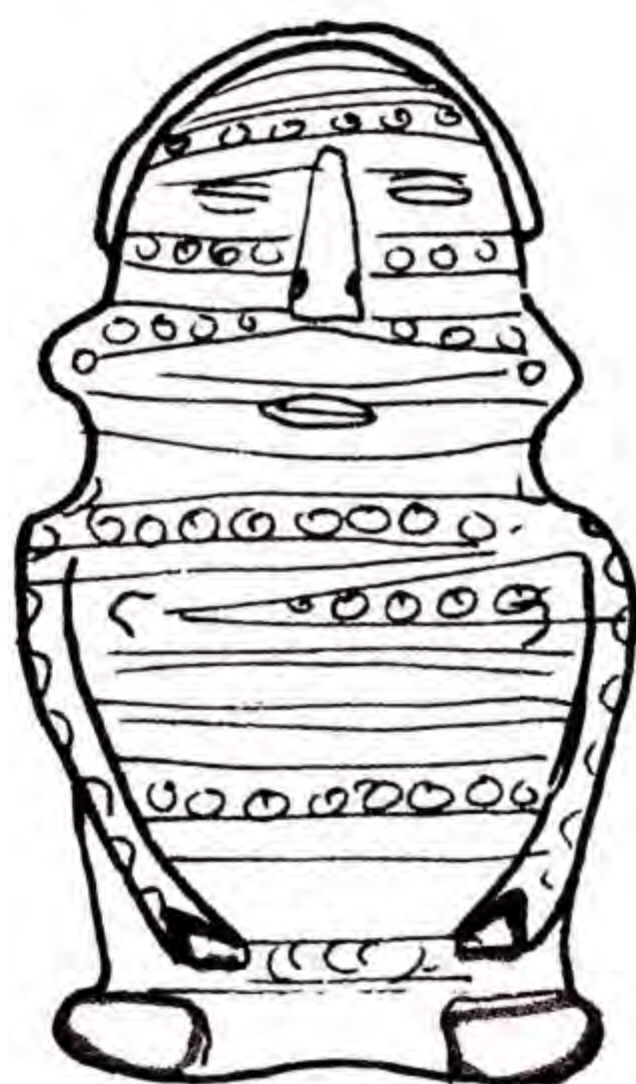


de la experiencia en Bogotá y Europa, el paso a la escultura, la relación con México (y una revelación: "Yo viví en México como turista", indicando que no se integró a las escuelas o tendencias mexicanas). No se aborda una revisión detallada del medio siglo que se celebra ni contiene recuerdos novedosos del pasado. Incluso contiene una pequeña errata: el pintor asevera que la exposición de 1949 fue en marzo, cuando en realidad se abrió en junio.

Aparte de *Mujer llorando* (1949), la exposición en San Ildefonso, curada por el propio Botero, ofreció tres obras de los años cincuenta, entre las que sobresale *La apoteosis de Ramón Hoyos* (1959), que en el catálogo figura como *Homenaje a Ramón Hoyos*, así como una de las versiones expresionistas que hizo el pintor sobre el Niño de Vallecas en 1959. De los años sesenta sólo se incluyó *Ecce Homo* (1967), que muestra la influencia recibida por entonces del arte colonial hispanoamericano. Las demás telas están fechadas en su mayoría en los tres últimos decenios, entre las cuales hay varias obras maestras, como es el caso de *La viuda* (1997), *Picnic* (1989), *La orquesta* (1991), *El presidente* (1989) y *La primera dama* (1989), así como *Después de Piero della Francesca* (1998), la enorme versión boteriana del retrato de Federico de Montefeltro y su esposa. También se presentaron cuadros de la polémica serie sobre la violencia en Colombia, entre los cuales sobresale por su calidad pictórica y testimonial *El desfile* (2000), una procesión fúnebre que pasa junto a un pueblo monocromático destruido.

La colección de dibujos es magnífica y corrobora la gran maestría alcanzada por Botero como dibujante, así como su admiración por Ingres. De excepcional delicadeza y perfección son *Picador en la plaza* (1986), *Naturaleza muerta con mandolina* (1997) y *Una pareja* (1997). Dos grandes telas dibujadas con sanguina, tituladas *Naturaleza muerta* (fechadas en 1973 y 1974), ponen de manifiesto las innovaciones conseguidas con esta técnica, tradicio-

nalmente limitada al papel en pequeño formato. Búsquedas sorprendentes de texturas en la superficie, mediante la utilización del papel amate, fabricado por artesanos mexicanos, se encuentran en piezas como *Ángel de la guarda* (1992), en la que un etéreo y macizo ser alado protege a un pintor mientras trabaja en el caballete, y *Mi habitación en Medellín* (1999), en la que el artista se presenta durmiendo.



Dos esculturas de gran formato, *La mano* y *Mujer fumando*, adornaron la entrada y uno de los patios de la sobria edificación de piedra, decorada con frescos de José Clemente Orozco. Entre las piezas de pequeño formato, que posteriormente son agrandadas hasta alcanzar dimensiones monumentales, cabe destacar *Centauro y ninfa* (2000), por el desarrollo que hace de la temática mitológica, abordada antes con piezas como *Rapto de Europa* y *Esfinxe*, ausentes de la muestra. Esta exposición viajó a Estocolmo, donde fue exhibida en el Museo de Arte Moderno entre septiembre y noviembre de 2001.

La celebración de medio siglo de vida artística se hizo muy a la manera de Botero, quien como curador de la exposición no parece muy afecto al pasado y prefiere el presente y el futuro. Por lo tanto, no se trata de

una revisión histórica en sentido estricto ni de una reconstrucción de época. Es más bien una exposición que, aunque admite marginalmente los cambios experimentados hasta mediados de la década de 1960, se concentra en mostrar la coherencia pictórica de su obra, la profundización en los temas, las variantes adoptadas —no siempre convincentes— y el cambio de paleta, en virtud del cual da mayor importancia a los colores locales encendidos.

SANTIAGO LONDOÑO
VÉLEZ

Gold Museum

EFRAÍN SÁNCHEZ CABRA

On 22 december 1939, the Banco de la República, the Central Bank of Colombia, purchased a 23.5 centimetres-high pre-Columbian gold artefact weighing 777.7 grams that was to become the Gold Museum's foundation stone. Described as a Quimbaya poporo, it is a masterpiece of pre-Hispanic goldwork, an object of beauty whose brightly burnished body and neck, crowned with four sphere-like ornaments, rest on an exquisite cast metal filigree base and which seems to float in a space of its own. The beholder cannot but leap up in amazement, and feel joy and admiration for those who made it.

The purchase of the poporo reflects a great deal of genuine official concern about the protection of treasures that were beginning to be regarded as part of Colombia's national heritage. This is clearly expressed in a number of documents relating to the new acquisition. In March 1939 the Ministry of Education sent a note to the Central Bank's Executive Committee, urging them to "buy, to preserve them, the gold and silver artefacts of indigenous manufacture and from pre-Columbian times, which the Ministry would buy at their material value"¹. In the same letter,

the Ministry put forward the poporo, which had been put up for sale by a lady, Magdalena Amador de Maldonado. There was a real risk that it would have been privately sold if there had been no prompt official action. The government therefore did try to prevent archaeological artefacts such as the poporo from leaving the country².

The risk that a culturally valuable object will be lost as collective property increases in direct proportion to its aesthetic value or historical significance. With gold artefacts, however, there is an additional factor that places them at the highest risk. In Western history, the exchange value of precious metals has prevailed over its utility value, which was predominant among indigenous peoples prior to the conquest of America³. The fact that goldwork was a significant vehicle of material expression among many pre-Hispanic societies in Colombia became a decisive factor in the destruction of their cultural remains.

The Spaniards found these metals in abundance in the newly-discovered land, buried in rich mines in New Spain and Perú, decorating walls in temples or adoratorios (shrines) in the Kingdom of New Granada, adorning chieftains and overlords in Indian villages, dangling from trees and roofs, according to some chroniclers, to make them shine under the tropical sun, or buried in graves and necropolises, along with human remains and pottery vessels. The Spanish Crown required precious metals to maintain an empire "where the sun never sets". Precious metals were indispensable to such a degree that the power of the Habsburgs would have been inconceivable without the gold and silver of the Indies⁴. In addition to financial needs, the Spaniards failed to understand or appreciate the creeds and customs of the Indians, which they viewed as being of the Devil and barbaric. The outcome was the disappearance of an indeterminable, though presumably very significant, amount of the goldwork produced by the ancient inhabitants of America.

The plunder continued after independence with the practice of *guaquería*, or the hunting for treasures in ancient Indian graves, carried out by peasants who made a livelihood out of this activity. Referring to the province of Antioquia, the area where, according to all indications, the poporo purchased in 1939 by the Banco de la República was found, Agustín Codazzi, the Italian author of the first systematic geographical description and map of Colombia, wrote in 1852:

Not content with looting the precious jewels with which the Indians adorned themselves, and unwilling to search for gold in its natural locations, the conquerors made their way into the sepulchres, from which they took enormous quantities of gold jewels of the most exquisite workmanship. More than three centuries have now elapsed, and even today the amount of gold extracted from Indian graves is very considerable, an activity to which large numbers of Antioquians apply themselves by preference. One could almost say that it is the only industry that is firmly established, with masters and experts whose hereditary expertise is like the famous magic wand for finding treasures⁵.

The rush for pre-Hispanic gold was intensified in the second half of the nineteenth century by the expansion of Antioquia's economy to the south, and the colonization of the Quindío mountains. The decline of rubber exploitation around 1880 was followed by a period when there was a great increase in *guaquería* activities that reached its peak by 1885 and did not diminish until about 1915⁶. In addition to the fortunes that were amassed through this practice, it has been affirmed, for good reasons, that the search for treasures in Quimbaya burial places played a crucial role in the foundation of new towns in the Quindío region throughout this period. Success ensured funds for the advance of colonization and the opening up of new lands; failure encouraged the

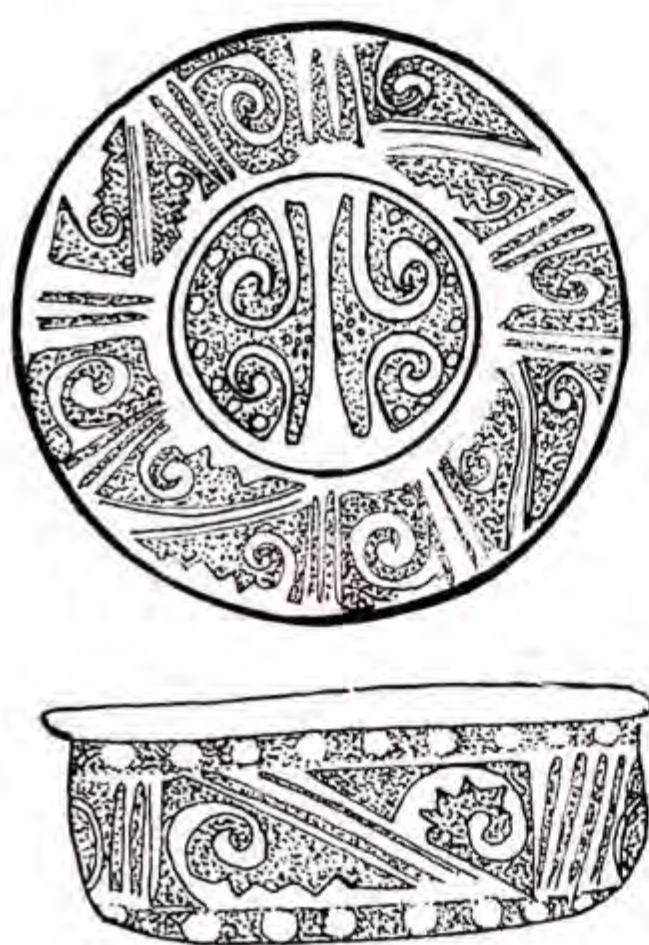
disappointed treasure hunter to move on to other ventures in the newly settled areas⁷. In Cundinamarca and Boyacá, the heart of Muisca territory, treasure hunting in Indian graves has been far less intense than in the Quindío mountains, although a number of ambitious engineering schemes for draining the Guatavita and Siecha lakes in search of the treasures of El Dorado have been attempted ever since Spanish colonial times.



