as transliterated into French, and Russian, and English. One has the option to re-transliterate these names according to modern designations and romanisation schemes. However, to facilitate cross-reference with past scholarship, I have usually elected to use romanised versions of site names most commonly found in 20th century literature (e.g. Begram instead of Bagrām, Dal'verzintepe instead of Dalvarzintepa, etc.).

Acknowledgements

This dissertation has its inception in a last-minute decision to see the exhibition *Afghanistan: crossroads of the ancient world* at the British Museum in April 2011. Before that day, I had never heard of Begram, but the questions that popped up during my short visit would ultimately lead me on an odyssey of strange labour around the world in pursuit of answers. The fact that I have been able to undertake this journey at all is thanks to the support I have received from institutions, colleagues, friends, and family during my doctoral research (April 2013 – October 2017) and phases of revisions and rethinking thereafter.

Four years of my doctoral research in Munich (April 2013 – March 2017) were financially supported by Pre-Doctoral and Doctoral Fellowships at the Graduate School “Distant Worlds” at LMU (DFG Excellence Initiative GSC 1039). I have good memories of inspiring discussions with many of my colleagues there, and appreciated the school’s generous travel allowances which drove me across Eurasia a number of times. My subsequent time in Munich was supported by STIBET funds of the DAAD.

Osmund Bopearachchi generously and patiently opened doors for me in Paris. I am immensely indebted to him for his insights and willingness to revisit the coins collected from the DAFA excavations at Begram in the Musée Guimet. Later in my research, staff throughout the Musée Guimet kindly provided assistance and advice to me, and I am especially grateful to Pierre Cambon, as well as Cristina Cramerotti, Dominique Fayolle-Reninger, Michèle Galdemar and Rouhanna Kedjam-Kaly for their invaluable help. On the Kabul side, I am especially obliged to Philippe Marquis and Olivier Bordeaux for facilitating my stay at DAFA in 2019. I would also like to thank Mohammad Fahim Rahimi and Omara Khan Massoudi for meeting with me, Nuria Roca Ruiz and Catherine Heim for their kind assistance, and Noor Agha Noori for generously inviting me to lecture at the Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan and enabling my site visits.

Many further colleagues have helped me through this process, whether by sharing their interpretations or data, suggesting bibliography, giving me a platform to present my ongoing thoughts, and patiently explaining things to me when I’ve been wrong. I cannot name and thank them all (I hope that you know who you are), but would especially like to express my general gratitude to Stefan Baums, Joe Cribb, Elizabeth Errington, David Fallon, Abdul Hafiz Latify, Gunvor Lindström, Luca Maria Olivieri, Margarete Prüch, Nicholas Sims-Williams, and Sören Stark. Some errors here will have persisted despite their efforts, which I hope can be forgiven.

My examiners have come to play important roles in my academic life. My Doktorvater Rolf Schneider “let [me] fly” by encouraging my ideas with intellectual curiosity and apparently endless good humour. I am incredibly grateful that he made the gamble of accepting a very young, very foreign student, and moreover that he always treated the Vater element of his title quite seriously. My second examiner Rachel Mairs cultivated a community for us all, always understood precisely what I was trying to do and the stakes involved, and never failed to offer some advice or sympathy to keep me moving forwards. Sitta von Reden challenged me with the unique opportunity to take the next step and look at the bigger implications of all of this with the BaSaR (Beyond the Silk Road) project. I am deeply appreciative to them all.

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Short summary

The Begram hoard constitutes hundreds of objects produced across ancient Afro-Eurasia that were deposited largely within two sealed rooms of the Site II structure at Begram (the ancient city of Kapisi) in Afghanistan. In scholarship, the hoard is usually linked to the period of the Kushan Empire (ca. 50–350 CE), but the published archaeological data pertaining to this unique find – discovered on the eve of World War II by archaeologists of the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* – are highly problematic and difficult to interpret. Accordingly, as I explain in Chapter 1, not only the date of the hoard, but also its nature (merchant's cache or palatial treasure?) and wider historical significance remain the subjects of unresolved scholarly debate. Thus, in this dissertation, I seek to break this impasse by re-examining the contents and context of the hoard, employing also documentary and photographic archival materials preserved in the Musée Guimet towards this objective.

To do this, in Chapter 2, I first synthesise and evaluate the methods and results of past fieldwork campaigns at Begram in order to clarify precisely how these data may be operationalised. I discuss Charles Masson's fieldwork (1833–1838), early activity under the DAFA (1923–1925), the Hackin excavations (1936–1940), the Ghirshman excavations (1941–1942), and the final DAFA campaign (1946). In this process, I also highlight the idiosyncrasy but internal consistency of the data produced during the Hackin excavations, and rectify lacunae and errors in the published data in light of archival material.

In Chapter 3, I then show how these data may be mobilised towards a study of life at Begram throughout antiquity. Examining the region of Kapisa as not a 'crossroads' but a dynamic borderland between Bactria and Gandhāra, I trace ties between these regions as I analyse the development of Begram and its hinterland from the Achaemenid to the Kushano-Sasanian period. Here, I also examine the development of the Site II structure over time, considering whether it may have functioned as an elite residence or not. I also discuss how hoards are understood in scholarship, highlighting the tension and interplay between ritual and utilitarian interpretations, and then propose how the Begram hoard itself may be archaeologically delineated: as objects between certain depths in the sealed rooms 10 and 13, in addition to those in room T, and two finds also in the central corridor. Diverging from traditionally utilitarian interpretations, I observe that both ritual and utilitarian behaviour could be read into the deposition of the hoard, and propose that this event occurred during the gradual collapse of urban life and the city's abandonment by its urban elites at the end of the phase

Begram II around the second half of the 3rd century CE. This dissents from past influential attempts to date the deposition of the hoard to the 1st or early 2nd century CE.

I then present the first comprehensive inventory of the hoard objects in Chapter 4, collating the diversity of surviving data. Discussions within this chapter also consider where and when the hoard objects were produced, their condition upon deposition, and their arrangement in the Site II structure. In terms of individual objects, over half were produced in the Roman Mediterranean, the smaller amount of goods from India are almost exclusively examples of ivory furniture (mainly chairs and footstools), and minor groups of objects were produced in China and probably Western Asia. Locally produced objects include vessels, utensils, coins, and certain raw materials. Although this corpus was extremely diverse, I highlight the predominance of luxurious articles of tableware (especially drinking vessels) that were primarily imported from the Roman Mediterranean. Objects which imply craft production activity especially include the plaster casts and detached elements from metalwork. The majority of the hoard objects appear to have been produced in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, but some may have been manufactured already in the second half of the 1st century BCE, and others at least in the second half of the 3rd century CE. This reiterates my late dating for the deposition of the hoard. There is also considerable evidence that many of the hoard objects had been deposited in poor, incomplete, and manipulated condition, suggesting a long history of their use, changes in their function over time, and the existence of at least one separate primary storage area. A clay sealing and inked inscriptions on some glass vessels also suggest the conduct of ‘administrative’ activity.

In Chapter 5, I return to the question of the nature and significance of the hoard from the perspective of Kushan Central Asia (the area encompassing Bactria to Gandhāra in the Kushan period). I first present arguments against ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard, which interpret the existence of the Begram hoard as the outcome of transit trade conducted through the city. I then, however, highlight persisting problems with the traditional alternative ‘palatial treasure theory.’ Stressing interpretative ambiguities in the contents and context of the hoard, I note that many aspects of these could be read as ritual or utilitarian. In respect to the primary storage area/s, the hoard objects could have been taken from an external (e.g. palatial) treasury for deposition in the Site II structure, or – if this building is instead a cultic space – could represent the partial contents of a temple treasury composed of votive offerings once deposited throughout the building. Leaning into this ambiguity, I discuss the capacity for both palaces and religious organisations to accumulate valuables, conduct administrative activity, and organise craft production. I also observe that the tableware in the hoard implies large-scale

elite drinking and perhaps feasting, but this activity does not need to have occurred in a purely social context. To move beyond these uncertainties, I propose that Begram hoard may at least be described as an intergenerational collection of valuable goods accumulated by elites, and is accordingly significant because it provides unique evidence for patterns of elite consumption of imported luxury and prestige goods in Kushan Central Asia.

Analysed in this light, the hoard objects suggest the emergence of a shared culture of consumption among local elites in Kushan Central Asia that was not simply the result of undifferentiated cosmopolitan taste, but reflective of specific local patterns of demand. This demand was shaped by the capacity of certain imported goods to communicate distinction, as well as the associations that were held about them and their utility when incorporated into local social practices. For example, the objects produced in the Roman Mediterranean were probably read as ‘Greek,’ were desired with reference to the social memory of Greek rule in Hellenistic Central Asia, and were likely incorporated into local drinking and craft production practices. Ultimately, long-standing historiographical notions of ‘Kushan middlemen’ and their profiteering coordination of transit trade along the ‘Silk Road’ (with Begram often cited as an example of this) must be disbanded. Instead, the specific consumption preferences of local elites in Kushan Central Asia drove highly directed trade towards the region – a point with important implications for broader understandings of the organisation of ancient long-distance exchange.

In Chapter 6, I comprehensively summarise the results of this dissertation. The appendices include lists of the finds from the Site II structure outside of the hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13 (Appendix I), the finds from 1940 described in the document R1940 (Appendix II), and the coin finds from the DAFA excavations (Appendix III).

Kurze Zusammenfassung

Der Begram Hort besteht aus Hunderten von Objekten, die im antiken Afro-Eurasien hergestellt wurden und größtenteils in zwei versiegelten Räumen des Gebäudes von Grabungsfläche II in Begram (der antiken Stadt Kapisi) in Afghanistan deponiert wurden. In der Wissenschaft wird der Hort gewöhnlich mit der Zeit des Kuschan-Reiches (ca. 50–350 n. Chr.) in Verbindung gebracht. Allerdings sind die veröffentlichten archäologischen Daten zu diesem einzigartigen Fund – der am Vorabend des Zweiten Weltkriegs von Archäologen der *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* entdeckt wurde – äußerst problematisch und schwer zu interpretieren. Wie ich in Kapitel 1 darlege, sind nicht nur die Datierung des Hortes, sondern auch sein Wesen (Händlerdepot oder Palastschatz?) und seine allgemeine historische Bedeutsamkeit nach wie vor Gegenstand ungelöster wissenschaftlicher Debatten. In dieser Dissertation versuche ich, einen Ausweg aus dieser Sackgasse zu finden, indem ich den Inhalt und den Kontext des Schatzes einer neuen Untersuchung unterziehe und dazu auch die im Musée Guimet aufbewahrten dokumentarischen und fotografischen Archivalien heranziehe.

Zu diesem Zweck fasse ich in Kapitel 2 zunächst die Methoden und Ergebnisse früherer Feldforschungskampagnen in Begram zusammen und bewerte sie, um zu klären, inwiefern diese Daten heute noch genutzt werden können. Ich diskutiere die Feldarbeiten von Charles Masson (1833–1838), die frühen Aktivitäten der DAFA (1923–1925), die Hackin-Ausgrabungen (1936–1940), die Ghirshman-Ausgrabungen (1941–1942) und die letzte DAFA-Kampagne (1946). Dabei betone ich die Eigenart, aber auch die innere Konsistenz der bei den Hackin-Ausgrabungen gewonnenen Daten, und berichtige Lücken und Fehler in den veröffentlichten Daten im Lichte des Archivmaterials.

In Kapitel 3 zeige ich dann, wie diese Daten zur Erforschung des Lebens in Begram während der Antike herangezogen werden können. Indem ich die Region Kapisa nicht als ‚Knotenpunkt,‘ sondern als dynamisches Grenzgebiet zwischen Baktrien und Gandhāra betrachte, zeichne ich die Verbindungen zwischen diesen Regionen nach und analysiere die Entwicklung von Begram und seinem Hinterland von der achämenidischen bis zur kuschisch-sasanischen Zeit. In diesem Zusammenhang untersuche ich auch die Entwicklung des Gebäudes von Grabungsfläche II im Laufe der Zeit und gehe der Frage nach, ob sie möglicherweise als Eliteresidenz gedient haben könnte. Ich diskutiere dabei zudem das Verständnis von Hortfunden in der Wissenschaft, wobei ich die Spannung und das Zusammenspiel zwischen rituellen und utilitaristischen Interpretationen hervorhebe. Ich

schlage dann vor, wie der Begram Hort selbst archäologisch abgegrenzt werden kann: als Objekte zwischen bestimmten Tiefen in den versiegelten Räumen 10 und 13, zusätzlich zu denen in Raum T, und zwei Funden im zentralen Korridor. Abweichend von den traditionell utilitaristischen Interpretationen stelle ich fest, dass sowohl rituelles als auch utilitaristisches Verhalten in die Deponierung des Hortes hineingelesen werden kann. Ich schlage vor, dieses Ereignis in die Zeit während des allmählichen Zusammenbruchs des städtischen Lebens und der Aufgabe der Stadt durch ihre urbanen Eliten, also in die Zeit des Endes der Begram II-Phase etwa in der zweiten Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr., zu datieren. Dies weicht von früheren einflussreichen Versuchen ab, die Deponierung des Hortes auf das 1. oder frühe 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. zu datieren.

In Kapitel 4 präsentiere ich das erste umfassende Inventar der Hortgegenstände und trage dazu die Vielfalt der erhaltenen Daten zusammen. In diesem Kapitel wird auch erörtert, wo und wann die Hortgegenstände hergestellt wurden, in welchem Zustand sie sich bei der Deponierung des Hortes befanden und wie sie in dem Gebäude von Grabungsfläche II angeordnet waren. Über die Hälfte der einzelnen Objekte wurde im römischen Mittelmeerraum hergestellt, bei der geringeren Menge an Waren aus Indien handelt es sich fast ausschließlich um Elfenbeinmöbel (vor allem Stühle und Fußhocker), und kleinere Gruppen von Objekten wurden in China und wahrscheinlich in Westasien hergestellt. Zu den lokal hergestellten Objekten gehören Gefäße, Gebrauchsgegenstände, Münzen und bestimmte Rohstoffe. Obwohl diese Sammlung von Objekten äußerst vielfältig war, hebe ich die Dominanz von luxuriösem Tafelgeschirr (insbesondere Trinkgefäße) hervor, die hauptsächlich aus dem römischen Mittelmeerraum eingeführt wurden. Zu den Objekten, die auf eine kunstgewerbliche Produktion hindeuten, gehören vor allem Gipsabgüsse und abgetrennte Elemente von Metallarbeiten. Die Mehrzahl der Hortgegenstände scheint im 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. hergestellt worden zu sein, aber einige könnten bereits in der zweiten Hälfte des 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. und andere zumindest in der zweiten Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. hergestellt worden sein. Damit wird meine späte Datierung für die Deponierung des Hortes untermauert. Es gibt auch zahlreiche Hinweise darauf, dass viele der Hortgegenstände in schlechtem, unvollständigem und manipuliertem Zustand deponiert wurden, was auf eine lange Geschichte ihrer Verwendung, auf Veränderungen ihrer Funktion im Laufe der Zeit und auf die Existenz mindestens eines separaten primären Aufbewahrungsortes schließen lässt. Ein Ton-Siegelabdruck sowie Tinteninschriften auf einigen Glasgefäßen deuten zudem auf ‚Verwaltungstätigkeit‘ hin.

In Kapitel 5 befasse ich mich mit der Frage nach dem Wesen und der Bedeutsamkeit des Hortes aus der Perspektive des kuschischen Zentralasien (des Gebietes, das Baktrien bis Gandhāra in der Kuschān-Zeit umfasst). Zunächst stelle ich Argumente gegen ‚Transitverkehrs-Erklärungen‘ des Hortes vor, die die Existenz des Begram-Hortes als Ergebnis des Transithandels durch die Stadt interpretieren. Anschließend zeige ich jedoch die Probleme auf, die mit der traditionellen alternativen ‚Palastschatztheorie‘ verbunden sind. Ich betone die interpretativen Mehrdeutigkeiten des Inhalts und des Kontexts des Hortes und stelle fest, dass viele Aspekte davon als rituell oder utilitaristisch interpretiert werden könnten. In Bezug auf den/die primären Aufbewahrungsort(e) könnten die Hortgegenstände aus einer externen (z. B. palastartigen) Schatzkammer entnommen worden sein, um sie im Gebäude von Grabungsfläche II zu deponieren. Alternativ – wenn es sich bei diesem Gebäude um einen kultischen Raum handelt – könnten die Hortgegenstände den Teilinhalt eines Tempelschatzes darstellen, der aus Weihgaben besteht, die einst im gesamten Gebäude deponiert wurden. In Bezug auf diese Zweideutigkeit diskutiere ich das Potential sowohl von Palästen als auch von religiösen Organisationen, Wertgegenstände anzusammeln, Verwaltungstätigkeiten durchzuführen und kunstgewerbliche Produktion zu organisieren. Ich stelle auch fest, dass das Geschirr im Hort auf umfangreiche Trinkgelage und vielleicht Festmähler der Eliten hindeutet, aber diese Aktivitäten müssen nicht in einem rein sozialen Kontext stattgefunden haben. Um diese Unsicherheiten zu überwinden, schlage ich vor, dass der Begram-Hort zumindest als eine intergenerationelle Sammlung von wertvollen Gegenständen beschrieben werden kann, die von Eliten angesammelt wurde. Der Hort ist deshalb so bedeutend, weil er einzigartige Belege für den Konsum von importierten Luxus- und Prestigegütern durch Eliten im kuschischen Zentralasien liefert.

In diesem Licht betrachtet deuten die Hortgegenstände auf die Entstehung einer gemeinsamen Konsumkultur der lokalen Eliten im kuschischen Zentralasien hin, die nicht einfach das Ergebnis eines undifferenzierten kosmopolitischen Geschmacks war, sondern spezifische lokale Konsummuster widerspiegelte. Diese Nachfrage war geprägt von dem Potential bestimmter importierter Waren, Distinktion zu vermitteln, sowie von den Assoziationen, die man mit ihnen verband, und von ihrem Nutzen, wenn sie in lokale soziale Praxen integriert wurden. Beispielsweise wurden die im römischen Mittelmeerraum hergestellten Gegenstände wahrscheinlich als ‚griechisch‘ verstanden, sie wurden mit Bezug auf die soziale Erinnerung an die griechische Herrschaft im hellenistischen Zentralasien nachgefragt und wurden wahrscheinlich in die lokale Trink- und Handwerkspraxis integriert. Letztlich müssen die lang verbreiteten historiographischen Vorstellungen von ‚kuschischen

Mittelsmännern‘ und ihrer profitgierigen Koordination des Transithandels entlang der ‚Seidenstraße‘ (Begram wird oft als Beispiel dafür angeführt) aufgelöst werden. Stattdessen trieben die spezifischen Konsumpräferenzen lokaler Eliten im kuschanischen Zentralasien den Handel in die Region – ein Punkt, der wichtige Folgen für das breitere Verständnis der Organisation des antiken Fernhandels hat.

In Kapitel 6 fasse ich die Ergebnisse dieser Dissertation ausführlich zusammen. Die Anhänge enthalten Listen der Funde aus dem Gebäude von Grabungsfläche II mit Ausnahme der Hortgegenstände in den Räumen 10 und 13 (Anhang I), der im Dokument R1940 beschriebenen Funde von 1940 (Anhang II) und der Münzfunde aus den Ausgrabungen der DAFA (Anhang III).

خلاصه کوتاه

گنجینه بگرام متشکل از صدها اثر باستانی ساخته شده در خطه باستانی آفریقا - اوراسیا می باشد، که در دو اتاق مهر لاک شده در قسمت نمبر ۲ ساحه بگرام (شهر باستانی کاپیسی) در افغانستان، جای داشتند. از نظر پژوهشی، این گنجینه معمولاً به دوره امپراتوری کوشانی (حدود ۵۰ - ۳۵۰ م) مرتبط دانسته شده، اما داده های منتشر شده باستان شناسی مربوط به این یافته منحصر به فرد - که در آستانه جنگ جهانی دوم توسط باستان شناسان هیئت باستان شناسی فرانسه در افغانستان (دافا) کشف شده است - بسیار مشکل ساز هستند و تفسیر آنها دشوار است. بر این اساس، قسمی که در فصل اول توضیح داده ام، نه تنها تاریخ این گنجینه، بلکه ماهیت آن (نخیره گاه بازرگان یا گنجینه قصر؟) و اهمیت تاریخی گسترده تر موضوع در بحث های علمی حل نشده باقی مانده است. از اینرو، در این پایان نامه، با بررسی مجدد محتوا و پس نهشت گنجینه، با استفاده از داده های مستند و تصاویر آرشیفی نگهداری شده در موزیم گیمه، به دنبال شکستن این بن بست هستم.

برای انجام این کار، در فصل دوم، ابتدا روش ها و نتایج کار های میدانی گذشته در ساحه بگرام را هم گذاری و ارزیابی نموده ام تا نحوه دقیق بهره برداری این داده ها روشن گردد. بنأ، روی تحقیقات میدانی چالز مسون (۱۸۳۳ - ۱۸۳۸)، فعالیت های مقدماتی دافا (۱۹۲۳ - ۱۹۲۵)، کاوش های هاکن (۱۹۳۶ - ۱۹۴۰)، کاوش های گرشن (۱۹۴۱ - ۱۹۴۲)، و آخرین پژوهش های دافا (۱۹۴۶) بحث نموده ام. در این فرآیند، من همچنین بر ویژگی خاص اما سازگاری درونی اطلاعات بدست آمده از حفاری های هاکن تأکید می نمایم و کاستی ها و خطاهای موجود در اطلاعات منتشر شده را با توجه به مطالب آرشیفی، اصلاح نموده ام.

سپس در فصل سوم، نشان می دهیم که چگونه از این داده ها برای مطالعه زندگی در دوره باستان در بگرام می توان بهره جست. با بررسی حوزه کاپیسا نه به عنوان یک «چهارراه»، بلکه مرزی پویا و متحرک بین باختر و گندهارا، و رابطه بین این مناطق را با تحلیل توسعه بگرام و مناطق همجوار آن از دوران هخامنشیان تا دوره کوشانو- ساسانیان، دنبال می نمایم. در اینجا، من همچنین توسعه ساختار ساحه شماره ۲ را در طول زمان، بنا به این فرض که آیا به عنوان اقامتگاه نخبگان مورد استفاده قرار می گرفته یا نه بررسی می نمایم. همچنین چگونگی درک و شناخت گنجینه (انبار) در تحقیقات را، با برجسته ساختن تنش و تأثیر متقابل بین تفسیر های آیینی و کاربردی آثار، مطرح نموده ام، و سپس پیشنهاد نموده ام که چگونه گنجینه بگرام به تنهایی می تواند از نظر باستان شناسی ترسیم گردد: به عنوان آثار بین افق های معین در اتاق های مهر شده شماره ۱۰ و ۱۳، علاوه بر آن هایی که در اتاق T، و دو بازیافت دیگر از راهرو مرکزی. بر خلاف نظریه های قبول شده مبنی بر کاربردی بودن آثار، من بر این باور هستم که این مجموعه هم اجناس کاربردی و هم تشریفاتی مذهبی داشته است، و پیشنهاد مینمایم که این رویداد در خلال فروپاشی تدریجی زندگی شهری و متروکه شدن شهر توسط نخبگان در پایان دوره دوم بگرام در حدود نیمه دوم قرن ۳ میلادی اتفاق افتاده است. بر این اساس، این پیشنهاد در تضاد با نظریه های قبلی که تاریخگذاری گنجینه را به قرن اول و اوایل قرن دوم میلادی تعیین کرده بود، می باشد.

متعاقباً در فصل چهارم من اولین فهرست جامع از آثار این گنجینه را ارائه نموده ام تا تنوع داده های بجا مانده جمع آوری و تطبیق گردد. در این فصل همچنان روی چگونگی زمان و مکان ساخت بازیافت های این گنجینه، وضعیت آنها در وقت ذخیره و واگذار شدن، و ترتیب و تنظیم آنها در قسمت نمبر ۲ ساحه نیز بحث صورت گرفته است. از نقطه نظر آثار منحصر به فرد میتوان گفت که، بیشتر از نیمی از این آثار در حوزه مدیترانه - رومی ساخته شده اند، قسمت اندکی از آنها به طور نمونه عاج های تزینی فرنیچر (عمدتاً چوکی و کرسی) از حوزه هند بوده، و گروه کوچکتر دیگری از این آثار در چین و احتمالاً آسیای غربی ساخته شده، میباشند. آثار تولید شده محلی دربرگیرنده ظروف، اسباب، مسکوکات و برخی مواد خام میباشند. اگرچه این مجموعه بسیار متنوع بوده، اما من رجحان ظروف مجلل (به ویژه ظروف نوشیدنی) را برجسته جلوه داده ام، که این اشیا عمدتاً از مدیترانه - رومی وارد شده بودند. آثار مربوط به تولیدات هنری به ویژه شامل قطعات گچی کنده کاری شده و قطعات جدا شده از اشیای فلزی هستند. به نظر می رسد که بخش عمده ای از آثار این گنجینه در قرن اول و دوم میلادی ساخته شده باشند، اما برخی از آنها ممکن است قبلاً در نیمه دوم قرن اول قبل از میلاد تولید شده باشند و یک تعداد دیگر حداقل در نیمه دوم قرن سوم میلادی ساخته شده باشند. این موضوع موقف من را برای تاریخگذاری متاخر تر این مجموعه تصریح مینماید. همچنان شواهد قابل توجهی در مورد نحوه واگذاری نامرغوب، ناقص و دستکاری شده ای قسمت بیشتری از آثار این گنجینه وجود دارد که نمایانگر تاریخچه طولانی استفاده از آنها، تغییر عملکرد آنها در طول زمان، و موجودیت یک فضای ذخیره سازی اولیه جداگانه میباشند. یک مهر سفالی و کتیبه های مرکب شده بر روی برخی ظروف شیشه ای نیز حاکی از انجام فعالیت «اداری» است.

در فصل پنجم، من به مسئله ماهیت و اهمیت انبار این گنجینه از منظر آسیای مرکزی کوشانی (منطقه ای که باختر تا گندهارا را در دوره کوشانی در بر می گیرد) باز می گردم. در ابتدا استدلال هایی را علیه «توضیحات تجارت ترانزیتی» این مجموعه ذخیره شده ارائه می کنم، که موجودیت گنجینه بگرام را به عنوان نتیجه تجارت ترانزیتی انجام شده از طریق شهر تفسیر می کند. با این حال، من مشکلات پایدار نظریه های سنتی «نظریه گنج قصر» را برجسته می کنم. با تأکید بر ابهامات تفسیری در محتوا و پس زمینه گنجینه، خاطرنشان می کنم که بسیاری از جنبه های این موارد را میتوان آیینی یا کاربردی دانست. با رجوع به محل/های ذخیره اولیه، بسیاری از آثار این گنجینه احتمالاً از یک ذخیره گاه بیرونی (مثلاً قصر) برای انبار شدن در قسمت ساحه نمبر ۲ برداشته شده باشد، و یا - اگر این بنا در عوض یک مکان مذهبی باشد - می تواند نمایانگر بخشی از محتوای خزانه معبد متشکل از هدایای نذری باشد که زمانی در سرتاسر ساختمان جابجا و یا ذخیره گردیده بود. با تکیه بر این شک و تردید، ظرفیت قصرها و سازمان های مذهبی برای جمع آوری اشیاء با ارزش، انجام فعالیت های اداری و سازمان دهی تولید صنایع دستی را مورد بحث قرار می دهم. همچنین ملاحظه نموده ام که ظروف سفره ای موجود در گنجینه (انبار) دلالت بر مجالس نوشیدن توسط نخبگان در مقیاس بزرگ و شاید برپایی جشن را داشته باشد، اما احتمالاً این نوع فعالیت در یک زمینه کاملاً اجتماعی انجام نشده باشد. فراتر از این شک و تردید ها، پیشنهاد مینمایم که گنجینه بگرام حداقل به عنوان مجموعه ای از اشیای ارزشمند که توسط

نخبگان طی چندین نسل جمع آوری شده باشند، تشریح و تفسیر گردد، و نیز از بعد دیگری هم قابل ارزش می باشد زیرا این مجموعه شواهد زیادی را از شیوه مصرف اجناس و کالاهای تجملی و با ارزش وارد شده را در آسیای مرکزی دوره کوشانی، ارائه می دارد.

با توجه به این شیوه تحلیل، آثار این گنجینه نشان دهنده ظهور فرهنگ مشترک مصرف اجناس وارداتی در میان نخبگان محلی در آسیای مرکزی در دوره کوشانی است که این امر نتیجه همگون سازی سلیقه های فرامرزی نبوده، بلکه منعکس کننده شیوه های تقاضای محلی می باشد. به عنوان مثال، اشیاء تولید شده در حوزه مدیترانه - رومی احتمالاً به عنوان اموال "یونانی" تعبیر می گردید، که در دوران حکومت های یونانی در آسیای مرکزی از اجناس مطلوب به شمار میرفت، و احتمالاً در شیوه های تولید نوشیدنی محلی و صنایع دستی گنجانده شده بودند. در نهایت، فرضیه های دیرینه تاریخی که گویا «تاجران کوشانی» و روش های سوجویانه آنها در تجارت ترانزیتی در امتداد «جاده ابریشم» (که بگرام اغلب به عنوان نمونه ای از آن ذکر می شود) باید منحل شود. در عوض، ارجعیت مصرف این مواد وارداتی توسط نخبگان محلی در آسیای مرکزی در دوره کوشانی ها تجارت هدایت شده کالا ها را به سمت منطقه سوق داد - نقطه ای با پیامدهای مهم برای درک گسترده تر از سازماندهی مبادلات باستانی از راه دور.

در فصل ششم، نتایج بدست آمده این پایان نامه را به طور جامع خلاصه نموده ام. ضمائم آن شامل فهرستی از بازیافت های ساحه نمبر ۲ بوده که مجزا از آثار گنجینه بدست آمده از اتاق های نمبر ۱۰ و ۱۳ می باشد (ضمیمه I)، آثار بدست آمده از سال ۱۹۴۰ در سند R1940 شرح داده شده است (ضمیمه II)، و مسکوکات بدست آمده از حفاری های دافا در (ضمیمه III) گنجانیده شده است.

ترجمه شده توسط عبدالحفیظ لطیفی

Translated by Abdul Hafiz Latify

Abbreviations

Beyond standard abbreviations, further shorthand is employed in this dissertation for brevity. These include:

Museums and exhibitions:

LTR	<i>Afghanistan, les trésors retrouvés</i> , exhibition with catalogue in Cambon 2006.
MG	Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet, Paris / Musée Guimet.
NMA	National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul / Kabul Museum.

Excavation reports and primary publications:

NRAB	<i>Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Begram (ancienne Kâpici) (1939–1940)</i> , Hackin 1954a.
RAB	<i>Recherches archéologiques à Begram: Chantier no. 2 (1937)</i> , Hackin 1939a.

Documentary and photographic archival material:

C.C.	Carl Croquis = Plans, drawings and sketches numbered by Pierre Hamelin in 1941 dispersed through Carl's notebooks (<i>Carl Carnets</i>), 43810 S.P., Fonds DAFA, Musée Guimet.
F1937	<i>Bégram – Fouilles de 1937 – Catalogue</i> = Draft catalogue of finds from Begram in 1937, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.
F1940	<i>Fouilles 1940</i> = Draft catalogue of finds from Begram in 1940, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.
MGP	Musée Guimet Photothèque.
MSRAB	Manuscript of RAB, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.
MSNRAB	Manuscript of NRAB, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.
R1940	<i>Bégram 1940 (Mme Hackin)</i> = notebook of Ria Hackin, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.

RMA *Rapports au Ministère Afghan 1933–1940*, Fonds Hackin/DAFA, Musée Guimet.

TRB *Tachymeter Record Book 1936–1937*, 43810 S.P., Fonds DAFA, Musée Guimet.

Other:

CKI Corpus of Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions, see Baums and Glass 2002–

Eggers Type in Eggers 1951.

Isings Type in Isings 1957.

1. Revisiting the Begram hoard

1.1. The cave of Ali Baba

In 1937 and 1939, two sealed rooms within a building at the excavation area Site II on the ‘new royal city’ tepe at the urban site of Begram (Pls. 8–9) were opened by archaeologists of the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* (DAFA). Here, at this site in the historical region of Kapisa (Pl. 5), they found hundreds of objects from the first centuries of the Common Era that were produced across ancient Afro-Eurasia – most visibly and famously from the Roman Mediterranean, India, and Han China. In the late 1930s, the archaeology of Afghanistan was terra incognita to most, and research into the period of the Kushan Empire (ca. 50–350 CE, Pl. 2) was still in its infancy. With the excavation of the Begram hoard, the connectivity of the ancient world was made visible in high definition. In particular, the exciting implications of the presence of objects produced in the Roman Mediterranean in this space, as well as the intricate craftsmanship of the Indian ivory and bone furniture elements – collectively the so-called ‘Begram ivories’ – have attracted longstanding attention. Yet, the DAFA only ever partially explored Begram, having discovered the hoard on the eve of World War II. Ultimately, although the three lead archaeologists, Joseph Hackin, Ria Hackin, and Jean Carl, had endeavoured to document and publish their finds as best as possible, their lives were tragically cut short in 1941 before their work could be completed.

Over eighty years later, the Begram hoard remains a significant and unique find in the archaeology of Afghanistan, as well as wider southern Central Asia and northwest South Asia – the nexus at which the site of Begram sits. Ultimately, it is one of the most sensational archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, not only in respect to its wider historical significance, but moreover because of the romance and tragedy surrounding its discovery, and the symbolic significance it has come to attain as an integral component of the pre-Islamic heritage of Afghanistan. Over the last 15 years, objects from Begram housed in the National Museum of Afghanistan (NMA) – the other part of the collection being in the *Musée Guimet* (MG) in Paris¹ – have become familiar to a global audience in this framework. The story is well known by now: in 1989, museum staff had the sharp foresight to move parts of the NMA’s collection into the Presidential Palace and Ministry of Information and Culture for safekeeping.

¹ Divided according to the partage agreement in the convention drawn up establishing the DAFA in 1922. For the relevant Articles 6 and 7 of this convention and the historical context of this agreement, see below (§2.3).

By doing this, they anticipated the looting and destruction suffered by the museum during the civil war to come. The success of this initiative was announced to the world in 2003, and after the objects were re-inventoried and subject to restoration, a selection of surviving material in the NMA collection from the important sites of Tepe Fullol, Aï Khanoum, Begram, and Tillyatepe was exhibited in Paris in 2006 as *Afghanistan, les trésors retrouvés* (LTR). Since then, the exhibition has travelled throughout Europe, North America, Australia, and East Asia, and has been accompanied by the publication of catalogues translated into many languages, with rich new colour photography and explanatory essays from a number of specialists.² Altogether, these exhibitions and catalogues have also achieved the remarkable service of familiarising a new global audience with the archaeology and heritage of Afghanistan.

Yet, behind the glossy pages lies a body of scholarship attempting to decode the Begram hoard's mysteries. More specifically – and largely due to an unwieldy publication record – the questions of the Begram hoard's precise date, and moreover its nature (i.e. what it is) and significance (i.e. what it tells us about wider historical phenomena) have been subject to ongoing and unresolved debate.

To some, the hoard objects were produced over an extended period of time, perhaps running as late as the 3rd or 4th centuries CE. To others, the hoard objects were produced within a shorter period of time – usually given as the 1st to 2nd centuries CE – or were even coeval and all made within the 1st century CE. In light of receptions of Begram as the summer capital of the Kushans, some have seen the hoard as a royal treasure abandoned in anticipation of a Sasanian invasion in the 3rd century CE. Others have argued that the hoard cannot be associated with royalty, but is rather a trader's stock abandoned in transit much earlier. The wider significance of this find depends on which interpretation one prefers. Some have seen the hoard as demonstrative of the cosmopolitan tastes of the Kushans or indicative of the availability of Roman-era models in the development of Gandhāran art. The view expressed most vocally in scholarship of recent decades is that it is a sample of the kinds of goods being traded along the network of routes connecting Eurasia ever-more-frequently referred to as the 'Silk Road/s.' Indeed, Begram and even the wider Kushan Empire are now often described in general works of globally oriented history as commercial nodes in the centre of these routes across Eurasia, benefiting through their control of external transit trade. Each of these diverging assessments has some strengths and weaknesses, but ultimately they remain difficult to reconcile with each

² The catalogue of LTR is Cambon 2006. For the English language iteration accompanying the exhibition at the British Museum, see Hiebert and Cambon 2011.

other. Accordingly, scholarship dealing with the hoard today stands at something of an deadlock. I will explain and contextualise these differing perspectives in more detail below (§1.3) and clarify how we can now move beyond the impasse (§1.4).

Before we are in a position to assess the significance of this find, we have to look more closely at its nature. Let us start with one particularly thought-provoking reception. When speaking to wider audiences, Francophone scholars – including members of the DAFA – have sometimes described the Begram hoard as a veritable cave of Ali Baba.³ This metaphor obviously just serves to capture the sense of an impossibly rich hidden cache of treasure, or a hoard, but it also inadvertently raises an interesting point. In *Histoire d’Ali Baba, et de quarante voleurs exterminés par une esclave*, the origin, contents, or significance of the treasure are not really important. It is simply treasure. While the cavern and its contents stand as a symbol of wondrous riches accumulated by thieves, it is particularly the coined gold – high value, portable, countable, and convertible money – that attracts Ali Baba and reappears throughout the tale:

[Ali Baba] vit de grandes provisions de bouche, des ballots de riches marchandises en piles, des étoffes de soie et de brocard, des tapis de grand prix, et surtout de l’or et de l’argent monnoyé par tas, et dans des sacs ou grandes bourses de cuir les unes sur autres ; et à voir toutes ces choses, il lui parut qu’il y avait non pas de longues années, mais des siècles que cette grotte servait de retraite à des voleurs qui avoient succédé les uns aux autres. ... Il ne s’attacha pas à l’argent, mais à l’or monnoyé, et particulièrement à celui qui était dans des sacs.⁴

But what exactly is a hoard? An English-language definition familiar to most would be something like the following: “an accumulation or collection of anything valuable hidden away or laid by for preservation or future use; a stock, store, esp. of money; a treasure.”⁵ Interestingly, however, there is a substantial amount of archaeological literature engaging with intentional deposits of objects – including ritual deposits that were clearly not meant to be retrieved – and these are often referred to as hoards too.⁶ The most theoretically developed body of scholarship on this point has been produced in respect to the ubiquitous phenomenon

³ For example in Bernard 2003; Bendezu-Sarmiento and Marquis 2015, 106.

⁴ Trans. Galland 1811, 377.

⁵ Hoard, n.1 in the Oxford English Dictionary Online 2018.

⁶ Discussed further below, §3.5.3.

of deposits of bronze artefacts in Bronze Age Europe. Here, since the 19th century, scholars have debated which of these deposits may be classified according to their find context and contents as ritual or utilitarian, with the debate more recently stressing how difficult it is to define a sharp divide between the two. I will return to these issues in more detail later (§3.5.3, §5.3).

The treasure in Ali Baba's cave recalls a hoard in the classic, popularly understood sense, and its value and function in the story is self-explanatory. Representing a store of immense wealth, it recalls another characteristic form of intentional deposits in the ancient world: coin hoards. Scholarship has also attempted to classify coin hoards, and – unlike the strong ritual leanings in interpretations of Bronze Age hoards – they are almost always seen from a utilitarian, monetary perspective. Various sub-distinctions have been proposed, such as emergency hoards (particularly including other precious metal objects or jewellery), purse hoards, savings hoards, and abandoned hoards, but of course, ritual deposits of coins (or including coins) are attested in antiquity too (§3.5.3). Examples of the deposition of such convertible stores of wealth or 'treasure' – coinage, precious metal plate, and jewellery – for safekeeping as well as ritual purposes are well attested in Hellenistic and Kushan Central Asia. Broadly utilitarian interpretations are most plausible when such hoards are found within domestic spaces (as opposed to graves, or sacred contexts like temple or stupa deposits), which were concealed and apparently only unintentionally left unrecovered. However, in many cases, aspects of both ritual and utilitarian behaviour can be interpreted from these intentional deposits.⁷

In fact, the Begram hoard is different from the treasure in Ali Baba's cave. Put another way, 'being-treasure' cannot be this hoard's *raison d'être* alone. Indeed, it is difficult to succinctly describe the immense diversity of objects that this hoard contained. It was filled with vessels and containers – predominantly tableware – made from glass using a range of different decorative techniques, as well as from copper alloys, from applied lacquer, porphyry, rock crystal, alabaster, glazed pottery, and worked ostrich eggs. There were also parts of several pieces of furniture which had been adorned with carved ivory and bone plaques and elements. Additionally, there were also bronze devices, figurines, and detached elements from articles of metalwork (including furniture), some tools and utensils, fasteners and fittings (such as from boxes), some examples of military equipment, a small amount of raw and semi-worked materials, and a group of plaster casts featuring a range of designs and motifs in positive relief.

⁷ See also Morris Forthcoming a.

Although a number of coins were apparently found in some association with the hoard, all were issues struck from alloyed copper, i.e. low-value base metal. Within this corpus, gold and silver are almost entirely absent. And despite the lack of precious metals, many of these objects must have been seen as highly valuable: not only did many require a considerable amount of skilled labour and time to produce, but it must have been difficult and expensive to bring them to Central Asia, as they came from workshops from across Afro-Eurasia, especially from the Roman Mediterranean, India, and Han China.

What, then, is the nature of the Begram hoard? Who did these objects belong to and what were they used for? Why and when were they accumulated? Moreover, in what circumstances were these objects assembled in the building at Site II, concealed, and abandoned?

As I noted above, these are the kinds of questions we need to have some firmer answers to before we are in the position to assess the wider significance of this find. And to find some answers, the solution is almost banally obvious: not only should we look more closely and methodologically at the hoard as a cohesive corpus of objects, but also its context. Here, among the possible scales of context to look at, I also mean the wider region stretching from Bactria and Gandhāra in the first centuries of the Common Era – a space and time which I refer to here as ‘Kushan Central Asia’ (see §1.5, Pl. 3) – but most importantly, the immediate archaeological context of the hoard objects themselves.

1.2. The surviving archaeological data and their problems

Unfortunately, the possibility of looking more closely at the contents and archaeological context of the hoard is made difficult by the matrix of complicated and incomplete surviving archaeological data available to work with. Moreover, the very problems entangled with this dataset are the key reason for current differences in scholarly opinion about the nature and significance of the hoard. Therefore, in the following, I first site the discovery of the hoard within a very brief history of fieldwork at Begram (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2), explain what data survive and are accessible, and outline where the main challenges in moving forwards lie.

The fortified urban archaeological site of Begram (Pl. 9)⁸ was re-discovered by the defected British soldier Charles Masson in 1833. Masson suggested that the site was the

⁸ See Ball 2019a, No. 122.

location of Alexandria of the Caucasus, and reportedly collected almost 80,000 coins at the site and its hinterland, the dasht of Begram (Pl. 6), between 1833 and 1838.⁹ Almost a century later, the site captured prolonged archaeological attention again. In 1922, Alfred Foucher founded the DAFA. In his initial programme to delineate areas and sites for future archaeological investigations, he zeroed in on Begram. Arriving to the Kohistan in April 1923, he observed features of the landscape and the distribution of Buddhist monuments to identify Begram as the capital of the region of Kapisa visited in the 7th century CE by the famous Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Xuanzang (Pl. 11)¹⁰ disagreeing with Masson's identification. More recent scholarship has rehabilitated Masson's view, and it now tends to be agreed that the archaeological site of Begram was the location of both historical settlements (§3.2). Important terminology for the archaeological site also derives from Foucher's initial observations; Foucher hypothesised, without excavation, that the Burj-i Abdullah – the northern tepe at Begram – had been the location of an older, original 'royal city,' and that this had been transferred at a later date to the southern tepe, becoming a 'new royal city' (Pl. 11).¹¹

Excavations at Begram finally began under Joseph Hackin's directorship of the DAFA (1934–1940). Hackin was a curator at the Musée Guimet in Paris, and collaborator on two past missions to Afghanistan with the DAFA. Here, campaigns (1936–1942; 1946) mainly focused on two areas in the new royal city. The first, Site I (Pl. 13), also known as the 'bazar,' was excavated by Jean Carl and Jacques Meunié during 1936–1937,¹² and constituted a habitation area focused around the main north-south street connected to the tepe's southern entrance, which was explored later. The second area, opened 200 m to the east of Site I, was Site II (Pls. 14, 15.1, 16), also referred to as 'Site R' or 'Ria,' after Ria Hackin, who supervised the first work there. This area was excavated during 1937–1940,¹³ revealing a large structure, the limits of which were never established. The hoard proper was recovered in rooms 10 and 13 of this building (Pls. 17–18), in the years 1937 and 1939 respectively, although, similar finds were also reported during excavations in 1940 in room T and apparently other ill-defined areas of Site II. The Site II structure was overlaid by a later rectangular edifice with four circular bastions, referred to as a qala, which was excavated by Meunié in 1938 (Pl. 15.1).¹⁴ Meunié also opened a similar structure, Site III, some 400 m south of the new royal city's southern

⁹ See discussion below (§2.2).

¹⁰ Foucher 1925, 255–273; 1942, 138–145.

¹¹ Foucher 1925, 270.

¹² Carl 1959a.

¹³ Hackin 1939a; 1954a; Meunié 1959a.

¹⁴ Meunié 1959a.

ramparts (Pl. 15.2).¹⁵ After the deaths of Joseph Hackin, Ria Hackin, and Jean Carl in 1941, Roman Ghirshman briefly assumed directorship of the DAFA. He conducted excavations at the Burj-i Abdullah, the fortification wall of the new royal city, and at Site B (an area west of Site I) during 1941–1942 (Pls. 19–21.1).¹⁶ Afterwards, the directorship of the DAFA was taken up by Daniel Schlumberger, and Meunié undertook a final excavation in 1946 at the entrance of the new royal city, south of Site I (Pl. 21.2).¹⁷

The data produced by the Hackin excavations at Begram – including those pertaining to the hoard – are fraught by two major problems. First, these excavations were methodologically distant from current practices of archaeological fieldwork. Indeed, even for the 1930s they were not methodologically cutting edge. This is not to say that they provide unusable data – I will argue later that they do follow their own internal logic (§2.4) – but the data do involve serious limitations, particularly in reconstructing archaeological context, and these limitations have to temper our expectations about what is possible to resolve from the re-examination of what survives.

Second, the surviving record – both published and unpublished – of this data is in itself incomplete, primarily because of the historical conditions surrounding the completion of the excavations (i.e. the outbreak of World War II). Fundamentally, because of the deaths of the three primary excavators in 1941, the hoard was never fully published as intended, and not all of the excavation documentation has survived. It is important to note, however, that Joseph Hackin was incredibly productive with respect to publication during his life. Immediately following the excavation of room 10, preliminary notices about the finds there had been published in French, German, Dutch, and English,¹⁸ followed by the major publication *Recherches archéologiques à Begram* (1939; hereafter RAB),¹⁹ which had nonetheless been intended only as a preliminary report. Likewise, in 1940, short notices about the finds from room 13 in 1939 were communicated in French, English, and Persian (translated by the DAFA's collaborator Ahmad Ali Kohzad).²⁰ The results of the excavations in 1939 and 1940, with a focus on the hoard finds from room 13, were published posthumously only later as *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Begram* (1954; hereafter NBAB).²¹

¹⁵ Meunié 1959b.

¹⁶ Ghirshman 1946.

¹⁷ Meunié 1959c.

¹⁸ See Rosu 1969, nos. 101–102, 106, 108–110.

¹⁹ Hackin 1939a.

²⁰ See Rosu 1969, nos. 119, 122. On Kohzad, see §2.4.1 below.

²¹ Hackin 1954a.

As publications, RAB and NRAB are similar in form. RAB features an introductory essay about the site, excavations, and foremost the hoard objects from room 10, and is followed by a catalogue of most objects excavated at Site II in 1937, in the order in which they were recorded. The information provided includes inventory numbers (usually, but not always, one inventory number is equivalent to an individual object), a description, dimensions of the object, the depth at which the object was found, and whether the object was allocated to the collections of Paris or Kabul; sometimes a note on where in the relevant room the object was found is provided. Finally, the volume of text is accompanied by a volume of photographs.

The structure of NRAB is slightly more elaborate. Its several supplementary essays includes contributions from personnel of the DAFA, the MG, and the Warburg Institute, who collaborated to produce the volume based on surviving excavation documentation.²² These essays deal with the excavations generally, and provide specialist studies on the ivories, objects from the Roman Mediterranean, and the lacquerwares, and discuss Pierre Hamelin's reconstructions of the ivory furniture from rooms 10 and 13. Importantly, this volume also includes the first plan of the Site II excavation area, executed only in 1947 by DAFA architect, Marc Le Berre (Pl. 16), on the basis of the exposed remains, as Jean Carl's original plan from 1940 had been lost.²³ The find catalogue of NRAB includes the same structure of information as that of RAB, but organised instead by material class. This is the main body of data which survived from the excavations, and had been conveyed to the Warburg Institute in London in 1941. The catalogue was supposedly largely unabridged by the editors, instead featuring comments throughout by Raoul Curiel, Jacques Meunié, and Daniel Schlumberger, who studied the finds from the excavation in the NMA in 1946. They noticed several unlabelled plaster, bronze, ivory and bone, and glass objects in the NMA that did not appear to match precisely with catalogue entries in RAB and NRAB (either restored from semi-documented or undocumented fragments or were simply not recorded in the first place). These were recognised as having probably come from either room 10 or 13, and are catalogued additionally in NRAB, demarcated with Roman numerals.²⁴

Just as RAB and NRAB are similar in form, they share parallel merits and deficiencies. On the one hand, their documentation of the hoard objects is well suited towards art-historical analysis, featuring detailed descriptions in the find catalogues, excellent and ample

²² Hackin 1954a, xi–xii; Olivier-Utard 1997, 128.

²³ Meunié 1954, 9.

²⁴ NRAB Plaster Nos. I–V; Bronze Nos. VI – XI bis; Ivory and Bone Nos. XII – LVIII; Glass Nos. LIX – LXXXVI. Two further glass vessels restored in Paris are NRAB LXXXVII – LXXXVIII.

photography of the excavated objects for the time, and the introductory essays (particularly in the case of NRAB) are especially focused on the dates and provenances of the objects, and sometimes the subjects depicted on them, from comparative and art-historical perspectives.

Yet from these reports, there are still some difficulties in assessing the contents of the hoard. As just mentioned, RAB and NRAB organize the presentations of their finds differently, respectively in order of inventory and in order of material class. It is thus difficult to get an overview of the contents of the hoard from these reports as they are published. Additionally, a number of finds (primarily glass vessels) were later restored from excavated fragments – sometimes inventoried in RAB and NRAB, sometimes not – and have been published separately, most importantly within Hamelin's studies of the glass.²⁵ No synthetic inventory incorporating these data has been attempted thus far. Moreover, despite the excellent quality and large number of photographs provided in RAB and NRAB, I would estimate that about sixty percent of the individual hoard objects²⁶ were not published with a visual record in those reports, and their appearance has to be surmised from frequently idiosyncratic written descriptions (a dangerous task), as well as some unpublished photographs from the excavations, photographs and drawings of certain finds among the Fonds Hackin/DAFA of the MG Photothèque (MGP), and material in Jean Carl's notebooks (C.C.) preserved in the Fonds Hackin/DAFA of the MG library. Moreover, some more detailed information and simple sketches can sometimes be found in other documents preserved in the Fonds Hackin/DAFA of the MG library, including the draft catalogue of finds in 1937 (F1937). A significant source of data is constituted by photographs and illustrations made later, especially for more recent exhibition catalogues, or catalogues otherwise presenting parts of the MG's and NMA's collections.²⁷ To assist my research in this direction, I am fortunate to have had access to some data on certain of the hoard objects in the MG, but data on the scope of the material from Begram which has survived in the NMA – besides what has been publicized in LTR – are not openly available at present.

Furthermore, extremely little contextual information is provided in RAB and NRAB. At first glance, this may seem to not entail such a great disadvantage – the majority of the relevant finds are from rooms 10 and 13 and presumably entail a larger single assemblage (i.e.

²⁵ See especially Hamelin 1952, 1953, 1954; Delacour 1993.

²⁶ Here, thinking of the ensembles of ivory furniture not as separate plaques and elements, but as individual objects of furniture (see further below, §4.1, §4.13.1).

²⁷ The main sources of this type I have used in the below include Gullini 1961; Rice and Rowland 1971; Delacour 1993; Cambon 2002; 2006; Hansen et al. 2009, as well as Tissot's partial catalogue of the collection of the NMA in Tissot 2006, which collates photos published elsewhere as well as others from a number of archives, including some previously unpublished material from the MGP.

the hoard) – but upon a closer look, the picture is more complex. As mentioned above, finds similar to the hoard objects were reported in other areas of Site II but have never really been explained. Indeed, neither the definition nor extent of the hoard are clear from these published data, nor the function and date of the Site II structure, nor the precise contents and arrangement of objects within the hoard deposits. Significantly, Hamelin's studies of the Begram glass also feature the first schematic ground plans of the arrangement of objects within rooms 10 and 13 (Pls. 17–18).²⁸ As we will see later (§2.4.2; §2.4.6) these are also rather more interpretative than primary sources *strictu sensu*, but at least provide a basis to (carefully) work with.

However, the picture is improved somewhat through the survival of photographic and documentary archival material preserved in the Fonds Hackin/DAFA of the MG. These include photographs of the excavations in process and objects *in situ* in the MGP and certain illustrations in the C.C. notebooks.²⁹ But moreover there are a number of documents which give insight into the excavations in process: these are the draft catalogue of finds in 1937 (mentioned above, F1937), which includes an unpublished section on finds at Site II prior to the beginning of the catalogue in RAB (see Appendix I), as well as the manuscript for RAB (MSRAB), the manuscript for NRAB (MSNRAB), the draft catalogue of finds in 1940 (F1940), a notebook of Ria Hackin (R1940, see Appendix II), as well as drafts of the reports Hackin sent to the Afghan government (RMA), and a record book of measurements made with a tachymeter in 1936 and 1947 (TRB). Comparing and contrasting these documents with the published data makes it possible to supplement information in the published record, as well as correct mistakes. For example, during publication in NRAB, all of the inventory numbers from catalogue entries for finds from 1940 at Site II were shifted to the previous object, which was then made undetectable by the organisation of the finds into material class (see further below in §2.4.6, corrected and normalised according to rooms and excavation areas in Appendix I).

One of the biggest problems emerging from the lack of contextual data is the difficulty of dating the hoard, the use of the main structure at Site II, and wider occupation phases at Begram. Naturally, the excavations were not conducted according to modern methods, and did not observe stratigraphy in a meaningful sense. Furthermore, the find catalogues for work at Site II in RAB and NRAB give the impression that only relatively complete examples of pottery were documented, and photographs or drawings thereof – if any were made – were never published.

²⁸ Hamelin 1953, Pl. II; 1954, Pl. XVI.

²⁹ I give references to these documents, but they are not published here.

On the other hand, coins were generally found in a high number at Begram, including at Site II, but the numismatic data are also very fraught and must be prudently used. None of the coins found during 1937, 1939, and 1940 were cleaned or photographed at the time, let alone studied by a specialist, and a few vague, even dubious, identifications are offered in RAB and NRAB. While some of coins from 1937 were allocated to the MG, where they were then published fully in 2001 by Bopearachchi,³⁰ the fate of the coins found from 1939 and 1940 is more discouraging. All were allocated to Kabul, and are now presumed lost after the theft of the part of the NMA's coin collections which had been left in the museum in the 1990s.

As Hackin did not say much about the chronology of the new royal city, one of the major contributions of Roman Ghirshman's excavations at Begram was to engage with this problem in light of numismatic evidence. In his main excavation area, a habitation area on the western side of the new royal city marked as 'B' on the plan drawn by Tania Ghirshman (thus Site B, see Pls. 9, 19.2–21.1), Roman Ghirshman observed three phases of occupation. He then dated each of these phases based on the distribution of coins he observed within them. Thus (and updating his identifications), Begram I was dated from Apollodotus I (?) to Wima Kadphises (thus ca. 176 BCE – 127 CE); Begram II from Kanishka I to Vasudeva I (altogether ca. 127 – 230 CE); and Begram III to Vasudeva I imitations (rev. Oesho with bull) and Kanishka II types (rev. seated Ardoxsho) (post ca. 230 CE–?).³¹

Ghirshman then took his findings from Site B, and expanded excavations at Site II in an attempt to clarify the stratigraphy there. Recovering only coins of the 'second Kushan dynasty' (i.e. Kanishka I to Vasudeva I), and citing "*toutes ces preuves stratigraphiques, architecturales et numismatiques*" he dated the later qala built above the Site II structure to Begram III, and the end of the Site II structure to that of Begram II.³² Ghirshman proposed that this occupation layer ended with an invasion of Shapur I, judged by him to have taken place between 241–250 CE.³³ Yet, Ghirshman did not publish his coin finds specifically according to occupation phase, and only representative examples of certain types were photographed. The entire collection was allocated to the NMA, and is (again) now presumed entirely lost, although revised classifications of Ghirshman's coins were made by Göbl in 1962 in his partially published study of coins in the NMA.³⁴ Moreover, as we will see shortly (§1.3), a number of

³⁰ Bopearachchi 2001.

³¹ Ghirshman 1946, 85–86; Morris 2017, 77, 97.

³² Ghirshman 1946, 28, 30.

³³ Ghirshman 1946, 100.

³⁴ Referenced in Alram 1999 and Morris 2021.

scholars rejected Ghirshman's date for the phase Begram II because the hoard objects seemed too early by comparison.

It should be emphasised here that referring heavily to coins for dating is unquestionably dangerous, but with respect to Begram II and the hoard also important and unavoidable. Besides difficult questions raised about the contextual association of certain coin finds and the incompleteness of the surviving dataset, the reference material for dating the coins themselves is also in flux. Numismatic research in this field is incredibly detailed and advanced, yet simultaneously a work in progress, with certain parts possessing the liability to shift along with new data.

This is especially the case with respect to the problem of what is often referred to as 'late Kushan' coinage, i.e. small copper alloy anepigraphic issues with increasingly schematised depictions of the standing sacrificing king on the obverse, with reverse types of Oesho with bull or seated Ardoxsho. Respectively, these reverse designs replicate types initiated by Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230 CE) and Kanishka II (ca. 230–247), and hence are sometimes called respectively 'Vasudeva I imitations' and 'Kanishka II imitations.' Importantly, Vasudeva I imitations were certainly found in the archaeological phase Begram III, and perhaps also Kanishka II imitations, although this is less clear. Vasudeva I imitations are also relevant to understanding the end of Begram II as well (for which see §3.5).

Both Vasudeva I and certain kinds of Kanishka II imitations currently tend to be associated with the period of Kushano-Sasanian rule. The Vasudeva I imitations – which also utilise an obverse type following the depiction of the king initiated during Kanishka II's lifetime – are particularly prevalent in the wider region, and can be classified according to their declining designs and weights over time. Among a number of significant studies on this type of imitation coinage,³⁵ recent work links the production of Vasudeva I imitations to the period within which Bactria and Gandhāra came to be under Kushano-Sasanian rule, dating it to around ca. 230–380 CE.³⁶

However, the end of the production of these coins is not clear. Indeed, examples have been documented in later archaeological contexts, including in a ca. 7th–8th century CE layer at Tapa Sardar (near Ghazni),³⁷ as well as at the urban settlement of Barikot in the Swat valley,³⁸ which has a developed, reliable stratigraphy and dating sequence. The awaited publication of

³⁵ Including MacDowall 2005; Khan 2010.

³⁶ Jongeward et al. 2015, 179–180; Errington 2021, 177–178; Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, F.3.

³⁷ Taddei 1999, 392–393.

³⁸ Luca Maria Olivieri, personal communication.

the coins from Barikot will undoubtedly clarify the picture, and in the meantime, the difficulties involved in dating these coinages should be kept in mind. Although I do not deal much with the problem of the date of Begram III in this dissertation, as it post-dates the deposition of the hoard (see §3.5.4), I would like to note that the chronology of this archaeological phase has been subject to particularly vigorous debate. Put shortly, Ghirshman dated the end of Begram III to the end of the 4th century CE,³⁹ while indications from both textual evidence and the phase's material culture led Kuwayama to argue that Begram III should be dated from the middle of the 6th to the middle of the 8th century CE.⁴⁰ Although some have expressed reticence in accepting such a late date for the phase,⁴¹ Kuwayama may well be correct.

1.3. Perspectives on the date, nature, and significance of the hoard

As we have just seen, the published archaeological data pertaining to the hoard's contents and find context are problematic in many regards. Accordingly, scholarship seeking to explain the nature and significance of this find has mostly attempted to bypass these difficulties by focusing instead on the question of the hoard objects' dates and places of production through comparison to material excavated elsewhere, and occasionally with some reference to the numismatic evidence associated with the hoard.

In fact, Joseph Hackin inaugurated this approach himself. In RAB, regarding the room 10 finds, Hackin attributed the manufacture of the glass and bronze artefacts to several dates within the period of the 1st to 4th centuries CE, and the ivories from the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th centuries CE.⁴² However, he had changed his opinion in light of the room 13 finds by May 1940, remarking in a letter published in NRAB that the hoard objects display “un synchronisme impressionnant” in time, dating largely to the 1st and 2nd centuries CE.⁴³ Obviously, it was the availability of more data – both from Begram, and the knowledge of perhaps more convincing comparanda – that made Hackin change his mind. However, I mainly cite this example to underline a major theme in scholarly efforts to date and provenance the Begram hoard objects: while some parallels drawn with certain comparanda are more

³⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 78–82.

⁴⁰ Kuwayama 1974, 76–77; 1991, 117–118; 2010, 291

⁴¹ MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 266–267; Fussman 2008, 156; Morris 2017, 97–100. Here I should note that, on the basis of continued reflection as well as having some additional data made available to me (see §2.4.5), I now reject the connection I drew in Morris 2017 between the Begram hoard and Begram III. The hoard is associated with Begram II, which was however abandoned later than Ghirshman suggested. I have updated my arguments in the present work.

⁴² Hackin 1939a, 10, 22.

⁴³ Hackin 1954a, 14.

convincing than others, ultimately the question of what one scholar or another may consider a close comparison – typologically, stylistically, iconographically, or technically – can be more subjective than one might like to admit. Additionally, the cross-cultural nature of the hoard objects presents a further challenge, and scholars (understandably) tend to limit their attention and expertise to certain classes of artefacts. Furthermore, assumptions about how the nature of the deposit may shed light on the date of the objects – i.e. whether they ought to be roughly coeval or not – permeate the debate.

Thus, original or particularly forceful arguments pertaining to the dates of the hoard objects in subsequent secondary scholarship can be characterised into two positions (indeed, just as Hackin saw it himself): a late date and an early date. To radically simplify, the ‘late’ position accepts that some of the hoard objects may have been produced earlier, but certain of the others – such as the glass vessels with applied trailed decoration or high relief cut decoration – may have been produced in the later 2nd or even 3rd to 4th centuries CE. Scholars who have argued for this position in reference to the glass include Coarelli, Menninger, and Rützi,⁴⁴ and others who have considered the same possibility for the ivories and bone plaques include Nehru and Rosen Stone.⁴⁵

On the other hand is the ‘early’ position: the essays accompanying NRAB,⁴⁶ as well as a spate of more recent publications, have suggested that the objects were produced within a more limited time frame, most commonly given as the 1st century CE or the 1st to early 2nd centuries CE, or that they are even coeval. Some early advocates for this view include Rowland and Dwivedi.⁴⁷ Later, Whitehouse made the case for dating the glass from the 1st to early 2nd century CE,⁴⁸ and Mehendale’s research concerned with the Begram ivories and her subsequent scholarship have argued that the hoard objects were produced around the same time, i.e. within the 1st century CE.⁴⁹ The ‘early’ position has come to dominate scholarship of the last two decades – and the attribution of all of the hoard objects to the 1st century CE in LTR⁵⁰ has likely played a major role in this process. I will engage more with the merits of some arguments vis-à-vis the dates of certain objects later in Chapter 4.

To make this all more complicated, arguments in both camps have referenced coins found within rooms 10 and 13 to support their arguments. The difficulty is that there are

⁴⁴ Coarelli 1962, 319; 2009, 97; Menninger 1996, 91; Rützi 1998, 196–200; 1999.

⁴⁵ Rosen Stone 1994, 91–97; 2008, 48; Nehru 2004, 124.

⁴⁶ Elisséeff 1954, 155; Kurz 1954, 108; Stern 1954, 54.

⁴⁷ Rowland 1966, 27–28; Dwivedi 1976, 95.

⁴⁸ Whitehouse 1989a, 99; 1989b, 155; 2001a, 444; 2012, 62–63.

⁴⁹ Mehendale 1997, 5.5; 2001, 500; 2011a, 143; 2012, 65.

⁵⁰ Cambon 2006.

differing opinions as to which coins are meaningfully associated with the hoard deposit – i.e. intentionally deposited with the hoard or lost beforehand – and thus can be used to date it. For example, Mehendale rejected the relevance of the coins finds from rooms 10 and 13 for dating the hoard objects, claiming that coins found in proximity to the hoard objects may derive from disturbances (i.e. post-depositional transformation processes) and alone “do not provide any particular leverage for one proposed date over another.”⁵¹ However, Whitehouse observed that the ‘billon’ coins of ‘Vasudeva’ (NRAB 11–16, at a depth of 1.80 m) and Kujula Kadphises (NRAB 6, 2.10 m) appear to be separated from the hoard deposit proper, and thus the only coins that could be associated with the hoard were those of Gondophares (NRAB 155, 2.55 m), Wima Kadphises (NRAB 208, 2.50 m), and Kanishka I (RAB 275 [129], 2.60 m).⁵² The Kanishka coin would then be the latest coin in association, which does not conflict with his dating scheme. Alternatively, Rütli considered the aforementioned ‘Vasudeva’ coins (NRAB 11-16, 1.80 m) to be in association with the hoard objects too, thus supporting his dating.⁵³ While Coarelli noticed that the Kanishka coin appears to be the latest in association with the hoard objects, he has stressed that it can only serve as a *terminus post quem* for the deposition event.⁵⁴

Coarelli was, in principle, right about the Kanishka coin, found at a depth of 2.60 m. However, as it turns out, some of the other, previously unidentified coins from room 10 and from precisely the same depth were eventually published by Bopearachchi.⁵⁵ I have recently republished and reidentified these coins: three are Vasudeva I imitation types minted after ca. 260 CE.⁵⁶ The role and importance of these coins for dating the deposition of the hoard – again, they provide a *terminus post quem* – will be discussed later (§3.5.3).

Instead, I will now look at how ideas about the dates of the hoard objects were transformed into interpretations about the date of the hoard’s deposition, and how this was done rather in spite of Ghirshman’s ascribed date of the end of Begram II (the occupation phase to which the deposition of the hoard belongs) to the mid 3rd century CE.

Essentially, a number of scholars who support an earlier date for the hoard objects have operated under the assumption that the hoard was concealed and abandoned shortly after the production dates of its supposedly most recent objects. For example, Mehendale explained that

⁵¹ Mehendale 1997, 5.2.

⁵² Whitehouse 2001a, 445–446.

⁵³ Rütli 1998, 194–195.

⁵⁴ Coarelli 1962, 320; 2009, 101–102.

⁵⁵ Bopearachchi 2001.

⁵⁶ Morris 2017.

“it seems reasonable to assume that the rooms were abandoned certainly within no more than one generation of the fabrication of the pieces. This suggests that the objects were left behind at some time in the early 2nd century CE.”⁵⁷ The latter suggestion develops a similar point made earlier by Whitehouse: “The fact that the latest datable objects belong to the late 1st or early 2nd c. leads me to suggest that the cache was concealed around this time: within a generation, let us say, of A.D. 100.”⁵⁸ Whitehouse later acknowledged that the latest coin in association with the hoard appeared to be an issue of Kanishka.⁵⁹

Concurrently, Ghirshman’s date for the end of Begram II in the mid 3rd century CE and presumed date of deposition for the hoard has often been dismissed as unlikely. For example, Will cited the 1st–2nd century CE dates offered by studies in this volume of the hoard objects, stating that “la date de la constitution de la cachette avancée par R. Ghirshman, le sac de Bégram par Châpour Ier (entre 246 et 250), devient bien problématique dans ces conditions.”⁶⁰ Rowland likewise objected to a 241 CE date of deposition because “this date ... is so late in relation to the age of the objects. All of them would already have been antiques, as much as one hundred to two hundred years old.”⁶¹ Mehendale put the matter in a similar way: “it seems inconceivable that it remained there for more than three-quarters of a century until the final destruction of the city.”⁶² Likewise, Whitehouse has observed that, if the hoard was deposited around or in 241 CE, “we must explain why the majority of datable objects (including the Indian ivories and the Chinese lacquer) were a century and a half old at the time of concealment.”⁶³ Finally, Kuwayama has more recently stated that the early dates ascribed to the objects weaken Ghirshman’s standpoint.⁶⁴

Such expressions of doubt seem reasonable at first glance, but are not entirely methodologically sound. Moreover, they mirror an equally flawed tendency in scholarship of the 20th century on bronze hoards in Bronze Age Europe to assume that hoards were composed of everyday objects in contemporary use, and thus could be applied to developing object typologies and dating systems. Of course, much scholarship on such hoards now reiterates their roles as ritual deposits, and the belief that all objects in a hoard should be coeval continues to be dismantled in more recent scholarship, particularly with the aid of archaeometric data (see

⁵⁷ Mehendale 1997, 6.4.

⁵⁸ Whitehouse 1989a, 99.

⁵⁹ Whitehouse 2001a, 446.

⁶⁰ Will 1955, 359–360, n. 1.

⁶¹ Rowland 1966, 28.

⁶² Mehendale 1997, 6.4.

⁶³ Whitehouse 2001a, 445

⁶⁴ Kuwayama 2010, 286.

§3.5.3).⁶⁵ Nonetheless, there is no reason to assume *a priori* that any hoard should be constituted of objects produced within an arbitrarily restricted time frame, nor deposited within an equally arbitrarily restricted time frame after that.

The vigorous debate about the date of the hoard, of course, is not purely intellectual, but has implications for how we interpret two big issues that really matter: the nature and significance of the hoard. Once again, scholarly interpretations on these points – although with a number of permutations – can be divided into two broad camps. There was first a traditionalist view, i.e. variations of the theory that the hoard represents the valuable possessions of a palace or otherwise elite residence, hence the ‘palatial treasure theory.’ Next, there were revisionist views, encompassing theories connecting the existence of the hoard with long-distance transit trade through Begram, hence the ‘transit trade explanations.’

With regards to the nature of the hoard, interpretations offered have tended to be quite colourful and anecdotal in nature – a quality that is characteristic of scholarship on hoards more generally, as pointed out by Bradley.⁶⁶ Perhaps quite judiciously, Joseph Hackin was virtually silent on the matter. However, the following works of his collaborators and successors began to express ideas that were presumably already circulating within the DAFA. This is the traditionalist ‘palatial treasury theory.’ Ghirshman referred to the Site II structure as ‘in all likelihood, a palace,’⁶⁷ and Hamelin also stated that the cachette of glassware and ‘many other treasures’ was deposited in a ‘single operation’ in the palace at Kapisa ‘at the time of a Kushana king pressed by an invasion of the Sasanians.’⁶⁸ Foucher’s foreword to NRAB provides even more colourful detail in this direction. To him, the hoard was:

“la cachette où quelque grand seigneur Kouşân, peut-être le roi en personne, avant de fuir devant l’invasion perse, avait entassé ceux des objets précieux en sa possession qui étaient trop fragiles ou trop encombrants pour être emportés dans ses bagages. Il croyait les mettre en sûreté jusqu’à un prochain retour, mais il ne revint pas, et travailla sans le savoir pour l’émerveillement de la postérité.”⁶⁹

Later, in 1978, MacDowall and Taddei briefly developed a version of this theory in their contribution to a synthesis of the archaeology of pre-Islamic Afghanistan. Noting possible

⁶⁵ Hansen 2016, 196–197.

⁶⁶ Bradley 2017, 10.

⁶⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 28

⁶⁸ Hamelin 1953, 123.

⁶⁹ Foucher 1954a, 2.

objections to be raised about the purported low value of plaster casts within a collection of otherwise rich objects, they wrote:

“We may perhaps solve the problem if we think of some particular purpose in collecting so many and so peculiar art objects, connected with the production of other objects. The two rooms at Begram probably contained wares taken from the “palace” in a moment of danger together with objects belonging to a royal atelier: the models for silver ware and possibly also for stucco decorations, even if made of worthless plaster, were certainly precious for an art workshop.”⁷⁰

On the other hand, the first revisionist ‘transit trade explanation’ of the nature of the hoard was stated most forcefully by Wheeler in 1954, who discussed the hoard in reference to the trade of Roman goods beyond imperial frontiers. Interestingly, Wheeler also emphasised the precious quality of the hoard objects, and agreed that they were dated from the 1st–3rd centuries CE (although he had not consulted NRAB, as it was published the same year), regarding the assemblage as “not an integral deposit, but an accumulation representing about 150 years.”⁷¹ Instead, his focus on long-distance trade led him to offer a different interpretation as to the nature of the hoard objects. He wrote:

“The easiest explanation is doubtless the correct one. The store was probably a Customs depot for the receipt of dues in kind collected by the kings or viceroys of Kapisa from the caravans which traversed the adjacent highway in the luxury traffic of Orient and Occident.”⁷²

By explaining the existence of the hoard objects at Begram via the phenomenon of long-distance transit trade through networks now often referred to as the ‘Silk Road/s,’ Wheeler’s view pre-empted the now emblematic revisionist ‘transit trade explanation’ of the nature of the hoard, i.e. the ‘merchant’s cache theory’ supported by Mehendale. Instead, Mehendale – who was guided by the idea that the hoard objects were coeval – has maintained that the hoard objects were not especially precious, and indeed that the hoard itself constitutes a trader’s stock accumulated for commercial purposes, and was presumably awaiting further distribution. She has also suggested that the apparently unworked material in the hoard possibly

⁷⁰ MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 257.

⁷¹ Wheeler 1954, 163.

⁷² Wheeler 1954, 163–164.

also indicates local craft activities at Begram. In her view, it is possible that the hoard might have been sealed during the regular course of trade activity, i.e. while a merchant was away, or that it represents stock impounded by government officials if duties were not paid. Mehendale has then suggested that the abandonment and concealment of the hoard coincided with a demise and abandonment of the city around this time, and that this demise might be ascribed to economic decline.⁷³ Interestingly, extremely little attention has been paid in scholarship to the structure at Site II within which the hoard was found. One exception is found in Simpson's discussion pertaining to the Begram ivories. Here, he observed that although the benches reportedly in rooms 10 and 13 could indicate that they were storage or reception areas (typical of a Central Asian or Middle Eastern context), their decoration of wall paintings may suggest they were reception or banqueting areas before their secondary use as a storage space.⁷⁴

For now, I want to conclude this section by clarifying the stakes culminating from these debates: the significance of the hoard. Once again, we have different readings emanating from the different interpretative camps. Generally, scholars who follow some variant of the 'palatial treasure theory' – or at least accept that the Begram hoard objects were intended for use in the region – have tended to highlight two main points. The first is that these finds coincide chronologically with the flourishing of Gandhāran art, demonstrating the local availability of Roman-era models,⁷⁵ hence the influx of possible Roman sources for the 'Classical' elements in the Gandhāran repertoire, rather than necessitating only the influence a surviving Hellenistic 'Greek' art in the region.⁷⁶ Second, scholars have also observed that the hoard can generally be linked to cosmopolitan taste under the Kushans. For example, MacDowall and Taddei pointed out that despite interpretative difficulties, it is at least "indisputable that the Begram hoard is a proof of the cosmopolitanism of the Kushan sovereigns."⁷⁷ Frye likewise called it "a tribute to the far-flung commercial ties as well as to the cosmopolitan tastes of the Kushans."⁷⁸ Whitehouse says that that it "stands a fair chance of representing the wealth and eclectic taste of one of the great Kushans."⁷⁹ In a similar direction, within a discussion on the role of objects

⁷³ Mehendale 1997, 6.4. See also Mehendale 1996; 2001; 2011a; 2012,

⁷⁴ Simpson 2014, 8.

⁷⁵ See for example Hackin 1954a, 14–15; Whitehouse 1989a, 99; Menninger 1996, 213–219; Ball 2000, 145.

⁷⁶ The 'Greek or Roman' debate as to the origins of classical imagery in Gandhāran art has been prolonged and intense, and now can be seen as somewhat reductive. For two recent treatments dealing with this problem which provide further bibliography and rehabilitate the often-dismissed connections between Roman and Gandhāran art, see Stoye 2020 on the semantics of Gandhāran 'image-language' drawing on Hölscher's work on Roman art, and Stewart 2020 in respect to the possible participation of craftspeople trained in the Roman Empire in Gandhāra. See further discussion below, §5.4.

⁷⁷ MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 262.

⁷⁸ Frye 1984, 284.

⁷⁹ Whitehouse 1989a, 99.

of Roman manufacture in Roman commerce with the East, Raschke also remarked that the “marketability and acceptability of such luxuries and objets d’art was no doubt facilitated by the survival of traces of Greek culture both in Northwest India and more particularly in Bactria, to which the Indian ports gave access.”⁸⁰

Some scholars have also looked at the hoard for a perspective on wider patterns of trade. For example, a number commented on the links between the hoard and information on Indian Ocean ports of trade in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (a 1st century CE Koine Greek trading manual).⁸¹ More specifically, followers of ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard have tended to go a bit further. Especially in works adopting a wide perspective of Afro-Eurasia, the hoard objects are now often seen as a sample of the kinds of goods moving along the long-distance trade networks running through this space (again, often now the ‘Silk Roads’) with Begram benefiting from its position as a central node in this network.⁸² Although I have little doubt that merchants were attracted to Begram, and that local rulers and governors throughout its history may well have extracted customs duties in cash or kind, ‘transit trade explanations’ of the Begram hoard pose bigger problems for many reasons, which I will explore throughout this dissertation (see especially §5.2).

To start with, these explanations are underpinned by a longstanding historiographical construct of ‘Kushan middlemen.’⁸³ By this, I mean the belief that the Kushan Empire was in itself a key commercial node along the Silk Road, and the Kushans deliberately and successfully sought to benefit economically in this system by controlling external transit trade between East and West. As I have argued elsewhere, this idea has been able to flourish with little respite for over a century not only due to the broad lack of attention paid to the economic history of Central Asia in this period (barring the work done by Soviet-era scholars) but also because of popular interpretations of highly visible bodies of evidence, like the Begram hoard, and Kushan gold coins (conventionally called dinars) in particular. For example, since the late 19th century, it was frequently asserted that Kushan dinars were produced from melted-down Roman aurei and minted to facilitate trade with Roman trading partners. Although attention had been drawn to the fact that the weights of the two coinages do not correspond well,⁸⁴ the

⁸⁰ Raschke 1978, 632.

⁸¹ Whitehouse 1989a; Mairs 2012; Seland 2013.

⁸² For earlier iterations following the customs duties theory, see Wheeler 1954, 163–164; Thorley 1979, 187–188. Incidentally, Thorley also nicely states that the alleged Kushan extraction of customs duties in the form of “works of art” occurred “quite simply because they liked them” (Thorley 1979, 188). On recent treatments drawing on the merchant’s cache theory, see e.g. Mehendale 2011; Benjamin 2018, 201; Graf 2018.

⁸³ Morris 2020a.

⁸⁴ MacDowall 1960.

idea was finally put to rest through the study of trace elements in both, which proved that they cannot derive from the same source.⁸⁵

By now, I think it may be becoming clearer which positions about the date, nature, and significance of the hoard I am more sympathetic to. But ultimately, being able to break the impasse on these points means looking more closely at the contents and context of the hoard. There are several reasons why now is the right time to do this.

1.4. Breaking the impasse now: where we stand

Above, I have already pointed at some ways in which the archaeological data pertaining to the hoard and its context can be taken forwards, even though the situation is far from perfect (§1.2). Here, I would like to clarify further why now is a good time to be looking at the Begram hoard's larger context too, including its position within Kushan Central Asia (from Bactria to Gandhāra between ca. 50–350 CE, see §1.5), as well as in the wider ancient world.

The first reason is that we are now in a better position to examine the history of Central Asia's period of antiquity than ever before, particularly with respect to the absolute dates of its ruling powers, such as the Kushan Empire (Pl. 2). The story of the Kushans has been painstakingly assembled since their rediscovery in modern scholarship,⁸⁶ and the current state of our knowledge is due to an immense amount of progress made in scholarship since the 19th century.⁸⁷ However, the lack of agreement about the absolute date of year 1 of the Kushan king Kanishka I, i.e. the Kushan era, especially plagued scholarship in the 20th century, with a range of solutions being proposed from the 1st to 3rd centuries CE.⁸⁸ That being said, there is now a widely accepted solution: Falk's re-reading of a 3rd century CE Sanskrit astronomical text, the *Yavanajātaka* of Sphujiddhvaja, observed a formula to convert a year given in the Kushan era into a Śaka era date (an important historical era of India beginning in 78 CE). Although much past scholarship equated the two eras, this study indicated that they are not the same, and has fixed the beginning of year 1 of Kanishka to 127 CE.⁸⁹ The picture has also been increasingly clarified through numismatic research and careful readings of inscriptions dated to these and

⁸⁵ Blet-Lemarquand et al. 2009.

⁸⁶ Cribb 2007.

⁸⁷ Of two fundamental works of the 20th century incorporating a range of evidence, although now partially outdated with respect to their information, see Rosenfield 1967 with particular strengths on the Indian material, and Staviskij 1986 on Kushan Bactria.

⁸⁸ See, for example, the positions represented in Basham 1968.

⁸⁹ Falk 2001.

other historical eras.⁹⁰ Because of this, it is possible to talk about the Kushan period with more historical precision than ever before.

Ascertaining the details of the Kushan emergence onto the scene of Central Asian history is also a work in progress, but one that is increasingly gaining more concreteness through the continued analysis of coins and a range of transmitted texts in various languages. They are foremost in Chinese, as well as in Greek and Latin, in addition to inscriptions in what is now called Gāndhārī (the local Middle Indo-Aryan idiom of Gandhāra), and the language referred to as Bactrian (the local Middle Iranian idiom of Bactria).⁹¹ The discovery of the Rabatak inscription in 1993 – a Bactrian-language foundation inscription from a temple at the site of Rabatak in northern Afghanistan – played an especially significant role in clarifying some issues of the dynasty's history and chronology into the early reign of Kanishka I.⁹²

In its broadest lines, the story of southern Central Asia in antiquity runs as follows. In the 330s BCE, Alexander the Great undertook his famous campaigns in Bactria and northwest India, capturing them from the Achaemenid Empire. Kings of the Seleucid Empire retraced his path into Bactria, but lost the region in the mid 3rd century BCE to the secession of what scholars refer to as the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom.⁹³ This polity would eventually expand into northwest India, split there into a number of kingdoms (hence the Indo-Greek kingdoms) dispersed from Kapisa to the Punjab. The cultural and political impact of these Greek kingdoms on the ground was famously revealed by the DAFA's sensational excavations of the city of Aï Khanoum (1964–1978), a royal capital of eastern Bactria.⁹⁴ Additionally, ongoing ISMEO work at the city of Barikot in the Swat valley has shown the material impact of the Indo-Greeks – not least the construction of a massive fortification wall – in this important agricultural region in the highlands north of Gandhāra.⁹⁵ The Graeco-Bactrian kingdom finally collapsed in Bactria in the mid 2nd century BCE. This was probably the result of both internal conflict, and external pressure from other expanding powers (such as the neighbouring Arsacid Empire), and possibly the inroads of nomadic groups into this space.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Cribb 2018a.

⁹¹ Very conveniently, these sources have been recently compiled and arranged in Falk 2015.

⁹² First published in Sims-Williams and Cribb 1996, with its most recent edition and translation in Sims-Williams 2004.

⁹³ For the political history of the Greek Kingdoms of Central Asia, consult Coloru 2009 and a synthesis in Morris 2020b, 63–70.

⁹⁴ The results of which are published in *Mémoires de la DAFA*, as well as a number of preliminary reports. For an annotated bibliography, conveniently consult Mairs 2011, 26–29, and also Ball 2019a, No. 18.

⁹⁵ See Olivieri 2020.

One of these groups was a nomadic confederacy – or perhaps just part of a nomadic confederacy – known in Chinese sources as the Yuezhi 月氏 (or Da [Great] Yuezhi 大月氏). The Yuezhi are thought to have migrated from around the Hexi corridor in modern China into Bactria after the mid-second century BCE (probably pushed out by the threat of the expanding Xiongnu Empire). Although the precise details remain unclear and subject to debate, Yuezhi rule here was eventually split between five *yabgu* ('allied princes'),⁹⁶ holding different parts of northern Bactria.

In the mid 1st century CE, the Kushan *yabgu* – thought to be Kujula Kadphises (ca. 50–90 CE) – seized power from the rest and established a ruling dynasty.⁹⁷ From then until the mid 2nd century CE, the first Kushan kings – Kujula Kadphises, Wima Takto (ca. 90–113 CE), Wima Kadphises (ca. 113–127 CE), and Kanishka I (ca. 127–151 CE)⁹⁸ – expanded their empire from Bactria by military conquest, holding power over Kapisa and Gandhāra, and making inroads into Gangetic India, also setting up a power base in Mathura. The dynasty's most famous king, Kanishka I, is known for inaugurating a new era, his conquests of India (as described in the Rabatak inscription), and his invigoration of the official use of the Bactrian language, which replaced the use of Greek, as well as for turning up in a number of later Buddhist legends.⁹⁹

Although the picture is not entirely clear, important centres (or perhaps 'capitals') of the northern part of the Kushan Empire (Pl. 3) included Balkh in Bactria, Begram (Kapisi) in Kapisa, and Peshawar (Puruṣapura/Kaniṣkapura) in Gandhāra (see comments in §3.5.1).¹⁰⁰ Other important urban sites in Bactria also probably included Old Termez and Qala-i Zal, and in Gandhāra also Charsadda (Puṣkalāvātī)-Shaikhan-dheri and Taxila-Sirkap then Taxila-Sirsukh.¹⁰¹ Besides the Begram hoard, among the most significant archaeological work relating

⁹⁶ Actually *xihou* 翕侯 in Chinese sources. On the term and its interpretation, see Sims-Williams and de la Vaissière 2007.

⁹⁷ For a summarised political history of the Kushan Empire, see Morris 2020b, 74–83, and for the sources, consult Falk 2015.

⁹⁸ The chronology for the Kushan kings followed here is that developed by Cribb and his collaborators, iterated most recently in Errington 2021; Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming.

⁹⁹ For a discussion of these legends, Rosenfield 1967, 27–39.

¹⁰⁰ Besides fortifications, limited Kushan-period remains have been exposed through work at Balkh, as this is an enormous multiperiod site. See bibliography in Ball 2019a, No. 99. The remains of any urban settlement at Peshawar in this period remain largely unknown, although there have been some recent excavations at the mound Hayatabad in the western outskirts of the city, for which see Khan et al. 2019. The massive stupa attributed to Kanishka, Shah-ji-ki-dheri, as well as the findspot of the 'Kanishka casket' (CKI 145) was explored in Spooner 1912.

¹⁰¹ The Kushan-period urban area of Old Termez is only partially explored, see Leriche and Fourniau 2001; Leriche 2007 Qala-i Zal (eastern Bactria) is not excavated, but was evidently an important site, for which see Ball 2019a, No. 892. For Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri, see Dani 1965. On the excavations at the sites of Taxila – of which the earlier city of Taxila-Sirkap was far more widely excavated than Taxila-Sirsukh – see Marshall 1951.

to the dynasty is excavations at the sanctuary of Surkh Kotal in Bactria by the DAFA (1952–1963), which included the remains of royal portrait sculptures and the first monumental inscription in the Bactrian language.¹⁰² In Soviet-era Uzbekistan, a Yuezhi-Kushan (?) period royal pavilion (Kh-1) was excavated at Khanakatepa, part of the site of Khalchayan (1959–1963),¹⁰³ a settlement located in the Surkhan Darya region. This building featured painted clay sculptures depicting a ruling family, a frieze with garland bearers, and a mounted battle scene. These may have been achieved in the latter half of the 1st century CE and used through to the 3rd century CE (i.e. the early Kushan period proper), but the date of the site and its sculptures, as well as its function – palatial or ritual? – have been subject to debate.¹⁰⁴ Soviet-era excavations at the urban centre of Dal'verzintepe (1962–1974),¹⁰⁵ located around 40 km south of Khalchayan along the Surkhan Darya, provide an important impression of urban life and planning in Bactria in the Kushan period. Finally, more recent work at the fortress-town of Kampyrtepa on the Oxus has given a comprehensive perspective on settlement in the Kushan period here.¹⁰⁶ While the growth in settlements in the Peshawar valley had already begun to accelerate between the 1st century BCE to the 1st century CE (the Saka-Parthian period),¹⁰⁷ Bactria in the Kushan period was characterized by a growth in the number and size of settlements, reaching the maximum extent of its urbanization in antiquity.¹⁰⁸

With Kushan political domination peaking by the reign of Huvishka (ca. 151–190 CE), a decline followed in that of Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230 CE). The heart of the empire, Bactria, was lost in ca. 230 CE to the Sasanians. They established the so-called Kushano-Sasanian kingdom, which then expanded its reach towards Gandhāra (ca. 230–265 CE). This was apparently a semiautonomous cadet branch of the Sasanian royal house, who called themselves Kushanshah.¹⁰⁹ A hazy period of political contraction occurred under kings Kanishka II (ca. 230–246 CE), Vasishka (ca. 246–267 CE), Kanishka III (ca. 267–272 CE), Vasudeva II (ca. 267–297 CE), Mahi (ca. 297–302 CE), Shaka (ca. 302–342 CE), and Kipunadha (ca. 342–352 CE). Kushan power finally fizzled out in the vicinity of Gandhāra around the mid 4th century CE.

¹⁰² Schlumberger et al. 1983.

¹⁰³ Pugachenkova 1966; 1971.

¹⁰⁴ For a recent discussion, see Lo Muzio 2017, 127–130.

¹⁰⁵ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978.

¹⁰⁶ Bolelov 2018.

¹⁰⁷ Ali 1999; 2003.

¹⁰⁸ Litvinskiy and Sedov 1983, 120. See also Staviskij 1986; Stride 2005, I: 303–329; Leriche 2007.

¹⁰⁹ Rezakhani 2017, 72–73.

Of course, such a neat narrative conceals the complexity behind this picture. Gandhāra was a particularly politically contested space between around 90 BCE to 50 CE.¹¹⁰ The local Indo-Greek kingdoms were being gradually pushed out, to finally disappear in around 10 CE in the eastern Punjab. They were replaced by local rulers and foreign conquerors who set up kingdoms of their own. Foremost among these were the Indo-Scythian rulers (or Sakas), and then the Indo-Parthian Gondopharid dynasty, ruling parts of Gandhāra and Arachosia and apparently having some ties with the Arsacids. In fact, after the fall of Kapisa's last Indo-Greek king, Hermaeus, in ca. 70 CE, it is not clear who controlled the region until Kujula Kadphises captured it in the mid 1st century CE (see below §3.4).

The transitional period between Hellenistic and Kushan proper rule in Bactria, as well as the role of nomad Saka and Yuezhi groups in this period, remains murky in many ways.¹¹¹ As above, it is also not certain how much overlap there was with the original 'Yuezhi' in Bactria and the later kings of the Kushan dynasty – at least, from the perspective of Chinese standard histories, they were the same thing: "All the kingdoms call [their king] the Guishuang 貴霜 [Kushan] king, but the Han call them by their original name, Da Yuezhi."¹¹² Substantial debate has also been undertaken with respect to the first Kushan rulers, particularly as to the identification of who produced the silver 'Heraeus' coinage and the copper alloy 'Soter Megas' coinage. To put a very long story short, according to Cribb, they may well have both been Kujula Kadphises (with the Soter Megas coinage minted in the majority by his son and successor, Wima Takto).¹¹³

The problem of identifying nomadic groups known from literary sources with archaeology on the ground is reflected in the debate about the affiliations of the nomadic-styled elites buried in six graves (one man and five women) at Tillya-tepe in the latter half of the 1st century CE, or a little earlier.¹¹⁴ Tillya-tepe is located in the Sheberghan oasis in western Bactria between the frontiers of Kushan and Arsacid influence during the period. The burials there are famous for their abundance of locally made gold jewellery and clothing appliques produced in a unique style incorporating Hellenistic components from Bactria with elements originating from Gandhāra and the Eurasian steppe. These articles and the grave goods from the burials of Tillya-tepe are also linked with the material culture of mobile groups in the north

¹¹⁰ For a useful exposition, see Errington and Curtis 2007, 57–66.

¹¹¹ On nomads in Bactria in this period, see generally Abdullaev 2007; Rapin 2007.

¹¹² *Hou Hanshu* 88.2921, trans. Hill 2015a, §13. This text was compiled by Fan Ye in about the 5th century CE.

¹¹³ See, respectively, with discussion and bibliography Cribb 2014; 2018b.

¹¹⁴ The primary publications are Sarianidi 1985; 1989, supplemented by the catalogues Cambon 2006; Hiebert and Cambon 2011. For an overview of the debate about the identity of this group, and the date given here, see Peterson 2020, 49–50. For the cultural connections demonstrated by the burials, see Francfort 2012.

Pontic to Caspian areas to inner Mongolia under the Xiongnu, as well as wider Afro-Eurasia: other grave goods included Roman glass unguentaria, Chinese mirrors, an Indian ivory comb, and gold Roman and Parthian coins (I will return to some of these later in §5.4). Rather than representing a royal line of the Yuezhi or Kushans, this group should broadly be considered as locally powerful elites with some kind of ‘Saka’ connections, perhaps ties with a local ‘Scytho-Bactrian’ ruling dynasty and/or links with the Gondopharid Indo-Parthian dynasty in Gandhāra.¹¹⁵

Moreover, this period saw the emergence of Buddhism as a major religion in Gandhāra, and beginning from around the 1st century CE, its transmission across the Hindu Kush into Bactria, as well as gradually through the Tarim Basin and into China. Fundamentally, this was facilitated not by the patronage of the Kushan kings – despite their longstanding reception as great supporters of Buddhism – but by the support of local elites.¹¹⁶ The emergence of Gandhāran Buddhist art also occurred by ca. 50 CE,¹¹⁷ prior to the Kushan period even if flourishing under it. In the first centuries CE, Kapisa attracted the establishment of a number of monasteries, including those within a comfortable walking distance from the city and serving its urban population at the Koh-i Pahlavan (Shotorak, Karratcha, and Qol-i Nadir). The archaeological data pertaining to these sites, as well as their position in the wider framework of new foundations of Buddhist monastic complexes in eastern Afghanistan, have recently been considerably clarified due to the publication of research conducted by Fussman (from Kabul to the Koh Daman) and Errington (on Charles Masson’s collections).¹¹⁸

Although there are still many things about Kushan Central Asia which are unclear, it is evident that the state of research now is quite different than it was even two decades ago, when a number of important contributions were written on the Begram hoard. In particular, it is now possible to speak with far more historical precision. These developments are particularly significant, because they present an opportunity to examine the Begram hoard in a way that intervenes in larger historical narratives about the Kushan Empire. Above, I have referred to ideas about ‘Kushan middlemen,’ the links drawn in world historical narratives about the ‘Silk Road’ and this empire, and particularly the notion that the prosperity of the Kushan Empire was built on controlling long-distance transit trade along the routes running through their territories.¹¹⁹ Although the narrative has recently shifted to represent the Kushans as not just

¹¹⁵ See e.g. Francfort 2012; Shenkar 2017 with discussion and bibliography.

¹¹⁶ Fussman 2015.

¹¹⁷ With particular reference to material from Swat, see Filigenzi 2012.

¹¹⁸ See Fussman 2008; Errington 2017a; 2021.

¹¹⁹ See Morris 2020a.

profiteering middlemen, but the crucial facilitators of transit trade,¹²⁰ surprisingly little attention has been paid to the role of elites in Kushan Central Asia as consumers of imported luxury goods, and the question of how their tastes and connections might have driven trade instead.

It is expedient to reiterate here that the concept of the ‘Silk Road/s’ is a modern invention, and such a ‘road’ never existed. Nonetheless, this flawed and ill-defined concept remains attractive in both popular imagination and scholarship in a diversity of forms. For example, the Silk Road can be either essentially synonymous with Central Asia (and more specifically the Tarim Basin) and its history of connectivity,¹²¹ refer in the plural to the networks connecting everything between East and West (with a focus on Persia) as well as an antidote to Eurocentric views of history,¹²² or encompass trade and interaction across Afro-Eurasia from ca. 200 BCE – 1400 CE.¹²³ Others (myself included) hold that the concept is too fraught to be of real use for elucidating the history of Central Asia or the realities of ancient trade and interaction.¹²⁴ Thus, my focus in this dissertation on dynamics in Central Asia as a specifically delineated region and simultaneous avoidance of reference to the ‘Silk Road’ is fully intentional.

Earlier (§1.3), I noted that a number of scholars have observed in passing that the hoard can be linked to cosmopolitan and eclectic taste under the Kushans, including Frye, MacDowall and Taddei, and Whitehouse. Furthermore, I mentioned that Raschke linked interest in luxury objects of Roman manufacture in this space to the “the survival of traces of Greek culture.”¹²⁵ These ideas certainly head in the right direction, but quickly run into some problems. First, the notion of cosmopolitanism is never defined or expanded upon but presumably follows popular understandings of the term (i.e., essentially, being a citizen of the world), and hence gives the impression of a demand for imported goods that is categorically open, undifferentiated, and wide-ranging. However, as I will discuss later (§5.4), very specific patterns can be detected among the types of objects in the hoard (especially imported luxury and prestige goods). Then, cosmopolitanism as implicitly understood in the above contexts has no power to give us more insight on these patterns.

¹²⁰ See, for example, Liu 2001, 272–276; 2010, 42–61; Benjamin 2018, 176–203.

¹²¹ See, e.g., Hansen 2012.

¹²² Frankopan 2015.

¹²³ Whitfield 2019.

¹²⁴ Rezakhani 2010; Ball 2019b; von Reden et al. 2020.

¹²⁵ Raschke 1978, 632.

Of course, there have since been recent endeavours to do something more theoretically concrete and productive with this nebulous concept.¹²⁶ For example, cosmopolitanism has recently been mobilised to describe the formation of common elite cultures and the management of differences within empires of the ancient Near East and Mediterranean,¹²⁷ following a “more rigorous use of the term.”

Cosmopolitanism designates a complex of practices and ideals that enabled certain individuals not only to cross cultural boundaries but also to establish an enduring normative framework across them. The historically particular ideals that led certain groups to transcend distance and difference also compelled them to develop practices that could integrate geographically and culturally disparate populations. Cosmopolitanism might thus be defined as theoretical universalism in practice.¹²⁸

Although I do think that we lack the evidence to assess whether the consumption of imported prestige and luxury goods as attested by the Begram hoard had such a specific, intentionally socially integrative function, I will indeed consider later how their appeal, acquisition, and use can be interpreted as components of a common elite culture that developed in Kushan Central Asia (§5.4). Then, still more recently, Franklin has defined cosmopolitanism as “the practices of imagining the multiply scaled worlds within which one is situated, and of dwelling (acting, dreaming, making) within those worlds.”¹²⁹ The definition is, of course, suitable for Franklin’s analysis of the global dimensions of everyday life along the ‘Silk Road’ in medieval Armenia. However, it also cannot simply be implemented here, as it still lacks the specific power I seek to interpret patterns among the Begram hoard objects.

Also acknowledging Raschke’s reference to the ‘survival’ of Greek culture, this is a story related in some way to Hellenism. Hellenism, however, is an imprecise term that is now often (but not exclusively) used to refer to Greek culture as well as the use of Greek cultural elements by non-Greeks.¹³⁰ Hoo has recently criticised the paradoxes of the concept with reference to Hellenistic Central Asia and Eurasia more broadly, and looks instead to ‘translocalism’ within globalisation theory as a way of approaching culture and interaction in

¹²⁶ For a treatment embracing this nebulousness, however, see the abstruse Pollock et al. 2002.

¹²⁷ Lavan et al. 2016a.

¹²⁸ Lavan et al. 2016b, 10.

¹²⁹ Franklin 2021, 3.

¹³⁰ See, e.g., the useful recent discussion in Strootman 2020, 203–305.

this space.¹³¹ Although such an approach could surely be carefully mobilised to reflect on the significance of material in the Begram hoard, the concept of globalisation and its associated terminology remain (in my view) most straightforwardly applied to describing large-scale (i.e. global) processes. As I am foremost concerned with accurately appraising and interpreting a critical dataset for cultural dynamics in Kushan Central Asia from a more local (if still macroregional) perspective, I simply hope that the present research will be of use for those who prefer to look at interaction through different terminologies, theoretical frameworks, and scales of perspective. Additionally, on that note, I also prefer to not label cultural phenomena in Kushan Central Asia as examples of Hellenism, although scholars working on this topic can explore the use of Greek cultural elements in ways parallel to my own approach below (see §5.4). I choose to do this because I wish to shed the theoretical baggage and imprecision of the concept, to de-privilege the role of specifically Greek cultural elements in a complex, post-Hellenistic cultural environment, and to avoid adding several other counterbalancing ‘-isms’ to describe the use of other foreign cultural elements in this same milieu. Or, to put it in a different way, I think there is no need to invoke Hellenism, when one can simply talk about the adaptation of Greek cultural elements and ideas people had about them.

1.5. ‘Kushan Central Asia’

My macroregional frame of analysis throughout this dissertation, ‘Kushan Central Asia’ (Pl. 3) is one chosen for convenience as well as a lack of good alternatives, and it is important to clarify its extent and my reasoning here. In this work, I consider this space to encompass the two northern core regions of the Kushan Empire. The first is Bactria,¹³² i.e. the space between the Hissar range to the Hindu Kush,¹³³ with a western frontier of Kushan power perhaps to be drawn in the west of the Balkh oasis. Altogether, this includes part of southern

¹³¹ See, e.g., Hoo 2018; 2020.

¹³² In fact, with respect to the Kushan period, recently published epigraphic evidence now proves that at least part of this region was referred to as Tokharistan from at least ca. 137 CE (see Sims-Williams 2015). Because it is not clear exactly when this change in practice occurred, and because this dissertation refers to periods between the 6th century BCE and the 3rd century CE, I prefer to simply refer to Bactria throughout, rather than (for example) attempting to switch between Bactria, Bactria-Tokharistan, and Tokharistan depending on the historical period under discussion.

¹³³ The location of the frontier between Bactria and Sogdiana remains a problem along a number of axes. Although there are strong cultural and political ties between southern Uzbekistan, southern Tajikistan, and northern Afghanistan in the Kushan period (i.e. constituting ‘Bactria’), there is good reason – on the basis of Graeco-Roman sources – to consider the frontier of Bactria and Sogdiana in the Achaemenid and Hellenistic period to have cut through this space, running along the Oxus and Vakhsh rivers instead. Of the substantial scholarship on the topic, see e.g. the recent comments in Rapin 2013, 48–49.

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as northern Afghanistan. The second northern core region is Gandhāra, understood here to include both Gandhāra proper (the Peshawar valley) but also the northern mountain valleys connected with this plain (such as Swat), and more broadly the space between Nagarahāra (the vicinity of modern Jalalabad) to Taxila.¹³⁴ This region includes part of eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan. Between these two regions lay Kapisa and its central urban settlement Begram, with the strength of its connections between Bactria and Gandhāra shifting over time (see Chapter 3).

For my purposes, I consider it useful to distinguish Bactria and Gandhāra from Mathura, the southern core of the Kushan Empire. Although Gandhāra and Mathura are obviously part of a wider shared Indic cultural sphere, I make this distinction on the basis of Bactria and Gandhāra's frequently entangled dynamics of political and cultural history throughout antiquity, i.e. from the 6th century BCE to the 3rd century CE (outlined above, §1.4). This is by no means whatsoever a new observation, but a position worth stating clearly. Importantly, the dynamics shared by these two regions include changes instigated by the occupation of the Achaemenid Empire, Hellenistic kingdoms, and mobile pastoralist rulers and elites – the so-called Saka/Sai and Yuezhi in Bactria, and the other branch of Sakas (the Indo-Scythians) in Gandhāra – especially those with connections to the Eurasian Steppe. Both Bactria and Gandhāra also had strong ties with the Arsacid world, including through the establishment of a ruling dynasty in Gandhāra (the Indo-Parthians) connected in some still obscure way to the Arsacids. Finally, Bactria and Gandhāra also developed some more limited connections with the Tarim Basin oasis states and Han China in this period. Some of these phenomena, as I will make clearer in Chapter 5, had especially important implications for patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia.

In this dissertation, I wish to emphasise the connectivity – culturally, politically, economically – between these regions in the first centuries of the Common Era (Chapter 3) rather than their separation, and I do not think the semantics of other ways of describing this interconnected space in prevailing scholarship entirely speak to my aims. Some available options strike me as inefficient ('southern Central Asia and northwest South Asia,' 'Bactria and northwest India,' 'Between the Indus and the Oxus,' then needing to add chronological

¹³⁴ Note, however, that there is important internal diversity in this region. As Olivieri (2020, 389–390) has observed, there is also an east-west cultural divide along the Indus river, between Gandhāra proper (i.e. the Peshawar valley and cis-Indus territories) and the rest of northwest India (i.e. the trans-Indus). Respectively, each side is relatively linked more with the Iranian or the Indo-Gangetic cultural spheres.

delimitations to all). In my opinion, other options give too inaccurate an impression that this space is a marginal area between two real entities ('Indo-Iranian borderlands').

My solution in taking up 'Kushan Central Asia' requires being a little loose with the boundaries of Central Asia as understood in anglophone use. Most archaeologists working on the history of this area now – albeit depending on their scholarly tradition and the period under study – tend to conceive of this space as revolving around the former Soviet Republics (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan), with a northern extent drawn at the Eurasian steppe belt in Kazakhstan, and the Kopet Dag and Hindu Kush ranges in the south, thus including northern Afghanistan. There is certainly some cultural, historical, and geographical logic to this, but the general problem is that the concept of Central Asia remains impossible to define on the basis of physical geographical boundaries, and the relevant areas do not represent any ethnic, cultural, or geographically homogenous space. The current situation is one of terminological chaos, as nicely put in Gorshenina's study of the concept of Central Asia.¹³⁵ Ultimately, the boundaries of this space shift along with one's historical perspective, the intensity of connectivity over time, and the questions we ask; hence, the well-known UNESCO volumes on the history of Central Asia also included Afghanistan in sum, Pakistan, north India, as well as northeast Iran, China, and Mongolia.¹³⁶ Thus, I use the solution of 'Kushan Central Asia' to refer to Bactria and Gandhāra (as defined above) in the Kushan period and acknowledge that it may not be to everyone's taste.

1.6. Structure and thesis

The central thesis of this dissertation is that more closely examining the contents and context of the Begram hoard will facilitate a clearer assessment of its nature and significance. Accordingly, the structure of this dissertation is as follows. In Chapter 2, I synthesise and evaluate the methods and results of the various fieldwork campaigns that took place at Begram, also reading them in light of the social and historical contexts within which fieldwork took place. With particular emphasis on the work undertaken during Joseph Hackin's directorship, I draw on both published data and archival material, and illuminate lacunae and errors in the publication record. While I do stress the problematics of the surviving data and the difficulties

¹³⁵ Gorshenina 2014, 539–544.

¹³⁶ Miroshnikov 1992.

faced in using them, I show the ways in which they can be operationalised to assemble a clearer vision – if a still deeply partial one – of life at Begram throughout antiquity.

In Chapter 3, I proceed by doing just this, with the aim of clarifying the historical conditions that contributed to the accumulation of the hoard objects at Begram in Kapisa and showing that this distinct region is not just a ‘crossroads,’ but a dynamic borderland with specific affordances. Considering varying scales of context – from the immediate archaeological context of the hoard in the Site II structure to the position of Begram and Kapisa between broader cultural and political developments in Bactria and Gandhāra – I examine some general territorial aspects of Begram and Kapisa before progressing through the region’s political history from the Achaemenid to the Kushano-Sasanian periods. In this framework, I also examine the function and development of the Site II structure while illustrating the ambiguity of the data, and attempt to delineate the specific limits of the hoard deposits, partly in light of comparative discussions on the nature of hoards more broadly.

In Chapter 4, I examine the contents of the hoard through the structure of an inventory written from an archaeological perspective that is as comprehensive as the surviving data allows. This inventory is organised first by formal and functional considerations (e.g. vessels and containers, furniture), then the primary material from which each object was produced (e.g., glass, copper alloy), adding further sub-classes according to types when needed. The presentation of each group of objects usually includes remarks on the primary data available about them, secondary studies of them, their formal qualities, methods of manufacture, where and when they were produced, their condition upon deposition and evidence for traces of use, as well as their arrangement in the hoard rooms. I conclude with remarks on objects featuring inscriptions, and then a summary of the above remarks.

In Chapter 5, I mobilise these data to reassess the nature and significance of the Begram hoard – i.e. what it is and what it tells us about wider historical phenomena – from the perspective of Kushan Central Asia. I first present arguments against ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard, then move on to stress both ‘ritual’ and ‘utilitarian’ aspects of the material and the ambiguities these present, remarking that the hoard may at least be regarded as an intergenerational collection of valuable goods accumulated by elites. Accordingly, I argue that just one of the reasons why the Begram hoard is significant is because it provides critical and unique evidence for patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia. I follow by examining these patterns of consumption, while also considering the local appeal of the hoard objects, associations that were held about them, their capacity to produce and communicate distinction, and their integration into a broader system of elite consumption in Kushan Central

Asia. I then conclude this chapter by remarking on the ways these local patterns of consumption had ramifications beyond Central Asia.

Finally, I summarise my key findings in Chapter 6, and point to the new questions and avenues of research that these outcomes may facilitate in future work. Three appendices follow. The first presents the finds from the Site II structure outside of the hoard objects from rooms 10 and 13, the second replicates and provides commentary on the data regarding finds from 1940 that were documented in R1940, and the third constitutes an overview of the coins documented in the course of the DAFA excavations at Begram.

2. Archaeological investigation at Begram

2.1. Begram's explorers

Major archaeological investigations at the site of Begram and its hinterland have been undertaken by two main parties. The first is Charles Masson (1833–1838), who is credited with the European rediscovery of the site of Begram. Masson both documented features of the region's archaeological landscape and accumulated a stunning volume of coins and small finds from both the urban site and its hinterland (the dasht of Begram). Later, members of the DAFA investigated and interpreted the region's historical landscape in reference to literary sources and made test excavations (1923–1925), before undertaking excavations at the southern tepe of the urban site of Begram (the new royal city), the site's citadel (Burj-i Abdullah), and an extramural 'qala' (1936–1942, 1946). Work at Begram was an important component of the early activity of the DAFA, and various campaigns were undertaken during the tenure of each of its first four directors: Alfred Foucher (1922–1934), Joseph Hackin (1934–1940), Roman Ghirshman (1941–1943), and Daniel Schlumberger (1945–1965).

Charles Masson's collections in Afghanistan have been the subject of a recently concluded, extensive research project at the British Museum led by Elizabeth Errington.¹³⁷ However, the results of the DAFA's work at Begram have not been critically synthesised and re-examined in a comparably in-depth manner,¹³⁸ and as mentioned above (§1.3), it is crucial to clarify this body of data to attain a better impression of the hoard's context and contents.

Thus, this chapter aims to synthesise and evaluate the methods and results of fieldwork at the site of Begram. I begin with a few comments on Charles Masson's work before outlining the results of the DAFA campaigns, within which I particularly focus on the work undertaken from 1936–1940 under Joseph Hackin's directorship. In respect to the Hackin excavations, I look more closely at the published excavation reports, compare them to archival material preserved in the Fonds Hackin/DAFA of the MG as described above (§1.3), and read these data also in light of the wider social and historical context within which these excavations took place. Some lacunae and errors in the publication record for these campaigns will also be illuminated and rectified along the way.

¹³⁷ See Errington 2017a; 2017b; 2021. Earlier treatments include Errington 1999; 2001.

¹³⁸ For a shorter overview and discussion of these excavations see already Morris 2021.

One of my main arguments in this chapter is that although the Hackin excavations were not undertaken according to archaeological standards of today, they did follow internally consistent (if idiosyncratic) methods which provide a coherent baseline to work with. Of course, the data are still deeply imperfect, and we should also have no illusions that re-examining them can ever achieve an adequately subtle analysis of this site. In addition, I also stress that it is often difficult to compare and interpret the results of the different fieldwork campaigns undertaken at Begram, although some considerable progress can be made towards assembling a clearer vision of life at this ancient city. Ultimately, the data produced by the DAFA excavations give a very significant – and yet still very incomplete – view into the archaeology of Begram.

2.2. Charles Masson's surveys and collections (1833–1838)

The exploration undertaken by Charles Masson (alias of James Lewis, 1800–1853) at Begram occurred within a period of burgeoning European antiquarian research in India and Afghanistan, which was facilitated especially by British colonial and imperial expansion in South Asia. In the first half of the 19th century, direct rule of the British East India Company (based in Bengal) increasingly encroached into the northwest of India, capturing Delhi and the Doab by 1803, and annexing the Punjab in 1849 (until then held by the Sikh Empire). This culminated in the transfer of Company rule to the British Crown in 1858, forming the British Raj. British expansion into the northwest of the Subcontinent was intertwined with ambitions in Afghanistan and the Central Asian Khanates. The political and diplomatic struggle between the British and Russian Empires over influence in these regions is now often referred to as the 'Great Game.'¹³⁹ British diplomatic and military interference in Afghanistan ultimately exploded in two Anglo-Afghan wars during that century (1838–1842; 1878–1880). The first culminated in a famously disastrous British defeat, but the second in a British victory, establishing limitations on Afghan relations with foreign nations until 1919. Then, a third Anglo-Afghan war resulted in full Afghan independence, including the reassumption of sovereignty over foreign affairs.

Although British imperialism put Masson in India, he was not quite the project's greatest advocate. It is especially thanks to Errington's work on the Masson Project that Masson's career, research, collections in Afghanistan, and the historical context in which they

¹³⁹ See, for example, Hopkirk 1990.

took place are now well researched¹⁴⁰ – but his story is so wild that it bears a brief reiteration. After five years as a soldier for the British East India Company, James Lewis deserted the regiment at Agra in 1827 and took on the pseudonym of Charles Masson. Until 1832, he travelled widely in modern Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq and gained the reputation of a bonafide antiquarian and explorer. All the while, he pretended to be an American, befriended British officers, and secured fiscal support for his exploration in Afghanistan from the British Envoy in Persia. Partway into his research in Afghanistan, he was found out as a deserter and, in exchange for a pardon, was forced into an appointment as a spy for the British. Although much has been asserted about Masson's espionage, Errington has stressed that this role was a reluctant one – Masson's passion was collecting coins.¹⁴¹ The tension among British officials caused by the disjuncture between Masson's passion and his official duties is nicely illustrated in a dispatch to the Bombay Political Department in 1838 from authorities in London who were interested in his collections. Here, the writers advocated for Masson to be provided with more funds for acquisitions to be sent back to London, while a handwritten note added to the document reads: "Better stop – we are not collectors nor antiquarians. Bactrian-Kufic and other coins may no doubt assist in throwing a light on history; but this is out of our way."¹⁴²

Besides Masson, there was a range of antiquarians either exploring or studying material from India's northwestern frontiers (especially the Punjab) in the second quarter of the 19th century. For men on the ground, key pursuits included coin collecting and looking for cities founded by Alexander the Great (then identifying them in 'topes,' actually the remains of stupas).¹⁴³ These activities, however, facilitated the rapid development of historical knowledge along multiple axes, as well as kicking off what might be called the beginning of 'Kushan archaeology'¹⁴⁴ in the region with the excavation of the monumental stupa at Manikyala in 1830. The incipient study and excavation of stupas led to an increasing recognition of their Buddhist significance, the importance of the religion in the history of the region, and the rediscovery of the corpus of sculpture which had adorned Buddhist sacred sites conventionally called Gandhāran art. The development of 'Oriental' numismatics and the study of coins collected by the likes of Masson not only helped to slowly piece the political history of the region together – including providing the core evidence for the rediscovery of the Kushan

¹⁴⁰ See particularly Errington 2017a, 3–27; 2021, 3–19.

¹⁴¹ On Masson's unmasking and the deal, Errington 2017a, 11–13. On his espionage, Errington 2021, 4–5.

¹⁴² E/4/1062 §15, Errington 2017b, 72.

¹⁴³ On early antiquarian activity in Gandhāra, Errington 2007.

¹⁴⁴ As observed by Pons 2016.

dynasty – but also facilitated the decipherment of the Brahmi and Kharoṣṭhī scripts by means of the bilingual (Greek/Brahmi and Greek/Kharoṣṭhī) legends on Indo-Greek coins.¹⁴⁵

Even within a period of such vigorous exploration and research, Masson's finds in eastern Afghanistan between 1832–1838 were exceptional. In these years, he excavated more than fifty stupas dispersed between Kabul and Jalalabad, making illustrations and notes on archaeological features of the landscape, many of which are now no longer preserved. But most importantly for the present purposes, Masson rediscovered the site of Begram for Europeans. In 1833, he left Kabul for the Koh Daman ('mountain's foot,' modern Parwan province, see also §3.2 below) with a strong suspicion that an Alexandria reportedly founded at the foot of the mountains of the Caucasus¹⁴⁶ (hence the conventional 'Alexandria of the Caucasus') should be located there.¹⁴⁷ Between 1833 and 1838, Masson and his agents collected coins and small finds from the dasht of Begram, a slightly elevated area delineated as the space between the Ghorband river in the north and the Koh Daman river to the south, and between Qal'a-i Buland village¹⁴⁸ and the modern Bagram Air Base to the west, to the lands of Julgha in the east (Pl. 6).¹⁴⁹ Prior to Masson's arrival, pastoralists passing through the plain of Begram during their seasonal migrations were the primary agents engaged in picking up coins and small copper artefacts at the plain of Begram. From here, they sold their finds to itinerant coppersmiths, then ultimately melted down by coppersmiths in Charikar or Kabul, or at the mint of the latter city.¹⁵⁰

Intervening in this traditional collecting practice, Masson and his agents reportedly accumulated a grand total of 79,739 copper coins along with other small artefacts, the sum of which were forwarded to the East India Company for their financial support.¹⁵¹ The small finds consisted of large numbers of engraved seals (some with inscriptions, some with figures of humans and animals, especially birds), amulets, rings, and brass and copper articles.¹⁵² Masson's exploration on the dasht of Begram and its surrounds in the Kohistan are reported in three articles published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*,¹⁵³ and summarised in the third volume of his *Narrative of various journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan and the*

¹⁴⁵ On these discoveries and processes, see generally Errington and Curtis 2007, 1–26; Cribb 2007; Errington 2007.

¹⁴⁶ Strabo 15.2.10; Arr. *Anab.* 3.28.4; 4.22.4–5; Plin. *HN* 6.21; Diod. Sic. 17.83.1; Curt. 7.3.23.

¹⁴⁷ Masson 1834, 153; 1842, 140.

¹⁴⁸ See Ball 2019a, No. 838.

¹⁴⁹ Masson 1842; Errington 2021, 6–7.

¹⁵⁰ Masson 1834, 154.

¹⁵¹ Masson 1842, 148–149.

¹⁵² Masson 1842, 150.

¹⁵³ Masson 1834; 1836a; 1836b.

Panjab.¹⁵⁴ During his time at Begram, Masson also noted the remains of structures a yard beneath the surface of the ground, and remarked upon the monumental fortifications of the urban site.¹⁵⁵ More broadly, he made many observations about the landscape and its archaeological features, including a number of sites which have remained inadequately explored or are no longer preserved.¹⁵⁶

After a long, murky, and complicated collection history, now less than ca. 10,000 items (primarily coins) from Masson's campaigns at Begram can be identified in the collections of the British Museum.¹⁵⁷ This substantial part of his collection provides a critical source of data for understanding the history of occupation at Begram. Masson himself was already aware of the utility of such a collection. Methodologically pioneering, he deliberately accumulated "every type and variety of coin," not just to amass a collection, but for the "application of them to useful purposes," considering "with satisfaction the prospect of obtaining a collection from a known spot."¹⁵⁸ Reflecting on the coins he collected from Begram, he noted that these suggested long, unbroken settlement at the site, being in "regular succession from Alexander to the Máhomedan era."¹⁵⁹ i.e. the Islamic period. This picture has since been refined in great detail by Cribb's study of the monetary history of Begram on the basis of this collection,¹⁶⁰ which I will discuss further in Chapter 3. Although these data were collected from a wider occupied space than the fortified urban site of Begram proper, they give significant insight into the history of occupation of this area through the proxy of the use of money, in addition to providing a critical point of comparison to the limited numismatic data obtained from the DAFA excavations.

Another legacy of Masson's research is his identification of Begram as the location of Alexandria in the Caucasus. Although initially rejected by earlier members of the DAFA (see below), his view has become widely accepted in scholarship,¹⁶¹ although it is still lacking definitive proof. More generally, modern scholars have highlighted Masson's pioneering

¹⁵⁴ See chiefly Masson 1842, 140–170.

¹⁵⁵ Masson 1836a, 3.

¹⁵⁶ See e.g., Qala-i Boland in Masson 1842, 155; Ball 2019a, No. 838; Kuratas in Masson 1842, 166–167; Ball 2019a, No. 647; a stupa on the eastern extremity of Koh-i Pahlavan ("Koh Bacha" in Masson's terminology) in Masson 1842, 165; Fussman 2008, 157–160; Errington 2017a, 84.

¹⁵⁷ See Errington 2021, 11–17.

¹⁵⁸ Masson 1834, 154.

¹⁵⁹ Masson 1842, 160.

¹⁶⁰ Cribb 2021.

¹⁶¹ Following Bernard 1982.

methodologies, insightful observations, and his comprehensive approach to the archaeological landscape of Begram and its hinterland – something unparalleled by its later explorers.¹⁶²

2.3. Early reconnaissance under the DAFA (1923–1925)

After Masson's explorations on the dasht of Begram, archaeological research at the site would only resume over eighty years later. This is because British limitations on Afghanistan's control over its own foreign affairs were lifted after the third Anglo-Afghan war in 1919, creating space for the Afghan government to negotiate new relations with a range of nations. This process led to the establishment of the DAFA in 1922. Before outlining the DAFA's early activities at Begram and its hinterland, some notes on the specific historical context of these programmes are necessary. For this, I draw particularly on Olivier-Utard's extensive historical study examining the formation and development of the DAFA from political, administrative, and scientific angles.¹⁶³

After the conclusion of the third Anglo-Afghan war, Amanullah Khan (then Emir) initiated a new foreign policy and set of social reforms with the aim of modernising the nation. This involved signing treaties of friendship with neighbouring countries, as well as reaching out to Berlin, Brussels, Paris, and Rome in 1921 to negotiate the opening of legations. In this way, Khan could secure the assistance of European powers for (among other tasks) establishing administrative and economic infrastructure, and bolstering education through the creation of foreign schools.¹⁶⁴ In this policy framework, Khan reopened the country for archaeological investigation for archaeological investigation by the foreign scientific community. France was approached to fulfil these policy objectives for a range of political reasons. Ultimately, in exchange for the establishment of a French college (attractive from the Afghan side), the formation of a French archaeological mission was proposed. This mission was to have a monopoly on excavations like the one held by the *Délégation en Perse*, and was attractive from a French perspective as it related to the foreign policy objective of expanding French intellectual activity around the world.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² See e.g., Ball 1982, 19; Fussman 2008, 7; Errington 2021, 17–19.

¹⁶³ Olivier-Utard 1997. Note, however, that Olivier-Utard's treatment of the history of the DAFA between the years 1965–1982 has been critiqued in Grenet 1999.

¹⁶⁴ Olivier-Utard 1997, 20.

¹⁶⁵ Olivier-Utard 1997, 21–25.

Alfred Foucher (1865–1952)¹⁶⁶ was recruited by the ministère des Affaires étrangères to establish this archaeological mission in Afghanistan and would become the first director of the DAFA. Foucher was an Indologist and specialist in the art and archaeology of Buddhism. Although not originally an archaeologist by training, by the time of his appointment he had also gained fieldwork and managerial experience (for example, by directing l'École française d'Extrême-Orient between 1905–1907).¹⁶⁷ Of Foucher's scholarly output, one can highlight his pioneering study *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra*¹⁶⁸ which draws on a range of textual and material evidence to interpret the visual content of Gandhāran art (especially in respect to the identification and analysis of its classical sources of influence), and still remains an important reference work today.

Foucher reached Kabul in 1922. Having set up the foundation of the promised French school (and acting more as a diplomat than an archaeologist, as a French Legation was not yet established), he then negotiated the establishment of the French archaeological mission.¹⁶⁹ The convention establishing the DAFA was to be valid for 30 years, whereupon it could be renewed by mutual agreement. With thirteen articles, the convention was based on the Franco-Persian model which (as noted above) stipulated a monopoly on archaeological excavation in the country. A comparison of the two conventions is provided by Olivier-Utard.¹⁷⁰ Articles in the convention of particular significance for excavations in the following three decades were those pertaining to the division of finds (*partage*) produced by excavations: Article 6 stipulated that all gold, silver, and jewellery was to be retained by the government of Afghanistan, while Article 7 specified that half of objects of non-precious metal or stone were to be allocated to the French Government, except in the case of unique objects. While Foucher found restrictions in the convention on international collaboration unfavourable, he was satisfied with the sharing agreement, particularly with respect to Gandhāran sculpture.¹⁷¹

At the time, such agreements were seen to be mutually beneficial, with liberal find sharing arrangements stimulating both the presence of foreign archaeologists in a given country and the volume of acquisitions for museums of both national and foreign governments – something that was seen as the 'point' of archaeology at the time.¹⁷² Globally, the practice of *partage* gradually fell out of use in the second half of the 20th century in favour of arrangements

¹⁶⁶ For Foucher's life and works, see generally Merlin 1954; Fenet 2010.

¹⁶⁷ Bernard 2002, 1291.

¹⁶⁸ Foucher 1905.

¹⁶⁹ Olivier-Utard 1997, 30–35.

¹⁷⁰ Olivier-Utard 1997, 37–39.

¹⁷¹ Olivier-Utard 1997, 40–42.

¹⁷² See the discussion of a report written on the topic by Leonard Woolley in 1939 in Olivier-Utard 1997, 42–43.

in which national institutions retain control over their own heritage material. Nonetheless, I mention this because the Begram finds were divided between the MG and NMA according to the DAFA's partage agreement. In principle, a number of advantages could be cited for this arrangement. For example, from a scientific perspective, the presence of certain of the hoard objects in the MG has facilitated their archaeometric analysis (see e.g. §4.2.1 and §4.2.2 below). From a heritage perspective, the threats faced by the collection kept in the NMA are well known (see §1.1), and this partage has facilitated risk-sharing with respect to the preservation of heritage material. But neither points constitute an overwhelming argument for sharing agreements. The reality behind these is inequality in global resource distribution. Indeed, a profound disadvantage of this agreement with respect to the Begram hoard objects is that in several cases, elements from single objects, including ensembles of furniture (especially with respect to the ivories, see §4.13.1) were sometimes split between the MG and NMA, making a cohesive perspective on material with limited published documentation extremely difficult to attain. This task is also made more complex by the conditions in which the finds were divided (i.e. the outbreak of World War II), meaning that although RAB and NRAB list the museum to which each find was allocated, in many cases these are incorrect. I discuss this further below (§2.4.5).

With the convention signed, Foucher set out delineating regions to prospect for further archaeological investigation, landing on Kabul and its surrounds, Bamiyan and the northern valleys of the Hindu Kush, Ghazni, and the Indo-Afghan border to the east.¹⁷³ Foucher's initial travels to document sites and monuments of interest (as well as the ill-fated excavation campaigns at Balkh) were published later in the 1940s, officially as the first volume in *Mémoires de la DAFA*. This work, *La vieille route de l'Inde de Bactres à Taxila*, presents the results of Foucher's fieldwork as framed by the geography, archaeology, and history of this 'old road,' and thus culturally situates ancient Afghanistan.¹⁷⁴ It should be stressed here that despite his work on 'Greco-Buddhist art,' Foucher was hardly driven by an all-consuming desire to locate traces of lost Graeco-Bactrian cities. On the contrary, he was interested in all periods of history, and – with respect to interpreting the historical landscape – he gave greater weight to the report of the 7th century CE Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang, preserved in *The Great Tang dynasty record of the Western Regions* than any Graeco-Roman source.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Olivier-Utard 1997, 57–58.

¹⁷⁴ Foucher 1942. See also Fenet 2010.

¹⁷⁵ T 2087, translated in Beal 1906. See e.g., Foucher 1942, 117.

Having visited Kabul, Bamiyan, Kunduz, and other valleys in the northern Hindu Kush, as well as Jalalabad, Foucher arrived to Kapisa (i.e. the Koh Daman and Kohistan) in April 1923. Here, he documented and remarked on features of the archaeological landscape, and identified Begram as the capital of the region of Kapisa visited by Xuanzang (Pl. 11).¹⁷⁶ He also suggested that Burj-i Abdullah had been the site of an older ‘royal city,’ and that the palace was then moved at a later date to the southern rectangular tepe on the edge of the plateau of the dasht of Begram, becoming the ‘new royal city.’¹⁷⁷ These designations, although made without excavation, became conventional in the work of Foucher’s successors, if given with prophylactic inverted commas.¹⁷⁸ Another long-term legacy of Foucher’s initial exploration was in his identification of the name of the ancient city; in identifying Begram with Kapisi, he disagreed with Masson’s view that the site was the location of Alexandria in the Caucasus. Joseph Hackin later followed suit, preferring Parwan (modern Jabal Saraj) as a possible site for the Alexandrian foundation.¹⁷⁹ As noted above, opinion in scholarship has since shifted, and it now tends to be widely accepted that Begram was probably the location of both ancient settlements, a point which I discuss further below (§3.2).

Foucher also remarked upon the remains of monasteries on the Koh-i Pahlavan, including one on the southeastern spur of this mountain which he identified as the monastery of the Chinese hostages described by Xuanzang.¹⁸⁰ He likewise noted the stone parasol of a stupa found on the Burj-i Abdullah, suggesting the presence of such a structure to the west of the city, and another fragment of schist sculpture in a village mosque which was reportedly found in the intervening space between the Burj-i Abdullah and the new royal city.¹⁸¹ Foucher also made remarks on a site enclosed by a quadrangular fortification wall called Kafir Qala that was located at the southeast corner of the dasht of Begram. Although very damaged by water erosion, Foucher observed that the fortification wall was 4.20 m thick (2.20 m in Ball) and composed at least in part with stone, with the total dimensions of 170 x 280 m enclosing an area of 4.76 ha. He suggested that this was probably a fortified village and noticed a monastery associated with the city 200 m to the north, including a mound representing the remains of a stupa that was about 30 m wide – perhaps the stupa of Rahula mentioned by Xuanzang.¹⁸² In

¹⁷⁶ See generally Foucher 1925, 255–275; 1942, 138–145.

¹⁷⁷ Foucher 1925, 270.

¹⁷⁸ See e.g. Hackin 1939a, 7; Ghirshman 1946, 1.

¹⁷⁹ See Foucher 1925, 269–274; Hackin 1939a, 4–5.

¹⁸⁰ Foucher 1942, 140–141.

¹⁸¹ Foucher 1942, 140.

¹⁸² Foucher 1942, 141; Ball 2019a, No. 491.

the *Gazetteer*, the site is broadly ascribed a Kushan-Hunnic dating of the 1st–7th centuries CE on architectural grounds.¹⁸³

Foucher realised the great potential for excavations at Begram and hoped to get further work in the region quickly underway, but was forced instead to attend to the beginning of excavations at Balkh, which was seen by the excavation commission in Paris as the prestige project of the new archaeological mission.¹⁸⁴ Accordingly, Foucher invited Gabriel Jouveau-Dubreuil, an archaeologist specialising in south India, for a short mission for the DAFA, tempting him with the possibility of beginning excavations at Begram.¹⁸⁵ Jouveau-Dubreuil undertook brief excavations at Paitava, a Buddhist monastery south of Begram along the road to Kabul, and envisaged a month of work at Begram, but the outbreak of the Khost rebellion (mounted in response to Amanullah Khan's modernising reforms) heightened dangers to foreigners, and the disappointed archaeologist returned to India before he could commence.¹⁸⁶

In the meantime, Joseph Hackin (1886–1941) was recruited for his first mission as a collaborator with the DAFA. Hackin was born in Luxembourg but grew up in France, later becoming a naturalised citizen. His career and eventual path to Begram is marked by a number of surprising twists and turns.¹⁸⁷ The son of a coachman but with the advantage of a good education, Hackin received a degree from the Institut commercial de Paris, then went on to study economic and social sciences at the École libre des sciences politiques. There, he began to cultivate an interest in the East, and became the secretary of Émile Guimet (a prominent industrialist and founder of the MG), ultimately writing his final thesis on a comparative history of religions from Iran to Japan. Hackin then went on to study Sanskrit and Tibetan at the École pratique des hautes études, graduating in 1912, and became employed as deputy curator at the MG in 1913. The next year, with the outbreak of World War I, he joined the French infantry, was deployed in France and then wounded, allowing him to finish and defend his doctoral thesis on figurative scenes of the life of the Buddha in Tibetan paintings in 1916. Afterwards, Hackin returned to the fight in Verdun and the Balkans before being demobilised in 1919 and was awarded the Legion of Honour and Croix de Guerre. Appointed as curator at the MG in 1923, Hackin was approached to collaborate with the DAFA, joining the excavation at Balkh in 1924 and briefly visiting Bamiyan. He concluded his first mission with excavations at

¹⁸³ Ball 2019a, No. 491.

¹⁸⁴ Bernard 2002, 1291–1300.

¹⁸⁵ Fenet 2010, No. 168.

¹⁸⁶ See an excerpt of Jouveau-Dubreuil's report in Cambon 2006, 86, as well as Fenet 2010, No. 198; de Saxcé 2011, 296–301.

¹⁸⁷ For the following, see conveniently Cambon et al. 2018, 12–34. For further treatments of the lives of Joseph and Ria Hackin, see Cambon 1986; Musée d'Histoire et d'Art Luxembourg 1987; Olivier-Utard 1997, 107–129.

Paitava. Joseph Hackin's first stay in Afghanistan left a great impression on him: seeking distance from the changing world in Europe, he found peace, solitude, and meaning in this vastly different country.¹⁸⁸

Shortly after, Jules Barthoux (the deputy of Foucher from 1924) returned to Paitava in 1925 and conducted some excavations at the monastery of Karratcha, just near to Begram on the west side of the Koh-i Pahlavan. He also undertook some soundings and executed a topographic plan of the site of Begram, including some extramural microreliefs southwest of the new royal city that are otherwise not well documented (Pl. 12).¹⁸⁹ Barthoux's report (like Jouveau-Dubreuil's) was not published, but a more recent study by Cambon presents surviving documentation from this mission pertaining to the three sites and sculptural finds from the two monasteries.¹⁹⁰ Although these data present difficulties, the monastery of Karratcha was clearly connected with the settlement of Begram, as it looked directly over it, and was probably founded between the mid 1st and mid 3rd centuries CE, but was occupied for some centuries after this before it was deliberately destroyed, probably after the mid 7th century.¹⁹¹ The monastery of the more distant Paitava may have been founded before the mid 1st century CE, and was perhaps still active in the 7th century.¹⁹² Further work was envisaged at Begram in 1926, but did not eventuate.¹⁹³

2.4. The Hackin excavations (1936–1940)

2.4.1. Prelude

In 1928, Joseph Hackin married Marie "Ria" Parmentier (1905–1941), a woman of Luxembourgish origin and 19 years his junior. Fewer details are available about Ria Hackin's life, but she moved to Paris in the mid 1920s, and apparently audited classes at the École du Louvre. Although often believed that Ria had met Joseph there as his student (he was appointed as a professor at the École du Louvre only in 1933), their acquaintance was more likely instigated by their shared roots.¹⁹⁴ Apparently a reserved and discrete woman, Ria Hackin's

¹⁸⁸ Cambon et al. 2018, 31.

¹⁸⁹ Cambon 1996, Fig. 15.

¹⁹⁰ Cambon 1996.

¹⁹¹ Fussman 2008, 160–161.

¹⁹² Fussman 2008, 142–149.

¹⁹³ Fenet 2010, No. 309.

¹⁹⁴ Cambon et al. 2018, 16, 38.

contemporaries lauded her humanity and the care with which she approached her work and life.¹⁹⁵ Ria Hackin's training was probably acquired in the field as she accompanied Joseph on most of his missions across Asia,¹⁹⁶ and she more than rose to the task of collaborator. Her most significant academic activities include her direction of part of the excavations at Begram, her coordination of photography and filming there, and her ethnographic research on folklore in Afghanistan in the 1930s in collaboration with Ahmad Ali Kohzad (Ahmad 'Ali Kuhzad) (1907–1983),¹⁹⁷ a rising intellectual star at the time. Kohzad had graduated from the French school in Kabul at the end of the 1920s, then taking on a number of government and translation jobs, among other work for the Kabul Literary Society and with the DAFA. Kohzad was later seconded as representative of the Afghan government at the Hackin excavations at Begram in 1937 and 1939. He would go on to write pioneering works on the pre-Islamic history of Afghanistan (informed by his close familiarity with the work of the DAFA and international scholarship), as well as serve as head of the NMA. Eventually, Kohzad would become the most celebrated and influential historian in modern Afghanistan.¹⁹⁸

Joseph and Ria Hackin returned to Afghanistan in 1929, accompanied by the new DAFA architect Jean Carl (1900–1941),¹⁹⁹ who would become their close friend and collaborator. In the subsequent years, the three worked and travelled widely together. They arrived in Kabul in the midst of conflict – Amanullah Khan having been overthrown the previous year – and Joseph Hackin had to defend the French Legation, a deed which elevated him to officer of the Legion of Honour.²⁰⁰ In 1930, the three documented the now-famous caves of Bamiyan,²⁰¹ and then went on to Tokyo, where Joseph Hackin was appointed as director of the Maison franco-japonaise.²⁰² Shortly thereafter, Ria Hackin returned to France, while Joseph Hackin and Carl departed for Afghanistan again to participate in the 'Pamir' group of the Croisière jaune (1931–1932), being the team of the trans-Asia interdisciplinary expedition sponsored by Citroën which sought to reach Chinese Turkestan (modern Xinjiang) from the west.²⁰³ The Hackins and Carl then went back to Tokyo to conclude Joseph's tenure at the

¹⁹⁵ Hamelin 1952, 25, n. 2; Cambon et al. 2018, 38.

¹⁹⁶ Cambon et al. 2018, 17.

¹⁹⁷ For Ria Hackin's academic output, Hackin and Kohzad 1953; Cambon et al. 2018, 70–74.

¹⁹⁸ Recent English-language treatments of Kohzad's life, output, and legacy include Green 2017, 2018, as well as the special issue of the *Afghanistan Quarterly Journal* (Issue 3 and 4, Nos. 30 and 31, 2017–2018) presenting articles on an international seminar held on Kohzad. For Afghan national historiography in the 20th century, see Nawid 2017.

¹⁹⁹ For a short notice about Carl, a still elusive figure, Cambon et al. 2018, 122–123.

²⁰⁰ Cambon et al. 2018, 42.

²⁰¹ Hackin 1933.

²⁰² Cambon et al. 2018, 50.

²⁰³ See Cambon et al. 2018, 54–56.

Maison franco-japonaise before travelling again to Afghanistan, where Joseph stepped into the role of director of the DAFA in 1934.

Joseph Hackin's early directorship was marked by a diversity of short campaigns, the direction of which were sometimes delegated to other team members in his absence (often Carl).²⁰⁴ In 1933, further work was undertaken at Bamiyan, followed by subsequent campaigns at sites in the vicinity of Kabul: the monastery of Tepe Maranjan (1933), the Shahi period Hindu cult site at Khair Khana (1934),²⁰⁵ Saka fort (1935), and Guldara monastery (1935). In 1933, Carl had also gone to Nijrab – a town and set of valleys east of Begram in the modern Kapisa province – with the intention of beginning excavations. He ended up photographing the excavated remains of a set of Buddhist monasteries already opened by Gholam Moyeddine Khan (a pioneering Afghan archaeologist and curator of the NMA), and slightly extending this work. The brief expedition was marked by conflict between Carl and Afghan authorities, and concluded with a ban on future excavations in the area.²⁰⁶ Ultimately, Tarzi's re-examination of work in this area observed that three monasteries could be documented, as well as a reliquary and some sculptural remains (including the head of a fasting Buddha), and what may be a pre-Islamic period necropolis with vaulted burials made of baked brick.²⁰⁷

2.4.2. Site I (1936–1937)

Permission to excavate at Begram was obtained from the Afghan Ministry of Public Instruction in 1936. In April of that year, Jean Carl and Jacques Meunié (1898–1967), the latter a new DAFA architect, were delegated to open Site I ('Chantier I,' better understood as 'trench,' but more literally 'site'), also known as the 'bazar,' in the centre of the new royal city (Pls. 13, 22). Here, until June, Carl and Meunié followed the western side of a north-south depression in the centre of this area, marking the line of a main street which had led to the city's south entrance. The main report for work in this area was published only after Carl's death in 1959.²⁰⁸

This area featured blocks of houses set around the city's central intersection. Finds from this area were described as the debris of domestic life,²⁰⁹ and included articles of bodily

²⁰⁴ For this period, see a number of reports published later in Hackin et al. 1959.

²⁰⁵ Hackin 1936.

²⁰⁶ See Hackin et al. 1959, Figs. 43–47 (published without accompanying text) and Tarzi 1999, 83–89; Ball 2019a, No. 773.

²⁰⁷ Tarzi 1999, 83–89.

²⁰⁸ The results are briefly summarized in Hackin 1939a, 7. The report is Carl 1959a.

²⁰⁹ Carl 1959a, 85.

adornment and for personal grooming, some copper and iron implements, arrow and lance heads, a copper alloy jug (Pl. 22.3), copper coins, and pottery – especially specimens impressed with distinct medallion-shaped stamps (Pl. 22.5). Two distinct levels of occupation were noticed, and on the basis of the coins they were able to identify, the excavators associated the first (earlier) level with Hermaeus, Soter Megas, and Wima Kadphises, and the second level with Kanishka I, Huvishka I, and Vasudeva I.²¹⁰

1936 marked a busy period for the DAFA, and Begram had not yet captured the chief attention of Joseph Hackin's team. In the same year, the Hackins were involved in an excavation at a Buddhist monastery in the vicinity of Kunduz, reconnaissance at the Buddhist monastery of Fondukistan near the Ghorband valley (assisted by Carl and Meunié), and a broader programme of investigation in Afghan Sistan, involving Carl, Meunié, and Roman Ghirshman (1895–1979) – then head of Mission archéologique de Perse, and later director of the DAFA and excavator of Begram (see §2.5 below).²¹¹

In 1937, work was resumed at Site I on the 16th of April, focusing on the east side of the street and south of the 'Ruelle mediane.' Ten days later, Meunié was sent to go start excavations at the nearby site of Shotorak. This is a monastery on the north side of the Koh-i Pahlavan, proposed by Meunié to have been that of the Chinese hostages mentioned by Xuanzang (*contra* Foucher), and is replete with stone sculpture and has a history of occupation that is still not precisely clear today.²¹² When the excavated structures at Site I were deemed sufficiently cleared, Carl left on the 14th of May to begin work at Fondukistan with Mohammad Aziz Khan, uncovering a small complex of the 7th or 8th century CE with remains of now famous painted clay sculptures.²¹³ While one find from 1937 at Begram's Site I, an ivory comb noted for its comparability to the Begram ivories, was presented already in RAB (Pl. 22.4),²¹⁴ the report for this season was again published only after Carl's death and consists of two laconic paragraphs.²¹⁵ These explain that 148 objects were found in the rooms 31–59, 50–66, 70, and 73, including terracotta lamps and vessels, pottery with stamped medallion decoration, metal utensils, arrowheads, copper coins (of the identified issues, 6 of Vasudeva, 2 of Soter Megas), weights, beads, a ring, a bone bracelet, and the aforementioned ivory comb.

²¹⁰ Carl 1959a, 85.

²¹¹ For the latter mission, see Hackin 1959a; Ghirshman 1959.

²¹² Published in Meunié 1942 and discussed in Fussman 2008, 162–165.

²¹³ Hackin 1959b. For a recent re-examination, Novotny 2007.

²¹⁴ Hackin 1939a, 7, Fig. 237.

²¹⁵ Carl 1959a, 102.

Behind these brief presentations of results from Site I lies a plethora of shortcomings in the documentation, making the data they produced difficult to interpret. First, it should be reiterated that these reports were published long after excavations were concluded (and hence could not be consulted by Ghirshman during his later research), and work at this area of the site seems to have little influence on developing understanding of the history of occupation at Begram during the Hackin excavations. The report for work at Site I in 1936 was prefaced by a note that the excavation diary and report of Carl could not be located.²¹⁶ Offered instead are a simplified plan of the excavation area drawn by Hamelin after Carl's preliminary plans, and a partially-illustrated catalogue of 171 finds, divided by material, and with no indication of findspots, followed by a brief catalogue of the coins found.

Evidently the dates for the two occupation layers noticed by the excavators are also problematic. Based on coin finds (and with Carl's catalogue of the coins also being lost) a hefty 91 reported coins (of a total of 142) were deemed to be illegible.²¹⁷ In his later study of the coins allocated to the MG from the Hackin excavations, Bopearachchi also expressed difficulty in accepting this dating of these two phases²¹⁸ and identified a number of late or imitation issues of Vasudeva and his successors from this area.²¹⁹ Significantly, Kuwayama has observed that the specific kind of pottery stamped with medallions documented at Site I is the same as that found in Ghirshman's phase Begram III (see below, §2.5), which he has argued should be dated from the middle of the 6th to the middle of the 8th century CE.²²⁰ And yet, although this distinctive type of pottery was documented, we are missing a big part of the picture: both the description of the pottery in the find catalogue (which does not include information about their fabric) and the published photographs²²¹ indicate that only relatively complete vessels and sherds featuring decorative elements were documented.

Finally, there are some oddities in these reports. For example, one figure depicts 10 flat, wide, and paddle-shaped arrowheads from the NMA, and is not mentioned in the text.²²² It appear to refer to part of 24 iron objects found in association with a later burial made into the area of room 10, as revealed by excavations in 1937, the inventory of which included 15 such arrowheads. These were suggested to have been 'tools' in RAB but were schematically

²¹⁶ Carl 1959a, 85.

²¹⁷ Carl 1959a, 101–102.

²¹⁸ Bopearachchi 2001, 413.

²¹⁹ Bopearachchi 2001, Nos. 65–69, 89–95.

²²⁰ Kuwayama 1974, 76–77; 1991, 117–118; 2010, 291.

²²¹ Carl 1959a, Nos. 1–90, Figs. 235–240.

²²² Carl 1959a, Fig. 233.

illustrated alongside the entry in F1937, which facilitates their identification (for all following references to archival material, refer to abbreviations in the front matter of this dissertation).²²³

The situation is not all bad. A list of finds for work at Site I in 1937 is actually preserved in the beginning of the document F1937. This part of the document achieves three things: first, it fleshes out the limited published report for work in 1937 (although interpretative difficulties remain); second, it corresponds with the findspot indications for the coins published by Bopearachchi allocated to the MG from this area (which had been kept in their original find envelopes); third, it reflects the format of documentation seen later at Site II during work in 1937, 1939, and 1940, suggesting that a similar methodology of excavation and documentation was practiced across these campaigns.

Although the methodology of the Hackin-era excavations at Begram was never explicitly described, its logic can be read to some degree from the find catalogues for these seasons. As a general rule, these catalogues include the following data: the inventory number of the find (or in some cases a group of finds), the room number in which the object was found (sometimes with a further note like ‘east wall’), the date the find was registered, a description, the depth at which the object was found below a fixed ground point rounded to the nearest 10 cm increment, and (at least in the case of RAB and NRAB) an indication as to which collection the object was allocated to, Paris or Kabul. In a broader methodological sense, the bulk of the excavation labour was undertaken by local workers, it appears that rooms tended to be delineated and cleared, one by one, at a relatively fast pace (by modern standards), and only potsherds with remarkable decorative features tended to be recorded.

Clearly, such an approach presents difficulties for achieving anything but a very broad overview of occupation at a site in macrophases – and then, without systematically recorded and studied pottery, there is even less hope for dating with precision. Nonetheless, it is still a shame that Carl’s notes for this excavation area are lost because the surviving documents he produced reflect both his skill as an architect and draftsman, as well as his considerable attention to detail.²²⁴ Indeed, documents in the archives of the MG show that Carl was also surveying the surroundings of Begram with a Sanguet Model No. 1 Tachymeter from 1936 to 1937. This is clear from notes in a recording book (TRB), the pages C.C. 109 and C.C. 110 which include diagrams and notes for calculating measurements from this device, and sketches throughout his notebooks of reliefs and features seen from above. More specifically, C.C. 119

²²³ See RAB 254 [108].

²²⁴ See, for example, *Carl Carnets*, 43810 S.P., MG.

shows a schematic representation of the Koh-i Pahlavan with points marking Shotorak (161, “roche du monastère”) and Karratcha (158, “F. Barthoux”). It is a loss that Carl’s survey work was never published: Fussman has more recently noted that there is no precise count or map of ruins on the Koh-i Pahlavan, and also the exact location of Karratcha on its west side of the mountain is not known,²²⁵ although he has been able to reconstruct their positions to some degree with the aid of recent satellite imagery.

This all being said, perhaps at least the find depth measurements at Begram were also taken with the aid of this tachymeter. These measurements give the impression of precise and consistent documentation and an overall relatively coherent dataset. Of course, using these data to create meaningful narratives about life across Site I still remains difficult. These depth data cannot be translated directly into stratigraphic data, occupation periods, or even floor levels across broad areas. On the other hand, when clusters of several objects seem to emerge around certain horizons in single rooms (such as in the hoard rooms), they may be interpreted as most likely indicating the presence of a floor. In Chapter 3, I will return to the question of what can be said about life at Site I on the basis of the data described above.

2.4.3. Site II (1937)

Shortly after work at Site I commenced in 1937, a new site was opened on the 17th of April, located around 200 m to the west (Pls. 14, 16, 23–24). This was named Site II or Site R, after Ria Hackin, who led excavations there. This excavation area was dominated by the remains of a large broadly rectangular edifice which was superimposed by a later ‘qala,’ i.e. a rectangular structure with four circular bastions. A brief account of the beginning of the excavations is given in RAB.²²⁶ Work began near to the south fortification wall, moving progressively north. The walls of the main Site II structure were described as being composed in their foundations and first courses by large irregular stones interspersed with smaller ones (Pl. 23.1), completed with rammed earth (pakhsa), and was then covered with a lime-washed earthen plaster which bore the traces of remnants of red and green pigments in places.²²⁷ The first rooms cleared (rooms 1–9) revealed few finds, including some copper coins and pottery, but corridor 7 was observed to terminate in a wall of mudbricks. This blocked off a spacious room lying on the other side, room 10 (8.4 m x 6.0 m). Clarifying its limits, they proceeded to

²²⁵ Fussman 2008, 157, 160–161.

²²⁶ Hackin 1939a, 7–9.

²²⁷ Hackin 1939a, 9.

begin clearing the room from its northwestern corner and north wall, and came across the first of the hoard objects.

A later account injects a little more colour into this part of the story. Informed by the memory of Ahmad Ali Kohzad and reported by Pierre Hamelin (1890–1977) of the MG in one of his later studies of the Begram glass, we are told that during the clearing of room 10, a worker noticed a pocket of crystalline powder in the earth and exclaimed “bora!” (بوره, a type of sugar), alerting the others to what was revealed to be a cold-painted glass cup (RAB 155 [6], see §4.2.1.1).²²⁸

Ultimately, hundreds of finds would be reported from this room as the archaeologists worked their way through it until July. The main hoard objects in this room included numerous glass vessels (some found in fragmentary conditions, others in a relatively intact state in bag or basket-shaped deposits, see Pl. 24), alabaster vessels, worked ostrich eggs serving as vessels, copper alloy basins, anthropomorphic balsamaria, and carved ivory and bone furniture elements, largely having represented a number of footstools and furniture legs. Two plain pottery lamps and eight copper coins were also found in this room, the latest identified in the report being attributed to Kanishka I at a depth of 2.60 m (RAB 275 [129]). With the publication of these finds, Joseph Hackin dated the glass and bronzes across the 1st to 4th centuries CE, and the ivories until the end of the 3rd to the beginning of the 4th centuries CE, describing a certain example as representative of the blossoming of imperial Gupta art.²²⁹ As mentioned above (§2.4.2), a later burial had also been dug into the south of room 10 at a depth of 1.60 m, i.e. about a metre above the majority of the hoard objects (see §3.5.3). To the left side of a fully articulated male skeleton,²³⁰ oriented north-south, were 24 iron objects, 15 of which were arrowheads – schematically illustrated in F1937 and perhaps depicted in the report for Site I at Begram – as well as a hook or clasp, a ring, and fragments of iron.

The hoard objects from room 10 were a sensation. Nationally, the finds attracted the attention of the Afghan government and the king himself (Mohammad Zahir Shah), and were presented in an exhibition at the NMA in August 1937.²³¹ To speak to this growing interest, Kohzad published articles on the excavation and finds in Persian in the 1315/1937 annual of the Literary Society of Kabul and in several issues of the journal *Kābul* in 1938, and also wrote

²²⁸ Hamelin 1953, 124, n. 2.

²²⁹ Hackin 1939a, 10, 22.

²³⁰ A photo thereof is published in Cambon 2006, 87.

²³¹ Hackin 1939a, I; Olivier-Utard 1997, 118.

a short monograph on the site.²³² To communicate their finds to a wider international audience, the Hackins returned to Europe. Joseph Hackin published a number of short, preliminary notes on the results from their first campaigns at Begram in French, German, Dutch, and English in 1938,²³³ and they also took the occasion to present their finds from other campaigns and Ria Hackin's films recorded thus far in Afghanistan.²³⁴ An exhibition of the finds from Begram allocated to Paris was also held from June to November at the MG, which especially foregrounded the ivories.²³⁵ In the same year, the preliminary report on finds from Site II in 1937 was sent off to press, published as RAB in the series *Mémoires de la DAFA* in 1939.²³⁶

As explained in the foreword of RAB, the main aim of this volume was to publish their finds as quickly as possible. The volume features an introductory essay about the site, excavations, and hoard objects found thus far, followed by a catalogue of finds from Site II in 1937 in the order they were documented. The information included for each catalogue entry usually includes a find number, a description, the dimensions of the object, the depth at which the object was found, the date it was recorded, and whether it was allocated to Paris or Kabul (although this information is not always correct). Occasionally, notes on excavated comparanda are included in the catalogue. The text of the volume concludes with an appendix containing two local folktales about Begram collected by Ria Hackin and Kohzad and translated into French, and follows with a volume of plates of photographs. The 238 black and white photographs presented are both high in quality and number, especially for the time. They are almost exclusively photographs of the hoard objects taken after processing and some degree of cleaning, but there are a few photographs of general views of the site and excavations (Pl. 23), some photographs of objects *in situ* (Pl. 24), and some photographs of a couple of items of comparanda for the hoard objects.

As I already noted above (§1.3), RAB as a document best speaks to an art-historical analysis of the hoard objects rather than a contextually oriented approach to this material as an archaeological assemblage. This is also partly a product of the methodology of the excavations, which we can understand by looking more closely at some of the photographs of work in process, as well as archival documents.

²³² See e.g. Kohzad 1938a; 1938b, and a discussion of Kohzad's early writings on Begram by Green (2018, 53–57), who examines how Kohzad explained this material (including the ivory panels carved with images of nude women) to an Afghan audience of the time.

²³³ See e.g. Hackin 1938a; 1938b and other contributions listed in Rosu 1969, Nos. 101–102, 160, 108–110.

²³⁴ For example in London and Luxembourg in 1938, and Paris in 1939; see The Royal Central Asian Society 1938; Cambon et al. 2018, 74.

²³⁵ The poster for the exhibition is presented in Cambon 2006, 85.

²³⁶ Hackin 1939a.

As for Site I, the bulk of excavation labour was performed by local workers, and rooms were generally demarcated and cleared one by one. What is clear from photographs taken in the field is that fill in rooms was removed not steadily in horizontal layers across the space of the entire room, but in progressive horizontal and vertical chunks. This approach is visible in virtually every photo of objects *in situ* (see examples on Pl. 24). As these photos also do not feature (or are accompanied by) any information about the orientation of the photographer, the position of north, or the scale involved, it is also often difficult to use these to reconstruct information about context, such as the arrangement of the hoard objects within room 10 – especially when vertical blocks of excavated fill can, at first glance, give the impression of returns of walls.²³⁷

Such a plan of the arrangement of the hoard objects was not published until 1953 by Hamelin within his studies of Begram's glass (Pl. 17).²³⁸ This plan is very schematic, populated with miniature illustrations of examples of the hoard objects, some descriptive captions (e.g. "plats de bronze," "plaquettes d'ivoire isolées") and documentation dates around certain of these groups. But even Hamelin's considerable talent for illustration²³⁹ could not compensate for a lack of primary data. Hamelin explained that his own plan is traced from Carl's (unpublished) sketch C.C. 140, simply adding in the dates of the finds and some details. Compared to Hamelin's elaborated plan, the original sketch C.C. 140 is, I must say, almost amusingly schematic. It depicts room 10 as a square (not to scale) and is sketched in a grid notebook in pencil. Carl's plan features yet simpler illustrations of some of the kinds of hoard objects, accompanied with laconic indications like as "gladiator," "buste," "albâtre." Hamelin did a fine job interpreting and clarifying Carl's plan in light of RAB's find catalogue and photography, but both documents should be understood as only giving a general impression of the distribution of the hoard finds rather than accurate and precise sources of data. This is somewhat frustrating because, as noted above (§2.4.2), Carl's other papers show that he was eminently capable of producing detailed and precise documentation. I can only conclude that the data we have to work with today from room 10 is both a product of the excavation method in use (which effectively obfuscated contextual relationships) as well as a lack of interest in documenting the distribution of the hoard objects – even if the depths at which they were found were still consistently documented.

²³⁷ See e.g. the confusing perspective created by this excavation methodology in the photograph of the southwest corner of room 10 in 1937, MGP 81311/62.

²³⁸ Hamelin 1953, Pl. II.

²³⁹ See his obituary in Parrot 1977.

Observations about the other excavated parts of the Site II structure also leave something to be desired. A plan drawn by Carl of the area excavated in 1937 was published in RAB (Pl. 14).²⁴⁰ However, it is not the most useful document at our disposal: it represents only a small part of a wider building and is a little difficult to understand, and is also superseded in its details by the plan drawn later by Marc Le Berre (a later DAFA architect) in 1947 and published in NRAB (Pl. 16), although the latter has mistakenly switched the numbering for rooms 11 and 12.²⁴¹ Nonetheless, Carl's plan expresses that the structure had been renovated. This is visible, for example, in at least two stages of building around rooms 1–4, as well as the northeast bastion and two northern rooms (11 and 12) of the later qala. Evidently, there was some difficulty in determining the location of doorways. Perhaps this indicated that some of the rooms were to be accessed from above (i.e. serving as basements), or was due in some part to the type of apparatus used to construct the walls of this structure, which (as described by Joseph Hackin, see above) were made of rubble style masonry in the lower courses and *pakhsa* in the upper, before being covered in a mud plaster. As the excavations in this season were undertaken at a fast pace, it is conceivable that the walls in all excavated areas were not cleaned and studied with requisite attention. Indeed, looking at Carl's plan, part of the west wall of room 10 had been cut through by excavators, and the interior structure of room T had not been correctly determined (room T on Carl's plan incorporates both this room and part of a corridor between this room and room 10).

However, one feature that is clearly marked on Carl's plan is 'B,' indicating the wall of "briques crues" where the western extremity of corridor 7 meets with the southeast corner of room 10. Although Joseph Hackin wrote that here workers came across a wall of mudbricks perpendicular to the corridor and that this concealed the entranceway to room 10,²⁴² I am not aware of any further written or photographic documentation providing additional information about these bricks and their dimensions. Instead, a number of photos do show this area after the bricks were removed. One depicts the area from above, looking west to east (Pl. 23.4). Another shows the same area, but viewed from the ground, and the vertical imprints of an earlier, now decayed structure – a wooden door jamb? – on the inside of the door in room 10 are still visible (Pl. 23.5). There are also two photos viewing this entranceway from the opposite direction, i.e. from the corridor looking west into the entrance of room 10, featuring the same workman standing inside the constricted part of the corridor where it meets room 10 (the first

²⁴⁰ Hackin 1954a, 11, Plan 1.

²⁴¹ Hackin 1954a, 9. On the mistake, Meunié 1959a, 103, n. 3

²⁴² Hackin 1939a, 9.

photo is Pl. 23.3).²⁴³ However, although some mudbricks appear to be discernible in the far distance of the first photo, this appears to rather represent the upper part of the west wall of room 10. It is also a pity that the apparatus of the walls throughout the Site II structure and this mudbrick blocked entrance were not studied and documented in more detail, because we have limited insight into the development of this building over time, and the blocked entrance is critical for conceptualizing the processes leading to the deposition of the hoard. As Le Berre's more detailed plan demarcates this and similar features as "murs écrans, portes murées" (Pl. 16) it is at least certain that they existed, although perhaps not all shared the same concealing function (discussed further below from §3.5.2).

With respect to the use of the Site II structure over time, finds outside of room 10 from this season – although limited in number – are only sparsely documented. Indeed, from RAB one would get the impression that the first find from Site II was the first listed in the catalogue: RAB 149 [1], an unidentified copper alloy coin from room 5 documented on the 13th of May, 1937. However, this is not the case, and the beginning of the published catalogue of RAB is somewhat arbitrary. The beginning of the draft excavation catalogue F1937 (discussed above, §2.4.2, as it includes also the finds for work at Site I from that year) also includes ten finds from Site II that are not included in RAB: a couple of copper coins, spindle whorls or loom weights, beads, a lamp, etc. Although not game-changing alone, they contribute to more insight into life at Site II, and I have transcribed these entries and organised them under their room number or excavation area in Appendix I. The history of occupation of Site II will be discussed further below (§3.5.2).

Archival documents also contribute to the corpus of surviving data about the hoard objects recovered in 1937. The document F1937 occasionally provides further information through slightly more detailed descriptions in the case of some objects which were then made more succinct for RAB, and intermittent schematic illustrations of objects and the marks on them in other cases (e.g. for inscribed elements on some of the glass, see §4.15, and artisan or location marks on ivory and bone elements, §4.13.1). As numerous hoard objects were not formally photographed or published with a visual record, and some of these marks were typeset instead of illustrated in RAB, these original illustrations are of some interest. The document MSRAB (the final manuscript for publication) is unsurprisingly very similar to RAB, but still constitutes a useful document to check against F1937 and RAB in the case of conflicting information.

²⁴³ See MGP 81311/7, included in Cambon 2006, 85, in addition to a closer view with MGP 81311/54.

Finally, perhaps one of the most pressing difficulties with the material presented in RAB is its treatment of the most dateable finds from room 10: coins. 20 copper alloy coins had been listed in the catalogue of RAB, of which 8 were reported from the hoard room. All were found at a depth of 2.60 m, barring one (RAB 238 [92] found at 1.50 m), all except for one remained unidentified (RAB 275 [129], an issue of Kanishka I mentioned above), and none were illustrated in RAB. This is clearly a great loss, not only because the date of the hoard has been subject to considerable scholarly debate (see §1.3 above), but also because these coins were almost certainly in association with the hoard objects, either as chance losses and/or deposited with the hoard objects themselves. Joseph Hackin explicitly noted that the coin of Kanishka had been found next to one of the leaded brass basins, and that two Kushan coins had been discovered inside the hollow support of another (RAB 289 [143]).²⁴⁴ It is not clear precisely which coins in the catalogue are meant here; they could be two of the three catalogued under RAB 274 [128] or the two catalogued under RAB 267 [121].

As discussed earlier in this dissertation (§1.3), the coin of Kanishka I found in room 10 has tended to be accepted by a number of scholars as the latest identified coin in association with the hoard objects on account of its find depth at 2.60 m, although it can provide only a *terminus post quem* for the deposition of the hoard. However, five of the previously unidentified coins discovered in this room that were allocated to the MG were studied and then published by Osmund Bopearachchi in 2001.²⁴⁵ Bopearachchi had listed six from this room in that article (Nos. 108, 111, 117–120), but I have shown in an earlier study on the basis of both Bopearachchi's notes and F1937 that one (No. 118; F1937 No. 12, see Appendix I) had actually been found in room 1 at Site II. All five of the coins found in room 10 had been found at a depth of 2.60 m, and while two were issues of Kujula Kadphises and Kanishka I, three were 'late Kushan' coins (Nos. 117, 119–120, see Pl. 25.1). Originally described by Bopearachchi as late emissions of Vasudeva I, they are rather posthumous imitations of types inaugurated by Vasudeva I, featuring the god Oesho with a bull on the reverse and an obverse of the standing king following a type initiated during the later king Kanishka II's lifetime. According to ongoing studies of this kind of coinage, the weights and designs of these coins conservatively indicate that they were minted around ca. 260 CE or afterwards.²⁴⁶ These coins are of critical significance for dating the deposition of the hoard, and I will return to this question later in the following chapter (§3.5.3).

²⁴⁴ Hackin 1939a, 10.

²⁴⁵ Bopearachchi 2001.

²⁴⁶ Morris 2017, 84–89.

2.4.4. The intramural qala, Site II, and the extramural qala (1938)

With Joseph and Ria Hackin away in Europe, and Carl returning to Afghanistan to undertake excavations at Shahr-i Banu and Zakar-tepe (vicinity of Khulm/Tashkurgan) in October and November,²⁴⁷ Meunié was sent to resume work on Site II on the 14th of April with Mohammad Aslam, who served as representative of the Afghan Ministry of Education. Here, until the 1st of June, they had two main tasks: to fully open the intramural qala with four circular bastions sitting on top of the main Site II structure, which had been partially revealed in the last season, and to prepare the area for the resumption of excavations with the full team in 1939 (with the expectation of more material in the vein of 1937 to be recovered in the vicinity of room 10).²⁴⁸ A short report for Meunié's work at Begram that year was only published later in the 1950s.²⁴⁹

Meunié's excavations revealed a more complete plan of the qala (see Pl. 15.1),²⁵⁰ of which its two circular bastions on the eastern side were larger than those of the west. The structure was divided into seven rooms organized around a central open court (room 14) with the stone bases of two columns supporting a covered section. The only entrance to this structure opened to the south from room 18. The structure itself was constructed in stone in its lower courses, with pakhsa laid above, and a number of rooms also featured earthen benches. The few finds recovered in this structure were two unidentified copper alloy ('bronze') coins, fragments of pottery with stamped decoration (Meunié's Fig. 246, the caption of which incorrectly reads room 19 instead of 18, here Pl. 25.2), a terracotta jug, and a gilded, painted plaster face of a Buddha, evidently in a secondary find context. The east wall of room 18 had been walled to create some kind of storage or concealment area (in Meunié's words "une sorte de double cache") although nothing was found in it. Meunié also remarked that the bastions – a similar type of which had been observed at Shotorak – may have only served to support the walls of the structure, and perhaps another floor or two, although no trace of stairs were found. Meunié also observed that the qala was later than the fortification wall of the new royal city, and indicated construction in the Kushan period (citing the use of semi-circular bastions at Taxila-Sirsukh). Finally, he wondered if the structure might have been built when the new royal city had been partially abandoned, or its fortifications had fallen out of use, but suggested that the building did not ultimately have a military function, but a habitation one, hence why it was

²⁴⁷ Carl 1959b. See respectively Ball 2019a, Nos. 1034 and 290.

²⁴⁸ Meunié 1959a, 103.

²⁴⁹ Meunié 1959a.

²⁵⁰ Meunié 1959a, 104.

still described as a ‘qala’ (qal’a قلعه, ‘fort,’ ‘castle,’ ‘fortified village,’ or compound with high walls).²⁵¹ It should be noted that Meunié’s plan reversed the original (correct) numbering of rooms 11 and 12 from Carl’s plan from 1937 (see above), instead following Le Berre’s later plan published in NRAB (Pl. 16).²⁵²

The archaeologists then also extended Site II into new areas on both the eastern and western sides of the qala (Pl. 15).²⁵³ To the east, four rooms (6 bis, 19, 20, 21) were found to be continuation of the main Site II structure, but only two finds are mentioned – a single unidentifiable copper alloy coin, and an earthenware pot in the doorway between rooms 19 and 20. To the west of the qala a series of rooms were also identified which on account of their depth and orientation, according to Meunié, were probably dated to the same period as the main parts of the Site II structure excavated in 1937. Meunié observed a number of interesting features and finds here, if offering less in the way of their interpretation. Room 27 had apparently been filled with stones to a meter high and then topped with mudbricks, and the connection between this room and room 26 to the north had been blocked with stone. Room 28 had the remains of a hearth with moulded earthen vertical ‘pilaster or jambs’ and traces of painted plaster (Pl. 25.3). Additionally, a pottery pipe (composed of separate cylindrical elements) was discovered *in situ* in room or corridor 33, apparently serving to evacuate waste from the north to beyond the south wall. An ‘Indo-Parthian’ square bronze coin of Spalahores (not illustrated, but rather Indo-Scythian, perhaps a joint issue, ca. 65–50 BCE)²⁵⁴ was found on the floor of the corridor 33. Continuing west, more finds were registered, primarily examples of domestic pottery of ‘exactly the same type’ as those reported in nearby Site I.²⁵⁵ Meunié observed that these finds suggested the presence of a regular habitation area like that seen at Site I, rather than a connection to the main structure of Site II. Two levels of occupation were detected in room 37, and all finds – a goblet, lamp, pots, a figurine of an elephant – were on the lower floor (at a depth of 3.10 m). Finally, some sondages were dug between the southwest bastion of the qala and the fortification wall (a distance of ca. 22 m), detecting a street paved with stones running along the inner side of the latter, terminating towards the west.

In the same year, Meunié also opened a feature around 400 m to the south of the new royal city’s fortification wall (Site III, Pl. 15.2).²⁵⁶ A quadrangular building with four circular

²⁵¹ For the above, see Meunié 1959a, 103–105. On Taxila-Sirsukh, its diaper masonry fortifications, and the limited excavations undertaken at the settlement, see Marshall 1951, 217–221, Pls. 42–43.

²⁵² Meunié 1959a, 103, n. 3.

²⁵³ For the following, see Meunié 1959a, 105.

²⁵⁴ For examples of joint issues of Vonones and Spalahores from Masson’s collection, Errington 2021, 146.

²⁵⁵ Meunié 1959a, Figs. 247–248, 250, 252.

²⁵⁶ For the following, Meunié 1959b.

bastions and roughly similar dimensions to the intramural qala was detected, but apparently speaking to a military function (i.e. as a fort) rather than a habitation one. Its foundations and first courses were constructed from stone masonry, and its upper walls were made from ca. 30 cm beds of pakhsa. Its internal arrangement featured very thick walls and four main rectangular rooms, with the preserved upper part three metres above the ground in room 2 indicating the use of a barrel vault (Pl. 25.4). Each of the four bastions appears to have been built around a small room with an access corridor, although these were only well preserved in one case – presumably these were to access loopholes, but the state of deterioration of the bastions precluded their identification. The fort was accessible from a small door on its eastern side. Because of its very thick walls, the size of the mound the fort represented prior to excavation, and the presence of remains of a staircase in the north of room 2, Meunié observed that this qala probably featured one or more floors in addition to the ground floor. Reported finds included an iron arrowhead, bronze bracelet, a bronze ladle, fragments of pottery lids and a lamp, and twenty copper alloy coins. Apparently only three were identified: an Indo-Greek issue of Eucratides, a coin of Wima Kadphises, and a coin of Vasudeva (found in a lower position than that of Eucratides) on the floor of room 1. Meunié took this to indicate that the building's construction could not predate the beginning of the 2nd century CE.

Meunié's work at Begram in 1938 offers some limited but still valuable insights into the history of the site's occupation. The primary difficulty here is interpreting the precise chronology of the structures he unearthed. Broadly, it is obvious that the intramural qala is later than the main Site II structure, and rooms 6 bis and 19–21 appear to unproblematically belong to the latter, but the status of the rooms excavated to the west of the qala is less clear – despite Meunié's opinion that they represented something like the extension of the main Site II structure (Pl. 15.1). None of these rooms to the west are depicted on Le Berre's later plan (Pl. 16), but they extend into an area which was otherwise marked by the traces of renovated or later buildings (discussed further below, §2.4.5). Also, as Meunié reports, the extramural qala clearly postdates Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230 CE) – but by how much?

Answering these questions is difficult because of the way the data were presented. Certainly, Meunié's strength is that he showed more interest than his colleagues in the development and history of use of the buildings he studied, but unlike the Hackins and Carl, he did not publish his find lists, instead summarising the most important material recovered (and one may presume again that most potsherds were not documented). It is unfortunate that his coin finds were not presented in a list or illustrated, as it seems quite plausible that the few identified coins give a skewed impression of the chronology of the activity around them. This

problem is clearest with respect to the western extension of Site II. The material reported by Meunié rather suggests that these buildings were occupied during Ghirshman's late phase Begram III (see further below §2.5), as finds broadly similar to the wide-mouthed cylindrical pot, the coarse water pot, the elephant figurine, and the niche with moulded earthen features were typically documented later by Ghirshman in houses at Site B during in this phase.²⁵⁷ As hinted above in respect to Site I (which features the characteristic Begram III stamped medallion pottery), the absolute date for Begram III is not entirely clear, but according to Kuwayama this phase was occupied between the 6th–8th centuries CE. It is, at least, hardly plausible that this material could date to close after the mid 1st century BCE, as suggested by the coin of Spalahores.

Similar problems are presented by the dating of the intramural qala. Without access to Meunié's data (see §2.5 below), Ghirshman suggested that the architecture of the structure and coins found there indicated that it belonged to Begram III.²⁵⁸ I have already expressed doubt elsewhere that this building could belong to precisely the same Begram III phases of Site I and Site B, and that this dating was offered primarily because the Site II structure below it appears to belong to the phase Begram II.²⁵⁹ Ghirshman himself observed that the walls of the qala were constructed in a different manner to other structures in Begram III, composed of beds of pakhsa alternating with mudbrick (*contra* Meunié).²⁶⁰ Kuwayama takes the same building to be part of Begram III because of its use of circular bastions and stamped medallion pottery (the fragments with a bird passing to right mentioned by Meunié, Pl. 25.2),²⁶¹ but places it later in the centuries encompassing this (macro) phase, around the mid 8th century.²⁶² The described and published material culture certainly has links to that of Begram III, but the stamped medallion device does not have precise parallels among the repertoire from the rest of Begram III, and the angular pottery jug documented by Meunié²⁶³ likewise lacks parallels among the ceramic assemblage excavated by Ghirshman. Hence, there is a good chance the qala was built considerably later than the majority of buildings of Begram III. The date of the extramural qala

²⁵⁷ Compare Meunié 1959a, Figs. 242, 247–248, 252. For the elephant figurines excavated by Ghirshman in Begram III, Ghirshman 1946, 72–73, Pl. XLVI, B.G. 248, B.G. 168. For a comparison for the coarse water pot, Ghirshman 1946, Pl. LI, B.G. 466a. For vessels very broadly recalling the form and decoration of the large cylindrical pot, Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIX, 5, 7; L, B.G. 538; LI, B.G. 330. On the niches typical of houses of Begram III, Ghirshman 1946, 33–37, Pl. VIII.

²⁵⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 28

²⁵⁹ Morris 2017, 98.

²⁶⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 38–39.

²⁶¹ Meunié 1959a, 104, Fig. 246.

²⁶² Kuwayama 1991, 108, 112.

²⁶³ Meunié 1959a, 104, Fig. 251.

is anyone's guess: the few identified coins, as mentioned above, spanned from issues of Eucratides I to Vasudeva (if these were correctly identified, which cannot be assessed as they were not illustrated), the circular bastions would appear to suggest a connection with Begram III as conceived of by Kuwayama, but without published pottery the question should remain open.

2.4.5. Site II (1939–1940)

For work in 1939 and 1940, the documentation record for the Hackin excavations at Begram becomes only more fraught, hazy, and complex – a clear outcome of the difficult context in which these last two campaigns took place. The team having reassembled in Afghanistan, excavations at Site II resumed under Ria Hackin's direction on the 19th of May, 1939, and concluded on the 12th of August. For this season, Hamelin also joined the excavations for a period between the 24th of June and the 13th of July (which will become important later). Meunié, however, was dispatched to excavate another monastery located on the Koh-i Pahlavan, being Qol-i Nadir,²⁶⁴ the foundation of which probably occurred during the later 1st or early 2nd centuries CE.²⁶⁵ The results for the 1939 season at Begram were published later as part of the report NRAB.²⁶⁶

As noted above, the team anticipated the possibility of finding more objects similar to those of the hoard in the vicinity of room 10. They began clearing a number of rooms north and northeast of this room,²⁶⁷ and quickly realised that a spacious room lay immediately north of room 10, being room 13 (9.0 x 6.0 m) (Pls. 16, 18). Here, on the 21st of May, they registered their first two finds along the west wall: the bronze jugs NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 (see §4.2.2.3). In room 13, they would come to uncover more objects of the same character as those from room 10, but marked by yet more diversity: besides glassware again, there were carved ivory and bone furniture elements almost exclusively representing the remains of several chair panels and backrests, a range of copper alloy vessels, vessels carved from porphyry and rock crystal, a range of bronze utensils, figurines, anthropomorphic balsamaria, and cast elements from composite articles of metalwork, as well as plaster casts with designs in relief, and lacquered

²⁶⁴ The results of which were published in Meunié 1959d.

²⁶⁵ To judge from similarities the relic deposit shares with others especially from the vicinity of Kabul and Jalalabad, for which see Errington 2017a, 35–36. Fussman, however, would place its foundation later in the 3rd century CE, for which see Fussman 2008, 167–169.

²⁶⁶ Hackin 1954a.

²⁶⁷ Meunié 1954, 7.

vessels and boxes. Fifteen coins were found throughout this room at a range of reported depths. Of the few which were identified, the latest that appeared to be around the depth of most of the hoard objects was a copper alloy coin of Wima Kadphises at a depth of 2.50 m (NRAB 208), although some coins of Vasudeva I were recovered at a higher depth of 1.80 m in this room (NRAB 11–16). With respect to the interpretation of the hoard, Hackin observed that most of the objects were dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries CE (rather than the later date he had initially proposed in RAB), which was in his view a heightened period of international exchange that Begram had benefited from by virtue of its geographical position. He also noted that none of the coins found around the depth of the objects were later than those of Vasudeva I, then understood to date to ca. 200 CE.²⁶⁸

Of the little information provided about the immediate archaeological context of the hoard objects in this room, Meunié made the following comments about the blocked entrance ways and double walls (which were not illustrated or photographed):

La porte d'entrée, dans l'angle nord-est, avait été murée, de la même manière que la porte de la chambre 10. Il semble qu'une communication a dû exister entre les deux chambres, mais le mauvais état des constructions n'a pas permis d'en avoir la certitude. Ces deux pièces constituaient un seul dépôt où l'on avait emmagasiné les riches collections qui ont été découvertes en 1937 et 1939. Non seulement les portes avaient été condamnées par de la maçonnerie de briques de terre crue, mais tout le pourtour avait été doublé à l'extérieur par la construction d'un deuxième mur.

Before outlining the results of excavations in 1939 and 1940 as presented in NRAB (as they were published together) in light of archival material, I want to capture a sense of developments and moreover the general mood between these last two seasons, as the reality of a second World War was crystallised through official declarations of war against Germany in Europe.

