

# The History and Development of Foreign Ethnology Collections in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

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**ABSTRACT:** The history of the foreign ethnology (excluding Pacific) collections in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa) is compared to that of three other New Zealand metropolitan museums: Otago Museum, Canterbury Museum and Auckland Museum. The collections in all four museums have followed a similar pattern of development, although each museum has its own unique history. As a result of its early policy and practices, Te Papa has smaller, more disparate collections than the other three museums and, unlike them, acquired nearly all its foreign ethnology material passively.

**KEYWORDS:** Museum, New Zealand, foreign ethnology collections, European lithic, Native American

## Introduction

This paper is part of a wider study which looked at foreign ethnology collections of material culture (excluding that of Pacific origin) in four New Zealand metropolitan museums, focusing on those in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (henceforth called Te Papa or the Museum). At Te Papa, the term ethnology is analogous with museum anthropology. Thus the Te Papa foreign ethnology collections comprise both foreign ethnographical and foreign archaeological collections. This definition is used throughout the study.

The wider study outlined the history and development of existing collections, examined the effects of current policy and practice on them, and investigated options for the future of all foreign ethnology collections (including new collections, relating to the cultural diversity of this country, that are currently

being developed) (Livingstone 1996 unpubl.)<sup>1</sup>.

The present paper focuses on the history and development of existing foreign ethnology collections in Te Papa<sup>2</sup>. These are compared with the history and development of foreign ethnology collections in three other metropolitan museums (Otago Museum, Canterbury Museum and Auckland Museum) to provide a broader view of foreign ethnology collections in New Zealand. Two case study collections are examined in detail.

## Background

Many colonial museums were established during the second half of the nineteenth century. They were predominantly natural history museums, which proliferated during this period (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 3). Also at this time anthropology was developing as a new natural history discipline (Ames 1992: 39, Pearce 1995:

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished material (unpubl.), personal communications (pers. comm.), museum, newspaper and other sources are in a separate section in the References. See also Yaldwyn (1982).

<sup>2</sup> The Museum will be referred to by its brand name, Te Papa, throughout the paper to avoid confusion. However, it has had several names during its history: Colonial Museum (1865-1907); Dominion Museum (1907-1973); National Museum (1973-1991); National Art Gallery and Museum (1991-1992); Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (1992-).

310).

Colonial museums collected both local and foreign material; the latter because having a comprehensive collection was necessary to maintain credibility internationally. Some foreign material was procured through exchanges with other museums, sponsored expeditions or dealers (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 11, 16). However, of greatest importance was the material obtained from private collectors, often local benefactors. They, together with long-serving, entrepreneurial directors, played an important part in the development of colonial museums (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 98). The New Zealand experience was similar, although emphasis was placed on local ethnology, particularly Maori, with Pacific material being the main representative of foreign cultures (Davidson 1996: pers. comm.).

In the early twentieth century, museums in Europe and North America started to decline. This decline was a consequence of developments in other academic institutions, particularly the universities, which were growing rapidly and diverting resources away from museums (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 101). Moreover, anthropology was increasingly becoming a university discipline which focused on social anthropology rather than material culture. By the 1930s, ethnology had been left behind, and collections, no longer important for research, were often poorly documented and inaccessible (Reynolds 1989: 112-113, Ames 1992: 39-40).

Furthermore, by this time, little foreign ethnological material was being collected. According to Phelps (1976: 14), this was due to the collecting practices in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which stripped many indigenous societies of their material culture, making it no longer readily obtainable. These collecting practices originate from the late eighteenth century when the objects collected during Captain Cook's voyages aroused interest in other cultures. Private collectors began to accumulate large quantities of ethnological material collected by explorers as well as by traders, travellers, missionaries and colonial officials. During the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, field collecting expeditions were common (Kaepler 1978: 37-38, Thomson & Parezo 1989: 36, Idiens 1994: 3-5, Pearce 1995: 345).

Another reason for the lack of available material was that, by the turn of the twentieth century, colonial museums had begun collecting and preserving their own indigenous material culture, ensuring it remained in its country of origin (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 100). In New Zealand this was enforced by the 1901 Maori Antiquities Act, which prohibited the export of Maori artifacts (Butts 1993: 173).

A universal move towards collecting local material occurred in the mid-twentieth century. This change was brought about by a change in ideology often referred to as the new museology. As a consequence, museums began to develop collections relevant to the local community (Harrison 1993: 166).

With increased migration in recent years, many communities have become multicultural. According to Harrison (1993: 164), cultural diversity is a major force which, along with other contemporary issues (for example, a global economy), will direct museums in the future. Immigrants to New Zealand now come from the Pacific and Asia, as well as Europe (Statistics New Zealand 1996: 94, 98). The country's Asian population is increasing rapidly and this trend is beginning to be reflected in museum collections and programmes.

The international industrial exhibitions held during the latter half of the nineteenth century generated public interest in other cultures. Museums displaying ethnological material were popular. Whereas in the nineteenth century ethnological objects were displayed according to similarity of form, for much of this century objects have commonly been displayed in their cultural context or as art objects (Idiens 1994: 5). Ethnographic exhibitions are now often developed in conjunction with members of the communities from which the collections originate (Ames 1992: 54-58). In the past, New Zealand museums have tended to display foreign ethnology material geographically. Themes of recent exhibitions have varied - displaying cross-cultural comparisons, cultural diversity, the history of collections and collectors, and interdisciplinary themes (Te Papa 1992 unpubl., Fyfe 1996: pers. comm., Anson 1996: pers. comm.)

Although one of the roles of nineteenth-century museums was to educate the public, it was not until the early twentieth century that techniques were developed to facilitate museum edu-

cation. In 1933, Sydney Markham undertook museum surveys in Britain and its former colonies, and found that education practice in New Zealand museums was behind that in institutions in Europe and the United States. This improved in the late 1930s when specialised education programmes were developed in New Zealand museums by a museums trust established with assistance from the Carnegie Corporation of New York (McQueen 1942: 12, Reynolds 1989: 113). The metropolitan museums were provided with a School Education Service, administered by a government department, up until 1995. Educational activities are now the responsibility of each museum.

In the northern hemisphere, ethnological collections were used for research in the late nineteenth century because they could be used to illustrate the evolutionary theories prevalent at the time. The shift of anthropology from museums to the universities meant a change in research theories and methods, and there was a decline in material culture studies. This continued for much of this century (Reynolds 1989: 112). In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in material culture, although much contemporary research is interdisciplinary. According to Ames (1992: 39-40, 46), there is also increasing interest in studying the history of collections and collecting. The present paper is a contribution to this field.

## Te Papa

The Te Papa foreign ethnology collections consist of more than 2,000 items. About 70% of these are ethnographic and 30% archaeological (Watt 1989 unpubl.: 1). The ethnographic<sup>3</sup> collections come from a variety of geographic areas, mainly Asia, Australia, Africa and the Americas, and include clothing, textiles, personal adornment, ceremonial items, weapons, household utensils and other implements. The archaeological collections comprise mainly prehistoric lithic material from Egypt, Europe, India and Africa. Only the Egyptian collection contains more than a few non-lithic artifacts (Young 1988: 112-113, Te Papa Records: FE Card Catalogue).

Until recently, Pacific material was considered part of the foreign ethnology collections.

There is now a separate Pacific collection which includes material from New Guinea, Torres Strait and Oceania, but which excludes Australian aboriginal, Indonesian and Philippine material; this remains in the foreign ethnology collections (Davidson 1995: pers. comm.).

## The History and Development of the Foreign Ethnology Collections

During its 130-year history, Te Papa has undergone several changes in philosophy and policy. These changes, as reflected in the history and development of the foreign ethnology collections, divide the museum's history into three broad periods: Early Period (1865 to 1903), Middle Period (1903 to 1988) and Current Period (1988 to the present).

### The Early Period (1865 to 1903)

The Museum was established by the central government in 1865 and accommodated in a building near parliament. James Hector, the director of the Museum, was also director of the New Zealand Geological Survey. This latter role influenced his development of policy for the new museum, outlined in his "Memorandum Concerning the Colonial Museum" published in the *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)* in 1866. This memorandum opens with the following statement:

"One of the most important duties in connection with the geological survey of a new country is the formation of a scientific museum, the principal object of which is to facilitate the classification and comparison of specimens collected in the different localities during the progress of the survey." (Hector 1866: 3)

Hector intended that the museum's main function would be to study and compare geological specimens to assist with the development of the country's natural resources. Another important function was to provide accurate information to those museums responsible for making natural history accessible to the public (Hector 1866: 3).

<sup>3</sup> A significant number of lithic items are included with some of the foreign ethnographic collections (e.g., the Native American collection), rather than with the foreign archaeological collections. The Te Papa foreign ethnology collections have always been managed in this way; this practice is consistent in all the metropolitan museums.

The Museum had six founding collections. Two of these consisted of geological specimens from provincial surveys. Another was a private collection of fossils deposited by a member of parliament, Walter Mantell, who had been influential in the establishment of the Museum and in Hector's appointment as director. Hector had been involved with the Industrial Exhibition held in Dunedin in 1865 and he deposited specimens collected for this, as well as his personal collection, in the Museum. The other collection came from the first museum in Wellington, that of the New Zealand Society, founded in 1851, which existed for only a few years. This collection included some foreign ethnology objects (Dell 1965: 4, Dell 1966 unpubl.: 8-9, 13, 24).

In accordance with Hector's policy, early acquisitions of the Colonial Museum consisted mainly of geological specimens, together with a lesser number of natural history specimens including some "native implements, weapons, dresses etc." (Hector 1866: 4).

