

PACIFIC PRESENCES

– VOLUME 1 –

Oceanic Art and European Museums

edited by

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CHAPTER 4

Oceania in Russian history: expeditions, collections, museums

ELENA GOVOR

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Introduction

Although Oceanic collections in Russia are not the richest in Europe, they are among the most valuable. In total Oceanic and Australian artefacts in these collections number nearly 9,000 items, the majority originating from the South Pacific.²⁴⁵ Many of them, especially those of Russian voyagers, were acquired during early cross-cultural engagements and have well established geographical and temporal provenance. Russian interest in the Pacific was determined by the fact that by the eighteenth century Russia was both a European and a Pacific power. As a result of the gradual Russian colonization of Siberian territories, its first settlements on the Pacific coast, Okhotsk and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, were established in the eighteenth century. Expansion continued to the northwest coast of America, where the Russian-American Company established its colonies, known as Russian America, at the end of the eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century these colonies attracted the first Russian commercial ships sailing from Europe across the Pacific with supplies. Russia's footing in the northern Pacific also prompted exploratory expeditions ranging across the Pacific, especially during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Interest in Oceania continued in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Russia had a Pacific naval detachment stationed in Vladivostok, which regularly visited the South Pacific islands and Australia as part of training exercises.

Early collections

Collections from the Cook expeditions

The early Russian presence in the Pacific explains the origin of the gem of the Russian Pacific collections, the artefacts from James Cook's third voyage. In April 1779, after a tiring and unsuccessful attempt to return to England via the northwest passage between Asia and America, and Cook's death on Hawai'i, his ships under the command of Charles Clerke sailed to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky to recuperate. Magnus Behm, the governor of Kamchatka, provided the distressed voyagers with all possible hospitality and free supplies. The visitors reciprocated in an unusual way – they donated to Behm

the collection of superb artefacts acquired during the expedition, which included at least 69 items and 15 engravings by William Hodges. A similar gift consisting of samples of artefacts was made to the Russians several months later when the ships returned to Kamchatka after their second unsuccessful attempt to go through the northwest passage. Clerke died on the way to Kamchatka and was buried in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. It seems that the nature of the South Pacific artefacts, which were usually transferred as gifts rather than as trade items of purely monetary value, suggested to the British voyagers the format of reciprocation for Russian support at a critical moment. Behm understood the cultural value of the collection and personally delivered it across Siberia to St Petersburg, to the Russian Empress Catherine the Great, who in 1780 presented it to the Kunstkamera, the public museum of the Russian Imperial Academy. It became one of the earliest significant collections from Oceania held by a European museum. The destiny of the second collection, which probably did not include South Pacific artefacts, is unknown, but presumably it also reached St Petersburg.²⁴⁶

The Cook expedition collection, accompanied by Behm's inventory,²⁴⁷ was housed in the Kunstkamera, now the Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (MAE), St Petersburg, but its South Pacific origin and association with the Cook voyage was forgotten for over a century. In his description of the museum, the curator Osip Beliaev listed the artefacts as part of the American section.²⁴⁸ The collection was rediscovered in the 1880s by MAE curator Fedor Russov, and then studied by Russian scholars in the 1960s.²⁴⁹ Thorough attribution of the collection was made by Adrienne Kaepler,²⁵⁰ Ludmila Ivanova²⁵¹ and Pavel Belkov,²⁵² and presented in the exhibitions *Last Voyage of Captain Cook* at the MAE, St Petersburg in 2002 and *Pacific Treasures:*



Figure 4.1. Brochure from the MAE exhibition *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 2002.

Cook Collections from the Kunstkamera, St. Petersburg at the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum, Middlesbrough in 2006 (Figure 4.1). Although the attribution of some objects, for example the Hawai'ian feathered capes with oval collars, remains an open question, according to these studies the MAE currently houses the bulk of the 'Cook' artefacts as collection 505 (over 30 items); besides this, some South Pacific artefacts which correlate to Behm's original list were identified in other MAE collections (736, 765, 2328). Most of these 'Cook' artefacts originate from Hawai'i, and a few are from Tahiti and Tonga. They include: Hawaiian feathered cloaks, a cape, helmets, helmet bands and ornaments, a tabooing wand, barkcloth beater, boar tusk bracelet, feather fans, matting, adze, shark tooth implement, shark hook, and weapon; a Tongan overskirt, combs, woven basket, and neck rest; a Tahitian mourning dress, gorget, and fish hooks. The MAE has artefacts from Cook's second voyage as well: three Tahitian tapa cloth from 'von Forster', most likely Johann Reinhold Forster, the naturalist on this voyage, have been identified in the 'old' collection of 737; they were donated in 1777. Several other artefacts from the Cook expeditions might have reached Russia via private collectors, which will be discussed further on.

Early voyagers and collecting

Another significant source of South Pacific artefacts in Russian collections came from the participants of the Russian circumnavigation voyages. The first Russian expedition led by Adam von Krusenstern (Ivan Fedorovich Kruzenshtern) and Yury Lisiansky visited Rapa Nui, previously known as Easter Island, Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas Islands, and Hawai'i in 1804. Krusenstern did not have explicit instructions concerning collecting, but he and his international team of Russian, Baltic German, and Western European naturalists gathered artefacts in the traditions established by earlier European voyagers. The nominal head of the expedition, Nikolai Rezanov, collected artefacts in triplicate when possible, with the aim of donating one example to the Kunstkamera, one to the Russian-American Company (a sponsor of the expedition) and one to another institution. At present we do not know the name of the third institution. Tensions over artefact collecting nearly brought the expedition to ruin while it was stationed on Nuku Hiva Island.²⁵³ Rezanov's subsequent withdrawal from the expedition and his premature death during his return journey to St Petersburg precipitated the relaxation of state control over the expedition's scientific trophies. Each participant of the expedition kept their own collection, which they disposed of according to their circumstances, although in the end many of the collectors donated their collections to various museums; thus, the briefly whole collection of Marquesan artefacts was dispersed throughout Russian, Estonian and Western European museums. They were recently identified through the research of the projects 'Artefacts of Encounter' and 'Pacific Presences.' As a whole, they constitute one of the earliest, richest and well provenanced Marquesan collections in the world, numbering over 130 extant artefacts plus scores of tapa cloth samples²⁵⁴ (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

Among the most valuable collections brought to Russia by these early South Pacific voyagers is Vasily Golovnin's collection. He visited Tana Island, Vanuatu, in 1809, being the second European voyager in this area after Cook, and acquired a number of artefacts, accompanying them with notes explaining their usage and providing their native names. In the following decades, the richest collections were gathered by Fabian



Bellingshausen and Mikhail Lazarev during their South Pacific voyage of 1820, when they visited Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, the Society Islands, Tahiti and outlying Western Pacific islands. Collecting was among the named objectives of this expedition and they returned with over 500 items. Russian voyagers were also successful in collecting in the Micronesia area, especially on the Marshall Islands (Kotzebue, 1816-1817) and Caroline Islands (Lutke, 1827-1828).

The state exercised more control over the deposition of material into museums acquired during these later expeditions than it had previously. Most of the collections were deposited in Russian museums; despite this, the whereabouts of some collections are unknown. For instance, the location of most of Otto Kotzebue's artefacts from the Marshall Islands (1816-1817) remains unclear, although some of them have been traced to Moscow, Tallinn, and Britain.

Figure 4.2. Nuku Hivan 'u'u, war club, Krusenstern expedition collection. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg (736-177).



Figure 4.3. State Admiralty Department Museum's label for 'u'u, which reads 'Club, used in battle by the inhabitants of the Marquesas Islands'. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg (inventory books).

