

3. Objects from Transcaucasia

3a. Introduction

In the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age there were flourishing cultures throughout Transcaucasia, often with close links to the Koban culture but also with distinctive local features. These included the Koban-Colchian culture in western Georgia, the east Georgian culture, and the Ganja-Karabakh culture based on Azerbaijan. Also at this time there were close connections with the Talish area of Iran, as evidenced by the material cultures of the two areas (de Morgan, H., 1905). The weapons of this period include so-called triangular daggers (nos. 118–19) and daggers with openwork handles or hilts (nos. 120–5). Probably from graves come a variety of pendants in openwork form, including birds (nos. 141–6), rattles (nos. 147–51), and campanulate ornaments (nos. 152–3). Particularly well-known from Transcaucasia are sheet metal belts with intricate incised decoration usually featuring animals (nos. 139–40). In the 8th and 7th centuries BC, a large part of Transcaucasia was controlled by the powerful Urartian state centred on Armenia, but for reasons explained elsewhere Urartian material is not being included in this catalogue. A small grave group from Karabakh (nos. 159–62) possibly dates from the period of Achaemenid domination in Transcaucasia. Six belt-clasps of distinctive Georgian type featuring stylised animals (nos. 133–8) belong to a later period, probably 1st–2nd century AD.

3b. Miscellaneous Items

Daggers

118. ANE 1931-4-9,1 (Pl. 7, Fig. 23)

Bronze dagger with triangular blade and tubular hilt. The tip of the blade is missing, and it is plain apart from converging pairs of grooves, or ‘blood channels’, on either side. The hilt is hollow and plain, and is made in two sections with seams visible at either side. It is filled with clay(?). At the top of the hilt are the remains of an openwork pommel with excised triangles around the base.

L. 29.75 cm., max. W. 7.2 cm., Wt. 315g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: bronze, possible traces of clay core in hilt. See Appendix.

119. ANE 1931-4-9,2 (Pl. 7, Fig. 24)

Copper alloy dagger with triangular blade and cylindrical hilt. On either side of the blade are four converging pairs of grooves or ‘blood channels’ and elaborate incised decoration. This takes the form of bands of cross-hatching and hatched triangles. The hilt is made from two pieces of sheet metal, with seams at front and back. There is a plate down the centre of the hilt, which is otherwise hollow. At the top of the hilt is a flat, spade-shaped projection which has a

raised edge all around on both sides to accommodate inlays.

L. 27.9 cm., max. W. 6.7 cm., Wt. 299g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: arsenical copper. See Appendix.

These daggers were purchased from Mr Werner Hasselblatt of Tallin, Estonia, in 1931. The entry in the British Museum acquisitions register gives the provenance as Shusha (Nagorno-Karabakh). But a letter from Mr Hasselblatt to Professor C.A. Macartney of All Souls College, Oxford, dated 23/3/1948 and written from Hannover, contains the following information:

I shall be much obliged to you if you will kindly forward the enclosed extract of this letter to one of the Directors of the British Museum in London by asking him to send an answer directly to me. The matter is the following: About 20 years ago I sold to the British Museum an ancient bronze dagger. I beg to enclose a sketch. I had sent the dagger from Reval [Tallin] Estonia to London The dagger had been found in the neighbourhood of the mountain Ararat and was purchased in Tiflis [in] 1917 by Armenian refugees... . It had been ascertained by an expert in London which tribe was using such daggers ... and from which period of culture the dagger originated. Unfortunately I have lost the whole correspondance [sic] about the matter. A similar piece very well preserved is in my possession but in the Russian Zone and I hope to get it out from there some day. I shall be very grateful if the British Museum could inform me about the age and origin of the dagger which is in their possession.

Unfortunately, the sketch referred to in the letter can no longer be located, so it is unclear which of the two daggers Mr Hasselblatt is referring to. Also, he seems to have forgotten that he actually sold two daggers to the British Museum. The only reliable information about one or both daggers seems to be that it was purchased in Tiflis (Tbilisi).

‘Triangular’ daggers (as nos. 118–19) are amongst the most characteristic products of the Transcaucasian Late Bronze Age. Their blades are wide and flat, often decorated with converging grooves. In addition, some of them have geometric designs below the hilt, which is tubular in shape and plain. Most of the daggers have a convex openwork button on the top of the hilt, cast in bronze, although some of them, including no. 119, have only a semi-circular projection, flat on both sides, to which inlays of other material were attached. These inlays are often not preserved.

‘Triangular’ daggers occur in graves in Armenia and Georgia,³⁴ where together with longer similar swords, bronze axes and spear-heads, they form the traditional local type of armament. Often they are the only type of dagger occurring on one site (e.g. the Artik necropolis).

Daggers excavated at Artik (Armenia) occurred in catacomb graves attributed by the excavators to two chronological phases (Khachatryan 1979: 15–16, 109, 112, 148, 155, 184, 265, 287, 310; Santrot 1996: no. 89). Thus, the daggers from graves 2, 6 and 91 are dated to the earlier

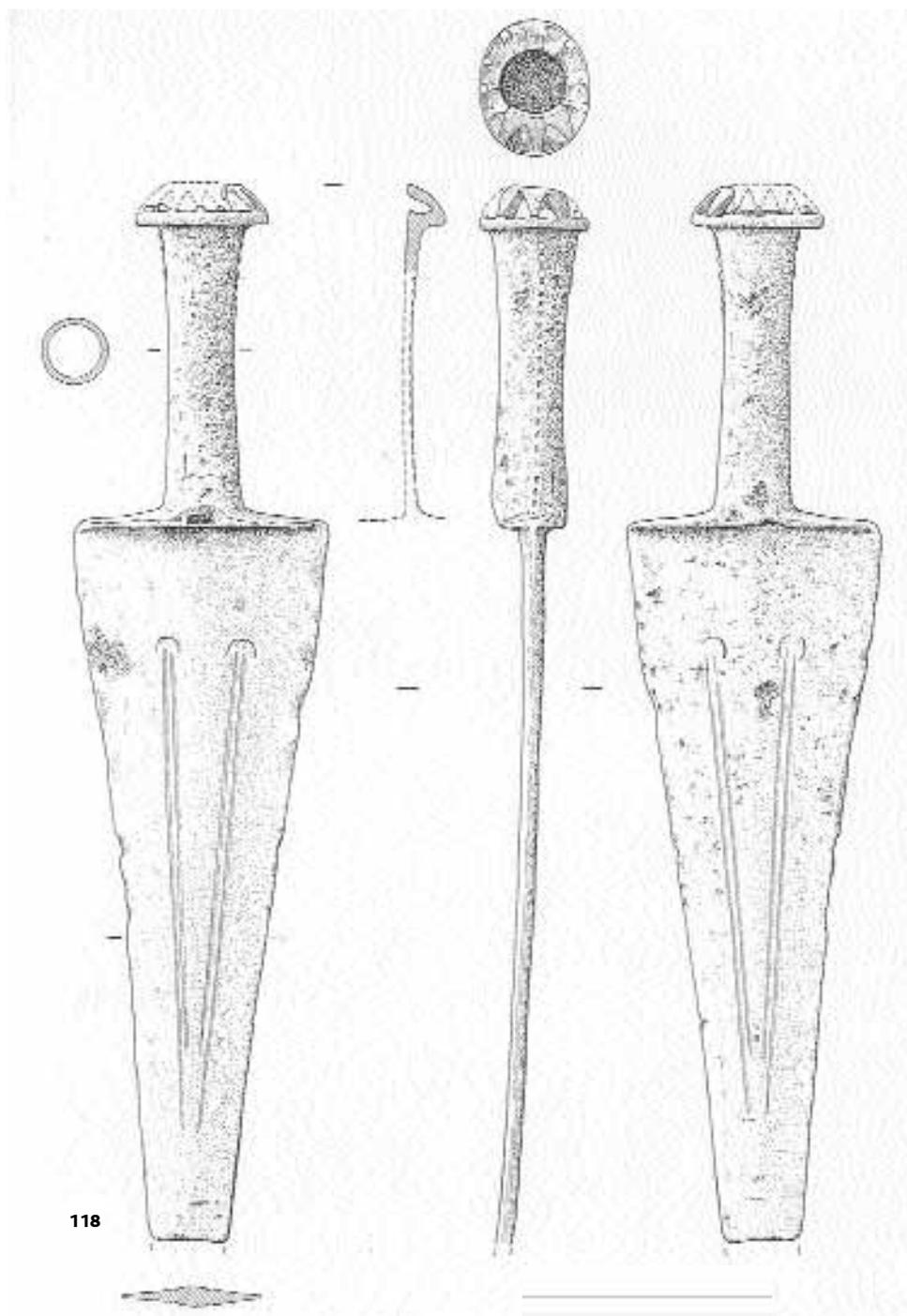


Figure 23 Scale 1:2

phase 14th–12th century BC and those from graves 355, 406 and 448 belong to the second group (dated to the 12th–11th century BC). Daggers from graves 107 and 182 are undated. Although these daggers come from graves belonging to two different chronological periods, they cannot be distinguished from each other on typological grounds. Parallel daggers from a necropolis at Samthavro in Georgia come from graves attributed to the first chronological group in this cemetery that are dated to 1300–1150 BC (Mohen 1979: 209). A dagger very similar to our **no. 118** is published by Przeworski (1939: pl. XXII/3).

120. ANE 1993-4-5,7 (Pl. 7, Fig. 25)

Bronze/copper alloy dagger with cylindrical openwork handle and openwork dome-shaped pommel. The openwork decoration is in the form of cut-out triangles. There is a

crescentic guard at the top of the handle. The blade is wide and has three ribs which converge towards the tip. It is fixed into the handle by means of a long narrow tang which is held in place by a thin bronze rod which passes through the sides of the handle and the tang.

Overall L. 32.5 cm., max. W. 4.28 cm., Wt. 247.7g.
Surface XRF analysis: blade = alloy of copper, tin and arsenic, hilt = bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

Although the dagger **no. 120** does not come from an excavated context, the material with which it was associated on the market (**nos. 122–31, 141–5, 147–58**) suggest Transcaucasia as a likely provenance. This is significant because comparable daggers that are similarly unprovenanced are usually assigned to the Caucasus and north Iran on the basis of the openwork decoration. There

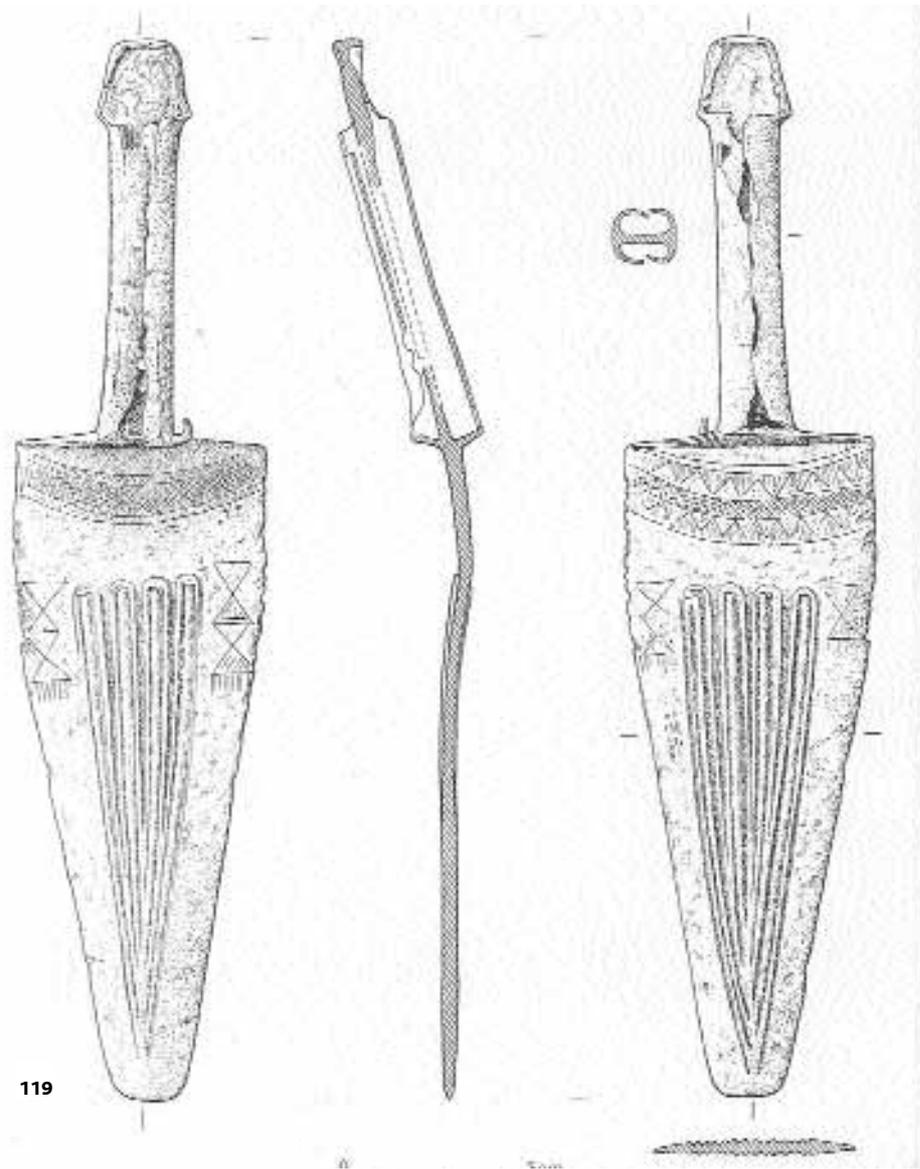


Figure 24 Scale 1:2

are daggers with similar openwork handles in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: no. 163), in the former Adam Collection (Moorey 1974: no. 27) and the Mahboubian Collection (Mahboubian 1997: nos. 401 a–d). Moorey dates the dagger from the Adam Collection to the Iron Age I of northern Iran and Muscarella the similar piece from the Metropolitan Museum to about 1000 BC. The British Museum dagger differs from the other examples cited, however, in that it has a crescentic as opposed to a rectangular guard and it has a wider and more elaborate blade. Openwork pommels are discussed in relation to nos. 126–9.

121. ANE 135160/1969-9-20,3 (Fig. 26)

Bronze dagger with dome-shaped pommel and cylindrical handle. The blade has a prominent mid-rib with a groove running down the centre, and at the top of the blade is a triangular-shaped guard. There are triangular excisions at the top of the pommel and long vertical grooves on the handle. The latter were filled with wooden inlays held in place with small bronze pins.

Overall L. 37.5 cm., max. W. of blade 5.25 cm., max. Diam. of pommel 4.08 cm., Wt. 361.5g.

Surface XRF analysis: blade and hilt both bronze. See Appendix. Examined in the Research Laboratory, British Museum (report no. 2719, dated 4/9/1969):

The metal is extensively mineralised and under the microscope massive deposits of green malachite and reddish cuprite are evident, and these have a structure characteristic of slow growth over a prolonged period of time.

Purchased in 1969 from Mr S. Motamed, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Said to be from Azerbaijan, Iran.

The form of this dagger is clearly related to no. 120 above and to nos. 122–9 below.

122. ANE 1993-4-3,3 (Pl. 7, Fig. 27)

Bronze/copper alloy dagger blade with long narrow tang and sleeve at base of blade. There are remains of five rivets on either side of the sleeve and a thin bronze rod passes through the tang. The handle would have been held in place by these rivets.

Overall L. 24.3 cm., max. W. 4.2 cm., Wt. 153g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: blade = leaded bronze, sleeve = alloy of copper, lead, arsenic and antimony. See Appendix.

Surface XRF analysis: rivet in sleeve = leaded copper, rivet in tang = alloy of copper, lead and arsenic. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

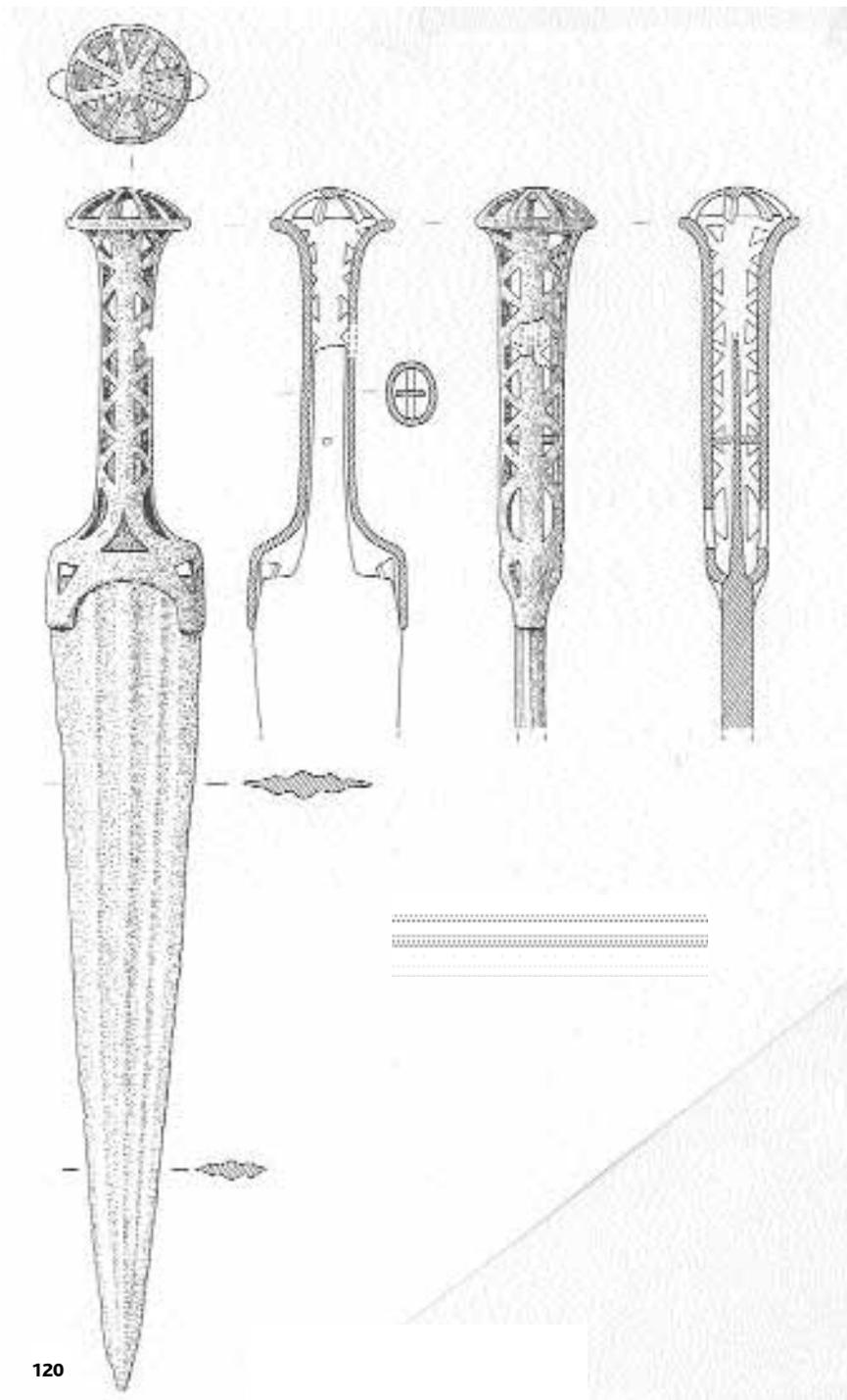


Figure 25 Scale 1:2

123. ANE 1993-4-3,6 (Pl. 7, Fig. 27)

Another dagger blade, similar to no. 122, but with remains of 3 rivets on either side of sleeve. Single hole in tang for rivet which is now missing.