By 1870, the collections included a modest number of Maori, Pacific and Australian artifacts as well as ethnological material from other parts of the world (Te Papa Annual Report 1867: 6-7, 11; *Catalogue of the Colonial Museum* 1870: vi, 231). The museum's Annual Reports published throughout the late nineteenth century show that small numbers of historical, Maori and foreign ethnological items were continually being acquired (Te Papa Annual Reports: 1867-1871, 1877, 1886, 1893, 1898). By the end of the century, the foreign ethnology collections consisted predominantly of lithic implements from various areas of the world and Asian ethnographic material (Thomson 1915: 13). Nevertheless, some significant items from other geographic areas were acquired during the early period. One of these was the Egyptian mummy received in 1885 from C.R. Carter (a local businessman, politician and benefactor), who had purchased it from the Egyptian Government (Te Papa Annual Report 1886: 9, 19; O'Rourke 1996 unpubl.).

Hector was director of the Museum for nearly 40 years, throughout the entire early period. From 1867 he was manager of the New Zealand Institute and responsible for several other government organisations as well (Dell 1965: 6). As noted by a subsequent director, J. Allan Thomson:

In 1903, on the retirement of Sir James Hector, the association of the Colonial Museum, the Geological Survey and the New Zealand Institute came to an end, and it was decided to make a complete change in the policy of the Museum. (Te Papa Annual Report 1915: 9).

### **The Middle Period (1903-1988)**

Augustus Hamilton, the Museum's second director, instigated this change in policy. Hamilton's appointment was a result of his advocacy for the 1901 Maori Antiquities Act, and his campaign for the establishment of a national Maori museum (to be incorporated within the Museum) (Dell 1965: 9). Hamilton wanted the Museum to embrace all subjects, though he had a special interest in anthropology, believing in the adage that "the proper study of mankind is man". (Hamilton 1901: 1, 4; Hamilton 1912: 3; Trinkaus & Shipman 1993: 4).

Hamilton was the first ethnologist in a New Zealand museum and, in 1910, he employed Elsdon Best who was to become an authority on Maori ethnology. Hamilton brought his own collection of Maori and Pacific ethnographic material to the Museum. During the 10 years he was director, Hamilton actively collected Maori material and developed this collection. The museum also expanded its collections of natural history and Pacific items, as well as acquiring historical items, fine art and foreign ethnology material (Dell 1965: 12). Most of the foreign ethnology material was acquired unintentionally; often a few objects were included in collections that were acquired primarily for their Maori artifacts (Te Papa Records: G and FE Registers).

Like Hector before him, Hamilton maintained a personal and professional network, and the Museum acquired some large collections during this period. In 1912, his friend Alexander Turnbull donated his Maori collection as well as Pacific, foreign and other items to the Museum. In the same year the Museum received another collection of Maori, Pacific and foreign ethnology material, some of which had been collected during Captain Cook's voyages. This was donated to the New Zealand Government by Lord St Oswald, grandson of an early nineteenth century British collector, Charles Winn (Davidson 1997: pers. comm.).

The collection was deposited in the Museum in recognition of its function as a national repository (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 20/3/1).

Nevertheless, according to Thomson, the Museum was still not functioning as a national institution since it did not specialise in collections relating to New Zealand. As a consequence of Hector's policy and the early focus on geology, the other three metropolitan museums, Otago, Canterbury and Auckland, had superior collections (Thomson 1915: 9). Thomson believed the Museum had to pursue a definite policy to remedy this situation and, in the Annual Report for 1915, he presented a policy and plans for future development.

Thomson defined the scope of the Museum as specialising in collections relating to New Zealand and the South Pacific. However, he also acknowledged the need to have foreign collections for comparison and, for this purpose, objects similar to those used by the Maori, such as lithic implements, utensils and clothing, were to be acquired. In his view:

One advantage of such a comparative collection is that isolated specimens from any race find a logical place in the Museum, without the need to attempt a complete collection of the objects of that race. (Thomson 1915: 13)

Thomson's policy also spelt out the functions of the Museum, including its responsibilities in exhibition, education and research. It remained the Museum's only coherent written policy for nearly 80 years (Dell 1965: 14).

In 1924, staff member W.J. Phillipps began assisting with the ethnology collections; he worked part-time in ethnology until his retirement in 1958. In the 1950s, two staff were employed to work with the ethnology collections; by 1988, the end of the middle period, the number had risen to five (Te Papa Archives: Correspondence, Thomson to Under Secretary, Internal Affairs, 27th August 1925; Te Papa Annual Reports 1958: 12; 1988: 31).

Markham, during his survey in 1933, noted that "Foreign ethnology is fairly well represented" in the collections of the Museum (Markham quoted in Dell 1966 unpubl.: 176, Reynolds 1989: 113). Through-

out this middle period, the foreign ethnology collections continued to be developed gradually through passive acquisition (the acceptance of offer of donations). A small number of items were actively acquired through fieldwork, purchase or exchange. The items were received for a variety of reasons (for example, because it was the national museum or through personal or professional networks) and from various sources (missionaries, other institutions, expeditions, collectors or New Zealanders travelling or living abroad). (Te Papa Records: Accession Files, McFadgen 1994: pers. comm.).

A few collections consist of material from a single source. Most of the material in one of the larger foreign archaeological collections, the Egyptian collection, was acquired as a result of the Museum being a sponsor for expeditions undertaken by the Egyptian Exploration Fund in the early part of this century (O'Rourke 1996: pers. comm.). One foreign ethnographic collection is the result of fieldwork undertaken by a museum staff member. This consists of Ifugaoan material collected in the northern Philippines during the early 1960s by Terry Barrow in collaboration with Philippine anthropologists (Te Papa Annual Report 1961: 18, Davidson 1995: pers. comm.). However, these are exceptions; most collections are derived from a variety of sources. The two case study collections will be used, in a later section, to show the development of the foreign ethnology collections in more detail.

There was little change in museum policy and practice relating to the foreign ethnology collections during the entire middle period. When the functions of the Museum were again defined in 1973 in The National Museum of New Zealand Act, they were similar to those specified by Thomson in 1915 - to acquire, care for and display material mainly from New Zealand and the Pacific. Museum practice in relation to the foreign ethnology collections also remained much the same as Thomson had proposed. No attempt was ever made to develop a representative collection of any foreign culture; they have always been comparative collections (Te Papa Annual Report 1915: 9-13, Watt 1989 unpubl.: 2, McFadgen 1994: pers. comm.). The current foreign ethnology collections are very small compared to the Museum's other collections of

cultural heritage material – approximately 2,000 objects compared to an estimated 19,000 Maori, 13,000 Pacific and 13,000 New Zealand History objects (excluding coins and stamps).

### **The Current Period (from 1988)**

In the mid-1980s, partly as a consequence of the success of the Te Maori exhibition which travelled to several venues in the United States and New Zealand, the Government conceived a plan to build a new national museum (Newton 1994: 285). In 1988, a project team was established to plan and develop the Museum of New Zealand (integrating the National Museum and National Art Gallery), to be built on Wellington's waterfront (Te Papa Annual Report 1989: 3).

The project team proposed that new policies be introduced to manage the development and care of collections. Their report included a recommendation that the relevance of the foreign ethnology collections be assessed (Young 1988 unpubl.: 14, 57-58). Information in the report relating to the range and size of the foreign ethnology collections was provided by museum curator, Robin Watt.

The following year, Watt produced an internal memorandum recommending that, with the exception of collections relating to immigrant groups, the foreign ethnology collections should not be developed further (Watt 1989 unpubl.: 3). In the following two years, few foreign ethnology items were accessioned into the collections. Only under special circumstances were items accepted (such as the Alaskan ivory implement which is described in the Native American collection case study). Collecting of foreign ethnology material virtually ceased with the introduction of new policies and practices in 1991 and 1992 (Te Papa 1992 unpubl.).

In 1991, the curatorial departments were restructured to align with the Museum's new conceptual framework: Papatuanuku (the earth we live on), Tangata Whenua (the people of the land by right of first discovery) and Tangata Tiriti (the people here by right of the Treaty of Waitangi).

This separated the ethnology collections into two different departments: Maori and History (which included Pacific and foreign ethnology). The Maori col-

lections embodied the concept of Tangata Whenua, and the Pacific and foreign ethnology collections that of Tangata Tiriti (representing the multicultural heritages of all immigrants, their history, art, science, technology, relationship with the land, and place in the Pacific and the wider world) (Te Papa Annual Report 1993: 4).

Within Tangata Tiriti, new associations and divisions were created. The Pacific and other foreign ethnology collections, which had previously been closely associated, were now separated into two distinct collection areas, one active (Pacific) and one mostly inactive (Foreign Ethnology).

On 1st July 1992, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act came into effect; later that year a number of policy documents were formulated that still form the basis of current policy (Te Papa 1992 unpubl.). However, Te Papa is again undergoing change, and museum policy, including that pertaining to collections development, is being modified. The museum is still collecting items from other cultures, particularly Asian material. However, recently acquired material (for example, items brought to New Zealand by Chinese immigrants), which once would have been considered foreign ethnology, has been accessioned into the New Zealand history collections.

Although the existing foreign ethnology collections are small and relatively unimportant, nearly all the collection items are registered, although little information is known about some of them. There have been sporadic attempts to improve documentation since the 1960s. Some collections are currently being documented in more detail; Ross O'Rourke is working on the Egyptian collection and some of the lithic collections. The European lithic collection and the Native American collection have been documented as part of this study. Collection data, even where only minimal, has been entered in the Museum's comprehensive database (Te Kahui), which was introduced in 1994.