In addition to being tolerated and socially accepted, the hunting for treasures in Indian graves was a perfectly legal activity, because until 1918 there was no rule preventing or restricting this activity. Law 48 of that year declared all pre-Columbian monuments as "belonging to the materials of national history", and prohibited "the destruction, repair, ornamenting or assignment of these relics without previous authorization from the Ministry of Public Education"⁸. In practice, however, things remained as they had been before the enactment of this law, and the objects taken from Indian graves continued to be sold as usual, to be melted down and turned into gold ingots or jewellery. A number of artefacts came into the possession of foreigners through sale or gift, and left the country without much difficulty.

It was not until 1920 that the law prohibited taking archaeological objects out of Colombia, including

those made of precious metals, without government permission⁹. Until then, virtually no distinction was made in the export of Colombia's gold between the metal obtained through mining, and that from pre-Hispanic goldwork, since the latter was melted down as it came to light. In the countries of destination, Europe in particular, these objects as such elicited little interest until late in the eighteenth century, and the collections of Colombian goldwork known to have existed at that time are indeed rare. However, with the opening of ethnological museums to the public, the interest in scientific expeditions sent to the New World to study its geography, fauna, flora and ancient monuments, and the organization of the first exhibitions of American antiquities in London and Paris during the first half of the nineteenth century, the interest shown towards metalwork objects grew¹⁰. Their archaeological and aesthetic value began to be appreciated.



A number of pre-Hispanic gold objects ended up in new museums. Mention is frequently made of Lady Brassey's collection, assembled between 1876 and 1883 and composed of artefacts from Northwest Antioquia. This collection went to the City of Birmingham Museum in England. Another collection, that of Gonzalo Ramos-Ruiz, of Bogotá, was acquired by the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde in 1888¹¹. Undoubt-

edly, the most celebrated among the collections that left the country is the one known as the "Quimbaya Treasure", presented in 1892 by President Carlos Holguín's government to María Cristina of Habsburg, the Queen Regent of Spain, in appreciation of a decision favourable to Colombia in an arbitration of its border dispute with Venezuela¹². Spain had organized an American historical exhibition in the same year, to commemorate the fourth centenary of the discovery. Paradoxically, what attracted the most attention of all of Colombia's exhibits was the Quimbaya Treasure and Gonzalo Ramos' collection¹³.

This background fully justifies the urgency of the appeal of Colombia's education authorities to the Banco de la República in 1939. The fact that any goldwork object had survived at all until then is almost a miracle. Yet many survived, partly because of the vast volume of pre-Hispanic metalwork production, and partly because many indigenous villages, shrines and burial places were located in inaccessible or concealed spots. However they also survived because of the existence in Colombia of collectors of sound judgement with a genuine personal interest in the pre-Hispanic past. A number of intellectuals assembled their own private collections, among them Alberto Urdaneta, owner and editor of the *Papel Periódico Ilustrado*, and Vicente Restrepo, author of *Los chibchas antes de la conquista española*, published in 1895¹⁴. The most renowned of these collections was that belonging to Antioquia merchant Leocadio María Arango, who published a catalogue in 1905 that listed 167 gold objects and 2,219 ceramic vessels, in addition to silver and stone artefacts and samples of gold in its native state¹⁵.

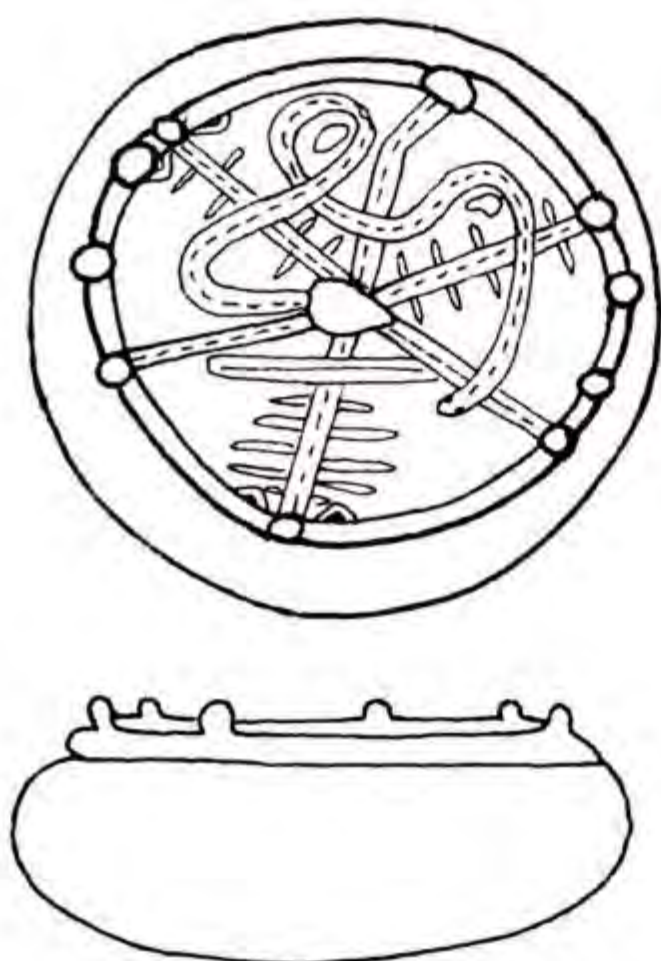
Prior to the acquisition of the Quimbaya poporo, the Banco de la República already had 14 pre-Hispanic gold items, which explains why the number for the poporo in the Museum catalogue is 15. The three first items had been sent to Bogotá between December 1936 and March 1937 by the Bank's gold trade office in Honda. The remaining eleven had

been bought from a Mr. Abraham González¹⁶. They can be described as minor works in terms of size and quality, and some of them are little more than fragments. This could hardly be called a collection, and it is said that they were kept in a cardboard box inside a safe in the office of the Director General, Julio Caro. Why the Bank preserved these items is an intriguing question, but the fact that it did set a significant precedent for the history of the Gold Museum. In contrast to most private collections, the Banco de la República did not restrict its acquisitions to works of art of outstanding quality or of a large size. In fact, the Museum's current collection is a vast array of artefacts that allows the researcher a vision of Colombian pre-Hispanic goldwork that is much wider than that offered by the exhibits, and puts within their reach materials that would otherwise be totally inaccessible.



The Banco de la República undertook the mission requested by the government to preserve this part of Colombia's heritage urgently and seriously. It pursued a strategy that was perhaps the only one feasible considering the circumstances of the country at the time, when the institutionalization of the profession of archaeologist was still decades away, no research centres existed that had the capacity to fund controlled excavations, and the first expeditions

to archaeological areas with government support were only then being organized. The strategy was to acquire the main private collections that were available. The purchase of three splendid goldwork objects in 1940 was followed in November 1941 by the first major accession, 153 items that had made up the collection of El Mensajero, a Bogotá bookshop¹⁷. A new addition came in the following month, 67 items bought from Fernando Restrepo Vélez.



The year 1942 was crucial to the newly-formed collection. In January the Bank made the most significant acquisition since the purchase of the Quimbaya poporo: Leocadio María Arango's collection, that he described as a *museum*. Two large groups of items were added over the following months, and by the end of the year, with 1,987 items of the highest standard, the Banco de la República's collection was already the largest and most important collection of pre-Hispanic goldwork in the country, and undoubtedly in the world.

The collection had not just grown in terms of size. There was also considerable progress as regards the geographical area represented in it. Until then it had been a collection almost exclusively composed of Quimbaya and Muisca goldwork, with a number of samples of Calima and Tolima origin. The accession of

items from the Caribbean lowlands in 1942 integrated the northern coastal area, and a truly national goldwork map started to take shape. The time span covered by the collection now came to two thousand years.

By the end of the 1940's, the collection was exhibited permanently in the Bank's boardroom. Contemporary photographs show display cabinets crammed with goldwork items, perhaps the whole of the collection, surrounding a huge meeting table. One can distinguish the forms of masks, pectorals, nose ornaments, ear ornaments, necklaces, poporos, ornamental plates, golden snail shells, pins, and a host of tiny items arranged in rows by size, in an initial effort to make order out of the chaos of a new-found universe. Symbolically, a bust of Simón Bolívar, the Liberator, presides over the scene, as if a reminder that the origins of nationhood were represented in that room. One thing was still missing, a name for the collection. However it had found one by 1944, when the first catalogue was published with a study written by the archaeologist Gregorio Hernández de Alba¹⁸. The Gold Museum had come into existence.

With the display cabinets and the newly-acquired name, exhibiting the items to the public was the next logical step. Until then few people in Colombia, perhaps with the exception of treasure hunters and collectors, had ever seen an object of pre-Hispanic goldwork. Plates that had appeared in a handful of books dealing with archaeological subjects written by Colombians or foreigners, and also a number of woodcuts originally published in the *Papel Periódico Ilustrado* in the 1880s to illustrate Liborio Zerda's *El Dorado*¹⁹, which came out in instalments, had been the only vehicle for spreading the knowledge of the nation's wealth in this field. But even these publications were accessible to only a small minority of the population, in a country where illiteracy rates were high until well into the twentieth century.

The collection grew relatively quickly, and by the end of 1943 it comprised 3,489 items, including 864

bought from Santiago Vélez, a Manizales collector. The number of items had risen by 75 per cent in a single year. It was not long before the Gold Museum was forced to leave the limited space it had in the boardroom, which was clearly inadequate to house it, in addition to the obvious access restrictions.



At the beginning of the 1950s, in a step described by a source as "the reform"²⁰, the Museum moved into a spacious, elegant room of the Bank, which by this time had its headquarters at the Pedro A. López building in Bogotá city centre. It remained there until 1959. During that period the Museum was open principally to special guests, including heads of state and other foreign dignitaries, members of commercial, military or diplomatic missions, and famous, distinguished Colombians, like beauty queen Luz Marina Zuluaga, Miss Universe 1959.

A leading commentator on art and culture at that time, Gustavo Santos, wrote the following words in the second edition of the general catalogue of the Museum, published in 1948 to coincide with the Ninth International Conference of American States, held in Bogotá: "The Gold Museum is, without doubt, the most extraordinary cultural attraction that Bogotá can offer to our fellow countrymen and to strangers,

particularly to strangers, tourists who come to visit us from distant lands in the hope of finding new, exotic things here, things that they have not seen elsewhere"²¹. At a time known in Colombian history as "La Violencia", or The Violence, the Gold Museum began to play a crucial role in the public relations of the nation.



