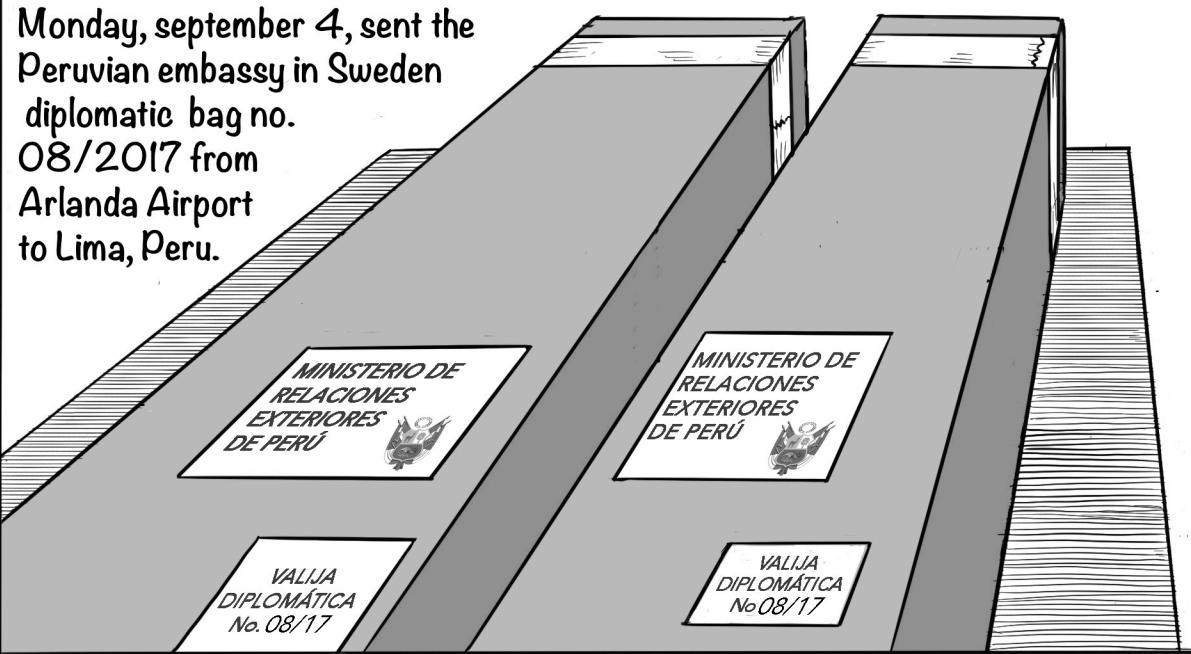
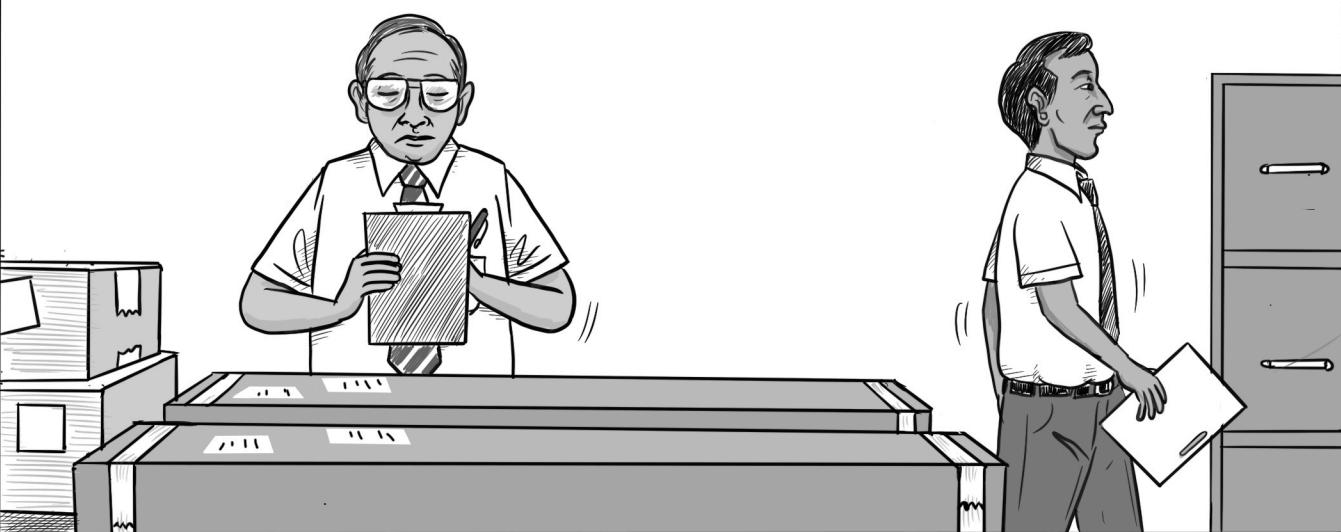


Monday, september 4, sent the Peruvian embassy in Sweden diplomatic bag no. 08/2017 from Arlanda Airport to Lima, Peru.

