

## Werk

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ON  
THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL COLLECTION OF THE  
PHYSIOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF GÖTTINGEN,  
BY  
PROFESSOR RUDOLPH WAGNER.

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WHEN after the death of the respected Blumenbach (Jan. 22, 1840) the undersigned received his summons to this University, and entered upon his present post in the autumn of 1840, the collection of the venerable naturalist had previously by the care of the Curatorium been purchased from the heirs, and the greater part of it had already been incorporated in the Academical Institute. The most valuable part of it was undeniably the collection of skulls, which Blumenbach, supported by pupils of his scattered over all parts of the world, and other numerous donors, had been collecting zealously for his whole life, and which it is well known had served him as the principal foundation for his investigations on the natural history of mankind. Together with the Craniological Collection there was ranked a more extensive body of materials for completing the knowledge of the different accompanying conditions of form and structure in respect of Ethnology, and for illustrating the Lectures on the General Natural History of Mankind.

Already, in 1795, Blumenbach had given a sketch of this, as well of the Craniological Collection, which he incorporated with the third edition of his famous treatise *De generis humani varietate nativa*, under the title *Index suppellectilis anthropologicae*

*auctoris, qua in adornanda nova hacce editione maxime usus est.* He divided the apparatus into five parts. The first division comprised the eighty-two race-skulls then existing in his Collection, separately detailed, and of which he had already represented thirty in the three first Decades of his *Decades craniorum*. Blumenbach here remarked that his craniological collection was unique of its kind, and that the richest museums of that sort then in Europe, namely, the anatomical collections of John Hunter and Peter Camper could not be compared with it. The other divisions of the so-called anthropological collection consisted of anatomical preparations, specimens of the skin and hair of different nations, and some embryos; then, very good drawings, especially some by the hand, paintings, also engravings, and besides excellent portraits of distinguished individuals of different nations of our planet, executed in water-colours, oil, and crayons.

All this material was handed over by the heirs to the University, and likewise most of the original manuscripts of Blumenbach's works on general natural history, and upon the races of man: they were first of all deposited in the rooms of the academical museum allotted to me, until the erection of the physiological institute in which the whole collection was arranged in the year 1842; where it remains in its entirety under the name of the Blumenbachian Anthropological Museum, in lasting remembrance of that highly deserving man. At present it fills two rooms. In the first room are the skulls, arranged in cabinets on the walls; outside which in like manner stand a collection of plaster casts; and in the middle are some mummies: whilst the other room contains the remaining objects, especially the portraits. From what Blumenbach himself left we have 245 whole skulls and fragments, and an Egyptian and Guanche mummy.

So far as my means and the great difficulty of making acquisitions in an inland country, have permitted, I have endeavoured to make the Collection still more complete. But up to the present time I have been only moderately successful. By purchase we have obtained some interesting mummies and skulls from Peru,

which Dr von Tschudi had collected; and I have lately received as a legacy from Professor de Fremery in Utrecht some skulls and the skeleton of a negro. H. M. King Louis of Bavaria, liberal as he had already shown himself in donations to Blumenbach, sent us some years ago seven in part very well preserved skulls from an old cemetery at Nordendorf on the Lech (probably of the second and third century), which were found on the occasion of making the railroad. His Highness the Graf von Görtz Schlitz, who as a pupil of our high school had always kept up a friendly recollection of it, sent us five old Peruvian skulls, which he had dug up himself on the spot, and in the place, on his voyage round the world. Professor Carl Schmidt of Dorpat, likewise a pupil of the Georgia Augusta, presented us with two Lett skulls; Professor Bidder, of Dorpat, added to them an Esthonian skull. To my brother, Dr Moritz Wagner, we owe two skulls from the Crimea and a Greek skull. In this way, and by some recently prepared skulls, some of them murderers for example, the number of skulls and fragments of skulls has reached 310.

The want of skeletons has always been very great; the few left behind by Blumenbach were very defective and useless. Now the Collection possesses several Europeans of different ages, and a well-prepared negro skeleton.