An important point to make here is that through his career in Afghanistan, Joseph Hackin came to be well known by the government in Kabul and the international community there for his diplomatic skills, deep knowledge of the country and broader Asia, and strong sense of understanding with the Afghans he worked with. However, by 1938 these qualities had attracted the jealousy of Jean-Baptiste Barbier, the head of the French Legation in Kabul,

²⁶⁸ Hackin 1954b, 14–15.

which culminated in diplomatic conflicts Joseph Hackin had to manage for his final years in Kabul.²⁶⁹ Having remained a reserve officer from his time in the French infantry in World War I, Joseph Hackin wished to return to Europe and join the fight in France when war was declared. Yet, both French museum and government authorities intervened to keep him in Afghanistan to take advantage of his local knowledge and potential to gather intelligence, which he officially did later along the border with India in May 1940, midway through the next season's excavations at Begram.²⁷⁰

Meanwhile, in the wake of the conclusion of the 1939 season, tension appeared in another form: the arrival of two Swiss women, Ella Maillart and Annemarie Schwarzenbach. Maillart was a sportswoman and travel writer, and Schwarzenbach a writer and photojournalist battling a morphine addiction. The two were undertaking a journey from Europe to South Asia in a Ford. As described in Maillart's memoir, *The cruel way*, the pair arrived to Begram just as the archaeologists were concluding their season for the year:

Crossing a waste-land and rolling over dried-up ditches, we covered the last lap of our journey. We reached a solitary mud hut on the desolate plateau which is the Begram of to-day.

Joseph and Ria Hackin, Carl and Meunié received us as if we had been their children. We were too late: they had just finished packing all the finds of their summer campaign.

Put to bed with two aspirins, Christina [a pseudonym for Schwarzenbach] was looked after by Ria with such motherly care that her heart was won at once. Meanwhile, in the next room, I was making a pig of myself by taking three helpings of *coq au vin* followed by chocolate soufflé.²⁷¹

The cruel way thus follow the time of Maillart and Schwarzenbach in the company of the Hackins from a brief carefree period in Begram to their stay in Kabul, where Schwarzenbach was to work with Joseph in the NMA and study Graeco-Buddhist (Gandhāran) art.²⁷² However, their stay in Kabul also became increasingly tense not only because of the

²⁶⁹ See, for example, the fallout from misunderstandings circulating around the expedition undertaken by the British scholar Evert Barger in Olivier-Utard 1997, 120–121.

²⁷⁰ Olivier-Utard 1997, 122–123.

²⁷¹ Maillart 2013 [1947], 189.

²⁷² Maillart 2013 [1947], 189–196.

looming threat of war, but also because of Schwarzenbach's illness and relapse,²⁷³ as well as Schwarzenbach's romantic feelings towards Ria Hackin.²⁷⁴ Near the end of the year, with the division of finds at the NMA complete, the Hackins departed Kabul for Kunduz. Maillart then travelled to India alone, with Schwarzenbach leaving to join the Hackins in the north before finally departing Afghanistan only in early 1940. Her exit was a great relief to Ria Hackin, who had found the whole ordeal difficult to negotiate.²⁷⁵

It was against these backdrops of conflict that the final campaign at Begram under Joseph Hackin's directorship began. The 1940 campaign ran from the 24th of April to the 3rd of July. The main focus was room T within the Site II structure, which was located directly to the north of the northeast bastion of the later qala (hence named for its 'tower'), although other rooms and ambiguously defined areas were also opened. Room T exhibited some similar finds to those of room 13, being mostly bronze decorative elements and figurines, and two gold spout attachments in the form of elephant masks (NRAB 245–246),²⁷⁶ while the published find catalogue in NRAB describes a diverse mix of some domestic pottery (drinking vessels and lamps), spindle whorls, zoomorphic figurines, and coins.

Before digging a little deeper into the publication and documentation record for the 1939 and 1940 seasons, the main lines of events following the closure of excavations should be described as they contextualise which data survive for us today. During the 1940 season, German forces were rapidly advancing through the Low Countries and France, culminating in General de Gaulle's appeal for a French Resistance as well as the armistice at Compiègne between Nazi Germany and the French Third Republic. Three days after the excavations were closed, Joseph Hackin declared the allegiance of himself and his companions to Free France via a telegraph sent through the British Legation at Kabul. With no French minister in Kabul, the new Vichy regime attempted (naturally, unsuccessfully) to install Joseph Hackin as a diplomatic agent.²⁷⁷ He officially resigned his directorship of the DAFA in August of 1940, leaving for London shortly afterwards with Ria and Carl. Prior to his departure, Joseph Hackin left his manuscripts and notes with the British Legation in Kabul by way of his friend and colleague, Kenneth de Burgh Codrington, a British archaeologist and art historian. During this

²⁷³ Maillart 2013 [1947], 196–201.

²⁷⁴ See the archival documents, including correspondence between Ria Hackin and Maillart presented in Jehin 2013, 236–242.

²⁷⁵ Jehin 2013, 241–242.

²⁷⁶ Meunié 1954, 8.

²⁷⁷ Olivier-Utard 1997, 123; Cambon et al. 2018, 92.

period, he also somewhat astonishingly found time to publish short notices about their new finds from Begram in 1939 in English, French, and Persian (translated by Kohzad).²⁷⁸

After liaising with General de Gaulle at Carlton Gardens, London, Joseph Hackin was assigned a mission to make contact with Free French communities around the world. Joseph and Ria departed Liverpool for this mission on the 20th of February 1941, but four days later, the ship they were travelling on was torpedoed west of the Faroe Islands in the early hours of the morning by a German U-Boat. The Hackins perished shortly afterwards, as reported by one of the few survivors. Learning the news, Carl took his own life. For their deaths in the service of Free France, the Hackins were named as *Compagnons de la Libération*.²⁷⁹

The trajectory of much of the excavation documentation from Begram at this point is not entirely clear. Some of Carl's notes and his site plan for 1940 were lost.²⁸⁰ Joseph Hackin's documents handed over to the British Legation were passed along to the Warburg Institute in London in 1941. The Institute, according to Hackin's orally expressed wish, had intended to publish the results of the Begram excavations in English, provoking a dispute in 1942 with Claude Schaeffer, a French archaeologist.²⁸¹ The documents were then returned to the MG after the liberation of France in 1944. Some of Carl's notebooks apparently turned up there later, according to a note inside one which states that it was returned to the MG in 1951 by a former member of the British Legation in Kabul.²⁸² The preparation of the volume NRAB, which made available the results of the 1939 and 1940 seasons at Begram, negotiated the conflict between London and Paris, including contributions based on the surviving excavation materials from (among others) personnel of the DAFA, the MG, and the Warburg Institute.²⁸³

NRAB is a volume broadly similar in structure to RAB, with some exceptions. It began with a number of essays and contributions written by members of the DAFA (Foucher, Meunié, and the text of an article written by Hackin in May 1940), the historian and MG curator René Grousset, as well as specialists in Indian art (Stern, Foucher, Auboyer), Chinese art (Elisséeff), and Graeco-Roman art and material culture (Kurz). Then, the find catalogues for 1939 and 1940 were presented, virtually in the same format as that of RAB, except this time organised by material class. These catalogues were supposedly kept largely unabridged by the editors. Some comments were added by Meunié, Raoul Curiel, and Daniel Schlumberger (director of

²⁷⁸ Hackin 1939b; 1940a; 1940b.

²⁷⁹ Olivier-Utard 1997, 124; Cambon et al. 2018, 100–101, 114–115.

²⁸⁰ Meunié 1954, 9; Carl 1959a, 85.

²⁸¹ Olivier-Utard 1997, 128.

²⁸² *Carl Carnet* 1, 43810 S.P., Fonds DAFA, MG.

²⁸³ Hackin 1954a, xi–xii; Olivier-Utard 1997, 128.

the DAFA from 1945), who had studied some finds from the excavations in the NMA in 1946. Having observed there numerous unlabelled plaster, bronze, ivory and bone, and glass objects that did not precisely tally with inventory entries from RAB and NRAB (i.e. having not been recorded during the excavations or reassembled from undocumented fragments), but as they were presumably found in rooms 10 and 13, these objects were also included in the catalogue for NRAB, indicated with Roman numerals. Some additional notes were also added by Auboyer, Hamelin, Kurz, and Stern.²⁸⁴ The text part of the volume concluded with appendices discussing Hamelin's reconstructions of the ivory furniture.²⁸⁵

Finally, NRAB included a volume of plates with 668 figures. These were primarily black and white photographs of the hoard objects (mostly after excavation and cleaning). However, there was also a colour reproduction of a gouache painting by Carl of the decoration of the enamelled glass goblet NRAB 27 depicting a scene from the Iliad (NRAB Fig. 263 bis), numerous black and white photos and illustrations of comparanda for the hoard objects, as well as illustrations of the reconstructed ivory furniture and the decoration of many of their elements. Although Carl had conducted aerial photography of the site at the end of June in 1939, two of these photos were only published later in Ghirshman's report and Hamelin's study of the glass from Begram (see Pl. 10).²⁸⁶ In addition, as noted above, the text volume of NRAB also includes the only surviving largely complete plan of the Site II excavation area, executed by Le Berre on the basis of the decayed exposed excavated structures which he studied in 1947 (Pl. 16).²⁸⁷

The effort involved in the preparation of NRAB and the final product is unquestionably admirable. Indeed, reflecting on the misfortunes experienced by the excavators and their documentation, it is almost a miracle that we have so much to work with today. This being said, NRAB also presents some real difficulties. The first issue is that NRAB, like RAB, is generally far better suited for art-historical analysis than a contextual approach to the excavated material as an archaeological assemblage. The brief opening essays by Meunié and Hackin – while providing some important details about the process of the excavations, features of the Site II structure, and how the excavation results were interpreted at the time – give only sparse information in this direction.²⁸⁸ Indeed, Joseph Hackin did not comment on the function of the Site II structure, and only in Foucher's introductory remarks was it observed that this building

²⁸⁴ Hackin 1954a, 156, n. 1.

²⁸⁵ Hackin 1954a, 315–330.

²⁸⁶ Ghirshman 1946, Pl. I; Hamelin 1954, 154, Pl. XV.

²⁸⁷ Hackin 1954a, 9.

²⁸⁸ Hackin 1954b; Meunié 1954.

seems to have been a palatial residence.²⁸⁹ Again, this was not the result of a lack of care; for example, the laborious method utilised by Carl for consolidating fragile ivory and bone furniture elements *in situ* and successfully removing them is mentioned and described in a number of places (this involving the saturation of ivory with coats of gelatine and the application of tissue paper).²⁹⁰ But the clear impression gained from NRAB is that the goal of the archaeologists was conceived as excavating and documenting works of art. Moreover, the presentation of the objects by material class in the catalogue, rather than in order of their documentation, makes it easier to navigate the scope of comparable finds, but more difficult to trace the progress of the excavations and the relation of the finds to one another. In addition to this, relatively few of the photographs printed in the plates section of the volume depict objects *in situ* (with some important exceptions among the ivory furniture ensembles), and many objects were not published with any visual record – an understandable point, considering the sheer number of finds. One improvement on RAB, however, in respect to the provision of contextual information is that more object catalogue entries in NRAB were accompanied with additional details about their findspots, such as ‘south wall’ and ‘west wall.’

I have noted above that within Hamelin’s studies of the glass discovered at Begram,²⁹¹ a plan for the distribution of the hoard objects in room 10 was published (see §2.4.3 above). Beyond providing a significant source of primary data for this body of material – much of which was only partially published, described, or illustrated in RAB and NRAB – Hamelin’s studies also provide critical information about the Site II structure and the archaeological context of the hoard that is not found in RAB and NRAB. In his final article, the first plan of the distribution of the hoard objects in room 13 was likewise presented (Pl. 18).²⁹² This plan is considerably more detailed than the one Hamelin drew for room 10, also featuring miniature illustrations of the hoard objects, but accompanied with their catalogue numbers in NRAB. However, like the plan drawn for room 10, this document cannot exactly be understood as a piece of primary data (i.e. a technical drawing executed in the field). Instead, it was informed partly by Hamelin’s memory of his participation in the excavations (from the 24th of June to the 13th of July in 1939), his understanding of the direction in which the excavation in room 13 had progressed, and also the excavation catalogue and some photos of material *in situ* that he

²⁸⁹ Foucher 1954a, 2.

²⁹⁰ Hackin 1954b, 15–16.

²⁹¹ Hamelin 1952; 1953; 1954.

²⁹² Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVI.

had access to.²⁹³ Earlier versions of Hamelin's plans more recently published by Delacour give an impression of his thought process in disentangling the data available to him: the plans are marked with dates, arrows, and lines indicating excavated chunks of earth and groups of objects.²⁹⁴

While relatively detailed and reliable, Hamelin's plan for room 13 still indicates some cases of errors and misunderstandings. These are laborious to unpick, but I will give one important example. Of the relatively few photographs taken of general views of the excavations and objects *in situ* in the MGP that were not published in NRAB, four show the remains of two layers of decorative wall paintings recovered in room 13 in 1939: the clearest part of the decoration is on the earlier layer depicting the repeating motif of a draped colonnade which presumably ran around the lower part of the room (see further discussion in §3.5). Two of these photos have been published more recently by Cambon (Pl. 26).²⁹⁵ In the bottom right corner of one of these photos (Pl. 26.2),²⁹⁶ a bronze jug is visible *in situ*, which must be NRAB 2 (see the discussion in §4.2.2.3). Another of these photos,²⁹⁷ shows a roughly excavated wall to the left running perpendicular to the wall with the paintings. Here, horizontal lines are just visible in the lower part of the wall, indicating layers of decayed pakhsa or mudbricks. Where these walls meet is obscured by a shadow, but it appears that this has been partially cut through by excavations, creating the impression of a niche in the space where the walls probably originally met.

Here, problems emerge. The position of photographed wall paintings within room 13 was not described. Among his other comments on the organisation of Site II, Hamelin noted briefly that traces of light green paint had been found on the walls of room 10, and the frieze with draped columns had been found in room 13.²⁹⁸ Carl had made two unpublished sketches of this decorative motif with indications of the colours used, which Hamelin later added the same note to, reading “croquis peinture murale de la niche de la Salle XIII, PH” (apparently interpreting this strangely excavated wall as a niche).²⁹⁹ Based on these, Hamelin drew his own illustrations (one is traced in Pl. 27.1, adding the indicated colours to give an impression of the

²⁹³ Hamelin 1954, 154. The contribution of published and archival photographs to Hamelin's work is clear from the references he makes throughout to these materials.

²⁹⁴ Delacour 1993, Figs. 3–4.

²⁹⁵ MGP 81314/1–4; MGP 81314/1 and 81314/2 or 81314/3 are slightly cropped in Cambon 2006, 100. MGP 81314/3 is shown in Morris 2021, 30, Fig. 17

²⁹⁶ MGP 81314/2.

²⁹⁷ MGP 81314/4.

²⁹⁸ Hamelin 1953, 122, n. 3.

²⁹⁹ C.C. 1, C.C. 2.

motif's original appearance).³⁰⁰ This painting was found to the left of NRAB 2 – but where was this jug found within room 13? Hamelin's plan places NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 (both bronze jugs) and NRAB 3, a bronze plaque, at the southeast corner of the room along the east wall, while NRAB explicitly states that all three had been found on the west wall. Looking at another archival photograph of excavations in process during 1939, which shows the southern part of room 13 and the northeastern part of the Site II structure looking east (Pl. 27.2),³⁰¹ it is clear that this wall painting cannot have been located in this southeast corner of room 13 (which would also indicate that NRAB 2 had been found on the south wall instead) but most likely in the southwest corner of the room. In the foreground, it is clear that the south wall of room 13 has been cut by excavations where it is supposed to meet the west wall. Evidently, then, NRAB 1–3 had been found during the early clearing of room 13 (they were documented respectively at the heights of 1.40 m and 2.20 m), before Hamelin's arrival respectively on the 21st and 22nd of May), and before work started in earnest at the lower depth of most of the hoard objects in the southeast corner, just as Hamelin apparently understood had occurred. In light of this case, Hamelin's plan of room 13 should be understood as an important and relatively accurate source, but not an infallible one.

Turning back to NRAB again, some real errors that had slipped into the publication should be highlighted. First, the published catalogue stated that the objects NRAB 1–229 (all excavated in the 1939 season) had been found in room 13,³⁰² but this is not accurate. One explicitly stated exception in the published catalogue includes as a small pottery bowl (NRAB 43) noted to have been found on the 10th of June at the “Chantier de la ruelle.” This excavation area is never mentioned explicitly in any of the Begram excavation reports, but is most likely to be identified with an inset on the plan of Site I (Pl. 13) presented in the later report for excavations there,³⁰³ which shows a number of buildings around a “ruelle médiane,” marked with the year 1939. In fact, this area was later fully excavated at Ghirshman's Site B, and we will return to it later (see below, §2.5).

A more serious problem, however, is presented by objects which were also listed under NRAB 1–229 and found outside of room 13, but were not indicated as such in the published catalogue. The typed manuscript of NRAB (being MSNRAB) shows that about a dozen objects originally had a different findspot indication (marked with “Chantier No. [blank]”), which was

³⁰⁰ Published in Cambon 2006, 100.

³⁰¹ MGP 81315791/4, published in Morris 2021, 24, Fig. 12.

³⁰² Hackin 1954a, 157, n. 1.

³⁰³ Carl 1959a, Fig. K.

simply removed for publication. These included a range of finds at different depths: a circular beaten piece of gold leaf (NRAB 7, 1.15 m), the upper part of a steatite male head, 2.9 cm tall (NRAB 17, 2.00 m), not illustrated but presumably broken from a piece of Buddhist relief sculpture, a glassy bead (NRAB 19, 1.80 m), a small pot decorated with circles (NRAB 22, 1.80 m), a terracotta figurine of an elephant serving as a support for a vessel (NRAB 53, 3.00 m), and six copper alloy coins (NRAB 45, 49, 50, 115–117), the first identified only as of the Kushan period, the next four unidentified, and the last (NRAB 117, 0.70 m) described as a coin with ‘the likeness of a sar of Garjistan.’ The entry for the latter coin includes a citation for an image published elsewhere (in a catalogue of de Morgan), indicating that it can be tentatively identified as the type Göbl 238 or 239, with the legend Sri Shahi, and is likely an issue of the ruler titled Shahi Tengin, who probably ruled after the mid 7th century CE.³⁰⁴

It is unclear where these objects were found. Perhaps they were recovered from Site II in other ill-defined areas surrounding room 13, including the northeastern rooms of the structure which one of the archival photographs discussed above shows had been entirely exposed during work in 1939 (see the background of Pl. 27.2),³⁰⁵ but it is impossible to confirm this. In an earlier article I followed the explicit published attribution in NRAB of these objects to room 13 to list coin finds from this room, and to interpret the position and dating of the objects in this space, which should now be corrected.³⁰⁶ I will return to this question of the delineation of the hoard deposits and the dating of Site II in more detail later (§3.5.3).

On a related note, however, it should also be stressed how unfortunate it is that none of the coins catalogued in NRAB were photographed or illustrated. In this report, 70 coins were listed, and 21 coins were supposedly documented within the confines of room 13 at various depths (although, as we have seen above, the number is actually 15). The issuers of 10 were roughly identified. In the order of their production, these apparently included a coin of Gondophares (NRAB 155, 2.55 m), one ‘billon’ coin of Kujula Kadphises (NRAB 6, a little higher at 2.10 m), one of Wima Kadphises (NRAB 208), six ‘billon’ coins of Vasudeva (NRAB 11–16, higher at 1.80 m), and one was loosely identified as of the Kushan period (NRAB 36, 2.50 m). It is not possible to check these identifications (or the dubious description of the alloy of several of these coins as ‘billon’) as none of the coins from the 1939 season were allocated to the MG, and all are now presumed lost with the theft of the NMA coin collections. The loss

³⁰⁴ See Göbl 1967; Vondrovec 2010, 183–184.

³⁰⁵ MGP 81315791/4.

³⁰⁶ Morris 2017, 82, 95, 100, Table 1. Unfortunately, MSNRAB had not been made available to me until after this article had been submitted.

of these data is clear because, as I have discussed above (§2.4.3), previously unidentified coin finds from room 10 kept in the MG were later published and recognised to be posthumous imitations of types inaugurated by the late Kushan kings Vasudeva I and Kanishka II.

Although the surviving data from room 13 in 1939 described thus far are complex, the situation for the data from excavations in 1940 presents yet more difficulties. In NRAB, work from this year was only very briefly described (see above), focusing mainly on room T, and finds from this season were included in NRAB's catalogue (i.e. from the number NRAB 230 onwards). One important note provided by Meunié was that room T was located separately to the concealed hoard rooms,³⁰⁷ and thus apparently its entrance was not blocked off. Yet, the lack of detail presented from this season is frustrating, as the excavated area should represent a substantial part of the Site II structure (located roughly west of the areas excavated in 1937 and 1939), the function and development of which over time still remains poorly understood.

Thankfully, at least a little more detail is provided in a draft for an unpublished report written by Joseph Hackin to be sent to the Afghan government, of the type he would regularly send about updates on the DAFA excavations and included in the document RMA (report 1940 – 4). I transcribe the relevant part of the report below:

Begram le 29 Juin 1940

Monsieur le Vice-Ministre,

J'ai l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que la 5^e campagne de fouilles de la Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan prendra fin le mercredi 3 Juillet 1940. Au cours des recherches effectuées quatre chantiers ont été en activité. Sur le site de Begram, madame Hackin a poursuivi les recherches commencées en 1937 en dégagant les bâtiments situés immédiatement à l'Ouest des chambres 10 et 11, fouillées en 1937 et en 1939 et au Nord de la forteresse flanquée des quatre tours rondes dont le dégagement commencé en 1937 fut poursuivi en 1938. Ce dégagement a été terminé cette année. Les objets mis au jour au cours des recherches provenant en grande partie de la chambre dite de la tour Nord-Est et se trouvaient à un niveau inférieur à celui des assises de la Tour, à une moyenne de 50 centimètres au-dessous du niveau des fondations. Ces constatations confirment très nettement l'hypothèse formulée dès 1938 relativement au

³⁰⁷ Meunié 1954, 8.

caractère tardif de cette construction (environ V^e siècle de l'ère chrétienne) édifice sur un emplacement occupé par des édifices ruinés remontant à la dernière période d'occupation grecque et à l'occupation Kushane (fin du I^{er} siècle av. l'ère chrétienne – fin du III^e siècle de l'ère chrétienne). Les objets mis au jour au cours des fouilles pratiquées dans la chambre de la tour nord-est sont en majeure partie des spécimens d'art gréco-romains, citons deux appliques-versoirs en or représentant des masques d'éléphants, trompes levées (diamètre : 0 m 035) ; un cavalier en bronze, une tête de canard et de nombreux pieds de coffret, des appliques et un très beau coffret en bronze et bois ; le décor de cette pièce, malheureusement très endommagé, est un chef d'œuvre d'une technique particulièrement délicate qui consistait à insérer dans une plaque de bois un léger filigrane de cuivre. *

* [Note in margin:] Il est à noter que la chambre dite de la tour n'a pas été dégagée complètement sa tour NE empiétant sur la partie sud de cette chambre, la première tâche qui incombera au fouilleur au moment de la reprise des travaux sera de procéder à la démolition la tour et au dégagement complet de la chambre jusqu'[au] sol zéro.

Dans les autres chambres la fouille n'a donné que des spécimens de poteries communes, quelques-unes de ces poteries sont intactes nous livrant de bons spécimens de poteries Kushan à décor imprimé. Le chantier de Madame Hackin a donné du 25 avril au 29 juin cent vingt-huit objets. [...]

The report continues on to mention work undertaken by Carl also that year at monasteries around the Koh-i Pahlavan, which I will discuss briefly at the conclusion of this section. With respect to the finds from Begram in 1940, there is not much new here that is not already mentioned (at least briefly) in NRAB, although Joseph Hackin's description of the finds from room T as primarily objects of Graeco-Roman art and his final comment that only pottery was found in the rooms outside of room T are of some interest (if perhaps not to be taken as definitive statements). These remarks gives an impression of a more coherent state of affairs than a glance at the catalogue for NRAB beyond the inventory number NRAB 330 would.

Indeed, this is actually because the presentation of the finds from 1940 in NRAB was marred by one serious, unfortunate error: when comparing NRAB, MSNRAB, and the

handwritten draft catalogue for work in 1940 (F1940) it becomes clear that the findspot indication for each catalogue entry from 1940 was moved to the previous object entry for publication in NRAB. Then, as each find was re-organised in NRAB's catalogue according to material class rather than order of documentation, this error became even more difficult to detect. The mistake, however, is indicated even from NRAB alone through the appearance of the note "Ch. R. T" (i.e. Site II, room T) under NRAB 229, fragments of a lacquerware ear cup certainly found along the south wall of room 13 and the last find registered for the 1939 season. Evidently, some confusion occurred in the preparation of MSNRAB for printing, as ordinarily findspot indications from 1939 were included underneath the entry for each object, while they were placed just above the first line for each object entry in F1940 and the continuation of MSNRAB from excavation number 230. This error impacts the findspot data for NRAB 230–NRAB 354 (all of the finds from 1940).

Another problem is then presented in the delineation of the precise areas which were being excavated in 1940. The catalogue in NRAB features a range of different findspot indications that are difficult to interpret at first sight, featuring a number of variations around R. T., i.e. Site II, room T (e.g. add or subtract 'corridor,' 'couloir,' 'NE,' O. (N. O.), etc.), other areas indicated by letters, like R. U, R. V, R. W, and R. X, and what are clearly personal names or nicknames, such as R. Ali Ahmed (or A. A. / Ah. Ali), and R. (Havalдар nord), R. (Seyyed Jan Nord). These are not all possible variations – here I simply aim to give an impression of the diversity of what is documented.

One archival photo (Pl. 27.3) presenting a view across Site II looking to the north is undated, but almost certainly shows the extent of excavations either late into or after the season at 1940. This is because cleared rooms and areas are visible to the north of the entire qala, and these were not excavated in 1939.³⁰⁸ Within this space, the rooms T, U, V, and X featuring in the NRAB catalogue for 1940 can also be located with some degree of confidence on the basis of both Le Berre's plan and another drawn by Hamelin (on the basis of Le Berre's) published within his studies of the glass (Pls. 16, 34.2).³⁰⁹ The names of these rooms are self-explanatory – after room T, some rooms and areas were evidently indicated in alphabetical order – but the excavation areas indicated by personal names (sometimes occasionally connected with a letter like R. U and R. W) need a little further unpicking. "Ali Ahmed" and variations must refer to Ahmad Ali Kohzad, who apparently had his own area to supervise this season. Havalдар

³⁰⁸ MGP 81311/93 bis, published in Morris 2021, 25, Fig. 14

³⁰⁹ Hamelin 1953, 121, Pl. I; Hackin 1954a, 9.

(havalḍār حوالدار), literally ‘charge-holder,’ is presently a rank equivalent to sergeant in the modern armies of India and Pakistan, but in this context may refer to someone holding responsibility for an area or its people, thus with a connotation of ‘chief’ or ‘boss.’ Seyyed Jan/Djan indicates first a title (Sayed سيد) borne by those thought to descend from the prophet Muhammad, combined with the noun (Jān جان) for soul or life that is perhaps used here as a given name. Who were the latter two figures?

Joseph Hackin’s report in RMA (1940 – 4), described above, is followed by a list of some material left at Begram, a description of the dig house (built of mudbricks, with a dining room, a kitchen, four rooms, a garage, two rooms for domestic workers, etc.), and the subsequent note:

Les gardiens[?] Ali Ahmed
 Seyyed Djan
 Abdul ~~Rachid~~ Rahman (dit Havalḍar)

8 roupies par mois payé jusqu'en fin mai 1941

Unfortunately, the handwriting where I have proposed to see “gardiens” is scrawled too messily to be sure of the reading, but here we at least have the three men after whom excavation areas at Site II were named in 1940, with “Havalḍar” referring to a certain Abdul Rahman. It is quite plausible that all had supervisory roles over their excavation areas, and Joseph Hackin’s note at least indicates that they were also to be paid through into 1941.

Comparing the data presented in F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB, and R1940, I have listed the finds from Site II discovered in 1940 within Appendix I, where they are joined by all other finds reported through other seasons at Site II in areas outside of rooms 10 and 13. Here, finds are listed according to the rooms and areas they were originally reported in, which I have attempted to locate with some more clarity according to notes across these different published and archival documents. As some additional details from finds in the 1940 season were made in Ria Hackin’s personal notebook, I have also transcribed the relevant notes in Appendix II. Not only do these corrected data give a very clear impression that the material comparable to the hoard objects was almost exclusively restricted to room T, which had evidently functioned as a third hoard room (if apparently unsealed), but they also give us the new possibility to look more accurately and closely at the function and development of the Site II structure over time – although, again, find depths are still certainly not pure stratigraphic data. I will return to this question in the next chapter (see §3.5.2).

Additional information on the history of occupation in this area can also be found in more surprising places. Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16) indicates quite clearly that the western part of the Site II structure had either been renovated or substantially overlaid with later constructions only very partially following the floor plan of the earlier structure. Le Berre's own confusion in respect to this area too is indicated by a number of question marks he added to this part of the plan. Clearly, the main Site II structure had been built over by the later qala at some point – but had it already been built over before that? Hamelin indicated already in 1953 that from around the area court U, that “cette partie du palais a été réoccupée postérieurement par des maisonnettes imbriquées les unes dans les autres.”³¹⁰ How far did these later pre-qala structures extend to the east over the main earlier building? The traces of no additional later buildings were ever reported closer to rooms 10 and 13.

As noted above (§2.4.3), Ria Hackin shot a number of reels of colour 16mm film in Afghanistan and had presented some of her footage in Europe already during the late 1930s. Her notebook from 1940 also includes a list of reels she had shot and sent back to Paris for development, with notes on their contents and occasionally a date added. Three reels clearly describe work at Begram undertaken in 1939: reel 7, 30 metres (departure for Begram 17th of May, excavation site 22nd of May, workers); reel 13, 30 metres (visit of a minister, July 1939, with 7 metres of cleaning of ivories on site); reel 14, 30 metres (cleaning of ivories on site, details of *kinnari* jug, and ivory elements, some views of site).³¹¹

Ria's films were found in storage at the MG already in the 1980s, and a short excerpt from them – including parts of what were presumably reel 13 and 14 shot at Begram in 1939 – was broadcast as part of a news segment in 1986 for the programme *Le Journal de 20H* on Antenne 2. This segment has since been digitised and is available online, albeit in unsurprisingly low video quality.³¹² In the intervening years, Ria's films have been digitised and publicly displayed on a number of occasions, but were most recently shown on a loop at the 2018 exhibition *De l'Asie à la France libre. Joseph et Marie Hackin, archéologiques et compagnons de la Libération* at the Musée de l'ordre de la Libération in Paris.³¹³ The images are far clearer on the version shown at this exhibition. For example, it can be discerned that Ria is shown cleaning and consolidating elements on the right side of the interior face of the

³¹⁰ Hamelin 1953, 122.

³¹¹ For reference, 33 metres of 16mm film played at a rate of 24 frames per second would represent about three minutes of footage.

³¹² Institut national de l'audiovisuel 2018.

³¹³ The accompanying publication for this exhibition is Cambon et al. 2018.

ivory-faced chair panel 4, which jutted out from the bottom of a stack of four backrests and panels lined up against the west wall of room 13 (see §4.13.1.2).

However, the wider shot of Ria working on panel 4 is of particular interest for other reasons (Pl. 28.1). These ivory backrests and panels collectively were recorded at a depth of about 2.50 m, according to the data in the catalogue of NRAB. What is clear from this part of the film, however – and judging from the height of the men standing on the same level as the ivories – is that this is at least ca. 3.50 m below the modern ground surface, probably even closer to 4.00 m. Moreover, here, at the surface above the west wall of room 13, the remains of walls composed of larger, partly worked stones can be delineated, which apparently followed a different route than the pakhsa or mudbrick upper walls of the main Site II structure. This suggests the existence of a later occupation phase that was unconnected to the qala and apparently never documented, although it must have been obvious to its excavators. Moreover, the method of construction and the position of these walls so close to the surface suggests analogies to Ghirshman's phase Begram III (Pl. 28.2, see below §2.5) – if hard to really prove on the basis of a film still alone. That there had been later constructions above the main Site II structure besides the qala also better explains the impression in Le Berre's plan of a gradual shift of the western part of the earlier building into structures resembling the shape and orientation of the houses of Begram III – the excavators had simply cut through everything above the main Site II structure from court U to the east. Indeed, this makes far more sense than the mistaken (if enthusiastic) explanation I proposed on the basis of information available to me in an earlier article, i.e. that occupation in the main Site II structure appeared to extend from the phase Begram II into Begram III.³¹⁴ In short, my opinion is now that the majority of occupation at the main structure of Site II occurred during the (macro) phase Begram II (as Ghirshman proposed), but that this phase was abandoned later than Ghirshman thought. In the next chapter I will assess how the results of the Hackin excavations at Begram can be re-operationalised to interpret the immediate context of the hoard as an archaeological assemblage (§3.5.2 and §3.5.3), and will also provide further comments on my dating of the deposition of the hoard (§3.5.4).

I will now conclude my discussion of the Hackin excavations of 1939 and 1940 with a brief comment in the way of a postscript on work done in 1940 at monasteries around the Koh-i Pahlavan. This is because Joseph Hackin's report in RMA described above (1940 – 4) went on to mention that Carl had excavated at a Buddhist monastery to the east called “Koh-i-Tope,”

³¹⁴ Morris 2017, 99–101.

and at two Buddhist monasteries to the west, “Dala Sang” and “Qol-i-Kalan.” Fussman has already transcribed and discussed this section of the report, attempted to interpret the contradictory information present in the report and the two posthumous plans of “Tepe Kalan” (Hamelin’s plans based on Carl’s)³¹⁵ and catalogue of objects published later, and tentatively located these sites among others on the Koh-i Pahlavan.³¹⁶ Although the problems of these three sites lie outside of the scope of my present agenda, and they all appear to be constructions largely post-dating the phases of Begram I and II, I would briefly like to state my own view on their locations, as they are part of Begram’s immediate hinterland and thus were bound up with the fate of the city throughout its life (Pl. 6).

First, Fussman may be right that ‘west’ in the report could be an error for ‘east;’³¹⁷ it may be best not to interpret this too literally. Instead, he proposes to locate the “Tope” stupa (i.e. Koh-i Tope) of the Koh-i Pahlavan not to the east, but on the northern side of this mountain with a feature visible on Google Earth just east of Shotorak.³¹⁸ However, the various descriptions, illustrations, and photography of this monument presented by Masson, Foucher, and (later) Mizuno indicate quite clearly that it was instead located along the very southeastern spur of the Koh-i Pahlavan, even if its precise position can no longer be determined today.³¹⁹ As Fussman observed, the remains of a nearby monastery building photographed by Mizuno should be the same structure represented in the upper plan of Tepe Kalan (the lower plan with the same title suggesting another building), and the find list for this same site resembles finds from Koh-i Tope mentioned in Joseph Hackin’s report.³²⁰ However, while Fussman hesitates to locate Tepe Kalan (his site “Y”), I think it is plausible that it was located near to the Tope / Koh-i Tope, and the same neighbouring quadrangular monastery of 30 x 40 m that Foucher initially interpreted as the monastery of Chinese hostages mentioned by Xuanzang,³²¹ although it is no longer visible today. Finally, Fussman is probably correct in interpreting the second, lower plan published with the title “Tepe Kalan” depicting two courtyards as the “Dala Sang” (a site of this name is not mentioned anywhere else) with giant earthen sculptures in Hackin’s report and tentatively suggests that it could be located (his site “Z”) to the east on the Koh-i Pahlavan, although this is not clear.³²²

³¹⁵ See C.C. 22–25, 30–32.

³¹⁶ See Carl 1959c; Fussman 2008, 157–171, Pls. 5–6.

³¹⁷ Fussman 2008, 169.

³¹⁸ Fussman 2008, 166, Pls. 6, 96

³¹⁹ See Foucher 1942, 140–141, Fig. 34 (‘Couvent des otages chinois’), Pl. XXXIX c; Mizuno 1971, 126, Pl. 50.1; Errington 2017a, 83, Fig. 74.

³²⁰ Compare Carl 1959c, 129–130, Fig. O; Mizuno 1971, 126, Pl. 50.2; Fussman 2008, 169–170.

³²¹ Foucher 1942, 140–141, Fig. 34 (‘Couvent des otages chinois’).

³²² Fussman 2008, 169–171.

2.5. The Ghirshman excavations (1941–1942)

Roman Ghirshman had declared for Free France in 1940, and after the resignation and death of Joseph Hackin, was ordered to take up the directorship of the DAFA, a position he held until his dismissal in 1943. Thus, together his collaborator and wife, Tania Ghirshman, Roman Ghirshman spent a few difficult years operating out of Kabul and continuing excavations at Begram in the autumn of 1941 and the spring to autumn of 1942, here also having assistance from Kohzad.³²³ Roman Ghirshman's report on his excavations, conducted in a number of areas both at the Burj-i Abdullah and the new royal city, was published in 1946 as *Begram: recherches archéologiques et historiques sur les Kouchans*, furnished with a plan of the site (Pl. 9) and illustrations executed by Tania Ghirshman.³²⁴ This volume was structured in an entirely different manner to the reports of the Hackin years, presenting the results of the excavations in addition to a numismatic study of certain coin finds from the site, and chapters on the problem of Kushan chronology and history that entailed a substantial new contribution to the still nascent study of this dynasty. As the latter part is now somewhat outdated, in the below I primarily focus on summarising the results of the Ghirshman excavations at Begram, then provide some further context which explains the approach that was used, and both weaknesses and legacies of this work.³²⁵

Roman Ghirshman set about investigating the Burj-i Abdullah (Pl. 19.1), which had been transformed into arable land about 75 years prior. A 150 m² sondage cut into the centre of the eastern part of the mound reached sterile ground at a depth of two metres, but no traces of constructions could be detected among the cultural material encountered. This gave the impression that past buildings in the area had been entirely razed and stone building materials removed as the land was transformed for reuse. Of the dozens of potsherds documented, these reportedly dated from the 1st centuries CE to the Middle Ages, and the presence of fragments from schist Buddhist sculpture were taken to indicate the presence of a stupa in the vicinity.³²⁶ The south fortification wall of the Burj-i Abdullah was also examined and found to be composed of retaining walls built of mudbricks (40 x 40 x 10 cm) with no foundation, that were then filled with earth and stone.³²⁷ The method of construction utilised here differed from

³²³ On Roman Ghirshman, see Martinez-Sève 2001. For his short career at the DAFA, Olivier-Utard 1997, 131–139. For the lives of the Ghirshmans during this period, see the account presented in Tania Ghirshman's memoir Ghirshman 1970, 149–171.

³²⁴ Ghirshman 1946.

³²⁵ The discussion here follows the same lines as Morris 2021, 26–27.

³²⁶ Ghirshman 1946, 2–3, Pls. XXV–XXVI.

³²⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 3.

that of the fortification wall visible around the new royal city, which Ghirshman also explored (Pl. 19.2). The latter wall featured rectangular bastions 16.6 m in length, was laid along a stone foundation in parts, and was constructed with mudbricks (40 x 40 x 12 cm) that had been marked with a sign resembling a Greek theta.³²⁸ He suggested that the construction of the wall was part of a re-foundation of the city after its capture by the Graeco-Bactrians in the 2nd century BCE, which extended the pre-existing settlement of Kapisi around the Burj-i Abdullah towards the south, creating the new royal city tepe on the edge of the plateau of the dasht of Begram.³²⁹ Ghirshman stressed that the new royal city represented only about a sixth of the area of the old city, as the intervening space between it and the Burj-i Abdullah had been thoroughly transformed into arable land – the ploughing of which having contributed to Masson's prodigious collections (see Pls. 8–9).³³⁰ Nonetheless, he highlighted the interest of the surviving remains of the site for providing information on urbanism under the Graeco-Bactrians, especially because the Kushans did not seem to have amended much of the city's layout.³³¹

Ghirshman's main excavations were undertaken on the western side of the new royal city at a site marked 'B' on the published plan (Pl. 9). This area, dominated by simple habitations, had been chosen in order to better establish the chronology and stratigraphy of the site.³³² Here, three phases of occupation were observed (Pl. 28.2) and dated by Ghirshman according to the distribution of coins he detected in each. Updating the terminology for these coinage issues, the earliest phase Begram I was thus dated from Apollodotus I (?) to Wima Kadphises; the phase Begram II from Kanishka I to Vasudeva I, and the latest phase Begram III to coins of Ghirshman's 'third and fourth Kushan dynasties,' but rather Vasudeva I imitations (rev. Oesho with bull) and Kanishka II types (rev. seated Ardoxsho).³³³ These coins, however, were not published separately with indications of the phases they were found in.

The earliest phase, Begram I (Pl. 20), had apparently been built on sterile ground between a depth of 3.7 m and 4.5 m. It typically featured stone walls, although mudbricks (40 x 40 x 10 cm) were sometimes found beneath these walls, and Ghirshman interpreted these as having served as foundations for levelling uneven ground.³³⁴ Walls in this phase were generally preserved at a height of two or three metres, a range of small finds were registered (e.g. objects

³²⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 16.

³²⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 15.

³³⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 23.

³³¹ Ghirshman 1946, 18.

³³² Ghirshman 1946, 23.

³³³ Ghirshman 1946, 85–86, Pls. XXII–XXIII.

³³⁴ Ghirshman 1946, 24, Fig. 12.

in bronze, stone, terracotta figurines), and pottery of this level was characterised as grey-black or black ware and finer red ware covered with a red slip, which had featured limited decoration, and then usually incised.³³⁵

The phase Begram II (Pl. 20) was found to be characterised by renovations and mixed patterns of re-use of walls from Begram I, and the construction of new walls on stone foundations of 60 to 70 cm topped with pakhsa in layers 30 to 50 cm thick.³³⁶ A range of small finds were again documented, and pottery of this phase was not determined to have changed much from Begram I, primarily representing red ware with few examples of grey-black ware, but notably marking the appearance of goblets painted with black triangle motifs (Pl. 33).³³⁷ On the basis of traces of destruction and fire in some houses, and thick layers of ash along the ground on the interior side of the fortification wall, then followed by rubble and a thin accumulation layer, Ghirshman determined this phase to have ended with a disaster and an abandonment lasting one or two decades.³³⁸ He proposed that this had been instigated by an invasion of Shapur I, putatively occurring between ca. 241–250 CE.³³⁹

The latest phase Begram III was characterised by the construction of wholly new buildings with irregular plans that were oriented slightly towards the north-northwest (Pl. 21.1).³⁴⁰ The walls of these buildings were constructed above foundations of larger, rougher stones rather than the irregular quarried stone seen in previous phases (see Pl. 28.2), and were then completed with mudbricks (38 x 38 x 8 cm or 40 x 40 x 10 cm), and covered with a whitewashed clay and straw plaster.³⁴¹ Houses of this phase were more comprehensively documented and were found to frequently feature earthen benches and moulded earthen niches protruding from walls. Ghirshman interpreted these as functioning for private worship.³⁴² Small finds from different houses included, for example, a fragment originally from a Buddhist relief sculpture found near a niche, a schist statuette of a seated Ardoxsho or Hariti, and a hoard of bronze vessels deposited beneath a floor.³⁴³ The pottery repertoire of this phase exhibited some changes. Red ware was predominant with a few examples of grey-black ware, painted decoration was phased out, and a new type of decoration – stamped circular medallions – became widely used (Pl. 29). Zoomorphic terracotta figurines, especially of elephants, were

³³⁵ See generally Ghirshman 1946, 44–53, Pls. VI, X–XI, XXVII–XXXIII.

³³⁶ Ghirshman 1946, 26–27, Fig. 12, Pl. VII, 1.

³³⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 54–67, Pls. XII–XV, XXXIV–XLIV.

³³⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 30.

³³⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 100.

³⁴⁰ Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 14, Pl. VII, 2.

³⁴¹ Ghirshman 1946, 32.

³⁴² Ghirshman 1946, 35–37, Pl. VIII, 1–6.

³⁴³ Ghirshman 1946, 76–82, Pl. XLV.

characteristic of this phase, as well as figurines of horses with riders.³⁴⁴ As noted above, Ghirshman dated this phase to his ‘third and fourth Kushan dynasties,’ and attributed its end with an abandonment instigated by ‘Chionite-Hephthalite’ (i.e. Hun) invasion, i.e. around the end of the 4th century CE.³⁴⁵ Ghirshman also broke with his predecessors by doubting that the site of Begram could have been the town of Kapisi visited by Xuanzang in the 7th century CE, suggesting instead that its location might be found at an unexplored site on the dasht of Begram (five kilometres southeast of the new royal city) called Ghundi Paisa. Here, Ghirshman had picked up a sherd of stamped medallion pottery.³⁴⁶

Ghirshman also resumed the work of the Hackin excavations at the Site II structure, but this time with the aim to establish its stratigraphy and compare this with his work at Site B.³⁴⁷ Working on areas north and northwest to the areas opened under the Hackin excavations (unfortunately the area is also not clearly described), he reported coins only of the ‘second Kushan dynasty’ (i.e. Kanishka I to Vasudeva I), and stated that the main structure should have been built in the ‘first or ... second Kushan dynasty,’ dating it to the phase Begram II.³⁴⁸ In one area, which must be around the “V” indicated on Le Berre’s plan (see Pl. 16) – a miniature “G” for Ghirshman is marked too – a waste-water drain had been identified running across what was described as a court connected to five narrow rooms (Pl. 30.1). Here, a number of mortars were found, and Ghirshman identified this space as a food reserve.³⁴⁹ The northern part of the northeast bastion of the qala was also cleared (Pl. 30.2, see again the miniature “G” there on Le Berre’s plan, Pl. 16) – something Hackin’s report to the RMA (1940 – 4) states was intended as an objective for the following season. Here, under the bastion, Ghirshman reported a bronze figurine and decorative elements similar to those found in 1940, in addition to some bronze fasteners presumably from a box and a clay sealing which had been impressed onto a since decayed woven surface (see Appendix I, room T).³⁵⁰

In assessing the results of Ghirshman’s campaigns at Begram, two things should be highlighted: first, the difficult conditions in which Roman and Tania Ghirshman worked in from 1941 to 1943, and second, how Roman Ghirshman’s methodology and publication style differed to that of his predecessor. Tania Ghirshman’s memoir gives some personal insights

³⁴⁴ Ghirshman 1946, 69–74, Pls. XX, XLVI.

³⁴⁵ Ghirshman 1946, 41.

³⁴⁶ See Ghirshman 1946, 41, Pl. L, G.P. 1. This is not the site indicated with the same name in Ball 2019a, No. 2078.

³⁴⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

³⁴⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

³⁴⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

³⁵⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 67–69.

into the life of her and her husband around their time at Begram.³⁵¹ Besides the relatable challenges of evading mice and spiders in the Begram dig house (“une maisonnette très primitive construite par Hackin, assez miserable”),³⁵² working with limited resources, and bouts of malaria and jaundice, diplomatic conflicts caused the two still more serious problems. Although Roman Ghirshman had already declared for Free France in 1940 and had briefly left Afghanistan for Beirut in 1942 on their orders, there seems to have been some confusion about his affiliation at the French Legation – a problem then exacerbated by interpersonal hostility. He was officially dismissed by the Vichy regime in early 1943, an action couched in disingenuous criticisms of Ghirshman’s professional conduct when the matter was eminently personal: besides his personality and political affiliation, he was also a Jewish immigrant.³⁵³

Although the British Legation had also provided assistance to the Ghirshmans after the revocation,³⁵⁴ Roman Ghirshman also had difficulties with its staff. As noted above, Joseph Hackin had left his documents and papers at the British Legation, but when Ghirshman tried to obtain them, he was refused by the new British Minister in Kabul, Francis Verner Wylie. Ghirshman tried once more to negotiate access to the documents while he was in Beirut and was again denied, meaning that at Begram he had to operate blindly to his predecessor’s fieldwork,³⁵⁵ with access to what only had been published and left in the NMA. Ghirshman’s results must be read in this light.

Despite the revocation, the Ghirshmans stayed on a little longer in Kabul in 1943, and Roman Ghirshman was asked by the Ministry of Public Instruction to conduct a brief examination of a Hephthalite tomb just to the northeast of Begram at Sadiqabad (Pl. 5).³⁵⁶ Ghirshman later finished the manuscripts for both his Begram and Sadiqabad volumes (the latter a more general work on the Chionites-Hephthalites) at the Institut français d’archéologie orientale in Cairo.³⁵⁷

Methodologically, Ghirshman’s approach and style of publication vastly differed to that of Joseph Hackin and his collaborators. Hackin’s published work from Begram can be characterised as a presentation of data offering relatively little in the way of interpretation of the material they excavated (barring, of course, the hoard objects). Ghirshman’s work, however, ran in the opposite direction; his Begram volume is rather a historical and

³⁵¹ Ghirshman 1970, 149–171.

³⁵² Ghirshman 1970, 151.

³⁵³ Olivier-Utard 1997, 136–137. See also Ghirshman 1970, 155–159.

³⁵⁴ Ghirshman 1970, 159.

³⁵⁵ Olivier-Utard 1997, 134–136.

³⁵⁶ For Sadiqabad, Ball 2019a, No. 963.

³⁵⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 1948.

archaeological treatise based the data he accumulated. The part of the report which more explicitly deals with the results of his campaigns at Begram characterise occupation phases and features of material culture in broad strokes, and we are left to trust his assessments. Here, the persistent depth measurements seen in the Hackin excavations are not given. If Ghirshman's original excavation notes survive, they do not seem to be included in the part of his archives held at the MG.

Also unlike his predecessor, Ghirshman paid considerable attention to pottery, defining the characteristic repertoires of each of the occupation phases of the site. While some of the pottery described in NRAB (all without visual records) does clearly recall the characteristic shapes and decorative techniques defined by Ghirshman, the general lack of attention paid to pottery by the Hackin excavations makes it difficult to assess with more precision to which occupation phases the remains they studied belong. Another distinctive thing about Ghirshman's work was his linguistic access to the products of Russian imperial and Soviet archaeology, including work in wider southern Central Asia.³⁵⁸ Thus he could cite comparanda for Begram's jewellery from Sarmatian products and the structure of Chorasmian fortifications for those of the new royal city, here drawing on work of the newly formed multidisciplinary Khorezmian Archaeological-Ethnographic Expedition.³⁵⁹

The situation regarding surviving data on Ghirshman's coin finds is somewhat better than those for the Hackin excavations, although all are now presumed lost.³⁶⁰ Thankfully, Ghirshman at least published some photographs and illustrations of certain of the coins he excavated.³⁶¹ However, these also reveal that some of his identifications were incorrect and cannot be taken at face value. In addition to this, Ghirshman studied 47 coins from the Hackin excavations in 1937 and 1938 which had been kept in the NMA.³⁶² These, however, cannot be attributed to specific seasons or excavation areas. Enumerating the coins reportedly allocated to the NMA from excavations at Begram during these years, by the end of 1938 this should have included 68 specimens, but Ghirshman only presented 47. Therefore, this number may not have included the 20 coins collected by Meunié during his excavations at the extramural qala (Site III) in 1938.

However, we can attain more insights into Ghirshman's coin finds from Begram from unpublished records of the numismatist Robert Göbl during his study of the coin collection of

³⁵⁸ Olivier-Utard 1997, 138.

³⁵⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 19–22, 62–63.

³⁶⁰ The following is drawn from the discussion already in Morris 2021, 31.

³⁶¹ Ghirshman 1946, 85–97, Pls. XXII–XXIII.

³⁶² Ghirshman 1946, 86.

the NMA in 1962. Here, Göbl examined both Ghirshman's coin finds, as well as those from Meunié's final campaign at the city's entrance (see below, §2.6). For this, however, he generally did not include information about the dimensions or precise weight of each coin, and relied on the pre-existing classification of Whitehead's *Catalogue of coins in the Punjab Museum* (1914),³⁶³ which for the case of late Kushan coins lacked some specificity. Accordingly, it is plausible that both lifetime and imitation issues of Vasudeva (the Oesho with bull types) were classified as PMC 216, with some qualifications like 'late' and 'type;' at least, the two photographs of such coins published by Ghirshman certainly depict smaller, later imitations rather than official lifetime issues.³⁶⁴ It is less clear whether the 14 coins identified by Göbl as the seated Ardoxsho type were lifetime issues of Kanishka II or imitations thereof. The single example of such a coin published by Ghirshman³⁶⁵ appears to be what Cribb and Bracey now classify as a lifetime issue,³⁶⁶ but we simply have no data about the remainder. Nonetheless, the identifications Göbl provided in this document for the coins excavated by Ghirshman certainly represent an improvement to the data in respect to detail and accuracy.

These coins, of course, figure into one of the central problems posed by Ghirshman's excavations: chronology. More specifically, Ghirshman's date for the phase Begram III has been the subject of considerable debate over the last decades. As noted above (§2.4.2), Kuwayama has dated the phase Begram III later.³⁶⁷ This was based on both the observation that the site of Begram should be the location of the capital of Kapisa visited by Xuanzang in the 7th century CE (*contra* Ghirshman), and that round bastions and stamped medallion pottery (also found at Site I and the intramural qala at Begram) were found at other later sites in the vicinity of Kapisa, Kabul, and Ghazni. Accordingly, Kuwayama proposed that the phase Begram III should be dated from the mid 6th to mid 8th centuries CE,³⁶⁸ certainly not earlier than the 6th century,³⁶⁹ and that there was a longer gap between Begram II and III than Ghirshman proposed.³⁷⁰ While some have expressed reticence at accepting such a late date for Begram III,³⁷¹ the results of more recent excavations at Buddhist monastic sites with stamped

³⁶³ Whitehead 1914.

³⁶⁴ Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXII, 9–10. See the official output of Vasudeva's main copper mint (plausibly Begram) and imitations according to Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, F.C1, F-imit.

³⁶⁵ Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXII, 11.

³⁶⁶ Compare what Cribb and Bracey define as the output of Kanishka II's copper mint (presumably at Begram) versus imitations in Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, G.C1, G-imit.C1-C3.

³⁶⁷ Kuwayama 1974, 1991.

³⁶⁸ Kuwayama 1991, 112, 117–118.

³⁶⁹ Kuwayama 2010, 291.

³⁷⁰ Kuwayama 2010.

³⁷¹ MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 266–267; Fussman 2008, 156; Morris 2017.

medallion pottery and significant late phases in the vicinity of Kabul have reopened these questions to some degree, and certainly indicate that Begram III should be later than the 4th century CE.³⁷²

There are several reasons why it is difficult to use numismatic evidence from the site of Begram to resolve this. The first set of issues are those of the surviving data: Ghirshman did not publish his specific coin finds according to archaeological phases, and limited information with respect to his finds exists today. The second set of issues relate to current understanding of the numismatic record of the region and dating of coin finds. I have already mentioned earlier (see §1.2) that the study of ‘late Kushan coinage’ – i.e. the imitation issues with reverse types of Oesho with bull and seated Ardoxsho, respectively based on those inaugurated by Vasudeva I and Kanishka II – is still ongoing. These types of coins have tended to be dated in past scholarship to the centuries following Vasudeva, and recent work places their production more specifically in the period of Kushano-Sasanian rule in Bactria and Gandhāra, hence around ca. 230–380 CE.³⁷³ There are two ways to mobilise this chronology with respect to the date of Begram III: to either suggest that “the date of the coins cannot be the same as that of the site,”³⁷⁴ or insist that they must be significant.³⁷⁵ However, as noted above (§1.2), it has since become somewhat clearer that some coins minted with these designs were also likely produced later, as they have been found in late phases both at Tapa Sardar (near Ghazni) and Barikot in the Swat valley. Future research will undoubtedly clarify the later production of these coinages. Although the question of the date of Begram III remains somewhat open, Kuwayama’s late chronology may well be correct.

This period of Begram’s history is outside the purview of this dissertation, but the problem remains for now that examples of these ‘late Kushan coinages’ were also found in the main structure of Site II, including Oesho with bull types in room 10 (Nos. 117, 119–120, Pl. 25.1).³⁷⁶ I will return to the issue of dating these coins, the end of the phase Begram II, and the abandonment of the hoard in the following chapter (§3.5.4).

³⁷² See respectively Tepe Narenj, Mes Aynak, and Qol-i Tut in Paiman and Alram 2013; Lerner 2018; Paiman 2018.

³⁷³ Jongeward et al. 2015, 179–180; Errington 2021, 177–178; Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, F.3.

³⁷⁴ As did Kuwayama (2010, n. 4) in general reference to the coins published in Bopearachchi 2001.

³⁷⁵ As in Morris 2017, 99.

³⁷⁶ Bopearachchi 2001, Nos. 117, 119–120; Morris 2017, 84–89.

2.6. The final campaign (1946)

After World War II, the DAFA resumed operations in 1945, now under the direction of Daniel Schlumberger. In 1946, it was decided to resume excavations at Begram. Meunié was delegated to examine the southern entrance of the new royal city (Pl. 21.2) in order to explore its connection to the area excavated at Site I (which lay directly to the north), the fortification wall, and the street running along its interior face that had been documented by Ghirshman. This season ran from the 9th of September to the 24th of October, reaching sterile ground, and the results were published later in the form of a short report in 1959.³⁷⁷

In this report, Meunié noted that three stages of construction had been documented around the break in the fortification wall which constituted the new royal city's southern gate. The resulting corridor was framed on either side by rectangular bastions and provided access to the main north-south street explored at Site I in 1936 and 1937. In the area of the entrance, the first phase of construction that was observed had been built from a foundation of rubble masonry (of the same apparatus described by Hackin and Ghirshman, see above §2.4.3 and §2.5) topped with mudbricks. In all periods these reportedly had the dimensions of 38–40 x 38–40 x 14 cm. A stone masonry waste water drain had been cut into the ground level in this phase, running north-south along the city entrance. Later in this same phase, part of the western fortification wall was expanded to further constrict the width of the city's entrance. Only a small part of the renovated wall of the second phase of construction was detected, but it used the same masonry apparatus as the foundations of the first. In the third and final phase, a new wall was built above with a coarsely arranged stone masonry, expanding this structure further to the south.³⁷⁸ At the centre of the passage constituting the city's gate, a hoard of 65 copper coins attributed by Raoul Curiel to Vasudeva was found 'on the ground' (Pl. 21.2, 'x78'; Pl. 31.1).³⁷⁹

In addition to the main structure of the fortification wall, additional buildings of different periods outside and within the city gates were documented. The partially revealed structures directly outside were attributed to the third building phase. Nestled inside the angles of the fortification wall bastions, and hence framing the city entrance, were the square bases of what were interpreted as the remains of two stupas (with their domes fully razed) (Pl. 21.2, St. 1 and 2; Pl. 31.2). By this phase, habitations had also come to encroach on the passage leading

³⁷⁷ Meunié 1959c.

³⁷⁸ Meunié 1959c, 108–109.

³⁷⁹ Meunié 1959c, 112, Fig. M 1, '78'.

up to the city gate, which was accessible now through one or two side ramps. Meunié suggested that constructions of this phase occurred under Huvishka or a successor.³⁸⁰

Expecting to find a street running along the interior side of the fortification wall as Ghirshman had further to the west, instead they discovered what were described as houses in two levels of occupation pressing up against the interior of the wall. The upper floor level was 70–80 cm below the modern ground surface, and the lower level a further 90 cm deeper below. Respectively, coins of Huvishka and Vasudeva were found in the upper, and of Wima Kadphises and Kanishka in the lower. One room in the upper level (C 5) had been built over the partially collapsed fortification wall.³⁸¹ Meunié also observed that many houses or rooms did not seem to have doorways, and that this phenomenon was also noted in houses of Taxila-Sirkap and Taxila-Sirsukh – there Marshall suggested that such rooms had been accessed from an upper floor.³⁸²

General conclusions included the observation that the first construction phase of the entrance was built prior to the Kushan period, and that the constriction of the entranceway in this period was to defend against an attack. The second and third phases followed in the Kushan period, and in this latter phase the fortification wall had fallen into disuse, while occupation within the city overflowed outside these walls and Buddhism flourished – perhaps ultimately indicating a period of security before the final abandonment of the city. A brief summary of finds follows, including, among other items, coins (127 found, including the hoard mentioned above), some arrowheads and spearpoints, fragments of gold jewellery, pottery, and some fragments of Buddhist schist sculpture.³⁸³

As with all other publications of the excavations at Begram, the report on Meunié's final campaign presents difficulties with respect to interpreting occupation in this area within the wider perspective of the new royal city. At least one thing is quite clear: Meunié mentioned finds of stamped pottery (presumably the stamped medallion variety) among the later material he documented, and the structures he described from the third, final occupation level lying just below the modern ground surface have the characteristics of those of the phase Begram III (as defined by Ghirshman). Thus, the final level of buildings in this area are most likely equivalent to Begram III, and must likewise postdate the Kushan period – despite the fact that coins of Huvishka and Vasudeva were apparently found here.

³⁸⁰ Meunié 1959c, 110.

³⁸¹ Meunié 1959c, 110–111.

³⁸² Meunié 1959c, 111.

³⁸³ Meunié 1959c, 111–113.

The partial presentation of numismatic data in the report is tantalising for this reason, but even though more information about these coins can be picked apart post-hoc, they still leave questions about dating unanswered. The 127 reported coins from this excavation area were not listed in full, none were illustrated, and all were sent to the NMA and are now presumed lost. At least for their presentation in this report, however, they had been cleaned and systematically studied by a numismatist. For the hoard of 65 coins found in the passage of the city entrance, pre-existing classifications for what were Oesho with bull and seated Ardoxsho types (i.e. either lifetime issues of Vasudeva and Kanishka II respectively, or imitations of each) were cited from Whitehead's catalogue of coins from the Punjab Museum,³⁸⁴ and accordingly attributed to Vasudeva. In addition, as already signalled above (§2.5), in 1962 Göbl studied both the coins from the Ghirshman excavations at Begram kept at the NMA, as well as those from Meunié's excavations in 1946. His documentation of the coins found in this hoard did follow Whitehead's type numbers too, but also included information about the dimensions of these coins (albeit not their weights, which would have been equally of interest). Only four Oesho with bull types were represented, and as they were relatively large (22–26 mm in diameter), some were probably lifetime issues of Vasudeva I.³⁸⁵ The remainder of coins were seated Ardoxsho types, and again large in diameter (17.5–25 mm, with an average of 20.7 mm), suggesting that perhaps all could have been lifetime issues of Kanishka II rather than later imitations – at least, according to current classifications.³⁸⁶

Therefore, although the composition of this coin hoard at first sight appears to resemble that of coin finds typical of Begram III, on a closer look it gives the impression of being somewhat earlier. And there is actually no guarantee this hoard was deposited during the latest phase of construction in the area of the city gate either. Its precise find context with respect to stratigraphy is unclear, and we can only wonder if it was really found 'on the ground' at the centre of the city gate (e.g., representing a bag of cash that was dropped during the abandonment of the city), or if it was rather buried intentionally (e.g., in a ritual manner) during a reconstruction of this area. It should also be added that, in respect to the vexed question of the dating Begram III, four Kushano-Sasanian copper coins had also been found outside the city gate, which is interesting as they were rarely reported among the coin finds of the DAFA

³⁸⁴ Whitehead 1914, Pl. XIX, Nos. 216, 228. Note that for the first type, Meunié 1959c, 112, n. 1 has instead "016".

³⁸⁵ Compare generally the official output of the main copper mint (plausibly Begram) and imitations in Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, F.C1, F-imit.

³⁸⁶ Compare again what Cribb and Bracey define as the output of Kanishka II's copper mint (presumably at Begram) versus imitations in Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, G.C1, G-imit.C1-C3.

excavations. Two were mentioned by Meunié as of Hormizd II (ca. 300–303 CE),³⁸⁷ and then four in total were identified by Göbl, adding one of Peroz (ca. 245–270 CE). But only the find context of the Hormizd II coins are noted – these simply outside of the south wall of room A 1 – and hence these coins can only help to support a vague *terminus post quem* for the latest building phase in this area. At least they give the impression that, occasionally, official Kushano-Sasanian coppers (rather than the ubiquitous ‘late Kushan’ types attributed to this period) circulated at the city too. More generally, we can give Meunié some credit for having a clear conception about which coin finds were of potential relevance for dating the different structures he examined. Namely, although coins of Apollodotus, Hermaeus, Kujula Kadphises, and Soter Megas were documented, he stressed that they had been found in the masonry drain from the first occupation level and outside the city walls beyond the west bastion, and hence could not be used to date the construction of this phase.³⁸⁸

Despite its difficulties, perhaps the most valuable outcome of this report is that Meunié’s plan of the area of the city gate, his illustration of the western angle of the fortification wall,³⁸⁹ and his detailed observations as an architect of the development of buildings and renovations in this space altogether give a strong impression of the complexity that lies behind the simple construct of progressive occupation phases that is Ghirshman’s Begram I–III. One good example of this, already mentioned above, is the fact that mudbricks of all different periods used in this area were apparently the same size. This is not encouraging, as brick dimensions are often taken to constitute a meaningful chronological marker.³⁹⁰

Another example emerges from Meunié’s observation that the second construction phase of the part of the western fortification wall constituting the city gate had been preserved only at a height of 30 to 40 cm when cleared, and had also been masked by bricks to raise the level of the ground surface for the establishment of the third level of construction.³⁹¹ Although this phenomenon is not surprising in principle, it presents an important reminder: we can piece together some amount of ‘positive’ activity in the archaeological stratigraphy of Begram as it was excavated and documented (i.e. depositions/layers, constructions, fills), but we are generally missing an enormous amount of information on ‘negative’ activities that would have been better detected through (modern) stratigraphically conducted excavations, such as cuts

³⁸⁷ Meunié 1959c, 112.

³⁸⁸ Meunié 1959c, 111.

³⁸⁹ Meunié 1959c, Fig. M 2.

³⁹⁰ Certainly not entirely mistakenly. See, for example, the table of brick dimensions from sites in the vicinity of Kapisa, Kabul and Ghazni in Kuwayama 1991, 98.

³⁹¹ Meunié 1959c, 109.

made into earlier layers (e.g., for building foundations), the levelling of ground for new constructions, the removal of building materials for re-use elsewhere, and erosion of exposed remains. For this reason – and although it would be a neat solution – it is also difficult to be sure on the basis of the published data that Meunié’s three layers of construction detected at the city gate are precisely equivalent to Ghirshman’s Begram I–III.

After Meunié’s last campaign it was decided that work at Begram should not be continued. In 1946, the DAFA was faced with multiple pressing obligations, including the publication of the results of the Hackin campaigns at Begram and working through material from these excavations in the NMA. Schlumberger’s private correspondence at the time also reveals that he regarded the site to be ‘not very promising’ and ‘exhausted by Hackin’s extraordinary find.’³⁹² A visit paid by the Indian Cultural Mission to Meunié’s excavations may not have encouraged matters. This mission included, among others, Mortimer Wheeler and M.A. Shakur of the Peshawar Museum. Shakur published an account of the cultural tour made by the mission in Afghanistan, *A dash through the heart of Afghanistan* (1947), which also made his opinion on the merits of the DAFA quite clear. The book’s introduction does not hesitate to offer critical comments on the impact of the monopoly the DAFA had held, the partage agreement, and the excavation methodologies that were followed³⁹³ – all betraying a clear interest in negotiating a future slice of the archaeological pie for the mission’s members.

After some visits in the vicinity of Kabul, the mission left on the 1st of October 1946 for Begram. Shakur first described the journey, the landscape, and points of historical interest of the site and finds made there, then turned to the excavations they witnessed that day:

“The present dig of Mon Meunie [sic], as seen by members of the mission, is nothing less than the destruction of valuable evidence which might throw further light on the past history of the site. His work to all intents and purposes was in search of treasures, as is done by ‘common’ people. It was not conducted in the light of the science of Field Archaeology. He had dug at random, without any plan, without stratification, without single drawn section, without recording antiquities, and above all, also had left the work to the care and mercy of the labourers, who smashed pottery and removed baskets full of earth which had not been searched ...”³⁹⁴

³⁹² Olivier-Utard 1997, 181.

³⁹³ Shakur 1947, 2–5.

³⁹⁴ Shakur 1947, 36.

This continues at some length. Shakur's assessment has some merit, but is not entirely fair. The methodology of excavation developed by the Wheelers in the 1930s had certainly not been adopted by the DAFA, and operations at Begram that day probably looked shockingly unscientific to the mission. However, on that single day in October, they did not see the historical, architectural, and archaeological insights that Meunié brought to his work (discussed above), and given the clear agenda of the tour there was probably little incentive to be diplomatic about work done by French archaeologists.

This conflict speaks to broader shifts in archaeological practice at the time. The DAFA also re-oriented itself in its post-war incarnation with Schlumberger's assumption of directorship. This eventually resulted in an institution that became less of a diplomatic instrument and more scientific in orientation, with increasing openness for international cooperation,³⁹⁵ although the monopoly on excavations and partage agreement would only be disbanded in the 1960s.

Meunié's final excavation at Begram, then, marked something like the end of an era: a final, necessary campaign to wrap up over two decades of the DAFA's interest at the site before getting along with the formidable task of publishing the results of excavations in the second hoard room. But before it was 'exhausted,' Begram's impact was profound. It was the source of Masson's enormous collections, and the site which had helped Foucher to interpret the ancient landscape of Kapisa through Xuanzang's testimony. It had provided the early DAFA with its most sensational finds, as well as fame for the hoard's discoverers. Begram launched careers, collaborations, and conflicts, and the site's own fate was likewise shaped by the individuals who explored it, most especially Masson, Foucher, Joseph and Ria Hackin, Carl, Meunié, Kohzad, Hamelin, and Roman and Tania Ghirshman. What I have attempted to capture in this chapter is the legacy of their work: an alluring, momentous, incomplete, and chaotic view into life at this ancient city.

2.7. Taking the data forward

In this chapter, I have synthesised and evaluated past fieldwork campaigns at the site of Begram in light of the wider historical and social context within which they took place. Although it is perfectly clear that re-examining the data produced by Masson and the DAFA can never achieve a precise and subtle analysis of the history of occupation at this site, the

³⁹⁵ See the general appraisal of this second period of the DAFA (1945–1965) in Olivier-Utard 1997, 225–230.

process of clarifying the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies, data, and results of work by Begram's explorers certainly helps to establish which findings still stand today and how the available data can be taken forwards.

These available data, when mobilised carefully, can be used to advance knowledge and create new hypotheses about the Begram hoard's contents, nature, and significance. More specifically, we can more clearly see the archaeological context of the hoard through three different scales of perspective – although as we progressively zoom our perspective out, the level of detail that can be offered decreases. The first scale is the immediate archaeological context of the hoard within the Site II structure, the second is that of the development of life at the city more broadly, and the third is the position of the city within the wider archaeological landscape of Kapisa.

The first scale of context is especially critical for the purposes of this dissertation, but has been virtually ignored by most scholarship on the hoard. As I hope I have shown amply above, this is because the surviving data are immense and fraught with documentation problems. Reassembling the data pertaining to the surviving area at Site II gives us a clearer impression of the function and development of the building within which the hoard was found, and the distribution of finds in this space, including the hoard objects as well as others attesting to the use of this structure over time. Disentangling the coin finds from this building in particular can help us to speak with more precision about the date of the deposition of the hoard, especially as surviving records of the pottery collected within the bounds of this building are scarce. Depth measurements likewise can help to give an impression of different layers of occupation within this relatively restricted space, namely through clusters of objects found in the same room at the same depth, suggesting floor levels. Nonetheless, we should not mistake these indications for pure stratigraphic data, and we are still missing information about negative activity in the site's stratigraphy. I accordingly operationalise the above data in Chapter 3 to interpret the function and development of the building at Site II as well as the specific archaeological context of the hoard within this space (see §3.5.2 and §3.5.3), and give further details on the contents and arrangement of the hoard in Chapter 4.

The data discussed in this chapter also give us more insights from a wider second scale of archaeological context – that of life at the city more broadly – although many problems remain unresolved. Although we can have an impression of the development of occupation phases structured around Ghirshman's scheme of Begram I–III, these are best conceived of as long macrophases within which we are missing decades and even centuries of details about human activities within these periods – here most clearly with respect to activity like the

renovation and use of buildings over time. It is still unclear how the different phases of occupation (especially those noted at Site I and the city gate) fit into this broader scheme of (macro)phases. It is also difficult to ascribe each of these phases a secure absolute date, particularly without comprehensive documentation of pottery across the diverse excavated areas. For this reason, the numismatic record of the site – the coins collected by Masson at Begram and its hinterland as well as the coins documented through the DAFA excavations – provide an important corpus of data. The surviving data from the DAFA excavations has been reassembled in the table presented in Appendix III. There, the coin finds are organised according to the year of the excavation campaign and area explored, and then indicated in order of the local numismatic sequence.

These data are still deeply imperfect. In this table, I have favoured more reliable bodies of data (as indicated there) rather than all initially published identifications, and it is not possible to re-evaluate most of these today because the coin finds from Begram in the NMA are now presumed lost. I have also included the identifications presented by Ghirshman for the 47 coins from the 1937 and 1938 campaigns that he studied in the NMA (see §2.5), but not included them in the final count as it is not precisely clear which campaigns each were found in. I list them in the table nonetheless because they show that previously-unidentified and now lost coins from these campaigns also included numerous specimens of types (official and/or imitation) inaugurated by Vasudeva I and Kanishka II.

One obvious problem with this dataset are the fact that, of the ca. 873 coins documented from the DAFA excavations, about a third remained unidentified. Another problem is that these coins were not published according to the different occupation layers they were found in (when identified by excavators), and this information cannot be reconstructed from surviving documentation. This body of data rather gives an impression of the history of occupation at the site of Begram through the proxy of the coinage used there. In this respect, the data from the coins studied by Göbl from Ghirshman's excavations at Burj-i Abdullah and the new royal city, as well as from Meunié's excavation at the city gate are still quite valuable because these excavations reached sterile ground and hence each represent relatively good samples of the coinage used throughout the life of this city.

On the basis of the numismatic data in sum, and especially the coins studied by Göbl, we can see that the latest coins identified at the new royal city were six Kushano-Sasanian coppers (one of Peroz, ca. 245–270 CE, two of Hormizd II, ca. 300–303 CE), a copper of Shri Shahi (6th or 7th century?) found in an unspecified excavation area at a depth of 70 cm, and a silver Sasanian coin of Khusrau II (ca. 591–628) from the spoil of the sondage at the Burj-i

Abdullah. None of these coins were documented in reliable contexts. The vast volume of coins from the site, on the other hand, were minted in the Kushan period, with lifetime issues spanning in considerable number from Kujula Kadphises to Kanishka II, dropping off with a single, certain identification of a coin of Vasishka – the Kushano-Sasanians putatively having captured the city late in the reign of Kanishka II. The data as assembled, then, would give a strong impression of a key period of occupation at the site under the Kushan Empire, with the final main occupation phase Begram III concluding under the Kushano-Sasanians around the beginning of the 4th century CE, with the Shri Shahi and Khusrau II coins representing later accidental losses.

But this picture is too simplistic. As indicated throughout this chapter, the phase Begram III seems to date later than the 4th century CE, and the central problem here is understanding the numismatic record of the site after the end of formal Kushan rule. Again, the key difficulty is found in interpreting the ubiquitous Oesho with bull type Vasudeva I imitations, which were categorically listed together with lifetime issues of this king in studies of Begram's coins – hence “Vasudeva I (including imitations)” in the table. It is likewise now impossible to know whether all coins excavated at Begram of seated Ardoxsho types, following designs minted first under Kanishka II, were actually lifetime or imitation issues. As noted above (§1.3), current classifications associate these types of imitations to production under the Kushano-Sasanians, with Vasudeva I imitations (according to design and weight) now dated to between ca. 230–380 CE.³⁹⁶ Of Masson's surviving collection from Begram, 182 such imitation Vasudeva I coins were documented, gradually dropping in weight from ca. 7 g to 1 g.³⁹⁷ Yet, as I have also mentioned, examples of such coins have been documented in later contexts, including in a ca. 7th–8th century CE layer at Tapa Sardar (near Ghazni) and at the urban site of Barikot in the Swat valley. The only real solution is to admit that Vasudeva I imitation type coins either remained in circulation or continued to be minted – presumably by local agents in reaction to a requirement for currency – after the 4th century CE.

In the following chapter, I will comment a little further on what a comparison between the numismatic datasets produced by Masson and the DAFA at Begram can tell us about the end of the occupation phase of Begram II, the date of Begram III, and the break in occupation between them (§2.5.4). But for now, to pre-empt my comments on these points, I can simply stress that coins can help with dating by indicating broad chronologies as well as *termini post*

³⁹⁶ Jongeward et al. 2015, 179–180; Errington 2021, 177–178; Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, F.3.

³⁹⁷ Errington 2021, 177–178.

quem for archaeological contexts on a micro scale, but they cannot not solve all of our problems.

The third scale of context that past archaeological investigation at Begram informs us about is the position of the city within the wider archaeological landscape of Kapisa (Pl. 5). Here, however, the broader picture remains yet more obscure. As we have seen, Begram is surrounded by partially documented and virtually unexplored sites which are equally (or even more) difficult to date than the ancient city. Furthermore, the archaeological landscape of this highland basin has been profoundly impacted by the expanding settlement and increasing demand for arable land in recent centuries, which means that remote sensing of previously detected and new sites through modern satellite imagery can only be partially successful. The *Archaeological gazetteer of Afghanistan*'s coverage of this region is fairly comprehensive with respect to known sites,³⁹⁸ but still gives the impression of a partially explored historical landscape.

Indeed, detected sites tend to be predominantly Buddhist, representing the remains of monasteries and their adjoining sacred areas that in several cases featured monumental stupas (hence making them somewhat easier for modern observers to spot). The findings of past explorations of these monasteries in the wider Koh Daman – including work after 1945 not specifically covered here – have been more recently re-evaluated by Fussman,³⁹⁹ and further information has been added by Errington in light of the study of Masson's documentation.⁴⁰⁰ Although many issues relating to these Buddhist sites remain uncertain, at least we have information about them.

Comparatively, we are very poorly informed about the history of other regular settlements in this region which hosted the wider population, as well as the immediate hinterland of the dasht of Begram connected to the city. For example, it is plausible that other settlements – smaller towns or villages – could have also existed in the vicinity of Charikar or Jabal Saraj adjacent to the basin's western piedmonts,⁴⁰¹ as well as on the southern edge of the dasht of Begram at Ghundi Paiza (Pl. 6), although the nature of the site mentioned by

³⁹⁸ The coverage of sites on the Koh-i Pahlavan in particular is confused both in the first and revised editions. Various overlapping site names and toponyms appear here. For example, Ghundi Paiza (the site 5 km south of Begram mentioned by Ghirshman as a possible candidate for the capital of Kapisa visited by Xuanzang) first was roughly correctly spatially located, however under the name "Kuh-i Bacha," the stupa excavated by Masson on the Koh-i Pahlavan (Ball 1982, No. 620). In the revised edition, Ghundi Paiza was given a separate inventory number, re-located incorrectly on the Koh-i Pahlavan, and given the perplexing description "Formerly Masson's Kūh-i Bacha, now identified with Kūh-i Pahlawān, probably Shotorak" (Ball 2019a, No. 2078).

³⁹⁹ Fussman 2008, 119–186.

⁴⁰⁰ Errington 2017a, 82–84.

⁴⁰¹ Ball 2019a, Nos. 176, 458.

Ghirshman is still unclear. Likewise, the extensive remains of a city with many mounds mentioned by Masson at Tatarang Zar further to the south are still obscure to us beyond this 19th century testimony.⁴⁰²

The history of occupation in Nijrab and Tagab (modern Kapisa province) to the east of the Koh Daman plain also remains highly murky. These highland valleys were surely settled by the Kushan period and lay along the route between Begram and Gandhāra, but have often been inaccessible to foreign researchers. A small number of sites here were nonetheless detected by Masson, Foucher, Khan and Tarzi (see §2.4.1), as well as Philip Kohl through a brief survey in 1976 (See Pl. 5).⁴⁰³ While Nijrab and Alisai hosted Buddhist monasteries, and at least some of these structures in Nijrab may have been established already in the Kushan period,⁴⁰⁴ the nature of most of these sites is indeterminate and their dating can only be broadly guessed at. One of these sites plausibly hosted a small settlement in the Kushan period – perhaps one of the mounds of Qand-i Pir or Tepe Tughak.⁴⁰⁵

The clearest evidence for a second ancient settlement in the vicinity of Begram is found back on the plain (Pl. 6). More specifically, it is located in the very southeast of the dasht of Begram, located between the Koh Daman (or Bari-ab) river and a ridge along the edge of the dasht before it drops on its other side to the Panjshir. This is the site of Kafir Qala, briefly described by Foucher and mentioned in the *Gazetteer* with an ascribed Kushan-Hunnic dating of the 1st–7th centuries CE.⁴⁰⁶ What is not clear from only looking at recent satellite imagery, is that this site is located at the southeastern fringe of the extent of cultivable land on the dasht of Begram. In satellite imagery from the 2000s (Pl. 7), we can see that agricultural activity on the dasht has been more limited towards the northern part of this plain, although traces of earlier cultivation are still visible. Indeed, the Soviet 1:50,000 military topographic map covering this area, published in 1983, indicates essentially the same limited extent of cultivation as in the 2000s.⁴⁰⁷ This makes it possible to offer some very broad hypotheses on the foundation of the Kafir Qala and the development of the dasht of Begram (see §3.5.1).

Yes, we are far from being comprehensively informed about the archaeological context of the Begram hoard according to the three scales of perspective outlined above. Nonetheless, some of the gaps in our knowledge can be remedied on the basis of the re-examined data

⁴⁰² Ball 2019a, No. 1154.

⁴⁰³ Kohl 1978.

⁴⁰⁴ See Tarzi 1999, 83–89; Ball 2019a, Nos. 32, 773.

⁴⁰⁵ See Ball 2019a, Nos. 903, 1186.

⁴⁰⁶ Foucher 1942, 141; Ball 2019a, No. 491.

⁴⁰⁷ Sheet I-42-43-B.

presented in this chapter. In the following chapter, I will use these data to help chart the development of life at Begram throughout antiquity until the deposition of the hoard.

3. More than a crossroads: life at Begram until the deposition of the hoard

3.1. Begram and Kapisa within Kushan Central Asia

This chapter traces the development of life at Begram through antiquity until the deposition of the hoard, with the ultimate aim of clarifying the historical conditions that contributed to accumulation of the hoard objects in this space at the heart of Kushan Central Asia (as defined above, §1.5). Here, I operationalise the archaeological data I examined in Chapter 2 to consider aspects of the three scales of context they speak to: the immediate archaeological context of the hoard within the Site II structure, the development of life at the city of Begram, and the status of Begram in wider Kapisa. On top of this, I also consider a fourth scale of context, being the position of Begram and Kapisa within broader political and cultural developments in Bactria and Gandhāra in antiquity – each respectively with stronger ties to wider Iranian and Indian cultural spheres.

One of my key aims here is to produce an alternative narrative to depictions of Begram's status as a 'crossroads' that was, above all, situated along long-distance trade routes.⁴⁰⁸ Certainly an important component of Kapisa's strategic interest to various rulers and states over time derived from its position along the main routes which connected southern Central Asia and India. However, the concept of a 'crossroads' conveys the sense of a junction between other entities. To provide a shift of emphasis, Kapisa can also be productively conceived of as a distinct region and a dynamic borderland in the sense developed by Parker,⁴⁰⁹ which was tied through varying processes to both Bactria and Gandhāra throughout antiquity. Kapisa was divided from Bactria by the Hindu Kush, but also lay before where the frontier of India was conceived to begin (i.e., just further down the Kabul river, perhaps before Laghman).⁴¹⁰ Indeed, the region was surrounded by many boundaries – geographical, cultural, demographical, political, and economic – but the permeability of these boundaries changed over time. The incorporation of Kapisa into larger empires and states throughout antiquity served as a key catalyst for these processes.

⁴⁰⁸ A conception that implicitly underpins a number of interpretations of the Begram hoard (see §1.3), but stated most explicitly in Mehendale 1996 and the conclusion of Mehendale 1997.

⁴⁰⁹ Parker 2006.

⁴¹⁰ At least the Achaemenid administrative 'border' encountered through Alexander's campaigns, for which see Rapin 2018, 158–161.

In this chapter, I begin with some comments on the limits of the region of Kapisa as understood here, its environmental affordances, the nature of the physical geographical frontiers separating it from Bactria and Gandhāra, and the pathways people travelled to cross these frontiers in antiquity (§3.2). I then proceed by examining life at Begram through the structure of its political history. I do this because the excavation data produced from Begram give a very partial view into development there: settlement prior to the 2nd century BCE is not well-represented by the material excavated by the DAFA, the scheme of Begram I–III collapses centuries of activity into single phases, and the absolute chronology of these phases is also not entirely clear. Therefore, I begin with a discussion of life at Begram under the Achaemenids, when Alexander passed through there, and its entanglements with the Seleucid and Mauryan Empires (§3.3). Then, I turn to the Indo-Greek and ‘transitional’ periods (§3.4), before looking at Begram during the Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian periods (§3.5). In the latter section, I especially consider the position of the city within the Kushan Empire (§3.5.1), analyse the function and development of the structure at Site II within which the hoard was found (§3.5.2), attempt to delineate the limits and distribution of the hoard deposits within this space (§3.5.3), and comment on conditions at the time of the deposition of the hoard and activity at the site thereafter (§3.5.4).

3.2. Boundaries, affordances, and routes

Begram was located in the ancient region of Kapisa, but we do not know the precise limits of this area in antiquity, and where its boundaries were conceived to fall may have also shifted over time. The toponym, at least, survives in the name of the modern administrative province of Kapisa that partly intersects with the probable limits of the ancient region. Indeed, the modern province Kapisa does not include the site of Begram, which is instead located in the adjacent Parwan province. Looking to physical geographical features of this space, Begram is at the centre of the Parwan-Kapisa plateau, a highland basin framed by the Hindu Kush, the Paghman mountains to the west, and the Koh-i Safi mountains to the southeast, and separated by spurs of these mountains from the Kabul basin further to the south. Parts of the Parwan-Kapisa plain have been variously referred to as Kohistan (‘land of mountains’), the Koh Daman (‘mountain’s foot’), and more recently Shamali (‘northern’). Fussman has addressed the problem of locating ancient Kapisa’s boundaries, noting that it probably corresponded to an area rather larger than the modern Koh Daman (including Begram), likely also encompassing Kabul and the lower Ghorband and Panjshir rivers. Hence, he opts to divide his discussion of

sites across this area with more geographically-precise units, using Koh Daman to refer to the Parwan-Kapisa plain.⁴¹¹

Perhaps the location and limits of Kapisa in antiquity are best understood in reference to where its core was thought to lie. The toponym Kapisa (Skt. Kāpiśa) is presumably of pre-Achaemenid age,⁴¹² and the region appears to have had a homonymous central settlement throughout antiquity called Kapisi (Skt. Kāpiśī). The description of the country of Kapisi (Jiabishi 迦畢試) provided by Xuanzang in the 7th century CE makes it clear that the core of this region was the Parwan-Kapisa plain, and that the location of its capital must be the site of Begram, as already noticed by Foucher.⁴¹³ Begram remains the only identified such large settlement in this space.⁴¹⁴ The toponym Begram (Bagrām بگرام, also used for the modern settlement adjacent to the military airfield) is of more recent origin, and is used for a small number of other sites in eastern Afghanistan. It has been etymologised in different ways, but generally seems to simply mean something like ‘capital/*the* city.’⁴¹⁵ The location of the Alexandria (of the Caucasus) reportedly founded by Alexander remains unconfirmed, but Bernard is probably correct in that Begram was the location of both Kapisi and this foundation.⁴¹⁶ Thus an earlier settlement was ‘re-founded’ by Alexander and later became known by its original name again. Already by the latter half of the 2nd century BCE, posthumous bronze coins minted in the name of the Graeco-Bactrian king Eucratides (ca. 171–145 BCE) are found in the region featuring the Kharoṣṭhī legend on the reverse reading *kavisiye nagara devata* (‘city goddess of Kapisi’).⁴¹⁷ The city was also certainly known by this name in the Kushan period. A copper alloy reliquary casket (Pl. 32.1) probably of the latter half of the 2nd century CE deposited in Manikyala’s Great Stupa (i.e. around 60 km southeast of Taxila, in the northern Punjab) features a Gāndhārī inscription telling us that it is the “Donation of the governor of Kaviśi, son of the governor Gaṇavhryaka” (*Kaviśiakṣatrapasa Gaṇavhryakakṣatrapaputrasa daṇamukho*).⁴¹⁸ For consistency, I continue to refer to the site

⁴¹¹ See Fussman 2008, 119–120.

⁴¹² It appears already as Kāpiśa in Pāṇini *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.2.99.

⁴¹³ Foucher 1925, 255–273; 1942, 138–145.

⁴¹⁴ As stressed by Fussman 2008, 120.

⁴¹⁵ Masson (1842, 163–165) etymologised the toponym as comprised of the Turkic title *bey* (‘chief’) and Hindi (also Sanskrit) *grām* (‘city,’ but also ‘inhabited place’ or ‘village,’ etc.). Cunningham (1871, 29) agreed with the general sense of the meaning, but offered a derivation from Sanskrit *vi* instead, coming to *Vigrāma* (then, emphatically ‘*the* city’) with *Bigram* constituting the Hindi version of the same.

⁴¹⁶ Bernard 1982, 241–242.

⁴¹⁷ Mitchiner 1976, Type 194; within Masson’s own collection at Begram, Errington 2021, 137, IOC.44.a, Fig. 24.16.

⁴¹⁸ Edition and trans. Baums 2012, 249, No. 53; CKI 150. The reliquary casket is in the British Museum, 1848,0602.2.a–b. The latest coins contained in the relic deposit were a gold quarter dinar and a copper unit of Huvishka.

of Begram by its more recent name, and I will return to the significance of the Manikyala reliquary later (§3.5.1).

As I use the historical toponyms of Bactria and Gandhāra throughout this dissertation, I elect to retain the use of Kapisa to loosely refer to a relatively limited microregion: the Parwan-Kapisa plain – unquestionably the core of this region in antiquity – until around the site of Tepe Skandar, in addition to Nijrab and Tagab to the east of Begram, which are located in the modern Kapisa province. The Kabul basin may well have also been included in ancient Kapisa, but can also be conceptualised as a separate microregion (Kabul city is located ca. 60 km to the south of Begram) with ties to broader developments in the north over time.

Our knowledge about settlement in the Kabul basin in antiquity is limited. Activity in the Achaemenid and post-Achaemenid period is indicated by the chance find in the park Chaman-i Hazouri in 1933 of a hoard of silver coins (Achaemenid, Archaic Greek, Classical Greek, and locally minted examples) and jewellery.⁴¹⁹ Recent work on material from the site of Mes Aynak, located at an enormous source of copper in neighbouring Logar province, also indicates evidence for settlement activity already in the Achaemenid period through the identification of a tulip bowl from this period.⁴²⁰ Then, although Kabul does not seem to figure with any prominence in Alexander's campaigns,⁴²¹ later at least three Buddhist monasteries (Tepe Maranjan 2, Shevaki 1, Kamari 2) appear to have been constructed in its vicinity, perhaps in the 1st century CE according to Fussman, who considers the existence of more Kushan foundations to be probable.⁴²² More recent projects at Kabul's later citadel, Bala Hissar, have good potential to concretely augment this incomplete picture of the city's non-Buddhist settlement history through the detection of earlier activity at this site.⁴²³ More dense settlement in the basin coinciding with Kabul's increase in political importance may have only accelerated from the 4th and 5th centuries CE when activity at Begram seems to have declined before being revitalised for the phase Begram III perhaps between the 6th to 8th centuries (see §3.5.4). Thus, the restricted understanding of the limits of Kapisa is suitable for my present purposes, although I accept that its reality with respect to the contours of historical geography in antiquity is quite open to question.

⁴¹⁹ Published in Curiel and Schlumberger 1953.

⁴²⁰ Noori et al. 2019. For further on tulip bowls, see §3.3 below.

⁴²¹ See Grenet's remarks on Ortospāna, probably rather to be located in Ghazni, in Rapin 2018.

⁴²² Fussman 2008, 108.

⁴²³ For example, some pottery potentially of the Bronze Age and Kushan periods uncovered in rescue excavations is published in Gascoigne et al. 2013, 193.

A few other historical toponyms exist that are relevant to Kapisa in antiquity. The most important are Paropamisus, Jibin 罽賓, and Gaofu 高附, although we know the precise limits of none of these entities (here readers may notice a pattern). Paropamisus is a toponym known with many orthographic variants in Graeco-Roman writing that essentially refers to a region covering a central part of the Hindu Kush without a clear extent. It almost certainly included all of Kapisa, and Begram was (again) presumably its central town. The region's name tends to be given an Iranian etymology, whether real or popular: “(the land) beyond (the land) above the eagle/falcon.”⁴²⁴ In the Bisitun inscription of Darius I (522–486 BCE), it is referred to interchangeably with Gandhāra in the *dahyāva* (country) lists: in Old Persian, Gandhāra is retained, and in Elamite and Babylonian respectively it is Parrubaresana and Paruparesanna.⁴²⁵ Examining the administrative structure of the Achaemenid Empire at the time of Darius III (i.e. into the structure of great, main, and minor satrapies), Jacobs has proposed that Paropamisus was a minor satrapy subordinate to the main satrapy of Gandhāra, with the main satrapy of Gandhāra then subordinate to the great satrapy of Bactria.⁴²⁶ Acknowledging the difficulties of attempting to define ‘borders’ for hazily documented and dynamic historical regions, the frontiers of the Paropamisus as a cultural and/or administrative unit were probably conceived to extend north of the central ridges of the Hindu Kush, border Aria and Drangiana to the west, run south somewhere along the road between Kabul and Ghazni, and extend east along the Kabul river before Laghman.⁴²⁷

The location and boundaries of Jibin are even less clear. In later Buddhist records this toponym refers to Kashmir, but in the Han period, it may have referred to a space somewhere in the vicinity of Kapisa and Gandhāra.⁴²⁸ The toponym is primarily of interest because a rather detailed account of fraught diplomatic engagement with unidentifiable (Indo-Scythian?) rulers of this region and the Han during 48–33 BCE is given in the *Hanshu (Documents of the Han)*,⁴²⁹ a standard history compiled primarily by Ban Gu and completed in ca. 110–121 CE. This episode is contemporary to Kapisa's ‘transitional’ period – i.e. when we do not know who was ruling the region – and it is tempting to connect the two together. Nonetheless, the description of Jibin preceding this episode cannot be reconciled with Begram and its immediate vicinity;

⁴²⁴ Vogelsang 2000.

⁴²⁵ Respectively DB_p I.16; DB_e I.13; DB_b 6. See Henkelman 2017, 216, n. 229.

⁴²⁶ Jacobs 1994, 217–220.

⁴²⁷ Consult and compare Jacobs 1994, 217–220; Rapin 2018.

⁴²⁸ The debate has been substantial. See the commentary in Hill 2015b, 36–64.

⁴²⁹ *Hanshu* 96A.3884–3886, see translation in Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, 107–109. The episode is also commented on in Falk 2015, 78–80, §50 (although the proposed reference to Artemidorus in Wutoulao 烏頭勞 should be taken with caution).

the toponym clearly rather points to a lowland area further east into the northwest Indian frontier. Among other things, apparently Jibin is low and flat, its fauna included elephants, monkeys, and peacocks, and the region's inhabitants minted gold and silver coins depicting a human face and a mounted rider. The latter remark cannot be entirely squared with the numismatic record of any region or microregion the toponym should refer to.⁴³⁰

The toponym Gaofu is usually identified with Kabul based on phonetic reconstructions.⁴³¹ It appears in the *Hanshu* to refer to an area ruled by a Yuezhi *yabgu* in the 1st century BCE,⁴³² but this was later corrected in another standard history, *Hou Hanshu* (*Documents of the Later Han*, compiled by Fan Ye, ca. 5th century CE), which places the same *yabgu* at Dumi 都密 (Termez).⁴³³ Gaofu is subsequently described in the latter text as a large kingdom with a similar way of life to Tianzhu 天竺 (northwest India), and that its people are wealthy and excellent traders, although weak. It is noted that the region has changed hands between different masters, including Tianzhu, Jibin, and Anxi 安息 (Arsacids/Parthians, here apparently to be understood as the Indo-Parthians).⁴³⁴ I will return to the implications of this text for Kapisa's political history in the transitional period below (§3.4). For now, I would like to stress the difficulty presented by the fact that neither Jibin nor Gaofu seem to refer precisely to Kapisa, although Gaofu's location in Kabul should indicate a relatively close connection to the region, or even represent a toponym encompassing both Kapisa and Kabul. At the end of the day, such interpretative snags are commonly encountered in writing on the 'Western Regions' in Han standard histories, where layers of information were often compiled from old and indirect sources of intelligence. It is advisable in such cases to not too earnestly attempt to mine these texts for neutral historical information.

In terms of Kapisa's environmental affordances, it is easy to see the how the region's geographical position was attractive to various rulers and states over time through its provision of access through the Hindu Kush, effectively connecting Bactria to the north, India to the southeast, and Arachosia to the south. However, this was not its only draw.

The earliest coherent impression we have of the resources and customs of Kapisa are from Xuanzang's report in the 7th century CE, which (among other things) points to a diversity of cereal and fruit cultivation, horse-breeding, and the availability of goods from other

⁴³⁰ See now comments in Cribb 2021, 101.

⁴³¹ See Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, 122, n. 296; Hill 2015a, 364.

⁴³² *Hanshu* 96A.3891, trans. Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, 122–123.

⁴³³ *Hou Hanshu* 88.2921, trans. Hill 2015a, 29, §13. On the confusion, Grenet 2006; Falk 2015, 73–78.

⁴³⁴ *Hou Hanshu* 88.2921, trans. Hill 2015a, 29, §14.

regions.⁴³⁵ Indeed, with its two perennial rivers, the Ghorband and Panjshir, and mild highland climate (Begram is at an altitude of ca. 1470 m), Kapisa has the potential for high agricultural productivity, providing conditions for the cultivation of two crops a year on a single plot of farmland.⁴³⁶ Although we are entirely lacking archaeobotanical data for the period under study, it is possible that grain crops grown in antiquity included barley and wheat (grown as winter crops) and perhaps rice or millet (as summer crops), but the reality of this remains entirely open for future investigation.⁴³⁷ Famous produce of this area includes mulberries, grapes, and other dried fruit. Although the antiquity of horticulture and viticulture in the region is also unclear, viticulture does pre-date the arrival of Alexander the Great (see §3.3), and both grapes and wine produced from the region were known in ancient India.⁴³⁸ Further information from Alexander's campaigns also make it clear that mobile pastoralism was highly productive in the Hindu Kush (§3.3), and local herds were probably especially constituted of sheep and goats. Although mineral resources in neighbouring valleys are rich – most notably silver in the Panjshir and Ghorband valleys – the exploitation of these resources in antiquity is not proven,⁴³⁹ if highly plausible, and hence tends to be presumed.⁴⁴⁰

It is possible to follow paths to other ancient regions from Kapisa, but I restrict my comments here to the routes through the region's frontiers with Bactria and Gandhāra as its most significant neighbours. Although a number of capillary routes through the Hindu Kush also connected provided access between these regions bypassing Kapisa,⁴⁴¹ most movement – especially in groups and with pack animals – probably followed most of the thrust of Foucher's 'old road'⁴⁴² connecting Bactra (Balkh) to Taxila via Kapisa. The use of parts of this route is partly determined by cultural factors (i.e. the cultural and economic attraction of certain areas over time), but strongly shaped by environmental ones (especially climate and topography).

Starting from one of the towns of Taxila (Pl. 4) – an urban centre and northwest terminal point of the routes constituting the *uttarāpatha* which ran across Indo-Gangetic India – one could cross the plains to Attock and more easily cross the Indus at its confluence with the Kabul

⁴³⁵ See T 2087.873c10–16, trans. Beal 1906, 54.

⁴³⁶ Identified as one of a number of such 'double-crop pocket zones' along the Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Himalayas by Olivieri in Spengler et al. 2020.

⁴³⁷ See, for comparison, the recently-published archaeobotanical data from Barikot (Swat valley) in Spengler et al. 2020.

⁴³⁸ Fussman 2008, 119, n. 3.

⁴³⁹ See investigations on historical exploitation in Thomalsky et al. 2013.

⁴⁴⁰ See e.g. Widemann 2000.

⁴⁴¹ For example, Rtveladze (2012, 89–92) describes a mountainous route between the Peshawar valley and Fayzabad (Badakhshan) that was used until the 20th century, which he (however) considers to have been the main historical path between northwest India and the Oxus valley.

⁴⁴² Foucher 1942.

river in the winter when the rivers were low.⁴⁴³ Then, a traveller could follow the Kabul river to the northwest, passing by the urban centres of the Peshawar valley: the older Puṣkalāvātī, with settlement focused in the Hellenistic and Kushan periods on the mound of Charsadda-Shaikhān-dheri, or the more recently founded Puruṣpura (Peshawar). Proceeding on through one of the passes (perhaps Michni pass in this period) into Nagarahāra, travellers probably moved along the right bank of the Kabul river until reaching the Surkh rud, crossing to the left bank, and following the Kabul river past Laghman to its confluence with the Panjshir river. The frontier of India was probably conceived to lie near Laghman or perhaps just past it.⁴⁴⁴ Approaching Kapisa, the Tagab river (rather than the lower Panjshir) could be followed upstream to Tagab, or alternatively, travellers could reach Tagab from Laghman through the Badpas pass.⁴⁴⁵ Then reaching Nijrab, travellers could descend into the Panjshir valley on the plain of Kapisa. Rather than only following the Panjshir and accessing Begram from the north, the position of the site Kafir Qala on the southwestern extremity of the dasht of Begram may rather indicate that travellers could have forded the Panjshir around its confluence with the Koh Daman river and proceeded across the dasht to approach the city from the south.⁴⁴⁶

From Begram, there was a choice of several passes that could be used to cross the Hindu Kush and enter Bactria.⁴⁴⁷ All were more or less hard-going, and would have been closed for some four or five months during the winter.⁴⁴⁸ Here we diverge a little from Foucher's delineation of this part of the 'old road' (Pl. 11), which indicates the route taken by Xuanzang into the Ghorband river valley. This led over the Shibar pass (2990 m), past Bamiyan, and then to Bactra (Balkh) via the Balkhab. This route was certainly significant in late antiquity, but its use prior to this is less clear, as there is little evidence of occupation around Bamiyan in the Hellenistic to Kushan period. However, this may be a result of limited exploration targeted towards these questions in the region.⁴⁴⁹ Another option, the Salang pass which follows the Salang river, is located at a much higher altitude (4075 m). It was probably not used regularly in antiquity, and has been replaced with a road and tunnel constructed in the 1960s.⁴⁵⁰ Alternatively, the route following the Panjshir river, crossing the Khawak pass (3545 m), descending into the Andarab valley and emerging at Pul-i Khumri and the Baghlan plains was

⁴⁴³ See Olivieri 2020, 390.

⁴⁴⁴ For this route, see Fussman 2008, 2015, 162.

⁴⁴⁵ Foucher 1942, Fig. 7.

⁴⁴⁶ As also in Foucher 1942, Fig. 34 (here Pl. 11).

⁴⁴⁷ See the discussion in Bernard 1982, 227–232.

⁴⁴⁸ According to Babur, writing in the 16th century, *Baburnama* 130, trans. Thackston 2002, 155.

⁴⁴⁹ Fussman 2015, 179.

⁴⁵⁰ Fussman 2008, 174.

probably a key one in antiquity. This area attained a symbolic significance in the Kushan period, seen through the construction of the royally sponsored temple of Surkh Kotal and later hosted the rock relief at Rag-i Bibi that was cut in the Sasanian period.⁴⁵¹ Indeed, this route could have well been the same taken by Alexander's army when they crossed the Hindu Kush, for the first time over the course of 15–17 days in the spring of 329 BCE, leading them from Pul-i Khumri down the Kunduz river to Drapsaca (perhaps Aliabad) and Aornus (Kunduz).⁴⁵² It was also possible to travel from Pul-i Khumri to the northwest via Samangan/Aybak to Khulm, and from here west to Bactra.

3.3. Early activity in antiquity: the Achaemenids, Alexander, Seleucids and Mauryans

Archaeological evidence of prehistoric occupation in Kapisa remains obscure. Recent ¹⁴C dating of charcoal in slag from the Panjshir valley indicated dates of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, but the authors of this study cautioned that this may be the result of artificial aging effects.⁴⁵³ Historically, this region becomes far more visible to us in the Achaemenid period, through the campaigns of Alexander the Great, and (to a lesser extent) in subsequent Seleucid and Maruyan imperial engagements in this space. This time span of around two centuries is not represented in the main occupation phases detected at the new royal city Begram I–III, but may be connected with the initial fortification of the Burj-i Abdullah, and is also reflected in some of the material collected by Masson. In the following, I discuss each historical period briefly, and consider its impact on political and cultural conditions in Kapisa (including the dynamics of its connections with Bactria and Gandhāra), and what material from Begram and its hinterland may be associated with this.

The Achaemenid king Cyrus the Great probably conquered Kapisa on his campaign from Arachosia to Bactria (i.e. in the 530s BCE).⁴⁵⁴ Thereafter, the region was incorporated into the Achaemenid Empire until its fall with Alexander the Great's victory over the last Achaemenid king, Darius III (336–330 BCE). The Achaemenid Empire was administered through satrapies of various scales. As noted above (§3.2), Jacobs has reconstructed these satrapies as known at the time of Darius III into a hierarchy consisting of great, main, and

⁴⁵¹ On these sites, see respectively Schlumberger et al. 1983; Grenet et al. 2007.

⁴⁵² On the identification of these sites, Martinez-Sève 2020, 221.

⁴⁵³ Merkel et al. 2013, 231–232.

⁴⁵⁴ Pliny mentions that Cyrus destroyed a Capisa in Capisene, Plin. *HN*. 6.25.

minor satrapies.⁴⁵⁵ The satrapy to which Kapisa belonged was that of the Paropamisus, which according to Jacobs's reconstruction was a minor satrapy under the main satrapy of Gandhāra, this all then being subject to the great satrapy of Bactria rather than the Indian satrapy of Hinduš.⁴⁵⁶

If this reconstruction is correct, it speaks to the political interconnection between Bactria and Gandhāra already developing in the Achaemenid period. In addition to this, Henkelman has proposed to interpret references to Kakawišša and Kapišiya on two texts from the Persepolis Fortification archive to refer to Kapisi, hence indicating that a satrapal seat had been located at Begram. More specifically, one text is a receipt for rations given for one individual travelling with royal authorisation to “Kakawišša” (PF 1520), and another (Fort. 0140-101) records rations for a group of men traveling from “Kapišiya” to Susa.⁴⁵⁷ This at least reiterates the astounding connectivity facilitated by the royal network of roads cutting across the Achaemenid Empire and Begram's incorporation into this system. It should also be noted that the reach of the Achaemenid apparatus can also be seen in documents discovered in regions adjacent to Kapisa which follow the norms of administrative documents from other parts of the empire. These include an Elamite cuneiform tablet found at Kandahar in Arachosia,⁴⁵⁸ and a set of unprovenanced Aramaic documents from Bactria.⁴⁵⁹ Its impact can also be seen even closer to home through the proxy evidence of Ashokan edicts (3rd century BCE) written in Aramaic established at Kandahar and Taxila, as well as one at Pul-i Darunta and two in Laghman just off the Kabul river valley.⁴⁶⁰

Firm evidence for settlement in the Achaemenid period at Begram is limited. The clearest testimony is found in Masson's collections at the dasht of Begram, which included intaglios possibly of the 4th century BCE,⁴⁶¹ and two Achaemenid period silver coins, being fractions of the so-called ‘bent bar’ coinage putatively minted in Gandhāra in the 4th century BCE.⁴⁶² These types of coins are developmentally related to Achaemenid coinage and represent examples of the earliest coin production in this region.⁴⁶³ As coinage in this period was limited to silver and only sporadically produced, it was probably only used in a restricted range of high-value transactions, perhaps for example oriented towards state contexts of

⁴⁵⁵ Jacobs 1994; 2011.

⁴⁵⁶ Jacobs 1994, 217–220.

⁴⁵⁷ Henkelman 2017, 213–217.

⁴⁵⁸ Fisher and Stolper 2015.

⁴⁵⁹ Naveh and Shaked 2012.

⁴⁶⁰ On the latter three, see Henning 1949; Ito 1979.

⁴⁶¹ Errington 2021, 213.

⁴⁶² Cribb 2021, 93; Errington 2021, 129.

⁴⁶³ For the Chaman-i Hazouri and Shaikhan-dheri hoards, see Curiel and Schlumberger 1953; Bopearachchi 2009.

economic activity such as official disbursements of payments or credit, or consolidation of income. The existence of these coins at Begram suggests economic interaction with Gandhāra. Incidentally, one of the Persepolis Fortification texts (PF 1358) mentions a “treasury-keeper, -guard” coming from Kandara (Gandhāra), indicating that an Achaemenid central treasury was located there.⁴⁶⁴

In the likely case that there had been an Achaemenid-period settlement at Begram, it is most plausible that this would have been centred on the Burj-i Abdullah, the natural rock constituting the citadel of the later city. Ghirshman observed that this vantage point had likely always been an attractive spot;⁴⁶⁵ indeed, it has most recently served as the site of a forward operating base. As Ghirshman’s excavations demonstrated that the rock had been fortified with a wall using different brick dimensions and structure than the fortification wall of the new royal city (see §2.5), perhaps this had been built already in the Achaemenid period, or alternatively under Alexander the Great, as suggested by Ghirshman.⁴⁶⁶ Bernard also remarked that this fortification wall may have been constructed in the 3rd century BCE or earlier.⁴⁶⁷ As noted above (§2.5), any other structures on this citadel appear to have been totally razed for their building materials, and of the pottery sherds collected from the sondage dug here, none appear to be identifiable as dating to the Achaemenid period. The data simply do not allow us to confirm or deny the existence of settlement on the Burj-i Abdullah during this time. If an Achaemenid-period citadel existed here, it may have served to control passage through the region, as observed by Cribb,⁴⁶⁸ or might have overlooked a ford or crossing point at the junction of the Ghorband and Panjshir rivers.

It is important to note that distinctive pottery forms appear especially in tableware of the Achaemenid period in Bactria and Gandhāra, while coarse and cooking ware tends to remain more conservatively oriented towards local forms – a trend also noticed with respect to the introduction of new forms in the Hellenistic period.⁴⁶⁹ One such characteristic form of Achaemenid-period tableware is that of the so-called tulip bowl. These are carinated drinking bowls that, for example, were introduced in the phase attributable to the Achaemenid period (Macrophase 2a2, 557–304 cal 2^o BCE) at Barikot in the Swat valley,⁴⁷⁰ an urban settlement

⁴⁶⁴ Henkelman 2017, 212.

⁴⁶⁵ Ghirshman 1946, 6–7.

⁴⁶⁶ Ghirshman 1946, 4.

⁴⁶⁷ Bernard 1982, 242.

⁴⁶⁸ Cribb 2021, 93.

⁴⁶⁹ For the case of Gandhāra, see remarks in Olivieri 2020, 403, 405–406.

⁴⁷⁰ Olivieri and Iori 2020, 87.

with an unusually refined and reliably dated stratigraphic sequence.⁴⁷¹ Iori has distinguished five different types of these bowls among the pottery assemblage of Barikot (also with reference to other sites in Gandhāra), with the last two types representing later versions of the form found sometimes in the Indo-Greek period, but especially in the Saka-Parthian and early Kushan period.⁴⁷² Interestingly, an almost complete example of a tulip bowl (h. 7.2 cm, dia. 12.0 cm) with red fabric and decorated with three painted black concentric lines on its exterior was reported by Ghirshman, however in the phase Begram II.⁴⁷³ In terms of shape, this example is more comparable to earlier types of tulip bowls. However, its painted decoration also seems to be unique, and broadly recalls the decoration of other tableware from Begram II (see below under §3.5.1), indicating that the vessel may indeed date from its reported context.⁴⁷⁴ At the least, this tulip bowl reflects the long-term impact of tableware introduced in the Achaemenid period on later preferences in the region. And with this question mark hanging over the surviving archaeological data, we can move into the Hellenistic period.

Alexander the Great's exploits among the Paropamisadae (the inhabitants of Paropamisus) and passages across the Hindu Kush are relatively well known, communicated to us with the usual discrepancies via the accounts of Arrian, Diodorus Siculus, Quintus Curtius Rufus, and Strabo.⁴⁷⁵ Despite the inconsistencies, which continue to be disentangled through ongoing research on the genealogy of information provided in these sources,⁴⁷⁶ the broad lines of the narrative run as follows.

Coming from Arachosia in pursuit of Bessos, Alexander arrived with his army among the Paropamisadae in the winter of late 330 BCE. Here, they endured famously dreadful conditions: the harsh, snowy landscape brought the army to exhaustion, injury, and death. However, they came across villages, co-opted their provisions, and settled in to winter.⁴⁷⁷ Then, before departing to cross the Hindu Kush (the 'Caucasus,' this mountain range being understood by the Macedonians as an extension of the Caucasus proper) Alexander founded an Alexandria, installing Proxenes a Persian as satrap, and Neiloxenes (a Companion) as a governor.⁴⁷⁸ He also (re-)settled 7,000 local inhabitants, 3,000 camp followers, and some mercenaries there,⁴⁷⁹ or alternatively 7,000 "from the subdued nations...as well as those

⁴⁷¹ For the chronology and cultural sequence of Swat informed by excavations at Barikot, Olivieri et al. 2019.

⁴⁷² Noori et al. 2019, 107–109.

⁴⁷³ Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XV, 1, XLI, BG 67.

⁴⁷⁴ I am indebted to Elisa Iori for discussing this material with me.

⁴⁷⁵ Arr. 3.28.4–7, 4.22.3–5; Diod. Sic. 17.82–83; Curt. 7.3.5–23, 7.4.22–25; Strabo 15.2.10.

⁴⁷⁶ See for example Rapin 2018.

⁴⁷⁷ Diod. Sic. 17.82; Curt. 7.3.11–18

⁴⁷⁸ Arr. 3.28.4. Diod. Sic. 17.83.

⁴⁷⁹ Diod. Sic. 17.83

soldiers whose services the king had ceased to make use of.”⁴⁸⁰ The army crossed the Hindu Kush in the early spring of 329. Again, they had limited supplies but were unable to co-opt provisions stored by villagers, so had to sustain themselves on river fish, herbs, and their own pack animals.⁴⁸¹ After 15, 16, or 17 days,⁴⁸² they arrived in Drapsaca in Bactria (perhaps Aliabad), probably going via the Panjshir river and Khawak pass (see §3.2).

After his difficult campaigns in Bactria and Sogdiana, Alexander left Bactra with his army in the spring of 327 for India, crossing the Hindu Kush and arriving at Alexandria of the Caucasus after 10 days.⁴⁸³ Neiloxenes was dismissed for ruling inefficiently, replaced with Nicanor (another of the Companions), while Turiaspes was appointed as satrap of the region. Further inhabitants from the region and soldiers were settled at the city.⁴⁸⁴ Alexander then departed for India, arriving in autumn of the same year.⁴⁸⁵ It is also worth noting that in 326 BCE, during Alexander’s time in India, the satrap “Terioltes” (presumably the Turiaspes in Arrian) was tried on the basis of charges forwarded by the Paropamisadae and put to death for his greed. Oxyartes was installed in his place,⁴⁸⁶ a Bactrian who had allied with Alexander after the death of Bessus and the capture of his own fortress, whereupon Alexander married his daughter Roxane. Oxyartes remained in this position after Alexander’s death, including after the redistribution of Alexander’s empire in Babylon in 323 BCE.⁴⁸⁷

At first glance, the details of the foundation of Alexandria of the Caucasus seem somewhat confused – not least because an apparent scribal error in Diodorus Siculus is responsible for putting the action on the wrong side of the mountain.⁴⁸⁸ Nonetheless, as mentioned above (§3.2), the location of this foundation was almost certainly at the pre-existing settlement of Kapisa, i.e. Kapisi. The same section of Diodorus adds that other cities were founded at the distance of a day’s march from Alexandria.⁴⁸⁹ One of these is plausibly Nicaea, which Rapin proposes to locate in the Panjshir region, tentatively placing it in the vicinity of Nijrab.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁰ Curt. 7.3.23, trans. Rolfe.

⁴⁸¹ Compare Strabo 15.2.10; Curt. 7.4.23–25.

⁴⁸² Respectively Strabo 15.2.10; Diod. Sic. 17.83; Curt. 7.3.21.

⁴⁸³ Arr. 4.22.4.

⁴⁸⁴ Arr. 4.22.4–5.

⁴⁸⁵ For a comprehensive discussion of the following part of Alexander’s itinerary, see Rapin 2018, 158.

⁴⁸⁶ But perhaps rather in charge of a wider unit, see Curt. 9.8.9–10; Arr. 6.15.4.

⁴⁸⁷ On Oxyartes, Schmitt 2002.

⁴⁸⁸ Bernard 1982.

⁴⁸⁹ Diod. Sic. 17.83.

⁴⁹⁰ Rapin 2018, 158–161, Fig. 2.

Alexandrian foundations in Central Asia are usually archaeologically ephemeral, primarily because in most cases these evidently did not constitute the foundation of new cities, but rather largely symbolic re-foundations of pre-existing settlements, or the establishment of fortresses. One (exceptional) surviving example of the latter is the fortress Kurganzol in Bactria, the foundation of which is dated according to dendrochronological data to 328 BCE. However, its architectural features speak to the local tradition rather than a Greek one, and Stančo has observed that it may have been built by a local noble on Alexander's command.⁴⁹¹ Naturally then, and despite the evocative implications of the foundation of a Hellenistic city populated (in part) with Graeco-Macedonian soldier-colonists, we have virtually no archaeological data pertaining to the reality of Alexandria of the Caucasus on the ground at Begram (or Nicaea putatively in Nijrab, for that matter). Burj-i Abdullah's fortification wall, as discussed above, theoretically could have been built around this period, and any residence of a governor or garrison could have been located there.

Interestingly, however, there are some coins in Masson's collection which may have been produced in the decades following these events. These are two bronze coins featuring Athena in a Corinthian helmet with a reverse of a double owl with single head. These can be broadly dated because of their similarities to bronze imitation owls current in Bactria with links to silver coinage issued by a certain Sophytos, a local ruler active perhaps around the late 4th to early 3rd century BCE.⁴⁹² The place of these coins has yet to be incorporated into the early monetary history of Central Asia, which is at present subject to vigorous debate.⁴⁹³ It should suffice for now to say that these issues are hitherto unique among the attested corpus of coins for this period and at least may suggest the results of small-scale coin production by a local governor, as well as economic interaction between Kapisa and Bactria during this obscure period.

It is worth highlighting here that despite the difficulties of connecting iterations of Alexander's exploits among the Paropamisadae with archaeological data, these sources provide valuable information about subsistence strategies in this region – if very much filtered through Graeco-Roman ideas about civility and barbarism. Curtius and Diodorus to a lesser degree paint a vivid image of the environment and customs of the 'barbarians' as the Macedonians

⁴⁹¹ See further in Stančo 2020, 260–261.

⁴⁹² Cribb 2021, 93. On these imitation owls (Série 25) and their relation to the coinage of Sophytos, see now Bordeaux 2021, 85.

⁴⁹³ For which see the discussion throughout Bordeaux 2021.

struggled through the mountains. Both give a similar appraisal of the region, reflecting their common source for this information:

“The landscape nowhere shows any verdure or cultivation; all is white and dazzling because of the snow and the ice which form in it. No bird, therefore, alights there nor does any animal pass, and all parts of the country are unvisited and inaccessible.”⁴⁹⁴

“But such deep snows cover the ground and are bound so fast by ice and almost perpetual cold, that no trace is to be found even of birds or of any wild beast.”⁴⁹⁵

The harshness of this winter landscape is a little difficult to reconcile with the pleasant climate of Kapisa in summer, and indeed, could really refer to anywhere along the road from Ghazni (if this is the location of Ortospana)⁴⁹⁶ to Begram. Nonetheless, the description of dwellings by both authors is also of some interest, as we have no other data about domestic architecture in the area prior the 2nd century BCE at the very earliest (i.e., the phase Begram I, which probably still primarily reflects activity in the transitional and early Kushan period):

“[These villages] contain houses with roofs of tile drawn up at the top into a peaked vault. In the middle of each roof an aperture is left through which smoke escapes, and since the building is enclosed all around the people find ample protection against the weather. Because of the depth of the snow, they spend the most of the year indoors, having their own supplies at hand. ... Nothing could be seen clearly from a distance. It was only as the villages were revealed by their smoke that the Macedonians discovered where the dwellings were, even when they were standing right on top of them.”⁴⁹⁷

“They build huts of unbaked brick, and because the land is destitute of timber, since even the ridge of the mountain is bare, they use the same brick up to the very top of their buildings. But their structure is broader at the base and gradually it becomes narrower as the work grows, and finally it comes together very much like the keel of a ship. There they leave an opening and

⁴⁹⁴ Diod. Sic. 17.82, trans. Welles.

⁴⁹⁵ Curt. 7.3.11, trans. Rolfe.

⁴⁹⁶ See Grenet in Rapin 2018, 173–174.

⁴⁹⁷ Diod. Sic. 17.82, trans. Welles.

let in light from above. ... If any [of the soldiers] could reach the huts of the barbarians, they were quickly restored. But such was the darkness that the only thing which revealed the buildings was their smoke.”⁴⁹⁸

The roofs ‘of tile’ in Welles’s translation of Diodorus above are actually described in Greek as “ἐκ πλίνθων,” and rather simply refer to (mud) bricks. These descriptions most plausibly refer to semi-subterranean pit houses, although may be confused to some degree as perhaps the described features were only closely observed from inside (the exterior being covered in snow). Of course, pit houses are a type of dwelling that was used across the ancient world, but they were also ubiquitous in Bactria during the Iron Age and Hellenistic period.⁴⁹⁹ No known excavated examples appear to feature converging or pitched roofs raised in mudbrick, although perhaps it is not impossible that some may have been built in this manner. Wood resources in the surrounding mountains were, at least, not as scarce as Alexander’s historians imply.⁵⁰⁰

Another practice of interest that is mentioned by Diodorus and Curtius is the burying of vines to protect them from winter frosts and annual loss:

“They heap up soil about vines and fruit trees, and leave it so for the winter season, removing the earth again at the time of budding.”⁵⁰¹

“Vines and trees, if any have been able to live in such a rigorous climate, they bury deep in the ground; in winter these remain dug in, and when the end of winter begins to open the earth, they are restored to the sky and to the sun.”⁵⁰²

Burying vines is common viticultural practice until recently employed (and then replaced with more effective technology) in many arid, cold climates around the world.⁵⁰³ It was also commonly utilised in certain grape growing areas in Afghanistan (such as Ghazni, Logar, and Parwan) in the latter half of the 20th century.⁵⁰⁴ The employment of this practice as

⁴⁹⁸ Curt. 7.3.8–10, 15, trans. Rolfe.

⁴⁹⁹ See, for example, references to pit houses at Kampyrtepa of the latter half of the 4th century BCE, and Zar-tepa in Stančo 2020, 261, 272, and others at Tepai Diniston in the second quarter of the 2nd century BCE, and at Bajtudasht 2, Karaul-tepe, Kuz Kajnar, and Tamosho-tepe in the Hellenistic period in Lindström 2020, 297, 304. A PhD dissertation by Zachary W. Silvia (Bryn Mawr) that examines rural settlements in the Hellenistic period of Bactria, Sogdiana, and Chorasmia, including further examples of pit houses, is forthcoming.

⁵⁰⁰ See Fussman 2008, 15–16.

⁵⁰¹ Diod. Sic. 17.82, trans. Welles.

⁵⁰² Curt. 7.3.10, trans. Rolfe.

⁵⁰³ See, e.g., Khanizadeh et al. 2005, 6.

⁵⁰⁴ Ghafoor 1974, 10, 28.

witnessed by the Macedonians underlines the development of viticulture in the Paropamisus well before their arrival.

Finally, although the Macedonians had a scathing impression of the barbarian Paropamisadae and the barrenness of the Hindu Kush (where they had difficulty appropriating and foraging for food), our sources simultaneously speak to well-developed agricultural and pastoral production in this space. Presumably in the valleys that Alexander and his army passed through, grain had been stored in underground pits which the Macedonians could not find, and sesame oil, honey, and wine could only be acquired at great expense.⁵⁰⁵ Tension between Greek conceptions of civilisation and the reality of pastoral productivity in the Hindu Kush is also reflected in a notice provided by Arrian:

“In this Mount Caucasus, however, there grows nothing save terebinths and asafoetida [silphium], according to Artistobulus. But even so it was inhabited by a large number of people and many flocks and herds grazed there, since the flocks like the asafoetida ...”⁵⁰⁶

After Oxyartes, the Paropamisus briefly appears back on the Hellenistic historical agenda in the late 4th century BCE with the eastern campaigns of Seleucus I, establisher of the Seleucid Empire. Having recaptured Bactria and Sogdiana, Seleucus crossed the Hindu Kush with his army, presumably passing through Kapisa. Subsequently, he met king Chandragupta, founder of the Mauryan Empire, on the Indus and the two concluded a peace treaty in 303 BCE. This treaty laid the terms for a marriage agreement (the nature of which is unclear), provided Seleucus with 500 elephants, and ceded Indian territories to Chandragupta.⁵⁰⁷ Especially following Strabo, it now tends to be assumed that these territories included that of the Paropamisadae, and Ashokan edicts (as mentioned above) have certainly been found in the vicinity of the Kabul river valley at Pul-i Darunta and Laghman.⁵⁰⁸ Masson’s collections also included numerous examples of Mauryan silver punch-marked and copper cast coins, representing types still in circulation after the mid 2nd century BCE, which could have been produced locally or elsewhere in the empire.⁵⁰⁹ However, no Mauryan coins are known from the coins collected in the DAFA excavations. Thus, although Kapisa and Begram must have remained settled in the 3rd century BCE, life in this period from the testimony of material

⁵⁰⁵ Curt. 7.4.22–24.

⁵⁰⁶ Arr. 3.28.6, trans. Robson.

⁵⁰⁷ On this episode, Strabo 15.2.9; App. 9.55; Karttunen 1997, 260–263; Mairs 2014a, 111–112.

⁵⁰⁸ E.g., Karttunen 1997, 263.

⁵⁰⁹ Cribb 2021, 93.

evidence remains largely obscure. Despite the new political division, however, Bactria and Gandhāra (as well as wider India) were not cut off from each other. Trade and connectivity between these spaces continued to some degree, and a well-known example of this dates to when Bactria was still under Seleucid rule (i.e. until ca. 250 BCE). This is an entry in the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries that records a Bactrian satrap sending 20 war elephants to Babylon for the king in 273 BCE.⁵¹⁰ These must have been raised in India.

Then, in the last decade of this century, we have another direct encounter between Seleucid and Indian kings (and the perennial elephants). More specifically, this occurred during Antiochus III's eastern campaigns, directly after treating with the Graeco-Bactrian king Euthydemus following the siege of Bactra. At this point, the Seleucid king "crossed the Caucasus and descended into India; renewed his friendship with Sophagasenus the king of the Indians; received more elephants, until he had a hundred and fifty altogether," returning to winter quarters in Carmania via Arachosia.⁵¹¹ Polybius constitutes the sole reference to the existence of Sophagasenus. Whether he was a local ruler or one of the later Mauryans, this meeting is often supposed to have occurred in among the Paropamisadae.⁵¹² It is impossible to be certain, but this was not necessarily the case; I doubt that this region (also including Kapisa) was understood to be located in India proper in this period,⁵¹³ and this frontier was likely rather conceived to lie further down the Kabul river, as it was in the past.⁵¹⁴

3.4. The Indo-Greek and transitional periods

The occupation phase Begram I, according to Ghirshman's reported coin finds, likely encompasses material from the period of Indo-Greek rule, the subsequent transitional period in which the political history of Kapisa is unclear, and the early Kushan period (hence spanning roughly from Apollodotus I to Wima Kadphises, see §2.5). Because of this, I treat the Indo-Greek and 'transitional' period together in the following.

The Greek kings who ruled after the Seleucid period in Central Asia (ca. 250 BCE – 10 CE), perhaps 45 in number, are often described as either 'Graeco-Bactrian' or 'Indo-Greek' by force of scholarly convention. These terms also partly speak to their putative geographical distribution between Bactria and the Punjab – or rather, the Hindu Kush is usually conceived

⁵¹⁰ Sachs and Hunger 1988, 345, No. 273 B, 31'–32'.

⁵¹¹ Polyb. 11.34, trans. Shuckburgh.

⁵¹² E.g. in Karttunen 1997, 270–271.

⁵¹³ *Contra* the outlying, puzzling remark that the Paropamisadae are located along the Indus in Strabo 10.2.9.

⁵¹⁴ See again Rapin 2018, 158–161.

of as a dividing line between Bactria and ‘India,’ with the region of the Paropamisadae lying in the latter. Numismatically, the division does make sense: Graeco-Bactrian coinage is that which adheres to the design of Hellenistic coinage and uses the Attic weight standard (tetradrachm of 16.80 g, current under the Seleucids and in the Hellenistic east), while Indo-Greek coinage was struck to a lower so-called Indian standard (9.80 g), included bilingual legends featuring Gāndhārī, depicted Indic deities, and could be struck from square flans (especially bronze issues).⁵¹⁵ To complicate matters, however, sometimes kings described as Graeco-Bactrian minted Indo-Greek style coins and vice versa. I do retain these terms here and use Indo-Greek to refer to the relevant period of occupation at Begram and Kapisa. However, my own view is that the political histories of territories on both sides of the Hindu Kush were very much interconnected in this period, and that developments in Kapisa were not always more closely tied to those in other ‘Indo-Greek’ territories, like Gandhāra, Arachosia, and the Punjab, as we will see below.

This entangled political history is still deeply unclear in many respects because of the limitations of our sources, and much of what we know is the product of the analysis of numismatic evidence. Nonetheless, the story runs broadly as follows.⁵¹⁶ In the mid 3rd century BCE, perhaps ca. 250 BCE, the Seleucid satrap of Bactria Diodotus I utilised the power and wealth he had amassed from his position to secede and establish an independent Graeco-Bactrian Kingdom.⁵¹⁷ The dynasty Diodotus established was shortly thereafter overthrown by Euthydemus I (ca. 230–190 BCE), meeting the Seleucid king Antiochus III in battle on the Harirud in 208 BCE, who sought to recapture the Upper Satrapies. This was followed by a siege at the Graeco-Bactrian capital, Bactra (mentioned above §3.3), concluding with a treaty recognising Euthydemus’s legitimacy, a marriage alliance, and the transfer of Euthydemus’s elephants to the Seleucid king.⁵¹⁸ The son of Euthydemus, Demetrius (ca. 190–180 BCE), enacted a campaign of military expansion, probably capturing the Paropamisus and Arachosia.

The subsequent decade or two sees a brief explosion in the number of active kings. Demetrius’s successor in Bactria, Euthydemus II (ca. 180–177 BCE) may have then allied with two new Indo-Greek kings ruling in the Paropamisus and Arachosia, and who probably also captured Gandhāra including Taxila (i.e., the western Punjab), being Pantaleon (ca. 180–175 BCE) and Agathocles (ca. 180–174 BCE). These kings were the first to mint Indo-Greek

⁵¹⁵ See, e.g., the succinct remarks in Bopearachchi 1991, 13–14.

⁵¹⁶ The following draws on the synthesis in Morris 2020b, 63–70.

⁵¹⁷ For this process, Holt 1999, 87–125.

⁵¹⁸ Polyb. 11.34.8–10.

coins.⁵¹⁹ Antimachus I Theos (ca. 177–171 BCE) then supplanted Euthydemus II in Bactria, and his coregency with Eumenes and Antimachus II (perhaps his sons) is documented to have begun in 175/4 BCE, marking also the establishment of a new regnal era which was also occasionally used to express years in subsequent centuries in Bactria and Gandhāra (the Yona or Yavana era).⁵²⁰ Numismatic evidence places Antimachus II in Indo-Greek territories, and likewise an alliance might have been struck with the subsequent king ruling these regions, Apollodotus I (ca. 174–160 BCE). Another Demetrius II (ca. 174–171 BCE) might have ruled in east Bactria around this time.⁵²¹

We then have two famous kings appear onto the scene: the usurper Eucratides I (ca. 171–145 BCE) in Bactria and Menander I (ca. 165–130 BCE) ruling territories south of the Hindu Kush. There have been attempts to mine a surviving paracanonical Buddhist text for information about Menander. This is the *Milindapañha*, perhaps originally composed in Gāndhārī but now extant in Pali and Chinese, which records a legendary dialogue between king Milinda (Menander) and the Buddhist sage Nāgasena.⁵²² In the Pali text, the birthplace of the king is given as an Alasanda between two waters and then a village called Kalasi.⁵²³ It has long been recognised that Alasanda plausibly refers to an Alexandria and Kalasi to Kapisi, but the confusion of geography between the Pali and Chinese versions of the story have caused some debate.⁵²⁴ Whether there is any truth to this, it is at least noteworthy that local tradition appears to have associated Menander with Alexandria (of the Caucasus) and Kapisi.

Among the wars of Eucratides's early reign, this king also led military campaigns into Indian territory (perhaps as far as the western Punjab) in around the 160s BCE. The successful outcome of these campaigns has been linked to luxury objects and coinage from the region found in the treasury of Aī Khanoum,⁵²⁵ the royal capital of eastern Bactria. These campaigns would have led Eucratides into conflict with Menander, who appears to have also driven his army eastwards (perhaps even into Gangetic India) in addition to eventually recapturing his territory lost to the Graeco-Bactrian king.⁵²⁶

⁵¹⁹ See Bopearachchi 1991, 56–57; Coloru 2009, 203–206.

⁵²⁰ On the Asangorna tax receipt, Bernard and Rapin 1994; Rea et al. 1994. On this era, Falk and Bennett 2009; Rapin 2010.

⁵²¹ Coloru 2009, 208.

⁵²² On the historicity of this text, see for example Fussman 1993a.

⁵²³ Mil. 82–83.

⁵²⁴ See most recently Alberly 2020, 110–113 (who, however, gives the location of Kapisi as Charikar and Kapisa as Begram).

⁵²⁵ Rapin 1992, 281–287.

⁵²⁶ See further comments and references in Morris 2020b, 68.

Greek rule in much of Bactria seems to have come to a close with the death of Eucratides, reportedly murdered by his own son upon his return from India,⁵²⁷ with the last kings in the west of Bactria apparently being Plato and Heliocles I (ca. 143–130 BCE). This collapse in ca. 145 BCE can probably be generally ascribed to internal infighting and external pressure from both the expanding neighbouring Arsacid Empire to the west, as well as the entry of two groups of putatively nomadic origin into Bactria: the Saka/Sai, and then the Yuezhi.⁵²⁸ This still very obscure period in Bactria's history is sometimes referred to as the Saka-Yuezhi, Yuezhi, or transitional period.⁵²⁹

In the territories south of the Hindu Kush – Paropamisus, Arachosia, Gandhāra, and those in the Punjab – power seems to have fragmented after Menander's death. In this wider area, Indo-Greek rule gives the impression of having been divided into two blocs, the west including Paropamisus, Arachosia, and the west of Gandhāra, and the east the space from Gandhāra to Sāgala.⁵³⁰ Here, as our number of kings increases immensely, the detail we know about the political history of this space decreases. Of the western bloc including Paropamisus, the kings Zoilos and Diomedes are thought to have ruled from ca. 130 BCE, followed perhaps by joint rule by Antialcidas and Lysias, a brief reunification of the blocs by Philoxenus, and then a spate of further kings who are more difficult to place.⁵³¹ One thing that is clear, however, is that the last Greek king to rule the Paropamisus was Hermaeus (ca. 90–70 BCE), but his reign was followed by an extensive series of posthumous imitation coinage minted in Kapisa, including by the first Kushan king Kujula Kadphises (ca. 50–90 CE). The party responsible for minting this coinage between Hermaeus and Kujula is unclear; I will return to this question below.

Contemporaneously to Hermaeus, political control over Gandhāra became subject to increasing competition, and the history of the region during this period is far better elucidated than that of Bactria due to both the coinage these rulers minted, as well as the Buddhist donative inscriptions that rulers and elites had made.⁵³² As Greek kings held sway over an ever declining space, the first so-called Indo-Scythian (or Saka) king Maues (ca. 75–65 BCE) rose to take Taxila, followed by a second wave led by Azes I (ca. 46–1 BCE), with the resulting dynasty becoming an important power in the region. The origin of these Indo-Scythians has been

⁵²⁷ Just. *Epit.* 41.6.

⁵²⁸ For recent treatments on conditions in this period, see Mairs 2014a, 146–176; Martinez-Sève 2018.

⁵²⁹ The latter, for example, in Stančo 2020.

⁵³⁰ Coloru 2009, 245.

⁵³¹ See Coloru 2009, 246–250.

⁵³² One recent detailed treatment, although now only slightly outdated with respect to some points of absolute chronology, is Errington and Curtis 2007, 57–66.

subject to some debate, but it appears likely that they had entered into Gandhāra from the north, crossing the Hindu Kush, Pamir, or Karakorum ranges.⁵³³ Azes also established a regnal era in 48/7 or 46/5 BCE, which was used to express the date in a number of later inscriptions in the vicinity of Gandhāra.⁵³⁴ Around the turn of the common era, two local dynasties emerged in the north of Gandhāra, being the Apracarājas, perhaps ruling in the area around Dir and Bajaur, and the Oḍi kings in the Swat valley. The last Indo-Greek king Strato III, who ruled in the vicinity of the eastern Punjab, disappeared during this time. Then, a new ruling dynasty was initiated by the king Gondophares (ca. 32–58 CE), that of the so-called Indo-Parthians. This term is used in modern scholarship because of the similarities between the coinage these kings minted and those produced in the Arsacid Empire, although specific affiliations between the ruling dynasties remain a matter of conjecture. The conclusion of this period falls with the Kushan king Kujula Kadphises's (ca. 50–90 CE) capture of the region in the first few decades of his reign. Altogether, this epoch of immense political and cultural activity in Gandhāra – including the establishment of many new Buddhist monasteries and the real genesis of the sculptural idiom of Gandhāran Buddhist art⁵³⁵ – is often referred to as the Saka-Parthian period.⁵³⁶

Presumably, Begram remained the central settlement of both Kapisa and the Paropamisus, and likewise served as the key seat of Indo-Greek kings operating in this region. Yet, of the archaeological material documented from Begram, that pertaining specifically to this period is still relatively ephemeral, especially because the majority of finds from Begram I (exposed primarily only in Ghirshman's Site B) seem to pertain to the latter part of this phase of occupation.

To start with the most obvious material related to this period, a relatively limited number of both Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins (all bronze) were found throughout the DAFA excavations. There is a single coin of the Graeco-Bactrian king Euthydemus I, a few examples each of issues of the Indo-Greek kings Pantaleon, Apollodotus I, Menander I, Diomedes, Antialcidas, and Strato, and Hermaeus. There were also Indo-Greek type coins minted by the Graeco-Bactrian king Eucratides I (see Appendix III). Masson's collections express a similar kind of pattern. Not exclusively, these included a small number of Graeco-Bactrian coins, especially of Euthydemus I and, later, Eucratides I. Indo-Greek coinage is

⁵³³ See Neelis 2011, 115.

⁵³⁴ On the date of the Azes era, Falk and Bennett 2009.

⁵³⁵ See, for example, Filigenzi 2012.

⁵³⁶ As, for example, in Olivieri 2020.

represented in larger quantity, especially issues of Pantaleon, Agathocles, Apollodotus I, and Menander I, with examples of issues of later kings including those of Lysias, Antialcidas, and (to a much lesser extent) Diomedes and Hermaeus.⁵³⁷ Examples of a local bronze coinage featuring elephant and lion designs (found also at Taxila) were simultaneously current during the period of Indo-Greek rule at Begram. Two specimens thereof were documented in the DAFA excavations, they are abundant in Masson's collection, and they were probably minted at the city.⁵³⁸

The prevalence of Indo-Greek coinage at Begram clearly indicates that Kapisa was part of the wider currency zone utilising coinage of this design and weight, which of course also included Gandhāra. The few examples of both silver and bronze Graeco-Bactrian (weight) coinage from the site, however, are slightly more puzzling. Cribb has suggested that the limited number of bronzes of Euthydemus I found at Begram as well as further afield in Taxila could have been conveyed during conquests in the region by his army.⁵³⁹ However, the occasional presence of these coins in both Kapisa and Gandhāra does not necessarily have to be explained by political activity, but may simply attest to continued interaction between the regions – even though the construct of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coinage gives an impression of two very separate currency zones divided by the Hindu Kush.

As suggested by Ghirshman (§2.5), it is possible that the mudbrick fortification wall traced around the southern part of the city was raised after the capture of the region by the Graeco-Bactrians, constituting part of a process of re-foundation which expanded the settled area towards the south, and created the part of the site conventionally called the new royal city. It is plausible that the wall connected the new royal city tepe to the Burj-i Abdullah, but its extent could only be more confidently traced to some degree to the north of the new royal city (see Pl. 9).

The use of massive fortification walls (although Ghirshman was not able to examine their internal construction) and rectangular bastions are characteristics broadly shared with other fortifications of southern Central Asia in the Hellenistic period, the most well-known example being that of Ai Khanoum in Bactria.⁵⁴⁰ After ca. 150 BCE, Barikot in the Swat valley was also surrounded by a massive stone fortification wall with rectangular bastion, an action which must have been the result of an important political event in the Indo-Greek period.⁵⁴¹ In

⁵³⁷ Cribb 2021, 94–97.

⁵³⁸ Cribb 2021, 94.

⁵³⁹ Cribb 2021, 94.

⁵⁴⁰ On fortifications in this time and space, Francfort 1979, 23–30.

⁵⁴¹ See most recently Olivieri 2020, 397, 399–340.

territories north of the Hindu Kush, the introduction of these features is particularly interesting because they represent an interlude in the traditional structure of fortifications of the region. These took a diversity of forms, but usually tended to feature hollow curtains and loopholes, and were better suited to defence against mounted archers. Comparatively, fortifications of the Hellenistic era were evidently oriented towards defence against siege warfare.⁵⁴²

Nothing really allows us to date the expansion of the city and the construction of the fortification wall more finely than (perhaps) the 2nd century BCE – and even this is not guaranteed. The evidence a sign resembling theta traced into the mudbricks does not really allow for more precision on this point, as the practice of marking bricks was common in southern Central Asia in antiquity, and signs resembling Greek letters persist well after the Hellenistic period. It is slightly more interesting that Ghirshman noticed the use of only one sign, which tallies with later observations on the limited number of signs on bricks of the fortification walls at Dal'verzintepe and Dil'berdzhin. Reflecting on these Bactrian cases, Pugachenkova suggested that while signs on mudbricks were ordinarily personal marks of workers and helped to facilitate record-keeping on work performed (e.g., for payment to individual workers), the walls of Dal'verzintepe and Dil'berdzhin imply a state context of construction, with the marks then referring to the state and a limited number of administrative personnel responsible for keeping accounts.⁵⁴³ The implications of this for Begram are hardly shocking: the party responsible for coordinating the construction of the city's wall was almost certainly a single authority (probably a ruler) with the power to operationalise considerable resources and manpower.

Although Ghirshman signalled the interest of the plan of Begram (which does not seem to have changed much over time) for understanding Graeco-Bactrian urbanism (§2.5), not much can be added on this point. The extension of the city during its re-foundation responded in part to affordances of the natural environment, its main entrance was probably on the south side of the new royal city, and the new royal city had a roughly rectangular form intersected by main streets from north to south, and east to west – a Hellenistic 'Hippodamian' plan, as he wrote.⁵⁴⁴ Terms like 'Hippodamian,' 'gridiron,' 'grid-plan,' and 'chessboard' have sometimes been used in respect to cities with putative Hellenistic layouts in Bactria and Gandhāra

⁵⁴² Francfort 1979, 24–30.

⁵⁴³ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 191–192.

⁵⁴⁴ Ghirshman 1946, 17–18.

(especially Taxila-Sirkap), but Mairs has rightfully observed that the organisation of cities into blocks hardly necessarily needs to reflect a culturally-specific system of urban planning.⁵⁴⁵

In addition to this, not much can be added about the specifics of domestic architecture for the period of Begram I in the limited area excavated by Ghirshman at Site B (Pl. 20), except that houses of this entire phase seem to have featured irregular plans. The occasional mudbricks noticed beneath stone walls of this phase, constructed otherwise on sterile ground, were interpreted by Ghirshman as having served as foundations for levelling an uneven surface.⁵⁴⁶ However, Bernard later observed that these may have derived from earlier structures that had since been dismantled;⁵⁴⁷ perhaps these may be remnants of buildings of the Indo-Greek period. Likewise, it is possible that a structure partially revealed at Site B in this phase reflects architecture of the Indo-Greek period. Here, the corner of a more monumental orthogonal building with a peripheral corridor (room 27) surrounding three parallel rooms (rooms 28–30) recalls the domestic architecture of Aī Khanoum, itself with both strong local and broadly Iranian roots.⁵⁴⁸ Perhaps the building at Site II was also built over the foundations of a structure from this early period, which is discussed further below (§3.5.2).

In terms of material culture, examples of grey-black and black ware as well as finer red ware covered with a red slip were documented from Begram I. However, rather little of the documented pottery appears to represent wares truly produced in the Indo-Greek period, with the repertoire for this phase giving the impression of being overall later (i.e. rather transitional/Saka-Parthian to early Kushan). Indeed, because of this, as well as Bernard's observation about the 'foundation' mudbricks mentioned above, I suspect that the houses documented by Ghirshman at Site B were not occupied continuously since the Indo-Greek period, but are instead later structures built on extensively cleared ground during (perhaps) the transitional period. Thus, I will discuss the pottery of Begram I a little further below with respect to the transitional period. For now, it is at least worth stating that, in Begram I, we can find some types of tableware that were originally introduced in the Hellenistic period in both Bactria and Gandhāra. These include several examples and derivations of so-called fish-plates, being a dish with everted sides.⁵⁴⁹ Again, although it is plausible that these illustrated examples

⁵⁴⁵ Mairs 2009.

⁵⁴⁶ Ghirshman 1946, 24.

⁵⁴⁷ Bernard 1982, 242.

⁵⁴⁸ Lecuyot 2013, 205–207.

⁵⁴⁹ See Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXX, 4, 5, 7, 15, 17. For a recent discussion on this type of tableware and finds from Barikot's Indo-Greek period / Macrophase 3a, see Iori 2018, sub-class OA-f. I am grateful to Elisa Iori for discussing this material with me. On fish-plates and their variants both in the Indo-Greek period proper and later, see also Olivieri 2021, 109–110, AA 3.1.

were largely (or all) produced after the Indo-Greek period, it is nonetheless interesting to see the longer-term impact of forms introduced in this epoch on later tableware preferences in the region.

From Begram I, there are also fragments of terracotta figurines exhibiting stylistic and iconographic features at least originally derived from Hellenistic art: a moulded and painted head of a woman with hair drawn back in a bun, and a nude, male torso.⁵⁵⁰ Although Ghirshman considered the woman's head to have Roman qualities, a broader parallel can be drawn with the single-moulded so-called 'Hellenistic ladies' introduced into the repertoire of terracotta figurines in Gandhāra in the Indo-Greek period, although these became more popular in Saka-Parthian period.⁵⁵¹ Interestingly, an example of a moulded terracotta figurine depicting a standing warrior with shield was discovered by Ghirshman north of the new royal city, but presumed also to belong to the phase Begram I.⁵⁵² Ghirshman suggested that it depicted a Roman soldier with scutum,⁵⁵³ but the subject, pose, and equipment of the figure broadly recalls that of a moulded terracotta plaque dating perhaps to the Hellenistic period from Kampyrtepa, as well as other terracotta figurines of warriors (without shields) from the Kushan period at Kampyrtepa and Chingiz-tepe (Termez). According to Nikonorov and Savchuk, these respectively perhaps represented objects of worship of a local divine hero and an idolised early Kushan ruler.⁵⁵⁴ Ghirshman reported a final interesting terracotta statuette from the phase Begram I, but I will discuss it further below with reference to the Kushan period (§3.5.1).

As noted earlier, political conditions after the Indo-Greek period at Begram (ending ca. 70 BCE) and before the invasion of Kujula Kadphises (ca. 50–90 CE) are unclear. The main body of evidence of interest here is numismatic, centred on the significant series of imitations of silver issues of Hermaeus, as well as copper alloy imitations of Apollodotus I and Eucratides I from Masson's collection.⁵⁵⁵ The Hermaeus coinage has been classified into ten groups by Bopearachchi: group 1 represents lifetime issues of the king, then the silver content of these coins was gradually debased, disappearing by group 7, and finally evolving into the so-called joint coinage of Su Hermaeus and Kujula Kadphises in group 10.⁵⁵⁶

Who was responsible for minting the posthumous Hermaeus imitation coinage between Hermaeus and Kujula? Cribb's study of Begram's monetary history represents the most recent

⁵⁵⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 49–50, Pls. X, 1–4, XXVIII, B. G. 452, B. G. 328.

⁵⁵¹ See e.g. Callieri 2007, 151; Olivieri 2020, 389, 405.

⁵⁵² Ghirshman 1946, Pls. X, 5, XXVIII, B. G. 539.

⁵⁵³ Ghirshman 1946, 53.

⁵⁵⁴ Nikonorov and Savchuk 1992, 50–52, Nos. 1, 3–4.

⁵⁵⁵ See Cribb 2021, 100–103.

⁵⁵⁶ See, for example, a later iteration of this classification in Bopearachchi 1999, 129–139.

evaluation of the problem.⁵⁵⁷ Essentially, he observes that any arguments for the identification of the issuing party are tenuous as they are based on ideas about shared numismatic practice. From such ideas, Dobbins and Senior attributed the coinage to a group of Indo-Scythians (who also use the title ‘king of kings’), however distinct to the group of Maues, Azes I and successors ruling in Gandhāra, while Bopearachchi highlighted the practice of imitating Greek coinage by nomadic groups active in Bactria after the Hellenistic period, namely the Yuezhi.⁵⁵⁸

Cribb has also considered what information in the Han standard histories *Hanshu* and *Hou Hanshu* about Jibin and Gaofu might elucidate about this period (discussed above, §3.2), ultimately remarking that “all we can glean from this is that the Chinese thought the Kabul area was ruled for a time by Scythians [i.e. via Jibin], but when the first Kushan king captured the region it was under Parthian rule.”⁵⁵⁹ Thus he concludes that the posthumous Indo-Greek coins at Begram are issues of an Indo-Scythian polity,⁵⁶⁰ including an example picked up by Masson of the rare, local copper posthumous imitation series of Eucratides I, the reverse design of a seated city goddess styled after Tyche and the legend ‘city goddess of Kapisi.’⁵⁶¹ Then, according to Cribb, the relatively large number of coins found at Begram of the Indo-Parthian Gondophares (ca. 32–58 CE) suggests that this king had briefly held the region before Kujula.⁵⁶²

Here, I would like to add three observations. The first is that it may not be necessary to insert a new group of Indo-Scythians into Begram’s political history.⁵⁶³ Information reproduced in Han histories on this area is not entirely coherent and does not insist upon this point. Alternatively, it is possible that the imitation Indo-Greek coinages of this period were issued by a governing member of the local elite – a ‘big man’ – based at the city of Begram. Our sources on Alexander the Great’s time among the Paropamisadae make clear that considerable power was accumulated (and abused) by the various governors and satraps of the region (see §3.3), and it is not implausible that a local figure may have risen in the power vacuum left after the death of Hermaeus. Perhaps this could be reflected in the continuity of practice exhibited in the production of imitation coinages, which (unlike the majority of Indo-Scythian issues) do not depict the new ruler. Indeed, the imitation Eucratides ‘city goddess of

⁵⁵⁷ Cribb 2021, 101–103.

⁵⁵⁸ Dobbins 1970; Bopearachchi 1999, 129–130; Senior 2000, 2; Cribb 2021, 100–101

⁵⁵⁹ Cribb 2021, 101.

⁵⁶⁰ Cribb 2021, 101.

⁵⁶¹ Errington 2021, 137. See above, §3.2.

⁵⁶² Cribb 2021, 102–103.

⁵⁶³ Here I cannot resist from reproducing a comment from Tarn as he attempted to disentangle sources for the nomad conquest of Bactria: “I may perhaps venture the remark that Asia is getting very full of Sacas” (Tarn 1951, 287).

Kapisi' issues appear to rather speak to the development of a civic identity. That being said, certain coins of the Indo-Scythian king Azes II (ca. 16–30 CE), and the *kṣatrapa* (governor) Mujatria (ca. 60–80 CE) also depict city goddesses, however without naming them, and examples of these are also among Masson's collection.⁵⁶⁴

The second observation I can add is that regardless of the matter of who ruled Kapisa, economic exchange continued between Kapisa and Gandhāra during this period. This is evident from multiple (numismatic) angles: 1. Finds, if scarce, of Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian coins (besides those of Gondophares) both from the DAFA excavations (see Spalahores and Spalagadama, Abdagases, Mujatria, Appendix III) and in Masson's collection;⁵⁶⁵ 2. Finds of entirely debased Hermaeus imitations at, for example, Taxila;⁵⁶⁶ and 3. The parallel extreme debasement of the Hermaeus imitations (Bopearachchi's groups 5 and 6) to the debasement of coinages minted in Gandhāra.⁵⁶⁷ This phenomenon, the so-called Great Debasement, refers to the sharp reduction of the silver content of tetradrachms to 10% or less (making coins of billon) and the discontinuation of copper denominations. This occurred during the reign of Azes II (ca. 16–30 CE).⁵⁶⁸ Although this phenomenon has in the past been regarded as indicative of economic crisis or the loss of access to silver, Coloru has recently proposed that – in light of the explosion of civic and religious building projects during this period – the coinage reformed by Azes II represents an example of fiduciary money with its value set by decree.⁵⁶⁹ The parallel debasement of the Hermaeus coinage then appears to be a response to changes in this wider interconnected monetary sphere, perhaps reflecting an intention to produce coinage exchangeable with that of Kapisa's neighbour.

The third observation I would like to make is that despite the impression that Kapisa changed hands between the Indo-Greeks, Indo-Scythians (or others), Indo-Parthians, and Kushans within the 1st century BCE to the 1st century CE, the long occupation phase of Begram I putatively coeval to these events does not seem to reflect any conflict spurred on by these regime changes. This also constitutes a reminder that transitions in the archaeological record and the end of occupation phases do not need to be entirely aligned with political phenomena on a macro scale.

⁵⁶⁴ Errington 2021, 148–149, Figs. 30.18–20, 30.24, 31.2.

⁵⁶⁵ Cribb 2021, 102–103

⁵⁶⁶ Bopearachchi mentions 263 examples in Bopearachchi 1999, 130.

⁵⁶⁷ Bopearachchi 1999, 134.

⁵⁶⁸ MacDowall 2007, 254.

⁵⁶⁹ Coloru in Coloru et al. Forthcoming.

Some finds from Begram I can be highlighted as they speak to Kapisa's cultural connections in this period. For instance, a highly distinctive pottery kitchen prop (*lasana*) was documented in this phase.⁵⁷⁰ This type of object is originally of Hellenistic origin, but was used in Gandhāra especially throughout the Saka-Parthian and Kushan periods, seen for example at Barikot,⁵⁷¹ Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri and Aziz-dheri.⁵⁷² An inscribed potter's tool known as a dabber in South Asian archaeology was also documented in this phase,⁵⁷³ featuring a name written in Gāndhārī (Pa[śa]maḍasa +?),⁵⁷⁴ which apparently functioned as a mark of ownership. As another dabber inscribed with the same name was found in the phase Begram II, it is possible that the find context of the first was misinterpreted.⁵⁷⁵ Regardless, these finds demonstrate an Indic component to Begram's secular onomastics in these periods,⁵⁷⁶ as well as the fact that pottery was made at the site according to an Indic tradition of production. More generally, and also with respect to chronology, the pottery assemblage of Begram I is comparable to those of Early Historic Barikot, and here more specifically Macrophase 3b (Saka-Parthian, ca. 1st century BCE to 1st century CE) to Macrophase 4a (early Kushan, ca. mid 1st to mid 2nd century CE).⁵⁷⁷ This suggests that Ghirshman's date for the end of Begram I is roughly accurate.

One important development in the Saka-Parthian period in Gandhāra was the flourishing of Buddhism into a truly dominant religion. Buddhism had gained a strong foothold in the region already by the mid 2nd century BCE, and from here, in around the early 1st century CE, it spread to the northwest through Nagarahāra (Jalalabad) along the Kabul river, Kapisa, and across the Hindu Kush into Bactria.⁵⁷⁸ With this came the establishment of new monasteries with attached objects of worship, namely stupas and shrines. Monasteries were often located in the vicinity of urban settlements, which constituted a major donor base, but they were established and maintained especially through the donations of members of the local elite. Such donations, especially of relics, were recorded in numerous inscriptions throughout this period.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁰ Ghirshman 1946, pl. XXIX, B. G. 405.

⁵⁷¹ Olivieri 2018, 133–134. See now Olivieri 2021, 128–129, V 3, Fig. 91; Callieri 2021, Pl. 192.

⁵⁷² Petrie et al. 2008, 9–10.

⁵⁷³ Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXIX, B. G. 444.

⁵⁷⁴ CKI 181.

⁵⁷⁵ Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXIX, B. G. 444; Fussman 1970, 53.

⁵⁷⁶ Fussman 1970, 44–45.

⁵⁷⁷ The pottery from Begram I is presented in Ghirshman 1946, 44–47, Pls. XXIX–XXXIII. On the delineation of these Macro-phases at Barikot and the description of their assemblages, Olivieri 2021, 33, 34, 107–146, Table 3.

⁵⁷⁸ On this early transmission of Buddhism from Gandhāra, see the synthesis of Fussman 2015.

⁵⁷⁹ Editions and translations of Gandhāran reliquary inscriptions can be found in Baums 2012.

The sacred areas attached to monasteries often came to be richly decorated with art, particularly the schist relief sculpture characteristic of what is referred to as Gandhāran (Buddhist) art in the first centuries of the Common Era. In these centuries, sculptures often narrated episodes from the life of the Buddha, but could also depict *jātaka* stories, images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, other gods attached more loosely to Buddhism, cult scenes, and important donors and worshippers, as well as more decorative figural and non-figural elements.⁵⁸⁰ This sculptural tradition really took off around the turn of the Common Era, which is relatively late from the perspective of Buddhist sculpture in India. A local precursor is found in so-called toilet trays: segmented stone dishes often featuring a variety of figural imagery, which may have had both cosmetic and ritual functions.⁵⁸¹ Additionally, contact with other sculptural traditions in India also contributed to the conception of Gandhāran art.⁵⁸² But this body of art is especially well known for having come to incorporate a wide stylistic and iconographic vocabulary from the ‘classical’ Graeco-Roman world alongside Iranian and Central Asian components.⁵⁸³ The longstanding question has been why this occurred. Of the many possible answers (see also §5.4 below), it is clear that the ethnocultural diversity of Gandhāra and its entanglements with various polities throughout antiquity played a significant role in shaping local taste. Filigenzi has observed that such broadly ‘Hellenistic’ features in this body of art may have been attractive to its elite donors as indicating an ‘international’ style.⁵⁸⁴

Buddhism must have begun to develop as a significant religion in Kapisa during the region’s transitional period, but it is not entirely clear when the monasteries in the vicinity of Begram were established. Known examples situated closest to the city, i.e. located on the Koh-i Pahlavan, were all explored to some degree by members of the DAFA from 1924 to 1940 (see §2.3 and §2.4), and feature the same breed of documentation problems as Begram as itself. Evaluating the evidence, Fussman has observed that the monastery Shotorak on the north side was probably the first established on this small mountain because of its specific locale, and he has tentatively suggested it could have been founded already in the 1st century CE. However, as the monastery was not visible from the city, he remarked that it dates to before the majority of inhabitants of Begram and its political leaders became Buddhists.⁵⁸⁵ Fussman has also

⁵⁸⁰ For an overview of the definition, development, and components of Gandhāran art, see the introductory essays in Zwalf 1996, 11–76.

⁵⁸¹ See Lo Muzio 2018.

⁵⁸² Zin 2018.

⁵⁸³ See most recently contributions in Rienjang and Stewart 2020.

⁵⁸⁴ Filigenzi 2012.

⁵⁸⁵ Fussman 2008, 164–165.

estimated that the monastery of Karratcha looking directly over the city on the west of the mountain may have been founded between the mid 1st and mid 3rd centuries CE,⁵⁸⁶ and ascribed the foundation of Qol-i Nadir on the eastern side to the 3rd century CE.⁵⁸⁷ However, Errington has shown on the basis of comparanda for the reliquary and relic deposit in the monastery's stupa – especially the Bimaran stupa 2 and Passani tumulus 2 in Nagarahāra – that it was probably founded in the later 1st or early 2nd century CE.⁵⁸⁸ As these monasteries seem to have really developed from the Kushan period onwards, I will return to them below (§3.5.1).

One last find from Masson's collections can be highlighted that speaks to exchange over longer distances in Kapisa during this period. This a recently identified small fragment of a inscribed copper mirror produced in Han China, noted to be similar to two mirrors found in two graves at Tillya-tepe in Bactria.⁵⁸⁹ Rather, three complete examples of silver inscription mirrors with 12 circles around the centre are known from graves 2, 3, and 6 (all of women) at Tillya-tepe.⁵⁹⁰ Han mirrors are rarely found in southern Central Asia (i.e. south of the Hissar range), and this specific kind of mirror is typologically distinct and unusually large. Brosseder has identified other examples from Munchak-tepe in Ferghana and Vrevskaya in Chach, as well as Verkhoturys in the distant central Urals (see Pl. 1).⁵⁹¹ Brosseder's distribution maps of Han mirrors of a variety of designs give the impression of a much stronger concentration of finds north of the Hissar range and broader connections with the networks of exchange across the Eurasian steppe.⁵⁹² The burial rituals and grave goods in the Tillya-tepe graves, dating to the latter half of the 1st century CE or perhaps a little earlier, show similar far-reaching connections across the steppe alongside ties with the visual and material culture of Bactria and Gandhāra (see §1.4). Mirrors in Bactria were often found intact, while those in Ferghana and along the southern fringe of the Taklamakan were usually found (probably intentionally) broken into fragments.⁵⁹³ The Begram fragment, found out of context, can only raise questions, but it at least appears to suggest Kapisa's links with exchange networks to the north around the first half of the 1st century CE, connecting it with Bactria, territories beyond the Hissar range, and ultimately those of the Eurasian Steppe. And with this uncertain picture, let us move into the Kushan period.

⁵⁸⁶ Fussman 2008, 160–161.

⁵⁸⁷ Fussman 2008, 167–169.

⁵⁸⁸ Errington 2017a, 35–36.

⁵⁸⁹ Fabrégues with Errington, Leighton-Boyce and Rienjang in Errington 2021, 302, Fig. 135.8.

⁵⁹⁰ Respectively graves 2, 3, and 6 in Sarianidi 1985, 235, No. 23, 245, No. 70, 258, No. 31; Brosseder 2015, 240.

⁵⁹¹ Brosseder 2015, 240, Fig. 16, list 10.

⁵⁹² Brosseder 2015, Figs. 15–19.

⁵⁹³ Brosseder 2015, 246.

3.5. The Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian periods

In respect to the data produced from the DAFA excavations, the incorporation of Kapisa into the Kushan Empire appears to overlap with the end Begram I and run through Begram II, the latter including the main period of use of the Site II structure. Here, we run into serious uncertainty with respect to the precise dating of these occupation phases, which must be addressed before progressing.

As noted earlier (§2.5), Ghirshman reported that the latest coins he found associated with the phase Begram I were those of the third Kushan king Wima Kadphises (ca. 113–127 CE), while those associated with Begram II included issues of the three subsequent kings Kanishka I (ca. 127–151 CE), Huvishka (ca. 151–190 CE), and Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230 CE). However, as I have stressed, Ghirshman based his system of Begram I–III on a relatively small excavated area of the new royal city (Site B), and did not publish his coins by phase but rather summarised his finds. Moreover, finds of Vasudeva I imitations can be identified in association with the hoard deposit in room 10 at Site II, which (according to recent classifications) should have been minted from at least ca. 260 CE (see §2.4.3 above, and §3.5.3 below). Although a single coin is not worth much in the bigger scheme of things, a ‘Vasudeva type’ (i.e. imitation) associated with Begram II was also identified by Göbl in 1962 among Ghirshman’s finds from 1941. Unfortunately, in Göbl’s list of Ghirshman’s coins from 1942, information about the associated layer of each coin find is presented in a different scheme to Begram I–III, and without access to his field documents (if they survive, as they are not in his archive at the MG), I cannot yet decode how they correspond to the phases Begram I–III.⁵⁹⁴

To make matters still more complicated, Cribb’s study of Begram’s monetary history based on Masson’s collections indicates that Kushan copper coins are represented in large number until the reign of Kanishka II (ca. 230–246 CE); later in his reign, the Kushano-Sasanian king Peroz I (ca. 245–270 CE) putatively captured Kapisa.⁵⁹⁵ The problem is that, while Kanishka II lifetime issues are present among coins collected by the DAFA at Begram, they give the impression of having been associated with the much later phase Begram III (see Appendix III, §2.4.2, §2.5, §2.6, §2.7).

Although our data remain problematic and incomplete, the solution I can propose is that the phase Begram II extended after formal Kushan rule, at least into the latter half of the 3rd century CE, i.e. into Kapisa’s still obscure Kushano-Sasanian period. However, we are not

⁵⁹⁴ Göbl 1962, unpublished documents *Excavation – Coins Begram 1941, Excavation – Coins Begram 1942*.

⁵⁹⁵ Cribb 2021, 105.

in a position to say precisely when this phase ended – an event marked by the abandonment of the city and probably also the deposition of the hoard. For this reason, I primarily treat life in the Kushan period below, but conclude with comments on the Kushano-Sasanian epoch and the end of Begram II (see §3.5.4)

3.5.1. The Kushan Empire and Begram

Although much about the origins of the Kushans and the dynamics of the empire they built remains unclear, the following broad lines of their political history can be offered (see also §1.4).⁵⁹⁶ It is well known that this dynasty can be traced back in some way to the Yuezhi 月氏 (or Da [Great] Yuezhi 大月氏), commonly described as a nomadic confederacy. Chinese historical sources give a tenuous impression of the early history of the Yuezhi prior to the second half of the 2nd century BCE, when part of this group had ended a process of gradual migration – likely instigated in part by pressure exerted from the expanding Xiongnu Empire – from their original pasturelands to Bactria.⁵⁹⁷ This homeland was apparently in the vicinity of the Hexi corridor,⁵⁹⁸ but the question of the ethnocultural identity of the Yuezhi (and later Kushans) really remains an open one. In Bactria, the Han diplomat Zhang Qian reached the Yuezhi in the latter 2nd century BCE, seeking to establish an alliance with them against the Xiongnu.⁵⁹⁹ By around the mid 1st century BCE, Yuezhi rule in Bactria came to be divided between five *yabgus* and their seats of governance as listed in the *Hanshu*. Each of these can be most plausibly located among the river valleys of northern Bactria, being more specifically:⁶⁰⁰ the *yabgu* of Xiumi at Hemo in the upper Vakhsh (Karategin); that of Shuangmi in the upper Surkhan Darya (Hisar); that of the Guishuang (Kushan) at Huzao in the lower Vakhsh; that of Xidun at Bomao in the Kafirnigan; and that of Gaofu at Gaofu/Dumi at Termez.⁶⁰¹

The *Hou Hanshu* gives a concise account of what happened next:

More than a hundred years later, the prince [*xihou/yabgu*] of Guishuang [Kushan], named Qiujiuque [Kujula Kadphises], attacked and killed the four

⁵⁹⁶ The following draws in part on the synthesis in Morris 2020b, 74–83.

⁵⁹⁷ On the early history of the Yuezhi and this process, see sources discussed in Falk 2015, §1–28.

⁵⁹⁸ *Shiji* 123.3162; *Hanshu* 96A.3891.

⁵⁹⁹ *Shiji* 123.31.57.

⁶⁰⁰ *Hanshu* 96A.3891

⁶⁰¹ Grenet 2006; Falk 2015, §48. On Gaofu/Dumi, see §3.2 above.

other *xihou*. He established himself as king, and his dynasty was called that of Guishuang.⁶⁰²

Thus Kujula Kadphises established Kushan rule in Bactria, and enacted a series of military campaigns to the south, capturing Begram, Taxila, and Kashmir.⁶⁰³ Late in Kujula's reign, the *Hou Hanshu* also indicates diplomatic entanglements with the Kangju (a nomadic confederacy controlling much of Sogdiana and Chach in this period), as well as the states of Yarkand and Kashgar in the western Tarim Basin via Ban Chao (Han protector-general of the Western Regions). In short, the Kushans and Kangju had recently concluded a marriage alliance, so Ban Chao sent gifts of silk to Kujula with the request he convince the Kangju to discontinue their support for the king of Kashgar, who had just revolted against Ban Chao. After the defeat of Yarkand, the Kushans then sought a marriage alliance with the Han and sent tribute of precious stones, lions, and antelopes to Ban Chao, but the request was rejected, souring relations between the Kushans and Han thereafter.⁶⁰⁴ According to Cribb's analysis, it was also late in the reign of Kujula when the so-called Soter Megas copper coinage with the legend 'king of kings, great saviour' was first initiated (the identity of the issuer of this widely-distributed coinage being a perennial source of debate in the field).⁶⁰⁵

The next Kushan king Wima Takto (ca. 90–113 CE) continued his father's expansion of the empire through conquest. His military exploits in the vicinity of Kucha in the Tarim Basin around ca. 90 CE were, however, not entirely successful. Reportedly, he led a force to attack Ban Chao and sent envoys with gifts of gold, silver, pearls, and jade to the king of Kucha in a request for assistance – but Ban Chao had the envoys killed, and then an envoy of Wima treated with the protector-general, arranging for tribute to be sent by the Kushans to the Han each year.⁶⁰⁶ Matters were different to the southeast, with Wima apparently conquering Tianzhu (northwest India) up to Mathura. Here, the *Hou Hanshu* tells us a general was installed, and that the territory made the Kushans rich.⁶⁰⁷ Physical markers of the territory captured in Wima's reign include a (perhaps) Brahmanical temple established at Māt (Mathura), which came to include over life-sized sculptures of the Kushan kings,⁶⁰⁸ as well as the trilingual Dasht-i Nawur inscription on a boulder at Mount Qarabayu (modern Ghazni province) written

⁶⁰² *Hou Hanshu* 88.2921, trans. Hill 2015a, §13.

⁶⁰³ For which now see Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, 5.A.1.

⁶⁰⁴ *Hou Hanshu* 3.158, 47.1579–1580.

⁶⁰⁵ Cribb 2014.

⁶⁰⁶ *Hou Hanji* 13; *Hou Hanshu* 47.1580. See also the commentary in Falk 2015, §74–75.

⁶⁰⁷ See *Hou Hanshu* 88.2921.

⁶⁰⁸ On the excavations of this temple, and the nature of the cult there, see respectively Rosenfield 1967, 140–142; Verardi 1983, 233–234.

in Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and the still undeciphered so-called ‘unknown language in the unknown script.’⁶⁰⁹ Wima Takto continued to strike the majority of the Soter Megas coinage initiated by his father.⁶¹⁰

Wima Takto’s son and successor Wima Kadphises (ca. 113–127 CE) continued patterns of diplomatic activity of his forebears in the Tarim Basin by becoming involved in a dynastic dispute in Kashgar, eventually helping to install the exile Chenpan to the throne there.⁶¹¹ A significant innovation in his reign is marked by the introduction of a regular gold coinage struck to a new 8.0 g unit, the dinar. This coinage utilised a distinctive design – the bust or standing king on the obverse, then a deity on the reverse – that was followed by subsequent kings of this dynasty.⁶¹² There is an interesting, longstanding scholarly belief that Kushan dinars were minted according to the same weight standard as Roman aurei – even produced from melted down aurei(!) – and thus were intended to facilitate trade with Roman agents. However, the weights of the two coinages do not correspond with real precision, trace elements in the gold of Kushan dinars point to an entirely separate origin of the ore they used (most likely sourced from alluvial deposits within the empire), and the inception and function of dinars are far better conceptualised from a local perspective.⁶¹³

The son of Wima Kadphises, Kanishka I (ca. 127–151 CE), is the most famous Kushan king. Before the Kushan dynasty was rediscovered to modern scholarship, Kanishka’s reputation preceded him via his appearance in later Buddhist legends.⁶¹⁴ However, despite the received tradition associating the flourishing and expansion of Buddhism with the Kushans, tales of Kanishka the Buddhist are rather pious fabrications. Indeed, it does not appear that any of the Kushan kings were Buddhist, and the agents responsible for the transmission of the religion beyond Gandhāra were instead local elites.⁶¹⁵ The Bactrian language Rabatak inscription (from an unexcavated image temple in Bactria) reports that Kanishka spent the first six years of his reign leading an enormous military campaign into Gangetic India, conquering

⁶⁰⁹ On this set of inscriptions, Fussman 1974, 2–50; Sims-Williams 2012, 76–77. This language is discussed later under §4.15 and §5.3.

⁶¹⁰ Cribb 2014.

⁶¹¹ *Hou Hanshu* 88.2927.

⁶¹² See Jongeward et al. 2015, 53–54.

⁶¹³ On the history of these beliefs and their relation to the concept of ‘Kushan middlemen,’ Morris 2020a, 681–688.

⁶¹⁴ On these legends, Rosenfield 1967, 28–39.

⁶¹⁵ Fussman 2015.

the rich old urban centres of Sāketa, Kauśāmbī, Pāṭaliputra, and Śrī-Campā.⁶¹⁶ Ten years later, the king returned to Bactria.⁶¹⁷

Kanishka's early reign was also marked by significant expressions of his authority as king, as well as the presentation of his dynasty using an emphatically Iranian vocabulary of power (whatever their real ethnocultural origins). Thus, as the Rabatak inscription makes clear, Kanishka inaugurated a new regnal era (year one being 127 CE),⁶¹⁸ replacing the Greek (Yona/Yavana) era previously in official use. His reign also saw the foundation of image temples in Bactria by upper imperial officials (*karalrangs*) dedicated to the gods of the Kushan pantheon (largely Iranian and more specifically Zoroastrian in origin), such as at Rabatak and at Surkh Kotal, as well as the abandonment of the use of the Greek language for the Bactrian language in official epigraphy and on coin legends. The Rabatak inscription appears to refer to this policy shift: "And he issued a Greek edict (and) then he put it into Aryan."⁶¹⁹ Sims-Williams has noted that the exact meaning here is unclear, and that this line could be understood to mean "he discontinued (the use of) the Greek language," and highlighted the similarity of the reference to 'Aryan' here with its use in the Bisitun inscription of the Achaemenid king Darius I, carved centuries prior.⁶²⁰ More recently, Panaino has stressed that the term 'Aryan' in the Rabatak inscription did not simply denominate the Bactrian language, but functioned to express the exalted nature of the text in an ethno-religious sense. Indeed, the use of this term may have been underpinned by a notion of leadership of a wider Iranian (and Indo-Aryan) *ethne* and used to express the distinction of this meta-linguistic identity from the Greek ethno-linguistic tradition.⁶²¹

Put more simply, Kanishka apparently wanted to express that he was an Iranian king, not a Greek one. Indeed, before the discovery of the Rabatak inscription, Fussman remarked upon the self-presentation of the Kushans as an Iranian dynasty. He posited that this *renouveau iranien* was the result of an anti-Greek political sentiment under the Kushans (although this did not lead to, for example, a rejection of architectural technology introduced in the Hellenistic period).⁶²² However, although Kushan dynastic self-presentation from the reign of Kanishka was certainly centred on an Iranian vocabulary of power, Kushan expressions of kingship also drew in part on those of the Hellenistic world and India, as well as (perhaps) occasionally

⁶¹⁶ The Rabatak inscription, lines 2, 5–6, 19, edition and trans. in Sims-Williams 2004.

⁶¹⁷ The inscription of Nukunzuk, line 4, edition and trans. in Sims-Williams 2015, 257.

⁶¹⁸ Rabatak, lines 2–3, Sims-Williams 2004.

⁶¹⁹ Rabatak, line 3, trans. Sims-Williams 2004.

⁶²⁰ Sims-Williams and Cribb 1996, 82–83.

⁶²¹ See Panaino 2015, 96–101.

⁶²² Fussman 1976.

recalling their dynasty's putative nomadic heritage.⁶²³ These wide-reaching strategies of communication help to contextualise the only clear, contemporary evidence we have for the direct patronage of Buddhism by a Kushan king: the monastery and stupa associated with Kanishka I at Shah-ji-ki-dheri, Peshawar. An inscribed gilded bronze incense box re-used as a relic container – the so-called Kanishka casket (Pl. 32.2) – was found in the relic chamber of this stupa. This box features small statuettes of the Buddha worshipped by the deities Indra and Brahma on its lid, while a lower relief frieze around the body of the box shows a frieze of Erotes or putti bearing a long, undulating garland, interspersed with the Buddha flanked by perhaps Indra and Brahma, and a standing Kushan king flanked by the Kushan deities of the sun and moon (Miirō and Mao).⁶²⁴ The inscription on the box refers to a donation of two staff members of the monastery of the king Kanishka in the city Kanīṣkapura (here also indicating that the city of Peshawar, Puruṣapura, had been 're-founded' in the king's name).⁶²⁵

I have argued elsewhere that the Rabatak inscription speaks to the potency of the social memory of Achaemenid and Greek imperial pasts in Bactria in the Kushan period. In addition to this, Kanishka's *renouveau iranien* could be rather understood as not a specifically negative reaction to the Greek past, but an understanding that using an Iranian vocabulary of power was a more effective means of expressing the political message of the dynasty's authority in this eastern region of the Iranian world.⁶²⁶ This strategy may have also been inspired by the usage of the same vocabulary of power by the Arsacids, and a number of parallels can be drawn between the royal self-presentation of the two dynasties.⁶²⁷ I will return later to the question of engagement with the memory of the Greek past in Kushan Central Asia (§5.4).

It is more difficult to establish the reality of Kanishka's other military campaigns and the extent of the Kushan empire at its height in his reign. Indeed, while he had certainly led his army into Gangetic India, there is virtually no evidence of the installation of an imperial administration beyond Mathura.⁶²⁸ Much later, Xuanzang (7th century CE) relayed a legend within which Kanishka was said to have expanded his control into the Tarim Basin,⁶²⁹ and a 5th century CE Chinese Buddhist text (*Fu fazang yinyuan zhuan*) mentions a successful battle against Anxi (the Arsacids).⁶³⁰ The same text gives an account of Kanishka's eventual demise,

⁶²³ See discussion in Morris 2020b, 83–85.

⁶²⁴ On the iconographic features of the box's decoration and the dating of the relic deposit to the reign of Huvishka, see Errington and Falk 2002.

⁶²⁵ CKI 145, edition and trans. in Baums 2012, 246.

⁶²⁶ Morris 2020c, 588–589.

⁶²⁷ Sinisi 2017.

⁶²⁸ See comments in Bracey 2020, 125, 131–132, 134.

⁶²⁹ T 2087, 1.0873c23, trans. Zürcher 1968, 377. This legend is also discussed further below.

⁶³⁰ T 2058, 5.316b16–18, trans. Zürcher 1968, 386.

whether or not there is any reality to the story: unhappily driven to the ends of the earth by Kanishka's conquests, the king's weary ministers smothered him to death when he fell ill.⁶³¹

The reign of Kanishka's successor Huvishka (ca. 151–190 CE) is less well known to us. Perhaps the limits of the empire had remained around the same during his rule, but some political turbulence may tentatively be inferred in this period. At least, the weight standard of the coinage he minted dropped,⁶³² although this in and of itself does not necessitate conflict, and one inscription at Surkh Kotal refers to new installations at the sanctuary built seemingly in response to an attack by enemies.⁶³³ Likewise, details of the reign of the subsequent Kushan king Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230 CE) are unclear, although – perhaps in response to a growing threat from the Sasanian Empire with its founding king Ardashir I (ca. 223–240 CE) – he reportedly sent envoys with tribute in the last year of his reign to the Chinese capital Chang'an.⁶³⁴

The Sasanian capture of Bactria in ca. 230 CE marked the beginning of the end for the Kushan Empire. Here, a semiautonomous branch of the Sasanian royal house appears to have been installed who called themselves Kushanshah perhaps for having captured a core area formerly controlled by the Kushans.⁶³⁵ This polity is referred in modern scholarship as the Kushano-Sasanian Kingdom (ca. 230–365 CE), and the coinage they minted drew on designs of both Sasanian and Kushan issues. The process of their advance from Bactria still remains in many aspects unclear, but it appears that an invasion into Kapisa took place under the third Kushano-Sasanian king Peroz I (ca. 245–270 CE), capturing the region from its last Kushan ruler, Kanishka II (ca. 230–246 CE) before setting their sights on Gandhāra.⁶³⁶ Thus, the trilingual inscription at Ka'ba-i Zartosht of the Sasanian king Shapur I (ca. 240–270 CE) could claim that the Kushanshah reached “as far as Peshawar.”⁶³⁷ The rock relief of Rag-i Bibi (near Pul-i Khumri just to the north of the Hindu Kush), interpreted to depict Shapur I hunting rhinoceros, likely reflects the direct presence of the king in this space.⁶³⁸ The large number of Kushano-Sasanian coins discovered by Masson at Begram and its hinterland indicates that these rulers controlled Kapisa until it was captured perhaps already by the mid 4th century CE by the Sasanian king Shapur II (ca. 309–379 CE).⁶³⁹ At the same time, power in Gandhāra was

⁶³¹ T 2058, 5.317a4–18, trans. Zürcher 1968, 387.