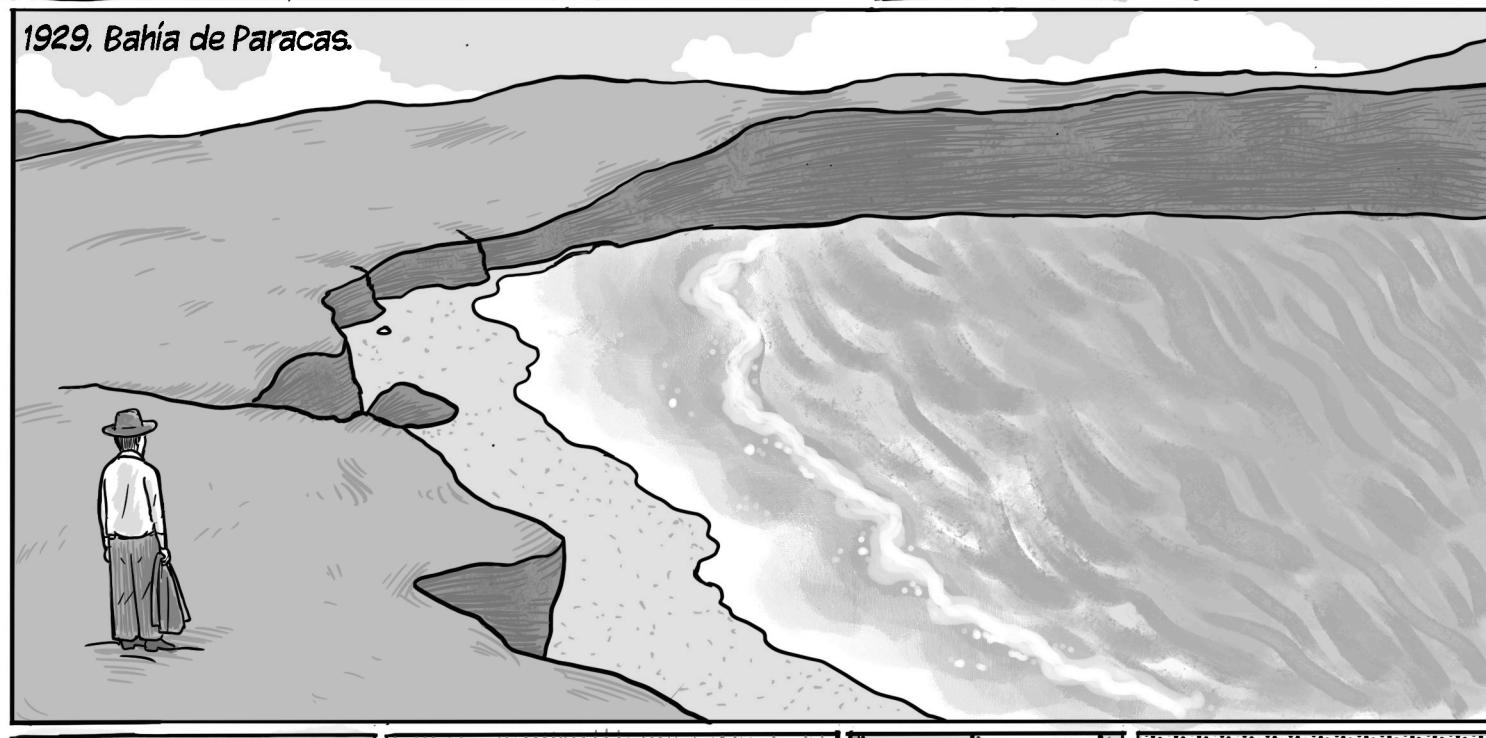
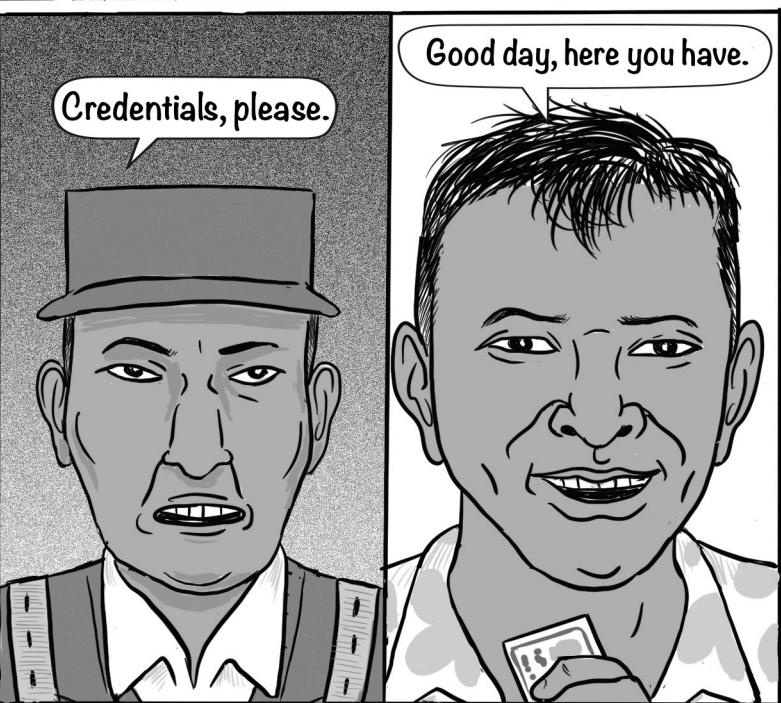
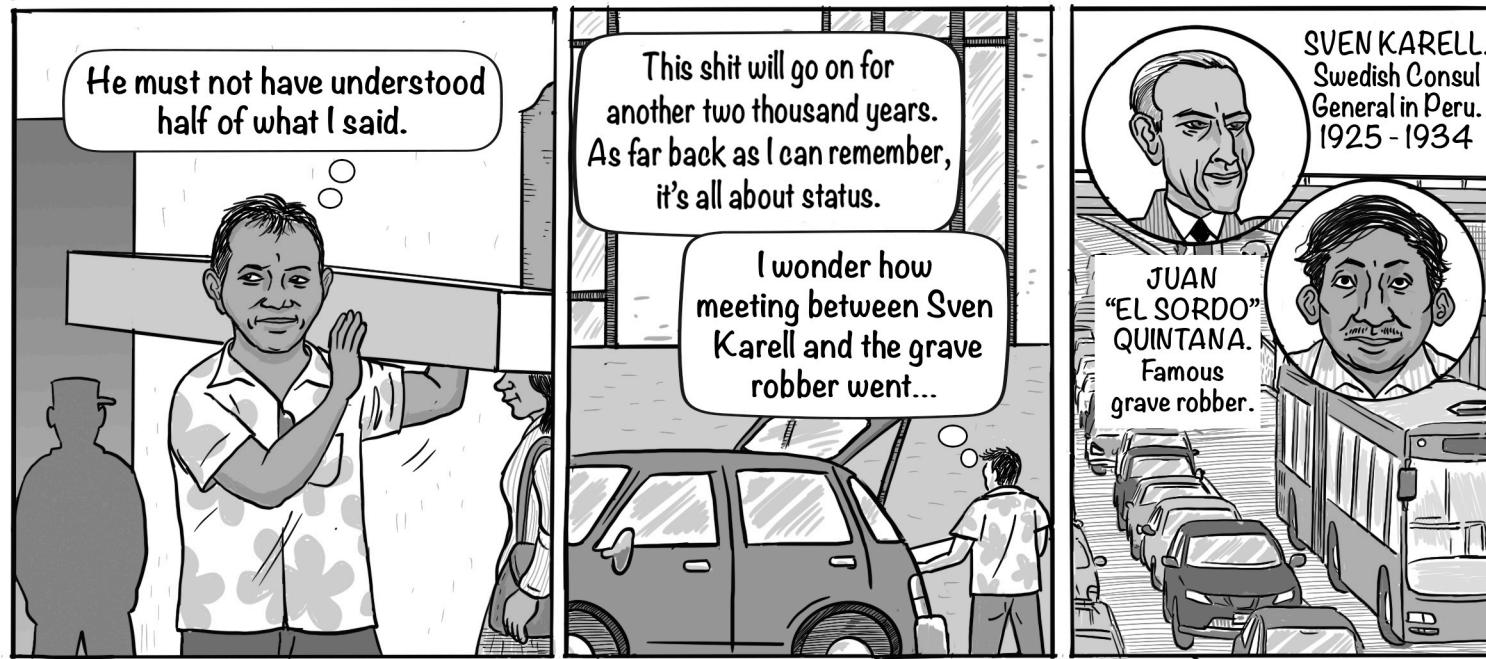


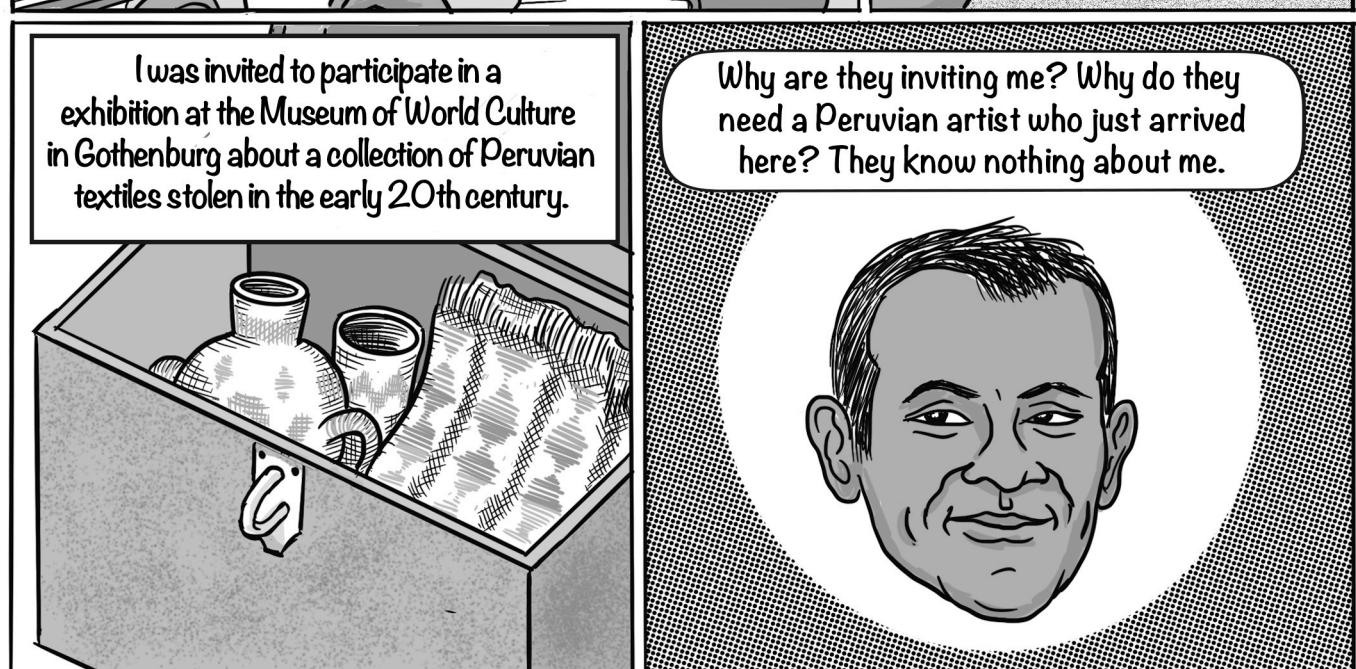