On 9 April of that year (1948), Liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated a block away from the Museum, and partisan political violence raged out of control. What the Museum then showed to "our fellow countrymen and to strangers", and "particularly to strangers", was another facet of a country that was falling apart; a golden, shining facet. To Colombians themselves, it also showed that, a thousand years ago, those fields where massacres and abuses were now being committed, had been inhabited by communities that left works of remarkable beauty and perfection. It was a profound lesson. If there was anything left in Colombians of their pre-Hispanic ancestors, and few doubted that there was, there could be no consistency between the images of savagery that the newspapers revealed and the evidence of the artistic development and refinement of the nation's forebears that the Museum now held. It started to become

clear that Colombia was not just "a country of vandals", as a politician described it at the time. It was also the country of El Dorado, and this introduced a way for Colombians to take pride in their origins. The treasures of El Dorado constituted a positive reassertion of nationality, and that is why they were shown "particularly" to foreigners. If there was a moment in which the poporos, pectorals and nose ornaments of the ancient inhabitants of Colombia started to become symbols of national identity, a rich, complex, contradictory national identity, this was that moment.

These years were also pivotal in the development and growth of the Gold Museum in regard to its collections and display organization. The non-metal collections began to be assembled in 1946 with the purchase of two ceramic items from Luis Alberto Acuña. These were followed by a set of 264 items from Fernando Restrepo-Vélez. A few stone items bought two years later, in 1948, were the beginning of the Museum's current rich collection of stone artefacts.

The diversification of the Gold Museum meant that dispersed remnants of pre-Hispanic material culture began to make sense again as part of a whole. Metalwork objects ceased to be just isolated objects and became expressions of real societies. What treasure hunting had destroyed by removing items from burial places and shrines started to be repaired in some way in the Gold Museum's showcases and storage rooms. This made it possible for future research about the way of life and thinking of pre-Hispanic societies to be pursued on surer foundations. In addition to preserving from loss and destruction a part of national heritage of great significance to Colombians, as well as exhibiting beautiful goldwork objects, the Museum earned the attributes of an important place for research and study.

Some serious preoccupation with the study of the indigenous past already existed in Colombia by 1939.

This is confirmed by the foundation of the National Archaeological Service in the previous year²². In 1931 a Spanish translation of Konrad Theodor Preuss' book *Monumentale vorgeschichtliche Kunst, or Arte monumental prehistórico* [Monumental Prehistoric Art]²³, was published. It had been the result of excavations by Preuss in the San Agustín area in 1913-14. This area had also been the place chosen for the first archaeological expedition promoted and funded by the government. It was carried out in 1936, and led by Spanish archaeologist José Pérez de Barradas²⁴. Also in 1936 a new edition of Ezequiel Uricechea's *Antigüedades neogranadinas* [Antiquities of New Granada], appeared. A pioneering work on the archaeology of Colombia, it was first published in Berlin in 1854²⁵. In addition, an effort to arouse public interest had been made with an exhibition organized by Gregorio Hernández de Alba in Bogotá and opened in 1938 in the Las Aulas building which is now the Colonial Art Museum, and then in the new building of the National Library²⁶.



Paul Rivet, founder of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, had dominated the anthropological scene in Colombia ever since 1941 and continued to do so for the next twenty years. Famous for his theories about the origin of American man, Rivet consid-

ered ethnological research a priority, because of the imminent danger that the surviving indigenous groups would soon disappear²⁷. For this reason, he was one of the leading promoters of the foundation of the National Ethnological Institute in 1941. Merged with the existing Archaeological Service, it became the Colombian Institute of Anthropology in 1953. Despite the emphasis on ethnology, archaeology also made significant progress, particularly in the exploration of San Agustín, Tierradentro, Valle del Cauca, the high plains of the Eastern Cordillera and the Atlantic coastal area.

The rich seam represented by the Gold Museum in terms of archaeological research began to be exploited towards the end of the 1940s. The Banco de la República made the first step by funding the publication of works relating to pre-Hispanic metalwork²⁸. First on the list was an *Estudio inicial de las colecciones del Museo del Oro* [An Initial Study on the Gold Museum's Collections] was published, written by Mexican researcher Carlos Margain in 1950²⁹. This was followed by the Spaniard José Pérez de Barradas' substantial work, six large volumes published in Madrid between 1954 and 1966 with the title *Orfebrería prehispánica de Colombia* [Pre-Hispanic Goldwork of Colombia], focusing on the Calima, Tolima, Muisca and Quimbaya styles, which formed the bulk of the Museum's metalwork collection at the time³⁰.

Two main preoccupations characterized archaeological research on Colombian goldwork during this period: the identification of objects and their classification according to "styles". The magnitude of the task that Margain, Pérez de Barradas and the archaeologists that followed them faced, can be recognized by considering the case of a significant item, the Quimbaya poporo that founded the Gold Museum's collections. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, this object, or a similar one, was referred to as something resembling a "large vessel", a "lamp", a "censer", a "candlestick" or "a bottle"³¹. In the 1870s, Span-

ish traveller José María Gutiérrez de Alba described and drew the neck of a poporo, defining it as a "sort of fruit bowl containing imitation indigenous fruits"³², because of the spheres on its top. Even in 1939, when the Banco de la República bought it, its real function continued to be uncertain. Documents relating to its purchase describe it as "a gold vase worked in a very perfect fashion"³³. Only a careful study of similar pre-Hispanic objects and a comparison with artefacts of common use among Colombia's present-day indigenous people made it possible to establish that the object in question was far more unusual than initially thought. It is, in fact, a container to keep lime, extracted with a thin stick or dipper, and used in the ritual chewing of coca leaf; in other words, a poporo. It is seldom recognized that it took over a hundred years to give a convincing answer to the basic question of what this mysterious object was.



Returning to the history of the Gold Museum, photographs of the period under study, 1944 to 1959, show a radical change in its museography from the time when it was situated in the Bank's boardroom. It was a change brought about by the advances made in archaeological knowledge. Under the guidance of Luis Barriga del Diestro, its diligent director for 38 years³⁴, the Museum's showcases were seen ex-

quisitely arranged, the emphasis being on the aesthetic aspect of the exhibits. The eyes of the observer were presented with a harmonious, clear, intelligible set of objects, despite the fact that some of the display cabinets contained over 300 items. An unmistakable educational aim was perceptible in the booklets that hung from the showcases, with brief descriptions of the objects on display. These were clearly organized according to "styles", as Pérez de Barradas called them, or "cultures", a more commonly used term. The display cabinets were sorted into groups of objects according to their function, which, to a large extent, determined their shape. Newly-acquired ceramic and stone items were now among the exhibits. The large number of items in the Museum began to find a meaning. At the same time, a coherent vision of pre-Hispanic societies or periods that, until then, had been little more than abstractions, began to take shape.

In 1958 the Banco de la República moved to new headquarters. The building was erected at a site where the renowned Granada Hotel, burnt down in the 1948 riots, had previously stood. The Gold Museum was set up in the building's basement, and opened to the public in July 1959. If the move from the Bank's boardroom to a special room was referred to as "the reform", the step now taken amounted to a revolution. For the first time the general public was given unrestricted access to the Museum. However, it still continued to be an essential port of call for the nation's distinguished visitors. Among public figures photographed at the time are Prince Philip from Great Britain and Archbishop Makarios from Cyprus taking a close look at the exhibits and signing the visitors' book, which by 1967 had been autographed by over 500 foreign dignitaries³⁵. In contrast to previous years, the Museum was now actively looking for a closer integration into national life.

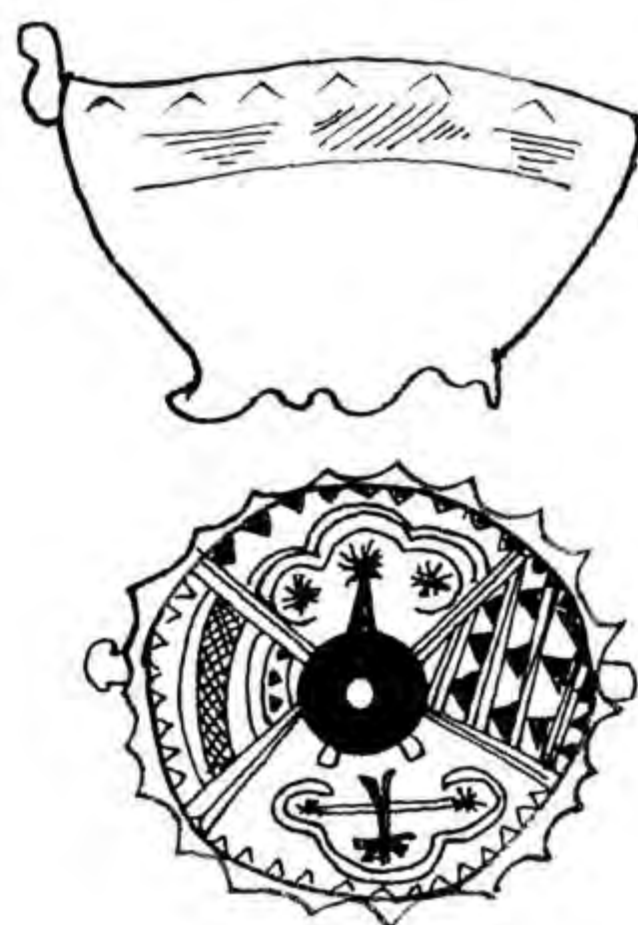
With its entrance a few steps away from the busiest street of the capital's city centre, the Gold Museum repre-

sented an open invitation to ordinary Colombians to enter into a world that was quite different from the one they had been taught about in history lessons. Bogotá was growing at a fast pace and its population had doubled in ten years, reaching a million inhabitants. The country was just beginning to recover from the period of partisan violence. These were the first years of the National Front, with its promise of reconciliation and peace.

With over 7,200 goldwork items at the time of moving to its new location, the Museum was no longer able to exhibit the whole of its collection. At most, it would put little more than two hundred items on display at one time. What was important now was to concentrate on making a new, unusual visual universe accessible to a diverse public with schoolchildren forming the largest group. The experience was as new to its visitors as it was to the Museum itself, and experimentation in display is patent in photographs from these years. The arrangement of the collection according to "styles" following Pérez de Barradas' system was preserved, although the display cabinets tended to show partial aspects mostly determined by the objects' shape and function. Quimbaya poporos, Calima diadems, Tolima pendants and pectorals, and Muisca tunjos were the exhibition's recurring themes. To a certain extent, this type of arrangement led the public to associate each "style" with particular objects.

The room itself was rectangular in shape, with display cases positioned at regular intervals along the long walls. At the bottom of the room, opposite the entrance, an array of maps of Colombia showed the political division of the country at the time, with the departments and their capitals, and the geographical areas associated with the various "cultures" represented in the collection. Curtains and fancy textiles played a crucial role in the presentation of the Museum displays, cascading in the background or concealing the bases that supported the displays. It is difficult to know how

great an impact these attempts to create spaces that mimicked nature had on the public. They were soon abandoned and there was a return to neutral backgrounds and geometrical structures that made it easier for the observer's attention to concentrate on the displays.



