



<https://publications.dainst.org>

iDAI.publications

DIGITALE PUBLIKATIONEN DES
DEUTSCHEN ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN INSTITUTS

Das ist eine digitale Ausgabe von / This is a digital edition of

Teufer, Mike

The Late Bronze Age Chronology of Southern Uzbekistan: A Reanalysis of the Funerary Evidence.

in: Franke-Vogt, Ute – Weisshaar, H.-J (Hrsg.), South Asian archaeology 2003: proceedings of the Seventeenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists, 7–11 July 2003, Bonn 199–209.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34780/mvc3-3u6b>

Herausgebende Institution / Publisher:

Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

Copyright (Digital Edition) © 2022 Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Zentrale, Podbielskiallee 69–71, 14195 Berlin, Tel: +49 30 187711-0

Email: info@dainst.de | Web: <https://www.dainst.org>

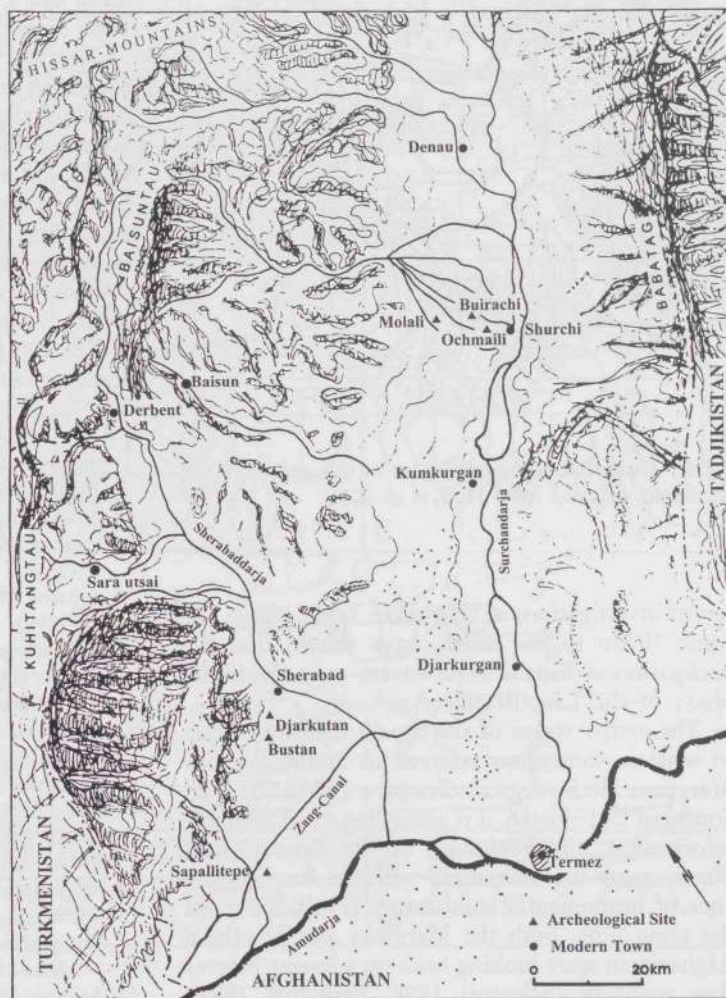
Nutzungsbedingungen: Mit dem Herunterladen erkennen Sie die Nutzungsbedingungen (<https://publications.dainst.org/terms-of-use>) von iDAI.publications an. Sofern in dem Dokument nichts anderes ausdrücklich vermerkt ist, gelten folgende Nutzungsbedingungen: Die Nutzung der Inhalte ist ausschließlich privaten Nutzerinnen / Nutzern für den eigenen wissenschaftlichen und sonstigen privaten Gebrauch gestattet. Sämtliche Texte, Bilder und sonstige Inhalte in diesem Dokument unterliegen dem Schutz des Urheberrechts gemäß dem Urheberrechtsgesetz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Die Inhalte können von Ihnen nur dann genutzt und vervielfältigt werden, wenn Ihnen dies im Einzelfall durch den Rechteinhaber oder die Schrankenregelungen des Urheberrechts gestattet ist. Jede Art der Nutzung zu gewerblichen Zwecken ist untersagt. Zu den Möglichkeiten einer Lizenzierung von Nutzungsrechten wenden Sie sich bitte direkt an die verantwortlichen Herausgeberinnen/Herausgeber der entsprechenden Publikationsorgane oder an die Online-Redaktion des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (info@dainst.de). Etwaige davon abweichende Lizenzbedingungen sind im Abbildungsnachweis vermerkt.

Terms of use: By downloading you accept the terms of use (<https://publications.dainst.org/terms-of-use>) of iDAI.publications. Unless otherwise stated in the document, the following terms of use are applicable: All materials including texts, articles, images and other content contained in this document are subject to the German copyright. The contents are for personal use only and may only be reproduced or made accessible to third parties if you have gained permission from the copyright owner. Any form of commercial use is expressly prohibited. When seeking the granting of licenses of use or permission to reproduce any kind of material please contact the responsible editors of the publications or contact the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (info@dainst.de). Any deviating terms of use are indicated in the credits.

M. Teufer

The Late Bronze Age Chronology of Southern Uzbekistan. A Reanalysis of the Funerary Evidence¹

Fig. 1. Bronze Age settlements in Northern Bactria (adapted from Huff 1997, fig. 1).



Research into the Bronze Age of Southern Uzbekistan started in the late sixties with the discovery and subsequent excavation of Sapalli Tepe (Askarov 1973). As Sapalli was the first Bronze Age site in what is usually called Northern Bactria (fig. 1)², it also became the eponymous site for the region's Late Bronze Age culture. So today, we refer to it as the Sapalli Culture, even though

¹ Special thanks are due to Dr. Kaniuth for his assistance in the production of this paper, and to Dr. Metzner-Nebelsick and Dr. Nebelsick.

