The National Museum of Afghanistan
An Illustrated Guide

by
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Front Cover: The Cyble Plaque, gilded silver, from Ai Khanoum, early 3rd Century B.C. (d. 25 cm)
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Acknowledgements

This guide replaces the two earlier editions (1964 and 1969) of A Guide to the Kabul Museum, by Ann Dupree, Louis Dupree and A. A. Motamedi. Many new finds from recent excavations have been put on exhibit and the text has been almost completely revised. The authors wish to thank the staff of the National Museum of Afghanistan (of which A. A. Motamedi is General Director) for its assistance, especially Mohammad Karim Barakzai (Curator of Museology and former Deputy Director), Mohammad Ibrahim (Curator of Numismatics) and Abdul Raouf (Deputy Director and Curator of Islamic Archaeology). The Afghan Tourist Organization was most helpful, and particular thanks go to R. Ali Sultani (Vice President), Zalmay Roashan (Director of Publicity) and Richard King (Peace Corps Volunteer). Particular thanks also go to Robert MacMakin for his professional advice in preparing this guide for the press.

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Praise is due Carla Griessmann (Peace Corps Volunteer working at the museum) for her assistance in typing, make-up, proofing and other tiring—but important—drudgeries.
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Photographs are acknowledged individually. Our special thanks go to Mr. Jiro Enjoji for his very kind cooperation in putting his color plates at our disposal.

We hope that this guide will further the enjoyment and appreciation of those visiting the National Museum of Afghanistan.

N.H.D.
L.D.
A. A. M.

Kabul, Afghanistan
1974

The Afghan Air and Tourism Authority take pleasure in publishing this guide to the National Museum of Afghanistan, which is the first guide book published by this office since the establishment of the Republican Regime in July 1973.

We thank Dr. and Mrs. Dupree and Mr. Motamedi for their selfless efforts to present this guide book in the most organized and comprehensive way that could be done.

We also thank all those who actively participated, one way or another, in the betterment of this book.

Sultan Mahmoud Ghazi,
President,
Air and Tourism Authority.

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### General Chronology

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cultural period</th>
<th>Excavated by</th>
<th>Sites represented in the Museum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Palaeolithic</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Darra Dadil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 years ago</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kara Kamar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Palaeolithic</td>
<td>Carleton Coon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30,000 years ago</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuprukan</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Aq Kupruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–20,000 years ago</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Aq Kupruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7–11,000 years ago</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Darra-yi-Kur</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000 B.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Darra-yi-Nur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Aq Kupruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–1000 B.C.</td>
<td>DAFA</td>
<td>Mundigak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iron Age</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Nad-i-Ali</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–3,000 years ago</td>
<td>DAFA</td>
<td>Deh Morasi Ghundai</td>
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<td>Achaemenid</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Shamshir Ghar</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th-4th Century B.C.</td>
<td>Accidental find</td>
<td>Tepe Fullol</td>
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<td>Bactrian</td>
<td>L. Dupree</td>
<td>Aq Kupruk</td>
</tr>
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<td>4th-3rd Century B.C.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauryan (Ashoka)</td>
<td>Accidental find</td>
<td>Chaman-i-Houzouri Coin Hoard</td>
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<td>4th-3rd Century B.C.</td>
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<td>Indo-Greek</td>
<td>Accidental find</td>
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<td>2nd-1st Century B.C.</td>
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<td>Mir Zakah Coin Hoard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GENERALChronology

Great Kushan
1st-3rd Century A.D.
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
Accidental find
DAFA
Begram
Surkh Kotal
Shotorak-Paitava
Hadda
Cham Qala
Bamiyan

Kushano-Sasanian
and Hephthalite
3rd-8th Century A.D.
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
Accidental find
DAFA
DAFA
Hadda
Bamiyan
Shotorak-Paitava
Tepe Maranjan
Qol-i-Nader
Tepe Khazana
Serai Khoja

Hindu Shahi
8th-9th Century A.D.
Accidental find
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
DAFA
Khum Zargar
Durman Tepe
Kama Dakka
Kona Masjid
Tepe Kalan
Fondukistan
Khair Khana
Gardez
Tagao

Islamic
10th-to present
Accidental find
IsMEO
DAFA
DAFA
Ghazni
Lashkari Bazaar
Shahr-i-Gholghola
The National Museum of Afghanistan

Introduction and Downstairs Exhibits

The first museum in Afghanistan was established in 1919 at the Bagh-i-Bala palace overlooking Kabul, and consisted of manuscripts, miniatures, weapons and art objects belonging to the former royal families. A few years later the collection was moved to the king’s palace in the center of the city and in 1931 it was officially installed in the present building, which had served as the Municipality. The original collection was dramatically enriched, beginning in 1922, by the first excavations of the Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA). Through the years other archaeological delegations have added their finds to the museum until today the collection spans fifty millennia—Prehistoric, Classical, Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic—and stands as one of the greatest testimonies of antiquity that the world has inherited.

As the visitor enters the museum he will see to the left a marble fountain bowl, originally found near the tomb of the great Moghul emperor, Babur (1483–1530 a.d.), in the gardens outside Kabul which bear his name. In the late 19th Century Amir Abdur Rahman transferred the fountain
to his palace and in the 1920s King Amanullah presented it to the museum.

