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Adriana Muñoz

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Department of Historical Studies  
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# Table of contents

Acknowledgements .....	9
Prelude.....	15
Objectives .....	19
Material, methodology and theoretical approaches .....	21
Abstract .....	23
Chapter I: The voyage. From curiosa to world culture .....	29
Introduction .....	29
The history of the Museum of World Culture .....	30
1996, the resolution, a new national museum.....	30
The debate.....	34
Making a new national museum. The Museum of World Culture .....	35
The natural cabinet at kungliga vetenskaps- och vitterhetssamhället .....	40
The Göteborgs Museum.....	45
Maecenas .....	49
The first collections and exhibitions.....	52
The museum organization, directors and departments .....	56
The ethnographical collections .....	57
The professionalization .....	60
Anniversary exhibition .....	63
The Ethnographical Museum of the City of Gothenburg.....	67
The dream of a new building .....	71
The municipal museum.....	76
Epilogue .....	81

Appendix to chapter I .....	83
Notes .....	84
Chapter II: The power of labelling.....	91
Introduction .....	91
The collections .....	92
The collections stored today at the Museum of World Culture .....	94
The American trend.....	97
Collecting and collections.....	99
Collecting practices during the history of the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg.....	101
Donation: .....	101
Purchase: .....	102
Exchange: .....	103
Collected:.....	104
Souvenir (passive collecting):.....	104
Other later souvenirs:.....	105
Unknown:.....	105
Depositions: .....	106
Replicas: .....	106
Material culture and collection .....	108
Objects and categories.....	109
Cataloguing.....	112
The beginning of taxonomies.....	113
The categories: .....	114
Curiosa .....	114
Museum as classification.....	115
The ethnographical categorization .....	116
Ethnography, ethnology, anthropology, archaeology .....	116
The ethnographical background .....	118
A new reorganisation, ethnography as non-European.....	121

Archaeology, on the other hand...	124
World culture.....	125
The first reaction: ethnography vs. art.....	130
At the museum today .....	131
Decolonizing practices, a possibility?.....	134
Conclusion .....	139
Notes .....	140
Appendix to chapter II .....	143
Chapter III: Indians / Immigrants: Collecting excluded people ..	151
Introduction .....	151
Disciplines, museums and the making of nations.....	154
A short background of Latin America during the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.....	157
The ideological environment in Latin America.....	160
The case studies .....	163
The first collections.....	163
Then.....	164
Others past as a gift for the new nation .....	168
The past as a gift.....	169
The trophy. The Bräutigam collection.....	171
The romantic adventurer.....	175
The scientist, the travels of Carl Skottsberg .....	176
Science and museums in Latin America and Gothenburg.....	181
Multiculturalism, museums and trans-nations .....	184
The challenge of the Museum of World Culture, from the perspective of the objects.....	187
The same objects, the new context .....	187
The new objects.....	189
The Patera case: World culture vs ethnography or not? .....	191
Conclusions .....	194
Notes .....	195

Chapter IV: Unruly Passions.....	201
Introduction .....	201
Making collections, memory in museums, staff relationships.....	203
Paracas, Niño Korin and Rio Loa. The fate of three collections .....	205
The Paracas Collection .....	208
Niño Korin .....	215
Rio Loa.....	217
Game of power and the impact on the material .....	223
Biography of objects and human relationships .....	231
Allusive objects .....	231
Coming back to the collections .....	235
A form of conclusion.....	239
Appendix to the Rio Loa collection .....	240
Notes .....	242
Summary and conclusion .....	247
Svensk resumé.....	251
Resumen en Español .....	257
References .....	265

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“You are always born under the wrong sign, and to live in this world properly you have to rewrite your own horoscope day by day” (Eco 1989).

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There are so many people that I must acknowledge that is almost impossible to name everyone, but all of them, they know that I am very grateful!

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However, in 2007 Antonia, my daughter was born, and during maternity leave I found the possibility to write again. This gave me the possibility to apply for grants and donations, and thanks to that economical help it has been possible to finish this work.

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Gracias! Thank you! Tack!

Adriana Muñoz  
Göteborg 2011

## Notes

1 *Etnografiska museet i Göteborg*, was also known for a while as *Göteborgs Etnografiska museet* (GEM), but I have used only the last designation to avoid confusion.

2 NAMU [www.namu.se](http://www.namu.se) is a European project about the making of national museums.



# Prelude

A *kipu*<sup>1</sup> was chosen as the cover image for this thesis. First I chose it because the object, as well as the photography, was so beautiful. *Khipu* are knotted textile record-keeping devices used by the Inkas and its predecessor societies in the Andean region. A *kipu* usually consisted of coloured, spun, and plied thread or strings from llama or alpaca hair. It could also be made of cotton cords. The cords contained numeric and other values encoded by knots in a base ten positional system. *Khipus* might have just a few or up to 2,000 cords (Urton 2009).

There are around 600 *kipu* in museums around the world (Urton 2009), and in Gothenburg there is a collection of around 35 well-preserved *kipu* from Inka times. The word *kipu* means knot in Quechua and is the same word in singular and plural form (Urton 2009). Afterwards I realized that in a way a *kipu* symbolizes this study.

A *kipu* is a way to tell a story, like chapter I; it is also knowledge, that kind of knowledge that has been ignored or hidden since the people who could read and understand it became unseen and forgotten. This *kipu* is also a perfect symbol of categorization, like I try to develop in chapter II, it has been placed in the past, as an unknown knowledge, almost a mystery.

In the deposit at the Museum of World Culture, thesis and antithesis coexist, the fact that in 1930, Bernardino Millaquen, a Chilean (*Araucan*) sailor left a *kipu* that he was actually using to the museum with an explanation of how to use it has been ignored (figure 1). That *kipu* is here today and has much to do with chapter III, about how modernism excluded “undesirable” people and put them in another category, how their culture was taken from them and made into a museum artefact<sup>2</sup>. A *kipu* is also a way to narrate, calculate, count, and organize the world. A *kipu* represents the way in which an organization has materialized, in that way a *kipu* has a lot to do with Chapter IV where organization echoes the way in which collections are ranked, interpreted and used. Still, when I chose this picture, the first parameter in which I was thinking was the aesthetical one. After reflecting about this, I hope that in the future I can be more aware about why I chose things when I am choosing them.

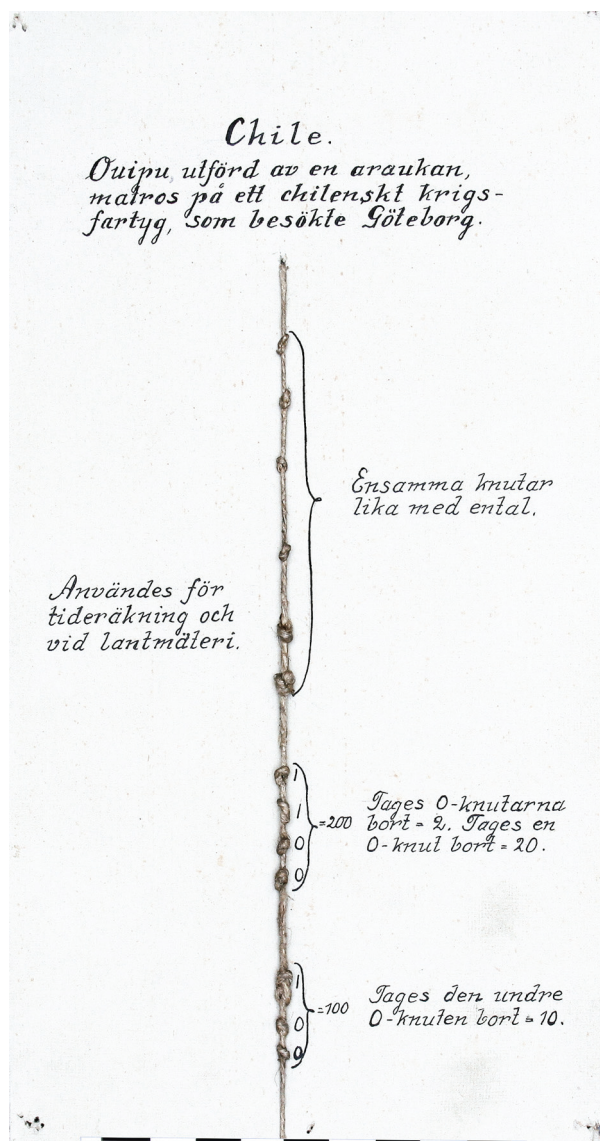


Figure 1: Photograph of a khipu donated in 1929 by Bernardino Millaquen from Renihue (he was Araucan). Millaquen was a sailor in a Chilean warship which visited Gothenburg (object no 1929.24.0001). Information from the Museum's original catalogue. Photo by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.

I commenced work at the former *Etnografiska museet i Göteborg* in 1996. Since then I have been in contact with the history of the museum, its collections, archive and library. This is why when I started to think of a topic for my Ph-D, it became natural to choose the history of the present *Världskulturmuseet* (Museum of World Culture) as the topic of my PhD.

Since I came in 1996 until today (2011) the idea of the museum has changed many times. I could observe during this period the museum's process from the Ethnographical thinking to today with the idea of world culture/s. One thing that I have observed during these years is how individuals can influence the direction of the museum's activities, praxis and philosophical background.

The actual Museum of World Culture is only six years old but the history of the museum's base (the collections, archive, library) is more or less 150 years in length. It goes back in time to 1861 when *Göteborgs Museum* opened to the public.

When I decided to write about the history of the museum I thought that the best form to enclose this theme and at the same time develop the different ideas that I had about it, was to take as example how collecting has been practiced during the museum's history. The archaeological collections from South America were the natural topic for me, as an Argentinean and an archaeologist.

This text has personal memories from the last years, I have not only been an observer but in many cases I have felt that everyone in this journey has been a protagonist. Many times I have come back to my own experience, which is entangled in this text. Sometimes I use my personal experiences as a starting point to make an introspective analysis about the museological practices. I have been proving partially as methodology, a reflexive practice where my own reflections are involved, that can blur the limits between an objective and subjective approach.

I started my thesis probably in a quite different way to how most scholars' begin. I use a pragmatic perspective and try to understand why we do things and actions in the way we do. My way of working has been many times, in my daily practice, to use theory to explain and suggest a method to change practices.

In 2000 I was accepted as Ph-D candidate at the Department of Archaeology at the University of Gothenburg, today part of the Department of Historical Studies and in some way it feels like coming back to my origins. When I studied Archaeology in Argentina it was inside the school of History



at the University of Cordoba. My experience to be part of the Ethnographical Museum, my experience as Argentinean in Gothenburg, as archaeologist, as a woman, obviously may be observed in the text. Many times, all these aspects of my own biography have influenced the choice of topics that I am presenting here, probably because just those topics were those that I needed to understand during my daily work as curator of the collections. I am not presenting myself as a nativist ethnographer, where “a reflexive discourse assumes that only natives understand natives and the native must be the proper judge of ethnography” (Peirano 1998:115); meaning that I as Latin American could understand better the Latin American collections. I consider myself part of all these processes that have been taking place, in some way many times responsible for the consequences. I am not the foreign talking about a Swedish museum, however probably my experience as South American, Spanish speaker opened other questions.

All this experience helped me to ask questions about the practices that we use daily in our work without questioning. Many times we do things in a way because we have been doing this for many years and other people before us did in the same way. Many times, we believe that practice is neutral and it means only a functional way of working. However, seeing and studying the formation of the collections at the museum and how practices had been established I could comprehend that practices are ideological and our bodies learn to do things without questioning; partially I am going to discuss this topic in my research on classification systems.

There are many ways to tell a history. The history I am presenting here is one of multiple and complex possibilities. During this period and in the process of writing I have seen that many things had no place in this account and needed to be left aside. The material gave me the opportunity to find one combination, still there are many other histories among the archive and collections material. The archive of the current Museum of World Culture is an uncharted territory, almost a Pandora’s Box.

## Notes

- 1 Khipu can be spelled *Quipu* in Spanish and commonly in English. *Khipu* is the word for knot in Quechua (Urton 2009). Quechua was the language of the Inkas and it is the language spoken by 10 million Quechua speakers today (Adelaar and Muysken 2004).
- 2 The khipu left by Bernardino Millaquen, the Chilean (Mapuche) sailor is not “beautiful”, it is very simple. The Peruvian pre-Columbian khipus are magnificent and old, and disconnected from present days.

# Objectives

With help of the Latin American collections stored today in Gothenburg, some objectives have been developed.

The first goal is to see how the concept of ethnography in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was used to categorise together the people who became excluded from national projects into the same category. The creation of museums of ethnography was the result of the reinforcement of national ideas and strengthening of nation/state. This is why when comparing museums of ethnography in Europe and South America the same kind of collections can be found. Objects have been used and classified in the same way as many of the people in places where those artefacts were collected. The objects at the museum have gone through being classified as *curiosa*, ethnography, to world culture, these classifications implied a way to see the people behind the objects.

The second objective is to examine how museological practices have been constructed and reproduced over time. Practices in institutions are accepted as neutral components, without ideological meaning; many times these practices are going into legacy to the next generation of practitioners without reflection or questioning them.

One practice that I am examining is how memories and ranking of collections is the result of the intersection of relationships, games of power, ideological and theoretical approaches, resulting many times in that silences and absences are bigger than memories.

There are other themes that are very interesting following the history of the institutions which hold the collections. One of them is how the contact between the institution and the general public has been. The audiences have been a focus for formation, education, participation and inclusion, meaning that the public can be a passive agent that needs to be shaped or an actor that can participate and be included in the mission of the museum. This third topic I am going only to discuss superficially.

One additional and fourth subject that became palpable during the course of my studies is how the background of the elite in Gothenburg, many of them with family roots in Scotland shaped the museum project from the beginning. When almost all cultural projects in Sweden were in one or another way pro German, the first beginning of the history of the museum in Gothenburg was a mimesis of the Victoria and Albert museum in England and praise to the exhibition of the Industrialism.

My main ambition is not to criticize the institution of today or the persons who have been involved in all those processes but to reflect about how we carry out our jobs today.

# Material, methodology and theoretical approaches

The collections stored today at the Museum of World Culture are the basis of this study. First an examination of them has been made, making an overview of origin, time of arrival in Gothenburg, who collected them, etc. The study of the collections is the empirical material used for this thesis. Additionally, the archive of the former Ethnographical Museum has been the source of primary information. Also documentation from the City Archive and City Museum archive, as well as published material (books, newspapers, material from exhibitions, etc) has been used.

The methodologies used to analyse the material are an analytical and reflexive methodology basically based on the discussion that has been going on during the last decennia by de-colonial thinkers which also allow arguments about the meaning of subjectivity. Among de-colonial thinking I have been inspired by Latin American authors like Walter Mignolo (1995; 2002; 2005), Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (1987; 1993; 2004) and Boaventura de Souza Santos (2009) among others. De-colonial thinking has revealed the mechanisms of the production of race and of modern Euro-centered epistemology. Citing Walter Mignolo “The de-colonial option is epistemic, that is, it de-links from the very foundations of Western concepts and accumulation of knowledge. By epistemic de-linking I do not mean abandoning or ignoring what has been institutionalized all over the planet (e.g., look what is going on now in Chinese Universities and the institutionalization of knowledge). I mean to shift the geo- and body-politics of knowledge from its foundation in Western imperial history of the past five centuries, to the geo- and body- politics of people, languages, religions, political and economic conceptions, subjectivities, etc., that have been racialized (that is, denied their plain humanity)” (Mignolo 2006:121).

I am also going to use the concept of reflexivity that Ian Hodder (2003) introduced, “meaning the incorporation of multiple stakeholder groups and the self-critical awareness of one’s archaeological truth claims as

historical and contingent” (Hodder 2003:58; Nordbladh 1995; Peirano 1998), relating to a critical position where we can enquire into our own taken for granted assumptions.

Since a recurrent theme is the establishment of practices and how those have been reproduced and transmitted, reference to Pierre Bourdieu has been a central thread throughout the different chapters. Bourdieu’s work (Bourdieu 1977) emphasizes the importance of the embodiment of practices and the reproduction of them focused on the bodily capacity in the social world. According to Bourdieu, social agents operate depending on implicit practical logic, a practical sense and a bodily disposition (Bourdieu 1977).

To understand the classificatory system used at the ethnographical paradigm and how collecting practices had been implemented I resort firstly to the classical work of Eric Wolf (Wolf 1982) and the creation of the category of people without history. In chapter II and III the main discussion is about those people, those who had been classified, labelled as ahistorical, primitives, outsiders, without rights. In the attempt to understand the museological practice and focus on the future, mainly de-Colonial thinkers (Mignolo 2005; Rivera Cusicanqui 1987; Tuhiwai Smith 1999) have been used. In Latin America, in the current days, archaeology among other disciplines has been confronted with a new political situation, where “those people without history” are claiming back their rights, and the discipline must to rethink its position in society. A generation of archaeologists has been proposing new methodologies (Haber 2005; Haber and Gnecco 2007; Mendez-Gastelumendi 1996) to understand the present.

Finally I am returning again to Bourdieu to understand how the game of power inside institutions can be one factor to rank objects. Bourdieu’s (Bourdieu 1988; Bourdieu 1989) analysis of how cultural (symbolic) capital gives status in society or inside an institution is very useful to understand the rules and the game of power inside an institution like a museum. In order to comprehend the final ranking of the collections and objects stored in Gothenburg I am incorporating how this game of power becomes embodied in the biography of the objects.

# Abstract

## Chapter I: The voyage. From curiosa to world culture

This chapter is a historical account of the institutions that hold the collections considered ethnographical. In some periods these could be objects coming from outside Sweden, in other periods they could be coming from lower classes or from “people in lower stages of civilizations” and in recent years they have been defined as the “non-European cultural component”. However in this chapter I am presenting more the institutional form descriptively.

The first documented objects coming to Gothenburg from abroad were those brought by sea captains after their journeys with the Swedish East India Company in the last part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Later, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, The Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in Gothenburg (*Kungliga vetenskaps- och vitterhetssamhället i Göteborg*) established a Natural Cabinet in the city. Mainly, it contained botanical and zoological items (many described by Carl von Linné), but also some cultural objects. The collections from this cabinet became the ones of the Museum of Natural History which was founded in 1833.

However, in 1861 the City of Gothenburg decided to create a museum, following examples from Europe, especially from England with the South Kensington museums. So, the Museum of Natural History and the art collection became the foundation of this new museum that opened to the public in December 1861 at the former house of the East Indian Company.

The objects coming from outside Sweden were placed together with the Swedish historical objects and the art collection, in the upper level of the building, together with the library and the area for society meetings and lectures. Many of the descriptions from this time show that those objects gave a cosmopolitan feeling to the city. They were the evidence of a city with international contacts and a growing middle class.

During the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the collections grew and objects coming from outside Sweden were placed in the Ethnographical Department. The department had a heyday when Erland Nordenskiöld was appointed director. During his period a frenzy of collecting of Latin American objects started. He also renewed museological concepts: education, exhibitions, and storage rooms became important issues for Nordenskiöld.

The department went through different re-organizations, and was impacted by the consequences of two world wars. Finally, in 1946, it became a separate museum, the Gothenburg Ethnographical Museum. During many years, the museum was searching for better facilities and storage for the collections, it was a period embossed by a dream of a new house, and new ideas. However, many dreams never became reality and coming into the 1990's the situation of the museum was very bad. The politicians wanted to close the museum because it was considered a strange activity in the city. The alien component became the one that saved the museum, and in 1996 the Swedish government decided to create a new museum and administration for the non-European collections in Swedish National Museums.

The collections from the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg were taken from the provincial administration and became part of the national one, in the structure of a new museum - the Museum of World Culture that opened to the public in December 2004.

## **Chapter II: The power of labelling**

In this chapter I introduce the museum's collections, especially those from Latin America; firstly because the Latin American collections make up 75% of all the collections and secondly because some of these collections are the ones this thesis will focus on. In this chapter I am going to introduce how they came to Sweden and the different ways to catalogue them during their history in Sweden. The system used to register and label them is very strongly connected to what these objects have represented during their time in the museum store rooms. I will discuss how knowledge and classification around these objects has been constructed. In this chapter I will analyze the implications of different classification/categorization systems. The objects have gone through many different theoretical and political paradigms and every period of time has put its imprint on the classification system for the objects. These objects have been classified through time as *curiosa*, ethnographic and world culture. Every one of these categories has meant different things. Ethnography was not the same in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup>

century as at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Who and what has been part of the category ethnography has been depending on who was excluded from hegemonic projects. In the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, ethnography at the museum had more to do with class, however in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had to do with the primitive people outside Europe, and in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it had to do with exotic people. Beginning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century a new category started to be used, and it was World Culture. The process to define what world culture means has not been an easy one: in one side are academics having a discussion about globalization and what it has implied for people, and on the other side politicians trying to define a practice of inclusion using the notion of world culture.

The collections at the Museum of World Culture are coming from the former Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg, and when the new museum was created, the collections were kept in the former system of classification. It is interesting that among the collections, hybrid examples, like objects coming from the mixed groups between indigenous and black populations had never been registered (those collections exist, but they are registered as “full blood”), also no objects coming from the upper classes in urban cities are represented. The collections are divided into archaeology and ethnography, as if the people outside Europe have no history (following Eric Wolf). The category history is not allowed for some people represented at ethnographical museums. In this chapter I also present a project that was run at the Museum of World Culture around a Bolivian collection in 2009: I am presenting this to show how categories and classification can be changed, and what the possibilities for the collections are in a future.

### **Chapter III: Collecting excluded people**

In this Chapter I explore the relationship between collecting, formation of museums of ethnography, and the constitution of nations/states. I am going to compare the period of formation of ethnographical museums with today and the formation of museums of world culture since in both periods these categories (ethnography and world culture) may perhaps connote the exclusion of some people from the political hegemonic projects.

I use a couple of theories that I believe have had impact in shaping of what ethnography has meant. One is the postcolonial situation of the Latin American countries, how classes were formed and took the political-cultural power and how some groups of people were excluded from the national projects. The same situation can be observed in Sweden and Europe.



I am going go deep into the shaping of the *Göteborgs Museum*<sup>1</sup> as a propaganda maker to shape identities and citizens; and also the new post-colonial countries in Latin America sending objects to Europe to profile themselves as lands of opportunities and natural-cultural richness. In this context, the collecting of material from people excluded from those national projects gave ground to the emergence of ethnography as discipline and ethnographical museums as colonial/imperial propaganda.

I am going to concentrate on the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the collecting practice in Gothenburg. However, I would like to explore if today practices are similar or dissimilar from those. Today, under the heading of multiculturalism, there are many different approaches, and some of them still exclude people and agglomerate them under the multicultural designation.

The role of the museums with ethnographical collections today is a field of many discussions and no clear answers, but many parallels can be observed with pronouncements taken 100 years ago. Today, in the case of Sweden ethnography has become defined politically as the non-European component and this pronouncement has given rise to many problems. A big challenge today is what museums are going to do with the ethnographical objects, are they a colonial burden, a political tool, an aesthetical piece, something to send back or something to keep in a mausoleum. There is no general answer but at the same time strategies must to be formulated.

In this chapter I am going to introduce some collections that came to Sweden in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the help of those collections I am going to introduce how the formation of new states were closely related to the formation of collections with emphasis on Latin America, in this part I am coming back to issues discussed in Chapter II and how categories had been used.

## **Chapter IV: Unruly passions**

In this chapter I would like to explore a common museum practice, to make rankings of the collections. In the history of the South American collections in Gothenburg, it is possible to observe how some collections have had higher status than others. There are different explanations for the practice. One is the aesthetical point of view, and another very common one is the evolutionary model of people, from “more primitive to more civilized”. However, often the decisive factor of ranking is who the collector was. Using three examples I am going to examine how this ranking was made

in the museum in the middle of the 1950's and has been kept until today, and how memories, distortion of memories, and personal conflicts, have meant that the collections at the end embodied the person of the collector more than any other quality.

In this part I am introducing the concept of power relationships inside institutions and biography of objects. Inside the frame of institutional power relationships I am going to develop how this game of power inside the institution became part of the biography of the objects and collections. At the end those artefacts have become agents of the people involved in conflicts, and the conflict became partially part of the biography of those collections. I am going to introduce three collections that had different fates.

## Synthesis

My proposition is that the practice of collecting is a puzzling process where ideas, people, jealousy and expectations have had important implications for what these objects have meant during their long sojourn in the museum storage rooms. These objects, coming from the past, have often had a broad audience during their time in Gothenburg and when the museum today meets the future, many times there is the demand to give them back to their original owners.

This thesis is about the link between objects and people; collectors, dealers, curators, public, politicians and original owners. There is also the history between the institution and its political context and how the objects at the end are reflections about relationships.

My aim with this thesis is to raise the awareness of and to reflect on museum practices, how they have been developed and become what they are today. The idea is to create a critical distance that allows rethinking of these practices.

## Notes

1 Museum of Göteborg. I am going to use the word in Swedish "*Göteborgs Museum*" because there is no official translation to English, and the term city museum is associated with a different kind of museum.



# Chapter I: The voyage. From curiosa to world culture

## Introduction

This chapter is going to present the history of many institutions which over time held the collections coming from outside Sweden. Many of these objects started their voyage as luxurious items of the bourgeoisie of the city of Gothenburg, later becoming part of the Natural Cabinet, the *Göteborgs Museum* and presently the Museum of World Culture.

I am interested in how a provincial museum with some exotica became a national museum about or for including the others, how political and ideological paradigms have formed the subject-matter and context around these collections.

In many cases I am going to oscillate between the objects and the institutions. I am trying also to interpret part of the political, social economical atmosphere of Gothenburg, Sweden or the international sphere, as a help to put some practices in context.

The role of museums in society and the interrelationship with the public, from their first beginning until today, has been discussed in recent years. In my studies I have realized how the *Göteborgs Museum*, later the Ethnographical Museum and today the Museum of World Culture, have been typical products and instruments for the political establishment. Obviously, I am not so naïve to believe that institutions, like museums, can be apolitical, but something interesting in the case of Gothenburg is that the museum has a remarkable interaction with politicians and not least with the public.

This story starts with the decision in 1996 to create the Museum of World Culture, going back in time to the first organization which presented the collections at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, continuing in the foundation of

the first *Göteborgs Museum* in 1861 with an ethnographical department. In 1946 this department became a separate museum that closed in 1999 to give birth to the new Museum of World Culture.

## The history of the Museum of World Culture

The history of the Museum of World Culture goes back to different periods: to 2004 when it opened to the public; to 1999 when it was founded; to 1996 when the Swedish government decided to create a new museum based in the collections from outside Europe, or ... to more than 100 years ago when the first collections from outside Sweden started to come to Gothenburg.

I am going to present briefly the history of the museum, discussing the different paradigms that defined each period and see how every period of the history of the museum has had an impact on the collections. I have been a witness to the last change, leaving ethnography and becoming and trying to define world culture, and because of that probably I have experienced it as one of the most dramatic in the history of the institution; but perhaps every change has been dramatic for those involved.

Collections are probably the heart of the museum, and the responsibility to update and present them is today in the hands of the Museum of World Culture, so let us start.

### 1996, the resolution, a new national museum

A beautiful September day in 1996, at the former *Göteborgs Etnografiska museum* a workshop called *Past and Present in Andean History* was held. Colleagues from Sweden and Europe had a meeting to present and discuss Andean topics. Having this workshop at the *Etnografiska museum* was the obvious place; the museum with its Latin American collections and Americanist history had been the natural place for Swedish Americanism since Erland Nordenskiöld's time.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> September, the personnel were collecting names to save the museum from being closed. The economical situation was calamitous and the rumours were that the museum would be dismantled. Since 1995, closing the *Etnografiska museum* was the continuous talk. In August 1995, the museum director of the provincial museums, Bo Jonsson, expressed

in the local newspaper Göteborgs Posten (GP), the probability to close the museum because of the lack of money and the strange (*främmande*) activities at the museum.

One proposal was to move the collections to the *Naturhistoriska museet* or put them in storage (Sahlberg 1995/08/17). At that moment the politicians of the city had decided to support the Art Museum and the improvement of the building housing the City Museum. Helping the city museums was, according to Bo Jonsson a priority because “it has become an important part in the fight against segregation<sup>1</sup>”.

The answer given by, at that time professors in anthropology, was extremely interesting. They wrote that it is in the nature of an ethnographic museum to illustrate what is foreign. Its mission is to expose the utility and art objects from foreign cultures. They defended the role of an ethnographical museum in integration policies saying that “if anything a well-functioning ethnographic museum contributes to combating segregation<sup>2</sup>”, obviously an ethnographic museum concerns many immigrants.

“It is an ethnographic museum’s nature to illustrate what is foreign. Its mission is to expose the customs and works of art from foreign cultures. Visitors are given the opportunity of discoveries and experiences of beauty which contribute not only to the understanding of foreign peoples, but also respect for foreign cultures as alternative solutions to people’s desire to build communities” (Aijmer, et al. 1995/08/23).<sup>3</sup>”

This position became very clear when the Museum of World Culture emerged; until today, the position is that immigrants (as a uniform category) should be placed in a closed area (it could be a museum as well as a suburb).

Coming back to the meeting in 1996: during the last day, the director of the museum, Sven-Erik Isacson, came and stopped the collecting of signatures and happily informed us that the Swedish government had saved the museum and the collections from the last death rattle.

That day it became known, that the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1996, in a government bill the Swedish Parliament decided that the *Etnografiska museum* in Gothenburg should leave the municipal administration and become part of the national one (Sveriges Regering 1996:142). One of the reasons that the government gave for this proposal was that “museums with wholly or partially ethnographical direction must, now even more than ever, have an important mission in promoting contacts between Swedish and non-Swedish cultures<sup>4</sup>”. This bill also suggested the creation of a new administration for the museums with non-European collections. This administration should

be placed in Gothenburg (Sveriges Regering 1996:143). Here, it became very clear that one goal for this new administration was dealing with the non-European components in Swedish society, and objects placed in ethnographical collections were symbols of the non-European.

Interestingly the bill pointed out that the museum should be interdisciplinary, and the work must be pursued in close contact with current research especially at the universities of Gothenburg and Stockholm. This detail had significance since the museums in Gothenburg became disconnected from the university in the 1960s and since that time, the contacts between institutions were carried by individual interest but only at an informal level.

The constitution process went on and on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1996 in a session of the Swedish Government it was decided to create a new museum in the city of Gothenburg. The fact was that the government took an enormous step and it took many years for the Social Democratic party to defend this action. Probably, it is not until today in 2011, that the project of the Museum of World Culture has been accepted by all the political parties in Sweden and established without doubts.

In the announcement the creation of a new administration before the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999 was required. In this new administration four museums were included: the Museum of Ethnography<sup>5</sup>, the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, the Far East Antiquities Museum, these three in Stockholm; and the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg. Furthermore at this moment it was discussed whether the Asian collections at the *Röhsska museum*<sup>6</sup> in Gothenburg should also be part of this new administration (Sverige Regering 1996:1–2).

In the announcement it was also asserted that active work with the public should be carried out in co-operation with schools, universities, educators, cultural institutions, libraries, local historical associations<sup>7</sup>, youth and immigrant associations and other popular movements<sup>8</sup> (Sverige Regering 1996:3).

The museum should be a meeting place and an arena for discussion. The multicultural society's heritage should be shown, illustrated and discussed. The objects should be displayed in a dynamic environment, reflecting the development of various cultures, similarities and differences.

The central administration should be a museum with national responsibility. Through new and cross-border<sup>9</sup> activities this statement could develop further. An ambition should be also a close co-operation with *Riksställningar*<sup>10</sup> to produce travelling exhibitions (Sverige Regering 1996:3).

New technology should be used extensively in communication with other cultural and educational institutions and also in the exhibitions and documentation (Sverige Regering 1996:4).

The location in Gothenburg for the new administration was based on the realization that the region had a long tradition of ethnographical collections in collaboration with the university. Also at the University of Gothenburg there is well established research on cultural conservation, multicultural questions, refugee problems, etc (Sverige Regering 1996:4).

Something very important that was emphasized all through the beginning of this process was the role of national institutions in general and this new museum in particular, working against xenophobia and racism.

In order to carry out these assignments, a committee was created and its work was divided into three phases.

In the first phase the committee implemented the directions from the Government. A first step was to study juridical questions for the transfer of different museums, coming from different backgrounds to the national administration (provincial, national, foundational). Also, the preliminary operation idea about the mission of this new entity was outlined, and how the resources should be divided. The committee also was in charge of the tender for an architectural competition for the construction of a new museum in Gothenburg (Sverige Regering 1996:4–6).

In the second phase, the committee organised the practical establishment of the new administration through among other things drawing up a proposal for a budget (a complete budget); also the transfer of the staff, collections, archive, etc from the former institutions/administrations to the National administration (in the case of Gothenburg from the municipality to the state) (Sverige Regering 1996:6–8).

The third and last phase included an account of the ideas for the activities that the new museum should have, and the transferral to the new administration.

The committee established a group of international experts for its commission<sup>11</sup>. The aim of forming this expert group, was to obtain an independent and comprehensive analysis of the museum's current situation. It was necessary for the committee to have information to create the best conditions for the new administration, thinking of the coming collaborations between Stockholm and Gothenburg (SOU 1998:125, 1998:23).



In one of the first papers presented by the “Committee for a New Museum of World Cultures” (1996) we can read:

The assignment implies developing and concretising visions and ideas for a Museum of World Cultures, in consideration to:<sup>12</sup>

- New methods to present the cultural heritage of the multicultural societies.
- Develop public activities, especially with focus on children, young people and immigrants’ organisations.
- Co-operation with the scientific community –the multidisciplinary perspective.
- National responsibility – the regional perspective.
- Develop the use of new information technology.

The University of Gothenburg started a process with the idea to concretise the cooperation between researchers and the new museum. Jan Ling, at that moment Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gothenburg, wrote in a first letter entitled “a Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg – a museum in co-operation: “A new Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg can be an important direction in the aspiration to change antiquated conceptions about alien people and question rigid boundaries between disciplines and research...”. At that time, The University of Gothenburg, invested in the creation of a centre working closer to the new museum, a centre for interdisciplinary research called Museion (SOU 1998:125 1998:51–53).

## **The debate**

The debate stormed once the proposition of a new museum in Gothenburg became public in 1996. In the first presentation the idea apparently was to move the three museums in Stockholm to Gothenburg. In a study made by media before the process started, it was presented that 80% of the budget for culture was spent in Stockholm, the remainder was distributed over the rest of the country (Rubin and Al Shadidi 1998/12/08); and for Gothenburg, it was clear that the city had no economical means to have good quality in its museums.

The three museums in Stockholm started a protest action against moving the museums. The lobby, especially from the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, had an enormous influence. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities has very well established friends, among others the Royal

house and important figures from the Swedish aristocracy and industry. The director of the museum at that time reacted strongly. He pointed out that an art museum such as they were, had nothing in common with ethnographical museums, and that his institution did not fit in such a concept as World Culture. The director of the Museum of Mediterranean had the same reaction. The directors of the both ethnographical museums, however were positive to the change. In particular the director of the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg, since this governmental proposition saved his museum from being dismantled (Brandt 1998/08/13; Haglund 1996/10/01; Rubin 1998/11/11).

It is also important to remember that the discussion became political as the decision of the new museum was a proposal from the Social Democratic government.

The big issue was the moving itself. Among the reasons given against it were: the fragility of objects, that the collections were going to be unavailable for 10 years, that the weather in Gothenburg was humid and salty so it was a problem to construct good storage, and that the new museum could not have a permanent exhibition about East Asian art and archaeology (Sverige Regering 1996/97).

In December 1996 it became clear that the move would only be an administrative one and the three museums in Stockholm left their former administrations and became part of the National Museums of World Culture.

However the debate was more than that. It was really an ideological clash, which shook traditions and dogmas. The ideological debate is something that is still going on and has many facets; as Jan Molin wrote in *Göteborgs Posten* “the debate about the Museum of World Culture is about vision vs reaction”, and he continued that for the future of a cultural diversity he hoped that vision would win over reaction<sup>13</sup> (Molin 1996/11/04).

## **Making a new national museum. The Museum of World Culture**

1<sup>st</sup> January 1999 the new administration took control of the three museums in Stockholm and started the new Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg. The former Ethnographical Museum continued its work until September 2000 when it closed to the public. The collections were moved from the old building at *Åvägen* and were relocated to the new storage at *Ebbe Lieberahtsgatan*; there has been an attempt to use the concept of “objects

archive” for the new storage, however without having a deep discussion about the term archive in a historical contextual approach.

The collections were transferred to the state<sup>14</sup> together with the library<sup>15</sup> and the staff. The archive became part of the National Archive but deposited in Gothenburg, close to the collections.

At the same time the construction of the new exhibition building at Korsvägen started. In the beginning it was planned that the building should also have space to contain the collections and the archive. Problems with the budget resulted in the building being only half the size that was planned from the beginning. So, the museum today has two locations, one for storage of the collections, archive and the conservation ateliers, and the building at Korsvägen for exhibitions, program and education. The library was originally in the central building, but it was moved in 2009 to the storage building, the museum management decided that the library is associated with the collections and not with the public activities. The central administration also moved to the same building as the new museum and until 2010 Museion (the University project) was also located at Korsvägen<sup>16</sup>.

After the formation of the central administration, and the decisions around the construction of a new exhibition building, the new director was appointed in 2001. Jette Sandahl became the first director of the Museum of World Culture.

In 2004 we can read the political mission from the Ministry of Culture and the Authority for National Museums of World Culture:

“The National Museums of World Culture has as statement (mission) to show and bring world cultures to life. We shall support interdisciplinary knowledge and public activities in new forms from ethnographical, archaeological, and artistic together with other social and historical perspectives. We shall document and illuminate different culture’s manifestations and conditions, and the cultural encounter, both historically and of today’s society”<sup>17</sup> (Regeringen Sverige Kulturdepartementet 1998/12/17) (my translation, unauthorized).

The Museum of World Culture wishes to create engagement in society and the world through discussion of important and current questions from a global perspective. The program shall be shaped in dialogue with the surrounding world, the content will both explore, invite and entertain.<sup>18</sup>

The first management team of the museum developed a mission for the Museum of World Culture where words like conflict and borders were picked up without naming disciplines, traditions or immigrants.

“In dialogue with the surrounding world and through emotional and intellectual experiences the Museum of World Culture aims to be a meeting place that will make people feel at home across borders, build trust and take responsibility together for a shared global future, in a world in constant change” (Museum of World Culture 2003–2006).

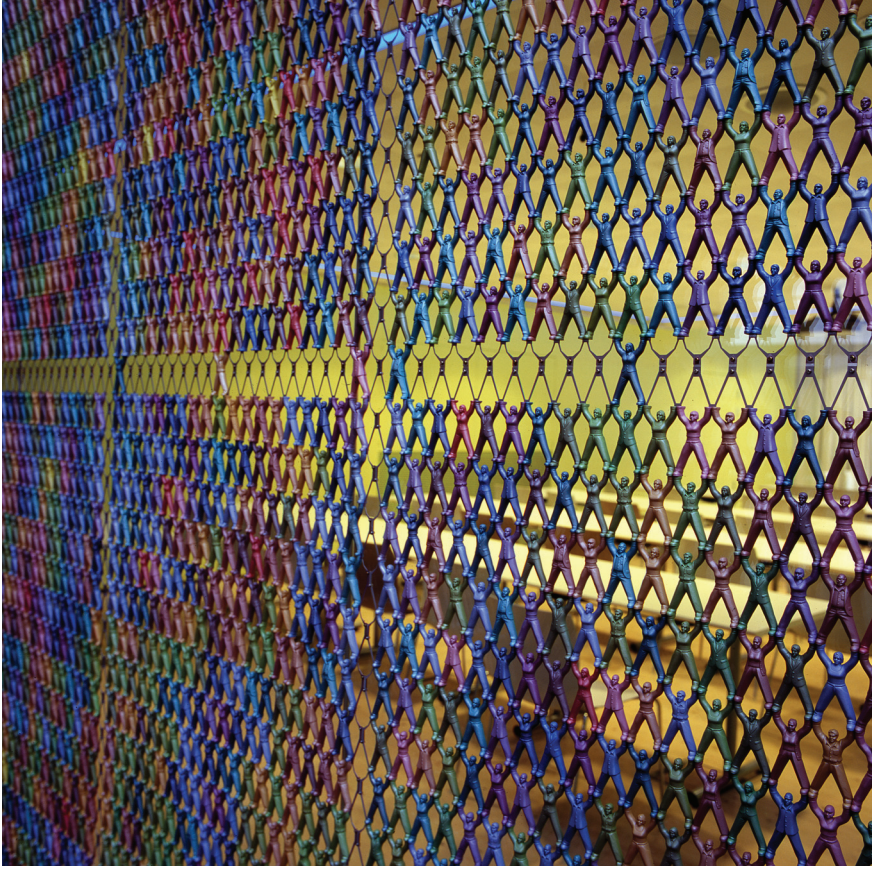
The Museum of World Culture (figures 2, 3 and 4) opened to the public 29<sup>th</sup> December 2004 with five exhibitions<sup>19</sup>. This has been without doubt, one of the most expensive cultural projects in Sweden in many years. Today, it is almost 15 years ago since we collected signatures to save the Ethnographical Museum, its collections, and history. To be a participant and an observer of the whole process put me without my intention in a position to be a link between histories, to be part of a huge change of paradigms, to preserve the past in the present and to come in the introspective history of the collections... and going back to the history of the institution (or institutions) that had been the keepers of those objects.



*Figure 2: Photo of the Museum of World Culture building from rear. Photographed by SFV; ©Museum of World Culture.*



*Figure 3: Photo of the Museum of World Culture building from inside.  
Photographed by H el ene Binet;  Museum of World Culture.*



*Figure 4: Photo of the Museum of World Culture. Do Ho Suh art installation - inside the museum. Photographed by Åke Fredriksson. ©Museum of World Culture.*

# The natural cabinet at kungliga vetenskaps- och vitterhetssamhället

”My little theatre, Aglie said, in the style of those Renaissance fantasies where visual encyclopedias were laid out, sylloges of the universe. Not so much a dwelling as a memory machine” (Eco 1989:283).

*Wunderkammer*, or Cabinets of Wonder emerged from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards in Europe. One of the oldest is the Worm cabinet, today in exhibition and managed by the National Museum in Copenhagen. Those cabinets became places of representation and knowledge, reflection and laboratory, mirroring the airs and the manners of the *époque*.

Those cabinets were, probably, the place (room) linking the Middle Ages with Modernity. In some way also the concept of wonder cabinet, had an conceptual evolution; those places went from *wonder* to *curiosa*, probably coming to the Enlightenment and after the Industrial Revolution (Evans and Marr 2006), the Systematic theory proposed by Linnaeus and the expanding of the colonial European power, those wonder cabinets became systematized in *curiosa* (or *exotica*), *naturalia* (fauna, flora, minerals), *artificialia* (creations of artisans, made by people), *mirabilia* (art), showing how the ideological background changed (Mason 1994; Yaya 2008:2).

There is a tendency to see the first cabinets as something chaotic, eclectic or disorganized. However, they reflected how the world was understood before the *époque* where current categorizations began.

A very interesting critique has been introduced by Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz (2005); they point out that how we classify the world today, and our categories, has influenced how cabinets have been studied. The study of cabinets have been based on the logic of our times and ways of understanding the world, separated in disciplines and categories starting from Linnaeus’ time. The authors suggest that instead cabinets should be studied in a more comprehensive way using probably pre-modern approaches.

Today cabinets have been studied by one group of scholars concentrating on art collections, among others, Krzysztof Pomian (1990), while the natural items have been studied by other scholars like Paula Findlen (1998). Thus dividing the comprehension of those cabinets in the way we are accustomed to delimit disciplines (and geographies) today. We study from

our current disciplines those objects in the cabinets creating dichotomies that did not exist in that time like, amateur vs scientific, irrational vs rational, etc (Dietz and Nutz 2005:45–46). Moreover, the concept of Curiosity has gone through different interpretations, it has meant different things in different historical contexts. In Peter Harrison's essay about curiosity he presents how the term has gone from something forbidden, to be associated with the Christian tradition where curiosity is associated with the original sin, to the use of curiosity as science, intellectual challenging, and coming back to modernism where curiosity was confronted with method and relegated to the area of amateurism (Harrison 2001).

In Gothenburg, the first cabinet was organized by the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences of Gothenburg in the last part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Probably there was already an amount of wonders and curiosa in the city but not in the form of a cabinet. It can be read in accounts of the formation of the museum, later in time, that people donated objects that they had in attics spread in the city (Eriksson 1978; Eriksson 1985; Lagerberg 1901; Lagerberg 1911).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century Gothenburg was transformed from a rather insignificant town to the second largest city in Sweden. The population grew from 4000 to 12000 inhabitants during 100 years; and the city had an apogee during that century (Oxelqvist 1995:14). Commerce and mercantilism flowered and in 1731 when the Swedish East India Company was founded Gothenburg became an important port in the North Atlantic. The company had great commercial activity in Asia, in particular with China. The company's ships main line to China from Gothenburg was via Cadiz where objects from Scandinavia were exchanged for currencies, mainly silver from the Potosí mines in Bolivia (Lundahl 2010). After Cadiz the route continued to South Africa, Java and Sumatra, to China. One of the most significant objects coming back from those trips was porcelain. The Swedish company was the one who imported most porcelain to all Europe (Söderpalm 2000). Porcelain was considered one of the luxurious articles coming back to Europe that became incorporated in the home of the rich people also in Sweden. The Chinese objects were very highly esteemed and they have kept their value until today (Nilsson 1978).

At the time that the Swedish East India Company grew and the city received the flow of goods coming from distant countries, the interest in studying the objects also increased. It was during this time that the learning from Carl von Linné also became known. So the atmosphere was a flow of objects from distant lands, the theories and classification of Linnaeus, his



students travelling around the world and collecting specimens and a growing bourgeois class with worldly aspirations in the province of Gothenburg; the aspirations to make the city not only a mercantilist city but also a cultural one.

Many foreigners settled in Gothenburg, mainly Englishmen, Scots, Dutch, Germans among others, making the town international (European at least). The city had both a military garrison and naval shipyards. Around the great harbour canal was the centre, where the import merchants involved in the affairs of the East India Company lived. Also the house of the East India Company and the city high school were there (Oxelqvist 1995:14).

When the ships of the Swedish East India Company returned, there was a fiesta in the city. At first auctions were organized and the products sold to the important merchants. Returning from these trips, many of the crew brought objects from “exotic distant countries”, which on numerous occasions were donated to The Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in Gothenburg and formed part of its *Naturalie Cabinette*. The Swedish East India Company was decidedly a defining element of the town (Eriksson 1978; 1985).

In this milieu The Royal Society was founded in 1773 and established by Royal decree in 1778 by the King Gustav III. During this period it was pointed out that in Gothenburg people wrote bills and no poetry (Falkemark 2010:85), so the Royal Society arranged lectures in economics (of course, and economy was ranked by Linnaeus as one of the most important Sciences), natural history, botany as well as in the history of Gothenburg and the fatherland. In this period, moreover, the national ideas were growing fast. One of the alma mater of the Royal Society was involved in the creation of a national costume (Eriksson 1978) (figure 5).

The Royal Society had education as an important issue. The ideas of Enlightenment from the continent, the formation of Academies of Sciences and Agriculture in other countries were the ideal for the Society in Gothenburg. The Society in Gothenburg was also the only one outside Stockholm that survived over time. There were some attempts to create other academies in Lund and Uppsala but they failed. The idea of education was important in the city. The library of the Secondary School (*gymnasium*) was opened to the public during this time. It is important to remark that 80% of the economy and social life of Sweden were agriculture, so the mercantilism impelled by the Swedish East India Company in Sweden (the central offices were in Stockholm, and part of the production of boats in Norrköping) was important but limited to the cities.



Figure 5: From the World Exhibition. Swedish National Costumes. *Ny Illustrerad Tidning* 13 July 1867.

Gunnar Oxelqvist (1995), discussing the location of the library, shows that both library and cabinet shared rooms. In the description of some objects donated to the cabinet it can be observed that the contributions made by people were haphazard, it could be anything from an electrical machine, to a flying fish, petrified tree, or a tortoise shell (Oxelqvist 1995:108). In the description of the objects held at the cabinet Carl von Linné states that in the collection were a conger (*havsål*), a calf with two heads, a large turtle and a parrot, as well as many beautiful books (Oxelqvist 1995:108).

The fact that the cabinet shared rooms with the library made books, natural items, some antiquities, pieces of art, physical instruments, and other things (Oxelqvist 1995:33), accessible not only for the members of the Royal Society but also for students and other audiences.

Probably it is obvious that in Sweden, with the legacy of Linnaeus, *naturalia* was an important subject during those times, and in fact the amount of objects coming to the *naturalia* cabinet was so important that in 1833 the first museum of the city could be founded, the Museum of Natural History<sup>20</sup>.

Eventually, the commerce with China began to decline, and the Swedish East Company was dissolved. In 1813 the company building was sold in an auction and in 1819 it was used by the library of the Royal Society, the Museum of Natural History (from 1833), a secondary school (gymnasium) and as storage for cereals (Hanner Nordstrand 2003; Lagerberg 1911; Oxelqvist 1995).

This is a period in which Sweden was at the crossroad oscillating between a Swedish national construction and a Scandinavian one (Stråth 2005). Influenced by the Pan German and Italian movements, it was also an attempt to create a Scandinavian one, including Denmark in the project (Norway and Sweden were in a union), while Finland was excluded. The symbols chosen for this pan-Scandinavian movement were neo-Gothicism where Gothic symbols from the Viking age emphasised the ideal of the free peasant (Stråth 2005:209). However, the Swedish national ideal was the one which prevailed.

In this ideological environment it is interesting to read in different accounts documenting this period about the flow of objects coming to the Museum of Natural History, donated by missionaries, ship captains, and of course, by Swedish scholars who participated in geographical and scientific expeditions. One who can be emphasized is Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, who discovered the Arctic passage in 1864; he also led an expedition to Greenland (Eriksson 1985:15). The city received from him an archaeological collection from Greenland (Hinnerson-Berglund 2009) and years after his son Erland Nordenskiöld became an important and decisive figure in the history of the museum. It is important to note that Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld's expedition was mainly financed by one of the most important figures of Gothenburg, Oscar Dickson.

At the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the amount of objects and the aspirations of the city were enough to be the germ of a new period, the creation of a museum.

## The Göteborgs Museum

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the city of Gothenburg was growing, the bourgeoisie was established and increasing their capital. Meanwhile, from the 1840s the enormous emigration of Swedish people to America started which was a general European phenomenon<sup>21</sup> (Johansson 2008; McKeown 2004; Norman and Runblom 1988). There was massive propaganda (and anti-propaganda) for the emigration. Many factors were involved in this, dreams of a better life, the enormous idea of America, the poverty in Europe, the class society, and so on. In the anti-emigration propaganda it can be observed how indigenous people in America could be used as a fear factor, the savage that could be met. Fear, as political propaganda is nothing new, but it is interesting how this propaganda became stereotyped. This representation of the Native Americans as savages and uncivilized was typical in this period, not only as propaganda, but as representation<sup>22</sup>. As Edward Said has noted, imperial powers have commonly used representations of foreign cultures not simply as a means for legitimizing and celebrating their imperialism and identity but as a lens through which the home population can view “the other” as uncivilized. In South America, the European immigrants were seen as agents of civilization against the Barbarian<sup>23</sup> (Criscenti 1993; Sarmiento 1999 [1845]).

Furthermore, at this time when Europe expanded with colonial power, the European citizens fled poverty and hunger. In the history of the Museum of Gothenburg, some of the people who left Sweden and migrated to other parts of the world became actors in the praxis of collecting<sup>24</sup>. For these people, collecting for the fatherland became an essential means to climb the ladder of social structure.

The emergence and development of museums around the world during this period are very closely related to the emergence or reinforcement of the national states (Kristiansen 2011). The expansion of the modern state during this period needed instruments to emphasize a national feeling and the invention of new traditions which connected citizens (those included in the model) to the state (Said 2000:179). The creation of these new trends of invented traditions has been well discussed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992). According to Hobsbawm, the period between 1870 and 1914 was almost a mass-production of “new traditions” officially and unofficially. Officially the new nation/states create a number of new traditions for the life of the new states; unofficially many social clubs incorporate traditions in their fraternities, with or without

clear political goals. The state needs new methods of ruling or establishing bonds of loyalty, the invention of political and customary traditions was conscious and deliberate, since it was largely undertaken by institutions with political purposes in mind. Among the new creations were official holidays, ceremonies, national customs, national heroes, and other symbols (Hobsbawm 1992:263). Museums were one of those institutions in charge of implementing and reproducing the rules of the new states.

The first museum which allowed access to the general public, independent of status and class, was the Louvre Museum in Paris. It opened in 1793 during the French Revolution. According to Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (1989) the emergence of the public museum was the break from the *Ancien Régime* and old forms of control, and the sharing of what had previously been private. In the new era royal, aristocratic and church collections were appropriated in the name of the people making them part of the Republic, and classifying them under rational principles (Hooper-Greenhill 1989:63). The French revolution transformed and created a museum where instead of being the symbol of the arbitrary power of the aristocracy, it became an instrument to educate the French citizens to the new state. In Sweden, Stockholm, 70 years later the National Museum was inaugurated in 1866 (Aronsson 2010).

Gothenburg, it must be remembered, had a strong bourgeoisie often with foreign origin. Obviously, the European atmosphere impacted also the provincial Gothenburg.

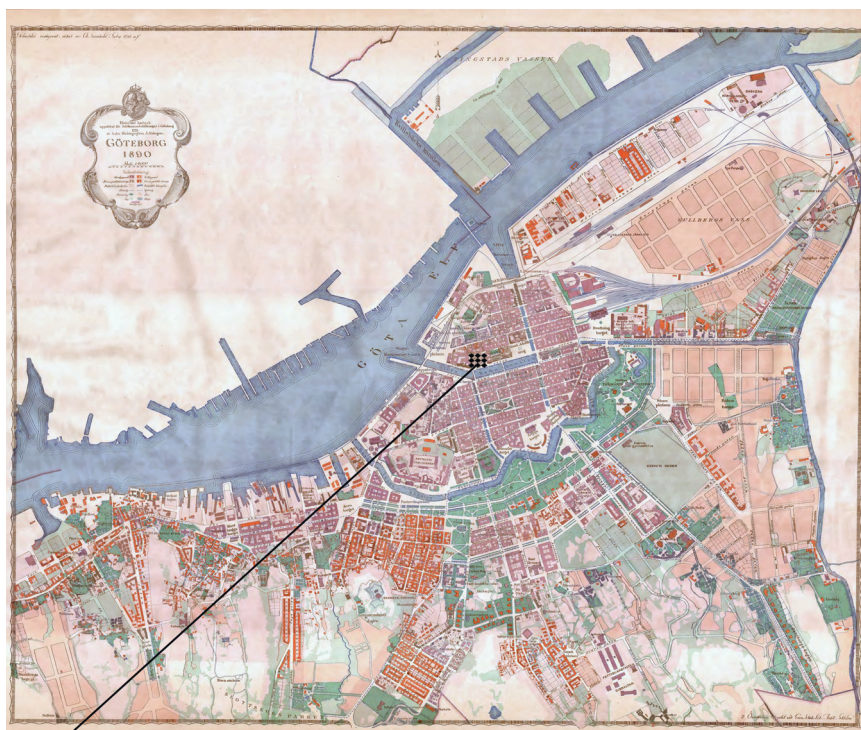
For the creation of the new museum in Gothenburg many factors were important, but probably one of the vital factors was to give an aura of culture and enlightenment to the city. As the second city in Sweden, the bourgeoisie needed to define themselves against the cultural and attractive Stockholm. Also in a growing industrial city where many people from the countryside were moving into the city, it was important to discipline and create those new inhabitants that were needed as labour force in the factories, and to be part of the new project of a modern Swedish State. The museum could be the place to instrument both goals.

In the creation of the museum in Gothenburg, contrary to the way in which many museums were created by the impetus of men of science (Classen 2007:906; Fernández Bravo 2005); the drive came from the trade and industrial class. Glenn Penny's (1999; Penny and Bunzl 2003) studies about the German ethnographical museums, especially with the creation of the Leipzig museums could be compared to the creation of *Göteborgs Museum*. Penny describes how in the creation of the Ethnographic Museum

in Leipzig, the combination of personal desires of Hermann Obst<sup>25</sup>, added to the needs of city of Leipzig to move away from their provincial origins and connect to a broader world, was the factor to create the museum. At the same time all this process was important in the refashioning of the city and the citizens themselves (Penny 1999:495).

In the case of Gothenburg (figure 6), also a provincial city, the figure of Sven Adolf Hedlund (1821–1900), must be the alma mater of the creation of the Museum of Gothenburg<sup>26</sup>. He was a liberal publicist, member of the Parliament and alderman.

S.A. Hedlund studied in Uppsala and took a Bachelor exam in 1845. He then worked for a Swedish newspaper, *Daglig Allehanda*, as correspondent, and he was reporting from Paris during the 1848 Revolution. In 1851 he became Editor in Chief for *Göteborgs Handels-och Sjöfartstidning*, which was one of the leading newspapers in Sweden during the 1860's. S.A.



Location of the Museum of Gothenburg, Gothenburg 1890.

