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The Karlbeck Syndicate 1930-1934:

Collecting and Scholarship on Chinese Art in Sweden and Britain.

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of London

School of Oriental and African Studies

2010

I hereby declare that:

- the work presented in this thesis is my own
- the following parts of the work or works now submitted have not previously been submitted for a qualification at a university or similar institution
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Abstract

History of archaeology, not merely archaeology itself, has become an important subject in contemporary scholarship. An investigation of The Karlbeck Syndicate (1930-1934), a collector's group that primarily focussed on the collecting and studying of early Chinese art, is based on primary archival research. The syndicate included some of Europe's most prominent private collectors and significant national institutions at that time. This study analyses original, hitherto unpublished, archival data provided by a set of archives at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum. The mechanics of this interesting and some-what secretive collector's group provides a contextual understanding of how Chinese collections were formed in this defined period in Western history and in the study of Chinese archaeology in Sweden and Britain.

The syndicate is named after Orvar Karlbeck (1879-1967). This thesis focuses on his collecting method and pioneering scholarship in the then developing field of Chinese art and archaeology in Sweden. Together with Johan Gunnar Andersson (1874-1960) and Gustaf Adolf of Sweden (1882-1973) he played an undeniable role in the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. At the time a group of Bronze Age objects formed a novel collecting and study subject and also had just started to appear on the art market. This thesis examines the institutional and intellectual framing of these objects in the discipline of Chinese art and archaeology in Sweden and Britain. A close-knit group of Western specialists of Chinese art are deliberated. They were all connected to the Karlbeck Syndicate and its organisers; including Andersson and Karlbeck in Sweden and Perceval W. Yetts (1878-1957), Robert L. Hobson (1872-1941) and Charles G. Seligman (1873-1940) in Britain.

The aim of this study is not to provide an art historical but a historical analysis of the major players and theoretical orientations that they depended on. I will consider approaches on the evolution of stylistic development at that time and how this affected the display and institutionalisation of the objects. Moreover, it examines the different methodologies used to classify and categorise the non-Western objects within Western scholarship, including the so-called comparative method. The intellectual background under which the syndicate operated was guided by some diffusionist concepts within the study of Chinese art and archaeology at that time. This debate is still playing a part in the current study of Chinese archaeology. Overall this study is based on the examination of archival material and will throw new light on a lesser known history of collecting and lay foundations to future research.

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this study to my husband and two daughters who all came into my life when I just started the research for this work.

Some years ago Craig Clunas told me about an interesting set of archival papers (in a cardboard box) at the Victoria and Albert Museum on The Karlbeck Syndicate. Other archival material on syndicate emerged at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, the British Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge. Many thanks to all the museum staff who helped me access this valuable material.

I would like to thank my two supervisors at SOAS, Wang Tao and Stacey Pierson, for their support, advice and encouragement.

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After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Objective of the study

The objective of this thesis is to analyse the significance of and discuss the hitherto unpublished archival material on a unique European-based collector's consortium, The Karlbeck Syndicate (1930-1934); furthermore, it intends to use the debate to provide a contextual understanding of the collections formed through this syndicate within the then developing discipline of Chinese art and archaeology in the West.¹ Through the purchasing operations of this collectors group many important archaeological objects from China's Bronze Age period (c. 16th century-206 BC) entered Western collections during the second and third decades of the twentieth century.²

The syndicate is named after the Swedish collector and railroad engineer Orvar Karlbeck (1879-1967): an interesting and somewhat ambiguous figure who was an important personage in the collector's world of early Chinese art and archaeology during the first three quarters the twentieth century (Figure 1). His personal history has, until now, been ignored in museum studies and in the history of Chinese collections in Europe, as well as, his role in the

¹ This thesis uses the term Chinese art and archaeology for the studies concerning the topic because it was used as the title for the academic study of early Chinese culture in Britain. It officially became part of the British academic program in the early 1930s at the Courtauld Institute and later at the School of Oriental Studies (now School of Oriental and African Studies), University of London. Stacey Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation: The Percival David Foundation and the Field of Chinese Art in Britain, 1920-1964', (PhD diss., Sussex University, 2004).

² The approximate date for the beginning of China's Bronze Age is the Erlitou culture (c. 1700 BC). However, the Ordos bronzes (c. 771 BC-221 AD) were also a group collected by Karlbeck and included in the discussion of this thesis. For dates see, Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the origins of civilization to 221 BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Xiaoneny Yang, ed., *The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology: Celebrated Discoveries of the People's Republic* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

For further reading on collecting early Chinese art during this period see, Craig Clunas, *Art in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); For a full discussion on Karlbeck see Chapter 2.

developing studies in the discipline of China's art and archaeology in the West at that defined time.³

The first section of this thesis analyses and illustrates his important attribution to the formation of archaeological Chinese collections, public and private, and how he participated in the increasingly knowledgeable specialist discussions on China's Bronze Age. He predominantly collected a defined group of archaic objects from the Shang (c. 16th century-11th century BC) and Zhou (c. 11th century-221 BC) period for himself, institutions and private collectors. These formed the basis for considering ancient Chinese culture within the larger context of world history.⁴ The objects consisted of jades, ceramics, ritual bronze vessels and ornamental bronzes such as weaponry, mirrors and belt hooks (Figures 2-6). Many of the smaller, un-inscribed bronzes dated from the second half of the Zhou period (Eastern Zhou period, c. 770-221 BC) and Han period (206 BC-221 AD). In addition, he also brought back a number of, considered non-Chinese, Ordos bronzes which visually bear a relation to objects produced by cultures associated with the so-called steppe regions of Northern and Central Asia, as well as, Eastern Europe and were then recently discovered within China's borders (Figure 7). Furthermore, and aside from the Bronze Age objects, he collected a selected number of Tang period (618-906 AD) tomb figures and Song (960-1279 AD) ceramics on behalf of his clientele (Figures 8 and 9).⁵

³ This thesis predominantly uses the term West or Western in reference to countries and people with historical and cultural links to Europe. This includes North America. When used in reference to Central Asia it is footnoted.

⁴ The term archaic implies: 'Designating or belonging to an early or formative period of culture, art. Primitive, antiquated.' *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, Fifth edition, Volume 1, A-M, (Oxford: 2002).

For a discussion on the complexities surrounding the writing of world history see, Christopher A. Bayly, 'From Archaic Globalization to International Networks, circa 1600-2000', in *Interactions: transregional perspectives on world history*, eds. Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal and Anan A. Yang, 14-29, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005); Benedikt Stuchley and Eckhardt Fuchs, eds. *Writing World History 1800-2000* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Edwin J. Van Kley, 'Europe's Discovery of China and the Writing of World History', *The American Historical Review* 76 (2) (Apr., 1971): 358-385.

⁵ In this thesis the Song ('Sung') refers to its art historical style rather than a specific time period in Chinese dynastic history (Song dynasty 960-1279 BC). See, Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560-1960* (Oxford and New York: P. Lang, 2007), 94.

Karlbeck's role as a collector often overshadowed his connoisseurship and scholarly reputation. Through primary archival research his position is analysed. This thesis determines that he was an established member of a then newly formed scholarly group, who were predominantly self-taught, and dedicated themselves to the study of early Chinese material culture.⁶ The select group focussed on in this thesis included Johan Gunnar Andersson (1874-1960) and Bernhard Karlgren (1889-1978) in Sweden, Berthold Laufer (1874-1934) at the Field Museum of Chicago, Robert Lockhart Hobson (1872-1941) at the British Museum, Walter Perceval Yetts (1878-1957) at the University of London and the British ethnologist Charles Gabriel Seligman (1873-1940); moreover, an evaluation of their direct involvement in the institutional and intellectual framing of Chinese art and archaeology in their countries also proves valuable.⁷ The collecting activities and specialist studies conducted by Karlbeck during the period 1924-1967, according to his publications and through the analysis of the original archival data, demonstrate the conventional approaches then used for categorising early Chinese art and are important in the understanding of the history and evolution of the

⁶ For a discussion of the small but very significant group of self-taught Western specialists and collectors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including Karlbeck see, Nick Pearce, 'Soldiers, Doctors, Engineers: Chinese Art and British Collecting, 1860-1935', *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History* Orientalism 6 (2001): 45-52.

⁷ For biographical accounts on Andersson, Laufer, Hobson, Yetts and Seligman see, Bernhard Karlgren, 'Johan Gunnar Andersson: In Memoriam', *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (BMFEA)* 33 (1960) [obituary].

Hans Bielenstein, 'Bernhard Karlgren (1889-1978)', *Journal of the American Oriental Society (JAOS)* 99 (3) (Jul.-Sept., 1973) [obituary]: 553; Göran Malmqvist, *Bernhard Karlgren: ett forskarporträtt* [Bernhard Karlgren: Portrait of a Scholar] (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1995); Walter E. Clark, 'Berthold Laufer 1874-1934', *JAOS* 54 (4) (Dec., 1934) [obituary]: 349-362; Arthur W. Hummel, 'Berthold Laufer 1874-1934', *American Anthropologist* 38 (1) (Jan.- Mar., 1936) [obituary]: 101-111; Robert L. Hobson, 'Berthold Laufer, 1847-1934', *Man* 35 (Feb., 1935)[obituary]: 28-29.

'R.L. Hobson', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs (BMC)* 79 (460) (July, 1941) [obituary]: 30; Basil Gray, 'R. L. Hobson Bibliography', *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society (TOCS)* 19 (1942-1943): 61-69; 'Robert Lockhart Hobson', *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941) [obituary]: 9-10; Bernhard Rackham, 'Mr. R.L. Hobson's Contribution to the Study of Chinese Ceramics', *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941): 11-13.

Orvar Karlbeck, 'Walter Perceval Yetts', *Artibus Asiae (AA)* 20 (2/3) (1957) [obituary]: 184-185; Percival David, 'Professor Walter Perceval Yetts: An Appreciation', *Oriental Art (OA)* III (3) (Autumn, 1957) [obituary]: 119-120; Howard Hansford, 'Walter Perceval Yetts', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (JRAS)* 1/2 (Apr., 1958) [obituary]: 110-112; Basil Gray, 'W.P. Yetts', *The Burlington Magazine (BM)* 99 (654) (Sept., 1957): 313-314 [obituary]; Harry M. Garner, 'Walter Perceval Yetts', *TOCS* 30 (1955-1957) [obituary]: xi.

L.C.G.C., 'C.G. Seligman', *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941) [obituary]: 15-16; Meyer Fortes, 'Charles Gabriel Seligman', *Man* 41 (Jan.-Feb., 1941) [obituary]: 1-6; F.J. West, 'Seligman, Charles Gabriel (1873-1940), in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 49, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 709-711; Melville J. Herskovits, 'Charles Gabriel Seligman', *American Anthropologist* 43 (3) (Jul.- Sep., 1941) [obituary]: 437-439.

subject in the West, and particularly in Europe. The innovative research by the aforementioned- essentially connected to the Karlbeck Syndicate collections discussed in this thesis- defined two important centres for studying and collecting early Chinese art and archaeology outside China during this period, one in Stockholm and the other in London.

Indeed, the first decades of the twentieth century are an important time in the developing concept of Chinese art in the West. Large public and private collections were formed, archaeology was introduced as a scientific discipline in China, mainly by foreign example, and historical object studies on Chinese material culture were led by a small group of predominantly self-taught connoisseurs who were essentially responsible for directing ground-breaking academic research. This thesis concentrates on Karlbeck's role within the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm, as one of those specialists, and evidently his role in the acquisition of a particular bronze collection for the British Museum. His collecting activity united private collectors and museums to a single defined collector's group, the Karlbeck Syndicate, and those directly involved in the study and institutionalisation of these objects.

Within the evaluation of these ideas the Karlbeck Syndicate is highly significant because, as this thesis will argue, it deliberates the manner in which a group of Chinese archaeological objects were collected and classified. The collecting methodology of the syndicate is analysed comprehensively through the original archival material. This thesis is consequently an important archival study that bases its arguments directly upon primary data and is framed by the boundaries of the archives. This also means that Karlbeck and the collectors involved are solely approached through Western sources. Its intention was not to use Chinese sources in this analysis because the focus lies on Western scholarship, collecting and institutional framing as a separate entity.

A notable landmark within the history of collecting Chinese art and archaeology were Karlbeck's expeditions to China. There is- to my knowledge- no other collector's syndicate that was formed either in the past or present which was organised or operated on such a large scale under the umbrella of connoisseurship. The hitherto unrecognised capacity of such a collector's consortium, as discussed in this thesis, confirms the operation of a delineated network of distinguished Western collectors who are characterised within a particular social strata and had a common intellectual motivation to understand the cultural and historical significance of their acquisitions. Throughout this thesis the Karlbeck Syndicate is exemplified in the same sphere as other known collector's clubs of that period that promoted Chinese art; the Oriental Ceramic Society in London, the Kinnaklubben (China Club) in Sweden, the Vereeniging van Vrienden van Aziatische Kunst (Friends of Asian Art Society) in The Netherlands and the Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst (Society for East Asian Art) in Germany.⁸ Recently, Russell Belk commented on the general concept of the collector's group which also frames the organisational network of the Karlbeck Syndicate:

'Organized groups of collectors support their mutual identity not only by trading with each other, but also delighting in showing their new acquisitions to each other. Only in such groups does a

⁸ These clubs were all founded in the second and third decades of the 1900s focussing on collecting Asian art. For further reading on their history and foundation see: Arthur L. Hetherington, 'A History of the Oriental Ceramic Society', *TOCS* 50 (1947-1948): 9-12; 'The Oriental Ceramic Society', *BM* 113 (820) (Jul., 1971): 361; William W. Winkworth, 'Art-History and the Oriental Ceramic Society', *BMC* 89 (526) (Jan., 1947): 13-15; Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation', 22; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 115-118; Judith Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections 1842-1943', (PhD diss., Sussex University 2003): 9-10; Judith Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', in *Collecting Chinese art: Interpretation and Display, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art*, ed. Stacey Pierson, 43-56 (London: University of London, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2000). 'Kinaclubben' (China Club), Volume IX, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive; Bo Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes', *BMFEA* 49 (1977): 1-16. 'Het Museum van Aziatische Kunst', *Catalogus der Tentoonstelling van Aziatische Kunst (Indie, China, Japan) in Particuopenbare Collecties in Nederland, 5 July-4 October 1936*, (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1936): 7; Herman F. E. Visser, 'The Exhibition of Far Eastern Art at Amsterdam' *BMC* 35 35 (199) (Oct., 1919): 143-145+148-150. Hartmut Walravens 'Ostasiatische Zeitschrift' *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst' Bibliography und Register* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2000).

collector find knowledgeable others with sufficient understanding to feel appreciative and envious of the collector's acquisitions.'⁹

The syndicate exhibits such a collector's consortium, as indicated by Russell Belk, where serious discussion of the collected objects and systematic exhibition display by its organisers formed the basis for the promotion and study of early Chinese art and archaeology. Indeed, Judith Green recently discussed the history of the Oriental Ceramic Society- which included a number of syndicate members, like Karlbeck- particular in conjunction with the British collections of Chinese ceramics at that time.¹⁰ Still, within the framework of collecting non-Western art, the Karlbeck Syndicate is an incomparable example of how European collecting activities of a specific type operated by an organised group. For example, one aspect of its uniqueness is determined by its secretive planning of the purchasing expeditions into China based out of a European public institution.

The foundation of the Karlbeck Syndicate is approached through the collecting expeditions that were supported by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (Figure 10). In the late 1920s and early 1930s the museum invited a group of private collectors and Western institutions to join its collecting activities. Today such an approach to collecting is often complicated because of the problematic aspects attached to the export of so-called cultural heritage objects and the discovery and institutionalisation of new archaeological data. The time-frame in which the syndicate operated is nonetheless demonstrative of a Eurocentric character connected to the Western mentality regarding East Asia in this period, where the collecting and export of historical objects was often accepted in the name of science.¹¹ The historical

⁹ Russell Belk, 'Collectors and Collecting', in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan Pearce, 317-326 (London: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁰ Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 9-10; Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 43-56.

¹¹ The general topic of Eurocentrism and collecting and a more defined discussion on non-Western and Chinese collections in Britain is recently discussed by a number of scholars see, Craig Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art, in *The Anthropology of Art: A Reader*, eds. Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, 186-208 (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publ., 2006); Tim Barringer, 'The South Kensington Museum and the

perspective of collecting in this thesis analysis how these Chinese collections participated in then specialist discussions instigated by collectors themselves, with the intention to locate their art works within an original historical context. Furthermore, discoveries and investigations into topics on evolution, technology, craftsmanship and origin led to the historical understanding of the production of these objects.

However, the Karlbeck Syndicate was initially founded out of self-interest by the museum to help the growth of its collection. It hoped that the acquisitions by the invited collectors subsequently ended up in the museum through donations and bequests. This process was geographically wide-ranging, as this thesis examines; the private collectors associated with the syndicate often had strong links with a national museum. The legacy of the syndicate is today evident in the collections of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and at the British Museum, not only because both were directly involved but also through the private collectors that affiliated their collections with these two institutions. On the motivation behind donating one's collection Stacey Pierson recently reflected on the incentive of the collector and function of the objects for teaching:

‘The objects in the museum formed the framework for the discipline and the collector of these objects influenced the teaching at a public institution by donating his objects.’¹²

This equally connects to the respective drive leading the collecting activities of the Swedish and British collectors in the syndicate. The process of collecting and understanding its unique historical context is addressed through important original data dating from the 1920s to

Colonial Project’, in *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, material culture and the museum*, eds. Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, 11-27 (London: Routledge., 1998); Craig Clunas, ‘China in Britain: The Imperial Collections’, in *Colonialism and the Object*, eds. Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, 41-51 (London: Routledge, 1998); James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, (Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 217-221; Chris Gosden, *Archaeology and Colonialism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Foster Stockwell, *Westerners in China: a history of exploration and trade, ancient times through present*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co, 2003); Robert Layton, *The Anthropology of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

¹² Pierson, ‘Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation’, 11.

1930s.¹³ The particulars of the archives are discussed further on in this chapter and throughout the thesis; suffice it to say that they are contemplative of a specific collecting period in Europe and unite the syndicate and discipline of Chinese art and archaeology in its earliest phase. In this retrospective context, one can argue that the syndicate is a unique example of how a group of Western institutions and private collectors not only instigated but participated actively in the acquisition and study of their collections.

Furthermore, this thesis focuses on Western studies of early Chinese art and archaeology conducted during the first decades of the twentieth century in Sweden and Britain specifically because this illustrates the boundaries of the archival material. It exemplifies the syndicate as an organisation dedicated to both scholarship and art during this formative period. Such activities for North American museums and private collectors would be an interesting comparative subject. However, it diverts this thesis from its original research question of why the syndicate is significant in the history of the discipline and collecting in Sweden and Britain set within the framework provided by the archive.

One primary objective is to look at the objects acquired by the Karlbeck Syndicate as a branch of specific scholarship and institutional framing of the subject. By grouping the objects, as analysed through the archives and purchase lists by Karlbeck, determined the different categories then used in Western scholarship. This concept is further examined. At the time, tentative chronologies were considered by a small group of Western specialists. Coincidentally this was a period when Chinese archaeological objects arrived into European

¹³ The names of the archives are referred by their archival titles: The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives is made up of three separate archives; The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, Volume I-IX, Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm; The Karlbeck Syndicate File, the Department of Asia, the British Museum, London; The Karlbeck Syndicate Papers, the Asian Department, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Standing Committee Reports, the Central Archive, the British Museum, London; The Robert Lockhart Hobson Papers, the Central Archive, the British Museum, London; Governing Body Minutes, SOAS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, London; Chinese Department (1930-1937), The Courtauld Institute Archives, The Conway and Witt Libraries, The Courtauld Institute, London; The Seligman Papers, the British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics, London.

collections through the art market and a popular taste for these commenced.¹⁴ Archaeological material was exposed because of extensive growth of rail and road building, a practice which unearthed ancient tomb sites and their contents came on to the market.¹⁵ This is consistent with the analysis of syndicate records that detail how many objects were purchased from local dealers in China, with often their only provenance an approximate geographical location. In the West, by contrast, there were two ways in which these objects were conceptualised: one as archaeology and the other as art in accordance with the aesthetic tastes of the collector at the time.¹⁶

The trends and aesthetic tastes in Chinese art in Britain have been discussed by a number of scholars including Basil Gray (1904-1989), Bernhard Rackham (1876-1964), and more recently, Stacey Pierson, Judith Green and Craig Clunas, and at times brought into context with the so-called ‘emerging taste for Modernism’.¹⁷ Primarily, however, the collecting of archaic Chinese bronzes was first depicted as a representation of a, in his words, ‘modern awakening’ by the bronze specialist Yetts in 1929, where their mystery and novelty was explicated in conjunction with a continuously growing of scholarly knowledge.¹⁸ Indeed, according to Craig Clunas, the concept of modernity in the West during the first decades of the twentieth century brought the objects into a new perspective which initially affected the

¹⁴ For further reading on this collecting trend see, Basil Gray, ‘The Development of Taste in Chinese Art in the West 1872-1972’, *TOCS* 39: (1971-1973)

¹⁵ Ralph Huenemann, *The Dragon and the Iron Horse: The Economics of Railroads in China, 1876-1937* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1984).

¹⁶ For a general discussion on how ethnological objects were re-identified as art see, Clifford *The Predicament of Culture*, 222

¹⁷ For biographical references on these scholars of Chinese art that followed the inter-war period see, William Watson, ‘Basil Gray: Scholar of the Orient’, *The Guardian*, 20 June, 1989, (national edition) [obituary]; William Watson, ‘Basil Gray’, *TOCS* 53 (1988-1989) [obituary]: 9-10; J.Michael Rogers, ‘Gray, Basil’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 23,(Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2004), 19-24. ‘Bernard Rackham’, *BM* 106 (738) (September 1964) [obituary]: 424-425; John Ayers, ‘Bernard Rackham’, *TOCS* 35 (1963-1964) [obituary]: vviii-xxiv.

For references on Chinese art and modernism see, Pierson, ‘Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation’; Green, ‘Britain’s Chinese Collections’; Clunas, *Art in China*, 9-13; Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art’, 195; Judith Green, ‘Ancient China/Modern Art’, *Vormen uit Vuur* 191/192 (2005/2): 87-99; Susan Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2005), 122-139.

¹⁸ Perceval W. Yetts, ‘An Exhibition of Early Chinese Art’, *BMC* 55 (317) (Aug.,1929): 82-87.

Western aesthetic appreciation of Chinese bronzes.¹⁹ This modern awakening is reflective of a new era which determined the interest of the Western collector in the appreciation of Chinese art from the early dynasties which in turn created aesthetic and economic value.²⁰ Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins discussed some of the ideas surrounding Modernism with regard to establishing an evolutionary framework for objects within the definition of art or anthropology and mentioned that these were often viewed as examples of a universal aesthetic which were open to a universalistic interpretation.²¹ Such considerations for historical objects often incorporated an anthropological perspective because it focussed on a cultural and evolutionary scheme within the idea of a universal history.

This thesis doesn't intend to analyse the archaic objects collected by Karlbeck within the aesthetic perceptions connected to collecting trends of that period. What the study of the Karlbeck Syndicate negotiates is that alongside this aesthetic appreciation an ethnological and archaeological interest in them often determined Karlbeck's selection. However, that there was an artistic appeal connected to these objects within the Modernist movement of this period is undeniable. In the 1925 the British art historian Roger Fry (1866-1934) introduced Chinese art as a significant field of study with its emphasis on aesthetics to the Western public.²² Interestingly, a couple of years earlier he commented on an archaic Chinese bronze vessel on display in a London gallery as a fascinating historical document 'whatever we may

¹⁹ Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art', 195-200.

²⁰ For a discussion on the creation of economic value in art see, George E. Marcus and Fred R. Meyers, 'The Traffic in Art and Culture: An Introduction', in *Traffic in Culture: Refiguring art and anthropology*, eds., George E. Marcus and Fred R. Meyers, 1-54 (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1995); Layton, *The Anthropology of Art*, 5-13.

²¹ Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkin's discussion gives an interesting insight on the history and the different functions and interpretations of non-Western art in the academic field of anthropology and by the Modernist movement. See, Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art: A Reflection on its History and Contemporary', in *The Anthropology of Art*, eds. Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, 1-31.

²² For a biographical account of Fry and his career at the Burlington Magazine see, Charles Holmes, 'Roger Fry and the Burlington Magazine' *BMC* 65 (379) (Oct., 1934): 145-146. Roger Fry, 'The Significance of Chinese Art', in *Chinese Art: An Introductory Handbook to Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, Textiles, Bronzes & Minor Arts*, Burlington Magazine Monograph I, (London: Batsford, 1925), 1-4; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 121-122; Green, 'Ancient China/Modern Art', 90-91.

think of it from an aesthetic point of view'.²³ Overall, his analysis of early Chinese art demonstrated a modernist comparative approach where Western art historical terminology was used in order to explain elements of Chinese art, especially in painting. This is also an approach that predominantly Chinese painting experts of that time like Laurence Binyon (1869-1943) and John C. Ferguson (1866-1945) pursued for exploring a relationship between Western and Chinese art without the intention of suggesting a direct influence or common origin.²⁴ Such studies were principally concerned with the aesthetic development in Chinese art history.²⁵ Their art historical discussions should not be confused with the theme considered in this thesis where through analysis of decorative motifs and stylistic comparisons in archaeological objects some historical inter-cultural affiliations were proposed at the time. However during this period the study of art history and archaeology were closely connected by its scholarship and scholars. Robert Thorp and Wen C Fong recently discussed this first generation of Western art historians who focussed on Chinese art, including their art historical studies of Bronze Age material.²⁶ Robert Thorp described this new group:

²³ Roger Fry, 'Some Chinese Antiquities' *BMC* 43 (249) (Dec., 1923): 276-277 + 280-281+283.

²⁴ For biographical references on Binyon and Ferguson and some of their early publications on Chinese art see, John Hatcher, 'Binyon, Laurence 1869-1943', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); John Hatcher, *Laurence Binyon: poet, scholar, East and West* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1995); Laurence Binyon, *The Flight of the Dragon* (London: J. Murray, 1911); Laurence Binyon, *Painting in the Far East* (London: Edward Arnold, 1913); Laurence Binyon, 'Chinese Painting', in *The Romance of Chinese Art* (Garden City NY: Garden City Publishing, 1936).

Thomas Lawton, 'John C. Ferguson: A Fellow Feeling Fallibility' *Orientalism* 27 (1996): 65-76; John C. Ferguson, *Outlines of Chinese Art* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago/University of Chicago press, 1919); John Calvin Ferguson Family Papers 1899-1962. Archives, Manuscripts, Photographs, Catalog. Smithsonian Institution Research Information System. Smithsonian Institution Archives.

²⁵ For a critique on the aesthetic development in Chinese culture at the time see the article by Carl Whiting Bishop (1881-1942). Bishop was the collector in China for the Freer Gallery at the time. Carl W. Bishop, 'The Aesthetic Development of the Chinese', in *The Romance of Chinese Art*, Robert L. Hobson and others eds., 12-19, (Garden City NY: Garden City Publishing, 1936).

For a biographical reference on Bishop see, C. Martin Wilbur, 'In Memoriam: Carl Whiting Bishop' *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 2 (2) (Feb., 1943) [obituary]: 204-207.

²⁶ For an analysis of the different art historical approaches to Chinese art see, Robert Thorp, 'Studies of Chinese Archaeology/Art History in the West: A Critical Review', in *Exploring China's Past*, eds. Roderick Whitfield and Wang Tao (London: Saffron, 1999): 51-62; Wen C Fong, 'The Study of Chinese Bronze Age Arts: Methods and Approaches', in *The Great Bronze Age of China: An Exhibition from the People's Republic of China*, ed. Wen C Fong 20-34 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980); Wen C Fong, 'Why Chinese Painting is

‘As a group, the common goal of professional art historians was to deploy Eurocentric art-historical concepts and methods on Chinese materials. First, certain kinds of objects were defined for operational purposes as art. As such they were assumed to express the maker’s intentions and to manifest specific stages in a logical evolution. Thus the scholar’s goal was to unlock the pattern of that evolution through the closest and most perceptive visual scrutiny of his objects. Certain patterns were to be expected, most notably a development from simple to complex, and a reaction against the complexity that has been described as a cycle of archaic, classic, and baroque.’²⁷

First and foremost there was amongst these Western scholars a distinction between certain types of medium and meaning of the art work; like that of painting, calligraphy and sculpture with undeniable aesthetic values to objects that used to have operational purposes, such as ritual bronzes, mirrors, belt hooks and tomb goods. What this thesis deliberates is that from the start, there was a difference in the study of archaeological objects to that of painting, calligraphy and religious sculpture, which was regarded as a fine art and ranked differently in the hierarchy within the field of art history.²⁸ Painting and sculpture were also later in date in comparison to the Bronze Age material that was also considered archaeologically important. This meant that in Western scholarship the attitude to Chinese painting was slightly different to that of Neolithic and archaic objects. Painting was and is an art historical study whereas in this period the archaeological objects were also placed within an ethnological and historical framework that focussed on progress, technology and evolution of an ancient culture. Such analysis brings its own complexities. The use of the term origin, as Jonathan Hay explained, is problematic as it implies a specific source in history.²⁹ In his argument origin is always retrospective and described from an ideological standpoint and framed by a historiographic

History’ *Art Bulletin* 85 (2) (Jun., 2003): 258-280; John A. Pope, ‘Sinology or Art History: Notes on Method in the Study of Chinese Art’ *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies* 10 (3/4) (Dec., 1947): 388-417.

²⁷ Thorp, ‘Studies of Chinese Archaeology/Art History in the West’, 59.

²⁸ In his article Wen C Fong addresses some of the themes how Chinese art history depended on a Western evolutionary model especially in painting. Wen C Fong, ‘Why Chinese Painting is History’, 258-280.

²⁹ Johnathan Hay, ‘Questions on influence in Chinese art history’ *Res* 35 (Spring, 1999): 241-261.

institution. It is interesting to keep this in mind throughout this thesis where some of the methodologies used to frame China's bronze art were driven by specific Western ideologies at that time that addressed ancient history and cultures globally.

The representation of the archaic in this thesis, including ritual and ornamental bronzes and jades, belonged to a particular group of scholarship which included anthropological and archaeological questions by its collectors, as opposed to the more popular ceramics from the Tang and Song period admired for their aesthetic appeal. This thesis does not focus on the development of aesthetic trends or the art historical evaluation in early Chinese art in the West. It primarily concentrates on the process of collecting, institutionalisation and historical research of Bronze Age objects as part of a new scholarly approach that was responsible for placing these within the concept of Chinese art. The theme of classification is discussed and elaborates how this was often determined upon existing definitions in associated studies of art history, archaeology and anthropology that were all part of the larger intellectual environment in Western scholarship at the time. It is for this reason that the term also used throughout this thesis to describe the archaic objects is material culture.³⁰ Within the study of material culture the object symbolises the people who created it. This is significant in the field of anthropology, archaeology and art history and therefore the terminology is convenient and neutral in the discussion of the Karlbeck Syndicate objects. Overall it is especially useful in the discussion of non-Western archaeological material, where the object has been removed from its original location and placed within a Western museum context. The term material culture is used here as a tool associated with the different disciplines; art history, archaeology and anthropology. What they have in common is that

³⁰ For a discussion on the term material culture as an analytical tool and its function in the fields of anthropology, archaeology and art history see, Daniel Miller, 'Things ain't what they used to be', in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan Pearce, 13-18, (London: Routledge, 1994); Jules Prown, 'Mind in Matter: an introduction to material culture theory and method', in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan Pearce, 133-138, (London: Routledge, 1994).

they investigate the object's formal qualities, classify according to the framework provided by the discipline and resolve questions regarding its history, function and meaning. It is important to keep this in mind when analysing the institutional and intellectual framing of the Karlbeck Syndicate objects within a Western environment and scholarship.

During the early twentieth century there was no clear definition dictating whether the early dating Chinese objects should be categorised as ethnology, as a branch of studies on cultures in the discipline of anthropology, or art and connected to the discipline of art history; Furthermore, the whole era represents an evolution in academic humanities and sciences, where structural development led to innovative studies on prehistory, archaeology and ethnology.³¹ Studies often focussed on the so-called comparative method, a terminology used then and today to describe a methodology predominantly explored by a group of field anthropologists in the America and Europe, such as Franz Boas (1858-1942), William Halse Rivers (1864-1922) and Alfred Cort Haddon (1855-1940), to understand and study non-Western cultures, their histories and material culture by means of cross-comparison.³² A good

³¹ Not long after ethnology was absorbed within Cultural Anthropology, where the study of art history was eliminated in favour of the social and psychological studies of non-Western cultures. This also had an impact on the field of archaeology which was previously an integral part of ethnology. For further reading on the field of ethnology and ethnographic object-studies see, Glyn Daniel and Colin Renfrew, eds., *The Idea of Prehistory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), 74 and 81; Glyn Daniel, *A Short History of Archaeology* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981); Adam Kuper, *Anthropology and Anthropologists, The Modern British School* (London: Routledge, 1973), 2; John D. Evans, Barry Cuncliffe and Colin Renfrew, eds., *Antiquity of Man: Essays in the Honour of Glyn Daniel* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981); George W. Stocking Jr., *The Ethnographer's Magic and Other Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Madison, Wis. and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 38; Layton, *The Anthropology of Art*, 18-19. Judith Green, William Watson and K.C. Chang discuss this topic in relation to Chinese material culture see, Judith Green, 'Curiosity', 'Art' and 'Ethnography' in the Chinese Collections of John Henry Gray', in *Collectors; Individuals and Institutions*, ed. Anthony Shelton, 111-129 (London and Coimbra, Portugal: Museu Antropológico da Universidade de Coimbra, 2001), 111-129; K.C. Chang, 'Major Aspects of the Interrelationship of Archaeology and Ethnology', *Current Anthropology* 8 (3) (Jun., 1967): 227-243; William Watson, 'The Progress of Archaeology in China', in *Antiquity of Man: Essays in the Honour of Glyn Daniel*, eds., John Evans, Barry Cuncliffe and Colin Renfrew, 65-71.

³² For biographical references on these anthropologists and further reading on their ethnological methodologies used in cultural anthropology see, Robert H. Lowie, 'Biographical Memoir of Franz Boas 1858-1942', *National Academy of Sciences XXIV Ninth Memoir*, Presented to the Academy at the Annual Meeting, (1947): 303-322; George W. Stocking Jr., 'Franz Boas and the Culture Concept in Historical Perspective', *American Anthropologist* 48 (4) (August, 1966): 867-882; Franz Boaz, 'The Limitations of the Comparative Method in Anthropology', *Science* 4 (103) (December, 1896): 901-908; Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'W.H.R. Rivers',

explanation by Ruth Mace and Mark Pagel considered that the comparative method used cross-cultural comparison as a common system of ‘testing hypotheses regarding the co-evolution of elements of cultures or of the adaptiveness of a cultural practice to some aspect of the environment’ in philological and anthropological studies.³³ From an anthropological standpoint, one thing that both Haddon and Boas investigated was to study forms and decorative patterns in the art of non-Western cultures in order to establish historical relationships between groups.³⁴ Although much of their research was conducted on the artistic productions of living societies they also established a framework for classifying archaeological material. This sequencing of data led to the concept of temporal progression; from simple to complex, from figurative to complex, from geometric to naturalistic or from naturalistic to geometric. In doing so, decorative motifs were seen to succeed each other, spreading across boundaries and explored on larger scale evolutionary and cultural diffusion. The idea of cultural diffusion proposed that invention, in particular of technology, art and other elements connected to creative progress in civilizations or societies, could be traced to one single source.³⁵ From this original location the new ideas diffused to other cultures or societies around them, which in turn absorbed these innovative concepts. The diffusionist theory introduced a methodology that used comparative techniques to support its argument. It

Geographical Journal 60 (2) (August, 1922) [obituary]: 162-163; Alison H. Quiggin and E.S. Fegan, ‘Alfred Cort Haddon, 1855-1940’, *Man* 40 (Jul., 1940): 99-100.

³³For further reading on the history of the comparative method and its use in both philology and anthropology see, Kenneth E. Bock, ‘The Comparative Method of Anthropology’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8 (3) (April, 1966): 269-280; Ruth Mace and Mark Pagel, ‘The Comparative Method in Anthropology’, *Current Anthropology* 35 (5) (December, 1994): 549-564; Peter N. Peregrine, ‘Cross-Cultural Approaches in Archaeology: Comparative Ethnology, Comparative Archaeology and Archaeoethnology’, *Journal of Archaeological Research* 12 (3) (September 2004): 281-306; Robert L. Rankin, ‘The Comparative Method’, in *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, eds. Brian D. Joseph and Richard D. Janda, 183-212 (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publ., 2004).

³⁴For a general overview on Boas and Haddon’s methodologies on material culture see, Morphy and Morgan, *The Anthropology of Art*, 5.

³⁵For a contemporary historical view on the theory of diffusionism and the concept of progress see, George W. Stocking, *After Tylor, British Social Anthropology, 1888-1951* (London: Athlone, 1996), 209; Robert H. Winthrop, *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology* (New York and London: Greenwood, 1982); Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Anthropological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 148-206; James Blaut, *The Colonizer’s Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (London and New York: Guilford Press, 1993), 23-41; Kuper, *Invention of Primitive Society*, 8-9.

is important to consider Boas and Haddon's contribution to the study of not only material culture but also to archaeology and art history in general for connecting this methodology to object-studies. This thesis examines how the comparative method was important in the study of early Chinese art and archaeology during this period. However, it should not be confused with the comparative art historical terminology used at the time that explored the significance of Chinese art in comparison with that of Western art. Haddon's systematic and scientific approach to the classification objects is echoed in the terminology used by Karlbeck and his contemporaries and, furthermore, determined how the essentially anthropological theory of diffusionism was connected to the study of ancient cultures; for example, often the term specimen was used to encapsulate the ethnographic nature of the objects in question.³⁶ Recently, Judith Green posits that this terminology was used in the first steps towards categorising objects of early Chinese art and it similarly polarised art and ethnography.³⁷ In a recent Swedish publication, Magnus Fiskesjö discussed the collections of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the process by which the objects of Chinese antiquity came to be defined as art, as opposed to, archaeology.³⁸ Indeed, the labelling of objects as ethnological indicated a cultural position, further demonstrating the social, technological and artistic changes within human societies in the past and present.³⁹ Within this cultural approach to studying historical objects, their stylistic and technological evolution was deliberated.

³⁶ The term specimen was traditionally used by collectors of botany and zoology and is Darwinian in its taxonomy. It was brought into context with objects of ethnological and antiquarian descent by the first curator of the British and Medieval Antiquities at the British Museum Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826-1897) see, Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 185-190; Edward Miller, *That Noble Cabinet* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1974), 313-316; Green, 'Curiosity', 'Art', and 'Ethnography' in the Chinese Collections of John Henry Gray', 11-128; Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 'Objects of Ethnography', in *Exhibiting Cultures: the poetics and politics of museum display*, eds. Ivan Karp and Stephen Lavine, 386-443 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

³⁷ Green, 'Curiosity', 'Art', and 'Ethnography' in the Chinese Collections of John Henry Gray', 11-128.

³⁸ For further reading on Magnus Fiskesjö's examination on the transformation of the identity of Chinese objects in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities collection see, Magnus Fiskesjö, 'En främmande fågel i en förgylld bur: Reflektioner kring svenska Asiensamlingar' [A Foreign Bird in a Golden Cage: On Asia Collections in Sweden], *Res Publica* 65 (2005): 68-80.

³⁹ Pearce, *On Collecting in the European Tradition*, 10; Morphy and Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art', 7.

1.2 The concept of Style in the study of Chinese archaeological objects

To discuss Style in early Chinese art comes with its complexities. The stylistic approach to classify art has been the main tool for art historians.⁴⁰ In archaeology Style is also used as a framework for defining the types of artefacts, where typology and decorative analysis play an important role to understand the function of objects and examine change.⁴¹ In anthropology, as seen in the studies by Haddon and Boas, the art forms of a culture had the possibility to bring to light some historical and social patterns of a society. Haddon concentrated on the formal analysis of art and connected stylistic-evolution to the social reflection of a culture.⁴² His research included the discovery of evolutionary patterns of decorative motifs to answer questions on origin and cultural history:

‘The craving for decorative art having been common to mankind for many thousand years would be a very difficult task to determine its origin. All we can do is to study the art of the most backward peoples, in the hope of gaining sufficient light to cast a glimmer down the gloomy perspective of the past.’⁴³

The perceived breakthrough in ethnological methodology for studying then called living-primitive societies during this period was that an understanding of their past was critical. Ethnologists believed that progress within any technological or cultural changes that were visual was often considered to be imported by a so-called ‘advanced’ culture. Boas connected the formal qualities of art to meaning in his anthropological studies in North America. Notably he constructed a framework that distinguished two separate stylistic expressions, one

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the use and analysis of Style in art history see, Meyer Schapiro, ‘Style (1953)’, in *The History of Art History: A Critical Analogy*, 143-149, ed. Donald Preziosi (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Ernst Gombrich, ‘Style’, in *The History of Art History*, 150-164, ed. Donald Preziosi.

⁴¹ Julian Thomas, *Archaeology and Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2004), 212.

⁴² Haddon’s main conclusion on primitive art was that it evolved from realistic representations of a form into stylistic motifs to again naturalistic forms to degenerate again over time. He believed that the origin of art motifs was one of realism. Alfred Cort Haddon, *The Decorative Art of British New Guinea: A Study in Papuan Ethnography* (New York: AMS Press, 1977); Alfred Cort Haddon, *Evolution in Art* (London: W. Scott, Ltd, 1895).

⁴³ Haddon, *Evolution in Art*, 4.

symbolic and the other formal and highlighted the importance of the geographical contribution of different cultural elements.⁴⁴ Essentially he engaged with the core arguments of art historians at the time, including the analysis of relationships between decorative representations within a historic pattern. For example, his system (although based on objects categorised as Primitive art) was later used to understand the development of decorative motifs on ancient bronze art as part of a study that proposed a universal model in non-Western art by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (b.1908).⁴⁵ However, at this stage in the developing field of Chinese art and archaeology the first process of identifying the objects was to find a coherent classification system that addressed chronological issues and a cultural understanding of the material. It also demonstrates that art historical and anthropological methodology shared common ground.

The anthropological and art historical frameworks effectively had an impact on the study of Chinese material culture and directed Western scholarship on the subject. The conceptualisation of the archaic objects and how they were typologically arranged based upon stylistic analysis within museum-displays and private collections demonstrated then current beliefs in evolution, progress and degeneration within a culture.⁴⁶ Wen C Fong points out that the development of scientific theories of stylistic analysis coincided with the expansion of the Western art historian's interest from the classical phases of Western art to the non-classical styles, including industrial and non-Western art forms.⁴⁷ It is important to

⁴⁴ Franz Boas, *Primitive Art* (New York: Dover, 1955); Franz Boas, 'Primitive Art', in *The Anthropology of Art*, 39-55.

⁴⁵ For biographical references on Lévi-Strauss and his anthropological studies see, Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss* (London: Fontana, 1996); Marcel Hénaff, *Claude Lévi-Strauss and the making of structural anthropology* (Minneapolis and London,.: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Claude Lévi Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books,1963); Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'Split Representation in the Art of Asia and America', in *The Anthropology of Art*, eds. Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, 56-73.

⁴⁶ For general reading on the topics of evolution, progress and degeneration see, Adam Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 64; Daniel, *A Short History of Archaeology*, 138-140; William R. Chapman, 'Arranging Ethnology: A.H.L.F. Pitt-Rivers and Typological Tradition', in *Objects and Others*, ed. George W. Stocking Jr., 15-48 (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

⁴⁷ Wen C Fong, 'The Study of Chinese Bronze Age Arts', 23.

take his words into consideration because during the first decades of the twentieth century this was also deliberated by ethnologists and archaeologists and demonstrative that the three disciplines were closely integrated and even depended on each other.

Thus, to discuss Style in ancient Chinese objects can mean different things to those of different scholarly backgrounds. The terminology is at times vague. Generally, for the art historian the typology of an object is predominantly concerned with shape and surface motifs, for the ethnologist questions of meaning and function supported by the study of evolutionary development in decoration and ornament are important.⁴⁸ Robert Bagley recently explained this complex issue and defined Style as ‘a property of objects- not a property of single objects considered in isolation but of their relationships with others, for example by comparison’.⁴⁹ The method to compare remains an essential analytical tool. In this debate Wen C Fong posits that the style of a work of art is largely determined by the mechanical properties of the material and the technical problems of manufacture.⁵⁰ In studying groups of objects characterisations and defined qualities unite them together, thus, to ascribe a style to an object is to state the result of comparison. This is also a good starting point to define the concept of Style in this thesis, as the divisions between art historical and ethnological analysis of Chinese objects was still undefined at this period, however, their classification depended on a correspondence of typological similarities or differences. Defining the scholars of this period Wen C Fong identified a group of, what he called, stylistic historians who approached notably stylistic changes in phases and so divided the history of China’s bronze art into different cycles of stylistic development.⁵¹ In the 1920s and 1930s these included Osvald Sirén (1879-1966) and Ludwig Bachhofer (1894-1976), who were not only interested in the

⁴⁸ Robert Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes* (New York: Cornell East Asia Series, 2008), 22-23.

⁴⁹ Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes*, 121.

⁵⁰ Wen C Fong, ‘The Study of Chinese Bronze Arts’, 23.

⁵¹ Wen C Fong, ‘The Study of Chinese Bronze Arts’, 23-25.

study of decorative patterns in Chinese bronze art but also proposed evolutionary models of stylistic developments from Simple to Classical to Baroque.⁵² Sirén proclaimed that his principal interest was fixed on the evolution of Style and influence of the historical and religious events in the formation of the arts of China and that the early arts made this study so attractive because of the ever-recurring new forms, styles and influences.⁵³ Bachhofer was a student of the Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945).⁵⁴ Wölfflin was interested in the genealogical development in art and patterns that indicated change, progress and degeneration, much like the ethnologists of his day. This evolutionary approach within art history was a very distinct route to classify objects and understand the so-called visual language in a historical sense that was reflective of the ideas associated with the Modernist movement in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁵⁵ Bachhofer's analysis of Chinese art followed Wölfflin approach. Furthermore, the classification of China's bronze art was later developed by the art historian Max Loehr (1903-1988), a student of Bachhofer, who would go to have a major impact on the field.⁵⁶ Through his stylistic art historical approach Loehr created an effective system that identified and successfully chronologically classified China's bronze art.⁵⁷ However, within the scope of this thesis the view is argued that at this

⁵² For biographical references see, William Watson, 'Osvold Sirén', *BM* 108 (762) (Sept., 1966) [obituary]: 484-485; Bo Gyllensvärd, 'Osvold Sirén', *Kunsthistorisk tidskrift* 35 (1966) [obituary]: 102-105.

Harrie Vanderstappen and Diane M. Nelson, 'Ludwig Bachhofer (1894-1976)', *AAA* 31 (1977-1978): 110-112.

⁵³ Osvold Sirén *A History of Early Chinese Art* (London: E. Benn, 1929), v

⁵⁴ For biographical references and Wölfflin's work see, Wolfgang Born, 'Heinrich Wölfflin', *College Art Journal* 5 (1) (Nov., 1945) [obituary]: 44-47; Heinrich Wölfflin *Principles of Art History: The Problem of Style in Later Art* (New York: Dover, 1950).

⁵⁵ The term visual language is used by a number of different theorists and within a range of definitions. It is often used to understand the meaning or symbols in Western art and how these are translated into words/language. For further reading on the visual language in art see, Meyer Schapiro, *Words, Script, and Pictures: Semiotics of Visual Language* (NY: G. Braziller, 1996); Michael O'Toole *The Language of Displayed Art* (London: Routledge, 2010).

⁵⁶ For biographical reference and Loehr's work see, Max Loehr, *Ritual vessels of bronze age China* (New York: Asia Society, Greenwich, Conn., 1968); Max Loehr, *Chinese bronze age weapons* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956); Max Loehr, 'Weapons and Tools from Anyang, and Siberian Analogies', *American Journal of Archaeology* 53 (2) (Apr.-Jun., 1949): 126-144; Max Loehr, 'The Bronze Styles of the Anyang Period (1300-1028 BC)', *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 7 (1953): 42-53; Robert Bagley, 'Max Loehr 1903-1988', *AAA* 42 (1989) [obituary]: 86-89.

⁵⁷ For Loehr's methodology see, Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes*.

period this specific art historical approach was essentially part of an already established anthropological system and widely used in a number of cultural and archaeological studies.

There are two particular bronze categories that are demonstrative of the focus of new scholarship in Chinese art and archaeology at this time. Both were collected by Karlbeck for the syndicate. The Huai-style bronzes and the Ordos bronzes (Figures 4, 5 and 7). Both groups were part of innovative studies within the field and first promoted through then recently formed Western collections. One of the considerations is how both the new categories were established, classified and inevitably linked to circulating inter-cultural concepts in the study of ancient cultures through the analysis of Style at this period. Notably, this thesis is not a case study on the history of the objects themselves but illustrates how certain methodologies affected their institutional and intellectual framing, classification and display in Western collections. Within this approach the concept of origin and essentially tracing decorative motifs or technologies to a common source was a central tool for establishing a tentative chronology. For example, the Huai-style, discussed in this thesis, was characterised by a number of naturalistic so-called animal-style decorative motifs that were introduced during the late Zhou period.⁵⁸ The bronzes dating from that period, then recently discovered and studied by Andersson, Karlgren and Karlbeck, were first placed within an ethnological and philological perspective and also drew the attention of art historians, like Sirén and Bachhofer. One thing these scholars of Chinese art and archaeology have in common was that their methodology included comparative techniques in order to establish chronological sequences and patterns. At the time, their stylistic studies and classification of

⁵⁸ The term animal-style is often associated with the naturalistic motifs found on bronze art belonging to the steppe cultures of Central Asia, Siberia and Southern Europe. More recently Emma Bunker pointed out that the term is misleading as there was never a general steppes-style. However, in this thesis the term is used in accordance with the terminology used in the Western scholarship of the early twentieth century to define this bronze style. Emma Bunker, 'Sources of Foreign Elements in the Culture of Eastern Zhou', in *The Great Bronze Age of China: A Symposium*, George Kuwayama ed., (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1983): 84-91.

groups provided a number of theories supporting cultural links between ancient China and the West and, furthermore, led to questions on origin, influence and diffusion in Chinese art.⁵⁹

The term Huai-style is no longer in use today; furthermore, the bronzes are now predominantly classified under the periodisation Eastern Zhou, which in turn splits into the Spring and Autumn Annals (770-476 BC) and Warring States (475- 221 BC).⁶⁰ In 1929, the French historian and orientalist René Grousset (1885-1952) popularly proposed the term Huai-style in his publication, *Les Civilisations de l'Orient: Chine*, for this distinct stylistic group of bronzes (Figures 24-25 and 32).⁶¹ They were first discovered in the Huai Valley Region and first collected by Karlbeck and therefore a geographical term was given to generalise and identify their common characteristics. Between 1935 and 1941 Karlgren used the term to describe this group in the museum collection in Stockholm that corresponded to this typical decorative style.⁶² This thesis discusses how the Huai-style was used as an accepted classification model at the time, especially at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and how it inevitably connected to a historical debate on inter-cultural relationships in ancient China. Within this discussion the Huai-style objects were linked to studies on the Ordos bronzes.

⁵⁹ Sirén, *A History of Early Chinese Art*, 57-65; Ludwig Bachhofer, *A Short History of Chinese Art* (New York: Pantheon, 1946); Ludwig Bachhofer, 'On the Origin and Development of Chinese Art', *BMC* 67 (393) (Dec., 1935): 251-264.

⁶⁰ The term Spring and Autumn Annals is a literary translation of the official history of this period. The graphically called Warring States period represents a period of disintegration of the Zhou states, with one of the dominant states the Chu. For further reading on these periods and a good description of the Huai-style see, Choyun Hsu, 'The Spring and Autumn Period', in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 545-586; Wu Hung, 'The Art and Architecture of the Warring States Period', in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, eds. Michael Loewe and Edward Shaughnessy, 651-744; Robert Swallow, 'Appendix 1: Huai Valley Culture', in *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, Robert Swallow, (Peiping: Henri Vetch, 1937).

⁶¹ René Grousset, *Les Civilisations de l'Orient: Chine*, volume II (Paris: G. Crés, 1929-1930), 59-60; René Grousset, *The Civilizations of the East: China*, (London: H. Hamilton, 1934), 44. For bibliographical reference on Grousset see, Marcelle Lalou, 'René Grousset (1885-1952)', *Journal Asiatique* (1952) [obituary]: 387-388.

⁶² Bernhard Karlgren, 'On the date of the Piao bells' *BMFEA* 7 (1935): 65-77; Bernhard Karlgren, 'Ordos and Huai' *BMFEA* 9 (1937): 97-112; Bernhard Karlgren, 'Huai and Han', *BMFEA* 13 (1941): 1-125.

The so-called Ordos bronzes (Figures 7 and 34) are a specific group of ornamental objects first discovered in the Ordos region in the early twentieth century. A number of similar objects have also been found throughout Northern China, Inner Mongolia, Central Asia, Siberia and Southern Russia and therefore the name is somewhat misleading. The objects depict distinct naturalistic animal motifs in bronze art. They are considered non – Chinese in appearance, meaning that they were not executed in the more typical geometric decorative motifs of the Shang and Zhou period associated with ancient Chinese civilizations, including the Huai-style, however, they were also discovered within China's borders.⁶³ The Karlbeck Syndicate showed a specific interest for these, specifically by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the British Museum, each acquiring a great number of these bronzes. Moreover, it demonstrates how studies on Eurasian objects were an integrated subject in the institutionalisation and study of Chinese art and archaeology from an early stage in the development of the discipline. Again, the discussion of the Ordos bronzes in this thesis is not a case study of the objects themselves but an analysis of a specific classification process at the time.

This thesis deliberates, in particular, on the studies of Ordos objects from the 1920s and 1930s by the pioneering group of Western scholars; including Andersson and Karlgren, but also by Ellis Hovell Minns (1874-1953) and Michael Ivanovich Rostovtzeff (1870-1952).⁶⁴

Their publications are prime examples how, in this period, both the Chinese and Ordos

⁶³ For further reading on the Ordos bronze culture see, Nicola Di Cosmo, 'The Northern Frontier in Pre-Imperial China', in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 885-966; William Watson, *Cultural Frontiers in Ancient East Asia*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971); Edwin G. Pulleyblank, 'The Chinese and Their Neighbours in Prehistoric and Early Historic Times', in *The Origins of Chinese Civilization*, ed. David N. Keightley, 449-450 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983); Emma Bunker, 'Ancient Ordos Bronzes', in *Ancient Chinese and Ordos Bronzes*, eds. Jessica Rawson and Emma Bunker, 287-362 (Hong Kong: Oriental Ceramic Council of Hong Kong, 1990).

⁶⁴ For biographical accounts on Minns and Rostovtzeff see, 'Minns, Ellis H.', *Who was Who (1951-1960)* vol. 5 (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1967), 771; Graham Clarke, 'Minns, Sir Ellis Hovel (1874-1953)', in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 38, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 359; Arnaldo Momigliano, 'M.I. Rostovtzeff', *The Cambridge Journal* 7 (1954) [obituary]: 334-346. For their work see, Ellis H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913); Michael I. Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1922).

bronzes were compared and considered within the boundaries of decorative analysis and how it was connected to an examination of a direct cultural relationship between the two neighbouring civilizations.

The Ordos bronzes, then and today, continue to raise a number of questions with regard to their cultural descent; such as possibly being produced by the nomadic Scythian or Xiongnu culture that lived within China's northern borders in ancient times.⁶⁵ At the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of Scythian cultural objects were discovered covering a large geographical area.⁶⁶ Already in 1923, Fry commented in his publication on Scythian art that the bronze Zhou style was inspired by the animal-style of the Scyths and initiated a debate on questions of origin, exchange and influence between China and Eurasia in art historical terms rather than one based on archaeological facts through excavation.⁶⁷ Through a number of known historical records and supported by then recent discoveries there appeared to be a cross-cultural absorption of Hellenic elements within their execution (those making this comparison did so being aware that the Hellenic was associated to the origin of the high culture of western civilization). Speculation on the origin of the Ordos bronzes and their possible influence on the development of Chinese decorative motifs, as analysed by the small group of Western scholars, included arguments that evidently China had embraced cultural elements of the Scyths and respectively Hellenic through cultural diffusion. Indeed, such speculations make the stylistic approach to classification more complex than merely establishing a chronological sequence for the objects in question. It further explored themes like influence and cultural relationship in ancient China. Indigenous decorative and

⁶⁵ The first historical writings on the Scythians date from the Greek historian Herodotus (c. 440 BC). The Scythian Classical Period is dated between 600 BC- AD 300. The first literary references to the Xiongnu were made by the great Chinese historian Sima Qian ('Ssu Ma Ch'ien', c. 135-86 BC). See, George Rawlinson, *The History of Herodotus* (London: John Murray, 1862); Robert Drew, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History* (Washington DC: Centre for Hellenic Studies, 1973); *Ssu Ma Ch'ien: Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).

⁶⁶ Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*; Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in Southern Russia*; Walter Perceval Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozlov Expedition', *BMC* 48 (227) (April, 1926): 168-185.

⁶⁷ Roger Fry, 'Scythian Art', *BMC* 42 (242) (May, 1923): 216-222.

technological development in early Chinese cultures was questioned with arguments of importation and diffusion from the West.

In Eurocentric historical constructions, Hellenic culture is considered the core of Western civilization.⁶⁸ From this point of view, it arguably suggested that the ancient Chinese recognised and accepted a technological and artistic superiority of a Western culture and were inspired or aspired to pursue and develop these distinct cultural elements within their indigenous art.⁶⁹ The theory argued at the time was diffusionist, where a body of influence was defined and indicated a geographically determined historical centre, source or origin, that diffused its superior knowledge to under-developed or so-called primitive societies.⁷⁰ As this thesis will argue, these diffusionist concepts were incorporated in studies by Minns, Rostovtzeff, Yetts and Andersson. To support their research they included the comparative method and incorporated the latest archaeological data, in combination with, ethnological and art historical questions of the objects in question; their decorative motifs, technology, geographical location and origin. Their work encapsulates how the subject included anthropological methodology as an accepted format for classification Bronze Age art.

In 2003 a symposium was organised in Stockholm by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities that reconsidered the topic of Prehistoric East-West contacts; these included the first surveys conducted by Andersson based upon his archaeological discoveries in China in the 1920s.⁷¹ The discussion was founded on the Neolithic and bronze collections he had

⁶⁸ For a discussion on the topic of Eurocentric historical construction see, Peter Burke, 'Western Historical Thinking in a Global Perspective', in *Western Historical Thinking: An Intercultural Debate*, ed. Jörn Rüsen, 15-30 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002).

⁶⁹ For further reading see, Mariquita Villard, 'The Scythian Animal Style', *Parnassus* 3 (5) (May, 1931): 31-32.

⁷⁰ For Eurocentric connotations connected to diffusionism see, Trigger, *A History of Anthropological Thought*, 148-206 and Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, 23-41; Kuper, *Invention of Primitive Society*, 8-9.

⁷¹ The symposium, 'New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology- Johan Gunnar Andersson Commemorative Symposium on the Making of China in the Context of Prehistoric East-West Eurasian Contacts' was held from November 21-23, 2003. The symposium was part of the Annual Asia-Europe Workshop Series sponsored by the Asia-Europe Foundation, ASEF, and the International Institute for Asian Studies, IIAS, in Leiden, The Netherlands. The papers presented by the various scholars are published in a special issue of the *Bulletin*. Magnus Fiskesjö, ed., 'New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology', *BMFEA* 75 (2003).

brought back and his first attempts at tracing the origin of the culture that had produced these objects. Within Andersson's search for answering the question of cultural origin in China he looked at the possibility of diffusion from Central Asia. Instead of applying the term diffusionism Andersson argued his Theory of Western Origin to link objects from ancient cultural sites across Eurasia and China, proposing missing links and clearly indicating a West to East influence.⁷² This thesis highlights some of the topics considered at the symposium in relation to Andersson's legacy and, based upon the archival data and understanding the foundation of the collection at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, add to the contemporary debate.⁷³

Within the discussion of how the analysis of Style was used in Chinese archaeology and to provide an intellectual framework the impact of the diffusionist theory is explored through the European scholarship of that period. In Sweden, this discussion was directed by Andersson, Karlgren and Karlbeck. In Britain, it was led by Yetts, Hobson and Seligman. Yetts' studies are representative of his scholarly approach to Chinese bronzes; Hobson connected the British Museum to the Karlbeck Syndicate; and Seligman characterises the private collector's in the syndicate and innovative scholarship on Chinese culture through his collection. In particular the group of syndicate objects in the Seligman Collection show a clear anthropological aspect to his collecting incentive which is also significant when understanding his professional background. An analysis of the Seligman Collection and the Karlbeck Syndicate is therefore an important consideration in this thesis.

⁷² Johan G. Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', *BMFEA* 15 (1943): 7-304.

⁷³ The symposium concentrated on a selection of bronze objects that Andersson collected at Neolithic sites in Gansu. The small archaic objects are a group of some of the earliest bronzes found in China, even today. The question on the origin of metallurgy is a contemporary topic with no concrete evidence whether the technology was brought into China through cultural interaction from Central Asia or was indigenous. At the symposium Andersson's studies were revisited and contemporary studies discussed the latest archaeological discoveries questioning the origin of China's Bronze Age. The symposium also demonstrated that Andersson's initial studies on cultural interaction should not be dismissed. See, Fiskesjö, 'New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology', 5-8; Shuicheng Li, 'Ancient Interactions in Eurasia and Northwest China: Revisiting Johan Gunnar Andersson's Legacy', *BMFEA* 75 (2003): 9-30; Jianjun Mei, 'Qijia and Seima-Turbino: The Question of Early Contacts Between Northwest China and the Eurasian Steppe', *BMFEA* 75 (2003): 31-54.

Seligman was a well-known anthropologist. He started his career as a participant in the famous British Torres Straits Expedition in 1898 led by the aforementioned Haddon and Rivers. It was the first British ethnographic fieldwork expedition that marked a new era in the professionalization of the discipline.⁷⁴ Although his professional focus was on ethnological fieldwork conducted in the Sudan, Egypt and Sri Lanka, his hobby was collecting and studying Chinese art, archaeology and culture. Seligman was influenced by his mentors Haddon and Rivers and their methodology of stylistic analysis in anthropological data is evident in his work. He published a number of papers on China's material culture, which were predominantly studies based on objects in his private collection.⁷⁵ Many of these were collected for him by Karlbeck. His publications are a clear example on how anthropological methodology was applied to studies on early Chinese art and archaeology and an important supporting factor in this thesis that anthropology influenced the study of Chinese art and archaeology in this period. Seligman's studies were fundamental innovative European scholarship in this field; moreover, this thesis demonstrates how, together with Yetts and

⁷⁴ The participants in the ground-breaking expedition were Haddon, Rivers, Seligman, Sidney Ray (1858-1939), Anthony Wilkin (d. 1901), Charles Meyers (1822-1905) and William McDougall (1873-1946). For further reading on this important expedition see, Alfred Cort Haddon, ed., *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits*, 6 volumes, (Cambridge: University Press, 1907-1935); Stocking, *After Tylor*, 98-115; Keith Hart, *The Place of the 1889 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits in the History of British Social Anthropology*, Lecture Opening St. John's College (Cambridge, 1988). <http://human-nature.com/science-as-culture/hart.html> (accessed 8 September 2008); Anna Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 21-22; Stocking Jr., *The Ethnographer's Magic*, 21-26.

⁷⁵ Seligman's publications on China's material culture: Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'Bird Chariots and Socketed Celts in Europe and China', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*(JRAI) 50 (Jan.-Jun., 1920): 153-158; Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'Further Note on Bird Chariots in Europe and China', *JRAI* 58 (Jan.-Jun., 1928): 247-254; Charles Gabriel Seligman and Horace Beck, 'Barium in Ancient Glass', *Nature* 133 (3374) (30 June 1934): 982; Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'Early Pottery from Southern China', *TOCS* 12 (1934-1935): 26-34; Charles Gabriel Seligman, Horace Beck and P. Richie, 'Early Chinese Glass from pre-Han and pre-Tang Times', *Nature* 138 (3495) (24 Oct., 1936): 721; Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', *Antiquity* XI (41) (Mar., 1937): 5-30; Charles Gabriel Seligman and Horace Beck, 'Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins', *BMFEA* 10 (1938): 1-64; Charles Seligman, 'Chinese Socketed Celts', *Antiquity* Volume XII (1938): 86-87; Charles Gabriel Seligman, 'Early Chinese Glass', *TOCS* 18 (1940-41):19-26.

Hobson, he influenced the direction of the discipline in Britain from an anthropological perspective rather than from an art historical viewpoint.⁷⁶

At the time, pioneering studies shaped the field of Chinese art and archaeology. This area of Western scholarship is therefore an important objective in this thesis. In this retrospect the history of the discipline has, until now, not been considered. Another important aspect that is deconstructed through examination of the archival data is that the collecting activity by Karlbeck connected the founders of the Western branch of the field of Chinese art and archaeology, retrospectively whether they agreed with each other's work or not, and places him at the foreground of this important formative period.

This discussion of the history of the discipline through the important analysis of the mechanics of the collector's group, the Karlbeck Syndicate, further leads to significant study questions and themes that considers the impact of diffusionism in the scholarship of Chinese art, archaeology and collecting within a post-colonial framework.

1.3 Study Questions and themes

The central topic to the question and themes in this thesis is the importance of Karlbeck Syndicate operation and its organisers: Karlbeck, Andersson and Gustaf Adolf (1882-1973, then Crown Prince and reigned King Gustaf VI Adolf 1950-1973) (Figure 14).⁷⁷ It deliberates how they were contributors to the study of Chinese art and archaeology in the West. This leads to a more general viewpoint if collecting is connected to some of the Western principles led by a history of colonisation, and furthermore, whether the institutional framing of Chinese

⁷⁶ Similarly Judith Green and Stacey Pierson discussed how private collectors in Britain led museums in scholarship, classification, display and content to their art collections and that at this point in time the private collections were often quite public through the participation in public exhibitions. Green, 'New Orientations of Ideas', 43-56; Stacey Pierson, 'The David Collection and the Historiography of Chinese Ceramics', in *Collecting Chinese Art: Interpretation*, ed. Stacey Pierson, 57-68.

⁷⁷ Harry M. Garner, 'HM King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden', *TOCS* 39 (1971-1973) [obituary]: x; B.W. Robinson, 'H. M. Gustaf VI Adolf, King of Sweden', *JRAS* 1 (1974) [obituary]: 98; Johan G. Andersson, 'Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf as a Promoter of Archaeological Research', *BMFEA* 4 (1932): 1-14.

collections in Western museums is a form of ‘internal colonisation’ in itself.⁷⁸ The collecting process is placed in a historical context where the tradition of collecting has its origin in Western trade and colonialism and also considers the concept of ownership.⁷⁹ This is also something that more recently Chris Gosden has investigated and in particular how the object functioned as part of colonial change within a society, Western and non-Western.⁸⁰ He points out that by addressing the moral issues connected to colonialism we are forced to recognise that the object acted as an agent in this, and therefore that it was profoundly material. In this relationship Gosden creates a framework that connects the (re-)identification of the objects, as they became part of trade, to (mass)-production and collecting, and indicates that in hindsight this was not categorically a negative thing. In this system the collected object became part of a larger global culture. In today’s terms we identify ourselves within globalization, where the display of these other, non-Western cultures are accepted, integrated and promote the internationality of the objects themselves and their makers. The object may be identified as a symbol and artistic production of a defined nationality, ethnic group and/or culture of the past and present and therefore can relate to different people, individually or as a group, on a number of levels. This also connects to the idea of the visual language of objects as pointed out earlier, where their interpretation is framed within a universalistic approach, where function and meaning, as well as aesthetic appreciation, continues to play an important role within the boundaries of their display. This opens further research questions on the

⁷⁸ For a discussion on the concept of and the term internal colonization see, Amalia Mesa-Bains, ‘The Real Multiculturalism: A Struggle for Authority and Power (1992)’, in *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Paradigm Shift*, ed. Gail Anderson, 99-109 (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2004); James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 1997); Anthony Shelton, ‘Questioning Locality: The UBC Museum of Anthropology and its Hinterlands’, *ethnográfica* 11 (2) (Nov., 2007): 387-406.

⁷⁹ The history of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the collecting activities of Andersson were recently discussed by Magnus Fiskesjö and Perry Johanssen. Magnus Fiskesjö and Chen Xingan, *China Before China: Johan Gunnar Andersson, Ding Wenjiang, and the Discovery of China’s Prehistory*, (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 2004); Magnus Fiskejö, ‘The China Connection: The Cross-Continental Ethics of Johan Gunnar Andersson and the Making of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, *Swedish Archaeologists on Ethics*, ed. Håkan Karlsson, 179-196 (Lindome: Bricoleur Press, 2004).

For further reading on the impact of colonialism on collecting see, Clifford, *Routes*, 188-219; Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, 215-252; Pearce, *On Collecting*, 122- 124.

⁸⁰ Chris Gosden, *Collecting Colonialism; Material Culture and Colonial Change* (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

Chinese collections formed by the Karlbeck Syndicate and on the display of the objects within an institutional environment.

The start of Chinese art engaging as a Western concept during the first decades of the twentieth century is examined through the development of classification systems as it became part of Western collections. One of the ideas that this thesis deliberates is that the syndicate objects were arguably the subject of a tentative taxonomy, established by a number of self-taught specialists. In turn, this shows how the archaeological and historical analysis came from a small, select group with specific intellectual biases. A discussion of the new classification systems for the Huai-style and Ordos bronzes in this thesis is based upon their proposed terminology. This thesis considers whether the suggestion of specific stylistic definitions was related to the growth in Chinese objects in Western collections in this period. It negotiates that those involved with the collections first instigated the problems concerning the origin of Chinese art and determined in subsequent studies what was defined as archaeological evidence to tackle the issues.

The re-occurring themes of cultural diffusionism and the inter-cultural in objects are linked to the institutionalisation of the Chinese collections and form an important intellectual framework for this thesis. A critical view on the Karlbeck Syndicate and its collecting process, as well as, Andersson's discoveries of Neolithic cultures in China and the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, the Seligman Collection as a discrete entity, and a number of exemplary publications dating from that period lead to an original analysis. In doing so it locates the diffusionist theory for the first time within studies of Chinese art and archaeology. Furthermore, it shows how Western studies and collections connected to early Chinese culture were pursued through the purchasing of ancient objects through a thriving art market. In particular, it defines a period when research was based upon objects that had little

provenance or archaeological data. In this environment speculation often led to hypothetical classification methodologies that had some of its roots in anthropology and philology.