Overall L. 23.9 cm., max. W. 4.12 cm., Wt. 127.8g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: blade = arsenical copper, sleeve = alloy of copper, lead and antimony. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

124. ANE 1993-4-3,5 (Pl. 7, Fig. 27)

Another dagger blade, similar to no. 122.

Overall L. 20.0 cm., max. W. 3.8 cm., Wt. 75.2g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: blade = bronze. See Appendix.

Surface XRF analysis: sleeve = copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

125. ANE 1993-4-3,4 (Pl. 7, Fig. 27)

Another dagger blade as no. 122 but lacking a sleeve at the base of the blade and with two holes in the tang.

L. 23.1 cm., max. w. 3.62 cm., Wt. 97.0g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: arsenical copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

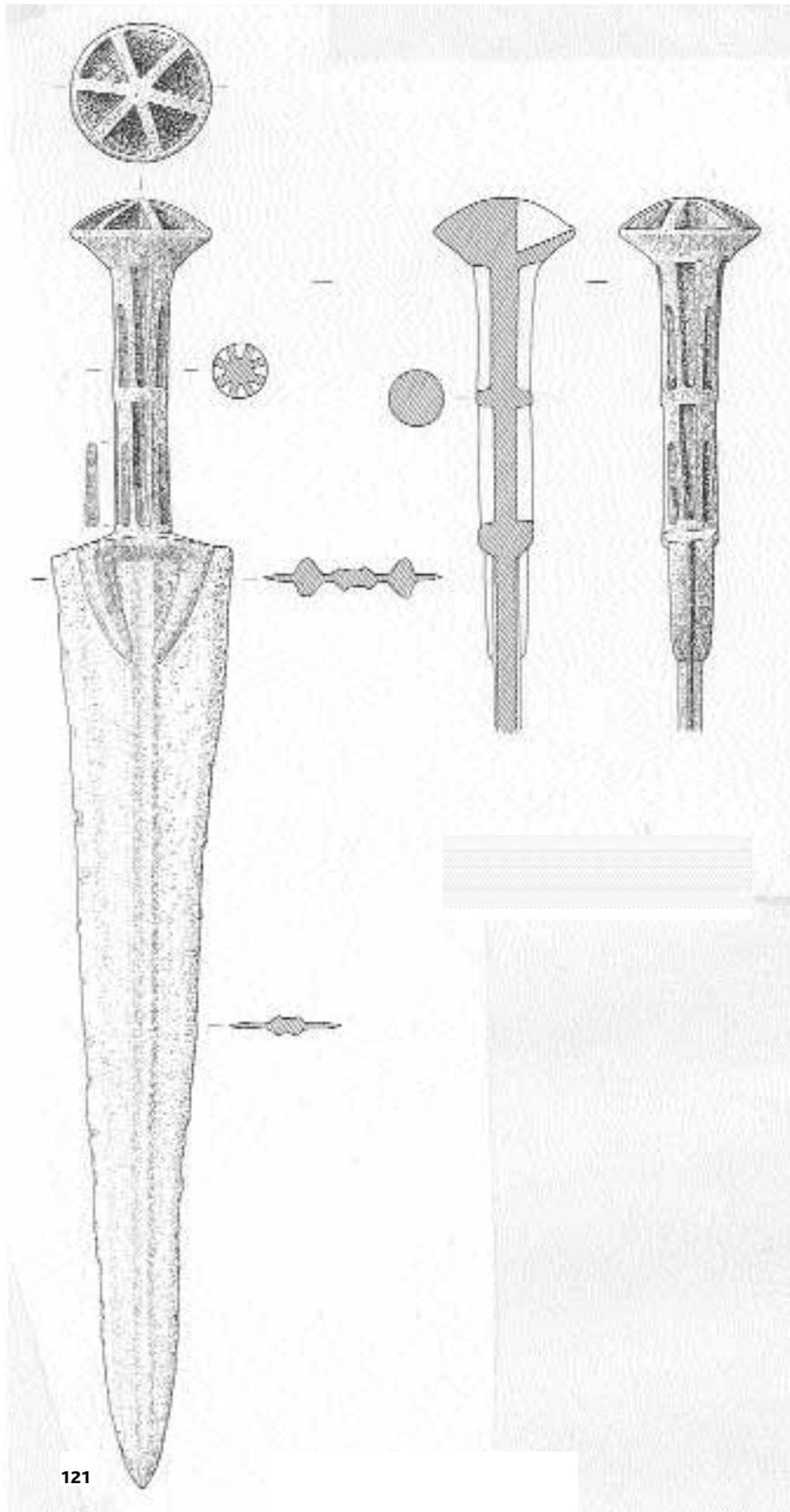


Figure 26 Scale 1:2

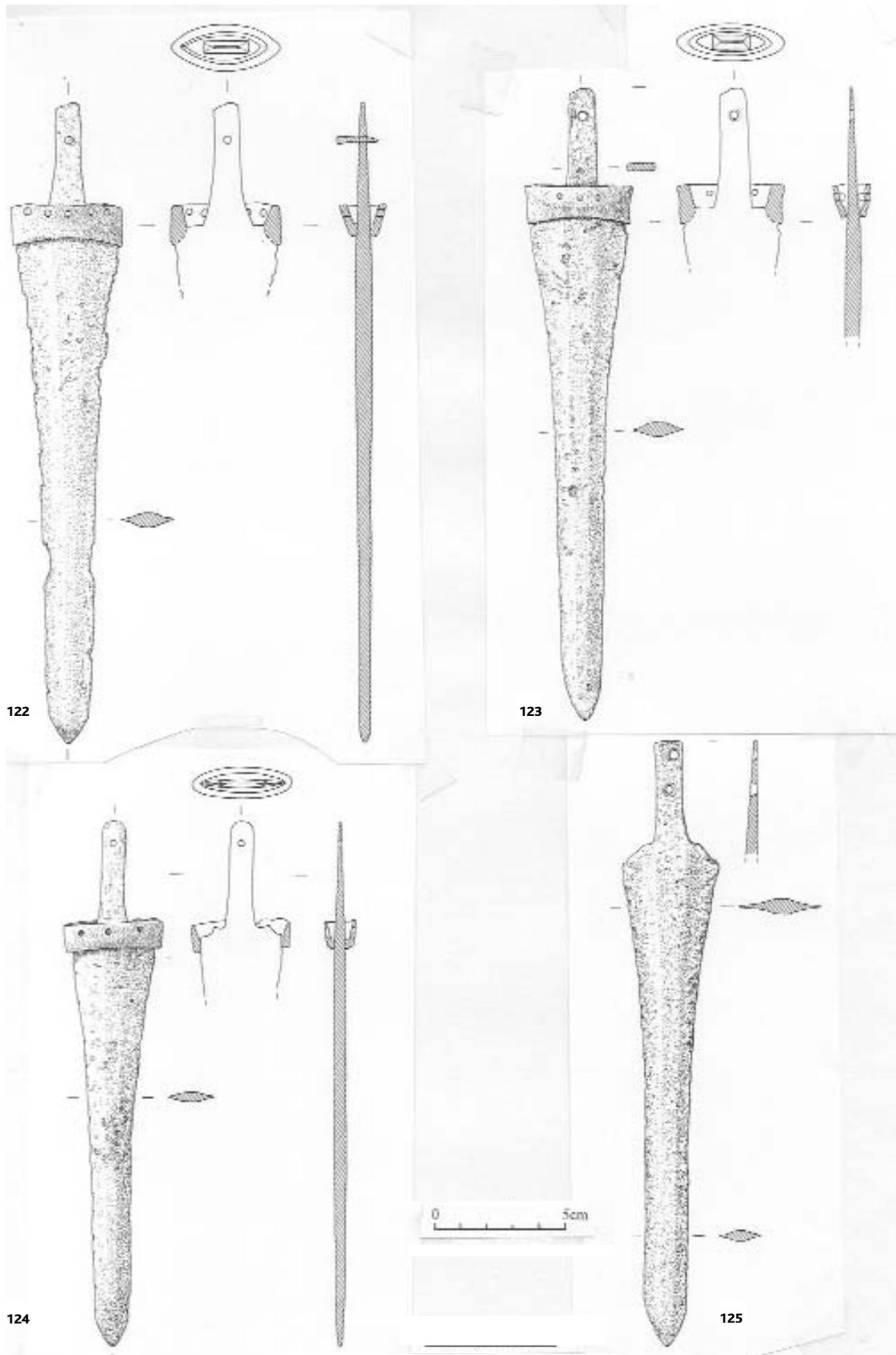


Figure 27 Scale 1:2

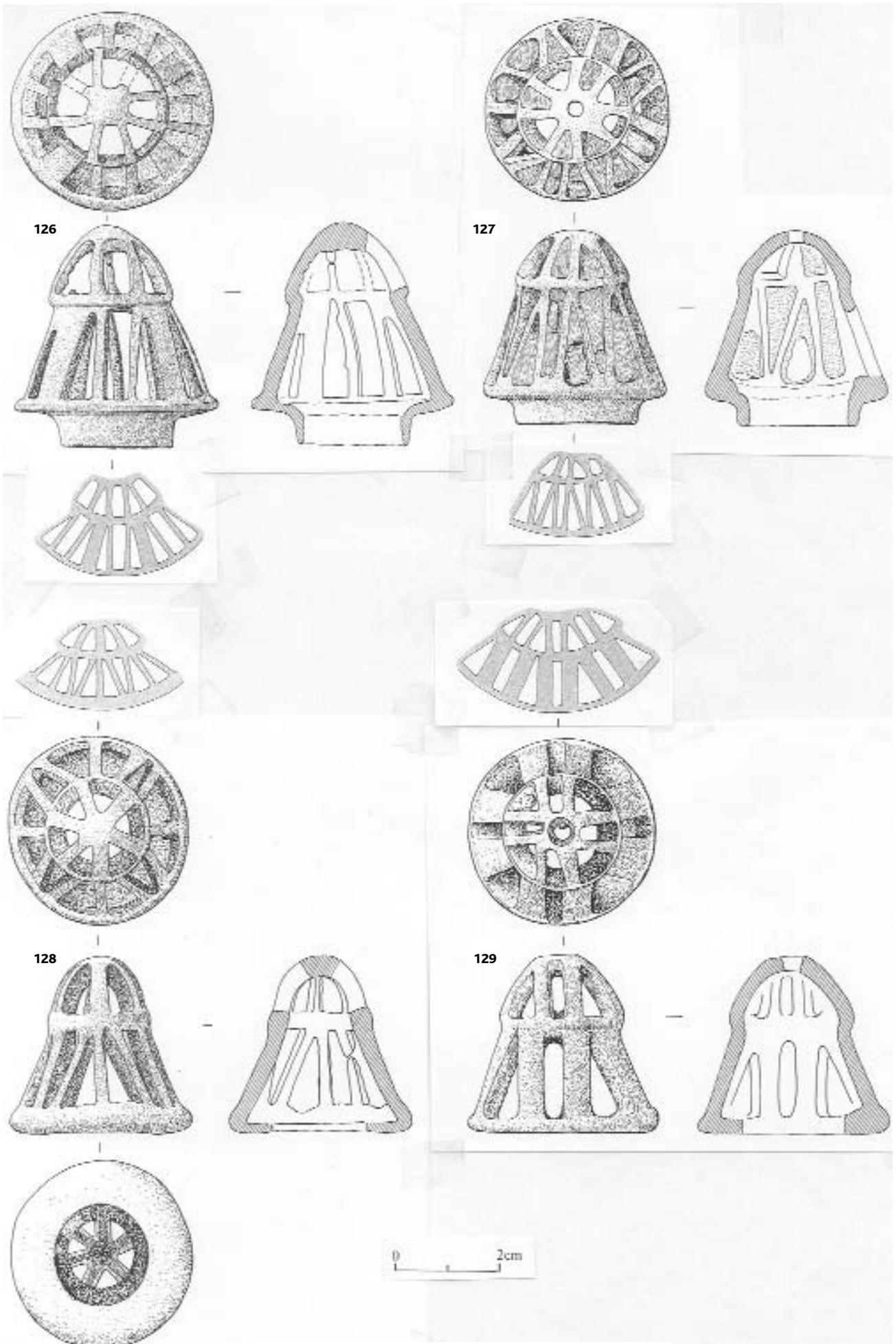


Figure 28 Scale 1:1

The following four pommels were acquired together with the daggers **nos. 122–5** and almost certainly belong with them. However, it is not possible to say with confidence which pommel belongs to which dagger.

126. ANE 1993-4-3,16 (Pl. 7, Fig. 28)

Copper alloy conical openwork pommel with circular flange at bottom.

Max. Diam. 3.9 cm., Ht. 4.0 cm., Wt. 39.3g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: alloy of copper, antimony and arsenic. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

127. ANE 1993-4-3,17 (Pl. 7, Fig. 28)

Another pommel as **no. 126** but with small circular hole at top centre. Also, with remains of inlay in the excised panels.

Max. Diam. 3.5 cm., Ht. 3.75 cm., Wt. 40.6g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: alloy of copper, tin, lead and arsenic. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

128. ANE 1993-4-3,18 (Pl. 7, Fig. 28)

Another pommel as **no. 126**, but without flange at bottom.

Max. Diam. 3.65 cm., Ht. 3.38 cm., Wt. 37.0g.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

129. ANE 1993-4-3,19 (Pl. 7, Fig. 28)

Another pommel as **no. 128**, but with small circular hole at top centre.

Max. Diam. 3.64 cm., Ht. 3.43 cm., Wt. 50.1g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: alloy of copper, tin and antimony. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

Bronze daggers with long narrow tangs and sleeves where they join the blade as **nos. 122–5** are well known from Transcaucasia. The blades are 20–30 cm long, and vary from being rhomboid or oval in cross-section (which are the most common) to examples with large flattened or rhomboid mid-ribs. Handles were originally made of organic materials such as wood or bone, and were fitted into the bronze sleeve at the top of the tang. They were held in place by rivets through the sleeve and through the tang itself. Handles were topped by bronze pommels, often with openwork decoration showing triangle designs. Some pommels (including **cat. no. 127**) have remains of inlay in the openwork decoration.

Esayan (1966: 73–76) classifies them as type VI, known also as the Sevan type, and divides them according to the shape of the blade into four varieties. The blades of variety 1 are rhomboid or oval in cross-section and daggers of variety 2 have flattened ribs in the upper part of the blade which look like a continuation of the tang. The British Museum daggers share features of these varieties. Rivet holes in the tang and the sleeve are typical for all varieties. The number of rivet holes in the sleeve can vary from three to over ten. The sleeves have an oval or rhomboid shape depending on the cross-section of the blade. Many of these daggers have been excavated together with pommels, which either have openwork decoration or are plain but with narrow slits. The same pommels can also be associated with other dagger types, for example daggers with flanged handles (Nagel and

Strommenger 1985: pls. 21/1; 72/1).

Daggers parallel to **nos. 122–5** are known from many sites in Transcaucasia, including Armenia, Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Georgia (Esayan 1966: 74–75; Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XIV; Kohlmeyer and Saherwala 1983: figs. 57–58, 61). The Early Iron Age graves from Kalakent and the surrounding area in Azerbaijan in particular have produced many daggers of this type, both with openwork pommels and with plain pommels (Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 16/7; 17/4; 18/1; 31/5; 37/10; 51/1–2; 54/1; 71/2). In some graves, daggers of the same type as **nos. 122–5** and daggers with flanged handles were found together (Kohlmeyer and Saherwala 1983: 67, figs. 57–58; Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 48/3–4). In grave no. 14 at Tsegem the skeleton was holding bronze daggers in both hands, parallel with his legs, one of which is of our type and the other with a flanged handle and pommel. The grave is dated to the 14th–13th century BC (Kohlmeyer and Saherwala 1983: pls. 57–58). The grave 145 from 'Paradies Festung' in Kalakent is especially interesting (Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 50–51). It has produced two bronze daggers with sleeves and pommels, a Transcaucasian bronze axe with crescentic blade parallel to our **no. 132**, a long narrow bronze spearhead, three bronze arrowheads, long pins and six bronze almond-shaped belt fittings.