## Use of Foreign Ethnology Collections

### The Early Period

According to Dell (1966 unpubl.: 84), everything accepted by the Museum in the early period was placed on permanent display because there was little storage space available. It is therefore likely that foreign ethnology material was on display during the nineteenth century. However, as Hector stated in the 1873 Annual Report, the displays were not primarily for the public:

While every effort is made to render the Museum as attractive and instructive to the public as possible...the principal object...is to make it useful to the Geological Survey.

Nevertheless, the Museum was popular, receiving more than 10,000 visitors per year by 1871. Early museum files show that teachers were bringing their classes to the Museum before the turn of the century (Dell 1966 unpubl.: 45, 253).

### The Middle Period

Educational activities became more formalised in the early twentieth century with staff taking classes (e.g., Best lectured on Maori culture). These activities were later developed by Phillipps into a more systematic programme that continued until the Museum moved into the Buckle Street building in the mid-1930s (McQueen 1942: 11-12).

In 1937, the Museum benefited from a Carnegie Corporation grant. As a result, the Museum's first education officer was employed in 1938. Topics for class lessons in the 1940s included subjects related to the foreign ethnology collections, such as early humans and Australian aborigines. In addition to taking formal classes, education staff organised clubs for secondary school students, and topics included *Life in Other Lands*, for example, *Ancient Egypt* (Appendix 1). The School Education Service also provided travelling display cases for schools too distant to have classes visit the Museum (McQueen 1942: 16, Oliver 1944: 11-14, Dell 1965: 18-19, Dell 1966 unpubl.: 253-255, 261). These display cases included foreign ethnology material; for example, in 1967 some new cases containing material about Japan, Africa and Turkey were circulated to schools (Te Papa Annual Report 1967: 17).

By the early twentieth century, some collections were in storage, there no longer being enough space to display them all (Te Papa Annual Report 1915: 6). Use of the foreign ethnology collections in displays was encouraged. Thomson (1915: 13) believed this to be important for two reasons. Firstly, because it was necessary to exhibit collections from other countries to better understand Maori culture. And secondly, because most people did not have the opportunity to travel and see other cultures for themselves.

When the Buckle Street premises opened in 1936, more exhibition space became available. However, by 1944 the director, W.R.B. Oliver, considered it inadequate and felt the space needed to be doubled (Oliver 1944: 30, 36). Even the foreign ethnology collections, although not extensive, did not have sufficient exhibition space. With the support of the Carnegie Museums Trust, Oliver organised small exhibitions to tour around larger museums; each museum was responsible for preparing two exhibits per year (McQueen 1942: 36, 38).

Annual Reports show that material from the foreign ethnology collections continued to be used in permanent exhibitions (e.g., the Egyptian gallery and Native American items in a display case containing items collected on Captain Cook's Voyages – a remnant of an earlier Cook Bicentennial Exhibition), and in temporary exhibitions up until the current period. Examples of temporary exhibitions include a small exhibit mounted in 1950 displaying material from India, Africa and the ancient Mediterranean region, another in 1967 of African material, and the Watters collection of Peruvian pots exhibited in 1973 (Te Papa Annual Reports: 1950: 22; 1967: 16; 1973: 7).

From the late 1930s, the Museum was involved in outreach activities (such as loans, travelling display cases, public lectures and films) which sometimes included material from, or information relating to, the foreign ethnology collections. For example, the Carnegie Museums Trust bought educational films which were used for cinema programmes at Te Papa, which was well-equipped with a theatre and film projector. The film *Navajo Children* was one of several films lent by the Museum to the Palmerston North Library in 1940 (*The Times* 5 Sept., 1940; McQueen 1942: 45).

Outreach through loans has continued throughout the second half of this century. During one five-year period (1974 to 1979), nine loans of foreign ethnology material (consisting of approximately 170 objects mainly from the African, Asian and Australian aboriginal collections) were made to regional museums for temporary exhibitions (Te Papa Records: FE Loan Files). Up until the early 1990s, travelling display cases were circulated to libraries and other public institutions. These included foreign ethnology material; at the time the service was discontinued, one case contained a display of African beadwork and another, ancient Egyptian jewellery and toiletry items. These travelling display cases were researched and put together by curators, unlike the school display cases which were produced by education staff.

From 1910 until his death in 1931, Best actively researched and published his findings on the Maori collections, sometimes using foreign ethnology material for comparison (Best 1912: 11, Dell 1965: 12, Dell 1966 unpubl.: 243-246). During the 1960s and 1970s, some research was carried out on the "Cook" collections by staff member, Betty McFadgen, and later by Adrienne Kaeppler, then curator at the Bishop Museum in Hawaii. Research was also carried out on other collectors and collections (e.g., O'Rourke's study during the 1980s on H.W. Seton-Karr, a collector who had donated foreign lithic collections to this and other New Zealand museums). Apart from these, the only research carried out on the foreign ethnology collections during the middle period was for exhibition purposes.

### The Current Period

Research on collectors and collections has continued, and exhibition research has been undertaken when required (O'Rourke 1995: pers. comm.). O'Rourke is currently documenting and researching the Egyptian collection. In addition to this, there has been one instance of interdisciplinary research also involving the Egyptian collection (Palma 1991).

Since the Egyptian gallery and Cook Voyages display were dismantled in 1991, no foreign ethnology material has been on permanent display. Objects from the collections have been occasionally used in temporary exhibitions (e.g., a recent interdisciplinary exhibi-

tion *History, Mystery and the Wolf*) and also in the associated education programmes. Some ancient Egyptian items, together with the coffin belonging to the Egyptian mummy, are currently on display in one of the children's discovery centres. A temporary exhibition, which opened in February 1998, focuses on Chinese immigrants; the Chinese community was involved in developing this exhibition.

Objects from the foreign ethnology collections have also been used for education programmes not related to exhibitions. For example, Watt used items associated with healing practices to illustrate lectures given to post-graduate nursing students (Watt 1995: pers. comm.).

However, the most frequent use of the foreign ethnology collections is for outreach activities, mainly as loans to regional museums for their exhibitions. The item most frequently lent is the coffin belonging to the Egyptian mummy. Other items lent recently include Peruvian ceramics and Asian dancing dolls (Te Papa Records: FE Loan Files).

## Case Studies

Two case-study collections illustrate the history and development of the foreign ethnology collections in more detail. One is an example of a foreign archaeological collection - the European Lithic collection; the other, the Native American collection (from North America), is an example of a foreign ethnographic collection.

### The European Lithic Collection

This collection consists of approximately 350 lithic implements and flakes. Although small, it ranges from the Palaeolithic through to the Neolithic era. Approximately half of the collection comes from Denmark. A substantial proportion is from France and Britain, with lesser amounts from other areas of Europe.

As shown in Figure 1, the European Lithic collection derives from 21 accessions<sup>4</sup> received at fairly regular intervals between 1871 and 1979. The earlier accessions tended to consist of large numbers of items; the size of accessions decreased after 1930.

The first acquisition of European lithic material,

<sup>4</sup> At Te Papa, an accession is the acquisition of one or more objects on a certain date from a single source (e.g., a donor).



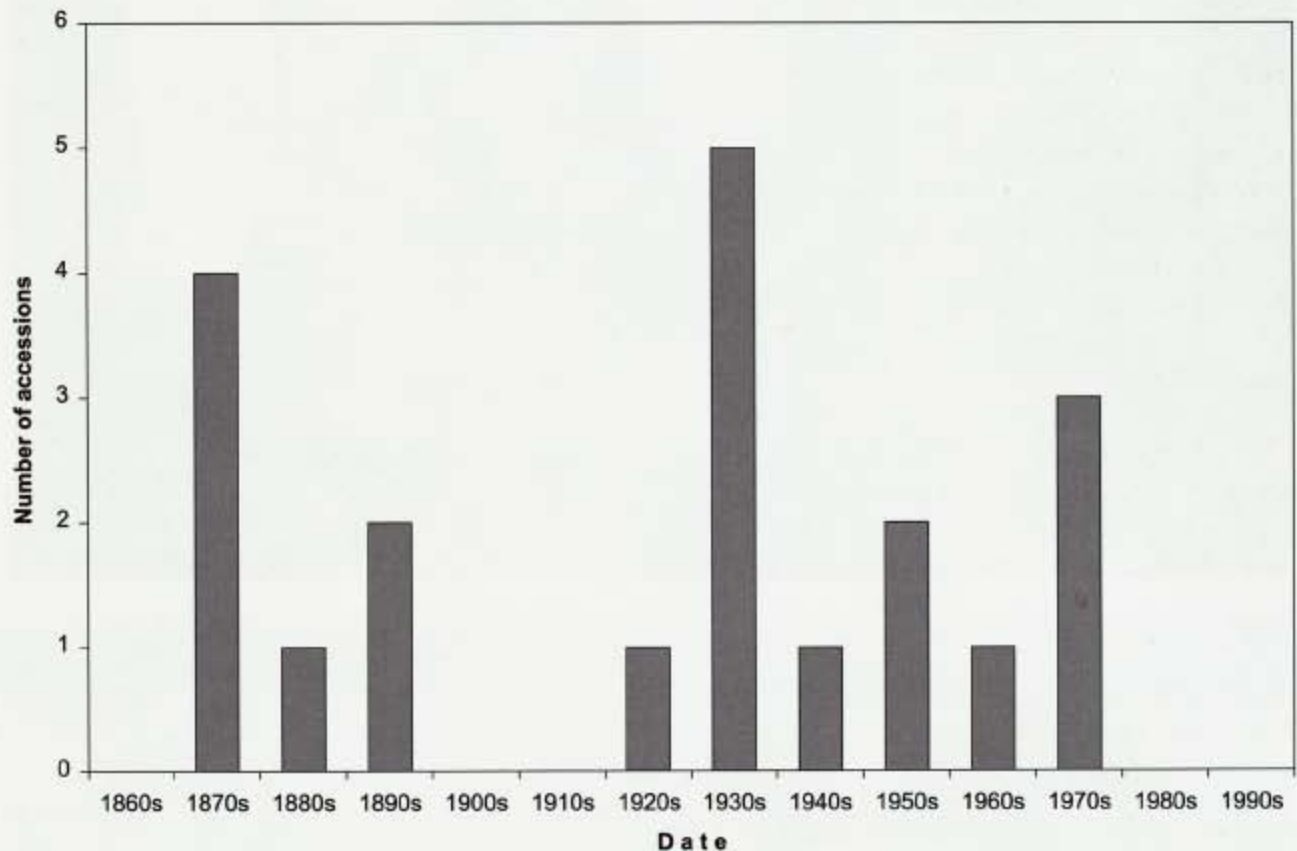
consisting of 24 objects (together with some geological specimens) occurred in 1871, a few years after the Museum was established (Figure 2). This (and another in 1876) was acquired from F.C. Rowan, a Danish immigrant. The 1871 donation was his own collection of Danish lithic material. The second acquisition was an exchange of similar material, which Rowan negotiated between the Museum and the Copenhagen Ethnographic Museum, which wanted Maori lithic material to add to its comparative collections (Te Papa Annual Reports: 1871: 9, 1877: 10-11, Te Papa Archives: Reg. Letters 1711, 2642).

