Findspot known: Treasures from excavation sites in Egypt in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin

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The origin of the collection of Late Antique and early Christian antiquities from Egypt in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin, dates to the time of Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929). In 1900 he acquired a large number of textiles from Carl Reinhardt (1856–1903), German consul in Cairo, to coincide with the opening of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin in 1904. In the same year he commissioned the well-known art historian Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941), professor in Graz and later in Vienna, to search for artefacts from Egypt and other regions of the Mediterranean appropriate for display in the new building. In the years 1900 and 1901 Strzygowski brought together more than 1400 objects from Egypt among which were many masterpieces that established the foundation of the Egyptian collection of the former 'Abteilung der Bildwerke der christlichen Epochen,' which is now the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst. In the years between the opening of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum and the fascist takeover in 1933, the collection grew by about 150 objects, from architectural and funeral sculpture to small objects of daily use, which Carl Schmidt (1868–1938) offered to the museum. Several gifts, mostly textiles, came from various collectors and included individual acquisitions of outstanding pieces. Without exception all these objects were purchased on the antiquities market from various dealers all over Egypt.

In addition to these objects, the Museum houses today a considerable number of items that can be traced back to excavations and surveys in Egypt. All in all, 16 findspots are recorded in the inventory books of the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, from north to south: Abu Mina, Abusir el-Meleq, Arsinoe, Batiit Harit (Theadelphia), Umm el-Barakat (Tebtynis), Illahun, Heracleopolis Magna, Bawit, Hermopolis Magna, Antinoupolis, Matmar, Mostagedda, Esne, Elephantine, Faras and Wadi Gazal.

Most of the excavations at these sites were conducted at the turn of the 20th century. Their yield went for the most part into the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, with a smaller proportion going to the Kunsthistorisches Museum, both in Berlin. From there the objects from the Late Antique and early Christian periods were transferred to what is now the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in 1934, 1935 and 1968.

This article aims to give an overview of the state of research on the items with a known findspot. As far as it exists, archive material related to the sites, finders and objects will be taken into consideration. Only a selection of the objects in question have been studied so far. The others still await examination. For the latter, ideally, this approach could be the beginning of a series of research projects for scholars or bachelor or master theses for students. The overview starts with the sites for which finds have been investigated already or are currently under examination. The accompanying images show items typical for the individual findspot.

1 For Josef Strzygowski and his acquisitions for the Staatliche Museen see: Mietke et al. 2012.
Arsinoe/Krokodilopolis/Medinet el-Fayum

Georg Schweinfurth’s exploration
A large number of textiles dates back to Georg Schweinfurth’s exploration in Arsinoe, the ancient capital of the Fayum Oasis, in 1886. Schweinfurth (1836–1925) was inspired to investigate this site by Theodor Graf (1840–1903), who appeared to have found a wealth of textiles there a few years before, in 1882. In contrast to Graf, Schweinfurth’s interest in the textiles was not commercial but purely scientific. His aim was to reconstruct ancient costumes, so he did not separate the decorative element from the basic, plain weave fabrics as was commonly practised at his time. He gathered about 410 fabrics from Arsinoe’s soil and donated the major part to the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin one year later in 1887. These textiles were transferred to the Altchristliche Abteilung of the Kaiser Friedrich-Museum in 1923 and in 1934–35 (Volbach 1946–47, 39). A few pieces have been distributed to collections at Hamburg, Hildesheim, Mainz and the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin; single items were given to interested colleagues or travellers, as proven for instance by samples in Köthen and in the Musée Départemental des Antiquités at Rouen (Fluck 2005, 144). Thanks to his careful working method, which was exemplary and progressive for its time, additional information on particular textiles is available. When Schweinfurth unearthed the fabrics, he attached small labels to them that stated the name of the finder, the year of the find and its provenance, for instance ‘ruins’ or ‘rubbish heaps’ (Fig. 1). It seems that Schweinfurth used both terms as synonyms, with ‘ruins’ in a more general sense including the heaps. Each item received a handwritten number on the label during or shortly after discovery. Occasionally, the exact findspot, meaning the name of the kom where he discovered his find or a short comment on the textile was recorded on the labels too. In a report on his expedition to Arsinoe in 1886 Schweinfurth gives a general description of the textiles he discovered in the koms and inside the tombs, which are of an astonishing similarity (Schweinfurth 1887, 68–73). He mentioned that the deceased were covered with coarse shrouds and pressed between wooden boards; others were wrapped in mats made of palm-leaves and reed. Some corpses were dressed in four or five garments one on top of another. Schweinfurth differentiated between various types of clothes, techniques and decorations without focusing on specific examples. Most of the items are garments or fragments of garments (Fig. 2) and head coverings (Fig. 3). Decorations mostly show ornamental or geometric designs, usually carried out in tapestry (Fig. 4) or lancé-weft (Fig. 5). Figurative patterns are uncommon. Furnishing textiles are often striped or checked and of a coarse weave not well suited for clothing. Smaller sheets with an all-over design in brocading or checks, occasionally fitted out with pile on one side, may have been cushions (Fig. 6).

