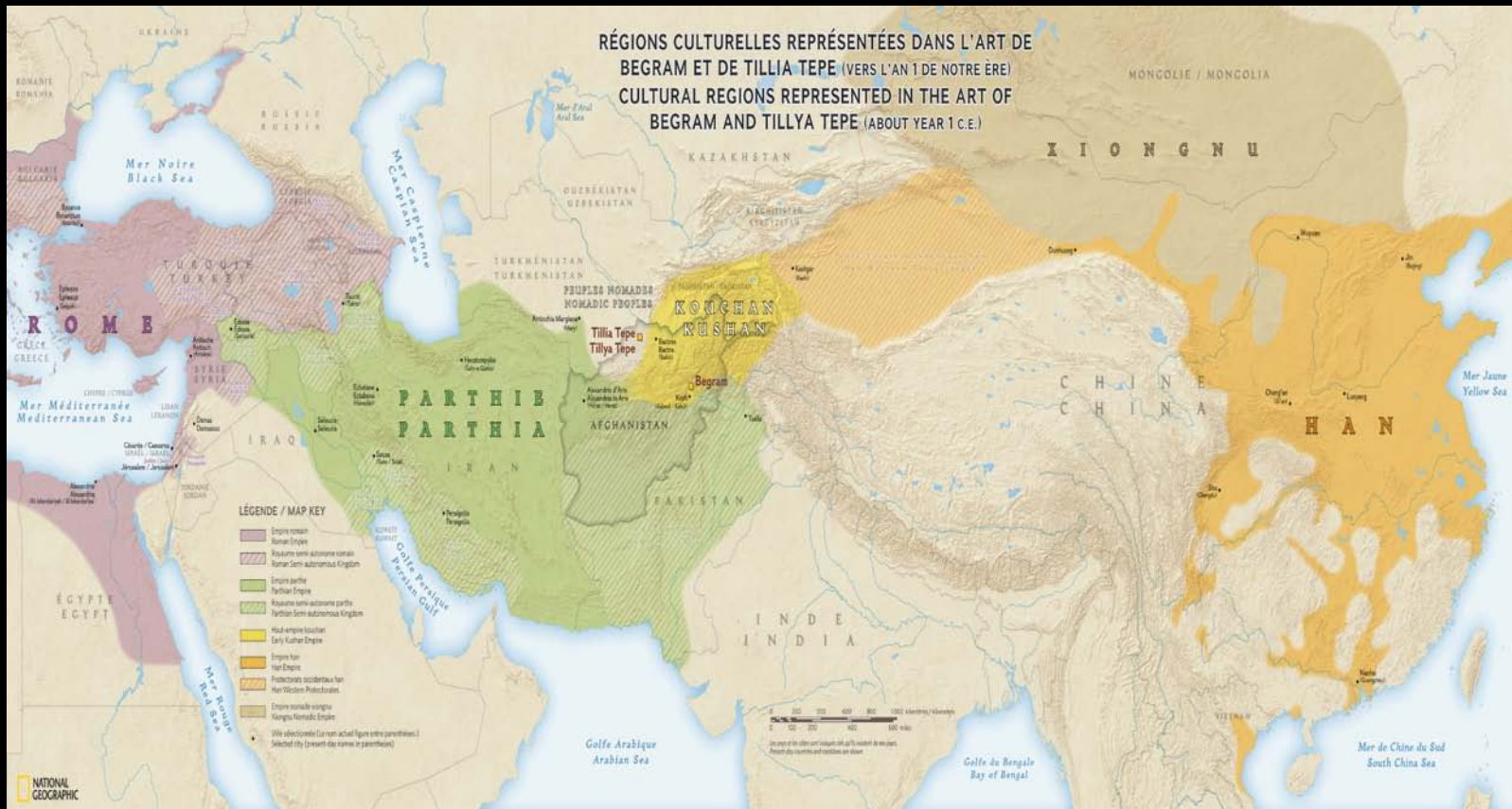


Cross roads of the ancient world

A nation stays alive if its culture stays alive.

*Farhad sediqy National museum of
Afghanistan , Kabul*

Afghanistan stands at the crossroads of many civilisations. At the heart of the Silk Road, Afghanistan was the historic link between China, India, Persia, the Middle East and the West.