² Northern Bactria is bordered in the north by the Gisar Mountains, in the west by the Kuhitangtau and Baisuntau Mountains, in the east by the mountain chain of Babatag, and in the south by the Amudarya (Oxus). Most likely, it did not belong to the Achaemenian province of Bactria, but its population was probably Bactrian at the time of

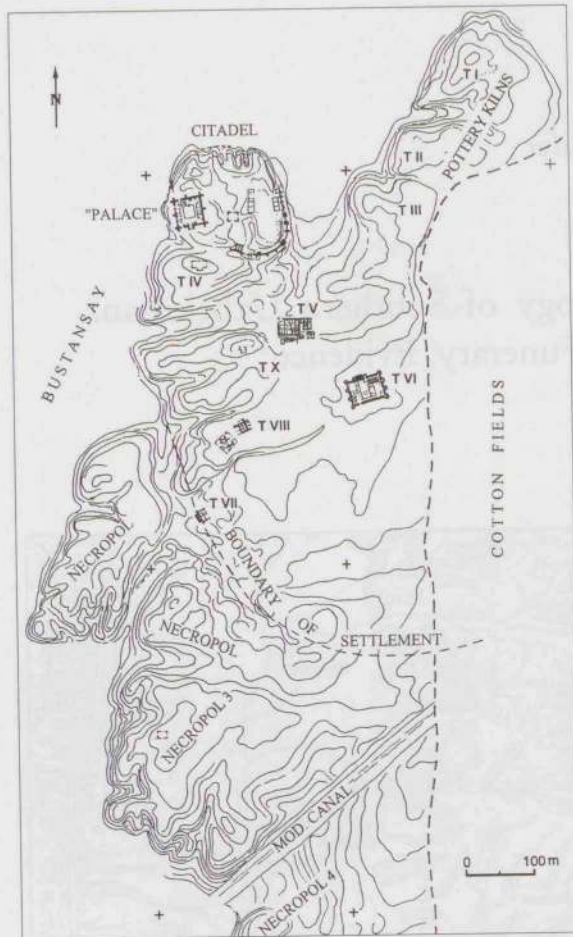


Fig. 2. Djarkutan, topographic plan of the settlement and necropolis (adapted from Huff et al. 2001).

recent investigations at Djarkutan Tepe, a large site some 30 km to the north, have shown that the occupation at Sapalli Tepe covers only the initial phase of the Late Bronze Age³.

The earlier stages of the Sapalli Culture belong to what is sometimes referred to as the *Bactria-Margiana Archeological Complex* (BMAC)⁴. For Southern Uzbekistan, it is according to all available information, the beginning of the Bronze Age. Furthermore it is connected with the first appearance of monumental architecture (Huff 2001). At the same time, both the Margiana and Northern Afghanistan were looking back on a longer Bronze Age tradition (Salvatori 1998; Francfort 1984). While the earlier phase of the Sapalli Culture shows strong links with these regions, we observe a shift of relations towards Southern Tadjikistan and the Eurasia Steppes in its younger phase⁵.

In this paper, I propose a new chronological scheme for the Late Bronze Age of Southern Uzbekistan, based on burial assemblages. It represents preliminary results of my Ph.D. thesis on Late Bronze Age burial data of Northern Bactria

and adjacent regions. Some of these burials were excavated since 1994 within the framework of the German-Uzbek joint excavations at Djarkutan Tepe under the direction of D. Huff and Sh. Shajdullaev (Huff 1997; Huff/Shajdullaev 1999; 2001); the larger part goes back to Soviet Era excavations conducted by A. Askarov and teams from the Uzbek Academy of Sciences⁶.

During these recent excavations, trenches were dug on the 'citadel mound', the so-called 'temple mound' in various residential quarters and on the No. 3 necropolis to the south of the residential areas (fig. 2)⁷. Between 1995 and 2000, 64 burials were opened here. At the same time, previously unpublished grave goods were documented from the extensive museum collections in Samarkand, Sherabad and Tashkent. I made a complete catalogue and a first analysis of the graves from Sapalli Tepe in my master thesis in 2001 (Teufer 2001)⁸.

First of all, I want to summarize the Late Bronze Age chronology used up to now. It goes back to research conducted by the excavator of both Sapalli and Djarkutan, A. Askarov (Askarov 1977), and was later refined by his students⁹. It is based on both burial finds and stratigraphic units. According to this system, a Sapalli period was followed by the Djarkutan Period, with a short overlap between the two. After Djarkutan, and clearly differentiated from it, came the Kuzali, Molali and Bustan Periods, again with close connections between Molali and Bustan.

the appearance of Alexander The Great (see Rtveldadze 1990). Although this is irrelevant for Bronze Age cultures, using the term "Bactria" for the area north and south of the central Amudarya is accepted in Bronze Age research.

³ Askarov 1977; Askarov/Abdullaev 1983; Askarov/Shirinov 1993.

⁴ Sarianidi was the first to summarize the very similar Late Bronze Age materials of South Bactria, North Bactria and the Margiana under the term of "Bactria-Margiana Archeological Complex (BMAC)" (Sarianidi 1974, 70; Sarianidi 1977a, 97). This term helps in the following to describe an extensive migration (Sarianidi 1987, 44ff. Sarianidi 1990, 74ff.; Sarianidi 1998, 150ff.; Hiebert/Lamberg-Karlovsky 1992, 1-15). In paper, the term BMAC has been used only in its chronological function for paraphrasing the older period of the Late Bronze Age (Hiebert's period 2 [Hiebert 1994]).

⁵ Vinogradova 2001, 199-204; Avanesova 1997, fig. 13, 15-17; Kaniuth/Teufer 2001, 104.

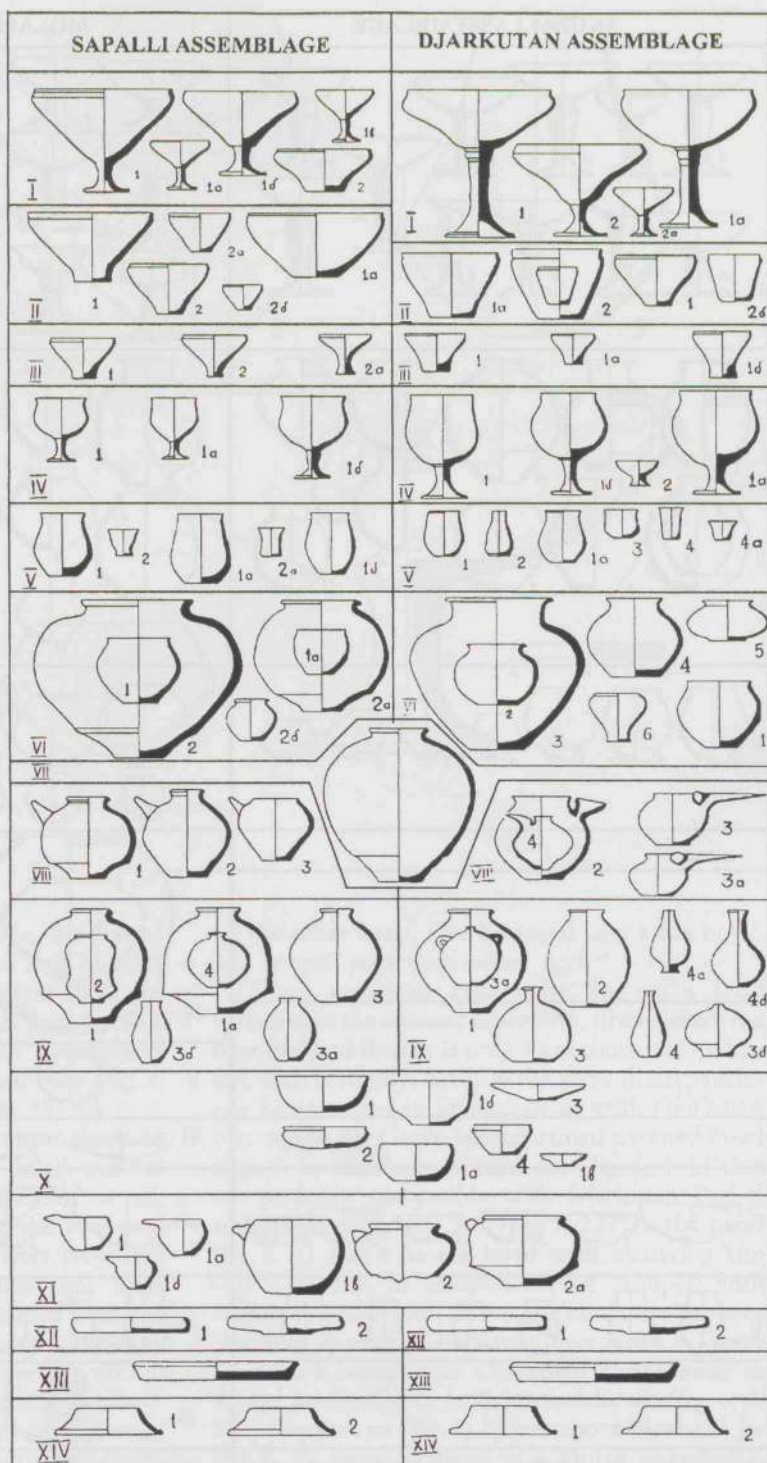
⁶ Askarov 1973; Askarov 1977; Askarov/Abdullaev 1983; Ionesov 1990; Shirinov/Baratov 1997.