⁶³² Jongeward et al. 2015, 89–90.

⁶³³ See Surkh Kotal 4 M, trans. Sims-Williams 2012, 78–79.

⁶³⁴ *Sanguo zhi* 3.97, trans. Zürcher 1968, 371.

⁶³⁵ See Rezakhani 2017, 72–73.

⁶³⁶ Cribb 2021, 105.

⁶³⁷ ShKZ I:24, trans. Huyse 1999.

⁶³⁸ Grenet et al. 2007.

⁶³⁹ Cribb 2021, 106.

contested between the Kushano-Sasanians and the ever contracting empire of the last Kushan kings, most of whom are poorly attested: Vasishka (ca. 246–267 CE), Kanishka III (ca. 267–272 CE), Vasudeva II (ca. 267–297 CE), Mahi (ca. 297–302 CE), Shaka (ca. 302–342 CE), and Kipunadha (ca. 342–352 CE). Meanwhile, the Kidarite Huns had gained a foothold in Bactria in ca. 330 CE, and appear to have crossed the Hindu Kush to take Kapisa in the 380s CE. Their presence in this region, on the basis of Masson’s coin finds, appears to have been brief – but, according to Cribb, it brought the period of Kushano-Sasanian and Sasanian rule in Kapisa to an end.⁶⁴⁰

While it was under the Kushan Empire, the city of Begram and the region of Kapisa appear to have served two important functions for this polity. First, on the basis of the study of Masson’s collection – and especially his discovery of a silver trial of a copper issue of Wima Kadphises at nearby Charikar – Cribb has argued that Begram was the location of the empire’s main copper mint. More specifically, this role appears to have begun with the production of the Soter Megas issues at the city first under the reign of Kujula Kadphises. These came to be widely used throughout the Kushan Empire, establishing this role for the city until the coinage minted by the last Kushan king of the region, Kanishka II.⁶⁴¹ The source exploited to provide this copper, however, is less clear. Sources of silver, gold, copper, tin, and lead do exist in the Ghorband and Panjshir valleys,⁶⁴² but it is plausible that the major copper source at Mes Aynak (modern Logar province, 30 km southeast of Kabul) was already exploited towards coinage production from the 2nd century BCE, which is at least the date of the earliest coinage found at this site.⁶⁴³ Perhaps, then, copper first processed at Mes Aynak might have been transported north to Begram for striking into coins, but the reality of this would be better assessed through metallurgical analysis.

The second main function Kapisa may have served was as the location of the summer capital of the Kushans and their court. Although the idea that Begram was this capital has been widely repeated in scholarship (and there could well be a kernel of truth to it), it is important to take a moment to consider where the reception comes from and its implications. In fact, this reception derives from a local legend heard in the 7th century CE by Xuanzang during his visit to a monastery in Kapisa where Chinese hostages had allegedly resided during Kanishka’s reign:

⁶⁴⁰ For the above, Cribb 2021, 106–107. See also the extended discussion in Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming.

⁶⁴¹ See Cribb 2021, 104–105.

⁶⁴² See the review of early mining in Afghanistan in Thomalsky et al. 2013.

⁶⁴³ For a study of metallurgy at Mes Aynak and an overview of the development of the site as known from ongoing rescue excavations, Eley et al. 2016; Marquis 2016.

“anciently King Chia-ni-se-chia (Kaniṣka) of the country Ch’ien-t’o-lo (Gandhāra), whose majesty spread over the neighbouring kingdoms and whose transforming (influence) penetrated the far-away regions, led his troops to enlarge his territory (even) to the east of the Ts’ung-ling (Pamirs). (The rulers of) the frontier tribes in the region “West of the (Yellow) River” (Ho-hsi) stood in awe of him and sent (their sons as) hostages to him. When king Kaniṣka had obtained (their) sons as hostages he treated them very courteously. He let them have different dwelling-places for hot and cold weather: in the winter they lived in the various countries of India, and in the summer they returned to Kāpiśa, whereas in spring and autumn they resided in the country of Gandhāra, and therefore he founded *saṅghārāmas* in each of the places where the hostage sons remained during the three seasons. Now this *saṅghārāma* is the one which was founded as their summer residence. That is why the features, the garments and the ornaments of the hostage sons as they are depicted on the walls in the various chambers are much like (those of) the people of China.”⁶⁴⁴

This story does appear to preserve some memory of real engagement with states in the Tarim Basin, although scholars now tend to think that the Kushans never established direct rule there.⁶⁴⁵ Likewise, the reference to hostages – or perhaps just one hostage, as either the singular or plural can be read in the text – probably also reflects patterns of real diplomatic behaviour, i.e. real incidences of taking and accommodating foreign hostages (*zhizi* 質子) at court. A much earlier example for such a transfer of hostages is found in the Yuezhi’s reception of Modu, the son of the Xiongnu leader Taomun in the late 3rd century BCE.⁶⁴⁶ Perhaps a memory of the case of the exile Chenpan from Kashgar, who had spent time among the Kushans (perhaps as a hostage?) between 114–120 CE before they helped to instate him to the throne, might have informed the story told to Xuanzang.⁶⁴⁷ The monastery of the hostages in Kapisa which the pilgrim described – three or four *li* to the east of the capital, at the foot of a northern mountain, with over 300 monks following the Hinayana – was proposed by Foucher to be located at Koh-i Tope (see §2.3) and by Meunié at Shotorak (§2.4.3). Fussman has more recently agreed that

⁶⁴⁴ T 2087.873c24-874a02, trans. Zürcher 1968, 377.

⁶⁴⁵ See most recently Vorderstrasse 2020.

⁶⁴⁶ *Shiji* 110.2888. See commentary in Falk 2015, §9.

⁶⁴⁷ The connection noticed already in Stein 1907, 57.

the identification with Shotorak is possible but not certain, as other large and insufficiently analysed monasteries nearby may correspond better to Xuanzang's description.⁶⁴⁸

If we accept that this legend may have an element of historicity, this passage can be read as evidence that the Kushan dynasty may have held an itinerant or peripatetic court that moved seasonally between a fixed set of regions: Kapisa, Gandhāra, and (northern) India. This being said, earlier Han standard histories do not convey the sense that the Yuezhi (i.e. Kushans from the mid 1st century CE) had such seasonal capitals or residences. Rather, the *Hanshu* and *Hou Hanshu* explicitly place their seat of governance at the city of Lanshi 藍氏 (監氏 in *Hanshu*), just as Lanshi 藍市 was described as the metropolis/capital (*du* 都) of Daxia 大夏 (Bactria) in the *Shiji*.⁶⁴⁹ Comparably, a corrupt passage in the *Hanshu* at least appears to indicate that the king of Kangju had a specific seat of governance in the winter,⁶⁵⁰ demonstrating that the compilers of these texts did have an awareness of the idea of seasonal capitals. Although the location of Lanshi has not been agreed upon – the classic solution being Bactra (Balkh), with Khulm or Baghlan being more recently forwarded⁶⁵¹ – these texts ultimately also do not insist that a centralised Kushan government and court was located permanently at this important city.

In fact, there are plenty of comparisons that can be cited for the phenomenon of peripatetic royal courts in antiquity, including those of empires active in Western Asia (including Iran). For example, the Achaemenid royal court was apparently seasonally driven between Ecbatana/Media (in the summer), then Susa, Babylon, and Persepolis.⁶⁵² From a Greek perspective, this practice was motivated by a desire to follow good weather conditions, and Llewellyn-Jones has remarked that this can also be explained in reference to the traditional migrations of nomadic groups.⁶⁵³ Comparably, interpretations of the peripatetic courts of the Seleucid kings are not shaped by ideas about seasons. Instead, they are thought to have not maintained fixed capitals, but rather used palaces along the royal roads while they were constantly on campaign, with these palaces functioning as the residences of governors in the king's absence.⁶⁵⁴ The Arsacids are likewise reported to have had several 'capitals' in Greek and Roman sources, again indicating the operation of a peripatetic court. These sources again

⁶⁴⁸ Fussman 2008, 165.

⁶⁴⁹ *Hanshu* 96A.3890; *Hou Hanshu* 88.2920; *Shiji* 123.3157.

⁶⁵⁰ *Hanshu* 96A.3891. See the extensive commentary in Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, 124, n. 299.

⁶⁵¹ See commentary and references in Falk 2015, §37.

⁶⁵² The available sources do not present an entirely coherent programme, for which see Tuplin 1998.

⁶⁵³ Llewellyn-Jones 2013, 79–81.

⁶⁵⁴ Strootman 2011, 71.

conceive of the movement of the court as seasonally determined, but Canepa has more recently stressed that reading a fossilised element of nomadism into this practice is misguided. Rather, a peripatetic or itinerant court can be understood as an effective tool for the assertion of power, facilitating an imminent threat of military reprisal across an empire.⁶⁵⁵

Of the numerous further cases that can be mentioned for the peripatetic or seasonal mobility of courts of later polities or dynasties – especially those often conceived of as having nomadic or semi-nomadic origins or practices – suffice it to name some examples active not along the Eurasian steppe or in northern Central Asia, but in the territories of modern Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India: the Ghurids (ca. 1148–1215 CE) wintering in Zamin-Dawar and summering in Firuzkuh;⁶⁵⁶ the mobility of the Mughals, for example, under emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–1627),⁶⁵⁷ and the Durrani court's use of a summer capital in Kabul and a winter capital in Peshawar during the 18th and 19th centuries.⁶⁵⁸

Therefore – although I think there is no necessity to read an especially 'nomadic' component into this practice – it is quite plausible (if not provable) that the Kushan court did move seasonally between different regions within the empire, including Kapisa in the summer. Nonetheless, the absence of Lanshi/Bactra in Xuanzang's account means that perhaps we should also not take it too literally.

All of the above, of course, begs the questions of the composition of the Kushan court, and moreover what the court actually did. The relatively little data we have to answer these questions at least suggest the development of an inner circle around the Kushan kings, although the origins structuring this institution are still quite unclear: they could have drawn on practice in the Iranian world (e.g., the *bandakā* of Darius I), as well as the Hellenistic (the *philoi*), or even the 'nomadic' (such as the *comitatus*).⁶⁵⁹ Nonetheless, the account of the career of Nukunzuk – a member of the Kushan upper imperial elite – inscribed in Bactrian after ca. 137 CE on a recently published silver dish⁶⁶⁰ suggests that the king was surrounded by group of elites understood as 'servants' (*marēgano*, in a manner comparable to the *bandakā* of Darius I), and that mobility through the hierarchy within this group was achieved through service to the king. This group included individuals holding such titles as *amboukao*, *hasht-walg*, and *karalrang* (provincial or frontier civic-military governors?), most likely playing significant

⁶⁵⁵ See remarks and further references in Canepa 2018, 70.

⁶⁵⁶ Thomas and Gascoigne 2016.

⁶⁵⁷ Balabanlilar 2009.

⁶⁵⁸ See, e.g., Hanifi 2011, 185, n. 3.

⁶⁵⁹ Morris 2020b, 84–85.

⁶⁶⁰ See edition and trans. in Sims-Williams 2015.

roles in various military and administrative functions at the very upmost level of the imperial elite.⁶⁶¹

Although we have virtually no information about the activities that took place at court, it is fairly safe to guess from a broad historical perspective that (at least) court rituals were practiced and banquets were held.⁶⁶² Perhaps some aspects of Hellenistic courts (among others) could have been infused into these activities. As a point of comparison, Galli has remarked upon the aristocratic context of the patronage of Gandhāran art, and argued that certain iconographic elements in this body of sculpture refer to the court milieu of local dynasties in Swat in the Saka-Parthian period, which also drew on Hellenistic aulic models.⁶⁶³

While Kapisa may have once hosted a summer residence for the Kushan king and his court, Begram was also probably the seat of a governor who handled administration in the region. I have proposed elsewhere that the Kushan Empire was characterised by a thin administrative apparatus: presided over by a superstructure of a small number of upper imperial officials, and run on the ground through a heterogenous conglomerate of administrative units run by local elites, including local aristocratic families.⁶⁶⁴ Above (§3.2), I have already mentioned an inscribed copper alloy reliquary casket (Pl. 32.1) that was deposited in Manikyala Great Stupa as a donation around the latter half of the 2nd century CE: “Donation of the governor of Kaviśi, son of the governor Gaṇavhryaka.”⁶⁶⁵ Baums translates *kṣatrapa* here as ‘governor.’ This title is of Iranian origin (see the Old Persian *xšaçaṇpāvan*, eventually the Greek *satrap*), and it is attested by the mid 1st century BCE in Gandhāra, coming to be attached in subsequent centuries to a range of Indo-Scythian individuals from Nagarahāra all the way to western India to variously express nobility, governance, or independent rule.⁶⁶⁶ Thus, although the use of this term on the Manikyala reliquary inscription could function as a title of nobility, it is quite reasonable to read it as ‘governor.’ Proceeding with this understanding, the inscription tells us three things of interest: first, the position may have been hereditary and held by a local elite family; second – to judge from the name of the donor’s father – this family may have been of Iranian stock (however with the usual cautions of inferring ethnic identity from onomastics);⁶⁶⁷ and third, the donor had both the piety and resources to donate a relic in an

⁶⁶¹ See Morris Forthcoming b, sec. II.

⁶⁶² On courts throughout antiquity and across history, see respectively Spawforth 2007; Duindam et al. 2011.

⁶⁶³ Galli 2011.

⁶⁶⁴ Morris Forthcoming c, sec. II.1.

⁶⁶⁵ Edition and trans. after Baums 2012, 249, No. 53; CKI 150.

⁶⁶⁶ Salomon 1974, 12–14; Falk 2010, 74, 78.

⁶⁶⁷ See already Konow 1929, 150–151. I am thankful to Stefan Baums for discussing this inscription with me.

important stupa that was located around the southeastern frontier of Gandhāra – or rather about 500 km by foot away from Begram.

Although the distance involved here is impressive, the donation of relics by local elites (and not kings themselves) in the Kushan period was not unusual. An illuminating example of similar activity conducted by another elite family in the highlands of the southern Hindu Kush is also seen from two reliquaries donated in ca. 178 CE at Khavada (Wardak, southwest of Kabul).⁶⁶⁸ These were given to establish a monastery and stupa of Vagamarega, who was perhaps (if not explicitly stated to be) the governor of this place. The inscribed reliquaries detail that honour should be allotted to, among others, the king of kings Huvishka and members of Vagamarega's family. Fussman has highlighted the “transcultural and transnational” nature of this family: although of Bactrian origin, its members bore variously Bactrian and Indic names, and had these inscriptions dated in the Greek format (the month of Artemisios), following earlier practice in Bactria.⁶⁶⁹

Ultimately, if the city of Begram had both served as the seat of a governing local elite family, we could hope to find a palace – the governor's official residence facilitating also administrative functions – somewhere among the archaeological remains of the city. More specifically, this palace would most likely be located on the Burj-i Abdullah, as both the fortified citadel and core of early settlement at the site before its expansion to the south and wider fortification in (perhaps) the Indo-Greek period (see §3.3 and §3.4). However, as I have mentioned above (§2.5), Ghirshman's sondage at the Burj-i Abdullah turned up dozens of sherds and even fragments of Buddhist sculpture, but no traces of constructions. Instead, the tepe had been transformed into arable land about 75 years prior to Ghirshman's investigation, and he expressed the impression that past structures in this area had long been razed and harvested for building materials. Because of this, I think it is quite plausible that a governor's palace had originally been located on the Burj-i Abdullah, but the silence of our data on this question means that this can only remain a hypothesis.

For now, I also want to stress that this theoretical palace did not necessarily need to have the dimensions to host the Kushan king and his court. It is important to note here that I have called Begram a city throughout this dissertation without entering into the related problems of defining urbanism in the Hellenistic and Kushan period. At least, Begram was around the size of other regional urban centres active in the Kushan period in Bactria and

⁶⁶⁸ CKI 159, 509; editions and trans. in Baums 2012, 243–246. The inscriptions are commented on further in Fussman 2015, 172–176.

⁶⁶⁹ Fussman 2015, 173–174.

Gandhāra, as the surface area (probably) enclosed by its fortifications was just less than ca. 40 hectares. For example, in Gandhāra, the site of Puṣkalāvātī active from the Indo-Greek period (Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri) covered ca. 48 hectares.⁶⁷⁰ Similarly, the surface area which could have held constructions at Taxila-Sirkap in the period of stratum II – dated from ca. 32–151 CE, i.e. the Indo-Parthian to mid Kushan period⁶⁷¹ – was ca. 52 hectares, but the fortifications of the subsequent foundation of Taxila-Sirsukh enclosed a much larger area of ca. 138 hectares.⁶⁷² In Bactria, Dal'verzintepa in Surkhan Darya had a surface area of ca. 35 ha,⁶⁷³ but it was still a fraction of the size of other cities in the wider region that might be interpreted as capitals, such as Bactra in the Bactra oasis, Termez on the Oxus, Shahr-i Nao in the upper Surkhan Darya, and Qala-i Zal in the Kunduz oasis.⁶⁷⁴

Within Begram's relatively limited fortified surface area, the Burj-i Abdullah only represents ca. 2.5 hectares, but if the Kushan king and court came to Kapisa, we do not need to assume that they stayed in the governor's hypothetical residence at Begram. Theoretically, they could have utilised a permanent purpose-built structure located in the vicinity of Begram and/or archaeologically ephemeral structures such as tents. For a possible comparable scenario from north Bactria, we can look to the ornate royal pavilion (35 x 26 m) featuring painted clay sculptures depicting a ruling family that was excavated at Khanakatepa, a mound which is part of the settlement of Khalchayan (see above, §1.4). Although this structure may have been used from the 1st to 3rd centuries CE and eventually functioned as a space for ancestor worship,⁶⁷⁵ it may have initially served to host audiences and feasts.⁶⁷⁶ To this we can note that the use of tents for when the king and court were on the move is already documented under the Achaemenids.⁶⁷⁷ Much later, in the Middle Ages, the use of royal and court tents is likewise well-attested among ruling dynasties of nomadic origin, including the Mongols and Timurids.⁶⁷⁸ Ultimately, the activities and mobility of the Kushan court remain quite unclear, but in my view, it is not implausible that they spent summers in Kapisa in this manner.

To return somewhat to the realms of reality, it is at least clear that Buddhism thrived as a major religion in Kapisa during the Kushan period. If not already founded in the late transitional period, the monasteries on the Koh-i Pahlavan of Karratcha and Shotorak

⁶⁷⁰ Olivieri 2020, 400.

⁶⁷¹ Erdosy 1990, 670.

⁶⁷² Fussman 1993b, n. 45.

⁶⁷³ Stride 2005, III: 167.

⁶⁷⁴ See broader comments on urbanism in Bactria in antiquity in Leriche 2007.

⁶⁷⁵ See Lo Muzio 2017, 127–130.

⁶⁷⁶ Pugachenkova 1966, 246.

⁶⁷⁷ See Briant 2002, 187–188.

⁶⁷⁸ Consult, for example, Wilber 1979 on the Timurids.

developed in the Kushan period, and likewise the monastery of Qol-i Nadir was founded in the late 1st or early 2nd century CE (see above, §3.4). The sporadic documentation of pieces of Buddhist sculpture on the Burj-i Abdullah and at Begram's lower city by Foucher and Ghirshman (see §2.3, §2.5) suggests that other Buddhist establishments may have been located around the city in this period, but we have no information about them. Further to the south at Paitava, coin finds including those of Kujula Kadphises may indicate a foundation in the early Kushan period.⁶⁷⁹ There are even less data available to date the monasteries around the western piedmonts, but all may well be later; Fussman at least suggests that Topdarra 1 and Qala-i Surkh could have been founded around 400 CE.⁶⁸⁰ Comparably, to the north, the foundation of the monastery at Koh-i Muri might date to the 1st century CE,⁶⁸¹ and to the east, the monastery of Nijrab II at Nijrab to the Kushan period.⁶⁸² In the first few centuries of the Common Era, workshops producing Buddhist stone sculpture that belonged to the wider sphere of Gandhāran art were also active in Kapisa. As the so-called Kapisa school is imprecisely defined (and dated), Fussman prefers to consider a 'Paitava workshop' among others, which produced almost identical examples of certain types of relief sculptures found across different monasteries in the wider region, such as Shotorak, Karratcha, and Koh-i Muri.⁶⁸³

The establishment of these monasteries and their adornment with sculpture can also be interpreted as proxy evidence for the surplus wealth of local elites in this period. Although administrators of Begram may have benefited from indirect taxation on goods in transit via the extraction of customs duties (see below, §5.2.4), and trade undertaken at the city could have been a significant source of income for others,⁶⁸⁴ a significant component of local elite wealth was likely based on land ownership and surplus agricultural production (see above, §3.2). Indeed, we can see a neat intersection between the foundation of monasteries, Kapisa's agricultural produce, the import of luxury goods, and broader practices of relic depositions in the contents of the Qol-i Nadir relic container: among other items, two compartments of this container were filled with dried brown substances, presumably blackberries and shelled

⁶⁷⁹ See the discussion of Fussman (2008, 142–149), where he however suggests that this foundation probably occurred before the 50s CE.

⁶⁸⁰ Fussman 2008, 130, 135.

⁶⁸¹ See Fussman 2008, 175–178.

⁶⁸² See Tarzi 1999, 83–89.

⁶⁸³ Fussman 2008, 149–165.

⁶⁸⁴ Compare, for example, Babur's remarks in the 16th century on Kabul as a trading depot: "... this province is an excellent mercantile center. Merchants who go to Cathay or Anatolia do no greater business. Ever year seven, eight, or ten thousand horses come to Kabul. From Hindustan, caravans of ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pack animals bring slaves, textiles, rock sugar, refined sugar, and spices. Many Kabul merchants would not be satisfied with a 300 to 400 percent profit." *Baburnama* 129, trans. Thackston 2002, 153.

walnuts, while others held four parcels of offerings wrapped in brown silk.⁶⁸⁵ The use of this imported textile (presumably from China)⁶⁸⁶ is attested in other relic deposits around Kabul, Wardak, and Nagarahāra, as well as a wrapping for the copper alloy cylindrical casket that contained the inscribed reliquary dedicated by the governor of Kapisi deposited in the Manikyala Great Stupa (Pl. 32.1).⁶⁸⁷

Perhaps the southwards expansion of settlement and cultivated land on the dasht of Begram may have also occurred within the Kushan period, then probably necessitating also the extension of irrigation works on the plain. I take this as plausible also because of the location of the settlement of Kafir Qala at the southeastern extent of the dasht between the Koh Daman and Panjshir rivers. This quadrangular fortified site enclosed an area of around nine hectares (although nothing of its internal organisation is known) and was accompanied by a small monastery to its north. While Kafir Qala is broadly ascribed a Kushan to Hunnic period dating of the 1st to 7th centuries CE in the *Gazetteer*,⁶⁸⁸ the shape of the site and its fortifications still visible on satellite imagery clearly recall those of the (much larger) putatively Kushan-period foundation of Taxila-Sirsukh. As Fussman has observed, the layout and loopholed fortifications of this site are comparable to those of settlements planned north of the Hindu Kush in Kushan Central Asia.⁶⁸⁹ Hence, Kafir Qala could well represent the remains of a small fortified settlement established around the 2nd century CE, perhaps also serving to monitor passage between the dasht and the higher valleys of Nijrab just to the east.

At last, zooming into the archaeological remains of Begram itself, it must be admitted that we have relatively little insight into precise developments at this city during the Kushan period outside of those at Site II (discussed below, §3.5.2). Indeed, one feature of this epoch appears to be continuity from the transitional period. According to Ghirshman's chronology (which is not objectionable in this case), the Kushan period overlaps with the latter part of Begram I as well as Begram II. Likewise, Ghirshman also remarked upon the use of walls from the earlier phase in Begram II, as well as patterns of continuity in the ceramic repertoire between the two phases (see §2.5). More generally, the interior layout of the settlement (or, at least that at the new royal city) appears to have been retained, including the main axis of streets from Begram I, with the southern gate of the new royal city probably remaining the settlement's

⁶⁸⁵ Meunié 1959d, 123–124.

⁶⁸⁶ On the question of the introduction of sericulture to Bactria, Lyovushkina 1996.

⁶⁸⁷ For these reports of silk in relic deposits, see Errington 2017a, 39. For the use of silk in the Manikyala relic deposit, Zwalf 1996, 355, No. 677.

⁶⁸⁸ Ball 2019a, No. 491.

⁶⁸⁹ Fussman 1993b, 91–95.

main entrance, although it is unclear if the second phase of renovations identified by Meunié in this area is coeval to the phase Begram II (see §2.6).

It is likewise also unclear whether the lower level of occupation detected at Site I is equivalent to the phase Begram II. This is because the majority of the material reported by the DAFA from this area is instead suggestive of the phase Begram III – even though the initial numismatic data that were reported indicated an earlier date (see §2.4.2). This being said, two unusual finds from Site I may give the impression of representing the phase Begram II, but the picture remains unclear upon closer examination. The first is a copper alloy jug (h. 29 cm, Pl. 22.3) with no more specific find context reported.⁶⁹⁰ The form of this jug is derived from well-attested types in the Roman Mediterranean during the 1st century CE, featuring a tapered neck, circular mouth, and vertical handle, but the diagonal ribbing on its belly and incised grooves around its shoulder as well as upper and lower belly make it distinctive. Perhaps it could have been locally made. More importantly, it shares typological similarities with three ovoid bellied bronze jugs found in association with the Begram hoard, which were perhaps produced around the mid 1st century CE (for these, see below §4.2.2.3). Indeed, the Site I jug was even confused for one those from room 13 in the catalogues for LTR.⁶⁹¹ It is possible that the Site I jug is likewise early, but without more contextual data it is not possible to be certain. The second find from Site I which might be related to the phase Begram II is the ivory comb found in 1937 with an incised duck depicted on one side, and a goose on the other (Pl. 22.4). This comb was already highlighted by Hackin for its comparability to the carved ivories in the Begram hoard.⁶⁹² However, the unpublished find catalogue F1937 places the comb in room 54 and gives its find depth as 1.20 m. As a point of comparison, a described example of stamped medallion pottery characteristic of Begram III was found nearby in room 51 at the depth of 1.50 m. Instead, it seems possible that the comb could instead belong to the phase Begram III, and indeed there is no guarantee, stylistically speaking, that it must have been produced at the same time as the ivory furniture in the hoard.

Of course, there are also some distinctive features of material culture of the Kushan period outside of Site I at Begram, and these speak to broader cultural dynamics in Bactria and Gandhāra. For example, with respect to indicators of religious beliefs, a curious terracotta statuette (h. 17 cm) found in association with the phase Begram I indicates a link with Bactria in the Kushan period. This depicts a seated woman (with missing head) wearing a heavy tunic

⁶⁹⁰ Carl 1959a, 100, No. 164, Fig. 229.

⁶⁹¹ LTR No. 223.

⁶⁹² Hackin 1939a, 7, Fig. 237.

with a mantle draped over it, holding a shallow cup in her left hand, and with her right arm folded against her body.⁶⁹³ Close parallels can be cited for this terracotta statuette from figurines of seated goddesses in the Surkhan Darya region in northern Bactria, especially certain examples found at Dal'verzintepi in layers associated with coins of Wima Kadphises to Huvishka. This is the second group of figurines found at the site as classified by Pugachenkova, which depict a seated woman holding an unclear attribute in the opposite hand to the Begram statuette, and (of the examples with preserved heads) wear a high headdress.⁶⁹⁴ The deity depicted by these figurines remains unclear and could represent a number of goddesses worshipped in Bactria,⁶⁹⁵ so Pugachenkova opts to refer to the subject simply as the great Bactrian goddess.⁶⁹⁶

While the pottery assemblage dating to the Kushan period at Begram overlaps with the latter part of the phase Begram I (see above, §3.4) and continues through Begram II, the assemblage of the phase Begram II is more specifically comparable to well-dated phases at Barikot: Macrophase 4b (the mid Kushan period, latter half of the 2nd century CE) through Macrophase 5b (the Kushano-Sasanian period, from the middle to the end of the 3rd century CE, or perhaps a little later).⁶⁹⁷ The analogy of Barikot's pottery assemblages also lends support to my proposal that the phase Begram II ended later than Ghirshman believed, and I will return to this problem later (§3.5.4).

Unsurprisingly, some of the pottery from Begram II reflects specific, longer-term drinking practices in Gandhāra. Two examples of pottery receivers or condensers were reported in this phase by Ghirshman, which must have been found within the larger habitation area of Site B.⁶⁹⁸ These kinds of vessels constitute part of devices that were most likely used to distil alcohol, i.e. stills. Parts of stills are found in Gandhāra especially from the Saka-Parthian to the late Kushan period, and examples impressed with *tamghas* (royal stamps) found at Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri and Barikot (but not at Begram) even seem to imply official or state engagement in this process of production.⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹³ Ghirshman 1946, 50–52, Pls. IX, 1–2, XXVIII, B.G. 371.

⁶⁹⁴ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 161, Fig. 113, 5–10.

⁶⁹⁵ The relevant goddesses popular in Kushan Bactria include especially Ardoxsho (associated with fertility) and Nana (granter of royal power, leader of the gods), for which see Shenkar 2014, 83–84, 120.

⁶⁹⁶ Pugachenkova 1992, 51.

⁶⁹⁷ The pottery of Begram II is presented in Ghirshman 1946, 54–57, Pls. XIV–XV, XXXVIII–XLIV. For the definition of these above phases at Barikot and the presentation of their repertoires, Olivieri 2021, 34–36, 147–203, Table 3. Luca Maria Olivieri kindly shared his impression of the Begram II material with me.

⁶⁹⁸ However, tentatively identified by Ghirshman as churns. See Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIV, 1, XXXVIII, B.G. 314, B.G. 358.

⁶⁹⁹ See the discussion of examples of parts of stills from Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, 420–421, Nos. 127–129, Pl. 125) and Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri and their function in Allchin 1979, and now reported finds from Barikot

As with previous periods in antiquity, tastes in tableware at Begram during the Kushan period also shifted in parallel with broader trends current in Bactria and Gandhāra. The most important example of this are the red, carinated, pedestaled goblets (i.e. drinking vessels on low stands) that were introduced in the phase Begram II. These were decorated with matte black paint which took on a dark red or purplish appearance, creating horizontal bands and triangular motifs, and Ghirshman's plates give the impression that many relatively complete examples were found (Pl. 33).⁷⁰⁰ Pedestaled goblets had been introduced to the pottery repertoire of Bactria already in the Saka-Yuezhi period and remained prevalent in the Kushan period, indicating also a change in drinking practices in the region.⁷⁰¹ Goblets of various forms also emerged in Gandhāra in the Saka-Parthian period, and were popular in the Kushan period.⁷⁰² The type of goblets found at Begram are evidently the product of a local workshop based in Kapisa, as the same type of vessels have also been found to the south at the site of Tepe Skandar.⁷⁰³ Indeed, the very distinctive decoration of these goblets could also perhaps suggest that they were produced around the same time as so-called 'fashion ware,' a luxury red ware with painted black decoration that is well dated to Barikot's Macrophase 5 (3rd century CE) and now understood to be an important cultural marker of post-Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian horizons.⁷⁰⁴ In Swat, examples of fashion ware are attested not in the form of goblets but globular bowls, open bowls, and jars, and are typically decorated with a figurative repertoire of birds arranged in registers, but also vegetal motifs and cross-hatched triangles. Examples of fashion ware are found also in Bajaur (northern Gandhāra) and Mes Aynak, as well as apparently slightly later in the Ganges-Yamuna doab and Rajasthan.⁷⁰⁵

Whether there is any connection between the emergence of fashion ware and the Kapisa goblets, it is worth mentioning that the latter were nonetheless also reported by Meunié at the city gate (§2.6). Here, most had been found discarded with other rubbish in part of the masonry drain (ca. 1.5 m deep) where its cover had collapsed. The drain was connected with the first

of the same periods in addition to Macrophase 5 in Olivieri 2021, 191–193, Class V 1.2. Allchin's study of stills included a map (1979, Fig. 6) indicating that receivers had also been found at Begram, but did not include a reference. He must have been referring to the two examples cited above. The Begram receivers do not feature such a pronounced convex base as others discussed by Allchin, but are more comparable to the so-called "large water bottles for pack animals" from Taxila listed by Marshall (1951, 413, Nos. 46–47, Pl. 122), which also rather appear to be receivers. I am grateful to Luca Maria Olivieri for discussing this material with me.

⁷⁰⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 56, Pls. XIV, 9, XL, B.G. 107, 117, 150, 207, 348, XLIV, 95–112.

⁷⁰¹ See Lyonnet 1997, 161–164; Maxwell-Jones 2015, 496–497.

⁷⁰² For this and finds from Barikot, Olivieri 2021, 158–159, ABd 1, 3–4 (especially class ABd 3). For Taxila-Sirkap, Ghosh 1944–1945, 62–63, Nos. 53–56, Fig. 12; Marshall 1951, 416–417, Nos. 88–91, Pl. 124. For Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri, Dani 1965, 195, Fig. 31.12.

⁷⁰³ Kuwayama 2010, 289, Fig. 5.

⁷⁰⁴ For this and the following, see Olivieri 2017, 2021, 195–200, PP 1.3; Noori et al. 2019.

⁷⁰⁵ Olivieri 2017, 2021, 195–200, PP 1.3; Noori et al. 2019.

phase of building in the area, so Meunié remarked that the above-named finds could not be used to date the associated constructions.⁷⁰⁶ However, the goblets could help to suggest when the drainage system was abandoned. Although our data do not allow more precision, I may note by way of comparison that the end of urban life at Barikot was accompanied by the discontinuation of maintenance work on the city's drainage system by the end of Macrophase 5b, a phenomenon that can be explained by a breakdown in the social organisation of the city.⁷⁰⁷ Again, I will return to the abandonment of Begram II at the end of this chapter (§3.5.4).

3.5.2. The Site II structure: function and development

Now we may turn to the question of the function and development of the Site II structure, being the main orthogonal building excavated in this area that was active during the phase Begram II and within which the hoard was deposited. From the history of life at Begram throughout antiquity that I have sketched above, we might expect to find some parallels for the architecture of this building in the traditions of both Gandhāra and Bactria. This is precisely the case.

The apparatus used to construct the walls of this building were described as of a mixed type, made of stone in the foundations and first courses, then built up in layers of pisé (i.e. pakhsa) (Pl. 25.1). Then, earthen plaster was added to the face of the wall and coated with lime, and on this the remnants of applied pigments could still be detected in some places, i.e. traces of red and green in rooms 10 and T.⁷⁰⁸ Additionally, as will be discussed below, room 13 was also decorated with at least two layers of decorative wall paintings. Hackin already noted the parallels between the stone masonry used for these walls and that in Taxila, and Gandhāra and Kapisa more broadly, although he observed that the rubble masonry of Begram's Site II was comparatively more irregular than that of known stupas around Kabul and Jalalabad.⁷⁰⁹ Judging from the photography, it is more specifically a rubble masonry approaching the regularity of the diaper masonry popularised in Taxila from the mid 1st century CE,⁷¹⁰ with partly hammer-dressed larger header stones surrounded by smaller partly hammer-dressed stones held in place by mud. Ghirshman, on the other hand, suggested that the use of layers of

⁷⁰⁶ Meunié 1959c, 112

⁷⁰⁷ See Olivieri 2012a and updated remarks on the abandonment of the city by its urban elites in Iori and Olivieri 2019; Olivieri 2021, 35–36, 51.

⁷⁰⁸ Hackin 1939a, 9, Fig. 1.

⁷⁰⁹ Hackin 1939a, 7, 9.

⁷¹⁰ For an overview of the development of masonry over time in Gandhāra, see Behrendt 2003, 255–265. It should be stressed that dating architecture on the basis of masonry alone is unreliable.

pisé at Begram, which appeared only in the phase of Begram II, may have been an innovation introduced from across the Hindu Kush in Central Asia.⁷¹¹ To radically generalise, earthen mediums were typical of architecture of Bactria, while stone masonry was more common in Gandhāra, respectively speaking to the affordances of abundant local construction materials. That being said, occasionally earthen elements were incorporated into architecture of Gandhāra in this period. For example, mudbrick was used in houses of the Kushan period at Charsadda-Shaikhan-dheri, following a phase of the use of diaper masonry.⁷¹² Examples of interior walls built in their first courses in stone and finished with earthen media in their upper layers (i.e. like at Begram's Site II) are also found at Taxila in examples of both monastic and domestic architecture.⁷¹³

Excavations of elite residences undertaken later in the oases of Bactria from the Hellenistic to the Kushano-Sasanian period – including at Aï Khanoum, Saksanokhur, Dal'verzintepe, and Dil'berdzhin⁷¹⁴ – reiterate the predominant use of earthen media in this region and moreover provide some comparative material for considering the development and function of the Site II structure, which I will return to below. The plans of the houses from Bactria mentioned above show clear similarities over time with their use of peripheral corridors, large courtyards, and central reception rooms, which also speak to their participation in the development of a shared local tradition.⁷¹⁵ Although the origins and genealogy of this tradition are still obscure, Lecuyot's recent study points to distant antecedents already in Iran of the Achaemenid period, and observes that the Greeks at Aï Khanoum had developed a local model for their houses rather than introducing a new one outright.⁷¹⁶ Comparative cases for roughly contemporary domestic architecture in Gandhāra are found at the houses and 'palace' (if it is truly a palace) at Taxila-Sirkap.⁷¹⁷ According to Marshall, houses at Sirkap's Saka-Parthian period tend to have diverse and somewhat irregular plans, but generally repeat the organisational concept of a central open court surrounded by rooms, topped with upper floors probably made of timber. This motif was then repeated according to needs of

⁷¹¹ Ghirshman 1946, 27.

⁷¹² Dani 1965, 27; Allchin 1995, 283.

⁷¹³ Marshall 1951, 199, 365–366.

⁷¹⁴ See Litvinskiy and Mukhitdinov 1969; Kruglikova and Pugachenkova 1977, 5–47; Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 33–74; Bernard 1980, 320–330; Fitzsimmons 1996, 277–280; Lecuyot 2013.

⁷¹⁵ See the discussion in Lecuyot 2013, 201–202.

⁷¹⁶ Lecuyot 2013, 202–207.

⁷¹⁷ See Marshall 1951, 199.

accommodation.⁷¹⁸ However, Fussman has observed that blocks of such putatively large houses may have accommodated several families.⁷¹⁹

Before we can evaluate how these comparanda might shed light on the Site II structure, we need to consider the history of occupation in this building. Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16) presents a vision of the remains of the structure still visible over half a decade after it was excavated, and to judge only from this plan, several phases of renovation and occupation are evident. We see these activities through the presence of stone foundations in certain places, the addition of rooms into the eastern court set at a slightly different axis, the construction of 'murs écrans' ('screen walls,' or rather, doubled walls) and walled-up doors to the north and east of rooms 10 and 13, and the expanse of irregular walls set on a different axis in the west of court U. As discussed earlier (§2.4.5), the part of this building immediately west of room 13 had been built over by structures most likely of the phase Begram III, which helps to explain the confusion of Le Berre's plan of this area (indicated by miniature question marks in a number of places). Other general difficulties are presented by the apparent lack of detected doorways in several rooms, such as rooms 1, 4, 5. The communication of these rooms with rooms 5, 6, 6 bis, 19, 20 and 21 also remain unclear from the available data.

We can also see traces of the history of occupation in this structure through the depth measurements reported for finds across Site II, which are presented by excavation area and then according to their depth in Appendix I. Throughout Chapter 2 (see §2.4.2, §2.4.3, §2.4.5 and §2.7) I have observed that these depth measurements are certainly not equivalent to pure stratigraphic data, but might give an impression of floor levels in delimited areas, for example when objects are clustered at different depths. When viewed together, these 'pseudo-stratigraphic' data from across Site II might then indicate two main floor levels associated with occupation within the main structure: the first at a depth of ca. 3.10 m, and the second around ca. 2.40 m. In the following, I argue that the floor level around ca. 2.40 m represents the last main phase of use of the Site II structure, and that the end of this phase was marked with the deposition of the hoard. Other objects found well above this horizon (from ca. 1.80 m and above), in my view, could be associated with activities postdating the main periods of occupation in this building, and I will return to these later activities below (§3.5.4). Judging from Meunié's description of his finds from rooms 22–37 on the western part of Site II in 1938 (§2.4.4), in addition to the orientation of these rooms visible on his plan (Pl. 15.1) as well as in

⁷¹⁸ Marshall 1951, 199.

⁷¹⁹ Fussman 1993b, 95–96.

aerial photography taken in 1939 (Pl. 10.2), these belong rather to the phase Begram III instead of the main phase of the use of the Site II structure.

How did the Site II structure, then, develop prior to the deposition of the hoard? Two scholars have presented insightful visions of an earlier, more homogenous structure beneath this somewhat confusing plan. Observing the size, symmetry, and orthogonal qualities of an underlying structure, as well as the presence of earlier foundations documented in Le Berre's plan, Rapin has proposed a reconstructed plan (Pl. 34.1) of a potential older building in the tradition of monumental Hellenistic-period architecture analogous to that of Aï Khanoum.⁷²⁰ The observation that an older building existed in this area is significant, because Ghirshman stated that the foundations of the Site II structure had been constructed on virgin soil.⁷²¹

From another perspective, already in 1953, Hamelin reconstructed the main 'royal residence' of the Kushan period underlying Le Berre's plan (Pl. 34.2).⁷²² For this, he removed traces of later buildings and renovations (including the rooms added to court Z, i.e. the eastern court), suggesting the main central L-shaped building (with courts on each side) had been elevated with an upper storey. He also noted that court Z was entered from the north façade, while court U could be entered from the west, providing also access to the rooms X and T. From court U, the central corridor giving access to room 13 (and then room 10) could be reached, as well as stairs reaching to the hypothetical second storey, the existence of which Hamelin deduced through the doubling of certain walls in the building. The clearest example of this is the wall added to the one east of room 13. Further elaborations of Hamelin's plans have been published more recently by Cambon, of which a reconstruction of the building showing the positioning of the second storey over rooms X, T, 10 and 13 is particularly useful (Pl. 35).⁷²³ In my view, Rapin is almost certainly correct that an earlier building preceded the main Site II structure, although it is impossible to say whether this first building truly was constructed in the Indo-Greek period. Likewise, Hamelin's plan also likely represents a good impression of the layout of the main Site II structure when it was first built (whether at the end of the phase Begram I or in the beginning of Begram II), but I will further consider his ideas about the location of the theoretical upper storey below.

With respect to the function of the Site II structure, it is clear that this building was not designed to function as a treasury proper. Although we do not have a single blueprint for what

⁷²⁰ Rapin 1992, 383–385, Pl. 51.2.

⁷²¹ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

⁷²² For the below, Hamelin 1953, 121–123, Pl. I.

⁷²³ Cambon 2006, 101.

a treasury should look like in this period, the layout of Aï Khanoum's treasury (attached to the palace complex) speaks very clearly to a storage function, including parallel sets of long rooms arranged around a central courtyard.⁷²⁴ Rapin has pointed to predecessors and parallels for this layout and Aï Khanoum's palatial architecture from the traditions of Mesopotamia, Iran, and Central Asia, including also the so-called Square House at the Arsacid ceremonial capital of Old Nisa, and the Begram Site II structure.⁷²⁵ However, the layout of the Square House is something of a red herring. Although this building featured a central court surrounded by sets of long rooms with earthen benches that eventually came to serve as storage spaces for valuable goods (including the famous group of elaborate ivory rhytons excavated there),⁷²⁶ Invernizzi has convincingly argued that the building was originally designed and used for ceremonial banqueting.⁷²⁷ Indeed, although Rapin took the Site II structure at Begram for a palace or rich residence, he considered the locale within which the hoard was found to have functioned as storerooms (if not a treasury proper) because of their very thick walls.⁷²⁸

From an early stage, several individuals associated with the DAFA influentially referred to the Site II structure as a palace or palatial residence, including Ghirshman, Hamelin, and Foucher.⁷²⁹ Mehendale rightfully took objection to this, commenting that rooms 10 and 13 were of "less than regal size" and further that "the excavated area certainly lacked rooms of the size and grandeur – no royal statuary, architectural features, or reliefs – one would expect for the summer 'palace' of a Kushan emperor and his court."⁷³⁰ Indeed, Mehendale could not cite more precise comparanda for this, as we do not have a model 'Kushan palace' to compare the Site II structure with. Broadening our temporal scope, it is true that this building has nowhere near the dimensions of the palace at Aï Khanoum in Bactria, the so-called palace (Block K) at Taxila-Sirkap,⁷³¹ or the Saka-Parthian or Kushan-era building interpreted as the palace of a king or local viceroy at Chanaka-dheri in Gandhāra.⁷³² That being said, I have also explained above that if the Kushan court spent the summer in Kapisa, the presumed governor's residence (perhaps once located on the Burj-i Abdullah) or a hypothetical permanent building within the fortified city were not necessarily required to host the king and his court (§3.5.1).

⁷²⁴ See Rapin 1992, 7–30, Pl. 8.

⁷²⁵ See Rapin 1992, 271–279, Pls. 44–48.

⁷²⁶ For a summary of finds from the Square House, Masson and Pugachenkova 1982, 16–17.

⁷²⁷ Invernizzi 2000.

⁷²⁸ Rapin 1992, 277.

⁷²⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 28; Hamelin 1953, 122–123; Foucher 1954a, 2.

⁷³⁰ Mehendale 1997, 5.2.

⁷³¹ Marshall 1951, 171–176.

⁷³² Naiki 2015.

So if the Site II structure cannot be best described as a treasury or a palace, what was it? I admit that I do not have a definitive answer. It was certainly an important building, orthogonal in layout and with large proportions. Judging from Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16), the walls of this structure were ca. 1.0–2.0 m thick throughout, and its surface area covered perhaps about 2,100 square metres (although the extent of the building was not clarified). The scale of this structure is considerably larger than anything excavated at Site I or Site B, and indeed, its monumentality is quite clear from Tania Ghirshman's plan (Pl. 9), where the building takes up a considerable portion of the eastern part of the new royal city. Indeed, it even appears to interrupt the central east-west street which otherwise bisects this part of the settlement into northern and southern sectors. Obviously, it is a shame that we do not have more information about the layout of the city in this area.

It is possible to entertain the hypothesis that the Site II structure may have been an elite residence. To support this, one can highlight possible shared features with mansions in Bactria in antiquity, most especially the Kushan-period elite residences DT-5 and DT-6 excavated at Dal'verzintepe (Pl. 36).⁷³³ Incidentally, a hoard of 115 gold objects including ingots, jewellery, and blanks was also found in DT-5. The hoard had apparently been buried for safekeeping in an earthenware pot in room 13, but was never recovered after the house succumbed to a fire.⁷³⁴

First, as noted above, rooms 10 and 13 in the Site II structure do not quite appear to have been built to function as storage rooms. As Simpson has already noticed (see §1.3), the reported presence of earthen benches and especially the decoration of these rooms with wall paintings suggests that they served as reception or banqueting areas before they were later utilised as storage spaces.⁷³⁵ Indeed, the houses at Dal'verzintepe featured central reception rooms, preceded by vestibules, and these were of analogous dimensions to rooms 10 and 13 of the Site II structure (room 1 in DT-5 being 11.5 x 7.6 m, and room 10 in DT-6 being 10.2 x 6.8 m). I will discuss further features of the Dal'verzintepe reception rooms below.

Additional similarities between the Site II structure and the Dal'verzintepe residences can be identified. For example, through the central corridor running to the east and north of rooms 10 and 13 in the Site II structure, we might also see the influence of peripheral corridors frequently found in the Bactrian tradition, likewise seen at Dal'verzintepe around the reception rooms of DT-5 and DT-6. In a similar way to the Site II structure, these houses were also

⁷³³ Bernard's comments on these houses within his review of the report of excavations at Dal'verzintepe (Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978) are especially valuable, for which see Bernard 1980, 320–323.

⁷³⁴ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 35.

⁷³⁵ Simpson 2014, 8.

framed by large courts on both sides (to the east and west of the excavated structures on Pl. 36). Bernard additionally observed that the Dal'verzintepe houses were spatially divided between a unit containing the reception rooms, and subsidiary rooms of the living and service quarters.⁷³⁶ Although it is unclear whether rooms in domestic spaces were always conceived to have fixed functions (and we have less data about the Site II structure), living areas in the latter could perhaps be identified in rooms T and X (as room T also featured traces of applied pigments on its walls).⁷³⁷ The northern block of rooms with a masonry covered waste water drain (see 'V' on Pl. 16, Pl. 30.1) was already identified by Ghirshman as a food preparation area, also in light of the mortars he found there (§2.5).⁷³⁸ It is also significant that Ghirshman noticed that this drain had been cut into sterile ground.⁷³⁹ Additionally, the house DT-5 had an outside washroom that was paved with fired bricks and fitted with a terracotta pipe for draining waste water that emptied into the western courtyard (Pl. 36).⁷⁴⁰ Indeed, the set of rooms added to the eastern courtyard (court Z) of the Site II structure during renovations – which was fitted with a drainage pipe leading beyond the northern façade of the structure – could have likewise served as a washroom. However, I hesitate to insist upon this because a washroom in this space should have incorporated some kind of paving (as it did in DT-5), and if such a feature existed, I think it would have been obvious enough to have been included in Le Berre's plan (such as the waste water pipe and the masonry drain in the same building).

If we would interpret shared features between the Site II structure and the houses at Dal'verzintepe, we may then wonder why the plan of the former is still so confusing. This could be explained by the existence of the earlier building underlying the main structure, which was highlighted by Rapin. This earlier orthogonal building appears to have featured a corridor running around the periphery of its facade, and could well have also been a house built according to the traditions of elite domestic architecture at Aï Khanoum.⁷⁴¹ Whatever its original function, and whenever it was constructed, this building then appears to have been largely cleared to build the Site II structure, which reused part of its foundations. Then, in order to include reception rooms typical of elite residences in Kushan Bactria, a suitable space defined by the pre-existing foundations of the earlier structure could have been chosen in the heart of the house.

⁷³⁶ Bernard 1980, 320–322.

⁷³⁷ Hackin 1939a, 9, Fig. 1.

⁷³⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

⁷³⁹ Ghirshman 1946, 28, Fig. 13.

⁷⁴⁰ Bernard 1980, 322.

⁷⁴¹ For these, see the elaborated plans in Lecuyot 2013, Fig. 73.

As I have mentioned above, Hamelin proposed that certain of the doubled walls found in the Site II structure – interpreted previously as having served to conceal the blocked doors of the hoard rooms – may have been built to support an upper floor (see his reconstruction in Pl. 34.2).⁷⁴² Alternatively, it is plausible that the structure was not fitted with a second storey proper, but the doubled wall to the east of room 13 could have served to raise the height of the ceilings of rooms 10 and 13 (Pl. 16). Then, the proposed set of stairs in Hamelin's plan in the south of the central corridor west of rooms 10 and 13 could give access to the flat roof of the building. A similar kind of reconstruction was proposed with respect to the houses DT-5 and DT-6 at Dal'verzintep. The reception rooms of these had substantially thicker walls than other parts of these houses, and nook with a bench was noticed in the northwestern corner of the front porch of DT-6. Turgonov thus remarked that this nook once provided access to the house's flat roof, noting that the use of roofs for a range of everyday purposes was common in traditional architecture in northern Afghanistan.⁷⁴³ Accordingly, the reception rooms of DT-5 and DT-6 were reconstructed to have had high ceilings that rose in a block above the lower flat roofs of the rest of these houses.⁷⁴⁴

It is additionally worth highlighting that the reception rooms and vestibules thereof in DT-5 and DT-6 had been ornamented. The reception room of DT-6 exhibited the remains for the foundations of four wooden columns, and that of DT-5 had been fitted out with an elaborate wooden lantern ceiling.⁷⁴⁵ Moreover, at the niche located at the entrance of DT-5's reception room, fragments of figural wall paintings were found on the floor, which had evidently been knocked down during one of the periods of renovation documented during its long life. One of these fragmented depicted part of a horse's head, another the face of a bearded man in a blue helmet in profile. Evidently, the subject had been a heavily armed mounted soldier, perhaps a member of the military elite.⁷⁴⁶

Rooms 10 and 13 in the Site II structure had also been ornamented. Although only traces of light green paint were discovered in room 10,⁷⁴⁷ room 13 certainly featured (at least) two layers of decorative paintings. As I have mentioned above (§2.4.5), these are documented through a set of archival photographs (see two on Pl. 26), which I have argued were taken at the southern extremity of the western wall of this room. The repeated motif of the first (earlier)

⁷⁴² See more specifically Hamelin 1953, 122, n. 1.

⁷⁴³ Turgonov in Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 52.

⁷⁴⁴ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 200.

⁷⁴⁵ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 192, Fig. 129.

⁷⁴⁶ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 38, Pl. 4.

⁷⁴⁷ Hackin 1939a, 9; Hamelin 1953, 122, n. 3.

painting is also indicated in two of Carl's sketches, and two of Hamelin's illustrations based on these. I have digitally traced one of Hamelin's illustrations here, adding colours he indicated – red, white, black, yellow, and grey – to give a rough impression of this motif's original appearance (Pl. 27.1).

The decoration most clearly visible among the above documents is from the first, earlier painting from this room. This depicted the motif of a draped colonnade which ran in a frieze around the lower part of the room, being about 55 cm high (at least according to Hamelin's indications, which however seem slightly too small from the perspective of Pl. 26.2). If any decoration had existed above this frieze, it was not documented. Broadly speaking, this motif originates in the Graeco-Roman world. Although I am not yet aware of closer parallels, colonnades draped with garlands are documented among Roman wall paintings. For example, a pine garland is draped between red and yellow pilasters arranged in a colonnade in the (aptly named) 'room of the pine garlands' from the House of Augustus on the Palatine Hill.⁷⁴⁸ Representations of fabric draped in a similar fashion are more difficult to find, but the painting from room 6 of the House of the 'Gran Portale' at Herculaneum features at least regularly draped curtains (as well as garlands) against elaborate architecture.⁷⁴⁹ The columns or pilasters depicted on the painting from room 13 at Begram – judging that Carl's and Hamelin's illustrations thereof are at least roughly accurate – appear to feature the central recessed panels frequently found on Corinthian and Corinthianising columns and pilasters depicted in Gandhāran Buddhist sculptural reliefs,⁷⁵⁰ and likewise on the Surkh Kotal podium.⁷⁵¹ The same feature is depicted on the Bimaran casket, although the pilasters on this object have capitals and bases composed of a torus between two plain fillets.⁷⁵² The capitals depicted on the wall painting are more puzzling. Apparently square-shaped with two vertical recessed panels (?), they may have intended to represent something like the schematised pseudo-Corinthian capitals of the pilasters executed in masonry on numerous Buddhist stupas postdating the Kushan period in the vicinity of Kabul. However, even these had been plastered and painted,⁷⁵³ so the question of the parallels for these capitals remains open, and I do not think this painting can be more precisely dated.⁷⁵⁴

⁷⁴⁸ Carettoni 1961, 189–191, Figs. 1–3.

⁷⁴⁹ A good photograph is published in Esposito and Moorman 2021, Fig. 5

⁷⁵⁰ See, for example, Zwalf 1996, Nos. 119, 131, 145, 172, 186, 194, 200–201, 204–205, 209, 214, 237, 241, 243–244, 264, 272, 274, 275.

⁷⁵¹ Schlumberger et al. 1983, Pl. 7.

⁷⁵² BM 1900,0209.1 For the post ca. 80 CE date of the relic deposit, and some photos, Cribb 2016.

⁷⁵³ See Fussman 2008, 23 and examples of this feature throughout.

⁷⁵⁴ However, for what it is worth, one may note a visual point of comparison between the capitals on the Begram wall painting and the terracotta so-called metopes that decorated certain structures at Old Nisa. These were

Interestingly, however, remains of a second (later) layer of wall painting in room 13 are also visible from the archival photographs. In the first photo reproduced here, these fragments are located near to the top left corner, revealing the lines of figural imagery on a light background (Pl. 26.1). The second photo does not show these fragments, but more clearly illustrates (to the left) how the first painting has been plastered over with a layer of clay to provide the surface for the next layer of paintings (Pl. 26.2). On the first photo, on the left part of the visible remains, the head of a figure with short dark hair is just discernible, featuring something wrapped over each shoulder and behind its neck. On the right part of the visible remains, part of the back of the right hand and forearm of a second figure is visible, folded against the figure's body, holding an indeterminate object.

The left figure appears to be a garland bearer. Of Graeco-Roman origin, the motif of Erotes or putti bearing undulating garlands was commonly used with many permutations for decorative friezes in Gandhāran relief sculpture,⁷⁵⁵ and further variations (for example) are presented by a decorative stone frieze at the sanctuary of Surkh Kotal,⁷⁵⁶ in the upper frieze of clay sculptures at Khalchayan's royal pavilion,⁷⁵⁷ and around the lower part of the so-called Kanishka casket (Pl. 32.2, see also above, §3.5.1).⁷⁵⁸ Pugachenkova more specifically interpreted a Dionysiac aspect to the Khalchayan frieze, the garlands of which were carried by various boys and girls, interspersed with male and female busts of musicians and theatrical performers, as well as 'satyrs' and perhaps Heracles.⁷⁵⁹ The Kanishka casket provides a good parallel for the kind of iconographic elements that the Begram wall painting may have featured: on the casket, all to the left of the king, a putto shouldering a garland stands next to the Kushan moon god Mao, who holds a plain ring or torque in his right hand and looks at the king (Pl. 32.2). The motif of garland bearers was evidently seen as appropriate for a range of contexts in Kushan Central Asia, expressing a fertile and festive atmosphere that was suitable for adorning Buddhist monuments as well as objects and spaces linked with royal investiture and power. For this reason it is perhaps better to not insist on a more specific meaning for this iconography as painted in room 13.

roughly square slabs featuring various symbols at the centre (many clearly relevant to royal power) often framed by two vertical slots, then with concave moulding and filets above and below. See examples in Koshelenko 1966, 32.

⁷⁵⁵ For example, Zwalf 1996, Nos. 414–426. The iconographic origins of this motif are discussed most recently in Stewart 2020, 55–56. For these Gandhāran examples, as well as further from Bactria and beyond, Bromberg 1988; Stančo 2012, 116–132.

⁷⁵⁶ See Schlumberger et al. Pl. 55

⁷⁵⁷ See Pugachenkova 1971, 21–45, and (for an impression of the overall ensemble), Fig. 3.

⁷⁵⁸ On this casket, see again Errington and Falk 2002.

⁷⁵⁹ Pugachenkova 1971, 21–45.

According to Hamelin's plans, rooms 10 and 13 also appear to have been fitted out with earthen benches (Pls. 17–18). More specifically, the centre of the northern wall of room 10 appears to have featured a short bench, while benches are indicated to have run around the south, west, north, and eastern walls of room 13, leaving the southeastern corner and the access door to room 10 clear. There also appears to have been a break in the bench at the centre of the north wall, where a recessed benched niche was located. Admittedly, none of these features are satisfactorily documented. They were never mentioned in RAB and NRAB (which is not entirely surprising), but might be visible in some archival photos taken during excavations in room 13.⁷⁶⁰ That being said, the impression of benches in these photos could also be a by-product of the methodology of the Hackin excavations, which involved the removal of fill in blocks (see §2.4). In addition, the reported distribution of the hoard objects within room 13 (see below, §3.5.3) does not indicate a real difference in depth between objects apparently found on the floor and on the bench. Nonetheless, the same bench in room 10 is drawn in Carl's plan thereof,⁷⁶¹ Hamelin did participate in the excavation of room 13 (§2.4.5), and the lack of differentiation in depth measurements in this room could also be explained in other ways (see §3.5.3), so these benches may well have existed. Indeed, clay benches (with a diversity of possible arrangements) are common features in the architectural tradition of Central Asia (north of the Hindu Kush) and in Russian language works are referred to as 'sufas.' As Invernizzi has pointed out, they were utilised in the Square House at Old Nisa on a monumental scale – with a height of 50–70 cm and depth of almost 2.0 m – and could have been covered with rugs and furnishings to host seated or reclining banqueters.⁷⁶² Although more rarely documented in Bactria in the Kushan period (see the benches in DT-5 and DT-6 on Pl. 36), the installation of benches around the walls of important rooms is especially well attested in later examples of royal and elite architecture of Chorasmia and Sogdiana, and here particularly in the main reception rooms of mansions of the city of Pendzhikent.⁷⁶³ This all being said, the benches in room 13 only had a depth of about 50 cm (judging from Hamelin's plan, Pl. 18), so it is quite difficult to imagine that they were used as seating for guests during banquets. Let us simply observe that the installation of earthen benches in rooms 10 and 13 reflects some ties with architectural traditions of regions north of the Hindu Kush.

⁷⁶⁰ See, for example, MGP 81311/94 and MGP 81317/133.

⁷⁶¹ C.C. 140.

⁷⁶² Invernizzi 2000, 35–41

⁷⁶³ See discussion and further references in Invernizzi 2000, 39.

Ultimately, real difficulties remain with reading the Site II structure as an elite residence, and these cannot be explained away by pointing to limitations on the planning of this structure imposed by the partial reuse of foundations of an earlier building. Here, we come to some of the leading actors in the hoard's story: the blocked up doors of rooms 10 and 13. Our knowledge of these is essentially limited to some passing comments in RAB and NRAB and a few photographs covering these areas (see §2.4.3, §2.4.5), and the indications of 'murs écrans/portes murées' on Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16). These are more specifically indicated on the east wall of room 4, the eastern extremity of corridor/room 7 ('A'), the western extremity of corridor 7 ('B'), the access door from this space to room 10, the door between rooms 10 and 13 ('C'), the door on the eastern side of the north wall of room 10 ('D'), as two walls added to northern part of the corridor around rooms 10 and 13, and at the wall added to the eastern wall of room 13.

In relation to these blockages, we might wonder how rooms 10 and 13 were supposed to be accessed. At an earlier stage of the building's life, passage to these rooms was presumably facilitated from two directions (while the doorway 'C' connected the two before being blocked). First, they could be accessed via the central corridor running north and east of rooms 10 and 13, which ended with a door ('D') to room 13. Second, room 10 could be directly accessed from corridor 7. Impressions of a since-decayed element (a wooden door frame?) are clearly visible on the interior face of room 10 around this doorway (Pl. 23.5). At a later stage, the doorway to room 13 ('D') was blocked up. This perhaps occurred around the same time that it was decided to add a peripheral earthen bench to this room, which ran in front of the earlier doorway to the corridor ('D'), but did not pass in front of the southeast doorway ('C'). According to Hamelin's plan of room 13 (Pl. 18), certain of the hoard objects were dispersed in front of the northeast doorway ('D'), but not the southeast ('C'), which likewise suggests (if not unequivocally) that the northeast doorway had already been blocked prior to the deposition of the hoard, and not as a result of it. The two further walls added in the corridor just north of room 13 are more difficult to interpret. Perhaps, as Hamelin implied, they could have served to add further support to a roof or second storey, and the double wall added to the east of room 13 could have also been constructed in order to raise the height of the ceiling of the block of rooms 10 and 13.

The southeast doorway of room 10 ('B') must have then been the main entrance by which rooms 10 and 13 were accessed, including at the time when the hoard objects were deposited in these rooms. But how this corridor 7 was actually entered is a mystery, because Le Berre's plan indicates that its eastern extremity had also featured a doubled wall ('A').

Essentially, we have two possible options: either Le Berre's plan is wrong and a doorway – either giving access on the northern side to the eastern court of the complex or to the south into room 4 – had been concealed and was not detected by the architect; or, corridor 7 was reached from above (e.g., with a ladder).

The above observations in sum present serious problems for interpreting rooms 10 and 13 as reception rooms, especially in the later stage of the use of the Site II structure. Why were they accessed by such secluded and indirect means? Why cut off the connection between these rooms and the service area ('V'), by which servants could bring refreshments to guests? Moreover, why does this building give the general impression of being elongated and oriented towards the east (e.g., considering that corridor 7 was the main entrance to rooms 10 and 13), when the rest of the city lay instead to the west? If so, rooms 10 and 13 may have been the rear rooms of a long building, the entrance of which possibly lay to the east, beyond the limits of the Hackin excavations.⁷⁶⁴ Comparably, the front courts and grand 'iwans' of DT-5 and DT-6 faced toward the centre of Dal'verzintepe, not away from it.⁷⁶⁵ Although I do think it is plausible that the Site II structure had once served as an elite residence, on the basis of the limited data (and my limited capabilities) I choose to leave the identification of the function of this structure throughout its life as a question open for other explanations and new hypotheses. I will note for now that peripheral benches and niches are hardly limited to appearing in elite domestic and palatial contexts. For example, both features appear in the central court 13 of the urban cultic complex of the Sacred Precinct B at Barikot (Periods VII and VIII = Macrophase 5, ca. 3rd century CE).⁷⁶⁶ Indeed, it has recently been made clear to me that the possibility that the Site II structure served as cultic space should be explored in further research.⁷⁶⁷

Then, by way of a conclusion to this section that does not insist upon a single hypothesis as to the function of the Site II structure, I can tentatively propose that this building was developed in the following manner. First, perhaps coevally to the phase Begram I, an orthogonal structure had been built on sterile ground at Site II (see Pl. 34.1). Later, either near the end of Begram I or in Begram II, this early structure was cleared almost down to its foundations for the construction of a new building, the main Site II structure. This new building was to partially reuse the foundations of the old, which helps to contextualise some of the oddities in its plan. A space chosen at the core of this building was divided into two rooms

⁷⁶⁴ Luca Maria Olivieri (personal communication) has suggested a comparison with the smaller Temple K at Barikot, for which see Olivieri 2012b, 7–9.

⁷⁶⁵ See Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 8, Fig. 2.

⁷⁶⁶ Olivieri 2012b, 7.

⁷⁶⁷ Personal communication, Luca Maria Olivieri.

(rooms 10 and 13, whether these were reception rooms or not) and a corridor, perhaps partly in order to better distribute the load of the roof over this area. During this first main phase, rooms 10 and 13 could be accessed from the northeastern door of room 13 ('D'), which was connected by the corridor to court U and the service area of the building, while room 10's doorway ('B') was the main entrance into this central block.

During this first main phase (if not earlier), the masonry drain running through area V in the north cut into sterile ground. Perhaps the first layer of wall paintings was added to room 13 during this phase too. It is difficult to say whether the (pseudo-stratigraphic) 'horizon' of finds located at a depth of about 3.10 m relates to occupation already in the earlier structure, or the first part of the main phase of the structure, but I am inclined towards the latter option. It is true that none of the described finds (Appendix I) are unequivocally characteristic of the phase Begram I or Begram II – or, at least, the descriptions are too idiosyncratic to be sure. One possible exception is found in the eight examples of pottery found at this depth in room/area T. O. (N.O). Among these, five fragmented bowls in grey-black ware were found ('common pottery with ribs,' whatever this means, NRAB 307–309, 312–323) as well as a red ware goblet on a circular foot (NRAB 311). These at least give an impression of the pottery repertoire of Begram I, within which grey-black ware and black ware were quite common (according to Ghirshman's observations, §2.5). However, a pottery lamp and 12 or 13 coins grouped in lots from the area "sud de la T" included two identified issues of Huvishka (NRAB 285–286), which would rather suggest activity in the phase Begram II. Again, these are not real stratigraphic data, and one cannot be sure. Indeed, any finds from this 'horizon' could also have been deposited in pits cut through floors.

Other finds from this possible 3.10 m horizon include indeterminate examples of pottery vessels (room/area T. N. O.), three carnelian beads (NRAB 266–267), two cylindrical terracotta pieces identified as spindle whorls (NRAB 268–269), and a pottery cup and goblet (NRAB 272–273) within court U. In the area A. A., four pottery lamps were reported (NRAB 322), an arrowhead (NRAB 321), and more problematically, fragments of a pot with stamped medallion decoration (NRAB 319), unmistakably an example of the pottery typical of the phase Begram III (see, e.g., Pl. 29). This is most probably an intrusion from when this context was disturbed through later activity. In room/area V. / Havaladar, a gold pendant was found (NRAB 318), as well as a small pottery lamp (NRAB 270). In room/area W / Seyyed Jan, another carnelian bead was reported (NRAB 271). Altogether, these finds might suggest that textile production (either spinning or weaving, if NRAB 268–269 were rather loom weights) occurred within the bounds of this building – although this is also not necessary – as well as

the use of lamps and drinking vessels (among other wares) and jewellery. As mentioned above, Ghirshman also reported mortars in area V, interpreting this space as a food reserve. As the drain had been cut into sterile ground in this area (which had also been excavated to some degree under the Hackins, see room/area V. / Havaladar), these mortars may have been found around this first horizon.

At a later stage, renovations were made to the building, which can be detected in a number of places, although it is unclear if all were made around the same time. These perhaps included an addition of a bench around the walls of room 13, the blocking of its northeast entrance ('D'), and the addition of further walls in the corridor to the north, as well as a doubled wall to the east, perhaps to support a raised ceiling for the block of rooms 10 and 13, or a second storey elevated above the ground floor. Also during this stage or later, a set of rooms was added to the north side of the eastern court. Perhaps the second layer of wall paintings was added to room 13 during this period of renovations.

The depth data of finds from throughout the structure give the impression that the floors had been later raised from ca. 3.10 m to ca. 2.40 m. Deposits of hundreds of objects around this higher depth are especially clear within rooms 10, 13 and T (discussed in more detail below under §3.5.3). Likewise, objects found at this depth are documented throughout the Site II structure, and most of these are of the same character as those reported from the lower horizon. For example, three beads and a needle-like bronze object were found in court U. In the area A. A., eight 'billon' coins (their precise alloy not being known) were also discovered around this depth (NRAB 337–344), in addition to pottery lamps (NRAB 345–346), an object interpreted as a steatite spindle whorl (NRAB 350), and a bronze corner support featuring an animal's paw that is similar to those found in the hoard deposit in room T (NRAB 335). An unidentified 'bronze' coin was found around this horizon in room 5 (RAB 148 [1]), another 'bronze' coin of Kanishka II in room 6 (No. 54 in F1937), a coin of Huvishka in room 9, and two 'bronze' coins in room 12, one being an imitation of Huvishka (NRAB 276). The masonry drain in the area 'V' (room/area V. / Havaladar) was perhaps likewise covered with a raised floor during this period. Five 'billon' coins were reported in this area at a depth of 2.40 m, and the photograph published by Ghirshman (Pl. 30.1) gives the impression that no doorways in this room reached down to the original ground level, but a door-shaped cut may be seen through the wall in the background, which stopped just above lower masonry courses of the wall.

Again, I wish to stress that these depth data are not real stratigraphic data, and a number of objects fall outside of what I interpret as floor levels or horizons at ca. 3.10 and 2.40 m connected to the main use of the building. This is most obviously the case, for example, with

nine ‘billion’ coins and fragments of two pots found at a depth of 2.80 m in room/area T. N. O. (see Appendix I). These could well represent a pit cut into the later floor level (ca. 2.40 m), but one can only speculate on this point. Indeed, a number of objects found in rooms T, 10, and 13 likewise fall outside of the main horizon of objects presumably laid on the last main floor level of these rooms, as do a few other comparable objects found outside of these rooms. I will return to these problems shortly in the next section, but I would like to close my remarks on finds from the Site II structure by observing that a relatively large number of coins were documented within the bounds of this building. Including finds from the rooms 10, 13, and T as well as those at depths above the theoretical floor level of ca. 2.40 m, at least 83 copper alloy specimens were found in a range of different rooms of this edifice (see §4.14 and Appendix I), and this figure does not even include the coins documented by Ghirshman because no clear count for these is available. Some of these coins may have constituted parts of separate hoards or deposits – we lack the data to confidently assess this – but this number still gives the impression of exceeding what might ordinarily be expected for an elite domestic context. For example, in comparison to the ca. 873 coins from the DAFA excavations at Begram (see Appendix III), relatively few coins were documented throughout the excavations running from 1962 to 1976 at Dal’verzintep. In total, 116 coins were reported during those works, 76 of which being from excavated cultural layers, and 35 from two different coin hoards.⁷⁶⁸ A good portion of these finds were admittedly reported from the residence DT-6 (41 coins), but this number also includes coins from a single hoard (24 coins).⁷⁶⁹ I will not attempt to develop a real quantitative argument on the basis of two imperfect datasets, but only wish to observe that the Site II structure seems to contain a rather large number of coins to be considered accidental losses – if that is indeed how all of these coin finds ought to be interpreted.

With respect to the end of the main phase of this building’s use, one can only express regret that the apparatus of masonry used to build the doubled walls and blocked doors of this building was not studied and documented with more care. If it had been, we would be in a better position to assess the process by which the most important rooms in this building – rooms 10 and 13 – were made inaccessible. Regardless, in a similar manner to all past commentators, I am inclined to interpret the blocking of the doorway between rooms 10 and 13 (‘C’) and between room 10 and corridor 7 (‘B’) as broadly coeval phenomena. This marked not only the deposition and concealment of the hoard objects in these rooms, but most probably also the

⁷⁶⁸ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 227.

⁷⁶⁹ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 55–56.

closure and abandonment of the Site II structure. I will return to this in more detail shortly below.

3.5.3. The limits and distribution of the hoard

At last, we can explore how the hoard and its limits should be defined, and look more closely at its immediate archaeological context, i.e. its vertical and horizontal distribution within the Site II structure. In fact, although scholarship on the hoard has tended to focus exclusively on the objects found behind the blocked doorways of rooms 10 and 13, the delineation of this assemblage (or rather, related set of assemblages) is not as straightforward as it might appear.

I have already hinted above at some of the questions and difficulties which emerge from the definition, classification, and interpretation of hoards in archaeological literature (§1.1), and now we can look at these in more detail and consider how they might apply to understanding the Begram hoard.⁷⁷⁰ The term ‘hoard’ conjures a general impression of a collection of valuables that is hidden or set aside for safekeeping and/or future use (such as the treasure in the cave of Ali Baba, §1.1). Archaeological definitions are somewhat more contrived: most generally and unproblematically stated, hoards can be understood as deposits of valuable objects in the archaeological record. Numerous alternative terms are also in use to describe such deposits. In English-language texts, these include cache, treasure, treasure trove, and deposits that are structured, odd, unusual, symbolic, non-domestic, placed, intentional, ceremonial and special.⁷⁷¹ As this spectrum of terminology indicates, two significant shared aspects among this diversity of deposits are that their contents are distinct from discarded items with little or no value, and that they were deposited with intentionality (i.e. they are not *in situ* or the product of accidental loss). Of course, a single object can also be deposited for the same reasons as multiple, but identifying the requisite intentionality in such cases is more difficult. Although the term ‘hoard’ as understood in archaeological literature is somewhat artificial and problematic, it need not be discarded if the precise meaning of the wielder is clarified.⁷⁷²

Moreover, depending on contents and context (as well as the temporal and cultural context within which a scholar is working), hoards tend to be classified as utilitarian or ritual

⁷⁷⁰ For the following, see also Morris Forthcoming a.

⁷⁷¹ See Richards and Thomas 1984; Hill 1995, 95–96; Brück 1999a, 152; Hamerow 2006.

⁷⁷² As Hansen (2002, 96) has observed, that the persistence of ‘Hort’ and ‘Depot’ in German-language scholarship in Bronze Age hoards has not itself hindered pursuits of interpretation.

in nature. The utilitarian function – concealment for safekeeping and future use – reflects popular conception of hoards, and can be most easily interpreted from deposits of convertible wealth (coin, jewellery, plate) concealed, for example, in domestic settings. To cite one well-documented example of a utilitarian hoard from Central Asia in antiquity (as many are reported without sufficient information about their precise contents and context), a coin hoard of 63 tetradrachms was found concealed in a hole of the wall of cuisine 18 in the extramural mansion (XXIII) at Aï Khanoum,⁷⁷³ and was interpreted to have been concealed by the last Greek occupant of the house before the city was abandoned.⁷⁷⁴ Coin hoards generally tend to be interpreted as utilitarian in function. With little contextual information usually available, some classifications have been proposed by numismatists on the basis of their contents – e.g. accidental losses, emergency hoards, savings hoards, abandoned hoards⁷⁷⁵ – but the validity of such classifications has been interrogated by Reece.⁷⁷⁶

Over the last decades, however, scholars have become increasingly aware that the formation and deposition of many hoards previously understood as utilitarian may be interpreted instead as the result of ritual activity. Here we can acknowledge difficulties with the term ‘ritual,’ as it is often used by archaeologists to describe non-utilitarian or otherwise unexplainable phenomena,⁷⁷⁷ while ritual behaviour is more appropriately understood as one element within a wider religious framework.⁷⁷⁸ Nonetheless, already in the late 19th century, deposits of bronze artefacts in Bronze Age Europe were being classified as utilitarian or ritual in nature on the basis of their contents (whole and fragmentary implements, as well as waste or uncast metal) and find context (including places facilitating limited retrievability such as bodies of water).⁷⁷⁹ These classifications were refined throughout the 20th century.⁷⁸⁰ However, Bradley’s contextual work on hoards, especially those of the Bronze Age in Britain, has made a significant contribution to problematising the classification of hoards on the basis of their place of deposition, broadly showing that these classifications are simplistic and that the division between ritual and utilitarian behaviour can often be collapsed.⁷⁸¹ Moreover, Bradley has criticised the tendency for hoards to be explained in an anecdotal manner,⁷⁸² referring to

⁷⁷³ See Petitot-Biehler and Bernard 1975.

⁷⁷⁴ Lecuyot 2013, 130–131.

⁷⁷⁵ Grierson 1975, 130–136. See a slightly different scheme in Casey 1986, 56–57.

⁷⁷⁶ See Reece 1981, 86–87; 1987, 61, 63–65.

⁷⁷⁷ Hodder 1982, 164; Brück 1999b.

⁷⁷⁸ Insoll 2004, 12.

⁷⁷⁹ See the discussion in Müller 1897, 422–443.

⁷⁸⁰ See, for example, Levy 1982.

⁷⁸¹ See Bradley 1990, 2017; Yates and Bradley 2010.

⁷⁸² Bradley 2017, 10.

the colourful stories often found in scholarship about the putative circumstances leading to the deposition of valuables and why they were not recovered (frequently starring invasions and other misfortunes).

Other important longstanding beliefs about certain types of Bronze Age hoards have been dismantled in recent decades. For example, hoards of fragmentary bronze implements (Brucherzhorte) were long interpreted as indicative of smithing activity and thus a utilitarian function, but more recent studies instead indicate that they should be interpreted as votive offerings in ritual contexts.⁷⁸³ Likewise, throughout the 20th century, hoards were often perceived to contain articles used coevally, and hence were considered to be of use for the development of artefact typologies. However, more recent applications of archaeometric methods of analysis have helped to clarify that items deposited in single hoards can be of very divergent ages.⁷⁸⁴ Accordingly, recent studies have advocated for biographical approaches to hoards, considering the processes which structured the contents, arrangement, and deposition of hoards, and especially looking more closely at aspects of use wear, repairs, and fragmentation of objects deposited in them.⁷⁸⁵

Scholars working on coin hoards have also become increasingly aware of cases in which these hoards were accumulated and deposited as the result of ritual activity,⁷⁸⁶ especially with respect to veneration of springs or other watery features.⁷⁸⁷ From Central Asia, one example of coin hoards deposited as votive offerings in a clearly ritual context are the four deposited in the Oxus temple (Takht-i Sangin),⁷⁸⁸ which Lindström has suggested were given as compensatory offerings in earlier votive pits from which valuable and recyclable offerings had been removed.⁷⁸⁹

What can we take away from the above? In short, a hoard is an assemblage of internationally deposited valuables, but can be the product of a wide range of human activity. Examining the contents and find context of hoards can help to delineate ritual or utilitarian aspects to their formation and deposition, but both aspects might be discernible in the same deposit, and it may not be possible (or even necessary) to draw a line between the two. Moreover, there is no need for objects deposited together to be of the same age, and it is of

⁷⁸³ See Hansen 2016.

⁷⁸⁴ Hansen 2016, 196–197.

⁷⁸⁵ Such as Garrow and Gosden 2012; Dietrich 2014; Joy 2016.

⁷⁸⁶ Aitchison 1988, 272–277; Bland 2013, 224–248.

⁷⁸⁷ See e.g. Allason-Jones and McKay 1985 on Coventina's well in Northumberland, and Sauer 2011 on the practice of coin depositions in such ritual contexts within and beyond the Roman Empire.

⁷⁸⁸ Zeymal 1997.

⁷⁸⁹ Lindström 2016, 302–303.

interest to interrogate the lives of the objects and processes which lead to the formation and deposition of hoards. Ultimately, we should avoid the temptation of imposing anecdotal interpretations on these deposits, as well as our expectations of what a hoard ought to be.

Let us then start with what more obviously can be considered part of the Begram hoard with reference to issues of archaeological context, and move outwards from there into more ambiguous territory. Generally, the objects that had been placed into rooms 10 and 13 before their doorways were sealed meet the criterion of being intentionally deposited. From the available data, it is acceptable to assume that most of these objects, if not all, were deposited and concealed behind the blocked doorways ('B' and 'C' on Pl. 16, with 'D' having been blocked earlier, as argued above) in these rooms coevally – or, as Hamelin put it, this was a 'single operation.'⁷⁹⁰ The links between the objects deposited in these two rooms is not only suggested by the distribution of objects of precisely the same type between the two (considered in more detail throughout Chapter 4), but indicated especially by the discovery of isolated groups of ivory plaques in room 10 which had almost certainly originally been attached to pieces of furniture that were deposited in room 13 (see §4.13.1 and §4.13.1.5). The age and condition of many of the hoard objects prior to their deposition suggests that they had been kept in at least one other primary storage location before they were gathered, deposited, and finally sealed away (§4.16). The impression from looking at Hamelin's plans of the distribution of the hoard objects (Pls. 17–18) is that the doorway between rooms 10 and 13 ('C') was left clear for much of this process. Perhaps room 13 was filled first, and then room 10. Then, the doorway between these rooms ('C') was sealed when room 13 was filled, and the ivory footstools in the southeast corner of room 10 must have been the last objects placed in this room before the main doorway ('B') was finally sealed too.

The depth measurements recorded in RAB and NRAB for the objects found in rooms 10 and 13 can be used to suggest more precise hypotheses about the details of this deposition process and establish which objects were placed into rooms 10 and 13 before they were sealed. However, I stress that the picture these data present still has problems and ambiguities. It should be reiterated that the fixed point from which these measurements were taken was not necessarily the precise surface level above rooms 10 and 13. Rather, the still from Ria Hackin's film showing her working on ivory panel 4 (§4.13.1.2, placed approximately on the floor level of this room) indicates from the height of the men standing on this level that the modern ground surface was perhaps 3.50 or 4.00 m above this point (see §4.2.5, Pl. 28.1). Regardless, of the

⁷⁹⁰ Hamelin 1953, 123.

207 catalogue entries for finds from room 10 presented in RAB (usually but not always equal to a single object), 205 are accompanied with a depth measurement, which gives the impression that this dataset is relatively comprehensive. The documentation for NRAB is somewhat less complete. Including numbers repeated with ‘bis’ referring to individual artefacts (but not those within larger ivory furniture ensembles), and excluding the objects that were not found in room 13 (see §2.4.5), of the 225 catalogue entries covering finds from room 13, 193 feature a depth measurement. However, the 88 restored objects recorded in NRAB from the NMA (NRAB I-LXXXVIII) that could not be correlated precisely with the catalogued objects in RAB and NRAB were presumably (if not necessarily) originally found in room 10 or 13. This constitutes a reminder that the depth data from RAB and NRAB are still partial.

These caveats aside, the depth data from RAB and NRAB may be visualised with histograms in order to achieve an impression of the vertical distribution of objects in rooms 10 and 13 (Pl. 37).⁷⁹¹ To create these graphs, I have normalised the available depth data according to 10 cm units. When objects were occasionally given depth measurements in 5 cm increments (instead of the usual 10 cm), I have rounded them up to the next unit (e.g. 2.55 m becoming 2.60 m). When objects were recorded with a depth range – such as the stacked leaded brass basins found in the southern centre of room 10 (§4.2.2.1) – I have averaged these figures and rounded them up or down to the closest 10 cm increment (e.g. 2.45–2.60 m becoming 2.525 m, then rounded down to 2.50 m).

These histograms help to clarify some things. First, in room 10, we see that most objects were found around a horizon of 2.50–2.60 m (Pl. 37.1), while in room 13, there is an impression of a slightly more dispersed clustering of finds between around 2.30–2.60 m (Pl. 37.2). We can proceed with the hypothesis that these horizons are probably roughly equivalent to the floor level of each room when the objects were placed in there. This picture broadly coheres with impression of a coeval floor level at 2.40 m throughout the wider Site II structure that I have discussed above (§3.5.2).

Moving onto the objects found outside of the main deposits in room 10, the single unidentified coin found at a depth of 1.50 m in room 10 (RAB 239 [92]) is probably the result of later activity, and the burial of a male with a 24 iron objects a depth of 1.60 m (RAB 254 [108]) was likewise cut later into this structure. The documented flat and oar-shaped arrowheads associated with this burial (see comments in §2.4.2, §2.4.3) are similar to those

⁷⁹¹ These differ from the histograms published in Morris 2017, Figs. 4–5, as archival documents made available to me after this article was submitted indicate that a number of finds indicated from room 13 were not found in this space, for which see comments in §2.4.5.

reported from a later grave cut into room 9 of the royal pavilion of Khalchayan, which was related to the Mongol period and included a coin of the early 14th century CE.⁷⁹² Perhaps then the burial cut into room 10 at Begram's Site II is similarly late.

Progressing deeper into room 10, we then find two terracotta lamps at 2.10 m (RAB 170 bis [23], RAB 171 [24], §4.2.8.1) around the centre of the western wall (see Pl. 17), and then a group of 10 objects at 2.20 m apparently distributed primarily in the northwest corner of the room. These include a cold-painted glass cup (RAB 155 [6], §4.2.1.1), a tall and a short facet-cut goblet (RAB 156 [7], RAB 160 [12], §4.2.1.3), a 'Hofheim' cup (RAB 157 [8], §4.2.1.4), a zoomorphic rhyton (RAB 158 [9], §4.2.1.15), a plain bronze hoop (RAB 158 bis [10], §4.11.1), a mosaic glass plate (RAB 159 [11], §4.2.1.8), a ribbed goblet (RAB 161 [13], §4.2.1.10), an enamelled glass bowl (RAB 163 [15], §4.2.1.2), and an ichthyomorphic flask (RAB 170 [22], §4.2.1.12). The order of documentation of these finds and their dates (the ichthyomorphic flask falling slightly after the rest in the catalogue, but also documented on the 19th of May) give the impression a group found together slightly above the floor level. Perhaps a small bronze device tentatively described as a 'stove' (RAB 162 [14], §4.11.1) found at a depth of 2.60 m had been below them, but this is not clear from the surviving documentation. The impression that this group lay above the rest of the hoard deposit in this room is reiterated by a passing comment by Maillart in *The cruel way* (see §2.4.5): "In the tenth [room] they had reached a layer of decomposed glass; and lower still Ria found a collection of cut vases and bowls as good as Murano's."⁷⁹³ I will come back to the interpretation of this shortly.

The picture is a little more complicated for room 13, as several objects appear to have been found both above and below the main hoard deposit, which was itself more vertically dispersed in this room than in room 10. To better visualise the problem, I have created a 3D model of the distribution of objects in this room, which however is restricted to representing only objects with depth data and those which are represented on Hamelin's plan of room 13 (Pl. 18). This model was created using Blender and is viewable online,⁷⁹⁴ where the objects are represented by their rough forms and shaded according to their main material class.⁷⁹⁵ Two greyscale orthographic views are also included here, from the east looking west (Pl. 38.1) and from the south looking north (Pl. 38.2). It must be stressed that these visualisations do not

⁷⁹² Pugachenkova 1966, 71–74, Fig. 44.

⁷⁹³ Maillart 2013 [1947], 191.

⁷⁹⁴ <http://www.bactria.org/begram-room-13.html>. My thanks are due to Rachel Mairs for hosting the model.

⁷⁹⁵ Glass is indicated in dark blue, plaster in beige, ivory in white, bronzes and copper alloy objects in gold, coins in red, beads in purple, porphyry in pink, lacquerwares in brown, the glazed pottery in salmon, and organic material (a marine shell, §4.10.2) in light blue.

represent pure excavation data, and substantial information is still missing. Indeed, I have elected not to attempt a model based on Hamelin's plan of room 10 (Pl. 17), because it is far too schematic and an elaboration of poor data (§2.4.3). I have also underlined the problems with Hamelin's better but still partially reconstructive plan of room 13 (§2.4.5). Indeed, I have argued that the two bronze jugs NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 and the bronze plaque NRAB 3 were found not on the east wall of this room (as Hamelin indicated) but the west, as was reported in NRAB (see §2.4.5, §4.2.2.3). However, although I think it is incorrect, I have retained NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 on the east wall of my model (no depth data is given for NRAB 3, hence it is not represented) because it is based on Hamelin's plan.

This model reiterates the impression of a main deposit of the hoard objects across room 13, although it is subject in some places to upwards and downwards deviations. Interestingly, these data give no impression that objects stacked on the benches around the room were positioned higher than objects in the centre of the room. Apparent outliers above the main hoard deposit are marked on the orthographic views presented here, including the bronze jugs NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 (§4.2.2.3) respectively found at 1.40 m and 2.20 m, a further bronze jug at 1.60 m (NRAB 209), and a small bronze bowl at 1.70 m (NRAB 210), a set of 'billon' coins identified in NRAB as issues of Vasudeva found at 1.80 m (NRAB 10–16), a carnelian bead at 1.80 m (NRAB 18), two further pierced 'billon' coins found at 1.80 m (NRAB 20–21), and a 'billon' coin of Kujula Kadphises at 2.10 m (NRAB 6) (Pl. 38). A further possible outlying piece is represented by the rock crystal cantharus at a depth of 2.20 in the centre of the north wall (NRAB 121, §4.2.5), and to the west of the same wall, a fragmentary ichthyomorphic glass flask at 2.80 m (NRAB 121, §4.2.1.12), which lies rather below the main hoard deposit.

What can we make of these data, as limited and problematic as they are? Although this material in sum conveys the impression that the hoard objects were primarily laid across a floor level of rooms 10 and 13, it is more difficult to unequivocally interpret finds closer to this horizon, although multiple hypothetical explanations can be offered. For example, the ichthyomorphic glass flask found at 2.80 m in room 13 could well have been deposited in a pit prior to the deposition of the majority of the hoard objects. Perhaps the floor level might not have been entirely even when the majority of the objects were deposited, and some deviations might be the result of objects having been stacked on one another, or caused by the decay of ephemeral organising devices. For example, one photo from the excavations shows a major deposit of glass (those with trailed decoration §4.2.1.11 and ichthyomorphic vessels §4.2.1.12) compressed into the shape of a bag or basket (Pl. 24.1). Likewise, a photograph of the group of ivory furniture elements in the form of 'statuettes' of women (see §4.13.1.5), still in position

after their removal, shows how the third ‘statuette’ was found tilted below the main ensemble (Pl. 87.1). Joseph Hackin also suggested in a report in 1937 that some of the glass in room 10 had originally been placed on shelves, the decay of which contributing to the ultimate disordered presentation of the glass.⁷⁹⁶ Whether or not that was the case, we will at least see shortly that a woven article, perhaps a basket, had once been in room T.

It is also not impossible that the floor might have been raised to meet the height of the benches in room 13, or additionally that the Site II structure might have already begun to decay when the hoard objects were deposited in rooms 10 and 13. Indeed, ethnoarchaeological studies of the taphonomy of earthen architecture show that characteristic talus slopes form on the sides of earthen walls as they degrade.⁷⁹⁷ Perhaps, then the group of objects at a horizon of 2.20 m in the northwest of room 10 were placed on such a slope, and likewise the terracotta lamps at 2.10 m.

I admit that it is still more difficult to insist upon a single interpretation of the objects found above the main hoard deposit in room 13. Earlier, I considered the possibility that some might derive from the collapse of a coeval upper storey of the Site II structure,⁷⁹⁸ but now I do not find this entirely convincing. However, the four bronze vessels documented above the hoard deposit proper in this room (NRAB 1–2, NRAB 209–210) do seem to have been produced in the mid 1st century CE (§4.2.2.3), and were probably all found along the western wall of this room (§2.4.5). We may then wonder if their positioning derives from disturbance during later building activities (probably of the phase Begram III) immediately above this area (see §2.4.5, Pl. 28.1). I must admit, however, that this also seems difficult to believe, as three of these jugs are of very distinctive types (NRAB 1–2, NRAB 209), which gives the impression of somewhat more intentionality in their positioning. I will leave the question open.

In addition to this, the group of ‘billon’ coins (NRAB 10, NRAB 11–16 reportedly of Vasudeva, the two pierced examples of NRAB 20–21) and carnelian bead (NRAB 18) in the southeast of room 13 give the impression from their numbering and Hamelin’s plan that they might have been found in association, and thus could represent a lost purse or another kind of hoard produced from activity after the Site II structure was sealed and abandoned. One can only speculate, but in any case I do agree with other scholars who took it as evident that the ‘Vasudeva’ coins (NRAB 11–16) do not appear to be in association with the main hoard deposit in room 13 (see §1.3 and below).

⁷⁹⁶ Cambon 1986, 22.

⁷⁹⁷ See Friesem et al. 2011, 1140–1147; 2014b, 564.

⁷⁹⁸ Morris 2017, 95.

Ultimately, in light of the discussion above, I understand the hoard in room 10 to include the objects distributed between the depths of 2.10–2.70 m. For room 13, the matter is less clear, but as a working hypothesis, I consider the hoard objects to be those distributed between 2.30–2.80 m, in addition to the more problematic cases of the four bronze vessels NRAB 1, NRAB 2, NRAB 209, and NRAB 210.

Questions remain as to the impact of possible postdepositional processes on the hoard deposits after rooms 10 and 13 were sealed and the Site II structure was abandoned. Hamelin noted that no traces of carbonised wood were recovered, and thus a destructive fire can be ruled out.⁷⁹⁹ Rather, a gradual, natural postdepositional process of the decay of the Site II structure appears to have produced the infill of rooms 10 and 13 – the hoard objects were surrounded by a fine clay which had not ‘crushed’ but rather ‘buried’ them.⁸⁰⁰ However, we have no way of checking whether any of the hoard objects might have been covered with some earth when they were deposited. Nonetheless, an ethnoarchaeological study indicates that collapsed roofs essentially seal the remains of activity on the floor below them, although it is still necessary to examine whether floor deposits were disturbed in other ways.⁸⁰¹ We cannot rule out the possibility of some disturbance from postdepositional bioturbation, and we ultimately have no real evidence to either assert or deny that rooms 10 or 13 might have been subject to later looting.

Nonetheless, I will conclude my discussion of the hoard deposits in rooms 10 and 13 with a critical point: from the analysis of the distribution of the hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13 that I have presented here, there is no compelling reason to think that the coins found at the depth of the vast majority of the hoard objects in these rooms were not associated with them, but the result of later intrusion. As indicated above (§1.3), most scholars who have considered these data have accepted that coins found at horizons between 2.50–2.60 m are relevant for dating purposes, with the single coin of eight from room 10 identified in RAB – being an issue of Kanishka I (RAB 275 [129]) at 2.60 m – thus providing a *terminus post quem* for the deposition of the hoard.⁸⁰² Rütli went further, considering that the ‘Vasudeva’ coins (NRAB 11–16) at 1.80 m to be in association with the hoard too,⁸⁰³ although as I have discussed above, I find this less clear. Mehendale however argued against the utility of coin finds from rooms

⁷⁹⁹ Hamelin 1953, 122.

⁸⁰⁰ As discussed at the round table *Begram et les routes commerciales* in Lyon in 2001 by Tissot and Boucharlat, cited in Bopearachchi 2001, 415.

⁸⁰¹ Friesem et al. 2014a.

⁸⁰² See Coarelli 1962, 320; 2009, 101–102; Whitehouse 2001a, 445–446.

⁸⁰³ Rütli 1998, 194–195.

10 and 13 for dating purposes.⁸⁰⁴ She suggested that the coins were found in “reverse chronological order” (as a coin of Kujula Kadphises [NRAB 6] is found above Wima Kadphises [NRAB 208], respectively at 2.10 and 2.50 m), and that postdepositional processes may cause coins to “filter” upwards and downwards. Nonetheless, she accepted the coin of Kanishka I had been found near to the hoard objects.

Despite this, three previously unidentified coins from room 10 found at a depth of 2.60 and preserved in the MG were published by Bopearachchi,⁸⁰⁵ but their significance was not acknowledged in subsequent scholarship. In 2017 I republished and reidentified these coins as Oesho with bull Vasudeva I imitation types (see further §4.14, Pl. 25.1, Nos. 117, 119–120), updating some of the misprinted data from Bopearachchi’s article pertaining to other coin finds from Site II. According to current classifications, the design and low weight of these coins indicates that they were minted after ca. 260 CE, and I made the case that they had been found in association with the hoard objects and thus provide a *terminus post quem* for this event.⁸⁰⁶

It is not precisely clear which excavation numbers these coins relate to, as the find envelopes that five coins (Nos. 108, 111, 117, 119–120) were kept in had indicated that they in total related to the inventory numbers RAB 267 [121] and RAB 274 [128]. These respectively record two and three coins, but both were reported at the depth of 2.60 m.⁸⁰⁷ Bopearachchi’s Nos. 108 and 111 are a coin of Kujula Kadphises and of Kanishka I.⁸⁰⁸ It is important to note that the other identified coin of Kanishka I (RAB 275 [129]) was remarked by Hackin to have been found to the side of one of the leaded brass basins in the southern central part of room 10, and further that two Kushan coins (not identified at that stage) had been discovered in the interior of the hollow support of one of these basins (RAB 289 [143], see §4.2.2.1).⁸⁰⁹ These two Kushan coins could be the same as RAB 267 [121], or could even refer to the three coins in RAB 274 [128], as MSRAB originally had ‘three coins’ later corrected for ‘two’ in this part of the text. It is impossible to know. Nonetheless, these data still tell us two important things: first, that at least some of the coins in the hoard were not accidental losses, but were clearly deposited in association with the hoard objects; and second, the coins documented under the catalogue entries RAB 267 [121] and RAB 274 [128] were found in the vicinity of other objects in the main hoard deposit, and at the same depth of 2.60 m.

⁸⁰⁴ Mehendale 1997, 5.2.

⁸⁰⁵ Bopearachchi 2001, Nos. 117, 119–120.

⁸⁰⁶ Morris 2017.

⁸⁰⁷ Morris 2017, 84.

⁸⁰⁸ Morris 2017, 86, Table 3.

⁸⁰⁹ Hackin 1939a, 10.

Two other low weight imitation Vasudeva I coins that were also found at Site II can be identified among the MG collection, however at considerably higher depths than those from room 10: the first was found at 0.80 m in room T, the second at 1.00 m in room 1 (Pl. 25, Nos. 116, 118).⁸¹⁰ This hardly needs to constitute a problem, however, as Vasudeva I imitation types could also be minted, used, and deposited in later contexts (see §1.2), and the high depth of these coins could also be a product of later disturbance. I am less convinced that three (inconveniently dated) coins had the ability to move down into a lower layer.

Then, we can accept that these Vasudeva I imitation types found in room 10 are of significance for dating the deposition of the hoard. Emphatically, however, they only provide a *terminus post quem* for this event, just as Coarelli already presciently stressed with respect to the Kanishka I coin from room 10.⁸¹¹ As I have reiterated in my discussion of hoards above, this hardly needs to mean that the other hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13 must have been produced around the date these coins were (around ca. 260 CE), or that the hoard was deposited and concealed immediately after when these coins might have been produced (a chronology that can still only be approximately established). Indeed, as will be discussed later, palaeographic qualities of a Bactrian ink inscription on the base of one glass goblet from the hoard suggest that the text was written in the latter 3rd or more likely 4th century CE (§4.15).

Now we can move onto objects of the same nature as those deposited in rooms 10 and 13 that were found outside of these sealed rooms. Having collated (and corrected) the findspot data for other objects reported within the Site II structure (see §2.4.5, Appendix I), the picture of their distribution within this building is now somewhat clearer. These objects were found largely without the bounds of room T, but there are important exceptions, which I will consider shortly.

There is no plan for the distribution of objects within room T, although some indications about the placement of certain objects were given in the surviving documentation. The objects Ghirshman documented from the south of this room after clearing its bastion were not, however, published with depth measurements. Four coins reported at a depth of 0.80 m in room T (RAB 211 [65] – RAB 214 [68]) presumably speak to later activity in this area. However, I should note that these may have been found in the corridor just to the east, as during 1937 room T seems to have been thought to have encompassed this area too (see Appendix I). Finds comparable to the hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13 begin at the depth of 2.50 m, and largely

⁸¹⁰ See Morris 2017, 87–88, Nos. 116, 118.

⁸¹¹ Coarelli 1962, 320; 2009, 101–102.

constitute items that were probably produced in the Roman Mediterranean. At this level, 14 objects were inventoried in the last Hackin campaign in 1940, including a bronze horseman (sans horse) (NRAB 237, §4.5), bronze elements taken from articles of metalwork (NRAB 238–244; NRAB 248–250, §4.4), two gold masks of elephants which had apparently been found in association with the remains of a glass vessel and had served as attached spouts (NRAB 245–246, §4.2.1.16), and a brown-black glass piriform unguentarium (NRAB 251, §4.2.1.21). Most of these objects were noted to have been found along the northern wall of this room (NRAB 237, NRAB 239–243, NRAB 245–246), while one bronze element had been found to the southwest below the bastion (NRAB 244, §4.4), another towards the bastion and below the level of its foundation (NRAB 248, §4.4), and a third to the right of the bastion (NRAB 249, §4.4). Ria Hackin's notes (R1940) indicates that four bronze corner elements (NRAB 239–242) had been found in association with pulverised wood (Appendix I), perhaps indicating they had been stored in a wooden box. Likewise, the glass vessel and gold elephant masks were noted in NRAB to have been found in association with iron bars, perhaps then fittings of a wooden chest that had been deposited in (NRAB 245–246, §4.2.1.16, see also Appendix I).

Then, slightly below this horizon in room T, the remains of iron fittings of a large wooden box were documented at 2.60 m (NRAB 256, §4.13.2). Still lower, at 2.80 m, a colourless glass funnel was documented (NRAB 235, §4.2.1.22), and three further bronze elements (NRAB 230–231, NRAB 234, §4.4), the first two having been found more specifically at the east wall. Finally, at a depth of 3.20 m, a wooden box in the shape of an octagonal prism was found in the northeast of the room, featuring the remains of (only) seven panels fitted with a bronze armature and ornately decorated with vine scrolls, birds and Erotes (NRAB 354, §4.13.2). A bronze handle mentioned above – discovered at a higher depth and to the southwest of the room – was noted to have belonged to this same box (NRAB 244, §4.4).

The 13 finds from under the bastion in the south of room T reported by Ghirshman are of much the same character as those reported in 1940. They again included a bronze figurine of a grotesque (B.G. 9, §4.5), bronze elements taken from metalwork (B.G. 1–7, 12, §4.4), closures, rivets, and chain putatively from a box (B.G. 8, B.G. 10–11, §4.13.2), and a clay sealing with two imprints of seals and the impression of a woven surface on the reverse (B.G. 13, §4.10.1), which may suggest that some of the finds had once been placed in a sealed basket.

Thus in room T, we once again have the impression of the majority of objects being distributed at a depth of 2.50 m, however with significant exceptions presented with the four objects at 2.80 m, and the box at 3.20 m – although we do not know precisely at which depth

Ghirshman's finds were located at. These highly distinctive objects present clear parallels to those found in rooms 10 and 13. However, there does not seem to be any indication that room T had been sealed. As it is accordingly more difficult to read precisely parallel aspects of intentionality and concealment into the objects deposited in room T, several questions arise: Why were these objects not gathered and deposited into rooms 10 and 13, if the sealing of those rooms functioned to ensure the safekeeping of similar objects? What else might have governed the choice to move objects into rooms 10 and 13? Could room T have been a primary storage space? Might the objects deposited at the depths of 2.80 and 3.20 m in this room have actually been found in pits cut into the floor? And finally, can we truly call this collection of objects a hoard? Although I have chosen to incorporate finds from this distinctive assemblage (or set of assemblages) in room T into my inventory (Chapter 4), I would like to stress that the boundaries between hoard and 'not-hoard' are not as clear as might be expected.

This boundary becomes yet more ambiguous when we track other objects similar to the hoard objects found throughout the Site II structure. Turning to the central corridor which ran between room T and the block of rooms 10 and 13 (Appendix I), we find two further distinctive bronze artefacts in the northwestern corner at a depth of 2.40 m: an element from metalwork, this time a small vessel perhaps originally from a lampstand (NRAB 254, §4.4), and a unique, perplexing quadrangular device which Hackin perhaps correctly identified as an *aedicula*, i.e. a small shrine (NRAB 255, §4.13.4). But within this corridor, other finds were reported around the same horizon, which reflect those found throughout the Site II structure: coins (NRAB 261–264), a pottery lamp (NRAB 260), and a terracotta spindle whorl (NRAB 265 bis).

Moving outside of the corridor, the picture becomes still more enigmatic. A fragment of mosaic glass with traces of burning was also reported in R1940, which may have been found in room T, but this is not certain (see Appendix I, undefined areas, and Appendix II). In addition, another bronze element from metalwork – a gilded leaf with a loop attachment (RAB 215 [69]) – had been found at a depth of 2.00 m within the walls of room 11, but may also relate to the main phase of use of the Site II structure (Appendix I, room 11). Then, in the area A. A. (perhaps the northeast of the Site II structure?), a bronze corner element from metalwork of the same type found in rooms T and 13 (NRAB 355) was reported at a depth of 2.40 m (Appendix I). Objects at a higher depth in this area are yet more difficult to interpret and may refer to later activity within Site II (or disturbance to the stratigraphy from later activity), but finds at a depth of 1.60 m included a bronze spoon of a type familiar from the Roman world (NRAB 320), and a gold crescent shaped pendant perhaps once from an earring (NRAB 317).

It is worth mentioning, then, that another gold pendant (NRAB 318) had been reported in room/area V / Havaladar at a depth of 3.00 m.

What can we make of this? I have included the two bronze objects from the central corridor in my inventory of the hoard objects, but not the other single objects found throughout the Site II structure just described above, because from the basis of the available data, it is not possible to read intentionality into their deposition. More significantly, this presents an opportune moment to cast some doubt on the interpretative validity of distinguishing between hoard and ‘not-hoard’ objects. What if the objects that were eventually gathered and sealed into rooms 10 and 13 had once been distributed throughout the Site II structure in a variety of primary storage locations, or even (votive) pits, and were then removed from these for the (ritual?) closure and abandonment of this building? What if the pottery vessels and lamps, spindle whorls, beads, and coins found throughout this building had once served similar functions to some of the hoard objects, perhaps even as votive objects, should the Site II structure have hosted ritual activity? Ultimately, although I have attempted to clarify how the Begram hoard could be delineated and understood as a set of assemblages of intentionally deposited, distinctive, and valuable objects, some boundaries are still ambiguous, and the above questions must remain open. Perhaps future research will be better situated to propose some answers.

3.5.4. Coda: the deposition of the hoard and the end of Begram II

As mentioned above, it appears most plausible that the gathering, deposition, and sealing of objects into rooms 10 and 13 marked the end of use and abandonment of the Site II structure, because this effectively closed off the most important part of this building. The final blocking of the doorways between rooms 10 and 13 (‘C’) and between room 10 and corridor 7 (‘B,’ Pl. 16) was also clearly not the result of a random and rushed decision; the responsible party had the time and resources to source and install the mudbricks that had been used in at least in the latter case (§2.4.3).

The logic that governed the selection of objects to be moved to rooms 10 and 13 – or, put differently, the curation of the hoard – remains unclear to us at this stage. As highlighted elsewhere (§4.16), the condition of some of the objects deposited in these rooms speaks to their lives of use before deposition, as well as to the existence of one or more primary storage locations. Furthermore, the remarkable paucity of objects of precious metal (i.e. objects of portable and convertible wealth) among these assemblages has been remarked upon by a

number of scholars. As I will discuss in more detail later (§4.16, §5.3), I think it is fully plausible that such objects had also been kept in the primary storage areas from which the eventual hoard objects were drawn, but were instead removed.

Although the blocking off of rooms 10 and 13 has always been interpreted as utilitarian in function within past scholarship, both ‘utilitarian’ and ‘ritual’ qualities of behaviour could actually be read into these processes. Certainly, the deposition and sealing of objects inside these rooms implies that they were seen as special or valuable in some sense, and the closure of the doorways (‘B’ and ‘C,’ Pl. 16) could have partly functioned to protect them. Admittedly, however, the closure of the doorway between rooms 10 and 13 (‘C’) would not be entirely necessary to achieve this – of course, it is also not impossible that the responsible party was simply acting a little overzealously. That being said, we may wonder if it is correct to assume that the responsible party did this all with the intention of later recovery.

As a result of more recent archaeological excavations, it is possible to consider some broader comparisons by way of Achaemenid-period fire temples in northern Bactria that had been ritually sealed at the ends of their lives.⁸¹² For example, Kindyktepa had been destroyed (whether intentionally or not) at the end of its second phase, backfilled in part, and its rectangular main chamber had been almost entirely sealed with pakhsa.⁸¹³ The temple at Kyzyltepa had similarly been closed (however, progressively in halves), being filled in and sealed with pakhsa and mudbricks. Interestingly, Wu has highlighted that a piece of green sandstone had been placed in front of the main doorway of this temple after it was blocked off, and suggested that this may have marked the building’s “ritual ‘death.’”⁸¹⁴ However, Wu also observes that ritual burial of structures may not have been limited to just the sacred, as the end of the life of a metallurgical workshop at the same site of Kyzyltepa was likewise marked with the filling and sealing of this building with pakhsa and mudbricks.⁸¹⁵

These constitute somewhat more extreme cases than the blocked doorways at Begram’s Site II structure, but it must be admitted that we do not know whether any of the Site II structure (including rooms 10 and 13) might have also been deliberately partly filled in. As mentioned above (§3.5.3), the excavated remains give a general impression of not having been destroyed, but rather infilled through the slow decay of the building. Indeed, it is not impossible that the building may have already been decaying by the time when the hoard objects were deposited

⁸¹² Both discussed in Wu 2020, 609–610; Forthcoming. I am indebted to Wu Xin for sharing her forthcoming article with me.

⁸¹³ Mokroborodov 2018, 350.

⁸¹⁴ Wu 2020, 610; Forthcoming.

⁸¹⁵ Wu et al. 2017, 309; Wu 2020, 610–611; Forthcoming.

in rooms 10 and 13, but this hardly clear (§3.5.3). In any case, even if these objects had been sealed in rooms 10 and 13 to mark the end of the Site II structure's life in a ritual sense, the blocked doors may have simultaneously served to 'protect' what lay behind them, perhaps even in the sense of a taboo. As stressed above, it may not be necessary to draw such a sharp line between ritual and utilitarian behaviour. For now, I will leave these matters open, and return again to the nature of the hoard later in this dissertation (Chapter 5).

This brings us to the problem of the abandonment of the occupation phase of Begram II, which is most plausibly roughly coeval with the closure of the Site II structure. What caused this wider event in the city's life? Judging from some traces of fire and destruction in certain of the houses at Site B, as well as a layer of ash along the interior of the fortification wall, the presence of rubble, and an accumulation layer, Ghirshman interpreted the abandonment of Begram II as having been instigated by a disaster,⁸¹⁶ more specifically an invasion of Shapur I which putatively took place between 241–250 CE.⁸¹⁷ A number of scholars have raised objections about this date for the end of Begram II on the grounds that it appears too late with respect to the hoard objects (see §1.3). As we have seen above, this reasoning is flawed (§3.5.3). However, Narain rightfully offered more specific objections about Ghirshman's historical reconstruction, noting that the evidence for violent destruction associated with the end of Begram II was rather too limited. Instead, he drew a parallel between Begram and Taxila, pointing to a decline under the Kushans during the period of 201–244 CE as the Sasanians were active in the western part of the empire, and nonetheless considered it not unlikely that Begram witnessed a Sasanian invasion in the latter half of this period.⁸¹⁸

As I have indicated above (§3.5), the imitation Vasudeva I coin finds from room 10 would rather seem to suggest that the abandonment of the phase Begram II was later than Ghirshman proposed, i.e. at least post ca. 260 CE, with occupation then perhaps continuing into the latter half of the 3rd century CE. This falls beyond Kapisa's period of formal Kushan rule, which – according to Cribb's analysis of Masson's collections – ended in the reign of Kanishka II (ca. 230–246 CE) when the Kushano-Sasanian king Peroz I (ca. 245–270 CE) captured Kapisa.⁸¹⁹ Again, judging from the large amount of coins associated with the Kushano-Sasanians collected by Masson, Cribb ascertains that these kings controlled the region until it was captured in the mid 4th century by the Sasanian king Shapur II (ca. 309–379

⁸¹⁶ Ghirshman 1946, 30.

⁸¹⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 100.

⁸¹⁸ Narain 1968, 229–230.

⁸¹⁹ Cribb 2021, 105.

CE).⁸²⁰ What this might mean for the interpretation of the material excavated by the DAFA is less clear. In particular, the still low number of confirmed examples of coins postdating official issues of Vasudeva I (ca. 190–230) that were found in reliable association with the phase Begram II remains something of a problem.

For this reason, I would like to propose that may be useful to move away from thinking about invasions as the catalyst for the end of Begram II, and instead consider that this process might have been a gradual one, in which settlement contracted and declined in the new royal city throughout much of the 3rd century CE.⁸²¹ Although the available data do not allow us to speak about this with desirable precision, we might consider the collapse of urban life at Barikot in Macrophase 5b as a possible point of comparison.⁸²² In this case, the contraction of the city was also instigated in good part by a first devastating earthquake at the end of Macrophase 5a in ca. 250 CE, and a second in ca. 300 CE around the end of Macrophase 5b. However, it has been hypothesised that this urban collapse was also caused by political factors during (and not because of) the Kushano-Sasanian period. Although Barikot's layout shows evidence of spatial contraction in this period, the city in fact remained functional. It is worth noting that during the Late Kushan phase (Macrophase 5a), former residential spaces were transformed into Buddhist cultic spaces (temples with veranda, courtyard and small chapels, but no stupas). This phenomenon may possibly confirm the diminished prestige of the local elites as land ownership in the city changed to benefit rich Buddhist communities in the countryside.⁸²³ These urban temples were also extensively restored in Macrophase 5b after the first earthquake. Thus the second earthquake, which was fatal for the city, occurred when the temples were functioning. Indeed, once the debris caused by the earthquake had been removed (and duly recorded), the archaeologists found evidence of cult activity, such as states in niches, offerings on the benches of Temple B, and a collection of valuable objects in the rear rooms of Temple K.⁸²⁴ In any case, after the second earthquake the social organisation of the city broke down, leading (for example) to the abandonment of management of the urban drainage system. The city, already in partial ruins, was then abandoned by its urban elites (lay families and monks) at the beginning of the 4th century CE. Shortly thereafter, its ruins were partially

⁸²⁰ Cribb 2021, 106.

⁸²¹ It should be noted here that Mehendale (1997, 6.4) already built on her own explanation of the Begram hoard to very tentatively suggest that the demise of Begram II may not have been the result of a sudden invasion or natural disaster, but a more gradual economic decline in the early 2nd century CE.

⁸²² For the following, Olivieri 2012a; 2021, 35–36, 51; Iori and Olivieri 2019.

⁸²³ In contrast to Barikot, substantial changes but no signs of crisis or contraction were observed in the numerous monastic settlements in the countryside around the city, for which see Olivieri et al. 2006; Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018.

⁸²⁴ See Olivieri 2012b, 9–12.

reshaped with makeshift structures and camp sites by non-urban settlers (Macrophase 6), while a smaller settlement was arranged at the foot of the acropolis (Macrophase 7).⁸²⁵

As our data remain too sparse and ambiguous, any proposals must remain hypothetical at this stage, but a similar phenomenon of de-urbanisation might have occurred at Begram. As I mentioned above, the dumping of goblets typical of the phase Begram II into the masonry drain at the entrance of the new royal city could indicate that it was no longer maintained after this period (§3.5.1). Perhaps, then, part of the city (including the new royal city) was abandoned by its urban elites. If Kapisa had hosted the Kushan king and court in the summer, and the main royal copper mint was located at Begram (§3.5.1), the power of these local elites at Begram must have been closely entangled with the fate of empire. Occupation could have simultaneously continued throughout the 3rd and even 4th centuries CE at the intervening area between the new royal city and the Burj-i Abdullah or on the dasht to the south, both of which having provided a source for Masson's coin collections.

The implications of the coinage covering the latter half of the 4th century CE in Masson's collections are somewhat more difficult to interpret. Cribb notes that the number of coins of Kidara indicate that the Kidarite Huns took the region in ca. 380 CE, but do not seem to have had a firm presence there.⁸²⁶ Kidarite coinage was then followed by those connected to the Alkhan Huns, spanning from ca. 390 CE (although early coins are few in number) to the second half of the 6th century CE. Indeed, the centre of Alkhan power from ca. 390 CE seems to have been located rather in Kabul.⁸²⁷ Thus, considering the impression that urban life at Begram was not reinvigorated in the 3rd and 4th centuries CE but only later from the 6th century CE with the phase Begram III (see §2.5),⁸²⁸ we may wonder if this might be explained by the rising importance of Kabul as an urban centre in the 4th century CE.⁸²⁹

In the above, I have suggested that some finds recorded from the Site II structure at depths substantially above the horizon of ca. 2.40–2.50 m may pertain to activity after the end of the building's last main period of use, likewise postdating the phase Begram II (§3.5.2). More specifically, finds from the eastern part of the Site II structure at depths of ca. 1.40–1.80 m among the partially preserved walls of the former monumental building at depths of ca.

⁸²⁵ See most recently Iori and Olivieri 2019, 27–28; Olivieri 2021, 36, and further references therein. The chronology of Macrophase 7, which includes some ceramic evidence pointing to a 'Begram III horizon,' is ¹⁴C dated to the 5th–6th centuries CE (2σ= 410–536 CE 100%). The study is still in progress (Luca Maria Olivieri, personal communication).

⁸²⁶ Cribb 2021, 106–107.

⁸²⁷ Cribb 2021, 108.

⁸²⁸ Kuwayama 1991, 112, 117–118; 2010, 291.

⁸²⁹ On the break between Begram II and III, see also Kuwayama 2010.

1.40–1.80 m could be explained as the result of more ephemeral sheltering. For example, four objects were recorded at a depth of 1.80 m in corridor 7 (Appendix I). These were two coins, one tentatively identified of Wima Kadphises (RAB 150 [2], RAB 151 [3].1), a blue glass bead (RAB 152 [3].2), and a coarse undecorated pot containing an eggshell (RAB 153 [4]).⁸³⁰ In the western part of Site II, I have pointed to evidence that structures perhaps coeval to the phase Begram III had once existed over the area from the western wall of room 13 onwards, but were never adequately documented (§2.4.5, Pl. 28.1). These were then related to the buildings of Begram III visible on Le Berre's plan to the west (Pl. 16), and the extension of this area cleared by Meunié in 1938 (§2.4.4, Pl. 15.1, see also above §3.5.2), which eventually continued onto the area of Site I (§2.4.2).

Begram III, dated according to Kuwayama from the 6th–8th centuries CE,⁸³¹ was the last and most widely-documented occupation phase at the new royal city, encompassing not only the final layer of remains revealed by Ghirshman at Site B (§2.5, Pl. 21.1), but also most likely the majority of structures in Site I (§2.4.2, Pl. 13), and the final stage of constructions at the entrance of the new royal city (§2.6, Pl. 21.2). Ghirshman's excavations show that the wholly new constructions of this phase were built on an accumulation layer, had used a coarser stone masonry than in previous phases, and were oriented slightly towards the north-northwest (§2.5). Meunié's excavations also indicated how the fortification wall of the new royal city had fallen into disuse in the last phase of activity in this area (presumably coeval to Begram III, despite Meunié's dating), with habitations encroaching into the wall and the passage leading up to the city's gate. Here, if they are accurately identified, two stupas had been built framing this gate – altogether giving the impression of both the prominence of this religion among the inhabitants of the city, as well as a broader period of stability (§2.6). As Kuwayama has stressed, this must have been the capital of the country of Kapisa visited by Xuanzang in the 7th century CE.⁸³²

The construction of the qala at Site II (§2.4.4) likely then followed occupation during Begram III proper, perhaps in the mid 8th century CE according to Kuwayama's chronology.⁸³³ Any documented activity at the new royal city thereafter is sporadic. There are no data to more precisely date the burial indicated in room 15 at Site I (to the northwest on Pl. 13), but the

⁸³⁰ Whether or not it might be relevant, it can be noted that in the sardoba attached to a mansion (V) in the suburbs of Dil'berdzhin, two broken bowls were found in niches in corridor 2, containing respectively three eggs and one egg with traces of black and red paint resembling a human face. The excavators proposed that these were associated with the celebration of Nowruz, for which see Kruglikova and Pugachenkova 1977, 56–57, Fig. 50.

⁸³¹ Kuwayama 1991, 112, 117–118; 2010, 291.

⁸³² Kuwayama 1974.

⁸³³ Kuwayama 1991, 112.

burial that was cut into room 10 of the Site II structure may date to around the 14th century CE (§3.5.3).

3.6. Conclusions on context

In this chapter, I have explored the development of Begram and Kapisa from the Achaemenid to the Kushano-Sasanian period in order to better clarify the context within which the hoard objects had come to be accumulated. By focusing on Kapisa's regional dynamics as well as political, cultural, and economic interaction with Bactria and Gandhāra over time, I have made the case that developments in this area are better understood not by virtue of Kapisa's status as a crossroads or confluence of long-distance trade routes, but rather as a distinct region of particular affordances within Central Asia. Throughout the Achaemenid to Kushano-Sasanian periods, connectivity with Bactria and Gandhāra grew alongside political changes that incorporated these regions into macroregional polities, but also without them too. The peak of this connectivity was seen under the Kushans, when Bactria, Kapisa, and Gandhāra were drawn together by a long-term (if thin) imperial administrative apparatus for the first time since the Achaemenids. Moreover, although Kapisa was probably administered by a local governor from Begram, the region may well have hosted the Kushan king and court in summers, and Begram was likely the location of the main Kushan copper mint. More generally, wealth concentrated in the city grew, settlement across the dasht may have expanded, Buddhism flourished into a major religion, and strong links can be observed with the material culture of Gandhāra but also that of Bactria.

I have also presented arguments in this chapter for why the Site II structure might possibly be interpreted as an elite residence with reference to the Bactrian architectural tradition, but likewise have stressed the problems with this interpretation. Thus, I prefer to leave the question of this building's function open for now. Nonetheless, I have highlighted the evidence for an earlier building at Site II, two main horizons of occupation within the bounds of these constructions (through the proxy of the depth of finds recorded in this space), and additional phases of renovations during the main use of the Site II structure. These included modifications made to room 13, such as the addition of earthen benches, the blocking of the doorway 'D,' and a later, second layer of decorative wall painting.

After considering the problems involved with defining and interpreting hoards in archaeological literature, I have argued that the Begram hoard – understood as a set of intentionally deposited assemblages of distinct and valuable objects – includes those concealed

in rooms 10 and 13, as well a group deposited in room T, and two further objects found in the central corridor. More specifically, in room 10, the hoard objects include those distributed between the depths of 2.10–2.70 m, in room 13 those between 2.30–2.80 m as well as four bronze vessels at higher depths (NRAB 1–2, 209–210), and in room T those between 2.50–3.20 m. Ultimately, however, I have stressed the ambiguity of the boundary between hoard and ‘not-hoard’ materials within Site II, and leave the question of the validity of this distinction open to future research. Likewise, in terms of unclear boundaries, both ‘utilitarian’ and ‘ritual’ activity could be read into the deposition of the hoard objects within the Site II structure.

Nonetheless, I have also pointed to numismatic evidence which suggests that the deposition of the hoard objects occurred after ca. 260 CE, and considered factors which led to the abandonment of the new royal city and the end of the phase Begram II. Rather than being instigated by any single invasion, this may have been a gradual process within which Begram’s former urban elites deserted the city from the second half of the 3rd century CE.

4. The hoard's contents

4.1. Approach

The overarching goal of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the Begram hoard as defined according to the limits of the relevant deposits established above (see under §3.5.3), and as far as the surviving data accessible to me has allowed. It is constructed primarily from an archaeological perspective rather than a heritage or museological one, but I have given references to which collection each object is reportedly in, as well as some museum inventory numbers, according to the information available to me.

This inventory follows a particular logic of classification (discussed shortly below) and includes observations on the condition and arrangement of these objects within the hoard deposits, with commentary on their dates and places of production, in light of other specialist scholarship and my own opinions based on the available data. Together, these data and observations are mobilised in Chapter 5 to re-examine the nature and significance of the hoard. Ultimately, however, this chapter also seeks to provide a navigable resource for future specialist scholarship further investigating specific parts of this corpus as there is still an immense amount of potential for further work on this material, which will become clear here and in the following chapter.

In fact, I did not initially want to produce a new inventory for three main reasons. First, RAB and NRAB still constitute the major sources of data for the Begram hoard objects and can never be superseded as primary documents. Because of the post-excavation realities of this material, we are frequently left to interpret textual descriptions of finds with no visual record. Additionally, other catalogues of the plaster casts and ivories have been more recently produced,⁸³⁴ so making another would feel superfluous, especially if one wished to add new inventory numbers to the entire corpus. Finally, although I acknowledge that it would certainly be desirable to produce a new inventory according the conventions typical of modern archaeological writing, this would require much more comprehensive data and, ideally, unrestrained access to all of the relevant objects, with the possibility to make and publish new drawings and photographs as required. This is presently impossible.

Despite these objections, there are more important reasons which made creating this inventory in its current form necessary. First, although RAB and NRAB provide the foundation

⁸³⁴ Menninger 1996; Mehendale 1997.

of these data and should be seen as a product of their time, I have already elucidated a number of the weaknesses (and sometimes mistakes) found in these reports above (see §1.2, §2.4, §3.5); the most important of these are the lack of surviving visual records (in any form) of excavation material now presumed lost, and the changes to the findspots for material excavated in 1940. It is possible to supplement the data presented in RAB and NRAB with data derived from the documentary and photographic archives preserved at the MG, and from subsequent and more recent studies, especially those on the surviving glass.⁸³⁵

Altogether, some of these deficiencies are relatively easily remedied, but bigger questions then emerge about how these imperfect data should be productively presented and organised to speak to specific questions. After all, data do not exist in a vacuum, and classification is an exercise undertaken by humans as a tool for understanding more than determined by any intrinsic quality of the material to be organised itself.⁸³⁶ Different approaches according to different goals are possible. For example, the approach of Mehendale's catalogue was to document individual carved ivory and bone elements, organised according to the subject matter of their iconographic content and excluding objects for which there were no surviving illustrations.⁸³⁷ My own approach differs substantially, being emphatically interested in a more holistic view of the contents of the hoard through individual objects and ensembles (e.g. furniture) as they were deposited and arranged in the hoard, as well as the possible utility of these objects, regardless of the imperfections of the data. Thus, Mehendale can speak of over a thousand carved elements, while I can discuss (perhaps) 13 footstools, 8 chair backrests and panels, 3 furniture legs, and an unidentified ensemble of furniture (see §4.13.1).

The inventory in this chapter is thus structured in the following manner. To attain more insight into the utility of the hoard objects, I have divided them initially not by material class (as in NRAB) but by their forms. Then, I have tended to subdivide objects according to the main material from which they were produced, and then into sub-classes according to types when needed. Organising this corpus according to formal attributes is useful because many of these forms imply a general function – cups can be drunk out of, chairs can be sat on – but in the case of some more ambiguous groups, I have more directly added my own interpretation (see, for example, §4.3, §4.4).

⁸³⁵ I.e. Hamelin 1952; 1953; 1954; Delacour 1993.

⁸³⁶ Adams and Adams 1991.

⁸³⁷ Mehendale 1997.

I begin with vessels and containers (§4.2), which constitutes by far the predominant class of goods in the hoard. This group is then divided according to material class, and then types – hence glass (§4.2.1), then copper alloys (§4.2.2), alabaster (§4.2.3), porphyry (§4.2.4), rock crystal (§4.2.5), lacquerwares (§4.2.6), worked ostrich eggs (§4.2.7), and pottery (§4.2.8). I then move onto devices for display or entertainment (§4.3), detached elements from articles of metalwork (§4.4), figurines (§4.5), tools and utensils (§4.6), fasteners and fittings (§4.7), items of toilette (§4.8), military equipment (§4.9), raw or semi-worked materials (§4.10), objects of an unknown function (§4.11), plaster casts (§4.12), furniture (§4.13), including that made of bone and ivory (§4.13.1), as well as metal and wood (§4.13.2–4), and conclude with coins (§4.14). I follow this with a short section on inscribed objects in the hoard, highlighting some interesting rediscovered evidence (§4.15), and a summary on the contents of the hoard, the arrangement of the hoard objects, their condition upon deposition, and their dates and places of production (§4.16).

The presentation of each group of objects is usually prefaced by general comments on the group, the primary data for the relevant objects, and significant studies on them. Then I describe some of their formal qualities and methods of manufacture, as well as where and when they may have been produced. I also make observations on their condition and any evidence of use if known, and their arrangement in the hoard rooms. Because of the documentation record, it is difficult to resolve the above points in many cases. In particular, I have certainly been unable to resolve all debates as to the hoard objects' places and dates of production, as this corpus contains many unusual and unique kinds of objects that do not fit comfortably into precisely dated and provenanced typologies, and speak to many microcosms of specialist, unresolved debates about material culture produced across Afro-Eurasia.

Ultimately, the information provided about each object includes: an excavation number or another reference if no excavation number is known; information on the findspot (room number, location in room, depth from fixed point, although sometimes the findspot is not precisely known, e.g. in cases for objects later restored in the NMA and studied in 1946); a short description (if no visual record is cited, this constitutes my interpretation of surviving textual records, which should be understood as based on RAB/NRAB unless otherwise noted); dimensions ('recon.' refers to a reconstructed dimension, 'con.' refers to the dimension of the conserved element); references to published or unpublished surviving visual records for the find; some further bibliography or cross-references; and which museum the object is supposed to be in now (often following the indications in RAB/NRAB, followed with a "?" if the location has not been confirmed to me, or with inventory numbers if known).

4.2. Vessels and containers

4.2.1. Glass cups, goblets, bowls, flasks, jars, jugs, bottles, and plates

With respect to number of individual objects, glass vessels constitute the largest component of the Begram hoard (perhaps ca. 186 in number,⁸³⁸ or ca. 183 with a maximum of 187 as presented here). Primarily, they represent articles of tableware suitable for drinking (goblets, many varieties of cups and small bowls), eating (bowls and plates), and holding and pouring liquids (jugs, bottles, and jars). But a smaller group of various forms can also be identified which may have served for the storage and dispensation of scented oils (the ichthyomorphic vessels, zoomorphic flasks, and small flasks). Although it is difficult to be certain with respect to the incomplete data and the problematics presented by vessels of unusual and otherwise unknown types, these glass vessels were probably almost exclusively produced in workshops of the Roman Mediterranean (particularly in eastern workshops, a number probably being located in Egypt), and primarily between the 1st–2nd centuries CE, although some vessels may still be earlier and later than this range.

The primary data for the corpus of glass vessels at Begram are found in RAB and NRAB, Hamelin's subsequent studies,⁸³⁹ and Delacour's more recent study of the cut glass in the MG.⁸⁴⁰ Dedicated studies or commentaries on substantial parts of the corpus include those by Kurz, Coarelli, Whitehouse, Menninger, Rütli, von Saldern, and Cambon.⁸⁴¹

The glass vessels in the Begram hoard were produced through a range of different manufacturing and decorative techniques, encompassing almost the whole spectrum of what late Hellenistic and Roman glass production was capable of, if with some notable absences (e.g., no cameo glass; very few examples of mould-blown glass). There are examples of slumped and probable melted and cast wares, in addition to many free-blown vessels. The discovery of the latter technology of production – revolutionary, faster, cheaper – in the 1st century BCE in Syro-Palestine allowed the glass industry to explode under the Roman Empire.⁸⁴² A range of decorative techniques were also used in the Begram corpus: there are examples of vessels that were cold-painted (§4.2.1.1), enamelled (§4.2.1.2), cut with facets

⁸³⁸ According to Hamelin's count in Hamelin 1953, 128.

⁸³⁹ Hamelin 1952; 1953; 1954.

⁸⁴⁰ Delacour 1993.

⁸⁴¹ Kurz 1954; Coarelli 1962; Whitehouse 1989a; 1989b; 2001a; 2012; Menninger 1996; Rütli 1998; von Saldern 2004, 616–621; Cambon 2010.

⁸⁴² On this discovery, see e.g. von Saldern 2004, 218–224.

(§4.2.13.), engraved with both non-figurative and figurative designs (§4.2.1.5 and §4.2.1.6), cut in high relief (§4.2.1.7), made of mosaic glass (§4.2.1.8), ribbed (§4.2.1.9), adorned with applied and openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11) and further manipulated into the forms of fish, dolphins and ships (§4.2.1.12), and decorated with gold leaf (§4.2.1.13). We even have two examples of uniquely manipulated glass vessels: a facet-cut juglet with inset stones (see §4.2.1.3), and a mysterious vessel with two golden masks of elephants added to it, which were probably locally made (§4.2.1.16).

Here, it should also be observed that this corpus of glass includes both single examples of certain types of glass as well as groups with multiple examples. Indeed, many of the latter can be formally organised into relatively large and homogeneous groups, which may then have respectively been produced at a single workshop or a very limited number of closely related ones, and could thus have been imported together as part of single shipments to Begram. The matter is still hypothetical, but this seems to apply to parts of the unusual group of cold-painted vessels (§4.2.1.1), most (if not all) of the enamelled ones (§4.2.1.2), the main group of facet-cut goblets (see §4.2.1.3), and the vessels with trailed decoration (§4.2.1.11), the latter also being related to the ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12). I will return to these issues again in Chapter 5.

Generally, this body of glassware covers a spectrum of types: from those relatively commonly distributed within and beyond the Roman Empire (such as slumped, ribbed bowls), to rarer types which are virtually unattested elsewhere. It is more difficult to assess the dates and places of production of such examples.

That being said, as noted above, it is almost certain that this corpus of glassware was almost exclusively produced in the Roman Mediterranean and especially in the eastern regions thereof. Although there are a number of unusual specimens with few known parallels from the Roman world, they still tend to represent methods of production and decoration that were well-developed in this space, if rare. A couple of exceptions may possibly be cited as perhaps having been produced further into West Asia, including parts of the later facet-cut group (see group two in §4.2.1.3), or the colourless, handled glass flask which Whitehouse suspected may be Parthian, i.e. produced in Western Asia under the Arsacids (MG 21714, see §4.2.1.21 below). On a similar note, Whitehouse has also expressed disbelief that the vessels with openwork trailing, including the ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.11 and §4.2.1.12), could be Roman, due to the almost total paucity of known parallels from the Roman Empire,⁸⁴³ and that the ‘Roman’

⁸⁴³ Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 2001a, 442. See further §4.2.1.11 and §4.2.1.12 below.

chemical composition of such vessels could theoretically reflect products manufactured from exported ingots (e.g. to India, see further below).⁸⁴⁴ However, Mairs has rightfully observed that they probably just represent the output of a previously unattested workshop or artisan.⁸⁴⁵

It is also not completely impossible that a couple of glass vessels (e.g. among the poorly-documented examples among the miscellaneous groups, see §4.2.1.17–22) could have been produced locally, but this is impossible to assess with respect to currently available data. The critical problem is that the development of glass production in Central Asia and northwest India in antiquity is not comprehensively understood. Certainly, beads and bangles were already common in local manufacturing, but the production of glass vessels requires different technologies and does not seem to be attested in India in antiquity thus far,⁸⁴⁶ although small-scale production is not inherently impossible. Interestingly, evidence for glass production was discovered during unofficial excavations at a site at the village of Bara (about 12 km southwest of modern Peshawar), apparently once a suburb or minor settlement from about the 2nd century BCE – 2nd century CE.⁸⁴⁷ Finds included a major hoard of primarily Indo-Scythian and Indo-Greek coins, but also glass slag and beads. While no fragments of glass vessels were reported, ‘mosaic’ glass pieces (i.e. made from stretched and cut canes) from the site have been studied, which were clearly locally produced – they depicted the face of a woman, birds, flowers, and the Gāndhārī word *kṣatrapa*, and featured a composition distinct from that of glass produced in the Mediterranean (soda-lime with a strong potassium component, hence a vegetal flux rather than a mineral one). The technique of production of such cane slices was developed in the Mediterranean and especially flourished in Egypt, and had evidently reached the frontiers of southern Central Asia in antiquity.⁸⁴⁸ While these mosaic pieces are not examples of vessels, they show the transfer of technology between the two regions. Turning to Bactria, fragments of a few cast or slumped vessels were discovered at Aī Khanoum, and may have been locally made.⁸⁴⁹ Abdurazakov has established 21 chemical groups for glass in southern Central Asia (including from northern Bactria, Sogdiana and Chorasmlia) from the late Bronze Age (2nd millennium BCE) to the Middle Ages (to the 14th century CE). In antiquity, varying soda-lime and mixed alkali-lime compositions were used in probable local products (including glass plaques and vessels) – although unfortunately the relevant sampled objects from

⁸⁴⁴ Whitehouse 2012, 62.

⁸⁴⁵ Mairs 2012, 7, n. 3

⁸⁴⁶ See Dikshit 1969.

⁸⁴⁷ On the finds and the site, Bopearachchi 2003, 7–8.

⁸⁴⁸ Dussubieux and Gratuze 2003.

⁸⁴⁹ See Rapin 1992, 147–148, 153, 320–321, Pl. 68, N7.

Dal'verzintepé and Old Termez (Bactria), Yerkurgan (Sogdiana) and Toprak-kala (Chorasmia) are not illustrated.⁸⁵⁰ The data assembled by Abdurazakov give the rough impression that local production of glass vessels in this region starts to kick off from the Kushano-Sasanian period – perhaps the late 3rd but surely the 4th century CE – with the introduction of glassblowing then occurring relatively late, although this question should be reviewed after future investigation. Some of the glass vessel fragments from the sanctuary of Surkh Kotal (Bactria), including stemmed goblets, may well be such later local products.⁸⁵¹

Having raised the topic of the chemical composition of glass produced in different areas, it is worth further elaborating what the compositional and archaeometric study of the Begram glass can contribute to this story.⁸⁵² Such research indicates a relatively homogenous composition of all studied samples, being a soda-lime glass derived from a mineral soda flux such as natron (rather than potash), as well as the presence of antimony as a decolouriser in colourless examples, generally consistent with production in the Mediterranean and Near East between the 8th century BCE – 8th century CE, with the use of antimony indicating production closer to the beginning the Common Era, although with a date up to the 3rd century CE remaining possible.⁸⁵³ The earliest analysis of a set of samples from the NMA of different types had already demonstrated a similar composition to a group of antimony-containing glass excavated at Karanis in Egypt from the ca. 2nd century CE, perhaps indicating manufacture in Egypt, or in a workshop using very similar raw materials, recipes, and melting procedures.⁸⁵⁴

More recently, strontium isotope analyses conducted on some samples of Begram's glass indicate that they form a loose group with respect to their strontium isotope ratios, which partially matches samples of glassware from Jalame that was produced from beach sand and natron from the Belus river. Other glass from Pompeii, Cosa, and Karanis also overlap with this subgroup, and the authors suggest that it is likely that these ranges of ratios point to a Levantine origin for the respective glassware.⁸⁵⁵ However, Nenna's research has underlined that glass production in Graeco-Roman antiquity should be understood as composed of two phases: primary production of raw glass in one location (the two main locations being the Levant and Egypt), supplying secondary production in workshops for manufacturing finished

⁸⁵⁰ Abdurazakov 2009.

⁸⁵¹ For these finds, Fussman and Guillaume 1990, 109–110, Pls. 2, 36, 38, 40–44, VI (036–041, 043–044).

⁸⁵² See e.g. Brill 1972; 1999a, 71–72; 1999b, 123–127; Dussubieux and Gratuze 2001; 2003; Brill and Fullagar 2009; Brill and Stapleton 2012; Caggiani et al. 2013.

⁸⁵³ Dussubieux and Gratuze 2001, 2003.

⁸⁵⁴ Brill and Tong cited in Whitehouse 1989a, 98–99.

⁸⁵⁵ Brill and Fullagar 2009, 553–554.

products throughout the Roman Empire.⁸⁵⁶ Thus, although strontium isotope analyses are of interest to illuminate the sources of raw materials used to produce glass,⁸⁵⁷ they do not necessarily inform us about the location of secondary production. It should be reiterated here raw glass ingots could be exported also for use in distant workshops, and the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* even remarks that there was a market for raw glass at the west Indian port of Barygaza (Bharuch, Gujarat).⁸⁵⁸ For such reasons, archaeometric data can only partially shed light on the question of where and when the Begram glass was produced.

Because of the post-depositional decomposition noticed in many of Begram's glass vessels (e.g. much had become fragmentary and opacified), it is difficult to say which vessels were deposited as complete objects, and whether some might have already been a broken or fragmentary state upon deposition. However, the excavation and restoration of many complete vessels does tend to indicate that a large amount of the glass vessels were deposited as complete objects. Additionally, a few vessels may show evidence for local manipulation and engagement, including the added inlaid stones on a fragment of facet-cut glass (see §4.2.1.3), the gold spouts in the form of elephant masks reportedly attached to a glass vessel (§4.2.1.16), and certainly inscriptions added in black ink to certain specimens (see §4.15). One such inscription was certainly attested on an ichthyomorphic flask (RAB 358 [214], see §4.2.1.12) and another on a plain colourless glass goblet (NRAB LXXI, see §4.2.1.17). Respectively, the former appears to have been written in the 'unknown language in the unknown script,' and the latter most likely includes at least part of a Bactrian word or sequence in the cursive modified Greek script used to write this language (see further comments under §4.15).

With respect to the distribution of the vessels in the hoard rooms, almost three quarters of the glass vessels were apparently found in room 10, with the majority of the remainder in room 13, while perhaps four vessels had been deposited in room T. The restoration of a number of vessels after the excavation, especially those reported in 1946 in the NMA and published in NRAB under Roman numerals, make it difficult to be certain about the precise number of individual vessels involved and the findspots of a number thereof, particular including specimens of cold-painted and engraved glass (see §4.2.1.1, §4.2.1.5, §4.2.1.6), although they were probably found in room 10. In room 10, glass vessels were apparently mainly arranged into groups or clusters along the west and south walls, but variously interspersed with the

⁸⁵⁶ Refer to the discussion of these issues and the report on the excavation of a primary glass production site at Beni Salama, Wadi Natrun in Nenna 2015.

⁸⁵⁷ See the discussion in Brems et al. 2013.

⁸⁵⁸ *PME* 56.

alabaster vessels, the worked ostrich eggs, and the aquariums. Carl's and Hamelin's plans at least give the impression of this, supported by the order of the find list in RAB, and a few contextual photographs.⁸⁵⁹ One photograph in particular clearly shows a major deposit of glass with trailed decoration (both regular vessels §4.2.1.11, and the ichthyomorphic flasks §4.2.1.12) near to the west wall compressed into the form of a since-decayed bag or basket (Pl. 24.1). It should also be emphasised that a number of the glass vessels (but apparently not all) were arranged into groups apparently according to some conception of their types. This is most notably seen in respect to the vessels with trailed decoration that I have just mentioned, but also to some degree with the enamel-painted glass vessels (§4.2.1.2, see Carl's and Hamelin's plan, annotated as "verres peints"), and the facet-cut vessels (§4.2.1.3, see Hamelin's plan under "verres taillés" and Pl. 24.5).

In room 13, glass vessels of various types were more loosely arranged in a small group at the centre of the east wall, interspersed with and adjacent to various objects of metalwork and an ivory-faced chair backrest (Backrest 55, see §4.13.1.2), and in the northwest corner, near to a sea shell (NRAB 184, see §4.10.1) and the rock crystal cantharus (NRAB 121, §4.2.5). In room T, a colourless glass vessel was documented (NRAB 235, §4.2.1.22), as well as a piriform unguentarium (NRAB 251, §4.2.1.21), and the unique vessel with golden spouts of elephant masks (§4.2.1.16) near to the northern wall (see Appendix I, room T). Ria Hackin's notebook (R1940) includes an additional unique reference to fragments of mosaic glass, some of which had apparently been burned (see §4.2.1.18, Appendix II).

4.2.1.1. *Cold-painted cups, bowl, plate*

This group of perhaps 6 fragmentary and poorly-documented cups, bowl, and a plate with cold-painted decoration remains somewhat mysterious (Pl. 39.1–3). Although it is difficult to take knowledge forward about this class on the basis of the data available to me, I have nonetheless discussed them at length, primarily because they have been virtually neglected in secondary scholarship and deserve renewed attention from glass specialists.

Three cold-painted vessels seem to have been documented in RAB (RAB 155 [6]; RAB 318 [172]) and NRAB (NRAB 96 bis), but apparently their fragility and decomposed states meant that fragments were collected but not recorded in the reports, and only studied and conserved later by Hamelin, whose work on the Begram glass constitutes the primary source

⁸⁵⁹ RAB Figs. 24, 25, 28 and 60.

of data and visual records for this class. Here, Hamelin described the forms of these vessels and the surviving decoration and provided a number of illustrations.⁸⁶⁰ To my knowledge, only an illustration of the interior base medallion decoration of NRAB 96 bis has been published elsewhere,⁸⁶¹ as well as photographs of another fragment,⁸⁶² probably RAB 318 [172], while photography of another vessel (Hamelin 1954, No. 23) has been published more recently.⁸⁶³ Some limited secondary commentary has been provided by Whitehouse, Menninger, and von Saldern.⁸⁶⁴

According to Hamelin, these vessels are primarily produced in colourless transparent glass in various forms including cups (perhaps a cantharus for RAB 155 [6]), bowls and a plate, which were then painted with applied cold natural pigments (compared to vitreous pigments, fired and fused onto glass to produce enamel, for which see §4.2.1.2 below). This class altogether originally included at least 6 individual objects, including 5 cups/bowls, and 1 plate. The figural subjects represented on these objects – according to Hamelin – are dancing satyrs and maenads, decoration depicting flowers and fruits, interior scenes, and ‘Dionysiac dances.’⁸⁶⁵ The surviving visual record speaks to a wider repertoire of subjects in Graeco-Roman mythology, for which see the inventory below.

Fascinatingly, Hamelin reported that four of these vessels had “deux couches” or a “double paroi,” i.e. double walls. According to his descriptions, such vessels were apparently constructed from two almost identical blown glass vessels, joined together after what would become their interior, sealed faces were painted with earth and mineral pigments – first with outlines and details traced in red, brown, and black, followed by flat applications of colour, with gold often decorating parts of clothes – to be viewed from the other side through the transparent glass. Three double-walled vessels also appeared to have shared a stylised laurel motif around the rim, lined on each side with strips of gold, and were sometimes engraved with two circles on the base.⁸⁶⁶ Hamelin also observed an enigmatic “épais ciment rosé” between the walls of NRAB 96 bis extending 12–13 mm from the base,⁸⁶⁷ and suggests that the other cold-painted double walled-vessels were reinforced as such.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁰ Hamelin 1952, 16–18, II–IV, Pl. IV; 1953, Pl. III, g–j; 1954, 166–171.

⁸⁶¹ NRAB Fig. 256 bis.

⁸⁶² NRAB Fig. 267; Gullini 1961, No. 32, Pl. 17.

⁸⁶³ Desroches 2000, 66, No. 28.

⁸⁶⁴ Whitehouse 1989a, 97; Menninger 1996, 50–51; von Saldern 2004, 440–441.

⁸⁶⁵ Hamelin 1954, 171.

⁸⁶⁶ Hamelin 1954, 168, No. 24, pl. XXXIII.

⁸⁶⁷ Hamelin 1952, 16.

⁸⁶⁸ Hamelin 1954, 167.

Apparently, no parallels are known for such double-walled vessels.⁸⁶⁹ Whitehouse did not trust Hamelin's observations, expressing doubt that an opaque adhesive would be used on colourless glasses, and, following an observation of Barag, suggested instead that these vessels were in fact two separate pieces, with the 'cement' then being silt which accumulated between them after deposition.⁸⁷⁰ However, as Hamelin was both personally involved in excavating NRAB 96 bis and conserving a number of the vessels, and had also explicitly remarked that "le décor a toujours pour fond une teinte unie qui recouvre toute la surface postérieure,"⁸⁷¹ it appears that the use of an opaque material between two walls of transparent glass fully covered with paint is not in principle objectionable, and there is no real reason to doubt the existence of these vessels as Hamelin described them. Indeed, two samples from a double-walled vessels in the MG with painted pigment and the 'cement' fill material were provided to the Corning Museum of Glass for chemical and XRD analyses in 1991.⁸⁷² The pink pigment from 6227 revealed the presence of gypsum and bore resemblance to a sample of natural rose madder (i.e. a gesso paint?), while the white of 6237 had remnants of calcite, quartz, and possibly mica.⁸⁷³ The results from 6227 in particular suggest that this filling material should be seen as an intentional component.

Although there are no known parallels for the double-walled vessels, cold-painted glass certainly exists in the archaeological record, if seldom found. One early example of such, not precisely parallel to the cold-painted glass of Begram, is found in the Hellenistic painted glass pyxides recently re-examined by Cavassa.⁸⁷⁴ Yet, reverse cold-painting on transparent glass – i.e. the technique apparently used for many or most of the cold-painted vessels at Begram – is ordinarily a technique seen rather later, in the 3rd–4th centuries CE.⁸⁷⁵ Hamelin was thus justified to draw a comparison with the technique executed on the so-called 'Paris Plate' (3rd–4th century CE, found in Syria),⁸⁷⁶ now in the Corning Museum of Glass.⁸⁷⁷ Some looser earlier parallels can be cited which feature black linear decoration that recalls the primacy of that on the Begram group as described by Hamelin, including a small group of jars with painted lids

⁸⁶⁹ Menninger 1996, 51.

⁸⁷⁰ Whitehouse 1989a, 97; 1989b, 153. The disbelief is reiterated by von Saldern 2004, 441.

⁸⁷¹ Hamelin 1954, 170.

⁸⁷² Brill 1999a, 236, Nos. 6227, 6237. Sample 6227 constituted a "fragment of pink material, probably a pigment. From double-walled vessel", while sample 6237 entailed "white fill from between layers of a double-walled glass. There is a pink phase between the fill and a piece of glass on which it is supported."

⁸⁷³ Brill 1999b, 518.

⁸⁷⁴ Cavassa 2016.

⁸⁷⁵ For a description of this technique, see Harden 1987, 260–261.

⁸⁷⁶ Hamelin 1954, 167.

⁸⁷⁷ Whitehouse 2001b, 261–264, No. 858. See also Harden 1987, No. 149.

of eastern manufacture, including one from Cyprus, perhaps dating to the 2nd century CE,⁸⁷⁸ and at Corning, another lid, and an unprovenanced fragment of the floor of a vessel depicting parts of horses and a chariot, dating to probably the 3rd or 4th century CE according to Whitehouse.⁸⁷⁹

On the basis of the comparison with the Paris Plate, Hamelin suggested a place of manufacture located on the Syro-Palestinian coast.⁸⁸⁰ On the basis of further potential comparanda cited above, I would not be surprised if the Begram group of cold-painted glass vessels was produced in the eastern Mediterranean in the 2nd or 3rd centuries CE, but it is impossible to be more precise. Hamelin also remarked that, as three of the double-walled vessels also feature stylised laurel bands, they may derive from the same workshop,⁸⁸¹ which I think is probable.

On the arrangement of these vessels in the hoard rooms, it is only possible to say that most appear to have been found in room 10, but their complicated documentation history means that it is impossible to confirm this in some cases (see the inventory below).

The following table lists what appear to constitute individual objects (6 in number, including 4 double-walled cups/bowls, one cup, and one plate) rather than fragments:

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 155 [6] (Pl. 39.1 h)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Fragmentary reverse-, cold-painted colourless transparent glass cup with the remnants of a ring handle near base, perhaps a cantharus. Double-walled, with decoration applied. Interior-looking face decorated with dancing maenads holding <i>thyrsos</i> on a pale pink background, and stylised laurel band around base. Concave exterior-looking face decorated with flowers, and	H. 9.0 cm; Dia. 16.5 cm, T. 0.01 cm (single wall).	Initial illustration of form with body and rim decoration Hamelin 1952, Pl. IV, 2; Revised illustration of form with rim decoration Hamelin 1953, Pl. III h (mislabelled No. 55 [6]); Illustration of complete decoration Hamelin 1954 Pls. XXXIV and XXXV.	Hackin 1939a, 9; Hamelin 1952, 17, No. III; 1953, 124, n. 2; 1954, 169–170, No. 27.	NMA?, MG

⁸⁷⁸ See Harden 1987, No. 148 and further references therein.

⁸⁷⁹ Whitehouse 2001b, 264–265, Nos. 859–560.

⁸⁸⁰ Hamelin 1954, 168.

⁸⁸¹ Hamelin 1954, 168.

		stylised laurel band at rim and base (Hamelin 1954).				
RAB 318 [172]? / Hamelin 1954, No. 24 (Pl. 39.2)	10, 2.60 m (if RAB 318 [172] correctly identified).	According to Hamelin (1954), three fragments of a colourless cold-painted glass bowl. Fragment 1 (MG) depicts a satyr, fragment 2 (MG) a maenad, and fragment 3 (NMA, RAB 318 [172], if correctly identified), a satyr and maenad (Hamelin) or Hades and Persephone (Gullini).	(Recon.) H. 11.0 cm; Dia. 18.0 cm (Hamelin 1954).	Black and white photo of fragment 3, NRAB Fig. 267; Illustrations of fragments 1–3 Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXIII; Colour photo of fragment 3 Gullini 1961, No. 32, Pl. XVII.	Hamelin 1954, 168–169, No. 24; Gullini 1961, No. 32.	MG, NMA 58-1-7 / ?
Hamelin 1954, No. 28 (Pl. 39.1 i)	10 (B. 37 in Hamelin 1953, Pl. III i).	Fragments of double-walled, reverse-, cold-painted glass cup. According to Hamelin, the concave interior-looking face depicts a person in a green tunic edged with gold braid, with a feminine figure to their left in flowing robes with gold braid. A stylised laurel band is near rim. The exterior-looking convex face is decorated with flowers (Hamelin 1954).	(Recon.) H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 17.5 cm; T. (single wall at rim) 0.05–0.1 cm (Hamelin 1954).	Initial illustration of form with rim decoration Hamelin 1952, Pl. IV, 3; Revised illustration of form with rim decoration Hamelin 1953, Pl. III i; Illustration of interior and exterior decoration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXVI.	Hamelin 1952, 18, No. IV; 1954, 170, No. 28.	MG
Hamelin 1954, No. 25	10 (B. 37 in Hamelin 1954).	Three fragments of a cold-painted plate, with traces of painted flowers with blue petals and leaves enhanced with gold	5.0 x 5.0 cm; 4.5 cm x 2.5 cm; 2.5 x 4.0 cm.	None	Hamelin 1954, 169, No. 25.	MG
Hamelin 1954, No. 23 (Pl. 39.3)	10? (Desroches 2000).	Two sets of fragments from a colourless, transparent glass vessel with reverse-, cold-	(Recon.) H. 4.5 cm; Dia. 26.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXII, No. 23; Black and white photo	Hamelin 1954, 168, No. 23; Desroches 2000, 62, No. 28.	MG 21173

		<p>painted decoration. It depicts two mounted cavalrymen walking to right, with a gold line near rim (Hamelin 1954). Judging from the published colour photograph, the first cavalryman wears a crested helmet with cheek piece, a striped cloak, and a short tunic. He also holds a medium-length pole weapon, probably a javelin, with a barbed head.</p>		<p>MGP 81316/20; Colour photo Desroches 2000, 62, No. 28.</p>		
NRAB 96 bis (Pl. 39.1 g)	13, centre of N wall, lodged inside NRAB LXXXV (Hamelin 1954, 154, n. 1 and plan of room 13).	<p>Double-walled, reverse-, cold-painted transparent glass bowl. Interior-facing scene with five figures, exterior-facing scene with figures in gold on blue background. Circular medallion on the interior base depicts the bust of a woman (?) with gold leaves in hair, and a similar medallion is on the exterior base (NRAB; Hamelin 1952). Subject rather Dionysus?</p>	H. 14.0 cm; Dia. 16 cm; T. 1 cm (base); T. (wall) 0.15 cm.	<p>Illustration of form and part of interior decoration Hamelin 1952, Pl. IV, 1; Colour illustration of interior base medallion Hamelin 1952, Pl. III based on C.C. 66; Illustration of same bust NRAB Fig. 256 bis; Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. III g.</p>	Hamelin 1952, 16–17, No. II; 1954, 169, No. 26.	NMA?

The following two entries constitute fragments of vessels which may or may not represent individual objects themselves:

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
Hamelin 1954, No. 21	10?	Two fragments of a glass vessel with remnants of black cold-painted linear decoration. Feet and lower legs of a person standing in contrapposto.	Unknown	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXI, No. 21.	Hamelin 1954, 167, No. 21.	MG

Hamelin 1954, No. 22	10?	Fragment of glass vessel with cold- painted human figure (Hamelin 1954).	(Recon.) H. 7.5 cm; Dia. 23.0 cm (Hamelin 1954).	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXI, No. 22.	Hamelin 1954, 168, No. 22.	MG
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4.2.1.2. *Enamelled goblets, bowls, plate*

This is a medium sized group of colourless glass vessels (certainly 14 individual vessels, perhaps 18) which were enamelled, i.e. painted with coloured powdered glass which was then fused onto the vessel through firing (Pls. 39.4, 40–41). Their forms include conical goblets (or rather footed cups) of different heights, bowls, and a plate. The primary documentation for this group is found in RAB, NRAB, and especially Hamelin’s later studies of the glass, who commented extensively on the technique of painting used and described the extant vessels at Begram.⁸⁸² The form of decoration used on this class is very distinctive, and the goblets (Eggers 186/Isings 21) form an especially coherent group. The enamelled glass at Begram has attracted a number of secondary studies, including those by Kurz, Coarelli, Whitehouse, Menninger, and von Saldern.⁸⁸³ Comparable enamelled goblets have also been subject to renewed scholarly attention because of the recovery and re-discovery of examples from burials in Magna Germania⁸⁸⁴ and Kazakhstan,⁸⁸⁵ but this has still not entirely resolved uncertainty about the question of their place and date of production (discussed further below).

This group of vessels includes at least 11 conical goblets, 2 large bowls, and 1 plate. Hamelin counted 18 vessels in total (7 type *a* small goblets, 4 type *b* medium goblets, 3 type *c* large goblets; 2 type *d* hemispherical bowls; 1 type *e* plate, and 1 type *f* wider bowl, Pl. 39.4),⁸⁸⁶ but as most examples of this class were recovered in a very fragmentary state, a number of his reconstructions have since been reassessed. Indeed, although Hamelin organised the goblets into three different sizes,⁸⁸⁷ but as their sizes are not entirely clear, and the heights (or

⁸⁸² Hamelin 1952, 126–127; 1953, Pl. III a–f; 1954, 155–165.

⁸⁸³ Kurz 1954, 102–105; Coarelli 1962; 1963; Whitehouse 1989a, 97; 1989b, 153; 2001a, 441, 444; Menninger 1996, 52–71; von Saldern 2004, 440–444.

⁸⁸⁴ Słowińska et al. 2008; Greiff 2010; Schuster 2010, 58–60; Rau 2017.

⁸⁸⁵ Moshkova and Treister 2014.

⁸⁸⁶ Hamelin 1953, 128, Pl. III. Menninger 1996, 52 notes also the “kugeliger Becher mit s-förmig geschwungenem Profil” as a form extant at Begram based on its inclusion in Hamelin 1953, Pl. III, as j. This actually depicts the section of a bowl from Kamissa, not Begram, but this is not obvious from the plate alone. A footnote (Hamelin 1953, 126, n. 1) explains “Comme échelle de comparaison, nous avons placé au centre de la planche III le petit bol de Kamissa qui appartient aux collections du Louvre; les verres peints de Bégram sont en général des pièces de très grande taille qui en font des verres de haut luxe.” That said, Hamelin seems to understand that four of the cold-painted vessels (§4.2.1.1) bear a shape like this (the table in Hamelin 1953, 128 gives “j/4”), but he does not indicate which ones these might be in his article of the following year.

⁸⁸⁷ Hamelin 1954, 162.

existence) of others have changed since more recent restorations, I simply present the 14 known complete enamelled vessels below in the order of their documentation rather than type, followed by 4 extra excavation numbers which appear to have no visual record, and thus may or may not represent individual objects or fragments now incorporated into other restorations. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting that the goblets have characteristic ridges around the lip and a pronounced ledge above the foot, which suggests a connection with the workshops producing blanks for facet-cut goblets (on the links between these classes, see below §4.2.1.3). With regard to decoration, the use of red and yellow bounding lines is ubiquitous, and a stylised floral decorative motif is also found on the goblets. The imagery on these vessels is diverse, encompassing a range of mythological and legendary scenes (Ganymede and Zeus, Europa and Zeus, scenes from the *Iliad*), battle scenes especially seeming to represent conflicts between Greeks and ‘barbarians’ (see the bowls and the plate), genre scenes (date harvesting, hunting, fishing), an Egyptianising scene, and then figurines and scenes with a more specifically Roman flavour, showing gladiators and chariot races. On at least two goblets, the decoration was accompanied by short painted inscriptions (see also §4.15). On NRAB 27, the inscriptions written in Greek with a brush or stylus in yellow enamel label the figures of Achilles and Hector. On Hamelin 1954, No. 4 / MG 21177 (if they are now correctly restored together), which at least depicts gladiators on the lower register, “Felix” is written in Latin, again in yellow. Perhaps it refers to the fragmentary figure to the left or a no-longer extant figure directly below, and represents the cognomen “Lucky,” which was popular in wider Roman society of the imperial period, including among slaves. In virtually the same manner, the gladiators depicted on the vessel from Lubieszewo/Lübsow Tunnehult 2 (*Barbaricum*, see below) are accompanied by such labels written in Greek in a dark colour, giving masculine names which should be seen as referring to fictive individuals, including a “Horainos” (a theophoric referring to the Egyptian god Horus) and a “Kinamos” (a cognomen especially popular for slaves).⁸⁸⁸

The blanks for these goblets were probably blown, and then finished by engraving to create their ridges and ledges (see also §4.2.1.3 below). The enamelled decoration was executed by applying coloured powdered vitreous material to the surface of the vessel, which was fused to the surface by firing.⁸⁸⁹ Analysis through Raman spectroscopy has more recently revealed that that lapis lazuli had been utilised as a colouring agent for both blue and green on

⁸⁸⁸ Lajtar 2010.

⁸⁸⁹ See von Saldern 2004, 437; Greiff 2010.

the Egyptianising goblet Hamelin 1954, No. 11.⁸⁹⁰ Gold also appears to have been applied onto the bowls RAB 163 [15] and RAB 202 [55].

Enamelled vessels comparable to those found at Begram have been recovered both within and beyond the Roman Empire.⁸⁹¹ A number of opinions have been forwarded about the date and place of production of such vessels. On the place, in light of the imagery depicted and the distribution of similar vessels, opinion tends to converge on the eastern Mediterranean, and particularly Egyptian or more specifically Alexandrian workshops.⁸⁹² The homogeneity of the group at Begram suggests that they may have been produced in a single workshop,⁸⁹³ and an Egyptian origin for this seems most plausible. A variety of dates for similar enamelled goblets have been proposed, ranging from the 1st–3rd centuries CE. Stylistic qualities of the decoration led Coarelli and Menninger to propose rather later dates in the later 2nd or 3rd centuries CE.⁸⁹⁴ Von Saldern, however, thought that the form of the goblets and their style of decoration rather suggested that they emerged in the last quarter of the 1st century CE, or the beginning of the 2nd century, and more specifically that the workshop of the Begram group was active in the second half of the 1st century CE.⁸⁹⁵

The re-examination of a very closely comparable group of goblets from burials in Magna Germania or ‘Barbaricum’ may help to clarify the dating problem. Fragments of two comparable vessels were found in graves at Lubieszewo/Lübsow (Tunnehult 1 and 2); according to Schuster, these graves belong respectively to B2b2–B2c1 and B2b2,⁸⁹⁶ with the phase B2 ending around 150 CE. Another gladiator goblet from Poland, at Zaborów Grave 1, belongs to around the same period.⁸⁹⁷ Fragments from Bordesholm Grave 184 also appear to date to B2b.⁸⁹⁸ Another close but not perfectly parallel vessel was found in a burial in kurgan 23 at Lebedevka V, Kazakhstan. The other finds in the burial date it to around the second quarter to mid 3rd century CE, so Moshkova and Treister consider the production date of such glass (including the Begram group) to be more likely the latter half of the 2nd century CE.⁸⁹⁹

⁸⁹⁰ Caggiani et al. 2013, 4349, Table 2. For earlier and comparative analyses, Brill 1972; Greiff 2010.

⁸⁹¹ Von Saldern 2004, 442–444.

⁸⁹² Coarelli 1962; 1963; von Saldern 2004, 442–444.

⁸⁹³ Von Saldern 2004, 443.

⁸⁹⁴ More specifically, Coarelli (1962, 1963) observed similarities between miniatures of the Ambrosian Iliad and the Begram enamel paintings, which appear to speak to the revival of Hellenistic painting in the late 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. Menninger (1996, 71) argued for a date from the mid 2nd century to the second quarter of the 3rd century CE.

⁸⁹⁵ Von Saldern 2004, 441–443.

⁸⁹⁶ See Schuster 2010, 58–60, 221.

⁸⁹⁷ Słowińska et al. 2008.

⁸⁹⁸ Rau 2017.

⁸⁹⁹ Moshkova and Treister 2014; Treister 2019, 42–45.

Noting also the similarity between the blanks for enamelled and the main group facet-cut goblets, which are thought to have been produced between the late 1st and early 2nd century CE (see below §4.2.1.3), perhaps an early to mid 2nd century CE date could be plausible for the Begram group. Despite the availability of useful comparative data, the matter is not settled.

Due to their fragmentary state of recovery (perhaps caused in part by post-depositional weathering), it is not clear whether all of the enamelled glass at Begram was deposited in a complete state. We learn from a comment of Hamelin that only NRAB 59–60 was allocated to Paris in the 1939 finds,⁹⁰⁰ so it is plausible that all of the other vessels reassembled from fragments in the MG were found in room 10. One bowl (RAB 163 [15]) was found in the northwest corner of room 10, and another group of goblets and a bowl appear to have been found in a group near the south wall (“verres peints” on Carl’s and Hamelin’s plans, Pl. 17). Another group appears to have been more loosely dispersed along the east wall of room 13.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 163 [15] (Pls. 39.4 f, 40.1)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Fragmentary wide flared colourless glass bowl with flat base, foot? Central register on exterior face bounded by red and yellow lines, enamel painted battle scene, combatants on foot and mounted. Remnants of gold applied to parts of paint. Coarelli (1962) regards this decoration of the same hand as RAB 202 [55].	H. 8.5 cm; Dia. 28.5 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo, RAB Fig. 34; Illustration of form Hamelin 1954, Pl. III f; Illustration of decoration Hamelin 1954, Pls. XXIX–XXX.	Hamelin 1954, No. 19, 164; Coarelli 1962, 320–322, n. 38.	MG 19017, MG 19018, MG 19019
RAB 197 [50] (Pl. 40.2)	10, S wall, 2.60 m.	Small colourless glass goblet, enamel painted with main register depicting exterior harvest, garland-making scene. Two female, two male figures. Above and below decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, surrounded	H. (con.) 12.6 cm; Dia. 8.0 cm; T. 0.1 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. III b; Black and white photos RAB Figs. 29–32; Illustration of decoration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVII; Colour photo Gullini 1961, No. 61;	Hamelin 1954, 155–156, No. 1; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 679.419a–d; LTR No. 163.	NMA 58-1-3 / 04.1.43.

⁹⁰⁰ Hamelin 1954, 161.

		above and below by red and yellow bands.		Colour photos LTR No. 163.		
RAB 199 [52] (Pl. 40.3)	10, S wall, 2.50 m.	Poorly preserved small colourless glass goblet, enamel painted with main register of opposing gladiators (two pairs?), yellow ground line, then lower register of running animals viewed from side (depicting <i>venationes</i> ?) Above and below decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands, as above.	H. (con.) 12.3 cm; Dia. 7.5 cm;	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 33; Illustration of fragment Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVIII No. 3; Colour photo Gullini 1961, No. 30.	Hamelin 1954, 156, No. 3; Gullini 1961, 104–105, No. 30; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 684.424.	NMA 58-1-4 / ?
RAB 200 [53]	10, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragmentary medium colourless glass goblet, enamel painted with main register of Orpheus (?) standing to right, lower register animals walking to left. Above and below, decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands?	(Recon.) H. 14.5 cm.	Illustration of fragments Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVIII, No. 5; Black and white photo MGP 81316/56.	Hamelin 1954, 156–157, No. 5.	NMA?
RAB 201 [54] (Pl. 40.4)	10, S wall, 2.60 m.	Small colourless glass goblet, enamel painted with main register of two pairs opposing gladiators, each in rectangles. Around rectangles, decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands, above and below. Cursive Felix here reconstructed incorrectly (<i>pace</i> Hamelin 1954,	H. 13.2 cm; Dia. 8.2 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. III a; Black and white photos RAB Figs. 35–36; Illustration of decoration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVIII, No. 2; More detailed illustration, without Felix Hamelin 1955, Pl. IV.	Hamelin 1954, 156, No. 2; 1955.	MG 19020

		156), changed at MG.				
RAB 202 [55] (Pls. 39.4 d, 40.5)	10, S wall.	Fragmentary, wide colourless glass bowl, enamel painted on exterior with added gold. Above red and yellow bands, main register depicting a battle between mounted and on foot Greeks and Persians (Coarelli) or Greeks and barbarians, a battle of Alexander? Gullini); Green foliage, below, blue band with diamonds, yellow bands either side, then further foliage and female head, pink halo? Same hand as RAB 163 [15] (Coarelli 1962).	H. 9.5 cm; Dia. 18.0 cm; T. 0.4 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. III d; Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXVII; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 266; Colour photos Gullini 1961, No. 31.	Hamelin 1954, 162, No. 16; Gullini 1961, No. 31; Coarelli 1962, 320–322; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 685.425.	NMA 58-1-5a, 58-1-5b / ?
RAB 364 [220] (Pl. 40.6)	10, 2.60 m.	Large colourless glass goblet, restored from fragments. One (MG 21178) corresponds to RAB 364 [220]. Painted with a hunting scene set in a forest. Upper register (?), two Africans (?) surrounded by birds, animals, plants. Lower register (?) with two, three (?) depictions of blue leopards stalking gazelles. Relation to 'bowl' in Hamelin 1954, No. 18, depicting leopard hunting an antelope. Fragments indicated in NRAB (Figs) to belong to RAB 364 [220]	(Recon.) H. 25.0 cm.	Illustration of fragments Hamelin 1954, Pls. XXIII + XXVIII; Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 268, 269?	Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXIII, No. 10 + Hamelin 1954, No. 18?; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 682.422.	MG 21191, MG 21188, MG 21185, MG 21181, MG 21179, MG 21178, NMA?

Hamelin 1954, No. 11 (Pl. 40.7)	10?	Medium colourless glass goblet, partially restored from fragments. Enamel painted Egyptianising scene. Below, decorative band of repeating stylised floral motif.	(Recon) H. 18.0 cm	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXIV and Pl. detail XXV; Black and white photo Coarelli 1962, Fig. 23; Colour photo Cambon 2002, No. 29.	Hamelin 1954, No. 11; Cambon 2002, No. 29.	MG 21180, MG 21183, MG 21184, NMA?
Hamelin 1954, No. 4 / MG 21177 (Pl. 41.1)	10?	Medium colourless glass goblet, fragmentary, with enamel painted decoration. Lower scene of gladiators, with upper scene (of same)? ‘Felix’ restored to right of figure in top register. See also §4.15.	H. 17.0 cm?	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XIX, No. 4; Colour photo earlier restoration Bopearachchi et al. 2003, 329, No. 275; Colour photo later restoration Hansen et al. 2009, No. 326.	Different restorations published, see Hamelin 1954, 156–157, Nos. 4 and 5; Bopearachchi et al. 2003, 329, No. 275; Hansen et al. 2009, No. 326.	MG 21177
Hamelin 1954, No. 12 / MG 21820	10?	Large colourless glass goblet, partially restored from fragments. Enamel painted registers depicting two quadrigas in a race, gladiator fight below? Decorative band of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands.	(Recon?) H. 22.0 cm?	Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXVI, No. 12.	Hamelin 1954, No. 12, Pl. XXVI.	MG 21820
Hamelin 1954, No. 17 (Pls. 39.4 e, 41.2)	10? (Hamelin 1953, Pl. III e).	Thick, colourless glass plate, flat base, with painted decoration on exterior face of bottom. ‘Roman’ soldier on rearing horse pointing lance at man wearing trousers and pointed cap on ground. Decoration surrounded by red and yellow border (all Hamelin 1954).	H. 4.5 cm; Dia. 18.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. III e (here given otherwise non-existent excavation number RAB 389 [246]); Illustration of decoration from memory (!), Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXVII.	Hamelin 1954, No. 17, and n.1.	NMA?
NRAB 27 (Pl. 41.3)	13, E wall, 2.55 cm.	Large colourless glass goblet enamel painted with a scene from the Iliad. Divided into a small upper register and a	H. (recon.) 24.3 cm; Dia. 13.4 cm; T. 0.25 cm.	Black and white photos, illustrations (also in colour) NRAB Figs. 261–263 bis; Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl.	Hamelin 1954, 159, No. 8; Coarelli 1962, 324–325; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 681.421a–b; LTR No. 211.	NMA 58-1-1 / 04.1.38.

		lower main register, upper with soldiers, lower with a confrontation between Hector and Achilles on chariots (each with name labelled in Greek, yellow enamel, see also §4.15). Above and below, decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands above and below.		XXI; Colour photos LTR No. 211.		
NRAB 54 (Pl. 41.4)	13, E wall.	Large colourless glass goblet with two main enamel painted registers. Upper register is a hunting scene, with men with pointed caps (Scythians?), Africans, goats, and tigers. Lower register is a fishing scene, Africans surrounded by fish, shellfish, one sailing a sloop. Above and below, decorative bands of repeating stylised floral motif, red and yellow bands.	H. 24.5 cm; Dia. 11.0 cm.	Illustration of decoration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXII; Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 35–36; Colour photos LTR No. 212.	Hamelin 1954, 158–159, No. 9; Coarelli 1962, 325; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 680.420; LTR No. 212.	NMA 58-1-2 / 04.1.39.
NRAB 59–60 (Pl. 41.5)	13, E wall.	Medium colourless glass goblet, divided into two main enamel painted registers. Above, Zeus and Europa and Ganymede and Zeus in separate rectangular frames. Decorative bands of stylised floral motif around frames. Lower register arms and animals. Red and yellow bands.	H. 16 cm; Dia. 8.0 cm; T. 0.19 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 264–265; Illustration of decoration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XX; Colour photo Cambon 2014, Pl. LIX.	Hamelin 1954, 157–158, No. 7; Coarelli 1962, 325–326.	MG 21228

The below fragments appear to have no visual record. They may belong to other vessels restored above, or represent the remains of individual objects.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
Hamelin 1954, No. 14	10	Fragments of a colourless glass goblet with enamel painted decoration depicting a gladiator combat.				MG?
NRAB 29	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Fragments of colourless glass goblet with enamel painted decoration.				NMA?
NRAB 31	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Fragments of colourless glass goblet with enamel painted decoration.	Dia. (recon). 42.8 cm (?) (NRAB).			NMA?
NRAB 73	13, E wall, 2.40 m.	Fragments of colourless glass with enamel painted decoration.				NMA?

4.2.1.3. *Facet-cut goblets, globular bowls, juglets, jugs, rhyton, plate*

This large class of glass vessels consists of ca. 44 individual pieces in a variety of forms (including goblets, bowls, juglets, jugs, a rhyton, and a plate) (Pls. 42–44). These were cut with facets, and produced primarily from colourless transparent glass, excepting 4 juglets (type B below) in transparent dark blue glass. The primary documentation for vessels in this group is dispersed between RAB and NRAB (many bearing Roman numeral inventory numbers, having been restored later at the NMA from fragments), Hamelin’s later studies (the most important source),⁹⁰¹ and Delacour’s later work on the examples in the MG.⁹⁰² Other recent studies or discussions on the date and place of manufacture and distribution of such facet-cut glass with reference to the Begram corpus include a significant article by Oliver focusing on the common form of goblets (see also types Isings 21 / Eggers 185, 187),⁹⁰³ as well as commentaries by Menninger, Whitehouse and von Saldern.⁹⁰⁴

This class can be divided into three groups. The first group, which Hamelin called “verreries taillées à nid d’abeilles”⁹⁰⁵ covers the majority of the class. Although these vessels

⁹⁰¹ Hamelin 1953, 128, Pls. VII, VIII, XIVa; 1954, 175–178.

⁹⁰² Delacour 1993, 56–62.

⁹⁰³ Oliver 1984.

⁹⁰⁴ Menninger 1996, 32–38; Whitehouse 2001a, 440; von Saldern 2004, 360–368.

⁹⁰⁵ Hamelin 1953, 128, Pls. VII, VIII; 1954, 175–178

encompass a variety of forms, they nonetheless belong to a coherent group because they share recurring features like rhomboid or hexagonal facets (rather than ovoid ones), ridges around the lip, above the faceted zone, and below the faceted zone and, in the case of the goblets, a pronounced ridge above the foot. Hamelin classified forms in the group into eight main types (Pl. 42): Type A: short conical goblets with splayed foot (according to Hamelin, 11 examples); type A bis: a fragment of piriform handled juglet (?) with inlaid stones, but according to Hamelin a short goblet (1 example); type B: piriform handled juglets (2 examples), also produced in transparent dark blue (4 examples); type C: globular bowls with everted rims (perhaps 7 examples, but see below); type D: barrel-shaped goblets (5 examples, but perhaps just 4); type E: truncated goblets, i.e. neither short nor tall, with splayed foot (2 examples, but perhaps just 1); type F: piriform handled jug (1 example); type G: tall conical goblet (7 examples, Eggers 185); type H: rhyton (1 example).⁹⁰⁶ These types are also followed in this inventory.

The second main group of this class are vessels cut with ovoid facets, all colourless and transparent. Hamelin mentioned 6 examples, but did not discuss these further, and illustrated only 2 examples of sub-types: a tall conical goblet and a globular bowl.⁹⁰⁷ The third group is a single example of a flat, circular, transparent, colourless glass plate.

Comparative vessels to those belonging to the first group (Hamelin's types A to H) are relatively well studied. Although specimens of elaborate luxury glassware, both short and tall conical goblets were relatively widely distributed both within and beyond Roman imperial frontiers. Examples of two comparable tall goblets have been even recently reported from a kurgan of Gorelyy I in the lower Volga region.⁹⁰⁸ With respect to method of production, Hamelin distinguished the main and second groups of facet-cut glass at Begram on the basis of his interpretation of their manufacturing technique (the former of which he thought used moulds for their blanks, and the second being blown),⁹⁰⁹ but now vessels like those in Begram's main group are generally thought to have been manufactured through blowing followed by cold work.⁹¹⁰

The range of goblets found at Begram belong to Oliver's Group II,⁹¹¹ i.e. those featuring a ledge below the facet-cut zone. But other shapes seen in the main group at Begram

⁹⁰⁶ Hamelin 1953, 128; 1954, 175–178.

⁹⁰⁷ Hamelin 1953, 128, Pl. 14a. See also Menninger 1996, 35.

