

Writing Material Culture History

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INTRODUCTION

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Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello

Why things?

Just a few years ago, historians would have been sceptical about the value of engaging with ‘objects’ or ‘artefacts’. The expression ‘material culture’ was equally alien to historical studies and mostly confined to the realm of the investigation of the remote past (pre-historical and ancient) or non-Western societies. Today we speak instead of a ‘material turn’ in history. On both sides of the Atlantic as well as in many parts of Australasia, historians seem to have experienced a Damascene conversion to material culture. And this is not just limited to historical research. At some institutions, students are now introduced to artefacts as readily as to manuscript and printed sources. History textbooks inevitably contain chapters dedicated to ‘visual’ and ‘material’ cultures.

This book is intended as a guide for students and teachers to understanding this new role played by material culture in history. We, as historians, are not the first to address this issue and we approach it with a particular view on how and why our field might benefit from an engagement with material objects.¹ In this volume, we have brought together not just historians, but also art historians, museum curators, archaeologists, anthropologists, design experts, television consultants and art consultants. Each brings a specific viewpoint on what material culture is and how material culture engages with history.

But what is material culture? The term material culture is defined in different ways depending on the disciplinary context within which the term is used. Historians have been using the label in a rather loose fashion, and sometimes simply take it to mean 'objects'. The 'material culture of domesticity', for instance, might refer to the material goods that turn a house into a home in the past or in the present. These might include soft furnishings and textiles, crockery and china, knick-knacks and children's toys. Even this simple list of material things or artefacts points to the fact that these might differ from similar objects that we find in a hotel room. Unlike hotel rooms, our houses are full of memories that are conveyed through the objects that fill them. Objects have meanings for the people who produce and own, purchase and gift, use and consume them. Material culture therefore consists not merely of 'things', but also of the meanings they hold for people.²

Meaning is a rather opaque concept. It emerges from the relationship between objects and people, but such relationships exist at the personal and individual level as much as they do at the public and collective level. For example, the children's toys scattered on the floor in the front lounge serve as a first indication that children live in the house. These might have very different meanings: for the children who play with them, the parents who bought them, the friends who gifted them, never mind the producers and sellers of the items. Such toys can then be seen as tokens of affection that bind parents and children in a specific time and place. For the child, however, they might be treasured for very different visual and tactile properties that are appealing to a child, which in turn create a different set of meanings and memories. The toys scattered on the floor are therefore not just material objects but they point at the affective, social, cultural and economic relationships that form our lives.

This present-day example is useful for us to ask more historical questions: were there toys in a similar household in the past? And, if we can trace them, did they have a similar or different function to today's toys? What do they tell us about childhood in the past and about the relationship between parents and children? Indeed historians are well aware that past households were not just different, but also that the meaning of childhood and of the affective bonds between parents and children were constructed differently throughout time and space. In this case the analysis of toys can become a powerful instrument to unearth a different world, one that might not be well recorded in written documents. However, we should be aware that 'material objects are not, and have not been, just caught up in an ever-shifting world but are actually creating, constructing, materializing and mobilizing history, contacts and entanglements'.³ Objects themselves are not simple props of history, but are tools through which people shape their lives.

The simple acknowledgement that objects can serve as a way of understanding and appreciating the past, does not necessarily explain why and how historians should engage with them. There are many fine historical

accounts that do not consider either objects or material culture. The engagement and usefulness of material culture depends on the questions that we ask. A researcher interested in analysing the historical process of 'imitation', usually between people from different social and cultural classes, also referred to as 'emulation', might well benefit from including in his or her study the objects and materials that formed part of this process. A scholar interested in the philosophical thought of Hegel, however, might find little help in engaging with material culture methodologies.

There are, generally speaking, three ways in which material culture has enriched history. Firstly, by complementing other sources: the understanding of the written and visual sources of the past has been strengthened by including the material legacy of that same past. Secondly, by making historians ask new questions: by including objects, the study of emulation, for example, is no longer a mere concept, but is understood as a series of material practices based on the production and consumption of goods. Thirdly, by leading historians to new themes: by using objects, historians have begun to explore new areas of enquiry ranging from how people dressed in the past, their emotions, their taste and even the ways in which they related to the imagined and real world that surrounded them.

History's engagement with material culture

History has long been seen as the discipline in which its practitioners engaged in the analysis of textual documents and communicated by producing more texts.⁴ The archive was the historian's second home. This maintained the traditional boundary between history and art history, the latter being interested in fine art, in particular two-dimensional artefacts such as paintings, prints and drawings.⁵ Three-dimensional objects were 'dismissed' to the realms of archaeology and curatorship. Archaeology defined itself by the very act of unearthing its own source materials not from the depth of dusty archives, but from digs and excavations.⁶ From the second half of the eighteenth century, the museum served as the 'palace of things', where armies of curators and restorers acquired, catalogued, preserved and displayed artefacts.

History's 'material turn' should not lead us to think that material culture has thereby become the preserve of history. History's engagement with material culture and its methodologies is relatively recent and what we here call 'material culture history' is a field of enquiry still in its infancy.⁷ The above-mentioned disciplines of archaeology, anthropology, and museum studies did much to bring to the fore the importance of material artefacts as sources, and objects as agents and mediators between the present and the past. Archaeologists, museum specialists and anthropologists worked together to develop the field of 'material culture studies' by investigating the ways in which a material object relates to a meaning or a variety of meanings and is

therefore a prime source of information about cultures, their evolutions, their peculiarities and differences.⁸

The acceptance of material culture by history should also be explained by considering the changes that the discipline of history has undergone in the past fifty years. In the 1960s, historians first became interested in understanding the everyday lives of ordinary people who had lived in the past. This was a shift away from the idea of history as determined by the few at the top, to what has come to be known as ‘history from below’ in which agency is given to the lives of common people.⁹ Yet, the people that replaced kings and queens, prime ministers and generals as the subjects of history did not necessarily leave substantial written records. One of the ways in which we can trace their lives is through the material goods they left behind. The buying, selling and using of goods, i.e. consumption, seems to have been common to poor and rich alike. In particular, the so-called ‘consumer revolution’ of the eighteenth century, when more goods were available to larger social groups than ever before, inspired a great deal of research in the 1980s and 1990s. This was followed by studies of consumption patterns in Renaissance Italy, early modern continental Europe, and also in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western world.¹⁰ More recently consumption has entered historical research in areas as different as the Ottoman Empire, Tokugawa Japan, Ming and Qing China and Colonial Latin America as part of an engagement with global history.¹¹

