

Shield rings

Sudan, Meroë, pyramid Beg. N6 · First century BC, Meroitic, Amanishakheto · Gold, flux (glass), 3.8–4.5 × 2.2–3.6 cm, diam. 1.8–1.9 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, inv. ÄM 22870 / inv. ÄM 22872 / inv. ÄM 22871

The ram-headed god Amun is depicted at the upper edge of the surface of the rings to the left and right, while the one in the middle shows the Meroitic lion god Apedemak. In some places glass inlays of the original decoration survive—and even some shell imitations at the bottom edge of the ring on the left.



dants, the craftsmen primarily used various kinds of stone, ivory, faience, glass flux, and semiprecious stones, as well as gold, silver, and copper.

There is evidence of bracelets and armbands as far back as the Predynastic period. These were worn on the wrists or upper arms by both women and men at the time. The materials used for their production were usually the same as those used for ear jewelry. A precious bracelet dated to the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2119–1793 BC) is made of short strings with carnelian, lapis lazuli, and turquoise beads that are kept in place by ten crosspieces made of hammered sheet silver, which serve as spacers. For centuries, Nubia was pharaonic Egypt's main supplier of gold, the so-called flesh of the gods. Egyptian and Nubian craftsmen made elaborate precious items out of it, as exemplified by the magnificent gold armband of Amanishakheto, the centerpiece of which is a temple facade and an aegis, a semicircular broad collar featuring the head of a deity (see p. 85).

Rings are documented in large numbers for nearly all periods of Egyptian history. They include decorative as well as seal rings. Finger rings were either manufactured as a one-piece solid ring—with or without a plate—or as a hook ring with a movable central part. The round, oval, or rectangular ring plates were decorated in various ways with ornaments, hieroglyphs, or figurative imagery. Seal rings were given to officials when taking office and thus they symbolized the authority of the particular office. However, they were also part of the ruler's regalia and were worn on certain occasions. The seal rings found among the funerary treasure of Amanishakheto feature engraved images of deities in human and animal guise as well as of hybrid creatures on their signet surfaces (see p. 86–87).

The shield rings (see above) are a unique group of Meroitic jewelry. Made in a similar manner to the hook rings, a shield ring consists of a circular ring with a small semicircular gold plate hinged to it that features a stylized broad collar. The collars of the pieces reproduced here bear images of either the ram-headed god Amun or the lion-headed war god Apedemak. It has not been determined conclusively to date whether these pieces are indeed finger jewelry. More likely, the rings were part of decorative pendants of the kind that Nubian women still wear on their foreheads today: a thick strand of hair is pulled through the ring part of the pendant, which is then attached to the hair. Furthermore, rings ranked among burial objects, as documented by the numerous pieces found on mummies. They were also presented as a reward for services performed or consecrated to temples as donations. Compared to the countless surviving rings, there is a rather modest number of images of jewelry on statues, in reliefs, and in paintings.

Belts held together by a clasp or knot have been documented since Predynastic times. Starting with the Middle Kingdom, we find statuettes of young girls and women wearing decorative belts. Running around the hip of the stylized female figure is a series of small depressed dots that are supposed to represent such a belt (see p. 31). The dots imitate cowrie shells and, along with the obviously accentuated sexual features, may be read as a symbol of female fertility. Many of these statuettes were found in women's tombs.

In Ancient Egypt, jewelry was worn by men, by gods, by the living, and by the dead. Beyond its mere decorative function it also served to protect its wearer and to lend him or her strength and power over danger, evil, or illness. The color symbolism and the design also added to its meaning.



Ring with wedjat eye

Egypt · ca. 1550–1292 BC, New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty · Faience, blue, diam. 2.3 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, inv. ÄM 13199

The wedjat eye is a stylized rendering of the human eye that is associated on the one hand with the sun god Ra, but on the other hand referred to the falcon-headed god of the heavens in particular. The Eye of Horus on the right symbolizes the sun, the one on the left the moon.