Besides the Egyptian and Guanche mummies we have three Peruvian mummies. Some mummified heads, for example one of a New Zealander, some negro heads in spirits of wine, &c.

As for the Craniological Collection, it can no longer pass for the richest existing. That of Morton, which is now in Philadelphia, is already much richer. Still it has much that is interesting, as will be seen from the following summary, in which, for the most part, I follow the old arrangement of Blumenbach.

## A. PEOPLES OF THE OLD WORLD.

## I. Caucasian Races (Indo-Atlantic peoples).

2 Indian.	1 Icelander.
1 Persian.	1 Norwegian.
3 Georgian.	8 Hollander.
1 Lesghi.	1 Wend.
1 Armenian.	1 Bohemian.
4 Gipsy.	3 Hungarian.
5 Greek.	1 Pole.
6 Turk.	4 Lithuanian.
7 Italian.	1 Esthonian.
1 Old Etruscan.	2 Slavonian.
5 Old Roman.	2 Galician.
6 French.	22 Russian.
1 Lotharingian.	5 Cossack.
1 Burgundian.	3 Finns.
1 Spaniard.	4 Lapps.
3 English.	2 Old Tschudi.
1 Irish.	1 Bulgarian.
5 Scot.	4 Jew.
1 Hebridean.	4 Egyptian mummy skulls.
1 Dane.	The remainder German.

## II. Mongolian Races (Asiatic nations).

10 Tartar.	1 Korak.
7 Calmuck.	2 Tungus.
2 Baschkir.	1 Yakute.
1 Samoiede.	1 Burat.
1 Kamtschatdale.	2 Burman.
1 Tschuvasch.	9 Chinese.

## III. Woolly-haired African Nations (Ethiopian race).

16 Negro skulls.	1 Hottentot.
1 Mulatto.	1 Bushman.
1 Kafir.	

## B. PEOPLES OF THE NEW WORLD.

## IV. Americans.

3 Esquimaux.	1 Mexican.
4 Greenlanders.	3 Schitgaganen.
1 Kornäger from Kadjäk.	2 Algonquin.
1 Illinois.	1 Iroquois.
4 From Missouri.	1 Modern Peruvian.
2 From Columbia River (artificially flattened).	8 Chincha-Peruvian (some artif. deformed).
2 Carib (one artificially flattened).	1 Ature.
1 Huanca (Peru, artif. deformed).	1 Botocudo.
	6 Brazilian.
	1 From Guiana.

## V. Malays and South-Sea Islanders.

6 Javanese.	1 From Otaheite.
3 From Bali.	2 Nukuhiva.
2 From Celebes.	2 From New Holland.
1 Mestizo from Celebes.	1 Papuan.
2 From Madeira.	

The remaining skulls have reference to congenital departures from the ordinary form, or pathological alterations, as microcephaly, hydrocephalus, &c.

In the original collection the plastic representation of the outward forms of races was limited to one bust of a negro and one of a Botocudo, both moreover of indifferent workmanship.

Much credit is due to Professor von Launitz of Frankfort for his exertions in promoting this above all important, but very much neglected means of forwarding the knowledge of the natural history of mankind by the aid of plaster-casts. He has executed a new though even now unfortunately small series of race-busts with great fidelity to nature and artistic handling, from individuals who came in his way at Frankfort.

I have obtained some beautiful casts for our collection of busts executed by Herr von Launitz. They are as follows :

Benjamin Gattegna, Constantinopolitan Jew.

Grossman, Jew.

Muhamed, Bedouin.

Hassan, Nubian.

Abdallah, Negro.

Zeno Orego, bearded negro from Guadaloupe.

Native North-American.

Chinese.

Cast from the head of a Chinese.

A Gipsy Girl.

Model of the face of an Hungarian, by Fr. Küsthardt, done by a young sculptor of Göttingen.

A Phrenological Collection, based upon genuine busts after the life, is now for the first time in process of being made. The above-named young artist, Fr. Küsthardt, has already got some materials together for it. There is no department so much in want of critically selected materials as this, which has been so seldom treated scientifically.

