

Prehistory. Catalogue

Nota bene:

Objects with accession numbers starting with 010.xx were assigned to the museum in 2010 from a donated collection and were available only after the documentation of the other objects was completed; hence, they were not recorded in full detail. During our assessment the objects received new numbers, corresponding to a previously fixed scheme, collective ID-numbers were individualised. For this reason, more than one object can carry the same old number (see particularly the stone columns).

Cat. No. Pr1

HNM 02.18.86m, see Fig. 2
Adze, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast

Size (cm): h. 4.1; w. 4.4; l. 11.3; d. 3
Small, but heavy adze with shaft hole (d. 1.5 cm). Flattened back from top, notch at front. Front pointed, but etched, no gloss. Backside with a groove. No indentation on top. The adzes with cat. nos. Pr1 to Pr4 are typical examples of a type known from the Balkans to the Indus from the later 3rd millennium BCE onwards.

For comparisons from Bactria, the Margiana, Turkmenistan, Pakistan-Baluchistan and various collections see Pottier 1984, Figs. 15; 85; 90 Pls. XII–XIII. – Jarrige 1987, Fig. 81 cat. B2 (Sibri).



Cat. No. Pr2

Cat. No. Pr2

HNM 02.24.86
Adze, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast

Size (cm): h. 5.4; w. 6; l. 19; d. 3
Adze with shaft hole (d. 3 cm), solid. Vertical edge sharpened. Horizontal edge pointed, but pecked. No traces of wear. One indent below and one on top.

Cat. Nos. Pr3–Pr4

HNM 010.5.06a; 010.5.06b
Adzes, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE



Copper alloy; cast
Same type as cat. nos. Pr1 and Pr2. The objects came to the museum in 2010 as part of a donated collection of antiquities, allegedly from Badghis.

Cat. No. Pr5

HNM 02.22.86a
Spearhead, northern Afghanistan
c. 2400–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast

Size (cm): h. 0.1; l. 41
Long, pointed thin blade with a short socket. Length of blade: 34 cm, plus a 7 cm long tang.



This type of blade is also known from the Indus Civilisation, Mehrgarh VIII, and south-eastern Iran (Shahdad).

For cat. nos. Pr5 and Pr6 see Hakemi 1972, Pl. XXc. – Hiebert 1994, Fig. 9.26,1. – Kaniuth 2006, 96ss type E-4-1 no. 98 (Djarkutan). – Pottier 1984, Fig. 3,14. – Sarianidi 1977, Pl. I. – Sarianidi 1986, 199 Pl. 77.

Cat. No. Pr6

HNM 05.01.86k
Spearhead, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 0.25; w. 4.45; l. 25



Long, leaf-shaped blade with a short tang, no rib. The tang is thicker in section than the blade. Not very pointed, no sharp sides or traces of use.

Cat. Nos. Pr7–Pr9

HNM 02.18.86o; 010.6.28; 05.03.86f
Spearheads, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): cat. no. Pr7: h. 0.4; w. 4.5; l. 27.5; – cat. no. Pr8: not available; – cat. no. Pr9: h. 0.1; l. 13.4





Three long, pointed spearheads, lanceolate shape, shallow mid-rib on one side, pointed tang (l. 5.5 cm); see also Fig. 3. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 3,15. - Masson 1988, Pl. XIV,2 (Altyn Tepe). - Kaniuth (2006, 97 no. 101 Djarkutan) lists this shape also as type E-4-1.

Cat. No. Pr10

HNM 05.03.86d
Spatula, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 0.1; w. 4.7; l. 17.5



Thin, leaf-shaped blade, flat; no rib; long, rounded tang, slightly bent upward. For cat. nos. Pr10 to Pr13 see Pottier 1984, Pl. XVI,104–107.

Cat. Nos. Pr11–Pr13

HNM 05.03.86e; HNM 02.18.86i; for HNM 010.5.07c see Gütschow Fig. 3
Spatulas, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): cat. no. Pr11: h. 0.1; w. 4.6; l. 12.2; - cat. no. Pr12: h. 0.1; w. 6.9; l. 23.4; - cat. no. Pr13: not available



Cat. Nos. Pr11 and Pr12

Flat, leaf-shaped spatulas with twisted and straight tangs (l. 8.6 cm), very thin, no mid-rib. See Sarianidi 1986, 208. - Jarrige 1987, cat. D6 (Quetta).