Beyond consumption, material culture has been a response to the growing interest in the everyday practices that shaped past lives. Material things have turned out again to be extremely useful to historians. Daniel Roche’s book *Histoire des choses banales* (1997) captures the power of relatively ‘banal’ – translated into English as ‘everyday’ – objects for understanding a past that is made not just by wars, commercial treaties and courtly splendour, but also by the roasting heat of an open fire, the spread of the use of individual cutlery, or the surprise generated by seeing a pineapple for the first time.¹² In the United States, material culture has long been used to understand and display everyday life in colonial societies, thus merging archaeological investigation, museum curatorship, historical research and the heritage industry.¹³ The innovative work carried out in places like Colonial Williamsburg and other major American museums, is complemented by an influential research agenda in the study of decorative arts, especially as part of the Winterthur-University of Delaware Masters programme that has trained generations of curators. History of design has been a great ally of material culture also in Britain and Continental Europe through graduate programmes, conferences and several academic journals.¹⁴

Interest in consuming practices and everyday life of past societies has been key to the success of material culture. In their attempt to understand people’s desires and preferences, historians have re-evaluated the significance of material artefacts. This has led to the investigation of a series of themes ranging from the everyday to luxury, politics, trade and innovation;

modernization, gender, domesticity and comfort, fashion, architecture and the built environment, to name but a few. Collaborations between museums and academics have allowed scholars to go ‘behind the scenes’, into museum store-rooms, developing projects that draw on curatorial expertise.

This new engagement of history with material culture has had profound consequences for the writing of history. First, the primacy of the written account in the historical discipline has been destabilized: the world of ‘the material’ is no longer left to highly specialized fields such as the history of textiles, the history of costume, the history of furniture, etc. Historians now actively engage with a series of themes and areas of study that were previously left out of consideration. Second, the boundaries of history have changed: material culture has been one of the most fertile areas of collaboration between historians engaged in different branches of history, between historians and academics in the humanities, social sciences and more recently the sciences, and between historians and museum curators. And finally, the separation between different kinds of historians has been challenged, and professional historians employed within their discipline at universities work more closely with practitioners whose analyses and presentations of the past are produced in non-academic circles for exhibitions and exhibition catalogues, radio and TV programmes, and country house and heritage displays.

Writing material culture history

How do historians approach objects? How, practically speaking, do they engage with material culture and its methods? What are the inevitable challenges the historian encounters when integrating documentary, visual and material sources into their analyses? These are some of the questions that this volume wishes to address. A series of articles and books have been produced in recent years in an attempt to guide both professional historians and students. Our book differs in three main ways from other valuable contributions. First, we argue that there is no single way of engaging with material culture. One can see a tendency – partly exacerbated by students’ demands – to pinpoint a method of analysis. Jules Prown famously suggested a practical guide to material analysis and divided academic and curatorial approaches. Prown’s scholarship is very useful for critical reflection on the engagement with material culture, but should not be taken at face value.¹⁵ The ways in which historians approach both artefacts and material culture can and should vary, depending on the available materials, the context and the aims of the research. A second important point, and a consequence of the previous, is the fact that there cannot be a unified and universal methodology because of the interdisciplinary nature of ‘material culture history’. Inter- and multi-disciplinarity are always part of the study of objects as, to cite Burman and Turbin, ‘the meanings of [an object] are multiple, many-layered, and overlapping, concerning, for example, individuals, aesthetics, sexuality,

cultures, economies, and ideologies'.¹⁶ This book acknowledges not just the importance of multiple disciplines – anthropology, archaeology, art history and literary studies in particular – but also the specific contributions they make to the field of history. Finally this book wishes to shift the focus of material culture history away from its often uncritically assumed Western context (especially Europe and North America) towards wider geographies. We think it is a significant departure for historians to begin thinking about objects not just in the context of microhistory and history from below, but to reflect on the ways in which artefacts came to be powerful tools for the creation of global connections.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part, entitled 'The Disciplines of Material Culture' is dedicated to illustrating the ways in which different disciplines have dealt with and contributed to the study of material culture. The focus is on literary and archival studies, archaeology, anthropology and art history. We have decided to integrate longer methodological contributions with more 'practical' shorter pieces, balancing the need for methodological guidance with the importance of 'applied' case studies. One of the insights of this section is that documentary sources and objects should be seen not as distinct but as part of a continuum. Objects from the past appear to us both in their material form and in textual records where our imagination conjures their form, and what matters more for our historical understanding is how we 'read' both kinds of artefacts. Literary methodologies, legal theory and archaeology each have different ways of accounting for objects, as some of these chapters demonstrate, but they help us to narrow the space between the micro-level world of the individual objects, and the macro-level of historical concepts like the Reformation or the Renaissance. And literary scholars as much as archaeologists struggle with the problem of synchronicity vs. sequence of objects: individual sites might give a 'snapshot' in time but they are more often the result of complex material and temporal layering which can only be understood by triangulating archaeological, documentary and visual materials.¹⁷

The discipline of anthropology has been particularly important to shape historians' engagement with material culture.¹⁸ We see this in a study of a single material (Lycra®) and in the study of the materiality of a single place (Indonesia). Anthropology offers the qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis that allow us to make sense of the spatial and chronological contexts within which materials take on meaning. A further three pieces in this first part explore art historical methodologies through a study of the relationship between two- and three-dimensional artefacts and the boundaries between art and material culture. When objects move, they establish connections across space. The examples explored here are porcelain produced in China to be carried to France in the eighteenth century and a basket and a silver coin in early nineteenth-century California. The very different political environments in which the movement of these objects occurred is an important backdrop, but it is the analysis of the objects

themselves that enables these scholars to reveal the subtle movements of power at work.

The second part of this book entitled 'The Histories of Material Culture' addresses the relationship between history and material culture. Where historians of material culture and artefacts once mostly worked on topics like consumption and everyday life, today material culture and object-based research covers a great variety of topics and issues ranging from gender to politics and race. This part aims to show how material culture has the potential to re-cast established historical narratives in new and exciting ways. Trade of porcelain and cotton textiles between Europe and Asia in the early modern period, for instance, shows how objects articulate exchange, taste, design and cultural understanding on a global scale. Here, too, objects shape and are shaped by power relations played out across vast distances, as the exchange of garments in the space of the Pacific Ocean illustrates.

A second important change that has prompted historians to consider material culture more seriously is a renewed interest in understanding experience, the senses and emotions in history. Material culture allows us to immerse ourselves in the intimate world of beds, in the social relationships embodied by the sound of a bell, in the sensorial experience of light before electricity or the emotional world of tokens used to identify abandoned children. A wide variety of objects passes review here, including beds, handbells, light bulbs, fragments of cloth and wallpaper. They all have the power to open up vistas onto the past in ways that documentary sources alone do not. None of these are stable objects: they take meaning in space and time, they change as human thoughts about them change, and it is in the human-object relationship that history is written.