⁷ Huff 1997; 2000a; 2000b; 2001; Huff et al. 1997; Huff/Shajdullaev 1999; 2001; G6rsdorf/Huff 2001; Teufer 1999.

⁸ I wish to extend my special thanks to Prof. Dr. Shirinov, Director of the Institute of Archeology, Uzbek Academy of Science in Samarkand, for the permission to study these unpublished materials.

⁹ Askarov/Abdullaev 1983; Rachmanov 1987; Shirinov/Baratov 1997.

Fig. 3. North Bactrian ceramic assemblages: Sapalli; Djarkutan (adapted from Askarov 1977, fig. 32).



Figures 3 and 4 show the most characteristic ceramic forms for the individual periods: For the Sapalli Period, these are high footed bowls with S-shaped or inward-curving rim (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage I), spouted jars (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage VIII), goblets (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage IV), open-spouted cups (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage XI) and different types of pithoi, pots, beakers, and bowls (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage V. VI. IX. X).

Particularly distinctive are strongly curved conical bowls (fig. 3, Sapalli assemblage II 1. 2).

The Djarkutan Period shows a very similar ceramic assemblage: Most types are variants of Sapalli Period forms, the conical bowls develop straighter sides (fig. 3, Djarkutan assemblage II 2), for example. Open-spouted cups disappear.

A clear break is visible when we turn to the Kuzali Period: Here, high footed bowls however with

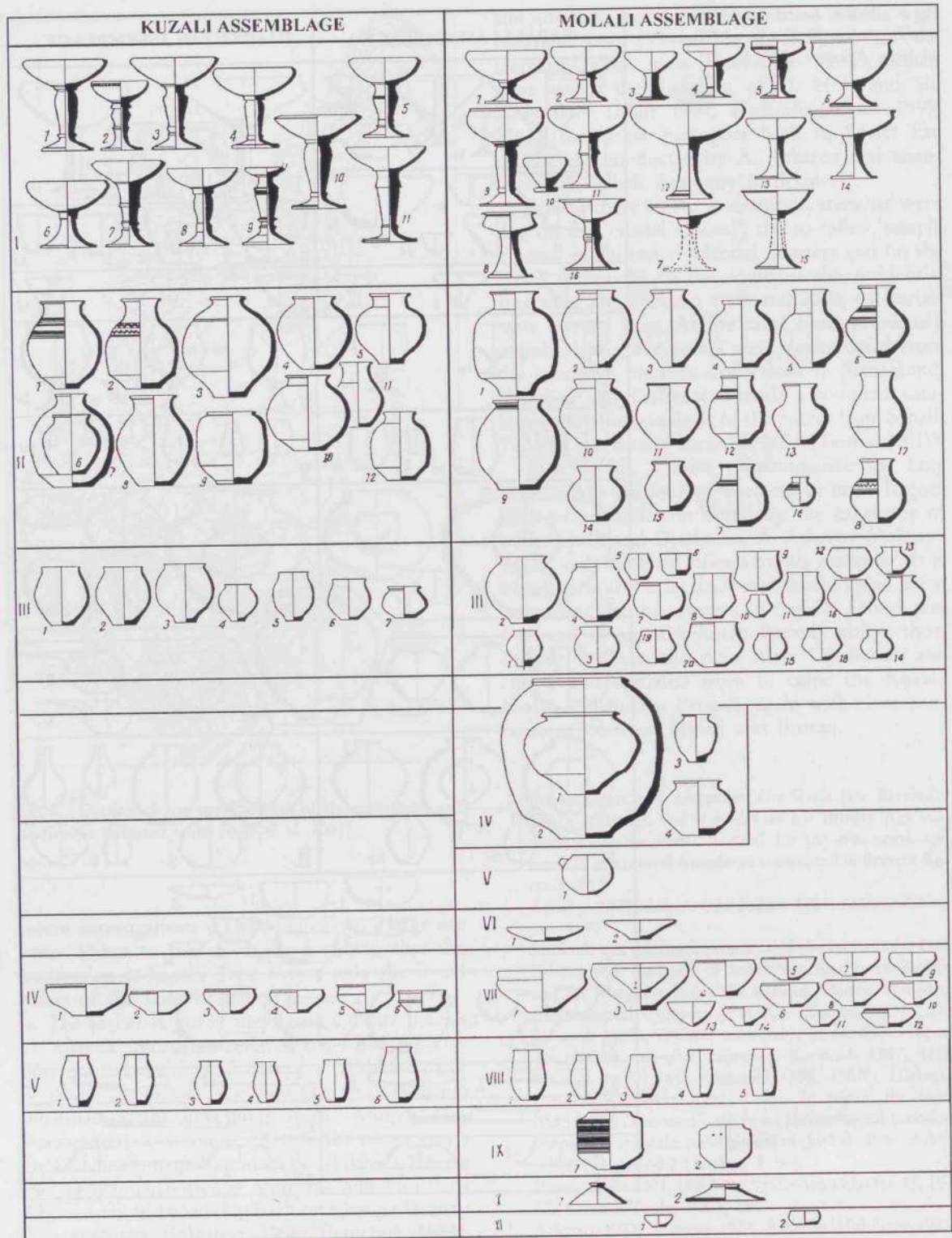


Fig. 4. North Bactrian ceramic assemblages: Kuzali; Molali (adapted from Askarov/Abdullaev 1983, fig. 8. 9).

strongly profiled, almost "baroque" stem and low bowls with sharply incurving rims must be mentioned (fig. 4, Kuzali assemblage I 1. 3-7. 10). Together with these, we find pots, narrow beakers, jars and

bowls. Larger vessels have a long, comparatively narrow neck (fig. 4, Kuzali assemblage II 1. 2. 5. 11). As we can see, the ceramic spectre is much reduced when compared to the Sapalli and Djarkutan Periods.