1.4 The comparative method and diffusionism in Chinese art and archaeology

One of the applications of the comparative method to China's archaeological objects was to visually connect them to those of other past cultures. In accordance, then popular anthropological methodology placed them within the larger picture of world history. Consequently, this thesis examines how this method formed a basis of Western scholarship for developing a tentative chronology- based on typology and the evolution of style- and how it proposed diffusionism to new archaeological data. In this diffusionist debate an alternative to Darwin's evolutionism was argued for, which in traditional cultural studies promoted the concept of independent invention.⁸¹ Independent invention was believed to link into the idea of psychic unity which supported that all cultural traits can occur autonomously in more than one place and therefore technological and artistic progress was indigenous as opposed to diffusionism where cultural innovations evolved once and were then acquired through borrowing or immigration.⁸² Generally, through diffusionism the theorist is able to link different cultures or civilizations together, by process of identifying a superior or advanced source and a lesser receiving one. In the traditional diffusionist model the superior source is always Western and the Primitive or non-Western receiving progress. Within this historical background this thesis intends to analyse Western sources on Chinese art only as these define a tight framework for the discussion of the classification of Karlbeck Syndicate objects. It was decided not to make a case-study of diffusionism itself and make a comparison between

⁸¹ For a general definition on independent invention see, Kuper, *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, 3.

⁸² For further reading on some of the differences between independent invention and diffusionism see, Paul E. Erickson and Liam D. Murphy, eds., *A History of Anthropological Thought* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2008), 56; Julian H. Steward, 'Diffusion and Independent Invention: A Critique of Logic', *American Anthropologist* 31 (3) (Jul.- Sept., 1929): 491-495.

Western and Chinese studies of that time, which would broaden the topic beyond the scope of this thesis.⁸³

As discussed, the use of the comparative method cross-referenced historical objects and easily linked into the theory of diffusionism that explored the cultural patterns between different societies, in past and present. The historical and social background of this theory is also connected to the idea of the national identity of the European (Western) against the non-European (non-Western). On the other hand, diffusionism engaged with the presumption that the history of non-Western cultures is to a degree invented and based upon interpretations and assumptions by the West.⁸⁴ In order to understand the circulation and popularisation of how these ideas circulated its historical context in Western scholarship is an important consideration. For example, this deliberates how Chinese archaeological data was processed.

This thesis argues that diffusionism is historically connected to the comparative method in the study of Chinese art and archaeology. Both theory and methodology had its roots in the discipline of philology and later appropriated as an anthropological theory in the study of cultures. This concept contemplated the existence of a universal history within a system of a

⁸³ For a discussion on the history of Chinese archaeology in China and the impact of Western scholarship in this field from a Chinese point of view see, Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China' in *Translating Western Knowledge into Late Imperial China* (1999 Göttingen University), eds. Michael Lackner and Natascha Viltzinghoff, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 423-445; Xiaoneng Yang ed., *New Perspectives on China's Past. Chinese Archaeology in the Twentieth Century. Volume I and II*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 33-36; Wang Tao, 'Establishing the Chinese Archaeological School: Su Bingqi and Contemporary Chinese Archaeology' *Antiquity* 71 (1997): 31-39; Robert Thorp, *China in the Early Bronze Age: Shang Civilization* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); K.C. Chang ed., *The Formation of Chinese Civilization: an archaeological perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

For references on Chinese scholarship in the 1930s by the archaeologists Xu Zhongshu (1898-1991) and Fu Sinian (1896-1950) contesting the theory of western origins of Chinese civilization see, Xu Zhongshu 'Zailun Xioa-tun yu Yangshao', in *Anyang fajue baogao* (vol. 3), ed. Li Ji, (Beijing: Guoli zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyuan yanjiusuo, 1931), 523-557; Fu Sinian, 'Yi Xia dongxi shou' in *Qingzhu Cai Yuanpei xiansheng liushiwu sui lunwenji* (vol. 2) (Beiping: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yangjiusuo, 1933): 1093-1134.

⁸⁴ For a discussion on how the history of non-Western cultures was incorporated, invented and accepted within a universal history see, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-5.

Interestingly Jonathan Hay posits that within the reconstruction of China's Bronze Age art history one has to be careful not to be trapped by the idea of a centralised state that influenced all the cultural productions of the regions it rules. In his words 'boundaries of the realm' would have been imagined in both a limiting and constructive sense. Hay, 'Questions on influence in Chinese art history', 241-261.

unifying historiography. In the seventeenth century Anthesius Kircher (1602-1680) first shaped the model that ancient Chinese culture had some of its sources in Western culture that he based on comparative philological and religious studies.⁸⁵ Other theories exploring the possible cultural connections between China and the West by Josephe de Guignes (1721-1800), Cornelius de Pauw (1739-1799) and William Jones (1746-1794) followed.⁸⁶ In the late nineteenth century the French sinologist Albert Terrien De Lacouperie (1845-1894), who was based at University College London, argued in a number of publications for a direct relationship between ancient Chinese civilization and that of ancient Babylonia through comparative philological studies.⁸⁷ In this philological scholarship of the Western specialists each claimed apparent origin of Chinese culture back to Egypt, Scythia, ancient Hindustan or Babylonia. In retrospect, these scholars were responsible for shaping the first Western ideas on China's ancient history by (re-)creating its cultural past. This inevitably led to hypothesis circulating in the early twentieth century that the source of early Chinese art production was anything but indigenous.

The development of such speculations was also formed by those generally studying the origin of mankind and the evolution of civilization within a more scientific sphere. In the nineteenth

⁸⁵ Edwin Van Kley pointed out that in the seventeenth century Chinese history was first discovered by Western missionaries. In these early philological studies comparisons were made between Chinese mythologies and Biblical texts suggesting there was a connection. Stacey Pierson has also pointed out that philology was the first scholarly approach to Asian studies. Edwin van Kley, 'Europe's Discovery of China and the Writing of World History', 358-385; Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation', 12.

For further reading on the impact of philological studies on China's history in the West see, Boleslaw Szczesniak, 'The Origin of Language According to Anthanasius Kircher's Theory', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 72 (1) (Jan.- Mar., 1952): 21-29.

⁸⁶ De Guignes elaborated on Kircher's theory that the Chinese language derived from Egyptian and even suggested that the Chinese were an Egyptian colony. De Pauw suggested a Scythian descent of the Chinese language. Jones argued a possible descent from a military caste of Hindus. Josephe de Guignes, *Mémoire dans lequel on prouve que les Chinois sont une colonie égyptienne* (Paris: Desaint&Saillant, 1759); Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Égyptiens et les Chinois* (Berlin: C.J. Decker, 1773); T.C. Fan, 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies', *The Review of English Studies* 22 (88) (Oct., 1946): 304-314.

⁸⁷ Edward I. Carlyle, 'Terrien De Lacouperie Albert Étienne Jean Baptiste (d. 1894)', rev. Janette Ryan, in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Albert Terrien De Lacouperie, *Early History of the Chinese Civilization* (London: E. Vatou, 1880); Albert Terrien De Lacouperie, *Western Origin of Early Chinese Civilization from 2,300 B.C. to 200 A.D.* (London: Asher& Co, 1894); Albert Terrien De Lacouperie, 'Origin from Babylonia and Elam of Early Chinese Civilization. A Summary and Proofs', *Babylonian and Oriental Record* III (1889): 62-233.

century James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848), a British physician turned ethnologist, was the first to scientifically propose that originally Man derived from one source, which he placed in ancient Egypt.⁸⁸ In addition, the impact of Charles Robert Darwin's (1809-1882) theory of evolution on historical studies continued to be an integral part of the educational system in Britain well into the first decades of the 1900s but started to be challenged within the intellectual environment.⁸⁹ In 1871 two British anthropologists Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and John Lubbock (1834-1913) respectively published their theories on Primitive Man and its relation to prehistory providing a framework that looked at the past in order to understand the present.⁹⁰ Overall, their studies popularised the idea of progress and according to Glyn Daniel (1914-1986), by doing so, a feeling of superiority of modern Western civilization was brought into context with studies of a culture's past.⁹¹ This is important because it explains one of the driving forces that made it plausible for diffusionism to be used as a tool for analysing historical objects. Another significant contribution by Lubbock was the development of the Three Age System, which he used to support and illustrate his ideas. This system was initially proposed by the Dane Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (1788-1865) to classify the technological developmental stages in prehistory into Stone, Bronze and Iron based upon the representation that progress had occurred.⁹² Thomsen first used this model as a basis for exhibiting ancient objects within a chronological sequence for the National Museum in Denmark. As a review to the application of the Three Age Model in the nineteenth century, Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins determined that it emphasised classification by dating the objects and also focussed on appreciating, appraising and

⁸⁸ James C. Prichard, *Analysis of Egyptian Mythology and Researches into the Physical History of Man*, 1819. For a critique on Prichard's theory see, Kuper, *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, 206; George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York and London: Free Press and Collier Macmillan, 1987), 48-53.

⁸⁹ For Darwin's evolutionary theory see, Charles Robert Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, (1858); Charles Robert Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, (1871).

⁹⁰ Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London: J. Murray, 1971); John Lubbock, *Origin of Civilization and the primitive condition of Man* (London: Longmans, Green, 1882).

⁹¹ Daniel, *A Short History of Archaeology*, 97.

⁹² Bo Gräslund, 'The Background to C.J. Thomsen's Three Age System', in *Antiquity and Man*, Evans, Cuncliffe and Renfrew eds., 45-40; Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society*, 64.

authenticating them as part of their cultural significances, something that was later also taken into consideration by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities when collecting and the institutional framing these objects.⁹³ In that same period, Augustus Pitt-Rivers (born Lane-Fox, 1827-1900) exhibited the ethnological object in a new type of museum display in Britain using a taxonomic and typological structure.⁹⁴ This meant that essentially the comparative method was used in museum display. These frameworks defined the institutionalisation of cultural and historical objects for some time to come, including those of early Chinese art and archaeology. It had a lasting effect on anthropological and archaeological scholarship because it set the format of systematic display. This theme will be further discussed through analysing the first exhibitions at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in the early 1930s when they displayed the objects within a sequence that demonstrated evolutionary progress through comparison. In this sense, the comparative-method was applied for understanding the development and differentiations of technology, decoration and styles. This included the proposal of cross-cultural relationships. Such display-models are one explanation as to why early Chinese objects, like those collected by Karlbeck, were at first classified as ethnological and later affiliated with art.

The application of the comparative method therefore is a crucial theme examined in this thesis. This methodology coincided with important archaeological discoveries in China but

⁹³ Morphy and Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art', 1-31.

⁹⁴ Pitt-Rivers was an evolutionist and follower of Darwin's theories and concerned with the ethnological aspect of objects. However, in his studies on the history and origin of the human race he attempted to trace mankind back to one single source and reconstruct history on human racial differentiation and interconnection. Equally the British zoologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), Darwin's protégé, was an important figure in the history of evolutionary narrative within the museum concept in Britain. Some years later he helped his student Haddon organise the Torres Straits expedition.

For further reading on both Pitt-Rivers and Huxley see, Herman J. Braunholtz, 'Presidential address 1938. Ethnographical Museums and the Collector: Aims and Methods', *JRAI* 68 (Jan.- Jun., 1938): 1-16; Sherrie L. Lyons, *Thomas Huxley: The Evolution of a Scientist* (Amherst NY: Prometheus Books, 1999); Thomas H. Huxley, *Evidence to Man's Place in Nature* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1873); Chapman, 'Arranging Ethnology', 15-48.; David K. van Keuren, 'Museums and Ideology: Augustus Pitt-Rivers, Anthropological Museums, and Social Change in Later Victorian Britain', *Victorian Studies* 28 (1) (Autumn, 1984): 171-189.

For biographical references see, Alfred C. Haddon, 'Pitt-Rivers', *Nature* 42 (1900) [obituary]: 59-60; Laurence Gomme, 'Liet.- general Augustus Pitt-Rivers', *Folklore* 11 (2) (Jun., 1900) [obituary]: 185-187.

also, in an art historical sense, through the proposing of sets of universal forms of representation where basic developments were labelled as Archaic, Classic and Baroque and applied to non-Western art. This included a cultural and aesthetic appreciation of the archaeological objects in art collections and museums. This thesis will focus on the scientific and historical motivations of the institutionalisation of these objects rather than the aesthetic and address some of the relevant questions raised through the publications of Andersson, Hobson, Laufer, Yetts and Seligman.

Notably, the first decades of the twentieth century in Britain delineate the complexity of the diffusionist argument that led to some radical ideas where Europe was placed at the centre of cultural origin. In these discussions, ancient Egypt and a number of specific sites in Central Asia was acknowledged as the cradle of all civilizations.⁹⁵ This movement was led by Grafton Elliot Smith (1871-1937) and his student William James Perry (1887-1949).⁹⁶ At the same time, a more moderate diffusionist approach was suggested by the British archaeologist Vere Gordon Childe (1892-1957) who brought a model of culture-complexes to the discipline of archaeology.⁹⁷ The culture-complex system demonstrated that an isolated centre of advanced technological and cultural development diffused superior cultural elements and

⁹⁵ The theories discussed in the late 1920s and early 1930s-corresponding with what is deemed in today's terminology as hyper- or heliodiffusionist.

⁹⁶ Smith was an anatomist who was working at University College London (UCL) at the time. He later became professor of anatomy at Cambridge University. Perry was a geographer and anthropologist, also working at UCL at the time. For biographical references see, Warren R. Dawson, *Sir Grafton Elliot Smith* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938); A.P. Elkin and W.G. Macintosh, *Grafton Elliot Smith: the man and his work* (Sidney: Sidney University Press, 1974); James L. Mitchell, 'William James Perry: A Revolutionary Anthropologist' *The Millgate* 27 (1) (1932): 498.

For their publications see, Grafton E. Smith, *Migrations of Early Culture* (Manchester, London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1915); Grafton E. Smith, *The Diffusion of Culture* (London: Watts&Co., 1933); Grafton E. Smith, *Human History* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1930); Grafton E. Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon* (Manchester: University Press, Longmand& Co., 1911); Grafton E. Smith, *In the Beginning: The Origin of Civilization* (London: Gerald Howe, 1928); Grafton E. Smith, *The Ancient Egyptians and the Origin of Civilization* (London: Harper&Brothers, 1923).

William J. Perry, *Children of the Sun: a study in the early history of civilization* (London: Methuen, 1923); William J. Perry, *Growth of Civilization* (Middx: Penguin, 1937); William J. Perry, *Origin of Magic and Religion* (London: Methuen, 1923); William J. Perry, *Gods and Men: the attainment of immortality* (London, 1927).

⁹⁷ For a critique on Childe's contribution to the field of archaeology see, Robert J. Braidwood, 'Vere Gordon Childe, 1892-1957', *American Anthropologist* 60 (4) (Aug., 1958): 733-736; Andrew Sherratt, 'V. Gordon Childe: Archaeology and Intellectual History', *Past and Present* 125 (Nov., 1989): 151-185.

technology to surrounding societies.⁹⁸ This method initially promoted diffusionist ideas among the studies of past cultures and helped to classify archaeological objects. This thesis examines how such theoretical influences were applied to the study of Chinese art and archaeology.

The popularity of the diffusionist theory was short lived but during this period it took centre stage in the anthropological and archaeological debate surrounding cultural history. In 1929, the Austrian-born American anthropologist Robert Harry Lowie (1883-1957), a student of Boas, commented on the intellectual environment implementing these ideas.⁹⁹

‘It has always been much easier to borrow an idea from one’s neighbour than to originate a new idea; and a transmission of cultural elements, which in all ages has taken place in many different ways, it has been one of the greatest promoters of cultural development [...]When we examine the higher civilizations of the Old World we are met with evidence that one of the conditions of development is the contact of peoples and the consequent diffusion of cultural elements. This appears clearly from a consideration of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia and China’.¹⁰⁰

This cultural debate is reflective of a defined Eurocentric *Zeitgeist* where such ideas supported the superiority of the West over other cultures, in the ancient past and historical present.¹⁰¹ As Werner Muensterberger recently commented:

‘Taste, choice and styles are inevitably affected, albeit often unconsciously, by the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit and socio-cultural climate of an era.’¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Originally the concept of culture-complexes was developed during the later part of the nineteenth by the German Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) who published a three volume compilation *Völkerkunde*, which was translated into English as the *History of Mankind*. For further reading on Ratzel and his theory see, Friedrich Ratzel, *Völkerkunde*, 3 volumes (Leipzig, 1887-1888); Friedrich Ratzel, *History of Mankind* (London: Macmillan&Co, 1904); Harriet G. Wanklyn, *Friedrick Ratzel. A biographical memoir and bibliography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961).

⁹⁹ For a biographical reference on Lowie see, Robert H. Murphy, *Robert H. Lowie*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

¹⁰⁰ Robert H. Lowie, *Culture and Ethnology*, (New York: Peter Smith, 1929), 67-73.

¹⁰¹ *Zeitgeist* describes ‘the spirit of the age; the trend of thought or feeling in a period, esp. As reflected in its literature, art, etc.’ *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, Volume 2, Fifth Edition, N-Z, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

The study of Chinese culture through archaeological objects is a recurring theme in this thesis. Eurocentric ideals connected to collecting and the attitude to the Chinese collections in Sweden and Britain in particular were often supported by its scholarship where cultural diffusionism was an accepted element in the classification of early Chinese art outside China. A demonstration of such a typical approach is noted in the then current publications by Charles Kliene (1867-1952) and the historian Herbert Chatley (1895-1947), where both included nineteenth century philological studies to support new archaeological data to conclude that Chinese civilization had its roots in the West.¹⁰³ Their publications should be viewed in a larger, more popular context, where China's history was presented as a combination of philological, mythological and archaeological studies that were in essence diffusionist in nature.

How the institutional and intellectual framing of the objects collected by Karlbeck were located within this historical context, where the idea of the West- meaning from European cultural descent- and Others- meaning culturally non-Western- validated some Eurocentric attitudes in Western scholarship at the time, is a theme in itself.¹⁰⁴ In this contextualisation China is considered as the Other because of the drastic cultural differentiation with the West.¹⁰⁵ The conception of this delineation is an issue heavily scrutinised by scholars like Edward Said (1935-2003), Robert Young and James Clifford.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Werner Muensterberger, *Collecting: An Unruly Passion, Psychological Perspective*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1994), 8.

¹⁰³ Their publications included the original philological comparative studies by de Guignes, de Pauw, Terrien De Lacouperie and Joseph Edkins (1823-1905) all had argued that the origin of Chinese culture was connected to Western civilization. Herbert Chatley, 'The Origin and Antiquity of the Chinese People', *China Journal of Science and Arts* (CJSA) 3 (1925): 244-351; Herbert Chatley, 'Did Ancient Chinese Culture come from Egypt?', *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (JNCBRAS) LX (1929): 79-83; Charles Kliene, 'Some similarities in Chinese and ancient Egyptian culture', *JNCBRAS* LIV (1929).

¹⁰⁴ For further reading on Eurocentric Diffusionism see Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, 1-13.

¹⁰⁵ Zhang Longxi, 'The Myth of the Other: China in the Eyes of the West', *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1) (Autumn, 1988): 108-131.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Routledge and Paul Kegan, 1978); Robert Young, *White Mythologies, Writing History and the West*, (London: Routledge, 1990), 126-130; Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, 225-276.

Said, for example, commented that such ideas were created Western concepts of the Orient that supported its own historical path:

‘[...]the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given reality and presence in and for the West’.¹⁰⁷

The Chinese scholar Zhang Longxi connected Said’s consideration to some of the bias Western perceptions of China and how these affected ideas on its history.¹⁰⁸ For example, he deliberates its function and how the West needed to culturally and historically cross-reference these views:

‘The East or the Orient, which stands for the Other over against which the West has been able to identify itself, is indeed a conceptual given in the process of self-understanding of the West, and an image built up in that formative process as much as the West itself.’¹⁰⁹

Zhang Longxi’s argument is an example of how misconceptions and ideas about China and its history became rooted within accepted Western attitude towards its cultural history. By doing so they were able to understand and place themselves in their own historical context. Retrospectively, Robert Young commented on the two different aspects that Said addressed in his presentation of Orientalism- one being a fabricated representational of a culture’s past; the other being the real or present- and how such concepts were separated from each other by the West.¹¹⁰ In this manner, China’s past and present are essentially two different things, the past being orderly in coherence with Western civilizations and the present a ‘fallen empire’ and in decline.¹¹¹ This thesis posits that by the time the first Western studies on China’s material culture, meaning art and archaeology, started to take form in the first decades of the

¹⁰⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁸ Zhang Longxi, ‘The Myth of the Other’, 114.

¹⁰⁹ Zhang Longxi, ‘The Myth of the Other’, 114.

¹¹⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, 222-223; Young, *White Mythologies*, 130.

¹¹¹ That China was, according to Catherine Pagani, a ‘fallen empire’ and in decline was one the Eurocentric perceptions at the time. See, Catherine Pagani, ‘Chinese material culture and British perceptions of China in the nineteenth century’, in *Colonialism and the Object*, Barringer and Flynn eds., 28-40 (London: Routledge, 1998).

twentieth century, the preconceptions of China's history were already entangled with the new scientific truths through archaeological research and the discovery and excavation of ancient sites.

Within this sphere, the role of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in directing the study of Chinese art and archaeology in the West is an important theme in this thesis. Founded as a research institute for Chinese archaeology, their team of in-house specialists- led by its curator Andersson and the sinologist/philologist Karlgren – directed their studies on its collection and on objects in private collections associated with the museum (Figures 11 and 12) and in doing so constructed a basis for this new and growing academic field outside China. Notably Karlgren sought to determine chronological information through his classification of decorative motifs in addition to his translations of archaic script found on the ancient bronzes.¹¹² Although his classification technique proved to be flawed his attempts represent some of the first Western studies of China's archaic bronzes. This thesis focuses on classification process within this Western scholarship rather than the history of the discipline itself and intends to condense the study of this theme to Western publications of that period, as opposed to, a comparison of studies conducted in Chinese or other languages that considered similar topics.¹¹³

In retrospect, during the early twentieth century archaeological objects belonging to an archaic past were systematically approached in the same way as those belonging to what

¹¹² Bernhard Karlgren, 'The Dating of Chinese Bronzes' *JRAS* 1 (Jan., 1937): 33-39; Herrlee G. Creel, 'Karlgen's System for Dating Chinese Bronzes' *JRAS* 3 (Jul, 1936): 463-473.

For an analysis and critique on some of the failures of Karlgren's methodology see, Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes*, 10-48.

¹¹³ For a reference on Chinese scholarship in the 1930s see, Xu Zhongshu 'Zailun Xiaotun yu Yangshao', 523-557; Fu Sinian, 'Yi Xia dongxi shou', 1093-1134.

For the history of the academic discipline of Chinese art and archaeology in Britain see, Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation', 2-52.

was also referred to as the living primitive by the anthropologists at the time.¹¹⁴ Initially, the recreation of China's past through object studies was processed in the same manner as those belonging to primitive cultures. Both archaeology and anthropology relied on the collecting of ethnological data, often on site. This thesis will address through the study of archival data and a number of primary sources how questions on origin, evolution and progress considered in both academic fields were justified through the analysis of stylistic and technological development of Chinese objects in Western collections and how this affected scholarship.

1.5 Sources

The examinations and critical analysis in this thesis are based on original primary unpublished archival material on Karlbeck and the Karlbeck Syndicate. This includes English translations from original Swedish archival data and presented here for the first time. The complete set of the Karlbeck Syndicate archive is located at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities: The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive Volumes I-IX. Two subsequent archives dealing with the British operations are in London: The Karlbeck Syndicate File at the Department of Asia at the British Museum and The Karlbeck Syndicate Papers at the Asian Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Two fieldwork trips to Stockholm to study the archives and a presentation of this research at a workshop organised at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in the fall of 2005 proved essential in the completion of this thesis.¹¹⁵

The archives include original copies of Karlbeck's newsletter-reports, which he wrote to the syndicate during his expeditions in China (Figure 15). The newsletter-reports feature detailed description of purchase lists and tales of in his words 'treasure hunts', as he often referred to his acquisition of objects (Figure 16). Respectively, these primary sources show the interests

¹¹⁴ For general reading on how anthropological studies of these so-called primitive societies were approached in the West during the first decades of the twentieth century see, Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society*, 4-5; Daniel and Renfrew, *The Idea of Prehistory*, 81; Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, 215-251.

¹¹⁵ Workshop at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, Autumn 2005.

of the individual collectors involved and to what extent they were concerned in the syndicate operations. In addition, the prices paid for each object in China are included in his reports. They provide an extremely important documentation of the history of the market value of Chinese antiquities in China and Europe in the 1920s and 1930s and collecting in general.

There are two auto-biographical publications by Karlbeck himself, one in Swedish and one translated into English that recapitulate his adventures and collecting activities between 1908 and 1934.¹¹⁶ His scholarly work is addressed through the articles he published between 1925 and 1967.¹¹⁷ The analysis of these primary sources, importantly, considers the public identity and personal character of Karlbeck. In addition, private letters in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities archive and his obituary written by his colleagues and friends illustrate the appreciation as a collector and specialist.¹¹⁸ It's within this boundary of these primary sources that the work and persona of Karlbeck is analysed. No Chinese sources on Karlbeck surfaced

¹¹⁶ Orvar Karlbeck, *Tsin pu tie lu: upplevelser och minnen från en tjugosexårig vistelse Kinas inre* (Stockholm: O.L. Svanbäck's boktryckerie., 1938); Orvar Karlbeck, *Skattsökare i Kina (Treasure Seeker in China)*, trans. Naomi Walford, (Stockholm and London: the Cresset Press, 1957).

¹¹⁷ A full list of Karlbeck's publications: Orvar Karlbeck, 'Ett och annat Kinas arkeologi', *Svenska Orientsällskapets Arsbok*, (1923); Orvar Karlbeck, 'Ancient Chinese bronze weapons', *CJSA* III (3-4) (1925): 127-132.; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors', *CJSA* IV (1) (1926): 3-9; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes on the archaeology of China', *BMFEA* 2 (1930): 193-207; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Anyang Moulds', *BMFEA* 7 (1935): 39-60; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Anyang Marble Sculpture', *BMFEA* 7 (1935): 61-69; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Some Chinese bronze Hu from Anyang', *Ethnos* 2 (1) (1937): 2-6; Orvar Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Corean Bronzes at Hallwyl House*, (Stockholm: Hallwyl House, 1938); Orvar Karlbeck, 'A covered cauldron of Ting type', *Ethnos* 4 (3-4) (1938); Orvar Karlbeck, 'Some archaic jade pendants and their dating', *BMC* 73 (425) (Aug., 1938): 68-70+72-74; Orvar Karlbeck, 'An early leather belt', *Ethnos* 8 (3) (1943); Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes on the wares from the Chia-tso potteries', *Ethnos* 8 (3) (1943): 81-95; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Early Yüeh Ware', *OA* 11 (1) (1949): 3-7; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Proto-porcelain and Yueh Ware', *TOCS* 25 (1949-1950): 33-48; Orvar Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Ceramic Art of China and other Countries of the Far East at the Hallwyl Museum*, (Stockholm: Hallwyl Museum, 1950); Orvar Karlbeck, 'The Charles B. Hoyt Collection: Some comments on the Memorial Exhibition Catalogue', *Far Eastern Ceramic Bulletin* (FECB) IV (3) (Sept., 1952): 18-19; Orvar Karlbeck, 'On Reported Kilns near Lin-Hsien', *FECB* IV (3) (Sept., 1952): 20; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Further Remarks on Chia Tso', *FECB* IV (4) (Dec., 1952): 15-16; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes from the wares of the Chia-tso potteries', *FECB* IV (4) (Dec., 1952): 9-14; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Selected Objects from ancient Shou-chou', *BMFEA* 27 (1955): 41-130; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes on the fabrication of some early Chinese mirror moulds', *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 18 (1964):48-54; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Notes on some Chinese wheel-axle caps', *BMFEA* 39 (1967): 53-74.

¹¹⁸ For some of these references on Karlbeck by his friends and colleagues see, Johan G. Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and The Karlbeck Collection', *BMFEA* 2 (1930): 81-132; Robert L. Hobson. No. 4782. 9 May 1931. Standing Committee Notes. Central Archive. British Museum London, 8; *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities: 1-10 September 1933*. (Stockholm, 1933), 3; Robert L. Hobson, 'On Some Potteries in Kiangsu and Anhwei', *TOCS* 4 (1924-1925): 25-34.

during the period that research was conducted. More recently, an article- in Swedish- by Perry Johansson commented on his relationship with Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and includes some of the ethical principles connected to this discussion.¹¹⁹ Issues such as the export of antiquities is briefly discussed and primarily based on examination of original archival data. It provides a clear insight on Karlbeck's own perceptions on the trade in archaeological objects at the time. It is not the intention to compare Karlbeck with other Western collectors that operated in China previously, contemporarily or later because the syndicate is treated as a unique entity. Indeed, it would be an interesting commentary to analyse Karlbeck against some of his contemporaries and therefore a number references are made to his encounters with some of his rival collectors throughout this thesis.

Recently, Nicky Levell discussed the Seligman Collection of Chinese Art and, in doing so, addressed Karlbeck's association with the collection.¹²⁰ There are two catalogues covering the collection: one on ceramics by John Ayers; the other dealing with the bronzes by Howard Hansford (1923-1973).¹²¹ Also, William Waton (1917-2007) co-published with Soame Jenyns (1904-1976) on 'The Seligman Gift' to the British Museum and particularly dealt with acquisitions that were motivated by his ethnological interest.¹²² Although these

¹¹⁹ It is not clear whether Perry Johansson examined the complete archival data in Stockholm and London concerning the purchasing of antiquities by Karlbeck as provided in this thesis. Perry Johansson, 'Orvar Karlbeck på skattjakt: Historien bakom Östasiatiska museets svenska kinasamlingar', *Nordisk Museologi* 2 (2005): 28-44. (privately translated into English as 'Orvar Karlbeck's treasure hunt: the story of the Chinese collections of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities' by Tom Adesko, 2008); Perry Johansson, 'Rescuing History from the Nation: The untold origins of the Stockholm Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', *Journal of the History of Collections* 21 (1) 2009: 111-123.

¹²⁰ Nicky Levell, 'Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste, The Seligman Collection of Chinese Art', in *Collectors: Expressions of Self and Other*, ed. Shelton, 73-90.

¹²¹ For biographical references on Hansford see, William Watson, 'Howard Hansford', *JRAS* 1 (1974) [obituary]: 100; Ben Neave-Hill, 'Howard Hansford', *TOCS* 39 (1971-1973) [obituary]: xi. John Ayers, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art. Chinese and Korean Pottery and Porcelain*, volume 2, (London: Published for the Arts Council of Great Britain by L. Humphries, 1964); Howard Hansford, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art: Chinese, Central Asian and Luristan Bronzes and Chinese Jades and Sculptures*, volume 1, (London: Published for the Arts Council of Great Britain by L. Humphries, 1966).

¹²² William Watson and Soame Jenyns, 'The Seligman Gift', *BMQ* 15 (1941-1950): 95-103. For biographical reference on Watson and Jenyns see, William Watson, 'Roger Soame Jenyns 1904-1976', *BM* 119 (887) (Feb., 1977) [obituary]: 79; 'Watson, William', *Who's Who* (2007), (London: Adam & Charles Black, 2007), 2387.

publications are secondary sources they are used to create a complete insight into the original collection that has since been split between the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Seligman's contribution to the study of early Chinese art in Britain is addressed using primary sources based on the Seligman Papers at the London School of Economics Archive and a number of his publications. This thesis further elaborates on his collecting activity through the syndicate and his specific selection process. In turn, it links to a consideration of these articles and the topic of cultural diffusion in Chinese art and archaeology.

Further historical examination of British scholarship- such that of Yetts and Hobson- and the Karlbeck Syndicate is based upon primary archival data (situated at the School of Oriental and African Studies Archive; The Papers on the Chinese Department at the Courtauld Institute, The Robert Lockhart Hobson Papers and the Standing Committee Minutes both at the Central Archive at the British Museum Library).

This study is principally support by the investigation of the named archives, and further substantiated through primary original publications by a number of Western specialists of that period. The English language journals that published many of the studies reflect the intellectual environment at the time, these include; *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, *The China Journal of Science and Arts*, *Antiquity*, *Artibus Asiae*, *Transactions of the Ceramic Society* and the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*.¹²³ Stacey Pierson recently commented that such journals brought Chinese art to the attention of a wider public and had a general Eurocentric approach to the subject.¹²⁴

¹²³ Abbreviations of these journals are used in the footnotes see, Bibliography.

¹²⁴ Pierson, 'Collectors, Collections and Museums, 1560-1960', 123.

Secondary sources on Chinese art and collecting in Britain and Sweden that are considered besides the already named Craig Clunas, Stacey Pierson, Judith Green and Watson, also include the Swedish experts Bo Gyllensvärd (1916-2004) and Nils Palmgren (1890-1955).¹²⁵

On the intellectual and historical discussion of diffusionism, post-colonial theory and collecting, notable contextual discussion is found in the works of James Clifford, Susan Pearce, Susan Stewart, Mieke Ball and Carol Duncan.¹²⁶ By including contemporary discussions on object-studies, art history and collecting the Karlbeck Syndicate is deconstructed. Contemporary analytical methodologies by the likes of Tony Bennett considering concepts in the studies concerning museology are addressed in order to understand the private collectors and institutions.¹²⁷ To direct the discussion on the syndicate the analysis engages the definitions by Howard Morphy, Morgan Perkins and Robert Layton, where the study of art in anthropology is conceptualised as an integrated tool for understanding a specific culture.¹²⁸

Eurocentrism and material of non-western cultures is a topic recently deliberated by scholars like Sally Price, Robert Young, Adam Kuper, James Blaut, Tim Barringer, Tom Flynn,

¹²⁵ For biographical references on Gyllensvärd and Palmgren see, Orvar Karlbeck, 'Nils Palmgren: In Memoriam', *FECB* VII (4/32) (Dec., 1955) [obituary]: 27-28.

Magnus Fiskesjö, 'Bo Gyllensvärd, 1916-2004, in memoriam', H-Net (16 January 2004), <http://h-net.msu.edu> (visited 6 April 2011).

For publications by Gyllensvärd and Palmgren see, Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes': 1-16; Bo Gyllensvärd, 'King Gustaf VI Adolf's Approach to Chinese Art', *TOCS* 44 (1979-1980): 31-46; Bo Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Art from the Collection of H.M. King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden* (London: The British Museum, 1972).

Nils Palmgren, *Selected Antiquities from the Collection of Gustaf Adolf, Crown Prince of Sweden* (Stockholm: Generalstabens litografiska anstalts förlag, 1948).

¹²⁶ Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*; Pearce, *On Collecting*; Susan Pearce, ed., *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, (London: Routledge, 2005); Susan Stewart, 'Objects of Desire', in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, 254-257 (London: Routledge, 2005); Mieke Ball, 'Telling Objects: A Narrative Perspective on Collecting', in *The Cultures of Collecting*, eds. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, 97-115 (London: Reaktion, 1993); Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: inside public art museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

¹²⁷ Tony Bennet, *The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

¹²⁸ Morphy and Perkins, *The Anthropology of Art*; Layton, *The Anthropology of Art*.

George Marcus and Fred Meyers.¹²⁹ This thesis refers to their studies as a post-colonial understanding of this complex topic.

1.6 Organisation of the thesis

This study is thematically constructed through the division of material into six chapters, each chapter of topical coherence. The first chapter, the Introduction presents the different aspects the subject entails and important aspects of the analysis of the archival data. The primary archival material substantiates and explicates the fundamental issues of the thesis and promotes a greater knowledge of this topic.

The following chapter, Orvar Karlbeck (1879-1967): a collector and a scholar, examines the first set of archival data on Karlbeck and his collecting activities in China. This chapter addresses the biographical issues surrounding his persona. This leads to Chapter 3, where the ‘forerunners and backers’ of the Karlbeck Syndicate are considered, and why the syndicate was an important creation within the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. Again, the primary sources form the core of this analysis.

Notably, this chapter examines aspects of the foundation of the museum collection and the history of Swedish collecting activities in China. Andersson’s role in the establishment of the Swedish China Research Committee proves an essential element for the study of the collection and later purchases from Karlbeck.¹³⁰ Andersson’s early scholarship is examined as an example of the methodology used at that time for classifying China’s archaeological objects, this includes the Neolithic objects he brought back to Sweden. This chapter also introduces the Gustaf Adolf as one of the great promoters of early Chinese art of his time, and

¹²⁹ Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Young, *White Mythologies*; Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society*; Blaut, *The Colonizer’s Model of the World*; Barringer and Flynn, *Colonialism and the Object*; Marcus and Meyers, *The Traffic in Culture*.

¹³⁰ Johan G. Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, *BMFEA* 1 (1929): 11-27.

analysis his direct association with the museum. The study of archival material in this chapter considers the specifics of Karlbeck's connection with the museum and his first collecting expedition to China in 1928 including a discussion on the museum's first exhibition and the display of the objects collected on this trip.

Chapter 4, The Karlbeck Syndicate, examines the mechanics and planning of the syndicate entirely through original analysis of the archival material. The first syndicate expedition (1930-1931) identified the seventeen names of the Swedish participants and all the objects purchased. Not all of the Swedish collectors are discussed in the analysis but some individuals connected to the museum are considered give a hitherto undisclosed perspective of Chinese collections in Sweden. Two subsequent expeditions (1931-1932 and 1934), and the changing nature of the syndicate's international affiliation, is again considered through the examination of archival data. This includes the names of its members. Not all of the collectors are individually discussed because this thesis primarily focuses on those that were directly involved with the mechanics of the syndicate and scholarship connected to the objects. In this chapter, a number of objects are deliberated through the 1933 exhibitions organised at the museum, particularly the Huai-style and Ordos bronzes.¹³¹ Their institutionalisation identifies one aspect of the character of Western scholarship at the time. Deliberately, this is not a case study of the objects themselves but a discussion on their presence and identification in Swedish and British collections.

In Chapter 5, The Contribution of the Karlbeck Syndicate to Scholarship on Early Chinese Art and Collecting in Britain (1931-1934), the intellectual framework for British scholarship and the syndicate is considered, including the question of cultural diffusion in the study of Chinese art and archaeology. Yetts represents the intellectual movement in London and

¹³¹ Johan G. Andersson, 'Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes', *BMFEA* 6 (1934): 81-132; *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities: Stockholm 1-10 September, 1933.*; Perceval W. Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', *BMC* 63 (367) (Oct. 1933): 178-179+182-184.

hitherto this side of his scholarship has not been addressed. Furthermore, the British Museum is singled out as an important institutional syndicate member. Its curator, Hobson is a valuable initiator for its participation and he made an important contribution to the growth of the museum's bronze collections. The private collector Seligman is discussed in relation to the anthropological incentive in Chinese art collecting. His collection is considered through specific objects that included an ethnologically interest.

In the final chapter, the Conclusion, I will give a fuller analysis of the Karlbeck Syndicate and its position in the history of Chinese art and archaeological collections in the West. It harnesses the research questions and themes first presented in the Introduction and reinforce the argument of the historical importance of the original archival data. It takes into consideration that during the first decades of the twentieth century comparable questions on cultural heritage and ownership were demonstrative of a new period of modernisation. Today such problems are still part of a more universal discussion including those of the effect of globalisation on art history and cultural history.

By reassessing the theory of diffusionism in the study of Chinese art and archaeology its significance will be considered. For example, by understanding the function of some anthropological and art historical theories, like that of the universality principle or questions on whether art history is global, the debate on the history of cultural diffusion in Western scholarship can demonstrate how it eventually was shaped into new ideas. A current deliberation on the concept of interculturality, or what used to be called influence in Chinese art history, has been explored by a number of present day scholars.¹³² The treatment of

¹³² As a word interculturality was not used in the 1920s and 1930s but a similar concept was addressed in scholarly work on Chinese art often using the term influence or relationship. The idea of a universality principle is discussed by Sally Price in connection with the understanding of non-Western art through the proposition that art is a universal language and shares the same basics in all cultures. There is a growing literature on the idea of a visual language in art which also connects to this universality in art and art history. James Elkins explores the different aspects of art history as a global concept. One of the ideas that Jonathan Hay considers is the flexibility and complexity of the term intercultural within the analysis of a work of art and how it can be an important tool

Chinese art as a unity is problematic, especially in the archaic objects, where regionality is an important consideration. The differences and similarities in the Style of Chinese bronze art was, and often still is, framed within a larger cultural whole that defines China. However, this must also take into consideration that the cultures living within these borders had their own specific developments and evolutionary path but also often crossed each other's boundaries which influenced the production of its material culture. This thesis does not intend to challenge the definitions of interculturality in art history but proposes that in the early studies of Chinese art, archaeology and culture there existed a group of scholars that explored the idea of the intercultural, its historical and decorative perceptions, in early Chinese bronze art that crossed its borders into Eurasia, Siberia and beyond. The term intercultural is commonly used today in studies of China's material culture that includes art historical and archaeological analysis. The Conclusion will furthermore reflect on the syndicate's significance in the history of collecting Chinese art in the West, and particularly Sweden and Britain, and propose the direction that future research can benefit from the ideas, arguments and the comprehensive archival analysis considered in this thesis.

for the art historian for understanding the Sincization (making something Chinese in character) process in art. An important consideration is that China as a unified whole is not necessarily a realistic view, especially when it comes to looking at the artistic development and material culture from a regional perspective. For further reading on theories covering these concepts see, Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, 23-36; James Elkins, 'Art History as a Global Discipline', in *Is Art History Global?*, ed. James Elkins, 3-24 (New York and London: Routledge, 2007). Jonathan Hay, 'Toward a theory of intercultural', *Res* 35 (Spring, 1999): 5-41; Jonathan Hay, 'Questions of influence in Chinese art history': 241-261; Schapiro, *Words, Script, and Pictures: Semiotics of Visual Language*; O'Toole *The Language of Displayed Art*.

Chapter 2

Orvar Karlbeck (1879-1967): a collector and a scholar

2.1 Karlbeck: a collector

The early life of Karlbeck remains a bit of a mystery. Little is known about his background and youth. What is documented is his education. He finished his studies at the Royal College of Engineering in Stockholm in 1904.¹³³ In his own mind he was young, curious and adventurous when in 1906 he decided to expand his horizons and work in China. He started collecting Chinese art not long after his arrival. At first he took a job as an engineer and superintendent of a concrete construction company. In 1908, he moved to a new posting, as section engineer for the Tientsin-Pukow Railway Company, an important connection that was part of the main train-link between Beijing and Shanghai (Figure 13).¹³⁴ He worked for the Railway Company for almost twenty years until he had to leave in 1927 because of the growing politically volatile environment. It was unsafe for him and his family to stay when an anti-foreign movement, known as the Nanking Incident, occurred in the Lower Yangzi Valley and led to the establishment of the Nationalist Government (1927-1937) by the General Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975).¹³⁵ However, his memoirs of China are fond and recall his initial motivation for moving abroad:

¹³³ For biographical references on Karlbeck see, Jan Wirgin, 'Orvar Karlbeck' *TOCS* 37 (1967-1969) [obituary]: xv; Jan Wirgin, 'Orvar Karlbeck', *OA* XVI (3) (Spring, 1968) [obituary]: 221; Bo Gyllensvärd, 'In Memoriam: Orvar Karlbeck (1879-1968)', *AAA* 21 (1967/1968) [obituary]: 6-7.

¹³⁴ This line was then known as the 'Tsin Pu Tieh Lu', the Tientsin-Pukow Railway.

¹³⁵ The Nanking Incident led to the establishment of a military regime in China for the next 10 years under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. For further reading his life and his government see, *Papers Relating to the Nanking Incident of March 24, 1927 presented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Parliament by command of His Majesty* (London, H.M.S.O, 1928); Joseph W. Esherick, Wen-shin Yen and Madeline Zelin, eds., *Empire, Nation, and beyond: Chinese History in late Imperial and Modern Times* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Asian Studies, 2006); James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration 1912-1949* (New York: Free Press, 1975); Keiji Furuya, *Chiang Kai-Shek: His life and times* (New York: St John's University, 1981).

‘Perhaps like many other people, I was born with the craving for adventure in my blood; that would partly account for my journey to China in January 1906.’¹³⁶

His adventurous spirit and hunger for something different and new were reflective of Karlbeck’s inquisitive character and in fact directed him to start collecting, and, thereafter, to study the important historical value of his collections. One of his interests in Chinese art and archaeology is demonstrated by his attempts to establish a coherent classification model for many early dating Chinese objects. A reliable system was lacking at that time for many recently discovered Bronze Age material. The nature of Karlbeck’s collecting process recalls a comment by John Elsner and Roger Cardinal where they mentioned that:

‘Classification precedes collection [...] If classification is the mirror of collective humanity’s thoughts and perceptions, then collecting is the material embodiment’.¹³⁷

Many years later Karlbeck interestingly recollected the experiences and learning curve that he found it important to connect with the objects that he collected:

‘I did not, however, collect for the sake of possession. I wanted to learn as much as possible about my treasures.’¹³⁸

His statement intimates that his incentive for collecting corresponded to a strong inclination to view the objects within their archaeological and historical significance. Throughout his collecting career Karlbeck remained a student of his collections and he independently examined and studied these with, what he named a cautiously ‘trained eye’. In 1926, just before he officially started to collect on behalf of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities he commented:

¹³⁶ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, vi.

¹³⁷ For an analysis on collectors and their collections see, Elsner and Cardinal, *Cultures of Collecting*, 1-2.

¹³⁸ Karlbeck, ‘Selected Objects from Ancient Shouchou’, 42.

‘The trained eye, the eye to recognize not only genuineness but quality is essential; without it one can do nothing.’¹³⁹

In turn, his trained eye and overall scholarly approach to collecting Chinese antiquities led him to the inner circles of the privileged private collector and museum scholars in Europe, the US and China.

Karlbeck was certainly a complex character. We know something about him but also don’t know many things about him. Like his collections, Karlbeck documented his life and adventures in China with stories that he wanted people to know. His first set of memoirs was published in Swedish in 1938 under the title *Tsin pu tie lu*, named after the railroad line he worked for (Figure 17).¹⁴⁰ This publication mainly dealt with reports on the construction of the railway and his curiosity of the local flora and fauna. It was during his engineering work that he first came into contact with the remains of China’s ancient cultures, as many building works led to the excavation of a great number of historical burial sites. Although many of the objects in Karlbeck’s early collections are said to have come from accidental finds during such works, he actually predominantly purchased from dealers. Karlbeck’s second autobiographical work *Treasure Seeker in China* was published in the 1950s, first in Swedish and later translated into English. It consists of a number of scattered stories of his travels as a collector between the years 1928 and 1934, at the time when the Karlbeck Syndicate was operating and he was collecting for the museum in Stockholm (Figure 18).

More recently Perry Johansson pointed out that when Karlbeck first started visiting the curio dealers in the city of ‘Shouchou’ (Chuzhou), just north of Nanking where he was

¹³⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 3-9.

¹⁴⁰ Karlbeck, *Tsin pu tie lu*.

stationed, it was of decisive importance that the things he bought should be old.¹⁴¹ He further mentioned that Karlbeck suggested that he had asked his Chinese language teacher to assist him with the purchase of early bronzes and to help him distinguish the fakes from the original. However, Karlbeck's publications and supported by the archival data investigated in this thesis clearly show that he was predominantly self-taught when it came to Chinese art and archaeology. From the start he was interested in collecting early dating objects but was insecure in recognising the real from the fakes:

‘I so want to buy bronzes, but do not dare, because I don't want modern trash’.¹⁴²

This early testimonial of Karlbeck's interest in pursuing a collection of Chinese bronzes and together with his comment in *Tsin pu tie lu*, as pointed out by Perry Johanssen, are the first and only known references that at the beginning he might have asked advise in purchasing ancient bronzes. However, Karlbeck never further elaborated on the background of this mentor or any Chinese material he might have been reading specifically on bronzes besides those mentioned in his publications. When it came to the time he returned to China on behalf of the museum and later the syndicate many years later it may be presumed that twenty years of residency provided a good knowledge of the local language and market. The first and second decades of the 1900s represent Karlbeck's learning curve as a collector; and through his fair portion of amateur mistakes, he developed his connoisseurship through purchasing and examining numerous objects. In doing so he taught himself to distinguish the genuineness from the fake.

Many of Karlbeck's citations on collecting in *Tsin pu tie lu* were recently discussed by Perry Johansson. For example, Karlbeck's interest in collecting Chinese antiquities was,

¹⁴¹ This thesis will refer to the old spelling for the town known today as Chuzhou as ‘Shouchou’ in accordance to the archive. For a summary and review of Karlbeck's *Tsin pu tie lu* see, Johansson, ‘Orvar Karlbeck's Treasure hunt’, 31.

¹⁴² Johansson, ‘Orvar Karlbeck's Treasure Hunt’, 31; Karlbeck, *Tsin pu tie lu*, 84.

after some time, noticed by the Chinese educated upper-class and so began associating himself with them; and according to Perry Johansson, the ‘collecting of antiquities provided Karlbeck with a pass to this exclusive club’.¹⁴³ Who the Chinese scholars were or how they assisted his scholarship was never clarified by Karlbeck and therefore speculative. However, Perry Johansson elaborates on an interesting connection between the social backgrounds of Western and non-Western collectors outside Europe at that time. This is worth pointing out as it gives an insight to part of Karlbeck’s character:

‘During the colonial period, going out into the world to make a career usually entailed a step up the social ladder for westerners. Those who had belonged to the middle class in their homelands found themselves part of a small white upper class in India, Africa or China [...] A freedom to assume new identities prevailed outside the social space that had defined their lives [...] The salaried railway engineer Orvar Karlbeck went through such a transformation when he began to associate with the Chinese upper class [...] Karlbeck’s ascension of the social ladder was not, however, limited to his Chinese experience. The visit paid him by the future King Gustaf Adolf one day in November 1926 would change the course of his life.’¹⁴⁴

If Karlbeck’s motivation for collecting is consistent with this presumed need for ascending the social ladder the matter is debatable. First of all, Karlbeck was an educated young man with opportunities and it is highly unlikely that he came from a deprived or poor background in Sweden. Besides some of his passing remarks on social contacts with Chinese scholars there is no concrete evidence on these friendships. The seriousness with which he approached the act of collecting and the degree of his historical unravelling of his treasures was something that inspired him on an intellectual rather than social level. Without a doubt, nonetheless, it was his self-taught collecting ability that later brought him into contact with

¹⁴³ Johansson, ‘Orvar Karlbeck’s Treasure Hunt’, 32-33.

¹⁴⁴ Johansson, ‘Orvar Karlbeck’s Treasure Hunt’, 32-33.

For further reading on some interesting social aspects connected to colonisation see, David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British saw their Empire* (London: Alan Lane, 2001).

the most notable upper-class collector's circles in the West at the time. Furthermore, Perry Johansson connected Karlbeck's elevation of social status through the terminology of Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), including that Karlbeck had acquired cultural capital that provided him with a way into antique-collecting upper classes and was confident, at an early stage in his collecting career, that he could translate this cultural capital into 'hard cash'.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Karlbeck's future career was directed to that of a professional collector, and much later defined as art dealer, but this was not something that was necessarily premeditated. His profession gradually grew out of selling some objects from his private collection, an idea first presented to him by the art historian Sirén.¹⁴⁶

During his early years in China Karlbeck often caught up with his fellow countrymen who were also working there at the time; including the geologist turned archaeologist Andersson, the visiting Sirén and the explorer Sven Hedin (1865-1952), who all shared a passion for China's rich archaeological past and art.¹⁴⁷ Letters from the 1920s in the archive verify these early friendships and included discussions on Chinese archaeological finds and objects. In particular Andersson and Sirén stayed with Karlbeck on several occasions in Pukow.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Johansson, 'Orvar Karlbeck's Treasure Hunt', 34.

For further reading on the concept of 'cultural capital' see, Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market* (New York: New Press, 1998).

¹⁴⁶ Osvald Sirén, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

Karlbeck was dealing in Chinese objects until the 1960s. He mostly linked up with the art dealership T.Y. King. With the rise of the Communist Party in the 1950s T.Y. King settled in Hong Kong. After his death his brother T.Y. Dunt continued this business relationship with Karlbeck. For archival data see, T.Y. King, 'Letter to Karlbeck, Shanghai 1938', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; T.Y. King, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 23 November 1957', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁴⁷ A group of letters (1915-1965) include correspondence from Andersson, Sirén and Hedin to Karlbeck. These are located in Sweden, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

For a biography on Hedin and his work see, Gösta Montell, 'Sven Hedin the Explorer', *Geografiska Annaler* 36 (½) (1954): 1-8; Sven Hedin, *History of the Expedition in Asia 1927-1935*, 3 volumes, (Stockholm: 1943-44).

¹⁴⁸ Sirén, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919'; Osvald Sirén, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 7 March 1920', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Johan G. Andersson, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 22 February, 1920', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Johan G. Andersson, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 26 May 1920', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

An important influence in Karlbeck's early collecting period was Sirén. In the early 1920s, Sirén started to focus his art historical interest to East Asia.¹⁴⁹ He first travelled to China in 1919 and stayed as a guest at Karlbeck's home. For the duration of that time, he was interested in acquiring a number of bronze objects for the purpose of study and in a letter asked Karlbeck if he could help him make purchases:

‘[...] could you not do me the great service of buying for me fragments of bronze and such things, animals and small figures and smaller vessels, whenever you get the chance? I am glad to send you money whenever you let me know; you have my complete confidence and plain pouvoir to buy for at least one or two thousand Mexican dollars. I know that you will only buy the right things, and you know probably what I wish [...] Later on it may become possible to do some business on a larger scale in Stockholm, and I will be very glad to assist you in every way [...] Do not speak too much about our plans to other people; the best course is at present to keep quiet and wait.’¹⁵⁰

He was predominantly interested in bronze fragments, small figures and smaller vessels. These objects were easy to transport out of the country and good study material as they depicted the decorative art of that period. In the excerpt, he interestingly asked Karlbeck to keep their future plans to sell such objects in Stockholm quiet for one reason or another, novelty being one. Overall, Sirén motivated the art dealer in Karlbeck with comments such as ‘it may become possible to do some business on a larger scale in Stockholm, and I will be very glad to assist you in every way’.¹⁵¹ No doubt that he wanted to share in the profit and advised him to sell his private collections. He encouraged Karlbeck to ‘divide the collection into three parts because you will hardly be able to sell all the objects to one man or institution’.¹⁵² Upon his return to Sweden, he informed Gustaf Adolf of Karlbeck's ceramic

¹⁴⁹ On Sirén's early travels through China see, Minna Törma, ‘Decade of Change: 1920's in the Life of Oswald Sirén’, in *The Shaping of Art History in Finland*, ed. Renja Souminen-Kokkonen, 157-168 (Helsinki: Taidehistorian seura, 2007).

¹⁵⁰ Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919’.

¹⁵¹ Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919’.

¹⁵² Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919’.

collection, who was in turn interested to purchase part of it for the National Museum.¹⁵³ There is no documented evidence that this transaction took place. This significant correspondence with Sirén is the first real indication that Karlbeck considered selling his locally collected objects to either institutions or private collectors in Europe. It was Sirén who made him aware of the art market in Sweden. Indeed, Karlbeck followed his advice.

A large part of Karlbeck's bronze collection was sold in 1922, soon after Sirén first stayed with him in Pukow, to the Swedish Countess Wilhelmina von Hallwyl (1844-1930) (Figure 32).¹⁵⁴ The objects were collected between 1916 and 1922 and mainly purchased through local dealers in 'Shouchou, Anhui and Nanking'.¹⁵⁵ The sale included a group discovered in the Huai River Valley, where Karlbeck was stationed, and consisted of a number of mirrors, belt-hooks and weaponry. Wilhelmina von Hallwyl added them to her private museum where a variety of collections ranging from old master paintings to sculpture, armour and antique furniture were on display in her Stockholm home.¹⁵⁶ The Huai-style bronzes were the first of its kind to reach Europe and in the preface of the Hallwyl catalogue, written by Karlbeck, he mentioned that he had intended this collection for a National Museum.¹⁵⁷ This is the first official record where objects of his personal collection sold to a private collector and indicated an interest in the Western market for ornamental non-ritual Chinese bronzes. In 1924, Karlbeck sold the second part of this bronze collection to the Freer Gallery of Art, now housed at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Sirén, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 12 January 1919'.

¹⁵⁴ Nils Palmgren, 'Gräfin Wilhelmina von Hallwyl: In Memoriam', *BMFEA* 2 (1930): 229-231; Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Korean Bronzes at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*.

¹⁵⁵ This collection was later added to from buys through the Karlbeck Syndicate (1930-1931) and purchases made from the dealership Yamanaka & Co. Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Korean Bronzes at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*.

¹⁵⁶ Bengt Claudelin, *Catalogue of the Collection of arms and armours at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*, (Stockholm: Hallwyl House, 1928).

¹⁵⁷ Karlbeck, preface, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Korean Bronzes at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*.

¹⁵⁸ Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 234.

In that same year the Malmö Museum in Sweden purchased a number of early ceramics from Karlbeck.¹⁵⁹ It is likely that the original ceramic collection was split between the British Museum, the Malmö Museum and the Field Museum in Chicago; there is evidence that Karlbeck already offered a number of ceramics to the Field Museum in 1915 and he definitely had approached the British Museum in 1924.¹⁶⁰ During these years he contacted a number of scholars at Western institutions- such as Laufer at the Field Museum and Hobson at the British Museum- with the intention of presenting his archaeologically interesting and unusual bronzes and early dating glazed ceramic wares.¹⁶¹ He also hoped to initiate academic debate. One of the earliest commentaries on the existence of Karlbeck's ceramic collection dates from 1915 by the American collector Charles Lang Freer (1854-1919) who expressed an interest to purchase some of the objects (Figure 19).¹⁶² In 1917 Laufer pointed out in his publication *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China* that Karlbeck had sent him a set of photographs and descriptions of a number of Han-glazed ceramic wares.¹⁶³ A note in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* some years later mentioned that Hobson had purchased some early glazed wares for the British Museum in 1925.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ The Malmö Museum, also today referred to as the Municipal Museum, holds extensive collections of objects belonging to archaeology, art, culture and natural history. The museum was a participant in the Karlbeck Syndicate trip 1934, when it bought a number of Anyang ritual vessels, ornamental bronzes from the Zhou period and Ordos bronzes. Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 234; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁶⁰ Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 234; Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists 1934'.

¹⁶¹ Berthold Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China* (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1917), 84-85.

¹⁶² Charles L. Freer, 'Copy letter Charles L. Freer to Mr D.E. Dannenberg, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., 16 September 1915', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

For biographical reference on Freer see, 'Freer Charles L.' *Who was Who in America (1897-1942)*, volume 1, (Chicago: Marquis- Who's Who, 1968), 425; George Bulanda, 'The Legacy of Charles L. Freer'.

www.hourdetroit.com/Hour-Detroit/February-2008/The-Legacy-of-Charles-L-Freer. (accessed 14 February 2008); 'Charles L. Freer, dated 19 September 1919'. *New York Times*. 9 December 1919.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html> (accessed 14 February 2008) [obituary].

¹⁶³ Laufer indicated that Karlbeck's collection of Han glazed wares consisted of 44 pieces. Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China*, 84.

¹⁶⁴ Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 234.

Apart from a publication by Hobson dating 1924 where he discussed a group of early glazed ceramics that at the time belonged to Karlbeck (the article was written at the period that the British Museum purchased a number of ceramics from him, as mentioned by Andersson in the *Bulletin*) there are no official records of an actual acquisition.¹⁶⁵ In this case, there are two ways for establishing the possible content of this original ceramic collection. One indicating that it consisted of a group of Song period ceramics, as described by Hobson in his article, and the other is that the objects purchased by the British Museum contained of a group of Han glazed wares for the purpose of studying. The latter is based upon an account by Laufer regarding a collection of ancient pottery that Karlbeck had offered to him for sale in 1915 (Figure 20).¹⁶⁶ There is strong suggestion that the collection discussed by Laufer was part of, or similar to, objects later purchased by the British Museum. Hobson was made aware of this collection when visiting Laufer in 1913, and both conducted research on questions regarding the origin of Chinese porcelain. Still, there is no evidence that the transaction with the Field Museum materialised, nor is it clear exactly what the British Museum acquired from Karlbeck in these early years, as there are no records that further confirm these purchases.

However, Karlbeck's collections were novel and of great interest to those studying early Chinese ceramics (especially Han period and Song wares) and ornamental bronzes. At the time, Laufer was the leading authority on early dating pottery and he had collected a number when in China during the first decade of the 1900s.¹⁶⁷ Basing his research on archaeological data he notably argued that the glazed wares started to appear during the Han period when China came into contact with Western cultures and he made the assumption that glaze-producing technique was an import from the West by means of trade.¹⁶⁸ This was also a

¹⁶⁵ Hobson, 'On Some Potteries in Kiangsu and Anhwei', 25-32.

¹⁶⁶ Berthold Laufer, 'Letter to Karlbeck, Chicago 25 August 1915', Volume IX, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive.

¹⁶⁷ Thorp, 'Studies of Chinese Archaeology/Art History in the West', 54-55.

¹⁶⁸ Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China*, 120, 125-128, 147.

theory that also Hobson favoured at the time.¹⁶⁹ The argument supports some ideas that can be considered diffusionist where a historical origin, or source, pointed to the West and introduced a new superior technology into China. This was incorporated into the production of material culture. Dating back as early as 1912 Laufer recalled that Karlbeck sent him a number of photographs depicting objects and fragments of Han ceramics.¹⁷⁰ Karlbeck recognised that the fragments were essential pieces in the puzzle to trace the origin of glaze production. The following year Hobson visited Laufer in Chicago and the two concluded that the Han glazed wares were forerunners of true porcelain.¹⁷¹ In a comparison to some glazed wares from the Middle East Hobson suggested that Egypt was the origin of the invention of the glaze-technology and that this technology had diffused via Central Asia to China.¹⁷² Studies of this kind were pioneering and further research depended on the collecting of a variety of specimen, usually pottery shards that could be displayed within an evolutionary framework. Karlbeck provided both, and it is evident that his very first archaeological collections consisted of ceramics. This early dating communication between Laufer, Hobson and Karlbeck shows a mutual historic interest in the study of Chinese ceramics and demonstrated how their research and collections linked into a specific intellectual environment that explored the topics of origin, evolution and diffusion through object-studies. Interestingly, this academic exchange of data dates back to the period before Sirén suggested to Karlbeck to start selling his collections. Inevitably, it shows that Karlbeck was interested in opening a debate on the history of his collections with the most established experts in the field with the intent to advance knowledge.

¹⁶⁹ Robert L. Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, 2 volumes (London and New York: Cassell and Company, ltd, 1915), 8.

¹⁷⁰ Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China*, 120, 125-128 and 147.

¹⁷¹ Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China*, 84-85 and 95; Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. 2.

¹⁷² Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. 1, 8.

The transactions between Karlbeck and Hobson of this period are somewhat vague. The purchases by the British Museum in the 1920s were intended with the purpose of studying the origin of early glazes, and there is a good possibility that the price paid was minimal because these were not necessarily display objects. On the other hand, in one of his first publications on Song wares, Hobson mentioned that Karlbeck had sent to the British Museum an important consignment of a group of white and cream-glazed pottery, which he had discovered during some works on a railroad line in the neighbourhood of 'Süchowfu' (Suzhou).¹⁷³ Such a significant find would help to identify the production localities of provincial factories and was important in the reconstruction of the history of Chinese ceramics that Hobson pursued. Karlbeck was a crucial provider of this study material. The rarity of the consignment might however have reflected in its price but as there are no records of the transaction it is left to speculation.

Thus, Karlbeck's early ceramic collections predominantly consisted of objects and fragments of glazed and unglazed wares dating from the Han to Song period and at that time primarily of interest to students of the subject. Research was focussed on the historical questions of technological origin and evolution rather than an aesthetic motivation to collecting such objects to display in a museum environment or private collection.¹⁷⁴ Aesthetically their appeal was relatively limited and this would have affected its economic value. The demand was small and concentrated to a handful of interested who were often linked to scholarly institutions. Amongst this academic group Karlbeck started to define himself as a systematic collector. His incentive for selling his collections was not necessarily motivated by the translation of cultural capital into hard cash and any payment was probably considered as monetary compensation for his discovery, or finder's fee, as the objects or fragments were meant for academic study. Going back to whether Karlbeck sold his objects solely for a

¹⁷³ Hobson, 'On Some Potteries in Kiangsu and Anhwei', 25-32.

¹⁷⁴ Karlbeck, 'Proto-porcelain and Yüeh Ware', 33-48.

means of extra income is considered, but he had a good job as an engineer and there was a clear underlying need for his collections to be placed within a place of research or academic institution. His drive for intellectual acknowledgment, more so than elevation in social status, firstly pursued Karlbeck to sell his objects. Susan Pearce's general comment on a collector's ambition and need for recognition, is also applicable to Karlbeck:

'Collectors who are more ambitious for themselves and their material tend to think of their collections' futures in terms of permanent disposition in a museum, and there we touch upon two important motifs: the particular character of the museum and the view the collector takes on the final act of self-surrender.'¹⁷⁵

In order to understand Karlbeck as a collector of archaeological objects and a self-taught scholar, it is essential to validate the importance of his early collections. Firstly, they demonstrated his academic pursuit of what were then pioneering subjects in the developing field of Chinese art and archaeology. Secondly, during this period he published a series of innovative articles and collection catalogues that included topics on early ceramics and bronzes, often focusing on the so-called Huai-style bronzes, bronze casting techniques and the analysis of the so-called proto-porcelain dating from the Han to Tang period. The academic standards in his publications bring to light a highly knowledgeable connoisseur of early Chinese art and archaeology and he was greatly admired amongst his peers.¹⁷⁶

His career as a professional collector was, as will be discussed in the following chapters of this thesis, not something that Karlbeck pursued himself. The idea was put to him by Andersson and Gustaf Adolf when he couldn't find an engineering job in Sweden after he had returned from China in 1927. In his memoirs Karlbeck recalled:

¹⁷⁵ Pearce, *On Collecting*, 346

¹⁷⁶ For a full bibliography of Karlbeck's publications see, Introduction, footnote 117, 64.

‘[...] little guessing that within a year I was to return to China on a very different errand’.¹⁷⁷

The slightly obscure element of his travels and collecting process is something that is arguably demonstrative of the pioneering Eurocentric attitude of exploration and exploitation in Asia at that time.¹⁷⁸ The newsletter-reports that he wrote to Andersson and the syndicate address an awareness and caution of the complexity and illegality aspects connected to the export of antiquities at the time. One could argue that by purchasing and exporting the historical objects he was indirectly involved in unofficial excavations of the archaeological sites. There are no formal, or informal, records that confirm Karlbeck participated in any archaeological excavation. The only known accounts that deal with the subject are of an attempt by him and Sirén to organise an official excavation in September 1921.¹⁷⁹ The two men planned an archaeological dig at a Bronze Age site near ‘Shouchou’ that according to Sirén, hopefully unearthed many beautiful Huai bronzes and, more importantly, indicated the precise historical location of either manufacture or operation of them.¹⁸⁰ Karlbeck was in charge for selecting the site. Both he and Sirén had high hopes that Andersson and Gustaf Adolf would participate in this venture, and so raise their profile immensely.¹⁸¹ Such social awareness played a part in so far as having this excavation approved by the local authorities. In a letter Sirén asked Karlbeck for help to get Andersson on board:

‘Professor Andersson’s interests for these plans seem very important, and I would like to establish the closest cooperation with him out there.’¹⁸²

The archaeological excavation never materialised. One of the reasons was that the permission Karlbeck received from the local authority was not valid. It was Andersson who pointed out

¹⁷⁷ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, vi.

¹⁷⁸ For further analysis of Europe’s Eurocentric attitude towards China see, Foster Stockwell, *Highlights in the History of Exploration and Trade in China* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2002), 158-168.

¹⁷⁹ Osvald Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 19 September 1920’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁸⁰ Osvald Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 16 May 1921’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁸¹ Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 7 March 1920’.

¹⁸² Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 19 September 1920’.

his concerns regarding this matter that without the participation of himself or Gustaf Adolf the status of the excavation was worthless.¹⁸³ Another reason was that Andersson was organising his own dig at the Neolithic Yangshao site in Gansu and was also trying to get the prince to join him for this project.¹⁸⁴ It is undeniable that from the start there were doubts regarding the legality and the possession of archaeological finds by Sirén and Karlbeck. For example, in a letter Sirén quite directly asked Karlbeck if the authorities would interfere with keeping and taking home any of the objects excavated:

‘Another question of importance is: Will I be allowed to take home with me the objects that we may find? Or is it feared that the population or the authorities will interfere? The material is of course essential to me from every point of view.’¹⁸⁵

It was during this period that the Chinese authorities started to proactively stop unofficial excavations and any export of antiquities. The main concern was that many national treasures had left the country to foreign hands in the past years. However, the art market was open to international trade. In defence to this issue Karlbeck later recalled his collecting activities:

‘I had done nothing illegal in buying the things, and there was no law forbidding foreigners to take antiques from one part of the country to another, but it was the soldiers who had the power and they could do as they pleased.’¹⁸⁶

That he didn’t know or understand that the government prohibited the export of antiquities was not entirely true. In a letter to Andersson dating from as early as 1928 he commented:

‘‘The Society for the Preservation of Cultural Objects’ has over the last weeks shown a very lively activity, and according to them it would be very difficult for me to be able to send anything

¹⁸³ Törma, ‘The 1920s: A Decade of Change in the Life of Osvald Sirén’, 157-168.

¹⁸⁴ Chen Xingcan and Ma Sizhong (Magnus Fiskesjö), ‘An important document in the history of modern Chinese science: Andersson’s letter to the Swedish Crown Prince, with commentary’, *Gujin lunheng* 8 (2003): 10-17.

¹⁸⁵ Sirén, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 16 May 1921’.

¹⁸⁶ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 101.

valuable out of the country [...] The American Express Company has ensured me that they are able to export for me what I want to ship, and I was told the same by the Yamanakas. The Chinese are not so secure. Some are openly telling that they cannot export large items, as stone sculptures, but only smaller items. All agree that minor items, as bronzes, large and small, minor Tang items and jades are easy to export. Everybody seems worried for the future [...] one can still export things that are not too large, providing that you act carefully. To ask the legislation to act as the sender I feel unwise. I dare not to address the items directly to the museum, but am sending them to [Nils] Palmgren at Sveavagen 65.¹⁸⁷

Indeed, he was fully aware to act carefully and that by sending any objects directly to the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities it could become a political issue because of the concerns and complexities connected to the export of antiquities out of China. He clearly mentioned that he thought it safer to ship the goods to the then relatively unknown Palmgren, who was Andersson's assistant.¹⁸⁸ Secondly, Karlbeck mentioned it was easier, for him and the shipping companies, to transport smaller objects such as ornamental bronzes and ceramics, which were relatively easy to carry around and take out of the country. This is a significant indication as to why Karlbeck concentrated on purchasing of smaller sized ornaments such as mirrors, belt-hooks and weaponry.

One of Karlbeck's newsletter-reports addressed to the China Research Committee in 1929 included a clipping from the Chinese-English newspaper *The Peking Leader*.¹⁸⁹ It dates from May of that year and described the regulations for any archaeological excavations and the export of antiquities. The article is one of the first English reports that marked the complicated issues surrounding the topic of excavation and ownership of ancient objects in China. In 1929 there was still no centralised law that dictated the matter, and it was the local

¹⁸⁷ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Letter to Andersson, Peking 30 September 1929', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁸⁸ Karlbeck, 'Nils Palmgren: In Memoriam', 27-28.