Cat. No. Pr14

HNM 05.01.86j
Chopper, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 0.2; w. 6.25; l. 16



Flat blade with long haft (l. 6 cm).

Cat. No. Pr15

HNM 05.01.86l
Chopper, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 0.2; w. 5.8; l. 13.3



Chopping blade with haft, slightly curved sides and edges. Lower side pointed and sharpened. See Kaniuth 2006, 100 type E-5-1 (no. 112, Sapalli Tepe, tomb 89).

Cat. No. Pr16

HNM 05.03.86m, see Fig. 4; Gütschow Fig. 14
Vessel, Afghanistan (?), c. 2100–1900 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 12.7; w. 0.1; d. (rim) 18.5
Wide vessel with concave sides. The small lip is flattened through hammering and slightly inverted. The base is gently raised, but flat. The walls are evenly thin and regularly shaped. No decoration. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 32,239. - Kaniuth 2006, 85 type C-4-2 (no. 62, Sapalli Tepe, tomb 85). - Sarianidi 1986, 192 Pl. 68 (shallower): also



known from other late 3rd-century sites in the region (Shahdad, Mehrgarh, Susa).

Cat. Nos. Pr17a, b and Pr18a, b

HNM 010.8.32b+c; for HNM 05.03.86a+b: see Figs. 5 and 6
Mirrors, Afghanistan (?)
c. 2100–1700 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): d. 17; d. 16



Four mirrors without or with simple, flat handle or tang (two mirrors each) are kept in the museum, cat. nos. Pr17a, b and Pr18a, b allegedly coming from Gulran or Badghis (north resp. northeast of Herat). See Pottier 1984, Fig. 38,265. - Gupta 1979, Fig. 3,39d (Dashly). - Kaniuth 2006, 70–73 type A-2. - Amiet 1989b, Fig. 10a. - Hakemi 1977, Pl. XXIc (Shahdad). - Jarrige 1987, cat. D7–D9 (Quetta).

Cat. No. Pr19

HNM 05.01.86r
Macehead, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 1.55; w. 3.9; l. 10.2



'Ceremonial' macehead, heavy, with four-pointed tips (one broken). Inside: rivet attached to two tips.

Mace- or pinheads of straight or curved type (HNM 05.01.86s, cat. no. Pr20) are reported from several sites in the region, see Kaniuth 2006, 92s (Gonur, Djarkutan). - Pottier 1984, Fig. 43,318.319 Pl. XLIII,320. - Sarianidi 1986, 210; Sarianidi 1989, Fig. 7. - Amiet 1989b, Fig. 8b. - Teufer 2006, Pl. 129,12.

Cat. No. Pr20

HNM 05.01.86s
Macehead, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): h. 2.15; w. 4.5; l. 10.4



Bent, rounded shape, four-pointed tips/fingers. Inside there is no 'flap' or rivet, but traces of a copper sheet, which is broken.

Cat. Nos. Pr21a–e

HNM 05.01.86a–e
Arrowheads, northern Afghanistan
c. 2100–1800 BCE
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): HNM 05.01.86a: h. 0.2; w. 2.2; l. 8; - HNM 05.01.86b: h. 0.2; w. 2.2; l. 7.5; - HNM 05.01.86c: h. 0.12; w. 2.45; l. 8.3;

- HNM 05.01.86d: h. 0.2; w. 2.7; l. 8.2;
- HNM 05.01.86e: h. 0.2; w. 2.15; l. 7.2



Five tanged arrowheads with long, leaf-shaped blades, shallow mid-rib; the tangs are flat and vary slightly in length. See Kaniuth 2006, 95 type E-5 cat. no. 95. - Pottier 1984, Fig. 2,9.

Cat. Nos. Pr22a–d

HNM 05.01.86f–i
Arrowheads, northern Afghanistan
Iron Age (?)
Copper alloy; cast
Size (cm): a. HNM 05.01.86f: h. 0.25; w. 3.55; l. 5.9;
- b. HNM 05.01.86g: h. 0.25; w. 3.7; l. 6.2;
- c. HNM 05.01.86h: h. 0.2; w. 3.5; l. 6.3;
- d. HNM 05.01.86i: h. 0.3; w. 3.9; l. 6.4



Four arrowheads with leaf-shaped, rather wide and short blades, shallow rib, flat, short tang, rather broad heads, slightly convex and pointed, with traces of wear and shine along the edges indicating use.