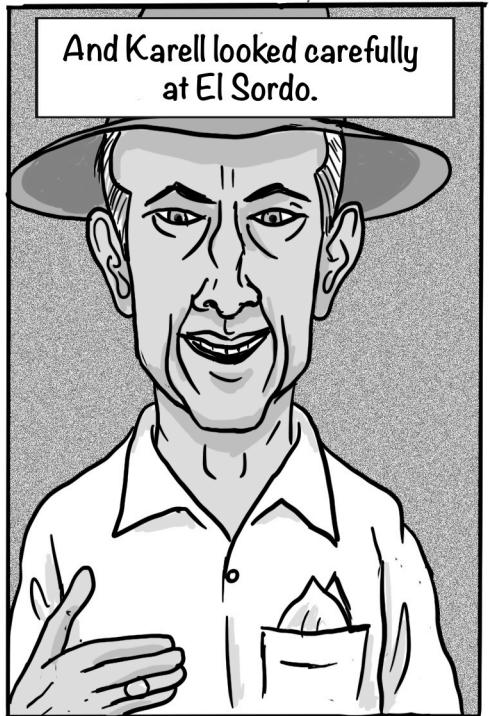
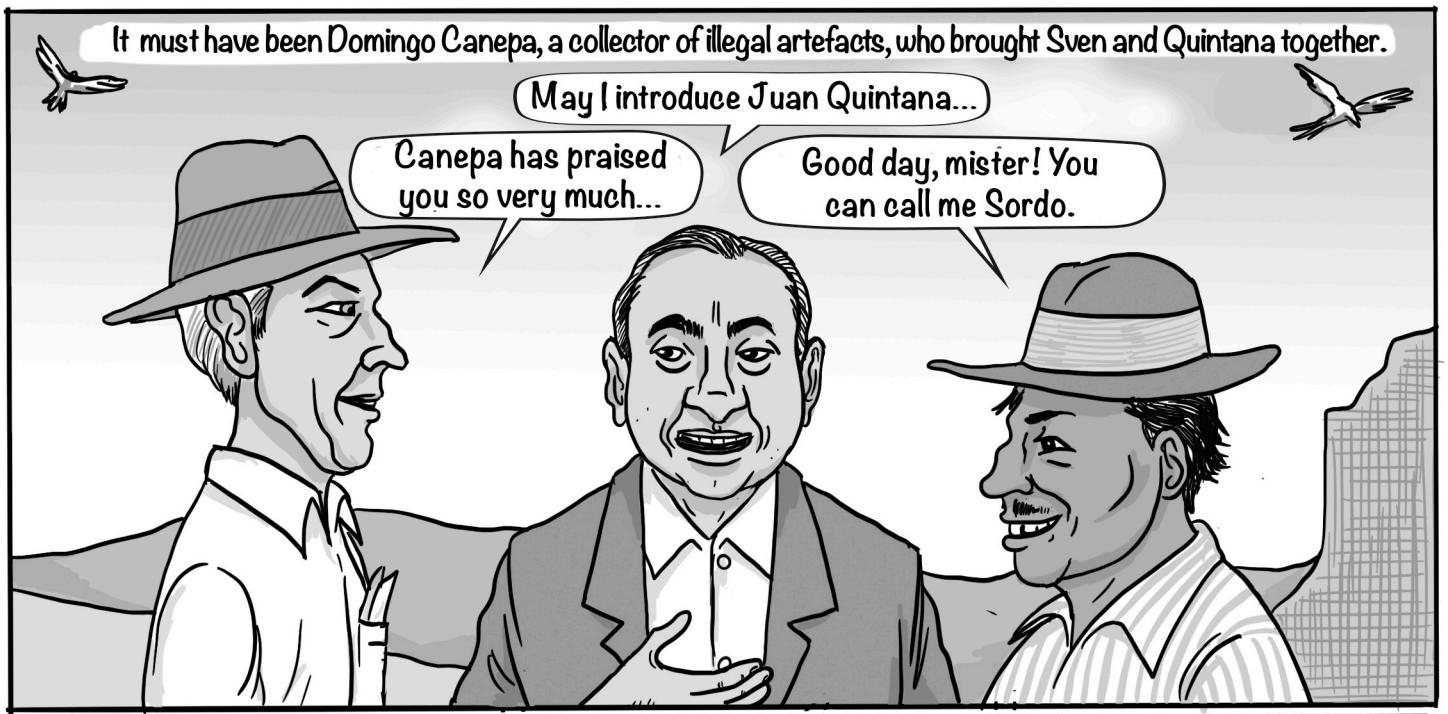
It contained copies of over two-thousand-years-old textiles from Paracas.

