

Brokiga  
samlingars bostad

FATABUREN 2007

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NORDISKA MUSEETS OCH SKANSENS ÅRSBOK 2007



FATABUREN Nordiska museets och Skansens årsbok, är en skatt av kulturhistoriska artiklar som publicerats under mer än ett sekel.

Årsboken började som ett häfte med rubriken »Meddelanden«, redigerat 1881 av museets grundare Artur Hazelius för den stödjande krets som kallades Samfundet för Nordiska museets främjande. 1884 publicerades den första kulturhistoriska artikeln och när publikationen 1906 bytte namn till »Fataburen. Kulturhistorisk tidskrift« kom de vetenskapliga uppsatserna att dominera innehållet. Från och med 1931 fick årsboken Fataburen en mer populär inriktning och i stora drag den form som den har idag. Fataburen har sedan dess förenat lärdom och sakkunskap med syftet att nå en stor publik.

Fataburen är också en viktig länk mellan Nordiska museet och Skansen, två museer med en gemensam historia och en gemensam vänförening. Varje årsbok har ett tematiskt innehåll som speglar insatser och engagemang i de båda museerna, men verksamhetsberättelserna trycks numera separat och kan rekvideras från respektive museum.

Ekonomiskt stöd från Nordiska museets och Skansens Vänner gör utgivningen av Fataburen möjlig.

Fataburen 2007  
Nordiska museets förlag  
Box 27820  
115 93 Stockholm  
[www.nordiskamuseet.se](http://www.nordiskamuseet.se)

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Tryckt hos Fälth & Hässler, Värnamo 2007  
ISSN 0348 971 X  
ISBN 978 91 7108 5146



# A Home for Multifarious Collections

## Summaries

### Introduction

The stately building of the Nordiska Museet, which is a hundred years old this year, is a tourist attraction and a symbol of collecting. No less of an attraction are the diverse collections that have had their home here since 1907. It is a somewhat confusing anniversary since the Nordiska Museet as an institution has already celebrated both its 100th and its 125th anniversary. A great deal has already been written about the history of the Nordiska Museet and Skansen, especially to commemorate previous anniversaries, but there are also many new perspectives on collecting and the collections – and on Artur Hazelius and other collectors.

Translated by Alan Crozier.

In *Fataburen* 2007 some of the authors describe the collecting work which has become a part of the Nordiska Museet, but which could have become something else. Other authors write about collections and objects which were not acquired by the museum, but which are nevertheless a part of the chequered history of the collections. Speculating about what did not happen – but which could perhaps have happened – can be a way both to celebrate and to renew the work pursued in a hundred-year-old building.

During the centenary year a series of exhibitions will be produced, with collectors from all over Sweden taking part. The goals and meaning of private collecting are also the theme of several articles in the book. The objects are meaningful in many ways to the people who collect them, and perhaps there is reason for the museums to start acquiring objects on new grounds.



### *Built for collected knowledge*

After almost twenty years under construction, the Nordiska Museet was completed – a Nordic Renaissance castle inspired by Danish models. Since the first exhibition in Drottninggatan in 1872, Artur Hazelius had begun to plan for a permanent museum and the artefact collections were growing rapidly. When the move to the new building on Djurgården began, there were over 100,000 artefacts. In the 1883 competition programme for a new building for the Nordiska Museet, the main task was to build a museum for the artefact collections, but a library and archives were also included in the programme as a matter very close to Hazelius's heart.

The museum building was to be situated at Lejonslätten on Djurgården. The architect Isak Gustaf Clason's first suggestion, known as the big version, was approved by the museum committee but was never executed. Instead the work was focused on Clason's first phase, roughly one third of the original plans. In this connection there was probably also a new discussion of a solution for the library and archives, and in the slimmed-down version it was chiefly the central section and the apse with the statue of Gustav Vasa that was redesigned. The library and archives were given a placing that was both practical and symbolic, on either side of Gustav Vasa.

The idea of collected knowledge was included in the planning of the premises from the beginning. Artur Hazelius's basic concept is still as relevant, and today several steps have been taken towards an updated version in what is called Fatburen. During autumn 2006 the library moved to the ground floor of the museum, with the office adjacent to an inviting setting for study and conversation. Hazelius's ideas have arisen in a modern form and the circle is being closed.

### *Happenings and secrets in a hundred-year-old house*

There are remarkable rooms in the huge building of the Nordiska Museet of which visitors have no idea. In corridors and small rooms squeezed in between the galleries of the hall floor and the column floor, employees live like moles, running up and down spiral stair-



cases. The rooms were an emergency solution when the planned museum building had to be reduced in size. It is only when darkness falls and the lamps are lit over busy desks that the rooms become visible, like a long string of beads.

The spiral staircases that are hidden behind locked doors coil from the basement to the attic. Up there was the photo studio with its big windows. If you go further up you come to the glazed upper attics, fantastic, gigantic, bright rooms. From there the daylight came down into the big hall through round windows. Once there was a newly employed textile conservator who had lingered in the attic and could not find the door to get out. She panicked and broke one of the windows with her shoe to get attention. From the glazed attics, steps lead up to the tower, where English journalists were once treated to an old-fashioned breakfast with herring, bread and butter, beer, spirits – and a view of Stockholm in the morning light.

Down in the underworld was the iron cellar, which was reached by ladder-like steps. And to the far south on the same level was the basket cellar. In the extensions to the north and south there are beautiful offices and once there was also a service apartment there. A room in the north extension has become increasingly secret in recent years. It is the governor's old room, which is now locked most of the time and is called the Hazelius Room. The handsome room with its inset portraits contains a great deal of the museum's history.