Another kind of collection, which is now equally for the first time projected, would be that of the form of the foreheads in different individuals. A number of foreheads with the form preserved as much as possible is ready collected, and it seems that a careful comparison of the foreheads of different individuals might really lead to very interesting results, on which perhaps I may say more at another opportunity. Unfortunately no one in Europe appears as yet to have thought of making a collection of race-foreheads of any

size, though this must be an important business for the future.

I have also endeavoured to promote the collection of representations of different nations and tried to complete it, and consequently have had the necessity of instruction or education especially before my eyes.

With the interest, which very lately the natural history of Ethnography has excited, in consequence of the notorious disputes about the origin of mankind, I became particularly alive to the necessity of anthropological collections of that sort. Much lies scattered in private collections in Holland and England, and a fresh youthful vigour which would give itself up with zeal and a spirit of investigation to this task, and study the museums in Europe and North America with this object, might bring interesting results to light. I had in earlier years proposed to myself the task at some time or other of editing an anatomy of the races and nations of man, and looked upon my natural history of mankind, published twenty-six years ago, as a juvenile prelude. But the difficulties, first of getting together sufficient materials and then of inspecting with that object all the public and private collections in Europe were so great, that I have long since been obliged to give up this plan, especially since my health has for some years past begun to fail me. The preservation and enlarging of the Blumenbachian Museum, and the utilization of the same partly for the purposes of instruction and partly for foreign inquirers, I have considered incumbent on me as a positive duty. In general, however, the furtherance of anatomical, physiological and zoological investigation in the last ten years has been turned so much in other directions, that the Collection has been used less than I could have wished both by native and foreign students, and in fact has only been honoured with an ordinary inspection. I have, however, pleasure in mentioning these gentlemen: Henle, Huschke, Van der Hoeven, Retzius, Tourtual, Von Tschudi, and Andr. Wagner, who, sometimes in my company, and sometimes alone, have gone through



our Collection, and in part have made public use of it for their own inquiries.

The notice given of it now is perhaps sufficient to attract anew the attention of foreign inquirers to our little museum. It seems scarcely necessary to remark that our material is much too scanty for any extended questions upon the individuality and affinity of the nations of our planet. We must have not single, but hundreds of skulls of one and the same nation, to settle certain questions. Blumenbach, with the eye of genius, though from very slender materials, early drew the ground lines, and accurately recognized the typical differences. We have only got beyond Blumenbach's investigations and results in some particulars, and on the whole not much and not essentially. The longer we busy ourselves about the subject, the more again and again we shall have to come back to the ground-plan and the divisions of Blumenbach. Still here I must mention above all as to the present time the works of the famous Retzius<sup>1</sup> in Stockholm, who has himself got together a great apparatus, and must be considered at present as by far the greatest proficient in scientific ethnology.

With respect to our Collection I may remark, that its greatest wealth and value consists in the skulls of Asiatic (Mongolian) nations, which—perhaps with the exception of that of St Petersburg—are still probably very uncommon in all collections. Nearly all these skulls came from a grateful pupil of Blumenbach, whom he often mentions, the imperial physician, Dr von Asch, in St Petersburg. Notwithstanding my narrow means and small opportunity for acquisition, I have especially laboured to enlarge the series of particular nations. From this point of view the Negro, the Peruvian, and the Chinese skulls present a particular interest. With a special view to that object, viz. the bringing together large numbers of skulls of one and the same people, I am anxious for assistance

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<sup>1</sup> [The anthropological works of Retzius (now deceased), have been collected, and are in process of translation for the Society by A. Higgins, Esq. ED.]

from foreign inquirers as well as from naturalists, and grateful should I be in this respect for such support as has lately been given me by Herr Professor Schröder van der Kolk, of Utrecht. Especially, however, should I be thankful for the acquisition of information about well-formed foreheads of known individuals amongst the nations of Europe, or the foreign races of man.

R. WAGNER.

GÖTTINGEN,  
*Sept. 16, 1856.*

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