Figure 6: Map of Gothenburg 1890. Map no F1a 568; © City planning office archive of Gothenburg.

Hedlund represented the typical intellectual of those times. He supported liberal reforms, education, religious and economical freedom, all the ideals of an Enlightened man. He worked hard for public schools, women's emancipation and penal reforms (Gellerman 1998). Hedlund was part of the pro-Scandinavian movement and participated in student meetings during the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Gellerman 1998:72). It can be said that he was a typical representative for Reformist ideas in a society in change.

S.A. Hedlund came in contact with the foremost circles of the city and they helped him to realize his ideals. He was in London and studied the British Museum, but he became more captivated by the South Kensington Museums (later Victoria and Albert Museum).

Following examples especially from England industrial exhibitions were arranged also in Sweden. In 1860 there was an agricultural meeting in Gothenburg, and associated to it, a widespread industrial exhibition was organized. Consecutively, after Hedlund's experiences of the South Kensington Museums, the idea of a museum that could unite science, industrial technology and art was born (Lagerberg 1911:4).

The Museum of Natural History, an Art Collection and the library of the Royal Society (KVVS) were already located in the city. In a reunion of the Royal Society, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1860, with S. A. Hedlund as chairman, he introduced the proposition of the creation of a museum. According to the regulations presented the museum should be placed in the former House of the East India Company (where the Natural History collections were exhibited), and assemble the collections from the existing museum, plus the art, science and industry collections. The following members of the museum board<sup>27</sup> were proposed: one of the City magistrates, one of the Elders of the bourgeois, one from the Royal Society, one from the board of the Museum of Natural History, two from the Trade Association, two from the Factory Association, two from the Arts and Crafts Association, one from the Art Association and one from the direction of the Handicraft Association<sup>28</sup>. It is interesting to note that in the board of the new museum, the majority of representatives are from the economical power of the city.

The election of the House of the East India Company (figure 7) as the museum building was not only a practical solution because the collections were there, but also made the building a museal object and emblem of the museum project.

“Gothenburg owns a magnificent building, a memory of an important era in its history, which is well worth for such a purpose (museum) granted, in order to bear witness of a new era in our

society's development and new time constraints, it is former East Indian Company building, half of which belongs to the city and the other to the state". Ingemar Hasselgr en cited by Mats Sj olin (2011).<sup>29</sup>



Figure 7: The House of the East Indian Company where the City Museum is placed today and which was home for the *G teborgs Museum*©free (<http://sv.rilpedia.org/wiki/Fil:Stadsmuseet.jpg>).

Mattias B ckstr m highlights the relationship between the establishment of the museum and the choice of the House of the East Indian Company, as a dialectical link which resulted in that *G teborgs Museum*, at that building, bore within itself its proud heritage, clearly idealized by contemporary needs, yet it was also the way to create conditions for the continuation and development of the society (B ckstr m 2011).

The first meeting of the board was the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1861, and in December of the same year, the museum opened to the public. The museum had many phases during its life, however a characteristic for this first period is that the Museum of Gothenburg was an eclectic project. The founders had been inspired by many different ideas, taken from London, Copenhagen, and Stockholm; also the people involved in the creation of the museum had different political ideological backgrounds and objectives (Hanner Nordstrand 2000; 2003; 2008).

## Maecenas

Above all, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the cultural policy was in the hands of private persons, foundations and donations. Many museums emerged because of private sponsorship. It was also a political statement and



associated with educating the lower classes to be perfect citizens. These donors, in many cases leaders in capitalist society, or eugenics, have been discussed by Donna Haraway (2004:245) regarding the creation of the Smithsonian institution, among others, as being the “patrons of science”. Eva Rovers pointed out that maeceneas, donors and collectors, especially in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were not only motivated by a philanthropism but also a part of self glorification and self promotion (Rovers 2009:158); they wanted to be part of the “history” of the city and the nation.

There are many examples of this in Sweden, but probably the most well-known examples are the Nordiska Museum and Skansen; both were founded with the private resources of Arthur Hazelius<sup>30</sup>. Later in the next century many of these private foundations became state-owned. In Gothenburg the donors (synonymous with the mercantile class) gave the economical resources for the construction of the hospital (Sahlgren), technical high school (Chalmers) and the university. According to Gunnar Falkemark (2010:84–85) it was the first time in Swedish history that such a donation culture detached from the state or the church supervened.

The museum in Gothenburg was created by the enterprise of the bourgeoisie (Hanner Nordstrand 2000; 2003; 2005), and this class was still devoted to the museum in the coming years. The museum would have never been an institution without the economical support of the businessmen of the city, of course, it means that the museum project was also the project of this class. Those “patrons” were patronizing the education of citizens, ideals of civilization, organization and rationalization of society. As Sjölin (2011) pointed out, for these people a museum (an industrial museum) should emphasize factories and crafts for coming generations; obviously they needed a strong symbol that every citizen could come and be educated to the new modern society.

The mercantile class was very strong in Gothenburg; it was the *alma mater* of the city. The names of Wijk, Dickson, Mark, Prytz are family names that are found in the donations made to the museum for at least two generations. Many of these families’ members were characterized as wholesalers, which was only one, or a cover, for many activities, primarily political and commercial (Elfving 1996; Falkemark 2010; Gillberg 2001:168; Hanner Nordstrand 2000; Hanner Nordstrand 2003; Hanner Nordstrand 2008).

It must be kept in mind that 13% of these entrepreneurs were born abroad, namely in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway and Germany (Arvidson 1989:253). In the group from the United Kingdom were an

important number of Scottish people with names like Gibson, Keiller, Carnegie and Barclay. Those families were also related to each other, and together they were represented in all the spheres of the city. For example, Gibson and Keiller married the sisters of Olof Wijk (Åberg 1991:66–67).

The Wijk family contributed to the museum from the very beginning. Olof Wijk<sup>31</sup> (1786–1856) was member of the *Kungliga Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets-Samhället i Göteborg* from 1831; he was married to Virginia Prytz. His son, Olof Wijk junior (1833–1901) married Caroline Dickson in 1870 (daughter to James Dickson). They had three children, Olof, Hjalmar and Eleonora. The Wijk family became noble in 1890<sup>32</sup>. Hjalmar Wijk (1877–1965) was one of the most active in the cultural life of Gothenburg. He was one of the directors of among other, the Museum of the City, the Botanical Garden, the Design Museum and the Strindberg archive. He also donated money to these institutions and to the Concert Hall, and the University Library. To this last one he also donated a number of incunables, books, manuscripts and his personal archive. The Wijk family had problems during the 1929 financial crash, but thanks to the benevolence of banks they could keep part of their capital (some of the banks were in the Dickson family's hand, who were relatives).

The Dickson family, also an old mercantile family of the city, became noble in 1880 and the same year they were elected part of the House of the Nobility (*Riddarhuset*), thanks to their contributions to culture and sciences. Oscar Dickson (1823–1897) gave financial support to Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld's expedition to Spitsbergen in 1868 and to Greenland in 1870 and to the Vega expedition, when the Northeast Passage was discovered<sup>33</sup>. He also financed Salomon August Andrée's expeditions from 1896 and 1897. One expedition that had impact for the ethnographical area at the coming museum was the financing of Otto Nordenskiöld's expedition to Tierra del Fuego 1899, where his cousin Erland Nordenskiöld made his first expedition. Those expeditions, especially Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld's were the pride of the entire nation, making Dickson one of the most influential persons in Sweden. The Dickson family supported the museum economically, and the ethnographical department under many decennia, for example, the Brazilian collections made by Curt Nimuendajú (Nimuendajú, et al. 2004) were acquired by the donations made by the Dicksons'.

The self glorification that Eva Rovers (2009) presented is clear in the case of the Maecenas of Gothenburg (Falkemark 2010). They could, thanks to their donations, become part of the aristocracy, and they could in some way be immortalized in the history of the museum. Even today, in the entrance

of the City Museum of Gothenburg<sup>34</sup> (former *Göteborgs Museum*) their names are displayed as the first thing that visitors view.

The Maecenas gave to the city and to Sweden glory and well known scientists; the country and city rewarded them making their families part of the nobility.

## The first collections and exhibitions

The museum was created on the basis of the former Natural History Museum of the city and art collections and had those as the basis for the exhibitions. The fact that the natural history collections were important is reflected in an article published in 1865 by the newspaper *Ny Illustrerad Tidning*, which on the 7<sup>th</sup> October informed about a fire that affected the building of the museum (Ny Illustrerad Tidning 1865). In this article, an anonymous journalist mixed up the natural history department with the museum. Sometimes the journalist referred to all the institution as the Museum of Natural History, mistaking the department with the museum. However it also is pointed out alongside the article that this department, natural history, was the embryo and the most important department of the museum. Nevertheless, industrialism became important and new “industrial” objects were collected to make the museum an important resource for education on this topic.

At the opening the distribution of exhibitions was as follows. In the basement the agricultural tools were exhibited, cast-iron objects as well as living plants and flowers. The next floor showed industrial products. One of the most appreciated was the exhibition of Höganäs<sup>35</sup> ceramic objects and even carpentry works. Further there was a presentation of cast-items such as tables and chairs, also tiled-stoves and saddlery. The upper floor was the evening meeting-place, where scientific and art collections were exhibited. This was a long room illuminated by ten big skylight windows; it was divided and the zoological, phrenological, ethnographical, archaeological, mechanical, technical and chemical collections were displayed. On this floor were also the library, the educational material, and a lecture room. During the opening ceremony around 500 persons were gathered in that room (Lagerberg 1911:2–3).

In a guide book from 1869, Octavia Carlén described the museum. She made an interesting portrayal of the exhibitions (Carlén 1869). Rather remarkable is that in every area of the exhibitions, the principle of display

was the local theme contrasted with the rest of the world. In her account we can read how, for example, the local flora and fauna was displayed opposite that from the rest of the world:

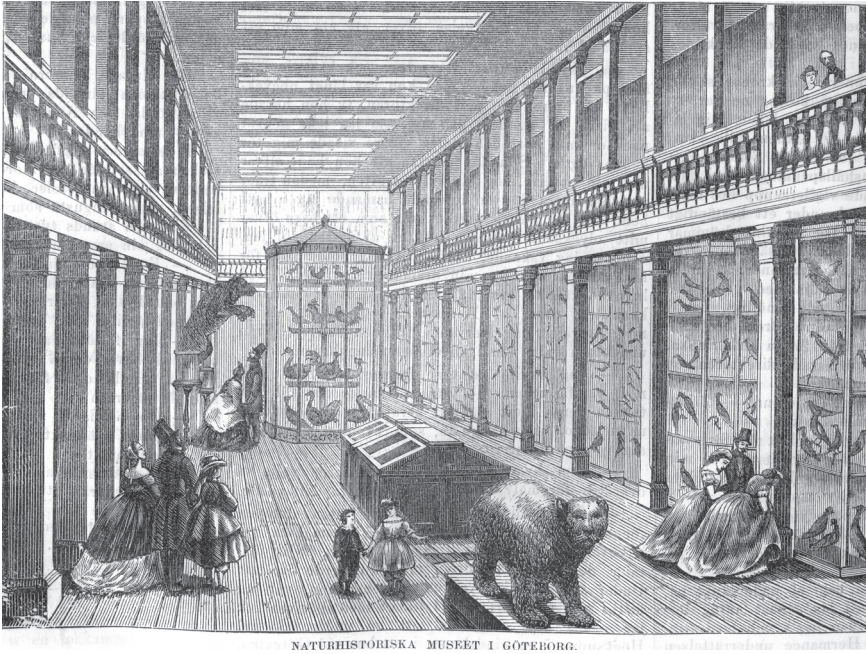
“Upon entering the main entrance, which is situated in the middle of the western side, notices in large lettering announce that the whole of the eastern side of the room is occupied by collections from Bohuslän, thus also the side facing this way of the showcases placed along the middle of the floor. On the opposite side, or the western one, the non-Bohuslän ones are set up. In the northern background, we have the domestic, in the southern one the foreign collection of mammals...” (Carlén 1869:80)<sup>36</sup> (Translation Karl-Göran Sjögren).

“on the hall’s western side is the foreign, likewise a quite rich collection, lined up on the same scheme, and complete labels are found everywhere, with the object’s Latin and Swedish names, find locations, etc etc” (Ny Illustrerad Tidning 1865: 7 October)<sup>37</sup> (Translation Karl-Göran Sjögren).

It seems that the natural history section was the most important. According to *Ny Illustrerad Tidning*, it deserved the foremost room (Ny Illustrerad Tidning 1865). And also, the Swedish –our *fatherland’s own natural history collections*<sup>38</sup>– had an important place (figure 8).

The description of the museum’s exhibitions is captivating. In one way the system to use the building, from the basement with the agriculture to the top floor with arts and sciences, could be seen as a metaphor of society with an agricultural basis and sciences in the top. Also, it is remarkable that the local, Bohuslän, is presented in opposition to the rest of the world. In spite that *Ny Illustrerad Tidning* writes about “fatherland”, it seems (from the description of the exhibitions) that at that moment it was more important with the local identity, as Bohuslän or Gothenburg, than the Swedish (that probably referred to the Stockholm area).

In one way, the distribution of the exhibitions in the building had a correlation to how society was at this time. In Sweden, the majority of the population lived in rural areas and were peasants. The land was owned by farmers, and in the top of society were the elite who could admire sciences and art. That the ethnographical collections were upstairs, in the top of the building and so could be understood as important objects, those



*Figure 8: Drawing from Ny Illustrerad tidning. Exhibition at the Natural History Museum (department) published the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1865.*

which gave a touch of cosmopolitanism. Very interesting is the observation about educational tools, or the museum as an educational place, “the general knowledge”<sup>39</sup> as was pointed out in the opening speech by Olof Fåhræus (1796–1884) (Lagerberg 1911:2). As Sjölin highlights, in Fåhræus’ discourse, the educational component of the museum should be “modern” to give “true path of enlightenment” and the new modern way took distance from the old way taught by churchmen (Sjölin 2011).

The opening hours of the museum were from 10 to 18 hours, and on Sundays and holidays from 12 to 15. Some years there was free entrance during weekends, in other years it was free some days of the week.

In the year 1900 Gothenburg had 145.632 inhabitants (figure 9). Ten years after the population was 191.209. The increase of population had to do with strong changes in the social organization and the fact that people started to move from rural areas to the urban industrial centres (Statistiska Centralbyrån 1969).

The fact that the museum had such generous opening hours and had many visitors is very interesting (figure 10). That entrance at weekends was free of charge gave the opportunity to the male workers to visit the

Tab. 7. Folkningaden i städerna länsvís 1800 - 1960 Urban population by county

Avser folkningagen den 31 december enligt indelningen vid samma tidpunkt utom för åren 1910 - 1960.

Län	1800	1810	1830	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910 <sup>1</sup>	1920 <sup>1</sup>	1930 <sup>1</sup>	1940 <sup>1</sup>	1950 <sup>2</sup>	1960 <sup>2</sup>
Sthlms s.	75 517	65 474	80 621	99 070	112 391	136 016	168 775	246 454	300 624	342 223	419 440	502 213	590 503	744 143	808 294
Sthlms l.	4 428	4 350	4 624	4 879	5 674	6 530	8 759	10 880	15 397	19 230	30 879	51 470	56 197	154 501	203 597
Upps. l.	6 244	5 188	5 745	8 365	10 012	13 318	18 220	24 800	27 056	31 097	34 835	36 208	44 760	74 600	90 726
Södr. l.	6 605	6 926	8 431	11 038	12 933	13 381	16 828	21 574	27 119	45 349	58 283	61 136	74 714	114 016	136 205
Östgr. l.	14 747	15 290	17 635	26 865	31 565	36 521	41 198	53 492	64 147	77 502	103 904	110 774	130 285	187 296	207 683
Jönk. l.	4 165	4 670	6 292	8 776	10 530	14 455	20 391	24 069	28 151	39 570	65 466	70 033	81 842	123 298	139 327
Kron. l.	1 130	1 228	2 072	2 665	3 229	3 737	4 935	6 606	7 365	8 311	9 336	9 699	20 963	33 293	33 293
Kalm. l.	7 154	8 067	10 074	12 961	17 979	20 332	25 473	27 382	31 232	37 317	42 449	46 539	54 994	67 769	79 520
Ödnl. l.	3 730	3 577	4 058	4 502	5 443	6 167	6 922	7 102	8 376	9 861	9 346	10 467	12 520	14 741	15 597
Bleek. l.	13 973	14 987	16 746	20 632	22 536	23 582	26 301	31 232	36 135	41 065	41 780	42 694	49 575	56 213	59 341
Krist. l.	3 710	4 005	6 500	8 115	8 804	11 309	13 136	14 526	15 164	17 701	23 346	24 528	34 024	52 416	59 172
Malmh. l.	15 758	17 143	24 040	34 201	44 828	61 321	84 052	107 863	130 379	185 296	233 803	258 330	306 439	374 273	425 995
Hall. l.	4 546	4 312	5 838	7 516	9 369	11 403	15 182	20 334	26 720	33 221	34 879	42 734	50 111	63 350	73 058
Göteborg. l.	20 353	20 692	27 889	33 145	45 397	66 045	88 068	117 317	145 632	191 209	227 006	289 419	327 480	416 433	485 629
Älvsb. l.	5 553	5 739	8 335	9 972	11 733	12 744	16 334	20 349	30 265	40 679	66 968	81 960	98 728	129 868	152 169
Skan. l.	4 446	4 742	6 522	8 716	11 605	14 134	17 843	20 631	23 288	35 465	43 226	47 364	54 676	74 576	87 473
Värml. l.	4 072	4 061	5 308	7 146	8 934	11 396	15 748	17 888	22 177	35 465	42 533	45 958	56 316	92 329	107 303
Ör. l.	5 381	4 960	6 414	8 008	10 785	13 215	16 531	18 960	22 406	35 255	43 306	45 490	84 715	120 524	135 299
Västmn. l.	7 719	7 548	9 468	10 706	12 567	14 831	17 822	22 316	28 503	36 910	50 184	49 564	59 346	106 367	133 129
Kopp. l.	5 927	5 432	5 573	6 041	6 612	7 855	9 223	10 148	12 027	15 383	27 575	29 563	33 814	66 175	79 119
Gäv. l.	8 201	8 335	11 059	13 034	16 417	21 719	31 159	38 381	45 682	54 348	56 589	57 822	57 053	92 316	118 461
Vrml. l.	3 382	3 242	3 861	4 671	7 671	10 112	14 886	19 304	25 371	29 941	33 502	37 561	40 027	71 630	77 286
Jämt. l.	1 039	1 278	1 445	1 817	1 496	1 717	2 854	5 333	6 866	8 544	13 405	14 153	16 647	21 527	24 827
Vb. l.	2 692	1 507	2 280	3 216	2 202	3 142	3 142	4 389	5 166	7 301	9 985	16 341	23 967	39 413	51 116
Nb. l.	2 280	1 507	2 280	3 216	3 807	4 647	6 496	8 698	13 707	13 014	22 588	23 474	28 621	61 627	81 833
Summa	229 433	222 735	280 958	351 526	434 519	539 649	690 431	899 698	1 103 951	1 392 442	1 744 813	2 005 494	2 388 317	3 342 603	3 865 682

<sup>1</sup> Enligt indelningen den 1 jan. följande år.

<sup>2</sup> Enligt indelningen den 1 jan. 1952.

Figure 9: Statistics Sweden. Urban population by county 1800–1960 (Statistiska Centralbyrån 1969:53).

Number of visitors during 10 years

	annual season-ticket	single ticket	without charge		total
			schools	others	
1900	680	3994	1464	85739	91877
1901	1075	3980	2726	100206	107987
1902	508	1772	4527	90171	96978
1903	718	3305	3374	120023	127420
1904	601	2202	4121	95766	102690
1905	571	2206	7070	99212	109059
1906	602	1964	12306	110754	125626
1907	917	3400	9906	92195	106418
1908	565	9675	12591	85188	108379
1909	499	7856	14782	89597	112734
1910	598	11762	15644	87701	115705

*Figure 10: Number of visitors at Göteborgs Museum. Information extracted from Lagerberg (1911).*

museum. That museums in the beginning were open during the weekend when other activities in the cities were closed has been discussed by Sophie Forgan. She suggests that those opening hours for museums gave a different relationship to the city (Forgan 2005:581). Also in the case of Gothenburg, it can be observed that the opening hours converted the museum into a success. If we compare (figure 9) that the population in 1900 was 145,632 inhabitants and 91,877 visited the museum according to official records, it can be said that an important number of the population of Gothenburg was a regular visitor of the museum.

## The museum organization, directors and departments

In the beginning the collections were not so strictly organized, but some core departments existed. The museum inherited the library from the Royal Society and the books assembled by the Museum of Natural History. The library also had a reading-room and subscribed to a number of national and international newspapers and journals. The Museum of Natural History was incorporated and the collections were now part of the “Gothenburg Museum Association”<sup>40</sup> (Lagerberg 1901, Hanner Nordstrand 2003; Hanner Nordstrand 2008).

Further, the natural history (zoological specimens, plants, fossils, minerals) and the art collections also contained drawings, coins and medals, archaeological and ethnographical objects. Those objects, archaeological and ethnographical were in the beginning under the library supervision. Regarding the ethnographical collections it was noted that they were not large, but the location of Gothenburg and the trade and shipping of the city bestow an important future for this section (Lagerberg 1911:21). There were also collections about agriculture (including implements and seeds, fertilizers, etc); raw materials (colonial materials, medicines, jars); manufactured products (porcelain, glass.); mechanical-technical objects (model of ships, samples of silk, wool, cotton, iron...); and models of tools for agriculture and economy in general (including wind and water turbines, mills, washing-machines). All these objects were bought from an exhibition in England and were considered important technological items. The school and education objects were a donation from S. A. Hedlund (Lagerberg 1911, Hanner Nordstrand 2003).

## The ethnographical collections

The so-called ethnographical collections have had a long journey; not only physically from the countries from which they derive, but also in the way they have been defined.

In the beginning, it was a mishmash of objects; a bit diffuse, without clear limits. The important thing was to exhibit them, thus every object was on display. In 1865, four years after the opening, the museum made one of its first re-organizations. The historical and ethnographical collections came together under the leadership of Gustaf Brusewitz (Lagerberg 1911:31). The archaeological collections were also included in this department, together with some industrial objects, and those that in the future were to be called design<sup>41</sup> objects. Brusewitz's duty was also the formation and administration of the museum archive. The collections had expanded quickly and haphazardly, and many objects coming to the museum with no obvious belonging ended up in the historical-ethnographical department.

A radical restructuring of the Ethnographical Department was made in 1891, in connection with the retirement of Gustaf Brusewitz at the age of 80. The collections were divided into two new departments, the historical (including numismatic) and the *konstindustriella*-ethnographical one. This division was in fact not obvious at all. Albert Ulrich Bååth was appointed as head of the later department (Lagerberg 1911; Zetterström 1979). At the time the curator at the National Museum, Gustaf Upmark, who was called



in as expert, noted that it was difficult, if not impossible to draw a limit between the historical and industrial design collections, and theoretically it was a large number of objects that fall in between these categories.

The position of the handicraft<sup>42</sup> collections was disputed between departments inside the museum. Thanks to a donation made by Wilhelm Röhss<sup>43</sup>, the *Röhsska konstslöjdmuseet*<sup>44</sup> was founded in 1890 (Hanner Nordstrand 2005; 2008). This new museum had the idea to take over the so-called industrial design collection from the *Göteborgs Museum*.

In 1900 the two museums, the new *Röhsska* and the *Göteborgs Museum*, and the keepers made an agreement that such collections that the *Göteborgs Museum* considered as surplus were to be sent to the *Röhsska* museum. This was not clearly accepted however, and the dispute continued during the following years. A new decision to move collections was made by the board, however many well renowned scholars and museums directors protested<sup>45</sup>. The objections were many. Of course, the moving of collections was one important issue, but also the planning of a museum without first defining the content. An interesting complaint was that this new museum, the handicraft (later *Röhsska*) was based on a German model that was strange and unfamiliar for the Swedish museum character (Lagerberg 1901:10–11).

This model, *Kunstgewerbemuseum* (Museum for Applied or Decorative Arts) became widespread in Central Europe in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These institutions had a more practical and educational purpose, using artefacts that could inspire contemporary craftsmen and manufacturers, but also improving the public taste with strong acquisition power (Stoklund 1993:87).

Protests against this kind of museum were also strong in Copenhagen ten years before the one in Gothenburg. Then, Sophus Müller strongly criticized this kind of museum. For him these museums (and also folk museums like Skansen) were anachronistic, unscientific and an “odious practice” “there is no other felicitous order for a large museum than chronological order”(Stoklund 1993:87).

In 1903, the direction of the *Göteborgs Museum* decided that the industrial design-ethnographic department was to be transformed to the culture-historical and ethnographical department, and the collections handicraft/design collections with cultural historical value should stay at the *Göteborgs Museum* when the others moved to *Röhsska*.

The purpose of the new museum (*Röhsska*) was unclear, although they had economical resources. Moving collections was a problem, and the solution was some kind of Solomonic decision and a change to the name of

the department at the *Göteborgs Museum*. The purpose and intention of the culture-historical /ethnographical department became to “illustrate traditions and uses of times long past<sup>46</sup>” with help of older objects. Still the definition was not clear, and terms like “new” and “older” objects were not enough to separate which collections belonged to which museum (Lagerberg 1901:7).

However, this did not mean that the ethnographical department was actually formed; a new decision came in 1905, and the collections were in focus again. Now, the ethnographical collections were separated from the historical. The historical collections including numismatic should represent the upper social classes (including furniture, clothes, adornments, decorations). While in the ethnographical section, the lower classes (preferably Swedish rural peasant cultures) and objects from lower non-European cultures were represented (Lagerberg 1911:84).

This division is extremely interesting. Until this point there is still no geographical separation. It is still the class society which defines the boundaries. The collections became part of this dilemma, and this is why until today some non-European collections are in the City Museum, like Chinese porcelain, considered as representative of upper classes and a high level of cultural evolution<sup>47</sup>.

During this period (1900–1910) of the museum there was also refurbishment of the building, and new spaces were assigned to every department. The ethnographical exhibitions came downstairs, with three rooms, one for Africa, America and Australia, one small one for Oceania and one fairly large for the Asian exhibition (Lagerberg 1911:117). Rather notable, is that in the beginning, the ethnographical collections were upstairs in the art and sciences display, in the evening room; after reorganization and rebuilding, they went downstairs and lost the cosmopolitan feeling, and became associated with lower classes. It is fascinating to see how the distribution of the collections in the building relates to new discourses ruling the political (museological) thinking of the time. The distribution of the objects and exhibitions in the building somehow functioned as metaphors of society.

With the professionalization of the museum came other ways of seeing the collections, and geography became a more important category for the organization of the materials. Nevertheless, vague concepts continued be in use, and during the history of the museum many times the discussion has continued to come up. With a new reform in 1924, the *allmoge*<sup>48</sup> collections left the ethnographical department and went to the historical. Probably all these long re-organization processes were the result of those going on in

the Nordic museum in Stockholm. Ethnology was already separated from ethnography (see Chapter 2, *Volkskunde/Völkerkunde*); and in the Nordic museum the peasant culture (*allmoge*) was separated from the Department of Upper Class Culture (*Afdelningen for de högre stånden*) (Becker 1992:6).

We are in a period where disciplines like ethnology and ethnography were also under development in Sweden and Scandinavia (Gerholm 1995). Probably, the influences from Diffusionism, with Friedrich Ratzel and his concept of *Lebensraum*, added and mixed with the ideas of Adolf Bastian, creator of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin<sup>49</sup> (Penny 2002) had consequences also in the categorization of collections in Gothenburg.

## The professionalization

Couze Venn (2006) pointed out that the most important factor for making collections in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was the colonial network of communication and agencies that made it possible to create societies of scientists and explorers, interconnected with the military and local authorities. Venn sees in Darwin's Beagle voyage the typical invisible colonial apparatus behind scholarship. Therefore, every new discovery, every variation in species, in geology, in culture and peoples could be efficiently disseminated to the scientific community in the West as well as to the furthest reaches of the European empires (Venn 2006:37).

With the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the incorporation of new theories like Evolution, Race, Diffusion, the museum started to change its direction. From 1910 and on, a new group of heads of departments started to be employed by the museum. It can be observed that a new ideal was taking position at the institution. Starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as an entrepreneurial project the museum in the next century went to a professional mission, and the educational scheme became an important issue. The new heads of departments were: Phil. Lic. Georg F. Sarauw for the archaeological, Professor Phil Dr. Leonard Jägerskiöld for the zoological and botanical, Professor Phil Dr. Axel Romdahl for the art department and Professor Phil Dr. Otto Nordenskiöld in charge of the mineralogical collections. In the Ethnographical Department after the death of Albert Bååth, Phil Dr. Erland Nordenskiöld became the head of the department (Lindberg 1996).

I do not want to focus in the life of Erland Nordenskiöld<sup>50</sup>, but he became the *alma mater* of the ethnographical department not only during his period

as director but in the future of the museum (Alvarsson, et al. 1992; Lindberg 1995; Lindberg 1996). Until the middle of 1990s when I became part of the museum staff, the figure of Nordenskiöld still had a strong presence.

Erland Nordenskiöld became a well-known anthropologist and Americanist, but he was also a museologist. He was appointed head of the department in 1913 but at that moment he was doing fieldwork in Bolivia. He took the post in 1915.

Erland Nordenskiöld's museological contribution has been shaded by the amount of his ethnographical production. Nordenskiöld started his museological career in 1906 at the National Museum in Stockholm<sup>51</sup> as assistant to Hjalmar Stolpe, in an atmosphere created there by the ideas of Oscar Montelius and Christian Thomsen<sup>52</sup>. There he came in contact with the ethnographical collections (later part of the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm) (Nordenskiöld 1907). He started to develop a very interesting idea of museum; the museum as an arena for the education<sup>53</sup> of the mass of the people.

Already in 1908 he published his thoughts about museums. Many of his ideas he could implement in Gothenburg when he became director of the ethnographical department. In his opinion a museum has three important objectives: to preserve objects for the future, supply scholars with material for their studies and become an important factor in the service of science, thirdly to be a source of education and pleasure for the general public (Nordenskiöld 1908:15).

Until Erland Nordenskiöld's period, there were no storage rooms, all the objects were on exhibition. The chaos and crowdedness, without themes gave the feeling of a curiosa cabinet. He proposed the creation of storage where the material which was not interesting for the public but only for scholars could be stored, and give to public exhibitions where material was organized in themes, based on geography or people. He was also working, in this first period, with travelling exhibitions, but he did not continue with this practice when he moved to Gothenburg. For Nordenskiöld it was important that the museum should be some kind of laboratory with exhibitions, storerooms, place for students, scholars, library and close links to the primary schools through the educators and children.

He formulated some very interesting aims, for example, that museum buildings should be inexpensive edifices, so the tax payers should not be burdened, and instead use the money to make the ethnographical research

of Sweden. The edifices should not be colossal but suited to the exhibition needs and include storage spaces. He criticized *Nordiska museet* because the rooms were small and bad for exhibitions. He specified the need to make exhibition rooms for the enjoyment of the general public and in particular to have a place for display of new acquisitions (Nordenskiöld 1908:16–17). Another point of view that he developed in his articles was the need to connect libraries to exhibitions. For him the museum must have a library, not only for the scholars' needs but also for the public, and have books that interested the general society. He also thought that exhibitions must employ many educational tools to explain the objects; graphics, photos, explanations, help with connections so the context of objects could be understood. Also, in connection with exhibitions and as a part of the museum practice he proposed that museums should have lectures, and be a tool for schools and school teachers. He suggested that museums should include educators in its staff. He also pointed out that museums should be open in the evenings, using the “new” technology to have light in the evenings, so it could have opening hours until nine pm.

“at present our museums make a great contribution to popular education, I certainly do not want to argue against this, but I am convinced that this would increase considerably if the museum staff understood their responsibility in such a way that they also were teachers, and transformed the exhibition rooms of the museums completely from treasuries to schools. This, of course, always under the condition that behind the school the principal duty of museums to preserve material for research and posterity should be warmly understood and encouraged” (Nordenskiöld 1908:21).<sup>54</sup>

So, from 1915 until Nordenskiöld's death in 1932, the ethnographical department of the Museum of the City of Gothenburg became the experimental field to implement these ideas. The first year, after coming back from Bolivia, the collections grew with 4000 numbers during one year. He had a passion for collecting, trying to construct the South American encyclopaedia of material culture. He needed to collect at least, one specimen from every culture; he knew that it was impossible to collect from every culture, but hoped for at least ideal samples from every type culture. This has resulted in that the ethnographical collection from South America has almost no object from “mixed” cultures, and there is no collection from the black population (or at least not registered as such).

So, it can be concluded that Erland Nordenskiöld, during his period in Gothenburg, added one more mission to what a museum should be, and this was collecting. He also developed an environment that resulted in

the implementation of Ethnography (later Anthropology) as a discipline at the University of Gothenburg<sup>55</sup>; and he became the first professor in Ethnography in Sweden. This professorship was established thanks to the donation made by Dan Broström, owner of a shipping company from the city (Wassén 1992). J.P. B. Josselin de Jong<sup>56</sup>, director of the Leiden Museum called this atmosphere the “Nordenskiöld School”.

Erland Nordenskiöld’s theoretical and museological contribution to the city of Gothenburg is huge (Lindberg 1996). However, he gave also lustre to the city, he was a Baron, part of one of the most well-known and established families in Sweden: a family that included several aristocratic, and well-known scholars.

## **Anniversary exhibition**

1923 was an important year for the city of Gothenburg, ergo to the Museum. The city of Gothenburg was 300 years old in 1921 but the anniversary festivities were moved to 1923. For the occasion an Anniversary Exhibition was organized. The exhibition had 4,2 million visitors from 8<sup>th</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> October 1923, of them 41000 came from other countries. In connection to the exhibition the city enlarged the boundary to the south and a number of new buildings were planned and constructed (Nordbladh 1997, Houltz 2003; Brodin and Carlander 2006).

It was a period of violent conflicts, strikes, high unemployment, well known in Europe as the period between the two world wars, with elevated inflation and many tensions. The exhibition took place in the midst of strong social pressure; all the arrangements were planned by conservatives and liberals, against the will of social democrats and communists.

This year also, the Museum of Natural History moved to a new building in Slottskogen. The beautiful building was designed by Ernst Torulf in close relationship to the museum director Leonard Jägerskiöld. The same year another museum got a new building, the Museum of Art, designed by architects Sigfrid Ericson and Arvid Bjerke (Elfving 1996:48–50). Also during this time the Botanical Garden was opened, with Carl Skottsberg as director; and the amusement park Liseberg also opened.

The city lost around 4,4 million crowns (around 104 millions in today’s currency) at the end of the exhibition, and the economy of city was ruined for many years. The discussion about responsibilities was enormous, but at the end the organizers became free of liability for the colossal loss (Houltz 2003).



*Figure 11: Ethnographical exhibition in 1923; catalogue no. 9135 ©Museum of World Culture archive.*

The Ethnographical Department was also involved in this event and an exhibition about South America was made at the museum (figures 11 and 12). The same year, 1923, a new re-distribution of the collections was made; the *allmoge* collections left the Ethnographical Department and became part of the Historical. The Ethnographical Department now only holds the collections from outside Sweden and Europe, with exception of the Sami collection.

The International Americanist Congress was also planned so it could take place in connection to the exhibition. The Congress was held in Gothenburg in 1924.

The International Americanist Congresses started in France in 1875 in the city of Nancy, the 25 August. It was a reaction to the influence that the “*Orientalists*” had in the interpretation of the Americas and in the reinforcement of international networks of scholars and explorers (López-Ocón 2003:274–275). The formation of this society took place a few years after the concept Latin America was invented (Mignolo 2005). The announcement had a fundamental objective: “to contribute to the progress of ethnographic, linguistic and historical studies related to the two Americas, especially for the time before Christopher Columbus, and to connect the people who are interested in these studies with each other”<sup>57</sup>.



Figure 12: Ethnographical exhibition in 1923; catalogue no. 9141 ©Museum of World Culture archive.

When the congress moved to Spain in 1880, Juan Pérez de Guzmán, an *amateur* Americanist wrote in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Madrid* “And is it not lawful for new scholars and new research to aspire to the same wonder about the unknown world that Columbus discovered through history and archaeology, paleography and linguistics skillfully performed?” (López-Ocón 2003:271)<sup>58</sup>. Again and again the idea of the “discovery” is going to be taken by congresses and by scholars, the creation of an unknown world before Columbus, a world that must be explored and collected.

Scandinavian scholars were involved in the planning of the congresses from very early stages. In 1883 the Congress was held in Copenhagen under the auspice of Johan Jakob A. Worsaae. Stockholm was the venue in 1894, where Gustav Adolf Tamm, Rudolf Virchow and Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld were the guarantors.

The Museum of the City of Gothenburg, with Oscar von Sydow, the county governor of Gothenburg and Bohuslän and Erland Nordenskiöld, head of ethnography, were responsible for the organization of the XXI International Congress of Americanists in 1924 (figure 13). Gothenburg shared the organization together with the Hague in the Netherlands.





*Figure 13: Attendees of the International Congress of Americanist 1924©Museum of World Culture Archive.*

The organization of the Congress in Gothenburg in 1924 was also a strategic idea after the First World War, to create a neutral place where scholars from different European countries could meet and discuss.

The Congress helped Erland Nordenskiöld to create solid links in the city, inside the museum and internationally for the future. Many of the participants in the congress were well known scholars putting the Ethnographical Department and Erland Nordenskiöld in an excellent position inside the museum (Sjöberg 2005). After the congress, Nordenskiöld's Americanist school was well established for the future and coming generations of scholars continued with his work (Alvarsson 1992; Alvarsson, et al. 1992; Cornell 1997).

After Nordenskiöld's death, Walter Kaudern (1881–1942) became director of the department. He had been doing research in the area of Sulawesi in Indonesia (Lindberg 2006). His time as director became marked by the Second World War. The war not only stopped the contacts with the rest of the world and halted the affluence of collections, but political divergences between the staff also became important. The political position taken by Walter Kaudern (he became member of the national socialistic party in 1938), occasioned some inconveniences. Walter Kaudern started the

series *Etnologiska Studier*. The curatorial staff included former students of Erland Nordenskiöld, Karl-Gustav Izikowitz, Stig Rydén and Henry Wassén.

## The Ethnographical Museum of the City of Gothenburg

“An ethnographical museum, which among other things has a task to collect cultural objects from exotic peoples, is certainly highly dependent of overseas connections.”<sup>59</sup> (Izikowitz 1944)

After Walter Kaudern died, Karl-Gustav Izikowitz took charge of the ethnographical collections. In Gothenburg, in 1946, there was a new reform in the Museum of the City. Every department became a museum inside the same organization. The ethnographical department became The Ethnographical Museum of Gothenburg (Göteborgs Etnografiska museum 1945).

Karl-Gustav Izikowitz (1903–1984) studied in Lund and Gothenburg and became Licentiate in 1931 and Phil Dr in 1935. He was student to Erland Nordenskiöld in Gothenburg, and to Bronislaw Malinowsky in Cambridge. He was in Berkeley and did some fieldwork with Alfred Kroeber in Mexico; he also studied at the *École Française d’Extrême-Orient* in Hanoi.

Izikowitz was the museum director until 1967 when the museum and the university became part of different administrations and the cooperation between them was not obvious. Until 1967, some of the directors of the museums were professors at the university; Izikowitz was one of them. In 1967 the museums became communal and the directors needed to choose to stay either at the university or at the museums.

In 1944, Izikowitz stated that the mission of the museum was to collect cultural objects from “exotic people”. Something had changed from Nordenskiöld’s period about the mission for an ethnographical museum; in 1919 after the reorganizations, the ethnographical department was the keeper of “non-European”<sup>60</sup> collections. Than after the war, it was chosen as a mission to collect “exotic people” instead of to be the keeper of “non-European” is an important political ideological change. In both terms the “non-native” to Gothenburg, Sweden or Europe is implicit, however the concept exotic emphasises a more profound distance; not only geographically but also in quality (figure 14).



*Figure 14: Students at the Ethnographical Museum studying exotic people; catalogue no. 5407 ©Museum of World Culture archive.*

It is interesting to compare with the foundation of *Musee de l'homme* in Paris in 1938, ahead of the advance of Nazism. The *Musee de l'homme* had as impulse to produce and popularize nonracist appreciation of human diversity and science in a frame of humanism and internationalism (Sherman 2004:670) in times of extreme nationalism and xenophobia. At the same time as the impulse was anti-Imperialist the museum was financed by the

Ministry of National Education which had money from French Colonies. Obviously science and colonialism had a long relationship, which affected their constitution as fields of knowledge and power (Sherman 2004:670). Marcel Mauss, one of the most influential figures in France, defined ethnography as “the description of so-called primitive peoples” and declared that France had a moral obligation to study the primitive inhabitants of its own colonies, as well as the “inferior populations” of the rest of the world (Sherman 2004:670). The idea was that all citizens and subjects would be welcome in the *Musee de l’homme* but only cultures and races outside France were included in the collections and exhibitions (Conklin 2002:258).

The Ethnographic Department at the *Göteborgs Museum* became a separate museum after the Second World War, when the results and damage of the war were clear and known, due, especially in Gothenburg, to the engagement of Torgny Segerstedt and the newspaper *Göteborgs Handels and Sjöfartstidning* (Östling 2008:205). And, as in France the word exotic became part of the mission of museums around the world.

The repercussion of the Second World War in the praxis of collecting at museums was huge. After years of war in Europe, plundering, death, and scholars moving outside Europe, the axis of production of knowledge moved from Germany to USA, and from German to English language.

This general European move towards Anglo-Saxon influences can also be observed in Sweden. The period after the Second World War was an interesting period in the history of the museum. Surely, Izikowitz played an important role in this change through his own education in Cambridge and Berkeley. With him, the former ethnographical approach changed and became social anthropology.

At the University of Gothenburg, after the death of Nordenskiöld, the position of professor in ethnography was empty. The next professor in anthropology was Karl-Gustav Izikowitz in 1953; the economical resources for the position came from the Royal Society (*Kungliga Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets-Samhället i Göteborg*). In this way, the Royal Society started a tradition of connecting the museums of the city to the university. Izikowitz created a teaching program at the university influenced by the modern British School (Sivert Nielsen 2003). During his long time as director, from 1944 until 1968, he had good contacts with the director of the Archaeological Museum, Carl-Axel Moberg, and they tried to merge the two museums into one institution (and discipline) but their ideas failed. Both Izikowitz and Moberg had the American model of anthropology in mind, where archaeology, anthropology, ethnology are in the same discipline.

The change that Karl-Gustav Izikowitz introduced in anthropology, had consequences at the museum: students in anthropology lost interest in material culture; and because the material was classified as “ethnography” the collections became inaccessible for the students from archaeology<sup>61</sup>. So, many of the collections became forgotten as study material, and in some way they became mere accessories.

During the Izikowitz period, the museum went through some modernizations that had an impact in the collection management system. Since 1933, the modernization of the collections catalogue had been going on. Every collection had been noted in a general catalogue, and a card index<sup>62</sup> system started.

The card index was a very advanced system, and functioned as a really good tool in the collection management of the museum. The job of putting the information in order was finished in 1948, when the museum had 78000 objects, at that moment every one was described. Besides the description there was a drawing of every object.

In a letter from Izikowitz to the *Göteborgs museistyrelse* (board of directors) in 1948 he pointed out that drawings were preferable to photographs because “... photos can not always<sup>63</sup> show the more important details of the objects”. Among the people who drew for the museum were some well known artists like Axel Hjelm, but also refugees from the Second World War, like Otto Puusta, an ex judge “intellectual refugee” in the words of Izikowitz.

During Karl-Gustav Izikowitz’s time at the museum, he initiated an internal re-organization in the last part of the 1940’s<sup>64</sup>. The personnel at the museum were divided into those specific for the museum and those that were part of a pool for all the museums. The curators were part of the museum but technicians, conservators, cleaners, etc worked for all the three museums in the House of the East India Company.

Karl Gustav Izikowitz attempted to modernize the work at the institution and make it more effective; he decided that the curators, Stig Rydén and Henry Wassén, should be responsible for different areas. His ideal was the model common in the ethnographical museums around the world, with specialists in different regional areas. However Rydén and Wassén were both Americanists, while Izikowitz himself worked in South Asia, and they took care of Africa together. So the division was that one of them should be responsible for the library and the archive and help the director with the general administration, while the other took care of the collections.

They also had help from students who together with conservators came under the supervision of the collection management.

Probably this was the way in which they worked in reality, because in the formal description of the museum in the 1960's the internal organization of the museum was divided in geographical areas (appendix I) but in practice Rydén was in charge of the collections and Wassén of archive and library (see appendix 1 at the end of the chapter).

During this entire period, the donations and maecenas were still important resources for the running of the museum, especially for the collecting. The ethnographical museum received donations from many established firms in the city, but also from other countries. In this period, an important donation from Hilding Svahn, Swedish Consul in El Salvador was made; he donated first 4000 US dollar and later 2000 more, creating a special fund for purchase of "collections, books, and suchlike everything that has to do with Latin America's indigenous cultures with 'Central America at the head'" (Museum Board protocol 9<sup>th</sup> December 1960).

During this period there were many attempts to move from the East Indian House, and build a new museum. There were two important and serious efforts to move from the building, including one attempt together with the Archaeological Museum. In the 1940s' at the East Indian house there were three museums, the historical, the archaeological and the ethnographical.

## **The dream of a new building**

From the beginning of Erland Nordenskiöld's time as the head of the Department of Ethnography, his collecting practice meant that the lack of space was a constant problem. The House of East India Company became narrow, badly prepared to be a modern museum, and without possibilities of expansion.

Year after year, the complaint of the lack of storage-rooms is repeated in the museum board protocols. In the last part of the 1940's the collections were moved out from the house of the East India Company to the building of the old town library in Haga. Parts of the collections were kept there until the beginning of the 1990's. The conditions at the old library were appalling. When Izikowitz accepted the direction of the museum he started planning to move the Ethnographical Museum out from the East India Company House.

In the 1960's a serious proposition to build a new building for the museum was put forward. It started as a new place only for the Ethnographical Museum, but later the plan was to construct a new building for the archaeological and ethnographical disciplines together. This understanding has to do with the idea of anthropology and archaeology that Karl-Gustav Izikowitz and Carl-Axel Moberg had about the two disciplines. In 1959, Izikowitz, Moberg and Albert Eskeröd (director of the Nordic Museum) published an article about anthropology in Sweden:

“Anthropology, in the American sense, is not treated as a single subject at Swedish universities, but is divided into several. In the first place physical anthropology, which is considered to be a branch of natural science, is entirely separate from ethnological fields. Those subjects which deal with the study of non-European cultures are officially termed “general and comparative ethnography” and are distinguished from “Nordic and comparative ethnology,” which deals mostly with the ethnology of Nordic countries together with some comparative material. Scandinavian and comparative archeology has its own department, as does classical archeology. Non-European archeology, if taught at all, is included in general ethnology and classical archeology. Comparative religion is a special subject which also includes primitive religion. The linguistic sciences are not included in anthropology. They are divided into various branches, the most general one being “comparative linguistics.” No general subject in Sweden includes all these branches. The following survey deals with only three of them—general ethnology, Nordic ethnology and Scandinavian archaeology” (Izikowitz, et al. 1959:669).

This clarification is extremely important, because it is in this way disciplines are still separated today; explaining why the discussion came up again when the Museum of World Culture came to life.

But to return back to the 1960's and the plans of constructing a new building for the two museums, the project started to receive donations from public and private funds and among the donors were the old families again, Olof and Carolina Wijk and the Renströmska funds (museum protocols).

The museum board and the administration of properties of the city (*fastighetsverk*) together proposed different locations. One of the first suggestions was to construct the new museum in Näckrosdammen (where today the University of Gothenburg Central Library and the Faculty of Humanities is located); but the most serious project was to construct the new building for the two museums in Sjöbergen (close to Nya Varvet).

The project had impetus in the beginning, money was donated, the architect firm White (WAAB White Arkitektkontor AB 1966) was involved, the city of Gothenburg, the museum board, the museum directors. Everyone was participating actively and the project was moving forward throughout

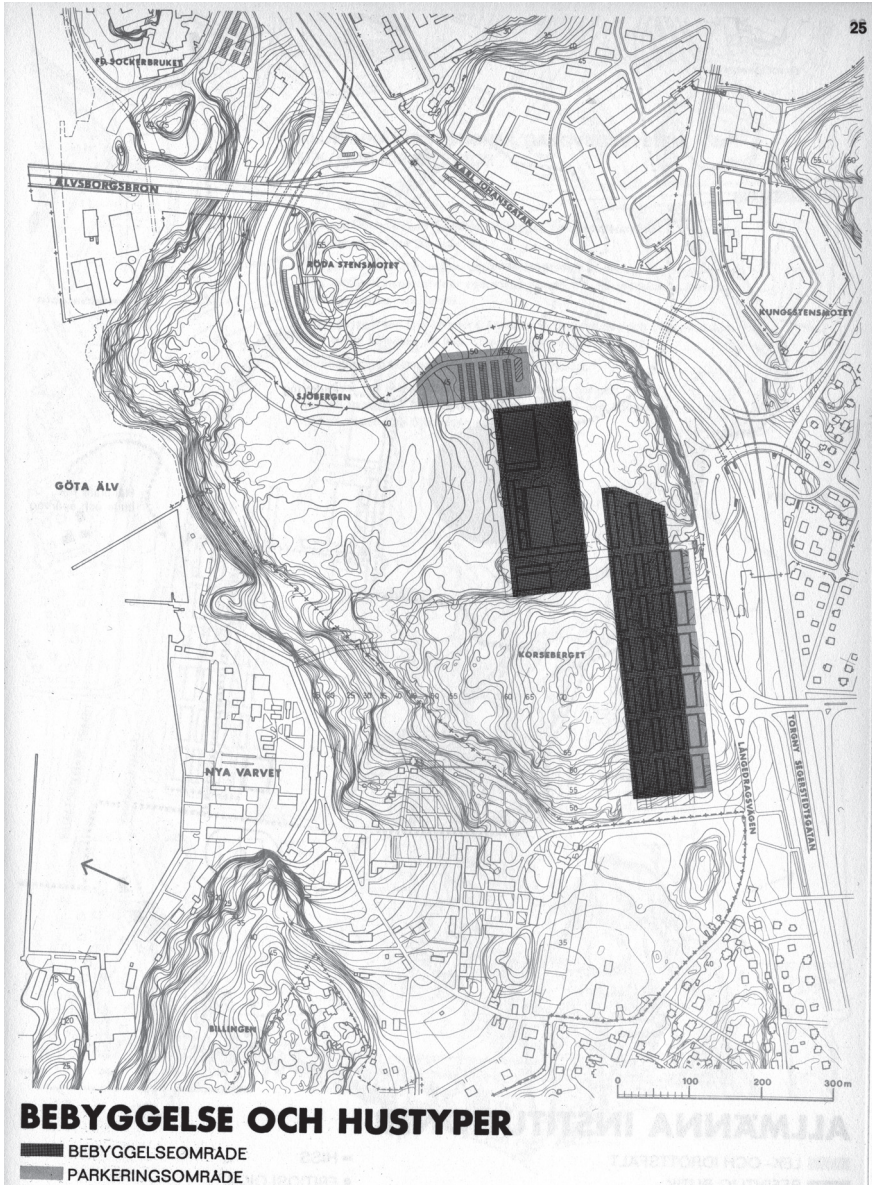


Figure 15: Area at Sjöbergen designated to the construction of the Ethnographical and Archaeological Museums (WAAB White Arkitektkontor AB 1966:25).





Utblickar kan erhållas i museernas kommunikationsutrymmen.

Figure 16: “Views can be obtained in the museums communication spaces” (WAAB White Arkitektkontor AB 1966:35).

the 1960’s. The building was planned to be 16000 square meters, exclusive of the collections storage (figure 15 and 16). It should cover the necessities for both museums in the coming 20 years. In many protocols it is pointed out that 80 % of the new building should be deposits, areas for study purpose, technical areas, and the rooms of the staff; and 20% exhibition areas and public activities.<sup>65</sup>

In every protocol from these years, the project is named, money is coming in, something<sup>66</sup> is always delaying the plans, but it is a living process.

In the middle of the 1960’s, the national government started an investigation about the culture situation in the country; this enquiry included the national museums. The investigation was called MUS 65<sup>67</sup>, and among other suggestions, one was to move the National Museum of Ethnography from Stockholm to Gothenburg (figure 17). This idea gave the plans to construct a new building an incredible vigour. Karl-Gustav Izikowitz was called as expert to comment on this idea. This was a good period for the Ethnographical Museum, with possibilities of expansion, with the premise to update the idea of ethnography, to promote contacts outside Sweden, etc.

However, in the last part of the 1960’s the Foundation that had administrated the city museums became part of the city of Gothenburg (*kommunalisering*), and many dreams went to the grave.

All the plans to construct a new building started to fail in 1968. It was a turbulent period, the directors, like Izikowitz and Moberg, left their positions

## Många kulturinstitutioner i Stockholm går emot museiflyttning till Göteborg

Stockholm (TT): En debatt med diametralt motsatta åsikter har utbrutit mellan olika kulturinstitutioner om förslaget från 1965 års museiställningskommitté att flytta statens etnografiska museum från Stockholm till Göteborg. Göte-

MUS 65 — som den statliga sakkunnigkommittén kallas — har därför fört fram frågan att flytta statens etnografiska museum till Göteborg för att man skall få ett s. k. museicenter, som skulle medföra besparingar när det gäller nybyggnader och driftkostnader.

Till samordningen och förflyttningen ställer sig Göteborgs stad positiv. Etnografiska museets styrelse liksom museets stödorganisation är negativa till förflyttningen av museet från Stockholm. Man hänvisar till museets betydelse för undervisningen i etnografi vid universitetet i Stockholm och Uppsala — i denna region är studentunderlaget fem gånger större än i Göteborg.

Kontakterna skulle dessutom försvåras med olika centrala organ och institutioner, med vilka

museet nära samarbetar och som är lokaliserade till Stockholm. Stockholm stads resurser skulle på ett betydande vis försvåras, de bli påtagligt försämrade, understryker Stockholms kulturdelegation. Ett fylliamuseum skulle inte ersätta den förlusten. Ett fylliamuseum i Stockholm kan inte fungera som en någorlunda självständig museienhet.

SVARA NACKDELAR FÖR UNDERVISNINGEN

Stockholms stads musienämnd deklarerar att den eventuella ekonomiska vinsten av en förflyttning till Göteborg av etnografiska museet inte överväger nackdelarna för undervisningen, utom betydligt sämre kontakter. En förflyttning innebär dessutom centrala myndigheter och ambassader m. fl., konstaterar Stockholms stads musienämnd och avstryrer förflyttningen till

Göteborg. I stället kräver nämnden att museisakkunniga snarast gör upp ett förslag till lämpliga lokaler för statens etnografiska museum i Stockholm.

Stadsantikvarie Bo Lagercrantz, som själv till MUS 65 uttrycker att om ett statligt museum skall flyttas från Stockholm ligger det mycket nära till hands att detta sker just till rikets andra stad som väl dokumenterat sig som en av landets museivänligaste kommuner.

Det är dock ofrånkomligt att flyttning av etnografiska museet från Stockholm medför en förlust för Stockholm genom att det bara blir en mindre permanent utställning av etnografiska skådesamlingar för skoundervisningen och den övriga allmänheten.

Stockholms stads skoldirektion ställer sig direkt avvisande till tanken på en förflyttning, eftersom man räknar med ett succe-

sivt växande antal museibesökare från skolorna av ca 10.000 elever.

HEMSTÄLLAN OM STADSKOLLEGIETS NEJ

Skol- och kulturborgarrådet W. Forsberg avstryrer förslaget om museets förflyttning till Göteborg och hemställer på onsdag hos Stockholms stadskollegium att även kollegiet avstryrer förflyttningen.

Han yrkar att förslag snarast upprättas om lämpliga lokaler för Statens etnografiska museum på en tomt på norra Djurgården. Genom en samordning av etnografiska museets verksamhet med de tekniska och sjöhistoriska museerna kan eventuellt samma rationaliseringsvinst nås som vid en förflyttning till ett museicenter i Göteborg.

Stockholms etnografiska museum med anor ända från 1700-talet torde vara det äldsta i sitt slag i världen.

Figure 17: One of the many articles published during this period in the Swedish press about the impact of the MUS 65. Göteborg Posten, 1 October 1969.

at the museum and stayed as professors at the University. It was not their personal decision but with the move of the museums to the municipality, the university and the museums ended up in different administrations, so people needed to decide in which organization they wished to stay. The problem was that at the municipal level research and education was not contemplated.

Coming to 1969, the project was still alive but the city had undermined the location in Sjöbergen, one argument is the lack of good communications to the central part of the city; so the city government proposed that the project should be moved to the northern part of Heden.

The planning of a new building for the museums was extended from 1963 to 1971 when the project finally collapsed. The dream of a new museum in Sjöbergen died the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1971 (Eliason and Bördal 1971; Göteborgs museer kanslichefen and Ekholm 1971).

It has been difficult to measure the costs of the project, but large sums of money were given by donors, by the city and other funds that were used in this project.