From 1993 to 1996 the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft funded a project to catalogue the so far unpublished textiles in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, which included the textiles excavated by Schweinfurth. The manuscript about the Schweinfurth collection was finished but for financial reasons has not yet been printed. A couple of articles about the project in general, on particular groups of textiles, such as head-coverings or individual pieces.
from Arsinoe, appeared between 1995 and 2010.\(^2\) In 2010 a small exhibition about Georg Schweinfurth, the pioneer of textile archaeology and explorer of Africa, was shown in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, and displayed textiles from Arsinoe (Finneiser, Linscheid and Pehlivanian 2010).

It is worth mentioning that Schweinfurth found at least 58 further textiles at Heracleopolis Magna, a few kilometres to the south of the Fayum Oasis. They are of the same type and decoration as the items from Arsinoe, which speaks for a particular regional style in that area. These textiles were also recorded as part of the project funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Fluck and Linscheid 1995a; Fluck and Linscheid 1995b; Linscheid 2011, nos 87, 347, 408, 474).

**Theodor Graf’s discoveries**

Another lot of 78 textiles most probably came from Arsinoe as well (Figs 7–8). Together with another 70 pieces, the Kunstgewerbmuseum in Berlin purchased them from Theodor Graf in 1886. From there they were transferred to the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in 1968. In the inventory book from the year 1886 they are recorded as ‘Findings from the burial places of Faidjum in Upper Egypt.’ Faidjum can only be a misspelled version of Fayum. No documents relating to this acquisition exist. Information concerning the provenance of Graf’s textiles is ambiguous: the orientalist Josef Karabacek (1845–1918) spoke of a clandestine, nocturnal excavation in 1882 at a place that could not be revealed because the natives feared the Antiquities Service of Egypt on account of their unauthorised digging (Fluck 2007, 58–59). In 1886 the art historian and canon Franz Bock (1823–1899) noticed that Graf searched for textiles in Arsinoe and that the greater part of his collection was taken to Vienna and a smaller part to Berlin (Bock 1886, 2). Georg Schweinfurth confirmed this one year later, stating that Graf’s finds in the Kom el-Addame (i.e., the cemetery of Arsinoe), inspired him to dig there (Schweinfurth 1887, 71). However, a few years later, in 1889, Alois Riegl (1858–1905) compiled a catalogue of Graf’s textiles in Vienna and for unknown reasons attributed them to a place near Saqqara (Riegl 1889, V). There is no evidence for this locality in the archives of the Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna and it is not known from where Riegl got this information.

Although Saqqara as a findspot for the Graf collection in Vienna can almost certainly be excluded, doubts concerning its true provenance still remain. Possibly the lot is a mixture of textiles of different findspots (Linscheid 2000, 43; Fluck 2005, 144; 2006, 20; 2007, 59). However, some pieces from the Graf collection both in Vienna and Berlin are closely related to Schweinfurth’s finds at Arsinoe (Linscheid 2000, nos 1, 5, 14, 18, 31, 52, 71–73, 76; for the Vienna pieces, see Fluck 2006, 20, n. 20). Three further fabrics (Linscheid 2000, nos 2, 38 and 49) are almost identical to items in Vienna which Riegl attributed to Saqqara (Riegl


http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_21/fluck.aspx
1889, no. 179, no. 152, and no. 176). The latter must come from the same workshop if not originate from the same textile. The textiles from the former Graf collection in Berlin’s Kunstkewerbmuseum that came to the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in 1968 were published by Petra Linscheid (Linscheid 2000, 43–124).