### *Museum rooms – for everything and everyone*

Thousands of museums have been built in the world since the mid-nineteenth century, and new ones are being built today. Objects from all over the world have been stored in crates and boxes. A cigar box can be like a miniature museum. The first museums in the nineteenth century did not have buildings of their own. They were like storehouses where everything was on show. The end of the 1920s saw the coming of a modernist, didactic aesthetic which was adjusted to school tuition and adult education. Then the stores were needed for the growing collections which were not on show.



In 1823 the architect Schinkel designed the *Altes Museum* in Berlin, which would serve as a model for museums of cultural history, a stately neoclassical shrine with colonnades and decorated galleries. But Alois Hirt, the archaeologist and historian of buildings, advocated instead a museum as a place for learning, with small, simple, and flexible exhibition rooms.

We recognize today's museum debate. Frank O. Gehry, Herzog & Meuron, and Jean Nouvel are the contemporary trendsetters. And now these star architects are designing museums and fashion stores in parallel all over the world. They are confusingly similar in expression. Will public activities in museums in the future be focused on the now well-developed artefact stores?

### *An infinity of collections!*

Artur Hazelius's entry into the museum arena in 1872 was discreet but with a feature that would be characteristic of the future success story: the deliberate use of the press. Artur Hazelius's little museum, the Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection, opened in Drottninggatan in October 1873.

The well-defined aim – to exhibit dummies dressed in folk costume and to collect objects of folk culture – was soon exceeded, and the many artefacts donated to Hazelius played a crucial part in the rapid growth of the collections. The donations came along with people who were to assist in the creation of the museum, including its motives and aims.

After a few years the Nordiska Museet had been transformed into a large and expansive, multifarious, and ambiguous enterprise, and questions arose about the meaning of this museum. Was it intended to describe folk culture, a museum of industrial art, or a universal museum of cultural history? When the utility and meaning of expansion was questioned, Artur Hazelius replied that responsibility for the varied content of the collections was borne by the interested members of the public who generously donated objects. Artur Hazelius did not create the Nordiska Museet – the Swedish people did so with his help.

Although the Nordiska Museet has become a broad-ranging collect-



ing project, both Hazelius himself and his allies emphasized the origin of the museum in a collection of folk culture. His secrecy about the size of the collections is in stark contrast to the grandiose plans for a new museum building. It is not difficult to detect from the architect Isak Gustaf Clason's plans that the collections were the starting point for the proposal. The colossal building was to be the new home of the multifarious collections, to put them in a context and perhaps make other museums superfluous.

### *Christian Hammer and the Nordiska Museet*

Christian Hammer (1818–1905) has been called “the legendary giant of Swedish art collections”. He was a goldsmith who managed in just a few decades to acquire the largest private collection ever in Scandinavia, but then – despite impressive efforts – failed to fulfil the dream of his youth, to lay the foundation for a museum of decorative art. His collection was dispersed more than a hundred years ago and is impossible to reconstruct, but the objects live on in museums and private collections in Sweden and abroad. As Artur Hazelius's collections grew, the Nordiska Museet acquired a great many of Hammer's objects. The museum's collections are a concentrate of the once huge Hammer collections.

Hammer's collecting really gained momentum at the end of the 1840s, and the number of objects grew so large that they became a problem. To ensure the future of the collection, Hammer offered to sell it to the state for 1.6 million kronor in autumn 1871, when the matter was referred to the Royal Academy of Letters and the Royal Academy of Art. Both advised against the purchase, to Hammer's dismay.

In 1890, after years of setbacks, Hammer turned to the well-known auction firm of Heberlé in Cologne, and between 1892 and 1897, in twelve auctions, a total of 20,465 lots were put up for sale. On the spot in Cologne was Henryk Bukowski, who acted as an agent and adviser to the Nordiska Museet. The most valuable purchases in every respect were the items from craftsmen's guilds, which were unusually well represented thanks to Hammer's collecting zeal. Hazelius's greatest and



most important acquisition from Hammer, however, was Skansen.

While Hazelius, right from the beginning, managed to win support for his ideas and his museum project among the Swedish people, Hammer could never assemble the broad opinion required to build a public museum based on his collections. The failure of one of the men was at least partly the key to the success of the other.

### *A collection of houses*

In Drottninggatan, Hazelius built up three-dimensional panoramas in the form of rooms furnished with appropriate objects and peopled by figures in folk costume. In the museum's annual report for 1891–92 he wrote that the work with the interiors had convinced him that “one should as far as possible also seek to present complete buildings which could be considered typical of the Nordic countries in different periods”. When Skansen opened on 11 October 1891 there was the Mora farmstead, the chipping house from Orsa, the Kyrkhult farmhouse from Blekinge, the stone cottage from Blekinge, a Sámi camp, and two charcoal burners' huts. The small collection of houses was a well-received novelty, behind which lay many years' preparations.

When Hazelius had bought the land with the tower, which he christened Bredablick, he himself moved into a room on the ground floor of the tower. It was then easier for him to direct the continued expansion of Skansen. At the same time, he managed the museum's other business and communicated with his staff through a system of written notes. In 1890 the staff of the museum consisted of 31 people apart from the governor. By 1892 the number had risen, as a result of the coming of Skansen, by 33. The first assistant in the open-air museum was Sigrid Millrath.