# The municipal museum

After the museum became municipal a process started, that slowly and inevitably, implied the decline of the museums in Gothenburg. Henry Wassén, a former curator, became the director of the museum from the moment that it became provincial to 1973.

At first, the separation between the museum and the university meant that few students had the possibility to be part of the staff of the museum; the second consequence is that the museum went through a difficult period to fill vacancies with professional staff. The museums in general, in Gothenburg, kept part of their staff, but the new personal in many cases were people that needed to be transferred inside the provincial administration. The results could be observed, and in some cases, it meant the eventual closing down of some institutions.

In 1969, a report from the Swedish Universities about the area of anthropology was published. Historically, anthropology in Sweden was connected to the ethnographical museums, and the name used for the discipline was “General and Comparative Ethnography”. In the 1960’s a change was made, and ethnography left the descriptive and comparative analysis for the study of social and cultural structures and processes. Inspired by the British School, it also changed the name to social anthropology (in Uppsala they took the American tradition and called themselves cultural anthropology). The Social Anthropology Department in Gothenburg is one of the oldest in the country, the starting point was the first professorial chair of Erland Nordenskiöld in the 1920’s, called the General and Comparative Ethnography. But in the modern form, it was established when Karl Gustav Izikowitz became the first professor in 1961.

A consequence at the Ethnographical Museum that can be observed from a distance is that anthropology students were no longer interested in material culture studies. The ethnographical museum, despite its varied collections, was the area of ethnographers/anthropologists. The only archaeologist until the 1990’s was Stig Rydén. When the anthropologists left “ethnography” and became more social-anthropologists, it became very difficult to recruit academic staff at the museum. It took a couple of years to find new curators for the ethnographical department. Henry Wassén complained about this situation many times during those years.

Already in 1968 soon after the municipal period started, Henry Wassén stated that there was a problem: the lack of academic, museum trained staff;

especially in the area of Americanism<sup>68</sup> (Wassén 1968/01/19). Another decision made the situation even worse. On 5<sup>th</sup> September 1969, in a meeting of the museum board (now part of the municipality of Gothenburg) a resolution was taken to transfer people employed by the city to new posts. In other words people who were superfluous in their posts could be transferred to another, and museums became the perfect place to relocate superfluous staff. The museums became the area to transfer people that had no functions anymore in other works at the city. After a few years it could be observed that the professional level of the staff was very poor.<sup>69</sup>

From the 1960's in Sweden a frenzied modernization period started, including the museums. Half of the old city was demolished and new modern houses constructed. It can be read in the protocols of the museum how different parts of the city were going to be demolished; often there are some viewpoints from the directors from the Archaeological and Historical Museums.

For the Archaeological Museum, the modernization of Gothenburg signified one of the golden periods. There were enormous excavation activities (contract archaeology), and the collections grew fast. The Archaeological Museum could survive much better because part of its budget came from contractual archaeology (Göteborgs arkeologiska museum 1973) and this good economy allowed the museum with its director, Lili Kaelas (1919–2007), to make big and international exhibitions.

For the Ethnographical Museum, on the other hand, it was a very gloomy phase. The interest in other countries' material culture was poor, the museum had become only a deposit with almost no staff and the city had no interest at all in the museum or its collections. The politicians were completely imbued in the modernization process and in the regional provincial history and strengthening of the local identity.

In the museum environment it can be observed through the protocols from the museum board that the resources started to go to cosmetic activities when the museums really had problems with storage spaces, personal, and so on. At the Ethnographical Museum only one person, the director, had academic training during a period of almost 3 years. The storage rooms were in a catastrophic situation, partly at the house of the East Indian Company and partly in the old library in Vasagatan (today University of Gothenburg library), in a cellar without good shelves, electricity or staff. The budgets were cut but at the same time a number of persons were employed at the chancellery level.

Henry Wassén wrote in 1971:

“the situation today is very serious, lack of good spaces, lack of means that make it possible to have a modern museum activity, ... the staff problem is huge... now we are undermanned in the technical area and unmanned in the academical staff”...(Wassén 1971).

At the same time the city celebrated the 350 years jubilee, although it was a shyer celebration the one than in 1923. A big exhibition was planned for the occasion. The goal was to attract tourists to the city. The exhibition was to be a big publicity tool for the city.<sup>70</sup>

An important but unnoticed fact is that the City’s Museums in 1971 joined ICOM<sup>71</sup>. It could be seen as an approach to return to a more professional practice and share with museums around the world same kind of policies and trainings, also ICOM gave the opportunity to share experiences. Somehow ICOM is one of the first attempts to create a *worldly culture* of museums.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1973 Henry Wassén retired and an Africanist scholar (the first specialist in Africa at the museum), Kjell Zetterström, became the new director. During Zetterström’s period, searching for new locality for the museum and collections became a goal. Between 1980’s and 1994, there were four different plans to move the museum to new buildings (figure

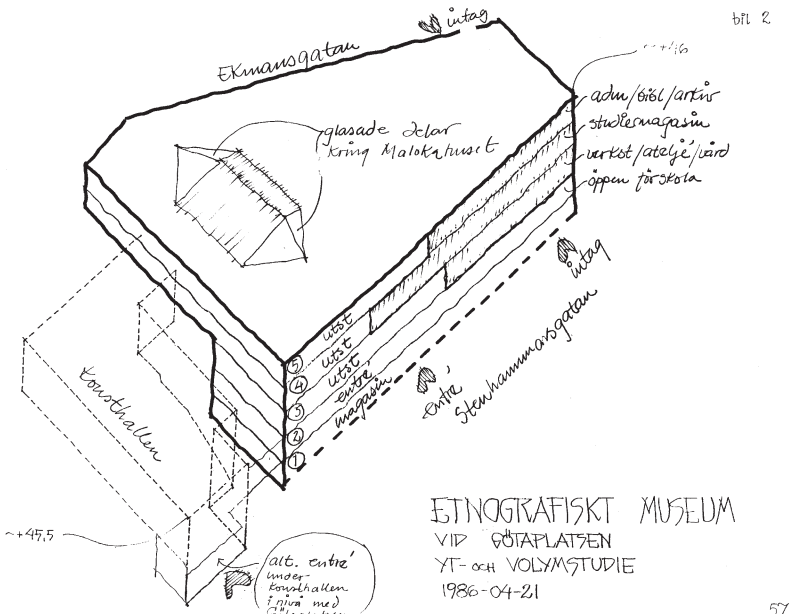


Figure 18: A new attempt to construct a new building for the museum at Götaplatsen in 1986 (Keyling and Arvidsson 1986:57).

18); and until 1994, the collections were spread around the city in different storage rooms in very bad conditions.

Coming to the 1990's the springtime of city plans was over for almost 10 years; and the provincial museums went through a new re-organization. The museums of history, industry and archaeology were closed down, and their collections moved to the new form of the Museum of the City of Gothenburg. The Ethnographical Museum was moved in 1994 out from the House of the East Indian Company to the Gårda neighbourhood, to a building that first was a brewery and later housed the Industry Museum<sup>72</sup>.

The directors, Kjell Zetterström and later Sven-Erik Isacson, needed to handle the institution in these pitiable circumstances. Sven-Erik Isacson carried out fieldwork in Colombia, following the tradition of Nordenskiöld and Wassén, he also went to the area of Chocó. He made two interesting collections, one from Colombia, and one in Guyana. Isacson strived to reconnect the museum with the university departments, at first anthropology but also archaeology, both at the University of Gothenburg. His more important contribution was to draw attention, with help of the local media, to the situation of the collections (see more in the chapter unruly passions).

After moving the museum to Gårda, some objects found better storage conditions, but it was only in 2001 during the Museum of World Culture organization that a new deposit area with better conditions for storing the collections could be constructed (figure 19).

The collections were in a very poor state of preservation during this period, with inadequate storage rooms, not enough and untrained personal and a very poor budget. The collecting practice during this period was ad hoc, some collections made by the directors during their anthropological fieldwork, some bought or donated. Archaeological objects were not collected, but many were donated or bought in auctions. Especially during Henry Wassén's period as a director, he was very interested in collecting extraordinary items.

Two years after the move to the new house in Gårda, the Ethnographical Museum was more or less bankrupt and no real interest from the province was shown.

And now, we come back to 1996, when the Swedish State decided on the creation of the new museum in Gothenburg. The 21<sup>st</sup> September 1999 the Ethnographical Museum closed for ever to the public.

The collections are now part of the Museum of World Culture in a separate location placed 3 kilometers from the exhibition building of the new

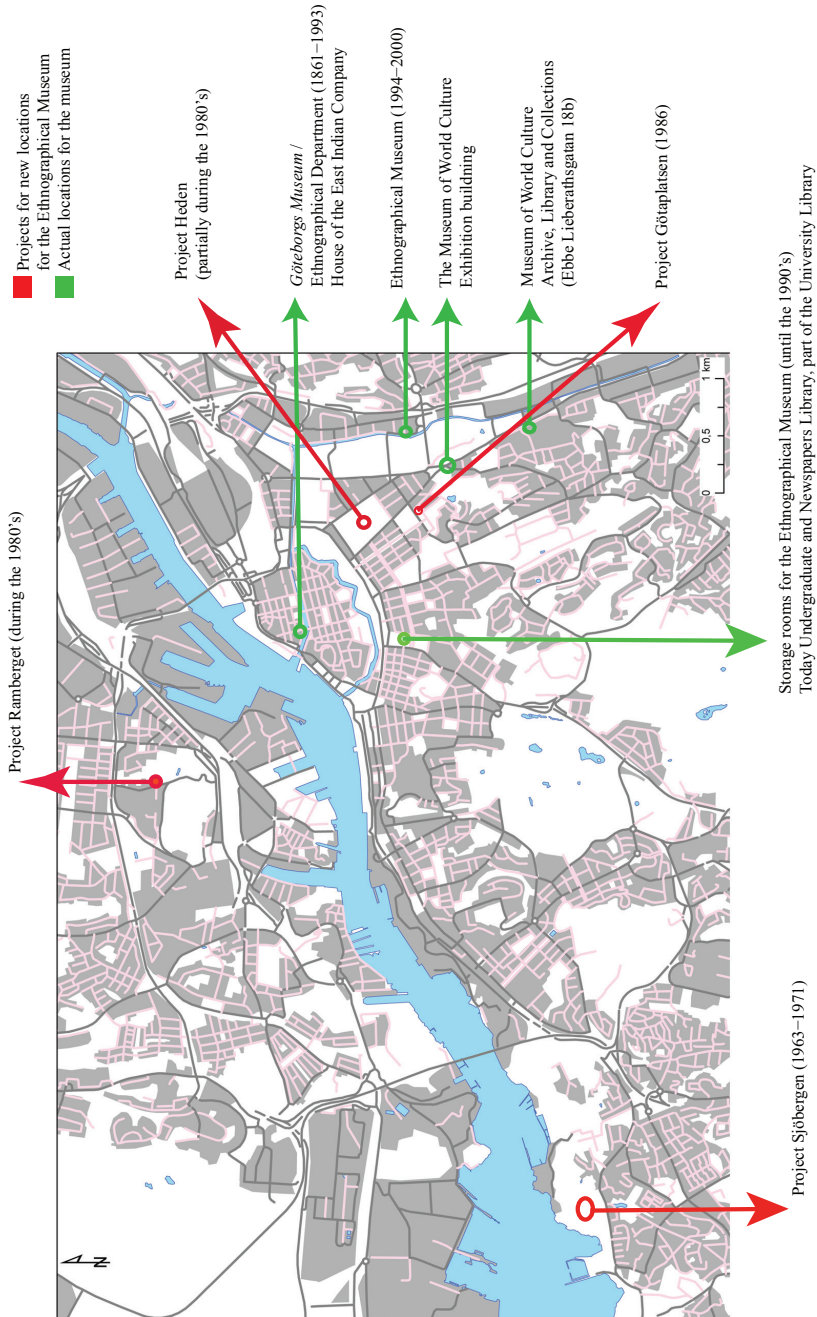


Figure 19: Actual locations for the museum/collections and the different projects for constructing a new building.

museum. The dream of a new building for the collections became reality in 2001 when the storage rooms at Ebbe Lieberathsgatan began receiving the collections. However, an interesting reflection is that the collections had no physical place in the new museum at Korsvägen. Buildings are artefacts in themselves, in the case of the Museum of World Culture, to have two locations is a special situation. The building which holds the collections is an integral part of them (Forgan 2005:574) articulating an idea about what the collections mean<sup>73</sup>.

## Epilogue

“How best to conceive this combination of conservatism and innovation? The most famous modern characterization of scientific change is that of Thomas Kuhn. For Kuhn, significant changes are sudden and radical. The switch from one ‘paradigm’ to another involves a sharp break in continuity” (Kuper 1988:10)

The museum’s history is the history of many re-organizations, the institution born in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, died during the 20<sup>th</sup> and probably was reborn as a Phoenix in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Summarising the history of the museum and its collections is also going through paradigms, discussions, paradoxes and tensions; changing, transforming and persisting under new forms. Different political paradigms had been at first those which had shaped the museum and its collections. The first museum was created by a society in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, represented in its bourgeoisie, who needed to create a cultural identity for the city that could give them an identity to compete with the highly educated aristocracy in the capital, Stockholm. The last museum created in the new century, as a clear political project, was an attempt from the power, the high, educated, white class to incorporate the others.

Tensions between science and politics have been mirrored in the direction of the institutions which hold the collections during those 150 years since the first museum in Gothenburg opened to the public.

Throughout the history of the museum we can follow the collections coming from outside Sweden placed in different paradigms. It can be observed that at first, those exotic objects gave luxurious and cosmopolitan sensations. In the foundation of the Museum of the City of Gothenburg, the objects coming from foreign countries were assembled in the historical



department. They were part of history, partly mixed with Swedish historical objects, probably in a comparative meaning, but still in the same group.

Around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the discussion was animated and the collections were moved from historical to industrial design, then to culture-historical ethnographical departments. In the spreading of collections, the ethnographical ones lose the quality of historical and at the end they represented the lower classes or primitive peoples. At the formation of the Ethnographical Museum the collections embodied the exotic people living in other continents. This version was prevalent for many years, until it was declared in the 1990's that those objects were strangers amongst us.

In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, the collections became part of the Museum of World Culture. A new concept came up, world culture. The former Minister of Culture Marita Ulvskog defined that "World Culture is World Cultures"<sup>74</sup> (Riksdagens snabbprotokoll 1998/99:31).

There are so many definitions of world culture that it could be impossible to summarize, but the interesting thing is that at that moment, the collections came into focus again. The first critique after Ulvskog's presentation came directly: if world culture is world cultures around the world, why are Europe and Sweden not represented in this new constellation of museums? Instead the museums inside the new organization were those with non-European cultural objects (and the Mediterranean archaeological objects). Also in this beginning was discussed if the collections should be the link between the national institution and the immigrant society in Sweden. The others, the exotic people are now the neighbours. Through time we can observe that class and culture are intermixed and not well defined, and sometimes the others were in another geography or in the same place.

Transforming an institution, changing the paradigm from ethnography to world culture was not only a superficial change, more than transforming it was a collision. As Kuper argued changing paradigms should be a sharp break in continuity or we can still be in the illusion of a transformation (Kuper 1988). Keeping stereotypes can be one way to maintain the older structures (Arwill-Nordbladh 1991).

The illusion in the case of the Museum of World Culture was that things could continue in the way that they always had been instead of accepting the clash.

Almost ten years into this new political paradigm, with a new exhibition building and a magnificent storehouse the collections are still the same, waiting to be updated, linked back or de-linked.

## Appendix to chapter I

I have included here how the organization of the museums inside the *Göteborgs Museum* was decided. It is very interesting to see how the internal organization of the museums mirrors the way in which the disciplines were understood. For example, the division inside the Historical Museum could be said is based in a medieval society organization with the aristocracy, church, military, and handicraft.

The Ethnographical Museum had three departments although the “European” objects like Sami material had no department. Interesting is the division inside the Archaeological museum with hunter-gathered and agricultural society, not using the three Ages System anymore as departments.

Protocol meeting at the museums of Göteborg 9th May 1962 (Göteborgs museer kanslichefen 1962). The board decided to approve the following, with designated statutes concerning the museums organization:

The museum institutions are divided in departments in this manner:

### Historical Museum:

- Upper classes and dress collections department
- Church and Middle Ages department with coin cabinet
- Folklore and handicraft department
- The history of the city department
- The military museum

### Ethnographical Museum:

- The Cultures of the Americas
- The Cultures of Asia and Oceania
- The Cultures of Africa

### Archaeological Museum:

- Hunter-gatherer culture; settlement finds
- Agricultural cultures; grave and hoards (depåfynd).

### Natural History Museum:

- Department of Vertebrate

Department of Invertebrate

Department of Entomology

Department of Geology

The Art Museum:

Department for Old Art

Department for Modern Art

The department is in charge of curators. The museum director can be in charge of one or some departments.

## Notes

1 "Stadsmuseet måste bli färdigt för att kunna bli en viktig del i kampen mot segregationen" (Sahlberg 1995/08/17).

2 "Om något så bidrar ett väl fungerande etnografiskt museum att motverka segregering" (Aijmer, et al. 1995/08/23).

3 "Det är i ett etnografiskt museums natur att det åskådliggör det som är främmande. Dess uppgift är att exponera bruks- och konstföremål från främmande kulturer. Besökarna ges möjlighet till upptäckter och skönhetsupplevelser som bidrar till inte bara förståelse för främmande folk utan också till respekt för främmande kulturer som alternativa lösningar i människors strävan att bygga samhällen".

4 "Museer med helt eller delvis etnografisk inriktning bör i ännu större omfattning än nu ha en viktig uppgift i att främja kontakterna mellan svenska och utomsvenska kulturer" (Sveriges Regering 1996:142).

5 The Museum of Ethnography was at that moment called *Folkens museum-etnografiska*.

6 Museum of Design and handicraft of the city of Gothenburg.

7 Hembygdsföreningar.

8 Folkrörelse.

9 Gränsöverskridande.

10 Swedish Travelling Exhibition.

11 The committee was composed by Sir David Wilson, professor and former head of the British Museum, Sandra Lorimer, Head of Department and of exhibitions at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and Magne Velure, well-known Norwegian museum expert and responsible for the Norwegian museum inquiry in 1996.

12 Uppdraget innebär att vidareutveckla och konkretisera visionen av ett världskulturmuseum, bli i följande avseenden:

- Nya sätt att presentera det mångkulturella samhällets kulturarv
- Att utveckla publikarbete, speciellt mot barn och ungdom och invandrarorganisationer
- Samarbete med forskarsamhället – det tvärvetenskapliga perspektivet
- Nationellt ansvarstagande – det regionala perspektivet
- utvecklad användning av ny informationsteknik

13 ”Debatten om Världskultureernas museum i Göteborg handlar om vision kontra reaktion. För vår mångkulturella framtid hoppas jag att det visionära vinner över den reaktionära”. Jan Molin, Head of the immigration administration in Göteborg.

14 One exception is the so-called Paracas Collection (see chapter 4). This was part of the Debate that never came up to the public discussion. There is much gossip about why this collections was kept by the municipality and became only deposited at the new museum (see Jonsson 2010).

15 The archive remained under city ownership but was deposited at the Museum of World Culture, because the archive, together with the library are very closely linked to the collections. From the start the library has been questioned. The chancellery has tried to close or donate the library three times, and the question remains unsolved. One argument has been the inappropriate content of the books coming from the ethnographical tradition.

16 Today Museion is under the administration of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

17 Statens Museer för Världskultur har till uppgift att visa och levandegöra världens kulturer. Vi skall främja tvärvetenskaplig kunskapsbildning och publik verksamhet i nya former utifrån etnografiska, arkeologiska, konstnärliga, konstvetenskapliga samt andra samhälleliga och historiska perspektiv. Vi skall dokumentera och belysa olika kulturers yttringar och villkor samt kulturmöten historiskt och i dagens samhälle.

18 Världskulturmuseet vill skapa engagemang kring samhället och världen genom att diskutera angelägna, aktuella frågor i ett globalt perspektiv. Programmet ska formas i dialog med omvärlden, innehållet vill både utforska, utmana och underhålla.

19 Horizons. Voices from a global Africa; Sister of Dreams: People and myths of the Orinoco; No Name Fever: Aids in the age of globalization; Fred Wilson: Site Unseen: Dwellings of the Demons; and 390 m<sup>3</sup> Spirituality.

20 Later, this first museum of Natural History became part of the Göteborgs museum, and became again an own museum in 1923, when the house in Slottskogen was finished (situated at the same place today).

21 It has been estimated that around 1,3 million people emigrated from Sweden 1840–1950.

22 Of course the American Indigenous population also has been presented to the European audience in a Romantic Idealized view, literature, children books, and later films. However, this romantic presentation had also a strong colonial impact (Fine-Dare 2002; Fulford 2006).

23 More in Chapter III.

24 See chapter III, the collection from Chaco donated by Folke Mattsson.

25 Hermann Obst was a medicine doctor in Leipzig. He founded a committee of 36 celebrities and well-known citizens of Leipzig. Among them university professors, booksellers, publishers and representatives of the large banks. Obst founded the association of Museum für Völkerkunde (Museum of Ethnography), which was the owner of the collections during 26 years, until the city of Leipzig became the owner in 1895. Obst was the first director of the Museum (source Staatliche Ethnographische Sammlungen Sachsen).

26 Sven Adolf Hedlund, or S.A Hedlund as he was called, was born in Eldgarn the 24<sup>th</sup> February 1821 and died in Göteborg in September 16, 1900. He married in 1854 Christina Maria Rudensköld, daughter to Earl Thorsten Rudensköld and Christina af Geijerstam (Elfving 1996:39). Thorsten Rudensköld was considered the “Swedish Elementary School (folkskola) apostle” (Elfving 1996:39).

27 Museets styrelse.

28 En av stadens magistrat; en av borgerskapets Äldste; en av kungliga vetenskaps-och vitterhets samhället, en av Naturhistoriska museets styrelse, två av handelsförenings fullmäktige, två av Fabriksföreningens fullmäktige, två av hantverksföreningens fullmäktige, en av konstföreningens styrelse, en av slöjdföreningens direktion.

29 Göteborg äger en storartad byggnad, ett minne av en viktig epok i dess historia, som är väl värd att för ett dylikt ändamål [museum] upplåtas, för att därmed bära vittne om en ny epok i vårt samhälles utveckling och nya tidsförhållanden, den är f.d. Ostindiska kompaniets hus, vars ena hälft tillhör staden och den andra staten.

30 About Arthur Hazelius and the creation of Nordiska museum see Mattias Bäckström's works (2011).

31 Svenskt biografiskt handlexikon (SBH), utgiven 1906.

32 Göteborgs stadsfullmäktige 1863–1962 - Biografisk matrikel, del II, Magnus Fahl

33 This expedition was financed by Oscar Dickson, the Swedish Kung Oscar II and Alexandr Sibirjakov (each of them contributed a third).

34 The City Museum today is the result of a long process from the *Göteborgs Museum* until today (without the ethnographical collections. The archaeological, industrial, historical came back to the City Museum in the 1990's).

35 Höganäs is a well-known design and ceramic factory in Sweden situated in the south of the country.

36 Vid inträdet genom hufvudingången, som är belägen på midten af vestra sedan, tillkännagifva anslag med stora typer, att hela östra sidan af lokalen upptages af Bohuslänska samlingar, således äfven den ditåt vända sidan af de skåp, som äro placerade längs åt midten af golvet. På sidan midt emot, eller den vestra, äro de icke-bohuslänska uppställa. I norra fonden ha vi den inhemska, i den södra den utländska daggdjursamlingen...

37 “Å salens vestra sida är den utländska, likaledes ganska rika samlingen uppställd efter samma plan, och fullständiga etiketter träffas öfverallt, upptagandea föremålen latiniska och svenska namn, fyndort, m,m.”

38 vårt fäderneslands egna naturhistoriska samlingar (Ny Illustrerad Tidning 7 October, 1865).

39 Den allmänna bildningen. Allmänbildning is derivated from German Allgemeinbildung. It has no equivalence in English, but it could be close to general knowledge or cultural literacy.

40 *Göteborgs Musei förening.*

41 In Swedish the concept *konstindustri* was used in the beginning, later defined as *slöjd* (crafts and handicraft).

42 *Konstindustriella.*

43 Wilhelm Röhss was a Swedish banker, merchant and donor to the city of Göteborg. Thanks his donation he was appointed Knight (riddare) at the Order of the North Star (Nordstjärneorden) and Commander (kommendör) in the Order Vasa (Vasaorden). He also was appointed in the Prussian Crown Order. At his death he donated 250000 Swedish crowns to the creation of the Röhsska Decorative Arts museum (konstslöjdmuseet).

44 Today Röhsska museum is the Design and Handicraft Museum of the City of Göteborg.

45 Among those who protested were Hans Hildebrand (Director of the National Heritage Board), Ludvig Looström (keeper at the National Museum), Oscar Montelius (Professor), Carl Anton Ossbahr (keeper at the Royal Armoury) and Georg Johansson Karlin (keeper at the Cultural Historical Museum in Lund).

46 ”Musei konstindustriella afdelning innehåller, man kan säga, nästan uteslutande äldre föremål, samlade i ”kulturhistoriskt syfte och afsedda att belysa svunna tiders seder och bruk” (Lagerberg 1901:7).

47 The Chinese porcelain in the Göteborgs museum is said to represent porcelain produce exclusively for the European market and therefore separated from the artefacts made for the Chinese market (Mats Sjölin, personal communication). It’s interesting to note that in many countries, the East Asian “high cultures” material is separated in own museums, like for example in Sweden in the East Asian Museum (*Östasiatiska museet*), in Berlin there it was also a museum for

East Asian Art (*Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst*). However in Denmark the Asian material is in the National Museum.

48 *Allmoge* is a Nordic term, from ancient Scandinavian *almoghe* “*hela hopen*”, “the masses or the multitude, the general public”. The term has its roots in how society was organized during the Middle Ages. In Scandinavia Feudalism never had the same impact as in central Europe. Instead of huge estates owned by one person, in Sweden much of the land was divided into farms. The system of lords and peasants was never fully developed.

*Allmogekultur*, refers to the material culture from the lower classes in the countryside. It could be translated as Folklore culture, but I am going to keep *allmoge* because the content is not the same. *Allmogekultur* also includes the collecting of folktales, sagas, etc, it was important although the collecting of intangible heritage. The material culture went to museums and the intangible heritage to archives.

49 Which opened 1886.

50 For an account about Erland Nordenskiöld’s work and life, see Christer Lindberg (Lindberg 1995; Lindberg 1996).

51 Riksmuseet.

52 The Three Age System (Stone, Bronze and Iron age) as Evolution model became very important in the museological organization around the world.

53 Folkbildning.

54 “våra museer göra för närvarande en stor insats i folkbildningsarbetet, det vill jag visst inte bestrida, men jag är övertygad om, att denna skulle ökas betydligt om alla museimännen fattade sin uppgift på så sätt, att de även voro lärare och förvandlade museernas utställningssalar fullständigt från skattkammare till skolor. Detta naturligtvis alltid under den förutsättningen att bakom skola i magasinerna museernas stora uppgift att bevara material för forskningen och eftervärlden skulle förstås och varmt omhuldas”

55 At those time it was *Göteborgs Högskola*.

56 Founder of the Leiden Structuralism School, later presented as the Leiden-Paris tradition (JPB de Josselin de Jong-Claude Levi Strauss).

57 “contribuer au progrès des études ethnographiques, linguistiques et historiques relatives aux deux Amériques, spécialement pour les temps antérieurs à Christophe Colomb, et de mettre en rapport les personnes qui s’intéressent à ces études” (<http://www.53ica.com/History.html>).

58 ¿Y no es lícito a nuevos sabios y a nuevas investigaciones aspirar a la misma maravilla respecto al mundo ignorado que descubrió Colón, por medio de la Historia y de la Arqueología, de la Paleografía y de la Lingüística hábilmente interpretadas?

59 Ett etnografiskt museum, som bl. a. har till uppgift att samla kulturföremål från exotiska folk, är naturligtvis i hög grad beroende av förbindelse över haven.

60 “den utomeuropeiska samlingen” (Göteborgs museum 1919:70).

61 It could be that the archaeological material was forgotten with intention (see Chapter IV). Until the 1980’s when a group of students from archaeology started a couple of projects in Peru and Argentina (Bengtsson 1998; Cornell 1988; Stenborg 2002; Stenborg and Muñoz 1999), the material was almost omitted.

62 The card index is still in used today, parallel to the computer system.

63 ...då ett fotografi icke alltid kan visa föremålets viktigare detaljer tillräckligt tydligt.

64 Proposal presented to the Museum Board (museistyrelsen).

65 The building of the new Museum of World Culture is about 8000 square meters, and the collections are outside the exhibition house. Probably the percentages are inverted, and today 80% are for the public activities and exhibitions.

66 Different inspections, like for example, if in the future the area is too isolated or if the trams system is going to come to the area. Other scrutiny that delays the plans is the office of constructions of the city.

67 1965 års musei-och utställningssakkunniga (MUS 65). Year 1965 Museum and Exhibition’s Experts (Advicers).

68 “vi har med nuvarande brist på akademiskt skolad och musealt tränad personal speciella problem i all synnerhet om arbetsinsatserna skall splittras på alltför många olika fronter. Särskild svårt har det visat sig vara att få medarbetare som är hemma på det amerikanistiska område” (Wassén 1968/01/19).

69 §331 5 September 1969 museum protocol.

70 The first report before the jubilee was completed in 1971. The director for the program was Kai Dessau.

71 International Council of Museums (ICOM).

72 Among the locations suggested by the city of Göteborg were Hisingen, Heden and Götaplatsen. Götaplatsen was under a year a real project, with an architect involved and plans for the construction of a new museum behind the Concert Hall of the city.

73 However, it must be noted that it’s an international trend to have the storage rooms separated from the exhibitions house. One of the most common causes is the high prices that must to be paid to have the collections in central places, instead to have storage areas elsewhere can reduce costs significantly.

74 Min definition av världskultur är världens kulturer (Marita Ulvskog 1998).





# Chapter II:

## The power of labelling

“notoriamente no hay clasificación del universo que no sea arbitraria y conjetural. La razón es muy simple: no sabemos qué cosa es el universo”<sup>1</sup>  
Jorge Luis Borges (1960:163).

### Introduction

In this chapter I am going to present collections, discuss the categories of registration and the way they have been collected; the latter two of which are very often interconnected.

The history of the collections in Gothenburg is an amazing trip through the history of the museum, the history of the city, and of its population.

These objects from all parts of the world have had many different positions and meanings. When they arrived, in the late 19th century, they gave a cosmopolitan touch to the elite of Gothenburg; years after they embodied the lower classes, the lower cultures, they stood for those in faraway countries, the others. At the beginning of the 21st century they became the tools of integration programmes, destined to help Sweden to integrate its immigrants with society.

When the museum in Gothenburg first opened in 1861, forming and educating<sup>2</sup> citizens was its primary objective. Today democracy, participation and dialogue are the goals. The objects are the same, the objectives very different.

Different factors have been important for defining these objects, one being the political-theoretical paradigms (both in Sweden as well as in the countries of origin), and the other the relationship between curators and objects in defining the status of the collections. The way in which they arrived at the museum has also helped to decide the way in which they have been presented and which narrative has been constructed.

This chapter is about practices, or "rules of practices" using part of Foucault's terminology (Foucault 2007), i.e. how we incorporate categories in daily action and how at the end we trust deeply in practice without questioning why or how.

## The collections

Categorizing the material from outside Sweden has not been easy as seen also in the previous chapter. Categories such as "art-industrial", design, art craft, ethnographical, historical, cultural historical, world culture, have been used and tried ad hoc.

The objects started coming to Sweden during the 18<sup>th</sup> century but only became part of a museum during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and were registered under the ideological and theoretical canon from the period when they arrived. Probably those first objects came as single objects or souvenirs and later were incorporated into collections.

On the public scene new approaches were attempted at the time when the museum became World Culture. At the collection management level the improvement has been technological: new database systems, scanning, conservation techniques and so on. Ideological changes at the collection management level have been more difficult to implement. Two decisions were taken: first to change the name of the storage rooms to *objects archive*; secondly collections became the target for a digitalisation program. However, the digitalisation meant simply leaving the collections to technocracy (without any ideological discussion about concepts and contents) and the only goal has been to make them accessible on the Internet. As Mike Featherstone remarked, information and culture are valuable commodities, meaning that corporations set their databases and archives for commercial purposes (Featherstone 2000:167). Obviously to have the information on the Internet is important today, however to put all the emphasis on the technological aspect without discussing the ideological ground of categories makes those aspects stronger, and in the end, this neutrality (no discussing categories) is a strong political statement.

For the collections the change from Ethnography to World Culture was also an administrative change, from the Province of Gothenburg to the Swedish State and to one general data system. This change has been very important and had a number of consequences for the collections. One issue that must be emphasised is that the administration of the collections

firstly went under the Museum of World Culture; however the project of digitalisation and the policy of collecting were in the hands of the central top administration, the Swedish National Museums of World Culture.

At the museum level, it was the first time that a mission statement for the collections was written:

“The Museum of World Cultures highly prioritizes collections care. The museum will make its collections widely accessible through its own exhibitions, through loans to other museums and through making them available for research as well as on the Internet for a general public” (Museum of World Culture 2003–2006).

The collections were originally assembled in a provincial museum for provincial needs. They represent the history of the bourgeoisie and middle class of the city and its aspirations through time. The collections have been part of the city’s history. When they were moved to the state, the city decided to keep some textile objects from different Peruvian collections and create a collection of them called the Paracas Collection; the city kept the Paracas collection but deposited it at the Museum of World Culture (Göteborgs stad 1998).

When the Swedish State took over the collections, a new objective was defined for them: to help the state to integrate immigrants (the non-European component). In 2009, an official commission was appointed by the Swedish government to consider the future of the national museums in Sweden, with the collections forming part of the discussion. In 2010, the government took the decision after the national elections and the incorporation of the political party Sweden Democrats<sup>4</sup> in the parliament that the Museum of World Culture, together with the Administration for National Museums of World Culture should have a clearer mission to increase diversity and respond against racism.

Since the Ethnographic Museum closed until today the discussion around the cataloguing of the collections has been an issue. In the beginning there was an attempt to discuss meaning and content; however it failed when all the discussion moved to the technical sphere and choosing data-base systems became the principal goal.

In discussions where I myself have been involved, the museum’s staff has argued that as an internal tool it is important to keep geography and concepts like “archaeological” for describing the collections. Probably, because the practices that we have been using for many years (almost 100) are rooted in our way of describing the others, it is difficult to change

ways of thinking. We have tacitly accepted in daily practice that everything before 1492 in America is archaeology, prehistory. We have tacitly accepted that people without writing must be part of prehistory. It is interesting that sometimes we have pointed out that archaeology is limited to the material that has been systematically excavated, in which case many collections which have come about by looting, have been bought at auctions or have been acquired through exchange with other museums should not be in this category. Another term used very often is pre-Columbian, giving Columbus the place of Christ to the Americas.

This is a statement of position, because many times in this text I will use categories that at the same time I have doubts about, but as part of the history of the museum I am absorbed in this paradigm, and also implicated.

## **The collections stored today at the Museum of World Culture**

It seems that one of the most important activities at a museum is to have thousands of objects without knowing them or ever exhibiting them. An important number of the collections were made during the period of construction and establishment of nations/states. Nevertheless, questions of repatriation or sorting out objects are difficult issues. Today, they could offer the opportunity to study different phenomena outside the colonial construction of the countries. In other words, many collections were made in the service of countries like Bolivia, Peru and Argentina. Today it could be possible to study them independently of national boundaries, without permission from national states.

Many collections have never been studied since they arrived in Gothenburg, or else they were published once and stored for the future. Even so, thanks to the fact that many collections were the product of fieldwork and scholarship, around 24% of them were published before the 1950s.

The first South American collections arrived during the period of the Natural Cabinet, but the large amount of objects came during and after the Erland Nordenskiöld period. During his very first year as director of the Ethnographical Department of the Museum of Gothenburg, 4,000 items were registered from Bolivia. This was the time when the museum functioned mostly as an educational institution. To Nordenskiöld collecting also meant gathering objects of knowledge, objects to form citizens and educate students.

The museum today has approximately 100,000 items<sup>5</sup> registered. 63% of all the material has its origins in Latin America (figures 21, 22 and 23). There are 372 archaeological collections from South America (Appendix II). Geography and current national boundaries have been used to organise the archaeological collection. This system has many solecisms and creates a gap between how ethnographical and archaeological collections have been registered, and the break became paradoxical when the information from the catalogue was transferred to the computerised database. In the original catalogue, the archaeological collections were defined by national boundaries while the ethnographical collections kept to the cultural boundaries. As an example, the archaeological material excavated in the Darien area (between Colombia and Panama) was registered as Colombian or Panamanian, while the materials from Emberá people from the same area was registered as Emberá or Chocó. Now, coming to the computerised system, the Emberá material was registered as Colombia/Panama and in many cases the two categories Emberá and Chocó have been amalgamated (Emberá/Chocó).

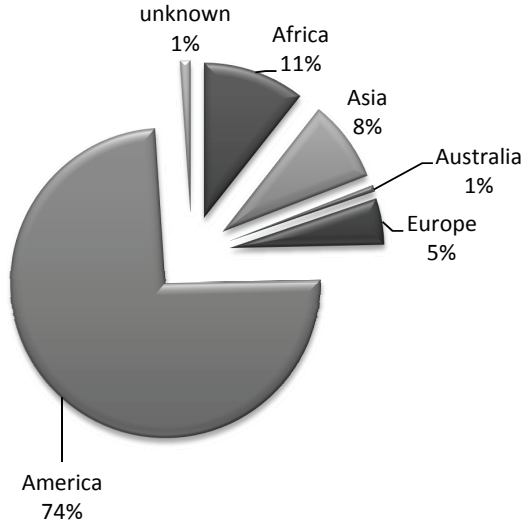
The collections are registered in the following form. The first four digits are the year of arrival at the museum, the second two digits are consecutive sequence within that year, and the final digit is the numbering of the objects. So, for example, the object number 1933.15.745 means that this object is part of collection number 1933.15 (it arrived in 1933 and it was the 15th collection arriving that year, and the last number is a sequential numbering of the objects, in this case this is the object no 745 in a collection with 757 objects).

The collections arriving before 1912 had another registration system. They were allotted numbers as they came in, from 1 to 6000.

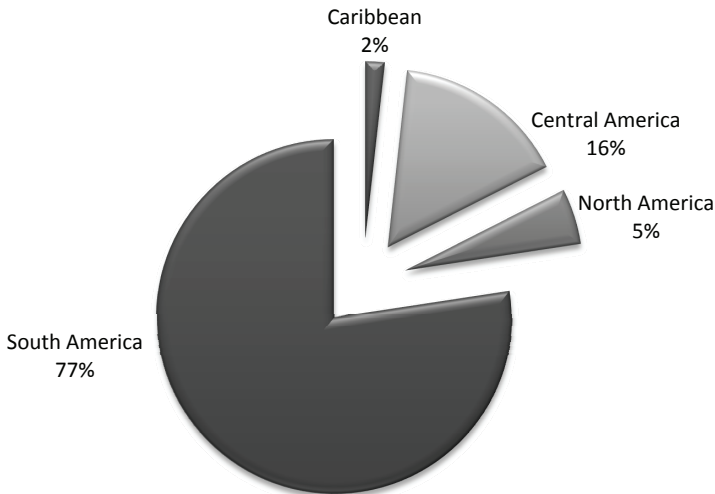
Continent	Archaeological collections	Ethnographical collections
South America	31389	17481
Central America	7566	3265
North America	1429	1133
Caribbean	833	1
Asia	313	10455
Africa	817	11080
Australia	5	469
Greenland	1577	536
Oceania	0	4847
Europe	0	1455

Figure 20: The organization of the collections at the Museum of World Culture. Number of items.

The collections are divided into ethnography and archaeology, as the first level; then by continent and at the last level by countries or cultures (figures 20 and 21). Of all these materials we can also see the relation within the Latin American material (figures 22 and 23).



*Figure 21: Percent of collections by continents.*



*Figure 22: Percent of collections from the Americas.*

Countries	Archaeology	Ethnography
Argentina	3362	1534
Bolivia	14158	2768
Brazil	5461	5530
Chile	936	314
Colombia	1593	2649
Costa Rica	246	25
Ecuador	951	727
El Salvador	1056	182
Guyana	865	1015
Honduras	40	1
Mexico	1600	969
Panama	5000	1900
Paraguay	106	2419
Peru	4474	286
Uruguay	11	6
Venezuela	24	380

Figure 23: Collections from South America.

## The American trend

Before 1912 the material from the American continent was rather insignificant, representing only four percent of the collections (figure 24 and 25). That from America was bought from a well-established collector, William Andersson Grebst<sup>6</sup>, and includes material not only from America but from all over the world. Otherwise the collections mainly represent the commercial contacts that Gothenburg had with the rest of the world. An interesting case is Europe, which then represented 20% of the whole material. Today Europe accounts for only five percent of the collections, including Greenland and the Sami material in this category.

From 1913 when Erland Nordenskiöld became director of the Department of Ethnography at the Museum of the City of Gothenburg and a period of considerable collecting started. Those were the museum's first Bolivian collections; today 17% of the collections are from Bolivia.



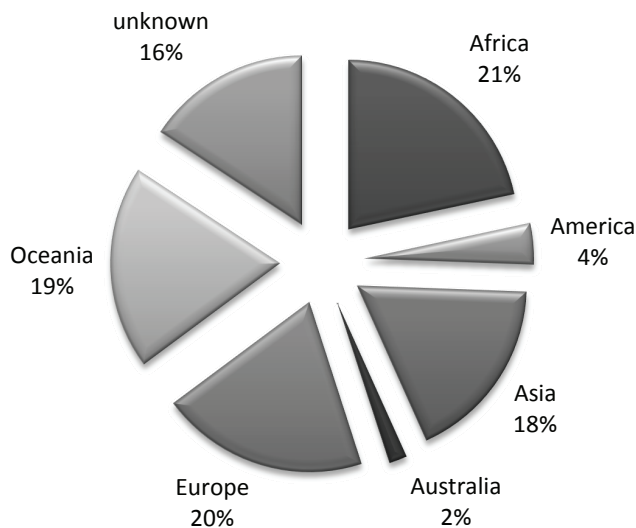


Figure 24: The collections at the Göteborgs Museum (from outside Sweden) before 1912.

Country	Archaeology	Ethnography	Empty	Total
Argentina		25		25
Brazil		6		6
Canada		6	1	7
Chile		56		56
Chile/Argentina		55		55
Colombia	11			11
Costa Rica		9		9
Mexico		3	4	7
Mexico/ South America		3		3
Nicaragua			33	33
Paraguay		43		43
Peru	16	24	1	41
Uruguay		6		6
USA	7	39		46
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>348</b>

Figure 25: Number of objects with provenance America before 1912.

Within the museum, the collections are divided into North, Central and South America. Those from South America are 55% of the total and roughly speaking, 55% of the total American material is classified as archaeology (figures 21 and 22).

One interesting aspect in the case of South American collections, concerns the relationship between ethnographical and archaeological ones. The archaeological collections are mainly from the highlands, even if there are important ones from the Brazilian areas; but the majority are from the Andean Highlands. On the other hand, almost all the ethnographical material is from the lowlands; that from the highlands is not so significant in numbers. I want to emphasise that the relationship is in quantity not in quality. I have wondered if the relationship between the archaeological Andean material and the ethnographical Amazonian one is not also a gender relationship created by the collectors. Perhaps it can be seen as a relationship between the powerful Andean materials from the past, from the glorious past, in preference to the current feminine savage from the lowlands.

## Collecting and collections

Collecting is an act of creating a new context, a new constellation with new meanings. The objects or specimens gathered from one context leave it and come to a new assemblage, representing the collector's idea. The creation of this new context implies the dismembering of another one (Preziosi and Farago 2004:5).

Susan Pearce pointed out in 1995 that “collections are gathered together for purposes which are seen by their possessors as lifting them away from the world of common commodities into one of special significance, one for which sacred seems the right word” (Pearce 1995:27).

An important act in collecting is choosing – deciding which objects are going to be part of the future. There are two important things here. One is the act of outwitting time, the second is the act of selection. Jean Baudrillard wrote in 1994 that “collecting abolishes time. Or rather: by establishing a fixed repertory of temporal references that can be replayed at will, in reverse order if need be, collecting represents the perpetual fresh beginning of a controlled cycle, thanks to which, starting out from any term he chooses and confident of returning to it, man can indulge in the great game of birth and death” (Baudrillard 1994:16). Pearce observed that choice has a double

nature, as selection and as the allotment of value, whatever form this value may take (Pearce 1995:27).

So, in the act of collecting and creating collections we are selecting and defining which objects are going to be part of the future. Some authors have defined collections as monuments and archives, repositories of a past and legacy preserved to the future (Venn 2006:40), so selection of material, in a museum context, became part of the legacy of a city, nation or state. With the comparison between collections and archive those museum's objects become part of a collective memory of a nation or people and in this way they are part of the national/state programme of educating and forming citizens (Brown and Davis-Brown 1998:19).

Virginia Dominguez remarks on the paradoxes of ethnographical collecting. The first paradox is that in the intention of portraying other cultures it is the search for completion of a description of our own, that collecting rests on a strong historical consciousness but concentrates on people perceived to be without history; and secondly it continually depicts "man" as subject – objectifier, creator, producer – but transforms him into an object and vehicle of knowledge (Dominguez 1986:548).

The first paradox reappears in different periods: the idea of collecting others to understand ourselves has been recurrent since the first ethnographers and collectors, like Adolf Bastian in Berlin, down to the present day, in a context of transnational or world culture paradigm. Collecting ethnographical objects had much to do with the construction of national identities in the late 19th and the early 20th century. Putting it simply, collecting the other to understand and form ourselves was part of the national programme in the constitution of nation states.

There are many definitions of what a collection is. Firstly, a collection can contain from one to many objects, and can hold the same kind of objects or the most diverse items. A collection can represent a people, an area, or a continent. I consider that a collection is a result, the product, of the interaction between the collector, the collected material, the collecting praxis, and the different contexts that the objects inside the collection had been exposed to.

Collecting is an act of appropriation and creation. During the process some objects have been chosen to survive time, and those objects leave the category for which they were created or used, becoming part of a collection, together with other objects or on their own, in a new function, meaning and context, representing many ideas. Appropriation occurs the moment the object is taken and replaced again; from that moment the original

owner, the creator, has no control anymore over the meaning of the object. In ethnography, this process has shaped property and heritage. Artefacts and belongings taken from their context, re-valued in a collection context, became cultural heritage, whereas before they were simply stuff; ordinary stuff became pieces of art, or vice versa.

In the case of the Latin American Collections at the Museum of World Culture, they are “the other” twice over. They represent “the other” the exotic, those beyond, outsiders, but also those before; many of the objects happened in the past and the past is constantly otherness (Lowenthal 1985).

## **Collecting practices during the history of the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg**

Objects came to Gothenburg in many different ways. In the history of the formation of collections at the current Museum of World Culture, some groups can be identified as the important resources of collections. It can be noted that the question of which group is strongest has to do with many factors, economic resources, policies of collecting (or not), interest on the part of the staff and curators, and so on. Today there is a general policy of acquisition and collecting and a detailed outline of the climate demands for the storage of the collections.

One particular point that interested me is the relationship between countries and how the collections were acquired. Collections from some countries became interesting from a research point of view, whereas other countries were interesting as sources of pieces of art.

There are a number of different collecting practices which can be identified: donation, purchase, exchange, collected in expeditions, souvenirs, unknown, depositions and replicas (figures 26 and 27).

### **Donation:**

In this category are objects registered as donated by scholars, collectors, visitors, etc. who gave the objects to the museum as a gift, contribution or souvenir. At the beginning of the museum’s existence this practice was very intensive, and also included donations of money for the purchase of collections, so sometimes there is no clear boundary between these two categories.

In recent years, the museum, adapting to the ICOM rules, has ceased to accept donated archaeological objects whose possession cannot be proved to antedate 1972.

Donation was also the way for some important local figures to climb the social ladder in the city, but very often too, people of the city who were important already felt duty bound to contribute to the museum. The concept of donation sometimes comes close to that of patron but not always: there are also unstructured gifts. Especially common between scholars at one time was the gift of objects following an anthropological practice of exchange and reciprocity.

Susan Pearce writes, “to give material freely to museums is a meritorious act which conveys famous immortality” (Pearce 1995:407). This is very much the case in Gothenburg. Many of the collections became one man’s collection, and the name of the donor became part of the history of the collection.

## **Purchase:**

Buying collections was common practice, especially during the period between 1915 and 1960; afterwards this was more or less discontinued for lack of funding. The criteria that were important for buying objects were: that the collection came from an important area (Peru or Colombia); that the collection had been assembled by an important collector (almost all the Brazilian collections were put together by Nimuendajú); or that the collections represented an area from which the museum had few other collections.

It is uncommon for the purchased collections to be accompanied by any information about context, and they were bought for aesthetical reasons. The collections from Brazil assembled by Curt Nimuendajú are an important exception. Nimuendajú was well informed about the material he was sending to Gothenburg, and selling the collections was his way of earning a living (Nimuendajú, et al. 2004).

Buying collections became, initially, the way to complete the Erland Nordenskiöld’s Encyclopaedia project, but later the way to acquire curios or unusual specimens. Another important consideration was that through buying objects the museum had the possibility of getting suitable material for exhibitions or education.

## Exchange:

Exchanging objects was very important during the Erland Nordenskiöld period and of course, the practice disappeared during the Second World War, with a brief revival in the 1950s.

Exchanging objects was the way to "complete" some areas, and also a way of obtaining objects from some famous collectors. In some letters from Nordenskiöld to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, he wrote, "*I would like to have some of Karl von den Steinen's Collections*".

The exchange of collections was possible because museums had *duplicates*. I think that the category of duplicate is a significant one that needs to be discussed. Duplicate implied and meant an industrial idea of production of material culture. Nowadays those duplicates would have been studied as one unit of complementaries, and in some cases scholars try to recover the dissipated duplicates into a single context.

The exchange between museums was also a way of establishing relationships between institutions and people.



*Figure 26: Object no 1929.18.0053 (bracelet). The collection no 1929.18 was an exchange between Museum für Völkerkunde i Berlin. The object was collected by Karl von den Steinen in Brazil in the area of the Xingú River. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz ©Museum of World Culture.*

## **Collected:**

This category included the collections made by scholars who knew the context and origin of the collections. The typical collections are those made during fieldwork, but also objects donated to the museum by well-known scholars.

The material from excavation has seldom been used in exhibitions at the museum. Only a few complete pieces, otherwise, the collected material was used as research material or for educational purposes.

There is a difference here between the material considered archaeological or ethnographical; the latter having been displayed more often.

## **Souvenir (passive collecting):**

A souvenir is defined as a “small and relatively inexpensive article given, kept, or purchased as a reminder of a place visited, an occasion, etc., memento”. It is also defined as “a memory”.

Many collections can be defined as souvenirs. There are those examples where the insignificant object was given to the museum after a trip, having been bought in a plaza; and there are those objects representing good will between institutions. The exchange of objects sometimes served to complete collections, or to fill gaps in a museum’s coverage, but many times they were also gifts from some scholars, or institutions, for the maintenance of good relations.

Among the curious objects donated by Grebst can be noted a chewing gum, described as an “American chewing gum for ladies” (0000.00.1925). This kind of practice can be illustrated with many of the objects donated or sold by Grebst. Another example is a bull horn, from Buenos Aires, Argentina, donated by a Sea Captain (C.A. Westerberg) in 1854.

Donation by wealthy Gothenburg families of objects acquired previously was a very common practice in the beginning of the museum’s history.

Over the years, numerous gifts were received from institutions or scholars which could be classed as souvenirs. This became more common during and after Erland Nordenskiöld’s tenure. One donor who made many gifts to increase the name and importance of the museum was one of Nordenskiöld’s first students, namely Alfred Métraux. He donated many hundred objects as gifts, collected systematically, and made many contacts that could help the museum in Sweden to acquire more collections.

## Other later souvenirs:

In later times, under Erland Nordenskiöld and the succeeding directors, receiving souvenirs that became part of the collections was common practice. These gifts were not outstandingly numerous, but the interesting thing is who the people were who made gifts, and where the objects came from.

Many times it was important, well known scholars who donated part of their personal collections, or when participating in congresses scholars could exchange objects, or receive them from the other participants.

Donors have included Alfred Métraux, Douglas Melin, Alfred Westholm, Karl P. Curtis, among others. During Henry Wassén's tenure as director of the museum, he acquired many objects, he received many gifts, and many objects added during his time are of uncertain origin.



*Figure 27: Object no. 1966.25.0004. necklace made from ceramic beads. Donated by Mr. Philip L. Dade, Panama to Henry Wassén. The necklace is from Parita, Herrera province in Panama; and coming from an excavation carried out by the donor. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz ©Museum of World Culture.*

## Unknown:

“Unknown” refers mainly to objects that have probably been looted; for example, part of the so-called Paracas Collection is registered as unknown, which is typical of the Peruvian collections. In the case of Brazil, Curt Nimuendajú had gathered nearly all the collections in the Unknown category but it is not clear who paid for them. Sometimes the Dickson family appear to have donated the money to buy collections, but when the collections were registered this information was not included. There are some collections whose donor or seller asked to be anonymous. Also, before 1913, it was unusual to note very much information as to how the collection came to the museum.



“Unknown” also includes a number of collections that arrived at the museum, were not registered directly and after decades were classified as unknown because the information about them had been lost.

## **Depositions:**

The category of depositions of collections is a small but very complicated one. There are very few collections thus registered. One is the so-called Paracas Collection (see chapter IV) that was the only one to remain the property of the city of Gothenburg instead of becoming that of the state.

One very interesting fact, however, is that when the museum was transferred from municipal to state mandatorship, other depositions were never mentioned.

Another kind of complicated deposition is those made between countries. There are two collections that are in a very complicated situation, especially one from Bolivia. In 1927, following his excavations in the area of Darien, Sigvald Linné brought part of the material to Sweden in order to study and publish it. The museum and the Panama government drew up an agreement for the material to be returned to Panama as soon as Linné had finished with it. *Darien in the Past* was published in 1929 (Linné and Leijer 1929), but the collection is still in Gothenburg.

One more complicated situation concerns the material collected by Stig Rydén in Bolivia in the 1950s. The museum board wrote in 1954 (10th September) that as soon as Rydén had finished his work the material must be sent back to Bolivia, and in the meantime it was to be regarded as a deposition. Stig Rydén moved to Stockholm in 1956, and I am not sure to which material they were referring. There is no archaeological collection registered for those years, and no collection has been sent back.

## **Replicas:**

For educational purposes, many copies were ordered during the period until the 1950's. Other replicas came later to be a part of exhibitions. The interesting thing is that many of these replicas became part of the museum system, numbered and classified. There are some copies that Stig Rydén received as a gift in Montevideo in 1952, namely replicas of well-known archaeological vessels from Uruguay. There are around 40 plaster casts, there are some copies from Tiwanaku sent by Arthur Posnansky, some replicas with motifs from Colombia bought from the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in

Berlin or *Instituto Colombiano de Antropología*, there are some Swedish-made copies of ceramic fragments from Córdoba in Argentina, modelled after Gardener, G.A, Comechingon Pottery from 1931.

We can see differences of collecting and acquisition practices between different countries (figure 28). The aesthetic values put on objects coming from different areas have been an important factor in the form of collecting and subsequently in the presentation of the material. Since the 1940's Peru and Colombia had been considered as the countries with important objects; those countries have in their heritage remnants from "high cultures" so it is important to acquire objects at any price (including looting). While others, like Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, represented lower cultures.

Country	Donation	Purchase	Exchange	Collected	Unknown
Argentina	328	354	91	1283	
Bolivia	272	15	149	2047	7
Brazil	56	3211	0	159	2012
Chile	83	3	3	196	16
Colombia	39	126	0	810	6
Ecuador	136	0	81	23	0
Paraguay	0	0	0	106	0
Peru	920	1994	574	0	347

Figure 28: Forms of acquisitions by countries (South American archaeological collections).

The different forms of acquisition of a collection are very interesting to see in relation to periods of history (figure 29). This relationship is only valid for the archaeological collections from South America; I have not compared this with the other collections to see if the tendency is the same.

The form in which the collections arrived at the museum can be also seen as the way in which collectors would be remembered. Many of the exchanges

Years	Donation	Purchase	Exchange	Collected	Unknown
1915-1932	1852	5688	842	4692	2390
1933-1946	417	927	0	12291	0
1947-1967	459	478	220	70	5
1968-1996	352	194	4	0	87
1997-2001	16				1

Figure 29: Relation between acquisition forms and years (South American archaeological collections).

involving the object en route to the museum were without remuneration, however, and may be characterised as gifts (Alberti 2005:564). Donation and exchange of collections gave a reciprocal relationship between institutions, collectors/donors, curators, etc.

## Material culture and collection

Material culture, originally the area of study for archaeologists, has become a multidisciplinary field. In 1996 a new journal about the topic was launched. There, the editors, Christopher Tilley and Daniel Miller, explained that the study of material culture may be defined as the investigation of the relationship between people and things, independently of time and space (Miller and Tilley 1996:5).