Antinoupolis

The Museum für Byzantinische Kunst also owns the material from three burials and several individual objects from a survey the German Coptologist Carl Schmidt undertook in Antinoupolis in early 1896 (Fluck 2000, 175–89). It was the first scientific undertaking since the explorers of the Napoleonic expedition had discovered the ruins of the town at the turn of the 19th century and before the large excavation campaigns initiated by Émile Guimet and conducted by Albert Gayet between autumn 1896 and 1911 (Calament 2005).

From Schmidt’s travel report, now in the archive of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Berlin, we know that he discovered a part of the Northern Necropolis where the town’s wealthy citizens were buried. In two tombs he found male corpses fitted out with elaborate clothing and accessories atypical for Egypt, but inspired by Persian costume habits. The deceased wore tailored dresses and coats with oversized sleeves as well as gaiters and boots (Figs 9–11). The third tomb was that of a woman buried in two tunics, a mantle and headgear like a hairnet, a tall wreath (bourrelet) and a fine linen cloth covering the head (Figs 12–13).

Schmidt’s troves came to Berlin in the year of the discovery. The corpses, individual objects including a tombstone with Greek inscription (Schmidt 1897, 99–106), a make-up jar and a comb and most of the textiles and leatherwork were registered in the Ägyptisches Museum, while—unimaginable from our-present day view—the silk trimmings decorating one of the coats were detached and brought to the Kunstkewerbmuseum. The Museum für Byzantinische Kunst received the textiles, some of the footwear (Bénazeth and Fluck 2004, 199–200 nos 12–14), the make-up box and the comb in the course of a transfer of objects from Late Antique and early Christian times from the Ägyptisches Museum in 1934 and 1935. The corpses and the silks that came to the Kunstkewerbmuseum have been missing since the Second World War. The entries in the inventory of the Kunstkewerbmuseum helped at least to identify one of the trimmings that once belonged to the coat (von Falke 1913, fig. 32; Fluck 2004, 145, fig. 58).

Reconstruction of the content and the position of the textiles found in the tombs is possible with the aid of the inventory of the Ägyptisches Museum and of Adolf Erman’s Ausführliches Verzeichnis der aegyptischen Altertümer und Gipsabgüsse (Erman 1899, 387–94). Both are based on Schmidt’s minutes of the unwrapping, which he made directly after the discovery.

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of the corpses. They also belong to the losses of the Second World War.

The Persian coats, dresses and gaiters from the male’s burials entered Max Tilke’s oeuvres about oriental costumes, their designs and colours (Fig. 14; Tilke 1923, 13, pl. 27; 1925, 10, 15; 1990, 10, pls 4.5, 5.1, 5.4–6) and a catalogue of textiles from cemeteries in various collections in Berlin published by Oskar Wulff and Friedrich Wilhelm Volbach in 1926. Further textile finds from Schmidt’s enterprise in Antinoupolis were published as a result of a project funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft in 2000 (Fluck, Linscheid and Merz 2000, 174–88, nos 111–23).

In the early 1990s, Gerd Gropp, a German orientalist from Hamburg, worked on the finds from Antinoupolis with the aim of bringing together the objects dispersed over three collections of the Staatliche Museum zu Berlin in the form of a catalogue, of which an unpublished manuscript exists (Gropp 1994). In the late 1990s the two coats and gaiters from the male’s burials, their findspot, their materials and techniques were studied in the context of a colloquium about riding costume in Egypt held in Leiden in 2000. The results were published in 2004 (Fluck 2004, 137–52; Linscheid 2004b, 153–61; Mälck 2004, 163–73; Unger 2004, 175–87).