The final part of this book entitled 'The Presentation of Material Culture' is dedicated to the study of the presentation as well as the preservation and representation of objects. Here, particularly, we see how historians' engagement with objects has blurred the very boundaries between 'professional' history and other types of historical enquiry. In what ways is the history presented in a museum, an exhibition or a film different from what we read in a scholarly article or book? Several of the contributions in this book deal with what has turned out to be a challenge to history as a discipline. The interpretation of the past (rather than history) involves historians, but also curators, freelance exhibition organizers, TV presenters and film makers. They all deal with what we loosely call 'material culture' and provide an interpretation of the past, but they do it in different ways. Even within a museum context, artefacts can be displayed differently in order to achieve different purposes or comply with different narratives, as several studies here illustrate. The complex process of creation of a major new set of galleries requires that objects are integrated into different stories. The case of empire, to give another example, shows how artefacts are used in rather specific ways to construct historical narratives.

Issues of interpretation are not just important in the presentation of objects but also in their preservation, as we see in the case of three Iranian

carpets highlighting how the process through which conservation and interpretation are interlinked and their helpfulness to scholars. Objects like carpets and desks do not belong to a specific time, as we are often led to believe by museum labels. They are, instead, the result of layers of use, interpretation and restoration across time. Cataloguing and comparing artefacts, in this case material objects and drawings that form part of an archive, similarly add layers of interpretation. Curators are not just in charge of the preservation of artefacts but also their interpretation especially in museum displays and exhibitions. In this sense, they are in the unenviable position to mediate between the care of rare and sometimes precious and fragile objects and their enjoyment by the public. The book concludes with a reflection that expands on the ways in which people – rather than scholars – engage with material culture and understand the past through objects. This is the case not just of museum experience but also of the ‘material past’ as is presented on the small and large screen.

All together, the contributions in this final part of the book adopt a distinctive perspective to both material culture and to artefacts. An indicator of this might be the fact that unlike contributions in other parts of this book, they address issues and problems in the first person, reporting and reflecting on direct experience. Whilst history books only disguise their author through the use of the impersonal and collective third person, contributors to the third part of this book show how the engagement with objects creates a different relationship between past and present.

The potential and limitations of material culture history

We have so far explored the various ways in which material culture can enrich history. We do, however, also have to recognize that material culture has innate complexities as well as limitations. These are, for example, *material limitations*. Some objects survive and offer us interpretive possibilities; far more objects have not survived, and their absence can feature in our stories only with difficulty.¹⁹ We should, whenever possible, consider the objects we have in light of the objects we do not have and ask how representative existing objects are of the much larger number of similar objects that have not reached us. The problems affecting the study of material culture are not just about survival. Material culture is based on meaning as much as on materiality. A second material limitation derives from the fact that we might have the object but we have often lost the context that made the object meaningful. Even archaeologists, for whom the find context is crucial, have to accept that the objects encountered in excavations are not necessarily in their ‘original’ context. De-contextualization is part of the very life of objects and must be acknowledged in research. Museums, because of their collecting

practices and scientific methods of categorization (for instance they divide objects by typologies, storing them in different departments), have unwillingly exacerbated the problem of de-contextualization.

Beyond material limitations, there are also *conceptual limitations* to the use of objects for historical study. A first important issue is the fact that objects bridge time. Unlike people and ideas, artefacts survive sometimes centuries and millennia. A beautiful Chinese Ming vase, as can be seen in one of the essays in this book, is both a source for historians in the present and an object that existed 400 years ago when it was made. This complicates the easy separation between 'past vs. present' and 'historians vs. historical subject'. The example is fetching because it reveals an even more complex notion of time. The vase is an artefact that existed not just now or 400 years ago when it was made, but has existed since. It has a lifespan, or what have been also defined as 'career' and 'biography', that the present-day object bears physically (it might have lost one of its parts, been chipped or broken) and in its meaning (for instance who owned it? Where did it go over time? How was it used?). Artefacts are therefore complex entities whose nature and life story can only partially be understood and recovered. One of their conceptual challenges – rather than limitations – is the fact that they often raise a series of question marks for researchers about their origin, use, value in the past and in the present. This is another reason why material artefacts need to be integrated with other sources – visual and documentary – both to produce better historical scholarship and to better understand the very material artefacts. As a corollary of the previous points, material culture requires interpretative skills on the part of researchers that are not just historical or interdisciplinary, but also aesthetic, visual and haptic.

Finally, some considerations have to be made about the *practical limitations*. Access to artefacts is often restricted. Those objects that are in museums can be on display in galleries and therefore unavailable for close inspection by researchers. The vast majority of objects are instead in store-rooms and access to them is possible only in those cases in which curators believe that it will not endanger the object. Museums are increasingly well equipped to welcome researchers 'behind the scenes', so to speak, but this requires long waiting lists – sometimes months. There are also a number of objects that cannot be handled (think about a large piece of furniture or a statue). A second important point is that not all artefacts are in museums. Indeed material culture surrounds us and includes landscape, architecture, objects of everyday use, artefacts to be found in antique dealers, auction houses and flea markets, and a great deal of perishable material culture such as food. Many objects are to be found also in archives as considered in several contributions in this book. This makes research logistically complex and requires the ability on the part of scholars to trace specific artefacts often through the use of catalogues (of exhibitions, sales, or museum indexes), dictionaries and online databases and resources. The internet has profoundly changed material culture research allowing for the easier access

to information and the integration of such information with images of artefacts. Thanks to museum online catalogues (still very partial though) we can for instance bring together objects that are in collections in different parts of the world.²⁰ We decided to include a list of useful resources to guide students and researchers through the most extensive online and material collections in the world. This can only be partial as large-scale digitalization projects are currently underway. It should be observed, however, that online access to digital images is one of the tools available to researchers and cannot substitute the engagement with material artefacts.

Conclusion

This introduction serves the reader as a guide to the theoretical and practical analyses put forward by 25 contributors in this book. We have highlighted the role of history in the study of material culture as well as how material culture has shaped historical research and scholarship. We strongly believe that material culture has the potential to enrich history as a discipline and more widely the understanding of the past. This requires however the acknowledgement that other disciplines have a great deal to offer to history as to the ways in which to approach and interpret artefacts. We have therefore given great prominence to interdisciplinarity and highlighted the potential of material culture to approach themes as different as design, the senses, emotion etc. Finally, this book develops a distinctive line of research that focuses not just on Europe but uses material culture to study wider geographies and the connections between different areas of the world.