⁹⁰⁸ Treister 2019, 28–31, Figs. 1–2, 4.3–4.

⁹⁰⁹ Hamelin 1953, 128.

⁹¹⁰ See e.g. Oliver 1984, 35–36, although note that Lierke has suggested that blanks were made instead with methods of 'glass pottery' (Lierke 1999, 97–100).

⁹¹¹ Oliver 1984.

are very unusual, such as the fragment with inlaid stones (type A bis), globular bowls (type C), and the rhyton (type H).⁹¹² The fragment of the vessel with inlaid stones, perhaps originally a pitcher with a handle of different material, now lost⁹¹³ (below type A bis, RAB 356 [212]) is unique. It had been inset with decorative cut, flat stones,⁹¹⁴ including lapis lazuli, and a turquoise-coloured feldspathoid.⁹¹⁵ These modifications might have been made already in the Mediterranean world, or added locally.⁹¹⁶ Delacour found a comparative piece in Tel Aviv museum for the globular bowls (type C),⁹¹⁷ but although betraying a very similar concept, the Tel Aviv bowl's facets are shallower and it is missing the characteristic ridges around the lip and above the faceted zone, suggesting it was produced in a different workshop. Interestingly, a fragment of what appears to be a facet-cut globular bowl (although the facets are not regular rhombuses, but amorphous shapes) with similar ridge profiling to the Begram group has more recently been discovered in Loulan in the Tarim Basin (see below §5.2.3).

Because of the similarities between different forms in the main group of facet-cut glass at Begram, it is plausible that they were produced in a very limited number of workshops, even a single one. Interestingly, there seems to be a link with the production and distribution of facet-cut goblets and enamelled ones, and even some bearing engraved figurative decoration. The link between blanks of tall facet-cut goblets and those with enamelled decoration has been noticed elsewhere (see Eggers 185 and Eggers 186). Oliver and von Saldern both consider it plausible that blanks were produced for these vessels by the same factories, with thicker walls for those destined for engraving, and provided with the same initial tooling before passed along to cutters and painters. Both cite an example from the Benaki museum, Athens, featuring both facet-cut and enamelled decoration as further evidence for ties between such workshops.⁹¹⁸ Interestingly, type G goblets at Begram have extremely similar blanks to examples with enamelled decoration (§4.2.1.3), as well as one example with engraved figurative decoration (§4.2.1.6), which may suggest workshops for these different classes are connected.

Generally, facet-cut vessels similar to Begram's main group are thought to have been produced in both Italy and the eastern Mediterranean,⁹¹⁹ the latter of which being probably the

⁹¹² Discussed in e.g. Menninger 1996, 37; von Saldern 2004, 362.

⁹¹³ As observed by Oliver 1984, 43–44

⁹¹⁴ See discussion in Delacour 1993, 58.

⁹¹⁵ Dussubieux and Gratuze 2001, 456.

⁹¹⁶ Dussubieux and Gratuze 2003, 319.

⁹¹⁷ Delacour 1993, 60.

⁹¹⁸ Oliver 1984, 38; von Saldern 2004, 360.

⁹¹⁹ Oliver 1984, 38–40; von Saldern 2004, 361–362.

origin of the main group at Begram. The apparent manufacturing connections to the goblets with enamelled decoration at Begram, which are usually thought to have been made in Egypt (§4.2.1.2), further support this impression.

Many excavated examples of facet-cut vessels broadly similar to Begram's main group are found in contexts from the second half of the 1st century CE, to the first few decades of the 2nd century.⁹²⁰ More specifically, also by virtue of their link with Oliver's Group II, it is plausible that Begram's main group of facet-cut glass was produced around the late 1st century or early 2nd century CE.⁹²¹

The date and place of manufacture of Begram's second and third groups are far less clear. Perhaps the flat cut plate of the third group belongs to the latter 1st to mid 2nd century CE.⁹²² With respect to the second group, Menninger has observed that the globular bowl with ovoid facets illustrated by Hamelin (NRAB LXXXIV) is a typological development from type C of the main group, just as the goblet (MG 21831) is a development of type G.⁹²³ Delacour cited parallels for NRAB LXXXIV with 2nd–3rd century CE examples at Dura Europos, also featuring the 'rice grain' facets around the lower register of decoration.⁹²⁴

It is, then, quite plausible that examples of Begram's second group are later than the main group. I am inclined to see these vessels as intermediary developments before the subsequent late antique tradition of facet-cut vessels, especially hemispherical and globular bowls prevalent also in Sasanian work. Incidentally, such vessels would become relatively popular as prestige and luxury goods throughout late antique Eurasia, including Central Asia, and found in good number in even East Asia (see §5.2.3, §5.4).

The state of preservation of this class of vessels is hard to assess from the surviving data. A number survive only in fragments, it seems generally that they been subject to considerable post-depositional decomposition. The photo of type C vessels *in situ* (Pl. 24.5) also gives the impression that these bowls were deposited in an intact state. Evidence for use or manipulation might be visible in the type A bis fragment featuring inlaid stones (see above), although it is not clear whether these modifications might have been added at the vessel's original place of manufacture or achieved locally. Although precise findspot data is missing for a good part of this class (having been documented post hoc from reconstructed examples in NMA), the majority was probably found in room 10, although a good portion were

⁹²⁰ See e.g. Oliver 1984, 40–41; Menninger 1996, 36–37; Whitehouse 2001a, 401; von Saldern 2004, 361–362

⁹²¹ See Menninger 1996, 37; von Saldern 2004, 362.

⁹²² See examples of plates and other forms discussed in von Saldern 2004, 363–366.

⁹²³ Menninger 1996, 35.

⁹²⁴ Delacour 1993, 59–60.

apparently dispersed in room 13 along the east and north walls. The photo of type C vessels *in situ* (Pl. 24.5) shows clearly that this group were found stacked in a pile together – the shape of the deposit may even suggest they had been held in a bag. None of the vessels of this type, however, were described definitively in the inventory of RAB or NRAB. However, F1937 includes an unmistakable, schematic drawing of a globular bowl, however, without everted rim added to RAB 347 [203]. It is thus plausible that the type C vessels were found in proximity to RAB 347 [203], and then restored later from otherwise unrecorded fragments, but the same vessel could also be an example of group 2, i.e. similar to NRAB LXXXIV, which was apparently also found in 1937. Perhaps examples of both the first and second group's globular bowls had been represented in this pile.

I begin with the main group of this class, with the presentation of the vessels classified as Hamelin's type A: 11 facet-cut short, colourless, transparent goblets,⁹²⁵ followed by a possibly related vessel, described as type A bis.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 156 [7]	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet.	H. 9.6 cm; Dia. 10.2 cm; T. 0.25 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 60.	NMA?
RAB 205 [58] (Pl. 42.1 A [left])	10, 2.60 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, five rows.	H. 9.3 cm; Dia. 10.5 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII A (left); Black and white photo RAB Fig. 42 [c].	Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 63; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 664. 404.	NMA?
RAB 206 [59] (Pl. 42.1 A [centre])	10, 2.60 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, four rows.	H. 9.3 cm; Dia. 10.2 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII A (centre); Black and white photo RAB Fig. 42 [a]; Oliver 1984, No. 55.	Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 55.	MG 19083
RAB 207 [60] (Pl. 43.1)	10, 2.60 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, four rows.	H. 9.3 cm; Dia. 10.2 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo Oliver 1984, No. 56.	Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, 56.	MG 19084
RAB 217 [71]	10, 2.60 m.	Type A short colourless goblet? (Hamelin 1954) However, described a "Garniture d'un pied de coupe, double feuille d'or battu" (RAB).	Dia. (base) 5.4 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 175.	NMA?

⁹²⁵ Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII A; 1954, 175.

NRAB LXI	10 (Hamelin 1954)	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet	H. 13.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 175.	NMA?
NRAB 23 (Pl. 43.2)	13, E wall, 2.55 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, four rows.	H. 9.5 cm; Dia. 10.8 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 364.	Hamelin 1954, 175; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 665.405.	NMA 57-2-00 / ?
NRAB 33	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet	H. 9.4 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 61.	NMA?
NRAB 188	13, N wall (to west)?	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, four rows.	H. 9.4 cm; Dia. (base) 4.7 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81316/119.	Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 57	NMA?
NRAB 189 (Pl. 43.3)	13, N wall (to west)?	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet, four rows.	H. 9.6 cm; Dia. 10.8 cm (Oliver); T. 0.2 cm.	Colour photo Cambon 2002, No. 27.	Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 58; Delacour 1993 n. 13.	MG 21469
NRAB 190	13, N wall (to west)?	Type A short colourless facet-cut goblet	H. 9.7 cm; Dia. (base) 4.4 cm; T. 0.2 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 175; Oliver 1984, No. 62.	NMA
RAB 356 [212] (Pls. 42.1 A bis, 43.4)	10, 2.60 m.	Type A bis short colourless facet-cut goblet with three inset alternating circular flat cabochons, turquoise(?), lapis lazuli, and turquoise(?) (Hamelin 1954); <i>pace</i> Oliver (1984) who thinks from a pitcher. Compare Delacour (1993) who thinks it is a short goblet, as Hamelin.	6.4 x 6.8 cm (RAB); (recon.) H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 11.4 cm (Hamelin 1954, 175-176).	Illustration of form in Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII A (right); Black and white photo Oliver 1984, Fig. 16; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 11; Colour photo Cambon 2010, Fig. 10.	Hamelin 1954, 175-176; Oliver 1984, 43-44; Delacour 1993, 58; Dussubieux and Gratuze 2001.	MG 21466

The following group includes Type B piriform handled juglets, with 2 colourless examples, and 4 in dark blue.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 204 [57] (Pls. 42.1 B [left], 43.5)	10, 2.60 m	Type B short colourless facet-cut juglet with handle.	H. 11.0 cm; Dia. 9.2 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII B (left); Black and white photo RAB Fig. 42; Colour photo LTR No. 161.	Hamelin 1954, 176; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 670.410; LTR No. 161.	NMA 04.1.42.

NRAB LXXIII	?	Type B short colourless facet-cut juglet (?), handle missing (Hamelin).	H. 10 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 176.	NMA?
NRAB 24	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type B bis short dark blue facet-cut juglet with handle (? Described in NRAB as goblet, illustrated on Hamelin's plan of room 13 as a pitcher).			Delacour 1993, n. 28 "N° de fouille 24", which was allocated to the NMA.	MG 21275 (Delacour)
NRAB 40 (Pl. 42.1 B [right])	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type B bis short dark blue facet-cut juglet with handle.	H. 8.5 cm; Dia. (belly) 7.1 cm (Hamelin).	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII B (right); Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 23.	Hamelin 1954, 176; Delacour 1993, n. 28 "N° de fouille 40", which was allocated to the NMA.	MG 21273 (Delacour)
NRAB 41 (Pl. 43.6)	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type B bis short dark blue facet-cut juglet with handle.	H. 8.5 cm; Dia. 7.1 cm (Hamelin).	Black and white photo MGP 81316/85 in Delacour 1993, Fig. 20; Colour photo LTR No. 162 (?).	Hamelin 1954, 176; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 672.412 (?).	NMA, 57-2-05 / 04.1.44 (?)
NRAB 42	13, E wall	Type B bis short dark blue facet-cut juglet with handle.	H. 10.0 cm; Dia. (neck) 0.6 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 176; Delacour 1993, n. 28.	MG 21447

The following vessels include type C globular bowls with everted rims. As noted above, Hamelin saw 7 examples from the photo *in situ* in RAB (Pl. 24.5), but only two examples are now extant from reassembled fragments.⁹²⁶ It is possible that this group was found in association with RAB 347 [203], as mentioned above. I treat the remainder of documented globular facet-cut bowls (whether belonging to this main group or the second group) further below.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
MG 21425 (Pls. 42.1 C, 43.7)	10	Type C colourless globular facet-cut bowl with everted rim.	H. 8.8 cm; Dia. 11.3 cm; T. (at rim) 0.4 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII C; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 60; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 16.	Hamelin 1954, 176 (there MG 21245); Delacour 1993, 59–60.	MG 21425

⁹²⁶ Compare Hamelin 1953, 128, 1954, 176.

MG 21474 (Pl. 43.8)	10	Type C colourless globular facet-cut bowl with everted rim.		Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 60; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 15.	Hamelin 1954, 176; Delacour 1993, 59–60.	MG 21474
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The following are Type D barrel-shaped goblets, for which Hamelin first mentioned 5 examples in 1953,⁹²⁷ but then listed only 4 in 1954.⁹²⁸ I further add NRAB 90 and NRAB 151, as in the report they are listed as being of the same type as NRAB 4, although this is impossible to verify, and may well simply refer to regular conical facet-cut goblets.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 4 (Pls. 42.2 D, 43.9)	13, E wall? (Hamelin's plan), 2.55 m.	Type D colourless glass barrel-shaped facet-cut goblet.	H. 12.7 cm; Dia. 11.0 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII D; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 252; Black and white photo Gullini 1961, No. 35.	Hamelin 1954, 176; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 663.403 (not 449.409, as NRAB 4 also listed there).	NMA 57-2-12 / ?
NRAB 90	13, 2.40 m.	Colourless glass facet-cut goblet, 'Type 4' (NRAB) hence perhaps Type D barrel-shaped.	H. (con.) 19.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 151	13, N wall, 2.40 m.	Colourless glass facet-cut goblet, 'Type 4' (NRAB) hence perhaps Type D barrel-shaped.	Dia. 8.5 cm.			NMA?
NRAB LXXII	?	Fragments of base and lower body of colourless glass facet-cut vessel, according to Hamelin Type D barrel-shaped.			Hamelin 1954, 176.	NMA?
NRAB LXXIV	?	Colourless glass facet-cut vessel, according to Hamelin Type D barrel-shaped.	Dia. 8.6 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 176.	NMA?
NRAB LXXVIII	?	Fragments of Type D colourless glass facet-cut	H. (con.) 10.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 176.	NMA?

⁹²⁷ Hamelin 1953, 128.

⁹²⁸ Hamelin 1954, 176.

		barrel-shaped goblet.				
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The next group are Type E truncated goblets, for which Hamelin initially listed 2 examples, and then only 1 in 1954.⁹²⁹

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
MG 21829 (Pl. 42.2 E)	?	Type E truncated colourless glass facet-cut goblet with thick blank (Hamelin).	H. 15.5 cm; Dia. 11.0 cm; T. 0.25 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII E; Black and white photo MGP 81316/27.	Hamelin 1954, 177; Oliver 1984, No. 21 (considers Hamelin's 1954 restoration incorrect); Delacour 1993, n. 13.	MG 21829

Type F is represented by one example of a large piriform jug.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
MG 21272 (Pls. 42.2 F, 43.10)	?	Type F colourless glass facet-cut piriform jug, handle missing.	H. 18.0 cm; Dia. 12.5 cm; T. 0.3 cm.	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII F; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 21; Colour photo Cambon 2002 No. 25.	Hamelin 1954, 177; Oliver 1984, 43; Delacour 1993, 60–61.	MG 21272

Type G constitutes, according to Hamelin, 7 tall conical goblets.⁹³⁰ There may be rather 9 examples. The example of Type G bis illustrated by Hamelin,⁹³¹ allegedly RAB 175 [28], cannot be the same vessel, as it does not correspond to the photo of the vessel *in situ* in RAB. However, it is still unclear which vessel is depicted. The data are particularly complicated and unclear for this group.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 160 [12] (Pl. 44.1)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet, fourteen rows.	H. 22.5 cm; Dia. 11.6 cm; T. 0.21 cm.	Black and white photo Oliver 1984, No. 19; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 5.	Hamelin 1954, 177 (misreferenced as 162 [12]); Oliver 1984, Group II, No.	MG 19085

⁹²⁹ Compare Hamelin 1953, 128; 1954, 177.

⁹³⁰ Hamelin 1953, 128; 1954, 177.

⁹³¹ Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII G bis.

					19; Delacour 1993, 56.	
RAB 175 [28] (Pl. 42.2 G bis)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet, fourteen rows.	H. 21.0 cm; Dia. 12.0 cm; T. 0.35 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 21.	Hamelin 1954, 177; Oliver 1984, Group II, No. 22; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 668.408; Delacour 1993, n. 13 (says is MG 21471, but appears different from RAB Fig. 21, has only thirteen rows).	NMA? Or MG 21417? (Delacour)
NRAB 25 bis (Pl. 44.2)	13, E wall.	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet, eleven rows.	H. 22.0 cm; Dia. 10.0 cm.	Black and white photo Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 75; Colour photo LTR No. 172.	Hamelin 1954, 177; Oliver 1984, Group II, No. 24; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 667.407.	NMA 57-2-18 / 04.1.112.
NRAB 28	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet?		Black and white photo Mizuno 1964, No. 78 (if correctly identified?).	If correctly identified, see Oliver 1984, Group II, No. 23; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 669.409 (?)	NMA? 57-2-64? (If correctly identified).
NRAB LIX	?	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet	H. (con.) 16.7 cm; Dia. 10.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 177.	NMA?
NRAB LX	?	Base of Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet.	H. (con.) 7.7 cm; Dia. 8.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 177.	NMA?
NRAB LXIX	?	Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet	H. (con.) 16.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 177.	NMA?
NRAB LXX	?	Base of Type G tall colourless glass facet-cut goblet.	H. 9.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 177.	NMA?
MG 21830 (Pl. 44.3)	?	Type G tall colourless facet-cut goblet? (Delacour 1993, <i>contra</i> Hamelin 1954 who attributes this to the rhyton depicted in MGP 81318/37, Type H)	Dia. 11.0 cm.	Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 13.	Hamelin 1954, 178; Delacour 1993, 58–59.	MG 21830

Type H, a rhyton, is represented by 1 example.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
MGP 81316/37 (Pls. 42.2 H, 43.4)	10? (MGP)	Type H colourless glass rhyton with same decorative scheme of cut facets as above. Slightly wider rim and everted lip.		Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII H; Black and white photo MGP 81316/37 in Delacour 1993, Fig. 14.	Hamelin 1954, 178 (connects with MG 21830); Delacour 1993, 58–59 (cannot be MG 21830 because form of lip).	?

The following vessels are facet cut and presumably belong to the main group but it is unclear to which type they belong.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 264 [118]	10, 2.60 m.	Fragment of colourless glass facet-cut vessel.	10.0 x 12.0 cm.			NMA?
RAB 352 [108]	10, 2.60 m	Base of colourless glass facet-cut vessel.	H. 6.4 cm; Dia. 3.8 cm.			NMA?
RAB 357 [213]	10, 2.60 m	Base of colourless glass facet-cut vessel.				MG?

The second group of facet-cut vessels follows here, which featured shallow ovoid or elongated facets. While Hamelin noted 6 examples, he only illustrated 2, being a tall conical goblet and a globular or hemispherical bowl. It is unclear what other vessels belong to this group, and there may be some overlap with type C of the main group above.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB LXXXIV (Pl. 44.6 [below])	10 (Hamelin 1953).	Globular glass bowl with oval facets cut vertically into belly, slim facets cut horizontally below.	H. 8.5 cm; Dia. 8.0 cm (opening).	Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV a.	Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV a; Delacour 1993, 60.	NMA?
MG 21831 (Pl. 44.6 [above])	10 (Hamelin 1953).	Fragments of colourless facet-cut glass goblet, facets elongated and ovalised, with double-engraved line above and below faceted section.		Illustration of form Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV a; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 10.	Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV a; Delacour 1993, 58.	MG 21831

The following table refers to a globular or facet-cut bowl which may represent an example from the main group (discussed above, Type C), or the second group, but the matter is unclear.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 347 [203]	10, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass facet-cut globular bowl (F1937: “vase verre blanc taillé, très attaqué,” with added illustration). Type unclear, probably main group Type C?	H. 7.0 cm cm; Dia. 9.0 cm.	Schematic illustration F1937; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 60.	Hamelin 1954, 176; Delacour 1993, 59–60.	NMA?

The third group is represented by a single glass plate.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 32 (Pl. 44.5)	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Colourless glass plate with cut with hexagonal facets, engraved lines perpendicular to rim (longer than in Hamelin 1953).	Dia. 42.8 cm.	Illustration of fragment in Hamelin 1953, Pl. V f; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81316/84; Black and white photo fragment NRAB Fig. 253.	Hamelin 1954, 173 (n.1 signals MGP 81316/84 to be published in NRAB, did not occur); Tissot 2006 K.p. Beg. 671.411.	NMA?

4.2.1.4. *Cups and goblets with wheel-engraved lines*

This group of 9 glass cups and goblets – primarily colourless and transparent, but also with light brown and ‘agate’ colour examples – were all engraved with a wheel to create lines running around the exterior of their walls in various positions (Pl. 45.1–4). The primary data for this group is found in RAB, NRAB, Hamelin’s illustrations of their types, and Delacour’s more recent study of examples in the MG.⁹³²

It is plausible that this entire group was produced through free blowing, but this is not clear. The shapes of these cups vary, from an example of a common ‘Hofheim cup’ in RAB 157 [8] (Isings 12), to more conical and hemispherical forms. Hofheim cups are very distinct with numerous known dateable finds – they were produced through the 1st century CE, with

⁹³² Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII c–d, f; Delacour 1993, 64–66.

their popularity peaking in around the middle of this period.⁹³³ They are commonly found in Italy and Roman northwest provinces (implying the presence of workshops), but the existence of a further workshop in the eastern Mediterranean supplying painted examples is also probable.⁹³⁴ The Hofheim cup at Begram is similar in form to NRAB 187, which however features a unique ring foot.⁹³⁵ RAB 178 [31] may be an example of Isings 96a, and NRAB 48 bis a conical cup of the type Isings 29, the latter more clearly dating to the 1st century CE. Based on its description, I have included RAB 312 [166] in this group, although there is not surviving visual record which can confirm this. It is neither clear whether this entire group dates to the 1st century CE, nor which workshops they were produced in.

The vessels in this group were found in varying states of preservation, and do not seem to have been subject to any specific organization as a group within rooms 10 and 13, although this is not entirely certain, as a number were reassembled from undocumented excavated fragments.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 157 [8] (Pl. 45.1)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Light brown conical glass 'Hofheim' cup with flat base, Isings 12. Lines engraved below rim and on lower belly.	Dia. 8.3 cm; T. 0.22 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII c; Black and white photo RAB Fig. 8.	Menninger 1996, 29–30; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 661.401.	NMA?
RAB 178 [31] (Pl. 45.2)	10, near W wall, found in RAB 177 [30], 2.50 m.	Colourless hemispherical glass cup with slightly curved walls, flat base, everted rim with two ridges, engraved lines on upper and lower belly. Form Isings 96a?	H. 5.9 cm; Dia. 10.3 cm; T. 0.12 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d (misreferenced as 178 [13]); Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 29.	Delacour 1993, 64.	MG 19080
RAB 312 [166]	10, 2.60 m.	Part of colourless glass goblet (RAB), groove at rim (F1937).				NMA?
NRAB LXXVI	?	Small cylindrical colourless glass vessel, with double lines at rim and base.	H. 4.5 cm; Dia. 5.6 cm.			NMA?

⁹³³ See Kurz 1954, 96; Isings 1957, 27–30; Menninger 1996, 29–30; Whitehouse 2001a, 449–440; von Saldern 2004, 479–480.

⁹³⁴ Von Saldern 2004, 480.

⁹³⁵ Menninger 1996, 30

MG 21836 (Pl. 45.3)	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless glass goblet or cup with straight walls, foot, engraved lines midway on belly.	H. (con.) 4.0 cm; Dia. (base) 4.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 30.	Delacour 1993, 64.	MG 21836
MG 21837	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless hemispherical glass cup, flat base, engraved lines above foot and belly.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d.	Delacour 1993, 64–65.	MG 21837
MG 21837 bis	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless hemispherical glass cup, engraved lines above foot and belly. May be connected with MG 21837 above rather than individual vessel.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d.	Known only from Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d; Delacour 1993, 64–65.	MG 21837 bis
NRAB 48 bis (Pl. 45.4)	13, 2.50 m.	Colourless glass cup, straight walls, with groups of thick engraved lines at base, twice on belly, and at rim. Isings 29.	H. 10.7 cm; Dia. 7.0 cm; T. 0.25 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII f; Black and white photo MGP 81316/88.		NMA?
NRAB 187	13, 2.50 m.	‘Agate’-coloured small glass cup, straight walls, double engraved lines at rim, circular ring foot.	H. 10.4 cm; Dia. 8.3 cm; T. 0.4 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII c.	Menninger 1996, 30.	NMA?

4.2.1.5. *Trulla and bowl with engraved non-figurative decoration*

Although the distinction between non-figurative and figurative engraved decoration is potentially fairly arbitrary, this group of 3 colourless glass vessels – at least 1 trulla and 1 plate – feature similar the same pattern of engraved concave decoration in parallel undulating broad lines (Pl. 45.5–6). The primary data for these vessels is found in NRAB, Hamelin’s studies on Begram’s glass, and Delacour’s more recent study on cut glass at Begram,⁹³⁶ and the group was also briefly discussed by Menninger and Whitehouse.⁹³⁷

Delacour has noted the use of this form of decoration on two goblets from the 1st century CE found in burials in Cologne, and a trulla found in Slovenia.⁹³⁸ Deep glass trullas are also

⁹³⁶ Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI a, 1954, 174; Delacour 1993, 65–66

⁹³⁷ Menninger 1996, 39, 41; Whitehouse 2001a, 440.

⁹³⁸ Delacour 1993, 66.

known from Pompeii (Isings 75b). On the distribution of these vessels in the hoard rooms, at least one was found in room 10 (MG 21446), and another in room 13 (NRAB LXXXV), with a cold-painted double-walled vessel (NRAB 96 bis, §4.2.1.1) placed inside it.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB LXXXV (Pl. 45.5)	13, N wall, with NRAB 96 bis inside it.	Colourless glass bowl with flat handle at rim (trulla), undulating engraved lines on exterior, with similar engraved lines around central point forming a rosette on exterior base. Isings 75b.	H. 7.6 cm; Dia. 13.1 cm; T. 0.3 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI a; Black and white photo MGP 81316/115 in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 676.416.	Hamelin 1954, 174; Delacour 1993, 65–66; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 676.416.	NMA?
NRAB LXXXV /2	?	Fragments of a second colourless glass vessel with undulating engraved lines. Noticed in NMA storerooms, not restored.	?		NRAB LXXXV (note to entry).	NMA?
MG 21446 (Pl. 45.6)	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless glass plate with two handles, undulating engraved lines on exterior face, circular ring base.	Dia. 18.6 cm (Delacour).	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI, a; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 33.	Hamelin 1954, 174; Delacour 1993, 65.	MG 21446

4.2.1.6. *Goblet, bowl, and plates with engraved figurative decoration*

This is a group of 5 colourless glass vessels – 1 goblet, 1 bowl, 3 plates – adorned with engraved concave (negative relief) figurative decoration (Pl. 45.7–9). One vessel was catalogued in NRAB, and the rest are known from the studies of Hamelin and Delacour.⁹³⁹ Secondary commentary has been provided by Whitehouse, Menninger, and von Saldern.⁹⁴⁰

One of these vessels is a tall goblet (Eggers 186 / Isings 21) of the type seen ubiquitously among the enamelled (§4.2.1.2) and the facet-cut (§4.2.1.3) glass at Begram, including ridges and ledge above the foot. The others are a wide bowl and flat plates. All were adorned with figurative decoration executed in negative relief on their exterior walls. Depicted

⁹³⁹ Hamelin 1952, 18–20, Nos. V–VII, Pls. V–VI; 1953, Pl. V; 1954, 173; Delacour 1993, 65–68.

⁹⁴⁰ Menninger 1996, 38–43; Whitehouse 2001a, 440; von Saldern 2004, 404–405.

motifs and imagery include hoplites, a reclining nude youth (perhaps Dionysiac in flavour), and indistinct animals and foliage.

The dating of vessels in this group is made problematic as it appears that there may have been an earlier and later group of glass engraved in a similar manner. Nonetheless, on the basis of excavated comparanda, it is most likely that the Begram examples belong to the earlier group, and were produced between the end of the 1st century CE and the early 2nd century CE in workshops of the eastern Mediterranean, perhaps Egypt (specifically Alexandria).⁹⁴¹

According to information annotated on Hamelin's illustrations ("B 37"), it appears that all were found in room 10, but their precise findspot is not known.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
MG 19086 (Pl. 45.7)	10 (Hamelin).	Tall colourless glass goblet (Eggers 186 / Isings 21), including ridges at rim and ledge above foot, with negative relief engraved depiction on exterior of two hoplites with lance and shield alternating with trees.	(Recon.) 22.0 cm; Dia. 12.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1952, Pls. V, 1; VI, 1; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. V b; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 40.	Hamelin 1952, 18, No. V; Delacour 1993, 67.	MG 19086
NRAB LXXXVIII (Pl. 45.8)	10 (Hamelin).	Fragmentary colourless wide glass bowl with three around rim, negative relief engraved depiction on exterior of nude reclining male figure holding a pedom, fruits, floral motifs and two colonnettes. Decorative band above and below; on exterior base, spear and lance enclosed in decorative band.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 26.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1952, Pl. VI, 2; Illustration Hamelin 1952, Pl. VII, 2; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. V a; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 254; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 42.	Hamelin 1952, 18–19, No. VI; Delacour 1993, 68.	MG 21274
MG 21817 (Pl. 45.9)	10 (Hamelin).	Fragmentary large colourless glass flat plate with negative relief engraved	(Recon.) H. 2.0 cm; Dia. 22.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1952, Pl. VI, 3; Black and white photo	Hamelin 1952, 19–20, No. VII; Hamelin 1954, 173; Delacour 1993, 66.	MG 21817

⁹⁴¹ Von Saldern 2004, 404–405.

		decoration on exterior face (i.e. on base), two ridges around rim, depiction of the foreparts of an caprid and the front paws of a feline (attacking the former?).		Delacour 1993, Fig. 38.		
MG 21860	10 (Hamelin).	Fragments from a flat colourless glass plate with negative relief engraved decoration on exterior face (i.e. on base), stylised leaves and grape vine.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. V c.	Hamelin 1954, 173.	MG 21860 (Hamelin).
MG 21861	10 (Hamelin).	Fragments of centre of flat colourless glass plate with negative relief engraved exterior face (i.e. on base), with decorative bands of circles and lines and traces of figurative elements.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. V c; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 34.	Hamelin 1954, 173; Delacour 1993, 65.	MG 21861 (Hamelin).

4.2.1.7. *Goblets and cups with cut relief decoration*

This class constitutes perhaps 7 individual colourless glass goblets and cups with cut relief decoration (Pl. 46), including the famous goblet (RAB 203 [56]) with high relief and openwork decoration – i.e. a so-called *diatretum* – depicting a maritime scene featuring what is most likely the lighthouse (Pharos) of Alexandria, and perhaps a fragment of a second such vessel with a different subject. The primary data for this class are found in RAB and NRAB, with additional information in Hamelin’s and Delacour’s studies of Begram’s glass.⁹⁴² The Pharos goblet in particular has been subject to numerous secondary studies as a unique and potentially early example of a *diatretum* – although the date and method of its production has been subject to considerable debate.⁹⁴³

⁹⁴² Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI b, d; 1954, 173–174; Delacour 1993, 62–63.

⁹⁴³ On various aspects of the goblet, see chiefly Picard 1952; Kurz 1954, 101–102; Piponnier 1983; Koster and Whitehouse 1989; Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 153; 2001a, 442–443; Menninger 1996, 77–83; Rütli 1998, 1999; von Saldern 2004, 389; Wetzel 2005; Lierke 2013.

More properly, this class should be divided into two groups which are presented separately in the tables below: 5 vessels with low and medium relief decoration, and perhaps 2 vessels with high relief decoration. The first group encompasses 2 tall goblets with vegetal motifs, 1 fragment of an indeterminate vessel also with a vegetal motif, 1 fragment of another with relief ‘horseshoe’ decoration, and 1 shorter cup with two hemispherical handles set at its lip, decorated with molluscs and aquatic plants. As mentioned above, the 2 vessels with high relief decoration include the Pharos goblet and a fragment from a possible second vessel.

With respect to the first group, which were cut directly from thick blanks, comparable vessels with relief decoration – especially a goblet with vegetal motifs found in Rome – are known from contexts dating especially to the second half of the 1st century CE.⁹⁴⁴ It is plausible that such vessels were produced by a limited number of specialised workshops both in the eastern and western Mediterranean – perhaps Alexandria and Rome or Campania respectively.⁹⁴⁵

The date of the second group has been subject to more vigorous debate. The central question here is how much the Pharos goblet is related to the famous and elaborate ‘cage cups’ of the 3rd–4th centuries CE., i.e. the so-called *diatrete*. Although the latter is an accepted term, it is something of a misnomer as the celebrated *diatretarii* probably produced a wider range of cut glass than these distinctive products. Nonetheless, such vessels were cut in a time-consuming and careful manner to produce extravagant, high relief and openwork decoration, and must have been seen as objects of high luxury.⁹⁴⁶ However, a similarly-shaped goblet with vegetal decoration in high relief and openwork found in 1989 in a Flavian period cremation at Nijmegen (i.e. last decades of the 1st century CE) proves that this method of decoration had developed earlier.⁹⁴⁷ Hence, the debate is essentially whether the Pharos goblet belongs to the earlier or later group.

Thus some scholars compare this goblet’s form and decoration to that of bell-shaped cage cups, specifically the rare figural *diatrete*, the earliest securely datable fragments of which are the birds and leaves found in the Athenian Agora with a *terminus ante quem* of 267 CE. Because of this Menninger suggests a mid 3rd century CE date, and Rütli a still later 3rd–4th century one.⁹⁴⁸ Others such as Whitehouse and von Saldern think the Pharos goblet belongs to the earlier group, with Whitehouse also more recently reiterating that the proportions of the

⁹⁴⁴ Delacour 1993, n. 37–38; Whitehouse 2001a, 440–441; von Saldern 2004, 355–356.

⁹⁴⁵ Von Saldern 2004, 354

⁹⁴⁶ See discussion in von Saldern 2004, 385–387.

⁹⁴⁷ Koster and Whitehouse 1989.

⁹⁴⁸ Menninger 1996, 83; Rütli 1998, 1999.

vessel are not similar to those of bell-shaped cage cups.⁹⁴⁹ If both vessels belong to the same early group, they may have been made in the same area or even a single highly-specialised workshop in Alexandria.⁹⁵⁰ Kurz highlighted the Alexandria connection long ago, mooted the idea that the Pharos goblet had been produced and exported from there like a ‘souvenir.’⁹⁵¹ In my view, the ‘early’ arguments seem more plausible, but there is no smoking gun.

It is worth mentioning that the Pharos goblet’s method of manufacture has been subject to some debate. It is quite possible that its decoration was executed by applying molten glass to the vessel blank, which were then finished by cutting and polishing.⁹⁵² However, Wetzel has managed to create an experimental reconstruction of the vessel from cutting an extremely thick blank (the method usually presumed for late antique cage cups) so evidently this was not impossible.⁹⁵³ Lierke, contrarily, has argued for some decades that all high relief openwork vessels were achieved through pressing molten glass into moulds, with the Pharos goblet then implying a complex process with wax-models and pre-fabricated elements which were then finished by cutting and polishing.⁹⁵⁴

The state of preservation of this group is unclear. A photo of RAB 237 [91] *in situ*⁹⁵⁵ gives the impression this vessel was deposited in good condition, and only crumbled from post-depositional weathering upon excavation. The fact that apparently only one small fragment of a possibly second ‘*diatretum*’ may (or may not) imply that it was already deposited in a fragmentary state. Based on the available data, this class appears to have been distributed in room 10 without any specific organisation into a separate group. Perhaps most interestingly – for all of the intense debate and interest that the Pharos goblet has generated – a photograph *in situ* (Pl. 46.4) shows that it had been simply deposited in a larger pile with the glass with openwork trailed decoration (§4.2.1.11) and ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12).

The following table lists the first group vessels with cut relief decoration, i.e. those low and medium relief.

⁹⁴⁹ See Koster and Whitehouse 1989; Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 153; 2001a, 442–443; von Saldern 2004, 355–356, 389.

⁹⁵⁰ Koster and Whitehouse 1989, 29; von Saldern 2004, 389.

⁹⁵¹ Kurz 1954, 108.

⁹⁵² See e.g. Fremersdorf 1943; Pionnier 1983, 79; Whitehouse 2001a, 443.

⁹⁵³ Wetzel 2005

⁹⁵⁴ See most recently Lierke 2013, 93.

⁹⁵⁵ RAB Fig. 53.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 237 [91] (Pl. 46.1)	10, W wall to S, 2.60.	Tall colourless glass goblet with stylised vegetal decoration in relief. Slightly more conical form than NRAB LXXXVII with everted rim.	H. 14.0 cm; Dia. 9.5 cm.	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> , partially restored, RAB Figs. 53–54; Black and white photo restored Gullini 1961, No. 38 (misreferenced as 39); Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81311/62.	Hamelin 1954, 174, mistakenly (?) links with MG 21279 as in Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI b; Gullini 1961, No. 38 (misreferenced as 39); Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 678.418.	NMA 57-2-53 / ?
NRAB LXXXVII (Pl. 46.2)	10?	Tall colourless glass goblet with stylised vegetal decoration in relief. Slightly more cylindrical form than RAB 237 [91].	H. 18.5; T. 0.3 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI b (misreferenced as 327 [91] i.e. RAB 237 [81]); Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXVII; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 255; Black and white photo Delacour 1993, Fig. 25.	Hamelin 1954, 174 (misreferenced as 327 [91]); Delacour 1993	MG 21279
MG 21857	10 (Hamelin).	Fragment of colourless glass vessel with stylised vegetal decoration in relief. Signalled in Hamelin (1954) ‘three goblets,’ with impossible excavation number “302 [239]” and with MG 21857.		Illustration MG 21857 Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI b.	Hamelin 1954, 174; Delacour 1993, 62–63, n. 34–35.	MG 21857, MG 21862 (Delacour).
MG 21859	10 (Hamelin).	Fragment of colourless glass vessel with relief decoration in shape of two horseshoes.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI d.	Delacour 1993, n. 36.	MG 21859 (Delacour).
NRAB LXXX (Pl. 46.3)	10	Fragmentary glass cup with straight walls and two short ‘ear’ handles at rim, with depiction in high relief of a series of molluscs and aquatic plants.	H. 7.5 cm; Dia. 12.2 cm; T. 0.25 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI b; Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXVII; Black and white photo MGP 81316/113.	Hamelin 1954, 174; Delacour 1993, 63, n. 36.	NMA, MG?

The following table includes the high relief vessels, being the Pharos goblet and the fragment of a possible second vessel.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 203 [56] (Pl. 46.4–6)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Tall colourless glass goblet with everted rim, decoration in high relief with openwork elements. Main subject is a lighthouse, perhaps the Pharos of Alexandria, surmounted by a nude male figure (probably a statue) with a torch, flanked by two tritons. On reverse, three different watercrafts: a galley, a single-masted boat, and figure in a canoe.	H. 18.0 cm.	Black and white photos of fragments, RAB Figs. 37–40; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 24; Black and white photos restored NRAB Figs. 359–362; Black and white photos further restored Piponnier 1983, Figs. 3a–b; Colour photo LTR, 27.	Hamelin 1954, 173–174; Piponnier 1983; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 677.417a & b; further references listed in text above.	NMA 57-2-91 / ?
RAB 203 [56] e	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Fragment of high relief decoration from a colourless glass vessel inventoried with RAB 203 [56] depicting the ‘forepart of a big cat / wild animal represented with extended legs (does not seem to be connected to fragment a).’	(Con.) H. 2.4 cm; W. 2.8 cm.		Whitehouse 2001, 442.	NMA?

4.2.1.8. *Mosaic plates and bowls*

This is a small group of perhaps 4 plates or bowls with ‘millefiori’ or mosaic decoration, meaning that their bodies featured glass cane slices that had been accumulated into a disc then slumped over a mould or cast (Pl. 47.1–2). Another bowl features mosaic decoration in imitation of agate but was produced into the form of a ribbed bowl, so it is treated separately below (see §4.2.1.9). The primary documentation for this group is found in RAB, R1940

(Appendix II), and Hamelin's studies.⁹⁵⁶ Secondary commentaries have been produced by Fremersdorf, Kurz, Menninger, Whitehouse, and von Saldern.⁹⁵⁷

The better-documented vessels in this group have some peculiar features. One (RAB 159 [11]) features square gold sandwich inlays, while fragments of one or two (only one if MG 21277 has been since restored with MG 21867, see table below) have canes arranged into 'garlands.' The plate with gold sandwich inlays features ribs cut in relief around its rim, lower wall, and in a circle around its base, while the garland fragments feature engraved lines. The form for the fragments reported from room T in R1940 is not clear.

There are no exact parallels for any of the better-documented specimens, making it somewhat complicated to date them and locate their places of manufacture. Mosaic vessels were especially popular in the repertoire of Roman glass of the late 1st century BCE to the 1st century CE, but were also produced later.⁹⁵⁸ Both Kurz and Whitehouse took the presence of gold sandwich glass inlays on RAB 159 [11] to suggest an earlier date.⁹⁵⁹ Citing also loose parallels with bowls with garlands, Whitehouse argues this class was produced in the 1st century CE.⁹⁶⁰ Menninger acknowledged some broad comparanda from the late 1st century BCE and the first half of the 1st century CE, hesitated to date RAB 159 [11], but observed that the garland pattern indicates that the plate (or plates) with this decoration in Egypt.⁹⁶¹ Von Saldern suggests that they were made around 100 CE.⁹⁶²

Vessels in this group appear to have been deposited in room 10, with fragments of another perhaps found in room T, which curiously are reported to have traces of burning (see Appendix I, undefined areas, and Appendix II). In room 10, Hamelin's plan clearly shows that one (RAB 159 [11]) had been found in the northwest corner, while at least another had been deposited near the centre of the south wall of this room.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 159 [11] (Pl. 47.1)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Mosaic glass plate. Cane slices of yellow core, red band, black and light green dots on a yellow matrix, a	H. 4.0 cm; Dia. 17.7 cm. T. 0.4 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Figs. 9–10; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IV b; Colour	Hamelin 1954, 171–172; Menninger 1996, 16–17; Tissot 2006,	NMA 57-1-90 / 04.1.55.

⁹⁵⁶ Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI; 1954, 171–172.

⁹⁵⁷ Fremersdorf 1943; Kurz 1954, 95; Whitehouse 1989a, 97; 1989b, 152–153; 2001a, 437–438; Menninger 1996, 16–22; von Saldern 2004, 171.

⁹⁵⁸ See Isings 1; Fremersdorf 1943; Menninger 1996, 17–22.

⁹⁵⁹ Kurz 1954, 95, n. 2; Whitehouse 2001a, 438.

⁹⁶⁰ Whitehouse 2001a, 438.

⁹⁶¹ Menninger 1996, 22.

⁹⁶² Von Saldern 2004, 171.

		red band, then grey-purple spots on grey-white matrix at rim. Interspersed with gold glass rectangular inlays on interior. Cut ribs on exterior at rim, lower wall, and in a circle on the base.		photos LTR No. 168.	K.p. Beg. 662.402.	
MG 21856	10 (Hamelin).	Fragmentary mosaic glass dish with flat base, dark green cane slices with yellow comma-shaped specks, some red, engraved grooves on exterior belly and circular rib around centre of base (?).	H. 4.7 cm; Dia. 16.3 cm; T. 0.4 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IV b.	Hamelin 1954, 171–172; Menninger 1996, 17.	MG 21856 (Hamelin).
MG 21277 (Pl. 47.2)	10 (Hamelin).	Fragmentary colourless glass dish with cane slices arranged in garlands. Canes are green and blue alternating with red and yellow circles in groups of four, with isolated red canes.	H. 3.0 cm; Dia. 19.7 cm; T. 0.3 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IV a; Colour photo Cambon 2002, No. 30.	Hamelin 1954, 171–172; Menninger 1996, 16; Whitehouse 2001a, 437–438.	MG 21227 (Hamelin) + MG 21445 (Hamelin).
MG 21867	10 (Hamelin).	Fragment of colourless glass dish with cane slices arranged in garlands, rows of two, red with yellow, and isolated canes are green. Perhaps restored now with MG 21277.	ca. 5.0 x 3.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IV a.	Hamelin 1954, 171–172.	MG 21867 (Hamelin).
R1940 “millefiori”	Undefined area, T? (Appendix I).	Fragments of mosaic glass, some with traces of fire.			R1940 (see Appendix I and II).	

4.2.1.9. *Ribbed bowls*

This is a small group of perhaps 3 ribbed (also known as ‘pillar moulded’) bowls executed in different colours (Pl. 47.3–5). Such ribbed bowls were popular and widely

distributed among examples of late Hellenistic and early Roman glass, and (for once) the dates of the examples found at Begram have not been the subject of controversy. The primary data for this group is found in RAB, NRAB, and Hamelin's studies,⁹⁶³ and detailed commentary has been provided by Whitehouse and Menninger.⁹⁶⁴

The existence of 3 individual bowls is certain: one was executed in transparent dark blue glass, another in blueish colourless glass (the most common colour used for this vessel type, especially in the latter two thirds of the 1st century CE),⁹⁶⁵ and a third from mosaic of brown and white canes (for this technique, §4.2.1.8) seemingly intended to imitate the appearance of agate. Glass vessels in various forms with decoration imitating agate were distinctive, luxury wares with examples found both within and beyond Roman imperial frontiers.⁹⁶⁶ All appear to have had concentric lines engraved on their interior walls. A fourth colourless fragment reported in the NMA (NRAB LXXIX) was described by Hamelin as an example of a ribbed goblet,⁹⁶⁷ but its dimensions and shape seem to rather suggest a bowl, so I have included it in the table below.

It is generally agreed that such ribbed bowls were slumped over a convex mould, with the ribs then pressed with a mould or tooled. The examples at Begram have very regular ribs (indicating a later date in their production) and are examples of the shallower type Isings 3a. Ribbed bowls began to be produced with regularity especially from the mid 1st century BCE. Monochrome examples disappear in the second half of the 1st century CE, mosaic bowls are rare in the post-Claudian (i.e. post 68 CE) period, while colourless examples are found until the early 2nd century CE.⁹⁶⁸ The Begram bowls then probably belong to the first half of the 1st century CE.⁹⁶⁹ Ribbed bowls were generally very widely distributed both within the empire and occasionally outside it, and number of workshops probably existed particularly in Italy and Syro-Palestine.⁹⁷⁰

All three extant individual bowls were reported from room 10. Hamelin's plan of room 10 clearly indicates two "phiales" found on the 22nd of May (Pl. 17). Only RAB 177 [30] clearly fits this description, but as objects documented before and after RAB 247 [101] were found roughly in that same area, it is possible that this vessel was also found there too. Another

⁹⁶³ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI a, a bis; 1954, 181–182

⁹⁶⁴ Whitehouse 1989a, 96; 1989b, 152; 2001a, 438–439; Menninger 1996, 26–29

⁹⁶⁵ Von Saldern 2004, 188.

⁹⁶⁶ Von Saldern 2004, 168–169.

⁹⁶⁷ Hamelin 1954, 182.

⁹⁶⁸ Von Saldern 2004, 190–191

⁹⁶⁹ Whitehouse 1989a, 96; Menninger 1996, 29.

⁹⁷⁰ Von Saldern 2004, 190–191

“phiale” is indicated further to the east, the date for which (16th of June) matches RAB 311 [165].

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 177 [30] (Pl. 47.3)	10, centre to W (plan), 2.50 m.	Transparent dark blue ribbed glass bowl. Isings 3a. Lines engraved around interior.	H. 6.5 cm; Dia. 22.8 cm; T. 0.35 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 22; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI a.	Hamelin 1954, 181–182; Menninger 1996, 26.	MG 19078
RAB 247 [101] (Pl. 47.4)	10, centre to W (plan)?, 2.60 m.	Colourless (blueish) ribbed glass bowl. Isings 3a. Lines engraved around interior.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 23.5 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 659.399; Colour photo LTR No. 167.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 659.399.	NMA 57-1-92 / 0.4.1.54.
NRAB LXXIX		Rim fragment of colourless ribbed glass bowl. Unclear whether unique object or restored into RAB 247 [101].	(Con.) L. 8.2 cm.	Black and white photo of fragment MGP 81316/113.	Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA?
RAB 311 [165] (Pl. 47.5)	10, centre to E (plan), 2.60 m.	Brown and white ribbed glass bowl made of mosaic cane slices in imitation of agate. Isings 3a. Lines engraved around interior.	Dia. 17.2 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 61; Illustration Hamelin 1954, Pl. XI a bis; Colour photo LTR No. 171.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Menninger 1996, 26; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 660.400.	NMA 57-1-91 / 04.1.82.

4.2.1.10. *Ribbed goblets*

This is a small group of 2 vessels in the form of goblets or ‘carchesia,’ as they are known in the literature (with and without handles), but decorated with vertical ribs (Pl. 47.6–7). Both were incompletely reported in RAB and by Hamelin,⁹⁷¹ and have since been more completely published or discussed.⁹⁷² Some further commentary has been provided by Menninger, who discussed them alongside the ribbed bowls (§4.2.1.9),⁹⁷³ and Whitehouse.⁹⁷⁴

One of these vessels was produced from colourless glass, the second in dark blue. Both have a small foot, essentially no stem, and an everted rim. The first vessel’s walls are concave, and the walls of the second are more cylindrical in form. Both vessels appear that they were first free-blown, with their ribs then formed by pinching. Vessels broadly of this form (Isings

⁹⁷¹ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI a, 1954, 182.

⁹⁷² Menninger 1996, 28–29; LTR No. 165.

⁹⁷³ Menninger 1996, 28–29.

⁹⁷⁴ Whitehouse 2001a, 439.

36) were produced especially in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. Although there are apparently no exact parallels, Menninger suggested a dating for the colourless example in the late 1st century CE.⁹⁷⁵

Both were found in room 10, although apparently not together. The first was certainly found in the northwest corner, where it is indicated on Hamelin's plan (Pl. 17).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 161 [13] (Pl. 47.6)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Colourless glass goblet with low foot, concave body and everted rim, ribbed.	H. 10.3 cm; Dia. 6.0 cm.	Illustration Menninger 1953, Pl. XI a; Black and white photo Menninger 1996, Pl. 6,3.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Menninger 1995, 28–29; Whitehouse 2001a, 439.	MG 19079
RAB 179 [32] (Pl. 47.7)	10, W wall, 2.50 m?	Blue glass cylindrical goblet low foot, cylindrical body and everted rim, ribbed.	H. (recon) 9.0 cm; Dia. 6.5 cm.	Colour photo LTR No. 165.	Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA / 04.1.46.

4.2.1.11. *Goblets and jars with openwork trailing*

This is a large group of ca. 26 goblets and jars in various forms which were produced from yellowish colourless glass or dark blue glass and decorated with distinctive trailed threads – usually built up to create openwork netlike constructions on the belly of each (Pl. 48). This style of decoration has strong commonalities with that of the group of 'ichthyomorphic' flasks (see below §4.2.1.12), and the two groups are generally considered to be linked. The primary sources of data for this group are RAB and NRAB, with additional information on their classification provided by Hamelin.⁹⁷⁶ Secondary studies have been offered by Kurz, Whitehouse, Menninger, Rütli, and von Saldern.⁹⁷⁷

The bodies of these vessels were first created from blown glass, upon which threads were added in molten glass, these being built up to produce openwork basketlike constructions. Hamelin sorted this group of vessels into three main types (Pl. 48.1): type I and I bis refer to goblets with slightly everted feet and rims (broadly similar in appearance to the footed goblets common in Begram's glass repertoire) with vertical trailing on the body built upon with horizontal lines of trails, and zig-zags of a trail around the foot (regular type I), or alternatively

⁹⁷⁵ Menninger 1996, 29.

⁹⁷⁶ Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX; 1954, 178–179.

⁹⁷⁷ Kurz 1954, 106–107; Whitehouse 1989a, 98–99; 1989b, 154; 2001a, 441–442; 2012, 62; Menninger 1996, 71–73; Rütli 1998, 200; von Saldern 2004, 618–620.

without the element of horizontal trails on the body (type I bis). Type J vessels feature the same decorative scheme set on a body of a wide-bellied jar with a slightly constricted neck and open mouth. Type K refers to slimmer jars with a more constricted neck and (usually) applied handles also with trailing, joining their shoulders to their upper necks (i.e. amphoras in form). Hamelin further distinguished type K into the variants type K bis and K ter, which lack the supporting element of vertical trails in their openwork body decoration.

According to Hamelin's count, there were 8 examples of type 8, 2 of type J, and 16 of type K.⁹⁷⁸ It is somewhat difficult to reconcile his list of these vessels with surviving documentation from the MG and NMA, as several vessels appear to have been allocated to the collection other than that originally indicated (not an uncommon phenomenon for the Begram hoard objects more broadly). For example, two type J vessels were reportedly allocated to the MG according to RAB, but one was listed by Tissot in the collection of the NMA in her catalogue (RAB [47], see tables below), and another – which hitherto does not appear to have had a published visual record, and does not match the data for the other type J vessel listed by Hamelin – had apparently been stolen from the NMA's collection, then more recently acquired in Japan for repatriation.⁹⁷⁹ Because of these complexities, I retain Hamelin's classification in the tables below.

As with the ichthyomorphic flasks (see below §4.2.1.12) this group has caused problems for those seeking to delineate its time and place of manufacture, as no good parallels from the extensive corpus of surviving Roman glass were known until relatively recently. Hence, the group was compared to rare examples of other vessels with openwork trailing (also known as 'pseudo-*diatrete*') of the 3rd–4th centuries CE such as the 'Disch cantharus' from Cologne.⁹⁸⁰ However a far closer and earlier parallel is known since 1997 (published later), excavated from a grave in Padua. It was described by its excavators as a pseudo-*diatrete*, and its significance for dating the Begram group was remarked upon.⁹⁸¹ This example is a colourless transparent jar – its style of openwork decoration precisely the same as type K but without handles – and slimmer in proportions with a slightly everted rim. The grave was dated from the late 1st to the early 2nd century CE by a coin of Domitian (81–96 CE) and the assemblage of other grave goods found in it.⁹⁸²

⁹⁷⁸ Hamelin 1953, 128; 1954, 179.

⁹⁷⁹ See Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 7.

⁹⁸⁰ See e.g. Menninger 1996, 72–73. On other late vessels with openwork trailing, see generally von Saldern 2004, 343–346.

⁹⁸¹ See Bonomi and Tagliaferro 2006, No. 12.

⁹⁸² Bonomi and Tagliaferro 2006, 106.

Whitehouse has acknowledged this parallel, presumably accepting that it is meaningful for the question of dating the examples at Begram.⁹⁸³ Yet, both he and von Saldern have vaguely distanced it from the Begram group. Whitehouse simply says that “the difference in quality between the bottle from Padua and the vessels from Begram is striking,”⁹⁸⁴ and von Saldern that there appears to be “keine unmittelbare Verbindung” between the groups.⁹⁸⁵ This is difficult to understand. The Padua jar shows without doubt that extremely similar vessels with precisely the same rare openwork decoration as the Begram group were being produced around the late 1st century CE. Von Saldern seems to downplay the comparison because he stylistically prefers a later date for this group, like Menninger, in the first half of the 3rd century CE.⁹⁸⁶ Comparably, as mentioned above (§4.2.1) Whitehouse’s appraisal rather seems to be connected to his idea that because of the paucity of surviving comparanda for these vessels (like the ichthyomorphic flasks), the Begram group was not produced within the Roman Empire.⁹⁸⁷ Mairs has already observed that these vessels could have been the product of an otherwise unknown atelier or artisan.⁹⁸⁸ I would like to additionally suggest that the paucity of Roman parallels – even though the technology of production and the composition of the glass itself extremely strongly suggests that it was made in this cultural sphere – may simply indicate that this workshop (the products of which being found in ‘bulk’ in the Begram hoard) was a specialist luxury atelier creating export-oriented wares. I will consider this hypothesis and its implications a little further below (§5.4).

For now, it should be stated that nobody is in a clear position to assert where this group was produced. However, observing a trend with the places of production of other large groups of glass at Begram (the enamelled group §4.2.1.2, the facet-cut group §4.2.1.3), as well as the similar appearance of the colourless and dark blue glass used for both this group and the main facet-cut one (§4.2.1.3, the blanks for the main group also suggesting a similar locus of production as the enamelled goblets), I would not find an eastern Mediterranean and more specifically Egyptian provenance for this workshop surprising – an appraisal which applies by extension to the related ichthyomorphic flasks too (§4.2.1.12).

Although a number of these vessels were reported from restored fragments later documented in the NMA, they appear almost exclusively to have been found in room 10 (the

⁹⁸³ Whitehouse 2001a, 442.

⁹⁸⁴ Whitehouse 2012, 62.

⁹⁸⁵ Von Saldern 2004, 619.

⁹⁸⁶ Menninger 1996, 76; von Saldern 2004, 620.

⁹⁸⁷ Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 154; 2001a, 442; 2012, 62.

⁹⁸⁸ Mairs 2012, 7, n. 3.

lonely NRAB 30 is one exception). Both Hamelin's plan ("verres à résilles") and *in situ* photography (Pl. 24.1) indicate that they were chiefly deposited in a basket or bag-shaped pile (the container since having decayed) next to the group of ichthyomorphic flasks. Another *in situ* photograph shows that others were found in the vicinity of the northeast corner adjacent to ivory Furniture Leg 2 (§4.13.1.3, Pl. 86.4).

According to Hamelin's classification, vessels belonging to type K include those in the following table. If we assume that this classification is correct and comprehensive, a blue jar of this type more recently acquired for repatriation to the NMA⁹⁸⁹ can only correspond with RAB 188 [41], and was presumably restored further later, since the originally recorded height for the remaining part of the vessel was given as 13.3 cm and the diameter of the base 8.4 cm, while in the recent catalogue its dimensions are H. 22.0 cm; W. 12.0 cm (now presumably including the openwork elements). This concordance is not certain, but nonetheless I include the reference to the catalogue in the table below.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 182 [35]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Type K blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 14.5 cm; Dia. 9.6 cm.	Black and white photo Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 69.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179; Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 69; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 693. 433.	NMA 57-2-44 / ?
RAB 188 [41]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Type K blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. (con.) 13.3 cm; Dia. (base) 8.4 cm.	Colour photo Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 102?	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
RAB 191 [44]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Type K blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. (con.) 16.5 cm; Dia. 7.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG 19094
RAB 192 [45] (Pl. 48.1 K, 48.2)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Type K blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 22.7 cm; Dia. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 23; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX K.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG 19092
RAB 229 [83]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Type K blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 15.0 cm; Dia. 10.1 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG 21428

⁹⁸⁹ Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 102.

NRAB LXXXII	?	Type K colourless glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration. Differs slightly from other type K vessels as handles are built from trailing.	H. 21.0 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81316/115 in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 692.432.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 692.432.	NMA?
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The following vessels are, according to Hamelin's classification, type K bis.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 183 [36]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. (con.) 15.4 cm; Dia. 7.7 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
RAB 190 [43] (Pl. 48.1 K bis, 48.3)	W wall, 2.50 m.	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 17.7 cm; Dia. 7.3 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 23; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX K bis; Colour photo LTR No. 158.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179; Tissot 2006, 694.434.	NMA / 04.1.35.
NRAB LXII	?	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 16.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
NRAB LXIII	?	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. (con.) 10 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
NRAB LXIV	?	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	Dia. 8.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
NRAB LXV	?	Type K bis blue glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	Dia. 8.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?

Again according to Hamelin's classification, the following vessels are type K ter. A colourless jar more recently acquired for repatriation to the NMA⁹⁹⁰ may be connected with

⁹⁹⁰ Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 8.

one of the vessels listed in this group (NRAB LXVIII or NRAB LXXXIII?). The dimensions of this jar do not match published records, and the structure of its openwork decoration corresponds to type K rather than that of type K ter (see the discussion of types above). However, all examples of type K listed by Hamelin are either blue, or distinct from this jar. Furthermore, it appears to have applied blue handles, which were topped with a trail of colourless glass that was then pinched – a feature indicated by Hamelin for RAB 263 [117] (type K ter) allocated to the MG. Hence, I tentatively indicate this vessel as possibly connected with NRAB LXVIII or LXXXIII, which otherwise do not appear to have visual records.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 263 [117] (Pl. 48.1 K ter)	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Type K ter colourless glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	(con.) H. 15.8 cm; Dia. 5.8 cm (upper).	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX, K ter; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 230?	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG 21172 (Hamelin).
NRAB LXVIII	?	Type K ter colourless glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 22.0 cm.	Colour photo Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 8? (or NRAB LXXXIII?).	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
NRAB LXXXI	?	Type K ter colourless glass jar with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 18.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
NRAB LXXXIII	?	Type K ter colourless glass jar with two handles and trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 21.0 cm.	Colour photo Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 8? (or NRAB LXVIII?).	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?

According to Hamelin's classification, the vessels in the following table are type I.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 223 [77]	10, W wall?, 2.60 m.	Type I blue glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 18.8 cm; Dia. 11.7.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG 19093
RAB 224 [78]	10, W wall?, 2.60 m.	Type I blue glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 15.6 cm; Dia. 9.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?
RAB 228 [82] (Pl. 48.1 I, 48.4)	10, W wall?, 2.60 m.	Type I colourless glass goblet with	H. 17.8 cm; Dia. 10.2 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX I; colour	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA 57-2-47 / 04.1.37.

		trailed, openwork decoration.		photo LTR No. 159.		
NRAB 30	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Type I colourless glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 20.0 cm; Dia. 19.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?

The following vessels are, according to Hamelin's classification, type I bis.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 353 [209]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Type I bis colourless glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 12.8 cm; Dia. 8.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG?
RAB 360 [216] (Pl. 48.1 I bis)	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Type I bis colourless glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 12.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX, I bis.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG?
RAB 361 [217]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Type I bis colourless glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 15.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG?
RAB 365 [221]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Type I bis colourless glass goblet with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 11.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	NMA?

This final table lists the two vessels which, according to Hamelin's classification, were examples of type J. Typologically, a wide colourless jar more recently acquired for repatriation to the NMA⁹⁹¹ can only correspond with this group, but again causes problems. RAB 194 [47] was reported in RAB to have been allocated to the NMA, while RAB 195 [48] was apparently allocated to the MG, but it does not appear to be catalogued there. The recently-published jar is certainly different to RAB 194 [47], but it also does not quite match the dimensions for RAB 195 [48]. The recently-published example was reportedly 20.0 x 19.0 cm, while RAB 195 [48] was recorded to have a conserved height of 15.0 cm (which could have since been restored with other fragments to be taller), and a belly (presumably sans openwork) and mouth of 12.0 cm in diameter. Plausibly, they could be the same, if the vessel had been allocated to the NMA after all, and the dimensions given recently were taken at the very possible widest points of the restored jar. Therefore I give a corresponding reference to the catalogue in the table below.

⁹⁹¹ Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 7.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 194 [47] (Pls. 24.2, 48.1 J, 48.5)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Type J colourless glass jar with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. 17.8 cm; Dia. (rim) 10.0 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 27; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 28; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX J.	Hamelin 1954, 178–179; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 696.436.	NMA?
RAB 195 [48]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Type J colourless glass jar with trailed, openwork decoration.	H. (con.) 15.0 cm; Dia. (belly) 12.0 cm.	Colour photo Inoue and Kano 2016, No. 7?	Hamelin 1954, 178–179.	MG, or NMA?

4.2.1.12. *Ichthyomorphic flasks with trailed decoration*

This is a large group of ca. 26 colourless and dark blue glass flasks with trailed decoration collectively described by Hamelin as “verreries ichthyomorphes” (Pls. 49–50.5). Broadly similar in form and construction, they were produced in three main types representing different subjects: fish, dolphins, and ships (this last type featuring openwork trailed decoration). Although their function is not certain, it is plausible that they were used to contain and dispense scented oils. The primary documentation for this group is divided between RAB, NRAB, and especially Hamelin’s secondary studies of the glass, which established a typology for this group and provided a list of the relevant finds from RAB and NRAB.⁹⁹² Secondary commentaries have been provided especially by Kurz, Whitehouse, Menninger, and von Saldern.⁹⁹³ Because of the style of applied and openwork trailing used to decorate this group, it is usually seen as typologically related to the goblets and jars with openwork trailing (discussed above, §4.2.1.11).

According to Hamelin’s initial classification, this group comprises 27 flasks, of which there are 13 examples of type L and L bis, 10 examples of type M and M bis, and 4 examples of type N (Pl. 49.1), but his later list (followed here) gives only 26 definitive examples, and makes less explicit mention of types.⁹⁹⁴ Nonetheless, these types appear to respectively represent stylised fish, dolphins, and ships. All are closed at one end, and in the case of the fish and dolphins, their ‘tails’ serve as openings. The type L and L bis fish feature long, slim bodies, each about 30 cm in length, executed by free blowing colourless or blue glass. The mouths of

⁹⁹² Hamelin 1953, 128, Pl. X; 1954, 180–182.

⁹⁹³ Kurz 1954, 106; Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 154; 2001a, 441–442; Menninger 1996, 73–76; von Saldern 2004, 343, 618–620.

⁹⁹⁴ Hamelin 1953, 128.

the fish are closed, and their tails are suggested by the tubular neck of the vessel, which terminates in a plain round opening. They are decorated by tooled and trailed glass; trails define their facial areas, run along the length of their bodies (in some cases pinched at intervals), and are formed into dorsal, pectoral, pelvic, anal, and caudal fins with contiguous loops, which had been clamped on some specimens for further decoration. Type L bis apparently encompasses vessels which had pectoral fins made from peglike glass attachments, rather than looped trailing. Each glass fish also has two pelvic fins, which allow the vessel to stand upright lengthwise. Eyes are added on all specimens from molten glass, normally in the same colourless or blue glass as their bodies and fins, but at least three specimens show variation, with eyes in pale blue (RAB 170 [22]), turquoise blue (RAB 209 [63]), and emerald green (RAB 187 [40]).

Type M and M bis refer to flasks rather representing dolphins, which can be distinguished from their pronounced melons, and tooled long, open beaks. They have shorter and stockier bodies than type L, with lengths of only about 20 cm, and appear to have been blown only from colourless glass. They have dorsal, pectoral, and caudal fins made from loops of blue or colourless trailed glass, but not along the length of their bodies or facial areas. Three peg-like attachments on the base of each specimens ensures that they are able to stand upright lengthways. Type M bis features a different positioning of the caudal fins, which are vertically rotated, instead of horizontally rotated like those of type M.

Type N vessels appear to represent ships, although Hamelin apparently did not suggest this in his work. At some point later they came to be described as “vases galériformes.”⁹⁹⁵ Hamelin mentioned that there were 4 examples of this type, but apparently only one has been restored in a manner sufficient to permit description of its form (RAB 262 [116]). Like the fish and dolphins, this type also features an elongated, free-blown body with a round orifice, but its closed end is lengthened and curved upwards, with its extremity vertically pushed flat. The body and decoration are executed in transparent colourless glass. Like the fish, glass trails have been drawn along the length of each side of these vessels and pinched at intervals to form decorative ribbing. The most distinctive feature of this type is a basket-like construction on the upper of the vessel body, which is made from two parallel stacked rows of glass trails formed in waves and topped with flat trails of glass. The ends of these rows are joined together with an arch comprised of two parallel trails, topped with a decorative zigzagging trails. The arch closest to the vessel’s opening is connected to the neck of the vessel by a thick trail of glass,

⁹⁹⁵ As in Berger and Fünfschilling 1986, 21.

which seems to have functioned as a handle. The inferior part of the vessel appears to have had a hooklike peg attached under the vessel's neck which may have either served to stabilise the sitting vessel, or served as a hook from which it could be hung.

It is probably impossible to distinguish whether these vessels were meant to refer to specific species of fish or dolphins, or kinds of ships (or other watercraft). All three types were executed in an abstracted and stylised manner, and show clear elements of fantasy in their execution. It is, however, quite clear that these vessels not only have similar forms and were most likely produced in the same workshop, but were also conceived of as a group by the party responsible for depositing them in the hoard rooms. This is because – with a couple of exceptions deposited in the northwest and northeast corners of room 10, and along the north wall in room 13 – the majority were apparently found in a large pile along the west wall of room 10 (see Hamelin's plan, indicated "verres ichthyomorphes"). I will return to the significance of the forms of these flasks later (§5.4). It is not clear whether all examples were found in complete condition, but it is worth highlighting that the opening ('tail') of a fish or dolphin (RAB 358 [214]) has the traces of an ink inscription on its interior, which is discussed in more detail below (§4.15).

It tends to be presumed that glass flasks in the shape of fish and other animals as containers for holding and dispensing smaller quantities of higher-value liquids, especially perfumed oil.⁹⁹⁶ The terms *balsamaria* and *unguentaria* are commonly used to describe vessels holding such presumed contents, but are both limited and imprecise – the first implies the vessel held a concoction derived from balsam resin, the latter unguents. It is probably safer to simply refer to perfumed oils, which in the Greek and Roman world could have a variety of functions, including social and aesthetic use (e.g. as cosmetics), as well as in rituals and banqueting, and for medicinal purposes.⁹⁹⁷ In such contexts, where the Begram ichthyomorphic flasks were produced, liquid or semi-liquid perfumes (Gk. *muron*) were primarily produced from a base of vegetable oil, usually olive, and aromatic substances, also usually vegetal in origin.⁹⁹⁸

Hamelin commented that the Begram flasks could have also served as *balsamaria*, but observing their large size (i.e. with a capacity of at least a third of a litre), he suggested that they may have instead functioned as drinking vessels in an otherwise unattested form.⁹⁹⁹ However, Menninger cited personal communication with Tissot at the MG, who informed him

⁹⁹⁶ Remarkd already in Kurz 1954, 106. On animal-shaped glass vessels, see generally von Saldern 2004, 518–524.

⁹⁹⁷ See generally Touwaide 2013a; 2013b.

⁹⁹⁸ On the production of perfumes, Verbanck-Pierard et al. 2008; Verbanck-Pierard and Massar 2013, 273–274.

⁹⁹⁹ Kurz 1954, 180.

that the residue of scented oil had been recovered from these vessels,¹⁰⁰⁰ although I have not been able to verify or obtain further details about this information. But hints about the forms of ichthyomorphic flasks also support such a function. For example, the fins and peg-like attachments added to the inferior side of these flasks allow them to stand lengthwise, and do not seem to lend well to a drinking function. Additionally, their openings are restricted and funnel-like, which is more suitable for the storage of a material subject to evaporation, and the dispensation of a liquid (rather than a semi-solid substance). As these vessels cannot stand upright alone, it is likely their openings had once been sealed. While lead stoppers have sometimes been recovered with glass unguentaria, no such stoppers were documented in the Begram hoard, so presumably a perishable material could have served this purpose, such as wax, cork, wood, or even grass.¹⁰⁰¹ If the Begram flasks had once contained perfumed oils, it is likely that they would have travelled to Central Asia full, like the majority of Roman glass bottles and receptacles in trade.¹⁰⁰² Indeed, partnerships between glassmakers and perfumers who collaborated to sell their products are attested from the Roman period,¹⁰⁰³ which may have occurred also in the present case.

As no close comparanda for this group of vessels are known, the question of their date and place of production has been subject to considerable debate. The general concept of a fish-shaped glass flask – especially free-blown and mould-blown – is fairly well attested, if in few types, from across the Roman Mediterranean.¹⁰⁰⁴ Of the range of options, the trailing on the Begram group is more comparable to two late groups: one produced in the Rheinland (see Isings 95a), with a frequently-discussed example from a grave in Cologne dated to the mid 3rd century CE,¹⁰⁰⁵ and another late group (perhaps 3rd or 4th century CE) attributed to Syro-Palestinian production.¹⁰⁰⁶ With respect to the type N vessels (ships), an excavated example of a blown glass flask or askos excavated at Martigny, Switzerland is usually cited, which is dated to either the late 2nd or early 3rd century CE. This vessel features some layered trails, and a trailed handle, apparently altogether creating the form of a ship (although its first publishers expressed some uncertainty whether a Roman-era beholder would have made that

¹⁰⁰⁰ Menninger 1996, 73.

¹⁰⁰¹ For a ceramic wine jug with a cork stopper from a well in the Athenian Agora, Thompson 1951, 50. For a wooden stopper found in a 3rd century CE sarcophagus in Cologne, La Baume 1960, 82. For a 1st century CE glass unguentarium sealed with a stopper made of grass from Fayum, Egypt, Edgar 1905, 55, No. 32661.

¹⁰⁰² Foy 2018, 277.

¹⁰⁰³ Brun 2008, 242.

¹⁰⁰⁴ On fish imagery in glass of the Mediterranean world, see generally Newby 1993. For an overview of the finds, von Saldern 2004, 520–522.

¹⁰⁰⁵ See comments in Menninger 1996, 74–75; von Saldern 2004, 521.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Von Saldern 2004, 522.

connection).¹⁰⁰⁷ Neither the Cologne fish nor the Martigny ship are particularly close parallels, as Whitehouse has remarked, who thinks that the Begram group of ichthyomorphic flasks as well as the related group with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11) are not Roman.¹⁰⁰⁸ Alternatively Menninger and von Saldern have looked to such comparanda to suggest a late date for the production of the Begram group of ichthyomorphic flasks, namely the first half of the 3rd century CE.¹⁰⁰⁹ As I have discussed above (§4.2.1.11), the jar with openwork trailing from Padua indicates strongly that similar vessels at Begram were made in the late 1st or early 2nd century CE, implying that the ichthyomorphic flasks were made around the same period in a related workshop. As observed above, it would not be surprising if these workshops were located in the eastern Mediterranean and more specifically Egypt, and oriented towards export production, a hypothesis I discuss again later (§5.4).

For the table below, I follow the list of Hamelin, and present the vessels in order of their excavation number rather than types, as these are neither specifically indicated by Hamelin, nor always clear in the case of partially-preserved examples. If all of the attributions of each object to either the MG or the NMA in RAB are correct (which they may well not be), I have suggested in the table below that RAB 234 [88] may be the same as a flask in the MG, SN IAP 425.752 / MG 27134. A problem is presented by RAB 187 [40], which is MG 21832 according to Hamelin's list, but RAB is explicit that this fish flask has emerald green eyes, while MG 21832 has colourless eyes.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 170 [22]	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Forepart of colourless glass fish with blue eyes, type L?	H. 7.4 cm; L. (con.) 13.6 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 184 [37] (Pl. 49.2)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Forepart of blue glass fish, type L.	H. 8.2 cm; L. (con.) 20.0 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 26.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 19089
RAB 185 [38]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Forepart of blue glass fish, type L.	H. 7.2 cm; L. (con.) 14.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 19088
RAB 186 [39]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Forepart of blue glass fish, type L.	H. 6.0 cm; L. (con.) 13.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 187 [40] (Pl. 49.3)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Forepart of colourless glass fish, emerald green eyes, type L.	H. 6.0 cm; L. (con.) 8.0 cm.	Illustration (of MG 21832, which has colourless eyes)	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 21832? (Hamelin, which however has

¹⁰⁰⁷ See Berger and Fünfschilling 1986, esp. 21, n. 6; Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 154; 2001a, 442; Menninger 1996, 75–76; von Saldern 2004, 619.

¹⁰⁰⁸ See e.g. Whitehouse 2001a, 441–442.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Menninger 1996, 75–76; von Saldern 2004, 618–620.

				from front Hamelin 1953, Pl. X; Colour photo (of MG 21832) in Cambon 2002, No. 26.		colourless eyes).
RAB 193 [46] (Pl. 49.1 L, 49.5)	10, W wall, 2.60 m	Blue glass fish, type L.	H. 11.7 cm; L. 30.5 cm.	Black and white photo, also <i>in situ</i> RAB Figs. 24, 26; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. X L; Colour photo LTR No. 166.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA 57-1-97 / 04.1.47.
RAB 208 [61] (Pl. 49.1 M, 49.4)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass dolphin, type M.	H. 9.5 cm; L. 22.0 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 41; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. X M; Colour photo LTR No. 169.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA 57-2-22; 04.1.56
RAB 208 bis [62]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Forepart of colourless glass dolphin with blue fins, type M.	H. 8.0 cm; L. (con.) 7.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 209 [63]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Forepart of colourless glass fish with turquoise eyes, type L.	H. 10.1 cm; L. (con.) 11.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 19091
RAB 210 [64] (Pls. 24.3, 49.6)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass fish with blue eyes, blue pinched trails, fin, and dot on side. Type L bis.	H. 8.4 cm; L. 22.2 cm.	Black and white photo, also <i>in situ</i> , RAB Figs. 44–45.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 19087
RAB 219 [73] (Pl. 49.1)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Colourless glass dolphin with turquoise eyes, type M.	H. 9.2 cm; L (con.) 9.3 cm.	Illustration from front Hamelin 1953, Pl. X; Colour photo Cambon 2010, Fig. 4.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 19090
RAB 220 [74]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Forepart of colourless glass fish, type L?	H. 7.3 cm; L. (con.) 9.3 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 230 [84]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Forepart of colourless glass fish, type L?	L. (con.) 7.1 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 231 [85] (Pl. 49.1 M bis)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Almost complete colourless glass dolphin, type M bis.	H. 8.5 cm; L. (con.) 22.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. X M bis.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 21276
RAB 232 [86]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Part of body of colourless glass fish, type L?	H. 7.0 cm; L. (con.) 14.6 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 233 [87]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Part of body of colourless glass fish, type L?	H. 6.2 cm; L. (con.), 15.1 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 21839 (Hamelin).

RAB 234 [88]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Part of body of colourless glass fish, type L?	H. 7.0 cm; L. (con.) 13.5 cm.	Colour photo (of SN IAP 425.752 / MG 27134) Cambon 2002, No. 28?	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG SN IAP 425.752 / MG 27134?
RAB 235 [89]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Part of body of colourless glass fish, type L?	H. 5.5 cm; L. (con.) 13.2 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 262 [116] (Pls. 49.1 N, 50.1–2)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass ship, type N.	H. (con.) 11.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. X N; Black and white photo partially restored Berger and Fünfschilling 1986, Fig. 6.	Hamelin 1954, 180–182; Berger and Fünfschilling 1986.	MG 21840
RAB 355 [211]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Two fragments of colourless glass fish, type L?	L. 22.5 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
RAB 358 [214] (Pl. 50.3– 5)	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Opening (tail) of fish or dolphin (type L or M) with part of blue fin, inscription in ink around interior (see §4.15).	L. (con.) 6.4 cm; Dia. 5.0 cm.	Illustration of inscription Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI c (not identified in text).	Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	MG 21465
RAB 365 [221]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass ship, opening missing, type N (Hamelin).	H. (con.) 11.0 cm; 9.1 cm		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
NRAB LXVI	?	Tail of blue glass fish or dolphin (type L or M) with beginning of tail fins.	L. (con.) 9.2 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
NRAB LXVII	?	Colourless glass ship, opening missing, type N (Hamelin).			Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA?
NRAB 185	13, N wall, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass dolphin with blue eyes and some blue fins, type M?	H. 9.0 cm; L. 21.0 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 180–182.	NMA
NRAB 194	13, N wall, 2.50 m.	Part of colourless glass fish with blue eyes, white fins.	H 7.2 cm; L. 26.8 cm.			?

4.2.1.13. *High-handled jugs (one with gold foil decoration)*

These 2 high-handled jugs are grouped together because they have very similar forms, although one is not decorated, and the other features a Dionysiac thiasus executed in gold foil (Pl. 50.6–7). Although both vessels were reported in NRAB, Hamelin's studies add some

additional data.¹⁰¹⁰ In their commentaries, Whitehouse and Menninger have stressed the similarity between the forms of the two vessels, and the significance of this for dating them.¹⁰¹¹

The blue-grey glass jug with gold foil decoration (NRAB 154) has a slightly different form than the blue-black opaque undecorated example. The first rests on a small flat circular foot, while the second has a higher conical foot. The belly of the second is also slimmer near the base.

Roman glass vessels decorated with gold foil are rare.¹⁰¹² Comparisons between the Begram piece and 3rd–4th century CE examples have been raised and discussed, including the gilded and painted ‘Daphne ewer,’¹⁰¹³ but Whitehouse has convincingly highlighted a closer comparandum in the Corning Museum of Glass which is dated by its form to the 1st century CE.¹⁰¹⁴ The forms of these high-handled jugs – relatively common in Roman metalwork of the 1st century CE, including at Pompeii – suggests that they were both produced in the 1st century CE, and more specifically the mid 1st century according to Menninger.¹⁰¹⁵ Von Saldern opines that the gold foil decorated jug was made around 100 CE.¹⁰¹⁶

The two vessels appear to have been found in complete condition. Both were deposited in room 13, but separately; one along the east wall, and the other in northeast corner. For the problem of the depth it was found at – NRAB and Hamelin conflict on the matter – see the note in the table below.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 48 (Pl. 50.6)	13, E wall.	Blue-black opaque glass jug with applied high handle, elevated conical foot.	H. 25.0 cm; Dia. 12.8 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIII a; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 250; Colour photo LTR No. 213.	Menninger 1996, 23; Whitehouse 2001a, 438; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 690.430.	NMA 57-2-40 / 04.1.66.
NRAB 154 (Pl. 50.7)	13, NE corner, 2.50 m (NRAB) or 1.70 m (Hamelin). ¹⁰¹⁷	Blue-grey glass jug with applied high handle and low circular foot, with decoration in gold foil depicting Dionysiac thiasus,	H. 21.4 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1952, Pl. I; Black and white photo and drawing of decoration NRAB Figs.	Hamelin 1952, 12–15, No. I; Whitehouse 1989b, 153; Menninger 1996, 23; Tissot 2006,	NMA 57-2-41 / 04.1.33.

¹⁰¹⁰ Hamelin 1952, 12–15, No. I; 1953, Pl. XIII a.

¹⁰¹¹ Whitehouse 1989a, 98; 1989b, 153; 2001a, 438; Menninger 1996, 23–25.

¹⁰¹² See generally von Saldern 2004, 452–461.

¹⁰¹³ Hamelin 1952, 12–15; Menninger 1996, 24–25.

¹⁰¹⁴ Whitehouse 1989a, 97–98; 1989b, 153.

¹⁰¹⁵ Menninger 1996, 25.

¹⁰¹⁶ Von Saldern 2004, 452.

¹⁰¹⁷ Hamelin (1952, 22; 1954, 155) is explicit that this object was found in an unexplored part of room 13 at 1.70 m (otherwise prospected until the depth of 2.40 m) as it was hit by the tool of a worker.

		plain gold band, ivy leaves, band with diamonds, leaves, final band with diamonds.		251–251 bis; Colour photo LTR No. 210.	K.p. Beg. 686.426a&b.	
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4.2.1.14. *Globular jars with horizontal ribs*

This is group of just 2 globular jars with constricted necks – respectively colourless and pale blue – which were decorated with horizontal ribs running around their bellies and necks (Pl. 51.1–2). The primary data for these vessels is found in NRAB and Hamelin’s studies,¹⁰¹⁸ and they have also been subject to brief commentaries from Menninger and Whitehouse.¹⁰¹⁹

These vessels were presumably blown, and their ribs cold-worked, i.e. cut or ground. Whitehouse noticed that some ribs on NRAB 94 were countersunk.¹⁰²⁰ To my knowledge, there are still no known close parallels for these vessels. Menninger notes that ‘Kugeltrichterflaschen’ were produced from the 2nd–4th centuries CE, but the form and rib decoration of the Begram examples is different. He cites a translucent dark red jar found in a grave at Kayseri in Turkey dated to the early 1st century CE as possible predecessor to the Begram examples, and thinks that the latter may have been produced already in the latter half of the same century.¹⁰²¹ Perhaps this date might be roughly correct, but the Kayseri vessel is still not a very close parallel. Alternatively, for a better sense of the type of decoration used, one can point to a small number of monochrome vessels (namely bowls) with pronounced horizontal ribs produced during the first third of the 1st century CE, perhaps in Italian (even Roman) workshops.¹⁰²² A 1st century CE date seems plausible, although apparently the Begram examples were products of an otherwise unknown workshop.

The two jars appear to have been found in complete condition (if highly weathered) in the northern centre of room 13, interestingly in close association with lacquerware bowls (see §4.2.6 below). More specifically, NRAB 92 had been stacked on NRAB 93 (Pl. 56.2).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 93 (Pls. 51.1, 56.2)	13, N centre, 2.50 m, grouped with	Colourless globular glass jar with constricted neck, decorated	H. 18.0 cm; Dia. 17.6 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII a; Black and white photos	Hamelin 1954, 182; Menninger 1996, 86.	NMA?

¹⁰¹⁸ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII a; 1954, 182.

¹⁰¹⁹ Menninger 1996, 86–87; Whitehouse 2001a, 443–444.

¹⁰²⁰ Hamelin 1954, 182; Menninger 1996, 86–87; Whitehouse 2001a, 443.

¹⁰²¹ Menninger 1996, 86–87.

¹⁰²² On this type of vessel, von Saldern 2004, 367–368. See more specifically a yellow-brown bowl and a white bowl, respectively in Whitehouse 1997, 16, No. 2; von Saldern 2004, Pl. 316.

	lacquerware bowls, under NRAB 92.	with horizontal ribs.		<i>in situ</i> NRAB Figs. 243–244; Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> MGP 813185/1, 813195/3.		
NRAB 94 (Pl. 51.2)	13, N centre, 2.50 m, grouped with lacquerware bowls.	Pale blue globular glass jar with constricted neck, decorated with horizontal ribs, some countersunk.	H. 18.7 cm; Dia. 17.9 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII a; Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> NRAB Figs. 243–244; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 813185/1.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Menninger 1996, 86.	NMA?

4.2.1.15. *Zoomorphic rhyton*

This group represents only a single but distinctive specimen of a light brown glass rhyton representing the form of an animal (Pl. 51.3). It is documented in RAB and Hamelin's studies of the glass.¹⁰²³ Secondary commentaries on this vessel has been provided by Whitehouse, Menninger, and von Saldern.¹⁰²⁴

This vessel was free-blown from two gathers, producing a rhyton representing an animal with a narrow head (the tip or 'nose' has been perforated) and curved horns presumably intending to represent a caprid, placed on a hollow conical foot. Two thin trails of glass were added around its exterior main opening.

This vessel is generally considered to be dateable, as the head of a relatively close comparandum in blueish glass has been excavated in a dated context: a grave on Siphnos, which also included a denarius of Vespasian produced in 75 CE.¹⁰²⁵ More generally, Roman glass rhyta appear to have been made chiefly in the 1st century CE, and while they were produced in both eastern and western regions of the empire, von Saldern thinks that an eastern provenance for the Begram specimen is likely.¹⁰²⁶

It is clear from its presentation in RAB that this rhyton was found in the northwest corner of room 10 in the vicinity of a group of other types of glass (a cup with cold-painted decoration, facet-cut goblet, a Hofheim cup, a mosaic bowl, etc.). Although it was found with its superior part broken, it is unclear whether it was originally deposited in this state.

¹⁰²³ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI; 1954, 182.

¹⁰²⁴ Whitehouse 1989a, 96–97; 1989b, 152; 2001a, 440; 2012, 56; Menninger 1996, 31–32; von Saldern 2004, 487–488.

¹⁰²⁵ Brock and Mackworth Young 1949, 89, grave 14, No. 12, Pl. 32.2. See also e.g. Whitehouse 2001a, 440; 2012, 56.

¹⁰²⁶ Von Saldern 2004, 487–488

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 158 [9] (Pl. 51.3)	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Brown glass rhyton on hollow conical foot. Tip perforated, terminating in head of horned animal. Two applied trails around exterior opening.	H. 16.5 cm; Dia. (upper) 7.2 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 7; Illustration in Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI c; Colour photo LTR No. 170.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 691.431.	NMA 57-2- 78 / 04.1.57.

4.2.1.16. *Glass vessel with gold spout attachments*

This group refers to perhaps a single example of a poorly-documented type of vessel which apparently was produced from colourless glass and featured applied gold elephant masks serving as spouts (Pl. 51.4). It was found in room T, and reported in NRAB with some additional remarks in R1940. To my knowledge, no attention has been paid in secondary scholarship to this vessel.

This vessel is reported under NRAB 245 and 246, being two gold masks of elephants, executed in relief. After accounting for the first mask in NRAB 245 (the second NRAB 246 is described as the same type as the previous, with slightly different dimensions), the function of the first attachment as a spout is described in a curious manner by Hackin, which I reproduce here:

“Cette applique faisant office de versoir; un tube, dont l’une des extrémités traversait la paroi d’un récipient en verre (réduit en poussière) et dont l’autre coïncidait avec l’extrémité de la trompe du pachyderme, permettait l’écoulement des liquides. La partie interne creuse de l’applique était fixée contre la paroi du récipient à l’aide d’un mastic.”¹⁰²⁷

From the descriptions in NRAB alone, it is not clear whether NRAB 246 was attached to the same vessel as NRAB 245 or another one. Ria Hackin’s notes in R1940 (see Appendix II), however, state that both were found in contact with a decomposed cut white glass, so presumably they were attached to the same vessel. The same source indicates that the ensemble was found in association with iron plaques and bars, probably the locks of boxes, and wood dust was mixed into the floor. So, it appears that the vessel had been originally deposited in a chest.

¹⁰²⁷ NRAB 245, Hackin 1954a, 305.

The resulting object – a white (or perhaps colourless?) glass vessel with two gold elephant masks functioning as spouts and attached to vessel wall with a putty or sealant – would be unique in the repertoire of Roman glass. There are few known examples of glass vessels with elements added in precious metals. Von Saldern has described a variety of thereof produced from perhaps the second quarter of the 1st century to the 4th century CE incorporating precious metal sleeves, cases and mounts,¹⁰²⁸ but none are similar to the vessel described here. Because of two particular stylistic choices used in executing the gold masks, namely the elephant's very small ears (which resemble those of an Asian elephant more than an African one), and the representation of the texture of the elephant's skin in groups of three dots, I think it is possible that these masks were produced and perhaps attached to the glass vessel locally, as intentional modifications. Of a number of known silver roundels representing elephants with riders that were produced in the vicinity of Gandhāra in the 1st century CE, one example (from the al-Sabah collection, sadly presumably the product of illicit excavation and without meaningful provenance) depicts an elephant with its skin exhibiting the same feature of three clustered dots.¹⁰²⁹

Additional information from F1940 (see Appendix I, room T) indicates that NRAB 245 and 246 were found along the north wall of room T. It is also important to note that these masks represent some of the few examples of precious metal elements in the Begram hoard.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 245 + NRAB 246 (Pl. 51.4)	T, N wall (F1940), 2.50 m.	Disintegrated white glass vessel with two gold appliqués in high relief depicting the masks of elephants (of same type, slightly different dimensions) attached to vessel wall with a putty or sealant. The trunks of the elephants are raised, serving as spouts, with tubes passing through the wall of the glass vessel.	(Elephant masks) NRAB 245: H. 3.3 cm; W. 3.4 cm; T. 0.05 cm; NRAB 246: H. 3.2 cm; W. 3.7 cm; T. 0.05 cm. L. (of tube) 2.7 cm.	(Elephant masks) Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 240.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 691.431.	(Elephant masks) NMA 60-1-4, 60-1-5 / ?

¹⁰²⁸ Von Saldern 2004, 236–237.

¹⁰²⁹ Carter 2015, 249–251, Cat. 69.

4.2.1.17. *Misc. goblets, cups, and drinking bowls*

This group encompasses a miscellaneous group of 8 largely plain glass goblets, cups, and bowls. I discuss them together according to their probable shared function: as drinking vessels. In most cases, they lack visual records which would allow us to assess their dates and places of production. One exception is MG 21833 (Pl. 51.6), a square-formed colourless glass cup with indents on each of its four sides (Isings 32). The entire vessel is not preserved, but cups of a similar concept have been found in dated contexts from the mid 1st to the 3rd / 4th centuries CE.¹⁰³⁰ They are fairly widely distributed in the Mediterranean, as well as in Western and Central Europe, and one such cup has also recently been reported from a kurgan at Magnitnyy in the southern Urals.¹⁰³¹ Although the precise form of the example from Begram is not clear, Menninger suggests that it is more similar to an example excavated at Fishbourne, England, and was probably produced in the 1st century CE.¹⁰³²

Some plain glass goblets with inked inscriptions on their bases are also included in the table below. The documentation is somewhat unclear on their exact number; RAB 349 [205] is only described in RAB as ‘same type as previous’ (i.e. the base of a plain colourless glass goblet) but a note in F1937 adds that it bore a ‘cursive inscription’ on its base. RAB 350 [206] is again the ‘same type as previous,’ but with a ‘β traced in ink on the base.’ A drawing of this beta in F1937 indicates its form was rather more triangular. Another example was documented in NRAB from fragments reassembled in Kabul, NRAB LXXI, which was described there as bearing ‘the very effaced remains of a Greek inscription traced in ink.’ Having identified this vessel with the illustration of an inscription by Hamelin (Pl. 51.5),¹⁰³³ (which he, however, does not mention in his text), and two unpublished photographs in the MGP (see table below), it is not clear whether this vessel may be a duplicate of one of the first two described in RAB, as it could feasibly match either. Because of this uncertainty, I list all three in the table below, and return to the question of the contents of these inscriptions later (§4.15).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 236 [90]	10, 2.50 m	Part of small glass colourless goblet.	H. 7.8 cm; Dia. (base) 3.7 cm.			
RAB 348 [204]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m	Base of plain colourless glass goblet, plain.	H. (con.) 4.6 cm; Dia. 3.2 cm.			NMA?

¹⁰³⁰ Isings 1957, 46–47.

¹⁰³¹ Treister 2019, 45–47, Figs. 4.2, 9.

¹⁰³² Menninger 1996, 86.

¹⁰³³ Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI c.

RAB 349 [205]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Base of plain colourless glass goblet, 'cursive inscription' in ink on the base (F1937).	H. (con.); 3.1 cm; Dia. 5.0 cm.			NMA?
RAB 350 [206]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Base of colourless glass goblet, plain. "β" traced in ink on the base (beta more triangular in F1937 drawing).	H. (con.) 7.0 cm; Dia. 3.0 cm.			NMA?
RAB 359 [215]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Base of colourless glass goblet.	H 4.6 cm; Dia. 8.5 cm.			MG?
NRAB LXXI (Pl. 51.5)	?	Reassembled fragments of the lower part of a colourless glass goblet with remains of a very effaced "Greek" inscription in ink under the base (NRAB).	H. (con.) 4.0 cm.	Illustration of base with inscription Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI b (not identified in text); Black and white photos MGP 81316/117, 81316/118.		NMA?
MG 21833 (Pl. 51.6)	10	Base of rectilinear colourless glass cup with intents on each side.	W. 5.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI e.	Menninger 1996, 86.	MG 21833
NRAB LXXV	?	Reassembled fragments of a colourless plain glass bowl.	H. 10.5 cm; Dia. 10.5 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81316/114, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 674.414.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 674.414.	NMA?

4.2.1.18. *Misc. plates and shallow bowls*

As the first miscellaneous group above, this group encompasses 4 colourless glass plates and/or a shallow bowl which perhaps served the same functions (Pl. 52.1–2). These were documented in RAB and NRAB and illustrated by Hamelin.¹⁰³⁴ They have been subject to brief comments by Menninger, who noted that all three lack close comparanda, but respectively offered a 1st century CE production date for RAB 189 [42], a date in the second half of the 2nd century CE for NRAB 91, and a date in the first half of the 1st century CE for RAB 346 [202].¹⁰³⁵ Another flat glass plate was reported as part of the aquarium RAB 216 [70], for which see below (§4.3).

¹⁰³⁴ Hamelin 1953, Pls. XI b, XII f.

¹⁰³⁵ Menninger 1996, 87–88.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 189 [42] (Pl. 52.1)	10, W wall?, 2.50 m.	Fragments of flat colourless glass plate.	Dia. ca. 20 cm?	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI b.	Menninger 1996, 87.	MG 21834
NRAB 91	13, NE corner?, 2.50 m.	Two colourless glass plates without decoration.	Dia. 10.9 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII f.	Menninger 1996, 87.	NMA?
RAB 346 [202] (Pl. 52.2)	10, N wall?, 2.60 m.	Fragment of colourless glass plate or shallow bowl with slightly splayed foot.	Dia. 17.0 cm.?	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI b.	Menninger 1996, 87–88.	NMA?

4.2.1.19. *Misc. bottles and jars*

This group includes 3 colourless vessels which may have served as bottles and jars (Pl. 52.3). Two specimens (RAB 351 [207] and RAB 363 [219]) lack a visual record, so are included here on the basis of their descriptions in RAB. Perhaps RAB 363 [219], reportedly allocated to Paris, is to be identified with MG 21278, an elongated but incomplete colourless free-blown glass jar with a restricted neck and open mouth. In its incomplete state, its dimensions approximate those recorded in RAB. Nonetheless, this is unclear.

One vessel in this group is distinctive for a number of reasons, namely “RAB 388 [245],” which I cite in scare quotes, as this excavation number appears nowhere else besides Hamelin’s illustration of the piece,¹⁰³⁶ and RAB ends already with the entry RAB 365 [221]. This vessel has been briefly discussed by Hamelin and Menninger.¹⁰³⁷ This is a large free-blown, blueish colourless storage bottle, roughly cylindrical in form, with a flat handle applied between its shoulder and mouth. Menninger rightfully compares the vessel with the type Isings 51a, although these usually are considerably smaller (ca. 10–15 cm in height, versus the 48.5 cm tall Begram example), and notes that such vessels were distributed throughout the Roman Empire between the second half of the 1st century and the 2nd century CE.¹⁰³⁸ Although it is not possible to more precisely delineate this vessel’s date and place of production, as a well-known utilitarian form of Roman glass (used for example for storage and transport), its presence in the Begram hoard is somewhat unusual.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 351 [207]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m.	Neck of colourless glass vase.	H. 7.5 cm; Dia. 5.7 cm.			NMA?

¹⁰³⁶ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIII b.

¹⁰³⁷ Hamelin 1952, 20–21, No. VIII; Menninger 1996, 83–84.

¹⁰³⁸ Menninger 1996, 83–84.

RAB 363 [219]	10, NE corner?, 2.60 m?	Colourless glass vase, elongated form.	H. 16.5 cm.			MG (21278?)
“RAB 388 [245]” (Pl. 52.3)	10	Very large blueish colourless glass storage bottle, roughly cylindrical, with flat applied handle from shoulder to mouth, Isings 51a.	H. 48.5 cm; Dia. 33.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIII b; Black and white photo MGP 81316/126, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 675.415.	Hamelin 1952, No. VIII, 20– 21; Menninger 1996, 83–84; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 675.415.	NMA?

4.2.1.20. *Misc. zoomorphic vessels – flasks?*

This group includes 3 colourless zoomorphic glass vessels (Pl. 52.4–5), most likely flasks (although they are all not sufficiently preserved to confirm this). These probably served a similar function to the ichthyomorphic flasks discussed above (§4.2.1.12), but are treated separately here as it is unclear whether they featured similar decoration or were produced in the same workshop as the ichthyomorphic group. These vessels are partially documented in RAB and in Hamelin’s studies of the glass,¹⁰³⁹ and have been subject to brief secondary commentary.¹⁰⁴⁰

One of these vessels represents the head of a rooster with an engraved striated crest (RAB 218 [72]), another the fragments of a fish with engraved striated fins (MG 21866), and the third the forepart of an animal, perhaps a fish, featuring two elongated ‘ears’ and some applied trailed decoration (MG 21715). Hamelin suggested that MG 21715 may have served as a rhyton,¹⁰⁴¹ but this is unclear from the preserved vessel.

As discussed with respect to the ichthyomorphic flasks above (§4.2.1.12), zoomorphic flasks were generally quite common in the repertoire of Roman glass and probably generally served as containers for holding and dispensing perfumed oils. Discussing other bird-shaped flasks (none of which are good comparanda for the Begram example), von Saldern notes that they were produced in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE in both eastern and western workshops.¹⁰⁴² Other vessels produced in the form of quadrupeds and other unidentifiable animals were also produced more widely in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE.¹⁰⁴³ Without close comparanda, it is not possible to more precisely ascertain the date and place of production of these vessels at Begram.

¹⁰³⁹ Hamelin 1953, Pl. X c; 1954, 182.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Bopearachchi et al. 2003, 323–324; von Saldern 2004, 522.

¹⁰⁴¹ Hamelin 1954, 182.

¹⁰⁴² Von Saldern 2004, 522–523.

¹⁰⁴³ Von Saldern 2004, 523.

Apparently all three zoomorphic vessels were found in room 10, with only RAB 218 [72] being documented in the excavation reports. Judging from the inventory number of this vessel, it was found along the west wall of this room in the vicinity of other varieties of glass, especially jars with trailed openwork decoration (§4.2.1.11) and the ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 218 [72] (Pl. 52.4)	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Colourless glass head of a rooster, probably originally from a flask, with applied crest and engraved striations.	L. 8.5 cm.	Black and white photo RAB Fig. 43; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI c.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 700.440.	NMA?
MG 21866	10 (Hamelin).	Fragments of a colourless glass fish with engraved striated fins, probably originally a flask.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI c.		MG 21866? (Hamelin).
MG 21715 (Pl. 52.5)	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless glass forepart of a vessel representing an animal (perhaps a variety of fish) with two extended 'ears,' elongated nose, and trailed pinched ring around the animal's neck. Perhaps originally a flask, or a rhyton (Hamelin).	H. 8.0 cm; L. 10.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI c; Colour photo Bopearachchi et al. 2003, No. 274; Colour photo Hansen et al. 2009, 395, No. 324.	Hamelin 1954, 182; Bopearachchi et al. 2003, No. 274; Hansen et al. 2009, 395, No. 324.	MG 21715

4.2.1.21. *Misc. small bottles and flasks including unguentaria*

This group encompasses 4 small brown and colourless bottles and flasks of varying forms (Pl. 52.6–9), which I have nonetheless grouped together here on the basis of their probable shared function – as receptacles for containing and dispensing liquids, which in some cases were likely to have been perfumed oils. Their primary documentation is split between NRAB and Hamelin's studies of the glass,¹⁰⁴⁴ and secondary commentaries on these vessels

¹⁰⁴⁴ Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d, e, g.

have been provided by Menninger and Whitehouse.¹⁰⁴⁵ I will summarise the discourse about their dates and places of production one by one below.

One of these vessels (NRAB 251) is a brown-black piriform small glass flask of a very common, widely-distributed type often referred to as an unguentarium in the literature. Menninger compared it to the type Isings 6,¹⁰⁴⁶ but Whitehouse correctly observed that it is closer to Isings 28, and that by virtue of dateable parallels, it was probably produced between the first half to the late 1st century CE.¹⁰⁴⁷ It is not possible to more closely distinguish where this flask was produced.

The colourless flask with a globular belly and an elongated neck (NRAB LXXVII) appears to be an otherwise unknown type. Menninger suggested that it could be a wine siphon (Isings 76) which are found in dated contexts of the third quarter of the 1st century CE,¹⁰⁴⁸ but the extant vessel does not seem to resemble such an object.

The blown, two-handled colourless flask (MG 21714 + MG 21835) was briefly discussed by Menninger who mentioned cylindrical and rectangular two-handled flasks were produced in the 2nd century CE.¹⁰⁴⁹ Whitehouse, however, noted that broadly comparable flasks were found in West Asia in 1st to early 2nd century CE contexts, and citing a comparandum he published from Ed-Dur, he suggested that it may be Parthian rather than Roman.¹⁰⁵⁰

Finally, a small colourless glass flask was documented by Hamelin under the inventory number “NRAB 0.” It is rectilinear in form, and hence mould-blown – a technique uncommon in the Begram corpus (§4.2.1.22 below). Although rectangular mould-blown bottles and flasks are relatively common in Roman glass, they usually have handles, and Menninger could find no direct parallels for the Begram example. Such vessels were produced from the late 1st until the early 2nd century CE.¹⁰⁵¹

These four vessels were found in rooms 10, 13 and T. More specifically, NRAB 251 was found along the north wall of room T (see Appendix I, room T).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 251 (Pl. 52.6)	T, N wall, 2.50 m.	Brown-black glass piriform unguentarium.	H. 12.4 cm; Dia. 8.4 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII g; Black	Menninger 1996, 31; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 689.429.	NMA?

¹⁰⁴⁵ Menninger 1996, 31, 84; Whitehouse 2001a, 440, 443.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Menninger 1996, 31.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Whitehouse 2001a, 440.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Menninger 1996, 84.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Menninger 1996, 84.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Whitehouse 2001a, 443.

¹⁰⁵¹ Menninger 1996, 84.

				and white photo NRAB Fig. 256.		
NRAB LXXVII (Pl. 52.7)	13 (Hamelin).	Colourless glass flask with globular belly and long neck.	H. 9.5 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII g; Black and white photo MGP 81316/113.	Menninger 1996, 84.	NMA?
MG 21714 + MG 21835 (Pl. 52.8)	10 (Hamelin).	Colourless glass flask, flat base, two handles connecting shoulder to neck.	H. (ca.) 12.0 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d.	Menninger 1996, 84; Whitehouse 2001a, 443.	MG 21714 + MG 21835.
“NRAB 0” (Pl. 52.9)	13 (Hamelin).	Small colourless glass bottle with rectilinear body, mould-blown.	H. 6.0 cm; W. 8.0 cm, 4.8 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII e.	Not in NRAB; Menninger 1996, 84.	NMA?

4.2.1.22. *Misc. vessels including unknown types*

This final group includes 6 glass vessels of various types, utilising a range of different decorative techniques (Pl. 53.1–3). They are grouped together here because their forms are otherwise unique in the Begram corpus (such as the glass funnel NRAB 235), or unknown. They are variously documented in RAB, NRAB, and Hamelin’s studies of the glass,¹⁰⁵² although to my knowledge, the mould-blown vessel with grape-shaped decoration has not been formally published. Menninger has commented on three of these vessels,¹⁰⁵³ while Clairmont and Whitehouse have discussed the grape mould-blown vessel.¹⁰⁵⁴

No visual records are known for RAB 196 [49] and NRAB 225, so it is not possible to comment on their forms. Menninger probably correctly suggested that the colourless glass vessel NRAB 235 – identified in NRAB as a footed vessel with a destroyed support – is rather a funnel of the type Isings 74, excavated examples of which date to the second half of the 1st century CE.¹⁰⁵⁵

Two mould-blown vessels are represented by NRAB LXXXVI and MG 21846.¹⁰⁵⁶ The first has a pyramidal motif, for which Menninger cites comparanda dating from the second half of the 1st century CE.¹⁰⁵⁷ The second has grape-shaped decoration. Although the form of the vessel is not clear, it is likely that it is a flask without handles of the type mostly found in the east (for example at Dura Europos) and thus likely of manufacture in the eastern provinces.¹⁰⁵⁸

¹⁰⁵² Hamelin 1953, Pls. XI d, XII b, g.

¹⁰⁵³ Menninger 1996, 85, 89.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Clairmont 1963, 39; Whitehouse 2000, 115–116.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Menninger 1996, 85.

¹⁰⁵⁶ On mould-blown vessels with geometric and vegetal decoration, see generally von Saldern 2004, 268–273.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Menninger 1996, 89.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Clairmont 1963, 39, Nos. 148–149, Pl. XXI.

Also found beyond imperial frontiers, for example at Ed-Dur, such vessels were already in use from the second half of the 1st century CE.¹⁰⁵⁹

Finally, for the thick carinated fragment of colourless glass (MG 21865), the form of which is unclear, Menninger could not locate any parallels, but suggested that it was either blown or pressed into a mould (on account of its thick walls).¹⁰⁶⁰

These vessels were found variously in rooms 10, 13, and T.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 196 [49]	10, W wall, 2.60 m.	Small colourless glass vessel, broken foot.	H. 5.0 cm; Dia. 5.3 cm; T. 0.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 235 (Pl. 53.1)	T, 2.80 m.	Colourless glass funnel, Isings 74?	H. 9.2 cm; Dia. 5.2 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII g.	Menninger 1996, 85.	NMA?
NRAB 225	13, 2.40 m.	Fragment of decomposed brown glass.				NMA?
NRAB LXXXVI (Pl. 53.2)	13	Fragment of colourless glass with mould-blown pyramidal motif.	L. 7.7 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI d; Black and white photo MGP 81316/113.	Menninger 1996, 89.	NMA?
MG 21846	10?	Colourless glass vessel fragment, mould-blown with grape-shaped decoration, most likely without handles (Clairmont).	H. 5.4 cm; L. 3.5 cm.		Clairmont 1963, 39; Whitehouse 2000, 116.	MG 21846
MG 21865 (Pl. 52.3)	10 (Hamelin).	Fragment of thick-walled colourless glass vessel with carinated profile.		Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII b.	Menninger 1996, 89.	MG 21865? (Hamelin)

4.2.2. Copper alloy basins, bowls, jugs, large pots, balsamaria

In this subsection I present 61 vessels of various types that were all produced from a range of different alloys, but the primary component of each was copper. Although the function of all of these different vessels is not certain, is it plausible that the 37 leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), 13 copper alloy bowls (§4.2.2.2), and 3 bronze jugs (§4.2.2.3) served as tableware, while the 2 large leaded bronze pots (§4.2.2.4) may have served as storage vessels or alternatively for cooking. Finally, the 6 leaded bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5)

¹⁰⁵⁹ Whitehouse 2000, 115–116.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Menninger 1996, 89.

probably originally served as containers for scented substances, perhaps perfumed oil. The primary documentation for the vessels discussed in this section is found in RAB and NRAB, and they have been subject to varying degrees of secondary scholarly commentary. For example, while the leaded brass basins, copper alloy bowls, bronze jugs, and large leaded bronze vessels have attracted relatively little attention, the anthropomorphic balsamaria have been analysed in a handful of studies (for which see the respective sections below). Importantly, a number of examples of each group preserved in the MG were subject to compositional analysis in the 1980s, which gives considerable insight into questions surrounding their manufacture.¹⁰⁶¹ Although also containers in a sense, I have elected to discuss the excavated examples of a bronze inkpot and an incense burner below under tools and utensils (§4.6).

Typological, comparative, and compositional analyses have been considered below to assess possible places and dates of manufacture for vessels in this section. In short, different types of these vessels were produced in the Roman Mediterranean as well as locally (i.e. the wider sphere of Gandhāra), and their dates of production span from the mid 1st century to probably at least the mid 2nd century CE, if not a little later into the 3rd century.

The bronze jugs are related to types commonly found in the Roman Empire, and were plausibly produced around the mid 1st century CE, although the possibility of local manufacture cannot be ruled out entirely. The leaded brass basins are also related to types of bronze basins commonly encountered within Roman imperial frontiers, as well as occasionally beyond them, although do not seem to fit well into hitherto established typologies. I find it plausible that these basins – an overall very homogenous group, despite the occasional special handle type – were produced in an otherwise unknown single workshop operating in the Roman Mediterranean between the mid 1st century to the mid 2nd century CE. The leaded bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria are also related to well-known types that were widely distributed in the Roman world, and it seems that they are best dated to the 2nd and perhaps early 3rd centuries CE.

The copper alloy bowls and the large leaded bronze pots were most likely produced locally, which can be suggested on the basis of comparisons with broadly similar types of vessels excavated particularly at Taxila-Sirkap. Although no precise parallels exist, the best comparanda from Taxila-Sirkap fall in stratum II of the site, which according to Erdosy's

¹⁰⁶¹ Voljevica 1985.

revised chronological scheme should be dated from the reigns of the Indo-Parthian king Gondophares (ca. 32–58 CE) and the Kushan king Kanishka (ca. 127–151 CE).

The vessels discussed in this section were found in rooms 10 and 13, and preserved in varying conditions. Notably, elements had been detached from some of the basins, a lid and closure rods were missing from the large leaded bronze pots, and only parts of suspension chains and handles were found on the anthropomorphic balsamaria, all indicating some history of use. Indeed, after the contents of the anthropomorphic balsamaria were expended, perhaps they had served other purposes (see further below §4.2.2.5 and §4.4). Finally, one of the large bronze pots (NRAB 106) featured a Gāndhārī inscription on its shoulder, which however is so impacted by corrosion that it has not been adequately edited (see further in §4.15).

4.2.2.1. *Leaded brass basins*

This is a large class of 37 very homogenous cast leaded brass basins, usually featuring a horizontal lip, soldered attachments of two handles and a ring foot, and engraved concentric circles on the interior (Pls. 24.6, 53.4–7). Although I am not aware of precise extant parallels for this group specifically, they are related to common forms of bronze basins that were widely distributed in the Roman world and occasionally beyond its frontiers. The primary data for this group is found in RAB and NRAB, but limited photography was published in the excavation reports: a photo of the group *in situ* in the centre of room 10 (Pl. 24.6) and the detail of one basin (RAB 291 [145]) with a special handle (RAB Fig. 63). Despite more recent photography being published, the group has received only very limited attention in secondary scholarship.¹⁰⁶² Several preserved in the MG were subject to archaeometric analysis in a thesis by Voljevica, which established that they were produced from leaded brass.¹⁰⁶³

The Begram corpus may be divided into four groups. Group 1 includes three vessels inventoried in RAB, described as bronze plates without handles, without a horizontal rim, and with thin walls, and furthermore that they were stacked together (RAB 308 [162], RAB 309 [163], RAB 310 [164]). No dimensions are given, and I have not been able to locate any visual records of these vessels, so little more can be said than that. Group 2 is the main type of basin (Pl. 53.5–7), of which there appears to be 32 examples. From the written descriptions and available visual records, they appear to be very homogenous. Their bowls are ca. 7.0 to 9.0 cm high, and ca. 27.0 to 31.0 cm in diameter. Characteristically, they have a horizontal rim,

¹⁰⁶² See e.g. Hansen et al. 2009, 397, No. 327; LTR No. 179.

¹⁰⁶³ Voljevica 1985.

soldered omega-shaped handles (with a bead and reel element at the centre of the grip) placed high on the vessel wall near to the rim, and soldered ring feet, sometimes more vertical and sometimes slightly splayed. This type appears to have relatively consistent interior decoration: there is a circular slight protrusion at the interior centre, within which is a small engraved circle, surrounded by two engraved concentric rings and, according to the description in RAB, two engraved concentric rings also around the interior rim. Some handles and feet of this group had become detached. Group 3 is just one vessel (RAB 291 [145], Pl. 53.4) with the same body type as vessels in group 2, however featuring different handles: one is mobile, connected to the rim of the basin with a clamp-like attachment depicting an amphibian. Its other handle depicts what appears to be two facing dolphins, meeting at a bead and reel element. Group 4 is also a single vessel (RAB 278 [132]) with the same main body type, but with another unusual handle type: a heart-shaped attachment for the vessel wall, and a ‘button’ shaped protrusion on the grip.

The elements of these vessels were apparently cast separately and then soldered together. Voljevica’s analysis on 14 basins in the MG,¹⁰⁶⁴ including parts of groups 2, 3, and 4 as defined above, gained considerable insight on the question of their manufacture.¹⁰⁶⁵ Rather than being produced of bronze – as they are described in all publications, and as vessels of this type are ordinarily made from¹⁰⁶⁶ – her analysis showed that they are produced from leaded brass. Besides copper, these vessels contain an average of 17% lead, an average of 14% zinc for their bodies, 12% for their handles, and 12% for their feet, and an average of 1.1% tin for their bodies, 1.5% for their handles, and 0.9% for their feet.¹⁰⁶⁷ This is a relatively uncommon alloy in Roman metalwork,¹⁰⁶⁸ with the lead serving to improve the malleability of the mixture. Additionally, Voljevica reported the isotopic analysis of the lead of six samples from the same set of basins, revealing that they were well-grouped (i.e. extracted from a particular source), and distinct from other (at least, then) known groups of Middle Eastern silver and Gallo-Roman silver and bronze.¹⁰⁶⁹

These data are particularly important because the typology of broadly comparable basins of the types Eggers 99–106 (as classified according to finds in Magna Germania) has

¹⁰⁶⁴ Ultraviolet emission spectrography with an argon plasma source.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Voljevica 1985, 31–34.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Comparably, for a recent analysis of three basins from Eastern Europe, Treister 2020, 35.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Voljevica 1985, 32.

¹⁰⁶⁸ See some examples discussed in Dungworth 1995, 122–123; Jouttijärvi 2017.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Voljevica 1985, 40–41.

been defined according to the attachments on these vessels, specifically their handles.¹⁰⁷⁰ This is a perfectly valid approach, but can give a distorted impression as to how the production of such vessels operated. All tested parts of Begram basins have a fairly homogenous composition utilising the same unusual alloy, even including the unusual handles (described above under groups 3 and 4), although the handles for the group 4 vessel were ‘slightly isolated’ in their specific composition.¹⁰⁷¹ Because of this, Voljevica is probably correct in proposing that these different elements were all made in the same workshop, with the handles of the group 4 vessel perhaps being produced by a different craftsman operating in it.¹⁰⁷² Because of the homogeneity of this group, it is plausible that the group reflects bulk export of such products to Begram.

That the Begram basins are the products of an otherwise unknown single workshop would also not be surprising, as I have not been able to locate more precise comparanda for them. Compared to other basins, they are of relatively small dimensions, their horizontal lips are uncommon, and their handles are placed comparably high on the vessel wall. In terms of appearance, they most closely recall the types Eggers 99–100, and have some commonalities with types known from Pompeii.¹⁰⁷³ It is then difficult to date the Begram group with any precision. Pompeii provides a *terminus ante quem* of 79 CE, and Eggers 99–100 basins were found in graves in Magna Germania in the late B1 to B2 phases (i.e. the mid 1st to the mid 2nd century CE),¹⁰⁷⁴ so a roughly similar date of production for the Begram group would not be surprising. The location of the workshop they were produced in remains an open question. Voljevica wondered if the source for the lead studied in the isotopic analysis (discussed above) may have been local.¹⁰⁷⁵ One similar copper two-handled basin with a ring base, plain handles placed very high on the vessel wall, and a diameter of 32 cm, but no horizontal lip was discovered at Taxila-Sirkap at stratum II (dated by Erdosy from the reigns of Gondophares to Kanishka, i.e. between ca. 32 and 151 CE),¹⁰⁷⁶ and was described by Marshall as a “pure Graeco-Roman type of vessel.”¹⁰⁷⁷ Presumably it was an import, although this is not certain. However, this basin apparently had a different composition than the Begram group of basins, and indeed all analysed objects made from brass reported by Marshall have considerably lower

¹⁰⁷⁰ Eggers 1951, 169. See also the approach of Tassinari 1993, 90–96, type S and the recent discussion in Treister 2020, 6–7.

¹⁰⁷¹ Voljevica 1985, 34.

¹⁰⁷² Voljevica 1985, 34.

¹⁰⁷³ See e.g. Tassinari 1993, 94–95, S2121 and S4000.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Schuster 2010, 218, Fig. 87.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Voljevica 1985, 40–41.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Erdosy 1990, 670.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Marshall 1951, 593, No. 304, Pl. 175.

percentages of lead than the Begram group.¹⁰⁷⁸ Because of this, and the weight of distribution of two-handled basins more generally – in great number at Pompeii, but also widespread in Magna Germania, Eastern Europe, Thrace, with finds also from Asian Sarmatia, the eastern Mediterranean and even in a hoard at Kolhapur in South India, i.e. connected to maritime routes of the Indian Ocean¹⁰⁷⁹ – the production of the Begram group in an otherwise unknown workshop of the Roman Mediterranean is perfectly plausible.

With respect to function, it is thought that in Roman Italy such basins were used for ablutions in a triclinium.¹⁰⁸⁰ Obviously, this speaks to culturally-specific feasting practices, so there is no need to expect a similar function for the Begram group. Because of the relatively smaller dimensions of the Begram group, and broad comparisons which can be drawn with vessels (both metalwork and pottery) in use around the first centuries of the Common Era in Bactria and Gandhāra, I find it plausible that they were used as tableware.

Apparently the Begram basins were not deposited in perfect condition. Some elements had evidently become loosened or detached in antiquity. Additionally, a photograph included in Voljevica's thesis of two examples of the main type of omega-shaped handles appears to show a nail or rivet in the right terminus of one,¹⁰⁸¹ which may indicate evidence of a repair. Treister has observed that the soldering on handles could have constituted a weak point for such vessels (which could contain considerable volumes of liquid), hence often allowing them to fall off with use.¹⁰⁸² With respect to their arrangement in the hoard rooms, a large group of basins was found in the centre of the south of room 10 in a number of small stacks, with the vessels placed upside down (Pls. 17, 24.6). Interestingly, Hackin remarked that two Kushan coins (it is unclear which ones in the inventory, for which see §4.14) had been found in the hollow support of one of these basins (RAB 289 [143]),¹⁰⁸³ which indicates that at least some of the coins in the hoard rooms were not chance losses from prior to the deposition of the hoard (see further discussion in §3.5.3 and §4.14). Another group was found along the east wall of room 13 (NRAB 56, NRAB 57, NRAB 58). The handle of a vessel of this type was also found along the east wall (NRAB 37, which I have listed under §4.4 below).

For the table below, I list basins in the order by which they were documented in RAB and NRAB. In some cases, it has been possible to connect these records with extant records in

¹⁰⁷⁸ See Marshall 1951, 568.

¹⁰⁷⁹ See the discussion in Treister 2020. For the Kolhapur basins, de Puma 1991, 91, Nos. 40–41, Figs. 5.13–16.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Tassinari 1993, 232.

¹⁰⁸¹ Voljevica 1985, 16.

¹⁰⁸² For a discussion of similarly lost elements and traces of repair from basins found in burials of Asian Sarmatia, Treister 2020, 31–33.

¹⁰⁸³ Hackin 1939a, 10.

the MG, but this has been more difficult for the vessels allocated to the NMA. Although one vessel was presented in LTR (H. 9.0 cm, Dia. 28.5 cm),¹⁰⁸⁴ it is unclear which basin it represents from the excavation records.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 268 [122]	10, centre?, 2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	Dia. 27.1 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 278 [132]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles with heart-shaped attachment on vessel wall and ‘button’ on grip, ring foot. Group 4.	H. (of bowl) 8.5 cm; Dia. 28.6 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25445
RAB 279 [133]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.6 cm; Dia. 28.4 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 280 [134]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.8 cm; Dia. 30.3 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25446
RAB 281 [135]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2. Four concentric circles engraved on base.	H. (of bowl) 9.0 cm; Dia. 30.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25447
RAB 282 [136]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.5 cm; Dia. 29.6 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 19075
RAB 283 [137]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.4 cm; Dia. 29.5 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		MG?
RAB 284 [138]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.0 cm; Dia. 28.4 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 285 [139]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 9.1 cm; Dia. 29.1 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 286 [140] (Pl. 53.5)	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.0 cm; Dia. 27.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 21433

¹⁰⁸⁴ LTR No. 179, NMA 04.1.89.

RAB 287 [141]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.2 cm; Dia. 29.2 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		MG 448
RAB 288 [142]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.8 cm; Dia. 29.9 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 289 [143]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.6 cm; Dia. 26.9 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25449
RAB 290 [144]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.6 cm; Dia. 27.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25450
RAB 291 [145] (Pl. 53.4)	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. One handle is mobile, connected to vessel rim with an attachment featuring the foreparts of an amphibian (frog?), and another handle in the form of two facing dolphins meeting at a bead and reel element. Group 3.	H. (of bowl) 7.5 cm; Dia. 27.4 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62; Black and white photo of detail of handle RAB Fig. 63; Colour photo Hansen et al. 2009, No. 327.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22; Hansen et al. 2009, No. 327.	MG 19076
RAB 292 [146]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 6.8 cm; Dia. 29.6 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 293 [147]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.4 cm; Dia. 29.2 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 294 [148]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.8 cm; Dia. 26.8 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25451
RAB 296 [144]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.0 cm; Dia. 30.3 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 297 [151]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) ca. 8.0 cm; Dia. 28.3 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 298 [152]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.9 cm; Dia. 28.3 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25452

RAB 299 [153]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.1 cm; Dia. 29.4 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		MG 25453
RAB 300 [154] (Pl. 53.6)	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.7 cm; Dia. 29.8 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.	Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25454
RAB 301 [155]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.7 cm; Dia. 30.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 302 [156]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) ca. 7.7 cm; Dia. ca. 30.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 303 [157]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) ca. 8.7 cm; Dia. 30.5 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 304 [158]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 7.0 cm; Dia. 27.8 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		?
RAB 305 [159]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.1 cm; Dia. 30.3 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 306 [160]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 9.0 cm; Dia. 29.4 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 307 [161]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. (of bowl) 8.3 cm; Dia. 29.1 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 62.		NMA?
RAB 308 [162]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin, thin walls, without horizontal rim. Group 1.				MG?
RAB 309 [163]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin, thin walls, without horizontal rim. Group 1.				MG?
RAB 310 [164]	10, centre, 2.45–2.60 m.	Leaded brass basin, thin walls, without horizontal rim. Group 1.				MG?
NRAB 56	13, E wall, 2.30 m	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. 9.0 cm.; Dia. 30.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 57	13, E wall.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	H. 9.0 cm.; Dia. 31.0 cm.			NMA?

NRAB 58 (Pl. 53.7)	13, E wall.	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2. Found without handles and foot.	H. 8.8 cm.; Dia. 28.5 cm.		Voljevica 1985, 13–22.	MG 25455
NRAB XI	?	Leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot. Main type / group 2.	Dia. 31.0 cm.			NMA

4.2.2.2. *Copper alloy bowls*

This group includes 13 bowls of different dimensions that were produced from alloyed copper (Pl. 54.1). The main group discussed here is comprised of 12 vessels which were described as being produced from copper in NRAB, while the final object I have included (NRAB 210) is a much smaller vessel that was described as being produced of bronze. These vessels have been documented chiefly in NRAB, but have attracted virtually no attention from secondary scholarship, barring a brief presentation of three bowls in the main group from the MG in Voljevica's thesis.¹⁰⁸⁵

First, although I have included NRAB 210 in this list, it is clear from the object's description in NRAB that it does not have much in common with the rest of the group except possibly in terms of function – it clearly has much smaller dimensions, a different shape, and was perceived in the excavation report to be composed of a different alloy than the rest of this group. With apparently no known visual record, its type and function cannot be commented on in more detail, but I include it here nonetheless as it does not fit well anywhere else.

Although no visual record for the main group of bowls was published in NRAB, and despite the fact that all were listed as allocated to the NMA, three are in the collection of the MG. Thus they can be described in a little more detail. These bowls are hemispherical in form, and range in dimensions, with heights from 7.0 to 17.0 cm, and diameters from 12.0 to 17.0 cm. They have very thin walls and are produced from an evidently brittle copper alloy, as a number had split into fragments without evidencing the deformation which would indicate more deliberate destruction. Although Voljevica sought to subject the three in the collection of the MG to compositional analysis, all were reportedly so mineralised that it was not possible to achieve this.¹⁰⁸⁶ However, she drew a comparison with the shape of these bowls from a bronze bowl excavated at Taxila-Sirkap, stratum IV (dated by Erdosy from Azes I to the early

¹⁰⁸⁵ Voljevica 1985, 20–21, 31.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Voljevica 1985, 31.

reign of Azes II,¹⁰⁸⁷ so from ca. 46–1 BCE to the early part of 16–30 CE).¹⁰⁸⁸ Still closer comparisons can be cited again from Taxila-Sirkap in three bowls of hammered copper,¹⁰⁸⁹ which were found in the later stratum II (dated by Erdosy from the reigns of Gondophares to Kanishka I,¹⁰⁹⁰ i.e. between ca. 32 and 151 CE). On the basis of these comparanda, it appears most plausible that the similar bowls at Begram were locally made.

All of the bowls of the main group were found in room 13, stacked in groups in two parts of the room: NRAB 107, NRAB 108, and NRAB 109 were perhaps in the centre of room 13 (according to Hamelin's plan, which disagrees with the west wall attribution in NRAB), while the rest of the group were found along the west wall. See the table below for their groupings and Hamelin's plan of room 13. As noted above, all of the vessels listed below were documented in NRAB to have been allocated to the NMA, but three examples of the main group are in the MG: MG 25456, MG 25457 (Pl. 54.1), and MG 25458. It is unclear to which inventory numbers they belong, as their dimensions do not match perfectly with the dimensions of the vessels listed in NRAB, so I have not included them in the table below, although it appears that there is some correspondence with NRAB 163, NRAB 164, and/or NRAB 168.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 107	13, W wall or centre? (Hamelin's plan), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, five fragments.	H. 17.0 cm; Dia. 12.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 108	13, W wall or centre? (Hamelin's plan), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 109.	H. 12.0 cm; Dia. 14.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 109	13, W wall or centre? (Hamelin's plan), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 109.	H. 12.0 cm; Dia. 14.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 120	13, W wall? (NRAB), 2.45 m.	Copper bowl.	H. 8.4 cm; Dia. 13.8 cm; T. 0.6 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 163	13, W wall, 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 164.	H. 10.0 cm; Dia. 17.0 cm.			NMA or MG?

¹⁰⁸⁷ Erdosy 1990, 670.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Marshall 1951, 591, No. 283, Pl. 183; Voljevica 1985, 21.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Marshall 1951, 591, Nos. 278, a–c, Pl. 174.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Erdosy 1990, 670.

NRAB 164	13, W wall.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 163.	Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA or MG?
NRAB 165	13, W wall (Hamelin), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 166, NRAB 167, NRAB 168.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 166	13, W wall (Hamelin), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 165, NRAB 167, NRAB 168.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 167	13, W wall (Hamelin), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 165, NRAB 166, NRAB 168.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 168	13, W wall (Hamelin), 2.40 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 165, NRAB 166, NRAB 167.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA or MG?
NRAB 169	13, W wall, 2.30 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 170.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 170	13, W wall, 2.30 m.	Copper bowl, adhered to NRAB 169.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 13.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 210	13, W wall to NW corner, 1.70 m.	Small bronze vessel with flat base, spherical form.	H. 6.6 cm; Dia. 8.2 cm; Dia. (base) 5.0 cm.			NMA?

4.2.2.3. *Bronze jugs*

This group includes 3 bronze jugs of a type well-attested in the Roman world, featuring ovoid bellies, a tapered neck, a circular mouth, and vertical handles (Pls. 26.2, 53.2–3). The primary data for this group is found in NRAB, and they have been discussed in part by Kurz and Voljevica.¹⁰⁹¹ I can confirm visual records for two jugs in this group: NRAB 1 and NRAB 209. The third vessel, NRAB 2, is to be included in this group on the basis of its description in NRAB, and is visible *in situ* an archival photograph (discussed below). Although another roughly similar bronze jug was presented in LTR as having been found in room 13,¹⁰⁹² it is in fact a find reported from Site I in 1936 (see above §3.5.1).¹⁰⁹³

NRAB 1 and NRAB 209 have similar forms, and reportedly so did NRAB 2. Although it is not possible to compare their rims, as this element is missing on NRAB 209, the primary difference in their execution is their applied handles. The handle of NRAB 1 extends from its

¹⁰⁹¹ Kurz 1954, 149; Voljevica 1985, 26, 35.

¹⁰⁹² LTR No. 223, NMA 04.1.94.

¹⁰⁹³ Carl 1959a, 100, No. 164, Fig. 229.

horizontal rim and falls vertically to the jug's belly (Pl. 54.2), while the handle of NRAB 209 is slightly elevated above the rim (Pl. 54.3). Voljevica's study reported that the body of NRAB 209 was produced from bronze with a leaded bronze handle,¹⁰⁹⁴ so I take it as plausible that the other two jugs had a similar composition.

The three jugs at Begram evidently resemble examples found at numerous Roman sites, especially at Pompeii and Herculaneum, as already observed by Kurz.¹⁰⁹⁵ Of the vessels from Pompeii studied by Tassinari, NRAB 1 is closer in form to type B1222, if with a more prominent horizontal lip, while the slightly elevated handle of NRAB 209 is closer to type B1242.¹⁰⁹⁶ They also are related to the type Eggers 122, which appear in graves of Magna Germania in the phase B1 (first half of the 1st century CE).¹⁰⁹⁷ From this perspective, it is plausible that the Begram jugs were produced around the mid 1st century CE. Although the weight of the comparanda suggests it is most likely that the Begram jugs were produced in the Roman Mediterranean, the possibility of local manufacture cannot be ruled out entirely, as Voljevica has already observed.¹⁰⁹⁸ More bulbous jugs of cast copper with vertical handles, evidently drawing on Graeco-Roman models, were excavated at Taxila-Sirkap. One example thereof has the same style of handle terminating in a mask, but could have been locally produced.¹⁰⁹⁹

These three jugs were all found in room 13. The question of their precise findspots is somewhat complicated. NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 were most likely found close to each other (as they were inventoried in succession), and NRAB reports that they were found on the west wall of the room (like NRAB 3, a bronze furniture plaque §4.13.3), while Hamelin's plan locates them on the east wall to the south in his plan. Essentially, while mistakes are prevalent enough in NRAB, the most likely conclusion is that Hamelin's plan has located the findspots of NRAB 1 to NRAB 3 incorrectly. As discussed above (§2.4.5), Hamelin's plan of room 13 is partially a product of problem-solving and reconstruction.

It seems that Hamelin's plan cannot be correct because of a set of contextual photographs relating to the wall paintings recovered in room 13 in 1939 (Pl. 26).¹¹⁰⁰ One of these photos with the wall paintings shows a bronze jug to the bottom right (Pl. 26.2), and in the original archival has '2' written on the bottom left corner in an area sometimes used for

¹⁰⁹⁴ Voljevica 1985, 35.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Kurz 1954, 149.

¹⁰⁹⁶ See Tassinari 1993, 33–34.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Schuster 2010, 218, Fig. 87.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Voljevica 1985, 26.

¹⁰⁹⁹ See Marshall 1951, 589, Nos. 261–262, Pl. 183, c–d.

¹¹⁰⁰ MGP 81314/1–4.

documenting find numbers.¹¹⁰¹ Indeed, the pictured vessel cannot be NRAB 1 or NRAB 209 (the findspot of which both NRAB and Hamelin's plan agree was the NW corner of the room); the jug in the photo has a handle which is not elevated above its rim (excluding NRAB 209), has a smaller horizontal rim than NRAB 1, and has a large hole in the upwards facing side of the vessel's body (presumably caused by a pickaxe during initial clearing of the fill of the room). Although there is not sufficient detail in this photo to check the appearance of this jug against the description of NRAB 2 (which, incidentally, does not mention an enormous hole in the side of the vessel), it cannot be anything else but this object. As discussed above (§2.4.5), the remains of this wall painting almost certainly were found in the southwest corner of room 13. Hence, NRAB 1 and NRAB 2 were both most likely recovered on the west wall of room 13. The depths of the finds of these vessels also present some difficulties, being respectively 1.40 m, 2.20 m, and 1.60 m, which all lie rather above the main floor level of this room. I have discussed this problem and my reasoning for considering these objects as part of the hoard nonetheless above (§3.5.3).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 1 (Pl. 54.2)	13, W wall (NRAB), <i>contra</i> E wall (Hamelin's plan), 1.40 m.	Bronze jug, no body decoration, ovoid belly and circular mouth with horizontal lip, vertical handle featuring a serpent and terminating with a human mask at belly.	H. 17.0 cm.; Dia. 10.3 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 339, 463; Colour photo LTR No. 224.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 723.463.	NMA 57-3-1 / 04.1.95
NRAB 2 (Pl. 26.2)	13, W wall (NRAB), <i>contra</i> E wall (Hamelin's plan), 2.20 m.	Bronze ('copper,' NRAB) jug, no body decoration, horizontal lip, vertical handle similar to NRAB 1 but cruder in appearance, terminating with a bearded mask at belly.	H. 15.2 cm; Dia. 10.6 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81314/2 in Cambon 2006, 100.		
NRAB 209 (Pl. 54.3)	13, NW corner, 1.60 m.	Bronze jug, no body decoration, mouth missing, vertical handle terminating with human mask at belly.	H. 17.0 cm.		Voljevica 1985, 26, 35.	MG MA 485

¹¹⁰¹ MGP 81314/2.

4.2.2.4. Large leaded bronze pots

This group is comprised of 2 leaded bronze pots (Pl. 54.4–5). Their primary data is to be found in NRAB, although neither were photographed separately for this publication. The one allocated to the MG (presumably NRAB 106, which was allocated to the MG) has been subject to compositional analysis, revealing all sampled parts were produced of leaded bronze (4% tin, 12% lead),¹¹⁰² so I take it as probable that the NMA vessel (presumably NRAB 173) was produced of the same.

I have only been able to locate one visual record of NRAB 173 *in situ* in which it is partially visible (see below), so the description of these vessels must draw on NRAB 106, which is extant in the MG (Pl. 54.4), and the descriptions published in NRAB. NRAB 106 is a large vessel with a globular body, a short wide neck, and horizontal lip. It features two cast, twisted handles, and two bands with the same twisted appearance running around the shoulder and lower neck of the vessel. The vessel's body appears to have been cast, which may have occurred in separate elements (lower belly, shoulder, neck) so the twisted elements could have served to cover the joins between these separate pieces. On the neck and the lip of the vessel on each side, two sets of bronze rings served as part of a closure (i.e. a lid with eyelets on each side could be held in place by rods put through the eyelets, presumably all not recovered, as well as a smaller eyelet lower down on the neck, perhaps for a connected chain). The round base of the vessel rests on three small protruding pegs, and is apparently not able to stand fully upright, but sits tilted on two pegs at a time. NRAB 173 was described as being of the type NRAB 106, but with a lid with a ring-shaped handle at the top, explicitly with the closure rod missing, with additional eyelets on each side of the vessel near the closure system for a chain.

I have not been able to locate precise extant comparanda for these pots. With respect to the composition of NRAB 106, Voljevica's analysis showed that it formed a homogenous group entirely distinct from the other studied objects, and suggested that it was produced locally, citing also loose comparanda of four copper pots from Taxila-Sirkap,¹¹⁰³ all dated to stratum II (dated by Erdosy from the reigns of Gondophares to Kanishka I,¹¹⁰⁴ i.e. between ca. 32 and 151 CE). These four vessels are smaller than the Begram examples (only ca. 24 to 29 cm), and have varying forms, but certainly show a similar typological concept. Likewise, an unprovenanced bronze pot (described as a *kamaṇḍalu*) with a Gāndhārī inscription published by Falk features herringbone elements around the base of the neck and belly which vaguely

¹¹⁰² Voljevica 1985, 35.

¹¹⁰³ Marshall 1951, 588, Nos. 255-258, Pl. 174; Voljevica 1985, 38.

¹¹⁰⁴ Erdosy 1990, 670.

recall the twisted elements in relief on NRAB 106.¹¹⁰⁵ These comparanda indicate that the Begram vessels were also locally produced.

The function of these pots is less clear; NRAB 106 was tentatively described in this report as a ‘kettle?’ Marshall described the Sirkap vessels as “cooking-pots and cauldrons akin to the modern *haṇḍī* and *deg*,” and the first two more specifically as *ghara*-shaped,¹¹⁰⁶ i.e. a shape commonly referred to a water pot in the archaeological literature, featuring a globular body and a short neck. Allchin’s discussion of a set of (again) unprovenanced such pots in the British Library collection featuring Gāndhārī inscriptions cites Miller’s 1985 study as to the function of a range of globular pots in India and Pakistan in order to note that the British Library pots did not necessarily serve to carry and store water; Miller’s work established that, although each specific type of vessel were theoretically associated with a specific function, they could in practice be used for a range of purposes.¹¹⁰⁷ I am inclined to interpret the function of the Begram vessels as oriented towards storage, mixing, and/or dispensing contents rather than cooking because of their closure mechanisms, which would allow their lids to be fitted very tightly.

As hinted above, both NRAB 106 and NRAB 173 were apparently found in incomplete condition, as the lid for the first appears to have been missing (although this is not explicitly stated in the report), and the closure rods for the second were not found. Significantly, NRAB 106 features a punched Gāndhārī inscription on its shoulder (Pl. 54.5), which appears to at least include a personal name, but the inscription is highly affected by the corrosion of the vessel, and thus still not adequately edited. This is further discussed below (§4.15).

Both NRAB and Hamelin’s plan agree that the vessels were respectively found towards the east wall near the ivory backrest NRAB 34 (i.e. roughly the northeast corner of room 13), and towards the west wall. The rim of NRAB 106 appears to be visible *in situ* of the foreground of a photograph of Backrest 34 (Pl. 83.2). NRAB 173 seems to be discernible *in situ* in the background of a photograph in the MGP,¹¹⁰⁸ which depicts a figure (apparently Ria Hackin) in the foreground in the process of removing some glass goblets, indicating that the photo was taken from the east looking west. The vessel, with its lid still affixed, is tilted towards the photographer.

¹¹⁰⁵ Falk 2012, 54–56, Fig. 31.

¹¹⁰⁶ Marshall 1951, 588.

¹¹⁰⁷ Miller 1985; Allchin in Salomon 1999, 183.

¹¹⁰⁸ MGP 81315791/7.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 106 (Pl. 54.4)	13, NE corner, 2.35 m.	Large leaded bronze vessel, globular body, short wide neck, horizontal lip. Two cast, twisted handles, and twisted bands in relief around shoulder and lower neck of vessel. Two sets of eyelets on either side of the neck to serve as part of a closure (lid and rods missing?), smaller eyelet lower on neck. Three pegs on base of vessel, Gāndhārī inscription on shoulder.	H. 32.0 cm; Dia. (opening) 25.0 cm; Dia. (belly) 42.0 cm; T. (at rim) 1.7 cm.	Black and white photo Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 748.488.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 748.488.	MG 21193
NRAB 173	13, W wall, 2.50 m.	Large leaded bronze (?) vessel with two handles, similar type to NRAB 106, with lid topped with a ring and eyelets on each side. Two eyelets on each side of the neck for lid closure, two further eyelets. Closure rods missing.	H. 39.0 cm; H. (with lid) 50.0 cm; Dia. (opening) 25.0 cm; Dia. (belly) 42.0 cm; T. (at rim) 1.7 cm.			NMA

4.2.2.5. *Leaded bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria*

This group of 6 small hollow, cast leaded bronze vessels includes five examples produced in the shape of busts of Graeco-Roman deities (i.e. Büstengefäßchen), and one in shape of a woman's head and neck (Pls. 24.4, 55.1–4). Although the latter vessel is slightly typologically different, it was found in a small, deliberate pile in room 10 with three other balsamaria (the final two being found together in room 13), so we can presume that they were perceived to constitute a group by the party responsible for depositing the hoard objects. Generally, these types of vessels are well known from the Roman world, and perhaps served as containers for perfumed oil (hence the conventional 'balsamaria') or other scented

substances. The primary documentation for this group from Begram is found in RAB and NRAB, and detailed secondary commentaries about them have been offered by Coarelli and Boardman.¹¹⁰⁹ Compositional analysis reported by Voljevica demonstrated that the two examples held in the MG, RAB 241 [95] and NRAB 79, were produced from leaded bronze,¹¹¹⁰ and as the appearance of the corroded metal on the entire group looks roughly similar, I take it as plausible that they were all produced from this alloy.

The two vessels representing busts of Athena in this group (RAB 241 [95] and RAB 242 [96], Pl. 55.2) are very similar, differing only very slightly in their execution of details on her helmet. Both show the goddess wearing an Attic helmet, the aegis, and globular earrings. Her pupils are marked. Both have a small lid placed at the top of her head, and a handle at the back. Both also have three eyelets attached to the back and sides of the goddesses' head for attached suspension chains. The beginning of such chains were certainly extant in RAB 241 [95] (the case is unclear for RAB 242 [96]). Two vessels which can be identified as representing the busts of Hermes or Mercury are also similar (NRAB 78 and NRAB 79, Pl. 55.4), but not precisely the same. Both depict the youthful god (identified by the two wings on his head) with a band tied around his head, but the first represents a full bust, while the shoulders of the second are cut off at the beginning of the arms in a hermlike fashion. The form of the vessel extends into a short cylindrical neck above the god's head, with eyelets on each side for a suspension chain or swing handle; an additional loop for such an element is preserved on the right eyelet of both vessels. The vessel depicting Ares or Mars (RAB 240 [94], Pl. 55.1) – here a youthful figure with helmet, the beginning of his cuirass, and marked pupils – has a small lid on the top of his head, like the Athena vessels, a handle at the back, and three small loops for a suspension chain, part of which is preserved. Finally, the vessel depicting the head of a woman (RAB 243 [97], Pl. 55.3), her hair perhaps wrapped at the back with a length of fabric, features an open funnel-like mouth added to the top of her head, which was then topped with a flat circular lid with a decorative motif running around its rim, although the details are difficult to distinguish. The lid is at least visible on published and archival photography¹¹¹¹ taken prior to recent cleaning and new photography, where it is not included.

Such anthropomorphic balsamaria are derived from Hellenistic prototypes, and are relatively commonly encountered across the Roman Empire, predominantly representing Ethiopians, Bacchic subjects, youths, and more occasionally deities, alongside other less

¹¹⁰⁹ Coarelli 1961, 2009, 97; Boardman in Errington and Cribb 1992, 112–114.

¹¹¹⁰ Voljevica 1985, 36. The data are reproduced also in Errington and Cribb 1992, 247.

¹¹¹¹ RAB Fig. 57; MGP 81317/51.

common types.¹¹¹² Such vessels are usually interpreted as having served as containers for perfumed oil or perhaps storing incense, and sometimes could be also be filled with lead and reused as scale weights. However, although the Begram anthropomorphic balsamaria have often been described as scale weights (including in RAB and NRAB), Boardman rightfully observed that this function is not clearly attested for this group;¹¹¹³ RAB 240 [94] and RAB 241 [95] are at least explicitly described as hollow in RAB, and NRAB 79 is noted as the same by Boardman. Marti has assessed the possible range of functions for anthropomorphic balsamaria also with a view to the iconographies they represent. She proposes that whether they contained perfumes, solid scented substances, or spices, they were probably not used predominantly in the contexts of toilette or bathing, but to add an additional, heady olfactory element in banqueting contexts (whether moved around the room by slaves, or applied by guests, etc.).¹¹¹⁴ Although it is not known whether such vessels could have had been imported to speak to a similar function in Kushan Central Asia, we may note the presence of other imported vessels from the Roman Mediterranean which probably contained and were transported with perfumed oils (see e.g. the ichthyomorphic flasks §4.2.1.12, and other small bottles and flasks §4.2.1.21). I will return to the precise function of such vessels below (§5.3).

It is difficult to assess the place and date of manufacture of the Begram anthropomorphic balsamaria with precision. Although the stylistic and iconographic features of this group clearly drew on Hellenistic prototypes,¹¹¹⁵ scholarly consensus has long held that comparable Roman anthropomorphic balsamaria were primarily produced in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE,¹¹¹⁶ and more specifically perhaps starting in the last quarter of the 1st century (they are generally absent at Pompeii and Herculaneum), and peaking in the 2nd century.¹¹¹⁷ For the Begram group, Coarelli has highlighted the use of marked pupils and the derivation of the representation of one vessel from a portrait of Antinous, indicating a date certainly after the 1st century, and perhaps even the beginning of the 3rd century.¹¹¹⁸ With respect to place of production, all provinces of the empire probably manufactured such anthropomorphic balsamaria, although finds are concentrated in the northern regions of the Empire.¹¹¹⁹ As depictions of gods on such balsamaria are relatively rare,¹¹²⁰ perhaps the question of their place

¹¹¹² For an overview, Marti 1996, 991–992.

¹¹¹³ Boardman in Errington and Cribb 1992, 112.

¹¹¹⁴ Marti 1996, 994–997.

¹¹¹⁵ Boardman in Errington and Cribb 1992, 112.

¹¹¹⁶ See e.g. Goessler 1928; Coarelli 1961, 2009, 97.

¹¹¹⁷ Marti 1996, 984.

¹¹¹⁸ Coarelli 2009, 97.

¹¹¹⁹ Marti 1996, 997, 1000.

¹¹²⁰ Marti 1996, 992.

of production should be left open. That being said, Voljevica observed that with respect to the composition of the alloy used for the analysed examples from the MG (leaded bronze), these balsamaria formed a homogenous group with the bovine leg NRAB 159 (see §4.4),¹¹²¹ perhaps suggesting a common place of production.

Although it is difficult to be certain, the surviving documentation indicates that the Begram group of figural balsamaria were found in incomplete condition. Only parts of the suspension chains or elements of some appear to have been preserved (see above). If vessels in this group had also been imported for their contents, whether perfumed oil or another scented substance, it is plausible that they were reused after their contents were expended. I think that their later functions in reuse may be indicated by their arrangement in the hoard rooms. The four balsamaria found in room 10 were discovered together in a small pile in the centre to northwest of room 10 (see Hamelin's plan 'pesons,' and the photos *in situ* RAB Fig. 57 and MGP 81317/18), perhaps indicating that they had been transported in a now decayed organic container, like a sack. However, the final two (NRAB 78 and NRAB 79) which were found in room 13 were arranged along the east wall thereof, interspersed with some leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), an inkpot (§4.6.2) and an incense burner (§4.6.3), but primarily a set of bronze elements detached from composite articles of metalwork (§4.4). Perhaps these objects had been grouped together for having shared a similar function (see further §5.3).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 240 [94] (Pls. 24.4, 55.1)	10, NW to centre, 2.60 m.	Hollow leaded (?) bronze balsamarium in the shape of a bust of Ares or Mars in helmet and cuirass, with marked pupils. Small lid at the top of the head, a handle at the back, and three small eyelets for a suspension chain, part of which is preserved.	H. 9.1 cm.	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 57 and MGP 81317/18; Black and white photo before cleaning RAB Fig. 56; Black and white photo after cleaning Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 83; Colour photo LTR No. 182.	Coarelli 1961; Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 83; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 718.458.	NMA 57-1-45 / 04.1.108.
RAB 241 [95]	10, NW to centre, 2.60 m.	Hollow leaded bronze balsamarium in the shape of a bust of Athena in Attic helmet and aegis, globular earrings,	H. 11.0 cm.	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 57 and MGP 81317/18; Black and white photo Errington	Coarelli 1961; Boardman in Errington and Cribb 1992, 112–113, No. 15.	MG 19073

¹¹²¹ Voljevica 1985, 36.

		with marked pupils. Small lid at top of the head, a handle at the back, three small eyelets for a suspension chain, not preserved?		and Cribb 1992, 112–113, No. 15.		
RAB 242 [96] (Pls. 24.4, 55.2)	10, NW to centre, 2.60 m.	Hollow leaded (?) bronze balsamarium in the shape of a bust of Athena in Attic helmet and aegis, globular earrings, with marked pupils. Small lid at top of the head, a handle at the back, three small eyelets for a suspension chain which is partially preserved.	H. 8.9 cm.	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 57 and MGP 81317/18; Black and white photos prior to cleaning RAB Figs. 57–59; Black and white photo after cleaning Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 85; Colour photo LTR No. 180.	Coarelli 1961; Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 85; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 716.456a–b.	NMA 57-1-35 / 04.1.100
RAB 243 [97] (Pls. 24.4, 55.3)	10, NW to centre, 2.60 m.	Leaded (?) bronze balsamarium in the form of the head and neck of a woman, with hair wrapped at the back with a length of fabric (?), and neck terminating in square-shaped base. Head topped with a funnel-like vessel mouth, completed with a thick, flat circular lid with decorative motif around rim.	H. 10.6 cm.	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 57 and MGP 81317/18; Black and white photo before cleaning (with lid) MGP 81317/51; Black and white photo after cleaning Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 84; Colour photo LTR No. 181.	Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 84; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 719.459.	NMA 57-1-36 / 04.1.104.
NRAB 78 (Pl. 55.4)	13, E wall, 2.40 m.	Leaded (?) bronze balsamarium in the form of a bust of Hermes or Mercury, depicted as nude youth, wings in hair at front of head, marked pupils. Neck of vessel extends from the head in cylindrical form, with eyelets on either side for suspension chain or handle, first loop thereof	H. 8.4 cm, W. 6.8 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 333; Colour photo LTR No. 217.		NMA 57.1.33 / 04.1.30

		preserved on right side.				
NRAB 79	13, E wall, 2.40 m.	Leaded bronze balsamarium in the form of a partial bust of Hermes or Mercury, depicted as nude youth, wings in hair at front of head, marked pupils. Unlike NRAB 79, the shoulders terminate horizontally at the beginning of the arms. Neck of vessel extends from the head in cylindrical form, with eyelets on either side for suspension chain or handle, first loop thereof preserved on right side.	H. 8.4 cm.	Black and white photo Errington and Cribb 1992, 114, No. 116; Colour photo Hansen et al. 2009, No. 328.	Coarelli 1961; Boardman in Errington and Cribb 1992, 114, No. 116.	MG 21230

4.2.3. Alabaster jar, patera, jug

This group includes three alabaster vessels in different forms, namely a two-handled jar (or amphora), a patera, and a jug (Pl. 55.5–7). Such forms are attested in metalwork of the Roman Mediterranean. The primary data for this group is found in RAB, and they have been further commented on by Kurz.¹¹²²

It is not clear precisely what kind of alabaster was utilised to produce these vessels. The jar RAB 164 [16] (Pl. 55.5) features two handles joining the upper neck and shoulder of the vessel, where they were additionally ornamented with grooves. Likewise, grooves were carved around the exterior of the vessel's mouth and the base of the vessel. The patera RAB 165 [17] (Pl. 55.6) is a shallow dish with an *umbo/omphalos*, a low circular foot and handle terminating in a ram's head. According to RAB, this handle had been attached to the body with an iron rod, and grooves were cut around the interior lip of the vessel and its handle. The jug RAB 172 [25]

¹¹²² Kurz 1954, 150.

(Pl. 55.7) features a trilobate mouth, raised handle, and bulging body with a low splayed foot. Regular breaks visible on the handle may suggest that these parts had been carved separately and then attached to the vessel.

Kurz already observed that comparable bronze paterae are known from the 1st century BCE to the 2nd century CE, and found for example at Pompeii as well as Taxila-Sirkap, but the use of alabaster was extremely rare, if not unique at Begram.¹¹²³ More specifically, the vessel is related to Eggers 154–155, 22 comparable bronzes (and 9 further fragments) from Pompeii have been documented,¹¹²⁴ and the example from Taxila-Sirkap was found in stratum II (i.e. ca. 32–151 CE).¹¹²⁵ The jug with trilobate mouth is broadly comparable to others found at Pompeii,¹¹²⁶ and likewise the two-handled jar.¹¹²⁷ The Begram group of alabaster vessels is clearly a coherent group, and on the basis of these comparisons, it is likely they were produced in the 1st or perhaps 2nd century CE. As the use of alabaster was apparently uncommon, perhaps they had been made in a single workshop in the Roman Mediterranean, although this is still uncertain. As noted by Kurz, paterae are often found in association with small jugs and were used for making libations,¹¹²⁸ so it is plausible that the vessels in the Begram group were imported and utilised for similar purposes.

These three vessels appear to have been found grouped together along the western wall of room 10 (see Pl. 17), and seem to have been deposited in good condition. Photography of the patera prior to recent conservation gives the impression that the handle had been broken in antiquity (Pl. 55.6), but according to its catalogue entry in RAB, the oxidation of the iron rod used to attach the extremity of the handle had caused the alabaster to break.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 164 [16] (Pl. 55.5)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Two-handled alabaster jar / amphora. Grooves carved around the exterior of the mouth, grooves on the bend of the handle, at the terminus of the handle on the vessel's shoulder,	H. 27.3 cm; Dia. 13.5 cm.	Black and white photos, also <i>in situ</i> , RAB Figs. 11–12; Colour photo LTR No. 174.	Kurz 1954, 150; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 704.444.	NMA 57-1- 88 / 04.1.77.

¹¹²³ Kurz 1954, 150.

¹¹²⁴ Tassinari 1993, 59, H2311.

¹¹²⁵ Marshall 1951, 592, No. 289, Pl. 175. This stratum is dated on the basis of coins from Gondophares to Kanishka I by Erdosy 1990, 670.

¹¹²⁶ Tassinari 1993, 42, D2300.

¹¹²⁷ Closer parallels are found among vessels of smaller dimensions, Tassinari 1993, 49, F2210.

¹¹²⁸ Kurz 1954, 150.

		and above the base.				
RAB 165 [17] (Pl. 55.6)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Alabaster patera with handle terminating in the head of a ram. Extremity of handle attached to body with an iron rod. Dish features an omphalos and low circular foot. Engraved grooves around the interior lip and on handle.	H. 4.0 cm; Dia. 19.3 cm; L. 29.5 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Figs. 16–19; Colour photo LTR No. 175.	Kurz 1954, 150; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 703.443a & b.	NMA 57-1-87 / 04.1.83.
RAB 172 [25] (Pls. 55.7, 58.3)	10, W wall, 2.50 m	Alabaster jug with trilobate mouth and elevated handle.	H. 13.35 cm; Dia. 8.8 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Figs. 13–15; Colour photo LTR No. 173.	Kurz 1954, 150; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 702.442a & b.	NMA 57-1-89 / 04.1.62.

4.2.4. Porphyry cup, plate

This group includes two vessels (a cup and a plate) that were carved from porphyry (Pl. 55.8–9), a very hard and large-grained stone that was sourced in the Egyptian Eastern Desert.¹¹²⁹ The primary data for this group is found in NRAB, and presumably on account of their clear source and the rarity of surviving comparable vessels from antiquity, only limited remarks on those from Begram have been offered in secondary scholarship.¹¹³⁰

The cup NRAB 95 (Pl. 55.8) is tall with straight walls flaring slightly nearer to the rim. It features a very low circular foot, two bands of incised grooves around its body, and a filet in relief just below its lip on the exterior. The plate or shallow dish NRAB 119 (Pl. 55.9) features a small circle in relief (or *omphalos*) at its centre and a carved groove around the interior of its rim. Porphyry was exploited to some extent under the Ptolemies, was used occasionally for the production of vessels and statuary in the early Roman imperial period.¹¹³¹ From the 2nd century CE onwards, the stone came to be used on a much larger scale for statuary, columns, vessels, and sarcophagi on account of its increasing association with luxury, prestige, power, and imperial rank.¹¹³² Of the relatively limited known vessels of porphyry known from antiquity,¹¹³³ there are no precise comparanda for those from Begram. However, the forms of

¹¹²⁹ On the quarries, Del Bufalo 2012, 58–59.

¹¹³⁰ See, for example, Kurz 1954, 150.

¹¹³¹ Del Bufalo 2012, 13–22; Lapatin 2015, 125–126.

¹¹³² Del Bufalo 2012, 22–26; Lapatin 2015, 125–126.

¹¹³³ See Del Bufalo 2012, Nos. V 1–39.

these vessels are comparable to those produced in other media from around the 1st century CE. For example, the form of the cup and its groups of engraved grooves broadly recalls those of the glass cups Isings 29 or 34 (compare, for example, NRAB 48 bis, §4.2.1.4), and the plate the shallow bowls and plates of Isings 1, 18, and 19. Therefore, a production date in the 1st century CE is plausible, but the question should remain open.

These two objects were found in the centre of room 13. Interestingly, while the plate NRAB 119 had been found intact, the cup NRAB 95 was broken into fragments, with a small triangular piece missing above the lower group of grooves around the vessel's exterior wall. It is not impossible that postdepositional processes caused this breakage and the missing fragment was simply not picked up by the excavators, but the relatively intact presentation of numerous examples of glass vessels and the comparative hardness of porphyry seem to suggest that the vessel might have been broken earlier, and deposited in room 13 in fragments. For a comparative case, see the rock crystal cantharus NRAB 121 below (§4.2.5).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 95 (Pl. 55.8)	13, centre, 2.50 m.	Porphyry cup with straight walls on small circular foot. Group of grooves cut above foot and higher on vessel wall, filet in relief below rim on exterior. Found in fragments.	H. 25.3 cm; Dia. 11.8 cm; T. 0.3 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV b; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 354; Colour photo LTR No. 215.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 705.445; Del Bufalo 2012, No. V 24.	NMA 57-1-86 / 04.1.65.
NRAB 119 (Pl. 55.9)	13, centre, 2.40 m.	Porphyry plate, circle in relief at interior centre, one groove around interior rim.	H. 4.5 cm; Dia. 18.5 cm; T 0.45 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV b; Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 354 bis; Colour photo LTR No. 216.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 706.446; Del Bufalo 2012, No. V 23.	NMA 57-1-85 / 04.1.67.

4.2.5. Rock crystal cantharus

This group constitutes a single rock crystal vessel in the form of a cantharus (Pl. 55.10). It is documented in NRAB, and was originally thought to have been made of glass.¹¹³⁴ However, Menninger correctly recognised that is made of rock crystal, i.e. transparent colourless quartz.¹¹³⁵

¹¹³⁴ See e.g. Hamelin 1954, 175.

¹¹³⁵ Menninger 1996, 46–47.

This vessel is a drinking cup with two vertical, slightly elevated handles, and featured a low ring base. It had been engraved with depictions of vine leaves, which had once been ornamented with gold leaf, and an Ionian cymatium ran around the exterior of its rim. Typologically and stylistically, it appears to have been produced in the Roman Mediterranean. Pliny relates that rock crystal could be sourced at a number of places in the vicinity of the Mediterranean, but the highest quality came from India.¹¹³⁶ The extremely high value of vessels made from rock crystal is made clear in Latin literature.¹¹³⁷ Few such luxurious vessels have survived in the archaeological record, but on the basis of the Begram vessel's shape and decoration, Menninger suggested that it had been produced in the early Imperial period, perhaps more specifically under the Augustans.¹¹³⁸

According to NRAB, this vessel was found against the north wall of room 13. Like the case of the porphyry cup NRAB 95 discussed above (§4.2.4), it had been found broken into large fragments, and two pieces were remarked to have been missing in NRAB. As noted above, the excavators may have simply missed the last two fragments, but considering the hardness of quartz and the otherwise good state of preservation of the vessel, it seems likely that it had been deposited in room 13 in a broken state.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 121 (Pl. 55.10)	13, against N wall, 2.20 m.	Rock crystal cantharus with engraved decoration of vine leaves, traces of gold leaf. Two vertical handles, Ionian cymatium around exterior of rim, low ring foot. Two fragments missing.	H. 9.0 cm; Dia. 14.45 cm.	Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. VI, c; Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 270–273; Colour photo LTR No. 214.	Hamelin 1954, 175. Menninger 1996, 46–49; Lapatin 2015, 258.	NMA 57-2-50 / 04.1.36.

4.2.6. Lacquerware bowls, platter, cups, and boxes

This group of objects constitutes the decayed and fragmentary remains of at least 10 lacquered receptacles (the precise number is not certain) that had been produced in Han China

¹¹³⁶ Plin. *HN*. 37.9.

¹¹³⁷ Lapatin 2015, 124.

¹¹³⁸ Menninger 1996, 47–49.

(Pls. 56–57).¹¹³⁹ The primary documentation for these wares are eight catalogue numbers and accompanying illustrations and photographs in NRAB,¹¹⁴⁰ in addition to a set of archival photographs in the MGP which include clearer or uncropped versions of those published in RAB, in addition to unpublished examples. A colour photograph of one ware (NRAB 215) has been published more recently.¹¹⁴¹ Secondary studies on the material presented in NRAB have been undertaken by Elisséeff, Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, and Zhang.¹¹⁴²

The Begram lacquerwares appear to have taken the forms of bowls, ear cups, a platter, and toilet boxes. More specifically, NRAB 92 was a bowl, NRAB 186 included the remains of toilet boxes, NRAB 215 was a platter, NRAB 216 was perhaps an ear cup, and NRAB 229 was an ear cup. The case of the other wares is less clear: NRAB 218 either included the remains of stacked bowls or was a collapsed box, NRAB 219 was a cup or box, and NRAB 219 bis reportedly included stacked cups. As discerning the forms of these wares requires some amount of interpretation, it is worth first clarifying some general features of these types of objects.

The Begram lacquerwares are broadly comparable to those produced in workshops across Han China, namely those active from the late part of the Western Han (206 BCE – 8 CE), the Xin interregnum (9 – 23 CE) and the early part of the Eastern Han (25 – 220 CE).¹¹⁴³ Such vessels and containers were prestigious and valuable, and were made by applying many thin layers of a lacquer coating (resin made from the sap of the *Rhus verniciflua* tree) onto a wooden core. However, sometimes cores were made from a fibre, often referred to as hemp in the literature, but is rather ramie. One ware at Begram, NRAB 219, made with an “*étoffe de chanvre revêtant une armature de bois*,” appears to have been manufactured in this manner. The main kind of polychrome decoration employed on lacquerwares was executed by colouring refined sap black or red by adding charcoal or cinnabar. The Begram lacquerwares also appear to have featured attached metal decorative elements, including rims on some bowls, handles (in the case of the ear cup NRAB 216), and perhaps feet. Such elements were usually made from a copper alloy that had been gilded or silvered. This was achieved through a toxic process

¹¹³⁹ With respect to the following discussion, I am indebted to Margarete Prüch for sharing her expertise on Han lacquerwares with me and recommending additional bibliography.

¹¹⁴⁰ NRAB Figs. 243–249. More specifically, these are small cropped photographs of lacquerwares *in situ*, showing the bowl NRAB 93, and the stack of bowls (?) NRAB 218, and illustrations of parts of the boxes NRAB 186, the platter NRAB 215, the cup (?) NRAB 216, the bowl NRAB 219, and the ear cup NRAB 229. NRAB 219 bis, described as a stack of cups, does not seem to have a surviving visual record.

¹¹⁴¹ Desroches 1994, No. 2.

¹¹⁴² Elisséeff 1954; Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2001; Zhang 2011.

¹¹⁴³ For lacquerwares of the Western Han generally, Prüch 1997. For a catalogue of lacquerwares of the late Western Han, Xin, and early Eastern Han, see Fu 1998.

involving dissolving precious metal in boiling liquid mercury to create a viscous amalgam, which could then be painted onto the copper alloy surface.¹¹⁴⁴

The production of lacquerwares was complex, time-consuming, and highly specialised, and thus concentrated in dedicated manufactories. The most important centres emerging in the late Western Han were the state-sponsored Western Manufactory of the Shu Commandery (*Shu jun xi gong* 蜀郡西工) and the State Manufactory of the Guanghan Commandery (*Guanghang jun gong guan* 廣漢郡工官), both in the present-day Sichuan province (see Pl. 1).¹¹⁴⁵ Their products, attested so far in graves dating from 85 BCE to 102 CE, can often be clearly attributed on the basis of inscriptions incised onto their bases, which include information about their manufacture date, titles of officials, the name and volume of the vessel, and the names and jobs of workers involved.¹¹⁴⁶ An important and frequent indication given in such inscriptions (at least, those inscribed with dates after 17 BCE)¹¹⁴⁷ constitutes the characters *cheng yu* 乘輿,¹¹⁴⁸ which suggests they were made specifically for royal consumption.¹¹⁴⁹ Two other state workshops were operating in the capital Chang'an 長安 during the time of the Western Han and Xin dynasties, being the Imperial Workshop (*kaogong* 考工), and the Imperial Tribute Workshop (*gonggong* 供工), which produced objects of other industries too. They can be attributed on the basis of inscriptions, but are less frequently encountered in the archaeological record. From the surviving exemplars, it appears these wares had a less complex division of labour, produced lower quality products than those of the Sichuan manufactories, and, significantly, appear to have imitated the products of the Sichuan manufactories in terms of both style and of organisation of inscriptions.¹¹⁵⁰ However, local workshops certainly existed during Han times, which is evident from a combination of written sources,¹¹⁵¹ and also supported by more recent finds, which are mainly toilet boxes from princely and upper-class tombs in the Jiangsu and Anhui provinces in east China, then the location of the small but

¹¹⁴⁴ Barbieri-Low 2001, 299–300.

¹¹⁴⁵ Hong 2006a, 152–154. On these workshops, see also Barbieri-Low (2001, 268–281), and on the Shu Commandery workshop, Bai 2014. For a list of the (at least) 28 extant inscribed lacquerwares from the latter workshop, Bai 2014, 39–43.

¹¹⁴⁶ Hong 2006a, 152.

¹¹⁴⁷ Hong 2006a, 154.

¹¹⁴⁸ Also written *cheng yu* 乘輿.

¹¹⁴⁹ These characters refer to the 'imperial carriage,' and thus allegorically refer to the emperor himself, Hong 2006b, 190–193.

¹¹⁵⁰ Hong 2006a, 154–156.

¹¹⁵¹ Only in the chapter Treatise on Geography (*dili zhi* 地理志) of the *Hanshu*, nine such local workshops are indicated, and six from these can be located from lacquered vessels with inscriptions, such as Panyu 番禺 in Nanhai 南海 (Guangdong province), Bushan 布山 in the Yulin 玉林 Prefecture (Guangxi province), Jushi 莒市 (Shandong province). For this, Prüch 2013, 145.

significant Guangling 廣陵 Princedom (established 154 BCE under Emperor Jing 景). These local products sometimes feature a special decorative *pingtuo* 平脫 technique (gold and silver foil inlays), and feature distinctive fine decorative motifs of interlacing filaments, bands of consecutive rhombi, and have registers and components filled with cloud, circle, and feather motifs. Until the 2011 find of an inscribed cup from a tomb dated to 127 BCE in the Dayunshan 大雲山 necropolis in the Jiangsu province (constituting an early example), products of these local workshops were neither found inscribed with dates, nor the names of the workshop, its artisans, and managing staff.¹¹⁵² When excavated lacquerwares do not bear inscriptions, they are dated and attributed to the workshops above based on their forms and decorative motifs. If any of the Begram lacquerwares had once been inscribed, no evidence of this survives.

Identifications and dates offered for the Begram lacquerwares have varied slightly as the corpus of excavated and dateable lacquerwares has increased over time. The first study of the Begram lacquerwares is Elisséeff's contribution to NRAB.¹¹⁵³ Elisséeff was not able to study the fragments in person (only NRAB 186 was allocated to the MG), and appears to have been supplied with slightly different information than that published in NRAB, and that available to Hamelin for his plan of room 13 (Pl. 18). When Elisséeff was writing, the most significant comparative corpus of excavated, inscribed lacquerwares were those found by Japanese archaeologists in tombs modern Pyongyang, i.e. the Lelang Commandery 樂浪 of the Han dynasty. Based on comparisons with lacquerwares inscribed with dates, in addition to stylistic observations, Elisséeff proposed to date the Begram lacquerwares to 40–50 CE.¹¹⁵⁴ In a later article on the lacquerwares, Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens focused on NRAB 215 and NRAB 229.¹¹⁵⁵ She observed further comparisons with lacquers found in Pyongyang, and attributed these wares from Begram to the Western Manufactory of the Shu 蜀 Commandery (i.e. one of two state workshops in modern Sichuan) and suggested that they had been produced in the first half of the 1st century CE. A more recent article by Zhang has questioned these attributions and dates.¹¹⁵⁶ Zhang has concurred that NRAB 215 and NRAB 229 were both products of state workshops, if not necessarily the Western Manufactory, and perhaps the ones mentioned above at Chang'an. Significantly, he observed that NRAB 186, NRAB 216, and NRAB 219 appear to have been products of private workshops of the Guangling Princedom. Zhang's arguments

¹¹⁵² On this workshop and its products, see Fu 1998, 39; Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009, 37–38, n. 12; Zhang 2011, 5–13; Prüch 2013, 145–151.

¹¹⁵³ Elisséeff 1954.

¹¹⁵⁴ Elisséeff 1954, 155.

¹¹⁵⁵ Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2001.

¹¹⁵⁶ Zhang 2011.

drew on comparisons with decorative motifs seen on finds from tombs of the region, comparing the decoration of NRAB 92 to designs on toilet boxes, and suggesting that NRAB 216 (probably an ear cup) and NRAB 219 (the interior of a cup or a toilet box) were likewise toilet boxes. Ultimately, he proposed a rather earlier date range of 74 BCE – 23 CE for this entire group.

Although Zhang's important observation that the Begram lacquerwares included examples of products of both state and private workshops still stands, his specific identifications of wares, their dates, and their workshops were proposed more on the basis of illustrations and photos published in NRAB than the text in this volume (including Elisséeff's contribution). Accordingly, through a closer reading of this text and in light of archival photographs in the MGP, some minor objections can be raised about his analyses of NRAB 92, NRAB 216 and NRAB 219.

First, Zhang seems to misinterpret Elisséeff's description of NRAB 92 when he writes that "Elisséeff proposes that it is a three-register composition like No. 186 ... actually the description only mentions four bands on the exterior."¹¹⁵⁷ Elisséeff rather says it "est dans le genre de certains éléments du décor du No. 186."¹¹⁵⁸ Zhang then compares his understanding of the decoration on this ware to that of a late Western Han toilet box (74 BCE – 8 CE), thus arguing that this decoration already existed at an early time. However, looking at the version of the photograph published in NRAB (Pl. 56.2), and archival photos of the same view,¹¹⁵⁹ the form of this vessel rather resembles a straight-sided *yu* 盂 bowl.¹¹⁶⁰ Considering this form, as well as the description of its decorative scheme in NRAB and the emendation thereof suggested by Elisséeff,¹¹⁶¹ a much closer point of comparison can be found in a bowl excavated from an Eastern Han grave in Wuwei City, Gansu (Pl. 57.4).¹¹⁶²

NRAB 216, then, was originally described as a cup "bordée d'un cercle d'argent pourvu de deux anses," and then as an ear cup by Elisséeff,¹¹⁶³ having seen Hamelin's amended version of Carl's illustration (published sans handle in NRAB, Pl. 56.5) which indicated the position of two gilded bronze handles kept in the MG.¹¹⁶⁴ Zhang, however, wrote that "because the design never occurs on any known ear-cup, the original ware is more likely an oval toilet-box

¹¹⁵⁷ Zhang 2011, 7.

¹¹⁵⁸ Elisséeff 1954, 152.

¹¹⁵⁹ MGP 813195/3–4.

¹¹⁶⁰ For this form, see Prüch 1997, 113–114.

¹¹⁶¹ Elisséeff 1954, 152.

¹¹⁶² Fu 1998, No. 297.

¹¹⁶³ Elisséeff 1954, 153.

¹¹⁶⁴ MGP 813195/14.

with a straight end.”¹¹⁶⁵ However, the vessel may indeed have been an ear cup. If we consider that the illustration may be partial and slightly confused, an ear cup from a private collection in the Lindenmuseum in Stuttgart with a stylised quatrefoil dragon design on its interior does feature a vaguely similar floral motif to that indicated on the drawing of NRAB 216 (Pl. 57.5).¹¹⁶⁶

The ware NRAB 219 is described as a “fond de coupe en laque, montée sur pied circulaire métallique (argent),” and the accompanying illustration evidently intended to depict the interior central decoration (Pl. 57.2). Elisséeff likewise considered this ware to have been a bowl with a vertical wall.¹¹⁶⁷ Yet, Zhang states that this illustration “shows the exterior of a toilet box.”¹¹⁶⁸ An unpublished photograph shows lacquer fragments (the ramie of the core is also visible) extending from the rim of a metal base,¹¹⁶⁹ so the illustrated design appears to show the interior of a cup or box. Nonetheless, Zhang’s comparison of the decoration of NRAB 219 with that of a toilet box from a late Western Han tomb at Yaozhuang 姚莊 (apparently a product of a workshop in the Guangling Princedom workshop) still stands.¹¹⁷⁰

All in all, NRAB 92 does not have to be as early as Zhang considered, and NRAB 186, NRAB 216, and NRAB 219 may still be products of the Guangling Princedom, but the basis for this attribution remains the decorative qualities of these wares rather than their specific forms. Because of the poor preservation of these objects, many points still remain unclear (e.g., which precise state workshop NRAB 215 or NRAB 229 were produced in), but in my view, a fairly safe date range for the production of this entire group is the mid 1st century BCE to the mid 1st century CE, with most perhaps falling in the middle thereof. With respect to the latter limit, it should be noted that metal-rimmed lacquered bowls and cups with metal handles do not appear to have been produced after 45 CE.¹¹⁷¹

The Begram lacquerwares were all found deposited in room 13. Their precise positions are slightly unclear. The first group, including NRAB 92, was associated with the glass vessels NRAB 93 and 94 (§4.2.1.14) and found between Panel 34 (§4.13.1.2) and the north wall, as indicated on Hamelin’s plan (Pl. 18). Unfortunately, NRAB 92 and NRAB 93 are also indicated on the south wall in the same plan. The first findspot seems to be the correct one, as Hamelin specifically wrote “les deux carafes 93 et 94 ont été trouvés avec des bols en laque, derrière le

¹¹⁶⁵ Zhang 2011, 9.

¹¹⁶⁶ For this vessel, Prüch 1997, 237–240.

¹¹⁶⁷ Elisséeff 1954, 153.

¹¹⁶⁸ Zhang 2011, 9.

¹¹⁶⁹ MGP 813195/9.

¹¹⁷⁰ Zhang 2011, 9–10.

¹¹⁷¹ Hong 2006a, 154.

panneau 34.”¹¹⁷² However, while NRAB 92 had been found jammed over the base of the glass vessel NRAB 93 (Pl. 56.2, NRAB Fig. 244),¹¹⁷³ other lacquerware vessels are visible in the photos of this ensemble *in situ* (Pl. 56.1),¹¹⁷⁴ and it is not clear which vessels they might be in NRAB. These might include NRAB 219 bis (for which there is otherwise no visual record), but the numbering of this catalogue entry would rather suggest association with NRAB 219. A second group of lacquerwares were found along the south wall and southwest corner of room 13 (Pl. 18), apparently intermingled to some degree with the plaster casts (§4.12). The poor preservation of the Begram lacquerwares means that it is not entirely possible to assess their condition when they were deposited in room 13. However, photography of NRAB 218 (described as a stack of cups of the type NRAB 92, but perhaps a collapsed tall box) seems to show a detached rim (?) fragment impressed across the pile of remains (Pl. 57.1),¹¹⁷⁵ which may suggest that this object (or set of objects) was already in a fragmented state prior to its deposition.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 92 (Pl. 56.1–2)	13, between Backrest 34 and N wall, on top of NRAB 93, 2.50 m.	Straight-walled lacquered <i>yu</i> bowl with black-brown exterior, with application of red decoration visible in places. 1. 4.0 cm below rim is a first red band (0.3 cm thick); 2. 2.0 cm below another band (0.3 cm thick); 3. 0.9 cm below another (0.3 cm thick). Traces of light red decoration between bands 2 and 3. Elisséeff (1954, 152) proposes that the decorated band above the first was effaced. Copper in tubular form around rim.	H. 10.2 cm; Dia. 20.7 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> (cropped) NRAB Fig. 243; Black and white photo with NRAB 93, NRAB Fig. 244; Black and white photos of same MGP 813195/3–4.	Elisséeff 1954, 152; Zhang 2011, 7.	NMA?

¹¹⁷² Hamelin 1954, 155. Elisséeff (1954, 152), however, appears to have been given the information that NRAB 92–93 were found along the south wall.

¹¹⁷³ See also MGP 813195/3–4.

¹¹⁷⁴ See also MGP 813195/1–2.

¹¹⁷⁵ See also MGP 813195/5.

NRAB 186 (Pl. 3)	13, S wall, 2.55 m.	10 fragments of lacquered boxes, wood decomposed. Decoration applied with brush on black-brown base, light reddish touches in form of spirals, commas. Fragment (a) inside double reddish border.	A. 6.1 x 5.3 cm; B. 3.0 x 8.0 cm; C. 1.0 x 0.7 cm; D. 1.3 x 4.0 cm; E. 1.3 x 0.3 cm; F. 1.3 x 0.7 cm; G. 1.5 x 0.5 cm; H. 1.3 x 6.8 cm; I. 0.3 x 0.8 cm; J. 2.4 x 6.3 cm.	Illustration NRAB Fig. 246; Black and white photo of framed fragments MGP 813195/5.	Elisséeff 1954, 152–153; Zhang 2011, 11.	NMA?
NRAB 215 (Pl. 56.4)	13, S wall.	Fragments of lacquered platter, decoration in circular field of interior with ‘three bears’ stylised design, fragments from (or near) rim with spiral motifs,	Rim fragment L. 8.0 cm x 2.0 cm.	Illustration NRAB Fig. 247; Black and white photo MGP 813195/10; Colour photo Desroches 1994, No. 2.	Elisséeff 1954, 153; Pirazzolli-t’Serstevens 2001; Zhang 2011, 7-8.	NMA, MG MA 202.
NRAB 216 (Pl. 56.5)	13, S wall.	Fragments of lacquered (ear?) cup, with silver (or silvered) rim, gilded bronze handles?		Illustration NRAB Fig. 248; Illustration with annotations by Hamelin MGP 813185/14.	Elisséeff 1954, 153; Zhang 2011, 9.	NMA, MG?
NRAB 218 (Pl. 57.1)	13, W wall (to S), 2.50 m.	Lacquered bowls (‘Type 92’) in a stack, or perhaps a collapsed tall box, red interior, black exterior with red bands.	Dia. 20.7 cm; T. 1.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> NRAB Fig. 245; Black and white photo original MGP 813195/5.	Elisséeff 1954, 153.	NMA?
NRAB 219 (Pl. 57.2)	13, W wall (to S), 2.50 m.	Base of lacquered cup or box with vertical wall, circular silver (or silvered) foot, wood and ramie core.		Illustration of interior decoration NRAB Fig. 248 bis; Black and white photo MGP 813195/9.	Elisséeff 1954, 153–154; Zhang 2011, 9–10.	NMA?
NRAB 219 bis	13, 2.50 m.	Fragments of cups (bowls?) stacked onto each other, red interior, black-brown exterior.			Elisséeff 1954, 154.	NMA?
NRAB 229 (Pl. 57.3)	13, S wall, 2.40 m.	Fragments of lacquered ear cup, black ground and red decoration, motif of two confronting phoenixes.		Illustration NRAB Fig. 249.	Elisséeff 1954, 154; Pirazzolli-t’Serstevens 2001; Zhang 2011, 8.	NMA?