Afghanistan at the heart of the Silk Road



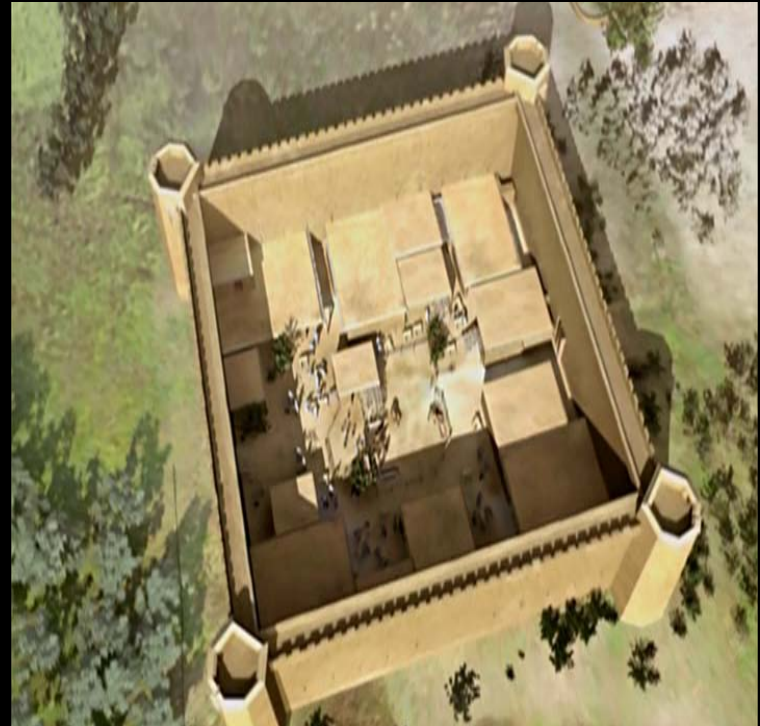
Cross road of the ancient world



When the Fullol villagers first found the hoard, such a rich treasure posed many questions, because archaeologists then knew so little about ancient northern Afghanistan.

Fullol lay close to the upper reaches of the Oxus river, rich in gold-bearing sand, and less than 200 kilometers away from the only known source of lapis lazuli in the ancient world. The deep blue stone was highly valued and whoever controlled the mines at this period would have grown rich from its export.

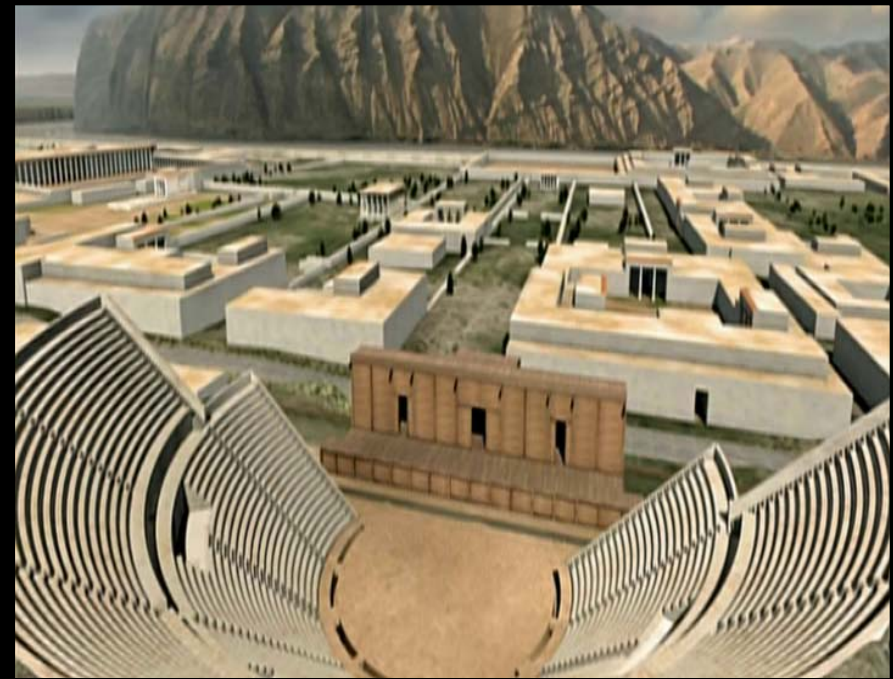
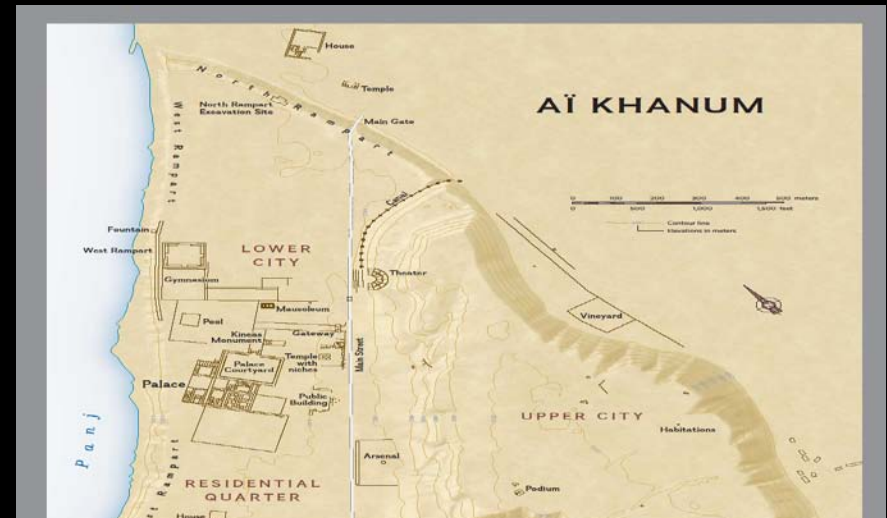
During the 1970s Soviet archaeologists gradually uncovered evidence of a network of settlements in northern Afghanistan and the surrounding areas. These dated to between about 2200 and 1900 BC and suggested a rich shared culture. The settlements relied on farming, but would have been closely connected through trade with each other and with cities in Central Asia and eastern Iran. Fullol lay within this region.