The relationship between people and things is dynamic and changeable; it is a dialectical relationship between objects and subjects, or between subjects. The dichotomy between objects and subjects has a historical explanation, and it is not shared everywhere or every time. The dissociation is probably a product of the Enlightenment, when man became the centre and everything outside of man was an object, nature that could be controlled or domesticated.

Material culture is not only about the physical attributes of the objects but also about the meanings underlying them, and this can have importance if we understand that the relationship between people and things could be also a relationship between subjects.

In the case of material culture, and in this case objects defined as ethnographical, contained and locked inside collections, the narratives around the relationship and the definition of what those objects represent or mean, are multiple.

The meaning of the relationship between objects and people in the original context is changeable. When the objects come into a collection their meaning is completely different and connotes (implies) the relationship between the collector, museum, curator, dealer, and object. In the case of things in ethnographical collections, many times, the relationship also goes from subject-subject to object-object.

In a way, the collections are ad hoc constructions. Before that, they are part of the material culture of a group, or the belongings of individuals. Leaving this category after being collected, those objects become part of a

new constellation; they are part of a whole, a collection. The collections, and the objects in them, as Prown (1993) pointed out, become accidents of the past in the present. They are here and now.

## Objects and categories

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggested that ethnographical artefacts are objects of ethnography (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:17), meaning that they are created as a category by ethnographers. Before they had been gathered from the original use and context, they were other things, signifying or representing something different from what they represent in the new context as objects of ethnography.

Because of this, objects are what the collectors are gathering them as, so the same objects can be ethnographic in one context when in another context they can be art, or history.

The interesting thing is, paraphrasing Vera Zolberg quoted by Brown and Davis-Brown, the creation of one primary category, natural vs human, or human vs nonhuman (Brown and Davis-Brown 1998:20). This first distinction has given birth to natural history museums or ethnographical, historical, art ones. But it is interesting that some cultural objects can be and are still today in natural history museum collections. Ethnographical material mixed with the “nonhuman” objects could be read in a different way if placed in an art museum. An example, not to be discussed here, but to consider, is the Sami material distributed in Swedish museums. Sami material culture is stored in the Ethnographical Museum in Stockholm, in the Museum of World Culture (both part of the central administration of National Museums of World Culture), in the *Nordiska Museet*, in the Historical Museum (both in Stockholm), in many Regional Museums, and in the Ajtte Museum (Sami Museum), and there are also some objects in museums of natural history. In every museum these objects have a different narrative, a different way of being presented, discussed, and ranked.

In the categorisation process the value that the collection or objects received when they entered the museum is also important. Dominguez pointed out that the ethnological value of a collection is calculated in terms of its completeness, the age of its items, or the “beauty” of its pieces (see chapter IV), but it was expressed in market terms – in terms of the uniqueness of its pieces, what it cost to obtain them, and what museums

were willing to pay for them – in other words, in terms of relative scarcity, supply and demand (Dominguez 1986:551–552).

The value that Dominguez developed has to do with a market value, important in the practice of collecting and in the final classification. There are, however, other components that have important meanings. There is a market, a taste, curators and a public that in relation to each other decide the value of the collection, and this decides in some way the categorisation. Also knowledge or lack of it is an important component of valuation-classification.

Using the Sami material again, beauty or uniqueness could be the factor placing it in a historical or Nordic museum, the idea of discovery or “natural or primitive people” could cause it to be placed in a natural history museum, while the idea of otherness, the exclusion from the political national project Sweden, placed Sami material in an ethnographical museum.

An interesting question is how these objects, in terms of changing audiences, changed significance. Coming to museums, and losing their original meaning, they also lose sensority attributions. In the museum environment today, objects are only there to be seen, and in many cases, they have lost their original meaning completely. In a museum environment the sensory experience of material is limited to visual experience only: smell, touch, and taste are completely excluded as essential informative sources.

Furthermore, visitors complete the meaning of the objects with their own ideas and representations; but the curators or collectors are crucial.



*Figure 30: Sieve made of calabash collected by Sven-Erik Isacson in 1972 in the Atrato area, Colombia (local name: Samburica). Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz. ©Museum of World Culture.*

As an example of this, I always remember a story from the last director of the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg, Sven-Erik Isacson. He told that when he did his first fieldwork in Colombia, the former director of the museum, Henry Wassén, asked him to make a “representative collection”<sup>7</sup> from the area and among the objects that he sent was a calabash. As a precaution for the transport he put some elastic bands around the calabash in all directions. Many years after, when he started to work at the museum he was curious to see how the collection was described. About the calabash, the text was exactly the one he had sent but also: “in addition decorated with black elastic bands in a beautiful pattern”<sup>8</sup> (figure 30). As he pointed out many times, he was not only the collector but also the creator of the object.

So, when we see and explore the way in which the objects have been classified it can be seen what they represent to the ethnographers, museum staff, visitors and society. In the end, the object can be seen as the synthesis of a series of relationships –between collectors, manufacturers, curators, scientists, conservators, and visitors– and the museum object is inalienably connected to those in its trajectory (Alberti 2005:571).

During the history of the collections at Gothenburg, they have been classified according to what they represented to the political and intellectual establishment and consequently these collections and the way they have been classified help to store and create modern “imagined communities”(Anderson 1991).

Following the categories it is possible to trail ideological paradigms and the atmosphere of the different epochs. I am convinced that sometimes categories have been chosen without thinking so much about what they mean in reality, but tacitly these categories indicate an ideological standpoint.

The collections and the museum are not frozen in time, there is a dynamic that arranges these categories and the objects change clusters with the passage of time. Some objects arrived within one category but changed during the registration process or in time. Other objects disappeared from the collections because they decayed or were stolen. These objects came to Gothenburg, were studied or stored, exhibited, conserved, but first they were typologised. Comparison was and is an important tool in the process of making typologies.

In the brief history of the museum I introduced how the objects have been organised and structured, and I have tried to infer what this has meant for the visitors and society. The journey from *curiosa* to world culture emulates the world of ideas of the historical periods.

# Cataloguing

“The Ethnographical Museum is not only a museum about societies and cultures in far away countries but also a Swedish cultural historical museum. It mirrors our country’s contacts with those distant regions. It treats the picture of how our own nation has grown up interacting with pictures of the surrounding world during different epochs. A Swedish window towards the world” Sven Erik Isacson (2001).

The objects in Gothenburg have been classified under different theoretical and political paradigms. Until the museum became the Museum of World Culture, the objects were under the ethnographical paradigms for almost 100 years, but this was by no means a stagnant category. Ethnography or later anthropology has been a very changeable discipline, coming today to be a very reflective one.

One of the largest problems appeared when the museum became one of world culture and a new kind of collecting practice came into use. It is important to point out that today, the museum does not have a developed policy for collecting (only recommendations and guidelines) and the new objects coming in are motivated by the exhibitions that the museum prepares. In this case, one question has been raised: if objects in the new context of exhibitions are carriers of knowledge and meaning or if they are only accessories? In general I would like to say that the objects have been chosen specially because of their particular meanings, but for us the problem is to categorise them within a pre-existing system.

Once the Ethnographical Museum became a Museum of World Culture, many things changed – the mission of the museum, the kind of exhibitions, etc.; but the register of collections from the Ethnographical Museum was kept as an internal tool. The new administration has been put millions of Swedish Crowns into the physical aspect of the objects, curators, storage rooms, and also into the construction of databases, and transferring computer data from one system to another. However, until today not enough money or resources have been devoted to discussing categories; categories from the 1950s still are in use. I do not suggest that they are wrong, but it is interesting that in such a paradigm change the discussing what these categories mean, what they represent, and how they embody ideas was not a priority. In some way it has been assumed that registration is “objective”, and the resources have been devoted to technology. It is interesting that technology or an information system is never discussed as a political theoretical instrument without questioning or reflecting over the process of choosing and adopting a system.

When the new acquisitions for the Trafficking<sup>10</sup> exhibition became part of the collections 2007, the first problem came up, concerning a *patera*<sup>11</sup> from Andalucía which was used to transport people from Africa to the European dream; is it an ethnographical object? Probably it could be, but in this case we must update and refresh the museum's concept of ethnography. Today, in this new political paradigm, ethnography is not suitable, it is mainly associated with the national construction of Europe and the colonial, imperial expansion period.

## The beginning of taxonomies

As Jones (2007) pointed out, “the traditional view of categorisation stems from the assumption that things have essences that are revealed by their invisible properties. Things belong to natural categories that exist out there in the “real world”; they behave in particular ways according to the possession of these properties and can be categorised on the basis of these properties” (Jones 2007:123).

The emergence of museums as a phenomenon in the late 18th and the 19th century around the world was associated with the ideals of order and modernity. They were created to organise different aspects of the cultural life of the new citizens in the nation/states. The museums were structured by subject areas, art, natural history, national museums, *Völkerkunde*, etc. This is the primary categorisation. It was assumed that these categories could divide objects belonging to them. The construction of museums was in some way, a form to order the world, at the same time, picking objects from a context and re-placing them in a new one, separate and isolated. It was the basis also for new disciplines to study those objects, the classification work intended to be normative became practice. Cultural hegemony was commonly accepted, and disciplines were constructed intellectually, technologically and socially (Whitehead 2008:136).

In the case of Gothenburg, as I presented in Chapter I, the first museums were the Natural History Museum and an art collection. Later, both collections became part of the *Göteborgs Museum*. The primary classifications in Gothenburg were natural history, art and *Gothenburg*. At the time of the creation of the *Göteborgs Museum* in 1861, every object represented the city and its very prominent, upcoming bourgeois class.

Inside this museum the collections were at first not so clearly organised into departments. From the first moment, however, typology became



important. The material was ordered in a functional way, artefacts for industry, agriculture, art, numismatic, historical, and ethnographical; and it was also organised spatially.

The ethnographical category has been changing from the beginning until today. What could be part of this department varied according to different, at first political, secondly theoretical ideas about what the objects embody and represent.

## The categories:

“Culture is probably the broadest concept of all those used in the historical social sciences. It embraces a very large range of connotations, and thereby it is the cause of perhaps of the most difficulty” (Wallerstein 2004:31).

## Curiosa

This is a classification used before the museum period (see more in Chapter I). Curiosities are anomalies and in one way they can not be classified. Curiosa, during the time of cabinets, were, in many cases, contemplated as unique, they were exhibited without a “systematic” organisation. The curios were also exotic, a rarity, different from everything known (Mordhorst 2009:215–217). And curiosa could be also the passion, desire, drive to see, to experience, to possess things that are rare, unique and new (Dietz and Nutz 2005:47). The category of curiosa in many museums still included the senses; the objects could be touched and experienced. In some cases, in the context of showing curiosa, food could be tasted at the same time (Classen 2007).

The period of cabinets was in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Yaya 2008:2) and curiosities (objects) were placed there. Those objects originated in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century voyages of trade, discovery (Arnold 1991:109) and colonization. The cabinet period was not so strong in the history of the city: in Gothenburg there was no Royal house, or rich noble families collecting as in other parts of Europe (for example, Copenhagen).

The curiosa, in the case of Gothenburg, were objects coming from curious countries; in Gothenburg, the cabinet was at first a *naturalia* one; and its organisation was based on Swedish objects set against the rest of the world. The information we have today about the cabinet period includes only information about the zoological and botanical collections

(Chapter I). In some ways, since many of these specimens were collected with the Linnaean systematic organisation in the background, many of them were not only curios.

The period of *curiosa* probably ended with the foundation of the *Göteborgs Museum* in 1862. Now the objects were more ornaments and glamour. They gave the touch of worldly experience to social activities of the rising bourgeoisie.

## Museum as classification

Today, a museum refers to organised institutions, educational or aesthetic in purpose, that collect, record, preserve, interpret, and display objects on a regular basis.

Yet, as has been pointed out, *all museums are exercises in classification*; and it is from their position as classifying institutions that museums become organisations of knowledge and technologies of power (Ames 1991:13). The institution of the museum stands at the intersection of a wide variety of social, cultural, scientific, and political developments in every corner of the world (Preziosi and Farago 2004:3).

Collecting some objects and not others, describing and naming them, displaying them in one way as opposed to another, and in constructing contexts for them, museums establish their sense of authority. They influence the definition of tradition and heritage, the status of analytical categories such as art, culture or culture area, and the importance of social values and political ideologies (Ames 1991; Kahn 1995).

That the objects and collections are today in a Swedish national museum (they are property of the Swedish State) mean that they are outside a circuit, they are not anymore exchangeable and also it is very difficult to discharge any object once they have been registered and given a number. However, a more interesting aspect is that when objects come inside a museum they lose most of the senses and attributes as material phenomena, and as culture, they become only objects to be seen, just a visual experience (Classen 2007; Classen and Howes 2006). Only a small privileged group has the possibility to touch them, even then wearing gloves. So the category of museum implies an object without all its cultural and material properties.

## The ethnographical categorization

Probably it can be argued that ethnography and especially museums of ethnography have their origins in three factors. The first is the colonial expansion of Europe over the world. The second is the development of ethnography/anthropology as a discipline; and the third and, I believe one of the most crucial factors is the construction of national states (Bennett 1995).

Ethnography/anthropology in the last part of the 19th century and as practised today are almost two different disciplines. In the last part of the 19th century, when anthropology/ethnography became established, the political context was different from today. In the beginning ethnography had more to do with the construction of nations and colonial expansion, but probably today it could be said that it has more to do with transnational movements and the need of inclusion. A subject that some authors see as an instrument of the colonial expansion can today be seen as a tool against the neo-colonial system.

The history of the classification at the ethnographical department at the *Göteborgs Museum*, and the later Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg is also the history of the discipline and the political factors around it.

At the same time, the system of classification of the collections is an internal tool, and it is interesting to study because, many times, despite changing conditions outside, very little happened in the classification system. There have only been changes when political factors have influenced the management of the museum. The strongest changes happened at the beginning of the 20th century, when ethnography was defined and separated from history and from design<sup>12</sup>. This process was materialized at the Museum of Gothenburg, in the organization of the objects in the different categories and the use of the museum building to display objects, everything was in some way a metaphor for social hierarchy.

### **Ethnography, ethnology, anthropology, archaeology**

The concepts of ethnography, anthropology, ethnology and archaeology were and are very closely related, and in some traditions they come under the same discipline (in the American tradition archaeology is also part of anthropology) as discussed by Moberg and Izikowitz (Chapter I). As Vermeulen has shown, the origin of these concepts –ethnography and ethnology– go back to Germany, when in 1771 in Göttingen the term *Ethnographie* appeared in the work of the German historian August Ludwig Schläözer (Vermeulen

1995:39). The establishment of ethnography as a discipline started, according to Han Vermeulen, in the middle of the 18th century when German historians were commissioned to travel throughout the Russian Empire and describe the peoples of Siberia. The German historian Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783) participated in the first Kamchatka Expedition (1733–1743) with the task of “describing the manners and customs of all peoples he would encounter” (Vermeulen). Müller had first thought to write the “history of people” but in the end he published a “description of peoples” (*Völker-Beschreibung* 1740) (Vermeulen 2008:272).

Furthermore, the direct translation of the Latin term ethnography to German used in this period was *Völker-Beschreibung*, and later the term *Völkerkunde* appears. Additionally, also in Göttingen, the use of the expression *Volks-Kunde* emerged in 1782 (Vermeulen 1995:39–40).

The differentiation between “the people of one’s own nation” (*Volk*) and *Völker*, or peoples of other nations, is of course related to the political environment in Germany at that moment. According to Gerholm, *Volkskunde* in Sweden became ethnology, and has to do with the construction of a national identity, with the formation of one country, one nation. *Völkerkunde* became ethnography, and has to do with imperial colonial expansion and the study of new peoples and cultures (Gerholm 1995). In Latin, the difference between ethnology and ethnography has probably more to do with method: ethnology is the study, and ethnography the description, of people. However, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, this differentiation had a political implication (Gerholm 1995).

In his in-depth study of *Volkskunde*-Ethnology – *Völkerkunde*-Ethnography, Han Vermeulen observed two periods, the first one in the last part of the 18th century when both terms were almost synonymous, and were in use indifferently. When the terms emerged, it was in an atmosphere of Enlightenment and rationalism (Vermeulen 1995:55–57) and they were associated with travelling and the need to find ways of describing. In some way this could be seen more as the results of a cosmopolitan practice. Then in the beginning of the 20th century, the meanings of the concepts changed to those which Gerholm explains.

In the beginning, anthropology was understood as physical anthropology (Proctor 1988). In Sweden, Gerholm pointed out that the term anthropology (social and cultural) was introduced in the 1960s. Until that time the discipline was called “General and Comparative Ethnography” and was very closely related to the two ethnographical museums in the country (Stockholm and Gothenburg) (Gerholm 1995:163–164).

However, it is important to remember that these new disciplines in the context of Colonialism had an important political goal. Ethnography was used often to present current populations outside Europe and the “civilized western world” as they were in the past, giving a feeling of timeless pre-modern, pre-historical (Fabian 1983). This temporal distance was used to create a norm of the modern people, and was also used as an ideological instrument to “help” those pre-modern people to rise to modernity.

Something very interesting that Gerholm (1995) also emphasizes is that in the history of the two disciplines in Sweden, ethnology and ethnography, or today cultural/social anthropology<sup>13</sup>, ethnology has always been a central discipline, well developed and discussed in the country, while anthropology has always been a very peripheral one.

During the first period of the museum in Gothenburg the ethnographical department was influenced by different waves: firstly, by the expansion of ethnography as a discipline in Germany, and the establishment of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin in 1886. Secondly, there is an emphasis from those who founded the museum (S.A. Hedlund) that Gothenburg must look to the Kensington museums in London. Third, the establishment of ethnological museums in Sweden, with Skansen as a good example; the resulting institutionalisation of archaeology and fieldwork in Scandinavia (Kristiansen 2011) with Stolpe, Montelius, Thomsen, and the first ethnographical museum in Scandinavia, which as many allege was the first in the world<sup>14</sup>.

For the mercantile class in Gothenburg, the world fairs were also important (Falkemark 2010; Hanner Nordstrand 2003; Sjölin 2011). The museum in Gothenburg was in some way an eclectic project taking in many ideas but without any in-depth discussion of goals. Only two objectives were very clear from the beginning: *bildning* i.e education of the wider public and adding a cultural touch to the city.

## **The ethnographical background**

In chapter 1 I introduced the different phases in which the department of ethnography at the *Göteborgs Museum* went through. The organization forms and the coming re-organizations were not only a product of an ad hoc practice but the response to the theoretical environment of the epoch. That the objects in the ethnographical department were considered, history, folklore and design, representing lower classes or primitive people, were results of this.

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the paradigms that were included in the formation of humanistic sciences were amongst others, Evolutionism, Diffusionism and it could be said a proto Structuralism, this last represented by Adolf Bastian's ideas (Köpping 1983; Köpping 2007).

Adolf Bastian (1826–1905), according to Köpping is the source of Lévi-Strauss' later ideas of Structuralism (Köpping 2007). Bastian's theories were based on the idea of existing elementary ideas (*Elementargedanken*) that could be reconstructed from existing collective representations of "folk ideas" (*Völkergedanken*). These folk ideas could be found in the mental products of specific groups, especially in myths (Köpping 2007:23). He coined the concept of the 'psychic unity of mankind' (Köpping 1983).

For Bastian, it was important to collect material. He was one of the first museum professionals who had travelled around the world and seen the rapid change of the *naturals*. As a result, he saw material culture as documents of high value, those documents needed to be saved (Bolz 2007:185); an attitude that later can be also observed in those who collected for the museum in Gothenburg. The term *natural people* (*naturvolk*) was a definition based on romantic ideas of nature versus culture, which were popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For Bastian, natural was not a question of primitive, he did not believe in evolutionary ideas (more about Bastian and how he was influenced by among others von Humboldt) (Bellers 2007). Bastian was against the idea of social evolution.

Bastian saw the possibility of every single object to contain traces of "elementary ideas". Every object holds the thoughts, structures and principles of the people who created them. He saw collecting as the possibility to create an archive which contains all the manifestations of human creative power (Bolz 2007:186).

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Evolutionism became stronger among social scientists, influencing anthropology and archaeology. The work on biological evolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century had impact in creating ideas of social evolution or social progress. Concepts like variation, natural selection and inheritance were introduced also in the language of social scientists. Scholars like Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin<sup>15</sup> were some of those involved in the establishment of the Evolutionary paradigm as the hegemonic one during the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Scandinavia Christian J. Thomsen presented the Three Ages System with an evolutive model, and Sven Nilsson laid the ground for an evolutive system where population growth was the main cause of evolution from hunter-gatherers to herders and farmers.

The imposition of stages in human development was discussed and presented, among others by Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Lewis H. Morgan. This latter, established in 1877 three eras of Ancient Societies: Savagery, Barbarism and Civilization (Morgan 1978). It was a dispute between unilineal Evolutionism and multiple Evolutionisms. Edward Tylor believed that societies around the world were in different stages of cultural evolution, so anthropology for him could reconstruct the evolution of the own culture through comparison with “primitive cultures” around the world (Kuper 1973; Tylor 1970).

The basis for evolutionism was: that every society may be classified and ranked from primitive to civilized; there are stages and grades from primitive to civilized, in modern terminology, band, tribe, chiefdom and state; and all societies progress through these stages but at different rates (Stocking 1982; Stocking 1996). At the museum level, Evolutionism has, until today, had a strong influence. It is still common to see evolutionary ideals in exhibitions and extremely common in classification of collections. At the ethnographical level, the results were that many people and their objects became part of natural history museums and were classified as “primitives”. The white western world could use primitive people to understand their own evolutionary history.

Diffusionism was also in vogue. The *Kulturkreis* School emerged in early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Austrian anthropology. The theory sustained that culture complexity develops from a centre of origin and is then diffused over large areas. One of the pioneers was Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) who considered that innovations had spread from a nuclear centre through migration (Stocking 1982).

Later Frits Graebner and Wilhelm Schmidt proposed that a limited number of *Kulturkreise* developed at different times and in different places and that all cultures, ancient and modern, resulted from the diffusion of cultural complexes from these cultural centres. Defenders of this school believed that the history of any culture could be reconstructed through the analysis of its culture complexes and the tracing of their origins to one or more of the *Kulturkreise* (Stocking 1982; Stocking 1987).

Arguing against the idea, then current, that natural people were remnants from the prehistoric era who could reveal the true nature of humanity, *Kulturkreis* scholars brought history back into the study of allegedly timeless peoples. They relied on Diffusionist principles, believing that similarities among cultures could be shown to be the result of cultural influence, rather than the result of a universal human nature, and that circles of interaction

among various peoples could and should be delineated by the professional anthropologist. One promoter of these ideas was Franz Boas, who had contacts among others, with Erland Nordenskiöld.

Diffusionist ideas have also influenced the current classification of materials. The idea of centres of high cultures, for example Incas in the Andean regions, and Mayan and Aztec in Meso/America, from where knowledge and invention were spread is still very common. Geography became important, the way in which migrants used the landscape, how and where they moved and took inventions with them. Diffusionism made some cultures important and condemned others to incapacity of creativity.

### **A new reorganisation, ethnography as non-European**

Recapitulating from Chapter I, in Gothenburg, at the ethnographical department, the ethnographical collections were split in 1924. The Swedish material became a separate category from the rest of the world. The separation of the *allmoge* material from the ethnographical collections meant in some way a re-structuring of the world view. The material from the Swedish peasantry had a higher status than the material from outside Sweden, becoming part of the historical collections. There is also an evolutionary model behind this selection that probably has to do with what was put into the ethnographical department. This is the first time that the category of non-European came to be used, but the Sami people remained part of ethnography, ergo non-Europeans. They were in a primitive stage of evolution.

At this time Erland Nordenskiöld was the director of the ethnographical collections, and during his tenure part of the collections left the condition of *curiosa*. As Penny pointed out, this is the moment when the objects move from antiquarian interest to scientific (Penny 2002:163). In the case of Nordenskiöld it is clear that the objects became proof, facts that could be classified, studied, used as educational material, etc. He expressly stated that some objects could be part of exhibitions (Nordenskiöld 1908) but the whole of the collections were part of the Encyclopaedia he tried to construct.

In the 1950s, under the direction of Izikowitz, Henry Wassén was in charge of organising the archive and system of registration. The collections became separated at first into two main categories, America and the rest of the world (the American collections were already the largest), each subdivided into archaeology or ethnography. For objects from America, classification as archaeology came to include everything before Columbus.



An interesting fact is that the collections were not yet as sacrosanct as they were later to become. During this period, it seems to have been common practice to use the collections, not only in exhibitions but in educational



*Figure 31: Karl-Gustav Izikowitz with Ann-Mari Adamson, model from Atelierteatern. She is wearing an Andean poncho. The pictures were published in the newspaper Aftonposten the 31st March 1956. Photo catalogue no. 13891©Museum of World Culture.*

programmes, programme activities, and so on; for example in 1956 a fashion show was organised using the archaeological Andean textiles (figure 31).

During the post-war period, the idea of ethnography was that of studying people at lower stages of development in faraway countries. The idea of ethnography and later cultural anthropology was that the anthropologist/ethnographer should travel from Europe and study the rural inhabitants of other continents. Scholars working on American issues studied people in the rainforest of Chocó, in the islands of Panama, or in the deep Amazonas, but never in Buenos Aires, Mexico City or New York.

”Ethnography deals in particular with the so-called preliterate peoples, peoples who more or less lack written records of their own. Its subject matter is the living cultures and societies, and the material that can be picked up from these is supplemented by what may be found in historical sources and documents, thus written by other people. The documents of ethnography are thus retrieved primarily from field research in the form of records, measurements, collection of objects and the like. Apart from that research is carried on at institutions such as museums and libraries, where such material is available.

The tasks are twofold. On the one hand one tries, on the basis of the different documents, to reconstruct the history of these history-less people and to put cult and social phenomena in a geographical and historical context. On the other hand one tries, with sociological methods, to find general systems, which can provide perspective and information about the societal and cultural phenomena. This new direction is now dominant. In this case Ethnography becomes a kind of “laboratory” for the social sciences. Experiments cannot be done, however you may well compare, classify and try to get at the main principles. In this way ethnography has a greater and greater importance for the debate in the social sciences”<sup>16</sup> (Izikowitz 1954/04/05).

In these paragraphs from a memorandum that Izikowitz wrote in 1954 it can be understood what ethnography was about at the museum at that time. The statement about the “people without history” is very clear when at the same time the study of ethnography/anthropology was becoming a “real science”. Laboratory experiments could be made in the form of comparison and classification of those historyless people.

In the last period of the ethnographical museum, ethnography/ social anthropology was defined as ”a way to see”. The professor of the Social Anthropology Department of the University of Gothenburg Kaj Århem,

wrote a statement about the discipline, using a shaman approach to understand the world. He believes that anthropology must be the way to understand ourselves. “We must allow ourselves to distance and observe ourselves (Århem) and become self-reflective”(Århem). I believe that by “we” he meant all of us, not ”us and them”; and in some way he is proposing to use alternative ways of seeing and understanding the world.

## **Archaeology, on the other hand...**

Archaeology in Europe has been separated from the discussion about anthropology. Archaeology has been considered a part of history, a method for historians of the period before history. History was defined as the area of study from the moment that people “invented” or introduced writing, whereas the period before writing was pre-history and called for a different approach. Archaeology was mainly pre-historical studies.

Later, in the USA, it became part of anthropology, but not in Europe (Izikowitz, et al. 1959). The division between people with and without writing created a gap and otherness not only between cultures but also with time (Lowenthal 1985; Wolf 1982). The others became placed in time (in the past, pre-history) or in space (the colonies).

Politically, archaeology at first has been one of the most powerful instruments to create the idea of Nation, justifying the nation/state (Kristiansen 2011). Archaeology, in some contexts, has also been given the sense of distance, having dead people as the object of study gave the sensation that it has nothing to do with current issues. As Stagnaro pointed out, to “discuss about dead Indians and their lost footprints could be exciting and not at all politically committed” (Stagnaro 1993:54).

This factor is very interesting regarding the case of the museum in Gothenburg. The archaeological collections from Sweden went to the historical department and those from America stayed at the ethnographical one.

In the 1950s an attempt was made to connect archaeology and ethnography as noted in the previous chapter. The directors of the two museums, Karl-Gustav Izikowitz and Carl-Axel Moberg, together worked out a plan to move the two museums into a single building<sup>17</sup>. Izikowitz and Moberg were at the same time professors of the related disciplines. This new idea collapsed after 15 years of planning, when the museums became part of the municipality of Gothenburg.

However, archaeology at the museum has always have a secondary position to anthropology, probably the causes are rooted in the position of archaeology in the academic world, where many archaeologists, including Lewis Binford witnessed the marginalised role that archaeology and archaeologists had in the face of anthropology (Arwill-Nordbladh 2008). At the museum in Gothenburg, historically archaeology as a discipline has had a reduced position, but has been used assiduously as a category to classify objects and exclude people from history, on the assumption that the objects under this category have nothing to do with living people today, ergo they are disconnected from current memories.

## World culture

When the idea of a Museum of World Culture was first broached, the concept of world culture also began to be discussed in Sweden. Nobody made a clear definition of world culture, but many people had different ideas of what the museum should be about. In the media, the role of a museum of world culture went from an immigrant museum to a multicultural arena, going by way of a more developed ethnographical museum. Christer Wigerfelt, in an interview with the first director of the Museum of World Culture, asked if world culture was some kind of Einstein's view of the universe where everything looks the same no matter where you are standing. Or is it a lot of local cultures lighting up the cultural sky?<sup>18</sup>.

However, as presented before, the Minister of Culture defined world culture as world cultures and in the end it became more or less a play on words (making no difference between the singular or plural form).

Many museums in Europe, in the past decade, have changed their name from Ethnographic to World Cultures, as for example, the former Ethnographical Department of the British Museum or the *Weltkulturen Museum* in Frankfurt, but this change of name as it can be observed from outside is merely skin-deep, just another name for the ethnographic museum form. Many of these variations can be observed around the world: museums of world cultures, museum of New World cultures (America), and so on. The divisions inside the museums are still the same, by geography and groups, static in time and space. These new World Cultures Departments still mean the non-European cultures in European museums or the non-western "component" in museums.

In Gothenburg, the museum's first director made a deeper change. According to her, world culture is not about the non-European component

or about others living outside the civilised world. World Culture is not about ethnicity, instead, probably, for Jette Sandahl, world culture is about all of us, in the trans-forms of culture, in the mixing of people and customs, in diversity, not only ethnic but complete multiplicity; it is about globalisation and the consequences of it. In the area of exhibitions a lot happened. The first step was to disregard the geographical areas when preparing exhibitions. World culture has been defined at the museum as: “The museum interprets the concept of world culture in a dynamic and open-ended manner. World culture is not only about communication, reciprocity, and interdependence, but the specificity, concretion and uniqueness of each and every individual”<sup>19</sup>.

World culture has been discussed a lot in the last years. Some authors propose that world culture is a product of system theory and the way to understand a globalised world, emphasising the common production of culture independent of place (and time?). Frank J. Lechner and John Boli (2005) go through the concept of world culture, tracing it to the period of European expansion and the creation of a new order of world systems (Wallerstein 1974) until today, with a world full of global experiences and the creation (re-creation) of many Creole cultures everywhere (Lechner and Boli 2005). As an example Lechner and Boli go through the creation and establishment of the ICC (International Criminal Court) as a typical institution representing world culture, transcending the sovereignty of national states and depending instead on the principle of individual responsibility. In some way this is the creation (for mass murderers...) of a world citizen, under the laws of a world legal system (Lechner and Boli 2005:238). But as Lechner and Boli pointed out, the concept of world culture is replete with tensions and contradictions.

Following Mike Featherstone, it is important to leave the binary logic of exclusive terms, like homogeneity/heterogeneity, integration/disintegration, unity/diversity, and he proposes that we need to inquire into the grounds for, the different processes, involving the formation of cultural images and traditions (as Anderson remarked, imagined traditions) as well as the inter-group fights and interdependencies which led to these conceptual oppositions becoming frames of reference for comprehending culture within the state-society which become projected onto the globe (Featherstone 1990:2). I believe that following this reasoning the concept could be used as a tool to re-define objects. Nevertheless, there are other voices, and many authors suggest that there is no world culture, but only world cultures, diversity, multiplicity in time and space. The phenomenon that we experience as world culture, is more like transnational movements,

typical of a period of re-formation of the state boundaries. In case there is a world culture, it is a hybrid and artificial construction by media (coca cola culture). Also it has been proposed that if there is a world culture it should be called Imperialist culture or Neo-colonial culture (Smith 1990).

The discussion is heated, and the last word on world culture or cultures has yet to be uttered.

At the Museum of World Culture and its collections, these tensions have been represented in many ways. Objects coming under a modern/colonial paradigm have been re-inserted in a global, transnational situation. When the objects arrived in Gothenburg, the population of the city was more or less homogenous, in the sense of all-Swedish (or rather Gothenburger). Today around 250 different nationalities are living in the city; and many objects from the museum can be linked to these communities (Muñoz 2008); but the idea of world culture was not to create an immigrant museum. The people living in Gothenburg are in many cases Swedish citizens (ergo European citizens) with civic rights, they have Swedish (European) passports, and yet they (we) are still counted in the category of immigrant; so by civic rights the people have access to the Swedish/European category but by culture (or race?) they are still outsiders. In a report made in 2004 by a commission set up by the Swedish government to study the problem of integration it was clearly concluded that the question of integration is a long way from being solved (Kamali 2006).

However, what can this mean for the collections? Today the ethnographical classification is still being used in the management of the collections, but changing the name of the storage rooms to “archive” did imply (at least on paper), that the objects are memories. An archive is a repository where materials of historic interest or social significance are stored and ordered. Because the Museum of World Culture is a national institution, it is a national archive; in that case it is the storage and ordering place of the collective memory of the nation or people(s) (Brown and Davis-Brown 1998:17).

The creation of a museum of world culture without European collections was the first problem of categorisation. Another problem has been that in every attempt to define world culture the collections have never been considered. The collections come from the former Ethnographical Museum, but since 1999 the practice of collecting has been changing, not according to a policy of collecting (which could be called collecting world culture) but in order to serve the exhibitions. So there are no clear plans about what collecting means today. Also, since the Museum of World Culture came

under the same administration as three museums in Stockholm (the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities and the Museum of Ethnography), the central administration has tried to unify the collection management system. However, this process implied many new problems. First, the four museums have different missions, and despite their all being part of the national administration of museums of World Culture, the museums in Stockholm are museums, not of World Culture, but about Far Eastern antiquities (a focus on history, archaeology and art); Mediterranean antiquities (especially archaeology) and Ethnography (in the traditional way of this kind of museum). Secondly, the discussion of a common collection management system has all the time referred solely to technological problems, databases, software and so on. The curators have never been involved as a collective group in the classification of collections. The same kind of object can be classified in one way in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and differently in the Museum of Ethnography.

The so-called digitisation process has cost important sums of money, but almost nothing has been spent on addressing the problem of classification. This has been a national project. The Swedish state has put a lot of emphasis on that the collections must be digitised; in the national discourse it seems to be a strong connection between digitization and accessibility. The most interesting thing is that as Leiser Silva pointed out 1997 the actions and events that led to the adoption and subsequent institutionalization of an information system are politically motivated and facilitated by power relations because information systems are chiefly instruments used by organisational actors to achieve their goals (Silva 1997:3).

At the Museum of World Culture a discussion took place during 2003. The direction of the museum tried to implement a new system for collection management. A report written by Darren Peacock for the museum (Peacock 2003), highlighted the significance of dialogue outside the museum walls and the idea was to integrate collection management, knowledge, outreach and exhibitions, in the same system. The central administration did not accept that the museum would create its own system, instead a new consultant was hired. In the new report the implementation of Carlotta<sup>20</sup> (which was the system used by the Ethnographical museum in Stockholm) was suggested as the common collection management system for the four museums. Carlotta was chosen to stress an integration of systems between the four museums instead of emphasising a social integration between the collections and the public.

Since new technologies came into use in the former Ethnographical Museum of Gothenburg, as well in the current Museum of World Culture, something new happened in the way of categorizing the collections. The content of the collections was questioned because in some cases the information could be offensive for some people. Many collections had little information or no information at all. So, lacking any profound discussion about categories, the material of the object started to be used ad hoc as a category for classification. Ceramic, Stone, Textile, Bones, etc became the new method of categorization. This system could be more “correct” in the way that nobody can be insulted by those groupings; however, to transform the objects to material, means cutting substance and essence from them, transforming them to something empty, more to paraphernalia or accessories instead of reconnecting them to a political ideological context.

Issues that the Swedish national government pointed out in the creation of a Museum of World Culture, included that the museum should use “new methods to present the cultural heritage of multicultural societies”; “Develop public works, especially with focus on children, young people and immigrants’ organisations” and pursue “Co-operation with the research community – a multidisciplinary perspective”. From the collection’s side no information has been given by the museum to the multicultural society of Gothenburg. Interestingly, it is seldom that people living in Gothenburg and coming from other countries know about the museum collections. Up till now, the only really successful venture was the work involving the collections from the Horn of Africa. The aim was to incorporate information in an exhibition. People from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia living in Gothenburg were involved in working with the collections that came to Gothenburg during 1901–1909 from the area called at that time Abyssinia (Rinçon 2005a; Rinçon 2005b:113). As Laurella Rinçon pointed out, institutions celebrate the official history and its heroes, so one of the goals with this project was to incorporate the non-writing history of the collections (Rinçon 2005b:115). The work with the collections became part of the opening exhibition *Horizons, Voices from a Global Africa*.

The museum has had many critics during recent years because it is not exhibiting enough of its own collections (KPMG 2008). And this is true; in 2009 only 78 objects were on display in the four exhibitions going on in the building. One rhetorical argument is that the collections are not representative of world culture and the topics which it is the museum’s mission to discuss (and this is a fact); much more could be done from the collections side, however putting resources in this has not been prioritized.



The tensions around the concept of world culture are around at least two axes. The first one is the definition of the term by politicians and by academia. Politicians defined world culture as everything that was not Swedish, an immigrant culture, some kind of ethnography with a strong political correctness component. On the other hand at the academic level world culture is about where different cultural identities intersect each other (Jonsson 1997/09/23). The other level is practice, where on one hand we work in a way without asking why we do things in the way we do, reproducing daily a colonial ideology in our form of working, registering, handling information, storing objects, etc. On the other side is a movement, not only academically but also of communities working for de-colonizing practices in cultural institutions (Atalay 2006; Tuhiwai Smith 1999). Today the collections are in this sphere of clashing ideas.

## **The first reaction: ethnography vs. art**

Why should, for example, Asia's foremost artists be displayed in an ethnological context? Is this how we would have Rembrandt treated in other parts of the world?<sup>21</sup> (Arnborg 1998/04/22).

Many discussions, conflicts and clashes between ideologies have come up during the long years since the beginning. Nobody could give an evident definition of World Culture. There was a long discussion about using World Culture or World Cultures, but the solution, the singular form, was an arbitrary decision by the central administration.

The first topic was that World Culture/s was all the material originating outside Europe, the only European material was the classic material from the Mediterranean and Sami. This lack of material from the contemporary world was very palpable when the first exhibitions started. But one discussion that I would like to present briefly is the dispute between Ethnography and Art that erupted at the beginning of the project. I want to go into this discussion because it is something that has marked the history of collections very strongly with the passage of time. The discussion came to the surface when the World Culture project was presented for the first time in 1996, but it has characterised the formation of museums, or rather, the way in which collections, sometimes the same kind of objects, could be part of different kinds of museums. And I believe that to define an object as art or ethnographic is not at all neutral, but a strongly political standpoint.

The discussion started when the government first proposed to move the three museums in Stockholm to Gothenburg, to bring together the non-European collections. This in itself involves a couple of interesting issues. Sami collections in the Ethnographical museums are a part of European Culture, but at the same time non-European objects in Art, Natural History and Design Museums and remained in those categories.

This new museum became part of a new authority that included museums in Sweden working with material from outside Sweden and Europe. This is remarkable, because the archaeological material from the Mediterranean (Europe) is stored at the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities; the Sami materials (Sweden, Finland and Norway) are in the collections of the current Museum of World Culture and the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm. As Sverker Sörlin observes, the northern nations were colonials with their own Empires, inside their own boundaries (Sörlin 2000:52–53); the Sami collections are the representation of this internal colonialism, especially in the way that they have been classified.

It could be that how the collections had ended up in different museums is a compromise, with established museums and strong ideologies. Today, museums, disciplines and ideologies are in need of review.

## At the museum today

It seems that the collections have not been discussed enough in relation to the new paradigm. In the exhibitions they have been used, on occasion, only as accessories. On other occasions, the objects have been seen to be more directly involved in the topic of the exhibition. For instance in Fred Wilson's (figure 32) exhibition *Dwelling with Demons*, the objects were presented and discussed as the inclusion/exclusion of the voice of the people that had been collected through them; or in the Horizons (figure 33) exhibition that re-connected to the local community from the Horn of Africa and discussed from a modern/colonial paradigm to the present day. In the case of the Sister of Dreams exhibition, the objects (not from the museum's own collection) were used to discuss and deconstruct the idea of people as static beings described by ethnographers. The idea was to release the people from behind the ethnographical creation they had become.

Nevertheless, in a later article one of the curators, Håkan Thörn, reflected on his work with the Horizons exhibition, and the dilemma of how to exhibit objects in a post-colonial paradigm that were collected under a colonial paradigm. According to Thörn, it is almost impossible to present the objects



*Figure 32: Fred Wilson's exhibition Dwelling with Demons, photographed by Åke Fredriksson©Museum of World Culture.*

inherited from the ethnographical museum without reproducing a colonial paradigm. Instead the objects are always going to be characterised by the institution's past; he goes on to the dilemma that in exhibiting those objects, although questions of colonialism and neo-colonialism are raised, still the museum helps to reproduce the colonial legacy; he assumes that the objects contain an exotic power of fascination (Thörn 2005). However inside the same project, one of the others curators, Laurella Rinçon, could show that although it was not easy the participants (with roots in Africa's Horn) in the project could re-appropriate the collections (Rinçon 2005b). In some way, Thörn's arguments are part of a paradox that ethnographical museums confront today, to be the product of colonialism in a postcolonial era (Butler 2000:74); and Rinçon's work shows the possibility of a de-colonial practice.



Figure 33: Horizons. Voices from a Global Africa (section Urban Voices), photographed by Åke Fredriksson©Museum of World Culture.

Today, the objects stored in Gothenburg have proceeded from curios through glamour, exotic people, lower classes, to become dangerous: today they are the legacy that nobody wants.

I do not believe that I have an answer to this dilemma; I am not sure if exhibits collected under a specific paradigm still carry content in themselves. I think the objects, as Stocking pointed out in 1985, have many dimensions: they come from the past (or from faraway), but it is the audience that invests them with content (Stocking 1985).

One reflection is that the objects now stored in Gothenburg will never go unnoticed; they will always mean something to somebody. They mean one thing to the politicians, another to academia, and a third to the public. They are never neutral.

It could be said that the discussion today, the *mea culpa*, is more a symptom of a state of mind in Sweden than a measure of the significance of the objects themselves. As a symptom I am thinking about the disconnection between the academic and the museum world in Gothenburg. Since the end of the 1960s, when the museum was separated from the university, intellectual discussions in the two communities were never on the same level. They had different traditions and were not connected again until 1996, with the creation of Museion; but to this day the study of objects and collections remains the domain of museums.

During the past few years, at the museum, a new discourse has suggested that world culture is about us (all of us, humankind?), not the others. At the same time, there has been much discussion about who the other is, trying to identify those others, not only ethnically, but what about us? Are we homogenous? Who are we? Is the museum a national institution only about us? Or is it about all humankind? Are we coming back to a more updated and fashionable idea of ethnography?

Museums have constructed ethnographical categories, classified people by objects, represented them, and spoken for them. To reverse the process, the practices must be changed, the budgets must be reviewed and other people and voices must be heard. We have to bear in mind that beyond the objects that we use as a representation of people, there is an individual person.

## **Decolonizing practices, a possibility?**

Since the 1990's a group of scholars have been studying how practices have been constructed and what they mean. As a result of a colonial presence in almost the whole world, practices have become imbued in this paradigm; the disciplines constructed around colonialism and the formation of nation states need to review their objectives and practices. Museums are included in this process. In a post-colonial condition many groups started to question the *status quo* of disciplines, education and practices (Tuhiwai Smith 1999) working to establish a different paradigm. Categories have an important meaning in this process of decolonizing practices, at first recognizing and discussing (Gnecco, et al. 2006) them before new ones can be chosen or not.

Another important factor is that the Museum of World Culture has taken the position to be a critical institution, a place for reflection. As part of this process it is important to be alert to social processes of our time, to see the

link between culture and power, to understand what is excluded from official narratives, and the “unfinished careers of modernity and postmodernity” (Saloni 2005:704).

Previously I presented the discussion about the objects stored today in ethnographical frameworks and the possibilities or limitations they have. Implementing a different kind of practice can contribute to a better understanding of the objects and put them in other theoretical political paradigms making them useful in a new political context.

To exemplify this, I want to present one object that was in focus during 2009 in a project at the Museum of World Culture. The project was funded by *Kulturrådet* (Swedish Arts Council), to discuss knowledge and categories in a World Culture context. The idea of the project started when the Bolivian government claimed back a collection called Niño Korin (see more in Chapter IV). Using Elisabeth Arwill-Nordbladh’s definition, knowledge in this context can be defined as the interaction between individuals and institutions against a background of economic, cultural and social beliefs and what we might call the zeitgeist at large (Arwill-Nordbladh 2008). This definition allows us to review what knowledge has meant inside the museum: the conditions, the spirit of the time is changing and new actors and individuals are part of the construction of knowledge.

The idea of this project was to implement in Sweden, at the Museum of World Culture, initiatives that had been taken since the middle of the 1980s in other parts of the world, especially in USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In these countries the First Nations have had the possibility to be part of the political and theoretical discussion and the post-colonial discourse began to be formulated (Said 1985). The first publications and exhibitions came in the USA and Canada (Ames 1986; Ames 1991; Ames 1992; Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Cruikshank 1992; Marcus and Clifford 1985), where the idea began to be discussed of incorporating other paradigms.

During the past 15 years the discussion has been intense and many interesting contributions have been made to studies of material culture (Appadurai 1986; Buchli 2002; Chilton 1999; Edwards, et al. 2006; Gosden and Knowles 2001; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Henare 2005; Hodder 1989; Lubar and Kingery 1993; McNiven and Russell 2005; McNiven, et al. 1998; Mihesuah 2000; Russell and McNiven 1998; Stocking 1985).

The Museum of World Culture started with new de-colonial practices as soon as it was created. The first director pointed out the importance of

shared authority and to deconstruct the false dichotomy between objective and subjective knowledge (Sandahl 2002).

Faced with a possible repatriation, the Museum of World Culture decided to document the collection and discuss the content and meaning of the objects. The aim of the project was to discuss how knowledge is constructed and how relations of power are imbued in the produced knowledge (Muñoz 2009). In the frame of the project three scholars were invited, Beatriz Loza, historian from the Universidad Mayor de la Paz, Bolivia, Walter Quispe, a medicine doctor and Kallawayá<sup>22</sup> and Walter Mignolo, professor at Duke university.

The collection of Niño Korin was acquired in 1970 and has been classified since then as: objects from a medicine man's tomb from the Tiwanaku period (c. 1000AD). The collection has been dated with Carbon 14 and described by Henry Wassen (Wassén 1972; Wassén and Bondeson 1973). Wassén was very interested in the use of psychotropic plants in South America and studied different plants in anthropological situations for many years (Wassén 1965).

The fact that the collection was from the Tiwanaku period put it in the context of archaeology, suggesting that it had no connection to the current population in Bolivia (see more about this discussion in Chapter III). Also the emphasis on psychotropic plants gave the aura of drugs, exotic, and primitive; or there was probably the influence of a 1970's atmosphere of interest in drugs. However, according to Wassén, the Niño Korin collection described and classified in the way it was, had nothing to do with the present. It was a typical example of an object of ethnography impossible to use in a world culture context.

The work done by Walter Quispe, Beatriz Loza and Walter Mignolo showed the opposite. This collection has not only to do with the current world but one object in particular plays an important role today.

Working on the Niño Korin collection for two weeks together with Walter Quispe and Beatriz Loza was a challenging project. New information emerged about the objects in the collection (see Wiphala, figure 34), but the most important modification was that of seeing the collection through different eyes. Since its publication by Henry Wassén in the 1970s the collection has been associated with the use of drugs. The objects had been interpreted in many cases as tools for using drugs, and the plants as the drugs to be used.

Walter Quispe knew the objects, because almost the same ones are in his personal medicine chest, and many of the objects in the collection

are medicine tools. Regarding the plants, he explained that they were a herbarium used for teaching the coming generations of medicine men. He still uses and produces herbariums, not only for the instruction of budding Kallawayas but also for his lectures at the university. Walter Quispe recognized many of the objects and could link them, not only to personal experiences but to a collective memory of the Kallawayaya culture.

As regards the objects, something very interesting happened. The most spectacular objects like the snuff tablets and the *keros* (ritual vessel) were not the most significant material for Walter Quispe; instead he became fascinated with a small textile (figure 34). This object has never attracted attention during its history in Sweden; it has been described only as a small bag. Walter Quispe identified this textile as a Wiphala, a flag, the flag of Tawantinsuyu. This flag today is one of the strongest anti-globalization



Figure 34: Object no. 1970.19.0022, Wiphala, photographed by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.



symbols in Latin America. Many detractors of the indigenous movement say that this flag is an invention or modern re-invention. There is debate as to whether there was an Inca or Tawantinsuyu flag. There are 16th and 17th century chronicles and references that support the idea of a banner, or flag, attributable to the Inca. The object in the Niño Korin collection is exactly like a Wiphala, the form, organization of colours, etc. and it is firmly dated to the Tiwanaku period.

Working with the collection with this grouping of people gave us the opportunity and freedom to explore what knowledge is, who has the power to forward this knowledge and to whom. Knowledge is power, and in the case of museums it is selective: one group alone has the power to produce knowledge and to share it. The inclusion of other people, other perspectives, aids the process of democratizing knowledge and access to it.

The work also showed, that the museum's scholars in the 1970's were not allowed to accept the possibility to incorporate other knowledge (at that time considered subjective or not knowledge at all). Ian Hodder (2003) pointed out how important an archaeologist's education is to interpret what are they seeing, he gave as an example, how archaeologists educated in northern Europe were unable to see "mud brick walling in the Near East" (Hodder 2003:58). In the same way, many times we have been unable to understand other knowledge because we have been trained in one school where there is one universal knowledge and other knowledge is alternative, indigenous, etc. Quoting Walter Mignolo, "probably we must unlearn to learn again" (personal communication).

Another very important aspect was the problem of continuity/discontinuity. In the system of classification of collections, it has been decided since the 1950's, for Latin America, that every object before the arrival of Columbus should be classified as archaeological. This is not a neutral decision but a very political one. All peoples before Columbus ended up in pre-history, in the people without history (Wolf 1982; Wolf, et al. 1994). A category made for European conditions was imposed on the world at large (a typical problem of paradigmatic universalism). In the case of Latin America, this category not only put the American people in the position of having no history but their history was also appropriated by the colonizers, and disconnected from the local narration. Coming back to Niño Korin, Walter Quispe not only recognized the objects but also remembered the stories behind them. Knowledge and memory are very powerful concepts in the museum narrative (Huyssen 1994; Huyssen 2003).

Finally, it could be that one way to decolonize the knowledge of the collections is to accept that there are a number of stereotypes included in the information about the objects, keeping these stereotypes is one way to maintain older structures (Arwill-Nordbladh 1991:64). However as Elisabeth Arwill-Nordbladh pointed out if we want “to bring a new understanding it will be necessary to discuss the central concepts in relation to the time and social context in which they were established, otherwise the risk is that old ideological concepts will be perpetuated” (Arwill-Nordbladh 1991).

## Conclusion

Museum and mausolea have more than a semantic overlap, both entomb dead visions (Meskell 2002:561).

The history of a collection is a reflection of different historical times and mirror of relationships, not only between people, but also between scholars and politicians. The acquisition and classification of collections has been shaped by these relationships. Collecting has changed during the last 100 years, from assaults on villages to take the objects to the construction of the museum (the national idea of the museum), through the meticulous collecting influenced by positivism to demonstrate a theory, to today's non-collecting (of archaeological material), with the museum engaged in fighting illicit trafficking in antiques. Classification, the more ideological phase, has also changed, going from curios to ethnographic; not developing further as a tool. Now we are waiting to see what happens on the classification level when world culture takes over. Materials have been chosen as a neutral way of classifying objects, for instance as bones, textiles, ceramics; this classification gives the feeling of neutrality, when in fact we have disconnected material from culture, reproducing the most positivist way of seeing objects. The shame that the objects have represented in the latest period is dangerous, it can have many consequences and so has been diffused by using this neutral classification

The objects are here, the history is the one we have, the future is open to changes, and many people are expectantly waiting to see what happens. The collections are here today, and they give, at least, a magnificent opportunity to study them outside the current state borders and explore other borders.

The collections today do not represent the non-Swedish/European component in Swedish society, they do not symbolise the other in a faraway

country, but a heterogeneous Sweden, diverse, complex, and those objects are here, among us, like the people, our neighbours who represent the world.

## Notes

1 “it is clear that there is no classification of the Universe not being arbitrary and full of conjectures. The reason for this is very simple: we do not know what thing the universe is”.

2 ”Bildning” from Bildung and ”utbildning”=education. Bildning in Swedish is like the German Bildung. The concept is not only more comprehensive than “education”; it is, above all, more complex and holistic in meaning. According to the European Association for Education of Adults: “Bildung” is a process of spiritual formation; it also refers to the inner shape human beings can attain when developing their aptitudes in touch with and through the agency of the spiritual contents found in their environment. “Bildung” not only implies the dimension of teaching but also that of learning (“sich bilden”), not only knowledge and skills, but also values, ethos, personality, authenticity and humanity <http://www.eaea.org/index.php?k=15098>. More about bildning see Allwood and Gunnarsson (2003).

3 There are many objects that came earlier from America to Sweden, many of them belong to the Swedish Church. I have considered only those that today are part of museum collections.

4 Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) is a political party in Sweden, which designates itself as a democratic and nationalist party inspired by the national conservatism and the social democratic welfare state idea. On immigration policy, which belongs to one of the Sweden Democrats key policy areas, they are very critical to the multicultural society which they believe threatens the national heritage and the unique Swedish culture. Therefore the party advocates the assimilation of immigrants in Sweden (instead of integration) and a severely limited immigration.

Sweden Democrats place cultural values high on the political agenda. Their ideological dimension, through the cultural value questions are superior to the material in importance, the consignment described as legalistic culture (kulturalistiskt). The party wants to protect the Swedish character and the traditions that the party sees as Swedish. For the Sweden Democrats the policy of socio-cultural dimension is central.

In parliamentary elections in 2010 the Sweden Democrats received 5.7 percent of the votes and thus had 20 seats in parliament. This is the first time the party entered parliament. Even in the municipal elections in 2010 the party noted great success and received 612 seats in 245 municipalities, compared with 280 seats in 144 municipalities after the 2006 election. <http://sverigedemokraterna.se/>

5 I prefer to use number and not object, because sometimes one number can be many objects or only a fragment of an object

6 More about Grebst in the next chapter.

7 He underlined “representative”.

8 Information in the original catalogue for the object no: 1972.27.0010a.

9 Etnografiska museet är inte bara ett museum om samhällen och kulturer i fjärran länder utan även ett svenskt kulturhistoriskt museum. Det speglar vårt lands kontakter med dessa fjärran trakter. Det behandlar bilden av hur vår egen nation vuxit fram i samspel med bilder av omvärlden under olika epoker. Ett svenskt fönster mot världen.

10 Trafficking, an exhibiton at the Museum of World Culture which opened 2006 to 2008. The idea of the exhibition was to raise public awareness of human trafficking. The exhibition was part of a Cooperation against Trafficking, an international project founded by the European Community.

11 Patera, simple boat of shallow-draught. The term is used often to refer to those with illegal immigrants coming from north-Africa to Europe through the Mediterranean. More about this in Chapter III.

12 *Konstindustri*.

13 Anthropology in Gothenburg, Stockholm and Lund is called Social Anthropology, in Uppsala Cultural Anthropology.

14 Because of the Royal Cabinet in Copenhagen that was before the National museum was built.

15 In Germany Adolf Bastian had a controversy with Darwin against the Evolutionary model (Köpping 1983).

16 Etnografins sysslar i synnerhet med de s.k preliterata folken, folk som mer eller mindre saknar egna skrivna dokument. Dess föremål är de levande kulturerna och samhällena, och det material kan hämta från dessa kompletteras med det som kan finnas i historiska källor och dokument, sålunda skrivna av andra folk. Etnografins dokument hämtas sålunda i första hand från fältforskningar i form av uppteckningar, mätningar, insamling av föremål och liknande. Vid sidan av detta bedrivs forskningen vid institutioner som museer och bibliotek, där sådant material finns tillgängligt.