Necklace

Mesopotamia, Assur · Fourteenth/thirteenth century BC · Gold, various semiprecious stones, especially agate, lapis lazuli, carnelian, chalcedony, turquoise, diam. 8 cm · Vorderasiatisches Museum, inv. Va 5645

The rich grave goods are in contrast to the type of burial, a plain earth grave that has yielded additional finds. Various kinds of beads and numerous small gold settings

have randomly been arranged into a decorative chain. The gold settings, which were found separately, give insight into the goldsmith's skills.



Pectoral of Panehesy with a scarab

Egypt · ca. 1292–950 BC, New Kingdom, Third Intermediate Period · Faience, glass, 10.6 × 10.2 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, inv. ÄM 1984

As a burial gift for the deceased, pectorals were part of funerary equipment. All of the imagery is closely related to the decedent's anticipated rebirth. The central image is that of a scarab on a sun boat, the symbol of the resur-

rected sun god who is accompanied by the goddesses Isis and Nephthys.

Armlet

Western Iran, Luristan · Ninth/eighth century BC · Bronze, w. 3,6 cm, diam. 8,5 cm · Vorderasiatisches Museum, inv. Va 15581

This armlet belongs to the so-called Luristan bronzes that were, in most cases, recovered as grave goods from stone cist graves in the Luristan Province in western

Iran. A characteristic common feature is the high degree of abstraction of figurative imagery, which is also evident in the sculptural demon masks on this armlet.





Pendant

Sam'al (today Turkey, Zincirli) · Ninth/eighth century BC · Gold, 4.5 × 4.4 cm · Vorderasiatisches Museum, inv. S 3625

This small piece of jewelry consists of a total of thirty-one individual parts.

The tableau-like depiction of a table and a figure seated on a chair with a small footrest suggests a connection with a funerary cult, based on comparisons with stone reliefs which show ritual meals being offered for an ancestor.



Earrings

Mesopotamia, Assur · Eighth/seventh century BC · Silver, h. 1.9–2.3 cm · Vorderasiatisches Museum, inv. Va Ass 4242.10–15

Remarkably, fourteen silver earrings of the same type—which are not likely to have been worn all at the same time—were added to a Neo-Assyrian burial in a tub-shaped sarcophagus. The six examples shown here have the typical shape of a horizontal crescent that, in each case, has a conical pendant centrally soldered to it.



Necklace

Mesopotamia, Assur · Eighth/seventh century BC · Various semiprecious stones, mainly lapis lazuli, turquoise, agate, diam. ca. 66 cm · Vorderasiatisches Museum, inv. Va Ass 4242.2

The large number of jewelry beads recovered from the same Neo-Assyrian tomb offered the opportunity to be influenced by the polychromatism of the semiprecious stones when arranging them into two chains. Thus the double chain derives its appeal from the two dominating agate beads as eye-catchers, as well as from the optical effect of the alternating arrangement of the colors blue and green.

Amulets with figures of gods

Egypt · ca. 746–332 BC, Late Period · Faience, 4.7–6.5 × 1.4–3.1 × 1.2–2.7 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, inv. ÄM 5516 / inv. ÄM 5723 / inv. ÄM 5390 / inv. ÄM 5459

Small figurines of anthropomorphic or theriomorphic deities—or, indeed, gods in the guise of hybrid creatures—were very popular protective amulets. The gods depicted here are Anubis (top left), Bes (top right), a triad consisting of Nephthys, Horus, and Isis (bottom left), and the lion-headed goddess Bastet (bottom right).





Pendant

Probably Etruria · Late sixth century BC · Gold, agate, l. 3.1 cm · Antikensammlung, inv. FG 100

The Phoenician scarab set into this pendant is decorated on the bottom with Egyptianesque imagery: the god Bes is standing underneath a winged sun disk and holds

two ibexes, two lions, and two snakes. Since Bes was also worshipped as protector of mothers and children, it is possible that the piece of jewelry served as an amulet.