¹⁸⁹ Kou Wen (Guo Wen), 'Nanking Places Restrictions to China Exploring: Regulations Drafted Radically Limiting Exploration, 18 May 1929', in Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the China Research Committee, Peking 30 July 1929', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

authority that controlled local excavations and were responsible for placing a (financial and historical) value on the discoveries. To make things confusing, it was the foreign office of the Nanking government that was in charge for setting the main regulations. Several interesting extracts from the article are worth acknowledging as they address the complexity surrounding the foreign ownership of archaeological objects:

‘According to the regulations drafted by the Nanking Ministry of Foreign Affairs there are many restrictions on exploration in China whether by foreign or Chinese scientists. In the first place it is stipulated that in excavating for ‘ancient things’ a scientific expedition shall not damage ancient structures, engravings, idols, monuments or other relics attached to the surface of the earth or decrease their value. Foreign scientists must apply to the Waichiaopu [the ministry for foreign affairs] for permission and a representative of the Chinese government must supervise the excavation.’¹⁹⁰

The article implied that any scientifically led excavation by foreign applicants was closely supervised by the foreign office and a Chinese government official must be present. Also, that excavation predominantly meant unearthing objects from the ground and that any monumental and fixed structures should not be damaged and authorisation for this was strict.

‘When finds are made on public or private land the local authorities concerned should appraise their value and divide them into two sets, one for the state and one for the excavator. This can be determined by drawing lots. Whereas the excavator disputes the decision he may appeal to the ministry of education, in which event the ministry shall appoint three experts to reevaluate the finds with the local authorities. Where it is impossible to classify the finds into sets, the local authorities shall purchase the ‘unclassable set’ at half the price fixed. In the event the local authorities consider it necessary to preserve all the discoveries, they are entitled to buy them from the excavator.’¹⁹¹

The degree to which the local authority was involved and could claim ownership of the objects excavated was at times puzzling to those organising the excavation. The power of the

¹⁹⁰ Kou Wen, ‘Nanking Places Restrictions to China Exploring’.

¹⁹¹ Kou Wen, ‘Nanking Places Restrictions to China Exploring’.

government authority led to a vague guideline of how objects should be divided amongst the excavator and the local government. In this process the Ministry of Education was asked to place a value on the objects, whilst the local authorities decided what they wanted to purchase and felt needed to be preserved in, for example, local depositories.

‘Concerning exploration work done on private property, the regulations provide that the excavator shall give a fixed percentage of the price to the owner of the land unless there is a special contract between the two parties [...] It is further provided that anyone who conceals his finds or tries to smuggle them out of China shall be fined a sum not exceeding \$ 3, 000 in addition to the confiscation of the finds [...] The regulations apply to ‘ancient things’ discovered by accidents. ‘Ancient things’ are defined by the regulations as prehistoric remains buried under ground or scattered on the earth which have a bearing on culture or arts and works of art.’¹⁹²

However, excavation on private property was possible and a contract needed to be in order between the parties involved. However, the export of antiquities was, according to this article, considered smuggling and if caught a monetary fine of maximum \$ 3 000 and the confiscation of the goods was implied. This also applied to any archaeological objects that were unearthed by non-official excavation, so-called accidental finds and no doubt included purchases made from dealers for export.

As Karlbeck included this article with his correspondence to the Swedish China Research Committee, who was funding the first expedition for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, he was conscious that the export of archaeological objects, or any ancient things bore consequences and he informed his employers at the museum.

On the 7 June and the 3 July 1930 respectively, the ‘Law on the Preservation of Ancient Objects’ and ‘The Detailed Rules on the Implementation of the Legislation on the

¹⁹² Kou Wen, ‘Nanking Places Restrictions to China Exploring’.

Preservation of Ancient Objects' were put into practice; these, importantly, were the first cultural property guidelines that established protection for cultural and historical goods leaving China.¹⁹³ Some years later Karlbeck again commented on the Society for the Preservation of Chinese Antiques and the cultural property laws to his clientele:

'There is a movement afoot to put a stop to the looting of tombs, and authorities in places such as Changtefu, Loyang, Sianfu and Shouchou are on the lookout for excavated pieces when any are found in the possession of would-be shippers. They are then confiscated and placed in local museums.'¹⁹⁴

Throughout his collecting career it became more complicated for Karlbeck to export the things he had bought. Already in 1929 he told Andersson of some difficulties he encountered in Beijing:

'Peking is probably the most difficult place to export from as it is here that the above mentioned society is based.'¹⁹⁵

The first cultural property laws were reflective of Chinese fear of foreign cultural exploitation. They encouraged state ownership of excavated objects and that archaeological excavations were led by Chinese academic institutions rather than by foreign scientists. Equally in the West there was a growing interest for obtaining Chinese archaeological material for its collections, with not only private collectors but a group of scholars at national institutions focussing their research on this material. An interesting point about the perception of foreign objects in Western collections was recently made by David Murphy who explained that they undergo a process of, what he calls cultural transformation, where an artificial

¹⁹³ For a report on the laws of cultural property in China see, David J. Murphy, *Plunder and Preservation, Cultural Property Law and Practice in the Peoples Republic in China* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996), 33 and 81; James B. Cuno, *Who Owns Antiquity?; Museums and the Battle over Our Ancient Heritage* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 88-120.

¹⁹⁴ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 23 May 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

¹⁹⁵ Karlbeck, 'Letter to Andersson, Peking September 30 1929'.

acculturation of the exotic was arguably an outgrowth of colonization and something that Chris Gosden also points out in his study.¹⁹⁶ In this context the Chinese objects were contextualised in newly formed Western collections, where the gathering and preservation of non-Western exotic objects was not entirely a presentation of a colonial dominance over Asia but also as something unique and of wonder. This idea was first presented by the French museum specialist Hugues de Varine, who according to David Murphy:

‘[...] notes that the very concept of cultural goods or property only emerges, paradoxically when goods have been divested of their primary functional utility and instead used for a secondary purpose, that is admiration. The rarity of the vestiges of the past leads to the enhancement both in intellectual and in economic terms.’¹⁹⁷

Many of the Bronze Age objects bought by Karlbeck were indeed one of cultural admiration in the West, and praised for both their aesthetic and historical significance. Arguably they underwent a similar process of cultural transformation when they appeared on the international art market and were included in private and public display, to be studied and admired. It was in the Western collection that their novelty led to a particular artistic and historic evaluation that made them desirable for the art collector and museum and inevitably a demand affected a growth in the market.¹⁹⁸ It is true that, in a larger context, by transporting and buying the antiquities in China Karlbeck did nothing illegal because they were bought at an open market. However, by exporting the question of ownership became more complex. In a recollection of this period Karlbeck colourfully described how he transported his purchases inside China and that he felt the need to disguise them:

¹⁹⁶ Gosden, *Collecting Colonialism*; Murphy, *Plunder and Preservation*, 38.

¹⁹⁷ For further reading on Hugh de Varine’s theory see, Hugues de Varine, ‘The Rape and Plunder of Cultures: An Aspect of the Deterioration of the Terms of Cultural Trade Between Nations’, *Museum* 35 (1983): 152-153; Murphy, *Plunder and Preservation*, 38.

‘Everything had to be hidden, [therefore], and I made a thorough job of it. Round my waist I wore a belt consisting of large bronze mirrors. Spear-points and halberds tickled my armpits, while the pockets of my fur coat-it was warm now for such a garment- were stuffed to bursting.’¹⁹⁹

Karlbeck purposely hid objects whilst travelling around the country because he knew that if discovered they would have been confiscated. This was a conscience decision by him and this can only mean that he knew that there were regulations against a foreigner transporting antiquities without governmental authorisation. However, many of the archaic and Tang period objects had began to find their way onto the growing art market during these years, before the protection laws were fully implemented, and high prices were paid due to demand. During Karlbeck’s first official collecting expedition in 1928 he commented on this growth due to foreign buyers:

‘The curio market has, during the two months I have been away from Peking, been enriched with quite a few good and interesting bronzes, but the competition is high, and therefore the prices are high. Many buyers from Europe and America are currently in Peking and pay good prices.’²⁰⁰

Growing Western demand for objects of China’s archaic past coincided with the first scientific excavations by the Chinese Academia Sinica (National Research Institute of History and Philology) at the Shang dynasty site at Yinxu, just outside the city of Anyang.²⁰¹ The preliminary excavations of this highly important Bronze Age site were managed by Li Ji who had just returned from Harvard University after he finished his dissertation in anthropology (Figure 21). They commenced in 1928 and lasted until 1937 when the project had to be stopped due to the Japanese occupation of China. Interestingly, until 1930 the Freer

¹⁹⁹ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 110

²⁰⁰ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the China Research Committee, Peiping 23 July 1929’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²⁰¹ For further reading on these excavations and general Shang archaeology see, Li Chi, *Anyang* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977); Herrlee G. Creel, *The Birth of China* (London: Peter Owen, 1958); Robert Bagley, ‘Shang Archaeology’, in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Loewe and Shaughnessy, 124-135; Thorpe, *China in the Early Bronze Age*, 118-120; Thorp, *China in the Early Bronze Age*.

Gallery had been involved in the funding of the excavations.²⁰² After this period the association of a Western institution's contribution to a Chinese archaeological excavation was completely halted. In a 1931 newsletter-report Karlbeck wrote that Li Ji played an important role prohibiting any foreign participation in official Chinese excavations:

‘[...] what has now happened is partly a matter of squeeze and partly jealousy on the side of Li Chi. Li knows perfectly well that tombs are being opened all over China by peasants and curio dealers and neither he or his confreres do anything to stop it. But when scientific excavations are being carried out by trained men, who leave all the material they find in local museums, then an attack is made on them. Foreigners who are interested in such matters are of the opinion that Li Chi is a dangerous man and very anti-foreign. He wants to do all the work himself and very bitterly [sic] against anybody who is engaged in research work in this country. He has even gone so far to state in public that no foreigner should be allowed to write on subjects dealing with Chinese art and archaeology.’²⁰³

To present Li Ji as anti-foreign and forbidding the participation of Westerners in the developing field of Chinese archaeology is perhaps a step too far. Indeed, Li Ji kindly welcomed Karlbeck into his home some years earlier, and the two discussed some of the interesting archaeological discoveries at Anyang.²⁰⁴

Moreover, the Anyang excavations are important for a number of reasons. They are known to be the first large-scale Chinese led archaeological excavations that exposed the earliest dynastic culture of Chinese civilization, linking China's literary history to its material culture. In 1899 the Chinese scholar Wang Yirong (1845-1900) identified a set of ancient inscribed

²⁰² Creel, *The Birth of China*, 28.

²⁰³ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 7 May 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²⁰⁴ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping 20 October 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

bones as China's earliest form of writing.²⁰⁵ Soon after this discovery, the first Western collectors -the American Frank Herring Chalfant, (1862-1914) and the Canadian James Mellon Menzies (1885-1957)- purchased a number of the so-called oracle bones and brought to light this important discovery to Western scholarship.²⁰⁶ Li Ji commented that, from its inception, the Anyang excavation was directed towards the recovery of the early written history of China, which is something that traditional Chinese antiquarianism and historiography concentrated on rather than the material culture of its antiquity.²⁰⁷

In the early years, the Academia Sinica excavation focussed on the centre where the oracle bones were found and did not include the peripheral burial sites where ritual bronzes and jades were predominantly located.²⁰⁸ The burial sites were often illegally plundered by the local population and many archaeological objects thus made it to the art market. In one of his newsletter-reports Karlbeck mentioned that most of these finds stayed in the hands of local dealers, which was good for provenance, as they could provide specific information on

²⁰⁵ For a reference on Wang Yirong's discovery of the oracle bones see, David N. Keightley, *Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China* (Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press, 1978).

Luo Zhengyu (1866-1940) was one of the first Chinese scholars and collectors to purchase and document the oracle bones. He was also one of the first to visit the site near Anyang to collect the inscribed bones and tortoise shells but also stone knives, vessels, jade implements and ivories. See, Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China', 434-436.

A workshop dedicated to the life and work of Luo Zhenyu was held in London on the 28-29 August 2008 in affiliation with Christies Education and the School of Oriental and African Studies: 'Lost Generation: Luo Zhenyu, Qing Loyalists and the Formation of Modern Chinese Culture'. A paper on Luo Zhenyu's art dealing was given by Shana J. Brown of the University of Hawaii named 'Luo Zhenyu and the Practices of Early Twentieth Century Chinese Art Dealing', which covers the period in which he sold a number of objects to the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities.

For a biographical reference on Luo Zhenyu see, 'Lo Chên-yü', *JNCBRAS* LXXI (1940) [obituary]:105

²⁰⁶ For further reading and biographical references see, Frank H. Chalfant, *Early Chinese Writing* (Pekin: Budenkaku, 1940); Berthold Laufer, 'Frank H Chalfant', *T'oung Pao* Second Series 15 (1) (1914) [obituary]: 165-166; Linfu Dong, *Cross Culture and Faith. The Life and Work of James Mellon Menzies* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2005).

²⁰⁷ Li Chi, *Anyang*, v; Luther C. Goodrich, 'Archaeology in China: The First Decades', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 17 (1) (Nov., 1957): 5-15; Michael Beurdeley, *The Chinese Collector through the Centuries*, (Fribourg: Office du Livre S.A., 1966).

Su Rongyu posits that the discovery of the oracle bones marked a great watershed in the development of Chinese historiography and formed the basis of the initial stage of archaeology in China. Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology ' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China', 434-442.

²⁰⁸ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Li Chi, *Anyang*, v; Goodrich, 'Archaeology in China', 5-15.

the location of the tomb and other burial goods found with the objects.²⁰⁹ In 1932 Karlbeck visited Li Ji to see and discuss some of the things that were then recently officially excavated.²¹⁰ These included some of the potshards and similar bronze weapons that he had purchased on the art market. His meeting with Li Ji provided him with the latest archaeological data of the site and comments of this visit in his newsletter-report included notes on different designs found on pottery remains. The visit shows that both men were on friendly terms during this period and not yet dominated by an anti-foreign atmosphere as Karlbeck mentioned two years later.²¹¹

Already in 1929 Karlbeck said that whilst purchasing in Beijing there were a great deal of objects from Anyang on the market:

‘Quite a few items are still coming from Anyang. The excavations that are still being made are done for the Nanking Museum but many things also benefit the Peking dealers. Inscribed and sculptured bones seem to be the largest part of the finds [...] The bronzes which are said to have come from there, and I have all reason to believe that they are so, are from a history of art point of view of a very large interest and I therefore have purchased what I have seen.’²¹²

What is interesting is that Karlbeck mentioned that equally the Nanking Museum and the dealers in Beijing acquired similar objects unearthed and there is a clear indication that what was discovered was divided between the institution and the market. Another important factor was, according to Karlbeck, that from a history of art point of view the bronzes were of a great interest and he purchased with this in mind. As these represented the earliest stylistic productions of Chinese bronze art they were, and still are, one of the most meaningful objects in the cultural and historic study of Chinese design and technology. Karlbeck’s interest

²⁰⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Peiping 1934’.

²¹⁰ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Peiping 20 October 1932’.

²¹¹ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 7 May 1934’.

²¹² Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Peiping 23 July 1929’.

clearly exceeded that of any ordinary dealer whose primary intentions were to buy and sell purely for financial gain.

A couple of years after he first wrote to Andersson about the Anyang objects on the market he continued to comment about the influx of such for sale in China.²¹³ At the start of the 1931-1932 expedition Karlbeck wrote:

‘The market is this time quite different from the situation during my earlier visits to China. Then I found it difficult to get really good bronzes. This time I am sorry not to buy any more of the beautiful things which are offered to me.’²¹⁴

The availability of bronzes on the market grew during the turn of the decade (1920s to 1930s) because of an increase in excavation, legal and illegal, market demand, and the instable political climate which made cultural property regulations difficult to implement. This inevitably affected their market value. In 1931 Karlbeck noted that vessels from Anyang were still moderately priced, however, this situation could suddenly change when the authorities put a stop to all [unauthorised] excavation, which would drive the prices up soaring high.²¹⁵ In 1930, Karlbeck’s friend, travel companion and fellow collector Robert William Swallow (1878-1938) commented on the antiquities market in China:²¹⁶

‘Many of the chief foreign collectors are placing more and more value on the older pieces [...] Another sign of the times is the constant complaint of the dealers that the demand is for ancient and unusual pieces, and that the prices for all other things are remarkably low [...] there is evidence

²¹³ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 23 May 1934’.

²¹⁴ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Letter to Andersson, copied in with the newsletter-report, Peiping 5 October 1931’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²¹⁵ Karlbeck, ‘Letter to Andersson, Peiping 5 October 1931’.

²¹⁶ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 20 September 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 91.

Swallow was born in China of missionary parents. He was partly educated in England but spent most of his life in China. In the late 1920’s and early 1930s he owned a curio-shop in Beijing named ‘The Sign of the Laughing Buddha’. Karlbeck travelled with Swallow in China often visiting historical and cultural sites. See, Arthur de Carle Sowerby, ‘Obituary- Robert William Swallow’, *CJSA* 29 (2) (Aug., 1938) [obituary].

enough to prove that the ancient wares of China are being enthusiastically sought after and admired.²¹⁷

Thus, foreign demand led to an increase of early objects on the market. This sustained the high price-value for early dating objects. A decrease of objects available would increase their value because they were considered rare. Karlbeck's and Swallow's statements showed that at the time it was a prosperous and advantageous period to buy and invest in early Chinese art.

As discussed, exporting antiquities from China was considered illegal by Chinese law in 1929. However, the debate about cultural property and ownership was not simple, even in today's terms. The political situation in China was highly unstable in the late 1920s and early 1930s, as there was no solid centralised government that had firm management of all the outer regions. This led to segregated ruler-ship in the different parts of the country. Many areas were under the control of local warlords or government officials and they were often prone to corruption.²¹⁸ On one of his visits to Kaifeng Karlbeck complained that many of the shops did not contain high class goods because the local authorities had ordered the farmers to stop digging.²¹⁹ He mentioned that the governor of Kaifeng was new and had not yet come to an agreement with the landowners as to how much of the proceeds were to be handed over. The poverty in the country-side was often blamed for the illegal excavations of ancient tombs

²¹⁷ Swallow wrote his publication on bronze mirrors in the spring and summer of 1930 when he was a resident in Kaifeng. It was during this period that Karlbeck visited the author and travelled to the town on behalf of the syndicate. Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, 3.

²¹⁸ For further reading on China's political state during this period see, Nathaniel Peffer, *China: The collapse of a civilization* (London: Routledge, 1931), 173-190; Edmund Club, *20th Century China* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964), 108-148.

²¹⁹ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Hsuechowfu 22 May 1932', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

by the local population.²²⁰ Still, local corruption also played a leading role in allowing trade to continue, making the matter more complex. Karlbeck wrote:

‘The population is now starving, and high prices are paid [for antiques], so farmers spend a lot of time searching [the land for ancient burial sites].’²²¹

Almost as a means for justification he declared:

‘Local authorities let the farmers dig, against orders from Nanking to put a stop to it. The local authority’s reason to let the farmers dig is that they are so poor and otherwise would turn to bandits.’²²²

In the same newsletter-report, Karlbeck commented that it is these types of excavations upon which he depends when it came to buying for the syndicate.

‘[...] it is probable [because of the digging by the farmers] that interesting bronzes will reach Peiping and Shanghai this autumn.’²²³

The prices that the ancient objects were fetching at the market were high and often the farmers would target the burial grounds which ensured them high prices:

‘Farmers are said to receive \$ 25 000 for a single find by the dealers. It is not surprising that the markets from time to time should be flooded with bronzes and early jade. Outstanding pieces are sold at high prices. There are many Japanese buyers and US and Chinese collectors.’²²⁴

According to both Karlbeck and Swallow, there were three ways in which antiquities were unearthed and subsequently found their way onto the art market.²²⁵ Firstly, there were

²²⁰ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 12 May 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²²¹ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 11 March 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²²² Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 20 September 1934’.

²²³ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 20 September 1934’.

²²⁴ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping 20 July 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

accidental finds by the local population, for example, when they were digging up land for various practical purposes such as building houses, irrigation ditches and wells. Secondly, through the increase of public works activity, such as the building of roads, railways and embankments many ancient graves were uncovered. Thirdly, the objects came on the market by means of unauthorised digging in so-called favourable places, where heavy penalties would incur in the case of discovery and conviction. Both Karlbeck and Swallow understood that the great objection to unofficial excavation was the loss of any archaeological record as the objects were taken out quickly and sold as soon as possible. At that time Swallow called for the Chinese government's attention to this problem and hoped that 'before long all excavations will be made under the supervision of experts'.²²⁶ His plea for the preservation of archaeological seems contradictory as he was the owner of an antiques shop in Beijing.

A detailed description by Karlbeck of an unofficial excavation of a tomb by local farmers in northern China gives an interesting insight on how such practices operated at the time:

'Before the mound was to be opened it was sown with kaoliang. When this had grown tall and thick enough to provide cover a vertical shaft was dug just wide enough to admit a man of normal girth. If anything of value was found, tunnels were thrown out from it in all directions. The digging took time, of course, but during autumn and winter no work is done in the fields and the peasants are therefore unoccupied. When the grave was thought to have been emptied of its treasures the shaft was usually, though not always filled again.'²²⁷

At that time, different methods for digging up ancient graves were used. Around the Anyang site both Karlbeck and the then young American scholar Herrlee Glessner Creel (1905-1994), who visited the site in the late 1920s, observed that the grave-robbers used a post-hole digger

²²⁵ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report, Shanghai 20 September 1934'; Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, 27; Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 91.

²²⁶ Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, 27.

²²⁷ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 135-136.

in order to locate the ancient graves and drill into the earth.²²⁸ Creel mentioned that most of the excavating was done at night and an entire tomb was often gutted by the morning. This was not without danger and often tunnels collapsed and fatalities occurred. A selected site was heavily guarded with armed men who would shoot to kill if interrupted making it difficult to intervene without the help of organised military co-operation. The looting of the graves by the farmers was severely punished by the local authorities, even by death.

It is true that a great deal of the objects ended up in foreign hands, including Europeans, Americans and Japanese. At that time, Creel remarked somewhat progressively that historical objects in Chinese or foreign collections were not lost to science and still available to research:

‘Although a large proportion of them [the objects] go abroad to museums and private collectors. They are not, of course, lost to science, for they are still available to study, though it seems rather unfair to the Chinese scholars to have to go abroad to study their own antiquities. But far more serious is the fact that in the process of digging up these objects the grave-robbers heedlessly destroy the most valuable and irreplaceable archaeological evidences. If they had been excavated by trained archaeologists [...] a great deal of the original form [could have been] preserved.’²²⁹

That unsupervised excavation and the export of cultural property were not officially accepted during the time is undeniable but the question was and is complex. However, statements by those studying and collecting in China set the circumstances of the environment. For example, Creel recognised that to stop destruction of historic materials was not entirely related to a stop in the trade in the ancient objects:

²²⁸ In one of his Newsletter-reports Karlbeck mentioned that Creel was a student of Chinese art and not a collector. This was one of the reasons Li Ji asked him to participate in the excavations at Anyang because he was considered non-threatening. Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, dated Peiping 20 July, 1934’; Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 176; Creel, *The Birth of China*, 31-32.

For a biographical reference on Creel see, David T. Roy, ‘Herrlee Glessner Creel (1905-1994)’, *Journal of Asian Studies* 53 (4) (Nov., 1994) [obituary]: 1356-1357.

²²⁹ Creel, *The Birth of China*, 32-33.

‘It is easy to say that the destruction of historic materials could be stopped if foreigners would cease to buying Chinese bronzes, but this is not quite true. Chinese collectors were encouraging this practice before the foreigners began buying, although the present high prices were unknown.’²³⁰

Antiquarianism and the collecting of antiquities in China, including Bronze Age vessels, were not new practices and the traditional, domestic art market for such goods was well established from the Song period (960-1279) onwards.²³¹ Within the country the traditional market was in the control of the Chinese dealers for centuries and they often bought objects on site bringing them back to Shanghai and Beijing to sell. Karlbeck recalled:

‘[...] in Peking there were something like four hundred antique-shops employing six thousand salesmen, and why I was as a rule of hope when I entered any one of them, even if I visited the week before. One never knew when something interesting might turn up from the interior, and it was important to be first in the field.’²³²

It is quite staggering to think that there were well over four hundred shops selling antiquities in Beijing alone and it would have been time consuming for Karlbeck to visit a good number and select the wares he was interested in.

It was rare to find foreign buyers purchasing outside the metropolitan cities, and Karlbeck was one of a handful who was confident and knowledgeable enough to travel around the country for this purpose. As a foreigner he was in possession of a Chinese passport, which was an official travel document in Chinese stating the provinces that he was allowed to visit

²³⁰ Creel, *The Birth of China*, 33.

²³¹ The Song dynasty scholar Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072) was one of the first to categorise these types of ancient objects. The *Kaogutu, Illustrated Catalogue of Examined Antiquity*, (its Preface dates to 1092), compiled by the scholar Lu Dalin (1046-1092) is one of the earliest systems that classified ancient artefacts that were known to these scholars.

See, François Louis and Peter N. Miller, eds., *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500-1800*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009); Xia Nai, ‘What is Archaeology?’, in *Anthropology in China*, ed. Gregory Eliyu Guldin, 59-67 (Armonk, NY: M.E.Sharp, 1990); Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 74; K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 4-12.

²³² Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 18.

and he often enjoyed the protection of local authorities. Still, he often depended on purchases from dealers in the Shanghai and Beijing and larger provincial towns from shops that carried colourful names such as ‘The Shop of Eternal Spring’, ‘The Elegant Studio’ or ‘The Brilliant Studio’ (Figure 22).²³³ In his auto-biography he gives a picturesque description of a typical Chinese curio shop at that time:

‘The antique-shops were usually quite narrow. The customer stepped into a front room crammed with objects designed to attract the less knowledgeable visitor. Should he find nothing here to please him, he was led across a small court into another room where better things were on display. If he was still not satisfied he was taken further into the interior of the store.’²³⁴

The process to buy was time-consuming. Each shop had its best goods in the back rooms and in order to get there was a process where the buyer was required to demonstrate his knowledge on the objects in the front rooms before taken to the authentic treasures.

The dealing of antiquities was in the hands of the Chinese themselves. During the 1920s and early 1930s it was predominantly the foreigners that purchased the early dating objects because they had the money to do so. In these years Karlbeck experienced that the market was thriving and growing because of an increase in demand:

‘Local dealers are now aware of the high prices which are paid in Europe, they consider themselves entitled to greater part of the profits [...] Foreign dealers, who bring gold to the country, can buy silver [Chinese dollars] very cheaply now and therefore local dealers are charging higher prices.’²³⁵

High prices were established and Karlbeck was arguably one of the most successful foreign collectors operating at that time who understood the market.

²³³ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 7 May, 1934’; Beurdeley, *The Chinese Collector through the Centuries*, 207-213.

²³⁴ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, 19-20.

²³⁵ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Peiping 5 October 1931’.

As discussed, he had already sold sets of his ceramic collection in the early 1920s and by doing so involved in the dealership of Chinese archaeology. From a collecting perspective Karlbeck systematically selected sets and this separated him from an ordinary dealer and motivation to sell. By selecting and organising specific objects to create sequences he understood the creation of a collection.²³⁶ During the collecting period for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the syndicate, he purchased close to 2800 objects, focussing on ritual bronze vessels, belt-hooks, weaponry and mirrors from the Zhou period, archaic jades, Tang period ceramic figures, Song period ceramics and Ordos bronzes. Karlbeck focused on the historical studies connected to subject presented by the objects and produced some innovative research. A description by his friend Swallow of a true collector is reminiscent of Karlbeck's approach to Chinese art and furthermore shows how a Western collector at that time identified himself with his private collection:

‘The true collector is not content with the mere acquisition of a number of objects, no matter how rare and costly they may be, but is also interested in their origin, their history, and the turns of fortune that have followed them through the ages. For such an enthusiast what can be more interesting than an ancient mirror? Romance radiates from it, and it needs little skill or imagination to make it the centre of a fascinating story, especially if the inscription tells us that it was an imperial mirror, on it bears the name of one of the famous makers of the Han dynasty.’²³⁷

If we take Swallow's description and mirror it to Karlbeck it illustrates his drive to investigate and historically explore the significance of the collections he created. As argued here, he was first and foremost an academic collector, not only of the objects themselves but also of archaeological and historical knowledge. This force led him to become a specialist in his field, conducting innovative research on subjects that were often little known topics at

²³⁶ For concepts and analysis on the act of collecting see, Pearce, *On Collecting*, 23.

²³⁷ Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, 23.

that time. His role within the academic circle that set the foundations of the study of Chinese art and archaeology in the West is undeniable.

2.2 Karlbeck: a scholar

To position Karlbeck within a newly formed group of Chinese art and culture specialists in the West- who then had recently based their studies on emerging scientific and historical evidence provided by ancient objects- it is important to analyse and identify the innovative concepts he presented in his publications. Karlbeck wrote twenty-four articles on Chinese art and archaeology, including two catalogues for the Hallwyl House Museum, between 1923 and 1967. He published predominantly in English which shows that it was the preferred language of the academic circle then. His articles are based on self-studies on the objects that he collected, including the period he was in China on behalf of the museum and the syndicate.

The first articles date from the early 1920s until the late 1930s and cover five main subject areas: his observations on Chinese archaeology whilst in China; Chinese minor bronzes, such as mirrors; Anyang moulds for bronze casting; Anyang marble sculpture and archaic jade pendants. His later articles, published between 1939 and 1967, predominantly dealt with the topics on ceramics such as proto-porcelain and Yue ware, historical kiln sites and revisiting his earlier work on bronzes. Throughout the years Karlbeck was in constant communication with a number of scholars and connoisseurs to discuss his work and analysis. The Karlbeck archive at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities includes a 1953 New Years card from the art historian Loehr, whose later research on the evolution of Chinese bronze decoration provided a guideline for dating bronzes.²³⁸ In the postcard Loehr asked if Karlbeck was interested in publishing an article or note in the American scholarly journal *Ars Orientalis*

²³⁸ Max Loehr, 'New Years card to Karlbeck, dated 1953', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

dedicated to art history, ‘which I would be greatly honoured to receive’.²³⁹ Overall, Karlbeck was held in high regard to later scholars in the field and he stayed active in this academic circle for many years.

Karlbeck’s articles define his personal research interests. Subjects like that of early weapons and ancient mirrors was not part of the traditional intellectual repertoire for the study of Chinese bronzes, where the focus at the time was on ritual bronze vessels and inscriptions. When he started collecting such objects in the late 1910s and early 1920s he was one of the first to systematically form collections of these types. There was not an immediate aesthetic ideal connected to them that would have triggered the interest of the more general collector of Chinese art; furthermore, the small bronzes were initially collected as ethnographic material, to analyse the development of decorative styles, inter-cultural influences, and technological evolution in early cultures. What occupied Karlbeck was to classify his collections in a coherent systematic manner, where description, dating and provenance preceded any further historical analysis. This is typical of the typological influence in classifying archaeological and ethnological objects at the time which was based upon the display of evolutionary progress.

Two specific articles based on his personal bronze collection date from the 1920 and included short technical descriptions of the objects he first acquired.²⁴⁰ ‘Ancient Chinese bronze weapons’ and ‘Notes on some early bronze mirrors’ were published in the *China Journal of Science and Arts* and are the first in English dealing with these particular topics. Both were written when he was still a resident in China and demonstrate he was at the front-line of this research. In 1925 he already commented on the historical value of this collection:

²³⁹ *Ars Orientalis* is sponsored by the Department of Art History of the University of Michigan and the Freer Gallery of Art of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

²⁴⁰ Karlbeck, ‘Ancient Chinese bronze weapons’, 127-132; Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 3-9.

‘To judge the number of minor bronze objects from the earlier Dynasties displayed amongst the wares of the curio dealers in various parts of China there must be some who are attracted by and collect such archaeological material.’²⁴¹

Karlbeck was certainly interested and attracted to these archaeological objects and his incentive for collecting weaponry was out of a genuine historical interest for the subject-matter connected to the Bronze Age. In the same article he continued:

‘It would not [only] be of interest to the student of Chinese archaeology but serve a definite scientific purpose as well if those collectors could be induced to publish [in the relevant column of the *The China Journal of Science and Arts*] reproductions of specimens in their collections, be it photographs, drawings or rubbings, accompanied with information about localities or districts where the objects were unearthed, and other data that might be of interest.’²⁴²

His request for sufficient data from other students or collectors which could help him in the taxonomic process was how he approached his collection. Again, the academic and intellectual dialogue is something that was important to him. Interestingly, he referred to these objects as specimen, and so associated them within an ethnological definition, and not immediately as art. The truth is that the few who approached this subject at the time were a small group of primarily Westerners residing in China. What sets them apart from the collectors outside China is that they concentrated on this topic because of the availability of these small objects either found on site or inexpensively purchased from dealers.²⁴³ However, these bronzes slowly reached the art market in Europe and were gradually bought by private collectors out of admiration for refined craftsmanship. Any important historical or

²⁴¹ Karlbeck, ‘Ancient Chinese bronze weapons’, 127.

²⁴² Karlbeck, ‘Ancient Chinese bronze weapons’, 127.

²⁴³ These Westerners included the editor of the *China Journal of Science and Arts* Arthur de Carle Sowerby (1885-1954), Swallow, Andersson and Hedin.

For a biography on de Carle Sowerby see, Richard Raine Sowerby, *Sowerby of China: Arthur de Carle Sowerby* (Kendal: Titus Wilson and Son, 1956).

archaeological data was lost in transport and information depended on data gathered by collectors in China, like Karlbeck.

Karlbeck was the first authority to call attention bronze mirrors he collected when he was living in the Huai River Valley (Figures 23 and 24). The Huai-style mirrors, a term he later borrowed from Karlgren, were of a particular interest from the start. Already 1926 he opened many questions addressing the evolution of casting technology, design and origin of this particular bronze group. The Chinese had been collectors of ancient mirrors for centuries and the first studies on the subject are found in Chinese literature of the Song period containing illustrations of mirrors from the Han period onwards.²⁴⁴ In his article Karlbeck used the available original Chinese source the *Bogu tulu* as a historical guide to his own studies on the bronze mirrors, in particular to define specific types and production locations.²⁴⁵ He recognised that it was essential that Chinese sources be taken into account when studying the mirrors as, in his words, ‘they hold the key to the history of its makers’ and the article sheds some light to what original material he was reading. Furthermore, he tried to date some of the objects with relation to their geographical history and in doing so linked distinct decorative motifs to specific cultural groups during the later Bronze Age period, like the Chu (771-450 BC) and Qin (221-206 BC) states.

The Huai-style mirrors date approximately from the fifth to third centuries BC (Eastern Zhou period). Through stylistic analysis based on sequencing and identifying evolutionary changes Karlbeck was the first to date these to earlier than the Han period. He questioned if some decorative motifs had a relationship to the ornamented knife handles from a then recently discovered Scythian bronze culture in Minusinsk in Russia, and wondered if there was a link

²⁴⁴ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 3; Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Mirrors*, xi.

²⁴⁵ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 3-9.

between the two bronze producing cultures.²⁴⁶ Some years later, in 1933 the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities organised an exhibition of Chinese bronzes that included the display of a number Minusink bronzes alongside the Huai examples as tentative comparative material.²⁴⁷ Many of the bronzes exhibited had been collected by Karlbeck and he was involved in the arrangement of this exhibition. Without a doubt he supported a visual connection between the bronzes produced by the neighbouring cultures by comparison.

This methodology not only showed his advanced knowledge of the Chinese sources but his stylistic analysis was essential and reflective of the more general Western approach to understanding non-Western objects in a historical context. Studies on stylistic development were useful to classify these mirrors and Karlbeck supplied fellow collectors with an intricate and visual description. Furthermore, he identified three separate methods of technology that were used in the ornamentation of the Huai-style and he was interested when a transition of the geometric to the naturalistic animal-style influenced ornament. At the time, the terminology to define and classify specific groups of objects, such as bronzes, within a stylistic framework was not firmly established and agreed upon amongst the Western and Chinese specialists. Some years later, Swallow commented that the Chinese method of classification was different to that of a Western approached the subject.

‘The Chinese mind steeped as it is in history and historical allusions thinks of the past in terms of imperial dynasties, and the same system of classification is used when speaking of curios and art.’²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 4.

For the discoveries in Minussinsk see the publications by the Swedish archaeologist Aarne M. Tallgren (1885-1945). Aarne Michael Tallgren, *Collection Tovostine des antiquités préhistoriques des Minoussinsk conservées chez le dr. Karl Hedman à vasa: chapitres d’archéologie Sibérienne* (Helsingfors: [K. F. Puromiehen kirjapaino o.-y.], 1917).

²⁴⁷ Andersson, ‘Exhibition of early Chinese Bronzes’, 81-132; *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September, 1933*.

²⁴⁸ Swallow, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Mirrors*, 10.

Swallow's comments somewhat suggested that the traditional Chinese methodology was inferior to the analysis of the same through the Western typological approach. At the same time Western specialists, including Karlbeck, were initially eager to follow the traditional Chinese system of defining stylistic groups within their approximate dynastic period, however, by Western academic tradition they also defined objects through classifying geographical and evolutionary styles.

During a visit to Anyang in 1929 Karlbeck investigated a number of dagger-axes (*ge*) found at the site and he suggested resemblances of design between the ancient Chinese and the Minusinsk culture (Figure 25).²⁴⁹ His comments implied awareness of the circulating inter-cultural diffusionist ideas that were part of the intellectual debate during that time, where the Minusinsk bronzes were considered Western. To support his view he made cross-cultural comparisons by categorizing the archaeological material of the Anyang site with those of other bronze cultures outside China's borders. However, to define Karlbeck in today's terms as a Eurocentric diffusionist is maybe far-fetched. His main concern was not to demonstrate superior technologies being introduced to China from the West but to establish the classification and the institutionalisation of the objects collected within a coherent typological sequence.

One of Karlbeck's important contributions to the study of Chinese art and archaeology was the deconstruction of regional styles in bronze objects discovered in the Huai Valley region and the discovery of a particular transitional style. This style of what Karlbeck called the Huai bronzes was identified as breaking away from the geometric stylization generally found on the earlier dating Shang and Zhou bronzes and introduction of more naturalistic motifs.²⁵⁰ The term Huai-style was only used for a short period of time in

²⁴⁹ Karlbeck, 'Notes on the archaeology of China', 194-201.

²⁵⁰ Swallow, Appendix 1, 'Huai Valley Culture'.

Western scholarship and later predominantly connected to the collection at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. Geographically many of the Huai bronzes were produced in the state of Chu that included the Huai River Valley area.²⁵¹ These archaeological discoveries of Chu material culture showed an exquisitely rich artistic production ranging from bronzes, jades, woodwork and architecture distinctly different from the Anyang finds. In his discussion of the decorative elements Karlbeck suggested that the geometric patterns produced by the Chu were a significant link to the more naturalistic elements produced by the following Han period. He argued that although it did not necessarily originate in the Huai River Valley region, it demonstrated that other influences were accepted within the Chu's artistic repertoire (Figures 23 and 24). Furthermore, he suggested that the Chu people were the first to decorate their mirrors by means of a, in his words, primitive experimental stamp designs (Figures 26 and 27).²⁵² Interestingly, he links ancient technology with the word primitive. This coincides with the conceptualisation that the cultural study of past societies was connected to a similar ethnological methodology used to analyse living primitive societies at the time and also addressed concepts like progress and evolution. Moreover, the mirrors were considered essential in the study of the origin and evolutionary production of design, ornamentation and casting techniques in Bronze Age China and continued to occupy Karlbeck's research throughout his life. Some years later he wrote:

‘During the many years I have been collecting I have studied and seen a great number of early mirrors, and have become familiar with the types found at the early centres. In Shou Chou, Shanghai and elsewhere I have examined many hundreds of early Shou Chou mirrors and in Cheng Chou and K'ai-feng Fu, where I have stayed many times, I have studied collections of early mirrors from

²⁵¹ For further reading on the Chu culture see, Constance A. Cook and John S. Major, eds., *Defining Chu*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

²⁵² Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors’, 4-8; Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Korean Bronzes at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*, 22.

Loyang and Chin Ts'un and I have found that types common at Loyang are but rarely met with at Shou Chou, and vice versa [sic].²⁵³

Karlbeck clearly considered himself a leading specialist on Huai Valley mirror production. He not only visited the important Bronze Age production centres at Chuzhou and at Loyang many times but was fortunate to examine many hundreds of mirrors in collections around the country and in Europe.²⁵⁴ During his travels he allocated production sites and identified the historical and archaeological importance of the two locations. He was the first to identify two separate centres of mirror production during the late Zhou period, each developing a distinct decorative style.²⁵⁵ He also suggested that the Chu people were the first cultural group to decorate their mirrors because of their experimental manner in ornament.²⁵⁶

There are a couple of specific articles that portray Karlbeck's choice of subject-matter and placed him at the forefront of ground-breaking research on ancient Chinese culture. One article dealt with questions surrounding Anyang ceramic moulds that were used for casting the bronze ritual vessels.²⁵⁷ He bought a number of these moulds from a local dealer for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (Figures 28 and 29).

'During a visit paid to Anyang in August 1934 I obtained from a local dealer some fragments of clay moulds for bronze vessels which the dealer informed me he had obtained in the village of Hsiao-t'un. The moulds were all rather worn [...] but nevertheless the ornaments could be deciphered and were carried out in a style generally found on the bronzes from Anyang [...] The only moulds for bronze vessels known to me at the time were fragments found by the members of the Academia Sinica at Anyang and kindly shown me by Dr. Li Chi. I consequently considered my find as highly important

²⁵³ Karlbeck, *Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese and Korean Bronzes at Hallwyl House, Stockholm*, p. 14.

²⁵⁴ Chuzhou was an archaeological and historical site. In ancient times the states of Chu, Zhou and Qin all had a presence there. Loyang was for many years the capital of the court during the Eastern Zhou period. It was also the capital during the Eastern Han period (25-220 AD).

²⁵⁵ Eventually Karlbeck identified seven different stylistic types based on decorative motifs within the Huai style. See, Karlbeck, 'Notes on the archaeology of China', 204-205; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, 1 May 1932', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²⁵⁶ Karlbeck, 'Notes on some early Chinese bronze mirrors', 6.

²⁵⁷ Karlbeck, 'Anyang Moulds', 39-60.

[...]When I departed I had procured a total of 25 fragments, chiefly through the aid of two small local dealers.²⁵⁸

Karlbeck recognised that the discovery of the moulds was highly important because they explained the technology of the Shang craftsmen to cast the ritual vessels. On the other hand, they were also extremely rare and only recently officially excavated by the Academia Sinica. Based upon studying the moulds Karlbeck was the first to correctly indicate that during the Shang period two different techniques were used to cast the vessels; by direct-process, where the molten metal was poured directly into the mould; or through the *cire perdue* or ‘lost wax’ method, where a wax layer applied to a model of the vessel was lost through a heating process and replaced by the molten bronze. The moulds for the direct-process, like those collected by Karlbeck, were of two principal types: permanent moulds that were used repeatedly or those that only permitted one or two castings.²⁵⁹ The *cire perdue* method required piece-moulds and were already known to have been used in ancient China. Karlbeck made a coherent argument for the use of direct casting as early as the Shang period based upon his collected evidence that the moulds had been in contact with molten metal.²⁶⁰ In doing so he was the first Western specialist to discuss the different casting methods of the

²⁵⁸ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists 1934’; Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Peiping 20 October 1932’; Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Moulds’, 39-60

Moulds were also purchased for the Swedish private collector Anders Hellström (1877-1940). Hellström was managing director of the Papyrus Mills in Mölndal. He was a promoter of various scholarly projects especially within the field of archaeology. He was interested in China and early Chinese art before it became a popular collecting trend in Sweden. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities purchased his collection from his widow Märtha in 1946, who wanted to keep the collection as a whole. The collection included many archaeological objects ranging from bronzes, ritual vessels and Neolithic ceramics to tomb figurines. For a biographical account on Hellström and his collection see, ‘Hellström Anders’ *Svenska Män och Kvinnor, Biografisk Uppslagsbok*, 3 G-H (Stockholm, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 405; Bernard Karlgren, ‘Bronzes in the Hellström Collection’, *BMFEA* 20 (1948): 1-38.

²⁵⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Moulds’, 41.

²⁶⁰ Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Moulds’, 42-44.

Shang. Karlbeck's research on casting techniques was recently discussed by Lukas Nickel and used as a basis for his review on the different casting technology in ancient China.²⁶¹

This topic continued to occupy Karlbeck's research for many years. In the early 1960s he participated in the Bronze Project, which investigated some of the casting problems raised by the Freer Gallery bronzes.²⁶² During this project the so-called Karlbeck Mark found on Shang bronzes was officially named after him. The mark was recognized by a set of lines in the form of a cross at the base of the bronzes and indicated their casting technique by use of the discussed moulds.²⁶³ In 1964 Karlbeck visited London at the age of 85, where he gave a talk at the Oriental Ceramic Society on the problems of bronze casting.²⁶⁴ This was his last lecture on his specialist topic and showed that his research and discovery was still of interest by collectors and academics after many decades.²⁶⁵ A copy with notes of this lecture is part of the archival data in Stockholm. It is unclear why the notes of his presentation weren't published in the *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* and it might well be that his age prevented him from compiling a draft of his lecture for publishing.

A second article that coincided with the discovery of the moulds found in Anyang was on a number of stone ornaments discovered at the site. In 'Anyang Marble Sculpture' Karlbeck discussed a pioneering topic in the study of Chinese sculpture (Figure 30).²⁶⁶ The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities had first acquired a number of such objects from the Chinese scholar,

²⁶¹ Lukas Nickel, 'Imperfect Symmetry: Re-Thinking Bronze Casting Technology in Ancient China', *AA* 66 (1) (2006): 5-59.

²⁶² Karlbeck was paid \$ 600 for participating in this project, a substantial amount at the time. 'Invoice Smithsonian Institution and Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 15 April, 1964', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²⁶³ 'Invoice Smithsonian Institution and Freer Gallery of Art, 15 April, 1964'.

²⁶⁴ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Some Bronze Casting Problems', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

²⁶⁵ Karlbeck gave a total of three lectures at the OCS, besides his bronze casting lecture; On 24 March 1950 he gave a talk on Proto-porcelain and Yueh Ware. His lecture was published in the *Transactions* of that year. The title of his talk was 'Reminiscences of a Collector in China' on October 30 1957. This lecture was not published by the OCS. Karlbeck's autobiography *Treasure Seeker in China* was translated into English in 1957 and it's highly probable that his talk reflected stories in his book. Karlbeck, 'Proto-porcelain and Yüeh Ware', 33-48.

²⁶⁶ Karlbeck, 'Anyang Marble Sculpture', 61-69.

collector, epigraphist and art dealer Luo Zhenyu (1866-1940).²⁶⁷ The exact date for this acquisition is not known but appears to be soon after the museum was founded in 1925. In his article, Karlbeck stated that between 1928 and 1934 the Academia Sinica unearthed a number of stone sculptures at the Anyang site and appeared similar to those acquired by the museum. These objects depict stylized motifs, as on the bronzes from the same site, but also include figurative human and animal representations that Karlbeck described as:

‘[...] one of those composite creations in early Chinese art in which naturalistic and highly conventionalized motifs have been combined to form a monster [...] They are a common occurrence in the art of the Han dynasty but appear to be extremely rare on archaic objects.’²⁶⁸

This group of marble sculptures are, besides the smaller jade carvings, the earliest form of the plastic arts in China and considered an essential link in the art historical study of Chinese sculpture. It was generally thought that the three-dimensional carving of stone only commenced with the arrival of Buddhism during the Han period.²⁶⁹ Karlbeck demonstrated that such technology was already practiced by the Shang. Furthermore, he suggested that the carvings were an incorporated part of their monumental architectural designs, a theory which is still widely accepted today. Another interesting observation was that the design was made up of naturalistic and stylized motifs, which was considered rare and unusual at this period and opened questions whether naturalistic ornamentation was indigenous, diffused or imported within Bronze Age production.

In 1938 Karlbeck published an article on archaic jade pendants that was a brief independent study on the evolution and development of decorative motifs.²⁷⁰ To date early jade ornaments was complex because of the many different types that had been excavated and

²⁶⁷ Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Marble Sculpture’, 61; Brown, ‘Luo Zhenyu and the Practices of Early Twentieth Century Chinese Art Dealing’, ‘Lo Chên-yü’, 105.

²⁶⁸ Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Marble Sculpture’, 62.

²⁶⁹ Osvald Sirén, ‘Chinese Sculpture’, in *Chinese Art*, eds. Fry et al., 16-27.

²⁷⁰ Karlbeck, ‘Some archaic Chinese jade pendants and their dating’, 69-74.

also recently appeared in Western collections through the art market. Karlbeck's analysis illustrated various objects he had collected in Anyang and Loyang during the syndicate expeditions for his clientele (Figure 31). He mentioned that he was self-taught on the subject but was confident to identify the characteristics of the different decorative styles because of his examination of numerous objects in Chinese and Western collections over the years. In his study of the distinct decorative motifs he addressed some Chinese sources like the *Jinshixue* that dealt with bronze inscriptions and characters on the oracle bones, but also gave an understanding between the relationship between inscriptions and design.²⁷¹ In this study Karlbeck made notable reference to Karlgren's then groundbreaking studies presenting a tentative chronology of both Shang and Zhou ritual bronzes.²⁷² He used Karlgren's dating system as a reference to classify the jade pendants using the comparative method to indicate specific stylistic representations that typified the two successive bronze cultures. In doing so he dated many archaic jades in Western collections that were bought on the art market and had no provenance. The objects were then given a tentative origin as having been produced at Anyang or Loyang, depending on the defined decorative elements.

These pioneering studies placed Karlbeck at the centre of Western research in Chinese art and archaeology at the time. He dealt with questions on origin, stylistic evolution and cultural diffusion. The themes were also discussed in 'Notes on Some Chinese Wheel-axle Caps', published in the mid 1960s (although, this historical analysis was first presented in the 1920s and 1930s).²⁷³ Based upon a new archaeological discovery of an untouched chariot pit in 1953 by the Chinese Academy of Science Karlbeck compared the finds with a number of

²⁷¹ Karlbeck, 'Some archaic Chinese jade pendants and their dating', 69-74.

²⁷² Karlgren's tentative chronology was challenged by Loehr, where his classification technique was proven wrong see, Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes*, 101-15. For Karlgren's studies that supported Karlbeck's classification methodology for the jade pendants see, Bernard Karlgren, 'Yin and Chou in Chinese Bronzes', in *Yin and Chou Researches* (Stockholm: The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1935), 9-154; Bernard Karlgren, 'New Studies on Chinese Bronzes' *BMFEA* 9 (1937): 9-118.

²⁷³ Karlbeck, 'Notes on some Chinese wheel axle-caps', 53-74.

chariot-fittings he had purchased on behalf of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Figure 32).²⁷⁴ He starts the article with an excerpt out of *The Bronze Age* by the well-known British archaeologist Childe, where he argued that the invention and diffusion of the wheeled vehicle originated at the ancient Sumerian capital Ur in Mesopotamia (date before 3000 BC).²⁷⁵ Karlbeck took this historical study on board and followed to conclude:

‘Since the [Chinese] chariot proper was drawn by horses it probably originated in a type of country suitable to the raising of horses and the grassland to the north of the Caucasus has been suggested as a likely region. Thence it spread in various directions and probably reached China in the Yin era [which corresponds to the early phase of the Shang period].’²⁷⁶

He argued that the Chinese chariot design had its origin in the northern Caucasus region, which in historical terms was considered Western, and diffused into its borders as early as the beginning of the Bronze Age. The bronze axle-caps collected by Karlbeck were the remains of original chariots dating from the Shang and Zhou periods. He methodologically analysed the technological production of the chariot in ancient China and included the classification and evolution of the axle-caps through a discussion of the notable changes in decoration and design. Through comparative method he considered the chariots in the Middle East and China were similar and furthermore questioned whether they were a Chinese invention or not. He recalled that when he purchased a number of fittings from a ‘trustworthy dealer in Peking’ he was informed that some probably originated in the Ordos region. This region is associated with the non-Chinese Xiongnu tribes that occupied this territory in ancient times. In the same

²⁷⁴ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some Chinese wheel axle-caps’, 53.

²⁷⁵ Vere Gordon Childe, *The Bronze Age* (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1930).

The Royal tombs of the ancient capital of the Sumerians at Ur were excavated between 1922 and 1934. They were located in ancient Mesopotamia and are part of what is now Southern Iraq. The excavations were led by the British archaeologist Charles Leonard Woolley (1880-1960). Charles Leonard Woolley, *Excavations at Ur* (London: Routledge, 2009).

²⁷⁶ Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some Chinese wheel axle-caps’, 53.

article, discussing related bronze objects, Karlbeck argued that the Chinese got the idea of a [belt] buckle from their nomad neighbours and that many of their designs and ornamentation had again their origin in the Ordos region (Figures 33 and 34).²⁷⁷ Thus, the ornamentation on the chariot designs and those found on the belt-buckle connected to the concept of import and new stylistic influences at a given period when the Chinese and Xiongnu were interacting, through trade and warfare. Such statements are reflective of diffusionist principles, where technology and decorative styles had its origin outside China's boundaries and absorbed into the Bronze Age cultures discovered within the boundaries. What is interesting is that the general diffusionist debate (as known in the 1920s and 1930s) was dismissed by the time that this article was published. However, these points made by Karlbeck demonstrated that in the 1960s some issues were still unresolved and the overall reconstruction of material culture, archaeology and history was more complex. The historical studies in Chinese art and archaeology remain to seek a possible link of influence between ancient cultures in China and its Western borders. It continues to analyse collected material in the first decades of the twentieth century, including those by Karlbeck and his peers, as the 2003 symposium discussed in the Introduction verified.

Indeed, Karlbeck's articles were predominantly based on objects that he acquired for himself, the museum and the syndicate and were an essential source for his research. As demonstrated, the subjects that challenged him to pursue his studies included archaeology, bronze-casting and the analysis of stylistic evolution in non-inscribed archaic bronzes and jades. This determined his field of expertise. This historical knowledge in combination with the trained eye of an experienced collector and familiarity of the art market in China also included speaking and reading the Chinese language. This inevitably led to a successful career at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and as an important buyer for a number of

²⁷⁷ Karlbeck, 'Notes on Some Chinese wheel axle-caps', 57.

prominent collectors and institutions in Europe in particular. The collecting process and concerns about the legality of the export of his purchases is something that links into the complex and contemporary topic of the circulation of cultural heritage.

We are dealing with a controversial issue. On the one hand Karlbeck was breaking the Chinese law by exporting the Bronze Age objects (as stated by the Chinese legislation published in 1930). But, to portray Karlbeck as a smuggler of antiquities would be too simplistic. Firstly, he was operating in a complicated environment with a tradition of trade in antiquities going back centuries. In the late 1920s and 1930s China was in consistent chaos and warlords ruled different parts of the country. Legislation was often vague and not enforced. He was one of a number of foreign collectors operating in China at the time, who will be briefly discussed in the following chapter. The study of collectors and collections needs to consider a complete view of their history, as Chris Gosden has recently pointed out, including their intellectual interests, institutional histories, economic resources and social skill to understand what they are, how they were collected and why.²⁷⁸ Bearing in mind the Eurocentric issues that are connected with the obvious impact of imperialism on collecting and ownership we should perhaps also perceive the collection as an entity in itself. This is a significant consideration where the collection has an after-life beyond its initial history and in a sense can be viewed within a larger global sense today. It also stresses that the colonial system was essentially about material culture and an important deliberation in archaeology and the formations of collections in the West. Collections, like those formed by Karlbeck, played an important role in the globalization of archaeology and non-Western art. They not only identify the interest of Western scholarship in ancient Chinese history but also their presentation demonstrated a dialogue with China at that period in time. The objects themselves are re-identified within this context, where the material culture of China's past in

²⁷⁸ For further reading see, Gosden, *Collecting Colonialism*.

Western institutions represents a new era of global communication. On the other hand the analysis of the complexity of this issue has revealed a multi-layered picture. In any rate, Karlbeck and his scholarship has made an important contribution to the study of Chinese art and archaeology. It was his pioneering research and classification method which effectively institutionalised the Bronze Age objects. This brought him respect and recognition within the discipline and has left his legacy within a number of institutions around Europe. We have to place Karlbeck in a historical context, defined by a period when the foreign collector in China influenced the growth of collections in the West. In turn, this period was also domineered by a Eurocentric prerogative on the ownership of non-Western cultural objects and Karlbeck needs to be understood as active participant in this system.

The foundation of institutional and private collections in Sweden is discussed in the next chapter. As part of the discussion Karlbeck is analysed through his collecting activities that lead to the Karlbeck Syndicate. The first collecting trip was organised by the museum with the benefit of expanding its collections. The China Research Committee funded the first expedition. The brains behind these collecting expeditions were Andersson and Gustaf Adolf. Furthermore, the following chapter acknowledges Andersson's pioneering scholarship during these formative years and focuses on how he directed the discipline in Sweden. Most of his research was based on the collections at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities under his curatorship. These included numerous objects he had brought back from China and later additions by Karlbeck upon his request. His scholarship is contextualised by defining his methodology. In connection to the museum's foundation the role of the Swedish China Research Committee is discussed and Gustaf Adolf's legacy proves essential to the history of Chinese collections in Sweden. Overall this next chapter gives a comprehensive insight in the institutional framing these objects at the museum, their collecting and classification

methodologies and how the influence of collectors, like Gustaf Adolf and Karlbeck, functioned within this system.

Chapter 3

The Forerunners and Backers of the Karlbeck Syndicate: Andersson, Gustaf Adolf and the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities.

The important collections of China's prehistoric and Bronze Age material culture in Stockholm are unique in Europe. How the collections ended up in Sweden in the 1920s is not a coincidence. They were part of an extensive collecting campaign that was organised and backed by a small but influential group of Swedish scientists, collectors and donors. Foremost, it was Andersson's pioneering scientific work during the second and third decade of the twentieth century that led to the foundation of the Swedish China Research Committee and inevitably the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. In 1925 the museum was established as a research institute and placed Stockholm on the foreground as an important centre for studies on Chinese art and archaeology outside China. Andersson's scholarship and legacy is still relevant today; and exhibited in the museum collection. Furthermore, Gustaf Adolf equally played an essential role in the founding of the museum. As a private collector of Chinese art and chairman of the China Research Committee he directed and promoted the discipline in Sweden. This chapter discusses Andersson's scholarship, the role of China Research Committee and Gustaf Adolf in connection with collecting Chinese art and archaeology in Sweden. In this analysis the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities engages Karlbeck's participation in one of Sweden's most important collecting expeditions in China during this period.

The extensive scientific collecting campaigns conducted by Andersson in the 1920s in China are well known.²⁷⁹ His work ultimately resulted in the acquisition of numerous

²⁷⁹ Johan G. Andersson, 'An early Chinese culture', *Bulletin of the Geological Survey of China* 5 (1923): 1-68; Johan G. Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu* (Peking: Memoirs of the

archaeological objects and their subsequent infiltration into Sweden's national collections. His expeditions were followed by that of Karlbeck who became the dominant collector for the museum during the later 1920s and early 1930s. How Karlbeck collaborated with Andersson and the China Research Committee is based upon the analysis of primary archival data. This chapter will discuss the mechanics of this partnership by deconstructing the primary sources. Ultimately, the collecting activities resulted in the creation the Karlbeck Syndicate. The syndicate's operations are viewed in a larger context where Sweden's interest in China's geology and archaeology are representative of a domineering Western presence in Asia at that time.

An important year in the discussion of the archival material in this chapter is 1928, when the Swedish China Research Committee proposed Karlbeck to venture out to China on a purchasing trip to enhance its collection with archaic objects.²⁸⁰ Up to then the collection consisted of Neolithic pottery and some bronze objects collected by Andersson in the early 1920s. The two figures who initiated this expedition was Andersson and Gustaf Adolf, interestingly one a scholar the other a collector. Their ideas on Chinese art and archaeology, connoisseurship and collecting were later absorbed in the syndicate operations and affected how some European collections were founded and promoted. Andersson's work as a geologist and archaeologist is important. He directed much of its operations from Sweden with a focus on his personal research. His studies are contextualised with the first collections of the museum and studies at the institute.

Geological Survey of China, 1925); Johan G. Andersson, *Children of the Yellow Earth*, (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1934); Andersson, 'Researches in the Prehistory of the Chinese', 7-304.

²⁸⁰ The Newsletter-reports to the China Research Committee for this trip (1928-1929) are in Swedish and located in the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive. Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports to the China research Committee, 1928-1929', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

3.1 Andersson and the Swedish China Research Committee: Swedish scholarship and Chinese archaeology.

Andersson's pioneering discovery of Neolithic sites in China determined the unique archaeological collection he brought back to Sweden. His collecting activities initiated the founding of a museum and established Stockholm as one of the main centres for the study of China's art and archaeology in the West. The legacy of his early scholarship was recently considered by a number of scholars who came together at a symposium, *New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology*, in 2003 as aforementioned in the introduction of this thesis. His work was brought into context with questions today regarding early cultural contacts between China and Eurasia and to more recent archaeological discoveries. What is important is that Andersson's early studies on the Neolithic discoveries and his Theory of Western Origin (which are theoretically diffusionist in persuasion, and Eurocentric in application) they are placed within a contemporary historical context.²⁸¹ Consequently, in the early 1940s Andersson retracted his diffusionist conclusions on prehistoric and Neolithic China because new archaeological evidence supported indigenous development in prehistoric societies.²⁸² However, these ideas were again challenged at the 2003 symposium.

In the context of this thesis, Andersson's publications are analysed considering diffusionist concepts in ancient Chinese history. More importantly they are demonstrative that such a theory was accepted and commonly utilised amongst an established group of European scholars at the time. A revision of Andersson's scholarship enables us to make an

²⁸¹ The term Theory of Western Origin of Chinese Culture was used by Andersson in the 1920s and 1930s. At the 2003 Symposium this term is re-used in the discussion of his early studies. Its Eurocentric connotations are addressed by Li Shuicheng. Li Shuicheng, 'Ancient Interactions in Eurasia and Northwest China', 9-30.

²⁸² In the 1930s as a result of the Longshan cultural remains in Shangdong province a number of Chinese scholars began to question the conventional ideas that posited an unbroken succession of the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang and Zhou) and that Chinese civilization might have originated in the East see, Xioneng Yang, *New Perspectives on China's Past* (Vol. 1), 33-36.

important connection to the objects Karlbeck collected upon his request for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities.

In 1918, Andersson started a comprehensive collecting campaign in co-operation with the Geological Survey of China (NGS) where at that time he served as a mining adviser. The NGS was under the directorship of Ding Wenjiang (1887-1936).²⁸³ During this period Andersson made a deal with Ding that foresaw the division of the collected material between him and the Chinese government. At this stage this consisted of fossils or so-called dragon-bones.²⁸⁴ The idea was that these were split between the Geological Survey of China and Swedish museums on the condition that all the necessary funds were raised by Andersson in Sweden. Under this unique arrangement a great number of China's geological, and later archaeological, material came to Sweden for research on the basis that one half of the collections were returned to China at a later date. This research then included geological surveys and analysis of paleontological and prehistoric data. At this point Andersson approached Axel Lagrelius (1863-1944), a leading Swedish industrialist with connections to the Swedish Royal Court, who offered financial assistance for natural history research.²⁸⁵ On the 15 September 1919 the Swedish China Research Committee was founded by Lagrelius who took the role of treasurer. The committee proceeded to play an important financial role in the scientific relationship between Sweden and China; indeed, it acted as the principal economic source that invested in Andersson's collecting activities.²⁸⁶ The committee was a

²⁸³ Karlgren, 'Johan Gunnar Andersson: In Memoriam'; Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 11-15; Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 14-18.

²⁸⁴ Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 14-15.

²⁸⁵ Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', 7-12; Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities'.

Lagrelius was a Swedish business man and patron of the arts. He was the chairman of the Friends of the National Museum and China Committee and a self-trained geologist and anthropologist. In 1938 he received the Walberg Medal for Anthropology. For a biographical reference see, 'Lagrelius Axel', *Svenska Män och Kvinnor, Biografik Uppslagbok*, 3 G-H, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 439-440.

²⁸⁶ The China Research Committee was founded on 15 September 1919. At its foundation the three members were Admiral Louis Palander (1842-1920), Lagrelius and the geographer Gunnar Andersson (who should not be confused with Johan Gunnar Andersson the archaeologist). In 1920 Sweden's Parliament voted for national

private organisation and relied on private donors. It continuously consisted of three dominant members who would lead the proceedings. However, it was Lagrelius' fund-raising efforts that financed a great number of Swedish expeditions and paid for the transport of collected research material back to Sweden.

In 1921 Gustaf Adolf took the chairmanship of the China Research Committee. This was a turning point for Swedish collecting in China because the committee, for the first time, included the funding of archaeological excavations in its remit as opposed to its previous focus on geological and paleontological field work.²⁸⁷ The year 1921 is significant in many ways: not only did the China Research Committee extend its areas of support for further research, but it was also during this period that Andersson discovered remains of a distinct Neolithic culture in Central China and changed his research topic to archaeology. This discovery changed the global view on the existence of a sophisticated civilization in prehistoric China and placed it on the same foot as early cultures in Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

During this time Andersson closely collaborated with a group of Chinese scientists, like Ding, and had made a name in his ground-breaking research on China's prehistory. Recently, Magnus Fiskesjö, Chen Xingcan and Perry Johansson have all published on Andersson's role in the foundation of Chinese collections in Sweden, including that of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities.²⁸⁸ The Swedish financial and scholarly engagement in geological and archaeological research is connected to a realization that China's undiscovered prehistory was an open field and reflective of certain nationalistic elements where success in this field

financial support for Andersson's research activities in China. The China Committee raised 500,000 SKr in support. Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 7-27; Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 33-34; Östasiatiska Samlingarnas arkiv (Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities Archive).

²⁸⁷ Andersson, 'Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf as a Promoter of Archaeological Research', 9.

²⁸⁸ Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 62-64; Johansson, 'Rescuing history from the nation', 111-123.

brought recognition.²⁸⁹ A scientific breakthrough and new discovery benefited Sweden as a country, where its progressive scientists claimed innovative scholarly studies and in doing so economic connections strengthened with other nations, such as China. Taking this into consideration, Andersson was the perfect business card for his country. Another point is that- from a predominantly Chinese point of view- Swedish scholars must have seemed less threatening as partners; as opposed to those from other European nations, for example, Britain who had a recent history of military altercations in China.²⁹⁰

Andersson was born in the town of Knista in 1874. He enrolled as a student at Uppsala University in 1892 and in 1901 he was appointed assistant professor for Geology and proceeded to receive his doctorate degree. In his early career he was a participant in leading Swedish expeditions that took him to several Arctic islands- such as to Bear Island which is situated in the high Arctic and to Hope Bay and Vega Island as part of the Swedish Antarctic Expedition.²⁹¹ These expeditions brought him recognition in his field and from 1906 until 1914 he was the director of the Geological Survey of Sweden. He held this important post until he left for China in 1914. It was in China that Andersson found his niche and his important paleontological and archaeological work attained worldwide recognition.

In 1920 Andersson was supported by the Chinese National Geological Society and the local provincial government in Henan for starting the first archaeological excavations at the Neolithic Yangshao site. His discovery was revolutionary because the excavated evidence of this prehistoric culture altered the perception of the earliest written history of the country.

²⁸⁹ See, Fiskesjö and Chen Xingan, *China Before China*, 34.

²⁹⁰ For a historical analysis on British military presence, colonialism and trade in China around the turn of the century see, Robert Bickers, *Britain in China: community culture and colonialism, 1900-1949* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Robert Bickers, 'The British in China, 1842-1900' *History Today* 50 (8) (Aug., 2000): 10-17.

²⁹¹ For a reference on these expeditions see, William James Mills, *Exploring Polar Frontiers: A Historical Encyclopaedia*, volume I, (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC CLIO, 2003), 22-23.

This was based on traditional historical accounts dating from the Zhou and Han dynasties, such as the *Shangshu* and the *Shiji*.²⁹² At the time, Li Ji heralded the discovery as:

‘An early Chinese culture totally unknown before, and whose relation to traditional Chinese culture [...] aroused a great deal of speculation’.²⁹³

The speculation of the origin of this culture was something that occupied Western and Chinese scholars alike and is, as will be discussed through Andersson’s studies, one of the arguments for cultural diffusion into ancient China.

What is important is that Andersson’s discovery of this Neolithic culture still stands as one of the most important archaeological discoveries in China’s during modern time. Throughout this period he continued to locate Neolithic sites in Gansu and Henan. He first categorised these as Painted Pottery Cultures, named after the unearthed funerary wares found at the sites (Figure 35).²⁹⁴ Today the remains are generally referred to as belonging to the Yangshao culture. The painted ceramic pottery style and technology placed China’s Neolithic culture next to similar discoveries at sites in the Mediterranean and Central Asia (Figures 36 and 37).²⁹⁵ This is important because it suggested that this culture had a developed aesthetic awareness that gave it an elevated historic value or status. The objects were heralded as ‘masterpieces worthy of the ceramic art of the Aegean’, by scholars like Grousset who, in

²⁹² The *Shangshu*, translated as *Book of Documents*, is said to have been compiled around the sixth century BC during the Zhou dynasty. Its fifty-eight chapters cover the first legendary emperors of the Chinese civilization and are the earliest historiographic records covering the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties. The *Shiji*, or *Records of the Grand Historian* was predominantly documented by the Han dynasty historian Sima Qian between 109-91 BC.

For a bibliographic critique of the two books see, Michael Loewe *Early Chinese Texts: a bibliographical account* (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, 1993).

²⁹³ Li Chi, ‘Archaeology’, 184-193; Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 64-68.

²⁹⁴ For references on the terminology Painted Pottery Culture see, Andersson, ‘An early Chinese culture’, 1-68; KC Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 138; Perceval W. Yetts, ‘Painted Neolithic Pottery in China’, *BMC* 47 (274) (Dec., 1925): 309; Grousset, *The Civilizations of the East: China*, 6.

²⁹⁵ For references on similar discoveries in Central Asia see, Raphael Pumpelly, *Explorations in Turkestan, with an Account of the Basin of Eastern Persia and Sistan: Expedition of 1903, under the Direction of Raphael Pumpelly*, 3 volumes, (Washington DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1903-1905); Fredrik T. Hiebert and Kakamurad Kurbansakhatov, ed., *Excavations at Anau, Turkmenistan, a Central Asian Village at the Dawn of Civilization*, (Philadelphia: University Museum Monograph, 2003); Fred H. Andrews, ‘Painted Neolithic Pottery in Sistan Discovered by Sir Aurel Stein’, *BMC* 47 (274) (Dec., 1925): 304-308.

doing so, connected them to the Western ideals of taste and artistic appreciation.²⁹⁶ This is one example how archaeological objects were compared within an art historical analysis by a Western scholar, and where their cultural and historical context was initially over-ruled by the artistic appraisal.

Indeed, Andersson's fieldwork is well documented in several of his publications.²⁹⁷ On the 4 September 1921 Andersson sent a letter to Gustaf Adolf urging him to visit and take part in the excavations. Scientific fieldwork in the Western sense was a relatively new thing in China at the time and not something that the traditional Chinese antiquarian would partake or was skilled in. There was only a small group of Chinese scholars that were interested in this new field and they predominantly had been trained outside China.²⁹⁸ Andersson was aware of the impact of the high profile participation by Gustaf Adolf and connected this to an advancement of archaeological fieldwork in the region and internationally:

'Now, if a noble lord in the exalted position of Your Royal Highness were to come out here and very modestly sit down in a site where antiquities are found and hold a spade or a knife in your hand, it would have a tremendous moral effect as a demonstration of the sanctity of scientific work even in its most humble forms.'²⁹⁹

This correspondence foreshadowed the important roles both individuals were to play in the following years; realising each other's strengths in foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern

²⁹⁶ Grousset, *The Civilizations of the East: China*, 4.

