

“THIS KNOWLEDGE BEARS WITH IT CERTAIN
RESPONSIBILITIES TO GOD AND OUR FELLOW MEN”:
MISSIONARY MOTIVATIONS, COLLECTING BEHAVIOR, AND
THE WENBERG COLLECTION AT THE MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

by

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ABSTRACT

“THIS KNOWLEDGE BEARS WITH IT CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES TO GOD AND OUR FELLOW MEN”: MISSIONARY MOTIVATIONS, COLLECTING BEHAVIOR, AND THE WENBERG COLLECTION AT THE MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

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Under the Supervision of Professor Jason Sherman

Missionaries have contributed greatly to the ethnographic collections of museums, yet the connection between ethnographic objects and the Christian project that prompted their collection is often lost in the museum record. This thesis aims to reconcile a collection at the Milwaukee Public Museum (Accession Number 24531) with the evangelization work of its collectors, Joseph Hugo and Edna Wenberg. From 1902 to 1920, J.H. Wenberg served as a colporteur and missionary across South America; during that time, he developed a passionate interest in the Aymara of Bolivia and became an advocate for Indigenous people within the Methodist Church. This thesis combines object analysis with information from archival letters and records to gain a better understanding of the Wenbergs' motivations for collecting, and how the objects in the museum collection were used in support of their Christian mission. This study contributes to the existing body of research on museum missionary collections, as well as anthropological research on Christianity as both a globalizing force and a factor embedded in specific localities.

Keywords: Bolivia, Aymara, Christianity, Missionary, Milwaukee Public Museum, J.H. Wenberg

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis centers around the life of and collections made by an American Methodist missionary named Joseph Hugo Wenberg, who from 1902 to 1920 evangelized throughout South America, where he developed a deep connection to the Aymara of Bolivia. In 1977, his son Herbert donated 267 items collected by his father to the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM). Accession #24531 is housed in the Anthropology Collection at the MPM, and comprises 239 objects from South America, 178 of which were collected in Bolivia (see Appendix A). Eight of these objects are clearly Christian objects, consisting of rosaries, crucifixes, a chalice, and a censer, made by Aymara craftspeople. Along with his donation, Herbert included a book of his own photographs and notes on the objects, along with an envelope of photos taken by his parents. It was the syncretic aspects of this collection along with the personal documents that first drew me to this project.

I was first introduced to this collection and Wenberg's life during the fall semester of 2021, while enrolled in the Museum Collections Management and Curation course as part of the curriculum for my Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The cumulative project for that course was an object project, which involved an in-depth study and analysis of an artifact in the MPM's cultural collection. This project not only allowed students to demonstrate our knowledge in the storage, handling, and exhibition requirements of particular materials, but also allowed us to conduct scholarly research on an artifact's history, production, or influence. The objects were chosen for us by Dawn Scher Thoma, Curator of Collections in the Anthropology Department, after learning about each of our research interests. At the time of this assignment, I was just beginning to explore possible

thesis topics but communicated to Scher Thomae my interest in studying Christian iconography. Because of this I was assigned E6281, a silver chalice produced in Bolivia in the late 19th century and collected by Wenberg (Figure 1.1). Researching and working with this chalice had a profound effect on me; I genuinely enjoyed reading the source documents connected to the collector's life, and in the process discovered many syncretic aspects of the chalice's design that were not discussed in other literature.



Figure 1.1: The silver chalice that first introduced the author to Wenberg's life (photo taken by author).

When it came time to develop my thesis project, I struggled to find a topic that suited me. I knew I wanted to work with museum collections, but I have always maintained an interest in the personal aspects of artifacts and was unsure how to incorporate that into my research. After much thought, several failed research avenues, and many discussions with mentors and advisors, I found myself drawn back to that chalice. When I first encountered it, I was fascinated at how evident the blending of Aymara and Christian iconography was, and I thought that

perhaps other objects in the collection might reveal the same. Furthermore, I had the rough outline of the collector's life and hoped that I would be able to discern some of the personal connections he made to these objects through my research.

Research Questions and Significance

Delving into the collector's documentation raised many questions in my mind and led me to undertake related research on Bolivian politics, Christian missionizing, and most profoundly the nature of personal narrative, evangelization, and faith. At the center of this maelstrom, two questions persisted: *Who was J.H. Wenberg and what did these objects mean, both to him and the people who made them?* In the course of my research, I found myself scouring letters and footnotes for any references to Wenberg's time in South America, eager to understand who this missionary was. It was during this process of chasing down leads that I read a family obituary and took a chance contacting one of his great-grandchildren, Neil Wenberg. To my surprise, not only was he willing to discuss his great-grandfather "Hugo" with me, but he generously offered me the opportunity to read the diary of Hugo's wife, Edna. The addition of this diary to my research fundamentally shifted it, as I now had firsthand accounts of the Wenbergs' day-to-day experiences in Bolivia. Though the diary contained few references to the objects at the MPM, I believed that I could more accurately determine how these objects reflected the Wenbergs' relationship with the people they evangelized, and how their experience and this collection compared to those of other missionaries at the time. Furthermore, I had up until then neglected much consideration of Edna's role in Hugo's mission; in fact, I was not certain how much time she had spent in South America at all. While this was partly due to the documentation I had available to me, it also reflected a general invisibility of

women in missionary narratives (Ganter 2015:7; Lawson 1994:71; Smith 2010:189), and one I hope to help rectify.

I began my thesis research influenced greatly by the work of Igor Kopytoff (1986) and Arjun Appadurai (1986) in approaching objects as social entities and looking at their biographies as they changed from gifts to commodities to museum possessions. As I discovered, much of the information about how the objects in the MPM collection were acquired and used was a mystery. To resolve this, I incorporated Bandak and Jørgensen's (2012) use of the concept of foregrounds and backgrounds, allowing for my interpretations of objects' shift between perspectives. Additionally, I adopted aspects of Torrence and Clarke's (2016) use of assemblage analysis with museum collections, considering the "life" of the objects as a group rather than as individuals (Harju 2018:4). In the spirit of this work, I combined methods of object analysis, historiography, and biographical research in order to place these objects back into conversation with their source culture and with their collector. From Hugo's writings and other missionary documents, I gained a deeper understanding of who he was and what motivated him, both as an individual and as a missionary working within a larger organization. I was surprised to find that his relationship with the larger missionary structure of the Methodist Church was more acrimonious and fractious than I had expected, and that a great deal of this animosity stemmed from his impassioned sense of duty to Indigenous Bolivians. Additionally, I began my biographical research expecting his affinity for the Bolivians to be the paternalistic, pitying stereotype of the "white savior," and yet his descriptions of Indigenous conditions along with historical research of the time presented their treatment by the Spanish as abhorrent (Charles 2010:103; Kamen 1993:201). Hugo's employment of his Christian faith in advocating for

Indigenous people's education and assistance resonated with the ethnographic work of other missionaries, and the historical ties between anthropological theory and Christianity (Cannell 2006:2; Irving-Stonebraker 2018; Pflug 2018). Though Hugo's language at times was dated, outside sources including those from the Oneida people in Wisconsin—whom he later was pastor to—portrayed him as a man genuinely respected and well-regarded by the Indigenous people with whom he worked.

With a better understanding of the Wenbergs and their relationships with the Aymara, as well as the history of Bolivia and the missionary culture at the time, I felt that I could now place the objects in the MPM collection "in conversation" with the other participants in this exchange. Much as I did in my original research on the chalice, I collected all the information I could gather on these objects. I analyzed the collection directly—recording both qualitative and quantitative data, in addition to taking photographs—and examined information about the objects provided by the donor. I also considered missionary collections held at other institutions and conducted research on how those assemblages of objects differed. With this deep understanding of the Wenbergs' experiences in Bolivia along with the wider religious context, I believe that I was able to draw some significant insights into their relationships with the Aymara, as well as wider attitudes towards Indigenous populations within the American Protestant mission.

It is my hope that this study contributes to the body of existing research on 20th century missionary collections (e.g., Bleichmar and Mancall 2013; Cannizzo 1998; Corbey and Weener 2015; Hart 2006; Smith 2010; Stanley 1994), which have too often been sidelined as curios or souvenirs, or when accepted by museums, treated as ahistorical ethnographic objects divorced

from their missionary and colonial contexts. This research also contributes to the growing anthropological study of Christianity as both a globalizing force as well as a factor embedded in specific localities. Importantly, this research also aims to bring the role of missionary wives and women missionaries out of the shadows and give better recognition to their contributions in the mission project.

Outline of Thesis

In the remainder of Chapter 1, I lay out the theoretical foundations of this study, focusing on the relationship between Christianity and modernity, and the theology driving Protestant missions in the early 20th century. In Chapter 2 I provide Hugo's biography, followed by contextual information about Bolivia's history and cultures, and the missionary situation in the early 20th century when Hugo and Edna operated. Chapter 3 discusses my research methods in greater detail, in addition to explaining and evaluating the different primary sources used. Chapter 4 focuses on the objects collected by the Wenbergs and donated to the MPM, and the records and letters about their lives. Drawing from those sources, this chapter then discusses three major themes evident in the Wenbergs' personal writings and in the collection. First, it examines Hugo's relationship with the Aymara and his attitudes towards Indigenous people and compares them to the wider missionary culture. Next it draws connections between Hugo's personal Christianity and larger forces of globalization and modernity. Lastly, Chapter 4 discusses personal collecting and memory, focusing in particular on the collecting behavior of Edna Wenberg, whose role in the collection has been obscured until now. The thesis concludes in Chapter 5, which includes a summary of the findings from the previous chapters and a discussion of the study's broader implications related to museum missionary collections.

Literature Review

In order to reconcile the Wenberg collection with the lives of its collectors, it is necessary to understand where they came from, and how they understood their roles as missionaries. It also requires a broader understanding of Christianity's influence in different localities. The following sections of this chapter will analyze Christianity's impact on cultural continuities and changes, particularly as they relate to materiality, before delving in to an examination of the ideologies surrounding missionary work during Hugo's time as an active missionary.

The work of anthropologist Talal Asad (1993) is strongly associated with the materiality aspect of studying religion. Core to Asad's argument is Geertz's definition of religion, which Asad argues privileges a Protestant emphasis on internal belief over concrete, visible practices (Asad 1993:47; Geertz 1973:90; Keane 2006:310). His work has been particularly influential in the anthropology of Islam, but Christian-focused researchers have also been influenced by his focus on materiality and interest in the construction of religious symbols (Connolly 2005:58; Martin 2014:141). For example, Bandak and Jørgensen (2012) present an interesting theoretical perspective on the complexities of Christianity through the framework of foregrounds and backgrounds. As they see it, anthropologists interested in Christianity need to go beyond contextualizing Christianity in a particular setting and investigate further how that context is produced. Conceiving of Christianity as a series of shifting foregrounds and backgrounds allows researchers to conceive of cultural "bundles" of ideas and practices, building off the concept used by Manning and Meneley (2008:287) in regard to the shifting materiality of objects. In their research, they describe this bundling as the collective whole of qualities in an object, many

of which could be potential signs, even contradictory ones depending on the context. They give the example of candles, which have the qualities of both illumination as a theological symbol, and fire as a material reality. Manning and Meneley themselves are influenced by Kopytoff's (1986) biography of things, using the concept to consider how objects can shift in and out of a state of religious fetish. Working within the contexts of foregrounds and backgrounds, we can see how Christianity is often bundled together with or works in the background of modernity.

In light of Christianity's massive global spread, as a religion it has come to be regarded as a herald for modernity and social change. Though this belief is widespread in the social sciences, it is not without controversy and debate regarding in what circumstances and to what extent it holds true. Before evaluating these arguments and applying them to Hugo's circumstances, it should be made clear what the "modernity" that Christianity is so often accused of ushering in actually entails. Stöckl (2006:245) characterizes modernity as "the gradual evolvement of a series of modern institutions such as the democratic polity, market-based economy and autonomous knowledge producing institutions." In the context of religion, Wilson (1987:11) adopts a somewhat broader definition, viewing modernity as simply "a spiritual medium that envelops and interconnects all particular instances of commitment to modernization." This view of modernity, as a social attitude that embraces cultural change, suggests the possibility of multiple modernities (Eisenstadt 2002; Hann 2014:S189; Thomassen 2012:172). However, one of the difficulties in reconciling these multiple or alternative versions of modernity is the extent to which they conform to the expectations of modernity in the West (Hann 2014; Stöckl 2006). Sahlins (1996:405) described the heart of this challenge as resulting from Christian cosmology's influence over the Enlightenment, from which the social sciences

emerged. The implication of Sahlins's argument is that anthropology as a discipline has been at the very least shaped, if not outright tainted, by a crypto-Christian influence (Bialecki et al. 2008:1143). The "haunting" of anthropology by theology, as it has been described, is indicative of the tension anthropology has historically faced when encountering Christianity (Webster 2022:335).

More recently, this "haunting" of anthropology by theology has come to be viewed by some as an actual opportunity for the discipline (Furani 2019; Robbins 2020:19; Viveros de Castro 2014:48; Webster 2022:336-337). This turn towards anthropology-as-theology has coincided with a growing number of scholars reconsidering the roles missionaries have played in anthropology, often acting as both practical intermediaries in the field as well as legitimate sources of data (Barringer 2002; Cooper 2016:5; Darnell 2001:9; Stocking 1992:365; Tomasini Castro 2008; Valdivieso Kastner 2023:106). The presence of missionaries in the ethnographic field as well as their historic documentation have benefitted anthropological research in many ways. The practice of Christian missionizing far predates modern ethnography, so in many areas, missionaries were the first to translate the local languages and report on early-contact conditions (Durstun 2007:28; Irving-Stonebraker 2018:244; Maxwell 2008:330; Mithun 2001:5; Tomalin 2011:1; True 2015:5). Despite the inherent bias in these reports, they can be essential sources of data for anthropologists, as they not only reveal the conditions of the field but also a missionary's self-understanding, which in turn helps the understanding of researchers "looking in" (Barringer 2002). When looking at the impact of evangelization on Indigenous communities, it becomes even more critical to consider the vested interests evangelized communities,

missionaries, and anthropologists have in constructing a narrative of cultural change or continuity.

Christian Missionaries as Agents of Social Change

One of the most influential studies of missionaries and social change is that of Jean and John Comaroff (1991, 1997). Their study of missionaries focused on the production of culture and ideology, a departure from previous work focused mainly on the political dimensions of missionaries as colonial agents (Elbourne 2003:440). As unique as their approach to Christianity may have been with their conception of the “long conversation,” later scholars of Christianity have criticized their work (Robbins 2007:7). Elbourne’s (2003:443-444) review of *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997) asks “whether a dialectical approach to the history of Christianity in colonial contexts does not fail to capture some aspects of social and political reality.” She discusses a number of social and political actions related to Christianity in South Africa that the Comaroffs failed to mention and when taken together, suggest that white missionaries were not fully in control of Christianity’s spread in the region, and that Christianity was not the first sign of globalization to arrive in the region (Elbourne 2003:449, 451). Cannell (2006:12) likewise finds their approach to Christianity overly simplistic, sidelining it as mainly a secondary phenomenon to colonialism and the imposition of European modernity. In light of the work on Christianity done later, it becomes clear that despite their focus on missionaries and supposed interest in the local production of Christianity, “Religion, however it is defined, is not interesting to them” (Landau 2000:503-504). Their research did, however, open the door for anthropologists to consider missionaries as more central actors in their ethnographic research.

As Elbourne (2003:451) suggested, when taking other political and social conditions into account, research that focuses on particular missionary encounters frequently finds them occupying a more ambivalent position in regard to social change. Hawker's (1999:97) study of British missionaries among the Tsimshian of British Columbia demonstrated that while missionaries introduced Christian burial to the Tsimshian, there were larger economic conditions influencing the reasons for conversion. There are also instances of the cultural effects happening in reverse, as missionaries adapt their tactics to accommodate Indigenous beliefs (Kittelmann 2021:17). Flexner (2016:3) notes as well the changes in the material realm of missionary culture, as missionaries in Melanesia became localized and increasingly adopted syncretic or Indigenous material culture (see also Smith 2010). Psychologically, the experience of a transcultural encounter can actually have profound transformative effects on missionaries themselves (Arnold 2015:247; Brahinsky 2020:832; Kimber 2012:217).

Determining the extent to which Christian conversion disrupts cultural tradition has also been observed to be an issue of narrative. Peel (1995:606) describes the importance of recognizing the difference between "narrative-as-told and narrative-as-lived," and how the two can shape each other in interesting ways. For example, Rozo (2018:285) studied missionaries in the Columbian Amazon and their Puinave and Curripaco converts and found that the missionaries tended to emphasize a separation between religion and culture, whereas their Indigenous converts described conversion as a total "reformation of traditional custom" (Rozo 2018:287). However, both missionaries and converts employed narratives of cultural change or continuity in order to strategically communicate political, social, and economic reasons for appropriating Christianity (Rozo 2018:305).

While the impact missionaries have had on the communities they evangelized has varied greatly across time, space, and personal inclinations, it is undeniable that missionaries were instrumental in the formation of museum collections. During the height of European imperialist expansion, hundreds of thousands of objects made their way from Indigenous communities into Europe, circulating among auctions, private collections, and museums (Corbey and Weener 2015:1). Missionaries played a pivotal role in the transport of these items, yet their presence has largely been neglected in studies of Europe's development of ethnographic collections.

The acquisition of ethnographic collections by missionaries has mainly been characterized as an extension of colonialism and even cultural genocide, and certainly there are instances of this in missionary history—in the East Indies, for example, there is plenty of documentation of Dutch Protestants burning pagan idols (Corbey 2003). However, research such as that by Corbey and Weener (2015) problematizes this narrative, demonstrating how converts would at times take it upon themselves to commit iconoclasm—destroying their idols as a sign of commitment to their newfound faith and a political strategy to combat oppressive government measures. In other cases, missionaries preferred the idols not to be burned, so that they could bring them back to Europe as conclusive proof of their success (Lawson 1994:15). Despite the ulterior motives behind these collections, missionary museums like that of the London Missionary Society preserved objects that in the present day are recognized as works of art and important cultural heritage (Hooper 2008:120).

One of the difficulties posed by studying missionary collections is the actual location of them. Aside from the few remaining missionary museums, missionary collections have by and large been sold off, separated, or subsumed into larger institutions, and the missionary label has

fallen away from them (Smith 2010:193; Stanley 1994:26). Even when a missionary collection can be identified and found, the fragmentary nature of historical research can leave many questions unanswered. Hugo, like other missionaries whose collections have been studied, wrote nothing about his collecting activities, leaving our picture of his relationship with the Aymara incomplete (Harju 2018:3). This missing information does not mean no insights can be gained, but rather that we must look at the objects more broadly as a collection, rather than focusing on their histories as individual commodities (Harju 2018:4). Additionally, we have some clues about the objects' histories based on letters Edna wrote back home. The valuable information contained in these letters speaks to a larger problem within missionary research, which is the frequently invisible presence of missionary wives in the academic record, despite the fact that many of these women were actively engaged in the mission themselves (Ganter 2015:7; Lawson 1994:xi, 71). Furthermore, published research on missionary collections tends to focus on the dramatic examples of iconoclasm and idol-smashing described above, and much less attention has been paid to the more mundane forms of object acquisition: purchases at market, household needs, and gift-giving, all activities traditionally more confined to the role of a missionary wife (Smith 2010:189).

The status of missionary museum collections is also related to archives of missionary documents and photographs. Like museum collections, missionary photographs are scattered among church archives and private collections, making it difficult to look at any one group of photos and determine how typical they are (Murray 2008:40). Despite the limited scholarly interest in missionary photographs thus far, there are some excellent studies that broadly characterize the genre. Gullestad's (2007) examination of Norwegian missionary photographs

taken in Cameroon aptly demonstrates the ways in which missionary photographs can and were used as propaganda for the mission project and strengthened cultural stereotypes. However, their later use as propaganda does not necessarily mean they were created with that intention in mind. Aubert (2015) examined a collection of photographs from South America archived by the Methodists, a collection of photographs that I used in this research. Aubert's examination found that while photographs of the Patagonian landscape and people were framed in a romantic "vanishing paradise" way in line with how missionaries spoke about the frontier, photographs as sentimental records of missionaries' experiences served as a crucial piece of communication between the missionaries and their families back home. Despite the competing narratives embedded in missionary photographs, I find it interesting that to my knowledge none of the photographs the Wenbergs took were ever published by the Methodists. In fact, in the mission scrapbooks studied by Aubert, there were only two photographs connected to the Wenbergs: a portrait of Hugo alone, and a portrait of the couple together (Figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2: Photo of Hugo and Edna Wenberg taken in South America (Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "Mission Photograph Album - Portraits #2 page 0025," UMC Digital Galleries, accessed March 31, 2024, <https://catalog.gcah.org/omeka/items/show/59407>).

Missionary Ideology

Any insights into the missionary experience would be incomplete without an understanding of how the mission is understood and communicated within and between members of the faithful. Despite the impossibility of speaking about missionary relationships with Indigenous people with any certainty, this has still been the prevailing narrative on the topic (Mackenzie 1993:47). According to Bayne (2017:17), "[i]ncreasingly, scholarship on both missionaries and native communities has moved further away from older conquest/resistance binaries to mark the myriad negotiations, confrontations, and hybridizations that characterized colonial encounters." Because of the predominant narrative of missionary hostility towards Indigenous

culture, which certainly did occur, less attention is paid in historical research to examples of the contrary. At the turn of the 20th century, a more tolerant approach to Indigenous tradition developed in Protestant Missions, influenced greatly by early works in comparative religious studies and anthropology such as that of Frazer and Haddon (Reid 1978:177-178). Even before this more liberal influence took hold at the institutional level, individual missionaries stand out as sympathetic advocates for the Indigenous people they came to know (Oddie 1999; Reid 1978: 181). These individuals are viewed by many scholars of global Christianity as “trailblazers who helped to usher in a more inclusive, progressive, multicultural, and multiracial Christianity” (Wu 2017:87). The period in which Hugo was an active missionary corresponds with the popularity of the Social Gospel movement in American Protestantism, which “viewed itself as a crusade for justice and righteousness in all areas of the common life” (White and Hopkins 1976:xii; see also Jacobs 2014). Emerging as a response to the destruction of the Civil War, proponents of the Social Gospel were concerned not only with redeeming individuals, but redeeming all aspects of society through salvation (White and Hopkins 1976:xi). As an extension of this theology, Protestant missions at the turn of the 20th century focused particularly on enhancing both the spiritual and social lives of their converts through not only religious instruction but also secular education and other humanitarian efforts (Quiroa 2013:82). As Valera (1998:241-243) notes, this shift in evangelization towards more “civilizing” activities neatly corresponded with the expansion of American imperialism, placing a “twofold duty” on American missionaries. In investigating the work of Methodist missionaries in Peru at the beginning of the 20th century, Bruno-Jofré (1988:99) described a strategy of “Mission opportunism” wherein progressive Christians cultivated good relationships with Peruvian

intellectuals and leaders in politics to shape relations between Peru and the United States. This political affiliation led Methodists to adopt education as a progressive cause in Peru, in the hopes of creating citizens of good moral character for a country that hoped to build a more modern society (Bruno-Jofré 1988:146). Because of the heavy influence of the Catholic Church over Peru's government, the Methodists and other Protestant schools were in some ways able to teach a more progressive curriculum than the public schools (Bruno-Jofré 1988:175). Even so, the motivations for doing so were clearly based in a desire to see Peru more aligned with North American interests (Bruno-Jofré 1988:75; Mackenzie 1993:46).

In the era of postcolonization, Christian scholars have begun to reckon with how their religion has been used both intentionally and inadvertently as a tool through which nations were destabilized, wars waged, and cultures extinguished. This reorienting process has been spurred on by both internal church debates and the changing realities of the mission field (Gullestad 2007:247). Theologian Daniel Groody (2008:262) aptly describes the way in which the faith of Christian scholars structures their global ambitions:

In much the same way that globalization has left behind such a high percentage of the world's population economically and developmentally, it has also left behind the deeper questions of human life that pertain to loneliness and belonging, good and evil, order and disorder, peace and division, meaning and meaninglessness, hope and despair, love and apathy, justice and injustice, freedom and slavery, and ultimately life and death. My argument here is that, beneath the veneer of global disorders, are fundamental spiritual issues that can be grasped only by a more thorough theological interpretation of reality and a deeper examination of the terrain of the human heart.

The cultivation of local mission ministries has enabled the practice of evangelizing to begin to detach itself from the Western worldview, with more missionaries and theologians arguing for an embrace of local theology, such as Greer (2019:193) who wrote: "when we

release and empower local theologizing, we lose control over the outcomes. If our goal is seeing the peoples of the world religions turn to Christ, we need to give up control and imitate Paul, who had full confidence in the working of the Holy Spirit.”

To understand the Wenbergs’ lives and analyze their collection, it is necessary to understand where they came from, how they understood their role as missionaries, and the larger sociopolitical forces that affected their interactions with the Aymara. This chapter has laid the groundwork for answering these questions by examining the associations between Christianity and materiality and modernity and how they manifest in missionary endeavors, as well as the development of Protestant missionary theology. Reviewing historical examinations of missionary accounts has revealed the importance of understanding missionary self-conceptions, as well as how their experiences are reshaped and communicated to the wider congregation, necessitating the consultation of a wide range of historical sources in order to place appropriate weight on the Wenbergs’ writings of their experiences. Having addressed the literature necessary to interpret Hugo as a Christian missionary, the following chapter will consider the geographic, cultural, and religious contexts of his mission field of Bolivia.

Chapter 2: Contextual Information

The Life of a Missionary: Joseph Hugo Wenberg

Unless cited otherwise, information in the following section was obtained from papers belonging to the Wenberg family, provided to me by Neil Wenberg. In respect for the privacy of the family and in accordance with their wishes, these papers are not being reproduced in this thesis.

Joseph Hugo Wenberg, or just Hugo as he went by, was born in Batavia, Illinois, on June 26, 1878. He attended the Moody Bible Institute, and in 1902 he traveled with several other missionary-minded students to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he quickly struck out on his own as a colporteur for the American Bible Society. For the next several years, he traveled throughout Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru selling Bibles. At the beginning of 1909, he took a position teaching at the American Institute in La Paz, where he met his future wife, Edna (East Wisconsin Conference 1960:1003).

Edna Mary Grover was born on April 2, 1876, in Waupaca, Wisconsin. According to a family friend, by age 15 Edna was already considering a call to missionary life. However, her father passed away just after she graduated high school, so she studied at Lawrence University and taught high school for a few years to pay off her schooling and support her mother and four siblings. In 1905, she finally began the work she had felt called to for so long, traveling to Santiago, Chile, to teach English at a school for girls (Figure 2.1). She taught there until 1909, when she visited the American Institute in La Paz and was asked to remain there as a teacher. A few months later she met “Hugo” Wenberg, the quiet and interesting new teacher with

fascinating stories about his dangerous travels across South America. By Easter of the next year, they had traveled across Lake Titicaca to be married in Puno, Peru, on March 8, 1910.



Figure 2.1: A map showing the locations Edna worked as a missionary, circled in red. From top to bottom: La Paz, Bolivia; Tucuman, Argentina; and Santiago, Chile (Wenberg Family).

The following year, the Wenbergs returned on furlough to America, where their first son Edwin Hugo was born. During his time as a colporteur, Hugo had witnessed firsthand the poor treatment of Indigenous people by the rest of Bolivian society. While schools like the American Institute had excellent results teaching to white and mestizo children, there were no schools for

rural Indigenous communities. While in the US, he heard of an independent mission called the Peniel Hall Society that was setting out to solve that issue. Already developing an interest in working among the Indigenous people of South America, he wrote to the Society and offered himself for the role of missionary (Peniel Hall Society Minutes 1911). The trustees accepted his application and in 1913 the Wenbergs returned to Bolivia to begin a new mission among the Aymara near Lake Titicaca.

The Peniel Hall Society was established in the will of an Italian convert Antonio Chiriotto, who had traveled to Argentina and Bolivia in 1911. Upon his death, he bequeathed \$32,000 for “the education and propagation of the Christian faith in Bolivia” (Boots 1971:113; Chiriotto 1911; May 2023:24; Wagner 1970:42). The trustees decided the best way to accomplish this was to purchase a *hacienda*, or farm, and minister directly to the Indigenous serfs there. They selected a farm located in the village of Guatajata, along the coast of Lake Titicaca (Figure 2.2). The goals of this project were humanitarian; according to Hugo, they set out to open a school to teach Spanish, and “through precept and example, gradually introduce better methods of farming, carpentry, and building of better homes.” While living on the farm, the Wenbergs’ second son, Herbert Bruce, was born.

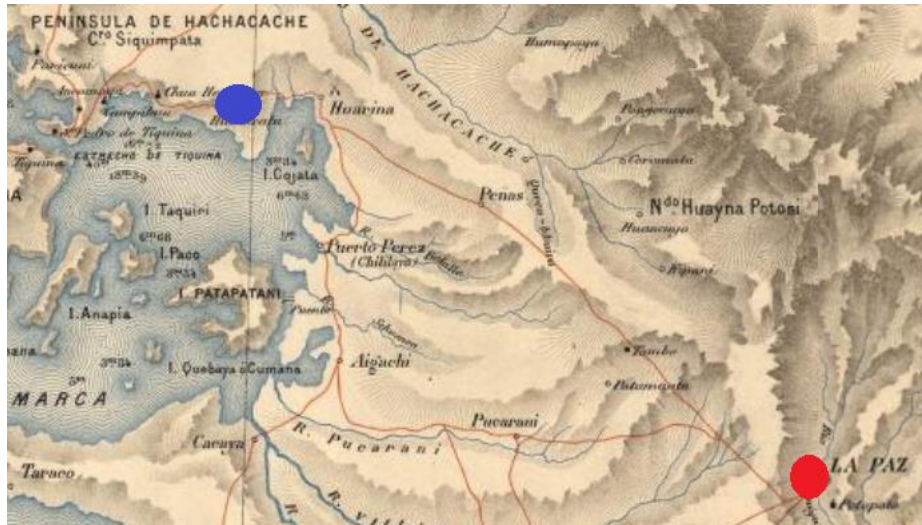


Figure 2.2: Guatajata, marked by a blue circle, is located along a peninsula extending into Lake Titicaca, to the northwest of La Paz, marked in red (Baluarte 1893) (Retrieved from the Library of Congress, markers added by author).