**Surkh Kotal**

To the right are exhibited finds from the important site of Surkh Kotal, excavated from 1952–63 by the Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA) led by Professor Daniel Schlumberger. Surkh Kotal, nine miles north of Pul-i-Khumri and 145 miles north of Kabul, was the site of a large non-Buddhist dynastic temple which flourished during the reign of the great Kushan king, Kanishka, and his successors during the 2nd Century A.D. The massive site consisted of a hilltop complex comprising a principal temple and a cela (a square area marked by four columns). A secondary temple lay against the exterior wall of the main temple and contained a square fire altar, its cavity still filled with fine grey ash. The altar was in the center, with a passage around it for the devout to circumambulate. This was strikingly different from the Greek temple plan, where worship centered on a statue of a divinity hidden in a shrine at the far end of an oblong building. A monumental staircase rose to the temple area, connecting four distinct terraced embankments. Evidence of fire attests to the fact that Kanishka’s sanctuary was burned during the civil unrest that followed his death. An inscription (see Number 3, following) speaks of extensive repairs, but another layer of ashes tells of a second conflagration and the final abandonment of the temple during the 3rd Century A.D.

Culturally, Surkh Kotal offers the first evidence for an indigenous Bactrian art and throws new light on the development of Gandharan art. As early as 1937 scanty, fragmentary finds, accidentally recovered from a Buddhist stupa in Kunduz, led Professor A. Foucher (DAFA) to postulate that the Gandharan art style developed out of a local Graeco-Buddhist style from Bactria. Later authorities, however, advanced the theory that Buddhist art styles came into the Afghan area from the eastern province of Gandhara, lying between the Indus and the Kunar rivers. Pronounced Roman influences on this Gandhara art of the early centuries A.D. were thought to be the result of intensive trade along the Silk Route between China and the Classical Mediterranean world.

At Surkh Kotal, however, Professor Schlumberger revealed an already advanced Bactrian style composed of eastern Iranian and Hellenistic elements which had mixed during the rule of the Bactrian Greek kings who reached their peak in the 3rd Century B.C. This Graeco-Bactrian art developed, therefore, after the death of Alexander and before the intensification of Silk Route commerce. Though ruled by Greeks, the people of Bactria remained faithful to their own beliefs and culture and produced a native Graeco-Bactrian art style, which cannot be taken lightly after the discoveries at Surkh Kotal. How far this style influenced later Gandharan art must be the subject of further investigation by archaeologists.

In the alcove to the right, in the glass case and on the top two steps, are objects from the Bactrian temple area of the sanctuary of Surkh Kotal.

**Finds from the Bactrian Temple Area—Reliefs and capitals**

Fire altar; merlons. Corinthian capitals from the temple podium. An unfinished base relief of an investiture scene illustrates the technique used by local sculptors. On the floor, column bases (similar to the bases seen at the entrance to the museum, which are from Durman Tepe and were excavated by the Japanese Archaeological Mission, Kyoto University, 1963–65). Limestone (except the fire altar, which is clay), from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

About one mile east of Surkh Kotal, on a direct line with the monumental staircase, the excavators discovered a
squirish platform faced with a beautiful stone wall with pilasters. Fragments of two feet, about three times larger than life size, and remains of drapery indicated that colossal statues of clay once stood on this platform. Of the 25 capitals recovered, 24 carried a small bust nestled within the leafy design. There was little in the style to distinguish them from the capitals found at the larger sanctuary except an ornamental edging with geometric designs at the top. The twenty-fifth capital, however, bore a turban on a draped base in place of a bust. This single capital has enabled archaeologists to attribute this temple to the worship of Buddha. The turban motif, known as the Turban of the Bodhisattva, commemorates the day Prince Siddhartha discarded his costly robes before embarking on the road to Buddhahood. Asking for a sign of success he threw his jeweled turban into the air where it remained suspended as a miraculous indicator of coming Enlightenment. The turban, therefore, became a cult object that was often used in Buddhist art, especially before it was permitted to represent the Buddha in human form, an innovation which probably took place during the reign of Kanishka in the 2nd Century A.D. The fortuitous discovery of this isolated capital revealed that the non-Buddhist art of Bactria and Graeco-Buddhist art are to a large extent one art, or one style, though from two different religious origins.

FINDS FROM BUDDHIST TEMPLE AREA—Capitals, pilaster
To the right, a large pilaster. Capital with the Turban of the Bodhisattva. Lower step, Corinthian capitals. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

NUMBER 1—Sculpture
A headless standing statue, possibly of a Kushan noble, wearing a long, flowing fur-trimmed coat. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

NUMBER 2—Sculpture
Across the hall, a headless standing statue, possibly of the great Kushan king, Kanishka. Note the Central Asian clothing: a long, straight coat, belted at the waist, worn over a flared robe decorated with a leaf motif and ornamented with pearls, long trousers gathered at the ankles and huge felt riding boots. This figure is similar to finds of the same period at the north Indian site of Mathura, one of the important cities in the eastern provinces of the Kushan Empire. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D. (Ill. 8)

NUMBER 3—Inscription
A 25-line inscription in Greek script in the eastern Iranian or Bactrian language. Not yet totally deciphered, the text, however, mentions Kanishka and refers to the repairs of the sanctuary by a successor of Kanishka. The ancient place name of Bagalaggo—modern Baglan—has also been deciphered. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D. (Ill. 7)