²⁹⁷ Andersson, 'An early Chinese culture', 1-68; Andersson, *Children of the Yellow Earth*; Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*.

²⁹⁸ For historical and biographical references of this Chinese group see, Xiaoneng Yang, *New Perspectives on China's Past*, 33-36; Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China', 423-445.

²⁹⁹ Chen Xingcan and Ma Sizhong (Magnus Fiskesjö), 'An important document in the history of modern Chinese science', 10-17.

Antiquities and promotion of the discipline in the West and for that matter around the world.³⁰⁰

An important moment was Andersson's analysis of the material he unearthed at the site. He was often accompanied by a number of Chinese colleagues who with him agreed that they had found the key to uncovering the origin of Chinese civilization. A common denominator in the story was that they were first and foremost captivated by the geometric motifs depicted on the ceramics and that they bore a resemblance to finds of Western Neolithic cultures.³⁰¹ An extract from the Chinese scholar Hu Shi's (1891-1962) diary exemplifies this fascination by Andersson and his colleagues:

‘Andersson took us to see the ancient stone tools and pottery he had excavated [...] he said their decorations did not seem Chinese, but were very close to those seen in Central Asia and Southern Russia’.³⁰²

Hu Shi mentioned that Andersson specified to his colleagues that the decoration of the pottery did not seem Chinese and its origin laid elsewhere. Clearly origin indicated a specific source or location in history. However, years later Andersson recalled that at the moment of his discovery he didn't make a cultural or historical connection between the Chinese, Southern Russian and Central Asian Neolithic:

³⁰⁰ At that time Gustaf Adolf did not accept Andersson's invitation.

³⁰¹ In this case Western refers to the ancient cultures in Central Asia and Southern Russia. The term Western for the Neolithic sites in Central Asia and Southern Russia was used by scholars at that time, including Andersson, Grousset, Ture J. Arne (1879-1965), and Bachhofer.

For biographical reference on Arne see: ‘Arne, Ture J’, *Svenska Män och Kvinnor, Biografisk Uppslagsbok*, 1 A-B, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag), 131-132.

³⁰² Hu Shi, *Hu Shi de riji* [The diary of Hu Shi], ed. Institute for modern history, (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Science, 1985).

Hu Shi was described by Magnus Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan as a non-archaeologist intellectual. Hu Shi had studied in the US and returned in 1917 to China. He was based at Peking University and proceeded to influence the development of modern historiographic methodology and the establishment of archaeology as a discipline in China. See, Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 50-52; Su Rongyu, ‘The Reception of ‘archaeology’ and ‘prehistory’ in Late Imperial China’, 443.

‘I knew nothing of the fine ceramics with black painting on a red ground that were found by Pumpelly’s expeditions of 1903 and 1904 at Anau [...] or much more similar polychrome vessels of the Neolithic and Aeneolithic finds in South East Europe, and it therefore seemed to me inconceivable that such clay vessels could be found together with stone implements [...] on my return to Peking I had the good fortune to find in the library of the Geological Survey the three splendid volumes in which the discoveries of the Pumpelly expedition in Anau in Russian Turkestan were described. In them I found coloured illustrations of fragments of vessels with paintings which reminded me very much of the fragments which I had found at Yang shao.’³⁰³

Andersson discovered the Yangshao site in the spring of 1921 but only started the excavation in October. The cited excerpt of Hu Shi’s diary dates to almost a year after the discovery of the site and many months after the first excavations had taken place. By the time of the described visit by his Chinese colleague Andersson already established a possible geographical, cultural or historical link between the pottery of the Yangshao and that of the Neolithic culture discovered at Anua (Figure 36).³⁰⁴ He based this on the decorative resemblances between the Yangshao fragments and illustrations published by the American geologist and explorer Raphael Pumpelly (1837-1923) in his volume *Explorations in Turkestan*.³⁰⁵ It was the archaeological reports in this publication that provided Andersson with the visual evidence that inspired him with comparative material and to explore some diffusionist concepts. In his report Andersson illustrated the pottery shards from Henan, Anau and Tripolje, each with similar geometric designs and pottery shapes (Figure 37). It was the stylistic elements (as defined in the Introduction of this thesis) that grouped these archaeological finds together based upon the sequencing of similar patterns. Furthermore, it was suggested that there was a direct cultural link between the geographically wide-spread

³⁰³ Johan G. Andersson, ‘Prehistoric sites in Honan’, *BMFEA* 19 (1947): 1-124.

³⁰⁴ Andersson, ‘An Early Chinese Culture’, 1-68; Andersson, *Preliminary Report on the Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 24.

³⁰⁵ Pumpelly, *Explorations in Turkestan*.

production sites. The methodology used by Andersson was closely related to that pursued in ethnographic research in other parts of the world at the time, like in the work of Boas, Haddon, Rivers and Seligman.³⁰⁶ The studies by these anthropologists provided a structure that proposed a universal stylistic development in art, where the geometric designs, as seen on Neolithic pottery, evolved to more intricate and stylized patterns. One of the aspects of the ethnological approach to art and stylistic analysis was that the comparison of decoration and ornament could provide evidence of information on cross-cultural and intercultural relationships but also present a framework for dating the objects. One of the things that Andersson considered was to use the non-Chinese Neolithic examples as an aid to chronologically classify the material he had collected and excavated, aside from questions of the function of these objects in their society. In doing so he established a number of cultural stages that were identified by particular decorative motifs, from simple to complex. His methodology was consistent with archaeological practices in other parts of the world.³⁰⁷

In his *Preliminary Report* Andersson wrote that, with the support of [Robert Lockhart] Hobson and other un-named British archaeologists, he grouped the Yangshao ceramics as belonging to, in his words, the same family of design as those found on sites in Central Asia and the Middle East. He opened academic debate with other Western specialists to help him classify and identify the finds within an historical context:

³⁰⁶ For some of the diffusionist studies of this group see: Boaz, 'The Limitations of the Comparative Method in Anthropology', 901-908; Franz Boas, 'Evolution or diffusion?', in *Race, language and culture*, Franz Boas, 190-194 (New York: Macmillan, 1940); Franz Boas, 'The methods of ethnology', in *Race, language and culture*, Franz Boas, 218-189, (New York: Macmillan, 1940); Alfred C. Haddon, *The Study of Man*, (New York and London: John Murray, 1898); Haddon, *Evolution in Art*; William H. Rivers, 'The ethnological analysis of culture', in *Psychology and Ethnology*, ed. Grafton Elliot Smith, 120-140 (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1926).

³⁰⁷ In 1904 the British archaeologist William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853-1942) published his *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* in which he demonstrated a sequence dating method that made it possible to reconstruct the history from the material culture of ancient civilizations. W.M. Flinders Petrie, *Methods and Aims in Archaeology*, (London: Macmillan, 1904); Margaret Drower, *Flinders Petrie: A Life in Archaeology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).

‘I sent to HRH the Crown Prince of Sweden a small number of specimens of the Yang Shao painted pottery. When his Royal Highness visited London in May 1922 he took the material in question with him and showed it to Mr. R.L. Hobson, the British Museum expert on Chinese ceramics. Mr. Hobson consulted a number of British archaeologists about this new Chinese ware and after these consultations presented HRH with a statement which was forwarded to me and here reproduced [...] The red pottery with black ornaments is clearly the same family of design as on the Aeneolithic pottery found on many sites of the Near East.’³⁰⁸

His initial contact to open this scholarly debate was through Gustaf Adolf, who went on to show the discoveries to Hobson at the British Museum. Andersson doesn’t elaborate, with the exception of Hobson, on the other specialists approached in Britain. However, soon after the Swedish Royal visit to London in 1922, Yetts published two articles on the Neolithic finds which included the important conclusion that, in his words, a cultural diffusion had taken place into China during Neolithic times.³⁰⁹ His study will be further discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis. During these years Andersson also sought the professional opinion of the German archaeologist Hubert Schmidt (1864-1933).³¹⁰ He had conducted the excavation in Anau and had a more reserved opinion to the diffusionist ideas Andersson and his British colleagues proposed to these discoveries. Was it that the British were more prone to the exploring the theory of diffusionism than other scholars of other countries because it was widely discussed within their intellectual environment at that time? Andersson mentioned two other archaeologists whose expertise he approached, the Austrian L. Franz and the Swede Ture Johnsson Arne (1879-1965).³¹¹ In co-operation they explored through comparisons a number of Yangshao and Near Eastern specimens. This investigation led to the typological

³⁰⁸ Andersson, ‘Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese’, 270-273.

³⁰⁹ Yetts’ study will be further discussed in Chapter 5. For a list of Yetts’ publications where he makes some diffusionist comments see, Chapter 5, 217.

³¹⁰ Andersson, ‘Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese’, 270-273.

³¹¹ ‘Arne, Ture J.’, 131-132; Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 2 and 24.

sequencing of the material and established approximate dates for the Yangshao objects. Andersson concluded:

‘[...] the evidence of consanguinity between the prehistoric groups of ceramics from the Near East and the Far East had become so convincing that we found it imperative to extend our archaeological research further west to regions where we could expect to find relics of the hypothetical connection between the sites in Honan and those in South West Asia [...] pointing to Kansu’.³¹²

Interestingly, Andersson uses the term consanguinity to highlight how much he was convinced about a direct lineage between the Yangshao culture and those of the Neolithic sites further to the west of these regions. Indeed, it was the comparative method based upon the study of stylistic developments and change in the decorative motifs that directed his research and an important integrated element in archaeological studies.

Based upon his concluded evidence Andersson organised a Northwestern Expedition in search for any missing links between Neolithic cultures in China and Central Asia.³¹³ The search for missing links in an historical and evolutionary sense was something that defined the intellectual and scientific environment of the early twentieth century was still influenced by some traditional Darwinian concepts. Andersson viewed his work as an important contribution to science rather than art history and this was reflected in his methodology. His conscious choice to pursue Neolithic prehistory overland was motivated by the archaeological data that suggested migration occurred in the form of a movement of people or cultural exchange. In other words, in his early scholarship he argued for cultural diffusion in Neolithic times. His main tool for establishing a complete chronology was by comparison with Near Eastern material because it was readily available and there was very few

³¹² Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 3.

³¹³ Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 56-64.

comparative data from China itself. Before a total survey of scientific evidence of the area was completed he concluded:

‘[...] at the close of the Neolithic Age a strong cultural influence was brought from ‘west’ to ‘east’.³¹⁴

According to Andersson a cultural diffusion amongst Neolithic cultures influenced the painted pottery production in China. His approach to China’s archaeology was systematic and scientific combining his geological background and ethnological methodology for interpreting data collected on site. He based his classification system on topological sequencing and predominantly used comparative techniques. In doing so he defined evolutionary patterns in style and decorative motifs. To approach objects through a stylistic definition and use of the comparative method was part of the then current direction of Western scholarship in art history, archaeology and anthropology, especially ethnology.³¹⁵

Andersson’s framework provided an analysis for China’s archaeological objects and was followed by his contemporaries like in Karlbeck’s and Seligman’s work on non-inscribed bronze objects but also directed the language of art historians like Sirén and Bachhofer who commented on China’s Neolithic and bronze art. It is therefore important to recap on how the art historical methodology was an integrated part in the study of Chinese art and archaeology and used in parallel to ethnological and archaeological stylistic frameworks that determined the classification process for Neolithic and Bronze Age objects.

³¹⁴ Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 10 and 30-31.

³¹⁵ In this case Western is used to indicate the scholarship that developed within European and American academic institutions following the definition see, Donald Preziosi, ed., *The History of Art History: A Critical Analogy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 112.

It is relevant to note that Bachhofer's art historical analysis on Neolithic pottery and their stylistic development were known to Andersson at the time.³¹⁶ Bachhofer tried to locate the origin of China's painted pottery to South East Europe by following a migration theory. In doing so he argued for the transmission of advanced technology from a superior culture from the West, a scholarly route that Andersson had followed at the beginning of his research.³¹⁷ Andersson later dismissed Bachhofer's theory as fiction and contradicted some of his earlier statements.³¹⁸ However, what is important to note is that Bachhofer's work characterised the manner in which Style was approached by the art historian and how this aspect of the discipline essentially developed out of the first archaeological studies by Andersson. What is emphasised is that the importance of Style in early Chinese art, within a historical context, was promoted by a select group of Western specialists- art historians, archaeologists and anthropologists- that focussed on the genealogical development in the distinctive features of objects. Within these types of studies a determination to locate the source of Chinese art led many of the theories.

3.2 Diffusionist concepts in Andersson's early scholarship

By the time Andersson first published on his archaeological discoveries he was fully aware of a number of theories circulating in Western scholarship that considered diffusionist concepts in Chinese history. For example, the philological studies of Charles J. Ball and Chalfant and Terrien De Lacouperie suggested a common origin for the Chinese script to the

³¹⁶ Bachhofer, *A Short History of Chinese Art*; Bachhofer, 'On the Origin and Development of Chinese Art', 251-264.

³¹⁷ Bachhofer, 'On the Origin and Development of Chinese Art', 251-264.

³¹⁸ Andersson commented on Bachhofer's research in the early 1940s when he withdrew his earlier statements on a cultural diffusion coming into Neolithic China. However, his diffusionist statements in the 1920s and 1930s provided the basis of Bachhofer's research on a migration theory. Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', 284.

pictorial writings of the Middle East.³¹⁹ Although Andersson mentioned he wasn't competent to make any concrete diffusionist conclusions he implied that such philological studies were part of his analytical methodology. In doing so he connected philology to the study of objects.

As discussed in the Introduction of this thesis, the idea that ancient Chinese culture had direct historic links with other, non-Chinese, cultures was eventually dismissed.³²⁰ However, at the time Andersson was careful to leave future discussion open as new archaeological material surfaced and he considered there was a cultural complex that connected different groups together as early as Neolithic times. In the 1940s he stated:

‘Compared with Eastern Europe and the Near East, where painted pottery has been studied for more than half a century, in the Far East only the surface has been scratched so far. It is no way an exaggeration to assume that the painted pottery provinces of the Far East form a cultural complex just as varied and extensive as that of the Near East. One day these two areas will be united through numerous sites being found and carefully surveyed in Central Asia. Then we shall know the nature of the actual exchange between West and East.’³²¹

Andersson understood that Chinese archaeology was still at its infancy and new discoveries would provide new evidences. Still, the diffusionist or western origin concept he considered in his early work had an important impact on the course of this field. Largely, they were accepted by his contemporaries. For example, the collector for the Freer Gallery Carl Whiting

³¹⁹ Andersson, ‘Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese’, 7-12; Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’. No biographical information or dates on Ball were confirmed. For a biographical reference for Chalfant see, Laufer, ‘Frank H Chalfant’, 165-166; Charles J. Ball, *Chinese and Sumerian*, (London: OUP, 1913); Chalfant, *Early Chinese Writing*.

³²⁰ The 2003 Symposium ‘New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology’ is an example of today’s revision of cross-cultural interaction between prehistoric and Bronze Age cultures in China and those in Eurasia.

³²¹ Andersson, ‘Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese’, 286.

Bishop (1881-1942), a competitor of Karlbeck in China at the time, supported Andersson's theory.³²² In an article on the subject he commented that:

‘While the evidence is not yet conclusive either way, it appears to show that the painted ware was diffused along what were in historical times the principal routes of travel, while the Neolithic sites on which [painted pottery] does not occur are those in the more secluded localities’.³²³

Bishop's ethnological studies of this period were highly diffusionist in nature and he is one example of American scholarship in this debate. He approached the study of ancient China's within the typical anthropological methodology, where a study of the so-called living-primitive was thought to be reflective of Neolithic society. In his study on the rise of civilization in China he clearly stated that he thought it was foreign influences that brought progress in the development of this civilization:

‘Most if not all domestic animals and cereals that form the economic basis of present day Chinese life are demonstrably of foreign origin [...] Wherever the aboriginal inhabitants of China has achieved any marked progress it has been without exception through culture borrowings. The group that live today in various isolated districts have signally failed to advance themselves through their efforts. The truth seems to be that Late Stone Age peoples of south-east Asia, including the proto-Chinese, had developed a culture pattern too rigid and inelastic to permit of progress beyond a certain point’.³²⁴

Furthermore, he pointed out two streams of influence coming into China in the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, one from India and the other from Central Asia (connected to cultures more to its Western regions). In his argument he posited that the discovery of painted pottery remains in China was evidence of its relations with the West:

³²² For the Bishop archive see, Carl Whiting Bishop, Accession 52-123, Smithsonian Institution Personnel Record 1892-1952, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC.

³²³ Carl Whiting Bishop, ‘The Neolithic Age in Northern China’ *Antiquity* VII (28) (Dec., 1933): 399.

³²⁴ Carl W. Bishop, ‘The Rise of Civilization in China with Reference to its Geographical Aspects’ *Geographical Review* 22 (4) (Oct., 1932): 167-631.

‘Of an independent origin of painted pottery in China no indication has so far come to light; it seems rather to have been already fairly well developed when it first appeared there. The use of some form of the potter’s wheel in its manufacture is also significant; for that instrument was known in the more advanced parts of the Occident far earlier than it was in China’.³²⁵

Also, Sowerby, then editor of the popular magazine the *China Journal of Science and Art*, mentioned that the Neolithic pottery were evidence of a cultural diffusion between Gansu, Central Asia and even parts of Neolithic Europe:

‘...that the proto-Chinese of Gansu were related in culture with the prehistoric peoples of Western and South-western Asia, the Mediterranean region, and other parts of Europe’.³²⁶

An important point to the reception of the Neolithic objects was that to Western scholarship they represented the origin of Chinese ceramics, so popularly collected for centuries. They were interesting historical objects to the archaeologist, ethnologist and the ceramic collector. Their novelty and intriguing historical debate added to their mystery and they made them a wanted commodity on all fronts. On a popular scale the Neolithic discoveries demonstrated a need to link ancient civilizations and integrate them within a unified historical context. By promoting these objects within a shared common origin with others produced in the West it stimulated propaganda on Western historical technological superiority and supported this in the writing of history, as shown by Andersson’s and Bishop’s studies. These are an example of active Eurocentrism in this particular period, in connection with China, and its effects upon the general perceptions on non-Western history.

In relation to Andersson’s early scholarship, Watson pointed out that initially he was responsible for promoting this westward theory.³²⁷ This idea was not contested until the

³²⁵ Bishop, ‘The Rise of Civilization in China with Reference to its Geographical Aspects, 167-631.

³²⁶ Arthur de Carle Sowerby, ‘Neolithic Pottery of Kansu, Burial Urns and other Vessels in the N.S. Brown Collection’, *CJSA* 22 (6) (Jun., 1936), 303.

³²⁷ Watson, ‘The Progress of Archaeology in China’, 65-71.

excavation of the Longshan black pottery culture in the early 1930s when the Chinese archaeologist Liang Siyong (1904-1954) adopted a single line of descent for Neolithic cultures in the region based upon the topographical circumstances in north-west China.³²⁸ Watson asserted that the influence of such westward-thinking historiography upon the first studies on China's archaeology was reinforced by the first scientific methods used. Chinese and Western archaeologists used archaeological methodology that specifically belonged to a traditional Western scholarship. This inevitably led to a rationalisation to look to the West for solutions. It was at this period that Andersson leading away from his diffusionist principals and revisited his studies on Yangshao.³²⁹ He continued to base this on the stratigraphical evidence where the Yangshao, Lungshan and Shang cultures were linked as a group in one site as opposed to having a segregated origin that was imported into China.

However, in the 1920s, Andersson had found it essential to bring the Neolithic material to Europe for further investigation:

'It has been found necessary to bring the larger part of our Kansu collections to Europe for comparative study where full access is possible not only to libraries and museums, but also to help and advice of the numerous European archaeologists who have already, by correspondence, contributed most materially to the progress of our archaeological research.'³³⁰

³²⁸ On the archaeology of the Longshan Culture see, KC Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 245-252; Ssu-yung Liang, 'The Lungshan Culture', *Proceedings of the 6th Pacific Science Congress*, (1939): 69-79; Wu Gin-Ding, *Prehistoric Pottery in China*, (London: Published on behalf of the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, by K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1938).

For a biographical reference and discussion of the work of the Chinese scholars then influenced by Western methodology see, Wang Tao and Peter Ucko, 'Early Archaeological Fieldwork Practice and Syllabuses in China and England', in *From Concepts of the Past to Practical Strategies: The Teaching of Archaeological Field Techniques* (London: Saffron, 2007), pp. 45-75; Xiaoneng Yang, *New Perspectives on China's Past*, 35-36.

³²⁹ Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', 66-74.

³³⁰ Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 10.

At this stage Chinese archaeological research was still very much led by Western scholarship and in anticipation of the arrival of his collections in Sweden, he promoted the idea that these Neolithic findings were linked to a migration of cultural diffusion.³³¹

In the summer of 1925 Andersson's Chinese collections reached Stockholm. First and foremost they needed to be housed. The Swedish archaeological state museum (Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm) offered the necessary facilities as his scientific headquarter for the next year. The organisation was placed under supervision of the Academy of Antiquaries. The foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities was planned with the aid of government funds in order to facilitate his important archaeological research and unique collection. During this period a number of objects were added to the museum predominantly purchased from Sirén, Karlbeck and Luo Zhenyu.³³² Palmgren, a young scientist, was appointed Andersson's assistant. Also Gustaf Adolf became actively involved. For some years he was a promoter of Andersson's work. He was a student of archaeology and a collector of Chinese art since the early 1900s.³³³ His interest in early Chinese art combined the two, art and archaeology, and he greatly influenced the direction of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities as a public collection.

³³¹ Su Rongyu argues in his paper that the idea of archaeology and prehistory initially came to China via Japan. However that at the turn of the century foreign archaeologists started to cooperate with Chinese scholars who had just returned to China after having received Western training in anthropology and archaeology abroad. Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China', 444.

³³² The only reference of these purchases is by Andersson in the *Bulletin*. These included bronze weapons and ritual bronzes. A number were purchased in 1926 when Gustaf Adolf and Andersson visited China. Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 22; Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', 11.

³³³ Gustaf Adolf studied Classical, Egyptian and Scandinavian archaeology as an undergraduate at Uppsala University between 1902 and 1903. He participated in several archaeological excavations in Scandinavia and the Mediterranean between 1905 and 1920. Andersson, 'Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf as a Promoter of Archaeological Research', 1-14.

3.2 Gustaf Adolf, Andersson and Karlbeck: shaping the museum collections.

The Museum of Far Eastern collection was essentially founded by Andersson, Gustaf Adolf and Karlbeck. The private collection of Gustaf Adolf is well documented by Gyllensvärd, the biographer of the Royal Collection (Figure 14).³³⁴ The ‘originary moment’ of this private collection dates to 1907 when he purchased some Kangxi porcelain wares from an antique shop in Sweden.³³⁵ During the following years he made annual visits to London, then a centre for the Chinese art market in Europe, where many new acquisitions were made. Eventually the collection grew to circa 2600 objects. It was during his visits around Europe that he established friendships with a close-knit London collector’s circle that included Hobson, Yetts, Seligman, George Eumorfopoulos (1863-1939) and Oscar Raphael (1874-1941).³³⁶ During the 1920s he started to focus on the early period objects (pre-Ming ceramics, archaic bronzes and jades) in the trend of the London based collectors. Craig Clunas recently commented that British collectors started to direct their interest to early Chinese wares during the years after World War I (1914-1918) as part of Modernist ideals because ‘early Chinese art was seen as the embodying a spontaneity and vitality that was invigoratingly different (and superior to) the more highly finished porcelain that had attracted an earlier generation’.³³⁷ Eventually, these objects became his main collecting interest. This is evidently connected to the many purchases he made from Karlbeck. Whether he was motivated by

³³⁴ Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 32; Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Art from the Collection of H.M. King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden*, 9.

³³⁵ On the concept of the ‘originary moment’ of a collection see, Ball, ‘Telling Objects: A Narrative Perspective on Collecting’, 101.

³³⁶ Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 32; Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Art from the Collection of H.M. King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden*, 9.

For biographical references on Eumorfopoulos see, Green, ‘Britain’s Chinese Collections’, 121-177; Bernard Rackham, ‘George Eumorfopoulos’, *BMC* 76 (443) (Feb., 1940) [obituary]: 64; ‘George Eumorfopoulos’, *TOCS* 17 (1939-1940) [obituary]: 9-10; Yasumara Yoshiko, ‘George Eumorfopoulos and the University of London’, *Orientalia* 38 (8): 86-90.

For a biographical reference on Raphael see, ‘Oscar Raphael’, *BMC* 79 (463) (Oct., 1941) [obituary]: 135; Edward Spencer-Churchill, ‘Oscar Raphael’, *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941) [obituary]: 14.

³³⁷ Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art’, 195.

modernist ideals is hard to determine, but he was most definitely encouraged by their novelty, beauty and archaeological significance.

As a collector Gustaf Adolf was one of the great promoters of Chinese art in the West during this period. In 1914 he took the initiative to organise the first exhibition of Chinese art in Sweden since 1849.³³⁸ It was to open at the Royal Academy in Stockholm and planned in close co-operation with Hobson, Eumorfopoulos and the curator of the Berlin State Museum Otto Kummel (1874-1952).³³⁹ Close to 550 objects were assembled from Swedish, British and German museums and private collections, covering the development of Style from the Zhou to the Qing (1644-1911 AD) period following the typical topological display of that period. The only reference to the preparations of this exhibition is a recollection by Gyllensvärd, who acknowledged that it intended to start a closer co-operation between scholars all over Europe:

‘[...] the first attempt in our country to give a broad survey of Chinese art in all its aspects, and it no doubt considerably widened interest in this ancient culture. It was also intended to start closer co-operation between scholars all over Europe’.³⁴⁰

World War I prevented the exhibition from opening to the public and there is no official documentation that further recalled the event. The war, however, did not stop Gustaf Adolf from continuing to make new additions to his collection, which by that stage included not only ceramics but also a number of bronzes and jades.³⁴¹ During these formative years, he was continuously kept up-to-date on archaeological discoveries in China made by his fellow

³³⁸ The only reference on the first Swedish Chinese exhibition in 1849 is in Gyllensvärd’s publication. The contents of this exhibition are unclear and therefore the term used by Gyllensvärd of ‘Chinese art’ should not be considered in the same context as to how it was defined then or today. On the organisation of the 1914 exhibit there is again no other reference than that of Gyllensvärd. An exhibition catalogue or any other reference whilst working on the archive at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities was not located. This might be due to the fact that the exhibition never opened. Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 33.

³³⁹ For a biographical reference on Kummel see, Aschwin Lippe, ‘In Memoriam: Otto Kummel’, *Ars Orientalis* I (1954) [obituary]: 262-264.

³⁴⁰ Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 33.

³⁴¹ Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 33.

country-men Andersson and Karlbeck and passed on important documentation to Hobson at the British Museum.³⁴² It was during this period that he became profoundly engaged in promoting Swedish research in China, demonstrated by his chairmanship of the Swedish China Research Committee. Extending the Chinese collections in Sweden was highly relevant.

The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities collection was initially a depository for Chinese archaeological objects. There was also a necessity for an officially recognised research institute devoted to the scientific study of this data. Andersson's role in its foundation has been established through his collection of Neolithic pottery; however, what is important in this thesis is how he directed the next flow of objects that came to its collection through Karlbeck.³⁴³

By creating a leading one-of-a-kind institute that focussed on Chinese archaeology outside China, the museum's original collections needed to be all encompassing in order to complete classification of the subject. At the time, Andersson commented that studies linked to the museum were intended for scientific examination and to place objects in a complete chronology.³⁴⁴ This need to complete required adequate study material and directly corresponded to the demand for new objects. Andersson and Gustaf Adolf decided to enhance the collection and include archaic bronzes and jades. There were a number of reasons for this and connect the principal figures to the objects themselves: First, Andersson's original collection had also included a number of Ordos bronzes, which, as we have seen, was then a novelty subject. Secondly, Karlbeck was an established collector of Huai-style bronzes and a reliable source to have on site in China. Thirdly, Gustaf Adolf had started to direct his

³⁴² Robert L. Hobson, 'Notebook by Hobson', The Robert Lockhart Hobson Papers, CE/38/51. The Central Archive, the British Museum.

³⁴³ Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 63-64; Johansson, 'Rescuing history from the nation', 28-44 .

³⁴⁴ Andersson, 'The origin and aim of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 7.

interests to early Chinese art in his private collection. Finally, the well-acclaimed philologist, Karlgren commenced his pioneering research on archaic Chinese script based on bronzes at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. Andersson recalled that the affiliation of Karlgren with the museum was a necessity, raising their profile to one of the leading research institute in its field.³⁴⁵ The combination of this group and their collecting incentives for the museum broadened its research remit to the archaic and Ordos bronzes, jades and later ceramics from the Tang period.

For financial support the museum had to rely on the donors of the China Research Committee. In 1926 the three committee members included Gustaf Adolf, Andersson and Lagrelius. The main donors were the brothers Emil Hultmark (1872-1942) and Richard Hultmark, Anders Hellström (1877-1940), Wilhelmina von Hallwyl and Gustaf Carlberg.³⁴⁶ Andersson, Lagrelius, Gustaf Adolf and the donors were coincidentally also Chinese art collectors and later purchased objects through the Karlbeck Syndicate.

On 24 February 1926, Sweden's Parliament considered proposals from the committee to nationalise the Chinese collections. Up to this point it had regarded itself as its formal owner. Its administration had temporarily been placed under the Royal Academy of Letters. By nationalising the collections more benefits were gained; such as government funding for storage and exhibition space. Shortly after Andersson was allocated the title of Professor of

³⁴⁵ Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 7.

³⁴⁶ Emil Hultmark was a researcher in the field of art history. In 1931 he received the medal of the Swedish China Research Committee in recognition of his generous support of the scientific work conducted at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. His brother Richard Hultmark was a District Court Judge in Stockholm. There is a strong indication that Carlberg was a wealthy businessman and philanthropist who encouraged Swedish intellectual progress and sponsored Sweden's first Chair in History of Science at Uppsala University in 1932. Today the Gustaf Carlberg Chair of History of Ideas and Learning is still seated at this university. It is however not ascertained that this is the same person and therefore any further biographical information on him is not included. For further biographical references on these individuals and their collections see, Tore Frängsmyt, 'History of Science in Sweden', *Isis* 7 (44) (Dec., 1983): 465-468; Karlgren, 'Bronzes in the Hellström Collection', 1-38; *Östasiatiska Samlingarna, Inbjudning och Program Torsdagen den 21 November 1929* (Program and Invitation to the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities Thursday 21 November 1929), (Stockholm: [The Museum], 1929).

East Asian Archaeology at Stockholm University and officially elected as the museum's first director.

Later that year Gustaf Adolf left on a well-documented journey to the Far East with his second wife, the English born and raised, Louise Mountbatten (1889-1965).³⁴⁷ This trip proved a turning point for the museum and the relationship between Andersson, Karlbeck and Gustaf Adolf; the three became increasingly associated through purchasing for the museum. The year 1926 is significant in a number of ways. Apart from the Royal visit to China and the nationalisation of the Chinese collections, it was also an important year in the history of Chinese archaeology because the very first official Chinese-led excavations took place under supervision of Li Ji at Xiyin village in Shanxi, a Yangshao cultural site.³⁴⁸

The Royal couple and their delegation planned the first part of the journey via the United States, crossing to Japan, Korea and finally China.³⁴⁹ Andersson and Lagrelius joined them in Beijing in the autumn of 1926. Amongst the various official visits in China, a special outing was planned to see Karlbeck at his home in Pukow later in the program. In Beijing, Gustaf Adolf attended several lectures held at the Rockefeller Institute and the Union Medical College, which was hosting a scientific symposium on archaeology and palaeontology.³⁵⁰ At this symposium, Andersson presented his important discovery of the Peking Man at

³⁴⁷ Gustaf Adolf's first wife was Margaret of Connaught (1882-1920). Louise Alexandra Marie Irene Mountbatten was his second wife. She reigned as the Queen of Sweden from 1950-1965. Margit Fjellman, *Louise Mountbatten, Queen of Sweden* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968).

³⁴⁸ Wang Tao and Ucko, 'Early Archaeological Fieldwork Practice and Syllabuses in China and England', 50; The Li Chi Records, The Seligman Papers, Seligman 1/7/4 (1905-1912) and Seligman 1/6/4 (1925-1940), the London School of Economics Archive.

³⁴⁹ In Japan Gustaf Adolf visited and studied the art objects at the imperial repository of the Shosoin in Nara. This repository has been preserved since the 8th century and holds the collection of the Emperor Shomu (701-756). In Korea he was invited to take part in an excavation on a site from the Shilla Period (668-935 AD). The grave that was excavated is known as 'The Grave of the Lucky Phoenix' and was one of the rich Royal graves of Kyongju.

³⁵⁰ Gyllensvärd, 'King Gustaf VI Adolf's Approach to Chinese Art', 34; Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China*, 64.

Zhoukoudian, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site today.³⁵¹ The Peking Man established that Palaeolithic man lived within the boundaries of China. A lecture by Andersson's colleague at that time Davidson Black (1884-1934) presented his research on the skeletal remains discovered in Gansu and he importantly argued that the Chinese prehistoric race was Mongolian in appearance and so proved that the original population in China was much older than previously assumed.³⁵² Other participants included the French scholar Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) (on Palaeontology) and the Chinese scholar Liang Qichao (1873-1929) (on the history of archaeology).³⁵³ The event was an important demonstration of how the first scientific studies conducted on prehistory and archaeology in China affiliated an international group of scientists. The collaboration between Western and Chinese scholars during the 1920s defined a period where the influence of Western science was the accepted route within the changing academic and education system in post-imperial in China.³⁵⁴ It further established that China took an important place within global prehistoric studies where internationally acclaimed scholars conducted and exchanged their academic work in Beijing.

³⁵¹The Peking Man or *Sinanthropus Pekenisis* is an example of the *Homo erectus*. Between 1923 and 1927 human remains were discovered at the site of Zhoukoudian. The site was first visited by Andersson and the American palaeontologist Walter W. Granger (1872-1941). Excavations were mainly conducted by Andersson's Austrian assistant Otto A. Zdansky (1894-1988).

For further reading see, Harry L. Shapiro, *Peking Man* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1976); Lanpo Jia, *The Story of the Peking man: from archaeology to mystery* (Beijing, Hong Kong, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Penny van Oosterzee, *Dragonbones: the story of the Peking man* (Cambridge, Mass: Perseus Pub., 2000); Andersson, *Children of the Yellow Earth*; Andersson, 'Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese', 20-62; Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Fossil men: recent discoveries and present problems* (Peking: Henri Vetch, 1943); 'Peking Man'. <http://www.unesco.org/ext/field/beijing/whc/pkm-site.htm>. (accessed 12 March 2007).

³⁵² Davidson Black, 'The Physical Character of the Prehistoric Kansu Race', *British Geological Survey of China Series A* (5) (Jun., 1929), 14.

For a biographical reference on Black see, Dora Hood, *Davidson Black: a biography* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1978).

³⁵³ In 1926, Teilhard de Chardin joined the ongoing excavations at the Zhoukoudian site as an advisor. Liang Qichao was the first Chinese scholar to introduce the western idea of prehistory and Thomsen's 'Three Age System' into China. This system is discussed in the introduction. For biographical references see, Wang Tao and Ucko, 'Early Archaeological Fieldwork Practice and Syllabuses in China and England', 50.

³⁵⁴ For further reading on the educational system in China during this period see, John Cleverly, *The Schooling of China: Tradition and Modernity in Chinese Education*, (Sidney and London: Allen & Unwin, 1991); Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe and Yongling Lu, eds., *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth Century China*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

Furthermore, Gustaf Adolf visited the former Imperial collections in the Forbidden City that were opened especially for him. He was allowed to study and handle various ceramics and ritual bronzes that had been collected by the Imperial Court for many centuries. Besides the formal engagements he sought out various antiques and curio-dealers and made some acquisitions on behalf of the museum. Andersson recalled that the funds used for these purchases were provided by the China Research Committee:

‘[...] it was the hope of the Crown Prince to avail himself of the occasion of his visit to the East to enrich the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, especially with objects of the early dynasties, funds were supplied by the China Research Committee’.³⁵⁵

Andersson also secured a number of objects for the museum during this trip but was more cautious than Gustaf Adolf. He negotiated some purchases from Luo Zhenyu’s personal collection, including ivory carvings and Anyang objects.³⁵⁶ One of the purchases by Gustaf Adolf came from an un-named Beijing dealer and included a large bronze bell dating from the late Zhou period and seven Tang dynasty tomb figures (Figures 38 and 39). He later recalled them being suited for the museum collection:

‘[...] at the time I did not know very much about Chinese bronzes and their dating, but it was of fine quality and suitable for the museum’.³⁵⁷

The acquisitions encapsulated the collecting interest for the museum and it is from this period they directed an interest to China’s bronze art.

In November 1926 Gustaf Adolf and Andersson arrived in Pukow to visit Karlbeck. By now Karlbeck had actively been collecting local bronzes from the Huai Valley region for over a decade. It was his Huai-style objects that the Swedish visitors were eager to examine

³⁵⁵ Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, 25

³⁵⁶ The only reference to the purchases made from Lou Zhenyu during the 1926 journey is by Andersson and mentioned in the *Bulletin*. Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, 26.

³⁵⁷ Gyllensvärd, ‘King Gustaf VI Adolf’s Approach to Chinese Art’, 34.

and purchase. A number of bronzes were bought for the museum, including a group of mirrors, weaponry and belt-hooks. Many were of the same genre Karlbeck had sold to Wilhelmina von Hallwyl some years earlier. In addition, eight bronze ritual vessels from Karlbeck's private collection were later donated to the museum by the Swedish collector and art dealer Ivan Traugott.³⁵⁸ Still, when Gustaf Adolf made the purchases he accepted that the objects were, in his words, moderately priced.³⁵⁹ He was impressed by Karlbeck's collecting skills and that he not only understood the historical importance of the bronzes but also had an eye for quality. By then, Karlbeck had already published two articles on Huai-style bronzes and started to specialise in this field.

By acquiring a collection of Huai-style objects, Gustaf Adolf understood the value of a specialised set for the museum. It included a full display of the evolutionary development of decorative motifs and techniques defined by this particular Style. He acknowledged that variety within a collection was an important factor in the classification and institutional framing of the objects. Within more recent discussions surrounding the process of collecting and collectors in general Susan Pearce discussed the significance of a selection- process.³⁶⁰ She points out that this process lies at the heart of collecting. In this context the roles Gustaf Adolf, Andersson and Karlbeck in the foundation of the museum collection are highly relevant because by doing so they directed and promoted the history of Chinese art. Following her framework, Karlbeck operated as the individual collector who arranged the different sets of objects when first selected bringing together a collection. Both Andersson and Gustaf Adolf acted as creators of the museum collection through purchasing and secondary selection.

³⁵⁸ Karlbeck gifted to Gustaf Adolf a Chinese sword for his private collection. It's not clear what type or period the sword represented. Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 235; Andersson, 'The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities', 26.

³⁵⁹ *Östasiatiska Samlingarna Inbudning och Program Tordagen den 21 November 1929.*

³⁶⁰ Pearce, *On Collecting*, 23.

After this visit Gustaf Adolf requested that Karlbeck continued collecting for the museum and to concentrate on archaic ritual and ornamental bronzes.³⁶¹ The China Research Committee provided the financial means for the future purchases. During the 1926 journey Andersson was careful not to acquire any objects directly from archaeological sites and he remained cautious in personally purchasing from the art market because of his affiliation with the museum, a national institution and representing Sweden. Gustaf Adolf's royal status gave him access to buy without too many questions. For other future acquisitions they asked Karlbeck to collect on their behalf and any direct political implications to the museum's involvement in the export of cultural objects was ceased.³⁶² As discussed in the previous chapter, to control the export of antiquities was an extremely complex issue and a number of arguments supported the prohibition of ancient objects leaving the country. Still, the Royal visit was one of the defining moments for Karlbeck's future career. He was nominated as the museum's chief collector whilst still living in China and this inevitably led to the creation of the Karlbeck Syndicate some years later. By that time, he was not only an experienced professional collector but also an established specialist linked to a national institution and connected to a group of affluent private collectors and a number of important museums.

In this period Gustaf Adolf, Andersson and Karlbeck acquired around 700 Chinese bronzes for the museum and their pursuit directed the course of collecting and studying the bronzes in Sweden and the rest of Europe. This is undeniably crucial in the context in understanding the development of the subject outside China. It was through their selection process that new research material was provided to scholars like Karlgren, Yetts, and Hobson who based their studies on museum and private collections.

³⁶¹ Gyllensvärd, 'King Gustaf VI Adolf's Approach to Chinese Art', 35.

³⁶² Correspondence between Andersson and Hedin (part of the Swedish National archives) mentioned that during the 1926 Royal visit to Beijing Andersson was cautious for purchasing and collecting objects for the museum. Sven Hedin Archive, National Archives. Johansson, 'Orvar Karlbeck's treasure hunt', 35-37.

In November 1929, the museum held its first exhibition displaying all the new acquisitions made in China.³⁶³ The very first thing occupying the organisers included that the objects needed to be identified and classified within the accepted chronological methodology. They focussed on using the Three Age System to identify a number of developmental stages. This was an important procedure in the institutionalisation of objects because it clearly showed that they were at first handled within a traditionally ethnological methodology and not necessarily approached as art. In a general discussion on the classification of art in the Western museum which deconstructs the transformation of the historical meaning of an object, Susan Stewart commented:

‘The collection replaces history with classification. Because the collection replaces origin with classification, thereby making temporality a spatial and material phenomenon, its existence is dependent upon principles of organization and categorization’.³⁶⁴

This is reflected in the collection of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, where the historical or archaeological significance of non-Western objects was situated within a typological classification system in a museum environment. Also important was that the function of the objects was not known at that time and they were processed as secular or decorative. This makes the distinction between an object categorised as art or as ethnology more complicated. The provenance of the objects was often debatable and based upon information Karlbeck gathered from the dealers in China. This meant that the historical definition of the objects was only established through a classification process based on typology once they reached the museum. The display originated the objects within an

³⁶³ Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, 26

³⁶⁴ Susan Stewart, ‘Objects of Desire’, in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan Pearce, 254-275 (London: Routledge, 1994).

established system accepted in Western scholarship where evolution, typology, chronology and aesthetics determined the function and understanding of the archaeological material.³⁶⁵

Through their selection-process Gustaf Adolf, Karlbeck and Andersson assembled what they considered a complete collection, representative of all China's Bronze Age technological and artistic production. This included objects with a variety of different regional styles based upon then recent discoveries. The concept of creating a complete set or complete chronology was recently assessed in relation to understanding the process of collecting by museums and individuals and appears to be part of the natural intention of the formation of a collection.³⁶⁶

For example, Susan Stewart pointed out:

‘The set of objects the Museum displays is sustained only by the fiction that they somehow constitute a coherent representational universe’.³⁶⁷

In the case of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, this explains that as part of the institutionalisation and display of the objects it was the organiser's concept of this fiction that they somehow selected a group that constituted such a coherent representational universe of China's archaic technology and art in Sweden. Following Susan Stewart's framework the display of a collection in a museum setting and the organisers were inevitably responsible and accountable for the creation of their vision of early China and also illustrated the legacy of their research along-side their success in recent collecting expeditions.

3.3 Karlbeck's first collecting expedition to China (1928-1929).

When Karlbeck returned to Stockholm from China in 1927 he was met with an interesting proposal:

³⁶⁵ For further reading on the history of the classification process of non-Western objects in Western collections see, Layton, *The Anthropology of Art*, 4

³⁶⁶ For some ideas on the formation of complete sets or complete chronology in collections see, Pearce, *On Collecting*, 184-188; Stewart, 'Objects of Desire', 254-257.

³⁶⁷ Stewart, 'Objects of Desire', 256.

‘The chairman of the China Research Committee, the Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf, honoured me with the task of revisiting China to purchase objects on behalf of the Museum’.³⁶⁸

He felt honoured to have been approached by Gustaf Adolf to return on behalf of the museum. They were in constant need of expanding its collections and maintain themselves as one of the leading research institute. Karlbeck was the perfect candidate for this somewhat dubious role because none of the expeditions were at the time not officially recognised in contradiction to those by Andersson some years earlier. The first trip was planned for the autumn of 1928. This proved a good time of the year to purchase archaeological objects because most of the illegal excavations were planned after the harvesting of the crops.³⁶⁹ By the time Karlbeck arrived in China, the freshly excavated objects had been scooped up by the local dealerships, and were ready for purchase in the curio-shops of the local towns or market cities.

Karlbeck left for his first collecting trip in September 1928 and returned exactly a year later. Before he left the China Research Committee raised the necessary funds. It was due to their generosity that financially he was able to leave. After his return Andersson announced:

‘The results obtained considerably surpassed the hopes of the Committee and the donors. He had acquired 823 articles, mostly small bronzes, but also bronze vessels, mortuary ceramics, few jade objects and some silver pieces, as well as three unique lacquered beams from a Honan tomb, dated about 2000 years old [...] Especially remarkable in the new Karlbeck collection are some high quality mirrors and a large number of small bronzes in animal style from southern Mongolia [...] a collection of bronze weapons and fragments of bronze vessels from the locality of Hiao-t’un in Anyang-hsien in Honan.’³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*, v.

³⁶⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Shanghai 20 September 1934’

³⁷⁰ Andersson, ‘The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection’, 235.

The objects were grouped by Andersson as The New Karlbeck Collection. It included over 800 items, mostly small bronzes, jades, Ordos bronzes and some bronze fragments from the vicinity of Anyang. On 21 November 1929 an exhibition was organised to display the new acquisitions.³⁷¹ The Exhibition of The Karlbeck Collection was planned in conjunction with the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the China Research Committee, the opening of the permanent, and now, public collections and the official inauguration of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities as a scientific research institute.³⁷² A program of this event is part of the archive in Stockholm and described as ‘a national celebration of Swedish scientific exploration’ in China.³⁷³ Andersson pointed out the remarkable objects somehow elevated the status of the museum by linking them to Karlbeck, a respected collector. As part of the celebrations the collection was ceremoniously handed over to the Swedish State by the China Research Committee. Added to the festivities was the presentation of the very first edition of the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, an annual academic journal that publishes to this day on the research connected to the museum.³⁷⁴

The exhibition itself included a selected display of 329 objects that Karlbeck had purchased for the museum in the past year. They were on show in the two southern rooms of the then museum space. It was decided that they were presented alongside a number of loan exhibits of Chinese furniture, pictures and textiles from Swedish private collections in order to create ‘an artistic Chinese setting for the archaeological treasures’.³⁷⁵ This is interesting because

³⁷¹ Andersson, ‘The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection’, 233.

³⁷² Andersson, ‘The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection’, 233-236.

³⁷³ ‘Ingenjör Orvar Karlbecks Samlarverksamhet (Engineer Orvar Karlbeck Collection)’, in *Östasiatiska Samlingarna Inbjudning och Program Thursdagen den 21 November 1929*. (Stockholm, 1929).

³⁷⁴ Andersson, ‘The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection’, 233; ‘Engineer Orvar Karlbeck Collection’.

³⁷⁵ For this exhibition the aforementioned Hultmark brothers loaned a selection of Chinese furniture and a pair of Wei (219-580 AD) period horses. The owner of the Kinamagasinet (The Chinashop) loaned ‘some decorative objects’. Other objects came from the collections of Gustaf Adolf, Lagrelius and Karlbeck. Andersson, ‘The

although the objects that Karlbeck bought were considered of archaeological value and bought with the intention to research its organisers felt that a Chinese-style setting needed to be created in order to authenticate the objects as an aid to educate and act to represent Chinese culture.³⁷⁶ For example, in the gallery area a collection of Ordos bronzes was on display and opposite, in one of the cases along the window, a selection of objects collected by Hedin some years earlier in southern Siberia made the overall Chinese exhibition visually connected to Eurasia.³⁷⁷

Amongst the objects Andersson especially praised both the high quality mirrors and the small bronzes in animal-style from Suiyuan, now known as Ordos.³⁷⁸ At the inauguration of the exhibition, several lectures were organised presenting the studies conducted at the institute. Interestingly, most of the lectures focussed on Paleontological subjects because the archaeological research was just commencing.³⁷⁹ Still, the exhibition and lectures demonstrate the wide aspect of research conducted. Tony Bennet recently explained that the museum acts as, in his words, a backteller, which the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities also intended as one of its roles as its collections were connected to knowledge and science:

Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 236; 'Engineer Orvar Karlbeck Collection'.

³⁷⁶ The creation of an authentic setting for Chinese objects on display is reflective traditional presentation of non-Western art in Sweden and Britain at the time. See, Barringer, 'The South Kensington Museum and the Colonial Project', 11-27; Pagani, 'Chinese material culture and British perceptions of China in the nineteenth century', 28-40.

³⁷⁷ The Ordos bronzes were brought together by the Swede F. A. Larson and purchased for the museum thanks to donations by Hellström and Gustaf Werner (1859-1948), also syndicate member. Werner was a Swedish businessman and industrialist. His main business venture was in textiles supplies, such as cotton, yarn and wool. He was a donor to Uppsala University and its business school. Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 236.

For a biographical reference on Werner see, 'Wener Gustaf', *Svenska Man och Kvinnor, Biografik Uppslagsbok*, 3 G-H, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 272.

³⁷⁸ Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 235.

³⁷⁹ The titles of lectures were published in Swedish- in the official program of the exhibition in Swedish and by Andersson in the *Bulletin*: 'Prof. Th. Hall spoke on Gigantopteris, a giant creeper from the Carboniferous coalbeds of China. Prof. C. Winman spoke on the Helopus dinosaur found in China. Dr. Olov Janse outlined some cultural connections between Europe and China during the early Iron Age. Dr. G.V. Edman spoke on the evidence discovered by him in cooperation with Dr. E. Söderberg of remains of cultivated rice in potsherds from the Neolithic dwelling-site Yangshao-tsun in Honan and Dr. J. G. Andersson spoke about Chinese climate change during the earliest Stone Age.' see, Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish China Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 235.

‘The museum was another ‘backteller’, a narrative machinery, with similar properties. In the newly fashioned deep-times of geology, archaeology and palaeontology, new objects of knowledge were ushered forth into the sphere of scientific visibility. The museum conferred a public visibility on these objects of knowledge.’³⁸⁰

Demonstrated by the exhibition, Karlbeck’s collecting expedition was heralded as a success and the organisers acknowledged his important contribution to scientific research at the museum and for Sweden. In a detailed synopsis of this achievement and a list of all purchases made was presented to the committee.³⁸¹ Interestingly, Andersson addressed the acquisitions as ‘works of art’, and by doing so highlighting their decorative and aesthetic value. He mentioned that they mostly consisted of small bronzes of the highest quality in accordance with the museum’s wishes:

‘When collecting these he [Karlbeck] has shown new proofs of judgement of Chinese works of art that has been manifested through his earlier collections. His trip has also been very significant in how an experienced collector in China has been able to acquire objects of the highest quality at a price that is only a fraction of the prices of the European antique market.’³⁸²

A further comment in this synopsis stated that during this trip Karlbeck felt refrained from purchasing bronzes of high quality because their prices were too high for his budget. It is plausible that Andersson meant that Karlbeck bought high quality ornamental bronzes but felt constrained from buying the more expensive ritual bronze vessels. The synopsis also contained an extract from a personal correspondence between Karlbeck and Andersson, where he mentioned that the financial restrictions had held him back:

³⁸⁰ Bennet, *The Birth of the Museum*, 178.

³⁸¹ Johan G. Andersson, ‘Ingeniör O. Karlbecks samlarverksamhet i Kina’ (Synopsis of Karlbeck’s collecting trip for the Committee), the Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

³⁸² Andersson, ‘Synopsis of Karlbeck’s collecting trip for the Committee’.

‘Although my purchases for the museum consist of small bronzes, I have not been without opportunities to acquire very good bronzes if only money had been no object. During my visits to antique stalls I saw many recently excavated bronze items, partly of very high quality. As the prices were too high for my budget, I got a two month option for quite a few. Unfortunately Sweden did not find the funds for such acquisitions and therefore the bronzes were purchased by other countries [...] The antique stalls even had some beautiful and interesting Sung ceramics for sale, but as the Museum’s interest end with Tang nothing was bought.’³⁸³

Karlbeck pointed out several factors. The first is that the objects for sale were recently excavated and he considered them authentic. Secondly, he mentioned the lack of adequate funding to purchase other, more expensive high quality objects. Thirdly, that the museum’s interest was the small bronze objects and was not concerned with the Song period ceramics that were also popular amongst Western collectors and for sale in China. There is a clear element of nationalism within his incentive for collecting the Chinese objects for Sweden when he expressed disappointment when objects went to other countries.³⁸⁴ In this respect, Karlbeck is clearly defined as a collector for the Swedish nation, connected to and worked for a national institution with an incentive to establish an important Chinese collection in his home country.

Indeed, the 1928-1929 collecting expedition proved a successful venture for both Karlbeck and the museum on a national level. Competition amongst other countries, especially the US and Canada to collect Chinese objects increased at that time and several collectors were operating in that field. In one of his newsletter-reports to the China Research Committee Karlbeck commented on the competitive nature that existed amongst the small

³⁸³ Andersson, ‘Synopsis of Karlbeck’s collecting trip for the Committee’.

³⁸⁴ On the history of nationalism and archaeology in the West see, Margarita Diaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology. Nationalism, Colonialism and the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5-6.

group of professional Western collectors.³⁸⁵ For example, William White (1873-1960), a Canadian Bishop was the collector for the Ontario Museum in Toronto and, like Karlbeck, interested in Bronze Age objects from the first dynasties.³⁸⁶

‘I have met several times with Bishop White, who moves with confidence and has unlimited capital, collecting small bronzes and armour [...] He just bought an extensive mirror collection for the Toronto Museum [...] He tried to find out, through me, the town where I bought the Chou mirrors, and even wrote to Ferguson to ask. He is going to be a difficult rival and he shoots up the prices.’³⁸⁷

Karlbeck recognised the rivalry between the Ontario Museum and the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities for collecting the best objects. He also mentioned that White had unlimited funds, something that Karlbeck complained about not having more of. White should not be confused with the previously discussed collector Whiting Bishop, who also operated in China at the time and bought numerous objects for the Freer Gallery. Another Westerner who was mentioned by Karlbeck was the aforementioned scholar and art-historian Ferguson.³⁸⁸ Both White and Ferguson were missionaries and well established collectors of Chinese art, including archaeological objects. During this period, Ferguson acted as a buyer of Chinese art for the Metropolitan Museum in New York.³⁸⁹ What the collecting activities of these men show is that in the history of collecting in China this period reports a rise in the demand for Bronze Age objects by Western institutions. Archaeology was surfacing in China and with

³⁸⁵ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report to the China Research Committee, Kaifengfu 10 November 1929’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

³⁸⁶ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Kaifengfu, 10 November 1929’.

White was probably one of the most persistent collectors in China at this period; he created the majority of the vast collection of early Chinese art that is still part of the Ontario Museum today. For a bibliography on White see, Lewis C. Walmsley, ‘Bishop in Honan: Mission and Museum in the Life of William C. White’, *BSOS* 83 3 (1975) [obituary]: 711.

³⁸⁷ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-report, Kaifengfu, 10 November 1929’.

³⁸⁸ In 1919 Ferguson published a handbook on antiquities, *Outlines of Chinese Art*, organised on the media-based categories most of the Western scholars then used. He was co-founder of the popular journal, *The China Journal of Science and Art*, and was involved in the development of western-style educational institutes in China at the time. For biographical reference see, Lawton, ‘John C. Ferguson’, 65-76.

³⁸⁹ Lawton, ‘John C. Ferguson’, 65-76.

this new scholarship arose. The result was that with greater popularity the prices also increased.

There had been a number of foreign collectors in China in previous decades, including Stephen Wootton Bushell (1844-1908), Paul Pelliot (1878-1945), Édouard Chavannes (1865-1918 and also Laufer and who all pursued important pioneering scholarship in the field.³⁹⁰ Their collecting activities inevitably enriched the collections of national institutions in their respective countries of origin. It was not unusual for institutions to seek out reputable collectors, with knowledge of the local market and language, to go on site to purchase the best objects from dealers or to collect directly from archaeological sites. Each collector has his own unique story to tell and worked within his own field and boundaries. What they all had in common, and something that was extremely important to the institutions they represented and were involved with, was that they were the main reliable source for acquiring some sort of provenance for the objects and, to a certain extent popularised the subject.

By the time Karlbeck started his collecting expeditions this first wave of collectors had passed. Collecting on site proved extremely difficult and there was a new focus and trend by the growing Western market for early dating objects by private collectors. To collect simultaneously for a group of museums and private collectors through an organised consortium, as Karlbeck proceeded to do, was unprecedented. He was an all-round collector with good knowledge of the market in the large cities, as well as, local provincial towns, and well established relationships with a number of dealers. The archive in Stockholm holds a list where he named some of the shops and Chinese dealerships he encountered.³⁹¹ This list includes seven dealerships in 'Peiping' (Beijing), three in Shanghai, one in 'Kaifengfu'

³⁹⁰ For biographical references see, Nick Pearce, 'Collecting Connoisseurship and Commerce: An Examination of the Life and Career of Stephen Wootton Bushell (1844-1908)', *TOCS* 70 (2005-2006): 17-25; Denis Sinor, 'Remembering Paul Pelliot', *JAOS* 119 (3) (Jul.-Sept., 1999) [obituary]: 467-472; Berthold Laufer, 'Édouard Chavannes', *JAOS* 38 (1918) [obituary]: 202-205.

³⁹¹ This thesis follows the spelling for the towns and dealerships as in the original list compiled by Karlbeck. Orvar Karlbeck, 'List and notes on dealers in China', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

(Kaifeng) and one in ‘Shouchou’ (Chuzhou). The main centres for the antiques market were Beijing and Shanghai. Unfortunately, these names were not identified by him with their Chinese characters and therefore difficult to determine. Amongst the more well-known dealerships is the name of T.Y. King of Shanghai, who Karlbeck described:

‘[...] a very reliable man, who does not deliberately gives out false information’.³⁹²

‘Huang Po-change of Peiping’ was a Beijing dealership that he also held in high regard and purchased numerous objects from. Interestingly he commented that the owner was a scholar and he might have been one of his intellectual influences in China:

‘Huang Po-change of Peiping is a scholar and most interested in archaeology’.³⁹³

In these notes Karlbeck also warned against a number of unreliable dealers. A certain ‘Tung Yi Hang’, who owned a shop in Beijing, was not to be trusted and sold fake items. What exact purpose this list served is not clear but it does imply that he placed trust in the dealers to provide him with correct provenance and authenticity. He thought it was important that the dealers travelled and purchased on site as opposed to rely on their assistants and that they had a good historical knowledge of their goods.

During his travels, Karlbeck received his instructions directly from Andersson. In 1928-1929 he was asked to purchase sets of specified objects for the museum. In a letter to Karlbeck in China Andersson explained that he just visited the leading Chinese art dealer Chin Tsai Loo (C T Loo, 1880-1957) in Paris.³⁹⁴ During this visit he inspected his collection of then-called

³⁹² Karlbeck, ‘List and notes on dealers in China’.

Karlbeck continued to sell antiquities on behalf of the T.Y family until the 1960s. Correspondence Karlbeck and the T.Y. family is located in The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

For a reference to this dealership see, Ian Robertson, ‘Art, Religion, History, Money’, in *Understanding International Art Markets and Management*, ed. Ian Robertson, 37-59 (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

³⁹³ Karlbeck, ‘List and notes on dealers in China’.

³⁹⁴ Johan G. Andersson, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, Paris 4 March 1929’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

Suiyuan bronzes which Loo had recently obtained in China. While still in Paris, Andersson requested if Karlbeck could stay out an extra six months and to concentrate on the purchasing of similar objects for the museum:

‘[...] the whole question is, from our point of view, that the Suiyuan bronzes are very important, and reasons for them to be fully investigated. Therefore I ask the Committee and yourself to fix it so that you can stay an extra six months, and during that period try to acquire of Suiyuan bronzes.’³⁹⁵

Andersson had purchased a number of such bronzes in the summer of 1920 when he was in Inner Mongolia and Beijing, and was instantly fascinated by the small bronzes which inspired further investigation in his missing link theories.³⁹⁶ In his letter, he demanded Karlbeck to keep in touch with the antique stalls in Shanghai and Beijing that sold such bronzes. He also suggested for him to visit the Swede Eric T. Nyström (b. 1879), then Professor of Natural History at the University of Jiangxi in Taiyuan.³⁹⁷ From there he advised to organise a collecting campaign in northern Shaanxi and offered the help of one of his former aids, a certain ‘Chuang’, who was working with Nyström and extremely good at establishing contact at site. In northern Shaanxi Andersson told him to contact some of the Swedish missionary stations that could help with the buying of such bronzes (Figures 7, 34, 63). In the mean time, Andersson approached a number of missionaries and sent photographs of the objects of interest. He informed Karlbeck that by the time he received this letter they were probably already searching on his behalf.

For biographical references on Loo and his collection see, Edward von der Heydt, ‘C.T. Loo’, *A A* 20 (213) (1957) [obituary]:186; Wang Yiyu, *The Louvre from China: A Critical Study of C.T. Loo and the Framing of Chinese Art in the United States, 1915-1950*, (PhD diss. Ohio University, 2007); Alfred Salmony, *Sino-Siberian Art in the Collection of C.T. Loo* (Paris: C. T. Loo, 1933).

³⁹⁵ Andersson, ‘Letter, Paris 4 March 1929’.

³⁹⁶ Andersson, ‘The origin and aims of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities’, 19; Johan G. Andersson, ‘Der Weg Über die Steppen’, *BMFEA* 1 (1929): 143-164; Johan G. Anderson, ‘Hunting Magic in the Animal Style’, *BMFEA* 4 (1932): 221-225; Johan G. Andersson, ‘Selected Ordos Bronzes’, *BMFEA* 7 (1935): 81-92.

³⁹⁷ For a biographical reference on Nyström see, ‘Nyström Eric T.’, *Svenska Män och Kvinnor, Biografisk Uppslagsbok*, 5 Lindorm-O, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1949), 589.

The urgency of Andersson's letter and the detailed suggestions for his interest in these bronzes indicated the competitive and somewhat aggressive environment within which Western collectors operated in China. His guidance to Karlbeck was calculated and determined. It also shows that Andersson controlled the purchases for the museum and directed Karlbeck out of his original comfort zone by encouraging for him to visit the outer provinces which did not have established dealerships as in the cities (Figure 40). Added to the instructions he saw a potential for Karlbeck to remain working as a collector and as the funds of the China Research Committee were growing its 'possible to ask you to stay'.³⁹⁸ No doubt Karlbeck wanted to deliver a successful expedition in order to secure his future with Andersson and the museum. These Suiyuan or Ordos bronzes were later put on display as part of the 1929 exhibition of The New Karlbeck Collection at the museum.

The mechanics of the expedition and its expenses was discussed by Andersson in his synopsis to the committee. Each purchase was described and systematically catalogued, including its price paid in China and its equivalent market price in London, Paris and Berlin. This provides extremely important and rare data for the analysis of collecting practices at the time and shows that the profit margins for such objects were extremely high in Europe. In addition, Gustaf Adolf with experience in purchasing from the art market advised on the equivalent of European valuations:

'The Crown Prince was especially helpful on pricing the grave goods because he is very familiar with these from the London antiques market'.³⁹⁹

An example for price comparison is that in Beijing Karlbeck purchased a pre-Han bronze mirror with spiral ornament for the equivalent of 17 Swedish Crowns that was considerably

³⁹⁸ Andersson, 'Letter, Paris 4 March 1929'.

³⁹⁹ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'.

less than the then current sale price in Europe of 746 Swedish Crowns.⁴⁰⁰ In Shanghai Karlbeck bought another bronze mirror with animal decoration, which was given a Han dynasty date, for the equivalent of 52 Swedish Crowns and the price for a similar mirror in a European dealership at the time was as high as 1,865 Swedish Crowns.⁴⁰¹

Andersson praised the competitive prices:

‘His trip has also been very significant in how an experienced collector in China has been able to acquire objects of the highest quality at a price that is only the fraction of the prices of the European antique market.’⁴⁰²

After all the necessary calculations were made, including Karlbeck’s salary and travel expenses, the total costs of the objects were one fifth of the European dealer’s price. The economics of the collecting expedition is highly significant because it later appealed to the private collectors and museums that joined the syndicate. The attraction of buying at the source was not necessarily to establish an authentic provenance but was also economical in cost:

‘The result is that Karlbeck’s purchase sum for the 823 items totalling SKr 33.696 is the equivalent of a European value of SKr 269.847. In order to be able to correctly evaluate the cost of the collection from Karlbeck we have to take in to consideration his salary, cost of travel etc. As you can see from the attached accounts the total cost of the trio amounts to SKr 63.818 from which is deducted some minor amounts regarding packaging and shipping of other collections, not made by him, and a cash balance at the end of the trip of SKr 818.93. If we put the cost of Karlbeck’s collections at SKr

⁴⁰⁰ Johan G. Andersson, ‘List of Karlbeck’s Purchases for the 1928-1929 expedition’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁰¹ Andersson, ‘List of Karlbeck’s Purchases for the 1928-1929 expedition’.

⁴⁰² Andersson, ‘Synopsis of Karlbeck’s collecting trip of the China Research Committee’.

62.000, we can see he has been able to purchase the objects at a total cost of a fifth of the European Antiques dealers prices.⁴⁰³

Andersson also expressed that the China Research Committee wished to continue to use Karlbeck's eminent ability to collect 'which of course has been strengthened by the experience of the recently finished year'.⁴⁰⁴ Furthermore, he proposed a future for Karlbeck to continue such activities on behalf of the committee. However, funding the next collecting trip proved somewhat difficult.

'Unfortunately the Committee cannot keep Karlbeck, as hitherto by single donations and under these circumstances the treasurer [Axel Lagrelius] has found new economic grounds to organise Karlbeck's ongoing work.'⁴⁰⁵

These new economic grounds proposed for a prospective collecting venture to operate under the Swedish name of the Karlbeck-Consortia, also known as The Karlbeck Syndicate and to include a small circle of connoisseurs and collectors to form a consortium:

'The new plan is to invite a small circle of connoisseurs and collectors of older Chinese art to form a consortium which would finance Karlbeck's ongoing work. The China Committee is hoping that part of the collection would be a donation to the East Asian Collections [at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities] whilst the remainder should be shared between the members of the consortium. The chairman [Gustaf Adolf] and the treasurer [Lagrelius] of the China Committee, together with [their] legal advisor, Johannes Heller, have created a detailed program for the activity of the consortium. With a view to Karlbeck's special qualifications as a collector it is agreed to limit the works to the earlier dating objects of Chinese art, up to the end of the Sung (Song) dynasty.'⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'.

⁴⁰⁴ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'.

⁴⁰⁵ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'.

⁴⁰⁶ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'.

This proposal defined the foundation of the syndicate as agreed by the China Research Committee. The ingenuity of this new and unique venture included institutional and private clients by invitation of the museum. This consortium could purchase objects through Karlbeck and by doing so to directly finance the new collections for the museum, including some of the more expensive items on the market. Previously Karlbeck felt that he had missed out on some purchases because he did not have the economic means to pay for them. This new plan would provide him with more financial freedom.

‘If, for instance, a sum of SKr 100.000 had been available it would have been possible to purchase more exquisite works of art which Karlbeck had to leave because of the prices and at the same time the running plan would improve because the personal expenditures would have been lowered in relation to the purchase prices.’⁴⁰⁷

The committee also hoped that some of the private collectors would donate some of the objects they purchased directly to the museum, whilst a remainder was divided between the participants. With this proposal a catalogue of previously purchased objects was distributed to a selected group of Swedish private collectors. An original copy of *Minnen Från Orvar Karlbecks Samlarfärd i Kina 1928-1929* (Memories of Orvar Karlbeck’s Collecting Trip to China 1928-1929) is part of the archive at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (Figure 41).⁴⁰⁸ It contained a selection of black-and-white photographs of objects and a price-list of the acquisitions in Swedish Crowns. It also made a comparison to European market standards at the time and included a spread-sheet of the total accounts of the expedition. To make the participation more attractive to a wider spectrum of collectors it was agreed to include the purchasing of Tang period objects and Song ceramics. The collecting of early Chinese ceramics from the Tang and Song period was particularly popular in the West at the time,

⁴⁰⁷ Andersson, ‘Synopsis of Karlbeck’s collecting trip of the China Research Committee’.

⁴⁰⁸ *Minnen Från Orvar Karlbecks Samlarfärd i Kina 1928-1929* (Memories of Orvar Karlbeck’s Collecting Trip to China, 1928-1929), The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

especially in Sweden and Britain, and partly reflective of an aesthetic and academic collecting trend as recently discussed by Judith Green and Stacey Pierson.⁴⁰⁹ No doubt that extending the focus to popular ceramics made joining more attractive to a larger spectrum of collectors. The appeal of the syndicate amongst a defined group of collectors is significant because it ultimately is demonstrative of the popularity of early Chinese art within a confined international collector's circle.

By the time the Karlbeck Syndicate started operating Swedish research of Chinese archaeology was represented by the prestigious and newly founded Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. The Neolithic discoveries by Andersson and the important Chinese collections had just arrived in Sweden. The ambition to establish a pioneering research institute connected to these collections was promoted not only by its now famous curator but also by Gustaf Adolf, who was an ambassador to the museum and collecting activities of his fellow country-men, such as Karlbeck and Hedin.

Andersson's scholarship determined a number of archaeological discoveries and his research was based upon predominantly ethnological methodologies, such as the comparative method. His research had an impact upon the development in this field, where the study of Style in archaeological objects determined historical and evolutionary patterns and the course for future research. His studies led to specific collections for the museum. It was under his instruction that Karlbeck purchased much of the Bronze Age material. Andersson managed the operations from Stockholm which eventually led to the foundation of the syndicate.

The Karlbeck Syndicate as an organisation, discussed in the Introduction, delineates the previously unrecognised similarities in the study of such groups, their collecting practices and

⁴⁰⁹ Stacey Pierson and Judith Green and both discussed the aesthetic taste of British collectors in connection to the emerging taste for modernism amongst the avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s. See, Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 91; Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 43-56; Green, 'Ancient China/Modern Art', 87-99.

pioneering scholarship on collections in Sweden and Great Britain. The next chapter analyses the archival data providing a unique understanding of the collecting operations of some important institutions and private collectors, in particularly Sweden and Britain.

Chapter 4

The Karlbeck Syndicate

The Karlbeck Syndicate started out as a Swedish collecting expedition where a group of predominantly Swedish-based private collector's affiliated themselves with a national institution, The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, to purchase early Chinese art. It was a unique arrangement from which the museum benefited because the private collectors directly paid for its purchases through participation. Its success was reflected in two subsequent expeditions that thereafter permitted an international group to join the arrangement. Later participants included representatives of leading museums from Britain, Germany, France and The Netherlands and a group of private collectors. The relationship between the collectors from Sweden and Britain and their affiliations to their public institutions is demonstrated in this discussion. This chapter analyses and deconstructs the primary archival sources on the Karlbeck Syndicate and discuss the mechanics of its operations and participants.