Grave no. 11 from the cemetery on the Beshtasheni-Safar-Kharaba road (Trialeti, Georgia) (Kuftin 1941: pls. XLII, XLIX) also contained two bronze daggers (with a sleeve and pommel), a long narrow spear-head and a Colchis type bronze axe. All of these objects were ritually broken before being put into the grave. Among the other objects from this grave were a bronze belt with bronze clasp decorated with a ram's head, four bronze arrowheads, a macehead, a hammer-like antler tool and beads. The breaking of metal tools can be connected with some burial rituals and was certainly intentional in this case.

According to Esayan, type VI daggers developed from the tanged daggers of his type I, which were known in Armenia from the second part of the 3rd millennium BC to the end of the 2nd millennium BC (Esayan 1966: 58–59, 63, pl. XI/3) and they are dated to the 9th–8th century BC (Esayan 1966: pl. 76), after which they were replaced by iron daggers of similar type. These iron daggers similar to the bronze daggers of type VI variety I are known from Kamo, Makarashen and Vornak in Armenia (Esayan 1966: p. 76) and from Trialeti in Georgia, where there are bimetallic daggers with iron blades and bronze sleeves and openwork pommels (Kuftin 1941: 57, figs. 54–55). The occurrence of these daggers together with objects such as Colchis and 'Amazon' axes, bronze daggers with flanged handles, and large, long bronze arrowheads dates them to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC. Completely iron daggers from Ghalekuti (Dailaman, Iran) still possess sleeves and conical pommels and certainly derive from the bronze daggers. They are particularly closely related to the bimetallic daggers from Trialeti. Daggers from Ghalekuti are dated to the Iron Age III of Iran (8th–6th century BC) (Egami *et al.* 1965: pl. XXVIII/1; Haerinck 1988: 72–73). According to Pogrebova (1977: 163) iron daggers of this type are typical of eastern Transcaucasia in the 8th century BC. In the 7th century BC they stopped being produced.

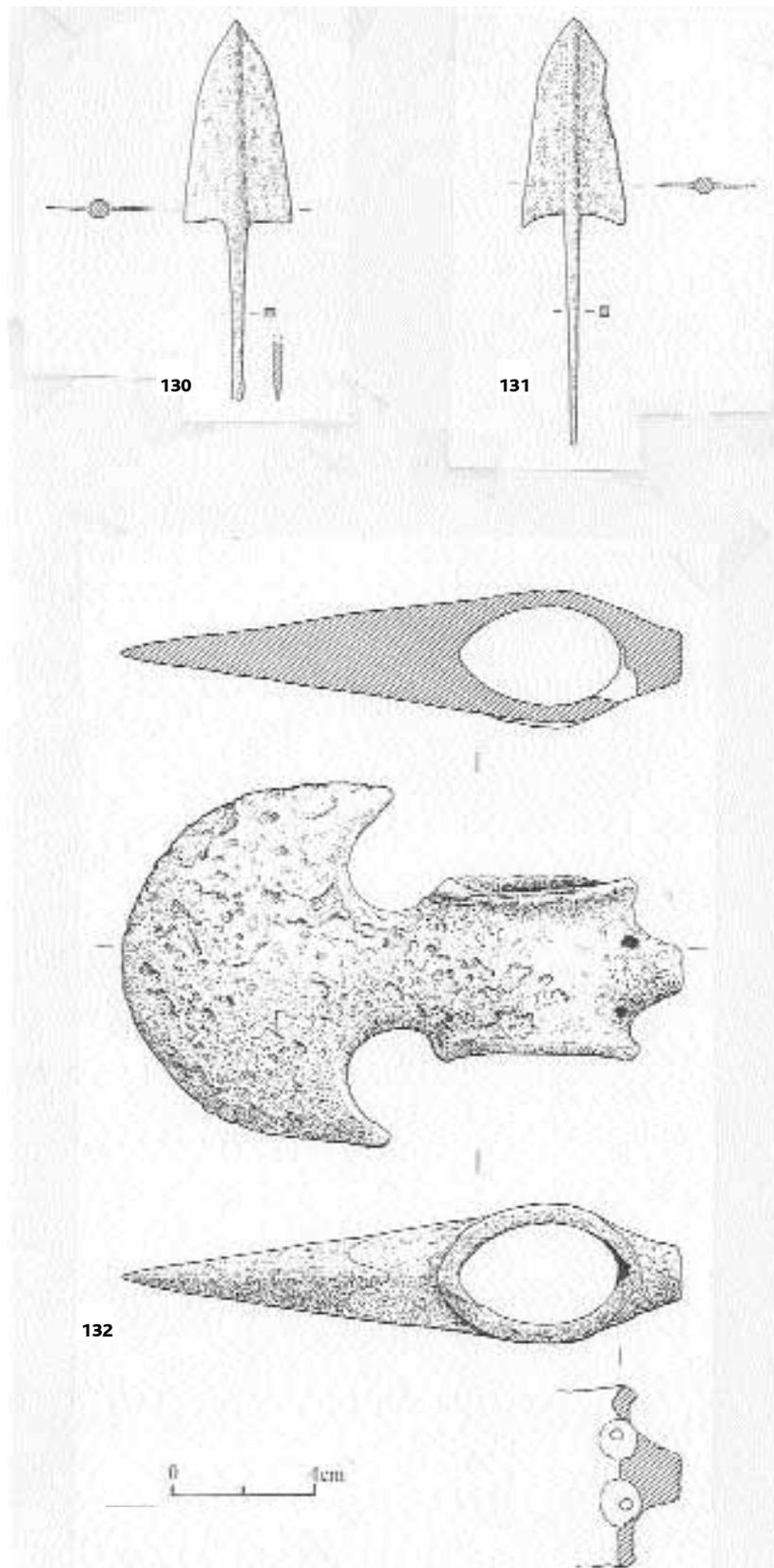


Figure 29 Scale 1:2

Arrowheads

130. ANE 1993-4-3,10 (Pl. 7, Fig. 29)

Copper alloy arrowhead with flat, spade-shaped blade and prominent mid-rib and long, rod-like tang, squarish in section.

Max. L. 10.55 cm., max. W. 3.05 cm., Wt. 18.2g.
Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

131. ANE 1993-4-3,9 (Pl. 7, Fig. 29)

Another arrowhead, as no. 130.

Max. L. 11.83 cm., max. W. 2.88 cm., Wt. 16.8g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317.

Bronze arrowheads with large, deltoid blades (sometimes winged), mid-ribs, and long tangs that are sharpened or hammered to a point, are well known from late 2nd and early 1st millennium BC contexts in Transcaucasia, Talish, Iran and Anatolia. Esayan (1966: 47–48, pls. VIII–IX) classifies winged arrowheads with long tangs as type VI, citing many sites in Transcaucasia where they have occurred. Arrowheads very close in shape to **nos. 130–I** are known for example from Kamo in Armenia (Esayan 1966: 48–49, pl. IX/3, 4) and Mingechaur in Azerbaijan (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XV/2, 10–11). Similar arrowheads mainly with winged blades are known from many sites in Armenia, for example Kamo, Stepanavan, Vanadzor (formerly Leninakan), Vornak and Tolors (Esayan 1966: 48), in Azerbaijan, for example Kalakent (graves 18, 122, 145), Karamurad (grave 11) (Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pl. 15/1, 13–18, 49/4, 51/4–6, 64/1) and Mingechaur (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XV/2–15), and in Georgia, for example Trialeti (Kuftin 1941: pls. XXXIV, XXXVII). Some excavated assemblages (e.g. Kalakent grave 145) contain both deltoid arrowheads and daggers similar to our **nos. 122–5**. Moorey (1971: 84) notes that deltoid arrowheads ‘are the typological precursors of the much more vicious winged arrow-heads which have a wide distribution largely complementary in time and area to that of the plain deltoid arrow-head’. According to Pogrebova (1977: 74) winged arrow-heads are particularly characteristic of eastern Transcaucasia, being much less common in Talish. This fact led her to believe that they spread from there directly to northern Iran and not via Talish, but transmission in the other direction is also possible.

Deltoid and winged arrowheads with long tangs occur at some relatively well dated sites in Iran such as Giyan I, Hasanlu V and Sialk V (Dyson 1964a: 40), which confirms their dating. One of the clay figurines from Marlik represents a Bowman firing an arrowhead of deltoid type (Moorey 1971: 84).

The British Museum arrowheads with their deltoid shape should belong to the earlier objects of this type when blade-wings or barbs are not yet fully developed. Their tangs are relatively long and are of two types – one is sharpened and pointed, and the other is hammered flat at the end.

Axe

132. ANE 138199/1980-7-26, I (Pl. 7, Fig. 29)

Heavy copper alloy axe-head with crescentic blade joined to the socket by a narrow neck. Flanges at top and bottom of socket and a knobbed projection at the back.

W. 15.65 cm., Ht. 10.15 cm., max thickness 4.05 cm., Wt. 811g.
Surface XRF analysis: arsenical copper. See Appendix.
Purchased in 1980 from Dr. Z. Zeitlin, Delft, Holland. The axe-head was previously in the possession of Dr. Zeitlin’s family.

Massive copper/bronze axes with large semi-circular cutting edges and transverse sockets, either undecorated or ribbed, are characteristic of the Transcaucasian culture. Although their development has not yet been fully investigated, it is certain that they developed locally and spread mainly into the east central part of Transcaucasia, particularly the middle part of the Kura river-basin and around Lake Sevan, and the adjoining areas of west Azerbaijan, Armenia (Artik, Erevan region), Nagorno-Karabakh (Shusha region) and

Georgia (Pogrebova 1977: 58–63; Khachatryan 1979: 147, 163; Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 23/b, 32/c, 46/a, 50/a, 65/j, 77/3; Chantre 1885–87: II, pl. XLVII/1; Gambaschidze *et al.* 2001: nos. 233–241). Their massive form and shape suggest a military purpose and according to Pogrebova (1977: 58–59), they were used as battle-axes. A very fine example of this kind of axe, but unprovenanced, is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Moorey 1971: no. 28). Transcaucasian battle axes are characteristic of the second part of the 2nd millennium BC and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, down to the 8th–7th century BC when they were replaced by iron axes (Pogrebova 1977: 58–63).

Belt-Clasps

133. ANE 1921-6-28, 2 (Pl. 8)

Gunmetal belt-clasp with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a wide border decorated with a running spiral design set between bands of plaited decoration. The design in the centre consists of a stag with spreading antlers with head turned back over its shoulder. The animal has concentric circle designs on the haunches. Below the stag there is a dog. There are hollow conical bosses at the corners of the plaque, and on the back there is a ring on one side and a hook on the other.

Ht. 9.7 cm., W. 10.2 cm., Wt. 261g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: gunmetal. See Appendix.

A previous XRF analysis showed the metal to be brass, that is a copper alloy containing c. 10% zinc and c. 1% iron, with only traces (< 1%) of lead and tin (Craddock in Curtis 1978: 110).

Presented to the British Museum in 1921 together with **no. 137** below by Lewis C.G. Clarke, Esq., FSA, Berkeley House, Hay Hill, London W1, as a mark of recognition on the occasion of the retirement of Sir Hercules Read, Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography 1896–1921.

Published Read 1921: pl. XXXII, top; Smith 1925: pl. VII, top; Khidasheli 1972: 92–3, no. 34; Curtis 1978: 99, no. 34, pl. 1b. Also, the same or a very similar plaque (from the same mould?) is published in Miller 1922: pl. XXVIII/2 and Miller 1926: pl. XXX/2.

134. ANE 135977/1973-12-20, 7 (Pl. 8)

Bronze belt-clasp as **no. 133** above with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a wide border with plaited decoration. The design in the centre consists of a stag with stylised antlers looking straight ahead. It has concentric circle designs on its haunches. There is a dog (?) above the stag, a bird (?) below and a fish (?) in front of it. There are hollow conical bosses at the corners of the plaque, and on the back there are remains of a ring on one side and a hook on the other.

Ht. 9.7 cm., W. 10.8 cm., Wt. 176g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

A previous XRF analysis showed the metal to be a leaded tin bronze, that is a copper alloy with 5–10% of tin and lead respectively (Craddock in Curtis 1978: 110).

Formerly in the collection of Professor C.G. Seligman and Mrs Seligman and bequeathed to the British Museum in 1973.

Published Hansford 1957: 101, no. A127, pl. LII; Curtis 1978: 109, no. A1, pl. 1d; Collon 1995: fig. 162.

135. ANE 1994-4-9, I (Pl. 8)

Copper alloy belt-clasp as **no. 133** above, with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a wide border decorated with a running spiral design set between bands of

plaited decoration. The central openwork design consists of a stag with stylised antlers looking straight ahead. There are traces of concentric circle decoration, now mostly worn away, on the haunches. Above the stag there is a dog (?) and below there is a bird. There are hollow conical bosses at the corners of the plaque, and on the back there is a ring on one side and remains of a hook on the other.

Ht. 9.73 cm., W. 9.9 cm., Wt. 135.0 g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: alloy of copper, tin, lead and arsenic. See Appendix.

Purchased together with nos. 136 and 138 from Mrs Antonia Spowers in 1994, with assistance from the British Museum Society and the Friends of the Ancient Near East. The three belt-clasps were collected in the Caucasus in the 19th century by Mrs Spowers' great uncle, William Joseph Myers (1858–1899), an army officer who was killed in the Boer War. His collection of Egyptian antiquities is now at Eton College.

Published Curtis 1994: fig. on left.

136. ANE 1994-4-9,3 (Pl. 9, Fig. 30)

Bronze belt-clasp as no. 133 above, with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a border with plaited decoration. The central openwork design consists of a stag with stylised antlers looking straight ahead. There are no accompanying animals, but there are bands of plaited decoration in the central composition. This clasp is very unusual in that the body of the stag was originally modelled from strips or rods. There are studs at the corners of the plaque, and on the back there is a ring on one side and a hook on the other.

Ht. 8.85 cm., W. 10.08 cm., Wt. 102.0 g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased together with nos. 134 and 138 from Mrs Antonia Spowers in 1994.

Published Curtis 1994: fig. on right.

137. ANE 1921-6-28,1 (Pl. 9)

Brass belt-clasp as no. 133 above, with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a wide border with plaited decoration. There are hollow conical bosses at each of the four corners. The central openwork design consists of a stylised horse with a covering on its neck and the top part of its chest. It has concentric circle decoration on its haunches. There is an ox above the horse and a bird below, while in front of the horse, standing on its hind legs, is a dog(?). There are hollow conical bosses at the corners of the plaque, and on the back there is a ring on one side and a hook on the other.

Ht. 13.2 cm., W. 14.0 cm., Wt. 353 g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: brass. See Appendix.

A previous XRF analysis also showed the metal to be brass, that is a copper alloy containing c. 10% zinc and c. 1% iron, with only traces (<1%) of lead and tin (Craddock in Curtis 1978: 110).

Presented by Lewis C.G. Clarke in 1921 together with no. 133 above. Published Read 1921: pl. XXXII, bottom; Smith 1925: pl. VII, bottom; Hančar 1935: pl. 13/4; Talbot Rice 1965: pl. 21, fig. 9; Khidasheli 1972: 108, no. 124, pl. X; Tait 1976: 102, no. 129; Curtis 1978: 105, no. 124, pls. 1a, 1e; Yarshater 1983: pl. 36a.

138. ANE 1994-4-9, 2 (Pl. 9)

Bronze belt-clasp as no. 133 above, part of left-hand side broken away, with embossed openwork design in the centre surrounded by a double border each with running spirals set

between bands of plaited decoration. The borders are separated by short pegs with moulded decoration. The central openwork design shows a horse with bands around its neck, its chest and its middle. The horse has legs curled at the ends which are thought to indicate that the animal is running (Khidasheli 1972). There are no bosses or studs at the corners of the plaque. On the back there are remains of a hook on the side that is preserved.

Ht. 12.27 cm., extant W. 11.82 cm., Wt. 192.5 g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased together with nos. 134 and 136 from Mrs Antonia Spowers in 1994.

Bronze belt-plaques of this type form a distinctive group.

They are rectangular in shape and have cones or bosses at the corners. Their wide borders are usually covered with spiral or plaited decoration. This has led Tait to suggest that these plaques 'may imitate plaques of thin gold or silver, decorated with twisted wire and filigree, which would have been nailed at the corners to wood or leather backings' (Tait 1976: 102). The central parts of the plaques are openwork, and show stylised animals. Generally there is one principal animal, a stag (sometimes with head turned backwards), a horse or a goat. These animals have wasp-like wrists and exaggerated fore- and hindquarters. Sometimes there is concentric circle decoration on the shoulders and haunches. Although the animals are very stylised, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them, the stags can be identified by their fanciful antlers and the horses by their tails and (occasionally) harness. In addition to the principal figure there are usually additional motifs such as birds, dogs, fishes, snakes, foals, oxen and animals' heads. Representation of humans are rare. Sometimes the plaques are divided into four compartments by intersecting bands, and in these cases the same design is repeated four times. On the back of the plaques there is a ring fitting at one side and a tongue at the other. That these plaques were associated with belts seems quite clear, partly because of their position when they have been found in tombs. What is not certain is whether they were actually clasps, positioned in the centre of the belt. The evidence of the fittings at the back – a ring and tongue – is ambiguous. It is equally possible that the plaques may have been linked together in series, as is the case with elaborate belts worn by statues from Hatra in northern Mesopotamia (Safar and Mustafa 1974: figs. on pp. 61, 63, 67, 208, 212, 254, 300).