The textile items from the female’s grave are recorded in the catalogue raisonné of textiles in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst (Fluck, Linscheid and Merz 2000, 176–78, no. 111; 180, no. 113; 181–82, no. 115; 184, no. 118; 187–88, no. 122). Other items from this burial still belong to the Ägyptisches Museum. An article about the reconstruction of the content of the grave is in preparation (Fluck in preparation).

Abu Mina

From Abu Mina, the pilgrimage site about 50km southwest of Alexandria, the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst houses an extensive collection of flasks featuring the well-known representation of Saint Mena between the two camels (Fig. 15). They were the subject of Janette Witt’s MA thesis published in form of a catalogue raisonné in 2000 (Witt 2000).

Most of the flasks can be traced back to Carl Maria Kaufmann’s excavations between 1905 and 1907 (Kaufmann 1910; Witt 2000, 75–76, 80–81, 118 no. 8, 128 no. 18, 135–36 nos 25–26, 138–40 nos 28–30, 144–45 nos 34–35, 151–53 nos 41–43, 157 no. 47, 169 no. 59, 177 no. 67). Excavations were funded partly by Berlin but mostly by the city of Frankfurt am Main, which is the reason why Kaufmann donated approximately 1,200 terracotta objects from Abu Mina and the Fayum to what is now the Liebieghaus (Witt 2000, 11–12). About 100 items from this donation were transferred to the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in

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7 The individual pieces are in Wulff and Volbach 1926: 68, no. 14252 (= SBM inv. 9705), pls 23 and 88; 69, no. 14253 (= SBM inv. 9709), pl. 89; 69–70, no. 15076 (= SBM inv. 9710), pls 90–91; 136, nos 14232 and 14244 (= SBM inv. 9922 and 9832), pls 123–24; 136–37, no. 14243 (= SBM inv. 9708), pls 121–22; 137, nos 14231 and 14255 (= SBM inv. 9695 and 9923), pls 125–26; 144, nos 14242 and 14321 (= SBM inv. 9926 and 9925).
Apart from the typical flasks (SBM inv. 6003–6015, 6017, 6020, 6046–6047, 9440–9448) they include a variety of figurative devotional objects, small vessels and lamps (Figs 16–17; SBM inv. 4978–4986, 6031–6040, 6044, 6048–6058, 6067–6070, 6076–6083, 6258–6259), as well as architectural sculpture such as capitals and altar screens or slabs (Figs 18–19; SBM inv. 6135–6139). Oskar Wulff (1864–1946) published all objects from Abu Mina acquired up to 1909 in the first catalogue raisonné of the museum. Single items were shown at an exhibition about early Christian art and culture in Egypt that took place in 1996 in the Gustav-Lübcke-Museum, Hamm (Cat. Hamm 1996, 158 no. 127c, 160 nos 130 and 132, 161 nos 134–35, 163 no. 138c, 164–65 nos 140–42a and b, 173 nos 157–59, 219 no. 230, 224 no. 239). Only a few objects from the site remain unpublished.

Ten items from Abu Mina, which have been missing since the Second World War, have quite an interesting history: together with thousands of objects from the Staatliche Museen and other German collections they were confiscated after the war by the Russian authorities. Many of the objects were returned to Germany in 1957. During this restitution, one of the boxes containing 47 items for Berlin erroneously went to Leipzig and into the Ägyptisches Museum–Georg Steindorff. There it remained until Dietrich Raue, the head of the museum, initiated a stock-taking in the museum’s store rooms. Two of his students identified the content of the box as not belonging to Leipzig and started a survey in the museums in East Germany. By accident my colleague Gabriele Mietke became aware of it and recognised 44 objects as part of the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst collection. In autumn 2011, the pieces were brought from Leipzig to Berlin. At the beginning of 2012 the contents of the box—including the objects from Abu Mina (Fig. 20)—were presented to the public in a small exhibition. This unexpected return gives hope that other objects considered as lost do still exist somewhere and will one day be found.

The Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, for the most part under the leadership of Peter Grossmann, has explored the site of Abu Mina since the early 1960s and has revealed many new insights regarding its archaeology, chronology and history. In this respect it is worth contextualising the objects in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst.