4.2.7. Ostrich egg cups and rhytons

This group of objects constitutes four ostrich eggs which had been ornamented with copper alloy and bronze attachments (Pl. 58). However, these attachments had been recorded separately, and it is not precisely clear which recorded eggs and elements belong to each other. The primary documentation for this group is found in RAB.

Three eggs are listed explicitly in RAB. Two examples, RAB 166 [18] (Pl. 58.1–2) and RAB 167 [19] seem to have only been worked in a limited way (the position of any holes is not indicated), and a third egg RAB 173 [26] had its upper third removed to form a cup (Pl. 58.3–4). However, an archival photograph depicts another egg with attached metal bands (perhaps RAB 169 [21]) that had been reassembled from fragments,¹¹⁷⁶ so perhaps four individual eggs had been found; indeed, Hamelin's plan of room 10 (Pl. 17) likewise depicts four eggs.

The first two eggs, RAB 166 [18] and RAB 167 [19], had been encased in vertical bands of copper, and presumably the former example was restored with a copper alloy support in the form of an antelope's head, RAB 176 [29] (Pl. 58.1). Although this artefact then took the form of a rhyton, it is unclear whether the nose of the terminal was appropriately pierced. A further support RAB 168 [20] was noted to have been in the form of a cupula with spiral terminals, another support RAB 169 [21] in fragments of oxidised bronze, and an additional example associated with the cup RAB 173 [26] was described as constituting a 'suspension system' RAB 174 [27]. The surviving remains of these objects give the impression that they may have been used as drinking vessels, but without more reported data (for example, as to the positioning of the holes on the rhyton), this is still uncertain.

These ornamented ostrich eggs appear to be unique in the archaeological record. Of course, there is a substantial body of literature on archaeological finds of ostrich eggs, and examples worked into the forms of cups have been documented especially in funerary contexts of the Near East in the Bronze Age.¹¹⁷⁷ It should be noted, however, that no analysis has been undertaken to establish whether the Begram eggs are those of African ostriches (*Struthio camelus*) or Syrian ones (*Struthio camelus syriacus*), the latter having only been hunted to extinction in Western Asia during the last century. Nonetheless, the copper alloy antelope head

¹¹⁷⁶ MGP 81317/142.

¹¹⁷⁷ See Laufer 1926; Finet 1982; Herles 2007; 2012.

attachment (RAB 176 [29], Pl. 58.1–2) very broadly recalls examples of Persian metalwork,¹¹⁷⁸ so perhaps they were imported from Iran. Comparative finds of ostrich eggs from the period of antiquity are relatively scarce, but one plain example apparently used as a vessel was found at the fortress of Qasr-i Abu Nasr (Old Shiraz) and is dated to the Parthian period.¹¹⁷⁹ Interestingly, fragments of at least two ostrich eggs have been attested at the Oxus temple. The first group of fragments derive from a find context dated from 140/130 BCE, and the second two fragments from find contexts prior to the end of the 1st century BCE.¹¹⁸⁰ To this it should be noted that ostriches and their eggs attracted attention in the Han standard histories, and are there associated several times with Tiaozhi (Characene and Susiana?) and Anxi (the Arsacids, or rather the Parthian Empire). In one instance, an embassy from Anxi was reported to have brought (alongside jugglers and conjurors) large bird's eggs as a present for the emperor,¹¹⁸¹ and the country of Tiaozhi, a vassal of Anxi, was noted to have "great birds which lay eggs as large as pots."¹¹⁸² Later, it is reported that in 101 CE, the king of Anxi presented lions in addition to "some of the giant birds of Tiaozhi, which people call 'Anxi birds.'"¹¹⁸³ All of this reiterates the impression that the Begram ostrich eggs may have come from Western Asia and were likely seen as luxurious and exotic objects, but it still not possible to more precisely date them.

The Begram ostrich eggs appear to have all been found around the centre of the west wall of room 10, a point also indicated by Hamelin's plan (Pl. 17), and one photo shows that the ostrich egg cup RAB 173 [26] was found near to the alabaster jug RAB 172 [25] (§4.2.3) (Pl. 58.3). However, as the inventory numbers for this group are slightly dispersed, they may not have been closely arranged together. Although their state of preservation is unclear, the fact that the eggs and their metal attachments were inventoried separately in most cases appears to suggest that they might have already been separated when they were deposited in room 10, although this is not certain. In the following table, I present both the eggs and supports separately according to the manner in which they were inventoried in RAB.

¹¹⁷⁸ For example, two conceptually similar Sasanian silver rhytons in the form of antelope heads can be cited from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (No. 47.100.82, see Demange 2007, 43, No. 10) and a private collection (Brunner 1974, Fig. 2), although these appear to be considerably later than the Begram example.

¹¹⁷⁹ Whitcomb 1985, 196–197, Fig. 74i.

¹¹⁸⁰ Gunvor Lindström, personal communication. I am indebted to Gunvor Lindström for drawing these finds to my attention.

¹¹⁸¹ *Shiji* 123.4201, trans. Watson 1993, 278. This is repeated in *Hanshu* 96A.3890.

¹¹⁸² *Shiji* 123.4189, trans. Watson 1993, 268. Again, this information is repeated in *Hanshu* 96A.3888, and *Hou Hanshu* 88.2918.

¹¹⁸³ *Hou Hanshu* 88.2918, trans. Hill 2015a, §10.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 166 [18] (Pl. 58.1–2)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Ostrich egg with copper support, encased by four vertical bands.	H. 14.5 cm; Dia. 11.5 cm.	Black and white photo indicated in RAB as RAB Fig. 12, but not visible there; Black and white photo as restored NRAB Fig. 358? Illustration as restored Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV c?	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 722.462 a?	NMA?
RAB 167 [19]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	‘Same as previous:’ ostrich egg with copper support encased by four vertical bands.	H. 14.5 cm; Dia. 12.0 cm.			MG, SNAFG 29?
RAB 168 [20]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Cupula-shaped bronze support for an ostrich egg, with terminal formed into a spiral. Attached fragments of copper bands from a suspension and support system.	H. 2.3 cm; Dia. 9.0 cm	Schematic illustration F1937.		MG?
RAB 169 [21]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze support for an ostrich egg. Two fragments of different sizes.	(1) H. 4.0 cm; Dia. 8.2 cm (upper) Dia. 5.3 cm (lower); (2) Dia. 5.6 cm.	Black and white photo as restored with an ostrich egg reconstructed from fragments MGP 81317/142?		NMA?
RAB 173 [26] (Pl. 58.3–4)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Ostrich egg in the form of a cup with the upper third removed.	H. 11.5 cm; Dia. 11.7 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 15; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV c.		NMA?
RAB 174 [27] (Pl. 58.3–4)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze support for ostrich egg RAB 173 [26] and part of a vertical copper band.	H. 5.3 cm; Dia. 5.25 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 15; Illustration Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV c.		NMA?
RAB 176 [29] (Pl. 58.1–2)	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze support for an ostrich egg, antelope head in the form of a ‘rhyton.’		Black and white photo of antelope head RAB Fig. 20; Black and white photo of restored as RAB 166 [18] (?) NRAB Fig. 358; Illustration as restored Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV c.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 722.462 a & b.	NMA?

4.2.8. Pottery lamps, jug, and jar

4.2.8.1. *Pottery lamps*

This group includes two terracotta lamps described in RAB. Presumably, they are plain lamps of a similar type reported throughout the Site II structure (Appendix I). These lamps were apparently found along the west wall of room 10 (Pl. 17), and were documented at a higher depth than the majority of the hoard objects. The problem presented by interpreting objects found at a higher depth in this area has been discussed above (§3.5.3). As no visual records of these lamps survive, I translate their descriptions from RAB below.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 170 [23] bis	10, W wall, 2.10 m.	Small terracotta lamp.				NMA?
RAB 171 [24]	10, W wall, 2.10 m.	Small terracotta lamp, current type without ornaments.				NMA?

4.2.8.2. *Glazed pottery jugs*

This group of objects includes two pottery jugs respectively covered with a faïence-like blue-green and olive-green glaze (Pl. 59). The primary documentation for this group is found in NRAB, with an illustration and photograph of NRAB 162 being only published later.¹¹⁸⁴ Secondary studies commenting on these vessels have been produced by Courtois, Davidson, and Agrawala.¹¹⁸⁵

The first jug NRAB 72 (Pl. 59.1), featuring blue-green glaze and light relief decoration, was produced in the form of a mythological hybrid creature known as a *kinnari*, i.e. a celestial musician with the foreparts of a woman and posterior of a bird. The cylindrical opening of this vessel is located on the creature's back, a handle joins the back to the head, and her mouth serves as a spout. The second jug NRAB 162 (Pl. 59.2) is described as a large jar with one handle, covered with an olive glaze, and featuring three grooves at the base of the neck, a circular foot, and a rim in relief. Surviving illustrations of this vessel show that the miniature representation thereof on Hamelin's plan of room 13 is inaccurate (Pl. 18).

¹¹⁸⁴ Courtois 1959, Fig. 10; Tissot 2006, 279, K.p. Beg. 701.441 (however, described as white glass in the latter).

¹¹⁸⁵ Courtois 1959; Davidson 1972; Agrawala 1976.

The form of NRAB 72 clearly points to the pottery tradition of India. Davidson noted that comparisons for the form of this vessel and especially the *kinnari*'s armlet can be found in the art of Bharhut, and thus can hardly be later than Sanchi I, ultimately pointing to a production date in the 2nd–1st centuries BCE.¹¹⁸⁶ However, the jug may not necessarily be so early. Sherds from vessels in this form have been reported from sites in Rajasthan and the Gangetic valley from the 1st to 4th centuries CE.¹¹⁸⁷ Comparable examples have likewise been discovered at Sonkh (Mathura),¹¹⁸⁸ as well as at Bhokardan in western India, if without contextual information.¹¹⁸⁹ However, Courtois has already stressed that the use of blue-green glazing distinguishes NRAB 72 from extant comparanda from India, noting that this technique corresponds with Parthian pottery, and thus regarded it as impossible to determine a place of manufacture.¹¹⁹⁰ In the same article, Courtois described NRAB 162 as a “jar or pelike with a handle,” and compared it to a glazed amphora found in stratum II at Taxila-Sirkap that is apparently a Parthian import.¹¹⁹¹

Sherds of alkaline-glazed imported vessels (yellowish green, blue-green, and green) have been reported in a number of excavations in South Asia, especially those in coastal areas connected with maritime trade activity, but are not always identified and dated correctly. A recent study by Schenk has shown that the importation of Parthian glazed ware (mostly storage vessels and jars) into Sri Lanka began in the 1st century BCE (e.g. at Tissamaharama), and that many similar sherds reported elsewhere across South Asia as Sasanian (or late Sasanian-early Islamic) may well be rather Parthian and Sasanian.¹¹⁹² Other examples of glazed wares have been reported in western India, including at Gujarat, Amreli near Baroda (dated from the 2nd–4th centuries CE by their excavator),¹¹⁹³ at Akota in Baroda (3rd–4th centuries CE),¹¹⁹⁴ and now in south India at Pattanam (Muziris?), with varieties dated from the 3rd century BCE to the 8th century CE.¹¹⁹⁵ Some examples of Parthian glazed pottery have likewise been reported in Arachosia. One is a blue glazed amphora (h. 32.5 cm) found alongside the contents of tombs disturbed during building works in 1934 in Kandahar. This was tentatively considered to be

¹¹⁸⁶ Davidson 1972, 1–4.

¹¹⁸⁷ Ghosh 1990, 189.

¹¹⁸⁸ Agrawala 1976.

¹¹⁸⁹ Shastri and Deo 1974, 169–170, Fig. 34, No. 1.

¹¹⁹⁰ Courtois 1959, 140.

¹¹⁹¹ Courtois 1959, 139. The example from Taxila-Sirkap (discussed with further comparanda) is in Marshall 1951, 407–408, No. 14, Pl. 129 a.

¹¹⁹² Schenk 2007, 71–72.

¹¹⁹³ Rao 1966, 73.

¹¹⁹⁴ Subbaro 1953, 102.

¹¹⁹⁵ Cherian and Menon 2014, 56–57.

Sasanian by Scerrato,¹¹⁹⁶ but it may rather have been produced in Hellenistic Western Asia, more specifically between the end of the 2nd century BCE to the early 1st century CE.¹¹⁹⁷ A blue-green glazed sherd has also been reported in a stratified context at Shamshir Ghar near Kandahar (2nd–4th centuries CE).¹¹⁹⁸

At the present stage, it does not appear possible to more precisely determine where and when NRAB 72 and NRAB 162 were produced. NRAB 162 may be an (uncommon) import from Western Asia under the Arsacids. However, NRAB 72 could well represent an example of the transfer of the technology of glazed pottery production to northern or rather western India, where (as noted above) numerous sherds have been reported.

NRAB 72 and NRAB 162 were both found against the western wall of room 13, respectively located towards the north and at the centre of the wall. NRAB 72 was reported to have been found intact except for a missing chip of glaze on the *kinnari*'s chin, which may then have already become detached in antiquity.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 72 (Pl. 59.1)	13, W wall, 2.30 m.	Pottery jug in the form of a <i>kinnari</i> with blue-green glazing and light relief decoration.	H. 20.2 cm; W. 13.0 cm; L. 21.8 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 241–242; Colour photo LTR No. 228.	Courtois 1959; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 707.447	NMA 57-2-90 / 04.1.84.
NRAB 162 (Pl. 59.2)	13, W wall, 2.30 m.	Large pottery jug with one handle, olive glaze, three grooves at the base of the neck, small circular foot, rim in relief.	H. 43.0 cm; Dia. 25.0 cm.	Illustration Courtois 1959, 139, Fig. 10; Black and white photo Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 701.441.	Courtois 1959; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 701.441 (described, however, as white glass).	NMA 80-1-13 / ?

4.3. Devices for display or entertainment: aquariums

This group includes two unique composite devices, largely produced from bronze and alloyed copper, that feature marine imagery embellished with mobile elements (Pl. 60). The first well-preserved example RAB 216 [70] was initially referred to as a 'dress shield' in RAB, but the two devices were later more aptly described by Hamelin as "aquariums magiques."¹¹⁹⁹ These devices may have been used for display or entertainment. The primary documentation

¹¹⁹⁶ Scerrato 1980, 638–639.

¹¹⁹⁷ Bernard et al. 2004, 326.

¹¹⁹⁸ Dupree 1958, 283.

¹¹⁹⁹ Hamelin 1953, 123.

for these objects is found in RAB and further clarified through archival materials. Important secondary commentary on details of the first aquarium were published in LTR following restoration and analysis of the device,¹²⁰⁰ while analysis of the composition of the second aquarium was reported by Voljevica.¹²⁰¹

The first aquarium RAB 216 [70] (Pl. 60.1–2) is documented in detail. It was first constituted of a plain round bronze plate with pegs, upon which a main flat bronze plate was set. The imagery on this plate, executed in repoussé, depicts a marine scene with aquatic creatures and some figures set around a gorgon's head, probably that of Medusa. As Quivron has suggested, this may represent a mythological scene, more specifically Perseus' rescue of Andromeda, and likewise stand for a symbolic representation of Perseus' shield.¹²⁰² The main plate had also been incised with floral decoration on the reverse. Separate mobile elements representing the fins of fish and other creatures, the ends of the snakes around the gorgon's head, and the wings of an Eros were cut from bronze, attached with rings to the main plate and affixed with weights below it. A circle of wood mounted around this plate also held a thick transparent glass plate in place above it, and was finally topped with a decorative bronze rim. A diagram of the reconstructed device was executed by Hamelin, but not published.¹²⁰³ Cleaning and analysis undertaken for LTR has shown the remnants of polychrome paint and miniscule gold flakes that had been applied to the surface of the main plate. Visible details include black lines indicating waves and scales, white and blue lines on the backs of the fish and their irises, black for the hair of the figures, red details, and white lines embellishing the longer mouths and beard hairs of certain creatures.¹²⁰⁴ The presence of this painting helps to explain why some of the details in repoussé decoration appear vague.

The second aquarium RAB 248 [102] (Pl. 60.3) is on display at the MG, but not mentioned in RAB. However, it is indicated on both Carl's and Hamelin's plans of room 10 (Pl. 17). A note from Hamelin added to the opposite page of C.C. 140 clarifies what happened:

¹²⁰⁰ Quivron and D'All'ava 2006.

¹²⁰¹ Voljevica 1985, 36.

¹²⁰² Quivron and D'All'ava 2006, 290.

¹²⁰³ MGP 813171/13.

¹²⁰⁴ Quivron and D'All'ava 2006, 291.

18.4.51 Note ... P. Hamelin.

L'objet rectangulaire à droite et un peu plus haut pour le bouclier dit être le 2^e aquarium retrouvé entre l'atelier de Carl à Kaboul et les réserves du Musée Guimet à Paris.

Les deux anses indiquées sont numérotées à l'inventaire B.37 n°248 [102] qui donné le numéro de l'aquarium et la date de trouvaille 7 juin 1937.

Le croquis de Carl indique un cadre rectangulaire avec 2 poignées - c'était notre aquarium.

La taille des poignées et leur forme s'adapte avec un rare bonheur au cadre.

La poignée attribuée à Kaboul a été nettoyée par moi et je garantis le décor au laurier et je précise qu'une feuille sur deux est en bronze, l'autre en argent ... et l'argent sont opposés en chaque côte ...

La poignée à Paris a été égarée.

[signed] P. Hamelin

Poignée

Une photo envoyée de Kaboul le 22/8/51

Thus, the second aquarium was found near to the first, and its two inlaid bronze handles had been documented under RAB 248 [102]. This device had been found instead in a highly fragmentary state but was later restored (the handle allocated to the MG has reappeared on this version). It appears that Hamelin had indeed intended to more adequately publish this second aquarium, as he produced two (unpublished) illustrations of reconstructions of its possible original appearance.¹²⁰⁵ The second aquarium is rectangular in form, but like the first aquarium, its main plate features marine creatures with mobile elements, this time against undulating lines representing water and with no clear mythological component to the imagery. Perhaps the poor state of preservation of the device was due in part to the alloy used to produce it, being (as reported by Voljevica) a red copper with very small amounts of lead and tin associated with

¹²⁰⁵ MGP 813171/12, 81317/3.

the metal.¹²⁰⁶ The fins and tails of the fish were also noted to have been made from brass.¹²⁰⁷ Its two handles terminating in the heads of fauns had been cast in bronze and inlaid with copper and silver, and remnants of silver are likewise visible on the rim of the device.

Occasionally it has been suggested that the first aquarium should have been submerged or placed in water,¹²⁰⁸ but this seems improbable for a device made of wood and painted metal, and (moreover) does not appear to have been necessary for the device to function. D'All'ava noticed, for example, that the mobile parts of the main plate continued to move after being set down,¹²⁰⁹ a point which is also supported also by an interactive reconstruction of the main plate produced by the education team of the Kyushu National Museum for LTR's iteration in Japan,¹²¹⁰ held in a perspex cylinder with two handles. Curiously, this reconstructed device was surprisingly noisy, producing a high-pitched jangling sound. In reference to the first aquarium, Descamps has suggested that it may be related to special devices associated with incense or water that were brought out to entertain guests at Roman banquets.¹²¹¹

No comparable objects to these two aquariums appear to be extant in the archaeological record. Their use of technology and specific imagery indicates that they were produced in the Roman Mediterranean. In particular, the predominance of swimming aquatic creatures depicted on these devices strongly recalls those of swimming fish prevalent in the mosaics of Africa Proconsularis, which generally signify themes of abundance and wealth.¹²¹² However, the execution of the mobile elements appears to be unique, and likewise, D'All'ava states that the use of applied painted polychrome decoration is not attested on other ancient bronzes.¹²¹³ Indeed, polychrome decoration on bronzes of the early Roman imperial period was usually achieved through inlaid precious metals or alloys, which in rare cases was combined with the intentional surface patination of alloyed copper.¹²¹⁴ Perhaps it is possible that the polychrome decoration attested on the first aquarium was executed by artisans who ordinarily painted objects like glass. Certainly, these aquariums cannot be dated with any precision.

¹²⁰⁶ Voljevica 1985, 36.

¹²⁰⁷ Voljevica 1985, 36.

¹²⁰⁸ "With the movement of water, both the weights on the lower part and the fish on the upper part were set in motion" (Tissot 2006, 287); "Si tratta probabilmente di un ornamento di fontana oscillando sotto uno zampillo d'acqua faceva vibrare le parti mobili conferendo una particolare vivacità a tutta la scena." (Gullini 1961, No. 27).

¹²⁰⁹ Quivron et al. 2006

¹²¹⁰ Visited at Tokyo National Museum, June 2016.

¹²¹¹ Cited in Quivron and D'All'ava 2006, 290.

¹²¹² On marine imagery in these mosaics, Ghedini and Novello 2005, 183–185; Novello 2007, 37–38.

¹²¹³ Quivron and D'All'ava 2006, 291.

¹²¹⁴ See, for example, the Vaison-la-Romaine inkpot and related pieces in Descamps-Lequime 2005, and the products of a specific Romano-Egypt workshop discussed in Giumlia-Mair 2015.

Both aquariums were found in vicinity of each other in the southwest corner of room 10, as indicated on Hamelin's plan (Pl. 17). While the first aquarium was well preserved, it is not clear whether the fragmentary state of the second may have been caused by postdepositional processes.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 216 [70] (Pl. 60.1–2)	10, SW corner, 2.40–2.65 m.	Aquarium, device made of (1) plain bronze plate with pegs; (2) main flat bronze plate depicting mythical scene (Perseus rescuing Andromeda?) with marine creatures (fish, dolphins) around head of Medusa, executed in repoussé and separate mobile elements inserted through plate, ring and weight affixed below, embellished with applied pigments, gilding, incised floral decoration on reverse; mounted on a circular wooden frame; (3) thick transparent glass plate; (4) bronze rim (triangular section), outer face Ionian cymatium.	Dia. (1) 46.0 cm; Dia. (2) 39.0 cm; Dia. (3) 39.0 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Fig. 47–52; Colour photo LTR No. 178; Colour photos Quivron and D'All'ava 2006; Illustration of glass plate Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIII c; Illustrated reconstruction of device by Hamelin in MGP 813171/13.	Gullini 1961, No. 27; Menninger 1996, 89-90; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 721.461 a & b.	NMA 57-7-7 / 04.1.89.
RAB 248 [102] / MG 22878 (Pl. 60.3)	10, SW corner, 2.60 m.	Aquarium, fragmentary and restored after excavation. Two handles (listed as RAB 248 [102]) of cast bronze with faun heads at extremities, inlaid with copper and silver. Fragmentary copper alloy elements restored	Ca. 30.0 x 25 cm.	Illustrations by Hamelin MGP 81317/3, 813171/12; Colour photo of handle LTR No. 177.	Tissot K.p. Beg. 737.477.	MG 22878; (handle) NMA 57-1-37 / 04.1.85.

		over a rectangular container (not original, perhaps wooden armature?), interior plate decorated with marine creatures (fish, octopus, serpents) and undulating lines of water in repoussé, embellished with separate mobile elements as RAB 216 [70], most apparently not extant. Upper frame with remains of silver, Ionian cymatium at rim.				
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4.4. Elements from metalwork furniture, figurines, and vessels

This is a group of 53 elements, primarily in bronze, that appear to have been detached from articles of metalwork, including furniture, vessels, and figurines. Strictly speaking, their function (or functions) are unknown, but I have nonetheless grouped these objects together as, in large part, they represent decorative elements, and cannot be restored into complete objects. I will offer some suggestions as to their functions below. The primary documentation for this group is spread across RAB, NRAB, and Ghirshman's report,¹²¹⁵ and a number of unpublished photographs of objects from the Hackin excavations are also located in the MPG. Objects within this group have received limited scholarly attention, but comparanda for some were discussed by Kurz.¹²¹⁶

A range of different objects are found in this group, but a substantial amount appear to have been elements detached from articles of bronze furniture produced in the Roman Mediterranean. For example, Kurz observed that the supports in the forms of lions' paws (Pl. 62.3–4, 7) were found also at Pompeii and other sites in Campania,¹²¹⁷ and that likewise provided a parallel for the element in the form of a swan NRAB 88 (Pl. 61.6) serving as a

¹²¹⁵ See Ghirshman 1946, 68–69.

¹²¹⁶ Kurz 1954, 148–149.

¹²¹⁷ Kurz 1954, 149.

support on a lamp stand.¹²¹⁸ He also noted that the bronze circular lamp stand NRAB 26 (Pl. 61.1) was a type commonly found at Pompeii (Pl. 63.1).¹²¹⁹ Although he compared the miniature bronze vessel NRAB 254 (Pl. 62.6) to full sized versions in various media prior to the time of Hadrian,¹²²⁰ broadly comparable examples are also found as elements of candelabra of the early Roman imperial period (Pl. 63.2).¹²²¹ Indeed, two objects reported by Ghirshman B.G. 6 and B.G. 7 (Pl. 62.10–11) may also be identified as foot elements, perhaps likewise from candelabra (Pl. 63.3).¹²²² Candelabra could also feature other soldered-on decorative elements, such as masks (again Pl. 63.3).¹²²³ The bronze mask of Silenus NRAB 77 (Pl. 61.4) could have originally served such a function. The bronze bovine leg NRAB 159 shows a clean break through the palmette at its upper extremity (Pl. 61.9), and most likely was also once part of a composite device, perhaps a piece of furniture. In addition to this, other elements like the bronze right forearm NRAB 183, and the examples of bronze antlers NRAB 64–65 (Pl. 61.3) presumably had been removed from figurines. There are also examples of vessel handles in bronze and iron (NRAB 37, NRAB 89, NRAB 223, B.G. 1, Pl. 61.11). The bronze element or handle NRAB 244, according to NRAB, had belonged to the box NRAB 354, which was however found separately elsewhere in room T (see §4.13.2, Appendix I).

Compositional analysis of the bovine leg NRAB 159 indicated this object was produced of leaded bronze and formed a homogenous group with the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5),¹²²⁴ perhaps suggesting a common place of production. However, manufacture in the Roman Mediterranean need not be presumed for this entire group. Indeed, the element NRAB 156 was described as a bronze furniture foot or a trinket in the shape of a balustrade, but a photo thereof in the MGP (traced in Pl. 61.8) shows that this element rather resembles a finial of reliquary casket, more specifically the gilded bronze and inscribed example deposited in Manikyala stupa by the governor of Kapisi during or after the reign of Huvishka (Pl. 32.1, see also §3.2, §3.5.1).

Another reason I have grouped the below objects together is because they were primarily found deposited in two main areas, being more precisely the northeastern corner of room 13 (Pl. 18) and room T (Appendix I). Some objects distributed between the two rooms were also extremely similar, such as the bronze supports with lion's paws (NRAB 178, NRAB

¹²¹⁸ Kurz 1954, 149, NRAB Fig. 462.

¹²¹⁹ Kurz 1954, 149. See, e.g., Tarbell 1909, Figs. 75–83.

¹²²⁰ Kurz 1954, 150.

¹²²¹ Bloesch 1943, No. 59, Fig. 66. From Pompeii, see Mattusch 2008, No. 45.

¹²²² Bloesch 1943, No. 59, Fig. 67. I am indebted to Norbert Franken for drawing this example to my attention.

¹²²³ Bloesch 1943, No. 59, Fig. 67.

¹²²⁴ Voljevica 1985, 36.

239–242, NRAB 250, and B.G. 3–4, Pl. 62.3–4, 62.7), and the bovine legs (NRAB 159, NRAB 182, B.G. 2, Pls. 61.9, 62.8). In addition to this, R1940 indicates that four supports of different dimensions in the form of lions’ paws (NRAB 239–242) had been found in association with pulverised wood (Appendix II), which may suggest that they had been deposited in wooden box. However, several objects in this group were found outside of these two main areas (see the table below). Of these outliers, the miniature bronze vessel NRAB 254 was reported in the northwest corner of the central corridor, and is only one of two objects in this area comparable to the majority of the hoard objects in rooms 10, 13, and T (see §3.5.3, and NRAB 255 in §4.13.4, and also Appendix I).

As the objects in this group cannot be refitted into complete articles of furniture, figurines, or vessels, the question of their function arises. Just as the bronze right forearm NRAB 183 was tentatively suggested in NRAB to have been an ex-voto, it is possible that objects in this group had once served as votive offerings (as the question of the Site II’s structure has been left open, see §3.5.2). Lindström has highlighted instances where earlier deposits of offerings were extracted from the Oxus temple in the Kushan period.¹²²⁵ Specifically, in the case of bronze bangles among a deposit (or ‘hoard’) of other intentionally fragmented bronze objects, her analysis suggests that parts of the ends of the bangles had been broken off then redeposited to the god following the principle of *pars pro toto*, while their remainders had been reworked or recycled into new offerings.¹²²⁶ Maybe objects in this group in the Begram hoard could have been detached through similar practices. Indeed, detached bronze lion’s feet in the form of supports had also been found in a mixed deliberate deposition in the floor of tower XIII at the sanctuary of Surkh Kotal.¹²²⁷ Alternatively, perhaps objects in this group could have been collected as reference material for craft production, similarly to the presumed function of the collection of plaster casts found deposited in room 13 (§4.12). These hypotheses are considered in more detail below (§5.3).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 198 [54]	10, W wall, 2.50 m.	Two bronze masks of lions, with space to hold a ring in mouth.	Dia. 3.5 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/30.		NMA?
NRAB 26 (Pl. 61.1)	13, E wall, 2.60 m, with NRAB 25 (figurine of	Bronze tripod lamp stand, draped, feet	H. 9.0 cm; Dia. 9.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 340;	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 735.475.	NMA 57-1- 55 / 04.01.32

¹²²⁵ Lindström 2016.

¹²²⁶ Lindström 2016, 304–305.

¹²²⁷ Schlumberger et al. 1983, 48; Fussman and Guillaume 1990, Nos. 517–518, Pl. IX.

	Serapis-Heracles).	terminating in lions' paws.		Colour photo LTR No. 219.		
NRAB 51	13, E wall, 2.50 m	Bronze lid, circular, decorated with band and two concentric filets, rim raised, adorned with ovals around edge.	Dia. 10.2 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/84.		NMA?
NRAB 52 (Pl. 61.2)	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Long bronze rod with attachment of a left hand, pointed index finger, and fragment of bronze between thumb and middle finger.	L. 30.2 cm (rod); L. 6.1 cm (hand). Dia. 1.1 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 352.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 742.482.	NMA?
NRAB 37	13, E wall, 2.50 m	Single handle from leaded brass basin with two handles and ring foot, see §4.2.2.1.	L. 8.0 cm; T. 1.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 62	13, E wall, 2.30 m.	Small bronze column.	H. 11.0 cm; T. 1.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 64 (Pl. 61.3)	13, NE corner, 2.35 m.	Bronze right antler, with five tines from a ten-tine stag.	L. 9.7 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 349 (b).	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 745.485.	NMA?
NRAB 65	13, NE corner, 2.35 m.	Bronze antler of a deer (rather a stag?).	L. 9.0 cm			?
NRAB 68	13, NE corner, 2.40 m	Bronze disc decorated with four concentric circles around a central one, edge raised and with ovolo moulding?	Dia. 10.3 cm; T. 1.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 69	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Bronze disc decorated with four concentric circles around a central one, edge raised and with ovolo moulding?	Dia. 7.4 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 77 (Pl. 61.4)	13, NE corner, 2.40.	Bronze element representing mask of Silenus.	H. 9.5 cm; W. 7.9 cm; T. 0.9 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 329; Colour photo LTR No. 221.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 720.460.	NMA 57-3-5 / 04.1.91
NRAB 81	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Small bronze rectangular socle on a widening base.	Upper 8.4 x 4.7 cm; lower 9.7 x 5.7 cm.			NMA?

NRAB 84 (Pl. 61.5)	13, NE corner, 2.40 m	Bronze element, foot of a case (?), griffin in profile in light relief, eyelets at right, two nails preserved at top.	H. 7.0 cm; W. 4.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 349.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 743.483.	NMA?
NRAB 85	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Hollow bronze 'base of an ornamental column in the Tuscan Roman order.'	H. 5.5 cm; Dia. 12.6 cm; 13.0 x 13.0 cm (base).	Black and white photo MGP 81317/84.		
NRAB 88 (Pl. 61.6)	13, centre, 2.40 m.	Bronze element in form of a swan terminating the foot of a lion.	H. 8.4 cm; W. 8.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 461; Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 80.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 726.466	NMA 57-9-9 / ?
NRAB 89	13, S wall, 2.40 m.	Two iron handles	Dia. 8.4 cm; Dia. 9.4 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 137 (Pl. 61.7)	13, W wall.	Bronze ornamental column, Corinthian capital with bust of figure at centre, element from candelabrum?	H. 35.2 cm; Dia. 1.4 cm) W. 2.7 cm (abacus).	Black and white photo (capital) NRAB Fig. 350.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 738.478.	NMA?
NRAB 152	13, W wall, 2.50 m.	Part of bronze lyre, right part and sound box intact.	H. 8.6 cm; W. 3.1 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 156 (Pl. 61.8)	13, N wall, 2.50 m	Bronze finial, e.g. of a reliquary casket.	H. 9.2 cm; Dia. 3.0 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/98.		NMA?
NRAB 159 (Pl. 61.9)	13, N wall, 2.50 m.	Leaded bronze posterior bovine leg, with border and palmette at upper extremity (broken at tip).	H. 14.6 cm; W. 3.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 345; Colour photo Cambon 2002, No. 33.		MG 21229
NRAB 178	13, NE corner, 2.50 m.	Bronze corner element with lions' paw on circular base.	H. 3.7 cm; W. 4.5 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 179	13, NE corner, 2.50 m	Bronze circular element deriving from piece analogous to previous (NRAB 178).	Dia. 3.8 cm; T. 0.7 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 180	13, NE corner, 2.50 m	Bronze handles and suspension chains for a lantern.	H. 4.0 cm; L. (element) 6.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 182	13, NE corner, 2.50 m	Bronze bovine leg, type NRAB	H. 14.5 cm; W. 3.1 cm.			NMA?

		159, with double groove at top of hock.				
NRAB 183	13, NE corner 2.50 m.	Bronze right forearm. 'Ex-voto?' (NRAB).	L. 4.5 cm; T. 1.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 223 (Pl. 61.11)	13, W wall.	Bronze handle, flowers and palmette in relief at lower extremity, traces of silver inlay on upper extremity.	H. 22.9 cm; W. 4.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 342.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 744.484.	NMA?
NRAB 230 (Pl. 61.10)	T, E wall, 2.80 m.	Bronze element in form of parrot, wings partially outstretched.	H. 7.6 cm; W. 10.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 336.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 730.470; Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 231 (Pl. 62.1)	T, E wall, 2.80 m.	Bronze element in form of palmette.	H. 8.6 cm; W. 11.2 cm; T. 0.6 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 344.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 733.473; Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 234	T, 2.80 m.	Truncated rod, three bulges, lotiform capital at end with central cavity at upper part. Foot of an object.	H. 28.0 cm.		Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 238 (Pl. 62.2)	T, 2.50 m.	Hollow bronze element in form of head and neck of a duck.	H. 5.6 cm; W. 2.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 334.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 731.471; Appendix I.	NMA 57-10-4 / ?
NRAB 239	T, N wall .	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	H. 3.7 cm.		Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 240 (Pl. 62.3)	T, N wall.	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178, identical to NRAB 239.	H. 3.7 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 343 (a).	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 732.472; Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 241	T, N wall.	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	H. 3.2 cm.		Appendix I.	MG?
NRAB 242	T, N wall.	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	H. 3.3 cm.		Appendix I.	NMA?

NRAB 243	T, N wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze foot in the form of a “balustrade;” the top formed in a crimped ring and still contains a pin.	H. 9.7 cm; W. 2.6 cm.		Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 244	T, SW, below foundation of bastion, 2.50 m.	Bronze ornament in the form of aiguillette or lace. Ends falling on either side of curved middle part. According to NRAB, part of NRAB 354.	H. 5.5 cm; W. 3.6 cm.		Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 728.468; Appendix I.	
NRAB 248 (Pl. 62.5)	T, towards the bastion, 0.40 m below, 2.50 m.	Bronze winged sphinx with head of woman, crouched.	H. 6.0 cm; W. 6.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 337.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 728.468.	NMA 57-4-0 / ?
NRAB 249 (Pl. 62.4)	T, right of bastion, 2.50 m.	Bronze support terminating in lion’s foot.	H. 8.2 cm. W. 6.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 343 (c).	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 472; Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 250	T, 2.50 m.	Bronze support terminating in lion’s foot, slender form, upper part with mask of lion.	H. 6.7 cm; W. 3.9 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 343 (b).	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 734.474; Appendix I.	NMA?
NRAB 254 (Pl. 62.6)	Couloir central, NW corner, 2.40 m (Appendix I).	Bronze element in the form of a miniature vessel (crater), gadrooned belly, ivy garland decoration on body. Circular hole at base with remnant fragment of bronze, originally from composite device such as a lamp stand.	H. 7.8 cm; Dia. 3.7 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 338.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 736.476; Appendix I.	NMA?
B.G. 1	T, under bastion.	Bronze omega shaped handle.	W. 11.0 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 8; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 1.	Ghirshman 1946, 69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 2 (Pl. 62.8)	T, under bastion.	Bronze bovine leg.	H. 14.6 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 1; Illustration	Ghirshman 1946, 69; Appendix I.	?

				Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXIV, B.G. 2		
B.G. 3 (Pl. 62.7)	T, under bastion.	Bronze support in form of lion's paw, same as NRAB 249.	H. 7.0 cm; W. 7.0 and 4.2 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 2; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXIV, B.G. 3.	Ghirshman 1946, 68–69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 4	T, under bastion.	Bronze support in form of lion's paw, same as NRAB 249.	H. 7.0 cm; W. 7.0 and 4.2 cm.	Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXIV, B.G. 4.	Ghirshman 1946, 68–69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 5 (Pl. 62.9)	T, under bastion.	Bronze element in form of a seated bird.	H. 5.0 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 5; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 5.	Ghirshman 1946, 68–69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 6 (Pl. 62.10, 62.11)	T, under bastion.	Bronze foot element, e.g. from a candelabrum.	Dia. 3.6 cm; H. 1.5 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 6; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 6.	Ghirshman 1946, 68–69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 7 (Pl. 62.11)	T, under bastion.	Bronze foot element, e.g. from a candelabrum.	Dia. 3.6 cm; H. 1.5 cm.	Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 7.	Ghirshman 1946, 69; Appendix I.	?
B.G. 12 (Pl. 62.11)	T, under bastion.	Bronze ring with moulded edges. Foot element?	Dia. ca. 3.0 cm.	Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 12.	Ghirshman 1946, 69; Appendix I.	?
NRAB VII	?	Decorative band with one ray hearts lightly framed by two plain edges, and on one the base is wide.	L. 37.6 cm; W. 3.1 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/127.		NMA?
NRAB VIII	?	Small cubic column base, lower mouldings on four side indicate was an Attic base. Traces of inlays or	H. 3.3; W. 3.7 cm.			NMA?

		different metal attached?				
NRAB VI	?	Bronze circular object, slightly domed, opening at top, and ring at base, decorated with braided motif, low relief motif of alternating palmettes and lotus flowers on exterior.	Dia. 15.0 cm; T. 0.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 341.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 725.465.	NMA?

4.5. Figurines

This group includes seven bronze figurines representing Greek and Graeco-Egyptian deities, horsemen, a grotesque of a rooster-man, and perhaps a mime (Pls. 65–66). They are documented in NRAB and Ghirshman's report,¹²²⁸ and the main secondary study of those reported in room 13 is found within Kurz's contribution to NRAB.¹²²⁹

All of these figurines appear to have been produced from cast bronze. One figurine NRAB 63 represents the Greek deity Eros, associated with love, who is depicted nude with wings and is holding a bow and a torch (Pl. 64.2). Two figurines rather represent Graeco-Egyptian deities. NRAB 153 depicts Harpocrates, a god associated with silence and secrecy, who wears the pschent, and is partially draped with a chlamys and wearing sandals. The figure was found with its lower left forearm missing, while the right points towards the god's right temple rather than the mouth (Pl. 64.3–4), which is a feature discussed further below. The subject of another figurine NRAB 25 is apparently a unique hybrid depiction of Serapis (associated with the sun and fertility) and the legendary hero Heracles (Pl. 64.1). The nude god wears the modius, which is an attribute of Serapis, but holds both the club of Heracles in his right hand, and the three apples of the Hesperides in his left.¹²³⁰ Two additional figurines of horsemen (sans horses) appear to respectively depict a Greek with right arm raised to hold a missing weapon (NRAB 237, Pl. 66.2), and a figure styled as a 'barbarian' (perhaps a Gaul), moustachioed and wearing a loincloth, with right arm likewise raised to hold a missing weapon (NRAB 160, Pl. 66.1).¹²³¹ A small grotesque figurine NRAB 177 depicts a hybrid creature with

¹²²⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 67–68.

¹²²⁹ Kurz 1954, 147–148.

¹²³⁰ Kurz 1954, 147.

¹²³¹ Kurz 1954, 148.

the head of a man and the body of a rooster (Pl. 66.3), perhaps was intended to represent Hermes (as the rooster was one of his attributes),¹²³² or serve an apotropaic function.¹²³³ Finally, a grotesque figurine B.G. 9 represents a hunched male with shaved head, heavy garment, and sandals, depicting perhaps a comic mime (Pl. 65.4).¹²³⁴

All of these figurines were most probably produced in the Mediterranean, and more specifically the representations of Graeco-Egyptian gods evidently point (if not conclusively) to their manufacture in Egypt. Without attempting to date individual figurines more precisely, it is plausible that all were produced between the 1st century BCE to the 1st century CE.

These figurines were found in rooms 13 and T. More specifically, the Serapis-Heracles figurine NRAB 25 was found along the east wall of room 13 pushed against the bronze lamp stand NRAB 26 (§4.4), perhaps suggesting that the figurine had formerly been displayed on the latter as a base. The figurines of Eros NRAB 63, Harpocrates NRAB 153, the ‘barbarian’ horseman NRAB 160, and the grotesque rooster-man NRAB 177 were all found dispersed primarily among detached elements from metalwork (§4.4) in the northeast of room 13, perhaps suggesting that they had similar functions (see §5.4 below). The Greek horseman NRAB 237 had been found along the north wall of room T, while the mime B.G. 9 was found in the same room below the bastion. As noted above, the predominant types of objects found in room T were detached elements from metalwork (§4.4).

Several instances of interaction with these figurines in antiquity can be highlighted. First, the Serapis-Heracles figurine NRAB 25 was described in NRAB to have been found wrapped in the remnants of a friable ‘bark’ which was ‘strongly adhering in places to the statue, represented by a whitish material.’ The catalogue entry further explains that this material did not appear to have covered the extremities of the hands, feet, beard, and hair, and hence these parts were found in a significantly more oxidised state. Indeed, this whitish material is visible on an archival photo of the figurine *in situ*, where it also partly covers the adjacent bronze lamp stand NRAB 26,¹²³⁵ and another of the figurine prior to cleaning.¹²³⁶ Although the nature of this material is unclear, perhaps it represented the remnants of a protective wrapping.

In addition to this, several figurines had missing elements. For example, the weapons (and horses, etc.) were missing from the two horsemen NRAB 160 and NRAB 237, as well as

¹²³² Kurz 1954, 147–148.

¹²³³ See the discussion in Voegtli 2016.

¹²³⁴ See Ghirshman 1946, 68. For a conceptually similar bronze in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (12.229.6) that was found in Rome and dates from ca. 50 BCE – 50 CE, see Trentin 2015, 78–79, 111, No. 8.

¹²³⁵ MGP 813172/29.

¹²³⁶ MGP 813172/24.

the upper part of the torch held by the Eros figurine NRAB 63. Likewise, as noted above, the Harpocrates figurine NRAB 153 was missing its left forearm (which had originally been soldered on separately), and the right appears to have likewise become detached in antiquity, and was later (incorrectly) repaired to point at the god's temple instead of his mouth (Pl. 64.3). As the result of modern conservation treatment, the forearm has since been returned to its original position (Pl. 64.4). This ancient repair suggests that the responsible individual misunderstood this iconographic trait of the god.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 25 (Pl. 64.1)	13, E wall, 2.60 m, with NRAB 26 (bronze lamp stand).	Bronze figurine of Serapis-Heracles, with club in right hand, apples of the Hesperides in left, modius on head decorated with olive branches.	H. 24.1 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 323, 325; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 813172/29; Black and white photo before cleaning MGP 813172/29; Black and white photo Gullini 1961, No. 23; Colour photo LTR No. 220.	Kurz 1954, 147; Gullini 1961, No. 23; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 711.451.	NMA 57-3-4 / 04.1.90.
NRAB 63 (Pl. 64.2)	13, NE corner, 2.35 m.	Bronze figurine of Eros, nude and winged, with bow in left hand, torch with upper extremity missing in right hand.	H. 15.2 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 326, 327; Colour photo LTR No. 218.	Kurz 1954, 148; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 713.453 a & b.	NMA 57-3-7 / 04.1.31.
NRAB 153 (Pl. 64.3– 4)	13, NE corner, 2.50 m.	Bronze figurine of Harpocrates, with pschent, chlamys, and sandals. Left forearm missing, right forearm incorrectly repaired in antiquity, pointing at temple instead of at mouth.	H. 13.3 cm	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 322, 324; Colour photo (right arm repositioned) LTR No. 225.	Kurz 1954, 147; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 712.452.	NMA 57-3-6 / 04.1.101.

NRAB 160 (Pl. 65.1)	13, NE corner, 2.50 m.	Bronze figurine of a 'barbarian' (perhaps a Gaul) horseman, moustachioed with long hair, wearing a loincloth. Right hand raised, broken off remnant of a missing weapon.	H. 14.7 cm; W. 4.7 cm.	Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 330–332; Colour photo LTR No. 222.	Kurz 1954, 148; Gullini 1961, No. 24; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 714.454 a & b.	NMA 57.38 / 04.1.92.
NRAB 177 (Pl. 65.3)	13, NE corner, 2.50 m.	Small bronze grotesque figurine in the form of rooster-man on a round socle.	H. 5.4 cm; L. 6.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 328; Colour photo LTR No. 226.	Kurz 1954, 147–148; Gullini 1961, No. 25; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 727.467; Voegtli 2016.	NMA 57-7-8 / 04.1.102.
NRAB 237 (Pl. 65.2)	T, N wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze figurine of a Greek young beardless horseman. Right arm raised holding remnants of broken off and missing weapon, left arm holding broken remains of missing reigns.	H. 13.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 335; Colour photo LTR No. 226.	Rowland and Rice 1971, No. 89; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 715.455.	NMA 57-39 / 04.1.28.
B.G. 9 (Pl. 65.4)	T, under bastion.	Bronze figurine of a grotesque male figure, perhaps a mime, hunched with shaven head and draped in a long garment.	H. 10.3 cm	Black and white photos Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XII, 1–5; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXIV, B.G. 9.	Ghirshman 1946, 67–68.	?

4.6. Tools and utensils

4.6.1. Iron tools and utensils

This group of two iron objects, both found along the east wall of room 13 and catalogued in NRAB, appear to have no surviving visual record. According to their descriptions, they may be understood as tools and/or utensils. It is not clear if the object in the form of a 'scythe' NRAB 47 (depicted in miniature on Hamelin's plan, Pl. 18) is truly an

agricultural implement. If so, it may be comparable to an example excavated at Taxila-Sirkap from stratum II (i.e. ca. 32–151 CE).¹²³⁷

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 47	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Iron instrument in the form of a scythe.	H. 17.6 cm; L. 24.3 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 51 bis	13, E wall, 2.55 m.	Iron spoon, two fragments.	L. 16.6 cm; W. 10.0 cm.			NMA?

4.6.2. Bronze inkpot

A single bronze inkpot NRAB 80 was reported from room 13 (Pl. 66.1). This container had a globular form, a small circular hole on the top, and a mobile handle formed into three bends. As noted in the catalogue entry for NRAB, similar inkpots of the 1st–2nd centuries CE were found in great number at Taxila-Sirkap. More specifically, two inkpots with the same type of handle are found in stratum II (i.e. ca. 32–151 CE).¹²³⁸ Thus NRAB 80 appears to have been produced in the vicinity of Gandhāra, or perhaps even Kapisa. This inkpot was found in a larger dispersed group of objects in the northeastern corner of room 13 alongside elements from metalwork (§4.4), bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), bronze figurines (§4.5), and the incense burner NRAB 82 (§4.6.3).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 80 (Pl. 66.1)	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Small bronze inkpot with handle formed into three bends.	H. 7.0 cm; Dia. 9.5 cm..	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 353.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 724.464.	NMA 57-3-4 / 04.1.90.

4.6.3. Bronze incense burner

A single bronze incense burner NRAB 82 was reported from room 13 (Pl. 66.2). This device was comprised of separate bronze pieces that had been joined together, taking the form of a three-footed disc (with a central circular cavity) attached to long quadrangular handle with a loop on its end. As noted in NRAB, similar incense burners had been reported at Taxila-Sirkap. However, comparable examples (or parts thereof) are found through different strata of

¹²³⁷ See Marshall 1951, 561, No. 203, Pl. 169. This stratum dated on the basis of coins from Gondophares to Kanishka I by Erdosy 1990, 670.

¹²³⁸ For 11 inkpots of a similar variety, Marshall 1951, 597, Nos. 329–339. The two with the same type of handle from stratum II are Marshall 1951, 597, Nos. 334–335.

the site.¹²³⁹ Another analogous incense burner was reported at the sondage taken by Dagens on the plain of Surkh Kotal.¹²⁴⁰ It thus appears that such varieties of incense burners were produced and used within the wider cultural sphere of Gandhāra and southern Bactria at least around the 1st century BCE to the 2nd century CE, and perhaps the Begram example cannot be dated more finely than that. This incense burner appears to have been found intact, and was documented among a larger dispersed group of objects in the northeastern corner of room 13 (Pl. 18, mislabelled as ‘84’) which included elements from metalwork (§4.4), bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), bronze figurines (§4.5), and the inkpot NRAB 80 (§4.6.2).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 82 (Pl. 66.2)	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Incense burner (<i>‘dhūpadāna’</i>) mounted on three feet. Disc shape with handle, central circular cavity, loop on end of handle.	Dia. 16.0 cm; H. 3.1 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 347.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 740.480.	NMA?

4.7. Fasteners and fittings

4.7.1. Gold-covered nails, gold nail and elements

This group includes an example of a gold nail reportedly attached to a gold rim fragment (NRAB 8), and two examples of nails with round heads covered with sheets of gold (NRAB 175 and NRAB 176). All were documented in NRAB, and no visual records for these objects appear to exist. The nails with round heads covered sheets of gold were remarked in NRAB to have been identical to other gilded examples found at Taxila. However, it is unclear which objects from Taxila are being referred to.¹²⁴¹

NRAB 8 is shown in Hamelin’s plan as having been found near to the east wall of room 13 (Pl. 18), while NRAB 175 and NRAB 175 were reported in NRAB to have been found at the west wall, and are likewise indicated towards the west in the centre of the room on Hamelin’s plan. These objects would then appear to have been detached from any larger

¹²³⁹ Respectively from stratum V, stratum II and stratum I, Marshall 1951, 595–596, Nos. 320–322, Pl. 176.

¹²⁴⁰ And as such, it is not firmly dateable, see regardless Fussman and Guillaume 1990, 107, No. 015, Pls. 1, V.

¹²⁴¹ None of the nails or nail-bosses in Marshall’s report are described as having been gilded. See Marshall 1951, 556–557.

composite objects to which they belonged before being deposited in room 13, perhaps being a vessel with attached gold elements in the case of NRAB 8. These objects are nonetheless of interest because they represent some of the only examples of precious metal objects found in association with the hoard. The other examples are two gold spouts in the form of elephant masks that were found in association with a glass vessel (§4.2.1.16) and an oval plaque with four nails (NRAB 174) reported on the scabbard of an iron dagger (NRAB 172), which are accordingly discussed below (§4.9).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 8	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Small gold nail attached to fragment of beaten gold rim.	L. 0.8 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 175	13, W wall, 2.50 m.	Nail with large round head, covered with a thick sheet of gold. Identical form to some found at Taxila.	H. 2.5 cm; Dia. 2.1 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 176	13, W wall, 2.50 m.	Nail with large round head, covered with a thick sheet of gold. Identical form to some found at Taxila.	H. 2.5 cm; Dia. 2.1 cm.			NMA?

4.7.2. Misc. iron and copper alloy fasteners and fittings

This group incorporates 4 catalogue entries which appear to have originally functioned as fasteners or fittings for a range of items (perhaps a door, a vessel, and boxes), but do not appear to have been found in association with the remains of such. They are described in RAB and NRAB without visual records, but two can be identified in archival documentation.¹²⁴² RAB 221 [75] was tentatively identified as the iron trimming of a door. However, RAB 225 [79] was likewise tentatively described as an iron support, but rather appears to have once served as rod that was attached to a fixed surface and the lid of an object (whether a vessel or otherwise).¹²⁴³ RAB 227 [81], described as a piece of worked iron, is schematically illustrated in F1937 to show a rectangular plaque with circles on the depicted face and cut out rectangular ‘teeth’ along one side, and hence may be rather a lock plate or decorative fitting from a box.

¹²⁴² For RAB 225 [79], MGP 81317/42. For RAB 227, a schematic illustration in F1937.

¹²⁴³ MGP 81317/42.

Finally, NRAB 86 is explicitly described as two copper plaques that formed the area around a lock, perhaps then again for a box, although no indication is given that these plaques had been found in association with the remains of a box. Fasteners and fittings reportedly or interpreted to have been found in association with the remains of boxes are discussed below (under §4.13.2). The objects reported in RAB were probably found along the western wall of room 10, to judge from their numbering, while NRAB 86 was probably (if not certainly) found in the northeastern corner of room 13, to also judge from its numbering.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 221 [75]	10, 2.50 m	Trimming of a door (?), oxidised iron.	H. 9.7 cm; L. 22.0 cm; T. 0.5 cm.			NMA?
RAB 225 [79]	10, 2.60 m	Curved iron rod terminating in two loops, one connected to the remains of an attachment for the lid of an object.	L. 10.0 cm; T. 0.6 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/42.		NMA?
RAB 227 [81]	10, 2.60 m.	Rectangular plaque of iron, three circles on one face, rectangular teeth along one side lock plate or decorative fitting from a box?	L. 9.6 cm; T. 0.1 cm.	Schematic illustration F1937.		NMA?
NRAB 86	13, 2.40 m.	Two small copper plaques forming the area around a lock.	(1) 6.2 x 6.0 cm; (2) 7.1 x 5.7 cm.			NMA?

4.8. Items of toilette

This group includes only one object, the plain bronze mirror NRAB IX. This mirror was reported in NRAB among other finds in the NMA that were presumably from rooms 10 or 13, but could not be precisely connected with the excavation find catalogues thereof (see §2.4.5). Although it was described in NRAB as being a bronze ‘disc, probably a mirror or cover, on the edge of which a kind of tenon remains,’ an archival photograph of this object shows that it is indeed a mirror, although only one side is visible and the image is somewhat unclear.¹²⁴⁴ At least, a slightly raised border appears to be visible around its edge, and it features a small triangular tang at its base where it was to have been set into a handle, which however does not appear to have been reported. A slightly larger similar mirror was reported from

¹²⁴⁴ MGP 81317/84.

stratum II at Taxila-Sirkap, the back of which had a broad raised rim around its edge and a central raised boss. The tang of this mirror had been slotted into bone handle which was found separately.¹²⁴⁵ It is thus plausible that the Begram mirror had been locally produced, although without clearer images of any typological features, perhaps it is not possible to date it with more precision.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB IX	?	Plain bronze mirror, slightly raised rim around edge, short triangular tang.	Dia. 10.5 cm; T. 0.3 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/84.		NMA?

4.9. Military equipment

This group includes 3 articles of military equipment, more specifically two iron arrowheads (NRAB 9, NRAB 35) and an iron dagger with a round pommel found in association with a gold plaque with four gold nails, which is indicated to have decorated its scabbard (NRAB 172 + NRAB 174). Although these objects are listed in NRAB and indicated on Hamelin's plan, no visual records appear to survive for them, precluding any possibility to assess where and when they might have been produced. However, the use of gold on the scabbard of the dagger – presumably having since decayed and perhaps made of wood or leather – suggests that it was a prestigious weapon. Indeed, the dagger might have been a short *acinaces*, which for example have been found deposited in the Oxus temple as offerings, as well in the Tulkhar burials (lower Vakhsh), albeit with different pommels.¹²⁴⁶ The position of the arrowheads is not indicated in NRAB, but Hamelin's plan places them along the eastern wall of room 13 (Pl. 18). The dagger and associated gold plaque are both noted to have been found along the west wall of the same room, where they are also depicted on Hamelin's plan.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 9	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Iron arrowhead.				NMA?
NRAB 35	13, E wall, 2.50 m.	Triangular iron arrowhead, oxidised iron.	H. 6.1 cm; W. 0.2 cm.			NMA?

¹²⁴⁵ Marshall 1951, 584–585, No. 208, Pls. 182 a, 199, No. 55.

¹²⁴⁶ For these, see respectively Litvinskiy 2001, Pls. 58, 61.3–13. On the deposition of *acinaci* as offerings in the Oxus temple, Lindström 2016, 293, 299, 301.

NRAB 172 + NRAB 174	13, W wall, 2.40 m.	Iron dagger with round pommel. Found with small gold oval plaque, pierced four times with gold nails, scabbard decoration.	L. 26.5 cm; W. 2.0 cm; gold oval plaque 3.3 x 2.4 cm.			NMA?
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4.10. Raw or semi-worked materials

4.10.1. Clay sealing

A single example of a clay sealing was documented by Ghirshman under the bastion in room T (Pl. 66.3).¹²⁴⁷ The piece of clay is roughly triangular shaped, with the imprints of two different seals on the front, both depicting indistinct nude figures, while the reverse bore a woven imprint of the surface had been attached to. While Ghirshman tentatively suggested that this was the imprint of a mat,¹²⁴⁸ the sealing might have rather been affixed to the corner of a finely woven basket. This may then indicate that such a sealed container had once been in this room, but had either since decayed or had already been removed in antiquity. In addition to this, the use of seals suggests the performance of administrative activity, broadly defined (see also §5.3 below).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
B.G. 13 (Pl. 66.3)	T, under bastion.	Clay sealing with imprint of woven surface on reverse. Two seal imprints of nude figures.	L. 3.2 cm; W. 2.6 cm; T. 1.5 cm.	Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 9; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 13.	Ghirshman 1946, 69.	?

4.10.2. Coral, marine mollusc shell

This group includes two apparently unworked examples of material of marine origin. These are respectively described in RAB and NRAB as a cracked branch of pink coral (RAB 362 [218]) and a marine shell. Although neither were published with photography, and both

¹²⁴⁷ Ghirshman 1946, 69.

¹²⁴⁸ Ghirshman 1946, 69.

were allocated to the NMA, two separate broken branches of pink coral are on display at the MG, intermittently faded in spots to white (Pl. 66.4). Presumably, one of these pieces should be RAB 362 [218]. Both appear to be examples of Mediterranean Red Coral (*Corallium rubrum*), which was primarily available in the western Mediterranean Basin.¹²⁴⁹ The precise findspot of RAB 362 [218] within room 10 is unclear. The marine (mollusc) shell NRAB 184 is not described in any further detail, but at least the fact that it was not identified by Hackin as a conch – i.e. *Turbinella pyrum*, the divine conch, which also appears as an auspicious symbol on the Begram ivories – means that it was probably the exoskeleton of a different gastropod. This shell was noted in NRAB to have been found at the north wall of room 13, and more specifically it is indicated towards the northwest corner of room 13 on Hamelin's plan (Pl. 18)

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 362 [218] (Pl. 66.4)	10, 2.60 m.	Branch of pink coral, cracked.	L. 7.2 cm.			NMA? MG 21488 a?
NRAB 184	13, NW corner, 2.50 m.	Marine mollusc shell.	H. 11.7 cm; L. 21.5 cm.			NMA?

4.10.3. Worked and unworked semi-precious stone

This group include two pieces of semi-precious stone, a block of worked agate RAB 273 [127], and an unworked block of lapis lazuli NRAB 195. Neither are accompanied with a visual record. Accordingly, it is neither possible to assess which variety of agate RAB 273 [127] represents, nor where it was sourced, nor what kind of object it was worked into (perhaps a stand for a vessel?).¹²⁵⁰ Among those of other semi-precious stones, agate beads were commonly included in relic deposits of eastern Afghanistan and likewise adorn some of the objects deposited in the Tillya-tepe burials.¹²⁵¹ In the ancient world, lapis lazuli was sourced in the mountains of Badakhshan, especially in the Kokcha valley and Sar-i Sang.¹²⁵² Unworked blocks of lapis have also been documented in room 104 of the treasury at Aï Khanoum within a deposit of roughly 75 kg that was found in the shape of a since-decayed basket or bag.¹²⁵³ A

¹²⁴⁹ See Harmelin 2000.

¹²⁵⁰ See, for example, a circular green jasper stand of the Parthian period or later with similar dimensions – however of a different shape and with no hole drilled through the middle – that was found during excavations at Jandial, Taxila, Marshall 1951, 508, No. 155, Pl. 142 ff.

¹²⁵¹ Errington 2017a, 47.

¹²⁵² See Bernard 1978.

¹²⁵³ Rapin 1992, 50.

small circular inlay of lapis was found on a fragment of facet-cut glass from room 10 (RAB 356 [212], see §4.2.1.3), and the powdered stone (evidently having been exported to the Mediterranean) had also been used as a colouring agent on some of the enamelled glass (§4.2.1.2). The stone was utilised on some of the objects in the Tillya-tepe burials,¹²⁵⁴ but is virtually absent among the relic deposits of eastern Afghanistan.¹²⁵⁵ The precise position of the block of agate in room 10 is unclear, but the block of lapis was indicated in NRAB to have been found at the west wall of room 13, where it is also shown in Hamelin's plan (Pl. 18).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 273 [127]	10, 2.60 m	Block of worked agate, conical form, polished and pierced in the middle, a circular groove begins on the truncated cone above the base.	H. 3.4 cm; Dia. 7.8 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 195	13, W wall, 2.50 m	Unworked block of lapis lazuli.	L. 9.0 cm; W. 4.8 cm.			NMA?

4.10.4. Glass cabochons

This group includes 46 glass cabochons of varying colours and sometimes featuring traces of gilding, which were reported in four different sets within room 10 in RAB. No visual records of these objects appear to survive, but it is suggested in RAB that they probably decorated bowls, and Hamelin provides the further detail that they were oval in form, with one face always flat and the other more or less domed.¹²⁵⁶ The precise function of these cabochons is unclear, but it would seem that they were intended to serve as inlays (perhaps in imitation of precious stone?) for composite objects. Although the precise position of these four groups within room 10 is not specified, they are catalogued along other objects that were documented along the west wall of this room (primary glass vessels), and thus most probably were found in this area.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 180 [33]	10, W wall (?), 2.50 m.	Group of 37 glass cabochons (sapphire blue, aquamarine, topaz	L. 1.0–1.9 cm; W. 0.8–1.4 cm; T. 0.2–0.7 cm.		Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA, MG?

¹²⁵⁴ Sarianidi 1985, grave 1 (Nos. 11, 27), grave 2 (Nos. 3, 7, 15), grave 3 (No. 49), grave 5 (No. 6).

¹²⁵⁵ Errington 2017a, 38.

¹²⁵⁶ Hamelin 1954, 182.

		yellow, milky white), probably decorating bowls.				
RAB 222 [76]	10, W wall (?), 2.50 m.	Three glass cabochons with traces of gilding.	1) 1.10 x 0.85 x 0.2 cm; 2) 1.1 x 0.90 x 0.02 cm; 3) 1.1 x 0.85 x 0.02 cm		Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA?
RAB 245 [99]	10, W wall (?), 2.60 m	Three glass cabochons.			Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA?
RAB 246 [100]	10, W wall (?), 2.60 m.	Three glass cabochons.			Hamelin 1954, 182.	NMA?

4.11. Objects of an unknown function

4.11.1. Bronze, copper, and iron objects

In this group I have included 14 objects of bronze, copper, and iron that were catalogued in RAB and NRAB, but are of unknown function. None were published with visual records, but archival photos of two (RAB 162 [14], RAB 226 [80]) still do not entirely elucidate their functions.¹²⁵⁷ The use of some objects may be guessed at: for example, the copper bell NRAB 46 and iron bell NRAB 71 might have been clothing attachments, and the miniature copper vessel NRAB 206 may have been an element detached from a larger composite device of metalwork, such as a candelabrum (see §4.4). However, as these identifications remain unclear from the basis of the descriptions, these objects are nonetheless included in the table below. The first three objects in this group from RAB appear on the basis of their catalogue numbers to have been documented along varying parts of the western wall of room 10. Because of its numbering, the bronze ring RAB 158 bis [10] (perhaps rather a plain hoop, because of its dimensions) more specifically seems to have been found in association with the zoomorphic glass rhyton RAB 158 [9] (§4.2.1.15). The objects described in NRAB were rather dispersed around room 13. The catalogue numbers of NRAB 38–39, NRAB 46, NRAB 61, and NRAB 70–71 would suggest that they were found along the east wall, but they are not indicated on Hamelin's plan. NRAB 157, NRAB 181, and NRAB 206 were respectively found along the north wall, in the northeast corner, and to the east of the south wall.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
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¹²⁵⁷ Respectively MGP 81317/50, 81317/37.

RAB 158 bis [10]	10, NW corner, 2.20 m.	Bronze ring (plain hoop?).	Dia. 4.5 cm.			NMA?
RAB 162 [14]	10, NW corner / W wall, 2.60 m.	Small square bronze stove (?), tringles close together.	7.3 x 6.9 x 1.8 cm	Black and white photo MGP 81317/50.		NMA?
RAB 226 [80]	10, W wall (?), 2.60 m.	Bronze clamp, hook?	L. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photo MGP 81317/37.		NMA?
NRAB 38	13, 2.50 m.	Small bronze hook.	H. 9.3 cm			NMA?
NRAB 39	13, 2.50 m.	Thin copper plaque in form of square.	7.0 x 7.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 46	13, 2.50 m.	Copper bell.	H. 4.0 cm.; Dia. 3.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 61	13, 2.30 m.	Small copper plaque in the form of a heart.	H. 7.3 cm; W. 6.3 cm; T. 0.1 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 70	13, NE corner, 2.40 m.	Small bronze cupule, at base an 'umbilicus' in a circle.	H. 2.6 cm; Dia. 6.7 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 71	13, 2.55 m.	Iron bell.	H. 7.3 cm; Dia. 4.3 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 76	13, E wall, 2.30 m	Bronze object in the form of a stylus and two moving elements (coulants).	L. 17.3 cm; T. (coulants) 1.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 157	13, N wall, 2.50 m.	Bronze piece in cylindrical form, pierced in upper part with rectangular opening.	H. 11.0 cm.; Dia. 1.6 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 158	13, 2.50 m.	Bronze cylindrical piece, decorated with horizontal incisions and topped by a small disc.	H. 11.4 cm; Dia. 3.2 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 181	13, NE corner, 2.50 m	Bronze plaque with cutout of quarter circle, bevelled on straight edges.	41.3 x 50.6 cm; T. 0.5 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 206	13, E of S wall, 2.50 m.	Small copper cylindrical vessel.	H. 3.1 cm; Dia. 5.4 cm.			NMA?

4.11.2. Plain ivory components

This group includes three hollow cylindrical ivory components of uncertain function. They are described in NRAB, where one (NRAB 87) was noted to be found along the east wall of room 13 and is indicated towards the northeast corner in Hamelin's plan (Pl. 18), while the other two (NRAB XXIII–XXIV) were reported from the NMA (see §2.4.5) and accordingly their precise findspots are uncertain. No visual records for these objects appear to have survived, but the second component is described in detail in NRAB, noting comparability with NRAB 76 and NRAB XXIV (see table below). According to these descriptions, these components appear to have been elephant tusks that had been worked in the form of interlocking cylinders. Mehendale regarded them as examples of unworked, uncarved ivory, and hence indicative of the possibility that an ivory carving workshop was present at Begram.¹²⁵⁸ However, as their descriptions suggest that they were worked to some degree, their function remains unclear. Perhaps they may have served as parts of furniture legs, although one would expect somewhat more evidence of working for this function (see §4.13.1.3).¹²⁵⁹ Their descriptions do not seem to correspond well to the hollow ivory cylinder that was documented in association with the dislocated remains of an unknown article of composite ivory furniture, perhaps a railing, found in room 10 (see §4.13.1, §4.13.1.4).

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 87	13, E wall, 2.40 m	Hollow ivory cylinder without ornaments.	H. 21.2 cm; Dia. 11.2 cm; T. 0.7 cm.			NMA?
NRAB XXIII	?	Fragment of elephant tusk, type NRAB 87. Like NRAB 87, the top is recessed in size to allow the interlocking of another piece, which must have fit to a corresponding piece. This fragment was to form the base of a series of nested cylinders, the	H. 22.0 cm; Dia. 12.3 cm; T. 0.8 cm.			NMA?

¹²⁵⁸ Mehendale 1997, 6.3.

¹²⁵⁹ Compare, for example, the ivory furniture legs from the Square House of Old Nisa in Manassero 2018, 125–159.

		bottom of which, there are traces. Major lacunae in the cylinder wall.				
NRAB XXIV	?	Same as NRAB XXIII, but without bottom, and retracts at interior towards base. Major lacunae in the cylinder wall.	H. 23.5 cm; Dia. 12.0 cm.			NMA?

4.12. Plaster casts

This is a large group of apparently 56 individual casts in different forms (circular, trapezoidal, and miscellaneous) that were produced from gypsum plaster and feature designs in positive relief (Pls. 67–69). The primary documentation for these casts is presented in NRAB, and the most comprehensive studies of this corpus are those produced by Kurz and Menninger,¹²⁶⁰ with other commentary found in papers, for example, by Adriani, Picard, Richter, and Burkhalter.¹²⁶¹

The Begram plaster casts were produced from negative matrices (perhaps clay, wax, plaster, or bitumen)¹²⁶² that were themselves taken from either pre-existing articles of metalwork or original models created in a workshop. Plaster casts in a variety of forms and dimensions were used in the Graeco-Roman world to copy elements of sculpture and relief imagery towards the production of new works that copied, transferred, or reproduced elements of the old.¹²⁶³ Among the numerous known individual examples of plaster casts from antiquity, the most significant comparative corpus with respect to the collection at Begram is that of the ca. 400 plaster casts from Mit Rahina, Memphis (Egypt), which emerged from clandestine excavations onto the antiquities market in the early 20th century.¹²⁶⁴ Most of these casts are dated on the basis of their stylistic and iconographic features to the Hellenistic period, but earlier and later examples also appear among this collection. Their presence in Memphis is generally presumed to have been associated with the location of a toreutic workshop.

As a corpus, the Begram casts primarily represent depictions of broad range of figures and scenes from Graeco-Roman mythology, as well as more decorative elements such as the

¹²⁶⁰ Kurz 1954, 110–150; Menninger 1996, 93–219.

¹²⁶¹ Adriani 1955; Picard 1955; 1960; Richter 1958; Burkhalter 1984.

¹²⁶² Menninger (1996, 93) deduces that these matrices were produced from a brittle material, as indicated by the ridges visible on the surfaces of some casts.

¹²⁶³ See, for example, Frederiksen 2010; Reinhardt 2019, 23–53.

¹²⁶⁴ See Rubensohn 1911; Ippel 1937; Reinsberg 1980.

arrangement of a grapevine and leaves (NRAB 129, Pl. 68.5), and the three-dimensional forepart of a left foot (NRAB 99 bis, Pl. 69.13). The casts in this corpus feature qualities of standardisation. At least 44 individual pieces had been made in circular form of varying dimensions (Pls. 67–69.9), while 9 were produced in trapezoidal form of more consistent dimensions (Pl. 69.10–12). The circular formed casts appear largely (if not exclusively) to refer to the central decorative medallions found on the interior of bowls, and are hence often referred to in scholarship as ‘*emblemata*.’ The trapezoidal casts were rather taken from the curved exterior walls of vessels, such as cups. Three casts diverge from the two main circular and trapezoidal types, including the forepart of a foot mentioned above (NRAB 99 bis, Pl. 69.13), an oval-shaped cast with the representation of a sleeping Maenad (NRAB 126), and the cast of the front side of a figurine of Aphrodite (NRAB 114, Pl. 69.14).

Menninger notes that some of the circular casts also feature the reliefs of frames made from a plastic material that had been applied to a metal original for producing the negative matrix, while the frames forming the edges of the trapezoidal casts had been added to the wall of pre-existing vessels to isolate the selected image.¹²⁶⁵ Bernard has more recently observed that numerous of the casts (primarily the circular examples) kept in the NMA featured the remains of two small channels running from the top of the cast into the body of the object, which he proposes had held a thread to facilitate the extraction of the cast from the mould. Similar channels were also observed in the casts from Mit Rahina (see above) and those found at Aï Khanoum (see below).¹²⁶⁶

Some designs on the circular casts are not unique, but presented in two copies, i.e. made from the same negative matrix. These include the two depicting the head and shoulders of a helmeted youth in profile, probably Ares (NRAB 97, NRAB 98, Pls. 67.2–3), an idyllic scene featuring dogs, perhaps the myth of Actaeon (NRAB 125, NRAB 125 bis, Pl. 68.2), a scene which probably depicts Heracles and the Erymanthian boar (NRAB 100, NRAB 138, Pls. 67.5, 68.10), and the head and shoulders of Athena depicted in profile (NRAB 139, NRAB 214, Pl. 68.11).

The number of different workshops which had produced these casts is not clear. The fields of seven casts (NRAB 100 = NRAB 138, Pls. 67.5, 68.10, NRAB 105, Pl. 67.5, NRAB 139 = NRAB 214, Pl. 68.11, NRAB 149 bis, Pl. 69.4, NRAB III) show that a raised ovoid

¹²⁶⁵ Menninger 1996, 94.

¹²⁶⁶ Bernard in Lecuyot 2013, 72–73, n. 171. The plaster casts from Begram with this feature are reported to be NRAB 99 bis, 101–103, 105, 110, 113, 122–123, 134, 139–140, 142–143, 145, 147, 149 bis, 212, 227–228, III–V.

sealing on a plastic mass with an impressed design – a head in profile to right in the clearer examples – had been applied to the originals that the negative matrices were taken from.¹²⁶⁷ Although their precise function is not clear, they probably speak to some kind of administrative function (broadly defined) within the workshop/s producing these casts. In addition to this, two miniature imprints resembling monograms, perhaps stamps, had apparently been made into the lower field of the metal originals of NRAB 128 and NRAB 130 (Pl. 68.4, 68.6). Kurz considered that these monograms may represent an artist's signature, while Menninger noted that they were not carefully placed with respect to the design and thus perhaps an official authority could have been responsible for them.¹²⁶⁸ As the seals mentioned above, they most likely reflect some kind of administrative function. Because of the different forms of the Begram plaster casts, Menninger ultimately took it as probable that they were not produced in the same workshop,¹²⁶⁹ but considering the similarities across the casts in this group, perhaps the casts were only sourced from a limited number of workshops.

There are difficulties involved in delineating precisely when and where the Begram plaster casts were produced. With respect to their date, the key problem is that the negative matrices from which the casts were taken could have been made from antique works, and thus the identification of iconographic and stylistic traits for individual casts can theoretically only establish a *terminus post quem* for each object's production. Accordingly, a substantial body of scholarly literature has debated the dating of these casts, the findings of which are summarised and discussed by Menninger.¹²⁷⁰ Ultimately, he dates the production of the originals that they were based on between the 2nd century BCE to the mid 1st century CE.¹²⁷¹ With respect to their place of production, a number of scholars have highlighted especially the imagery of the circular cast depicting the reclining Tyche of Alexandria (NRAB 140, Pl. 68.12) and a comparable trapezoidal cast purchased by Furtwängler in Cairo to argue that the Begram casts had been produced in Egypt, more specifically Alexandria.¹²⁷² Menninger considers arguments for and against a specific Egyptian provenance, concluding that while there are numerous indications that the originals had been available in Egypt, this is not entirely certain, it is not impossible that some of the casts had also been imported to Egypt and traded onwards from there.¹²⁷³

¹²⁶⁷ Kurz (1954, 140) noticed four, Menninger (1996, 96–97, n. 20) five.

¹²⁶⁸ Kurz 1954, 140; Menninger 1996, 97.

¹²⁶⁹ Menninger 1996, 96.

¹²⁷⁰ Menninger 1996, 98–100.

¹²⁷¹ Menninger 1996, 219.

¹²⁷² For example, Kurz (1954, 145–146), and especially Adriani 1955.

¹²⁷³ Menninger 1996, 210–211, 216.

Although it has been suggested that the Begram casts may have been used as decorative objects,¹²⁷⁴ or to facilitate mechanical reproduction of the images they bore,¹²⁷⁵ it rather appears that – like their counterparts in the Graeco-Roman world – they had served as general reference material for production in a workshop context,¹²⁷⁶ even though the nature of material produced by this workshop is not known.¹²⁷⁷ At least two (NRAB 111, NRAB 132, Pls. 67.10, 68.7) had featured intentional holes presumably to facilitate suspension for display towards this purpose.

Examples of Hellenistic plaster casts probably used for similar purposes have since been reported elsewhere in Central Asia. At Aï Khanoum, four examples of casts taken from vessels representing at least two mythological scenes and the anterior of a horse were found in a pit in a house in the southwest quarter.¹²⁷⁸ At the same site, a medallion with a gorgon's head was found in the sanctuary of the temple with indented niches, as well as a baked clay mould of a female bust taken from a toreutic work.¹²⁷⁹ More recently, part of a circular plaster cast perhaps depicting a scene from the Gigantomachy was reported in a Yuezhi-Kushan period coroplastic workshop at Old Termez.¹²⁸⁰ As Mairs noted with respect to the Aï Khanoum plaster casts, the utility of the Begram casts for the transmission of imagery is thus predicated by earlier practice in the region.¹²⁸¹

All of the Begram plaster casts appear to have been found in room 13. Virtually all of those catalogued in NRAB are noted more specifically to have been found at the south wall, where they are also indicated in stacks on Meunié's plan (Pl. 18), interspersed to some degree with the lacquerwares (§4.2.6). The five casts from the NMA that were catalogued in NRAB under Roman numerals were at least presumably found in room 13, as finds of plaster casts are referenced nowhere else in the excavation documentation. The plaster casts were reported in varying states of completeness. While many were virtually intact, others were broken into several pieces and/or were missing fragments. The otherwise excellent state of preservation of many of the casts may suggest that some of this damage had occurred prior to the deposition of the casts into room 13, and not solely because of postdepositional processes. Indeed, the left

¹²⁷⁴ Picard 1960.

¹²⁷⁵ Mairs 2014b, 184–185.

¹²⁷⁶ See, for example, Menninger 1996, 205–206.

¹²⁷⁷ Gullini (1961, 33) considers metalwork, Coarelli (1966, 102–103) Gandhāran stucco.

¹²⁷⁸ See most recently Bernard in Lecuyot 2013, 68–74, P.O. Nos. 1040 A et B, 1041–1043, Fig. 24, Pl. XIV.

¹²⁷⁹ Francfort 1984, 35–37, 45–46, Nos. O.2249–2250, Pls. 18, XVI, XVII; Bernard in Lecuyot 2013, 72.

¹²⁸⁰ De Pontbriand and Leriche 2012, 19, Fig. 4.

¹²⁸¹ Mairs 2014b, 184–185.

arm of the cast of the figurine of Aphrodite (NRAB 114, Pl. 69.14) was noted in NRAB to have been found four days after the figurine was documented.

In the tables below, I first list the 44 circular casts in the order that they were reported, and subsequently the trapezoidal casts, followed by the final three casts with unique forms. The description of the imagery depicted on these casts follows the identifications of Kurz and Menninger, and when no visual record is available the description in NRAB.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 74	13, 2.45 m.	Two fragments of a circular plaster cast depicting standing man, seated woman in profile to left, standing man in profile to right.	1. 8.0 x 4.7 cm; 2. 8.0 x 4.5 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 96 (Pl. 67.1)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Ganymede watering Zeus as an eagle.	Dia. 12.8 cm; T. 1.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 296, 417; Colour photo LTR No. 187.	Kurz 1954, 123–126; Menninger 1996, 107, 174–175, No. M 26; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 749.489.	NMA 57-1-56 / 04.1.22.
NRAB 97 (Pl. 67.2)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of youth in profile with helmet and lance, probably Ares. Same type as NRAB 98.	Dia. 12.5 cm; T. 1.0 cm (NRAB).	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 299 (Fig. 437 is rather NRAB 98); Colour photo LTR No. 185.	Kurz 1954, 129–130; Menninger 1996, 159–160, No. M 11; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 750.490.	NMA 57-1-55 / 04.1.19.
NRAB 98 (Pl. 67.3)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of youth in profile with helmet and lance, probably Ares. Same type as NRAB 97. More fragments evidently recovered from excavation materials, allowing full restoration.	7.7 x 5.3 cm (NRAB, prior to restoration).	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 437 (after restoration, labelled as NRAB 97); Black and white photo prior to restoration MGP 81313/9.	Kurz 1954, 129–130; Menninger 1996, 159–160, No. M 12.	MG MA 197.
NRAB 99 (Pl. 67.4)	13, S wall, 2.55 m.	Incomplete circular plaster cast depicting standing nude male, perhaps Poseidon holding a phiale over an altar.	Dia. 14.0 cm; T. 0.9 cm (NRAB).	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 292.	Kurz 1954, 122; Menninger 1996, 119–120, 162–163, No. M 14; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 751.491	NMA?
NRAB 100 (Pl. 67.5)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Heracles and the	Dia. 18 cm; T. 0.8 cm	Gullini 1961, No. 21.	Gullini 1961, No. 21; Menninger	NMA 57-1-77 / ?

		Erymanthian Boar? Same type as NRAB 138.			1996, 177–180, No. M 30; Tissot 2006 K.p. Beg. 752.492 (NRAB 138 pictured).	
NRAB 101 (Pl. 67.6)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting nude standing bearded male with chlamys, stick, and patera making a libation/sacrifice over an altar.	Dia. 13.2 cm; T. 1.4 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 294.	Menninger 1996, 162–164, No. M 15; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 754.494.	NMA?
NRAB 102–103 (Pl. 67.7)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting naked Endymion lying on ground, approached by Selene, Eros figure.	Dia. 16.0 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 291, 415; Cambon 2002 No. 35; Colour photo LTR No. 190.	Kurz 1954, 141; Menninger 1996, 180–182, No. M 31; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 755.495.	NMA 57-1-51 / ?
NRAB 105 (Pl. 67.8)	Room 13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting nude bearded male with helmet, garment and weapon, Odysseys at the theft of the Palladium.	Dia. 11.0 cm; T. 1.30 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 308, 445.	Kurz 1954, 130–133; Menninger 1996, 166–169, No. M 19; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 756.496.	NMA 55-1-78 / ?
NRAB 110 (Pl. 67.9)	13, S wall, 2.35 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Dionysiac thiasus.	Dia. 13.8 cm; T. 1.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 275, 384.	Kurz 1954, 111–113; Menninger 1996, 192–194, No. M 36; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 757.497.	NMA?
NRAB 111 (Pl. 67.10)	13, S wall, 2.35 m.	Circular plaster cast, depicting youth in high relief with mantle, sling, headband, young hero or Apollo? Two suspension holes on either side of head.	Dia. 22.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 313–315; Colour photo LTR No. 183.	Kurz 1954, 139; Menninger 1996, 154–155; No. M 2; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 758.498.	NMA 57-1-44 / 04.1.17.
NRAB 112 (Pl. 67.11)	13, S wall, 2.35 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting a child, head made separately in the round, holding butterfly, representation of Eros and Psyche.	Dia. 16.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 305, 425; Colour photo LTR No. 186.	Kurz 1954, 127; Menninger 1996, 154, No. M 1; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 759.499.	NMA 57-1-47 / 04.1.117.
NRAB 122 (Pl. 67.12)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head of youth, maenad or Dionysus, crowned with leaves and flowers, to right.	Dia. 16.3; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 278.	Kurz 1954, 139; Menninger 1996, 157–158, No. M 7; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 761.501.	NMA 57-1-76 / ?
NRAB 123 (Pl. 67.13)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of Athena (?) in profile to right.	Dia. 16.3; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 123, 302.	Menninger 1996, 161–162, No. M 13; Tissot 2006,	NMA 57-1-49 / ?

					K.p. Beg. 762.502.	
NRAB 124 (Pl. 68.1)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting tragic poet with muses.	Dia. 15.2 cm; T. 1.4 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 309, 450; Colour photo LTR No. 184.	Kurz 1954, 136; Menninger 1996, 175–176, No. M 27; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 763.503.	NMA ? / 04.1.18
NRAB 125 (Pl. 68.2)	13, S wall, 2.55 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting idyllic scene with dogs, perhaps the myth of Actaeon. Same type as NRAB 125 bis.	Dia. 22.5 cm, T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 304, 431.	Kurz 1954, 130; Menninger 1996, 186–188, No. M 33; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 764.504.	NMA?
NRAB 125 bis	13, S wall, 2.55 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting idyllic scene with dogs, perhaps the myth of Actaeon. Same type as NRAB 125.	H. 12.0 cm; W. 8.5 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo of part of fragment Menninger 1996, No. M 34.	Kurz 1954, 130; Menninger 1996, 186–188, No. M 34.	MG M 198
NRAB 127 (Pl. 68.3)	13, S wall.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of woman looking to left, maenad or Artemis?	Dia. 16.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 279, 391.	Kurz 1954, 115; Menninger 1996, 113–115, No. M 8; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg.	NMA?
NRAB 128 (Pl. 68.4)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Heracles watering an eagle from a cup.	Dia. 14.6 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 293, 389.	Kurz 1954, 122; Menninger 1996, 119–120, No. M 16.	MG MA 194
NRAB 129 (Pl. 68.5)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting arrangement of grapevine and leaves.	Dia. 12.0 cm; T. 1.5 cm	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 281, 412; Cambon 2002 No. 36; Colour photo LTR. No. 189	Kurz 1954, 139; Menninger 1996, 198–199, No. M 40; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 767.507.	NMA 57-1- 84 / ?
NRAB 130 (Pl. 68.6)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting standing Athena watering snake from a vessel.	Dia. 14.0 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 295.	Kurz 1954, 123; Menninger 1996, 119–120, No. M 17; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 768.508.	NMA ?
NRAB 131	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting Odysseus.	14.4 cm x 10.2 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 306.	Kurz 1954, 133; Menninger 1996, 121–122, No. M 21; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 769.509.	NMA 57-1- 72 / ?
NRAB 132 (Pl. 68.7)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting portrait of a bearded man in profile to left. Hole for suspension at top.	Dia. 19.1 cm; T. 1.3 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 312, 312 bis.	Kurz 1954, 138; Menninger 1996, 112–113, No. M 4; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 770.510.	NMA 57-1- 42 / ?

NRAB 133 (Pl. 68.8)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of Heracles in profile to right.	Dia. 19.0 cm; T. 1.9 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 300, 435.	Kurz 1954, 128; Menninger 1996, 109, No. M 3; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 771.511.	NMA 57-1-70 / ?
NRAB 134 (Pl. 68.9)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of satyr in profile to right.	Dia. 16.5 cm; T. 1.1 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 276.	Kurz 1954, 114; Menninger 1996, 113–114, No. M 6; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 772.512.	NMA 57-1-43 / ?
NRAB 135	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast of nude man standing in profile to right?	Dia. 13.2 cm; T. 1.1 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 136	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting bust of satyr to right.	16.9 x 16.0 cm.			NMA?
NRAB 138 (Pl. 68.10)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Heracles and the Erymanthian Boar? Same type as NRAB 100.	Dia. 18.0 cm; T. 0.9 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 311.	Kurz 1954, 140; Menninger 1996, 177–180, No. M 29.	MG MA 193
NRAB 139 (Pl. 68.11)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of Athena in profile to left. Same type as NRAB 214.	Dia 12.5 cm; T. 1.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 301, 428.	Kurz 1954, 126; Menninger 1996, 117–118; No. M 9.	
NRAB 140 (Pl. 68.12)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting reclining Tyche of Alexandria.	Dia. 17.2 cm; T. 1.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 303, 422.	Kurz 1954, 127–128; Menninger 1996, 122–123, No. M 23; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 774.514.	NMA 57-1-53 / ?
NRAB 141 (Pl. 68.13)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting standing Eros with basket and indistinct object.	Dia. 15.2 cm; T. 1.1 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 316.	Menninger 1996, 124–125, No. M 25; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 775.515.	NMA?
NRAB 144 (Pl. 69.1)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Odysseus at the theft of the Palladium.	Dia. 13.3 cm; T. 1.1 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 307, 433.	Menninger 1996, 120–121, No. M 20; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 776.516.	NMA?
NRAB 145 (Pl. 69.2)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting a nymph with Dionysus the child.	Dia. 12.6 cm; T. 1.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 277, 393.	Kurz 1954, 113–114; Menninger 1996, 115–116, No. M 5; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 777.517.	NMA?
NRAB 146 (Pl. 69.3)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting standing Eros with bunch of grapes.	Dia. 15.2 cm; T. 1.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 317.	Menninger 1996, 124–125, No. M 24.	MG MA 196
NRAB 149	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast, subject indistinct.	Dia. 12.3 cm; T. 1.5 cm.			NMA?

NRAB 149 bis (Pl. 69.4)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting Diomedes at theft of the Palladium.	Dia. 11.7 cm; T. 1.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 444.	Kurz 1954, 130–133; Menninger 1996, 120–121, No. M 18; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 778.518.	NMA?
NRAB 213 (Pl. 69.5)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting sacrificial scene.	H. 14.1 cm; W. 7.6 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 289, 410.	Kurz 1954, 119; Menninger 1996, 130–133, No. M 38; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 780.520.	NMA?
NRAB 214	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting head and shoulders of Athena in profile to left, same type as NRAB 139.	H. 11.4 cm; W. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photos MGP 81313/20 (design); 81313/21 (reverse).	Menninger 1996, 159, No. M 10.	MG MA 438
NRAB 226 (Pl. 69.6)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting scene of comic poet and muses.	Dia. 14.0 cm; T. 0.9 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 310.	Kurz 1954, 134–136; Menninger 1996, 176–177, No. M 28.	MG MA 195
NRAB 227 (Pl. 69.7)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Circular plaster cast depicting cooking of a pig, sacrificial scene in outdoor setting.	Dia. 15.3 cm; 1.4 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 290, 397.	Kurz 1954, 115–116; Menninger 1996, 182–186 No. M 32; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 779.519.	NMA 57-1-50 / ?
NRAB 228 (Pl. 69.8)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Fragment of circular plaster cast depicting forepart of chimera.	H. 18.5 cm; W. 11.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 320.	Menninger 1996, 122, No. M 22; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 781.521.	NMA?
NRAB I (Pl. 69.9)	13?	Circular plaster cast depicting thiasus and Dionysus.	Dia. 13.7 cm; T. 1.7 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 274, 378.	Menninger 1996, 188–191, No. M 35; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 783.523.	NMA 57-1-80 / ?
NRAB II	13?	Three fragments of circular plaster cast depicting thiasus, with Heracles?		Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 318.	Menninger 1996, 194–197, No. M 37; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 773.513.	NMA
NRAB III	13?	Circular plaster cast, two standing figures.	Dia. 13.2 cm; T. 1.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 319.	Menninger 1996, 198, No. M 39; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 784.524.	NMA?

The following table includes the nine casts in a trapezoidal form in the order that they were reported.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 113 (Pl. 69.10)	13, S wall, 2.35 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting three figures, the central one raising a torch.	H. 8.5 cm; W 8.3 cm; T. 1.4 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Figs. 285, 405.	Menninger 1996, 199, No. S 1; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 782.522a.	NMA?
NRAB 142 (Pl. 69.11)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast with two standing women.	H. 8.9 cm; W. 7.6 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 282, 407.	Menninger 1996, 199, No. S 2; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 782.522b.	NMA
NRAB 143 (Pl. 69.12)	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting a scene at cult table.	H. 8.3 cm; W. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 283.	Menninger 1996, 199, No. S 3; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 782.522e.	NMA
NRAB 147	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting figure filling vessel with an amphora.	H. 9.0 cm; W. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 284.	Menninger 1996, 200, No. S 4.	MG?
NRAB 148	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast, subject unclear.	H. 8.4 cm; W. 8.0 cm.		Menninger 1996, No. S 5.	NMA?
NRAB 148 bis	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting woman at altar.	H. 7.2 cm; W. 7.2 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 286.	Menninger 1996, 200, No. S 6.	MG MA 199
NRAB 212	13, S wall, 2.50 m.	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting two women holding a platter?	H. 8.5 cm; W. 8.0 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 288.	Menninger 1996, 200, No. S 7; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 782.522c.	NMA?
NRAB IV	13?	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting amphora, crater, figure?	H. 8.5 cm; W. 8.0 cm.		Menninger 1996, 200, No. S 8.	NMA?
NRAB V	13?	Trapezoidal plaster cast depicting standing woman with arm outstretched, child?	H. 8.5 cm; W. 7.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 287.	Menninger 1996, 201–202, No. S 9; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 782.522d.	NMA?

The table below includes the three plaster casts of otherwise unique forms.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 99 bis (Pl. 69.13)	13, S wall (association with NRAB 99).	Plaster cast of forepart of a left foot, big toe broken.	L. 12.6 cm; W. 8.6 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 321.	Kurz 1954, 110; Menninger 1996, 96, No. S 11; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 753.493.	NMA?
NRAB 114 (Pl. 69.14)	13, S wall, 2.40 m.	Plaster cast in form of front side of Aphrodite represented nude, left arm extended	H. 26.7 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 297, 298; Colour photo LTR No. 186.	Menninger 1996, 204–205, No. S 12; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 760.550.	NMA ? / 04.1.20.

		holding an apple. Left arm discovered separately four days later.				
NRAB 126	13, S wall, 2.55 m.	Oval plaster cast depicting a sleeping maenad.	H. 17.5 cm; W. 15.5 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 280, 395.	Menninger 1996, 204, No. S 10; Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 765.505.	NMA 57-1- 54 / ?

4.13. Furniture

4.13.1. Ivory and bone furniture

This group encompasses the famous ‘Begram ivories,’ i.e. the ca. 1040 worked ivory and bone elements¹²⁸² that had once adorned articles of furniture (Pls. 70–88, 91.2–4). These pieces of furniture may have included up to 13 footstools (§4.13.1.1, Pls. 70–77), 8 chair backrests and panels (§4.13.1.2, Pls. 78–85), 3 detached furniture legs (§4.13.1.3, Pl. 86), and a further unidentified ensemble of furniture featuring ‘statuettes’ of women (§4.13.1.4, Pl. 87).¹²⁸³ The primary documentation for this group is found in RAB and NRAB, the latter of which also included contributions by Stern and Hamelin regarding the reconstruction of the original appearance of the furniture.¹²⁸⁴ Tissot’s catalogue of the NMA’s collection also includes some archival photographs and illustrations.¹²⁸⁵ Hand-drawn examples of the marks on the reverse of some of the plaques – which sometimes slightly differ to those presented alongside certain catalogue entries in RAB – are also found in archival documentation.¹²⁸⁶

This corpus of furniture elements is extremely significant from an art-historical perspective because it represents by far the most extant examples of the output of ivory carvers of ancient India. Ivory carving must have represented an important industry, with some production certainly structured by guilds (*śreṇī*), but examples of worked ivory from this tradition rarely survive in the archaeological record.¹²⁸⁷ One famous exception is a carved statuette of a woman, originally a furniture element, that was excavated at a house in Pompeii (Pl. 89.1).¹²⁸⁸ Accordingly, the Begram ivories have attracted an enormous amount of scholarly

¹²⁸² According to the count in Mehendale 1997, 2.2.1, n. 1.

¹²⁸³ Three ivory cylindrical components of unknown function are dealt with separately above, for which see §4.11.2.

¹²⁸⁴ In Hackin 1954a, 315–330.

¹²⁸⁵ See Tissot 2006, 134–264.

¹²⁸⁶ F1937, MSRAB.

¹²⁸⁷ On ivory carving in India, see Chandra 1957; Dwivedi 1976.

¹²⁸⁸ See e.g. During Caspers 1981, and now Evers 2017, 22–36.

attention with respect to interpreting their artistic content and moreover discerning precisely when and where they had been produced. However, answers to the latter questions still remain uncertain. Major works concerning the ivories include the essays by Auboyer and Stern in NRAB,¹²⁸⁹ further contributions by Auboyer, Davidson, Rosen Stone, Gill, Nehru, the dissertation and other works by Mehendale, and reports on the technical study on 20 elements undertaken at the British Museum.¹²⁹⁰ In this section, I consider aspects of the entire corpus of the Begram ivories, and list the relevant pieces of furniture in the tables of the following subsections.

The majority of the Begram ivories constitute decorative plaques that had been worked with a variety of techniques¹²⁹¹ before being nailed onto or fitted into pieces of furniture with wooden armatures. Other elements in this corpus included more plain plaques (e.g. those on Backrest 161), miniature columns, spikes, and beads carved in the round, and also pieces carved in the round which served as brackets and parts of furniture legs. A more limited number of the ‘ivories’ had been produced from bone. Although elements are identified throughout RAB and NRAB as either ivory or bone, it is still possible that several have been misidentified. This is because it can be difficult to distinguish bone from ivory, especially without the aid of specialist knowledge and tools. Indeed, when a group of the Begram ivories were studied at the British Museum, differentiating between the two media required examination with an optical microscope and reference to comparative specimens. This analysis revealed that a number of elements originally from Footstool I and Footstool V (§4.13.1.1) that were identified in RAB as bone were actually made of ivory after all,¹²⁹² although a carved panel from the post of Backrest 3 (§4.13.1.2) as well as a part of a furniture leg (probably Furniture Leg 2, §4.13.1.3, Pl. 86.5) were confirmed to have been made from bone as they had originally been identified.¹²⁹³ Hence, the Begram ivory and bone elements are treated together here, and the identification of the material used for certain pieces mentioned below (which necessarily follows the indications in RAB and NRAB) should not be considered to be entirely certain in all cases.

The precise number of pieces of furniture represented by the Begram ivories is unclear for three reasons: their poor state of preservation, their chaotic presentation in rooms 10 and

¹²⁸⁹ Auboyer 1954; Stern 1954.

¹²⁹⁰ See Auboyer 1971; Davidson 1971; 1972; Rosen Stone 1974; 1994, 91–97; 2008; Mehendale 1996; 1997; 2001; 2012; Gill 2001; Nehru 2004; Ambers et al. 2014.

¹²⁹¹ For the preparation of the elephant tusk and method of carving these pieces, Mehendale 1997, 2.3.1; Simpson 2014, 18–21.

¹²⁹² For Footstool I, Ambers et al. 2014, Cat. 1–4, 11. For Footstool V, Ambers et al. 2014, Cat. 7–9.

¹²⁹³ Respectively Ambers et al. 2014, Cat. 13, 20.

13, and the incomplete documentation that survives to clarify their positioning upon excavation. To elaborate, first, exposure to the humid fill in rooms 10 and 13 had damaged the ivories to the extent that they crumbled upon touch. Each element could only be recovered by applying gelatine and tissue paper for reinforcement *in situ*, and when safely extracted, the tissue paper was removed from the element with a knife.¹²⁹⁴ Second, these elements were recorded in RAB and NRAB in an inconsistent manner, being spread across numerous catalogue entries (with several elements often listed under single catalogue numbers), and were only infrequently noted to be part of fuller ensembles within these catalogues. In RAB, several elements are subsumed into catalogue entries marked with Roman numerals (I–XIII). These indicated articles of furniture that were first interpreted as coffers, but were later understood by Hamelin as rather representing remains of footstools.¹²⁹⁵ The picture is still less clear in NRAB. For example, elements catalogued under NRAB 150 and NRAB 191 appear to have belonged to different parts of furniture (backrests and panels) that had been stacked on each other.¹²⁹⁶ Third, although the positioning of these articles of furniture was only incompletely documented, the original appearances of a number were nonetheless painstakingly reconstructed later by Hamelin on the basis of photography (especially photos taken *in situ*), illustrations and sketches made by Carl, descriptions in the excavation catalogues, and preserved elements of the furniture.¹²⁹⁷ Generally, the reconstructed pieces of furniture correspond well to depictions of chairs and footstools found frequently in the relief sculpture of Amaravati.¹²⁹⁸ Hamelin's reconstructions and their significance will be discussed further below.

The decorative plaques among the ivories were executed with a number of carving techniques – engraved or incised, flat relief, sunken relief, low relief, and high relief openwork¹²⁹⁹ – and depict a wide array of mythical, animal, fantastic and human subjects.¹³⁰⁰ Depictions of scantily-clad women are especially common. Subjects appear alone, in pairs, and groups, as well as in 'genre' and apparent narrative scenes.¹³⁰¹ Certain plaques featured tenons to be fitted into the mortises of furniture, while others had been affixed (via pre-drilled holes) with copper rivets. Some rivets featured decorative heads in the forms of rosettes, fish, or the

¹²⁹⁴ The process is detailed in Hackin 1954a, 15–16.

¹²⁹⁵ See Hackin 1954a, 316.

¹²⁹⁶ Again, see Hackin 1954a, 316.

¹²⁹⁷ Hackin 1954a, 315.

¹²⁹⁸ See Hackin 1954a, 317 and NRAB Figs. 621–630.

¹²⁹⁹ On description of these techniques, see Hackin 1939a, 13–14; Mehendale 1997, 2.3.1–2.

¹³⁰⁰ On the range of subjects represented, Mehendale 1997, 3.4.1–3.4.2.

¹³⁰¹ Gill 2001. Although Foucher (1954b, 83–87) proposed to identify depictions of scenes from *jātaka* stories on two panels from Backrest 55, Gill (2001, 316–318) has stressed that their 'Buddhist' character remains uncertain.

heads of monsters. The decorative plaques had also been embellished in other ways. For example, traces of red, black, white, and green pigments were noticed on several pieces upon excavation. Scientific analysis of 20 plaques by the British Museum has more recently illuminated the breadth of pigments that had been utilised – such as amorphous carbon, vermilion, indigo, hematite – and suggests that these were typically used to highlight designs on incised plaques, as well as decorate the borders of openwork pieces.¹³⁰² Sheets of mica had also been used for embellishment, having (for example) been placed behind the openwork carvings on Panel 34 and Backrest 5.

A range of marks incised and inked on the reverse of certain plaques were also noticed and reported in RAB and NRAB. Some of these were identified by Hackin in RAB as representing Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī letters that served to facilitate the placement of the plaques on the pieces of the furniture they belonged to, while other signs were considered to have perhaps represented the marks of artisans.¹³⁰³ These are described by Simpson as fitters' marks, who also reported additional examples of marks from the plaques studied at the British Museum, being a black ink letter on No. 12, and an incised double cross on No. 4.¹³⁰⁴ In total, 30 plaques (so far) are known to have featured these kinds of marks.¹³⁰⁵

Because these marks were so intermittently documented in RAB and NRAB, it will probably never be possible to reconstruct the precise logic of the system/s that they represented. Nonetheless, many plausibly functioned in a similar fashion to 'location markers' used in architectural contexts. As a point of comparison, the use of Kharoṣṭhī letters as location markers on component parts of Gandhāran stupas has been examined in an article by Salomon.¹³⁰⁶ Here, Salomon notes that Kharoṣṭhī letters used as location markers in this context usually follow the system of the Arapacana syllabary or the expanded vowel-plus-consonant sequence, but there are instances of alternative uses of these letters, as well as numerical and 'non-phonetic' symbols.¹³⁰⁷ Overall, two systems are defined, with the

¹³⁰² Simpson 2014, 21–23.

¹³⁰³ Hackin 1939a, 23–24.

¹³⁰⁴ See Simpson 2014, 16–17, Table 1.

¹³⁰⁵ Associated with Backrest 161 (primarily in room 13): RAB 250 [104], RAB 251 [105], RAB 252 [106], RAB 253 [107], RAB 259 [113], RAB 260 [114]; associated with Backrest 5 (?) (primarily in room 13): RAB 265 [119]; associated with Footstool I: RAB 321 [175d], RAB 321 [175dI], RAB 321 [175u] (Ambers et al. 2014, No. 4); associated with Footstool V: RAB 325 [179a], RAB 325 [179b], RAB 325 [179c], RAB 325 [179e]; associated with Footstool VIII: RAB 328 [182c], RAB 328 [182d], RAB 328 [182e], RAB 328 [182f], RAB 328 [182g]; associated with Footstool IX: RAB 329 [183j], RAB 329 [183q] (Ambers et al. 2014, No. 12); RAB 329 [183y], RAB 329 [183eI]; associated with Footstool XI: RAB 331 [185n]; associated with Footstool XII: RAB 332 [186t], RAB 332 [186z], RAB 332 [186jI]; associated with Footstool XIII: RAB 333 [187c]; associated with exterior face of Panel 1 or Panel 4: NRAB 191i bis; associated with Backrest 3 (?): NRAB 192o.

¹³⁰⁶ Salomon 2006; I am thankful to Stefan Baums for drawing this article to my attention.

¹³⁰⁷ Salomon 2006, 181–213. For other symbols, see also Zwalf 1996, 361–362.

‘matching system’ employing identical marks on the edges of adjoining pieces, while pieces assembled according to the ‘sequencing system’ usually featured only one location mark. Salomon suggests that the matching system may have been used more often because it did not necessitate artisans to be literate in the Arapacana alphabet.¹³⁰⁸ Salomon also discusses other examples of location markers, such as the use of Brāhmī letters in alphabetical order on stone pillars of Bodh Gaya, and Greek letters in Hellenistic architecture, suggesting that the specific employment of Kharoṣṭhī location markers in Gandhāra may have grown out of an earlier Hellenistic system.¹³⁰⁹ It is also worth mentioning that 7 Kharoṣṭhī letters were reported to have been inscribed on stone balusters of the eastern *torāṇa* of the Bharhut stupa (Madhya Pradesh), as well as 27 Brāhmī letters on the stupa’s railing, leading Cunningham to conclude that artists coming from the west (where Kharoṣṭhī was used) had been employed to carve the *torāṇa*.¹³¹⁰ However, from the limited documentation concerning these marks, it remains unclear whether the Kharoṣṭhī letters were arranged in an alphabetic sequence. Moreover, Melzer has recently observed that when the drawings of these letters are rotated, some Brāhmī letters might rather be read instead.¹³¹¹ It should also be noted that the base of the Pompeii statuette was carved with a symbol that has been interpreted by past scholars as a Kharoṣṭhī letter, but Evers has more recently noticed that it rather seems to represent a *triśūla* (the auspicious symbol of a trident), and may have functioned as a craftsman’s mark.¹³¹²

This all being said, and having reviewed the marks on the Begram ivories presented in the catalogue for RAB, in addition to the hand-drawn versions thereof in archival documents (F1937, MSRAB), it does appear that certain marks identified by Hackin as Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī can indeed be interpreted as letters from these scripts. However, the documentation for several of these letters or marks remains highly ambiguous, while other marks may suggest numerical functions, and still others are symbols that likely did not have phonetic or linguistic qualities.¹³¹³

Indeed, if all of the marks on the Begram ivories are to be interpreted as location markers, it is difficult to delineate clear and coherent systems underpinning their use. One exception is represented by a number of isolated plaques found in room 10 that were later reconstructed by Hamelin as having belonged to Backrest 161 in room 13 (discussed below).

¹³⁰⁸ Salomon 2006, 213–214.

¹³⁰⁹ Salomon 2006, 217–221.

¹³¹⁰ Cunningham 1879, 8, Pl. VII. See also Lüders 1963, XXX–XXXI.

¹³¹¹ Melzer 2018, n. 35.

¹³¹² Evers 2017, 26, 28, n. 179.

¹³¹³ I am grateful to Robert Arlt and Stefan Baums for discussing this documentation at length with me.

These plaques featured sets of miniature incised circles (two to seven are reported),¹³¹⁴ while an additional plaque found in room 10 and reconstructed likewise into Backrest 161 was incised with six vertical lines instead.¹³¹⁵ These marks suggest a sequencing system, more specifically a simple unary numeral one. A similar system is likewise implied by another openwork plaque found in room 10 (but perhaps originally from Backrest 5 in room 13), which was carved with five small circles (unusually) on the front of its lower tenon (Pl. 88.10).¹³¹⁶

However, the picture is even less clear with respect to other systems in use. Of three plaques with attested marks from Footstool I, one featured a mark that was identified by Hackin as a Kharoṣṭhī *tra* (which is possible, but not certain, judging from the illustration only in MSRAB), the second featured four indeterminate symbols made in ink that were seemingly placed closer to the corners and edges of the plaque, and the third plaque exhibited a larger incised double cross at the upper centre.¹³¹⁷ The positioning and size of the latter sign seems to suggest that it had a somewhat different function to the others. The diversity of different marks on Footstool VIII¹³¹⁸ – symbols, vertical lines, and perhaps Kharoṣṭhī letters (the cases of the two supposed examples of the Brāhmī letter *da* being still less certain) – might indicate the partial use of a matching system. But perhaps all of these symbols were rather understood as non-linguistic signs to those who made and used them, and likewise constituted part of a sequencing system? Indeed, three separate pieces of a continuous long decorative band from Footstool XIII, all depicting identical friezes of ducks or geese carved in openwork (Pl. 76.4), were reported to have been marked with a similar sequence of signs on their reverses. According to RAB, these looked something like: 1. VOX; 2. VOX YO[]; and 3. VOX (although the ‘V’ might have rather resembled a character like V or Ū, judging from the handwritten version in F1937).¹³¹⁹ One could play endless games to interpret each of these symbols in isolation as letters – Brāhmī, Greek... Latin? – but ultimately they do not clearly belong to a single known script. Rather, they were probably also non-linguistic symbols, although their referents and functions in this context remain obscure to us. That being said, they also do not seem to insist upon a ‘location’ function; why repeat ‘VOX’ on bands with virtually identical designs that obviously fit together?

¹³¹⁴ Reported in RAB 250 [104], RAB 251 [105], RAB 252 [106], RAB 253 [107], RAB 260 [114].

¹³¹⁵ RAB 259 [113].

¹³¹⁶ RAB 265 [119].

¹³¹⁷ RAB 321 [175d], RAB 321 [175dI], RAB 321 [175u] (Ambers et al. 2014, No. 4).

¹³¹⁸ RAB 328 [182c], RAB 328 [182d], RAB 328 [182e], RAB 328 [182f], RAB 328 [182g].

¹³¹⁹ RAB 333 [187c]. See also Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 354.94, and MGP 81315/94.

To conclude on the matter of the marks on the Begram ivories, at least the attested diversity of different symbols, locations, and methods employed (i.e. incision, ink) indicates that they were made according to a variety of systems. Some probably expressed the location of each carved element for assembly into a final piece of furniture, but the logic of these systems is not clear. The use of mixed symbols, lines, and perhaps Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī letters on plaques of Footstool VIII in particular raise the question of whether these ‘letters’ (if correctly identified) were rather treated by their makers as non-linguistic symbols. This point is of some interest, because the use of Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī letters as marks on the ivories has attracted considerable scholarly attention with respect to the vexed question of where they were produced. I will return to this question shortly below. It can be stated, however, that the surviving evidence makes it difficult to believe that some of the ivory plaques might have been transported in separate parts from their place of manufacture to be assembled at Begram,¹³²⁰ in the manner of IKEA furniture. Instead, the complexity of the attested systems can only suggest close communication throughout the chaîne opératoire, i.e. between designers, craftsmen, and carpenters.

Otherwise, it also remains possible that some of the marks served other functions. Some might have referred to the carver in order to facilitate administrative activity; perhaps, for example, they assisted in the calculation of wages (on a piece basis) well after the piece had been finished. This suggestion is purely hypothetical, but it is worth stating here that producing the numerous plaques required to adorn each article of furniture would have required the labour of multiple skilled craftsmen over weeks, if not months. Lacking precise knowledge of the means by which this furniture was produced, the amount of time which passed between cutting blank plaques from an elephant’s tusk and the final assembly of a chair or footstool remains a matter of wild guesswork. Nonetheless, by way of comparison, some relevant observations about Indian ivory carving in the mid 20th century made by Max Mallowan (reflecting on the Nimrud ivories) can be highlighted. For example, Mallowan noted that a patron of a workshop usually employed about 20 poorly-paid craftsmen who used very simple tools, that some carvings took only a day to make while others could take months, that a figurine of Krishna carved from a four-inch section of tusk took about 35–40 hours to finish, and that openwork was the most difficult technique to achieve.¹³²¹ Mallowan also went on to say that he noticed a mark made on the back of the base of the Krishna figurine he purchased. Somewhat

¹³²⁰ E.g. Mehendale 1996, 58–59.

¹³²¹ Mallowan 1966, 483–484. Some of this text was also reproduced in Simpson 2014, 18.

humorously (in light of the protracted discussion above), the craftsman clarified that the mark had “no other significance than to obliterate the traces of a flaw.”¹³²² As the marks on the Begram ivories appear to have all been made on parts that were not visible after assembly, I do not think it is plausible that any served this function. Nonetheless, this constitutes a reminder that the marks may have functioned in other ways that are not obvious to distant observers.

As noted above, it is still unclear where and when the Begram ivories were produced, and over the last 80 years, various solutions have been offered over an enormous geographical space between Andhra Pradesh in southeast India to Bactria, and a likewise extensive time frame between the 1st century BCE to the 4th century CE. The failure to reach scholarly consensus on these problems is quite remarkable, and solving them is beyond the purview of this dissertation as well as my own capabilities. Nonetheless, in the following I will outline some of the methodological issues contributing to this uncertainty, some solutions offered by other scholars and their strengths and weaknesses, and some possible answers that I think should be investigated in future scholarship.

There are a number of reasons why the date and place of the manufacture of the Begram ivories remain uncertain. First and foremost, the lack of precise excavated comparanda – due in part to unfavourable conditions for preservation and recovery in the archaeological record of India – impedes answering these questions on comparative grounds. Certainly, some broadly comparative pieces are well known. For example, with respect to the three statuettes of woman constituting part of an unidentified piece of furniture (§4.13.1.4), there is the statuette from Pompeii already mentioned above (Pl. 89.1), the lower part of another found during excavations at Bhokardan (Maharashtra) which is very comparable to the Pompeii specimen but not precisely dated,¹³²³ and another surface find from Ter (Maharashtra) that is very similar in concept but stylistically different (Pl. 89.2).¹³²⁴ The findspots of the latter two examples suggests that all three may have been made around the 1st century CE in the western part of the Sātavāhana Kingdom (ca. late 2nd century BCE – early 3rd century CE).¹³²⁵ The boundaries of this kingdom fluctuated over this long period, but its core was the Deccan region, overlapping with the modern states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka. However, while the Begram specimens are broadly comparable to the three examples just mentioned and

¹³²² Mallowan 1966, 484.

¹³²³ Shastri and Deo 1974, 188–190, Pl. LVI A, B, Figs. 37–39.

¹³²⁴ Chandra 1957, 21, Pl. 3 a, b. On these specimens, see also the discussion in Mehendale 1997, 4.2.1.

¹³²⁵ See e.g. Evers 2017, 27, n. 186.

indicate production within similar furniture manufacturing traditions, the Begram examples are considerably larger, and do not seem to be products of precisely the same workshops.

Likewise well-known comparanda include combs of different shapes that featured incised figurative decoration similar to that of certain of the Begram ivories. These were, however, not found in India, but in Gandhāra and Bactria: at Taxila-Sirkap,¹³²⁶ Tillya-tepe,¹³²⁷ and Dal'verzintepe (Pl. 90).¹³²⁸ As mentioned earlier, another comb with incised and sunken relief was found at Site I at Begram (Pl. 22.4), but its date is unclear (§3.5.1). Although the distinctive Indian styles of decoration and imagery on the combs from Taxila-Sirkap, Tillya-tepe, and Dal'verzintepe suggest that they were most likely imports, Mehendale has rather taken their findspots as indicative of a 'northern' school of Indianesque ivory carving.¹³²⁹ Accordingly, this would support her hypothesis that some of the Begram ivories had been carved at Begram by "Indian, Indian-trained or Indian-influenced artisans,"¹³³⁰ which will be discussed further below. Due to certain of their stylistic features, such as the use of a 'stippling technique,' Nehru argues that these combs had been produced in Bactria (hence also supporting her hypothesis that certain of the Begram ivories had been produced in this region).¹³³¹ Two additional combs incised with Indian or Indian-inspired iconography likewise from around the 1st century CE have been more recently reported from a collective tomb in Dibba Al Hisn (southeastern Arabia).¹³³² However, because their workmanship differs to that of other published comparanda, Potts hesitates to argue whether or not they were produced in India, but tentatively notes that they might be non-Indian copies of Indian combs.¹³³³

In addition to this, a double-sided ivory plaque probably originally from a piece of furniture has been reported from the Partho-Sasanian fire temple at Mele Hairam in Turkmenistan (Pl. 89.3).¹³³⁴ Having been discovered in the wall debris outside the temple's ramparts, it appears that the plaque had once been part of a gift given to the temple before it was abandoned, a process involving the removal of its contents and the blocking of the main entrance to the sanctuary and its adjacent corridors, perhaps occurring in the 5th century CE.¹³³⁵

¹³²⁶ Ghosh 1944–1945, 79–80, Pl. XX.

¹³²⁷ Grave 3, Sarianidi 1985, 243, No. 56, Ill. 142.

¹³²⁸ DT-9, sanctuary of the artisans' quarter, Pugachenkova 1978, No. 65; Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, 137, Fig. 97a.

¹³²⁹ Mehendale 1997, 4.2.1–4; 2001, 493–496.

¹³³⁰ Mehendale 1996, 59.

¹³³¹ Nehru 2004, 116–117.

¹³³² Potts 2011, 337–339, Figs. 2–5.

¹³³³ Potts 2011, 341–342.

¹³³⁴ Kornacka 2007, Figs. 1–2.

¹³³⁵ Kornacka 2007, 188.

The plaque bears carved relief decoration depicting similar subjects and styles to certain of the Begram ivories, but following Nehru's stylistic arguments about Indianising ivories putatively produced in Bactrian workshops, Kornacka suggests that it was probably a product of Bactria.¹³³⁶

While proposed Bactrian attributions for the pieces discussed above are not entirely baseless, I admit that I still find them somewhat difficult to accept, also with reference to the Begram ivories. Although certain stylistic and iconographic features of the Begram ivories do remain hard to explain with reference to Indian art alone, when they are viewed as a corpus – likewise as constituent parts of larger ensembles of furniture – these carvings so repeatedly and consistently speak to artistic idioms of India proper that it seems difficult to believe that some had been produced in Central Asia. Indeed, Nehru has rightfully repeatedly stressed the curious absence of the Gandhāran idiom among the Begram ivories.¹³³⁷ How can it be possible that Indian-style furniture putatively produced in Bactria did not draw on aspects of this highly developed neighbouring artistic idiom, especially when Bactria and Gandhāra were so politically, culturally, and economically connected in the first centuries of the Common Era?

Because of the paucity of surviving excavated comparanda in ivory from India, scholarly attempts to comparatively date and provenance the Begram ivories instead have drawn heavily on the extant outputs of regional idioms, style, or 'schools' of (primarily) Buddhist sculpture, which unfortunately also tend to be imprecisely dated. The relevant schools, named for their main centres, are those of Sanchi in central India (Madhya Pradesh, fl. 1st century BCE, associated with Sātavāhana initiative), Mathura in the northern plains (Uttar Pradesh, fl. late 1st century BCE – 2nd century CE, conventionally but misleadingly associated with the Kushans), and Amaravati in the south. The latter 'school' included Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh, and Kanaganahalli in Karnataka, flourished between the 1st century BCE – 4th century CE, and is generally associated with the Sātavāhanas, although the earlier carvings of Amaravati are more accurately linked with the Sāta dynasty and those at Nagarjunakonda (from the 3rd century CE) with the Ikṣvākus.¹³³⁸ Incidentally, there is also some evidence that ivory carvers may have also worked in other media such as shell or stone, which bolsters the methodological validity of comparing the ivories to developments in stone sculpture.¹³³⁹

¹³³⁶ Kornacka 2007, 190.

¹³³⁷ Throughout Nehru 2004.

¹³³⁸ See Shimada 2013, 111, 202.

¹³³⁹ See e.g. Simpson 2014, 27.

Drawing on comparisons from these schools, assessments have still varied widely. Most of Hackin's opening essay for RAB was devoted to the ivories. Noticing aspects of all three schools in this corpus, he offered a terminal date through Footstool IX, which he judged to represent an example of Gupta art that was produced around the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century CE.¹³⁴⁰ In a contribution written after room 13 was excavated, he however omitted comparisons to the art of Amaravati.¹³⁴¹ Stern, in his essay in NRAB, noted comparisons with the different schools, but ultimately stressed the extreme difficulty of dating the ivories. Considering a date prior to the last quarter of the 1st century CE to be impossible (in light of certain features on Footstool IX), and highlighting strong parallels with Mathura, Stern very tentatively suggested that they had been produced between the last quarter of the 1st century CE and the second half of the 2nd century CE.¹³⁴²

A number of later treatments then offered differing appraisals. Davidson, for example, argued that certain features of the ivories spoke instead to a date in the 1st century BCE.¹³⁴³ Later, Mehendale presented the hypothesis that the ivories had been carved in the 1st century CE in the same workshop, which was more specifically located at Begram, by artisans who were either Indian, trained in India, or inspired by its art, who had settled at the city because of its trade activity.¹³⁴⁴ To make this case, she has pointed to pre-existing ivory carving traditions in the north, literary evidence attesting to the existence of itinerant artisans, the mix of styles and techniques evinced in the corpus, the disassembled state within which the ivories were found, examples of supposedly unworked pieces of ivory found in the hoard (see above §4.11.2), and the use of Kharoṣṭhī letters as markings on certain pieces. Nehru then wrote an article in 2004 which dated the ivories instead to a time span between the second quarter of the 1st century CE to the early 3rd century CE, however suggesting that some pieces might have also been imported in the 1st century BCE.¹³⁴⁵ Nehru also argued that some of the ivories can be ascribed to workshops in Bactria and Mathura, while some in a third group might possibly have been produced at Begram by itinerant artists working in the Mathura style, however simultaneously acknowledging the curious absence of the Gandhāran idiom in the entire corpus.¹³⁴⁶ Alternatively, Rosen Stone has continued to highlight important parallels particularly for Footstool IX and Backrest 161 among sculptures of the Amaravati school

¹³⁴⁰ Hackin 1939a, 14–22.

¹³⁴¹ Hackin 1940b, 608.

¹³⁴² Stern 1954, 51–54.

¹³⁴³ Davidson 1972.

¹³⁴⁴ Mehendale 1996, 59; 1997, 2.5, 6.3, Conclusion; 2001; 2012.

¹³⁴⁵ Nehru 2004, 127.

¹³⁴⁶ Nehru 2004, 124–125.

(especially Nagarjunakonda and Kanaganahalli), some of which date to the 3rd and 4th centuries CE.¹³⁴⁷

What can be made of all of this? In my opinion, the hypotheses that certain (or all) of the ivories had been produced in Bactria or Begram remain unconvincing for several reasons, chief of which being the consistency, diversity, and breadth of parallels that can be cited from artistic idioms of India proper, and the simultaneous apparent lack of influence from Gandhāran art. That being said, Mehendale's criticisms of the restrictive manner in which Indian art is divided according to regions and dynasties are well taken.¹³⁴⁸ Indeed, the debates outlined above reflect continuing scholarly difficulties in distinguishing, charting, and explaining the mechanisms by which iconographic, stylistic, and technical traits were adopted and transformed across distant spaces in antiquity to impact otherwise regionalised traditions of craft production. Although it is beyond the purview of this dissertation to solve these problems, I should also add that it remains unclear as to whether itineracy of artists alone should explain the combination of different styles, iconographic traits, and techniques within the carvings of even single pieces of furniture at Begram. The literary evidence Mehendale cites from the *Guttilajātaka* for the existence of itinerant ivory carvers rather mentions traders moving as a group (not individuals) from Benares (Varanasi on the Ganges) to Ujjain (Ozene) for trade, and apparently these figures are only described as ivory workers on a trading journey in some translations.¹³⁴⁹

With respect to more precisely delineating where in India the ivories may have been produced, perhaps the Kharoṣṭhī letters marked on the reverse of certain pieces do not necessarily imply that an answer must be sought in the regions where the script was widely used. Indeed, Dwivedi already noticed that the use of Kharoṣṭhī would suggest production in the northwest, but rejected the idea on stylistic grounds,¹³⁵⁰ while Mehendale has taken the marks to support her arguments for production of the ivories at Begram.¹³⁵¹

To elaborate on this problem, Kharoṣṭhī was used to write the Middle Indo-Aryan language Gāndhārī and emerged in Gandhāra by the mid 3rd century BCE. Although the script came to be employed in the first centuries of the Common Era throughout parts of southern Central Asia and even the Tarim Basin, it was only rarely used in India proper, where the

¹³⁴⁷ Rosen Stone 1974; 1994, 91–97; 2008.

¹³⁴⁸ Mehendale 2012, 76.

¹³⁴⁹ Mehendale 1997, 2.5.1; 2012, 73.

¹³⁵⁰ Dwivedi 1976, 76.

¹³⁵¹ Mehendale 2012, 75.

favoured script was rather Brāhmī.¹³⁵² Some rare exceptions from the Gangetic plain and beyond include a few donative inscriptions from Mathura, such as those on the famous Mathura lion capital associated with Indo-Scythian Kṣatrapa rulers,¹³⁵³ an inscribed sealing from Sonkh near Mathura,¹³⁵⁴ an inscribed pillar from Chunar (Uttar Pradesh),¹³⁵⁵ an inscribed pottery plaque found in Patna (Bihar),¹³⁵⁶ and – quite exceptionally – three far earlier Aśokan edicts (mid 3rd century BCE), found much further south in Karnataka, that were written in Brāhmī but signed with ‘scribe’ in Kharoṣṭhī.¹³⁵⁷ As discussed above, it is unsure whether the letters carved on the eastern *torāṇa* balusters at Bharhut are truly examples of Kharoṣṭhī. In addition to this, early rulers of the Western Kṣatrapas (ca. 1st – 4th century CE) – a dynasty originating from Indo-Scythian rulers of the northwest which came to rule from the area of modern Gujarat – continued their forebears’ practice of striking coins with (increasingly garbled) Greek and Kharoṣṭhī legends, but added Brāhmī legends too, eventually supplanting the others.¹³⁵⁸ It is worth noting that the Western Kṣatrapa king Nahapāna is often supposed to be the same as a certain Manbanos mentioned in the Periplus, who ruled the region including the major emporion of Barygaza (Bharuch, Gujarat) and the metropolis Minnagara.¹³⁵⁹ The former seat of the region’s royal court was further remarked in this text to have been the city of Ozene (Ujjain).¹³⁶⁰

In sum, although the use of Kharoṣṭhī in India proper was rare, the attested examples nonetheless give an (entirely unsurprising) impression of mobility and connectivity between Gangetic India, the Deccan, and the northwestern frontiers. Additionally, as discussed further above, it is also possible that the Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī letters marked on the reverse of certain of the Begram ivories were treated by their makers as non-linguistic symbols. This raises the possibility that the craftspeople who carved the ivories did not necessarily come from Kharoṣṭhī-using regions, or were conversant or literate in Gāndhārī.

As we have seen, the Begram ivories are related in some way to the art of Sanchi, more so to that of Mathura, and Rosen Stone’s work also demonstrates that parallels with sculpture of the Amaravati school cannot be dismissed. To reconcile both north and south, as well as the Kharoṣṭhī problem (and perhaps also the baffling marks on Footstool XIII), I think it would

¹³⁵² For the below, see also Strauch 2012a, 154–155, n. 16, n. 17.

¹³⁵³ CKI 48, CKI 49, CKI 157, CKI 440.

¹³⁵⁴ CKI 1117.

¹³⁵⁵ CKI 1080.

¹³⁵⁶ CKI 166.

¹³⁵⁷ CKI 29, CKI 30, CKI 31.

¹³⁵⁸ See Senior 2001, 194–200; Strauch 2012a, 155.

¹³⁵⁹ *PME* 41; Casson 1989, 47, 198.

¹³⁶⁰ *PME* 48.

not be surprising if Begram's ivory furniture turned out to have been manufactured to the west of central India (i.e. western Madhya Pradesh or Maharashtra), the political control of which having also fluctuated over the centuries through conflict between the Sātavāhanas and Western Kṣatrapas. More specifically, given broad impressions of homogeneity among the ivories (i.e. recurrent themes, motifs, styles), perhaps the responsible parties had been one or more (closely related) guilds of ivory carvers based at a regional centre like Ujjain, the output/s of which being otherwise unattested. Here, one can think of the well-known 1st century BCE Brāhmī inscription on Sanchi stupa's southern *torāṇa*, which states that the carving had been done by the ivory workers of Vidiśā,¹³⁶¹ an urban centre located about 10 km away. Besides indicating that ivory carvers worked in other media, the inscription attests to collective action by artisans located in a city (if without explicitly mentioning a guild). Additionally, although the tantalising but limited information provided in the Periplus cannot solve this problem for us, it is worth noting that this text lists ivory as an export of Barygaza.¹³⁶² On the question of the date of the ivories, perhaps it is better to remain agnostic. I will simply stress that the weight of the comparative evidence indicates that it is difficult to insist on a 1st century CE date for the entire corpus, while the post ca. 260 CE date I have defined for the deposition of the hoard (see especially §3.5.3, §3.5.4) leaves the later limits of this range open. Specialists will hopefully be able to provide more precise solutions in the future.

All of this now being said, I think it is more important to highlight the disarticulated, incomplete, and poor condition that the furniture had been in already by its deposition in rooms 10 and 13, an issue which seems to have been largely overlooked in secondary scholarship. As discussed above, the precise number, arrangement, and condition of articles of furniture in the hoard remain unclear for several reasons. Nonetheless, beyond the fact that the furniture legs in rooms 10 and 13 and the backrests and panels from room 13 had already been disarticulated from the larger articles of furniture to which they once belonged, there is plenty of additional evidence (which cannot be simply explained by excavation methodology, postdepositional decomposition, or confusing documentation) that articles of furniture throughout the hoard had been deposited already in varying stages of imperfect condition. Namely, several pieces were evidently further disarticulated, and a number of decorative plaques were either entirely missing, or had been deposited separately from the piece of furniture to which they had originally been attached – sometimes even in a different room.

¹³⁶¹ Bühler 1894, 378, No. 200, C. 189.

¹³⁶² *PME* 49.

We may begin with the footstools (§4.13.1.1, Pls. 70–77), which according to Carl's and Hamelin's plans (Pl. 17) were found along the east wall of room 10. These articles of furniture generally took the form of rectangular boxes but featured a range of different schemes of decoration. Usually, their top sides featured a central decorative plate surrounded by decorative bands, while their long and short sides had various arrangements of smaller plaques. Although the original appearances of only a few footstools were reconstructed by Carl and Hamelin (Pls. 70.2, 74–75, 77), it is worth mentioning that the shape of plaques associated with most stools (at least Footstools I, II, V, VIII, X, XI, and XII) indicates that they were built with distinctive omega-shaped short sides (sometimes reinforced with copper strips), while Footstool IX had trapezoidal sides.

In room 10, 13 ensembles of plaques that had been found in association were catalogued in groups under single inventory numbers in RAB, which were then also marked with Roman numerals (I–XIII). These were interpreted later by Hamelin as representing the remains of footstools, such as those depicted ubiquitously in front of ornate chairs in the art of Amaravati.¹³⁶³ However, some documentation factors slightly complicate the picture. First, other plaques from room 10 were reported separately to these ensembles. These separate plaques can be divided into three 'sets.' The first is the loosely defined set of 18 'isolated plaques' (see Pl. 88), some of which were certainly found in the north of room 10 in early June, which are indicated clearly both on Carl's and Hamelin's plans (Pl. 17).¹³⁶⁴ This set appears to include plaques that had originally been attached to articles of furniture in room 13, so we will return to them below. The second set, which includes five plaques from footstools, were catalogued just before the 'statuettes' and plaques listed under footstool groups (I–XIII) were documented.¹³⁶⁵ One plaque in the second 'set' appears to have actually been found in association with a footstool: Footstool II was otherwise catalogued under RAB 322 [176] (51 elements), but a plaque of its lid (RAB 316 [70]), still visible *in situ* (Pl. 71.1), had been catalogued separately just earlier. However, three other plaques from the second set (RAB 313 [167], RAB 314 [168], and RAB 315 [169]) were noted in RAB to probably come from Footstool III, which constituted otherwise 18 elements catalogued under RAB 323 [177], and seem then to have been found separately. The third set of 20 separate plaques (some documented in groups) were recorded after Footstool XIII.¹³⁶⁶ Fewer visual records are

¹³⁶³ Hackin 1954a, 316–317.

¹³⁶⁴ Encompassing RAB 249 [103]–253 [107], RAB 255 [109]–RAB 261 [115], and RAB 265 [119]–266 [120], RAB 269 [123]–272 [126], reported between the 7th and 14th of June, 1937.

¹³⁶⁵ RAB 313 [167]–317 [171].

¹³⁶⁶ See RAB 334 [188]–336 [190], RAB 338 [191, 192]–339 [193], RAB 341 [195].

available for these plaques, but some give the impression of having once decorated parts of further (unattested?) footstools,¹³⁶⁷ while another (RAB 336 [190]) looks more like a component of the partially reported alternating garden and *torāṇa* interior register I on the Panels 1, 4, and 34 that were later excavated in room 13.

In addition to this, the number of elements listed under each footstool group also varies widely, from under 10 plaques to over 60. While the size of plaques used to decorate each footstool certainly did vary in size and shape (as did their decoration, etc.), the smaller groups of plaques give the impression of representing incomplete remains. Indeed, it seems possible that the group of 19 plaques subsumed under ‘Footstool’ VII may also include specimens which had been detached from other groups of furniture (see below for the incorporation of four plaques from this group into the reconstruction of Backrest 5). Certainly, incomplete photographic documentation of the relevant elements makes this difficult to see clearly, and it is likewise tempting to explain missing pieces as simply decomposed or unsuccessfully excavated and documented. Nonetheless, as we will see, all missing pieces cannot be explained in this way.

The surviving photographs of four footstools *in situ* – Footstool II next to another uncertain example, perhaps Footstool III (Pl. 71.1), apparently Footstool VI (Pl. 86.1), and Footstool IX (Pl. 74.4) – indicate that some of the footstools were at least deposited in partially articulated condition (rather than, alternatively, piles of plaques). However, even these relatively well-documented examples were still disarticulated to some degree. It is for this reason that these articles were initially understood as coffers by Carl: the space left by missing plaques on the upper part of Footstool II (Pls. 70.2, 71.1) and the long side of Footstool IX (Pl. 74.4) were interpreted as openings facilitating the deposition or removal of small objects. Only later did Hamelin notice that the lack of hinges, closures, and openings on these pieces of furniture, as well as their incorporation of open elements – i.e. in openwork plaques, around beaded ivory colonnettes – showed how unsuitable they were for storage purposes.¹³⁶⁸ It should also be noted that the top decorative panel of Footstool IX – made of six separate parts originally nailed to a since-decayed slab of wood (Pl. 74.1) – was indicated in Hamelin’s plan of room 13 to have been found disarticulated, found to the east of the rest of the piece (marked ‘plateau,’ Pl. 17). In short, although the documentation is often difficult to interpret, it is clear

¹³⁶⁷ Such as the two plaques catalogued under RAB 334 [188] (see also Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 657.397 and K.p. Beg. 658.398), which look similar in design and structure to those decorating Footstool I and Footstool IX. The five plaques catalogued under RAB 337 [191] with unique scrollwork also seem to represent parts of another individual footstool or box.

¹³⁶⁸ Hackin 1954a, 316–317.

that at least some of the footstools in room 10 had already been deposited in the hoard in incomplete condition.

Other ivory elements documented in room 10 likewise represent incomplete articles of furniture. This is obviously the case with respect to the two furniture legs reported in room 10 (§4.13.1.3), which are visible in both *in situ* photography (Pls. 86.1, 4) and on either side of Footstool VI on Hamelin's plan (Pl. 17). Somewhat confusingly, still-articulated parts of these furniture legs are documented across different inventory numbers in RAB. The lower leg of each appears to have featured the foreparts of an elephant (RAB 342 [196], Pl. 86.2, and RAB 343 [197]), each then set with an iron rod into a corner bracket that had evidently once been attached to a sturdier base plate to be set on the ground. These base plate brackets were respectively ornamented with four carved small figurines of lions (RAB 343 [199]) and buffalos (RAB 344 [200], Pl. 86.3). An element in the form of an elongated 'winged lion' (RAB 343 [198], Pl. 86.5) was reported with the repeated inventory number of the second elephant component, which would suggest that it was part of the same furniture leg. Otherwise, in the *in situ* photography, lathe-turned elements formed the upper part of these furniture legs, and the remains of the first better preserved specimen also appears to have been partially attached to a long, thin crossbar. The precise relation of a separately documented mask of a lion (RAB 345 [201]) to these pieces is unclear. A third furniture leg found however in room 13 is documented only in an *in situ* archival photograph¹³⁶⁹ and Hamelin's plan (east wall, Pl. 18). Hamelin's plan illustrates the furniture leg as the same type from room 10, but although the still-articulated crossbars and upper lathe-turned elements are clear in the archival photograph, the lower part (perhaps representing the foreparts of an elephant) is too crushed to be certain of its appearance. Nonetheless, the three furniture legs reported in rooms 10 and 13 appear to be similar in construction, and may have once supported the same piece of furniture. As will be considered below (§4.13.3), this piece of furniture may have also been adorned with large bronze plaques.

The three statuettes of women (RAB 319 [173] h. 56.0 cm, RAB 320 [174a], h. 45.0 cm, and RAB 320 [174b], h. 45.6 cm, Pl. 87), either *yakṣīs* or river goddesses, that were found in room 10 also represent the remains of a disarticulated and incomplete piece of furniture. With limited information as to the extent of their decoration, Mehendale tentatively suggested that if they were carved in the round, they might have formed the legs of a small stool, or if not

¹³⁶⁹ MGP 81317/133.

carved in the round, part of a decorative panel.¹³⁷⁰ Nehru, however, noticed that their backs had been left unfinished,¹³⁷¹ indicating that they were to be left unseen. These statuettes were found arranged in a curious manner. One (RAB 320 [174a]) relatively complete statuette had been found set against an ivory plate framed by ivory ‘walls’ rounded at the base. The base of the statuette, these ‘walls’ and lathe-turned ivory elements were joined by an iron bar connecting these elements, while a large, hollow, cylindrical piece of ivory was reported in right part of this ensemble (Pl. 87.1–2). A second statuette (RAB 320 [174b]) had been placed in a perpendicular position across of this incomplete ensemble (Pl. 87.1–2), an arrangement which Hackin noted in the catalogue entry to be ‘purely accidental,’ not facilitating any understanding of the original position of this object. Hackin further noted that the hands and feet of this statuette had been damaged, its right hip was missing, and that its detached head had been found earlier. The third statuette (RAB 319 [173]), slightly taller than the others on account of its preserved capital-like headdress, had been found to the right of this set (Pl. 87.1). As is visible from this *in situ* photography,¹³⁷² its lower part had been found tilted below the horizon upon which the rest of the statuettes and associated elements had been located, perhaps suggesting that they had been deposited on uneven ground or a since-decayed organising device like a box (see §3.5.3).

The grouping together of these similar statuettes and associated elements suggests that they represent the incomplete remains of a single piece of furniture, although (as Hackin noted) their precise arrangement in room 10 does not precisely reflect their original positioning. Mehendale tentatively suggested that RAB 320 [174a] the ivory elements encasing this statuette suggest that this piece belonged to a larger decorative ensemble or alternatively that this ‘box’ served for protection during storage or transportation.¹³⁷³ I would alternatively propose that these statuettes and associated elements once formed part of a decorative railing (often referred to as a *vedika*), with the statuettes being originally placed in ivory frames (also covering their backs) to form pillars, and the large, flattened ivory cylinder representing the remains of a dislocated crossbar. There are several attested instances of the adornment of stone railing pillars surrounding stupas with depictions of *yakṣīs* in high relief, such as those from the stupa at Bhutesar (Mathura); here the *yakṣīs* stand on crouched dwarves (Pl. 91.1). On this photograph, flattened cylindrical sockets for missing crossbars are visible on the lateral sides

¹³⁷⁰ Mehendale 1997, 2.2.3.

¹³⁷¹ Nehru 2004, 98.

¹³⁷² See also MGP 81315/3.

¹³⁷³ Mehendale 1997, 2.2.3.

of the pillars, while the lintels are also not pictured. Perhaps such ornamented railings could have been installed in secular settings too; plain railings, at least, are depicted in private garden scenes on certain plaques of the panels 1, 4, and 34 among the Begram ivories (see, e.g., NRAB 191h, Pl. 91.2), and ornamented railings also appear as decorative elements (with rosettes, NRAB 200j4, Pl. 92.3 and RAB 266 [120], Pl. 88.9; with *garuḍas*, NRAB 34c2, Pl. 92.4). Ultimately, it appears that this piece of furniture from room 10, perhaps an ornamental railing, had been dislocated and damaged prior to its deposition in the hoard, with its remaining parts pushed together into a group.

Finally, we come to the eight backrests and panels deposited in room 13 and concomitantly the nature and significance of Hamelin's reconstructions. As hinted already above, the documentation for these pieces of furniture is exceedingly complicated; while some were relatively isolated and clearly defined (e.g., Backrests 5, 55, and 161 and Panel 34), the group of four panels and backrests to the north of the eastern wall had been stacked in a pile, making it difficult to understand the original composition of each after they were excavated, and accordingly elements from these pieces are mixed between different inventory numbers in NRAB. Most of these pieces were also ornamented with decorative plaques on both faces, further complicating the picture. Nonetheless, after careful examination of the documentation available to him, Hamelin was able to reconstruct the original appearance of all of these pieces of furniture with varying degrees of completeness and certainty, and these reconstructions (excluding Backrest 55) and illustrations thereof were published in appendices to NRAB written by Stern and Hamelin (Pls. 78–84).¹³⁷⁴ Evidently, there was less confidence about Backrest 55, although an illustration that Hamelin produced has been since published by Tissot (Pl. 85.1). The appendices in NRAB explain Hamelin's methodology and findings in detail, and clarify the parts of each reconstruction which are to be considered more or less weak.

Without reiterating and discussing the contents of these appendices in total, two points with relevance for the present purposes can be stressed. First, as Stern explains, the general impression and organisation of decoration in each of these reconstructions is usually relatively clear, while in some cases the position of certain details as well as the shape and dimensions of each piece are less certain.¹³⁷⁵ Following this, we should consider the reconstructions to be relatively reliable, even if certain details are probably debatable. Second, even among the chaos of the documentation, it is clear that these pieces of furniture were incomplete. Not only were

¹³⁷⁴ Hackin 1954a, 315–330.

¹³⁷⁵ Hackin 1954a, 315–316.

the seats and legs of all pieces obviously absent (although perhaps the three ivory furniture legs perhaps originally belonged to one chair), but original decorative elements were also evidently missing from several of these pieces of furniture already when they were deposited. Some plaques which fit perfectly into these missing spaces, however, can be identified with isolated examples that had been reported already in room 10.

The best example of this is the case of Backrest 161, which had been deposited along the north wall of room 13 (Pls. 18, 78), and excavated while Hamelin was present. Of the two registers with alternating plaques and colonnettes, only five plaques had been found in association with the backrest (NRAB 161a1–e1).¹³⁷⁶ However, six isolated ivory plaques found in room 10 (from the first ‘set’ described above) were in precisely the same style as the plaques missing from room 13 (Pl. 88.1–6),¹³⁷⁷ and were associated with the remains of Backrest 161 with Hackin’s approval.¹³⁷⁸ Stern offered additionally that these separated plaques had perhaps fallen off during the transport of the piece.¹³⁷⁹ Based on the shape and reverse markings of the plaques from room 10, which are discussed above, Hamelin deduced that seven plaques had adorned the top register of this backrest (marked with circles on the reverse), and eight the lower (marked with lines). Although four plaques were ultimately still missing, Hamelin illustrated an impression of the original appearance of this backrest with copies of the remaining plaques (Pl. 78.1, with plaques indicated with their inventory numbers and reported reverse markings).¹³⁸⁰ Although this reconstruction is somewhat confusing – why have RAB 260 [114] on the lower register? Why not attempt to place the marked plaques in numerical order? – the justification for incorporating the isolated plaques from room 10 is quite evident.

Although not all of the isolated plaques were published with photography – a point which prevents assessing the piece of furniture to which they belonged with confidence – several of these examples appear to best correspond with decorative schemes of furniture from room 13. For example, the plaque incised with the *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (RAB 249 [103], Pl. 88.7) is of the type found on lower part of one of the two identical posts of Panels 1 and 4 (see Pl. 84.3). Here it is worth mentioning that Panels 1 and 4 were ‘mirrored,’ either once having been connected to form a long backrest, or part of a larger symmetrical ensemble with Panel 34, which shared an extremely similar decorative scheme and dimensions.¹³⁸¹ A small openwork

¹³⁷⁶ Hackin 1954a, 326–327.

¹³⁷⁷ RAB 250 [104]–253 [107], RAB 259 [113]–260 [114].

¹³⁷⁸ See the catalogue entry for NRAB 161 and Hackin 1954a, 327.

¹³⁷⁹ Hackin 1954a, 319.

¹³⁸⁰ Note that this reconstruction differs from that described in the catalogue entry NRAB 161, which had been revised by Hamelin.

¹³⁸¹ Hackin 1954a, 322–325, 329–330.

yakṣa atlant from room 10 (RAB 256 [110], Pl. 88.8) appears to thus correspond with the decoration of the lower interior registers of Panels 1, 4, and 34 (Pls. 82.2, 84.2). A plaque from room 10 depicting a decorative railing (RAB 266 [120], Pl. 88.9) is also most similar to those used on the upper and lower registers of the exterior faces of Panels 1, 4, and 34 (Pls. 82.1, 84.1, see also Pl. 91.2–4).

With respect to Backrest 5, an openwork plaque of a seated male musician (RAB 265 [119], Pl. 88.10) found in room 10 seems to correspond best with the surviving décor of register IV of this piece (whether its interior or exterior face) (Pl. 79.1–2). Likewise, the openwork *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (RAB 269 [123], Pl. 88.11),¹³⁸² is similar to that on the exterior face of register V of this piece (Pl. 79.3). It should also be noted that in the case of Backrest 5, part of register V was signalled as incomplete in Carl’s sketch C.C. 145, so Hamelin borrowed four plaques from ‘Footstool’ VII (RAB 327 [181k–n]) to complete it in his reconstruction.¹³⁸³ Ivory plaques across register I were also remarked to have been destroyed on the object itself, but two ‘fallen’ plaques were noticed by Hamelin to possess the right dimensions to fit these (NRAB 192i, NRAB 192e).¹³⁸⁴

What is the significance of this? Mehendale cast doubt on the validity of Hamelin’s reconstructions, most especially because of the incorporation of elements found in room 10 into Backrests 161 and 5. More specifically, in respect to Backrest 161, she strongly rejects the legitimacy of Hamelin’s methodology, noting that “the fact that the pieces were discovered in two separate rooms seems to indicate that they formed part of two different pieces of furniture. That the pieces might still have been in the stage of assembly and thus were going to make their way from Room 10 to Room 13 must be discounted, since the frame of the chairback in Room 13 clearly indicates that the furniture had already been assembled.”¹³⁸⁵ These criticisms, however, reflect the assumption that these pieces of furniture had been in good condition before they were deposited in the hoard. On the contrary – and despite the difficulties presented by the surviving documentation – we have seen that there is plenty of evidence that this was not the case.

The mass of evidence outlined above for the poor and incomplete condition of the ivory furniture deposited in rooms 10 and 13 suggests a different interpretation: that the furniture was old by the time it was deposited in the hoard and had been stored in one or more primary

¹³⁸² For a photograph, see Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 628.368, MGP 81315/110.

¹³⁸³ Hackin 1954a, 327.

¹³⁸⁴ Hackin 1954a, 320, 327.

¹³⁸⁵ Mehendale 1997, 2.2.4.

locations prior to this event. Eventually, as the evidence suggests, the preservation of the furniture had worsened in the primary storage location(s) – perhaps their wooden armatures had been afflicted by dry rot? – and plaques had become detached from several pieces, including Backrests 161 and 5, and Panels 1, 4, and 34. When objects were selected to be deposited in rooms 10, 13, and T, the large, important, surviving decorative panels from several chairs were detached from their seats and legs (if this had not occurred earlier), and were deposited in various positions in room 13 (Panel 34 was even placed upside down), as well as the detached Furniture Leg 3 along the east wall. Some plaques that had become detached earlier from the panels and backrests destined for room 13 were then deposited in a group in room 10 near to the northeast door. Residual parts of what may have once been an ornamental railing were placed together nearby, and finally, the remains of perhaps 13 footstools in various stages of articulation and preservation as well as two furniture legs were arranged along the east wall of this room. I will return to the implications of this alternative interpretation later (§5.2).

The tables below present the footstools (§4.13.1.1), panels and backrests (§4.13.1.2), furniture legs (§4.13.1.3), and unidentified furniture elements, being perhaps components of an ornamental railing (§4.13.1.4). As the footstools, panels, and backrests are treated as pieces of furniture, their component plaques are not described in further detail. Some discussion has been presented in the text above, and in the tables below further references to more comprehensive presentations of the material are indicated. Because of the volume of material and the uncertainty of which certain plaques are attributed to certain pieces of furniture, precise museum inventory numbers are not included. These tables also do not include the isolated plaques reported in room 10, for which see the discussion above, as well as the plaques reported with Roman numerals from the NMA collection in NRAB.

4.13.1.1. Footstools

This group represents perhaps 13 footstools which had been found in varying states of articulation and completeness in room 10. It is possible, if difficult to prove, that certain of these footstools were conceived to form pairs with the remains of chair backrests attested in room 13; Stern, for example, noted that Footstool IX may have perhaps formed a pair with Backrest 161, judging from analogies in their decoration.¹³⁸⁶ For the problems relating to their

¹³⁸⁶ Hackin 1954a, 317–318.

documentation, condition, and reconstruction, see the text above (§4.13.1). Dimensions are given only for reconstructed examples illustrated with an indication of their scale.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
Footstool I (RAB 321 [175]) (Pl. 70.1)	10, E wall, SE corner? (Hamelin's plan indicates date of 21.6), 2.60 m.	Footstool decorated with ivory and/or bone plaques, incised and in sunken relief. 45 elements catalogued in RAB. Omega- shaped short sides, one framed by winged lions and birds, the other by birds and makaras. Rectangular plaques with trees, foliage, birds, and seated nude women wearing girdles. Marks on reverse of RAB 321 [175d], RAB 321 [175u], and RAB 321 [175d1].		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 83–94, 97–98; Tissot 2006, 142– 145; Ambers et al. 2014, 51–98, Nos. 1–4.	Tissot 2006, 142–145; Ambers et al. 2014, 51–98, Nos. 1–4 (RAB 321 [175x], RAB 321 [175w], RAB 321 [175r], RAB 321 [175u]), where plaques were analysed and determined to be made of ivory, not bone.	NMA, MG.
Footstool II (RAB 322 [176] + RAB 316 [170]) (Pl. 70.2, 71.1)	10, E wall, 2.50 m	Incomplete remains of a footstool decorated with ivory and/or bone plaques, incised, light relief, and openwork. 52 elements catalogued in RAB. Reconstructed by Carl (RAB Fig. 102), noting additional features (armature, use of copper alloy brackets). Omega- shaped short sides, one framed by birds. Long side featuring interior armature composed of beaded colonnettes, faced with panels depicting nude women, foliage,	H. (all approx.) 15.0 cm; W. (ca.) 25.0 cm; L. 40.0 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Figs. 99–101, 104– 105; Illustrated reconstruction RAB Fig. 102.	Tissot 2006, 146.	NMA, MG.

		and birds. Upper part with central decoration of pairs of nude women wearing jewellery, girdles, and sheer garments covering their legs. Two (?) such plaques missing from central decoration as found? Framed by row of flowers, then row of birds in rhombuses surrounded by foliage.				
Footstool III (RAB 323 [177] + RAB 313 [167]–315 [169]) (Pl. 71.2–3).	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with incised ivory and/or bone plaques. 18 elements catalogued in RAB. Carvings depict a lotus, plants, and ducks. Noted in RAB that 313 [167], 314 [168], and 315 [169] probably belong to III.		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 103, 106.	Tissot 2006, 147.	NMA, MG.
Footstool IV (RAB 324 [178]) (Pl. 72.1–2)	10, E wall.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool (?) decorated with ivory and/or bone plaques, incised, flat relief, openwork. 9 elements catalogued in RAB. Carvings depict leogryphs, foliage, medallions of knotted bands with winged animals (including leogryphs) and figures.		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 108, 110–111.	Tissot 2006, 148.	NMA, MG.
Footstool V (RAB 325 [179]) (Pl. 72.3)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Footstool decorated with ivory and/or bone plaques, incised, in sunken relief, and flat relief with occasional		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 112–115, 117–122, 124–133, 135.	Tissot 2006, 149–154.	NMA, MG.

		openwork. 64 elements catalogued in RAB. Omega-shaped short sides framed by a band of waves, then leogryphs, birds, and makaras. Central decorative scheme an anguiped with makara legs (as now restored in MG, with RAB 314 [168]), surrounded by bands with repeating geese, medallions formed from knotted bands with humanoid faces. Marks on the reverse of RAB 325 [179a], RAB 325 [179b], RAB 325 [179c], and RAB 325 [179e].				
Footstool VI (RAB 326 [180]) (Pls. 73.1–2, 86.1)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with openwork and incised ivory and/or bone plaques and ornamental copper rivets. 42 sub-entries (including groups of fragments and copper rivets) catalogued in RAB. Decorative subjects include anguipeds, leogryphs, birds, flowers, and equestrians.		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 137, 140, 145.	Tissot 2006, 155.	NMA, MG.
Footstool VII (RAB 327 [181]) (Pl. 73.3–4)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with openwork and low relief ivory and/or bone plaques. 19 elements catalogued in		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 136, 138, 141, 144, 146–147.	Tissot 2006, 156.	NMA, MG.

		RAB. Decorative subjects include flowers, equestrians, griffins, women, makaras, leogryphs, wrestlers, musicians, anguipeds, and birds.				
Footstool VIII (RAB 328 [182]) (Pl. 73.5–6)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with openwork and incised ivory and/or bone plaques. 12 elements catalogued in RAB. Omega-shaped short sides framed by makaras, birds, and winged lions (?). Other decorative subjects include anguipeds with makaras, ducks, and vegetal and floral motifs. Marks on the reverse of RAB 328 [182c], RAB 328 [182d], RAB 328 [182e], RAB 328 [182f], RAB 328 [182g].		Black and white photos RAB Fig. 73, 95–96, 142, 148, 149, 150–152.	Tissot 2006, 157.	NMA, MG
Footstool IX (RAB 329 [183] + 340 [194]) (Pl. 74)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Footstool decorated with incised, sunken relief, and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques. 38 elements catalogued in RAB. Trapezoidal form. Top side with central decoration of garden scene with two pairs of nude women wearing girdles and jewellery, two seated, variously interacting with a	H. 25.0 cm; W. 29.0 cm; L. 46.5 cm	Black and white photos RAB Fig. 154–169, 171–182, 186–187; Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Fig. 649–650; Colour photos LTR Nos. 153–155; Colour photos Ambers et al. 2014, Nos. 5, 6, 12.	Tissot 2006, 158–162; Ambers et al. 2014, 99–128, 188–198, Nos. 5, 6, 12.	NMA, MG.

		<p>parrot, holding bowls, and using a mirror. Scene framed first by a geometric decorative band, and second by vegetal scrollwork inhabited by ducks and plants, with composite creatures at corners. Sides with lower bands of composite creatures, bands with geometric decoration, lower register of quadrilateral plaques depicting real and fantastic creatures interspersed with colonnettes, bands with inhabited scrollwork, another register with plaques depicting creatures interspersed with colonnettes, followed by bands with circular geometric motif, all framed by plaques depicting standing women in exterior scenes. Ornamental copper rivets in the form of rosettes. Found in semi-articulated state. Marks on the reverse of RAB 329 [183j], RAB 329 [183q] (Ambers et al. 2014, No. 12); RAB 329 [183y], RAB 329 [183cl].</p>				
Footstool X (RAB 330 [184]) (Pl. 75)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with incised and low relief ivory and/or bone plaques. 13	H. 18.0 cm; W. 20.0 cm; L. 32.0 cm.	Black and white photos RAB Fig. 190, 194; Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Fig. 651–653.	Tissot 2006, 163.	NMA, MG.

		<p>elements catalogued in RAB. As reconstructed by Hamelin, top side with central decorative scheme of semi-nude women in garden setting, surrounded by decorative bands with cross and geometric motifs. Omega-shaped short sides with open decoration featuring central decorative plaque depicting three semi-nude women and nude child. Framing decorative plaques with geometric motifs and makaras. Long sides with decorative bands of geometric and vegetal motifs, use of ivory colonnettes.</p>				
<p>Footstool XI (RAB 331 [185]) (Pl. 76.1–2)</p>	<p>10, E wall, 2.60 m.</p>	<p>Incomplete (?) remains of footstool decorated with incised and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques. 16 elements reported in RAB. Top side with central decorative plaque depicting eight semi-nude women and two children in garden scene with <i>torana</i>. Omega-shaped short sides framed by leogryphs. Subjects of other decorative plaques include anguipeds, makaras, birds, leogryphs, griffins, flowers, ducks.</p>		<p>Black and white photos RAB Figs. 82, 191–193, 195, 197, 220.</p>	<p>Tissot 2006, 164.</p>	<p>NMA, MG.</p>

		Mark on the reverse of RAB 331 [185n].				
Footstool XII (RAB 332 [186]) (Pl. 77)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Footstool decorated with incised and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques. 65 elements catalogued in RAB. Top side with central decorative scheme of four semi-nude women in garden scene, three seated with drinking bowls and an attendant with a jug. Framed by row of flowers, then row of birds in rhombuses surrounded by foliage. Omega-shaped short side with central plaque of anguiped with makaras, framed by leogryphs and makaras among vegetal motifs and scrollwork. Long sides featuring decorative bands of leogryphs, floral motifs, and vegetal scrollwork, central register with plaques depicting pairs of women interspersed with colonnettes. Marks on the reverse of RAB 332 [186t], RAB 332 [186z], RAB 332 [186jI].		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 198–204, 206–209, 212; Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Fig. 654, 655; Illustrated reconstruction MGP 81315/182 in Tissot 2006, 165.	Tissot 2006, 165–167.	NMA, MG.
Footstool XIII (RAB 333 [187]) (Pl. 76.3–4)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a footstool decorated with openwork and incised ivory and/or bone plaques. 18 elements catalogued in RAB. Subjects of		Black and white photos RAB Figs. 205, 213–217; Black and white photo MGP 81315/94 in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 354.94.	Tissot 2006, 168.	NMA, MG.

		decoration are primarily birds (roosters, ducks, guinea fowls) with occasional rosettes, vegetal motifs, winged monsters. Marks on the reverse of RAB 333 [187c].				
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4.13.1.2. *Backrests and panels*

The eight articles of furniture listed in this table – primarily parts of chairs, perhaps also a sofa or bed (Panels 1, 4, 34) – are listed not by their NRAB inventory numbers or their date of discovery, but according to the names and order within which Hamelin’s reconstructions are presented,¹³⁸⁷ followed by Backrest 55 (which Hamelin did not offer a detailed reconstruction of). Most of these ensembles had been ornamented on both faces (interior and exterior), but the illustrations of the reconstructions often only depict the decoration of the interior face. It should be noted that Panels 1 and 4 were discovered to be mirrored in their decoration (perhaps intended to be connected to each other), and moreover that the decorative schemes and dimensions of Panels 1, 4, and 34 were similar, indicating to Stern and Hamelin that these pieces had been related in some way. Indeed, Hamelin made a tentative illustrated reconstruction of the three into a kind of larger decorative platform upon which a chair (with Backrest 161) with a footstool had been placed, but as he did not publish it, it seems that he (probably rightfully) discarded this interpretation.¹³⁸⁸ Alternatively, perhaps Panels 1, 4, and 34 had formed some kind of bed or sofa, but they are nonetheless listed separately below. Detached elements from certain of these pieces were reported in room 10, including examples from Backrest 161 and Backrest 5 (listed in the table below), as well as three most likely from Panels 1, 4, and 34.¹³⁸⁹ For further remarks on the documentation, incomplete condition, and reconstruction of these articles of furniture, see the discussion above (§4.13.1).

In this table, dimensions are given according to Hamelin’s reconstructions. I do not include references to all known images of plaques from these articles of furniture, especially because the connection of individual plaques to certain ensembles is in many cases unclear. I do, however, provide references to photographs *in situ* and Hamelin’s illustrated

¹³⁸⁷ Hackin 1954a, 315–330.

¹³⁸⁸ Published in Mehendale 1997, Fig. 94.

¹³⁸⁹ RAB 249 [103], RAB 256 [110], and RAB 266 [120].

reconstructions. It is also worth noting that a mark was reported on the reverse of NRAB 191i bis, which was associated with either the exterior face of Panel 1 or 4.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
Backrest 161 (NRAB 161) (Pl. 78)	13, N wall.	Incomplete remains of a curved chair backrest decorated with ivory plaques, plain, incised, and in relief, colonnettes, and ornamental copper rivets in the shape of rosettes. Four decorative registers. Lower rail decorated with incised geometric pattern, followed by bead colonnettes, register of occupied vine scrolls, and two registers of plaques depicting semi-nude women interspersed with colonnettes. Reconstructed with plaques from room 10, RAB 250 [104]–253 [107], RAB 259 [113]–260 [114]. See discussion in §4.13.1.	H. (all approx.) 70.0 cm; W. 128.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 320).	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> NRAB Fig. 1; Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Fig. 636; Black and white photo of alternative reconstruction in NMA in 1960s Grissmann 2006, Pl. 50.	Hackin 1954a, 319, 316–317; Tissot 2006, 136–141.	NMA 58-1-101 / ?
Backrest 5 (NRAB 5) (Pl. 79)	13, centre to SE, ‘lightly inclined position,’ 2.50 m (average).	Incomplete remains of a rectangular backrest decorated on both faces with plain and openwork ivory plaques, colonnettes, and ornamental copper rivets. Gilded copper clamps. Seven decorative registers, openwork plaques backed with sheets of mica and	W. 140.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 320).	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> NRAB Fig. 28; Illustrated reconstruction of interior face NRAB Fig. 637; Illustrated partial reconstruction of exterior face Tissot 2006, 170.	Hackin 1954a, 320, 327–328; Gill 2001; Tissot 2006, 169–177.	NMA, MG.

		<p>copper on wood on each face. On interior face, register I (destroyed on object, Hackin 1954a, 320) with pairs of semi-nude women interspersed with colonnettes, II with frieze of animals, II bis with beaded colonnettes, III with interior narrative scene (Gill 2001), IV with dwarven musicians, V with alternating scenes of pairs of women and equestrians on monsters, V bis with beaded colonnettes. On exterior face, register II with geese, III with inhabited scroll, V with alternating equestrians on monsters and vegetal decorative plaques. Plaques from room 10, including RAB 265 [119], and RAB 259 [123], probably derived from this backrest. See discussion in §4.13.1.</p>				
Backrest 2 (parts of NRAB 150, 202) (Pl. 80)	13, N of W wall, 2.20–2.50 m.	<p>Rectangular backrest with projecting side elements decorated with incised, relief, and openwork ivory plaques. Copper clamps. Upper rib with diagonal stripes, top register with polychrome hunting scenes, then register of</p>	H. 67.5 cm; W. (total) 142.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 328).	<p>Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Fig. 638; Illustrated reconstruction of posts NRAB Fig. 648.</p>	Hackin 1954a, 320–321, 328; Tissot 2006, 201–206	NMA, MG.

		palmettes, geese, undulating vegetal motif, scrolls inhabited with animals and hunters, winged lions, figures with makaras and birds, geometric motif, beaded colonnettes, and geometric motifs. Posts decorated with auspicious symbols (including <i>pūrṇa-ghaṭa</i>), animals, monsters, and <i>yakṣas</i> .				
Backrest 3 (NRAB 192 and part of NRAB 150) (Pl. 81)	13, N of W wall, 2.20–2.50 m.	Rectangular backrest with projecting side elements and decorative brackets, decorated on both sides with incised, relief, and openwork ivory plaques. Traces of mica noticed (Hackin 1954a, 329). Copper clamps. Interior face upper register decorated with trees, hunting scenes, scenes with elephants, then band of quatrefoil motif, band of palmettes and floral motifs, band with conches, register with plaques of semi-nude women interspersed with colonnettes, followed by bands of undulating vegetal motif, birds, scrolls inhabited with animals and hunters on horseback, and geometric motifs.	W. (total) 136.9 cm (Hackin 1954a, 320).	Illustrated reconstruction NRAB Figs. 639–640; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 8131564/2; Illustrated reconstruction of right side of exterior face MGP 81315/164 in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 496.236.	Hackin 1954a 322, 328–239; Tissot 2006, 217–230.	NMA, MG.

		Posts decorated with undulating vegetal motif, <i>pūrṇa-ghaṭa</i> supported by atlant. Decorative brackets carved in the round of leogryphs terminating in makara, ridden by semi-nude female figure, small figure underneath. Mark on the reverse of NRAB 192o.				
Panel 34 / NRAB 34 (Pls. 82–83)	13, centre to N (found upside down).	Incomplete (?) remains of a large curved panel with projecting perpendicular side elements, decorated with openwork, incised, and relief ivory and/or bone plaques. Gilded copper clamps. Openwork decoration backed with sheets of mica and copper on wood on each face. Exterior face with register of decorative railings, pairs of semi-nude women under 12 elaborate <i>toraṇas</i> , alternating with incised plaques of pairs of semi-nude women, followed by register of decorative railings. Interior face with six main decorative registers, first with garden scenes alternating with <i>toraṇas</i> , decorative quatrefoil band, register with undulating foliage	H. 58 cm; W. 315.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 329).	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> NRAB Figs. 5–7; Illustrated reconstruction of interior and exterior faces NRAB Figs. 641–642; Illustrated reconstruction of posts NRAB Fig. 648.	Hackin 1954a, 322–323, 329; Tissot 2006, 178–196.	NMA, MG.

		and figures, decorative band of flying geese, register with semi-nude women under <i>torāṇas</i> , decorative band with flying geese, register with vegetal scrolls inhabited by figures, decorative band with floral motifs, register with anguipeds and makaras interspersed with birds, decorative band with ducks, register with atlants, decorative band with waterfowl. Posts decorated with auspicious symbols (including <i>pūrṇa-ghaṭa</i>), animals, and makaras. Reconstructed with decorative bracket in genre of NRAB 192 or NRAB 192 by Hamelin (NRAB Fig. 641).				
Panel 1 (several numbers in NRAB) (Pl. 84)	13, N of W wall, 2.20–2.50 m.	Incomplete remains of a rectangular panel with projecting side element, originally with decorative bracket (semi-nude woman riding a leogryph terminating in a makara, with small figure underneath). Decorated with incised, relief, and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques, decoration mirrored with Panel 4, and	W. (with Panel 4) 302.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 330).	Illustrated reconstruction of Panel 1 and 4 NRAB Figs. 643–644; Illustrated reconstruction of mounts NRAB Fig. 648.	Hackin 1954, 324–325, 329–330; Tissot 2006, 231–242.	NMA, MG.

		similar to Panel 34. See description of Panel 34 above.				
Panel 4 (several numbers in NRAB) (Pl. 84)	13, N of W wall, 2.20–2.50 m.	Incomplete remains of a rectangular panel with projecting side element, originally with decorative bracket (semi-nude woman riding a leogryph terminating in a makara, with small figure underneath). Decorated with incised, relief, and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques, decoration mirrored with Panel 1, and similar to Panel 34. See description of Panel 34 above. Gilded clamps.	W. (with Panel 1) 302.0 cm (Hackin 1954a, 330).	Illustrated reconstruction of Panel 1 and 4 NRAB Figs. 643–644; Illustrated reconstruction of mounts NRAB Fig. 648.	Hackin 1954a, 324–325, 329–330; Tissot 2006, 231–242.	NMA, MG.
Backrest 55 / NRAB 55 (Pl. 85)	13, E wall (between wall and NRAB 32, §4.2.1.3), 2.30–2.45 m.	Incomplete (?) remains of a rectangular backrest with projecting side elements, decorated on interior face with incised, relief, and openwork ivory and/or bone plaques. Upper rib with diagonal stripes, top register with figures (anguipeds or <i>yakṣas</i>) interspersed with foliate knots, decorative bands with waves and geometric motifs, central decorative register of alternating plaques with pairs of semi-nude		Black and white photos NRAB Figs. 97–99, 179, 228–232; Illustrated reconstruction of right side MGP 81315793/19 in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 428.168; Colour photos of NRAB 55a and NRAB 55b in LTR No. 193 and 192.	Foucher 1954b; Gill 2001, 316–318; Tissot 2006, 197–200.	NMA, MG.

		women in exterior setting and elaborated palmettes, followed by foliate, geometric, and plain bands. Posts decorated with palmettes and geometric motifs. Projecting side elements with narrative (?) scenes, perhaps from <i>jātaka</i> stories (Foucher 1954b, 83–87), or not (Gill 2001, 316–318).				
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4.13.1.3. Furniture legs

The three incomplete furniture legs in this group were found in partially articulated condition, but the first two found in room 10 – shown clearly in photos taken *in situ* – were documented across different inventory numbers in RAB, while the third is known only from an archival photograph of this piece *in situ* in room 13 and Hamelin’s plan (Pl. 18). As discussed above (§4.13.1), these furniture legs nonetheless appear to have had similar forms, and perhaps derive from the same article of furniture. As will be discussed below, this piece of furniture may have been further adorned with large bronze plaques (§4.13.3). An ivory fragment of a lion’s head (RAB 345 [201]) should belong to Furniture Leg 1 or 2.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
Furniture Leg 1 (RAB 342 [196], 344 [200]) (Pl. 86.1–3)	10, E wall, 2.60 m.	Incomplete remains of articulated ivory furniture leg. Set into base plate corner bracket ornamented with four buffalos carved in the round. Lower part carved in the round with foreparts of elephant set into an iron rod. Lathe-turned elements on upper part, still articulated with	H. (est.) 80.0 cm?	Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> RAB Figs. 231, 233; Black and white photos of constituent elements RAB Figs. 228–229, 232, 236. Colour photos of constituent elements LTR Nos. 150, 152, 156–157.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 652.392–394.	NMA, MG.

		long plain crossbar?				
Furniture Leg 2 (RAB 343 [197], 343 [198], 343 [199]) (Pl. 86.4–5)	10, E wall, 2.50 m.	Incomplete remains of articulated ivory and/or bone furniture leg. Set into base plate corner bracket ornamented with four lions carved in the round. Lower part carved in the round with foreparts of elephant set into an iron rod. Lathe-turned elements on upper part, surmounted with disarticulated (?) elongated ‘winged lion’? (Catalogued with same inventory number RAB 343).	H. (est.) 100.0 cm?	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 230; Black and white photos of lions from base plate RAB Fig. 235; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81311/16. Colour photos (if upper elongated ‘lion’ element) Ambers et al. 2014, No. 20.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 651.391; Ambers et al. 2014, 312–322, No. 20 (upper elongated ‘lion’ element?).	NMA, MG.
Furniture Leg 3	13, E wall.	Articulated ivory furniture leg. Lower parts perhaps foreparts of elephant carved in the round, lathe-turned elements on upper part, two still-articulated plain crossbars at top.		Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81317/133.		

4.13.1.4. Unidentified furniture elements – ornamental railing?

As discussed above (§4.13.1), the elements listed in the table below (according to their documentation in RAB) appear to represent the incomplete remains of a single piece of furniture, perhaps an ornamental railing.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 319 [273] (Pl. 87.1, 3)	13, centre to N, 2.60 m.	Ivory ‘statuette’ of <i>yakṣī</i> or river goddess with capital-like headdress, standing on makara. Found parallel to right of	H. (total) 56.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 75; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81315/3; Black and white photo after	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 251.1b.	NMA 59-1-301 / 0.4.1.16.

		320 [174a], not attached at any point, tilted deeper into deposit at base.		consolidation RAB Fig. 79–80; Colour photo LTR No. 149.		
RAB 320 [174a] (Pl. 87)	13, centre to N, 2.60 m.	Ivory ‘statuette’ of <i>yakṣī</i> or river goddess standing on makara, remnants of carved ashoka branches. Adhering to ivory plate in horizontal position, framed by double ivory ‘walls’ arranged vertically and rounded at base, with the vertical portion of the rounded part being protected by thin bands of copper. 54 cm iron rod threaded through bottom part of ensemble, lathe-turned ivory elements on either side. To right, large piece of plain, hollow ivory cylinder. Ensemble found to left of RAB 319 [173].	H. (total) 45.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 75; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81315/3; Black and white photos after consolidation RAB Figs. 76–78; Colour photo LTR No. 147.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 262.2.	NMA 59-1-302 / 04.1.14.
RAB 320 [174b] (Pl. 87)	13, centre to N, 2.60 m.	Ivory ‘statuette’ of <i>yakṣī</i> or river goddess standing on makara, found in perpendicular position at top of RAB 320 [174a]. Right hip missing, hands and feet damaged, head found separately.	H. (total) 45.6 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> RAB Fig. 75; Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81315/3; Black and white photos RAB Figs. 76–77, 81; Colour photo LTR No. 148.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 263.3.	NMA 59-1-303 / 04.1.15.

4.13.2. Boxes with metal decoration or fittings

This group includes the remains of at least 4 wooden boxes which had featured fittings or decoration made in metal, whether (alloyed) copper, bronze, or iron. The primary

documentation for these boxes is presented in NRAB, Ghirshman's excavation report,¹³⁹⁰ and archival documents and photography.¹³⁹¹ It is also worth noting that the remains of at least two additional boxes in room T seem (if not unequivocally) to be suggested by the remains of iron plaques and bars noted in R1940 to have been found in association with the glass vessel with gold spout attachments (see §4.2.1.16, Appendices I and II), as well as the pulverised wood in association with four bronze corner elements NRAB 239–242 of different dimensions (see §4.4, Appendices I and II). As the identification of these two additional boxes is somewhat uncertain, I do not list them in the table below.

The precise dimensions and forms of most of these boxes are not clear, as apparently their wooden frames had largely decayed. NRAB 66 and NRAB 256 probably took the form of rectangular prisms, judging also from Carl's sketched reconstruction of the latter.¹³⁹² The inclusion of the box closures, rivets, and chains reported by Ghirshman (B.G. 8, B.G. 10, B.G. 11) in this group is based on his suggestion that these elements derived from a missing wooden coffer.¹³⁹³ However, the highly ornamented box NRAB 354 – called a “chef d'œuvre” by Hackin¹³⁹⁴ – had taken the form of an octagonal prism with eight long, slim, rectangular panels (one found to be missing) featuring copper fittings and delicate scrollwork decorated with miniature silhouettes of birds and Erotes. According to the description in NRAB, two panels had aiguillette-shaped handles, and another had a lock. Unlike the other boxes described here, which probably primarily served storage functions (perhaps for certain of the hoard objects?), NRAB 354 appears to have been a decorative object in its own right. Without firmer documentation or parallels for NRAB 354, the dates and places of production of these boxes remain unclear.

Although the box NRAB 66 had been reported in room 13, it is noteworthy that the remaining three were documented in room T. More curiously, NRAB 354 was reported at the very low depth of 3.20 m (see, however, contradictory documentation in Appendix I and II), perhaps suggesting that it had been placed in a pit. It also appears that this box had been found in incomplete condition. No trace was reported of one panel (panel 3), although the catalogue entry in NRAB offered the explanation that it had probably been made only of wood. One handle, NRAB 244 (§4.4), was reported separately from the same room, but remarked in NRAB to have belonged to NRAB 354. Although the precise findspot of the handle within

¹³⁹⁰ Ghirshman 1946, 68–69.

¹³⁹¹ C.C. 3, C.C. 21, MGP 81317/148, 81317/149.

¹³⁹² C.C. 3.

¹³⁹³ Ghirshman 1946, 68–69.

¹³⁹⁴ RMA 1940–4, see §2.4.5.

room T is unclear (it appears to have been found under the bastion), it was reported at a depth of 2.50 m – much higher than the box NRAB 354. The positioning of the panels of the box NRAB 354 in surviving *in situ* photography also indicates that these panels had not been fully articulated upon the object's deposition.¹³⁹⁵

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 66	13, NE corner, 2.30 m.	Six pieces of copper, the metal lining of a decayed wooden box, the sixth piece being the lock plate.	Square pieces 1–3: 3.1 x 2.9 cm; diamond piece 4: 6.0 x 3.0 cm; rectangular piece 5: 8.4 x 5.5 cm; lock plate 6: 8.7 x 7.2 cm.	Indicated with dashed rectangle in Hamelin's plan of room 13, Pl. 18.		NMA?
NRAB 256	T, N wall, 2.60 m.	Parts of the metal armature of a large wooden box. Fragments of very oxidised iron. Corner reinforcements.	12.0 x 10.0 cm.	Illustrated reconstruction C.C. 3.		NMA?
NRAB 354 (Pl. 92.1)	T, '40 cm below the foundation of NE tower,' 3.20 m.	Wooden box in the form of an octangular prism, originally formed from eight rectangular panels. Seven panels featuring copper armature and decorative elements, scrollwork with silhouettes of birds and Erotes. Panels 1 and 4 had an aiguillette-shaped handle (see NRAB 244), panel 7 had a lock. No trace found of panel 3.	L. (panel) 46.0 cm; W. 11.0 cm.	Illustration of panel 1 and part of panel 2 by Carl in NRAB Fig. 357; Illustration of form of box C.C. 21; Black and white photos <i>in situ</i> MGP 81317/148, 81317/149.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 747.487.	NMA?
B.G. 8 (Pl. 92.2–3)	T, under bastion.	Bronze box closure; bronze rivets and chain with iron plaques. According to	L. 6.6 cm; W. 2.2 cm.	Black and white photos Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 3, 7; Illustration Ghirshman 1946,	Ghirshman 1946, 69.	

¹³⁹⁵ MGP 81317/148, 81317/149.

		Ghirshman, from a wooden coffer.		Pl. XXXV B.G. 8.		
B.G. 10 (Pl. 92.5)	T, under bastion.	Bronze rivets. According to Ghirshman, from a wooden coffer.		Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 10.	Ghirshman 1946, 69.	
B.G. 11 (Pl. 92.4)	T, under bastion.	Bronze chains with suspension loops. According to Ghirshman, from a wooden coffer.		Black and white photo Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 4; Illustration Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 11.	Ghirshman 1946, 68.	

4.13.3. Bronze plaques from furniture

This group includes 2 rectangular bronze plaques forming a mirrored pair, with each featuring a short side that had been cut with a moulded profile. These plaques are documented in NRAB, in addition to an archival photograph showing the second *in situ*.¹³⁹⁶

NRAB 3 was suggested in NRAB to have served as some kind of covering, and a hint as to the function of these objects is provided in the archival photograph showing Furniture Leg 3 (§4.13.1.3) and NRAB 26 bis *in situ*. In this photograph, one corner of NRAB 26 bis appears to cut through one of the crossbars articulated with the furniture leg. Furthermore, seeing the two objects juxtaposed, it seems that the moulded right side of the plaque corresponds in the negative to the lathe-turned elements on the upper part of the furniture leg. Accordingly, NRAB 3 and NRAB 26 bis may have served to further adorn the article of furniture to which the legs from rooms 10 and 13 had once been attached.