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- 18 Appadurai (ed.), *Social Life of Things*; Miller, *Material Culture*.
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- 20 An example is the recent exhibition 'The Interwoven Globe' at the MET in New York. The exhibition curators were able to bring together a man's gown and its matching waistcoat currently in different American museums. It was thanks to online catalogues that it was realized for the first time that these two items belonged to the same garment.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Exchange and Value: The Material Culture of a Chumash Basket¹

Dana Leibsohn

Baskets are fragile things. Their fibres degrade with use, their colours fade in bright light. Yet the basket in Figure 8.1 – created in the early 1820s by a Chumash woman living on a mission in California – is largely intact. This is a basket that has been treated with care. Today it resides in a museum of anthropology, testimony to the craftsmanship of the Chumash, indigenous people that have long inhabited western California.²

The basket design includes alphabetic writing and images that would have been familiar to many living in Spanish America in the early nineteenth century.³ The preference for such texts and imagery suggests an object embedded in networks of cross-cultural circulation and linked to histories of colonization and its economics. Baskets are traditionally made to hold and carry other objects; they can be transported with ease. During the first hundred years of this basket's existence, it travelled an extraordinary distance: more than 2,000 miles, from the mission to Mexico City and onto New York City, and then west into California again.⁴ Beyond these basic facts, though, how does a basket register patterns of exchange and speak to the disparate meanings of value?

We can start with the basket's physical form. It measures 41 cm in diameter and 16 cm in height, which is neither very large nor very small by Chumash standards. The basket takes an open form, with sloped sides. The coiled structure is composed of rushes (*juncus textiles*), a material that was



FIGURE 8.1 *María Marta, presentation basket, c. 1822. Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley, California, USA.*

locally tended, honoured and harvested both before and after the arrival of Spaniards. Compared to other baskets, the stitches that bind the coils here, and create the dark-upon-light design, are exceptionally even and tight. From this we know that the basket represents the work of a skilled basketmaker – one highly trained in the handling of fibres and awl, and who had time to create very fine work.

The Spanish words woven into a circle of text near the basket's rim register the name of a person, *María Marta*, and the place where she worked, *San Buenaventura*. Translated into English, the full text reads: 'María Marta, neophyte in the mission of the Seraphic doctor [in] San Buenaventura made me in the year. . .'.⁵ The words seem to stop short (before recording the year of the basket's creation), yet they clearly situate the basket geographically and culturally. *San Buenaventura* was one of several Franciscan missions founded in California in the late-eighteenth century and devoted to the conversion and education of Chumash people. *María Marta* was a baptismal name,⁶ and 'neophyte' was her status near the bottom of a church-determined hierarchy at whose head sat the 'Doctor'. And so this basket speaks directly of evangelization practices in the Americas – a primary filament in the cross-cultural web that bound Franciscans and Chumash together in this period. For in Spanish America, evangelization did not mean simply conversion to Christianity; it also required that indigenous people adhere to patterns of

daily life that friars and colonists sanctioned as proper and 'civilized'. It also meant for many contributions of time and labour to build and sustain churches and mission complexes.

Across three hundred years of Spanish rule in the Americas, very few handmade objects were signed. This basket represents a rare (if not unique) example of an object with a woman's signature. This implies that indigenous biographies – while often not well documented – contributed to the meanings invested in objects. Who made an object could matter greatly, and gender (along with individual subjectivities) was fundamental.⁷ Yet the basket does not merely record its maker's name. Its text says María Marta 'made me', suggesting this basket was an object with presence and a voice in the world. The phrasing is that of a 'speaking object'. The basket's woven inscription also implicates habits of western literacy. María Marta may well have learned to read and write Spanish letters at the mission, but we cannot be sure. Her woven words may have been copied from a text set out for her by a friar or other literate person.

Indeed, how much of a role María Marta had in designing this basket remains unclear. The patterned designs may have been her idea, although we should hold open the possibility that she was, at least in part, following a friar's directions. For Chumash people living at San Buenaventura in the early 1800s, autonomy was a complicated prospect. People came to the mission for many reasons, and we do not know why María Marta chose to move there. At the mission, people could count on food, although once baptized and living within the Franciscan fold, they were not at liberty to leave. Indians were 'spiritual children'.⁸ Daily habits were subject to Franciscan rules of behaviour and religious practice, and indigenous labour was organized to support the mission, its residents and Franciscan ambitions. Products from the mission – including agricultural goods and baskets – were used locally, but they were also sold. Funds would have sometimes been spent to enrich the church, which had bells (that still exist today) and paintings imported from Mexico City. San Buenaventura may have been another world in comparison to the cosmopolitan cities of the early-nineteenth century, but it formed part of a network composed of other missions in California, religious colleagues in the capital of New Spain, painters and craftsmen thousands of miles away, and traders willing to make the journey from distant Mexico City.

How María Marta perceived her own situation at San Buenaventura is difficult to say, but her move to the mission, and the likely fact that she would stay forever, contrast pointedly with the mobility experienced by her basket. Of all the objects made for sale and trade on the California missions, baskets were among the most coveted. Chumash basketry had a long and illustrious history, and well before the arrival of the Franciscans, baskets were made for daily use, ritual occasions and exchange with other indigenous people. By the time María Marta wove her basket, nearly forty years after San Buenaventura was founded, baskets had been circulating outside

Chumash communities for many years. One European who travelled through California in the 1790s describes ‘curious wrought baskets which were much admird [sic] & eagerly purchasd [sic] as articles of curiosity’.⁹ Others write of so many baskets having been purchased or given as gifts that some villages in California had no more to offer. Given this history of commodity exchange and gifting, we might reasonably expect that María Marta knew her exquisite basket would be taken from the mission.

The pattern woven into the basket’s side panels certainly points to the outside world. Certain portions of the basket’s design emphasize geometric patterning. Others owe their inspiration to silver coins, of a type minted under Spanish auspices in Mexico. For this reason, this kind of basket is today sometimes called a ‘silver basket’.¹⁰ The specific coin that served as María Marta’s model no longer exists (at least it is not known), although it was likely similar to the one in Figure 8.2. This coin was worth 8 reales; in English it would be known as a ‘Piece of Eight’.

In Spanish America, the minting of such coins was to comply with official weights and measures, and symbolically, these coins evoked the wealth and imperial reach of the Spanish crown. We sense this from the coin’s design. The pattern appears on pesos minted from the 1770s through to the 1820s. One side of the coin bears a profile of the Spanish king, with his name and year set into the text around the rim (‘Charles IV by the grace of God, 1806’). The other side also displays text at its perimeter. Through abbreviations, the Latin lettering identifies Charles as King of Spain and the Indies; it registers the site of the mint (with an ‘M’ for Mexico City) and the coin’s value (8 reales).¹¹ At the centre is the coat-of-arms of the Spanish monarchs, with the shield of Castile and Leon flanked by the Pillars of Hercules and a crown at the top.