In an important book published in Georgian in 1972 (*A Contribution to the History of Bronze Decorative Work in Ancient Georgia*), Manana Khidasheli collected together 171 belt-plaques of this type. More than three-quarters of them are in museums in Georgia, and there are large collections in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Other examples are scattered in museums around the world. This book was used as the basis for a paper that was delivered at a colloquium at the Percival David Foundation in 1977 (Curtis 1978).³⁵ This paper reproduces Khidasheli's list of belt-plaques, and adds 13 further examples (p. 109, nos. A1–A10, and p. 115, n. 3). To this list should now be added another plaque in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: no. 581), three in the Heeramaneck Collection in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Bunker 1981: p. 184, nos. 942–4),

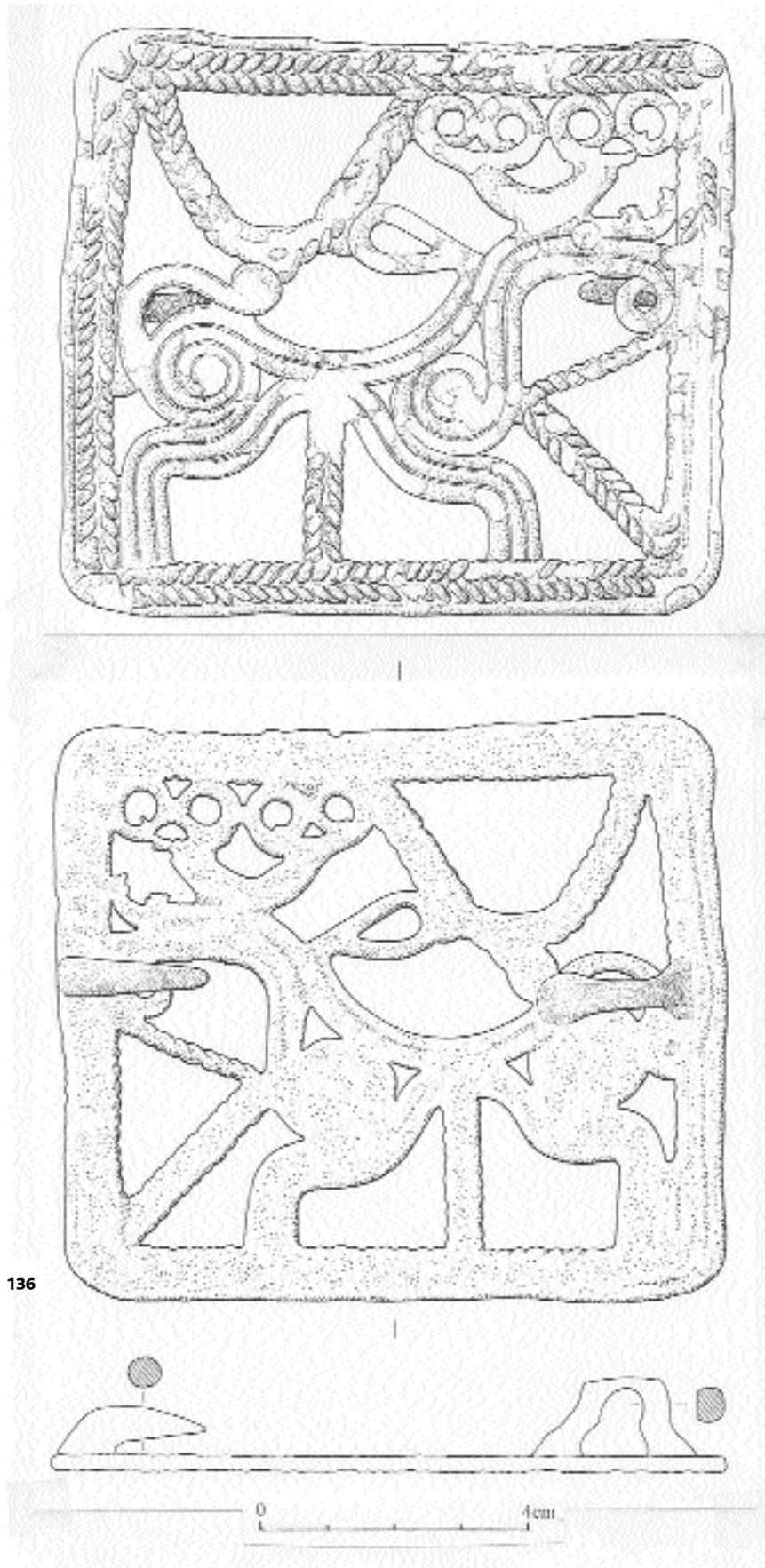


Figure 30 Scale 1:1

five plaques that were included in the Georgia exhibition at the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum in Bochum (Gambaschidze *et al.* 2001: nos. 426–430) and further examples in the Musée des Antiquités Nationales at Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the Römisch-Germanisches Museum at Cologne.³⁶ Of course, there is no certainty that all of these belt plaques are genuine, and more work needs to be done on this subject. There is a possibility that some plaques might be aftercasts from genuine examples, and the situation is complicated by the fact that as the plaques are cast, multiple examples of the same design might have been produced in antiquity.

Unfortunately, only very few of these plaques appear to come from properly controlled archaeological excavations, but on the basis of information contained in Khidasheli's catalogue a distribution map showing the alleged find-spots was drawn up in Curtis 1978 (pl. 3). This shows that most of the plaques come from north central Georgia, and particularly from the area outlined by the modern towns of Oni, Chiatura and Tskhinvali. Other examples have been found to the east, south, and particularly the west, and there are a few occurrences on the north side of the Caucasus, but nevertheless there is a clear concentration in the provinces of Imereti and western Kartli.

Although a number of these plaques come from tombs, and ought therefore to be quite closely dated, over the years there has been a considerable difference of opinion about their dating. Estimates have varied from the 9th century BC to the 3rd century AD. However, when the dating is based on solid archaeological evidence there seems to be a consensus in the 1st–2nd centuries AD. Kuftin (1941: 25–30) first advocated this date on the basis of finds associated with the plaques found at Rosenberg near Moltovo and in Manglissi. This dating was later supported by material associated with a plaque found in Sepulchre 2 at Sokhta in the Tskhinvali district (Kuftin 1949: pl. II). Then, there is a belt plaque from the cemetery at Kldeeti near Zestaphoni which Lomatidze (1957: pl. XIV/2) dates to the 2nd century AD. Amongst material from this cemetery is a glass unguentarium of typical 1st–2nd century type, fibulae of the sort common in Roman contexts from the 1st century AD onwards, and jewellery in which extensive use is made of garnets. The coins include issues of Augustus and Antoninus Pius and a Parthian coin of the late 1st century AD (Lomatidze 1957: pls. I–II, XIII–XIV, XVIII, XX). In a letter to Kenneth Painter in June 1973, Professor Othar Lordkipanidze of the Georgian Academy of Sciences wrote:

Such bronze plaques have, as far as I know, not yet been found in contexts reliably dated to a time earlier than the 1st century AD. They normally occur in contexts of the 1st–3rd centuries AD. Thus, the opening centuries AD ought to be taken for the period when openwork bronze plaques became widespread.

Similarly, the belt plaques of this type in the Hermitage are dated to the 1st–2nd centuries AD on the basis of the pottery found in association with them (Yerusalimskaya 1974).

The dating of these Georgian plaques to the early centuries AD is perhaps corroborated by the dating of comparable belt plaques from the Ancient Near East. Although these latter plaques are not exactly the same, they share certain features in common. Thus, on the stone statues from Hatra, that we have already referred to, openwork belt

plaques are shown figuring stylised animals (e.g. Safar and Mustafa 1974: figs. on pp. 63, 254). Such statues date from the 2nd–3rd centuries AD.

There is yet one more reason to support a date for the Georgian plaques in the early centuries AD. Analyses of the three British Museum examples have revealed that one of them is a leaded tin bronze while the two others are brass with about 10% zinc. The composition of the two brass alloys, with insignificant quantities of lead and tin, had led Craddock (in Curtis 1978: 110–111) to advocate a date of 1st–2nd century AD for the belt-plaques when alloys of this kind were most common.

Sheet Metal Belts

I39. ANE I34734/I966-2-14,1 (Pl. 10, Fig. 31)

Belt of sheet bronze cut off square at one end and tapering to a loop at the other. Along the edge on the tapering part and around the edge at the other end are holes for attachment to a backing of cloth or leather; there is also a cluster of four holes beneath one of the animals. The whole of the surface of the belt is covered with elaborate incised decoration. Around the edge is a pattern of diamonds and triangles, while the decoration in the central part consists of four pairs of antithetical animals. From the left, these animals are: (i) a pair of kneeling bulls with birds on their backs and a spoked wheel design between them; (ii) a pair of goats with swept back horns, also with a spoked wheel design between them; (iii) a pair of boars with their characteristic square snouts; and (iv) a pair of lions with tufted tails and birds on their backs. The beasts are roaring with open mouths and they have long tongues. The protuberances on the tops of their heads are probably meant to be ears rather than horns. Between the lions is a pair of entwined snakes. The bodies of all the animals are covered with geometric decoration. In the field beneath and to the sides of the animals are concentric semicircles, while there are V-shapes above.

L. 82.0 cm., W. 10.0 cm., Wt. 330g.

Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.

Examined in the Research Laboratory, British Museum (report dated 3/12/1965):

The layer of mineralisation is not very thick, but it has a structure which is typical of mineralisation which has developed slowly. Also, there is evidence of extensive intercrystalline corrosion of the underlying metal. Metallographic examination reveals a history of cold working and annealing which would be expected on the basis of the techniques of metalworking used in the fabrication of the object.

Purchased from Mrs A. Khonsari, 48 Kensington Court, London, in 1966. Said to be from Ardebil, Iranian Azerbaijan. Published Barnett and Curtis 1973: 123, pl. LII a; Curtis 1978: pl. 4b; Culican and Zimmer 1987: fig. 2; Collon 1995: fig. 137.

I40. ANE I35153/I969-7-21,3 (Pl. 10, Fig. 32)

Belt of sheet bronze cut off square at both ends and with three holes at either end for fixing to a backing. The belt is broken into four pieces, and a small part of it is missing. As **no. 139** above, the whole surface is covered with elaborate incised decoration. In the borders at the top and bottom there is a running spiral design, and between these borders there are blocks of geometric design and running animals. This central geometric design consists of triangles, running spirals, concentric semicircles and V-shapes. From the left,

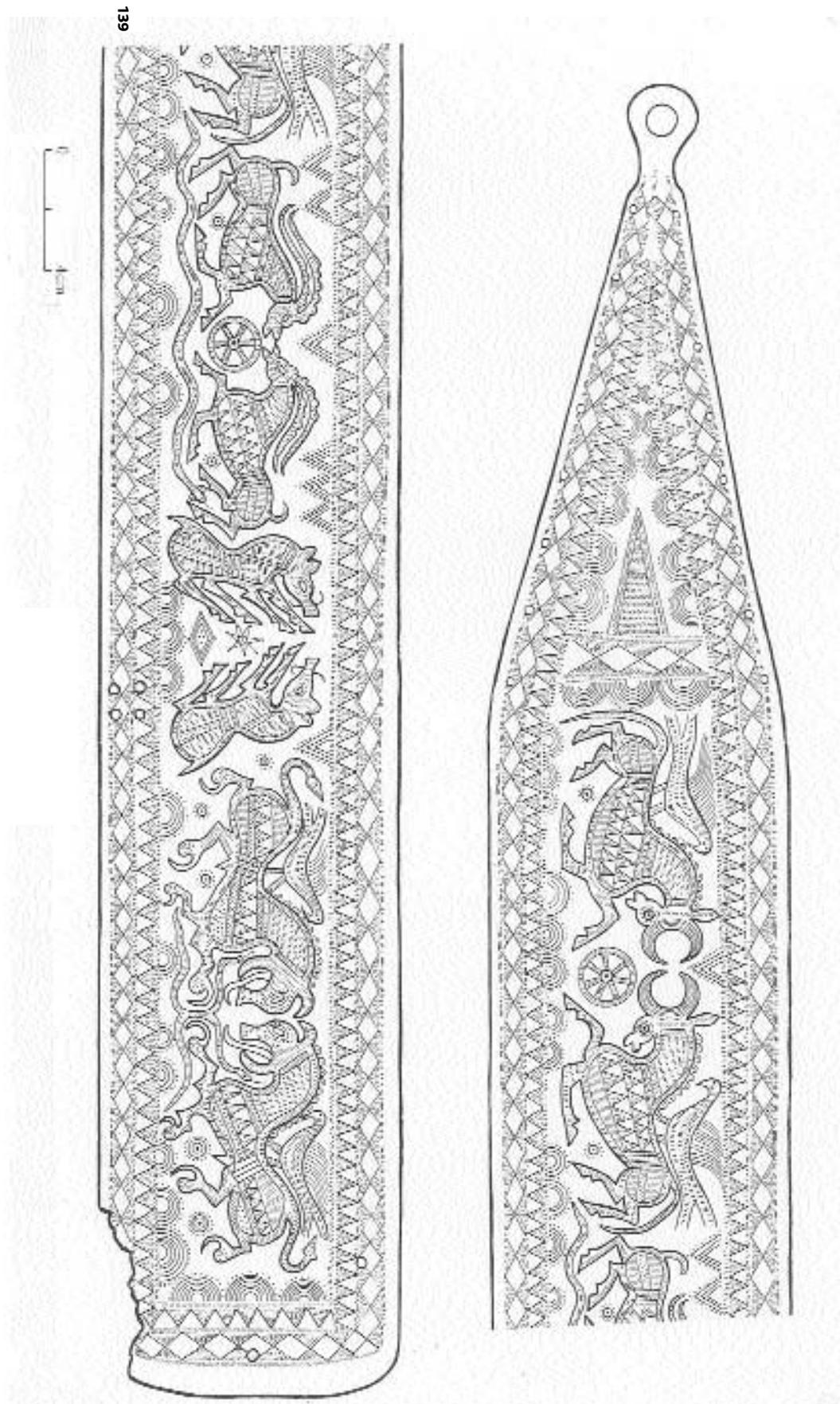


Figure 31 Scale 1:2

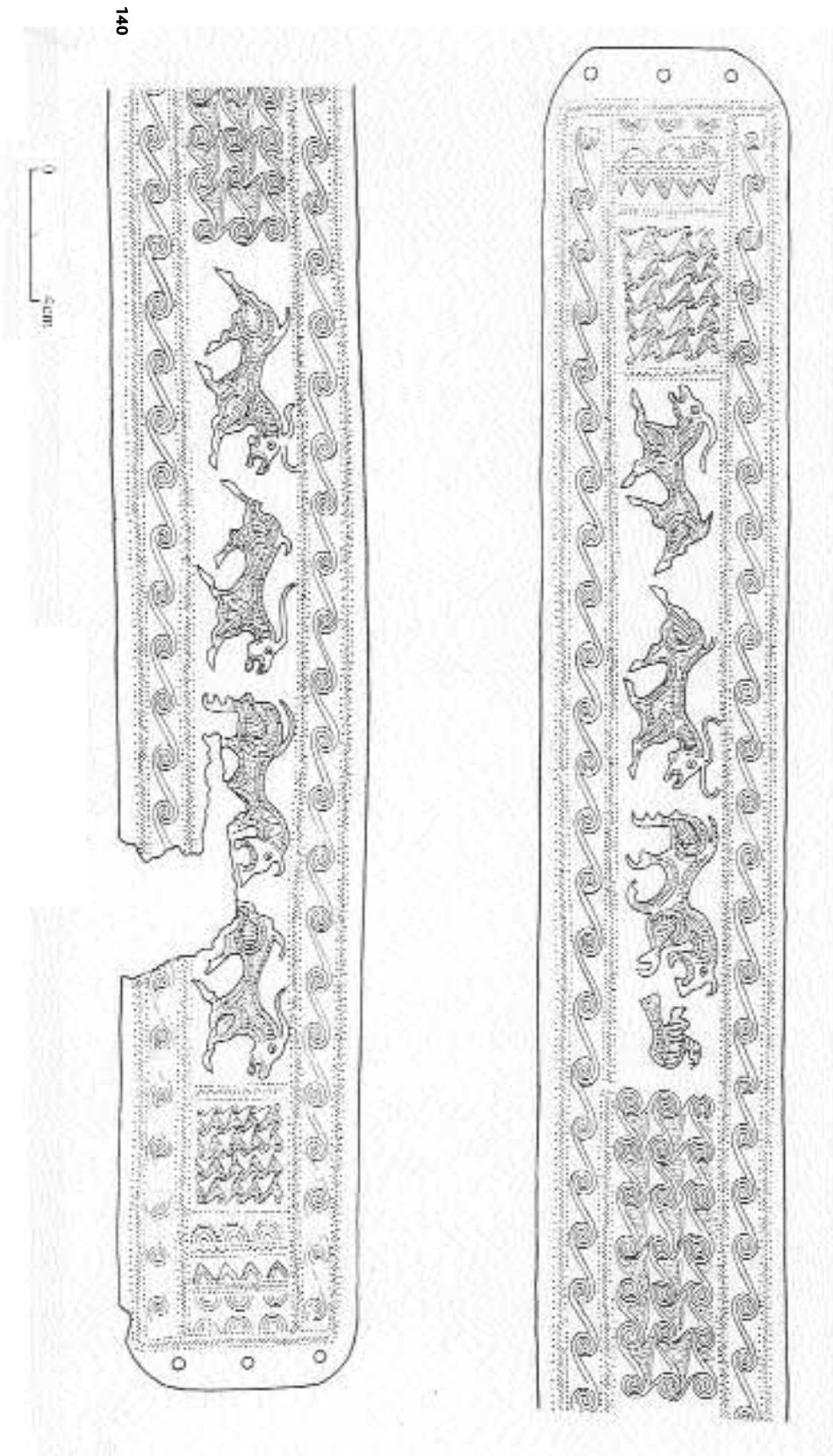


Figure 32 Scale 1:2

the animals are: a goat with swept back horns; a bull; a lion; another bull; another goat; another lion; and another goat. Except for the goat on the extreme left, which is facing left, all the animals are facing right. The bodies of all the animals are covered with incised patterns.