8 A few of them (SMB inv. 9411–9414, 9416–9422, 9423–9425, 9428–9429, 9436–9439) were transferred to the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin in 1935. It is not sure whether they originate from Abu Mina or from the Fayum.


10 SMB inv. 6046–6047, 6258–6259 and 9940–9948. Inv. 6046, 6258–6259 have been missing since the Second World War.

11 SMB inv. 6040, 6045–6046, 6048, 6070, 6076, 6078–6080, 6083.


Otto Rubensohn’s excavations in Ashmunein, Abusir el-Meleq, Elephantine, Batn Harit and Umm el-Barakat

Between 1901 and 1907 Otto Rubensohn (1867–1964) headed the papyrus ventures of the Königliche Museen zu Berlin, and from 1902 he was also the representative of the Papyrus-cartel (Primavesi 1996, 173–87). In this capacity he was commissioned not only to acquire papyri on the antiquities market, but also to conduct excavations for the Berlin museums at various sites with the primary purpose to search for literary Greek papyri. He also discovered more than 2,000 ‘by-products’ in the form of objects of daily use and funerary artefacts, of which about 100 now belong to the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst. Many of these objects disappeared in the aftermath of the Second World War. The objects come from Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna, excavated in spring 1903, 1904/1905, 1905/1906 (Figs 21–23; SBM inv. 6092–6100, 6180, 9702, 9741, 9745, 9766, 9842–9853, 9858, 9870, 9872–9873, 9879–9880, 9893, 9895–9896, 10246–10253, 10286–10295, 10346–10376, 10430–10436, 10446, 10448), Abusir el-Meleq, excavated in 1903 (SBM inv. 9821–9824, 9844–9845, 9854), Elephantine, excavated in 1907/1908 (Fig. 24; SBM inv. 9891, 10377–10383, 10437–10439, 10440–10445); with single pieces from Batn Harit/Theadelphia, excavated in spring 1902 (SBM inv. 10342–10345) and Umm el-Barakat/Tebtynis, excavated in spring 1902 (SBM inv. 10341). Most of the finds are terracotta lamps or fragments of pottery vessels, but they also include some figurines, pyxides and fittings for furniture made of ivory and bone, seals and stamps made of stone, mud, clay or wood and also small wooden musical instruments like castanets.

Since 2010, Renate Germer has been studying the material Rubensohn brought from Egypt to the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. She has listed all objects, except the papyri, and has begun evaluation of the finds and acquisitions with regards to Rubensohn’s diaries, focusing on the material from the cemetery of Abusir el-Meleq. For several years Josefine Kuckertz has studied finds from excavations in Elephantine of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Cairo. Based on their preliminary studies, the Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien (BKM) together with Berlin-funded research associated with the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung in Berlin in July 2012. For this project, entitled ‘Otto Rubensohn in Ägypten – Vergessene Grabungen: Funde und Archivalien aus den Grabungen der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin 1901–1907/8,’ Renate Germer, Josefine Kuckertz and Sabine Schmidt are currently working on Rubensohn’s acquisitions dating from the pharaonic to Graeco-Roman periods. Plans to include the material of Late Antique and early Christian times, now in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, are under discussion.