Hugo began a school for boys on the patio in his backyard, teaching for two hours every morning so as not to disrupt their farmwork. In a year, his class had grown to 70 students, with its reach extending beyond the hacienda to the free Indigenous communities nearby. With so many students, construction for a new schoolhouse was approved and the foundation was built, but then funds ran out (May 2023:25). The Peniel Hall Trustees decided to turn management of the farm over to the Canadian Baptists, and unable to secure the funding needed to meaningfully complete their work, the Wenbergs felt they had no choice but to resign in 1914 (Wenberg, July 1, 1920).

The Wenbergs were then appointed by Bishop Stuntz to Tucuman, Argentina (Methodist Episcopal Church 1915). Hugo was ordained in 1915 in Buenos Aires. There the Wenbergs established a Methodist Church, and their third and final child, Ernest Daniel, was born on June 7, 1916. Shortly after his birth, both Ernest and Edna became ill, and the Wenbergs decided it was best for her and the children to return to the United States. Hugo remained in Argentina until 1918, returning home to recover from the Argentinian heat and conducting Centenary

work in New York and Ohio (Wenberg 1929). While in the US, he argued passionately with the Board of Foreign Missions to dedicate some resources to allow him to begin work with the native people of Bolivia under Methodist jurisdiction, writing in one letter: “The Lord has shown me the awful conditions and dire distress of the Indians and were I to keep my mouth shut I would feel like a coward and a traitor to my Lord and His cause.” (Wenberg, June 5, 1918). In 1919, Hugo returned to Bolivia, hoping to find a suitable location to reinstate the Methodists’ work among the Aymara. Through his letters, archived by the United Methodist Church’s General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), it is clear that he grew increasingly frustrated at the board’s apparent lack of urgency towards the Bolivian mission, as well as their inability or unwillingness to appropriate the necessary funds towards such an operation. This frustration was furthered by the fact that after turning the management of the Guatajata farm over to the Canadian Baptists, nothing had been done to further it, and yet Hugo was prevented from taking charge of it himself (May 2023:28). Feeling that his message was not being communicated clearly enough, he traveled to New York to speak with the board directly. As he wrote in a letter to the Board Executive Secretary for Latin America, Dr. Harry Farmer: “[A]ll you think the Indians ought to have is a paltry \$5,000 for a farm... I am more convinced than ever that it is necessary to go to the United States and lay the whole matter before the Board, as there is no one there who has studied the Indian of S. America” (Wenberg, May 15, 1920). This unapproved travel seemed to be the final straw for the board, already irritated by the criticisms levied against them (Farmer 1920; May 2023:29). In July of 1920, he was notified of his dismissal from missionary service in a letter from Dr. Farmer who wrote: “I trust you understand

that this action was necessary, in view of all the circumstances concerning your appointment and your return from the field.”

Back in America, Hugo served for a time with the Missionary Centenary, and then spent a year working at the United States Post Office in Chicago, Illinois (Wenberg 1929). In 1922, he and Edna were appointed by the Women’s Home Missionary Society (W.H.M.S.) of the Methodist Church to minister to the Ponca of Oklahoma (Beggs 1922:23). In 1924 he joined the Oklahoma Annual Conference and was appointed to Blackburn Church (Magner 1925:166). Following this he transferred to the Wisconsin Annual Conference serving Pardeeville and in 1928 became minister at the Oneida Methodist Church (May 2023:30; Wenberg 1929). He remained in this position for 22 years, until retiring in 1950. Later, a ceremony was held by the Oneida to honor the Wenbergs and adopt them as members of the Oneida. “Hugo” passed away on October 1, 1959, after 55 years in the ministry. Edna passed away on June 8, 1968.

The Wenberg story continued with their sons. Their youngest, Ernest, became a doctor and a Lieutenant in the United States Army. Tragically, he was killed in World War II during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944, posthumously being awarded a Purple Star (Oshkosh Northwestern 1945:3). Their eldest child Edwin became a geologist for the Gulf Oil Company. In 1950 he was working in Caracas, Venezuela, and his father had the opportunity to visit him and check-in on some of his old missionary sites. In Guatajata there was now a schoolhouse proper, as well as a large church, hardly recognizable compared to how Hugo had left it in 1914. While there, he was approached by one of his former students, who he recognized by name over 30 years later. Their middle child Herbert became a chemist, working at the Nicolet Paper Company in DePere, Wisconsin, where he developed several patents (Post-Crescent 1997). In 1977, he donated a

large collection of his parents' objects, along with photos and documents, to the Milwaukee Public Museum. Through a long series of coincidences, it was this donation that led me to discover the Wenbergs' lives and to contact their great-grandson Neil Wenberg, who has very graciously allowed me access to some of the Wenberg family papers and has been instrumental in the success of this research.

The Mission Field: Bolivia

It seems fitting that this research, with its focus on cross-cultural and cross-religious relationships, would take place in the context of Bolivia, as the country has been described as “not simply a colonial replica of its last conqueror, but a complex amalgam of cultures and ethnicities that go back centuries” (Klein 2003:xi). This fact is further reflected in the country's official name, the “Plurinational State of Bolivia,” underscoring the complex interplay of cultures and ethnicities that have shaped the trajectory of Bolivia's historical and cultural development. That development has also been influenced in no small part by Bolivia's unique environment, encompassing a range of biomes that required unique cultural adaptation, as well as resources that made the country stand out from its South American neighbors in the age of European conquest and colonization.

Geography of Bolivia

Bolivia's geography can be divided into three physiographic zones: the Andean, Sub-Andean, and Llanos regions (Figure 2.3). While the Sub-Andean valleys and Llanos tropics constitute roughly two-thirds of Bolivia's territory, the majority of the population has historically resided, and continues to reside, on the highland plateaus, or *altiplano*. The *altiplano*, while dry

and with poor soil in many parts, is characterized by a more stable climate and open plains as opposed to the dense jungle found elsewhere in the region. It also contains a wealth of mineral deposits, including gold, silver, and tin. Crucial to the development of civilization on the altiplano was Lake Titicaca, a roughly 3,200 square-mile lake on the border of present-day Peru and Bolivia, which provided humidity and warmth to the surrounding area in contrast to the much drier, infertile, and mineral poor western half of the altiplano (Klein 2003:6). The resulting concentration of agriculture and herding around the lake created surpluses, allowing for the development of a trade economy with people in the surrounding valleys that supplied resources the altiplano lacked. And while this portion of the altiplano is contained within the borders of modern-day Bolivia, its cultures did not develop in isolation, but rather were greatly influenced by larger forces within the Andean region as a whole.

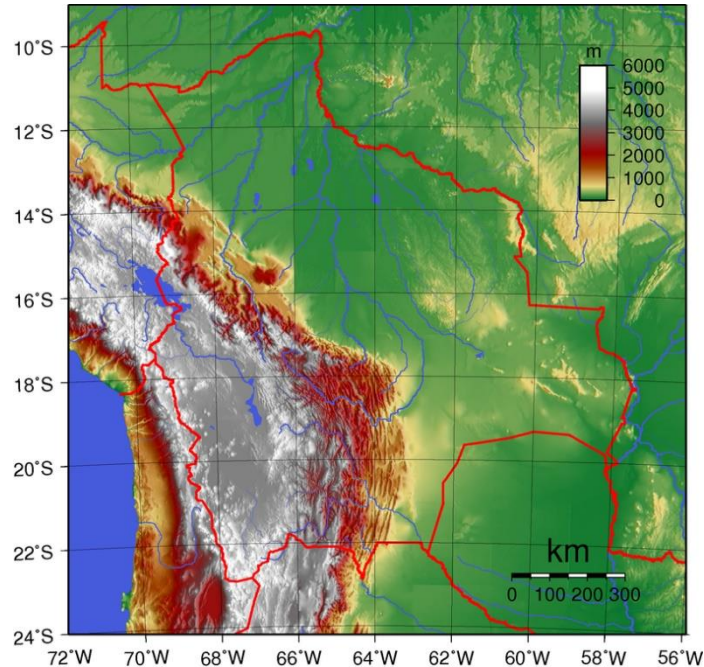


Figure 2:3: Topographic map of Bolivia, showing the Sub-Andean zone in red, the altiplano in gray, and the Amazon Llanos in green (By Sadalmelik - Own work, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2236179>).

Early Bolivian History

According to anthropologist and Andean scholar Andrew Orta (2004:30), “the challenge for students of the Andes is to finesse the claim that a regional culture ‘there’ there exists without falling into the trap of positing a homogenous or enduring Andeanism.” The history of the Andean region is complex and entangled, with events from the distant past often taking on surprising relevance in the present. For this reason, while a summary of some Bolivian history is essential in order to contextualize my research, this retelling will be incomplete.

The foundations of Andean history are somewhat debated, but generally evidence of hunter-gatherers dates as early as ca. 12,500 BCE (Dillehay et al. 2015; Henderson 2013:4; Klein 2003:10; Morales 2003:2; Stanish 2003:1). Domestication came much later, around 4000 BCE with the main crops being quinoa, potatoes, and other root crops, which have remained staples in the Andean diet to this day (Klein 2003:10). The altiplano’s open fields were ideal for grazing, and the domestication of alpacas, llamas, and vicuña created a herding economy that has remained the backbone of Andean life (Klein 2003:7). A system of interregional trade, sometimes called vertical ecological integration, was also key to Andean societies. Villages would send colonists to different altitudes to cultivate resources only found in the valleys and jungles such as fruits, maize, chili peppers, and coca, which were then traded for surpluses of highland resources like wool, meat, and roots (Henderson 2013:10). This system created networks of relationships that were vital in establishing wider and more complex Andean civilizations, and it even survived European colonists’ efforts to isolate the highlands, remaining an important aspect of rural Bolivian society today (Henderson 2013:11; Klein 2003:9). It was because of these interconnected villages that civilizations were able to develop and spread

through the Andean region, with the first large scale ceremonial centers being created by the Chavín culture in 800 - 100 BCE (Klein 2003:11; Morales 2003:2). Subsequent societies included the Moche, Nasca, and Wari (Henderson 2013:18). Another regional culture, Tiahuanaco, established many practices that would be repeated throughout Andean history.

The Tiahuanaco polity emerged as a political force sometime around 600 CE near Lake Titicaca, though its influence eventually stretched to the Peruvian and Chilean coasts as well as into Argentina (Henderson 2013:23; Morales 2003:3). Tiahuanaco influence was heavily religious in nature and believed to have consisted of a federation of autonomous groups, tied together by long-distance trade and religious and ceremonial norms (Henderson 2013:26; Janusek 2004:71). In addition to its religious influence, Tiahuanaco also greatly expanded agriculture in the highlands, creating floating gardens in Lake Titicaca and ridged-field agriculture with complex irrigation systems (Klein 2003:12). Tiahuanaco's religious and technological practices are believed to have influenced other pre-Inkan Andean cultures as well as the Inka themselves (Morales 2003:4). Despite these advances, the polity was unable to sustain its extensive territory after a particularly intense and prolonged drought, and the political vacuum that was left behind was filled by smaller regional powers, the largest of which were the twelve Aymara kingdoms (Morales 2003:5; Stanish 2003:11).

While in power ca. 1150-1477, the Aymara, whose descendants still reside in Bolivia today, had an extremely unique political and social structure. Each nation was subdivided into two unequal kingdoms, a more powerful kingdom in the highlands, and a smaller subservient kingdom in the lowlands, each with its own ruler and elite class (Klein 2003:15; Morales 2003:5). This highly structured social network along with the vertical ecological integration

between high- and lowlands allowed the Aymara kingdoms to become very wealthy and powerful, with some even operating entire silver and gold mining operations (Klein 2003:15-16). Despite this prosperity, the power of Aymara rulers was rather limited to their own kingdoms, as the animosity and aggression between the different nations ultimately prevented them from uniting against the Inka, who entered the Lake Titicaca region around 1460 CE. Despite being “conquered,” the Aymara fared relatively well under Inkan rule. Due to their power and wealth, they enjoyed greater status than other conquered polities, and even after an unsuccessful revolt in 1470, they were still able to retain their language and cultural practices (Klein 2003:18).

The Inka

The conquering of the Aymara by the Inka greatly influenced the subsequent history of what is now Bolivia. At the beginning of the 13th century, rulers in the territory surrounding the sacred city of Cuzco began to gain prominence among the many highland nations and kingdoms existing at the time. These people, the Inka as they came to be known, were Quechua-speakers with *Inka* originally being the name for their ruling class and emperors (Klein 2003:17; Morales 2003:7). Within several generations, the Inka developed a highly organized sociopolitical structure, with conquered territories being divided into provinces and subprovinces with varying levels of oversight. Following the earlier Tiahuanaco and Aymara traditions, the Inka continued the practice of *ayllus*, or kin-groups that had rights over shared land and formed the basis of Inkan society (Morales 2003:9). Through the *mita*, or involuntary labor system through which the Inka required able-bodied males to serve the empire, they were able to construct massive road and aqueduct systems. At its height of expansion in 1527, Inkan rule extended

over more than 380,000 square miles from northern Ecuador to southern Chile, encompassing likely over ten million subjects (Morales 2003:7).

Despite this success, the empire was still in its fledgling stages of solidifying a national identity when the Spanish arrived. For all their imperial and military might, accounts from the time of Spanish contact characterize the Inka rulers as fairly benevolent and allowing conquered areas to retain a great deal of autonomy as long as taxes were paid and the mita enforced (Klein 2003:19). While their expansion was certainly made easier through this policy of tolerance, the lack of strong cultural unity and sense of identity may have contributed to the rapid breakdown of the empire when the Spanish invaded. Just prior to the conquistadors' arrival, the Inka empire was wracked by a series of regional uprisings as well as a civil war and conflict over succession between Inka Huayna Capac's sons Atahualpa and Huáscar (Morales 2003:17). The Spanish arrived in what is now Peru towards the end of the conflict, after Atahualpa had successfully imprisoned Huáscar and executed most of his supporters. While under normal circumstances this would have ensured his rule, the loss of so many soldiers and important administrators left the Inka deeply vulnerable to an outside threat. Through a deceitful deal and ambush, the Spanish were quickly able to capture and execute Atahualpa and swiftly take control of the empire through the installation of puppet Inka rulers (Morales 2003:18-19). Though the Spanish had been successful in quelling rebellion, infighting broke out between the conquistadors, and the Spanish Crown was forced to send a viceroy to manage them (Andrien 2001:45). This resulted in the establishment of the *encomienda* system, a royal grant given to conquistadors which rewarded them with rights to a portion of land along with the Indigenous people who lived on it. In theory, the *encomienda* was meant to operate similar to a feudal

system, wherein the *encomendero*, or grant recipient was meant to protect the Indigenous people on his land and offer them Catholic instruction, in return for a portion of their taxes to the Crown and their labor (Klein 2003:34; Presta 1997:3). With this established, “the machinery of the colonial state grew slowly but steadily in the first generation” (Andrien 2001:48).

The Spanish, Silver, and Colonial Bolivia

The first phase of Spanish conquest was mostly confined to the territory of modern-day Peru until 1545, when the continent’s largest vein of silver (in what the Spanish called *Cerro Rico*, or “Rich Hill”) was discovered in Potosí (Lane 2019:1). This accidental discovery proved pivotal, not only in establishing Bolivia as a crucial territory for Spain as a global power, but also shaping the development of Bolivian society for hundreds of years to come. To understand the importance of such significant silver deposits to the Spanish Crown, it is necessary to understand the state of global trade at this time, which relied on *specie*, or hard cash. At the time, gold was still relatively rare, making silver the backbone of imperial and international trade (Lane 2019:5). In the first century after its discovery, Potosí changed Spanish history and provided nearly half of the global silver supply.

The discovery of silver in Potosí not only drastically shifted Spain’s economic standing and its interest in Bolivia as a colonial territory, but also had a major effect on the social structure. Spanish immigrants enjoyed an immediate rise in status once arriving in the Americas, due to the wealth of the mining industry and their distance from Spain’s rigid guild structure. As a result, the Spanish peasant class was essentially nonexistent in the Americas, replaced by Indigenous peasants (Klein 2003: 26). While by no means an equal society, people

of mixed Spanish and Indigenous descent, called *mestizo* in Bolivia, soon made up not only a large portion of the “middle class” within larger villages or towns, but also made their way into the upper “white” elite as the children of male Spanish immigrants (Klein 2003:47). The original racial basis of the social hierarchy quickly deteriorated as the mining industry grew, with the mestizo class increasingly being composed of full-blood Indigenous individuals who had moved from their rural villages into cities and adopted Western dress and the Spanish language.

While the discovery of silver benefitted Spanish immigrants by affording them more lucrative social positions than were found in mainland Spain, it also radically changed the conditions for the Aymara and Quechua populations in negative ways. By the 1560s, the *encomienda* system was failing. Despite the original intentions of this system to preserve and minimally disrupt the preexisting governance and social structure of Indigenous groups, the *encomenderos* frequently neglected their duties and far from the crown’s direct oversight, exploited their positions to enforce tyranny on their subjects (Klein 2003:34-35). This, coupled with the decimation of Indigenous populations by European diseases, meant that the *encomienda* system was no longer very profitable for the crown, and the Andean workers were at risk of revolt (Andrien 2001:48). Additionally, the Spanish needed to create some sort of structure to bring in workers to the newly discovered silver mines. The outcome was a series of reforms by Peruvian viceroy Francisco Toledo (Klein 2003:35).

Toledo attempted to deal with the issue of the *encomienda*’s dwindling productivity as a result of Spanish greed and reduced Indigenous numbers by relocating native workers into more central villages, called *reducciones*, consolidating power locally, and severing ties between highland *ayllus* and their lowland satellite communities (Klein 2003:36; Morales 2003:31).

Toledo also reformed city life, especially in Potosí, which in the 1570s was approaching a crisis as the most abundant and easily accessible silver veins were depleted. He began by introducing mercury amalgamation, a process that allowed silver to be refined in larger amounts from lower-quality ore (Klein 2003:37). This necessitated the construction of mercury mines in Huancavelica in Lower Peru, as well as circumvention of the many native-owned refineries that had previously controlled the operation (Morales 2003:23-25). Next, to lower the high cost of labor for the mines, which had risen significantly as extracting silver became more difficult and workers decided to return to their villages, Toledo reintroduced the mita system of the Inka, obligating able-bodied adult males to work unpaid in the mines for a portion of the year. While Toledo had attempted to use the mita to enforce stricter mining regulations and protect the workers, the results of the mita were disastrous, with work periods being extended in many cases to year-round, and high food prices in Potosí rendering starvation a real concern for miners (Morales 2003:27; Robins 2011:38). When silver production once again decreased, putting more pressure on mita laborers, many fled into highland villages to avoid being drafted (Klein 2003:62). The late 1700s witnessed a resurgence of Indigenous identity and solidarity, culminating in 1780 with a massive uprising across Upper Peru and Cuzco (Morales 2003:36). While smaller, localized revolts had been common up to this point in the Andean region, the Túpac Amaru revolution of 1780 was a departure from this norm as it was much larger and more widespread than any previous peasant uprising, comprising likely over one hundred thousand troops across the region and from all classes and castes (Klein 2003:74). Despite the high degree of coordination and effective destruction by the rebel forces, by 1782 they were

effectively crushed. Despite this setback, the seed of revolution had been sown, and as conflicts broke out across South America and the globe, Bolivia would soon enter a new era.

Revolution and Republic

The 19th century began with Bolivia undergoing another economic downturn, this time due to Spain's involvement with the Napoleonic Wars and the disruption of their sea routes, which led to a halt of mining production in Bolivia. In addition, from 1803 to 1805 the region experienced a series of harvest failures as well as major epidemics. In this vulnerable state, the news from Spain of the forced deposition of King Charles IV fractured the colonial government's loyalties (Morales 2003:40). Inspired by the successful revolutions in the United States and Haiti, independence movements were sweeping through South America, with the first declaration of independence coming from La Paz in 1809, though it was quickly defeated. As historian Herbert Klein (2003:93) notes: "Having been the first region formally to declare for independence, Upper Peru [Bolivia] would paradoxically become the last region in South America to gain it." In the fifteen years leading up to Bolivia's independence, the region was surrounded by bloody revolutions and civil war, and the highlands were subject to invasions from both Argentinian guerilla fighters and Peruvian royalists. Liberation forces ultimately declared victory and on April 6, 1825, Upper Peru was declared an independent nation (Morales 2003:47). With the war ended, Upper Peru's independence proved to be an important buffer between the territorial ambitions of Lower Peru and Argentina, and the Republic was named after the Venezuelan who liberated the region, Simón Bolívar (Morales 2003:48).

Post-independence Bolivia was a “war-weary and economically depressed region” that experienced almost 50 years of economic stagnation and would be further strained by political turbulence and territorial disputes (Klein 2003:102). Regions that previously had very strong and open trading arrangements now were caught in trade disputes between the new republics. Bolivia especially was affected by a need to transport exports and access far-away ports (Klein 2003:103). Additionally, the mining industry had been a main target during the independence wars, with mines and smelters being demolished, and churches being raided for silver to be melted down (Boylan 1970:79). The only area of growth at all was among rural peasant communities, who more and more were returning from the cities and taking up agricultural work. While the first republican assembly had outlawed the royal tribute tax Spain exacted on Indigenous citizens, within a year the government could not function without taxation and reinstated it. While not exorbitant, the tax now constituted around 60% of the government’s income—evidence of how dire the economic conditions had become (Klein 2003:104).

Bolivia’s position throughout the 19th century was made only worse by the activities of its more prosperous and politically-stable neighbors. Bolivia, under the leadership of Andrés de Santa Cruz, recognized that Peru had great potential to be economically powerful and industrious, and in 1836 defeated Peru’s General Agustín Gamarra, splitting Peru into two nations and placing them into a confederacy with Bolivia (Klein 2003:114). This was short-lived as Chile wanted to expand as well and went to war with Santa Cruz in 1837, defeating him in 1839 (Klein 2003:114). Though this decisive defeat allowed both Peru and Chile to annex large swaths of Bolivia, negotiations actually reestablished peace among the three countries by

1841, with Bolivia remaining much the same as it had before: still economically stagnant and politically tumultuous (Klein 2003:116-117).

Just a few decades later, Bolivia came into conflict with Chile once again over the Atacama Desert. Nitrate deposits had been discovered, and though they were located within Bolivian territory, the country lacked the resources to profitably develop a mining industry in the area and was forced to outsource to British and Chilean capitalists (Klein 2003:140). Chile, in particular, had invested quite a lot into developing the region, and Chilean workers far outnumbered Bolivians in the Atacama mines, causing tensions to rise between the two countries. This hit a boiling point in 1878 when Bolivia attempted to enforce a new tax, which Chile refused before resorting to an invasion (Morales 2003:65; 71). In what is now known as the Pacific War, Chile retook the Atacama Desert and in 1884 Bolivia ceded control of the region to Chile, losing a fourth of its territory and its only direct access to the sea as a result (Klein 2003:144; Morales 2003:83). More positively, for the first time Bolivia now had a stable government of a republic nature, and through their Chilean connections, Bolivian miners proved to be a powerful force in resolving the Pacific War and once again made the silver industry profitable (Klein 2003:144).

Bolivia finally established a profitable export economy, and the Indigenous head tax was no longer the predominant funding for the government. Unfortunately, this meant the protection of Indigenous peasants was no longer an economic necessity for the government, and wealthy white elites immediately seized on this weakness. For decades, the government had generally protected the rights of free Indigenous communities, or in other words, communities who had a community claim to land but did not have an actual deed of ownership.

Now at the behest and often force of landowning elites, these rights were stripped away and land owned collectively could be seized due to a lack of an individual owner (Klein 2003:147). This was part of a larger elite political strategy focused on keeping Indigenous individuals out of higher government roles and from gaining any sort of political representation. As a permanent and exploited working class, many Indigenous people moved to urban areas as a result of being displaced, though in the rural areas where education was not at all a priority, Indigenous languages still remained the common tongue.

The political and social landscape in Bolivia that the Wenbergs would have encountered in 1902 was one of drastic differences. From one perspective, the country was flourishing; the conservative era had been replaced with new liberal government focused on subsidizing transportation and supporting business, with the newly growing tin industry making Bolivia one of the central powers in mining across the globe (Klein 2003:157; Lane 2019:123-125; Morales 2003:94). However, the profits of this were mostly restricted to the elite barons and overseas entrepreneurs, and the Liberal regime had not made any progress towards ensuring the rights of its Indigenous citizens. As Hugo would attest in his mission reports and letters, the situation in much of the country remained the same as it always had, with many Aymara and Quechua living in rural areas, working in agriculture or mining, and being routinely impoverished, exploited, and abused by the rest of society (Wenberg, November 2, 1918). It is to Hugo's credit that he made repeated pleas for assistance to both his Methodist board and officials in the Bolivian government to build Indigenous schools a good decade before Indigenous rights really became a focus in Bolivia's leftist movements (Klein 2003:192). With the understanding of Bolivia's deep cultural roots, the way its natural world has been used and altered, and its

complex political history, the following section will focus more particularly on what Hugo would have observed and familiarized himself with as a missionary among the Bolivians, mainly the culture and daily life of rural Aymara in the early 1900s and the state of religion in the region.

The Aymara

The Aymara are the second-largest Indigenous group in Bolivia today, making up 25% of the population, with communities of Aymara also in Peru and Chile (Guizardi et al. 2023:9; Morales 2003:xxvii). Descended from the early Aymara kingdoms, they have undergone multiple phases of conquest and enculturation, first by the Inka and then by the Spanish and Bolivian mestizos. Despite this, the basic structure of Aymara culture has endured. In traditional Aymara society, the basic social units are the *ayllus* or kin groupings, each of which is divided into an upper and lower class. An ayllu was not restricted to a single location, but rather kinship ties connected highland communities to satellite lowland villages. While land was shared communally within an ayllu, there were also regional chiefs called *caciques*, who held land independently of an ayllu and could extract labor from ayllus under their jurisdiction (Klein 2003:14-15). The caciques played an important role by acting as intermediaries between Spanish authorities and the peasant class, ultimately bearing responsibility for any taxes not paid by the peasants (Klein 2003:43).

Under Toledo's reforms in the 1570s, most Aymara lived either in "reduced" *comunidades* or on *haciendas*. *Comunidades* were land communally owned by free natives, whereas the *haciendas* were land held by wealthy Spaniards, who directly began to manage agricultural operations, supported by the labor of migrant peasants or other landless Indigenous

workers (Klein 2003:49). Up until the late 1800s, the balance between haciendas and comunidades would remain fairly steady, with haciendas owning slightly more land and being more profitable, but with the majority of Aymara still living on comunidad land (Klein 2003:121). This is not to say that comunidades were completely free of Spanish exploitation, as they were subject to forced labor under the mita system (discussed previously). The communities that provided mita labor were wrecked; not only did vast numbers of people flee to avoid it, but those who remained suffered due to disease, suicide, and punishment (Robins 2011:35). Before it was abolished under Bolivian independence in 1825, the mita directly killed tens of thousands of Indigenous workers and many more through its indirect consequences (Morales 2003: 31; Robins 2011:193).

The end of the mita and Bolivian independence did not immediately translate into better conditions for the Aymara. Though the proportion of free Indigenous land had remained steady throughout the 1800s, in the 1860s the liberal state began an attack on the rights of Indigenous landholders. This was somewhat held off until the 1880s, but increased pressure from wealthy whites and mestizos ultimately broke up comunidades and led to the second great wave of hacienda expansion well into the 1930s (Klein 2003:147). On these haciendas, allegedly free and paid workers were essentially treated as slaves, denied education, and abused at the hands of both white landowners and Catholic clergy. The hacienda system was not demolished until the 1950s, so Hugo witnessed firsthand the conditions of the Aymara on these farms. In fact, as noted previously, in 1913-1914 he was stationed on an hacienda in Guatajata, Bolivia, and letters from him and his wife describe the mistreatments that took place there (Wenberg, July 1, 1920).

Bolivia's Religious Context

Aymara Folk Beliefs

At the heart of discussions about the Aymara and Christianity is the role that “traditional” religion or folk beliefs play in the lives of Christian converts. Aymara beliefs have been influenced by nearly 500 years of conquest and outside influences, and the extent to which these “traditional” beliefs are expressed or practiced has varied greatly throughout history and is also highly dependent on a rural versus urban contexts. As Orta (2004:14) suggests, in the context of such an “entangled ethnography,” it would be more accurate to refer to Indigenous Aymara beliefs and practices as folk beliefs.

Colonialism has affected even the most basic facets of Aymara spirituality. For example, according to some sources, Aymara cosmology is divided into two realms: *Alaxpacha*—the upper, male, celestial sphere—and *Akapacha*—the lower, female, earthly sphere (Burman 2016:33). In other sources, the cosmos is split in three: *Alaxpacha*, *Akapacha*, and *Manqhapacha*, the underground and dark places (Kolata 1996:11; Orta 2004:65). Other accounts indicate that *Manqhapacha* is an aspect encompassed within the *Akapacha* domain, and this interpretation accords with the dualism reflected elsewhere in Aymara society (Buechler and Buechler 1971:90). The distinction of *Manqhapacha* as a separate realm may have been a colonial invention, a way to draw stronger parallels to the Christian hell and further demonize the spirits who inhabited it (Orta 2004:64). Likewise, Burman (2016) recounts witnessing anthropologist and *yatiri* (Aymara ritual specialist) Juan Angel make the realization that the “Code” of Andean dualism, when represented in colonial textiles, emphasizes the

meeting point of the upper and lower realms as an integral part of the structure. “Viewed this way, these textiles express not a dual but a tripartite ‘Code’... This would mean that rather than expressing authentic Aymara values and organizational structures, the Code was a sly colonial projection of the Holy Trinity” (Burman 2016:61). This disagreement—whether there are two *pacha* or three—illustrates how colonial concepts are not discrete obtrusions into Aymara culture, as so much time has passed that many Aymara accept this cosmological ordering as authentically Indigenous.