In 1877, the Museum received another large collection, this time in its capacity as the national repository. The parliamentarian Mantell retained a continuing interest in the Museum. He also had connections with the British Museum. In 1877, with Mantell's assistance, the Museum received several cases of natural history specimens from the British Museum together with a gift of 100 lithic implements from the Trustees of the Christy Collection (Te Papa Archives: Reg. Let-

ter 1856).

This lithic material had been excavated by a famous British collector, Henry Christy. Most of this came from Magdalenian sites in the Dordogne Valley in France, where he worked with French palaeontologist, Edouard Lartet, in the early 1860s (Figure 3). A. Woollaston Franks, Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum, was one of the Trustees. He arranged the gift of the Christy material to the Museum, also donating some lithic material he had collected (Figure 4) (Te Papa Annual Report 1877: 11, Stephen 1887: 295-296).

Although some small collections of lithic material were received during the early period, most acquisitions consisted of substantial numbers of artifacts. In 1897, the Museum received another large collection of Danish material donated by another Danish immigrant, Hans Lau of Dannevirke (Te Papa Archives: Reg. Letter 1897/147, Te Papa Annual Report 1898: 26).



**Figure 1:** Development of the European Lithic collection, showing number of accessions per decade (the average number of objects per accession is 22; before 1930 the average number is 41, after this date it is 8)



Figure 2: Neolithic implements from Denmark

Rowan Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa  
Photographer: Michael Hall

In 1924, the Museum acquired a collection of Magdalenian implements from Switzerland, which was purchased from R. Hauesler who had brought them from Switzerland when he emigrated (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 10/5/1). In 1927, Hauesler approached the Museum again with another offer to sell, but the director, Thomson, refused this offer saying the Museum had enough lithic material (Te Papa Archives: Correspondence, Thomson to Hauesler, 31st May 1927). However, the succeeding director, Oliver (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 13/27/219), unable to find the earlier collections (perhaps because the collections were inaccessible), began acquiring more material. In 1928, the Museum purchased some Danish lithic items and, in 1935, received more Danish material (together with some Native American lithic items), as a result of an exchange arranged with Whanganui Museum (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 19/2/5).

Mantell's daughter-in-law donated his Maori collection to the Museum in 1930 (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 2/5/26). Included with it were some European lithic and bronze implements and a carnelian bead (the bronze implements are some of the few non-lithic items in the prehistoric European collection). This acquisition was one of several twentieth century accessions which consisted mainly of Maori or Pacific material but which included a few foreign ethnology items. One of these accessions was purchased, the others were obtained through donations or bequests.

There is just one instance of active collecting of European lithic material. This was initiated by the Museum's newly established Education Service in 1938 when it asked for and received a collection of 29 British palaeolithic and neolithic implements from the National Museum of Wales to use in its education programmes (Te Papa Records: Acc.No.1939/14). This acquisition was one of the last "large" lithic collections received by the Museum.

The last was a gift of Danish lithic material in 1952 from the National Museum of Denmark. This donation was an outcome of the Museum's connections with the Danish Expedition Ship *Galathea*; staff from the Museum sailed aboard this ship to Campbell Island to carry out scientific studies (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 22/0/2, Te Papa Records: Acc.No.1952/168, Dell 1966 unpubl.: 195).

The museum continued to receive donations of small numbers of European lithic items until 1979.

### Use of the Collection

It is likely that items from this collection were displayed in the Museum during the nineteenth century. It is also likely that they were displayed during the early part of the twentieth century. In 1910, Hamilton, in a letter to Seton-Karr (from whom the Museum received several collections of non-European lithic material), commented that since the Geological Survey specimens had been removed, the Museum could "devote more space to the very interesting subject of stone implements." (Te Papa Archives: Correspondence, Hamilton to Seton-Karr, 17th June, 1910).

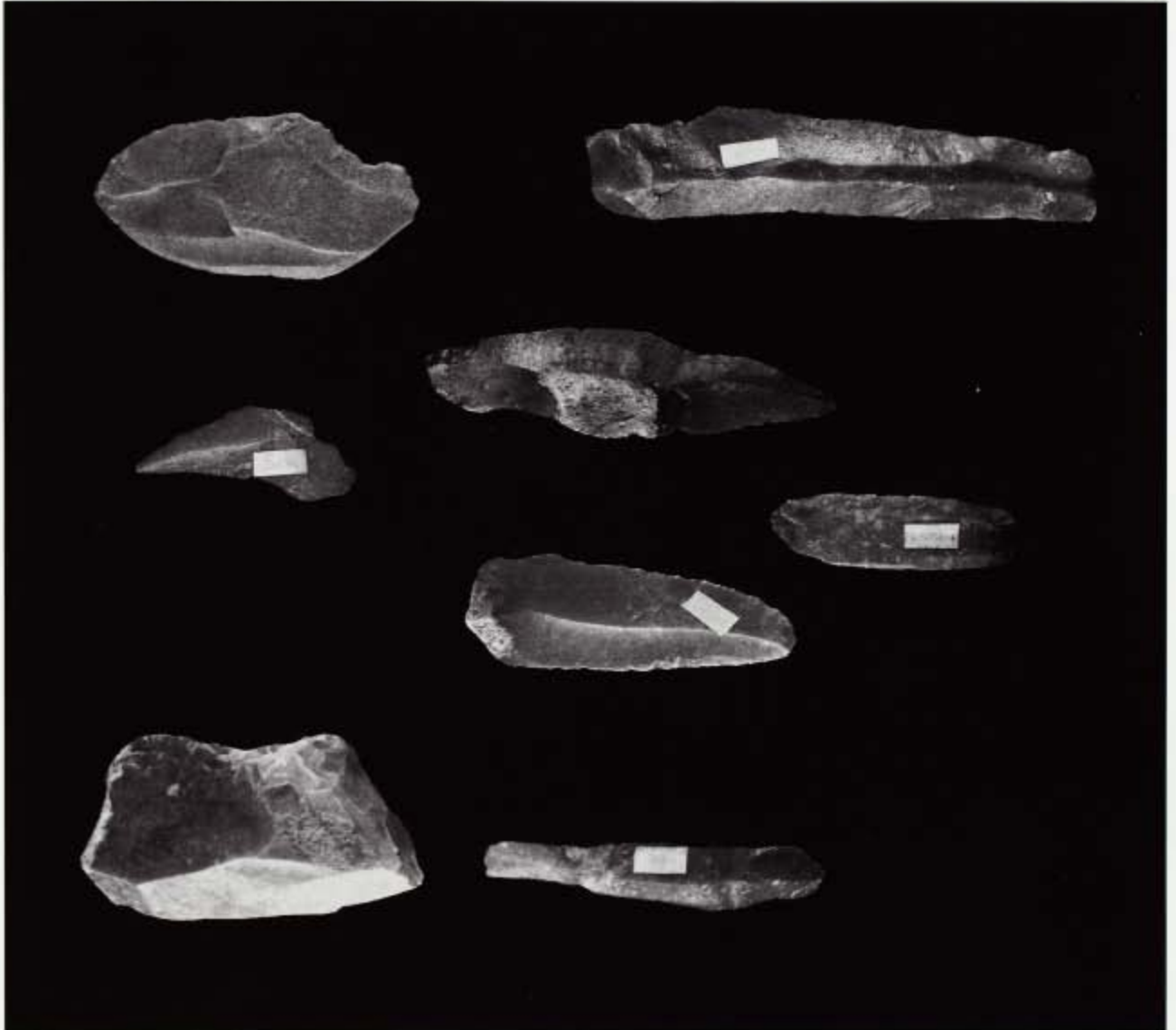
European lithic material has only been used to a limited extent in exhibitions this century. Some items were included in a long-term display on early humans during the late 1970s/early 1980s (Watt 1995: pers. comm.).

The European lithic collections have been used more often for educational activities, particularly during the late 1930s and 1940s in travelling cases, and for school groups (*The Dominion*, 1st July, 1938; Te Papa Archives: Education Services Resource Material, 1942). The collections were again used for educational activities (for comparison with Maori lithic implements) in association with the 1970s/1980s exhibition. After this exhibition closed, museum curator Watt continued using the lithic collection for secondary school classes until he resigned in 1993 (Watt 1995: pers. comm.).