4.1 The Karlbeck Syndicate: its mechanics and members

Karlbeck stayed in China approximately eight months during the first syndicate expedition. He arrived in China in June 1930 and his last newsletter-report dated from February 1931.⁴¹⁰ For this expedition a total of twenty participants, including three public institutions and seventeen private collectors, signed up to the proposal as outlined by Andersson in the synopsis.⁴¹¹ The private collectors were sixteen Swedish and one American. During this expedition Karlbeck brought back around 660 objects; containing a great number of small Huai-style ornamental and Ordos bronzes, several Shang and Zhou ritual vessels,

⁴¹⁰ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1930-1931', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴¹¹ Andersson, 'Synopsis of Karlbeck's collecting trip of the China Research Committee'; Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1930-1931'.

archaic jades, Tang dynasty tomb figures and Song wares. A list based on archival data is compiled below and identifies the names of the participants (minus one), the number of objects they purchased and a general description of their main collecting interests.

The Karlbeck Syndicate 1930-1931

Collector	Nr. of objects	Collecting interest
Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities	310 objects	Ordos and Huai bronzes.
Röhsshska Konstslojdmuseet	2 objects	Huai bronzes.
Hallwyl Collection	2 objects	Huai bronze mirrors.
Gustaf Adolf	40 objects	Archaic bronzes and jades.
Axel Lagrelius	57 objects	Han and Huai bronze mirrors.
Richard Hultmark	14 objects	Huai ornamental bronzes.
Emil Hultmark	29 objects	Huai ornamental bronzes.
Wilhelmina von Hallwyl	2 objects	Huai bronze mirrors.
Ivan Traugott	50 objects	Huai ornamental bronzes jades.
Anders Hellström	16 objects	Huai bronzes, early glass, archaic jade, Han bricks.
Johannes Hellner	14 objects	Song ceramics and early glazed wares, including testers.
Gustaf Werner	2 objects	Ritual vessels

Carl Kempe	9 objects	Song glazed ceramics, Wei period figure.
Axel Lundgren	4 objects	Early ceramics and bronze Huai mirror.
Eric Nydahl	56 objects	Musical instruments, incl. Sung period lute, Bronze Age bell.
Holger Lauritzen	5 objects	Song ceramics
M. Månsson	2 objects	n/i
O. Falkmans	14 objects	Tang and Song ceramics, Bronze Age ritual vessels.
RM	14 objects	Song period ceramics.
Joseph Sachs	18 objects	Tang and Song ceramics.

In order to give a clear overview of this syndicate and its members this list is arranged according to five hypothetical groups, each representing a type. Each gives an insight to why the syndicate was an interesting venture for them. The first is characterised by the participating institutions; the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, whose aim was to purchase objects from the Bronze Age for research and in order to complete sets for its collection; the Röhsshska Konstslöjdmuseet, a museum for crafts and design in Göteborg and interested in the so-called industrial arts; and the Hallwyl Collection that had turned into a public collection after the death of Wilhelmina von Hallwyl in 1930. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities bought 310 objects and predominantly focussed Ordos and Huai-style bronzes, and the Röhsshska Konstslöjdmuseet and Hallwyl Collection only purchased two objects each, all ornamental bronzes representing the Huai-style. The second type of member is the

donors and those connected to the China Research Committee and already familiar with Karlbeck's prior collecting experience. The group includes established ceramic and bronze collectors at the time, such as Gustaf Adolf, Lagrelius, the brothers Hultmark, Wilhelmina von Hallwyl, Traugott, Hellström and Johannes Hellner (1866-1947), who was then legal adviser to the committee.⁴¹² This group was predominantly interested in purchasing similar objects to the museum, the Huai-style and Ordos bronzes, and determined Karlbeck's expertise. Especially, Gustaf Adolf and Lagrelius both bought a substantial quantity of objects for their private collections; Gustaf Adolf concentrating on archaic objects, including jades and Lagrelius solely purchasing bronze mirrors. The third type of member is represented by a group of affluent Swedish ceramic collectors with an interest in purchasing China's early wares. This group includes Gustaf Werner (1859-1948), Carl Kempe (1884-1967), Axel Lundgren, Eric Nydahl and Holger Lauritzen.⁴¹³ Amongst this group Lundgren, a prominent Swedish banker, and Kempe stand out because they donated a large part of their collections to the museum in later years.⁴¹⁴ The fourth member-type represents participants that proved difficult to identify. Their identity and their names were not found amongst known collectors and one is only represented by its initials. They include, according to the

⁴¹² From 1917 to 1920 Hellner was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Sweden. In 1933 he gave a lecture to the China Club on Song dynasty ceramics, 'Vit Keramik under Sungtiden'. A copy of his lecture is part of the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive in Stockholm. 'Kinaclubben' (China Club).

For biographical references on Hellner see, 'Hellner Johannes' *Svenska Män och Kvinnor, Biografisk Uppslagsbok*, 3 G-H, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 396; Lester B. Orfield and Benjamin F. Boyer, *The Growth of Scandinavian Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1953), 286; Steven Koblik, 'Wartime Diplomacy and the Democratization of Sweden in September-October 1917', *The Journal of Modern History* 4 (1) (March, 1969): 29-45.

⁴¹³ In the period that research for this thesis was conducted no definite dates for Lundgren, Nydahl and Lauritzen were confirmed and therefore not included in this dissertation. However, some biographical references are included in this footnote.

Lundgren was a Swedish banker. His collection was bequeathed to the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in the 1970s. Kempe was one of the most important ceramic and porcelain collectors in Europe of the twentieth century. He also had an interest in Chinese gold and silver and Chinese glass. About 350 pieces of his Chinese glass collection were donated to the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. Kempe was a nephew of Wilhelmina von Hallwyl, another syndicate member. 'Wener Gustaf', 272; Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes', 1-16; Bo Gyllensvärd, 'Carl Kempe', *TOCS* 37 (1967-1969) [obituary]: xiii+xiv; Bo Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Ceramics in the Carl Kempe Collection* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1965); Jan Wirgin, *Sung-Ming Treasures from the Holger Lauritzen Collection* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1965).

⁴¹⁴ Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes', 1-16; Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Ceramics in the Carl Kempe Collection*.

archive; M. Månsson, O. Falkmans and R.M. The last type of member stands for the internationality of this syndicate and is a single entity. He is described in the archival data as General Consul Joseph Sachs and here identified as the American collector and then Professor of Art at Harvard University and Associate Director of the Fogg Art Museum, Paul Joseph Sachs (1878-1965).⁴¹⁵

These collectors all had specific demands for purchases, and effectively Karlbeck bought on order. For example, Gustaf Adolf, Traugott, the Hultmark brothers, Hellström, Sachs, Falkmans, Nydahl and Lagrelius were the majority buyers during the operations of this syndicate.⁴¹⁶ Overall all these collectors concentrated on purchasing Huai-style and Ordos bronzes, however, Kempe only bought ceramics, such as, the then popular Song period glazed wares and a Wei dynasty figure. Kempe started collecting Chinese ceramics around 1930 and the syndicate purchases reflect his earliest collecting phase.

The most expensive wares on the market in China at that time were the ritual Shang and Zhou bronzes, which sold for between \$900-2,000 Chinese dollars, followed by cast-bronze Zhou period bells (Figure 38).⁴¹⁷ Archaic bronze so-called mask-plaques and late Zhou inlay bronzes fetched between \$ 250-400 (Figures 32 and 42), whilst Tang bronze mirrors and Song ceramic wares cost between \$200-400. At the end of the expedition a total of \$ 121,396.00 Chinese dollars were spent by Karlbeck on behalf of the syndicate. During his expedition Karlbeck did not ship the objects directly to the museum, aware that this could

⁴¹⁵ There is a strong inclination that Sachs was a member of the investment banking family of Goldman-Sachs. He was a Founding Member of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and served as a Trustee from 1929 to 1938. He held the full Professorship of Art at Harvard in 1927 until 1933 when he became chairman of the Department of Art. In 1923 he became the Harvard associate Director of the Fogg Art Museum.

Perry T. Rathbone, 'Paul J. Sachs', *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 63 (332) (1965) [obituary]: 92-93; Sally A. Duncan, 'Paul J. Sachs and the Institutionalization of Museum Culture between the World War's', (PhD diss., Tufts University, 2001); Sachs, Paul J. Papers 1904-1953: a Guide, Harvard Art Museum Archives, Harvard University Library. <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~art00011>. (accessed 21 December 2009).

⁴¹⁶ The total number of purchases was summarized in a Newsletter-report. Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, 8 February 1931', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴¹⁷ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1930-1931'.

discredit the institution and for it to become a complex political issue. He purposely used the private addresses of Lagrelius, Lundgren and his wife in Stockholm to receive the goods and from there they were distributed to the appropriate syndicate members.⁴¹⁸

The analysis of the archival data shows that the Swedish collectors, like their British contemporaries, laid the trends associated with the collecting of Chinese art. The organiser of the purchasing trips, in this case the committee, was partly accountable for directing the private collectors to buy objects the museum was interested in and, therefore in turn, responsible for setting a trend for collecting early bronzes and ceramics. These objects had an archaeological and historical interest and connected to the research conducted at the museum. The aesthetic interests and collections of Gustaf Adolf, Hellström and the Hultmark brothers also directed some of the Swedish scholarship. A number of their objects were discussed in articles by Andersson and Karlgren and representative of the impact of this trend in collecting and academic research.⁴¹⁹ The museum and the art collector were both closely linked to the study of Chinese art during this period. The popularity of Chinese art in Sweden, especially ceramics, was further manifested through the aforementioned foundation of the Kinnaklubben (or China Club) in 1929.⁴²⁰ The China Club was an association of Oriental art

⁴¹⁸ A group of small bronzes that Karlbeck purchased for the museum in Mongolia, contained a number of Ordos bronzes and were sent to Lundgren at the address of Karlavägen 101 in Stockholm. A list of so-called 'curios' were sent directly to Lagrelius in Stockholm. A number of purchases were sent to Mrs S. Karlbeck at Odengatan 98 in Stockholm. Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report Karlbeck to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping 2 August 1930', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping, 13 August 1930', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Peiping 20 September 1930', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴¹⁹ For some examples how objects of private collections were used in scholarly research at the museum see, Karlgren, 'Yin and Chou in Chinese Bronzes', 9-154; Karlgren, 'Bronzes in the Hellström Collection', 1-38; Andersson, 'Hunting Magic in the Animal Style', 221-225; Andersson, 'Selected Ordos Bronzes', 81-92.

⁴²⁰ The China Club was not an official and developing organisation like the Oriental Ceramic Society in London which grew into a registered association with international members. It only existed for a short period of time and consisted of a small group of 17 Swedish collectors who would host lectures on the subject of Chinese art. The China Club was founded in 1929 and meetings lasted until the death of then King Gustaf Adolf IV in 1973. The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive in Stockholm notes that the China Club started to meet again in recent years. This is not confirmed. Not much is known on the mechanics of the China Club but a list dating from 1929 names its members of the club and some of its lectures: 'Johannes Hellner, HRH Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf, Anders Hellström, Holger Lauritzen, Gustaf Lindberg, Axel Lundgren, Anders Norberg, Nils Palmgren, Ivan Traugott, Gerard Verstegh, Emil Hultmark, Richard Hultmark, Carl Kempe, Axel Lagrelius, Johannes Norberg,

enthusiast which modelled itself on the Oriental Ceramic Society in London.⁴²¹ Hellner, a collector of Chinese ceramics and legal adviser of the China Research Committee, was its first President.⁴²² Its founding coincidentally was around the same time as the syndicate expeditions and showed the popularity of collecting early Chinese art in Sweden in this defined period.

The success of the 1930-1931 expedition led to new demand for Chinese objects by the museum and private collectors and two more expeditions in the following years. This success was predominantly due to Karlbeck. His ability to individualise his purchases for its members and the competitive prices paid for the objects were important factors that attained an international interest in this operations.

The mechanics of the two following expeditions are clearly documented in Karlbeck's newsletter-reports and purchase lists contained in the various archives. They also demonstrate an interesting insight in the developments and changes in China's art market during the late 1920s and early 1930s and showed that there was a particular high demand for early wares and archaic objects by foreign request.

In the first newsletter- report of Karlbeck's third expedition, which commenced in the autumn of 1931, he mentioned that some Chinese dealers were becoming increasingly aware of the prices paid by Western collectors for similar goods on the European market and they felt entitled to a greater percentage of the profits.⁴²³ A rise in prices was especially noted in small bronze objects, early jades and silver and any objects with a provenance from the vicinity of

Orvar Karlbeck, Hans Öström'. 'Kinaclubben' (China Club); Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes', 1.

⁴²¹ Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 43-56; Hetherington, 'A History of the Oriental Ceramic Society', 9-12; Gyllensvärd, 'Axel and Nora Lundgren's Bequest of Chinese Bronzes', 1.

⁴²² 'Kinaclubben' (China Club).

⁴²³ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report, Peiping 5 October 1931'.

Anyang.⁴²⁴ There was strong and growing foreign market for Anyang objects, which could easily be identified because of the ongoing official excavations at the site that unearthed many objects for comparable data.

The economics of the syndicate's collecting activity during this period in time can be weighed against the effect of the recession in the world economy in the late 1920s and early 1930s.⁴²⁵

One reason for the eagerness of the collectors to purchase through Karlbeck directly in China was because the prices paid by him were a fraction of the price than those in Europe. In addition, the unstable political circumstances in China- where the country found itself segregated and in civil war- fuelled the need for survival amongst the population and resulted to the selling of many cultural objects. A downturn within their internal market led to a further concentration on foreign buyers and their tastes.⁴²⁶ This was one reason why Karlbeck was able to transport the objects so easily out of the country. Overall this troubled period was successful for Karlbeck and shows a window in history where the export of early Chinese art was possible because of this reason. Soon after the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 and due to growing internal hostility the country was closed to free trade and travel and the export of antiquities stopped.⁴²⁷

Time would tell, but in 1931 the syndicate organisers decided to invite a number of museums and private collectors to join a future expedition. Again, their intent was that by participation it would lead to the growth of its museum collection because the members financed its purchases. Two more expeditions followed. The first was in the autumn of 1931 until

⁴²⁴ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report, Peiping, 5 October 1931'.

⁴²⁵ For an analysis on the history of the world economy and the so-called depression of the 1920s and 1930s see, Charles H. Feinstein, Peter Temin and Gianni Toniolo, eds., *The European Economy between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Charles P. Kindleberger, *The World in Depression 1929-1939* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987).

⁴²⁶ For an overview on the Chinese collector and the art market in China throughout this period see, Beurdeley, *The Chinese Collector through the Centuries*, 207-213.

⁴²⁷ For a historical account on the Japanese presence in China during this period see, Dick Wilson, *When Tigers Fight: The Story of the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (New York: Viking Press, 1982); Keith R. Schoppa, *Revolution and its Past* (Upper Saddle River, NJ and London: Prentice Hall, 2006).

December 1932, having Karlbeck stay for over a year. The second expedition lasted from May to December 1934.

During the 1931-1932 expedition, the syndicate included both Swedish and British participants. To include both public institutions and private collectors shows that these two countries were considered important centres for Chinese collections. In accordance with his previous expeditions Karlbeck continued to regularly send out newsletter-reports addressed to the Karlbeck Syndicate via Andersson, who in turn distributed a copy to all members. As discussed, the main archive is located in Sweden, however, two sets of the two following expedition's newsletter-reports are in London.⁴²⁸ A list of names of the members provided below is based upon the analysis of archival data. There are a total of twenty-seven reports for both syndicates; in 1931-1932 Karlbeck wrote nineteen reports and in 1934 there are eight. In the list a hypothetical division is made of two particular groups: institutions (Museum) and private collectors (PC). This list facilitates to understand the background of each participant. There are two members identified and named as in the archives; one is a Mrs. Robert Solomon of Chelsea and the other is A.V.⁴²⁹ The list further includes their country of residence and collecting interest and gives a good general overview of the purchases made at the time. The 1931-1932 register starts with the most significant British institution, the British Museum, followed by the participating Swedish public institutions (Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities is identified as MFEA). Next are the names of the British private collectors, as a new group, followed by Swedish private collectors from which a

⁴²⁸ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1931-1932', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴²⁹ A letter by Raphael to Andersson mentioned that Mrs. Robert Solomon was the sister of Dennis Cohen (1891-1969), a private collector who participated in the following 1934 syndicate. A nominal File at the Central Archive of the Victoria and Albert Museum noted the donations made by a Mabel Solomon to the museum during this period; they don't include any Chinese objects. It can therefore not be certain that Mabel and Mrs Robert Solomon was the same person. Oscar Raphael, 'Letter Raphael to Andersson, 19 November 1933', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

number took part in the previous syndicate. This shows the intricately linked collector's network between Sweden and Britain.

Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932

Name	City/Country	Association	Collecting interest
British Museum	London/UK	Museum	Huai bronzes, Anyang bronzes, Ordos bronzes.
MFEA	Stockholm/S	Museum	Ordos bronzes, Huai bronzes.
Hallwyl House	Stockholm/S	Museum	Anyang ritual bronzes, Huai mirrors.
Louis Clarke	Cambridge/UK	PC	Glaze beads, coins, early ceramics.
Oscar Raphael	London/UK	PC	Archaic jades, Huai bronzes.
Henry Oppenheim	London/UK	PC	Anyang jades, Huai belt hooks and weaponry.
Charles Seligman	London/UK	PC	Early glass beads, Tang figures, Huai bronzes.
Alice Mariquita Sedgwick	London/UK	PC	Huai bronze mirrors and weaponry.

Mrs Robert Solomon	London/UK	PC	Bronze mirrors, Tang silver.
Gustaf Adolf	Stockholm/S	PC	Archaic jades and bronzes, Ordos bronzes, early ceramics.
Axel Lagrelius	Stockholm/S	PC	Huai bronze mirrors, Sung ceramics
Emil Hultmark	Stockholm/S	PC	Huai bronze ornaments.
Richard Hultmark	Stockholm/S	PC	Sung ceramics, bronze mirrors.
Anders Hellström	Möln dal/S	PC	Anyang bronzes, early bronze weaponry, bronze mask.
Axel Jonsson	Stockholm/S	PC	Anyang ritual bronzes.
Gerard Verstegh	Stockholm/S	PC	Anyang ritual bronze.
Gustaf Werner	Stockholm/S	PC	Anyang ritual vessels.
Thorsten Laurin	Stockholm/S	PC	Huai ornamental bronzes.
New Carlberg Foundation	Sweden	PC	Neolithic pottery, Anyang ritual bronzes.
AV		PC	Anyang ritual bronzes.

The list classifies the original purchase-reports of the 1931-1932 expedition and deconstructs that both the public and private collections were interested in purchasing similar types of objects. Through the systematic listing of the syndicate members it is clear that the British Museum, together with the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, was the most significant

buyer not only because they purchased most of the objects but both institutions were representative of their nation, where collecting was connected to a nationalistic incentive. During the syndicate the British Museum bought 122 objects and concentrated on small Huai-style ornaments such as mirrors, chariot-fittings, axle-caps and belt-hooks (Figures 43-45).⁴³⁰

Still, this syndicate was still predominantly Swedish. It numbered ten Swedish collectors and six British. Two new Swedish members joined: Axel Jonsson (1888-1950) and Thorsten Laurin (1875-1954), both successful businessmen and well-know art collectors at the time in Sweden.⁴³¹ Some names of the British private collectors stand out because they equally were well-known figures in the London collector's circle: the already discussed Raphael and Seligman, Louis Colville Grey Clarke (1881-1960), Henry J. Oppenheim (d. 1946) and Alice Mariquita Sedgwick (1883-1967).⁴³²

Of the British members, Seligman and his collection in particular are further discussed in the following chapter. A short bibliography of selected private collectors in this group is included

⁴³⁰ All purchases made for the British Museum are found in the newsletter-reports in the Karlbeck Syndicate archival data in Stockholm and London and a selection was published by Hobson. R.L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes, *The British Museum Quarterly* VII (1932-1933): 2-3; R.L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes, *The British Museum Quarterly* VII (1932-1933): 81-83.

⁴³¹ Jonsson was a wealthy Swedish ship-owner. He was born in Göteborg. His career led him to Antwerp and London and in 1919 he started a partnership in Stockholm, Jonsson and Krafft. In 1929 he appointed the chairman of the Sweden-America Line and he directed the immigrant traffic between the two countries. His main collecting interest was Italian propaganda art. Laurin was a publisher and was known in Stockholm as one of Sweden's foremost art collectors. He was a personal friend of Gustaf Adolf. He established a collection of both modern and ancient art that included over 500 paintings, 300 drawings and 1000 prints. He was a Friend of and Secretary of the National Museum in Stockholm. For biographical references on Jonsson and Laurin see, 'Jonsson Axel', *Svenska Män Kvinnor, Biografik Uppslagsbok*, 3 G-H, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 113; 'Laurin Th.', *Svenska Män Kvinnor, Biografik Uppslagsbok*, 3 G-H, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1946), 497; Laurin Thorsten, Nominal File, MA/1/L435, the Victoria and Albert Museum Central Archive; R. Hoppe, *Katalog over Thorsten Laurins Samling av måleri och skulptur* (Stockholm, 1936); G.K.A. Jungmaker, *Thorsten Laurins Samling* (Stockholm: Nationalmusei utställnings katalog, 1945); Henry Goddard Leach, 'Thorsten Laurin: In Memoriam' *American Swedish Historical Foundation: The Cronicle* (Spring, 1954) [obituary]: 9-11.

⁴³² Oppenheim is defined through his art collection. For biographical references on Raphael and Alice Mariquita Sedgwick and their collections see, 'Louis Clarke', *Who was Who (1961-1970)* (London: Adam and Charles Black), 212-213; 'Oscar Raphael', 135; Basil Gray, 'The Oscar Raphael Collection for the Nation', *BMC* 87 (512) (Nov., 1945) : 276-283; William Watson, Soame Jenyns, Basil Gray and D.E. Barret, 'The Raphael Bequest: II Oriental Antiquities', *BMQ* 15 (1941-1950): 82-95; Fortes, 'Charles Gabriel Seligman', 1-6; Soame Jenyns, 'Mrs Walter Sedgwick', *TOCS* 37 (1967-1969): xvii; Basil Gray and Soame Jenyns, 'The Oppenheim Bequest', *BMQ* 16 (1) (Jan., 1951).

to explain the mechanics of this syndicate. They are understood as an exclusive delegation and representation of the British collector of early Chinese art in this period who also played a role in the promotion of such collections in Britain.

Clarke was a Cambridge trained archaeologist and President of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society.⁴³³ At the time he was the curator at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. From 1938 to 1960 he was Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. He was a member of the British General Committee for the International Exhibition of Chinese Art at Burlington House at the Royal Academy in London in 1935-1936, the first great exhibition of Chinese art in Europe.⁴³⁴ For this exhibition the Chinese government send, for the first time, a collection of its treasures from the Peking Palace Museum abroad. They were put on display alongside a selection of the best objects from European public and private collections, including some purchased through the syndicate. Clarke purchased around 182 objects, including 59 Neolithic pottery urns, a number of early dating glass beads and bronze weapons (Figures 47 and 48). His private collection, including some of the Karlbeck Syndicate objects, was bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum after his death in 1960.⁴³⁵ However, a selection of objects was privately purchased by Clarke for the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the time and still part of its collection today.

Alongside Clarke, the already named Raphael also participated in the two consecutive syndicates. He purchased a total of 25 objects, mainly consisting of small bronze ornaments

⁴³³ Clarke graduated from Cambridge University and pursued a career in archaeology. He participated in several excavations in New Mexico and Hungary. From 1927-1929 and from 1938-1945 he was the President of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society.

⁴³⁴ For a historical analysis and importance of this pioneering exhibition see, *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1935-1936*, (London: The Royal Academy of Arts, 1935), v-vi; Basil Gray, 'The Royal Academy Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1935-36: in Retrospect', *TOCS* 50 (1985-1986): 11-36; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 154-165.

⁴³⁵ Bequest of Louis Colville Gray Clarke. Annual Report of the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate for the year 1962, 4.

in Huai-style and archaic jades (Figures 49-50). Raphael was a notable figure during this period in the London collector's circle and played a central role for the syndicate in Britain. Not much is known about his personal or professional life and it is his collection that is a reflection of his connoisseurship. What is known is that he was a founding member of the Oriental Ceramic Society and published several articles on Middle Eastern ceramics for its journal.⁴³⁶ He sat on the Executive Committee for the Chinese Exhibition at the London Royal Academy and travelled to China in order to select objects for this event.⁴³⁷ There is an indication that Raphael traded in Chinese ceramics and East Asian works of art, mostly Japanese objects, but overall he is somewhat a bit of a mystery.⁴³⁸ During his life Raphael had steadfast connections to the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, and the Fitzwilliam Museum; indeed, it was to the latter two that he bequeathed his art collection, including the objects he purchased through the syndicate.⁴³⁹ Raphael was a personal friend of Gustaf Adolf and it is very likely that this friendship invited him into the syndicate. During

⁴³⁶ The articles by Raphael predominantly were on ceramics that he encountered during his travels. Oscar Raphael, 'Fragments from Fusat', *TOCS* 3 (1923-1924):17-25; Oscar Raphael, 'Notes on Some Early Pottery of the Near East', *TOCS* 5 (1925-1926): 27-30; Oscar Raphael, 'Notes on Siamese Ceramics', *TOCS* 9 (1930-1931): 24-27; Oscar Raphael, 'Chinese Pottery Jar in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice', *TOCS* 10 (1931-1932): 13-15.

⁴³⁷ For Raphael's role in the organisation of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art see, *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1935-1936*, v-vi, Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 131 and 157.

⁴³⁸ Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 46.

⁴³⁹ The British Museum received nearly 700 objects from the Raphael bequest. In the summer of 1915 Raphael had volunteered at the British Museum in the Department of Medieval Antiquities, where also the young Hobson was working at the time. Throughout his life Raphael continued to be active within the British Museum and helped out fund-raising for the museum's acquisitions from 1917 onwards. The British Museum Sub-Committee Minutes show that the Department of Ceramics and Ethnography continued to be indebted to his help, suggesting this to be of economical means. At the British Museum he was made Honorary Keeper of the Oriental Collections in 1924 and also held this position at the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate for the year 1941-1961.

Gray, 'The Oscar Raphael Collection for the Nation', 276-283; Oscar Raphael Bequest. Annual Report of the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate for the year 1941, the Fitzwilliam Museum Archive, 2; Duncan Robinson, ed., *The Fitzwilliam Museum, 1848-1998* (Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum Publication, 1998); David M. Wilson, *The British Museum: A History* (London: British Museum Press, 2002), 210 and 224; Miller, *That Noble Cabinet*, 330; Sub-Committee Minutes, August 1876-March 1932, Volume 4-6, No. 3040, the Central Archive; Raphael Oscar C. Nominal Fie, MA/1/R191, the Victoria and Albert Museum Central Archive; Robert L. Hobson, 'The Oscar Raphael Collection', in *Chinese Ceramics in Private Collections*, 89 (London: Halton & Truscot, 1931).

the years of its operations he was asked to act as secretary for its British members.⁴⁴⁰ With this position came the task of securing participation and he acted as the middle man between the British delegation and Andersson. One of the members he brought in to join the syndicate was Oppenheim.

Oppenheim was originally of German-Jewish descent and a leading name in the London collector's circle at the time; he was an original member of the Oriental Ceramic Society and, like Clarke, served on the British General Committee of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art. In this thesis, he is defined through his Chinese collection as not much is known about his life. He frequently lend out objects to a great number of exhibitions during this particular period.⁴⁴¹ His Chinese ceramic collection was documented by Hobson in 1930 in three articles in specialist magazine, *The Collector*.⁴⁴² In 1947 he bequeathed his Chinese art collection to the British Museum. Part of this same group was Alice Mariquita Sedgwick, wife of Walter Sedgwick (d. 1950), who were both collectors. Both Alice Mariquita and her husband were involved in the London art circle but it was her name that appears in the syndicate archive. They often loaned objects for public display. She is known to have been more of an enthusiast for Chinese art than her husband and therefore the participation in the syndicate was her motivation. She started collecting Chinese art in the 1920s and besides acquiring a lot of porcelain she also purchased Chinese bronzes, Tang dynasty silver and Song ceramics. In doing so she was following the trend of the appreciation of the early wares and archaeological objects during this time. In the 1930s she joined the Oriental Ceramic Society and was one of its few women members. During the two syndicate

⁴⁴⁰ Oscar Raphael, 'Letter to Andersson, 10 November 1933', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁴¹ *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1935-1936*, v; Yetts, 'An Exhibition of Early Chinese Art', 82+86-87; Gray and Jenyns, 'The Oppenheim Bequest', 21-29; Gray and Jenyns, 'The Oppenheim Collection: (Part II)', 50-53.

⁴⁴² Robert L. Hobson, 'The Oppenheim Collection', *The Collector* XI (40) (Sept., 1930): 3-10; Robert L. Hobson, 'The Oppenheim Collection', *The Collector* XI (41) (Oct., 1930): 55-61; Robert L. Hobson, 'The Oppenheim Collection', *The Collector* XI (42) (Nov., 1930): 118-126; Robert L., Hobson, 'The Oppenheim Collection', *The Collector* XI (43) (Dec., 1930): 161-167; Robert L. Hobson, 'The Oppenheim Collection', in *Chinese Ceramics in Private Collections*, eds. Robert L Hobson et al., 33-88.

trips, she purchased a couple of bronze mirrors in 1931-1932 and two ritual vessels from Anyang in 1934.⁴⁴³ Her purchases were more expensive than the Huai-style and Ordos ornaments bronzes that were more popular amongst the syndicate members. After her death, the Late Mrs. Walter Sedgwick Collection was predominantly divided between the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bristol Art Gallery.⁴⁴⁴ In 1968, the objects of her bequest were on display as part of an exhibition at the British Museum, *The Sedgwick bequest of Chinese art to four Museums*.⁴⁴⁵ The remainder of her collection was sold at Sotheby's at two separate sales in July and October of 1968.⁴⁴⁶

The inclusion of these significant British collectors in the syndicate shows that Karlbeck's expeditions at the time were recognised as a great success amongst this notable international group. They expected him to purchase the best objects available on their behalf and trusted him with their tastes and desires. In 1934 some new international collectors joined the final syndicate.

The final Karlbeck Syndicate expedition is defined in a particular environment when the unstable political situation was under a constant threat of Japanese invasion and local rebellions in the provinces.⁴⁴⁷ This prevented Karlbeck to travel safely and made him return early. The list of participants below follows the same sequence as before, starting with public institutions and followed by private collectors. The prior participants are succeeded by new members. The list provides a clear overview and guideline of the otherwise scattered

⁴⁴³ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1931-1932', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase-lists, 1934'.

⁴⁴⁴ Jenyns, 'Mrs Walter Sedgwick', xvii; Mrs M Sedgwick. Nominal File, MA/1/S1071, the Victoria and Albert Museum Central Archive.

⁴⁴⁵ Jenyns, 'Mrs Walter Sedgwick', xvii.

⁴⁴⁶ *Catalogue of the Important Collection of Chinese Ceramics, Lacquer, Cloisonné, Enamel and Works of Art, remaining after the bequest to museums, Late Mrs. Walter Sedgwick.*, Tuesday 2 July 1968 and Tuesday 15 October 1968, Sotheby & Co, (London: Sotheby's & Co., 1968).

⁴⁴⁷ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report to the Karlbeck Syndicate, Shanghai 28 December 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

information in the archival data. It combines information in the eight consecutive newsletter-reports covering this expedition.

The Karlbeck Syndicate 1934

Name	City/Country	Association	Collecting Interest
British Museum	London/UK	Museum	Huai- Han mirrors Anyang jades, Anyang ritual vessels.
MFEA	Stockholm/S	Museum	Ordos bronzes, Anyang weaponry, Anyang ritual vessels.
Malmö Museum	Malmö/S	Museum	Anyang ritual vessels, Huai bronzes, Ordos bronzes.
Royal Scottish Museum	Edinburgh/UK	Museum	Anyang ritual vessels, Huai and Anyang bronze ornaments.
The Louvre	Paris/France	Museum	Anyang ritual vessels.
State Museum	Berlin/Germany	Museum	Huai- Han mirrors.
Asian Art Museum	Amsterdam/NL	Museum	Anyang ritual vessels, Huai-Han mirrors, glass.
Louis Clarke	Cambridge/UK	PC	Archaic jades, early coins, Neolithic earthenware.
Oscar Raphael	London/UK	PC	Anyang and Loyang jades.

Henry Oppenheim	London/UK	PC	Anyang ritual vessels.
Charles Seligman	London/UK	PC	Early glass, Huai bronze ornaments, tomb figures, Anyang weaponry.
Alice Mariquita Sedgwick	London/UK	PC	Anyang ritual vessels, Huai bronze vessel.
Mrs Robert Solomon	London/UK	PC	Neolithic pottery, Tang tomb figures.
Gustaf Adolf	Stockholm/S	PC	Anyang jades, Huai bronzes.
Axel Lagrelius	Stockholm/S	PC	Huai-Han mirrors.
Anders Hellström	Möln dal/S	PC	Anyang ritual vessels, Anyang weaponry, jades Han pottery, Huai mirrors.
Axel Jonsson	Stockholm/S	PC	Anyang ritual vessel.
New Carlberg Foundation	Sweden	PC	Anyang ritual vessels.
Dennis Cohen	London/UK	PC	Anyang ritual vessels, Wei and Sung sculpture.
Edward Spencer-Churchill	London/UK	PC	Anyang ritual vessel, Huai weaponry and ornaments.
George Eumorfopoulos	London/UK	PC	Anyang pottery, Sung shards and glaze testers.
David	Paris/France	PC	Anyang ritual vessels,

David-Weill			archaic bronze ornaments.
Robert Woods Bliss	Washington DC/ USA	PC	Anyang ritual vessels, Huai bronzes and jades.

There were a total of twenty-three participants in this syndicate and shows it was a growing group. It included many returning customers and incorporated an international perspective to the expedition. Of the museums the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, the Malmö Museum and the British Museum had all joined before. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities purchased 78 objects ranging from Anyang clay bronze casting-moulds, bronze weaponry, ritual vessels from Anyang and a number of Ordos bronzes (Figure 51-54), demonstrative of the research conducted at the museum.⁴⁴⁸ The Malmö Museum, had bought some ceramics of Karlbeck in 1924, and through the syndicate purchased a total of 58 objects, including 6 ritual vessels and a great number of ‘Shouchou’ Huai-style belt-hooks and mirrors.⁴⁴⁹ The British Museum purchased 31 objects, from which 3 ritual vessels, early jade and ivory ornaments that, according to Karlbeck, all had an Anyang provenance.⁴⁵⁰ They also purchased some early dating glass. The new members included some of Northern Europe’s leading institutions and all concentrated on purchasing ritual vessels from Anyang; the Royal Scottish Museum, The Louvre, the Berlin State Museum and the Asian Art Museum in Amsterdam.⁴⁵¹ The Royal Scottish Museum purchased 16 objects that represented industrial bronze art in China and its acquisitions included 7 Shang and Zhou period ritual vessels from Anyang.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁸ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934’.

⁴⁴⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934’.

⁴⁵⁰ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934’.

⁴⁵¹ For a historical background on the collections at these museums see, Jenni Calder, *Royal Scottish Museum: The early years* (Edinburgh: Department of Education and Public Relations, Royal Scottish Museum, 1984); *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Aziatische Kunst*; Carol Duncan, ‘Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship’ in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan Pearce, 279-286; Christiane Aulanier, *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre*, (Paris).

⁴⁵² A list in Swedish, presumed to be by Karlbeck, commented on the wishes of the syndicate clientele. Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Wish-list for the members of the Karlbeck Syndicate, 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

The Louvre purchased 4 ritual bronze vessels with inscriptions with an Anyang provenance.⁴⁵³ The Asian Art Museum, newly founded in 1932, was interested in a small collection of Anyang ritual vessels and Huai-style mirrors.⁴⁵⁴ The Berlin State Museum, under the curatorship of Kümmel who, as discussed, helped Gustaf Adolf with the organisation of the 1914 exhibition in Stockholm, was interested in acquiring a complete mirror collection that demonstrated the development of the Huai-style.⁴⁵⁵

Of the sixteen private collectors that joined in 1934 nine were British, five were Swedish, one Frenchman and one American. That the numbers of individual members were predominately British demonstrates that Britain was a leader in collecting early Chinese art during this time period and had a great historical interest in creating such collections, private and also public. The returning British members included Clarke, Raphael, Oppenheim, Seligman, Sedgwick and Solomon. The Swedish members were Gustaf Adolf, Lagrelius, Hellström, Jonsson and the private New Carlsberg Foundation. New members were Dennis Cohen (1891-1969), Edward Spencer-Churchill (1876-1964), Eumorfopoulos; the Frenchman David David-Weill (1875-1962); and the American Robert Woods Bliss (1875-1962).⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ The Louvre purchased two 'Ting' (Ding) tripods, a 'Chueh' (Yue) vessel and a 'Yi' (Yi) vessel. Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934'.

⁴⁵⁴ The Museum van Aziatische Kunst (Asian Art Museum) in Amsterdam was founded as part of the State Museum (Stedelijk Museum) due to the effort of a group of Dutch collectors of Asian art. The first museum collections were put together by this group and exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum. In 1918 the Vereeniging van Vrienden van Aziatische Kunst (Friends of the Asian Art Society) was founded and based in The Hague. The collector's group primarily focussed on the collections of art that came from the Dutch colonies in Indonesia, Japan and China and they promoted Asian Art in the Netherlands through the organisation of exhibitions and through publications in their monthly journal, *Maandblad voor Beeldende Kunst*. 'Het Museum van Aziatische Kunst', 7-8; *Tentoonstelling van Chinese Kunst/Exhibition of Chinese Art, Amsterdam, 1925*, 13 Sept-18 Oct, (Amsterdam: Municipal/Stedelijk Museum, 1925); Herman F.E. Visser, *The Museum of Asiatic Art, Amsterdam* (Amsterdam), 1-9.

⁴⁵⁵ Karlbeck purchases 31 bronze mirrors for the Berlin State Museum. Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase, 1934'.

⁴⁵⁶ 'Captain Edward Spencer-Churchill', *Who was Who (1961-1970)* volume 6 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1970), 205; 'Dennis Cohen'. *The Times*. 2 February 1970 [obituary]. <http://genealogymetastudies.net/PS09/PS09-296.HTM>; Walter Perceval Yetts, 'George Eumorfopoulos' *JRAS* (1940): 253-258; Rackham, 'George Eumorfopoulos', 9-10; 'David-Weill, David', *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, volume X, (Paris: Librairie Letourey et ané, 1965), 378-379; The Woods Bliss Papers, Harvard University Archives, Harvard University Library. <http://www.oasis.lib.harvard.edu/deliver/~hua26003> (accessed 7 November 2008).

In particular well-established British collectors had decided to join the venture. In the archive it is mentioned that Cohen was the brother of Mrs Robert Solomon and it is plausible that his sister introduced him to the syndicate.⁴⁵⁷ He was the founding director of the publishing house, The Cresset Press, specialising in books on art.⁴⁵⁸ Some years later they published Karlbeck's *Treasure Seeker in China*. Cohen purchased 3 ritual bronze vessels, two Buddhist heads and a group of Wei period figures.⁴⁵⁹ Also, Spencer-Churchill was a well-known collector at the time. His collections, not only included many Chinese objects but also European paintings, prints and sculpture. They were primarily on display at the art galleries at his residence Northwick Park House. Through the syndicate he purchased 17 objects, from which 8 ornamented bronze weapons, 2 ritual vessels from Anyang and small jades in the shape of animals. Eumorfopoulos, then the greatest collector of Chinese art in Europe also became associated with the syndicate.⁴⁶⁰ At this time his collection was already documented by Hobson, Yetts and Binyon in a series of catalogues that were dedicated to pottery and porcelain, bronzes, sculpture, jade and jewellery and paintings and frescoes.⁴⁶¹ Recently his life and Chinese collections were discussed by Judith Green and George Manginis.⁴⁶² Eumorfopoulos frequently opened his gallery at his home in London for students and connoisseurs. He was the first president of the Oriental Ceramic Society and a member of the

⁴⁵⁷ Raphael, 'Letter, 19 November 1933'.

⁴⁵⁸ 'Dennis Cohen'.

⁴⁵⁹ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934'.

⁴⁶⁰ Yetts, 'George Eumorfopoulos', 253-258; Rackham, 'George Eumorfopoulos', 9-10.

⁴⁶¹ For a completed catalogue of the Eumorfopoulos collection see, Robert Lockhart Hobson, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection: Catalogue of the Chinese, Korean and Persian Pottery and Porcelains* volumes I-VI (London: E. Benn, 1925-1929); Laurence Binyon, *The Eumorfopoulos Collection: Catalogue of the Chinese Frescoes* (London: E. Benn, 1927); Laurence Binyon, *The Eumorfopoulos Collection: Catalogue of the Chinese, Korean and Siamese Paintings* (London: E. Benn, 1928).

⁴⁶² For further reading on Eumorfopoulos as a collector see, Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 121-177; Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 43-56; George Manginis, 'The George Eumorfopoulos Donation to the Benaki Museum, Athens; The Eight George de Menasce Memorial Trust Lecture', *TOCS* 66 (2001-2002): 77-93; George Manginis, 'For the Benefit of the Nation': The Ionides and Eumorfopoulos Collection', *Yearbook of the Greek Cathedral of St. Sofia*, (London, 2004), 28-31; George Manginis, 'George Eumorfopoulos, Art Collector', *Imperial Treasures from China*, (Athens: National Gallery of Athens, 2004), 19-22.

Executive Committee for the International Exhibition of Chinese Art in London.⁴⁶³ In 1935, his entire collection, with few exceptions, was purchased by the British State just before his death in 1937 and divided between the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁴⁶⁴ What is interesting is that Eumorfopoulos did not purchase any significant bronze or ceramic objects through the syndicate, instead his expenditure was minimal. On his request Karlbeck brought back a number of pottery shards from Anyang and glaze-testers were used to study the origin and technology of Chinese ceramics and are indicative of his active participation in connoisseurship and scholarship. It also indicates that Eumorfopoulos approached Karlbeck and the syndicate as an academic venture, where he trusted the collector to provide him with archaeological data and provenance of the specimen he had requested from him. The connection with the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, who institutionalised the objects as an archaeological collection, reflected this incentive on the members joining the syndicate.

New non-British private collectors were from France and the United States. Alongside the Louvre, the collector and banker David-Weill was a prominent figure in the museum world in France at the time.⁴⁶⁵ He started collecting art in the early 1900s. His collection of Chinese bronzes is now part of the Musée Guimet in Paris.⁴⁶⁶ In total he purchased 11 objects including 3 very expensive bronze ritual vessels that all carried inscriptions.⁴⁶⁷ The American was Woods Bliss. From 1923 to 1927 he was the US Ambassador in Stockholm and during this period he befriended Gustaf Adolf. This led to his connection to the syndicate and

⁴⁶³ Rackham, 'George Eumorfopoulos', 9-10; *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1936-1936*, v.

⁴⁶⁴ A copy of the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum after the sale of his collection catalogued the objects that were added to their collection. *Chinese Art, The Eumorfopoulos Collection*. (London: The Victoria and Albert Museum, 1936)

⁴⁶⁵ David-Weill was a partner in the family business Banque Lazard Frères in Paris.

⁴⁶⁶ Vadime Elisseef, *Bronzes Archaiques Chinois au Musée Cernuschi*, volume I, (Paris: L'Asiatheque, 1977).

⁴⁶⁷ Karlbeck purchased a 'Li' for \$1500, a 'Ho' for \$1100 and a 'Lei' for \$1400 for the Louvre. Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934'.

furthermore his interest to collect Chinese art.⁴⁶⁸ The Woods Bliss art collection also included Byzantine and Pre-Columbian objects. In the trend of that period a number of his Chinese bronzes were lent to public exhibitions in the United States throughout the 1930s.⁴⁶⁹ Through the syndicate he purchased 5 objects, from which one expensive Anyang ritual vessel and a jade ornament with a provenance from 'Shouchou'.

By grouping the institutions, private collectors and their collecting interests, it is clear that they all predominantly concentrated on the purchasing of Bronze Age objects. Indeed, during the 1930-1931 expedition Karlbeck bought several Song ceramics, Huai-style and Ordos bronzes. In the 1934 purchases are defined by its concentration of Bronze Age objects, especially with an Anyang provenance and several Tang period tomb figures. Karlbeck closely followed the request of his clients, and depended on the availability of objects in the art market. When he returned to China in 1934 he reported back that there were noticeable changes since his last visit two years earlier:

'Prior to 1933 most of the bronzes and jades for sale in Shanghai had been excavated in Loyang and Chintsun (Old Loyang). Now articles from these places are sparse. They are replaced by treasures from Changtefu, Anyang and Shouchow [...] The earliest and most important finds are from Anyang where there are still excavations going on.'⁴⁷⁰

Most of the purchases made in 1934 were Anyang bronzes and jades because of their availability on the market in China. They were also highly desirable by the Western collector because of the historical importance of the site. In the excerpt Karlbeck mentioned that the ongoing official excavations at Anyang led to an influx of such objects at dealerships, indicating that there was a relationship between excavation and the art market. The

⁴⁶⁸ See, 'The Woods Bliss Papers'.

⁴⁶⁹ Alfred Salmony, 'Chinese Art. The First Exhibition of the Friends of Far Eastern Art', *Parnassus* 6 (7) (Dec., 1934):14-16; J. Leroy Davidson, 'Some Great Chinese bronzes', *Parnassus* 10 (6) (Nov., 1938):19-20+22-23.

⁴⁷⁰ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-report, Shanghai 7 May 1934'.

organisation of the last two syndicate expeditions followed the same format as in 1930-1931, meaning that its members helped to pay for the purchases for the museum: A participation of twenty shareholders was needed in order to complete a syndicate.⁴⁷¹ Each share was valued at 5000 Swedish Crowns. Twenty to thirty percent of the share would go to Karlbeck's travel expenses and an agreed salary which left approximately 3500 Swedish Crowns for direct buying.⁴⁷² In 1930-1931 and 1931-1932 one fifth of the whole amount of the total shares of the private collectors was contributed to the museum. As a result, the museum could purchase objects for its collection from this one fifth contribution. In 1934 this was lowered to ten percent.⁴⁷³ Museums were exempted from this payment.⁴⁷⁴ In a letter to Woods Bliss Andersson explained that Karlbeck individually bought for each member:

‘[...] each share-holder explains to Karlbeck what he especially wants and Karlbeck buys individually for each member [...] this system has worked smoothly and to general satisfaction’.⁴⁷⁵

The headquarters for the syndicate remained at the museum, with Andersson as mediator between Karlbeck and the members. By taking this position Andersson acted as the core of its operations in Europe. Karlbeck directly reported back to him and trusted him to keep the syndicate informed on his collecting activities. Throughout, Lagrelius acted as treasurer.

Before each collecting expedition was finalised, it was Andersson's responsibility to approach and secure new participants that inevitably brought the financial support to the museum and the overall organisation. As discussed, in Britain, Raphael helped with the recruitment of British collectors. More participants meant that Karlbeck was able to purchase better quality objects, buy a greater number for the museum and stay in China for a longer

⁴⁷¹ Johan G. Andersson, 'Letter to Robert Woods Bliss, 11 January 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁷² Johan G. Andersson, 'Letter to Visser, 5 October 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁷³ Johan G. Andersson, 'Letter to George Salles [Louvre], 23 December 1933', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive.

⁴⁷⁴ Andersson, 'Letter, 23 December 1933'.

⁴⁷⁵ Andersson, 'Letter, 11 January, 1934'.

period of time. Ultimately, the museum would benefit from this structure. For the private collector, buying through the syndicate remained attractive because, as we have seen, Karlbeck paid one-fifth of the price that European dealers charged for similar objects.⁴⁷⁶ During the 1931-1932 expedition, Andersson gave all members the option to buy a second share because at the time, in his words, good bronzes were on the market and the prices were considered moderate; Karlbeck expressed some concern that the availability of such high quality objects might be temporary, indicating it was a favourable time to invest.⁴⁷⁷

An example of a soliciting letter from Andersson to Herman Visser (1890-1965), then curator at the Asian Art Museum, dated the 22 December 1933.⁴⁷⁸ It typifies the manner in which possible members were approached and evidently shows how the syndicate functioned and their collecting strategy. Andersson included some names who had already signed up, highlighting its exclusivity by association:

‘Dear Mr. Visser,

Since several years we have been in cooperation with Mr. Orvar Karlbeck who has acted as our collecting agent in China. During his first expedition in 1928-29 we sent him out entirely on our own behalf and he brought home for this museum no less than 823 excellent specimens, mostly small bronzes. When in 1930 he was ready to start a second expedition our museum did not have sufficient funds and we then organized the so called Karlbeck Syndicate consisting of collectors and connoisseurs who bought together twenty shares, each of 5000 Crows/2096:44 gulden. Each shareholder declared beforehand to Mr. Karlbeck what he wanted him to buy and this system of buying directly for each individual shareholder worked during two collecting expeditions 1930-1931 and 1931-1932, without friction. In the first Syndicate all the shareholders were Swedes. In the second

⁴⁷⁶ Andersson, ‘Letter, 5 October 1934’.

⁴⁷⁷ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Letter to Andersson, included in newsletter-report dated Peiping, October 1931’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁷⁸ Johan G. Andersson, ‘Letter to Visser, 22 December 1933’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

A short bibliography on Visser is published in English see, Aleth Lorne, Petra Rösch and Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, ‘The Chinese Wooden Sculpture of Guanyin. New technical and historical insights.’ *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 50 (3) (2002): 365-390.

the Kunstindustriemuseum and the British Museum participated, each with two shares. Furthermore there were six private British shareholders. In the new Syndicate that is now being formed there will be seven British shareholders, probably one German, Kümmerl of the Berlin State Museum and also quite probably the Louvre in Paris. Do you think that the Museum van Aziatische Kunst would be interested to enter as one of the shareholders?⁴⁷⁹

Together with his letter was included a catalogued album of a selection of objects purchased during the 1931-1932 expedition. It was appropriately titled *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932*, and a copy is found in both the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive in Stockholm and in the School of Oriental and African Studies library in London.⁴⁸⁰ The use of photography as a form of documentation, as demonstrated by this catalogue, was a process that had been in evidence since the start of the 1900s.⁴⁸¹ The syndicate members Visser, Woods Bliss and David-Weill used this catalogue as a reference to later indicate specific objects of interest to Andersson.⁴⁸² All three joined in 1934; the visual representation of this catalogue was one of the factors that persuaded them to participate. The production of an album was standard for the syndicate operations since 1928-1929. A copy was distributed to each member. A full series of the albums are part of the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive in Stockholm.⁴⁸³ The principal lay-out of the catalogue was the same throughout. The album was bound in green leather binding and its cover depicted a golden embossed logo of a *taotie* mask (Figure 55). This motif appears on Zhou and Han period bronzes (Figure 56).⁴⁸⁴ Directly above the logo,

⁴⁷⁹ Andersson, 'Letter, 22 December 1933'.

⁴⁸⁰ *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* [privately published for the Karlbeck Syndicate members] (Stockholm, 1932).

⁴⁸¹ Judith Green also pointed this out in her thesis see, Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 131.

⁴⁸² Herman Visser, 'Letter to Andersson, 23 January 1934, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Herman Visser, 'Letter to Andersson, 23 October 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Robert Woods Bliss, 'Letter to Andersson, 26 May 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; David David-Weill, 'Letter David-Weill to Andersson, 31 August 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁸³ In October 2005 the four albums were complete and part of Volume V of the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. In October 2008 the albums were unfortunately no longer located in the original archive.

⁴⁸⁴ For further reading on the meaning of the *taotie* on ancient bronzes see, Wang Tao, 'A Textual Investigation of the *Taotie*', in *The Problem of Meaning in Early Chinese Ritual Bronzes*, Colloquies on Art and Archaeology

the title *The Karlbeck Syndicate* and date of the collecting expedition was printed in gold lettering. A selection of photographs of the purchased objects was pasted in along with a typed description underneath, an estimated date and possible provenance, its dimensions and for whom it was purchased. The Preface of the catalogue read:

‘Contrary to the arrangement followed during the first Karlbeck Syndicate expedition, when all the objects were kept in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities until Karlbeck’s return, during the second journey we despatched the specimens to the respective members of the Syndicate shortly after the arrival of each consignment. In the brief interval preceding the distribution of the specimens a selection of them was photographed. Out of these photographs we have chosen a certain number, which are reproduced here, together with Mr. Karlbeck’s brief descriptions of the specimens. We are pleased to offer this album to the members of the Syndicate as a souvenir from Mr. Karlbeck’s second collecting expedition.’⁴⁸⁵

Interestingly in the catalogue the objects are referred to as specimen, again giving a scientific impression to the overall collecting expedition and that the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities connected the objects to the study of archaeology. However, Andersson quite clearly described similar objects previously collected as works of art in his 1928 synopsis report. There was no clear distinction at this period that this group of Chinese objects were defined as art, archaeology or ethnology and furthermore that science and art were closely related in the study of Chinese archaeology in Western museums. The Karlbeck syndicate catalogue demonstrates that it was considered important by its organisers that the overall nature behind the expedition had some academic standing and separate it from art dealing. It was the custom that the majority of objects were photographed, either when they reached Andersson at the museum or prior to shipping in China. Karlbeck was responsible for the

in Asia, No. 15, ed. Roderick Whitfield, 102-119 (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1993); Elena Moreno, ‘The problems in the interpretation of the *taotie* motif on Shang bronzes’, *East Asia Journal. Studies in Material Culture* I (2003): 9-15.

⁴⁸⁵*The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932.*

descriptions and dating, often based upon information obtained from dealers. During the syndicate, Andersson distributed a selection of photographs amongst the syndicate of purchases made or objects that were encountered at dealerships. In this way, members could keep track of what was bought by whom and what available at the market in China. This system provided an important means of communication between Andersson, Karlbeck and the syndicate. Often requests were passed on to Karlbeck on site by telegram, detailing the tastes and interests expressed by one of the members.⁴⁸⁶ For example, Seligman had seen a photograph of a ritual vessel for which he was willing to pay 2000 Chinese dollars, a substantial figure; he requested that Andersson wired Karlbeck to purchase this object for him (Figure 57).⁴⁸⁷ This emphasises the important function of the photographic material in acquiring the objects but also demonstrates that photographs and cataloguing inevitably kept order. It was an essential method to institutionalising the objects and signifies the syndicate as a well-organised and established collector's group of early Chinese art.

As discussed, Raphael was the secretary for its British members.⁴⁸⁸ For the 1934 expedition he secured full shares from the British Museum, the Royal Scottish Museum, Cohen, Alice Mariquita Sedgwick and Mrs. Solomon, while one full share was split between Eumorfopoulos, Seligman, Clarke and Spencer-Churchill.⁴⁸⁹ In January 1934 the organisers still fell short to complete the syndicate.⁴⁹⁰ Raphael suggested to Andersson for Karlbeck to visit London and meet with potential British members, so they could express their wishes directly to him; he posited that participation was more appealingly if a personal visit was made:

⁴⁸⁶ Johan G. Andersson, 'Telegram to Karlbeck, 20 October 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁸⁷ Charles G. Seligman, 'Letter to Karlbeck, 31 July 1932', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Andersson, 'Telegram, 20 October 1934'.

⁴⁸⁸ Oscar Raphael, 'Letter to Andersson, 12 January 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁸⁹ Raphael, 'Letter, 10 November 1933'; Raphael, 'Letter to Andersson, 19 November 1933'.

⁴⁹⁰ Oscar Raphael, 'Letter to Andersson, 7 January 1934', The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

‘Please remember that at least five of the British group will not join unless they see Karlbeck before he goes to China; so I will hope that he will come here first [...].I would like to discuss my wants with Karlbeck before I sail [to South Africa] [...]. So if there is a chance of the new syndicate being complete I shall be pleased if Karlbeck could come here as soon as possible. If he comes here within the next 12 days I can offer to put him up at my flat if that suits him.’⁴⁹¹

Karlbeck visited London on 30 January 1934, taking up the invitation to stay with Raphael at his residence.⁴⁹² Some years later he returned this hospitality when Raphael visited Stockholm.⁴⁹³

After London, Karlbeck proceeded to see other interested parties in France and The Netherlands. His first stop was Paris to visit the Louvre and David-Weill, who had acted as intermediary between the museum and the syndicate.⁴⁹⁴ Karlbeck continued to Amsterdam to meet with Visser.⁴⁹⁵ During this trip there were two collecting interests that appealed to all members, namely the archaic and Ordos bronzes. They were a novelty subjects and therefore highly desirable to add to one’s collection.

4.2 Display and scholarship in Stockholm of the Karlbeck Syndicate objects

In 1933 the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities organised two simultaneous exhibitions where a great number of the syndicate objects were put on display; one on Chinese bronzes and the other on Ordos bronzes (Figure 58).⁴⁹⁶ The exhibitions were planned in connection with the 13th International Congress of Art History in Stockholm.⁴⁹⁷ Gustaf Adolf suggested a temporary exhibition that brought together the bronzes and ‘kindred

⁴⁹¹ Raphael, ‘Letter, dated 12 January 1934’.

⁴⁹² Johan G. Andersson, ‘Letter to Visser, 26 January 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁹³ Oscar Raphael, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 20 August 1938’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁴⁹⁴ David-Weill, ‘Letter, Paris 31 August 1934’; David David-Weill, ‘Letter to Andersson, 21 February 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Andersson, ‘Telegram, 26 January 1934’.

⁴⁹⁵ Andersson, ‘Letter, 22 December 1933’.

⁴⁹⁶ Andersson, ‘Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes’, 81-132 ; *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*; Yetts, ‘Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm’, 178-179+ 182-184.

⁴⁹⁷ *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*.

objects' in Swedish museums. He wanted to encourage a historical discussion by the visiting Western scholars and specialists. This included questions on origin, evolution, patterns in stylistic and decorative development and how these affected the classification of early Chinese art archaeology. Already in 1914 Gustaf Adolf had tried to open a scholarly debate between a defined group of European-based specialists when he intended the first exhibition of Chinese art in Sweden. In the following years he communicated on the research and discoveries by Andersson and Karlbeck to experts like Hobson at the British Museum. The International Congress of Art History was the perfect event to arrange a new exhibition and bring scholars together to discuss and handle the Chinese collections. It was also a celebration of Swedish success and its affiliation with new scholarship. The chosen arrangement displayed a tentative chronology by use of the comparative method that linked new archaeological data to the objects in the exhibition. For example, studies of the Huai-style and the Ordos bronzes were important in the developing studies on Chinese art and archaeology. They not only addressed the issues on origin and progress in Bronze Age art but also provided new classification possibilities. More importantly, these newly discovered objects showed a possible connection, or missing link, between the Bronze Age cultures in China and Eurasia based on the study of evolutionary patterns and Style. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities was the first institution to dedicate research to this subject. The exhibitions were a result of the investigations to date. Recently, Ivan Karp generally discussed the display of non-Western objects in a Western museum environment and his framework suggests that the exhibitions are reflective of the exhibition makers themselves:

'Exhibitions represent identity, either directly, through assertions, or indirectly, by implications when cultural 'others' are implicated, exhibitions tell us who we are, and perhaps more significant who we are not. Exhibitions are privileged areas for presenting images of self and

‘others’[...] From one point of view the most powerful agents in the contribution of identity appear to be neither producers of the objects nor the audience but the exhibition makers themselves.’⁴⁹⁸

Using his framework, the makers of this exhibition were Andersson, Karlbeck and Gustaf Adolf. Importantly, they represent the identity and creation of the intellectual presentation. They were responsible for selecting the objects and by doing also promoted the Swedish national identity at an international level, demonstrated by the collection and important scientific work conducted at home and abroad. The prestige of hosting the Congress for Art Historians inevitably also reached out to a larger general public. This gave a defined status to the museum. The unique collection played an important visual role because it not only established the museum as a significant scientific institute but also that Sweden stood at the foreground of ground-breaking scholarship and had an important collector on site.

The Exhibition of Chinese Bronzes was on display in the Southern Hall and so-called Anyang Room of the Museum (Figure 59). There were 317 Chinese bronzes selected which included objects from the private collections of syndicate members Gustaf Adolf, Hellström, Lagrelius, Traugott, Laurin, Karlbeck, and David-Weill.⁴⁹⁹ For this exhibition Gustaf Adolf had suggested a new arrangement in an effort to establish a new chronology in Chinese art than had previously been attempted at the museum and elsewhere in Europe.⁵⁰⁰ An English copy of the 1933 exhibition’s official guide is in the School of Oriental African Studies library. The catalogue described the objects as Chinese art, however, it is highlighted that they were largely of the kind that offered itself readily to scientific research:

‘The material of Early Chinese Art accumulated in Swedish museums and private collections is small when compared with the wealth of Early Chinese Art brought together in larger and richer

⁴⁹⁸ Ivan Karp, ‘Culture and Representation’, in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, eds. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, 11-24.

⁴⁹⁹ Andersson, ‘Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes’.

⁵⁰⁰ *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*, 4.

countries such as England, U.S.A., Germany and France. But our material is largely of a kind that offers itself readily to scientific research.’⁵⁰¹

In the display 67 objects were collected by Karlbeck and all were published in the guide. Throughout, Karlbeck was praised for his collecting activities and importance to the museum; ‘his discovery of a singularly refined and graceful bronze art’ and ‘very valuable assistance in planning and arranging the exhibition’.⁵⁰²

Overall, the organisers clearly wished highlight their discovery and research connected to the collections as opposed to presenting the objects as aesthetic experience, as in an art museum. The exhibitions therefore had to reflect pioneering and advanced scholarship. Related to the exhibitions, at times Andersson specifically chose word species or specimen to describe the objects. Species has its roots in scientific collecting of things from natural history and biology demonstrating his scientific incentive.⁵⁰³ There is no distinction made between which objects he consider art or others specimen. Previously Andersson had described similar objects as Works of Art in appeal for private collectors to join the syndicate and in the exhibition catalogue. The private collector was often motivated by some sort of aesthetic attraction alongside an intellectual interest in these objects. Andersson clearly wanted to attract the private collector to finance the syndicate and also broaden the types of visitors to the museum’s exhibition. To use the word art was therefore more all-inclusive than that of specimen.

⁵⁰¹ *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*, 4.

⁵⁰² *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*, 4.

⁵⁰³ For the history of the display of the natural history collections and museums the British zoologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) and Pitt-Rivers first presented the evolutionary narrative within the museum concept. Both were responsible for the manner in which ethnography was presented in Britain but also something that was adapted in Sweden. Huxley and Pitt-Rivers were both followers of Darwin’s ideas on evolution. Huxley in particular was Darwin’s protégé. Some years later he helped his student Haddon organise the Torres Straits expedition.

For further reading on Pitt-River’s display model see, Introduction and on the display of natural history by Huxley and ethnology by Pitt-Rivers see, Stocking Jr., *After Tylor*, 100; Brauholtz, ‘Presidential Address 1938’: 1-16; Lyons, *Thomas Huxley: The Evolution of a Scientist*; Huxley, *Evidence to Man’s Place in Nature*; Chapman, ‘Arranging Ethnology’, 15-48; Bennet, *The Birth of the Museum*, 178-179; van Keuren, ‘Museums and Ideology’: 171-189.

Andersson recalled that months before the International Congress of Art History opened personal invitations were sent to a number of specialists and connoisseurs of Far Eastern Art with consequence that a number of distinguished visitors came to Stockholm. These included Eumorfopoulos, Yetts, Minns and Kümmel. At the time four lectures were organised related to research topics considered at the museum.⁵⁰⁴ On 7 September Gustaf Adolf led a scholarly discussion raising some important questions.⁵⁰⁵ These considered some of the universal academic concerns on the interpretation, categorisation and institutional framing of early Chinese art at the time. As discussed, the general approach to the subject was through the interpretation of stylistic developments by use of the comparative method. Some of the questions and answers below show this cross-comparative methodology and how cultural connections and the topic of influence in Neolithic and Bronze Age art stood central in this debate:

‘1. Does any connection exist, as to style or otherwise, between the Neolithic pottery of China and the styles of the later periods? The consensus of opinion was that certain Neolithic types such as the Ting, the Li etc [sic] are common to the Yangshao period and the earlier dynasties, but that the decorative style of the earlier dynasties has no forerunners whatsoever in the Neolithic periods.

2. In what different directions are to be sought the origins of the Yin and the Yin-Chou styles? Can an influence be established from the Eurasian animal style? What about some connection with the so-called Pacific style? The prevailing opinion was that the origin of the Yin style is still unknown. There are striking resemblances to Pacific objects but these are of very late date. Everything goes to show that the Yin style is older than the Eurasian animal style.

3. What changes did the ornaments on archaic bronzes undergo in the course of time? How can we explain that on archaic bronzes we find both conventionalized and naturalistic animals and that in the Sung time and later the conventionalized animals become more and more naturalistic?

⁵⁰⁴ The lectures were predominantly concerned with geological and Palaeolithic topics see, *BMFEA* 7 (1935).

⁵⁰⁵ Andersson, ‘Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes’, 12-13.

4. How far can we use inscriptions to establish the authenticity and the age of Chinese bronzes?⁵⁰⁶

The discussion in connection with the exhibitions in Stockholm at the time shows that there were many uncertainties in the classification process of the bronzes. There was a direction that pointed to the transition of conventionalized motifs to a naturalistic decorative style in art, as explored by Boas and Haddon around that period or just preceding. However, this was an uncertain method for dating the archaic bronzes because it was initially a framework for studies on Primitive art. Another aspect of categorising the bronzes was to identify the inscriptions and date the objects accordingly, as seen in the studies by Karlgren at the time. This methodology was also problematic, especially when it came to grouping non-inscribed bronzes which had to depend on stylistic analysis.

In today's terms, Morphy and Perkins explain that one of the issues of presenting non-Western objects (especially Primitive art) through an evolutionary framework within a definition of art was connected to questions on origin of design and the perception of techniques that focussed on a realistic representation.⁵⁰⁷ It is difficult to identify a universal pattern that indicates that naturalism precedes a conventionalized style, or the other way around. What it does point out is that there was a parallel between the first Western studies of early Chinese art and Primitive art, specifically through ethnological methodologies. At the time of the exhibitions in Stockholm, the terminology of the display was explicated. The official guide mentioned that the arrangement of the chronological order of the bronzes was a suggestion by the organisers. They intended to place objects of similar date together, so these could be stylistically compared. In addition, Li Ji provided twenty-five photographs of the

⁵⁰⁶ Andersson, 'Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes', 12-13.

⁵⁰⁷ Morphy and Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art', 4.

recent excavation of Anyang.⁵⁰⁸ The inclusion of this visual material transferred the objects back to an original setting, and indicated that the intention was to highlight their archaeological value, as opposed to artistically present them. Andersson even commented that photography was used to help give a fuller idea of periods and groups and somehow brought the objects back to their originality. This overview is an important insight to the institutional framing of such objects into a Western museum setting. It also shows that the museum was experimenting with a number of display concepts, where the objects represented Sweden's important connection to discipline of Chinese archaeology in the West and in China but also by creating an archaeological setting. In doing so the objects were visually transported back to their origin and showed the visitor how they were first discovered in an archaeological context in China. However, one must keep in mind that many of the objects were purchased by Karlbeck and never discovered through an official archaeological excavation. In turn it was a display methodology to add the archaeological importance of this collection.

In this display the bronzes were classified into style-groups that corresponded to the earliest dynastic periods in Chinese literature, their geographical and archaeological location. Their division was based upon stylistic analysis. Some of the terminology is no longer in use today. For example, the earliest dating group, including the Anyang objects, was 'Yin Style' and dated to be '11th century BC and earlier'. Next was the 'Yin-Chou Style' and given an approximate date from the 'c.11th- 10th centuries BC'. This was followed by 'Middle Chou Style' and dated '9th-7th century BC or somewhat later'. The 'Huai Style' was given an approximate date of '7th or 6th century BC until the 3th century BC' and followed by the 'Han Style' dated '206 BC until 220 AD and somewhat later'. It was clear that there was no definite classification structure for these bronzes at the time and much was left to speculation.

⁵⁰⁸ Andersson, 'Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes', 14

This overall attempt of establishing a chronology defined the first stage in institutionalising these objects in a Western collection. Today the terminology is universally divided into Shang, Western Zhou, Eastern Zhou and Warring States and eliminates the term Yin and Huai from the classification system, as well as stylistic taxonomies.

An important moment in the classification methodology at the museum was that the Huai-style was officially incorporated as a term in its display. At the time, Sirén commented that the Huai-style mirrors and belt-hooks were the most significant of all ornamental bronzes of this period and adds to the importance of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities collection.⁵⁰⁹ Karlgren was the principal figure studying the bronzes at the time. As a philologist, he was primarily occupied with the translation of bronze inscriptions on the so-called Piao-bells.⁵¹⁰ This was a group of fourteen Bronze Age bells discovered in Henan depicting the distinct Huai-style decoration. Through the translation of their inscriptions Karlgren placed the date for these bells to around 550 BC. He argued that the Huai-style was earlier in date than previously thought and that this typical decorative style belonged to the Western Zhou period. In his paper 'Chinese Bronzes' Karlgren explained that he used the term Huai to refer to the distinct stylistic elements that defined the artistic motifs that flourishing during the latter half of the Zhou and Qin dynasty. He also recognised that the Style was first regionalised by Karlbeck in the Huai Valley:

'It is a convenient name, chosen according to a common archaeological practice, a conventional denomination founded upon its first geographical location. And just as Yangshao culture-so called because Andersson first located it in Yangshao of Honan- flourished quite

⁵⁰⁹ Sirén, *A History of Early Chinese Art*, 62-65.

⁵¹⁰ Karlgren, 'On the Date of the Piao Bells': 65-77; Karlgren, 'Yin and Chou in Chinese Bronzes', 9-125; Karlgren, 'Ordos and Huai', 97-112.

abundantly in Kansu and Honan, so we testify to the existence of the Huai style not only in Anhui but equally well in Shangtung, Shansi, Shensi, etc.⁵¹¹

Although Karlgren's methodology was flawed and neglected important archaeological data, he was the first scholar who made a comprehensive attempt to construct a system for dating these bronzes.⁵¹² However, at the time his taxonomy was challenged by Bachhofer, and later Loehr, both addressing some of the art historical issues connected to classifying the bronzes.⁵¹³

The Huai-style bronzes were characterised by Sirén and his contemporaries as being of a superior quality and depicting a distinctive animal-style. This combination appears to have made them aesthetically desirable to Western collectors because they were easily associated with the Western ideals of naturalism and beauty; furthermore, they provided concepts of a historical connection in ancient times between China and the West that went beyond mere influence.⁵¹⁴ Generally, the Huai-style objects have a greyish so-called water-patina, which is caused by an oxidation process of the bronze when interred for many centuries (Figure 61). Again, this was considered beautiful by the Western collector. The elaborate decorative motifs showed a newly refined technology in comparison to the earlier dating Shang period bronzes (Figures 61 and 62). At the time, Bachhofer and Andersson both described this distinct Style as 'baroque' in aspect and a real feature of the Huai-style.⁵¹⁵ What is interesting is that both used of the term baroque in their description. This implies that at the time both, an art-historian and archaeologist followed a Western stylistic taxonomy to classify the decorative motifs and style of Chinese archaic bronzes. It also hints to these objects making a

⁵¹¹ Karlgren, 'Yin and Chou in Chinese Bronzes', 89.