Ulrich Wilckens’s expedition to Ahnasiya/Heracleopolis Magna

In addition to the textiles that Georg Schweinfurth gathered in Heracleopolis Magna (see above), the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst holds a few objects of other material from the same site. A couple of years after Édouard Naville’s (1844–1926) excavations in the years 1891 and 1892, during which he found the famous Late Antique limestone reliefs with mythological scenes (Hayter-Lewis 1894, 32–34, pls 14–17), and a first survey by William
Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) in 1897 (Petrie 1905, 1), Ulrich Wilcken (1862–1944), on behalf of the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin, investigated the ruins of the ancient town in 1898/99. Like Rubensohn his objective was to look for papyri. Wilcken characterised his finds as 'nicht gerade glänzend' (Wilcken 1903, 325). He was disappointed as he expected to discover papyri from Ptolemaic and Roman times, yet instead found mostly items from the Byzantine and early Islamic periods. To top it all off, many of the finds were destroyed by a fire that broke out on the ship that was carrying them to Germany. In his excavation report Wilcken mentioned that apart from papyri he brought a number of small antiquities home, partly excavated and partly bought from the sebakhin diggers. He wrote of ostraca, coins, seals and stamps among other objects (Wilcken 1903, 325 and 334). The only item he explicitly describes is a theatre mask which came into the Ägyptisches Museum. The Museum für Byzantinische Kunst owns 16 pieces that go back to this campaign: 12 lamps, two fragments of pottery, a terracotta statuette of the Good Shepherd and a figurative bone carving, both the latter lost since the war. The remaining objects are of a poor quality but at least most of them still exist and are nevertheless of a certain historical value (Fig. 25; SBM inv. 9704, 9712, 10327–10337, 10339–10340, 10447).

**Guy Brunton's excavations in Mostagedda and Matmar**

Thirty-three objects in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst originate from the British Museum expedition in the Badari region located roughly between Asyut and Akhmim. Between 1928 and 1931 Guy Brunton (1878–1948) explored the cemeteries of Mostagedda and Matmar. Both cemeteries cover almost all periods of Egyptian history, including burials from the Badarian and Pan Grave people, nomads who settled in this area.

The Ägyptisches Museum bought items from these excavations in 1931. The objects belonging to the Late Antique and early Christian period were transferred to the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in 1934/35. All of them have been missing since the Second World War and no images, drawings or archive documents exist. The only surviving sources for study are the inventory books, which fortunately mention the findspots of individual objects. With the help of Brunton's excavation reports and plans it was possible to get an impression of how the pieces looked and to locate individual findspots, e.g., five tombs in Mostagedda (18 objects, SBM inv. 10390–10405, 10420–10421) and ten in Matmar (15 objects, SBM inv. 9887, 10406–10419). The British Museum and other institutions, such as the Griffith Institute in Oxford, the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology in London and the Bolton Museum, also hold archival material or other finds from these excavations that date to the Late Antique and early Christian periods.

**Mostagedda**

The Roman, Late Antique and early Christian burials in Mostagedda were scattered across most of the areas north of the headland, especially in zone 1400, close to Mostagedda village.
(Fig. 26). This is the same area from which the finds in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst were recovered. Brunton characterises the graves as ‘poor burials’ (Brunton 1937, 140). The finds (Fig. 27) include various kinds of jewellery, with a few exceptions made from inexpensive materials like bronze, iron, lead, glass, stone, bone, shells and mother of pearl as well as a little ivory carving, probably the foot of a little casket. Among the metal objects little cross pendants or scratched crosses occur relatively often, obviously an expression of the Christian belief of the owners.

Matmar
At Matmar a fair number of Late Antique and Christian tombs were spread over the whole site, in particular areas 600, 800, 900, 1000 and 1100 (Brunton 1948, 91–96; Fig. 28). Scattered single finds from here are of special interest. They include stelae, shoes (Fig. 29), combs and several coins from the end of the 4th century AD. Brunton also discovered some intact graves and in many of them children were buried. The bodies were oriented with the head towards the west according to the pagan funerary tradition (Gessler-Löhr 2010, 311). The deceased were adorned with all kinds of jewellery—necklaces were mostly made of pearls and beads of glass and wood, while rings, earrings, torques and bracelets consist of bronze or iron. Up to the present, only one item among the jewellery from the Late Antique graves that came to Berlin could be identified from the plates in Brunton's report (SMB inv. 10417; Brunton 1948, 93, no. 917 and pl. 69.25–28). It is an iron bangle with iron rings and bronze medallions\(^\text{15}\) that was found around the arm of a female with wavy black hair who lay, unusually, on her side.

In terms of the finds from Matmar, it is worth mentioning that The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, has recently begun to investigate the material Brunton excavated at this site as part of a Store Stories project.\(^\text{16}\) It would be fruitful if other institutions holding material from Brunton's excavations in Matmar could follow this example.