The goldwork collection grew at a steady pace during this period, although the ceramic collection remained relatively stagnant. It only increased by 87 items in 19 years. However, the purchase of ceramics resumed in June 1966 with the acquisition of a set of 215 items from Alfredo Ramos-Valenzuela, a descendant of Gonzalo Ramos, whose gold collection later went to the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. There was also some diversification during this period, with the initiation in 1967 of two new valuable collections, those of shell and bone.

The first pre-Hispanic goldwork exhibitions outside Colombia, a significant activity of the Gold Museum, took place in these years. The first of these exhibitions was staged in 1954, when 80 masterpieces were taken to the Metropolitan Museum of New York, for the bicentenary of Columbia University³⁶. In 1962 the International Petroleum Company took a group of objects belonging to the Museum to be exhibited in several European countries³⁷. Another group was displayed at the Seventh International Art Biennial in São

Paulo, Brazil, and this was followed in 1966 by exhibitions at the Colombian Center in New York, and at Mexico's National Museum of Anthropology and the headquarters of the Venezuelan Central Bank in Caracas in 1967. Also in 1967, the Gold Museum had its first experience of holding temporary exhibitions in the country itself, with one called *Pre-Columbian Ceramics*, organized at the Bogotá Gallery.

The most significant chapter in the Museum's life during this decade was its move to a permanent building, specially built to house its collections, and opened to the public on 22 April 1968. It was a change of far-reaching consequences. At its new home, the Museum was to develop in several ways, and to fulfill purposes that went far beyond the ambitions of those who had founded it thirty years before.

The initial steps were taken in 1961. The Banco de la República, presided over by Eduardo Arias-Robledo, acquired a plot of land close to its new headquarters, facing the Santander Park. The initial plan of the Bank's directors was to extend the bank's offices and have a new building, in which a whole floor would be assigned to the Gold Museum³⁸. The Esguerra, Sáenz, Suárez, Samper firm of architects, that in the previous decade had constructed the building for the Luis Ángel Arango Library, also part of the Bank's cultural section, was commissioned to develop the idea, and from the beginning it took advice from the anthropologist and archaeologist, Luis Duque-Gómez, director of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology³⁹.

The architects travelled to Mexico City, where the National Museum of Anthropology, which opened in 1964, was under construction. There they gained valuable experiences that allowed them to plan, with a new vision, a building that was to be unique in Colombia to house a museum that was unique in the world.

Under the guidance of their scientific advisor, the architects came up with an ambitious project that required not just a floor, but a whole

building⁴⁰. It did not take long for the Bank's directors to give their approval. The general principle was to establish "an institution organized according to new concepts of what a modern museum is, namely a live, active institution at the service of culture"⁴¹, as one can read in the proposal that the architects submitted to the Bank. This principle translated itself into the idea of setting up an exhibition embracing "all aspects of pre-Columbian culture", in other words, displaying goldwork objects in a context that was meaningful and took full advantage of the diversity of the Museum's existing collections.

From an architectural point of view the fundamental postulate was a simple one: rather than the building itself, the important thing was its contents, the pre-Hispanic objects. The design should make the nation's gold heritage stand out, without sacrificing the aesthetic value of the building itself.



The result was a structure that, from the outside, looks like a plain white box resting on a glass plinth, without decoration or distraction, a sharply-outlined receptacle that constitutes a firm declaration of architectural modernism. The hand of the architect can most clearly be seen in the corridors and stairways which link the exhibition rooms. After crossing the entrance the visitor is met by a monumental staircase that plays with the perception of distance and depth by means of a false-per-

spective effect, achieved by gradually narrowing the staircase as it goes up. The architectural design dominates again at the end of the staircase, where there is a vast open space which stretches up three floors and is bathed in intense natural light coming in through a large plate-glass ceiling.

The idea of a modern museum as a live, active institution, the idea that inspired the architects, was more clearly visible in the distribution of space inside the Museum. In addition to the exhibition areas, the new building had storage areas housing the archaeological collections, and a small, specialized library, as well as an administrative area. The latter, located on the top floor, naturally reflects the modernist concept adopted by the architects. However it does also recall the structure of the Spanish colonial house, with a central patio surrounded by rooms and profusely illuminated by natural light.

The exhibition areas were designed following the concept that a modern museum must have an educational mission and should, at the same time, be a space for aesthetic contemplation. A plan was adopted from the outset concerning the collection's permanent exhibition: it was to be organized into two levels, the first of which should emphasize the educational aspect. The second was to be a space for aesthetic contemplation⁴². The former would constitute an introduction to Colombian pre-Hispanic metal-using societies, and the latter a journey through their extraordinary metalwork production. In the final design these levels corresponded to the first and second floors. A temporary exhibition room was also included, on the first level.

Archaeologist Alicia Dussán de Reichel took on the responsibility of devising the Museum's layout, to give concrete form to this general scheme. The layout has evolved to reflect the progress made in archaeological studies, including field research projects and investigations carried out in the Museum itself. A comprehensive review of the Museum's layout was

done in the mid-1980s under the guidance of Clemencia Plazas and Ana María Falchetti⁴³. A contract to design the Museum displays was awarded to museologist Vidal Antonio Roza and British architect Alec Bright, who took charge of this aspect of the Museum over the years that followed its opening. Complex technical difficulties had to be resolved, lighting among them, due to the relative uniformity of the exhibits in terms of size and colour, and also to the fact that most of them are flat objects⁴⁴. A principal role in the selection of the items that were to be exhibited was played by the person who had the best knowledge of the collection gathered by the Museum thus far, the Director, Luis Barriga del Diestro.

Structurally, the architects created on the first floor an enormous empty space to be compartmentalized by showcases that seem to hang in the air supported by rods of steel attached to a metal framework that hides the ceiling. As on the second floor, the showcases demarcate small areas for the purpose of ensuring the privacy necessary for study and contemplation. With the assistance of specially trained guides, maps, chronological tables, audio-visual devices, diagrams, sketches, models, dummies, full-scale reproductions of diverse types of tombs, and other modern museological devices, the visitor is introduced to the daily life, the means of production, the economic, social and political organization, the religious and funerary practices, and the metalwork techniques of pre-Hispanic societies. Ceramic items are predominant, and the diversity of styles proves that these were far from being static societies. A large number of stone or gold tools, objects made from shell, bone, wood, and textiles, and also sarcophagi with human remains and mummies, one of which is remarkably well preserved, make the general picture of the goldsmiths' lives less obscure, and prepare the visitor better to understand and enjoy their extraordinary metalwork production.

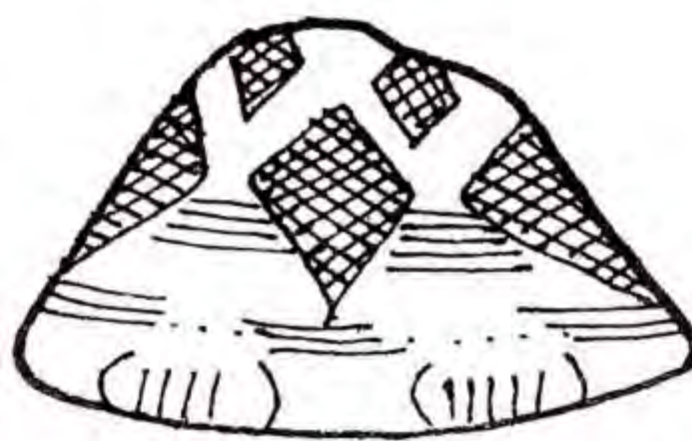
The best of the goldwork exhibition is on the second floor. In the

Museum it is known by a word inherited from the language used by the Bank: "the vault". In the Bank itself the vault is a fortress housing the gold that used to be the standard for currency and which measured the wealth of the nation. There is an obvious parallel with the Museum's second floor. It is a "vault" with reinforced concrete walls, without windows, and with one enormous strong-box door. It houses the gold of the Indians, a standard to measure the nation's pre-Hispanic cultural wealth.

The "vault" keeps select samples of the various "styles" associated with geographical areas. The samples are distributed following an approximate chronological succession scheme, which conveys a message that there was as much variety in the course of time as there was in space. The exhibition starts with goldwork samples from Tumaco and Calima, the oldest goldwork producing areas known to us, and continues with objects from Malagana, San Agustín, Tierradentro, Cauca, Tolima, Quimbaya, Urabá, Zenú, and Nariño. To conclude, there are examples of the Tairona and Muisca societies, that survived until soon after the Spanish conquest. Nariño Goldwork, first discovered in the 1970s⁴⁵, was at the end of the exhibition, closing a sort of geographical tour in the South of the country. In contrast to the museological arrangements in the previous buildings of the Museum, the items are shown here according to their individuality—many showcases exhibit only one item—and also their functional, formal, and conceptual relationship with other items from the same stylistic group. Consequently, the visitor is constantly reminded of the diversity of each geographical area or "culture", while the unity of concept that defines each particular style is kept in evidence.

Inside "the vault", to round off the Museum visit there occurs a moment of great dramatic effect. In case all that the visitor had seen thus far had not already put his or her capacity for astonishment and delight to the test, he or she is con-

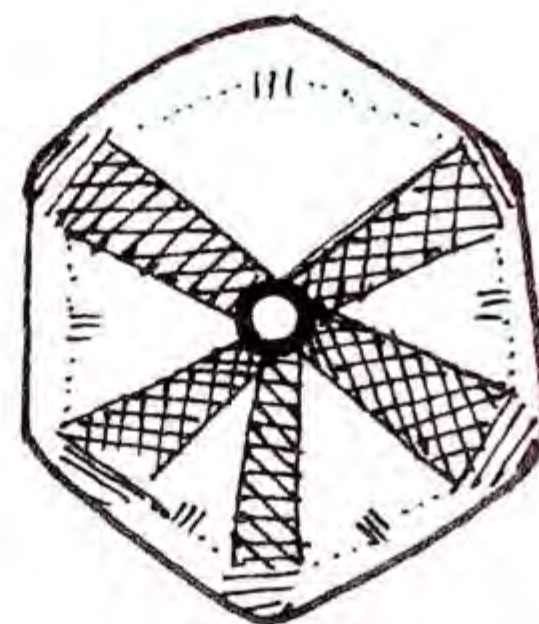
ducted into a dark room that is gradually lightened. The visitor is suddenly surrounded by hundreds of masks, pectorals, pendants, ceremonial staffs, nose ornaments, a total of 8,000 gleaming items in a dazzling scene. It is the "Golden Room", a materialization of the conquerors' dreams.



The building was awarded first prize in the Fourth Colombian Architecture Biennial in 1970, in recognition of the fact that "the fabulous and now world famous Banco de la República's gold collection is now in an appropriate, austere space that has been well planned and well executed", as the jury's verdict reads⁴⁶. "This building", it adds, "fulfils, in addition, cultural and educational functions that are of an extraordinary importance to the Colombian public". It was a remarkable success for a building that, as one of the architects says, should be like a case for a jewel: fine and provocative, but not more than the jewel⁴⁷.