CASE NUMBER 4—Inscription
A three-line inscription in Greek characters, the first two lines in the Bactrian language and the last line in Greek, called the Palamedos Inscription. It commemorates work on an armed fort at Bagalaggo (Baglan), and is signed by Palamedos, probably the engraver. This fragment may illustrate the presence of Greek artisans in the service of the Kushans. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

Al Khanoum
Another significant site under investigation is Al Khanoum, in Takhar Province, at the confluence of the Kokcha and Darya-yi-Panj (Oxus) rivers. Al Khanoum, excavated by the French Delegation (D. Schlumberger, 1963–64, and P. Bernard, 1965 to present), is the easternmost genuine Greek city in Asia. The town plan compares with those of Greek and Hellenistic cities further west. Among other things, the French have identified: an upper town
with a huge citadel; a lower town with residential and administrative areas, including a palace with a peristyle courtyard; a gymnasium, the Greek educational establishment which emphasized a balanced intellectual and physical development; and a burial ground.

NUMBER 5—Inscription
A stone block, bearing two contemporaneous inscriptions in Greek script and language. A disciple of Aristotle, named Clearchos, had transcribed a partial list of Delphic precepts, copied originally by Clearchos in Delphi itself. A loose translation is as follows: As children, learn good manners. / As young men, learn to control the passions. / In middle age, be just. / In old age, give good advice. / Then die, without regret. (For two other important finds from Ai Khanoum, see Bagram Room, second floor.) Limestone, from Ai Khanoum, early 3rd Century B.C.

ASHOKA EDICTS

Two stone inscriptions from the Mauryan Indian Emperor Ashoka (ca. 269–32 B.C.) were found in Kandahar, southwest of Kabul. The great Ashoka established a series of Rock and Pillar Edicts, also called Pillars of Morality, throughout his empire in attempts to convert his subjects to Buddhism. The two Edicts from Kandahar are the westernmost inscriptions of Ashoka that have yet been found.

NUMBER 6—Inscription
Found in 1958 on the mountainside of the Chehel Zina, the Forty Steps of Emperor Babur, at the outskirts of Kandahar. The original is still in place; the copy in the museum is a plaster cast. The Edict bears 13 lines of Greek text and 8 lines of Aramaic, the official language of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia and lingua franca for much of Western Asia for some time after. Translations of the Greek and Aramaic vary only slightly. Both exhort men to kill animals only for food and not for sport, and to abstain from all evil doing. From Kandahar, 3rd Century B.C.

INTRODUCTION & DOWNSTAIRS EXHIBITS

NUMBER 7—Inscription
An Ashoka Edict found by chance in the Kandahar bazaar in 1963. A fragmentary stone block, bearing 22 lines of Greek text. The text is sufficiently complete, however, to link it directly to Ashoka. In the Schumacher translation, the second paragraph calls Ashoka “Piodasses,” and refers to his bloody conquest of Kalinga, in India, the horrors of which converted him to Buddhism. Limestone, from Kandahar, 3rd Century B.C.

NUMBER 7a—Inscription
Large dedication stone. The inscription is in a Middle Indic dialect, using the Kharoshthi script. From Jallalabad, B.C.—A.D. line.

NUMBER 8—Inscription
Two stone fragments of a long inscription from the third terrace of the dynastic temple of Surkh Kotal. French excavators found more than fifty blocks with fragmentary Greek script. The inscriptions probably welcomed the pious to the sanctuary (see photographs in the Surkh Kotal album). The blocks were later removed and used to line a deep well at the foot of the hill-temple. Limestone, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

TEPE FULLOL

Up a few steps, to the left, is the case containing the Tepe Fullol (or Khosh Tepe) Hoard, dating from the Bronze Age. In 1966 this unusual hoard, consisting of five gold and 12 silver vessels, almost all fragmentary, was uncovered east of Baghlan near the famous lapis lazuli mines of Badakhshan. The astonishing total weight of the find was 940 grams of gold and 1,922 grams of silver. The hoard was accidentally uncovered by local inhabitants. The various objects in the hoard may represent several periods and come from different localities. The presence of Indian, Central Asian, Iranian and Mesopotamian motifs and techniques suggests that the objects date from the periods of intensive lapis lazuli trade during the second half of the 3rd and end of the 2nd Mil-
lennium B.C. On the basis of present evidence probably most specimens date ca. 2500 B.C.

CASE NUMBER 9—Gold and silver vessels, from Tepe Fullol
Top shelf, gold objects:
1. Small bowl, with rounded base. The bearded bull, a common motif in Mesopotamia, is carefully engraved, particularly the details of the beard and curls on the body. The entire design is slightly embossed. (Color Ill. 3)
2. Goblet with the stem broken and missing. The step motif is found in Soviet Central Asia, southern Afghanistan and Sistan.
3. Large beaker with two wild boars separated by a stylized 'tree of life'. Probably of Iranian origin.
4. Pale gold goblet with crudely engraved undulating snake motif. The eight-point star and vulture-like bird are unique in the hoard, although they are common motifs in the 3rd Millennium B.C. from Syria to the Indus Valley.
5. Pale gold undecorated cup. Identical to finds from the Royal Tombs at Ur in Mesopotamia.