Pieces of Eight of this type were used across the Americas. They may have been made (and used) in Spanish America, but they were also shipped to



FIGURE 8.2 *Eight-real coin, Mexico City, 1806. Photo by the author.*

Spain and France, India and China, serving as one of the world's main currencies. Spanish silver coins were, in fact, among the most mobile and fluid objects known at the time. As a form of money, coins make us think about wealth and desire, and economies of exchange. Coins were valued because of the silver they contained, but then, as now, coins were objects with complicated lives. Apart from being handed over to a merchant or trader to buy something, coins were pierced and strung together to make jewellery, hoarded in locked chests, and buried as offerings for the dead. Silver coins were also melted down and turned into other things: ingots, candlesticks, buttons. Given how convertible silver coins could be – how easily they can be turned into other things, through both physical manipulation and commodity exchange – how do we interpret the coin design of María Marta's basket?

Visual analysis makes it clear that only certain parts of Spanish coinage appear in the basket: while there is no portrait, the wording at the basket's rim parallels the text of the coin's perimeter (the words are of course different); and the crown, Pillars of Hercules and coat-of-arms have been excerpted from the coin and repeated four times along the basket's sides. At a basic level, a shift of design or imagery from one medium to another is a familiar gesture in the history of art and design. Today, for instance, it is not surprising to see frames from a comic book transferred to T-shirts or recast into movies (sometimes even in shot-to-shot remakes). In the early modern period, prints often inspired tapestry weavings and costumes for ritual processions; ceramics prompted new kinds of design work in glass and metal. Yet as a hand-worked technique, the 'translation' of pictorial elements from silver coin to reed basket was no simple matter, it required sophisticated thinking and a well-honed sense of design.

We sense something of this from the coat-of-arms and Pillars of Hercules, which appear as 'negative images'. That is, the forms are not a dark colour set onto light fibre; rather they have been outlined with dark stitches and are actually part of the light background of the basket. In addition, elements from the coin had to be translated from flat (or nearly flat) images on a circular object into stitched forms that would still be legible along the sloped angle of the basket's side. A practiced hand might create such translations out of habit, but we should not underestimate the technical expertise this involved.

Seen from this perspective, the basket – an object made of humble, fragile materials – is a virtuoso creation. No small part of its value comes from the labour, knowledge and skill implied in its final structure and form. The basket also offers a commentary on silver coins. It is not the physical weight of silver that matters here, nor the glint of the precious metal. Instead, the basket calls attention to the design of the coin, turning the silver token into an object of visual rather than strictly monetary value. In freezing the image of a coin in reed fibre, the silver object takes on meaning for its patterned appearance, not for what it can buy, not for its shiny surfaces. Unfortunately,

we cannot know precisely what María Marta was thinking when she made this basket: did she intend to comment on, and expand the symbolic meaning of silver coinage, or were the technical challenges of turning a coin into basketry foremost in her mind?

Of course a maker's intentions never dictates the meaning of an object or artwork, nor do the intentions of owners. Even so, it is tempting to try to trace the path of this basket after it left San Buenaventura. From what is known about baskets given as gifts to visiting officials, it would be reasonable to presume this one was taken to Mexico City by those who first owned it, or perhaps by their heirs. Even if the basket was never highly valued and spent much of its life in a dark closet, its state of preservation suggests it led a relatively privileged life. Just about one hundred years after it left the mission, in 1919 or 1920, Zelia Nuttall found the basket in a shop in Mexico City that specialized in antiquities. A well-known archaeologist and scholar of indigenous histories in the Americas, Nuttall purchased the basket, sent it to New York City and soon thereafter donated it to a museum in California, a museum now named in honour of her good friend, a wealthy philanthropist and collector named Phoebe Hearst.

As it became drawn into a cycle of gifting and collecting, the basket's status shifted from antique to indigenous artefact. The primary figures in this part of the basket's life were women of means who shared interests in objects created by indigenous people, creating new value for such objects through their preservation and study in museum settings. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in the United States, thousands of handmade, indigenous objects entered the world of Euro-American collecting and scholarship. This part of the basket's story, then, is hardly unique – and this, too, lends the object significance.

María Marta's basket travels little these days and it holds nothing more than air. It has become a quiet, still object. Even so, her basket demonstrates the eloquence of material forms, showing us how woven fibres can create and sustain multiple kinds of value. Trade and silver money, missions and artefacts, the weight of metal and ephemeral labour of coiling words and images into basketry: María Marta's handiwork bears witness, even today, to the complex relationships that objects could create in, and for a colonial world.

Notes

- 1 This chapter owes much to collaborative research and writing with Barbara E. Mundy, who helped me develop a deeper understanding of this basket; I also thank Byron Hamann and Jeffrey Moro for sharing their perspectives on colonial and contemporary cultural practices.
- 2 The basket is held by the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley, California (1–22478).
- 3 California was part of New Spain, and subject to the Spanish Crown until

Mexico won its independence in 1821. Alta California, as the region was known, then became part of Mexico. In 1848, after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, it became part of the United States.

- 4 The collection history of the basket is summarized by L. Smith (1982), 'Three inscribed Chumash baskets with designs from Spanish colonial coins', *American Indian Art Magazine*, pp. 62–68.
- 5 In Spanish: 'María Marta, neofita de la mision de el Serafico Doctor San Buenaventura me hizo en . . .' Zelia Nuttall gives a slightly different translation of the inscription, attributing it to Ana Marta. See Z. Nuttall (1924), 'Two remarkable California baskets', *California Historical Society Quarterly* 2 (4), pp. 341–343.
- 6 Smith has argued that María Marta's indigenous name was Lapulimeu. Smith, 'Three inscribed Chumash Baskets', p. 67.
- 7 Male signatures, especially on paintings, are more common, although the number of indigenous craftsmen whose names have survived are few indeed. María Marta's basket may therefore be seen as doubly rare because of its signature. Yet the production of objects by women in hierarchical institutions led by men (such as missions) represents a well-known aspect of colonial practice in this region and period.
- 8 S. W. Hackel (2005), *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, p. 3. On conditions at the Chumash missions, including discussion of religious and labour expectations, as well overt and subtle acts of resistance, see: Hackel, *Children of Coyote*; and J. Sandos (2004), *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- 9 A. Menzies (1924), 'Archibald Menzies' journal of the Vancouver expedition', *California Historical Society Quarterly* 2 (4), p. 315.
- 10 Other 'silver baskets' are housed in the National Museum of the American Indian and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. None of these other baskets bear María Marta's name – making this particular basket unique – although she is clearly not the only woman to have created works of this type. Indeed, Menzies mentions baskets with the Spanish coat of arms and texts woven into their patterned decor in his 1790s journal. Menzies, 'Archibald Menzies' journal', p. 326.
- 11 The texts are composed in Latin, and include abbreviations: 'Carolus IIII Dei Gratia 1806' (obverse), and 'Hispan[iarum] et Ind[iarum] Rex mo 8K T.H.' (reverse).