Ai Khanum was found in 300 BC by Seleucus I, one of the followers of Alexander the Great. The city was naturally defended with a river on two sides and a high rocky citadel behind.

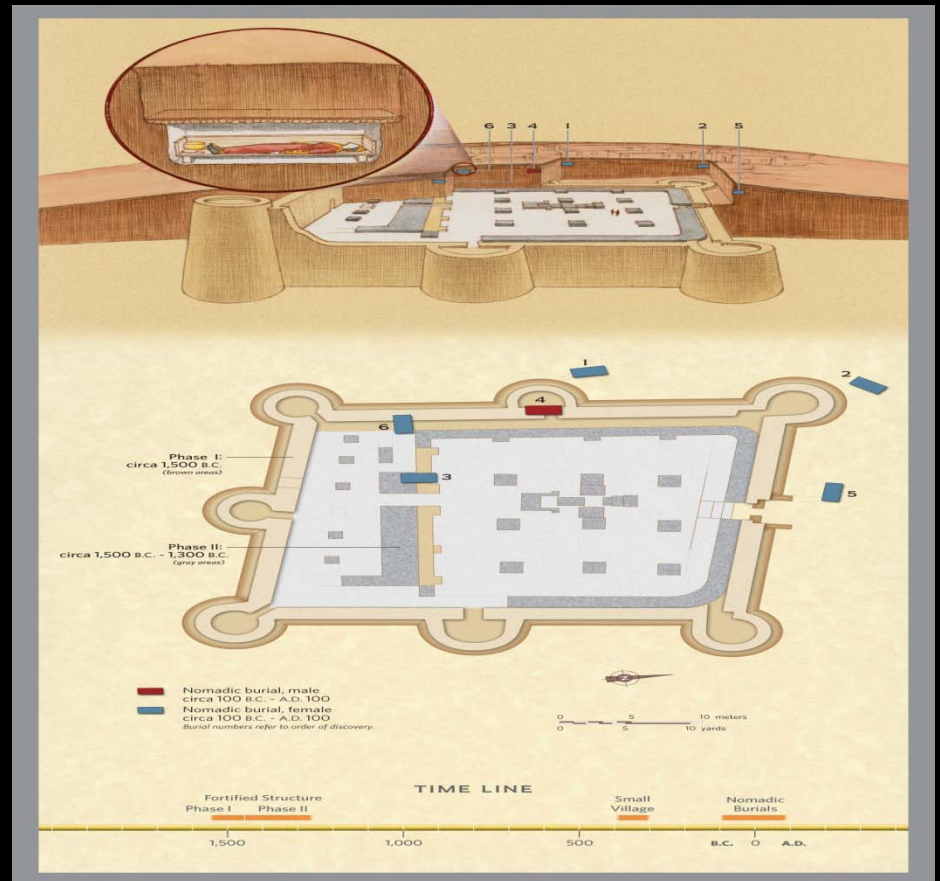
Its defences were strengthened by a city wall. Its purpose was to control the access road from the north-east, leading into the fertile oases of Bactria.