Bottom shelf, silver objects:
1. Large beaker with engraved step motif.
2. Large bowl decorated with a frieze of bulls, separated by a palm tree ('tree of life?'), three bulls on each side. The stylistic flavor apparently combines Indian and Mesopotamian characteristics.
3. Small bowl, finely engraved. Two pairs of grazing bulls confront each other. The rounded base is embossed with an eight-armed "octopus" or star, emanating from a central disc. Possibly the Indianization of an Iranian motif, or vice-versa.
4. Small bowl with sketchy geometric motif. Similar to several Central Asian motifs.
5. Small bowl decorated with three boars, facing right, following each other. Possibly of Iranian origin.

ANTIQUE JEWELRY

Directly opposite the Tepe Fullol Case is a case containing specimens of jewelry from Bagram and elsewhere. The ornamental jewelry from Bagram tells a story of widespread commercial and cultural exchange. All these pieces resemble those found in South Sarmatian tombs, 2nd Century B.C.-1st A.D., and also finds from 5th-century Merovingian France. Many of the pieces are of Indian, Roman, Alexandrian or Central Asian origin.

CASE NUMBER 10—Ornamental jewelry
Top shelf, all found at Bagram except Number 6 and 8, 1st-2nd Century A.D.:
1. Gold bracelet with sockets for 46 square cut rubies.
2. Gold earring with turquoise inlay.
3. Small gold discus, probably sewn on a dress.
4. Small silver ring with a ruby.
5. Gold goblet stand, fragment of glass still visible.
7. Gold earring inset with rubies and seed pearls.

Lower shelf:
1. Gold belt buckle. From Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D. (Color Ill, 10)
2. Gold dress ornament. From Bagram, 1st-2nd Century A.D.
3. Gold dress ornament (?). From Bagram, 1st-2nd Century A.D.
4. Bone toiletry items for applying eye makeup. From Bagram, 1st-2nd Century A.D.
5. Gold fragment of a vessel. From Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D.

NUMBER 11, center of hall—Marble basin
Found in 1925 at the shrine of Sultan Mir Wais Baba in the old city of Kandahar. Because of a lotus blossom carved on the under side it was known as the Buddha\'s begging bowl. Two later Islamic inscriptions occur. The inside inscription (ca. 1490 A.D.) relates that this massive basin was used to serve sherbat (sherbet) to Muslim pilgrims. The outer inscription (16th Century) lists the
rules and regulations of the Kandahar madrassa (religious school). Black marble, from Kandahar. (III. 48)

Facing the stairs, turn right into the corridor for the small exhibit of Buddhist finds from Cham Qala, Baghlan Province, near the famous Kushan sanctuary of Surkh Kotal. The Buddhist monastery of Cham Qala, discovered by accident in 1965, yielded many limestone bas reliefs and sculptures.

NUMBER 12—Reliefs and capitals
From left to right, a) a stylized bird with outstretched wings on the corners, Buddha and other figures in Central Asian dress in the center; b) the central figure is destroyed, but both Indian and Central Asian dress are represented; c) fragmentary Departure Scene: the young Prince Siddhartha sits on the edge of a couch on which his wife sleeps, unaware that he plans to leave her and palace life to seek Enlightenment; d) a column capital with winged lions (griffins?) on the corners, a mythical lion in the center with his paws on the rumps of the griffins. Limestone, from Cham Qala, ca. 2nd-3rd Century A.D.

Along the corridor walls are large photographs of historical monuments and sites in Afghanistan, taken by Mr. and Mrs. Erik Hansen. Mr. Hansen was a Danish architect working for the UNESCO program on the restoration and preservation of historical monuments. These photographs were part of the 1964 Monuments Week exhibit. Facing the stairs, turn left to the end of the corridor.

NUMBER 13—Frieze
Early Islamic calligraphic frieze. (See also Room of Islamic Art, second floor.) Brick and plaster, from Lashkari Bazaar in Lashkar Gah, Hilmand Province, ca. 11th Century A.D.

NUMBER 14—Mosque
Reconstructed Early Islamic mosque and mihrab (prayer niche pointing towards Mecca), for the private use of the Ghorid kings at their winter capital of Lashkari Bazaar. Plaster, ca. 12th Century A.D.

Return to the center of the hall for various stone sculptures exhibited in the alcoves on either side of the staircase. The left alcove contains three Buddhist sculptures.

NUMBER 15—Sculptured umbrella
Large stone umbrella, upside down, from a Buddhist stupa. The stupa is an architectural conception of the cosmos, consisting of the world covered by heaven, a hemispherical dome, and surmounted by a square platform representing the Tushita Heaven, the Heaven of Pleasure or the Heaven of the 33 Gods where Future Buddhas dwell prior to their appearance on earth. A mast symbolizing the world axis rises from the cosmic waters through the world-mountain to the empyrean, carrying a series of umbrellas symbolizing a succession of intermediary heavens, each one increasing in purity until the last, most essential paradise is reached. Schist, from Bagram, 2nd-3rd Century A.D.

EXHIBITION CASE—Confiscated objects
These genuine antiques of unknown origin have been seized by Afghan Customs. See page 113 for details of Customs regulations regarding the export of Cultural Property from Afghanistan.

NUMBER 16—Sculpture
A seated Buddha. Schist, provenance unknown, seized by the Afghan Customs.