According to Watt, the collection is valuable in that it represents an unbroken chronology from the early Palaeolithic to Neolithic periods (Young 1988: 107). No in-depth research has been carried out on the lithic collection, although work has been done on the history of the collections and collectors, as well as research for education programmes and exhibitions.

### The Native American Collection

This collection consists of approximately 300 objects originating from all regions of North America except the southeast. The collection has a high proportion of



**Figure 3:** Upper Palaeolithic implements (Magdalenian period) from the Dordogne Valley, France

Christy Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa  
Photographer: Michael Hall



Figure 4: Lithic implements (representing different periods) from St. Acheul, France

Franks Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Photographer: Michael Hall

lithic items. In addition to these, it includes costume and wooden implements, with fewer numbers of fibre-craft items, ceramics and items of personal adornment. The age of the lithic material is unknown; the non-lithic material dates from the 18th century to the present.

The collection had its beginnings before the establishment of the Museum – a pair of Canadian snowshoes were acquired as part of the New Zealand Society's collection (Te Papa Annual Report 1867: 7). No further items were acquired until around the turn of the twentieth century; the collection was developed from then until 1991.

The collection derives from 41 documented accessions (Figure 5). One of the earliest collections acquired is also one of the most significant. It is one of three collections<sup>5</sup> received by the Museum that contain Native American material which may have been collected during Captain Cook's voyages. This collection, like the later ones, was offered to the New Zealand Government, which passed them on to the national institution

(Te Papa Archives: Subject File 20/3/1).

The first of these "Cook" collections was acquired in 1912, donated by Lord St. Oswald of Wakefield, England. It consists of 74 items, some of which are known to have been collected during Cook's voyages (Kaeppler 1974: 77-78, Kaeppler 1978: 256, 263, 276, 286). This first collection consists mostly of Maori and Pacific items, plus items collected from the Northwest Coast of North America, which Cook visited on his third voyage (Figure 6). In addition to these, the collection includes some Native American items that originated from the northeast region of North America (Phelps 1976: 345, Sturtevant 1995: pers. comm.), as well as material from Africa, England and South America (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 20/3/1).

Much of the Native American material acquired during the first half of this century consists of isolated items that came with large accessions of other material. Often this has been Maori or Pacific material as with the first Cook collection. A donation of

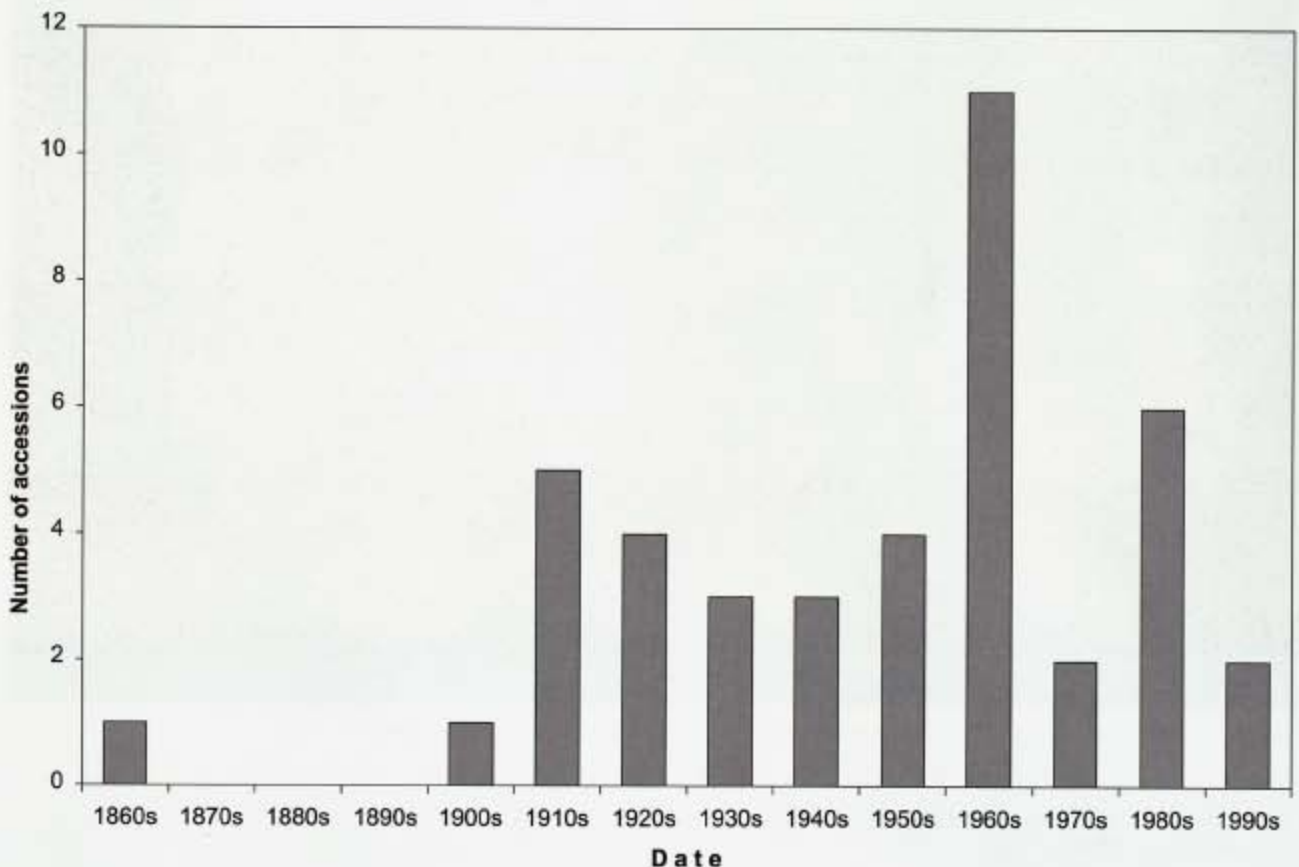


Figure 5: Development of the Native American collection, showing numbers of accessions per decade (average number of objects per accession is 6)

<sup>5</sup> The museum has a total of eight collections with alleged Cook material, five of which definitely do include Cook material; three of these five include Native American material (Davidson 1996: pers. comm.).

Melanesian material (which included three Native American items) was received in 1927 from a Welsh collector, Francis Price. He originally offered his collection to the National Museum of Wales, which recommended he send it to New Zealand, and thus it came to the national institution (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 10/2/11).

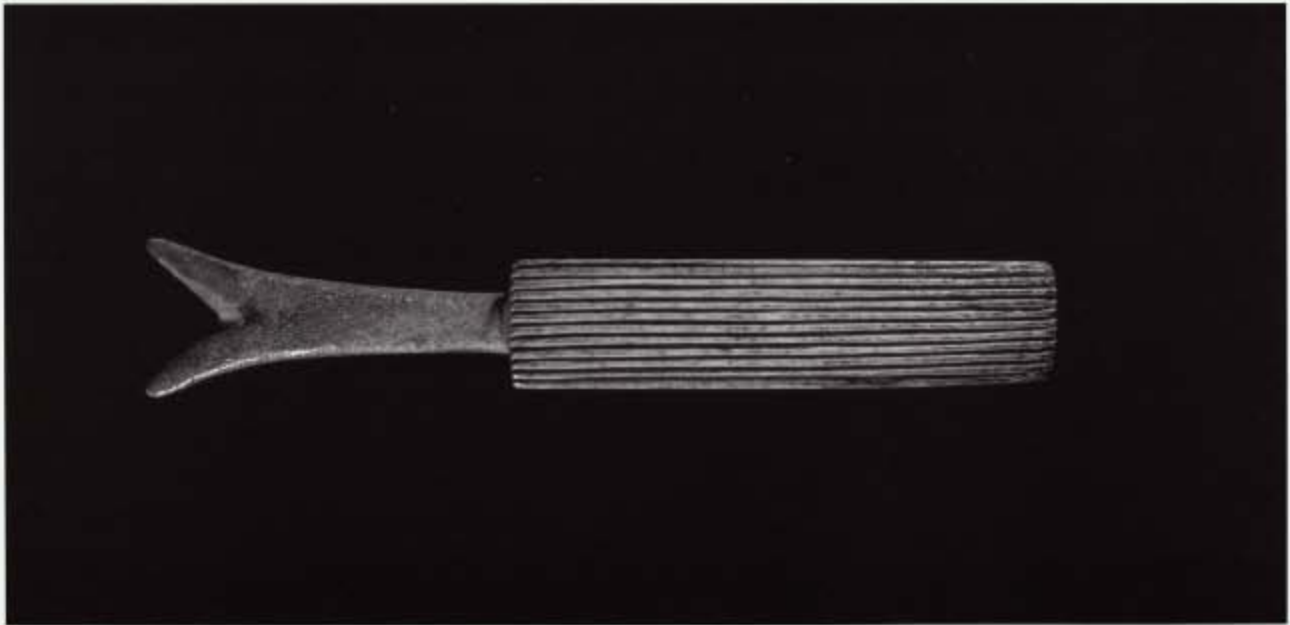
Some material was acquired from Otago Museum in the 1920s in exchange for Maori objects and casts of Maori objects (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 2/7/156). Other large collections of Maori and/or Pacific material were purchased, for example, from the Taylor estate (1912), the Mackie estate (1943), and at a Bethunes' auction (1916). All these collections included a few Native American items (Te Papa Records: G Register, FE Register 2; Te Papa Archives: Subject File 2/2/25).