Museums in St Petersburg

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, during the period of the most intense Russian voyaging and collecting in Oceania, the collections were housed in St Petersburg in two major museums: the Academy Museum, known as the *Kunstkamera*, and the *Muzei Gosudarstvennogo Admiralteiskogo departamenta* (State Admiralty Department Museum). The *Kunstkamera* had been established by Peter the Great in St Petersburg in 1714. The first public museum in Russia, it was inaugurated, like its counterparts in Europe, with a collection of naturalia, having a special interest in *lusus naturae*, *monstra*, and curiosities, and included important collections purchased from Leiden. In 1724 it was incorporated into the newly established Academy of Sciences, which facilitated its transformation into a research institution for which the collection of artificialia became increasingly important. Throughout the eighteenth century it was stocked with Chinese, Tatar and Siberian ‘rarities’.²⁵⁵ The first South Pacific artefacts to reach the *Kunstkamera* were the above-mentioned collection from Cook’s third expedition, which were followed by a number of other gifts. For instance, in 1807 it received a helmet and feathered cloak which had been presented by Kamehameha I, the first ruler of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, to the governor of the Russian colonies in Northern America.²⁵⁶

Some collections of Russian South Pacific voyagers were deposited in this museum soon after the return of their expeditions. This was done, for instance, by Lisiansky and Krusenstern; later some gifts were deposited by the expedition’s naturalist Wilhelm Tilesius. In 1831 the museum received the large Caroline Islands collection of Friedrich Lutke (Fedor Litke), numbering 348 objects. ‘The collection is so complete,’ wrote its curator Julia Likhtenberg, ‘that it provides an account of the Carolineans’ life in the early 19th century’²⁵⁷ (Figure 4.4). But the destiny of most other collections of the voyagers was not so straightforward, as



Figure 4.4. Carolinean water bailer made from one piece of wood, Lutke expedition collection. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg (11-272).

at that time the *Kunstkamera* had a rival institution, the *Muzeum Gosudarstvennogo Admiralteiskogo Departamenta* (State Admiralty Department Museum), also based in St Petersburg. Originating as the 1709 Russian Admiralty Department's *Model-kamera* (Model Chamber), it was expanded in 1805 by Emperor Alexander I to house a 'curiosity cabinet', and was renamed the State Admiralty Department Museum; later it was commonly known as the *Morskoi muzei* (Maritime Museum).²⁵⁸

The growing popularity of the later institution is obvious from changing allegiances during the first Russian circumnavigation. While Rezanov at Nuku Hiva in 1804 was collecting rarities for the 'Academy', *i.e.* for the *Kunstkamera*, and was experiencing a lot of opposition from Krusenstern, the officers, and the naturalists, who, it seems, were eager to build up their own collections. By 1805 the attitudes had changed. Krusenstern, upon receiving a letter from the Naval Minister Pavel Chichagov about the establishment of the State Admiralty Department Museum, wrote:

The Maritime Museum has inspired in all of us an enthusiasm for the collection of rarities ... All that has already been collected by us and, of course, will be collected with great zeal, each of us will donate to the Museum with special pleasure on our return to Russia.²⁵⁹

His expedition was the first to establish a new tradition of donating artefacts and natural curiosities brought from the Pacific voyages to the State Admiralty Department Museum; three participants of Krusenstern's expedition – Krusenstern himself, Lisiansky, and Povalishin – presented collections to this museum soon after their return.

The curiosity cabinet of the State Admiralty Department Museum grew rapidly during the first decades of the nineteenth century as further Russian voyages and private donors brought new collections. Nevertheless, in spite of the original enthusiasm, the museum was for years no more than a collection of curiosities stored in trunks, until an attempt to reinvigorate the museum was made in 1825, following the death of its first head and curator Alexander Glotov. The position was offered to Nikolai Bestuzhev, a naval officer and maritime writer. Upon taking the position, Bestuzhev drafted a plan for the museum's restructuring; he proposed drawing on both ethnographic and natural history collections to prepare ambitious exhibitions dedicated to the various geographic regions explored by the Russian voyagers. This, Russian museum specialists have argued, was a significant innovation in Russian museum practices which took displays beyond the unsystematic 'cabinet of curiosities' stage and justified the accumulation of collections in the State Admiralty Department Museum.²⁶⁰

Unfortunately, political events intervened. Bestuzhev was a member of a secret society aiming to replace Russian autocracy with a constitutional monarchy. After the death of the Emperor Alexander I in December 1825, the revolutionaries declared themselves. From now on they were known as the Decembrists. The uprising was severely repressed by the new Emperor Nicholas I, and Bestuzhev, one of the movement's active members, was sentenced to hard labour in Siberia for the term of his natural life. Dmitry Zavalishin, another educated naval officer and a participant of the Russian expedition which visited the South Pacific in 1823, was appointed in his stead. In his memoirs, he wrote that he 'made foundations for establishing an ethnographic

museum, which was opened to the public and became one of St Petersburg's early tourist attractions.²⁶¹ Alas, Zavalishin remained in this post for only three months, as the enquiry into the Decembrist uprising also uncovered his connection with the rebels, and he was likewise sentenced to hard labour in Siberia.

These political events had a direct impact on the Oceanic collections. With two directors found guilty of high treason, the museum itself fell under the suspicion of the new Emperor. In 1827 Nicholas I wrote to the head of the Naval Department that the Museum 'stored things which have nothing to do with naval arts' and ordered that, among other items, 'weapons, dress and crafts of the inhabitants of the Eastern [*i.e.* Pacific] Ocean' were to be transferred to the Department of Education and to the Naval Cadet Corps.²⁶² This marked the beginning of the dispersal of the State Admiralty Department Museum's collections. Some of the artefacts and natural history collections were transferred to the Academy of Sciences (over 6,000 exhibits), of which 1,855 artefacts were deposited in the *Kunstkamera* in 1828. Other objects were sent to the Naval Cadet Corps in St Petersburg and some to the Map Depot in Nikolaev on the Black Sea.

South Pacific artefacts from the disbanded State Admiralty Department Museum arrived at a time of change within the former *Kunstkamera* itself: in the 1830s its collections were divided between several newly established museums, including the Ethnographic and Anatomical Museums. In 1878, they became the basis for the newly established Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography. Currently this institution has the official name of Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (abbreviated as MAE), but being the heir of the original *Kunstkamera* it is also referred to as the *Kunstkamera*. It has long been the major centre of Oceanic anthropology studies in Russia.

The ethnographic collections brought by Russian expeditions in the Pacific are the crowning jewel of this museum, but their identification has encountered some complexities. The inventories, made at the time these collections were gifted to the State Admiralty Department Museum, usually included brief descriptions of the items or at least their type, sometimes identifying them according to their place of origin, material, use, native name, but often, less informatively, grouping notionally similar items without separate or more specific identification.²⁶³ Bestuzhev, when appointed, had an inventory of artefacts prepared, now a key source for untangling the origins and movements of the ethnographic collections of the museum.²⁶⁴ When the artefacts were transferred from the State Admiralty Department Museum to the *Kunstkamera* in 1828, they were accompanied by a 'List of rarities' organized by territorial subdivisions, and had some labels, but, by the 1870s, when custodians of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography turned to these collections, the connections between surviving documentation and objects had become tenuous. Most of the South Pacific artefacts from the State Admiralty Department Museum were grouped together as *fond* (collection) 736. *Fond* 736 has over '330 artefacts, most of which are attributed to particular localities in the Pacific; they include 44 items from New Zealand, 27 from Hawai'i, 23 from Fiji, 17 from the Marquesas, 16 from Australia, 15 from Hervey Islands, etc.'²⁶⁵ Unlike later MAE collections, this *fond* does not list individual donors, referring to the origin of the artefacts as 'From the old collections'. Although most of the artefacts in this *fond* were collected during one or other of the Russian voyages to the Pacific, some of the items came from individual collectors who had not been to Oceania.