NUMBER 17—Sculpture
A standing Buddha. This sculpture represents the Great Miracle of Sravasti, by which the Buddha conducted a dual miracle, giving forth flames from his shoulders and water from the hem of his robe, in order to demonstrate his superiority over a group of staunch Hindu Brahmins, the Kasyapa Brothers. Note the elaborately carved panels to the left showing the Buddha with his bodyguard, Vajrapani, and various groups of admirers. The slanting posture of these figures is unique. The side panel also depicts a rampant griffin and a figure with a most distinctive face. Below this there is an ornate triton, and on the very lower edge a frieze depicting an aquatic scene which carries through the theme of the watery miracle above, executed with a tremendous sense of
movement. (See also Bas Reliefs from Shotorak, second floor corridor.) Schist, accidental find, 1965, from Serai Khoja, ca. 3rd-4th Century A.D.

NUMBER 18—Sculpture
Standing Buddha, representing the Great Miracle of Sravasti, similar to Number 17. Schist, from Serai Khoja, ca. 3rd-4th Century A.D.

NUMBER 19—Sculpture
Standing Buddha, representing the Great Miracle of Sravasti. Schist, from Khum Zargar, ca. 3rd-4th Century A.D.

NUMBER 20—Sculpture
Stone lingam, the stylized phallic symbol of the masculine cosmic principle and of the Hindu god Shiva. Marble, from Tagao, Farwan Province, probably Hindu Shahi period, ca. 9th Century A.D.

NUMBER 21—Painting
Oil portrait of Habibullah, known popularly as Bacha Saqqao, “Son of a Water Carrier,” who occupied the throne of Kabul from January to October 1929. (See also Portraits along the main staircase.)

Ethnographic Room

See the front and back inside covers for an ethnographic map of Afghanistan.

CASE NUMBER 1—Marriage costumes, from Kabul region
1. Woman's waistcoat of red felt, embroidered with gold thread.
2. Woman's dress of red velvet, decorated with bands of green velvet and embroidered with gold thread at the hem.
3. Hanging down the back of each model, a long narrow bag of black cloth embroidered with white flowers and green leaves. Used to hold a long braid of hair.
5. Gold and green brocade bridal pantaloons. Wide trousers caught at the ankles, each leg with a gold band ornamented with a red tassel.
6. Hanging down back, long narrow bag for hair, black cotton embroidered with red and white flowers.
7. Woman’s hat embroidered with gold and silver thread. The inside is green leather, with a central decoration in red.
8. Gold embroidered shoes, floral design, Tree of Life motif on the inside. (See Case Number 13.)

CASE NUMBER 2—Pushpān dress, from Paktya Province
1. Square cloth for carrying clothes. Ornamented with mother-of-pearl buttons, embroidered with multicolored stars, flowers and geometric motifs.
2. Woman’s black cotton mantle, embroidered with yellow and red geometric designs, decorated with white buttons, and edged in yellow. Fringe begins about half-way down.
4. Woman’s black cotton shawl, embroidered with multicolored circular floral and geometric motifs.
5. Woman’s black and purple cotton dress, with multicolored floral designs.
6. Pantaloons, with wide silver band at the ankles.
7. Woman’s plaited straw sandals, decorated with red stitching.

CASE NUMBER 3—Pushpān dress, from Kandahar
1. Man’s turban cap, embroidered with gold and silver thread, a floral motif, decorated with metal sequins and beads. Small tassel on the side.
2. Man’s turban cap, embroidered with gold and silver thread in floral motifs. Brocade band around the base of cap, small tassel.
3. Woman’s peach-colored silk shawl, with flowers and leaves embroidered in orange silk.
4. Woman’s garnet-red silk dress, with embroidered front, pockets and cuffs. Black embroidery runs down the front and around the hem.
5. Woman’s brownish-red cotton skirt, with leaf pattern. The hem is edged in black.
6. Woman’s leather shoes embroidered with silver, leaf motif in multicolored thread. Pointed toes.
7. Man’s fringed blue and gold turban cloth and turban cap.
8. Man’s white shirt, gathered at the waist. Front and cuffs elaborately embroidered. Note small mirror decorations.
9. Man’s leather shoes, stitched with silver and multicolored thread, geometric designs. Pointed toes.

CASE NUMBER 4—Mazar-i-Sharif dress, Balkh Province
1. Woman’s conical cap, with multicolored embroidery, edged in black.
2. Woman’s ornate cap, multicolored embroidery. Decorated with small silver shields, gold and silver floral and geometric ornaments.
3. Man’s turban cap, embroidered with multicolored thread, leaf motif.
4. Woman’s large rectangular scarf of green chiffon silk, with yellow and white rosettes.
5. Woman’s dark blue cape (farānjīn), embroidered with multicolored geometric motifs. Fringed edge and fringed false sleeves, hanging down the back, held together by a fringed band.
6. Woman’s garnet-red silk dress with narrow black and yellow stripes. Gold braid borders the collar.
7. Woman’s yellow silk farānjī, embroidered with stylized floral and geometric motifs. Embroidered false sleeves hang down the back. In the north these farānjī were sometimes worn over the head, with usually a black horsehair veil.
8. Beige cotton tablecloth, embroidered with multicolored flowers and leaves. Fringed on three sides. Central motif is an eight-pointed star enclosing another star, pink flowers inside smaller star.
9. Man’s shoes, carved from a single piece of wood. Engraved decoration. Pointed toes, three iron-tipped projections under the sole.