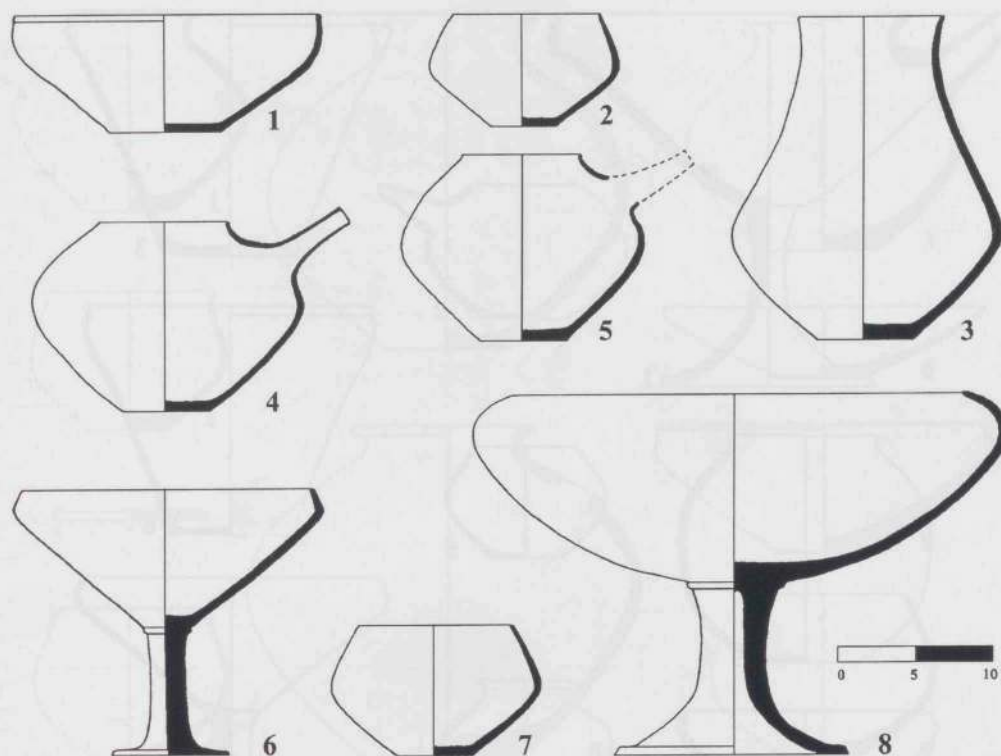


Fig. 5. Djarkutan Necropolis 4c, Grave 165, ceramics.

In the Molali and Bustan Periods, the footed bowls have a rather squat form and lack profiled stems (fig. 4, Molali assemblage I). Jars share the same narrow necks with the Kuzali jars, but the pots and bowls show greater diversity. Particularly noteworthy are the small, biconical jars (fig. 4, Molali assemblage III 8–10. 12. 16. 18–20).

The major problem with the chronology as presented here is that only a very small number of graves (closed finds) were published at all, making it extremely difficult to test the proposed sequence. This was only possible after recording older burials, excavating new ones and, most importantly, taking into account graves from the nearby necropolis of Bustan VI. As should be the case in a proper 'paradigm shift', some data do not fit the chronological system I have just outlined. To illustrate this point, some graves from Bustan should be mentioned, which were published by N. Avanesova and N. Tashulatova¹⁰.

Bustan Grave 148 contained a hairpin and a spouted jar, both types of Djarkutan Period date¹¹. But we also find clear Molali types, namely a footed bowl with low, hollow foot, slightly rounded body and inward-curving rim, three rounded pots with offset neck, two biconical jars and a tear-shaped lapislazuli bead¹². Bustan Grave 230 shows the same combination of Djarkutan- and Molali-Period types: On the one hand a spouted jar, a goblet, a bronze rod, and a pin with conical head¹³;

on the other hand, two biconical jars, a flat bowl, and several pots with offset neck¹⁴.

These variations cannot be due to a local variation in the ceramic repertoire, firstly, since the necropolis of Bustan is only 3 km south of Djarkutan, and, secondly, because the same discrepancies can be observed in Djarkutan as well: Djarkutan Necropolis 4c, Grave 165 contained a footed bowl (figs. 5, 6) and two spouted jars (fig. 5, 4, 5) that are perfectly compatible with Djarkutan Period types. Two biconical jars (fig. 5, 2, 7), a flat bowl (fig. 5, 1) and a footed bowl with incurving rim (fig. 5, 8) can, in comparison, be grouped with Molali-Period forms, as can the miniature bronzes (Kaniuth in press). Djarkutan Necropolis 3, Grave 50 held a number of Djarkutan forms such as footed bowls (fig. 6, 1, 9), conical bowls (fig. 6, 3, 6), a spouted jar (fig. 6, 2) but also a biconical jar (fig. 6, 5), more at home in a Molali assemblage.

¹⁰ Avanesova 1997; Avanesova/Tashulatova 1999.

¹¹ Avanesova 1997, fig. 10, 1. 12; Kaniuth/Teufer 2001, fig. 11, 1. 12.

¹² Avanesova 1997, fig. 10, 4. 7–11. 13; Kaniuth/Teufer 2001, fig. 11, 4. 7–11. 13.

¹³ Avanesova/Tashulatova 1999, fig. 1; 1a; Kaniuth/Teufer 2001, fig. 12, 1. 2. 7. 9.

¹⁴ Avanesova/Tashulatova 1999, fig. 1a; Kaniuth/Teufer 2001, fig. 12, 5. 6. 8. 10. 12. 13.