Both of these plaques were reported in room 13. As discussed above (see §2.4.5, §4.2.2.3), NRAB 3 does not appear to have been found on the east wall of room 13 (as in Hamelin's plan, Pl. 18), but along the west wall, as it was originally reported in NRAB. In addition to this, the photograph of NRAB 3 published in NRAB (Pl. 93.1) shows that this plaque cannot be the same one shown in the *in situ* archival photograph to be in association with Furniture Leg 3, because the latter plaque was found lying on the reverse side, and hence it must be NRAB 26 bis.

¹³⁹⁶ MGP 81317/113.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 3 (Pl. 93.1)	13, W wall (<i>contra</i> Hamelin's plan).	Large rectangular bronze plaque. Moulded profile cut into right side, upper and left edges chamfered.	27.4 cm x 37.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> NRAB Fig. 351.		NMA?
NRAB 26 bis	13, E wall, 2.60 m (associated with crossbars articulated with Furniture Leg 3, <i>contra</i> Hamelin's plan).	Large rectangular bronze plaque forming pair with NRAB 3, moulded profile cut into right side, two other sides presumably chamfered?	26.7 cm x 37.0 cm.	Black and white photo <i>in situ</i> MGP 81317/133.		NMA?

4.13.4. Bronze shrine?

This group includes a single example of an ornamented bronze object that was described as an *aedicula*. The documentation for this object is found in NRAB. In NRAB, features of this object are described in some detail, both by Hackin and then by his later editors on the basis of the object's appearance in 1946, presumably after some restoration. Some of these features are visible on the published photograph (Pl. 93.2), and Hamelin's illustration (Pl. 93.3) adds further confusion into the mix. Although not explicitly stated, Hamelin's illustration appears to correspond to some degree to the object described by Hackin's editors. From Hackin's description and the photograph, it appears that this object took the form of a rectangular prism made in two main parts. The lower featured a mobile rectangular 'door' (apparently detached), on which a separately made repoussé representation of a seated man reaching for fruit from a tree had been soldered. The upper part had instead a pentagonal 'window,' and was topped with a cornice ornamented with a cymatium, a flat roof with a sort of handle, an acroterion and a palmette.

Perhaps Hackin was correct to describe this object as an *aedicula*. In the Graeco-Roman world, an *aedicula* is more specifically one type of small household shrine in the form of a simplified miniature temple featuring images (often statuettes) of deities.¹³⁹⁷ For example, *lararia* – household shrines for worshipping domestic gods – were often built in the forms of *aediculae*, as attested amply at Pompeii and Herculaneum.¹³⁹⁸ However, although NRAB 255

¹³⁹⁷ Boyce 1937, 12–13.

¹³⁹⁸ Boyce 1937; Orr 1978, 1575–1586.

very vaguely recalls niched *lararia*, the entablatures on the *aedicula*-type versions, and the concept of two stacked elements with sets of doors found on a wooden cupboard-*aedicula* found at Herculaneum,¹³⁹⁹ none of these comparanda are particularly close to the version found at Begram. Perhaps conceptually closer comparanda could be cited from the rather larger, *vihāra*-type rectangular (Buddhist) shrines or chapels that had been installed during Macrophase 5a in the courts of Unit D and Temple K at Barikot (see also above, §3.5.4). These were respectively about three and two metres wide, and although the first chapel hosted an altar and the second a small stupa, both were similar in that they had been placed on podiums, were plastered, and featured a decorated wooden architrave as well as two outwards-opening doors on their front sides.¹⁴⁰⁰ If this object had served as a shrine, any images or objects placed into it would have had very small dimensions. As no clear comparanda are known for this object, it is impossible to assess where and when it was made.

Two other aspects about this find are important to stress. The first is that this object was clearly found in incomplete condition. Second, it was reported in the NW corner of the ‘couloir central’ of Site II (see Appendix I), being one of only two objects found in this area that are comparable to those found in rooms 10, 13, and T; the other find is NRAB 254 (§4.4), a bronze element in the form of a miniature vessel from a device such as a lamp stand. Although I have stressed that the boundary between hoard and ‘not-hoard’ is ambiguous in this case (§3.5.3), I have included these objects in my inventory of the hoard objects nonetheless.

Number	Findspot	Description	Dimensions	Images	See also	Museum
NRAB 255 (Pl. 93.2–3)	Couloir central, NW corner, 2.40 m (Appendix I).	Incomplete small bronze rectangular shrine (?) in two separate parts with rectangular ‘door’ and pentagonal ‘window.’ Repoussé depiction of man reaching for fruit from tree soldered onto ‘door.’ Cornice with cymatium at top of object, palmette, ‘handle’?	H. 18.8 cm; W. 8.6 cm.	Black and white photo NRAB Fig. 348; Illustration by Hamelin (of object as restored by 1946?) NRAB Fig. 348 bis.	Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 729.469.	NMA?

¹³⁹⁹ Mols 1999, No. 29.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Shrine 527 from Unit D in Olivieri 2011a, 8–10, Figs. 8–10; shrine 1123 from Temple K in Olivieri 2012b, 8–9, 12, Figs. 8–10.

4.14. Coins

The table below lists the 13 coins that were discovered in association with the hoard, according to the definition of these deposits outlined above (§3.5.3). More specifically, these are the coins that were found at a depth of 2.60 m in room 10 (three examples in Pl. 25.1, Nos. 117, 119, 120), and those in room 13 reported between the depths of 2.10 m and 2.55 m. It should be reiterated that several coins indicated in NRAB as having been found in room 13 do not appear to come from this room (§2.4.5). Other coins documented throughout the Site II structure are listed in the tables presented in Appendix I. The primary documentation for these coins is found in RAB, NRAB, and secondary studies presented by Bopearachchi and myself.¹⁴⁰¹

All of these coins were most likely produced from alloyed copper. However, because the catalogue entries in RAB and NRAB constitute the only surviving data for the majority of these coins, their descriptions (whether accurate or dubious) are replicated below. According to the available data, these coins were minted across a wide date range: between the reign of the Indo-Parthian king Gondophares (ca. 20–46 CE) to the second half of the 3rd century CE or later (Pl. 25.1, Nos. 117, 119, 120). As explained above (§3.5.3), it is not clear how the five coins associated with the hoard in room 10 kept in the MG precisely correspond to either RAB 267 [121] or RAB 274 [128], which respectively catalogue two and three coins each. Therefore, the data for each of these five coins is repeated in each row of the table corresponding to these inventory numbers.

Some details are available about the more specific findspots of these coins. In room 10, one coin of Kanishka I (RAB 275 [129]) had been found to the side of the leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1) in the southern central part of room 10, while two Kushan coins (coins catalogued under RAB 267 [121] or RAB 274 [128]) were found in the interior of the hollow support of one of these basins (RAB 289 [143]).¹⁴⁰² These details are significant as they demonstrate that at least some of the coins in the hoard cannot be described as accidental losses from earlier activity within the hoard rooms, but were clearly deposited in association with the hoard objects. Otherwise, details about the position of the coins in room 13 are indicated in NRAB and Hamelin's plan (Pl. 18), suggesting that they were loosely dispersed around the walls of the room.

¹⁴⁰¹ Bopearachchi 2001; Morris 2017.

¹⁴⁰² Hackin 1939a, 10.

Number	Room	Description	Images	See also	Museum
RAB 267 [121]-1 (Pl. 25.1, Nos. 117, 119, 120)	10, 2.60 m.	Copper alloy coin of Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108), Kanishka (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 111), or imitation Vasudeva Oesho with bull (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 117, 119, or 120).	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120.	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120; Morris 2017.	MG
RAB 267 [121]-2	10, 2.60 m.	Copper alloy coin of Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108), Kanishka (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 111), or imitation Vasudeva Oesho with bull (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 117, 119, or 120).	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120.	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120; Morris 2017.	MG
RAB 274 [128]-1	10, 2.60 m.	Copper alloy coin of Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108), Kanishka (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 111), or imitation Vasudeva Oesho with bull (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 117, 119, or 120).	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120.	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120; Morris 2017.	MG
RAB 274 [128]-2	10, 2.60 m.	Copper alloy coin of Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108), Kanishka (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 111), or imitation Vasudeva Oesho with bull (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 117, 119, or 120).	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120.	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120; Morris 2017.	MG
RAB 274 [128]-3	10, 2.60 m.	Copper alloy coin of Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108), Kanishka (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 111), or imitation Vasudeva Oesho with bull (Bopearachchi 2001, No. 117, 119, or 120).	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120.	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 108, 111, 117, 119, or 120; Morris 2017.	MG
RAB 275 [129]	10, 2.60 m.	Coin, bronze, obverse Kanishka, reverse unclear.			NMA?
RAB 295 [149]	10, 2.60 m.	Coin, very oxidised bronze, unidentified.			MG?
NRAB 6	13, E wall to S, 2.10 m.	Coin, billon, Kujula Kadphises			NMA?
NRAB 36	13, E wall to centre, 2.50 m.	Coin, copper, pronounced oxidation. Kushan period.			NMA?
NRAB 118	13, 2.40 m.	Coin, copper, marked oxidation			NMA?
NRAB 155	13, N wall, 2.55 m.	Coin, copper, Gondophares.			NMA?
NRAB 171	13, W wall, 2.40 m.	Coin, copper, oxidation marked.			NMA?
NRAB 208	13, W wall, 2.50 m.	Coin, copper, oxidation marked. Wima Kadphises.			NMA?

4.15. Inscribed objects

In various parts of the inventory above, the fact that certain of the objects deposited in the Begram hoard featured inscriptions has been mentioned in passing. In this section, some of these inscribed objects are discussed in more detail to facilitate easier reference and ideally encourage attention from specialists in the future. These inscriptions are all insufficiently documented, but five examples from three glass vessels were semi-accurately illustrated by Hamelin in a plate accompanying one of his articles on Begram's glass, which however is not mentioned in the text.¹⁴⁰³

The inscriptions on the first two objects discussed here were executed with a brush or stylus on large glass goblets with yellow enamel (fused vitreous material), i.e. the same medium used to achieve their decoration (§4.2.1.2). These texts essentially functioned as labels for the depicted subjects, and had been intentionally added during manufacture. The first such goblet featuring these labels is NRAB 27 (Pl. 41.3), which depicts scenes from the Iliad in two registers. The lower register more specifically shows a battle in chariots between Achilles and Hector, and these figures are labelled in Greek executed in a handwritten style. There does not appear to be clear published photography of these texts, but they are relatively clear on the recently restored vessel. Hamelin's illustrations, reading "Ἀχ[ὶλλ]εύ[ς]" and "[Ε]κτω[ρ],"¹⁴⁰⁴ do not appear to be of use for commenting on any palaeographic features of these inscriptions. On the vessel Hamelin 1954, No. 4 / MG 21177 (if these fragments are correctly restored together), the label "Felix" written in Latin is quite clear, executed in a handwritten style (Pl. 41.1). It appears to either refer to the figure to the left, or a no longer extant figure directly below, perhaps a gladiator like those in the surviving lower register of the decoration. As noted earlier (§4.2.1.2), Felix represents the cognomen "Lucky," and the use of a labelled name here is comparable to another enamelled glass vessel depicting gladiators indicated with fictive Greek names that was excavated at Lubieszewo/Lübsow Tunnehult 2.

Comparatively, the next group of inscriptions to be discussed were executed in black ink on finished examples of glass vessels, and although they are not legible, they suggest a documentary function and may speak to some kind of administrative procedure (see below, §5.3). It is worth remarking here that a bronze inkpot NRAB 80 (§4.6.2) had been found in room 13.

¹⁴⁰³ Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI a.

The first example from this group is a curiously documented fragment of the opening (in the form of a ‘tail’) of an ichthyomorphic glass flask representing either a fish or dolphin, RAB 358 [214] (§4.2.1.12, Pl. 50.3–5). The inscription was semi-accurately illustrated by Hamelin (Pl. 50.5), and mentioned without reference to the plate in his text: “Une embouchure avec amorce de nageoire (M.G. 21.465) porte une inscription qui, d’après le Père Stève [*sic*, the Dominican priest and Orientalist, Marie-Joseph Steve], serait en caractères araméens.”¹⁴⁰⁵ Hamelin’s list of examples of ichthyomorphic flasks connects this MG inventory number with RAB 358 [214].¹⁴⁰⁶ This same object is still preserved in the MG, and although the surviving part of the inscribed text is extremely effaced, it indicates the inaccuracy of Hamelin’s illustration (Pl. 50.4–5). The inscription is illegible, and represents neither an example of the Aramaic script, nor Kharoṣṭhī (developed from the Aramaic script), nor any other deciphered script. In my view, the characters represented in this text are comparable only to those utilised in examples of the so-called unknown language in the unknown script. This script may be an enriched variant of a Saka runic script emerging in the 3rd–2nd centuries BCE, and – as demonstrated by its parallel use alongside Bactrian and Gāndhārī in the early 2nd century CE Dasht-i Nawur inscription¹⁴⁰⁷ of Wima Takto – was apparently initially utilised as an official language under the Kushans.¹⁴⁰⁸

Two (or perhaps three) further examples of glass vessels – namely, plain colourless goblets – appear to be attested with inked inscriptions. As indicated above (§4.2.1.17), two plain goblets were reported in RAB that seem to have featured similar markings applied to their bases. RAB 349 [205] was simply described as ‘same type as previous’ in this report, but a note added to the document F1937 indicates that it bore a ‘cursive inscription’ on its base. RAB 350 [206] was again described as the ‘same type as previous,’ but with a ‘β traced in ink on the base,’ and a schematic illustration of this character in F1937 indicates that this letter was more triangular in form. Another example, NRAB LXXI, documented in NRAB had been reassembled from fragments in the NMA, where it was described to have ‘the very effaced remains of a Greek inscription in ink.’ As indicated by two surviving archival photographs,¹⁴⁰⁹ this is one of the inscriptions semi-accurately illustrated by Hamelin (Pl. 51.5).¹⁴¹⁰ The latter inscription, however, does not seem to have been in the Greek language. According to Sims-

¹⁴⁰⁵ Hamelin 1954, 180.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Hamelin 1954, 180–181, n. 1.

¹⁴⁰⁷ On the Dasht-i Nawur III, see Fussman 1974, 23–31.

¹⁴⁰⁸ For this body of inscriptions, see Rapin 1992, 139–142. On the significance of this script and language, Grenet 2015, 206.

¹⁴⁰⁹ MGP 81316/117, 81316/118.

¹⁴¹⁰ Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI c.

Williams, one part is in the Bactrian Greek cursive script, within which the sequence $\pi\alpha\sigma\eta\delta\rho\alpha\ldots$ is legible. However, if it forms part of a Bactrian word, it is one hitherto unattested. Significantly, the cursive script used here is a later development; in Sims-Williams's opinion, a late 3rd century CE date for this inscription is not impossible, but he would estimate that a later date in the 4th century CE would be more likely.¹⁴¹¹ Furthermore, although the details of Hamelin's illustration are somewhat confusing, it also does not appear that only one single script is represented in the inked text. Without undertaking the appropriate epigraphic labour, it can at least be noted that other characters that seem to be visible are similar to those of the 'unknown language in the unknown script.' This includes the large central character, which recalls certain examples of distinctive characters appearing on the Surkh Kotal painted inscription.¹⁴¹² The same inscription incorporates characters similar in appearance to the Greek alpha and beta (one example of which is written in a triangular form).¹⁴¹³ Perhaps the use of these letters (as in Greek) served to express numbers? From the surviving documentation, it seems that the vessel NRAB LXXI could represent a duplicate of RAB 349 [205] or RAB 350 [206], although it is impossible to confirm this.

To summarise, it can be said that the surviving documentation for NRAB LXXI indicates that at least two different scripts were utilised on the base of this vessel, that one of these may represent an example of the 'unknown script,' while another most likely attests to the cursive modified Greek that was used to write Bactrian, and that the latter component suggests a date in the late 3rd or 4th century CE. Importantly, the three (or perhaps four) inked inscriptions on examples of Begram's glass described above (RAB 358 [214], RAB 349 [205], RAB 350 [206], and NRAB LXXI) demonstrate local engagement with these objects.

The final object to be discussed in this section is the large leaded bronze pot NRAB 106 (§4.2.2.4, Pl. 54.4–5), the shoulder of which featured an inscription in the Kharoṣṭhī script (presumably in the Gāndhārī language) that had been executed with small dots punched into the surface by a pointed instrument.¹⁴¹⁴ Unfortunately, because the vessel is extremely corroded, the inscription is almost illegible, and no formal edition or reading has ever been produced. In 1990, Fussman apparently offered a translation, "Ceci est le bien de Sagadea," and palaeographically dated the inscription to the reign of Kanishka, and these contributions were cited in a more recent publication by Cambon.¹⁴¹⁵ However, according to Baums (also

¹⁴¹¹ Nicholas Sims-Williams, personal communication.

¹⁴¹² See characters 21 and 25 in Fussman 1974, Pl. VII.

¹⁴¹³ Characters 5, 15, and 18 in Fussman 1974, Pl. VII.

¹⁴¹⁴ Now CKI 1118.

¹⁴¹⁵ Cambon 2006, 99.

following personal inspection of the inscription), the text Fussman proposes to read is unclear except for perhaps the personal name ‘Sagadea,’ and the precision of the proposed palaeographic dating is moreover unconvincing.¹⁴¹⁶ Perhaps the inscription may have functioned as a mark of personal property, but this remains to be assessed by future research.

4.16. Summary: contents, dates and places of production, condition, and arrangement

In this chapter, I have sought to assemble a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the Begram hoard, according to the relevant deposits defined earlier in this dissertation (within rooms 10, 13, and T, as well as the central corridor), although I have stressed that the boundaries of hoard and ‘not-hoard’ are somewhat ambiguous (§3.5.3). The result is that a minimum of ca. 512 individual objects have been listed and described in the sections above. Although there are profound difficulties in negotiating the documentation for this material, and many questions are impossible to answer, the substantial amount of data – if imperfect – gives the following impressions in sum.

First, with respect to the contents of the hoard, the predominant amount of individual objects is represented by glass vessels and containers (§4.2.1), with a total of ca. 183 examples. Although incredibly diverse in method of manufacture and decoration, these largely represent the remains of luxury articles of tableware suitable for drinking, eating, and holding and pouring liquids, but also vessels that were suitable for the storage and dispensation of scented oils. Within this corpus of glass, there are also several large subgroups of vessels which were probably each produced in single workshops, or alternatively extremely closely related ones: the enamelled glass (§4.2.1.2), facet-cut vessels (§4.2.1.3), the goblets and jars with openwork trailing (§4.1.1.11), and the ichthyomorphic flasks with trailed decoration (§4.2.1.12). Furthermore, there are similarities between the blanks utilised to execute enamelled and facet-cut goblets, indicating connections between these first two groups, while the highly distinctive use of openwork trailing on the latter two groups also indicates that their workshops were connected in some manner. However, although such large groups of relatively homogenous vessels can be determined, there are plenty of individual examples of a variety of different classes. More broadly, the glass vessels documented in the Begram hoard were probably almost exclusively produced in workshops of the Roman Mediterranean, especially those in the east,

¹⁴¹⁶ Stefan Baums, personal communication.

and then more specifically in Egypt. However, the diversity of the material documented in addition to the frequent absence of known well-dated and close comparanda means that it is difficult to insist on a restricted region of production for material in this corpus. For example, several specimens could also have been produced in Italy, or in Western Asia (see §4.2.1), and there are also examples of vessels which may have been manipulated locally by adding inlays (RAB 256 [212], §4.2.1.3) and precious metal spouts (§4.2.1.16). The diversity of material represented by this corpus also contributes to the difficulty of assessing when it was produced. Most of the glass gives the impression of having been produced in the 1st to 2nd centuries CE, with several classes suggesting dates in the latter half of the 1st and early 2nd centuries CE more specifically, but some examples could be slightly later (see, for example, §4.2.1.1, groups in §4.2.1.3), and others are virtually impossible to date with confidence. Hence, examples may fall on either side of the main 1st to 2nd century CE chronology.

The next largest group of individual objects are the vessels and containers produced from various alloys of copper (§4.2.2), with a total of 61 individual specimens again appearing to primarily represent articles of tableware. The lion's share of this group is represented by a relatively homogenous set of leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), which may all derive from an otherwise unattested workshop active in the Roman Mediterranean between the mid 1st and mid 2nd centuries CE. Likewise, the bronze jugs as well as the anthropomorphic balsamaria – these probably produced as containers for scented substances – appear to have been produced in the Mediterranean, respectively (perhaps) around the mid 1st century CE and 2nd or even 3rd centuries CE. However, a set of copper alloy bowls and two large leaded bronze pots appear to have been produced locally (south of the Hindu Kush), between around the mid 1st to mid 2nd centuries CE.

The other vessels and containers documented in the Begram hoard are found in smaller groups, but nonetheless represent highly luxurious and unusual objects. The vessels carved from valuable stone – rock crystal (§4.2.5), porphyry (§4.2.4), and alabaster (§4.2.3) – were most likely produced in the Roman Mediterranean, perhaps respectively in the late 1st century BCE or early 1st century CE, the 1st century CE, and the 1st or even 2nd centuries CE. However, the group of four ostrich egg cups and rhytons (§4.2.7) were perhaps produced in Western Asia, more specifically Mesopotamia or Iran. Likewise, a Western Asian or more specifically Mesopotamian origin appears to be plausible for one of the glazed pottery jugs, while another may have been produced in western or northern India using technology transferred from the west (§4.2.8.2). The examples of lacquerware cups, bowls, platters, and boxes (§4.2.6) – at least 10 in number – had apparently been produced in a mix of both state and private workshops

in Han China, plausibly located in the Shu Commandery (Sichuan), Chang'an, and/or the Guangling Princedom in the northeast. The precise date of production for all objects in this group is not clear, but a mid 1st century BCE to mid 1st century CE date is quite safe, with most examples probably falling in the middle of this range. The two plain pottery lamps reported in room 10 (§4.2.8.1) represent clear outliers in this corpus of predominantly valuable and ornate vessels and containers.

Although the number of individual pieces of furniture represented by the Begram ivories is somewhat smaller (§4.3.1) – perhaps up to 13 footstools, 8 backrests and panels, 3 furniture legs, and perhaps a decorative railing – the enormous number of carved ivory and bone elements used to adorn them and the many hours of labour they imply demonstrates clearly that these were expensive and luxurious items. The precise place and date of their manufacture remains uncertain, but perhaps it is possible that they were produced to the west of central India by a guild (or related guilds) of carvers working at a regional capital like Ujjain. It is also difficult, at least, to assert that the entire corpus had been produced in the 1st century CE.

More diverse, unusual, and presumably highly valuable items were also found in the hoard. The best example of this are the two aquariums (§4.3), being elaborate composite devices probably for display or entertainment that were most likely produced in the Roman Mediterranean. An ornate box (NRAB 354, §4.13.2) was also found, which had been adorned with a copper alloy armature featuring delicate scrollwork and silhouettes of Erotes and birds. A small number of gold nails and elements (§4.7.1) had apparently been detached from larger objects, significantly implying the availability of items adorned with precious metal when the hoard was assembled and deposited. The function of three ivory components in the form of cylinders (§4.11.2) is unknown.

One very large group of objects deposited in the hoard which, however, are difficult to read as luxury goods suitable for display are the 56 plaster casts (§4.12). These were apparently produced in the Roman Mediterranean from original works dating from the 2nd century BCE to the mid 1st century CE, and more specifically, at least some were most likely cast in Egypt. These casts were most plausibly collected for use as reference material in the context of craft production. The intended function of a range of 53 smaller metalwork elements (§4.4) is still less clear. These parts – often decorative in nature – had been removed from larger composite items: figurines, vessels, and especially articles of furniture like lampstands. Significantly, they cannot be refitted into complete items. Some objects in this group were most likely produced in the Roman Mediterranean, while others may be local in origin. Perhaps these objects may

represent parts of votive offerings, or alternatively they might have been collected as reference material for use in the context of craft production (see further below, §5.3).

Other articles of bronze found in the hoard suggest specific functions, although – like many of the objects in the hoard – it remains wholly possible that different purposes for these objects were envisaged by the time of their deposition. For example, seven bronze figurines of deities, grotesques, and equestrians produced in the Roman Mediterranean were also reported in the hoard (§4.5). The statuettes of Heracles-Serapis and Harpocrates (NRAB 25 and NRAB 153) more specifically point (if not unequivocally) to production in Egypt. Although some of these figurines may have initially been produced for religious or broadly apotropaic use, their function after they were imported into Central Asia are unclear (see further below §5.3). Further objects suggesting a specific function include a locally produced bronze inkpot of the 1st–2nd centuries CE (§4.6.2), a locally produced incense burner that is more difficult to date (§4.6.3), a probably locally produced plain bronze mirror (§4.8), and a curious, unique item that was interpreted as a shrine (§4.13.4). In addition to this, the 13 copper alloy coins (seven from room 10, six from room 13, §4.14) found in association with the hoard would seem to imply an economic function. However, these were produced over a long period of time, namely from the reign of Gondophares (ca. 20–46 CE) to the second half of the 3rd century CE or later, and thus presumably represent specimens that had been taken out of monetary circulation. Three iron articles of military equipment – two arrowheads and a dagger with a scabbard adorned with gold (§4.9) – can be added to this list of objects. The functions of a further two tools or utensils made of iron – one resembling a ‘scythe,’ another a spoon (§4.6.1) – are less clear.

A diversity of other objects are difficult to interpret. Some objects that I have considered as examples of raw or semi-worked materials were probably also conceived of as valuable in their own right. These included a marine mollusc shell and a piece of coral (§4.10.2), the latter presumably sourced from the Mediterranean basin, as well as a piece of worked agate (perhaps once a vessel stand) and a chunk of unworked lapis lazuli (§4.10.3), the latter certainly mined from the mountains of Badakhshan. The 46 glass cabochons documented in room 10 (§4.10.4) perhaps had once served as decorative inlays from composite objects, or were intended to serve as such, and may altogether suggest the occurrence of craft production (see §5.3). The remains of three wooden boxes with simpler metal fittings (§4.13.2), in addition to a clay sealing with a basketlike impression on its reverse (§4.10.1) imply the presence of ephemeral storage devices, with the sealing also broadly suggesting an ‘administrative’ function. Some iron and copper alloy fasteners and fittings may also suggest the presence of

additional boxes and/or composite devices (§4.7.2), and there are ultimately still 14 bronze, copper alloy, or iron objects that are difficult to identify (§4.11.1).

Although there are still many uncertainties, the places and dates of production for the objects in the Begram hoard can be summarised in the following manner. First, over half of the individual objects in the hoard were obtained from areas around the Mediterranean – especially the east, and more specifically Egypt – including almost all of the glassware, a diversity of bronzes (vessels, devices, figurines), metalwork elements, the plaster casts, stone vessels, and even some raw material (the coral). A smaller contingent of individual items – if highly complex and composed of many elements – is represented by goods obtained from India (the pieces of furniture adorned with ivory, a glazed pottery jug). Then, there is a smaller group of items from China (the lacquerwares), and a group of objects of roughly the same quantity that were produced in Western Asia, perhaps more specifically in Mesopotamia and Iran (including perhaps some of the glassware, a glazed pottery jug, and the ostrich egg vessels). Interestingly, there was also a strong local component to the hoard, with examples produced in Central Asia as defined here (§1.5) including at least various copper alloy vessels, bronze utensils, a mirror, coins, and raw materials (lapis lazuli). Perhaps the military equipment may have been produced locally, but it is impossible to assess this on the basis of the surviving data. As we have seen, it is immensely difficult to date many of the hoard objects. Nonetheless, it is relatively safe to say that the majority appear to have been produced in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, although certain items were probably produced in the second half of the 1st century BCE (e.g., probably some of the lacquerwares), and some of the latest objects included coins minted at least in the second half of the 3rd century CE.

The evidence for the poor, incomplete, and manipulated condition of many of the hoard objects prior to their deposition reiterates the impression of their long history of accumulation and use, as well as probable changes in functions over time. Although the complexities of the documentation and clear impact of post-depositional processes make it difficult to assess the condition of much of the glass upon deposition, I think it is likely that some amount of the glassware had been deposited in incomplete condition, although this is difficult to prove. In addition to this, I have already noted possible instances of manipulation of certain vessels above. Furthermore, R1940 indicates that some fragments of mosaic glass perhaps found in room T (see §4.2.1.18, Appendix I, undefined areas, and Appendix II) bore traces of burning. The inked inscriptions added to at least three different vessels also attests to a history of local interaction with these vessels, perhaps in some kind of administrative context, broadly defined (§4.15, see also §5.3).

The condition of the copper alloy vessels is somewhat clearer (see §4.2.2). For example, certain elements had been detached from some of the leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), a lid and closure rods were missing from the large leaded bronze pots (§4.2.2.4), and only parts of the suspension chains and handles were found attached to the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5). The Gāndhārī inscription on one of the large leaded bronze pots (NRAB 106, §4.2.2.4, §4.15), perhaps a mark of ownership, reiterates the impression of a history of local interaction with these objects. Certain of the stone vessels were also damaged. The porphyry cup NRAB 95, made of very hard stone, had been found in fragments, and ultimately one piece was found to be missing. It would then appear that the vessel may have been broken prior to its deposition in room 13 (§4.2.4). The same case is indicated for the rock crystal cantharus NRAB 121, which was also found broken and with fragments missing (§4.2.5).

In a similar fashion to the glassware, it is extremely difficult to tell what condition the lacquerwares were in when they were deposited in room 13. However, I have suggested that photography of NRAB 218 (either stacked cups or a tall box) suggests that this piece may have already been in a fragmented state prior to deposition (§4.2.6). It is again hard to assess the condition of the ostrich egg cups and rhytons, but the separately inventoried parts in RAB give the impression that they had been found in a detached state (§4.2.7). The chin of the glazed pottery *kinnari* jug NRAB 72 was remarked to have a large chip of glaze missing, this presumably detached already in antiquity (§4.2.8.2). Then, although it is once again difficult to ascertain how much of the highly fragmentary state of the aquarium RAB 248 [102] / MG 22878 can be explained by postdepositional processes (§4.3), the next group of objects I have listed – elements from metalwork furniture, figurines, and vessels (§4.4) – categorically represent incomplete, detached parts from a variety of composite objects which cannot be refitted into complete items. The bronze figurines also attest to several instances of interaction and manipulation (§4.5). The Serapis-Heracles figurine had been partially wrapped in a whitish material (perhaps a protective covering), and several others were missing elements: the upper part of Eros's torch, the weapons (and horses, etc.) of the two horsemen, and Harpocrates's left forearm. In addition to this, the right arm of the Harpocrates figurine had evidently become detached in antiquity and had been incorrectly repaired to point at his temple instead of his mouth. The gold elements documented in room 13 (§4.7.1) had evidently been detached from larger composite objects, which is also presumably the case for the miscellaneous copper alloy fasteners and fittings (§4.7.2). Perhaps the bronze mirror had been deposited without a handle (§4.8), and likewise the arrowheads without their shafts (§4.9), although if these elements had been made of wood and deposited in association with their metal components, it is not clear

whether these ephemeral elements would have been observed and documented. If the glass cabochons may have served as inlays for composite objects, they were not found in association with them (§4.10.4). It is also interesting that most of the plaster casts were documented in relatively good condition, although numerous were broken to some degree. However, several specimens were found broken into many pieces and/or were missing fragments, and indeed, the left arm of the cast of a figurine of Aphrodite NRAB 114 had been found four days after the rest of the cast was documented (§4.12).

Some of the most important data attesting to the poor condition of the hoard objects relates to the ivory and bone furniture. Above, I have presented a range of evidence to demonstrate that much of this furniture was found in an incomplete and disarticulated state (§4.13.1). Key examples include the groups of detached plaques from room 10 that almost certainly were originally attached to backrests and panels that had been deposited in room 13. As I have remarked, the separate deposition of these elements indicates that these articles of furniture had earlier been kept in at least one primary storage area, and had been damaged prior to their transfer into the hoard rooms. Plaques were also detached and missing from the footstools in room 10, and yet more obvious examples of the poor condition of these objects are found in the three similar but disarticulated furniture legs, as well as the incomplete and disarticulated unidentified elements deposited in the centre of room 10, which I have suggested represent part of an ornamental railing. Two bronze plaques found in room 13 may have also been attached to the piece of furniture featuring three of the ivory furniture legs just mentioned above (§4.13.3). Finally, the bronze device which may have functioned as a shrine is also clearly an incomplete object (§4.13.4). In sum, although the documentation is frequently unclear, there is plenty of evidence that many of the hoard objects were in poor and incomplete condition prior to their deposition, and furthermore indicate the existence of at least one primary storage area, the significance of which will be considered further below (§5.3).

Throughout this chapter I have noted how the objects in the hoard had been dispersed and even arranged into groups throughout rooms 10, 13, and T as well as the central corridor, with the notion that this may help us to ascertain how certain objects were understood and perceived to relate to each other. Possible insights as to the function of the hoard objects in light of their arrangement are considered later (§5.3, §5.4). For now, the following summary can be given (see also Pls. 17–18).

Of the two main hoard rooms (being rooms 10 and 13), room 13 had been filled first, as its northeastern doorway had been previously blocked and an earthen bench had been constructed around most of the perimeter of the room (§3.5.2). There is some sense of the

grouping of objects in this space. Along the west part of the northern wall, a small group of diverse examples of glassware had been deposited (see §4.2.1), interspersed between the marine mollusc shell (§4.10.2), and the rock crystal cantharus (§4.2.5). In the northeast corner and northern part of the east wall had been scattered with detached elements from articles of metalwork (§4.4), some of the bronze figurines (§4.5), certain of the leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), some of the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), the remains of a decayed wooden box with metal armature (NRAB 66, §4.13.2), one of the unidentified ivory cylindrical components (§4.11.2), and the bronze and iron tools and utensils (§4.6). Moving further south along this east wall, there was another small cluster of glass vessels (see §4.2.1), and the figurine of Serapis-Heracles (NRAB 25, §4.5) alongside the bronze lampstand NRAB 25 bis (§4.4). Directly to the south were a scattered arrowhead (§4.9), a coin of Kujula Kadphises (NRAB 6, §4.14, however at a higher depth), a gold nail and detached element (NRAB 8, §4.7.1), and a barrel-shaped facet-cut glass goblet (NRAB 4, §4.2.1.3). More directly adjacent to the eastern wall were large parts of furniture which had been adorned with ivory, including Backrest 55 (§4.13.1.2), and Furniture Leg 3 (§4.13.1.3), the latter apparently found in association with the bronze plaque NRAB 26 bis (§4.13.3); as I have already noted, NRAB 3 appears to have been found along the western wall of this room, not the eastern one.

Curiously, the parts of articles of ivory-faced furniture found in room 13 – backrests, panels, and the single furniture leg – were almost equally dispersed throughout it, rather than being restricted to a single area. Panels 1 and 4 had been stacked with Backrests 2 and 3 along the northern part of the western wall, Backrest 161 was deposited along the north wall, while Panel 34 was placed upside down in the northern part of the centre of the room. Then, Backrest 5 had been found on a slight incline to the south of the centre of the room, and, as mentioned just above, Backrest 55 had been deposited along the east wall (§4.13.1.2). Just north of Panel 34, certain of the lacquerwares (§4.2.6) had been found in direct association with the two globular glass jars with horizontal ribs (§4.2.1.14), all being near to the large leaded bronze pot NRAB 106 (§4.2.2.4). The remainder of the lacquerwares were found in the southwest corner of this room (§4.2.6), partially interspersed with the plaster casts, which were stacked along the southern wall (§4.12). Tracing the west wall southwards of the stack of ivory furniture panels and backrests, the two glazed pottery jugs were recorded (§4.2.8.2), followed variously by elements from metalwork (§4.4), the chunk of lapis lazuli (§4.10.3), the dagger (§4.9), some coins (§4.14), and a fragment of glass (NRAB 225, §4.2.1.22). A set of objects found around the perimeter of this room were documented at a higher depth than most, including a bronze bowl (NRAB 225, §4.2.2.2), and the bronze jugs (§4.2.2.3), with two of these (NRAB 1 and

NRAB 2) being found along the west wall, rather than the east as indicated in Hamelin's plan (Pl. 18). The coins found in this room appear to have been roughly dispersed around its perimeter (§4.14). In the central part of the room and to the south were some more isolated objects, some found in groups. There were two separate sets of copper alloy bowls that had been deposited in stacks (§4.2.2.2), while the porphyry cup (§4.2.4) was apparently found near to an element detached from metalwork (NRAB 88, §4.4), and the porphyry plate was placed separately further to the south (§4.2.4). Finally, just to the west, two nails covered with sheets of gold were reported (§4.7.1), and to the south of these, the second large leaded bronze pot (NRAB 175, §4.2.2.4). Finally, to the south and just before the south wall, two iron handles were indicated (NRAB 89, §4.4). Broadly speaking, much of the central part of the room was apparently left empty, in addition to the southeast entrance which provided access to room 10 before this doorway was blocked (§3.5.3).

Hamelin's plan of room 10 (Pl. 17), based on the one made by Carl (§2.4.3), gives the impression that the objects deposited in this room had been arranged in stricter groups than in room 13, which is slightly misleading. About three quarters of the glassware had been deposited in this room, including a diverse set at a slightly higher horizon around the northwest corner (§3.5.3, §4.2.1). Directly to their east was the majority of leaded bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria, found in a pile together (§4.2.2.5). Moving south, the alabaster vessels were documented (§4.2.3), close to the ostrich egg cups and rhytons (§4.2.7). In the vicinity of these objects, at a higher depth, were the two plain pottery lamps (§4.2.8.1). The majority of the glass vessels appear to have been documented further to the south along the western wall, and in the vicinity of the southeast corner of this room, with some impression of having been organised into groups, just as several are indicated on Hamelin's plan: the ribbed bowls (§4.2.1.9), vessels with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11), ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12), painted vessels (especially §4.2.1.2), mosaic glass (§4.2.18), and facet-cut vessels (§4.2.1.3). However, these groups do not often appear to have been neatly defined, being frequently interspersed with other types of vessels. For example, a mass of vessels with openwork trailing and ichthyomorphic flasks (i.e., §4.2.1.11–12) was found in a bag- or basket-shaped deposit, and the famous cut relief Pharos goblet (RAB 203 [56], §4.2.1.7) had likewise been deposited among such vessels. Other jars with openwork trailing had been deposited near to the ivory Furniture Leg 2, located along the east wall (§4.13.1.3). Besides the glass, other finds along the west wall also included some bronze objects of an unknown function (§4.11.1), and the two aquariums (§4.3), apparently found in the vicinity of one another towards the southwest corner of the room. The vast majority of the leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1) had been

deposited in a large stack in the southern part of the centre of room 10, and some of the copper coins reported in this room were found in association and near to these basins (§4.14). Finally, the distribution of the furniture in this room is only known in the broadest lines. As indicated in Hamelin's plan, the unidentified furniture elements, perhaps part of a railing (§4.13.1.4) was found to the north in the centre of the room, while one of the groups of dissociated plaques from articles of furniture (some of which had been deposited in room 13) is indicated to the north, directly west of the northeast doorway. Along the east wall, the footstools had apparently been placed in a row, where they are interspersed with two furniture legs to the north (a similar leg having been deposited in room 13). If we consider that the southeast entranceway to room 10 provided the main point of access to rooms 10 and 13 by the end of the Site II structure's life, the footstools in this area would have been the last objects deposited before this door was blocked (§3.5.3). Comparably to the case for room 13, the distribution of items in room 10 indicates that deposition around the perimeter of the room was preferred, leaving some space in the centre of the room.

The distribution of objects within room T, which appears to have been left unsealed, is largely unclear from the basis of the surviving data (see Appendix I, room T). However, the general position of several objects is indicated. Found along the north wall were several elements detached from metalwork (the main kind of objects found in this room, §4.4), as well as the figurine of the Greek horseman NRAB 237 (§4.5), the glass with attached golden elephant spouts (§4.2.1.16), the unguentarium NRAB 251 (§4.2.1.21), and the metal remains of the armature of a large wooden box (NRAB 256, §4.13.2), presumably having served as a storage device. During the Hackin campaigns, two further metalwork elements were indicated along the east wall (NRAB 230–231, §4.4), and additional examples were noted to the south, either towards the bastion (NRAB 248, §4.4), to the right of it (NRAB 249, §4.4), and either in the vicinity or below it, like the octagonal wooden box NRAB 354 (§4.13.2), apparently found at a much lower depth than the majority of the objects (3.20 m), and its separately-found handle NRAB 244 (§4.4). Several further metalwork elements were then reported under the bastion in the south of the room by Ghirshman (§4.4), as well as another figurine (B.G. 9, §4.5), the metal fittings representing the remains of a wooden box (§4.13.2), again presumably having served as a storage device, as well as the clay sealing (§4.10.1). Within this room, the findspots of a few other metalwork elements are not specifically indicated (NRAB 234, NRAB 238, and NRAB 250, §4.4), which is also the case for another glass vessel NRAB 235 (§4.2.1.22), and the fragments of mosaic glass perhaps found in this room (§4.2.1.8, see also Appendix I, undefined areas, Appendix II).

Finally, considering objects found in the central corridor that are of the same type as the distinctive objects deposited in rooms 10, 13, and T as part of the hoard (§3.5.3), the two relevant items presented in this chapter were both deposited in the northwestern corner of this space. These were a small bronze vessel detached from metalwork, probably part of a lampstand (NRAB 254, §4.4), and the remains of a bronze device which had perhaps once served as a small shrine (NRAB 255, §4.13.4). However, as I have stressed earlier, the delineation of what may be said to constitute the hoard is actually ambiguous in many respects (§3.5.3).

5. The nature and significance of the hoard

5.1. Getting to the important questions

The previous chapter has served to clarify the contents of the Begram hoard, as well as synthesise what can be said about where and when its constituent objects were made, and the condition they were deposited in. Throughout, I have emphasised the difficulty of accessing precise dates and locations for these products of many workshops across Afro-Eurasia. This would be a disappointing result if my ultimate aim in this chapter were to analyse issues of classification, dating, provenance, and distribution patterns of the hoard objects and comparative material across Afro-Eurasia in order to attain a macro perspective on flows of exchange in this entire space. However, that is not my present aim, and accordingly these details are not entirely important. My goal is instead to reassess the nature and significance of the hoard – what it is and what it tells us about wider historical phenomena – from the perspective of Kushan Central Asia.

To do this, I first present my arguments against ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard, which should at last put these theories to rest (§5.2). Then, I consider the persisting ambiguities in interpreting the nature of the hoard, including aspects that may be read as ‘utilitarian’ and ‘ritual,’ and suggest that, for now, the hoard may at least be regarded as an intergenerational collection of valuable goods accumulated by elites (§5.3). For this reason, I argue that one of the reasons that the Begram hoard is significant is because it provides critical, unique evidence for patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia, especially of imported prestige and luxury goods. However, it must be acknowledged that the hoard represents a distorted reflection of consumption activity due to the obscurity of the processes which contributed to its accumulation and deposition. I then examine these patterns of consumption, remarking on evidence for selectivity and consumption preferences (§5.4). In doing so, I argue that the local attraction of these objects was related to their utility through their incorporation into local systems, associations held about them, and finally their capacity to produce and communicate distinction. Ultimately, I offer some observations on how these local patterns of consumption had ramifications beyond Central Asia with implications for the understanding of the organisation of long-distance trade.

5.2. Arguments against ‘transit trade explanations’

In the introduction to this dissertation (§1.3), I described the two main iterations of revisionist views of the hoard which explain the existence of the hoard objects through the conduct of long-distance transit trade through Begram. These are Wheeler’s explanation of the hoard as a depot of customs duties collected in kind from passing caravans over about 150 years¹⁴¹⁷ and Mehendale’s explanation of the hoard objects as a merchant’s stock awaiting further distribution.¹⁴¹⁸ Here, I will clarify how the evidence presented in this dissertation thus far does not support these ideas, and provide further argumentation against them, namely by considering processes of customs duty extraction and wider distribution patterns of material comparable to the hoard objects. We can begin by tackling certain ideas underpinning Mehendale’s ‘merchant’s stock’ version of the transit trade explanation, being specific notions about the date of the hoard, the value and condition of the hoard objects, and their find context.

5.2.1. Date, value, condition, and find context

First, on the date of the hoard, Mehendale’s interpretation builds on the ‘early’ dating camp (as opposed to the late one, see §1.3) for the hoard objects. Thus, she states that the Begram hoard objects appear to date to the 1st and early 2nd century CE, and even that practically all can be dated with confidence to the 1st century CE.¹⁴¹⁹ But as I have outlined above (§4.16), it is impossible that the hoard objects were produced even roughly coevally, and could all be in circulation as trade goods simultaneously. Although the upper and lower limits of the range of the hoard objects’ production dates are not known with certitude, there is a strong likelihood that this date range stretches at least from the late 1st century BCE to the second half of the 3rd century CE, if not later – especially once we purge assumptions that the hoard objects *ought* to have been produced roughly around the same time (see comments in §1.3, §3.5.3). The plausibility of this range of production dates is also reiterated by the numismatic evidence (§3.5.3) as well as the palaeographic evidence of a glass vessel with a cursive Bactrian inscription (§4.15) that I have presented, which suggest that the hoard was deposited and concealed at least in the second half of the 3rd century CE at the very earliest. Finally, the poor condition of many of the hoard objects, as well as evidence for manipulation,

¹⁴¹⁷ Wheeler 1954, 163–164.

¹⁴¹⁸ See iterations in Mehendale 1996; 1997, 6.3, 6.4; 2001, 492; 2011, 142–143.

¹⁴¹⁹ Mehendale 1997, 6.4, Conclusion. See also Mehendale 1996, 51; 2001, 498–500.

repair, and interaction with these items reiterates the sense that these goods experienced a life of use before they were deposited – and many had been veritable antiques by the mid 3rd century CE (§4.16).

On the question of the value of the hoard objects, Mehendale disputed the idea that these were high-value items and must necessarily be linked with royalty. To support this, she pointed to the absence of gold, silver, and precious jewels, in comparison to the presence of items of low ‘intrinsic’ value (i.e. the plaster casts, the use of bone alongside ivory elements within the furniture ensembles) to suggest that the hoard was not a royal collection, but a trader’s stock.¹⁴²⁰ However, value is a slippery concept. Indeed, notions of an object’s value are dynamic, and can be shaped by many intersecting material and social factors over time. Archaeologists engaging with this issue (if usually in reference to prestige goods) tend to at least consider questions such as labour and acquisition costs, scarcity, and utility.¹⁴²¹ Accordingly, here, the apparently non-prestigious materiality of certain of the hoard objects should not concern us so much. With respect to the plaster casts, MacDowall and Taddei have already rightfully observed that “the models for silver ware and possibly also for stucco decorations, even if made of worthless plaster, were certainly precious for an art workshop.”¹⁴²²

The use of bone alongside ivory in the hoard’s furniture seems like a trickier problem to tackle, but might instead be a red herring. Mehendale has especially cited the use of bone in this corpus to argue that the hoard objects cannot have only been destined for royal consumers. This is because, putatively (following Dwivedi), bone was held in lower regard than ivory – even understood as ‘dirty ivory’ – and considered inferior both because of its abundance and tendency to become dirty through its larger pore sizes.¹⁴²³

But would the owners of the furniture at Begram looked at these pieces and felt the same way? Not necessarily, for two reasons. First, while ivory was certainly perceived as a high-status material in ancient India (like much of the ancient world), the purported negative perception of bone is ascertained primarily from the material’s use also in utilitarian objects, as well as Dwivedi’s interpretation of the phrase ‘dirty ivory’ as referring to bone. Dwivedi may be correct, but context is important here; the phrase pops up in the *Deśopadeśa* of Kṣemendra (a poet working in Kashmir around the 11th century CE), in a metaphor in which the author refers to the goddess (Śrī) worshipped by an untouchable caste (the *chanḍāla*)

¹⁴²⁰ Mehendale 1996, 58; 1997, 6.3, 6.4; 2001, 492; 2011, 143.

¹⁴²¹ See most recently Crook 2019.

¹⁴²² MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 257.

¹⁴²³ Mehendale 1997, 2.4.2, 6.3, drawing from Dwivedi 1976, 25.

populating dirty ivory figures (hence *danteṣu malapūrṇeṣu*) enfolded with dirty blankets.¹⁴²⁴ A negative moral flavour is clear here. Moreover, while Kashmir is not extremely far from Begram, the 11th century is, and there is no need to assume that such values were also prevalent in Kushan Central Asia. Second, it is also not always easy to tell bone and ivory apart. As discussed earlier (§4.13.1), recent scientific analysis undertaken on certain ivory and bone elements required the use of an optical microscope and comparative specimens to differentiate between the two materials, resulting in the correction of some initial identifications of these materials offered by Hackin. This raises the question of whether a consumer at Begram was always able to distinguish between the two. Ultimately, bone could have been incorporated into the decoration of this rich furniture for a number of reasons. For example, Mehendale also raised but dismissed the idea that ivory might have been scarce at points.¹⁴²⁵ Or, perhaps it was simply a cheaper material, and the responsible workshop(s) knew they could get away with using it.

All in all, the hoard objects were clearly regarded as valuable to whoever possessed and deposited them. Without engaging in the (impossible) labour of quantifying any of the following, suffice it to say that clearly major costs are implied in the production (e.g. many hours of specialised labour for the ivory and bone furniture, see §4.13.1) and transportation of the vast majority of the hoard objects, and comparable goods were apparently scarce, i.e. not widely available in Central Asia. Additionally, the specific utilities of the hoard objects in the wider cultural context of Kushan Central Asia would have also impacted conceptions of their value (see §5.4 below). Most obviously, these objects were conceived of as valuable because, first, most had been kept for decades and even centuries before their deposition, and second, they had been intentionally gathered, deposited, and concealed. But would gold, silver, and gemstones have been considered *more* valuable than the objects which were deposited in the hoard? Yes, probably. However, as I have shown, the examples of gold elements (some detached) and nails documented within the hoard (§4.2.1.16, §4.7.1) suggests that items made of this precious metal had been accessible to the party responsible for its deposition, but had not been included in the relevant assemblages.

The only conclusion can be that these highly valuable objects were commanded by elites. Furthermore, the data I have presented for the condition of the hoard objects – poor, incomplete, and with evidence for manipulation, repairs, and use (§4.16) – demonstrates that

¹⁴²⁴ See Chandra 1957, 7. For an edition of the *Deśopadeśa* see Shastri 1923, *Deśopadeśa* II.30.

¹⁴²⁵ Mehendale 1997, 2.4.2; 2001, 492.

they cannot be interpreted as new trade goods intended for further distribution. Instead, many of the hoard objects had clearly experienced long lives of use, and (again) were even antiques by the time of their deposition.

With respect to the find context of the hoard, Mehendale has also disputed the ‘royal treasure’ theory by remarking on the “less than regal” dimensions of rooms 10 and 13 and the lack of excavated areas at Begram that would be appropriately identified as a Kushan royal palace. Instead, she has suggested that the hoard rooms may instead be interpreted as a merchant’s store rooms.¹⁴²⁶ Although Mehendale is right to criticise the reading of the Site II structure as a palace, there is little basis for alternatively interpreting rooms 10 and 13 as the store rooms of a merchant. Above, I have considered the function of the Site II structure in light of some architectural comparanda (§3.5.2). There, I have noted that it may be possible to interpret this building as an elite residence, but that too many problems remain to be certain, and that future research should explore the possibility that this structure served as a cultic space. Furthermore, the architecture of this building, as well as the arrangement and condition of the hoard objects (§3.5.3, §4.16) indicate that rooms 10 and 13 were not utilised as the primary storage space for these items over the centuries during which they were produced. I will return to these issues again shortly below (§5.3).

5.2.2. Practices of customs duty extraction

Now, we can consider whether the existence of the hoard objects at Begram may be plausibly explained as the result of the extraction of customs duty, which was the central idea of Wheeler’s version of the ‘transit trade explanation.’ Unlike Mehendale, Wheeler accepted that the hoard objects were valuable items that had been produced between the 1st–3rd centuries CE.

First, I should emphasise that we have no direct evidence for strategies of customs duty extraction at Begram or Kushan Central Asia. But that is not to say that such an indirect tax was not extracted; on the contrary, we can probably presume that Begram’s rulers and governors throughout antiquity incorporated this source of revenue to some degree into their fiscal regimes, just as earlier and contemporary polities across Afro-Eurasia with links to Hellenistic and Kushan Central Asia did, variously, on imports and exports at borders, along

¹⁴²⁶ Mehendale 1997, 5.2.

routes, at harbours, city gates, and/or marketplaces.¹⁴²⁷ To speculate what kinds of customs duties might have been levied at Begram, we can get an impression of neighbouring approaches to revenue extraction from merchandise in early historic India via two corpora in particular: Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and the Buddhist *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (i.e. rules of discipline of the Mūlasarvāstivādin school).¹⁴²⁸

Among the plethora of extracted levies that are referred to in the *Arthaśāstra*, two main relevant charges demanded in respect to trade goods can be highlighted: a *bhāga* (share) given to the king in kind on *paṇya* (i.e. merchandise) and *śulka*, a customs duty extracted usually in cash. The first (*paṇyadaśabhāga*) is found in a passing reference to a king being provided with this 10% tax in kind on merchandise.¹⁴²⁹ *Śulka*, on the other hand, was ordinarily to be paid in cash at customs points (e.g. set up in cities and crossing points) based on an assessment of the value of the goods being transported, i.e. 20% for imports,¹⁴³⁰ although there is evidence that monks were allowed to pay this fee in kind if necessary.¹⁴³¹

As Bactria and Gandhāra both had developed monetary economies in the Kushan period, it already seems improbable (if not impossible) that duties would normatively be extracted in kind in these regions. Nonetheless, if we still would like to consider possible extraction rates in kind at 10% or even 20%, with reference to the composition of the Begram hoard, it also seems deeply implausible that this assemblage of objects could have been requisitioned through such a scheme. We only have to look at cases where we find multiples of very similar objects in the Begram hoard (e.g. the enamelled §4.2.1.2, facet-cut §4.2.1.3, trailed §4.2.1.11, and ichthyomorphic §4.2.1.12 glass vessels, the leaded brass basins §4.2.2.1, and ivory footstools §4.13.1.1), which were produced respectively in single or limited numbers of related workshops most likely operating coevally. Here, we must then imagine that cargoes of such goods putatively taxed in kind at a rate of 10% or 20% would have to be either absolutely enormous, or coming through Begram incredibly consistently and frequently – both already improbable scenarios.

¹⁴²⁷ For example, with respect to the Seleucids, on the *pentekostē* in both silver and in kind see Aperghis 2004, 160, 162, 169, 177. For evidence of customs duty collection by local agents under the Arsacid sphere of influence, or rather, the apparent lack of an imperial customs system, see Hartmann 2018, 461–464.

¹⁴²⁸ Respectively composed between ca. 50–125 CE with a recension in ca. 175–300 CE (Olivelle 2013, 25–31) and perhaps in the 2nd century CE (see comments in Pagel 2014, 17, n. 5), or between the 2nd–7th centuries CE (Schopen 1999, 294–298; 2004, 2). Discussions of information in these texts is incorporated into a wider examination of Buddhist monastic reactions to taxation in ancient India in Pagel 2014.

¹⁴²⁹ “Oppressed by the law of the fish, people made Manu, the son of Vivasvat, king. They allocated to him as his share one-sixth of the grain and one-tenth of the merchandise, as also money.” *KA* 1.13.5–6, trans. Olivelle 2013, 80.

¹⁴³⁰ “On imports the duty is one-fifth of the price.” *KA* 2.22.3, trans. Olivelle 2013, 150.

¹⁴³¹ Pagel 2014, 46.

5.2.3. Distribution patterns of comparative material: regional and global scales

Finally, we may consider whether the evidence for the wider distribution of material comparable to the hoard objects further along the long-distance routes connected to Begram is enough to claim that the hoard reflects patterns of (transit) trade activity through the city. This claim is critical for both Mehendale's and Wheeler's versions of 'transit trade explanations,' but enormously complicated and multilayered. Essentially, we can approach it from two different scales – a regional one and a global 'Silk Road' one.

First, looking at a regional scale, if one would believe that Begram hoard was filled with goods intended to supply regional markets of Bactria (e.g. for the Roman and Indian goods) and northwest India (e.g. for the Chinese lacquerwares), the very few relevant finds of comparative material in these regions are still not a 'smoking gun' to support this theory. While Wheeler did not mention any explicit evidence to support his interpretation, Mehendale cited the finds of incised combs at Taxila-Sirkap, Tillya-tepe, and Dal'verzintepe (which have clear stylistic parallels to certain of the Begram bone and ivory carvings, §4.13.1) to reiterate her early date for the Begram ivories, to support her theory that the Begram ivories had been carved at the site by itinerant artists, and to suggest that this local production was oriented towards 'Silk Roads trade.'¹⁴³² However, as Simpson has argued, such finds do not attest to local Bactrian production or bulk trade, but rather perhaps "small-scale trade in petty trinkets which characterised local markets and peddlars' goods in Afghanistan until recent decades."¹⁴³³ Certainly, combs speak to very different markets than highly ornate, large pieces of furniture. Indeed, while a limited number of finds from Bactria, Gandhāra, and wider southern Central Asia that are comparative to the Begram hoard objects can be cited, such evidence could rather speak to shared patterns of elite consumption of prestige and luxury goods across these culturally connected spaces – which I think is precisely how they may be explained (see below, §5.4). Generally, the difficulty of archaeologically detecting marketplace exchange as a distinct mode for the movement of goods may be stressed,¹⁴³⁴ let alone in unevenly documented regions like Kushan Central Asia.

That being said, looking to a global 'Silk Road' scale might be more informative in assessing whether the objects in the hoard might have been intended to ultimately supply even more distant markets. Looking at the position of Begram within the network of trade routes

¹⁴³² Mehendale 1996, 59. See also Mehendale 1997, 4.2.2-4; 2001, 493–496; 2011, 137; 2012, 74–77.

¹⁴³³ Simpson 2014, 28.

¹⁴³⁴ See Stark and Garraty 2010.

crossing Afro-Eurasia, the lacquerwares could have theoretically been destined for Arachosia, Iran, Mesopotamia, or India, while the bone and ivory furniture could be on the way to markets in the Eurasian Steppe or along the Oxo-Caspian-Caucasus part of Rtveladze's 'Great Indian Road',¹⁴³⁵ and then, the goods produced in the Roman Mediterranean must have been destined to go to markets and consumers in the east: to the Tarim Basin, China proper, or even the eastern Eurasian Steppe. Of course, I seriously doubt a number of these options – Begram was far from the most expedient place to stop or transit goods for many of these itineraries – but let us keep these options open and take this theory to its logical conclusion for the next few pages.

The question is whether we have enough evidence for the distribution of goods similar to those in the Begram hoard along such routes. Here, serious methodological caveats must be highlighted. First, the ancient world is inconsistently archaeologically explored. Second, certain kinds of materials – if they survive postdepositional processes in regions with unfavourable climates in the first place – may not always be recovered, documented, or even published in a consistent and accessible manner. Third, it must be acknowledged that shared distribution patterns of prestige and luxury goods over wider swathes of Afro-Eurasia do not necessarily confirm Begram's role as a transit trade point, but can also speak to shared patterns of consumption and taste for such goods among networks of elites – indeed, we will return to links between mobile groups of the Eurasian Steppe and Kushan Central Asia below (§5.4).

Nonetheless, the available evidence does not support the reading that the Begram hoard contains goods intended for further redistribution along such networks, as material truly comparable to the majority of the hoard objects is simply not found where it ought to be. The best way to show this is by looking at one of the most characteristic components of the corpus of hoard objects: glass vessels produced in the vicinity of the Roman Mediterranean. Glass vessels provide an excellent case study, not only because they are found at Begram in considerable number – including in major groups that were probably produced at single workshops – but they are also typologically distinct artefacts, and their distribution in East Asia has also been subject to some amount of recent scholarly interest.

Before looking at comparative material from China and the eastern Eurasian Steppe, it is necessary to outline the routes by which glass produced in the realm of the Roman Mediterranean (and here, especially its eastern regions) was first brought to Begram. A range of maritime and terrestrial routes were possible, although land transport tended to be slow and expensive, while water transport – by rivers, but especially by sea – was generally far cheaper

¹⁴³⁵ Rtveladze 2012.

and efficient.¹⁴³⁶ Indeed, it is very likely that the Roman glass was brought to Begram primarily through maritime routes linking ports of the Red Sea (e.g. Myos Hormos, Berenike) and Indian Ocean, as described in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*.¹⁴³⁷ Such maritime routes linked Roman Egypt and the wider Mediterranean with the northwestern coastal ports of the Indian subcontinent, Barbarikon (perhaps Banbhore, Sindh), in ‘Skythia’ under contested Indo-Parthian power, and Barygaza (Bharuch, Gujarat) under the Western Kṣatrapas.¹⁴³⁸ From Barbarikon, one could follow the Indus upriver to reach Gandhāra. There is virtually no information on the use of this river for transport of goods in antiquity, but it is worth noting as a point of comparison that Alexander Burnes reported in the 1830s that the journey from the coast to Lahore (on the Ravi, a tributary of the Indus) took 60 days in a flat-bottomed sailboat, which was towed with ropes when winds were unfavourable,¹⁴³⁹ presumably by beasts of burden along the river bank. Alternatively, from the port of Barygaza, one could travel inland to the city of Ozene (Ujjain), then north to Mathura, joining network of roads known as the *uttarāpatha* (‘northern route’) giving access to Gandhāra.¹⁴⁴⁰ From Gandhāra, one followed the road to Begram (see §3.2 above for further detail, Pl. 4). Alternatively, southern Mesopotamian harbours, such as Charax Spasinou, could have exported glass instead, thus providing a link to northwestern Indian coastal ports from the eastern Mediterranean, the Arsacid Empire, and its client kingdom Characene.¹⁴⁴¹

A number of largely terrestrial routes were available too. The ‘Parthian Stations’ of Isidorus of Charax starts from Zeugma on the Euphrates, and – via Media, the northern Iranian Plateau, and Margiana – ultimately winds back around south into Sakastan and terminates at Alexandria of Arachosia (Kandahar).¹⁴⁴² One could theoretically continue on from here, past Ghazni, to eventually reach Begram, but taking the detour via Arachosia would be a remarkable waste of energy for this destination. One could also take the route linked to Maes Titianus and his agents (ca. 100 CE), starting from the Euphrates and crossing the northern Iranian Plateau via Hamedan/Ecbatana, Hecatompylos, and entering into southern Central Asia via Antiochia in Margiana (Merv), from where the traveller could approach Begram from the north instead,

¹⁴³⁶ See, with reference to the Roman world, Erdkamp 1999, 565–566 (with further bibliography) and Raepsaet 2008, 601. However, both stress the continuing prevalence of land transport, despite its expense.

¹⁴³⁷ See, for example, Whitehouse 1989a; Mairs 2012, 8–10; Seland 2013.

¹⁴³⁸ On these ports, see especially *PME* 38–39, 47–49. On Banbhore, see accounts of recent excavations in Manassero and Fiorani 2014; Fiorani 2018. On recent trial excavations at Old Bharuch, Dimri 2016, 44–51.

¹⁴³⁹ Burnes 1834, 200.

¹⁴⁴⁰ On the *uttarāpatha*, Neelis 2011, 186–204, and on Ujjain, Neelis 2011, 214–215.

¹⁴⁴¹ On the Parthians and Indian Ocean trade (including the client kingdom of Characene and its capital Spasinou Charax), see recently Gregoratti 2019.

¹⁴⁴² Isidorus of Charax 19.

via Bactra.¹⁴⁴³ To this, one might add the route running from the Black Sea, across the Caucasus and Caspian Sea, before reaching the Oxus, the reality of which (famously shunned by Tarn) has been vigorously defended by Rtveladze as an extension of the ‘Great Indian Road.’¹⁴⁴⁴ It is even possible that some Roman glass reached Begram through the ‘Steppe Roads’ or ‘Steppe Highway’ exchange networks connecting mobile groups of the Eurasian steppe.¹⁴⁴⁵

A problem, however, emerges from these geographies of connectivity. If Begram ought to have functioned as a node of transit for Roman glass vessels on the way to China or the Eurasian Steppe, it was not entirely well positioned to do so. If glass was being transported through maritime networks of the Indian Ocean to Gandhāra to supply markets in China, why bother to cross the Hindu Kush instead of directly using one of the many capillary routes through the Karakorum mountains which provided particular access to oasis states of the Tarim Basin, and from there, China proper?¹⁴⁴⁶ Or, why not continue along maritime routes around the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia, where fragments of Roman glass vessels dating to around the late 1st century BCE or 1st century CE have also been found in the upper Thai-Malay Peninsula (e.g. at Phu Khao Tong)?¹⁴⁴⁷ If coming from the northern Iranian plateau into Bactria (like Maes Titianus and/or his agents), why cross the Hindu Kush instead of going directly east through the Pamir mountains – through the upper Vakhsh via Garm to Kashgar, or even via the Kokcha to Yarkand – past the ‘Stone Tower’ into the Tarim Basin?¹⁴⁴⁸ This is what the agents of Maes Titianus did, conveying that the journey from the ‘Stone Tower’ to the mysterious ‘Sera Metropolis’ (Liangzhou 涼州, i.e. Wuwei?) took seven months – although it is not clear whether the reporting party took the northern or southern route around the Tarim Basin.¹⁴⁴⁹

So, even though a stop at Begram was hardly a ‘must’ for any traders from the Mediterranean or West Asia with cargoes for the East, let us now look at the evidence for the distribution of Roman glass in the Tarim Basin, China proper, and the eastern Eurasian Steppe. For the latter region, a single example of a Roman glass vessel is known: a recently discovered blue and white marbled, ribbed, blown glass bowl, of the common ‘zarte Rippenschale’/ Isings

¹⁴⁴³ For the route of Maes Titianus, see Bernard 2005, also Lerner 1998. The trader’s itinerary, recorded with travel distances, was a source for the geographer Marinus of Tyre, engaged with by the geographer Ptolemy (see especially *Geography* 1.11.4, 6–7; 1.12.3–10). For further information, *FGrH* 2213.

¹⁴⁴⁴ Rtveladze 2012.

¹⁴⁴⁵ On these networks, Christian 2000; Brosseder 2015.

¹⁴⁴⁶ For a discussion of these routes, see Neelis 2011, 257–287.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Borell et al. 2014, 105–107.

¹⁴⁴⁸ On the itinerary of Maes Titianos from Bactra to the ‘Stone Tower’ (probably rather Daraut Kurgan than Tashkurgan) Bernard 2005, 953–957.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Bernard 2005, 957–961.

17 / Eggers 184 type (however, not seen at Begram) produced from the mid to second half of the 1st century CE. This was found at a Xiongnu grave at the necropolis Gol Mod 2.¹⁴⁵⁰

With respect to the Tarim Basin and China, a number of recent studies have collected and analysed the evidence for finds of glass produced in the west, including Roman, as well as later Sasanian and Byzantine products.¹⁴⁵¹ Interestingly, the difference between the number of finds dating from antiquity versus late antiquity is like night and day: for finds certainly dating from the 1st to 2nd centuries CE, when most of the Begram glass was probably produced (§4.16), a Mediterranean origin for three vessels is clear:¹⁴⁵² a purple and white mosaic, cast or slumped ribbed bowl (Isings 3a) from the tomb of the king of Guangling 廣陵 (Eastern Han period, 25–220 CE) at Shuangshan 双山 (Jiangsu Province) dating to 67 CE;¹⁴⁵³ a transparent, blueish, hemispherical blown glass cup (a more cylindrical Isings 96a?) in an Eastern Han tomb at Laohudun 老虎墩 (also Jiangsu Province) dating from the 1st–2nd centuries CE;¹⁴⁵⁴ and a marbled green and white piriform unguentarium (Isings 28?) in an tomb at the Eastern Han capital of Luoyang.¹⁴⁵⁵ The ribbed bowl from Shuangshan and the piriform unguentarium were respectively very widely distributed types of Roman glass, the former produced especially from the late 1st century BCE and the 1st century CE,¹⁴⁵⁶ and the latter from the second third of the 1st century CE, until perhaps the early second century.¹⁴⁵⁷ Ribbed bowls and piriform unguentaria have also been found at Begram and wider Kushan Central Asia (see §4.2.1.9, §4.2.1.21 and below §5.4). Finally, it is possible that a fragment of a transparent, colourless, globular glass bowl cut with irregular rhombus facets that was reported in an undated context in Loulan (Tarim Basin) may belong to this earlier group of imports too, although this is not certain.¹⁴⁵⁸ As discussed above (§4.2.1.3), comparable facet-cut vessels in a range of forms

¹⁴⁵⁰ Tomb complex 1, satellite burial 30, in Erdenebaatar et al. 2011, 311, Fig. 11.1.

¹⁴⁵¹ See e.g. Laing 1991; An 2001; 2004; Kinoshita 2009; Borell 2010; Selbitschka 2010, 135–138; Hoppál 2016; Żuchowska and Szmoniewski 2017.

¹⁴⁵² It is worth noting here that the question of provenance is a little more difficult to answer for a set of mould-made glass cups and bowls from Han-era tombs from south China (Guangxi) and Vietnam. These have often been described as imports, particularly because they did not possess the lead-barium composition typical of early Chinese glass production, but were made of potash glass instead. However, Borell has convincingly argued that this group was probably not imported but locally made (Borell 2010; 2013). Indeed, a fragment of a glass vessel at Arikamedu, usually ascribed a Mediterranean origin, also has a very similar form to those of the Guangxi group (Borell 2010, 129–131). A group of three mould-made dark blue glass bowls from the middle Western Han period also found in south China (in Guangzhou), have also often been described as early imports (An 2001, 83; 2004, 58) but again are possibly rather examples of potash glass and hence local products (Borell 2010, 134–135).

¹⁴⁵³ Hoppál 2016, No. I.1.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Hoppál 2016, No. I.2.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Watt 2004, No. 13.

¹⁴⁵⁶ An 2004, 57; Hoppál 2016, 100–101.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Watt 2004, No. 13.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Hoppál 2016, No. III.2. Hoppál considers its date to be uncertain, perhaps of the 4th century CE, but compares the vessel with MG 21425, i.e. a Type C globular bowl from room 10 at Begram, see above §4.2.1.3.

(including the engraved ridge under the lip) were most often produced in latter half of the 1st and perhaps early 2nd century CE, although the globular form of the Loulan vessel is an unusual one that is analogous – albeit with different facets – to those found in the Begram hoard (see Type C in §4.2.1.3) and cannot be dated with certitude.

However, the appearance of such a cut, transparent, globular glass bowl in China may be connected to a late antique phenomenon: the emergence of a real pattern of consumption in Xinjiang, China, and (later) Korea and Japan of imported glass bowls and cups, beginning perhaps in the 3rd century CE but picking up with some vigour from the 4th century. Such vessels are often transparent, frequently hemispherical or globular, and cut with ovoid or circular facets, or circles in relief, and a good portion of this group was likely made in Western Asia under the Sasanians.¹⁴⁵⁹ As will be discussed below (§5.4), some broadly comparable cut cups have also been found in Central Asia too, at Toprak-kala in Chorasmia, with one example also at Begram (NRAB LXXXIV, see §4.2.1.3) which may represent 2nd–3rd century CE work of Western Asia, although this is not certain. But such a find at Begram hardly needs to be interpreted as a good in transit, but rather could simply reflect persisting patterns of consumption in Central Asia (noting that we have earlier examples of facet-cut globular bowls at Begram), as well as shared or ‘global’ patterns of consumption of prestige goods among elites across Afro-Eurasia in late antiquity.¹⁴⁶⁰

All in all, I think this hardly constitutes convincing evidence that glass vessels were transported for trade into the Eurasian Steppe, Xinjiang, or China through Begram. Of course, the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, but the mass of evidence I have drawn together here regarding the dates of the hoard objects, their value, their condition, their find context, as well as patterns of customs duties extraction, and distribution patterns of comparative material altogether simply cannot support transit trade explanations of the Begram hoard. In fact, we may even begin to wonder why the hoard has ever been explained in these terms at all.

In the introduction to this dissertation (§1.3), I indicated that transit trade explanations of the hoard rely on a certain historiographical construct. Namely, they are entangled with the longstanding notion of ‘Kushan middlemen,’ i.e. that the Kushan Empire was a commercial node in long-distance (including ‘Silk Road’) trade networks, and that the Kushans presided

¹⁴⁵⁹ On the Tarim Basin examples, Selbitschka 2010, 135. For the earlier part of this group from Nanjing, Hoppál 2016, 102–105. On the wider phenomenon of imports of Byzantine and Sasanian glass into China and further into East Asia in this period, Kinoshita 2009; Żuchowska and Szmoniewski 2017, 164–184.

¹⁴⁶⁰ For the interaction of elites across Eurasia in late antiquity, Canepa 2010.

over a trade-based economy, deliberately and successfully to benefit economically by controlling external transit trade between East and West. As I have clarified elsewhere, the popularity of this idea is especially contingent upon on the lack of scholarly attention paid to the economic history of Central Asia in antiquity outside of Soviet-era research, and the (mis)interpretation of the function of Kushan gold coinage, as well as longstanding beliefs about the Begram hoard.¹⁴⁶¹

In short, if the hoard was found in any other archaeological context in the world, it would probably have been taken as self-evident that the imported hoard objects were intended for and used in the framework of local consumption. In the following, I will continue to show why this is the case, and why that is significant.

5.3. The ambiguities of an intergenerational collection of goods accumulated by elites

So, if the hoard is not an assemblage of objects requisitioned from or intended for transit trade through Begram, what is it? Should we instead follow a version of the ‘palatial treasure theory,’ for example, that the hoard was composed of “wares taken from the ‘palace’ in a moment of danger together with objects belonging to a royal atelier,” as suggested by MacDowall and Taddei?¹⁴⁶² In the following, I consider how to define the nature of the hoard, and the profound ambiguities encountered in this process.

Earlier in this dissertation I have noted that although the Site II structure cannot be interpreted as a royal palace or purpose-built treasury, this building could plausibly be interpreted as an elite residence, with rooms 10 and 13 once having functioned as reception rooms before they were re-purposed to conceal the hoard objects (§3.5.2). However, I have also highlighted serious issues with this interpretation, including problems of access throughout the structure, the difficulty of explaining the blocked doorways and doubled walls, and the orientation of the building within the new royal city. Other profound ambiguities that could alternatively be interpreted to suggest an elite residential context or a cultic one include architectural features of this building, the use of wall paintings, niches, and benches.

One could still choose to progress with the interpretation of this space as an elite residence, and – adapting a version of the palatial treasure theory – read the deposition of the

¹⁴⁶¹ Morris 2020a.

¹⁴⁶² MacDowall and Taddei 1978, 257.

hoard objects and the blocking of rooms 10 and 13 as ‘utilitarian’ activities intending to safeguard their valuable contents for later recovery as the city was abandoned in anticipation of an ultimately successful invasion (see similar iterations in §1.3).

The story is simple, neat, and romantic – but does that make it true? Indeed, it is perhaps too perfect, artificially attractive, even ‘twee.’¹⁴⁶³ But if we choose to relinquish this anecdotal account for the deposition of the hoard – a type of explanation characteristic of much writing on hoards (§3.5.3) – what do we have left? I do not think there is a clear answer, and have chosen to leave the critical question of the Site II structure’s function open to future research, which should explore the possibility that the building served as a cultic space (§3.5.2). That being said, the gathering, deposition, and sealing of objects in rooms 10 and 13 marked the abandonment of the Site II structure, and moreover recalls examples of the ritual sealing of religious and secular buildings in Achaemenid Central Asia when they came to the end of their lives (§3.5.4). The blocked doorways of rooms 10 and 13 at Site II may be interpreted as having served to ‘protect’ their contents, whether in the utilitarian sense (to facilitate their later recovery), or in a ritual sense (sacred items safeguarded physically, and perhaps also in a non-physical sense by a taboo). Indeed, as I have noted, we do not know whether the Site II building was in good condition by the time of its abandonment, and whether any part of it may have been deliberately filled in. Furthermore, this assumption that the responsible party deposited this material with the intention of later recovery is not secure. Ultimately, the abandonment of the phase Begram II (including the deposition of the hoard and the end of the Site II structure) does not need to have been instigated by an invasion. Instead, this abandonment may have been a gradual process taking place in second half of the 3rd or even 4th centuries CE, featuring the contraction of the settlement, the collapse of its social organisation, and the departure of its urban elites (§3.5.4).

For now, the best way to proceed is by highlighting interpretative ambiguities in the contents and archaeological context of the hoard. Indeed, I have noted that since the late 19th century there have been attempts to classify Bronze Age hoards of articles of metalwork as ritual or utilitarian in nature, but scholars have progressively realised the methodological difficulties involved in this endeavour, the predominant role of ritual activity in the formation of hoards previously interpreted as utilitarian, and the ambiguity of the boundary between these two categories (§3.5.3). Likewise, although nothing in the contents or context of the hoard unequivocally indicates that we are looking at a religious context, many aspects of the Begram

¹⁴⁶³ With credit to David Fallon, who suggested this word.

hoard could be interpreted either way: ritual or utilitarian, and referring to the erstwhile contents of a palace's or temple's treasury. Indeed, even determining the intentionality of the deposition of the entire body of material that I have defined as the hoard is difficult outside of the blocked doorways of rooms 10 and 13. Or, put differently, the boundaries between hoard and 'not-hoard' are not as precisely clear as one may hope (§3.5.3).

In the previous chapter of this dissertation, I have noted that the condition of certain of the hoard objects indicates that they had been kept in one or more primary storage areas prior to their final deposition in rooms 10 and 13 (summarised in §4.16). The question then emerges of where this area (or areas) had been located. The corpus of hoard objects represents an enormous volume of material, but rooms 10, 13, and T appear to have constituted the largest enclosed spaces in the Site II structure. If this building had been an elite residence, it is difficult to conceive how it could have been used for everyday purposes if its limited enclosed spaces were used to store all of this material over the centuries. And indeed, the large amount of tableware and furniture represented in this corpus suggests a scale of activity beyond that of even an individual elite family and their guests. If one wishes to read strictly utilitarian behaviour into this material, the only conclusions can be that either a significant enclosed part of the putative residence must have extended elsewhere, or that the hoard objects had been stored somewhere else entirely before they were deposited in the Site II structure. Here, thinking of a palatial context is unavoidable – namely, the theoretical palace of the governor located on the Burj-i Abdullah (§3.5.1). Could the hoard objects have been removed from the treasury of this palace in order to be concealed in an elite residence located on the new royal city tepe, perhaps in an attempt to throw potential looters off the scent? The scenario is not unimaginable, but its reality seems impossible to evaluate. Moreover, here we enter into anecdotal explanatory territory again.

Alternatively, these concerns could be eradicated if we might hypothesise that some of the hoard objects could represent votive offerings (thinking of the Site II structure as a possible cultic space), including the extracted contents of former pits filled with offerings that had been cut into the floor of this building. Lindström has analysed several such pits documented in the Oxus temple at Takht-i Sangin, some still with the remains of the votives deposited in them, and others from which the offerings had been later removed (e.g., for recycling), being in some cases then replaced with compensatory items.¹⁴⁶⁴ Indeed, I have indicated that the surviving data from the distribution of items throughout the Site II structure could well be interpreted as

¹⁴⁶⁴ Lindström 2016.

evidence for the existence of such pits. In addition to this, a few examples of objects similar to those in the hoard have also been found elsewhere in this building (§3.5.3), including in area A. A. an element from metalwork (NRAB 355), and, at a higher depth, a bronze spoon (NRAB 320) and a gold pendant perhaps from an earring (NRAB 317). Another gold pendant was found in room/area V / Havalдар (NRAB 318) (see Appendix I).

Speaking generally, the treasuries of both palaces and temples could be sites for the accumulation of enormous wealth. Palatial treasuries had the capacity to contain valuable objects of different ages that were collected by rulers and their households. For example, certain Hellenistic rulers and their courts were known for accumulating works of art, luxury textiles, precious tableware, and other small articles, like jewellery, articles for toilette, and historical objects.¹⁴⁶⁵ The finds of the Square House (in its later stage) at the Arsacid citadel of Old Nisa¹⁴⁶⁶ and of the palatial treasury at the Graeco-Bactrian eastern capital of Aï Khanoum¹⁴⁶⁷ speak to such practices. In a comparable manner, Marshak has highlighted the attractiveness of ancient silver and gold plate to historical collectors, carrying connotations of ancient hoards and dynastic treasuries; accordingly, some late antique silver bowls were even kept in the treasury of the Badakhshan emir up to the 19th century.¹⁴⁶⁸ The availability of such antiques in elite collections could also impact craft production. For example, Marshak also observed that in ancient Tokharistan (Bactria), older collections of plate probably changed hands between the rulers of this region over time, and he has also suggested that the opening of such collections and the concomitant later availability of Hellenistic metalwork helps to explain the distorted way Greek elements came to be incorporated into late antique toreutics of the region.¹⁴⁶⁹

The capacity of temples in Central Asia to accumulate valuable material of different dates – for example, as votive objects – is equally clear.¹⁴⁷⁰ Excavations at the Oxus temple, which celebrated the god of this river, have revealed the diversity of objects dedicated there between the temple's foundation in the early Hellenistic period to the Kushan period (i.e., the 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE). Finds included articles made of gold, silver, bronze, glass, ivory, wood, iron, and ostrich egg, among other materials. The types of represented objects

¹⁴⁶⁵ See especially Kuttner 2014.

¹⁴⁶⁶ On the function of the Square House over time, Invernizzi 2000. For an overview of finds relating to the building's treasury function, see Masson and Pugachenkova 1982, 16–17.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Rapin 1992

¹⁴⁶⁸ Marshak 2017, 261.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Marshak 2017, 262–266.

¹⁴⁷⁰ It is also plausible that religious organisations active in this period, including temples and Buddhist monasteries, were able to own land, the rents from which probably serving as another source of their income, for which see Morris Forthcoming b, sec. IV.

included jewellery, furniture, coins, tools, clay portrait sculptures of Graeco-Bactrian rulers (indicating their patronage), musical instruments, and especially military equipment (the latter group being also predominant in the Kushan period).¹⁴⁷¹

There are two particularly famous examples of hoards from Central Asia in antiquity, which however were not discovered in the course of controlled excavations. The first is the Oxus treasure found at Takht-i Kuwad in the late 19th century, which contained primarily gold and silver objects probably dating to the Achaemenid and early Hellenistic period. The treasure has a fraught history of documentation but at least contained parts of vessels, jewellery, figurines, probably coins, and gold plaques which were apparently *ex-votos*. Hence, the collection is most plausibly interpreted as the contents of a temple's treasury, although its more precise origins – i.e. from which razed temple it may have been removed from – and date are unclear.¹⁴⁷² The second example is constituted by the Mir Zakah deposits (I and II). These are associated with a spring in the vicinity of the village of Mir Zakah, which lay on the route connecting the Gardez region (Arachosia) and the Kurram valley, which eventually provided access to northwestern India. The first deposit was explored through some limited excavations by the DAFA (1947–1948),¹⁴⁷³ but the second deposit (1992–1993) became widely known through acquisitions made by the Miho Museum, then represented as having come from Bactria, and perhaps related to the Oxus treasure.¹⁴⁷⁴ The Mir Zakah II hoard was subject to significant research by Bopearachchi, who traced its constituent objects from Japan and the antiquities market back to their source at Mir Zakah.¹⁴⁷⁵ He estimated that this corpus may have contained over half a million gold, silver, and copper alloy coins, and around 350 kg of gold and silver items, including statuettes, jewellery, plate, and votive plaques, which would make it the most valuable hoard in the ancient world.¹⁴⁷⁶

The nature of the Mir Zakah deposits is unclear. Similarities can be drawn between the contents of these deposits and the Oxus treasure, including the votive plaques.¹⁴⁷⁷ Bopearachchi has noted that the Mir Zakah deposits were compiled of collections of objects from different origins and periods: the votive plaques thus suggest an Achaemenid treasury, and the Graeco-Bactrian, Indian and Indo-Greek objects and coins likewise to 'sacked' (or emptied) treasuries (of temples or otherwise). He has further noted that, as coins of Vasudeva

¹⁴⁷¹ For an overview, Lindström 2020, 292–295, and on the offerings, Lindström 2016, 288–291.

¹⁴⁷² See the recent summary and further references in Lindström 2020, 289–290.

¹⁴⁷³ Curiel and Schlumberger 1953, 68–69, 93–99.

¹⁴⁷⁴ See Miho Museum 2002.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Bopearachchi 1995, 612–616; Bopearachchi and Flandrin 2005.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Bopearachchi and Flandrin 2005, 155.

¹⁴⁷⁷ See comments in Grenet 2008, 39.

I were the latest among both Mir Zakah deposits, it is plausible that the contents of these treasuries were extracted at the end of first quarter of the 3rd century CE.¹⁴⁷⁸ Curiel and Schlumberger initially proposed that the burial and abandonment of this hoard could be connected with a Sasanian invasion – i.e. with absconding elites presumably attempting to escape the oncoming army with convertible wealth in hand – although this was later dropped for a ritual interpretation.¹⁴⁷⁹ Indeed, both ritual and utilitarian interpretations of the Mir Zakah deposits have been offered, and I have also suggested elsewhere that even if the hoard might have ultimately served a utilitarian function (to conceal valuables for future recovery, although this is hardly certain), the deposit may could have simultaneously been ritually charged through its association with a spring.¹⁴⁸⁰

The Oxus treasure and Mir Zakah deposits are also interesting because, unlike the Begram hoard, their contents look more like what one might expect from a utilitarian hoard (i.e. a collection of articles of convertible wealth like Ali Baba's cave, §1.1), but simultaneously suggest clear links with religious contexts, as well as dislocation from them. As I have shown already, examples of gold elements (some detached) and nails documented within the Begram hoard (§4.2.1.16, §4.7.1) indicate that items made of this precious metal had been accessible to the party responsible for its deposition (e.g., in one of the primary storage locations), but had not been included in the relevant assemblages. Perhaps, then, hypothetical items of high-value, convertible wealth may have been taken with absconding elites (whether they drew their power from socio-political or religious means) as the city was abandoned, who however took care to ensure the appropriate ritual and/or utilitarian protection of other valuables in their command. Then, similar scenarios may have been ultimately responsible for the deposition of the Oxus treasure and the deposits at Mir Zakah.

It is important to note that divisions between religious organisations and palaces (as residences of rulers) or elites more generally may not have always been so sharply delineated in antiquity. Rulers could serve as the key patrons of religious organisations, and cases where the initial construction of temples appear to be linked with royal sponsorship include the temple with indented niches at Aï Khanoum and the Oxus temple.¹⁴⁸¹ It is also worth remarking that in some contexts in the Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean and Western Asia, temples could serve banking functions (namely as secure places for elites to deposit their wealth), and could

¹⁴⁷⁸ Bopearachchi and Flandrin 2005, 163–166, 245.

¹⁴⁷⁹ Curiel and Schlumberger 1953, 90.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Morris Forthcoming a.

¹⁴⁸¹ See Martinez-Sève 2010, 10–11; 2014, 276.

sometimes offer credit from the part of their wealth suitable for secular use in periods of crisis.¹⁴⁸² Although these functions are not yet explicitly attested for the religious organisations active in Central Asia in antiquity (as we have so little data in this respect), they are also not implausible, and thus constitute factors to keep in mind when considering the history of processes contributing to the deposition of the hoard.

To name another point of ambiguity, the evidence for the use of certain documentary practices with reference to the hoard implies a broadly institutional ‘administrative’ context, but does not allow us to specify with certainty whether this was palatial or religious in nature. More specifically, I am referring to the presence of a clay sealing in room T (§4.10.1), as well as the inked inscriptions on certain of the glass vessels (§4.15). Seals and sealings are relatively commonly encountered in official contexts in Central Asia in antiquity, including the Arsacid citadel of Old Nisa, where they were found especially at the Square House (when it fulfilled its treasury function) and the SW Building (a storage area for bulkier products).¹⁴⁸³ The inked inscriptions from Begram are somewhat more baffling, not least because their contents cannot be deciphered. In principle, the simultaneous use of the ‘unknown language in the unknown script’ and Bactrian would be consistent with our knowledge of official languages apparently in use in the early Kushan period, although the Bactrian component on one of the glass vessels points to a later date (§4.15). Indeed, Bactrian was apparently the dominant language used for official contexts from the reign of Kanishka I, indicated by its pre-eminence in monumental epigraphy and coinage, as well as its use in an apparent archive represented by slivers of papyri found at the fortress Kampyrtepa.¹⁴⁸⁴ That being said, adding such inked inscriptions to glass was apparently a very unusual practice in the global archaeological record. Yet, it is remarkably already attested in the Hellenistic period at Aï Khanoum, perhaps then suggesting a continuity of local practice. There, at the sanctuary of the temple with indented niches, part of an opaque glass shovel or scoop perhaps destined for ritual use was found, featuring a few lines inked in Greek.¹⁴⁸⁵ Although the original use context of the object and the reading of its inscription are not certain – perhaps, if perplexingly referring to the sour sauce *aburtake*, a commodity known

¹⁴⁸² See comments and further references in Fabian and Weaverdyck Forthcoming, sec. V.2.

¹⁴⁸³ See respectively Mollo 2001; Lippolis and Manassero 2015.

¹⁴⁸⁴ On these papyri, Rtveladze 2012, 234–240.

¹⁴⁸⁵ P.O. 2806, Rapin and Grenet 1983, 323–324, No. 3, found in room 23 according to the numbering of Francfort 1984. *Contra* Rapin and Grenet (1983, 324), Martinez-Sève (personal communication) is of the opinion that the scoop had originally been kept in the northern chapel of the sanctuary, rather than the palace’s treasury. From the chapel, it was moved into room 2.22 during the post-palatial occupation of the site, according to Martinez-Sève’s new numbering of the buildings in this area, to be communicated in her forthcoming publication on the sanctuary. On the post-palatial occupation of Aï Khanoum with the new numbering of the sanctuary area’s rooms, see already Martinez-Sève 2018.

from the table of the Persian Great King – the text has some formulaic similarities with inscribed objects from the treasury (which were dispersed especially in the palace and temple in the post-palatial occupation period), and may refer to its number in a larger inventory or batch of objects.¹⁴⁸⁶ As I have noted above (§4.15), the apparent use of characters resembling Greek letters on two of the inked Begram vessels could suggest the expression of (serial?) numbers. Although the comparative inked glass shovel from Aï Khanoum remains baffling, for our purposes, it should suffice to highlight the similarity between documentary practices apparently used in palatial and temple contexts in the Hellenistic period, and the attendant ambiguity of the inked glassware at Begram.

The enormous prevalence of examples of valuable, imported articles of tableware, especially drinking vessels, in the Begram hoard implies large-scale elite drinking and/or feasting. Such activity, however, did not have to be purely social, but could refer to rituals too. These might constitute court practices, or more religiously oriented activities; see, for example, the scene with wine-filtering, and attendants standing before a drinking, elite male individual on a folding seat that is depicted on one of the tapestries discovered in kurgan 20 at Noyon uul which was presumably produced in Bactria between the late 1st century BCE to the early 1st century CE (for further on these seats, see below §5.4).¹⁴⁸⁷ Indeed, wine-making and wine-drinking could have also taken place in the context of socially significant festivals. Filigenzi has recently re-examined scenes featuring males taking part in these activities depicted in Gandhāran Buddhist relief sculpture (especially from stupas in Swat). Noting the incongruity of these relief scenes with the Buddhist ‘biographic scenes’ they are vertically juxtaposed with, Filigenzi has argued that they depict local, native elites – specifically, men of high rank – taking part in socially significant open-air ceremonies, perhaps connected to the wine-making season, which included sacrifices and the ritual consumption of wine, comparably to more recent festivals celebrated in Kafiristan.¹⁴⁸⁸ Moreover, she notes that the incorporation of these scenes into the decoration of Buddhist monuments – probably sponsored by the local aristocracy taking part in these rituals – indicates the interplay between the two religious systems. It is especially worth highlighting that several of the reliefs discussed by Filigenzi depict their central high-ranking male figures (as well as one couple) on elaborate seats – such as ‘curule-

¹⁴⁸⁶ Rapin and Grenet 1983, 324; Rougemont 2012, 232–233, No. 123.

¹⁴⁸⁷ Polos'mak 2015, Figs. 5–6. On the iconography and implications of the related set of textiles found at Noyon uul, Yatsenko 2012; Francfort 2013, 1559–1576.

¹⁴⁸⁸ For this and the following, Filigenzi 2019, 65–75.

type' folding chairs (Pl. 94.1) like that depicted on the Noyon uul tapestry, and even a throne with a canopy (Pl. 94.2) – accompanied with footstools.¹⁴⁸⁹

In my view, the elite celebration of similar, socially significant local festivals and rituals at Begram could perhaps be inferred from the prevalence of drinking vessels and rich ivory seats and footstools in the hoard, although (as I hope I have made clear by now) the precise processes of the accumulation and deposition of this corpus still remain largely obscure to us. Nonetheless, it should be noted that Kapisa is adjacent to the historical region of Kafiristan and likewise possessed clear cultural links with the highland region of Swat further to the east, and moreover was known for its wine in antiquity, which was apparently even exported to India (§3.2).

Another case of objects in the hoard with an ambiguous function are constituted by the glass flasks suitable for containing or dispensing scented oil – most especially the group of ca. 26 typologically unique, large ichthyomorphic flasks that were executed in the forms of fish, dolphins, and ships (§4.2.1.12). If these flasks had indeed been used for this function, they could conceivably have been utilised in the context of toilette. However, considering a unique point of comparison – a similarly large, hollow golden fish from the Oxus treasure, Pl. 94.3) – one may also think of a ritual function. This object was plausibly made locally, also because it appears to depict a species of barbel from the Oxus or Caspian Sea.¹⁴⁹⁰ An added suspension loop indicates that it had once featured an attached stopper, and Dalton accordingly proposed that it had served as a flask for perfume or oil.¹⁴⁹¹ Hence, the object as a vessel could be suitable for pouring libations, although it is worth remarking here that depictions of the god of the Oxus and items associated with his worship do not frequently feature aquatic creatures.¹⁴⁹² From another perspective, Wu has observed that the Oxus fish would have needed to have been kept upright if used as a vessel, and noting the use of religiously charged depictions of fish as saddle hangings among nomads of the Altai, has alternatively suggested that it may have been used as such for religious processions.¹⁴⁹³ The Begram ichthyomorphic flasks, however, encounter the same issue as they were made to lie flat, indicating their suitability for pouring rather than storing liquids. That being said, I have noted above that if these vessels had once contained

¹⁴⁸⁹ Filigenzi 2019, 65, 68–69, Figs. 3.8, 3.10–14. The captions on Pl. 94.1–2 (Callieri and Filigenzi 2002, No. 146; Ingholt 1957, No. 175) follow Filigenzi's observations.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Burton 2016

¹⁴⁹¹ Dalton 1964, 81.

¹⁴⁹² See Stark and Morris Forthcoming.

¹⁴⁹³ Wu 2005, 261–263; Forthcoming.

scented oils, it is plausible that they were transported full to Central Asia, and may have been fitted with stoppers made out of perishable material (§4.2.1.12).

The function of the elements detached from articles of metalwork (§4.4) – including furniture, figurines, and vessels largely manufactured in the Roman Mediterranean – is also ambiguous. In the presentation of this material in Chapter 4, I have considered two possibilities which both imply the activity of craft production. First, if the Begram hoard speaks to a cultic context, these objects may have functioned as parts of votive offerings which had been detached from more complete objects and retained, while their remainder had been recycled by cult personnel into new offerings. Alternatively, as these objects largely represent decorative elements from a wide diversity of articles, I would propose that they may have been accumulated over time as a body of reference material, i.e. as ‘quotes,’ for use in craft production. If these objects had served as reference material, this is similar to the presumed function for the collection of plaster casts deposited in room 13 (§4.12), and may also elucidate the function of examples of incomplete and/or repaired figurines deposited in the hoard (§4.5). Indeed, some of the latter group appear to have been deposited in some association with the detached metalwork elements in rooms T and 13 (§4.16). I have also suggested above that the anthropomorphic balsamaria may have functioned in this manner (§4.2.2.5).

Whichever hypothesis we might prefer, the significant point is that these objects suggest the occurrence of craft production, a function likewise suggested (if not unequivocally) by the presence of raw and semi-worked materials in the hoard (see §4.10). It is worth noting that in principle, both palaces and religious organisations could have been engaged in coordinating this economic activity. For example, raw materials that were feasibly used in the production of prestige goods were documented in the remains of the palace at Aï Khanoum, although the absence of tools indicates that the implied workshop was located elsewhere.¹⁴⁹⁴ For the case of temples, one may cite the votive plaques of the Oxus treasure and Mir Zakah mentioned above, and evidence for the ritual removal and recycling of old dedications to make new cult instruments or offerings (including evidence for bronze casting *in situ*) at the Oxus temple.¹⁴⁹⁵ For the most powerful religious organisations in Gandhāra in antiquity, i.e. Buddhist monasteries, we have the most obvious example: Gandhāran sculpture. Although little is clear about the precise process by which this sculpture was commissioned and produced, the content of this sculpture implies coordination between monastic staff,

¹⁴⁹⁴ See room 104, Rapin 1992, 48–50

¹⁴⁹⁵ See Drujinina and Lindström 2013, 182–183; Lindström 2016, 305–306

workshops, and the donors who sponsored these works, being especially local elites. For example, a recent study has examined features of sculptural pieces at a range of sacred areas in Swat that appear to derive from the same workshop, which is suggested to have specialised in non-Indic genre scenes incorporating Graeco-Roman imagery that were preferred by the local aristocracy.¹⁴⁹⁶ Chronological links between the plaster casts in the Begram hoard and the incorporation of iconographic and stylistic traits of Graeco-Roman origin into Gandhāran art have long been recognised.¹⁴⁹⁷ It is quite plausible that workshops producing this sculpture had such corpora of reference material at their disposal (see also below, §5.4), but the precise output of the presumed workshop working with the Begram plaster casts (and perhaps also the detached metalwork elements) remains obscure. The remarkable size of this corpus of reference material at least suggests a larger-scale, organised form of production and an output oriented towards elites. However, our expectations as to the appearance of the resulting output may be slightly tempered in light of the find of Hellenistic plaster cast at a Yuezhi-Kushan period coroplastic workshop at Old Termez.¹⁴⁹⁸ The complex composition on the cast, probably depicting a Gigantomachy, does not appear to be directly related to the output of this workshop, which included figurines of musicians and a crude lion, suggesting the possibility that the use of objects produced in the Roman Mediterranean as reference material could result in objects and imagery that are surprising to modern observers.¹⁴⁹⁹

It may also be remarked that the sparse remains of military equipment in the hoard (§4.9) could be interpreted as the residue of votive offerings, but also property from a palatial treasury. In respect to the latter, examples of arrowheads and javelin points as well as fragments of horse lamellar armour were found in Aī Khanoum's treasury, but were interpreted to have been dispersed from the armoury into this space by the post-palatial occupants of the city.¹⁵⁰⁰ A still more ambiguous case is presented by the substantial finds of arrowheads in the royal pavilion of Khalchayan,¹⁵⁰¹ which may suggest rather the occurrence of ritual activity in this building (see §3.5.1). Otherwise, the popularity of weapons donated at the Oxus temple, especially in the Kushan period, has already been mentioned above. It is also worth noting that parts of lamellar armour have been documented in votive contexts at Barikot, including a

¹⁴⁹⁶ Brancaccio and Olivieri 2019.

¹⁴⁹⁷ See, e.g. Whitehouse 1989a, although hardly requiring the interpretation of these casts as part of a western craftsman's toolkit, as Whitehouse suggests.

¹⁴⁹⁸ De Pontbriand and Leriche 2012.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Morris 2020c, 589.

¹⁵⁰⁰ See Rapin 1992, 257–258.

¹⁵⁰¹ Pugachenkova 1966, 62–64

specimen of such in the courtyard of the Sacred Precinct B (Macrophase 5).¹⁵⁰² Incidentally, another cultic context dating to the 3rd century CE at Barikot (room 109 of Temple K) revealed a deposit of valuables that broadly recalls some of the material in the Begram hoard, including examples of small and medium sized luxury pottery vessels, an elephant's tusk, and even a greenish glass bowl produced in the Roman world.¹⁵⁰³

It is difficult to embrace these interpretative ambiguities and suggest a clear assessment of the nature of the Begram hoard. Nonetheless, for now, the Begram hoard can safely be described in the following manner: an intergenerational collection of goods accumulated by elites. The involvement of elites – whether socio-political and/or ritual – is evident from the value of the hoard objects, and the intergenerational component is made manifestly clear as the production dates of the hoard objects encompass a span of around three centuries, i.e. at least the latter 1st century BCE to the late 3rd century CE. Most of this chronological range overlaps with the period of Kushan rule in Central Asia.

Clearly, the Begram hoard constitutes significant (as well as charismatic and baffling) evidence for a diversity of historical phenomena, such as the flows of long distance trade across Afro-Eurasia, ties between the Mediterranean world and Central Asia, the capacities of ivory carvers and furniture makers in India, and the emergence of Gandhāran art. However, because the Begram hoard can be described as an intergenerational collection of goods accumulated by elites, I will conclude this dissertation by arguing that a key reason why the Begram hoard is significant is because it provides critical, unique evidence for patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia, especially of imported luxury and prestige goods. However, it must be stressed that this body of material cannot be understood as a representative example of imported goods that allows us to create a clear historical narrative. Instead, because of the diversity of obscure processes contributing to the accumulation and deposition of this material, the Begram hoard constitutes a distorted reflection of consumption. Indeed, the hoard is the curated end result of centuries of poorly understood biographies of hundreds of objects, which were most likely brought to Begram through a range of different exchange mechanisms – such as commercial trade, gift exchange, even perhaps the extraction of tribute or booty – and then collected and used for a range of different reasons. Certain large groups of relatively homogeneous imports, including particular classes of glassware (e.g. the cold-painted §4.2.1.1, enamelled §4.2.1.2, facet-cut §4.2.1.3, trailed §4.2.1.11, and ichthyomorphic §4.2.1.12

¹⁵⁰² Olivieri 2011b; 2012b, 11, Fig. 22

¹⁵⁰³ Olivieri 2012b; 2014, 133–135, Table 20, Figs. 103–105.

groups), metalwork (the leaded brass basins, §4.2.2.1), plaster casts (§4.12), and perhaps the ivory furniture (§4.13.1), may reflect the results of larger cargoes quite directly brought to Begram's elites through directed commercial trade. Comparably, objects like the detached elements from metalwork (§4.4), the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), and figurines (§4.5) may have first entered into Begram or wider Central Asia as direct imports respectively as pieces of furniture, vessels, scented oil carriers, and objects of religious devotion, but were then collected, stored, and recycled in part for different purposes.

Such changes in meaning, to be expected in an object's biography as it moves through space and time,¹⁵⁰⁴ are illustrated through evidence for manipulation of some hoard objects, and the arrangement of others. An excellent example of this can be cited through the repaired, incomplete bronze figurine of Harpocrates (NRAB 153, §4.5). As discussed above, the left forearm of this figurine was missing, while his lower right forearm – with his finger originally set to point at his lips, as a god associated with silence and secrecy (Pl. 64.4) – had become detached in antiquity, and was reattached according to someone's best approximation of this iconographic feature, without understanding its significance (Pl. 64.3).¹⁵⁰⁵ While Harpocrates had once been relatively well-known through both imported and locally produced representations (figurines and seals) in Central Asia – although it is unclear whether he was always understood in a religious sense in this region¹⁵⁰⁶ – the repair of this figurine in the Begram hoard speaks to a loss or reconfiguration of understanding of this god's traits.

Another example of changing understandings of the hoard objects throughout their lives is found in the arrangement of certain of the lacquerwares. More specifically, most of this group was found together in the southwest corner of room 13 (see §4.2.6), but at least one example, a bowl (NRAB 92), was found jammed on top of a glass jar (NRAB 93, see §4.2.14) in the north of the central part of the room (Pl. 56.2). The logic of this arrangement indicates some distance from the significance of both objects when they were imported – respectively from the Mediterranean and from China – as well as a conception that they were similar in function, or related in some other way.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Kopytoff 1986; Gosden and Marshall 1999. In a parallel vein, Espagne's work on 'transferts culturels' highlights the transformation of meaning undergone by cultural objects when transferred between contexts, for which see e.g. Espagne 2013.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Again, humorously, this ancient repair was later corrected by a modern conservator, the result of which is shown in Pl. 64.4.

¹⁵⁰⁶ Mairs 2007, 77–80.

With the above methodological and theoretical caveats in mind, the following section considers the ways in which the Begram hoard illuminates patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia, especially of imported luxury and prestige goods.

5.4. Patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia

Earlier in this dissertation, I have noted that a number of scholars have suggested that the Begram hoard can be explained as a product of cosmopolitan and eclectic taste cultivated under the Kushans (§1.3), but that this problematically gives the impression of an undifferentiated, wide-reaching demand for imported goods (§1.4). Again, the concept of cosmopolitanism does not adequately explain patterns which can be observed among the contents of the hoard. Instead, as I will argue below, these patterns must have been determined by the local attraction of the hoard objects, which was related to the specific associations and utility they had for local consumers.

To this end, it is important to first clarify how I understand consumption in the present case. In archaeology, the study of consumption has only come to be a subject of concerted attention in recent decades, particularly in historical archaeology where emphasis is placed on its social dimensions,¹⁵⁰⁷ but also in respect to earlier periods of history (e.g. the Roman world) with an interest in the role of this behaviour in ancient economies.¹⁵⁰⁸ Interestingly, consumption is still infrequently invoked or explored in dominantly archaeological studies of the exchange or transfer of prestige or luxury goods, which is most likely because the term is often conceptually linked with ideas about modern capitalist economies and consumerism.¹⁵⁰⁹ Instead, consumption can be defined more simply (if imperfectly) from a sociological perspective as “involving the selection, purchase, use, maintenance, repair, and disposal of any product or service,”¹⁵¹⁰ with consumers being the actors undertaking these processes. Although consumption and production are often conceptualised as separate, distinct processes, especially with respect to economic activity, the two are actually often intertwined.¹⁵¹¹ Consumption can be approached differently from economic and social standpoints: an economic perspective may detect patterns of consumer behaviour and assess the role of these patterns in the wider

¹⁵⁰⁷ Reviewed in e.g. Dietler 2010; Mullins 2011.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Discussed in Ray 2006.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Ray 2006, 25.

¹⁵¹⁰ Campbell 1995, 100.

¹⁵¹¹ See discussion in Ray 2006, 27.

economy,¹⁵¹² while a social perspective could stress the need to “understand the social and cultural logic of the desire for [objects] and the social, economic, and political roles that their consumption played.”¹⁵¹³ The present section is concerned with precisely such themes, but how to achieve this understanding is another problem. Some recent elaborations on the archaeological study of consumption have advocated for demanding methodologies utilising comprehensive bodies of data,¹⁵¹⁴ but this are impossible to apply to Kushan Central Asia. Nonetheless, as I will show below, the unevenness of our data hardly precludes an attempt to understand these social processes.

At this point, it is also expedient to explain why I qualify the hoard objects as examples of prestige and luxury goods, which is relevant to issues of consumption. References to prestige goods and luxury goods (or luxuries) are commonly found in archaeological and historical scholarship without much qualification, but often essentially refer to objects that seem rare, ‘exotic,’ and/or expensive. Selbitschka has recently interrogated the concept of prestige goods in the archaeological record in some detail. He argues that genuine prestige goods ought to be distinguished from luxury products (which he does not define) and status symbols in that they generate esteem (*Ansehen*), and such goods can possibly be identified by considering their relative value, but safely assessed through evidence for their emulation in mortuary contexts.¹⁵¹⁵

The definition of luxury goods in archaeology specifically has yet to be subjected to a similar protracted theoretical critique, although concepts of luxury – which are often imbued with profound social, political, and moral significance – have certainly been investigated in scholarship more broadly.¹⁵¹⁶ Conventionally, the term has been defined in opposition to necessity, hence the typical division between luxury goods and staple ones. This opposition and moreover the idea that luxury derives from some intrinsic quality of an object has been critiqued in respect to scholarship related to trade and Graeco-Roman economies. For example, Morley has suggested with respect to classical antiquity that luxury lies not in the nature of goods, but how they were consumed,¹⁵¹⁷ and likewise Cobb has stressed that the categories of luxury and necessity in Roman society were not mutually exclusive or inherent, but rather socially constituted.¹⁵¹⁸ In a similar way, the acquisition and redistribution of luxury goods,

¹⁵¹² Ray 2006, 28–37.

¹⁵¹³ Dietler 2010, 226.

¹⁵¹⁴ Ray 2006; Dietler 2010, 226–227.

¹⁵¹⁵ Selbitschka 2018.

¹⁵¹⁶ See generally Berry 1994. For luxury in the Roman world, see e.g. Parker 2008, 165–171.

¹⁵¹⁷ Morley 2007, 43.

¹⁵¹⁸ Cobb 2013.

especially imported ones, played essential social and political roles in other societies.¹⁵¹⁹ Schneider's recent study of the development of Roman demand for pearls from the Indian Ocean further shows that the consumption of luxuries is entangled with wider, dynamic phenomena, such as the initial discovery of pearls, change in Roman taste, and the emergence of specialist retailers and craftspeople, with pearls ultimately being consumed by middling groups in society too.¹⁵²⁰

Many of the Begram hoard objects were rare (from global and local perspectives), 'exotic' (procured from distant places), presumably expensive to obtain (when acquired through commercial exchange), and were certainly seen as valuable. Certainly, not all of the objects meet the bar of goods typically considered as luxuries – e.g. objects of precious metal, gemstones, ivory, silk – but they are also not staples, and hence broadly fit into the conception of luxuries described above, imperfect as it is. Some of these luxury goods were most likely 'genuine prestige goods' too, but we generally lack the data to assert whether they had the specific esteem-generating function that Selbitschka highlights, as Kushan Central Asia is unevenly archaeologically explored and the Begram hoard is a unique corpus of material. Hence, I generally refer to the hoard objects as prestige and luxury goods.

In my view, it is still entirely possible to move forwards by examining which specific kinds of luxury and prestige goods from particular, distant places were appealing to elites in Kushan Central Asia and – crucially – why.¹⁵²¹ To this end, we can draw on Bourdieu's influential conceptions of the different forms of capital, the role played by taste in the consumption of cultural goods, and how taste relates to social status.¹⁵²² Evidently (and to use Bourdieu's terms) the figures responsible for accumulating the hoard objects were part of the "dominant class," and possessed significant economic and social capital, demonstrated by their capacity to mobilise networks of significant size and scope for procuring imported goods. According to Bourdieu, the uneven accumulation of cultural capital produced "lifestyles" of distinctive groups, within which taste served to socially differentiate. It is important to stress that desiring and obtaining specific imported objects implies the possession of certain cultural knowledge. Indeed, Bourdieu considered the taste for consuming "exotic" food among certain social groups as reflective of cultural capital.¹⁵²³ In a similar way, and in relation to the

¹⁵¹⁹ For the use of luxury foreign goods among Central Asian nomadic polities in the 6th–9th centuries CE, Stark 2015.

¹⁵²⁰ Schneider 2019.

¹⁵²¹ The following remarks are adapted from Morris 2020c, 586.

¹⁵²² Bourdieu 1984; 1986.

¹⁵²³ Bourdieu 1984, 185–186.

interpretation of archaeological material, others have more recently suggested that the “exoticism” of an object was a criterion which contributed to its value.¹⁵²⁴ This may be true to some extent, but hardly captures the entire significance of an imported luxury or prestige good. Instead, the locally held associations about such objects must have contributed to their appeal, also driving their consumption. Otherwise, few patterns could be observed in the consumption of different kinds of imported goods in the archaeological record. On the contrary, there are clear patterns among the material represented in the Begram hoard. Specifically, the immense volume of certain kinds of objects in the hoard, especially from the Roman Mediterranean, speaks to the existence of such patterns and the desire for certain imported goods over time, some of which were extremely unusual and even unique in the global archaeological record. The very existence of such unusual objects in Kushan Central Asia cannot be a random byproduct of the non-directed distribution (i.e. essentially ‘diffusion’) of goods across Eurasia. Instead, this shows clear selectivity, and represents a matrix of intentional choices made by local actors that were – quite apparently – informed by their own desires for specific goods. A useful, relevant concept to mention here is that of receptivity. Specifically, Athenian receptivity to Achaemenid Persian culture in the 5th century BCE was influentially examined by Miller, with receptivity understood as the ‘readiness’ of a society to receive culture elements; the emphasis on the social system of recipients and not the status of donor cultures is a productive way to reframe the analysis of cultural exchange beyond problematic, hierarchical models of diffusion.¹⁵²⁵ To summarise, we can endeavour to understand why imported prestige and luxury goods were desired in Kushan Central Asia by considering their capacity to communicate and produce distinction, which was determined by the local cultural associations that were held about these objects and how they were incorporated into a local social system – i.e., the taste, desire, or ‘readiness’ for these goods.

Let us begin with the most significant example of these points. As noted above (§4.16), the most numerous and diverse range of goods represented in the Begram hoard, in terms of individual objects, were produced in the Roman Mediterranean. It is important to note that certain types of such objects in the hoard were widely distributed within the Roman Empire and even beyond it, across Eurasia, while others were extremely rare or even unique in the global archaeological record. Examples of relatively widely distributed goods included the figurines (§4.5), the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), and the leaded brass basins

¹⁵²⁴ Dillian and White 2010, 9–11; Selbitschka 2018, 11.

¹⁵²⁵ Miller 2004 [1997], 243–244.

(§4.2.2.1), if however attested elsewhere in bronze and of slightly different types than the Begram group. For example, two comparable (bronze) basins were discovered in a hoard at Kolhapur in southern India.¹⁵²⁶ Ribbed glass bowls (§4.2.1.19) were also fairly widely distributed (see also above, §5.2.3), with examples also being documented elsewhere in Central Asia, including at Taxila-Sirkap (Pl. 95.1),¹⁵²⁷ and at the royal pavilion of Khalchayan (Pl. 96.1).¹⁵²⁸ And yet, although these kinds of objects (or related types) were relatively widely distributed, the fact that they are represented in several examples at Begram still indicates directed trade towards Central Asia. Other examples of objects – apparently the products of more specialised workshops – seem to have had a more limited ranges of distribution, to judge from known parallels from both within and outside of the Roman Empire. These include the enamelled glassware (§4.2.1.2), which, as I have discussed above, were also found in Magna Germania, and in an isolated case in western Kazakhstan. In addition to this, some limited examples of comparable plaster casts (§4.12) are known from outside of the Graeco-Roman Mediterranean world, but it is curious that several have been documented elsewhere in Central Asia in contexts dating from the Hellenistic to Kushan periods.

It is especially significant that many objects in the hoard that were produced in the Roman Mediterranean were exceedingly unusual, rare, or even unique in the archaeological record. Objects like the porphyry vessels (§4.2.4) and rock crystal cantharus (§4.2.5) would have been extremely expensive and considered to be highly prestigious objects in the Mediterranean world. The aquariums (§4.3) also represent entirely unique examples of composite devices. Furthermore, the fact that several unusual or virtually unique examples of glassware – and even entire groups thereof – are represented in the hoard is likewise remarkable, considering the enormity of the corpus of comparative Roman glass which survives today. Examples of such include the vessels with openwork trailed decoration (§4.2.1.11), the ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12), the Pharos goblet (RAB 203 [56], §4.2.1.7), and the cold-painted vessels (§4.2.1.1). And yet, the latter mysterious group still appears to share some parallels with other finds reported in Central Asia. In Bactria, a fragment of an oval convex piece of glass depicting a hand and a wreath painted in black was documented at the necropolis of Tepai-Shakh.¹⁵²⁹ Beyond the frontiers of the Kushan Empire, fragments of a thin white glass featuring painting outlined in black and filled with an ochre colour and with

¹⁵²⁶ De Puma 1991, 91, Nos. 40–41, Figs. 5.13–16.

¹⁵²⁷ Marshall 1951, 688, Nos. 8–9.

¹⁵²⁸ Pugachenkova 1966, 55, Fig. 32.

¹⁵²⁹ Litvinskiy and Sedov 1983, 151, Cat. 3, 33; 29; XXXIII, 14.

additional traces of gilding were discovered among other fragments of glass at a temple (building II, quarter A) at the royal fortress-settlement of Toprak-kala in Chorasmia (Pl. 97.1, 12–15).¹⁵³⁰ Another piece of thin glass with gilding and painted black lines was found in room 8 of the palace of the same site (Pl. 97.2, 4).¹⁵³¹

In fact, several other examples of glassware – primarily tableware imported from the Roman Mediterranean – have been documented in Central Asia. In addition to the ribbed bowl found at Khalchayan, a bright blue flat plate was found (Pl. 96.1, compare §4.2.1.18).¹⁵³² Among other fragments of glass at the Oxus temple, fragments of unguentaria were discovered (compare §4.2.1.21).¹⁵³³ Two further glass unguentaria had been deposited as grave goods in the burial of a woman at Tillya-tepe, the first a globular example made of marbled glass, and the second a smaller sky-blue piriform version (Pl. 96.2).¹⁵³⁴ At Taxila-Sirkap a range of fragments of glassware were reported.¹⁵³⁵ Examples included sea-green, translucent piriform unguentaria (Pl. 95.9–12), as well as marbled versions thereof (Pl. 95.5–6), in addition to examples of luxury tableware. A mosaic method was used to manufacture some examples of the latter vessels (Pl. 95.6–9), versions of which are seen also in the Begram corpus (see e.g. §4.2.1.18), while there is another example of cameo glass (Pl. 95.10), an elaborate method of decoration not attested among Begram's glass. Interestingly, the neck of a large sea-green translucent jug with a ribbed handle was documented (Pl. 95.11), indicating (alongside the plain unguentaria) that vessels beyond examples of luxury tableware were also imported.

Moving beyond the Kushan realm in Central Asia, several other fragments of glass vessels were also documented at Toprak-kala, which flourished in the 2nd–3rd centuries CE. These were found both in the palace, as well as in the lower city's residence and temple quarters.¹⁵³⁶ A number of these vessels, especially cut and faceted examples (Pls. 97.1, 18–29, 97.2, 2–5), share affinities with glass produced in Sasanian-era Mesopotamia and the southern Caucasus.¹⁵³⁷ Although manufactured later, and in a centre (or centres) of production distinct to the facet-cut glass vessels of Begram (§4.2.1.3), the latter group broadly represent an earlier period of development of this concept within the Mediterranean world. Indeed, such late

¹⁵³⁰ Nerazik and Rapoport 1981, Fig. 58, 12–15.

¹⁵³¹ Rapoport and Nerazik 1984, Fig. 93.

¹⁵³² Pugachenkova 1966, 55–56, Fig. 32.

¹⁵³³ See e.g. Litvinskiy and Pichikiyan 2000, 75–76.

¹⁵³⁴ Grave 6 in Sarianidi 1985, 259, No. 38, Ill. 147.

¹⁵³⁵ Marshall 1951, 685–689, Nos. 1–16, Pls. 209–210.

¹⁵³⁶ Nerazik and Rapoport 1981, 117–119, Fig. 58; Rapoport and Nerazik 1984, 286, Fig. 93.

¹⁵³⁷ Compare, for example, excavated examples from Veh Ardashir and vessels purportedly from Gilan in the British Museum in Simpson 2015, Figs. 2–3, 6–7. Note, however that one cut example from Toprak-kala (Pl. 97.2, 18) was apparently also painted with red and black, and gilded.

antique cut glass bowls and cups clearly began to be demanded more widely across Eurasia from the 3rd–4th centuries CE, as they also begin to appear in elite tombs in China (see §5.2.3).¹⁵³⁸ Other fragments of presumably earlier glass from Toprak-kala provide parallels for the glass imported to Begram. Beyond the painted fragments mentioned above, there are again examples of mosaic glass (Pl. 97.1, 8–9).

Finally, fragments of an unpublished wide glass bowl (dia. 26 cm) reportedly dated from the 1st–2nd centuries CE from the site of New Nisa – i.e. adjacent to the Arsacid ceremonial capital of Old Nisa, Mithridatkert – have been displayed at the State Museum of the History of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, to which they were presented by the widow of archaeologist M. S. Mershiev.¹⁵³⁹ From what I could observe, the bowl features gilded decoration, perhaps gold leaf sandwiched between two layers of transparent glass, producing a relatively thick wall. At least a riderless horse is clearly visible, and perhaps the scene depicts a cavalry battle (compare e.g. the scene on RAB 163 [15] under §4.2.1.2 above), but this can be assessed when the vessel is properly published. Generally, the form of the vessel and the structure of its decoration are close to neither of the two main classes of sandwich gold glass in antiquity, i.e. the rare output of the Hellenistic-period so-called Canosa Group (often attributed to Alexandria), or the more common Roman-era so-called *fondi d'oro* emerging around the 3rd century CE.¹⁵⁴⁰ Although there are also no close parallels for this vessel among the Begram glass, its existence reiterates the bigger picture that is painted here: that there was a wider demand for imported glass vessels as examples of luxury and prestige goods particularly in Kushan Central Asia, but also parts of Central Asia located further to the northwest. Vessels of particular interest were unguentaria and tableware, and several rare and unusual types of tableware were imported into this space. Considering parallels between the Begram hoard and other excavated comparanda, it is evident that this material attests to highly directed trade between the Roman Mediterranean and Central Asia.

This conclusion is of interest because evidence for direct interaction between the Roman and Kushan worlds is limited and difficult to interpret. We do have some impression of the mobility of agents along maritime networks connecting these two spaces through a passing reference to “Bactrians, Scythians, and a few Indians” present at Alexandria’s theatre,¹⁵⁴¹ the hoard of ca. 105 Kushan dinars and double dinars found at Debra Damo in

¹⁵³⁸ See examples from Eastern Jin burials in Nanjing, Hoppál 2016, Nos. II.2, II.4.1, II.6.

¹⁵³⁹ Inv. No. 293/1. I thank Otabek Aripdjanov for this information.

¹⁵⁴⁰ For these, see Cesarin 2018, 27–29, 38.

¹⁵⁴¹ Dio Chrysostomus *Orationes* 32.40.

Ethiopia,¹⁵⁴² and some slightly later inscriptions in Bactrian and Gāndhārī at the island of Socotra in the Arabian Sea.¹⁵⁴³ But curiously, the author of the *Periplus* – a critical source of information for the organisation and scope of maritime trade between the Roman Empire and India – was only distantly aware of Kushan Central Asia, populated by “a very warlike people, the Bactrians, under a king.”¹⁵⁴⁴ Two well-known passing comments in late antique Latin texts referring to the reigns of Hadrian (117–138 CE) and Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE) mention ‘Bactrians’ sending envoys to each,¹⁵⁴⁵ which could represent the memory of real diplomatic relationships, or rather be hagiographic exaggerations celebrating the far-ranging power of these emperors.

The existence of any Romano-Kushan diplomatic relationships has probably also been over-interpreted in scholarship. The key case in point is the appearance of ‘curule chairs’ in the orbit of early Kushan Central Asia. An early copper coin type issued by Kujula Kadphises utilised an obverse with head in profile to right that apparently was modelled on certain issues of Augustus, while the reverse featured a ruler seated on a folding stool.¹⁵⁴⁶ The seat represented here is often described as a *sella curulis*,¹⁵⁴⁷ and likewise similar pieces of furniture included in the male burial at Tillya-tepe,¹⁵⁴⁸ excavated at Taxila-Sirkap,¹⁵⁴⁹ and depicted as the seat of a wine-drinking ruler on the Bactrian tapestry excavated at Noyon uul (mentioned above, §5.3) have also been described as examples or imitations of this politically charged chair of Roman origin.¹⁵⁵⁰ Accordingly, Speidel has suggested that some of these depicted and excavated chairs may be interpreted as evidence of the Roman grant of *amicitia*, which was sealed by the presentation of a *sella curulis* alongside other gifts to the new *amicus*.¹⁵⁵¹ On the other hand, Sinisi has noted that the Roman origin of such chairs is not certain, and they may simply be interpreted as *diphroi* (i.e. folding stools).¹⁵⁵² Indeed, to these excavated examples and depictions listed above can be added the depictions of elite male figures on ‘curule-type’ chairs from schist relief sculpture from Swat that have been discussed above (§5.3, see Pl. 94.1). It is evidently difficult to assert that such chairs are indicative of genuine diplomatic

¹⁵⁴² See Whitfield 2018, 57–80; Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, §5.F.6.

¹⁵⁴³ Strauch 2012b, Nos. 16:13, 16:18.

¹⁵⁴⁴ *PME* 47, trans. Casson.

¹⁵⁴⁵ *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* Hadrian 21.14; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 15.4.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Cribb and Bracey Forthcoming, Type A.C4-i.

¹⁵⁴⁷ See for example Rosenfield 1967, 13.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Grave 4, Sarianidi 1989, 110, Fig. 30.1.

¹⁵⁴⁹ Marshall 1951, 544, No. 54, Pl. 170 s.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Francfort 2013, 1574.

¹⁵⁵¹ Speidel 2016, 178–179.

¹⁵⁵² Sinisi 2017, 873.

relationships, and their popularity in Kushan Central Asia (whatever their origin) rather attests to the existence of a common elite culture that developed in this space. That being said, and in a parallel manner to the late antique works on Hadrian and Antoninus Pius mentioned above, the Kushans also seem to have occasionally invoked the distant Romans in their own expressions of universal rule, with the title *kaīsarasa* ('caesar') attached to Kanishka III (ca. 267–272 CE) in a Gāndhārī well inscription at Āra in 268 CE.¹⁵⁵³

The picture of connectivity is complicated by the relative rarity of documented genuine imported goods from the Roman Mediterranean into Central Asia, which have sometimes also been optimistically identified.¹⁵⁵⁴ Some examples have been discussed above, as well as in Chapter 4. To this, one may add a small marble head of a male found at Ilonli-tepe and another marble object in the unusual form of a comedic mask at Shakhri-Gul'gulya.¹⁵⁵⁵ Comparatively to India, finds of Roman coins are relatively uncommon in Central Asia. In Khayrabad-tepe (near Termez) a sesterces of Nero was reported, and a hoard of Roman denarii (reportedly with ca. 300 examples) with issues ranging from Trajan to Commodus at Ura-tyube (north of the Hissar range),¹⁵⁵⁶ while an aureus of Tiberus had been deposited in a grave at Tillya-tepe.¹⁵⁵⁷ South of the Hindu Kush, a denarius of Augustus had been included in the relic deposit in Dharmarajika stupa 4 at Taxila,¹⁵⁵⁸ the relic deposit of Ahinposh (Nagarahāra) included three aurei of Domitian, Trajan and Hadrian,¹⁵⁵⁹ and a gold reliquary from the antiquities market allegedly found in the vicinity of Begram had included two aurei of Nero and Domitian.¹⁵⁶⁰ However, I have noted above that examples of locally produced versions of types of jugs (and perhaps also basins) deriving from the Roman world were reported at Taxila-Sirkap, and these are also directly comparable to probably imported vessels found in the Begram hoard (see §4.2.2.1, §4.2.2.3). This image of the paucity of Roman imports, however, may also be an artefact of practices of excavation in the region, and the picture may still change with future research.

¹⁵⁵³ CKI 158.

¹⁵⁵⁴ Compare Staviskij 1995. See also the alleged Greek and Latin inscriptions referring to the Legio XV Apollinaris and a Mithraem at the Kara Kamar caves in Ustinova 2000. The 'Latin' component is more plausibly modern graffiti (Braund 1991), and the 'Greek' part is rather modern Korean (Riotto 2018). In addition, the 'Askos of Termez' is a modern forgery, demonstrated in Bernard 1987.

¹⁵⁵⁵ Pugachenkova 1976, 65–66, Fig. 2; Turgonov 1976.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Zeimal' 1983, 63–64.

¹⁵⁵⁷ Grave 3 in Sarianidi 1985, No. 47, Ill. 130.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Marshall 1951, 277, 292.

¹⁵⁵⁹ Errington 2017a, 59.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Bopearachchi 2013.

Then, we cannot avoid coming to the question of the incorporation of ‘classical’ (i.e. Graeco-Roman) imagery deriving from the Roman imperial period (rather than just the Hellenistic era) into Gandhāran art. Although this enormous topic cannot be dealt with in detail here, some recent contributions relating to the undying ‘Greek or Roman’ debate as to the origins of this imagery are of interest for the present purposes. More specifically, two recent papers by Stoye and Stewart have stressed the chronological break between the rule of the Greek Kingdoms and the *floruit* of Gandhāran art in the Kushan period, thus problematising the usual line of continuity drawn between the Hellenistic period in favour of examining often-dismissed connections with contemporary Roman art.¹⁵⁶¹

Certainly, as Stoye and Stewart demonstrate, the links are there – but a critical challenge has always been to take the discussion beyond nebulous discussions within which similarity and hence ‘influence’ is observed, and precisely clarify the mechanisms by which this transfer occurred. It is usually accepted that portable imported goods (like the Roman objects in the Begram hoard) could have provided models for the artistic idioms that were transferred and transformed into this body of Buddhist sculpture. Indeed, as I have discussed above (§5.3), plaster casts like those found at Begram could very conceivably have been imported and utilised as reference material for such a context of production. However, Stewart has recently argued that the movement of craftspeople should be rehabilitated as the key explanation for the incorporation of Roman artistic idioms into Gandhāran art. For this, he notes that the assimilation of classical imagery into Gandhāran art was made virtually without ‘error,’ that there are examples of the mobility of craftspeople in the ancient world, and ultimately that to meet enormous demand in the 2nd century CE, patrons and artists of Gandhāra looked to the city of Rome as the major centre of sculptural production in this period of the ancient world.¹⁵⁶² Accordingly, this explanation now seems more plausible than it is usually given credit for, but I cannot help but retain some scepticism that the employment of Roman-trained sculptors in Gandhāra – as Stewart puts it, “people, not objects”¹⁵⁶³ – can truly be considered as the crucial mechanism by which elements of Roman artistic idioms came to be incorporated into Gandhāran art. If numerous Roman craftspeople were being driven by profound economic demand to this extremely distant region (rather than a multitude of closer labour markets), should we not expect to find a little more direct evidence of this putatively frequent, strong interaction refracted, for example, in any real knowledge of Gandhāra in Roman literature, or

¹⁵⁶¹ Stoye 2020; Stewart 2020.

¹⁵⁶² Stewart 2020, 79–81.

¹⁵⁶³ Stewart 2020, 80.

alternatively in the onomastics of the region's rich epigraphic record? It should be noted here that a single inscribed 'Tita' that is often (but without any certainty) interpreted as a rendering of 'Titus' on a wall painting from a stupa in distant Miran in the southern Tarim Basin¹⁵⁶⁴ can hardly be mobilised as supporting evidence.

Again, as I stated above, the available data for direct interaction between agents of the Kushan and Roman empires remain limited and difficult to interpret. Furthermore, from this accumulation of data alone, is it still not evident why the diversity of goods produced in the Roman Mediterranean attested in the Begram hoard would be desired in Kushan Central Asia. Certainly, the attraction of these goods cannot have derived solely from locally held associations and ideas about the Roman world alone. Indeed, turning back again to the related topic of the incorporation of Roman imagery into Gandhāran art, it is instructive to consider explanations offered in recent scholarship as to *why* this process of transfer and transformation occurred. For Stoye, for example, the explanation lies in the need for images to express certain meanings. Following Hölscher's work on Roman image-language (*Römische Bildsprache*), she postulates that Gandhāran iconographers seeking "an adequate image formula" for certain narrative scenes could have drawn on both "locally transmitted Hellenistic but also newly infiltrated Roman image-types."¹⁵⁶⁵ Stewart's explanation is primarily economic, suggesting that the explosion of local demand generated by religious materialism draws sculptors from Rome to Gandhāra.¹⁵⁶⁶ However, he also acknowledges that viewing a Hellenistic legacy for Gandhāran art may be accurate if Roman elements "fell on fertile ground because the visual culture of Gandhāra had been informed for centuries by contact with the Greek world."¹⁵⁶⁷ Ultimately, while Stoye and Stewart stress the gap between Central Asia's Hellenistic period and the flourishing of Gandhāran art, they also acknowledge that the incorporation of Roman imagery has something to do with the region's cultural past – albeit framing the artistic impact of this past in a somewhat passive, unavoidable light.

Here, I will go one obvious step further: the Roman objects in the Begram hoard could have been equally read by local consumers as 'Greek.'¹⁵⁶⁸ By this I mean that, without specialist knowledge of developments in the visual and material culture of the Roman imperial period, both ancient and modern observers could easily read the Roman objects in the Begram hoard as iconographically, stylistically, and formally relating to the world of Greek visual and

¹⁵⁶⁴ CKI 443.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Stoye 2020, 43.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Stewart 2020, 81.

¹⁵⁶⁷ Stewart 2020, 79–80.

¹⁵⁶⁸ The following is adapted from Morris 2020c, 586–589.

material culture. Indeed, in the same way that we speak of ‘Graeco-Roman’ and ‘Classical’ visual and material culture and are often faced with difficulties in drawing hard boundaries between Hellenistic and Roman art, I think an elite consumer in Kushan Central Asia would not have perceived a clear division between ‘Greek’ and ‘Roman’ when encountered with the objects in the Begram hoard. Indeed, several of the Roman objects in this corpus have strong links with visual culture of the Hellenistic period. Some of the most obvious examples include the plaster casts (§4.12) and the enamelled glassware (§4.2.1.2) – one specimen of which even being labelled with Greek (NRAB 27, §4.15) – that also drew on models of Hellenistic painting.¹⁵⁶⁹ Likewise, the deities represented on the anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5) and among the figurines (§4.5) could all easily be recognised as deities popular in the Hellenistic (and Roman) worlds.

As already discussed to some degree above (§3.4), the period of Greek rule in Central Asia must have facilitated these associations, as the processes of interaction and exchange it entailed instigated profound changes in the visual and material culture of this space into the Kushan period and beyond. Colonists, soldiers, and kings arrived, new religious and socio-cultural practices were introduced, monetisation was set in motion, and the Greek language was used at least in elite contexts (i.e. in epigraphy, documentary texts, and on coins). Terms for “Greek” are also attested in the Indo-Scythian period in Gāndhārī (*yona*) to indicate an ethnonym,¹⁵⁷⁰ and a regnal era,¹⁵⁷¹ and in the Kushan period in Bactrian (ἰωνάγγο) to refer to the Greek language version of an edict of Kanishka I in the Rabatak inscription,¹⁵⁷² indicating that this term remained a locally meaningful ethnocultural designation. Greek names were also still in use in Bactria and Gandhāra until at least the 2nd century CE, suggesting some awareness of ethnocultural difference and prestige associated with these names, although admittedly revealing little about the ethnocultural origins and identity of their bearers.¹⁵⁷³ In addition to this, as discussed earlier (§3.5.1), the Greek (Yona/Yavana) regnal era was followed and the Greek language was used in official epigraphy and on coin legends in the Kushan period until the reign of Kanishka I, when they were respectively replaced by a new era measured from year one of Kanishka, and the Bactrian language (however, still written in a modified Greek script). Iconography and attributes of Greek gods were also mobilised towards the depiction of Indic and Iranian deities in the Kushan period; see, for example, the emergence of depictions

¹⁵⁶⁹ Coarelli 1962.

¹⁵⁷⁰ CKI 455.

¹⁵⁷¹ CKI 405.

¹⁵⁷² See Sims-Williams and Cribb 1996, 82–83.

¹⁵⁷³ See Baums 2018, 41–42, Table 1.2; Morris 2020c, 585.

of Vajrapāṇi from the 2nd century CE in Gandhāran art with the attributes of Heracles.¹⁵⁷⁴ However, the foreign origins of these features as well as the identities of certain Greek gods would still have been recognisable and understood to certain degrees in the same period. Heracles and Serapis, for example, are unmistakably depicted (and labelled with their names) on occasional issues of Huvishka, with Heracles even being depicted in the nude. He is the only deity represented as such on Kushan coinage.¹⁵⁷⁵ Ultimately, then, Greek cultural elements were not seamlessly incorporated and transformed into the cultural landscape of Kushan Central Asia, resulting in some kind of nebulous ‘Hellenistic legacy’ for the region, but could simultaneously be perceived as distinct, prestigious, and even foreign.

If the Roman objects in the Begram hoard would have been understood by local elites in Kushan Central Asia as also ‘Greek,’ we may then ask more directly why they were specifically appealing and had the capacity to communicate and produce distinction. To this end, I have already noted above that the Rabatak inscription makes Kanishka I’s self-presentation as an Iranian king clear, but simultaneously illustrates the potency of the social memory of the Achaemenid as well as Greek imperial pasts as these rulers reoriented the vocabulary of power they utilised to better communicate their authority to their constituents in Bactria (§3.5.1). Social memory is a collective constructed notion of the past (if not monolithic across society), and it is significant for legitimising authority and creating a sense of identity shared by a community.¹⁵⁷⁶ This memory of the Greek past and engagement with it in the Kushan present must have impacted how the Roman objects in the Begram hoard were understood. More specifically, the enormity and diversity of this corpus of luxury goods as well as comparative finds known thus far in Central Asia demonstrates that even as imperial rulers decided to show they were not Greek, a variety of local elites consumed imported goods they most probably understood to be associated with ‘Greekness,’ and even utilised them (i.e., certainly the plaster casts, §4.12) as models for local craft production. The demand for such objects were shaped by the specific social history of power and prestige in the wider region. In a related vein, it may be noted here that others have already proposed that elite social groups seeking to socially distinguish themselves were responsible for driving the incorporation of ‘Western,’ Graeco-Roman, or Hellenistic elements into Gandhāran art.¹⁵⁷⁷ This suggestion may therefore also be extended to explain the incorporation and transformation of

¹⁵⁷⁴ See Zin 2009.

¹⁵⁷⁵ Morris 2020c, 587.

¹⁵⁷⁶ Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 2–4.

¹⁵⁷⁷ Taddei 1969, 115–116; Galli 2011, 282–283.

contemporary Roman elements into this artistic idiom. Local elite taste for this imagery was neither driven by the putative availability of Roman craftspeople, nor the need to express certain artistic ideas, nor a passive and unavoidable influence of the Greek component to Central Asia's cultural past. Instead, this imagery was demanded and incorporated in the sculpture commissioned by local elites because it was associated in some way with Greekness, power, prestige, and distinction in their own social world. Some would feel free to categorise the above set of tastes and practices as Hellenism, but I have already explained above why I intentionally do not (§1.4).

To step back and consider the bigger picture at play here, the consumption of Roman objects at Begram reflects just one (significant) component of a local variant of a common elite culture emergent in Kushan Central Asia, and concepts like cosmopolitanism (as well as Hellenism) do not effectively capture the diversity of cultural dynamics at play here. Again, prestige and luxury goods have the most social utility when integrated into locally meaningful practices. I have already noted the emergence of goblets of various forms in the Saka-Yuezhi and Saka-Parthian periods in Bactria and Gandhāra respectively, with their popularity in the Kushan period – including also the production of a local version of this vessel form in the Kapisa region (Pl. 33) – altogether implying parallel trends and the convergence of similar drinking practices in these regions (§3.5.1). As we have seen, the majority of Begram's glassware is represented by drinking vessels, and a substantial portion of this is represented by goblets, usually in the form of truncated cones with low feet throughout. Furthermore, I have highlighted similar depictions of elites from Bactria and Gandhāra apparently engaging in ritualised wine-drinking (§5.3), who are even shown to be seated on similar kinds of folding stools.

Of course, the imported Roman goods at Begram did not only have to be linked with ideas about power and prestige through memory of the Greek past, and we may consider the hoard objects as a source for understanding what notions the inhabitants of Kushan Central Asia may have cultivated about the distant Mediterranean world (or 'West') more broadly. For example, Parker's work has shown the potential of this line of enquiry by examining the ways in which ideas about India as an exotic place were developed in the Roman imperial period, and moreover how these notions intersected with the trade and consumption of luxury commodities.¹⁵⁷⁸ Accordingly, Stark and I have recently examined what notions and concepts

¹⁵⁷⁸ Parker 2002; 2008, 147–202.

about the West were cultivated in antique and late antique Central Asia.¹⁵⁷⁹ As we argue, these generally included notions of vast rule, and conceptions of the West as an exotic, ‘other,’ and wealthy place, where certain appealing technically intricate and luxurious goods could be obtained, although other ideas also emerged as connectivity between the Mediterranean world and Central Asia shifted in form and intensity over time. For example, numerous objects in the Begram hoard feature marine imagery, i.e., depictions of marine creatures and watercraft, including rare and even unique items like the ichthyomorphic flasks (§4.2.1.12), the Pharos goblet (RAB 203 [56], §4.2.1.7), the aquariums (§4.3), and the enamelled goblet featuring a hunting scene with Scythians and Africans on its upper register, and a fishing scene on its lower register (NRAB 54, §4.2.1.2). The fact that these unusual objects had been imported to Central Asia demonstrates selectivity on the side of their consumers. Moreover, true marine imagery is essentially foreign to Central Asia, and the selection of objects depicting the world of the sea and its inhabitants presupposes some knowledge or ideas about this space. Accordingly, we have proposed that one of the ways their consumers conceived of the West was a rich and abundant place connected with the sea. These ideas, as well as notions about ‘Greekness,’ may have also fed into the popularity of schematised dolphin-amphora type earrings (most probably introduced in the Hellenistic period) in Bactria and Gandhāra already prior to the Kushan period, with versions being found in graves of women of the local pastoralist elite in Bactria, as well as at Begram and Taxila.¹⁵⁸⁰

The consumption of other imported luxury and prestige goods attested by the Begram hoard sheds additional light on other aspects of this shared elite culture. For example, in light of the emphatic self-representation of the Kushans as Iranian kings and ties between Kushan and Arsacid vocabularies of power (§3.5.1), it is remarkable that manufacture in Iran or even Mesopotamia under the Arsacids can be proposed for so few of the hoard objects. The best contenders for manufacture in Western Asia include the ostrich egg cups and rhytons (§4.2.7), and perhaps one of the glazed pottery jugs (§4.2.8.2), and the forms of these vessels imply that they also had the capacity to be integrated into local elite drinking practices. When viewed in comparison to the glassware, the lack of preference of luxury and prestige goods produced in Western Asia could perhaps be interpreted as a disjuncture between imperial vocabularies of power and the values of local elites. However, as I have already stressed that the hoard cannot be taken as a representative and unproblematic sample of patterns of consumption (§5.3), the

¹⁵⁷⁹ Stark and Morris Forthcoming.

¹⁵⁸⁰ See remarks and further references in Stark and Morris Forthcoming.

mobilisation and transformation of visual and material culture originating in Iran and Mesopotamia by local elites in Kushan Central Asia is probably a subject better left for future research.

As the Kushan Empire expanded into Gangetic India, Indic concepts of kingship also became incorporated into the vocabulary of power utilised by Kushan kings (see above, §3.5.1). However, although the Hellenistic to Kushan periods in Central Asia saw accelerating connectivity with India proper – implied, for example, by the trade in raw ivory to Bactria, patterns of the circulation of coinage, and the links between artistic idioms of sculptural schools in Indian proper and Gandhāran art¹⁵⁸¹ – examples of finished prestige and luxury goods imported to Kushan Central Asia are still somewhat rarely attested, which could however be an artefact of limited data. The key examples of this remain the ivory combs discussed above, as well as the furniture element deposited at Mele Hairam (Pls. 89.3, 90), if one agrees that they were not produced in Central Asia (§4.13.1). These sparse pieces of data could be interpreted to suggest again a more widespread incorporation of these specific prestige and luxury goods into the shared elite culture of Kushan Central Asia, but perhaps it is best not to extrapolate too much significance from this at the present stage. It is, however, notable that almost all of the goods in the Begram hoard that were produced in India were luxurious articles of furniture, and simultaneously that no examples of other forms of seating or footstools of different origins were included in this corpus. This, at least, suggests that there was a strong preference among local elites for furniture produced in India, and the elaborate quality, size, and evident expense of these pieces also implies clear communication with producers. Otherwise, due to the sparse available comparative material and our lack of knowledge about the conditions in which these pieces of furniture were produced, it is almost impossible to assess what agency consumers at Begram may have exercised in selecting the kinds of decoration and imagery depicted on these articles of furniture. Considering the scope of subjects depicted in this corpus (especially scenes with semi-clad elite women) and the extent of the extravagant decoration, it is probably safe to venture that a consumer in Kushan Central Asia could look at this furniture and think of India at least as a rich and fertile place. Again, this furniture could have only been desirable if its use was integrated into locally meaningful practices, and as I have suggested above, it is plausible that it may have been acquired for use as seating for elite males or couples during (ritualised) drinking in a comparable manner to such scenes depicted on Gandhāran sculptural reliefs (§4.3).

¹⁵⁸¹ Morris Forthcoming d.

Finally, we may consider what the lacquerwares in the Begram hoard (§4.2.6) may tell us about the consumption of prestige and luxury goods produced in China within Kushan Central Asia. From the perspective of this region, Brosseder's study of the distribution of comparable Han lacquerwares makes the geographical peculiarity of the bowls, cups, boxes and a platter deposited at Begram clear.¹⁵⁸² Comparatively, lacquerwares were far more commonly found in burials of the eastern and central Eurasian Steppe, and, to the west, also in Crimea (Ust'-Al'ma). Interestingly, the distribution of lacquerwares has been considered to be linked to specific social and political processes, which has implications for how we may understand their presence at Begram. For example, Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens has observed that within China proper, the products of state workshops are rarely attested, while the products of private workshops tend to be clustered around their regional centres of production (i.e. especially in Jiangsu-Anhui with respect to workshops of the Guangling Princedom). Comparatively, outside of imperial frontiers, the products of state workshops are found circulating alongside the products of private workshops in tombs of the Xiongnu, as well as in Qingzhen and in the Lelang Commandery. Thus she concludes that state products were likely never sold on commercial markets, but were often gifted to foreign 'barbarian' chieftains.¹⁵⁸³

As the lacquerwares at Begram include examples of the products of both state and private workshops, it is tempting to connect these objects to attested instances of diplomatic interaction between Han China and Central Asia. As discussed earlier, the lacquerwares were probably produced between the mid 1st century BCE to the mid 1st century CE, with most perhaps falling in the middle of this range (§4.2.6). However, the question of who ruled Begram during this period is unclear, although I have suggested that this may have been governing members of the local elite (§3.4). That being said, there is plenty of evidence for diplomatic entanglements between the Yuezhi, Kushans (who the Han also referred to as Yuezhi), and regional rulers like those of Jibin (although the toponym is difficult to place on the ground, see §3.2). In transmitted texts, we find attempts to establish an alliance with the Yuezhi against the Xiongnu in the late 2nd century BCE through the envoy Zhang Qian (§3.5.1), a summary of failed attempts at maintaining diplomatic relationships with local rulers in Jibin in this region during the 1st century BCE (§3.2), and engagements with the Han protector-general of the Western Regions concerning states of the Tarim Basin in the late 1st century CE (§3.5.1).

¹⁵⁸² Brosseder 2015, 249–259, Fig. 27. Note that Brosseder (2015, 288, n. 191) also makes reference to a lacquered object at Tillya-tepe. This appears to refer to ornaments found along the skull of the woman buried in grave 6, which were carved from mica and reportedly covered with black lacquer (Sarianidi 1989, 131), although whether these truly represent lacquered objects remains unclear.

¹⁵⁸³ Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009.

Among excavated texts, we find inscribed wood slips from the postal station Xuanquanzhi 懸泉置 (near Dunhuang) referring to the movements of agents from Central Asia, including 16 documents relating to representatives – i.e. envoys (*shizhe* 使者) and guests – from Da Yuezhi. Dated examples of these documents cover the period of 61 – 18 BCE.¹⁵⁸⁴ This being said, following Yü Ying-shih, there has been some longstanding skepticism as to whether such envoys were *really* envoys, and not just foreigners seeking to exploit diplomatic exchange relationships and lucrative exchanges of tribute as “a cloak for trade.”¹⁵⁸⁵ However, Selbitschka has more recently effectively argued that real diplomacy was also practiced, including the exchange of gifts and tribute towards the fostering of amicable relations.¹⁵⁸⁶

There may also be no need to interpret the presence of lacquerwares at Begram as the product of several instances of direct diplomatic gift exchanges with the Han. Considering the comparable circulation of Han lacquerwares from both state and private workshops across the Eurasian Steppe, we may instead consider that these lacquerwares arrived at Begram through gift exchange networks with steppe elites. There are some indications, for example, that Han mirrors reached Central Asia through such mechanisms. Earlier, I have discussed examples of silver inscription mirrors which were deposited intact in three graves of women at Tillya-tepe (§3.4). However, despite the numerous links between the grave goods and burial practices of Tillya-tepe with those of mobile peoples across the Eurasian Steppe, much about them was simultaneously specifically local. The acquisition and deposition of these mirrors was evidently linked with local preferences and customs: two burials with Han mirrors also included examples of locally produced so-called Bactrian mirrors among their grave goods (grave 3 and 6), while another also featured a ‘Bactrian’ mirror, but not a Han one (grave 5).¹⁵⁸⁷ I have also discussed the find of a fragment of a copper Han inscription mirror among Masson’s collections from Begram, noting that the practice of breaking mirrors into fragments was common in Ferghana and along the southern fringe of the Taklamakan (comparably, they were usually found intact in Bactria), which accordingly suggests networks of connectivity with peoples in these territories (§3.4).

There is, of course, another key example of a luxury good produced in China and imported into Kushan Central Asia that was likewise not deposited in the Begram hoard: silk. Fragments of this textile have been found at a range of sites, such as at the royal pavilion of

¹⁵⁸⁴ See Hao and Zhang 2009, 201–227.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Yü 1967.

¹⁵⁸⁶ Selbitschka 2015.

¹⁵⁸⁷ See Brosseder 2015, 249.

Khalchayan,¹⁵⁸⁸ as well as in several relic deposits, including at Qol-i Nadir in Kapisa, stupas around Kabul, Wardak, and Nagarahāra, and as a wrapping for the copper alloy cylindrical casket containing the inscribed reliquary deposited in the Manikyala Great Stupa that was dedicated by the governor of Kapisi (see §3.4). These finds not only reiterate the links between this luxury good and elites across Kushan Central Asia, but moreover the use of this material in relic deposits demonstrates its incorporation into local practices of consumption.

Ultimately, most of the forms of the lacquerwares found at Begram suggest that they could have been incorporated into local elite practices of drinking and eating, but as toilet boxes were also apparently imported, the precise attraction and utility of these objects for local consumers remains somewhat obscure. Likewise, from the basis of the restricted range of prestige and luxury goods imported from China that are attested in this period – lacquerwares, mirrors, and silk – it is also difficult at this stage to unpick the specific ideas that were associated with them. However, it can be said that these ideas most likely changed over time. I have already noted above that the particular arrangement of the lacquerwares within the hoard – including a lacquered bowl found jammed on top of a glass jar produced in the Roman Mediterranean – suggests a reconfiguration of the meaning of these objects, perhaps even the loss of memory of their specific origins and other early parts of their biographies. At the very least, this arrangement reflects the roughly three centuries of distance from the production of these wares as extremely valuable, specialised objects in Han China, to their ultimate deposition in the Begram hoard.

As I have endeavoured to show in the above, the imported luxury and prestige goods that had been deposited in the Begram hoard cannot be described as a product of cosmopolitan or eclectic taste alone, because these concepts do not adequately explain patterns which can be observed among this corpus. Likewise, these imported goods cannot have been attractive only for their ‘exoticism.’ Instead, this corpus shows consistent evidence of selectivity, a point especially reiterated by the presence of a diversity of rare and unusual objects, often found even in multiples. The desire for these goods was instead shaped by local associations that were held about these objects and their utility by virtue of their incorporation into local systems, ultimately with the capacity to produce and communicate social distinction. The number and diversity of Roman objects in this corpus is especially significant, and I have argued that their appeal in Kushan Central Asia was linked with associations of ‘Greekness,’ power, and

¹⁵⁸⁸ Pugachenkova 1966, 53–54. However, the textile fragments disintegrated upon touch, and were accordingly not technically analysed; Lyovushkina (1996, 146–147) raises the possibility of local production.

prestige, connected to the memory of Greek rule in the region. The consumption of such goods, however, was just part of a shared elite culture cultivated in this period, and as we have seen, specific kinds of imported luxury and prestige goods from India and China were also incorporated to lesser degrees into this broader system. These processes were likewise shaped by the specific dynamics of connectivity between these macroregions and Central Asia. The Begram hoard ultimately provides unique, significant evidence for such patterns of elite consumption and moreover a path towards interpreting the wider system they belonged to.

By way of a conclusion, some brief remarks can be offered on the ramifications of these local patterns of consumption beyond Central Asia. Most importantly, the imported goods in the hoard clearly demonstrate the agency local consumers exercised in procuring them, showing by extension how exchange in these elite spheres was highly directed and involved the communication of local demand through networks which spanned immensely wide spaces. This has several significant implications.

The first is that we should see the role of agents in Central Asia in long distance trade activity in an entirely different light than the longstanding conception of the Kushans as middlemen profiting from long-distance transit trade running through their empire. Instead, it appears that the specific consumption preferences of elites in Kushan Central Asia was responsible for driving part of this trade.

Second, in light of the intentional, patterned acquisition of imported prestige and luxury goods demonstrated by the Begram hoard, it is difficult to conceive that (in particular) the unusual and valuable objects in this corpus produced in the Roman Mediterranean were all obtained by opportunistic merchant middlemen from the coastal emporia of northwestern and western India such as Barbarikon and Barygaza – despite the repeated links drawn between passing comments about the marketability of certain goods at both ports in the *Periplus* and the Begram hoard (§1.3) – and then taken to be sold at periodic markets or permanent ones in the urban centres of Central Asia. Put simply, far too much risk is involved in such a model. The effective communication of consumption preferences from Central Asia to the Mediterranean implies a more direct model of the organisation of trade, where local elites could have (for example) contracted merchants to procure the goods they desired, or merchants could have operated with the understanding that they could market very specific kinds of goods directly to buyers in their social network. In a comparative way to other contemporary societies in Afro-Eurasia, is it highly plausible that merchants active in Central Asia were also organised in some manner, whether in terms of formal associations or social networks built on shared kinship, such as the network of diaspora communities of Sogdian merchants and caravan

leaders active in the Tarim Basin and China from the 4th century CE onwards.¹⁵⁸⁹ Consumption preferences were also evidently effectively communicated to the producers of the ivory furniture in India, as well as to the agents who facilitated the acquisition of the lacquerwares, whoever they may have been.

Finally, it is significant that several groups of items are documented in the Begram hoard that were apparently manufactured in the Roman Mediterranean but are either unique (such as the aquariums §4.5) or the products of otherwise virtually unattested workshops (such as the cold-painted glassware §4.2.1.1, those with openwork trailing §4.2.1.11, the ichthyomorphic flasks §4.2.1.12, and the leaded brass basins §4.2.2.1). Here I may venture to suggest that precisely comparable goods are not well-attested in the Roman world because the relevant objects in the Begram hoard represent the products of specialised, export-oriented workshops driven by the effective communication of specific demands from such distant places as Central Asia. Although this hypothesis awaits future evaluation by the trowel, if found to be acceptable, it would complement the emerging awareness that the cargo ships returning from India to the Roman Mediterranean with spices, textiles, precious stones, and other luxury goods were not just filled with aurei and denarii on their outbound journeys to the east, but a significant amount of diverse goods produced in the Mediterranean that were actually desired in India.¹⁵⁹⁰

¹⁵⁸⁹ Morris Forthcoming d, sec. VIII.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Cobb 2015; Cobb and Mitchell 2019.

6. Conclusion: moving on from the Begram hoard

In this dissertation, I have engaged with interpretative problems which have persisted about the Begram hoard for some 80 years of scholarship, and in seeking answers, I have ultimately raised more new questions than I anticipated. In this chapter, I summarise my findings in detail, and finally point to some avenues of inquiry for future research that can be partially facilitated by the work presented here.

In Chapter 1, a comparison is drawn between the cave of Ali Baba and the Begram hoard in order to highlight two key points that remain uncertain about this sensational and mysterious archaeological find: its nature and significance. However, scholarship concerning these points has long stood at something of an impasse. Accordingly, I suggest that the way to find some answers is to more closely examine the hoard's contents and context. A key hurdle to this end is found in the problematic surviving archaeological data available to work with. Accordingly, I highlight the existence of unpublished photographic and documentary archival material preserved in the MG that has the capacity to facilitate a clearer interpretation of the published data. I then review scholarship dealing with the contested date, nature, and significance of the hoard. This scholarship has mostly attempted to bypass thorny, related problems with the archaeological data, and has instead drawn on comparative material and occasionally made reference to the coins found in rooms 10 and 13 in order to suggest dates for the hoard objects. Two positions relating to these dates can be defined. The late position holds that some of the hoard objects could have been produced in the later 2nd or even 3rd to 4th centuries CE, while the early position maintains that these objects were produced only during the 1st to early 2nd centuries CE, or even just the 1st century CE. I then show how these proposed dates have been combined with assumptions about the nature of the hoard in order to interpret the date of the hoard's deposition. This event tends to be assumed to have taken place shortly after the last object in the hoard was produced. Proponents of an early position for the date of the hoard consider this event to have taken place considerably earlier than the mid 3rd century CE, being the date for the end of the archaeological phase Begram II (to which the hoard belongs) that was proposed by Ghirshman. However, as I indicated already in 2017, the existence of three Vasudeva I imitations in association with the hoard provides a *terminus post quem* of ca. 260 CE for the deposition of the hoard, making these arguments redundant.

Ideas about the date of the hoard have been significant for interpretations as to its nature and significance. Positions regarding the nature of the hoard again fall into two main camps: a

traditionalist view with variations of the ‘palatial treasure theory’ (i.e. that the hoard represents valuable possessions of a palace or otherwise elite residence), and revisionist ‘transit trade explanations’ which connect the existence of the hoard with long-distance transit trade through Begram. More specifically, the latter camp includes the interpretation of the hoard objects as the product of customs duties extracted in kind, as well as Mehendale’s recent, influential interpretation of the hoard as a merchant’s cache abandoned in mid-transit. Assessments of the significance of the hoard can, once again, be divided into two main positions. Those who accept that the hoard objects were imported for local use tend to consider them as evidence for the availability of Roman-era sources for the ‘Classical’ imagery in Gandhāran art, and/or cosmopolitan and eclectic taste under the Kushans. Those who consider the hoard as a product of transit trade through the region interpret the objects as a sample of the kinds of goods moving through long-distance trade networks, especially of the ‘Silk Road/s.’ I have observed that the latter notion is underpinned by a longstanding but now untenable historiographical construct – the notion of ‘Kushan middlemen’ – which frames the Kushan Empire as a commercial node along the Silk Road, with the Kushans presiding over transit trade in order to benefit economically.

I then clarify that now is an appropriate time to re-examine these issues, because we are in a better position than ever before to analyse the history of Central Asia’s period of antiquity (6th century BCE – 3rd century CE), and especially that of the Kushan Empire (ca. 50–350 CE). This is not only because critical, absolute dates for this period are now fixed with consensus, but also because understanding of the cultural dynamics at play has expanded dramatically. Indeed, as interest in the role of the Kushan Empire continues to expand in world historical narratives, I note that it is an especially appropriate time to reassess the role of agents in this polity with reference to the organisation of long-distance trade, and particularly to consider them as not just middlemen but as consumers in their own right. However, I stress here that the idea of eclectic or cosmopolitan taste driving this consumption is problematic because it gives the impression of undifferentiated wide-reaching demand. Here, I also explain why I choose to not mobilise the concept of Hellenism in my work. I observe the potential for the hoard to shed light on a common elite culture emergent in Kushan Central Asia, a space and time which constitutes the macroregional frame of analysis of my research. This space is understood to include the two northern cores of the Kushan Empire, Bactria and Gandhāra, between which Begram lay.

In Chapter 2, I synthesise and evaluate the methods and results of various fieldwork campaigns at Begram, read them in light of the social and historical contexts of these

programmes, and clarify how these data may be operationalised in order to better examine the context and contents of the hoard. Key points I have raised may be summarised as follows. I observe that the material collected by Charles Masson on the dasht of Begram between 1833–1838 (including almost 80,000 coins) provides a significant insight into the history of occupation of this area, supplementing material collected by the DAFA during the course of later excavations. Furthermore, Masson’s cohesive approach to documenting the historical landscape remains unique today, and he was probably correct to identify Begram with the location of the Alexandria of the Caucasus founded by Alexander the Great. Turning to early reconnaissance under the DAFA (1923–1925), I note how Foucher established the legal conditions for the partage of finds between the NMA and MG, and how his influential interpretation of the historical landscape of Kapisa not only documented additional sites in this region, but also created conventional terminology for the description of the site of Begram (such as the ‘new royal city’), as well as established its identification with Kapisi, the capital of the region visited by the pilgrim Xuanzang in the 7th century CE. Other archaeologists delegated by Foucher to investigate the region documented some additional sites in Kapisa and expanded knowledge about Begram to a small degree, but only later were the first archaeological excavations (1936–1940) set into motion under Joseph Hackin’s directorship.

A key argument of the section dealing with the Hackin excavations is that although they did not use a modern methodology, they were internally consistent, providing a baseline of material for us to work with. These excavations involved several figures who played important roles in producing knowledge about Begram: Joseph Hackin, Ria Hackin, Ahmad Ali Kohzad, Jean Carl, Jacques Meunié, and Pierre Hamelin. Early, short campaigns of Joseph Hackin’s directorship provided some information about sites in the vicinity of Kabul as well as Kapisa, before Jean Carl and Jacques Meunié were delegated to open Site I of Begram in 1936. Various members of the team worked in the vicinity of Kunduz, at Fondukistan, and Afghan Sistan (with Roman Ghirshman) in the same year. In 1937, work at Site I continued, while Meunié excavated the nearby Buddhist monastery of Shotorak. The reports for investigation at Site I during these busy years of 1936–1937 were published only in 1959, and are marked by a plethora of shortcomings which make them difficult to interpret. These include the loss of critical field data, a find catalogue provided without any contextual indications, and an incorrect chronology based on partial interpretation of coin finds. The limited documented pottery rather points to the late phase of Begram III (i.e. ca. mid 6th to mid 8th centuries CE). However, a surviving archival find catalogue for 1937 (F1937) provides some additional context for these finds, and moreover indicates that the methodology and logic of

documentation utilised for these excavations was similar to that of the subsequent Hackin excavations at Begram. Some further documents (TRB, C.C.) indicate that Carl was surveying the Koh-i Pahlavan (although the data were never properly published), and suggest that a tachymeter was being used to take the depth measurements typically documented throughout the Hackin excavations. I note that these measurements cannot be directly translated into stratigraphic data, but when clusters of objects are documented across rooms at different levels (as seen later in rooms 10 and 13), these may tentatively be interpreted to indicate the presence of floors or deposits.

In 1937, Site II was opened, supervised by Ria Hackin, eventually revealing the first hoard room (room 10), and a publication of these sensational finds was quickly produced (RAB). In this publication, Joseph Hackin proposed that the hoard objects could be dated between the 1st to late 3rd / early 4th centuries CE. Although ample photography of many of the hoard objects (but certainly not all) was published, very few photographs were published of finds *in situ*. These photos are often confusing to interpret because of the tendency for the Hackins's team to excavate in progressive vertical chunks rather than horizontal layers. Little documentation was produced for the architecture of the Site II structure as well as the distribution of the hoard objects within room 10, suggesting a lack of interest in context. This is seen with respect to the limited documentation of the critical blockages of the doorways of rooms 10 and 13, as well as other finds from around Site II. Some of these finds from an unpublished section of F1937 are listed in Appendix I. The documents F1937 and MSRAB also occasionally provide additional information that is of use, including some schematic illustrations of objects otherwise without a surviving visual record. Although none of the coin finds from room 10 were illustrated, some remarks in RAB show that coins were found in association with the hoard objects, and I have identified three of these coins (which survive in the collections of the MG) as posthumous imitations of Vasudeva I. These are critical for dating the deposition of the hoard.

Meunié opened a western extension of Site II in 1938 (including the intramural qala) as well as an extramural qala south of the new royal city. It is somewhat difficult to use the data Meunié produced, partly because he did not publish lists of his finds like Joseph Hackin, but rather summarised the most important material in his reports. The few excavated coins in these buildings surely give a skewed impression of their chronology. In addition, although Meunié thought that the rooms he uncovered in the western extension of Site II were of the same period as those excavated at Site II in 1937, the features he documented rather suggest that these rooms belonged to the late phase Begram III. Later, Ghirshman dated the intramural

qala to the phase Begram III, but this building probably falls on the very late side of this phase, or post-dates it.

The documentation for work in 1939 and 1940 is more fraught and complex, mirroring broader political and personal difficulties encountered by the excavators in this period. The majority of work in 1939 was undertaken in the second hoard room (room 13), but other ill-defined areas were also excavated. Nonetheless, finds from these areas were incorrectly indicated in NRAB to have also come from room 13. Room T was the focus of work in 1940, but further areas were excavated in Site II. Again, these are not precisely delineated in the surviving documentation.

Between the departure of the Hackins and Carl from Afghanistan for London to join Free France, some of their documentation was transmitted to London and then later to Paris, while other documents were lost. The available material was published in the report NRAB alongside a new plan of the Site II excavation area by Le Berre. Only passing comments on the architecture of the Site II structure (including the blocked doorways and doubled walls, and the status of room T) were offered, and extremely little contextual photography was published, although some archival examples thereof still survive. However, some additional information about the findspots of certain objects was indicated. Plans of the distribution of the hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13 were only published later by Hamelin, but these are highly interpretative documents and also feature errors and misunderstandings, seen for example in the positions of NRAB 1, NRAB 2, and NRAB 3 as illustrated on the plan of room 13. Unpicking such problems suggests that the two layers of wall paintings documented in room 13 (never adequately published) were visible on the southern part of the western wall of this room. None of the coins catalogued in NRAB were photographed or illustrated, and are now presumed lost.

Comparing NRAB with earlier archival documents (F1940 and MSNRAB) demonstrates that for publication, findspot indications for all catalogued objects from 1940 were mistakenly shifted to the previous catalogue entry. These are corrected and presented in Appendix I, where the variety of findspot indications from Site II in this report are also normalised and interpreted. Accordingly, it is clear that room T constituted a third major deposit of hoard objects, although it was apparently left unsealed. Additional information about finds from 1940 from Ria Hackin's notebook (R1940) is presented in Appendix II. Further archival documentation (RMA) demonstrates that some of these areas were named after presumed supervisors of different areas. Analysis of Le Berre's plan of Site II and images from film shot by Ria Hackin at Begram in 1939 shows that the modern ground surface above room

13 was well above the fixed point from which find depths were taken, and that another occupation layer – perhaps equivalent to Begram III – had existed over Site II near to the western wall of this room, but was never documented. The precise locations for the monasteries explored by Carl on the Koh-i Pahlavan in 1940 are also discussed.

Roman Ghirshman's subsequent work at Begram followed a different methodology to that of the Hackin excavations and was published in a different manner, making the results of each somewhat difficult to compare. But, despite difficult conditions – including lack of access to Hackin's documentation and Ghirshman's abrupt dismissal from his post – Ghirshman established the first real understanding of the development of the site of Begram by commenting on its layout, delineating three macrophases of occupation at the new royal city (Begram I–III) and the dates and cultural characteristics of each, and conducting the first real study of the site's pottery. The dates of these phases offered by Ghirshman were based on the distribution of coins he observed within each. Begram I was thus dated from Apollodotus I (?) to Wima Kadphises (thus ca. 176 BCE – 127 CE, according to modern understandings of the absolute chronology), Begram II from Kanishka I to Vasudeva I (altogether ca. 127 – 230 CE), and Begram III to Vasudeva I imitations (rev. Oesho with bull) and Kanishka II types (rev. seated Ardoxsho) (post ca. 230 CE–?). These dates still stand to some degree: features and material belonging to Begram I are more suggestive of the latter part of the date range offered by Ghirshman, Begram II probably ended somewhat later than Ghirshman suggested, and the date of Begram III is considerably later than first proposed, probably encompassing parts of the 6th–8th centuries CE. Ghirshman also excavated part of the Site II structure, dated its main phase of use to Begram II, and documented further hoard objects in room T. He also examined the Burj-i Abdullah, making the valuable observation that all past buildings on this part of the site appeared to have been entirely razed. Ghirshman's study of his coin finds also included photographs and illustrations of numismatic material from the DAFA excavations for the first time. Although some of his identifications were incorrect, the coin finds were not published according to archaeological phase, and the coins themselves are now presumed lost, at least Göbl's surviving documents from his later study of these coins give some further insight into the numismatic record of the site.

Meunié's final campaign at Begram in 1946 explored the new royal city's southern gate. Although his report is difficult to use and features an incorrectly interpreted chronology on the basis of a partially identified corpus of coin finds (later studied by Göbl and all now presumed lost), it gave an impression of the complexity of the original stratigraphy and development of architecture in this area. The ultimate result of the DAFA excavations at

Begram are a tantalising, partial, and chaotic view into life at this ancient city. Although re-examining the data they produced can never provide answers to many of our questions, the data can be mobilised carefully to advance knowledge about the Begram hoard's contents as well as context on multiple scales.

In Chapter 3, I operationalise these data to clarify the development of life at Begram throughout antiquity, as well as the historical conditions contributing to the accumulation and deposition of the hoard objects at this site. Here, I simultaneously argue that the region of Kapisa was not simply a 'crossroads,' but a dynamic borderland entangled with broader cultural and political developments in Bactria and Gandhāra over time. First, I comment on the limits of Kapisa and relevant historical toponyms, including Begram's probable status as the location of both Alexandria in the Caucasus and the city of Kapisi. Then, I outline Kapisa's rich agricultural, pastoral, and mineral resources, the nature of the physical geographical frontiers separating this region from Bactria and Gandhāra, and the routes by which people traversed these frontiers in antiquity. I then comment on activity in this region during the Achaemenid period, although material evidence relating to this epoch remains very limited. Kapisa appears to have been part of the Paropamisus minor satrapy under the main satrapy of Gandhāra. If these satrapies were then subject to the great satrapy of Bactria (as proposed by Jacobs), this administrative hierarchy speaks to the political interconnection of Bactria and Gandhāra already in this early period. Finds of Achaemenid period silver coins from Masson's collection suggest economic interaction with Gandhāra, and the probable Achaemenid period settlement at Begram/Kapisi (never archaeologically confirmed) may have been located on the Burj-i Abdullah, serving as an administrative centre for the region.

Alexander the Great's exploits among the Paropmasidae are then described. I consider the specific itinerary the conqueror may have taken, his appointments of governors, and the probability that the (re-)foundation of Kapisi as Alexandria in the Caucasus was centred again on the Burj-i Abdullah. Finds of coins probably of the late 4th or early 3rd century CE from Masson's collection may suggest small-scale coin production by a local governor, as well as economic interaction between Kapisa and Bactria in this period. I then highlight unique information about subsistence strategies in the region communicated by Alexander's historians, noting probable references to pit houses as well as the practice of vine burying, which demonstrates developed viticulture in the region. I then discuss the limited evidence for Seleucid activity in the region and its Mauryan period, although cultural and economic interaction between Bactria and Gandhāra continued to some degree in the latter epoch.

I then consider the role of Kapisa within the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek kingdoms, however stressing that archaeological material at Begram relating to the Hellenistic period is largely ephemeral. A large number of Indo-Greek coins found at the site and its hinterland demonstrate clearly that it was part of a shared political and economic zone with Gandhāra, although occasional finds of Graeco-Bactrian coins also suggest continued interaction with Bactria too. The new royal city's fortification wall was raised in this period, which shares characteristics with other such constructions of Hellenistic Central Asia, and implies the agency of a single authority (i.e. a ruler) behind this project. Likewise, the expansion of the settlement of Begram to include the new royal city also appears to have occurred in this period. However, most of the material from Ghirshman's phase Begram I appears to rather relate to the subsequent 'transitional' and early Kushan periods at Kapisa (i.e. the latter part of the date range proposed by Ghirshman), with buildings documented in this phase perhaps then constructed on the extensively cleared foundations of those built under the Indo-Greeks. The pottery is comparable to that of the Saka-Parthian and early Kushan period in Gandhāra, suggesting that Ghirshman's date for the end of Begram I is roughly accurate, as well as continued cultural interaction between the regions, culminating for example in shared preferences for tableware. Considering the debate as to who ruled Begram between the Indo-Greek and Kushan periods, I suggest that the party responsible for minting the Hermaeus imitation coinage may have been a governing member of the local elite. I also highlight continued economic interaction between Kapisa and Gandhāra during this transitional period, and the lack of evidence for political conflict indicated within the long and continuous occupation phase of Begram I. I also highlight the development of Buddhism into a dominant religion in Gandhāra in this period, from where it spread also to Kapisa and eventually Bactria. Although the dates of the documented monasteries in the vicinity of Begram are still somewhat unclear, Shotorak and Karratcha may have already been founded in this period. A find of a Han mirror from Masson's collection speaks to tantalising links with exchange networks to the far north in the first half of the 1st century CE.

I begin the discussion of the Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian periods at Begram by noting that the phase Begram II probably extended after formal Kushan rule, i.e. at least into the latter half of the 3rd century CE, which is why I treat these two periods together. I then consider the political history of the Kushan Empire, the transregional connections cultivated in this period, the self-presentation of the dynasty's kings, and the (limited) evidence for royal patronage of Buddhism. The city of Begram and the region of Kapisa probably served as the location of the empire's main copper mint, and perhaps also hosted the summer capital of the

Kushans and their court. The reality of the latter role is not certain, as it was reported first in the 7th century CE, but I suggest that it is nonetheless plausible, and moreover that the Kushan dynasty may have had a peripatetic court constituted of the king's inner circle. This court was probably related to a thin administrative apparatus at an upper imperial level, while administration on the ground was conducted by governors drawn from local elites. Such a governor was based at Kapisi, and is attested from his inscribed dedication of a reliquary at Manikyala Great Stupa at the southeastern frontier of Gandhāra. The donation of relics by such local elites in the Kushan period was not unusual. Any official residence of Begram's governor would most likely have been located on the Burj-i Abdullah, although this is impossible to prove on the basis of the surviving data. If Kapisa hosted the Kushan king and his court in the summer, it is not guaranteed that they would have utilised a permanent building. I note that Begram was the size of other regional urban centres in this period, but still a fraction of the size of sites that are often interpreted as 'capitals' in Bactria. As Buddhism thrived as a major religion in Kapisa in this period, it is at least clear that the foundation of the monastery of Qol-i Nadir on the Koh-i Pahlavan was founded in the late 1st or early 2nd century CE, while others continued in operation. Other Buddhist establishments also existed around the city proper. These monasteries can be interpreted as proxy evidence for the surplus wealth of local elites in the Kushan period, the basis of which was most likely agricultural production. The contents of the relic container of Qol-i Nadir points to this production, as well as shared practices of the use of silk in relic deposits in regions south of the Hindu Kush. The southwards expansion of settlement and cultivated land on the dasht of Begram might have also occurred in the Kushan period, perhaps culminating in the establishment of the site of Kafir-Qala at the southeastern extent of this plain.

With respect to the development of Begram, there is evidence for continuity from the transitional period, with the Kushan period overlapping with the end of Begram I and extending into Begram II. It remains unclear whether the lower level of occupation indicated by excavations at Site I corresponds to Begram II. Distinctive features of certain parts of Begram's material culture in this phase point to links with Bactria and more so with Gandhāra. The pottery of Begram II roughly suggests by comparison that this phase can be dated from the mid 2nd century CE to the end of the 3rd century CE. There are indicators of shared drinking practices with Gandhāra, and tastes in tableware also point to parallel developments with trends current in Bactria and Gandhāra, especially seen in the popularity of pedestaled goblets. A certain local variant of such a vessel produced at Begram may have been produced in the 3rd

century CE, and the dumping of examples of these goblets in the drain of the city's gate may suggest the collapse of urban life as part of the abandonment of Begram II.

Moving on to examine the function and development of the Site II structure, I highlight parallels with the architecture of this building in the traditions of both Bactria and Gandhāra. Examining evidence for the several phases of renovation and occupation in this building (i.e. via the plans and 'pseudo-stratigraphic' depth data), I note the probable existence of an earlier structure, the foundations of which had been partially re-used for the construction of the main Site II structure. This main structure was not designed to function as a treasury proper, and neither resembles a true palace, but was evidently an important building. I argue that one may entertain the hypothesis that this building had been an elite residence, especially in light of comparisons with DT-5 and DT-6 at Dal'verzintepe, citing possible reception rooms (i.e. rooms 10 and 13), the use of peripheral corridors, large courts, a service area, and perhaps a washroom. However, the plan of the Site II structure remains confusing. This could perhaps be explained by the partial re-use of the foundations of the earlier building. Certain of the doubled walls could have been built to support a raised ceiling around rooms 10 and 13, and a proposed set of stairs could have given access to a flat roof, comparably to the houses at Dal'verzintepe. The reception rooms of Dal'verzintepe's houses and Site II's rooms 10 and 13 had been ornamented. Room 13 had two layers of wall paintings. The first layer features a draped colonnade running in a frieze around the lower part of the room, while the second (later) painting appears to depict a garland bearer. Both motifs were suitable for a range of different contexts. Rooms 10 and 13 also featured earthen benches of varying dimensions, which however were probably not suitable for seating (e.g. during banquets). Ultimately, I note that serious difficulties persist with reading the Site II structure as an elite residence. Specifically, the blocked doorways documented in this building raise questions about access to rooms 10 and 13, and the process by which they were sealed. Doorway 'D' was probably blocked prior to the deposition of the hoard. The function of doubled walls just to the west of this doorway is unclear, and how corridor 7 was accessed remains a mystery. With rooms 10 and 13 apparently accessed by secluded and indirect means and detached from the service area, their interpretation as reception rooms seems doubtful. Rather, rooms 10 and 13 may have been the rear rooms of a long building with an entrance located beyond the limits of the excavations to the east, and I note that other hypotheses should be explored in future research, including the possibility that the Site II structure served as a cultic space.

Without insisting on a certain function for the Site II structure for now, I observe in sum that a predecessor to this building was constructed on sterile ground, perhaps coevally to

Begram I, then later (near the end of Begram I or in Begram II), this was almost entirely cleared for the construction of a new building, being the main Site II structure. A central space was divided to create rooms 10 and 13, a masonry drain was cut in area V into sterile ground in an apparent service area, and perhaps the first layer of wall paintings was added to room 13. Finds located at a depth of 3.10 m throughout the building may relate to this phase of use, including pottery vessels and lamps, beads, spindle whorls, coins, and a gold pendant. Mortars were found in the service area. Renovations were then made at a later stage, although it is unclear if they are all coeval. Finds at a depth of 2.40 m throughout the building appear to suggest that floors had been raised, and include again coins, lamps, and a bronze corner support similar to those found in the hoard. The vast majority of objects in rooms 10, 13, and T (i.e. the hoard rooms) were deposited roughly around this depth too. However, depth measurements deviating between these two main 'floors' (3.10 m and 2.40 m) may suggest the remains of pits cut into the later 'floor,' although this must remain purely hypothetical. The number of coins dispersed throughout the Site II structure seems too sizeable for a purely domestic context.

I then consider how the hoard and its limits should be defined on the basis of the distribution of material through the Site II structure, as well as in light of insights obtained from the study of hoards in the ancient world. Hoards are intentional deposits of valuables described in archaeological literature by a diversity of terminology, and have a scholarly history of being classified as utilitarian (i.e. concealed for safekeeping and future use) or ritual in nature. More recent research has explored the difficulties of these classifications and the ambiguity of the division between ritual and utilitarian behaviour. That being said, ritual interpretations of Bronze Age hoards in Europe now convincingly tend to be preferred over purely utilitarian ones. Recent scholarship has also highlighted the problematic tendency for hoards to be explained in an anecdotal manner, stressed that items deposited in hoards do not need to be coeval, and proposed that biographical approaches to hoards can provide insights into the processes which produced them.

