

# UC Merced

## Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology

### Title

Blackburn and Hudson: *Time's Flotsam: Overseas Collections of California Indian Material Culture*

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8kx5w2dn>

### Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 17(1)

### ISSN

0191-3557

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### Publication Date

1995-07-01

Peer reviewed

at almost half of the loci, and they originated at least 15 miles away. There is no discussion of these marine materials as a "redundant activity set" in a seasonal round of activities in subsistence-settlement models. It is presumed that such items represented food remains, but it is challenging to preserve meat for transit over such distances. Some items may have been used as artifacts; one was a fish centrum bead fragment, and the *Laevicardium* shells could be considered natural bowls. Alternatively, these marine items simply may be personal mementos of excursions to the beach and to fiestas. The full significance of nonlocal materials is not developed in the subsistence-settlement model depicted in this study.

Overall, this volume is an important contribution. Its formal publication makes it widely available, and other firms hopefully may follow suit. It will be widely used for comparisons against other modest sites, and there are many such sites throughout southern California. Its bold theoretical discussion should spur refinements in understanding of local subsistence-settlement models. The publication is nicely designed and printed. There are good line drawings showing key artifact forms but no photographs; however, these site assemblages apparently warrant little else. The text is well edited, and the CAD-produced site maps are crisp. This volume is a good value for the price. Brian F. Mooney Associates is to be commended for launching this new series.



***Time's Flotsam: Overseas Collections of California Indian Material Culture.*** Thomas C. Blackburn and Travis Hudson. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 35. 1990, 225 pp., 30 photographs, tables, bibliography, index, appendix (out of print).

*Reviewed by:*

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The national move to repatriate Native American cultural materials was formalized when President Bush signed into law the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA, PL 101-601) on November 16, 1990. During the 1970s and 1980s, academic scholars, as well as native activists, were paving the way to repatriation as a matter of conscience and/or good scholarship. *Time's Flotsam* is the record of good museum scholarship done by Thomas Blackburn and Travis Hudson before NAGPRA compliance began to drive museum and academic professionals to document Native American collections. Tom Blackburn is an anthropologist at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, and Travis Hudson, who tragically died in 1985, was an anthropologist at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

In *Time's Flotsam: Overseas Collections of California Indian Material Culture*, Blackburn and Hudson document the California Indian collections held by 140 foreign museums in 20 countries in Europe, Russia, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. NAGPRA does not apply to the foreign museums inventoried in this book. However, the NAGPRA directive to document American Indian collections has had the effect of creating a new generation of native and academic scholars who are turning their interests to the research of Native American collections worldwide. As material culture items become the vehicles for research on history and culture, the new scholars working in native California are finding that some of the oldest and most unusual cultural materials belong to foreign museums.

The American discipline of anthropology grew up as a museum-based discipline in the late 1800s as the Smithsonian sent out fieldworkers to collect the material remnants of native cultures and to write ethnographies of American Indian life before contact. The ethnographies were published in the Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin series, and the objects were housed in the Smithsonian.

The belief of the government, the public, and the Smithsonian fieldworkers at that time was that American Indian ways of life were disappearing. The guiding principle of early anthropology was to collect and record the old ways as fast as possible, racing against history's savage destruction and the federal government's efforts to assimilate. The rush to collect American Indian cultural materials was intense from 1870 until 1920, and the great museum treasure houses filled to capacity with millions of native objects—at the Smithsonian, the American Museum and the Heye in New York, the Peabody at Harvard, the University Museum in Philadelphia, the Field Museum in Chicago, the Denver Museum, the University of California Museum, and others. Massive collecting expeditions ended with the Great Depression. Most of the U. S. collections of Native American objects date between 1870 and 1920. Most of the California Indian collections in the U. S. date from 1900 to 1920. For the last 70 years, the task of museum professionals has turned from collecting to storage and organization of the items. NAGPRA ushered in a new era of documentation and utilization of the materials.

California is a special case in the history of American Indian museum collections. It was contacted both very early and very late, in different areas of the state by men from different countries of origin; along the southern coast as early as 1542 by Spanish ships and in the northern mountains as late as 1850 by American miners. The Europeans who explored or administered California before it became an American state on September 9, 1850, collected native objects as curios of colonial exploration and trade, not to document the history of the land as the Americans were later to do. This reflects the different world view of the

Europeans and the Americans. The Europeans dealt with Indians in relationships of economy, trade, and commerce, while the Americans wanted to possess the land. *Time's Flotsam* is the record primarily of this kind of European collecting before 1848. The authors note the remarkable nature of the early overseas collections. "Scholars . . . will undoubtedly be surprised by the number and quality of overseas [California Indian] collections, and by the fact that they often contain a richer and more varied assortment of early ethnographic objects (many of them truly unique) than can be found in all of North America" (p. 14).