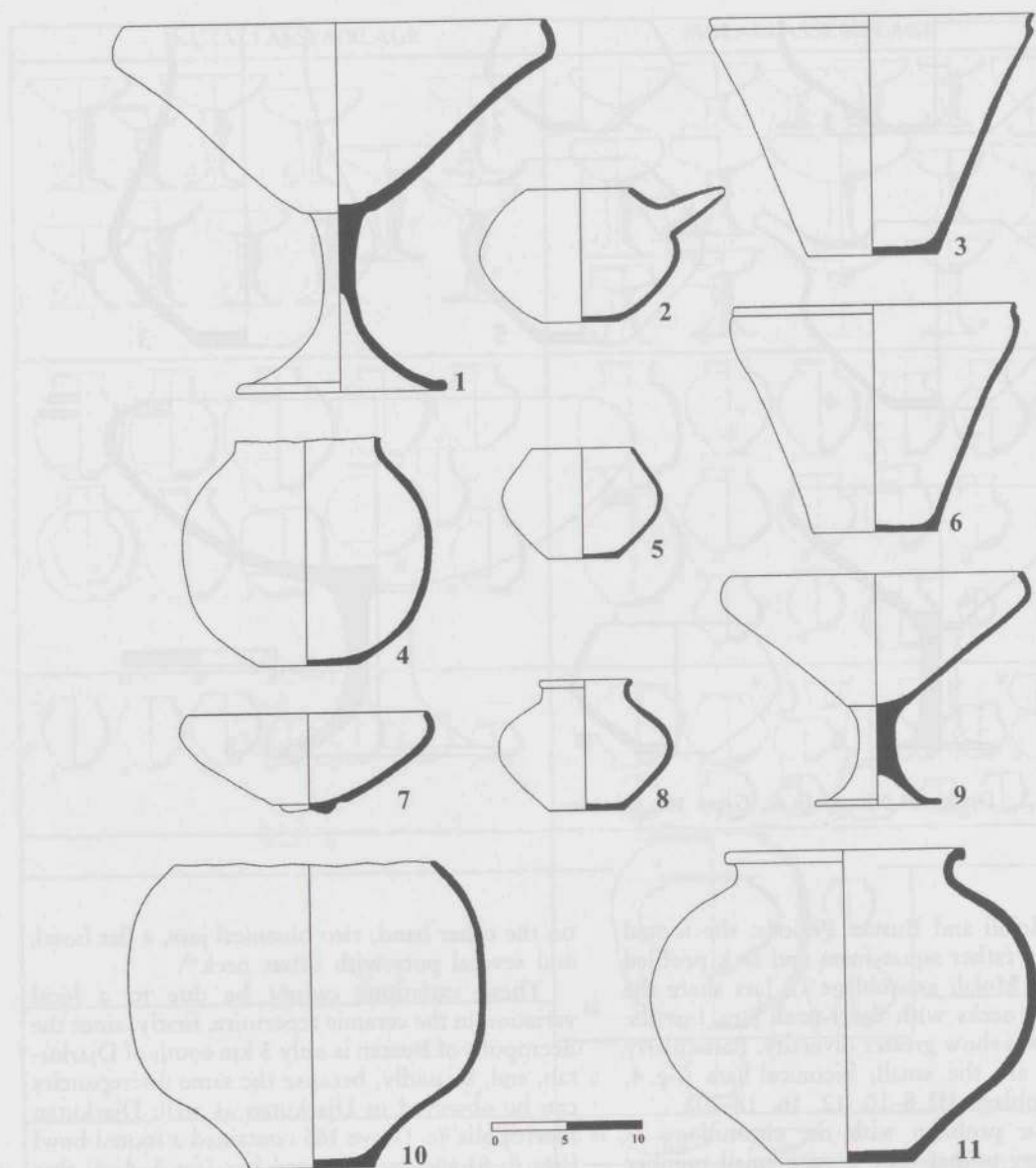


Fig. 6. Djarkutan Necropolis 3, Grave 50.

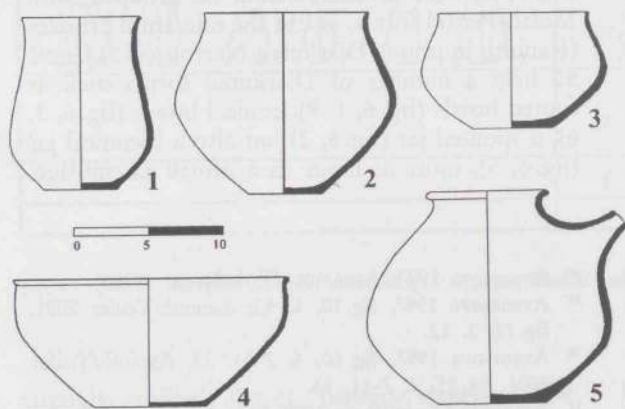


Fig. 7. Djarkutan Necropolis 3, ceramic depot.

The fragment of a footed bowl also resembles a Molali type (figs. 6, 7), but given its fragmentary state we cannot be certain. Finally, a ceramic hoard from Necropolis 3 contained a spouted jar (fig. 7, 5) and two biconical jars (fig. 7, 3), a Djarkutan and a Molali-type and the same combination again appears in Grave 5 of Tepe 4 (spouted jars: fig. 8, 3, 5; biconical jars: fig. 8, 4, 7, 9).

So, we are facing some deviations from the traditional chronological sequence. None of the burials showed links between the Djarkutan- and Kuzali-Periods, while Djarkutan- and Molali-materials frequently appear in the same contexts.

In order to make the necessary adjustments in the chronological sequence, all available

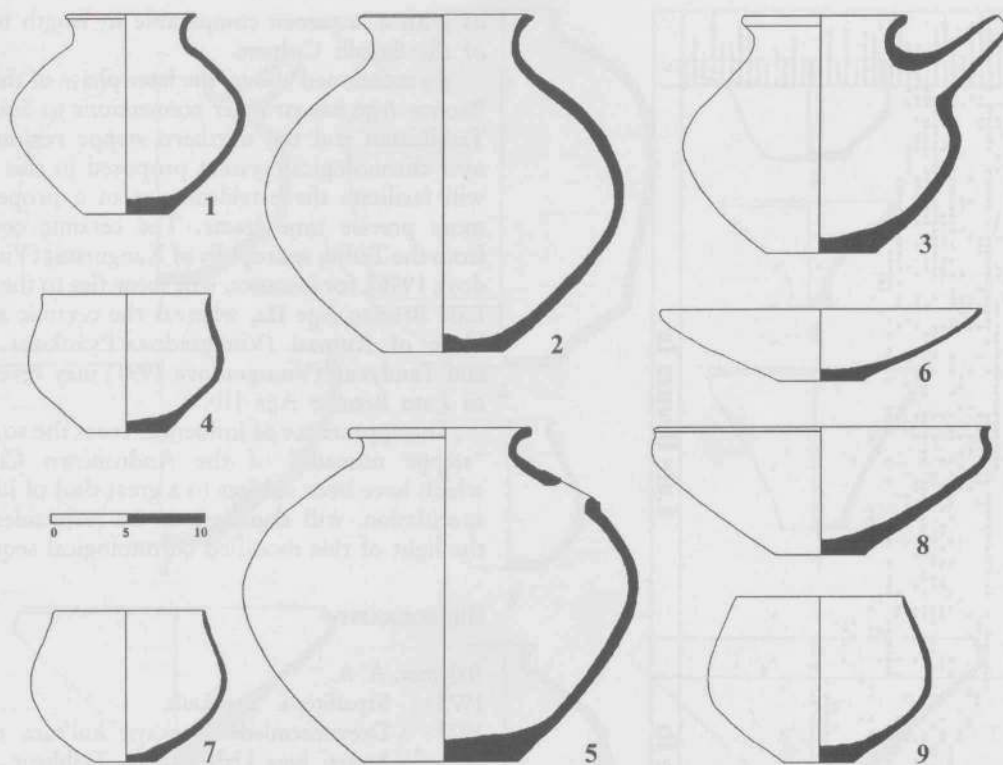


Fig. 8. Djarkutan Tepe 4, Grave 5.