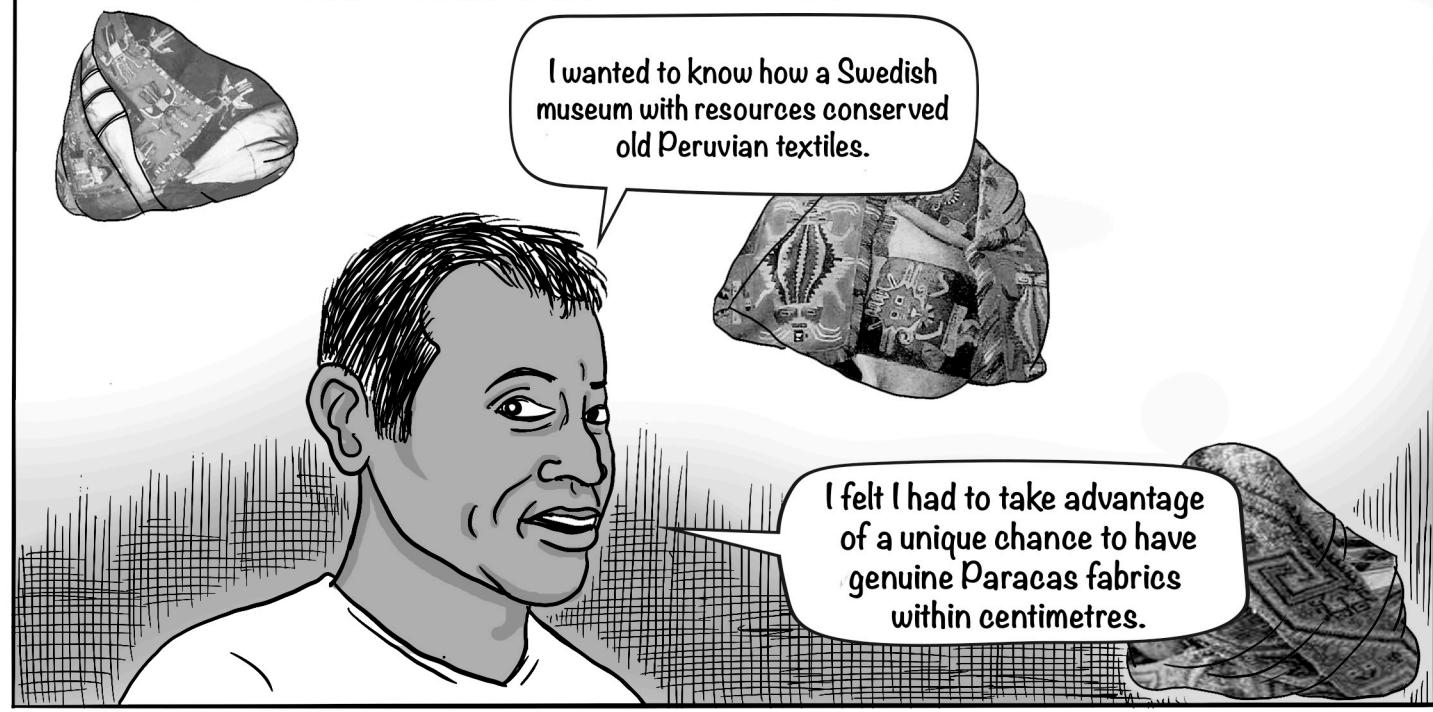
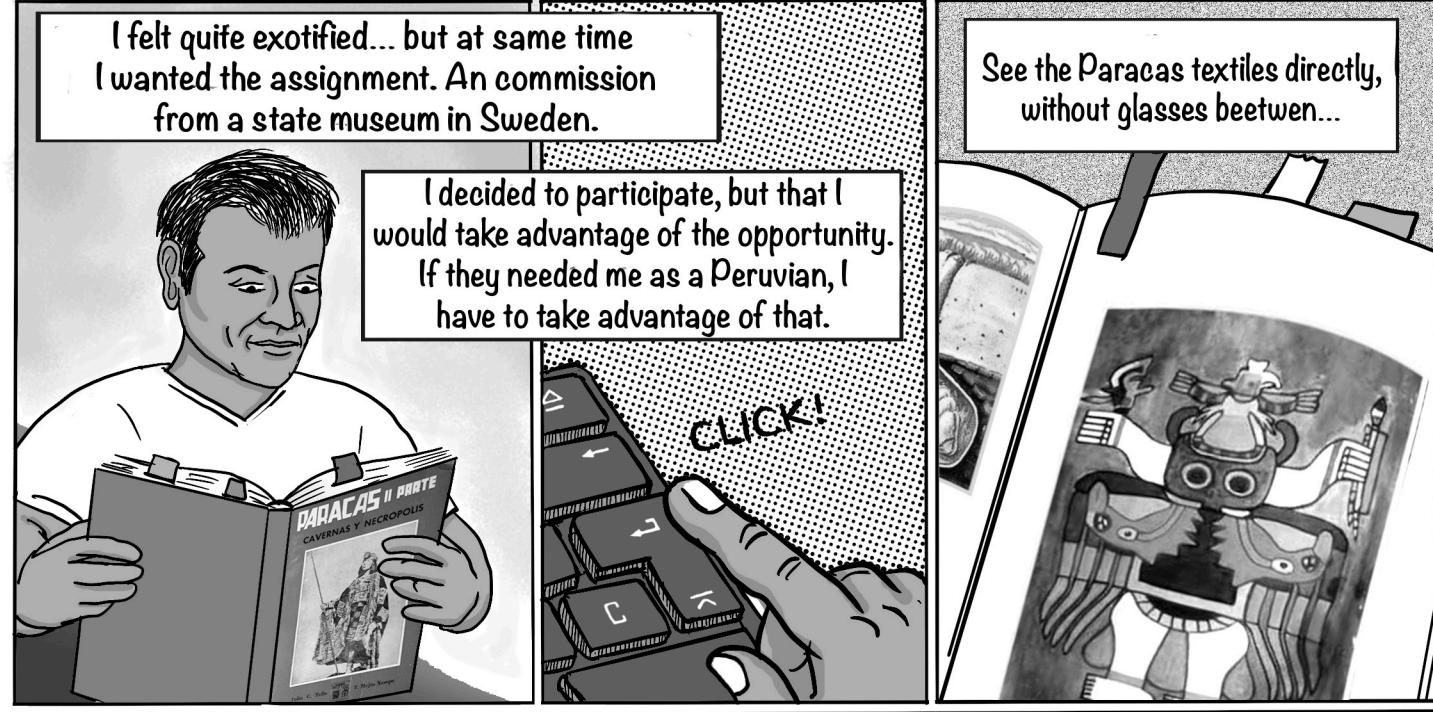
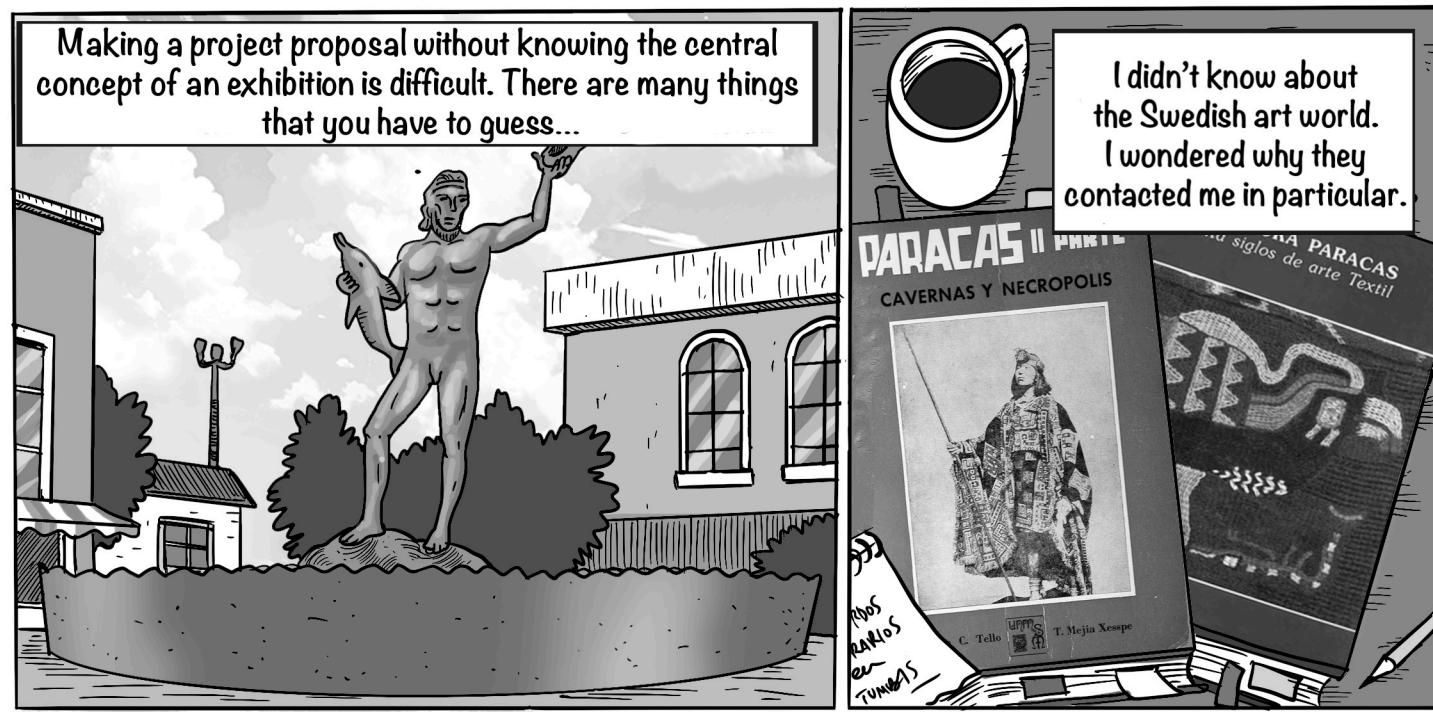