- 14 S. Pierson (2012), 'The movement of Chinese ceramics: appropriation in global history', *Journal of World History* 23 (1), pp. 9–39.
- 15 For an in-depth analysis of a palampore and its restoration see S. Ellis (2009), 'A passage in the life of a Palampore: conservation', *Journal of the Canadian Association for Conservation* 34, pp. 21–30.
- 16 A. Morall and M. Watt (2008), *English Embroidery from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1580–1700*. New Haven: Yale University Press; M. Bellezza Rosina (1988), 'Tra oriente e occidente', in M. Cataldi Gallo (ed.), *I mezzari: tra oriente e occidente*. Genoa: SAGEP Editrice, pp. 20–1; M. Gittinger (1982), *Master Dyers to the World: Technique and Trade in Early Indian Dyed Cotton Textiles*. Washington DC: The Textile Museum, p. 186; R. Maxwell (1990), *Textiles of Southeast Asia: Tradition, Trade and Transformation*. Melbourne: Australian National Gallery and Oxford University Press, p. 27.
- 17 For an illustration of the processes of customization of Asian goods on the part of Europeans in the seventeenth century, see J. Styles (2000), 'Product innovation in early modern London', *Past & Present* 168, pp. 124–169.
- 18 W. Foster (ed.) (1912), *English Factories in India, Vol. 6, 1637–41*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 312.
- 19 About quilts: 'some, all of on[e] kinde of chinte, the lyninge and upper parte of one and the same; some of differinte chintes, yet such as eather side may be used; and some to have borders only of different cullers [colours], aboute a covide deepe [9 inches], to hange by the bed side on all sides alike, and the inner parte of the quilte allso to bee both sides alike. This last is most used in India, and wee thinke will be most pleasinge in England. They must be a little thicker and stronger sticht then ordinary, for there better lastinge'. W. Foster (ed.) (1906), *English Factories in India, Vol. 1: 1618–21*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 84 (16 March 1619).
- 20 For the twentieth century see M. B. Steger (2009), *The Rise of the Global Imaginary: Political Ideologies from the French Revolution to the Global War on Terror*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 21 For exploring different aspects of European collecting of rarities, but also flora and fauna, see P. H. Smith and P. Findlen (eds) (2002), *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe*. London and New York: Routledge.
- 22 It is also found on an earlier armorial service for the Guillot family in Amsterdam, an example of which is held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (51.86.100). William Sargent has suggested that the pattern may have its origins in the 'décor à la corne' seen on eighteenth-century faience from northern France. W. R. Sargent (2012), *Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics: From the Peabody Essex Museum*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 137–8.
- 23 M. Berg (2005), *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 24 For more information see: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=178804&partId=1&searchText=palampore&images=true&page=1 [accessed 27 July 2014].

- 25 The fragment is 348 x 80 cm and is now at the Tapi Collection in Mumbai, Acc. No. 02.43. It is reproduced in D. Shah (2005), *Masters of the Cloth: Indian Textiles Traded to Distant Shores*. New Delhi: TAPI Collection, p. 47. There is also a palampore at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London representing one of the two Chinese seated ladies. See V&A IS.43-1950 (Given by G.P. Baker): <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O481959/palampore-unknown/> [accessed 27 July 2014]. The individuation of this motif is now possible thanks to access to online catalogues such as the British Museum and V&A online catalogue. Although only a fraction of the millions of objects in these museums' collections are available online – and even a smaller number have images – they provide a unique tool for researchers.
- 26 On the consumption of Indian cloth in Southeast Asia see: K. R. Hall (1996), 'The Textile Industry in Southeast Asia, 1400–1800', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 39 (2), pp. 87–135.
- 27 J. C. Boyajian (1993), *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 140–2.
- 28 R. Crill (2008), *Chintz: Indian Textiles for the West*. London: V&A Publications, Cat. No. 66, p. 31, illus. p. 113.
- 29 These issues are discussed by Giorgio Riello in a podcast with Rosemary Crill of the V&A to be found at the University of Warwick's Knowledge Centre: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/knowledge/culture/globalcommoditiesnetwork/> [accessed 27 July 2014].
- 30 This pattern, called 'India' is 'perhaps the most commonly encountered of all the Brameld [Rockingham] transfer-printed patterns'. A. Cox and A. Cox (2001), *Rockingham, 1745–1842*. Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, p.155. We thank Hilary Young for helping us with this reference.
- 31 There are several Ironstone patterns with a flowering tree motif. See G. A. Godden (1999), *Godden's Guide to Ironstone: Stone & Granite Wares*. Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club.

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CHAPTER TEN

Cosmopolitan Relationships in the Crossroads of the Pacific Ocean¹

Christina Hellmich

A set of unique handmade Unangan garments extant in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, forms the focus of this short chapter. Specialized garments made from sea mammal and bear intestines have provided the Unangan people physical protection from the harsh Arctic environment for generations.² These outer garments, often referred to as *gut parkas* or by their Russian name of *kamleika*, were historically worn over other clothing made of bird skin or fur. Though transparent, paper thin and weighing just ounces, processed gut is very tough and waterproof due to the physical qualities of intestinal tissue (Figure 10.1).³

The style of the Unangan parka is characterized by its simple cut and horizontal strips of gut. The variation in the structure of sea lion gut tissue results in visible white areas in the centre of strips that are employed as a design element.⁴ In contrast to its simple form, the parka may have extremely elaborate ornamentation.⁵ The intricate embellishments added to seams, cuffs and collars were personalized for the wearer using materials gathered locally or through trade.⁶ The Peabody Essex parka has bird-skin edging on the collar and sleeves. Bright bands of dyed oesophagus on the collar and cuffs required thousands of minuscule stitches. Small pieces of dyed hair have been incorporated into the seams.

During the European Age of Exploration, the islands and surrounding waters of the Unangan people in the Bering Sea were rich with marine mammals and fish, and these formed the centre of this culture's material and



FIGURE 10.1 *Parka*. By courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, E3662.

spiritual life. In the late-eighteenth century, these resources were claimed as part of a fast-growing global trade network and as part of the imperial goals of Russia. Slavery, forced labour and resettlement of the Unangan on their own islands swiftly impacted their material culture. The Unangan garments of the Peabody Essex Museum collection enable us to explore the cultural meaning of clothing items as commodities and gifts during the expansion of global trade at the end of the early modern period. The garments can be viewed as products and cultural fragments from a moment in time, but they also played a key role in fostering the socio political connections that facilitated the trade in furs and sandalwood. They were gifted several times

and directly conveyed personal and political favour. Their value, meaning and significance shifted with their physical transference between parties and expressed the larger and very complex social, political and economic milieu of the time.