The objects placed into rooms 10 and 13 meet the criterion of intentional deposition. It appears that room 13 was filled first, followed by the sealing of doorway 'C,' with the ivory footstools being the last objects placed in room 10 before the main doorway 'B' was sealed too. Most objects in room 10 were deposited around a horizon of 2.50–2.60 m, while more dispersed clustering is evident in room 13 between 2.30–2.60 m. Both datasets of depth measurements roughly suggest the existence of a floor level around this horizon. Certain finds from room 10 (including a later burial) can clearly be excluded from the hoard because of their vertical distribution. The situation is more complicated for room 13, and to better illustrate this

I created a 3D visualisation drawing on the depth data and Hamelin's plan. This model shows more upwards and downwards deviations for the hoard objects in this room than those deposited in room 10. Multiple explanations could be offered for the situation in both rooms, including the possibility that certain objects had been deposited in pits, that the floor levels were uneven, or that ephemeral organising devices had been used, and had then decayed after the deposition of the hoard but before the collapse of the building. Perhaps the building was even already decaying when the hoard was deposited, and specific objects in room 13 had been disturbed during later building activities. Ultimately, I understand the hoard in room 10 to include objects between the depths of 2.10–2.70 m, and in room 13 to include those distributed between 2.30–2.80 m in addition to four bronze vessels found above these depths. I note that we have no information as to whether the hoard objects had been intentionally buried, and likewise whether any other disturbances occurred. Nonetheless, the data still make it clear that the three posthumous Vasudeva I imitations from room 10 provide a secure *terminus post quem* for the deposition of the hoard.

The remainder of the hoard objects were found largely within room T. Although less information is available about these finds, they also exhibit divergent depth measurements. Most were distributed around 2.50 m, but there are some significant exceptions (e.g., at 2.80 m and 3.20 m, perhaps representing pits?). Interpreting intentionality in the deposits of objects in this room is less certain and raises many questions, and accordingly I stress that the boundary between hoard and 'not-hoard' are not as clear as might be expected. The boundary is still more ambiguous considering objects similar to those from the hoard but deposited elsewhere in the Site II structure. In the central corridor, an element from metalwork and a bronze shrine (?) were documented, which I include in my inventory of the hoard. However, finds elsewhere in this corridor are similar to others documented throughout the Site II structure. There are also several more ambiguous cases of single objects similar to those found in the hoard that were deposited in other unclear contexts within the Site II structure. We have no information regarding the intentionality of their deposition. I note that doubt may be cast on the interpretative validity of hoping to define the hoard in the first place, and that a different perspective on the nature of these deposits would be warranted if one would read the presence of ritual activity into this material.

I then observe that the deposition of the hoard marked the end of the use of the Site II structure, and that the sealing of rooms 10 and 13 was also not a rushed decision. Furthermore, both utilitarian and ritual behaviour could be interpreted into this process. I then consider factors leading to the abandonment of the new royal city and the end of Begram II, which also

coincided with the deposition and abandonment of the Begram hoard. The numismatic evidence suggests a date after ca. 260 CE, i.e. in the early Kushano-Sasanian period, but few other coins from this era are known from the DAFA excavations. Accordingly, I propose that this abandonment of Begram II does not need to have been instigated by a single invasion, and draw on comparative material from Barikot to suggest that this event may have been a gradual process involving the desertion of the city by its former urban elites – the power of whom was connected with that of the fallen Kushan kings – around the second half of the 3rd century CE. Occupation at the city could have then continued outside of the new royal city tepe. As urban life appears to have been reinvigorated only later from around the 6th century CE, the fate of Begram in the intervening centuries might also be connected to the rise of Kabul as an urban centre in the 4th century CE. I note possible evidence for ephemeral sheltering within the Site II structure after its abandonment and collapse, as well as traces of constructions which came to be built over the western side of the Site II structure and may be linked with Begram III. This much later phase was constructed on an accumulation layer at a slightly different orientation to Begram II, and was probably followed by the construction of the intramural qala at Site II, and then a later burial cut into the Site II structure perhaps in the 14th century CE.

In Chapter 4, I examine the contents of the hoard through an inventory of the objects documented in the relevant deposits as defined in Chapter 3. Written from an archaeological perspective, this inventory is as comprehensive as possible with respect to the surviving data. The presentation of each group of objects – organised first according to formal and functional considerations – synthesises information about the primary data available for each, major secondary studies, their formal qualities, the methods by which they were produced, where and when they may have been produced, their condition upon their deposition and traces of use, and their arrangement in the hoard rooms. I also highlight overlooked data for objects which had featured inscriptions.

Ultimately, I have catalogued a minimum of ca. 512 individual objects (considering the ivories as parts of articles of furniture), noting the predominance of glass vessels and containers in this corpus. These primarily represent luxurious articles of tableware, and then especially drinking vessels. There are also substantial groups of vessels suitable for the storage and dispensation of scented oils. Several large subgroups of vessels suggest production in single workshops or a small number of closely related ones. Much of the glass appears to have been produced in the latter half of the 1st and early 2nd centuries CE and points to production in the eastern Mediterranean, but not all. Copper alloy vessels and containers were also found in a large number, with many examples constituting again tableware. Certain groups had been

produced locally, while others were most likely made in the Mediterranean between the mid 1st to mid 2nd centuries CE, but this is not certain. Several other smaller groups of vessels and containers in a variety of media again represent examples of highly luxurious objects, variously suggesting production in the Mediterranean, and perhaps Western Asia and India, and dates for some in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE are feasible but not certain. The lacquerwares appear to have been produced in both state and private workshops in China most probably between the mid 1st century BCE to the mid 1st century CE. Plain pottery lamps represent an outlier in this corpus. The numerous articles of furniture adorned with ivory and bone carvings were most likely produced in India, not in Central Asia. I suggest that they may derive from workshops to the west of central India and note that they at least cannot be dated to the 1st century CE with security. I highlight other diverse, unusual, and valuable items in the hoard, including the aquariums which probably served as items for display or entertainment. A limited number of gold elements in the hoard also suggests that objects produced from this precious metal had been available to the party depositing the hoard. Certain of the plaster casts suggest production in Roman Egypt and were probably collected for use as reference material in the context of craft production. A substantial part of a large group of elements detached from articles of metalwork but which cannot be refitted into complete items were also apparently produced in the Roman Mediterranean, while others were made locally. Functionally, they seem to imply some variety of craft production activity. Certain groups of objects imply suggest (original) functions on account of their forms – such as figurines, an inkpot, an incense burner, a plain bronze mirror, a small shrine, copper alloy coins, and military equipment – but whether these functions were maintained is not guaranteed. Examples of raw and semi-worked materials (including semi-precious stone, a marine mollusc shell, and coral) may have also been valuable in their own right. The example of a clay sealing and the fittings of wooden boxes suggest the presence of ephemeral storage devices, while the sealing and inked inscriptions on certain examples of the glassware suggest the conduct of ‘administrative’ activity. Of course, the functions of several objects still remain difficult to identify.

Viewing the Begram hoard as a sum of individual objects, over half of these items were obtained from the Roman Mediterranean, and many more specifically suggest production in Egypt. Goods obtained from India are largely examples of furniture, while smaller contingents of objects were produced in China and probably Western Asia. However, the precise places of production for many objects remain unclear. In addition, rather more objects than normally appreciated appear to have been produced locally in Central Asia, including copper alloy vessels, utensils, coins, and certain raw materials. It remains incredibly difficult to date the

hoard objects on a comparative basis with security as there are many examples of items in this corpus that are highly unusual or unique in the global archaeological record. Nonetheless, most of the hoard objects were produced in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, but some suggest manufacture in the second half of the 1st century BCE, and others may have been produced at least in the second half of the 3rd century CE. Indeed, I have highlighted evidence throughout this chapter for the poor, incomplete, and manipulated condition of many of the hoard objects prior to their deposition, which mirrors the impression of their long history of use and/or accumulation, in addition to likely changes in their functions over time. Examples of this can be found among many groups of the hoard objects, but the most significant data relate to the ivory and bone furniture. There are several indications that these articles of furniture had been kept in a primary storage area, and had moreover been in poor and incomplete condition when transferred into rooms 10 and 13. I also note that the hoard objects were arranged to some extent into groups of similar classes, but some types of objects had been more dispersed, and the picture is not as neat as expected.

In Chapter 5, I draw on the material presented throughout this dissertation to reassess the nature and significance of the hoard from the perspective of Kushan Central Asia. I first present arguments against ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard. These include the divergent dates of the hoard objects and their high value; here I also tackle beliefs about the significance of the use of bone alongside ivory to decorate articles of furniture and the limited number of articles of precious metal in this corpus. Additional arguments include the poor and incomplete condition of many objects upon their deposition in the hoard, and the ambiguous find context of this material. I then show that, on the basis of comparative observations about the extraction of customs duties on goods in transit elsewhere in the ancient world, it is almost impossible to explain the existence of the hoard objects at Begram as the product of such an indirect tax demanded in kind. Then, considering the wider distribution patterns of material comparable to the hoard objects, I note that the distribution of comparable objects within Central Asia could be easily interpreted as speaking to shared patterns of elite consumption of prestige and luxury goods. Turning to a more global ‘Silk Road’ perspective, I draw on the case of the distribution of Roman glass along the trade routes that Begram could putatively be supplying (i.e. connecting Central Asia to East Asia as well as the Eurasian Steppe). Here I argue that Begram is not only not the most expedient place to stop for such transit trade, but that evidence for the consumption of Roman glass in these regions is extremely limited until late antiquity. I then reiterate that these ‘transit trade explanations’ of the hoard – which must now finally be put to rest – largely reflect ideas about ‘Kushan middlemen,’ and stress that if this corpus of goods

was found in any other archaeological context in the world, it would be taken as self-evident that they were imported for use in the framework of local consumption, not for transit trade.

I then return to the question of the nature of Begram hoard, highlighting again the difficulties of the 'palatial treasure theory' (including the interpretation of the Site II structure as an elite residence), as well as the profound interpretative ambiguities presented by our data. Specifically, several aspects of the hoard can be read as ritual or utilitarian. These do not only include the architecture and features of the Site II structure, the deposition of the objects, and the sealing of rooms of 10 and 13. The condition of several of the hoard objects suggests that they had been kept in one or more primary storage areas prior to their final deposition, but it remains unclear where this area should have been located. The answer depends on whether the Site II structure may be interpreted as an elite residence or a cultic space. In the former case, the limited suitable storage space in this building implies that the hoard objects should have been extracted from an external (e.g., palatial) treasury for deposition in the Site II structure. If this building is interpreted as a cultic space, the hoard objects could represent the partial contents of a temple treasury constituted by votive offerings once deposited throughout the structure, including in pits.

In principle, enormous amounts of valuable objects could be accumulated in the treasuries of both palaces and temples; cases attesting to this are also known from Central Asia in antiquity. Considering the examples of the Oxus treasure and the Mir Zakah deposits, I note both ritual and utilitarian aspects that may be interpreted from these hoards, and point to the predominance of articles of convertible wealth (i.e. items produced from precious metals and coins) among their contents. The small amount of examples of gold elements in the Begram hoard suggests that items produced from this precious metal had been accessible to the party responsible for its deposition. Theoretically, such items could have been taken with absconding elites as they left the city, while care was taken to appropriately deposit other valuables in their command. Here, I also note that the activities and property of elites and religious organisations could also intersect in antiquity. The use of certain documentary practices attested by the clay sealing and glass inscriptions in the hoard also suggests the conduct of administrative activity, but such activities could occur both in palatial and religious contexts. The prevalence of tableware in the hoard, and especially drinking vessels, implies large-scale elite drinking and/or feasting, but such activity did not have to be purely social in a secular sense. Indeed, depictions of local elites (usually male) on elaborate seats within scenes of open-air ceremonies involving the consumption of wine are found in Gandhāran relief sculpture, especially in Swat, and apparently refer to non-Buddhist rituals and festivals of local social significance. The existence

of similar practices at Begram could be inferred by the prevalence of drinking vessels and ivory furniture in the hoard. The ichthyomorphic flasks and other glass flasks suitable for dispensing scented oil could be interpreted as intended for use in the context of toilette, or may speak to a ritual function (i.e. pouring libations).

A variety of objects in the Begram hoard imply the activity of craft production. I suggest that the detached elements from metalwork may represent parts of former votive offerings which had been recycled, or could have been collected for use as a body of reference material. The latter function is certainly implied by the plaster casts, and links with craft production may also be tentatively interpreted from the figurines, anthropomorphic balsamaria, and some of the raw and semi-worked materials in the hoard. In principle, both palaces and religious organisations have the capacity to be engaged in coordinating elite craft production, the classic example of the latter being Gandhāran art. The number of the plaster casts at Begram suggests a larger-scale, organised form of production, but the nature of the implied workshop's output remains obscure. I also note that the sparse remains of the military equipment in the hoard could, again, also point to a palatial or religious context.

At this point, I remark that the hoard may at least be regarded as an intergenerational collection of valuable goods accumulated by elites. Although this corpus has the capacity to shed light on a diversity of historical phenomena, I argue that one of the reasons why the hoard is significant is because it provides unique evidence for patterns of elite consumption of imported luxury and prestige goods in Kushan Central Asia. However, I also stress that that because the hoard is the curated end result of the biographies of hundreds of objects probably brought to Begram by a diversity of exchange mechanisms, implying also changes in the meaning of these objects, we cannot assume that the hoard is an unbiased sample of imported goods. Rather, it represents a distorted image of consumption patterns, and must be carefully interpreted.

Departing from the observation that explanations of the hoard as the product of cosmopolitan taste under the Kushans give the problematic impression of undifferentiated demand for imported goods, I explore the patterns of consumption illuminated by this corpus. Consumption is understood here to involve a diversity of processes of interaction with goods, including (but not limited to) their acquisition, use, and disposal. One objective of the study of consumption patterns is to understand why objects are desired and the roles that consumption plays in society. I note that the Begram hoard objects may be considered generally as examples of both luxury goods (although the concept of luxury remains slippery) and prestige goods (although we lack data to assess if they had an esteem-generating function). Drawing on

Bourdieu's conceptions of capital, taste, and distinction, I stress the socially differentiating function that the demand for imported goods implies. However, I problematise the blanket categorisation of imported goods as 'exotic' and hence valuable, noting that it is more productive to consider specific locally held associations about these goods to better understand their appeal. Indeed, patterns among the imported goods in the Begram hoard demonstrate clear selectivity in the acquisition of these objects. Pointing to the concept of receptivity, I stress that the appeal of such objects is also determined by their utility when incorporated into a local social system.

Objects in the Roman Mediterranean constitute the most diverse and plentiful body of goods in the Begram hoard, and significantly include many objects (and groups thereof) that are highly unusual in the global archaeological record. Indeed, other comparably unusual examples of imported luxury glass vessels are known from Central Asia. These finds suggest that there was a wider demand for such vessels (tableware, but also unguentaria) in Kushan Central Asia, and attest to highly directed trade between the Roman Mediterranean and Central Asia. This conclusion does not sit easily with our other limited and confusing evidence for direct interaction between actors of the Roman and Kushan worlds. Here, I note that evidence for diplomatic relations between the two empires has probably been too optimistically interpreted, and that imported Roman goods are still relatively rarely documented in Kushan Central Asia. I then turn to the difficult question of the incorporation of imagery of the Roman imperial period into Gandhāran art, rather than that introduced solely in the Hellenistic period. Here, I discuss recent contributions within which the Roman connection has been rehabilitated, and specifically (with some scepticism) Stewart's renewed proposal that Roman-trained craftspeople rather than objects were the key mechanism by which this imagery was transferred to Gandhāra.

Here I note that that the appeal of the diversity of Roman goods present in the Begram hoard cannot be explained by cultural contact with the Roman world alone. Pointing to acknowledgements that the incorporation of Roman imagery into Gandhāran art was a phenomenon still evidently related to Central Asia's Hellenistic past in some way, I propose that the Roman objects in the Begram hoard could easily have been read by local consumers as also 'Greek.' This understanding would have been facilitated in part by cultural change instigated during the period of Greek rule and its long term impacts, but I highlight evidence that Greek cultural elements were not seamlessly and meaninglessly absorbed into the cultural landscape of Kushan Central Asia. Instead, the 'Greek' could also be perceived as distinct, prestigious, and foreign. These associations were related to the social memory of the

Hellenistic past. Indeed, while the Rabatak inscription responds to such social memory by framing Kanishka as not a Greek but Iranian king, the Begram hoard objects and comparative finds from Kushan Central Asia indicate that local elites cultivated a taste for the consumption of imported goods they probably associated with ‘Greekness.’ Similar associations thus likely drove the incorporation of both Greek and Roman elements into Gandhāran art. I note that some scholars would call this Hellenism, but I choose not to. Indeed, the demand for Roman goods can be considered only one aspect of a local, common elite culture emergent in Kushan Central Asia, and this phenomenon cannot be explained best as the product of cosmopolitanism or Hellenism. I note here that imported prestige and luxury goods are of social utility when incorporated into locally meaningful practices, suggesting that the imported glassware (for example) was incorporated into locally attested drinking practices in Kushan Central Asia. The Roman goods at Begram may have simultaneously been appealing for their association with local notions about the distant Mediterranean world more broadly, for example as a rich and abundant place connected with the sea.

Other imported luxury and prestige goods in the Begram hoard can shed additional light on aspects of the shared elite culture emergent in Kushan Central Asia. The few drinking vessels and jugs perhaps produced in Iran and Mesopotamia may have also been incorporated into local elite drinking practices, but their small number seems to imply a lack of preference for these goods. I tentatively suggest that this may indicate a disjuncture between the tastes of local elites and imperial vocabularies of power, but stress again that the hoard does not represent an unproblematic sample of consumption patterns, and thus the question may remain open.

I then remark that, despite accelerating cultural and economic interaction between agents of India and Central Asia in this period, examples of prestige and luxury goods from India are also rare in Kushan Central Asia, primarily including examples of ivory combs. That being said, it is significant that almost all of the Indian goods in the Begram hoard were luxurious articles of furniture, which indicates both a strong preference among local elites (at least at Begram) for chairs and footstools produced in India, as well as clear communication with producers in order to obtain them. This demand was probably shaped by associations about India (i.e., as at least a rich and fertile place) as well as the local social utility of this furniture. Specifically, I propose that they may have been obtained as rich seating for elite males or couples that could be used during (ritualised) drinking practices.

The lacquerwares in the Begram hoard are still more difficult to interpret. Distribution patterns of comparable assemblages outside of Central Asia and evidence for diplomatic

interaction between the Yuezhi/Kushans and the Han make it tempting to interpret the presence of these prestigious goods at Begram as a result of direct diplomatic gift exchanges. However, this is hardly necessary, and the lacquerwares may have been procured instead through (gift?) exchange networks with steppe elites. Activity along similar networks is implied by rare finds of Han mirrors in Kushan Central Asia, the acquisition of which is connected with local preferences and customs. I note that silk was also not found in the Begram hoard, but was also imported and incorporated into local practices of consumption, attested especially by its use in relic deposits. Perhaps certain of the lacquerwares had been incorporated into local practices of commensality, but their precise local functions and meanings remain unclear. However, the peculiar arrangement of these objects in the hoard at least suggests that their meaning was reconfigured in the roughly three centuries falling between their dates of production in China and deposition at Begram.

Ultimately, the imported prestige and luxury goods in the Begram hoard provide evidence for patterns of elite consumption in Kushan Central Asia, and more specifically begin to elucidate the scaffolding of a shared elite culture emergent in this time and space that was not simply cosmopolitan or eclectic. Stressing again that the hoard attests to the demand for specific imported goods by local elite consumers, as well as the effective communication of these demands across far reaching networks, I note three implications of these observations from a wider perspective. First, we can move beyond the long-held construct of ‘Kushan middlemen’ and instead consider the consumption preferences of local elites in Kushan Central Asia as actively driving long-distance trade. Second, the communication of these preferences implies a more direct model for the organisation of this trade than is usually considered. Finally, groups of items in the Begram hoard from otherwise virtually unattested workshops of the Roman Mediterranean may represent the products of specialised, export-oriented workshops that were driven by the communication of such demands from such distant places as Central Asia.

With these findings now summarised, I will point to potential avenues of inquiry for future scholarship that can be facilitated by the above. As this dissertation has engaged with context on a diversity of scales, I structure my remarks according to different fields and scales of inquiry.

First, and quite simply, I hope that the archaeological data and especially the inventory presented in this dissertation will facilitate future specialist research on the objects in the Begram hoard. As highlighted in Chapter 4, much of this material has remained partially understood in scholarship, with a barrier to this certainly constituted by the difficult state of

the surviving data. However, the hoard objects remain of significant interest to specialist debates in a diversity of bodies of research concerned with ancient Afro-Eurasia, such as the study of Roman glass and bronzes, Indian art, and Han lacquerwares. Renewed specialist interest in specific material from this corpus, and ideally the more precise delineation of places and dates of production, could likewise facilitate the better integration of the hoard objects into studies seeking to attain a macro perspective on the flows of goods across the ancient world – a topic which was emphatically not the key focus of my own research.

By focusing on specifically regional dynamics in Central Asia, I realise that I diverge to some degree from a broader scholarly milieu within which the problematic construct of the ‘Silk Road/s’ continues to accelerate in both popularity and semantic haziness. Indeed, at least for now, it seems like the term is here to stay. My general avoidance of the concept in this dissertation has nonetheless been deliberate, and I hope to have tacitly shown instead that the history of Central Asia is first and most productively analysed on its own terms without any need to summon up a Silk Road. This, of course, is not an argument for maintaining strict regionalism in archaeology, but a response to a real problem: the scholarly outcome of the lack of a disciplinary home for Central Asian archaeology and ancient history in most institutions, with established chairs dedicated to the field remaining shockingly rare. More specifically, as the study of this space usually occurs at the fringes of established disciplines around the world, the resulting diverse body of historical, archaeological, numismatic, epigraphic, and art historical (etc.) scholarship that might be pushed together under the theme of ‘Central Asia in antiquity,’ ‘pre-Islamic Central Asia,’ ‘the Hellenistic Far East,’ or ‘Kushan studies’ is often extremely confusing to navigate, and even incoherent at its worst. This is a critical reason why misconceptions about the history of this space are so frequently taken up – and, unfortunately, tend to stick – in world historical narratives (as well as on Wikipedia). As I have stressed several times in this dissertation, the Begram hoard and the Kushans have repeatedly suffered this unlucky historiographic fate.

I thus hope that the results of this study, emphatically centred on Central Asia, can facilitate the more accurate and insightful incorporation of the Begram hoard into world historical narratives, and that powerful broader receptions of Central Asia as a crossroads or zone characterised by transit trade may continue to be eroded. In the meantime, however, there does not appear to be a systemic solution to the ‘Central Asia in antiquity’ conundrum. With humanities departments under persistent existential threat, it seems implausible that field will ever be really ‘institutionalised,’ and lumping everything under the ‘Silk Road’ instead will likewise not fix the intellectual core of the problem. That being said, significant change within

the field is also occurring: in recent years, online social media and networking services have facilitated immense, unprecedented connectivity between researchers active around the world. This has also enabled the free, rapid, and wide distribution of a great deal of scholarly literature. Likewise, the increasing sophistication of machine translation can only continue to break down the linguistic barriers that characteristically plague scholarship of the field. The study of the ancient history and archaeology of Central Asia and its wider scholarly impacts may thus look very different in even a decade from now.

In this dissertation, I also hope to have shown the value of maintaining an emphatically local, regional perspective for investigating not the ‘whats’ and the ‘hows’ of the long-distance trade which exploded across Afro-Eurasia from around the turn of the Common Era, but really the ‘*whys*.’ More specifically, there is still considerable unrealised potential for the examination of the social systems, power relationships, and ideas that structured and drove local demand for specific imported goods of diverse origins in an increasingly connected (or ‘globalised’) ancient world. In my view, there is not one single theoretical roadmap to follow to this destination. A good place to start is by simply acknowledging that there were other driving forces for long-distance trade besides the demands of Rome, that the demand for imported goods cannot be explained by their ‘exoticism,’ and that exposure to exchange routes and imported goods (and ideas) does not in itself generate desire for such objects.

Now, I can outline future directions for scholarship with specific reference to Central Asia. First, I have already pointed at the need for future investigation into Begram’s Site II structure as a cultic space. A real exploration of this hypothesis presents the best means to finding answers to many of the new questions raised in this dissertation (see especially Chapters 3 and 5), and specifically cutting across the persisting interpretative ambiguities as to the nature of the hoard that I have highlighted. Indeed, despite my best efforts, many questions about the Begram hoard remain open, and work on this material and Begram itself is hardly ‘finished.’ The items in the hoard imply manifold stories and experiences relating to both Central Asia and the wider ancient world, and only some of these could be explored in any detail here. Likewise, the relation between the hoard objects and the phenomenon of Gandhāran art could now surely be reassessed and examined in more detail by someone more capable than myself.

Second, it is clear that an enormous amount must still be added to our knowledge of towns and cities of the Kushan period. Excavations of urban sites in northern Bactria have achieved this to varying degrees of horizontal coverage and chronological precision, with an example of a thoroughly-studied site being the fortress-settlement of Kampyrtepa. The

comparative lack of emphasis on urban archaeology in Gandhāra – barring very notable exceptions like the excavations of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan at Barikot – is regrettable. In this light, the DAFA excavations at Begram were clearly a missed opportunity. If fieldwork can ever be resumed at Begram (a distant hope), it should at the very least seek to clarify the sequence of occupation at the site, the absolute chronology of this occupation, and the site's pottery sequence. Ideally, any remaining evidence for patterns of ancient occupation on the dasht of Begram should also be documented. Of course, critical questions relating to the horizontal layout and organisation of the city cannot be solved with a single trench, and depend on whether the site can remain protected.

Third, I may point to a few significant gaps in the orbit of 'Kushan studies' of relevance to this dissertation that should be rectified in future scholarship. Evidently, for example, the structure and extent of the Kushan Empire as a polity must be the subject of more systematic future investigation. For a wider perspective on the scaffolding of the shared elite culture emergent in Kushan Central Asia that I have explored here, the critical mass of archaeological and visual data at our disposal should also be incorporated into a more systematic analysis of society and cultural dynamics in the Kushan period. In a related manner, methods should also be sought to examine the lives of non-urban, non-elite actors in this period, who remain poorly represented by the (published) data. More specifically (and perhaps more achievably), the study of coinage imitating types inaugurated by Vasudeva I and Kanishka II should continue in reference to stratified finds, in order to better clarify the specific dynamics of the later production and use of coins minted in this style.

Fourth, the continuing value of the analysis and reassessment of legacy archaeological data should be stressed. The fact of the matter is that a critical mass of published and unpublished archaeological data relevant to Kushan Central Asia has now accumulated. There is still plenty to study from long-excavated material, and yet more to learn from what has even been subject to research for decades, even if the data are deeply imperfect – a point emphatically made by this dissertation.

The importance of work on legacy data is especially clear in respect to Afghanistan. The history of the nation's archaeology could easily be characterised as a series of sporadic, phenomenal, and problematic discoveries that scholars still debate at length today. The potential of future discoveries to likewise radically re-write the ancient history of this remarkable country is essentially guaranteed. However, the energetic and promising activity of the Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan in recent years has now been halted with the fall of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the establishment of a new Taliban administration.

The path towards realising Afghanistan's colossal archaeological potential is uncertain once again. For now, I can at least offer the present work as a small tribute to the incomparable heritage of this country, and our colleagues who have dedicated their lives to it.

Appendix I: finds from the Site II structure outside of the hoard objects in rooms 10 and 13

This appendix collates data for finds from the Site II structure (the main orthogonal building at Site II) outside of the hoard objects found in rooms 10 and 13. It is based on a number of sources: F1937, RAB, R1940, F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB, and Ghirshman 1946. I have not included most of Meunié's finds from the western extension of Site II in 1938 for three reasons: first, because Meunié did not present his finds in the form of a catalogue with findspot information and depth data; second, because Meunié's finds from rooms 11–18 appear to belong the period in which the qala was in use (i.e. the latest phase of occupation in this area); third, because rooms 22–37 appear to belong to the phase Begram III (for the above, §2.4.4, §3.5.2). However, the rooms 6 bis, 19, 20, and 21 excavated by Meunié appear to belong to the main structure, so finds mentioned in passing from these rooms are included below.

The error leading to the shifted findspots for finds from the 1940 season in NRAB (§2.4.5) has been corrected according to pre-publication presentations of the data (R1940, F1940, MSNRAB). In these sources, Site II is usually referred to as 'Chantier R.' for Ria Hackin, who led excavations in this area. The Hackin excavations typically proceeded by following the lines of walls and clearing blocks of fill from the rooms they encountered (see §2.4.2). However, findspot indications were not just given according to rooms, but also to less defined excavation areas (see also §2.4.5). Some of these are now difficult to locate with precision on the plan of the Site II structure.

In this Appendix, I organise finds into subsections according to their room or excavation area. Then, finds are listed in tables according to the depth at which each was found, to facilitate an impression of their vertical distribution within these (relatively) defined spaces. In the below, descriptions from F1937 are simply transcribed from the French and not translated, as they derive from an otherwise unpublished document. Otherwise, find descriptions are given in English, and should be understood as a translation or summary of final published descriptions (from RAB, NRAB, or Ghirshman 1946). However, when the description I provide deviates from that of the excavators, I indicate this with my initials (LM).

The data presented below remain problematic. In the published and archival documents at my disposal, findspot information is often inconsistently given. I have endeavoured to normalise this when possible, and in the case of more ambiguous cases, I also reproduce the information given in different sources (with that from NRAB corrected with the original

findspot and checked against MSNRAB). Although I have attempted to more precisely locate excavation areas and show my reasoning towards this below, in several cases this has not been possible. More broadly, in drawing these data together, I have sought to understand the logic lying behind the inconsistencies, but also to resist the temptation of hoping that this material should fit neatly together or behave ‘logically.’

I begin with some objects from either undefined or unique excavation areas which never appear again. I then work according to the numerical order of rooms, then alphabetical order, as rooms/areas excavated in 1940 were labelled in this manner following the designation of Ch. R. T., i.e. the room partially underneath the ‘tour’ (the northeast bastion of the later qala).

Undefined areas

The findspots of the first two entries below were not recorded, and the latter two are unique and appear only once. I can locate neither with confidence. Furthermore, after F1940, NRAB 353 is reported instead from R. (A. A.). I am inclined to wonder if the latter change is a mistake introduced by editors of NRAB.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
9 (F1937)		19.04.1937		Perle (2) en pierre.	Items of personal adornment, stone, bead.	
R1940 [3, see Appendix II]	Perhaps room T from context in R1940? Unclear.	01.05.1940	Between 2.50–2.80 m	Fragments de verre Type millefiori don’t quelques portent des traces d’incendié.	Vessels and containers, glass, mosaic.	
NRAB 351	R. (Ex. est partant nord) (NRAB); Ext. est partant nord (F1940).	22.06.1940	2.00 m	Iron ring/hoop of very oxidised iron.	Unknown function, metal, iron.	
NRAB 353	R. mur bordj (F1940); R. (A. A.) (NRAB).	25.06.1940	1.60 m	Small glass bead.	Item of personal adornment, glass, bead.	

Room 1

Room 1 is located to the south of the Site II structure, but the nature of its connection to the main part of the building is unclear.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
12 (F1937)	R. 1	21.04.1937	1.0 m	Monnaie bronze Vasudeva (ronde) oxydation avancée.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 118, but misattributed there to room 10. Posthumous imitation of Vasudeva I, sacrificing king/Oesho with bull 3.07 g, Morris 2017, No. 118.

Room 3

This room was located to the north of room 1, and apparently no finds were reported in the intervening room 2. F1937 includes a schematic illustration of this bow-like (?) object and a confusing plan appearing to indicate the placement of this object within room 3.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
14 (F1937)	R. 3	22.04.1937	1.10 m	Arc? (fer oxydation avancée) en 4 fragments.	Unknown function, metal, iron.	

Room 4

This room is located on the southeast corner of the main block of the Site II structure. Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16) indicates it had a doubled eastern wall, an impression reiterated also by Carl's plan (Pl. 14). How access was provided to room 5 or corridor 7 is unclear.

Cat. No.	Room	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
30 (F1937)	R. 4	26.04.1937	2.10 m	Poids (fuseau).	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl or	

					loom weight)?	
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Room 5

This room was located just to the west of room 4 in the southern side of the Site II structure. It is unclear how access was provided to rooms 4 and 6.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
31 (F1937)	R. 5	27.04.1937	Déblais	Pièce de fer à tenon (oxydé).	Unknown function, metal, iron.	
RAB 149 [1]	R. 5	13.05.1937	2.50 m	Coin, bronze, advanced oxidation, not identified.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 115, Huvishka enthroned king / Mao (late emission), 7.47 g, Göbl 973.

Room 6

This room is located on the south side of the Site II structure, immediately to the west of room 5.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
27 (F1937)	R. 6	26.05.1937	2.10 m	Couvercle de vase ou de petite jarre terre-cuite.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lid or vessel.	
28 (F1937)	R. 6	26.04.1937	2.10 m	Petite lampe terre cuite.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamp.	
29 (F1937)	R. 6	26.04.1937	2.10 m	Poids (fuseau).	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	
53 (F1937)	R. 6	29.04.1937	déblais	Perle	Items of personal adornment, bead.	

54 (F1937)	R. 6	01.05.1937	2.50 m	Monnaie de bronze oxydé.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 121, Kanishka II or Vasishka, sacrificing king / seated Ardoxsho, 6.19 g.
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Corridor/room 7

This corridor was directly north of rooms 4–6 bis on the south side of the Site II structure. Corridor 7 provided access to room 10 before the doorway ('B') was blocked. The problem of other points of access into this corridor is considered above (§3.5.2).

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 150 [2]	R. 7	15.05.1937	1.80 m	Coin, bronze, Wima Kadphises (?).	Coin	
RAB 151 [3].1	R. 7	16.05.1937	1.80 m	Coin, bronze, advanced oxidation, not identified.	Coin	
RAB 152 [3].2	R. 7	16.05.1937	1.80 m	Bead, blue glass.	Items of personal adornment, glass, bead.	
RAB 153 [4]	R. 7	15.05.1937	1.80 m	Vase, coarse pottery, without decoration, containing an eggshell. H. 10 cm (RAB). More specifically, terracotta pot with thick rim containing an eggshell (6 pieces, one fragment missing) (F1937).	Vessels and containers, pottery, pot; organic.	

Room 8

This room was located north of corridor 7. According from Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16), it appears to have been either raised or lowered by a set of three stairs from the eastern courtyard.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 154 [5]	R. 8	15.05.1937	1.40 m	Coin, bronze, advanced oxidation, not identified.	Coin	

Room 9

This room was directly to the west of room 8. It appears to have been connected to the latter with a small doorway, and to have also opened into the eastern court from the room's north wall.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 277 [131]	R. 9	15.06.1937	2.40 m	Coin, strongly oxidised bronze, not identified	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 113, Huvishka king on elephant / Oesho, 14.23 g, Göbl 782.

Room 10

This room was the first major space within which the hoard objects were documented. The table below lists items that I do not consider to have belonged to the hoard deposits (§3.5.3). The hoard objects from this room are instead catalogued in Chapter 4.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 238 [92]	R. 10	05.06.1937	1.50 m	Coin, oxidised bronze, not identified.	Coin	
RAB 254 [108]	R. 10	08.06.1937 – 10.06.1937	1.60 m	Lot of 24 iron objects (a-x); tools, hook, ring, other fragments, deposited to left side near tibia of male skeleton in N-S direction.	Burial; military equipment, iron; items of personal adornment, iron; tools and utensils (?), iron.	See §2.4.2, §3.5.3.

Room 11

This is the northeastern room of the later qala excavated at Site II. It is numbered correctly on Carl's plan (Pl. 14), but swapped with room 12 on Meunié's (Pl. 15) and Le Berre's

(Pl. 16) plans (discussed in §2.4.2, §2.4.3). Although defined by the bounds of a later building, this room overlaps part of the earlier main Site II structure, and the find listed below probably relates to occupation in the latter (see also §3.5.3 above).

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 215 [69]	R. 11	31.05.1937	2.00 m	Bronze leaf, traces of gilding (H. 12.6 cm; W. 12.0 cm).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	LTR No. 176. Compare §4.4.

Room 12

This room is the northwestern room of the later qala excavated at Site II. As with room 11 above, it is numbered correctly on Carl's plan (Pl. 14), but swapped with room 11 on Meunié's (Pl. 15) and Le Berre's (Pl. 16) plans (see also §2.4.2, §2.4.3). Like room 11, room 12 is defined by the bounds of the later qala, but overlaps with part of the earlier main Site II structure.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 239 [93]	R. 12	05.06.1937	1.50 m	Coin, oxidised bronze, not identified.	Coin	
RAB 244 [98]	R. 12	05.06.1937	2.60 m	Coin, very oxidised bronze, unidentified.	Coin	
RAB 276 [130]	R. 12	15.06.1937	2.40 m	Coin, strongly oxidised bronze, not identified.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 114, Huvishka king on elephant / Miir (late emission), 8.69 g.

Room 13

This room was the second major space within which the hoard objects were documented. The table below lists items that I do not consider to have belonged to the hoard deposits (see §3.5.3). The hoard objects from this room are instead catalogued in Chapter 4.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 10	R. 13	24.06.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, marked oxidation.	Coin	

NRAB 11	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 12	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 13	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 14	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 15	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 16	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, Vasudeva.	Coin	
NRAB 18	R. 13	24.05.1939	1.80 m	Carnelian bead.	Items of personal adornment, bead.	
NRAB 20	R. 13	14.06.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, very advanced oxidation, pierced with a circular hole in the central part.	Coin	
NRAB 21	R. 13	14.06.1939	1.80 m	'Billon' coin, very advanced oxidation, pierced with a circular hole in the central part.	Coin	

Room 19

This room, along the south side of the Site II structure, was part of a group excavated by Meunié in 1938. His report mentions only that a single unidentifiable 'bronze' coin was found in this room, and that a large earthenware jar was found in the doorway between rooms 19 and 20.¹⁵⁹¹

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
Meunié 1959a, 105.	19	1938		Unidentifiable bronze coin.	Coin	
Meunié 1959a, 105.	Doorway between 19–20.	1938		Large earthenware pot.	Vessels and container, pottery.	

¹⁵⁹¹ Meunié 1959a, 105.

Room 20

This was another room excavated by Meunié in 1938, and only contained an earthenware pot in the doorway shared with room 19; for this see above.

Room T

Room T was first delineated to some degree in 1937 and was named for the northeastern ‘tour’ of the later qala which cuts across it. A range of different findspot indications are related to room T, and it is somewhat difficult to interpret these. It should first be highlighted that although the bounds of this room are very clear in Le Berre’s plan (Pl. 16), its walls were not yet fully defined in 1937. Carl’s plan from this period (Pl. 14) indicates that the western wall of room 10 had been cut into, and room T was understood to encompass also what was later revealed to be the central corridor running along the other side of the western wall of rooms 10 and 13 (see Pl. 16). This confusion helps to clarify some findspot indications from the various documents covering excavations in 1940 in this area (R1940, F1940, MSNRAB, and NRAB), variously referring to a “couloir central,” “R. (corridor),” and “R. T. (couloir).” More specifically, R1940 described objects which can be identified as NRAB 252–255 as having been found in “couloir central” (R1940), which are then given in F1940 and subsequent documents the findspot “R. T. (couloir)” (see Appendix II). R1940 also describes objects which can be identified as NRAB 260–262 as deriving from the same “couloir central” (Appendix II), and from F1940 onwards, these are given the findspot indication “R. (corridor).” NRAB 263–265 bis are also given the findspot indication from F1940 onwards as “R. T. (couloir).” Also because the doorway of room T (ca. 1.0 x 2.0 m) could hardly have been conceived of as a corridor/couloir, I consider the finds above to have all been found in the central corridor, and treat them all separately below.

Finds associated with the main use of the Site II structure in room T appear from a horizon of 2.50 m and below, and were excavated in part by the Hackins in 1940 and in part by Ghirshman, after he cleared the northeastern bastion of the qala. The 1940 excavation data includes the usual depth measurements as well as further detail about the position of some finds within the room, but Ghirshman did not publish depth measurements. For this reason, this section concludes with a separate table of Ghirshman’s finds from below the bastion in the south of room T.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
RAB 211 [65]	R. T	30.05.1937	0.80 m	Coin, heavily oxidised bronze, illegible.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 112, Kanishka or Huvishka, 15.27 g.
RAB 212 [66]	R. T	30.05.1937	0.80 m	Coin, heavily oxidised bronze, illegible.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 110, Kanishka I sacrificing king / Mao, Miiro, or Athsho, 14.70 g.
RAB 213 [67]	R. T	30.05.1937	0.80 m	Coin, heavily oxidised bronze, illegible.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 116. Posthumous imitation of Vasudeva I, sacrificing king / Oesho with bull, 2.92 g, see Morris 2017, No. 116.
RAB 214 [68]	R. T	30.05.1937	0.80 m	Coin, heavily oxidised bronze, illegible.	Coin	Bopearachchi 2001, No. 109, imitation of Kujula Kadphises, 1.50 g.
NRAB 237	R. T, N. wall.	01.05.1940	2.50 m	Hollow bronze figurine of young, beardless horseman.	Figurine, bronze.	§4.5
NRAB 238	R. T	02.05.1940	2.50 m	Hollow bronze element in form of head and neck of a duck (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 239	R. T, N. wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 240	R. T, N. wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178, identical to NRAB 239.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 241	R. T, N. wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 242	R. T, N. wall.	04.06.1940	2.50 m	Bronze corner support terminating in foot of a lion, type NRAB 178.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4

NRAB 243	R. T, N wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze foot in the form of a “balustrade;” the top formed in a crimped ring and still contains a pin.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 244	R. T, SW, below foundation of bastion.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze ornament in the form of aiguillette or lace. Ends falling on either side of curved middle part. According to NRAB, part of NRAB 354.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 245	R. T, N wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Gold appliqué in high relief representing the mask of an elephant. Trunk serving as a spout, mask originally attached to (now pulverised) glass vessel with an adhesive.	Vessels and containers, glass and gold.	§4.2.1.16
NRAB 246	R. T, N wall.	04.05.1940	2.50 m	Same as NRAB 245 but with slightly different dimensions.	Vessels and containers, glass and gold.	§4.2.1.16
NRAB 248	R. T, towards the bastion, 0.40 m below.	05.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze winged sphinx with head of woman, crouched.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 249	R. T, right of bastion.	05.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze support terminating in lion’s foot.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 250	R. T	05.05.1940	2.50 m	Bronze support terminating in lion’s foot, slender form, upper part with mask of lion.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 251	R. T, N wall.	05.05.1940	2.50 m	Brown-black glass piriform unguentarium (LM).	Vessels and containers, glass,	§4.2.1.21

					unguentarium.	
NRAB 256	R. T, N wall.	07.05.1940	2.60 m	Parts of the metal armature of a large wooden box. Fragments of very oxidised iron. Corner reinforcements.	Furniture, iron fittings.	§4.13.2
NRAB 235	R. T	30.04.1940	2.80 m	Colourless glass funnel, Isings 74? (LM).	Vessels and containers, glass.	§4.2.1.22.
NRAB 230	R. T, E wall.	29.04.1940	2.80 m	Bronze element in form of parrot, wings partially outstretched.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 231	R. T, E wall.	30.04.1940	2.80 m	Bronze element in form of palmette.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 234	R. T	30.04.1940	2.80 m	Truncated rod, three bulges, lotiform capital at end with central cavity at upper part. Foot of an object.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 354	R. T, '40 cm below the foundation of NE tower.'	05.05.1940	3.20 m (2.50 m in R1940?)	Octagonal wooden box originally formed from eight rectangular panels. Seven panels featuring copper armature and decorative elements, scrollwork with silhouettes of birds and Erotes. Panels 1 and 4 had an aiguillette-shaped handle (see NRAB 244), panel 7 had a lock. No trace found of panel 3 (LM).	Boxes with metal decoration or fittings, copper.	§4.13.2

The following table lists Ghirshman's finds from below the bastion in the south of room

T.¹⁵⁹²

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
B.G. 1	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze handle.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 8, XXXV, B.G. 1; §4.4.
B.G. 2	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze leg of a bovine (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 1, XXXIV, B.G. 2; §4.4.
B.G. 3	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze support terminating in a lion's paw.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XXX, 2, XXXIV, B.G. 3; §4.4.
B.G. 4	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze support terminating in a lion's paw.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXIV, B.G. 4; §4.4.
B.G. 5	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze element in form of a seated bird.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 5, XXXV, B.G. 5; §4.4.
B.G. 6	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze foot element, e.g. from a candelabrum (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 6, XXXV, B.G. 6; §4.4.
B.G. 7	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze foot element, e.g. from a candelabrum (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 7; §4.4.
B.G. 8	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze box closure; bronze rivets and chain with iron plaques.	Boxes with metal decoration or fittings, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 3, 7, XXXV, B.G. 8; §4.13.2.
B.G. 9	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze figurine of a grotesque male figure, perhaps a mime, hunched with shaven head and draped in a long garment.	Figurine, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XII, 1–5, XXXIV, B.G. 9; §4.5.
B.G. 10	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze rivets.	Boxes with metal decoration	Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 10; §4.13.2

¹⁵⁹² See Ghirshman 1946, 67–69.

					or fittings, bronze.	
B.G. 11	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze chains with suspension loops.	Boxes with metal decoration or fittings, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 4, XXXV, B.G. 11; §4.13.2.
B.G. 12	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Bronze ring with moulded edges. Foot element? (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 12; §4.4.
B.G. 13	T, under bastion.	1941	Under bastion	Clay sealing with imprint of woven surface on reverse. Two seal imprints of nude figures.	Raw or semi- worked materials, clay sealing.	Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XIII, 9, XXXV, B.G. 13; §4.10.1.

Central corridor / T. couloir

This is the corridor ('E' on Le Berre's plan, Pl. 16), that ran directly to the west of rooms 10 and 13, and to the east of room T. On the delineation of this excavation area, see remarks under room T above. In the below, I reproduce the findspot indications given in different sources.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 254	Couloir central, northern extremity (R1940); R. T. (couloir), NW corner of northern extremity of corridor (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	07.05.1940	2.40 m	Small bronze vessel with circular hole at base with remnant fragment of bronze, originally from composite device such as a lamp stand (LM).	Element from metalwork, bronze.	§4.4
NRAB 255	Couloir central, northern extremity (R1940); R. T. (couloir),	07.05.1940	2.40 m	Incomplete small bronze parallelepiped <i>aedicula</i> (?) with door and window.	Furniture, bronze, shrine?	§4.13.4

	NW corner of northern extremity of corridor (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).					
NRAB 260	Couloir central (R1940); R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	08.05.1940	2.40 m	Small lamp, common pottery.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamp.	
NRAB 261	Couloir central (R1940); R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	09.05.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, very marked oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 262	Couloir central (R1940); R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	09.05.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, very marked oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 263	Couloir central (R1940); R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	09.05.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, very marked oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 264	Couloir central (R1940); R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	09.05.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, very marked oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 265	R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB);	09.05.1940	2.40 m (2.70 m, R1940?).	Terracotta spindle whorl, cylindrical form. Dia. 3.7 cm.	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	

	T (R1940)?.					
NRAB 265 bis	R. (Corridor) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB); T (R1940)?.	09.05.1940	2.40 m (2.70 m, R1940?).	Terracotta spindle whorl, cylindrical form. Dia 5.4 cm.	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	
NRAB 252	Couloir central (R1940); R. T. (couloir) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	05.05.1940	3.00 m (2.50 m or 2.80 m, R1940?).	‘Billon’ coin, Kushan, marked oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 253	Couloir central (R1940); R. T. (couloir) (F1940, MSNRAB, NRAB).	05.05.1940	3.00 m (2.50 m or 2.80 m, R1940?).	‘Billon’ coin, marked oxidation.	Coin	

Room/area T. N. O. / X?

This findspot designation (with further brackets occasionally added) and R. T. O. (N.O) appear in F1940, MSNRAB, and NRAB. Both designations do not appear to refer to a space within room T proper, but rather rooms/areas north and west of the northeast bastion of the qala. This impression is reiterated by a reference in R1940 to NRAB 307 or NRAB 308 (from R. T. O. (N.O), see below), which indicates the findspot “Chambre à l’ouest de la tour” (Appendix II). Following Le Berre’s plan (Pl. 16), this area would appear to overlap with room/area X, which however is indicated as a findspot separately (see below). It is thus possible that room/area T. N. O and T. O. (N.O) refer to parts of room/area X, but out of uncertainty, I keep these areas separate here. In F1940, NRAB 292–298 (‘billon’ coins) are catalogued together, and presumably were found together in a group. Likewise, in F1940 NRAB 290–291 (two further ‘billon’ coins) were catalogued together. In MSNRAB and NRAB all are grouped together.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 302	R. T. N. O.	26.05.1940	1.80 m	Small lamp, common pottery. H. 3.6 cm, L. 6.4 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamp.	
NRAB 292	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 293	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 294	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 295	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 296	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 297	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 298	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 290	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 291	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 299	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	Fragments of small common pottery vessel with two handles (one broken) and short neck, flat rim, stamped decoration of two concentric circles around vase at height of body [shoulder? LM]. H. (surviving) 10.0 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 300	R. T. N. O.	22.05.1940	2.80 m	Object of hollow conical form with thick walls, common pottery, decorated with three rows of debossed triangles. H. 6.2 cm.	Vessels and containers?, pottery.	
NRAB 288	R. T. N. O.	20.05.1940	3.10 m	Small vessel, common pottery, neck and handle broken, with spout. H. 5.5 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 289	R. T. N. O.	20.05.1940	3.10 m	Neck and opening of common pottery vessel. H. 5.7 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	

Room/area T. O. (N.O) / X?

This excavation area appears to have been located to the west of room T, and may refer to an adjacent area to R. T. N. O. as well as part of room/area X. See commentary above.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 307	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	Six connecting fragments of large bowl, protruding edges, common ribbed pottery, grey-black paste. H. 7.2 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 308	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	'See NRAB 307. Eight connecting fragments.' H. 7.0 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 309	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	'See NRAB 307. Ten connecting fragments.' H. 10.35 cm.	Pottery (vessel).	
NRAB 310	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	Base of vessel, common red pottery with black slip. H. (surviving) 8.3 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 311	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	Fragments vessel in form of hanap [goblet] on a circular foot, common red pottery. H. (surviving) 9.5 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 312	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	Fragments of a bowl, common ribbed pottery, grey-black paste. H. (surviving) 9.0 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 313	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	'See NRAB 312.' H. (surviving) 7.0 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 314	R. T. O. (N.O).	15.05.1940	3.10 m	Fragments of a bowl, common red pottery.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	

Area/room sud de la T

This excavation area is referred to in MSNRAB and NRAB as “R. (Ch. sud de la Tour)” and in an abbreviated form in F1940 (“R. Ch. sud T).” It is not referred to in R1940. The location of this area or room is also difficult to pinpoint; presumably it refers to an area south of the NE bastion of the qala, but it is unclear whether this overlaps with the rooms in the qala proper, or (for example) room 21 cleared by Meunié in 1938 (§2.4.4). The only finds in this area are 12 ‘billon’ coins catalogued in lots and a pottery lamp. More specifically, NRAB 275 was catalogued alone in F1940, while NRAB 276–277 were grouped together, and NRAB 278–286 also together. Comparably, NRAB catalogues the first three coins (NRAB 275–277) as a group. None of these help us to locate the area.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 275	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	18.05.1940	3.10 m (2.50 m F1940)	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 276	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	18.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 277	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	18.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 278	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 279	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 280	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 281	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 282	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 283	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 284	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 285	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	

				Huvishka, standing with elephant type.		
NRAB 286	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation. Huvishka, standing with elephant type.	Coin	
NRAB 287	R. (Ch. sud de la Tour).	19.05.1940	3.10 m	Small lamp, common pottery. H. 3.6 cm, L. 7.4 cm.	Pottery (lamp).	

Area/court U

Following Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16), this area appears to be located directly north of rooms/areas T and X, and south of area V. This area appears to be an open court, which is an assumption made explicit on Hamelin's plan (Pl. 34.2). However, some difficulties are presented by inconsistencies between objects reported in this area in F1940, MSNRAB, and NRAB versus R1940. For example, NRAB 257–258 bis and NRAB 266–267 are indicated in R1940 as having been found at a depth of 3.10 m in “chambre voisine celle de la tour vers le Sud l'ouest.” Additionally, NRAB 259 is reported in R1940 as from “colouir central.” It is plausible that these indications in R1940 are mistakes then corrected in F1940 (then taken forwards for NRAB and MSNRAB), but I indicate them in the table below regardless.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 257	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?	08.05.1940	2.40 m (3.10 m, R1940?).	Carnelian cut and polished into oval seal, not engraved. 2.8 x 1.8 cm.	Worked materials, semi-precious stone.	
NRAB 258	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?	08.05.1940	2.40 m (3.10 m, R1940?).	Cut and polished carnelian in a spherical form.	Worked materials, semi-precious stone.	
NRAB 258 bis	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la	08.05.1940	2.40 m (3.10 m, R1940?).	Cut and polished banded agate, barrel form, pierced.	Items of personal adornment, bead.	

	tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?					
NRAB 259	R. U; Couloir central (R1940)?	08.05.1940	2.40 m	Bronze object in the form of a large, hollow needle. L. 8.0 cm, Dia. 0.4–0.8 cm.	Unknown function, bronze.	
NRAB 266	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?	11.05.1940	3.10 m	Cut and polished carnelian, elongated form, pierced lengthwise. L. 3.1 cm.	Items of personal adornment, bead?	
NRAB 266 bis	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?	11.05.1940	3.10 m	Cut and polished carnelian, elongated form, pierced lengthwise. L. 4.4 cm.	Items of personal adornment, bead?	
NRAB 267	R. U; chambre voisiné celle de la tour vers l'ouest (R1940)?	11.05.1940	3.10 m	Cut and polished carnelian, pierced, elongated form, 'part of a necklace.' L. 4.0 cm.	Items of personal adornment, bead.	
NRAB 268	R. U	12.05.1940	3.10 m	Spindle whorl, type NRAB 265, i.e. cylindrical form, terracotta. Dia. 3.5 cm.	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	
NRAB 269	R. U	12.05.1940	3.10 m	Spindle whorl, type NRAB 265, i.e. cylindrical form, terracotta. Dia. 3.0 cm.	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	
NRAB 272	R. U	12.05.1940	3.10 m	Common pottery cup, without ornamentation.	Vessels and containers, pottery, cup.	
NRAB 273	R. U	12.05.1940	3.10 m	Common pottery hanap [goblet], broken on upper part.	Vessels and containers, pottery, goblet.	

Room/area V / Havalдар

This is a partially undefined excavation area which appears to have lay in the northern part of Site II. References to ‘Havalдар’ refer to Abdul Rahman, a figure who presumably led work in this area (see discussion in §2.4.5). A possible reference to NRAB 270 in R1940 indicates that this object was found “Chambre voisine de la tour vers le nord,” (Appendix II) which gives the impression that this area may overlap with area/court U. In the below I include objects from areas consistently referred to between F1940, MSNRAB and NRAB as from “R. V. (Havalдар)” (the northern rooms indicated with ‘V’ on Le Berre’s plan, Pl. 16), “R. (Havalдар Nord),” “R. (Havalдар, extrémité nord),” and “R. (H. E. N.),” retaining these findspot indications.

In the rooms Ghirshman further excavated in this area (‘V_G’ on Le Berre’s plan), Ghirshman documented a masonry drain dug into sterile ground,¹⁵⁹³ as well as several “égrugeoirs” (grinding stones, such as saddle querns?), indicating that it served as food reserve.¹⁵⁹⁴ However, he did not publish these separately as small finds.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 304	R. (Havalдар Nord).	28.05.1940	0.40 m	Fragment of ‘water whistle,’ type NRAB 301, head. H. 4.1 cm.	Figurines, pottery.	
NRAB 306	R. (Havalдар, extrémité Nord).	29.05.1940	1.30 m	‘Billon’ coin, Huvishka.	Coin	
NRAB 301	R. (Havalдар Nord).	22.05.1940	1.60 m	Small reddish fine pottery ‘water whistle’ in the form of a horse. Two protruding openings on rump and chest respectively.	Figurines, pottery.	
NRAB 315	R. (Havalдар, extrémité Nord).	03.06.1940	1.80 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 303	R. (Havalдар Nord).	27.05.1940	2.20 m	Carnelian, polished and cut into the form of a bead.	Items of personal adornment, bead.	
NRAB 325	R. (H. E. N.)	06.06.1940	2.40 m	‘Billon’ coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	

¹⁵⁹³ Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 13, Pl. VII, 7

¹⁵⁹⁴ Ghirshman 1946, 28.

NRAB 326	R. (H. E. N.)	06.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 327	R. (H. E. N.)	06.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 328	R. (H. E. N.)	06.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 329	R. (H. E. N.)	06.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 318	R. (Havalдар, extrémité Nord).	03.06.1940	3.00 m	Small gold pendant with a chain in circular form, with a 'perle' [bead?] inserted into the chain.	Items of personal adornment, gold jewellery.	
NRAB 270	R. V (Havalдар).	12.05.1940	3.10 m	Small lamp, common pottery. H. 3.5 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	

Room/area W / Seyyed Jan

Two objects from Site II were recorded with a findspot referring to the name "Seyyed Jan," presumably the figure who led excavations in this area (see §2.4.5). NRAB 271 was reported in "R. W. (Seyyed Jan)," and NRAB 305 in "R. (Seyyed Jan Nord)." This excavation area cannot be located with more precision, but perhaps lay somewhere in the western part of Site II (like the other excavated areas from the 1940 season).

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 305	R. (Seyyed Jan Nord).	28.05.1940	1.40 m	Common pottery jar. Decoration of three concentric lines at the base of the neck and beginning of the belly. Immediately below, a decoration of seven stamped circular medallions, each of them displaying a flower with eight petals surrounded by a circular border traversed by slashes. H. 27.0 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery, jar.	
NRAB 271	R. W. (Seyyed Jan).	12.05.1940	3.20 m	Carnelian, cut and polished, form of a bead.	Items of personal adornment, bead.	

Room/area X

Judging from Le Berre's plan (Pl. 16), this room/area was located immediately to the west of room T. As discussed above, this space may overlap with the findspot indications "R. T. N. O." and "R. T. O. (N.O)."

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 236	R. X	01.05.1940	0.40 m	Spindle weight, form of a vase. Earth, black slip.	Tools for textile working (spindle whorl)?	
NRAB 247	R. X	04.05.1940	2.00 m	Fragment of an undecorated hanap, common pottery, of domestic use, red without slip. Classic type on circular foot, with slight bulge at base.	Vessels and container, pottery, goblet.	
NRAB 247 bis	R. X	04.05.1940	2.00 m	'Same as previous,' i.e. fragment of an undecorated hanap, common pottery, of domestic use, red without slip. Classic type on circular foot, with slight bulge at base.	Vessels and container, pottery, goblet.	

Area A. A. / Ahmad Ali

This excavation area is not referred to in R1940, but appears to be represented through a range of orthographic variants in F1940, MSNRAB, and NRAB, such as "Ch. (Ah. Ali)," "Ch. Ali Ahmed," "Ch. A. A." (with and without the preceding 'R.' indicating Site II). I have normalised all to be consistent in the below as "R. A. A." Work in this area was apparently supervised by Ahmad Ali Kohzad (see §2.4.6), but despite the large number of reported finds, it is difficult to delineate where this area is located. Although the majority of work in 1940 took place to the west of rooms 10 and 13, there are two reasons why I suspect that this area may have covered some of the northern blocks of rooms in Site II. First, NRAB 324 and NRAB 324 [bis] were originally reported in F1940 as coming from "Havaladar E. N." (see above room/area V / Havaladar), an indication which was then struck out and corrected for "A. A." Second, while one archival photograph from 1939 shows that the rooms in the northeast of Site II had already been at least partially cleared in that year (Pl. 27.2), on another appearing to show Site II after

the conclusion of excavations in 1940 (as the whole area north of the qala has been cleared), a shade cover is visible over the middle room of the group of three built into the north of the eastern court (Pl. 27.3). Finds from this area represent the majority of the last objects registered from this season during its last weeks in June. Therefore, Ahmad Ali Kohzad may have been active in the northeastern rooms of Site II during 1940, although this remains uncertain.

Cat. No.	Area	Date	Depth	Description	Type	Concordance
NRAB 348	R. A. A.	18.06.1940	1.20 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 317	R. A. A.	02.06.1940	1.60 m	Small pendant in the form of a crescent, probably serving as part of a pendant from an earring. Gold.	Items of personal adornment, gold jewellery.	
NRAB 320	R. A. A.	05.06.1940	1.60 m	Bronze spoon with extremity of hand in the form of a palmette (?).	Utensil, bronze.	
NRAB 323	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	Fragment of small horse, common pottery. Lower part of body of horseman remains, with pants decorated with oblique slashes. H. (surviving) 6.3 cm.	Figurines, pottery.	
NRAB 324	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	Iron key, and fragment of iron lock.	Fasteners and fittings, iron.	
NRAB 324 [bis]	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	Fragment of iron axe (?) in five sections.	Tool, iron?	
NRAB 330	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 331	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 332	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 333	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	Copper needle. L. 11.4 cm.	Unknown function	
NRAB 334	R. A. A.	06.06.1940	1.60 m	Two fragments of copper bowl. 11.5 x 5.8 cm.	Vessels and containers, copper, bowl.	
NRAB 336	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	1.60 m	Common red pottery hanap [goblet]. Missing foot, rim chipped. H. (surviving) 12.9 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery, goblet.	
NRAB 352	R. A. A.	24.06.1940	2.00 m	Iron corner piece.	Fasteners and fittings, iron.	
NRAB 337	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	

NRAB 338	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 339	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 340	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 341	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 342	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 343	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 344	R. A. A.	10.06.1940	2.40 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 345	R. A. A.	13.06.1940	2.40 m	Common pottery lamp 'de porche' [?], Kushan type. 8.8 x 8.5 x 4.7 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamp.	
NRAB 346	R. A. A.	13.06.1940	2.40 m	Common pottery lamp 'de porche' [?], Kushan type. 6.7 x 7.4 x 3.7 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamp.	
NRAB 350	R. A. A.	20.06.1940	2.40 m	Steatite spindle whorl.	Tools for textile working, stone, spindle whorl?	
NRAB 335	R. A. A.	09.06.1940	2.40 m	Bronze support, type NRAB 178.	Element from metalwork, bronze.	
NRAB 316	R. A. A.	03.06.1940	2.70 m	Anterior part of a caprid-shaped vessel. Common pottery with thin walls, blackish slip. Two openings on each side of the chest. H. 17.8 cm.	Vessels and containers, pottery.	
NRAB 347	R. A. A.	14.06.1940	2.80 m	Iron ring.	Unknown function	
NRAB 349	R. A. A.	18.06.1940	2.80 m	'Billon' coin, strong oxidation.	Coin	
NRAB 319	R. A. A.	05.06.1940	3.10 m	Fragments of common red pottery vessel. At beginning of belly [neck?], two circular medallions, impressions in low relief: ibex/goat represented in profile to left. At the height of the rump of the ibex, a bird in profile to left. Under the ibex, an unidentified object. On the left of the	Vessels and containers, pottery.	

				right hand side of the medallion, an engraved sign.		
NRAB 321	R. A. A.	05.06.1940	3.10 m	Iron tripod arrowhead, tang missing.	Military equipment, iron, arrowhead.	
NRAB 322	R. A. A.	05.06.1940	3.10 m	Lot of four common pottery lamps, Kushan form. 1. 8.0 x 7.2 x 4.2 cm 2. 4.2 x 7.1 x 4.2 cm 3. broken 4. broken	Vessels and containers, pottery, lamps.	

Appendix II: finds from 1940 described in R1940

The first column of this table is a transcription of descriptions of finds and some observations in R1940, i.e. Ria Hackin's notebook. As this is an otherwise unpublished primary document, I have sought to preserve particularities of language and format. The second column provides the equivalent catalogue number in NRAB with which the described find might be identified. The third column includes my comments on the information that is provided.

Description in R1940	NRAB equivalent	Comments
Petit objet en forme de vase, mais percé de part en part. Chantier du djoui Profondeur : 0.40, 1 ^{er} Mai	NRAB 236	Chantier du djoui must = Ch. R. X.
Objet bronze, cavalier Chambre de la Tour Prof. 2 m 50, 1 ^{er} Mai	NRAB 237	
Fragments de verre Type millefiori dont quelques portent des traces d'incendié. Prof. entre 2 m 50 et 2 m 80 1 ^{er} Mai 1940	?	Absent in all other documents. R. T. from context?
Chambre de la Tour 1 ^{er} sol d'habitation a 1 m 70 murs construits en porsa au-dessous grandes briques provenant de l'effondrement des murs	-	Note about archaeological context in room T, observing habitation level at 1.70 m, walls made in pisé/pakhsa under bricks from collapsed walls.
Appliqué en bronze, représentant la tête d'une canard. Chambre de la Tour prof : 2 m 50, 2 Mai	NRAB 238	
Deux têtes d'éléphant, masque coulé et repoussé en or ayant servi d'appliqués. Trouvés en contact avec du verre blanc taillé en état de décomposition et avec des plaques et des barres de fer ces dernières légèrement recourbées vers le bout. Serrures de coffres vraisemblablement. Prof 2 m 50 longueur 0 m 58 Chambre de la Tour Le sol à cet enduit est mélangé de poussière de bois 3 Mai	NRAB 245, NRAB 246	Additional information about glass found in contact with masks (i.e. cut), as well as associated iron elements, i.e. object originally deposited in a chest? Date in NRAB is 4.05.1940.

4 pieds en bronze = serres d'aigle ayant supporté un plateau en bois, à en juger d'après les particules de poussière de bois dans lesquelles ils ont été trouvés Prof 2 m 50 4 Mai chambre de la tour	NRAB 239, NRAB 240, NRAB 241, NRAB 242.	Reference to these objects being found in association with wood dust. Perhaps not supporting a tray (as the four supports are of different dimensions), but indicative that they were stored in a wooden box?
Plaquette, sorte de chaînette formant un décor ornemental pu servir d'applique (bronze) Chambre de la tour 4 Mai	NRAB 244	
Bronze (partie adhère ayant appartenu à une colon[n]ette en bronze) 4 Mai	NRAB 243?	Description in NRAB 243 differs slightly.
Pied en bronze griffe de lion passant sur un petit socle rond Chambre de la tour (5 mai) Prof. 2 m 50	NRAB 249	
Pièce d'applique en bronze représentant un sphinx Chambre de la tour (5 Mai)	NRAB 248	
Monnaie bronze Provenant du couloir central Prof : 2 m 50 5 mai	NRAB 252 or NRAB 253	Depth for NRAB 252 and NRAB 253 reported 3.00 m in later documents. An error fixed for publication? Couloir central = R. (corridor) in other documents.
Pied de bronze à griffe de lion Chambre de la Tour 5 Mai	NRAB 250	
Vase en verre sombre, panse en forme de ballon, col allongé 4 Mai Chambre de la Tour	NRAB 251	Date in NRAB 5.05.1940.
Objet « non défini » [?] cuivre et bois, décor de cuivre per présentant des rinceaux incrustés dans du bois, se présente comme une sorte de cassette avec deux anses en cuivre à 40 cm au-dessous des fondations du la Tour Chambre de la Tour Prof. 2 m 50	NRAB 354	Depth reported for NRAB 3.20 m. An error fixed for publication?

Monnaie bronze Kushana Couloir central Prof : 2 m 80 5 mai	NRAB 252 or NRAB 253	Depth for NRAB 252 and NRAB 253 reported 3.00 m in later documents. An error fixed for publication? Couloir central = R. (corridor) in other documents.
Objet en bronze à destination inconnu, se présente comme une sorte d'autel partatif ayant deux volets au forme de partie sur la face principale. Sur l'une de ces volets un décor en cuivre repoussé représente un [...?] Profondeur : Couloir central, extrémité nord 7 mai	NRAB 255	Findspot = R. T. (couloir) in other documents.
Petit vase en bronze (pied manque) partie inférieure bulbeuse et a fines côtes, partie supérieure, au centre étranglé allant s'évasant vers le [... ?] Couloir central, extrémité nord 7 mai	NRAB 254	Findspot = R. T (couloir) in other documents.
Lampe en terre cuite du type ordinaire Couloir central Prof : 2 m 40	NRAB 260	Findspot = R. (Corridor) in other documents.
2 monnaies cuivre couloir central Prof : 8 mai	Two of NRAB 261, NRAB 262, NRAB 263, or NRAB 264	Findspot = R. (Corridor) in other documents.
1 boule cornaline 1 sorte cachet sans motif en cornaline 1 pierre forme oblong chambre voisine celle de la tour vers le Sud l'ouest Prof. 3 m 10 8 mai	NRAB 258, 257, and 258 bis	From date and description, must be NRAB 258, NRAB 257, and NRAB 258 bis. Different depths (2.40 m) and findspot (R. U) in other documents.
Bronze, sorte de longue aiguille percée de part en part Couloir central 8 Mai	NRAB 259	Findspot = R. U in other documents. Usually couloir central in R1940 = R. T (couloir) or R. (corridor).
1 monnaie cuivre couloir central 9 mai	1 of NRAB 261, NRAB 262, NRAB 263 or NRAB 264.	Findspot = R. (Corridor) in other documents.
1 monnaie cuivre chambre voisine de celle de la tour 9 mai	1 of NRAB 261, NRAB 262, NRAB 263 or NRAB 264.	Findspot = R. (Corridor) in other documents.

Peson fuseau, terre cuite, chambre de la tour Prof. 2 m 70 9 Mai	NRAB 265 or NRAB 265 bis.	Identified on basis of date/description, but findspot = R. (Corridor) and depth = 2.40 m in other documents.
3 perles cornaline, dont une sorte de cachet sans motif chambre voisine de celle de la tour, vers le Sud Ouest Prof. 3 m 10	NRAB 266, NRAB 266 bis, and NRAB 267.	Findspot = R. U in other documents.
Lampe terre cuite, du type ordinaire Chambre voisine de la tour vers le nord	NRAB 270?	Identification not certain. If correct, findspot = R. V. Havalдар in other documents.
Bol en terre cuite, très écrasé sous le borde, lacune Prof. 3 m 10		Identification not possible, too many possible options.
Fragments de poterie noire Prof 3 m 10 Chambre a l'ouest de la tour	NRAB 307 or NRAB 308.	Indicates that findspot = R. T. O. (N.W) is distinct from room T, located to the west.

Appendix III: coin finds from the DAFA excavations at Begram

The following table synthesises the coin finds produced from the DAFA excavations, and is adapted from Morris 2021, 32–33, Table 3. The figures from the column marked “47 coins 1937–1938 in NMA – Site I/II 1937 + Meunié Site II + Qala? (Ghirshman 1946, 86)” is not included in the final count as the same material was studied and summarised in other reports, but is included here because Ghirshman noticed additional coins and imitations of Vasudeva I which were not identified elsewhere.

<i>DAFA excavations</i>	1936 – Site I (Bopearachchi 2001 for MG coins). 65 in NMA	1937 – Site I (Bopearachchi 2001 for MG coins). 36 in NMA	1937 – Site II (RAB, F1937; Bopearachchi 2001; Morris 2017). 7 in NMA	1938 – Site II + Qala (Meunié 1959). All in NMA	1938 – Site III (Meunié 1959). All in NMA	47 coins 1937–1938 in NMA – Site I/II 1937 + Meunié Site II + Qala? (Ghirshman 1946, 86)
Euthydemus						
Pantaleon		2				
Local lion/elephant					1	
Eucratides I					1	
Eucratides imitation	1	1				
Menander I						
Strato						
Apollodotus I						
Antialcidas						
Diomedes						
Parthian imitation						
Hermæus lifetime or imitation	1					
Spalahores and Spalagadama				1		
Gondophares						
Abdagases						
Indo-Parthian?						
Mujatria						
Azes I imitation						
Kujula Kadphises	4		2			2
Heliocles imitation		1				
Soter Megas	1					4
Wima Kadphises	9		1		1	1
Kanishka I	17	3	3			
Huvishka	17		4			
Vasudeva I (including imitations)	16	4			1 (imitation?)	16 (including imitations)
Vasudeva imitations	2	1	5			
Kanishka II	3	9	1			17
Vasishka	1					
Kushano-Sasanian						1
Sasanian						
Shri Shahi						
<i>illegible</i>	7 + 65 in NMA	12 + 36 in NMA	+ 5 in NMA	4	16	6

	1939 – Site II (NRAB). All in NMA	1939 – Site? (MSNRAB) All in NMA?	1940 – Site II (NRAB). All in NMA	1941 – NRC and Burj-i Abdullah (Göbl). All in NMA	1942 – NRC (Göbl). All in NMA	1946 – city gate (Göbl). All in NMA	Summary (minus coins from 1937–1938 in NMA)
Euthydemus					1		1 Euthydemus
Pantaleon							2 Pantaleon
Local lion/elephant					1		2 local lion/elephant
Eucratides I				2	13 (including imitations)		16 Eucratides I
Eucratides imitation							2 imitations
Menander I				1	1		2 Menander I
Strato					1		1 Strato
Apollodotus I					2	1	3 Apollodotus I
Antialcidas				1			1 Antialcidas
Diomedes				1			1 Diomedes
Parthian imitation					1		1 Parthian imitation
Hermæus lifetime or imitation				8 (or lifetime?)	11 (or lifetime?)	2 (or lifetime?)	22 Hermæus lifetime or imitation
Spalahores and Spalagadama							1 Spalahores and Spalagadama
Gondophares	1			5	15		21 Gondophares
Abdagases				1	4		5 Abdagases
Indo-Parthian?				1			1 Indo-Parthian?
Mujatria					1		1 Mujatria
Azes I imitation				1			1 Azes I imitation
Kujula Kadphises	1			13	56	4	80 Kujula Kadphises
Heliocles imitation					3		4 Heliocles imitation
Soter Megas				6	21	3	31 Soter Megas
Wima Kadphises	1			5	18	5	40 Wima Kadphises
Kanishka I				13	30	8	74 Kanishka I
Huvishka			3 (imitations?)	22	36	12	90 Huvishka
Vasudeva I (including imitations)	6 (imitations?)			7 (including imitations)	31 (including imitations)	21 (including imitations; 4 from hoard)	86 Vasudeva I (including imitations)
Vasudeva imitations							8 Vasudeva imitations
Kanishka II				4	10	65 (including imitations? 61 from hoard)	92 Kanishka II
Vasishka							1 Vasishka
Kushano-Sasanian					2	4	6 Kushano-Sasanian
Sasanian				1			1 Sasanian
Shri Shahi		1					1 Shri Shahi
illegible	54	5	46	7	16	2	275 illegible
							Total: 873 = 598 identified and 275 unidentified

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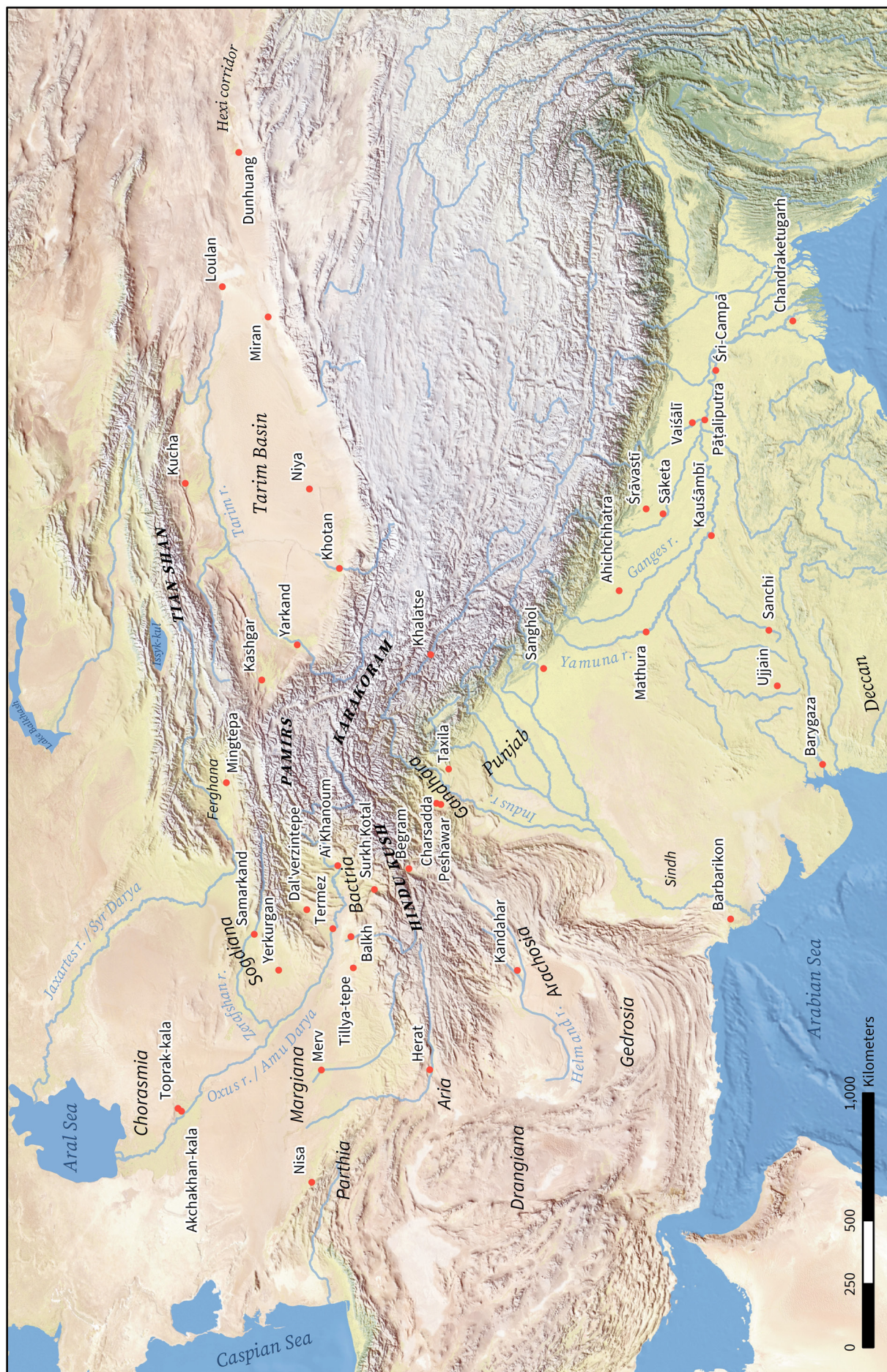
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Plates

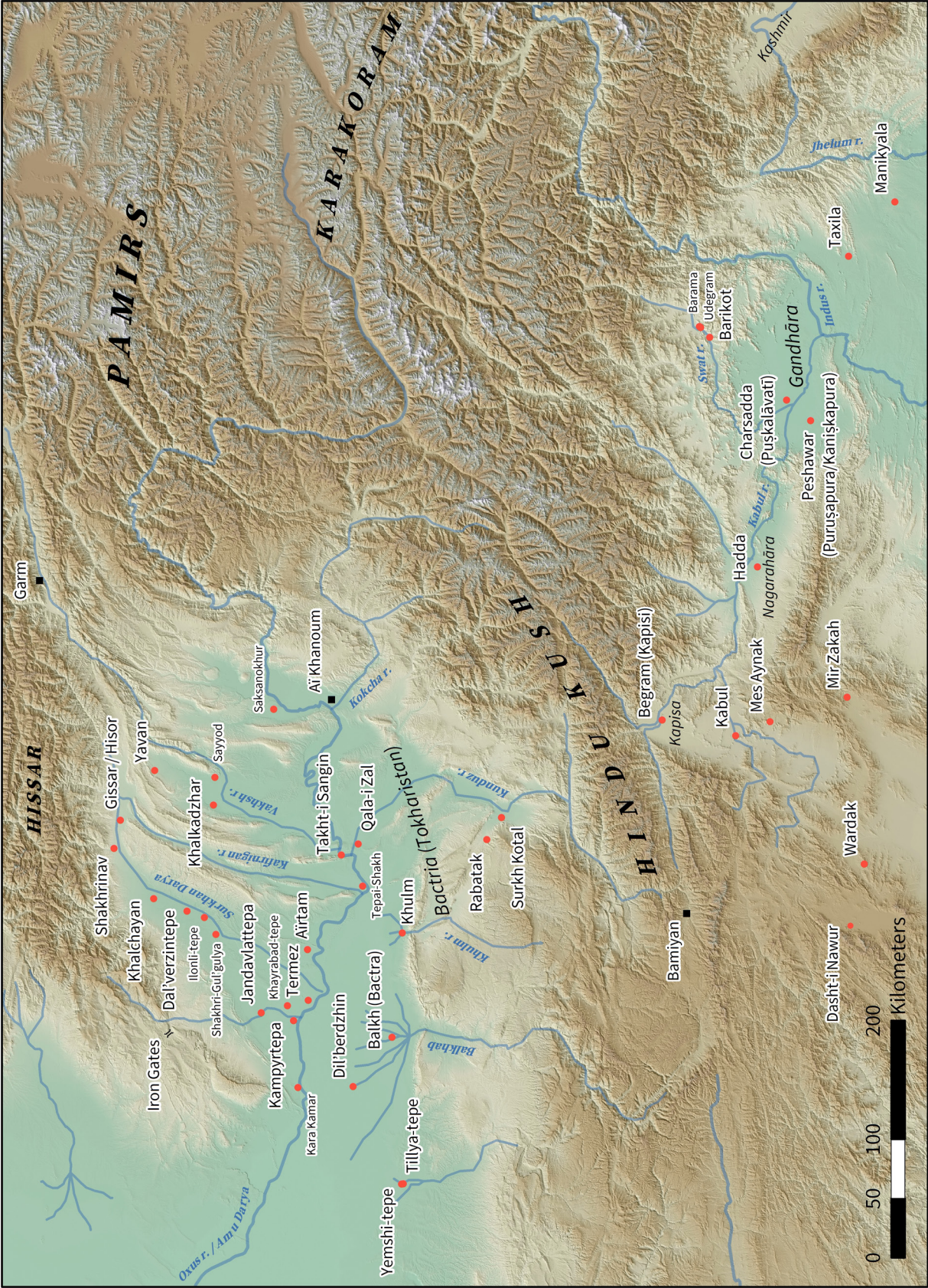
Note: the citations for the sources of images used in the plates follow the format of abbreviations and referencing utilised in the main text. In addition to this, all photographs indicated “Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG” are included by the courtesy of Pierre Cambon, curator of the Afghan Collection at the Musée Guimet.



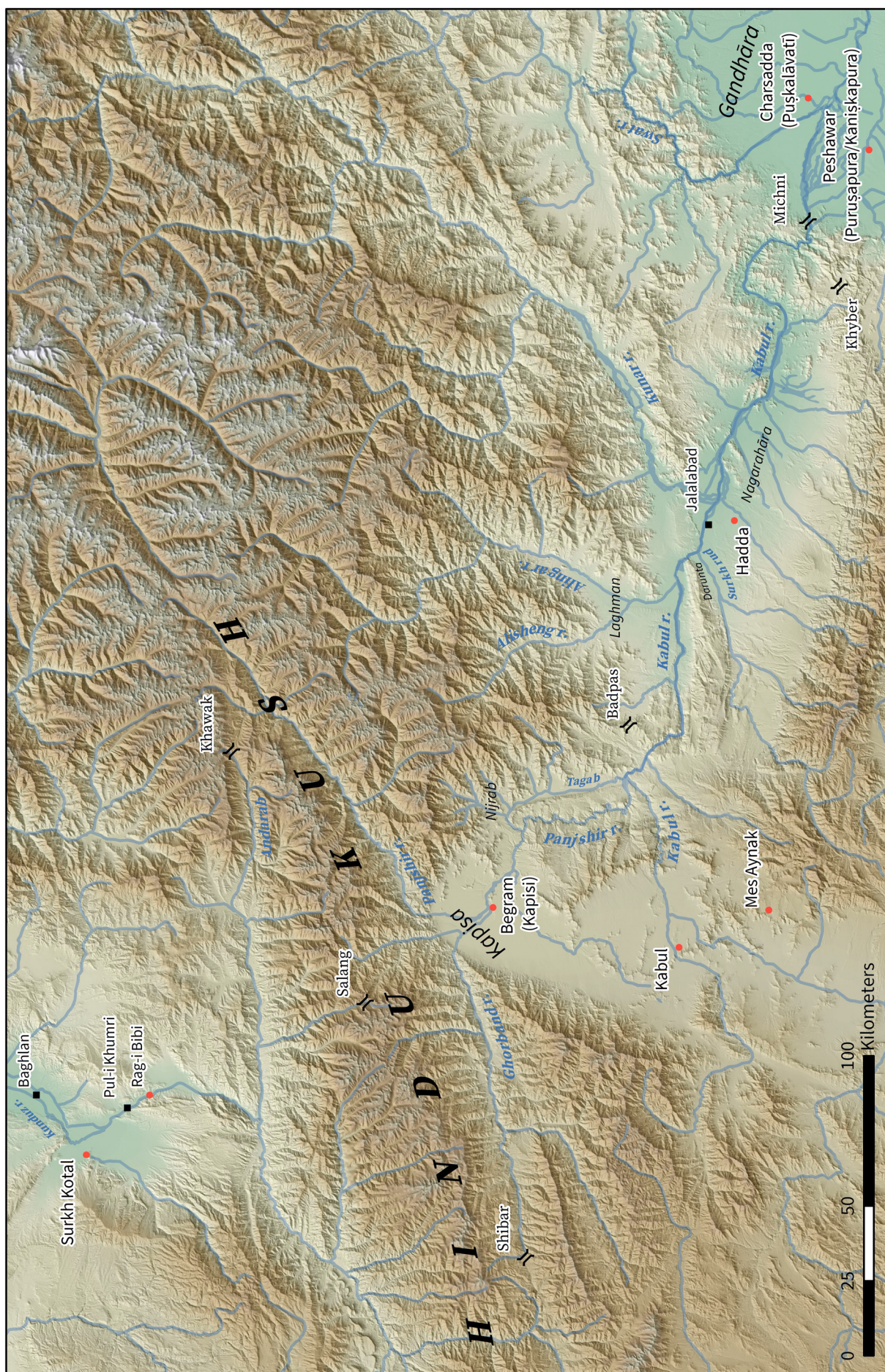
Ancient Afro-Eurasia, with places and sites discussed in the text.



Central Asia and northern Indian in antiquity.



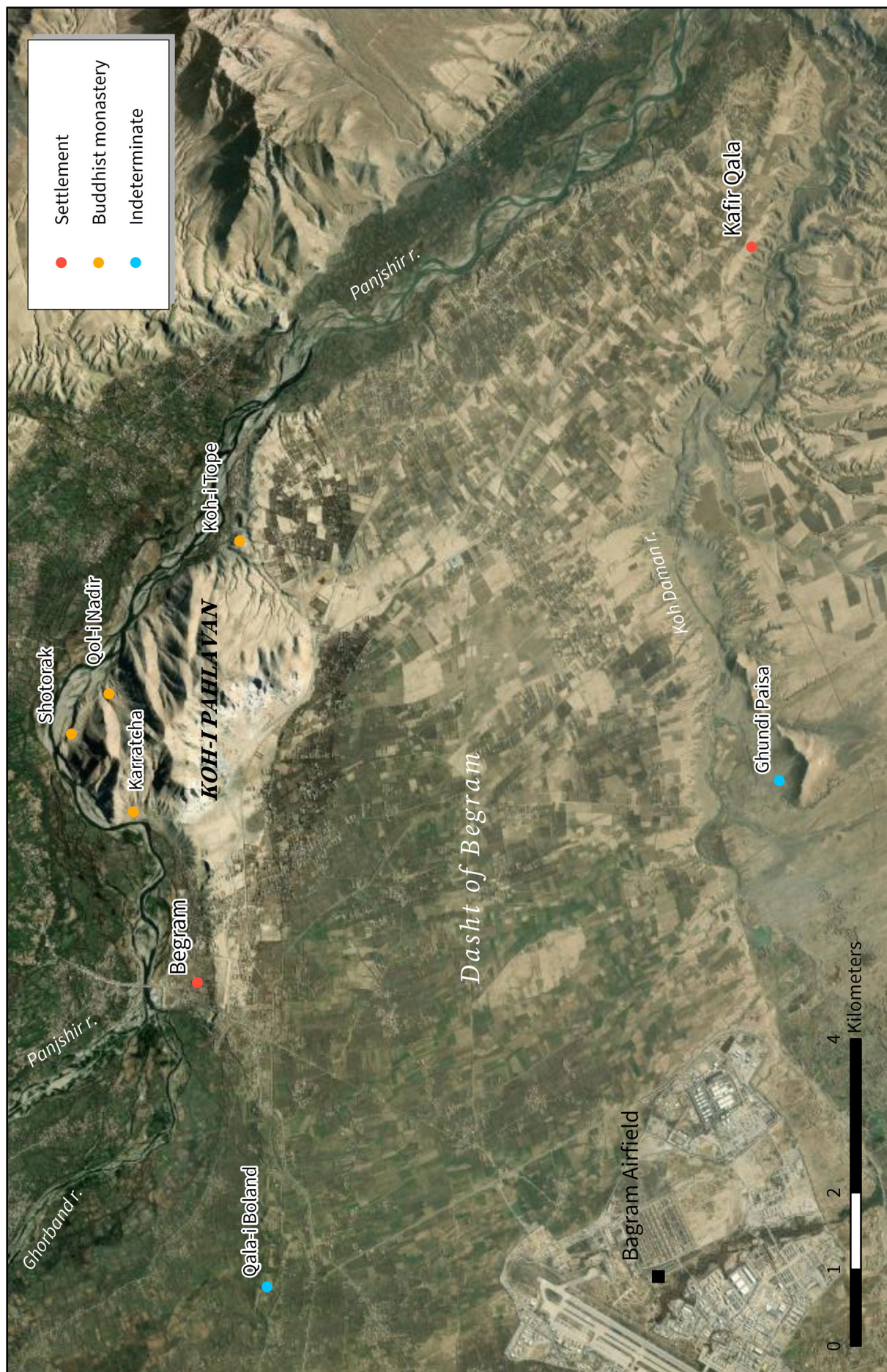
Kushan Central Asia.



Kapisa and its frontiers with Bactria and Gandhāra.



Kapisa, with known pre-Islamic archaeological sites.



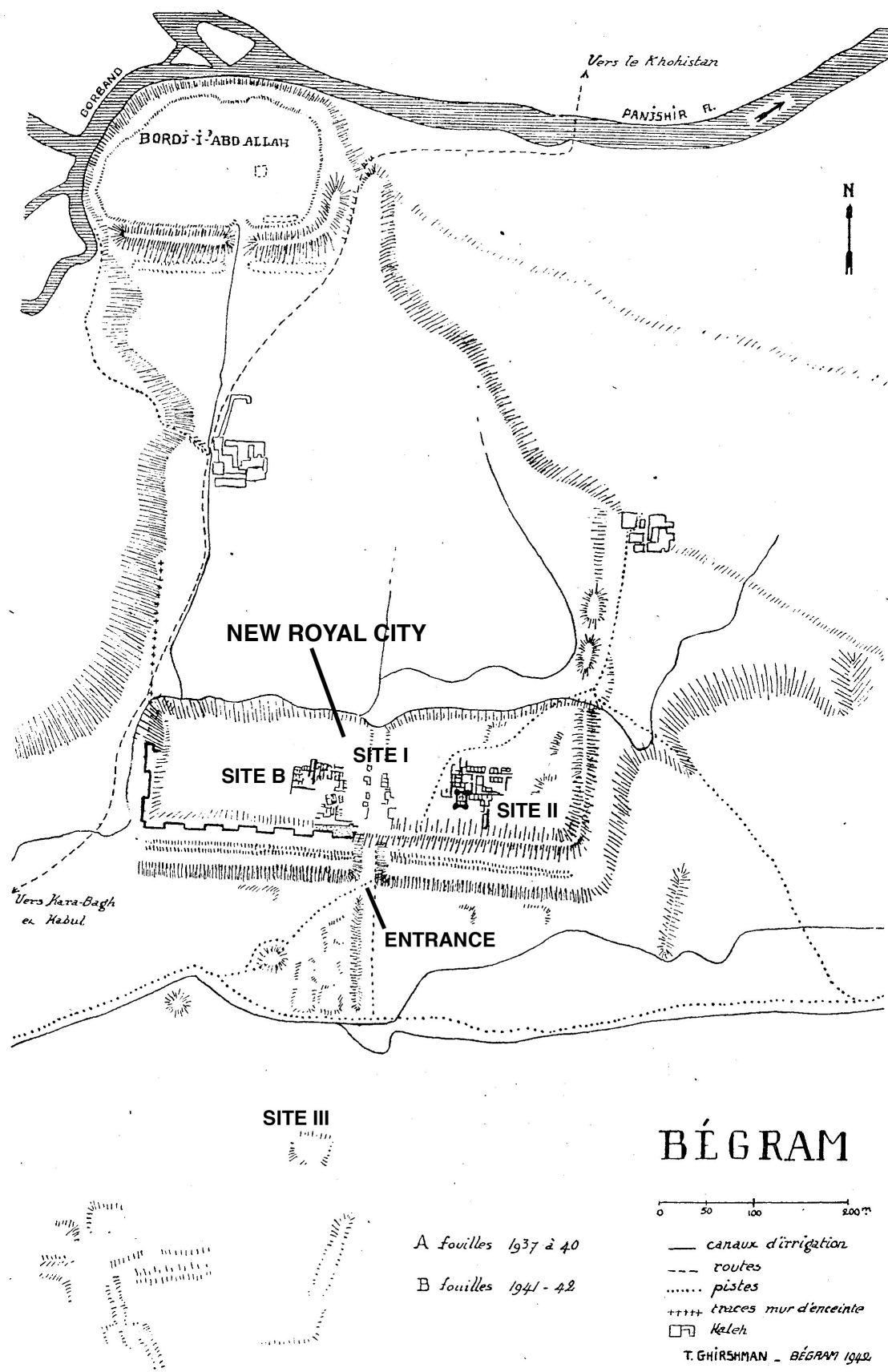
Begram and its immediate hinterland, satellite imagery dating from 2018–2019
(Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community).



Begram and its immediate hinterland, satellite imagery dating from 2003–2009 (Google, Image © 2021 CNES/Airbus; Maxar Technologies).



The site of Begram, satellite imagery dating to 2009 (Google, Image © 2021 Maxar Technologies).

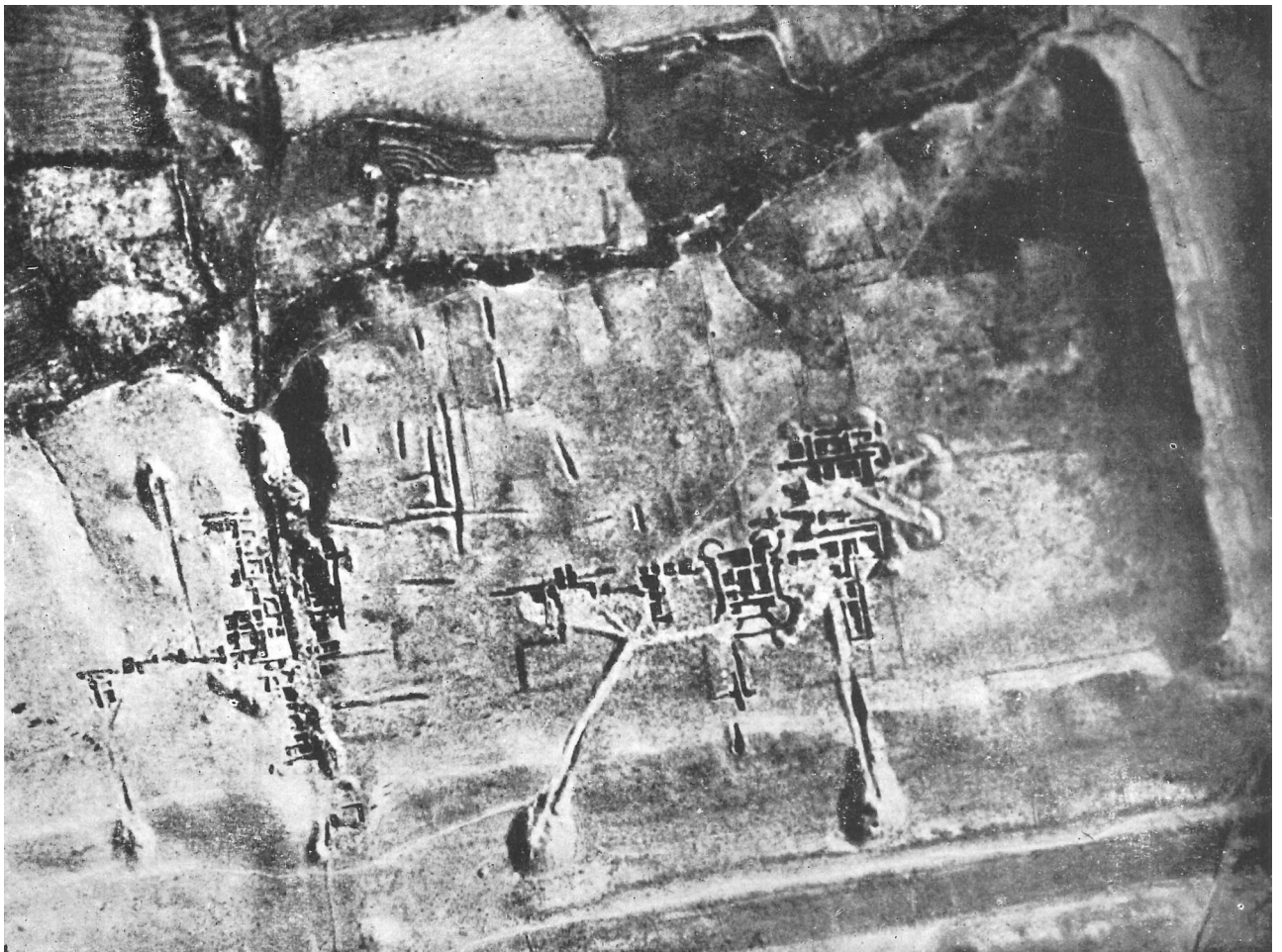


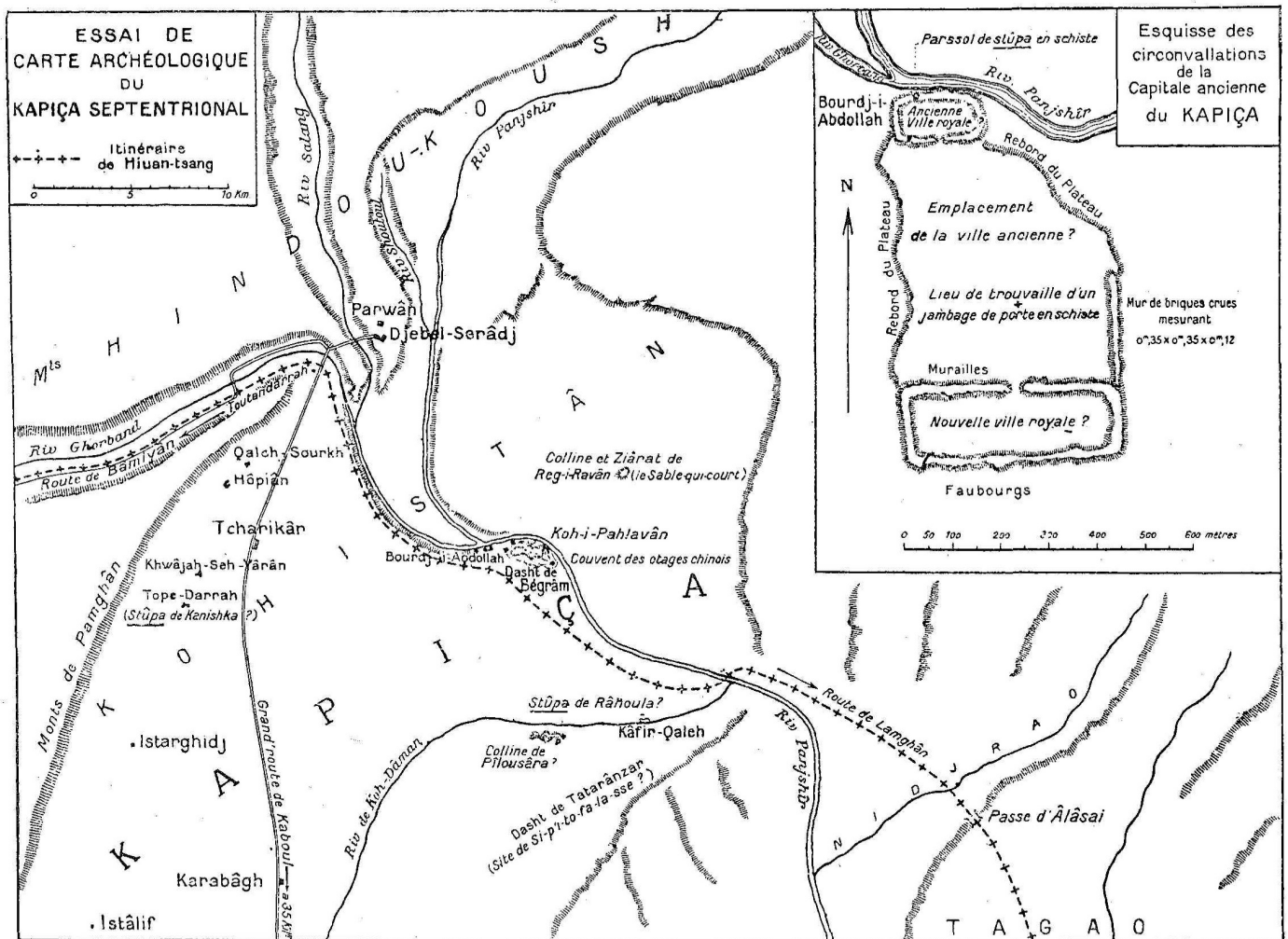
Plan of the site of Begram with excavation areas indicated (after Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXIV).



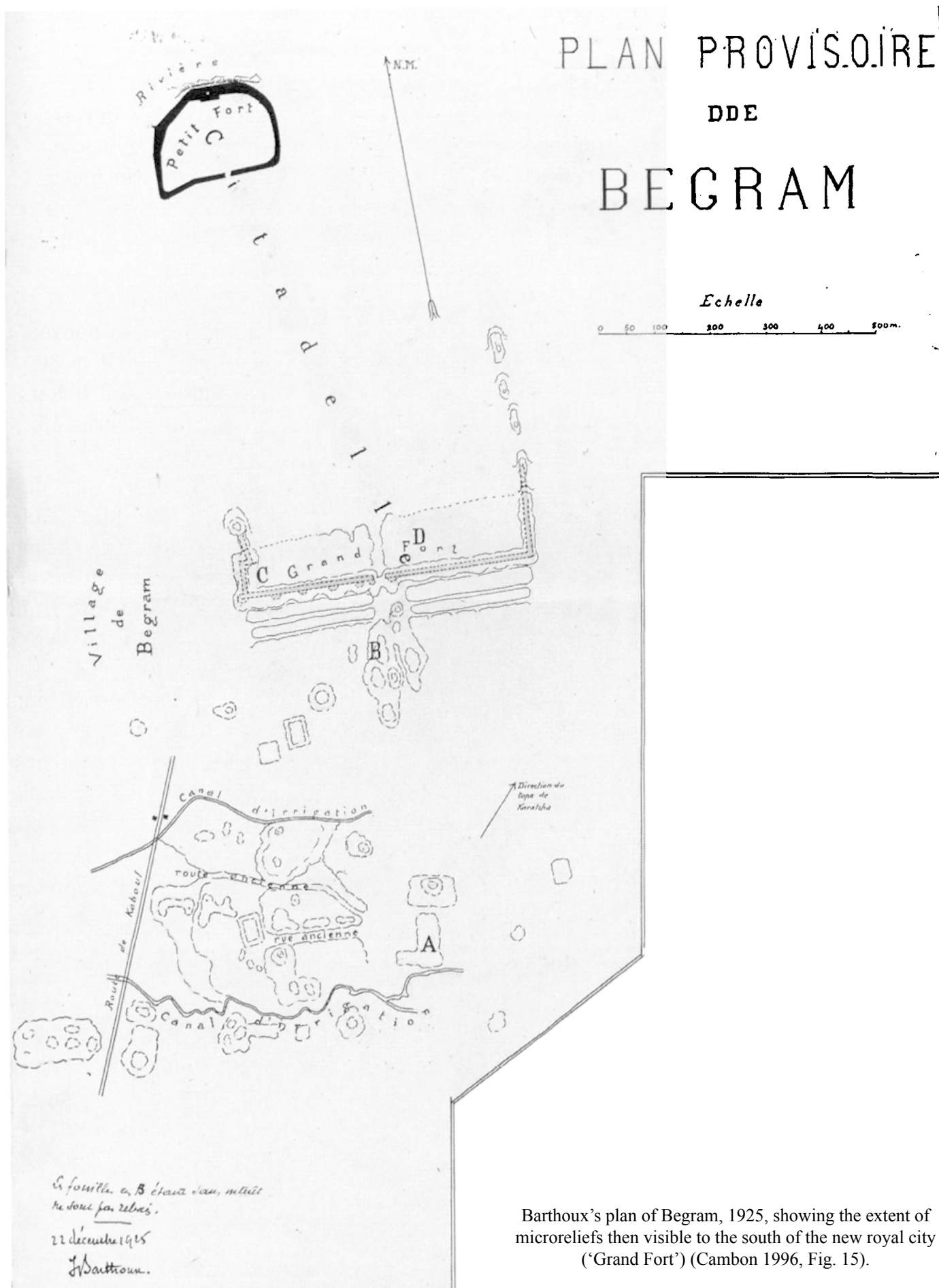
1. Aerial photograph over the new royal city, taken in 1939 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. I).

2. Aerial photograph showing excavated areas at Site II in more detail, taken in 1939 (Hamelin 1954, Pl. XV).

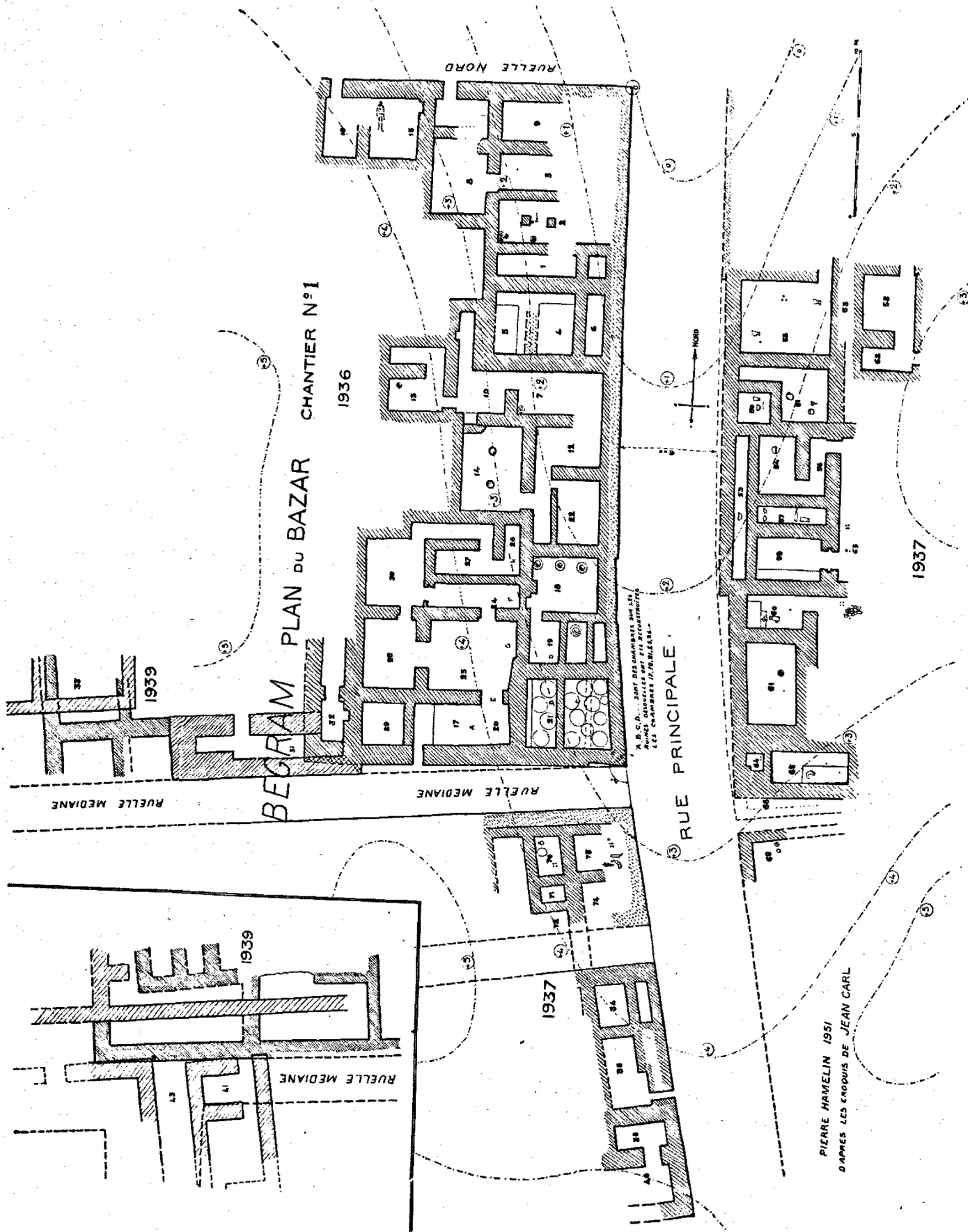




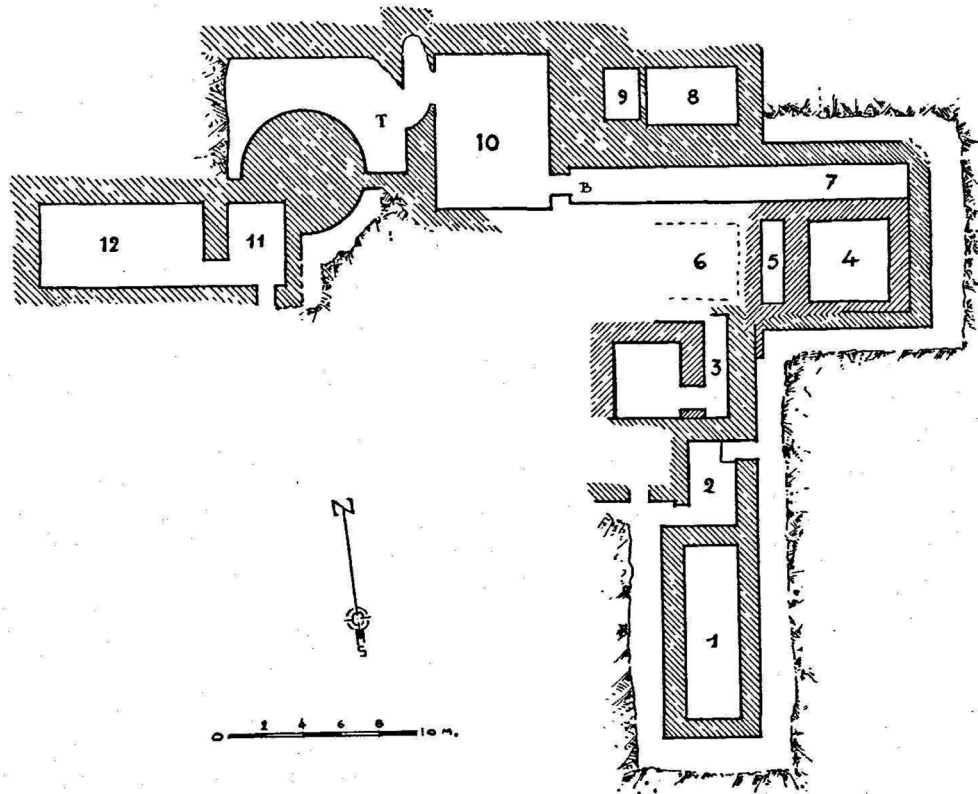
Focher's map of the Kohistan indicating its historical features, inset with detail of the site of Begram (Focher 1942, Fig. 34).



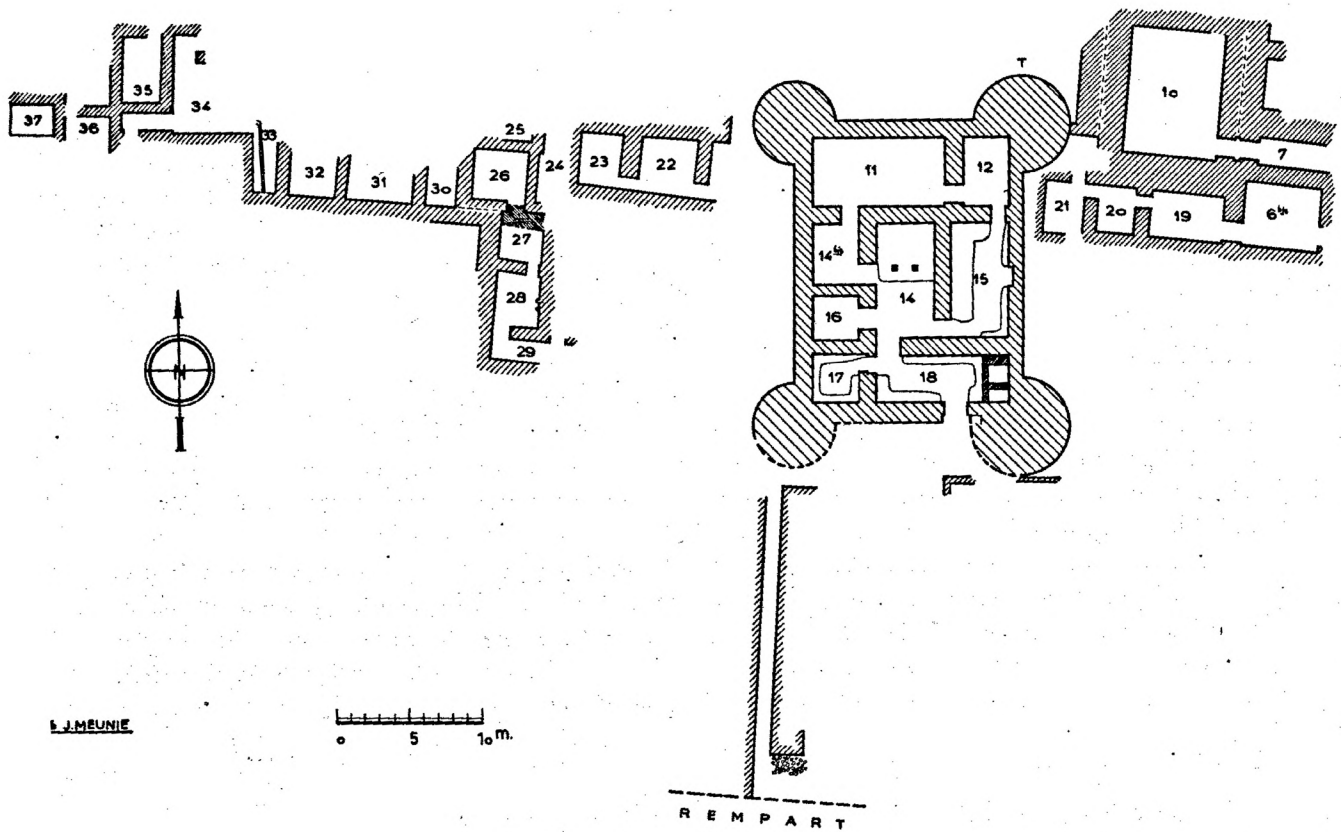
Barthoux's plan of Begram, 1925, showing the extent of microreliefs then visible to the south of the new royal city ('Grand Fort') (Cambon 1996, Fig. 15).



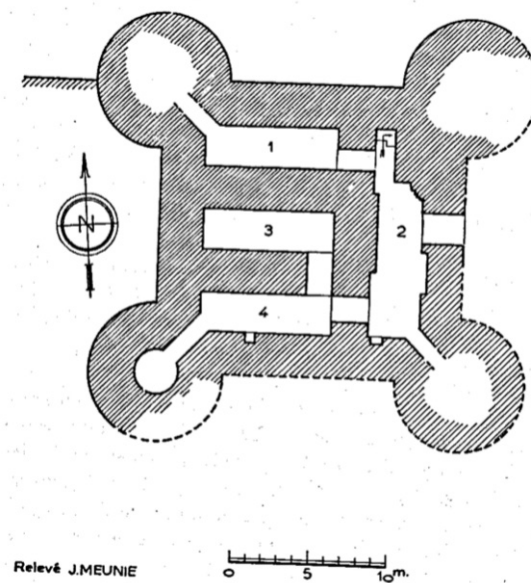
Plan of Site I, the 'bazar' (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. K).



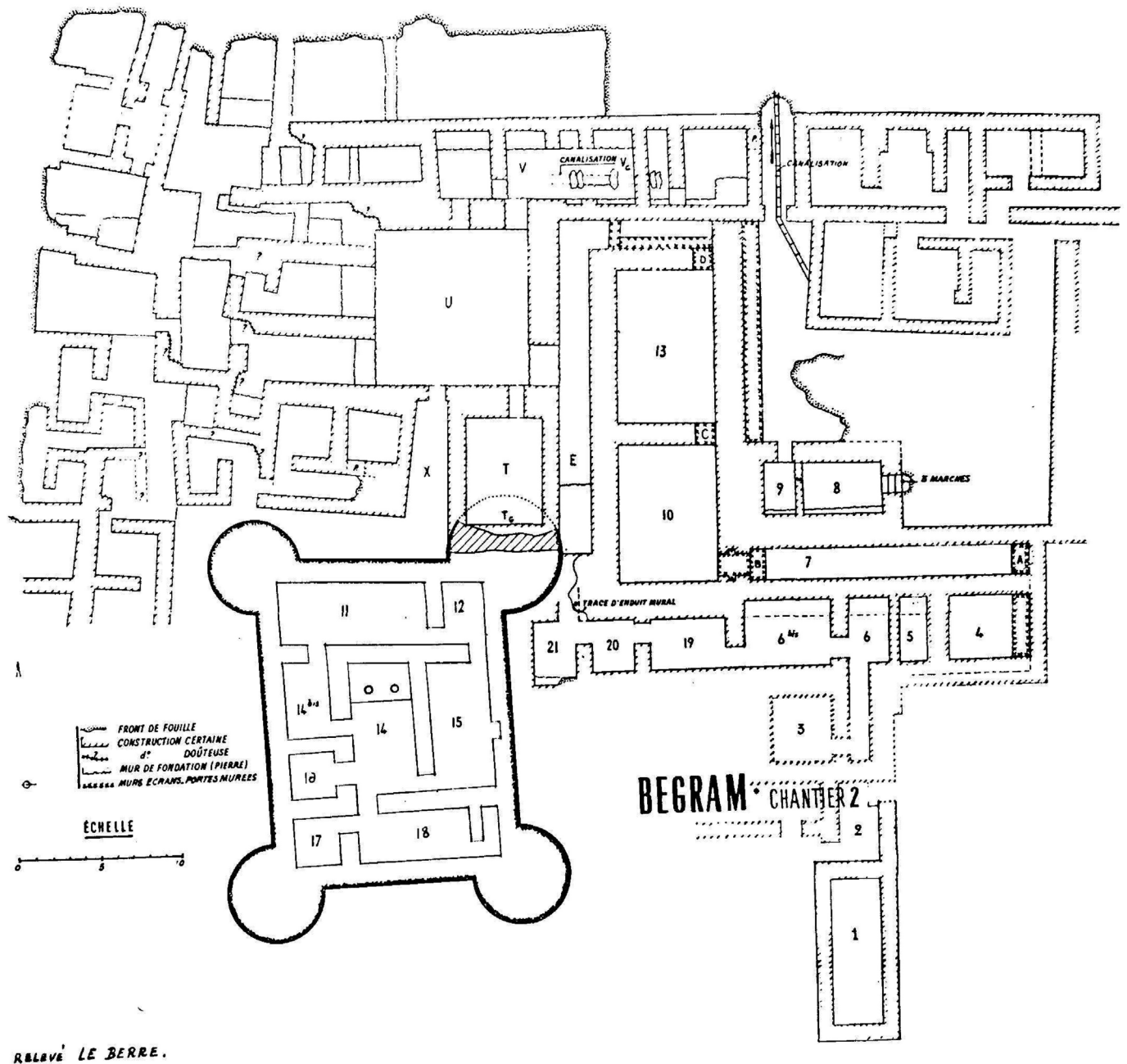
Carl's plan of Site II after excavations in 1937
(Hackin 1939a, Plan 1).



1. Meunié's plan of Site II including the intramural qala and his western and southern extension in 1938 (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. L1).

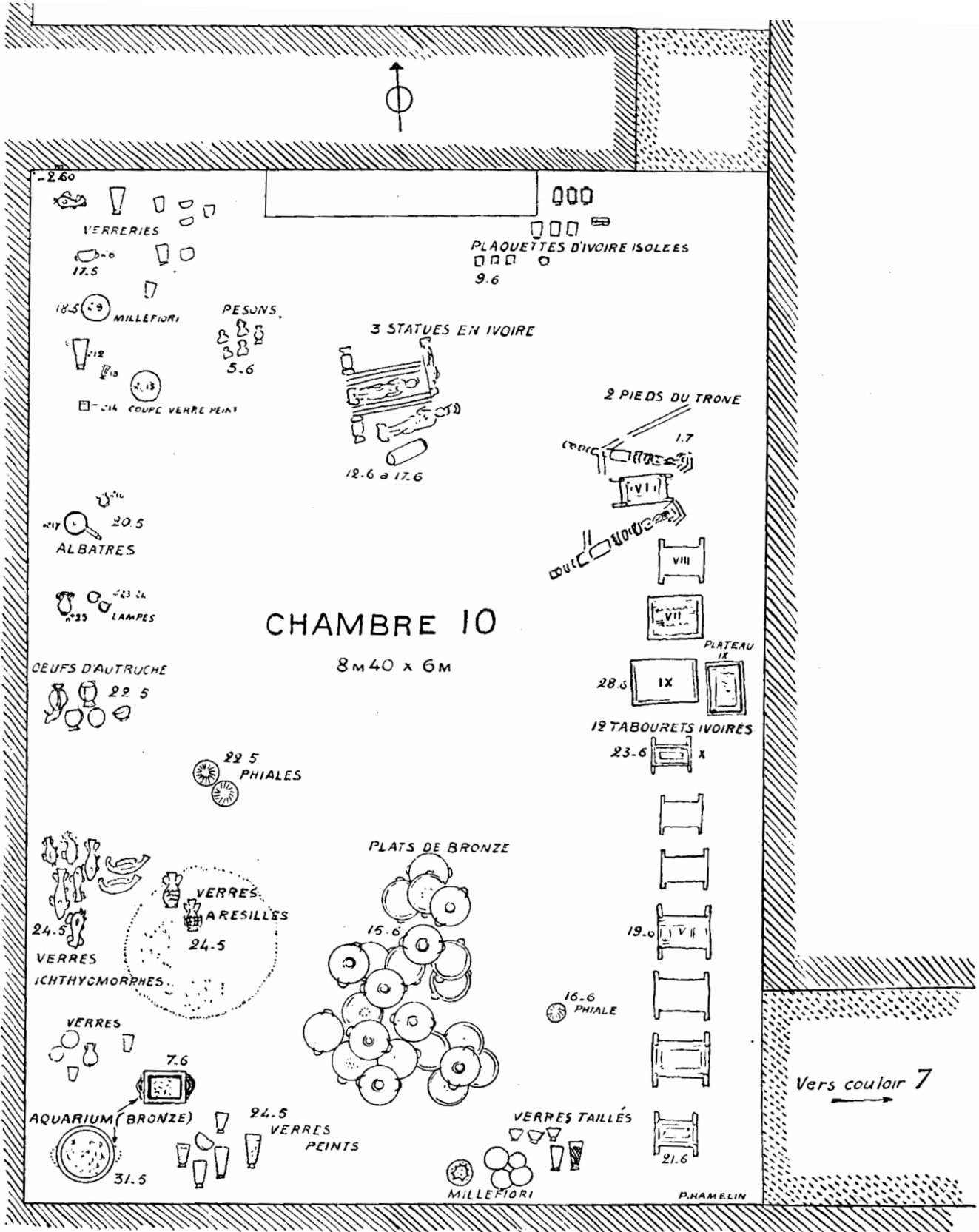


2. Plan of Site III, the extramural qala (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. L2).

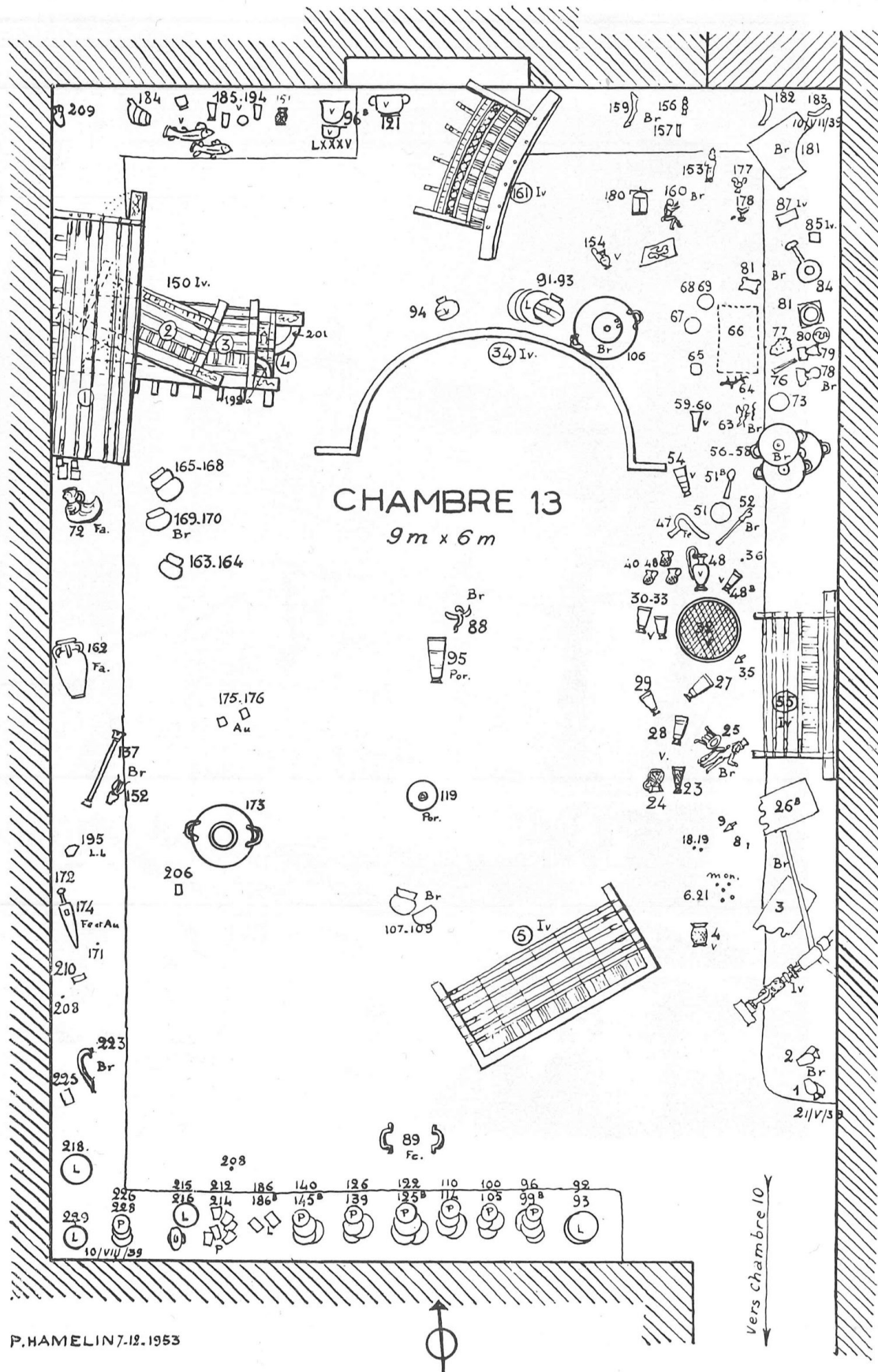


RELÈVÉ LE BERRE.

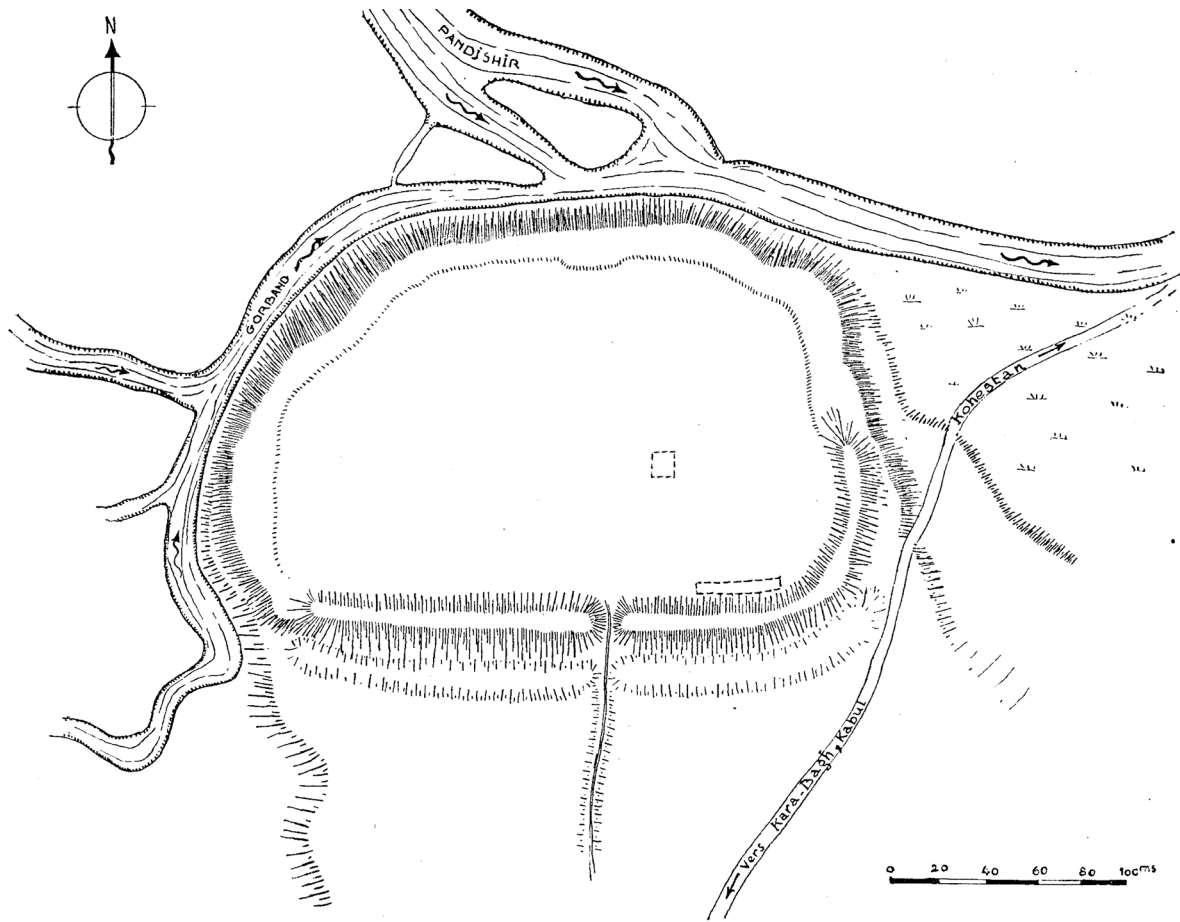
Le Berre's plan of Site II, executed in 1947 (Hackin 1954, 9).



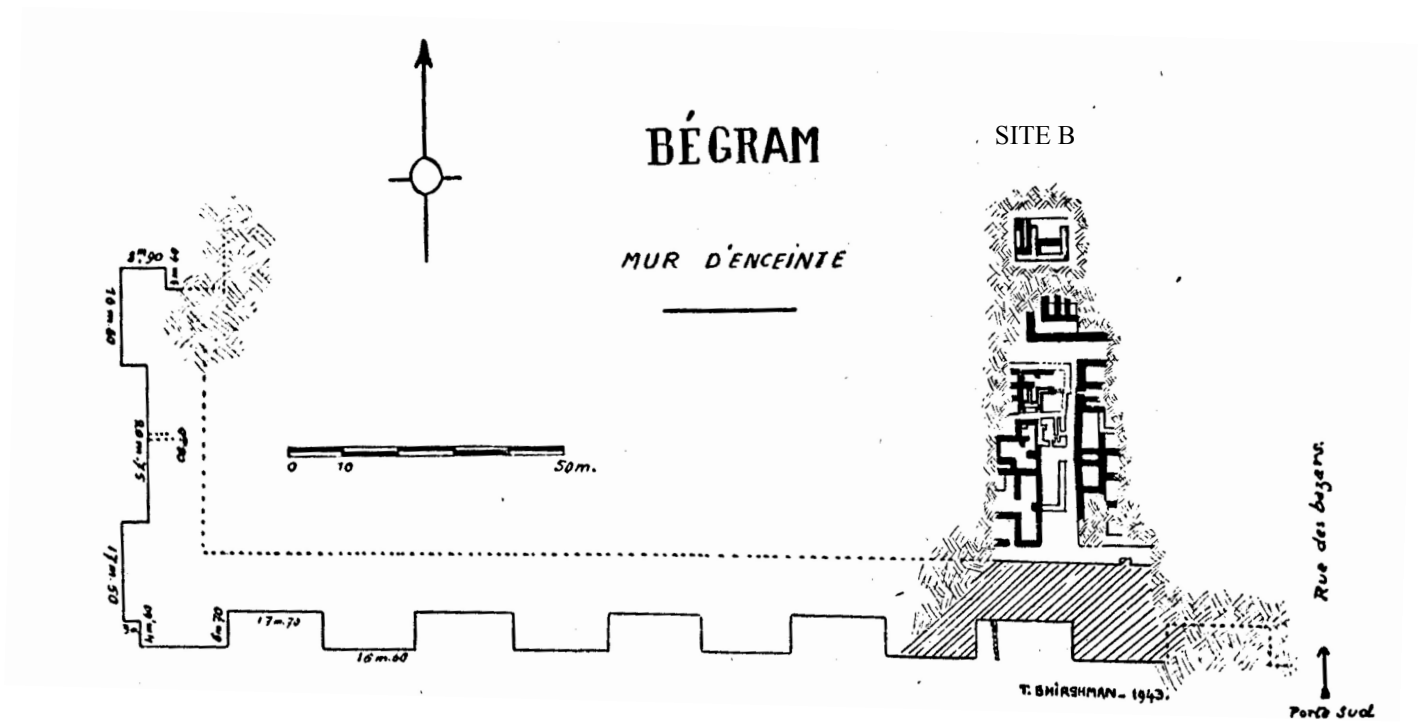
Hamelin's plan of room 10 (Hamelin 1953, Pl. II).



Hamelin's plan of room 13 (Hamelin 1954, Pl. XVI).



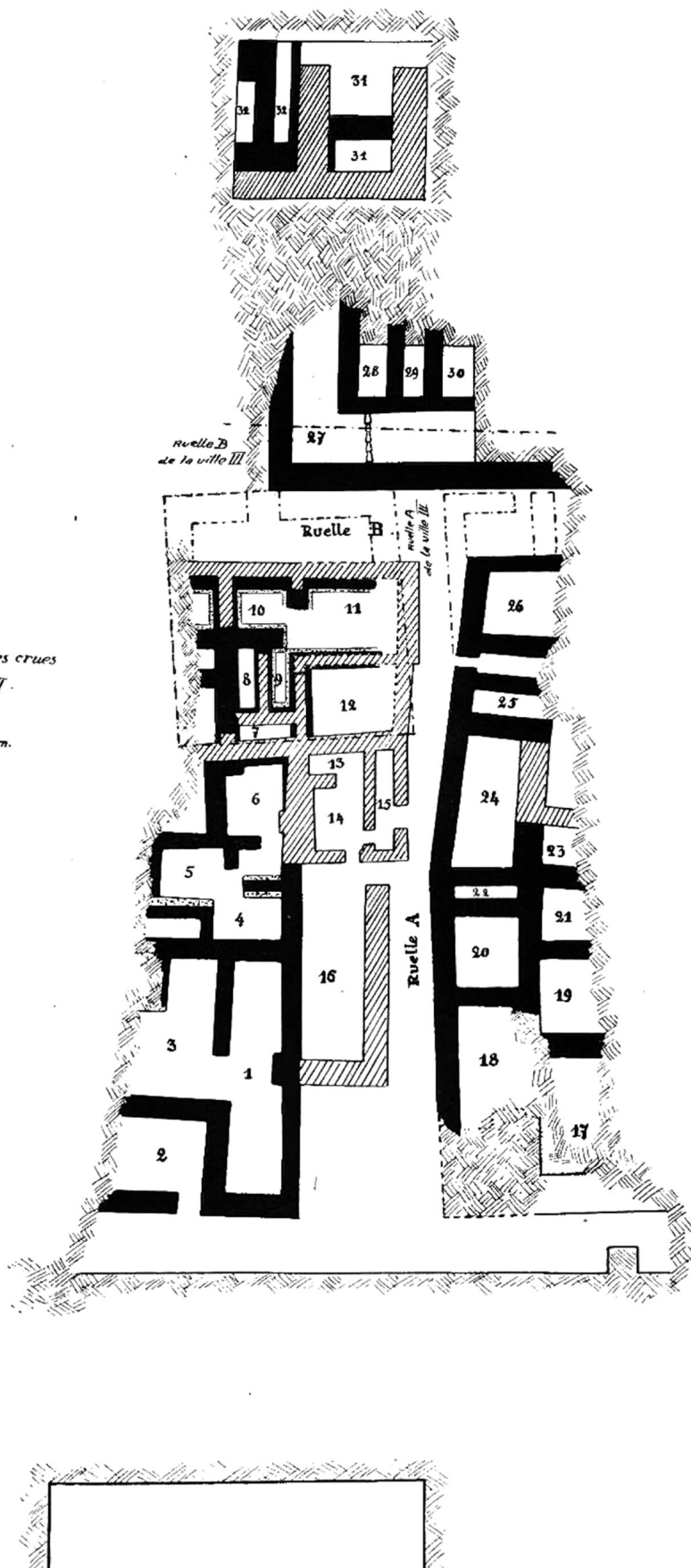
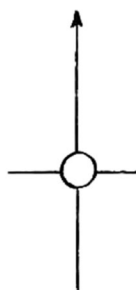
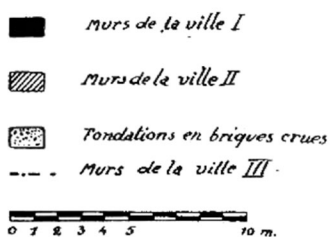
1. Plan of the Burj-i Abdullah with the location of Ghirshman's trenches (Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 1).



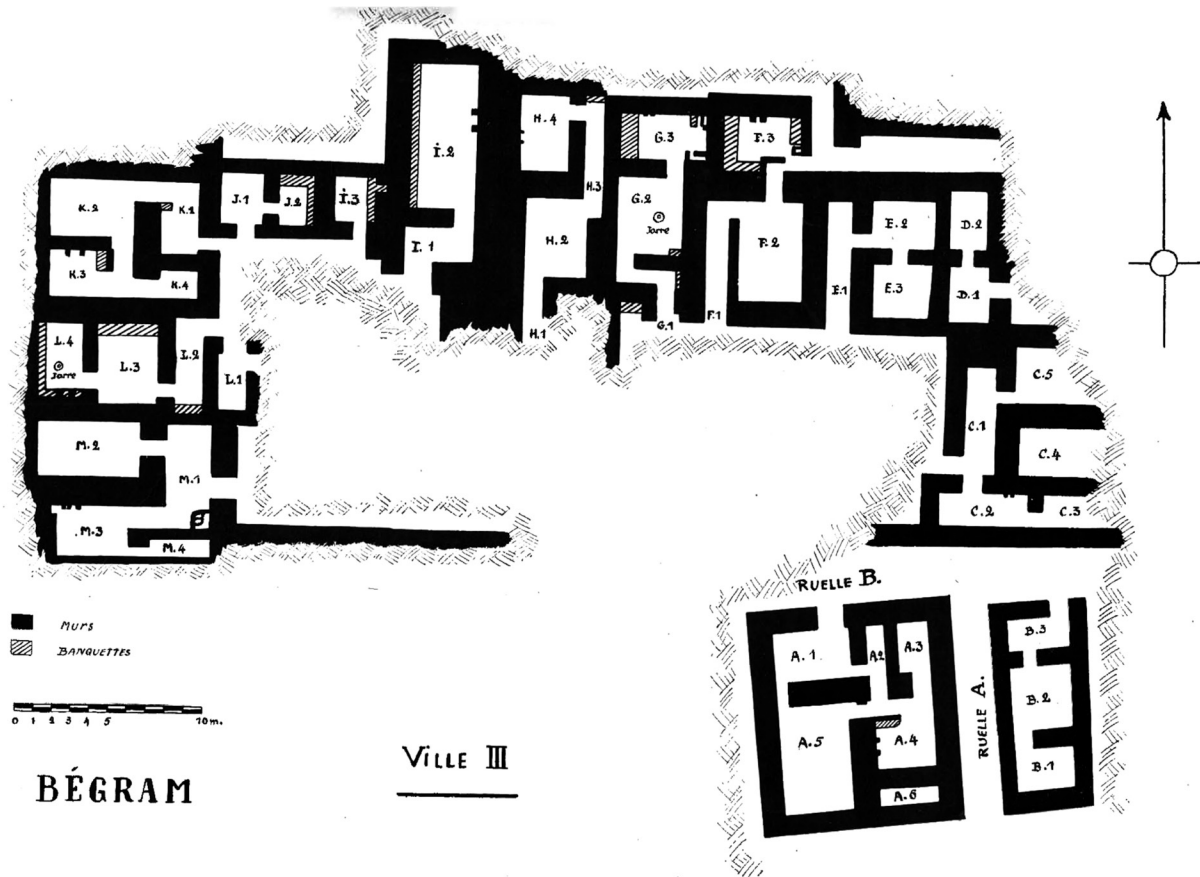
2. Plan of the fortification wall, new royal city, with Site B indicated (after Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 5).

BÉGRAM

VILLES I ET II

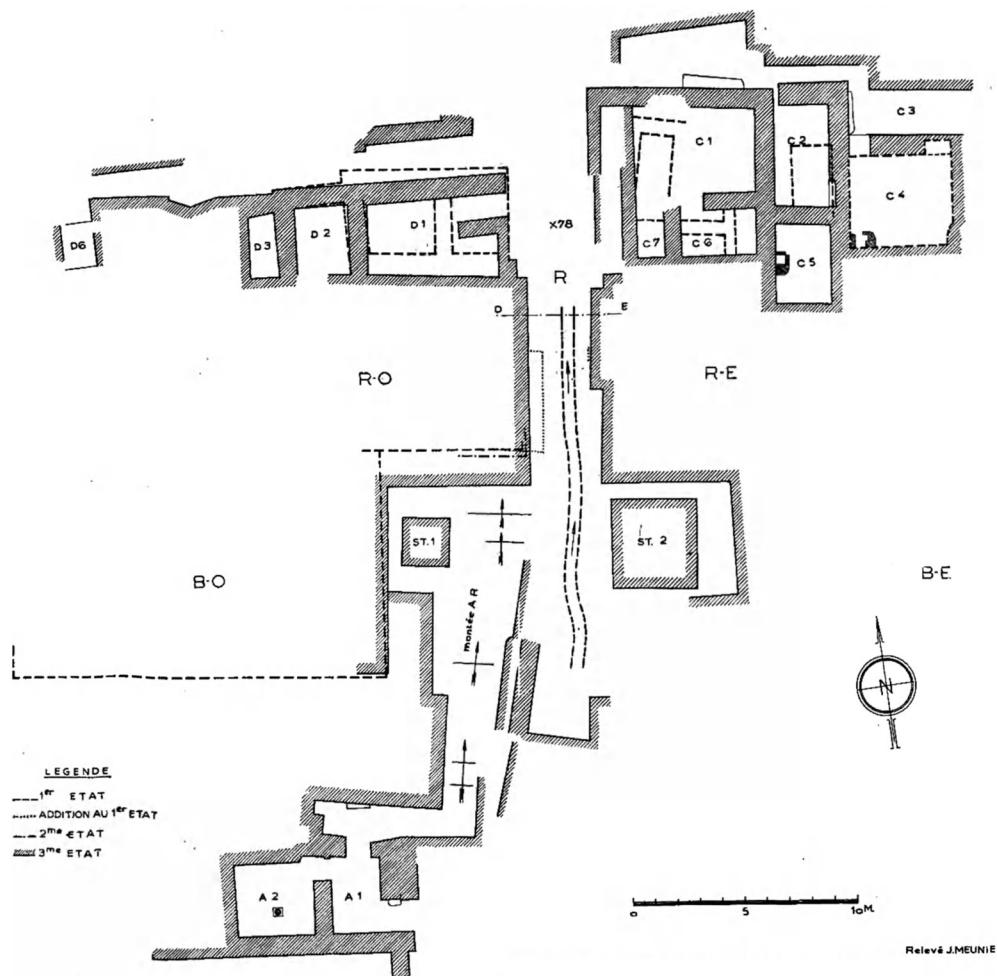


Plan of the houses of Bégram I and II at Site B (Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 12).



T. GHIRSHMAN, 1962.

1. Plan of the houses of Begram III at Site B (Ghirshman 1946, Fig. 14).



Relevé J. MEUNIE

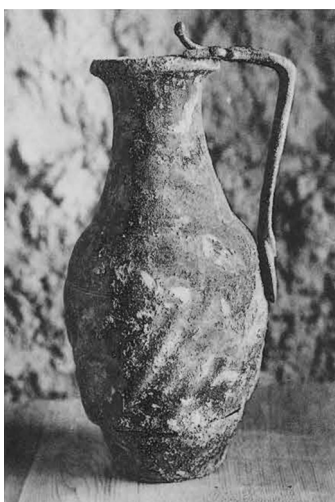
2. Plan of the excavated area of the city gate (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. M 1).



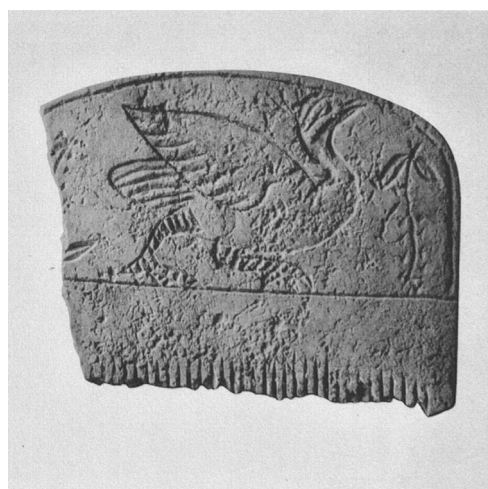
1. View to north of excavations at Site I, 1937
(Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 224).



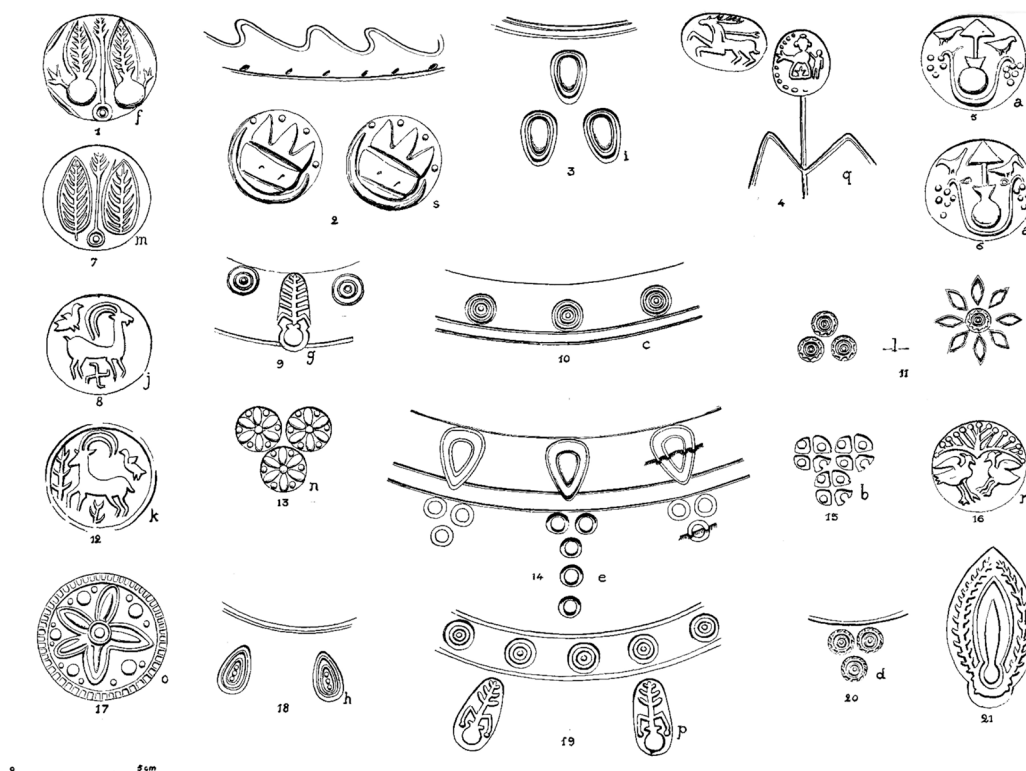
2. View to east of excavations at Site I, 1937
(Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 225).



3. Copper alloy jug found at
Site I, No. 164 (Hackin, Carl,
and Meunié 1959, Fig. 229).



4. Ivory comb found at Site I
(RAB Fig. 237).



5. Pottery stamps
from Site I, including
examples typical of
the stamped medallion
pottery of Begram III
(Hackin, Carl, and
Meunié 1959, Pl. VII).



1. Lower part of wall apparatus at Site II (RAB Fig. 1).



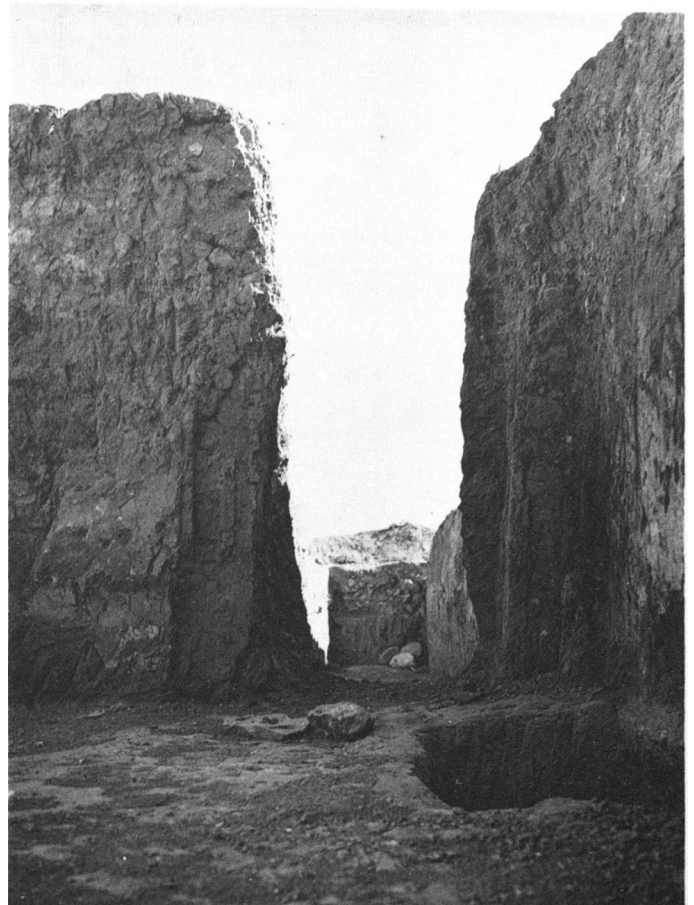
2. View from the south of room 1 looking north, Site II (RAB Fig. 2).



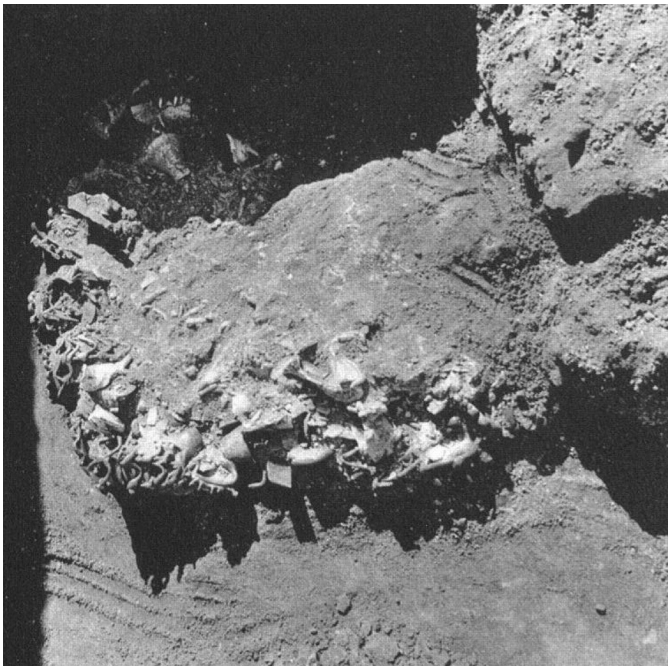
3. View from corridor 7, looking west towards room 10 (MGP 81311/7, in Cambon 2006, 85).



4. View over room 10, looking east to corridor 7, Site II (RAB Fig. 4).



5. View from room 10, looking east to corridor 7, Site II (RAB Fig. 5).



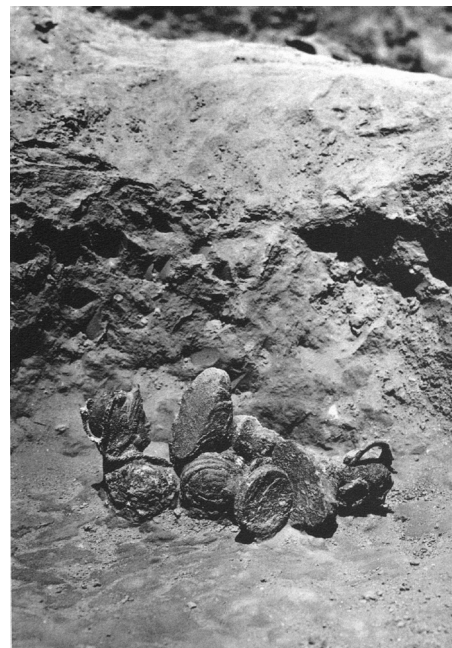
1. Glass vessels, primarily with trailed decoration (§4.2.1.11, §4.2.1.12), room 10 (RAB Fig. 25).



2. Glass vessels including RAB 194 [47] (§4.2.1.11), room 10 (RAB Fig. 28).



3. Glass vessels including RAB 210 [64] (§4.2.1.12), room 10 (RAB Fig. 44).



4. Bronze anthropomorphic balsamaria (§4.2.2.5), room 10 (RAB Fig. 57).



5. Type C facet-cut bowls (§4.2.1.3), room 10 (RAB Fig. 60).



6. Leaded brass basins (§4.2.2.1), room 10 (RAB Fig. 62).



1. Vasudeva I imitation coins from Site II (courtesy of Osmund Bopearachchi).



2. Example of stamped medallion pottery, room 18, intramural qala, Site II (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 246).



3. Moulded earthen features, room 28, extension of Site II (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 244).



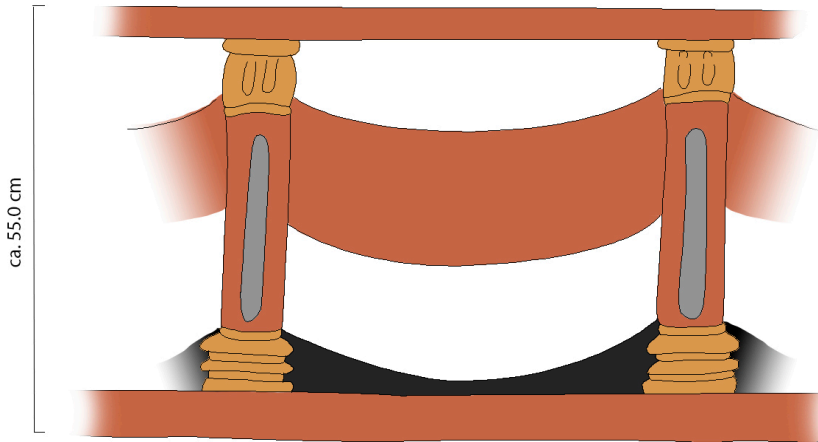
4. West wall of room 2, extramural qala, Site III (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 241).



1. Wall paintings from room 13, second layer visible to top left
(MGP 81314/1 or 3, in Cambon 2006, 100).



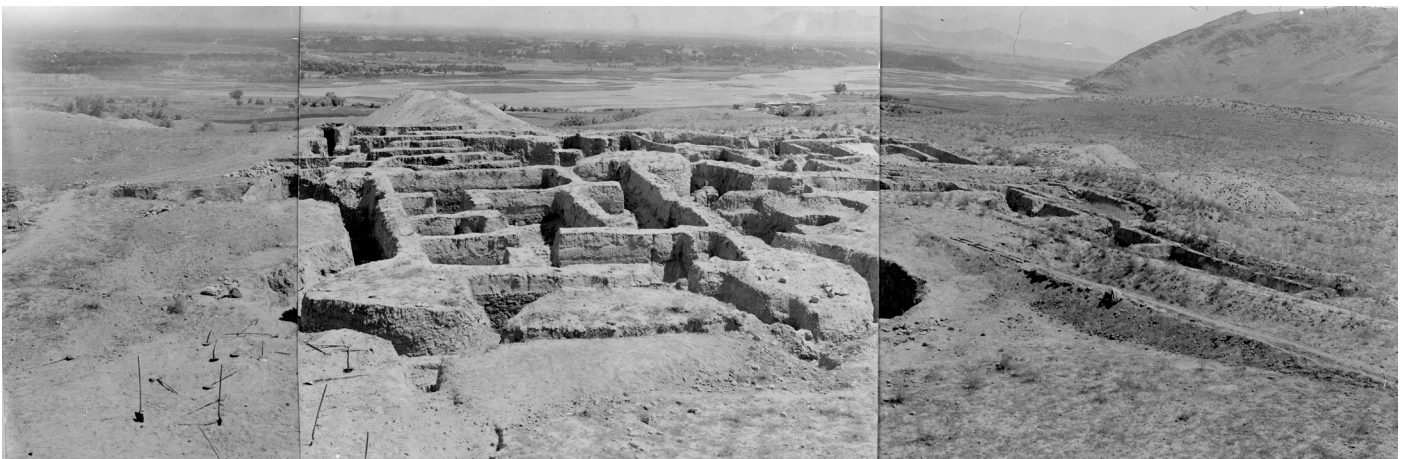
2. Wall paintings from room 13, with NRAB 2 visible to right
(MGP 81314/2, in Cambon 2006, 100).



1. Motif from earlier painted frieze in room 13 (traced from illustration indicating colours by Hamelin, in Cambon 2006, 100).



2. Excavations at Site II in process in 1939, with the southern part of room 13 in the foreground (MGP 81315791/4, in Morris 2021, Fig. 12).



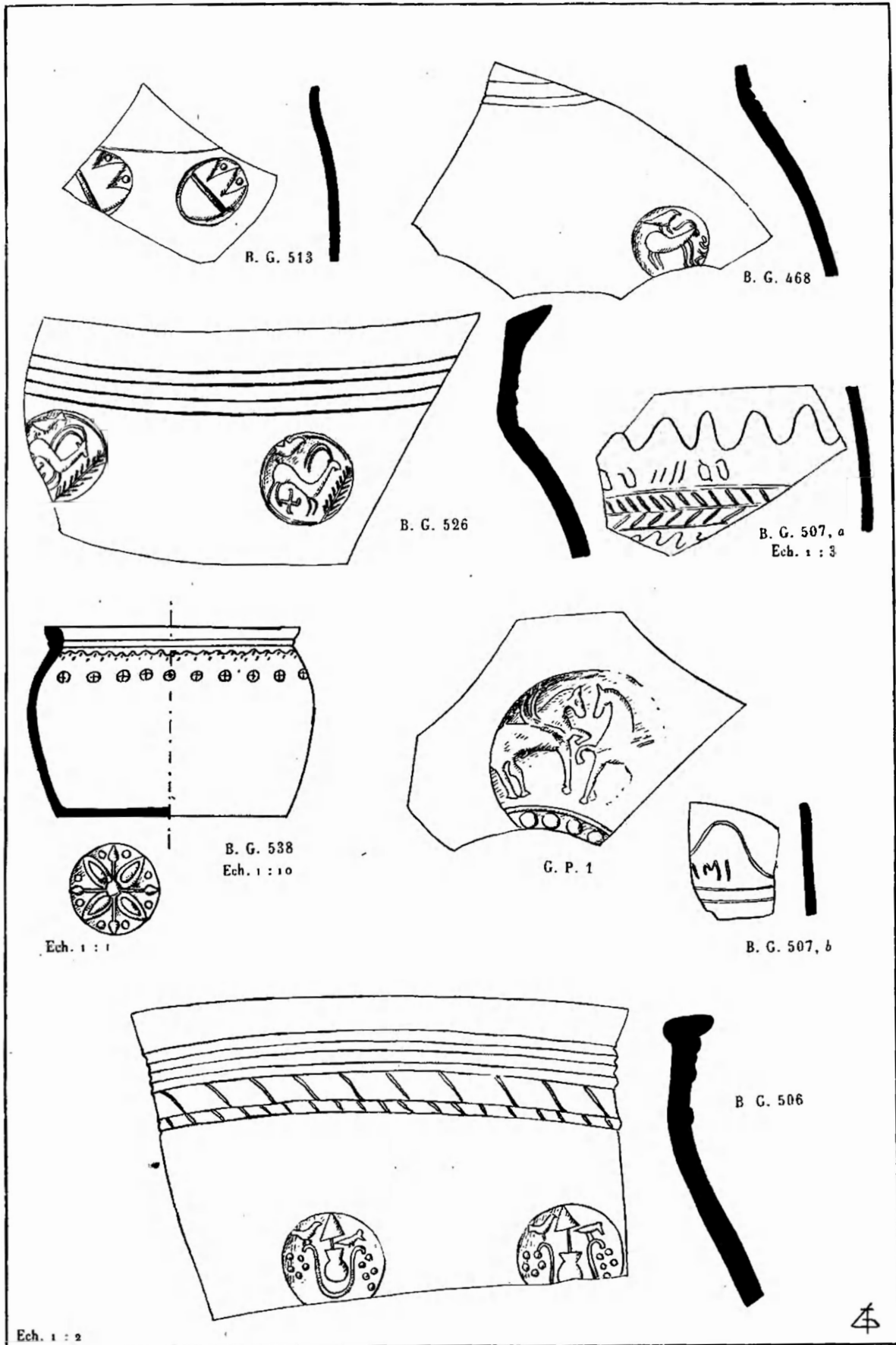
3. Site II after excavations in 1940 (MGP 81311/93 bis, in Morris 2021, Fig. 14).



1. Detail of still from Ria Hackin's film shot at Begram in 1939 during work in room 13 along the northern part of the western wall. Remains of the wall of a later structure are indicated (photo taken during the film's display in the exhibition *De l'Asie à la France libre. Joseph et Marie Hackin, archéologues et compagnons de la Libération*, Musée de l'Ordre de la Libération, Paris, 2018, red arrow added).



2. Excavations at Site B showing the succession of the three occupation phases Begram I-III (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. VI, 1).



Examples of stamped medallion pottery characteristic of Begram III (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. L).



1. Covered drain in room/area V, Site II
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. VII, 7).



2. View south into room T and the
northeast bastion of the qala, Site II
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. VII, 5).



1. View to south of excavations at the entrance of the new royal city, workers in the foreground where the hoard of coins was found (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 257).



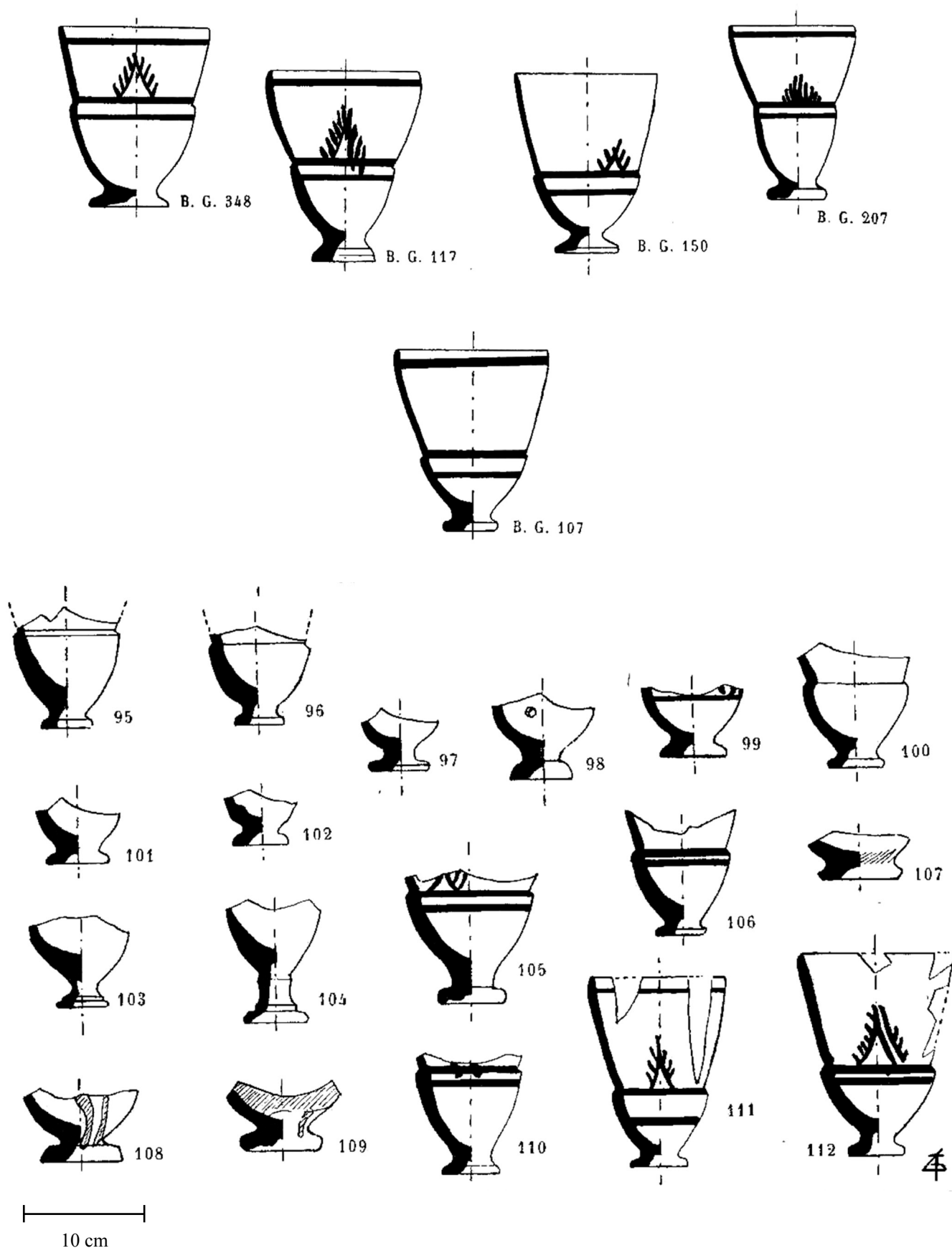
2. View to east of excavations at the entrance of the new royal city, possible bases of two stupas on either side of passage to right (Hackin, Carl, and Meunié 1959, Fig. 258).



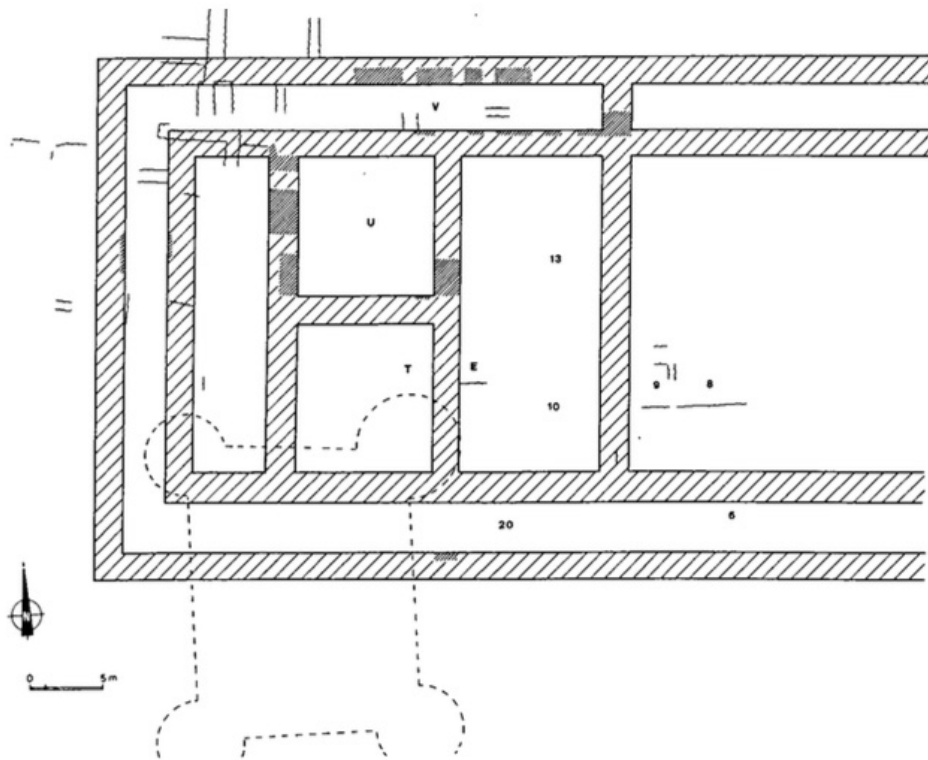
1. Reliquary caskets and contents from lowest deposit in Manikyala stupa. Copper alloy casket (h. 22.30 cm) with remnants of silk and wax on exterior, copper alloy casket with inscription (CKI 150), gold inner casket. In foreground, copper alloy coins of Kanishka I and Huvishka, inscribed silver disc, gold coin of Huvishka (British Museum, 1848,0602.1–3, © The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).



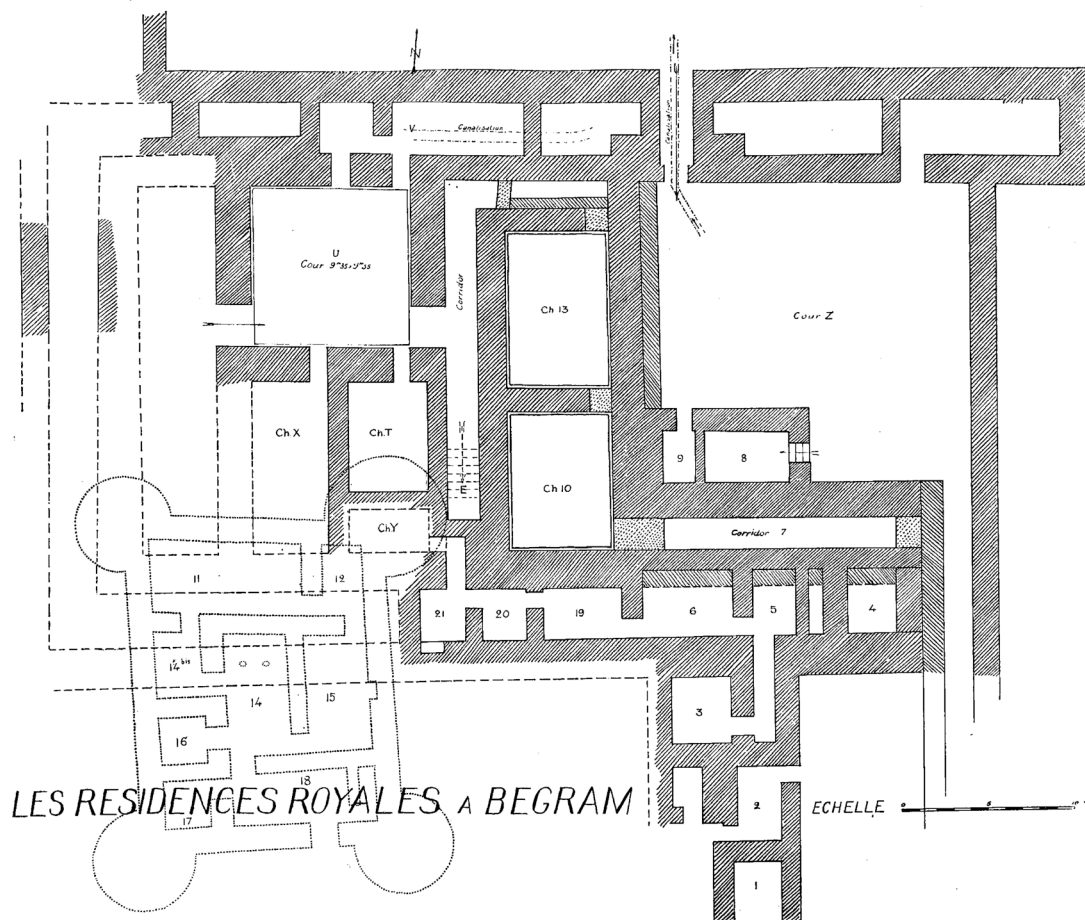
2. Electroformed replica of the so-called Kanishka casket (h. 19.20 cm), copper alloy (British Museum, 1880.270, © The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, cropped).



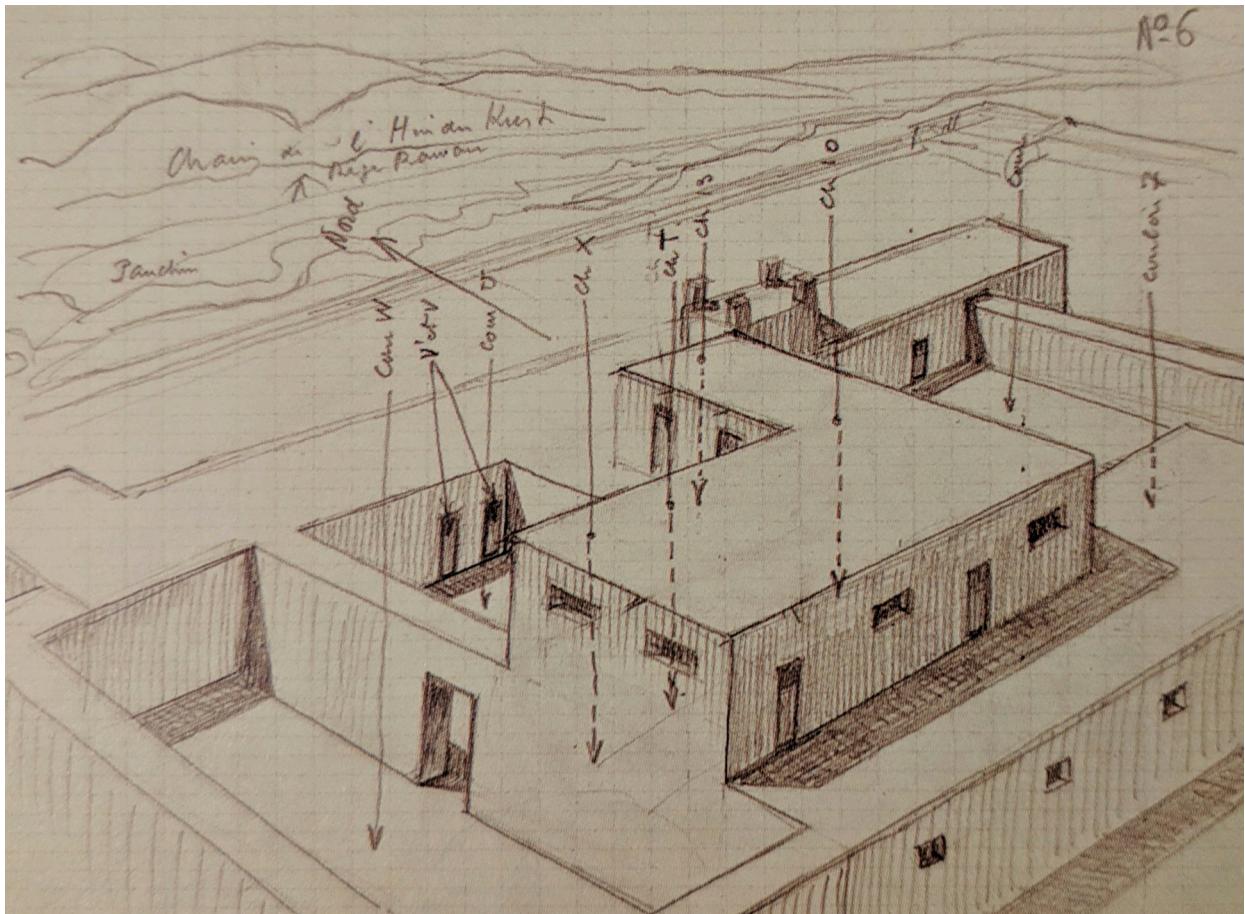
2. Examples of goblets of Begram II excavated by Ghirshman at Site B
(after Ghirshman 1946, Pls. XL, XLIV).



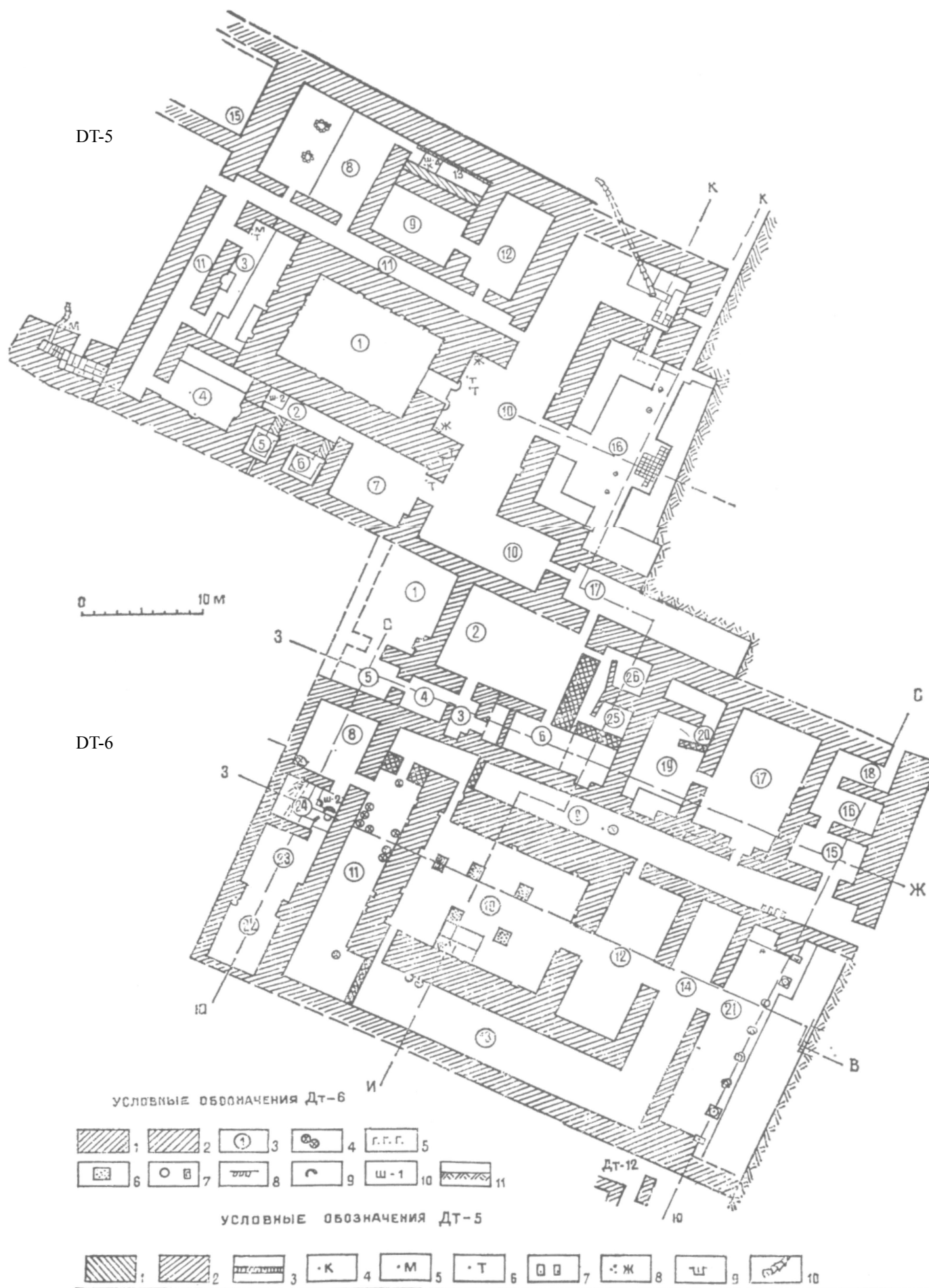
1. Reconstruction of a theoretical pre-Kushan edifice at Site II below the main structure, proposed by Rapin (Guy Lecuyot, in Rapin 1992, Pl. 51.2).



