

Hunting the gatherers - ethnographic collectors, agents and agency in Melanesia, 1870s-1930s

Berghahn Books - Hunting the Gatherers: Ethnographic Collectors, Agents and Agency in Melanesia, 1870S



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The Contemporary Pacific, 14 2 , 518-520. Welsh, 2000 AU - Corbey, R.

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As part of this process, great assemblages of ethnographic artefacts were made by a range of collectors whose diversity is captured in this volume. Kassel, it seems, held the Instituto as an exemplar.

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The editors also commissioned a number of foreign specialists to examine their respective countries' cultural contribution to Peter's creation, resulting mostly in able summaries of older publications. Visiting the Kunstkammer in Kassel, Schumacher praised the strict distribution over separate rooms of different materials: naturalia on the ground floor and artificialia on the first floor; minerals, animalia, shells and botanical herbs, all had their distinct rooms.

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Johann-Christian Klamt most interestingly positions the Petersburg Kunstkamera between other such creations of its time: the Museum Fridericianum in Kassel 1779 and the Instituto delle Scienze in Bologna 1712. The contributors to this tightly-integrated volume take these collectors, and the collecting institutions, as the departure point for accounts that look back at the artefact-producing societies and their interaction

with the collectors, but also forward to the fate of the collections in metropolitan museums, as the artefacts have been variously exhibited, neglected, re-conceived as indigenous heritage, or repatriated.

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Journal of the History of Collections, 15 2 , 275-277.

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Review of the book Hunting the gatherers: ethnographic collectors, agents and agency in Melanesia, 1870s

In doing this, the contributors raise issues of current interest in anthropology, Pacific history, art history, museology, and material culture.

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