Almost all of the features of the city are Greek. Extensive excavations of the lower city uncovered a palace at the centre of the site, a theatre, a gymnasium, temples, and houses for the nobility as well as ordinary people.



Dug into the ruins of an ancient temple were six graves belonging to a man and five women, nomads buried in about 100 AD. Lying alongside them was the wealth they carried to the afterlife – over 20,000 objects of gold and semi-precious stones.

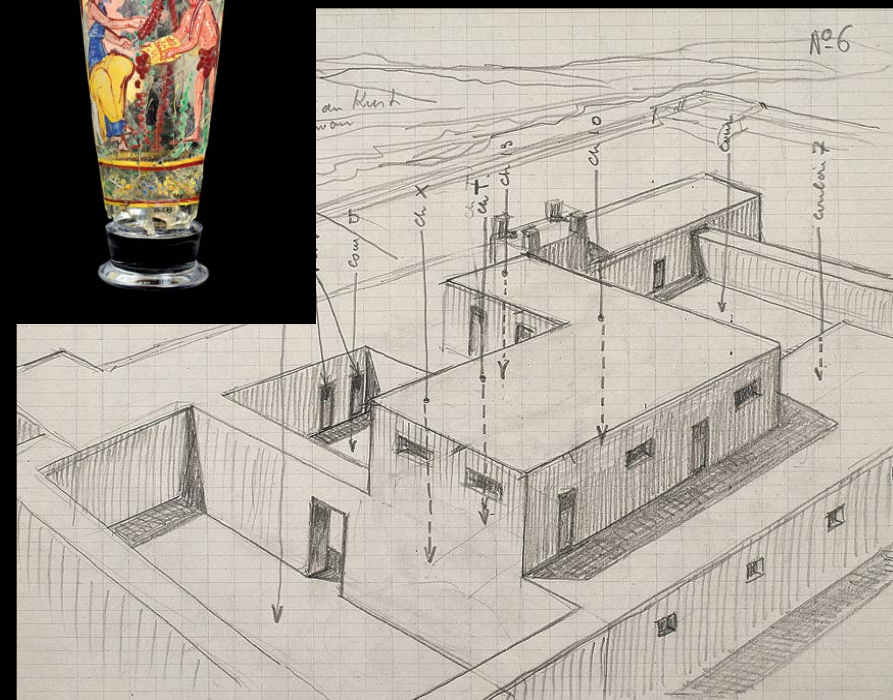
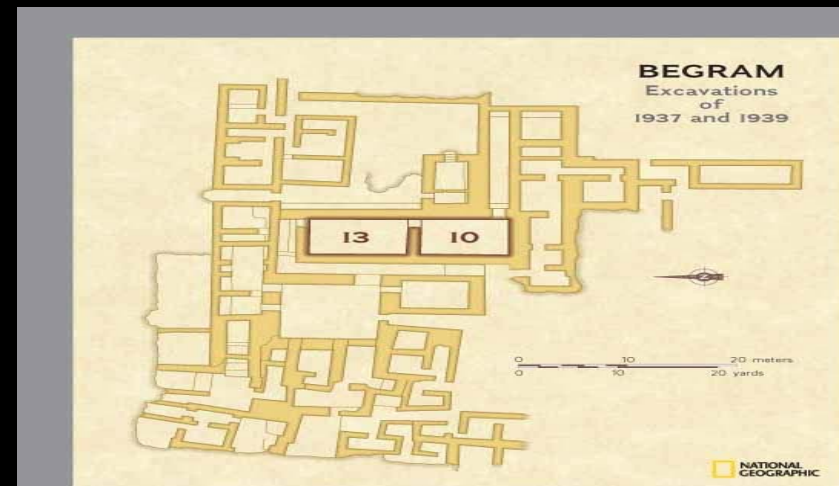
The local Uzbek name for the site was Tillya Tepe, meaning Hill of Gold.