L. 75.0 cm., W. 7.5 cm., Wt. 203g.

Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.

Examined in the Research Laboratory, British Museum (report no. 2728, dated 9/7/1969):

The metal is well mineralised; both red cuprite and green malachite are visible at the surface, and under the microscope the cross section at the various edges indicates that the mineralisation is quite extensive and in some places has proceeded throughout the entire thickness of the metal. The structure of the mineralisation suggests slow growth over a long period of time.

Purchased from Mr E. Safani, New York, in 1966. Said to be from Azerbaijan, north-west Iran.

Published Curtis 1978: pl. 4a; Culican and Zimmer 1987: fig. 3.

These two belts share a number of common features, namely the combination of animal and geometric motifs, the extensive use of stabbed and dotted decoration, the concentric semicircular designs, the V-shapes, and the treatment of the animals. The lions on both belts, for example, have claw-like feet and ears which look rather like horns. The belt **no. 139**, however, is a finer work of art than **no. 140**, with much greater attention to detail. In this case, the bodies of the animals are decorated with elaborate geometric motifs, whereas on belt **no. 140** the detail is added by stippling and repeating some of the body outlines.

Although these belts were allegedly found in Iranian Azerbaijan there is no doubt that, wherever they were made, they are much influenced by the art of the Caucasus. This can be seen by the type and range of the geometric motifs, the running spiral patterns, the identity and style of the animals, and the combination of forms, such as birds on the backs of animals. Many of these patterns can be found on decorated metalwork from the Caucasus, such as bronze axes of Koban-Colchian type (see **no. 114**), and on objects made from sheet metal including belts. It has been suggested that there is also some Iranian influence in these belts and others of the same type (Culican and Zimmer 1987: 171), but some of the Iranian material cited for comparison is not securely provenanced. And even if there is Iranian influence, it is minimal compared with the Caucasian contribution.

Both of the British Museum belts are discussed in an article by Culican and Zimmer (1987) together with other unprovenanced examples in Melbourne University, in the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam, in the Ashmolean Museum, and in the Adana Regional Museum.³⁷ The similarities between these belts are considered, and they are compared with belts from excavated contexts in the Caucasus. The belts referred to are from Tli in southern Ossetia, from Trialeti, Charabukhi, Maral-Deresi³⁸ and Samtavro in Georgia, from Mingechaur, Kedabeg and Chodsali in Azerbaijan,³⁹ from Stepanovan, Mouci-Yeri and Akthala in Armenia, and from Kayakent in Daghestan.

Although they come from archaeological excavations, it is unfortunate that these Caucasian belts are on the whole not clearly dated. It cannot be proven, but it seems likely that they are not all of the same date. Culican and Zimmer (1987) suggest that the earliest belts in the series are those from Tli,

which are dated by Tekhov to the 12th–10th centuries BC, while the latest in the series are those from Mingechaur and Chodsali in Azerbaijan, which they date to the 9th century BC. The British Museum belts are assigned to the latest group (no. 4) (Culican and Zimmer 1987: 197–8). However, the parallels between the British Museum belts and the two belts from Tli (Culican and Zimmer 1987: figs 11–12; Tekhov 1977: figs. 99–100) are sufficiently close to suggest there is not a long chronological gap between them. Perhaps we might tentatively suggest a date of 10th–8th century BC for our belts.

It is interesting that elaborately decorated bronze belts were particularly popular in neighbouring Urartu in the 8th–7th century BC. Of the hundreds of Urartian belts that have survived, most are unfortunately unprovenanced (Kellner 1991; Curtis 1996), but some come from good archaeological contexts (see commentary after **no. 193**). These belts in Urartian style differ from their Caucasian counterparts, however, in that the Urartian motifs are quite distinctive and the decoration is generally embossed and chased, as opposed to being incised as is usually the case with the Caucasian belts. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that there is no sort of cross-fertilisation between the two groups or that the two types of belt are widely separated in time, which is why we have suggested that some of the Caucasian belts could be as late as the 8th century BC. This would bring them into line with the Urartian belts, which are much more securely dated.

Bird-shaped pendants

141. ANE 1993-4-3,15 (Pl. II, Fig. 33)

Bronze openwork pendant in form of a bird with fan-shaped tail and loop for suspension on top of back. There are two rows of excisions, each row consisting of alternating triangles. There are two, long triangular excisions on the base, side by side.

Ht. 4.62 cm., L. 7.2 cm., Wt. 58.5g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10-11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

142. ANE 1993-4-3,13 (Pl. II)

Another bird-shaped pendant as **no. 141**. Small part of tail missing.

Ht. 5.0 cm., L. 6.7 cm., Wt. 55.7g.

Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10-11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

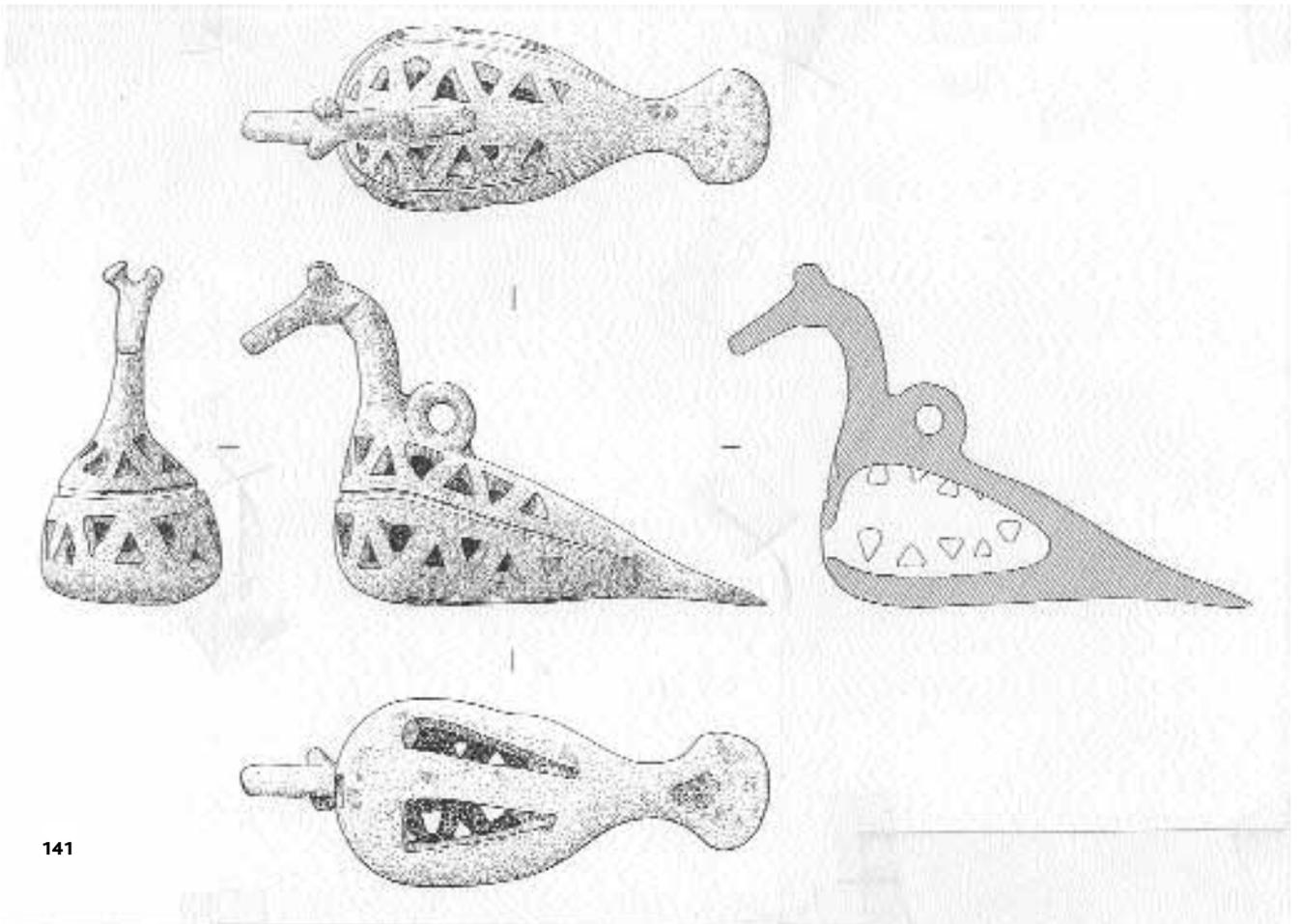
143. ANE 1993-4-3,14 (Pl. II, Fig. 33)

Another bird-shaped pendant as **no. 141**, but smaller and with two rows of straightforward triangular excisions. Two excisions on the base in the form of opposed triangles.

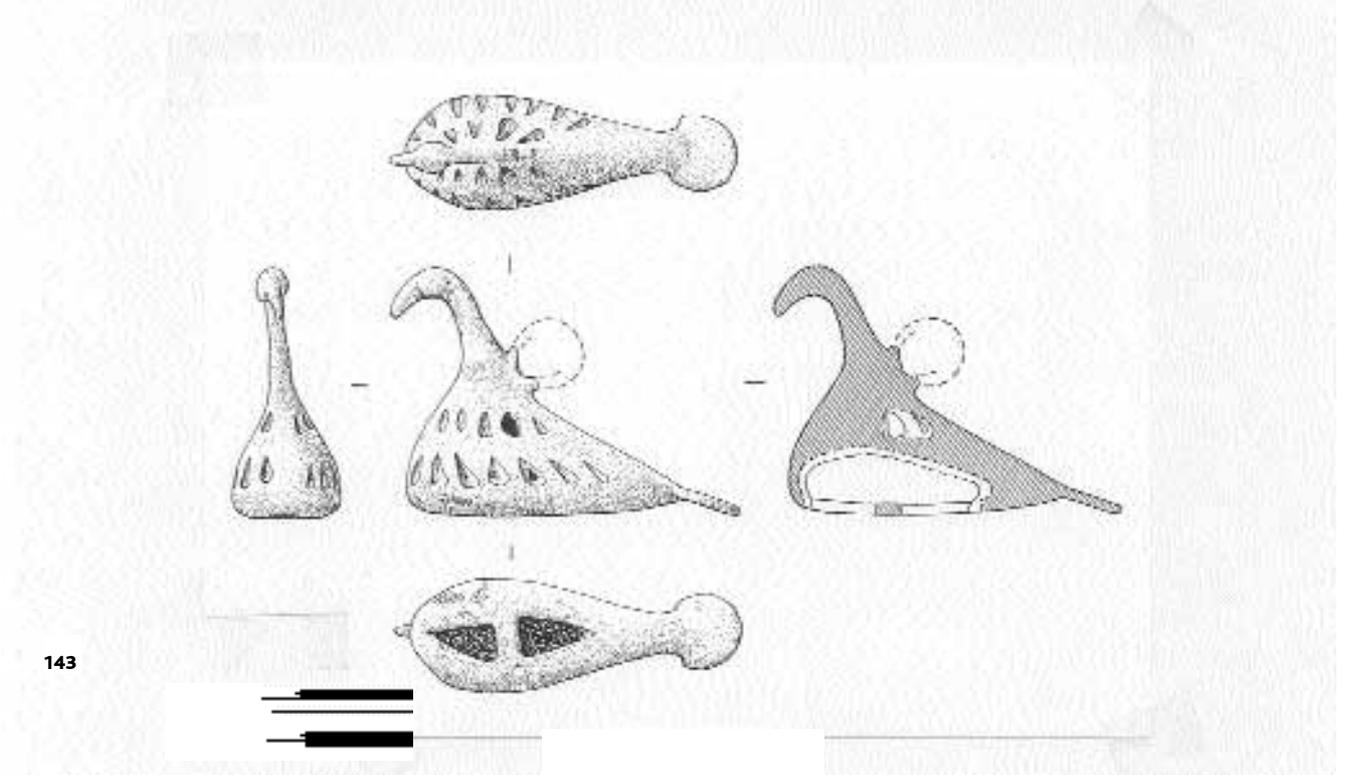
Ht. 3.23 cm., L. 4.16 cm., Wt. 13.1g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10-11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.



141



143

Figure 33 Scale 1:1

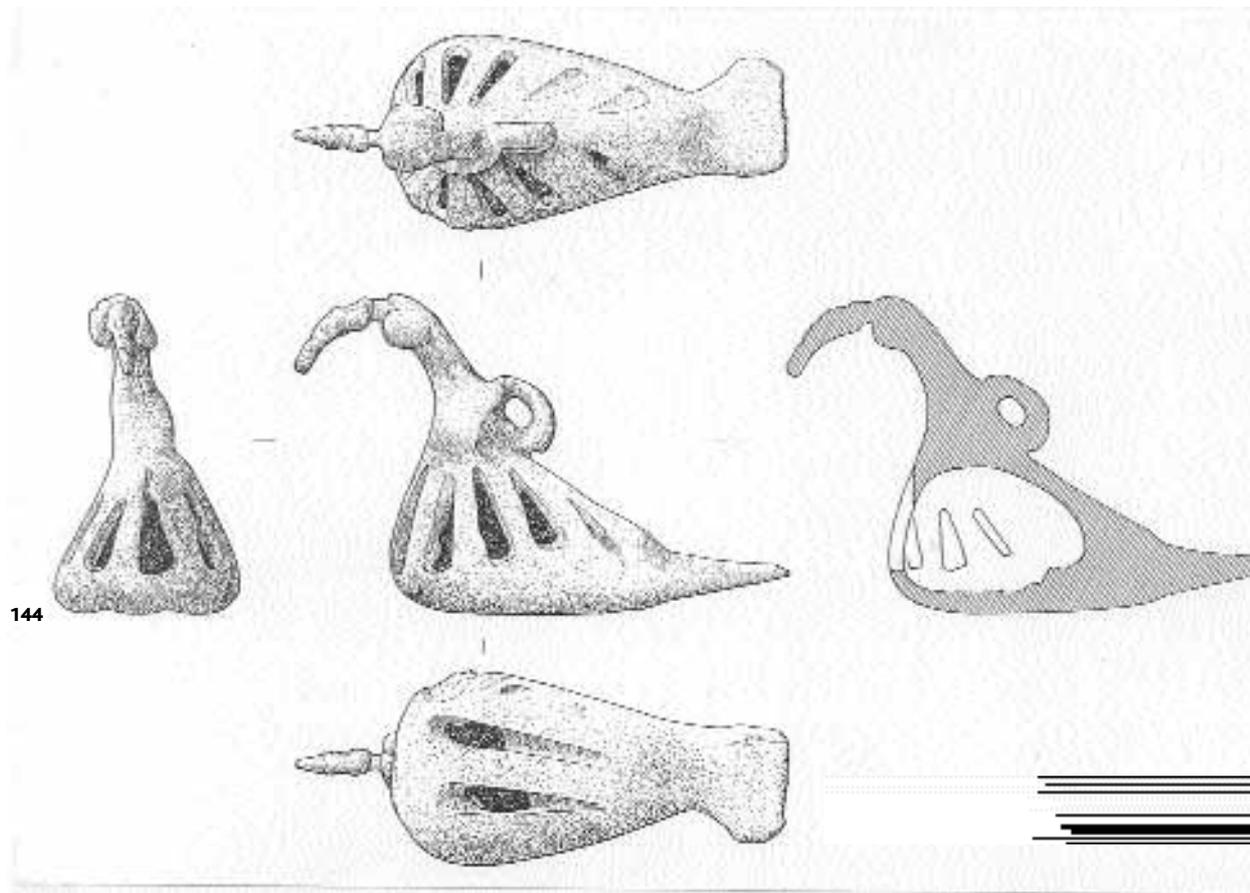


Figure 34 Scale 1:1

144. ANE 1993-4-5,8 (Pl. II, Fig. 34)

Another bird-shaped pendant as **no. 141**, but with single row of tall, triangular excisions all around body. Two triangular excisions on base as **nos. 142-3**.

Ht. 4.18 cm., L. 6.5 cm., Wt. 45.7g.

Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10-11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

145. ANE 1993-4-5,9 (Pl. II)

Another bird-shaped pendant as **no. 144**, but smaller.

Ht. 2.93 cm., L. 5.28 cm., Wt. 23.2g.

Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10-11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

146. ANE 1990-9-19,1 (Pl. II, Fig. 35)

Copper alloy openwork pendant in form of a bird with pointed, duck-shaped tail and loop for suspension on top of back. There are two, rectangular excisions on each side of the body. Circular holes on one side of the chest and on the underside of the body may be accidental or secondary.

Ht. 6.23 cm., L. 8.0 cm., Wt. 87.5 cm.

Surface XRF analysis: antimonial copper. See Appendix.

Examined in the Research Laboratory, British Museum, (report no. 5870, dated 20/12/1989):

This object was examined using a low-powered microscope. It was radiographed. The bird appeared to have been cast and the fenestration and holes to have been cut out of the figure subsequently. There is a casting fault on the neck near the ring. The surface of the object shows scrape marks, both original (to clean up the design) and more recently, presumably to remove corrosion products.