This is not the only key aspect of Aymara folk beliefs that has been subject to syncretic influence. The existence and importance of spirits in keeping the balance of daily life has also remained highly important despite the adoption of aspects of Christianity, such as the belief in Catholic Saints. The Aymara world is imbued with spirits in a very real tangible way. To the Aymara, “the shapes and forces of nature *are* their kin. When the Aymara gaze up to the mountains that enclose their world, they see their remote ancestors silhouetted against the sky, turned to stone all around them, infused into the landscape” (Kolata 1996:10). Spirits are generally associated with particular locations, such as mountains, rivers, and lakes, and can be grouped generally under the Aymara term *achachillas* (Lewellen 1978:90). These spirits are not unambiguously benevolent, and their cooperation in Aymara life is dependent on both people behaving correctly and respecting the spirits, and on rituals to cajole the spirits into cooperation (Burman 2016:35; Kolata 1996:11; 20). The relationship with spirits reflects another key part of folk beliefs, and that is balance and complementarity between the human and supernatural worlds. It is important to note that this is based on a relationship of mutuality rather than one of causality. In other words, the Aymara do not believe in a direct cause and effect between

human and supernatural actions, but rather that too much chaos in one sphere will inevitably disrupt the normality of the other, and corrective actions must be taken. To use an example observed by Buechler and Buechler (1971:93): “[A]bortion is related to normal birth as hail is related to propitious climatic conditions. Abortion does not cause hail, nor does normal birth cause fertile fields, but in order to attain balance in the forces of nature a complementary normality in human reproduction must be maintained.” This is also reflected in the presence of “other” or strange spirits, often called *ñanqhas* or *yaqhas*. Under the influence of the Catholic Church, these spirits have been heavily conflated with Christian devils or demons, who cause illness and misfortune when people interact with them (Buechler and Buechler 1971:91). According to more traditional beliefs, however, illness from *ñanqhas* is not malicious, but the result of their “otherness” and ignorance about the proper way to relate to them. One exception to this may be the *karisiris*, spirits that are said to steal Aymara body fat, which is strongly associated with life-force and energy (Burman 2016:89). These spirits are most commonly described in human terms, similar to evil sorcerers, with priests and monks even being accused of secretly being *karisiri* and using the fat to make church candles and chrism oil (Burman 2016:89; Orta 2004:231). In all forms, the *karisiri* are associated with otherness, often taking the form of outsiders to the Aymara in some way. This demonstrates the ambivalence many Aymara still feel about their enculturated position in Bolivian society.

As previously mentioned, the *yatiri* (“one who knows”) are spiritual specialists in Aymara culture who act as more formal intermediaries with the spirit realm, mainly through the execution of rituals. These rituals encompass both individual, domestic rites such as hair-cutting ceremonies, as well as community rituals for plantings and harvests (Orta 2004:125). Offerings

of alcohol and coca are included in essentially all rites, which certainly intensified Church persecution during the colonial period. More recently, coca has come under attack from the government due to concerns of drug trafficking (Buechler and Buechler 1971:97; Charles 2010:112; Gustafson 2002). Lewellen (1978:92) notes that while Christianity has in many cases dissolved the traditional cosmology or belief system of the Andes, rituals remain widely practiced, which he credits to their utilitarian use in a largely unpredictable and difficult environment. If anything, Christianity has in more recent times strengthened the importance of rituals, as they are most heavily practiced around the Catholic holidays, especially All Saints Day (Buechler 1980:95; Buechler and Buechler 1971:97). Since the introduction of Catholicism to the Aymara, saints have come to play a major role in festivals and rituals, an addition that has not gone without criticism from both Aymara and white Catholics (Orta 2004:82).

Catholicism

From the time of the Spanish conquest up to the present, converting the Aymara has been a goal of the Catholic Church, and the relationship between the Aymara and Catholicism provides important context for some aspects of the Protestant mission efforts that came later. For many Aymara today, Catholicism is inextricable from Andean folk religion, with many Aymara considering the fiesta system and Catholicism to be interchangeable (Granville 2005:72; Lewellen 1978:101). Despite the ubiquity of the Catholic saints now present in many folk rituals and celebrations, Catholicism as an institution is also widely hated by highland Bolivians, as a result of a long history of mistreatment by European clergy (Granville 2005:73). Early interactions with Spanish Catholics have been described as more a process of conquering than of conversion (Lewellen 1978:94; Tschopik 1946:509). By the late 16th century Spanish fears

about the devil disguising himself in Andean idols led to an inquisition of sorts across the highlands, with those suspected of consorting with the devil being subject to exorcisms, harsh punishments, or even execution (MacCormack 1991:46, 389-390; Murry 2013:34). While these cases were certainly the most dramatic, throughout the colonial period clerical violence against both “idolaters” and Indigenous converts was common (Charles 2010:110; Kamen 1993:209).

Over the course of the 17th century, accounts of public rituals decreased and those that still occurred did so under the supervision of churches, with Christian idols being offered as suitable replacements (Abercrombie 1998:270-271). Though there were concerns that saint cults were being formed by baptized and allegedly Christian natives, and attempts were made to confiscate their idols, several factors led the Church to adopt a more laissez-faire approach to evangelizing by the end of the 17th century (Abercrombie 1998:107). Greed was certainly a factor, as having more converts (however sincere that title) and a more permissive attitude toward dubiously Christian practices such as fiestas allowed priests to collect hefty payments from their patrons (Abercrombie 1998:278). Additionally, under Church and Royal law, Indigenous people were given certain rights to bring charges against clergy misconduct, and due to a growing number of Spanish-literate native interlocutors, litigation against the Church was a very real and costly risk for overly zealous priests (Abercrombie 1998:278; Charles 2010:182). Finally, perhaps the least cynical reason for this relaxation of church policies was that a lack of sufficient clergy to meet the needs of rural populations created real concerns that without authorizing Indigenous practitioners, believers would go without access to time-sensitive and crucial sacraments such as their last rites (Abercrombie 1998:273). This shortage was not entirely an accident. For all of the peasant distrust of the Church, the clergy in turn regarded

their Bolivian converts with suspicion if not outright distrust (Lee 2019:2). To them, Indigenous converts were “at once the obedient servants of evangelization and the underhanded plotters of its demise” (Charles 2010:3). Spanish skepticism towards Indigenous Andeans perpetuated an image of the clergy as “Western” and in opposition to the congregation, and discouraged catechists from pursuing ordainment, and Indigenous catechists who did join Church ranks were subject to discrimination and limited autonomy (Charles 2010:104; Lee 2019:5). Only since the 1970s has Bolivia truly begun to foster an “indigenous” clergy—due in large part to a change in theological approach to evangelizing (Lee 2019:9).

Following World War II, the Vatican adopted a “theology of liberation” that was deeply concerned with issues of poverty and global politics, paying most attention to the emerging “third world” and the atheistic threat of communism (Orta 2004:79-80). The failure to nurture an Indigenous clergy left foreign priests in Bolivia overwhelmed with traveling far distances to perform masses, and they began to believe that their lack of roots in any particular community encouraged the “part-time” Catholics (Orta 2004:106).

From this crisis, a new “theology of inculturation” developed, with the belief that Indigenous practices are, in fact, not idolatry but “local expressions of universal Christian meaning” (Orta 2002:724). The reasoning is that the imposition of Catholicism through colonialism stunted its natural growth, and that by building up a more local clergy—through learning the language, practicing the local traditions, and “recuperating” the Aymara culture—missionaries can connect in the minds of their converts the “surface” cultural practices to an authentic Catholic “core” (Orta 2002:725). This stands in stark contrast to the strict prohibitions

enforced by Protestants, causing potential fragmentation for converts within their tight-knit communities.

Protestantism

According to a survey conducted in 2020, 64.7% of Bolivians identify as Catholic, with Protestants of all denominations constituting only 21.1% of the population (Corporación Latinobarómetro 2020). Despite more substantial progress elsewhere in South and Latin America, and a substantially higher rate of Protestants (or *evangélicos*, as Bolivians more commonly say) compared to 50 years ago, Protestantism has not become mainstream or even widely accepted in Bolivia, especially in rural areas (Calestani 2012:41; Canessa 1998:21; Wagner 1970:179). There are several reasons for this lag in expected progress, some political and others cultural. The most obvious limiting factor to the growth of Protestantism is time: from the moment the Spanish took control of the region until well after independence, Catholicism was the only legal religion in Bolivia (Wagner 1970:13). It was not until 1906 that the Bolivian government “[permitted] the public exercise of all cults” (Wagner 1970:15; Lee 1907). While illegal, attempts to establish a Protestant presence in Bolivia began as early as 1827, often at great risk, as both British and Foreign Bible Society members Luke Matthews and Joseph Monguardino were murdered while attempting to evangelize, and those who fared better were deported or imprisoned (Wagner 1970:21). These hardships came after numerous reports from Catholic clergy about their own difficulties in “successfully” converting Bolivians (Charles 2010:149-150; Murry 2013:47). English Protestants in particular were already biased against Catholicism, believing it to be “as heavily imbued with superstition and prone to the snares of anti-Christ as Indian religion” (Murry 2013:38). A great deal of Protestant hesitancy

towards entering the region boiled down to the concern that if even the Catholics were unable to make progress, how much more difficult would it be for missionaries bringing the “true Gospel”? Despite the wider denomination’s reluctance, believers from around the world felt called to start church-planting missions. While many organizations and denominations attempted to build a flock in the highlands, up until the late 1900s, the most influential and successful of these were the Canadian Baptists, the Methodists, and the Bolivian Indian Mission.

Canadian Baptists

The first permanent Protestant work in Bolivia began in 1898 by Canadian Baptist Archibald Reekie (Boots 1971:14). As Protestantism was illegal for the first few years of operation, Reekie and his fellow missionaries worked under the guise of starting schools, with hopes that they would set the groundwork for evangelizing once they gained religious freedom (Boots 1971:22; Wagner 1970:35). Their educational work was initially successful, with the Bolivian government even offering to finance part of their operations, but they won virtually no converts. Their school project was eventually abandoned in 1908 to pursue more direct missionary work under religious liberty, and during World War I there was an influx of Canadian missionaries to the region (Boots 1971:25). Despite this, church numbers grew very slowly up until the mid-1940s, when they opened a radio station to try to better reach non-literate and more rural would-be converts (Boots 1971:28).

One of the most significant aspects of the Canadian Baptists’ Bolivia project was their involvement in agricultural outreach via the independent mission that Hugo was associated with, the Peniel Hall Farm in Guatajata. Of the three trustees originally charged with executing the mission, two were American Methodists. However, after the Wenbergs’ departure in 1914,

management of the farm was assumed by the Canadian Baptists who wanted to make the farm more profitable. As one trustee wrote: "We bought Cragin [a Baptist] a Bols. 15 whip, told him to shoe and feed up the horse out there, have no classes Mon. & Tues. but get on the horse with the whip, have the mayordomo with him and get some order and work out of those Indians" (Wenberg, July 1, 1920). The results were disastrous, driving the Aymara living at Guatajata to riot. The farm did not become the radical evangelizing homestead that the Canadian Baptists envisioned, and in fact the trustees were shocked at the open resistance their missionaries met. Women refused to send their children to Sunday School, and workers began to show open hostility towards their status as serfs, especially when the Baptist missionaries continued the practice of whippings, making them little different than the previous Spanish owners (Boots 1971:118; Dabbs 1952:183; Wenberg, July 1, 1920). In other words, "for the oppressed masses the distinction between a white absentee overlord and a white resident missionary was not too great" (Wagner 1970:48). Recognizing this, the Baptists largely abandoned any efforts in Guatajata or the larger Lake Titicaca region for years (Wenberg, 1920, February 28). Finally in 1935, after five years of planning, the Baptists decided that the serfs might be more open to the message they were preaching if they were freed, so they redistributed the farm land to their workers (Boots 1971:119). There is still a Baptist Church in Guatajata today, but the Canadian Baptists no longer operate an agricultural project, instead focusing on providing educational and medical services.

Methodists

The first Methodists arrived soon after the Baptists in 1901. Similarly, they took to education to avoid persecution, focusing on liberalizing before evangelizing (Wagner 1970: 56).

Methodist Francis Harrington developed a positive relationship with the Bolivian government and in 1907 opened a high school, the American Institute, in La Paz, the very same institution where Hugo and Edna would meet while teaching. Harrington was also responsible for issuing Hugo a local preacher's license in 1905, one of the very first in Bolivia (Copplestone 1973:246). Though not religious in nature, from an educational standpoint the Institute was a major success for Bolivian development, pioneering in the admission of girls, expanding to teach kindergarten through high school, establishing another location in Cochabamba in 1912, and continuing to the present day (Wagner 1970:57). The focus on institutional work left Methodists at first rather restricted to the cities and perhaps inadvertently they were almost exclusively involved with white and mestizo communities, something that Hugo took great issue with (Boots 1971:32; Wenberg, July 30, 1920). The South American conference of Methodists had adopted a policy that missionary work should be self-sufficient, so there was very limited funding to support evangelical projects, leading the Church to enter "a long period of crisis which was a struggle for existence" (Wagner 1970:58). According to the account of one missionary, in the 1950s there were only three hundred members across six churches in the entire country (Boots 2006). In 1956 the United States Methodist Church declared Bolivia a "land of decision" pushing massive resources towards developing better strategies and goals for evangelization efforts (Smith 1956:7; Wagner 1970:69). Today the number of Methodists in Bolivia sits around 9,190 (Apaza 2023; World Methodist Council 2023).

Bolivian Indian Mission

The last of the major "early" Protestant groups to enter the mission field was the Bolivian Indian Mission—the brainchild of two New Zealand evangelicals, George and Mary

Allan—which formed officially in 1909 (Wagner 1970:73). Rather than establishing schools or churches, they took a much more direct route to evangelizing, with George beginning work on translating books of the New Testament into Quechua (Boots 1971:40-43). The Mission grew very slowly for the first few decades but grew steadily after the 1940s due to the implementation of leadership training among their converts, reflecting a more community-oriented approach to evangelizing than other denominations (Boots 1971:45).

Compared to the two other Protestant denominations, the Bolivian Indian Mission has taken the most fundamentalist approach to their missionary work, focusing not on development or nation-building but solely on the “saving of souls” (Boots 1971:83). Wishing to expand to the white and mestizo populations, the organization was renamed the Andes Evangelical Mission in 1965, and in 1982 merged with the predominantly African-based mission organization SIM. Since the merger membership numbers have been difficult to find, but the organization operates successful charity fundraising and has likely grown beyond the 8,000-some Bolivian members reported in the 1960s (Boots 1971:45).

Seventh Day Adventists

The most significant change to the religious composition of Bolivia began with the entrance of Seventh Day Adventists in 1907 (Wagner 1970:87). Like the Methodists, the Adventists dedicated themselves to the Indigenous population and had slow beginnings. They took an “educational evangelism” approach, opening schools to reach populations that otherwise would have no formal teaching, and due to their significant funding from the US, they were able to maintain a number of schools (Wagner 1970:89). From there, the Adventists experienced significant and rapid growth, growing from 2,000 members in 1952 to over 10,000

just a decade later, and numbering more than 130,000 today (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2023; Wagner 1970:90). The significant growth of Adventists and similarly evangelical and fundamentalist sects surprised many due to their much more stringent opposition towards folk practices and substance use, positions that one would assume would make them unattractive to peasant communities (Canessa 1998:28; Lewellen 1979:245).

One explanation for this sudden growth has to do with the political environment in Bolivia. Despite its status as a “Pluri-national State,” Bolivia has attempted to create a homogenous identity, prohibiting the official use of the word *indio* and replacing it with *campesino* (peasant) (Canessa 1998:31). Indigenous migrants to cities are often economically poor as well as culturally looked down upon for not adhering to the norms of the Westernized urban environment (Gill 1993:195). Protestantism is associated with strong moral character and Western values, and this is especially true for Seventh Day Adventists, due to their strict moral code and plain dress clothing practices (Canessa 1998:33). Additionally, the close association in many people’s minds between Catholicism and disguised pagan beliefs makes Protestantism an attractive choice for trying to de-racialize oneself in order to advance in urban life, becoming what Ströbele-Gregor (1989) describes as “white-skinned Indians.” Their fundamentalist beliefs have other benefits to upward-mobility minded converts as well, one of the most important being their strict prohibition on alcohol and coca. Many women have been drawn to convert because of this, hoping to improve their home life by gaining a sober husband (Canessa 1998:35; Green 1993:175; Robins 2015:128; Van Vleet 2002:572; Walsh-Dilley 2019:508). Men are drawn to the sober lifestyle as well, it offers them a way to opt-out of the fiesta system.

Hosting a fiesta is an extremely costly and time-intensive endeavor, and even those who do not host are obligated to contribute favors (Buechler and Buechler 1970:69-71).

While fiestas are seen as a crucial part of the social realm, the Adventists have gained enough members to create a sort of parallel society, offering community without the weighty financial obligations (Canessa 1998:32; Van Vleet 2011:851). In addition, their emphasis on education and the high amount of funding they have invested into it has led to Adventists disproportionately holding higher paying jobs and being more active in politics than the general population (Lewellen 1979:245). The high value Adventists place on capitalistic success and education makes them appear very promising to the disillusioned migrants that make up a large proportion of their converts, but their sense of moral superiority has also led to strains within the larger Protestant community. Mainline Protestants have accused the Adventists of “stealing sheep” and growing their ranks out of already established Protestant congregations rather than from Catholic or nondenominational groups (Wagner 1970:87). Subsequently, Adventists have both been excluded from and refused to be a part of wider Protestant cooperative efforts as far back as 1916 (Wagner 1970:154). Their status as outsiders within the Bolivian missionary community seems to be a position they take no issue with, believing that those who permit flexibility are embracing heresy.

Summary

Bolivia’s political and cultural history makes Hugo’s experiences as a missionary more understandable, as well as raising new and interesting questions. He entered the country during a period of stable government and great economic growth due to the tin industry, and yet

encountered hundreds of peasants who had few rights and little to no access to education or medical care. While many missionaries expressed distress about the conditions of Indigenous groups on the basis of what they considered to be a debased and immoral spiritual life, Hugo seemed much more concerned with the abject poverty and indignity he encountered (Wenberg, July 1, 1920). For all of his concern, he was also in a difficult position culturally; he lacked institutional support abroad, the climate made him sick and miserable, and he spoke some Spanish but no Aymara or Quechua. Most of all, he was a Methodist in a country where Catholicism had been practiced for hundreds of years, whereas Protestantism had only been legalized a little more than a decade prior. He was an outsider not only among the Indigenous population, but among whites and mestizos as well. Despite all these barriers, his desire to do good via his faith was so strong that it led him to leave his position as a missionary when it was clear he could not make progress from within.

Chapter 3: Methods

Objects are not just expressions of culture or of their creators, they are also reflections of the people who possess them. The things we surround ourselves with are chosen, whether we recognize it as intentional or not, because some attribute appeals to us. The objects collected by the Wenbergs in South America remained in their possession for close to 50 years, through multiple moves across continents, and then remained with their son Herbert until 1977. For these objects to remain with them so long speaks to their importance, and it was my goal when beginning my thesis research to better understand what that importance was. I believe that by viewing these objects as a reflection of their collectors' lives, we gain a new dimension of understanding. In the following chapters, I hope to show that the preservation of these particular objects for so long demonstrates the deep affinity the Wenbergs had towards the Aymara and other native people of South America and the immense sentimental value the objects had to them. Furthermore, I believe that the collecting of these objects reflected the particular kind of Christianity Hugo was interested in spreading, one that was concerned with uplifting the social and economic conditions of the Indigenous people he encountered.

In addition to exploring these questions, one of my goals for this thesis was to contribute to the body of knowledge about the objects held at the MPM. I therefore began by reviewing all of the museum documentation associated with the collection and researching the objects' origins. For many of the objects there were only the briefest of descriptions in the museum records, so it was also crucial that I spend time physically examining them and recording descriptive information including materials, makers marks, and decorative elements. Through my research on the Wenbergs' movements in South America, I was able to identify the time

periods when some objects were obtained that were not given in the accession records. Furthermore, there were some incorrect attributions or descriptions in the original catalog records that I was able to correct.

Part of my object documentation process included photographing the collection in order to provide a visual record to facilitate comparative research and to increase the accessibility of this information. Due to the collection's large size, time constraints, and my specific research goals, I only photographed the portion of the collection that seemed most relevant, totaling 124 objects. These photographs are included in Appendix B.

To streamline my research, I began by compiling all of the catalog information into a spreadsheet. I grouped the objects by region of origin and then into broad categories in order to determine if there were any patterns across the entire assemblage that I could compare to other collections (see Torrence and Clarke 2016:183). In the remainder of this chapter, I will review the results of my object groupings, and then discuss the various archival sources that I consulted and consider the different viewpoints and information each of them presents.

Accession #24531

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Accession #24531 comprises 267 items collected by the Wenbergs. The original catalog ledger, included in Appendix A, gives estimations of the tribal associations and locations where objects were collected, with 177 being from Bolivia (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Geographic Origins of Objects in the MPM Wenberg Collection (Accession 24531).

Location Collected	Number of objects
Bolivia	177
Peru	28
Chile	7
Venezuela	4
Argentina	22
Oklahoma, U.S.	26
Unknown	3
Total	267

The objects from Oklahoma were collected while the Wenbergs served as missionaries to the Ponca in Whiteagle, Oklahoma, from 1922 to 1924 (Beggs 1922:23; May 2023:29). Of the 26 items, all are personal garments made for the Wenbergs and their children, and all have identified makers. The 238 South American objects include a much wider variety of object “types,” so I began by grouping them in broad categories based on their inferred function (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Inferred Functions of South American Objects.

Category	Count
Souvenirs (objects denoted as being tourist trade objects or objects mentioned from locations where the Wenbergs vacationed)	100
Representative Objects (models; ethnographic examples)	41
Textiles and Clothing	37
Shawl Pins and Jewelry	34
Religious Objects	13
Household Items	13
Total	238

It is important to note that I defined these categories simply for initial sorting purposes and that they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For instance, I chose to categorize bags and footwear as “textiles and clothing,” when they could also belong with souvenirs or representative objects. Likewise, the donor notes indicate that some objects that appear to be mundane household items, such as a vase or a mirror (E62881 and E62919 respectively), once held ritual significance (see Appendix A). These categories are not meant to be definitive but rather they were the first step in discerning the objects most relevant to my study. They are not the end of my analysis, since broadly categorizing the objects can sometimes obscure interesting details. For example, I chose to categorize weapons as representative objects, but when they are conceived of as their own category, it becomes clear that the only weapons in the entire collection came from Chaco, Argentina (again, depending on how you categorize them—shepherd’s slings and whips could be considered tools or weapons depending on your framing). With cases like this in mind, I decided to create several tiers of categories from broad to specific, in order to maximize the amount of information I could use to analyze connections between the objects and historic documents. For example, based on the data shown in Table 3.2, it was clear that souvenirs and representative objects made up the majority of the South American objects, so I focused my examination of archival sources around evidence pertaining to those two themes. Likewise, the contents of the documentation I uncovered emphasized modernity and change as a consistent theme in Hugo’s missionary work. Returning to the collection again with this information in mind, I found additional objects that supported this interpretation in the categories of religious and household objects.

As I selected individual objects for closer study, I conducted some comparative research with collections at other institutions, primarily the Smithsonian. In searching the museums' digital catalog databases, I had several objectives. First, I wanted to obtain a general idea of what was included in other South American ethnographic collections as a whole and determine if the Wenberg collection at the MPM taken as an entire assemblage differed in any significant way. Second, as I will discuss in Chapter 4, I wanted to identify any similar or identical objects to the ones I was studying in the Wenberg collection. Finally, I attempted to find donations made by other missionaries who were contemporary with the Wenbergs. The results of this comparative research added to my overall understanding of the Wenbergs' collecting behavior, as well as informed my interpretations of specific objects.

Archival Sources

Beginning this thesis research, I only had a very general understanding of Hugo's life, pieced together from his newspaper obituary (*Green Bay Press-Gazette* 1959:12) and the documentation his son Herbert provided to the MPM. Constructing a more detailed account of his life required piecing together primary source documents housed in various archives, as well as combing through second- and third-hand accounts and reports from Hugo's family and colleagues. Each type of documentation provided a piece of the puzzle to understanding Hugo's life, but each also represents a particular viewpoint and potential bias that must be weighed against the other available information. The following sections briefly describe the different sources that I obtained documents from, as well as the contents of those documents.

Milwaukee Public Museum

The museum's donor file contains seven letters between Herbert Wenberg and the curator of anthropology at the time, Nancy Oestrich Lurie, dating between 1976 and 1979. In Herbert's initial letter to the museum in 1976, he described the formation of the collection, writing: "Both of them [Edna and Hugo] collected many curios during this period. Many of the things they collected have since been discarded because of wear, attack of moths, lost, or stolen. Now I have what remains" (Wenberg 1976). The rest of the contents of the donor file are what Lurie (1977) described as "a curator's dream"—that is, a booklet of object photographs along with information about them as recollected by Herbert from his parents. Despite being in the donor files, the contents of this booklet provided some pieces of information that were not recorded anywhere else, such as additional details about how the objects were used or obtained. Additionally, Herbert included an envelope of photographs, mostly undated and unmarked, taken by his parents while in South America (see Appendix A).

Herbert would have only been a toddler when his family returned from South America, so the amount of information he was able to provide on these objects suggests that they were not hidden away in an attic, but rather objects his parents spoke about often and clearly felt were important. The report on the Aymara he includes with the booklet, written by his father, was my first introduction to Hugo Wenberg and gave me a deep impression of his sympathy and good intentions. It is also worth noting that out of all of Hugo's writing I have been able to find, this report is the most ethnographic in nature, and while he wrote similarly descriptive accounts of Bolivian culture in other letters, this one is devoid of the Christian appeals present in others. It is unknown at this point whether this report was part of a larger piece submitted to the Board

of Foreign Missions or another institution, or if his reasons for writing it were separate from his missionary efforts entirely.

It is clear from Herbert's letters that he hoped to preserve his parents' life work in some way and ensure that these treasured objects were taken care of better than he could in his old age. He expressed his hope that the donation of the collection would "serve to increase our knowledge of the South American Indians. If so, my Father and Mother would be greatly pleased" (Wenberg, June 2, 1977).

The General Commission on Archives and History for the United Methodist Church

Knowing that Hugo had to be in communication with his superiors while abroad, I next turned my research gaze to his church. The records of the United Methodist Church are maintained by their General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), located in Madison, New Jersey. While only a portion of their archival materials are available online, they have a very extensive searchable finding aid located on their website (<https://gcah.org/>). There I was able to find five call numbers associated with the Wenberg name, all on microfilm. I submitted a research request for these materials and archivist Frances Lyon generously scanned and delivered copies of the materials to me, which I received on October 23, 2023.

The smallest files were labeled as "Mission Bio Reels" and only contained one photograph of Edna Wenberg and two personnel cards. These cards provided Edna and Hugo's basic biographical information, including when and where they were born, their marital status, their degrees, as well as a timeline of mission-specific information: when they joined the church and what positions they had held in the church, including their missionary postings. These cards

were filled out sometime after 1920, since Hugo's card lists his discharge date from missionary service. The remaining documents, dated between 1911 and 1939, total 196 pages and include 67 letters, 7 telegrams, and 7 missionary application documents. Of these 30 pages are from letters from the 1930s related to Bolivia, but they were not written by or about the Wenbergs. The rest is composed of letters between Hugo and members of the Board of Foreign Missions, letters between Edna and the Board, and copies of their missionary application documents. The letters are not comprehensive, with no records for the years 1912-1915 and only a few from 1917-1918. Despite these gaps, significant moments in Hugo's missionary career are documented, such as his and Edna's applications for missionary work after returning from furlough in 1911, Edna's return to the United States in 1916 and Hugo's remaining time in Argentina, and his eventual dismissal from missionary service in 1920 (Farmer 1920; Stuntz 1911; Wenberg, October 3, 1916).

The letters offer some of the best insights into Hugo's state of mind, particularly how important Indigenous South Americans were to him. In almost every letter postdating his time in Guatajata, he advocated for devoting more resources towards the Aymara and Quechua, even going so far as to directly criticize the board and praise other Protestant denominations in comparison. These letters also offer a less varnished depiction of Hugo's relationship with the board, with board members' frustration and brushing-off of his requests clearly coming through in their replies (Farmer 1919; North, December 2, 1918; June 13, 1918).

The Wenberg Family

As part of my research, I went through many newspaper articles and obituaries. This was mainly done to help fill out my timeline of events and Hugo's biography, but I also used it as an opportunity to find leads on possible documents—for example, a historical society in the town where one of the Wenbergs' children lived. From the obituaries I gathered that there was a significant number of Wenberg descendants still alive and living in and around Wisconsin. Not expecting any response but wanting to leave no stone unturned, I sent a Facebook message to three of the Wenbergs' grandchildren and one great-grandchild who I had identified, introducing myself as a researcher and asking if they would be willing to discuss their grandfather with me. On February 26, 2024, I received a reply from their great-grandchild: Neil Wenberg of Almond, Wisconsin. He graciously spoke to me about his great-grandfather's life and even informed me of a collection donated to Lawrence University's Anthropology Department that I was unaware of.