Miniature fibulae

Etruria, probably Vulci · Second half of the sixth century BC · Gold, l. 1 cm/2.1 cm/2.6 cm/1.9 cm · Antikensammlung, inv. GI 291/inv. Misc. 11863,64/inv. GI 280/inv. GI 283

Miniature fibulae such as these with little figures of sphinxes, winged lions, or other animals—in this case a cowering hare—attached to them appear to have been manufactured primarily in a workshop in Vulci in southern Etruria.



Broad collar

Sudan, Meroë, pyramid Beg. N6 · First century BC,
Meroitic, Amanishakheto · Stone, carnelian, faience,
glass, shells, w. 40 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und
Papyrussammlung, inv. ÄM 1757

Besides a number of wedjat eyes and shells, this broad collar—a modern arrangement—consists only of non-figurative beads of various materials and colors. Kings, gods, and non-royal individuals adorned themselves with such splendid collars for special occasions.



Armlet

Sudan, Meroë, pyramid Beg. N6 · First century BC, Meroitic, Amanishakheto · Gold, flux (glass), 3 × 18,5 cm · Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrus-sammlung, inv. ÄM 1644

The two halves of this armlet are connected by a hinge, which is covered by the depiction of a temple facade and a ram-headed Amun on a semicircular collar. Small Uraei, rosettes, and drop-shaped images in the cloisonné technique decorate the bracelet.



Fragment of an armlet

Probably Egypt · ca. 210 · Gold, 8×5.3 cm ·
Antikensammlung, inv. 30219,499

Two gold coins with images of Emperor Caracalla and his consort Plautilla are set into this fragment of an armlet. Caracalla wears a beard, a feature that became common on coins only after 209. Since Plautilla fell out of favor with the emperor in 205 and was murdered at his behest in 211, this piece of jewelry must have been manufactured between 209 and 211.

Armlet

Syria, Tartus · End of the fourth century · Gold,
diam. 10 cm · Antikensammlung, inv. 30219,509

This armlet with trellis-like openwork and a gold weight of about 141 grams consists of numerous different fields with distinct patterns. A Greek inscription on the central band admonishes its wearer: "Use it happily throughout your entire life."





Earring

Iran · Tenth/eleventh century · Gold, l. 8.5 cm ·
Museum für Islamische Kunst, inv. I. 57/71

The basket shape of this earring, which traces back to pre-Islamic amphora earrings, appears in the eastern Islamic world in the tenth century. The rich attachment includes a small lantern, crescents, and small bells.



Large chain link

Syria · Tenth/eleventh century · Gold, l. 4.7 cm,
diam. 2.6 cm · Museum für Islamische Kunst,
inv. I. 1989.10

This delicate filigree work with granulation from the Fatimid period is hollow on the inside. The chain thread was fed through the openings at the tips.

Pair of earrings

Iran · Eleventh century · Gold, h. 3.2 cm ·
Museum für Islamische Kunst, inv. I. 1989.11-12

This characteristic Persian type of earring with open-work spherical balls and a solid polyhedron with granules in the middle was fashionable in the period from the tenth to the twelfth century.



SILVER TROVE FROM PRITZWALK

Fibula shaped like a sexfoil with filigree wire spheres and stone trim

Northeastern Germany · First half of the fourteenth century · Silver, face gilded, almandine, pyrope, fluorite, diam. 5.2 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1896,344 167

SILVER TROVE FROM PRITZWALK

Upper level of a set of lion-shaped hook-and-eye closures

Northeastern Germany · Mid-fourteenth century · Silver, 7.9×14.8 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1896,344 142 a,b

In 1870, a silver trove came to light in the town of Pritzwalk (Prignitz district, Brandenburg, Germany) that included at least 432 pieces of jewelry and six coins and that, as a whole, weighed 1,526 grams. The most recent coin in it suggests it was buried shortly after 1392. This silver trove is among the most important late medieval jewelry finds in Europe. It includes mostly jewelry used on garments: clasps and fibulae, numerous hook-and-eye closures, disc- and ball-shaped buttons, and various sew-on sheet metal plates. By contrast, body jewelry is represented only by a few finger rings and armlets.