The development of the collections made remarkable progress during the first few years after the opening of the Museum's permanent building. By the end of 1968, the goldwork collection came to more than 10,000 items, and the ceramic collection numbered about one thousand. Soon afterwards the collections started to grow at a pace unparalleled in the Museum's history. In just five years the collection of metalwork objects doubled, and reached the total of 20,046 items in December 1973. The collection of ceramics developed in an even more notable way, as it increased fivefold

in six years, reaching 5,225 items in December 1974. Growth was more gradual over the following ten years, and was at its lowest level during the 1990s. Today the collection of metalwork objects is composed of some 33,800 items and that of ceramics of nearly 13,500. In addition, there are close to 3,400 stone items, 1,200 shell



items, 330 bone items, 139 archaeological wooden objects, 145 samples of textiles and a number of mummies. The current exhibition comprises some 1,300 goldwork items, apart from the 8,000 in the Golden Room. These figures provide a basis on which to evaluate the role that the Central Bank and the Gold Museum have played ever since 1939 in the preservation of Colombia's cultural heritage, and in the development of a solid foundation to improve our knowledge of pre-Hispanic metal-using societies.

The extraordinary wealth of the Museum is already highly representative of the production of Colombian metal-using societies. It might have been expected that following sixty-five years of collecting the remains left by almost five centuries of the widespread looting of tombs, graveyards and sanctuaries, this part of the nation's archaeological heritage had become exhausted. However, a number of acquisitions made in the past thirty years provide genuine surprises. The first was a model raft on which a number of figures, led by a chieftain, can be seen. It represents a ceremony that took place on a lake, and has been given the name of El Dorado. The Muisca raft, one of the most outstanding objects

made by the ancient inhabitants of the high plains of the Eastern mountain range known to us, was found by peasants early in 1969 in Pasca, Cundinamarca, and bought by the Museum in April that year. In 1987 a sumptuous set of burial offerings was dug out of a tomb in the Magdalena valley. It consisted of helmets, diadems, poporos and other objects, and was given the name of the New Quimbaya Treasure, an analogy with the Treasure donated to Spain by the Colombian government in 1892. But perhaps the most important find was made on the Malagana estate in 1992.

The case of Malagana draws attention, once more, to the issue of the indiscriminate exploitation of Colombia's archaeological heritage by treasure hunters. Following the accidental discovery of a group of pre-Hispanic tombs in the middle of a sugar-cane field by workmen, a few months were enough for inhabitants of the region and professional treasure hunters to devastate the area which in aerial photographs taken soon afterwards looks like a bomb site⁴⁸. Even with police and army protection, the archaeologists whom the Colombian Institute of Anthropology rushed to the area only managed to excavate a handful of tombs. In addition to the pressure put on them by the treasure hunters, who kept a close watch on what they were doing, archaeologists found themselves in a situation where what they had achieved through patient effort during the day was ruined during the night.

Archaeologists know quite well that this kind of event does irreparable damage to the study of pre-Hispanic societies. A grave or a shrine is not simply a repository of things put there at random by indigenous peoples. The position of the objects, the shape and size of the tombs, the number of artefacts placed in them, the materials of which they are made, their quality and splendour, always express clearly-defined intentions. When treasure hunters remove items from a tomb, they wipe out valuable evidence that could have made it possible for archaeologists to interpret,

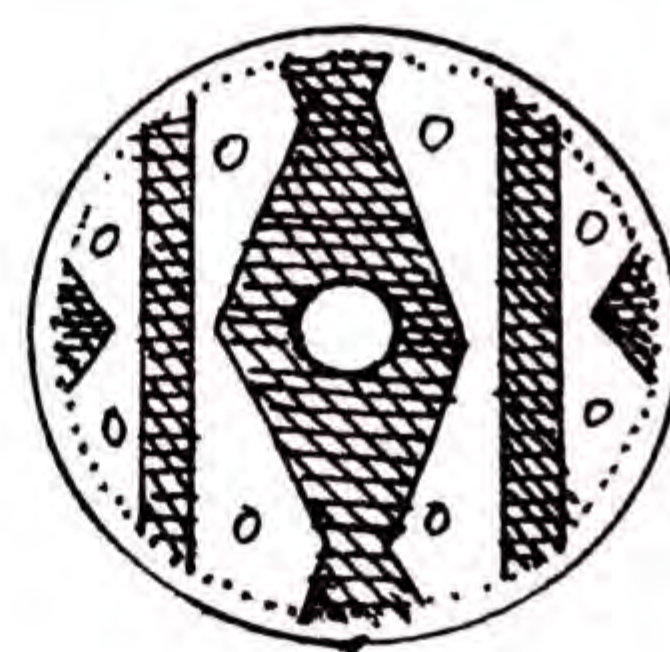
to some degree of accuracy, the meanings and the motivations behind their making. This deprives everyone interested in pre-Hispanic societies of clues that are essential to unravel the mysteries surrounding them.



Prior to the adoption of the 1991 Constitution, the most significant step forward as regards legislation concerning the protection of the nation's cultural heritage was Law 163 of 1959, and a decree regulating it, enacted in 1963⁴⁹. Apart from providing essential definitions, this law expressly forbids taking any object belonging to the nation's historical and artistic heritage out of the country without satisfying certain requirements. Article 72 of the new Constitution laid more solid foundations for the introduction of a more comprehensive legislation. "The nation's cultural heritage", the article reads, "is under State protection. Archaeological heritage and other cultural effects that constitute national identity belong to the nation and cannot be transferred to others. The Law will lay down the mechanisms to be used in order to re-acquire them if they are in the hands of private individuals, and will also regulate the special rights of ethnic groups settled in archaeologically rich territories"⁵⁰. Law 397 of 1997 fills many gaps in the preceding legislation. It even provides for the punishment of offences against the nation's cultural heritage⁵¹.

There had been no lack of will among the authorities in earlier times to protect archaeological heritage, and there was certainly no lack

of plans for doing this. Ever since the 1950s attempts had been made, with meagre results, to implement a protection system called "rescue archaeology". It was based on a legal principle that the construction of roads,



the laying of pipelines and other civil works must be preceded by studies on the environmental impact. There was also an obligation to protect the archaeological heritage. However, this only began to produce an effect after the issuing of the 1991 Constitution. It is argued that over a thousand archaeological discoveries have been made in Colombia since then, and a number of engineering projects have even been temporarily suspended for reasons pertaining to archaeological heritage. None of the discoveries has resulted in the recovery of metalwork objects of any significance in their own context.

The problem is undoubtedly complex, and there is no easy or immediate solution. It is not just a matter of issuing regulations or protecting archaeological research with the army or the police. The case of Malagana shows clearly that cultural and educational factors have contributed to the formation of a mentality that justifies treasure hunting, contrary to the principle that the common interest ought to prevail over individual interests. Clearly, these are essential factors to be taken into consideration when deciding policies on the protection of cultural heritage.

As far as the study of pre-Hispanic societies is concerned, progress in the past four decades has been closely

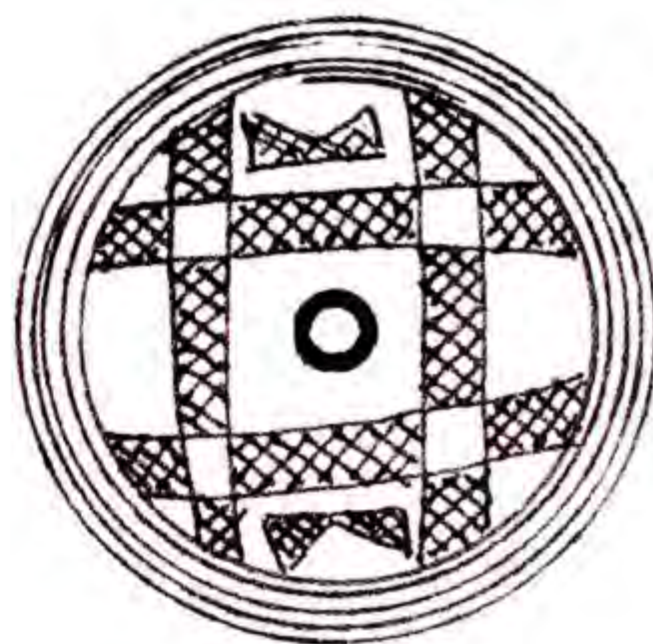
linked to the development of archaeology. Until 1964 the training of anthropologists was carried out by the National Ethnological Institute and its successor, the Colombian Institute of Anthropology. Until then progress was slow, judging from the results. Only 38 anthropologists had graduated since 1941, when the first of these institutions was founded⁵². This is explained chiefly by a lack of opportunities in the labour market. The Department of Anthropology of Los Andes University was established in 1964, with Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff and his wife, Alicia Dussán, in charge. Two years later other universities founded anthropology departments, including the National University in Bogotá and Antioquia University in Medellín. Cauca University in Popayán founded its own anthropology department in 1970, and the National University in Manizales followed suit in 1999. Interest in the new discipline soon became apparent, and over 700 students graduated in the space of fifteen years⁵³.



With the introduction of anthropological studies into university curricula and the consolidation of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology as a research institution, archaeology gained a new momentum in the country. Colombians and foreigners who had promoted the advance of archaeology since the 1940s, including Gregorio Hernández de Alba, Luis Duque-Gómez, Eliécer Silva-Celis, Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, Alicia Dussán de Reichel, Julio César Cubillos, Henri Lehmann, Wendell Bennett, Sylvia Broadbent,

Karen Olsen-Bruhns, Warwick Bray, Thomas van der Hammen, Henning Bischof, and Marianne Cardale, among others, were soon joined by professionals from the younger generation who substantially widened the scope and range of archaeological studies.

The Foundation for National Archaeological Research, set up by the Banco de la República, played a leading role during this period, a period that could be described as the formative stage of modern Colombian archaeology. Created for the purpose of promoting and providing support for projects focusing on the exploration of Colombia's archaeological heritage, particularly among final-year or newly graduated students, from the outset the Foundation has operated in close coordination with the Colombian Institute of Anthropology, the university departments of anthropology, the Gold Museum and other institutions, in a common effort that rapidly bore fruit⁵⁴. A quick look at the list of projects that it supported during its



first twelve years reveals many book titles that have become indispensable reference materials. By 1998 the Foundation had sponsored over 220 research projects and published upwards of sixty monographs, in addition to the *Boletín de Arqueología* [Archaeology Journal], now approaching its 50th issue.

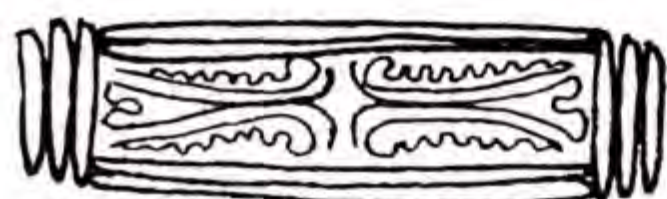
The Gold Museum played a significant role in these academic developments, partly because it is the place where the bulk of any research work on Colombian pre-Hispanic metalwork is done. In addition, from

the time when it was installed in its new building, it has continuously sponsored and even used its own specialists in research projects on Colombia's goldwork and gold-using societies, thus persevering with the task initiated by Carlos Margain and José Pérez de Barradas in the 1950s. Notable among these is the laborious iconographical study of the collection of metalwork objects commissioned towards the end of the 1980s by Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, which provided the basis for his outstanding book *Orfebrería y chamanismo*⁵⁵. Undoubtedly, apart from Pérez de Barradas's works, the most influential studies have been those carried out by Clemencia Plazas and Ana María Falchetti during the quarter of a century in which they worked for the Museum, where they became director and technical assistant director respectively. We owe much of our knowledge of Colombian metal-using societies to them. Some of their books, particularly those focusing on the Sinú and Lower San Jorge river areas, —they conducted an intensive field study of the latter funded by the Museum and Econóquel between 1975 and 1980— are essential reference material for their particular subjects⁵⁶.