⁵¹² Creel, 'Karlgren's System for Dating Chinese Bronzes', 463-473.

⁵¹³ Ludwig Bachhofer, 'The Evolution of Shang and Early Chou Bronzes', 107-116.

⁵¹⁴ For some commentaries on how these objects at the time were perceived see, Sirén, *A History of Early Chinese Art*, 57; Andersson, 'Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes', 21.

⁵¹⁵ This Western terminology was also used in discussions on Chinese painting at the time by Binyon and Ferguson, see Introduction, 33-35; Andersson, 'Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes', 29-30; Bachhofer, 'On the Origin and Development of Chinese Art', 258.

transition and being accepted in both fields, moving from ethnology to art. However, in this period the two were extremely closely related in the study of Chinese bronzes. Still, by distancing the objects from their original cultural context and by using Western definitions to describe the style of the bronzes they were re-identified within Western scholarship and became part of a more global aspect of the artistic representation of the objects themselves. This inevitably had an impact on future studies on Chinese bronze art, where art historians like Loehr solely approached the studies through stylistic analysis where the meaning of the object was not considered, eliminating their ethnological significance. Indeed, his methodology proved adequate for successfully classifying and dating these objects within a universal system.

For the Ordos exhibition a separate space in the museum was made available in the Straight Gallery and Curved Gallery (Figure 60). The term Ordos was first used by Minns in 1929 to define the naturalistic animal-style bronzes found within the perimeter of a large geographical area including Inner Mongolia, the Ordos Desert, Northern China, Siberia and Southern Russia.⁵¹⁶ More recently Emma Bunker pointed out that the numerous Eurasian steppe tribes had their own artistic repertoire and taste, in spite of the cultural homogeneity among them and therefore to generalise the Style of their bronze art brings with it its complexities.⁵¹⁷ At the time, the decision to exhibit this group of bronzes was based on the museum's claim that they held the leading collection in the world. Andersson commented that the objects are little understood and largely misinterpreted and were an extremely novel subject.⁵¹⁸ Around 500 bronzes were assembled together and included objects from the collections of Loo, David-Weill, Wannieck, Eumorfopoulos, the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the dealer T.Y. King. It was decided to exhibit them alongside a group of

⁵¹⁶ Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, 60

⁵¹⁷ Bunker, 'Sources of Foreign Elements in the Culture of Eastern Zhou', 86

⁵¹⁸ *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*.

animal-style bronzes from finds in the Minussink area in Russia, which the Finnish archaeologist Aarne M. Tallgren (1885-1945) arranged on loan from the Nationalmuseum in Helingsford in Finland.⁵¹⁹ The comparative method employed in this display emphasized a cultural and historical connection between these objects and its makers. As discussed, this methodology was widely used at the time for interpreting archaeological and art objects alike and provided a framework for categorising and chronology based upon typology.

The aim of the Ordos exhibition was to open a dialogue among its visitors and inform on the museum's pioneering research. It supplied a visual connection between objects of the ancient East and West. The bronzes were arranged in seventeen display cases, either by objects assigned to a particular tomb find or by types (highlighting their original function); such as 'Vessels', 'Knives', 'Buckles' and 'Plaques'. The Siberian objects were exhibited in three separate cases that complimented the Ordos material. The reason for this was that none of the objects were dated and therefore a chronological sequence could not be followed. At the time dating these bronzes was an ambiguous issue because there was not enough historical material or known literary sources on the nomadic cultures and much speculation on who had produced the bronzes. The museum guide stated that their provenance, age and anthropological association have until quite recently remained to a certain extent in mystery and that one may only assume that the majority of the objects in our exhibition of Ordos bronzes date from the centuries before and during the Han dynasty.⁵²⁰ In his paper 'Selected Ordos Bronzes' Andersson posited that a new chronology should be developed starting with the archaic beginnings of the animal style, followed by the height of its development and the

⁵¹⁹ Tallgren conducted archaeological work in Russia during the first decades of the twentieth century, especially in the Caucasus region. For his work and a biography see, Timo Salminen, 'Finnish Archaeologists in Russia 1870-1935', *Archaeology, Ethnology and Anthropology of Eurasia* 29 (1) (Mar., 2007): 100-110.

⁵²⁰ *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933*, 36 and 38.

degenerate affiliations of this style.⁵²¹ He clearly followed the methodology as proposed by Haddon of looking for simple to complex to degenerate principles in art.

Karlbeck's collecting activity and provenance for these bronzes was once again praised by Andersson in the guide. The connecting element between the exhibition display and the discussions held at the museum was the Huai-style and Ordos objects. The museum decided on the terminology used for classifying these bronzes. Karlbeck was also responsible for the development of this classification system because he had purchased the objects for the museum and selected them in China. Research was directed by a small specialist group at the museum, whose primary aim at that time was to fix and establish a tentative chronology that was based on stylistic interpretation, origin and technological evolution. However, it was somewhat experimental.

The Ordos bronzes at the museum were primarily studied by Andersson. He had collected a number of such bronzes when he was working in Suiyuan province in 1923 and 1924. In the early 1920s, he purchased a series of bronzes from local dealers in Beijing that came from two tomb finds in the mountain range north of the city and he described as Ordos-like in appearance.⁵²² These tombs within China's borders were rich in small bronze objects, mainly consisting of weapons and for personal adornment of the dead, and similar in character to known Scythian and Siberian objects.⁵²³ Andersson brought his collection back to Sweden.

Initially he used these bronzes for establishing a tentative chronology of the prehistoric sites in Gansu because he had first found such objects at Neolithic locations in that region. In 1929 he published his pioneering article based on the museum's Ordos collection in German proposing the term Suiyuan indicating the geographical locality of his finds. In 1932

⁵²¹ Andersson, 'Selected Ordos Bronzes', 83

⁵²² The location of the tomb finds were at Luan ping and Xuan hua see, Andersson, 'Der Weg Über die Steppen', 143-164.

⁵²³ For an article of that period on Scythian art style see, Mariquita Villard, 'Scythian Art Style' *Parnassus* 3 (5) (May, 1935): 31-32.

‘Hunting Magic in the Animal Style’ concluded his research and an attempt to date the bronzes.⁵²⁴ In this publication he argued that he didn’t believe that the animal-style was indigenous to China and was transmitted as part of a diffusion of cultures across the continent from West to East. Such a statement would have had an enormous impact because the museum held one of the largest collections of Ordos bronzes in the West and Andersson was one of the leading experts on the subject:

‘Our collection of Ordos bronzes is essentially different from those seen in the hands of other collectors and antiquity-dealers, who have been principally guided by their love of beauty and exquisite specimens. Common and simple objects-crude and abandoned vessels, simple undecorated knives, nails and spoons are entirely absent in other collections but fully represented in ours. Without boasting, therefore, we feel justified in saying that ours is the only one of all existing collections that can claim to give an approximately adequate representation of the inheritance of the bronze objects bequeathed to us by the ancient Hiung-nu (Xiongnu).’⁵²⁵

The collection was considered extremely important to Andersson. As pointed out in the excerpt, he mentioned that the objects were intended for research. Andersson stressed the importance on the scientific using the term specimen rather than that of beauty, as the incentive of selection and that other collectors and art-dealers were often guided by an aesthetic appeal.⁵²⁶ This gives a strong message regarding the institutional framing of these objects within the museum. The novelty and presentation within a national institutional environment validated its ownership, in this case Sweden. In a sense the objects were internally colonised, collected with the purpose of owning, display and scholarship on an exclusive and traditionally non-Western subject.⁵²⁷ Generally, the history of collecting non-Western objects is connected to a colonising attitude. The colonising collector proudly

⁵²⁴ Andersson, ‘Hunting Magic in the Animal Style’, 221-225.

⁵²⁵ Andersson, ‘Hunting Magic in the Animal Style’, 225.

⁵²⁶ Andersson, ‘Hunting Magic in the Animal Style’, 225.

⁵²⁷ For the use of the term internal colonisation in a museum environment see, Mesa-Bains, ‘The Real Multiculturalism’, 99-109; Shelton, ‘Questioning Locality’, 387-406.

brought back objects that represented a foreign culture and he was admired and applauded for his collecting skills.⁵²⁸ There was a similar atmosphere surrounding the collecting activities of the museum during this period. On numerous occasions Andersson praised Karlbeck for his success as a collector and his contribution to the collection. These comments indicate that Karlbeck's work was considered to benefit the universal academic study of Chinese art and archaeology, like the research Andersson was conducting himself.

Andersson in particular focussed on the ornamental system of the bronzes as being, in his words, derived from the Near East.⁵²⁹ Through the studies of Rostovtzeff, who firmly believed that China's bronze culture had some of its foundations in so-called Sumerian art, Andersson developed his theory.⁵³⁰ He suggested that a ready-made bronze casting culture entered China through a migration route from the West.⁵³¹ As discussed in the Introduction, Minns and Rostovtzeff led the first debates on the transmission of stylistic elements and decorative motifs between China and cultures to its western borders. Greater part of their research was based on objects depicting this naturalistic animal-art of Eurasia and using the comparative method to seek similarities or patterns for dating non-inscribed bronze art. Andersson repeated this methodology in the museum's exhibitions in 1933 and in his study on Ordos bronzes. Within this approach the principal topic of discussion included an investigation into Western Zhou, Ordos and Scythian bronze technologies, where a unifying animal-style was proposed within a wide-spread geographical area. In 1929 Minns argued for a merging of cultural groups covering a large geographical area:

⁵²⁸ For other examples of how the collecting and presentation of China's material culture was praised as a reflection of a colonising attitude in this period see, Clunas, 'China in Britain', 41-51; Barringer, 'The South Kensington Museum and the colonial project', 11-27; Pearce, 'Collecting, Connoisseurship and Commerce', 17-25; Pearce, 'Soldiers, Doctors, Engineers', 45-52.

⁵²⁹ Andersson, 'Hunting Magic in the Animal Style', 221-225.

⁵³⁰ Rostovtzeff based some of his conclusions on the ideas by the German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofer (1833-1905) and stated that 'the Chinese have migrated from the ancient home in Chinese Turkestan, where they were supposed to have developed their earliest culture and received influences from Chinese peoples'.

Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 31 and 41; Rostovtzeff, *Russians and Iranians in South Russia*, 18; Rostovtzeff, 'Persia, India, China, AA 2 (4) (1927): 294-297.

⁵³¹ Andersson, *Preliminary Report on Archaeological Research in Kansu*, 31 and 41.

‘[...] the unity of the Asiatic and European Steppe has led me to the occasion right across Siberia, Turkestan and China, without any feeling that I was trespassing my borders’.⁵³²

More recently, in an interesting reflection on early twentieth century scholarship Emma Bunker examined the existence of an early trade route operative during the Bronze Age which she named the Fur Route and accordingly runs eastwards from the north of the Caspian Sea to Southern Siberia and southwards to China.⁵³³ She suggests that this was one of the ways by which foreign technology, such as the chariot [and possibly other Bronze Age objects] was introduced into China from a cultural centre to the West.⁵³⁴ Interestingly, this was also something that Karlbeck pointed out some thirty years earlier in his discussed article on the history of the chariot in China.⁵³⁵

At the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities the studies on this type of bronze art was approached through intercultural ideas, where a stylistic relationship indicated a direct influence from one culture to another. This theory was predominantly based on objects in European collections. In this classification the Ordos style was believed to have introduced elements of this naturalistic style during the later Zhou period and came into its own during the Han period. However, the dating of the Ordos bronzes was equally problematic. At the museum, Karlgren took the dating of the Huai-style Piao bells as a starting point for dating the Ordos bronzes.⁵³⁶ In his study he argued that already in the fourth and third centuries BC there existed a neighbouring art along the northern frontier of China that possessed some of the similar features known as Ordos art and these could not be later than the fourth to third century BC. His system, based upon epigraphical research, supported that two bronze-making cultures developed next to each other and both probably influenced the other by adapting and

⁵³² Minns, ‘preface’, *Scythians and Greeks*.

⁵³³ Emma Bunker, ‘Gold in the Ancient Chinese World: A Cultural Puzzle’, *AA* 53 (1/2) (1993): 27-50.

⁵³⁴ Bunker, ‘Gold in the Ancient Chinese World’, 31.

⁵³⁵ See, Chapter 2, 115-117; Karlbeck, ‘Notes on some Chinese wheel-axle caps’, 53-74.

⁵³⁶ Karlgren, ‘Ordos and Huai’, 97-112.

adopting decorative motifs and technology. The available archaeological data supported a cross-cultural connection between the two cultures. Emma Bunker more recently pointed out that when Karlgren wrote his paper the scientifically excavated and dated finds in Eurasia were extremely scarce.⁵³⁷ This resulted that numerous prominent motifs in Eastern Zhou art were considered loans from the steppe cultures in the studies by him and his contemporaries. Furthermore, she posits that a lot of the naturalistic features in Late Zhou art were indigenous developments and the overall technology of the steppe objects often demonstrate less advanced technology.⁵³⁸ That there is some cultural affinity between the bronze art of Eurasia and China continues to raise a number of questions. However, during this period it was very much the viewpoint that the animal-style of the steppes preceded that of China and was introduced during the later Zhou period. Equally, at the time Bachhofer argued that the Huai-style derived from Siberian proto-types, and therefore these Western bronzes must be considerable older than presumed.⁵³⁹

In 1926, an important discovery of Scythian bronze finds and Chinese bronze objects was made by the Kozlów Expedition in Mongolia.⁵⁴⁰ The Kozlów Expedition, led by Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlów (1863-1935), a Russian Colonel, unearthed a number of ancient Mongolian tombs whose grave goods included Chinese, Hellenic and Sino-Siberian objects.⁵⁴¹ The discovery of a variety of archaic objects in a single tomb (belonging to neighbouring bronze cultures) was interpreted at the time by the British Chinese bronze specialist Yetts as an

⁵³⁷ Bunker, 'Sources of Foreign Elements in the Culture of Eastern Zhou', 86.

⁵³⁸ Today archaeological discoveries and Charles Weber's study on Late Zhou motifs show that motifs that were once thought to have been imported into China predate the once considered Eurasian proto-types. Charles Weber, 'Chinese Pictorial Vessels of the Late Zhou Period', *AA* 28 (2/3) (1966): 107-140.

⁵³⁹ Bachhofer, 'On the Origin and Development of Chinese Art', 258.

⁵⁴⁰ The expedition exposed a selection of tombs in the Thushetu Khanate region of Mongolia and date from the beginning of the Christian era. The excavation of the tombs was carried out between March 1924 and February 1925. The tombs were extremely rich in funerary furnishings, such as textiles, gold, silver and bronze objects, as well as, lacquer, wood, pottery, depicting the Scytho-Siberian 'animal style' and a number of Han period objects hinting a connection of cultural interaction between the two neighbouring cultures. Gregory Borókva, *Scythian Art*, (London: E. Benn, 1928); Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozlów Expedition', 168-169+172-177+180-182+185.

⁵⁴¹ For a biographical reference on Kozlów see, 'Colonel P.M. Kozlów', *The Geographical Journal* 87 (2) (February, 1936) [obituary]: 190-191.

example of cultural diffusion and evidence of a link between the bronze cultures of Eurasia, including that of Ordos, with that of China.⁵⁴² His research is further discussed in the following chapter.

Minns, Rostovtzeff, Bachhofer and Andersson all presented the Ordos bronzes as a missing link that influenced the naturalistic ornamentation in the late Zhou and early Han period.⁵⁴³ By doing so, they first and foremost proposed that a Scythian migration was responsible for progressive introductions of new technology into the Chinese territories in the Bronze Age period. In modern terms, they argued for a diffusion of cultural influence from the West and this is essentially Eurocentric in perception, where the concept of progress was identified in ancient China by a group of Western (art) historians and archaeologists.

Another important factor was that both the Huai-style and the Ordos objects in the museum collection predominantly consisted of small ornaments, such as belt-hooks, chariot fittings and weaponry represented the cultural relationship between China and the West (Figures 33 and 34). The Ordos objects are highly ornamental and often embellished with decorative motifs depicting naturalistic representations of animals such as the tiger, the boar and the deer (Figure 63). Characteristically they were decorated by an intricate inlay technique of gold and silver, or semi-precious stones such as turquoise, demonstrating a superior knowledge of this technology. Andersson was the first to link this sophisticated inlay technique to a similar expertise first seen in Zhou and Huai-style bronzes (Figures 32, 50, 52 and 61).⁵⁴⁴ In doing so he placed both in context to the history of the goldsmith in China and believed that Huai-style objects must have been inspired by these foreign examples. He based his argument on the stylistic analysis of decorative technique, comparative methodologies between Huai-style and

⁵⁴² Perceval W. Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozl6v Expedition'.

⁵⁴³ For a stylistic analysis of the art of the Han and Tang period see, William Watson, *Realistic Style in the Art of Han and T'ang China* (Hull: University of Hull, 1975).

⁵⁴⁴ Johan G. Andersson, 'The Goldsmith in Ancient China', in *Yin and Chou Researches* (Stockholm: The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1935), 1-38.

Ordos objects, as well as, addressing the historical and archaeological accounts by Minns and Rostovtzeff that suggested a cultural exchange had taken place at the end of the Zhou period. Notably, Rostovtzeff commented that there was a cultural connection indicated that similarities in decorative motifs could not be accidental:

‘These striking coincidences between the Scythian and Chinese animal style cannot be accidental. The fact that the motives borrowed from Assyro-babylonian art are paramount in both speaks for itself. I have not the slightest doubt that both countries received the animal style from a common source: I mean Iran in Central Asia. The Chinese adapted the elements of this style, dealt with them freely, in accordance with their artistic temperament, and formed a new and peculiar decorative style.’⁵⁴⁵

He considered that the bronze style of the Scythian and Chinese objects must have had a common source and that this geographic location was within the boundaries set in the early twentieth century: Iran in Central Asia.⁵⁴⁶ Furthermore, he argued that the Chinese adapted and developed this style to their according to their artistic temperament.

The theory of diffusionism is dismissed today; however, new research is revisiting the studies on cultural exchange between ancient China and its Western neighbours.⁵⁴⁷ In connection to the Ordos culture, Emma Bunker has raised the question of inter-cultural links and relationships between Eurasia and China and suggested a connection between the two.⁵⁴⁸ Her studies demonstrate that the topic of inter-cultural connections in early Chinese art is still connected to the art of the Ordos today. Andersson’s studies conducted at the time these

⁵⁴⁵ Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, 200.

⁵⁴⁶ Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, 200.

⁵⁴⁷ The analysis of the relationship between ancient Chinese decorative patterns and the role of Eurasian cultures is something that is still part of a contemporary discussion on the objects of material culture in that region see, Philip Denwood, *Arts of the Eurasian Steppelands*, *Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia*, No. 7 (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1977); Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Ornament, The Lotus and the Dragon* (London: The British Museum Press, 1984), 44 and 54; Jessica Rawson, *Animals in Art* (London: The British Museum Press, 1977), 6 and 102-104; Bunker, *Animal Style Art from East to West*; Tu Cheng-sheng, ‘The Animal Style Revisited’, in *Exploring China’s Past, New Discoveries and Studies in Archaeology and Art*, eds. Roderick Whitfield and Wang Tao, 137-149 (London: Saffron, 1999).

⁵⁴⁸ Bunker, ‘Gold in the Ancient Chinese World’, 31.

collections were formed at the museum addressed similar possibilities through his object studies and, at the time, concluded that they represented the evidence of a cultural diffusion into ancient China.

In conjunction with intercultural studies on the Ordos and Huai-style bronzes at the museum in this period a similar approach was taken in Britain on retrospective studies. They were an important presence as the largest group of non-Swedish participants in the Karlbeck Syndicate. In the following chapter the institutional and intellectual framing of China's bronze art in Britain is taken into consideration. A discussion on some of the principal figures and their roles in this developing field will show that they were closely connected to the collecting process, either privately or for an institution. A significant theme that will be considered is that in the classification of the archaic objects the concept of diffusionism played an important role, and defined the intellectual environment in Britain at this specific time. After this period the categorisation of Chinese bronzes followed a considerable art historical approach where such anthropological arguments were often excluded from the taxonomy.

Chapter 5

The Contribution of the Karlbeck Syndicate to Scholarship on Early Chinese Art and Collecting in Britain (1931-1934).

The 1920s and 1930s are an important time in British scholarship in the developing academic studies of Chinese art and archaeology. This period is defined to a degree by a noticeable relationship and interaction between the Swedish and British scholars, and the Karlbeck Syndicate played a significant role. There are three principal figures who are considered in this chapter: Yetts is considered because he was the leading figure in the recently established discipline of Chinese Art and Archaeology at the University of London, and his study of archaic Chinese bronze art was not only important to the field in general, but also directly influenced the members of the Karlbeck Syndicate. Yetts' own study of Chinese art and culture demonstrate some diffusionist ideas and he was one of the scholars who promoted the work of Andersson. Hobson and how he and his institution were involved in the syndicate operations and a rare example of a museum's direct engagement in collecting from China. The third person is Seligman. His selection of particular objects from the Karlbeck Syndicate framed his pioneering scholarship on Chinese art and archaeology. His work and collection represent an important aspect of British academic interest in Chinese bronze art.

As pointed out, the theory of diffusionism was one of the tools commonly used in anthropology and archaeology for understanding and classifying the newly discovered material culture of non-Western origin during the 1920s and early 1930s. The Introduction of this thesis presents the important intellectual background of how this theory was used and adapted in studies on Chinese culture and bronze art. In the following discussion of British scholarship and the institutional framing of the archaic objects it is important to take into consideration that Hobson, Yetts and Seligman were products of a Western education system

in a particular time. On an academic level the influence of Darwinism with its search for missing links and concepts of a common origin for Mankind was followed through in cultural and archaeological studies. On the other hand, imperialism and a dominant colonising mentality still played a significant role in Britain's political and social structure, including its education. This is at times evident in development of Britain's Chinese collections and scholarship.

5.1 Yetts at the centre of British Scholarship and the Diffusionist debate in Chinese art.

One of the key players in the foundation of Chinese Art and Archaeology as an academic discipline in Britain was Walter Perceval Yetts (1878-1957, Figure 64). He trained as a medical student and was sent to China where he served in the Royal Naval Medical Service between 1908 and 1912. During this period he sailed up the Yangtze River and was drawn to the 'beauty of the Chinese scenery'.⁵⁴⁹ During these years, he was, in his words, interested in the mysteries surrounding Chinese art.⁵⁵⁰ In 1912 he presented his very first lecture to the Royal Asiatic Society 'Symbolism in Chinese Art'.⁵⁵¹ Whilst in China he studied the local language and on a visit to Beijing he bought a number of the so-called oracle bones then recently discovered. As discussed in Chapter 2, these depict the earliest form of writing and furthermore led him to explore the origin of the archaic Chinese script. What is surprising is that he did not revisit China after 1914. Some years later the British art historian Gray made the assumption that Yetts was more interested in early China than in the China of his day.⁵⁵² This correlates to his attraction that drew him to study the history of Chinese

⁵⁴⁹ Karlbeck, 'Walter Perceval Yetts', 185; David, 'Walter Perceval Yetts: An Appreciation', 119.

⁵⁵⁰ For Yetts' early publications see, Perceval W. Yetts, *Symbolism in Chinese Art* (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1912); Perceval W. Yetts, 'A Famous Chinese Bronze', *BMC* 43 (246) (Sept., 1923): 118-119+121-124; Perceval W. Yetts, 'The Eight Immortals', *JRAS* 1 (Oct., 1916), 773-807.; Perceval W. Yetts, 'The Chinese Isles of the Blest', *Folklore* 30 (1) (Mar. 31., 1919): 35-62; Perceval W. Yetts, 'Chinese Tomb Jade', *Folklore* 33 (3) (Sep. 30, 1922): 319-321; Perceval W. Yetts, 'Pictures of A Chinese Immortal', *BMC* 39 (222) (Sept., 1921):113-117+120-121.

⁵⁵¹ Yetts, *Symbolism in Chinese Art*.

⁵⁵² Gray, 'Professor W.P. Yetts', 313.

culture and art, in particular from the archaic period. From around 1920 onwards he resigned from public service and started to dedicate most of his time to the investigation of Chinese art. He never studied the Chinese language or art in a British institution and was predominantly self-taught.⁵⁵³ In his ground-breaking research on ritual bronzes he understood that the study of inscriptions was inseparable from that of the objects. Classification and dating depended on the two. He was mentored and worked together with the then British expert in archaic Chinese script Lionel Charles Hopkins (1845-1952).⁵⁵⁴ Together they published a number of articles that included translations of bronze inscriptions found on such vessels. Yetts is generally remembered for his epigraphic approach to British studies on Chinese bronzes and his catalogue of the George Eumorfopoulos Collection demonstrated his meticulous classification methodology.⁵⁵⁵ Recent studies by Stacey Pierson and Craig Clunas acknowledged him as the defining figure in the founding of the discipline of Chinese Art and Archaeology at the University of London and he directed the course of this field for many years to come.⁵⁵⁶

In the analysis of Yetts and his work his publications on the non-inscribed small archaic objects show a fresh perspective on his work. In his arguments to classify this material he showed his active participation in the dialogue between British and Swedish scholarship during this period where diffusionism and the intercultural in China's bronze art was an integrated element in these discussions. Craig Clunas has also pointed out that Yetts

⁵⁵³ See, Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art', Footnote 61, 207; 'Dr Walter Perceval Yetts C.B.E.', *Times*, 15 May 1957 [obituary].

⁵⁵⁴ For Yetts' philological contribution to the British studies on ancient Chinese script see, Perceval W. Yetts, Lionel C. Hopkins and T. Tai, *The Six Scripts or The Principles of Chinese Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954); Perceval W. Yetts and Lionel C. Hopkins, 'A Chinese Bronze Ritual Vessel', *JRAS* 1 (Jan., 1933): 107-113.

For biographical reference on Hopkins see, Perceval W. Yetts, 'Lionel Charles Hopkins I.S.O.', *JRAS* (New Series) 85 (1953) [obituary]: 91-91.

⁵⁵⁵ See, Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 121-177; Perceval W. Yetts, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection: Catalogue of the Chinese and Korean Bronzes, Sculpture, Jades, Jewellery and Miscellaneous Objects*, Volumes I-II (London: E. Benn, 1929).

⁵⁵⁶ For recent discussion on Yetts' role in the founding of the discipline see, Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation', 22-34; Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art', 199; Yasumura Yoshiko, 'George Eumorfopoulos and the University of London', 86-90.

approached Chinese art from an archaeological and ethnological point of view but was by no means indifferent to aesthetic qualities around him; his preferred recreation was watercolour painting.⁵⁵⁷

Between 1925 and 1933, Yetts published five articles which discuss elements, which we now define as intercultural links, in ancient Chinese material culture.⁵⁵⁸ Four were published in the *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, a predominantly art historical journal and one in the *Geographical Review*, a US based magazine that concerned itself, and is still dedicated to, geography and geographical fieldwork. The choice of publications shows that in some cases the discussions on early Chinese art, archaeology and culture were as much an art historical as a geographical and cultural question. His first article dates from 1925 and examined the possibility of a cultural exchange in Neolithic China with the West.⁵⁵⁹ He primarily discussed Andersson's latest archaeological discoveries and, like him, included that there was a plausible argument that their cultural origin originated outside China's borders. To back up this discussion he addressed some of the reasons that Western scholars, like Kircher, had proposed centuries before:

'The origin of the Chinese is a subject that has exercised the ingenuity of many Western writers. So long ago as 1654 the Jesuit Anthesius Kircher traced it Egypt; from time to time after him others found pretexts for elaborating the theme; and at the present day some argue a cultural, if not a racial, descent from that ancestry[...] Beyond doubt the surest clues to the mystery lie buried in the

⁵⁵⁷ Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/Far Eastern Art', 199.

⁵⁵⁸ Perceval W. Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', *BMC* 59 (341) (Aug., 1931): 76-81; Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozl6v Expedition', 168-169+172-177+180-182+185; Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', 184; Perceval W. Yetts, 'Contacts between China and the West', *BMC* 48 (276) (Mar., 1926): 116+121-123; Perceval W. Yetts, 'Links Between Ancient China and the West', *Geographical Review* 16 (4) (Oct., 1926): 614-622; Perceval W. Yetts, *Chinese Bronzes* (London: The Burlington Magazine Monograph, 1925); Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery': 308-310.

⁵⁵⁹ Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China': 308-310.

soil of China. A start in scientific excavation has been made during the last few years under the supervision of Dr. J. G. Andersson, the Swedish mining advisor to the Chinese government.⁵⁶⁰

What Yetts posited is that the theme of the origin of Chinese culture had occupied a number of Western scholars for centuries. Many claimed a Western descent for the roots of this Far Eastern civilization. These presumptions had circulated for a long time and in time created an imagined heritage for ancient China, without any scientific evidence. Andersson's discovery of the painted pottery, with a close resemblance to Neolithic finds in Central Asia, Southern Russia and Eastern Europe easily supported the notion that a direct cultural relationship had existed in the ancient past amongst these culture groups. This archaeological discovery was at the time considered the necessary proof to promote the diffusionist ideas first presented by Kircher, Ball and Terrien De Lacouperie, who are discussed in the Introduction of this thesis.

Yetts was the first to fully discuss Andersson's discoveries in a British publication and he proposed that a Neolithic type spread over far separated parts of Eurasia and must be part of a cultural united whole.⁵⁶¹ He supported his statement by following Andersson's suggestions to compare the decorative motifs, or Style, of the Neolithic pottery urns found in Gansu and Central Asia (Figure 65). He mentioned that 'a presentment of the decoration may be given by pictorial means better than by written descriptions'.⁵⁶² Included he made some semi-diagrammatic drawings of some of the characteristic motifs taken from published illustrations of pottery shards found by Andersson on the left, and, on the right compared them to similar designs found on Neolithic pottery excavated in other countries. Yetts understood that for the classification of these objects within a coherent chronological sequence a number of things needed to be taken into account, like technique, material, form and decoration. However, one

⁵⁶⁰ For Kircher's diffusionist ideas see, Introduction, 55; Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China', 308

⁵⁶¹ Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery': 308-310.

⁵⁶² Yetts mentioned that he depended on the provenance of the pottery illustrations from Arne, Andersson and Fred H. Andrews, who had recently published an article on the Neolithic discoveries by Stein. Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China', 308; Fred H. Andrews, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in Sīstān by Aurel Stein', *BMC* 47 (273) (Dec., 1925): 304-305.

of his principal methodologies was to treat the objects through the analysis of their decoration:

‘To make a thorough comparison between this newly-found ware and Neolithic remains in other lands would need the taking into account of technique, material, form and decoration. Limitations of space compel a narrowing of the issue, and I propose to treat mainly of the decoration.’⁵⁶³

His comparative approach is reflective of a time when the study of archaeological objects was not necessarily done on site and often relied on collected material that was brought back to Europe. A number of experts and scholars, specialising in art history, archaeology or anthropology, depended on information coming from the collector, his reports, sketches and drawings. As discussed in Chapter 3, Gustaf Adolf had promoted Andersson’s and also Karlbeck’s work abroad in Britain throughout the 1920s. He sought out advice from a number of Western specialists regarding the discoveries made by this Swedish group in China. The form of this archaeological data was often limited to the drawings and small samples sent by Andersson to Sweden and taken around by Gustaf Adolf for further analysis and inspection. It took some years for the actual objects themselves to arrive in Sweden and for other Western experts to physically examine the material. However, by the time the objects got there a strong argument was already circulating that supported a direct cultural relationship between Neolithic and prehistoric cultures in the East and West.

Yetts considered Andersson’s arguments and in his article included the comparative drawings of the specific decorative motifs on the potteries in question. He mentioned that much relied on forthcoming scientific investigation, like further ethnological and chronological data including that from human remains. Still he posited that the Gansu decorative motifs corresponded exactly in style with those in Susa. Notably, he pointed out a ‘conventionalized

⁵⁶³ Yetts, ‘Painted Neolithic Pottery in China’, 308

bird design, combined with bands of symmetric patterns that stylistically were so closely related that a common origin for this motif could not be ruled out (Figure 66).⁵⁶⁴ Based on this evidence he concluded that Andersson's studies indicated that the Chinese had origins, cultural or racial, or perhaps both in a land west of China:

'Are the points of likeness between these widely distributed relics of Neolithic pottery to close to be fortuitous? They seem so; but decision would be premature before further reports have been received from China and fuller comparisons drawn[...]there can be scarcely room for doubt concerning a common origin [for the bird motifs at Chên-fan and Susa][...] Andersson's pioneering discoveries indicate that the Chinese had origins, cultural or racial or perhaps both in a land west of China.'⁵⁶⁵

This important publication in a noteworthy art historical journal promoted Andersson's Theory of Western Origin in Britain. During this period, the diffusionist debate dominated the intellectual environment in London, led by the extreme views of Smith and Perry to more moderate support by Rivers and the culture-complex theory by Childe, all discussed in the Introduction.⁵⁶⁶ Yetts was part of this scholarly milieu and without a doubt considered the diffusionist possibilities in his research on early China.

In 1926, he published 'Contacts between China and the West', again in the *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*.⁵⁶⁷ As pointed out by Stacey Pierson and noted in the Introduction of this thesis this journal not only brought Chinese art to a larger public but also had a general Eurocentric approach to the subject.⁵⁶⁸ The theme of diffusionism in ancient China fitted into these principles, where a Western superior culture either brought progress or settled in the underdeveloped territories that were then placed within China's borders of the

⁵⁶⁴ Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery': 308-310.

⁵⁶⁵ Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China', 308-310.

⁵⁶⁶ For an overview of the intellectual environment in Britain and references of the diffusionist theories circulating in the 1920s see, Introduction, 58-60.

⁵⁶⁷ Yetts, 'Contacts between China and the West', 116.

⁵⁶⁸ See, Introduction, 66; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 123.

twentieth century. This time Yetts was advocating in his message for a common cultural origin of Neolithic China and Europe. He even goes as far as declaring Andersson's discoveries as proof for this theory:

'Dr. Andersson proved that China shared a Neolithic culture with Persia and Europe'.⁵⁶⁹

The second half of this article discussed of the work of the German explorer Albert von Le Coq (1860-1930) who, at the time, conducted an investigation on the exchange of decorative and religious motifs between East and West based upon collected data from China and Central Asia.⁵⁷⁰ Von Le Coq's research addressed some of the intercultural concepts and the idea that the East owed some of its cultural progress to the West:

'[...] to arouse discussion on intercultural exchanges between East and West as manifested through exploration in Central Asia. The East is represented here as the great debtor.'⁵⁷¹

It is an important indication that Yetts was a contributor to the diffusionist discussion on early Chinese culture and art in Britain.

One of the arguments where this very active support is manifested, including a comparative study of then recently discovered archaeological objects, was his publication on the so-called Luristan bronzes.⁵⁷² He considered the bronze decorative styles of a number of Chinese and Luristan objects and that the similarities in style were so profound that they were evidence of a cultural exchange between the two cultures in the Bronze Age period (Figure 67).⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁹ Yetts, 'Contacts Between China and the West', 116.

⁵⁷⁰ For a biographical reference and von Le Coq's work see, Albert von Le Coq, *Bilderatlas zur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte Mittelasiens* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1925); 'Dr. Albert von Le Coq', *Nature* 125 (3158) (10 May, 1930) [obituary]: 714-715.

⁵⁷¹ Yetts, 'Contacts Between China and the West', 116

⁵⁷² Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76-81.

⁵⁷³ The objects in this illustration support Yetts' comparative methodology to classify the bronze ornaments. He used examples from the collections of Raphael (A), Seligman (B) and the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (C, D, E). Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76-81.

The Luristan bronzes are stylistically and culturally similar to the Ordos bronzes (Figures 67 (B), 67 (D, E) and 34). They formed a defined group of Eurasian animal-style objects that were also classified as being of Scytho-Siberian descent. They started to appear as a novelty on the art market during the 1920s, at the same time as the Ordos and Chinese bronzes. The objects predominantly belonged to a bronze culture that was geographically situated in, what is today, west-central Iran and at the time given an approximate date from the twelfth to the eighth centuries BC, demonstrating the vast geographical area that produced the animal-style bronzes.⁵⁷⁴

The primary expert at the time classifying this group of bronzes was Rostovtzeff. As discussed, he was also one of the main authorities on the history of the Ordos bronzes and culture and an influence on Andersson's work on the subject. One of the ways that he institutionalised these bronzes was by comparing them with Chinese objects that were similar in date and had some stylistic parallels. In support of this view Yetts suggested that it was possible that these bronzes had influenced the later dating naturalistic style of the Han period. In doing so he implied that the Luristan objects predated the Han dynasty. He also posited that these naturalistic elements in Chinese art were imported and not something that developed independently. In his study Yetts suggested that the Luristan bronzes represented a missing link in the search for the origin of naturalism in Chinese art.

'Many writings have appeared on Luristan bronzes; but, so far as I know in none has the remark been made that possibly these bronzes influenced the art of the Han period. The following note summarizes a theory which I discussed in lectures at the time of the Persian Exhibition and later in Sweden. At the Östasiatiska Samlingarna in Stockholm, unexpectedly strong support of the theory

⁵⁷⁴ For references to the Luristan bronzes see, Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*; Andre Godard, *Les Bronzes des Luristan* (La Haye: L.J.C. Boucher, 1931); Pierre Amiet, *Les Antiquités du Luristan. Collection David-Weill*, (Paris, 1973); Peter S. Mooney, *Ancient Bronzes from Luristan, British Museum* (London: The British Museum Press, 1974); Edit Porada, *Ancient Iran: The art of pre-Islamic times* (London: Methuen, 1965).

was found amongst the amazingly significant collection of bronzes which is one of the chief glories of the Museum.⁵⁷⁵

Notably, at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities Yetts had found strong support for this theory. In a number of lectures dating from that period he presented his argument, one in London and two in Stockholm. The first was in 1931 at the International Exhibition of Persian Art in London demonstrating that this was as much a subject of interest in studies of Central Asian history and shows how the objects participated in a larger global debate at the time addressing intercultural issues.⁵⁷⁶ His analysis included comparative elements that the objects of both cultures had in common, especially some of the feline-forms that appeared as an ornamental motif on weaponry, belt-hooks and chariot-fittings or the so-called animal-in-combat motif that appeared in Chinese art in the latter half of the Zhou period and was popular during the Han period and thereafter (Figure 67 (B, D, E), 68, 69). Yetts' study is largely based on a group of objects in the collection of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, in the Seligman Collection and in the Raphael Collection. Although he refers to the objects as art throughout his article it is clear that they also provided important ethnological information. Their stylistic analysis offered cultural data that helped to position the objects within a historical framework. Furthermore, he concluded that it demonstrated that the evolution of Chinese design was clearly connected to that of Eurasia and acknowledged that these Western collections played a significant role in supplying this historical information. Particularly, Andersson's and Karlbeck's collecting activities were praised because they gathered together an unrivalled mass of material in order to demonstrate the evolution of early Chinese design.⁵⁷⁷ He recognised the importance of the Museum of Far

⁵⁷⁵ Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76.

⁵⁷⁶ The International Exhibition of Persian Art was held at Burlington House in 1931 see, *Persian Art, An Illustrated Souvenir of the Persian Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House, 1931* (London: Burlington House, 1931); Barry D. Wood, 'A Great Symphony of Pure Form: The 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art and its Influence', *Ars Orientalis* (30) (2000): 113-130.

⁵⁷⁷ Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76.

Eastern Antiquities collection in the debate exploring this theme in bronze art. His study showed the imperative roles of both private and public collections in the developing field of art and archaeology. This period is demonstrative of a time when the private collector significantly promoted scholarship of the objects in his collection and often discussions focussed on progress within the discipline itself. Yetts' studies define this period's scholarly approach to the subject. The examination or the handling of objects within a collector's environment, where the sharing of newly acquired material opened scholarly debate was an extremely valuable experience. During his two visits to Stockholm, in 1931 and 1933, Yetts not only had the opportunity to see the museum collection but he was also invited by Gustaf Adolf to stay at the palace and study his private collection.⁵⁷⁸

One of Yetts' obituaries was written by Percival David (1892-1964).⁵⁷⁹ In this obituary, he copied in a letter from Gustaf Adolf remembering these two occasions:

'Yetts was staying with us at the palace in Stockholm on two different occasions. The first was in May 1931, together with Eumo and Raphael, and again in September 1933, together with the same friends. On this later occasion they were here to attend the International Art Congress [The International Congress for Art Historians] and as part of the Congressional work, we had arranged a little exhibition of Chinese antiquities, then housed in a different place then now. I think I may say that he was held in great esteem by everyone who had the privilege to get in close contact with him for his thoroughness and balanced judgement. We all remember him for his quiet examining, let us say, a usual bronze. And then his verdict would come very quietly, usually very convincingly, and

⁵⁷⁸ David, 'Walter Perceval Yetts: An Appreciation', 120; Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', 178-184.

⁵⁷⁹ For biographical references on David and his collection of Chinese art see, Hansford, 'Sir Percival David', 472-475; Harry M. Garner, 'Sir Percival David' *TOCS* (1963-1964) [obituary]: x; Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation'.

with a great sense of humour which made working with him so thoroughly agreeable and delightful.⁵⁸⁰

Yetts was a guest of Gustaf Adolf's together with David, Eumorfopoulos and Raphael when this small British group visited Sweden. In 1931, he had been invited to give a lecture at the museum named 'Chinese contact with Central Asia' through the study of bronzes based on his research that included the Luristan bronzes.⁵⁸¹ At the time the museum held the largest collection of Ordos bronzes, equally important in the argument exploring the diffusion of the naturalistic animal-style motifs into Chinese bronze art. Two years later, he was a representative of the British delegation during the city's hosting of the Thirteenth International Congress for Art Historians.⁵⁸² The two important bronze and Ordos exhibitions were held at the museum and are discussed in Chapter 4. Of these exhibitions Yetts recalled that the Ordos bronzes presented in their ordered association provided a whole of the highest evidential value, the like of which had not been seen before in Europe, or indeed probably elsewhere in the world as a single specialized exhibition.⁵⁸³ It was indeed a crucial moment in the history of collecting. He also felt that the study of the Ordos bronzes was fundamental to the student of Chinese art and that the adaptation of what he called the nomad vogue often occurred in Han art. Supported by archaeological and historical data he mentioned that the import of horses into China might have played an important role in the transmittance of animal-style motifs and bronze technology into China.

In reference to the classification of the Chinese bronzes in the exhibition, also discussed in Chapter 4, Yetts agreed with the use of the term Huai-style for the group of bronzes collected by Karlbeck and furthermore posited that it was a good choice to recognise the different

⁵⁸⁰ David, 'Professor Walter Perceval Yetts: An Appreciation', 120.

⁵⁸¹ Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76-81.

⁵⁸² *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities: 1-10 September 1933.*

⁵⁸³ Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', 183.

regional styles because China, in his words, never constituted a single cultural unit.⁵⁸⁴ He stressed that new archaeological data supported a classification methodology based on a territorial basis:

As research advances, we shall no doubt learn to recognize the different styles characterizing several centres of civilization which existed side by side, and probably new classification will be mainly according to locality'.⁵⁸⁵

This is an extremely relevant point in the acknowledgement of the concept of the intercultural in Chinese art today, and something that is recently discussed by a number of scholars including Jonathan Hay.⁵⁸⁶ Yetts understood the complexities of the distinct types of influences in China's bronze art and how their design and ornament were different and similar at the same time. On the one hand he realised that China was never a cultural whole but on the other hand he also proposed a cultural unity between the Chinese, Persian and Europeans during the Bronze Age. However, the identification of regionality in Chinese art was principally a matter of classification at the time. New archaeological discoveries were anticipated to shed light on whether these influences were due to a direct cultural diffusion that was considered non-Chinese, to what degree ornamental designs were obviously imported and others indigenous and reflective of what can be identified and typified as Chinese. These included also some of the questions that they were trying to answer in correlation with the two exhibitions in Stockholm and led by Gustaf Adolf in this organised discussion at the museum in 1933.⁵⁸⁷ During this trip he met Andersson and Karlbeck on several occasions and acknowledged their roles in organising the exhibition displays.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁴ Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', 183.

⁵⁸⁵ Yetts, 'Two Chinese Exhibitions in Stockholm', 183.

⁵⁸⁶ See, Jonathan Hay for an art historical discussion on the intercultural in Chinese bronze art. Hay, 'Toward a theory of intercultural', 5-41.

⁵⁸⁷ Some of the questions see, Chapter 4, 199-200.

⁵⁸⁸ Yetts, 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes', 76.

Karlbeck fondly remembered Yetts as:

‘A true friend who was always ready to give up some of his valuable time in order to help with various problems that confronted me’.⁵⁸⁹

Their friendship dates back to 1928 when Yetts wrote an article on a bronze ritual vessel that belonged to Karlbeck, and gave a rare insight into his private collection.⁵⁹⁰ A year later, Karlbeck met him in Berlin, where he attended his lecture on Shang period casting techniques.⁵⁹¹ The museum archives include correspondence between the two and illustrate that they had a lot in common.⁵⁹² They both had lived in China for a period of time and, like Karlbeck, Yetts became fascinated with Chinese culture and history during this residence. They focussed greater part of their research on the study of bronze casting techniques, to establish of a coherent classification system and, in doing so looked at the topic of interculturality in Chinese bronzes through possible cultural diffusions.

Yetts and Karlbeck visited Berlin in 1929 to attend the momentous ‘Exhibition of Chinese art’.⁵⁹³ It was organised by the German connoisseur group the Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst, founded in 1926 and dedicated to the promotion of East Asian art.⁵⁹⁴ The exhibition was the first of its kind in Europe bringing together 1,300 objects from 170 sources and thirteen countries. Yetts mentioned that the display was according to period but material and aesthetic considerations were reconciled in a way which, in his words, manifested rare taste

⁵⁸⁹ Karlbeck, ‘Walter Perceval Yetts’, 185.

⁵⁹⁰ Perceval W. Yetts, ‘A Bronze Vessel Dedicated to the Grand Guardian’, *BMC* 52 (299) (Feb., 1928): 54+56+59.

⁵⁹¹ Karlbeck, ‘Anyang Moulds’, 39-60.

⁵⁹² Volume IIX, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive.

⁵⁹³ Besides Yetts, other lecturers included Andersson, Gregory Boróvka, Keeper at the Hermitage Museum at the time and author of *Scythian Art* (1928), Hobson and Rackham. Perceval W. Yetts, ‘Chinese Art in Berlin’, *BMC* 54 (312) (Mar. 1929): 128+132-135+139; Perceval W. Yetts, ‘Exhibition of Chinese Art in Berlin’, *JRAS* 2 (Apr., 1929): 337-339.

⁵⁹⁴ The society was inevitably connected to the publications of the *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*. This journal was founded in 1912 by Kümmel and William Cohn (1880-1861). See, Walravens ‘*Ostasiatische Zeitschrift. Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst. Bibliography and Register*’.

and discernment.⁵⁹⁵ The principal consideration was classification and arrangement which included the compilation of a catalogue containing a miniature photograph of each exhibit. This gave an overall coherent illustration of the exhibition and was in alignment with the developing model of presenting, exhibiting and cataloguing art and making it available to a larger, growing public at the time.

In this exhibition a number of the objects of the Kozl6v Expedition were put on display. This demonstrates that from an early period the archaic material culture of China and Central Asia were considered a segment of a larger whole. Already in 1926 Yetts had published on the discoveries by Kozl6v. The exhibition gave him the opportunity to examine the actual objects and get a fuller understanding of several important points, including the verification of their dating and their relationship with Chinese objects. In fact, before this visit he had already established that the objects represented proof that an intercultural affiliation existed between the ancient East and West:

‘They add an important page to the history of cultural diffusions and provide concrete proof of one of the channels of communication between China and the West some two thousand years ago.’⁵⁹⁶

More precisely, Yetts mentioned that a channel of communication had existed in the past and added an important page in the history of cultural diffusions. He was also concerned with the bearing that such archaeological discoveries had on history of art. The tombs unearthed by Kozl6v had included a number of Scythian, Chinese and Hellenic objects and showed that there was some form of cultural exchange amongst Bronze Age cultures; artistic, diplomatic or through trade (Figures 70 and 71). By studying the objects Yetts examined the possible transfer of artistic and technological characteristics into Chinese material culture. One of the

⁵⁹⁵ Yetts, ‘Chinese Art in Berlin’, 128.

⁵⁹⁶ Yetts, ‘Discoveries of the Kozl6v Expedition’, 185.

methodologies was to analyse a cultural relationship between the objects through comparing decorative motifs. This was supported by the latest archaeological evidence which looked at the environment and other objects found alongside each other in the tombs. This ethnological approach to the study of China's bronze art and archaeology was thus also connected to art historical analysis of ornament and design and essential to the classification process of the objects and data.

In 1926 Yetts had organised a new group of lectures titled 'Oriental Culture' at the School of Oriental Studies (now the School of Oriental and African Studies) in London, these also included non-Chinese subjects.⁵⁹⁷ The union of the variety of topics included in the study of, what he defined as, oriental culture within a single course was pioneering but also demonstrative of the significance and relation of the different subjects to each other. For example, he invited Minns to give a series of lectures on Scytho-Siberian art. At the time, Minns argued that there was a direct relationship between the Scythian and Han style, one influencing the other through direct intercultural exchange. Other lecturers included Laufer, Karlgren, von Le Coq and Pelliot; the latter two conducted extensive expedition campaigns into Central Asia and collected a great number of objects for Western collections.⁵⁹⁸ One of the factors that all of these guest-speakers had in common was that, at the time, they investigated the topic of interculturality in ancient Chinese history through the study of archaeological and cultural objects. Yetts deliberately named his course 'Oriental Culture' and included studies on Chinese art and archaeology as an important element of a much larger topic, namely that of the historical study of culture. He was aware that this ethnological approach was connected to art and archaeology, and where the comparative method was used

⁵⁹⁷ Governing Body Minutes. Volume X. (October 1925- July 1926). SOAS Archive, 26 and 36.

⁵⁹⁸ Governing Body Minutes. (Oct. 1925-Jul. 1926). 20, 26 and 36; Governing Body Minutes, Volume XI, (October 1926- July 1927), SOAS Archive, 3, 7, 52, 59, 63.

For further reading on expeditions into Central Asia at that period see, Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road: The Search for Lost Cities and Treasures of Chinese Central Asia*, (London: John Murray, 1980).

as a tool in the study of evolution, progress and Style. In the proposal for these lectures he thought it was important that they were taught adjacent to linguistic studies:

‘Knowledge of their civilizations, in respect to the arts, is an essential step towards the understanding of Oriental Nations, and to this end may be regarded as an important adjunct to linguistic studies. Besides helping to foster friendly international relations, the study of Oriental Culture is relevant to inquiry into the sources of our own civilization. The debt we owe to the East have been demonstrated no less abundantly than have the borrowings by the East from us, and much still awaits investigation.’⁵⁹⁹

By promoting such cultural studies Britain’s historical link with the East was restored and encouraged friendly international relations.⁶⁰⁰ In his younger years, Yetts had been part of British military presence in China and understood the diplomacies involved between the two countries.⁶⁰¹ A cultural association in the past, even ancient, was relevant to the present and these cultural studies, including topics of art and archaeology, encouraged positive international affairs. The traditional study of philology was connected to cultural history in order to give a full understanding of the East with the result that original theories by Kircher, de Guignes, de Pauw and Ball were reconsidered within the analysis of new archaeological data.⁶⁰² What is important to keep in mind is that the comparative methodologies of these philological studies were similar to those considering diffusionism.

What these lectures represented was that they were an essential part of a broader intellectual discussion in London at a time that explored the concept of diffusionism in the ancient world. Coincidentally Yetts explored such ideas in his studies and presented in his articles from this period. He deliberately included the presentation of any historical intercultural links between

⁵⁹⁹ Governing Body Minutes.(October 1925-July 1926). 36.

⁶⁰⁰ Governing Body Minutes. (Oct. 1925-Jul. 1926), 36.

⁶⁰¹ In the 1920s and 1930s Britain still focussed on imperialistic expansion in the East. The study of Chinese culture at the School of Oriental Studies can be explained within this sphere of diplomatic education.

⁶⁰² For a basic analysis of the diffusionist theories and the origin of Chinese civilization see, Introduction 53-63.

Central Asian and Chinese cultures in the official academic program. The timeframe when diffusionism was an accepted and common element of cultural and archaeological studies was only very short. Indeed, it delineates a defined period in time when the discipline of Chinese Art and Archaeology was founded within an academic curriculum in Britain.

In Yetts' proposal for the program he connected to research at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities by inviting Karlgren. Furthermore, he asked a number of scholars to discuss their latest research questions on the topic of interculturality in his course. On the other hand, the growth of Western collections provided continuous new study material. Objects in the private collections of Seligman, Raphael, Eurmorfopoulos, Karlbeck and Hellström were made readily available to him.⁶⁰³ The formation of the syndicate opened a meaningful dialogue between Swedish and British collectors and scholars. Yetts was part of this discourse and at the time influenced the direction of this field in Britain greatly. His efforts to organise the studies at the School of Oriental Studies led to Lectureship in Chinese Art and Archaeology in 1930 and later to the first Chair of Chinese Art and Archaeology at the Courtauld Institute in 1932.⁶⁰⁴ Both positions were filled by him.

The discussion of Yetts' articles from this period highlight that he applied the comparative method to the study of non-inscribed bronze art and examined the evolution of style and decorative motifs to classify and support intercultural concepts in China's material culture. In doing so Chinese and Central Asian objects were classified within historical framework that included the history of the Far East, Middle East and Europe. His lectures and travels outside Britain show a hitherto unknown international scope for this debate. In retrospect, it defined how Western collections of this type supported this discussion. In

⁶⁰³ Perceval W. Yetts, 'A Chinese Scabbard-Jade', *BMC* 49 (283) (Oct., 1926): 196+198-201; Perceval W. Yetts, 'The Bronzes', *BMC* 68 (394) (Jan., 1936): 14-17+222; Yetts, 'A Bronze Vessel Dedicated to the Grand Guardian'; Yetts, *The George Eurmorfopoulos Collection*.

⁶⁰⁴ Governing Body Minutes. Volume XVI. (Oct. 1931- Jul. 1932). SOAS Archive, 69-71; Chinese Department (1930-1937). CIA8/2007. Courtauld Institute Archive; Pierson, 'Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation', 7-66; Clunas, 'Oriental Art/Far Eastern Art', 199-200.

Britain, the British Museum was the principal leader in collecting China's archaic bronze art. At the time its collection was enriched through the participation in the Karlbeck Syndicate and in turn provided important study material to a new group of scholars and students of Chinese culture, art and archaeology in the West.

5.2 The British Museum, Hobson and the Karlbeck Syndicate.

The curator of the Chinese collections at the British Museum, Hobson connects the museum involvement in the Karlbeck Syndicate. The discussion of mechanics of the syndicate showed that the British Museum was one of its most prestigious and largest clients buying numerous objects (Illustration 72). Its purchases were predominantly subsidised by the State, including those made through Karlbeck.⁶⁰⁵ The 1920s and early 1930s is a significant time in the formation of its collections. During this period it extended its so-called oriental collections as part of a reorganisation of its departments.⁶⁰⁶ Many new acquisitions were made. It was unusual for such an important national museum to instruct a foreign collector to purchase specific objects on their behalf and its association with the Karlbeck Syndicate was an uncommon venture for the British Museum. The dominating influence behind many of the additions made at the time was Hobson. Through analysis of the archival data it is demonstrated that he also played a key role in the museum's participation in the syndicate and British-Swedish relations in the field.

Hobson was better known for his expertise and pioneering work on ceramics, and incidentally trying to re-construct the history and origin of its production in China. His study on dating and classifying early Chinese glazed ceramics is briefly discussed in Chapter 2. Around 1915 Karlbeck had offered him part of his ceramic collection consisting of Han and

⁶⁰⁵ Standing Committee Report. No. 4782. (9 May 1933), 8.

⁶⁰⁶ More recently the history of the British Museum's Chinese collections were discussed by Craig Clunas, see Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art', 190-193.

Song period glazed wares. It was about this period that Hobson had travelled to Chicago to study similar specimen brought back by Laufer.⁶⁰⁷ Questions on origin and arguments that led to proposals where the source of Chinese glazed wares had its foundations in the West followed. Hobson was well-informed on the collections of the young Swedish collector in China who not only sold relatively unknown ceramics of a newly discovered type but also rare bronzes objects. What was interesting of Karlbeck's collections was that they could shed new light on themes such as origin and the evolution of design and ornament. When the opportunity came for the British Museum to participate in the Karlbeck Syndicate many years later Hobson encouraged this.

Hobson joined the British Museum in 1897, and at first was involved in the publication of the museum catalogues on English pottery and porcelain.⁶⁰⁸ Between 1909 and 1910 he served, together with Eumorfopoulos, on the committee of the 'Chinese pottery and porcelain' exhibition held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club.⁶⁰⁹ It was during this project that he focussed his interest to Chinese ceramics.⁶¹⁰ In 1908, he published *Porcelain, Oriental, Continental and British* that included a large section on Chinese ceramic wares.⁶¹¹ A year later, he wrote a series of articles on China's early ceramics and included a number of Song and Yuan period objects, popularly collected at the time.⁶¹² In 1915 he published his two

⁶⁰⁷ See, Chapter 2, 81.

⁶⁰⁸ 'R. L. Hobson', *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941) [obituary], 9-10.

⁶⁰⁹ Edward Dillon, 'Early Chinese Pottery and Porcelain at the Burlington Fine Arts Club', *BMC* 17 (88) (Jul., 1910): 210-213; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 94.

⁶¹⁰ Stacey Pierson commented on this exhibition as being reflective of a new interest in Britain for collecting early dating, meaning pre-Ming ceramics. Rackham mentioned that around 1914 Hobson started to apply methods used for studying English ceramics to those of what he considered as Oriental descent and produced a framework to classify the Chinese wares. See, Dillon, 'Early Chinese Pottery and Porcelain at the Burlington Fine Arts Club', 210-213; Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 94; Rackham, 'Mr. R.L. Hobson's Contribution to the Study of Chinese Ceramics', 11-13.

⁶¹¹ Robert L. Hobson, *Porcelain, Oriental, Continental and British*, (London: Constable, 1908); Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 93

⁶¹² Robert L. Hobson, 'Wares of the Sung and Yüan Dynasties', *BMC* 15 (73) (Apr., 1909): 18-25; Robert L. Hobson, 'Wares of the Sung and Yüan Dynasties', *BMC* 15 (74) (May, 1909): 82-93; Robert L. Hobson, 'Wares of the Sung and Yüan Dynasties', *BMC* 15 (75) (Jun., 1909): 160-173; Robert L. Hobson, 'Wares of the Sung and Yüan Dynasties', *BMC* 16 (80) (Nov., 1909): 74-84.

volumes, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, that was internationally heralded by connoisseurs like Gustaf Adolf, as the standard authority on its subject.⁶¹³

In the restructuring process of the British Museum departments Hobson was given a central role. Originally, the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities contained its collection of so-called Oriental antiquities and other affiliated ethnographical material demonstrating that early Chinese art was in fact classified as ethnology. In 1921 this department was renamed the Department of Ceramics and Ethnography and included all Chinese ceramic and cultural objects. The 1920s defined a period of growth in its Chinese collection. In 1933 the department was named the Department of Oriental Antiquities and Ethnography.⁶¹⁴ This time it housed all its Chinese objects, including ceramics, prints, painting, jades, furniture, textiles and lacquer. Hobson had been the Keeper of the oriental departments since 1921 and worked at the museum until his retirement in 1938. During his curatorship the expansion of this collection was primarily due to the significant efforts of Hobson.⁶¹⁵ Karlbeck had already sold a small collection of early ceramics to the British Museum in 1925.⁶¹⁶ Hobson's notebooks document that throughout the 1920s Gustaf Adolf kept him informed on Karlbeck's and Andersson's collecting activities in China.⁶¹⁷ As discussed, his expertise was requested on the Neolithic discoveries by Andersson regarding the dating, classification and participation in the scholarly debate on early Chinese art in Sweden and Britain. These new discoveries in China connected him to this group in Stockholm.

⁶¹³ Rackham, 'Mr. R.L. Hobson's Contribution to the Study of Chinese Ceramics', 11; Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*; Gyllensvärd, 'King Gustaf VI Adolf's Approach to Chinese Art', 33.

⁶¹⁴ Miller, *That Noble Cabinet*, 330; Wilson, *The British Museum*, 224

⁶¹⁵ Standing Committee Report. No. 4738. (14 February 1931). Central Archive. British Museum; Standing Committee Report. No. 6750. (14 March 1931). Central Archive. British Museum.

⁶¹⁶ Andersson, 'The Tenth Anniversary of the Swedish Research Committee and the Exhibition of the Karlbeck Collection', 234.

⁶¹⁷ Robert L. Hobson, A Notebook by Hobson. CE/38/511. The Robert Lockhart Hobson Papers. Central Archive. British Museum.

Hobson's curatorship is an important factor in the analysis of the Karlbeck Syndicate in Britain because during this period a great number of Chinese bronzes of a specific type were purchased by the museum. In the *British Museum Quarterly* (1932-33) he wrote that the collection of early Chinese bronzes at the museum was still inadequate.⁶¹⁸ As discussed throughout this thesis many archaic objects appeared on the art market and extensive European private and public collections were formed. Hobson understood that the respectability of the British Museum and as a national symbol it needed to keep up with this new collecting trend and affiliated scholarship. Especially, now that newly founded institutions like the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities were claiming pioneering research and presented unique material in their collections.

Hobson requested for funding to participate in the Karlbeck Syndicate from the museum's trustees. One of his proposals was that these acquisitions were specifically selected by him for their ornament and design and that this was of particular interest because it showed the progress, or evolution, of Chinese decorative art.⁶¹⁹ More importantly, he was purposely expanding this particular collection at the museum as part of establishing a coherent chronology and the institutional framing of the objects. This taxonomy was based upon typology and focussed on the patterns of style that fitted into an evolutionary scheme. Similarly to the system explored by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. The official archival data of the British Museum and the syndicate are the Standing Committee Reports at the museum's Central Archive.⁶²⁰ On 1 May 1931 Hobson approached the trustees for the first time proposed to take a full share in the expedition:

'Syndicate for the purchase of Antiquities in China: Read a report by Mr. Hobson, 1 May, proposing that the Trustees should take shares in a syndicate, operated in Sweden, under the Crown

⁶¹⁸ Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes', 2-3; Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes', 81-83.

⁶¹⁹ Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes', 2.

⁶²⁰ Standing Committee Report .No. 4782. (9 May 1931), 8.

Prince as President, which employed Mr. Karlbeck, an expert and trustworthy antiquary, who had long been resident in China, to obtain excavated antiquities, the Crown Prince having invited English members to fill in vacancies. Mr. Hobson proposed that one share, at £ 275, be taken from the Museum on account of the 1932-3 departmental grant, Sir Percival David having kindly undertaken to advance the money; but it was possible that the syndicate might not be operating long, he suggested that a further share at £275 be taken from the Roebling Fund or some other source. The Trustees approved both suggestions.’⁶²¹

There are a number of important points that Hobson wanted to bring across to the Board of Trustees. He clearly mentioned that Gustaf Adolf, the Swedish Crown Prince, was the President of the syndicate and personally had invited a number of British members to fill in new vacancies. This brought an air of prestige and connoisseurship to the organisation of the expedition. He guaranteed Karlbeck was according to him an expert and trustworthy antiquary and that he personally placed faith in any acquisitions and selections by him. One share in the venture cost £275. Importantly, David already advanced the money as time was essential and the syndicate would probably not be operating for long. This assistance by David, although not a syndicate member himself, was extremely significant because he was the most eminent ceramic collector in Britain and promoter of Chinese art of his time. Thus, David financially supported the expeditions of the Karlbeck Syndicate. In 1932 Karlbeck had offered David a collection of potsherds he had collected at the ancient kiln site near ‘Hangchow’ (Hangzhou) dating from the Song period.⁶²² It is not clear if David purchased this collection, however, he did buy a number objects from Karlbeck during this period. As collectors there is a significant difference between Karlbeck and David. David was a private collector that later institutionalised his collection. Karlbeck was a collector for an institution, with a specific brief what to purchase. David recognised this quality in Karlbeck. During a

⁶²¹ Standing Committee Report. No. 4782. (9 May 1931), 8.

⁶²² Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Letter to David, Peking 22 November 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

syndicate trip he negotiated on David's behalf the purchase of the Burchard collection for the sum of £1800.⁶²³ He also bought a walnut water vessel dating from the Ming period which was, according to Karlbeck:

‘Shipped via Canada and addressed to one of the ladies at the Stockholm Museum with the request to address it to Hobson. I did not dare ship it directly to the British Museum. The Customs examiner at the post office would have opened the parcel if he had found it was addressed to the British Museum and he might have confiscated it.’⁶²⁴

The British Museum and Hobson in particular was an important intermediary for the British collectors that were purchasing through Karlbeck.⁶²⁵ On many occasions consignments for the British group were addressed to him and received at the British Museum (Figure 73).⁶²⁶ The objects were sent from the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and never directly from China. The same procedure was followed for the objects purchased by Karlbeck for David; via Canada, to an associate in Sweden and finally to Hobson at the British Museum any unnecessary confiscation was avoided. Upon arrival they were unpacked and inspected by Hobson, as a means of authenticating the objects. He was then responsible for returning the included receipt to Andersson. At the time the British museum reported the operations a success:

⁶²³ Orvar Karlbeck, ‘Letter to David, Peiping 15 October 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁶²⁴ Karlbeck, ‘Letter to David, Peiping 15 October 1932’.

⁶²⁵ There are a number of references of purchases by Karlbeck to David in Volume IIX of the Karlbeck Syndicate Archives. Already in 1931 David bought a Ming period porcelain stem-cup and incense burner. These purchases were treated separately to those of the syndicate. However, payments to Karlbeck, like for the syndicate, were made through Lagrelius. The correspondence between Karlbeck and David included some academic exchange on the identification of kiln sites from the Song period, which Karlbeck had visited and reported on.

Karlbeck, ‘Letter to David, Peking 22 November 1932’; Karlbeck, ‘Letter to David, Peiping 15 October 1932’; Percival David, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 13 November 1931’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Percival David, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 24 January 1933’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

For Andersson's correspondence with Hobson on syndicate procedures see, Johan G. Andersson, ‘Letter to Hobson, 12 November 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives; Johan G. Andersson, ‘Letter to Hobson, 25 October 1932’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

⁶²⁶ Andersson, ‘Letter, 12 November 1932’; Andersson, ‘Letter, 25 October 1932’; Robert L. Hobson, ‘Note to Andersson, London 4 December 1934’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

‘To continue the operations of the syndicate which had financed Mr. Karlbeck with the object of obtaining antiquities, chiefly bronzes from China [...] the expedition has so far been successful, and the Museum had obtained a number of bronzes of great interest at a price far lower than would have been paid to dealers. During that period the Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf had enquired whether the Trustees would be willing to take on another two shares in the Syndicate of £ 275 each and to this the Trustees agreed.’⁶²⁷

During the time the syndicate operated Gustaf Adolf had enquired if the museum was willing to take on two more shares for a total of £ 550. This was agreed. In the discussion on the mechanics of the syndicate in Chapter 4, it was demonstrated that the participating museums did not have to pay the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities a commission, as the private collectors did. Therefore they did not directly contribute to the funding of the purchases of Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and there appears a certain kind of solidarity between the participating museums. Overall, this venture proved extremely attractive to the British Museum. The far lower prices paid by Karlbeck in comparison to dealers [in Europe] promoted an appealing arrangement. The purchasing of cultural and historical objects by a national institution defined a time in British history when such acquisitions through dealers or collectors were not unusual. The relationship between the collector and museum was often encouraged. In the recent past, Bushell had sold many objects to the Victoria and Albert Museum and British Museum and Marc Aurel Stein (1862-1943) had collected numerous historical objects and manuscripts for the British Museum during his expeditions into Central Asia, India and China.⁶²⁸ The Eumorfopoulos Collection was purchased by the State a couple

⁶²⁷ Standing Committee Report. No. 4920. (12 November 1932). The Central Archive, British Museum.

⁶²⁸ For a reference on Bushell’s collecting activity see, Pearce, ‘Collecting, Connoisseurship and Commerce’, 17-25.

For Stein’s expeditions see, Helen Wang, *Sir Aurel Stein in The Times* (London: Saffron, 2002); Helen Wang, *Handbook to the Stein Collections in the UK*. (London: British Museum Occasional Paper 129, 1999).

of years later to be divided amongst the British Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum.⁶²⁹

The Karlbeck Syndicate arrangement with the British Museum however was unique because of its direct relationship with another non-British museum, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, and how it united a group of collectors throughout Europe. Today, the British Museum is the main institution that houses the legacy of the syndicate purchases in Britain, including some of the objects that belonged to private collectors and later added to its collections through donations and bequests.⁶³⁰ Some years later, Watson mentioned:

‘It is due to a group of collectors in London that the museum [British Museum] is able to illustrate so richly the subject now treated’.⁶³¹

During the 1931-1932 expedition the museum concentrated on purchasing of archaic ornamental objects, in particular small decorated Zhou and Han period weaponry, belt-hooks, chariot-fittings and mirrors (Figures 43, 44, 45, 46). In 1934 they added archaic jades and Shang period ritual vessels, as well as, early dating glass and Anyang ceramics. The museum was predominantly interested in the acquisition of series of objects that widely represented China’s Bronze Age. A factor that contributed to the extensive purchasing expedition by the museum was that at the time a serious idea circulated to create a separate Asian Art Museum in London.⁶³² Two of its main supporters were Hobson and Yetts. The foundation of this museum was never realised. The precise reasons for this are not clear. What it does show is that the expansion of the Chinese collections, institutional and private, was a direct result of the popularity of the subject and due to the efforts of a small group of specialists and

⁶²⁹ For a reference on the sale of the Eumorfopoulos Collection see, Green, ‘‘A New Orientation of Ideas’’, 51-52.

⁶³⁰ The bequests included the collections of Seligman, Raphael, Oppenheim and part of the Sedgwick Collection. For further reading see, Pearce, *On Collecting*, 248-250; Miller, *That Noble Cabinet*, 399 and 230; Green, ‘Britain’s Chinese Collections’, 121-177; Gray, ‘The Oscar Raphael Collection for the Nation’, 276-283; Wilson, *The British Museum: A History*, 230.

⁶³¹ William Watson, *Handbook to the Collections of Early Chinese Antiquities* (London: Trustees of the British Museum: 1963), 5

⁶³² Standing Committee Report. No. 4738. (14 February 1931); Standing Committee Report. No. 6750. (14 March 1931); ‘Editorial: An Asiatic Museum?’, *BMC* 58 (336) (Apr., 1941): 111; Perceval W. Yetts, ‘Review [untitled], *BMC* 46 (267) (Jun., 1925): 319- 320.

connoisseurs. A dedicated museum called for adequate display space. The presentation of a coherent collection that demonstrated the evolutionary development of China's art and culture in London would have been celebrated as a cultural achievement within a traditional Imperial system.⁶³³ The display of Chinese objects was bound by the ideological assumptions anchored in British history, where its political and economic power was demonstrated through the ownership of a non-Western culture.⁶³⁴ This possession of the cultural and historical is related to the concept of internal colonization, discussed in the Introduction and in relation to the exhibitions in Sweden at the time.⁶³⁵ In the 1920s and 1930s Britain was still in the mist of imperialistic expansion in the East. This was also manifested in the organisation of the lectures by Yetts titled 'Oriental Cultures' and can be explained within this sphere of diplomatic education. The purchasing campaign by Hobson for the museum is one interpretation of his central role in the presentation of this ideology behind the Chinese collections in Britain.