Most significantly, Neil's family had a copy of Edna's personal diaries and letters, totaling 220 pages transcribed by Neil's niece Hannah Kelley. Graciously, Neil offered me the opportunity to read these documents, under the condition that they would not be published, and that the majority of the contents would remain private unless the family gave their explicit permission. On April 13, 2024, I was able to visit Neil, as well as his niece Hannah, who has been collecting and preserving much of the family's papers. During this visit they helped me sort through several dozen boxes of materials and allowed me to look through Hannah's extensive collection of letters, postcards, and photographs, some of which have been reproduced in this thesis. I here again must express my gratitude to Neil, Hannah, and the Wenberg family for their

generosity and willingness to trust and share their materials with me. The addition of these diary entries has been fundamental to this research, offering me crucial insights into the Wenbergs' day-to-day life in South America, their thoughts and feelings about their mission work, and the many difficulties they faced. Though Edna did not write much about purchases or collecting she may have done in South America, there were several mentions of events or items related to some of the objects in the MPM collection, which will be discussed later in Chapter 4.

As insightful as these diary entries are, it is important to note their subjectivity and remain aware of that when using them for interpretation. Most of these entries are letters written by Edna to her family back home in the US, and while she displays a great deal of candor in these letters, any recollection of events will leave out certain details. For example, the diaries contain Edna's account of their leaving the Peniel Hall Mission; her account is similar to that in Hugo's letters but with a noticeably more optimistic framing, downplaying the friction between the Wenbergs and the trustees. Perhaps the most glaring example of selective framing of events is the way Hugo recounts the circumstances of their leaving the missionary service in 1920 in a letter to a family friend written around 1950. From the letters archived by the GCAH it is very clear that Hugo was released from service to the Board of Foreign Missions due to an unapproved leave of his station in Tucuman. Edna's diaries end with her leaving Tucuman, so it is unclear how she interpreted the circumstances, but all Hugo says on the matter is "After 3 years, we returned home for a furlough" (Wenberg family papers). The letters from the GCAH decidedly do not indicate a furlough but rather a firing, yet it is understandable that with more than 20 years past and with the audience being his family, Hugo might want to portray it as such.

Aside from these two events, Hugo's letters at the GCAH and Edna's diaries more or less agree on events, with Edna's writing more focused on day-to-day difficulties and the activities of her children, whereas Hugo's letters are more business-oriented correspondence about money and most especially, the opening of a mission field among the native Bolivians.

Other Archival Materials

Hugo's letters and Edna's diaries were the most substantial and influential pieces of archival material contributing to my research, but they were supplemented by a few records collected from a number of institutions. From the Wisconsin United Methodist Conference I received a letter from Hugo dated 1929, recounting his career up to that point, as well as his ministerial record documents from 1950, his and Edna's obituaries, and several news article clippings and photographs from their time with the Oneida.

From the Archives of the Canadian Baptists, I received a series of letters totaling 22 pages, written between Hugo and the trustees of the Peniel Hall Mission from 1912 to 1914. These letters detail Hugo's coming-on to the mission, as well as reports back and forth on securing a mission site, the status of supplies, and settling matters once the Wenbergs resigned. Interestingly, though Hugo's letters at the GCAH indicate that he and the Peniel Hall Mission trustees ended matters on bad terms, there is a gap in letters indicating this in the Baptist Archives. On September 8, 1913, one of the trustees (I believe Mr. Charles W. Foster) wrote to Hugo that he had arrived in Guaqui and would be visiting Guatajata soon. In the next letter dated December 19, Hugo wrote to Dr. Foster about settling some legal possession of land, a matter which is unclear based off that letter alone, and then the next letter came from

Tucuman. May's (2023:26) biography of Hugo indicates that he was likewise unable to find documentation of Hugo's resignation letter and a contemporary account of the circumstances from this time.

As previously mentioned, Neil informed me of a collection donated to Lawrence University. I reached out to the Anthropology Department and a faculty member was able to confirm that a donation by Hugo took place and provided me a list of 20 objects with some brief descriptions. Unfortunately, they were unable to find any information about when this donation took place and the nature of it, nor were they able to provide any further information about the objects, including where they were collected from.

This chapter laid the groundwork for a deeper exploration of the Wenbergs' collections and lives in the following chapter. The combination of museum documentation, object analysis, archival research, and personal accounts sets the stage to delve into the significance of specific objects, their cultural context, and the broader implications of the Wenbergs' collecting practices. The information gathered from this multitude of sources indicated to me three major themes of object-use present in the Wenberg collection at the MPM, namely, representing Indigenous culture, Protestant influence on material culture, and personal sentiment.

Chapter 4: Analysis

The previous chapters provided a solid foundation for exploring Hugo's life and collecting practices. Through my research I have identified several themes in the archival records of the Wenbergs' lives and writings that I believe can be used to interpret the objects at the MPM. This chapter will identify these themes within the archival documents, highlight examples within the MPM collection that are related to the themes, and demonstrate the veracity of these conclusions through the use of wider contextual sources.

Representing Indigenous People in the Wenbergs' Mission Work

As noted in Chapter 1, I was first introduced to Hugo's life while working on an object project for one of my classes. At the time, I only had the information contained in the documents donated by his son to the MPM, and even then, long before developing this thesis project, I was struck by Hugo's passionate sympathy for the Aymara. I suspected that this was not a common attitude among missionaries at the time, so one of my primary lines of inquiry was gaining a fuller understanding of Hugo's relationships with and feelings towards Indigenous people, and to what extent this deviated from the norm.

While Hugo was trying to open his own school for Indigenous students in Bolivia, a political discussion had been brewing at the governmental level of both Peru and Bolivia regarding education, the highlands, and the "Indian problem" (Larson 2024:36). At the national and continental level, Hugo's actions played an insignificant and incidental role in much larger and more troubling motivations for the promotion of education among Indigenous people.

Throughout the 19th century, the republics of South America struggled to form their national identities. As Bolivia's title as a "plurinational state" would suggest, within Bolivia's territory were lingering fragments of the Aymara, Inka, and Spanish empires that needed to be cobbled together in some way to form a new national identity (Larson 2024:3). Across Latin America, the political and intelligentsia classes were greatly concerned with transforming their countries into modernized nations, and in their minds, the millions of Indigenous people were a serious liability to these goals (Salomon 1985:88). Some countries took extreme measures in attempting to resolve this issue, the bloodiest being in Argentina. From 1878 to 1885 the Argentinian government engaged in a series of military campaigns known as the Conquest of the Desert, that constituted an ethnic cleansing of Patagonia (Larson 2020:9). Whether surrounding South American nations were unwilling or unable to enact their own versions of the Conquest of the Desert, they nonetheless eventually turned to education as the "best, and perhaps the only, pathway toward cultural unity, modernity, and nationhood" (Larson 2024:5).

According to Larson (2024:8), "Race and education worked at ideological cross-purposes in the modern psychology of the ruling oligarchy." Among the Bolivian elite, there was no clear consensus on the "racial fate" of the nation (Larson 2024:35). To some the Indigenous people of the Andean highlands embodied a romantic antiquarianism (not unlike the "Vanishing Indian" trope in North America) of a once great Inkan people downtrodden by the Spanish (Cadena 2000:67; Larson 2024:55). Supporters of this view saw education and assimilation as the only way to "save" the Aymara from the destructive force of modernity, uplifting Andean people back to a "civilized state" through an "agenda of benign but essentially compulsory assimilation" (Salomon 1985:88). Others wondered if Bolivia's Indigenous people were even capable of being

educated, and feared the political consequences of granting literacy to people that in their view were essentially incapable of meeting the civic responsibilities of literate society. As one Peruvian politician wrote: “[A]nd these Indians we call ‘citizens’—what good will they do the Republic?” (Tavara 1856:20). At the same time, Indigenous people constituted the majority of Bolivia’s population and played a fundamental role in the labor force. For this reason, Bolivia’s rural educational approach settled on the establishment of three normal schools designed to teach Spanish and modern farming techniques and other trades, essentially to create a permanent manual labor class (Larson 2024:63-64). Inherent in this educational system was an assumption that whites and mestizos by nature needed to be educated separately from Indigenous people, supported by a belief in their “cognitive deficiencies” (Larson 2024:41). Hugo (1919) himself visited one of these normal schools located in Cochabamba and observed that they taught “agriculture, carpentry, weaving, hat making and one or two other trades.” Despite the goal of teaching “Indian-appropriate” skills for teachers to take out into the rural villages, Hugo reported that the majority of graduates from the normal school program ended up in white and mestizo communities.

In the larger context of Bolivia’s educational goals, we can see points at which Hugo’s own educational work was influenced. Unlike many within Bolivia’s white intelligentsia, there is no evidence to suggest that Hugo questioned the Aymara’s capacity for education; in fact, he believed that their lack of literacy reflected an intentional effort by the Catholic Church to maintain control (Wenberg, Spring 1918). While he believed that classes should be taught in Spanish as the national language, he also took lessons in Quechua (Wenberg, January 1, 1918). While their goal of education was evangelistic in nature, the Peniel Hall Society was very much

focused on the productivity aspect of managing a farm, purchasing a new plow and new varieties of seeds at the offset. These introductions were not immediately successful, with Edna writing that the people feared harming their oxen with the new plow, and Hugo reporting that the grass seeds he brought would not grow at higher elevations (Wenberg Family Papers). In 1920, the Peniel Hall resolved to reopen their Guatajata school with a focus on “more scientific methods of agriculture... the development of native crafts, especially among the women, introducing better methods of spinning and weaving; to undertake immediately the improvement of the stock and grains” (Haddow and Wilson 1920). The Wenberg family had somewhat different motivations. Edna’s (1913) first impression upon arriving in Guatajata was that the first priority was to teach “honesty, cleanliness, and industry.” As her children were still very young, the Board allowed her to hire help for the home, and from her diaries it appears she spent a great deal of time attempting to train her paid helpers to maintain the house to a standard she was more accustomed to. Although Hugo was certainly interested in introducing more modern farming techniques, he predominantly viewed education as a means through which Indigenous people could escape from a life he referred to as barely above slavery, writing: “Today in the 20th century he [the Aymara] is treated as an outcast not even enjoying the privileges of a citizen and that in his own country and that of his forefathers! To enjoy these rights, he must be able to read and write and even this privilege have [sic] been denied him!” (Wenberg, November 2, 1918).

Evidently, Hugo’s school made quite an impression on the Aymara of Guatajata, as well as Aymara from the surrounding free communities. By the end of the summer of 1913, he had 40 enrolled boys and men, who came seven days a week for two hours before their workdays to

learn reading and writing and Gospel on the back patio of the Wenberg home (Figure 4.1). By the end of his time at Guatajata, Hugo had 67 students, the names of which he recorded in a letter written in 1920, and some of whom he met again on a visit in 1950 (Wenberg, July 1, 1920).



Figure 4.1: A photograph of the patio school in Guatajata from Edna's scrapbook. The original caption reads: "School in patio at Guatajata 2 yr. old Edwin watching near blackboard" (Photo courtesy of Neil Wenberg and Hannah Kelley).

While education was one means for Hugo to carry out his evangelizing mission, his concern for Indigenous people extended beyond it. Out of his 25 letters archived by the GCAH, he mentions the Indigenous people of South America in 22 of them, frequently taking up the majority of his letters, usually in urging members of the Methodist Board of Foreign Missions to take the "Indian project" more seriously. In one particularly impassioned letter Hugo (November 2, 1918) wrote:

What shall we say and do as we come face to face with the condition of the Indian of S. Am. Who has been oppressed not 4 years, but 400 years! He is left to die without God

and without hope. He has imbibed very little of the Christian religion. How could he accept a religion from the one who is one of his worst oppressors, the priest?

While converting them was certainly a goal of his, Hugo's descriptions of his feelings towards Indigenous people speak to a broader humanitarian inclination of his, more in line with the theology of liberation that would become popular among many missionaries a few decades later (Holliday 1982; Tombs 2002:85). While his religious beliefs led him to believe that dying without knowing Jesus Christ is an unjust state, in his letters he also frequently pointed to more tangible, socioeconomically based injustices, for example writing in regards to the Catholic treatment of Indigenous people:

He is taxed for mass for departed relatives and his wife and daughter must take their turn of 8 days at the priest's house doing domestic work. If it would stop there it wouldn't be so bad, but many an innocent girl leaves her virginity at the priest's home. This pernicious custom of domestic duty has been abolished by law many years ago but is still in vogue in many places (Wenberg November 2, 1918).

In another letter he wrote: "The Lord has shown me the awful condition and dire distress of the Indians and were I to keep my mouth shut I would feel like a coward and a traitor to my Lord and his cause" (Wenberg June 5, 1918).

Hugo's assertions that education was the means through which the Aymara could gain better status within Bolivia eventually would prove true. In the 1930s, Aymara campaigns to defend communal land rights spurred a movement for developing autonomous Indigenous schools. The legal campaign "took on a dynamic of its own making as literacy became a weapon of combat in an escalating battle over the legality of traditional land claims and ongoing boundary disputes" (Larson 2024:71; also Arnold and Yapita 2006:53). Literacy among the Aymara almost exclusively refers to reading and writing Spanish, and not Aymara. While Aymara *can* be written, and there have been attempts to teach it, for most Aymara peasants there is

simply no incentive for learning it, while reading and writing Spanish can have many benefits when engaging with the apparatus of the state (Godenzzi 1996:241; Mitchell 1994:230-231; Nuñez del Prado 1976:75). Hugo seemed to realize this, as he believed the lack of effort by the Catholic Church in educating Andean peasants was intentional in order to prevent them from exercising their rights as citizens and as partitioners of the Church (Arnold and Yapita 2006:43; Wenberg Spring 1918).

At times Hugo's tone can border on paternalistic, for example self-appointing himself as a "spokesman for the millions of Indians in South America." However, the context of his letters implies that as far as the missionary efforts of the Methodist Church were concerned, he was in fact the only spokesman, and his remarks to this effect were made while directly criticizing the Methodist Church for their "cold indifference and unconcern" towards the Indigenous people of South America (Wenberg, July 30, 1920). In his letters, he attested with great conviction that he felt a Christian duty to advocate for more resources to be sent to Indigenous populations, writing: "[t]his knowledge [of the conditions in South America] bears with it certain responsibilities to God and our fellow men" before vouching to "use [his] voice and pen and life if need be to help the Indian fight his battles, and to plead for justice for him" (Wenberg, September 28, 1920).

This is not terribly uncommon among missionary reports, both in the past and still today, nor is it uncommon for secular forces in South America (Barnett 2011:61-62; Elphick 2012:18; Mills 2016:60). Paternalistic attitudes still run strongly in Bolivian politics and NGOs today in efforts to "help" and "save" marginal groups, particularly women (Paulson and Calla 2000:119-120). In their astute analysis of Bolivian neoliberal politics in relation to gender and ethnicity,

Paulson and Calla (2000:128) describe how modern gender theory has been used against Indigenous rights movements, with ethnicity being “affiliated with tradition: something that needs to be overcome through better education and improved standards of life, or something to be glorified, preserved, and protected as a unique and untouchable lifeway.” Both of these approaches trivialize the experience of ethnicity in Bolivia and disguise the fact that these “marginal groups” constitute the majority of the country, and that how ethnicity is performed is highly dependent on class. Hugo’s letters emphasize quite vigorously the majority status of Indigenous people in Bolivia, frequently offering statistics to this effect. In his writings Hugo gave no indication that he wanted to see the Aymara totally assimilated; in fact, he describes them quite positively in comparison to the mestizo population. At the same time, it is clear that he saw aspects of their culture that in his view needed to be improved, focusing mainly on their superstitions and consumption of alcohol. An examination of Hugo’s letters provides a nuanced, and at times challenging, perspective on his relationship with Indigenous populations.

Ethnography and the MPM Collection

Hugo’s letters and what they indicate about his attitudes toward the Indigenous people he worked with provide important context for understanding what the collection at the MPM represents. As discussed in Chapter 1, the roles of missionaries and anthropologists in the field frequently overlapped, and many missionaries found themselves performing the tasks of ethnographic work as part of their mission. In examining the Wenbergs’ collecting practices and their cross-cultural relationships, it was important to consider how Hugo and Edna’s collection

compares to those of other missionaries and scientists, as well as whether these objects were used in a scientific manner.



Figure 4.2: This bark poncho, collected by Canadian Baptist missionary George McBride between 1901 and 1915, was purchased from him by the MAI in 1918 (National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution 4/4480. Photo by NMAI Photo Services).



Figure 4.3: According to Herbert, this garment and matching hat (not pictured), collected by Hugo in 1920, was “made from the inner bark of a tree” and used for festive occasions by “Indians of interior Bolivia” (see Appendix A). Note the hook pattern design, which is similar to the poncho at the MAI shown in Figure 4.2 (photo taken by author).

During my research, I was able to find several objects donated to museums by other missionaries that the Wenbergs personally knew and worked with, as well as other missionaries working in South America who were contemporaries of the Wenbergs. At the Field Museum in Chicago, I discovered a rug (likely llama or vicuna) that was donated by one of the Peniel Hall Society Trustees, Archibald Baker (Field Museum). In her letters, Edna (March 17, 1908) described sending a similar rug to her sister Gussie as a wedding gift. She indicated that vicuna rugs were becoming somewhat rare and prized, making it reasonable to assume it was a prized souvenir for missionaries. George McBride, the Canadian Baptist trustee of the Peniel Hall Society that Hugo accused of pushing the Methodists out of the operation and reinstating whipping on the farm, later became a notable anthropologist, and his records are held in the National Anthropology Archives at the Smithsonian. He also sold several artifacts to the Smithsonian, including a bark poncho very similar to the one in the Wenbergs' MPM collection (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

While Herbert's notes to the MPM say it was made "by Indians of interior Bolivia," McBride's is more accurately attributed to the Chácobo people. I also found record of the Smithsonian having 88 objects collected in South America during the same period by a Seventh Day Adventist couple, Ferdinand and Ana Stahl. Though they have some Aymara hats and shawls in their collection, their work was focused in the Peruvian Amazon mainly among the Piro and Asháninka. Other collections by non-missionaries contained textiles and miniatures similar to the ones the Wenbergs collected, including several objects that were almost identical, such as silver jointed fish pins and miniature dolls worn as headdress decorations (see Figures 4.4-4.7). The time period when these objects were collected, the biographies of their collectors,

and the remarkable amount of similarity between them, suggest that they were tourist items, rather than representing genuine field-collecting.



Figure 4.4: The image on the left shows a set of "World's Smallest Dolls" collected by Edna Wenberg in Sucre, Bolivia, with ruler provided for scale (photo taken by author).

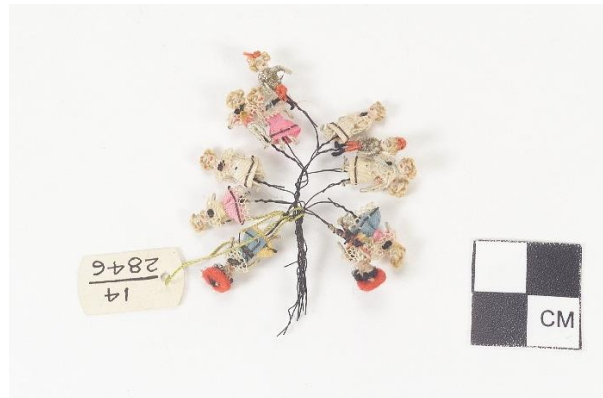


Figure 4.5: The image on the right is of object 14/2846 from the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, which describes it as a headdress fragment. It was collected in 1924 or 1925 by A. Hyatt Verrill, a MAI field collector (National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (14/2846). Photo by NMAI Photo Services).

Despite this, the way the Wenbergs used the objects after their mission work ended suggests that they felt they held some representative value to the public. Included in the donor documentation at the MPM is a four-page excerpt taken from Hugo's writings describing the Aymara. While Hugo often spoke of the Aymara in his letters, this is the only example I have found that displays the characteristics of ethnographic writing. In it, he portrayed the Aymara as a people in decline under the Spanish, and he described their religious beliefs, clothing, and everyday living in detail. As was common in other ethnographic reports of the time, he included descriptions of the Aymara's physical appearance, particularly the shaping of the skull

(Steggerda 1950: 63). Elsewhere in the donor documents is evidence that Hugo regarded Andean people as fundamentally noble and industrious, expressing particular appreciation for their weaving and silverwork. For example, he wrote: “In gracefulness, beauty and variety their spindles have never been equaled by any people. At Ancon the textile industry may be said to have reached its culmination for the American continent” (see Appendix A).



Figure 4.6: E62823, currently on display at the MPM, was collected in La Paz, Bolivia. Herbert wrote that the fish pin is a “highly prized and rare” antique (see Appendix A) (photo courtesy of Alyssa Rieger).



Figure 4.7: Collected in Bolivia by German singer Lissy Sanden during the 1940s and 50s, this fish pin is dated to the colonial period (National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (23/4660). Photo by NMAI Photo Services).

While Hugo had a deep appreciation for Aymara weaving and silverwork, he was less impressed by the role Catholicism played in their lives. In a letter to the Board of Foreign Missions from 1918 he quoted James Bryce, writing: “Nominally Roman Catholics, their religion

is the primitive spirit worship of their ancestors with a varnish of Christian forms and the cult of the Christian saints” (Bryce 1913: 529). Edna shared his sentiments, writing to Harry Farmer in 1920:

I want to write to you about some things that trouble me... Those Indians don't know much of anything about Romanism. They wear the signs to protect themselves but under and through it all is their superstition. If we can teach them truth and goodness without appearing to battle Romanism except as a side issue much will be gained and the few good teachings in Romanism will be saved.

In a letter to her family on September 20, 1906, Edna described Catholic indulgences: “Does it seem awful to you when I speak bitterly of Roman Catholicism? Here we see its grossness, where it is really idolatry.” The Wenbergs’ belief in Catholic superstition is likewise apparent in Edna’s (November 8, 1908) description of a graduate of the school in Santiago whom she visited:

She is quite an ardent Catholic but one of the right kind. Here is the true Christ spirit. She would not cross herself or bow to the images when she took us into the church, and she spurned certain ceremonies and ideas so rife among the people that we all know are wrong.

Despite their disdain for what they saw as Roman Catholic idolatry, as it pertains to the Aymara, the Wenbergs placed most of the blame on the priests, with Hugo writing frequently about the abhorrent treatment and lack of Christian principles exemplified by the Catholic priests. Given these attitudes, the contents of the MPM collection are somewhat surprising, as it includes a scapular, two rosaries, a chalice, an incense burner, three crucifixes, and a metal cross. With the possible exception of the cross (E62897), all of these objects are Catholic ecclesiastical equipment. Methodists do practice Communion, the taking of bread and wine (or grape juice), during church service and could use a chalice, but Communion is a less frequent and less central aspect of worship compared to a Catholic Mass, as they do not believe in the

Transubstantiation (the spiritual transformation of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood). The chalices used in Methodist services are a much plainer cup design than the Catholic chalice, which E62821 more closely resembles (see Figures 4.8-4.10).



Figure 4.8 (left): The Aymara-made chalice, E62821 is more ornately decorated than a typical Methodist common cup (photo taken by author).



Figure 4.9 (center): This Catholic chalice from late 18th century Mexico, features ornate designs common in Spanish ecclesiastical objects (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (33.120.68a). Bequest of Alphonso T. Clearwater, 1933. Open-Access image).



Figure 4.10 (right): Methodist Common Cups are typically much larger and simpler than Catholic chalices (Church Supply Warehouse 2023).

The burning of incense likewise is a part of Catholic mass absent in Protestant services. The other objects are more everyday symbols of Catholic devotion, as typically Methodists do not employ imagery of the crucifix (Christ hanging from the cross, as shown in Figure 4.11), and rosaries and scapularies are items of devotion exclusive to the Catholic Church. When the Wenbergs spoke of Catholic idolatry, they were referring to the emphasis on the crucifix and images of the saints and Virgin Mary, and when speaking of superstition, it was primarily prayer beads and “protective charms” like the scapular that they were referring to (Figures 4.12 and 4.13).



Figure 4.11 (left): The bead at the top of this brass crucifix (E62895) suggests that it may have broken off of a rosary (photo taken by author).

Figure 4.12 (right): The centerpiece of rosary E62900 is a version of the “Miraculous Medal” also known as “The Medal of the Immaculate Conception” believed to have been given to Saint Katherine by the Holy Mary in France in 1830. The cross intertwined with the letter “M” represents Mary’s suffering at the Cross, with the two hearts beneath symbolizing Christ and Mary’s love (The Basilica Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal 2020) (photo taken by author).

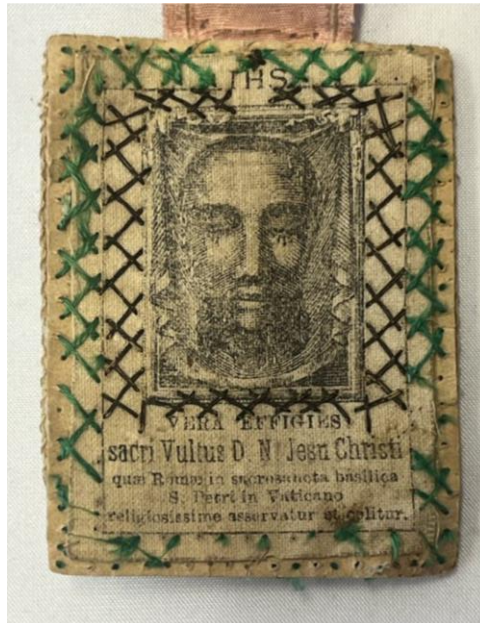


Figure 4.13: H30906, described as a “religious cloth tag” in the catalog inventory, appears to be part of a scapular, an object of Catholic piety wherein two small rectangles of material connected by a piece of cord are worn on the front and back of the chest. The Catholic Church recognizes 18 scapulars, each with specific imagery or text and associated blessings, this one being the “Scapular of the Holy Face” (photo taken by author).

For all of these reasons, the presence of these objects in the MPM collection is a bit of a mystery, but one possibility for their inclusion is that they were tokens or trophies of successful conversions. The silver objects more likely came from curio shopping as will be discussed later in this chapter, but the rosaries and scapular in particular are so specific to Catholics that I cannot see any reason why either Wenberg would purchase or otherwise keep them if not for some documentary or commemorative purchase.

In the object descriptions provided by the Wenbergs' son, Herbert, there are many details suggesting that his father understood and shared with his family a great deal of information about the culture and social norms of Bolivia, indicating which woolen caps in the collection were to be worn by servants, the customs for drinking mate, and burial customs. In Hugo's letters to the Board of Foreign Missions, he referenced sending a report of over 100 pages on the Aymara to them, but I could find no record of it still existing, either at the GCAH or within the personal belongings of the Wenberg descendants.

However, evidence from elsewhere makes it clear that the Wenbergs did use these objects occasionally to promote their missionary work and to educate about the Indigenous people of South America. An article in *The Gazette* (Stevens Point, Wisconsin) from May 4, 1920, describes Edna visiting a women's club with a large collection of objects from South America to share her experience as a missionary. The article describes her having outfits representative of the typical dress of Spanish Bolivians, mestizos, and Indigenous tribes from Bolivia, Peru, and Chile (*The Gazette* 1920:6). The following year, after Hugo was released from missionary service, a brief article circulated nationally in multiple newspapers described him lecturing in Chicago about the process of making bark cloth clothing in South America (*San Francisco Examiner*

1921:1). In 1931, Edna gave a lecture in De Pere to the Church Work association of the Presbyterian Church, speaking of the many admirable qualities she witnessed in the Indigenous people of South as well as North America and presenting an exhibit of “Indian beadwork” (*Green Bay Press-Gazette* 1931:29).

In Hugo’s recounting of his Methodist career, he remarked that after returning from Bolivia in 1919, he began work in Columbus, Ohio, on the Methodist Centenary. The Centenary was a “Methodist World’s Fair” celebrating 100 years of missionary outreach (Lankford 1963:27). It comprised a mixture of spectacles, featuring typical fair entertainment, educational exhibits on the work of Methodist missionaries, prayer services, and living dioramas of “foreigners” performing their daily activities in recreated sets of the mission field (Anderson 2005:275, 2006:5). My research was unable to determine what Hugo’s role was during the Centenary preparations, however, in the course of examining the objects in the MPM collection, I discovered evidence that a number of them were exhibited as part of the Centenary cultural halls. Out of the 124 objects I examined, five had a sticker adhered to them as shown in Figure 4.14. The five objects discovered to have this identification tag were H30906 and E62933 (lot of 4), consisting of a Catholic scapular and four pots from Bolivia (Figure 4.15). According to Herbert’s notes, the pots were “reportedly from graves and “antique”” (see Appendix A). His use of “reportedly” here leads me to believe that that these were purchased from one of the antique stores that Edna mentioned visiting in her diaries, as in all of Herbert’s other notes he stated plainly where an object was acquired. At this point, it is unknown whether more of the Wenbergs’ collections were displayed in the Latin American exhibits at the Centenary, and what context they were presented in, yet the evidence available does serve as another example of

how Hugo used his personal collections to promote the overall project of the Methodist Foreign Missions.

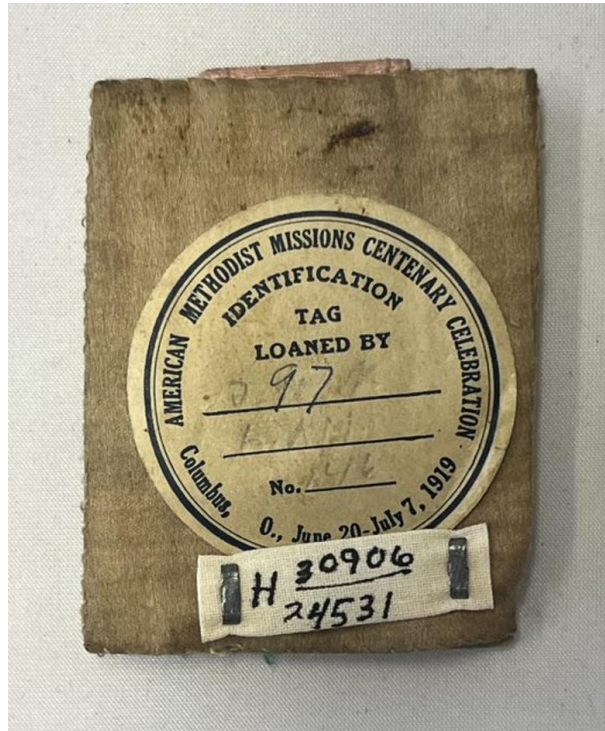


Figure 4.14: An object identification sticker adhered to the back of H30906. “L. AM” has faintly been written on the tag, indicating that this object was part of the Latin American exhibits (photo taken by author).