Currently MAE scholars are in the process of correlating the original State Admiralty Department Museum inventories with Pacific and American artefacts brought by the Russian expeditions.²⁶⁶ For instance, the collection of Golovnin from Tana Island was painstakingly identified and researched by Ivanova and later by Belkov.²⁶⁷ A few early voyagers' collections donated to the MAE directly are well documented and provenanced, for instance Lisiansky's Nuku Hiva and Hawai'i collection in fond 750 and Lutke's above-mentioned Caroline Islands collection in fond 711.²⁶⁸

Other early Oceanic collections in St Petersburg museums worth noting are the collections of the Arsenal (Armoury) in Tsarskoe Selo, which housed artefacts nominally belonging to the Russian Emperor. The collection had dozens of South Pacific items and their origins indicate that these were donations from the participants of various Russian expeditions to the Pacific. Documentation of this collection has survived in the Russian State Historical Archives and has been studied by Sergei Dmitriev.²⁶⁹ This collection reached MAE in 1937 (fond 5754) after being transferred first to the Russian Museum, and then to the State Ethnographic Museum.

Private collections and collectors

Some private collecting took place during the early expeditions, but never on such a scale as was customary among European and American voyages (see Chapter 1). For instance, in 1822 a *toi moko* (preserved Māori head) was spotted in the possession of Nikolai Galkin, a surgeon on the Bellingshausen expedition, while several South Pacific items were confiscated from the apartment of Dmitry Zavalishin in 1826 during his arrest.²⁷⁰

During the first decades of the nineteenth century some South Pacific artefacts reached St Petersburg museums via private collectors, who might have acquired them in London auctions. Thus, Captain Scott, an Englishman on Russian service, known there as Stepan Georgievich Scott, owned a number of Polynesian artefacts, particularly from New Zealand, although he had not served in the Pacific. In 1808 he donated his collection to the State Admiralty Department Museum, and from here his artefacts may have ended up in fond 736 with those of the Russian voyagers.²⁷¹ The case of Lev Waxell, an engineer and lover of antiquities, is likewise interesting, and has been explored in detail by Belkov.²⁷² The trigger for this research was David Attenborough's case study of three figurines from Easter Island in MAE's fond 736, presented in his documentary 'The Lost Gods of Easter Island' (BBC, 2000), which were remarkably similar to drawings of Isaac Smith's album containing images from Cook's second voyage (Figure 4.5). Taking into consideration the fact that Russian expeditions visiting Easter Island had no chance to collect such figurines during their brief and often hostile encounters with Easter Islanders, tracing the provenance of the figurines to Cook's voyage seems quite reasonable. Indeed, Belkov found that in 1809 Waxell sent sculptures of three gods from the South Sea Islands to the Russian Academy. Moreover, although Waxell missed the auction of the Leverian Museum in 1806, which put hundreds of Cook artefacts on sale (see Chapter 1), he attempted to buy some artefacts from the dealers immediately afterwards.

Artefacts of the first Russian expedition became the foundation of another private collection, that of Count Nikolai Rumiantsev, who supported the expedition and to whom Lisiansky gave part of his ethnographic collections. Later Rumiantsev received



Figure 4.5. Thor Heyerdahl studies Easter Island figurines in the Australia and Oceania office, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg. Vladimir Kabo archives, Canberra.

some artefacts from Kotzebue, whose expedition on the *Rurik* he had financed. For decades the Rumiantsev collections were stored and exhibited in St Petersburg in his mansion, first as a private collection and then as the Rumiantsev Public Museum, opened after his death in 1831.

Collections outside St Petersburg

Russian round-the-world voyages were also foundational for museum collections beyond St Petersburg, in other parts of the Russian Empire. For instance, Ivan Simonov, the astronomer in Bellingshausen's expedition, donated 37 Oceanic artefacts to the Cabinet of Curiosities at Kazan University. The cabinet later grew into the university's ethnographic museum²⁷³ (Figure 4.6). Moritz Laband, the surgeon in Lisiansky's expedition on the *Neva*, donated his collection to the Cabinet of Antiquities of Kharkov University;²⁷⁴ unfortunately this collection was destroyed by German bombing during the Second World War.

South Pacific artefacts also found their way to Estonia, from which many members of the Russian naval expeditions originated. Krusenstern donated part of his collection to the newly established Art Museum of Derpt (Tartu) University. There is evidence that it was on display by 1814, as a German traveller, visiting the university, noted that it was worth seeing the curiosities brought by Krusenstern, especially those of the South Sea Islanders.²⁷⁵ Currently this collection is part of the Eesti Rahva Muuseum (Estonian National Museum). Along with the Krusenstern collection the museum owns around 160 other Oceanic items, received as gifts and through exchanges with other museums.²⁷⁶

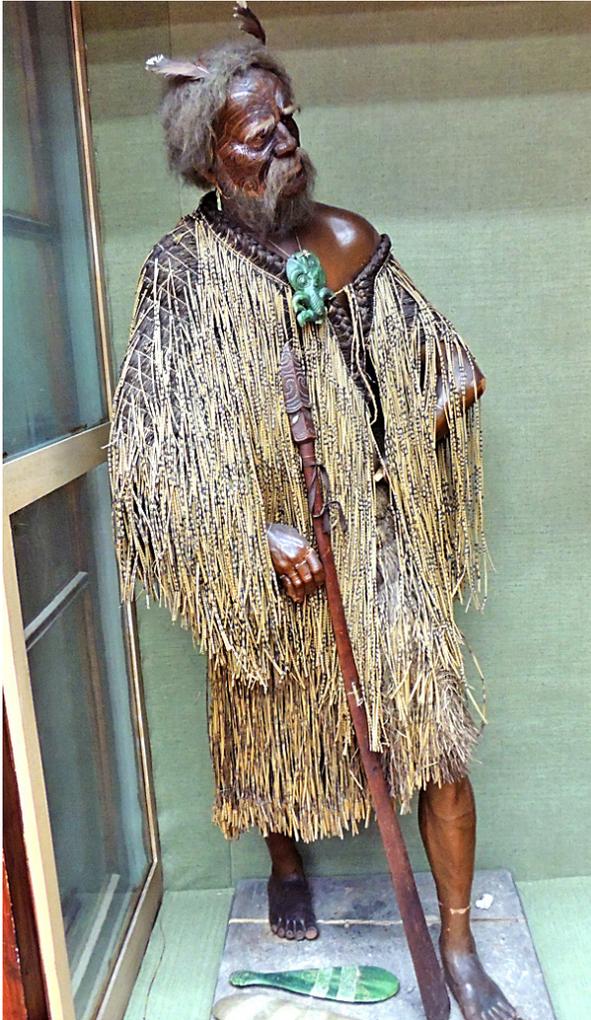


Figure 4.6. Life-size figure of Māori man in traditional dress. Ethnographic Museum of Kazan University.

The Eesti Ajaloomuseum (Estonian Historical Museum), in Revel (Tallinn), had its origins in the private collection of Johann Burchard (1776-1838), a Tallinn pharmacist and physician, who started collecting curios in 1802. He had an extensive network of contacts among Baltic Germans and Western Europeans. Among those who donated South Pacific artefacts were Karl Espenberg, the surgeon of the Krusenstern expedition, and Otto Kotzebue, whose artefacts were in the 1822 exhibition of Burchard's collection.²⁷⁷ Another early South Pacific collection which can be identified within the Estonian Historical Museum's holdings belongs to Hermann Karl von Friederici, a member of Krusenstern's expedition. He donated his collection to the Museum der Estländischen Literarischen Gesellschaft (Museum of the Estonian Literary Society) in Tallinn on 26 July 1853 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the departure of Krusenstern's expedition.²⁷⁸ The Estonian Historical Museum also has a collection of early South Pacific tapa cloth including some samples of tapa attributed to the naturalist on Cook's second voyage, Georg Forster, in the Burchard collection²⁷⁹ (Figure 4.7).



Figure 4.7. Samples of Tahitian tapa attributed to Forster and its original packaging. Estonian Historical Museum (K 1445).

Collections in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century

After the cessation of Russian exploratory expeditions in the Pacific in the late 1820s and the disbandment of the ethnographic section of the State Admiralty Department Museum, the Oceanic collections in the *Kunstkamera* entered a state of limbo; some remained packed in trunks and were hardly exhibited. A revival of interest in South Pacific studies and collecting started in Russia in the 1870s with the resumption of Russian naval voyagers in the Pacific, the travels of Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay in Oceania (1871-1883)²⁸⁰ and the emergence of Moscow as a new centre of anthropological studies. This interest in South Pacific artefacts was precipitated by broader historical processes, including the establishment of public museums across Europe, the facilitation of travels to the South Pacific, the emergence of commercial artefact collectors, and large-scale exchanges of collections between museums.