While Skansen was being born, the other major project was in progress, having started in earnest in 1888 – the construction of the Nordiska Museet's new building at Lejonslätten, to the plans of Isak Gustaf Clason. At Skansen Hazelius gave varying information about the future direction of the museum, but this was always oral and presumably depended on the mood he happened to be in at the time, and perhaps also on who had asked the question.



### *Cabinets – furniture to collect in and to collect*

Right from the beginning, Artur Hazelius had an idea of the significance of the Nordiska Museet for artistic education. In the press the museum was described as a “cultural creation” with great influence on “the development of our industrial art”.

In the Nordiska Museet’s collections there are certain categories of object that clearly express an ambition in Hazelius to let his museum of cultural history also function as a museum of industrial art. The cabinet is one such category. This was a piece of furniture for collections, exotic shells, minerals, medals – a tailor-made frame for a precious content. But cabinets were also collectors’ items in themselves. They have been cared for and admired since people began to perceive them as old-fashioned.

One of the oldest cabinets in the museum’s collections was acquired already in 1875. It belongs to a group of furniture with rich intarsia which is usually ascribed to the Tyrol or southern Germany and is dated to one of the decades around 1500. An ordinary model of cabinet, typical of the production of the joiners of Augsburg in the mid-seventeenth century, is represented by a cabinet with blackened hardwood veneer, acquired through Artur Hazelius himself in 1881. Another Augsburg speciality was enamel work. A late cabinet in this context, with straw intarsia and dated 1748, also has a handwritten label pasted behind the drawers. The name on the label is probably that of the maker.

### *Yet another side of the saddle-harness man. Artur Hazelius as a collector of technology and science*

In autumn 1872, a whole year before Artur Hazelius opened his museum in Drottninggatan, artefact number 75 was acquired for the collection, a jack from a forge. This early acquisition was followed by several others from the engineering sphere, which reveals a different side of “the saddle-harness man”, the pithy epithet that caricatured Hazelius’s narrow focus on peasant culture. But his interest in technology and science was both profound and systematic, and



for many years the Nordiska Museet acted as a predecessor to the National Museum of Science and Technology. When that museum's first collections were being built up, a large number of objects were borrowed from the Nordiska Museet. Hazelius often concentrated on individuals when he collected, including great men in technology and science such as the chemist Jöns Jacob Berzelius and the inventor John Ericsson. The death of Hazelius in 1901 meant a radical change of the museum's focus, and in practice the interest in technology and science was abandoned. The objects in this sphere are not used very much, except by the National Museum of Science and Technology and the Royal Academy of Sciences. One artefact was aroused from its slumber in 1979, when the historian of technology Michael Lindgren, after assiduous study of the Nordiska Museet's collections, discovered that accession number 39.204, "model of a calculator", acquired by Hazelius at the start of the 1880s, was an important link in the international history of computer technology.

### *Lace saved – and collected*

The museum gets many calls from women who have a box of inherited lace in a wardrobe at home. Often there is a multitude of cut-off pieces made by all manner of techniques: bobbin lace, needlepoint, crochet, machine-made. Today lace is not marketable either in fashion or as an antique, so it can feel like a heavy responsibility to look after something that was once of great value to the person who saved it. Were these women collectors? If we use the word *save* instead of *collect*, we come closer to what it was about. "This could come in handy whenever I might need it" is the idea. Lace has always been precious, not something to be bought and thrown away, always useful as a loose accessory. Lace can also be a source of memories and a stock of patterns. Today it is rare for the Nordiska Museet to accept such pieces of saved lace since there are already huge quantities of lace in our stores.

Three large private collections donated during the 1900s may serve as examples of the museum's lace collecting. Not surprisingly, the collections come from three women. Ingeborg Petrelli belonged to the



group of women who took part in a rescue action to save Vadstena lace, which had previously been in demand for folk costumes. Hilda Stark-Lilienberg began to give lessons in Italian needlepoint lace in 1906, and in 1907 she opened a needlepoint school. Gerda Björk's collection, which covers the history of crochet lace over almost a century, was displayed in an exhibition at the Nordiska Museet in 1946.

*High mountains and deep valleys. Objects found and not found in the museum*

The Nordiska Museet's collections are supposed to represent all life in the whole country during almost five hundred years. It is almost inevitable that there should be deficiencies in the collections, with both gaps and over-representation, despite the official instructions and collecting policy. Collecting could be compared to a net which captures certain objects or phenomena and makes them visible, while others slip through. There are conscious collecting nets, that is to say, well-considered decisions or directives. But no less important are the unconscious choices and stances.

The artefact collections have proved to be *self-generating*, they reproduce and accentuate an imbalance that has already arisen. *Rescuing* what is in danger of getting lost has been an obvious part of work. The *artefact identity of phenomena* has clearly influenced the number of objects collected. The museum's image of history has been adjusted to the *prevailing social order* and the museums' way of handling history is in many ways typical of the *middle class*, from which many museum workers come. Individual museum employees and their *experiences* can also have exerted a more direct influence on collection. The things collected have often been *aesthetically pleasing*, or *successful* and *nice*. *Variations in time* have been reflected when the work of collecting was affected by the archaeological method, and *spatial variation* when the concepts of settlement district and diffusionism were at the centre.

What is not captured by the collecting net may nevertheless have been important parts of people's lives. These phenomena can be described as the valleys between the artefact mountains, or as the non-



topics of the collections. Often it is a matter of subjects that are difficult to handle, but there are also more unexpected things which are under-represented, such as *slaughtering of domestic animals*, the *free churches*, *entrepreneurs and their business*, and *midwives*.