Uppgifterna är tvåfaldiga. Dels försöker man med utgångspunkt från de olika dokumenten rekonstruera dessa historielösa folks historia och sätta kult och samhällsfenomen i geografiskt och historiskt sammanhang. Dels försöker man med sociologiska metoder få fram allmänna system, som kan ge perspektiv och upplysning om de samhälleliga och kulturella företeelserna. Denna senare riktning är numera härskande. I detta fall blir etnografen liksom ett samhällsvetenskapernas

”laboratorium”. Experimentera går icke, men väl att jämföra, klassifiera och försöka komma åt ledande principer. På så sätt har etnografin allt större och större betydelse för diskussionen inom de samhällsvetenskapliga disciplinerna.

17 See chapter I about the dream of a new house.

18 Är världskultur något av en einsteinsk blick över universum, där allt ser likadant ut varifrån man än blickar? Eller är det en mängd lokala kulturer som lyser upp kulturhimlen? (Wigerfelt 2005/10/02).

19 <http://www.worldculture.se>

20 Carlotta is an information system used by some Swedish museums.

21 Varför skulle till exempel Asiens främsta konstnärer ställas ut i ett etnologisk sammanhang? Är det så vi vill att Rembrandt skall behandlas i andra världsdelar? (Arnborg 1998/04/22).

22 The Kallawayas are a group of medicine men which has been (documented) since the Inca period. They are travelling physicians whose knowledge is handed down from father to son.

# Appendix to chapter II

## List of archaeological collections from South America

collection	total	ceramic	bone	lithic	composit	mollusc	veg-part	metal	textile	other	collector	Land
0000.00	16	12						1		3	Grebst	Peru
0000.00	11	3		6				1		1	Pereira	Colombia
1915.02	159	158		1							Nordenskiöld	Brasil
1915.02	1987	1760	30	174		5	1	9	6	2	Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1915.02	26	25	1								Nordenskiöld	Argentina
1916.02	19	13		6							Nordenskiöld/von Rosen	Peru
1916.02	73	10		45		2				16	Nordenskiöld/von Rosen	Bolivia
1916.02	60	37		23							Nordenskiöld	Argentina
1916.03	56	33		15	1	2					Bolinder	Colombia
1916.08	1							1			Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1916.09	295		8	6	30	30	24	94	73	30	Berlin Völkerkunde	Peru
1916.12	60	26	2	26		5				1	Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1916.16	1	1									Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1917.01	118	113		4						1	Backman	Argentina
1917.05	3			3							Nyström	Chile
1917.07	51		9	15		13	1			13	Nordenskiöld O	Tierra del Fuego
1917.10	6			6							Dusén	Brasil
1918.07	1	1									Mollen	Peru
1919.01	115	13					1		91	10	Skottsberg	Chile
1919.04	1									1	Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1919.06	1			1							Backman	Brasil
1919.06	560	500		46						14	Backman	Argentina
1920.01	37	14	11	1	1		2		3	5	Uhle	Chile
1920.02	32	32									Schmidt	Peru
1920.05	578	529		48						1	Backman	Argentina
1920.07	23	8		10				1		4	Karsten	Ecuador
1920.09	185	171							13	1	Gaffron	Peru
1921.01	15				1	1		12		1	Gaffron	Peru
1921.02	60			2			58				Gaffron	Peru
1921.03	1							1			Säve	Bolivia
1921.06	293				2				291		Berlin Völkerkunde	Peru
1921.07	69	68								1	Gaffron	Peru
1921.08	106	98	2	1		1				4	Medin	Paraguay
1921.10	17	12	3			1			1		Nordenskiöld O	Peru
1921.10	42	3		29				4		6	Amberga	Chile
1921.10	1							1			Nordenskiöld, O	Bolivia
1921.10	1			1							Nordenskiöld Otto	Argentina
1921.17	46									46	nobody (copior)	Bolivia
1922.01	78	78									Gaffron	Peru
1922.02	43								43		Gaffron	Peru
1922.03	13					11		2			Weizinger	Peru
1922.07	21					1	1	1	17	1	Leipzig Völkerkunde	Peru
1922.08	58	20		37						1	Nimuendaju	Brasil
1922.09	11	11									Leipzig Völkerkunde	Argentina
1922.16	22			22							Nordenskiöld O	Chile
1922.18	6									6	Völkerkunde	Colombia
1923.05	259	120		1			20	33	56	29	Berlin Völkerkunde	Peru

1923.07	118	106		10			1	1			Nimuendaju	Brasil
1923.10	696	629	2	51					14		Nimuendaju	Brasil
1923.11	3			3							Lundberg	Chile
1923.12	1								1		Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1923.14	5	4			1						Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1923.16	4	4									Weizinger	Peru
1924.02	22	9		9					4		Bolinder	Colombia
1924.03	1								1		Berlin Völkerkunde	Peru
1924.04	1							1			Andersson	Peru
1924.07	243	164	12	37			4	13	13		Nimuendaju	Brasil
1924.08	45						1		2	42	Grebst	Peru
1924.10	1								1		Hennmarck	Peru
1924.16	1620	1498	3	95					24		Nimuendaju	Brasil
1924.17	131	122		5		4					Uhle	Ecuador
1924.19	4			1				3			Posnansky	Peru
1924.19	89	18	3	32				26	10		Posnansky	Bolivia
1925.04	7							6	1		Sandström	Bolivia
1925.06	1			1							Melin	Brasil
1925.08	105	61	24	10	1	1			8		Kulberg	Argentina
1925.11	9	2						1	4	2	Henriques	Peru
1925.12	15			15							ver	Brasil
1925.13	1	1									Malmberg	Peru
1925.14	682	531	24	77	1		4	12	33		Nimuendaju	Brasil
1925.18	1			1							Métraux	Argentina
1925.21	16								16		Posnansky	Chile
1925.23	4								4		Speyer	Peru
1925.24	2	2									Malmberg	Peru
1925.26	2								2		Henriques	Peru
1926.01	15	14		1							Tenz	Bolivia
1926.02	1			1							Garcia de Freitas	Brasil
1926.04	92	90		2							Nimuendaju	Brasil
1926.07	6			3				3			Melin	Peru
1926.11	3	3									ver	Brasil
1926.13	44						1	1	34	8	Métraux	Peru
1926.13	1	1									Métraux	Chile
1926.13	42	17		23				1	1		Métraux	Bolivia
1926.13	59	18		39					2		Métraux	Argentina
1926.17	1			1							Melin	Peru
1926.17	1	1									Melin	Brasil
1926.18	8	8									Melin	Ecuador
1926.19	2	2									Métraux	Chile
1926.19	17	9						8			Métraux	Bolivia
1926.19	1	1									Métraux	Argentina
1926.26	1198	1101	1	85					11		Nimuendaju	Brasil
1927.02	10			10							Métraux	Chile
1927.02	1	1									Métraux	Bolivia
1927.02	7			7							Métraux	Argentina
1927.09	1			1							Melin	Peru

1927.10	32		11	16		4				1	Weizinger	Peru
1927.14	1								1		Métraux	Peru
1927.14	1								1		Métraux	Bolivia
1927.19	66		3		6				2	55	unknown	Peru
1927.21	752	644	2	97					1	8	Linné	Colombia
1927.27	2			2							Nordenskiöld	Colombia
1927.29	480	432		48							Nimuendaju	Brasil
1928.01	16	5	3	6			2				Nimuendaju	Brasil
1928.03	31	16	1	9			1	3		1	Posnansky	Bolivia
1928.04	17	16							1		Sandström	Peru
1928.04	4	4									Sandström	Colombia
1928.04	8	6					2				Sandström	Bolivia
1928.04	4	3	1								Sandström	Argentina
1928.09	1								1		Métraux	Argentina
1928.11	13	13									Tenz	Bolivia
1929.02	4				2		1			1	Gaffron	Peru
1929.03	1									1	Sandström	Peru
1929.05	72	68								4	Saville	Ecuador
1929.11	2	2									Vogel	Peru
1929.13	2	1					1				Gaffron	Peru
1929.16	2	2									Mordini	Brasil
1929.21	2								2		Mordini	Brasil
1929.25	1	1									Ström	Peru
1929.26	211	18		2	8	5	4	15	124	35	Hannover Museum	Peru
1929.26	6								6		Gretzer	Bolivia
1929.32	161	8	15	6	25	5	16	15	6	65	Gaffron	Peru
1930.01	1	1									unknown	Peru
1930.02	477	8		17	68	2	41	21	36	284	Paris auction	Peru
1930.05	20			7					12	1	Buck	Bolivia
1930.11	77	1	3				5		13	55	Petersen	Peru
1930.13	295	1				3	12	3	34	242	Paris auction	Berthon collection
1930.16	12	2		1					3	6	Boman	Argentina
1930.17	2								2		Schreiter	Argentina
1930.18	2								2		Bylander	Colombia
1930.19	1	1									Tessmann	Peru
1930.20	33	33									Estevão de Oliveira	Brasil
1930.24	13	13									Braun	Bolivia
1930.27	11	5	1							5	Glasgow Art Galleries and Museums	Peru
1930.28	61	12	7	2						40	Gaffron	Peru
1930.30	4	4									Métraux	Bolivia
1930.30	136	36		93		7					Métraux	Argentina
1930.31	28	27		1							Serrano	Argentina
1930.34	8	2		6							Teisseire	Uruguay
1930.37	5						5				Lidman	Ecuador
1930.39	343	121	4	120	8		6	81	3		Schreiter	Argentina
1930.41	1				1						Gaffron	Peru
1931.03	2									2	Hänfler	Peru
1931.08	1			1							J:son Mark	Brasil



1931.12	1									1	Roemer-Museum	Ecuador
1931.18	124	86		26			1	9		2	Fischer	Colombia
1931.25	3			1	1					1	Métraux	Chile
1931.25	12			4			2		5	1	Métraux	Bolivia
1931.25	1	1									Métraux	Argentina
1931.28	24									24	unknown	Argentina
1931.36	23	21		2							Bühl	Bolivia
1931.37	2								1	1	Karell	Peru
1931.39	68	2		1	1	2			56	6	Métraux	Chile
1931.41	15	13		2							Nimuendaju	Brasil
1931.43	12			12							Studart Filho	Brasil
1931.44	58	15		4		2		1	34	2	Tucumán	Bolivia
1932.01	2								1	1	Métraux	Bolivia
1932.02	361	59	8	8	5		5	7	83	186	anonymous	Karell
1932.07	16	1					1			14	Hallstén	Peru
1932.08	8			5							Karell	Peru
1932.14	1							1			Karell	Peru
1932.15	9				2					7	Karell	Peru
1932.16	456	41	24	21	66	2	49	23	115	115	anonymous	Peru
1932.18	2	2									Fischer	Colombia
1932.19	2								2		Schmidt y Pizarro	Peru
1933.01	27	21	3		1					2	Rydén	Argentina
1933.07	4	2							2		Karlsson	Colombia
1933.15	757	655	13	79		9			1		Rydén	Argentina
1934.19	28	28									Braun	Bolivia
1934.23	319	150		169							Dade	Argentina
1935.14	1			1							Wassén	Colombia
1935.16	1	1									Wassén	Colombia
1935.20	115	105		3	2		1			4	Wassén	Colombia
1935.22	2									2	bought in Buenos Aires	Peru
1935.32	215	46			3		1	1	150	14	anonymous	Peru
1936.03	2	1	1								Ryden	Argentina
1936.11	2	1		1							Karlsson	Colombia
1936.20	8	3		5							Haard	Colombia
1936.34	3			3							Lindahl	Colombia
1937.04	1		1								Rydén	Bolivia
1937.22	1			1							Lindahl	Colombia
1937.30	22							18		4	Bergsøe	Ecuador
1937.32	3	2								1	Haard	Colombia
1938.12	1								1		Bylander	Colombia
1938.45	160		11	2	3		29	66	19	30	Nordenskiöld	Peru
1938.45	1	1									Nordenskiöld	Brasil
1938.45	4	2		2							Nordenskiöld	Bolivia
1939.43	1	1									Nilsson	Peru
1939.51	6		1		2		1		1	1	Geographisches Institut der Universität, Kiel	Chile
1939.58	2	2									Karlsson	Colombia
1939.66	2	2									Fraenckel	Peru
1939.72	1			1							Baldus	Brasil

Chapter II: The power of labelling

1941.07	3	3										Dahl	Colombia
1942.04	409	37	19	23	31	9	153	4	7	126		Rudershausen	Chile
1942.05	60	45	2	9		4						Rydén	Bolivia
1943.12	2368	1636	692	19				13	8			Rydén	Bolivia
1943.14	18	2	4			11				1		Rydén	Chile
1943.15	2			2								Burn	Chile
1943.16	4	4										Rydén	Chile
1943.17	20	3			1	2	2		4	8		Rydén	Chile
1943.18	21	7	2	3	1		5		1	2		Rydén	Chile
1943.19	6	3		3								Rydén	Chile
1943.20	14	14										Rydén	Chile
1943.21	2030	998	875	110		3		27		17		Rydén	Bolivia
1943.22	2024	1769	210	19			2	4		20		Rydén	Bolivia
1944.01	2045	1657	349	10		1		15		13		Rydén	Bolivia
1944.02	39	30		1						8		Rydén	Bolivia
1944.03	16	16										Rydén	Bolivia
1944.04	70	70										Rydén	Bolivia
1944.05	97	93						1		3		Lunardi	Bolivia
1944.06	29	20	9									Rydén	Bolivia
1944.07	15	14	1									Rydén	Bolivia
1944.08	531	235	257	23			1	3		12		Rydén	Bolivia
1944.09	239	235		1				2		1		Rydén	Bolivia
1944.10	729	16	701	3				9				Rydén	Bolivia
1944.11	606	597	2	5				2				Rydén	Bolivia
1944.12	503	62	434	6				1				Rydén	Bolivia
1944.13	1	1										Baldus	Brasil
1944.14	5	4		1								Rydén	Peru
1944.15	2				2							Portugal	Bolivia
1945.15	21								21			Karell	Peru
1945.16	1						1					Karell	Peru
1946.07	1	1										Hansson	Venezuela
1946.14	1	1										Tamm	Colombia
1946.18	11	8		3								Johansson	Colombia
1946.20	1	1										Johansson	Ecuador
1946.20	4	4										Johansson	Colombia
1946.20	1		1									Johansson	Bolivia
1947.02	1	1										Johansson	Bolivia
1947.20	1	1										Wassén	Colombia
1947.25	1									1		Wassén	Colombia
1947.26	2								2			Wassén	Peru
1947.27	3							3				Karell	Peru
1947.31	1			1								Wassén	Colombia
1947.32	3							3				Snöbohm	Peru
1947.33	2	2										Wassén	Colombia
1947.39	1	1										Wassén	Colombia
1947.40	4	4										Wassén	Colombia
1947.43	6			4						2		Wassén	Colombia
1947.44	68		1	55						12		Wassén	Colombia

1948.01	22	21		1							van Gorkkum	Argentina
1948.12	114	43		16					55		Wiberg	Ecuador
1949.04	1	1									Sandström	Bolivia
1949.09	16	16									van Gorkkum	Argentina
1949.21	1			1							Swahn	Colombia
1950.06	9	9									Wichström	Bolivia
1950.11	13	8		5							Holmström	Argentina
1950.18	1			1							Hofman	Argentina
1951.08	73			73							Hofman	Argentina
1951.10	36	24		11			1				Gonzalez	Argentina
1951.12	22	19					3				Cruxent and Rouse	Venezuela
1952.17	3								3		Rydén	Uruguay
1953.05	104			104							Gonzalez	Argentina
1953.24	1							1			Condarco	Bolivia
1953.34	1								1		Karell	Peru
1954.02	70	64	1				3		2		Bolinder	Colombia
1954.12	1							1			Prins Wilhelm	Peru
1955.06	1			1							van Gorkkum	Argentina
1955.07	7			7							Inst.Colombiano Ant	Colombia
1955.10	3							3			Ball	Colombia
1955.11	4							4			Rumph	Colombia
1955.16	12							12			Moseley-Williams	Colombia
1955.24	2			2							von Sneider	Colombia
1955.25	1			1							Buenaventura	Colombia
1955.26	4			4							Inst.Colombiano Ant	Colombia
1955.27	1								1		Inst.Colombiano Ant	Colombia
1955.30	2	2									Wassén	Colombia
1955.31	2	1		1							Wassén	Colombia
1955.38	1							1			Wassén	Colombia
1955.42	2							2			Moseley-Williams	Colombia
1955.44	1	1									Karell	Peru
1955.48	17	17									Hanke	Brasil
1956.10	3								3		Inst.Colombiano Ant	Colombia
1956.20	2	2									Westring	Peru
1956.22	2	2									Sawyer	Peru
1956.23	3			3							Sawyer	Bolivia
1956.25	1								1		Evans	Colombia
1957.02	4			1			1		2		Westholm	Peru
1957.05	1							1			Graña	Peru
1957.13	1							1			Westring	Peru
1957.14	3	3									Westring	Peru
1957.15	2							2			Westring	Peru
1957.22	1	1									Glücksman	Peru
1957.29	2								2		Lindström	Peru
1957.36	1	1									Westring	Peru
1958.05	7								7		Brodin	Peru
1958.06	1	1									Blomqvist	Peru
1958.08	1	1									Westring	Peru

1958.12	1	1								Westring	Peru	
1958.60	3						3			Brodin	Bolivia	
1958.63	177	138		7			32			Estrada	Ecuador	
1958.85	1	1								Dickson	Peru	
1959.11	9							9		Brodin	Peru	
1959.13	16	7	1		1		5	1	1	Brodin	Peru	
1959.22	1	1								Westring	Peru	
1960.15	1								1	Curtis	Colombia	
1960.35	1	1								Karell	Peru	
1961.05	8	1			2		1		4	Albercht	Peru	
1961.06	22							21	1	Fischer	Colombia	
1961.12	9	3					2		4	Engellau	Peru	
1961.31	6	6								Slojdföreningens Skoia	Peru	
1962.02	1						1			Beer	Peru	
1962.19	2			1			1			Adde	Bolivia	
1962.26	1	1								Christensen	Venezuela	
1964.02	1	1								found without number	Peru	
1964.13	1	1								found without number	Peru	
1965.01	2	2								Irwe	Peru	
1965.08	88	80				4		4		Holm	Ecuador	
1966.06	12	12								Jarnald	Bolivia	
1966.41	1							1		Emmerich	Peru	
1967.09	184	106	1	44		24			9	Persson	Colombia	
1967.10	3	2		1						Persson	Colombia	
1967.11	10	10								Persson	Colombia	
1967.39	1	1								Skandiakoncernen	Peru	
1968.08	1	1								Gardler	Colombia	
1968.31	1								1	Persson	Colombia	
1969.02	47	47								Lewin	Ecuador	
1969.17	1	1								Karlsson	Peru	
1969.18	1	1								Lewin	Ecuador	
1969.19	1			1						Lewin	Peru	
1969.19	3	3								Lewin	Ecuador	
1969.22	1			1						Lewin	Ecuador	
1969.39	8	8								Naranjo	Ecuador	
1969.41	3	3								Nilsson	Colombia	
1969.42	2			2						Lewin	Ecuador	
1970.05	10	10								Zeller	Ecuador	
1970.06	180	121	1	6			1	17	34	Fromell	Ecuador	
1970.08	4		1				3			B: Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Santiago	Chile	
1970.09	6								6	Simons	Chile	
1970.10	2								2	Lindberg	Chile	
1970.11	16	3			3		5		5	Simons	Chile	
1970.18	1	1								Stråle	Peru	
1970.19	77		3		9		38	1	13	13	Oblitas Fernandez	Bolivia
1970.32	1						1				Khepri Galerie	Peru
1970.33	1	1									Poblete	Bolivia
1971.06	1	1									Johansson A	Peru

*From curiosa to world culture*

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1971.08	7			7							Ivemark	Argentina
1972.03	3	2						1			anonymous	Peru
1972.14	1			1							Berkeley Galleries	Ecuador
1972.16	5								5		found without number	Peru
1972.21	13	3					1		8	1	Henschen	Peru
1972.21	10	10									Henchen	Ecuador
1972.24	1			1							Augustsson	Peru
1972.26	5			5							Lindberg	Ecuador
1972.26	2	1		1							Lindberg	Colombia
1972.26	22	9		1			6	1	3	2	Lindberg	Chile
1973.12	11								11		Lindberg	Chile
1973.16	1	1									found without number	Peru
1973.22	1	1									Lewin	Ecuador
1973.23	35	25		10							bought USA	Bolivia
1973.25	1	1									Wassén K	Peru
1973.25	1	1									Wassén	Colombia
1973.25	1	1									Wassén	Bolivia
1973.32	1	1									Persson	Colombia
1975.12	4	3						1			Lewin	Peru
1975.12	10	6								4	Lewin	Ecuador
1975.17	12	12									Lewin	Ecuador
1975.18	25						1		8	16	found without number	Peru
1975.18	1								1		unknown	Chile
1976.09	6	5								1	found without number	Peru
1977.02	20	20									Wassén	Ecuador
1977.15	1	1									Svensson	Peru
1978.06	3	3									Gran	Peru
1978.15	23	21								2	Carlo	Colombia
1985.12	2	2									Lewin	Peru
1985.15	1								1		Biese	Peru
1986.04	1							1			Llagostera	Chile
1986.09	17								17		Lewin	Peru
1990.04	23								1	22	Runnerström	Peru
1990.05	2						2				unknown	Peru
1998.11	3									3	Sandberg	Peru
1998.12	12	12									Sjódin	Peru
1998.13	1									1	Bergfelt	Peru
2001.02	1									1	unknown	Peru
	31132	19605	3815	2457	293	183	540	735	1579	1925		

# Chapter III: Indians / Immigrants: Collecting excluded people

“Los mejicanos descienden de los aztecas, los peruanos de los Incas y los argentinos de los barcos”<sup>1</sup> Carlos Fuentes (1990).

## Introduction

In this chapter I will explore the link between the construction/consolidation of new nation/states in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the formation of ethnographical collections. I am going to use as examples the relationship between the *Göteborgs Museum* and the formation of Latin American ethnographical collections.

I would also like to approach more recent times and the creation of a new Museum of World Culture in a transnational environment as part of an EU project with multicultural political agendas.

In this chapter, there are two crucial moments in the history of the museum –the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, and today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In both moments a patronizing touch is notable, not only in the museological practice, but also in the political discourse (cultural politics), as the result of the categorization as ethnography and multiculturalism.

The discourse of today is very similar to the period of formation of national states in the South American former colonies in relationship to Europe, and the role that different disciplines (ethnography, archaeology, history) had in the construction of national identities, in one way the de-ethnification (the indigenous population losing their ethnical identity, becoming Indians) and re-ethnification of groups (the white population

becoming the nation) help in the shaping of the nation/state. One crucial theoretical practical problem behind all this discussion is about citizenship and who can and how they can be citizens. Citizenship is also the key to be included in the political arena today.

The idea of citizenship was created to give security to the inhabitants of a territory, the geographical area that later should be important in defining the nation/state. Security was a prime reason. However to create this ideal, it was necessary to create the feeling that all the citizens were part of the same “family” or using a well-known metaphor, the body of the nation. These metaphors describe the idea of the modern nation/state, family-like bodies, with common ancestry and a common future (Joppke 2005:preface). However, there are some requirements to be part of the “family of the nation”; therefore standards, ideals of good practices and homogenization (family members are alike) were created. In other words, society became normalized. Quoting Weber “normalization, then, is the primary principle of formation in disciplinary society. It is what produces citizens as good (read normalized) citizens and states as good (read normalized) states (Weber 2008:135)”.

The discourses of the two periods (in the history of the museum) seem on the surface very different, however at the same time the categorization of the other is implicit in both times. Nowadays, the “problem” of immigration and how to integrate people has become the goal of many cultural and political discourses, in one way trying to de-ethnicize the group of immigrants and at the same time re-ethnizing the national groups (Joppke 2005:x). Because citizenship, as already has been suggested, is partly defined by the metaphor of *family* member, no wonder that, to absorb the impact of migration there is an intrinsic proclivity in the modern nation/state to select newcomers, using the proximity to the common particular ancestry and the model and definition of destiny that all the family members adhere to. According to Joppke, this model results in a categorization of ethnic migration (Joppke 2005:preface).

Archaeology and ethnography as disciplines have played an exclusive role in the classification of people and using their (material) culture against or in favour them, creating categories that help in the creation of citizens, creating canons and norms. In a European context archaeology has many times been the main instrument of creation of the idea of one people (folk), one territory, one nation, not only as an extreme case like in Nazi Germany but also as an important tool for nationalistic ideas (Pettersson 2007) to create the feeling of inclusion for the chosen citizens; while at the same

time finding a niche for those who became excluded. Rodell (2005:109) has pointed out that the significance of material objects is central in the case of nation building, and there museums played a major role.

The formation of collections then and today is a powerful process of selection and in an ethnographical context many times this means a process of museumization of people, putting them outside time and space, many times making living fossils of living people. Often those excluded folk are the outsiders from the hegemonic discourses. Collecting ethnography was not only the process of exclusion in Latin America, but also those objects played an important role coming to Gothenburg representing different things during time.

I am going to use some collections made in the formation days of the museum and from today to try to explain the objectives that I have outlined.

In the presentation, there is a certain unbalance between the contextualization made for Latin America and for Sweden. In the case of Latin America I am going to present different countries within that long continent giving a very superficial idea of them. In the case of Sweden, I am going to concentrate on Gothenburg where the collections have been placed since they arrived in Sweden. The idea is not to compare an entire continent with a city, but to contextualise and try to elucidate why a small museum in a nation's second city holds relatively important collections from Latin America, becoming, over time, a museum renowned (at least in Latin America) in the academic world for its collections (see figure 20 in Chapter II).

While for the earlier collections I am going to concentrate on the relationship between Gothenburg and Latin America, for the present time I look rather at the problem inside Europe today.

In the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the relationship between the collections and the "original owners", if we say that the collections came from nations/states, was very geographical, the collections came to be in Gothenburg while the "original owners" were in other continents.

Today the relationship has changed, it is geographical in cases of repatriation issues, when a national state requires the return of the collections; however many of the "owners" live today in Gothenburg as immigrants or new Swedish citizens, and according to the original plan of creation of the museum, the idea was to use the objects as tools for integration of these new "neighbours" living in Sweden.



In many ways, the geopolitical situation today is different than from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, the understanding of the collections is dependant upon the present in which they are used and the discourse many times is not so different in both époques, and those people who are represented by the collections, somehow, are still those excluded from hegemonic government projects.

## Disciplines, museums and the making of nations

The last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a period of constitution and strengthening of many nations in national states. This formation process was the victory of a class or nation over others constituting a homogenic hegemonistic project. The development from nation to states (nation/state/territory) went hand in hand with programs of modernism; in some cases constructing new countries, in other cases reinforcing identities or producing new identities. The population inside these new states became citizens; they became members of a new “national state” which meant a belonging to the body of the nation, having common history, ancestors and a future together.

In Europe, many states emerged during this period. Germany and Italy (where a “common” language was a unifying factor) are good examples, and other countries defined themselves as industrially dominant powers, controlling resources around the world (like the United Kingdom). In connection to a modernist project a new geopolitical map was designed; strong states, imperial expansion, control of resources outside Europe, etc. The formation of nations was mutually reinforced with colonial expansion (Mignolo 2002:61). Meaning not only the expansion of European powers but also the reinforcement of internal colonialism, following exactly the same phases: occupation and appropriation of resources, winning cheap manpower, industrialism, and imposing of new ideology. This new order required a new kind of population or citizens. They needed to be mobile, literate, culturally standardized, and for this purpose the nation state required institutions that would help to mould this new man; therefore, industrialism/colonialism/modern nation-state relied on scientific inquiry, pedagogy and new methods of publicity (Boyer and Lomnitz 2005:111). Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1991) partially explores the role that journalists, novelists, curators, grammarians and historians played in the conformation of this representation of a national community.

In Latin America, this was a period of independence from European power, however it did not mean an economic or cultural independence from Europe, instead in many cases the situation moved from the initial political dependence on Spain to the cultural-economical dependence on England, France or the United States. Clear examples of this situation can be observed in Central America, for instance the formation of Nicaragua, Panama and the political dispute between Spain, England and USA for controlling the area.

The formation of new nation/states in Latin America was an interesting mix of projects and ideologies. However, put simply, it can be said that the results were that the white classes represented by *criollos*<sup>3</sup>, or white immigrants were the hegemonic class represented in the formation of the states, where the other groups, called indigenous or ethnically mixed people (like gauchos, mulattos) or poor people and the black population were excluded from the national projects.

Since independence, the new Latin American republics and their ruling classes tried with great effort not only to build a national state and a viable economy, but also a sense of national identity (Anderson 1991; Larrain 1994:60) with a common past and common ancestors.

This identity needed first a national culture, and this culture had to be constructed, sometimes trying to keep the “best” of the traditions of the existing peoples culture. This was a very ideological process, selective and exclusive, guided from above. The exclusion process had many tools, but one of the most important was the language –European languages– and the writing system, one of the most powerful instruments making people without writing into people without history (Wolf 1982). A national language was necessary for national unity (Handler 2003:360) and all the new states strived for this forcing all the population to accept it. It is a period of raising monuments and statues, the new symbols of national belonging (Rodell 2005). A norm was created giving a feeling of truth, determining what belongs and what does not to this new culture and nation. As Mignolo (2002:59) pointed out, the expansion of western capitalism implied the expansion of western epistemology, oppressing other possibilities and the western epistemology was the winner in the construction of national projects.

In other words the process of making nations in Latin America and probably in many other parts of the world was an excluding process. It can be said that the process of independence that many countries went through was in many ways, for the indigenous population, only a changing of colonial forms (Rivera Cusicanqui 1987).

The idea of creating a common past took different solutions in different parts of the continent. As a rule, in many places monuments, artefacts and landscapes were expropriated from the original population using different methods and discourses. For example, in Mexico and Peru where the traces from Incas and Aztecs were very strong, magnificent in the eyes of Europeans, and proved a splendid past, those were expropriated from the current population putting them in the categories of “indios” and disconnecting them from their past (Mendez-Gastelumendi 1996; Peralta 1997). This strategy is well known all over the continent. History and archaeology helped in this process saying that, the Incas had nothing to do with the current Quechua population and the Mayas disappeared in 900 AC after the Maya collapse, with all the psychological and social implications of such a word as “collapse”. In the case of Guatemala, for example, the pre-colonial past became part of the national discourse, but lacked a connection with the current Maya population. In the discourse of Guatemala and many new countries, it became clear that the past was incorporated (in the form of material culture), but the indigenous population disconnected and the new countries were (are) the results of the colonial period (Earle 2006:28). The same thing happened in Mexico with the Maya population, which had no possibility to be involved in the creation of a Mexican identity, however all the monuments were incorporated in a national discourse of a great past. During the last years the indigenous population had been incorporated in the national cultural discourse as fragments of the past that can be used, using Ames (Ames 1992:23) terminology, as “tourist attractions” creating a bizarre form to be incorporated (Watkins 2005:436).

In Europe, and especially in Sweden, which is going to be one of my examples, reinforcing identities had a lot of to do with changing the economical system of the country. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sweden was an agricultural country with almost 80% of the population living in the country-side as peasants. The bourgeoisie elite started the industrialization of the country. This process needed workers, in particular for the development of factories. In the process of reinforcing Sweden as a nation/state, people were also excluded from the project, such as Sami people, nomadic people, like Romani or Tattare<sup>4</sup> or those which were not wanted. During this period and above all a little later, the organised working class can be also a problem, to be excluded, if they are politically active or included if they can be “educated”. The concept of *Folkhem* became a strong national icon for those included in the Swedish project (Jonhson 2006).

In Gothenburg, the period of the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of reinforcement of the bourgeoisie, the economically and politically powerful class in this area of Sweden. They constituted a dominant group compared to the aristocracy from Stockholm (Christensen 2009). This could perhaps be interpreted as the old fashioned Stockholm aristocracy representing the old system (in a medieval way) against the modern and progressive provincial bourgeoisie representing the future (Åberg 1991).

At the same time, the cities were in the process of becoming important industrial centers. The people that until that moment were mainly agriculturalist, started to become workers in the industries, causing social tensions in the transitional period (Bjur 1984).

In this political context emerged museums, institutions that were created to form and educate the new citizens, establish the new nation/state icons and symbols and to perpetuate the new political economical status in a power position (Bennett 1995).

In Latin America museums fulfilled the function of disconnecting the past from the original population, putting them in an asymmetrical and a-temporal place, and in many cases making them invisible (Andermann 1997; Andermann 2001; Andermann and Rowe 2005; Earle 2006; Fernández Bravo 2005; González Stephan and Andermann 2006). In Gothenburg, the museum had a strong role of educating the new citizens, the workers, so the new industrial society could be built.

## A short background of Latin America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is the Independence period for many areas of the American continent. Many components influenced the process, and a number of internal and external causes were involved. Not the least of which was the convulsive period in Europe with revolutions, nation formation and wars.

In the last part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the French Revolution and the independence of the United States of America changed the way of thinking of many intellectuals in the Spanish Colonies in America. Also an Enlightened ideological power, and the expansion of the Encyclopaedia project contributed to a redefinition and educated the *criollo* class. Some authors have defined that the process of independence in the Spanish colonies started with the conjunction of the ideas of French Enlightenment

from XVIII century, the British Liberalism and Comte's Liberalism (Larrain 1994:11) (figure 35). Larrain alleges that the independence wars in the Spanish American Colonies were made under the theoretical flag of the Enlightenment (Larrain 1994:11).



Figure 35: “*Ordem e Progresso*” (order and progress) inscribed on the Brazilian flag. The inscription is inspired by Auguste Comte's motto of positivism: “*L'amour pour principe et l'ordre pour base; le progrès pour but*” (Love as a principle and order as the basis; progress as the goal).

The aspiration of the *criollos* class was to acquire more political and economical power, and the freedom to trade with other countries than Spain (in particular with England which lobbied to trade with the Spanish colonies). The economy was controlled by Spain, which controlled the trade routes, the levels of production and taxes. It was a regimen of monopolies, tributes and impediments that the colonies needed to adjust to. Also the *criollos*, because they were born in America (from Spanish parents) did not have the same rights as Spaniards from the peninsula. The fact of being born in America disqualified them from being truly Spanish; it was viewed as a degeneration or corruption (Langebaek 2003). In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century theories about the relationship between humans and climate (landscape) were in vogue. A populist idea was the idea that the Americas in some way corrupted people living there, heat and abundance making *criollos* lazy and corrupted (Langebaek 2003:38–39). Even the Spanish language spoken in America was degenerated, for instance Langebaek cites Antonio de Ulloa's comments that the practice of incorporating native words in Spanish was detestable (Langebaek 2003:46).

Many of the *criollos* had been educated in Spain or France, but they could not be part of the Spanish system. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century among the 170 viceroys only 4 were *criollos* (Anderson 1991; Jones 1993; Lynch 1994). Many times the *criollos* were better educated and from nobler lineage families than those sent by the Spanish crown. During their studies or on sojourn to Spain, many of these young *criollos* (almost all young men), met together. In the beginning of 1800 around 400 young *criollos* were in Spain. The two more well known *libertadores*, liberators, José de San Martín

and Simon Bolivar, were typical examples of this situation, they came from rich families, and were sent to Europe to study (Lynch 2006; Lynch 2009).

San Martin's father and mother were born in Palencia, Spain, but he himself was born in the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, so he was a criollo. The family moved back to Spain when he was 6 years old. He joined the military in Spain and fought against the Napoleonic invasion, and was awarded the grade of colonel after he defeated Napoleon's forces in Bailén (1808) (Garcia Hamilton 2000). He moved back to Rio de la Plata in 1812 and participated in Independence wars, fighting against Spain in Argentina, Chile and Peru.

Simon Bolivar was born in Caracas in the present Venezuela, at that time Gran Colombia. He belonged to an aristocratic family which came to America in the early colonial times (1589). He studied and travelled through Europe and met personally, among others, Napoleon and Alexander von Humboldt. He fought against the Spanish army in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Panama (Lynch 2006).

The Spanish crown lost status and power during this period. In 1808 Napoleon invaded Spain, and King Fernando VII resigned his rights over the Spanish Crown and the Indias (the American Colonies) to Napoleon, who gave those rights to his brother José Bonaparte. This generated the Spanish war against American insurrections. Many viceroyalties were taken by the criollos against the Napoleonic occupation and for Spain, but in one way they were taking the power for themselves. In this process those new "juntas" ignored the appointments made by Spain (under Napoleon's regime) and they, the criollos, justified this position in name of the legitimate Spanish Crown. Every area in the colonies established different alliances and in this environment the period of wars for the independence started (Lynch 1994).

One very important factor for the formation of the countries in Latin America today is also the economical expansion, first of the United Kingdom, and later also USA, and the conquest of the market. It is very interesting that in many cases, from Mexico to Argentina, from the period of Independence, in internal wars (Paraguay war, Nicaragua formation, Bolivia war, Colombia crisis, Panama's creation, etc) USA and the British Empire were the important actors behind the scenes. For the indigenous population, in many cases the creation of new countries and the process of modernization meant new forms of colonialism (Mignolo 2005; Rivera Cusicanqui 1987).

## The ideological environment in Latin America

In the Americas the European Enlightenment was an important ideological factor in the formation of the national states, in the same way that it was in Europe (Gay, et al. 2000). Enlightenment principles changed the way in which Europeans saw other cultures, the ideas of evolution and progress produced a rule against which every folk was measured. Accompanying those ideas were the colonial expansion of Europe, modernism and the collapse of the old political economical system exchangeable by the new nation-states, the modern state.

Bruce Trigger listed some of the most important doctrines of Enlightenment (Trigger 1989; Trigger 1998):

1. Psychological homogeneity, all cultures had the same capacity, same feelings, every individual can develop (grow up) to the European level. Cultural differences can be explained by climate, geography, historical hazard and accidents.
2. Cultural progress is the dominating topic. Progress is based on human wish to improve its situation, above all through controlling nature.
3. Progress is not only technological but also social, political, moral and religious. Cultural changes were perceived as a series of stadiums which happened everywhere. Europeans were in the front edge of this series.
4. Progress completed mankind's nature through eliminating ignorance, exaggeration and superstition. The new evolutionary view of cultural changes did not deny Christianity or the Cartesian conception about a firm and unchangeable human nature.
5. Progress is a consequence of using reason to improve the own situation.

This ideological political environment influenced the elite of many new coming countries or potential countries in the Americas. The fact that many intellectuals and military were trained in Europe by European teachers made possible the transplantation of ideologies to the Americas. The idea of civilization became very strong during this period, the need to civilize, control and domesticate, not only nature but in a holistic view. The indigenous population were seen in ambiguous ways, sometimes they were the object of domestication, and sometimes they were romantic figures to be imitated (probably in Rousseau's romantic manner). However, to construct new nations, it was necessary to control everything, to exploit resources (natural and humans) and to modernize.

The Latin American intellectuals had some kind of optimism around the ideas of Enlightenment and they saw the possibility to come closer to the European model. The idea of a unity of humankind, which accepted that every individual and society could move to a better stage, was very attractive. The indigenous could be “free citizens” as well as the black population, mestizos and poor whites, as everyone; however the people needed to be assimilated and educated to the new national project. Everyone was a winner in this discourse; it was only positive and optimistic (Langebaek 2003:77).

Some of the most important thinkers of this period were Juan Bautista Alberdi and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (both Argentineans); they influenced many American intellectuals, politicians and lawyers. Several of their ideas became the basis for constitutions and state laws in many other countries.

Sarmiento was president of Argentina between 1868 and 1874. He was also a teacher, writer, journalist and military. When he was young, the territory of Argentina (before it was constituted as one state 1880) was imbued in a civil war between *Unitarios* and *Federales*. He embraced the cause of the *Unitarios* which resulted in many periods of exile, from where he wrote with inflamed prose against the Federal cause. His production is huge and some of his publications were the basis for many political actions in the future, not only in Argentina but in the Spanish speaking area of America. One of his most read books *Civilizacion y Barbarie* was written during his exile in Chile in 1845. There he discussed the nature of *Argentinean* people, as well as formulating a strong criticism of the Federal cause. He promoted the idea of taking European population to educate, modernize and civilize the Argentinean people (Sarmiento 1945). It is interesting to note that already in 1868 an English translation of *Civilization and Barbary* was made. In this book there is a character Facundo (making reference to Juan Facundo Quiroga<sup>5</sup>), and via him Sarmiento promoted further civilization and European influence of Argentinan culture. All the time, in this book, Sarmiento made a strong opposition between progress and the traditional way of living in the Argentinean countryside. The indigenous population is treated as the most opposed to the progress of civilization, being constituted in an undesirable group.

In another book “*Conflicto y Armonía de las Razas*” from 1883, Sarmiento dealt with race issues in Latin America. The next book *Inmigración y Colonización*, was the publication that led to mass immigration of Europeans to Argentina. This migration wave put the new European population in



conflict with the existing population in the country (indigenous, gauchos and other undesirable and invisible people) generating disputes and armed conflicts in different parts of the territory.

“Are we going to voluntarily close the door to European immigration that called with repeated blows to populate our deserts, and make us, in the shadow of our flag, a people innumerable as the sands of the sea?... After Europe: is there another civilizable and Christian world like the desert of America?” (Sarmiento 1999 [1845]:11)<sup>6</sup>.

As a complement to Sarmiento’s thinking, Juan Bautista Alberdi published in 1852 “*Bases y Puntos de Partida para la organización política de Argentina*” (Alberdi 1915) that became the basis for the Argentinian National Constitution. One of the most important statements he made in this work was that “In America to govern is to populate”<sup>7</sup>; he explained that for him to govern is to populate in the sense that people are educated, improved, civilized, enriched and enhanced spontaneously and rapidly, as has happened in the United States<sup>8</sup>. He made a strong distinction between the European and non-European component in the Americas, pointing out that the indigenous heritage was only a barbarian element.

“In America everything that is not European is Barbarian: there is no more division than this one: 1.º, the native, that is to say, the savage; 2.º, European, that is to say, we, those who have been born in America and spoke Spanish, those who believe in Jesus Christ and not in Pillán”<sup>9</sup>

In the rest of the continent, ideas of modernism and progress were in vogue. The political model that started in the United States was imitated in most of the new countries in the rest of the hemisphere. Projects like the conquest of the *Far-West*, were copied in many countries, as was the creation of emptiness and deserts (imaginary deserts that needed to be populated). The new countries with help of the new armies, and a wave of hapless immigrants, pressed and took over the land from the indigenous population, creating a horde of people without any possibility to survive in acceptable conditions. Institutions for colonization were created in almost every new country.

In this process, the pillage of land was accompanied with the plunder of things, being the main resource of making collections. Those objects came into museums having new contexts, preserving the material and forgetting the people. Furthermore, those objects helped the vanquishers to become well known collectors, moving up in the class society, becoming well known scientists, etc.

Still, this is not a history of the past. Even today, many countries in Latin America still have ministries of colonization, associated with agrarian expansion or reforms. Some countries tried to change the mission of those ministries like in Brazil where today environment and sustainable development is emphasized and a future vision to be a *reference for solutions to social inclusion*<sup>10</sup>. Or as in Bolivia where the former Ministry of Colonization has been changed to a Decolonization vice-ministry inside the Department of Cultures (accent in the plural) with the following mission and vision:

*Mission:* It has policies, plans and inclusive, participatory and transparent cultural programs, recovering the knowledge, customs and traditions of indigenous peoples, native, rural, intercultural and Afro-Bolivian communities, promoting artistic expressions decolonized cultural identity, protecting, *preserving* and enhancing the heritage

*Vision:* The Ministry of Cultures is responsible for strengthening the construction of a Decolonized Multinational State, with identity based on principles, spirituality, knowledge, traditions and customs of cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, establishing its sovereignty in the framework of Living Well”<sup>11</sup>

Both countries, Brazil and Bolivia, have a history of resistance by the rural and indigenous population to the appropriation and expropriation of their territories. In other countries, those colonization institutions still have as a mission to colonize new areas in the future (like Uruguay).

## The case studies

### The first collections

The collecting of non-Swedish material in Gothenburg has at least two distinctive phases, before and after Erland Nordenskiöld became director of the Ethnographical Department at the *Göteborgs Museum* (1913). In this chapter I would like to introduce some of these collections coming before 1913. When Erland Nordenskiöld assumed the direction of the department he strongly changed the character of collecting. He introduced the idea of research at the museum and delineated the academic disciplines. Nordenskiöld had the idea of collecting not only for exhibitions but also

material that was never exhibited but was a resource for training students, and that scientists could use as comparative material (Nordenskiöld 1908).

Before Nordenskiöld, collecting was not organised. Acquiring collections was an *ad hoc* practice, and almost every object at the museum was on display. The ideological background probably was not so different, still serving the fatherland was an important component; only the means were different.

The first collections coming to Gothenburg can show the different contexts, ideologies and paradoxes behind the way in which they were collected. It is important to frame them inside the political ideological paradigm of the construction of nation/state, and the creation of national identities.

## Then...

“Mr Folke Mattson, who resides in South America, in “Colonia Ocampo, Gran Chaco, Republica Argentina”, has sent home a little collection with ethnographical objects, all of them taken in an attack on an Indian camp the 3rd September 1882, during an expedition against the Toba Indians. The things, of highly primitive character, bear witness of the extreme poverty and low education level former owners’. There are no weapons in the collection. It was highly unexpected from this remote country to receive the corroboration to solve an old enigma, concerning the use of the small round, pierced pulleys made of clay and stone, which, as well here in our North as in other countries, have been found in old graves. Among the donated things there was namely one complete spinning wheel, for use as distaff, showing the pulley sitting in the lower extremity of the stick and this over spun with wool. The collection consists of 23 objects (Brusewitz 1884:44)”<sup>12</sup>.

This quotation from Gustaf Brusewitz, the head of the Ethnographical Department at the *Göteborgs Museum*, in the annual report, shows the general opinion and environment of the époque. Brusewitz did not reflect on the attack on the Toba people on September 1882, he noted this as a fact; his short notice and analysis of the collection is that one object coming from the living people in Chaco<sup>13</sup> at that moment could solve an archaeological dilemma in Sweden. That Tobas probably died and the direct consequence of this was that 23 objects arrived to Gothenburg meant no moral dilemma or connection for Brusewitz, but he was excited by the possibility of understanding one particular object (figure 36). A further peculiar comment

is the one that Folke Mattsson is sending a little collection “home” meaning Gothenburg and the museum.



Figure 36: Object no 0573a. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz ©Museum of World Culture.

The use of one Toba object (from current days) to explain another object from the Swedish past is also a demonstration of ethnography working as a time capsule, where people living in the countryside in other parts of the world became *per excellence* the evidence of “pre-history” for Europeans. People outside the national projects, living outside the recognised metropolis were relics (relics in the face of progress, of modernism, of the new nation states). This strategy of taking people out of time is what Fabian (1983) called *denial of coevalness*, the way of locating our contemporaries in the past, thereby suggesting that they have a longer period of “evolution” or, over the same period they have progressed more slowly than others (than us).

Another interesting question is who Folke Mattsson was, the man sending the collection. He was a Swede living in Argentina who participated in an attack to the Tobas. The motive for the attack is not clear, but the trophies of war were sent home, to the new museum in the city of Gothenburg. This happened in 1882 and Mr Mattsson was serving his country sending things to the museum.

In 1872 Domingo Faustino Sarmiento dictated a decree which created the National Territory of Chaco with Villa Occidental as capital. This happened in the context of a territorial dispute with Paraguay after the Triple Alianza War. The decree became validated by the no 576 law in October 18, 1872, establishing a government for the Territory of Chaco. In 1874 the Argentinean national government created the political leadership (*jefatura política*) of Chaco, in which the territory between the West bank of the Parana River, between Bermejo River and a stream called “El Rey” became governed under the jurisdiction of the Executive (*Poder Ejecutivo Nacional*), a political leader, judges of peace (*jueces de paz*) and by municipal committees.

In this context the *Chaco Exploiter Commission* was created. This commission was led by Arturo Seeltrang and conducted cartography of the area, population, resources, climate, etc. The territory was divided in different areas which later were the base for the national government for the adjudication of land to the new colonies created in the region. In connection with this, the Law for Colonization and Immigration was promulgated in October 16, 1884 under the presidency of Nicolas Avellaneda. This law provided the tools for the creation of an agrarian policy suited for the new colons coming to the area. The land was sold in auctions under the protection of the Law of Auctions (November 3, 1882) in which the region was fragmented in pastoral sections, with plots up to 1 million hectares; and agricultural sections with plots between 10000 and 100 hectares. The land was sold, the colonization project was underway, but the area was populated by many people; in this complex situation where economical interests, geopolitical factors and the construction of the nation intersected, the military became the most important tool to make the colonization project possible (Spota 2009:93).

Another important economical resource in the area was the forest of *Quebracho* (*Schinopsis lorentzii*) from which man extracted tannin (used in the manufacture of leather), and which supplied wood for the construction and laying of the railway. After a lapse of 60 years the area became a real desert after the overexploitation of the forest.

An important ideological propaganda used by the national state for the conquest of Chaco was the creation of an idea that the area was empty, that it was the conquest of desert; in the case of Chaco which was a forest, this desert was a place controlled by nature, far away from civilization, a feral place of refuge for the indigenous tribes resistant to civilization [ (Huret [1911]) (Spota 2009:96). The idea of “desert” was one of the most important tools created for the reason that a new reality was created to hide another. The military action of making forts in the borderline and attacking the indigenous population reinforced the idea of a dangerous desert. At the same time there was a clear partnership between the different forces (the new bourgeoisie, the national state, the military) that wanted to control the area and the population to conquer land and access cheap workers.

The oxymoron of a populated desert was not a problem. It was solved using the category of citizenship which excluded directly the indigenous population by the differential classification established by the inclusion or

exclusion in the category of “citizens” (Quijada 2002:10). Desert was the lack of civilization and the only way to counterbalance was with help of progress and modernization.

In Argentina, at the moment of the constitution of the national state, the conquest of deserts, those not empty areas, was an important issue. Chaco and Patagonia were the first two desert areas that should be conquered. Those areas were populated by many people, but they were not white, or *mestizos*, so their humanity was in doubt. Populate, meant kill. First depopulate from those “others” and then replace them with white population more like “us”, that was the discourse of the emergent Argentinian national state (Barlolomé 2003:166):166.

Manuel Ocampo Samanés was one of the colons who acquired land here and founded Colonia Ocampo 1882. The colonies could start with the help of the army; a line of forts was constructed to protect the new settlements. The area of current Santa Fe, which was part of Chaco, was home for Mocovíes, Tobas and Abipones. From the newspapers of the area an enormous propaganda started to sell those areas to European and USA immigrants or to inhabit the new colonies with white immigrants (Maffucci Moore 2007). The indigenous population, displaced from their lands many times attacked the new colonies, looking for food, cattle and horses. It provoked the colons to also organize as paramilitary groups and attack the indigenous villages. In the face of criticism of this practice many of the colons answered that if they could not defend themselves they would leave the country (Maffucci Moore 2007:14–15). Of course, it was an effective reason to ignore these militias and in many cases the government collaborated giving these militias help in the form of soldiers and weapons. The persecution of the indigenous population was seen as a question of progress, it was the way to secure the frontier and to protect the new industries and agriculture (Maffucci Moore 2007:20).

Folke Mattsson was the kind of citizen that Domingo Faustino Sarmiento declared valuable for the construction of the new Argentinean. In the eyes of the Argentinean government Folke Mattsson was civilization’s agent.

## Others past as a gift for the new nation

The first archaeological collection from South America that arrived to the *Göteborgs Museum* was a donation made in 1871 by Nicolás Pereira Gamba<sup>14</sup> a traveller from Colombia. Pereira Gamba had visited Sweden, and Gothenburg, with the purpose of doing business. He had contacts with S.A. Hedlund and August Fröding<sup>15</sup> (Wassén 1961:119). Pereira Gamba organised an exhibition about Swedish products in Bogota. The contacts with Fröding probably had to do with Pereira Gamba's interest in railways.

Nicolás Pereira Gamba seems to be a multifaceted man; he was member in the Radical party in the *Granadine Confederacion*<sup>16</sup>, current Colombia (Uribe 2003:31). In 1869, Nicolás Pereira Gamba is named as President of the National Road Administration<sup>17</sup> (Benavides Erazo 2003/05/19).

Stig Rydén, curator at the Ethnographic Museum, was looking for information about this collection. In 1949 he added information about Pereira Gamba in the general information at the museum. Minister Axel



*Figure 37: Golden nariguera donated by Pereira Gamba, object no. 0126. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.*

Paulin sent a letter to Rydén dated the 3rd October 1949, where he wrote that Pereira Gamba was in Sweden to initiate commercial relations. According to Paulin, Pereira Gamba was partner in a Company called Pereira, Gamba and Co, and it would be a Swede living in Colombia, Mr Pedro Nisser, who made the contacts which allowed Pereira Gamba to come to Sweden. But in reality, it seems that Pedro Nisser met Pereira Gamba for first the time in 1874, after Nisser was in Gothenburg and had contacts with S. A. Hedlund. However, the interesting fact is that it seems that the visit of Pereira Gamba was an important commercial relationship for both cities, Bogota and Gothenburg. In the original catalogue of the museum, the collection is registered as donated by Pereira Gamba, a tourist from Colombia.

The collection contains 11 objects from the San Agustín area: two funeral urns, one vessel, three stone axes, two perforated stones, one figurine of a bird, one hollow stone and one *nariguera*<sup>18</sup> made of gold (figure 37). It was given to Gothenburg as a gift for coming cooperation between countries and deposited at the new museum.

## The past as a gift

The fact that Nicolás Pereira Gamba, a white *criollo*, could take a collection from the indigenous population to Sweden as a gift to encourage coming business is an example of a relatively common practice. In Colombia, as in almost all the “new countries” that were created after the Spanish colonial period, the new elite, formed by criollos confronted a dilemma. They had ahead of them the construction of new countries and identities, but they felt that they needed a glorious past (Langebaek 2003). The dilemma was that in many cases those places and objects that could give them the past that they aspired to were sacred places and objects for the inhabitants living there.

During this time a propaganda against those populations started, the most common argument being that before, for many years (in another epoch) it was one particular race that made everything, these mythical people were augmented and described as Greeks or Romans, ignoring their own history making them part of some universal past (Langebaek 2003). Those magnificent people had nothing to do with the current population; they were newcomers, or a degenerate variant from the past. This propaganda gave the possibility of cutting the indigenous population loose from their past, and gave the tools to appropriate their history and sacred places. This process is very clear in every part of America, not only in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> or beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but still today. With more sophisticated



arguments the process is still going on (Langebaek 2003; Mendez-Gastelumendi 1996). Cristobal Gnecco (Gnecco 2008) discussed the cases of “population discontinuity”, as a problem in Colombia. The indigenous population could not be legitimized as descendants of the pre-Hispanic people (those which had high cultural development). Gnecco (2000) and Gnecco and Hernandez (2008) show how the site of San Agustin, in which high-quality statues were created, has been presented by archaeologists and historians as “vanished people from the Amazon” or people who were displaced or replaced by other population. By this mechanism contemporary people living in San Agustin valley are considered to have no cultural connection or sentiments to the pre-Hispanic past. This discontinuity served to de-legitimize possible contemporary territorial claims and also to characterize the current populations living conditions as product of their own undeveloped culture (Curtoni and Politis 2006:103–104).

That the objects that Pereira Gamba donated were from San Agustin, in fact, reveals the importance of the gift. San Agustin has become one of the most important archaeological places in Colombia, which has the status to be placed and compared with Peruvian settlements (the Peruvian settlements are those which defined the canon of “high cultures”).

San Agustin became an early part of the Colombian national discourse. The magnificence of the place made of it an important icon; at the same time that the dominant class did not want to be associated to the indigenous, the majesty of the place could not be ignored. The solution was the explanation given by scientists, that San Agustin had nothing to do with the population living there today; they were too degenerated and unable to have constructed such a place. San Agustin was the evidence of an ancient civilization before the contemporary indigenous population came there (Langebaek 2003:86).

Over all the Americas it was a common practice to de-link the material culture from the indigenous population. Cases like the one from San Agustin can be observed in every country, in some cases cutting history and appropriating it for its own profit, other times denying the existence of a past.

Every new country tried to find, create or establish sites that could be incorporated inside the Inca sphere. Incas were the only high culture or civilization known to have existed in South America at that point. It is very interesting to note that at the same time that Incas became the canon of high cultures this in fact meant an imperial “Peruvian” expansion as many countries tried to aspire to the canon.

At the same time, archaeological remains came to play an important role to separate one new nation/state from the others; for example, Peruvian

and Bolivian scientists created two different chronologies, the same kind of objects in one side of the border becoming one culture (Huari for example) when in the other they became a different one (Tiwanaaku); creating a cultural differentiation in the past.

Another strategy was used between Peru and Ecuador: the creation of the Kingdom of Quito was used as a central narrative as an identity appropriating the Incas as an Ecuadorian tale, where Atahualpa (the last Inca king) born in Ecuador (when Ecuador did not exist) took over the Inca Empire (Benavides 2008:141) (Benavides 2009)<sup>19</sup>. Something interesting to note in all the discussion about using the indigenous past in the services of the new nations is that usually, this construction is glorious and masculine, when the current indigenous population is presented as degenerate and in feminine terms.

