

Tangible Memories and Intertwined Histories: Sweden-Korea Relations as Seen through the Collection of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities

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The Korean collection at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, National Museums of World Culture, Sweden is closely intertwined with the historical relationship between the Korean Peninsula and Sweden in the 20th century. Starting with a discussion of the earliest objects donated to the Museum, including the collection of King Gustaf VI Adolf, the speakers will clarify how the establishment of the Korea collection is rooted in cultural and diplomatic exchange between Sweden and Korea and reaches back to the very foundation of the Museum itself. The second part of the talk will focus on objects donated by doctors and nurses who served in Korea during and after the Korean war, a chapter in Swedish-Korean history that deeply shaped the relationship between the two countries. The presentation will then provide an overview of the most recent developments of the collection and give an outlook into future. In conclusion, this presentation shows that Korean objects held in collections in Europe can tell the stories not only of a distant culture, but of two peoples with an intertwined history.