*Photographic history that was not acquired. On Helmut and Alison Gernsheim's unique collection*

The Gernsheim Collection was the world's finest private collection of photographic history, consisting of approximately 17,000 photographs when it was presented in the exhibition *A Hundred Years of Photography* at the Nordiska Museet in 1957. This unique collection contained the world's first known photograph, daguerreotypes and calotypes, and other things that are among the icons of photography today. The Gernsheims rediscovered forgotten pioneers and promoted them internationally in travelling exhibitions and in books. Leading art critics wrote appreciatively about the exhibition at the Nordiska Museet, and they considered the issue of the need for an institution to assume responsibility for photographic history.

The man who brought the Gernsheims' exhibition to the Nordiska Museet was Bo Lagercrantz, art historian and curator at the museum. During these years he tried to ensure that the Gernsheim collection would find a permanent home in Sweden, and that a museum of photography could be established. Novilla, beside the main entrance to Skansen, was envisaged as a conceivable site. The property was not purchased in 1957, but Helmut Gernsheim and Bo Lagercrantz maintained their contacts. In 1963 there were good prospects of obtaining state support for a museum of photography, but when the Gernsheims were invited to Stockholm to start a photographic museum it was already settled that their collection would go to a university in Texas. Helmut Gernsheim suggested that Sweden could buy a small collection of duplicates, and in 1971 the photographic collection was opened as a department of the Moderna Museet, with the Gernsheim collection of duplicates and Helmer Bäckström's more Swedish-based collection as the foundation stones.



### *Continuity and innovation. On the museum's way of collecting*

In 1956 the Nordiska Museet reached an agreement with the toy manufacturer BRIO to pick out a selection of the toys they manufactured and sold. Acquiring products directly from the maker was one answer to the question of how the museum could collect a representative selection of the rich flow of modern products and goods.

The objects added to a museum collection are always based on a choice, whether they come from active collecting or are offered as donations. Sometimes new research findings and scientific ideas have provided guidance, and parallel to this the work of collecting has been a continuation of previously collected series. In the Nordiska Museet the administrative division into a peasant department and an upper-class department has reflected the idea that the museum should chiefly concentrate on objects with something to say about Sweden at the time when society was divided into separate estates. Already in the 1930s, however, the museum's social perspective was broadened, partly through collaboration with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation. In the 1930s and 1940s new methods of artefact collection were also tested in the museum, by people like Sigurd Erixon and Sigfrid Svensson. In the late forties and early fifties Anna-Maja Nylén was instrumental in the work of bringing the artefact collecting up to the present day, and in the 1970s Inga Wintzell began collecting contemporary children's and young people's clothes. In 1960 the exhibition *Traditional and Contemporary* opened, in which Anna-Maja Nylén and her staff sought to stress that traditions are also contemporary phenomena. In 1960 a number of modern grave lanterns were purchased on the initiative of Mats Rehnberg.

Classification and gaps have often been discussed in the museums' collecting of contemporary objects. The idea that there are gaps in the collections is based on the assumption that there is a totality which the museum aspires to describe. And since the actual classification gives meaning to the continued collecting, the classification system can be regarded as reflecting a conception of the world, of history and the present day.

*"Eat your stamps or I'll leave you!" Reflections on the psychology of collecting*

A story has grown wings, about a philatelist who was so attached to his stamps that his girlfriend finally had enough and said "Eat your stamps or I'll leave you!" It is not surprising, since it concerns not just the price of love, but also the collector himself and his passions. To understand, we must begin at the dawn of human history with an invention, ingenious in its simplicity. The bag. Is the bag one of mankind's most basic needs? Breathe, eat, sleep, love – and own a bag to collect things in. Why not? It is clear, at any rate, that many of the needs and behaviours of the earliest humans have continued with relatively little change right up to our own times. Collecting is not a novel madness. On the contrary. Collecting for its own sake is a way to avoid madness. People feel better if they have a passion to search for God knows what, so strong that they constantly sneak out with their bag on to the savannah, if it is only in the form of the Internet – the greatest hunting ground of all. We can forget about the utility aspect. That is generally secondary, that in itself is not the driving force.

For some collectors the passion becomes a trap, but it is far more common that the collector lives in the best of health, viewed by his nearest and dearest with a mild, half-ironic indulgence, or enclosed in a community of like-minded people.

*The value of collections. On things and people in the consumer society*

Collecting is something that has fascinated people through the ages. In a consumer culture where we are surrounded by more and more things, we also have more chances to collect. In the research literature a distinction is made between collecting and stockpiling. While collecting is a more selective activity, with limits set to what the collection is to contain, stockpiling is a more unsystematic way of acquiring things. People who collect order their objects and relate them to other parts of the collection. Collectors also feel a powerful affection for the things they collect; it is the sentimental value rather than



the economic value that counts. Other reasons for collecting are an interest and a desire to learn more. Nostalgia and longing for other times are also important motives for collecting. Collectors create value by producing their collections, and they also create themselves as collectors. The collection can become a part of one's identity.

A collection and its value can be changed, and collectors avoid achieving complete collections by redefining the collection, extending the boundaries, replacing objects, or starting a new collection. Knowing the origin of an object – the provenance – usually increases the value. A patina can also add value to an item. The economic value of a collection is determined by the market, and this is usually expressed when collectors try to sell parts of their collection. The price that is paid can be explained, among other things, by psychological processes. An auction or flea market often involves an element of tension and excitement that can make the experience valuable.

Composition is also an important element in the process of collecting, with scope for creativity. Collectors say that there should be other reasons for collecting besides economic motives, but they are often highly aware of the current value of their collection.