Archaeology and other disciplines thus helped to create a historical discontinuity between the population before the Spanish Conquest (which became considered as High Cultures) and the contemporary people living in the areas (considered undeveloped cultures) and tried to reject any possible connection between them (Curtoni and Politis 2006:103–104).

Full of paradoxes, every new country needed to be a new nation, creating histories that gave credibility to this new form of nation-state, both de-linking and re-connecting the past from the current society. For example Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador needed to find the excuse to be three different countries and not an Aymara or Quechua nation, so with help of archaeology and ethnography the current populations were disconnected from their past but at the same time those new countries needed to find their own identities that differentiated them from the neighbours.

## **The trophy. The Bräutigam collection<sup>20</sup>**

The economy of the city of Gothenburg was in the hands of a few very rich families, they were the economical and political spheres of the city, and they were the driving force in the construction of the new museum and in every cultural activity in the city. They were not aristocrats originally, however many of them were raised to nobility for their services to the country. The Bräutigam collection represents an important part of the history of Gothenburg in the making of a working class into a middle class. Gothenburg has been a strong economical node in Sweden.

Emil Bräutigam was an immigrant from Germany who established himself in Gothenburg in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was married to

a woman from Morlanda (north of Gothenburg), Johanna Beata Petersdotter. They belong to the working class; they met in Copenhagen, married and moved to Gothenburg. Emil worked hard and opened a bakery in 1870 in a basement at Skolgatan 18 in Gothenburg that over the years became one of the most classical bakeries and cafés in the city. They had 9 children, 7 boys and two girls. Beata had a brother working in Nicaragua. Seven of their children (six boys and one girl) went to Nicaragua; two of them became Nicaraguans.

The first son to go to Nicaragua was the eldest, August. He went there when he was 12 years old. He lived there with his mother's brother, and together they moved their business to the Bluefields area in 1883. Among other business they worked or dealt with the United Fruit Company (Bucheli 2004). There they came in contact with the Miskitu<sup>21</sup> people. The contacts were kept between the two countries during many decades<sup>22</sup>.

The Bräutigam family donated objects to the *Göteborgs Museum* in 1908, 1911 and 1931. Emil Bräutigam (one of the brothers) was born in Gothenburg in 1876 and died in Nicaragua (he became Nicaraguan) in 1967. He moved to Nicaragua in 1901. Emil came back to Gothenburg and donated to the museum a collection with 33 archaeological objects from Nicaragua.



*Figure 38: Object no.0000.00.2544a, cap used by Chief Robert Clarence. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.*

Among the objects from Nicaragua donated by the Bräutigam family, one item has the following information:

“Object number 2544 donated 1908: “*cap used by the last Indian Chief Robert Clarence*” (figure 38).

This information leads me to suppose that the objects come from the area of the Miskitu people. Chief Robert Henry Clarence (born in 1872 and died in 1908 in Kingston) was the last king of the Miskitu people, before the coast was conquered by the English Empire and became part of the current territory of Nicaragua. In 1894, the Nicaraguan government annexed the area of Bluefields. The soldiers took hold of the government buildings and the archives of the Mosquito Coast area and raised the flag of Nicaragua. General Carlos Lacayo from the Nicaraguan forces said that the area was misgoverned by Jamaican blacks. The Miskitu people and Robert Clarence were declared rebels. Clarence was rescued by the British and went to exile in Jamaica, where he lived with a British pension the rest of his life (Dennis and Olien 1984:721).

How Emil Bräutigam received this collection is unknown in the register at the museum. According to August Bräutigam’s memoirs they (he and his uncle) had contacts with the Miskitu king in the area, and they helped in the construction of his house. It seems that in the 1960’s the family had contact with Robert Clarence’s daughter, Mary Clarence (Bräutigam 1961–1965).

Nicaragua has a convulsive history as a nation/state; during Spanish colonial time it was part of the General Captaincy of Guatemala (*Capitania General de Guatemala*). Later it became part of the Mexican Empire and later still became independent as part of the United Provinces of Central America, following the South American model of United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, with the current countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica (Panama joined Bolivar’s República de Colombia).

Nicaragua became an independent republic in 1838. The area of the Mosquito Coast was a protectorate of the United Kingdom from 1655 to 1850, later delegated to Honduras and transferred to Nicaragua in 1860. However it was an autonomous area until 1894 when José Santos Zelaya (president of Nicaragua from 1893–1909) annexed the area to the rest of the country. Nicaragua had two rival elite groups, the liberals and the conservatives, which often were at civil war. As in many other countries, Nicaragua saw the European and US citizens as the model of immigrants. Many of them set up business with money they brought from Europe and they started in agriculture with sugar cane plantations and coffee.

During the later period of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of constructing a link between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans was planned in Nicaragua, where the topography was perfect using the big lakes in the area. Nevertheless USA put a veto to this plan and moved the construction to Panama (an extremely complicated project in a very difficult topography). Nicaragua and the countries in Central America became the clearest examples of USA's neo-colonial expansion in the Americas. When the decision to construct the Panama Canal was made in 1903, the USA established naval bases, not only along the area of the Canal, but along all the Central American coast, to protect American investments. Theodore Roosevelt, president of the United States, expanded the Monroe Doctrine<sup>23</sup> in 1904 to include his country's right to intervene in the domestic affairs of Caribbean states (Gismondi and Mouat 2002:846). However, as Gismondi and Mouat noted, behind all this economical and military expansion, the justification was a civilizing component "the secretary of State Philander Knox advocated the imposition of financial discipline on Central American and Caribbean republics 'to assist the less fortunate American Republics in conducting their own affairs in such a way that those difficulties should not be liable to rise'" (Gismondi and Mouat 2002:846).

The area of Mosquito was for a long time a "free zone" with a fading British presence, strong indigenous and creole<sup>24</sup> zones, a growing number of Spanish and Nicaraguans, an important group of American merchants, engineers, Europeans, and concession-hunters. British and Americans had a superior place in the ranking of people living there, and because the area was a British protectorate many of the other groups, like for example Miskitu had British citizenship and considered themselves citizens of the British Empire (Gismondi and Mouat 2002:848).

When the national government of Nicaragua took over control of the Mosquito area, many of the Miskitu's people went into exile, to England or to other English colonies. The place of Miskitu people in Nicaragua has been questioned until our times, for example during the Sandinista government (1979–1990), they clashed with the administration because they helped the contras movement (Bourgouis 1981; García 1996).

The cap of Robert Clarence is now in Gothenburg, in the storage rooms and has lost its real meaning. We know that it was sewn in France, in Carcassonne. The relationships between Bräutigam and the Miskitu is not clear, it seems that they had some kind of economical relationship during that time. The cap has never been exhibited or studied; the cap of the last Miskitu king rests in a shelf in the museum's stores.

## The romantic adventurer

The American collections represented only 4% of the total in 1912, and the museum had at that moment 4000 objects classified as “ethnographical”. The larger collections were donated or sold by William Anderson-Grebst (also named as W A:son Grebst, Willy Grebst) to the museum. He bestowed around 1000 objects (in 1912 this meant almost 25% of the collections) coming from every continent. The American collections contain around 150 objects given by him; they are from Tierra del Fuego (registered as from Argentina/Chile), belonging to the Selk’nam people, from Paraguay from Lengua people, from Peru, Uruguay, Costa Rica and USA.

Willy Grebst was born in Gothenburg in 1875 and died in 1920. Apparently he was a scriptwriter and actor, and also he was the editor of a



Object no.0000.00.2151

Object no. 0000.00.2155

Figure 39: Object no: 0000.00.2151; bag made of leather.

Figure 40: Object no: 0000.00.2155; iron knife with handle made of bone.

Both objects from the Selknam's. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.

tabloid called *Vidi* (Grebst 1920), an anti-Semitic sensationalistic newspaper that had its headquarters in Gothenburg. He wrote an amount of books on the most diverse topics, article collections, memoirs, novels, poetry, etc. He also travelled among other countries to Japan, Korea, Tierra del Fuego, USA, Samoa, Tahiti (Hübinette 2000:20). During the journeys he collected objects and published travel books about those journeys (Grebst 1909; Grebst 1912; Grebst 1916a; Grebst 1916b).

The objects that I am interested in here are those coming from South America, especially those from Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, because Grebst wrote a travel book about his trip to Patagonia. That journey was in fact his wedding trip. William A:son Grebst and his wife went from Montevideo to Punta Arenas and throughout Tierra del Fuego. During their voyage they met Yaganas and Selk'nam people. The main objective of the Grebst's book is to tell about the travel, their luxury life, and the people they met (not the indigenous people but the white population and friends they made). However, sometimes he reflected over the situation of the indigenous people "and the cruel military campaign, which in 1883 took place against the Indians, is a blot on the escutcheon (coat of arms) of Argentina, which probably is not so easy to erase"<sup>25</sup> (Grebst 1913:184).

The objects from Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego were mainly bought in "curios shops" as he described (Grebst 1913:87). As we know, only a small collection of arrowheads and "weapons" (figure 39 and 40) were acquired by exchange between him and the Selk'nam. He described how he bought tobacco and exchanged it for objects that he chose (Grebst 1913:185)<sup>26</sup>.

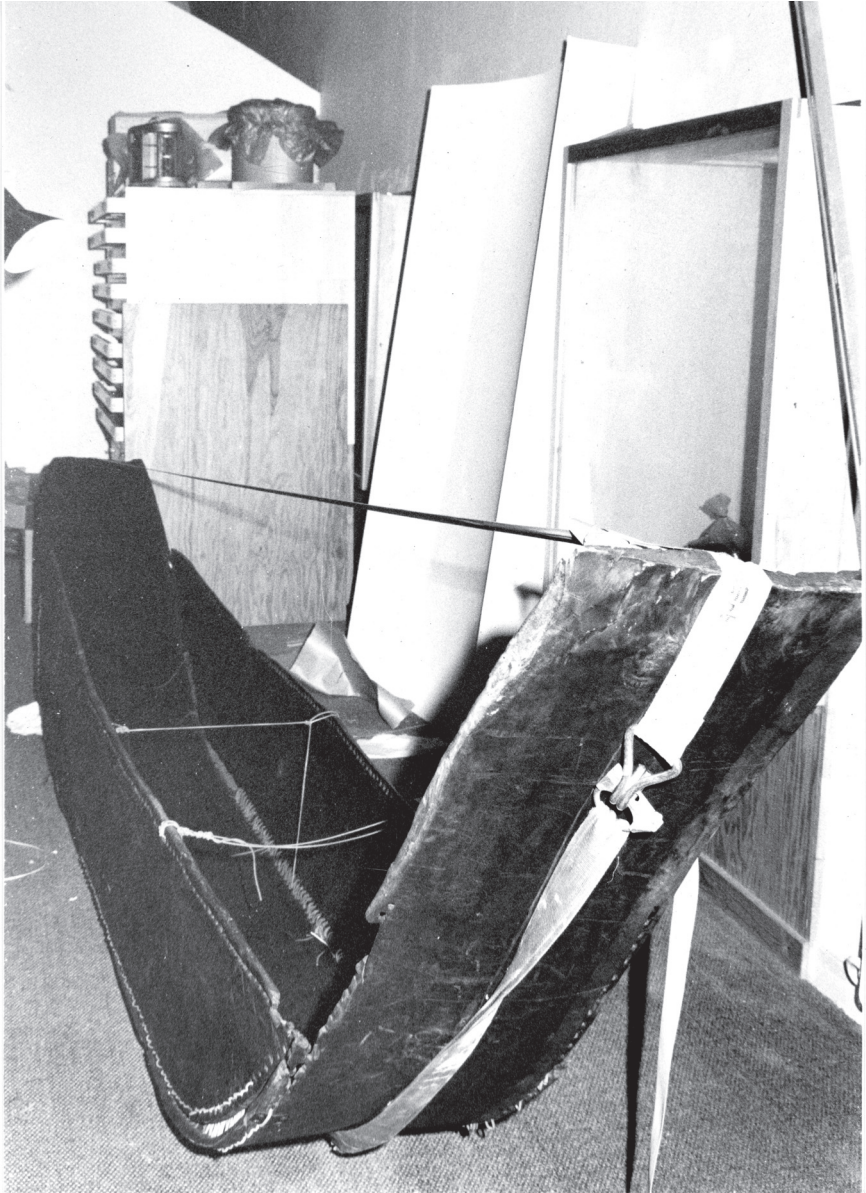
It is remarkable that despite his political position, he reflected many times in his book about the situation of the non-white people in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, and commented on the cruelty of the "white race" and wondered why "civilization" could not leave that people in peace. Of course, all the time the tone of his writing is paternalistic and haughty (Grebst 1913).

## **The scientist, the travels of Carl Skottsberg**

The second large collection from Tierra del Fuego is the one gathered by Carl Skottsberg and registered at the museum in 1906–1907. The objects from this collection come from the area in the Strait of Magellan (Alakaluf) (Skottsberg 1913).

Carl Skottsberg made many botanical fieldworks and during those he also collected archaeological and ethnographical objects that he later on donated to the museum. Carl Skottsberg was an important person in Gothenburg.

He was the first director of the Botanical Garden in the city (1923) and was professor in Botany at the University. He participated first in Otto Nordenskiöld's expedition to Antarctica (1901–1903) (Nordenskiöld 1904), and later he led the Magalhães expedition (1907–1909) (Skottsberg 1913b).



*Figure 41: Dalka, object no: 0000.00.3810, photographed in 1980's in relation to a conservation report. ©Museum of World Culture.*



Skottsberg made other important collections during Erland Nordenskiöld's period, and he donated objects to the museum like an important archaeological collection from the Chinchorro area in Arica, Chile (Skottsberg 1924). There are also some objects that were given to him by different people, and which he then donated to the museum.

The Magalhães expedition travelled in southern Chile and Argentina, the channel region between the Straits of Magellan and the Penas Gulf. The primary goal of the voyage was studies on geology, physical geography and botany, still, as Skottsberg noted, they "endeavored to devote as much attention as possible to the peculiar native people inhabiting the channels" (Skottsberg 1913:578).

Here I am going to present one object from this expedition, a boat, called *dalka*<sup>27</sup> (figure 41). The acquisition of the *dalka* was made in the historical context of the genocide of the people of Tierra del Fuego. From 1880 onwards the Argentinean national government together with mainly English and Argentinean farmers started the extermination of the populations in Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and Chaco. In Tierra del Fuego and Patagonia farmers together with army and mercenaries systematically killed the local population. One of the most well-known colonizers was Julius Popper, who systematically killed the indigenous population (Ansel 1970; Odone and Palma 2004).

Many methods were implemented, from giving between 1 to 8 pounds for body parts (one pound for the ears to 8 pounds for the head); to using poison and spreading diseases amongst other methods.

In this context Skottsberg arrived and in his publications he is aware that the people living there are condemned. He never used the word genocide and he did not criticize openly the action of the white population, but in many paragraphs it is obvious that he is wondering.

He collected mainly botanical and zoological items, but also an important amount of "ethnographica". Something very interesting is that collecting, not only for him, but for many collectors from this time, implied to make a holistic collection from people condemned to disappear. It was some kind of "rescue ethnography" saving materials because people were impossible to save. This is a well-known element in the discourse of the expansion of modernism; rescuer of the threatened or dying culture. Even when people resisted they were consigned to the status of ethnographical and museum piece. In some way, collecting those objects to become ethnographical objects in a museum started in itself the process of wiping out a culture (Sherman 2004:691).

In an evolutionary worldview ethnographical situations gave the scholar the possibility to be in the presence of a “living pre-history”, in front of a real savage stadium, and as scientists they had the obligation to register everything before those prehistoric populations vanished (Stagnaro 1993:53).

In Argentina, in the process called *Campaña del Desierto* (Desert Campaign), the plan was clear and well designed. The people living in those “deserts” should be annihilated and their territories occupied by civilized people, with a goal of modernization, economic expansion and construction of nationality. It was a necessary process to ascend to a higher evolutionary stage (Stagnaro 1993:54).

Is it not clear how Skottsberg acquired the boat that today is stored in Gothenburg<sup>28</sup>. In one sentence he said that they were inspecting the content of one boat, and the owners were afraid to lose their belongings. Boats were the most precious object for these people, who were nomads living in the channels fishing and finding places to collect shells. Now, in spite of his knowledge about the value that this boat had for the people in the channel, he still brought it to Gothenburg.

The dalka (boat) was collected together with other objects to document an ethnic group that was disappearing. The people were still there, and still are there today, but they were stripped of their possessions so the objects could be safeguarded in a museum for coming generations of white people. The dalka became a document which makes the museum the owner of the last boat from Tierra del Fuego. Today at the museum we are “proud” to have the last boat known in the store rooms. After 100 years the history of Selknam, Yamanas Akaloufes, etc has been completely forgotten, and the dalka is a symbol of “the last in its species”, the genocide became hidden by historians, anthropologists, museums, and in the end we have forgotten the people behind the dalka.

The dalka was collected as an ethnographical item. The ethnographical category included the people who were excluded from the formation of national states. In the case of Argentina only the white population was the hegemonic class that established the nation/state Argentina; all the other people, excluded from the project became objects for persecution or study. Skottsberg, a trained Swedish botanist, collecting natural specimens, included also people as part of the natural specimens.

Skottsberg’s practice reinforced the view of people as natural specimens or *natural folk* in a time in which ethnography worked as a category inside a classificatory system. People had been classified in races, cultures, nations,



*Figure 42: Map with the provenance of the collections presented in Chapter III.*

and in geographical/temporal space. In his work, George Condominas (1965; 1991) evidenced how people became tribalized by the colonial power; using language as a tool, maps were constructed putting people inside geographical areas, limited by other groups or by geography. This mapping and tribalization made that populations became immobilized, classified inside one area, without contacts with other people outside the border. Aside from the spatial immobilizations people also became fixed in time, in an a-historical impression, like relics from the past.

## **Science and museums in Latin America and Gothenburg**

As the “progress”, the conquest and colonization of territories advanced, the sciences were forming and establishing in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the shadows of the Enlightenment, travellers, explorers and men of science returned to their homes with natural history and ethnographical specimens, which were studied and classified. Classification systems were in vogue in natural science and after the Linnaeus system was accepted, the natural sciences became a universal verity. The same goal was searched for in the human sciences. Adam Smith and John Millar produced a speculative Four Stage evolutionary theory based on the development of world cultures (Owen 2006:14); although it was not a system used as much as the Linnaean until Christian J. Thomsen introduced the Three-Age System which organized the human evolution in different technological stages.

The constitution of the modern state makes the archive an important tool for accumulation and storing of administrative records, and in the end those archives created the national memory (Featherstone 2000:168). As an archive, museums can also be considered, as in the case of ethnographical museums, to have been part of the accumulation of the encyclopaedic knowledge of other peoples. This was crucial for the creation of amnesia about other people’s history.

Museums emerged everywhere as the administrator of the material coming from the colonies in the name of science and education. The materials were organized in new classification systems and presented to the public in a form that made the audience interested in the exoticism and differences behind those artefacts instead of an understanding of the cultures which created them (Owen 2006:14). The purpose was the creation of the new national identity in contrast to those exotic worlds; the new nations

should be the opposite, modern, progressive, hygienic and unified. These themes have been well treated and presented among others by Russell and Mac Niven (1998), Pyenson and Sheets (1999; 1988), Anderman and Rowe (2005), Anderson (1991).

In Latin America many of the new countries invested important sums of money in the establishment of universities (in a new form, not the old scholastics model but a model working for progress, industry and the new society), museums, geographical institutes, etc. In many countries scholars from Europe were invited to be professors, museum directors, and mentors of these new institutions and movements. For example, Hermann Burmeister (1807–1892) a German zoologist who founded the National Museum in Buenos Aires (Peralta 2001). The import of European scholars was the consolidation of a colonial knowledge and education (Mignolo 2002).

The most important new sciences for progress were engineering, geography and surveying; yet ethnography, archaeology and folklore became very important in shaping the new national identities. Almost every country in Latin America built ethnographical museums to put those objects from the non-civilized groups living in the new states' territories. Those museums were the counterpart to the historical museums arising at the same time. This phenomenon is also observed in Sweden and within the *Göteborgs Museum* the historical collections were separated from those from lower uncivilized people (as told in Chapter I). Now, people without histories were created in opposition of the civilized population that constructed the future.

In this atmosphere, the appropriation of the indigenous material culture became a target for collecting. Those collections not only filled the stock of the new national museums but were also a coin to exchange with the other institutions in Europe, or in many cases used as national gifts to Europeans or European countries (like Pereira Gamba); or simply as a commodity that could be sold in the market. As a matter of fact, many of the Peruvian collections today at the Museum of World Culture were bought.

This is not a Latin American invention, the same process was going on at the same time all around the world (Mignolo 1995; 1999; 2005). The expansion of an economic system destroyed not only traditional structures of other people, but created an atmosphere where killing, exclusion, appropriation and violence were the basis of a new society with rules of coexistence, inclusion, law, and order. These paradoxical circumstances were in many cases the foundation of the humanities as a scientific method.

The positions at universities and museums in the new sciences, anthropology (ethnography, folklore) or archaeology, were mainly given to European scholars and much of the knowledge about the indigenous population, at least from Mexico to Argentina, was also produced outside the continent.

Moreover knowledge produced in Europe became canon in Latin America. Examples include: Anders Retzius about craniometry and his scheme for craniums and races using skulls from all the Americas; Adolf Bastian's *Die Culturländer des Alten America* (1889); Max Uhle's writing which dealt largely with South American archaeology; Eduard Seler, C.H. Reid, Erland Nordenskiöld, Alphos Stübel, Wilhem Reiss, Bendix Koppel, Konrad Theodor Preuss, Karl von den Steinen, among others, became the "fathers" of anthropological and archaeological sciences in Latin America adding the making of collections to the activities of their museums and institutions.

The knowledge produced outside the continent became canon, and was considered the real knowledge to the detriment of all other production of knowledge. From this point until today, the story behind every object collected became one man's voice, the voice of the European scientist or his disciples obliterating other's narratives and outshining the power of other's material culture.

This was the environment of the construction of museums in Latin America, and almost every museum had an ethnographical collection, such as Museum of Buenos Aires (1862); Museo de La Plata (1884); Museo Etnográfico de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de Buenos Aires (1904) (Stagnaro 1993:54). Ethnographical collections were (and are) very popular in Museums of Natural History as well, putting the people in the category of nature, and also placing them in the bottom of the evolution of society.

Ethnography and archaeology became, in the period of construction of new states, the tool of exclusion and classification. Ethnography by putting people into a closed geography; archaeology constructing a static past and detaching people from history (Benavides 2009:144). Both disciplines were used to construct the other, the non-citizen, the Indian, the non-desired people.

Archaeological objects must be one of the most useful political tools in the construction and reinforcement of national identities. Anderson in his work about imagined communities discussed the role of museums and material culture in the construction of nationalism and those others (Anderson 1991).

In a context of ethnographical museums, the characteristics of those objects played and still play an important political role in the construction of a strong own identity in the face of others cultural identities.

## Multiculturalism, museums and trans-nations

“Yes, it is true that immigrants in this country are often treated by the authorities as minors because of their language difficulties. It does not matter if you’re seven or seventy years, the Swedes still know best. I think they count our age from our arrival. Therefore should I start in first grade this fall. I turn eight this year. I came here 25 May 1971. It is my new birthday. I usually give lots of toys and candy to my immigrant playmates. This book is about us immigrant children between seven and seventy years old and our new life in this country (Mahmut Baksi 1979:8–9)”cited by (Peralta 2005:187)<sup>29</sup>.

In the first chapter the construction of the new Museum of World Culture was presented. In the second chapter I discussed what world culture means in the classification system. Here, firstly I introduced the collections coming before 1913 and the implications that colonialism external as well as internal, played in the formation of nations and collections.

In the second part of this chapter I would like to introduce partially the political discourse and use of the world culture concept in the cultural European context that we are in today. Where, many times, the difference with ethnography is not so distant. Persistently, a more polished discourse still is a universal discourse of exclusion and otherness.

The new museum was created in a frame of reinforcement of the European Community. Sweden became a member of the Community in 1994 after three years of negotiation and a plebiscite. In elections 52,3% (1994) of the Swedish people voted in favour of being members. Since that moment, the integration of the country in Europe has been a topic of discussion in every political party, agenda and elections. The last discussion has been the integration in the monetary system that Swedish people voted against (2003) with 55,9% of the votes (Swedish Government).

The cultural integration of Europe has been strong since the beginning of the 1990's with many different projects. However, a topic of discussion is and has been the integration in Europe of the "non-European" citizens. Here museums have played an important role, and also the ethnographical museums have positions in this new era. In the 2000's ethnographical museums from central Europe started a project called "the non-European components of European Patrimony" (ECHO: European Cultural Heritage online) to make their collections accessible on the Internet. The project was never successful, though, it is interesting that museums with ethnographical collections started to see their role as keepers of the "non-European component" and that the subjects of the discourse were the immigrants living in the European cities.

In the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, those others who were living in foreign countries at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were now moving to the centres. Today, the "indigenous", are not only in their countries but also in the nearer neighbourhood (figure 43).

Diversity in Gothenburg
68000 Swedish citizens are born in other countries
Gothenburg has 512754 inhabitants (30 September 2010)
21 %, or 103083 persons are born in other countries
47% of those born in other countries are from Europe and 53 % from the rest of the world (mainly Asia)
In Gothenburg are around 40000 immigrants
35000 are born in other countries
Around 5000 are from South America (mainly Chile)
37% of immigrants live in the north-east part of the city
Information from Statistics Sweden <a href="http://www.scb.se/">http://www.scb.se/</a>

Figure 43: Diversity in Gothenburg, information from Statistics Sweden.

In the new discourse, the immigrant is the one who fills the place of the other, the one that has become patronized, categorized and placed in the lower place of power positions (de los Reyes and Kamali 2005).

In Sweden it is very interesting that the word immigrant is used not only for the persons who migrated to Sweden but also for their children



and grandchildren, expanding categories of “migration” to people that have been born and settled in Sweden and Europe. Categories such as “immigrant”, “immigrant background”, “immigrant politics”, “immigrant cultural heritage”, etc are usual in the political and cultural discourse. However many of these immigrants have lived there for many years, acquiring Swedish and European citizenship. People can vote in national and European elections, but despite this, they still are considered as and put into the category of immigrants. The civil rights are not in correlation with the cultural and *de facto* rights of everyday life (Peralta 2005). Sweden today is, in fact, a heterogeneous society, yet the country’s social and political structure still remains in an older model of society. Although society has changed during the last 40 years, the view that power has about itself has not changed neither the view about Swedish society. Part of the Swedish population is deprived in practice of certain rights that other parts of the population enjoy (Peralta 2005:200). The same situation is observed in other European countries, Mohammed Nour Eddine Affaya (2000) citing Alain Touraine pointed out that although “the French state has been the vanguard to guarantee the political rights, it is very slow in giving the social rights and vacillates in the recognition of cultural rights” (Affaya 2000:29).

The power structures of Sweden show that the political and economical power is in the hands of people with Swedish ethnical background, producing a “mono cultural environment” (Peralta 2005:198) in which cultural policies of integration and migration are discussed and decided.

As presented before, the new museum was created to integrate the “non-Swedish” population into the Swedish cultural life. The idea was to use the collections (coming from outside Sweden) for this purpose. Here, categories, and classification are important. “Non-Swedish” means born in another country with non-Swedish parents, or child of immigrants born in Sweden. An interesting question is when people can be Swedish, because it is not enough to have a Swedish citizenship.

In the political sphere, a huge discussion was triggered in 2004 when Masoud Kamali (Kamali 2006) presented the report “*den segregerande integrationen*”<sup>30</sup>, however a follow-up discussion in cultural terms has not been developed. Last year (2010), the Sweden Democrats (presented above), became part of the national parliament. The incorporation of such extreme right wing ideas in the daily agenda of the parliament has generated a new discussion in the public arena about cultural politics and cultural rights.

The discussion about cultural heritage has been a little more developed, but also there the discourse to the “non-Swedish” population is often

paternalistic and very few “non-Swedish” people participate in this discussion, or they participate in separate geographical or discursive areas (like the Carnival of Hammarkullen in Gothenburg). Often, the communication is difficult and is perceived as one way, one part of society (the Swedish) making policies and recommendations about the cultural heritage for the other part of the society.

Integration (political and cultural) is always about how immigrants should be part of the Swedish society but rarely about how Swedish and non-Swedish could integrate together to a new model of society, beyond a model of nation/state from the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **The challenge of the Museum of World Culture, from the perspective of the objects**

”Si queremos que todo siga como está, es preciso que todo cambie. ¿Me explico?”(Lampedusa 1958:20)<sup>31</sup>.

As older collections were discussed before, here I would like to introduce the challenge that is connected to the incorporation and registration of new objects in a new paradigm. Two issues are discussed; the first one is what to do with the old objects and how to update, and incorporate new ones; the meaning of those materials and what and whom they represent. The second and also the most important issue is to look at how those objects are related to people, and how the use of artefacts has to do with the discourse in which people are framed. Partially this has been discussed in chapter II, however here, I would like to present new objects coming to the collections.

### **The same objects, the new context**

“The sources of power are derived from the capacity of cultural institutions to classify and define peoples and societies. This is the power to represent; to reproduce structures of belief and experience through which cultural differences are understood” (Karp, et al. 1992:1–2).

In his introduction to *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Ivan Karp noted that “. . . museums are not exempt from history, and the communities that have been eliminated from museums or denigrated by them now insist that museums rectify their errors—errors that can be

viewed in out-of- date-exhibit halls” (Karp, et al. 1992:12). This point was very important when the Ethnographic Museum closed and the new Museum of World Culture was created to try to correct all those mistakes.

When the Museum of World Culture was created, a new mission was followed regarding topics of discussion for the museum. However, the collections became a conflict area from the beginning. The objects coming from an ethnographical paradigm were difficult to match in a new context. For the politicians (Swedish government) it was clear in a first phase that the objects should be used, partially as a tool to integrate immigrants or to discuss inclusion/exclusion.

For the opening, the director invited Fred Wilson<sup>32</sup> to make an exhibition using the museum’s collections to discuss the question of exclusion. The exhibition “Site Unseen: Dwellings of the Demons” (figure 32 in Chapter II) made by Fred Wilson took difficult questions and touched the strongest icons of the museum history. As Jette Sandahl pointed out (2007:210), in this exhibition the goal was to expose the colonial power structures, racism and sexism which are part of the museological practice.

The reactions to the exhibition were many and disparate. Swedish curators and anthropologists had problems with the show; among the criticisms were the lack of knowledge and information about every object, the lack of historical contextualization about every artefact, etc.

Fred Wilson was discussing something deeper; he was touching the icons of anthropology and unmasking museological practices. He explored the practice of collecting, and the mechanisms of exclusion. However, something interesting happened with some immigrants that visited the exhibition, they loved it. They were not “academic” reasons behind the explanations but people were talking about feelings.

“I love how the urns talk; they are talking about my history, to move, to be an immigrant, the need to reconstruct yourself”<sup>33</sup>.

Another opening exhibition that took the objects of the collections into a new context was the exhibition *Horizons: Voices from a Global Africa* (figure 33 in Chapter II). In this exhibition people from Africa’s horn were invited by the museum to participate in the making of knowledge about the objects. The so-called “subjective” knowledge, personal, family and collective memories were brought to the surface (Lagerkvist 2006; Rinçon 2005a; Rinçon 2005b; Sandahl 2002; Sandahl 2005; Sandahl 2007). The project was presented in the exhibition, and caused many criticisms. Something

interesting was that one of the curators in charge doubted the legitimacy of using objects with “colonial baggage” (Thörn 2005) to discuss colonialism in a post-colonial position. He undermined the power of the objects, and partially affected the work made by the people who were involved in the Africa’s Horn project. Putting the stamp of “colonial” on the objects made them impossible to use by the owners, to come back to an original context or to use as a powerful tool for the future. Probably, the problem there is that, the curators (we) are trying to identify things that were known to and by others (Thomas 2010:7). We are discovering and interpreting (again), objects that easily could be filled with content (non-colonial), if the curator or interpreter had been the original owner. The people from Africa’s horn working on the project experienced the objects not as colonial legacy (obviously the impact of colonial power was not denied), however the objects represented reminiscences, families, histories before they came to be immigrants in Sweden (Rinçon 2005a; Rinçon 2005b).

## The new objects

When the Museum of World Culture was established, the museum had the possibility to administer its collections (later the central administration was to be in charge of the acquisition of collections). The first objects acquired in the new paradigm as world culture were a collaboration project between the museum in Gothenburg and the National Museum of Kenya and the National Museum of Mali (Sandahl 2007). In Kenya a group of young people collected objects from urban daily life in one of the worlds largest metropolises. The objects collected in Mali had to do with gender including the sensitive topic of female genital mutilation (Sandahl 2007:211–212). The most interesting aspect of this project was that the museum did not send somebody from its staff to collect “the other”, instead the collecting was made by people living there in cooperation with the local museums. The knowledge was produced *in situ* and the Museum of World Culture presented it during the exhibition called *Horizons: Voices from a Global Africa*. In this project the idea was to share power, incorporate multiple experiences and voices in the collections and share those experiences with the public in an exhibition.

In 2006 the exhibition *Trafficking* opened. This show was the result of a European cooperation to fight the illegal trafficking of humans, especially for sexual use. To make this exhibition new objects were collected, among them a *patera*<sup>34</sup> (figure 44) from Andalucía, six stepladders from Melilla<sup>35</sup> (Muñoz 2011), and an installation of twelve dresses from Ciudad Juarez<sup>36</sup>.



*Figure 44: Patera collected in Almeria, Andalucia in relation to the Trafficking exhibition©Museum of World Culture.*

This group of objects were different from those collected before in an ethnographical paradigm, in the way that they do not represent a foreign culture that is to be shown to us, but they symbolize a phenomenon in which we are all involved. They are not collected to be part of an encyclopaedia of foreign cultures but intended to show the political situation of the current world.

However, the difficulty started after the show closed when the objects became part of the collection. Until that moment, the patera, the stepladders and the dresses were linked to the context of immigration, to the history of the individuals behind those items. The objects were telling with their materiality how the people are moving throughout the Mediterranean, or jumping to a dreamily new world in Melilla or dying and disappearing in Ciudad Juarez. When they arrived to the collections they became a boat,

in the category of transport, stepladders became only an installation, and the dresses missed the history of the women. They all became objects of ethnography.

The principal problem is practice and data-bases. Practice around the classification of museum objects has been constructed over a long period of time. The new data bases are adapted to the established practice, and have never been discussed. Large amounts of money has been invested in new computer systems and new data-bases, however no money have been invested to discuss how and why we use a determinate classificatory system. This is because there has never been a need to look over the practice of collecting and management of objects. This part of the museum work, that behind the scenes, has always been seen as neutral, when in reality practice is political and ideological.

### **The Patera case: World culture vs ethnography or not?**

The *patera* was acquired in 2006 in Almeria, Spain. The idea was to find a strongly symbolic object that carried on the history of migrants from northern Africa to Europe following dreams of a better life; also to show the business behind the transport of illegal immigrants and the impact on transnational economies.

This *patera* came to Almeria and during a period it was evidence of crime. When the police closed the case, due to lack of facts, the boat was sent to a junkyard, where it could be sold again. So, using different contacts and creating a network of people including police, *medicine sans frontiers* and friends, the museum could localize a patera and buy it.

Many people wonder today: why do migrants risk their lives in pateras to come to Europe?

The European Union made efforts to liberalize regulations of trade and finance taking away borders between the members of the union (Shengen Agreement). The migration still rests on the concept of sovereignty of the state depending of the control of country borders (White 2001:27). The migration is illegal (in many cases) but Europe, especially Spain needs these cheap workers, creating a paradox between *inviting* cheap workers and *expulsing* illegal immigrants . In Spain Moroccan people represent 20% of immigrants living there (according to the statistic about legal immigrants), and as workers they represent almost 40% of the foreign labour force. In Almeria the number is even higher, and the illegal people are not counted.

This cheap labour is not only a benefit for Spain, the job that these people are doing, mainly in the agricultural sector means cheap fruits and vegetables for all the European citizens.

Many authors (Alscher 2005; Crain 1999; White 2001) argue that this is part of push and pull dynamics. The push is the unemployment and underemployment in the original countries. White (2001), taking Morocco as an example, shows that in urban places, unemployment among young people is 30%. However, an important push factor is the remittances to the Moroccan economy. The people working in Spain send money to their families stimulating all the economy; according to White (2001) this is the second resource after oil in world trade. The World Bank Data estimate that Moroccans working outside Morocco have sent home roughly 2,1 billion USD dollar (in 1998), representing 5% of Morocco's GDP or 16% of Morocco's exported goods and services (White 2001:28):28).

One question that arose when the *patera* was included in the collections was about the differences between this boat and for example the one from Patagonia collected by Skottsberg in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

One hundred years had passed by. The boat collected by Skottsberg was under a paradigm of colonial expansion, scientific research, construction of nation/states. In practice, the boat became a symbol at first for the collector; the name of Skottsberg became immortalized in the museum archive. Secondly, the boat from Patagonia is one of the few complete *dalkas* in the world, making it a symbol for the museum which owns the last in its species. The Selk'nam became anonymous in this saga together with almost all individuals who produced objects that today are stored in the museums.

The *patera* was collected in a different period of time and not as a product of scientific research but for an exhibition. However, as in the case of the *dalka*, for many reasons the people who came to Europe with the *patera* have been anonymous. In both periods of time, those who are excluded from hegemonic projects become part of a homogenous and anonymous mass. De los Reyes and Kamali (de los Reyes and Kamali 2005:7–8 ) discussed how absolute categories construct these images of homogeneity and help in a process of making the excluded actors anonymous. They observed how grouping "immigrants" in a category worked to give attributes and affinities to people that are individuals with different backgrounds. Going further, de los Reyes and Kamali, discussed how this categorization constructs borders between we and them (Swedish-immigrants) creating a balance where one group, the Swedish have the good attributes, and the other group, immigrants, are a problem that must be solved.

Sweden came to the European Union with a discourse of equality and welfare for all the citizens, nevertheless in the last years international organizations have complained that in Sweden authorities have permissive and passive attitudes towards the everyday racism and racist organizations. The existence of discrimination and everyday racism therefore undermines the image of the Swedish model (especially the image inside the country). This also means, putting Sweden in a common European history in which the reproduction of hierarchical worldviews and racist ideas have been central to the consolidation of the Christian, white and modern domination of the “others” (de los Reyes and Kamali 2005:9). Sweden is part of a western tradition where colonialism marked and shaped the line between Europeans (civilized) and the others (barbarians), not as two different positions but as a contrast. Those ideas are today still part of the perception of identity, belonging and citizenship.

It is interesting that in the level of cultural politics and discussions about cultural heritage, the distinction is often immigrants versus “the nationals” (Swedish in this case). Cornelius Holtorf and other archaeologists (Bengtsson 2000; Burström 2008; Burström and Rönby 2006; Holtorf 2009; Karlsson and Lund 2005) have discussed that in Sweden immigrants should have a right to cultural heritage... “Although different cultural groups may bring along and contribute new heritage, the cultural heritage in a given society does not belong to specific individuals or groups but to the large and increasingly diverse communities of residents who together form a state” (Holtorf 2009:679).

The right and access to a cultural heritage of individuals and communities is obvious in creating a real integration, yet the problem of accessibility today lies in the colour of the skin and family name. Thus I suggest, following de los Reyes and Kamali (2005) that probably the best step is to deconstruct the concept of “immigrants” as many of them already are Swedish citizens.

The discourse is a set of metaphors, stories and performances that are an integral part of the concrete practices that create a certain order. Discourses are normative because they establish specific ways of interpreting the world and respond to it. However, the discursive process also operates through exclusions and silences. To provide a degree of interpretation is therefore to exclude and make invisible other possible approaches. This means an exclusion of voices, experiences and perspectives that can be disruptive and destabilize the imagination in which power rests on (de los Reyes and Kamali 2005:16).



One difference is that 100 years ago, those “others” who were collected as objects were living geographically outside the areas of power. They were in other countries, and in those countries they were in areas that could be invisible (slums, countryside, etc). Today, the immigrants came to the central areas, as a consequence of the impact of modernization and globalization of economy in their countries, creating diasporas of refugees and immigrants. The flow of people changed the space in the rich world of Europe. This new process also created new discourses to put those intruders in their right place. Concepts like hospitality and welcome (Bell 2010) can be perceived as good qualities, however they give an idea of the position, you come to another person’s house, you are welcome, but it is not your house. This is very important in the construction of citizens and a base in the political agendas of integration. Coming back to the beginning of this chapter, citizenship as family member, the homogenous group, the *one nation* state must be reviewed.

In the formation of nation/states members inside and included in the project (citizens) made a pact of non-conflict. This pact must be reconsidered. Multiculturalism, diversity and a state with a number of people inside the new liberal state probably requires that conflict is allowed and that many voices can be heard.

Still, the one who speaks is still the same, one voice is strongest, and polyphony is allowed only as background and not as first person.

## Conclusions

The aim with this section is to analyze the contexts in which collections arrived to Gothenburg, from the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today in the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. When the first collections arrived, museums and nations were in a phase of construction. They strongly needed “others” to define themselves and to acquire a distinctive identity. In this new century that we are part of, nations are trying to re-define themselves, in the face of the flows of people moving around the world, diasporas produced by wars, economical factors, etc it has been shown that the concept of nation-states must to be rethought. Still it is not only the movement of people which has caused this process but also the reconfiguration of new economically powerful areas. European Union, NAFTA, Asia, corporations, etc. Today

capital is a global issue and not national at all. Today, an economic crash in the United States affects all of us.

In this new world order, people are being re-categorized again. 100 years ago, those undesirable people were living far away, and they became “Indians”, “Negros” “Aborigens”, etc. They had in common to be excluded from the new nation states that were emerging around the world, and also that everyone was drawn together in the category ethnography. Museums had a golden age of collecting, appropriating and expropriating objects and history from these people.

Today, all those unwanted still exist, classified under new categories. In many cases they still are Indians, Negros, etc, but they are also Refugees, Illegal, Undocumented and Immigrants. However, today they are not silent anymore; they demand to be included, to have a right to their objects and history. They are not anymore excluded in remote exotic countries; everyone is built-in, in a blended we. We are here, in the same neighbourhood.

## Notes

1 The Mexicans descend from the Aztecs, the Peruvians from the Incas and the Argentineans from the boats.

2 Göteborg is after Stockholm the largest city in Sweden.

3 *Criollos* was the term used especially in Latin America comprising the locally born people of pure Spanish ancestry.

4 *Tattare* (officially called Travellers), are a group of Swedish traveller's sometimes associated to the Romani people (Hazell 2002).

5 Facundo Quiroga was a charismatic leader (caudillo) who supported Federal ideas at the time when Argentina was still in formation. Sarmiento in his book *Civilización o Barbarie*, used Quiroga and caudillos as the image of barbarians.

6 “¿hemos de cerrar voluntariamente la puerta a la inmigración europea que llama con golpes repetidos para poblar nuestros desiertos, y hacernos, a la sombra de nuestro pabellón, pueblo innumerable como las arenas del mar?...Después de la Europa, ¿hay otro mundo cristiano civilizable y desierto que la América?”

7 En América gobernar es poblar

8 Gobernar es poblar en el sentido que poblar es educar, mejorar, civilizar, enriquecer y engrandecer espontánea y rápidamente, como ha sucedido en los Estados Unidos.

Juan Bautista Alberdi, 1879 *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina*. Páginas explicativas de Juan B. Alberdi

9 En América todo lo que no es europeo es bárbaro: no hay más división que ésta: 1.º, el indígena, es decir, el salvaje; 2.º, el europeo, es decir, nosotros, los que hemos nacido en América y hablamos español, los que creemos en Jesucristo y no en Pillán (dios de los indígenas).

10 <http://www.incra.gov.br>

11 Misión: Se tiene políticas, planes y programas culturales inclusivos, participativos y transparentes, recuperando los saberes usos y tradiciones de los pueblos indígena, originario, campesinos, comunidades interculturales y afrobolivianos, promoviendo las expresiones artísticas con identidad cultural descolonizada; protegiendo, conservando y potenciando el patrimonio cultural.

Visión: El Ministerio de Culturas es responsable de fortalecer la construcción de un Estado Plurinacional Descolonizado, con identidad basada en principios, espiritualidades, saberes, usos y costumbres del patrimonio cultural, tangible e intangible, estableciendo su soberanía en el marco del Vivir Bien. <http://www.minculturas.gob.bo/mdcb/>

12 Herr Folke Mattsson, som vistas i Sydamerika, i "Colonia Ocampo, Gran Chaco, Republica Argentina", har hemsändt en liten samling etnografiska föremål, samtliga tagna vid öfverrumplingen af ett indianläger d. 3 September 1882, under en expedition mot Toba-indianer. Sakerna, af högst primitif beskaffenhet, bära vittne om förra egarnes ytterliga fattigdom och låga bildningsgrad. Inga vapen finnas i samlingen. Högst oväntadt var, att ifrån detta så fjerran land få bekräftelse på lösningen af gåtan, rörande bestämmelsen af de små runda, genomborrade trissor af lera och sten, hvilka, så väl här i vår Nord, som i andra länder, upptagas ur forngrifter. Bland de skänkta sakerna fanns nemligen en fullständig spinnsten, att begagnas till slända, visande trissan sittande i nedre ändan af tenen och denne öfverspunnen med ullgarn. Samlingen bestod eljest af 23 föremål, nemligen:

Tvenne så kallade "maletas", till att lägga på hästryggen som sadel. (inv N:o 2,051 och 2,052).

Tvenne vattenhemtare, bestående af fruktskal. Kallas "jarong". (inv N:o 2,053 och 2,054); Tvenne mat- och kok-härl. (inv N:o 2,055 och 2,056); En kopp, hvaruti tillredes ett slags rätt af fett. (inv N:o 2,057); En drickeskopp. Dessa fyra sist nämnda af lera. (inv N:o 2,058); En vattenskal af fruktskal. (inv N:o 2,059); En skramla af fruktskal. (inv N:o 2,060); Det ofvannämnda spinnredskapet. (inv N:o 2,061); Ett dylikt utan trissa. När tenen är fullspunnen med ullgarn, sättes trissan på en annan ten. (inv N:o 2,062); Rökepipa. Vid rökande stoppa indianerne så väl piphufvudet som skaftet fulla, på det att röken, som går genom skaftet, skall kännas desto starkare. I stället för tobak rökes ett slags rot sönderkrossad. (inv N:o 2,063); Prof af indiansk flättningskonst. (inv N:o 2,064); En penningpung, innehållande benbitar, begagnade som penningar. (inv N:o 2,065); Tre st. dockor,

(inv N:o 2,066); En indiansk kam. (inv N:o 2,067); Tyngd, att sätta i ändan på en "boleador" eller kastlina, begagnad af indianerne til jagt. (inv N:o 2,068); En nätpåse eller kasse, till att deruti bära fisk, m.m. (inv N:o 2,069); En knifslida. (inv N:o 2,070); Magsäcken af en struts (kasuar?) begagnad som påse. (inv N:o 2,071); Sadeljord. (inv N:o 2,072); Ännu en kam. Men denne, som röjer vida mer konstskicklighet än N:o 2,067, är förfärdigad af "los Indios Matacas", boende vid gränsen af provinsen Falta (the bold type is mine to indicate misspelling: Matacos instead of Matacas, och Salta instead of Falta).

13 The appellation Chaco is used in different senses. Gran Chaco is the geographical area between southern Brazil, western Paraguay, Eastern of Bolivia and center-north Argentina (Trinchero 2000:67). The denomination Chaco in this case included areas of the current provinces of Salta, Santiago del Estero (east), Santa Fe (north), Corrientes (north-west) and the modern province of Chaco had the legal figure of "gubernacion de Chaco" from 1872 until 1945 when it became a province and not a federal area (Maeder 1996:109).

14 Original text on the general catalogue: "äro fr. republiken Columbia i Sydamerika och skänkte af en resande fr. detta land. Señor D. Nicolás Pereira Gamba som 1871 vistades i Sverige". ("they are from the Republica of Colombia in South America and were bestow by a traveler from this country: Señor D. Nicolás Pereira Gamba, who in 1871 sojourned in Sweden" free translation).

15 A. Fröding and Co.

16 Colombia became a country in 1863, before this, together with Panama it was part of Confederación Granadina.

17 Presidente de la Junta Administradora del Camino de Occidente: "Camino Carretero al Magdalena".

18 Nose adornment.

19 In the state's official account of the Kingdom of Quito the central narrative is in many ways a simple war story, that is, a tale of a smaller polity resisting the onslaught of an invading imperial enemy. It is also a story of re-conquest and vengeance, as the defeated Kingdom of Quito reconquers the Incas at the end. In the textbooks the Incas are first hailed as enemies of the Quito nation (read Ecuador), but interestingly enough they are themselves conquered by the region's geography (in the cities of Tomebamba and Quito) and by the beauty of their women (Princess Pacha). The Incas are seduced, resulting in the Inca heir Atahualpa, being born on Ecuadorian soil. Atahualpa not only rightfully reigns over the Quito polity but usurps the Peruvian throne of the Tahuantinsuyu, once the enemy and plunderer of the Quito state. Through Pacha and Atahualpa the Inca conquerors are conquered." (Benavides 2009:141).

20 All the information about the Bräutigam family I have received from Gun Bräutigam and her son Anders. Gun was married to August's son Otto. Otto interviewed his father in 1960, and made a manuscript about the history of the

family. Today there is a copy of this manuscript at the Museum of World Culture archive thanks the donation made by Gun and Anders. More information about this collection in the coming Curiosa or Trophy? The beret of the last Miskitu king at the Museum of World Culture, Sweden by Muñoz.

21 I am going to use the word Miskitu like Claudia Garcia (1996) has proposed in her work “The Making of the Miskitu People of Nicaragua. The Social Construction of Ethnic Identity”.

22 It seems that the contacts were fluent until the Sandinista Revolution in 1979. Bräutigam’s were Nicaraguan consuls in Göteborg during two generations.

23 The Monroe Doctrine was a manifest declared by USA’s president James Monroe in the face of the European economical colonial expansion in the Americas. It was a declaration that faced with the European aggression or invasion, USA should intervene defending the interest of the Americans (including all the continent), nevertheless under the period, Spain invaded the Republic of Dominic twice (1861 and 1865), and the United Kingdom occupied the area of Mosquito Coast and the Malvinas. Under Roosevelt the doctrine became more about defending the interests of the USA investors in Latin America.

24 The creole in this area, is a population of mixed people from Afro-American, European and indigenous but culturally identified themselves as Afro-Americans, speaking a creole English.

25 och det grymma fälttåg, som år 1883 företogs mot indianerna, är en skamfläck på Argentinas vapensköld, som nog inte så lätt utplåna sig.

26 Jag gjorde en del bytesaffärer med indianerna. Tobak fanns att köpa i mr Bridges butik, och tobak satte rödskinnen värde på. De skuro iden i bitar och rökte den i små hvita kritpipor, som äfvenledes stammade från missionen. De gåfvo villigt en båge mot en stäng tobak, värd åtta öre, och ett dussin pilar mot samma valuta. Affären afslöts utan många ord. Jag pekad på det föremål jag gärna ville ha. Dess ägare satte till svar upp en eller flera fingrar, beroende på det antal tobakstycken han önskade. Och så byttes det ena mot det andra utan vidare bråk och prut.

På så sätt fick jag en hel liten samling av hvarjehanda föremål. Det blev minst ett trettiotal nummer. Mr Bridges gaf mig namnen på originalspråket för hvart och ett. Och idag hänga, ligga och stå de nummerade och i finaste ordning i en glasmontre på Göteborgs museum. Ibland går jag dit och tittar på dem. Och då känns det helt tungt i hjärtat, blir det helt vemodigt i tanken. Jag minns, under hvilka förhållanden alla de märkvärdiga föremålen blefvå mina. Och längtan ut, bort, långhän, knackar på själens dörr och pockar på att få stiga in. Men det får den inte. Den är en gäst, som är farligt att hysa... (sida 185)

27 The collection made from this expedition has around 60 items,

28 Carl Skottsberg collected at least two boats (dalkas), one is in Göteborg today, the other/s are in the Ethnographical Museum in Stockholm.

29 Ja, det är sant att invandrare här i landet på grund av sina språksvårigheter av myndigheterna ofta behandlas som omyndiga barn. Det spelar ingen roll om man är sju eller sjuttio år, svenskarna vet ändå bäst. Jag tror att de räknar vår ålder från vår ankomstdag. Därför ska jag börja i första klass till hösten. Jag fyller åtta i år. Jag kom hit den 25 maj 1971. Det är min nya födelsedag. Då brukar jag få massor av leksaker och godis av mina invandrarlekkamrater. Den här boken handlar om oss invandrarbarn mellan sju och sjuttio år och vårt nya liv här i landet (Mahmut Baksi 1979:8–9).

30 The Segregationist Integration.

31 If we want everything to stay as it is, it is necessary that everything changes. Am I clear?.

32 Fred Wilson, a conceptual artist born in 1954. He defines himself as “African, Native American, European and Amerindian” descent. Among other works, he represented USA in Venice in 2003, he has made important exhibitions around the world. [http://www.renabranstengallery.com/WilsonF\\_Article\\_LATimes.html](http://www.renabranstengallery.com/WilsonF_Article_LATimes.html)

33 Mail received September 2006, by a person who wants to be anonymous.

34 Patera is the name given to a kind of boat. Today in southern Spain it is related to the boats coming from Africa with illegal immigrants.

35 Spanish colony in northern Africa in the territory of Morocco.

36 Ciudad Juarez, a city in the border between Mexico and USA.



# Chapter IV: Unruly Passions

## Introduction

In this chapter I would like to explore the process in which collections became (and are) ranked inside the museum. The status of the object is the intersection between the positions (among other) of the people who made the objects, the geographical area where the object was produced, who collected it, who administrates the object today and the political context in which the institution is placed.

I am going to introduce three collections which can be considered “similar” but which have had different status in the museum history. I propose that the status given to these collections has to do with who the collectors and the curators were. It is significant and a common practice that the objects when they arrive at the museum receive an “ethical/aesthetical” status; they can become “beautiful”, “primitive”, “of scientific interest”, etc.

The internal situation of the institution, the stressful interaction between the curators looking for power positions, is reflected in the position that the collection gets. I will try to see what role the internal relationship had for the final position of the objects, affecting how often they became exhibited and published, and the impact on the political sphere of the city. I will also try to see how an institution whose goal is to preserve and deal with memory, can in one moment work against this goal creating an atmosphere of amnesia around some collections.

The composition of the museum staff is decisive in the interpretation and ranking of the collections, and historically in the case of the collections stored in Gothenburg, the staff has mainly been represented by upper middle class. No study about the social structure of the intellectual cultural class of museums (and cultural power) has been made in Gothenburg, however



a strong network of relationships can be observed in at least the past 100 years. Apparently, the composition of these elites has changed but digging deeper it can be observed that the power is still in the same networks (Brodin and Carlander 2006).

Since the 1970's women became incorporated in the management of collections as conservators, which meant taking care of the objects, but the knowledge was still in the hands of men. It is only since the last part of the 1990's that there are been female curators at the Ethnographical Museum, and when the Museum of World Culture opened the curatorial staff were women and men. However, in the area of collections little has been done to modify the existent knowledge, produced many years ago by a particular group of people, so the old information and status quo is the one that still is exercised.

As it was pointed out before, the composition of the staff is significant especially in relation to the mission of the institution. Since the museum became the Museum of World Culture, democratization and diversification can be observed in the incorporation of women and younger people, though questions about class, belonging, ethnicity and other issues that correspond to the current society are still points that should be worked on.

Coming back to the collections, the three collections came in different times, but the people involved in the collecting process were coetaneous. One of them, Erland Nordenskiöld, was the teacher of the other two, Stig Rydén and Henry Wassén. The collections were made in the 1930's, 1940's and 1970's, so the political and cultural situation in Gothenburg and in the world was different over time. Once the collections arrived and stayed in Gothenburg, they were considered in very different ways. It could be supposed that the ranking in which these collections were placed had and has to do, with the qualities of the objects, the information, the possibility to make research or the aesthetical possibility of the objects to be exhibited.

However, in the end, the more important factor to create this unofficial ranking was the internal relationship, the conflicts between the curators. A game of alliances, a race for power, and bullying became important aspects in the final position of the collections at the museum. Remarkably this positioning somehow became institutionalized and passed on as a legacy to the coming generations. Until today, the position of the collections, the *ad hoc* ranking that exists has never been discussed or deeply analyzed by the staff. Instead, the common practice has been to accept this ranking and reproduce a practice established in the 1940's.

Another peculiar situation is that the collections came to represent the collector. In one specific case, the collections made by Stig Rydén became, together with him, *persona non-grata*. The collections faded into oblivion, always considered ugly, not interesting, impossible to be part of an exhibition, etc; reaching the extreme that in some cases, unconsciously (or not), the objects were treated disrespectfully almost to the limit of erasing them. The collections made by Rydén became not a representation of Rydén, but in some way they became him, and the mistreatment could continue even after he moved away from the museum and continued as a practice, without knowing anything about Rydén.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss how human relationships influenced the position of collection, the making of knowledge, the way of creating exhibitions, and in the end, in some ways that institutions that have as a goal to keep memories can instead produce amnesia, and how this situation was transmitted to the general public. The ranking that I am going to introduce is an unspoken ranking, not an official practice.