10. Woman’s embroidered leather shoes, decorated with metal thread, tassels and buttons.

CASE NUMBER 5—Panjshiri Tajik dress, from Kapisa Province
1. Man’s white cotton cap, with gold braid, and fringed turban cloth in heavy white linen with blue threads.
2. Beige felt coat, stitched with geometric pattern, lined with orange cloth.
4. Beige linen shirt, gathered at the waist. The front, cuffs and hem are embroidered.
5. Beige linen pantaloons, with drawstring belt.
6. Woman’s rectangular black cotton shawl, edged with tatting.
7. Woman’s white cotton cap, embroidered with roses and leaves.
8. Red cotton dress, small pleats at the waist, with a pattern of white stripes and triangles. Red bands ornament the hem, neck and back.
9. reddish-brown pantaloons, with drawstring belt. Gathered cuffs, with blue edging.
10. Woman’s leather half-boots, with embroidery, pointed toes and iron heels.
11. Man’s wooden clogs, with ornate carved design, leather straps.

CASE NUMBER 6—Pushtun jewelry
1–6. Nomad rings.
7. Forehead ornament.
8. Pair of silver bracelets.
9. Silver pendant inlaid with red stones.
10. Silver earrings.
11. Woman’s forehead ornament.
12. Wide silver bracelets.
13. Woman’s talisman worn on the forehead.
15. Earrings.
16. Silver necklace, inlaid with stones and glass.
17. Silver anklets with bird motif, ancient fertility symbol.

CASE NUMBER 7—Kafir and Nuristani jewelry and weapons
1. Prestige knife with ornate handle. All have some brass ornamentation to counteract the evil aspect that iron assumes when it is used in weaponry. The knife is usually worn on a silver-studded belt. (See effigy statue Number 11.)
2. Incised brass bracelets, modern.
3. Forged iron anklets, 19th Century.
5. Modern brass necklaces. (See effigy statue Number 12 for earlier Kafir model.)
6. Forehead ornament.
7. Modern brass bracelets.
8. Kafir brass bracelet in the form of serpents.

CASE NUMBER 8—Kafir and Nuristani jewelry
1. Forehead ornament, 19th Century. (See effigy statues Number 14, 16, 23, 24.)
2. Modern necklace.
3. Chitrali-type bracelet, no longer worn in Nuristan.
4. Repoussé forehead ornament.
5–6. Modern brass necklaces.
7–8. Silver necklaces with iron coils, 19th Century. Prestige symbols for warriors who have killed many enemies, and/or men and women who were great feast-givers. (See effigy statues Number 11, 14, 15, 22.)
10. Modern forged bracelets in iron.
15. Type of earring-head ornament. Each year a man could add another ring if he contributed to the poor.

CASE NUMBER 9—Wooden utensils and bowls, from Nuristan
1. Butter storage bowl, with carved, stylized ram and horse heads.
2. Ladle, with painted and lathed handle.
3. Water drinking bowl, with carved, stylized ram and goat heads, and Sunburst or Shield design.
4-5. Carved ladles.
6. Small drinking bowl with carved, stylized ram and horse heads.
7. Large drinking bowl with elaborately carved, stylized ram heads as handles. Two smaller ram-head ornaments on exterior.
8. Butter storage bowl with larger handle carved into stylized horse head. Smaller handle is a stylized ram head.
9. Drinking bowl with carved, stylized horse and ram heads.
10. Large bowl for fat products. Spout supported by carved entwined serpents. Elaborately stylized ram-head handle.
11. Funnel for filling goatskin churn.
12. Receptacle with two handles and cover, elaborately carved designs of circular Sunburst or Shield motifs.

CASE NUMBER 10—Dress, other objects, from Nuristan
2. Harp. Nearest parallel found in 3rd Millennium B.C. at Sumerian sites in Iraq and in the Bamiyan wall paintings. 3rd-7th Century A.D. Found in Waigal and Wama Valleys.
3. Necklace of small colored glass beads, cowrie shells, metal buttons, small bells made from thimbles.
4. Narrow blue wool belt, red and blue tassels and cowrie shells.
5. Wide, fringed black and red belt.
6. Woman's beige dress, embroidered with blue and red wool.
7. Wooden stool, seat of brown and beige wool.
9. Wooden table with three forged, twisted iron legs. Twisted shapes denote various grades of warrior status. Kafir silver wine-drinking cup sits in the holder. The markings on the cup are also prestige symbols.

CASE NUMBER 11—Dress, other objects, from Nuristan
1. Brass quiver containing six arrows, five with iron tips, one with brass.
2. Oak bow with leather bowstring. Bamboo arrowshaft, iron tip.
4. Man's beige wool coat, embroidered cuffs and fringed hem.
5. Man's beige wool pantaloons, gathered at waist.
7. Wooden stool, seat of cowhide thongs.
8. Drum, hollowed by burning.
9. Man's knitted half-boots.
10. Small wicker eating table.
11. Carved wooden cup for drinking buttermilk.
12. Small square, forged iron table, fixed in a wooden socket. Oil lamp attached.

CASE NUMBER 12—Hazaraat dress, from central Afghanistan
1. Man's embroidered silk cap.
2. Coat of brown wool, two false pockets.
3. Wool waistcoat, four pockets.
4. Trousers of light beige wool, gathered at waist and tied with drawstring.
5. Man's leather half-boots with curved toes. The sole is made of eight layers of leather.
6. Woman's hat, two small white tassels in front, dark pink center crown. A wide black panel, embroidered with red, hangs down the back.
7. Woman's square-shaped cap, gold trim around the edge, two long flowing panels down the back.
8. Green cotton dress, lined in red, decorated with gold and multicolored floral bands.