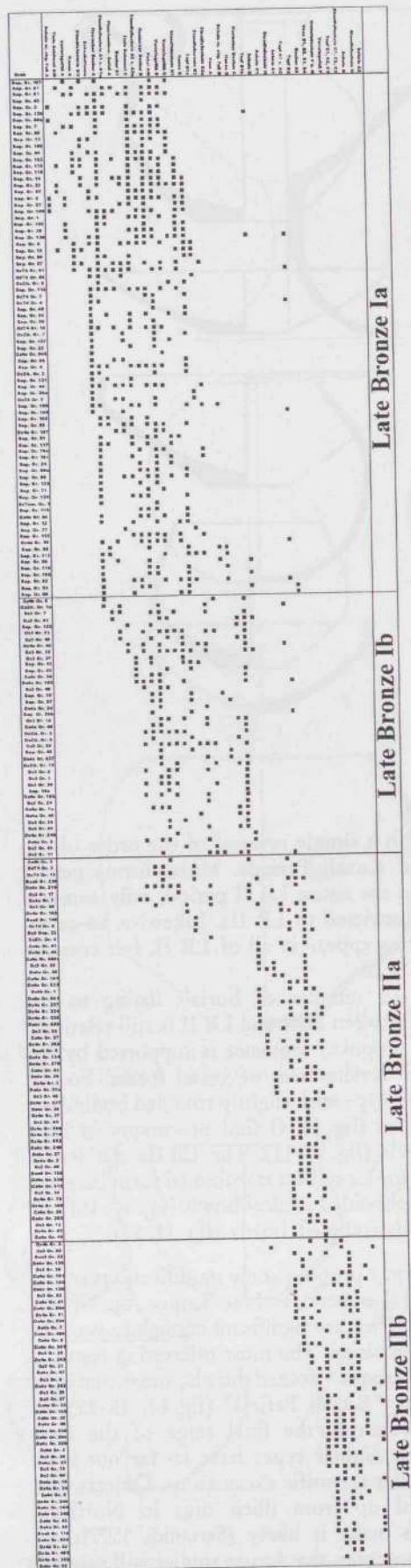
burial finds from Sapalli and Djarkutan are listed in a combination-table. The result is a combination matrix, which shows the burial contexts in the left column, and the ceramic types in the first row (fig. 9). We can see that the Late Bronze Age sequence falls into two distinct units, which we propose to call Late Bronze (LB) I and II, LB I being the older (here in the upper left corner) and LB II the younger one (down on the right). They can each be further divided into two sub-phases, LB Ia/b and LB IIa/b respectively. Listing the characteristic shapes of these sub-phases, we can immediately see, that LB Ia and LB Ib correspond with the Sapalli and Djarkutan Periods defined by Askarov (fig. 3; 10). In LB IIa, on the other hand, types appear that were so far classified as 'Molali': biconical jars (fig. 4, Molali assemblage III 8-10, 12, 16, 18-20; fig. 11, 1, 2), footed bowls with slightly rounded body and incurving rim (fig. 4, Molali assemblage I 12; fig. 11, 4) and flat bowls with rounded rims (fig. 4, Molali assemblage VII 6; fig. 11, 7).

Forms thought to be characteristic for the Kuzali Period, such as footed bowls with strongly profiled stem (fig. 4, Kuzali assemblage I; fig. 11, 16-19) and small pots with narrow base (fig. 4, Kuzali assemblage III, 2-5; fig. 11, 10, 14) now form the bulk of the material within our sub-phase LB IIb. It has to be emphasized that we are not

dealing with a simple reversal of the order of the Molali and Kuzali Periods. Molali-forms persist throughout the entire LB II period, only some of them are restricted to LB IIa. Likewise, so-called Kuzali-forms appear in all of LB II, but concentrate in LB IIb.

While the number of burials dating to the transition between LB I and LB II is still relatively small, the proposed sequence is supported by the typological development of vessel forms. Footed bowls of IIa-type with slightly rounded bodies and inturned rims (fig. 11, 4) find precursors in LB I footed bowls (fig. 10, 11). The LB IIa flat bowls (fig. 11, 7) appear to be a transitional form between LB Ib straight-sided conical bowls (fig. 10, 15) and the Late IIb rounded bowls (fig. 11, 11).

Summing up, I propose some modifications of the chronological sequence of Late Bronze Age Northern Bactria. They are significant enough to warrant a new terminology. The most interesting result is that the "baroque" footed bowls, once the hallmark of the "Kuzali Period" (fig. 11, 16-19), in reality characterize the final stage of the Late Bronze Age. Similar types have so far not been found in other scientific excavations. Objects that have turned up from illicit digs in Northern Afghanistan make it likely (Sarianidi 1977b, 69 fig. 31, 2), however, that future studies will provide



us with a sequence comparable in length to that of the Sapalli Culture.

As mentioned above, the later phase of the Late Bronze Age has stronger connections to Southern Tadjikistan and the northern steppe region. The new chronological system proposed in this paper will facilitate the establishment of a proper and more precise time frame. The ceramic complex from the Tadjik necropolis of Kangurtut (Vinogradova 1996), for instance, will show ties to the phase Late Bronze Age IIa, whereas the ceramic assemblage of Kumsai (Vinogradova/Pyankova 1990) and Tandyriul (Vinogradova 1991) may reveal ties to Late Bronze Age IIb.