St Petersburg

The MAE remained the main repository of Oceanic collections from the second half of the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries (Figure 4.8). According to an overview by Tamara Shafranovskaia and Aleksandr Azarov, its Oceanic and Australian holdings



Figure 4.8. Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg, the main repository of Oceanian collections in Russia.

rose to nearly 5,000 artefacts during this period.²⁸¹ One of the first significant Oceanic collections of this time was donated in 1886 by the Russian explorer and anthropologist Nikolai Miklouho-Maqlay. Besides his collections are some items donated by members of the Russian naval ship *Skobelev*, which visited New Guinea with Maqlay in 1883. New Guinea, especially its eastern part, also featured in the collections of other donors, who donated their collections directly to the MAE or to the Russian Geographical Society, whose museum with its ethnographic collections was disbanded in 1891. Among these individual contributors, on many of whom the records are patchy and limited, we might mention Otto Finsch, a German explorer and ethnographer, whose collection numbered 555 items representing Melanesia, especially New Guinea, and Micronesia; Fisher (or Fischer), a military doctor from Ternate; and Pieter Swaan, a Dutch Navy captain, who explored western New Guinea on the *Surabaia* in 1875-1876. Swaan's collection (65 items) was accompanied by a detailed catalogue; he also donated his New Guinea collections to Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden (see Chapter 3). Another large New Guinea collection (219 items) was donated by V.A. Baud, a Dutch merchant serving as a Russian consul in Batavia, and de Brujen, a Dutch naval officer. Karl Maschmeyer, a manager of a tobacco plantation on Sumatra, donated a large collection (307 items) from New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, and the Hermit Islands (Bismarck Archipelago).²⁸²

In the early twentieth century MAE collections further expanded as a result of exchanges of duplicate artefacts with several European museums; in other cases,

benefactors would buy duplicates in European museums and donate them to the MAE. Among the largest acquisitions of that period were collections from Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig (via Hans Meyer), Museum Umlauf in Hamburg (via Eugeny I. Alexander), Museum für Völkerkunde, Dresden, and Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg (via Feliks Schottländer and Otto Manasevich).

The growing interest in the culture of Oceanic people resulted in a 1908 trip on behalf of the MAE to Oceania and Australia for the purposes of artefact acquisition by Vladimir Sviatlovsky, professor of political economy at St Petersburg University. Newspapers reported that the catalyst for his trip was the ‘discovery’ in St Petersburg of ‘Hawai’ian feather-work, which was given by one of the Hawai’ian chiefs to Captain Cook ... the day before he was killed’. Moreover, while in Hawai’i, Sviatlovsky proposed to the trustees of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu an exchange of Russian duplicates from Cook’s collection for some artefacts representing the everyday life of Hawai’ian Islanders.²⁸³ The plan was gladly agreed upon, but was most likely never implemented (Figures 4.9 and 4.10). Nevertheless, Sviatlovsky managed to acquire a quite representative collection of Hawaiian artefacts. Besides purchasing artefacts from traders, he established contacts with museum directors in Honolulu, Wellington, Melbourne and Perth, initiating exchanges of their duplicates with Russian museums. Letters sent by Sviatlovsky to the MAE during his voyage portray the market for artefacts in this period. For instance, he wrote about the Dominion Museum in Wellington:

The local museum here is chaotic. It’s less of a museum, more of a giant shed, where everything is in complete disarray. (Admittedly, they are waiting to be transferred to a new building – a new jail rejected by the town as ‘luxurious’ and ‘too picturesque’). The museum director longs for exchange with Russia, and has therefore agreed to send us a collection of his Maori duplicates ... In exchange for this ... whole collection he asks for only one item.²⁸⁴

In Melbourne, Sviatlovsky’s contact was Baldwin Spencer, an anthropologist and director of the National Museum of Victoria (now Melbourne Museum), who in exchange for Samoyedic traditional dress, sledges and stuffed dogs offered Sviatlovsky rich Australian Aboriginal and South Pacific collections. The ‘young museum in Perth’, which must be the Western Australian Museum, happily swapped collections of artefacts of newly discovered Aboriginal tribes (‘there are no analogous items in any European museum’) for products of the Russian Imperial porcelain plant. Sviatlovsky also bought some artefacts at London auctions and organized an exchange with the Museum für Völkerkunde, Dresden. The collections acquired with his facilitation number over 500 items from New Zealand, Hawai’i, Samoa, Easter Island, Australia, New Guinea and Melanesia.²⁸⁵ The Russian geographer Alexander Yashchenko, who visited Australia in 1903, returned with nearly 100 Indigenous Australian artefacts.

During the nineteenth century, the ethnographic collections of the former *Kunstkamera* became part of the Academic Museum, and then of the *Etnograficheskii muzei* (Ethnographic Museum). They were occasionally put on display, but the museums could show only a small proportion of them due to a lack of appropriate space, resources, and the prevailing dismissive attitude to ‘artificial curiosities’. The



Figure 4.9. Vladimir Sviatlovsky, St Petersburg collector of Oceanian artefacts. (Rozina, 'V.V. Sviatlovsky – sobiratel kollektzii iz Okeanii'.)

The Pacific Commercial Advertiser

U. S. WEATHER BUREAU, February 24.—Last 24 hours rainfall, .50.
Temperature, Max. 79, Min. 96. Weather, fair.

ESTABLISHED JULY 1, 1864

VOL. XLVII, NO. 1976. HONOLULU, HAWAII TERRITORY, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1908. PRICE FIVE CENTS.

NET FISHING IN HARBOR IS TABU

Superintendent Campbell Stops It in the Interests of Commerce.

For the past two weeks two bits, one of Chinese and the other of Japanese, have been fishing with nets in the harbor, on a scale far in advance of anything that has been seen for a number of years. Some of the boats that have been made have been enormous. In one boat nearly two weeks ago something like \$500 worth of fish were secured.

But the enormous spread of net used has been a source of concern to steamship men. The harbor is small, and the nets used when cast for a haul extend over a considerable area of it. They are made of strong material, and they have to be, and if they should be caught in a propeller would cause a great deal of damage. There have been several narrow escapes from just such accidents, spreading their nets without much regard to the movements of steam craft in and out of the harbor or across it.

The masters of steam craft concerned brought the matter before Harbor No. 54, Masters and Pilots' Association and the Harbor brought the matter to the attention of Superintendent of Public Works, Mr. Campbell. Yesterday Superintendent Campbell issued an order forbidding further fishing with nets in the harbor on account of its interference with commerce. The order was sent through Harbormaster Fuller, who notified the fishermen yesterday. They took the notification very calmly, and at once pulled up their nets. It is probable, however, that they will make a protest to the superintendent Campbell, or at least ask for a hearing on the subject matter.

NATIONAL GUARD WILL SOON BE PAU

Name to Be Changed to First Infantry, Hawaii, in Short Time.

The last of the official inspection of the National Guard will be completed this morning when Major Dunning visits its quarters at the drillshed, checks over the uniforms, rifles and stores on hand with the lists and notes in what manner there are being cared for. Then his full report on the standing of the local white boys of Honolulu and the outfitting companies will be ready to forward to the War Department at Washington.

It is not generally known that, according to the new regulation, the National Guard of Hawaii is soon to be a thing of the past, while in its place will be the First Infantry, Hawaii. All the units of the National Guard of the companies, E, F, G, etc., are no longer used officially, being designated now state troops on an arm of the regular army. Uniforms, equipment, drill and of course all regular army lines, ready to take their places without confusion with the regulars when necessary.

About the only change that will be noticeable in the herald is the fact that very shortly the letters "N. G. H." will have disappeared from the letters "HAW." will have taken their place.

