

The Collart-Palmyre Object Database on CATIMA from the UNIVERSITY of LAUSANNE, Switzerland, in collaboration with the International Council of Museums (ICOM)

The Collart-Palmyre Project and Databases

The Collart-Palmyre Project of the University of Lausanne was launched in 2017 following the destruction of the Baalshamin temple in Palmyra (Syria) in 2015. This project is based on the rich archives left by Paul Collart, a Swiss archaeologist and professor at the universities of Geneva and Lausanne, who led the Swiss archaeological excavations in the city of Palmyra from 1954 to 1956 and in 1966. He took a particular interest in studying the Baalshamin temple, and this resulted into a gathering of sixty to eighty workers and a large team of experts taking part in Paul Collart's archaeological excavations and researches in Palmyra.

After his death in 1981, Paul Collart's descendants bequeathed his personal archives to the Institute of archaeology and ancient studies of the University of Lausanne (ASA-UNIL). His archives contained about 3'000 photographs, notebooks and maps of a dozen archaeological sites and monuments, including documentation from the Baalshamin sanctuary. As a result of the recent destruction of this monument, Paul Collart's documentation is now the best source of information for the study of this sanctuary. The value of this Archive is of high importance to any future rebuilding or restoration project.

One of the major aim of the Collart-Palmyre Project is to establish an inventory of all the objects found during the excavations lead by Paul Collart in Palmyra. The goal of such an inventory is to contribute to the preservation of cultural goods, ensuring their provenance and traceability so that professionals can identify and return them to their original location. This work was carried out in collaboration with the International Council of Museums from Austria (ICOM-Österreich) under the form of a database that follows the Object ID Standard and that is made available (on request) to professionals who fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods. The *Collart-Palmyre Object Database* was first sent to stakeholders (INTERPOL, OSCE, Carabinieri, UNODC, FBI, Cranfield Forensic Institute) interested by ICOM at the end of 2020.

The Collart-Palmyre Object Database on CATIMA using Object ID Standard

	<p>Oil lamp with rounded body and four rows of pearl motifs</p> <p>Object type: Oil lamp; Material: Ceramic; Dimensions in cm (Height x Length x Width): 2,4 x 8,8 x -; Diameter in cm: 6,1; Inscription and particular characteristic: Orange tones; Excavation ID: C. 5; Museum ID: Palmyra, No ID; Publication ID: 56; Tiresias data base ID: 78301; Bibliography: Baalshamin VI, p. 44, pl. 5, n. 7 ; p. 21, abb. 2, n. 15.</p>
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The *Collart-Palmyre Object Database* is hosted on the generator of online catalogues CATIMA, itself hosted by the University of Lausanne.

CATIMA

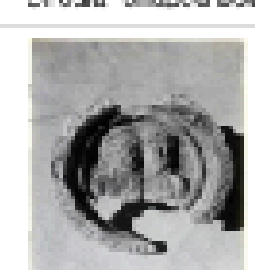
The word CATIMA stands for the French acronym "CATalogue d'IMAgés" (Catalogue of images). As a database, CATIMA allows various actions that work perfectly with the *Collart-Palmyre Object Database* objectives :

- it defines the structure of the data of the objects;
- it connects the objects together;
- it enters data within a web-based interface;
- it includes images and documents with each entry;
- it browses the data interactively on the web;
- and it allows research within the catalogues.

Circular-shaped bowl in alabaster decorated with two busts

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Title Circular-shaped bowl in alabaster decorated with two busts

Picture

[Click to enlarge](#)

Object type Vessel

Materials Alabaster

Diameter in cm 3,7

Excavation and particular characteristic: Small fish-shaped alabaster bowl with two busts

Excavation ID Sc. 347

Museum ID No ID

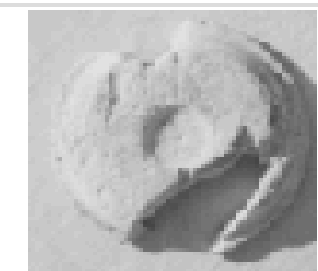
Publication ID Grab 13, Object 2, Objekt 7

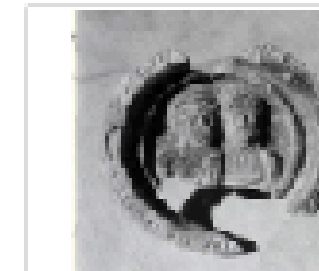
Tiresias data base ID 78301, 78302, 78303, 78304, 78305

Description Circular-shaped bowl in alabaster decorated with two busts. The horizontal external edge of the bowl is decorated with two symmetrical ensembles. Each ensemble is surrounded by a circular protruding rim. The upper and lower parts of the bowl are decorated with a small fish-like figure above and below the rim. The representation shows a couple with the male figure on the left and the female on the right.


Bibliography Baalshamin VI, p. 44, pl. 5, n. 7, p. 21, n. 15.

Photographs

 Circular-shaped bowl in alabaster decorated with two busts

 Circular-shaped bowl in alabaster decorated with two busts

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Functioning of the database

The *Collart-Palmyre Object Database* contains precise descriptions and photographs from the archaeological artefacts found by the Swiss team of archaeologists in the Baalshamin Sanctuary. The structure of the items inventory sheets is based on the Object ID system, the international standard used to describe cultural objects. The database has been designed to be accessible and to be used by any professional who fights against the trafficking of cultural goods. This is the reason why only a limited number of fields containing relevant information for the identification of the object have been registered:

- Title: short description of the object.
 - Picture: the main photo is on top of the page, but below the description are many photographs that allow a vision of the object under various angles.
 - Object type : category of the object, whether it is inscribed, ceramic, sculpture, jewel etc.
 - Materials : that composed the object (iron, silver, clay ...).
 - Dimensions and diameter of the object.
 - Inscription and particular characteristics: whether it has colors or special feature (break, hole, etc.) that allow a clear identification of the object.
 - ID-Excavation.
 - ID-Museum.
 - ID-publication: from the Baalshamin publication by Paul Collart and his collaborators.
 - Tiresias database ID : from the database of the Collart archives <https://tiresias.unil.ch/home>.
 - Date: approximative dating of the object.
 - Description: of the object.
 - Bibliography: references where informations on the object have been found. All the book references mentioned in the «inventory files» sheets are fully developed on the page «Bibliography».
- Each information entered in the database is based on the Collart archives and on the publications of work carried out by the team of Swiss researchers.

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