Purchased from Mr S. Motamed, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Openwork birds decorated with rows of triangles are amongst the most characteristic ornaments of the Transcaucasian Late Bronze Age. They have been excavated in many cemeteries in Armenia and Azerbaijan. The birds were originally suspended from bronze chains attached to a pendant holder, with two birds hanging from one pendant holder. Material from graves at Artik suggests that two pendant holders with four birds suspended on chains were put into individual graves. They probably decorated the costumes of the buried people. These double pendants appeared in both the earlier graves at Artik dated to the 14th–13th centuries BC (Khachatryan 1979: 156, grave 108) and the later graves dated to the 12th–11th centuries BC (Khachatryan 1979: 127, grave 34; 148, grave 92). Although in general the bird pendants are similar in shape and decoration they differ in details. The birds are decorated with one or two rows of small or long triangles. Some of them also have legs beneath. Even birds coming from the same burial-ground and belonging to the same period are often different (e.g. Esayan 1980: pls. 34–36; Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 33/5–8; 34/10; 37/6,9; 59/13–14; 64/12; Santrot 1996: nos. 53–54; Khachatryan 1979: 127, 148, 156, 161, 192, 213, 267, 317, 368). This fact and their generally crude style show that they were probably manufactured in small workshops in many places across Transcaucasia.

Birds with triangular excisions seen as **nos. 141–5** are by far the most common, both from excavations such as Dsegam (Kohlmeyer and Saherwala 1983: front cover, 64–5, fig. 54) and on the art market (e.g. Barbier Collection: no. 130). Birds with large rectangular excisions such as **no. 146** appear to be much more unusual.

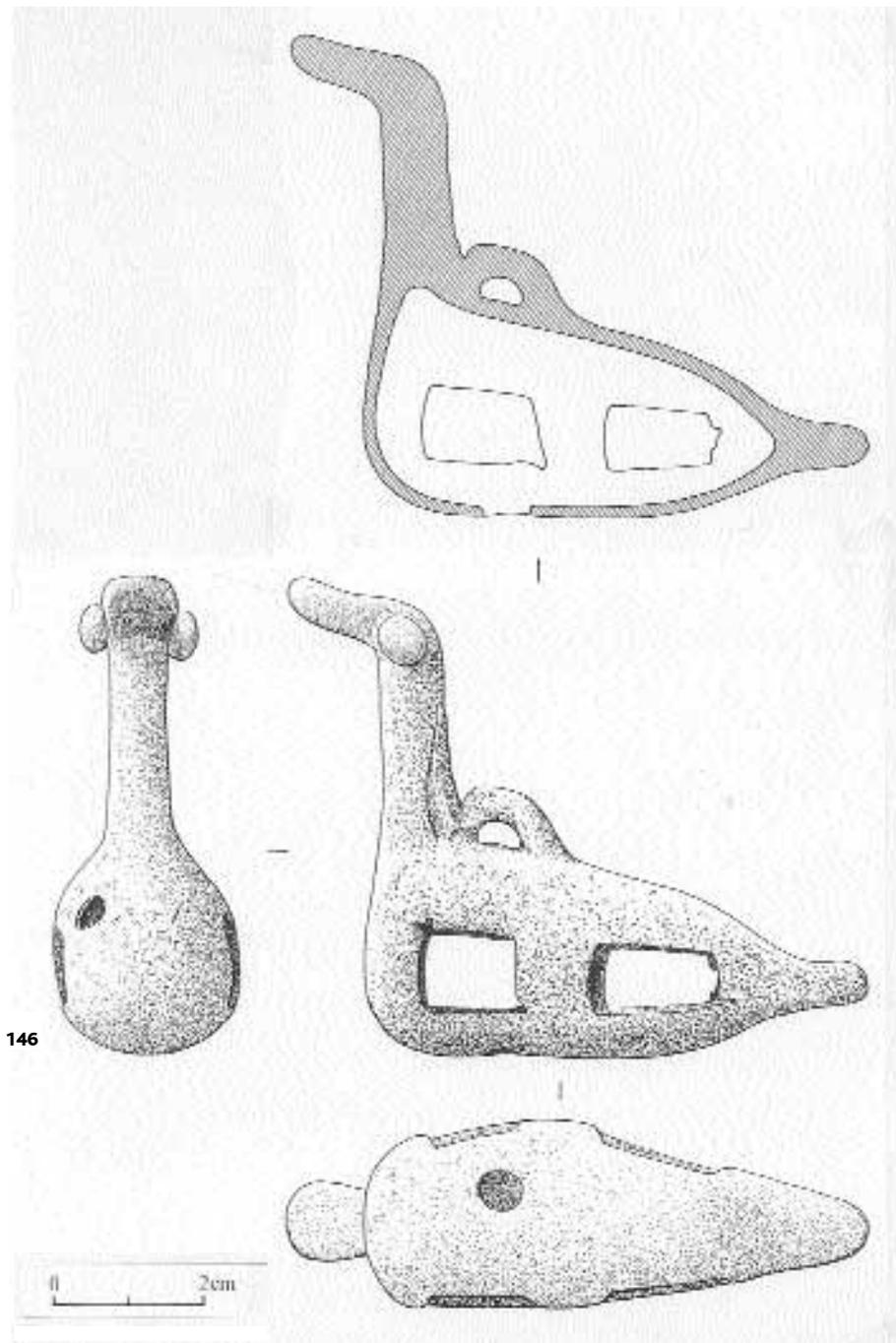


Figure 35 Scale 1:1

Rattle pendants**147. ANE 1993-4-5,6 (Pl. II, Fig. 36)**

Bronze cage-like openwork pendant of spherical shape with irregularly shaped stone (?) pebble inside and loop for suspension at top. Two rows of excisions in the form of alternating triangles.

Max. Ht. 4.27 cm., max. Diam. 3.48 cm., Wt. 32.2g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

148. ANE 1993-4-5,2 (Pl. II, Fig. 36)

Pendant as no. 147 but lemon-shaped and with larger excisions, consisting of long vertical openings alternating with opposed triangles. Irregularly shaped stone pebble inside.

Max. Ht. 5.38 cm., max. Diam. 3.12 cm., Wt. 45.0g.
Surface XRF analysis: alloy of copper, lead and antimony; chromium

pigment on surface. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

149. ANE 1993-4-5,3 (Pl. II)

Pendant as no. 148. Irregularly shaped stone(?) pebble inside.

Max. Ht. 5.77 cm., max. Diam. 3.17 cm., Wt. 52.2g.
Surface XRF analysis: antimonal copper. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

150. ANE 1993-4-5,5 (Pl. II, Fig. 37)

Pendant as no. 149, but bag-shaped and with long vertical, triangular excisions. Irregularly shaped stone pebble inside.

Max. Ht. 4.61 cm., max. Diam. 2.76 cm., Wt. 23.9g.
Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

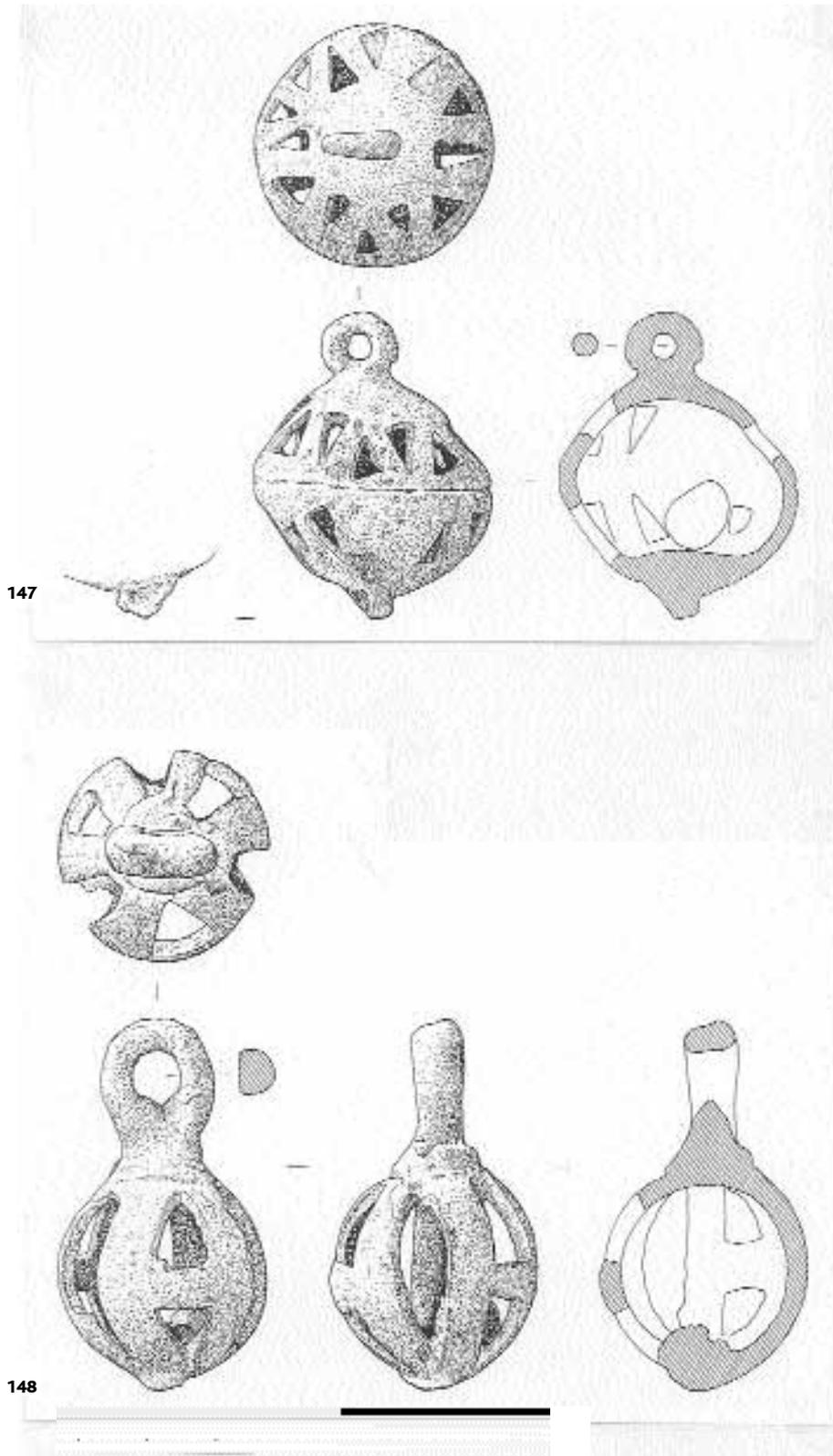


Figure 36 Scale 1:1

151. ANE 1993-4-5,4 (Pl. II)

Pendant as **no. 150**. Irregularly shaped stone(?) pebble inside.

Max. Ht. 4.72 cm., max. Diam. 2.86 cm., Wt. 27.0g.

Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.

Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

Rattle pendants are known from sites of the Koban culture, having been found in the Koban necropolis (Chantre 1885–87: II pl. XXVII/9; Mohen 1979: no. 183; Domanskiy 1984: pl. 93) and at Industriya (outside Kislovodsk

(Melyukova 1989: 408, pl. 102/A47). They are dated to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC (mid 12th–mid 8th century BC according to Melyukova 1989: 304). Smaller objects of the same sort are attached to both ends of a chain. They are known from Koban (Chantre 1885–87: II pl. XXVII/1; Mohen 1979: no. 182). None of these parallels, however, is very close in shape to **nos. 147–51**, and all have just one row of cut-out triangles.

There are also bronze bells decorated with openwork triangles from sites of the Koban culture such as Kamunta

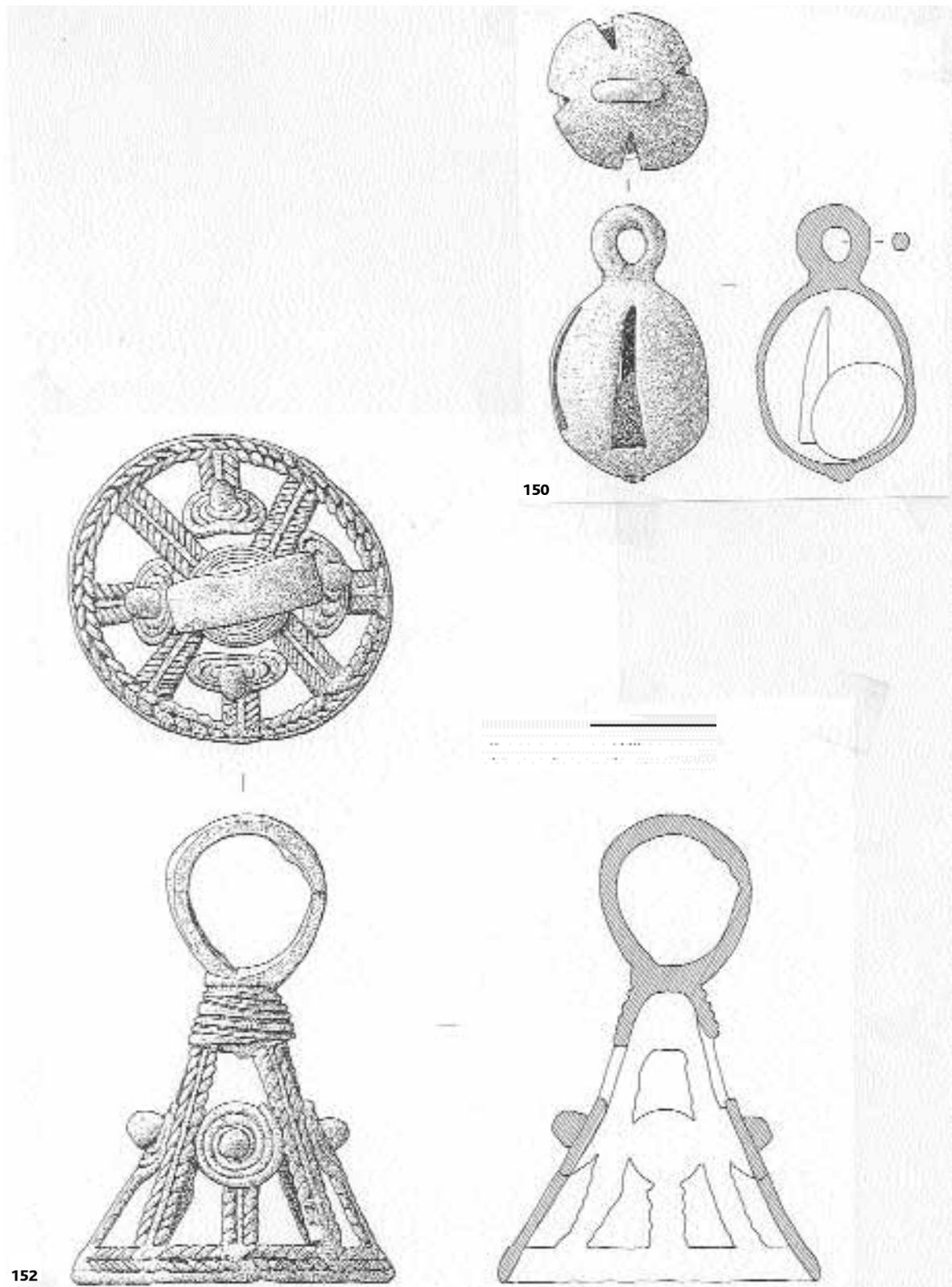


Figure 37 Scale 1:1

and Kumbulta in northern Ossetia (Chantre 1885–87: III, pls. V/1, XV/10; Domanskiy 1984: pl. 171) which are probably of similar date (but Chantre dates them to the Scytho-Byzantine period).

The purpose of these objects is not very clear. All of the British Museum pieces have stone pebbles inside, indicating that they are genuine rattles. They were perhaps attached to horse-harness or a cart. Smaller pieces attached to chains might have been personal ornaments.

Conical openwork pendants

I52. ANE 1993-4-3, I (Pl. 12, Fig. 37)

Bronze bell-shaped, openwork pendant with loop at top. There is surface decoration of twisted wire on the metal strips and there are spirals of wire with knobs in the centre in the open panels.

Overall Ht. 7.66 cm., max. Diam. 5.4 cm., Wt. 63.5g.
Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

153. ANE 1993-4-3,2 (Pl. 12)

Another bell-shaped openwork pendant, as **no. 152**

Overall Ht. 7.67 cm., max. Diam. 5.26 cm., Wt. 57.8g.
Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

No exact parallels have been found for these basket-like conical pendants. In shape they are rather like tassels, but their precise function is unknown. They might have served as horse harness, but this is speculative. Although these forms are apparently unusual, the different elements that are incorporated in these pendants are all well attested in Caucasian art. Thus, similar plaited decoration can be found on bracelets from Kalakent (Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pl. 9) and Artik (Khachatryan 1979: 249, 261), and on pendants published by Domanskiy (1984: col. pls. XXIII, XXVIII). Similarly, the spiral decorations can be seen in pendants from Artik (Khachatryan 1979: 368).

Openwork pendant (probably horse harness)

154. ANE 1993-4-5,1 (Pl. 12, Fig. 38)

Flat bronze pendant with double circular shape and excised decoration in the form of three floral shapes. These are indicated by circles of excised triangles. Above is a tongue of metal with an inverted triangle cut into it at the top which provided a means of suspension.

Overall Ht. 8.28 cm., max. W. 7.5 cm., Thickness c. 0.18 cm., Wt. 40.9g.
Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: leaded bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 312.

Different types of bronze openwork pendant have been excavated in Transcaucasia. Most of them are circular in shape with a single loop for suspension. Pendants of double circular shape are much rarer and perhaps replaced traditional double spiral pendants with a loop for suspension, which lasted for a long time and are known in Transcaucasia, for example at Mingechaur (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XVII/33–34). The closest parallels to our pendant, both in shape and in the form of the openwork decoration, are from the region of Lake Sevan (Martirosyan 1969: pl. 37/10–11 = Piotrovsky 1987: fig. 12). They are dated to the Late Bronze Age. Other analogies to our pendant, with quite similar tangs for suspension, come from Mingechaur in Azerbaijan (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XIX/22, 26). The Mingechaur pendants are also decorated with a combination of openwork triangles, although differently arranged. Two comparable pendants decorated with rows of small triangles, but of single circular shape, are known from grave 12 at Kalakent in Azerbaijan (Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pl. 58/5, 6). They are flat with three circles of triangles, topped by a small loop. This grave 12 also included two bronze birds with openwork decoration comparable to our **no. 141**. Other single circle pendants with different geometric openwork designs are known from Mingechaur and Kalakent (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XIX/18–33; Kohlmeyer and Saherwala 1983: 65, fig. 54; Nagel and Strommenger 1985: pls. 37/4, 75/1).