THREE FOREST RESERVES MADE

One of 44,440 Acres on Island of Maui and Two of Small Areas.

Three more forest reserves were created yesterday at a public hearing held by Governor Pease and the Board of Commissioners of Agriculture and Forestry, in the office of the board. There was no opposition to either of the reserves and it was decided that they should forthwith be proclaimed.

The first reserve consists of government lands in the districts of Lahaina, Kanihali and Wailuku, island of Maui, which may be described in general terms as embracing the entire top of the West Maui mountain, above a line as enclosing the mountain as to exclude all agricultural land and occupying an area of 44,440 acres, more or less.

The second reserve, a small one, is situated in the district of Hanalei, Kaula, island of Maui, lying on the northwestern slope of Mount Hanalei, and containing the Kohala forest reserve, on the south by the land of Kanihali, and on the east and northeast by the remainder of the land of Hanalei, and containing an area of 150 acres, more or less.

Third and smallest is a reserve in the district of Hilo, lying on the northwestern slope of Mount Hualala, bounded on the north by the land of Puu I and on the south by the land of Kahala II. It covers the northern part of the mountain, and contains an area of 100 acres, more or less.

The post-mortem examination on the body of the woman found dead Saturday night at the corner of Aieha street and Vineyard street, proved that she died of heart disease, and that there was no toxin for the purpose of poisoning her, which has been the subject of rumors since the discovery of the woman's remains, and contained an area of 100 acres, more or less.

The exchange will be gladly made by the trustees and some of the gifts of Edinburg will thus be restored to the inside after their remarkable adventures.

Great interest has been shown among the historians and antiquarians of Honolulu in the story of the adventures of Professor Sviatlovsky's mission, that period, geographers, topographers and traps, weapons and such. The exchange will be gladly made by the trustees and some of the gifts of Edinburg will thus be restored to the inside after their remarkable adventures.

FEATHERWORK TRADED FOR FOOD

Captain Cook's Captains Gave Valuable Relics for Tea and Tobacco.

The story of the recent discovery of a large number of Hawaiian featherwork cloaks in St. Petersburg, where they had lain since the eighteenth century, and which were intimately connected with the tragedy of the death of Captain Cook, as told in the Advertiser yesterday morning, was confirmed yesterday by Professor Vladimir Sviatlovsky, who added several interesting particulars to the report. The fact that the boxes containing the valuables remained so long unopened was due, so related, to the fact that there existed no record of them and the authorities of the St. Petersburg museum were in ignorance of the fact that any such articles were in their possession. The discovery was made by accident.

Professor Sviatlovsky states that the featherwork is in excellent preservation and will be used, much of it, to form the splendid nucleus of a Hawaiian collection for the museum. The object of his visit here is to secure further articles for this collection, and he has proposed to the trustees of the Bishop Museum to trade a number of the featherwork articles for the articles of daily use of the Hawaiians of that period, geographers, topographers and traps, weapons and such. The exchange will be gladly made by the trustees and some of the gifts of Edinburg will thus be restored to the inside after their remarkable adventures.

THE BATTLESHIPS TO REACH COAST BEFORE MAY 15

Judge Grosscup and Other Directors of Traction Road Arraigned for Manslaughter—Natal Act Declared Inoperative.

(Associated Press Cablegrams.)

WASHINGTON, February 25.—Secretary Metcalf says that the battleship fleet will be in San Francisco before May 15.

JUDGE GROSSCUP CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER

CHARLESTON, Ill., February 25.—Federal Judge Grosscup and seven other directors of the Illinois Traction road have been arraigned on a charge of manslaughter, as responsible for the traction accident last August in which eighteen people were killed.

JAPANESE EXEMPTED.

VANCOUVER, February 25.—The Court of Appeals has declared the Natal act inoperative against the Japanese.

BAD FOR NASI.

ROME, February 25.—Nasi has been convicted and sentenced to eleven months in prison.

SETTLING A STRIKE.

LONDON, February 25.—The terms of settlement for the engineers' strike on the Tyne have been accepted by both provisions.

Figure 4.10. 'Featherwork traded for food', The Pacific Commercial Advertiser, 25 February 1908.

situation did not change much when in 1879 the collections were reshaped into the MAE. In 1886 Miklouho-Maclay had ample grounds to criticize the state of the museum:

I hope that the Academy will in time find better premises for the preservation of its collections than those in which the collections of the seafarers Kotzebue, Krusenstern, and Lutke have up to this point been housed. At the present time, they are kept in some sort of basement. Nevertheless, they are as valuable as my collection, because they cannot be found any longer on the islands of the Pacific, as the process of their manufacture and their uses have long been forgotten. It would be extremely desirable for there to be a proper ethnographic museum in St Petersburg, whose collections would be formed from items scattered amongst the Geographical Society Museum, the Maritime Museum, and others.²⁸⁶

Only in the late 1880s, when the museum received exhibition and office spaces, could its research curator Fedor Russov (Russow) start the laborious process of unpacking the 'old' collections from their trunks and registering them, trying to match them to the scarce documentation, and to determine their provenance.²⁸⁷ The success of a temporary exhibition presented by Maclay in 1886, the growing number of donated collections, and emerging interest in the issues of anthropology and ethnography within society at large allowed the MAE to stage the first comprehensive display of its Oceanic collections. The artefacts were exhibited in ten large display cabinets and seven display cases with large items placed over the cabinets and on the walls. The artefacts were grouped according to broad island areas, aiming to represent the collection of each donor individually within these areas.²⁸⁸

A few years later the Russian traveller and writer Aleksandr Eliseev, upon visiting the MAE, noted that it 'enjoys the least amount of attention', and that many educated people were hardly aware of its existence. His arguments for the importance of the comparative history of humankind, published in the popular Russian magazine *Niva*, with numerous illustrations of Oceanic artefacts from the MAE, were beneficial for promoting public interest.²⁸⁹ In the following years the study and cataloguing of Oceanic collections continued. In 1911 the Department of Oceania was established within the MAE; it was headed by Eugenia Petri, the widow of the Russian anthropologist of Swedish background Eduard Petri. In 1914 she published a guide to Oceanic artefacts in the MAE (Figure 4.11). Comparison with the guide of 1891 demonstrates that during the intervening years much progress had been made in the study, expansion and conceptualization of the display. Although the system remained geographical, it evolved from displays of individual collections to a number of thematic cases, for instance 'Money' or 'Tobacco and Betel'. A special display case was dedicated to the raw materials and production of artefacts by Oceanic people. Pottery displayed in a spectacular hexagonal cabinet also demonstrated the different stages of production and ornamentation; for instance, a bowl was displayed upside down to exhibit an artist's trademark. The exhibition also boasted two life-size figures: a Papuan with a weapon and a Hawai'ian in feathered garments.²⁹⁰



Figure 4.11. Eugenia Petri (sitting 3rd from the right), the first female curator of Oceanic collections, with MAE staff. (Staniukovich, *Etnograficheskaia nauka i muzei*, p. 137).

Moscow

While in St Petersburg the MAE was part of the academic establishment, in Moscow the promotion of anthropology and ethnography was in the hands of learned societies enjoying support and broad-spectrum interest from the wider community. Initially the activities of natural science enthusiasts there centred around the Imperial Moscow Society of Naturalists, established in 1805 at Moscow University with a predominantly academic membership.²⁹¹ The situation changed in the liberal 1860s – in 1863 a new Society of Devotees of Natural Science was established, with a membership including scientists and professors but also educated laymen interested in the subject. It later grew into the Imperial Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology and Ethnography. Anatoly Bogdanov, a Russian zoologist and anthropologist, was instrumental in its expansion and development. By 1864 it had already established an anthropological section and was championing the 1867 All-Russia Ethnographic Exhibition in Moscow.