Cat. Nos. Pr23a, b

HNM 05.01.86m+q
Cosmetic container and pin, northern Afghanistan, c. 2100–1800 BCE (?)
Copper alloy; cast; chiselled; feet attached
Size (cm): h. 7.35; w. 2.9; d. 2.9; d. (rim) 1.3
Small bottle with thick walls and heavy body; long neck with everted lip. On the rim and around the body: a band with chiselled (top) and engraved (back) diagonal grooves. Three legs (2.3 cm long) are added to the grooves in the socket attached to the body. Legs are curved, feet bend outside. Two pins with modelled tops are also in the collection (HNM 05.01.86q, cat. no. Pr23b).



The date of such containers and pins is difficult to assess when out of context, since they occur from the Bronze Age to the Islamic Period. Early bottles usually do not have legs unless they are animal-shaped. For comparisons of Bronze Age pins see Kaniuth 2006, 113s type F-3-1. - Hiebert 1994, Fig. 9.26,11 (Gonur South). - Sarianidi 1977, Pl. II.

Cat. No. Pr24

HNM 02.22.86l, see Fig. 8
Metal compartment seal, northern Afghanistan, c. 2100–1700 BCE
Copper alloy; cast, openwork
Size (cm): h. 0.5; d. 4.45



Openwork compartment seal with high, rounded, pierced knob-handle. The closed parts are c. 1.5 mm deep, no traces of inlay. An outer ring encloses a winged animal with two long legs, most likely a swan. The head on a long neck is turned backwards; the raised wing curls above the body and touches the head. Published comparable seals show some variation in the shape of the legs and wings; see Sarianidi 1986, 270 Pl. 136; Sarianidi 1998, 91 Figs. 217–219, from Bactria, also identified as 'swan'. - Amiet 1989b, 170 Fig. 15b. Baghestani

(1997, 309 cat. nos. 442–445) proposes that the bird represents a goose, but the feet are rather long. The motif is most similar to her cat. no. 445 (private collection) which she interprets as a "goose standing on and being attacked by a snake" (Baghestani 1997, 309 Pl. 2,445; see also Amiet 1989b, 170 Fig. 15b: "bird with an oversized neck"). The seal in Herat lacks the lower part of the snake.

Cat. No. Pr25

HNM 88.088, see Fig. 9

Stone stamp seal, northern Afghanistan

c. 2400–1800 BCE

Stone, greyish chlorite; carved

Size (cm): h. 1.3; d. 1.8

Small stamp seal with engraved design. Pierced small knob, broken off, and a perpendicular shallow groove on the back. The motif is not very clear, but shows a curled-up snake and a crescent-shaped ornament at the top. See Kaniuth 2006, 78s B2. – Sarianidi 1998, Pl. 164,2; 165,3 (Togolok 24 and 21).

Cat. No. Pr26

HNM 07.02.86a

Stone pedestal of composite figurine, Afghanistan, late 3rd millennium BCE (BMAC)

Stone, green chlorite; carved

Size (cm): h. 3.3; w. 5; l. 8.5



Fragment of a pedestal with a seated figurine. Flat base, smoothed and polished. On top and on the side: a hatched zigzag pattern, imitating a *kaunakes*, a typical late 3rd-millennium woollen textile. Such female and male figurines are often of a composite type, shown seated, sometimes with detachable parts, such as head and headdress, arms or upper body. Made from limestone and chlorite with inlays of shell, calcite and lapis lazuli, they show an attractive range of colours. Composite stone statuary from different contexts is found in south-eastern Iran, Afghanistan and

northern Pakistan-Baluchistan (Quetta), but many of them come from the art market. Among numerous works see Amiet 1989b, 174–177 Pl. 20. – Jarrige 1987, cat. D10 (Quetta). – Ligabue/Salvatori 1989, Pls. 109–115. – Pottier 1984, 44–46 Pls. XXXVII–XLI.



For comparison, see this example from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1989.281.41a,b)

Nota bene:

It has to be noted that green stains on all stone objects are remains of a previous labelling with a green marker.

Cat. No. Pr27

HNM 90.002 (010.8.41), see Fig. 11, front right

Stone vase, Afghanistan, c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 6.7; d. (rim) 4.5; d. (base) 13.2



Flat, bulbous vase with slightly concave base and short neck with out-turned rim. The shoulder is decorated with circular grooves. The shape of the vessel is known from 4th-millennium BCE pottery vessels; a similar vessel is also published from Altyn Tepe (Masson 1988, Pl. XXXVII,13: Exc. 1, burial

296, horizon 10), but the cracks and shiny platelets on the surface raise some doubts about the authenticity of the object.