### *A collective of collectors*

Collecting is a selective activity where a person defines the limits to what the collection is to contain. Collecting can also be a collective activity where collectors see and confirm each other's collecting. Social contacts are often a requirement for being able to build up a collection. In 1941 an association of collectors, Nordstjärnan, was founded in Sweden. It is a nationwide organization, with about thirty local branches. Ten times a year the newsletter *Samlarnytt* is published and distributed to all the members.

The collectors in Nordstjärnan differ considerably. Having many members seems to be part of the idea behind the association. Some members do not collect anything at all, having joined only as a way to meet people. Barbro belongs to the type of collector who collects most

things. She tells with great enthusiasm about all the enjoyable events arranged by the association.

Sven Hagman is chairman of the Sankt Erik branch in Stockholm and boasts Sweden's largest collection of the history of sweets. He started to collect pastille boxes when he was 11. In 1986 Sven published the book *Tidernas godis*, which is about the history of the confectionery industry. "Some collectors collect anything, but a serious collector is more focused", he says.

### *Meeting in the museum. Collectors large and small exhibit their collections*

In the exhibition *Storsamlaren* ("The Big Collector"), which opened at the start of the year, the public have been invited, perhaps for the first time in the museum's history, to display their own collections in the huge hall of the Nordiska Museet. Collections of things are lined up side by side, almost like a market. The exhibition has everything from the small, colourful smelly erasers of the 1980s to hundred-year-old candlesticks and clay pipes. The exhibition shows the diversity of private collecting – giving pause for thought and inspiration both for the museum's employees and for all the museum's visitors.

To reach collectors all over Sweden, the museum advertised in several magazines and spread information via the Internet. Of almost a hundred proposals sent in to the museum, 63 were finally chosen for a separate spot in the exhibition.

The exhibiting collectors started collecting for various reasons, and the aim can be to achieve the biggest, the most complete, the artistically most perfect, or perhaps the most amusing collection. The economic value of the objects does not seem to be the primary thing; the sentimental value is often considered more important. For many people, collecting has meant not just a hunt for a particular type of things, but also a search for deeper knowledge.



### *Things matter*

Through objects, people organize the world – building identities, marking differences, and creating solidarity. The physical objects are, in a narrow sense, the basis for the definition of a museum of cultural history, intended to be used for research, documentation, and exhibitions. Today we often hear that museums face a number of challenges, some of them to do with the collections and the acquisition of objects. In today's media landscape and through digital technology, museums are on the way to acquiring a different role in society. Today there is also a growing interest in how people have used objects to handle existential and emotional questions. Despite the palpable quality of objects, their exterior does not always reveal the meaning that people attach to them. Outside the museums it seems self-evident that objects are worth preserving because they are charged with powerful emotions and narratives, but the museums' collecting work is described as systematic and scientifically based. But what would happen if the museums undertook to acquire objects whose significance was defined on other criteria?

In the past the scientific interest in the collections of museums of cultural history chiefly assigned them a role as source material for knowledge about factual matters, as evidence of people's material circumstances and aesthetic preferences, but now other questions are being asked about the collections, about how and why they came about and what they say about social and political relations in society. It is a matter of a communicative process which is ultimately a question of who assumes the right to describe someone else and to take over, remove, purchase, or even steal other people's things. With the objects as tools, the museums have, to varying extents, contributed to marginalization and discrimination, but perhaps the museums can also contribute to healing with the same tools and thereby turn rooms for memories into rooms for justice.