At the same time the ethnographic collections of the private museum of Count Rumiantsev in St Petersburg, which were, by the 1850s, in a dilapidated condition, were transferred to Moscow, becoming part of the *Moskovskii publichnyi i Rumiantsevskii muzei* (Moscow Public and Rumiantsev Museum) in 1861. On the eve of the 1867 exhibition the Moscow Society of Naturalists elected the German-Australian botanist

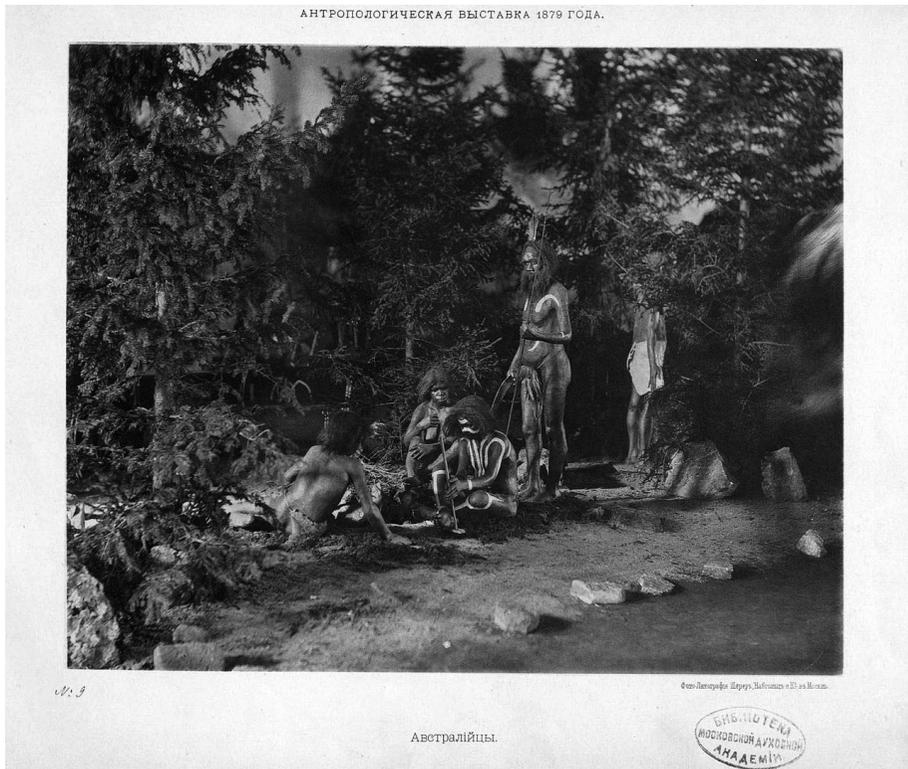


Figure 4.12. Life-size figures of Australian Aborigines among Russian fir-trees at the Anthropological Exhibition in Moscow in 1879. *Vidy Antropologicheskoi vystavki v Moskve, Moscow, 1879.*

Ferdinand von Mueller as a member. With his assistance, the nascent Rumiantsev Museum was soon able to acquire superb collections of Indigenous Australian artefacts.²⁹² In 1879 Moscow built upon the success of the first exhibition by hosting the Anthropological Exhibition. The display featured life-size figures of Australian Aboriginal people, made by the Russian sculptor Ivan Seviugin using busts in the Natural History Museum in Paris, which had in turn been produced from living subjects. He used materials from the same museum to create busts and masks of Australian mainland, Tasmanian, Papuan, New Ireland, New Caledonian, Fijian, Samoan, and Caroline Islander peoples²⁹³ (Figure 4.12).

The collections from the exhibition became part of the newly established *Muzei antropologii* (Anthropological Museum) of Moscow University headed by anthropologist Dmitry Anuchin, while the ethnographic collections became part of the *Etnograficheskii muzei* (Ethnographic Museum), which had incorporated Rumiantsev's collections and was growing rapidly. Although the South Pacific area had never been a focus for these museums and they had limited resources for the acquisition of collections, they managed to accumulate around 1,500 artefacts from the South Pacific. After the revolution of 1917 these collections underwent a number

of inter-institutional transfers until they were reassembled in 1948 in a museum now called the Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut i Muzei antropologii im. Anuchina (Anuchin Research Institute and Museum of Anthropology of Lomonosov Moscow State University, MAMSU).

The earliest collection in MAMSU is of Lisiansky's artefacts from the Marquesas and Hawai'i; these artefacts are easily identifiable. By contrast, only a few items can be identified from the collection of Kotzebue, including a mogan, a floating device from Rumiantsev (Wotje) Atoll (Figure 4.13). The Museum has a superb collection of Polynesian tapa cloth, mostly unpatterned; it is lacking the original documentation and was later catalogued as Hawai'ian, but might also originate from the Marquesas. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the South Pacific collections of the museum grew through donations by Russian naval visitors and individual travellers. Among them is the collection of Aleksei Birilev from San Cristobal (Makira) Island (Solomon Islands) (1870) and Vladimir Messer from New Guinea (1872), both of whom visited these places aboard Russian naval vessels. Russian traveller Eduard Zimmerman visited New Caledonia, New Zealand and Hawai'i in 1882 and brought back a large collection of artefacts. Although he probably purchased some from dealers, he wrote that he had bought some artefacts including a dancing mask from a missionary who had lived for a long time in New Caledonia. A large collection assembled by well-known Russian symbolist poet Constantin Balmont, who visited the islands of Polynesia and the south coast of New Guinea in 1912, in search of 'islands of the happy people', is distinguished by the marked aesthetic quality of the artefacts.²⁹⁴



Figure 4.13. Detail of Marshall Islands grass skirt with belt. Kotzebue's collection in Anuchin Research Institute and Museum of Anthropology of Lomonosov Moscow State University (370-8). Photo: Aleksei Mukhin.

In 1911 the Museum acquired the skeletal remains and attire of a Papuan man named Nolle from the Kai-Kai tribe in Merauke, southern New Guinea (now Indonesian territory). He and two other Papuans were brought to Moscow in 1910 by Angelo Koufakos, a Greek impresario, and Nolle died while on tour. The collection consists of 36 items including a number of ornaments made from European materials.

European museums and companies were another important source for the growth of the Oceanic collections in Moscow. For instance, large collections were acquired from the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien (Natural History Museum Vienna) (1893), from the companies Paul (1895), Luders (1896) and Umlauff (1899, 1909, 1912, 1929) in Hamburg, and Oldman in London (1909). During the inter-institutional transfers, some collections lost most of their documentation and the only way to attribute them is from an old catalogue of the former Ethnographic Museum and some old tags. Some can be identified only as 'from the old collections', without the name of the donor. One of these, for instance, is from New Caledonia, collected in the mid-1860s (no. 342); another is from the Micronesian Island of Pohnpei (formerly known as Ponape) (no. 390).²⁹⁵

Some remnants of a former South Pacific collection which might have been on display in Moscow in the nineteenth century have also been found in the Moscow State Museum; they include tapa cloth from the Marquesas Islands, which most likely originates from Lisiansky's collection.

Collections during the Soviet period

After the Russian revolution of 1917, contact between the outside world and Russian museums and scholars was drastically curtailed, and opportunities for expeditions and exchange with foreign institutions dwindled. Nevertheless, the anti-racist stance of the official Marxist-Leninist ideology, shared with genuine enthusiasm by Soviet scholars, provided some opportunity for further studies in the field of 'Okeanistika', *i.e.* studies of Oceania and its people. In fact, MAE, along with the field of ethnography in general, became a refuge from the ideological tenets of the regime for many scholars. For the public at large, meanwhile, the Kunstkamera's collections of artefacts from far-away, unreachable lands became a rare window into a wider world.