CASE NUMBER 13—Marriage costume, from Kabul region
1. Man's purple velvet waistcoat, heavily embroidered in gold.
2. Woman's beige felt coat, embroidered with silver thread and sequins.
3. Bride's silk brocade dress, gold trim on collar, cuffs and hem.
4. Bride's silk brocade pantaloons, tassel on gold band.
5. Bridal groom's pale blue coat, gold embroidery.
7. Gold embroidered slippers, with floral design, and on the inside a Tree of Life motif.

The effigy statues and other objects from Nuristan are free-standing. All wooden statues are from pre-Muslim Kafiristan, that is, pre-20th Century.

NUMBER 1–28—Wooden objects from Nuristan

1. Wooden statue of a woman, similar to statue Number 27. Possibly the goat fertility goddess, Disani, or a local goddess. She is astride a markhor, her face resting between his horns. She wears a large hat, four bracelets and a small conical basket on her back. (Ill. 56)
2. Sculptured wooden column with elaborate designs. The capital has four carved ram heads.
3. Post of a hero's chair. The Kafir constructed intricate chairs to preserve the memory of famous men. Two human figures, with headdresses and on their backs circular shields, embrace at the top. Two small heads appear between each pair of legs. (Ill. 54)
4. Elaborately carved wooden door. The symbolic meaning of the various designs probably goes back to prehistoric times.
5. Elaborately carved wooden chair, probably to commemorate a Kafir hero. The carvings are symbolic of a man's rank. Two pairs of male and female figures are copulating on top of the posts. One penis is missing. The female figures have conical baskets on their backs. (See basket, Number 17.)
6. Modern chair from Nuristan. Unlike other Afghan ethnic groups, the Nuristani sit on chairs and stools and eat off tables.
7. Wooden panel for the outside of a house. Stylized domestic and wild goat horns have a mystic significance in Nuristan today, as they did in earlier Kafir culture. Note the Tree of Life and Sunburst or Shield motifs on the carved goat horns.
8. Large elaborately carved wooden porch pillar, ritually as well as structurally important.
9. Elaborately carved door. The designs all had ritual and status significance in pre-Islamic Kafir culture.
10. Kafir seated ancestor effigy, male. Simple necklace (see Case Number 8, 2), Sunburst or Shield design at navel, possibly a buckle at the intersection of the bandoliers. The stones used to represent the eyes have been removed. From Landai Sin Valley.
11. Kafir ancestor effigy, male, probably representing a hero. Note the traditional dagger (see Case Number 7, 1) in the right hand, the elaborate headdress, and the warrior's prestige necklace (Case Number 8, 7–8). From Waigal Valley.
12. Kafir ancestor effigy, female. Note the prestige headdress with horns. Also the prestige necklace (Case Number 7, 5). The breasts are exposed. The skirt and pantaloons are elaborately decorated. From Waigal Valley.
13. Elaborately carved wooden oil lamp, to be attached to the wall.
14. Kafir ancestor effigy, female. Note the forehead ornament (Case Number 8, 1); embroidered shoulder loops and necklace are prestige symbols. The breasts have been lopped off. The elaborate design of the cummerbund and skirt indicates status. From Waigal Valley.
15. Kafir ancestor effigy, male, probably a hero. Note the elaborate headdress, ceremonial axe over the right shoulder and the prestige earrings and necklace. He wears a distinctive brass prestige belt and dagger at the right, and kilt-like trousers. The halfboats closely resemble those worn today in Nuristan. From Waigal Valley.
16. Kafir ancestor effigy, female. Note the forehead ornament, elaborate earrings, exposed bosom, cummerbund with tassels or bells, and the stylized pudenda. From Waigal Valley.
17. Woman's goat hair basket, carried on the back.
18. Elaborately carved wooden oil lamp, similar to Number 13.
19. Carved wooden Nuristani door, similar to Number 4.
20. Elaborately carved wooden window, with stylized ram head as handle. A lock on the inside.


22. Kafir ancestor effigy, male, a hero on horseback. Note the horse trappings with bells, the shield on the back of the figure, the sword slung across his chest, with crossed bandoliers (?), prestige necklace and elaborate headdress. The stone eyes are still intact. The brass belt with bells is a hero symbol. He carries a flint and steel pouch and powder horn on the right side, carved rifle on the left. The Shield motif on the left arm is a status symbol. From Landai Sin.

23. Kafir ancestor effigy, female, encrusted with sacrificial blood and butter. Forehead ornament, stylized pudenda, similar to figure Number 14. (III. 55)

24. Ancestor effigy, female, similar to figure Number 23. Designs on the skirt may represent variants of the prestige necklaces. From Waigal Valley.


26. Sculptured wooden column, similar to Number 2.

27. Small wooden statue, female, astride a markhor. Possibly Disanri, goddess of goat fertility. The figure wears four bracelets and a belt. Tattoo (?) designs on the topknot, and a conical basket on the back. From Waigal Valley.