Richard Lepsius’ expedition to Wadi Ghazal

Twelve gravestelae (Fig. 30; SBM inv. 9671–9673, 9680–9684, 9786–9787, 9750, 9999) and fragments of two terracotta plates with Greek and Coptic inscriptions (SBM inv. 10000–10001\(^\text{17}\)) in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst can be traced back to Karl Richard Lepsius’ (1810–1884) expedition to northern Sudan in 1844. They originate from the monastery of Ghazali and were shipped to Berlin where they entered the Ägyptisches Museum first. From there they came into the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in 1934/35. A few have gone missing since the Second World War. Lepsius published drawings of most of the inscriptions in his Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien (Lepsius 1849, sheets 99 and 103) and, in 1937/38, Maria Cramer (1898–1978) incorporated some of them in her catalogue of Coptic inscriptions

\(^{15}\) No. 27 on the plate is in fact more likely a buckle than a pendant of a bracelet. I owe this information to Yvonne Petrina.


\(^{17}\) Most probably from Wadi Ghazal.
in the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, which only appeared in 1949 (Cramer 1949, 9–13). Another sandstone stela with reddish patina inscribed with a 3rd–4th-century Latin inscription (SBM inv. 9675), formerly attributed to Wadi Ghazal, turned out to be from Musawwarat es-Sufra in Meroe according to the study of Adam Łajtar and Jacques van der Vliet (Łajtar and van der Vliet 2006, 193–98).

**Individual objects from various sites**

Finally, for the sake of completeness, individual acquisitions from various sites such as Illahun, Bawit, Esne and Faras are listed briefly. The Museum für Byzantinische Kunst keeps:

- a lamp from Illahun, excavated in 1899: SBM inv. 10326.
- four wooden reliefs from Bawit, acquired in 1904 and 1905: SBM inv. 4786, 4788, 4790, 4792 (Krause 1988, 114, 117 and 119; Cat. Hamm 1996, 136, no. 95; Enß 2005, 104, no. 5; 106, no. 12; 125, nos 71 and 152, no. 64; pls 12, 16 and 52).\(^{18}\)

**Conclusion**

The material from excavation sites in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst corresponds to that of other collections—most of the finds are objects of daily use that served in secondary use as grave goods. Some are tombstones and a fair number, for instance some architectural sculptures and pilgrimage souvenirs, are from settlements such as the famous site of Abu Mina. The recent study of the discoveries from 19th- and early 20th-century excavations in Antinoupolis and Arsinoe, now held in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, has demonstrated that a re-evaluation, using modern scientific and technological methods, leads to new insights that help to understand the past. With regards to Guy Brunton's and Otto Rubensohn's work in Egypt, it is of great interest to join on-going digitisation and research projects and, in the future, it would be valuable to compile and contextualise the numerous objects from Carl Maria Kaufmann’s expedition to Abu Mina.

**Bibliography**


\(^{18}\) SMB Inv. 3019, 4784 and 4785 were attributed to Bawit, but doubts concerning the provenance remain.


Fig. 1: Typical label on textiles discovered by Georg Schweinfurth (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

Fig. 2: Child’s dress from Arsinoe; SBM inv. 2013/4 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).
Fig. 3: Hairnet in sprang technique from Arsinoe; SBM inv. 9323 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

Fig. 4: Tapestry decoration from Arsinoe; SBM inv. 9314 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).
Fig. 5: Decoration in lancé-weft from Arsinoe; SBM inv. 9336 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

Fig. 6: Small sheet with all-over design in brocading; SBM inv. 10028 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).
Fig. 7: Doll’s tunic from Theodor Graf’s collection; SBM inv. 9987 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

Fig. 8: Lower part of a tunic from Theodor Graf’s collection; SBM inv. 11467 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Rainer Saczewski).
Fig. 9: Riding coat from Antinoupolis; SBM 9695 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

Fig. 10: Gaiters from Antinoupolis; SBM 9926 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

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Fig. 23: Lamp with rosette decoration from Hermopolis Magna; SBM inv. 10358 (© Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, photo Antje Voigt).

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