# Källor och litteratur

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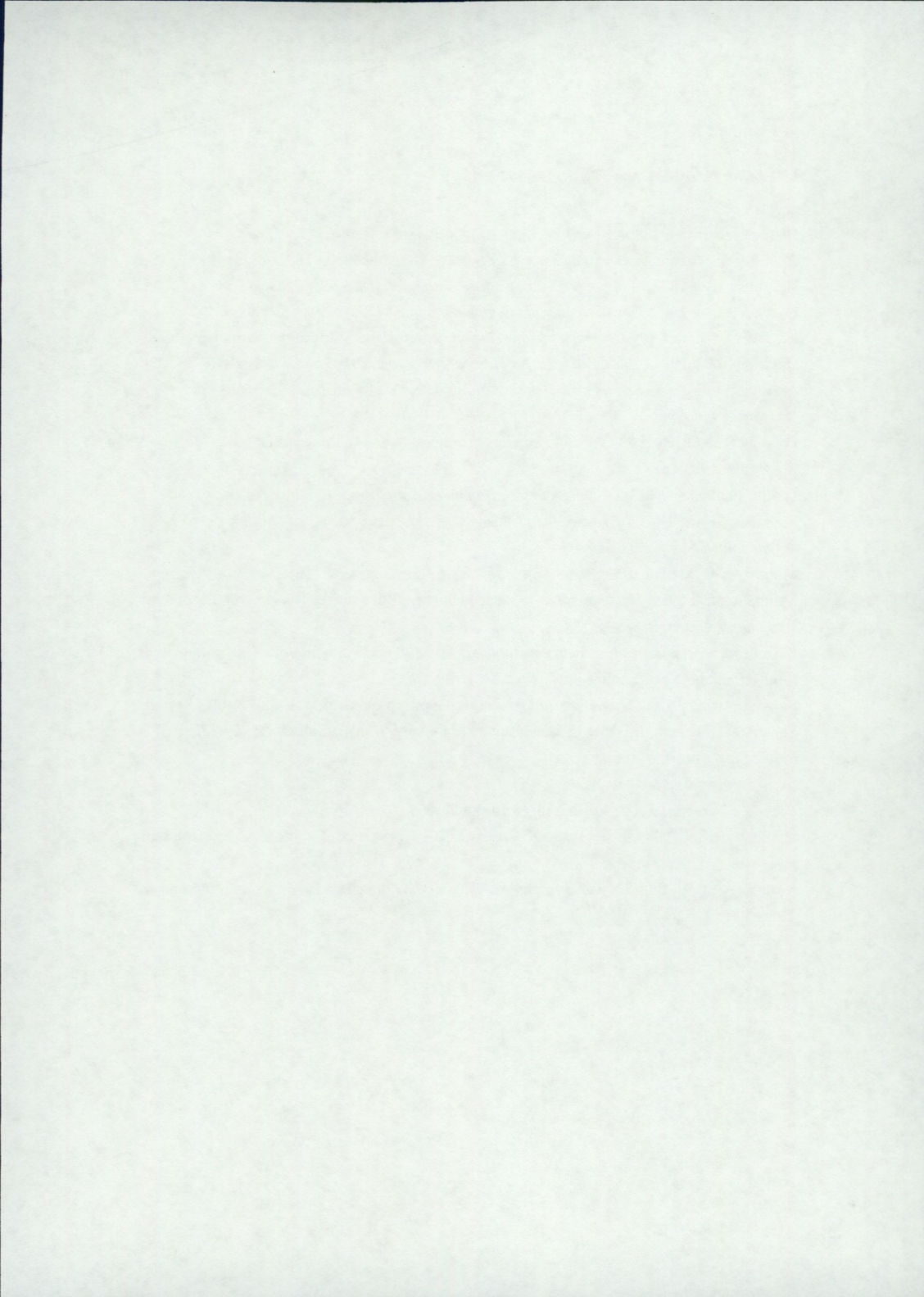
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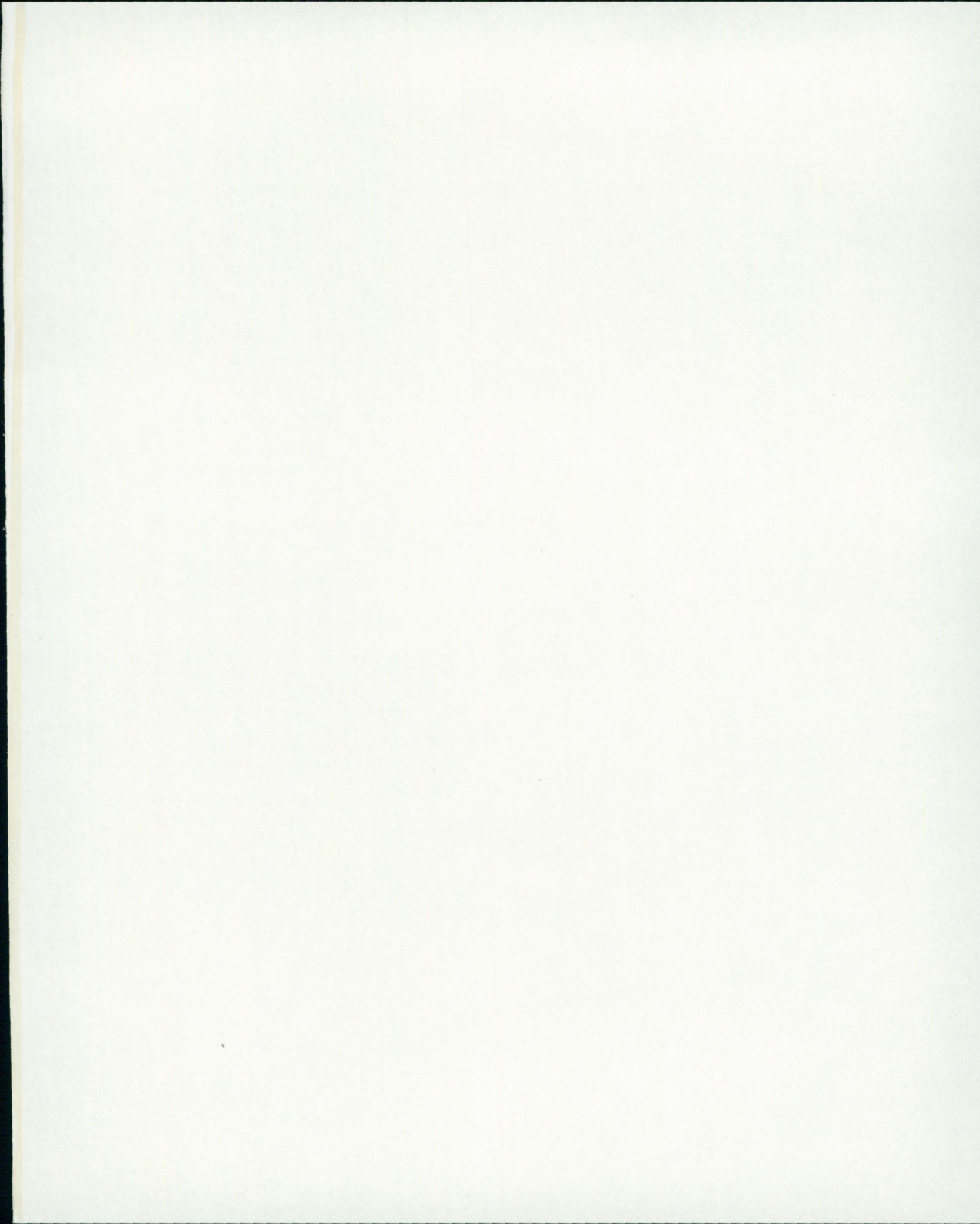