The quality of Unangan women's handiwork was acknowledged regionally and 'the waterproof decorated garments they produced were traded by their men to the mainland in exchange for caribou skins, caribou hair, iron, and copper'.⁷ As Jane Schneider and Annette B. Weiner expressed in *Cloth and Human Experience*, 'cloth is a repository for prized fibers and dyes, dedicated human labor, and the virtuoso artistry of competitive aesthetic development'.⁸ As soon as European explorers encountered these gut garments, they acquired them because they functioned superbly. English Captain James Cook bought parkas for his crew during his stay in the area in 1778.⁹

The hooded parka in the Peabody Essex Museum collection came to the museum with two other Unangan gut garments: a cape and a pair of pants. They were included in a special exhibition in 1920 entitled, 'The Hawaiian Portion of the Polynesian Collections in the Peabody Museum of Salem'.¹⁰ The clothing ensemble was originally catalogued by the founding organization of the museum, the East India Marine Society, as 'the Royal Robe of Tamahama, King of the Sandwich Islands, made of the intestines of the Ursine Seal, received of the old king by the donor, Captain Thomas Meek of Marblehead'.¹¹ Tamahama was the man we know today as Kamehameha, King and unifier of the Hawaiian Islands in the late-eighteenth century.¹² The catalogue entry proffers that the garments were 'probably exchanged for sandalwood, and then presented to Captain Meek by Kamehameha as being of more value than anything Hawaiian'.¹³ Meek gifted them to the Society before 1821.

After one hundred years in the museum's collection, the provenance of the garments, particularly their connection to King Kamehameha, still defined their importance.¹⁴ Their connection to their place of origin in the Unangan community and the story of the Unangan women who expertly crafted and embellished the clothing was never chronicled or perhaps never revealed during their journey to Salem. Ernest Dodge, who joined the staff of Peabody Museum of Salem in 1931 and later became Director, celebrated the work of the East India Marine Society for 'their good sense to catalogue their material', recording the collector and the date of accession.¹⁵ He remarked that 'if enough dated pieces are available, the progress of white and native acculturation can be definitely traced'.¹⁶ However, the 'native' or indigenous data about works collected during this period, like these gut garments, is most often absent. Museum documentation provides an incomplete narrative of these pieces, but we can analyse the fine materials and techniques used in their creation with the help of indigenous and conservation specialists to learn more about the possible conditions of their creation and about the women who made them (Figure 10.2).



FIGURE 10.2 *Front of cape. By courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, E3662.*

The Peabody Essex Museum cape follows the style of a Russian naval officer's cape. Unangan seamstresses applied the techniques and materials used for parkas to these elegant and richly adorned capes. This one is unusual for its vertical panels with red and blue embellishments. The

appliquéd bands of geometric motifs of dyed oesophagus are exquisitely finished. Hundreds of these beautiful and functional garments were created. These were hybrid costumes used by Russians and visitors for celebrations, souvenirs, trade or as gifts. They were created and conveyed in the space between the violence and alliances between Unangans and Russians that marked this period of colonization. The local significance of gut garments was subverted as they shifted in form and function to objects that might never be worn – only gifted and exchanged. When brought home to Europe or America, they celebrated exploration and colonization of far away lands.

But who made these garments? Was this fine work a condition of the seamstress' servitude? Were her material and colour choices impacted by her economic situation or other factors? Human hair fibre is generally used on parkas, however, in this garment it has been incorporated just into the upper cape. All of the materials would have taken considerable time to gather and prepare. Some might have been local, others such as caribou hairs, would have been articles of trade. In the absence of documentation at this time, we can only speculate how the Peabody Essex garments made their way from the Aleutian Islands to the Hawaiian Islands and into the collection of King Kamehameha. An historic encounter between crewmembers of a Russian ship and King Kamehameha shows how garments and cloth from all over the world functioned as gifts during this period. It is possible that the gut cape and garments were conveyed in this manner.

Ukrainian artist Louis Choris arrived in Hawaii on the Russian vessel *Rurik* on the 24 November 1816.¹⁷ He was sent onshore to Hawaii island with a small contingent of other men including a botanist Adelbert de Chamisso who recorded that, 'On the shore, countless people were under arms. The old king (Kamehameha), in front of whose house we landed, was sitting upon a raised terrace, surrounded by his wives, and dressed in his native costume, the red malo and the black tapa, the wide beautiful folded cape of black cloth'.¹⁸ During their time on shore, Choris asked to paint Kamehameha's portrait. He recorded that, 'I asked Tammeamea permission to do his portrait; this prospect seemed to please him very much, but he asked me to leave him alone an instant, so he could dress. Imagine my surprise on seeing this monarch display himself in the costume of a sailor; he wore blue trousers, a red waistcoat, a clean white shirt and a necktie of yellow silk. I begged him to change his dress; he refused absolutely and insisted on being painted as he was'.¹⁹ The portraits and studies by Choris are the only known paintings of Kamehameha created during his lifetime.²⁰ They became very popular in Hawaii and the distinctive painting of Kamehameha in European dress made its way to America even before Choris arrived back in Saint Petersburg in 1818.²¹ The king's choice of European clothing, rather than Hawaiian garments, might have functioned as a sign of his political equality with the Emperor of Russia for whom the portrait was being painted. Marshall Sahlins suggests that his ability to acquire European clothing and other luxury goods as gifts or commodities

and to consume, or to wear, them was clear by his clothing choice, and would have been seen as a sign of his power to his rivals on Oahu.²² The colours of the garments Kamehameha selected for his seating – the ‘red waistcoat’ and ‘yellow necktie’ – expressed his royal status, and the adoption of cloth and different styles of dress by King Kamehameha and the chiefly classes in Hawaii did not change their role as a signifier of status.²³

Kamehameha was born on the island of Hawaii and he did not travel beyond the island chain in his lifetime. However, the world arrived at his doorstep. Captains sought sandalwood for the China trade and provisions for their long Pacific Ocean journeys. Kamehameha supported trade and received ships from around the globe. He was also a collector of European material culture beginning in 1778, stockpiling European silverware, porcelain, shoes and brocade.²⁴ One purchase in 1812 included furniture, fireworks, ‘velvets, satins, silks, 50 paper parasols, 50 silk hats, 135 pounds of large glass beads, and the like’.²⁵ By the end of his reign, Kamehameha controlled the supply of European goods coming into the kingdom by forcing trade on only certain islands under the direction of his European or Hawaiian agents who implemented contracts he executed with the captains.²⁶ In 1779, upon his visit to the Hawaiian Islands, Kamehameha gave Captain James Cook the cloak he was wearing. Cook departed Hawaii with over thirty cloaks that he described as having the textural quality of velvet. They are now in collections around the globe including six in Saint Petersburg, although fewer than one hundred feather cloaks have survived worldwide. Many of these were gifted to non-Hawaiians by Kamehameha and subsequent Hawaiian monarchs.