Some Native American items came with two collections of material other than Maori and Pacific. Unlike most of the collections mentioned above, these

were not private collections. One consisted of two weapons included in a 1912 purchase of coins from the St. Louis Coin Company (Te Papa Archives: Reg. Letter 141, Te Papa Archives: Ledger 1904-1911, Index No.138). Several items from the northeast (together with material from the Philippines) were included with a collection of birds received from the State University of Iowa in 1923, as a result of scientists from that university visiting here (Te Papa Records: G Register, Te Papa Annual Report 1923).

In 1952 and again in 1955, the Museum shared, with Auckland Museum, some material from the Wellcome Medical Museum when that museum deaccessioned its ethnographic collections. This consisted of material from various geographic areas; Te Papa received mainly South American material plus some items from the Pacific and North America (Te Papa Records: Acc.No.1955/98).

Another Cook collection was acquired in 1955 from the Imperial Institute in London. This was an



**Figure 6:** 18th-century bone beater from the northwest coast, US  
(Used for beating bark to obtain fibres for weaving. Collected during Captain Cook's third voyage.)

Lord St. Oswald Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa  
Photographer: Michael Hall

exchange negotiated between the institute and the New Zealand Government (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 20/3/1). It consisted mainly of Maori and Pacific items probably collected during Cook's first and second voyages (Kaepler 1978: 286). The collection also included eighteenth-century Native American items originating from the northeast region of the United States (Figure 7) (Phelps 1976: 345, 353; Sturtevant 1995: pers. comm.). The third Cook collection contains only one item known to have come from North America; it is also of eighteenth-century northeast origin<sup>6</sup> (Figure 8) (Phelps 1976: 346). This collection of mainly historical material was donated to the nation by the widow of a descendent of Captain Cook's sister in 1962 (Te Papa Archives: Subject File 20/3/1).

Many of the acquisitions, particularly in the latter part of the twentieth century, have been small numbers of items received from individuals, mainly donations from local residents. Sometimes these have been people who have an association with the Museum, examples being Isobel Morice who had previously donated Seddon family material, and Fred Waite who donated Egyptian material to Te Papa and Otago Museum (Te Papa Records: FE Register 3, Acc.No.1967/7).

Some donors had other connections. One, an American naval officer, Amory Waite, took part in Antarctic expeditions in the 1950s; the Museum was also involved with work in Antarctica during this period (Stewart 1990: 1071). Some of the last items to come into the collection were donated by David Beaglehole, son of anthropologists Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole who had undertaken fieldwork among the Hopi Indians during the 1930s (Te Papa Records: Acc.No.1987/49).

The final accession in 1991 is significant in that it was thought to be cultural property illegally exported from Alaska. The item is a fragment of a pick or similar implement made about 1,000 years ago from fossilised walrus tusk. It came into the collection via a circuitous route, originally found by a local Inuit, digging at an old site, who sold the fragment to a drug dealer. The dealer gave it as payment for work done on a truck to the donor, who in turn offered it to the Museum. Curator Janet Davidson investigated the history of this acquisition,

which included discussions with the Smithsonian Institution. It was decided that the main value of the specimen was as a comparative piece of walrus ivory and that it would remain in the Te Papa collections (Te Papa Records: Acc.No.1991/48: correspondence between Fitzhugh and Davidson, January-March 1992).

### Use of the Collection

Material from the Native American collection was used for hands-on educational purposes during the late 1930s; some was even acquired for this purpose (Te Papa Archives: Correspondence, Phillipps to Miss McClure, 18th March 1938; *The Dominion* 1st July, 1938). This practice continued into the next decade with material being used for school classes, children's clubs and outreach services (Te Papa Archives: Educational Resources, 1942; Te Papa Archives: Newspaper File, 4th Sept, 1940).

Items from the Cook collections were included in a display case containing material collected during the Cook Voyages, from 1979 until 1991. No research has been undertaken on the Native American collection (apart from the material in the Cook collections). The collection is small and diverse, and, apart from the items used in the "Cook Voyages" display, has been little used since the 1940s. On a few occasions, collection items have been lent to regional museums (Te Papa Records: FE Loan files).

### Comparisons of the Case Study Collections

Both collections were mainly developed through passive collecting, by accepting offers of donations. A substantial proportion of the European lithic collection was acquired during the nineteenth century, partly because early accessions of this material consisted of relatively large numbers of items. The Native American collection was acquired during the twentieth century. All accessions of Native American material consisted of small numbers of items. Many of the Native American items (and the smaller quantities of lithic items received after 1930) were acquired as part of other collections – usually Maori or Pacific material. Some of these collections were gifted to the nation.

During the history of the Museum, material from

<sup>6</sup> The fact that there are items from the northeast in all three "Cook" collections may be significant. It has been suggested that Captain Cook may have collected them while surveying in the northeastern region of North America before his Pacific voyages. Further research is required to prove or disprove this hypothesis (Sturtevant 1995: pers comm., Kaepler 1995: pers. comm.).





**Figure 7:** 18th-century leather and quillwork moccasins from the northeast US

Imperial Institute Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa  
Photographer: Michael Hall



Figure 8: 18th-century leather and quillwork fringing from the northeast US

Long Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa  
Photographer: Michael Hall

both collections has been used intermittently for research, education and exhibition. It is likely that the development and use of the case study collections, for the most part, reflect that of all the foreign ethnology collections.

## Conclusions

Museum policy and practice played a part in determining the development of the foreign ethnology collections. Little foreign ethnology material was acquired in the early period because of Hector's policies. Most of the collections were developed in the middle period, although the number of acquisitions decreased towards the end of the middle period and have almost ceased in the current period, since the introduction of new policies in 1992.

Little research has been carried out on the foreign ethnology collections. One reason for this is that because the collections were not systematically developed they are small, diverse and unfocused, and thus have limited research value.

Because of their limitations, the foreign ethnology collections have always had a peripheral role in the Museum. Notwithstanding this, throughout most of the Museum's history the foreign ethnology collections have been used for education and exhibition, and have been lent to regional museums. With the exception of loans, use of the foreign ethnology collections in public programmes has declined during the past few years.

## The Other Metropolitan Museums

### Otago Museum

Otago Museum has the largest foreign ethnology collection of any of the metropolitan museums. The total number of foreign ethnology objects is estimated to be well in excess of 10,000 objects, or approximately five times the size of the Te Papa collections (Anson 1995: pers. comm.).

The museum was established by the Otago Provincial Government just three years after Te Papa, in 1868. Its foundation collections were similar, comprising mainly natural history and geology specimens from the 1865 New Zealand Exhibition held in Dunedin.

Like Te Papa, Otago Museum's first curator (equivalent to Hector's position as director) was a geologist, F.W. Hutton, formerly Provincial Geologist for the Otago region.

By 1877, the museum incorporated a technical museum of "arts, manufactures and ethnology" (Otago Museum 1877: 3). By this time provincial governments had been abolished, and Otago University had taken over control of the museum.

Before the turn of the century, Otago Museum had fewer foreign ethnology items than Te Papa in its collections. A change in collecting practice occurred in the early twentieth century, at a time when changes in policy and practice were also taking place at Te Papa. In 1898, W. Benham became curator and remained in the position until his retirement in 1937. It was during his term as curator that the major development of the foreign ethnology collections took place (Otago Museum Annual Reports: 1937, 1940).

A principal reason for this development was the generosity of Willi Fels, a local businessman and collector. In 1918, Fels gave his large collection (including classical and foreign ethnology material) to the museum, together with an endowment to pay half the salary of an anthropologist for five years (Otago Museum Records: Card Catalogue; McLintock 1966: 627).

As a result of Fels' generosity, H.D. Skinner was appointed Assistant Curator and took charge of the ethnology section of the museum (Otago Museum Annual Report 1918: 1). Skinner systematically developed the ethnology collections, especially the Maori and Pacific collections, throughout his long career at the museum (Harsant 1984: 12).

Although some foreign ethnology material was acquired through exchanges with museums within New Zealand and overseas, most was received from benefactors, usually wealthy businessmen (Dunedin being the commercial centre of New Zealand at this time). Benefactors also provided endowments, for example, the Fels and Colquhoun Funds that enabled the museum to purchase items for the collections (Otago Museum Annual Reports: 1925/1926, 5; 1943/44, Notes; Anson n.d. unpubl.: 3). There has been a recent tendency towards actively collecting Asian material; other foreign ethnology material is passively collected (Anson 1995: pers. comm.).

In addition to his gifts of endowments and collections, Fels worked toward building a new wing for the museum. In 1929, the Fels Wing was opened, its upper floor allocated to the display of the foreign ethnological material (Otago Museum Annual Report 1943/44, Anson n.d. unpubl.: 2, Skinner 1946: 9, 11, 14). Material from the foreign ethnology collections has been on display in the Fels Wing since then. The displays in this wing have been used for educational activities, and were still being used by School Services Education Officers in 1995, when the service was discontinued (Engebretson 1995: pers. comm.).

The collections are well-documented and research has been carried out on them, including research for exhibitions (Harsant 1995: pers. comm.). Skinner used material from the foreign ethnology collections for comparative research. He also used it to illustrate his university lectures as the country's first lecturer in anthropology, at Otago University (Skinner & Simmons 1974: 14, 176-178; Harsant 1988: 40).

### The European Lithic Collection

Otago Museum's European lithic collection is estimated to be in excess of 2,000 objects, considerably larger than the Te Papa collection. Unlike Te Papa, Otago Museum acquired most of its collection in the early twentieth century.

