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C. V. Hartman and Museum Anthropology a Century Ago

by

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Dave Watters (Section of Anthropology, Carnegie Museum of Natural History) and Oscar Fonseca Zamora (University of Costa Rica, retired) are exploring aspects of the life of Carl Vilhelm Hartman (1862-1941), a Swedish botanist who changed careers to anthropology during the decade of the 1890s. Hartman's transition began on Carl Lumholtz's expedition (1890-1892) to the Sierra Madre region of Mexico. He took over responsibility for archaeological research from the expedition's first archaeologist, A. M. Stephen (Lumholtz used only the initials) who almost certainly was Alexander McGregor Stephen, a somewhat mysterious early Southwestern anthropologist discussed by Don Fowler in *A Laboratory of Anthropology* (our gratitude to Don for making that connection). After that expedition, Hartman worked for F. W. Putnam and Franz Boas at the World's Columbian Exposition for six months. He returned to Sweden and acquired superb archaeological field training under Hjalmar Stolpe who was working on Iron Age cemeteries. In 1896, he went to Central America on a three-year, Swedish-sponsored anthropological expedition, spending about a year and a half conducting archaeological research in Costa Rica and an equivalent amount of time doing ethnographic research in El Salvador and Guatemala. He returned to Sweden in 1899 and worked as Stolpe's assistant at the Royal Ethnographical Museum, mounting an exhibit of his Costa Rican artifacts and publishing his first monograph (Hartman 1901) on Costa Rican archaeology. From this time forward, Hartman based his professional career exclusively in museums.

The link to Carnegie Museum (as it was known then) came in 1903. Director W. J. Holland hired Hartman as the first Curator of Ethnology and Archaeology and sent him to Costa Rica a month later, on the eight-month Carnegie expedition to excavate sites and purchase collections of antiquities. Hartman worked at the Carnegie Museum for five years, published his second Costa Rican monograph (Hartman 1907), and installed his second exhibit of Costa Rican antiquities. He returned to Sweden in 1908 to become Director of the Ethnographical Museum (Stolpe having died in 1905). He remained as Director into the 1920s, took a medical leave of absence from which he entered retirement, and died in Stockholm in 1941.

Hartman was in contact with major players in anthropology on both sides of the Atlantic, from Stolpe in Sweden and Eduard Seler in Germany, to Anastasio Alfaro and Henri Pittier de Fabrega in Costa Rica, to Putnam, Boas, W. J. McGee, George Grant MacCurdy, W. H. Holmes, Marshall H. Saville, and Clark Wissler, among others, in the United States. He participated actively in the International Congress of Americanists, attending the 10th (Stockholm, 1894), 13th (New York City, 1902), 15th (Quebec City, 1906), 16th (Vienna, 1908), 18th (London, 1912), and 21st (Goteborg, 1924) sessions. He joined the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography, publishing in its journal *Ymer*, and the American Anthropological Association, serving in 1905 on its Committee for the Preservation of American Antiquities and publishing in *American Anthropologist*. He was one of the foreign delegates touring museums in the United States on the 13th ICA post-Congress excursion in 1902 and attended the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904.

Hartman is known to Central American archaeologists as the person who introduced systematic field methods (learned from Stolpe) into Costa Rican archaeology during his two expeditions (Rowe 1959), but for the most part he remains little known outside of that region. He opted to conduct archaeological research in Costa Rica after being introduced to the Swedish geologist Ake Sjögren, who had worked there in the early 1890s and a few years later agreed to fund Hartman's first expedition. He became acquainted with Anastasio Alfaro and Juan Fernandez Ferraz at the Museo Nacional de Costa Rica during the Swedish and Carnegie Museum expeditions. However, his closest colleague and primary contact appears to have been Henri Pittier de Fabrega, the Swiss-born Director of the Instituto Físico-Geográfico, the agency responsible for mapping Costa Rica. Hartman's ethnographic, linguistic, and anthropometric research elsewhere in Central America is largely unknown, although the recent translation of his century-old Swedish article in *Ymer* will increase awareness of his ethnographic work in El Salvador (Hartman 2001). After 1908, Hartman's research and publishing productivity decreased markedly, due to the administrative demands of his directorship of the Ethnographical Museum (although ill health may have played a role as well).

The work by Watters and Fonseca Zamora (2001a, 2001b, "in press") centers on Hartman's five-year (1903-1908) tenure at Carnegie Museum, but that brief period is better understood within the broader context of his career transformation to museum anthropology beginning in 1890. His legacy at Carnegie Museum of Natural History includes 120 glass plate negatives of the 1903 fieldwork; some 700 plates of artifacts

photographed at the Museo Nacional de Costa Rica and later in Pittsburgh; Hartman's documents preserved in the archives of the Section of Anthropology; and papers in the Holland archives relating to Hartman. He was a key player in fulfilling Holland's vision of a new Carnegie Museum, a vision culminating with the 1907 opening of the expanded facility where Hartman installed all of the anthropological exhibits. In turn, the Hartman study has sparked other lines of investigation. It was discovered that W. J. Holland was involved with the International Congress of Americanists, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the founding meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Pittsburgh in 1902, and the establishment of the American Association of Museums (Watters 2002a and 2002b). Carnegie Museum of Natural History maintains a C. V. Hartman web site at: <http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmnh/hartman>.

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