The Museum currently employs a staff of anthropologists who, in their respective fields and with their own publications, conduct research projects at a steady pace, and provide technical support for the Museum's programmes. Also of great importance is the highly technical work done in the Museum in connection with the conservation and restoration of the items of every kind found in the collections. These include goldwork objects, subject to deterioration through factors such as oxidation, corrosion and material stress⁵⁷.

The Museum complements its academic, technical and scientific pursuits, with the *Boletín Museo del Oro* [The Gold Museum Journal], a scientific publication that also fulfils the purpose of publicizing the Museum's activities. It started publication in 1978 under the direction of the anthropologist

Luis Duque-Gómez, its main promoter and mentor. An essential source for consultation by specialists, and of knowledge for the general public, in over 40 issues the Gold Museum Journal has recorded the progress of research on the life of indigenous communities and on pre-Hispanic metalwork, in articles and reviews written by leading authorities in Colombia and from abroad.



This perspective of today's Gold Museum, which corresponds to the classical definition of a museum as a source of knowledge and a place where a significant part of a nation's heritage is kept, is by no means irreconcilable with another facet of the Museum, one which is more widely known: that of being a centre of information, learning, contemplation, and enjoyment of the nation's heritage. As a matter of fact, the Museum has never lost sight of the fact that it holds and exhibits exceptional works of art that arouse admiration and curiosity among those who look at them. Nor has it ignored the fact that these works constitute a testimony to remarkable human societies who developed unique world views; human societies that preceded present-day Colombians, and are therefore hope-inspiring symbols of national identity in which to take pride. Consequently, the Gold Museum's orientation is towards the public, its education and its intellectual and emotional enrichment.

The main vehicle for spreading knowledge of the metalwork of pre-Hispanic societies is, of course, the permanent exhibition, structured and displayed as described in previous pages. Guided tours and audio-visual presentations are organized around it. School children come top of the agenda, and ever since 1987 the Education Services Office has made

substantial contributions to the development of museum-based non-traditional education. Programmes of particular significance among those implemented by the Museum are the recreational workshops, the "Educational leaflets", interactive materials that help children gain a deeper insight into the exhibitions, and the "Educational suitcases", specially designed boxes containing replicas of gold figures and objects of ceramic, stone, shell, and bone that teachers can bring to the classroom. Children can handle the objects, enjoy playing the games which come in the box, and ask questions of the teacher, who has been prepared in advance through an specially written booklet⁵⁸. Nearly two hundred children and young people a day visit the Museum on school trips.

National and international exhibitions have been an indispensable complement to the permanent exhibition. They provide an opportunity to investigate particular subjects in greater depth, highlight specific aspects or groups of items, and look at pre-Hispanic societies from new perspectives, with the help of catalogues, posters, audio-visual presentations, and other museological aids. These exhibitions, usually accompanied by talks and seminars delivered by specialists, also serve the purpose of revitalizing the Museum itself, since they renew the interest of the public who are already familiar with it. Furthermore, temporary exhibitions frequently allow new discoveries to be made during the setting up of the Museum's displays, as previously ignored facets of the collections or little known facts come to light.

The first temporary exhibition of the Gold Museum in Bogotá took place in 1968, coinciding with the opening of its new building. Its highly appropriate theme, *The Legend of El Dorado*, was undoubtedly an additional attraction to draw the public's attention to a revitalized institution that had just been reopened. Two years later, in 1970, following a number of exhibitions on a diversity of subjects, the opening

took place of a novel exhibition that for the first time gave the general public an opportunity to have an overview of goldwork from the whole of the continent. *Gold in America*, as the exhibition was called, brought together items from México, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panamá, Ecuador and Perú⁵⁹.

Until 1968 the Gold Museum and its collections, and therefore the only opportunity that the public had to see anything of pre-Hispanic metalwork, were confined to the capital. A first attempt to send round the country what Colombians of all regions considered to be part of their own heritage was made that year in Manizales, formerly Quimbaya territory. An "Exhibition of 25 Masterworks of Pre-Hispanic Goldwork" belonging to the Museum was organized, along with a display of a group of ceramic items owned by Santiago Vélez, a local collector. It did not take long before this kind of event was replicated in other Colombian cities, particularly in order to mark occasions of historical, cultural or social significance. In 1970, to celebrate the Pan-American Games, another exhibition was put on in Cali, and a further one the following year in Ibagué, as part of a Cultural Week. The first Gold Museum touring exhibition, successively shown in different cities, was called *Pre-Columbian Goldwork*, initially organized in Barranquilla in 1977, and taken later to Ibagué, Popayán, Bucaramanga, Pereira, Cúcuta and Medellín.



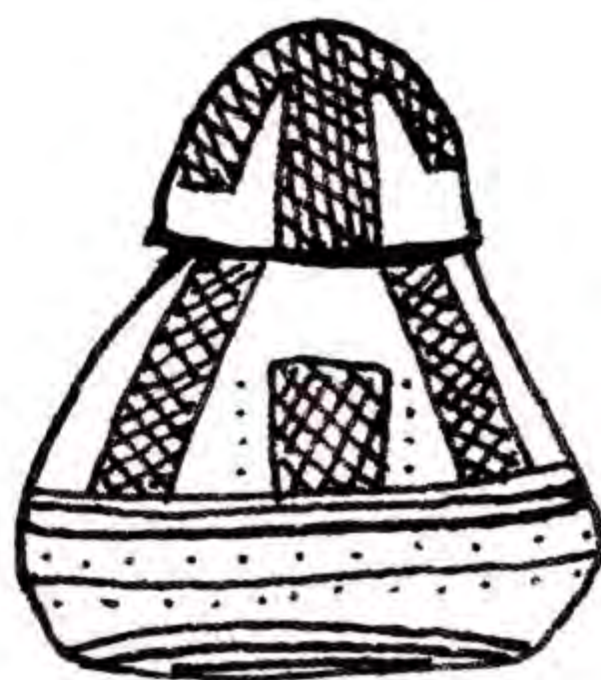
The structure and routine of the Museum were disturbed in 1978, when the whole display on the first floor was dismantled. The reason was the arrival in Bogotá of *Textiles*

and *Gold from Ancient Perú*, the first great international exhibition on a pre-Hispanic theme to be shown at the Museum. A few years later, in 1985, the first international touring exhibition arrived at the Museum: *México: 3,000 years of history*. It then visited other cities throughout the country.

Organized at regular intervals, the temporary exhibitions of the Gold Museum, held in Bogotá as well as in other cities, have allowed an ever increasing number of members of the public, particularly people who live far from the capital, to gain access to its rich collections. They have also reinforced a message of cultural identity, both national and regional, that has been associated with the Museum's contents from the outset. This is particularly true in relation to exhibitions such as *7,000 Years of Calima History*, shown in Cali in 1986 to mark the city's 450th anniversary, *The Muisca at the arrival of the Spaniards*, staged in the country's capital to commemorate the 450th anniversary of Bogotá and Tunja, and *1492: The American Response*, staged to mark the fifth centenary of the discovery of América.

It was precisely an attempt to facilitate access to pre-Hispanic art throughout the whole country and to promote both the ancestral and current cultural values of the regions, that motivated Banco de la República to initiate, in 1980, the opening of regional museums⁶⁰. First was the Gold Museum in the Customs House in Santa Marta, containing tairona art pieces. Next came the Gold Museum of Manizales, which opened in 1981 and specialized in Quimbaya goldwork. This was followed in 1982 by the Gold Museum of Cartagena whose collection is based on Zenú culture. Two others were established in 1985, the Gold Museum of Pasto and the Gold Museum of Ipiales, focusing on Nariño metalwork, and then two more in 1986: the Gold Museum of Pereira, for late Quimbaya goldwork, and the Gold Museum of Armenia, for early Quimbaya style. The Ethnological

Museum of Amazonian Man was established in Leticia in 1988, and the Gold Museum in Cali in 1991, with pieces of Calima culture. Each of them exhibits collections that include the work of goldsmiths who inhabited that particular region, really unique art work. At the same time, they organize temporary exhibitions of archaeological or ethnological interest, and also host touring exhibitions from other regions. Between 1984 and 1986 the Museum, under the direction of María Elvira Bonilla, initiated an interesting experiment when it brought examples of goldwork to Banco de la República's gold-trading offices in remote towns such as Condoto, Barbacoas and Guapi on the Pacific coast, gold producing centres for several centuries⁶¹.



The exhibitions that the Gold Museum has sent to other countries ever since 1962 also convey a message related to Colombia's cultural and national identity. It seems clear that, like international exhibitions shown in Colombia, they are expressions of goodwill among nations, and contribute to the spreading of culture from different countries throughout the world. In the case of Colombia, a country that in the past was generally ignored by the outside world, and is now remembered chiefly because of drug trafficking, violence and natural disasters, the nose ornaments, pendants, bracelets and poporos of the pre-Hispanic world have been assigned a mission to help rescue the image and self-esteem of

Colombia, a mission that they have never failed to accomplish with unequivocal success.

Gold Museum exhibitions have been staged in 120 cities in fifty countries on five continents, reaching different peoples from a great diversity of cultures. Sent abroad by invitation, the gold items have been shown in over 180 exhibitions since 1954, a great deal more than the number of exhibitions that the Gold Museum could have organized in Bogotá in its entire history. Under certain circumstances the exhibits have been shown in ten or even fifteen countries in one year, which is remarkable even for the world's best-travelled collections. Many illustrious institutions have hosted these exhibitions, including Mexico's National Museum of Anthropology, the Mu-



seum of Modern Art and the Museum of Fine Arts of Buenos Aires, the Museum of America and the National Archaeological Museum of Madrid, the Hermitage Museum of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), the National Museum of New Delhi, the Royal Academy of London, the Palazzo Sforza in Milan, the Marmottan Museum, Petit Palais and Grand Palais in Paris, and Washington's National Gallery of Art.

Sixty years after its foundation, the Gold Museum is being extended and refurbished in every aspect. As far as the structure is concerned, a substantial project is under way, with the assistance of Germán Samper, one of the architects of the original building.

The area for the collection's permanent exhibition, on the second and third levels, will double. The area of the temporary exhibition room will increase from 110 square metres at present, to 450 square metres, and the capacity of the assembly hall will increase from 40 people to one hundred. These existing facilities will be complemented with new ones, including an Education Activities Room, and workshop areas for children and young people, a restaurant, and a café. Visitors will be able to use computers and multimedia equipment. The Museum itself will become an "intelligent building", with the renovation of its technical devices and networks, lighting, and so on. In addition, the Museum will have functional areas to keep the reserve collection, and restoration and packing areas for all the collections, including those of metalwork, clay, stone, shell, bone, and wood objects, textiles and mummies.



The number of goldwork items on display will be considerably increased. Even more so will be the ceramic, stone, shell, bone, textile and wooden items, in order to offer a more complete vision of the artefacts used by pre-Hispanic societies, thus placing metalwork objects in their proper context. The scientific script of the exhibits is being comprehensively reviewed and updated, in the light of new knowledge gained in the recent past about pre-Hispanic societies, their culture and representations. At the same time, the museography and exhibition techniques are being revised, to facilitate the spread of scientific infor-

mation and the enjoyment of an aesthetic experience by the public. Essentially, the aim is to enable visitors to view the collections from a diversity of perspectives, including an archaeological one. There will be rooms in which the emphasis will be laid on the artistic aspects, while in others the shamanic and symbolic facets, or the metalwork techniques, will be prominent. The "Offerings Room", ending the visit to the Museum, will provide an opportunity to learn about the function of many items as offerings made for the preservation of the balance of the universe. Therefore, the Gold Museum will substantially strengthen its tradition as an active, dynamic cultural centre for the inhabitants of the city and its visitors.