Figure 4.15: These archaeological pots from Bolivia were likely purchased from an antiques dealer in La Paz. Remnants of identification stickers on the undersides of the vessels indicate that they were exhibited during the Methodist Centenary in 1919 (photo taken by author).

While both of the Wenbergs spoke publicly about their work in South America, it appears that they conducted their activism along gender lines. Hugo wrote letters to the government, newspapers, and church publications, very publicly aligning himself with Indigenous people in both North and South America (*Green Bay Press-Gazette* 1933; Miller and Frantz 1921:553; *Post-Crescent* 1930:7; Wenberg 1923:11). In contrast, Edna was a frequent guest of women's clubs and lady society meetings (*Green Bay Press-Gazette* 1950:16). Operating in traditionally feminine spaces, it appears that Edna used objects that were recognizable and relatable to her audience, focusing on clothing and handicrafts so as to humanize the subjects of her talks. Presenting her work in the framework of traditionally feminine domains such as fashion likely made it easier for her to gain access to these spaces and present her work in a way that was socially acceptable for a Christian woman and wife.

While not the focus of this thesis, Hugo's relationship to the Oneida also adds important context to his overall attitudes towards Indigenous people. During his time as pastor to the Oneida, he was a public and vocal supporter for the rights of Indigenous people. In a document archived on the Oneida Nation website, Herbert Wenberg provides a listing of his father's writings regarding the Oneida, which included letters to the editors of the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* rebutting offensive articles, letters to President Harry Truman regarding the poor treatment of Native Americans, and letters to the President of the Daughters of the American Revolution advocating for greater recognition of the Oneida's cooperation with the US. He also introduced "The Lord's Acre" project within his church, wherein proceeds from produce grown and sold were sent to missionaries in Bolivia working with the Aymara (*Springfield Reporter* 1941:30). In 1950, Edna compiled a history of the Oneida Methodist Church, which includes

many Oneida legends submitted by parishioners (Wenberg 1950). One of these contributors was Melissa Cornelius (Figure 4.16), who according to the MPM accession records made a shawl for Edna, E62916 (see Appendix B). She is photographed alongside Minnie Elm who is credited with making E62915, a beaded belt (see Appendix B).



Figure 4.16: Included in Edna's history of the Oneida Methodist Church is this photo, which shows two creators of objects in the MPM collection, Melissa Cornelius (far left) and Minnie Elm (far right) (Wenberg 1950:9).

Despite his 22 years with the Oneida, Hugo never forgot the people of South America. Though the climate's adverse effects on his family's health and a resistant Foreign Missions Board made it impossible for him to receive the funding to adequately accomplish the work that he found to be most crucial, it seems he sought a place where he was able to make a positive impact, finding in the Oneida Nation a similar people disregarded by the rulers of the country their forefathers belonged to. In an account to a family friend, preserved by the Wenberg family, Hugo said of his time as a colporteur: "If I had my life to live over again, that is what I would do, only do it better."

I believe that the evidence presented above supports an interpretation of the MPM's Wenberg collection being partially composed of representative objects—though not in the sense of anthropological ethnography. Rather, the historical records indicate that some of these objects were used to promote the Wenbergs' petitions for greater awareness and assistance in their work with Indigenous South American people. Additionally, Hugo's writings regarding the culture of the Aymara in particular suggest an appreciation for their craftsmanship, especially their weaving and silverwork, which is well represented in the MPM collection. The fact that they were donated to the museum nearly 20 years after Hugo's death serves as further evidence that they were not collected for scientific purposes or the public, but rather out of a deeply personal sense of affinity and duty to the community he had been a part of. As noted earlier in this chapter, some of Hugo's feelings towards South America bordered on paternalistic and assimilationist rhetoric. A further examination of his religious beliefs reveals these attitudes stem from a particular interpretation of Christianity within 20th century Protestantism that is interwoven with the trappings of modernity.

Protestantism's Influence on Material Culture

Ever since Max Weber published *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in 1905, Protestantism has been associated with the rhetoric of capitalism and modernity. However, much as Christianity is manifested differently in different localities, the Protestant influence as it pertains to modernity differs in various social, cultural, and geopolitical contexts. In the 1970s and 80s, Protestant churches, especially more charismatic sects such as Pentecostals, exploded in growth across Latin America (Canessa 1998:21; Gooren 2010:356-358). Conspiracies rose up around this growth, suspecting Protestant missionaries of being

agents of North American imperialism (Bastian 1993:33; Mondragón 2010: 39). This was due in large part to the fact that liberal governments in South America favored the introduction of Protestant churches, not only because of the humanitarian resources they brought, but because they viewed them as a means to align themselves with the United States and saw them as “a possible bulwark against the power and ideological influence of the Catholic Church among the populace” (Mondragón 2010:38). The associations between American imperialism, neoliberalism, and the Protestant Church have led to a belief that the faith represents a dismantling of Latin American culture, a belief that requires testing.

Sexton (1978) measured a number of variables associated with modernity in groups of Guatemalan Catholics and Protestants. He found that Protestants had high economic achievement, higher occupational aspirations, more political knowledge, and more exposure to electronic and printed media (Sexton 1978:291). However, he suggested that the commonly-believed relationship between modernization and Protestantism was actually reversed—that Indigenous people who acquired wealth first adopted modern clothing and housing, and only then did they accept Protestantism (Sexton 1978:296). He suggested a feedback loop between modernization and Protestantism, reflecting McClelland’s (1961) postulate that Protestants in Latin American perceive themselves to be a disadvantaged but morally superior minority, giving them greater motivation to achieve (Sexton 1978:297).

However, there is potential for Protestantism to still be at the root of modernization within South American Indigenous populations, even if it does not directly correlate with conversions. Ariza (2002) studied from a Peruvian perspective the impact of Protestant missions on Peru and found that their initiatives in education, health care, and sanitation projects

supported the government's assimilationist goals, but resulted in few conversions (Garrard-Burnett 2005: 724). Analysis of this study suggests that Protestant impact on Peru and elsewhere in Latin America had "less to do with converts and 'empire building' than with the long-term impact of Protestant institutions" such as Protestant-run urban schools (Garrard-Burnett 2005:725).

One of the most profound effects Protestantism has had in changing social norms in South America is its prohibition of alcohol consumption. In the highlands of Bolivia, alcohol consumption is a critical vehicle for integrating communities in events like fiestas and weddings (Van Vleet 2011:849). However, the overconsumption of alcohol can have negative ramifications that are recognized even by the Indigenous participants, such as violence and sexual assault (Robins 2015:128; Van Vleet 2002:572; Walsh-Dilley 2019:508). While government and NGO programs exist in the cities to assist with drug and alcohol abuse, in the rural highlands of Bolivia, Protestant churches are typically the *only* resource for dealing with problems related to alcohol use (Walsh-Dilley 2019:509). The desire to convert to Protestantism in order to rescue oneself or one's family from the negative consequences of alcoholism are further supported by the survey findings of Smilde (2003:317), which showed the extremely tangible and practical reasons people report converting from Catholicism (Walsh-Dilley 2019:507). However, this conversion can still come with drawbacks due to social isolation and a rejection of Catholicism, which among many rural Bolivians is practiced in tandem with Indigenous folk beliefs (Walsh-Dilley 2019:504). To some, the rejection of Catholicism is a rejection of indigeneity. However, the increasing number of Protestant converts, the higher populations of migrants to the cities, and the creeping influence of modernity through government initiatives have contributed to a

growing movement to redefine the traditional Bolivian boundaries between Indian, mestizo, and white. In his dissertation on modern indigeneity in Ecuador, Simon Haisell (2017:12) writes:

Being indian in colonial and postcolonial Ecuador was synonymous with being poor, rural and traditional. Therefore, the growth of cosmopolitan and affluent indigenous groups in Ecuador has contributed to the discussion of a new “indigenous modernity” that challenges and overhauls these stereotypes. And yet neither the rural poor nor the stigma of being indian has gone away.

This statement aptly describes the divisions modernity has created in South American Indigenous communities. In ways far beyond just Christianity, aspects of modern life have crept into the Andean highlands and modified the social norms there. As an example, Andía (2005:146-147) describes the tension between traditional and modern values embedded within Andean rituals—wherein cattle are exalted as deeply beloved beings likened to family members, and yet are sold to afford homes and education.

Strobele-Gregor (1996: 81) argues that it would be a mistake to characterize the continued existence of communal governance systems among the Aymara and Quechua as simply holdovers of tradition. Rather, they “must be seen as culturally specific forms of modernity and as a manifestation of local development rooted in the cultural traditions of precolonial times” (Strobele-Gregor 1996: 82). Historically, indigeneity in Bolivia was used almost synonymously to mean rural, and people with Indigenous heritage in the cities tended to try to distance themselves from that ancestry, creating the de-racialized urban mestizo class or “white skinned Indians” as Strobele-Gregor (1989) described them (Canessa 2007:199; Klein 2003:47; Ravindran 2015:322). Many Indigenous activists in Bolivia believe that concerns over modernization are based in ideas of racial purity—and that by only recognizing “pure Indians” it limits the political strength and unity of Indigenous people (Ravindran 2015:330). While many

Indigenous people in Bolivia today recognize that they do not have to wear traditional clothing, speak Aymara or Quechua, or live in the highlands in order to retain their identity, many are also caught in a trap of having to perform a more exaggerated presentation of Indigenous-ness in order to participate in the capitalist system (Paulson and Calla 2000:115-116). Orta (2004:149) conceives of the body as a contested site between Indigeneity, modernity, and Christianity. Particularly among Indigenous migrants in the urban centers, the increased exposure to the modern nation-state and their separation from home collides with their sense of community and indigeneity (Canessa 1998:31). Protestantism, rather than being a force of Indigenous erasure and assimilation, can perhaps be best understood through the Aymara concept of *thaki*, or life path, and constitutes a different “path” to being Indigenous in Bolivia today (Orta 2004:168).

Modernity and Change at Guatajata

One of the difficulties that researching Hugo’s missionary motivations has presented is that many of his aspirations in Bolivia never came to fruition. It is clear from his writing that he envisioned spending a much longer time among the Aymara and having greater outcomes from his work with them, writing: “I hope that someday we will have a chain of stations reaching from Ecuador or even Columbia down through Peru and Bolivia to Northern Argentine. This would pass through the heart of the Indian population of South America thereby reaching the vast majority of the millions of Indians on the continent” (Wenberg, February 28, 1920). Despite his projects never reaching fruition, there are still hints about what he intended to carry out, which speak to his belief in Christianization as an uplifting, civilizing process, but not one necessarily involved in total assimilation.

Above all else, Hugo's primary concern regarding the Indigenous people of South America is that they lacked access to the Gospel. He ultimately believed that the acceptance of Christ and turning away from heathendom would provide salvation from the unjust social and economic conditions he witnessed. He did not believe in salvation through faith alone and saw education as the primary practical means through which to improve the status of Indigenous people. As I discussed previously, this focus on education ultimately led to greater participation in the Spanish-speaking realm of mestizos and whites. This does not mean that Hugo wished to see the Aymara or Quechua fully assimilated, as his writing indicated that he actually valued the spiritual integrity of Bolivia's Indigenous people above that of their mestizo and white populations: "I believe they would make as good Christians as you'll find anywhere. Morally, they are better than the whites and mestizos" (Wenberg, January 1, 1918). Hugo seemed to focus primarily on improving the "dignity" of Indigenous people in the eyes of Bolivia's elite, through the influence of Christian civility, and one of the ways this dignity could be created was through material improvements to living conditions via the introduction of modern agriculture, housing, and medicine.

One of the modern tools the Wenberg family used to entice converts was the magic lantern—a precursor to the projector that used images printed on glass slides. Magic lanterns and projection equipment were widely used by missionaries, as these tools allowed them to transcend linguistic barriers (Borgo Ton 2019). Lantern slides were used by missionaries to illustrate Bible stories or lessons, as Hugo did while working as a colporteur (May 2023:23). Often the allure of the technology was enough to capture the locals' attention, as Edna described a Christmas lantern showing at Guatajata doing (December 12, 1913). While useful in

the field, the magic lantern's real importance came in the way it was used back home to promote the mission efforts (Kuo 2016:28). Photographs taken by missionaries while in the field were used to solicit support from sponsors, and they also served as documentary and educational aids in presenting their mission progress (Lydon 2017:480). Hugo (1917) made explicit reference to this purpose in his letters, writing to Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, James Taylor: "He [Reverend Teeter] is taking a copy of my negatives (about 125) mostly around Bolivia, to New York with the intention of making lantern slides of the suitable ones. If there are any that you could use for photos or slides you are welcome to use them."

Despite the modern accoutrement of a projector and "baby organ" that Hugo used in Bible-selling, his accounts of this time suggest he had relatively few qualms about giving up modern comforts in pursuit of his work. In papers preserved by his descendants, Hugo recounted to a family friend his time as a colporteur, describing traveling on foot across Bolivia, at times even barefoot, armed only with a broken pocketknife. His letters describe enduring difficulties and hardships in Tucuman, but these difficulties seemed to have been more about the health of his wife and his relations with the Board, rather than material complaints about the working conditions (Wenberg, January 1, 1918). In contrast, while Edna became very comfortable teaching in La Paz, her letters from Guatajata suggest she had a more difficult time adapting so far away from the modern comforts she was used to.

Edna's letters provide a much clearer image of the difficulties of living in a new country, describing her homesickness and the many unfamiliar conditions she had to adapt to. Throughout these entries, she mentioned instances of familiar modernity that appear to have brought her great comfort. For example, she wrote with delight about when barrels of canned

fruit and dishware from home arrived after months of delay, or when their bed finally arrived from the States. Her letters indicate that they had an organ shipped to their home in Guatajata, which would have been an expensive and difficult maneuver for such a large instrument but played an important role in Protestant religious life (McDannell 1995: 15-16). Despite these familiar domestic items, there were many comforts Edna had to forgo in pursuit of her and her husband's work, and the MPM collection contains some evidence of the adaptations she made to her daily life. For many months while they lived in Guatajata, the Wenbergs' dishware from home was held up in customs, and they had to make do with local tableware. Notes from their son Herbert indicate that an Aymara-made cup and bowl, shown in Figures 4.17 and 4.18, were used during this time.



Figure 4.17 (left): This cup E62830 was made by an Aymara craftsperson in Guatajata, Bolivia and was used by the Wenbergs while living there (photo taken by author).

Figure 4.18 (right): This unglazed bowl, E62831, was used along with cup E62830 by the Wenbergs while living in Guatajata (photo taken by author).

There were a few other instances of Edna reusing or repurposing traditional Aymara crafts to better suit her own tastes for the home. For example, the MPM collection includes several woven belts, often used by Aymara women to bind their babies to their backs. The collection also includes two table runners, sewn together from several of these belts. Figures 4.19 and 4.20 show one of the belts next to one of the table runners for comparison. Likewise, the collection also includes a European-style sugar and creamer set (objects E62923a-d, shown in Figure 4.21) that was made by an Aymara potter (or potters) in Guatajata, perhaps at the special request of Edna.



Figure 4.19: E62869 a woven belt typically used by Aymara women to bind babies so they can be carried on their mother's back (photo taken by author).



Figure 4.20: Herbert indicated in his notes that this was a "table scarf," sewed by Americans out of three Aymara belts similar to E62869 (photo taken by author).



Figure 4.21: An Aymara potter (or potters) in Guatajata created these vessels for holding cream and sugar but would not have used them (photo taken by author).

These objects are fascinating because they reflect a blending of Western and Indigenous influences, but do not suggest that the Aymara at Guatajata adopted “modern” techniques or styles. Rather, these objects appear to have been created to meet a specific demand. These cases suggest that although Western influence is evident in the objects, it did not impact the wider craft production system. Other seemingly Western influences on Aymara handicrafts actually have very old roots. For example, openwork weaving among Andean cultures predates the Inkan Empire, yet Spanish colonization brought with it European techniques of lacemaking, such as needle and bobbin lace. Beltrán-Rubio (2022:187) argues that the success of lacemaking in the Andean region during the colonial period was due to the fact that similar practices had already been well-established. The doilies in the Wenberg collection were produced by a needlework technique known as cutwork, which developed during the Italian Renaissance (Figure 4.22). Under Spanish colonization, the wearing of expensive styles such as lace were restricted, and thus lacework designs began to be implemented into woven textiles instead (Meléndez 2022:149; Middleton 2022:157; Phipps et al. 2004:193).



Figure 4.22: This doily (E62890) collected from Bolivia in the early 1900s displays European lacework techniques first introduced under Spanish colonialism (photo taken by author).

Other research has been conducted on creolization in Bolivian weaving, mainly regarding the industrialization of traditional weaving designs and the use of weaving in modern functional items such as sneakers and wallets (Terry 2020:71). Objects that reflect mixed cultural heritage are often sidelined within museum collections, either because they are viewed as less valuable or legitimate in comparison to culturally “pure” artifacts, or because they are considered to be culturally irrelevant souvenirs (Hume 2013:90). Rincon (2019:158) suggests alternatively that “[t]he aesthetics of the diverse is an invitation to rethink our approach to collections by urging museum professionals to reflect on the materialization of entanglements, on areas of exchange and influence, and through this give greater attention to historical and cultural contact.” Museum collections with mixed cultural heritage can reveal interesting and otherwise hidden aspects of cross-cultural relationships (Cifarelli et al. 2018:555-556).

Object hybridization has been a particular area of interest in the anthropology of Christianity as it pertains to religious syncretism. This was what first interested me about the MPM collection, particularly how syncretism is manifested in E62821, a small silver chalice shown in Figure 4.23. During Bolivia's revolution, Catholic churches were common targets for looting, as they had amassed huge storehouses of silver mined by Indigenous people (Lane 2019: 95-96). Silver from Spanish Colonial coins as well as religious objects were commonly reworked to better reflect Andean styles that could now be more freely expressed (Boylan 1970: 79). This is demonstrated in the fact that while this chalice is in the overall shape of European Christian chalices, the animal, chain, and coin adornments are common elements of Andean k'eros, or traditional ceremonial vessels (Egan 1996:26). Bulls in particular feature prominently in Andean libation rituals, as a symbol of prosperity and fertility (Tschopik 1946:562). Likewise, E62822, a silver incense bowl shown in Figure 4.24, features not only a Bolivian coin but also what I believed to be two hummingbirds. While the condor is more commonly known as an Andean symbol, hummingbirds historically have been an important symbol among the Moche, Nazca, Inka, and Quechua peoples (Bernier 2009; Hoyle 1946: 159; Sault 2016:791).



Figure 4.23: While this chalice is in the typical European form, the addition of a silver coin and bull figures are common Andean adornments (photo taken by author).



Figure 4.24: Suspended between the mouths of the two birds on either side of this vessel is a chain, in the center of which hangs a propaganda medal minted in Potosí, Bolivia in 1852 (photo taken by author).

Hecht (2005:48) argues that the proliferation of natural motifs in Andean ecclesiastical objects from the colonial period was an Indigenous response to church officials' intense scrutiny of "idolatrous" native art forms. Europeanized images of Andean natural motifs became a

clandestine way to retain cultural autonomy, and even after the colonial period ended, remained an integral part of the design vocabulary of the Andes. This assertion falls in line with Robbins's (2011:410) assertion that anthropologists typically view conversion through the lens of crypto-religion, believing that those who convert to Christianity "were bribed by the good the missionaries offered... into playing along with a game the rules of which they never really accepted." However, Robbins cautions against viewing syncretism with such inherent suspicion of crypto-religion, as it may overstate the intentions of Indigenous artists and disregard the process of neoculturation that was occurring outside of the bounds of colonial authoritarianism (Robbins 2011:413; also Ortiz 1947). Grieder (1975: 852) writes of the symbolic content of forms that "[n]either disjunction nor continuity can be safely assumed." The danger of ascribing too much cultural continuity to iconography is that it can obscure the attribution of new meanings to traditional elements, and lead to interpretations in which "either the 'indigenous eye' or the 'European eye' is blind" (Nicklisch 2018: 12).

In the case of the sugar and creamer set discussed earlier, the original museum documentation describes them as "an attempt to copy Western dishes." This description implies that the creation of these objects was an Aymara-driven endeavor, but Edna's writings suggest that it was much more likely a case of her solicitation. The blending of traditional Aymara handicraft customs with Western forms, materials, and object uses as presented here demonstrates that the Westernization brought by the Wenbergs was a collaborative process, brought about both by functional necessity and by the Wenbergs' interest in and appreciation of the Aymara culture—qualities that helped them to form strong bonds within Guatajata. Given the sheer number of objects the Wenbergs collected in South America and preserved for

decades to come, it is clear how strong those bonds were, and that the objects served as personal reminders of those connections, as well as mementos of specific events and experiences they had.

Sentimentality, Memory, and Personal Collecting

Thus far my interpretation of objects in the MPM has focused on their potential use as aids in support of missionary efforts, or as syncretic objects reflecting a sort of collaboration across cultural boundaries. At the same time, many objects in the collection also suggest a theme of personal memorabilia and sentimentality, which will now be brought to the forefront. Crooke (2012:26) writes: “It is rare that any object is purely functional; instead even the most mundane and everyday will have layers of associations and meanings waiting to be revealed.” Many of the objects discussed in this chapter had a functional purpose at some point in their life story, but that is not what led them to be included in Herbert’s donation to the MPM. Take, for example, the cup and bowl discussed earlier in this chapter. On the surface, there is nothing about these objects that makes them stand out as museum objects—the cup is chipped, devoid of decoration; the bowl is unglazed and very simply decorated. In the context of a massive museum collection, their appearance alone does not seem to warrant any further study. It is only when we consider why such plain, functional objects were kept long past their usefulness that their uniqueness is highlighted. These objects were not kept in the Wenberg family for 50 years because they were exquisitely crafted or monetarily valuable. Rather, they were collected, kept, and donated as time capsules from a pivotal time in their owners’ lives. While the role some objects play as “memory cues” is evident in their very materiality, such as scrapbooks, postcards, and souvenirs with a destination name emblazoned across them, the personal

significance of other objects is harder to empirically observe. As Crooke (2012:26) notes: “The memories embedded in objects, the connection to past events, and how they represent us is deeply personal and often very private.” In studying the meaning of objects, the intimacy between people and their possessions can be a double-edged sword; their privacy can obscure important details and connections, but when revealed, brings new dimensions to the objects (Auslander 2005:1042).

Among all the evidence concerning the Wenbergs’ South American missions that I have gathered thus far, references to their collections are brief, vague, or inferred. To an extent, this can be explained by the nature of the textual sources. In his letters with members of the Board of Foreign Missions, Hugo considered other matters much more important to report on, and he may have thought it unwise to inquire to his employers about his salary in the same breath as recounting his antique shopping. Likewise, newspaper articles recounting the Wenbergs’ public appearances provide some of the best evidence regarding their collections’ use, but the brevity of this medium leaves many details out. Herbert’s additional notes provided to the MPM provide details not found elsewhere, but the public and scientific nature of a museum may have led Herbert to leave out information that he felt was not of “intellectual merit.” All of this taken together suggests that in order to uncover the more intimate meanings embedded in these objects requires examining texts of a more private and personal nature, a task that would have been impossible if not for the assistance of the Wenbergs’ living descendants.

Edna’s letters, presumably written to her mother, contain the most explicit and personal references to objects in the collection, as well as references to times and places which can be connected back to objects. For example, on July 7, 1910, Edna wrote about convicts in La Paz

making things while in prison, “such as dressed dolls and combs carved from bits of wood and bone” and she mentioned herself and a group of teachers coming to see these wares, and even photographed the prisoners at work (Figure 4.25). Her mention of combs is particularly interesting as E62886, shown in Figure 4.26, is a small wooden comb which Herbert indicated was carved by a prisoner, most likely coming from this mentioned interaction. It is interesting that Edna made no other reference to this event, so it is unclear if her desire to hang on to this comb was a result of an impactful interaction with the prisoner who made it, or if it was an interesting souvenir to share with her family back home due to how she came to own it.



Figure 4.25: This image is captioned “Prisoners at work” in an album of photographs from La Paz made by Edna, which was uncovered in my visit with Neil Wenberg (photo courtesy of Neil Wenberg and Hannah Kelley).



Figure 4.26: Herbert's indication that this comb (E62886) was made by a prisoner gave no other details, but Edna's explicit reference to witnessing convicts making wooden combs is compelling evidence that she purchased this while in La Paz in 1910 (photo taken by author).

On January 24, 1909, Edna described visiting the Alasitas festival in La Paz and many of the miniature items being sold there: "One of the greatest things to buy seems to be a sort of clown doll loaded as heavily as can be with everything imaginable that belongs to a household." Many of the items she listed were miniatures present in the MPM collection, such as crockery, pottery, and hats (Figures 4.27 and 4.28). Miniatures are also mentioned by Herbert as being sold along the Alameda in Santiago, Chile, which Edna said she attended on Christmas Eve, 1905 (December 26, 1905). There are four pieces of "tourist" pottery connected with this event listed in the MPM documents (E62925 and E62926, [lot of 3]). An article from the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* from 1950 recounting a YWCA arts and crafts show described Edna's South American exhibit as featuring "miniature dishes and pottery pieces as well as dolls." In this instance, while the miniatures were being brought out on display, there was not a necessarily educational or evangelical aspect to their presentation, but rather in the context of an arts and crafts show, they were displayed as part of Edna's personal collecting and hobby interest.



Figure 4.27: A portion of E62903, currently on exhibit at the MPM, consisting of miniature dishes, bags of sugar, coffee, and clothing (photo courtesy of Alyssa Rieger).



Figure 4.28: Additional pieces of E62903 including more miniature dishware and clothing, as well as two sets of miniature dolls, five llamas on small sticks, three bags in the shape of sheep, and one knit peacock (photo taken by author).

From her letters, it is certainly clear that Edna had at least a hobby-level interest in souvenir shopping, as gathering “antiques and curios” is one of the central activities she mentioned escorting visiting missionaries to during the South American Conference in 1908 (January 12, 1908). Additionally, while still an unmarried teacher working in Santiago, she wrote a letter to her mother on October 10, 1909, describing a dream where she was back home in Wisconsin: “It was back on the farm and all my old schoolmates came up to see me, and I was trying to show my curios and talk—”. This mention of curios, while incredibly brief, nonetheless is definitive evidence that Edna was collecting objects in South America out of personal desire. Furthermore, Edna’s emphasis on “showing and telling,” as it were, speaks to the communicative aspect of souvenir collecting.

In her essay on the collecting practices of Victorian women, Macknight (2009:83-84) observed that part of the joy of collecting as a hobby for women was in sharing their collections with others. The displaying of objects in the home, especially ones clearly from far-off places, invites curiosity, and allows the owner an opportunity to share more about themselves (Cairns and Silverman 2004:44). While museums plainly give an artifact’s interpretation in text on the wall next to it, in the home the owner is the sole arbiter of the object’s meaning. In relation to gender, this fact seems to be fairly significant. Broadly speaking, for men, “The possession of an exotic object offers. . . imagined access to a world of difference, often constituted as an enhancement of the new owner’s knowledge, power, or wealth” (Phillips and Steiner 1999:3). However, research on women’s collecting practices emphasizes objects as an opportunity for women to define themselves in relation to masculine power structures, to carve out a piece of their own self-expression and self-interest, and to act as keepers of the heritage and memories

held within their treasured possessions (Cairns and Silverman 2004; Coulombe 2008; Edwards 2017:46-47; Gleadhill 2022:10; Macknight 2009). The role collected objects play in women's formations of selfhood is interesting to consider in the context of Edna's life. The objects discussed above were collected by Edna prior to becoming Mrs. J.H. Wenberg, and perhaps reflect a desire to commemorate a period of her life when her identity was that of a missionary first and foremost, rather than a missionary's wife or mother.

By cross-referencing the locations and dates recorded in Edna's diaries with Herbert's accompanying notes at the MPM, I discovered what I found to be significant evidence towards understanding this collection as an assemblage of personal mementos. Edna and Hugo Wenberg (shown in Figure 4.29) were married on March 5, 1910, and though they were living and working in La Paz, they had to cross Lake Titicaca and wed in Puno, Peru, as Bolivia only recognized Catholic marriages at the time. In describing her wedding day, Edna wrote of taking pictures, buying curios, and taking walks (Wenberg, March 5, 1910). While many of the objects in the Wenberg collection have only a country as identification, there are 11 objects (shown in Figure 4.30 and grouped together under the catalog number E62934) that are specifically noted as coming from Puno, Peru.



Figure 4.29: Edna and Hugo Wenberg on their wedding day in 1910 (Photo courtesy of Neil Wenberg; image lightened by author).



Figure 4.30: Curios likely purchased by the Wenbergs while celebrating their wedding in Puno, Peru (photo taken by author).

From a traditional museum interpretation, these objects would be regarded as simply more examples of Quechua pottery, if they were not disregarded as being tourist pieces altogether. However, by making this connection between the object notes and Edna's diaries, the story of this pottery changes completely. While they remain Quechua-made objects, possibly even archaeological ones, that does not appear to be the reason why they were purchased, transported across various moves, including at least one time overseas, and then kept until 1977. These objects, souvenirs from her wedding day, were kept by Edna for 58 years, including almost 10 years after her husband's death, and they remained in their son Herbert's possession for almost 10 years after that until he ensured they had somewhere safe to remain.

After a loss, objects that held happy memories can become sources of grief as well (Auslander 2005:1020; Hattrick 2012:150). As Cains and Silverman (2004:174) note:

Such special things are kept tucked away and contemplated only in solitude. Others may be displayed in public areas of a home where anyone can see them, and yet where their profound stories are completely and routinely overlooked. It is as if women are smiling and saying: You think you know me, but you don't. I have a life apart from what you know of me.