Cat. No. Pr28

HNM 012.11.04

Stone bowl, Afghanistan, c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 4.4; d. (rim) 9.4; d. (base) 7



Rather wide, but shallow bowl with thick walls, outward turned triangular rim, flat base. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 25,189.

Cat. No. Pr29

HNM 03.32.86b, see Fig. 11, back right

Stone bowl, Afghanistan, c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 5.8; d. (rim) 6.8; d. (base) 5



Small, globular bowl with S-shaped section, everted flat rim, flattened base. Thick and therefore not translucent body, diagonal veins. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 25,196, but less closed. – Masson 1988, Pl. VII,2 (Altyn Tepe, Exc. 5, Burial Chamber 13). – Sarianidi 1986, 153 (Ulug Tepe).

Cat. No. Pr30

HNM 03.32.86c, see Fig. 11, back, second from left

Stone bowl, Afghanistan, c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 6; d. (rim) 7; d. (base) 6



Small, globular bowl with S-shaped section, everted flat rim, flat base. Translucent upper body, horizontal veins. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 25,196 Pl. XXV,196. – Casanova/Piran 2012, Fig. 1 (from Jiroft).

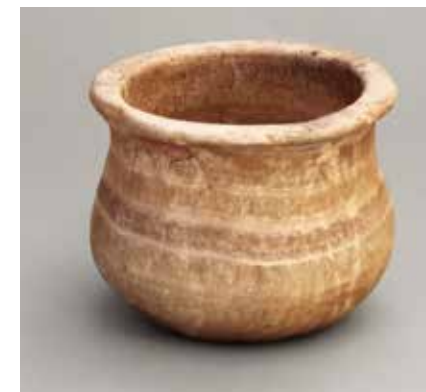
Cat. No. Pr31

HNM 03.32.86a, see Fig. 11, back, second from right

Stone bowl, Afghanistan, c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 5.7; d. (rim) 8.6; d. (base) 5.7



Small, globular bowl with slightly carinated lower part, everted, flat rim, flat base. Thin and thus translucent upper body (c. 0.3 cm), thick lower part, horizontal veins. Few traces of drilling.

Cat. No. Pr32

HNM 03.32.86d, see Fig. 11, front centre

Stone beaker, Afghanistan

c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 4.6; d. (rim) 4.6; d. (base) 6.8

Small, conical vessel with everted, flat rim and slightly concave base. Side walls are c. 0.8 cm thick, base 0.8 cm, yet, the vessel is not very translucent. Cat. nos. Pr33 to Pr38 share the conical shape with flat base and everted rim, but have different proportions. See Pottier 1984, Fig. 26,204 Pl. XXV,203.



Cat. No. Pr32

Cat. No. Pr33

HNM 012.11.03

Stone beaker, Afghanistan

c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 6.4; d. (rim) 7.2; d. (base) 7



Small, conical vessel with everted, rounded rim, flat base. See Majidzadeh 2003, 144 (Jiroft). – Casanova/Piran 2012 (Tepe Hesar).

Cat. No. Pr34

HNM 012.11.08

Stone beaker, Afghanistan

c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 9; d. (rim) 10.3; d. (base) 10.5

Conical vessel with everted, triangular rim, flat base. See Amiet 1986, Fig. 151 (Ulug Tepe, Namazga V); Amiet 1989b, Fig. 7d. – Pottier 1984, Fig. 26,204. – Majidzadeh 2003, 144 (Jiroft). – Hakemi 1997, 203 (Shahdad, tomb 42); 694 Fig. 9.42 (Cem. B, Ra3).



Cat. No. Pr34

Cat. No. Pr35

HNM 012.11.07

Stone beaker, Afghanistan

c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 10.5; d. (rim) 9; d. (base) 10



Conical vessel with everted, flat rim, flat base. See Majidzadeh 2003, 146 (Jiroft). – Hakemi 1997, 320 (tomb 163); 694. – Pottier 1984, Fig. 27,205. Similar shapes are also known from pottery vessels (e.g. Hiebert 1992, 114 Fig. 7.4,12: Gonur).

Cat. No. Pr36

HNM 012.11.06

Stone beaker, Afghanistan

c. 2500–1900 BCE

Calcite; carved, drilled

Size (cm): h. 13.5; d. (base) 12

Tall, conical vessel with everted, triangular rim and slightly concave base. See Hakemi 1997, 601 (Shahdad, from rooms).