## **Making collections, memory in museums, staff relationships**

The idea of a museum is to hold, acquire and administrate collections and to study, show and preserve them for future generations. However, as Nick Merriman (Merriman 2008) pointed out, the majority of the collections never have been shown, presented, or published and nobody has been able to define the needs of the future generations. This is not an exception for the collections at the Museum of World Culture. As I presented in Chapter II few collections have been studied, and the information today is very old; few collections have been presented and discussed in exhibitions, and often the same objects are coming back under different topics. Most of the collections have been buried in storage and from time to time a “new discovery” is made in the storage. This situation creates a sense of a prevailing mausoleum in the storage rooms, creating a sacred feeling.

The ranking of collections, from those most esteemed to those which have become forgotten, is a long process. There are some practices that had more impact in the formation of the collections; such as the requisite to have examples from every “tribe” and geographical area. In this encyclopaedic ideal it was sometime impossible to send expeditions or exchange with other institutions, so acquiring looted material was an alternative. It could be that

the museum went to auctions and bought materials or that some donors provided objects for those empty or precious areas. The idea of emptiness (areas without examples) was exploited for fund-raisers. Obviously, the objects bought in auctions were always of “good aesthetical quality” perfect to be shown in exhibitions.

The idea of precious areas and cultures is something that it is not explicitly pointed out, but in the praxis of collecting it can be observed that some areas and culturally associated objects, like Peruvian or Colombian, are more valued than others (Figure 28 and 29 in Chapter II, relation between acquisition and countries) and almost all the pre-Spanish conquest material from these two countries are products of looting, although in some cases registered as anonymous donations. Also, it is important to remark that, for example, Peru has had laws of protection of the country’s cultural heritage since early 1900, so the way to complete the “encyclopaedia” was with the help of looted material.

Many times it has been pointed out that the morality of those early years of collecting was very different from that applied today. In reality, the collectors and curators knew very well that it was unethical. A typical example can be illustrated in a letter from Karl Gustav Izikowitz to Henry Wassén when he was studying in Cambridge under the tutorship of Boris Malinowsky in 1935:

“On religious history seminar here they run only with morality, ethics, and the devil and his grandmother. How about approximately 30-40 participants in an ethnographic seminar? There are more ethnographers in the world than you suspect apparently. Well, a large percentage are not real ethnographers but English colonial blokes (old men) who learn the best way to educate negroes and coloured people in order to collect treasures from them”<sup>1</sup> (Izikowitz 1935).

As usual the comment is without condemnation, but told as an anecdote<sup>2</sup>. However a common motivation was the role as saviour. Collecting was the way to save the universal cultural heritage for the coming generations, and this goal was higher than any ethical dilemma. It became common to hide the origin of the collections, the donor or collector, to put moral issues of why they took objects from others to preserve for the coming future. Many times a paradox of practice can be observed. The idea was to save “other’s” material culture for the future, because they are disappearing whilst the observation about how people are disappearing imply that: an observation. Scholars and travellers were aware about the impact of modernism but were silent in the face of the exclusion and annihilation (compare Chapter III, the

position of Skottsberg). These travellers, anthropologists, men of science were observing, knowing the results of political and military actions, and collecting the material culture as an evidence of coming absences.

Magnus Fiskesjö pointed out that the museums inside the Administration of National Museums of World Culture in Sweden (including the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg) were engaged in the acquisition of objects of doubtful provenance, mainly products of looting, and purchased, collected and /or donated by prominent citizens who were looking for social prestige and recognition from the nation-state-sponsored museums (Fiskesjö 2007:7). Following a strange logic, the collected cultures were presented as weak and primitive and not able to protect their objects and keep them in good condition. The collector (looter, donor) in these cases became a rescuer saving those objects, art objects, from savagery and keeping them safe in civilization.

I suppose that looted material in some cases also has a higher status because of the difficulty in acquiring it. They are expensive and extraordinary objects, there are not so many of their kind and the competition to own them is very high. It is a process of making cultural objects into commodities, however arriving at the museum the objects are deactivated, in a process of decommmodification. This deactivation according to Igor Kopytoff, leaves the objects open not only for various kinds of singularization but also to individual (as opposed to collective) redefinitions (Kopytoff 2003:76). The way in which objects become redefined is an important question in the ranking of collections.

## **Paracas, Niño Korin and Rio Loa. The fate of three collections**

I am going to present here briefly three collections (figure 45), to contrast how feelings and personal relationships have influenced those objects, how categories of perception and appreciation (Bourdieu 1989:14) have been created to construct images, values and status.

Stefan Jonsson suggests in his essay about the Paracas textiles from collections of the Museum of World Culture that there are three different systems of meaning that have determined the interpretation of the textiles in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the ethno-archaeological viewpoint, the aesthetical



*Figure 45: Geographical areas from where the collections originate.*

viewpoint and the ideological viewpoint (Jonsson 2010). I think that this intersection of viewpoints is very useful for the interpretation and understanding of the objects in general inside the museum. In the ideological sphere, different levels can be observed, the political and the theoretical, among others.

Virginia Dominguez pointed out that the ethnological value of a collection is calculated in terms of its completeness, the age of its items, or the “beauty” of its pieces. However, these values have more to do with market terms where scarcity, supply and demand define the uniqueness and final value (Dominguez 1986:551–552). One more factor that could be included is who the collector is. In the history of collecting practices at the museum in Gothenburg it can be observed that the purchase of collections made by well renowned scientists was prioritized.

The “most appreciable” collection of the museum is the so-called Paracas Collection (which is owned by the city of Gothenburg). There is no other collection from the museum that is so well known in the city of Gothenburg as the Paracas Collection. Paracas has become a symbol, and a powerful symbol. It is interesting to confront what Paracas meant (and means) for the curators, the public, the politicians, the city of Gothenburg, and at last for the Peruvians.

I have chosen the so-called Paracas Collection as the prototype for how a collection becomes the queen of collections, and how much obsession and mania a group of objects can bear. This collection is also interesting in how the concept of beauty has been highlighted. This collection is without doubt a magnificent one, but how it has been handled during 80 years is questionable.

The second collection is from Niño Korin in Bolivia which partially has been presented in Chapter II. This collection was bought surrounded by confusing information about the origin. When it came to Gothenburg it was the focus of scientists, doing advanced research for those times. At that moment, Henry Wassén was the director of the Ethnographical Museum and the person who ordered this collection from La Paz. His position resulted in the collection achieving an important place in the museum.

The third collection is one from Rio Loa (without a proper name) in Chile. This is also a great collection but one that never has been in focus. This collection was bought not only because of the quality of the objects, but also to exemplify a theory, to show the contacts between the Pacific coast and the area of Chaco. This collection shows how the poor relationship between Stig Rydén and the director of the ethnographical department, Walter Kaudern, affected the fate of these objects condemning them to oblivion. The ideological and political struggle of the 1940's is reflected in this case.

These three collections all have beautiful objects, so the aesthetical value is not a parameter of discussion. The collections made by Stig Rydén from the Tiahuanaco area are the largest at the museum (around 10000 numbers) but I am not going to use them for this discussion because these materials could not “compete” against the other two in “beauty”. The materials from Tiahuanaco are product of Rydén's fieldwork in the area and there are many fragments of ceramic and bones. Those collections have never been exhibited or studied, after Rydén presented them in 1947 (Rydén 1947), they have been forgotten.

## The Paracas Collection

The so called Paracas collection is the only group of objects that the municipality of Gothenburg kept after the move of the administration of the museum to the State. The municipality is the owner, however the collection is deposited at the Museum of World Culture. Obviously there are many questions around why the city of Gothenburg did not want to leave this collection to the state, and more speculations than answers. The fact is that a group of textiles coming from different collections became “the so-called Paracas textiles” and owned by the City.

“The municipality transfers the museum collections free of charge, except the so-called Paracas textiles which are deposited to the state, as well as inventory, rental agreement, etc,- the so-called Paracas textiles are deposited by the municipality to the new administration, as long as the State is the trustee for the administration.”<sup>3</sup> (Göteborgs-stad 1998:3; Statens Museer för Världskultur and Göteborgs Stad 2005).

The so-called Paracas textiles collection is not one collection but 89 textiles coming from different collections. The textiles arrived in Gothenburg in 1932 and 1935. They were a donation made by the Swedish Ambassador in Lima. The ambassador donated many objects, the majority between 1932 and 1935 (Esteban Johansson 2005, forthcoming). The collections donated by him also include ceramics, wood, baskets, etc. But only textiles (those associated to Paracas Period), became part of the so-called Paracas collection. This *ad hoc* construction made by media with help from the museum was taken over by politicians. In the middle of the 1980’s the situation of the museum storage rooms was catastrophic, it was humid and the material was decaying. A group of archaeology students took the initiative to contact the local newspapers. After this, a movement to save the objects started. The emphasis was put on the textiles, drawing in part on the aesthetic quality and on the fact that they were old.

All the circumstances around the origin and arrival in Gothenburg were obscured in a tacit agreement between the people at the museum (in those times Ethnographical Department at the *Göteborg museum*) and the donor; obviously because the objects originally were looted. The collection was registered as an anonymous donation, and this information was kept hidden until a couple of years ago. In 2008, the collection was presented in the exhibition “Stolen World” where the emphasis was put in the process of looting of cultural heritage (Jonsson 2010)<sup>4</sup>.

Handelsbörningen 25/11 1932

# Etnografica från Peru.

14 T 25/11 32

Specialutställning öppnad på Göteborgs Museum i dag.



Några av de utställda föremålen.

I dag kl. 2 öppnas en intressant utställning i en av de mindre salar i Göteborgs museum etnografiska avdelning. Utställningen består av nyförvärvade föremål från Peru. Dr Walter Kaudern demonstrerade de nya samlingarna i dag på morgonen för några inbjudna.

— De föremål vi här ha fått äro särskilt intressanta, säger dr Kaudern. De ha sänts oss av en person, som inte önskar få sitt namn nämnt. Han har dessutom ställt i utsikt, att vi i framtiden skola få ännu en värdefull samling av liknande saker. Tyvärr är det så, att de saker man får från

dessa trakter inte äro funna av vetenskapsmän utan av gravplundrare. Myndigheterna äro så njugga med tillstånd för vetenskapliga utgrävningar, att gravplundrarna äro de enda, som komma åt föremålen. Sådana personer ha naturligtvis inte någon aning om etnografi, utan samla på en slump sådant, som de tro sig om att kunna avyttra. Många gånger klippa de rent av bort de delar på en vävnad, som de finna vara fula och skämmande för saken i sin helhet. Det blir även mycket svårt för oss att sedan bestämma, vilka av föremålen, som höra samman.

Den nu utställda samlingen består av

vävnader, kläder, peruker och keramik. Föremålen, som alldeles säkert härröra från en tid, som ligger före Kolumbus, äro synnerligen väl konserverade. Detta beror, åtminstone enligt mitt förmenande, på att luften i dessa trakter är mycket torr, där regnar ju nästan aldrig. Vidare torde den rikliga tillgången på salpeter i jorden inverka konserverande. Vävnaderna utmärka sig för synnerligen vackra och originella mönster, och keramiken visar även prov på stor konstfärdighet. En märklig sak är de små syskin, som funnits i en del gravar. De nålar, som hittats i dessa, ha ordentliga ögon och äro till formen sådana som de, som nu anses vara de modernaste.

Figure 46: Newspaper article from 1932 in relation to the opening exhibition with the Paracas textiles. Walter Kaudern (director of the Ethnographical Department) referred to the “anonymous donor”. It is remarkable that Kaudern pointed out the looting in the area as a problem to understand the context of the objects.

One trivia around the collection is the explanation given to the public about how the collection arrived in Gothenburg. As late as the 1990's it was stated in some newspapers and in the guides of the museum: “one day a few years into the thirties, a consignment arrived at the Ethnographic Museum in Gothenburg.



Tisdag 10 mars

LOKALT

Arbetet

3

# Tygen håller inte längre

Nu måste den ovärderliga skatten av 2000-åriga indiantextilier räddas

AV INGEGERD SVEDEBERG / GÖTEBORG

**O**kända och outforskade. De har legat där som lida ting! säger Helene Axel-Nilsson, textilingenjör vid Göteborgs Etnografiska Museum.

Det är en ovärderlig skatt som måste räddas. Kanske vår motsvarighet till Stockholm Vasstmuseum.

Hon talar om den fantastiska samlingen av gamla textilier från sydamerikanska indian-kulturer, 1400 föremål, som finns i Etnografiska museets ägo, och i synnerhet det hundratals textilier som kommer från halvön Paracas söder om Lima i Peru.

#### RÄDDNINGSAKTION

De är 2000 år gamla, tekniskt fulländade väva och broderade färgsprakande och med fantastiska motiv som skildrar ett skriftlöst folks religiösa och mytologiska berättelser. En värld fylld av fåglar, kattjur, fiskar, grodor och kräftdjur. Motiv som fortfarande lever i den sydamerikanska kulturen. Textilerna har långsamt brutits ned och är nu så sköra att de inte går att rengöra eller konservera på traditionellt sätt. Det är syret som är den största boken. Textilerna borde helst förvaras i vakuum. Nu pågår en intensiv räddningsaktion inom det så kallade Paracasprojektet. Pengarna ska användas för uppbyggnaden av ett särskilt magasin och utställningslokal för textilerna.

#### ANNONSKAMPANJ

– Vi behöver tio miljoner, säger insamlingsgeneralen och museets marknadsansvariga Moca Odesjö. Idag har vi cirka 1,5 miljoner. Vi hoppas få ihop fem miljoner från stiftelser, fonder och donationer. Vi har bearbetat företagen men det har gått mycket dåligt. Vi känner av likviditetskrisen. Nu vänder vi oss till allmänheten i en annonskampanj som startar snart.

Samlingen är av mycket hög klass, verkligen något för göteborgarna att vara stolta över, säger Sven-Erik Isacson, förste intendent på Etnografiska museet. En likvärdig finns bara i Peru.

Han har varit där för att få igång ett samarbete. Intresset är lika stort från båda sidor.

#### HEMLIG DONATOR

Hur samlingen hamnat i Sverige är en gåta. Enligt Sven-Erik Isacson härrör den sannolikt från en arkeologisk utgrävning på Paracashalvön 1927. I mitten av 30-talet donerades den till Etnografiska museet. Donatorn ville vara anonym och man vet fortfarande inte, varken officiellt eller inofficiellt vem det är.

Den nya förvaringslokalen ska förhoppningsvis vara klar 1994, lagom till den stora amerikanskongressen som ska hållas i Sverige då, med bland



Detalj av en prakttextil som är den enda av sitt slag i världen, broderad med öglesygn, likadan på båda sidor. Fyrtalets symbolik styr bildspråket. Resten av ytan upptas av hundratals miniatyrmotiv, från djur och växtvärlden, som skildrar religiösa begrepp och mytiska väsen ofta med mänskliga drag.

FOTO: PAI-NILS NILSSON

annat studiebesök till Göteborg. 20-talet, säger Isacson. – Jag ser i gamla klipp att vi faktiskt tjuvat om det här sen

tenskaplig forskning med deltagande av bland annat Socialantropologiska institutionen vid Göteborgs universitet och Svenska Textilforskningsinstitutet i Göteborg.

Figure 47: Newspaper article from 1992 in relation to the rescue action on Paracas textiles. Here the “secret donor” is referred to. It is notable that the statement is that the museum does not know who the donor is: “The donor wished to remain anonymous and still today we do not know officially or unofficially who he was” (Donatorn ville vara anonym och man vet fortfarande inte officiellt eller inofficiellt vem det är).

In a single suitcase were old, splendid textiles rolled up, the sender was anonymous. It soon became clear that the approximately one hundred textiles were most likely grave finds from Paracas in the south of Peru. How on earth had they ended up in Gothenburg? Who was the donor?<sup>5</sup> (Snidare 1992; Svedberg 1992/03/10; Tham 1994; and personal communication by Christine Palmgren and Helena Ågren)<sup>6</sup> (figures 46 and 47).

It is interesting to note that an agreement made in the 1930s' was still regarded as valid in the last part of the 1990s'. The legacy of the administration of the collections between curators included the acceptance of the promise made when the collection arrived. I remember that when the question about the donation came up in the former Ethnographical Museum, the answer from the direction team was "the museum had and has a gentlemen's agreement". More interesting is that outside Sweden, for example in Lima and Buenos Aires, the name of the donor was well known and associated to other Paracas collections spread in different countries (Isabel Iriarte, *Museo Etnográfico de Buenos Aires*, personal information).

So, I understand the wall of silence constructed in the 1930s' when the objects were looted in Peru and came illegally to Sweden; probably in the 1990s' the fear of repatriation demands was the ghost that made the mystery continue and in the end, the objects stayed at the safe municipality instead of going to the insecure State. However an observation can be made, when something is said without discussion, after a couple of times it becomes true or dogma. But of course, this is only speculation about some trivial information. In fact, in 2010 the Peruvian government presented a request for repatriation for the so-called Paracas Collection to the Swedish Foreign Affairs ministry. Today the question is at the level of the municipality which is the formal owner of the collection<sup>7</sup>.

In Gothenburg, from 1932 to the present, the collection has always been contemplated with pride and considered as a jewel. The textiles have almost always been exhibited with exception of a short period of 8 years, from when the former Ethnographical Museum closed to the public in 2000, until the new presentation in the Museum of World Culture in 2008.

From 2000 and onwards a discussion about the conservation of the textiles has been ongoing (Javér 2011; Javér Kristianssen 2002). The almost 70 years of exhibition and handling have produced much damage to the objects (Javér Kristianssen 2002), nevertheless it has been almost impossible not to exhibit them. The idea<sup>8</sup> that the municipality, politicians and general public want to see the Paracas textiles, has been an important factor in deciding to put them on display again. It is interesting that the

concept of treasure has increased over time. In the beginning the textiles and the collections as a whole were seen more as important aesthetical and cultural material from the Paracas peninsula. In the 1950's the textiles were not sacred at all, for instance they were used by models, and in the 1994 exhibition they were presented as a cultural phenomena from the past, and connected to current populations today (Etnografiska museet i Göteborg 1994). In the 2008 exhibition, they are presented as treasures in a separate room with glossy walls giving an exotic feeling. Nevertheless, in spite of the exoticness of the presentation, the goal was to discuss the problem of looting, generating a paradox between the goal and the form.

The textiles from Paracas have never been studied in depth by archaeologists. They have been presented by Henry Wassén (only three objects) (Wassén 1950), Anne Paul in 1979 (Paul 1979); and further studied by Sven-Erik Isacson. There have been many approaches made by textile conservators, art historians, artisans, etc. Many millions of Swedish Crowns have been put into the conservation, presentation, and the study of the collections, but again, never has an archaeologist been permanently connected to the study, and the collections that include Paracas textiles have never been studied using a holistic approach (only the textiles). In 2008, the museum employed Leonid Velarde, a Peruvian archaeologist, for two weeks, to look closely at the material (Velarde 2007). It is interesting to note that until today, the material from Paracas is still considered only as a Peruvian instead of an Andean phenomenon. The national borders imposed on the area are those which have been applied to understand and present the Paracas material to the public.

When the textiles arrived in the 1930s', Stig Rydén was the first assistant at the museum with a Ph-D in archaeology. Despite his degree he never became involved in the registration, classification or publication of the collection. Some years later Henry Wassén (Wassén 1950) published one of the first articles about three objects from one of the collections coming from the same context, two pieces of ceramic, a head (probably a fake) and a female figure, and the third a baton made of wood. The first article about an object (the most appreciable, the textile no. 1935.32.0179, figure 48) from the collection in Gothenburg was published by Raoul d'Harcourt (d'Harcourt 1948).

The Paracas textiles and the rest of the collections arrived in Gothenburg thanks to the relationship that the Swedish ambassador in Peru had with the city of Gothenburg, its politicians and with Erland Nordenskiöld, director of the Ethnographical Department. Erland Nordenskiöld was an important figure in the city, not only because of his position in the museum



Figure 48: Object no:1935.32.0179. Textile from Paracas, the both faces are identical. It was placed in the middle of the chest of a mummy package. ©Museum of World Culture.

but also because he was a Baron, the son of Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld and member of the Nordenskiöld family. The relationship between the donor and the city it is very remarkable. He continued donating collections until the 1950's, in some cases anonymously. After him other cultural attachés and ambassadors continued with this practice. Probably, in the beginning, it was the personal relationship between people that was important, but after some decades it also became important to give American collections to an Americanist museum, that was what the Ethnographical Museum in Gothenburg became.

The position of the Paracas collection at the top of the ranking list of collections started to be constructed as soon as it arrived in Gothenburg in 1932. Stig Rydén and Henry Wassén, assistants (curators<sup>9</sup>) at the museum, brought part of the collections, among other the most beautiful textiles to the hospital where Nordenskiöld was admitted (and died the same year) to show him the objects. After Nordenskiöld died, the collection was presented to the public without naming the donor, especially because the Peruvian ambassador would be present at the opening of the exhibition (Paracas archive). However, from 1932 until today when a repatriation claim has been presented almost all ambassadors have been proud that the museum had Peruvian material that is shown to the Swedish public.

However, the trouble with Paracas, ranked as the most beautiful and important American collection in Gothenburg is that those objects have

always been taken from their context. As Ames pointed out, problems happen when material culture is recontextualized as “primitive art” or when the museum highlights only the aesthetic quality of the artefacts (Ames 1991:8), creating, at first the competition to have the same kind of objects, and secondly producing a commodification of a culture. Coming back to Chapter II, the problem of classification as art, craft, folk art, western and non-western is a discriminatory judgement giving the feeling of an objective classification. Following again Ames, artefacts hold a lower rank than art in the Western prestige system, and craft is even lower down the scale of public worth (Ames 1991:8). The Paracas textiles have been considered almost like art, while design and textile craft has a very high status in the Swedish milieu.

Also, we could consider Paracas as a fragment. It is a fragment in many ways, because it was looted losing context, because it was moved from its original place, but also because it was constructed as a collection gathering together only textiles and detaching them from the other objects (ceramics, Peruvians, south Americans) and making of them a group to be admired. The fact of creating this group, made the separation bigger between objects, collections and subjects. According to Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett we make fragments, in some way making fragments creates a special aesthetic, or better aesthetical principles creates fragments (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991:388). For Kirshenblatt-Gimblett the artfulness of the ethnographic object is an art of detachment.

In the case of Paracas textiles, it can be observed around the world that those objects have been a target for looting since they were “discovered” until today, and not much research has been done on them. In the case of Gothenburg, important sums of money have been invested in the textiles (principally since the 1990’s in conservation, but also in photographic documentation), however until today the only publication that presents the collection is the one made by Anne Paul in the 1970’s (Paul 1979). Probably the basis for the creation of a collection called Paracas is to be found in Ann Paul’s research, due to the fact that she took only textiles to study.

As it was pointed out before, from 1932 until 1950 Stig Rydén was curator at the museum. He was an archaeologist, very well trained and published a wide range of books and articles about South American Archaeology, but also history, and translated some texts, etc. The question is why he never became involved in the documentation and publication of the material from Paracas. The material was exhibited in the South American section from the middle of the 1930s. Nobody was studying or publishing

anything about the textiles until Raoul d'Harcourt in 1949 remarked on the importance and impressiveness of one textile. Probably the silence was product of the "commitment" made by gentlemen, but still it is peculiar that Rydén never became involved.

## Niño Korin

The collection numbered 1970.19 (Wassén 1972) and called Niño Korin, came to the Ethnographic Museum of Gothenburg following a visit by its Director, Henry Wassén, to La Paz in 1970 for the International Americanist Congress in Lima. After participating in the congress in Peru he went to Bolivia, where he saw an interesting collection at the Archaeological Museum in La Paz. Through contacts he made in Bolivia, he was able to order a similar collection for the museum in Gothenburg (Muñoz 2008). The political situation in Bolivia at that time was very complicated. It will be remembered that only a couple of years earlier (1967) Che Guevara had been killed there while attempting to start a revolutionary focus in Bolivia. Guevara's murder was not the end of a very difficult situation. The government was under pressure from left-wing parties, indigenous movements, mine workers, and other actors. Bolivia returned to elected civilian rule in 1982 after a turbulent four-year transition from a period of military rule that had begun in 1964. The only important political party to survive the military period was the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR), the party that led the 1952 Bolivian Revolution (Cott 2003:756).

Bolivia has had one of the least stable political histories in Latin America, with frequent coups interrupting brief periods of elected civilian rule since independence in 1825. The most recent democratic period began in 1982 (Cott 2003:755).

In the 1970's, the export of cultural heritage was forbidden, which explains why the information and form of acquisition of the Niño Korin collection was unclear and somewhat confused. The circumstances surrounding the acquisition are obscure, but we know that the man who sold the collection, Oblitas Fernandez, had a longstanding link with the museum. Bolivia in the 1970's was a dictatorship, and in such circumstances the law is unclear (Capriles Flores 2003). In 2007 the Bolivian government demanded the repatriation of Niño Korin.

The demand for repatriation was later extended to all Bolivian objects in the museum collections, about 17,000 in all. The dialogue on the matter

is now being conducted by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bolivian government through its embassy (Muñoz 2008).

The letters in the museum archive make clear that Wassén ordered a collection like the one he saw in La Paz, and for this he offered 1,000 US Dollars (catalogue information at the Museum of World Culture). Wassén's principal interest in this collection was not only the quality of the objects but the presence of hallucinogenic plants among the material and in the archaeological context (Wassén 1965). Since the beginning of the 1960s he had been interested in the use of drugs among different South American cultures.

Once the collection came to Gothenburg Wassén started an intensive correspondence with many scholars, especially in USA, and he also engaged a group of scientists to make different kinds of analysis on the material, such as radiocarbon, botanical and anatomical analysis. In the beginning Henry Wassén thought that the collection corresponded to the Paracas period (500 BC – 100AD)<sup>10</sup>, however the results of the radiocarbon dating put the collection in the Tiwanaku period (700-1100 AD) (Wassén 1972). The fact that Wassén thought the collection as contemporary to the Paracas is interesting in two ways: first showing the importance that Paracas had for him, trying to find something similar in other collections; probably he bought this collection thinking in a possibility to find Paracas material in Bolivia (this is a supposition). Secondly it is strange that Wassén thought that the material was Paracas because Tiwanaku material was well-known in the 1970's, and Niño Korin is without doubt typical Tiwanaku. Speculating more, Wassén was probably blind to recognising Tiwanaku because of the power that the Paracas collection had over him or as Hodder (Hodder 2003) pointed out, because his background and knowledge made him unable to see other possibilities at that moment; although these are my own speculations, the fact is that at as soon as the Niño Korin collection was in Gothenburg, he contacted people and presented the collection as Paracas (Henry Wassén's personal archive at the Museum of World Culture).

Wassén interpreted the collection with emphasis on the presence of hallucinogens. He knew that the collection was part of a medicine man's belongings, and he referred many times to the Kallawayas<sup>11</sup>, but still the emphasis was on the hallucinogenic complex. Every object in the collection was thought to have been associated with using narcotics (Wassén 1972; Wassén and Bondeson 1973). Henry Wassén's publication became a very well-known and quoted work in South America and a reference for people working on Tiwanaku (Augustyniak 2004; Glowacki 2005; Mendoza 2003; Torres and Repke 2006).

Many of the objects from this collection have been exhibited during the history of the Ethnographical Museum. The fact that Henry Wassén became director of the museum elevated this collection to one of those which were often in focus.

During 2009, we ran a project at the museum around this collection; we invited MD Walter Alvarez Quispe, who is also a Kallawayá, to study the collection. The change in the interpretation was colossal. Wassén saw in the collection the shaman who used drugs for a hallucinogenic trip. Quispe understood the collection as the tools of a medicine doctor, as well as teaching tools, where the plants in the collection were not used for the personal trip of the shaman, but for the use as anaesthetic for patients and herbarium, and he concluded that probably the collection were the tools for a gynaecologist (Loza and Alvarez Quispe 2009). However, the most important moments during Quispe's study was the "discovery" of a *Wiphala*<sup>12</sup> among the collection. This flag has been the focus of many discussions during the last decades in Bolivia. Some people argues that it is the product of new *indigenismo* (*neo indigenismo*), others are certain that it stems from a long tradition that survived the Spanish colonization. This object had been classified at the museum as a bag for holding coca, but looking closer there is no doubt that it is a Wiphala (figure 34 in chapter II).

One amazing result after the study of the collection made by Quispe and Loza was the fact of changing an epistemological paradigm. The knowledge about the collection given by Quispe helped the museum to come closer to a de-colonial practice (Mignolo 2009; Tuhiwai Smith 1999) of museological practice.

## Rio Loa

Stig Rydén was curator at the Ethnographical Department from 1927 to 1953. He got his Ph-D in archaeology in 1935 about his archaeological fieldworks in Argentina (Rydén 1936). Rydén was not only an archaeologist, but he also made anthropological and historical studies on South American topics. Aside from his work in Argentina (Rydén 1936) he also conducted fieldwork in Chile (Rydén 1944) and Bolivia (Rydén 1941; Rydén 1947; Rydén 1957a). The archaeological works in Bolivia were supplemented with ethnographical fieldwork among the Sirionó (Rydén 1941), which resulted in a publication and in a documentary film<sup>13</sup>. He also studied the origin of



some collections made by students of Carl von Linne (Rydén 1957b; Rydén 1965), as well as the relations between South America and Sweden earlier in the XVII century (Rydén 1950; Rydén 1954).

In 1938 he went to Chile and Bolivia to carry out fieldwork. Rydén carried out extensive fieldwork and his research is still material of consult in the Andean area (Cáceres and Berenguer 1996; Janusek 2008; Scattolin, et al. 2005). His work regarding Rio Loa is still cited in the publications about the area (Rydén 1944). He also collected and bought material, particularly to demonstrate Erland Nordenskiöld's theories about contacts east- west (Amazonia-Andean contacts) in South America (Nordenskiöld 1906; Nordenskiöld 1912; Nordenskiöld 1919; Nordenskiöld 1920; Nordenskiöld 1930; Nordenskiöld 1931; Rydén 1956). This axis was later changed, influenced mainly by American scholars, to explanations involving north-south Andean contacts (Rowe 1945; Rowe 1946; Rowe 1966). In the last decennia, scholars have started to look again at Amazonia, and Rydén's work and collections have become very important scientifically. Nordenskiöld and Rydén had particular interest in the Amazonian area; they saw this region as an important object to study and not as savage and uncivilized. Since his first expeditions to Argentina and Bolivia, Nordenskiöld had become fascinated with the history of the lowlands areas, first with Chaco, later with the Bolivian lowlands.

The collection from northern Chile that is going to be presented here was acquired by Rydén during his sojourn in Chile during 1938. He had plans to carry out fieldwork in the area of Atacama (Rydén 1944) and being there he came into contact with an American who told him about an interesting place in the mining area of Chuquicamata; so he changed his original plans and went there to start his surveys<sup>14</sup> (Rydén 1938/09/19).

During his fieldwork in the area, he came in contact with a German engineer, F.J. Rudershausen. Who Rudershausen was is very unclear, it seems that he was working in a mine in Chuquicamata; at least it is clear that he was living there temporarily. Rudershausen had an important collection from the Rio Loa area, and very good information about the finds. Rydén evaluated that the collection was good in the quality of the objects and perfect because there was archaeological contextual information about every item. This particular collection contains some objects that for Stig Rydén were the evidence of contacts between the Pacific coast with the lowlands to the Chaco area; so he contacted the museum director, Walter Kaudern in order to make agreements for the purchase of the collection.

Chuquicamata: letter from Stig Rydén to Walter Kaudern (Rydén 1938/09/19)

“An American told me that near the mining town of Chuquicamata were Indian relics, and so I gave up the old itinerary and managed with a car to come on the high plateau to a point where one of the mining company’s trucks picked me up and brought me to the Rio Loa. There I had to wait for five hours until another American transported me and my large luggage up to Chuquicamata. The journey took in all one day. I got in touch with a German engineer, in Chuquicamata, Mr. Rudershausen, who himself is very interested in ancient remains up here. Through him I got some information. The next day I went thus about 30 km east of Chuquicamata. Down in the Loa valley on a mountainous headland in the river I found an entire city with about 150 houses ... ..

My German friend here, Engineer FJ Rudershausen, address Chuquicamata, Chile, has an excellent collection of about 200 objects. Among those are the only gold objects from this area known to me: five or six simply worked gold plates, a leather harness!, baskets, arrows, bows, pottery, several turquoise objects, etc.. the best thing about the collection is that he knows where every item comes from, and which objects have been found together ... His collection approximates the one in Oslo that Montell published ... We have talked about possibly publishing it together with the publication I hope to create about the things I have seen here at Rio Loa...”<sup>15</sup>

In a first communication Walter Kaudern accepts that Stig Rydén buys this collection. However, something happened later and the relationship between Kaudern, Rydén and the purchase of the collection became imbued with misunderstandings.

The same year, Rudershausen sent a letter to Kaudern with a list of the objects (without naming the gold plates), photos of the excavations, and apparently an article he wrote about the origin of the objects (Rudershausen 1938/11/12). Kaudern answered to Rudershausen the 4<sup>th</sup> May 1939 (Kaudern 1939/05/04), and wrote that Stig Rydén had taken the impudence and insolence to offer to buy this collection in the name of the museum of Gothenburg, and sent back to Rudershausen all the material he sent (photos, lists and information about the origin of the objects). The general tone of the letter is reproachful against Rydén. All the original information about the context of the objects, included in Rudershausen’s manuscript, disappeared

under these circumstances. It could be supposed that Rudershausen received everything, and subsequently became disappointed with the situation.

However, before Rydén knew about this letter he already had bought the collection with his private money. He paid 20 pound sterling for the collection. In May 1939, Rudershausen moved to Los Angeles, USA and cut the contacts with Rydén and the museum.

Stig Rydén could sell the collection to the museum in 1942, after Kaudern died. He published the material alone, without the contribution of Rudershausen. The collection originates from a cemetery close to Chiu-Chiu. Rydén pointed out that *because of the political conditions* he could not have supplementary information about this collection in the way he would like to have. He also said that Rudershausen had information that some objects came from the same graves but he does not know which are those that should be associated together (Rydén 1944:94).

Obviously, the political conditions he named in his publication as an obstacle to have more information about the collection was the situation in Gothenburg and his relationship with Kaudern.

The collection has 409 objects described by Rydén in 1944. He put emphasis on those that could demonstrate the connections that could have existed in pre-Hispanic times, between the lowlands to the East. Rydén was trying to demonstrate Erland Nordenskiöld's hypothesis of contacts between the lowlands and highlands, and the importance of the lowlands cultural component (Nordenskiöld 1920). Among the objects are a sack made with the nose of a coati, armour made of alligator (figure 49) and bows made of raw material from the Chaco area (Rydén 1944). The collection also contains ceramics, arrows, nets, one copper spade, calabashes, baskets, textiles, feathers, an instrument to deform craniums, etc (see appendix about Rio Loa).

“The newly added collection gives a rich picture of the now extinct Atacama Indians' way of life, and what is more: an investigation of the collection, undertaken by the undersigned has provided secure evidence for cultural relations, which were previously only imagined. The collection thus includes a leather armour belonging to the ethnographic department, composed of four parts (Fig. 3); during an investigation at the Natural History Museum, it has turned out, that the material in the breastplate is alligator skin, which for decorative purpose bears sewn strips of monkey skin. This discovery shows that the Atacama Indians must have had relations

across the Andes to the tropical region of eastern South America. The closest place where alligators occur in our days is the upper Pilcomayo. Another couple of finds in the collection certify that the Atacama Indians have had commercial relations in this direction, for example a pouch, made of skin from a raccoon's head. Otherwise, the collection consists of bows and arrows, clothing and ornaments, pottery, spoons, baskets (Fig. 5), which, although they remained at least 500 years in the earth are undamaged and with the beautiful patterning fully preserved. In the collection there are also beautifully carved wooden bowls, spindles, in the so-called snuff tube of wood and bone, halters, packing rope and bells of wood for the llama and a hunting net, the only known archaeological find of this type from the highland area of South America. A club with dish-shaped stone head is also a great rarity (Göteborgs Etnografiska museum 1943; Rydén 1944:51).<sup>16</sup>

The interesting thing is that this collection as far as I can trace it has never been exhibited. In fact, very few objects collected by Stig Rydén have been exhibited in the history of the museum<sup>17</sup>. One reason could be that he collected material from his archaeological fieldworks, not only complete pieces or objects thought to be exhibited but to be studied. His principal motive was research, so he collected thousands of ceramic fragments. However among the material collected by him there are very interesting objects, not only for research but also from an aesthetical point of view. The complicated relationship between Stig Rydén and the other curators and department director is obviously something that affected the objects collected by him, and I believe that also in some way harmed archaeology as a discipline inside the museum. As I presented in Chapter II archaeology has not had a good position at the museum, but the conflict between curators was an important factor for the discipline to be in a secondary position.

Stig Rydén left the museum in 1953, when by a Royal warrant he became curator at the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm where he could continue his work on American archaeology and history. Remarkably, until 1996 Rydén was in fact the only curator educated in archaeology.



*Figure 49: Leather armour made of alligator skin with monkey skin decorations. Photographed by Ferenc Schwetz©Museum of World Culture.*

## Game of power and the impact on the material

In 1977 Pierre Bourdieu introduced the concepts of “field”, *habitus* and “capital” (Bourdieu 1977; 1997) in which a cornerstone is the relationship in a double meaning between the objective structures (or social fields) and the agency of the actors. Bourdieu extended the idea of capital to other categories (not only economic) as social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital. This symbolic capital, according to Bourdieu has implicit a symbolic “violence” which is based on the synchronization between the structures that constitute the habitus of the dominated and the structure of the relations of domination to which they apply; the dominated perceived the dominant through categories that the domination relationship has produced and because of that conform to the interests of the dominant (Bourdieu 1997:197). This symbolic power/violence can be expressed in the degree of inequality, class, nature of social power, family, network, political power, i.e. all social relations and properties.

Our interpretation of power relationships will largely be determined by social categories as differentially structured in mixed societies. Nevertheless, we leave room for individuals to have different qualities, and thus power resources, even though they are members of specific classes or sets of people we have categorically structured.

I think that using Bourdieu is an fruitful tool to understand the relationship and games of power between different curators at the museum which culminate with the materialization of conflicts in the collections.

Norbert Diaz de Arce (2005) in his work *Plagiatsvorwurf und Denunziation: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altamerikanistik in Berlin (1900–1945)* explores how relationships can influence a discipline; he shows how the prominent Americanists in *Altamerikanisten* (Ancient America) had a hostile approach and fought confrontation with non-scientific means. Diaz de Arce proposed that those conflicts can be understood as “anomalies” (in Thomas Kuhn’s paradigm shifts), and those anomalies have a strong impact in science; in the case of American Studies in Berlin, those anomalies (conflicts) influenced the position of a discipline (Diaz de Arce 2005:6).

The same kind of materialization of conflicts produced by game of power can be observed inside the formation of Scandinavian archaeology (Gillberg and Jensen 2007:14–15) where networks of professionals and

individuals interested in the discipline shaped the future of the field; the eventual winners are those who presented their version and tended to omit their competitors (Gillberg and Jensen 2007; Gustafsson 2001).

As an example of this construction of a symbolic power in the museum and as mirror of the game of power that took place in the decades of 1930's to 1960's, I would like to discuss and introduce the concept of mobbing. It is not my intention to avow that harassment was a practice at those times, but I think that in research about this phenomenon there are some key attitudes that can be observed later in the collections.

Research into the phenomenon of mobbing was pioneered by the German born Swedish scientist Heinz Leymann during the 1980's. He borrowed the term mobbing from antipredatory animal behaviour, which described how a group can attack an individual based only on the negative covert communications from the group. According to Leymann, the word mobbing was not used in English context or for description of human behaviour. It was used by Konrad Lorenz describing animal conduct, who called the attack from a group of smaller animals threatening a single large animal mobbing (Leymann 1996):167. Afterward, a Swedish physician, Peter-Paul Heinemann, used the term to describe how groups of children can turn against a single child. Leymann also introduced the term to describe workplace stressful environment and its consequences.

Terminology around this phenomenon has been the subject of a long discussion. Mobbing, bullying, and discrimination can be different aspects of the problem or for some authors different phenomena (more about this discussion in Crawshaw (2009). During the last years, people have been discussing how bullying, mobbing and harassment affect workplaces, schools, efficiency, etc. (Agervold 2007; Beasley and Rayner 1997; Crawshaw 2009; Einarsen 1999; Liefoghe and Olafsson 1999; Rayner, et al. 1999).

Stereotypical routes of how mobbing occurs in institutions were also listed by Leymann (Leymann 1996:171–172); this scheme has also been used by Leiding (Leiding 2010:365) to figure out how and why mobbing situations arise in an environment like libraries where it could be thought that the workplace should be more safe than others.

1. Critical incidents: the triggering situation is most often a conflict. The first mobbing phase may be very short, while the next phase reveals stigmatizing actions by colleagues or the management and become unresolved.

2. Mobbing and stigmatizing. Mobbing activities may contain quite a number of behaviours which, in normal interaction, not necessarily indicate aggression or expulsion. However, being subjected to these treatments for a long time can change their context and they may be used in stigmatizing the person in question.
3. Personnel management. When management steps in, the case becomes officially “a case”. Due to previous stigmatization, it is very easy to misjudge the situation as being the fault of the subjected person. Managers have the opportunity to rectify the situation, but if they are in denial or complicit in the process, at this stage they may act to further isolate or expel the victim.
4. Expulsion from the organization. At this point, the employee, if he or she does not make a face- or career-saving move, may experience psychological or physical distress and post-traumatic stress-like symptoms, as well as a ruined career.

Mobbing behaviours are hidden and insidious; the victim is excluded and disqualified from workplace activities and communications, often the ultimate goal is forcing the victim out of the organization (Einarsen 1999). Mobbing is highly stressful because the targeted individual’s social support system is undermined and for those people in the organization that are not involved but are observers of the problem it is also stressful. However, mobbing victims are usually special individuals with proven intelligence, skill, creativity, integrity, success and dedication; they are strong contributors to the organization who are seen as principled, creative, and hard workers. Their status usually may make them targets. They may be reluctant to speak out about the aggressive behaviour they experience because they do not want to harm their organization’s reputation (Leiding 2010:366; Zapf, et al. 1996; Einarsen 1999:20–21). Frequently, faults are placed on the victims; they can be presented as crazy or incompetent. If the situation goes so far that they are forced to leave the organization, this is depicted as their choice (Leiding 2010:364).

There is a consensus among different authors that mobbing is a typical consequence found in work environments with poor organization. According to Leymann (1996), organizations where work is complex, workers are relatively autonomous, critical thinking is encouraged, but the organizational missions and goals are ambiguous or weak, are the perfect arenas to create mobbing situations.

Museums are perfect examples of this description: a dedicated and enthusiastic staff, working with the public, where free and critical thinking



should be encouraged and stimulated, however where goals sometimes are unclear. In small museums especially, the figure of the director, or management group, is so important giving to the institution a personal imprint and in some periods, depending of the management an extremely familiar and informal environment. This situation creates high levels of competition, and talking about the museum in Gothenburg, for many of the people from the staff it was the only place that they could work (because the characteristics of the job). In the case of Gothenburg during the 1930's–1950s the ethnographical department was too small for two (and sometimes three and four) Americanists, despite the size of the collections and work that would have been possible requiring perhaps more than ten Americanists.

In general mobbing is very difficult to prove and it is almost impossible to demonstrate that it happened 70 years ago. In those times nobody talked about mobbing or the work environment at the museum. However, going through the personal correspondence between Karl Gustav Izikowitz<sup>18</sup> and Henry Wassén<sup>19</sup>, it is obvious that in the race to find their positions in the institution problems arose between Izikowitz, Wassén and Rydén during the period 1940–1950; and it had repercussions in the positioning of the objects.

The idea, in this section is not to prove mobbing occurred, but to see how the game of power at the museum went. Another tool to understand this game could be the one proposed by Berit Ås (1992). She proposed the concept of *domination (suppression<sup>20</sup>) techniques*. Berit Ås identified suppression techniques to give women the key to understand what happens when they are not heard, when they are overlooked or ignored (Ås 1992). Situations of domination have in many cases not to do with individuals but rather with the group that the viewer places the oppressed in. Giving the domination situation a name can help to neutralize its effects. Berit Ås revealed these techniques for women in situations of inequality; however they can be used for many oppressed relations.

The techniques used to dominate are: first, to make the person invisible; second to ridicule; third, withholding information; fourth, double punishment and lastly guilt and shame (Ås 1992).

Going through the correspondence at the museum, it can be observed that the first conflict was between Stig Rydén and Henry Wassén. Wassén was probably jealous about Rydén's way of working. They were engaged at the museum at the same time, both students of Erland Nordenskiöld (Izikowitz was also a student). The figure of Nordenskiöld without any doubt had an enormous impact on his students, and following his passion

must be more like a priesthood at that time. Stig Rydén was extremely meticulous and delivered many results. He was a trained archaeologist, and among his teachers was Nils Niklasson, director of the Archaeological Department at the *Göteborgs Museum* (Gillberg 2001). He carried out his first fieldwork in Argentina together with Alfred Métraux at La Candelaria (Salta province) and he presented the results from this work in his PhD in 1936 (Rydén 1936). Across the correspondence it can be observed that he was a person that could easily come into conflict, extremely careful with his work and details. It has not been possible to see why he came in conflict with people around him, but in the case of Walter Kaudern, obviously something happened between them when he left for Chile and when he came back, and all the history around the purchase of Rudershausen's collection.

The conflict with Henry Wassén probably originated in the competition for who would be the favourite of Nordenskiöld. But, during Nordenskiöld's life time, no conflict can be observed, probably because he was a much respected person with a special authority and charm. Partially following Leymann's thesis for mobbing and Ås' proposal of domination techniques, Erland Nordenskiöld was an accepted and respected leader of the organization; he motivated the staff, or better said, the curatorial staff, with many tasks. Also during Nordenskiöld's period it seems that the institution had a very international environment, with students from other countries coming to study there, among them Alfred Métraux, Rubén Pérez Kantule. Erland Nordenskiöld, as a leader of the department seems to have been in control, obviously during this period, the fact that he was a Baron, the position of Head of the Department, the fact that he was a recognized scholar, were factors of some kind of "sacred leadership", or a patriarchy (Grint 2009:103) without possibilities of discussion. However, no conflict can be observed from the present. The fact is that Nordenskiöld followed theoretical approaches in his research but also in his way of teaching. He saw the museum and the curators as a school, where people, including himself, were learning all the time. He was also influenced by the ideas of Franz Boas, who recruited among his students' people coming from different backgrounds, ethnicity, gender and culture (Boas was one of the first to have indigenous women, black students and Latinos among his students). Perhaps this way of working created an inclusive and stimulating work atmosphere.

In 1944 (almost 12 years after Nordenskiöld died) Wassén wrote in a commentary to a letter from Stig Rydén that Nordenskiöld (according to Kaudern), had already expressed in 1932 that he did not want Rydén to stay at the institution because he was not pleased with his travel.<sup>21</sup> Here the allusion is to Rydén's fieldwork in La Candelaria, Tucumán, Argentina during 1932

(he was there when Nordenskiöld died), where Rydén had problems with Alfred Métraux. It seems that there was an amount of misunderstandings and conflicts during the fieldwork. I do not know if Métraux wrote about these problems to Nordenskiöld (there is no letter about this), but Métraux informed Kaudern about the problems. So, and speculating again, there are different scenarios possible; one is that Métraux informed Nordenskiöld and he decided to dismiss Rydén from the museum; another is that it was a decision made by Kaudern but put in Nordenskiöld's mouth, and still another is that Wassén (who had contacts with Métraux during many years) knew those problems and he put words in Nordenskiöld's mouth (Kaudern was dead when Wassén wrote this comment).<sup>22</sup>

Stig Rydén had the skills, the passion for research, dedication, loyalty and he was incredibly imbued in Nordenskiöld's hypothesis about the upcoming of different cultural phenomena in South America, pointing out the importance of the Amazonian area for the development of the Andean cultures. Stig Rydén made several archaeological and ethnographical fieldworks to demonstrate Nordenskiöld's thesis (Rydén 1941; Rydén 1944; Rydén 1947; Rydén 1956). In his late period at the museum, before he moved to Stockholm, he was working with the Amazonian material collected by Curt Nimuendajú which was stored in Gothenburg. He wrote a manuscript that could not be published until many years after his death because of the conflict at the museum (Nimuendajú, et al. 2004).

Apparently, Stig Rydén was a complicated man. In the letters between Wassén, Kaudern and Izikowitz he is presented as crazy person who easily ended up in conflicts, yelled and threatened to call newspapers and make a scandal. However, the information that we have today about all these events where Rydén was involved, exist without Rydén's side of the history. Maybe he was a complex man but it can also be observed that many times he was declassified or stigmatized.<sup>23</sup> The fact that he was an archaeologist seems to have been a problem in some way, it is pointed out several times in the letters. The objects collected by him were doomed, and also archaeology was degraded.

Henry Wassén never finished his PhD. He also tried to follow in Nordenskiöld's footsteps. He carried out fieldwork in the area of Chocó in Colombia, where he made important collections, however his publications never became comprehensive. He was trying to work with other of Nordenskiöld's theories about the exchange and cultural influences in the area of Darien, regarding the contacts between Central America and South America, especially throughout the lowland cultural areas. Erland

Nordenskiöld and Sigvald Linné carried out important fieldwork in Darien (today Panama, in those days Colombia), Nordenskiöld putting emphasis in the Kuna people and Linné making excavations at the present border between Colombia and Panama (Linné and Leijer 1929). However, Henry Wassén's most productive period was when he became director of the museum, after the publication of the Niño Korin collection (Wassén 1972). During the last twenty years of his research he concentrated strongly on the use of hallucinogens among lowland cultures through time. It can be observed in the correspondence that Wassén was incredibly good at social relations, his correspondence with scholars around the world is huge; in those letters there is an important exchange of ideas but also familiar comments, as among friends or people who know each other well.

Karl-Gustav Izikowitz was involved in the conflict very actively. During a period of time (around 1940-1950) he supported Wassén<sup>24</sup>. However when Stig Rydén left the museum, Izikowitz and Wassén were no longer good friends. It seems (according to personal communication from people who were at the museum in the 1970s') that the relationship between them was very complicated; some people have commented that this has to do with the fact that Izikowitz was Jewish and Wassén had right wing political sympathies. I am not sure about this, during the period of the Second World War, Walter Kaudern sent Henry Wassén to Germany to make a study at the Völkerkunde museums, and in a letter Izikowitz<sup>25</sup> asked if Wassén had been sent there to be "redeemed". In fact, it can be observed that during the period of the war they were friends, in fact close friends. In this period letters of camaraderie can be observed, these letters have the intimacy and trust shown between friends. And during this period they worked together against Rydén. One more time, speculating, they became adversaries when Rydén was no longer at the institution. It can be observed in the correspondence that they were very close friends until the beginning of the 1960's. After this, there is no more information or letters. Henry Wassén "cleaned up" his personal letters from the museum archive and many times we do not have a complete picture of what happened. The way in which Wassén handled the archive was in order to create a picture of himself but also he was the builder of the museum's history (and memories).

The last observations about this conflict between curators during the 1930's until the 1950's is that two of the curators writing to Wassén about Rydén held high positions: Kaudern as director of the Ethnographical Department and Izikowitz with the same position first and later the first director of the Ethnographical Museum of Gothenburg (figure 50). It is interesting that both, in a more powerful position than Rydén, could

# Vem blir dr Kauderns efterträdare?

Delade meningar bland  
sakkunnige HT

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De sakkunniga angående den ledigförklarade intendentsbefattningen vid Göteborgs Musei etnografiska avdelning hava avgivit sina utlånanden.

Doktor Kaj Birket-Smith, Köpenhamn, giver företräde åt docenten Izikowitz såsom mest meriterad och anser att efter honom endera av amanuenserna Rydén eller Wassén bör ifrågakomma till befattningen.

Professor Martin Gusinde, Wien, förordar endera av Rydén eller Wassén.

Professor Rafael Karsten, Helsingfors, förordar på grund av vetenskapliga meriter doktor Bolinder och docenten Izikowitz, därvid Bolinder gives företräde med avseende på omfattningen av fältforskningar, etnografiskt vetande och egna forskningsresultat. I tredje rummet nämnes amanuensen Wassén.

Professor Gerhard Lindblom, Stockholm, uttalar, att då man i liknande befordringsärenden vid andra museer vanligen brukar fästa största avseende vid de vetenskapliga meriterna, docenten Izikowitz bör sättas i främsta rummet, men anser att eljest amanuenserna Rydén och Wassén med hänsyn till museala förtjänster böra givas företräde, därvid Rydén förordas framför Wassén.

Figure 50: Article from daily newspaper about the successor to Walter Kaudern as museum director. It can be observed that the names of Izikowitz, Rydén and Wassén are discussed and ranked.

not control the problem or, as it can be observed they incentivized the differences. Also it can be observed that to write about Rydén and talk about him behind his back was accepted behaviour. I do not know how much

Rydén knew about what Wassén wrote, for example, to Alfred Métraux<sup>26</sup>, however it is interesting to note that gossip and a process of infantilizing were going on behind his back.

I have presented these speculations around intimidation at the institution seventy years ago to try to understand and prolong assumptions. I consider that the troubled situation between the curators directly affected the position, interpretation of and conditions in which the collections were held. I do not know and I do not want to go so far to say that the collections were a target of mobbing after Rydén left the institution, however it is very interesting to see how these objects and the figure of Rydén were hidden and the institution, in the guise of the directors, worked to create oblivion. Following Berit Ås' (1992) domination techniques it can be observed that the objects were treated in the same way as Rydén was. The objects became invisible, ridiculed (ugly), and forgotten.

It is an incredibly interesting phenomenon that when the objects arrived in Gothenburg, they represented, or rather, corresponded not only to the group or culture who made them, but they embodied the collector (curator) to the point that objects could be bullied without the possibility of defending themselves.

## Biography of objects and human relationships

### Allusive objects

Objects and collections stored in museums are fragments from the past or from other cultures. However, in museums they are imbued in many different levels of knowledge and understanding. The same objects can be used in different exhibitions representing the most varied and divergent matters. The biography of objects has been discussed since Igor Kopytoff published in 1986 his pioneering work on the topic (Kopytoff 2003). He suggested that a biography of things becomes the story of “various singularizations of itself, classifications and reclassifications in an uncertain world of categories whose importance shifts with every minor change in the context”. Igor Kopytoff also pointed out that in the biography of objects as well as biographies of peoples, the drama lies in the uncertainties of valuation and

of identity (Kopytoff 2003:90). Other authors have gone further with the discussion about commodity and objects (Appadurai 1986).

However, one very important work that can be used to understand those objects that have been classified as ethnography is the contribution made by George Stocking. The book *Objects and Others* (Stocking 1985), opened the understanding of the impact of colonial power in the making of collections and the construction of ethnography and ethnographical museums. Stocking's model for understanding objects and their history is primordial. Stocking argued that objects have at least seven dimensions. Aside from the three space dimensions, he pointed out the fourth of time, where objects coming from the past have been placed in museums, with all the contingencies and problematic character. The time dimension is also the one of being in a temporal limbo, otherness, taken out from present time. This dimension is entangled with colonial situations (Stocking 1985:4–5).

The fact, that objects come to museums and become part of an “archive” is part of what Stocking presents as a fifth dimension. In the construction of the museum the relation of power and the expropriation of objects results in the making of a new constellation where objects coming from different frameworks are now sharing a new context.

The sixth dimension is about ownership, the constitution of the museum, as an archive, implying memory; making the material culture into cultural property, owned by the state. The last dimension is the aesthetical one. The material culture of non-western peoples has undergone a process of aestheticization since its original emplacement in museums. This has resulted in part from the relativization and universalization of western aesthetic standards, and in part from processes which have recontextualized the production of traditional items of material culture. Objects lose their many functions becoming only aesthetical expressions (Stocking 1985:6).

These dimensions and the possibilities to understand objects from multiple points of view are essential to understand the life history of them. They have an origin then afterwards they were appropriated, expropriated, replaced, given a new content, changing their essence, making them commodities, private passions, and state property.

Many authors have discussed and argued during the last ten years about the biographical situation of objects. One of the most important contributions is probably that made by scholars working on colonialism and its impact on people and material culture (Edwards, et al. 2006; Flynn and Barringer 1998; Gosden and Knowles 2001; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Harrison 2002; Harrison 2006; Küchler 1997; MacLeod 2000; Russell and McNiven

1998; Sanjek 1993; Tilley, et al. 2009). Objects, it has been pointed out, can be understood only through looking at the cultural context which originally produced them and the new circumstances into which they later moved; the histories of many objects are composed by shifts of context and perspective, creating many layers of knowledge giving new meanings (Gosden and Marshall 1999:174; Svensson 2008). Objects are not only part of social life, but involved actors in personal intimate relation with owners, and as Tim Dant remarks, “the value in material objects that are incorporated into social life does not derive exclusively from their origins in production, from their meanings in consumption, from their practical use in everyday life or from the networks associated with their emergence as technical entities – it derives from all of these” (Dant 2006:299).