In the context of a museum collection, this revelation opens up new avenues for interpretation. Andrea Witcomb (2012:46) writes of souvenirs: "If their significance lies in the realm of affect and sense memories, traditional forms of display in which objects are used as illustrations of historical themes will fail to bring this out. New strategies of interpretation which enable affective forms of engagement with the object are needed." While it is beyond the scope of this paper to offer interpretative strategies, this research has unveiled thus far unrecorded aspects of the objects' life-histories and found historical details that deepen their personal significance. This research has aimed to present the different perspectives that can be taken in interpreting these objects—whether focusing on syncretic or hybrid qualities as evidence for cross-cultural contact, or demonstrating which objects were selected and used to promote the missionary agendas of the Methodist Church. However, none of these interpretations would be complete without a recognition and understanding of the personal significance that led them to be chosen and collected in the first place. Furthermore, until this point Edna's presence has been almost completely absent from any documentation surrounding this collection, and her active involvement and contributions as both missionary and collector should not be neglected.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

At the start of this thesis, there were two questions driving my research: *Who was J.H. Wenberg, and what did these objects mean?* Over the course of this project, I have found answering these questions to be a cyclical process: the more I learned about Hugo, the more I learned about the objects, and the more I studied the objects, the more I gained new insights into Hugo. I am certain that I could have continued to cycle between these two questions ad nauseum, and given enough time found a connection between every object and Hugo's inner state of mind. For the purposes of this thesis, I think I have gathered enough information thus far to present new insights into the existing body of research on museum missionary collections and their collectors.

As pertains to the first question, after countless hours spent with Hugo's writings and those of his family and colleagues, I believe I have gained a fairly good understanding of the kind of person he was. In a candidate reference given to the Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. G.J. Schilling wrote of Hugo that he was "Honest as daylight" (Board of Foreign Missions 1919), and based on all of my research, I believe this to be an accurate assessment. As a missionary, Hugo truly believed that his work could save souls from damnation, and that the people of South America were deprived of their right to know salvation. This conviction was so strong, and so dire, that he could not abide by the Board's passivity regarding this issue, and he did not mince words in criticizing them. As a result, he was characterized as insolent, impatient, and hard to work with, but his response to this was that "he did get along with the Indians" (Wenberg, July 1, 1920). At many junctures in his life, Hugo had the opportunity to take up the role of pastor for white congregations, or he could have easily remained a teacher or missionary for the mestizo

and white urban populations in South America. But he chose repeatedly to work among people different than himself, and he did not work with them in a pitying manner, but rather used his position and privilege to write to newspapers and civic and political leaders on behalf of their best interests. Taking Hugo's beliefs in eternal salvation and damnation at face-value, he seemed to have little interest in saving the souls of people who already had all the resources to do so themselves and dedicated his life to bringing the Gospel to those otherwise neglected. While he witnessed firsthand how Christianity could be used as a weapon to subjugate, his version was one of universal humanity.

In some respects, addressing my second research question was easier, as I could rely not only on the archival resources, but also on the materiality of the objects as a source of data as well. Through a close reading of Hugo and Edna's letters and an examination of the collection as a whole assemblage, I defined three thematic patterns that I wanted to study further: representing indigeneity, modernity and change, and sentimentality. I have highlighted objects from the collection that best reflect these qualities and used them as opportunities to connect back to and delve deeper into the Wenbergs' firsthand accounts. Inspired by Kopytoff's (1986) work on the biography of things, I discovered that the meaning of these objects changed over time and depended on context. The miniatures that Edna collected as souvenirs were brought out on display for a lecture, or the tablecloths she made from Aymara weavings out of necessity came to represent hybridity and modernity. These shifting positions are reminiscent of the foregrounds and backgrounds discussed by Bandak and Jørgensen (2012). Additionally, the collection's status as museum objects may mask some of their varied meanings. Of the objects currently displayed at the MPM, many are being interpreted as ethnographic objects. However,

this thesis has demonstrated that these are not the only worthwhile aspects to these objects, as they represent the complex relationships between missionaries and the communities they enter. As expressed by Rincon (2019:158), embracing hybridity encourages museum professionals to “reflect on the materialization of entanglements, on areas of exchange and influence, and through this give greater attention to historical and cultural contact.” Additionally, there is a growing interest among scholars regarding the status of missionary collections in museums as it relates to questions of cultural heritage and restitution (American Academy in Rome 2022; Universiteit Utrecht 2022).

Through this research, I have demonstrated that while these objects are being catalogued and used in an ethnographic context at the MPM, their primary “role” during the majority of their life histories was that of personal mementos and keepsakes from the Wenbergs’ travels. These objects are inextricable from their missionary context, and their collection by missionaries necessitates different curatorial and interpretive perspectives than objects collected by professional anthropologists or other field collectors. Furthermore, this research has presented an in-depth examination of the beliefs, motivations, and actions of Hugo Wenberg acting as a missionary in South America. While Hugo’s life is relatively unremembered in the Methodist community, his belief in the necessity of evangelizing and providing education to the most disadvantaged communities is something that the Church has only recently come to adopt. Rather than appeal for greater recognition in the Church, as Roy May’s (2023) article on Hugo does, this research has approached his motivations and behavior through an anthropological lens, demonstrating that Christianity as a theological framework led Hugo to develop a strong empathy for Indigenous people, while Christianity as an institution often found

itself at odds with these beliefs. Furthermore, this research has emphasized the materiality of these Christian beliefs through the kinds of objects Edna and Hugo collected, and how they differed from collections by other Christian missionaries working with different theological or political understandings of their mission.

In discussing the contributions of my project, it is also important to note that there were limitations to this study and its impact, the most significant of which being an absence of Indigenous voice in the research. Where available, I have done my best to seek out Indigenous perspectives, even reaching out to representatives of South American church structures, but the combination of a parity of sources as well as my personal limitations as a geographically and financially constrained, and monolingual researcher have limited this research to a focus on only one direction of the cultural exchange. While this thesis was focused on understanding and interpreting Hugo's experiences as a missionary, and thus at many points viewed Indigenous people through his eyes, it is important to acknowledge that does not capture the full picture of the missionary encounter. From antiquity through to the present the Aymara have endured and survived attempts at cultural erasure by the Inka, Spanish, and Bolivian Republic. While Hugo exercised some amount of authority at Guatajata, his letters make it clear that the Aymara there had full agency and control over the decision to attend his school or convert to Christianity, and those who did likely had strategic reasons for doing so (Arnold and Yapita 2006:53; Godenzzi 1996:241; Larson 2024:71; Mitchell 1994:230-231; Nuñez del Prado 1976:75).

Additionally, this study has focused solely on the Wenbergs' time in South America and specifically Bolivia, despite the fact that the Wenbergs also spent a significant amount of time with the Oneida, whose culture is represented in the MPM collection as well. In part, this

limitation could not be avoided, as a fire at the Oneida Methodist Church years ago destroyed many of the documents that would have aided my interpretations (see Figure 5.1). Additionally, I chose to focus my attention on the South American items in the collection to ensure that the scope of the thesis project and the time required to complete it would be feasible.



Figure 5.1: In the only photo available of Hugo from his time as pastor to the Oneida, Hugo (right) stands with an unknown man outside of the Oneida Methodist Church, c. 1950. (Archives, Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Sun Prairie, WI).

Suggestions for Further Research

Despite these limitations, I believe that they represent ample opportunities for future research. In particular, I hope this thesis will be of great use to researchers more familiar with South America and the Spanish language, and that this research will provide the starting point

for developing interpretations from the other side of the cultural encounters reflected in this collection. Related to this, this research has pieced together the early history of the Peniel Hall Mission, which has been relatively understudied (for example, historical details presented here are absent in May's [2023] account of the same period). It is clear from Hugo's recounting of his visit to Guatajata in 1950 that the area has changed greatly, and my research using the Archives of the Canadian Baptists suggests that there is much more to be uncovered about the mission project's development at Guatajata after Hugo's initial involvement. Additionally, I hope that in the future more information can be gained about the Wenberg donation to Lawrence University, and that the donation made to the Anthropology Department may one day shed more insight on Hugo's interest in ethnographic work.

This research has also highlighted the significant role that Edna Wenberg played as both missionary and collector, and the relative absence of women in research pertaining to missionary work and missionary collections. Through the generous help of her great-grandson, Neil Wenberg, I was able to access many of her personal letters and documents that were otherwise absent in the archival records, perhaps because her accounts and contributions were not considered worth saving by historical institutions. I have sought to correct this disparity by highlighting the example of one missionary woman and hope to see more research uncovering the stories of missionary women in the future. Edna's involvement with women's organizations indicates that they were significant spaces for women to develop humanitarian, social, and political opinions, but research focused on women's organizations has been largely relegated to their impact in the suffragette movement and on economic development (Akchurin and Lee 2013: 683; Klein 1984:18; Sharer 2004: 3-6). The role of Christianity and women's spaces on

developing humanitarian attitudes and cross-cultural empathy is an area of research that merits further attention.

This research has contributed to a growing body of work interested in the status of missionary collections in museums. One of the challenges in undertaking this kind of work is a common disconnection between donors and objects once the latter are transferred to museum ownership, making such collections difficult to identify. This is further complicated by the lack of public accessibility to this kind of collection information, limiting not only researchers from easily being able to conduct comparative and more comprehensive research, but also the public. Information about the Wenberg collection at the MPM is not available online, which is not uncommon, but that means that there could be many people like Neil Wenberg who are completely unaware that parts of their family history are now being held in museums.

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasized that understanding the personal significance of objects is a worthwhile scholarly and museological pursuit. My desire to study anthropology and develop a career in museum collections care has stemmed from an acute interest in understanding how people use objects to relate to themselves, one another, and their surrounding culture. In valuing the objects as individuals with unique life trajectories, I uncovered many details that would not have been revealed by a purely physical analysis of the objects, and as a result, I was able to connect these objects to members of the Wenberg family living today. I am incredibly grateful that this research was able to impart new information to them and enrich their stories about their loved ones. Beyond any academic or professional contributions, it is my hope that this research promotes more reconciliation between objects and people.

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Appendix A: Museum Documentation

Accession List (21 pages):

ETHNOLOGY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY <input type="checkbox"/>		Date	P. <u>1</u> of <u>21</u> pp.	Accession No. <u>24531</u>
ETHNOLOGY	ARCHAEOLOGY	day	mo.	YR.
62805	1	7	6	77
62806	1			
62807	1			
62808	1			
62809	1			
62810	1			

No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
1		wooden spindle for winding woolen yarn	Aymara	Bolivia, S.A., 1912-1920	J.H. Wenzberg (donor's leather)	H.B. Wenzberg R. J. Oter D. (Wapaca, 1912)	donation	5.00	Spinner carries spindle in right hand, draws out yarn on it from one spindle to left side, two spindles, pass round it, twist together, if back to her hand, from donor's description
1		mixture wooden plow	"	"	"	"	"	2.00	model of larger ones actually used by the Aymara. Info. from donor
1		leather mule whip made from end of a bridle rein and braided leather	"	"	"	"	"	5.00	
1		model of a rawhide trunk laced with dark brown leather	"	"	"	"	"	20.00	model of larger ones used to carry baggage on mule pack. Info. from donor
1		rawhide ^{with} whip used by Roman Catholic devotees for doing penance by lashing the back. Also used to whip strays	"	"	"	"	"	25.00	Info. from donor
1		"Guitarra" musical instrument made from Armadillo shell and wood. Sounding boards cracked and broken. Several strings missing and keys broken off	"	"	"	"	"	25.00	"

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62811	1		"Pipas"; bamboo musical pipes bamboo is splitting, 6 tubes	Aymara	Bolivia, S.A. 1912-1920	J.H. Wernberg (donor's father)	J.H. Wernberg R. J. Otter Dr. Wau-pa-a-yu-ti	donation	1.000	
62812	1		11, 7 tubes	"	"	"	"	"	1.000	
02813	1		"Flauta"; flute made from bamboo, 6 finger holes	"	"	"	"	"	1000	
02814	1		Mate (Paraguayan tea) cup made from a gourd with burned on decoration	"	"	"	"	"	1000	Dried tea is put in the cup, hot water poured over it. Bombillas are used to sip the tea. (Info. from donor)
02815	1		Mate cup made from a gourd with engraved curvilinear decoration.	"	"	"	"	"	1000	"
, 2816	1		Mate cup made from a gourd. Blackened outside elaborately engraved to expose white interior. Inscription - Helicidad.	"	"	"	"	"	1000	"

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62817	1		"Bombilla": Brass tube used to sip Paraguayan tea. From Mate cup; strainer on one end to catch tea leaves	Aymara	Bolivia, S.A. 1912-1920	J. H. Weidberg (Dose's father)	H. B. Weidberg R. A. Offer Dr. Uaupaca, B.I.	donation	35.00	
62818	1		"Bombilla": silver tube used to sip Paraguayan tea. From Mate cup; strainer on one end to catch tea leaves	LL	" "	" "	" "	" "	35.00	
62819	1		"Bombilla": silver tube used to sip Paraguayan tea. From Mate cup; strainer on one end to catch tea leaves	LL	" "	" "	" "	" "	40.00	
62820	1		Silver cup marked D.R.	Native Bolivian	" "	" "	" "	" "	65.00	
62821	1		Silver censor; urn shaped, bull figures as decoration, coin on chair handle dated 1852	LL	" "	" "	" "	" "	50.00	
62822	1		Silver censor; bowl shaped bird figures as decoration; chair handle broken; coin from handle dated 1850	LL	" "	" "	" "	" "	50.00	
62823	1		Silver shawl pin with peacock, floral and hand motifs; Inlaid with blue and green stones. Also jointed silver-plated fish ornament attached with chain.	LL	La Paz, Bolivia	" "	" "	" "	65.00	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62824	1		Silver shawl pin, spoon shaped with stamped floral design. Also used for eating	Aymara	La Paz, Bolivia	J. H. Wenderberg	H. B. Wenderberg R. A. Otterberg Luzumpata, W.I.	donation	40.00	
62825	1		Silver shawl pin, spoon shaped with stamped skull and bird motif. Also used for eating	"	"	"	"	"	35.00	
62826	1		Silver shawl pin, spoon shaped with stamped branched motif. Also used for eating	"	"	"	"	"	25.00	
62827	1		Silver pin, rectangular with llama motif, marked Peru, Industria Peruana	"	Peru	"	"	"	10.00	
62828	1		Silver dog pin	Aymara	Bolivia, 1912-1920	"	"	"	10.00	
62829	1		Silver filigree flower pin with brass center	"	"	"	"	"	5.00	
62830	1		Pottery cup, yellow-green glazed interior, has been broken and glued together	Aymara	Guatemala Exp. 1912	"	"	"	5.00	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62831	1		pottery bowl, unglazed simple, painted design on interior	Aymara	Guatajeda Bolivia 1912	J. H. Wernberg	H. B. Wernberg RA Dept. of Anthropology	donation	\$70	
62832	2 (amb)		pair of copper vases		Oruro, Bolivia	"	"	"	\$500	one has been damaged and spot soldered
62833	1		copper vase		"	"	"	"	\$500	
62834	1		woolen poncho (ruana) red, yellow, & green	Aymara	Lake Titicaca Bolivia 1913	"	"	"	\$500	ponchos are worn by men (Info. from donor)
62835	1		woolen poncho (ruana) brown with red, beige, green, & yellow trim	"	"	"	"	"	\$500	"
62836	1		woolen blanket, gray and brown striped	"	Bolivia 1910	"	"	"	1000	used as spread to display goods for sale. (Info. from donor)

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62837	1		woolen poncho (yuana) Red striped with green, pink, red and white border	Aymara	Bolivia 1912-1920	J.H. Venter	H.B. Venter (K. Oberdorfer, J. Oberdorfer)	donation	7500	
62838	1		shawl; green with multi-color stripes	"	"	"	"	"	8000	
62839	1		woolen blanket (Lijilla); red with bands of multi-color woven designs. Damaged in several places.	"	"	"	"	"	7500	Used by women to carry babies on their backs or goods to market (Tupfo, Frow davor)
62840	1		woven towel with black printing in black and pink.	"	"	"	"	"	5000	
62841	1		woolen multi-colored double bag. Used either as saddle bag or hand bag	"	"	"	"	"	2000	
62842	1		woolen money bag or purse, in the shape of a fish. Brown and white with multi-color tassels	"	"	"	"	"	10000	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
02843	1		woolen money bag or purse, multicolored	Aymara	Bolivia 1912-1920	J.H. Wernberg	H.B. Wernberg R.J. Oster-D Wernberg, Bolivia	donation	\$ 10	
02845	1		woolen cap with ear flaps; green with yellow, blue, and red decorative beading	"	"	"	"	"	\$ 5.00	worn by men (Info. from donor)
02844	1		woolen multicolored cap	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	worn by house servants (Info. from donor)
02846	1		woolen festive sleeves, multicolored with figures knitted into the pattern	"	"	"	"	"	36.00	worn by men (Info. from donor)
02847	2 (emb)		pair of trenzas (beaded braids); black woven wool and several colors of glass beads.	"	"	"	"	"	50.00	women braid them into their hair for decoration (Info. from donor)
02848	1		woolen multicolored bag decorated with several colors of feathers	"	"	"	"	"	16.00	used by men for coca leaves
02849	1		woolen money bag or purse; multicolored	"	"	"	"	"	5.00	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62850	1		woolen money bag or purse; multicolored, with pocket on one side	Aymara	Bolivia 1912-1920	J.H. Werberg	J.B. Werberg R. J. Ober-Dier Wau-pata, WI	Donation	1000	
62851	2 (amb)		pair of woolen mittens; brown with multicolored decoration	"	"	"	"	"	5000	
62852	2 (amb)		pair of leather sandals	"	"	"	"	"	3000	
62853	2 (amb)		pair of leather sandals with purple velvet trim	"	"	"	"	"	3000	
62854	1		model of woman's festive dress; maroon velvet beaded jacket with yellow skirt	"	"	"	"	"	3500	
62855	1		shepherd's sling; braided wool; black, brown, and white	"	"	"	"	"	1000	
62856	1		shepherd's sling; braided wool; brown and white	"	"	"	"	"	1000	
62857	1		shepherd's sling; braided wool; red, brown, black and purple	"	"	"	"	"	1000	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62858	2 (abb)		Bark garment and cap. Garment has design's stamped on with purple and yellow dyes		Bolivia	J.H. Wenberg	H. B. Wenberg R.I. Osher Dr. Wash. post, Wash.	Donation	6500	For festive occasions (info. from donor)
62859	1		Bark garment: design painted on with purple dye		"	"	"	"	6000	"
62860	1		Wooden hand bag; gray with multi-colored stripes		Peru	"	"	"	2500	"
62861	1		glazed pottery pitcher with anthropomorphic figure; badly cracked		Quecha Peru	"	"	"	10000	"
62862	1		glazed pottery pitcher with seated human figure shown probably eating and drinking; Spout is small pitcher at figure's feet	"	"	"	"	"	15000	"
62863	1		Saddle blanket, wool woven on a fiber base, red with orange and brown trim	Araucanian	Chile	"	"	"	15000	"

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62864	1		Water cooler, basketry covered clay; purple, red, and orange decoration	Quecha	Copacabana, Bolivia	JH Wenberg	H. B. Wenberg at other Dr Moupaean, COT	Donation	10.00	
62865	1		"	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	
62866	1		Hammock; woven cord, orange, purple, yellow, white		Caracas, Venezuela	"	"	"	25.00	
62867	1		Hammock; woven cord, several colors in block-type design.		Argentina	"	"	"	75.00	Also used as saddlebag or baby's hammock
62868	1		Woolen belt; Rust color with multi-color stripes	Aymara	Bolivia	"	"	"	35.00	Also used to bind babies so they can be carried on mother's backs
62869	1		Woolen belt, red, purple, black & white	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	"
62870	1		Woolen belt; Red, purple, blue, and white	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	"
62871	1		Woolen belt; multicolor with figures woven into the design	"	"	"	"	"	20.00	"

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62872	1		Fabric devil doll, clothed in dress decorated with beads and braid; mulehide shoes		Bolivia	J. H. Wenberg	H. B. Wenberg R2 Other Dept USI	Donation	35.00	
62873	2 (amb)		Pair of maracas; made of gourds and wood. Decorated with a leaf design cut into the gourd.		Caracas, Venezuela	"	"	"	5.00	
62874	2 (amb)		Model of balsao boat with a sail	Aymara	Bolivia	"	"	"	75.00	
62875	2 (amb)		Bow; hard wood, unstrung string separate	Chiriguano, Mestizo, Tobas, or Siriono	(Place) Argentina	"	"	"	50.00	
62876	one lot (12)		Arrows; cane with hardwood points	"	"	"	"	"	100.00	
62877	one lot (5)		Spears; cane with feathers and hardwood points	"	"	"	"	"	25.00	
62878	1		war club; wooden	"	"	"	"	"	50.00	

used for close fighting or for throwing (info. from donor)
 gripped before left hand
 but seen open

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62879	1		Whip, made from dried bull penis		Lake Titicaca Bolivia	H. B. Weisberg	H. B. Weisberg	Donation	50.00	Used to beat Indians (slaves on farms) Info. from donor
62880	one lot (5)		Copper shawl pins in the shape of spoons		Bolivia	"	"	"	50.00	chipped or horns
62881	1		vase; glazed pottery in the shape of a bull		La Paz, Bolivia	"	"	"	5.00	Poor condition
62882	1		Swatch of weaving; Brown and beige		Bolivia	"	"	"	5.00	
62883	1		Small piece of weaving, sewn together to make a bag		"	"	"	"	5.00	
62884	1		Brown and beige bottle made of horn, decorated with floral designs etched with a stone		"	"	"	"	5.00	badly cracked and chipped
62885	1		collapsible cup made of horn and etched with a stone		"	"	"	"	10.00	
62886	1		Wooden comb		Bolivia	"	"	"	2.50	made by prisoner; 3 teeth broken

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62887	1		Woolen cap with ear flaps, multicolored	Aymara	Bolivia	J.H. Wintersberg	H. B. Wintersberg R.I. Oberdorfer C. Oberdorfer, etc.	Donation	15.00	Some damage, several holes
62888	1		Strip of lace drawn work		Bolivia	"	"	"	5.00	
62889	1		cutwork lace doily		Bolivia	"	"	"	10.00	
62890	1		"		"	"	"	"	10.00	
62891	1		silver shawl/pin with peacock motif		"	"	"	"	10.00	
62892	1		copper ring		"	"	"	"	5.00	
62893	1		Brass shawl pin with llama or alpaca motif and human figure on a chain		"	"	"	"	15.00	
62894	one lot (19 pieces)		Shawl pins and pieces (1 silver, 6 brass or bronze, 11 copper, 1 steel)		"	"	"	"	25.00	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62895	1		Crucifix, brass with blue stone on chain		Bolivia	J. H. Wankel	H. B. Wankel, R. B. Wankel, J. Wankel, Wankel	Donation	1000	probably from rosary
62896	1		Crucifix, metal		"	"	"	"	1000	
62897	1		Crucifix, copper		"	"	"	"	1000	broken
62898	1		Crucifix, brass		"	"	"	"	1000	
62899			Rosary, wooden beads with medal depicting "Senora de los Dolores"		"	"	"	"	500	
62900	1		Child's rosary, pink glass beads with crucifix		"	"	"	"	500	
62901	1		Anthropomorphic stone carrying		"	"	"	"	500	
62902	1		stone carving depicting man and woman		"	"	"	"	500	
62903	one lot (38 pieces)		miniatures; 3 pairs sandals, one pair socks, one pottery picker, one silver cup, one coffee pot, 2 copper skillets, 2 caps, 2 hats, one double bag, one kerseene can, one pottery pot, one sheep		"	"	"	"	1000	miniatures are made for a special holiday "A la Cruz", when only miniatures can be sold in market

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62904	2(a+b)		Small, oval basket and lid. Purple and green decoration.	Quechua	Copa Cabana Peru	H. Weikberg (Donor's father)	H. & Weikberg Rd other Dr. Peru, WI	Phonetic	10.00	
62905	1		Round basketry tray. Purple and green decoration.	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	
62906	1 lot		"lucky beans"; Grayrured beans in a canvas bag, carried in the pocket for luck.	Aymara (probably)	Bolivia	"	"	"	5.00	
62907	1		Hank of native rope.	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	
62908	1		Fish net, white cord.	Aymara	Lake Titicaca, Bolivia	"	"	"	2.00	
62909	1		Beaded headband, floral design in yellow and green on black background with red border.	Pan-Indian Ovidal?	Oklahoma	"	"	"	1.00	
62910	1		Beaded headband, Diamond design in red, blue, green, white + yellow.	"	"	"	"	"	15.00	

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Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62911	1		Round beaded purse, red, white and blues. Zippered closure	Omeida	OKlahoma U.S.	J.H. Overberg (Doris's father)	H.B. Overberg D. other Dr. Overberg	Donation	20.90 20.90	Made by Tom Schweigler
62912	3 (abs)		beaded cufflink and tie clip set, greens, yellow, brown, orange and white	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
62913	2 (abs)		pair of moccasins, tan leather with multi-colored beadwork around cuff and on vamp	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	Made by Mrs. Baker
62914	1		Beaded bracelet, 4 identical portraits of an Indian with two feathers as design. Blue background.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
62915	1		Beaded belt, multi-colored beadwork on J.C. Roney's mother belt, size 40	"	"	"	"	"	10.00	Made by Maura Elan
62916	1		Red satin shawl, fringed edges	"	"	"	"	"	"	Made by Melissa Carnelins for Mrs. J.H. Overberg
62917	1		hawk feather pendant, red and blue bead work around base of feathers. red band and tail on bobcat, blue felt cap trimmed with red, blue, yellow	"	"	"	"	"	35.00	Made by Carnelins wheellock for J.H. Overberg

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Accession No. 24531

Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62918	9(a-i)		Dance costume Headress: turkey (?) feathers, green feathers around base of feathers, red band, brown felt cap, silver buttons as decoration, white and blue ribbon and leather fringe with Chinese ornaments from late 1700's & early 1800's) above ear.	"	White Eagle, Oklahoma	H. B. Collins (Donor's father)	H. B. Collins (Donor's father)		100.00	Made by John Bull ca. 1922 for donor's brother George
a			Printed shirt, trimmed with lavender ribbon, brown background with purple, r blue, pink, beige and brown design	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
b			Navy wool vest lined with brown satin, trimmed with red seam bindings gold we fabric fringe, green and fake pearl beads. (beadwork is broken)	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
c			Apron, black pinstripe wool and black cotton. Decorated with green ribbon 5-pointed star and multi-colored ribbon 6-pointed star	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
d			Navy wool costume tail trimmed with red seam binding and decorated with green sequins in star and crescent shapes.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
e										

ETHNOLOGY ARCHEOLOGY _____ Date 10 6 77 day mo. yr.

P. 18 of 21 pp.

Accession No. 24531

Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62918f			legging - black pin stripe wool and navy cotton, trimmed with red seam binding, red and white ribbon. Decorated with feathers, bells, green thread, lavender and red beads	Ponca	White Eagle Oklahoma	J. H. Winters (Donor's father)	H. B. Swearing At Other Dr. Winters	Donation		Made by John Bull on 1922 for donor's brother George
3			"	"	"	"	"	"		"
h.			macassin, brown, rough leather ties in front, decorated with beads around edge near sole, and on vamp	"	"	"	"	"		"
2919	1		round mirror in 12 pointed star shaped tin frame, pearboard backing	Probably Apurva	Boliva	"	"	"	5.00	left as a gift for spirits by a traveler passing over a ridge
62920	1		Vienna fur robe, golden brown with green satin lining	H	" (probably)	"	"	"	3.00	
62921	1		Robe made from Peruvian sheep wool, white wool with black felt lining, lining has	H	"	"	"	"	3.00	Backers paid me for making

ETHNOLOGY ARCHEOLOGY _____ Date 29 6 77
 day mo. yr.

P. 20 of 21 pp.

Accession No. 24531

Catalog No.	No. of Specimens	Storage	Name and Description of Object	Race, Tribe, etc.	Where Collected	By Whom Collected	From Whom Received	How Acq'd	Value	Remarks
62928	1		poncho - made of English wool; Bright red on one side, navy blue on other side. Delicate model of a native. Clement's poncho. (Native word) used one this way		Caracas, Venezuela	JH Umber	H.B. Umbering at 20000	Donation	\$200	
62929	1		Three belts sewn together by Americans to make a table scarf. Multicolored. Red predominant	Argon	Bolivia	"	"	"	\$200	
62930	1		Trim (?) belts sewn together (by Americans) to make a table scarf, mostly green, orange, blue & pink	"	"	"	"	"	\$200	
62931	1		long, brown cotton dress like wide decorated red, yellow, & blue neckband & ribbons	Orinda, Panama	Orinda	"	"	"	\$300	made for dressmaker

Herbert's booklet of additional notes and photos (22 pages):

ing on the yarn. This was a common sight on the high-ways. The spindle is of wood.

The miniture trunk is made of raw hide, and was used by travelers, being carried on mule back. Students coming to the schools often traveled for days on mule back and were accompanied by several mules carrying their baggage and personal servants.

To the right is a vase in the form of a bullock. It was obtained from a tumbled down shrine on the hills above La Paz. It was used for holding dried flowers on an alter. It is made of clay.

The candlestick on the left, is also in the form of a bullock, which seems to have religious significance. Deaths in that country must be followed by quick burial; so graves by the roadside are common, and are marked only with a wooden cross and candles. This candle stick was from such a grave. It also is of clay.

The leather flaps are from the end of a bridal rein, the Indians used them for driving mules.

The "Cat-o-nine-tails" is also of leather, and was used by the Roman Catholic devotees among the Aymara Indians for doing penance by lashing the back. Often this whip was also used for punishing slaves.

At the top of the picture is a miniture wooden plow of the kind used by the indians for tiling their soil.

PHOTO NO. 2.

This native musical instrument is made from the back shell of the Armadillo. This "Guitarra" is a cross between a guitar and a mandolin, and was made and used by the Aymara Indians about 1900.