In addition to the discussion of the Chinese bronzes at the British Museum, Anneliese Bulling's publication on late Zhou and Han art in its collection served as a reminder to this significant collecting period.⁶³⁶ Namely, she discussed that a number of important additions were made during the inter-war period, including the bequests by Oppenheim and Raphael.⁶³⁷ The museum was considered a natural destination for these private collections, where they were made available for research and on display to a large international public. Of the bequests dating from that period, the Seligman Collection encapsulated this collecting incentive. The objects of the Karlbeck Syndicate and their institutionalisation by Seligman

⁶³³ Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 18; Stocking Jr, *The Ethnographer's Magic*, 102-103.

⁶³⁴ Yetts, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection*, 338; Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 18. For further reading on colonialism and collecting see, Stocking Jr, *The Ethnographer's Magic*, 102-103; Barringer and Flynn, *Colonialism and the Object*, 1-10.

⁶³⁵ On the concept of internal colonisation see, Introduction, 51; Chapter 4, 207-208.

⁶³⁶ Anneliese Bulling, 'Late Zhou and Han Art at the British Museum', *BM* 93 (578) (May, 1951): 152-157.

⁶³⁷ Bulling, 'Late Zhou and Han Art at the British Museum', 152-157.

demonstrate how he contributed to pioneering British scholarship on Chinese art and archaeology.

5.3 The Seligman Collection of Chinese Art: A Diffusionist Collection

The Seligman Collection of Chinese art was an extraordinary collection assembled over a period of about 40 years by Charles and Brenda Seligman (1882-1965) (Figure 74).⁶³⁸ The collection was wide-ranging and included ceramics, paintings, sculpture, bronzes, jades and glass.⁶³⁹ Most of the objects date from the pre-Ming period and were in standing with the collecting trend of the period. There is one specific group within this collection that can be separated from the whole, notably the archaic bronze weaponry and glass beads that were used in Seligman's studies on early Chinese culture. It is therefore important to understand Seligman's professional background.

Seligman and Brenda both contributed important work to the academic environment at the time. Their Chinese collection is just one aspect of their intellectual aspirations. They were key figures in the cultural and historical movement in Britain during this period. As young ethnologists they were at the centre of a growing academic field of anthropology and specifically concentrated on the study of material culture. Within their professional careers they focussed on ethnology and based importance on fieldwork and the study of cultures that also included prehistory and cultural history. Their Chinese collection formed a parallel to this ethnological interest, and, although there was an aesthetic incentive for a greater part of their collection, they also valued its cultural aspects. They were vivacious promoters of Chinese art and participated in many exhibitions, importantly bringing their objects to a larger public. They were active members the Oriental Ceramic Society and Seligman was a

⁶³⁸ For biographical references see, Meyer Fortes, 'Brenda Seligman, 1882-1965: A Memoir', *Man* 65 (Nov.-Dec., 1965) [obituary]: Basil Gray, 'Mrs B.Z. Seligman', *TOCS* 35 (1963-1964) [obituary]: xxvi; 177-181; Fortes, 'Charles Gabriel Seligman', 1-6.

⁶³⁹ For a selection of objects in the Seligman Collection see, Harry M. Garner, 'Chinese Works of Art from the Seligman Collection' *Apollo* 83 (51) (May, 1966): 351.

member of the British General Committee to the International Exhibition of Chinese art 1935- 1936.⁶⁴⁰ Robert Thorp interestingly mentioned that the collecting period in Europe prior to the Second World War is defined by an explosion of content based studies, where knowledge about society became accessible through the study of art.⁶⁴¹ This is significant in the Seligman Collection and what we know how Seligman approached the subject and exemplified through a number of his studies on Chinese culture, art and archaeology. In a letter to Daniel J. Finn (1886-1936), who then recently discovered a Neolithic culture on Lama Island off Hong Kong, Seligman made a clear division between the study of Chinese archaeology and art.⁶⁴² This separation of the two fields was also a significant division in his collection:

‘I do feel that it is necessary to push Far Eastern Archaeology, as far apart from Far Eastern Art, in this part of the world’.⁶⁴³

He felt that in this part of the world (the West) the differentiation between the two was especially relevant. There was a clear partition within his private collection. As discussed throughout this thesis the division between art and ethnology was often unclear during this period and the two depended on each other’s methodologies and theories in order to classify the objects. Art usually addresses the aesthetic principles of beauty and the archaeological and historical connected to cultural studies. The archaic weaponry and glass beads were considered a separate group by Seligman. He had selected them for their specific cultural significance and an academic motivation. His purchases through the Karlbeck Syndicate represent this particular selection.

⁶⁴⁰ *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1935-1936*, v; ‘C.G. Seligman’, *TOCS* 18 (1940-1941): 15-16; Gray, ‘Mrs B.Z. Seligman’, xxvi.

⁶⁴¹ Thorp, ‘Studies of Chinese Archaeology/Art History in the West’, 52.

⁶⁴² Finn graduated from the Royal University in Oxford and distinguished in Classical Archaeology. He was appointed Professor of Education at the Hong Kong University, where he was a lecturer in Geography. For biographical reference see, A. James, ‘Distinguished Jesuit, Late Rev. Daniel J. Finn, His Work in China’, (Whelan Press Cuttings, 1936), SELIGMAN 6/1/3, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁴³ Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter to Finn, 9 April 1936’, SELIGMAN3/1/6, The Seligman Papers.

The focus in this study is on Seligman himself- as opposed to Brenda- and how the collection connected to the Karlbeck Syndicate. However, the influence of Brenda can't be fully excluded in understanding the history of the collection. Both believed in the understanding of cultural histories and relationships through material forms and technology and that the study of material culture should be at the heart of learning about non-Western cultures. Seligman and Brenda married in 1905. Soon after they conducted a number of field work expeditions together, with Seligman focussing on ethnological classifications and Brenda on kinship and marriage.⁶⁴⁴ Their marriage also symbolises the beginning of their Chinese collection when they received a Ming dynasty beaker as a wedding gift.⁶⁴⁵ The subject of their private collection was decided. Gradually, they purchased a number of archaic objects and Tang period tomb figures, in vogue with this new collecting trend. Some years later Gray posited that the increase of early dating objects on the art market inevitably affected the taste of the collector in Britain:

'Taste does control, as well as respond to, what is to be seen in exhibitions, or even what reaches the market, even what sites are excavated'.⁶⁴⁶

When the Seligmans started collecting early Chinese art they followed the market, seeking out novelty objects relating to their interest of history and culture.

⁶⁴⁴ The countries where they conducted fieldwork included Melanesia, the Sudan, Egypt and Sri Lanka from which they collected archaeological objects, pottery, beads and other ethnologically interesting material. This part of their collection is part of the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Cambridge, the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and the Petrie Museum at University College London today, see, Sarah Milliken, 'Charles and Brenda Seligman Biography', in the *Catalogue of Palaeolithic Artefacts from Egypt in the Pitt Rivers Museum* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003); Levell, 'Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste', 76; Kuper, *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, 5, 18-19.

For co-publications see, Charles G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, *The Veddas* (Oosterhout: Anthropological Publications, 1969); Charles G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, 'The Kababish, a Sudan Arab Tribe', *Harvard African Studies*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: African Department of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, 1922): 105-186; Charles G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, 'The Bari', *JRAI* 58 (Jul.- Dec., 1928): 409-479); Charles G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* (London: Routledge, 1932).

⁶⁴⁵ 'C.G. Seligman', 15; Ayers, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*, viii; Levell, 'Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste', 75.

⁶⁴⁶ Gray, 'The Development of Taste in Chinese Art in the West 1872 to 1972', 19.

The relationship of Seligman and Brenda has recently been discussed by Nicky Levell through their Chinese collection.⁶⁴⁷ Brenda raised the collection's aesthetic quality when she found beautiful, what she called, treasures in shops.⁶⁴⁸ Seligman, on the other hand, also concentrated on a specific group of objects that were bought for the purpose of scholarly research. In 1966 the Seligman Collection of Chinese Art was exhibited at the British Arts Council in London following a unique arrangement where it was bequeathed to the Council for a period of ten years.⁶⁴⁹ After the ten year loan period it was split between the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. One of the reasons for the nationalisation of the collection was that both Seligman and Brenda found it important that the objects were made available to the general public and students of Chinese art:

‘Both Mrs. Seligman and her husband were anxious that the general public throughout the country, as well as students of Oriental Art, should have the opportunity to see and enjoy the collection.’⁶⁵⁰

By the time this arrangement took place Seligman had been deceased for a quarter of a century. However, what is important is that the final destination of this collection was always intended at a public institution and an important example of the close relationship between private collector and the museum during this period. By keeping greater part of the collection together the value of its completeness was taken into consideration. Adequate space was provided for, what Susan Pearce frames as, the immortal disposition of the objects.⁶⁵¹ In the concept of immortalising oneself through ones collection the museum acts as a place of endurance where one's identity is captivated and the collection can be kept as a whole:

⁶⁴⁷ Levell, ‘Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste’, 81-82

⁶⁴⁸ In 1909 on their way home from one of their expeditions in the Sudan Brenda and Seligman stopped in Paris where they bought a number of Chinese objects which included glazed roof-tiles, two Buddhist funerary urns covered with a green glaze, some Tang period pottery and a Song ceramic dish. Brenda Seligman, ‘Visit to China Shop, dated 5 January 1909, Paris’, SELIGMAN1/4/3, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁴⁹ The Arts Council of Britain was under directorship of Gabriel White (1902-1988).

⁶⁵⁰ Hansford, ‘Preface’, *The Seligman Collection*.

⁶⁵¹ On one of the concepts dealing with the immortal disposition of oneself through one's collection see, Pearce, *On Collecting*, 248-250.

‘The collector usually gives considerable thought to the destination of the collection, particularly as (s)he starts to grow older [...] The ‘capacity to appreciate’ seems to be an important strand in this leave-taking [...] The sense of identity of one’s whole self with one’s whole collection frequently creates the most characteristic urge among collectors: to keep the entire collection together and prevent the sale or dispersal of it or any part of it after the death of the owner[...]Museums are immortal- to be so is one of the objects of their existence- and so collections received within them share this immortality’.⁶⁵²

In equal sense Russell Belk considered how the acceptance of one’s collection by a museum is the ultimate legitimisation of the [collecting] activity.⁶⁵³ Most of the Seligman Collection was kept as a whole by Brenda until her death. It might well be that she identified greater part of it to represent both Seligman and herself. However, after her husband’s death in 1940, she significantly reduced the size of the original collection by donating a group of objects to the British Museum. At the time Watson and Jenyns commented:

‘From an archaeological point of view, Mrs. Seligman’s gift of two series of objects carefully selected over a long period by Professor Seligman, one early Chinese weapons and the other of Chinese glass. The latter is probably the only one of its kind in existence and both are additions of the greatest importance to the museum collection.’⁶⁵⁴

This group of bronze weaponry and glass beads represent the purchases that Seligman made through the Karlbeck Syndicate. One suggestion was that Brenda moved to a smaller home in this period and did not have the adequate space to house these objects.⁶⁵⁵ However, by segregating this part of the collection after her husband’s death shows that she did not identify herself with these objects and more specifically separated them from a larger whole. In a way she was disconnecting herself from her husband’s scholarship, perhaps in grief, and

⁶⁵² Pearce, *On Collecting*, 249.

⁶⁵³ Belk, ‘Collectors and Collecting’, 320.

⁶⁵⁴ Watson and Jenyns, ‘The Seligman Gift’, 95.

⁶⁵⁵ Watson and Jenyns, ‘The Seligman Gift’, 95-103.

the act is symbolic of his death. Indeed, she thought it was important for the objects to become part of the British Museum collection where they were available to students. There is a strong sense that, if she was occupied with the aesthetics of the collection, this particular group represents the ethnological aspect of Seligman's interest. The objects are in actuality characteristic of his selection process and his concentration on scientific research. Collectors have individual incentives and are led by their own inclinations, even in a collection that was predominately created by two different people:

'To use cognitive criteria to choose items that adds to a series and helps their knowledge rather than the beauty of a collection'.⁶⁵⁶

In the Seligman Collection there were objects chosen together and others selected separately. What is significant is that the foundations of this ethnological aspect of the collection and Seligman's studies on Chinese art, archaeology and culture place him in a defined time-period. The new collecting trend and the intellectual environment that focussed on the different aspects of the intercultural in art influenced his work and his collection. Furthermore, it is through the analysis of the archival data that it is determined that it was Seligman, not Brenda, who instructed the purchases from the Karlbeck Syndicate. But he communicated with Andersson and Karlbeck directly and studied the circulating photographs of the acquisitions amongst the members. His letters are demonstrative of his academic motivations and background within this participation.

Seligman was more than a collector of Chinese art and culture. A turning point in his scholarship was around 1929 when he and Brenda took a six month cultural trip to the Far East, including China. On this journey many new purchases were made and visits to cultural sites filled their program. In China he met Li Ji and they corresponded with each other from

⁶⁵⁶ Russel Belk provides a framework for the different types of collectors and what drives them see, Belk, 'Collectors and Collecting', 320

this period onwards.⁶⁵⁷ The two men discussed a wide range of then contemporary topics such as the excavations at Anyang, the use of photography in archaeology and some of the physiological and psychological aspects in the study of anthropology. Both Seligman and Brenda were invited by Li Ji to lecture at the Natural History Society on anthropological methodology.⁶⁵⁸ Seligman's notebooks of this trip are filled with commentaries filled under 'China's racial types', 'early migration routes', 'Chinese Alchemy', 'Lolo and border tribes of Western China', 'dwarfs at the Tang dynasty court', 'Chinese language' and 'peasant embroideries in China'.⁶⁵⁹ There was one common denominator to these subjects, connecting to themes on the intercultural and diffusion in Chinese cultural history.⁶⁶⁰ Whilst in China he was trying to collect proof for some of his intercultural ideas connected to diffusionist thought.

During this journey he went to see a number of then recently excavated archaeological sites on behalf of his editorship of *The Cresset Press*, a publication that was coincidentally owned by the syndicate member Cohen.⁶⁶¹ The sites were located on Lamma Island near Hong Kong

⁶⁵⁷ The Li Chi Records; Li Ji, 'Letter to Seligman, 10 April 1932', SELIGMAN6/1/4, The Seligman Papers; Charles G. Seligman, 'Letter to Li Chi, [n.d.]', SELIGMAN6/1/4, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁵⁸ Charles Seligman, 'Letter to Bernard E. Read, Peking Union Medical College, 1929', The Seligman Papers, SELIGMAN6/6; Li Ji, 'Letter to Seligman, 14 July 1929', SELIGMAN6/1/4, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁵⁹ In his 'Notes on China' from 1927 Seligman tried to establish whether there was a connection between the Chinese and 'the Akkadians'. He based this on the physical differences between the northern Chinese and the 'Hakkas', a group who lived in Southern China. On the origin of the Chinese language Seligman commented that the British sinologist Herbert Allen Giles (1845-1935) thought that 'a number of Chinese words are Greek, Persian and even Hebrew, phonetically', and that these words related to descriptions of flora and fauna were later introduced to Korea and Japan see, Charles G. Seligman, 'Notes on China', in *Nature*, (1927), SELIGMAN6/1/4, The Seligman Papers; Charles G. Seligman, 'Articles on China', SELIGMAN6/1/5, The Seligman Papers; C. Schuster, 'Letter to Seligman, 27 July 1935', SELIGMAN6/1/5, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁶⁰ In 1936, Seligman published two articles based on research done during the 1929 trip to China and Japan. In these two papers he addressed some psychological issues of the Chinese and Japanese race by analyzing the history of the two cultures see, Charles G. Seligman, 'Chinese and Japanese: A Study in Character and Temperament', *Birmingham Medical Review* 11 (1936): 277-283; Charles G. Seligman, 'Patterns of Culture', *Man* 150 (Jul., 1936), 113.

⁶⁶¹ For his visits to archaeological sites and Lamma Island see, Charles G. Seligman, 'Letter to Finn, 18 September 1934', SELIGMAN6/1/3, The Seligman Papers; Daniel J. Finn, 'A Neolithic Culture on Lamma Island', in the *Hong Kong Naturalist* III (Dec., 1933): 132-155; Seligman, 'Early Pottery from Southern China', 19-26.

A trilogy was published by *The Cresset Press* that focussed on the social and cultural history of China, India and Russia see, Charles P. Fitzgerald, *China: A Short Cultural History* (London: the Cresset Press, 1960): D.S.

and represented a previously unknown Neolithic culture discovered by Finn, Charles Heanley (1877-1970) and Joseph Shellshear (1885-1958).⁶⁶² Some years later he discussed the importance of the site because the archaeological data indicated an early contact of the ‘southern aborigines’ (a term then used to describe the local culture of this area as it was not considered Chinese) with the sophisticated bronze culture of the north.⁶⁶³ Most of the unearthed objects consisted of polished stone tools, several bronze implements and a number of fragments of glazed ceramics, illustrating that the site was occupied over a long period. Seligman’s interest was that the diversity of objects discovered suggested a cultural exchange had taken place some time in history. Connected to this site, Finn’s report included the comparison of archaeological data to stone tools found in the ‘Sarasin culture in Celebes’ and the ‘Torii in Eastern Mongolia’ and in his conclusion argued that the Bronze Age objects found at the Lamma Island site were obvious introductions from the Western cultures.⁶⁶⁴ Furthermore, he posited that this native culture could have come from the south and that the same culture affected the Philippines and Polynesia.⁶⁶⁵ In this analysis Seligman had provided assistance to Finn in London by testing two glazed fragments from the site at the Courtauld Institute, where Yetts working at the time.⁶⁶⁶ In doing so they were trying to prove

Mirksky, *Russia: A Social History* (London: The Cresset Press, 1931); Hugh G. Rawlinson, *India: A Short Cultural History* (London: the Cresset Press, 1937).

⁶⁶² Finn made the important discovery of a Neolithic culture on Lamma Island near Hong Kong. Heanley and Shellshear discovered a pottery culture along the Hong Kong coastline that used similar decorative designs to those found on later dating Zhou and early Han mainland bronzes see, Daniel J. Fin, *Archaeological Finds on Lamma Island near Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Ricci hall, University of Hong Kong, 1958).

For further reading on the archaeology of Hong Kong see, William Meacham, *The Archaeology of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong university Press, 2009), 10-20; Solomon Bard, ‘Archaeology in Hong Kong. A review of achievement’, in *Archaeology in Southeast Asia*, eds. Yueng Chung-ting and Li Wai-Ling, 383-396 (Hong Kong: University Museum and Art Gallery, University of Hong Kong 1995); Charles F. W. Higham, *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁶⁶³ Seligman, ‘Early Pottery from Southern China’, 19-26; Seligman, ‘Letter to Finn, 18 December 1934’.

⁶⁶⁴ Daniel J. Finn, ‘Letter to Louis Clarke, 24 November 1934’, SELIGMAN6/1/3, The Seligman Papers; Daniel J. Finn, ‘Hong Kong Finds and their contacts with surrounding cultures’, Oslo Conference synoptic notes (1936), SELIGMAN6/1/3, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁶⁵ Finn, ‘Hong Kong Finds and their contacts with surrounding cultures’; Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter to Andersson’, The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive.

⁶⁶⁶ Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter Seligman to Finn, 1933’, SELIGMAN6/3, The Seligman Papers.

The method for testing the fragments of pottery is not clear in the notes by Seligman. He named the method for scientifically testing the fragments ‘aresectroscopy’. The methodology is explained in his article ‘Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins’. Seligman, ‘Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins’, 1-64.

a common origin for the Lamma Island culture and the Anyang ceramics then recently discovered and ultimately questioning if this was the true ancestor of Laufer's early porcelain and that indeed the glaze technology was an importation from the West.⁶⁶⁷ This meant that an importation of the glaze-technique to China's coast-line happened through a cultural diffusion as early as the turn of the millennium.

Seligman's approach to the subject of Chinese art and archaeology was overall ethnological. It was his fieldwork training as an anthropologist that made him interested in Chinese culture within this sphere. As discussed in the Introduction, he was part of the team of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits with Haddon and Rivers. Not only did he become interested in the psychological aspect of primitive society and dedicated this expedition to the discovery of mankind but he also was part of the first discussions on cultural diffusion in the study of living primitive societies.⁶⁶⁸ This expedition also formed the basis for Haddon's theory on the evolution of style in non-Western objects by attempting to establish artistic provinces and providing a systematic framework for classifying objects.⁶⁶⁹ His methodology included ideas where the diffusion of culture was identified through object-studies. This inevitably influenced Seligman research on Chinese culture. The idea of cross-comparison in the study of archaeological objects as a methodology, like Haddon used to those of, what he named, the living primitive society, was a new view on material culture, where the living primitive were seen as a reflection of archaic society. Next to Haddon studies, Rivers elaborated on a concept first projected by the anthropologist Tylor that the study of a society's past was essential in understanding its

⁶⁶⁷ Seligman, 'Letter, 18 December 1934'.

For Laufer's study on early ceramics see, Chapter 2, 81-82; Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China*.

⁶⁶⁸ For general reading on the so-called British School of Anthropology see, Stocking, *After Tylor*, 98-115; Kuper, *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, x; Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye*.

⁶⁶⁹ For Haddon's methodology to classify Primitive art see Introduction, 36-38; Haddon, *The Evolution of Art*; Haddon, *The Decorative Art of British New Guinea*.

present.⁶⁷⁰ This affected on Seligman's view and interest in archaeology. In his approach to material culture he often looked for evolutionary patterns in material culture, past and present.

In 1912 Seligman published a small article in connection to his research in New Guinea where he questioned the recent discovery of ancient stone Chinese axe blades to be of New Guinea type and, furthermore, wondered how the objects reached China.⁶⁷¹ The article doesn't specify where the objects were found or indicated who had discovered them. To understand the significance of collected data on site served as a route to defining relationships between different culture groups and this was something that Seligman took on board. However, many times these objects had no provenance and came into Western collections through the art market. This left much open to speculation.

The early years in his career were predominantly dedicated to fieldwork in Sri Lanka, the Sudan and Egypt.⁶⁷² In 1910, he took over Haddon's ethnological lectureship at the London School of Economics and 1913 was appointed the Chair of Ethnology at the University of London, the first of its kind, until he retired in 1934. Still, his publications that deal with Chinese art and archaeology are a separate entity to those that define his professional career and an important aspect of his scholarship that has hitherto not been assessed.

It was not until 1920 that Seligman published his second article on Chinese material culture, this time incorporating the themes of origin and evolution in weaponry and chariot design.⁶⁷³

In this article he suggested a diffusion of new technology and ornamentation into China. As

⁶⁷⁰ See the Introduction for a short discussion on Tylor's methodology in ethnology see, Introduction, 56; Rivers, 'The ethnological analysis of culture', 137.

⁶⁷¹ Charles G. Seligman, 'Stone Adze Blades from Suloga (British New Guinea) as Chinese Antiquities', *Man* 12 (1912): 72; Charles G. Seligman, *The Melanians of British New Guinea* (New York: AMS Press, 1976); Charles G. Seligman, 'Field-work notes 1898-1922', SELIGMAN/1, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁷² For his research notes that deal with his professional career see, Seligman, 'Field-work notes 1898-1922', SELIGMAN/1, the Seligman Papers.

⁶⁷³ Seligman, 'Bird-chariots and Socketed Celts in Europe and China', 153-158

part of his methodology he analysed through cross-comparison the evolution of chariot-design and the so-called *celt*, a Bronze Age weapon type, in Europe and China based upon a number of examples in his own collection (Figure 75). This is the first real evidence that Seligman separated a defined group within his Chinese collection. A similarity in a number of objects that had recently been found in southern Russia and Siberia, the Ordos, Luristan and China had started to appear on the market. They were collected at the time by Minns, Andersson, Tallgren and also Karlbeck. However, the first academic discussion on archaic weaponry types in Europe and China was by Laufer in 1906.⁶⁷⁴ Seligman included his study and independently suggested a cultural relationship between chariot-types from ancient China and the West. Moreover, Seligman demonstrated that a cultural diffusion was possible during the archaic period through a trans-Siberian land route and introduced new technologies, design and ornament into China.⁶⁷⁵ His analysis incorporated the history of small Bronze Age chariot vessels and chariot-fittings, such as on axle-wheel caps, and through a number of stylistic comparisons was used as proof for his theory (Figure 76). As discussed in Chapter 2, this was also a topic researched by Karlbeck using similar methodologies and argued, some years later, that the origin of the Chinese chariot came from the Near East.⁶⁷⁶ The debate on small ornamental bronzes was highly adaptable to the diffusionist concept because of continuous archaeological discoveries and new objects coming into Western collections. Seligman's research fitted into a larger academic discussion that led to the classification of this new data and in doing so he positioned these objects within a Western historical analysis. There is no evidence of a direct scholarly exchange between Seligman and Laufer. However, he often acknowledged Laufer's research. There are a number of characteristics that draw parallels to the studies of both academics worth mentioning. They searched for links and

⁶⁷⁴ Berthold Laufer, 'The Bird-chariots in China and Europe', in *Anthropological Papers written in Honour of Franz Boas*, ed. Berthold Laufer, 410-424 (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co, 1906).

⁶⁷⁵ Seligman, 'Bird-chariots and Socketed Celts in Europe and China', 155 and 158.

⁶⁷⁶ See, Chapter 2, 115-117; Karlbeck, 'Notes on some Chinese wheel axle-caps', 53-55.

origin in the history of technology and material culture by arranging cultural patterns. Their methodology is predominantly ethnological, using cross-comparison for the analysis of objects. Shared subjects included the diffusion of archaic weaponry and the chariot, an investigation in tomb figures and recently discovered Chinese pottery in the Philippines.⁶⁷⁷ Laufer primarily based his studies on objects collected for the Field Museum during his fieldwork in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. They also represent the first Western studies on early Chinese art where art-historical and anthropological methodologies were combined to understand the cultural history of the object.⁶⁷⁸ One thing that he provided was a format, or framework, using a traditional anthropological approach to the subject where the object's meaning was equally important to dating. This had an effect on the study of Chinese art which included the archaic objects that were essential to the historical reconstruction of not only China but also Central Asia and Siberia. One relevant point that Laufer argued for was that Chinese civilization was a complex structure due to the influx of distinct cultural streams especially during the Han period.⁶⁷⁹ This connects to what Yetts pointed out where the cultural unity of China in ancient times was, and is, a misconception and that the idea of regionality in China's bronze art was an important consideration.⁶⁸⁰ However, the archaeological data and historical objects visually resembled other discoveries covering an extremely large geographical region and stylistic influence upon each other was expected. This made more extreme diffusionist ideas adaptable in the study of China's prehistory and a presumed relationship or even proposing a common origin for some of the

⁶⁷⁷ Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1909); Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Clay Figures* (New York: Kraus Reprint Corp., 1967); Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Pottery in the Philippines* (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1912); J.B. Powel, 'Letter Powel to Seligman, dated 1930', SELIGMAN6/1/4, Charles G. Seligman, 'Letter Seligman to Finn, 1933', SELIGMAN6/3, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁷⁸ Pierson, 'The David Collection and the Historiography of Chinese Ceramics', 59; Thorp, 'Studies of Chinese Archaeology/Art History in the West', 54-55.

⁶⁷⁹ Laufer, *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, 212-236.

⁶⁸⁰ Yetts, 'Two Exhibitions in Stockholm', 183.

Neolithic and archaic objects discovered. At the time generalisations how ancient cultures connected to each other were commonly made. Lowie, in the US, posited:

‘Most important of all, it appears that essentials of agriculture, cattle-raising, metallurgy and pottery, as well as less tangible features of civilization are common to ancient China and Babylonia, which forces the conclusion that both the Chinese and Babylonian cultures are ramifications from a common Asiatic sub-stratum.’⁶⁸¹

Without the support of sufficient archaeological data ancient Chinese and Babylonian cultures were thought, as pointed out by Lowie, to come from one common (still undiscovered) origin. This connection had already been established by Terrien De Lacouperie in his comparative philological studies.⁶⁸² A full comparison between some of the diffusionist concepts that circulated and influenced archaeological and anthropological research in Europe and the US is beyond the scope of the current thesis. However, their background is significant in how Western scholarship was influenced by such ideas and supported by eminent researchers on both continents like Lowie, Laufer and Seligman.

Significantly in this early stage in the developing field of Chinese art and archaeology, diffusionism was an accepted theory used for dating and classification. Technology and evolutionary patterns in Neolithic and Bronze Age ornament were often thought to be traceable to one common origin and initially not attributed to indigenous developments. The object studies provided patterns indicating new cultural influences bringing advancement. Notably, Seligman considered this through his studies on glass and bronze weaponry in his collection. Many acquired from Karlbeck and indicative of his scholarship at the time.

⁶⁸¹ Lowie, *Culture and Ethnology*, 75-76.

⁶⁸² For a reference on Terrien De Lacouperie see Introduction, 55; Chapter 3, 135-136.

Seligman joined the syndicate on two occasions, in 1931-1932 and in 1934. He bought a total of 122 objects.⁶⁸³ Half of these consisted of early glass beads and glass plaques the other half were predominantly Huai-style weaponry, chariot fittings and some bronze mirrors. He also bought a Neolithic pottery urn and 13 Tang period tomb figures, from which 12 depicting non-Chinese features and a 'male figurine' from the Han period. A number of these objects were published in the Art Council catalogues of the collection.⁶⁸⁴ When Karlbeck visited Seligman in Britain, just before his 1934 expedition, he was asked to purchase:

'Early glass, like *bi* disk and glass beads; smooth as well as with eyes. Some pre-Tang glass and some bronzes with inlay glass beads'⁶⁸⁵.

These glass objects represent an important insight to his ethnographic interest in his collection (Figure 77). During this period, his bead collection also included Egyptian and Mediterranean glass. He had the beads scientifically dated in order to place them in a time-frame and so connected the studies on Chinese material culture to world history in Western scholarship. He published several studies on the subject between 1934 and 1941.⁶⁸⁶ The beads were dated from the pre-Han to Tang period and important in the search for the origin of glass-technology in the ancient past. Seligman considered that this technology was imported into China from the West. His approach included simple cross-comparisons with similar beads from other cultures and in doing so tried to establish a tentative chronology (Figure 78). Seligman had first classified the beads within the Western principles of historic analysis, similarly to the approach by Andersson to categorise and date the Yangshao ceramic

⁶⁸³ Orvar Karlbeck, 'Purchase List Seligman', The Karlbeck Syndicate Papers.

⁶⁸⁴ Ayers, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*; Hansford, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*.

⁶⁸⁵ Karlbeck, 'Wish-list, 1934'.

⁶⁸⁶ Seligman and Beck, 'Barium in Ancient Glass', 982; Seligman, 'Early Chinese Glass from pre-Han and pre-Tang Times', 721; Seligman, Beck and Ritchie, 'Early Chinese Glass from pre-Han to pre-Tang Times', 721; Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', 5-30; Seligman and Beck, 'Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins', 1-64; Seligman, 'Early Chinese Glass', 19-26.

urns.⁶⁸⁷ The Chinese beads were new on the market and extremely rare.⁶⁸⁸ He was one of a few to privately collect the beads in Britain and Karlbeck was one of a handful that brought them to Europe. In 1934 a collection of Chinese glass beads were on display in small exhibition at the Courtauld Institute. It included a number of recent archaeological finds by the Canadian collector White, Karlbeck's rival in China.⁶⁸⁹ The exhibition was organised by Yetts and one of the first that was entirely dedicated to Chinese archaeology in Britain. The presentation of these archaeological objects at a prestigious national academic institute dedicated to the field of art history was significant. It illustrates that there was a fine line between what was considered art or ethnology. It also demonstrates that Yetts was an important promoter of Chinese archaeology in Britain and found it essential to include these discoveries as artistically and archaeologically imperative. Seligman commented on this exhibition as an important event. Furthermore, he was able to physically investigate a number of Chinese beads that had been found in the vicinity of Loyang.

'The beads found at Loyang, a number of which were exhibited by Bishop White [at the Courtauld Institute in 1934], so closely resembled specimens collected in Egypt that even without chemical examination there could be little doubt that they were identical with the Egyptian beads, and were in fact Egyptian beads that had reached China.'⁶⁹⁰

He was convinced that the beads found by White were in fact Egyptian beads that had reached China. In doing so argued that the beads exhibited were of a superior quality to those known to have been produced in China, and furthermore it was Egyptian technology that

⁶⁸⁷ For Andersson's approach to dating and classifying the Yangshao ceramics see, Chapter 3, 127-134.

⁶⁸⁸ Stein collected the very first glass beads from Eastern Turkestan and brought them back to Europe. They are part of the British Museum collection today see, Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan: Detailed Report of Archaeological Explorations in Chinese Turkestan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907). For a biographical account see, Annabel Walker, *Aurel Stein, Pioneer of the Silk Road* (London: John Murray, 1995).

⁶⁸⁹ Only six copies of the catalogue to this exhibition were published. Karlbeck, 'Letter, Kaifengfu 10 November 1929.'; Walter Perceval Yetts, *Catalogue of a small Exhibition Illustrating Recent Archaeological Finds in China* (London: The Courtauld Institute of Art, 1934).

⁶⁹⁰ Seligman, 'Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins', 9.

influenced the development of glass production. He was the first European to publish on this subject. He focussed this ethnological study through the development of design patterns and also used pioneering methods for analysing the chemical components. This method was by means of spectrography which used a Hilger Size Quartz spectroscope to measure the lead and barium content in the glass specimen and could indicate the geographical area of production.⁶⁹¹ In 1932 he presented his results at the International Congress of Prehistoric and Proto-historic Sciences, where also Finn was presenting his archaeological discoveries on Lamma Island.⁶⁹² Seligman defined that the beads discovered in China were the result of import:

‘The import of glass into China from the West, and indeed the whole efflorescence of glass-making in China, was due to that series of foreign influences and contacts that brought iron into the country’.⁶⁹³

Seligman supported his dating of the beads by linking it to the import of iron around the fourth or fifth century BC. He suggested a migration theory that pushed the date of a then accepted foreign influence coming into China further back than previously thought.⁶⁹⁴ His argument was based on cultural diffusion. Through the syndicate he had purchased two iron swords that were linked to this investigation.⁶⁹⁵ In a letter to Karlbeck, Seligman discussed this research and specifically asked to look out for objects that supported his studies:

‘One good specimen of a glass plaque, [en]graved if possible, for my collection, and another engraved or broken specimen which I should of necessary smash up for chemical examination[...]

⁶⁹¹ Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter Seligman to W.H. Hampton of Chance Brothers and Co., Glass Works, 1938’, SELIGMAN6/1/4, Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter Seligman to Finn, 1933’, SELIGMAN6/3, The Seligman Papers.; W.M. Hampton, ‘Letter to Seligman, 1938’, SELIGMAN6/1/4, Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter Seligman to Finn, 1933’, SELIGMAN6/3, The Seligman Papers; Charles G. Seligman, ‘Report on the Spectrum Analysis of Six Ancient Glasses, dated 1938’, SELIGMAN6/1/4, Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter Seligman to Finn, 1933’, SELIGMAN6/3, The Seligman Papers.

⁶⁹² Seligman, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 31 July 1932’.

⁶⁹³ Seligman and Beck, ‘Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins’, 1-64.

⁶⁹⁴ Seligman and Beck, ‘Far Eastern Glass: Some Western Origins, 1-64.

⁶⁹⁵ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists 1931-1932’.

want a glass cicada, Han date or thereabouts, again for preference a specimen for my collection and a bit that I can break up[...]Also a glass *pi* [disk], Han or thereabouts. If you cannot get a whole one at a reasonable price get a broken one, so long as the bits are all there.’⁶⁹⁶

Seligman’s instructions included the purchase of broken specimen to use for scientific and historical analysis. The objects were clearly used for academic research.

In addition to support his intercultural arguments Seligman acquired a small collection of 28 Huai-style objects including some weaponry types and horse- and chariot-trappings (Figures 76, 79 and 80). As discussed, they provided adequate comparative material to bronze objects from Central Asia and Siberia and discussed in the studies by Andersson, Minns and Rostovtzeff at the time. No doubt that Seligman was familiar with their work and they link into his interest in cross-cultural patterns in China’s material culture. He specifically requested:

‘a celt with ornament, a bronze *ko* [Chinese dagger-axe], some with turquoise inlay intact, a sword girth with two types of metal, one pair of horse-fittings with animal decoration and an early mirror’.⁶⁹⁷

On this basis Karlbeck purchased a total of 6 bronze swords and 1 iron sword; 5 *ge* (Chinese dagger-axe); 1 spear head; 1 bronze knife; 1 socketed dagger-axe; 1 axle-wheel cap of Siberian type, and a *celt* from Anyang (Figures 76, 79, 80).⁶⁹⁸ In a letter to Seligman dated 1932 Li Ji discussed the recent discovery of a bronze hoard which he had dated to 1200-1300 BC, somewhat earlier than Huai-style bronzes, where ornamental designs showed a more obvious relationship to Western bronze productions.⁶⁹⁹ Part of the discovery was, what he named, a socketed spearhead that he described as remarkably similar in style to those of the

⁶⁹⁶ Charles G. Seligman, ‘Letter to Karlbeck, 14 May 1934’, Volume IX, the Karlbeck Syndicate Archive.

⁶⁹⁷ Karlbeck, ‘Wish-list, 1934’.

⁶⁹⁸ Karlbeck, ‘Newsletter-reports and purchase lists 1931-1932.’

⁶⁹⁹ Li Ji, ‘Letter to Seligman, 10 April 1932’.

Late Bronze Age in the British Isles without suggesting a direct relationship between the two. The dating of the Chinese bronzes was still being considered and such a discovery led to speculation on dating and classification. One of Seligman's research topics was the distribution and origin of such a socketed-celt in China and in his study he did include the possibility of a direct relationship between European and Chinese designs (Illustration 75).⁷⁰⁰ Interestingly, in his discussion Li Ji also used the comparative method as a classification tool, like his colleagues in the West, and is significant to this period when accepted Western methodologies were used by a number of Chinese scholars that had studied in the West.⁷⁰¹ This example of academic exchange is rare but valuable to define this period where the diplomatic connections between Britain and China were encouraged on a number of fronts, including academic exchange.

In his publication, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', Seligman continued to discuss a variety of weaponry styles and types in his collection. He considered that the dagger-axe as a type was a Western invention and introduced to China around five or six hundred BC:

'As suggested [to me] by Professor Minns, it [the *ge* or dagger-axe] may be associated with events in the Far Northwest which started with the movements of the 'Scythians' by the trans-Siberian land route coming from a metallurgical centre in Minnoussinsk.'⁷⁰²

As discussed, Minns connected the Chinese bronze art of that period to Scythian production sites in Siberia, and used the Ordos bronzes as an important verification to his argument that they influenced the development of the Huai-style and Han style. By considering Minns' theory it demonstrates that Seligman belonged to the same school that discussed the topic and

⁷⁰⁰ Seligman, 'Bird Chariots and Socketed Celts in Europe and China', 153-158; Seligman, 'Further Note on Bird Chariots and Socketed Celts in Europe and China', 247-254.

⁷⁰¹ See, Su Rongyu, 'The Reception of 'archaeology' and 'prehistory' and the founding of archaeology in Late Imperial China', 434-444.

⁷⁰² Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', 7.

in a way says more about the intellectual environment in Britain than the presentation of actual scientific proof for such connection without enough archaeologically excavated evidence.

Throughout his studies on China's material culture Seligman made a number of valuable academic contributions. He dated a number of the bronzes and beads that were questioned at the time to being earlier than previously thought, an extremely important factor in the development of the subject.⁷⁰³ In a letter to Finn, Seligman revealed somewhat more of his methodology, for example, that he rather got into the habit of looking for evolution and degeneration of patterns in objects, a process that was influenced by Haddon's framework for interpreting non-Western objects.⁷⁰⁴ Seligman's approach to the study of Chinese art and archaeology attempted to connect the cultural to the historical.

A last group of objects in the Seligman Collection that demonstrated this topic of interculturality in Chinese art were the Tang period tomb figures with non-Chinese features (Figure 81). They were specifically selected because they were ethnologically interesting. Between 1931 and 1934 he purchased 12 of such figures from Karlbeck.⁷⁰⁵ The collecting of tomb figures was relatively new and only quite recently started to appear on the Western market. Seligman recalled their novelty:

'Tang grave figures, if known to Chinese dealers before this date, were not regarded as of any worth; they were not collected by Chinese and did not reach Western collections.'⁷⁰⁶

The tradition of making tomb figures as burial goods was, and still is, believed to have started just before the Han dynasty took over political control from the Qin dynasty.⁷⁰⁷ The reason

⁷⁰³ Judith Green posits that the categories for Chinese and other Asian objects more generally were created in a context dominated by hierarchical evolutionary theories of cultural development which in turn were embodied by material culture. Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', 7.

⁷⁰⁴ Seligman, 'Letter to Finn, 9 April 1936'.

⁷⁰⁵ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter- reports and purchase lists, 1931-1932'.

⁷⁰⁶ Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', 20.

given is a shift in religious ideas and new practice entering China during this period. The first substantial discussions on this subject were by Laufer and the Belgian sinologist Carl Hentze (1883-1975).⁷⁰⁸ These were followed by Rostovtzeff's analysis in the 1920s that these figures were a tradition from the nomadic people of Central Asia and derived from a Sarmatian tradition that was imported into China from the West.⁷⁰⁹ This suggested the practice was anything but indigenous. The intercultural relationship throughout the Tang dynasty, many centuries after the Han period, with other cultures was documented in China's historical literature.⁷¹⁰ This period is generally defined as multi-cultural, wealthy and prosperous in the arts and trade. The rich cultural remains of the Tang included objects made of gold, silver and ceramics and their decorative motifs are easily connected with those of cultures to their West. New ornamental designs and silversmith technologies were introduced and clearly demonstrate an influence coming from Persia and the so-called Roman Orient.⁷¹¹ When the Tang objects reached European collections they were susceptible to diffusionist concepts because the obvious foreign elements in decoration and design enriching the art of this period. In 'An Amerind Type in China in Tang Times' Seligman considered some of the

⁷⁰⁷ Wang Renbo, 'General Comments on Chinese Funerary Sculpture', in *The Quest for Eternity*, ed. Susan L. Caroselli, 39-62 (London: Thames & Hudson, 1987).

⁷⁰⁸ For studies on tomb figures of that period see, Carl Hentze, *Chinese tomb figures: a study in the beliefs and folklore of ancient China* (New York: AMS Press, 1974); Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Grave-sculptures of the Han period* (London and New York: E.L. Morice and F.C. Stechert & Co, 1911); Arthur de Carle Sowerby, 'Pottery Tomb Figures of Ancient China' *CJSA* 27 (6) (Dec., 1937): 275-279.

⁷⁰⁹ For a social and cultural history on the Sarmatians see, Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, 204; Tadeusz Sulimirski, *The Sarmatians* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970).

⁷¹⁰ For further reading on some social and religious aspects that define the Tang period see, Patricia E. Karetzky, *Arts of the Tang Court* (Hong Kong and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Edward H Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: a study in T'ang exotics* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1996); Rawson, *Chinese Ornament, The Lotus and the Dragon*.

⁷¹¹ For further reading on the art of the silversmith and new decorative elements in Tang art see, William Watson, ed., *Pottery & Metalwork in T'ang China*, Colloquies on Art & Archaeology in Asia, No. 1, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, University of London, 1970); Richard N. Frye, 'The Merchant World of the Sogdians', in *Nomads, Traders and Holy Men along the Silk Route*, eds. Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, 71-74, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002); Jessica Rawson, 'Central Asian Silver and its Influence on Chinese Ceramics', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 5 (1991): 139-151.

tomb figures in his collection that in his mind obviously connected to the principles of, what is today defined as, interculturality.⁷¹²

The figures represent Western types and were then thought to have lived in the Central Asian plateau. The ‘Armenoid race’ was first discussed by the American racialist William Ripley (1867-1941) by grouping people of Armenian, Assyrian and Anatolian descent from the Caucasus region.⁷¹³ Some years later Seligman exemplified the Tang period figures in his article ‘The Roman Orient and the Far East’ as part of a larger investigation on direct intercultural relationships between China and the West.⁷¹⁴ Nicky Levell also recognises that Seligman selected this group because of a traditional ethnological interest in the classification of races and ethnic groups, something that his study notes verify.⁷¹⁵ Indeed, the Seligman Collection also included a number of tomb figures depicting Chinese men and women and several Buddhist sculptures, it is possible that their acquisition was aesthetically motivated and more in the trend of collecting at the time.⁷¹⁶ Seligman asked Karlbeck to purchase for him a couple of things that were out of character with the otherwise considered study material and related to the larger part of the collection:

‘a good Kuanyin from the Tang dynasty, a stone Tang dynasty lion, a beautiful dancing female grave figure with goose and a shaman in grey clay’.⁷¹⁷

Of this request only a Song period iron head of a Kuanyin figure and a shaman figure in grey clay were purchased.⁷¹⁸ There is no indication that these directed Seligman’s research and were not discussed in any of his articles.

⁷¹² Charles G. Seligman, ‘An Amerind Type in China in T’ang Times’, *Man* 24 (Aug., 1924): 113

⁷¹³ William Z. Ripley, *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (New York, 1899), 444.

⁷¹⁴ Seligman, ‘The Roman Orient and the Far East’, 5-30.

⁷¹⁵ Ayers also mentioned that the figures were of an ethnological interest. Levell, ‘Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste’, 77; Ayers, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*, 9.

⁷¹⁶ Levell, ‘Scholars and Connoisseurs, Knowledge and Taste’, 77; Ayers, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*; Hansford, *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*.

⁷¹⁷ Karlbeck, ‘Wish-list, 1934’.

The analysis of the Seligman Collection through the Karlbeck Syndicate shows that there was a clear division in the collection. Objects of ethnological interest are separated from the aesthetic. Especially the selection process for this division was influenced by Seligman. This was also considered by Brenda when she segregated this particular collection from the larger whole after her husband's death. Karlbeck's purchases were used as study material and applied in arguments promoting intercultural relationships in ancient China. It is Seligman's research and this defined aspect of the collection that makes him an ethnological collector of Chinese art and provided him with subjects of expertise. The archaic objects were predominantly collected by those who were interested in discovering the origin of Chinese civilization through its material culture. On the other hand, the collecting of ceramics and paintings were often led by principles of admiration and artistic appreciation.⁷¹⁹ Seligman was motivated by both. However, his pioneering studies on early Chinese art and archaeology defined him as a leading specialist in this British scholarship. Though his research is demonstrative of a segregated component of his collection where some of the diffusionist ideologies were freely explored. His arguments were important factors within this developing field and his intercultural debate demonstrative in the late 1920s and 1930s. The intellectual concept connected to early Chinese art and culture, such as evolution, progress and diffusion was an essential part to his research. Seligman was a rare example of a European collector who directed pioneering scholarship based upon objects in his private collection in a defined collecting period.

The contribution of the Karlbeck Syndicate to British scholarship and collecting is identified by a number of considerations in this chapter. The analysis of specific publications by Yetts show that diffusionist principles were accepted factors in the classification of

⁷¹⁸ Karlbeck, 'Newsletter-reports and purchase lists, 1934'.

⁷¹⁹ For a study on the David Collection see, Pierson, 'The David Collection and Historiography of Chinese Ceramics', 57-68; Pierson, *Private Collecting, Teaching and Institutionalisation*.

Chinese bronze art in Britain and in Sweden. He not only was a significant figure in a new specified specialist group, who was predominantly self-taught, but stood at the foreground of the foundation of this academic field. He led the intellectual debates on Chinese art and archaeology and more importantly connected it to that of culture. His relationship with the group of collectors in London and Stockholm show a significant internationality to the debates. He visited Sweden on two important occasions, as these epitomise the early stages in the academic debate on Chinese art and archaeology when innovative research was being conducted by this small specialist group. Yetts found support in Sweden for his work. His relationship with Karlbeck, Andersson and Gustaf Adolf was further examined through primary archival data. His contribution to the field is indispensable. Furthermore, what this chapter illustrates is that Yetts brought Swedish and British scholarship together in his publications. The Karlbeck Syndicate further contributed to British scholarship by providing new study material in its important public and private collections. Hobson was responsible for the expansion of the Chinese collection at the British Museum. He was a significant promoter of the syndicate in Britain. In addition, Seligman studies show some of the leading British research that addressed the anthropological issues in early Chinese art. By understanding the object's cultural context and function he made innovative arguments and contributions to British scholarship in this field.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis has defined the Karlbeck Syndicate in a number of ways: firstly, I have examined Karlbeck and shown that he is an important central figure within this particular history of collecting Chinese art. Secondly, I have shown that the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities played an imperative role as the creators of this successful syndicate by uniting institutional and private collectors under a single interpretive and collecting mechanism. Thirdly, the analysis of Karlbeck's newsletter-reports provided a detailed account of the mechanics of this exclusive consortium and the different aspects of its operations. This gives considerable data for the analysis of Western collecting in China during the inter-war period. Lastly, I have discussed, with connection to the Karlbeck Syndicate and the diffusionist intellectual trend of that time, the categorisation and institutional framing of non-Western objects, the foundation of Chinese collections in the West, in particular in Sweden and Britain, and how this process influenced the Western scholarship of Chinese culture and art.

What makes the Karlbeck Syndicate such a fruitful ground for research is that it is so extraordinarily well documented in the archives kept in Sweden and London. This is very unusual in the studies of collecting histories, making it a rare example. This thesis considered the collecting syndicate as a collector's group and as an area of collecting that has not been previously studied. The mechanics of the syndicate were clarified detailed analysis of primary, hitherto unpublished, archival sources that document its operations. They provided an unprecedented insight into the exclusive arrangements that connected a network of European collectors- private and institutional- to the purchasing of Chinese objects. From the start the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities had an incentive to distinguish its collection as unique and to rival that of other Western institutions. Supported by the exclusive Neolithic

collection brought back by Andersson, and bronze objects acquired by Gustaf Adolf and Karlbeck for the museum it had a prestigious international standing. Furthermore, it stood symbol for the success of the Swedish nation in scientific fieldwork in China. Its aim was to establish itself as an influential centre for Chinese art and archaeology outside China. This, in turn, leads to a research question about the role of Western institutions in nationalising non-Western art and how this process transformed the conception of the object from historical or archaeological into art. The recent discussion on whether the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities was archaeologically focussed or an art museum is led by its former curator Magnus Fiskesjö. He addresses the fine line between what is considered archaeology or art in the objects at the museum:

‘The museum did not really start as an art museum, but as an archaeological research institute, even though indeed over time it did get redefined as an art repository. And I believe, at the time, even in art museums Chinese objects were often not yet seen as art’.⁷²⁰

One of the questions that came out of this study is: What are these objects considered as and what is their function within a Western museum concept? This is one of the important conclusive points raised after the initial understanding how the collections were formed.

Karlbeck has hitherto remained a relatively unknown figure. His collecting activities and scholarship, not only for the museum in Stockholm but also for a number of private collectors and public institutions in Britain, France, The Netherlands and Germany, have up till now not been fully analysed. This thesis has clearly demonstrated the important role he played in this collecting history and the study of Chinese archaeology. Furthermore, it revealed how Western institutions, like the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and British Museum formed their collections. In the 1920s and 1930s, the syndicate activities represent one of Europe’s last collecting expeditions into Asia in a particular moment, through which a

⁷²⁰ Magnus Fiskesjö, Personal Email to Valerie Jurgens, dated 10 December 2007.

great number of archaeological objects left China relatively unrestricted. China's door was shut soon afterwards. Karlbeck's recollections are preserved in the archival data and contain first-hand on site accounts on the process of his acquisitions and the complexity of exporting antiquities. Central in this discussion is that China was in political turmoil at the time, with a decentralised government and segregated leadership in the provinces. There was substantial poverty and an economic strife. In this environment there existed a thriving antiquities market. In turn, this leads to an important discussion within the debate on cultural heritage and ownership today. Much is not within the perimeters of this thesis. However, the discussion on purchasing, export and legislation of material culture discovered through the archival material are a significant reminder of the complexities surrounding cultural property law, even in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The debate is current, where the ownership of China's historical objects in Western collections is challenged. The subject in this thesis is examined within its own historical boundaries at a time when Western collecting was often conducted as, what was considered, scientific research in historical and cultural studies.

Karlbeck importantly defined himself as an academic collector. He clearly did not think that he was dealing in cultural property in the negative sense, nor was he motivated to collect for financial gain. From the period his first collections were formed there was a determination to open a scholarly dialogue amongst a group of Western-based specialist, these included Sirén, Gustaf Adolf, Andersson, Hobson, Laufer and Yetts. Even though he sold his ceramic and bronze collections Karlbeck initially promoted their historical significance. There is no evidence that the selling of objects had made him a rich man or that he intentionally purchased to sell for large profits in Europe or the US. At the time he was fully aware of the difficulty involved in excavating and exporting antiquities, something that the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities was also conscious of. There are no records that Karlbeck participated in an archaeological excavation, although he did plan one with Sirén.

Their official application was denied by local authorities and he did not act illegally in this matter. His collecting came from buying directly from local dealers, again not something that was beyond the boundaries considered inappropriate. When Andersson and Gustaf Adolf visited Karlbeck in 1926 in Pukow and purchased numerous bronzes from him for the, then recently opened, museum they were perceptive that the export of antiquities was already a sensitive and complex issue. Andersson did not openly get involved in collecting on behalf of the museum during this trip. From then on he instructed Karlbeck in acquisitions he thought important and to bring these back to Sweden. During the operations of the syndicate no objects were sent directly to the museum and there was always an intermediate address from which they were further distributed. However, the syndicate was not an illegal operation and the trade of antiquities was open to an international market, however, their activities suggested that they knew the complexities connected to their actions.

Karlbeck purchased a great number of objects belonging to China's Bronze Age upon the request of the syndicate members. In the 1920s and 1930s he was one of a few Western collectors who travelled through China and collected archaeological objects. He mainly purchased small ornamental bronzes, such as mirrors, belt-hooks and weaponry. The facility of their transport in and out of China gave good reason for this choice. Larger objects, such as ritual vessels, sculpture and pottery figures, which were also available on the market, were more obvious and fragile in transport. These were also more expensive and bought by him in much smaller quantities or when specified by a particular collector or institute.

His first-hand accounts on the state of the art market in China itself could contribute to future research into the history, collecting and ownership of non-Western objects in Western collections. There were several other Western collectors that operated in China at the time, mostly acting on behalf of American museums and dealerships. Whiting Bishop for the Freer Gallery, White for the Royal Ontario Museum and Ferguson for the Metropolitan Museum

were three rivals mentioned by Karlbeck. At the time, they focussed on similar material to bring back to the perspective institutions they were connected with. Their common primary incentive was that these objects were used in archaeological and historical research and to be exhibited within a museum environment dedicated to scholarship. Like Karlbeck, their motivation was academically driven. A comparative study to look at the individual collecting practices of this American group in comparison to the collections and scholarship in Europe will prove to be an interesting avenue of future research. This thesis contributes a full analysis of Karlbeck's role and the incentives of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities within this particular history.

With respect to his collecting skills Karlbeck stood at the front of innovative research on Chinese bronze art, archaeology and culture and directed future studies in the field. His work on early bronze-casting techniques and successfully establishing the provenance for the Huai-style productions sites are important contributions that still hold their argument. He was also the first to point out distinct regional styles in the bronze mirrors of the Zhou period and in doing so supported the notion that a culturally unified China in the Bronze Age was not necessarily a realistic conception, something that Yetts also commented on at the time.⁷²¹ The definition of the Huai-style is therefore an important factor considered throughout this thesis. It not only demonstrates that for the short period that the term was used the geographical region of this bronze style was a significant classification tool. After this period the periodization for classifying bronzes used the dynastic names to represent the style of the objects demonstrating that objects too can be subject to fashion or trends.

⁷²¹ This is an important and current topic that is addressed by archaeologists and art historians alike. For examples, see, Jonathan Hay's intercultural discussion on China's bronze art. Hay, 'Toward a theory of intercultural', 5-41; Hay, 'Questions in Influence in Chinese Art History', 241-261; Fiskesjö, 'New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology'.

The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in particular supported the use of the term Huai-style to categorise the stylistic components of these objects. They also applied it to label the bronzes on display in their 1933 exhibition. A discussion of this exhibition in Chapter 4 elaborated on the characteristics of the Huai-style and also suggests that the discovery of this bronze style was due to the efforts of their in-house collector, Karlbeck. It was very much, therefore an invented category to suit a Western taxonomy. The 1933 exhibition of Chinese bronzes at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities represented the first of its kind in Europe and was organised in conjunction with the International Congress of Art Historians in Stockholm. Interestingly the exhibition was also connected to the field of art history because its opening was planned around this event. The museum proposed a tentative chronology that they hoped opened further scholarly debate amongst the visitors of this congress on questions addressing origin, evolution, diffusion, influence and, in today's terms, intercultural relationships in early Chinese art and cultural history.

Alongside this Chinese bronze exhibition it was decided that a collection of Ordos objects was also a significant and valuable denominator in the study of Chinese art and archaeology. The museum held the largest collection of these in the world and it was the first time they were put on display. They were exhibited alongside another group of non-Chinese bronzes then recently discovered in Siberia. The incentive for using this comparative method within a museum display was chosen to visually support a cultural relationship between East and West. Furthermore, it opened a debate about the possible diffusion route of the naturalistic animal-style from Central Asia to Siberia into China during the Bronze Age period. A number of distinguished visitors came to see these exhibitions and participated in the organised discussions. They included Yetts, Eumorfopoulos and Raphael. They were guests of Gustaf Adolf at the royal palace and in a way represent the unity of the Karlbeck Syndicate in Sweden and Britain. At the time of their visits the Karlbeck Syndicate was fully operating

and the communication between them came together at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and through the syndicate.

The reasoning behind the Karlbeck Syndicate was primarily based on economical considerations. For the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities it was a secure way to finance new purchases. Also, for its members it proved one-fifth cheaper than buying through the European market. The organisation of the syndicate was centred at the museum. Its ingenuity was entirely through the efforts of Andersson, Karlbeck, Lagrelius and Gustaf Adolf. Another important factor that made it successful was Karlbeck's reputation. His so-called trained eye and ability to provide provenance added authenticity and possibly increased the object's economical value. This thesis did not explore all the possible avenues of research within the boundaries of the archival material. Karlbeck's numerous references to the growth of the fake's industry in Chinese art or the history of the local art market provide equally fruitful topics for future research.

In each syndicate the participants- private or institutional- had specific collecting interests. New in Western collections the dominant group of non-inscribed archaic objects were for the first time coherently classified predominantly by specialists in Sweden and Britain. The discussion of the relationship between collecting and scholarship in these two retrospective countries served as a basis for future research into similar collections in The Netherlands, Germany and France. What this thesis is able to conclude is that China's bronze art formed an important core of the first Western studies that defined early Chinese art. It also showed that Eurasian art and archaeology was inevitably connected to the field of Chinese art and archaeology during this particular period and that current scholarly methods of cultural analysis were also applied to Chinese objects, a circumstance which was first identified here.

The mechanics of the syndicate as presented in this thesis and the participation of a select group of now identified members is a significant contribution to the history of Chinese collections in Europe. Furthermore, a case study for future studies on collector's groups may be in order. In the first decades of the twentieth century a number of specialised groups were founded that dedicated themselves to the collecting and promoting of Asian art; these included the China Club in Sweden, the Oriental Ceramic Society in London, the Friends of Asian Art Society in Amsterdam and the Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst in Berlin. The records on the Karlbeck Syndicate are a significant contributor to the study of such groups. Its mechanics, as contributed in this thesis, show a highly exclusive and organised consortium of connoisseurs with very specific incentives. It was bound together by a common motivation; the collecting, promoting and scholarship of Chinese culture and bronze art in Europe. Simultaneously, some important figures in this circle, including, Eumorfopoulos, Raphael, Oppenheim and Hellström were considered and shed new light how their private collections were formed. The majority of these collectors donated and bequeathed their Chinese collections to museums. There was a general motivation in Sweden and Britain that the final destination for such collections was a public institution. Within a museum environment objects were displayed and open to a larger public. However, what makes the Karlbeck Syndicate unique is that it was the museums that acquired most of the objects independently, notably the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the British Museum. The relationship between private collector and museum during the first decades of the twentieth century was, as this thesis demonstrated, very close-knit and the boundary between the two often crossed over. Moreover, in pre-war Europe, this interaction was often encouraged by the government and through new university programs. A significant aspect within this discussion is that it connects the institutional and private collections to one common source.

In the very part, the examination of the Karlbeck Syndicate is an important piece in the study of history of Chinese art collecting in the West. The lists of its members that are compiled in Chapter 4 are based on primary archival records and show the popularity of types of objects. It also demonstrates that the private collector and public institution were interested in the acquisition of similar objects, both following the same trend. The discussion of the participation of the British Museum and Seligman shows an interesting comparison between the institutional collector and the private collector within the boundaries of the Karlbeck Syndicate data.

For example the British Museum focussed on objects selected for their ornament and design representing the evolutionary path of decorative art in China. Seligman, on the other hand, was motivated by objects that were linked to his ethnological interest. In doing so, he focussed on its historical importance through the analysis of Style, design and technology using the comparative method. His work represented some of the innovative studies that placed these types of objects within the larger picture of world history. The correspondence between Seligman and Karlbeck showed that, unlike the British Museum, he did not try to establish so-called complete sequences in his collection. He was more interested in objects with very specific decorative motifs that were applicable to then new scientific dating techniques and related to the topic of diffusionism. Uniquely, Seligman's collecting activities demonstrated that both art history and ethnology, as defined at the time, were closely related to the study of early Chinese art and archaeology. His approach and scholarly influence is an important example how a private collector was actively involved in this developing field in Britain.

The Karlbeck Syndicate is a key example of how Chinese art was approached within a newly developing academic field in the West, and particularly Europe. This is exemplified by a discussion of Andersson's pioneering archaeological work and ground-breaking research by

Karlbeck on casting-technology and discovery of regional and transitional styles in bronzes, as well as, the addition of Chinese art and archaeology as an academic subject at the University of London by Yetts and the analysis of the Seligman Collection through Seligman's ethnological approach to the subject. In addition, a number of publications by Hobson and Laufer are also discussed. The taxonomic methodology of this scholarly group took into consideration a number of intercultural concepts that led to the exploration of anthropological frameworks for the analysis of Chinese objects and still have some relevance today.

The discussion on the institutional and intellectual framing of the Karlbeck Syndicate objects is also a contribution to the contemporary study of the anthropology of art, which argues for the idea of art as an integral part of anthropology.⁷²² In turn the essentially anthropological methodology of the comparative method was used at the time to classify the bronzes and focussed on the evolution of their stylistic development. This method was first proposed at the turn of the twentieth century by a number of anthropologists such as Boas and Haddon. Later this method was first considered by Laufer in the study of Chinese material culture and somewhat later by Andersson, Karlbeck, Yetts and Seligman. Following this methodology an interpretive framework was created for Chinese art and archaeology according to Western scholarship. It opened up a debate on the concept of bronze art and its technology that pointed to a geographical and cultural originating source outside of China's borders. This led to the implication of the theory of diffusionism as a plausible explanation for recreating its history, technology and the origin of design. The Chinese objects were studied alongside those of other cultures, notably Eurasian and southern Russia, exemplified by the Ordos and Luristan bronzes.

⁷²² On the issues connected with the anthropology of art see, Morphy and Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art', 1-323; Layton, *The Anthropology of Art*.

Furthermore, this thesis posits that the theory of diffusionism and the study of early Chinese art shared common ground. The idea of the intercultural or cultural influence in China's bronze art is a recurring theme. The term intercultural is used today by a number of scholars for discussing different art historical principles. In this thesis it is used as a historical term in the study of decoration and design in China's material culture. In this case, it stands synonymous with cultural relationship or even cultural diffusion in reference to scholarship of that time. Furthermore, this methodology became part of an art historical approach to understanding non-Western art. The terminology used by art historians, like Sirén, Bachhofer, Binyon and Ferguson is especially exemplary of the definitions commonly used in the stylistic classification of Western art. Even Andersson used the term Baroque to describe a stylistic phase in Neolithic pottery without meaning that there was a direct relationship to the Baroque style in Western art. However, one of the findings of this thesis is that at the time there was already a distinction in Western scholarship between the approaches to painting and calligraphy and those of bronze art and other archaeological material.⁷²³ Whilst the emphasis of using comparative terminologies in Chinese painting was to stress its differentiation from Western examples, in archaeological objects the comparative method was used in a search for unity and a common cultural origin of technology and design.

This study contributes significantly to the understanding of the field of Chinese art and archaeology in a particular Western context. It is reflective of a defined period of collecting history when a new archaic group came to European collections and were categorised within an accepted Western taxonomic system. The discussion of Style and what this means, and meant, in the different fields that deal with the same object is an important reminder that Chinese art was initially connected to the study of cultural history. Furthermore, it also demonstrates how, alongside the anthropological methodologies,

⁷²³ For a discussion on an art historical approach to Chinese objects and paintings at that time see, Fry, 'The Significance of Chinese Art', 1-5.

Western art historical periods were applied to label these archaic objects. This equally led to a number of interpretative assumptions to explain transitions and new stylistic motifs in China's bronze art without attempting to explain its meaning or function. Alongside the sequencing of their supposed evolutionary progress this framework was used in museum display. This was essentially an ethnological approach and typical of foreign objects. The exhibitions discussed in this thesis are genuine examples of how this model was used at that time.

In the Introduction a short history of the theory of diffusionism, and in particular in Britain, address some of the principal elements of this theory. The idea that most civilizations had a common source from which inventions and superior knowledge diffused into inferior cultures was a Western concept. Its roots was first located in nineteenth century philology and served as a foundation for later object based studies such as ethnology, archaeology and the art of non-Western cultures. The Introduction established that China's past was first framed by scholars like Kircher, Ball, de Guignes and Terrien De Lacouperie, who in their philological studies had argued that the Chinese language was not indigenous and derived from ancient Egypt or Babylonia.

By the early 1920s the diffusionist debate in Britain was led by Smith and Perry, who concluded in their ethnological research that Egypt was the geographical place of origin of all so-called advanced civilizations in ancient history, including China. At the same time the British archaeologist Childe had brought the model of culture complexes to the discipline of archaeology, which was one way to explain the diffusion of cultural traits in past societies. This had an effect on the general preconceptions of ancient China and on Western scholarship. Equally, the differentiation between the West and Others (meaning culturally non-European or from European descent) in the historical classification of early Chinese art

was strengthened through some of comments by Said, Young and Zhang Longxi.⁷²⁴ The creation of the idea of the so-called Orient influenced the perception of the objects discussed in this thesis and how they were framed within the collections and scholarship. The diffusionist theory, also an element of philological and anthropological studies, was essentially part of a larger intellectual debate in Western scholarship that went back a couple of centuries. However, for a short period in the 1920s and 1930s it took centre-stage in the analysis of a number of cultural and historical issues in London and also in Sweden.

The discovery of an advanced Neolithic culture within China's borders was a significant evidence of diffusionist possibilities in the prehistory of the area. Andersson, who conducted the excavation, wrote in his archaeological report a theory that supported the fact that he had found the remains of an unknown culture in Gansu that bore a direct relationship to Neolithic findings in Central Asia and Southern Russia. He not only was the discoverer of this culture but also the leading Western archaeologist operating in China and conducting scientific research in the field. He provided a framework for classifying this, and later other, archaeological material. One of the things that occupied Andersson was his search for missing links in China's prehistory that could explain the resemblance in the otherwise geographically wide-spread Neolithic finds. He used the terminology The Theory of Western Origin and this is essentially what we now call a diffusionist approach. He continued to follow this method when he studied the later dating bronze objects, especially the Ordos bronzes and the likelihood that they introduced the animal-style into China. Another significant article where he proposed these answers was that the technique of the gold-smith, and especially the delicate inlay-technique often found on bronzes from the Zhou period onwards, was an introduction from the West. At the time, these so-called progressive elements in Chinese art were thought to be anything but culturally indigenous. The main

⁷²⁴ See, Introduction, 60-62

conclusion was that they were imported. Although Andersson withdrew his theory in the 1940s his early arguments for a direct cultural relationship between East and West had influenced how the Neolithic and archaic objects were first received in Western scholarly circles. His publications represent some of the first Western discussions based on the study of China's archaeological objects and are an important source of information in the historiography of the field in Europe. In Britain, it was Yetts who published two significant articles in the leading art historical journal *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, discussed in Chapter 5, where he presented and affirmed Andersson's ideas to a larger audience. This shows the impact of the, what would today be considered as scientifically unsubstantiated, classification of new archaeological data. During this period a lot of archaeological material was based upon a cross-comparison of objects in Western collections but without any of the important information provided by excavation. On the one hand, Andersson's discovery and excavations of the Neolithic sites are the first that were systematically conducted, provided provenance and scientifically documented the finds. On the other hand, he also purchased a lot of objects and specimen from the local population and to process all the data in Sweden took many years. His archaeological report was published soon after his discovery and already included his Theory of Western Origin before all the research on the collected material was completed.

The discussion of the developing scholarship in Sweden during the period of the foundation of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities brings to light an academic bond between a group of specialists that all participated in a debate on a cultural relationship and diffusion through the discovery of China's early material culture, respectively whether they agreed with each other or not. Significantly to this thesis they were predominantly based in either Sweden or Britain. Both countries held exclusive Chinese collections and promoted themselves as important centres for Chinese art. Furthermore, the scholarly exchange

between the two countries and their mutual collecting interest in early Chinese art, as illustrated in this thesis, found itself united in the Karlbeck Syndicate. This places diffusionism into context with a specific intellectual and historical atmosphere surrounding scientific and cultural studies at the time. The idea that early Chinese material culture had some of its origin in the West was an accepted perception that already had been firmly placed in Western universal history. This is one of the important findings in this thesis. It was essentially the broader intellectual environment of that time, or *Zeitgeist*, that directed these diffusionist ideas in the study of Chinese art and archaeology. As Blaut mentioned in his study on Eurocentric history that the diffusionist scholars were, in essence, elaborating and codifying the theory (of Europe's permanent geographical superiority) in the realms of scholarship within which they worked.⁷²⁵ The first museum curators, like Andersson and Hobson, dealing with objects of China's Bronze Age represented their national institutions, the State and with that the complexities involved by promoting Chinese art to a Western audience. This affected purchases made for the museums and the choice for their display to a larger public, importantly publicizing new archaeological discoveries. The museum was essentially responsible for supporting the historical ideas linked to its objects and reaching a wide audience. The ownership of and identification with early Chinese art on a historical and aesthetic level were powerful tools in this promotion. This is pointed out in the discussion of how the Ordos bronzes were exhibited next to a group of Siberian bronzes that bore similarities in design but were culturally different. Still, a direct relationship was suggested by visually comparing the objects in a framed display.