On the basis of the associated material such pendants can be dated to the late 2nd–early 1st millennium BC. They

seem to have been produced in the east of the Caucasus region.

Massive segmented rings (probably horse harness)

155. ANE 1993-4-3,7 (Pl. 12, Fig. 38)

Heavy bronze ring with segmented decoration and loop for suspension at the top.

Max. Ht. (with loop) 8.71 cm., max. Diam. 7.2 cm., Wt. 134g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

156. ANE 1993-4-3,8 (Pl. 12)

Another bronze ring, as **no. 155**.

Max. Ht (with loop) 8.52 cm., max. Diam. 7.16 cm., Wt. 129g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

Similar rings of segmented appearance with small loops attached are known from Dilizhan in Armenia dated to the 6th– century BC (Esayan 1976: pl. 115/17–8). In the publication, two of them are connected together through the small loops. They are here referred to as bracelets (p.130) but the attached loops and the corrugated surface make this identification very unlikely. More probably they are elements of horse harness and decorations were suspended from the looped holders. Segmented bronze rings but lacking the attached loops and less massive are known from other cemeteries in Armenia such as Khrtanots (Esayan 1976: pl. 117/17–18).

Rods (probably horse harness)

157. ANE 1993-4-3,11 (Pl. 12, Fig. 38)

Bronze rod, decorated with bead and reel mouldings, with loops at either end.

L. 10.34 cm., max. W. (of loop) 1.2 cm., Wt. 23.0g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

158. ANE 1993-4-3,12 (Pl. 12)

Another bronze rod, similar to **no. 157**.

L. 10.28 cm., max. W. (of loop) 1.16 cm., Wt. 23.5g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased at Sotheby's sale 10–11 December 1992, part of lot 317, illustrated on p. 152 of sale catalogue.

No close parallels are known for these two rods but their association with other material from the Caucasus, albeit on the art market (**nos. 120, 122–31, 141–5 147–56**), suggests they come from that area. The fact that there are loops at either end of the rods suggests they were used for suspending pendants, either as personal ornaments or as horse harness.

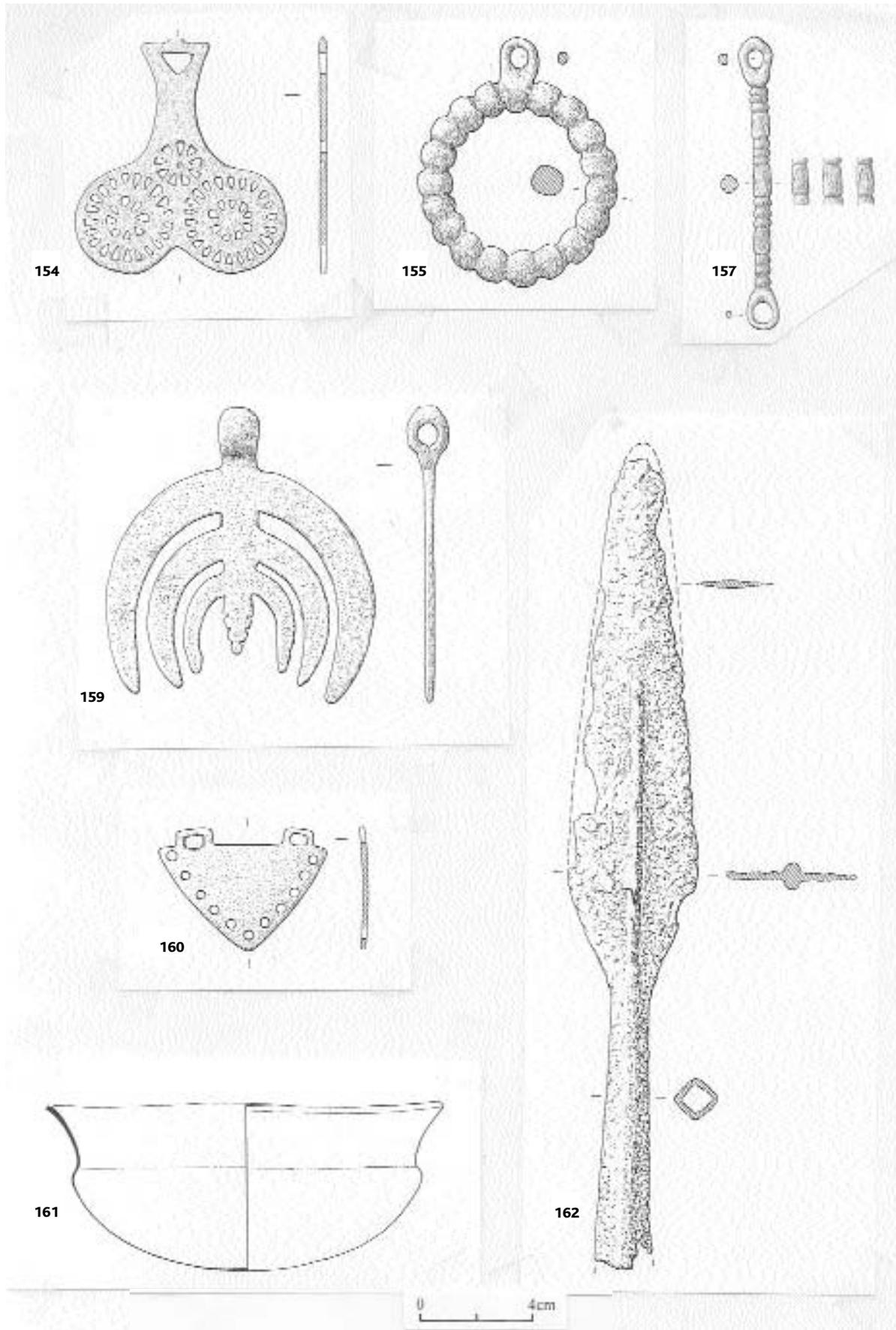


Figure 38 Scale 1:2

3c. Objects from a Karabakh Grave

The four items nos. III–14 are said to have been ‘found together in a grave at Karabakh, Erivan, Caucasus’. They were presented to the British Museum in 1898 by Sir Hercules Read, Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography 1896–1921. They are referred to in the guide to Early Iron Age antiquities in the British Museum (Smith 1925: 86).

In view of the circumstances of their acquisition, these objects cannot of course be considered as a closed archaeological group. We have no means of assessing the reliability of the information that they were found together in a single grave at Karabakh, but this possibility is certainly worth considering. First, in view of the geographical spread of comparable material, ‘Karabakh’ certainly seems to be a possible source. Whether the objects come from a single grave is more problematic, not least because of the uncertainty surrounding the dating of much Caucasian material. Distinctive crescentic pendants (as no. 159) have been variously dated between the 11th and 7th century BC. The metal bowl (no. 161) should probably be dated to the 5th century BC or slightly earlier. The iron spearhead (no. 162) belongs in the horizon 8th–4th century BC. In effect, the two items which are dated by parallels from beyond the Caucasus (the bowl and the spearhead) could be dated to the 6th–5th century BC. Dr. Yerusalmiskaya believes such a dating is also acceptable for the enigmatic bronze pendant no. 160. Therefore, if these four items do all belong together and come from a single grave, the pendant no. 159 must either be later than generally believed or this particular example was already an antique when it was buried.

Pendant

159. ANE 1898-6-16, 2 (Pl. 12, Fig. 38)

Bronze pendant in the form of three concentric crescents with serrated projection in centre and loop fastener on top.

Max. Ht. 10.68 cm, max. W. 9.5 cm., Wt. 135g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

Pendants of this kind have been found in Transcaucasia, namely in central Azerbaijan (Mingechaur) and Armenia (Vardakar, Tolors and the Sevan region) (Martirosyan 1969: pl. XXXVII/1–9; Santrot 1996: no. 100). There are a few different varieties varying from pendants with 2–3 concentric crescents to pendants with 2–3 concentric circles with a loop fastener on the top and often with a projection in the centre.

The most interesting group of these pendants is known from a burial-ground in Mingechaur where in tumulus no. 5 six similar pieces were discovered. They were placed around a human skeleton. Remains of fabric indicate that originally a male corpse was covered by a cloth to which the metal ornaments were attached, suggesting some religious meaning. Although the human skeleton was surrounded by the skeletal remains of six animals no pendant of this form was found amongst them (Aslanov *et al.* 1959: pl. XIX/29, 31, 33, 114, fig. 92/114–116). Tumulus no. 5 at Mingechaur is dated by the excavators to the 11th century BC and was considered as the earliest of a whole group of tumuli (other tumuli are dated to the 10th–9th century BC – *ibid.*: 121).

Pogrebova (1977: 123) dates the tumuli to the 9th–8th century BC and also suggests a slightly earlier dating for tumulus no. 5 (*ibid.*: note 11), disagreeing with the much later dating (7th century BC) of Terenozhkin (*ibid.*: note 12; Terenozhkin 1971).

Triangular ornament

160. ANE 1898-6-16, 3 (Pl. 12, Fig. 38)

Triangular bronze ornament in sheet metal, pierced with holes on two sides, with rectangular loops at the top.

Ht. 4.32 cm., W. 5.88 cm., wt. 18.4g.

Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

No parallels have been found for this item, which remains enigmatic. However, Dr. Anna Yerusalmiskaya of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, suggests⁴⁰ that it might belong amongst the belt buckles/ornaments of the late ‘Colchid/Koban’ culture, 6th–4th century BC. She believes that it resembles material from the eastern parts of the Caucasus (Daghestan, Azerbaijan), which would make ‘Karabakh’ a possible provenance.

Metal bowl

161. ANE 1898-6-16, 1 (Fig. 38)

Carinated bronze bowl with everted rim, plain.

Ht. 5.5 cm., max. Diam. 14.0 cm., Wt. 223.5g.

Surface XRF analysis: bronze, with area of tin on surface that has been applied on top of corrosion and is probably a later addition. See Appendix.

In Mesopotamia, carinated bowls make their appearance before the Late Assyrian period (Haller 1954: pl. 2), but either the rim is not everted or the neck is very short. The carinated pottery bowls of the Late Assyrian period are closer to our form (Oates, J, 1959: pls. 35–36; Curtis 1989: figs. 7–10, 24–25), but it is difficult to compare pottery and metal vessels, particularly when the pottery examples stand on a ring-base. Nevertheless, there are several thin-walled pottery bowls of so-called ‘palace ware’, rounded at the base, and these can be compared with metal bowls. There are examples from Nimrud (Oates 1959: pl. 37) and Khirbet Qasrij (Curtis 1989: fig. 31, no. 140). Both are broadly similar to the Karabakh example, except that the shoulders are more rounded. The same applies to an unpublished bronze bowl from Nimrud probably dating from the 8th century BC, now in the British Museum (N 94). By contrast, bronze bowls from the Persian-period cemetery at Deve Hüyük in Syria are very close to the Karabakh example (Moorey 1980: fig. 6, nos. 107–9). The shape of the rim is the same, and at the base of the neck is a slight lip giving way to the curved underbelly of the bowl. Such bowls can also be seen on the Apadana reliefs at Persepolis, being carried by various delegations (Walser 1966: pls. 43, 45, 51, 59). A silver omphalos bowl decorated with gadroons and lotus flowers from the Kazbek Hoard found in the Caucasus has a similar but not identical profile to no. 74; it is dated between the 6th and 4th century BC (Tallgren 1930: fig. 4a–b; Krupnov 1960: pl. 52). Therefore, a date in the 5th century BC seems most likely, although a slightly earlier date cannot be excluded.

Iron spearhead**162. ANE I898-6-I6,4 (Fig. 38)**

Iron leaf-shaped spearhead with pronounced mid-rib and folded socket. Tip of spearhead and end of socket missing, parts of blade eroded away on one side. The most distinctive features of this spearhead are the relative thinness of the metal (probably testifying to the considerable degree of control that the blacksmith had over his material), the prominent mid-rib and the pronounced shoulders.

Extant L. 28.6 cm, max. W. 4.65 cm., Wt. 139.2g
Surface XRF analysis: iron. See Appendix.

Iron spearheads first occur in Transcaucasia at the end of the 2nd millennium BC. Examples dated to Period II of the Late Bronze Age of Transcaucasia (12th–11th century BC) are known from Armenia, eastern Georgia and Azerbaijan, from where they spread to north and north-west Iran around the Caspian Sea (Pogrebova 1977: 74–7) and to the Koban culture (Krupnov 1960: 205–6). In form, these early objects made of iron are reproductions of bronze spearheads and sometimes they still have sockets covered with bronze or made in bronze. In grave no. 16 at Vornak (Armenia), for example, an iron knife and a bimetallic spear-head were found among bronze objects including a Transcaucasian sword with an openwork hilt terminal and an ‘Amazon’ axe. The long, thin, leaf-shaped spearhead of iron was set in a short bronze socket. The whole assemblage of grave no. 16 is dated to the 11th century BC (Martirosyan 1964: 115–6, pls. XI/1–9; XXXV, box VI, 1–5). An iron spearhead from the Artik necropolis comes from a grave (no. 222) that is not in itself dated but was next to a grave (no. 223) that contained an iron bracelet and produced a sample for Carbon 14 analysis that gave a date of 2850 ± 50 BP (i.e. 900 ± 50 B.C.) (Khachatryan 1979: 17, 51–2, 202). All the other spearheads found in the Artik necropolis were of bronze (Khachatryan 1979: *passim*). An iron spearhead from a grave at Akthala in

Armenia, dated to the early 1st millennium BC (Mohen 1979: no. 231), appears to be relatively close to the Karabakh type, but generally speaking iron spearheads were scarce in the Caucasian region until the development of the Urartian state and its metallurgy in the 8th–7th century BC and only then did they outnumber bronze spearheads which continued to be produced.

In Urartu, iron spearheads have been found both at Karmir Blur (Barnett 1959: 3, 7, 11, 14; Piotrovsky 1950: 41, fig. 21; Piotrovsky 1966: 239) and Toprak Kale (Lehmann-Haupt 1907: 101, fig. 72.2, on left), but although the blades are narrow, these Urartian examples are generally heavier and thicker than our specimen and the shoulders are less pronounced. However, two contemporary iron spearheads from graves at Kamennomostskiy Mogilnik in Kabarda (Koban culture) and at Berezovskiy Mogilnik in Kabardino-Pyatigorye are quite close to the Karabakh example (Krupnov 1969: pl. XII, 1; Terenozhkin 1976: fig. 76, 3). Both were found in association with a distinctive type of north Caucasian dagger with cross-shaped hilt (Golovyatino-Leibnitz type) that is closely dated to the 8th–7th century BC (Krupnov 1960: pl. XII/4; Terenozhkin 1976: 104–132, fig. 76/1). Spearheads similar in shape to the Karabakh specimen also occur in the Achaemenid period. For example, there are the spears being held by archers on the glazed brick panels from Susa (Amiet 1988: fig. 81) and those held by some of the guards on the reliefs at Persepolis (Roaf 1983: pl. XLII). Actual iron spearheads of this date have been found at Deve Hüyük (Moorey 1980: 165–180) and at Lugovoy Mogilnik near the village of Muzhichi in Checheno-Ingushetia (Krupnov 1960: 72–3, pl. LXIII). The latter are dated to the 6th–4th century BC. It emerges, then, that the Karabakh spearhead cannot on its own be very closely dated. Parallels have been noted dating from between the 8th and the 4th century BC, so we should probably consider these as the bracket dates for this spearhead.

4. Miscellaneous Objects of Caucasian Type

Conjoined Warriors

163. ANE I32986/1962-10-15, I (Pl. 13, Fig. 39)

Bronze group consisting of two figures joined together at the shoulder. The legs are slightly flexed, and the arms are turned up at the ends. Both figures are wearing helmets with crescentic crests; belts are indicated by three incised horizontal lines, and each figure has a diagonal sash again represented by three incised lines. The figures are hollowed out at the back. The casting is rough, and is poorly finished on the reverse. Each figure has a loop for attachment or suspension at the back of the head.

Ht. 11.0 cm., max. W. 5.2 cm., Wt. 99.3g.

Surface XRF analysis and quantitative analysis by ICP-AES: bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased in 1962 from Mr Ernest Ohly, The Berkeley Galleries, London; allegedly found at Khurvin (Iran) in 1950.

Published Barnett 1962–63: 97, pl. XLVc. The authenticity of this piece has been questioned by Muscarella (1977: 188, no. 204; 2000: 126, no. 16), but he seems to be unaware of the Daghestan examples.

Figurines of standing warriors with crested helmets are a characteristic feature of the art of Daghestan, but the figures are usually naked (Melyukova 1989: 421, pl. 115/2–3; Domanskiy 1984: pls. 188, 190; Mohen 1979: 160, no. 150). Although they are schematic in form and quite crudely cast, they represent a distinctive group. Their naked bodies are slim and simply executed. They have long heads with large noses and chins as well as pronounced eyes and mouths. The emphasis on the genitals stresses their heroic status. They wear helmets with crests that vary in shape from rhomboidal such as a figure from Zibir-Kala in Daghestan (Melyukova 1989: 421, pl. 115/2) to crescentic, such as the British Museum figure (Domanskiy 1984: pls. 188, 190). The position of the arms suggests that these warriors are either javelin-throwers, with one arm raised and flexed (e.g. Melyukova 1989: 421, pl. 115/2–3), or chariot-drivers, with both hands together as if holding reins (e.g. Domanskiy 1984: pls. 188, 190; Mohen 1979: 160, no. 150). The figurines referred to above all represent naked warriors or heroes, but figures that are clothed and armed do occasionally occur in both Daghestan and south-east Chechnya (Melyukova 1989: 420–1, pls. 114/12, 115/5). However, these latter figures are not close to the British Museum example, even though one wears a crested helmet.