PHOTO NO. 3.

These "Pipas" (pipes) and "Flauta" (flute) were made by the Aymara Indians from bamboo. The Indians played ~~xxxx~~ these instruments alone or in bands. He seldom traveled through the country without his pipes or flute, and was often seen by the wayside filling the air with music. These were collected about 1912.

62808
24531

62881
24531

62927a
24531

62807
24531

62809
24531

62810
24531

62811 62812
24531 24531

62813
24531

PHOTO NO. 6.

Mate cups and Bombillas made by the Aymara Indians for serving Mate, or Paraguayan tea. The dried tea is put in the cup and hot water poured over it. It is then sucked through the silver bombillas or tubes by the guests, and then is passed on to the next one for a refill. It is lack of courtesy to refuse it. The Mate cups are made of gourds

24531

cup 2 - 62814

24531

cup 3 - 62816
24531

bombilla 1 - 62818
24531

2 - 62819

24531

3 - 62817

24531

PHOTO NO. 7.

(1 cup, 2 censos)

These silver cups and censos were made by Native Bolivian ~~xxxxxx~~ silversmiths probably in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Bolivia is rich in silver. Much silver was taken from the Indians at the time of the Spanish Conquest and stored in churchos. After the liberation, this silver was worked up into many beautiful pieces by skilled Indian silversmiths. The coin in the handle of the censor has the date of 1850.

1 - 62820

24531

2 - 62821

24531

3 - 62822

24531

PHOTO NO. 8.

Bolivian silver work. At the top are two shawl pins with dangling fish ornaments. These fish ornaments are of many joints; they are highly prized and rare. They are antique. In the second row are four pure silver shawl pins of antique age. They were used for pinning together shawls or blankets by the Aymara Indians. The blue stone setting at the base of the bowl of the spoon is quite characteristic. These spoons were also used for eating.

missing

The other five silver spoons are of more recent origin, and also are examples of Bolivian silversmith work. The filigree work in two of the handles is of exquisite design. The design of the next handle is hammered in; the last is beaten silver.

Indian

The top center is a silver buckle with llama design. The two rings are of copper and are in the form of coiled snakes.

Of the four silver pins, one is in the shape of a dog, one a flower, one a crucifix, and the last a filigree sun.

shawl pin - 62823
24531

square pin - 62827
24531

dog pin - 62828
24531

flower pin - 62829
24531

crucifix pin - 62893
24531

ring - 62892
24531

2 more shawl pins shown - one brass with a human figure on a chain, one silver with a peacock motif

spoon 1 - 62826
24531

spoon 2 - 62824
24531

spoon 3 - 62825
24531

PHOTO NO. 10.

Arrow heads picked up while traveling across country around Lake Titicaca. They were probably used by the Aymara Indians for hunting and fishing. They are of various shades and shapes. Near the top are three circular stones with holes through them.

PHOTO NO. 11.

Robe made of Vicuna fur. This is made from the fur of the legs of the vicanna, a deer like animal of the high Andes. It is very soft and silky. Fur from other parts of the body might be longer haired and made into other robes.

62920
24531

PHOTO NO. ~~11~~ 12.

Fur robe made from the fur of Peruvian sheep. The Peruvian sheep is similar to the Alaskan sheep. It is white and wooly. This robe was obtained in Bolivia.

62921
24531

PHOTO NO. 13.

Fur rug made from the baby Alpaca of Bolivia. The full grown Alpaca is about the size of a sheep. Its fur is soft and fine, usually black.

PHOTO NO. 14.

This Poncho, colored red, yellow, and green, was made by the Aymara Indian women from wool raised, spun, and woven on the shores of Lake Titicaca. The weaver worked on a primitive loom stretched between posts flat on the ground. It was woven in 1913. Ponchos were worn by men.

62834
24531

PHOTO NO. 15.

This poncho, similar to the one shown in the previous photo, is brown with a colored border.

62835
24531

excepted, produced from rude primitive looms fabrics in so many and such pleasing combinations of colors or employed such a variety of methods of weaving. In gracefulness, beauty and variety their spindles have never been equalled by any people. At Ancon the textile industry may be said to have reached its culmination for the American continent.

A small hand-loom was used by the Peruvian weaver in her work. Nevertheless, on this simple appliance fabrics were made which have never been excelled and which are finer than can be produced to-day. Furthermore, the Peruvian weaver had evolved and made practically every type of fabric known to the modern textile manufacturer - tapestry, embroidery, brocade, gauze, lace, crepe, pile-knot, double-cloth, bobbin-weave, tie dying, fabric painting, and several other techniques not used to-day. Of these the most admirable and frequent are probably the tapestries. The technical processes and the decorative designs afford a large field for the attention of the modern textile designer and manufacturer.

nuts, etc., were placed in the
blanket. The blanket is gray and brown.

PHOTO NO. 17.

A poncho, similar to photos 14 and 15, made by the
Aymara Indians. It is of various shades of red. *Pictured is* 62838
a queen shawl 24531

PHOTO NO. 18.

This Aymara Indian blanket, or Llijllia, was used by
the women for carrying babies on their back. It also
was used for carrying merchandise to or from market.
Used about 1910. The type of weaving and the thin
threads or yarn, indicate this to be very old, of the
type worn by royalty in pre conquest era. 62839
24531

PHOTO NO. 19.

A towel showing block printing on native weaving.
Made by the Aymara Indians. The irregularity of the
printing shows it is handwork. 62840
24531

PHOTO NO. 20.

Double bag, either carried on the arm to hold Coca
leaves, etc., or as saddle bags. Made of wool by
the Aymara Indians, it is woven in many beautiful
colors. 62841
24531

PHOTO NO. 21.

Woolen money bags and caps, made by the Aymara Indians. 62842
One of the money bags is knit in the form of a fish, 24531
with the fins as extra compartments for change. bag 2 - 62843
The caps are knit of wool in many colors. The cap 24531
with the ear flaps is heavily beaded, and was worn by cap 1 - 62845
men out of doors under the hat. The other cap has 24531
no ear flaps, showing that it was for a house servant, cap 2 - 62844
to be worn all the time. 24531

PHOTO NO. 22.

In the top of this photo is a set of festive sleeves,
knit and worn by the Aymara Indians. Worn by men. sleeves - 62846
The many figures knitted into them is marvelous. 24531
To the left are two sets of beaded braids, or trensas, trensa 1 - 62847b
Made of wool and beads of glass by the Aymara women, they 24531
were braided into their braids of hair for decorations. trensa 2 - 62847a
2 24531

sense its use is a drug.
The small purses and festive mittens were knit of wool from sheep and vicunia. About 1910.

PHOTO NO. 23

Aymara Indian sandals. Made of leather, they were worn by indians and natives. When traveling over muddy places they were taken off the feet and carried on the arm.

Pair 1
62853a : 62853b
24531 24531

Pair 2
62852a : 62852b
24531 24531

PHOTO NO 24.

Small model of a dress of an Aymara woman is made of velvet and heavy dress goods. A festive dress is of many colors and always of the same pattern. The skirt is faced with a bright color so that in the whirling movements of the dance it adds one more color to the many shades of six or seven underskirts. Bishop Bristol likened the dancers to poppies.

62854
24531

PHOTO NO. 25.

Slings used by the Aymara herdsman. They may be made of wool of sheep, vicuna, or llamas. If a sheep straggled from the flock the shepherd expertly dropped a stone in front of it and thereby turned the sheep back again.

1 - 62855 2 - 62857 3 - 62856
24531 24531 24531

2 missing

PHOTO NO. 26.

One piece garment and cap, made from the inner bark of a tree by Indians of interior Bolivia. It is stamped with dyes, and is for festive occasions. Obtained about 1920.

2 examples
cap - 62858b
24531
garment - 62858a
24531

PHOTO NO. 27.

Woolen handbag made by Peruvian knitters.

62860
24531

PHOTO NO. 28.

Water pitchers made by the Quechua Indians of Peru. Made about 1900 for native use and sale to tourists. The beautiful figures on these jars are semi-religious. The pitcher to the left has a spout half way down the front.

62862
24531
:
62861
24531

Close up view of two of the pieces of pottery shown in photo 29. Note the head of the snake on one of the handles.

62157
24531

PHOTO NO. 31.

Baskets and water cooler made by the Quechua Indians. The basket work is made of cords of fiber closely wound with straw. The water cooler is pottery with a covering of finely woven straws or grasses. Obtained in Copacobana, Peru.

water cooler - 62865
24531

basket 1 - 62922 2 - 62922 3 - 62922 4 - 62904a 4 (lid) - 62904b
24531 24531 24531 24531 24531

placemat - 62905b
24531

PHOTO NO. 32.

Glazed clay vase, made by Chilean natives. At Christmas time much of the pottery, things in miniature, is sold from booths along the Alameda. The Alameda is an avenue with streets on each side and is lined with trees on both sides. It is really a promenade ground.

where 62926
24531

PHOTO NO. 33.

Glazed clay vase, saucer, and mate cup in miniature size from Santiago, Chile.

1 - 62926 2 - 62926 3 - 62925
24531 24531 24531

PHOTO NO. 34.

In the background is a bottle and a collapsible cup made of horn. The etched patterns of these is done with sharp stones. Obtained in Santiago, Chile. In the foreground is an iron spur used by the Chilean "gauchos" or cowboys.

62884
24531
?
62885
24531

PHOTO NO. 35.

Saddle blanket made by the Araucanian Indians of Chile. Made of wool on fiber base. This type is more like darning a pattern, rather than weaving. It is rare. The Araucanian Indians of southern Chile are well civilized, never yielding to the Spanish yoke, and finally by treaty becoming a part of Chilean government.

62863
24531

PHOTO NO. 37.

A poncho from Caracas, Venezuela. Made of English wool, used by mountain climbers, about 1945. It is also used as a stretcher for carrying wounded or dead. It is dark blue on one side and bright red on the other. The color shown on the outside tells to watchers below what to expect.

62923
24531

PHOTO NO. 38.

A hammock, made of strong cord, from Argentine. Also used as saddlebag or baby's hammock. The comparatively small opening safeguards a small babe.

~~late~~ ^{early} 62867
1900 24531

PHOTO NO. 39.

Branch of the "Lace Tree" of Jamaica. The inner bark as shown may be pulled out into lace or materials for garments. It also may be pulled into a twisted rope as shown below.

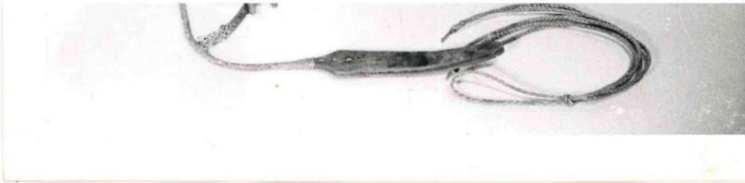
late

PHOTO NO. 40.

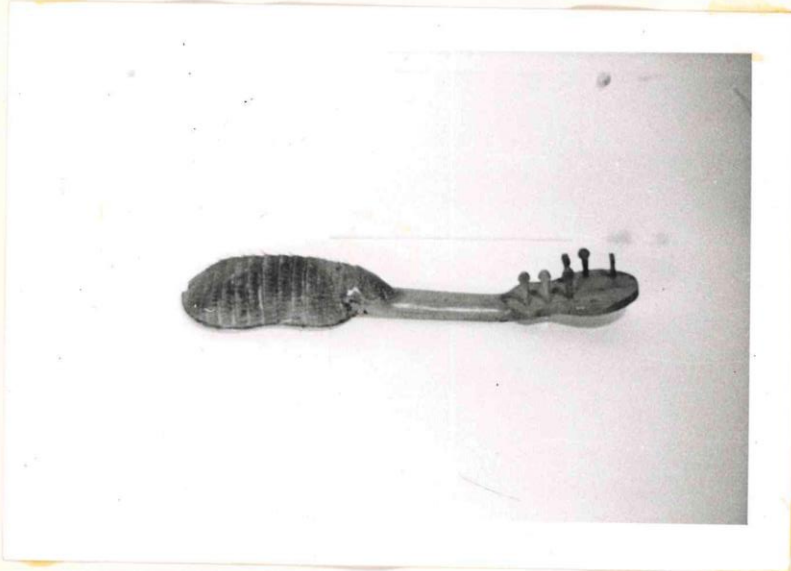
Pair of maracas, made from gourds, by Venezuelan peasants. Obtained in Caracas in 1947. The steady rattle of these gourds is prominent in native music. Sometimes whole bands are comprised of these and the performers exhibit great antics in shaking them. Each gourd has a little different sound. The horse whip is from British Guiana. The model of a native hut and surroundings is also from British Guiana. It is made of rubber. Note the monkey climbing the palm tree for a coconut, the tender of the fire, and the woman grinding their food in a bowl.

late

62873a ? 62873b
24531 24531

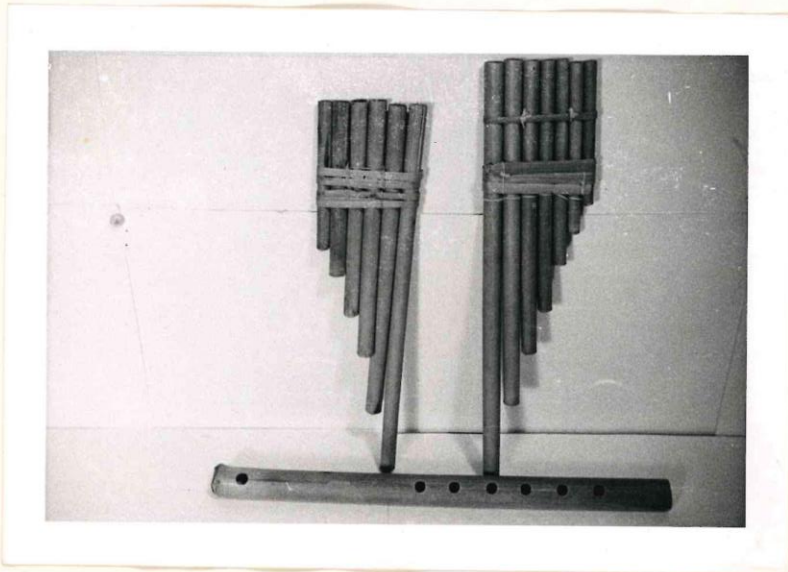


24531
 tails - 62809
 24531



62810
 24531

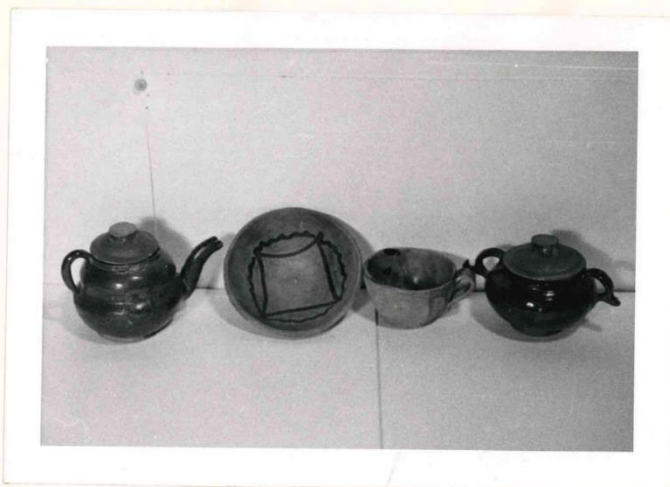
2



left pipe - 62811
 24531
 right pipe - 62812
 24531

3

bottom - 62813
 flute 24531



teapot - $\frac{62923d}{24531}$
 cover

teapot - $\frac{62923c}{24531}$

bowl - $\frac{62831}{24531}$

4 cup - $\frac{62830}{24531}$

sugar bowl - $\frac{62923B}{24531}$
 cover

sugar bowl - $\frac{62923A}{24531}$



$\frac{62933}{24531}$

5



cup 1 - $\frac{62815}{24531}$

cup 2 - $\frac{62814}{24531}$

6 cup 3 - $\frac{62816}{24531}$

Bombilla 1 - $\frac{62818}{24531}$

2 - $\frac{62819}{24531}$

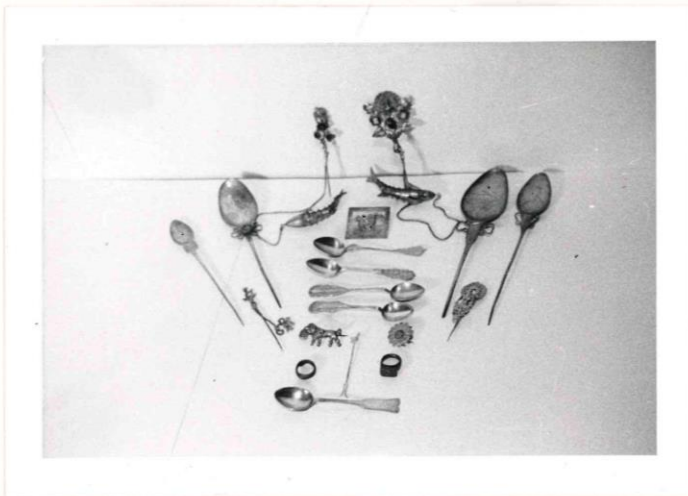
3 - $\frac{62817}{24531}$



1 - $\frac{62820}{24531}$

2 - $\frac{62821}{24531}$

7₃ - $\frac{62822}{24531}$



trawl - $\frac{62823}{24531}$
pin 1

square
pin - $\frac{62827}{24531}$

dog pin - $\frac{62828}{24531}$

flower
pin - $\frac{62829}{24531}$

8
crucifix
pin - $\frac{62893}{24531}$

ring - $\frac{62892}{24531}$

spoon 1 - $\frac{62826}{24531}$

spoon 2 - $\frac{62824}{24531}$

spoon 3 - $\frac{62825}{24531}$

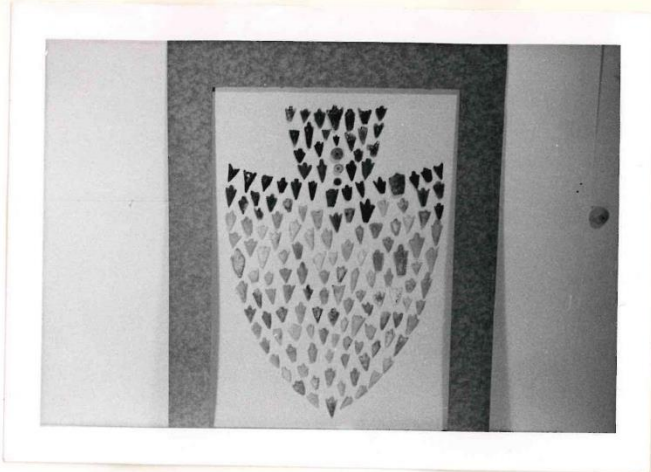


vase 1 - $\frac{62832b}{24531}$

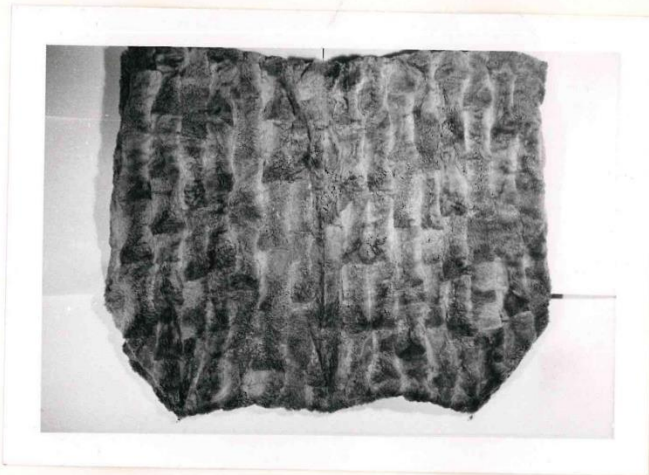
2 - $\frac{62833}{24531}$

9

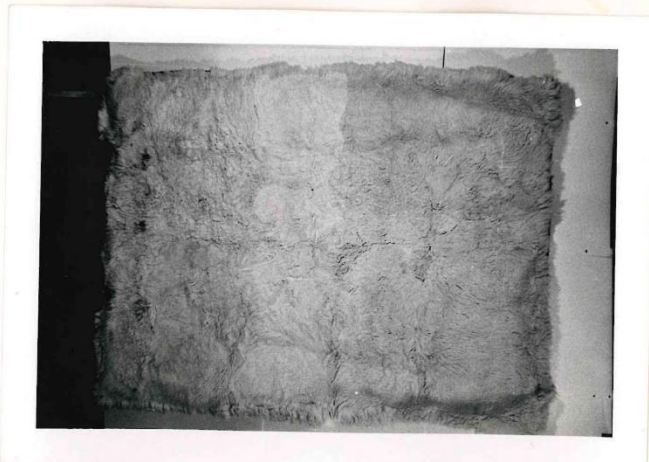
3 - $\frac{62832a}{24531}$



10



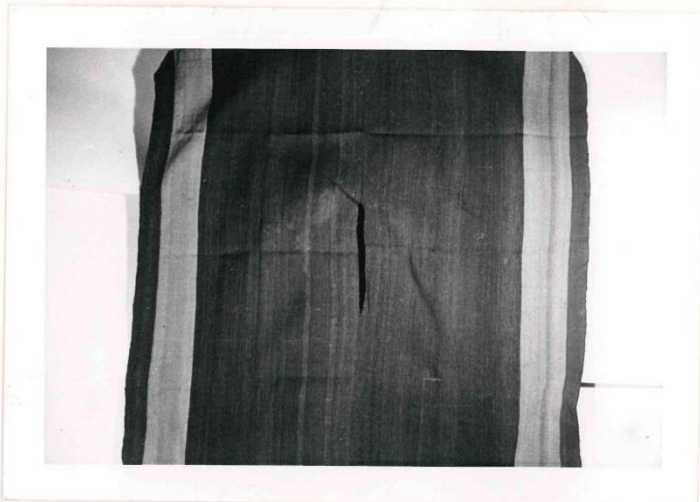
11 $\frac{62920}{24531}$



12 $\frac{62921}{24531}$



13



62834
24531

14



62835
24531

15



62836
24531

16



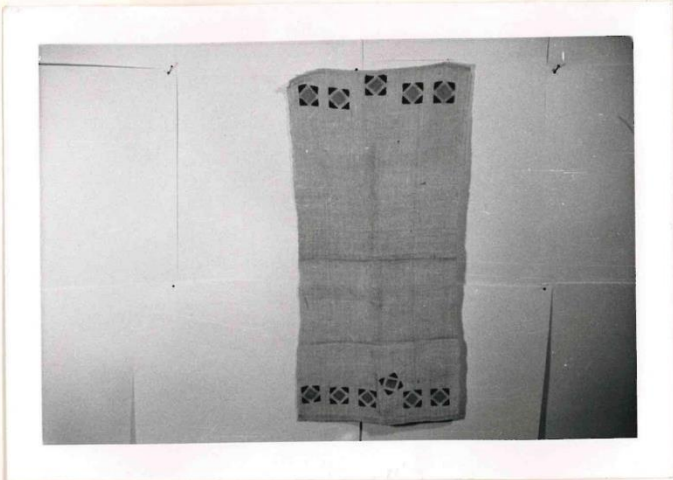
62838
24531

17



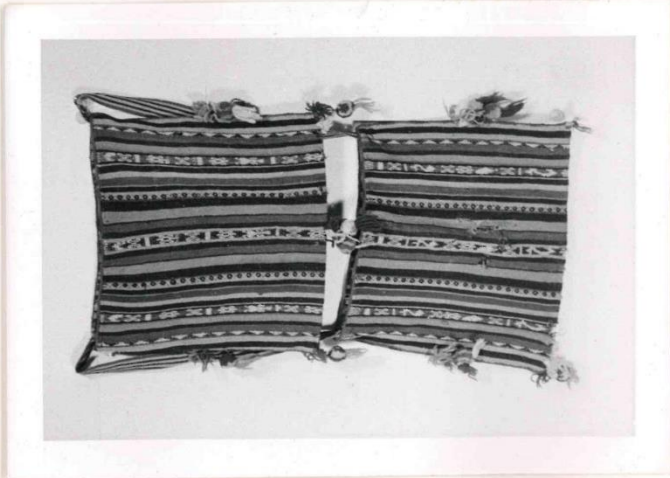
62839
24531

18



62840
24531

19



62841
24531

20



bag 1 - $\frac{62842}{24531}$
bag 2 - $\frac{62843}{24531}$
cap 1 - $\frac{62844}{24531}$
21
cap 2 - $\frac{62844}{24531}$



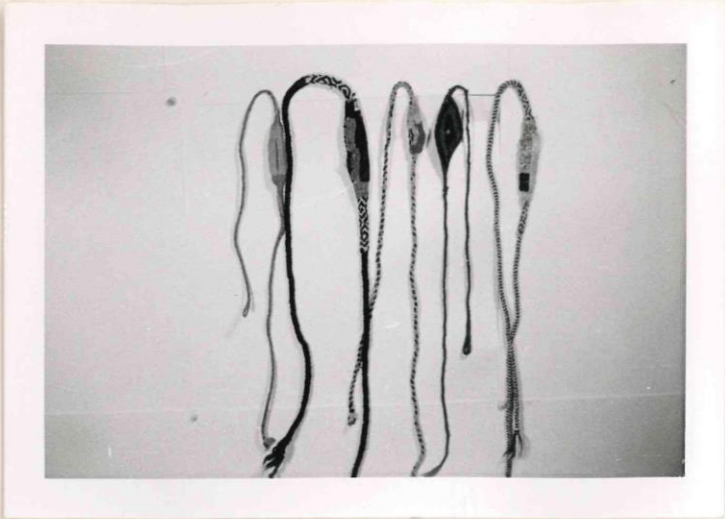
sleeves - $\frac{62846}{24531}$
 tunic 1 - $\frac{62847b}{24531}$
 tunic 2 - $\frac{62847a}{24531}$
 Feathered
 2 2 bag - $\frac{62850}{24531}$
 small
 purse - $\frac{62849}{24531}$
 glove 1 - $\frac{62851a}{24531}$
 glove 2 - $\frac{62851b}{24531}$



Pair 1
 shoe 1 - $\frac{62853b}{24531}$
 shoe 2 - $\frac{62853a}{24531}$
 2 3
 Pair 2
 shoe 1 - $\frac{62852a}{24531}$
 shoe 2 - $\frac{62852b}{24531}$