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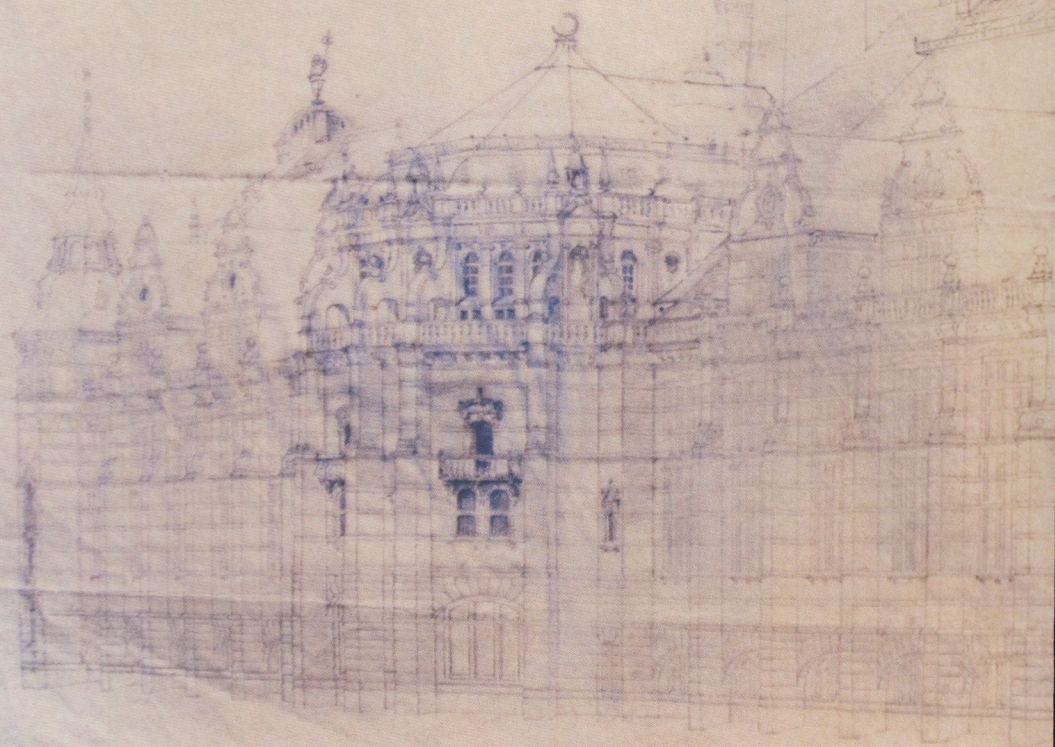
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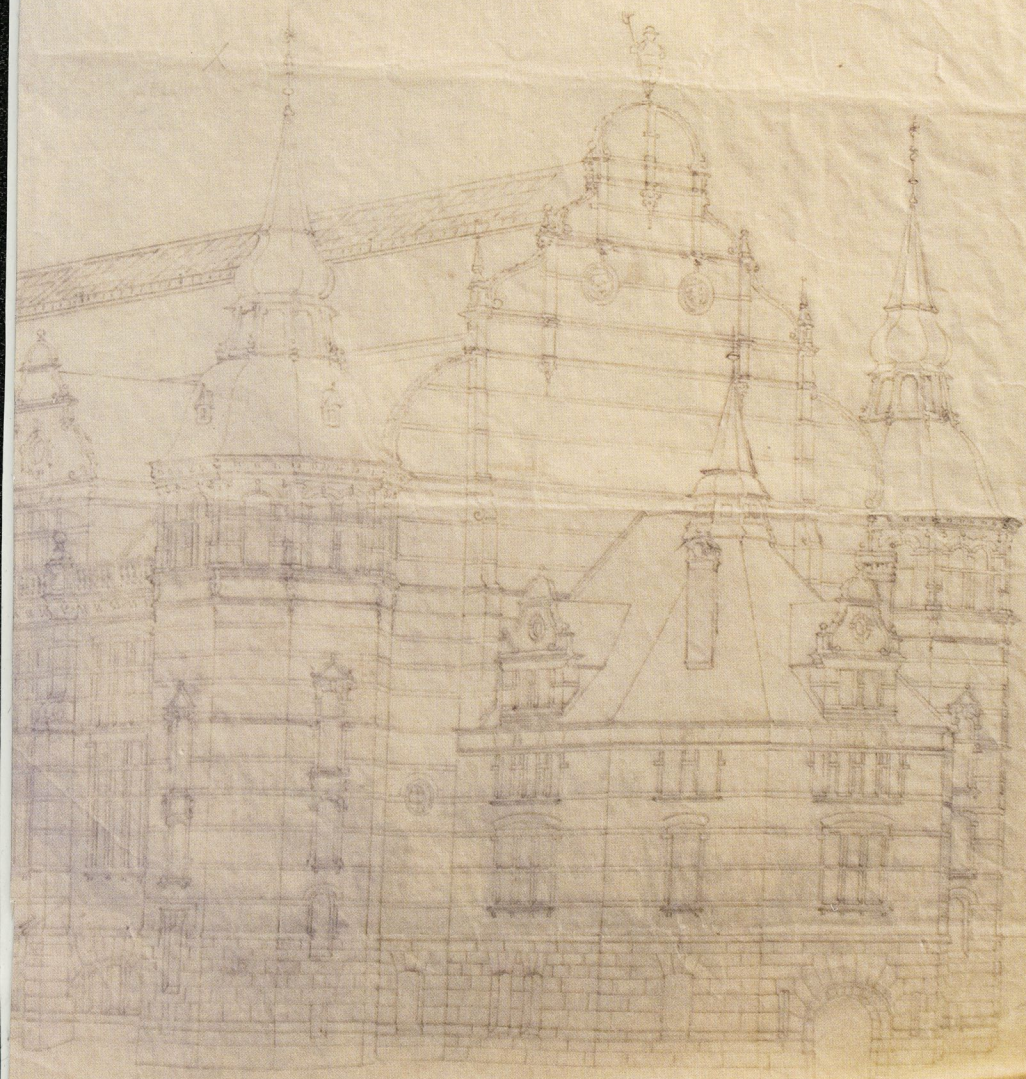