The appearance of influences from the so called "steppe nomads" of the Andronowo Culture, which have been subject to a great deal of historic speculation, will also have to be reconsidered in the light of this modified chronological sequence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Askarov, A. A.
 1973 Sapallitepa. Tashkent.
 1977 Drevnezemledel'cheskaya kul'tura epokhi bronzi iuga Uzbekistana. Tashkent.
- Askarov, A. A./Abdullaev, B. N.
 1983 Djarkutan. Tashkent.
- Askarov, A. A./Shirinov, T.
 1993 Rannjaja gorodskaja kul'tura epochi bronzi iuga Srednei Azii. Samarkand.
- Avanesova, N.
 1997 Spätbronzezeitliche Kulturkontakte in der baktrischen Flußoase nach den Befunden der Nekropole Bustan 6. In: Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan 29, 147-178.
- Avanesova, N./Tashulatova, N.
 1999 Simbolika ognja v pogrebal'noj praktike sapallinskoj kul'turi. In: Istorija Material'noj Kul'turi Uzbekistana 30, 27-36.
- Francfort, H.-P.
 1984 The early periods of Shortughai (Harappan) and the western Bactrian culture of Dashly. In: Allchin, B. (ed.), South Asian Archaeology 1981. Cambridge, 170-175.
- Görsdorf, J./Huff, D.
 2001 14C - Datierung von Materialien aus der Grabung Džarkutan, Usbekistan. In: Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan 33, 75-87.

Fig. 9. Combination matrix.

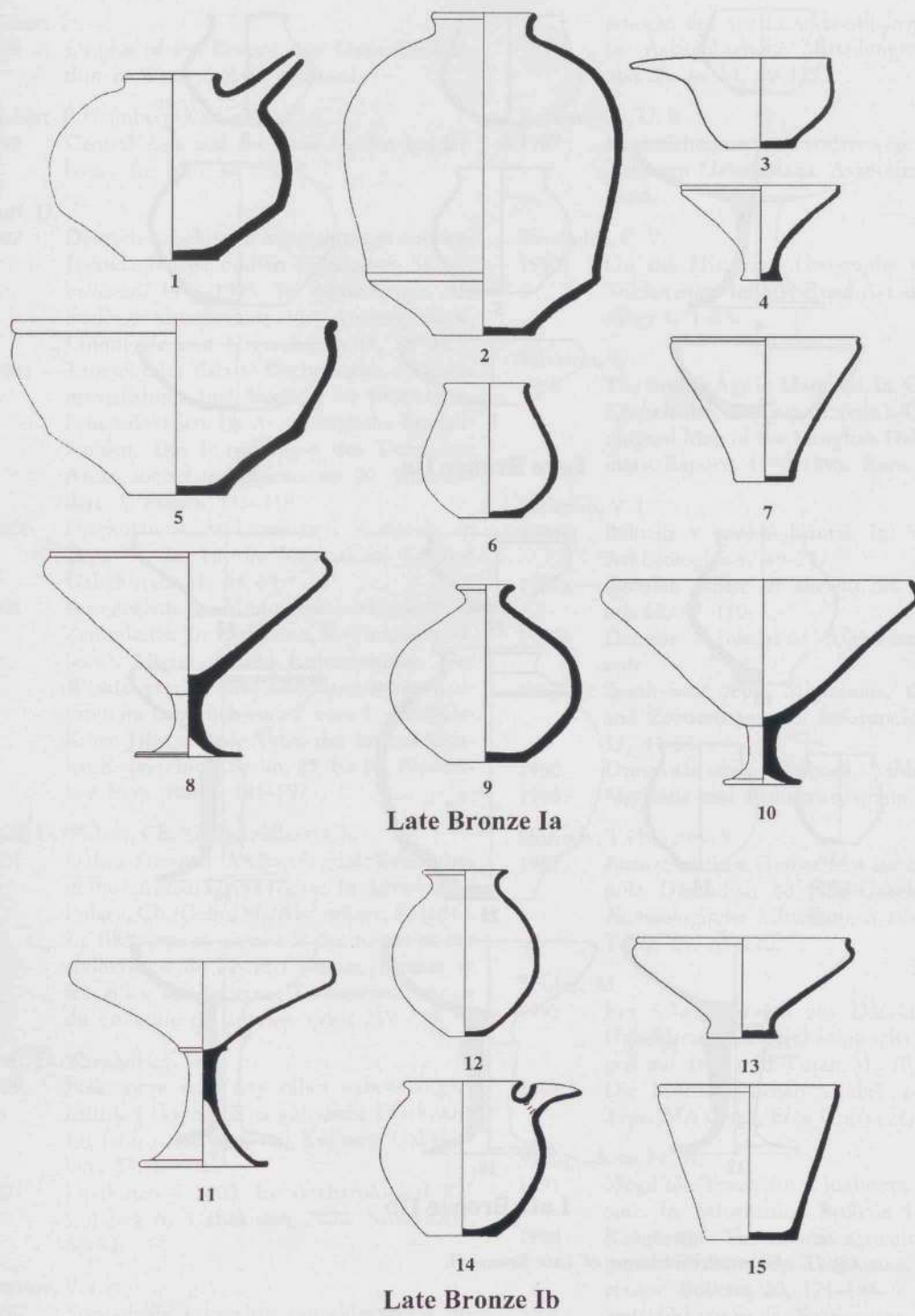
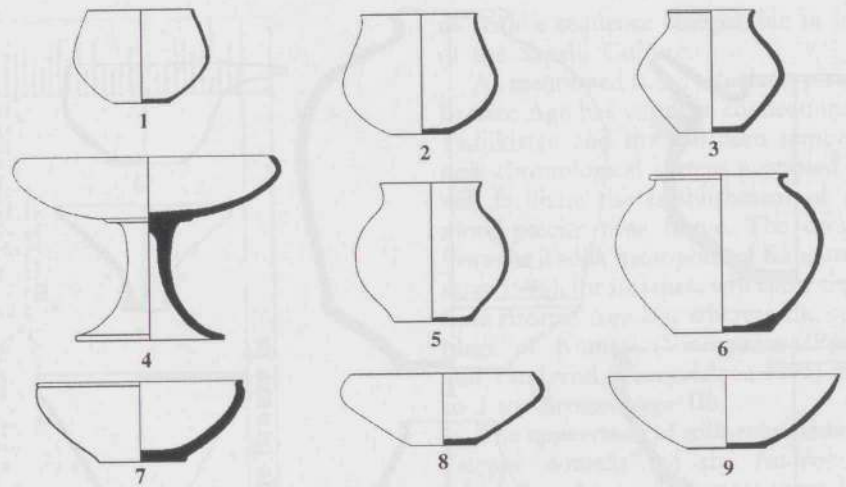
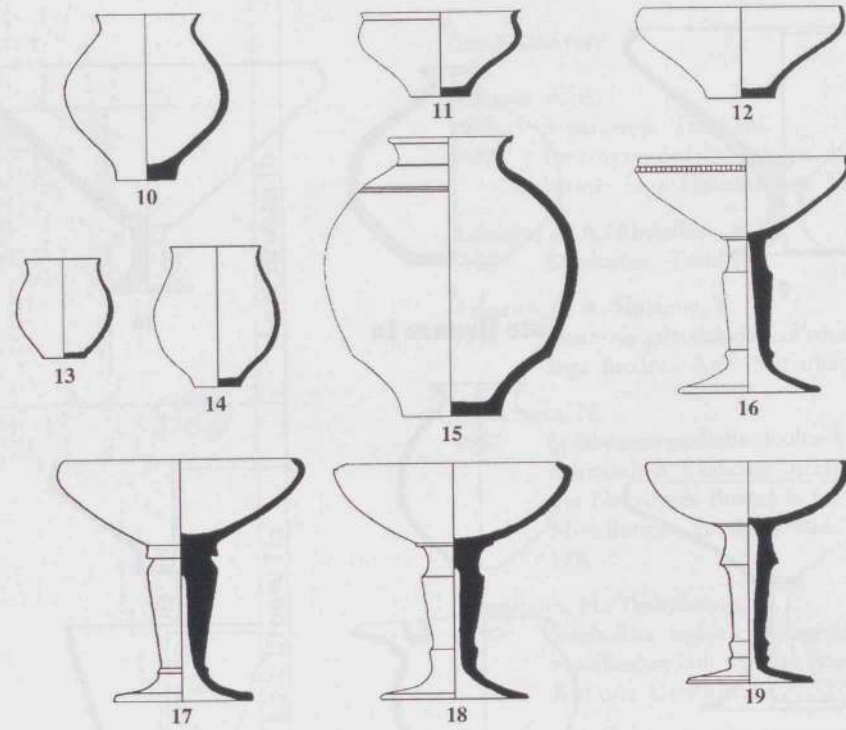