The Gold Museum is *sui generis*. It was not born as a cabinet of curiosities bequeathed by a philanthropist collector, nor did it develop into an archaeological museum, or a

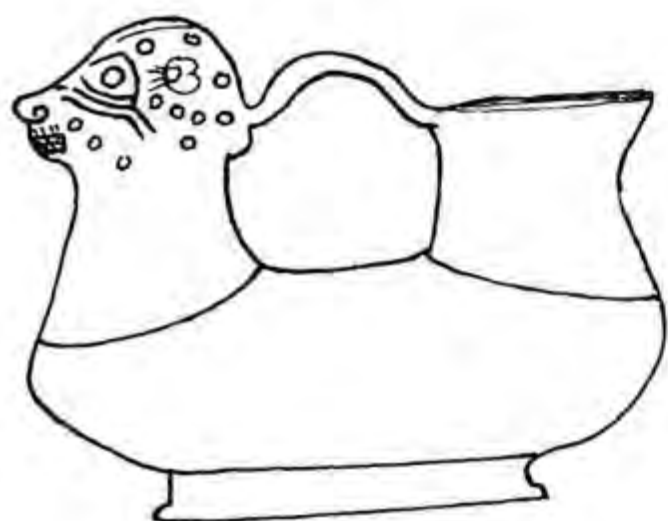


natural history museum, like almost all museums of its kind had done. Reconstructing its story is reconstructing the history of a great discovery. Colombia was not among the destinations of the great international scientific expeditions that were organized during the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century to countries such as Greece, Italy, Egypt, Asia Minor, Mexico or Peru, because there were no pyramids or Cyclopean constructions, or any fabulous temples of the ancient world to be found in Colombia. Instead there was wrought gold, but how beautifully it had been worked did not matter. What mattered was

its weight and purity, reasons good enough to put it on the market in the form of ingots. However one day something new appeared on the market, something that was not an ingot but a large vessel of pre-Hispanic times, and it was noticed that this had been worked "in a very perfect fashion". It was officially recognized that many other pre-Hispanic objects had also been worked in a similar fashion, and therefore it was decided that these objects should be acquired and preserved by the government. Soon a collection had been put together and placed in display cabinets. Then the great discovery was made. There was a revelation. This was something that until then had only been recognized by a handful of Colombian visionaries such as Ezequiel Uricoechea, Manuel Uribe-Ángel and Leocadio María Arango, and above all, a number of foreign collectors and scientists, as well as the visitors to the American Historical Exhibition which opened in Madrid in 1892. It was discovered that these objects were things of beauty; amazing, intriguing things, artefacts that demonstrated that monumentality was not a matter of size, but of proportion. It was discovered that these were great masterworks in miniature. Further, a great European expert, Paul Rivet, was there to confirm this. Suddenly, it became clear that this was something for the nation to be proud of, and for this reason it was exhibited to foreigners first of all.

It is a common belief that the Gold Museum was set up because the country was becoming conscious of its ancestry and its cultural identity, because some artists had started to paint the myths and rituals of pre-historic peoples. History seems to demonstrate that in fact things were much less clear, and the opposite was perhaps true. It is a known fact that, behind the nationalistic ideas of Colombian painters and intellectuals of the 1930s, there was a great deal of "mexicanism". To a large extent, the *bachués* represented the impact on Colombia of the muralistic movement led by Rivera, Orozco and

Siqueiros, and its manifestos and political attitudes. There was no such thing as a cult of the Indian peoples in Colombia. Such a cult did in fact exist in Mexico where their ancient, monumental constructions could be seen, and a revolution of Indians and peasants had recently taken place.



There is little doubt that there was an element of genuine appreciation of the country's pre-Hispanic past in Colombia at the time. But this only began to develop when sufficient material evidence had been gathered, for everyone to see, of how wonderful the works of the ancient inhabitants of Colombia were. It was then that the indigenous element of nationality started to be viewed as an asset, not as a liability. It is for this reason that the Gold Museum means so much to Colombians, for its collections are powerful symbols of national identity.

1. Minutes of the Banco de la República Executive Committee, no. 505, 30 March 1939.
2. Minutes of the Banco de la República Board of Directors, no. 1174, 17 May 1939. For further details on the Gold Museum's early history, see Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, 1989, pp. 61-63. See also Museo del Oro, "Historia del Museo del Oro", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 1, January-April 1978, pp. 3-12.
3. Evidence gathered by archaeologists and ethnohistorians as well as recent insights into the matter suggest that gold and other precious metals did have a value as elements of power and were used for trade and exchange. However, when these metals became ritual objects through the goldsmith's work and gained a symbolic meaning,

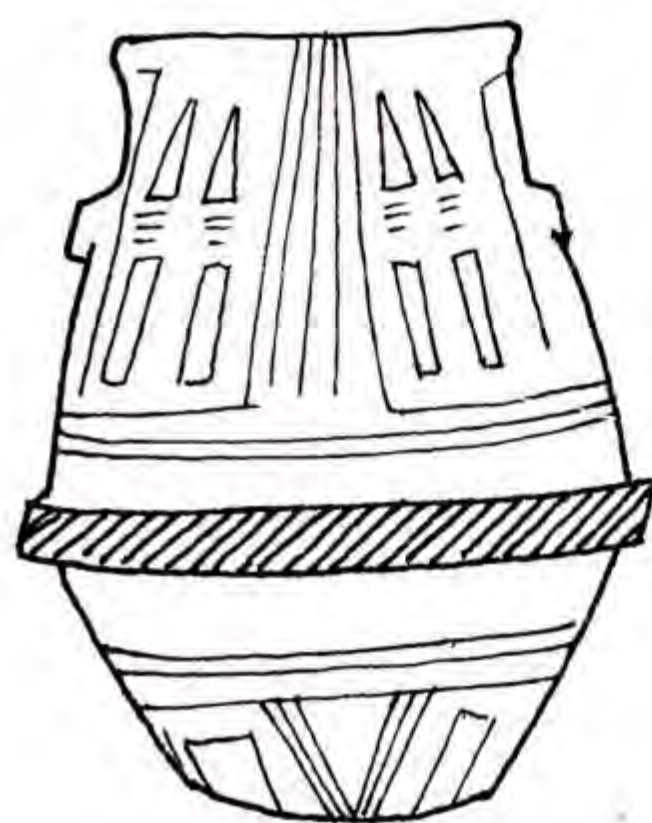
they entered into new dimensions of value that were very different from those that the Spaniards had in mind. See *El oro y la plata de las Indias en la época de los Austrias*, a book published as the catalogue of an exhibition by the ICO Foundation, Madrid, 1999.

4. *Ibid.* See, in particular, the essays in sections V, Las transformaciones del oro y la plata, VI, Los centros del poder, and VII, La expansión del oro y la plata por Europa.
5. Agustín Codazzi, "Jeografía física i política de la provincia de Antioquia" (continuación), in *Gaceta Oficial*, Bogotá, no. 1710, 23 March 1854, p. 267.
6. Sources on the topic of treasure hunting in the Antioqueño colonization area include Luis Arango Cano, *Recuerdos de la gaudería en el Quindío*, Bogotá, Editorial Cromos, Luis Tamayo y Cía., s.f. and Albeiro Valencia Llano, "La gaudería en el Viejo Caldas", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 23, January-April 1989, pp. 61-74.
7. Albeiro Valencia Llano, "La gaudería en el Viejo Caldas", *op. cit.*, p. 72.
8. Luis Duque Gómez, *Etno-historia y arqueología*, Bogotá, Historia Extensa de Colombia, vol. 1, Prehistoria, t. 1, Academia Colombiana de Historia, Ediciones Lerner, 1965, p. 81.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
10. Elizabeth A. Williams, "Art and Artifact at the Trocadero. Ars Americana and the Primitivist Revolution", in Stocking, G. W. (ed.), *Objects and others. Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, pp. 146-166.
11. An inventory in Madrid National Archaeological Museum lists the items presented by Colombia to the Queen Regent of Spain. Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, 1893, Número de orden 181, Sign. III - 3 - 99, caja no. 99.
12. Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
13. Ernesto Restrepo Tirado, "Colombia", in *El Liberal*, Madrid, October 1892.
14. Alberto Urdaneta was an active nineteenth century promoter of Colombia's prehispanic past. In addition to publishing Liborio Zerda's *El Dorado* in instalments in the *Papel Periódico Ilustrado*, he had each article illustrated with woodcuts, thus making a significant contribution to the spreading of a heritage that was virtually unknown to most Colombians. Vicente Restrepo, *Los chibchas antes de la conquista española*, Bogotá, 1895. Another relevant work by Restrepo is *Estudio sobre las minas de oro y plata en Colombia*, Medellín, Fondo Rotatorio de Publicaciones, FAES, 1979.
15. *Catálogo del Museo del señor Leocadio María Arango de Medellín, capital del departamento de Antioquia en la República de Colombia*, Medellín, Imprenta Oficial, 1905.
16. Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, *op. cit.*, p. 61. The assistant manager-secretary to the Bank at the time was Luis Ángel Arango, whose name was subsequently given to the public library founded by the Bank in Bogotá. Luis Ángel Arango held that position from 1947 to 1957.
17. Data regarding the growth of the Gold Museum's collections come from the Museum's Purchase Register.
18. *El Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Bogotá, Colombia*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, July 1944.
19. See Liborio Zerda, *El Dorado*, Bogotá, Biblioteca Banco Popular, 1972, 2 vols.
20. Museo del Oro, Photography Archives, Bogotá.
21. Gustavo Santos, *El Museo del Oro*, An edition commemorating the Banco de la República's 25th anniversary, Bogotá, Banco de la República, 1948.
22. An easily accessible source for the history of archaeological studies and institutions in Colombia is Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, *Arqueología de Colombia. Un texto introductorio*, Bogotá, Presidencia de la República, 1997.
23. Konrad Th. Preuss, *Arte monumental prehistórico*, Bogotá, Dirección de Divulgación Cultural de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, third Spanish edition, 1974. Transl. by Dr Hermann Walde-Waldeg and Dr César Uribe Piedrahíta, Ed. and comments by Eugenio Barney Cabrera and Pablo Gamboa Hinestrosa.
24. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, *Arqueología de Colombia*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
25. Ezequiel Uricoechea, *Memoria sobre las antigüedades neo-granadinas*, Berlin, Librería de F. Schneider i Cia., 1854, Bogotá, Biblioteca Banco Popular, 1971.
26. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, *Arqueología de Colombia*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
28. A good source for works published previous to 1950 on metal work in Colombia is Gabriel Giraldo Jaramillo, *Bibliografía selecta del arte en Colombia*, Bogotá, Editorial A. B. C., 1955, "Arte precolombino", pp. 42-60.
29. Carlos Margain, *Estudio inicial de las colecciones del Museo del Oro del Banco de la República*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, 1950.
30. José Pérez de Barradas, *Orfebrería prehistórica de Colombia: Estilo calima*, Madrid, Banco de la República, 1954, 2 vols.; *Orfebrería prehistórica de Colombia: Estilos tolima y muísca*, Madrid, Banco de la República, 1958, 2 vols.; *Orfebrería prehistórica de Co-*