One such story was that of Leningrad schoolboy Boris Kudriavtsev, who joined the Friends of MAE group, and on a visit to the museum was captivated by the *kohau rongo rongo* tablets donated to the museum by Miklouho-Maclay. Kudriavtsev, along with his school friends, made the first breakthrough in deciphering the tablets. In 1941 he volunteered in the army to defend his city, and was tragically killed. His materials survived, were published and inspired the entire Leningrad school of Easter Island studies (Figures 4.14 and 4.15). Another South Pacific artefact became the symbol of Leningrad's unquenchable perseverance in the two and a half year long Siege of Leningrad during the Second World War. There was no time to evacuate the collections of MAE when the siege began and the figure of a Papuan holding a bow and arrow was placed on the upper gallery of the exhibition hall. During a bomb explosion, the Papuan's hand shook and released the arrow, which pierced the western wall of the hall. The MAE curators, who continued their work while dying from starvation, were cheered by this incident: 'If even our Papuan fires at the Nazis, we will win!'²⁹⁶ (Figure 4.16).



Figure 4.14. Boris Kudriavtsev, a Leningrad youth, goes to fight Fascism having not finished deciphering kohau rongo rongo. (I. Rakhtanov. *Potomki Maklaia* [Descendants of Maclay], Moscow-Leningrad, 1954).

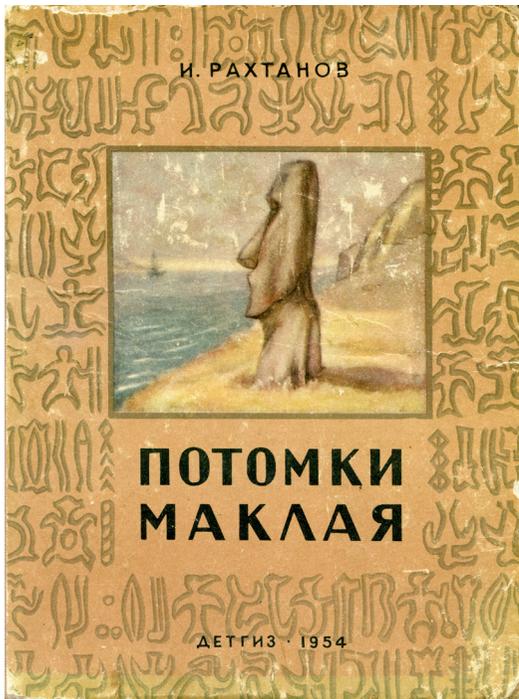


Figure 4.15. Well-read children's book *Descendants of Maclay* telling Kudriavtsev's story, published in 1954.



Figure 4.16. Life-size figure of Papuan taken during the Leningrad siege. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg.

Despite numerous political upheavals, the Oceanic collections of MAE continued to grow. In the first years after the revolution, when contacts with the West had not been completely limited, it received a large South Pacific collection from Etnografiska Museet Stockholm (Stockholm Ethnographic Museum) (fond 3117). At the same time, as all collections came into the possession of the state, inter-institutional transfers became

easier and the MAE, as the centre for overseas ethnography, benefited from an influx of artefacts. Significant collections of South Pacific materials were transferred to MAE from the *Voenno-morskoe uchilishche im Frunze* (Frunze Naval Cadet School), the *Voenno-morskoi muzei* (Naval Museum), and the *Institut proletarskogo izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva* (Institute of Proletarian Art) in the 1930s. Although these collections are lacking their original documentation, they are most likely remnants of the early Russian voyagers' collections in the State Admiralty Department Museum, which was disbanded in the late 1820s. Despite this sequence of transfers, not all Oceanic collections have ended up in the MAE holdings: some remain in the *Muzei istorii religii* (Museum of the History of Religion), and some are with the Russian Geographical Society.

After the Second World War, the Soviet authorities brought some material from the collections of the *Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde Berlin* (Royal Museum for Ethnology Berlin, now *Ethnologisches Museum Berlin*) to Leningrad as part of a broader policy of reparations. These collections seem to have remained unclaimed by Soviet ethnographers, were never mentioned in their studies, and were finally returned to Leipzig in 1975.²⁹⁷ The next sizeable acquisition in the MAE Oceanic collections took place in the 1970s, when Soviet ethnographers were allowed to travel to Oceania for the first time, in the footsteps of Miklouho-Maclay. Currently the Australian and Oceanic collections in MAE number 6,500 items.²⁹⁸



Figure 4.17. Curators of the Australia and Oceania section at Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg, 1957: (l to r, sitting) Julia Likhtenberg, Liubov Rozina, a Bulgarian ethnographer, Maria Butinova; (l to r, standing) Nikolai Butinov, Vladimir Kabo. Vladimir Kabo archives, Canberra.

In the 1930s MAE formed part of the Institut etnografii AN SSSR (Research Institute of Ethnography) and became the centre of South Pacific ethnographic studies in Russia. Its armchair ethnographers worked as curators of the collections and produced a number of thorough studies of the material culture of Oceanic people on the basis of its rich collections. The first endeavour in this field was the publication of a volume on Miklouho-Maclay's collections in his *Collected Works* in 1954. Work with South Pacific collections continued throughout the 1960s by the MAE curators Likhtenberg, Rozina, Butinov, Kabo, and others (Figure 4.17). These studies were mostly regional (for instance Marquesan, Hawai'ian, and Māori collections) or thematic (for instance tapa cloth). The only exceptions were the above-mentioned collections of Cook and Lutke. At that time identification of objects was based on late nineteenth century inventories and comparisons with artefacts in published overseas collections.

During the 1930s the MAE aimed to replace the evolutionary-typological approach dominating the displays with a Marxist-Leninist ideology of class struggle as interpreted through the lens of museum curation, liberating itself from the dominance of 'things'. The result of this were the 1934 'paper' displays *Colonial Policy in Oceania* and *Dutch Imperialism in Indonesia*.²⁹⁹ From 1951 the permanent exhibition on Australian and Oceanic peoples, formed under the guidance of the prominent Soviet ethnographer Sergei Tokarev and later expanded by Nikolai Butinov and Vladimir Kabo, was set in one of the museum's best halls (Figures 4.18 and 4.19). It reflected different aspects of traditional Oceanic culture, featured a number of life-size figures, and was popular with visitors.³⁰⁰ In 1987 the MAE's Oceanic collections were presented at a major exhibition abroad, *Journey to Oceania*, in the Taideteollisuusmuseo (Museum of the Applied Arts) in Finland. It included about 600 items and was accompanied by a catalogue, which remains the best pictorial illustration of Russian Oceanic holdings.³⁰¹

Figure 4.18. Life-size figure of a Hawai'ian in featherwork dress, 1953. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg.





Figure 4.19. Permanent Australia and Oceania exhibition, 1953. Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg.



Figure 4.20. Exhibition hall with Oceanic collections in MAMSU. Photograph by Aleksei Mukhin.

The South Pacific collections in Moscow were not so lucky. In the 1920s, some of them were displayed as part of the newly established *Muzei narodovedenia* (Museum of Ethnography); in 1939, as the museum was rebranded as the *Muzei narodov SSSR* (Museum of the Peoples of the USSR), they were transferred to the *Muzei antropologii*



Figure 4.21. Opening of Nicolai Michoutouchkine's exhibition *Ethnography and Art of Oceania*, 1980, State Museum of Ethnography, Sardarapat, Armenia. Photograph courtesy of Aloï Pilioko.

(Museum of Anthropology). They were kept in storage during the Second World War and, until recently, have hardly been exhibited and were barely accessible to researchers. Only in the twenty-first century have the storage facilities for the collections been upgraded, which allowed the curator Ekaterina Balakhonova to conduct further research and organize their first display in the Museum hall of the old university building in the centre of Moscow (Figure 4.20).

A wider movement to make South Pacific artefacts accessible to the masses outside the large cities and academic institutions was precipitated in the 1980s by the artist and collector Nicolai Michoutouchkine (1929-2010).³⁰² A son of Russian emigres to France, he made his home in Oceania; in 1979-1987 he toured his travelling exhibition of Oceanic artefacts and art all over the Soviet Union. These exhibitions, which took on aspects of festival-style happenings, were one of the first gestures towards dismantling prescriptivist Soviet traditions of museum practice. Under one roof, they united traditional artefacts with contemporary Oceanic art, including the work of Michoutouchkine's partner-artist, the Polynesian-born Aloï Pilioko, who made drawings live for visitors; they brought Oceanic artefacts outside museums and into accessible public exhibition spaces; finally, they were exhibited across an enormous geographical area, including cities in Siberia, Central Asia and the Caucasus. The exhibition was ultimately visited by more than 5 million people (Figure 4.21). After the tour, Michoutouchkine-Pilioko's collection of over 60 artefacts became the foundation of the new *Etnograficheskii muzei Instituta etnologii i antropologii* (Ethnographical Museum of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology) in Moscow.