Jewish wedding rings

Germany and Galicia · Sixteenth–nineteenth century · Gold, enamel, h. 1.6 cm, diam. 2.3 cm/h. 1.2 cm, diam. 2.3 cm/h. 1.4 cm, diam. 2.2 cm/h. 1.9 cm, diam. 2.2 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1918,829/inv. 1883,1193/inv. 1876,302/inv. 1918,575

These richly ornamented wedding rings bear the inscription “Masl Towf” (good luck) on the inside. The ring on the left has particularly rich enameling and features the image of a small house as a symbol of the Temple of Solomon. It is a nineteenth-century replica.



Pendant in the shape of a book with fish bladder tracery

Southern Germany · ca. 1500 · Silver, 3,8 × 2,1 cm ·
Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. F 737

*Placed inside the hinged pendant is a silver tablet with
black wax applied to both sides. This means that the
precious piece served as a small notebook.*

The Royal *Gnadenpfennig* (1610)

In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century portrait paintings, one often finds the subjects adorned with portrait pendants attached to magnificent thick gold chains. These so-called *Gnadenpfennige*, or largesse medals, were usually elaborately decorated pieces of jewelry made of oval or round gold medallions that were, in addition, richly embellished with pearls, colored stones, or enamel. The gold work underscored the appreciation that was symbolized by the gift of a fine gold coin or medal and, indeed, increased it, for in their settings designed by goldsmiths, the medallions, which were serially produced by means of casting or coining, became one-of-a-kind pieces. The settings also made it possible for the objects to be worn as jewelry and, by extension, to be seen as a regular feature of finery. Initially called *contrafect* in Saxony and Brandenburg, these portrait medallions were often the most valuable clothing ornament. The *Gnadenpfennige* were

awarded by princes or kings and served as a public token of the favor and friendship extended to the recipient. The medallions were official gifts or rewards, or they were presented as gifts marking particular events such as festivities or journeys. During the Thirty Years' War they then became established as a reward for distinguished service in the field. Hence they may be considered forerunners of the princely orders of merit that emerged in the eighteenth century. The mounted portrait medallions mainly gained currency in the German and Austrian territories. The oval gold medallion which was probably manufactured by Jacob Gladehals in 1610 shows the Elector of Brandenburg, Johann Sigismund (1608–19), in all his baroque corpulence. Emblazoned on the reverse is his motto, PRO LEGE ET GREGE! (For the law and the people). The jeweler's setting is richly decorated with scrollwork, small flowers, beads, leaves, rubies, and pearls.

Gnadenpfennig

Germany, Brandenburg ·
1610 · Gold, partly enameled,
diam. 4.4 × 3.8 cm, setting:
13 × 7.7 cm · Münzkabinett,
inv. 18200715



Gnadenpfennig of Cardinal Andrew of Austria

Germany · ca. 1600 · Gold, gold enamel, diamond,
rubies, pearls, 5.4 × 1 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum,
inv. F 2740

*So-called Gnadenpfennige with portraits of rulers were
especially awarded to individuals of very high standing
for their services. The medals were richly decorated and
worn on long chains.*





Chest ornament with shell finial

Germany · Eighteenth century · Silver, fifty diamonds, 7 × 6.5 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1886,267

During the seventeenth century, the use of precious stones increasingly dominated jewelry design. The work by the jeweler eclipsed that of the goldsmith, and cutting techniques were further refined to enhance the luminosity of the stones. Colorless yet fiercely sparkling diamonds were particularly commensurate to eighteenth-century aesthetics.