28. Kafir wooden figure, female. Similar to Number 1 and 27, but wearing two bracelets on the right wrist and only one on the left. Bosom is visible. Tattooed forehead or forehead ornament. Two rows of white stones are inlaid around the neck. The head is in a normal position with an elaborate hairdo on the back. From Parun Valley (?).

NUMBER 29—Wall hanging
One of two surviving silk hangings, with ornate bird and animal and floral motif, presented by the Amir of Bokhara to Amir Abdur Rahman at the turn of the 20th Century. Others were destroyed during the civil war of 1929. (See upstairs hall for matching hanging.)

ETHNOGRAPHIC ROOM

As you leave the Ethnographic Room, note the paintings, weapons and accoutrement along the walls of the right and left staircases.

NUMBER 1–6—Paintings
Staircase, in the center of hall:

Staircase, to the left:

Staircase, to the right, top:

NUMBER 7–10—Weapons and accoutrement
To the left and right staircase:
7–8. Large calibre weapons, manufactured at the Kabul arsenal during the time of Amir Habibullah (1901–1919). All are percussion cap, with gold inlay. Note the cylindrical powder containers attached to some.

Top of stairs, left:
9. Four jezails from the early 19th Century. The two on the left are flint-locks, those on the right percussion cap. All are inlaid with gold, silver and mother-of-pearl. The barrels are damascened. The weapon on the extreme right has turquoise around the barrel mouth. Probably all were manufactured in Afghanistan.

To the right:
10. Four weapons, from the second reign of Amir Sher Ali (1868–79). The outer weapons are flint-locks, the center ones percussion cap. All are inlaid with gold, mother-of-pearl, ivory and bone, with silver banding around the stocks and barrels. One center barrel is damascened.
CASE NUMBER 11—*Weapons and accoutrement, 19th Century*
1. Belt buckle. Gold and silver epigraphic and geometric inlay.
2. Iranian-type dagger sword, with elaborately decorated scabbard. The blood-letting grooves down the center of the blade not visible.
3. Large sword, with brass inlay. Bone hilt.
5. Dagger with gold inlay on the blade. Engraved jade hilt.

CASE NUMBER 12—*Weapons and accoutrement, 19th Century*
2. Steel bow of Turkish design, with brass inlay.
3. Indian-type arm dagger with double blades. Gold inlay.
4. Steel breast plate with buckles. Elaborate floral incised decorations.
5. Central Asian saber. The handle is enamelled with gold inlay.
6. Revolver. The handle is inlaid with gold and precious stones. Gold inlay on the barrel and trigger guard.
7. Brass belt clasp.
8. Iron belt buckle, with gold inlay. A raised center roundel.

NUMBER 13—*Wall hanging*
One of two surviving silk wall hangings (see Ethnographic Room, Number 29) presented by the Amir of Bokhara to Amir Abdur Rahman at the turn of the century. Others were destroyed during the 1929 civil war.

For a discussion of the objects in the left wing of the second floor corridor, see the sections on Shotorak Room, page 67, and the Islamic Arts Room, page 79.
3 Gold beaker with bull motif, from Tepe Fullol, ca. 2500 B.C. (h. 5.5 cm)

4 Bone seal with winged camel, obverse, and bird, reverse, from Shamshir Ghar, 2nd Millennium B.C. (d. 3 cm)

6 Painted glass goblet, from Begram, 2nd Century A.D. (h. 13.5 cm)
5 Ivory panel, from Bagram, 2nd-3rd Century A.D. (h. 41 cm)

7 Plaster casts of Ganymede offering water to the eagle of Zeus (d. 12.8 cm)

8 Carved ivory yaksha, or water goddess, from Bagram, 1st Century A.D. (h. 40 cm)
9 Glazed pottery vessel in the shape of a bird-woman, from Bagram, 2nd Century A.D. (h. 22 cm)

10 Gold belt buckle, from Surkh Kotal, 2nd Century A.D. (l. 9 cm)

11 Rhyton, or drinking vessel, from Kona Masjid, late 7th Century A.D. (l. 19 cm)

12 Painted clay Devata, from Fondukistan, 7th Century A.D. (h. 29 cm)
Begram Room

High ruined ramparts encircle a long mound rising above the confluence of the Ghorband and Panjsher Rivers near the village of Begram, some 40 miles north-east of Kabul. This was Kapisa, the famed summer capital of the mighty king of the Kushans, Kanishka.

Kanishka’s empire extended across northern India, through the Afghan mountains and east into Central Asia. Though detailed specifics of this ruler are strangely lacking, a rich, varied panorama of his era can be painted by the mind’s eye with the aid of such finds as the Begram treasure.

During the early part of the 2nd Century A.D., when the Kushan Empire reached its greatest heights under Kanishka, peace reigned from Rome to China and for more than two centuries commerce, art, and religion moved freely by land and by sea along the caravan trade highway known as the Silk Route. The Caesars of Rome and the Han Emperors of China avidly exchanged their most exotic products while bargaining for the spices, gems and cosmetics of India and Ceylon and the gems and furs of Central Asia. At the heart of this trade, the Kushan aristocracy of Kapisa pursued a life of high sophistication. A patrician elegance characterizes their portraits on the bas reliefs from Shotorak.

The vast accumulation of objects contained in the Begram treasure further testifies to the refined and elaborate taste of Kapisa’s citizens. It represents, in capsule form, the extent and richness of the commercial activity along the Silk Route.