Recent developments

The political changes in Russia in recent decades have allowed its anthropologists to travel abroad and to establish contacts with colleagues all over the world; some collections formed as a result of fieldwork were brought from Micronesia and Maclay (Rai) Coast in Papua New Guinea by Arina Lebedeva, curator at MAE (Figure 4.22).



Figure 4.22. Arina Lebedeva collecting artefacts for MAE in Gorendu, PNG, 2017. Photo: Arina Lebedeva.

Unfortunately, this newly open environment was accompanied by dwindling finances. The exhibition hall of Australia and Oceania at the MAE was dismantled in 1999, and has not yet been restored. Nevertheless, the work of curators and scholars in the field of the South Pacific continued. In the 1990s a new generation of scholars, such as Elena Soboleva and Ivanova, brought to the fore a new source for collection reconstruction – archival documentation mostly concerning donations and the history of transfers of Russian voyagers’ collections. In the following decades, the painstaking research into the history of objects has continued, particularly by Belkov on Australian and Oceanic collections and by Korsun on American collections, the respective artefacts of which often share common destinies, as many were collected by the same expeditions. Now the aspiration is the complete identification of all old artefacts and collectors on the basis of archival and museum documentation, transfer lists, tags, the handwriting of early curators in the surviving documentation, the close study of objects, and a pinch of educated guesswork, which together overcome the lack of original identifying documents in the artificially grouped collections. Soboleva also conducts research on the history of the MAE’s exchanges with European museums. The above-mentioned study of Marquesan artefacts of the Krusenstern expedition, conducted across the holdings of multiple European museums with the involvement and knowledge of source communities, is also a further step towards a cross-boundary study of Russian Oceanic connections.



*The Gottorp Globe, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St Petersburg 2013.
Photograph by Nicholas Thomas.*

- Kulturen in Basel (Daan van Dartel, 'The oldest collections of the Tropenmuseum: Haarlem and Artis', p. 36).
220. Alexander Cornelis van der Leeden, 'Hoofdtrekken der sociale structuur in het westelijke binnenland van Sarmi' (PhD thesis, Universiteit Leiden, 1956).
221. David van Duuren and Steven Vink, 'Expeditions: collecting and photographing', pp. 62-75.
222. See section 'The southwest coast' for the Lorentz collection; Terence E. Hays, 'Encounters in the Highlands of New Guinea', in John Friede, Terence E. Hays and Christina Hellmich (eds), *New Guinea Highlands. Art from the Jolika Collection*, pp. 163-70 (Munich, London, New York: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, de Young, DelMonica Books, Prestel, 2017), p. 168.
223. David van Duuren and Steven Vink, 'Expeditions: collecting and photographing', pp. 75-80; Anton Ploeg, 'Observations on the value of early ethnographic reports: Paul Wirz's research in the Toli Valley, Irian Jaya, in 1921', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 122 (1997), pp. 209-28.
224. Anton Ploeg, 'Highlands of West New Guinea', in *New Guinea Highlands. Art from the Jolika Collection*, pp. 541-5.
225. Charles F.M. Le Roux, *De Bergpapoea's van Nieuw-Guinea en hun woongebied* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1948-1950).
226. Terence E. Hays, 'Encounters in the Highlands of New Guinea', p. 169.
227. David van Duuren, 'You have a miracle in your hand': the New Guinea paintings and drawings of Father Petrus Vertenten', in *Oceania at the Tropenmuseum*, pp. 152-3.
228. Johan Theodorus Broekhuijse, 'De Wiligiman-Dani: een cultureel-anthropologische studie over religie en oorlogvoering in de Baliem-vallei' (PhD thesis, Utrecht University, 1967).
229. David van Duuren and Steven Vink, 'Expeditions: collecting and photographing', pp. 97-9.
230. Terence E. Hays, 'Encounters in the Highlands of New Guinea', p. 169.
231. Lindor Serrurier, *Catalogus der ethnographische afdeling van de Internationale Koloniale en Uitvoerhandel Tentoonstelling (van 1 Mei tot ult^o October 1883) te Amsterdam* (Leiden: Brill, 1883).
232. Dirk A.M. Smidt, 'Art in Dutch Collections: Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden', p. 203.
233. Denise Frank, 'Oceania in view', in *Oceania at the Tropenmuseum*, pp. 161-78; René S. Wassing, 'The Oceanic Collection', in *Expressions of Belief*, pp. 109-13.
234. Denise Frank, 'Oceania in view', p. 162.
235. Dirk A.M. Smidt, 'Art in Dutch Collections: Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden', pp. 203-04.
236. René S. Wassing, 'The Oceanic Collection', p. 112.
237. Denise Frank, 'Oceania in view'.
238. Denise Frank, 'Oceania in view'.
239. Dirk A.M. Smidt, 'Art in Dutch Collections: Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden', pp. 203-04.
240. René S. Wassing, 'The Oceanic Collection', p. 112.
241. Denise Frank, 'Oceania in view'.
242. Dirk A.M. Smidt, 'Art in Dutch Collections: Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden', pp. 203-04.
243. David van Duuren, 'New Guinea: Ritual Traditions', in *Oceania at the Tropenmuseum*, pp. 179-85.
244. Kees van den Meiracker, 'Het ontstaan van de Nederlandse bisj-palen collecties', p. 55.

Chapter 4

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- Muzeia antropologii MGU' [Australian and Oceanic ethnographic collections in the Museum of Anthropology of Moscow State University], *Voprosy antropologii*, 83 (1989), p. 104.
246. P.L. Belkov, *Ocherki istorii rannikh okeaniiskikh kolleksii MAE* [Essays on the history of the early Oceanic collections of the MAE] (St Petersburg: MAE RAN, 2015), p. 43.
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Chapter 5

303. The high number of artefacts from German New Guinea in German collections represents a rough estimate. To provide but one example: Dr Oliver Lueb (personal communication, 21 April 2017) graciously shared the regional breakdown for Oceania available at the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in Cologne. This breakdown reveals that about 64 percent (11,757 out of 18,232 artefacts) of the Oceanic objects derived from former German New Guinea.
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305. Harry Liebersohn, 'Coming of Age in the Pacific: German Ethnography from Chamisso to Krämer' in *Worldly Provincialism*, pp. 31-46, quote stems from page 37; see also his *The Travelers' World: Europe to the Pacific* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).
306. John Gascoigne, 'The German Enlightenment and the Pacific', in Larry Wolff and Marco Cipolloni (eds), *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 141-71, quote stems from page 171.
307. Christiane Küchler Williams's study began as a doctoral dissertation at Northwestern University; it appeared in print as *Erotische Paradiese: zur europäischen Südseerezeption im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).
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PACIFIC PRESENCES – VOLUME 1

Hundreds of thousands of works of art and artefacts from many parts of the Pacific are dispersed across European museums. They range from seemingly quotidian things such as fish-hooks and baskets to great sculptures of divinities, architectural forms and canoes. These collections constitute a remarkable resource for understanding history and society across Oceania, cross-cultural encounters since the voyages of Captain Cook, and the colonial transformations that have taken place since. They are also collections of profound importance for Islanders today, who have varied responses to their displaced heritage, and renewed interest in ancestral forms and practices.

This two-volume book enlarges understandings of Oceanic art and enables new reflection upon museums and ways of working in and around them. In dialogue with Islanders' perspectives, It exemplifies a growing commitment on the part of scholars and curators to work collaboratively and responsively.

Volume I focuses on the historical formation of ethnographic museums within Europe, the making of those institutions' Pacific collections, and the activation and re-activation of those collections, over time and in the present.



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