A substantial portion of the collection, a series of English palaeolithic flint implements, was gifted by a benefactor, Daniel Colquhoun, in 1918 (Otago Museum Annual Report 1918/19: 3). In addition to this, a large donation of material was received from the Trustees of the Christy Collection, via the British Museum, in 1920 (Otago Museum Annual Report 1920: 5). Further European lithic material was acquired by exchange in 1922 (Otago Museum Annual Report 1921: 12).

This collection has been displayed since at least the early 1930s (Otago Museum Annual Report 1932/33). As recently as 1995, there were still display cases containing lithic material in the upper gallery in the Fels Wing.

In the late 1930s, Otago Museum prepared several display cases for rotation amongst museums under the auspices of the Carnegie Museum Trust. One of these showed the migrations of prehistoric people in Europe and included lithic implements. When this

case was displayed in Te Papa in 1939 it stimulated considerable interest (*Evening Post* 15th May, 1939; Otago Museum Annual Report 1941/42: 4-8; McQueen 1942: 38-40).

### The Native American Collection

This collection also consists of about 2,000 items (Harsant 1984: 12, Otago Museum Records: Card Catalogue). Most of it came from a single benefactor, Percy Sargood. The collection was donated in several stages, although the majority was received in 1919.

This material is mostly from the Columbia River Plateau in Washington State, and includes a wide range of items, although most of it is lithic material. It also includes some important items of late nineteenth-century clothing associated with Chief Moses and his band of Salish Indians (Harsant 1988: 42).

Harsant believes that the Native American collection, at its beginnings in the early twentieth century, was an illustration of both museum philosophy and Skinner's theories of connections between Maori culture and other cultures around the Pacific rim (such as North America). Skinner was particularly interested in obtaining material which could demonstrate these connections (Harsant 1988: 40).

Consequently, Skinner negotiated some important exchanges to supplement the collection. He exchanged Maori material with the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in 1920 and again in 1921. He also made exchanges with the American Museum of Natural History in 1921 (Harsant 1988: 40). From the 1920s to 1950s, there were further small additions to the Native American collections. No further Native American material has been acquired since the 1950s (Harsant 1984: 13).

Items from the collection have been displayed in the Fels Wing since it was opened. The display was refurbished by Park in 1975 and again by Harsant in 1988, and has been used for educational activities (Engebretson 1995: pers. comm.).

Skinner also carried out research on this collection; an example is his comparison of Maori *patu* with similar clubs from the northwest coast (Skinner & Simmons 1974: 178-180). Since then, the collection has not been studied apart from exhibition research un-

dertaken by Park and Harsant (Harsant 1995: pers. comm., Park 1996: pers. comm.).

## Canterbury Museum

Canterbury Museum has an estimated 10,000 items in its foreign ethnology collections (Fyfe 1995: pers. comm., Burrage 1995: pers. comm.). They cover a wide geographical area: the Americas, the Mediterranean, Africa and Asia. Of most importance are the Asian collections, some of which have international significance (Canterbury Museum 1993 unpubl.: 9).

Canterbury Museum had similar beginnings to Te Papa and Otago Museums, in that its founding collection consisted of geological specimens provided by the first curator, Julius Haast (formerly Provincial Geologist for the Canterbury region). The museum was established in 1867 by the provincial government but, like Otago Museum, after the abolition of the provincial governments the nearby university took over its administration.

Two important events which were to affect the early history of the museum occurred in 1866 and 1868, when deposits of moa bones were found in a swamp and presented to the museum. During the next two decades, Haast built up the museum's collections by exchanging moa bones and other items for material from overseas museums (Canterbury Museum Annual Reports: 1893/94: 11, 1911/12: 25; Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 81; Fyfe 1996: pers. comm.).

Haast used these exchanges to acquire items that the museum could not afford to purchase. In a letter dated 11 April, 1877, to Baird at the Smithsonian Institution, Haast requested duplicates; he particularly asked for specimens of natural history, palaeontology and ethnology saying he cared "less about quantity than quality" (quoted in Kiumaki-Price 1992 unpubl.: 34).

Haast died in 1887. Until the mid-twentieth century, his successors (including Hutton, previously curator at Otago University Museum) continued the policy of developing the collections through exchange.

The foreign ethnology collections were also developed through other means, such as donations (e.g., the Lingard collection of Alaskan material in 1892) (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1892/93, Burrage

in *The Press* 31 May, 1994). However, the early exchanges were the most important acquisitions.

Most of the foreign ethnology collections were acquired during the nineteenth century (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1959/60: 49). A little material continued to be acquired during the first half of the twentieth century but, from the middle of the century, collection development had a New Zealand focus. The 1948/49 Annual Report stated that no further attempts would be made to build up collections on a world scale (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1948/49: 5). One important exception to this was Chinese material donated by Rewi Alley, a New Zealander living in China, in the 1950s (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1957/58: 18). Asian items continue to be acquired; some, especially contemporary items, are actively collected. Collecting of other foreign ethnology material is passive (Canterbury Museum 1994 unpubl.: 3, 12).

The foreign ethnology collections were displayed in the museum's Antiquities and Ethnology Rooms during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1892/93; Canterbury Museum 1906: 90). The Hall of Human History, installed in 1977 to celebrate the museum's centennial, displayed items from collections acquired during the first 30 years of its history (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1986: 9). Asian material has been displayed more often than other foreign ethnology collections, most recently in a new gallery opened in 1994. The local Chinese community was involved in the development of this exhibition (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1957/58: 18, *Canterbury Museum News* November 1994).

The foreign ethnology collections are currently being catalogued, and data relating to the Asian collections is being entered on to a computer database (Fyfe 1995: pers. comm.). Research has been carried out into the history of collections and for exhibitions.

## The European Lithic Collection

This collection is estimated to consist of 2,000 objects, nearly half of which come from the lake dwellings in Switzerland, with the rest originating mainly from France, Denmark and Britain.

The *Guide to the Collections* (Canterbury Museum 1906: 96-97) reveals that the museum had already received the large collection of lake-dwelling material by 1906. Around the turn of the century, a number of exchanges were made which helped develop the European lithic collection. In addition to these, material was donated and some items were purchased (Canterbury Museum Annual Reports: 1899/1900: 15, 1904/5: 13).

The only significant additions since that time were two collections acquired in the late 1920s, one donated by Hauesler in 1927, and a purchase of French material in 1928 (Canterbury Museum Annual Reports: c1927: 32, c1929: 38)<sup>7</sup>. Little has been acquired since 1940.

Items from this collection were displayed in the early period (e.g., the lake-dwelling material was on display in 1906) and again in the 1970s.

### The Native American Collection

There are approximately 1,100 items in this collection, of which 700-800 are lithic. The remainder is made up of a variety of textiles, ceramics, fibre-craft and wooden items. Material comes from a variety of regions in North America and includes a considerable quantity from Alaska.

Like the European lithics, this collection was acquired in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Annual Reports show that a substantial proportion was obtained through exchange. Some material was acquired by purchase and donation (Canterbury Museum Annual Reports: 1892/93, 1893/94: 14, 1897/98: 12, 1900/01: 15, 1929/30: 14). However, apart from a donation of some Navajo material in 1945, there appears to be little evidence for any development of this collection since the early twentieth century (Canterbury Museum Annual Report 1944/45: 20).

The collection was used for display in the early period - the *Guide to the Collections* (Canterbury Museum 1906: 156-159) states that five cases in the Ethnology Hall were devoted to Native American material. It was displayed again during the 1970s. The collection has not been studied other than to provide information about collectors and collecting associated with the history of the museum.

### Auckland Museum

Auckland Museum was established in 1852 - much earlier than the other museums - by the provincial government. However, it did not become permanently established until 1867, when it took over the Auckland Institute collections. Like the other metropolitan museums, the founding collections included some geological material (Park 1996: pers. comm.). Unlike the other metropolitan museums, the first (important) curator, T.F. Cheeseman, was a botanist not a geologist (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Report 1943/44: 8, Park *et al.* 1986: 2).

The 1852 collecting policy focused on natural history and Maori and Pacific material, and, by the end of the nineteenth century, Auckland Museum had the largest collection of Maori material in New Zealand. Some material from Ceylon may have been acquired during this early period (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Report 1922/23: 13-14, Park 1996: pers. comm.).

The foreign ethnology collections were extensively developed during the 50 years that Cheeseman spent as curator (1873 to 1923). This development has continued until the present day, with some major collections of South East Asian material acquired recently (Neich 1996: pers. comm.).

The foreign ethnology collections are well documented, and research has been carried out on some objects/collections (Neich 1996: pers. comm., Prickett 1996: pers. comm.).

The collections have regularly been displayed throughout this century. In 1910, a new foreign ethnology room opened to the public and attracted considerable public attention. When the museum moved into its present building in 1929, several foreign ethnology display cases were installed and, by the 1940s, the museum had a foreign ethnology gallery (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Reports: 1930/31: 15, 1939/40: 18).

It is likely that foreign ethnology items were used in experimental displays trialled at Auckland Museum between 1937 and 1941, supported by the Carnegie Museums Trust. The experimental displays focused on just a few aspects of life and were displayed so as to be self-explanatory (McQueen 1942: 47-51).

<sup>7</sup> These annual reports are only available as photocopies and their dates are uncertain.

Because of the interest of most people in the lives of others, the anthropology department was the obvious place for the experiment. (McQueen 1942: 47)

In 1969, a Hall of Man (later renamed the Peoples of the World Gallery), consisting of displays of cultures in their environments and early human history, was funded by the Sir John Logan Campbell Trust Fund. This hall was designed to facilitate its use for education, with shelves fitted to the display cases for children to rest schoolbooks on. The foreign ethnology collections have been used for educational activities since the 1930s (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Report 1940/41: 11).