Pectoral of filigree foliage ornament

Italy, Venice · Eighteenth century · Silver, rock crystal, 5 × 6.5 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1876,1023

Popular forms of jewelry in the eighteenth century included flowering twigs, vines, and bows. Stones were inserted into settings of such designs—larger stones, if possible, into prong settings and smaller ones closely together in a pavé setting. Often rock crystal was used instead of expensive diamonds.





1700-1800

Belt pendant in the shape of a leopard's head

Nigeria, Benin Empire · Eighteenth century · Ivory,
l. 19 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. III C 12536

Belt pendants were badges of rank awarded by the king to high dignitaries within the court hierarchy. The leopard head symbolizes the power of the king who carried, among others, the title "The Leopard of the

House." The ram's head was adopted as a royal emblem from the neighboring Yoruba. The crocodile head refers to the sea god Olokun, to whom the power and wealth of the king of Benin were traced.



Clasp

Sri Lanka, south coast · Nineteenth century ·
Alloy, gilded, rubies, emeralds, pearls, l. 11.2 cm ·
Museum für Asiatische Kunst, inv. I 339

Encrusted with small gemstones and pearls, this pointy clasp draws on traditional gold work in its manner of execution.



Crown

Western Tibet · Nineteenth century · Wool fabric, turquoise, silver clasps and pendants, enamel, mother-of-pearl, h. 14.2 cm, diam. 16.3 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. I D 39407

Brightly colored, high-contrast festive costumes and personal jewelry are a characteristic of the syncretist Tibetan-Buddhist cultures of both nomadic and mountain tribes in the region, as excavation finds confirm.



Decorative combs

India, Tamil Nadu, Tiruchirapalli · Nineteenth century · Brass, 25 × 3,5 cm / 23,5 × 3 cm / 19 × 2,5 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. I C 3401 / inv. I C 3403 / inv. I C 3404

The hair combs were also worn to hold braids in place.

Toe ring

India, Uttar Pradesh, Mathura · Nineteenth century · Brass, silver-plated, diam. 7 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. I C 4593 b

This ring is called "pagpuhl" (foot flower) and is worn by Hindu women of higher castes on the middle toe.



Toe ring

India, Uttar Pradesh, Agra · Nineteenth century ·
Brass, silver-plated, 6,5×6,5×5 cm · Ethnologisches
Museum, inv. I C 4670 e

*This toe ring is called "annot" and is worn on the big toe
by Muslim or Hindu women of higher castes.*





Parure: necklace and ear pendants
with mosaic medallions

Italy, probably Rome · ca. 1800 · Yellow gold, tessellation, glass beads, case of green leather with gold embossing, necklace: l. 44 cm, ear pendants: h. 3.3 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. L 335

Eight oval mosaic medallions set in gold are connected by small double-threaded chains of turquoise-colored glass beads in floral-shaped settings. The mosaics feature ancient architecture on a red ground on one side, and bird motifs on a turquoise ground on the other. The ear pendants are decorated with matched medallions.

FROM FRONT TO BACK

Signets: with the arms of alliance / with cupid and lion / with intertwined snakes, heart, and Gothic inscription “In Threue fest” (Firm in loyalty) / with leaping lion / other rings see p. 246

Germany · 1800–1810 · Gold, rock crystal, ivory, cutting work, agate, amethyst in *à jour* setting, blue seal stone, 4.1 × 3.9 cm / 2.75 × 1.2 cm / 2.75 × 1.2 cm / 2.5 × 1.7 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. O-1972,113 (HM 7403) / inv. O-1974,118 (HM 7413) / inv. O-1974,112 (HM 7422) / inv. O-1974,121 (HM 7423)

Queen Louise owned numerous signets and seal rings with which to seal her extensive official as well as private correspondence. The signet with the crowned coat of arms of the Prussian-Mecklenburg alliance seen in front was used for official letters, while the signets with her signature served to seal private correspondence.