- Colombia: *Estilos quimbaya y otros*, Madrid, Banco de la República, 1965-66, 2 vols.
31. Agustín Codazzi, "Jeografía física i política de la provincia de Antioquia" (continuación), in *Gaceta Oficial*, Bogotá, no. 1710, 23 March 1854, p. 267.
 32. José María Gutiérrez de Alba, *Impresiones de un viaje a América*, vol. XII, "Orfebrería indígena, Colombia. Pl. no. 1. Objetos de oro de fabricación indígena encontrados en los sepulcros", Manuscript, private collection, Bogotá.
 33. Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, op. cit., p. 61.
 34. The list of the Museum's directors is as follows: Luis Barriga del Diestro (1939-1977), Luis Duque Gómez (1977-1983), María Elvira Bonilla (1983-1986), Clemencia Plazas (1987-1997), Clara Isabel Botero (1997 to the date of publication of this essay).
 35. Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, op. cit., p. 63.
 36. D. T. Basby, "Colombian El Dorado", in *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New York, no. 12, March 1954, pp. 192-193.
 37. Data regarding the Museum's national and international exhibitions come from Roberto Lleras Pérez, "Las exposiciones temporales e itinerantes", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 28, July-September 1990, pp. 39-53.
 38. Germán Samper, interview by author, Bogotá, October 1999. Samper was one of the architects that built the Museum in the 1960s.
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. *Ibid.*
 41. Esquerro, Sáenz, Suárez, Samper, "Programa tentativo para el Museo del Oro", unpublished, Bogotá, 1961.
 42. Germán Samper, interview by author, Bogotá, October 1999.
 43. See Alicia Dussán de Reichel, *Colombia: Orfebrería prehispánica*, París, UNESCO, Rencontre, 1971. To a large extent, the ideas behind the Museum's new layout can be found in Plazas and Falchetti's works of that time, including *La orfebrería prehispánica de Colombia*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, 1983, "La tradición metalúrgica del suroccidente colombiano", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 14, 1983, pp. 1-32; "Patrones culturales en la orfebrería prehispánica de Colombia", in *Metalurgia de América Precolombina*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, 1986.
 44. Alec Bright, interview by author, Bogotá, October 1999.
 45. Large quantities of gold objects were found by that time at Miraflores cemeteries in Pupiales (Nariño). See, among others, María Victoria Uribe, "Documentos del siglo XVIII referentes a la Provincia de los Pastos", in *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, Bogotá, vol. XIX, 1975, pp. 39-63; "Asentamientos prehispánicos en el altiplano de Ipiales, Colombia", in *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, Bogotá, vol. XXI, 1977, pp. 57-195. Also, Edgar Emilio Rodríguez Bastidas, *Fauna precolombina de Nariño*, Bogotá, Fundación de Investigaciones Arqueológicas Nacionales (Banco de la República), Instituto Colombiano de Antropología, 1992.
 46. Santiago Londoño Vélez, *Museo del Oro 50 años*, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
 47. Germán Samper, interview by author, Bogotá, October 1999.
 48. See Alvaro Botiva Contreras and Eduardo Forero Lloreda, "Malagana, Guaquería vs. Arqueología", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 24, May-August 1989.
 49. Regulations and laws on archaeological heritage enacted in twentieth century Colombia are compiled in Ministry of Culture, Colombian Institute of Anthropology, *Ley General de Cultura. Patrimonio Arqueológico*, Bogotá, October 1997.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 51. An additional regulation is Decree 833 of 26 April 2002, included in Gonzalo Castellanos Valenzuela, *Régimen jurídico del patrimonio arqueológico en Colombia*, Bogotá, Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, August 2003.
 52. Myriam Jimeno Santoyo, "La investigación en antropología", in Carlos B. Gutiérrez (ed.), *La investigación en Colombia en las artes, las humanidades y las ciencias sociales*, Bogotá, Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales, Ediciones Uniandes, 1991, p. 61.
 53. *Ibid.* Anthropology faculties have also been opened at the Externado de Colombia University in Bogotá and the University of Magdalena in Santa Marta. Today (2004), at least another two faculties are planned in two different universities. Articles on the subject include, among others: Hernán Henao Delgado, "Departamento de Antropología de la Universidad de Antioquia, pasado y futuro", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 18, January-April 1987, pp. 64-65; Carlos Armando Rodríguez, "50 años de investigación arqueológica en el Valle del Cauca", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 16, May-July 1986, pp. 17-30; Álvaro Román Saavedra, "Departamento de Antropología de la Universidad Nacional, veinte años", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 18, January-April 1987, pp. 66-69.
 54. Ever since its first issue the *Boletín Museo del Oro* has played a significant part in the promotion of the Foundation for National Archaeological Research's activities and the Project it sponsors. Museo del Oro, "Fundación de Investigaciones Arqueológicas Nacionales", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 1, January-April 1978, p. 38.
 55. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, *Orfebrería y chamanismo. Un estudio iconográfico del Museo del Oro*, Medellín, Editorial Colina, 1988.
 56. Clemencia Plazas, Ana María Falchetti, Juanita Sáenz, "Investigaciones arqueológicas en el río San Jorge", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 2, September-December 1979, pp. 1-18. Other significant joint works by Plazas and Falchetti, in addition to those mentioned above, are: "Orfebrería prehispánica de Colombia", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 1, September-December 1978, pp. 1-53; *El Dorado: Colombian Gold*. Exhibition Catalogue, Australian Art Exhibitions Corporation Limited, 1978; *Asentamientos prehispánicos en el bajo río San Jorge*, Bogotá, Fundación de Investigaciones Arqueológicas Nacionales, 1981. Individually, they have also made important contributions: Ana María Falchetti, "Pectorales acorazonados", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 1, 1978, pp. 28-34; "Colgantes 'Darién'", in *Boletín Museo del Oro*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 2, 1979, pp. 1-55; "Desarrollo de la orfebrería tairona en la provincia metalúrgica del norte colom-



biano", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 19, May-August 1987, pp. 3-24; "Orfebrería prehispánica en el altiplano central colombiano", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 25, September-December 1989, pp. 3-41; "La tierra del oro y el cobre: parentesco e intercambio entre comunidades orfebres del norte de Colombia y áreas relacionadas", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 34-35, January-December 1993, pp. 3-75; *El oro del gran Zenú. Metalurgia prehispánica en las llanuras del Caribe colombiano*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, Museo del Oro, 1995. Clemencia Plazas, *Nueva metodología para la clasificación de orfebrería*, Bogotá, Jorge Plazas Editor, 1975; "Tesoro de los quimbayas y piezas de orfebrería relacionadas", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 1, May-August 1978, pp. 21-28; "Clasificación de objetos de orfebrería precolombina según su uso", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, Year 3, 1980, pp. 1-27; "Forma y función en el oro tairona", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 19, May-August 1987, pp. 25-33; "Cronología de la metalurgia colombiana", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 44-45, January-December 1998, pp. 3-77.



57. On the specific topic of restoration, see for example Fernando S. Barandica Forero, "La restauración de objetos cerámicos en el Museo: un estudio de caso", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 28, July-September 1990, pp. 87-91. Among the works published by the Museum's anthropologists we draw attention to the following, in

addition to those mentioned above: Sonia Archila, *Los tesoros de los señores de Malagana*, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, 1996; Sonia Archila, Ana María Falchetti, Clemencia Plazas and Juanita Sáenz Samper, *La sociedad hidráulica Zenú. Estudio arqueológico de 2.000 años de historia en las llanuras del Caribe colombiano*, Bogotá, Banco de la República, 1993. Clara Isabel Botero, *The Construction of the Prehispanic Past of Colombia: Collections, Museums and Early Archaeology, 1823-1941*, D. Phil Thesis, University of Oxford, 2001. Lucero Gómez del Corral, *Relaciones de parentesco en las relaciones de producción en la comunidad indígena de Mueyamues (Nariño)*, B.A. thesis, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, 1985. Eduardo Londoño, "Un mensaje del tiempo de los muisca", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 16, May-July 1986, pp. 48-57; "Santuarios, santillos, tunjos: objetos votivos de los muisca en el siglo XVI", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 25, September-December 1989, pp. 92-119; "El lugar de la religión en la organización social muisca", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 40, January-June 1996, pp. 63-87; "El proceso de Ubaque de 1563: La última ceremonia religiosa pública de los muisca", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 49, July-December 2001, Web page edition. Roberto Lleras Pérez, *Prehispanic Metallurgy and Votive Offerings in the Eastern Cordillera, Colombia*, Oxford, BAR International Series 778, Archaeopress, 1999; "Las estructuras del pensamiento dual en el ámbito de las sociedades indígenas de los Andes orientales", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 40, January-June 1996, pp. 3-15; "As oferendas muisca na Lagoa de Guatavita", in *Omar, eterno retorno*, Lisboa, Museo Calouste Gulbenkian, 1998. "La geografía del género en las figuras votivas de la Cordillera Oriental colombiana", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 49, July-December 2001, Web page edition. Juanita Sáenz Obregón, "Notas sobre la restauración y conservación de los metales precolombinos", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 28, July-September 1990, pp. 75-85. "Restauración de metales en el Museo del Oro", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 47, July-December 2000, Web page edition. Juanita Sáenz Samper, "Mujeres

de barro: estudio de las figurinas cerámicas de Montelíbano", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 34-35, January-December 1993, pp. 76-109. "Las águilas doradas: más allá de las fronteras y del tiempo. El motivo de las aves con alas desplegadas en la orfebrería tairona", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 48, January-June 2001, Web page edition. María Alicia Uribe, "Introducción a la orfebrería de San Pedro de Urabá, una región del noroccidente colombiano", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 20, January-April 1988, pp. 35-53; "La orfebrería quimbaya tardía. Una investigación en la colección del Museo del Oro", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 31, 1991, pp. 31-124.

58. Details on the Museum's educational activities can be found in Ivonne Delgado Cerón and Clara Isabel Mz-Recamán, "El Museo como ente educador", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 28, July-September 1990, pp. 15-37.
59. Roberto Lleras Pérez, "Las exposiciones temporales e itinerantes", *op. cit.*, p. 41.
60. María Elvira Bonilla, "Los museos arqueológicos regionales, una mirada del presente hacia el pasado", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 15, January-April 1986, pp. 14-15; María Victoria Uribe, "Museo regional de Nariño. Desde el spondylus hasta el barniz de Pasto", in Boletín Museo del Oro, Bogotá, Museo del Oro, Banco de la República, no. 15, January-April 1986, pp. 16-19.
61. Clemencia Plazas, interview by author, October 1999.

¿Poeta hoy?

1. La lección de Pound

Escribir hoy día poesía en español, en Hispanoamérica, es, en primer lugar, sentirse parte de una tradición muy rica y variada. Una constelación de grandes figuras que bien puede partir de Jorge Manrique, Garcilaso de la Vega y san Juan de la Cruz para llegar a Neruda, Borges u Octavio Paz. Eso te da aliento e ímpetu y al mismo tiempo te asusta e inhibe. Pero el poeta es el ser de la contradicción.