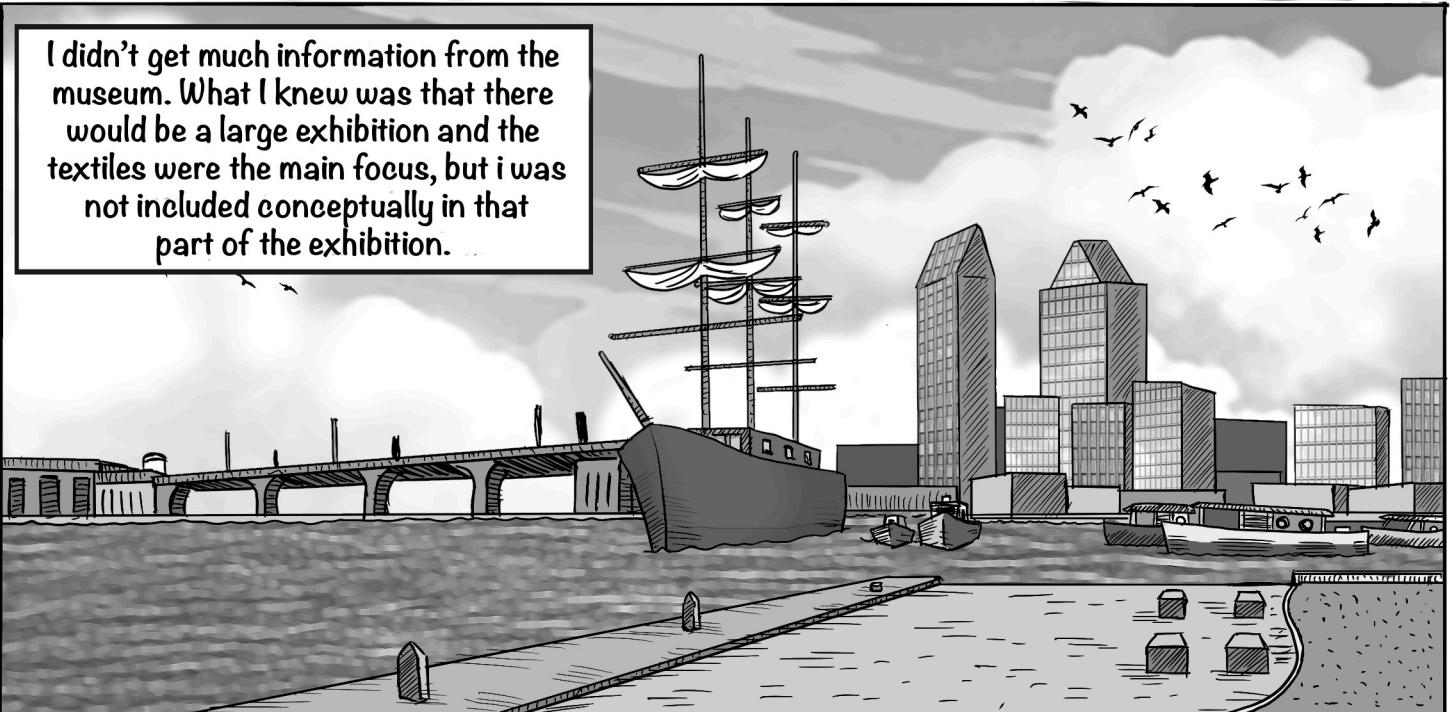
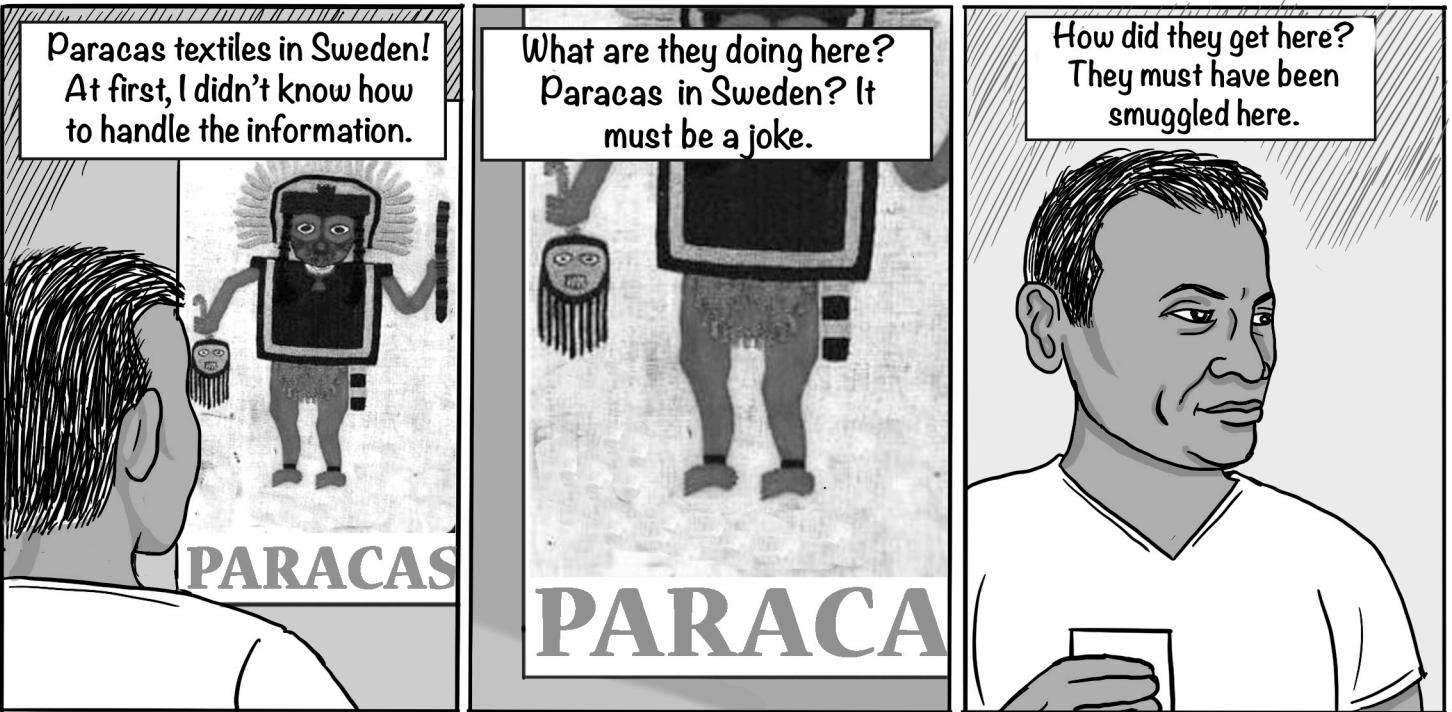


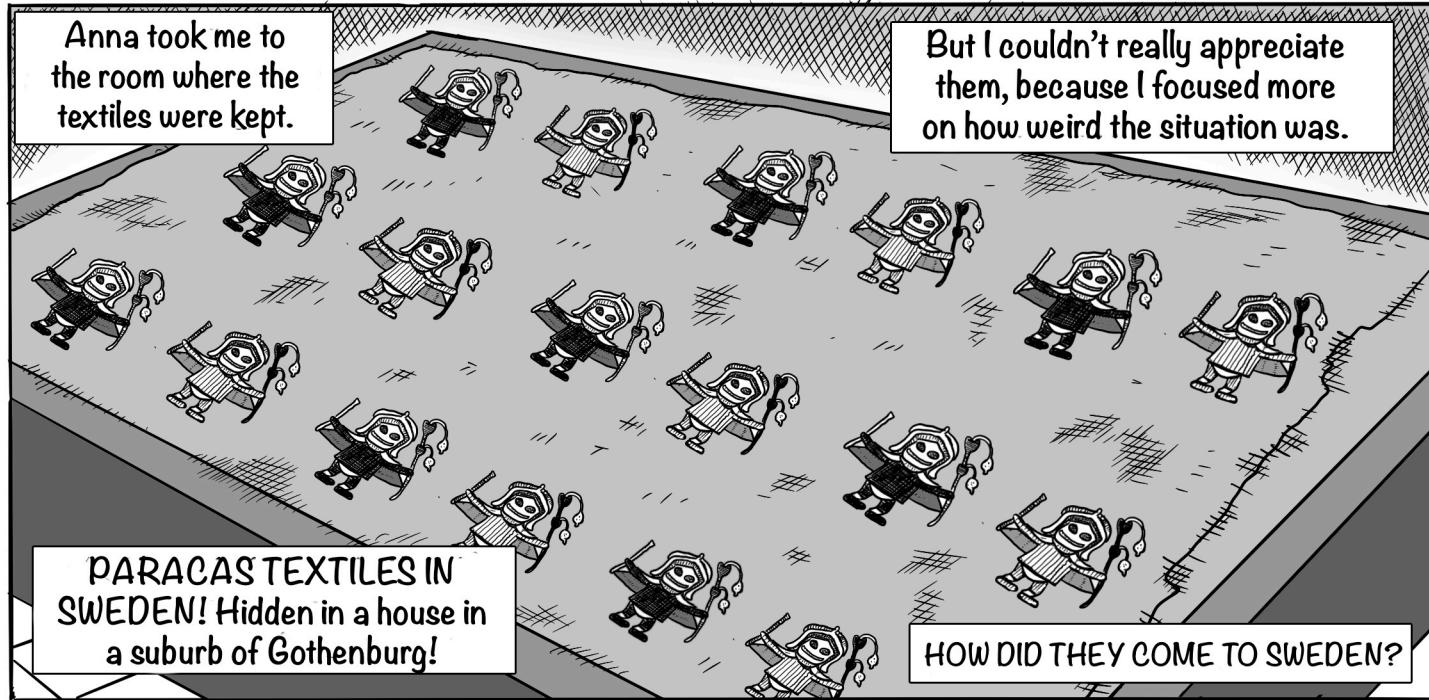