Global commodities such as sandalwood, guns and iron were central to the relationships of Europeans and King Kamehameha in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. However, these relationships were predicated on diplomatic and political exchanges between the parties involving what anthropologist Annette Weiner has termed ‘soft’ valuables: cloth and textiles such as sacred and culturally important feather cloaks and bark cloth as well as European clothing items.²⁷ Cloth was used as a currency of prestige by traders abroad and also when they returned home. The brothers Thomas and John Meek of Marblehead who donated the garments to the museum came from a family of seamen. They were both engaged in the China trade. Both men were major figures in Honolulu and their experiences are well documented in the journal of Stephen Reynolds.²⁸ Gail Pike Herscher, who has researched the Meek brothers extensively indicates that ‘they had easy access to Kamehameha in business and leisure and they mediated for missionaries and other merchants’.²⁹ Thomas would convey ten works to the East India Marine Society museum including the gut garments. For Meek, the garments were textile ‘treasures’ for their ability to ‘facilitate claims to the past – its names, legends, and events – that justify the transactions and extend the power of living actors’.³⁰ It was their connection to Kamehameha that was most important, illustrative of a personal relationship with the

king. The garments were ‘received of the old king’ and their distinction as a gift rather than a simple commodity was important to Meek.³¹

Each work presents a challenge to reconnect the points of its past to discover its many lives as an object. By amplifying and expanding the voices, histories, and meanings associated with the work, some histories are liberated and some are repressed; others remain unknown and lost – at least for now. Multiple intentions and cultural misunderstandings have been imbedded in these hybridized objects. While it seems doubtful that King Kamehameha would consider the gut garments as ‘being of more value than anything Hawaiian’, his gift of the parka, cape and pants to Meek points to their multifaceted personal relationship and shows the symbolic importance of textiles in global exchange.

Notes

- 1 With thanks to Karina Corrigan, Karen Kramer, Dan Finamore, Gail Pike Herscher, William Fitzhugh, David Dearing, Mary Malloy, Pat Boulos, Carol Ivory and Robin Wright.
- 2 P. Hickman (1987), *Innerskins and Outerskins: Gut and Fishskin*. San Francisco: San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum, p. 4. See also: Kamleika, AOA 1842,12-10.46, The British Museum, London.
- 3 Hickman, *Innerskins and Outerskins*, p. 8.
- 4 Interview with Mimi Leveque by Christina Hellmich, February 2012. See also Hickman, *Innerskins and Outerskins*, p. 6.
- 5 W. W. Fitzhugh and A. Crowell (1998), *Crossroads of the Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, p. 219.
- 6 F. Reed (2008), ‘Embellishments of the Alaska native gut parka’, *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*. Textile Society of America, pp. 1–2.
- 7 Fitzhugh and Crowell, *Crossroads*, p. 56.
- 8 J. Schneider and A. B. Weiner (1989), ‘Introduction’, in J. Schneider and A. B. Weiner (eds.), *Cloth and Human Experience*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, p. 2.
- 9 Hickman, *Innerskins and Outerskins*, p. 5.
- 10 Peabody Museum (1920), *The Hawaiian Portion of the Polynesian Collections in the Peabody Museum of Salem* Lynn: Thos. P. Nichols & Son Co, p. 50.
- 11 Peabody Museum, *Hawaiian Portion*, p. 50.
- 12 Christian missionaries standardized the Hawaiian language after their arrival and eliminated ‘t’s in favour of ‘k’s.
- 13 Peabody Museum, *Hawaiian Portion*, p. 50.
- 14 The parka and cape travelled back to Hawaii in 2002 for inclusion in a temporary exhibition at the Bishop Museum, ‘Ho‘i Pū‘olo ~ Returning Gifts’,

- that featured Hawaiian items from Salem, Massachusetts that were given as gifts by Hawaiian ali'i or chiefs including Kamehameha.
- 15 E. S. Dodge (1945), 'Captain collectors: the influence of New England shipping on the study of Polynesian material culture', *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 81, p. 31.
 - 16 Dodge, 'Captain collectors', p. 31.
 - 17 J. Charlot (1958), *Choris and Kamehameha*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, p. 15.
 - 18 Charlot, *Choris and Kamehameha*, p. 20. Tapa, also known in Hawaii as 'kapa', is a paper-like cloth made from the inner bark of trees.
 - 19 Charlot, *Choris and Kamehameha*, p. 21.
 - 20 Charlot, *Choris and Kamehameha*, p. 27. See anonymous copy, Chinese, after Louis Choris (1795–1828), *Tamm ahammaha* [King Kamehameha I], c. 1816, oil on canvas, 24.9 × 20.3 cm. Boston Athenaeum collection. A small copy after the work in the Boston Athenaeum now in the Peabody Essex Museum was gifted to the Essex Institute in 1897. See 'Tammahammaha' [King Kamehameha I] engraving, 10.3 × 7.2 cm. Peabody Essex Museum collection. For a copy made in China, see *King Kamehameha I in a Red Vest*, anonymous Chinese oil on canvas painting after original by Louis Choris, c. 1820, Honolulu Academy of Arts now Honolulu Museum of Art.
 - 21 R. E. A. Hackler (1969), *The Voice of Commerce*. Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society.
 - 22 M. Sahlins (1990), 'The political economy of grandeur in Hawaii from 1810 to 1830', in Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney (ed.), *Culture Through Time: Anthropological Approaches*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 40ff.
 - 23 L. B. Arthur (1998), 'Fossilized fashion in Hawaii', *Paidensis: Journal for Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Studies* 1, pp. 4–7.
 - 24 M. Malloy (1986), '30 Souvenirs of the fur trade, 1799–1832: the Northwest Cast Indian collection of the Salem East India Marine Society', *American Indian Art Magazine* Autumn, p. 251.
 - 25 Sahlins, 'Political economy', p. 38.
 - 26 M. Sahlins (1981), 'Historical metaphors and mythical realities: structure in the early history of the Hawaiian kingdom', in *ASAO Special Publication No. 1*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p. 44.
 - 27 Schneider and Weiner, 'Introduction'.
 - 28 Phone conversation with Gail Pike Herscher, 14 March 2012.
 - 29 Phone conversation with Gail Pike Herscher, 14 March 2012.
 - 30 Schneider and Weiner, 'Introduction', p. 6.
 - 31 Email from Mary Malloy, 27 November 2012.