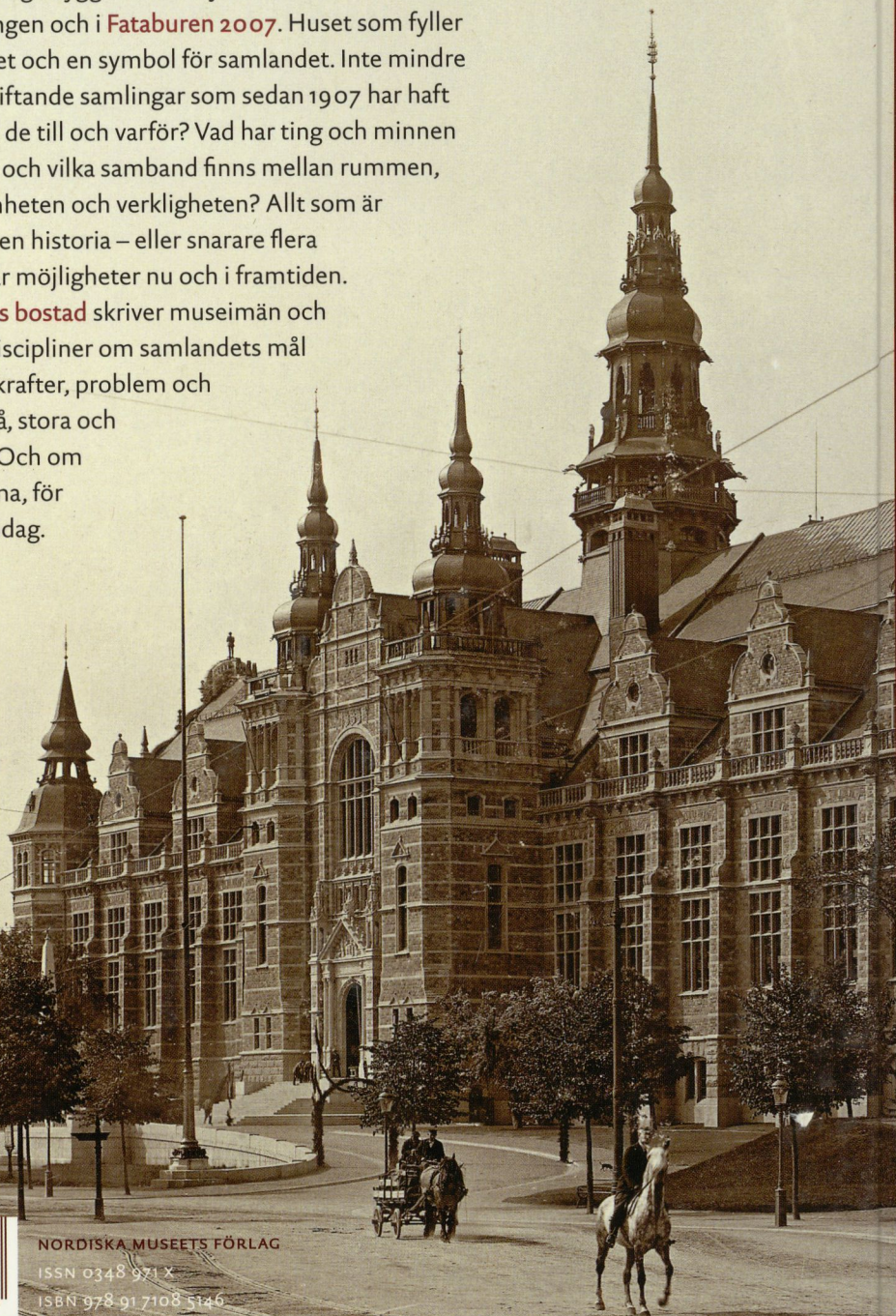






Nordiska museets ståtliga byggnad är betydelsefull och framträdande, både i omgivningen och i **Fataburen 2007**. Huset som fyller hundra är en sevärdhet och en symbol för samlandet. Inte mindre sevärda är de mångskiftande samlingar som sedan 1907 har haft ett hem här. Hur kom de till och varför? Vad har ting och minnen betytt för byggnaden och vilka samband finns mellan rummen, samlingarna, verksamheten och verkligheten? Allt som är Nordiska museet har en historia – eller snarare flera historier, som också är möjligheter nu och i framtiden.

I **Brokiga samlingars bostad** skriver museimän och forskare inom olika discipliner om samlandets mål och mening, om drivkrafter, problem och glädjeämnen, om små, stora och jättestora samlingar. Och om människorna, samlarna, för hundra år sedan och idag.



NORDISKA MUSEETS FÖRLAG

ISSN 0348-971X

ISBN 978-91-7108-514-6