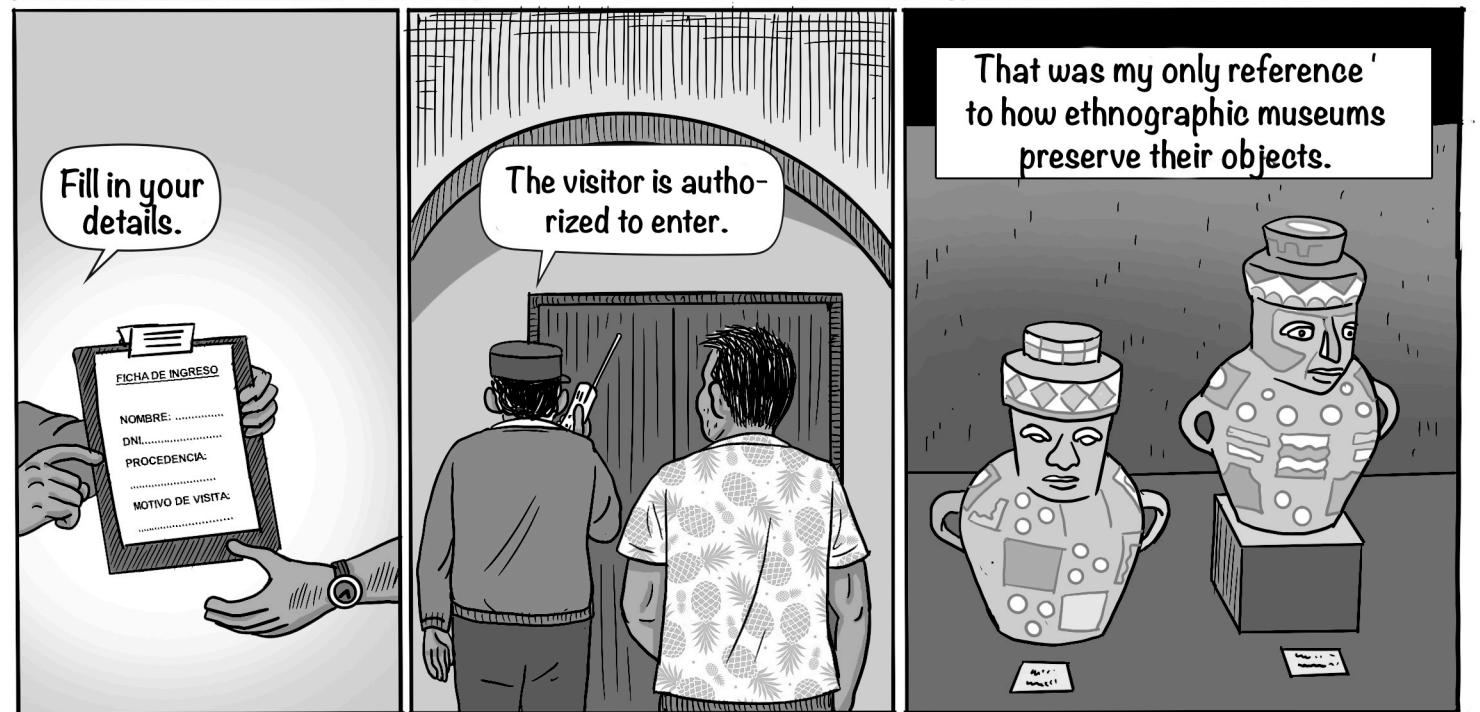
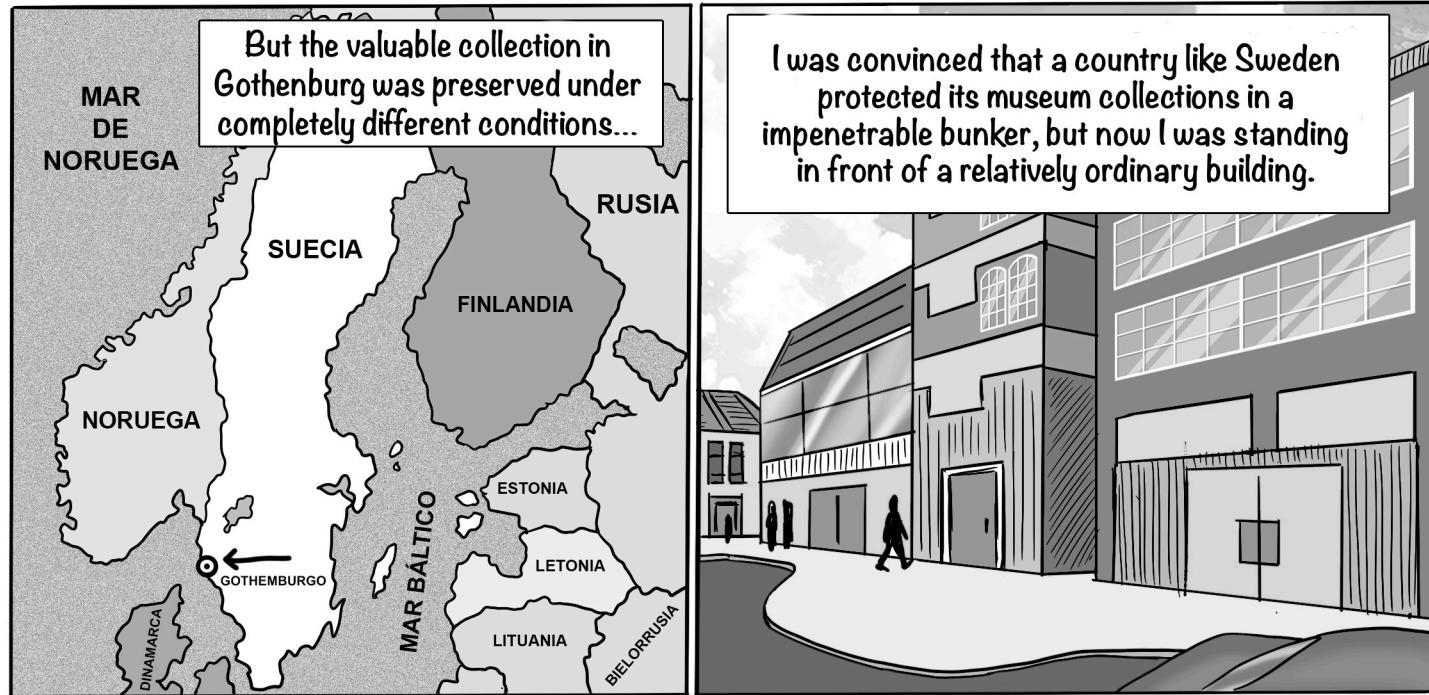
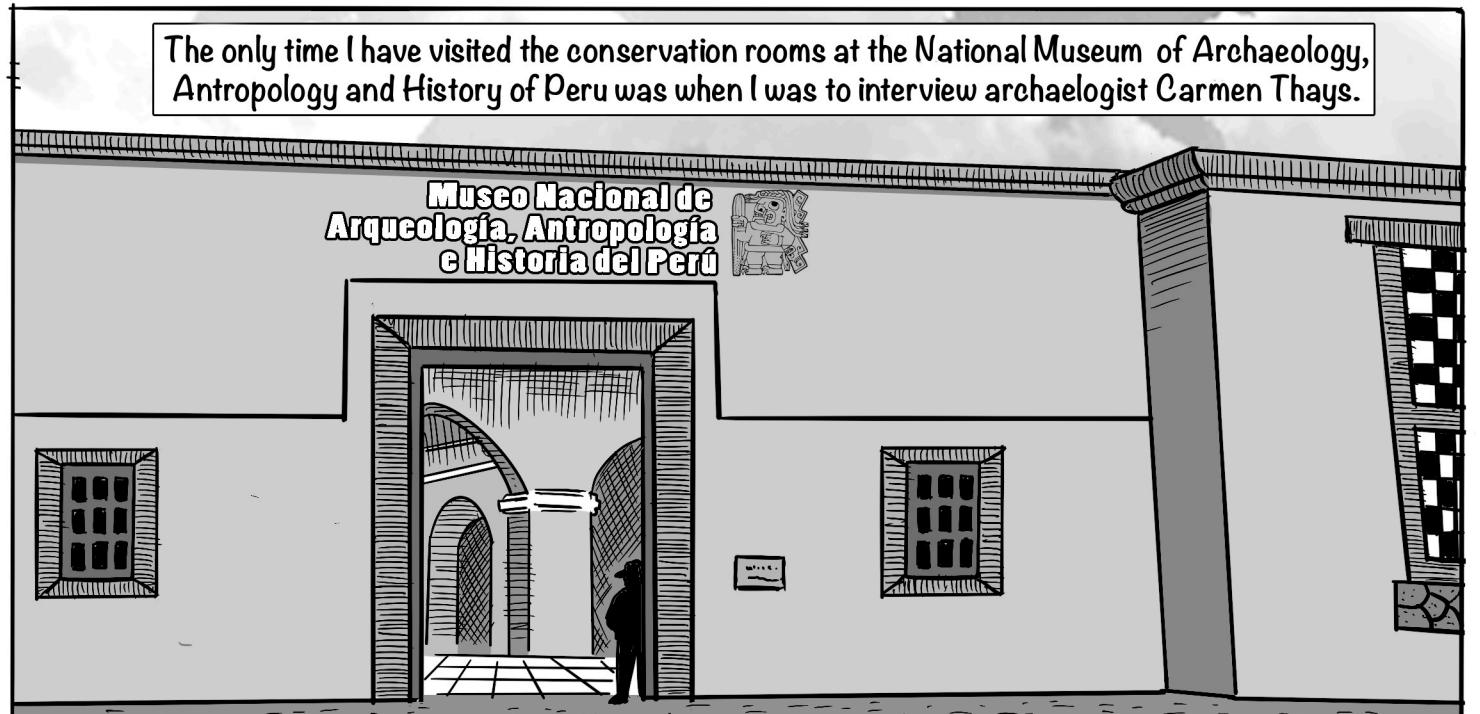