Others, like Janet Hoskins, have been working with the concept that objects are tools to tell people’s biographies. Hoskins makes a distinction about the biographical objects which “imposes itself as the witness of the functional unity of its user, his or her everyday experience made into a thing, biographical objects share our lives with us, and if they gradually deteriorate or fade with years, we recognize our own aging in the mirror of these personal possessions” (Hoskins 1998:8). Hoskins moved to a personal, more intimate level of understanding those objects biographies. As she concluded for her work on Sumba material culture, the narrative construction “of identity is complexly entangled with personal possessions because of a general cultural preoccupation with the metaphoric properties of things and their use as surrogate companions”. An object can thus become more than simply a “metaphor for the self”. It becomes a pivot for reflexivity and introspection, a tool of autobiographical self-discovery, a way of knowing oneself throughout things (Hoskins 1998:198). This is an important approach to understand the relationship between collections, collectors and/or curators.

In a museum context it is not uncommon that the curators treated the collections as their personal items: “my collection”, “my Indians” were not unusual phrases. However, in this case, the collections were “owned” by the municipality and later the state, and today we talk about the ethical ownership, so the biography of objects is the interaction and conjunction of all those histories.

In the life history of objects what Michel Foucault called “microphysics of power” may also be materialized. He was “concerned with the ways in which power overlapped all social relations, discourses and institutions” (Foucault 1980). Foucault’s explorations of how everyday practices of



individuals and groups are produced, perpetuated and delimited can be useful to see how these practices can be observed in the materials and ways of doing in museums (Dennis and Martin 2005:192). In the relation between power and practices, as Michel Wieviorka pointed out in 1995, some people can make a career and be rewarded with a better position by accepting institutional practices and by accurate service strengthen the institutional practices; others who question the practices can be sanctioned by marginalization and exclusion (Wieviorka 1995:55–63).

The relations of power between curators, in this case, affected the transmission and production of knowledge. Here I am discussing the construction of knowledge inside the institution, not only the one that is presented to the public, but also the one that is transmitted inside the institution to others in the staff and to coming generations. In the case of the museum's collections the political power of the city of Gothenburg was also an important factor in deciding the knowledge and ranking of the collections.

The relationship of scientific knowledge and political power is not easy. It also involves institutional mediations and reciprocal transformations of the character of knowledge and of power themselves (Brown 1993:154). This factor is very clear in the case of the Paracas Collection where political pressure from the city influenced many decisions taken about those textiles (Jonsson 2010).

This phenomenon, how knowledge, and power is constructed inside academic institutions was discussed by Pierre Bourdieu in *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu 1988), where, using the French academic world as object of study, he analyzed how scientists as people struggle to impose as legitimate their vision of the world and their definition of high-quality scholarly work. In the creation of an intellectual group, professors build an image of their students, of their performance and their value, and reproduce through practices of co-optation guided by the same categories, the very group of their colleagues and the faculty resulting in a homogenous group incorporated into a mainstream culture. The categories used to define excellence and “brilliance” are called “categories of judgement” by Bourdieu (1989:14).

Michèle Lamont suggests, going further than Bourdieu, that, in the categories of judgement, the importance of the self and emotions must be considered, in particular pleasure, saving face, and maintaining one's self concept- as part of the investment that academics make in scholarly evaluation (Lamont 2009:19–21).

Alliances, relationships, personal sympathies, and affinities, between the staff have repercussions, not only in which kind of knowledge is produced, and who can produce it, but also in the way in which collections become used from the present into the future.

## Coming back to the collections

I want to elucidate how objects not only represent the collector but also how they can become her or him; the objects incarnated as the collector. This process of embodying the objects with people can be observed in the three collections that I am comparing, and also that the objects materialize a conflict in their biography. In some way, practices have been materialized and of course, these evidences show practices and not intentions. The relationships shaped the knowledge about the collections, the potential to be studied, the possibilities to be exhibited and the accessibility to them.

In these three collections, it can be observed that over time they were treated in different manners. Stig Rydén left Gothenburg in the 1950's. However, the collections made by him stayed, but it seems that he took all his diaries and archive material (however they are not in Stockholm either). The only thing he left was the manuscript about Curt Nimuendajú's archaeological collections from Brazil (Nimuendajú, et al. 2004).

The collections assembled by Rydén were never exhibited, although they represent 13% of the museums total collection. Rydén's name never came up again in spite of the fact that the institution is still very focused on those big men who collected material. In the case of Rydén his name seldom arises in connection with the material or other cases, instead they are referred to by geographical area, as Bolivian collections. It can be observed, again coming to the intuitive level, that the memory of him was almost erased in the practice of the museum. It can also be observed that in the internal practice of the museum, Henry Wassén was the one who dictated which things and in which form they were to be remembered. Many times, in the former Ethnographical Museum, during the 1990's the history of the museum was remembered through its big men. The names of the big men always came up (old boy network): Nordenskiöld, Wassén, sometimes also Izikowitz, and Kaudern, because the research on South East Asia is still going on at the museum. However, Stig Rydén was never named, neither were women<sup>27</sup> who have been working or collecting for the museum.

The same process of forgetfulness can be observed regarding the collections made by Stig Rydén, and going farther, in some cases it may be wondered if the process was not going so far as mistreating the objects. Obviously, one fact is clear, during the period in question here, no professional practice of conservation and care of the collections was in place. The museum had only one conservator for all the departments; Björn Thörnborg. He had been trained mainly by Rydén. The fact that the storage rooms were poor and coming to the 1970's even catastrophic must be taken into account, and also that during the 1970's the municipality had as an employment policy to place in museums and cultural institutions people who needed support or to be reinstated in working life. Even so, marginalization and exclusion can be observed in the treatment of these collections made by Stig Rydén.

Many times, the aesthetic factor has been one of the explanations why these materials were never used. Even though the museum was also a research institution and until the 1970's well connected to the university, the material was not used or studied. Obviously not only because many of the objects were collected by Rydén, but also, because the museum from the 1950's started to lose interest in material culture, a phenomenon that had to do with the development of anthropology as a subject (see chapter I); with the fact that no curator was trained in archaeology or other discipline related to materials; and finally with the lack of interest for making research on the objects by the curators as well as by the municipality of Gothenburg (coming to the 1970's).

The fact that the objects collected by Rydén were not held in high esteem, is very explicit in a commentary written by Henry Wassén about a letter written by Stig Rydén<sup>28</sup>.

“1944 (without more information about the date)”<sup>29</sup>

“R. (Rydén) speaks about the largest donated collection. He could not mean qualitatively, for in that case the Peruvian textile donations should be put first, with whose acquisition R. has nothing to do. Whether it is archaeology or ethnography is not mentioned” (Wassén 1944).

In this paragraph the position of Wassén about the “quality” of the collections is clear. Obviously he made a ranking based on an aesthetical point of view, otherwise the collections made by Rydén are very well documented while those from Peru are the product of looting with a uncertain provenience, geographical and ethical. Wassén's statement has been relevant until today.

In 1999 when the museum went to the national administration, conservators<sup>30</sup> working on the moving of the collections observed that the collections made by Rydén had been packed worse than any other collections, in some cases putting stone objects on the top of more sensitive material (like bones or ceramics). Also, it could be observed that much of the material was never unpacked or placed correctly.

In some odd way, it is probably a very human behaviour to cast away the letters of a former lover, crush an object that was given by somebody with whom we are very angry, to keep something from a beloved that is not anymore with us. Objects entail a symbolic content, in some way they imply human relationships and the way in which humans relate their feelings to objects (Brown 2010:188). Objects often become people.

Therefore, objects play active roles within systems of negotiation and are part of biographies involving linked people, places and objects (Hill 2007:72–73). And questions of objectivity fail in the game of relationships. Nick Merriman wonders if museum collections become subject to the whims and interests of the individual curator (Merriman 2008:14). I believe that the answer is yes, of course, and in the same way that he points out, probably museums must pay attention to the purpose of holding collections rather than hiding behind notions of objectivity and permanence (Merriman 2008:14); and going further, seeing and reviewing practice.

However, it is interesting that in a museum, collections could be handled as personal items, hiding, shadowing and impeding people to study them.

Coming back to the three collections that I presented in the beginning, I am going to summarize how they have been treated (figure 51). The three collections are from the Pre-Spanish Conquest Period, and from current South America, probably two of them (Niño Korin and Rio Loa) from the same period of time. Probably, if they could be studied together, this could lead to understanding of a broad phenomenon (both of them correspond to the period of the so-called Tiwanaku expansion).

The Paracas<sup>31</sup>Collection, or the textiles in the collection have always been in focus. They were taken by looters in Peru in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, transported by diplomatic suitcases to Sweden, exhibited during almost 80 years, waking up passions in curators, conservators, politicians and visitors, being claimed today by the Peruvian government, always on the top, never forgotten. The collection represents the commitment between the elite in Gothenburg and the museum

<b>Paracas</b>	<b>Rio Loa</b>	<b>Niño Korin</b>
Looted	Archaeological research	Looted
No context	Context	Partial Context
The textiles disconnected from the rest of the collection	Holistic	Holistic
Been shown since 1940's	Never shown	Shown since 1970's
Deposited at the museum, owned by the municipality of Göteborg	Part of the museum's collections	Part of the museum's collections
Icon in Göteborg	Ignored in Göteborg	Partially important in Göteborg
Not so important in Peru for research	Very important for research in Chile	Very iconized in Bolivia
Interpreted as artistic and handicraft	Cultural context	Cultural medicine context
Studied by textile connoisseur during the time at the museum	Studied by the collector but never updated since the 1950's.	Studied and published by specialists; updated in 2009 by Beatriz Loza and Walter Alvarez Quispe.
Creation of a foundation for the conservation of Paracas textiles	No research money	Research money in project form in 2009 because Repatriation question
No fluent contact with Peruvian scholars.	Never studied, never re-connected to Chilean research or communities.	Studied by American and Swedish scholars in 1970's. Studied by a Kallawayaya 2009 together with other scholars.
		Presented to the Bolivian community living in Göteborg during 2009.
Reclaim from Peru	no reclaim from Chile	Reclaimed by the Bolivian Government but the issue was cancelled
No new signification	No new signification	Changed completely, from being a sorcerer's tools to be a medicine doctor's implements, probably for gynaecological treatment. The plants in the collection changed from drugs to herbarium and vademecum.

*Figure 51: Comparison between the three collections.*

The Niño Korin collection, illegally excavated and exported, studied by scientists in the 1970's, shows us today that there are many ways to see these collections. We still have the possibility to reconsider our practice as museum practitioners. Today, after an input made by the museum it does not represent anymore Henry Wassén's ego but the Kallawayas, we could give back the moral ownership to them.

The material from Rio Loa, in contrast to the other two collections, never had a personal name attached to it (the material from Rio Loa), never became exhibited or in focus, and after Rydén left, became buried in the

deepest of the storages. The material collected by Rydén has never had a chance. It became the ugly duckling of the collections. Probably in the future we have the opportunity to clean up those old histories and reconnect the collections to another context, I do not want to say an “original context” because this is a chimera, but a more fruitful context, where the objects can be reactivated and tell us other histories.

## **A form of conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented three collections coming from the same geographical area and in two cases from the same period, collected by different persons. I have tried to present the prevailing atmosphere at the museum during many years when three curators were rivals and competed for power. The concept and idea of mobbing is new, and nobody talked in those terms before the 1980's. I can observe that probably mobbing was going on against one of the curators as a technique to get a powerful position inside the institution. I have also presented how relationships construct a strong connection between knowledge and power, and how they reflect and materialize in organizations and material culture. I think that the game of power constructed by alliances has had enormous significance on how the collections have been ranked and retransmitted to coming generations.

These three collections had unequal possibilities to be exhibited, studied, re-linked or be part of the museum discourse. During many decades one of them has been hidden and forgotten. Today, seventy years later, the collection from Rio Loa can still be an important tool, not only to understand the archaeology of the Rio Loa, but also to comprehend how we, museum practitioners, create and reproduce new meanings for the collections that we work with; and probably the most important issue is to be aware about which history and who are we making invisible today.

## Appendix to the Rio Loa collection

In 2002, an attempt to work with the collections was made at the Museum of World Culture. We seized the opportunity when the collections were moved to a new building to unpack and look at some objects from the Rio Loa collection. The collection contains 409 objects; Rydén had described almost all of them in the *Archaeology of Rio Loa* publication (Rydén 1944). He concentrated on objects that according to him were the evidence of early contacts from the lowlands to the Pacific coast.

The collection contains ceramics, arrows, a shirt of vegetable fibres, nets, spades (one made of copper) (Kjerrman 1944:242–250), calabashes, mollusks, baskets, lithic material, combs, textiles, feathers, etc.

We were particularly interested in seeing the armour that Rydén used as the convincing evidence of contacts. The project was not financed, and it was disrupted after a couple of months when the work for the opening of the new museum became important. We never had the possibility to see all the objects, but we could make some 14 C analysis that is presented here.

1942.04.0280 armour (figure 52):

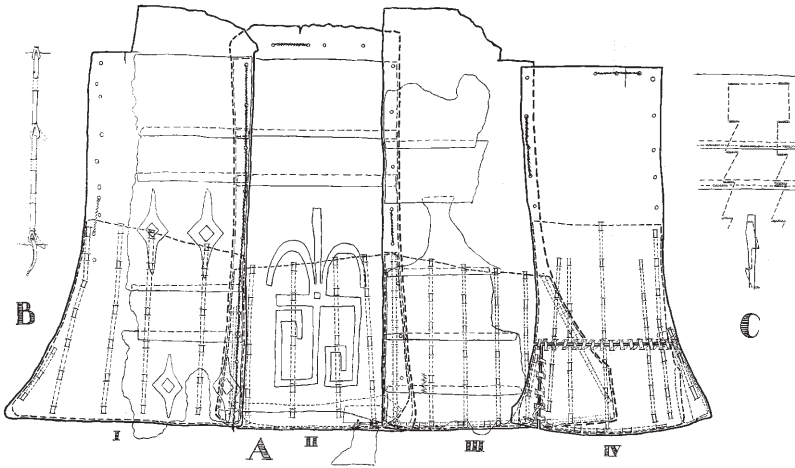


Fig. 65. Schematic drawing of the leather cuirass fig. 66. 115.

*Figure 52: Sketch of the leather armour (figure 51) published in Stig Ryden's work about Rio Loa (Rydén 1944b).*

Stig Rydén described this armour as a compound leather cuirass to differentiate it from those described by Posnansky and Latchman. In the figure 54 (1944: figura 65), which has been taken from his publication, it can be seen how the armour was constructed. The numbers I, II and III (and those with thick lines) show those parts of the armour made of alligator, the number IV its made with different kind of leather. The soft lines in the drawing indicate the front of the object, which is made of monkey leather, forming a geometrical pattern (photo 3, 4, 5 y 6). The backside has been reinforced with leather from an unknown animal (Rydén 1944:108–109).

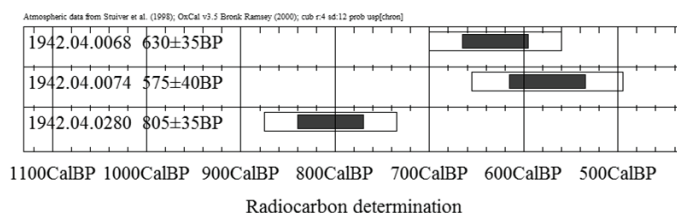
Rydén in 1943 pointed out the bad conservation condition of the objects. In 2002 Natalia Fasth checked the conservation, and she could see that it was stable, not much deterioration had occurred since 1943 (Fasth 2002: personal communication).

The identification of leathers was made in the Natural History Museum of the City of Gothenburg in the 1940's.

In 2002 we got the results of 14 Carbon analyses that are presented here. The analyses were made in Uppsala at the Ångström Laboratory.

Laboratory no.	Sample	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ ‰ PDB	$^{14}\text{C}$ date BP
Ua-20200	1942.04.0068 (vegetable fibres)	-25,7	630±35
Ua-20201	1942.04.0074 (vegetable fibres)	-23,5	575±40
Ua-20202	1942.04.0280 (alligator)	-17,5	805±35

## Calibration



Atmospheric data from Stuiver et al (1998); OxCal v3.5 Bronk Ramsey (2000); cub r:4 sd:12 prob usp [chron]



## Notes

1 “På religionshistoriska seminariet hör kör de bara med moral, etik, och fan och hans mormor. Vad säger Du om en c:a 30-40 deltagare på ett etnografiskt seminarium. Det finns mer etnografer i världen än man anar tydligen. Nåja en stor procent äro icke riktiga etnografer utan engelska kolonialgubbar, som skola sig bästa sättet att uppfostra negerer och färgade folk in order to collect skatter from dem.”

2 Brusewitz had the same reaction faced with the fact that Toba objects arrived to Göteborg after an attack to a village in Argentina (discussed in Chapter III).

3 Kommunen överlåter vederlagsfritt museets samlingar, med undantag för de s.k. Paracas-textilierna som deponeras hos staten, samt inventarier, hyresavtal mm.

– de s.k. Paracas-textilierna deponeras av kommunen hos den nya myndigheten så länge staten är huvudman för verksamheten.

4 For a deeper analysis about the exhibition and the collection see Jonsson 2010.

5 En dag några år in på trettioalet anlände en försändelse till Etnografiska museet i Göteborg. I en enkel resväska låg gamla, praktfulla textilier hoprullade, avsändare var anonym. Det stod snart klart att de omkring hundra textilierna med största sannolikhet var gravfynd från Paracas i södra Peru. Hur i all världen hade de hamnat i Göteborg? Vem var donatorn? (Tham 1994).

6 Helena Ågren and Christine Palmgren worked as educators at the former Ethnographical Museum, from 1994 to 1999, and this discourse was the one given to them from the direction of the museum.

7 The municipality is the owner of 84 textiles, coming from different collections donated by the same man, in different periods of time. Those textiles apparently are related to the Paracas culture (I use apparently because the conclusion is drawn from the iconography and technique on the textiles and not from a complete study of provenience and historical context).

8 I said idea, because according to the former director Jette Sandahl, she never was pressed to show the textiles. However, to put them in display again in 2008 “the pressure” from the public and politicians was used as an argument. According to an inquiry made in 2002, the general public has no especiall interest in see Paracas, and if we compare with the number of visitors that the Ethnographical museum had when Paracas was on display (12000 visitors in the last years), can we conclude that probably “the pressure” is also a construction.

9 Amanuens in Swedish.

10 Henry Wassén letters at the Museum of World Culture Archive.

11 Kallawaya doctors (“médicos Kallawaya”) are known as the naturopathic healers of Inka kings and as keepers of scientific knowledge, principally the pharmaceutical properties of vegetables, animals and minerals. Kallawaya speak

Quechua and are travelers, often they are on foot, walking looking for traditional herbs and healing people. UNESCO has recognized the Andean Cosmivision of the Kallawayá (Bastien 1987) as Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

12 Wiphala is also called the Tawantinsuyu Flag (in reference to the Inca Empire, Tawantinsuyu). This flag has been controversial during many years, but when Evo Morales assumed the presidency of Bolivia, the debate was increased. People against the indigenous movement claim that this is a new symbol created *ad hoc* for political motives, however, it is recognized that in Bolivia like in many other countries, the underground cultural resistance made by indigenous populations have been sometimes very successfully.

13 This film is in the archive of the Museum of World Culture today, thanks to a donation made by Stig Rydén's grandchild, Niklas Rydén.

14 Chuquicamata 19.9.1938; letter from Stig Rydén to Walter Kaudern. Archive Museum of World Culture.

15 En amerikan berättade mig att nära gruvstaden Chuquicamata fanns indianlämningar, och jag övergav då den gamla resplanen och lyckades med en bil komma på högslätten till en punkt, där en av gruvbolagets lastbilar hämtade mig och förde mig vidare till Rio Loa. Där fick jag vänta fem timmar tills en annan amerikan transporterade mig och mitt stora bagaget upp till Chuquicamata. Resan tog i allt ett dygn. Kom i kontakt med en tysk ingenjör, i Chuquicamata, Mr Rudershausen, som själv är mycket intresserad av fornlämningarna här uppe. Genom honom fick jag en del upplysningar. Nästa dag for jag sålunda öster ut från Chuquicamata ta c:a 3 mil. Nere i Loas dalgång påträffade jag på en i floden utskjutande bergsudd en hel stad med cirka 150 hus.....

Min tyske vän här Ingenjör F. J. Rudershausen, Adres. Chuquicamata, Chile, har en utmärkt samling på cirka 200 föremål. Därbland finns de enda av mig kända guldföremålen från detta område, fem eller sex enkelt bearbeta guldplåtar, ett läderharnesk! korgar, pilar, bågar, lerkärl, flera turkosföremål mm. Bäst med samlingen är att han vet var varje föremål kommer ifrån, och vilka föremål som äro hittade tillsammans..... hans samling motsvara i det närmaste den i Oslo Montell publicerat.... Vi har talat om ett event. publicera densamma i anslutning till den publikation jag hoppas kunna fabricera om de saker jag sett här vid Rio Loa.

16 "Den nytillkomna samlingen ger en fyllig bild av den nu utdöda atacamaianernas levnadssatt, och vad mer ar: en av undertecknad företagen bearbetning av samlingen har givit säkra belägg for kulturförbindelser som man hitintills blott anat.

I samlingen ingår sålunda ett av fyra delar sammansatt läderharnesk (fig. 3). vid en undersökning företagen vid Naturhistoriska Museet har det emellertid visat sig, att materialet i det till etnografiska avdelningen hörande harnesket är alligatorskinn, som i prydnadssyfte försetts med påsydda remsor av apskinn. Denna upptäckt visar, att atacamaianerna måste ha haft förbindelser över Anderna med det

tropiska området i östra Sydamerika. Närmsta plats där alligatorer förekomma i våra dagar är övre Pilcomayo. Ytterligare ett par fynd i samlingen bestyrka att atacamaindianerna haft handelsförbindelser åt detta håll, t. ex. en pung, gjord av skinnet från ett tvättbjörnshuvud.

Samlingen i övrigt består av bågar och pilar, klädesplagg och prydnadsföremål, lerkärl, skedar, korgar (fig. 5), som trots att de legat minst 500 år i jorden äro oskadade och med den vackra mönstringen helt bevarad. I samlingen finns vidare vackert skurna träskålar, sländor, i s.k. snusrör av trä och ben, grimmor, packrep och skällor av trä för lamadjur samt ett jaktnät, det enda kända arkeologiska fyndet av detta slag från höglandsområdet i Sydamerika. En klubba med skivformigt stenhuvud är även den en stor sällsynthet (Årstryck 1943, Stig Rydén: 51)".

17 Urns collected by Stig Rydén in La Candelaria, Tucumán, Argentina, became part of Fred Wilson's installation at the opening exhibition *Site unseen: Dwellings of the Demons*.

18 First assistant at the Ethnographical Department, later became the director of the department and the Museum of Ethnography.

19 Wassén was incorporated as amanuens 1929, became curator for America, and later, after Izikowitz left the institution and the museum became part of the city of Gothenburg, he became the director of the museum until his retirement in the 1973. He continued steer the institution until the middle of 1980's.

20 Härskarteknikerna.

21 Wassén 1944: "Rydén talar om löften från Nordenskiöld betr. Kvarstannande osv. enligt Dr. Kaudern var Nordenskiöds sista ord på dödsbädden eller vid det sista samtal som de båda hade med varandra på sjukhuset, att om han komme upp igen skulle han laga så att Rydén ej fick stanna alls, då han av någon anledning ej var nöjd med hans resa el.d."

22 Henry Wassén, thinned out part of his archive material, letters, etc. so what we have today is the version that he kept. In many cases, it can be observed that answers, or material where he has been discussed is missing.

23 "Izikowitz to Wassén 4 February 1951 : "fick ett brev av Rydén med avskrift, han frågar efter kopian av en inlaga han gjorde till styrelsen angående en niombo, samt order om bättre vakthållning. Hinner jag svara på det nu innan båten sticker i väg så skall han få ett brev annars får han vänta till Por Said. Du behöver icke nämna var den ligger, men som vanligt sättes allt in i brevpärmen . och då hans skrivelse är officiell så har de också satts in där. Detta borde han förstå. Under sin egen skrivelse hade han skrivit några rader som han ansåg jag skulle skriva under. Rena diktatet alltså. Att tänka sig att andra människor kan ha annan uppfattning och att saker och ting kan diskuteras ingår inte i hans trånga hjärna. Även i denna senaste skrivelse om intendentvikariatet är det liknande diktaturfasoner. Det han anser är det rätta. Idiot!

Han vet inte vad etnografi är. Själv är han ju enbart arkeolog. Ta och läs hans skrivelse eller ”kritik” av Holmbergs Siriono-bok i Man. När man skriver så dumt, så har man förkyllt för sig. Det var väl troligen en hämnd. Innan jag reste exploderade han och hotade som vanligt med tidningsskriveriet om han inte fick intendentursvikariatet eftersina linjer. Hot och hämnd! Snyggt....”

24 Following the exchange of letters between Izikowitz and Wassén it can be observed that they had a common front against Rydén.

25 Letter from Karl Gustav Izikowitz to Henry Wassén, 10 December 1938. “inte visste jag att du var I Tredje Riket, Blev du frälst? Eller hade K. lyckats att göra det innan?” (it seems that Kaudern had been trying to ”redeem” Wassén).

26 In many letters to and from Alfred Métraux , Rydén is presented as a problem, or “nene” (little boy in Spanish). The use of word “*nene*” is in a way a form of disempowerment.

27 I am not going to go in details about the attitude to women in the institution during the early years of the museum, however in the personal correspondence of Henry Wassén it can be observed that the objectification of women was very common.

28 I must admit that many times, I have only one part of the correspondence, letters written by Stig Rydén or /and others to Wassén, many times they don’t exist. It is not known where the material from Rydén is. Also, Wassén thinned out his own archive material during the 1960–1970’s (according to his personal record).

29 R talar om den största donerade samlingen. Han menar väl aldrig kvalitativ, ty I så fall bör utan tvivel Peru-textildonationerna sättas främst, med vilkas tillkomst R. intet har att skaffa. Om det är fråga om arkeologi el. etnografi säges ej.

30 Natalia Fasth Tjeerdsma, personal communication.

31 A construction from the 1980’s.



# Summary and conclusion

Looking back over the text, I realize that in every chapter practices are a concern. In chapter I, I present the history of the different institutional forms that hold the collections in Gothenburg, and try to explain how those objects coming from different parts of the world and from different periods of time became part of the ethnographical collection of the city of Gothenburg, later the Museum of Ethnography and today the Museum of World Culture. Practices inside those institutions defined what the objects should be and how they should be presented to the public. There is a feeling that it was the same institution as from the beginning however there was some kind of discontinued continuity, the organization changed many times, some people stayed through all the different forms, others changed. It is interesting that every new organization implied a new ideological standpoint for the collections, and created practices that with time became institutional traditions. Large parts of the current ways of working at the museum have origins in the period after the Second World War, when the collections were registered and classified in a similar way to how they are today; however in that period they were reproducing practices that many of those curators learnt with Erland Nordenskiöld in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In chapter II I present and discuss categories, and how they started to be used, based in a political, institutional and academic practice. We approach objects today believing that the classification system used in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a neutral one. We accept that objects coming from outside Europe/Sweden can only be classified as ethnography (alternatively archaeology referring the material before colonial encounters). Reproducing practices and reproducing classification of objects and people means that we are reproducing a status quo; we have mentally criticised the systems, yet unwittingly our reflexive actions reproduce that same system we have criticised. The aura of neutrality also gives a comfortable feeling that allows us to continue without questioning.

In Chapter III I am trying to go in depth into the relationship between classification of objects and peoples. I propose that in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the people who were excluded from national projects became part of the category of ethnography. To exemplify I present collections coming to the museum in the period when South American countries/nations were being established, and discuss how those objects were collected. I compare with the situation today, when inside a new ideological political context, collecting objects and classifying people can also be an issue. At the Museum of World Culture, trying to be a museum about everyone and not the others has been a big issue since the beginning. The idea with the exhibitions has been not to show “other’s culture” as foreign, and to try to include the public as an actor and not as an observer. In almost every exhibition the idea to deconstruct categories has been a topic. However in the collection management this approach has been more complicated. To change practices around the management of collections is a very deep change that requires a real introspective and reflective review about the way in which the institution has been working, and trying to change. I don’t have an answer to this problem; I believe that we are in the beginning of a new moment. As I was writing this text, the central administration of the Museums of World Culture decided that the collections from the four museums within this organization (Museum of World Culture, Ethnographical Museum, Mediterranean Museum and Far Eastern Antiquities Museum) are going to be part of a new department. The collections are leaving categories as Ethnographical, Mediterranean and Far Eastern Antiquities to become World Culture. Now, an interesting period where the possibility to go in depth and challenge the future is coming. Hopefully a review of practices and what the collections mean will be carried out.

In chapter IV I am presenting another side of practices and collections. At the same time that the belief in the neutrality of practices is almost generally accepted, it is difficult to see how conflicts and the game of power can situate the collections in a scale of values. The ways in which objects and collections are ranked are not only based in aesthetical, cultural or economical values. In many cases how collections became ranked has to do with the relationship between members of the museum staff. In this chapter I am presenting three collections that I consider very “equal” or balanced if those parameters could be measured (I do not go into the discussion of how to measure an aesthetical value in museums objects); however these three collections and every particular object in them had been considered

throughout the history of the museum in very different ways. The position that the collections got reflect and materialize a game of power inside the institution where in the end the objects became transmuted by who the collector was. The relationship between people created a practice of how some objects and collections should be prioritized.

The history of the collections in Gothenburg is a fusion of relationships between many people, institutions, and countries, and political and ideological paradigms. Those relationships throughout time have created practices that have infiltrated disciplines and professions creating the vision of professional neutrality. Practices should be understood, unveiled and deconstructed to avoid keeping old approaches and retaining old paradigms. This process should not only be a theoretical criticism but also the implementation of new practices.

Through the analysis of the collections at the current Museum of World Culture, it can be observed that the museum and its collections are not neutral. If these conclusions are valid for other similar museums it means that the collections are always a contested area.

One manifestation of this contentious relationship is the increasing requests on the repatriation of objects. That may be good in many contexts, but such a process is also part of a controversial event. In front of repatriation cases, the stories added to the objects in the museum may also be wiped out, which would be a disappointment because these additions give us critical knowledge and understanding of facts and relationships that have implications for us today. Furthermore, the objects that end up repatriated are not coming into a vacuum but they will be included in new polemic contexts.

An opportunity to manage this relationship is to really open up the collections, both digitally and also by making them more accessible for researchers, for instance through invitations, generous scholarships and international research collaborations and networks. By doing so the complexity and importance of these and similar materials is acknowledged.

We can change practices; through small-scale projects, it has been shown that opening up the collections to people interested in the objects, people that have knowledge about materials, history, and context, has helped the museum to reconnect the collections to current situations. The collections are not limited to one fixed interpretation, the meaning of them is fluid and depends on many factors, especially our attitudes, and the degree



of openness that we show. The storage rooms at the Museum of World Culture could be an ecumenical place where people from different areas of knowledge could meet, where people from different nations can study the same objects, crossing state boundaries at the same time. Questions of ownership, repatriation, and accessibility can be disentangled through changing practices. A first step it is to recognize that those practices never have been neutral and that every one of them needs to be scrutinized.

Today we can face up to change, try to review why we act as we do, and accept that nothing is neutral and at the end it is a professional attitude to take positions.

# Svensk resumé

## Från kuriosa till världskultur: Historien om de latinamerikanska samlingarna på Världskulturmuseet

Denna avhandling handlar om de samlingar med ursprung i Latinamerika som i dag förvaras i Göteborg.

En av målsättningarna med avhandlingen är att se hur begreppet *Etnografi* under slutet av 1800-talet användes för att även kategorisera människor, samtidigt som de blev uteslutna från de nationella projekten. Skapandet av etnografiska museer var en konsekvens av förstärkningen av ideologin om det nationella liksom av beförordandet och stärkandet av nationen/staten. Det är också därför man kan finna samma typ av samlingar i etnografiska museer i Europa och Sydamerika.

Den andra målsättningen är att se hur en museologisk metod har konstruerats och reproducerats över tiden, och många gånger gått i arv utan reflektion.

Avhandlingen är uppdelad i fyra kapitel, där vart och ett avhandlar specifika frågeställningar.

### Kapitel I: Resan. Från kuriosa till världskultur

I kapitlet ger jag en historisk bakgrund och beskrivande översikt över de institutioner som har samlingar som anses etnografiska. I vissa perioder kom föremålen till Sverige från utlandet, medan de i andra perioder kunde samlas in från lägre klasser eller från människor som ansågs befinna sig på lägre stadier av civilisationsutvecklingen. Under de senaste åren har föremålen definierats som ”icke-europeiska kulturella inslag”.

De första dokumenterade föremål som kommer till Göteborg från utlandet medfördes av sjökaptener efter sina resor med det svenska Ostindiska kompaniet i slutet av 1700-talet. Många av dessa föremål blev en del av förmögna familjers privata samlingar.

Senare, i början av 1800-talet, etablerade Kungliga Vetenskaps- och Vitterhetssamhället i Göteborg ett *naturaliekabinett* i staden. Främst innehöll det botaniska och zoologiska föremål (många beskrivs av Carl von Linné), men även en del kulturföremål. Dessa objekt var från såväl Sverige som andra länder och det gjordes ingen skillnad mellan dem, alla var en del av naturaliekabinettet.

I början av 1800-talet fanns också en konstsamling i staden. Båda samlingarna (konsten och naturföremålen) kunde besökas av allmänheten. De placerades på stadens gymnasium (Hvitfeldska) och senare i Ostindiska kompaniet hus. Vid denna tid hade kompaniet upplösts, och huset användes endast som en förvaringsplats.

Samlingarna från naturaliekabinettet blev en del av Naturhistoriska museet, som grundades 1833.

Med exempel från Europa beslutade Göteborgs Stad 1862 att skapa ett stadsmuseum. Framförallt blev England, med South Kensington museet, en förebild. Naturhistoriska museet och konstsamlingen låg till grund för detta nya stadsmuseum som öppnade för allmänheten i december 1862.

De föremål som hade kommit från utlandet till Sverige placerades, tillsammans med de svenska historiska föremålen och konstsamlingen, på det övre planet i huset tillsammans med biblioteket. Där fanns också lokaler för möten och föreläsningar. Många av beskrivningarna från denna tid visar att dessa föremål gav en kosmopolitisk känsla till staden. De var bevis för en stad med internationella kontakter och en växande medelklass.

Under första delen av 1900-talet växte samlingarna och de föremål som kom från områden utanför Sverige placerades i Etnografiska avdelningen. Avdelningen upplevde en storhetstid då Erland Nordenskiöld utsågs till intendent och föreståndare. Under hans tid pågick en frenetisk insamling av latinamerikanska föremål. Han förnyade också det museologiska begreppet, och utbildning, pedagogisk verksamhet, utställningar och lagerlokaler blev viktiga frågor för Nordenskiöld. Han blev den första professorn i etnologi i Sverige, och utbildade i Göteborg och museet en generation unga akademiker som senare skulle föra traditionen vidare. Den etnografiska avdelningen i Göteborg blev ett viktigt centrum för Amerikastudier.

Den etnografiska avdelningen gick igenom olika omorganisationer, och påverkades av följderna av två världskrig. Slutligen, 1946, blev det ett separat museum, Göteborgs Etnografiska museum. Under många år sökte museet efter bättre anpassade byggnader och magasin för samlingarna. Det var en period präglad av en dröm om ett nytt hus och nya idéer. Många drömmar blev aldrig verklighet och när man kom in i 1990-talet var museets situation mycket besvärlig. Politikerna ville stänga museet eftersom man ansåg att etnografi var en främmande aktivitet i staden. Den främmande komponenten blev dock den som räddade museet, och 1996 beslutade den svenska regeringen att för de icke-europeiska samlingarna i svenska Statens museer skapa ett nytt museum med en ny administration.

Samlingarna från Göteborgs Etnografiska museum överfördes från den kommunala administrationen och, i form av ett nytt museum, blev de en del av den nationella Världskulturmuseet, som öppnade för allmänheten i december 2004.

## **Kapitel II: benämningarnas makt**

I kapitlet presenterar jag museets samlingar, företrädesvis de från Latinamerika. För det första för att de latinamerikanska samlingarna utgör 75 % av samlingarna, och för det andra för att avhandlingen fokuserar på en del av dessa samlingar. Jag kommer att redogöra för hur de kom till Sverige och hur de katalogiserats på olika sätt under deras historia i Sverige. Det system som används för att registrera och etikettera dem är mycket starkt kopplat till vad dessa föremål har representerat under sin tid i museets magasin. Tanken är att diskutera hur kunskap om och klassificering av dessa objekt har konstruerats och vad olika kategoriseringssätt har inneburit politiskt sett. Föremålen har gått igenom många olika teoretiska och politiska paradigmer och varje tid har satt sin prägel på klassifikationssystem av föremål.

Föremålen har klassificerats på olika sätt genom tiderna, som kuriosa, etnografi eller världskultur. Var och en av dessa kategorier har haft olika betydelser. Kategorin ”etnografi” hade inte samma innebörd i slutet av 1800-talet som i slutet av 1900-talet. Vem/vilka som omfattades av kategorin etnografi har berott på vilka som var undantagna från de hegemoniska projekten. Under den senare delen av 1800-talet hade begreppet etnografi på museet mer att göra med klasstillhörighet, medan det i början av 1900-talet hade att göra med de s.k. primitiva människorna utanför Europa, och i mitten av 1900-talet hade det att göra med exotiska människor. Från och med slutet av det 20e århundradet började den nya kategorin världskultur användas. Processen att definiera vad världskultur innebär har inte varit lätt. På den

ena sidan återfinns akademiker med en diskussion om globalisering och vad det har inneburit för människor, och på den andra sidan står politiker som vill försöka definiera en praxis för integration med hjälp av begreppet världskultur.

Samlingarna på Världskulturmuseet kommer från det forna Etnografiska museet i Göteborg, och när det nya museet skapades var samlingarna kvar i det gamla systemet för klassificering. Intressant är att samlingarna med objekt som kommer från grupper med blandad inhemsk och svart befolkning, hybridexempel, aldrig har registrerats (sådana samlingar finns, men de är inte registrerade som blandade). Inte heller finns några föremål representerade som kommer från de övre urbana klasserna. Samlingarna är indelade i arkeologi och etnografi, som om människor utanför Europa inte hade någon egen historia (enligt Eric Wolf). Kategorin historia är inte tillåten för de människor som representeras på etnografiska museer.

I detta kapitel redovisar jag också ett projekt som drevs på Världskulturmuseet kring en boliviansk samling 2009, för att visa hur kategorier och klassificering kan ändras, och vilka möjligheter som kan finnas för samlingar i framtiden.

### **Kapitel III: Att samla exkluderade människor**

I detta avsnitt utforskar jag förhållandet mellan samlandet, skapandet av etnografiska museer, och bildandet av nation/stat. Jag jämför den period när etnografiska museer skapades med nutiden och bildandet av museer för världskultur.

I analysen kommer jag att undersöka ett par företeelser som jag anser har haft inverkan på utformningen av begreppet etnografi som kategori. En är den postkoloniala situationen för de latinamerikanska länderna, hur klasser bildades och de härskande tog den politiska och kulturella makten samtidigt som vissa grupper av människor uteslöts från de nationella projekten. Samma förhållanden kan iakttas i Sverige och Europa.

Jag fördjupar mig också i hur Göteborgs Stadsmuseum utformades till skapare av propaganda för att forma identiteter och medborgare; och undersöker även hur de nya post-koloniala länderna i Latinamerika genom att skicka föremål till Europa profilerade sig som länder med stora möjligheter och rik natur och kultur. I detta sammanhang gav insamlingen av material från människor som var utestängda från de nationella projekten

upphov till etnografi som vetenskap, och etnografiska museer bidrog till kolonial och imperialistisk propaganda.

Jag koncentrerar mig på den sista hälften av 1800-talet och första hälften av 1900-talet när jag undersöker praktiken för insamlande i Göteborg. Samtidigt undersöker jag om dagens metoder liknar eller skiljer sig från dessa. Idag finns det många olika metoder för insamling, och några av dem utesluter människor genom att klumpa ihop dem under beteckningen mångkulturell.

Den roll som museer med etnografiska samlingar har idag är ett fält för många diskussioner utan entydiga svar, men många paralleller kan observeras med uttalanden som gjordes för 100 år sedan. I dag har, i Sveriges fall, etnografi definierats politiskt som det icke-europeiska, och detta uttalande har gett upphov till många problem. En stor utmaning i dag är vad museerna ska göra med etnografiska föremål. De är en kolonial börda, ett politiskt verktyg, ett estetiskt objekt, något att skicka tillbaka eller något att ha i ett mausoleum. Det finns inga svar, men samtidigt måste strategier formuleras.

I detta kapitel redogör jag för fem samlingar som kom till Sverige i slutet av 1800-talet och början av 1900-talet. Med hjälp av dessa samlingar presenterar jag uppkomsten av nya stater, och sätter detta i relation till bildandet av samlingarna med tonvikt på Latinamerika. Jag gör även tillbakablickar på kapitel II och undersöker hur kategorierna har använts.

## **Kapitel IV: Besvärliga passioner**

I detta kapitel utforskar jag en vanlig museal praxis, att göra rankningar av samlingarna. I historien om de sydamerikanska samlingarna i Göteborg är det möjligt att observera hur vissa samlingar har haft högre status än andra. Det finns olika förklaringar till denna praktik. En är det estetiska perspektivet, och en annan ofta förekommande är en evolutionär modell för beskrivning av människor, från mer primitiva till mer civiliserade. Men ofta är den avgörande faktorn för rankning vem samlaren var.

Utifrån tre exempel undersöker jag hur denna rangordning konstruerades på museet från mitten av 1950-talet, hur den har bibehållits fram till idag, och hur minnen, snedvridning av minnen och personliga konflikter slutligen gjorde att den viktigaste faktorn bakom kvalitetsbedömningen av samlingarna var ett förkroppsligande av personen bakom samlingen.

I denna del introducerar jag begreppen mobbning och föremålsbiografi. Mobbning är ett organisatoriskt problem som beskrevs först på 1980-talet, så det var inte ett begrepp i den period som jag undersöker, men en mobbningssituation kan ändå observeras. Dock är min poäng att den mobbning som förekom mellan människor överfördes till föremålen. Artefakterna blev agenter för de inblandade i konflikter, och konflikterna blev delvis en del av samlingarnas biografi. Jag redogör för tre samlingar med olika öden.

## **Syntes**

Min slutsats är att praxis för insamling är en förbryllande process där idéer, människor, svartsjuka och förväntningar hade viktiga konsekvenser för vad dessa objekt har betytt under sin långa vistelse i museets magasin. Dessa objekt från det förflutna har ofta haft en bred publik under sin tid i Göteborg och när museet idag möter framtiden, uppstår ofta önskemål och krav att återföra dessa samlingar till sina ursprungliga ägare.

Avhandlingen handlar om sambandet mellan föremål och personer, samlare, handlare, kuratorer, allmänhet, politiker och de ursprungliga ägarna. Den berör också historien som utspelat sig mellan institutionen och dess politiska sammanhang och hur föremålen slutligen är reflektioner av relationer.

Min målsättning med avhandlingen har varit att medvetandegöra och reflektera över museets praktik, hur denna har utvecklats över tid och blivit det den är idag. Meningen är att medverka till att skapa ett kritiskt perspektiv som möjliggör en omprövning av praktiken.

# Resumen en Español

## De Curiosa a Cultura del Mundo: La Historia de las Colecciones Latinoamericanas en el Museo de la Cultura del Mundo

Este trabajo de tesis se centra en las colecciones almacenadas hoy en Gotemburgo, que tienen su origen en América Latina.

Los objetivos de este trabajo son, en primer lugar analizar como el concepto de "etnografía" se utilizó en el última parte del siglo XIX con el objeto de categorizar las personas excluidas de los proyectos nacionales. La creación de los museos de Etnografía fue, de la misma forma, el resultado del refuerzo de las ideas nacionales y el fortalecimiento del estado/nación. Èsta es la razón por la cual, comparando museos de etnografía tanto de Europa como de América del Sur, se puede en ellos encontrar el mismo tipo de colecciones. En segundo lugar estudiar como las prácticas museológicas fueron construídas y reproducidas en el tiempo, prácticas que la mayoría de las veces se heredaron sin haberse reflexionado sobre las mismas.

La tesis se divide en cuatro capítulos. En cada uno de ellos se ha tratado de presentar un aspecto de estas preguntas.

### Capítulo I: De Curiosa a Cultura del Mundo

En este capítulo se hace un recuento histórico de las instituciones que custodiaron las colecciones consideradas etnográficas. Estas colecciones comprendieron en determinados momentos objetos llegados a Suecia desde el extranjero mientras que en otros incluyeron objetos recolectados dentro de los límites de la nación-estado provenientes de las clases bajas o de "personas menos civilizadas" y en los últimos años de objetos definidos como "el componente no Europeo de la cultura Europea"



Los primeros objetos documentados que llegaron a Gotemburgo desde el extranjero fueron los traídos por capitanes de la marina mercante después de sus viajes para la Compañía Sueca de las Indias Orientales en la última parte del siglo XVIII. Gran parte de estos objetos pasaron a formar parte de colecciones privadas pertenecientes a las familias adineradas de la ciudad.

A comienzos del siglo XIX la Sociedad Real de las Artes y las Ciencias de Gotemburgo (*Kungliga vitterhets-samhället vetenskaps-och i Göteborg*), crea en la ciudad un gabinete de naturalia. Este gabinete contenía elementos zoológicos y botánicos, muchos de ellos descriptos por Carl von Linné, así como también algunos objetos culturales. Los objetos presentados, procedían tanto de Suecia como de otros países y no había una diferenciación entre ellos sino que todos eran parte de este gabinete. Por esta época se crea también una colección de arte en la ciudad. Las colecciones, de arte y de naturalia, estaban expuestas en el liceo de la ciudad (*Hvitfeldska gymnasium*) y podían ser visitadas por el público en general. Posteriormente las mismas fueron ubicadas en la casa de la Compañía Sueca de las Indias Orientales, que tras cerrar sus actividades comerciales era usada como depósito. Las colecciones de este gabinete pasaron en forma posterior a formar parte del Museo de Historia Natural al fundarse éste en 1833.

Siguiendo el ejemplo de otras países europeos la ciudad de Gotemburgo decide crear en 1862 un museo en la ciudad. Inglaterra con el museo de South Kesington será el ejemplo a seguir. Así las colecciones del museo de Historia Natural y la colección de arte sentaron las bases de este nuevo museo que abrió sus puertas al público en diciembre de ese año.

En el nuevo museo los objetos traídos de lugares fuera de Suecia fueron exhibidos junto a objetos históricos suecos y a la colección de arte. Las salas de exhibición se ubicaron en el piso superior junto a la biblioteca, sala de conferencia y de reunión de la Sociedad Real de las Artes y las Ciencias. Descripciones de la época dan muestra del ambiente cosmopolita que se pretendía dar a la ciudad a través de los objetos exhibidos. Estos objetos eran la representación tangible de una ciudad con contactos internacionales y de una pujante clase media en ascenso.

Durante la primera mitad del siglo XX las colecciones aumentaron en número al tiempo que los objetos procedentes de lugares fuera de Suecia pasaron a formar parte del recién creado departamento de Etnografía.

El departamento tuvo un apogeo cuando Erland Nordenskiöld fue nombrado director. Durante su período comienza un frenesí por reunir colecciones de América Latina. Nordenskiöld también renovó los conceptos museológicos: educación, exposiciones y salas de almacenamiento fueron

cuestiones importantes para Nordenskiöld. Él fue el primer profesor de Etnografía en Suecia dotando a Gotemburgo y el museo de una generación de jóvenes investigadores que continuaron la tradición americanista por él iniciada convirtiendo al departamento de Etnografía en un importante centro de Estudios de América.

El departamento de Etnografía pasó por diferentes reorganizaciones y se vió afectado por las secuelas de las dos guerras mundiales. Por último, en 1946, se convirtió en museo propio - el Museo Etnográfico de Gotemburgo. Los siguientes años estuvieron marcados por el deseo de nuevas y mejores instalaciones para las colecciones, un período además marcado por el sueño de una nueva casa para el museo y de nuevas ideas. Sin embargo muchos de estos sueños nunca se hicieron realidad y entrando la década de 1990 la situación del museo empeoró y se hizo insostenible. Los políticos comunales consideraban al museo como un componente foráneo en la actividad cultural de la ciudad y estaban por el cierre del mismo. Pero fue justamente este componente la salvación del museo. Es así que en 1996 el gobierno sueco decidió la creación de un nuevo museo y de una nueva autoridad para administrar las colecciones "no Europeas" en los museos nacionales suecos.

Las colecciones del Museo Etnográfico de Gotemburgo, que hasta este momento se encontraban bajo la administración comunal, pasaron a ser propiedad del estado sueco en la estructura de un nuevo museo - el Museo de la Cultura del Mundo - que abrió sus puertas al público en diciembre de 2004.

## **Capítulo II: El poder de rotular**

En este capítulo se presentan las colecciones del museo, especialmente las de América Latina; en primer lugar porque éstas representan el 75% del total de las colecciones y en segundo lugar porque la tesis se centra justamente en estas. Así mismo se abordará la forma en que éstas llegaron a Suecia y las diferentes formas de clasificarlas durante su historia en el museo/s.

El sistema utilizado para el registro de las colecciones y su etiquetado está firmemente conectado con lo que estos objetos han representado durante su estancia en los depósitos del museo. Es propósito analizar como se construyó el conocimiento y la clasificación en torno a estos objetos y lo que estas diferentes categorías han significado políticamente.

Los objetos han pasado por diferentes paradigmas teóricos y políticos, y cada período de tiempo ha dejado su impronta en el sistema de clasificación de los mismos. Así vemos que estos objetos han sido clasificados a través

del tiempo como curiosidades, etnografía, cultura del mundo. Cada una de estas categorías han tenido distinto significado. De igual manera Etnografía como categoría ha ido cambiando a través del tiempo, no es ésta lo mismo en la última parte del siglo XIX que a finales del siglo XX. A quién o quienes se ha sido incluido en la categoría etnografía ha sido en función de quien o quienes fueron excluidos de proyectos hegemónicos nacionales. En la última parte del siglo XIX, etnografía en el museo tenía más que ver con clase social, en el comienzo del siglo XX, tuvo que ver con los “pueblos primitivos” fuera de Europa, en la mitad del siglo XX con la gente “exótica”. Comenzando el siglo XXI una nueva categoría comenzó a ser utilizada, y es cultura del mundo (y diversidad cultural). El proceso para definir lo que cultura del mundo significa no ha sido fácil, en un lado esta el discurso académico que lo relaciona con globalización y lo que esta ha implicado para las personas; en el otro lado el discurso político que trata de definir una práctica de inclusión usando la noción cultura del mundo.

Las colecciones en el Museo de la Cultura del Mundo, provienen del precedente Museo Etnográfico de Gotemburgo. Al crearse el nuevo museo las colecciones mantuvieron el antiguo sistema de clasificación. Es interesante destacar que entre los objetos registrados no se encuentran ejemplos de objetos híbridos, producto de mezclas culturales o población negra como así tampoco objetos procedentes de las clases altas urbanas. Las colecciones se dividen en arqueológicas y etnográficas, la categoría historia está ausente en los museos etnográficos como si la gente extra- Europea no tuviese historia.

En este capítulo se presenta también un proyecto que se llevo a cabo en 2009 en el Museo de la Cultura del Mundo en torno a una colección proveniente de Bolivia. Será ésta un ejemplo para mostrar como las categorías y la clasificación son factibles de cambio y cuales son, a partir de este ejemplo, las posibilidades y desafíos futuros con respecto a las colecciones del museo.

### **Capítulo III: recolectando personas excluidas**

En este capítulo se explora la relación entre la recolección, la formación de los museos de etnografía, y la constitución de los Estados Nacionales. Vamos aquí a comparar el período de formación de los museos etnográficos, en su momento, con la formación de los museos de la cultura mundial en la actualidad.

Para ello se hará uso dos teorías que han tenido un impacto en la formación del concepto de "etnografía" como categoría. Una de ellas es la situación postcolonial de los países latinoamericanos, la formación de clases y la apropiación del poder político-cultural así como, a consecuencia de ello, la exclusión de los proyectos nacionales de ciertos grupos de la sociedad. Misma situación que se observa y tiene paralelos en Suecia y en resto de Europa.

Se profundizará, además, en la formación del museo de la ciudad de Gotemburgo y el papel que el mismo cumplió como agente generador de un discurso con el objetivo de dar forma a una identidad como ciudadano. Como así también en los procesos de formación de los nuevos países postcoloniales en América Latina donde el envío de objetos/colecciones a Europa será el medio para perfilarse como tierra de oportunidades y de una amplia riqueza natural y cultural. En este contexto la recolección de materiales de aquellos grupos - personas- excluidos de los proyectos nacionales aportará las bases para el surgimiento de la etnografía como disciplina y de los museos como agentes de propaganda colonialista e imperial.

La tesis se concentra temporalmente en los finales del siglo XIX y primera parte del siglo XX para abordar el tema de la práctica del coleccionismo en Gotemburgo. Sin embargo se pretende también examinar la vigencia hoy en día de estas prácticas, similitudes y diferencias con las del momento estudiado. Se puede acotar que bajo el título de la diversidad cultural existen hoy enfoques diferentes y que, dentro de ellos, se pueden aún encontrar aquellos donde se excluye a las personas / grupos aglomerándolas bajo la denominación multicultural.

El rol de los museos con colecciones etnográficas es actualmente campo de discusiones donde no hay respuestas claras, sin embargo, paralelos se pueden observar con los pronunciamientos de hace 100 años atrás. En el caso de Suecia, y al presente, etnografía ha sido definida a nivel político como el componente cultural no europeo, pronunciamiento que ha dado lugar a una serie de problemas. Uno de los mayores desafíos que los museos con objetos etnográficos tienen que enfrentar es que hacer con los mismos - que función cumplen los mismos - Son estos una carga colonial, una herramienta política, una pieza estética, algo a reenviar a sus países de origen o a preservar en un mausoleo. No existe hoy una respuesta clara a este problema, de allí la necesidad de formular estrategias.

Finalmente se introducirán en este capítulo cinco colecciones llegadas a Suecia entre fines del siglo XIX y comienzo del siglo XX. Éstas serán el medio para presentar como la formación de los nuevos estados en América

Latina conllevó a la formación de colecciones. Se retoma aquí lo expuesto en el capítulo II para analizar/estudiar como las distintas categorías fueron utilizadas.

## **Capítulo IV: pasiones turbulentas**

En este capítulo se explora una práctica museológica común, jerarquizar las colecciones. Cuando se estudia la historia de las colecciones de América del Sur en Gotemburgo vemos que algunas de ellas han tenido un estatus más alto que otras.

Esta práctica de jerarquizar colecciones, en el caso de Gotemburgo, tiene diferentes explicaciones, así se tomó en cuenta el aspecto estético como también la aplicación del modelo evolutivo para la descripción de la gente, de lo más primitivo a lo más civilizado. Sin embargo más frecuente fue el de asociar la colección a la persona de su recolector creando un ranking de éstos.

Se tomará tres ejemplos para examinar como se hizo uso de esta jerarquización en el museo hacia mediado de la década de 1950, como ésta se ha mantenido vigente hasta hoy y como los recuerdos sobre el recolector, muchas veces distorsionados, y los conflictos personales se reflejaron sobre las colecciones las cuales, al final, encarnaron la persona del coleccionista sobre cualquier otra cualidad.

Se introducirán aquí nuevos conceptos cuales son el de acoso moral, relaciones de poder y biografía de los objetos. Con respecto al primero de ellos, acoso moral es un problema de organización descrito por primera vez en la década de 1980 por lo que no era un concepto usado en el momento que tratamos. Sin embargo una clara situación de acoso moral se puede observar dentro del museo. El punto en este caso es que esta situación se trasladó a los objetos/ colecciones. Los objetos se convirtieron así en agentes de las personas involucradas en los conflictos y éstos se convirtieron a su vez en parte de la biografía de las colecciones. Presentaremos aquí tres colecciones que han tenido tres destinos diferentes.

## **Síntesis**

La conclusión en este trabajo es que la práctica del coleccionismo es un proceso singular donde las ideas, las personas, los celos y las expectativas jugaron un papel importante y tuvieron serias implicaciones para los objetos y colecciones durante su estancia en los almacenes del museo. Estos objetos y colecciones que nos llegan desde el pasado y que permanecen hoy en Gotemburgo han contado a menudo con un amplio público. Y hoy día y de cara al futuro el museo hace frente a nuevos desafíos, incluyendo la demanda de devolución de estas colecciones a sus propietarios originales.

Esta tesis trata sobre la relación entre objetos y personas, coleccionistas, marchantes, comisarios, público, políticos y propietarios originales. Comprende también la historia entre la institución, en este caso el museo de Etnografía de Gotemburgo y su entorno político y de cómo los objetos al final son reflexiones acerca de relaciones.

El objetivo con este trabajo de tesis es el de crear conciencia y reflexionar sobre las prácticas de museo, la forma en que estas prácticas se desarrollaron y se convirtieron en lo que hoy son. Finalmente de posibilitar una posición crítica que permita replantear estas prácticas.



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