In 1937 French archaeologists, excavating the ancient site of Begram, discovered a concealed room filled with treasure. Two years later they found a second room, also filled with valuable goods. They contained hundreds of luxury items, imported from China, India and the Roman Empire.

At first archaeologists believed they had found a warehouse belong to merchants trading along the Silk Road. More recent research suggests the rooms lay at the heart of a palace.

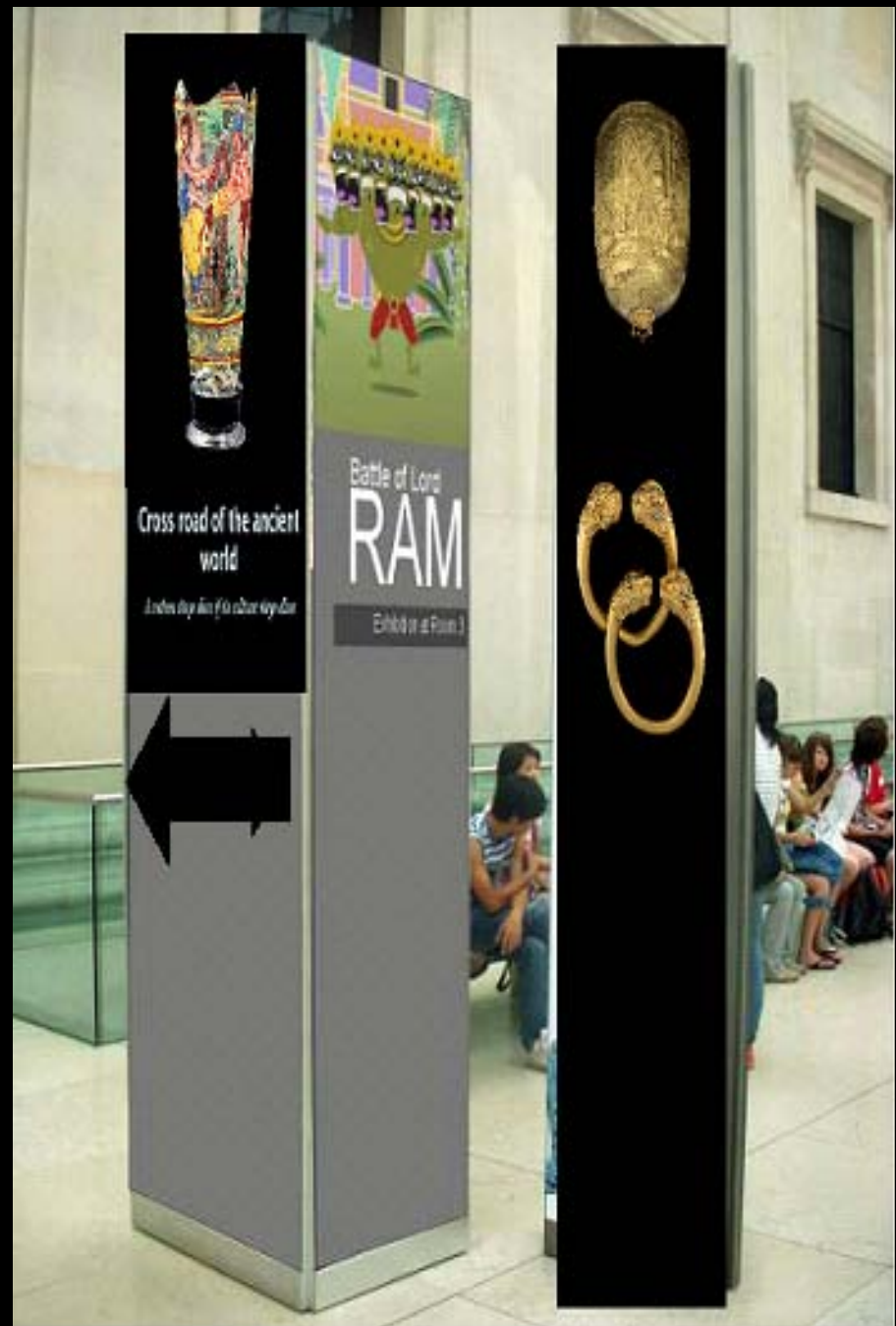
Perhaps these were the hoarded treasures of the Kushan royal family, concealed at a moment of crisis over 2000 years ago and their existence forgotten.



Surkh Kotal



Marketing On-site signage



Billboard marketing





Thank you for your
attention