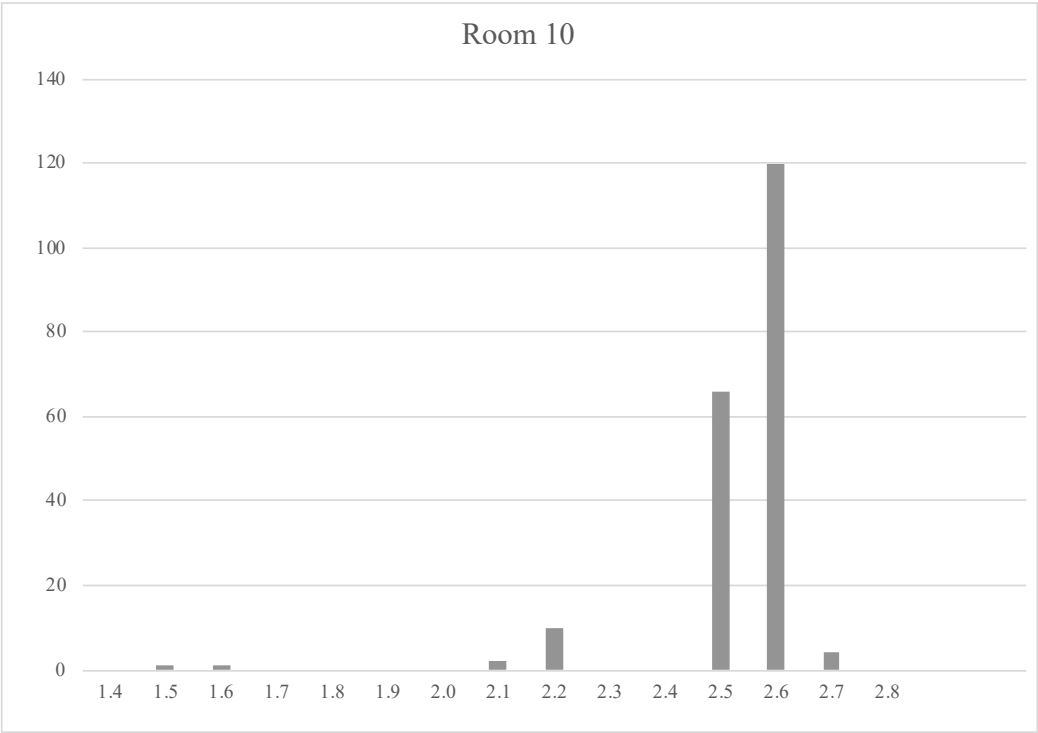
2. Hamelin's version of the initial plan of the Site II structure (Hamelin 1953, Pl. I).



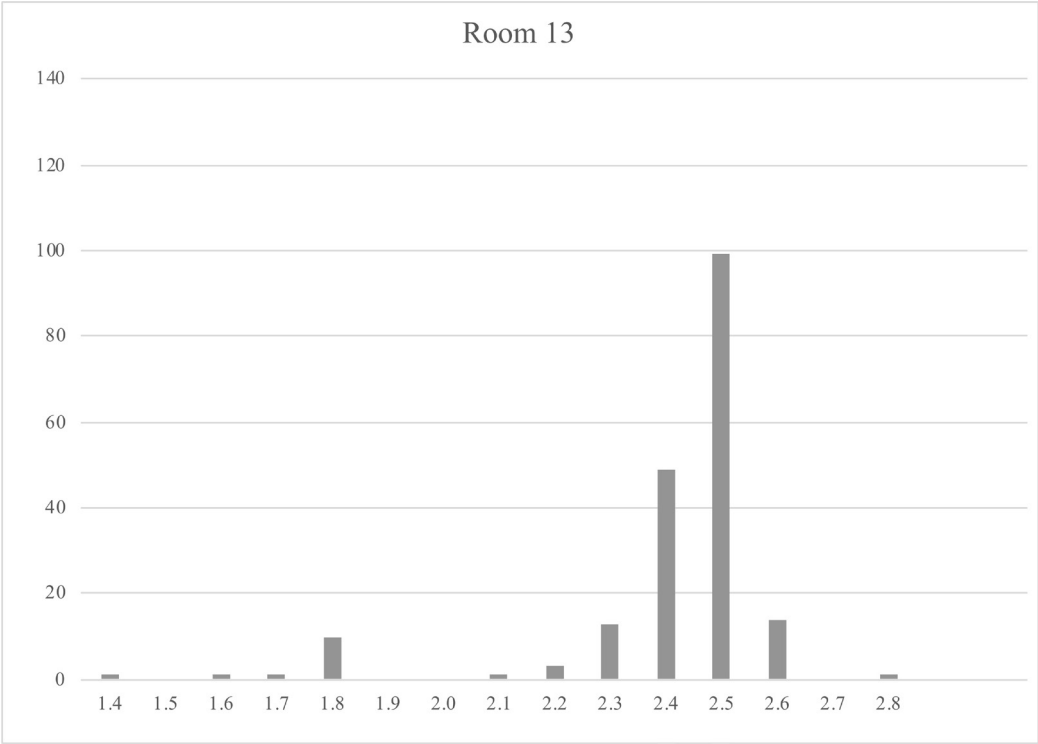
Hamelin's reconstruction of the Site II structure, indicating the possible position of a second storey (in Cambon 2006, 101).



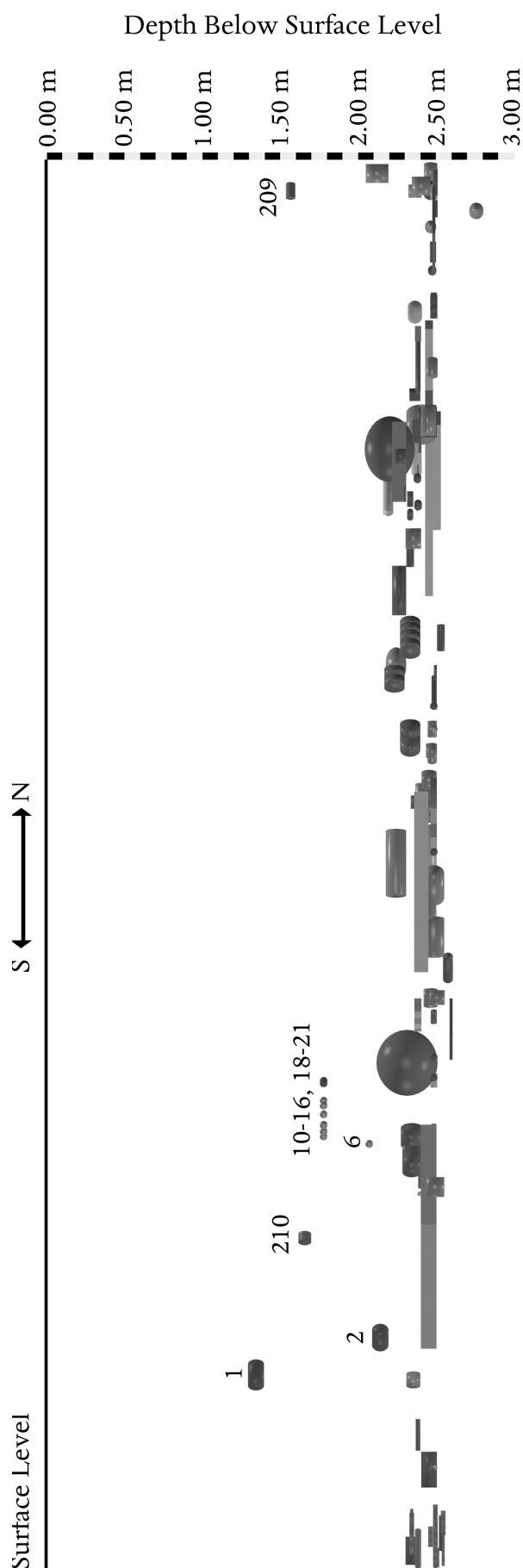
Plans of houses DT-5 and DT-6 at Dal'verzintep (merged from Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, Figs. 15 and 26, with house names labelled). 'Ж' (No. 8 under DT-5) indicates remains of wall paintings.



1. Vertical distribution of finds in room 10, Site II. The horizontal axis indicates depth measurements in 10 cm increments, and the vertical axis indicates the number of catalogue entries recorded with any particular depth measurement.

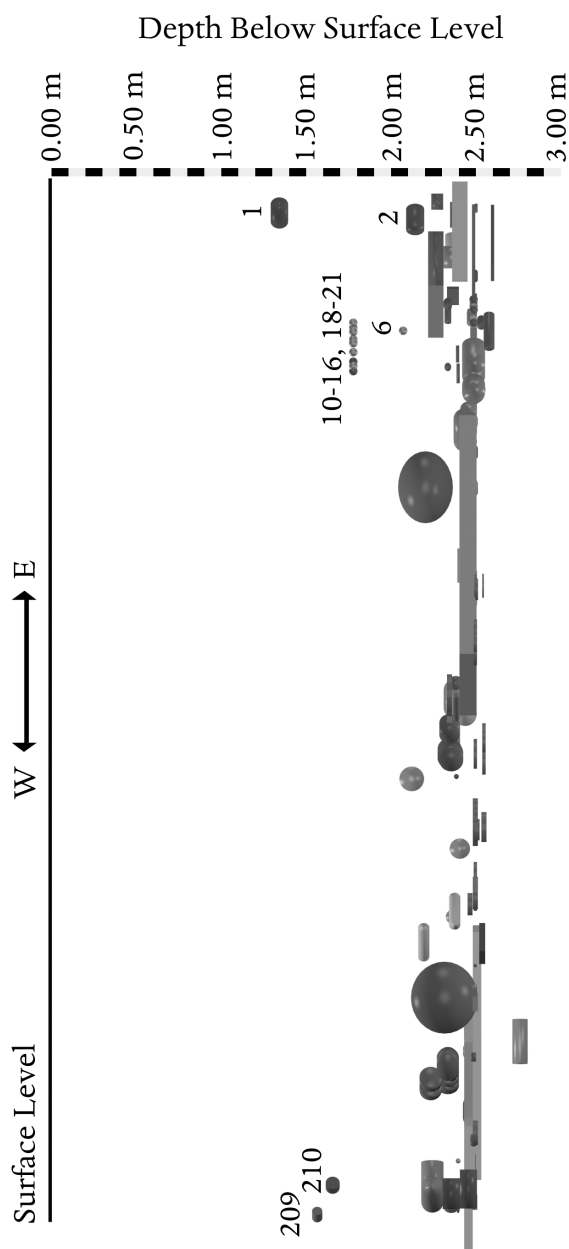


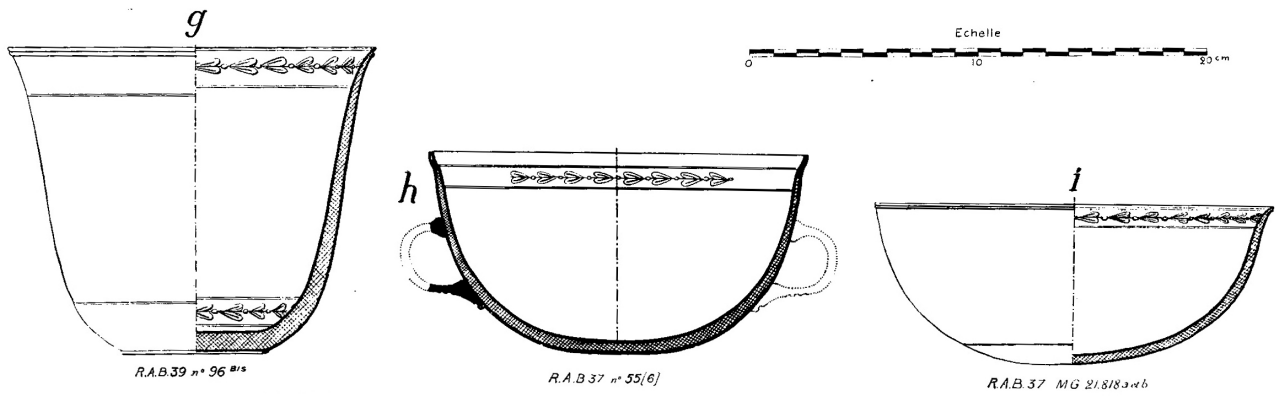
2. Vertical distribution of finds in room 13, Site II (see caption above).



1. (Left) View from east to west of model indicating distribution of objects in room 13, Site II. Objects are represented with shapes corresponding to their basic forms and dimensions. Apparent outliers above the main hoard deposit are labelled.

2. (Below) View from south to north of same model (see above).



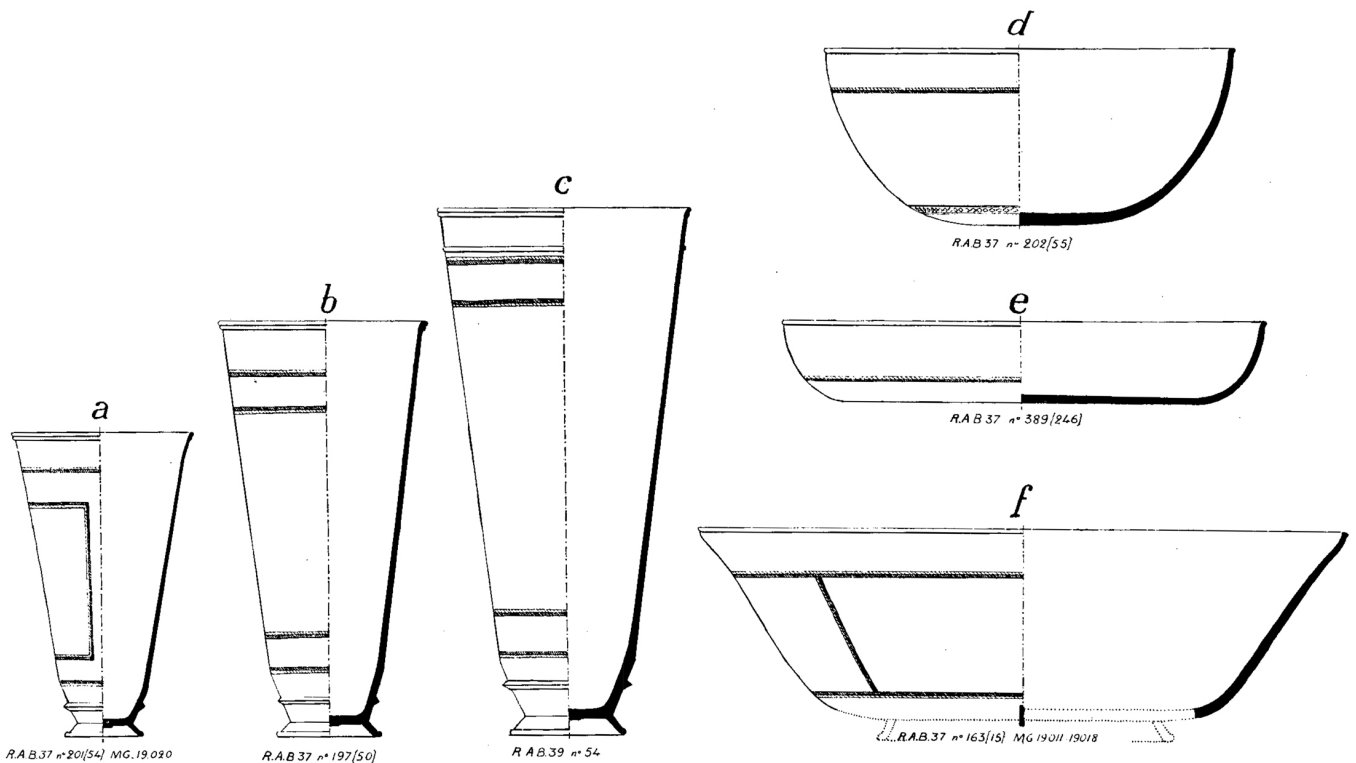


1. Forms of three examples of cold-painted glass vessels (§4.2.1.1) (after Hamelin 1953, Pl. III g-i).

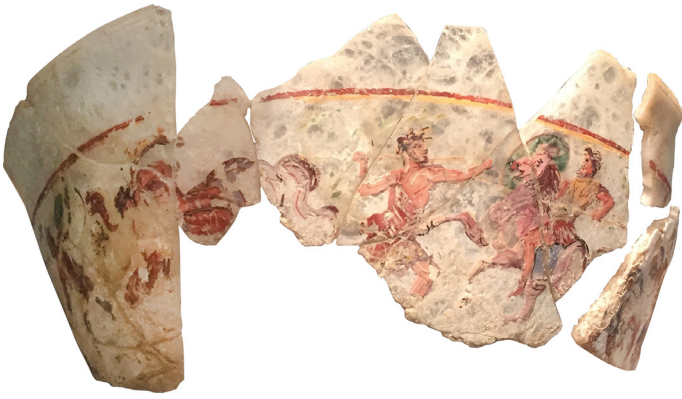


2. Cold-painted glass vessel (§4.2.1.1), RAB 318 [172](?) / Hamelin 1954, No. 24 (Gullini 1961, No. 32).

3. Cold-painted glass vessel (§4.2.1.1), Hamelin 1954, No. 23 (Desroches 2000, 62, No. 28).



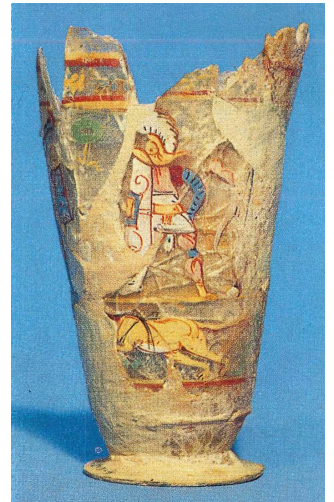
4. Forms of six examples of enamelled glass vessels (§4.2.1.2) (after Hamelin 1953, Pl. III a-f).



1. Enamelled glass bowl (§4.2.1.2), RAB 163 [15]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



2. Enamelled glass goblet
(§4.2.1.2), RAB 197 [50]
(Thierry Olliver,
LTR No. 163).



3. Enamelled glass goblet
(§4.2.1.2), RAB 199 [52]
(Gullini 1961, No. 30).



4. Enamelled glass goblet
(§4.2.1.2), RAB 201 [54]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre
Cambon, MG).



5. Enamelled glass bowl (§4.2.1.2),
RAB 202 [55] (Gullini 1961, No. 31).



6. Enamelled glass goblet (§4.2.1.2),
RAB 364 [220] (Morris, courtesy of
Pierre Cambon, MG).



7. Enamelled glass goblet
(§4.2.1.2), Hamelin 1954, No. 11
(Cambon 2002, No. 29).



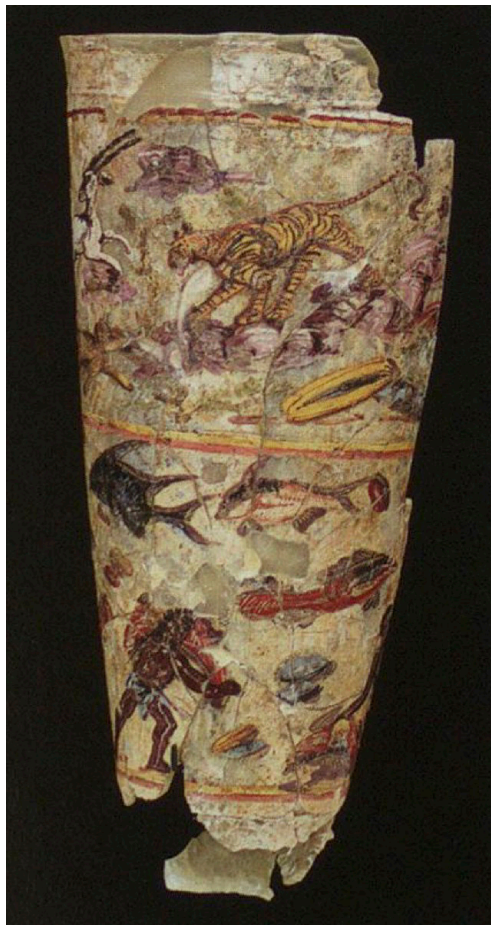
1. Enamelled glass goblet (§4.2.1.2),
Hamelin 1954, No. 4 / MG 21177
(Hansen et al. 2009, No. 326).



2. Enamelled glass plate (§4.2.1.2), Hamelin 1954, No. 17
(Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXVII).



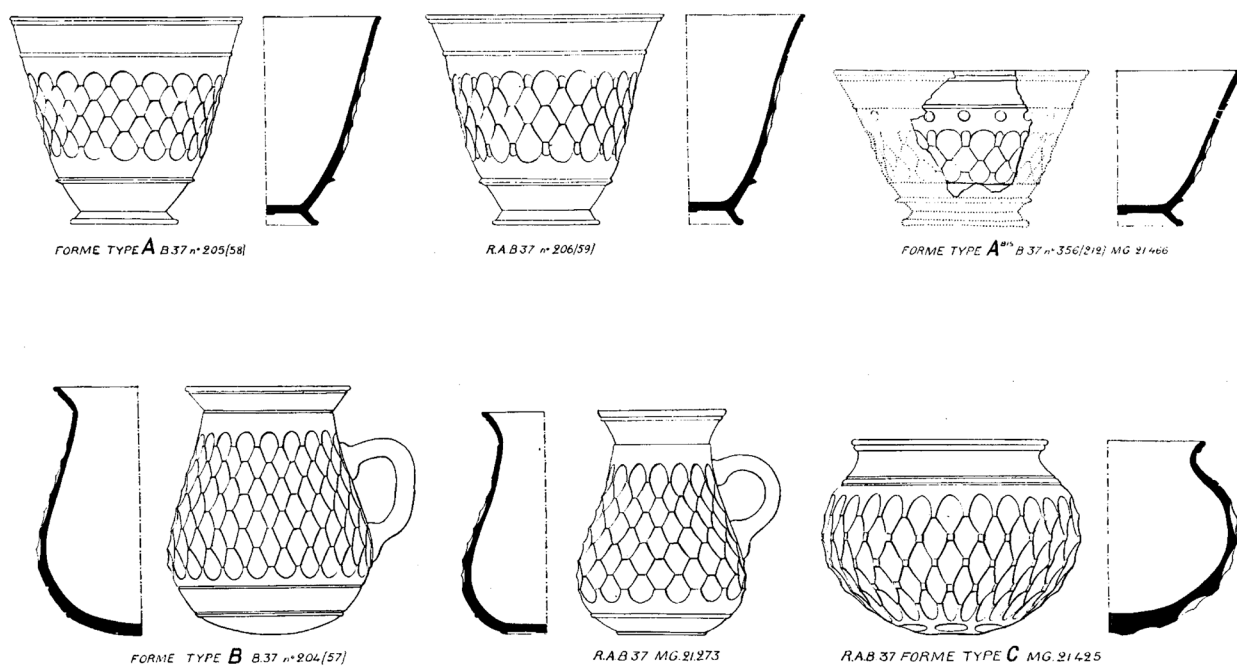
3. Enamelled glass goblet (§4.2.1.2),
NRAB 27 (Thierry Ollivier,
LTR No. 211).



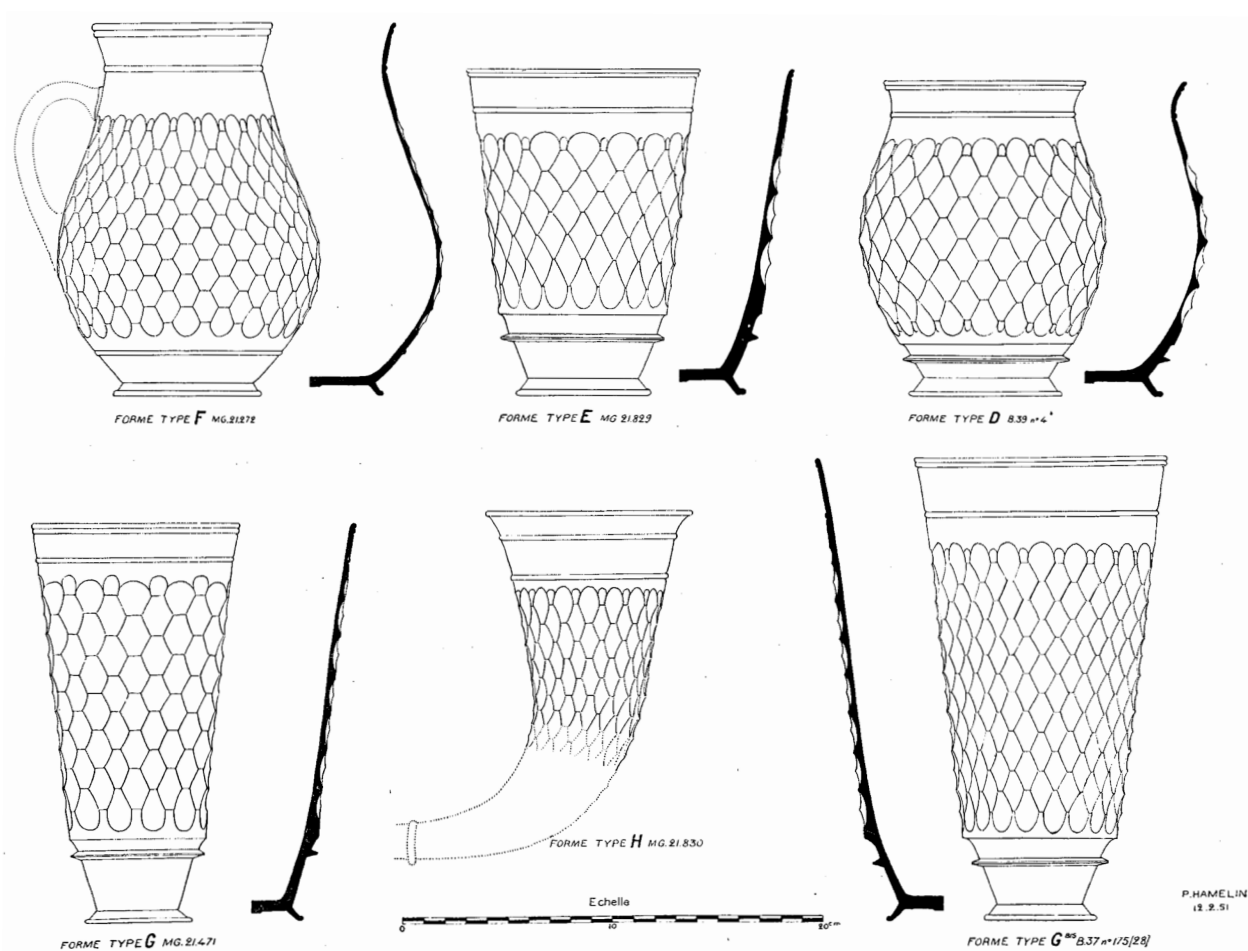
4. Enamelled glass goblet (§4.2.1.2),
NRAB 54 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 212).



5. Enamelled glass goblet
(§4.2.1.2), NRAB 59–60 (Morris,
courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Forms of facet-cut glass vessels (§4.2.1.3) (Hamelin 1953, Pl. VII).



2. Forms of facet-cut glass vessels (§4.2.1.3) (Hamelin 1953, Pl. VIII).



1. Type A facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), RAB 207 [60] (Oliver 1984, No. 56).



2. Type A facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 23 (NRAB Fig. 364).



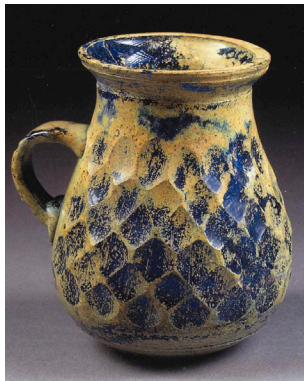
3. Type A facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 189 (Cambon 2002, No. 27).



4. Type A bis facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), RAB 356 [212] (Cambon 2010, Fig. 10).



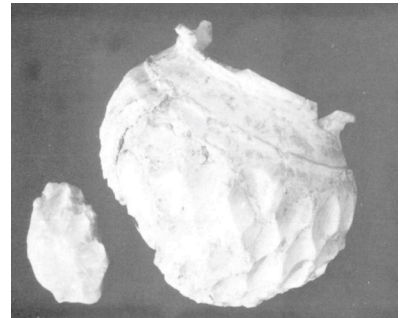
5. Type B facet-cut glass juglet (§4.2.1.3), RAB 204 [57] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 161).



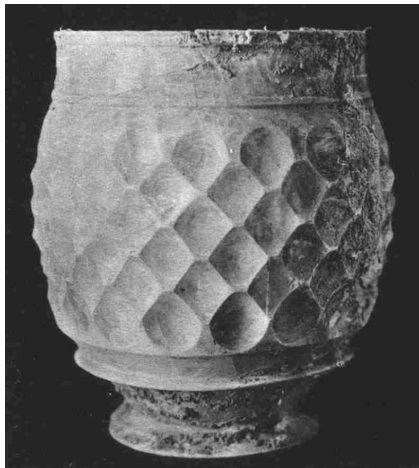
6. Type B facet-cut glass juglet (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 41(?) (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 162).



7. Type C facet-cut glass bowl (§4.2.1.3), MG 21425 (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



8. Type C facet-cut glass bowl (§4.2.1.3), MG 21474 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 15).



9. Type D facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 4 (NRAB Fig. 252).



10. Type F facet-cut glass jug (§4.2.1.3), MG 21272 (Cambon 2002, No. 25).



1. Type F facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), RAB 160 [12] (Delacour 1993, Fig. 5).



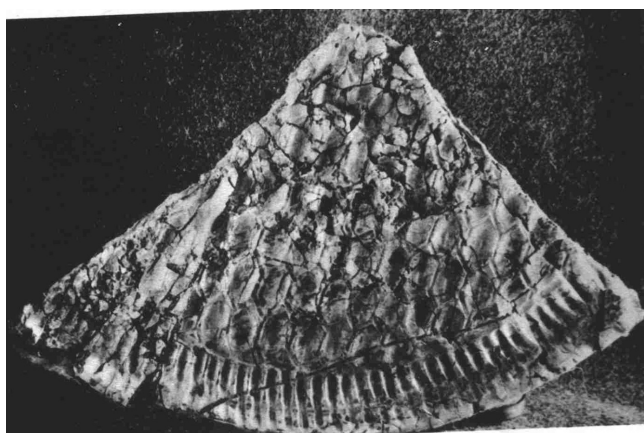
2. Type F facet-cut glass goblet (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 25 bis (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 172).



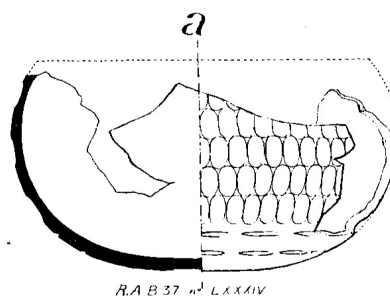
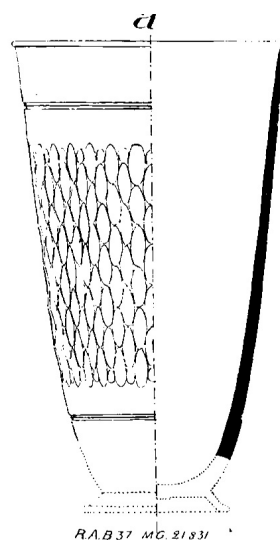
3. Type G facet-cut glass goblet(?) (§4.2.1.3), MG 21830 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 13).



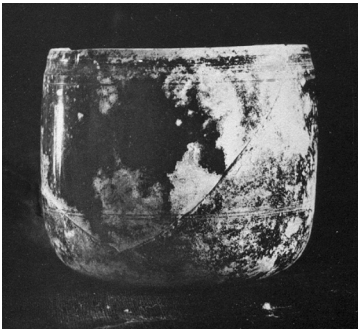
4. Type H facet-cut glass rhyton (§4.2.1.3), MGP 81316/37 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 14).



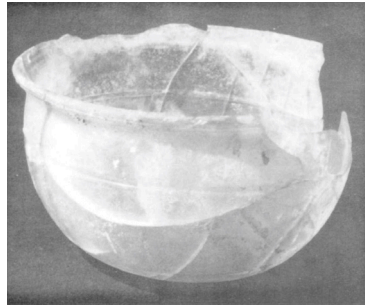
5. Facet-cut glass plate (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 32 (NRAB Fig. 253).



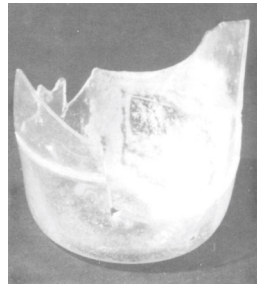
6. Facet-cut glass goblet and bowl with ovalised facets (§4.2.1.3), NRAB 21831 (above), MG 21831 (below) (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV a).



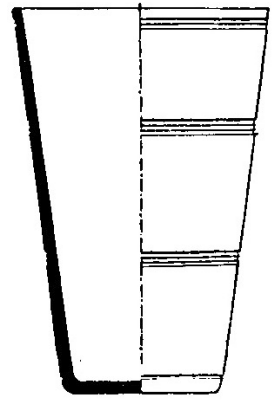
1. Glass cup with wheel-engraved lines (§4.2.1.4), RAB 157 [8] (RAB Fig. 8)



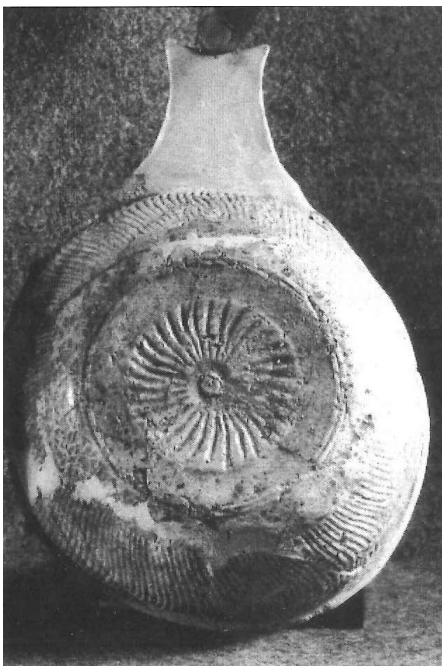
2. Glass cup with wheel-engraved lines (§4.2.1.4), RAB 178 [31] (Delacour 1993, Fig. 29).



3. Glass cup with wheel-engraved lines (§4.2.1.4), MG 21836 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 30).



4. Glass cup with wheel-engraved lines (§4.2.1.4), NRAB 48 bis (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII f).



5. Engraved glass trulla (§4.2.1.5), NRAB LXXXV (MGP 81316/115, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 676.416).



6. Engraved glass plate (§4.2.1.5), MG 21446 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 33).



7. Engraved glass goblet (§4.2.1.6), MG 19086 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 40).



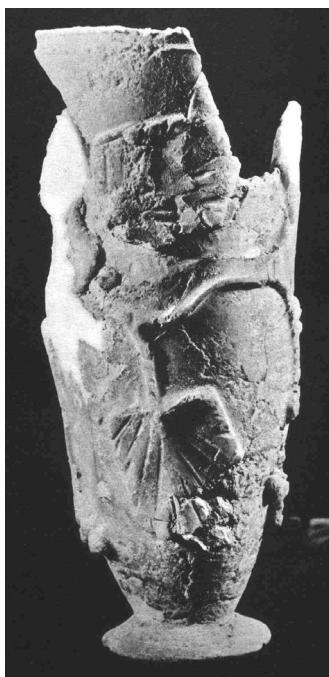
8. Engraved glass bowl (§4.2.1.6), NRAB LXXXVIII (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



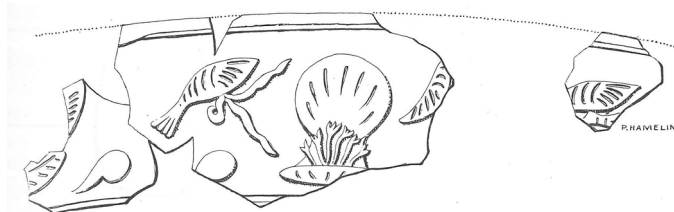
9. Engraved glass plate (§4.2.1.6), MG 21817 (Delacour 1993, Fig. 38).



1. Glass goblet with relief decoration (§4.2.1.7), RAB 237 [91] (Gullini 1961, No. 38).



2. Glass goblet with relief decoration (§4.2.1.7), NRAB LXXXVII (NRAB Fig. 255).



3. Glass vessel with relief decoration (§4.2.1.7), NRAB LXX (Hamelin 1954, Pl. XXXVII).



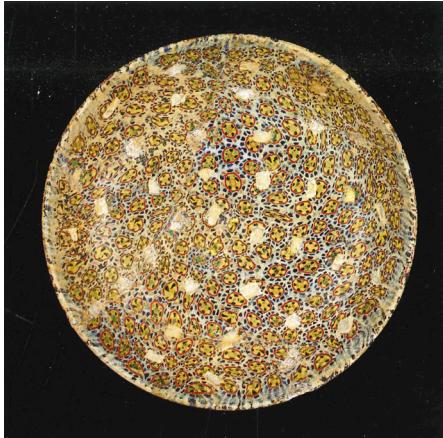
4. Pharos goblet (§4.2.1.7), RAB 203 [56] *in situ* (RAB Fig. 24).



5. Pharos goblet (§4.2.1.7), RAB 203 [56] (Photograph MG, LTR, 27).



6. Pharos goblet (§4.2.1.7), RAB 203 [56] (NRAB Fig. 362).



1. Mosaic glass plate (§4.2.18), RAB 159 [1] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 168).



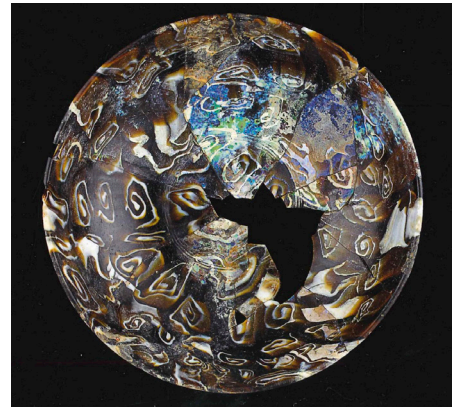
2. Mosaic glass plate (§4.2.1.8), MG 21277 (Cambon 2002, No. 30).



3. Ribbed glass bowl (§4.2.1.9), RAB 177 [30] (RAB Fig. 22).



4. Ribbed glass bowl (4.2.1.9), RAB 247 [101] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 167).



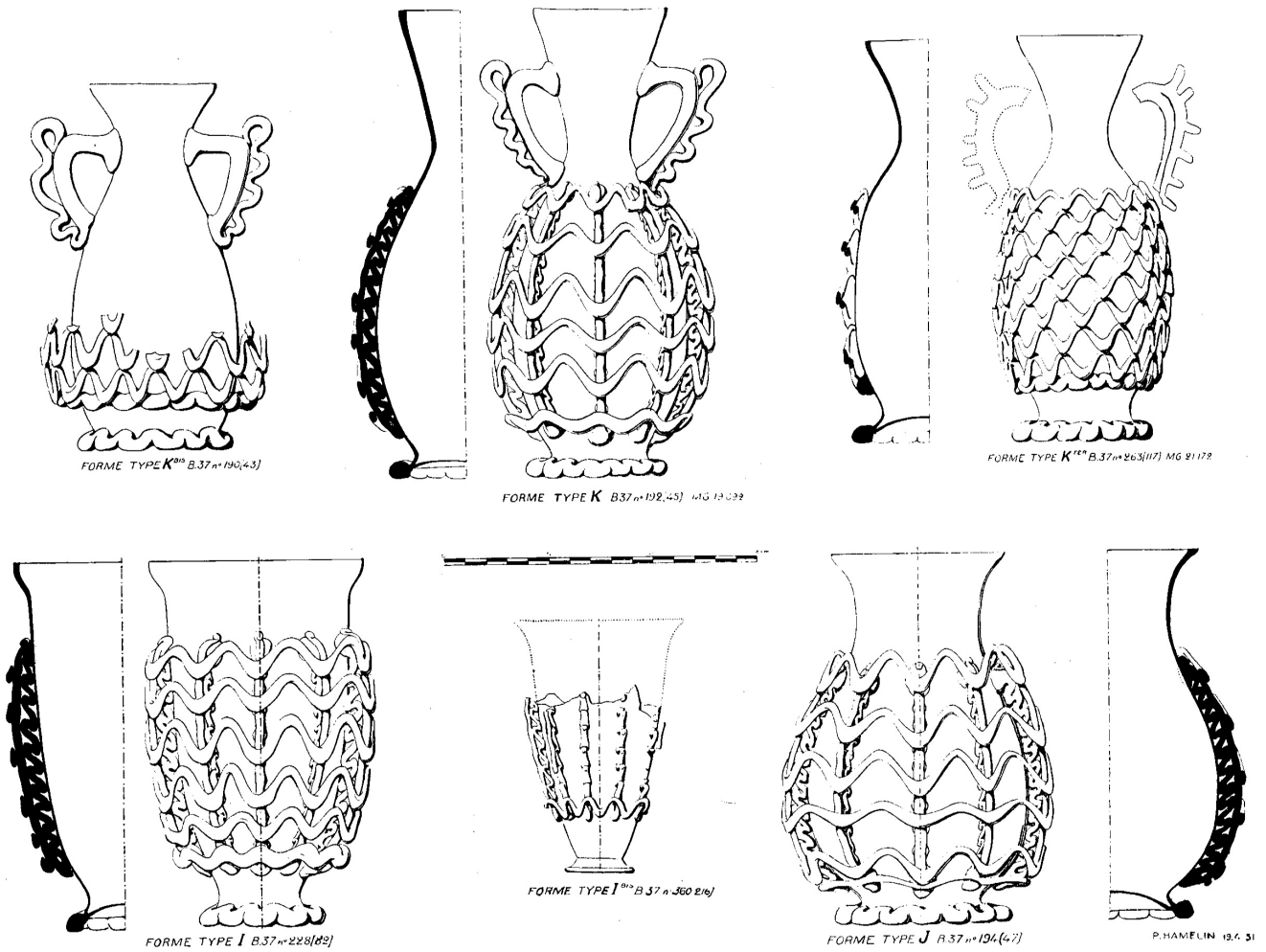
5. Ribbed glass bowl (§4.2.1.9), RAB 311 [165] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 171).



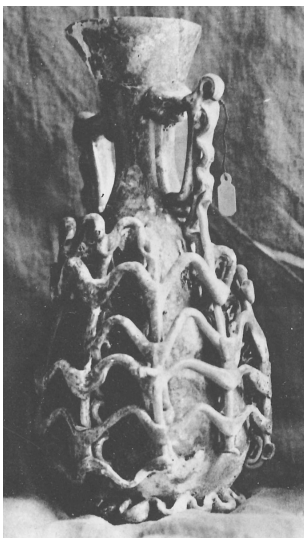
6. Ribbed glass goblet (§4.2.1.10), RAB 161 [13] (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



7. Ribbed glass goblet (§4.2.1.10), RAB 179 [32] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 165).



1. Glass goblets and jars with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11) (Hamelin 1953, Pl. IX).



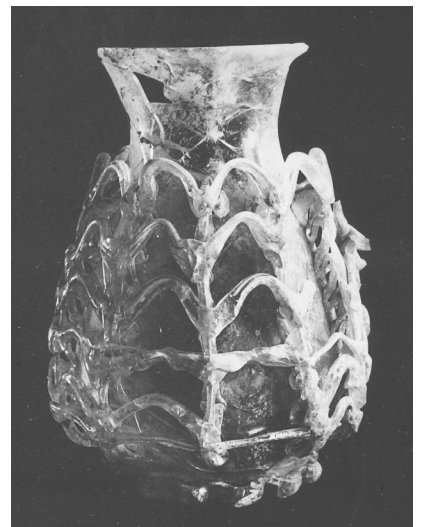
2. Type K glass jar with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11), RAB 192 [45] (RAB Fig. 23).



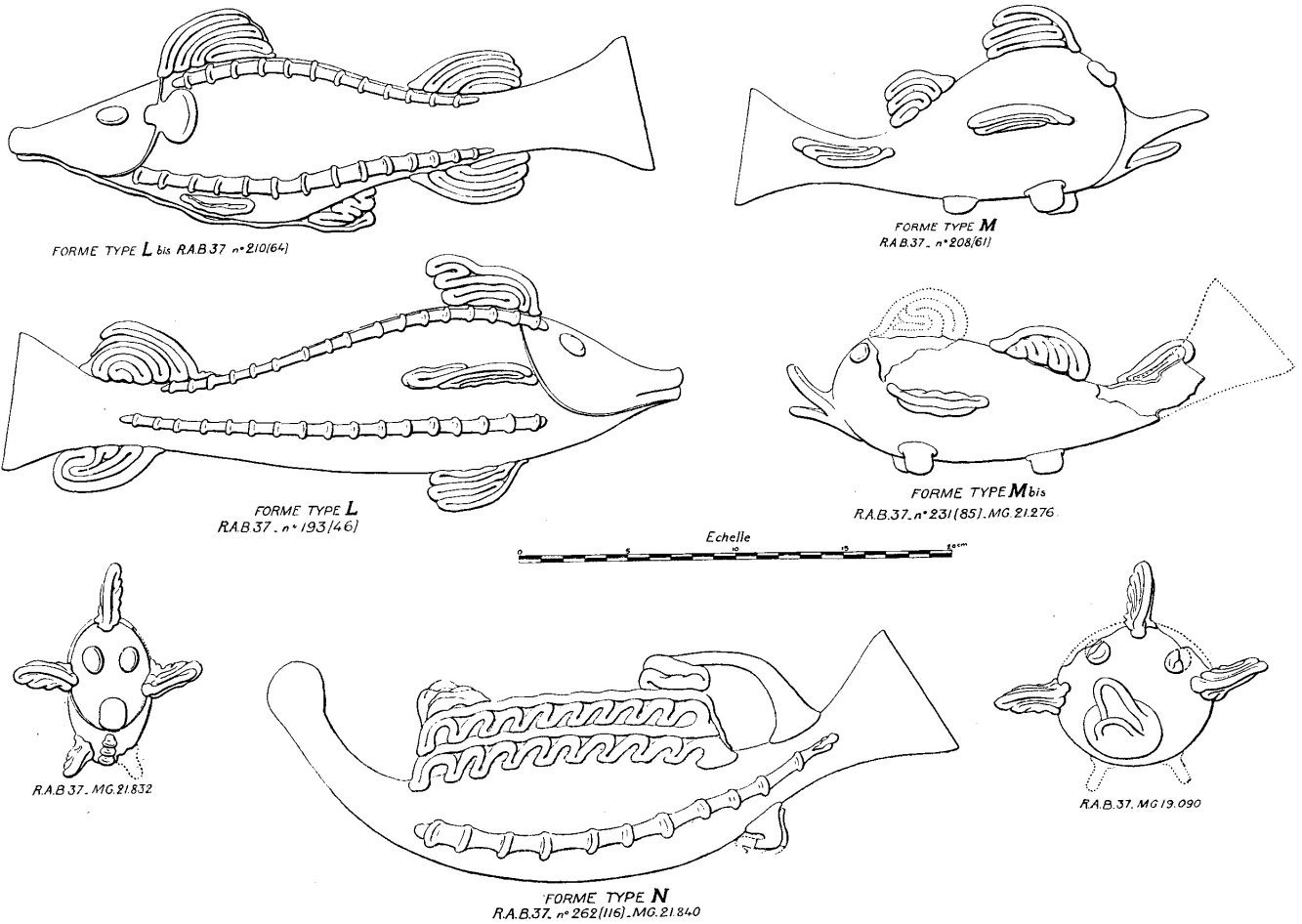
3. Type K bis glass jar with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11), RAB 190 [43] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 158).



4. Type I glass goblet with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11), RAB 228 [82] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 159).



5. Type J glass jar with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11), RAB 194 [47] (RAB Fig. 27).



PHAMELIN 18.4.51

1. Ichthyomorphic glass flasks (§4.2.1.12) (Hamelin 1953, Pl. X).



2. Type L glass fish flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 184 [37] (RAB Fig. 26).



3. Type L glass fish flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 187 [40] (Cambon 2002, No. 26).



4. Type M glass dolphin flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 208 [61] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 169).



5. Type L glass fish flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 193 [46] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 166).



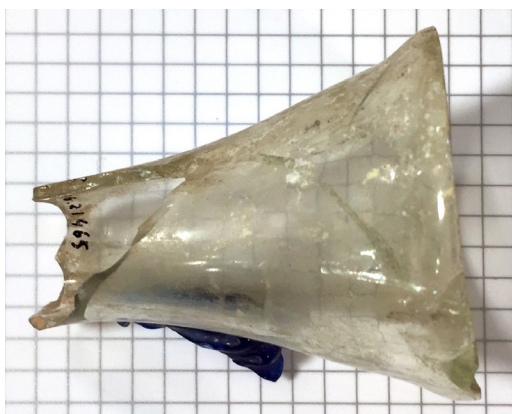
6. Type L bis glass fish flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 210 [64] (RAB Fig. 45).



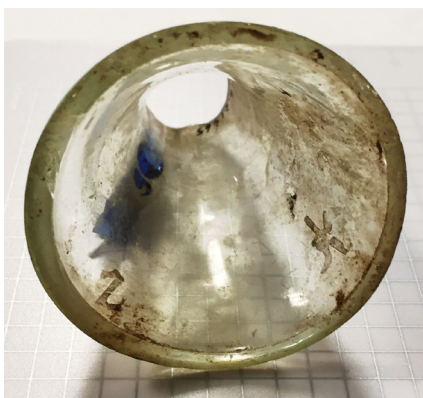
1. Type N glass ship flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 262 [116]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



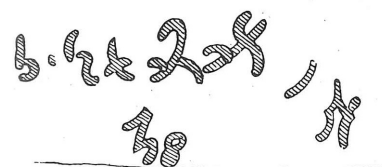
2. Type N glass ship flask (§4.2.1.12), RAB 262 [116]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



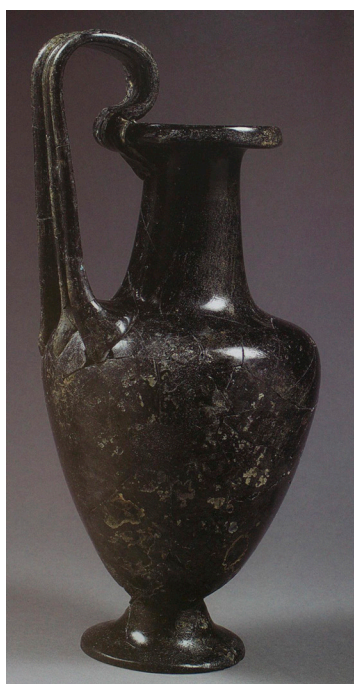
3. Opening of ichthyomorphic glass flask
(4.2.1.12), RAB 358 [214]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



4. Opening of ichthyomorphic glass
flask (4.2.1.12), RAB 358 [214] (Morris,
courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



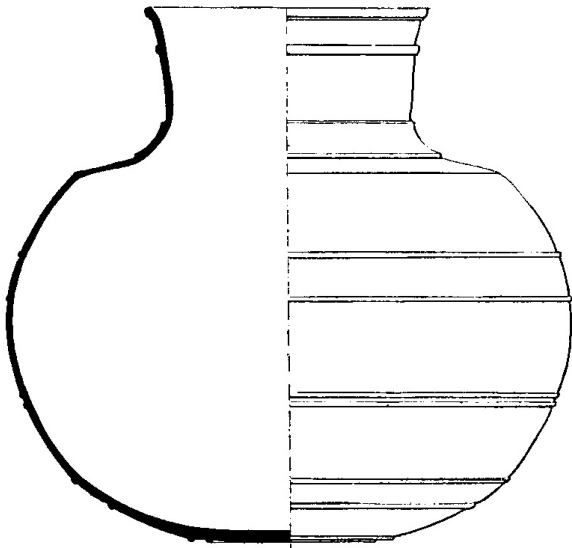
5. Hamelin's illustration of the
inscription on RAB 358 [214]
(Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI c).



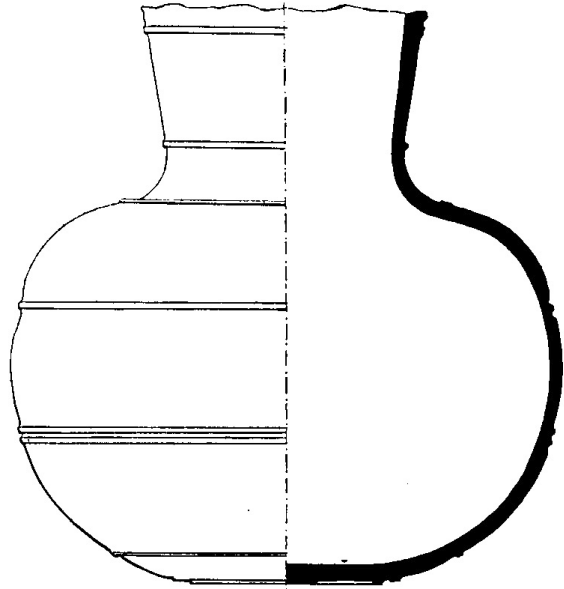
6. High-handled
glass jug (§4.2.1.13),
NRAB 48 (Thierry
Ollivier, LTR No.
213).



7. High-handled glass
jug (§4.2.1.13), NRAB
154 (Thierry Ollivier,
LTR No. 210).



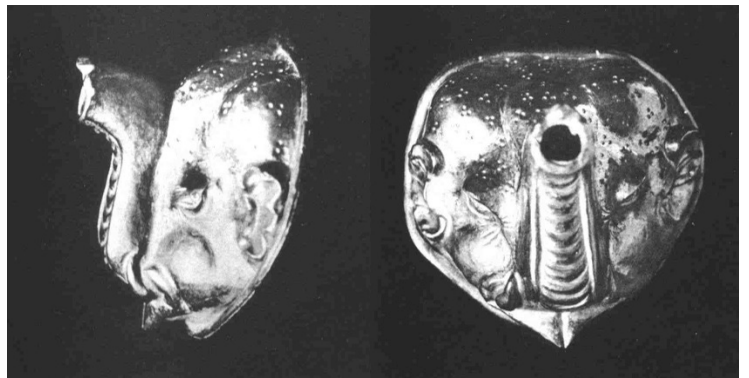
1. Glass jar with horizontal ribs (§4.2.1.14), NRAB 93 (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII a).



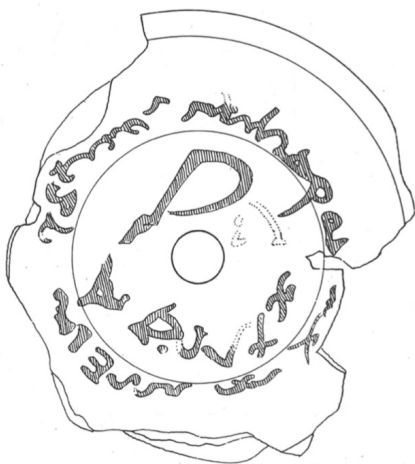
2. Glass jar with horizontal ribs (§4.2.1.14), NRAB 94 (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII a).



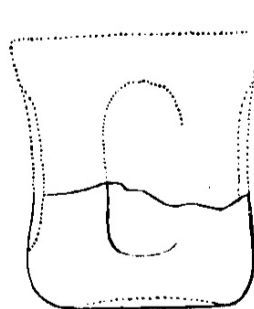
3. Zoomorphic glass rhyton (§4.2.1.15), RAB 158 [9] (RAB Fig. 7).



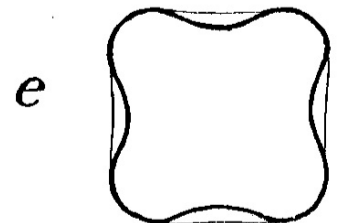
4. Views of gold elephant mask NRAB 245, i.e. spout attached to a glass vessel (§4.2.1.16) (NRAB Fig. 240 b–c).



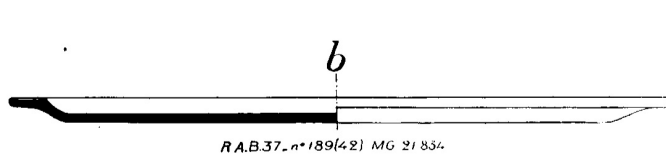
5. Hamelin's illustration of inscriptions on the base of a glass goblet (§4.2.1.17), NRAB LXXI (Hamelin 1954, Pl. XLI b).



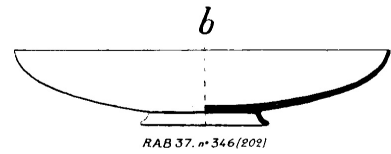
B 37. MG 21 833



6. Colourless glass cup (§4.2.1.17), MG 21833 (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI e).



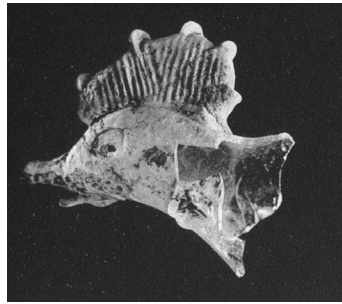
1. Glass plate (§4.2.1.18), RAB 189 [42]
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI b).



2. Glass plate or bowl (§4.2.1.18),
RAB 346 [202]
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI b).



3. Glass storage bottle (§4.2.1.19), “RAB 388
[245]” (MGP 81316/127, in Tissot 2006, K.p.
Beg. 675.415).



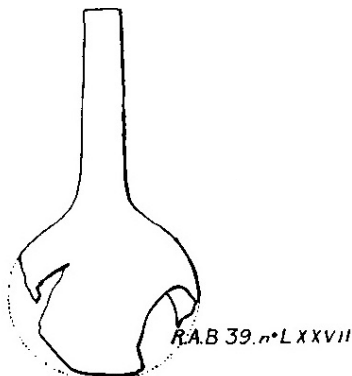
4. Zoomorphic glass vessel, head of
a rooster (§4.2.1.20), RAB 218 [72]
(RAB Fig. 43).



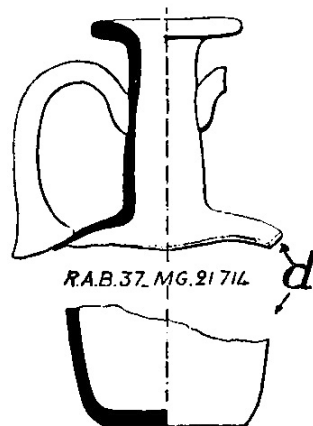
5. Zoomorphic glass vessel
(§4.2.1.20), MG 21715
(Bopearachchi et al. 2001, No. 274).



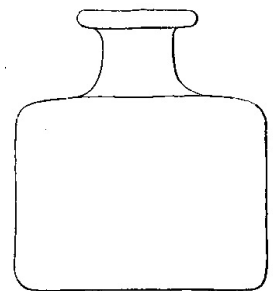
6. Glass unguentarium
(§4.2.1.21), NRAB 251
(NRAB Fig. 256).



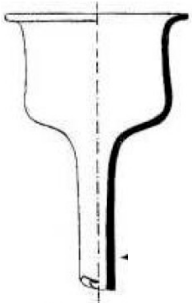
7. Glass flask (§4.2.1.21),
NRAB LXXVII
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII g).



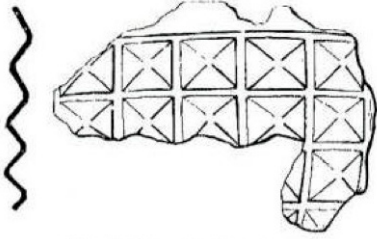
8. Glass flask (§4.2.1.21),
MG 21714 + 21835
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII d).



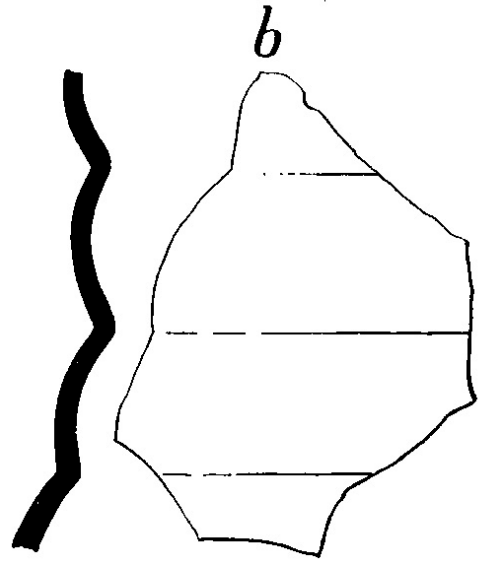
9. Glass bottle
(§4.2.1.21), “NRAB 0”
(Hamelin 1953,
Pl. XII e).



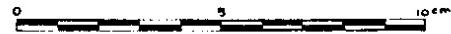
1. Glass funnel(?)
(§4.2.1.22), NRAB 235
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII g).



2. Mould-blown glass
(§4.2.1.22), NRAB LXXXVI
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XI d).



R.A.B 37. MG 21.865



3. Glass vessel with carinated profile (§4.2.1.22), MG 21865
(Hamelin 1953, Pl. XII b).



4. Leaded brass basin (§4.2.2.1), RAB 291 [145]
(Hansen et al. 2009, No. 327).



5. Leaded brass basin (§4.2.2.1), RAB 286 [140]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



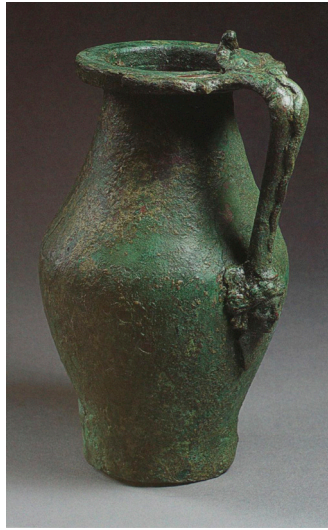
6. Leaded brass basin (§4.2.2.1), RAB 300 [154]
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



7. Leaded brass basin (§4.2.2.1), NRAB 58
(Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Copper alloy bowl (§4.2.2.2), MG 25457(?) (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



2. Bronze jug (§4.2.2.3), NRAB 1 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 224).



3. Bronze jug (§4.2.2.3), NRAB 209 (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



4. Leaded bronze pot (§4.2.2.4) with inscription on shoulder, NRAB 106 (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



5. Gāndhārī inscription on shoulder of leaded bronze pot (§4.2.2.4, §4.15), NRAB 106 (Composite of two photographs, Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Bronze balsamarium (§4.2.2.5), Ares, RAB 240 [95] (Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 83).



2. Bronze balsamarium (§4.2.2.5), Athena, RAB 242 [96] (RAB Fig. 59).



3. Bronze balsamarium (§4.2.2.5), RAB 243 [97] (Rice and Rowland 1971, No. 84).



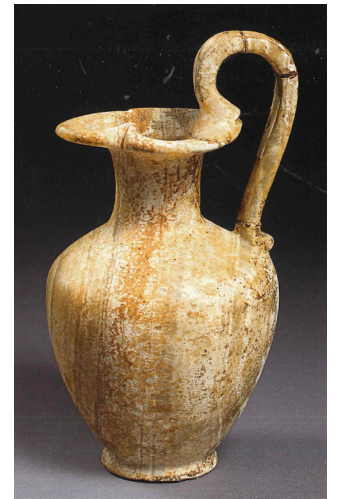
4. Bronze balsamarium (§4.2.2.5), Hermes, NRAB 78 (NRAB Fig. 333).



5. Alabaster jar (§4.2.3), RAB 164 [16] (RAB Fig. 11).



6. Alabaster patera (§4.2.3), RAB 165 [17] (RAB Fig. 18).



7. Alabaster jug (§4.2.3), RAB 172 [25] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 173).



8. Porphyry cup (§4.2.4), NRAB 95 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 215).



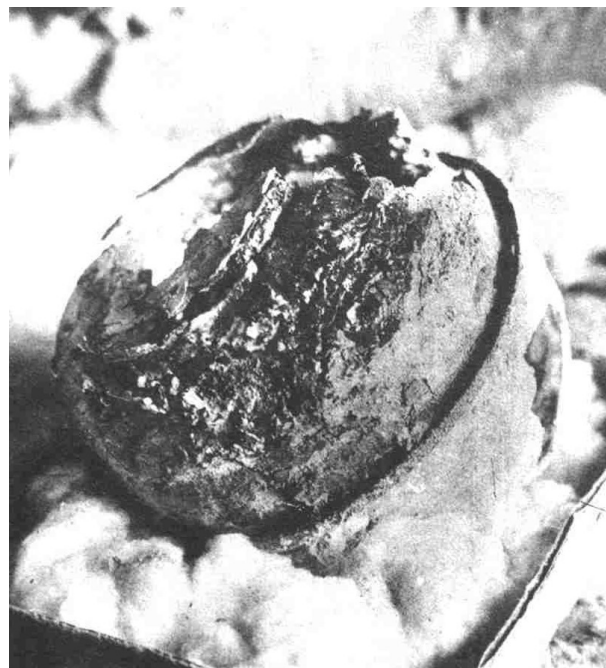
9. Porphyry plate (§4.2.4), NRAB 119 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 216).



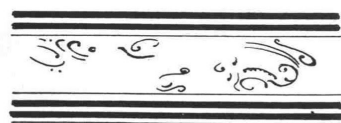
10. Rock crystal cantharus (§4.2.5), NRAB 121 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 214).



1. Lacquerwares *in situ* (§4.2.6), NRAB 92 in background to left (NRAB Fig. 243).



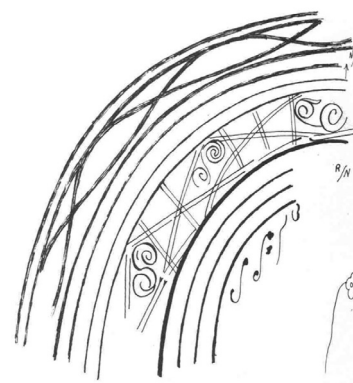
2. Lacquerware bowl (§4.2.6), NRAB 92 stacked on glass jar NRAB 93 (NRAB Fig. 244).



3. Illustration of fragments of lacquerware boxes (§4.2.6), NRAB 186 (NRAB Fig. 246).



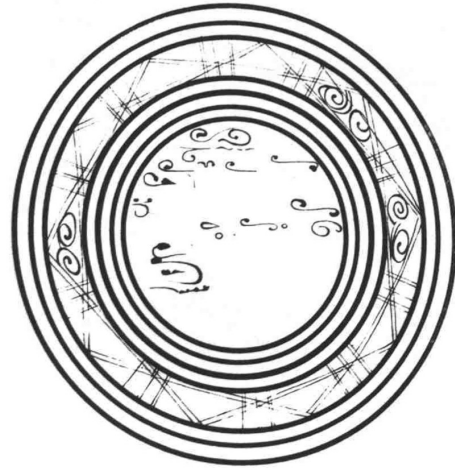
4. Illustration of fragments of lacquerware platter (§4.2.6), NRAB 215 (NRAB Fig. 247).



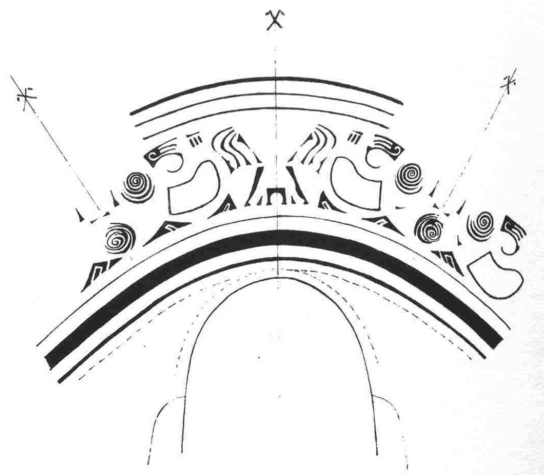
5. Illustration of lacquerware (ear?) cup (§4.2.6), NRAB 218 (NRAB Fig. 248).



1. Stacked lacquerware cups or box (§4.2.6),
NRAB 218 (NRAB Fig. 245).



2. Illustration of decoration on lacquerware cup
or box (§4.2.6), NRAB 219
(NRAB Fig. 248 bis).



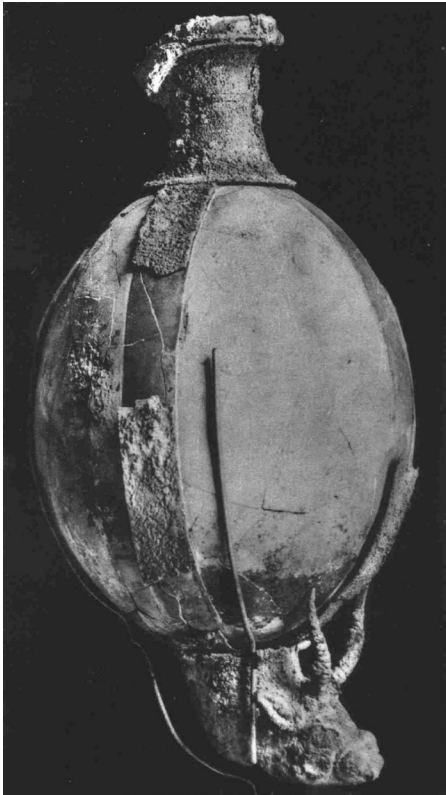
3. Illustration of decoration on lacquerware ear cup
(§4.2.6), NRAB 229 (Fig. 249).



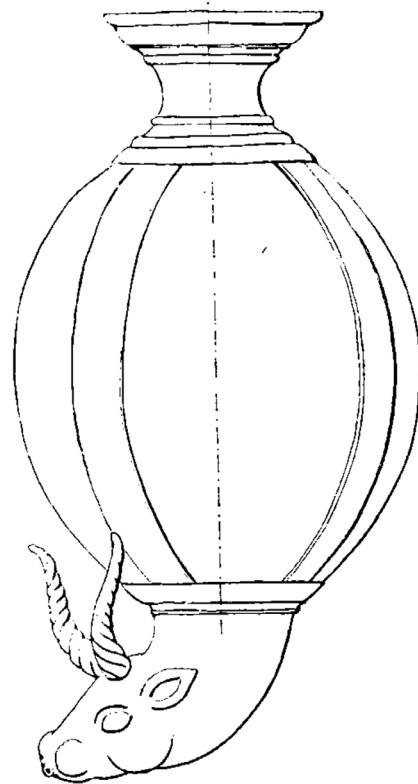
4. Lacquerware bowl from grave in Wuwei City, Gansu
Province, Eastern Han (h. 10.5 cm, dia. 24.3 cm)
(Fu 1998, No. 297).



5. Illustration of lacquerware ear cup,
Lindennmuseum, Stuttgart
(Prüch 1997, Fig. 106).



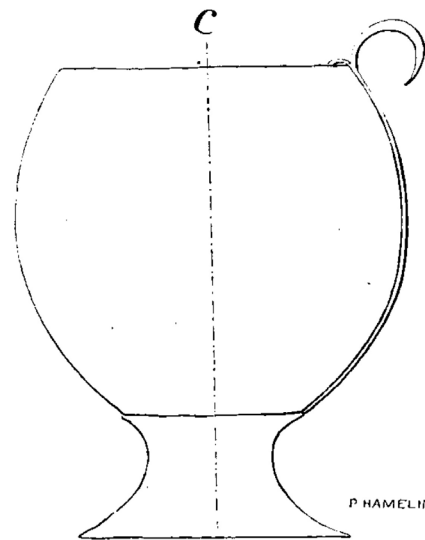
1. Ostrich egg and support (§4.2.7), RAB 176 [29] + RAB 166 [18](?) (NRAB Fig. 358).



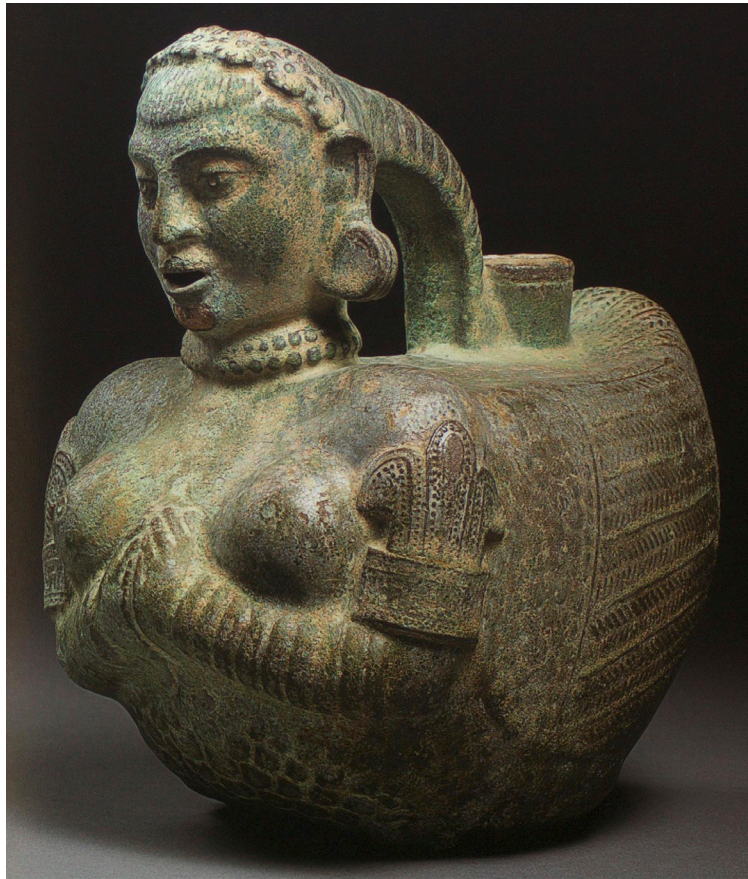
2. Ostrich egg and support (§4.2.7), RAB 176 [29] + RAB 166 [18](?) (Hamelin 1953, Fig. XIV c).



3. Ostrich egg cup and support (§4.2.7), RAB 173 [26] + RAB 174 [27], and alabaster jug (§4.2.3), RAB 172 [25] *in situ* (RAB Fig. 15).



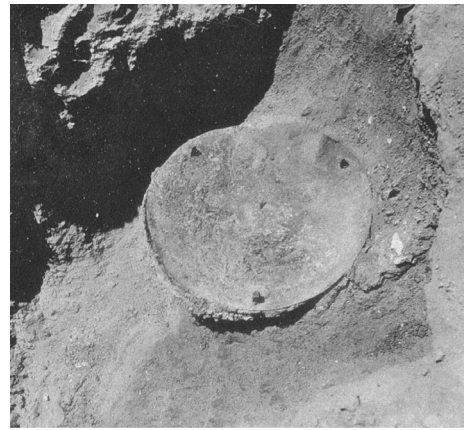
4. Ostrich egg cup and support (§4.2.7), RAB 173 [26] + RAB 174 [27] (Hamelin 1953, Pl. XIV c).



1. Blue-green glazed pottery jug in the form of a *kinnari* (§4.2.8.2), NRAB 72 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 228).



2. Olive glazed pottery jug (§4.2.8.2), NRAB 162 (Josephine Powell, Tissot 2006, 279, K.p. Beg. 701.441).



1. Lower plate of aquarium *in situ* (§4.3),
RAB 216 [70] (RAB Fig. 47).

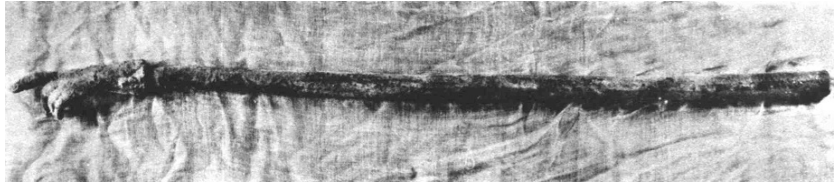
2. Upper plate and rim of
aquarium (§4.3), RAB 216 [70]
(Gullini 1961, No. 27).



3. Aquarium (§4.3), RAB 248 [102] / MG 22878 (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Bronze lamp stand (§4.4), NRAB 26 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 219).



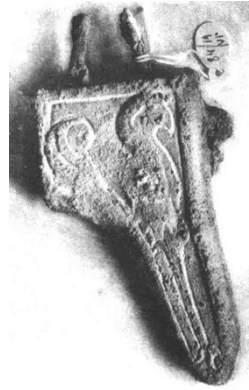
2. Bronze rod with hand attachment (§4.4), NRAB 52 (NRAB Fig. 352).



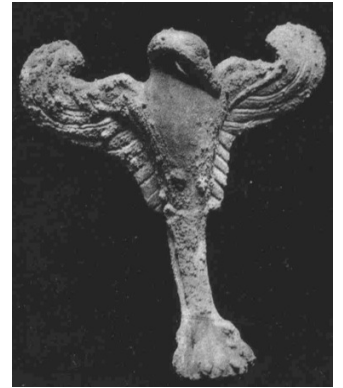
3. Bronze antler (§4.4), NRAB 64 (NRAB Fig. 349 [b]).



4. Bronze mask of Silenus (§4.4), NRAB 77 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR. No. 221).



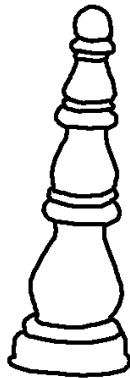
5. Bronze element (§4.4), NRAB 84 (NRAB Fig. 349).



6. Bronze swan element (§4.4), NRAB 88 (NRAB Fig. 461).



7. Capital of bronze ornamental column (§4.4), NRAB 137 (NRAB Fig. 350).



8. Bronze finial (§4.4), NRAB 156 (traced after MGP 81317/98).



9. Bronze bovine leg (§4.4), NRAB 159 (Cambon 2002, No. 33).



10. Bronze parrot element (§4.4), NRAB 230 (NRAB Fig. 336).



11. Bronze handle (§4.4), NRAB 223 (NRAB Fig. 342).



1. Bronze element (§4.4),
NRAB 231 (NRAB Fig. 344).



2. Bronze element (§4.4),
NRAB 238 (NRAB Fig. 334).



3. Bronze support (§4.4),
NRAB 240
(NRAB Fig. 343 [a]).



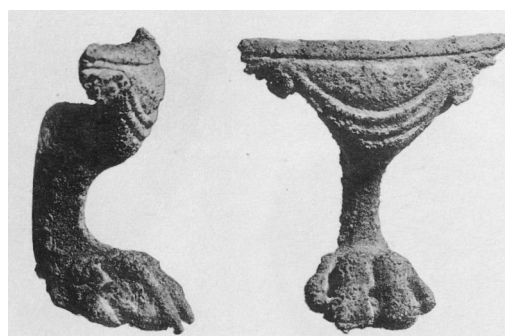
4. Bronze support (§4.4),
NRAB 249
(NRAB Fig. 343 [c]).



5. Bronze element (§4.4),
NRAB 248 (NRAB Fig. 337).



6. Bronze element (§4.4),
NRAB 254 (NRAB Fig. 338).



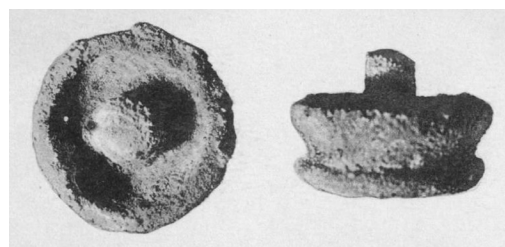
7. Bronze support (§4.4), B.G. 3
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 2).



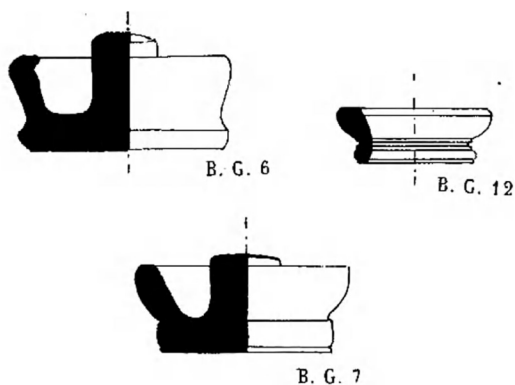
8. Bronze bovine leg (§4.4), B.G. 2
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 1).



9. Bronze element (§4.4), B.G. 5
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 5).



10. Bronze foot element (§4.4), B.G. 6
(Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 6).



11. Bronze foot elements (§4.4), B.G. 6,
B.G. 7, B.G. 12 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV).



1. Types of bronze lamp stands from Pompeii (Tarbell 1901, Figs. 75–83).



2. Bronze candelabrum with miniature vessel element (Bloesch 1943, No. 59, Fig. 66).



3. Bronze candelabrum with circular feet and mask elements (Bloesch 1943, No. 59, Fig. 67).



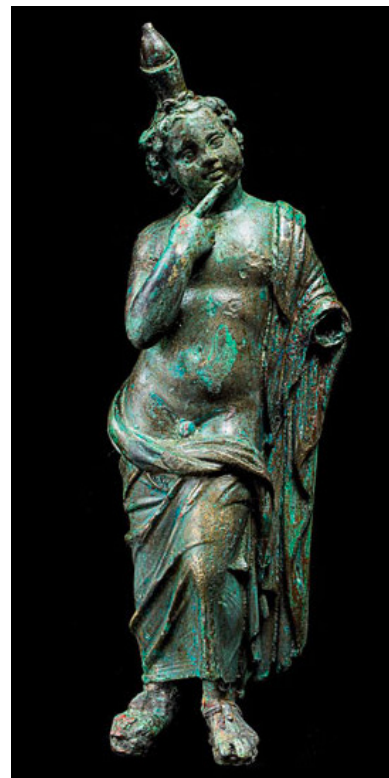
1. Bronze figurine of Heracles-Serapis (§4.5), NRAB 25 (Gullini 1961, No. 23).



2. Bronze figurine of Eros (§4.5), NRAB 63 (NRAB Fig. 326).



3. Bronze figurine of Harpocrates with ancient repair (§4.5), NRAB 153 (NRAB Fig. 322).



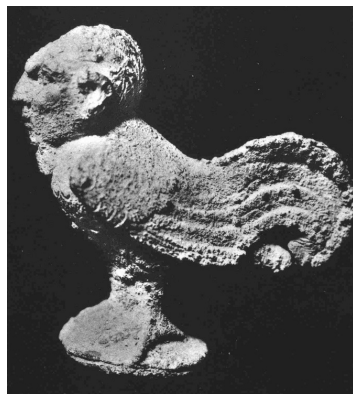
4. Bronze figurine of Harpocrates after conservation (§4.5), NRAB 153 (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 225).



1. Bronze figurine of a horseman (§4.5),
NRAB 150 (NRAB Fig. 331).



2. Bronze figurine of a horseman (§4.5),
NRAB 237 (NRAB Fig. 335).



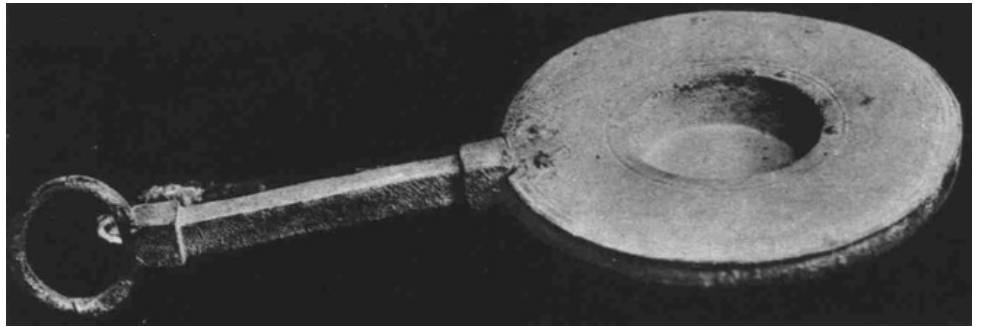
3. Bronze figurine of a rooster-
man (§4.5), NRAB 177
(NRAB Fig. 328).



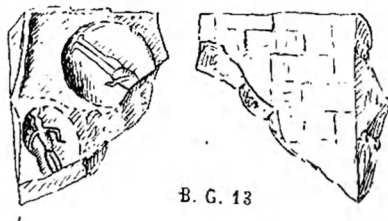
4. Bronze figurine of a mime (?)
(§4.5), B.G. 9 (Ghirshman 1946,
Pl. XII, 1).



1. Bronze inkpot (§4.6.2), NRAB 80 (NRAB Fig. 353).



2. Bronze incense burner (§4.6.3), NRAB 82 (NRAB Fig. 347).



3. Clay sealing impression (§4.10.1), B.G. 13 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 13).



4. Coral (§4.10.2), RAB 362 [218] (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 96 (NRAB Fig. 296).



2. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 97 (NRAB Fig. 299).



3. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 98 (NRAB Fig. 437).



4. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 99 (NRAB Fig. 292).



5. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 100
(Gullini 1951, No. 21).



6. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 101 (NRAB Fig. 294).



7. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB
102–103 (NRAB Fig. 291).



8. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB
105 (NRAB Fig. 445).



9. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB
110 (NRAB Fig. 384).



10. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 111
(NRAB Fig. 313).



11. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 112
(Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 186).



12. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 122 (NRAB Fig. 278).



13. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 123 (NRAB Fig. 302).



1. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 124 (NRAB Fig. 450).



2. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 125 (NRAB Fig. 304).



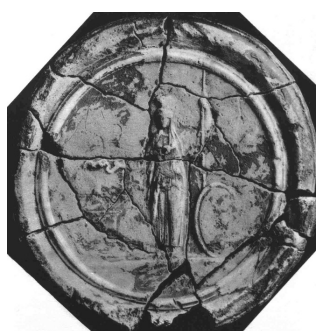
3. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 127 (NRAB Fig. 279).



4. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB
128 (NRAB Fig. 293).



5. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 123 (Thierry Ollivier,
LTR No. 189).



6. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 130 (NRAB
Fig. 295).



7. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 132 (NRAB Fig. 312).



8. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 133
(NRAB Fig. 300).



9. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB
134 (NRAB Fig. 276).



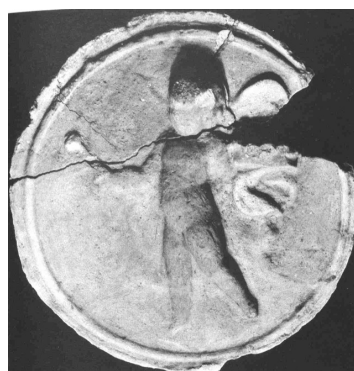
10. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 138
(NRAB Fig. 311).



11. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 139 (NRAB Fig. 301).



12. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 140
(NRAB Fig. 303).



13. Plaster cast (§4.12),
NRAB 141 (NRAB Fig. 316).



1. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 144 (NRAB Fig. 307).



2. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 145 (NRAB Fig. 277).



3. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 146 (NRAB Fig. 317).



4. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 149 bis (NRAB Fig. 444).



5. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 213 (NRAB Fig. 289).



6. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 226 (NRAB Fig. 310).



7. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 227 (NRAB Fig. 290).



8. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 228 (NRAB Fig. 320).



9. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB I (NRAB Fig. 378).



10. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 113 (NRAB Fig. 285).



11. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 142 (NRAB Fig. 282).



12. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 143 (NRAB Fig. 283).



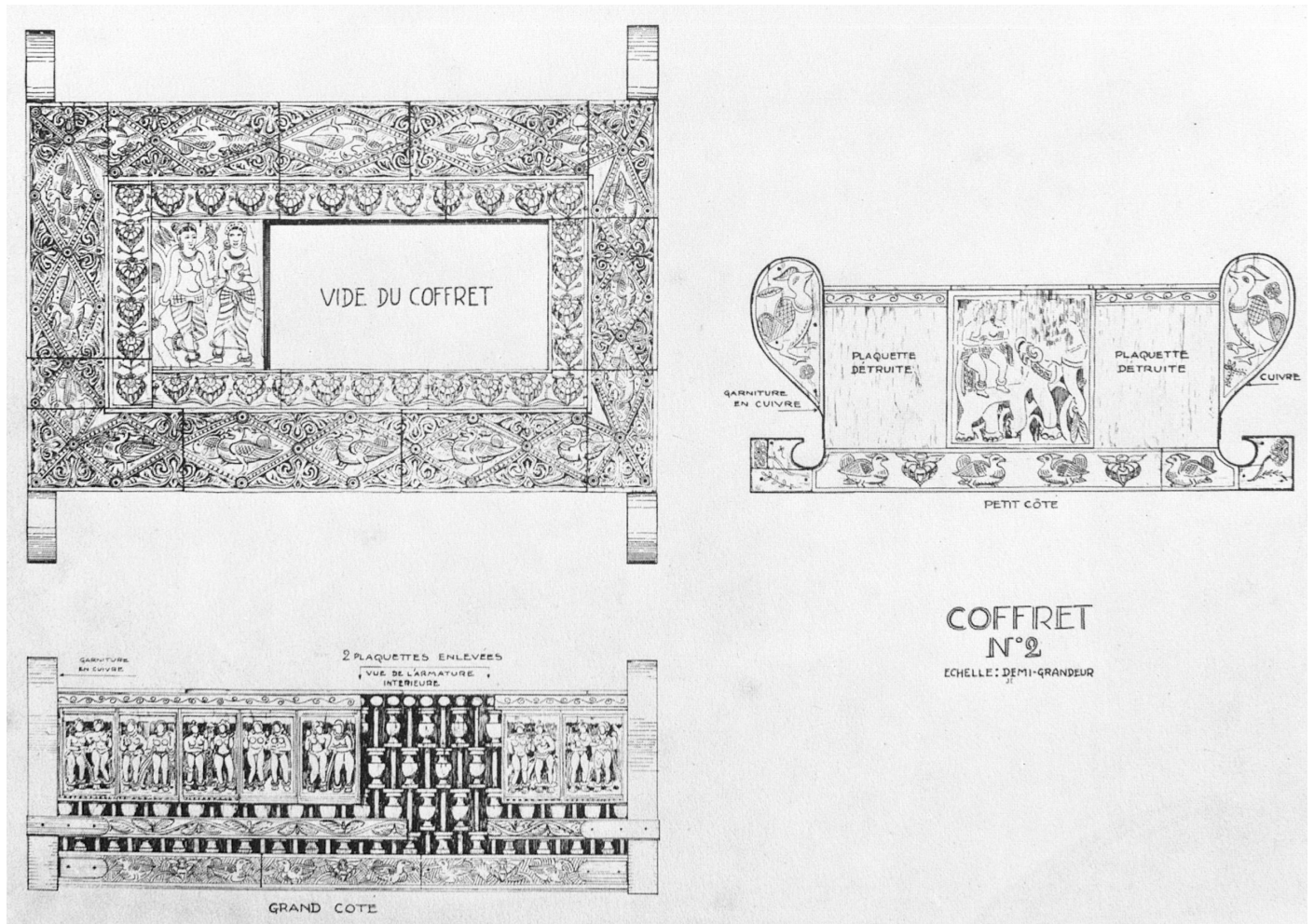
13. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 99 bis (NRAB Fig. 321).



14. Plaster cast (§4.12), NRAB 114 (NRAB Fig. 298).



1. Plaques from short side of Footstool I (§4.13.1.1), RAB 321 [175], as displayed in the MG (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



2. Carl's reconstruction of Footstool II (§4.13.1.1), RAB 322 [176] + RAB 316 [170] (RAB Fig. 102).



1. Footstool II *in situ* (§4.13.1.1), RAB 322 [176] + RAB 316 [170], showing absence of plaques from top side (RAB Fig. 100).



2. Plaques from Footstool III (§4.13.1.1), RAB 323 [177a] (RAB Fig. 103).



3. Plaques from Footstool III (§4.13.1.1), RAB 323 [177b, 177e, 177f] (RAB Fig. 106).



1. Plaque from Footstool IV (§4.13.1.1), RAB 324 [178d] (RAB Fig. 108).



2. Plaque from Footstool IV (§4.13.1.1), RAB 324 [178a] (RAB Fig. 110).



3. Footstool V (§4.13.1.1), RAB 325 [179], viewed from short side as displayed in the MG (Morris, courtesy of Pierre Cambon, MG).



1. Plaque from Footstool VI (§4.13.1.1), RAB 326 [180a] (RAB Fig. 137).



2. Plaque from Footstool VI (§4.13.1.1), RAB 326 [180a1] (RAB Fig. 140).



3. Plaque from Footstool VII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 327 [181h] (RAB Fig. 136).



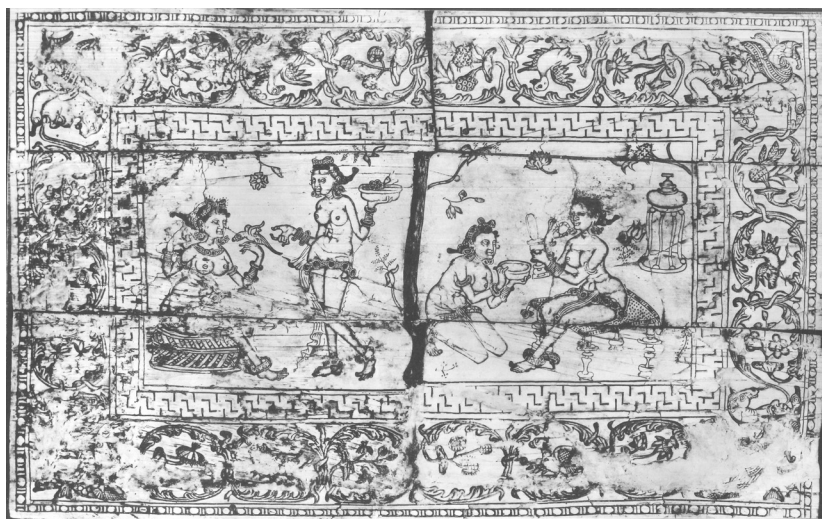
4. Plaque from Footstool VII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 327 [181o] (RAB Fig. 141).



5. Plaque from short side of Footstool VIII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 328 [182g] (RAB Fig. 149).

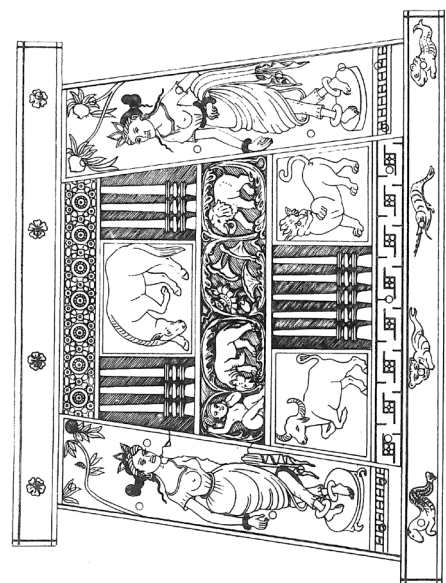


6. Plaque from short side of Footstool VIII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 328 [182e] (RAB Fig. 150).

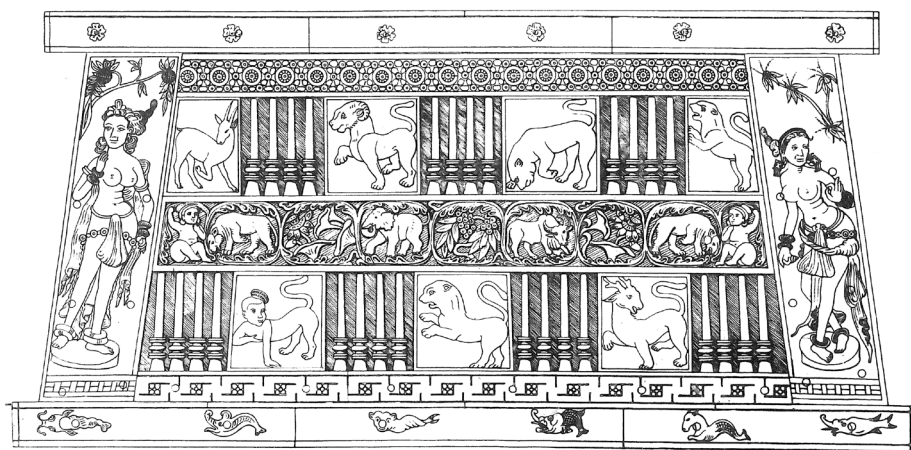


1. Top side of Footstool IX (§4.13.1.1), RAB 329 [183] + 340 [194]
(NRAB Fig. 233).

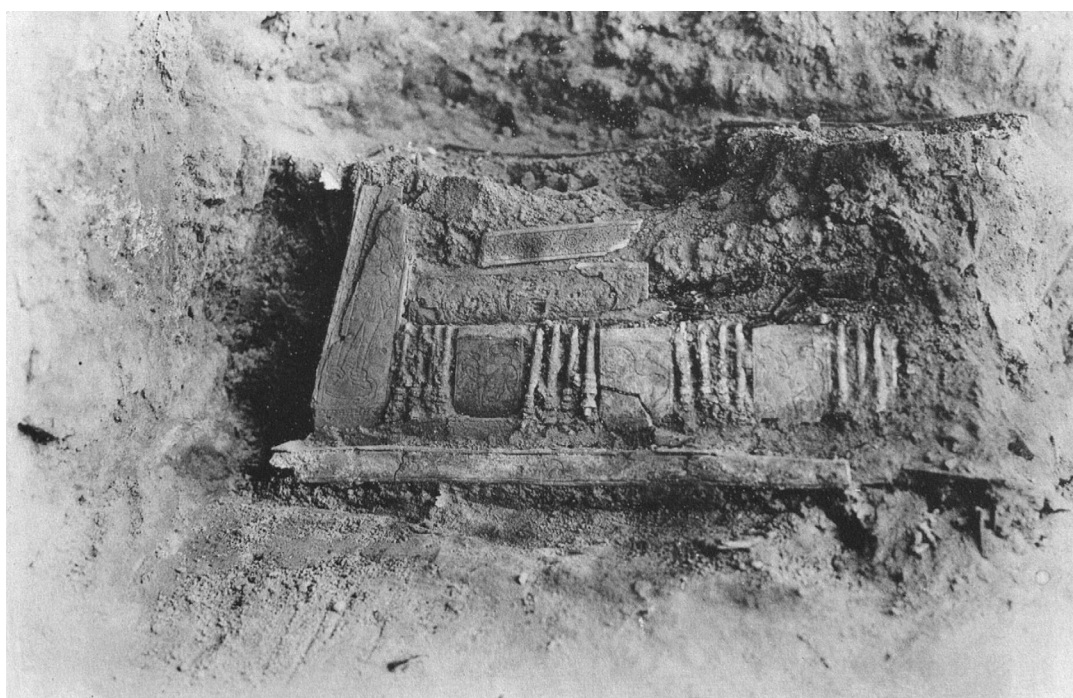
Echelle : 1 cm



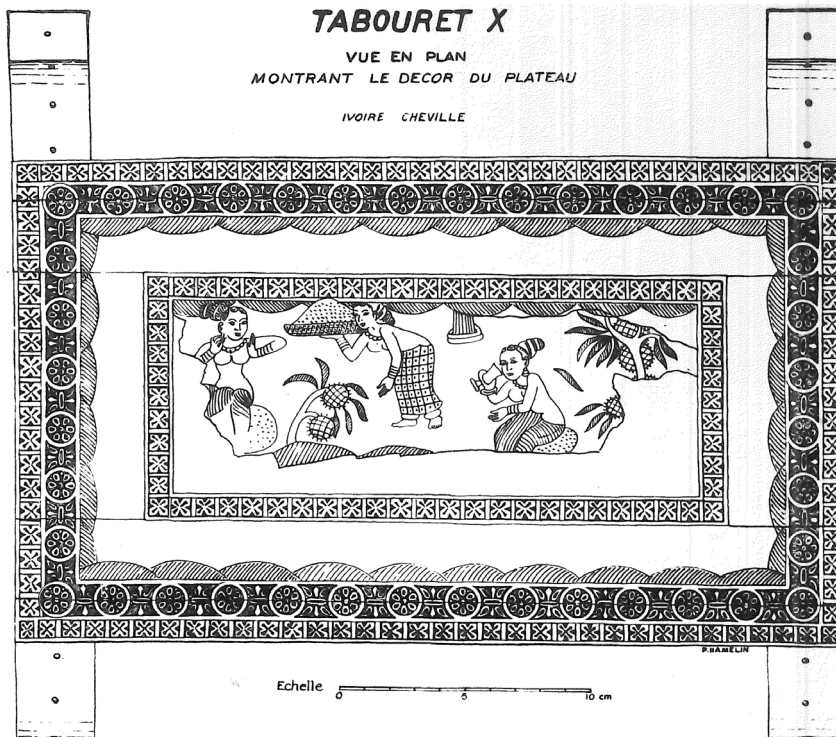
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of short side of
Footstool IX (§4.13.1.1), RAB 329 [183] +
340 [194] (NRAB Fig. 650).



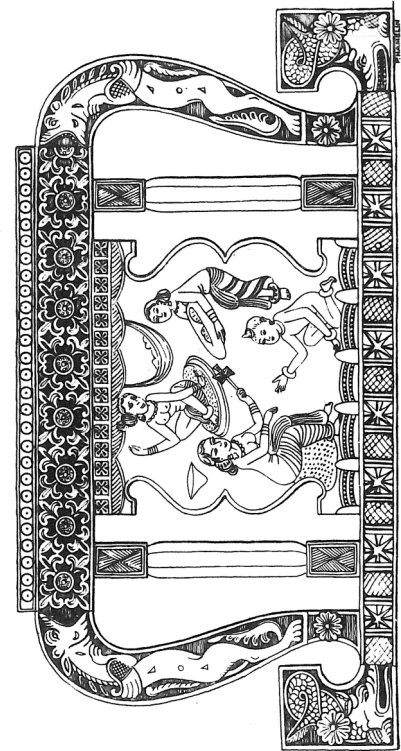
3. Hamelin's reconstruction of long side of Footstool IX (§4.13.1.1),
RAB 329 [183] + 340 [194] (NRAB Fig. 649).



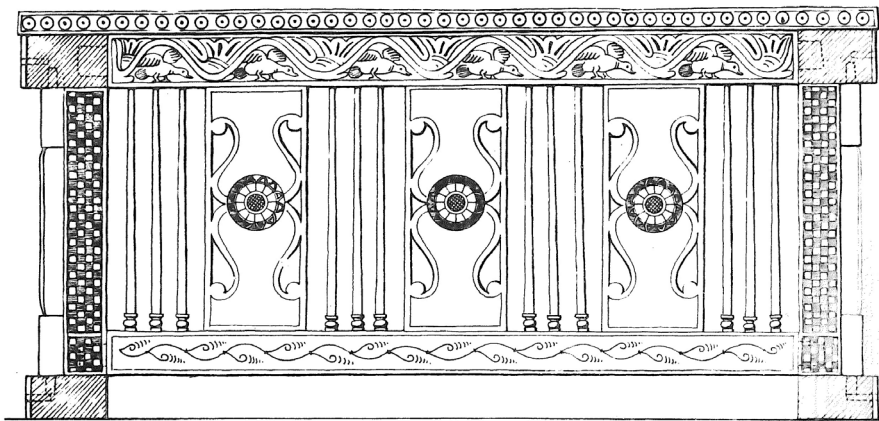
4. View of long side of Footstool IX *in situ* (§4.13.1.1), showing absence of plaques in upper row
(RAB Fig. 154).



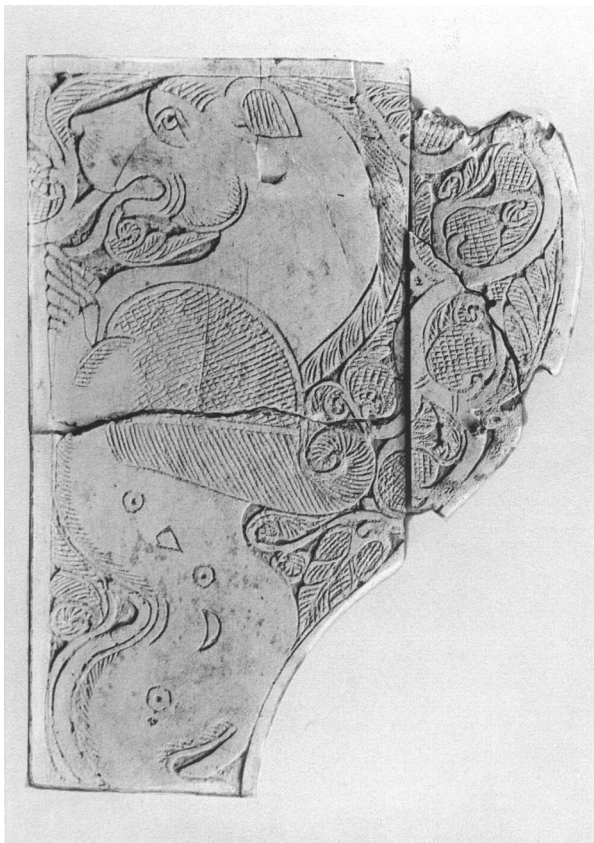
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of top side of Footstool X (§4.13.1.1), RAB 330 [184] (NRAB Fig. 651).



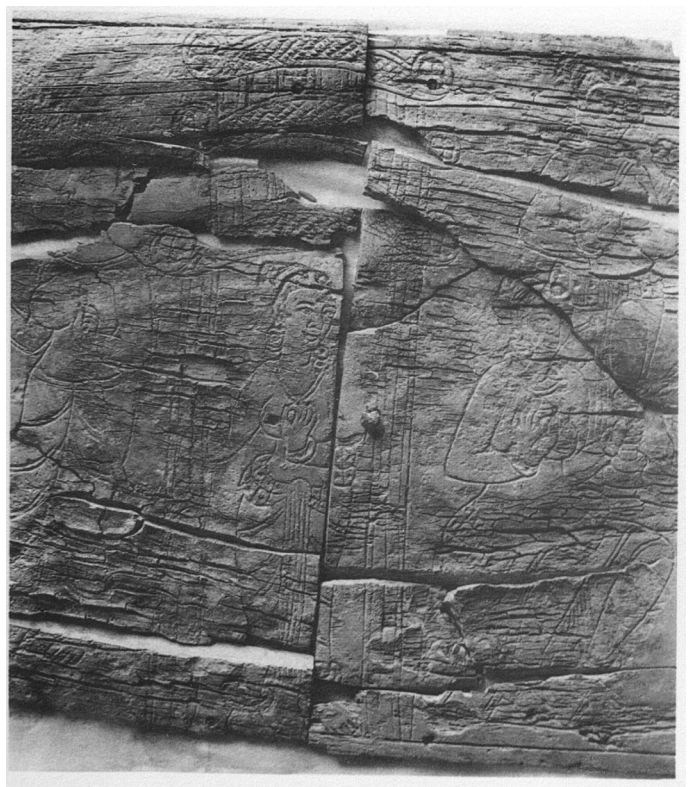
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of short side of Footstool X (§4.13.1.1), RAB 330 [184] (NRAB Fig. 652).



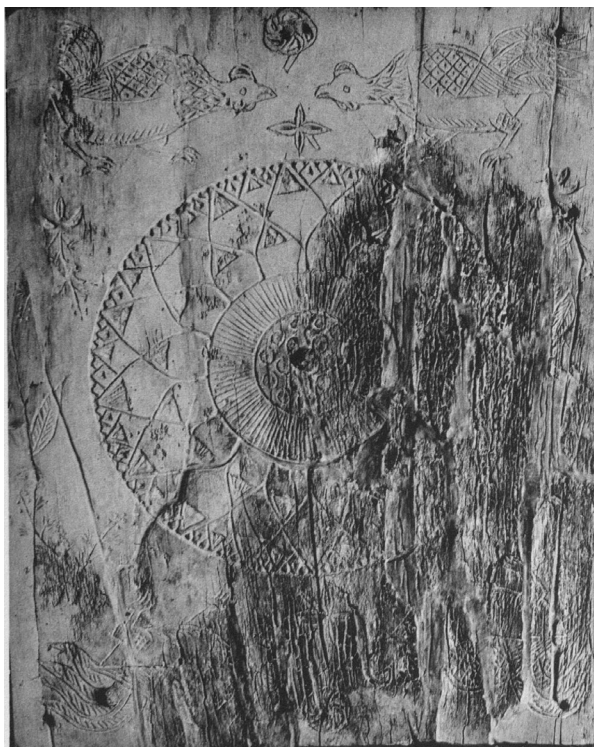
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of long side of Footstool X (§4.13.1.1), RAB 330 [184] (NRAB Fig. 653).



1. Plaque from short side of Footstool XI (§4.13.1.1), RAB 331 [185a] (RAB Fig. 82).



2. Plaque from top side of Footstool XI (§4.13.1.1), RAB 331 [185p] (RAB Fig. 193).



3. Plaque from Footstool XIII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 333 [187b] (RAB Fig. 213).



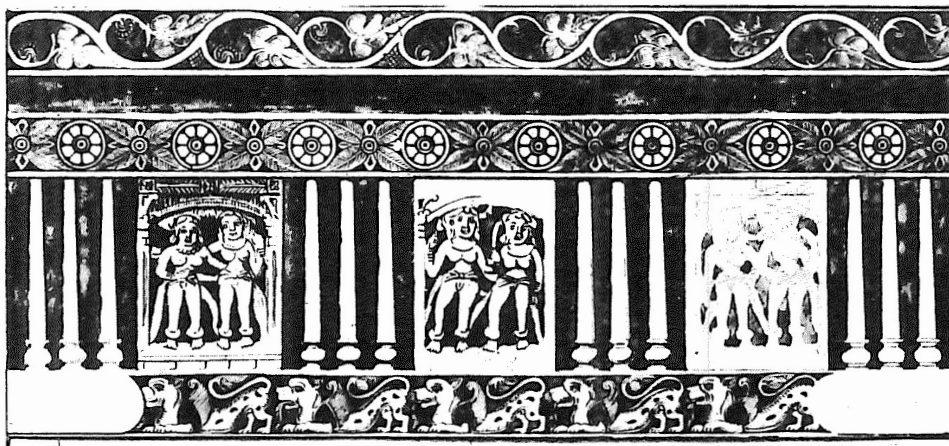
4. Plaques from Footstool XIII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 333 [187c] (MGP 81315/94, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 354.94).



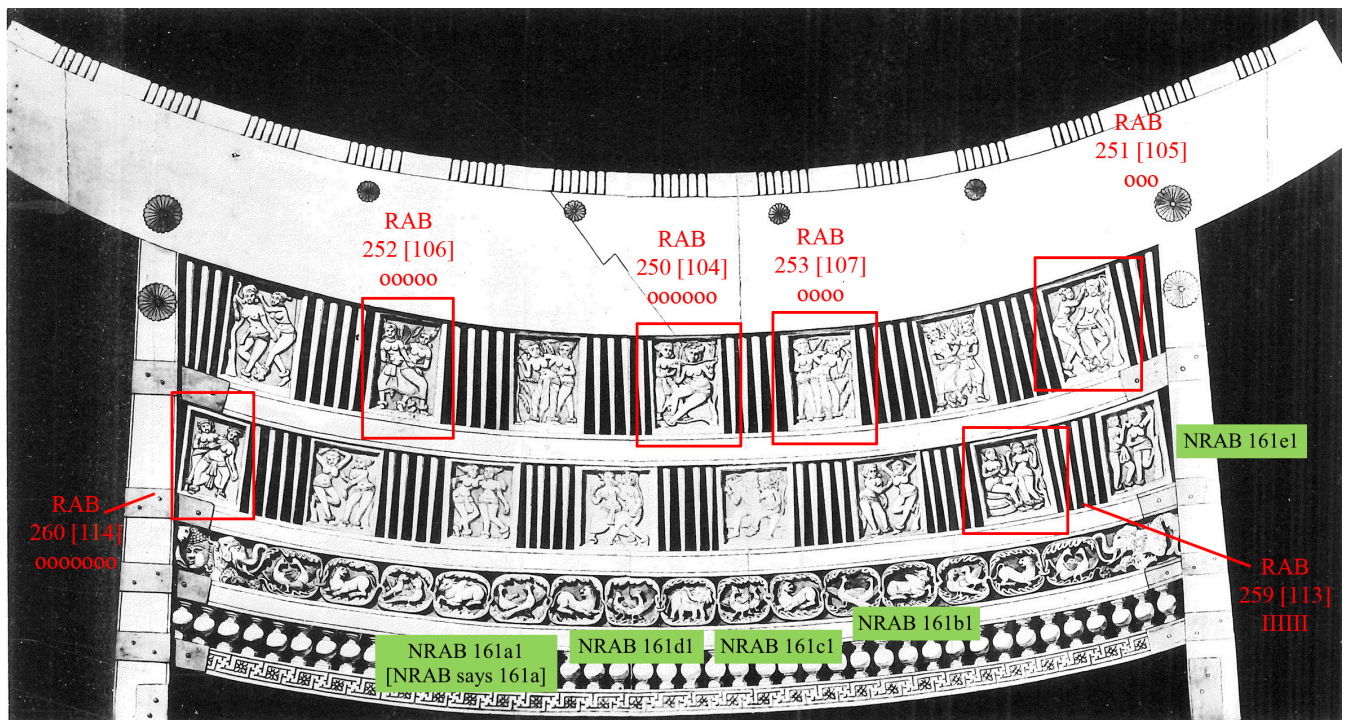
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of top side of Footstool XII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 332 [186] (NRAB Fig. 654).



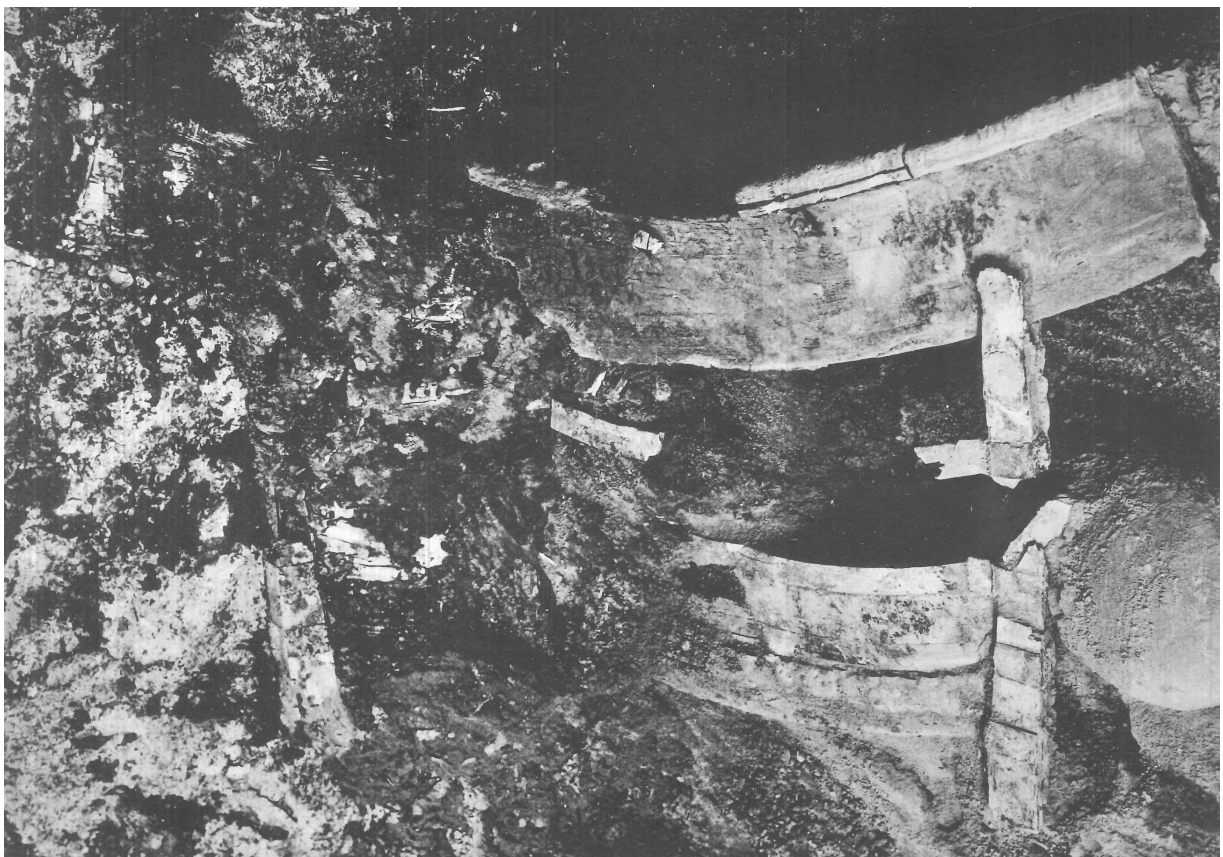
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of short side of Footstool XII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 332 [186] (MGP 81315/182, in Tissot 2006, 165).



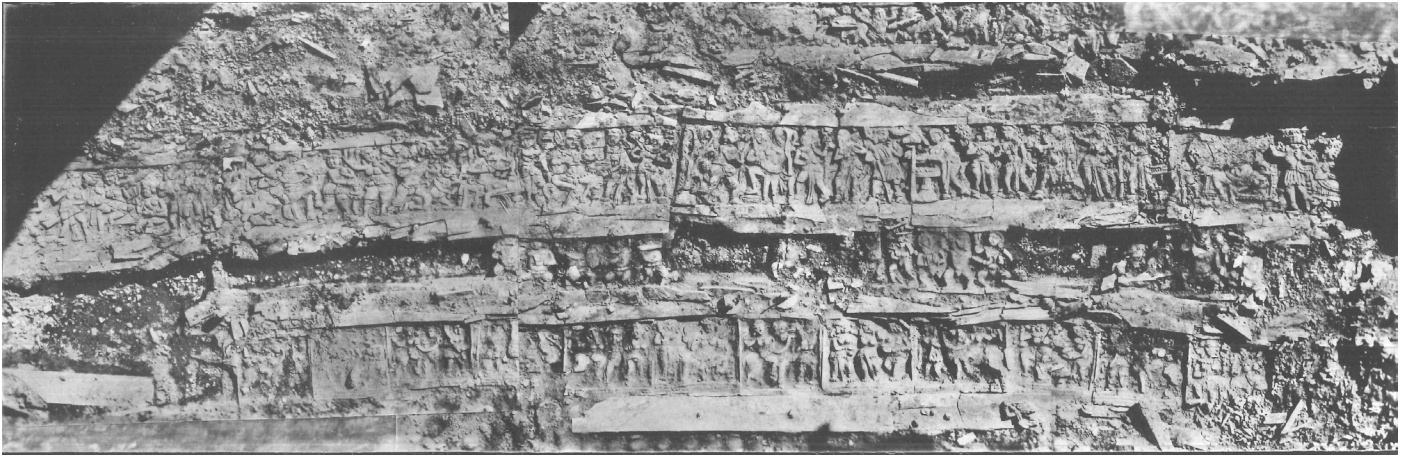
3. Hamelin's reconstruction of long side of Footstool XII (§4.13.1.1), RAB 332 [186] (NRAB Fig. 655).



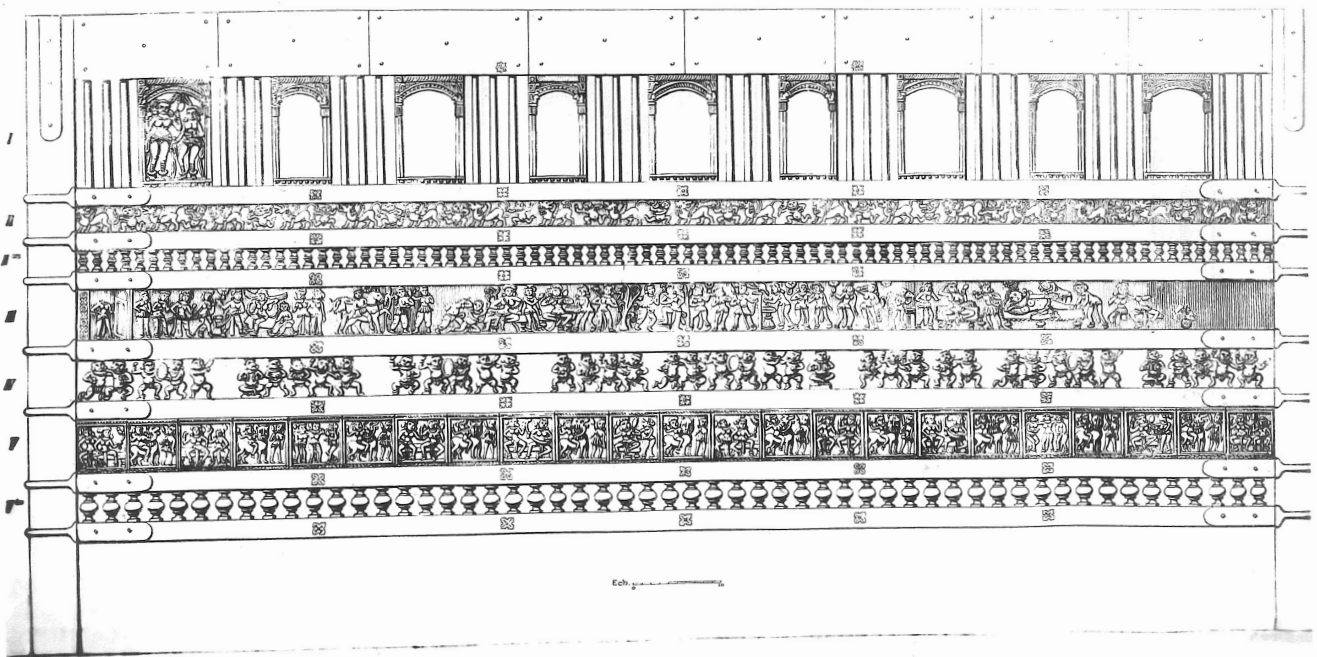
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of Backrest 161 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 161, with plaques from NRAB and RAB indicated (after NRAB Fig. 636).



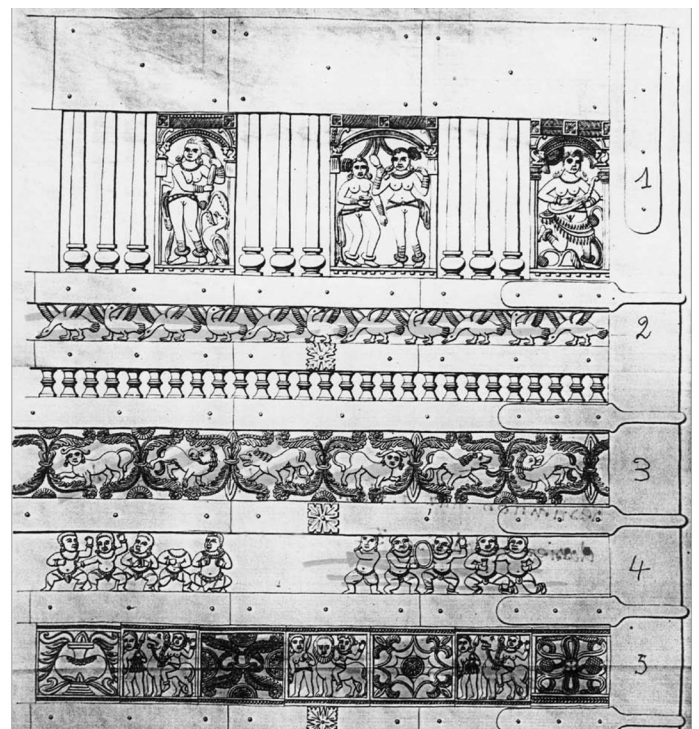
2. Backrest 161 *in situ* (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 161 (NRAB Fig. 1).



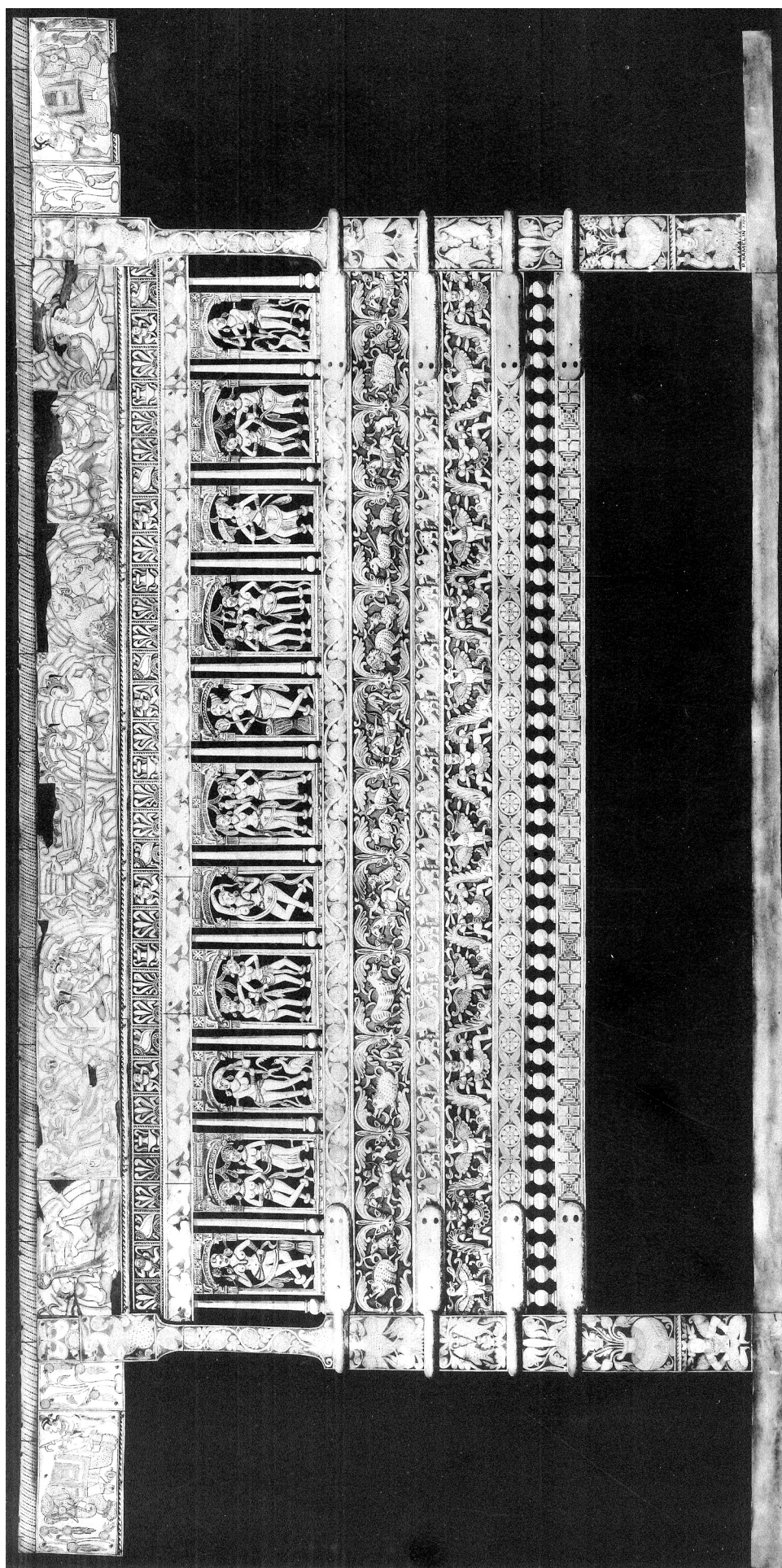
1. Backrest 5 *in situ* (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 5 (NRAB Fig. 28).



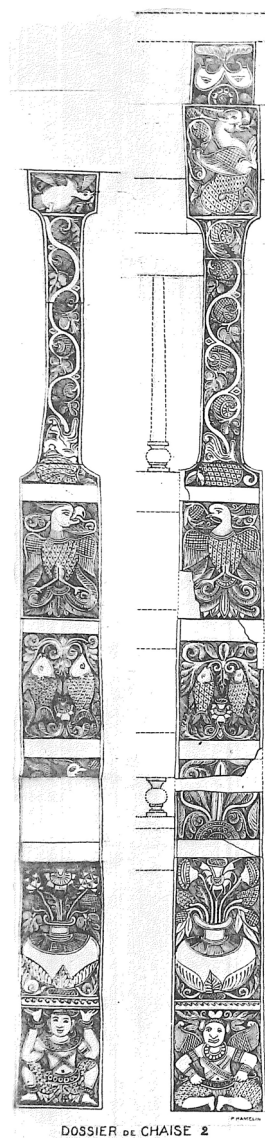
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of interior face of Backrest 5 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 5 (NRAB Fig. 637).



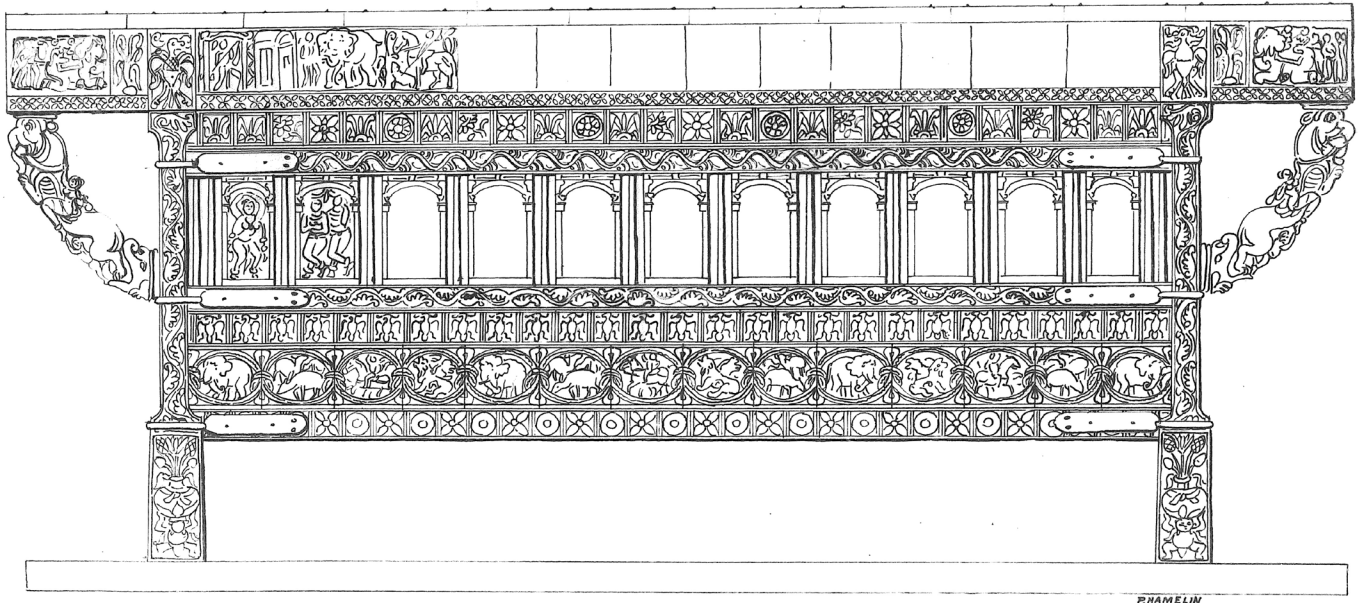
3. Hamelin's reconstruction of right side of exterior face of Backrest 5 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 5 (Tissot 2006, 170).



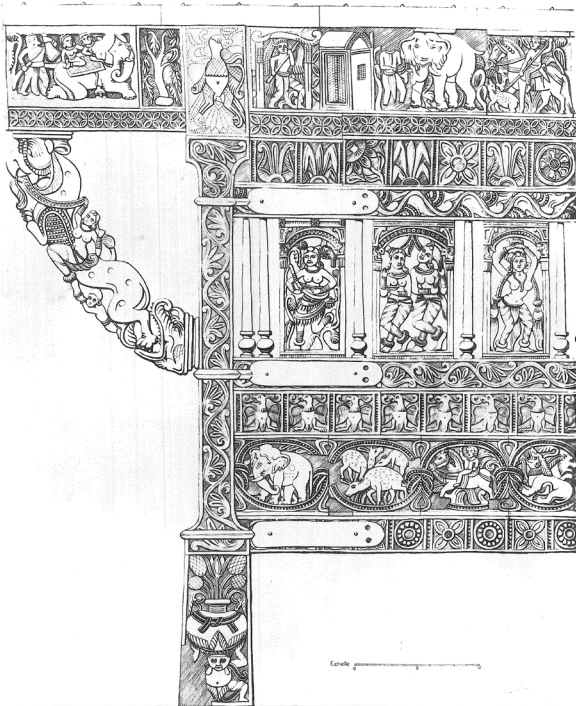
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of Backrest 2 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 638).



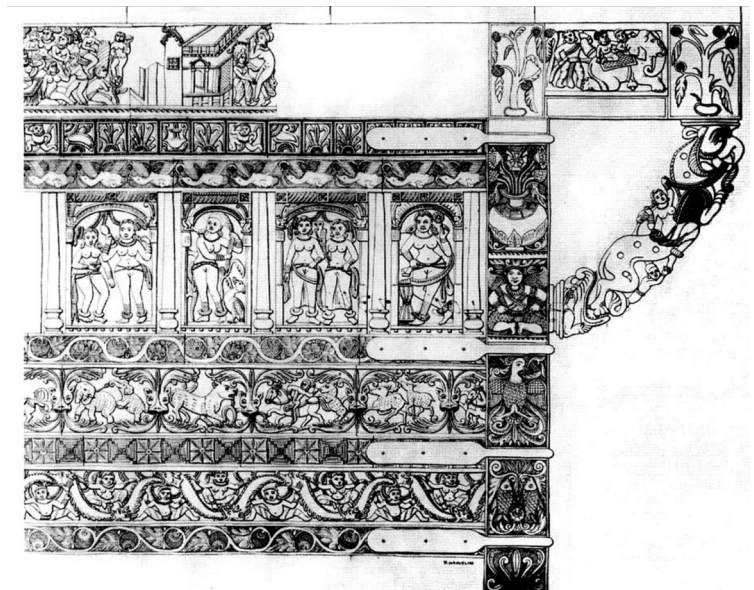
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of posts of Backrest 2 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 648).



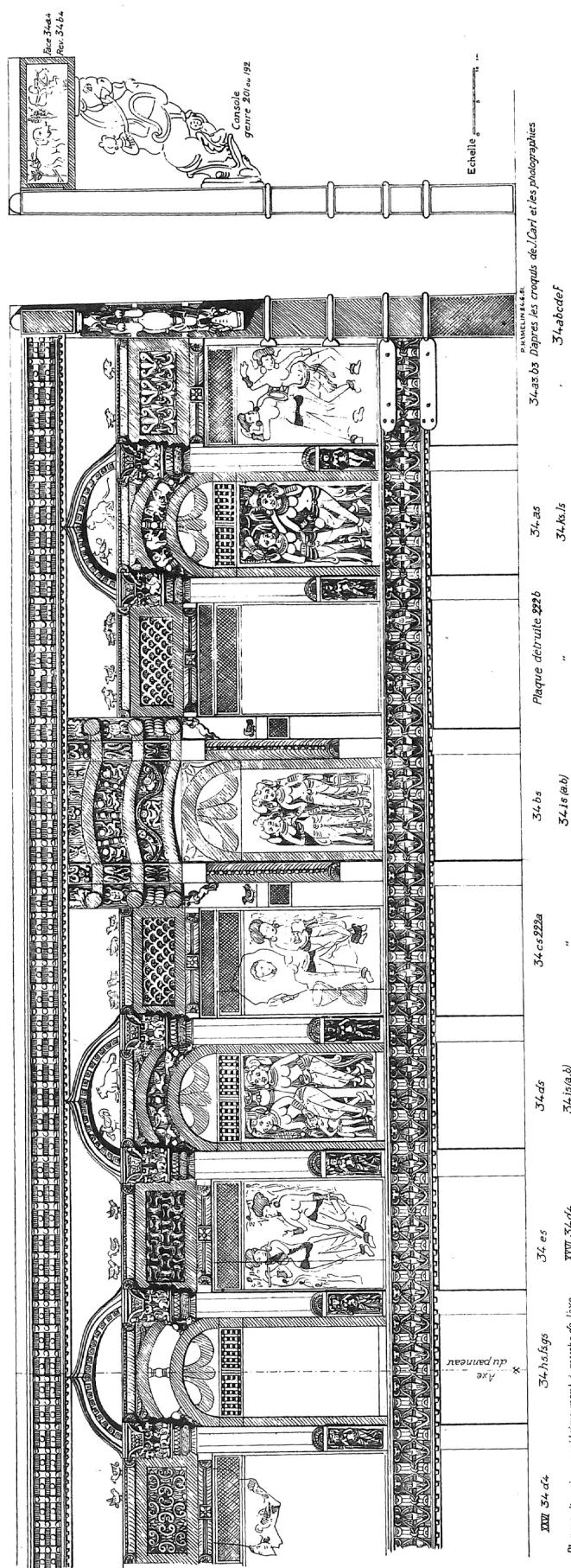
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of interior face of Backrest 3 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 640).



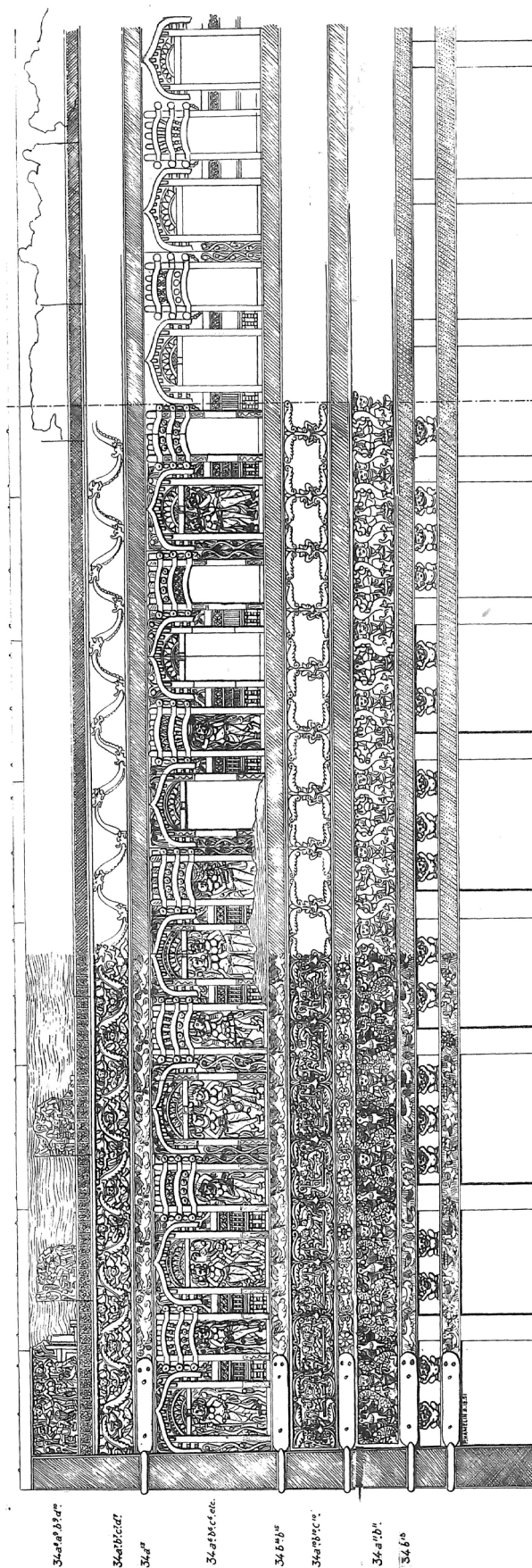
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of left side of interior face of Backrest 3 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 639).



3. Hamelin's reconstruction of right side of exterior face of Backrest 3 (§4.13.1.2) (MGP 81315/164, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 496.236).



1. Hamelin's reconstruction of exterior face of Panel 34 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 34 (NRAB Fig. 641).



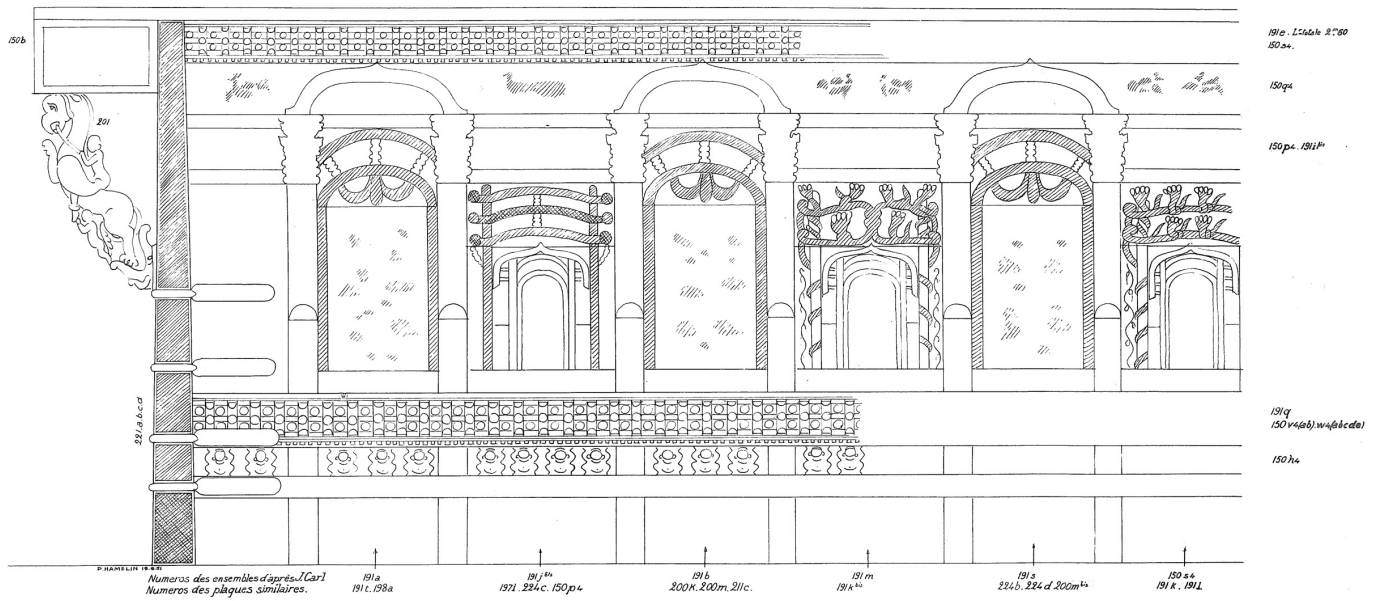
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of interior face of Panel 34 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 34 (NRAB Fig. 642).



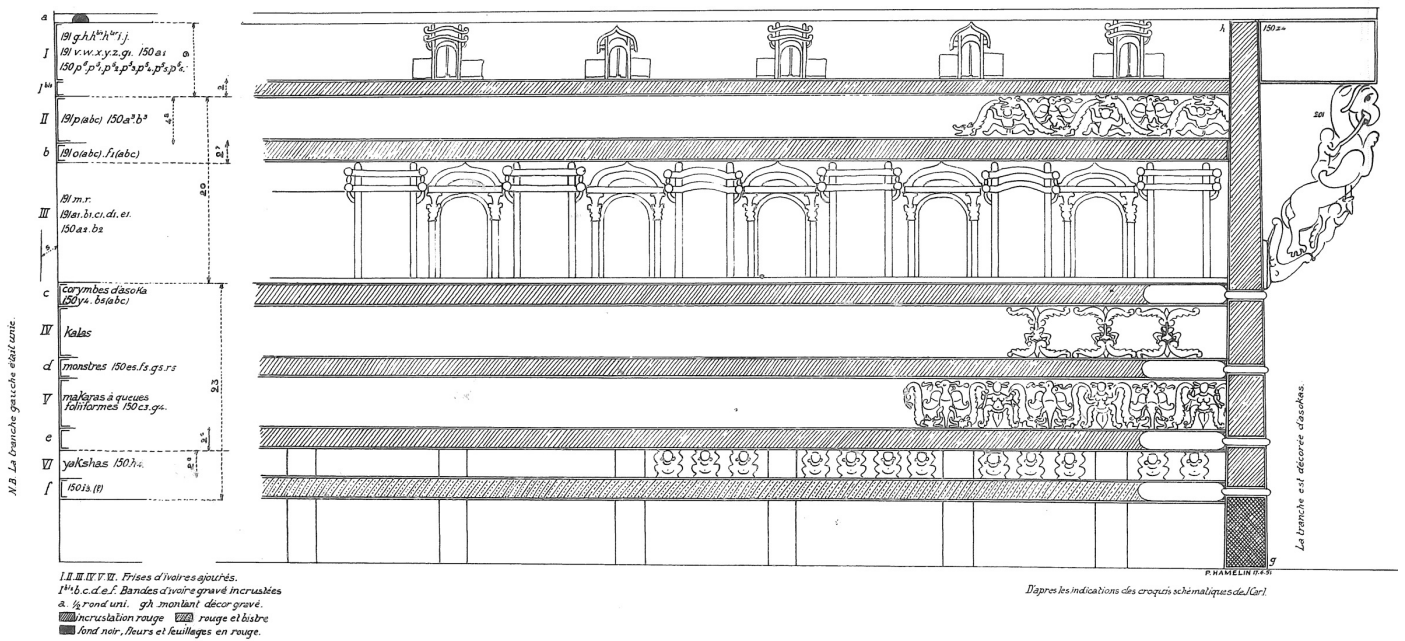
1. Hamelin's reconstruction of the posts of Panel 34 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 34 (NRAB Fig. 648).



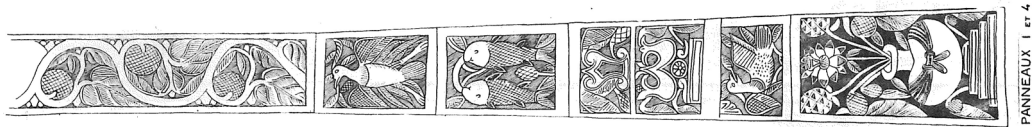
2. Panel 34 *in situ* (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 34 (NRAB Fig. 7).



1. Hamelin's reconstruction of exterior face of Panels 1 and 4 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 644).



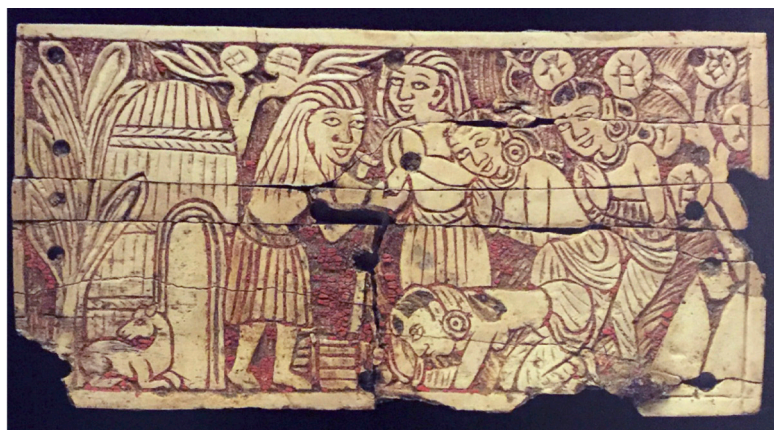
2. Hamelin's reconstruction of interior face of Panels 1 and 4 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 643).



3. Hamelin's reconstruction of posts of Panels 1 and 4 (§4.13.1.2) (NRAB Fig. 648).



1. Hamelin's reconstruction of right side of Backrest 55 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 55 (MGP 81315793/19, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 428.168).



2. Plaque from projecting side element of Backrest 55 (§4.13.1.2), NRAB 55b (Thierry Ollivier, LTR No. 192).



1. Furniture Leg 1 *in situ* (§4.13.1.3), RAB 342 [196], 344 [200], with Footstool VI (?) (§4.13.1.1), RAB 326 [180] (RAB Fig. 231).



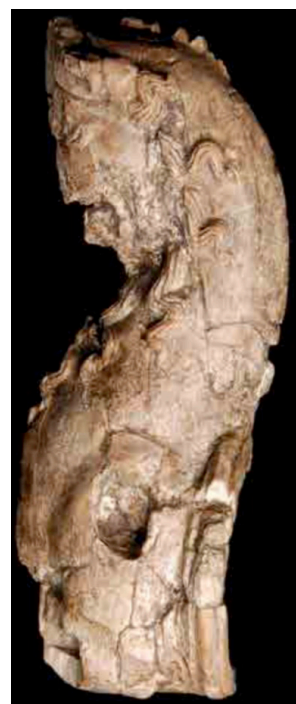
2. Lower part of Furniture Leg 1 (§4.13.1.3), RAB 342 [196] (RAB Fig. 229).



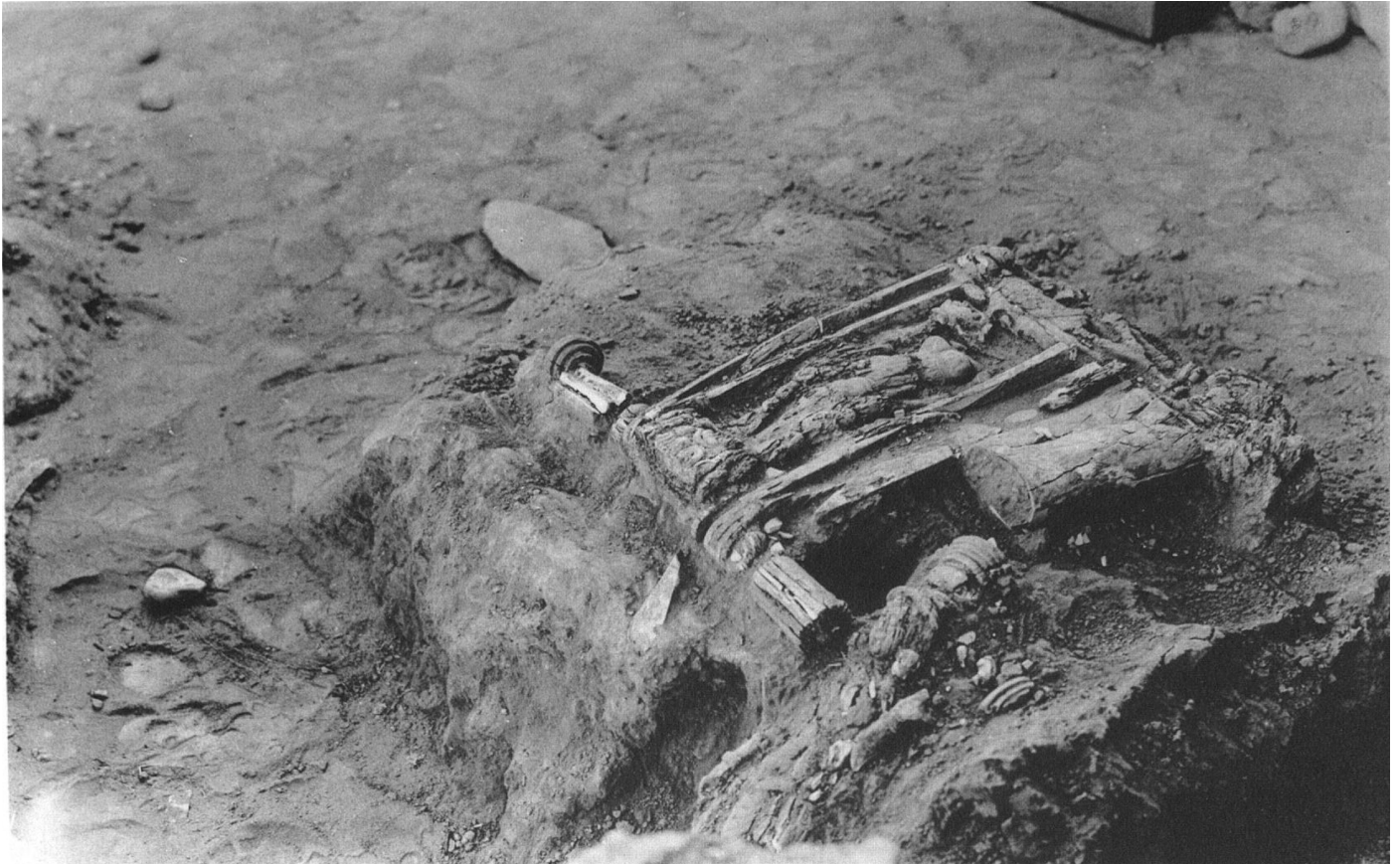
3. Buffalo from Furniture Leg 1 base plate (§4.13.1.3), RAB 344 [200] (RAB Fig. 232).



4. Furniture Leg 2 *in situ* (§4.13.1.3), RAB 343 [197], RAB 343 [198], RAB 343 [199], with glass jars with openwork trailing (§4.2.1.11) (RAB Fig. 230).



5. Upper component of Furniture Leg 2 (?) (§4.13.1.3), RAB 343 [198] (Ambers et al. 2014, No. 20, Fig. 20.1).



1. Unidentified furniture elements including 'statuettes' of three *yakṣīs* or river goddesses *in situ* (§4.13.1.4), RAB 319 [273], RAB 320 [174a], and RAB 320 [174b] (RAB Fig. 75).



2. Unidentified furniture elements (§4.13.1.4), RAB 320 [174a] (RAB Fig. 77).



3. The 'statuettes' (§4.13.1.4), RAB 320 [174a], RAB 319 [273], RAB 320 [174b] (Thierry Ollivier, LTR Nos. 147, 149, 148).



1. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 250 [104] (RAB Fig. 65).



2. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 251 [105] (RAB Fig. 66).



3. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 252 [106] (RAB Fig. 67).



4. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 253 [107] (RAB Fig. 69).



5. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 259 [113] (RAB Fig. 70).



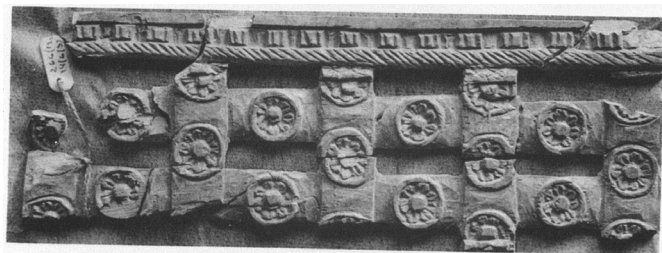
6. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 260 [114] (RAB Fig. 68).



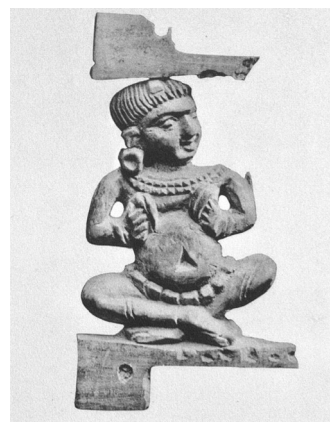
7. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 249 [130] (RAB Fig. 64).



8. Plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 256 [110] (RAB Fig. 71).



9. Decorative plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 266 [120] (RAB Fig. 188).



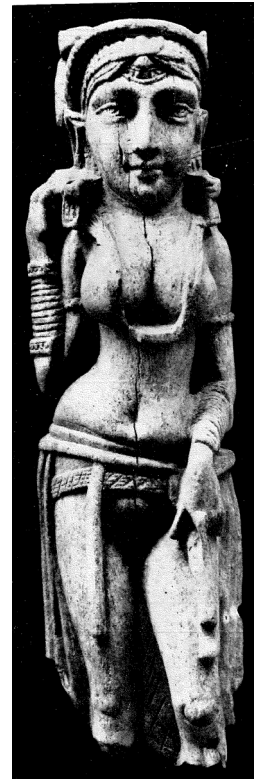
10. Decorative plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 265 [119] (RAB Fig. 72).



11. Decorative plaque found in room 10 (§4.13.1), RAB 269 [123] (MGP 81315/100, in Tissot 2006, K.p. Beg. 628.368).



1. Ivory statuette from article of furniture (h. 24.5 cm), found at Pompeii (Evers 2017, Fig. 2).



2. Ivory statuette from article of furniture (h. 16.4 cm), found at Ter (Chandra 1957–1959, Pl. 3 a).



3. Ivory plaque from article of furniture (l. 10.2 cm), found at Mele Hairam (Kornacka 2007, Fig. 1).



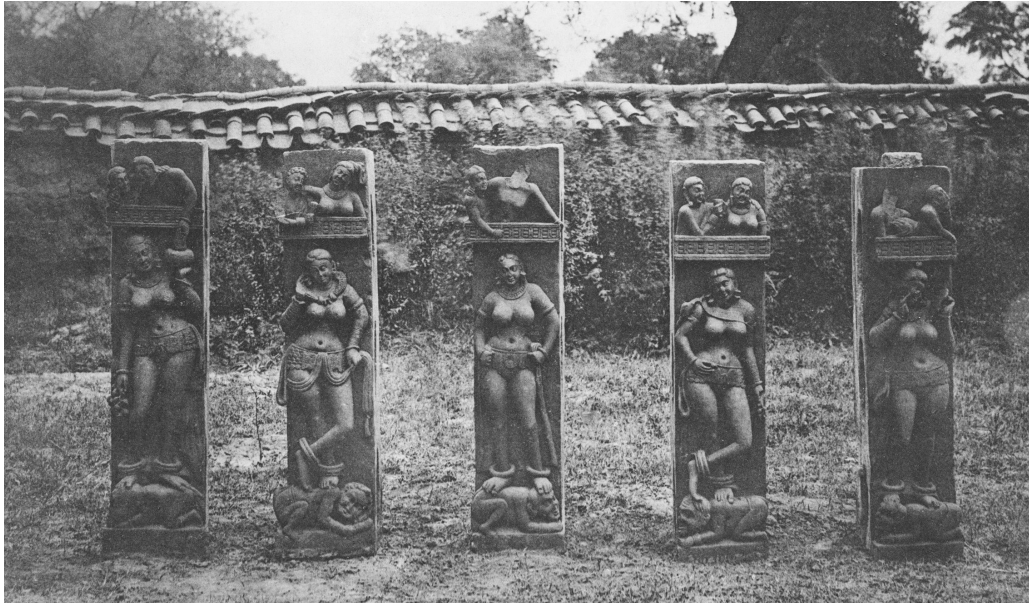
1. Ivory comb found at Taxila-Sirkap
(Ghosh 1944–1945, Pl. XX).



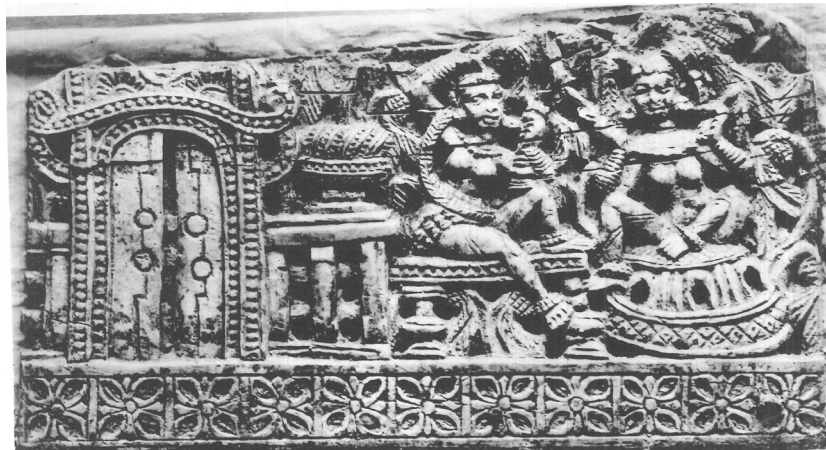
2. Ivory comb found in grave 3 at Tillya-tepe
(Sarianidi 1989, Fig. 29.4).



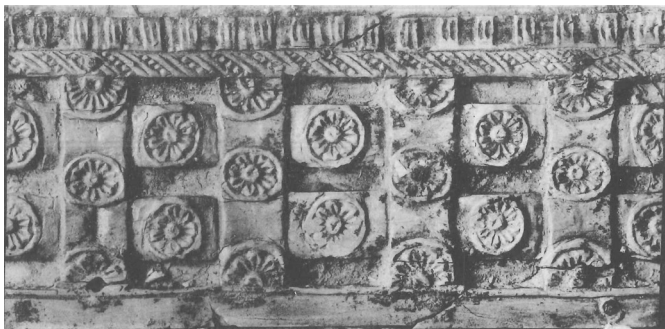
3. Ivory comb (h. 9.0 cm), found at the temple in the potter's quarter, DT-9, Dal'verzintepa
(Pugachenkova and Rtveladze 1978, Fig. 154).



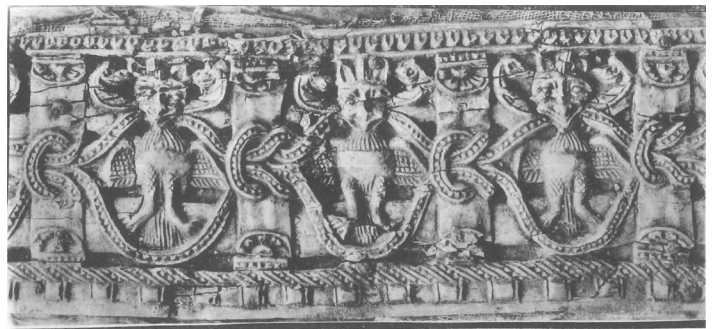
1. Five railing pillars (h. 132 cm) from stupa at Bhutesar (Mathura), photographed in 1897 (Leiden University Library, Digital Collections, KITLV 87973, CC-BY, cropped).



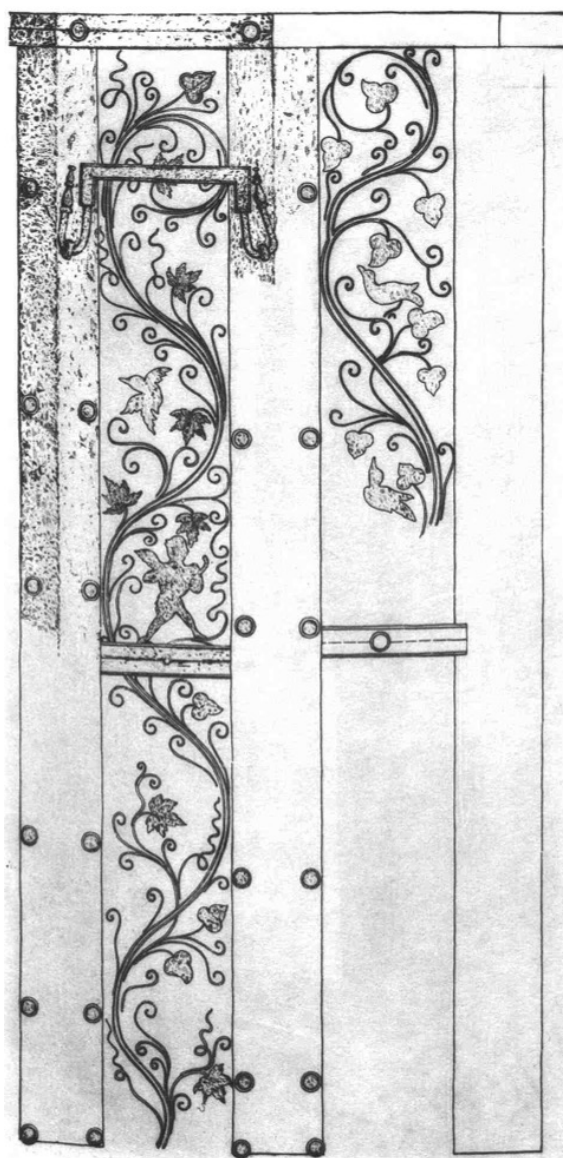
2. Ivory plaque with garden scene, torana, and railing, NRAB 191h (NRAB Fig. 126).



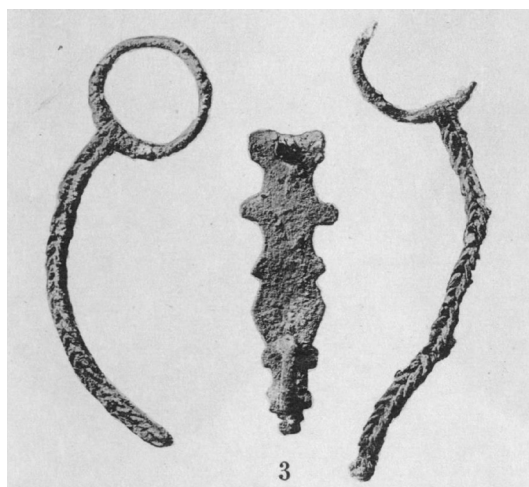
3. Decorative ivory plaque with ornamented railing, NRAB 200j4 (NRAB Fig. 185).



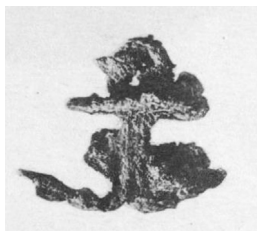
4. Decorative ivory plaque with ornamented railing, NRAB 34c2 (NRAB Fig. 184).



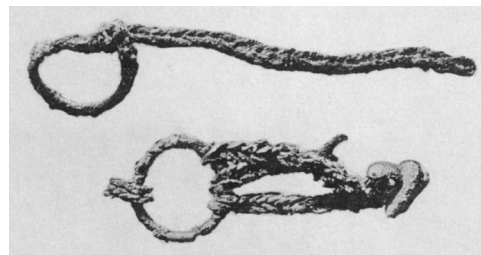
1. Carl's reconstruction of panel 1 and part of panel 2 of wooden box ornamented with copper (§4.13.2), NRAB 354 (NRAB Fig. 357).



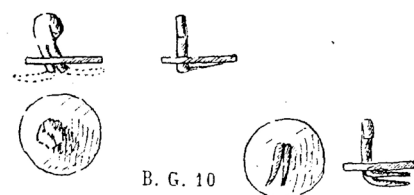
2. Bronze box closure and chains (§4.13.2), B.G. 8 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 3).



3. Iron and bronze rivet (§4.13.2), B.G. 8 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 7).



4. Bronze chains and suspension loops (§4.13.2), B.G. 11 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XIII, 4).



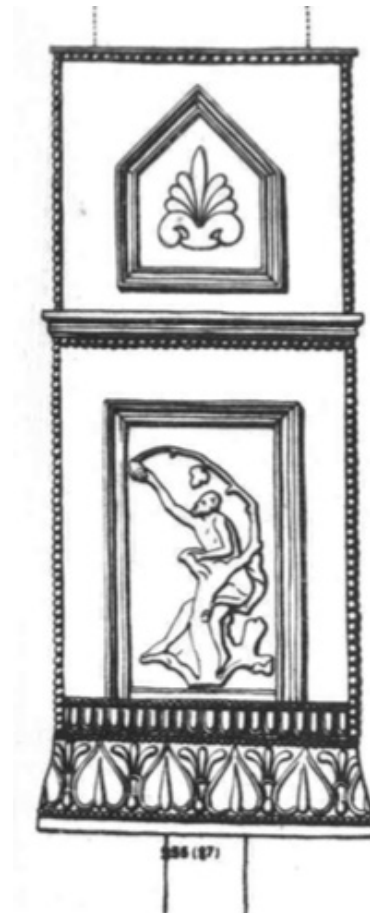
5. Bronze rivets (§4.13.2), B.G. 10 (Ghirshman 1946, Pl. XXXV, B.G. 10).



1. Bronze plaque from furniture (§4.13.3),
NRAB 3 (NRAB Fig. 351).



2. Bronze shrine (?) (§4.13.4), NRAB 255
(NRAB Fig. 348).



3. Hamelin's illustration of the
bronze shrine (?) (§4.13.4),
NRAB 255 (NRAB Fig. 348 bis).



1. Schist relief sculpture (h. 14.5 cm) with upper register depicting ceremonial scenes featuring elite males seated on 'curule-type' chairs with footstools and served by attendants, Saidu Sharif I (Callieri and Filigenzi 2002, No. 146; see also Filigenzi 2019, 68–75, Fig. 13.3).



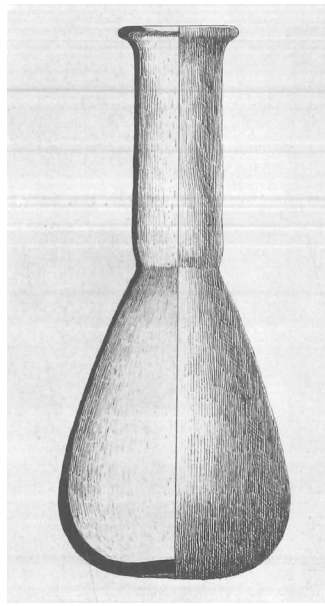
2. Schist relief sculpture (h. 18.4 cm) depicting wine filtering, pressing, and drinking, with elite male figure to the right holding a spear and seated on canopied throne with footstool, served by attendants, Peshawar Museum (Ingholt 1957, No. 175; see Filigenzi 2019, 65, Fig. 3.8).



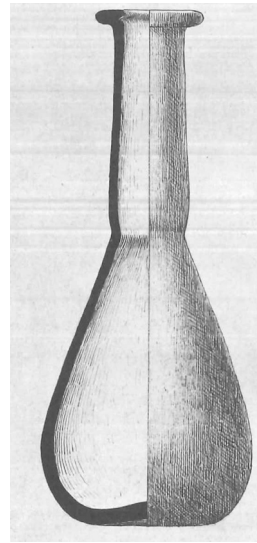
3. Hollow gold fish (l. 24.5 cm), Oxus treasure (British Museum, 1897,1231.16, © The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, cropped).



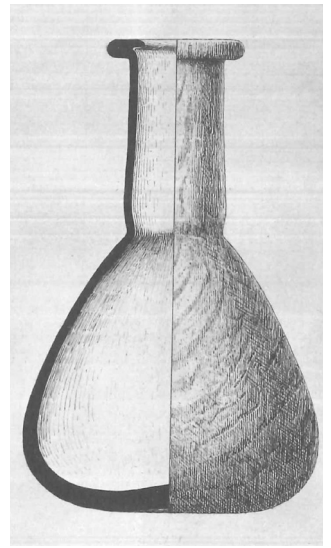
1. Fragment of ribbed glass bowl (l. 4.8 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 k).



2. Piriform glass unguentarium (h. 15.4 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 210 a).



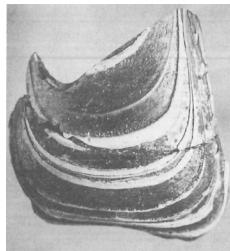
3. Piriform glass unguentarium (h. 14.0 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 210 b).



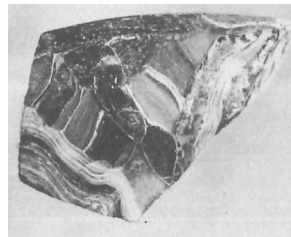
4. Piriform glass unguentarium (h. 13.3 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 210 c).



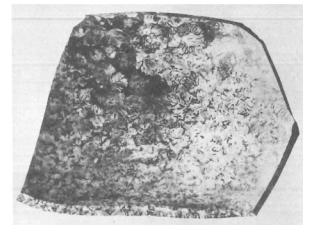
5. Fragment of marbled glass unguentarium (h. 3.7 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 j).



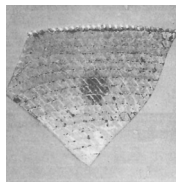
6. Fragment of marbled glass unguentarium (h. 5.1 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 n).



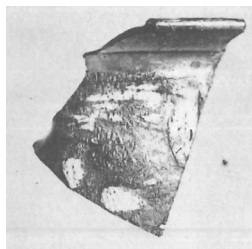
7. Fragment of gold banded mosaic glass vessel (l. 6.35 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 i).



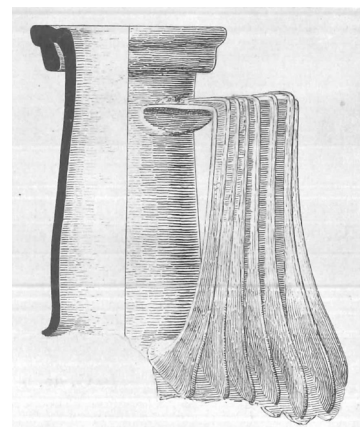
8. Fragment of mosaic glass vessel (l. 6.0 cm) Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 o).



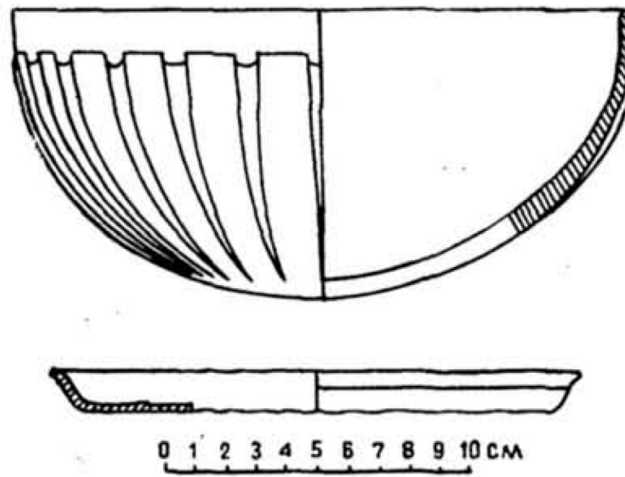
9. Fragment of network mosaic bowl (l. 3.7 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 m).



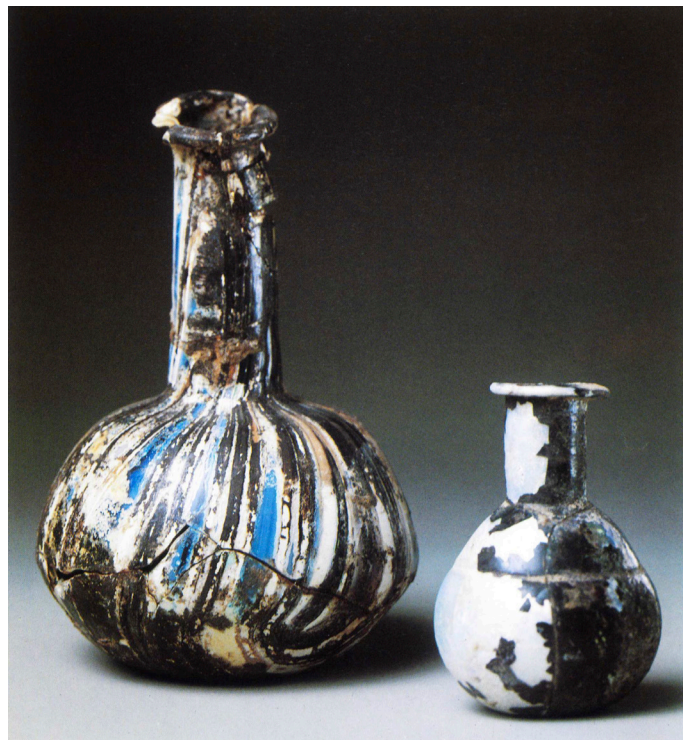
10. Fragment of cameo glass vessel (l. 5.3 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 209 h).



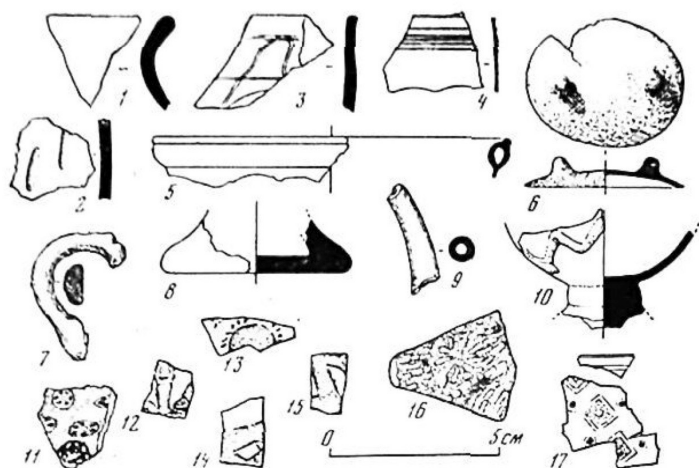
11. Neck of glass jug with ribbed handle (h. 12.1 cm), Taxila-Sirkap (Marshall 1951, Pl. 210 d).



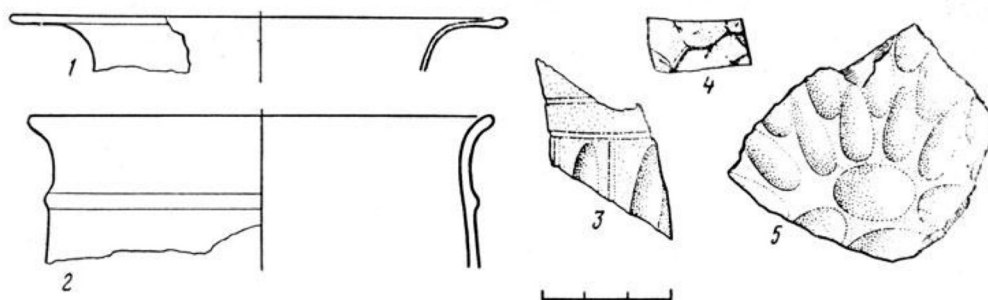
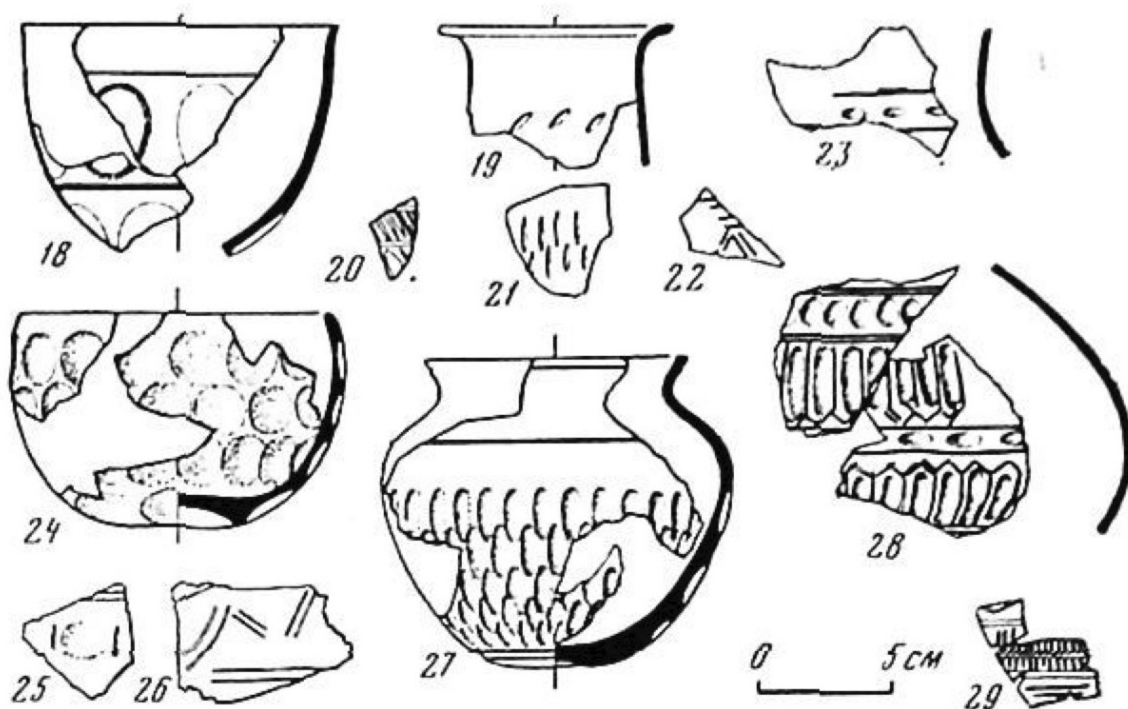
1. Forms of the ribbed glass bowl and glass plate found at the royal pavilion of Khalchayan (Pugachenkova 1966, Fig. 32).



3. Glass unguentaria (h. 10.0 cm; h. 5.0 cm), grave 6, Tillya-tepe (Sarianidi 1985, Ill. 147, Cat. 6, 38).



1. (Left and below) glass vessels from Toprak-kala (Chorasmia), quarter B (Nos. 1 and 2) and quarter A, building II (after Nerazik and Rapoport 1981, Fig. 58).



2. Glass vessels from Toprak-kala, palace, room 90 (Nos. 1, 2, 5), room 26 (No. 3), and room 8 (No. 4) (Rapoport and Nerazik 1984, Fig. 93).