Parure: necklace with two brooches

Bohemia · Second half of the nineteenth century ·
Silver, gold, almandine, necklace: l. 42 cm, brooches:
4.6 × 3.2 cm / 5 × 3 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum,
inv. 1990,240 / inv. 1990,241 / inv. 1990,242

Thirty-three rosettes make up the necklace. The stones' settings are concealed and have metal plate bases. The oval brooch with three stone-studded rings placed on top of one another appears particularly luxuriant

due to the shift from smaller to larger stones. A strong contrast to this is offered by the filigree design of the tiara-shaped brooch.





Hairpin with boat-shaped ornament

China, Beijing · Second half of the nineteenth century, Qing Dynasty · Silver, gilded, kingfisher feathers, colored beads, flux (glass), painting, 4.5×9.8 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1881,281

This kind of “movable hairpin” is crafted with utmost delicacy. Choice and densely laid kingfisher feathers reproduce the bright blue of the boat and its canopy. The way in which the various parts are appended makes them appear lightweight and bobbing. The entire pin sways along with each movement of its wearer.





Ear jewelry

Marquesas-Inseln, Hivaoa, Puamau/Fatuhiva, Hanavave/Hivaoa, Puamau · ca. 1890 · Whale and pig teeth, seashell, l. 4.8 cm/4.6 × 2 cm/4.6 × 2 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. VI 15745/inv.VI 15747 a/inv. VI 15762

Groups of girls on ear pins often refer to mythical events. The piece of jewelry in the middle, called tai-ana, was used only by women and passed on matrilineally. The decorated part of the ear jewelry was worn behind the ear lobe. The tiki images with large eyes are characteristic.

Necklace

Marquesas Islands, Hatiheu, Nuku Hiva · ca. 1890 · Dolphin teeth, coir thread, glass bead, European textile, 11 × 7 cm · Ethnologisches Museum, inv. VI 15731

The collector Karl von den Steinen speculates that this jewelry was worn in particular by women. It was very popular, especially because of the teeth, and its value could equal that of four pigs of a hundred kilograms each.



Brooches with photo portraits

Germany, Berlin · ca. 1900 · Photographs, metal mounting, under glass, diam. 2.5 cm / double portrait: diam. 1 cm · Museum Europäischer Kulturen, inv. I (30 B) 255/1977 / inv. I (30 B) 256/1977 / inv. I (30 B) 503/1983

Souvenir pictures in the form of brooches or pendants with portrait photographs were fashionable around 1900 and were a highly personal type of jewelry. Becoming a true mass medium, photography also reached the poorer classes.



Bridegroom jewelry,
"Bräutigamslust"
[Bridegroom's joy]

Germany, Hesse, Schwalm · ca. 1900 · Paper,
cloth, glass spheres, tinsel, diam. 25 cm · Museum
Europäischer Kulturen, inv. D (54 D 13) 652/1974

*For his wedding, the bridegroom donned the full dinner
suit. His headgear was a three-cornered hat, to which
the so-called Bräutigamslust, a headdress made of glass
spheres and tinsel with a bridal couple in the center, was
attached.*





GIANPAOLO BABETTO

Finger ring

1993 · Gold, red pigment, h. 4.3, upper cube:
2.3 × 2.3 × 2.3 cm · Kunstgewerbemuseum,
inv. W-1993,69

A cube that is closed on four sides forms the band of this ring. Sitting askew on one of the edges, on the verge of tipping over, is a hollow cube painted red on the inside. The works of Gianpaolo Babetto (b. 1947) can be worn as jewelry, yet often may be thought of as monumental sculpture as well.

SABINE KLARER

Ring

1995 · Silver, partly gilded, cabochon stones,
chalcedony, turquoise, emerald, 4.5 × 4 × 2 cm ·
Kunstgewerbemuseum, inv. 1995,100

The wide trapezoid band features irregular stone trimming and zigzag-patterned engravings. Hiding underneath an opening in the lower part is a tangle of cables and tubes. The ring head with an oval stone opens up. Inside sits a removable fly and on the inside of the cover is a photograph of Robert de Niro.