$\frac{62854}{24531}$
 2 4



1 - 62855
24531

2 - 62857
24531

25 - 3 - 62856
24531



62858b
24531

26 62858a
24531



62860
24531

27



$\frac{62862}{24531}$ $\frac{62861}{24531}$

28



$\frac{62934}{24531}$

29



$\frac{62934}{24531}$

30



basket 1 - 62922
24531

basket 2 - 62922
24531

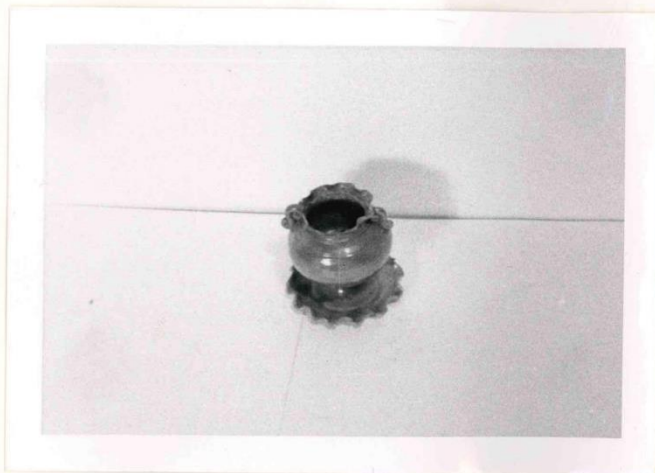
basket 3 - 62922
24531

31 basket 4 - 62904b
lid 24531

basket 4 - 62904a
24531

water cooler - 62869
24531

placemat - 62905b
24531



62926
24531

32



1- 62926
24531

2- 62926
24531

33

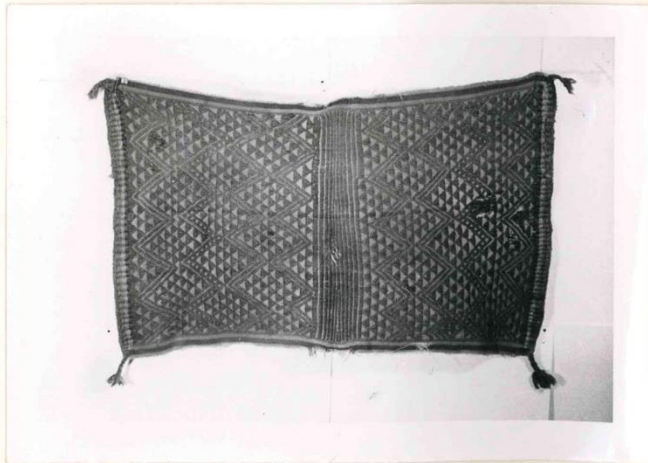
3- 62925
24531

62884
12829
24531

62885
1352
24531

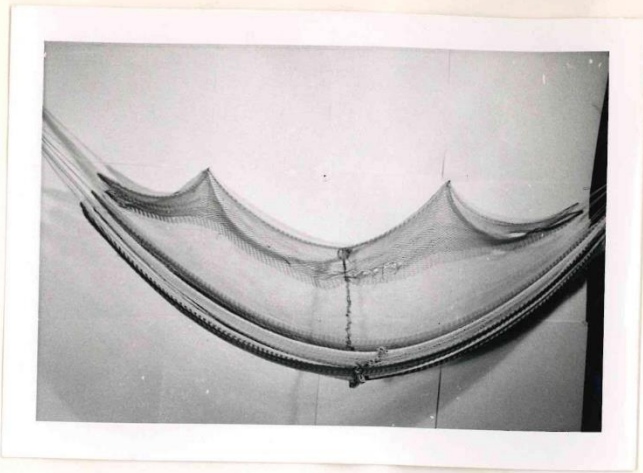


34



62863
24531

35



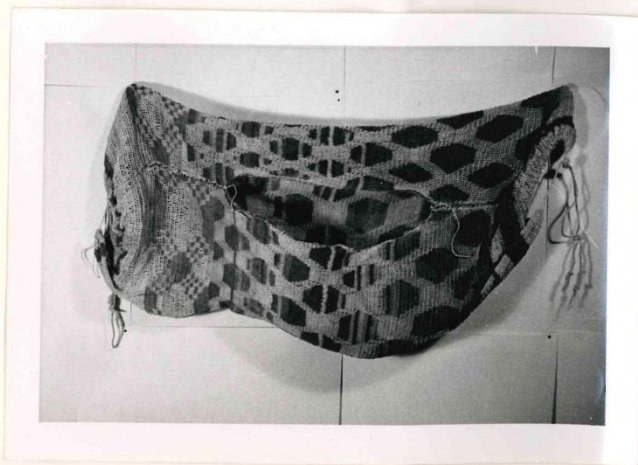
62866
24531

36



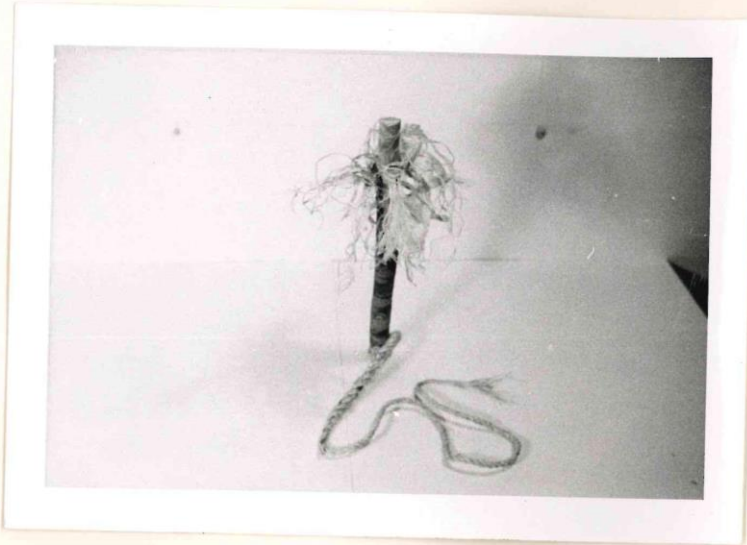
62928
24531

37



62867
24531

38



39



40

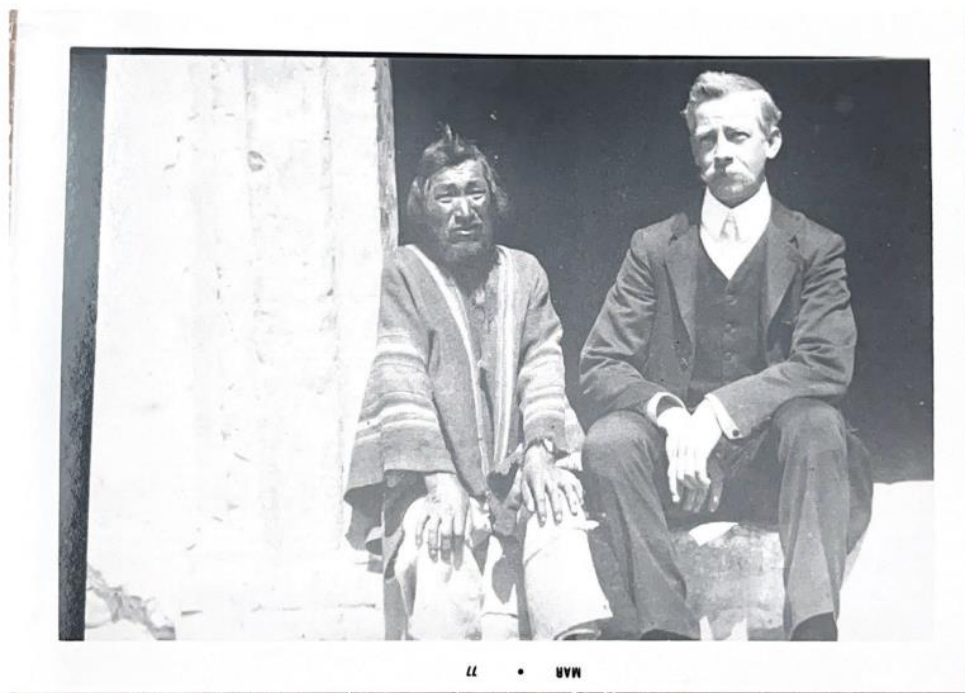
62873b
24531

62873ba
24531

Copies of the Wenbergs' photographs provided by Herbert to the MPM (32 photos):
No additional notes provided by Herbert.



Print of a photograph of an unknown man. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



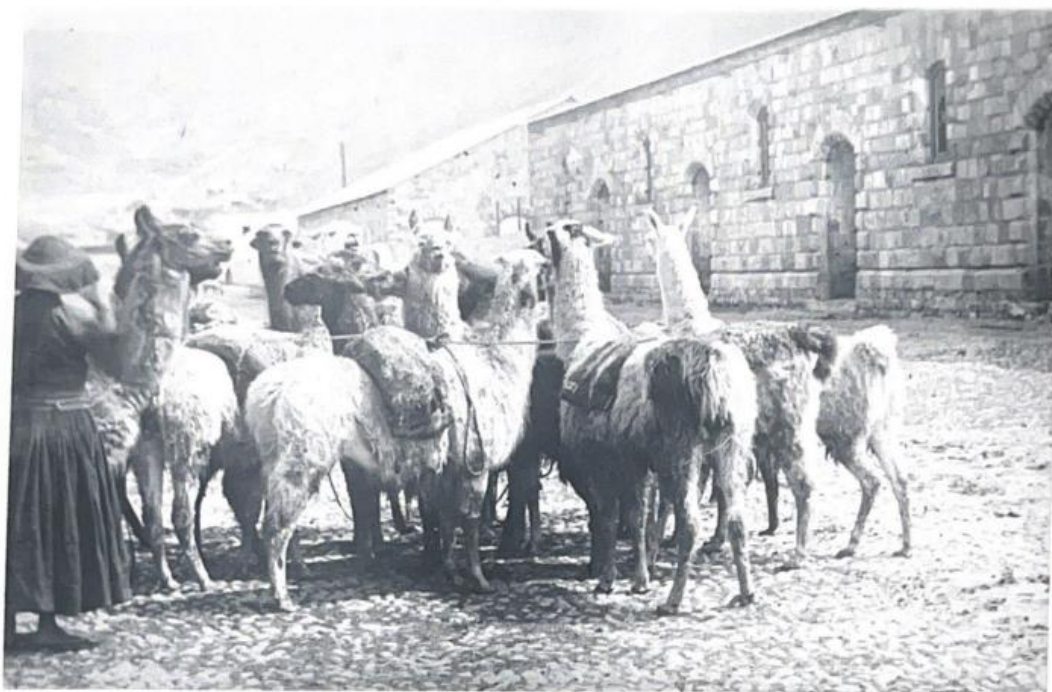
Print of a photograph of Hugo (right) seated next to a Quechua chapel keeper, according to a Wenberg family scrapbook. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unknown man. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of a group of unknown children. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



LL • MVM

Print of a photograph of a group of llamas. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



LL • MVM

Print of a photograph of a group of unknown Aymara women and children. Undated. Unknown photographer. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



77 • MAR

Print of a photograph of an unknown person. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of two reed boats in Lake Titicaca, taken in Guatajata according to a Wenberg family scrapbook. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.

MAR • 77



Print of a photograph of three unknown people. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



11 • 1111

Print of a photograph taken on the way to a vacation in Chulumani, according to Edna's diary. From left to right: an unknown Bolivian man, Edna Wenberg, Mr. and Mrs. Merubia. November 1909. Photographer presumed to be Hugo Wenberg. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



11 • 1111

Print of a photograph of two unknown men on a reed boat. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



11 • 1111

Print of a photograph of two unknown people transporting a mule on a reed boat. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of Hugo seated on a horse during his time as a corporal, according to a Wenberg family scrapbook. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of two unknown people leading two oxen. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of three reed boats with unknown people. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of a group of unknown men wearing feather bonnets and Native American dress. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unknown man and woman. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of the Wenbergs' three sons dressed in Ponca dance costumes, according to a Wenberg family scrapbook. From left to right: Ernest, Edwin, and Herbert Wenberg. Edwin is wearing E62918. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of two baskets. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph showing the back of the Wenberg children's Ponca dance costumes. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of a basket. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unidentified human skull. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of two baskets. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.

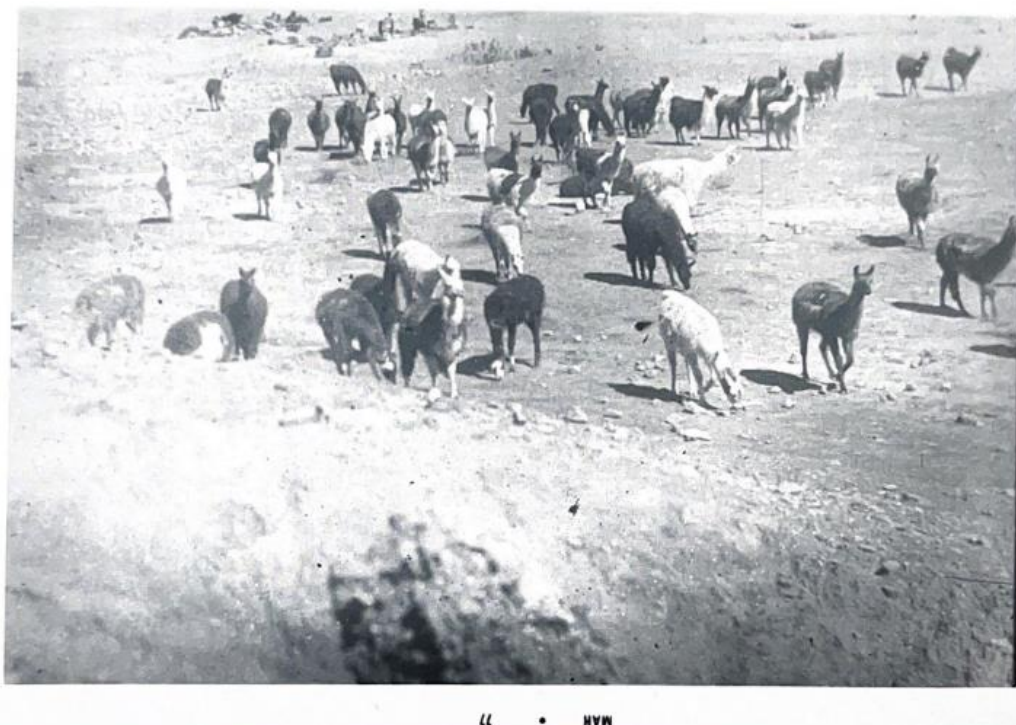


“ • ”

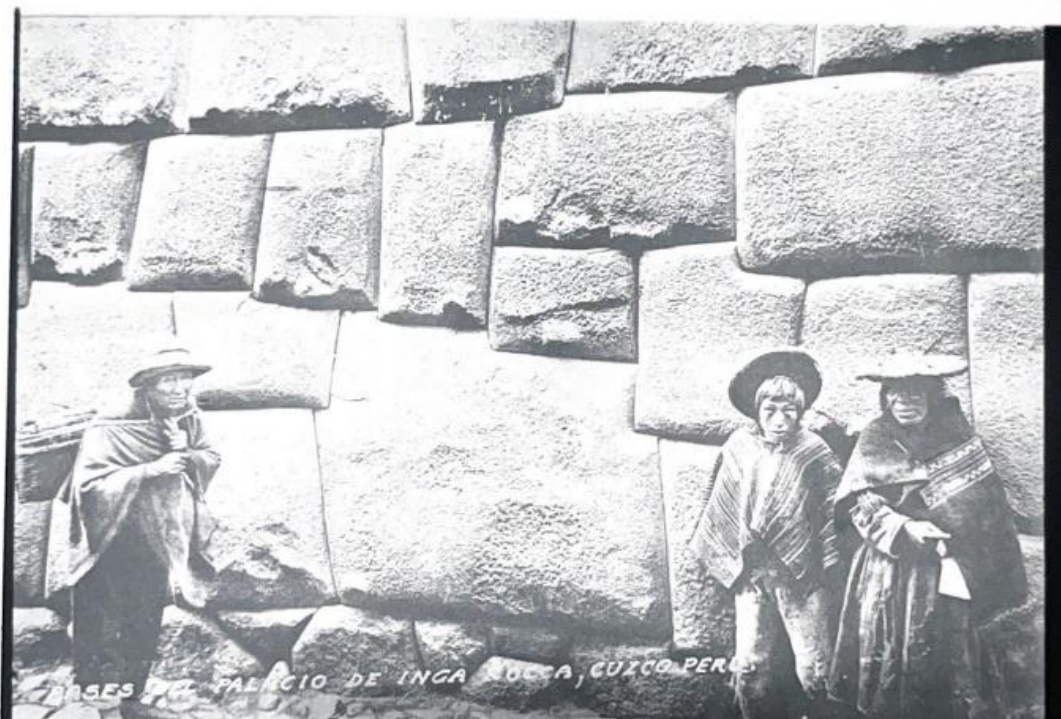
Print of a photograph of an unidentified shrine. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unidentified shrine or grave with two human skulls. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.

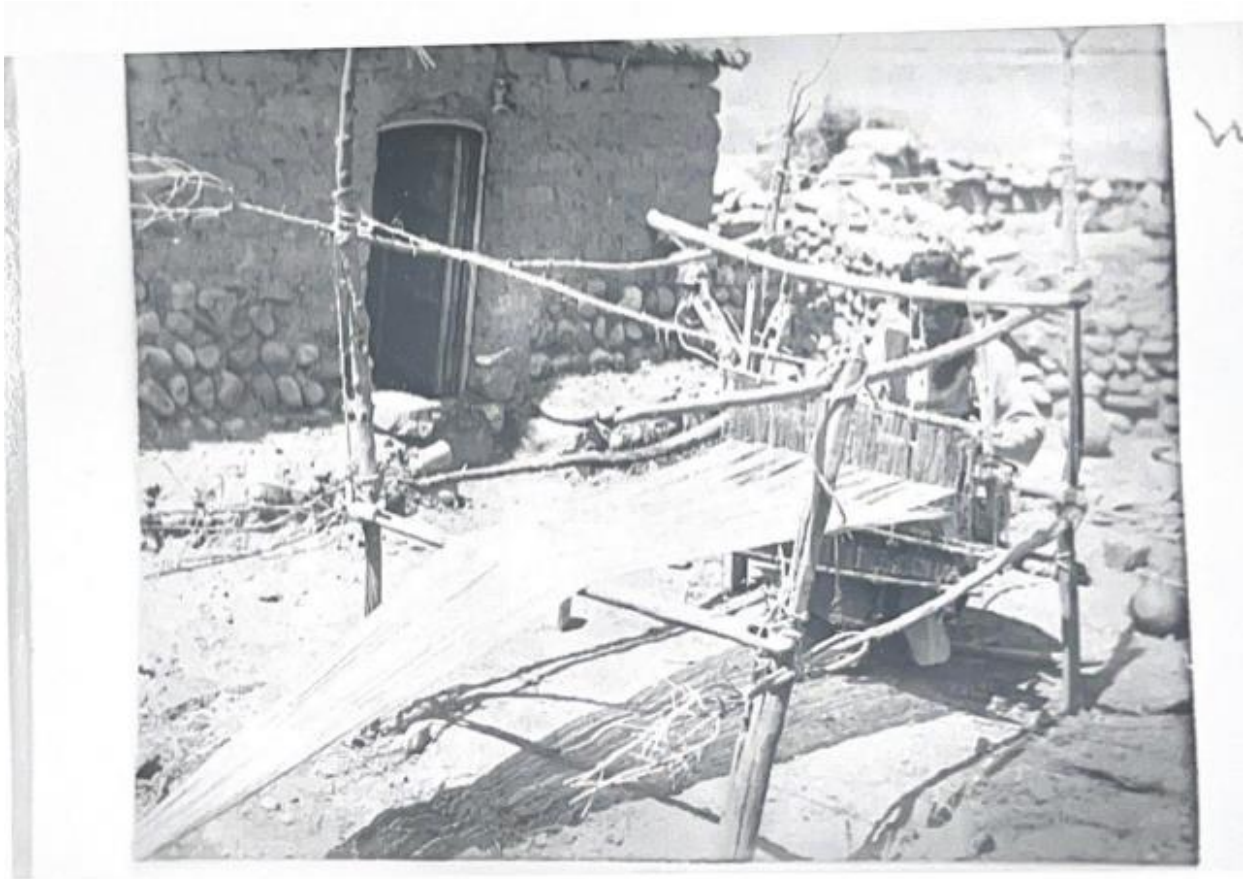


Print of a photograph of a herd of llamas. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



LL • NYM

Print of a photograph of three unidentified people in front of a stone wall. In white pen across the bottom is written: "BASES DEL PALACIO DE INCA ROCCA, CUZCO PERU." Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unidentified person seated at a loom. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of a group of unidentified people seated around a loom. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of a group of unidentified people gathered around a loom. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



“ • WYH
Print of a photograph of four unidentified Quechua women in traditional dress. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.



Print of a photograph of an unidentified woman seated at a loom. According to a Wenberg family scrapbook, this woman was weaving a poncho for the Wenbergs. Undated. Photographer unknown. Print housed in the MPM Anthropology Department. Access provided by the MPM.

Letters between Herbert Wenberg and Nancy Lurie Oestrich (7):

MUS
Donor
file

Herbert B. Wenberg

R. 1, Otter Drive
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981
December 22, 1976

~~Herbert B. Wenberg~~
ANTHRO

The Milwaukee Public Museum
800 West Wells St.
Milwaukee, Wis.

Gentlemen;

During the period of about 1900 to 1918 my father was a col-
porteur, teacher, and missionary in South America, principally
in Argentine, Peru, and Bolivia. My mother was a teacher in
Chile and Bolivia. Both of them collected many curios during
this period. Many of the things they collected have since
been dissarded because of wear, attack of moths, lost,
or stolen.

Now I have what remains. I am retired and in poor
health, and would like to see these curios in a better home.
I have photos and a very brief discription of each in booklet
form, and if you are interested, I would be pleased to sent
to you. Of course there are a few items I would like to
keep.

Very truly yours,

Herbert B. Wenberg
Herbert B. Wenberg

Call

MVS
Donor file

Jan. 6, 1977

Herbert B. Wenberg
R. 1 Otter Drive
Waupaca, WI. 54981

Dear Mr. Wenberg:

The holidays delayed my replying to you. It is very kind of you to think of the Milwaukee Public Museum in connection with the items collected by your parents in South America. Your letter was passed on to me, but it is possible that some of the materials would be more appropriate to our History Department's collections. Therefore, we would really appreciate it if you could send us the booklet you mentioned in your letter describing the items.

I assume from your letter that if the materials are appropriate to our collections, you would donate them to the museum. In such case, the Museum provides a statement for you to use for tax deduction purposes with the IRS.

I will be on research leave the rest of this week and all of next week and will be back in my office Jan. 17. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Nancy Oestreich Lurie
Curator, Anthropology

Donor

Herbert B. Wenberg

R. 1, Otter Drive
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981
January 18, 1977

Ms Nancy Oestreich Lurie, Curator
Milwaukee Public Museum
800 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Dear Ms. Lurie;

Thank you for your letter of January 6th, concerning the curios my father and mother collected while in South America.

I am inclosing a booklet, including photographs, which I made up several years ago, with whatever information I could gather at the time concerning the various pieces. I note various pieces were omitted. Bow and arrow set from Chaco in Northern Argentine, and, I believe, a wooden war club for throwing from the same location. A whip, made from the dried penis of the bull, twisted to cut the flesh, used by the Spaiard descendants to beat the Indians (slaves who worked the various farms). A small model (about 30 inches) of a Balsa, made of native materials, used by the Indians for sailing on Lake Titicaca. There may be more I will find when I unpack the curios.

Yes, I plan to donate these items to the Museum.

Very truly yours,

Herbert Wenberg
Herbert Wenberg

Mus.
Donor

Jan. 20, 1977

Mr. Herbert B. Wenberg
R. 1, Otter Drive
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981

Dear Mr. Wenberg:

Would that all potential donors had such a fine sense of the need for documentation that you have! We would be delighted to accept your collection. As you probably realize, we get a lot of inquiries from people cleaning attics and settling estates wanting to give us things they don't want but don't feel they can throw away. Usually, they have only vague notions of what things are, where they came from and when they were acquired. Your beautifully documented inventory and photos are a curator's dream. Your materials will get excellent attention here and will serve many useful purposes for exhibit and, more importantly, for comparative study by scholarly researchers. I am sure that we would also be interested in any things not listed as yet.

Now, the next thing is how to get the things to the museum. I would like to talk with you a bit too about your parents' work for further documentation of the collection. Unless for some reason you are in a hurry to get this taken care of, I would like to suggest that when the weather improves in the spring, April or May, I could drive up to Waupaca. I think it would be possible to get everything in boxes in my car. Meanwhile, I assume it is all right to keep your booklet. If you want it back, I would like to copy it. I can bring packing boxes with me when I come to Waupaca if this arrangement is agreeable to you.

Unless you would like to make some other arrangements, I will call you in March and we can work out a date convenient for you when I can drive to Waupaca.

Many thanks for thinking of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Sincerely,

Nancy Oestreich Lurie
Nancy Oestreich Lurie
Curator, Anthropology

Ms.
Donor

Herbert B. Wenberg

R. 1, Otter Drive
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981

January 28, 1977

Ms. Nancy Gestreich Lurie
Curator, Anthropology
Milwaukee Public Museum
800 W. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wis. 53233

Dear Ms. Lurie;

Thank you for your letter of January 20th. I am certainly pleased that these curios will finally find a home in Milwaukee.

I believe the arrangements you outlined in your letter to be most satisfactory, and will look forward to meeting you in April or May.

You are most welcome to keep the booklet. I will try to obtain more information for you before you visit us.

Very truly yours,

Herbert B. Wenberg
Herbert B. Wenberg

Herbert B. Wenberg

R. 1, Otter Drive
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981

June 2, 1977

Ms. Nancy Oestreich Lurie
Curator, Anthropology
Milwaukee Public Museum
800 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI, 53233
Dear Ms. Lurie,

We certainly enjoyed having you and your mother here recently, and hope we can meet you again.

There were so many things we had to talk about that several items did not get fully explained. So, I am inclosing photographs (photographs of photographs) and further descriptive material. In order to keep the proper continuity I will start with number 77, with the weaving of one of the ponchos and the Balsas, followed by the Ponca dancing suits, and ending with photographs of Oneida basketry, which were not included in the things you took with you.

Concerning the Ponca Dancing Suit, you took (front veiw) the one in the center and the head-dress on the right, or, (rear view) the suit on the right and the head-dress on me in the center. John and Margaret Bull directed the making of these suits, and John made the head-dresses from his. The moccasins were made by another Ponca woman, I don't remember her name. This reminds me, you were going to see if you had the address of to whom I should write to get a permit to keep my eagle feathers.

We hope the items you took will serve to increase our knowledge of the South American Indian. If so, my Father and Mother would be greatly pleased.

Very truly yours,

Herbert Wenberg
Herbert Wenberg

ASK
Mother

- 77- Weaving one of the ponchos at Guatajata, or Quatajata, (pronounced Guatahata), the farm on which we lived in Bolivia. I believe this poncho to be the bright red one with the broad yellow stripe
- 78- The same poncho
- 79- Another view of the same poncho
- 80- Another loom, Aymara in Bolivia
- 81- Balsas, showing the two sticks as masts
- 82- A reference to John Bull, who made our head-dresses. This is from THE PONCA TRIBE by James Howard, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 195. I assume you have this book at the Museum.
- 83- Plate 16 from the above book. John Bull is in the center back without a head-dress
- 84- John and Margaret Bull, photograph taken in the early 1920s in front of the mission house at White Eagle, Oklahoma
- 85- The three Wenberg boys dressed in suits made under the direction of John and Margaret Bull. Left to right, Ernest, Edwin, Herbert
- 86- Back view. Left to right, Ernest, Herbert, Edwin
- 87- Oneida basketry. Left a utility basket and right a waste paper basket
- 88- Oneida basketry. Hamper
- 89- Oneida basketry. Two market baskets, or more likely, for picking beans for the cannery

Put in
accession
corres- file

HERBERT B. WENBERG

Route One, Otter Drive, Box 674

WAUPACA, WISCONSIN 54981

February 23, 1979

Dr. Nancy Gestreich Lurie
Curator, Anthropology
Milwaukee Public Museum
800 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI, 53233

Dear Dr. Lurie;

I have been recently cleaning out my files, and have come across the inclosed booklet, which may be of some value to those working on my parent's curios. If you already have one, throw this away.

I am still hoping to get down to the museum some day, as all reports praise it highly.

It is not necessary that you acknowledge this letter.

Respectfully yours,

Herbert Wenberg

C. 6a 1160
Peruvian textiles

Appendix B: Additional Object Photos and Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all photos taken by author.

E62805 Wooden Spindle, Aymara



E62810 back view: "Guitarra", Aymara, ca. 1900

Note: MPM documents describe it as a guitarra, however, this instrument is more often called a charango.



E62810 front view:



E62814: mate cup, Aymara



E62815: Mate cup, Aymara



E2816: Mate cup, Aymara

MPM documents note the inscription as “Helicidad” however it is more likely “Felicidad” (celebrate).



E62817: "Bombilla" used in drinking mate, Aymara



E62818: Bombilla, Aymara



Spoon detail:



E62819: Silver bombilla, Aymara



E62820: Silver cup, marked "D.R.", "Native Bolivian"



E62820 detail of inscription:



E6821 silver censor, "Native Bolivian", c. late 19th century:

Note: MPM documents list it as a censor, but it is a chalice.



Detail of attached coin:



E62822: silver censor, "Native Bolivian", c. late 19th century.



Detail of attached coin:



E62823: silver shawl pin, "Native Bolivian" La Paz, Bolivia.

Currently on Exhibit at MPM.

Photo courtesy of Alyssa Rieger.



E62827: silver pin, Peru.

Marked "Industria Peruana", .925 silver.



E62828: Silver pin, Aymara, Bolivia.



E62830: Pottery cup, Aymara, Guatajata, Bolivia c. 1912-1913.



E62831: Pottery bowl, Aymara, Guatajata, Bolivia, c. 1912-1913.



E62854: model of women's festive dress, Aymara, Bolivia.



E62858a: Barkcloth garment, Chácobo, Bolivia, c. 1920.



E62858b: Barkcloth cap, Chácobo, Bolivia, c. 1920.



E62869: Woolen belt, Aymara, Bolivia.



E62871: Woolen belt, Aymara, Bolivia.



E62872: Doll, Aymara, Bolivia.

Described as a “devil doll”.



E62880: Lot of 3 copper shawl pins, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia.



E62881: Bull-shaped vase, La Paz, Bolivia.

According to Herbert, was obtained from a crumbled shrine in the hills near La Paz, and was used to hold flowers on an altar.



E62886: Wooden comb, Bolivia, c. 1910. Made by a prisoner.



E62888: Strip of lace drawn work, Bolivia.



E62889: Cutwork lace doily, Bolivia.



E62890: Cutwork lace doily, Bolivia.



E62895: Crucifix, Bolivia.



E62896: Crucifix, Boliva.



E62897: Cross, copper, Bolivia.
Noted incorrectly as being a crucifix.



E62898: Piece of a broken crucifix, Bolivia.



E62899: Rosary, Bolivia.
Medal depicts "Senora de los Dolores" (Our Lady of Sorrows).



Detail of medal:



E62900: Child's rosary, Bolivia.

Centerpiece version of the "Miraculous Medal".



Detail of centerpiece medal:



E62903: Lot of 48 miniatures, Bolivia.

Partial lot, 23 miniatures on display at the MPM:

Photo courtesy of Alyssa Reiger.



Partial lot 25 miniatures in MPM storage:



Individual images of 25 miniatures in MPM storage:



Individual miniatures continued:



Individual miniatures continued:



Individual miniatures continued:



Individual miniatures continued:



Individual miniatures continued:



E62915: beaded belt, Oneida, Oklahoma, c. 1922-1926.
Made by Minnie Elm.
Photo courtesy of Alyssa Rieger.



E62916: Red satin shawl, Oneida, Oklahoma, c. 1922-1926.
Made by Melissa Cornelius for Edna Wenberg.
Photo courtesy of Alyssa Rieger.



E62917: Hawk feather bonnet, Oneida, Oklahoma, c. 1922-1926.
Made by Cornelius Wheelock for Hugo Wenberg.
Photo courtesy of Alyssa Reiger.



Hugo pictured wearing E62917:
Photo courtesy of Neil Wenberg.



E62918a-i: Ponca dance costume, Whiteagle, Oklahoma, c. 1922.

Made by John Bull for Herbert's brother, Edwin (who the MPM accession notes lists as George).

Photos courtesy of Alyssa Reiger.

Headdress:



Shirt:



Vest:



Apron:



Costume tail:



Leggings:



Moccasins:



The Wenberg children in Ponca dance costumes:
From left to right: Ernest, Edwin, and Herbert.
Edwin is wearing E62918.

Photo provided to the MPM by Herbert Wenberg.



E62919: mirror, Aymara, Bolivia.

According to Herbert, was left as an offering to spirits at a shrine near a ridge.



E62923a-d: Cream and sugar containers, Aymara, Guatajata, Bolivia, c. 1912.



E62925: Mate cup, Quechua, Santiago, Chile.



E62933: Lot of 4 pots, Bolivia.



E62934: Lot of 11 pots, Quechua, Puno, Peru. Possibly archaeological.



H30906: Scapular, South America.