The foreign ethnology collections are currently distributed between two departments, Archaeology and Ethnology. The overall size of the foreign ethnology collections (as defined in this paper) is estimated to be in excess of 10,000 items (Neich 1995: pers. comm.).

### The European Lithic Collection

The European lithic collection, held in the Archaeology Department, consists of approximately 600 items. Of these, approximately half are unlocalised, the remainder being from Britain, Switzerland and France (Auckland Museum Records: Archaeology Card Catalogue).

Most of this collection was acquired in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The greatest proportion was received (mainly through donation) during the 1920s and 1930s, although some large collections had been acquired earlier than this.

Earlier acquisitions included a gift of Swiss lake-dwelling material in 1883, and a collection of Danish lithic implements purchased in 1900 (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Reports: 1894/95: 15, 1900/01: 15).

Later acquisitions include a large collection of British implements donated in 1926. Also that year the museum received, or possibly purchased, some Swiss Palaeolithic implements from Hauesler (who had also provided Canterbury Museum and Te Papa with similar material). A very large collection of archaeological and ethnographic material was donated in 1930 by the family of W. Cole (Auckland Institute and Museum

Annual Report 1925/26: 11, 25).

### The Native American Collection

The Native American collection is held in the Ethnology Department. It consists of approximately 1,000 items and, unlike the collections in the other institutions, most of it is ethnographic, with less than 20% being lithic.

The Native American collection began with a founding collection obtained through an exchange negotiated with the United States National Museum of Natural History in 1887. The material came mainly from the western United States and the Arctic. Some of these objects were collected by John Wesley Powell, during expeditions (which were primarily geological and natural history surveys) to the Southwest (Auckland Museum Records: Ethnology Card Catalogue, Thomson and Parezo 1989: 39).

Some early material was also acquired through donation, for example, Mississippi Mound-builder items donated in 1886 and 1899 (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Report 1899/1900: 8, 15; Auckland Museum Records: Ethnology Card Catalogue).

In the early to mid-twentieth century the museum again acquired material through exchanges negotiated with several institutions: the Field Museum in Chicago in 1931, Cambridge University (southwestern items) and the University of California (Californian items) in 1944 (Auckland Museum Records: Ethnology Card Catalogue).

The museum also received three substantial donations during this period, including one from Sargood in 1930 of material from Washington State (similar to the material he had previously donated to Otago Museum) and, also in 1930, the Cole collection (mentioned above). A few small collections were purchased in the 1930s.

Most of the collection was acquired before 1950. However, it is still being added to through passive acquisition of small numbers of items, for example, a donation in the 1980s received from the United States Consulate in Auckland (Auckland Museum Records: Ethnology Card Catalogue).

## Use of the Case Study Collections

Material from both collections has been displayed since the late nineteenth century. A substantial quantity of Native American material was exhibited in the 1930s and 1940s (Auckland Institute and Museum Annual Reports: 1930/31: 15, 1939/40: 18). Both collections have been well represented in the Hall of Man/Peoples of the World Gallery since 1969. They have been used for educational activities since the 1930s. The Peoples of the World Gallery was still being used for this purpose by the museum's School Services Officers in 1995 (Johnstone 1995: pers. comm.).

## Summary and Conclusions

Overall, the history and development of the foreign ethnology collections in New Zealand metropolitan museums have followed a similar pattern, characteristic of colonial/post-colonial museums (Table 1). They were all established in the late nineteenth century and had long-serving directors who actively developed their institutions. In doing so, they assembled large collections of high quality material from overseas (Sheets-Pyenson 1988: 19, 21, 98, 100).

However, there are variations as a result of each museum's unique history, and this is particularly noticeable for Te Papa. In its early history it differed from the other metropolitan museums and many other colonial museums in several respects.

It was set up by central government and remains a government-funded institution. This influenced museum policy and collection development during the nineteenth century. While Te Papa focused on collecting and researching geological and mineral specimens, the other metropolitan museums were developing a broader range of collections.

Te Papa acquired some of its important collections in its capacity as the national museum. It received most of its foreign ethnology material through donations and thus the development of its collections has always been passive. The other metropolitan museums also received donations, with Otago and, to a lesser extent, Auckland receiving some important collections from benefactors. However, during their early history, the other metropolitan museums actively developed

at least part of their foreign ethnology collections. They acquired a substantial proportion of their collections through exchange, especially Canterbury Museum.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, all four institutions have, for the most part, passively acquired small quantities of foreign ethnology material. Thus there is a noticeable change in the collecting patterns of the other metropolitan museums around this time, when active collecting declined. (This change is not obvious at Te Papa, with its much smaller collections and continuous passive collecting). The change is possibly an indication of less material being available after circa 1930, as well as the influence of new museology on museum practice around the middle of the century.

The use of the collections in all four metropolitan museums has followed a similar pattern. The development of museum education was similar in all the museums, greatly influenced by the assistance provided by the Carnegie Corporation. All the museums displayed their foreign ethnology collections in the late nineteenth and/or early twentieth centuries. However, Te Papa and Canterbury have only displayed foreign ethnology material intermittently since then, whereas Otago and Auckland have continued to display their collections in galleries (founded by benefactors) that are dedicated to foreign ethnology. Many recent and current exhibitions focus on Asian culture, and usually involve members of the Asian community in their development. This involvement reflects international trends.

The foreign ethnology collections in all the metropolitan museums have at least minimal documentation, with some being well documented; work in this area is on-going. Little research has been carried out on the foreign ethnology collections in any of the metropolitan museums. However, contrary to the experience of museums in Europe and North America, it is unlikely that the rise of universities had a negative effect on ethnological research in New Zealand. According to Sheets-Pyenson (1988: 99), in the late nineteenth century many colonial museums were affiliated with universities. Two of the metropolitan museums (Canterbury and Otago) were administered by universities until well into the twentieth century. Anthropol-



ogy was taught at Otago University from 1919, with Skinner as lecturer. It did not become established as a strictly university discipline until the 1950s (Auckland Museum Annual Report 1950/51: 12, Gathercole 1974: 14).

Foreign ethnology collections have not been used to a great extent in any of the metropolitan museums. Some of the reasons for this are probably those discussed earlier with regard to Te Papa – foreign ethnology collections tend to be small, diverse and unfocused. However, the main reason is that foreign ethnology collections are not a high priority in New Zealand museums which place most emphasis on local ethnology – Maori and Pacific material

culture (Davidson 1996: pers. comm.).

Museums worldwide are currently undergoing rapid changes in response to the new economic and political environment. The metropolitan museums in New Zealand are no exception. The change most directly influencing the future development of foreign ethnology collections is this country's increasing multiculturalism. All the metropolitan museums are currently focusing on collecting material that reflects this country's cultural diversity, particularly Asian and Pacific material culture.

It is important that in this new environment existing foreign ethnology collections in New Zealand museums are not forgotten. Through being used in

**Table 1:** The history and development of foreign ethnology collections in the metropolitan museums in NZ

	Te Papa	Otago	Canterbury	Auckland
<b>Established</b>	1865	1868	1867	1852/1867
<b>Early administration</b>	General Government	Provincial Government, then university	Provincial Government, then university	Provincial Government, then affiliated to Auckland Institute
<b>Founding collections</b>	Mainly geological specimens	Mainly geological and natural history specimens	Mainly geological specimens, later moa bones	Maori, Pacific, natural history and geological specimens.
<b>Late 19th C collecting of foreign ethnology</b>	Passive acquisition – few donations	Little foreign ethnology material acquired	Majority of foreign ethnology collections acquired (through exchange with moa bones)	Substantial proportion of foreign ethnology collections acquired (donation and exchange)
<b>Early 20th-century collecting of foreign ethnology</b>	Passive acquisition – mainly donations	Majority of foreign ethnology collections acquired (exchange and benefactors)	Less foreign ethnology material acquired (donation and exchange)	Substantial proportion of foreign ethnology collections acquired (donation and exchange)
<b>Mid 20th-century collecting of foreign ethnology</b>	Passive acquisition – mainly donations	Little material acquired	Little material (except Asian) acquired – policy to collect local material	Passive acquisition – mainly donations
<b>Current size of foreign ethnology collections</b>	More than 2,000 objects	More than 10,000 objects	More than 10,000 objects	More than 10,000 objects

research, exhibitions and educational activities they can help provide a window on the rest of the world.

He who views only the produce of his own country may be said to inhabit a single world; while those who see and consider the productions of other climes bring many worlds in review before them. (Linnaeus quoted in Murray 1904: 224)

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DOMINION MUSEUM EDUCATION SERVICE

***Other Lands Club – 1. Life in Ancient Egypt***



**COSTUME IN 3000 B.C.**

This man and his wife show typical Egyptian costume. The man is wearing a loincloth and a string of beads, while the woman has a garment of very fine linen, is wearing a wig, and has elaborate neck ornaments. At the back of the statues are seen hieroglyphs, the picture writing of the Egyptians.

—Cairo, Egyptian Museum.



**TOP LEFT:**

**THE PHARAOH**

The great King of Egypt, who was treated as a god, was so sacred that in early times his name could not be spoken. He was called *Per-o*, meaning *great house*, and this later became the name of the kings. This Pharaoh, Chephren, who lived in 2800 B.C., is shown with his head guarded by the falcon, the sign of kingship.

—Cairo, Egyptian Museum.

**BOTTOM LEFT:**

**AN OFFERING TO A GOD**

The Pharaoh Seti I is shown making an offering to the falcon-headed god Sekhmet. He has incense in a long-armed censer, and is pouring a libation into a bowl. The Egyptians always carved the human head sideways, but placed the eye straight on. This was carved in 1300 B.C.