\_This is a level 3 Research Aid\_  
\_first edited by Wiebe Reints as original\_author on 2025-05-13\_  
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Volkenkundig Museum 'Gerardus van der Leeuw'

# Abstract

Until 2003, the Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum was an ethnographic museum in Groningen and formed a part of the university in that city. The museum collection consisted of various sub-collections, including objects from the former Tropical Agricultural School in Deventer and the Princessehof Museum in Leeuwarden. After the museum closed in 2003, the collection became part of the University Museum of the University of Groningen.

## Description

The former Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum originated from the personal ethnographic collection of Theo van Baaren, a religion historian who was a professor at the University of Groningen. Van Baaren never visited the countries from which he collected objects, but acquired his collection through several art dealers. In 1968, Van Baaren donated his collection to the University of Groningen, after which a foundation was established, named after the professor who had succeeded Van Baaren, Gerardus van der Leeuw. Through this association, Van Baaren's collection was greatly expanded. Among others, the Princessehof Museum in Leeuwarden sent its ethnographic collection to Groningen, as the Frisian museum decided to focus solely on collecting ceramics. The municipality of Deventer donated the collection of the former Tropical Agricultural School. In addition, businessman Fred ten Houten gave his ethnographic collection on long-term loan. Together with the objects purchased by the Gerardus van der Leeuw Association, the above collections formed the core of the Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum, which opened its doors in 1978 on the Nieuwe Kijk in 't Jatstraat in the city of Groningen. During the museum's existence, the collection was supplemented by purchases and donations. After several unsuccessful attempts to merge the ethnographic museum with other museums in Groningen, the Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum closed in 2003. Afterwards, the museum collection was incorporated into the museum of the University of Groningen, where it remains until today.

## Provenance research

Several catalogues of the collection of the Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum have been published. One of these is \_Hoe het ging en verging, which describes the so-called “MG collection”, the collection of objects that the museum has accumulated during its existence. This book also contains an overview of all the exhibitions held within the museum between 1978 and 2003. In addition to the MG collection, \_Hoe het ging en verging\_ also provides an overview of the CG collection, which was transferred to the ethnographic museum after the Cultural Anthropology department at the University of Groningen was closed down, and the A collection, which was donated by the Australian Government in 1978.

The collection of the former Tropical Agriculture Museum in Deventer (the TD collection) has its own catalogue: \_De collectie Deventer\_. In addition to an overview of the collection, this catalogue also provides a insightful background information about the former agricultural museum in Deventer. The original Van Baaren collection (the VB collection) is described in the book \_The Collection Van Baaren\_, which is unfortunately not available online. The ethnographic collection of the Princessehof in Leeuwarden is referred to as the PL collection and does not have its own catalogue.

The archive of the Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum (until 1995) is housed at the Groninger Archieven. In addition to documents about the organisation of the museum and its place within the Faculty of Theology, this archive also contains descriptions of the collection. Apart from the sources described below, catalogues of the museum's various exhibitions are also available. These can be found in the RUG library by searching for “Gerardus van der Leeuw”.

# Related Aids

\_see also: Wetenschappelijk onderzoek in gekoloniseerde gebieden\_  
\_see also: Wageningen University & Research\_  
\_see also: Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch\_

# Primary sources

Archive:

# Secondary sources

Book:

Book:

Book:

Book:

Article:

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# Relevant Data

Identifiers:

http://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q14942678  
,  
 Name variations:

,  
 Tags:  
 Activity:

Ethnographic museum, University museum  
,  
 Type of objects:

Ethnographic objects  
,  
 Geographical:

Asia, North Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, West Africa, North America, Central America, South Amerika, Oceania  
,  
 Period of activity:  
 Year of start:  
 1978,  
 Year of end:  
 2003,  
 Collections:  
 General remarks:  
 content:  
 "The collection of the former Gerardus van der Leeuw Ethnographic Museum is part of the museum of the University of Groningen. "  
,  
 content-type:  
 text/markdown,  
 Within the Data Hub:  
 https://www.rug.nl/museum/collections/ethnological/