Fig. 10. Characteristic forms of Late Bronze I.



Late Bronze IIa



Late Bronze IIb

Fig. 11. Characteristic forms of Late Bronze II.

- Hiebert, F.
1994 Origins of the Bronze Age Oasis Civilization in Central Asia. Harvard.
- Hiebert, F./Lamberg-Karlovsky, C. C.
1992 Central Asia and the Indo-Iranian borderlands. In: *Iran* 30, 1–15.
- Huff, D.
1997 Deutsch-uzbekische Ausgrabungen auf dem Džandaulattepe und in Džarkutan, Südszbekistan, 1993–1995. In: *Mitteilungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte* 18, 83–95.
2000a Tempel oder Palast? Dscharkutan – Monumentalbauten und Siedlung im bronzezeitlichen Baktrien. In: *Archäologische Entdeckungen. Die Forschungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts im 20. Jahrhundert*. I. Mainz, 115–118.
2000b Džarkutan – Archaeological Research on Tepe VI. In: *Istorija Material'noj Kul'turi Uzbekistana* 31, 58–69.
2001 Bronzezeitliche Monumentalarchitektur in Zentralasien. In: Eichmann, R./Parzinger, H. (eds.), *Migration und Kulturtransfer. Der Wandel vorder- und zentralasiatischer Kulturen im Umbruch vom 2. zum 1. vorchristlichen Jahrtausend. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums Berlin, 23. bis 26. November 1999*. Bonn, 181–197.
- Huff, D./Pidaev, Ch./Chaydoullaev, Ch.
2001 Uzbek-German Archaeological Researches in the Surkhan Darya region. In: Leriche, P./Pidaev, Ch./Gelin, M./Abdoullaev, K. (eds.), *La Bactriane au carrefour des routes et des civilisations de l'Asie Centrale. Termez et les villes de Bactriane-Tokharestan. Actes du colloque de Termez 1997*, 219–233.
- Huff, D./Shajdullaev, Sh.
1999 Nekotorye rezul'taty rabot uezbejsko-germanskoj ekspedicii na gorodishe Džarkutan. In: *Istorija Material'noj Kul'tury Uzbekistana* 30, 19–26.
2001 Džarkutan – 2000. In: *Archaeological Researches in Uzbekistan 2000*. Samarkand, 68–72.
- Ionesov, V. I.
1990 Stanovlenie i razvitie ranneklassovych ot-noshenij v osedlozemledel'cheskom obshestve Severnoj Baktrii (po materialam pogrebal'nich kompleksov 2.tis.do.n.e. Iushnogo Uzbekistana). Avtoreferat. Samarkand.
- Kaniuth, K.
in press Metallobjekte der Bronzezeit aus Nord-Baktrien. Ph.D. Thesis, Muenster
- Kaniuth, K./Teufer, M.
2001 Zur Sequenz des Gräberfeldes von Rannij Tulchar und seiner Bedeutung für die Chronologie des spätbronzezeitlichen Baktrien. In: *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 33, 89–113.
- Rachmanov, U. B.
1987 Keramicheskoe proizvodstvo epochi bronzi iushnogo Uzbekistana. Avtoreferat. Samarkand.
- Rtveladze, E. V.
1990 On the Historical Geography of Bactria-Tokharistan. In: *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 1, 1–33.
- Salvatori, S.
1998 The Bronze Age in Margiana. In: Gubaev, A./Koshelenko, G./Tosi, M. (eds.), *The Archaeological Map of the Murghab Delta. Preliminary Reports 1990–1995*. Rom, 47–55.
- Sarianidi, V. I.
1974 Baktrija v epokhi bronzi. In: *Sovjetskaja Arkheologija* 4, 49–71.
1977a Bactrian centre of ancient art. *Mesopotamia* 12, 97–110.
1977b *Drevnie Zemledel'tsi Afghanistana*. Moscow.
1987 South-west Asia: Migrations, the Aryans and Zoroastrians. In: *Information Bulletin* 13, 44–56.
1990 *Drevnosti strani Margush*. Ashkhabad.
1998 *Margiana and Protozoroastrism*. Athen.
- Shirinov, T./Baratov, S.
1997 Bronzezeitliche Grabstätten aus der Nekropole Džarkutan 4c (Süd-Uzbekistan). In: *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 29, 65–120.
- Teufer, M.
1999 Ein Scheibenknebel aus Džarkutan (Süd-Uzbekistan). In: *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 31, 70–142.
2001 Die bronzezeitlichen Gräber aus Sapallitepe. MA thesis, Free University of Berlin.
- Vinogradova, N. M.
1991 Mogil'nik Tandyriul v Iuzhnom Tadzjikistane. In: *Information Bulletin* 18, 68–88.
1996 Kangurtut: The ancient agricultural burial ground in Southern Tadjikistan. In: *Information Bulletin* 20, 171–194.
2001 Südtadžikistan in der Spätbronze- und Früh-eisenzeit. In: Eichmann, R./Parzinger, H. (eds.), *Migration und Kulturtransfer. Der Wandel vorder- und zentralasiatischer Kulturen im Umbruch vom 2. zum 1. vorchristlichen Jahrtausend. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums Berlin, 23. bis 26. November 1999*. Bonn, 199–219.
- Vinogradova, N. M./P'jankova, L. T.
1990 Kumsai Cemetery in South Tadjikistan. In: *Information Bulletin* 17, 121–138.