The closest parallel to **no. 76** is a bronze figurine that is supposed to come from the necropolis of Khurvin in Iran (Vanden Berghe 1959: 124, pl. 156b–c). Like our example, it has parallel lines around the waist and diagonal lines on the chest. However, the Khurvin provenance is certainly not proven, and in view of the probable date of this piece it is perhaps unlikely. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that such figurines, although ultimately of Caucasian origin, might have found their way into Iran or been copied there. An

unprovenanced bronze figurine in the Ortiz Collection (Ortiz 1994: no. 22) which has some similarities to our example is also ascribed to Khurvin.

The double figurine in the British Museum is of particular interest in that although individually the style of both warriors follows the characteristics of the Daghestan group, the double form is quite unusual. A representation of two figures with arms on each other's shoulders is known from Shali in south-east Chechnya (Melyukova 1989: 286, 420, pl. 114/7), where two men are shown without armour and helmets. Such 'comrades in arms' are known in Russian literature as 'pobratimy'.

The Daghestan figures are dated to the Scythian period, 7th–5th century BC (Melyukova 1989: 287; Domanskiy 1984: 66, 235).

Figure of Naked Man

164. ANE I20453 /1874-II-4, I (Pl. 13, Fig. 39)

Bronze statuette of a man standing on a small barrel-shaped plinth. One arm is outstretched, and in the clenched fist is a rod or handle that is broken away at the top. The other arm is bent, and the hand is missing. It is possible that originally the figure was holding a spear or dagger in the right hand and a shield in the left hand. The figure is mostly naked except for a small conical cap, and he is shown with erect penis. The upper part of the body is covered with incised decoration, which could represent either tattoos or (on the front) a breast-plate and a belt. The man has a distinctive face with large flattened nose and almond-shaped eyes. The ears are large and pierced, perhaps for the addition of earrings that are now missing.

Ht. 13.7 cm., Max W. 7.6 cm., Wt. 235g.

Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

Presented by Dr. H. Schliemann (Athens) in 1874. It is described in the British Museum acquisitions register as coming 'from Ilium Novum?' (i.e. Troy), but because of the question-mark it looks as if this provenance is a guess based on the association of Schliemann and Troy.

Published Walters 1899: 13, no. 179; Müller 1929: pl. XL1/402; Przeworski 1939: 194, pl. XI V/2; Collon 1972: fig. 5/6; Negbi 1976: 35, n. 27.

This figurine is very similar to an example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: no. 488). As Muscarella notes (*ibid*: 362), these figurines are quite distinct from the 'smiting gods' associated with the Levant, and together with Collon and Negbi he believes they might have been made in Anatolia. A Caucasian origin, however, seems more likely.

Representations of heroic figures of this kind are well known amongst metalwork from the Caucasus and particularly from Daghestan, where many similar male and female figurines have been found (Melyukova 1989:

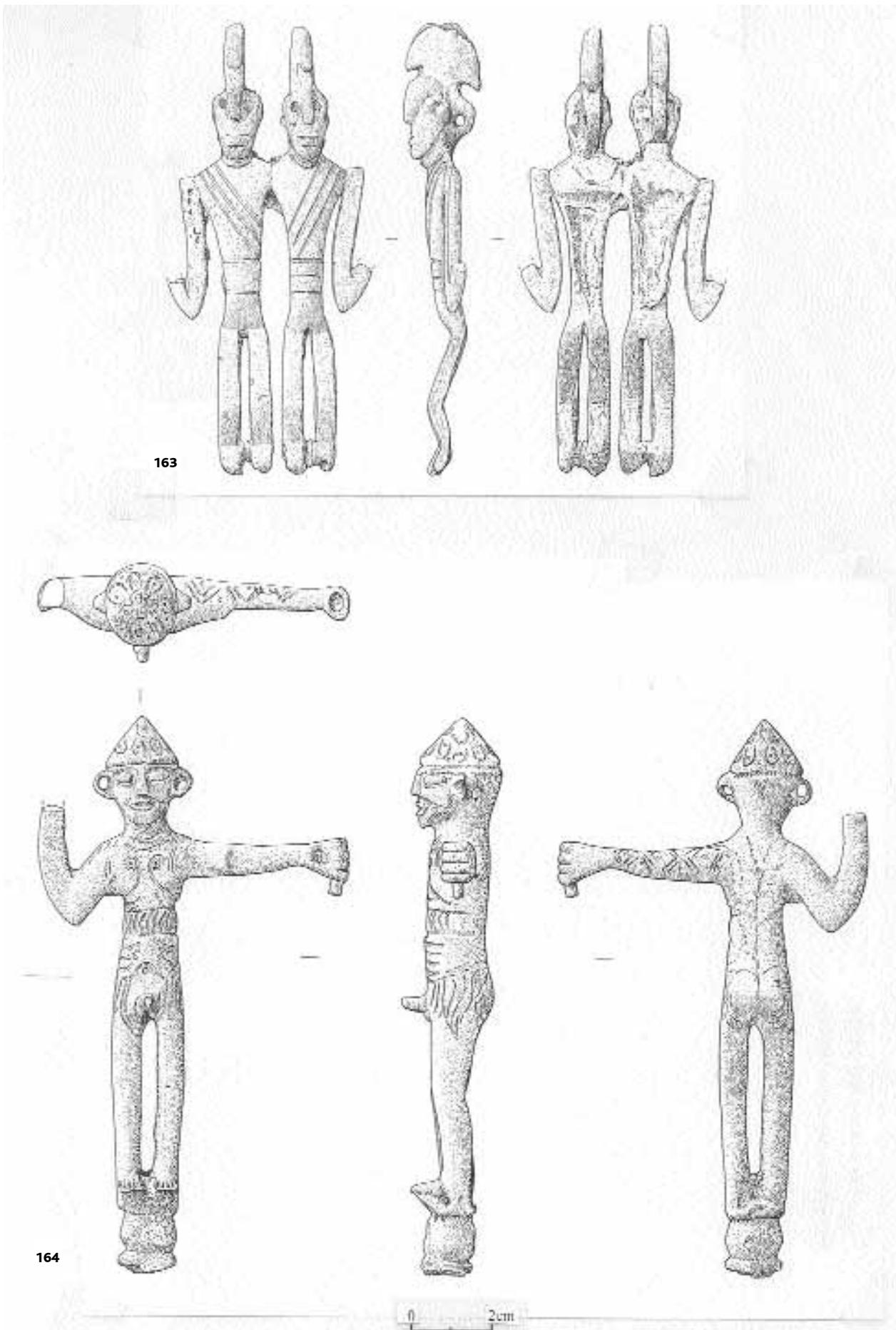


Figure 39 Scale 3:4

286–287). Most of them are naked, usually with bodies that are schematic in form and often they have helmets on their heads and a flexed right arm (Melyukova 1989: pls. 113/1, 115/1–3; Domanskiy 1984: pls. 187, 189; Lang 1966: pl. 17). Sometimes they also have pierced ears (Melyukova 1989: 286, pl. 115/1).

The Daghestani anthropomorphic figurines of this type are interpreted as images of the local deities of the Scytho-Sarmatian period, 7th–5th century BC (Melyukova 1989: 286–287; Domanskiy 1984: 235, pls. 187–8).

Lang remarks (1966: 63–64) that ithyphallic bronze figures were extensively copied for sale to tourists in Tbilisi, but he concedes that there are many authentic examples.

Figure of Naked Woman

165. ANE 1939-7-5,1 (Pl. 13)

Copper alloy figurine of a woman with severe features and square jaw. The figure is naked except for a belt or girdle worn around the waist which has a small knob in the front. She holds a small cup or goblet in the left hand and a short rod, perhaps the remains of something else, in the right hand. Bangles in the form of open-ended bronze rings, separately applied, are worn on the arms. The hair is parted in the centre and swept back close to the head; there are plaits around the crown of the head and meeting at the base of the skull. The ears have small holes for the provision of earrings which are now missing. Under the feet, and part of the original casting, is a curved strip of metal, the purpose of which is unclear.

Ht. 21.1 cm., max. W. 6.55 cm., Wt. 51.7 g.

Surface XRF analysis: copper. See Appendix.

Presented by the Trustees of Henry Christy in 1939.⁴¹ It was sold to the Christy Trustees by N. Koutalakis who had obtained it from a French dealer who said it came from Hungary. However, even in 1939 the British Museum curator who registered it recognised that it was 'probably from the Caucasus and of the Early Iron Age, 8th–7th century BC'.

The earliest parallel to this piece is a bronze figurine found at Sogratl in Daghestan, which is ascribed to the period c. 6th - 4th century BC (Melyukova 1989: 305, pl. 115/1). It is about 29 cm. high, and has a similar hoop beneath the feet. However, the figure is entirely naked, with no belt, and although the arms are bent in a similar posture there are apparently no objects in the hands. Another bronze figurine of a woman from Daghestan was purchased by the Department of History and Ethnography of the University of Tbilisi in 1923 and is now in the Metekhia Museum (Kuftin 1950: 60, fig. 14). It has a different hairstyle, and the arms are outstretched, but the woman is wearing a belt around her midriff and to judge from the published photograph there may once have been a hoop beneath the feet, although it is now missing. The woman is holding unidentified objects in her hands. A bronze statuette showing an ithyphallic male figure, now in the Kutaisi Historical and Ethnographic Museum in Georgia and dated to the 8th century BC (Lang 1966: pl. 17), has a hairstyle that is comparable to our figure in that there are apparently plaits around the crown of the head. Bronze figurines of naked women are also known from later periods in the Caucasus, both from the central Caucasus (Chantre 1885–7: III, pl. IV/2), and from Transcaucasia (Lordkipanidze 1984: pl. LXXI), but they are

different in style and at least one example reflects Hellenistic influence.

Bison

166. ANE 108813/1914-2-14,39 (Pl. 14)

Heavy solid cast bronze/copper alloy figure of a bison. The animal has a long beard, and its shaggy coat is indicated by wavy lines. However, the rear part of the back and the top of the hindquarters have been left smooth. There is a vertical hole, diam. 0.9 cm., through the centre of the back. The underside of the feet are plain, with no evidence that they were ever fixed to a base. The right horn, the lower right leg, and the end of the tail are now missing.

Overall L. 16.35 cm., Ht. 12.1 cm., Wt. 2283.0 g.

Bequeathed to the British Museum by H.F.B. Lynch in 1913 together with a miscellaneous collection of antiquities from the Near East; this piece is described in the Trustees' Minutes for 1914 as a 'bronze bull from Armenia'.

Published Budge 1922: 173; Lehmann-Haupt 1929: 891, pl. 8; Barnett 1954b: 11, pl. I; Nagel 1959: pl. 13/1; Barnett and Wiseman 1969: no. 14; Spycket 1981: 183.

The possible association of this piece with the Caucasus region is indicated by the fact that it was allegedly obtained in Armenia by H.B.F. Lynch. Further, the bison was once native to the Caucasus but was finally exterminated by hunters in 1928; it has now been reintroduced in the Caucasus National Park (Brice 1972: 98–9). Lehmann-Haupt saw this piece as Urartian and dated it to the 1st millennium BC (1929: 891), but Barnett compared it with Mesopotamian metalwork of the 3rd millennium BC (Barnett 1954b: 11; Barnett 1982: 328; Barnett and Wiseman 1969: 33). Spycket (1981: 183) believes that the nose of this bison with its flared nostrils can be compared with the bulls from Maikop (Frankfurt 1954: pl. 124 D–E), and it is interesting that like our piece the Maikop bulls, two of gold and two of silver, have a vertical hole through the body. They were mounted on rods which supported a canopy over a burial. The Maikop bulls are dated to the late 3rd millennium BC, and a similar date, together with a Caucasian origin, may be tentatively suggested for the bison.⁴²

Goat Protome

167. ANE 48285/1863-II-3,1 (Pl. 14)

Hollow cast bronze fitting terminating in the foreparts of a goat, with curved, swept back horns. The whole piece is crudely executed. The legs are bent at the knees and tucked under the body. The shoulders and upper parts of the legs are represented by incised decoration in a wing-shaped pattern. The goat has heavy eyebrows, and on its chest there is a circular pendant that is suspended from a necklace. At the back of the head there is extensive dotted decoration. The back part of the fitting is box-shaped, with the socket measuring 5.5 cm x 3.67 cm (max. dimensions).

Overall L. 12.4 cm., Ht. 12.13 cm., max. W. 6.75 cm., Wt. 978.0 g.

Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.

Purchased from Mr O. Russell in 1863, and said to have been 'found in the East'.

Published Rawson 1977: pl. 10.

This rather crudely executed piece is not easy to identify on stylistic or typological grounds, but according to Mr R.W. Hayman formerly of the British Museum Natural History⁴³

the animal represented here can be identified as the east Caucasian tur (*capra cylindricornis* Blyth), 'a distinct species confined to the east Caucasus and recognisable by the unusual twist of the horns with a definite upward turn at the tip.' Just as the origin of this piece is obscure, so is its function. It could have been fitted onto a piece of wood with a rectangular section, in which case it might have decorated a piece of furniture or the end of a chariot-pole, or it might have served as the terminal of a horn-shaped rhyton or drinking-cup. This is less likely, however, because the back part of the fitting is rectangular rather than rounded as would be expected for a rhyton. If this piece is indeed of Caucasian origin, though⁴⁴ – and in the absence of convincing evidence this must remain speculative – it may be relevant to draw attention to a silver rhyton from a grave at Mtisdziri near Vani which has a terminal in the form of a goat (Tsetskhladze 1993–94: 19–20, fig. 10; Knauss 1999b). The animal has a human head, but at the same time it has long, curled horns and its front legs folded under its body. This rhyton is dated to the 4th century BC. Whatever the relevance of this parallel, and regardless of the exact provenance of our piece, it seems likely that it dates from some time in the 1st millennium BC. If it is as late as the Achaemenid period, it would have to be regarded as a locally inspired product that has no connection with works of art in the so-called Achaemenid court style.

Woman(?) on Horse

168. ANE 1929-1-16,17 (Pl. 14)

Copper alloy group showing a human figure standing on the back of a horse. The modelling is crude and schematic. The horse has an elongated body and straight legs. It has pricked ears, and the mouth is open. The tail ends in four separate strands. On the back of the horse is mounted a platform (it cannot really be called a saddle) with high semicircular sides. The figure on the platform stands with legs apart and outstretched arms. There are three fingers on each hand. Possible rendering of breasts and a vagina may show that the figure is a woman. At the back of the head there is a semicircular shape that seems to represent a bunch of hair or a 'pony-tail'. The head of the woman and the horse are similar in that both are shown with open mouths and the eyes are indicated by applied discs. The bodies of both the horse and the woman(?) (the latter mainly on the back) are decorated with applied discs that produce a studded effect. There are two loops on the top of the horse, one on the neck and one on the rump, and there are four loops underneath, two on the bottom of the body and others below the neck

and the tail respectively. A broken stump underneath the body, between the two other loops, may be the remains of yet another loop, giving a total of five underneath the horse.

There is a deep groove on the underside of the horse, possibly showing that this group has been manufactured by folding over a thick sheet of metal to form the body of the horse.

Ht. 6.4 cm., L. 8.5 cm., Wt. 87.0g.

Surface XRF analysis: alloy of copper, lead and antimony. See Appendix.

This piece was purchased in 1929 together with a group of 19 other objects from S.B. Burney, Esq., of 13 St. James's Place, London SW1. The group was said to be from south Russia, and contains a number of pieces that are clearly of Ordos type (Smith 1928–29).

Published Minns 1930: 19–20, pl. III/20; Rostovtzeff 1931: 52, fig. 1. Both Minns and Rostovtzeff regarded this piece as Caucasian.

This interesting piece combines a number of curious features for which no parallels have been found, and indeed we have not succeeded in finding a comparable bronze figurine.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, there are a number of features which link this work with the Caucasus. For example, the open mouth and crudeness of modelling of the human figure are paralleled on a horse and rider in the Hermitage collection, dated to the 5th–4th century BC and ascribed to the Caucasus (Domanskiy 1984: 235, pl. 191). Here, the horse stands on a platform which has loops round the edge from which bells are suspended. Elaborate groups of pendants are actually characteristic of the Caucasus (e.g. Chantre 1885–87: II, pls. XXVI/2, LVII/1, 4), which is one of the principal reasons for assigning the British Museum group to this area. It would have been suspended from the two loops on top of the horse, and the four or five loops underneath would in turn have supported further pendants. The studded decoration on our group also occurs, for example, on a dagger handle from the Koban necropolis (Chantre 1885–87: II, pl. Vbis/2).

Perhaps the closest analogy to the British Museum piece comes from the Heraion on the island of Samos (Jantzen 1972: pl. 81, no. B452). This figurine shows a woman and child sitting sideways on a horse. There are significant differences between it and the British Museum piece, but a point of contact is that the woman is perched on a seat with high sides.⁴⁶ Again, it cannot really be called a saddle. Features that link the Samos group with the Caucasus are the plaited decoration on the back of the seat, which is also found for example on pendants from the Koban necropolis (Chantre 1885–87: II, pls. XX bis/8–9, XXV/11), and the distinctive way the woman's feet are joined by a bar, that is also seen on our pair of figures **no. 163** and on figurines from the Koban necropolis (Chantre 1885–87: II, pls. LX, LVII).