*Time's Flotsam* also records the practice of institutional exchanges in which museum directors and curators worldwide traded their items with each other in order to achieve a kind of Noah's ark or zoo-like collection, two from each area, two of each type. The exchange system was "the mechanism by which museum curators could improve, modify, or expand their collections at what seemed to be a relatively modest cost" (p. 38). The traded objects were not the unique items, of course. These treasures remained in the home museum. The authors located many California materials in overseas museums that had originally been housed in American museums. They note that "virtually all of the materials in question can be traced to only a few specific institutions: the Smithsonian Institution, the Lowie Museum at Berkeley, the Peabody Museum at Harvard, the Field Museum, and the Logan Museum in Beloit" (p. 38). The historian of early international relationships between anthropologists and between museums would find this an invaluable research document.

The organization of *Time's Flotsam* is a testament to the museum experience and documentary perspective of the two authors. From 1982 to 1987, they had collaborated on the exhaustive five-volume publication *The Material Culture of the Chumash Interaction Sphere*. It was Hudson's interest in Chumash material culture that motivated his first trip to the Leningrad Museum in 1983. He returned in 1984 to visit and document other European collections. In 1985, Hudson and Blackburn visited European museums to continue

their project of documenting California Indian materials overseas. After publication in 1990, *Time's Flotsam* sold quickly and is now out of print, with no plans to republish it. It is available at most research libraries in California.

The bulk of this book is devoted to the inventory of California Indian items in overseas museums. This information is arranged alphabetically by country, by town, and by museum. For each museum, there is a brief introduction that indicates if the museum was visited and inventoried, or if the information was obtained through correspondence with museum personnel. Then for each museum, the objects are listed numerically by catalogue number, with the name of the object, and the manner in which the object was obtained (collector's name, year, or museum that exchanged the item, or gift donator, and so on). In the Appendix, there is also the useful "List of Museums Lacking California Materials."

Preceding the inventory, there is an excellent essay, "The Origins of Overseas Collections," which traces the hard-to-research history of early collectors in California. The essay discusses "Visitors before Statehood" and "Later Travelers and Scholars" as well as providing information on places to find untapped documents and "Secondary Sources." The essay contains two invaluable tables, "Significant Early Visitors and Potential Sources of Collections" from LaPerouse in 1786 to the French schooner *Anais* in 1847, and "Partial List of California Items Dispersed by Smithsonian Institution" during its worldwide institutional exchange program. Included after the inventory are a bibliography, 30 photographs of exceptional items, a list of the museums' addresses, and an index to the inventory that provides subject access by type of object (e.g., awls), tribe (e.g., Hupa), collectors' names (e.g., H. N. Rust), county (e.g., Tulare County), Indian personal names (e.g., Scar Faced Charlie), and so on.

*Time's Flotsam*, even in the inventory section, is a good read just for the history it contains. Robert Lowie, who was born in Vienna, gave the museum there a Pomo flute and cocoon rattle.

Alfred Kroeber and Samuel Barrett of the University of California Museum gave the museum in Berlin over a hundred items from all over California. German museums, such as the one in Dresden, sustained considerable damage during World War II when many of their collections were destroyed. The University of California museum also exchanged items with the museum in Auckland, New Zealand. Some of the overseas collections have been photographed (Florence museum in 1984 by Roger Colten) or published (Bern, Switzerland, museum catalogue by Judy Thompson in 1977). Of special interest to me was a Hupa dance apron at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, England, collected by E. M. Hopkins in 1842, eight years before contact!

Until now, there has been a vacuum in access to museum collection information. The scholar who had the luxury to visit a museum and inspect its collections was the only one to know what was there. The *Time's Flotsam* inventory provides access to locations, collections, and item information that used to belong to a privileged few. The authors hope that their data base will be added to the growing worldwide network of institutional information generated by NAGPRA. Academic and tribal scholars have taken *Time's Flotsam* in hand and visited the overseas collections: Sally McLendon, Craig Bates, Lowell Bean, and L. Frank Manriquez, who was awarded a research grant to use *Times' Flotsam* in Paris as a guide to tribal research in the Musée de l'Homme. In the Introduction, there is also a list of other guides to regional museum collections in Europe (p. 14).

The authors state that the goal of *Time's Flotsam* is to stimulate and facilitate additional studies of California Indian material culture by providing access to information about where overseas collections are located and what items they contain. In the post-NAGPRA age, the cultural materials of the Native California ancestors promise to bring a vitality to the inheritors of the tradition and spirit that once went into their creation. This is the map not just to that legacy from the past, but also to the vitality of the future.