This study showed that around the period that the syndicate operated Andersson, Karlbeck, Yetts, Hobson and Seligman all significantly communicated with each other through correspondence, in publications and participated in the organised exhibitions and

⁷²⁵ See, Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, 13

seminars. One of the things that stood out is that the comparative method was used by this group and affected the writing of China's prehistory through archaeological data. The general focus was on a search for a common origin for Chinese and Western civilization. Secondly, after this inter-war period the study of Chinese art was slowly breaking up in two directions; one purely focussing on the stylistic development of design and did not necessarily include the archaeological data provided by the objects, and the other dedicated to the importance of archaeology through excavation. A research question of how the discipline of Chinese art and archaeology following this defined period developed naturally follows from the discussion in this thesis.

The implications of diffusionism in China's archaeological and anthropological research are complex. The idea that Western culture brought progress to ancient China was influenced by a Eurocentric political system, which provided a set of beliefs about empirical reality that a majority Europeans, according to Blaut, accepted as true propositions supported by facts.⁷²⁶ This affected the collecting of Chinese antiquities and promoted the growth of European collections and was conditioned by the intellectual environment of the period. The question of Chinese origin resurfaced in the 1920s and 1930s through a number of new discoveries, including the Bronze Age site at Anyang and new archaeological data entered the mainstream intellectual debate. A number of publications supported that some form of cultural inter-action between China and the West, either through trade, war or migration had existed. Specifically Seligman's pioneering comparative studies on weaponry types in China and ancient Europe and his research on the diffusion of glass-making technology are valuable examples of the ethnological approach within the study of early Chinese art and culture.

Seligman's work was influenced by Haddon, who at the start of the twentieth century published a revolutionary study on Primitive art. He proposed that forms of art could

⁷²⁶ See, Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, 1-10; Said, *Orientalism*.

deconstruct historical patterns and demonstrate relationships between cultural groups, something that Boas also argued for at the time in the US. The short discussion of their studies in Chapter 3 conclude that there was a parallel between the approach to early Chinese art and Primitive art in this period. One of the reasons being, that the study of the objects of the archaic past, including non-Western archaeology, was considered in the same way as the then so-called living-primitive. This is relevant to understand that art, archaeology and anthropology of non-Western art shared common ground.

As noted earlier, these archaic objects first started to appear on the art market around this period. The popularity of the syndicate amongst a group of private collectors demonstrated that an aesthetic value was somehow connected to a historical value. In the Introduction it was discussed that Craig Clunas proposed that Chinese art as a concept is indeed a Western invention sets an important framework for understanding the function of China's bronze art within a Western collection. The novelty of the bronze objects was one factor that made them interesting to collect and their intricate design, technological refinement and antiquity being other valuable motivations. The art market was central to the creation of Western collections and played an indirect role in their institutional and intellectual framing. An object's provenance depended on information given to the buyer by dealers in China. Once they reached Western collections they started their classification process and, as can be argued, their re-identification within a new cultural environment.

There are a whole range of intellectual perspectives that deal with the concepts of re-identification of the object in a museum setting. The discussion on the different transformations of early Chinese material culture once they are framed within a Western institution or private collection is an important matter. It tells us something about the way that the history of a culture is written by the organisers of the display and links into questions on the ownership of non-Western art. Furthermore, there is growing literature on the conception

of a so-called visual language in art discussed in the Introduction.⁷²⁷ This concept can mean different things to different people but in connection to art it is mostly connected to the perception of design, colour and composition within a work and how this is transmitted into a coherent system that is a universal language. These ideas are mostly explored within issues in contemporary art, especially painting, as a means of de-coding its semiotics or in the reconstruction of how language was related to the creative production of art at a certain period and how the two were connected.⁷²⁸ However, it also includes how archaeology communicates to the public and how its objects continue to be (re)interpreted. It comes down to what the work of art or object tells the perceiver and how this is translated, its reception. The complexities of this topic are beyond the scope of this thesis and lead to future research on the collections today. It is an interesting view to keep in mind when looking at such ancient Chinese objects either as being grouped as either ethnology or art. The language used to classify and interpret these bronzes was an important contribution to this re-identification process of the objects themselves in Western collections. This gives future research a direction to explore. What the discussion in this study shows is that the language in the first three decades of the twentieth century to classify early Chinese material culture employed both Western anthropological and art historical terminology; the terms specimen and works of art were used freely outside the boundaries of the disciplines. There was no definite distinction made between the two. It is an important indication that in the study of China's bronze art in the West, archaeology and anthropology have always been intertwined and were part of a much broader investigation of cultural history. The objects collected by Karlbeck, in

⁷²⁷ The term visual language is used by a number of different theorists and within a range of definitions. It is often used to understand the meaning or symbols in Western art and how these are translated into words/language. See, Introduction, 42; Schapiro *Words, Script, and Pictures*; O'Toole *The Language of Displayed Art*.

⁷²⁸ Recently, Sarah Peirce discussed the visual language through the decorative motifs in a group of Hellenic vases and Stephanie Moser addressed some of the issues concerning visual language in archaeology and how archaeology communicates to a larger public. See, Sarah Peirce, 'Visual Language and Concepts of Cult on the 'Lenaia Vases'', *Classical Antiquity* 17 (1) (Apr., 1998): 59-95; Stephanie Moser, 'The Visual Language of Archaeology: a case study of Neanderthals', *Antiquity* 66 (253): 831-844; Brian Molyneaux ed. *The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 1997).

particular the Huai-style and Ordos bronzes, are an example of how this classification framework addressed both art historical and anthropological terminology, and how this also connected to the aesthetic principles in Western art historical scholarship. Importantly, this raises fundamental questions about the definition of Chinese art and the function of these objects outside China. Another point is that within a Eurocentric structure the objects were internally colonized and promoted in and by the West defined itself as a dominant progressive power over seemingly degenerate cultures elsewhere in the world. This is a strong use of language in itself.

What is interesting is that the intellectual framing of Primitive art in Western collections underwent a similar transformation from ethnology to works of art as the Chinese objects during this period. In more recent studies on the collecting history of Primitive art it shows a connection between the Modernist movement and the creation of this category in art historical terms.⁷²⁹ These objects were first grouped within the principles of a so-called universal aesthetic and were open to universalistic interpretation. Equally, the classification process of the Huai-style and Ordos bronzes discussed in this thesis were first contextualised within a broader universalistic interpretation that was based on the belief that ancient Chinese design and bronze technology had some of its origin and influences in Western art. However, what sets early Chinese art apart from Primitive art is that it connected to both the Modernist movement and appealed to the traditional Western appreciations of Classical art and antiquarianism. There was a historical and cultural identity in their design and technology that was recognisable to the Western collector. On the other hand archaeological data supported important scientific facts on their history and origin, much like Classical archaeology provided to studies on the origins of Western art. Recently, Judith Green discussed the attraction of early Chinese art to the Modernist collector, in specific reference

⁷²⁹ This topic is discussed through the influence of ethnological theory on the study of early Chinese art see, Introduction, 31-33 and 70-71; Morphy and Perkins, 'The Anthropology of Art', 4-5.

to Eumorfopoulos, who also collected Modernist art.⁷³⁰ This thesis complements future research investigating this relationship between the collector of early Chinese and Modernist art. A closer look at the particular collectors themselves was out of bounds in the discussion of in this thesis but importantly this study considered the activities, consequences and scholarship of a defined consortium to collect China's bronze art within a defined environment.

This brings one final question for future research: Is diffusionism still an element in the study of Chinese art today? The diffusionist ideas presented in this thesis are first and foremost Eurocentric. However, they also represent the conception of a need to link, historically, intellectually and visually, objects of the past. The contextualisation for this desire to connect cultures, objects and histories was an essential part for creating order. Within this thought, it can disconnect, not dismiss, diffusionism from some of its more radical elements. What can be taken into consideration is that at the time the scholars discussed in this thesis did not acknowledge the Eurocentric connotations and implications of their ideas defined as diffusionist as we do today.

To seek a historical connection between early Chinese material culture and that of others is still questioned today through the analysis of archaeological material. The 2003 symposium is one example of how Andersson's Theory of Western Origin is under review. Although the terminology today is slightly different and ideas seem less extreme it is also supported by archaeological data. For example, in the archaeological discussions the term influence (in a direct sense) is often replaced by cultural interaction and interculturality. In this case, influence is predominantly used within the art historical analysis of ornament. At the symposium there were a number of scholars that argued for Andersson's original ideas

⁷³⁰ See, Green, 'A New Orientation of Ideas', 43-56; Green, 'Ancient China/Modern Art', 87-99.

without implying the Eurocentric concepts connected to cultural relationships that possibly influenced China's bronze art.⁷³¹ Today's interpretation of the Bronze Age cultures in China and those to its West are based upon archaeological evidence that they communicated with each other. The degree of this interaction is still not entirely clear. The communication, or relationship between ancient cultural groups and civilizations, could have been in a number of ways; trade, war, immigration, marriage. The result is that they influenced each other's on a cultural level. The extent of this relationship is often difficult to determine. The objects are representative of one aspect of this history. On a more conceptual level, it links into questions on the more general perception that if a universal history exists how this affected the study of bronze or archaic art, its history, archaeology and how this connects to the re-construction of the culture that produced it. Ideas that explore whether the study of non-Western art can be placed within the model of a universality principle are primarily discussed in the studies on the history of Primitive art.

Research questions connected to the different intellectual principles naturally follow. Can the treatment of Primitive art and archaic art then follow a similar methodology in scholarship? In this sphere what is considered art and what is archaeology or should these objects generally be referred to as material culture? Is this decided by the perceiver and the translator of the visual language of the object in question? Is it the discipline that decides what objects belongs where? An important finding in this thesis was that in the anthropological methodologies used to classify early Chinese art the archaic was treated as the so-called living primitive and this gives a new insight into the history of a number of ideas on material culture. It raised the important art historical question if the fields of art history, anthropology and archaeology are global and connected through a universal language, or, was and is this language defined by traditions in Western scholarship that initially classified non-Western

⁷³¹ See, Introduction, 47-48

objects within a diffusionist history that promoted cultural relationships in ancient times in order to verify their own position in history.⁷³² On the other hand, such concepts support the proposal that the interpretation of non-Western art is yet again both anthropological and art historical and the two are interconnected when it comes to the study of Chinese material culture and becomes a global issue. The Karlbeck Syndicate and the conceptualisation of the archaic objects that were collected within this defined period therefore represent an important page in the cultural history of Western collecting in the first decades of the twentieth century.

⁷³² For further reading see, Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, p. 23-36; Elkins, 'Art History as a Global Discipline', 3-24; Elkins, *Is Art History Global?*.

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The primary archival sources used in this thesis are: The Karlbeck Syndicate Archives.

The material is kept in three places:

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Abbreviations of journals

<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JNCBAS</i>	<i>Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>BMFEA</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities</i>
<i>CJSA</i>	<i>China Journal of Science and Arts</i>
<i>TOCS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society</i>
<i>AAA</i>	<i>Archives of Asian Art</i>
<i>BMC</i>	<i>The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
<i>BM</i>	<i>The Burlington Magazine</i>
<i>JRAI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i>
<i>FECB</i>	<i>Far Eastern Ceramic Bulletin</i>
<i>BMQ</i>	<i>British Museum Quarterly</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>

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Illustrations

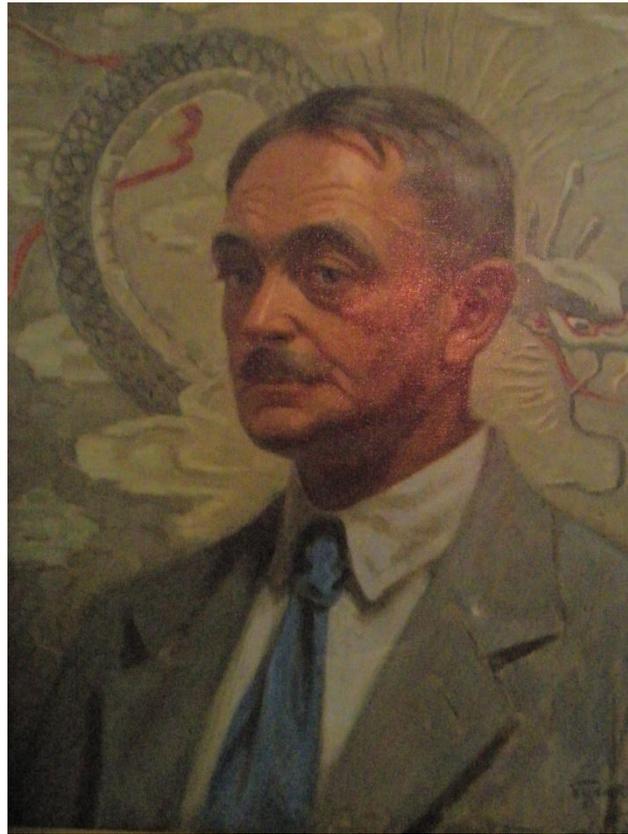


Figure 1. Oil painting of Karlbeck by Tyra Kleen (1874-1951).

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
Photo by Valérie Jurgens



Figure 2. A bronze *ding*, Zhou period. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-12087-012)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 3. A bronze dagger-axe (*ge*), Western Zhou period. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-11074-003)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 4. Bronze mirror, Eastern Zhou period. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0582)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 5. Bronze belt hook, Eastern Zhou period. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0293)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 6. Archaic jade ornament. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-1416)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 7. Ordos bronze. Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-12069)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 8. Polychrome lead-glazed tea cup, Tang period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-11034-011)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 9. Pottery tomb figure of a camel, Tang period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-07548)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 10. The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities today, Stockholm.

Photo by Valérie Jurgens

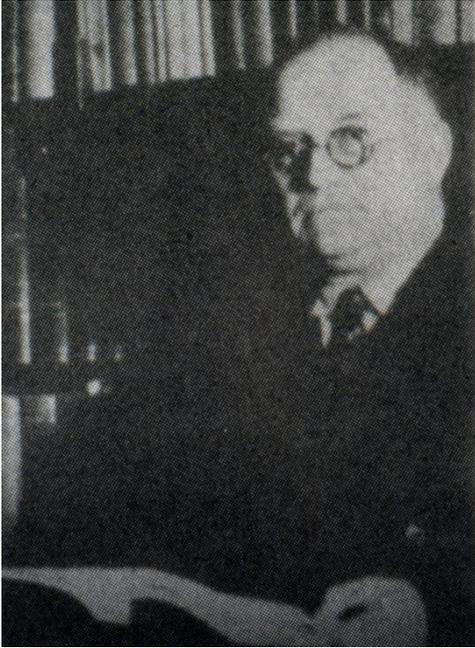


Figure 11.

Photo of Andersson after K.C. Chang *The Archaeology of China* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986)

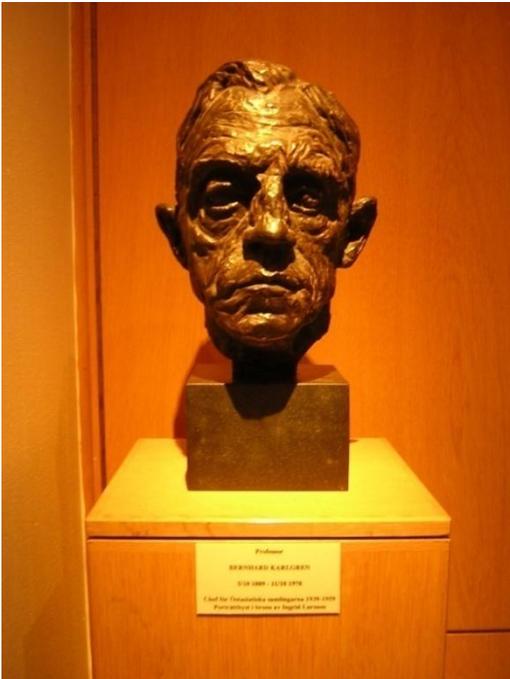


Figure 12.

Bronze bust of Karlgren at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm.

Photo by Valérie Jurgens

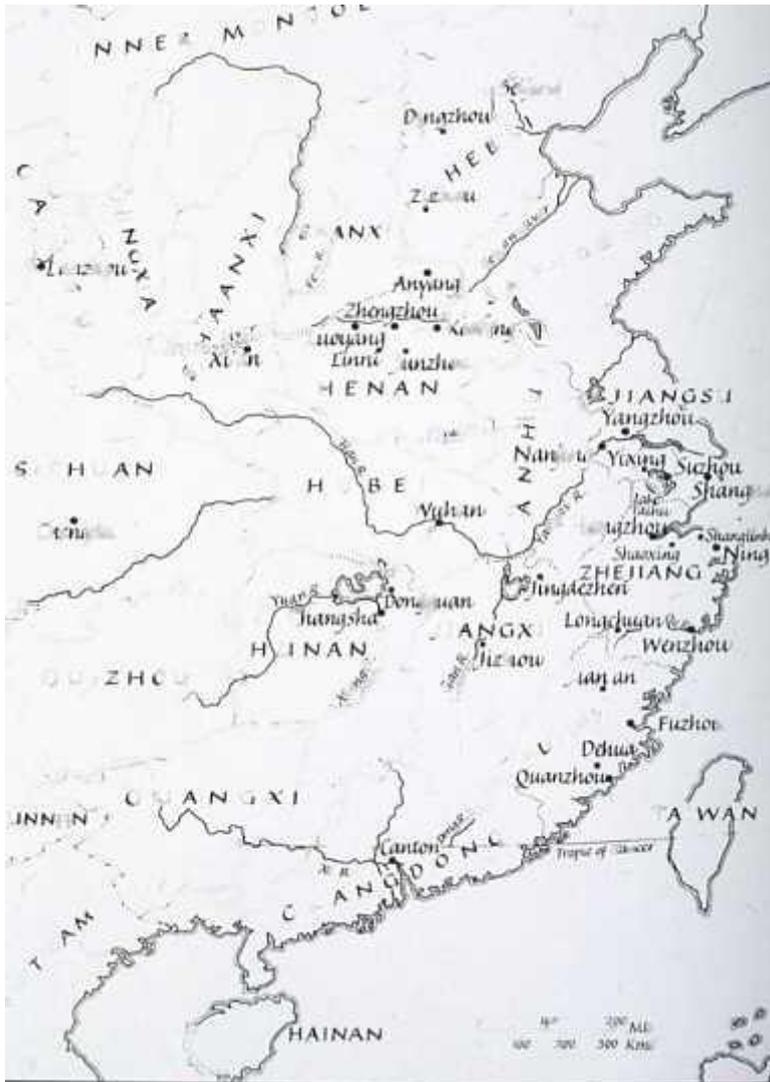


Figure 13.

Map of northern China.
After Orvar Karlbeck,
Treasure Seeker in China
(Stockholm and London:
the Cresset Press, 1957)



Figure 14.

Photo Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden. After the
Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society 39
(1882-1973)

Report No. 1. Peiping Oct. 5th 1931

To The Karlbeck Syndicate,
Gentlemen,

I arrived in Peiping four days late, partly owing to engine trouble in Siberia and partly due to Japanese occupation of Manchuria. On my way I passed through Dairen, where I tried to locate a Japanese factory, where imitations of Sung ware are being turned out. I found it and was shown round by the owner. I found four types of imitations viz, Tanchow, Lungshuan, Qunyang and three-coloured Yang with silver glaze. His ware might be divided into two classes viz, those bearing the chop of the factory and those lacking the chop. Specimens of the latter type are probably meant to be passed off as genuine Sung ware. The Tanchow imitations were very good and some of the urns were very hard to tell from genuine ones. They were decorated with a floral design in a dark rich brown glaze, the surrounding spaces being left unglazed. The Lungshuan imitations were also very good, but not quite as convincing as the former. The Qunyang imitations were very poor. The Yang imitations were rather good, particularly the silvery pieces. The only fault I could find with it was that it was a bit dull.

When I started my rounds of the curio-shops I had hopes of finding low prices, or at least prices lower than when I left China in Febr. After a couple of days work, however, I had learnt that the prices had risen in the most scandalous way. This is particularly the case with minor bronzes, jade, silver and objects from Anyang. I will here mention the prices of a few of the objects shown me.

For a beautiful silver bowl, measuring 6" with very good ornaments and gilt, \$5000 were asked in a shop where very little bargaining can be done. In the same shop I was shown a jade hare in the round and not more than 5/8" long which the owner considered worth \$600. In another shop with fixed prices, the only one in Peiping, I saw the jade head of a tiger. The design on the head appears to be archaic and the piece is probably pre-Man. The jade was gray and brown in colour and not at all nice looking and the head did not exceed 4" in length. The price was \$10,000. When I wanted to know why such a ridiculous price was asked, I was told by the owner, that 4000 years ago some year's ago had a similar sun for the front part of a horse in green jade. His tiger head was much older and must therefore be worth much more.

For two ornaments of bronze intended for the nap and in the shape of reclining tigers the owner wanted \$3500, and I feel convinced that, if I had offered him \$5000, he would have refused the sum. They were quite beautiful with good design and with a wonderful black patina, and they reminded me very much of a fitting in the shape of a tiger head in the Raphael collection.

There seems to be several reasons for the high prices now prevailing. The local dealers are now aware of the high prices which are now being paid in Europe, and they consider themselves entitled to a greater percentage of the profits. They have also realised, that foreign dealers who bring gold to the country, can buy silver very cheaply now and are therefore charging prices which the foreign dealers would have had to pay if the big slump in silver had not set in. I have also been told that local Paris buyers pay absurd prices for unusual things and that the local

2

dealers are forced to follow suit.

The foreign dealers who are here now are unable to pay these high prices, and I am therefore of the opinion that prices will soon begin to drop. Under those circumstances I think it would be a good policy to wait. The more expensive pieces which I have bought so far are things I consider unique, and which I did not dare to let out of my hands.

The curio market is on the whole rather poorly supplied. Bronzes from Suifu are getting increasingly scarce and are therefore going up in price. These much worn bronzes which the Mongols used to wear as charms have almost entirely disappeared from the market. The things now offered for sale are almost all fresh from the ground. Most of them seem to come from Yulin in northernmost Shensi. This does not necessarily mean that they have all been found there. Yulin is a distributing centre for everything found in the southeastern part of the Ordes. I have seen not a few interesting pieces from that region but I have not been able to buy many on account of the prices.

Last week a number of good pieces found near Anyang reached this city. The prices were generally very high. The most interesting object was a sculptured bone inlaid with turquoise. On one side the bone was decorated in the style characteristic of that region. On the other there were deeply incised characters. Very little remained of the inlay. \$1500 was asked for the piece on the ground, that it was stated in the inscription that the bone was that of a unicorn.

A new bronze centre has been discovered about 50 km. south of Anyang. The name of the place is Huihsien. I saw several good weapons found there. Unfortunately the prices were prohibitive. Amongst them there was the head of a lance measuring 750 mm.

Chintsun near Loyang is still yielding many interesting bronzes and objects of jade. I have been shown quite a few bronze vessels found there. Most of them are rather rough but occasionally one finds a good piece. The best I have seen so far was a Tzun with a wonderful glossy green patina mottled with red. Unfortunately it was suffering from bronze pest and was therefore not worth buying. The price was \$15,000. I was also shown a pair of bronze Hu which probably came from the same tomb as the pair of Hu which I bought at Kaifengfu last Febr. and sent back to Sweden. The two Hu I now saw had long inscriptions on the outside of the neck. They were not yet deciphered, but the owner seemed to be of the opinion that they are Ts'in in character.

A few days ago I saw a number of early mirrors which had been unearthed not far from Shouchoo, Anhui. Most of them were unfortunately so badly broken that they were not worth buying. Amongst them was a most interesting specimen. It is a TIV mirror and seems to form a link between the earliest known TIV mirrors and those of the eastern Han dynasty. There are in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities a few mirrors of the earliest type. They are in addition to the TIV ornaments decorated with arabesques scattered over the surface without any attempt at symmetry. On the mirror, I am now referring to, the arabesques have been replaced by four dragonlike creatures with bodies composed of arabesques.

Last spring Swallow wrote me about the purchase of parts of an early chariot. I got the impression that the find also included part of the woodwork. I have now gone through the collection and found that it was composed of chariot fittings and horse trappings of bronze. There are in all some four hundred pieces. Most of them are either from the same tomb or from two tombs of the same age. I beg to enclose a list of the objects found together with sketches of the more important pieces. I am also enclosing photos of most of my purchases as well as a list of my purchases to date.

Yours truly
Göran Karlbeck

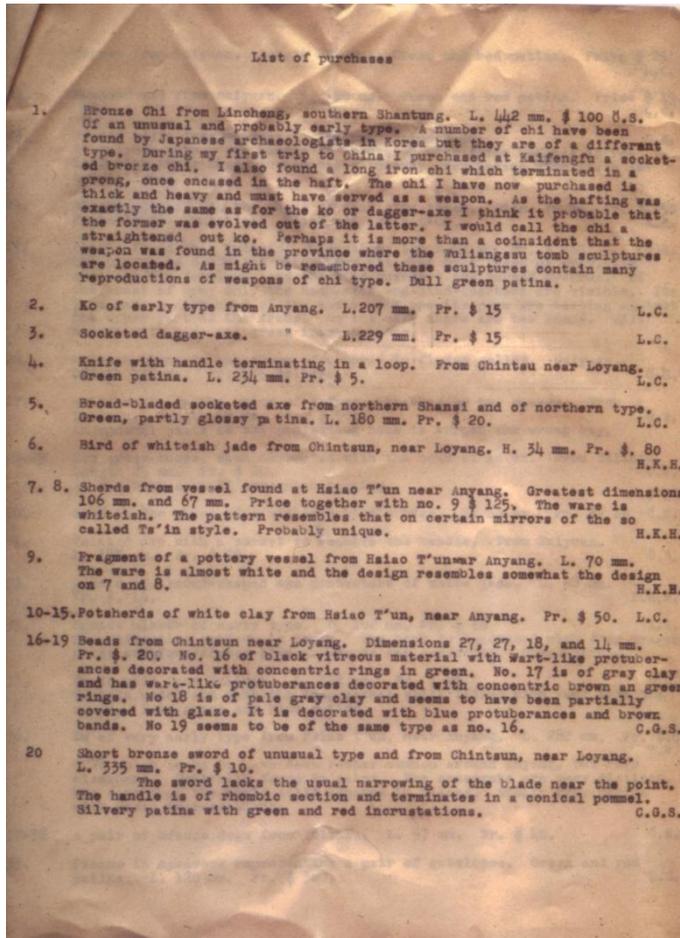
Figure 15.

Example of a newsletter-report from Karlbeck to the Karlbeck Syndicate. Report 1. Peiping, October 5 1931.

The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm

The Karlbeck Syndicate Papers, the Asian Department, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The Karlbeck Syndicate File, the Department of Asia, the British Museum, London



16. Example of a List of Purchases.

The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm

The Karlbeck Syndicate Papers, the Asian Department, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The Karlbeck Syndicate File, the Department of Asia, the British Museum, London

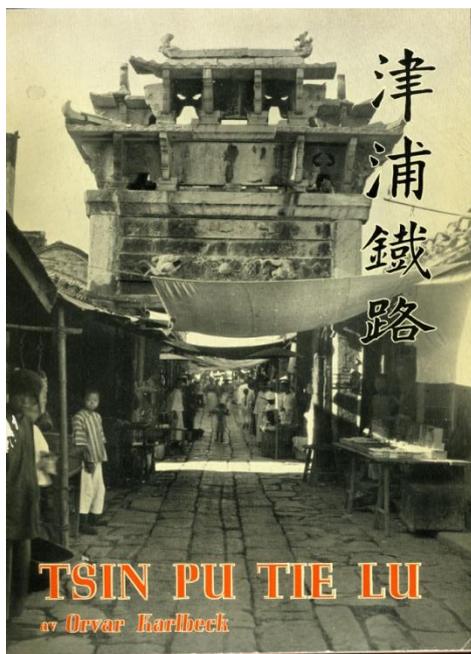


Figure 17.

Cover of *Tsin Pu Ti Lu*, by Orvar Karlbeck.

(Stockholm: O.L. Svanbäcks boktryckerie, 1938)



Figure 18.
 Map of northern China indicating the travel route of Karlbeck between 1928-1934.
 After Orvar Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China* (Stockholm and London: the Cresset Press, 1957).

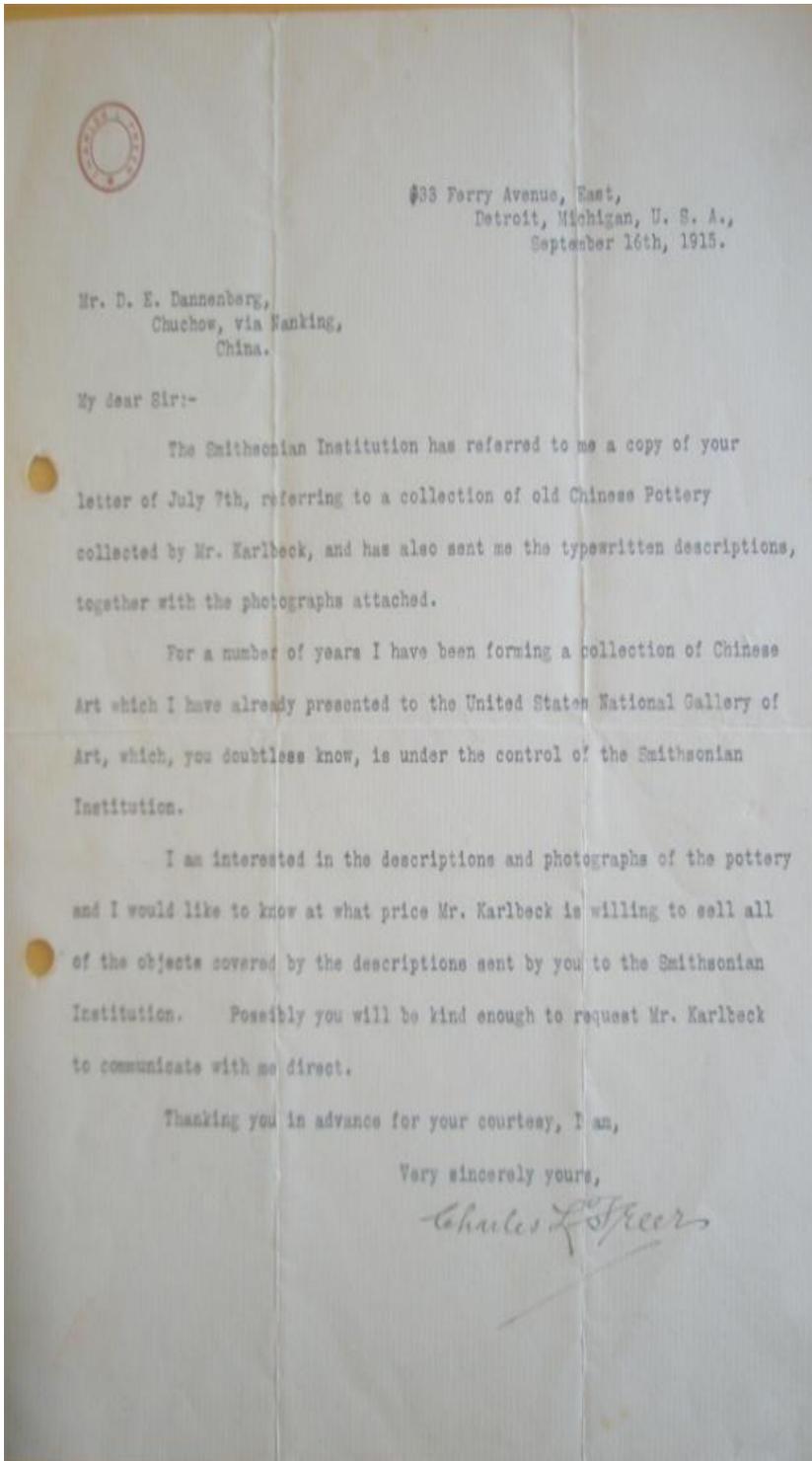


Figure 19.

Letter Charles L. Freer to Mr. D.E. Dannenberg expressing an interest in Karlbeck's ceramic collection.

Dated: Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

September 16, 1915.

The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm.

FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CHICAGO

August 25, 1925.

Mr. Orvar Karlbeck,
Tientsin-Peking Railway,
Chu Chow, Anhui, China.

Dear Sir:

I am very pleased that you have written me in regard to your collection of ancient Chinese pottery. There is no doubt that the collection gathered by you through several years is very interesting and valuable. I perused with great pleasure the report which you have elaborated and which is most scholarly. With a few exceptions, your attributions meet with my hearty approval. We have in this institution a number of pieces agreeing with what you call Chow, and silk worms, cocoon, jars. Negotiations for the acquisition of your collection would be greatly facilitated if you had stated in your letter the price which you ask for it. Please let me know at your earliest convenience what valuation you place on it. The best procedure will be for you to set a separate valuation on each individual piece. As soon as I have this information from you, I shall communicate with you and tell you what the best method will be of placing your collection in this country.

Very truly yours,

Berthold Laufer

Figure 20.

Letter Laufer to Karlbeck discussing the purchasing of a ceramic collection for the Field Museum in Chicago.

Dated: 25 August, 1925.

Volume IX. The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Museum, Stockholm



Figure 21.
Photo of Li Ji after K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of China* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1957)



Figure 22.
Photograph of a 'Peking' Shopping Street in the early twentieth century.
After Orvar Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China* (Stockholm and London: the Cresset Press, 1957)



Figures 23 and 24.

Two bronze Huai-style mirrors collected by Karlbeck.

Hallwyl Collection.

After Osvald Sirén, *A History of Early Chinese Art* (London: E. Benn, Limited, 1929)



Figure 25.

Bronze dagger-axe (*ge*) with Anyang provenance. Collected by Karlbeck for the British Museum.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figures 26 and 27.

Two ceramic stamps used to decorate bronze mirrors. Collected by Karlbeck.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0472)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figures 28 and 29.

Anyang moulds. Collected by Karlbeck.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0796(0813)) and (OM-1974-0795).

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 30.

Anyang Marble Sculpture.

Collected by Karlbeck.

After Orvar Karlbeck,
'Anyang Marble Sculpture'
*Bulletin of the Museum of
Far Eastern Antiquities* 7
(1935): 61-69

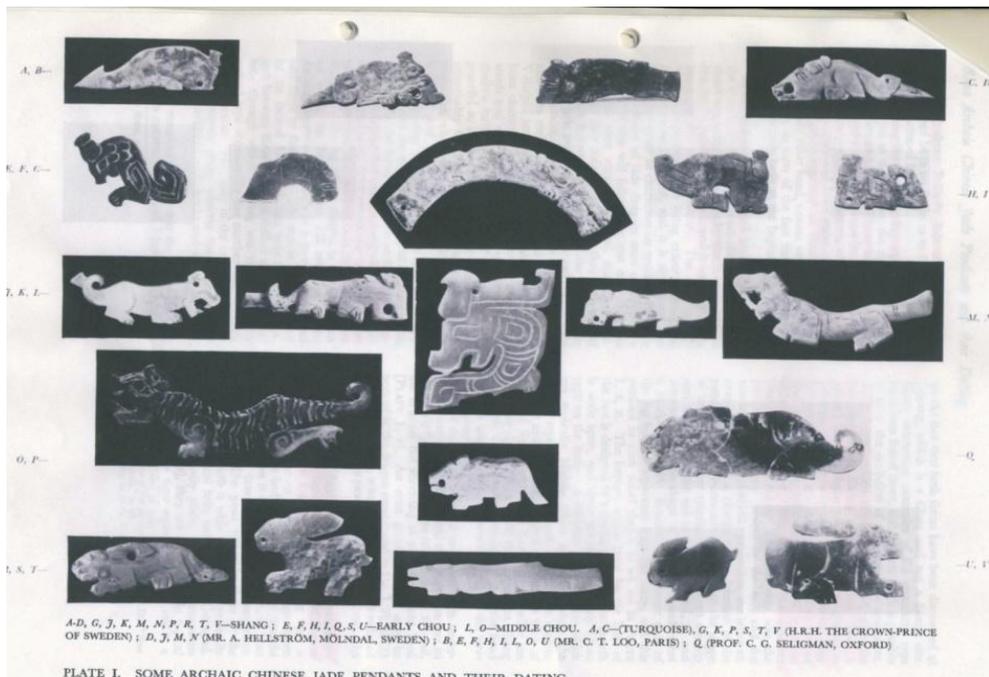


Figure 31

Page containing a selection of jade objects collected by Karlbeck supporting his article on dating and classifying archaic jades.

After, O. Karlbeck 'Some Archaic jade Pendants and Their Dating' *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 73/425 (Aug., 1928): Plate I.



Figure 32.

Bronze axle-cap with inlay design.
Eastern Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the
Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities,
Stockholm (K-1448)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 33.

A selection of Huai-style bronze belt hooks. Collected by Karlbeck for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities Stockholm.

Exhibited at the museum in 1933.

After Andersson 'The Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes' in *Exhibitions September 1933*

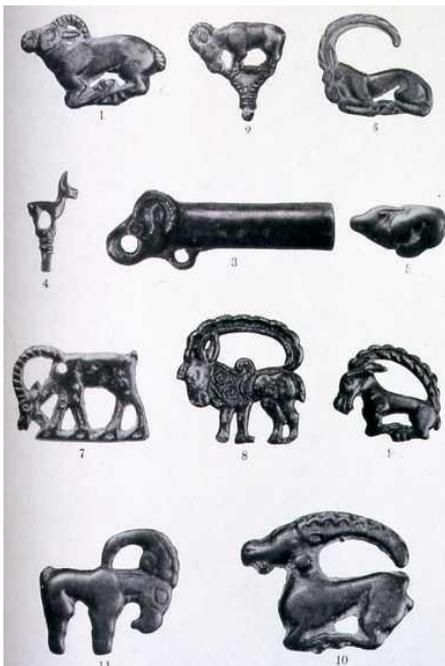


Figure 34.

A selection of Ordos bronzes that were exhibited at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in 1933.

After Andersson, 'Selected Ordos Bronzes' *Exhibitions September 1933*



Figure 35.

A painted pottery urn from Gansu.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0780)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 36.

Map showing the discovered site at Yangshao and compared to the Anau and Tripolje sites.

After Andersson, 'An Early Chinese Culture', *Bulletin of the Geological Survey of China* 5 (1923)

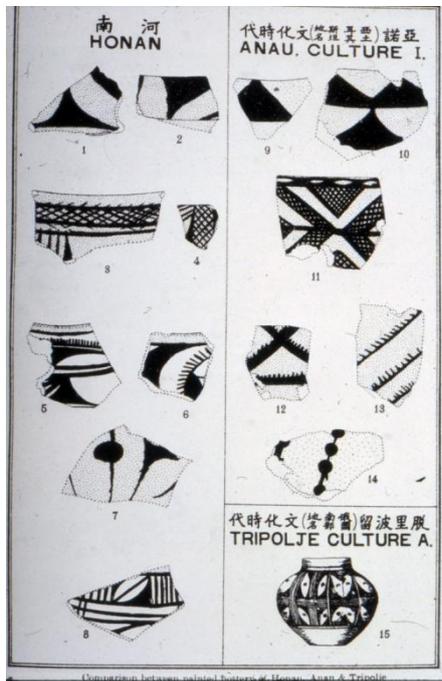


Figure 37.

Andersson's comparison between the Henan Neolithic pottery decorative style and that of the Anau and Tripolje cultures.

After, J.G. Andersson, 'An Early Chinese Culture', *Bulletin of the Geological Survey of China* 5 (1923)



Figure 38.

A bronze bell, Western Zhou period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities,
Stockholm (K-11376)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 39.

Pottery tomb figure of a court lady, Tang period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities,
Stockholm (K-15052)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 40.

Karlbeck travelling in Inner Mongolia during the period he collected for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and the Karlbeck Syndicate.

After Orvar Karlbeck, *Treasure Seeker in China*
(Stockholm and London: the Cresset Press, 1957)



Figure 41.

Catalogue of the objects of the 1928-1929 collecting expedition.

Minnen Från Orvar Karlbecks Samlarfärd i Kina (1928-1929)

(Memories of Orvar Karlbeck's Collecting Trip (1928-1929))

Photo by Valérie Jurgens



Figure 42.

Bronze mask plaque on display at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm.

Photo by Valérie Jurgens



Figure 43.

Bronze end piece to *ge* handle. Eastern Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the British Museum

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 44.

Bronze ornament for dress, Han period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the British Museum

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 45.

1. Bronze knife with Anyang provenance, Shang period.
2. Bronze horse frontlet with feline mask design, Western Zhou period.

Both bronze objects were collected by Karlbeck for the British Museum.

After Robert L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes', *The British Museum Quarterly* VIII (1932-1933): 2-3



Figure 46

A selection of Huai-style bronzes purchased by the British Museum through the Karlbeck Syndicate (1931-1932).

- l. Chariot-fitting, Zhou period.
- m. Mirror, Eastern Zhou period.
- o. Mirror, Eastern Zhou/Early Han period.
- n. End of *ge* handle, Eastern Zhou period.

After Robert L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes, *The British Museum Quarterly* VIII (1932-1933: 81-83

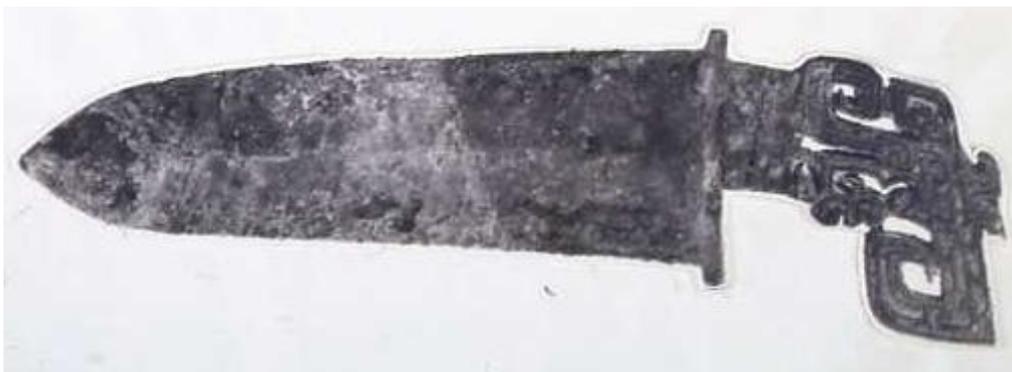


Figure 47.

Bronze knife with an Anyang provenance. Described in the catalogue as 'ceremonial dance axe', 'probably Yin'.

Collected by Karlbeck for Clarke.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 48.

Bronze axe with Anyang provenance. Described in the catalogue as 'ceremonial dance axe' and 'probably Chow' (Zhou period).

Collected by Karlbeck for Clarke.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 49.

Bronze chariot fitting, Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for Raphael.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 50.

Bronze spear-head with inlay technique depicting the Huai- style, Eastern Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for Raphael.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 51.

Bronze goblet (*gu*), Shang period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the
Museum of Far Eastern
Antiquities, Stockholm (K-12337)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 52.

Bronze sword with inlay design,
Eastern Zhou.

Collected by Karlbeck for the
Museum of Far Eastern
Antiquities, Stockholm (K-12337)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 53.

Bronze weapon, (probl.) Shang period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the Museum of Far
Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (K-11034-
093).

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 54.

Bronze dagger, Anyang provenance.

Collected by Karlbeck for the
Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities,
Stockholm (K-11055-023)

Photo courtesy of the museum.



Figure 55.

Cover and logo depicting *taotie* mask of the catalogue *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 56.

Bronze handle depicting *taotie* mask design, Han period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0483)

Photo courtesy of the museum.

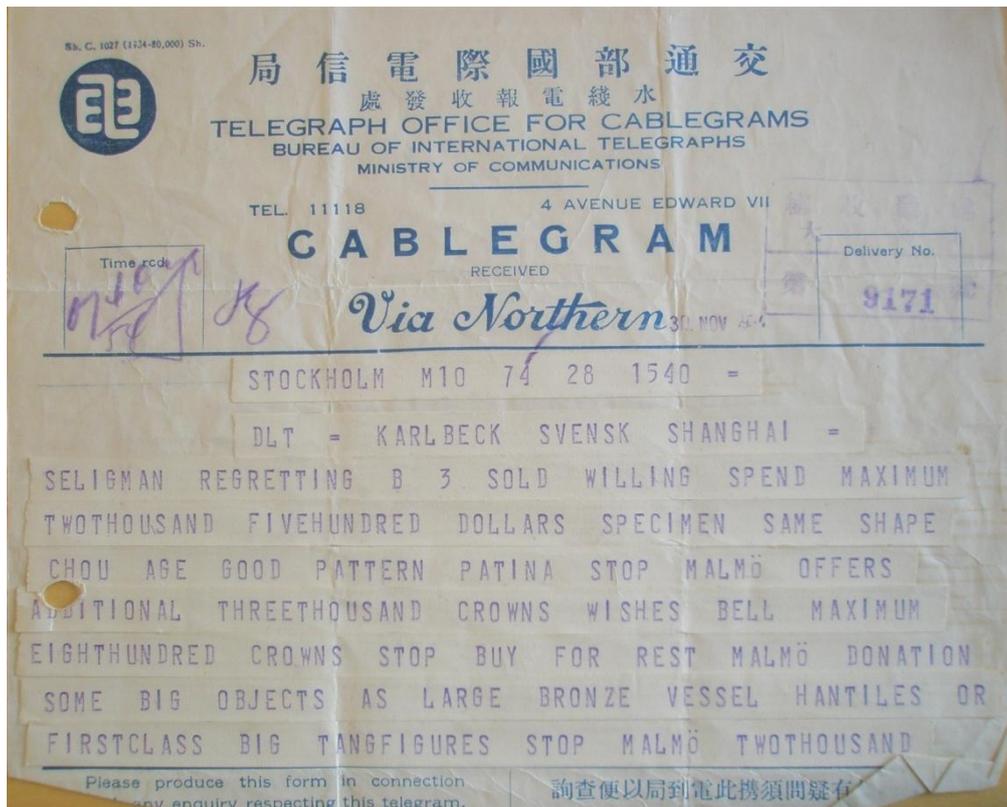


Figure 57.

Example of a telegram sent from Andersson to Karlbeck in China requesting specific purchases for Charles G. Seligman and the Malmö Museum.

Volume IX. The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm.

Photo by Valérie Jurgens

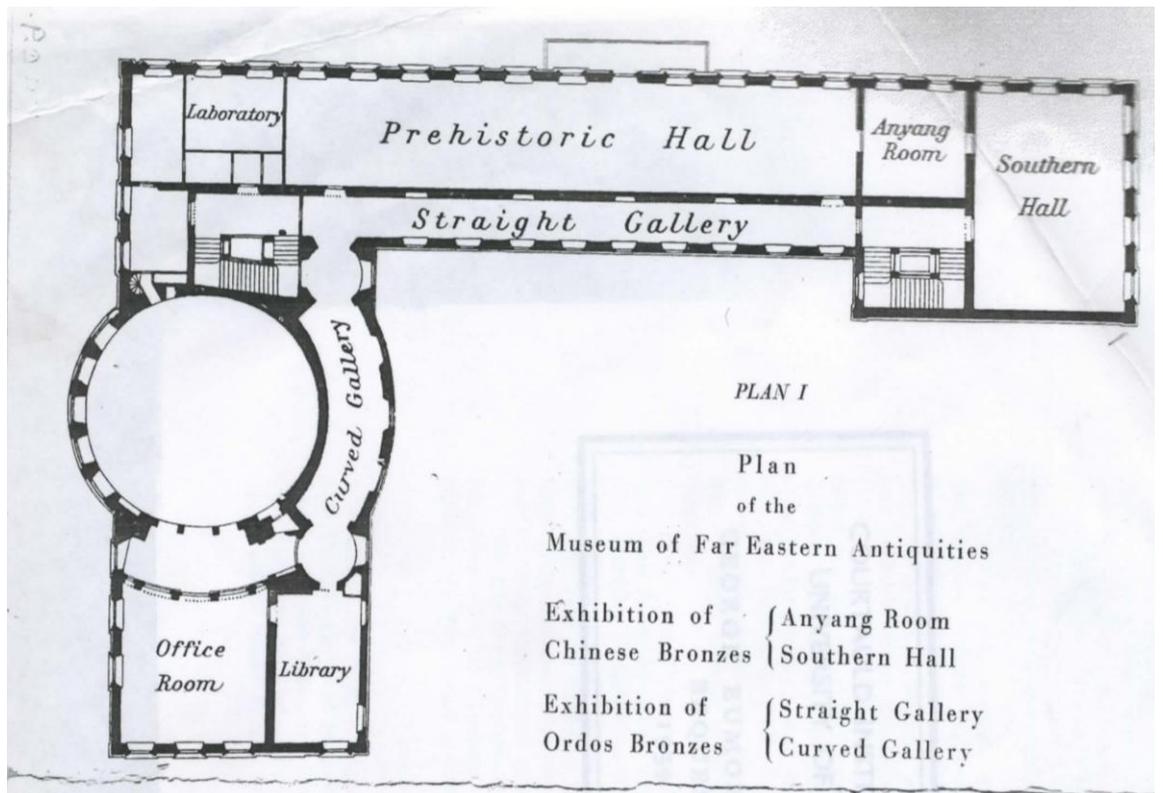


Figure 58.

Floor Plan of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in 1933 and the exhibitions of Early Chinese Bronzes and Ordos Bronzes.

After *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933* (Stockholm: [The Museum, 1933])

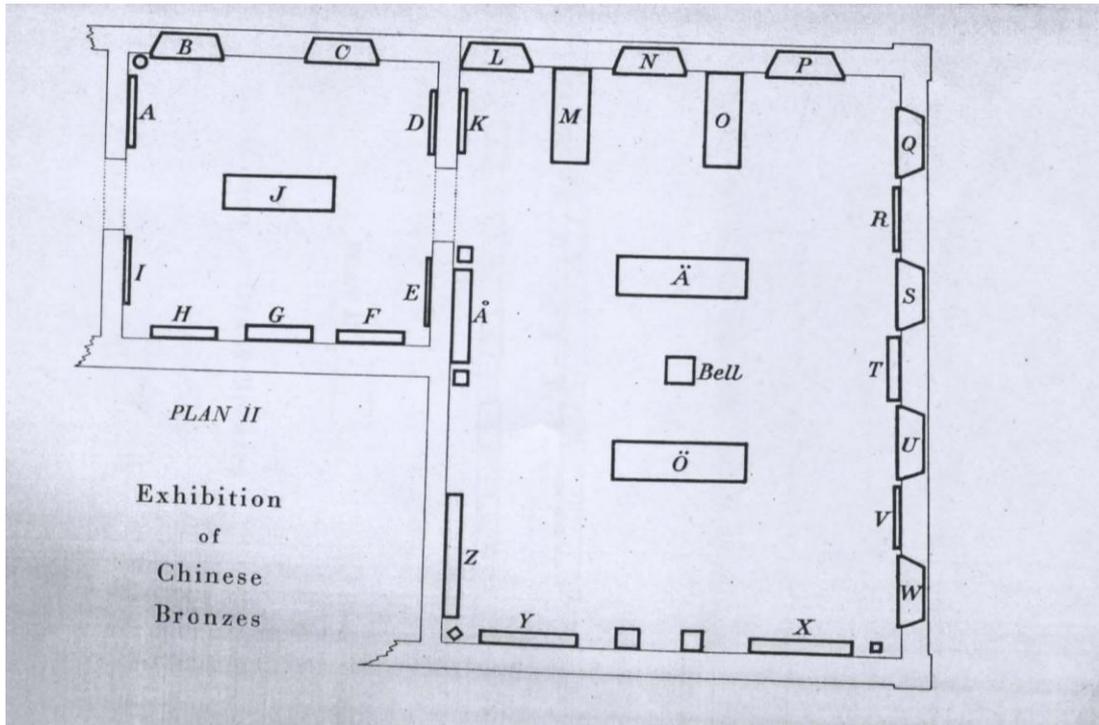


Figure 59.

Floor plan of the Exhibition of Chinese Bronzes at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in 1933.

The smaller room contained the objects that were categorized under the stylistic classification of 'Yin Style' and 'Yin-Chou Style'. The main room displayed objects that were classified as 'Middle Chou style', 'Huai Style' and 'Han Style'.

After *Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933* (Stockholm: [The Museum], 1933)

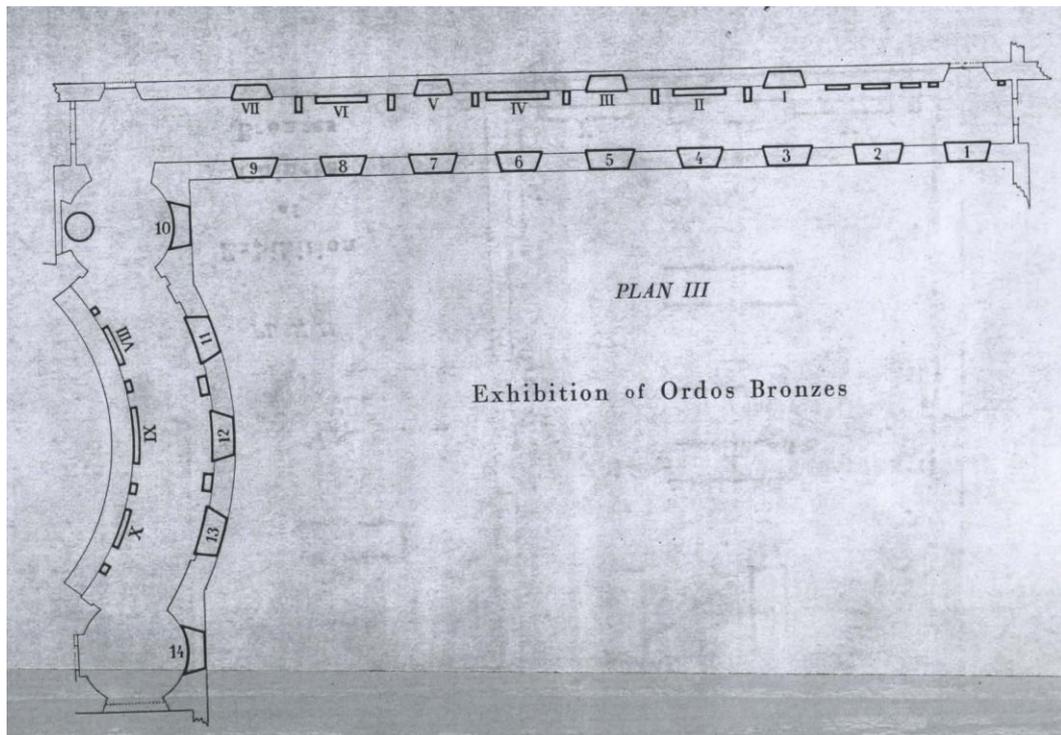


Figure 60.

Floor plan of the Exhibition of Ordos Bronzes at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in 1933.

Cases X, IX and VIII displayed the Siberian bronze objects alongside the Ordos bronzes that were exhibited in the rest of this space.

After Guide to the Exhibitions of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm 1-10 September 1933 (Stockholm: [The Museum], 1933)



Figure 61.

Bronze handle depicting the Huai-style and the distinct blue water-patina, Eastern Zhou period.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
(OM-1974-0465)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 62.

Bronze Huai-style mirror, Eastern Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for the Museum
of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
(K-10599-550)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 63.

Ordos bronze depicting the so-called typical animal style.

Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm (OM-1974-0711)

Photo courtesy of the museum



Figure 64.

Percival W. Yetts (1878-1957)

After Percival David, 'W. Percival Yetts: An Appreciation', *Oriental Art* III (3) (Autumn, 1957)



Figure 65.

A comparative drawing by Yetts of painted pottery designs from Chinese sites, including Yangshao to motifs from Susa and Tripolje.

After Perceval Yetts 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China' in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 47/ 273 (Dec., 1925): 308-310, Figure 2.

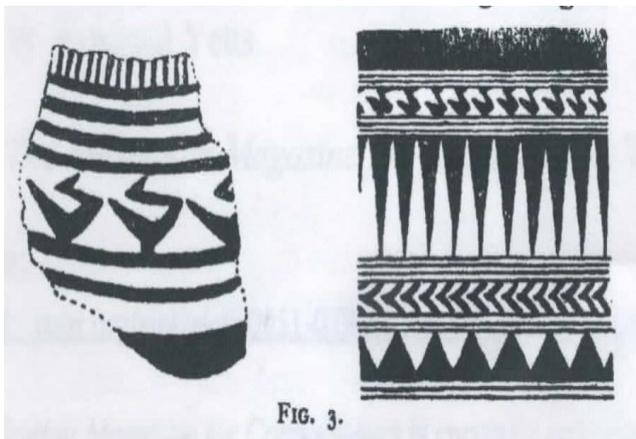


Figure 66.

Two examples of 'conventionalized bird designs combined with bands of symmetric pattern' painted on pottery from Gansu region discovered by Andersson.

Published by Yetts as they were considered of extreme importance since they, according to Yetts corresponded exactly in style to the decoration of a group discovered in Susa.

After, Perceval Yetts, 'Painted Neolithic Pottery in China' *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 47/273 (Dec., 1925): 308-310, Figure 3.

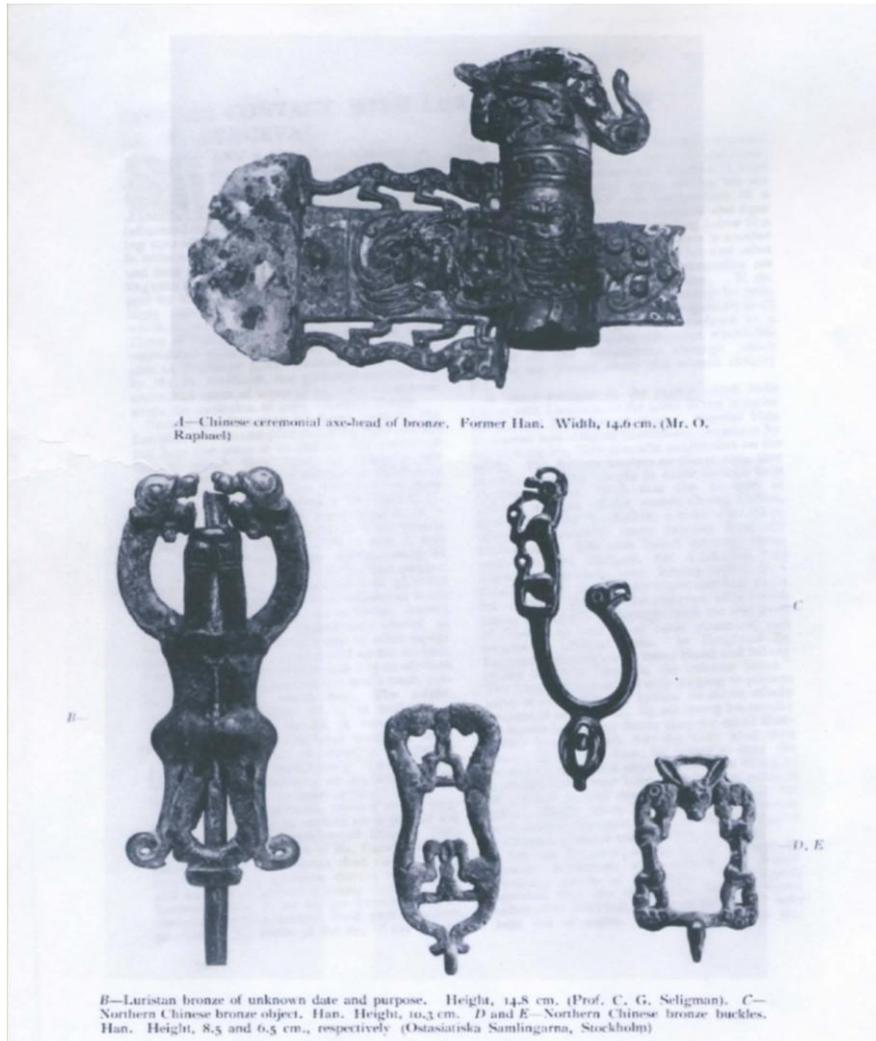


Figure 67.

A selection of Luristan and Chinese bronze objects supporting Yetts' comparative methodology to classify this group. Objects belonged to Raphael (A), Seligman (B) and the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (C, D, E).

After Perceval Yetts 'Chinese Contact with Luristan Bronzes' *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 59/ 341 (Aug., 1931): 76-81



Figure 68

Ordos bronze plaque depicting animal-in-combat motif.

Collected by Karlbeck for the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm

(K-11248-022)

Photo courtesy of the museum

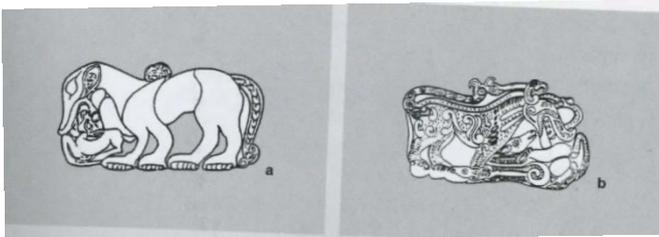


Figure 69

Two examples of the animal-in-combat motif on bronze ornaments discovered in tombs in China.

- (a) Tiger biting a goat. Pengyang Baiyanglin
- (b) Tiger biting a goat. Warring States tomb. Xiji Chenyangchuan

After Tu Cheng-sheng 'The Animal Style Revisited' in *Exploring China's Past*, 137- 149 (Figure 9).



Figure 70.

Detail animal-in-combat motif from embroidered carpet.

Discovered Kozl6v Expedition from a tomb in Inner Mongolia. c 1 century BC.

After Perceval W. Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozl6v Expedition', Plate I A (C)



J—Metal plaque, showing Scytho-Siberian elements



L—Black lacquered bowl, design in red. Chinese

Figure 71.

Two objects found by the Kozl6v Expedition.

J. Metal plaque, naturalistic animal motif, Scytho-Siberian style.

L. Black-red lacquered bowl with scroll design, Chinese.

Found together in Inner Mongolian tomb. c. 1 century BC.

After Perceval W. Yetts, 'Discoveries of the Kozl6v Expedition', Plate IV.



Figure 72.

A selection of small bronze objects acquired by the British Museum through the Karlbeck Syndicate. Including an Anyang openwork belt ornament, Huai-style horse-frontlet and belt hook and Han period ornaments. (Especially nr 5, a Huai-style belt hook was considered of unusual form of this transitional period and has a rich blue patina.)

After, R.L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Bronzes' *The British Museum Quarterly* VII (1932-1933): Plate III

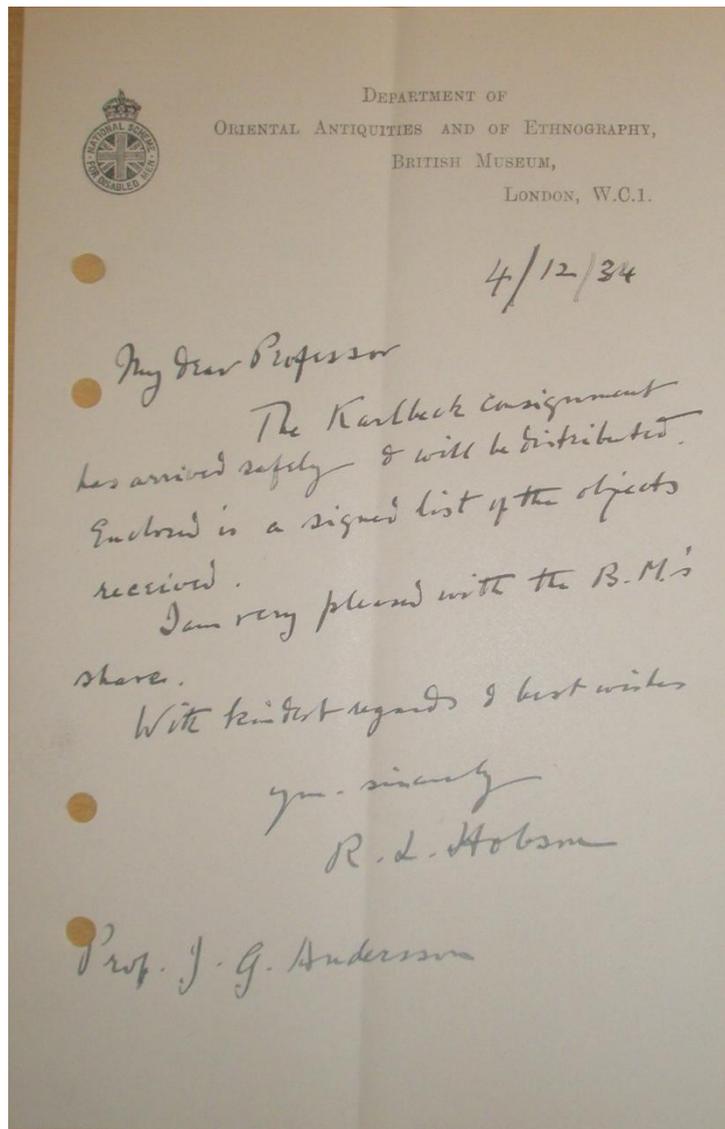


Figure 73.

Note Hobson to Andersson dated 12 December 1934 in which he mentioned that the consignment of Karlbeck's objects for the syndicate members in Britain was safely received at the British Museum.

Volume IX. The Karlbeck Syndicate Archive, the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm



Figure 74.

Photo of Seligman and his wife Brenda.

After Basil Gray, 'Professor and Mrs Seligman' in *The Seligman Collection of Oriental Art*, Howard Hansford (London: Published for the Arts Council of Great Britain by L. Humphries, 1966)

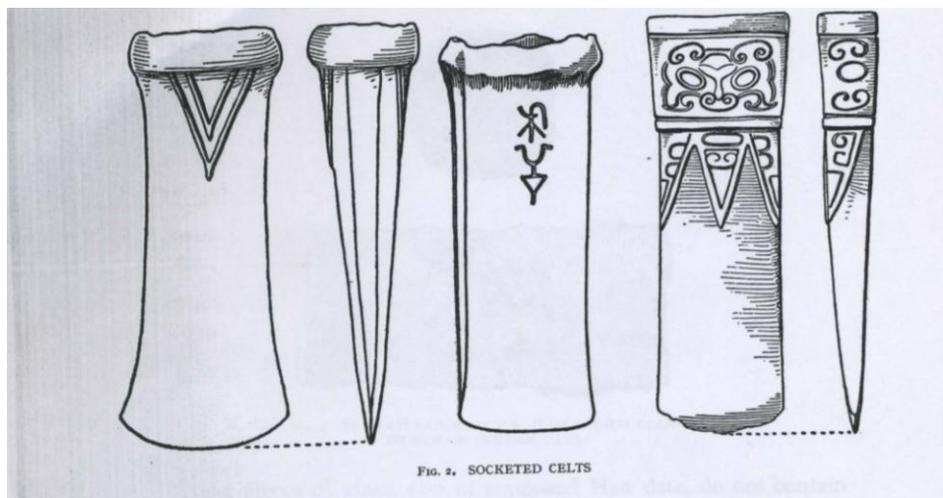


Figure 75.

A significant drawing by Seligman where he demonstrated a comparison between Chinese *celt* types (right) and those found in southern Russia (left).

After Charles G. Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', *Antiquity* XI (1937): 5-30



Figure 76.

Bronze wheel-axle cap, Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for Seligman.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932*
(Stockholm, 1932)

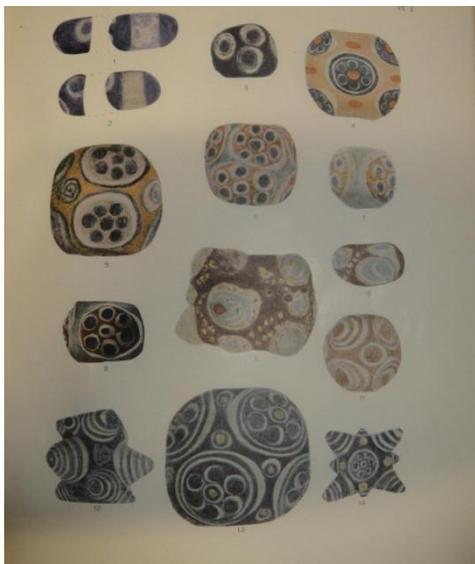


Figure 77.

A selection of ancient Chinese glass
beads from the Seligman Collection.

Collected by Karlbeck for Seligman.

After Charles G. Seligman and H.
Becks, 'Far Eastern Glass: Some
Western Origins', *Bulletin of the
Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 10
(1938): 1-64

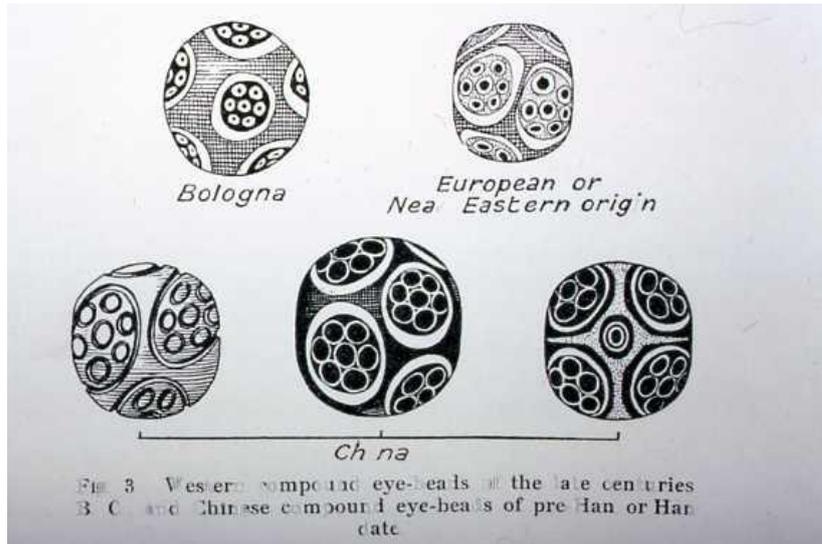


Figure 78.

Drawing by Seligman where he illustrated the comparative method used in his studies on ancient Chinese beads.

After Charles G. Seligman, 'The Roman Orient and the Far East', *Antiquity* XI (1937): 5-30



Figure 79.

Bronze dagger-axe (*ge*), Western Zhou period.

Collected by Karlbeck for Seligman.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932* (Stockholm, 1932)

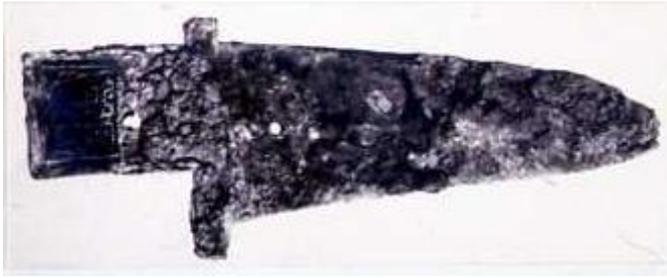


Figure 80.

Bronze dagger-axe with Anynag provenance.

Collected for Seligman by Karlbeck.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932*
(Stockholm, 1932)



Figure 81.

A pottery tomb figurine depicting non-Chinese figure, Tang period.

Collected by Karlbeck for Seligman.

After *The Karlbeck Syndicate 1931-1932*
(Stockholm, 1932)