The shipment was picked up by officials and was taken to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in downtown Lima.







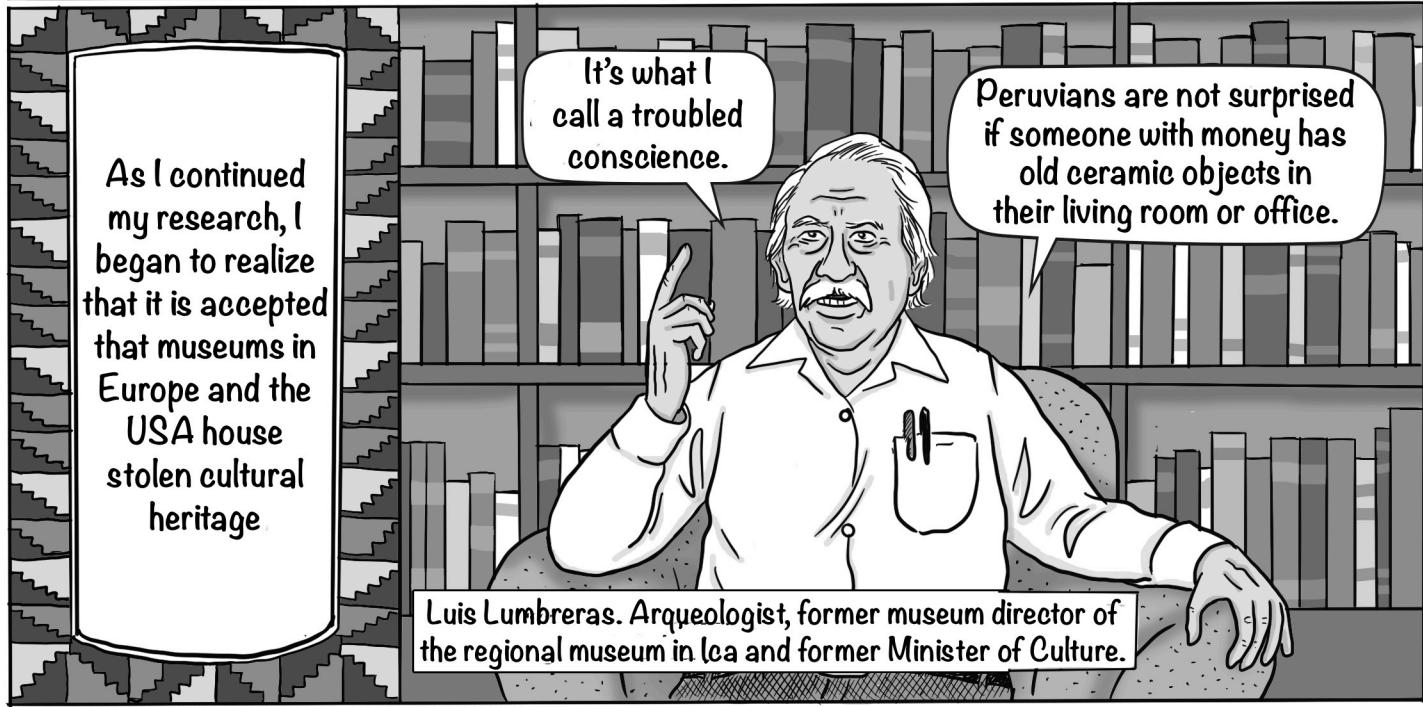




On October 15, 2024, the regional museum in Ica, Peru, was robbed.



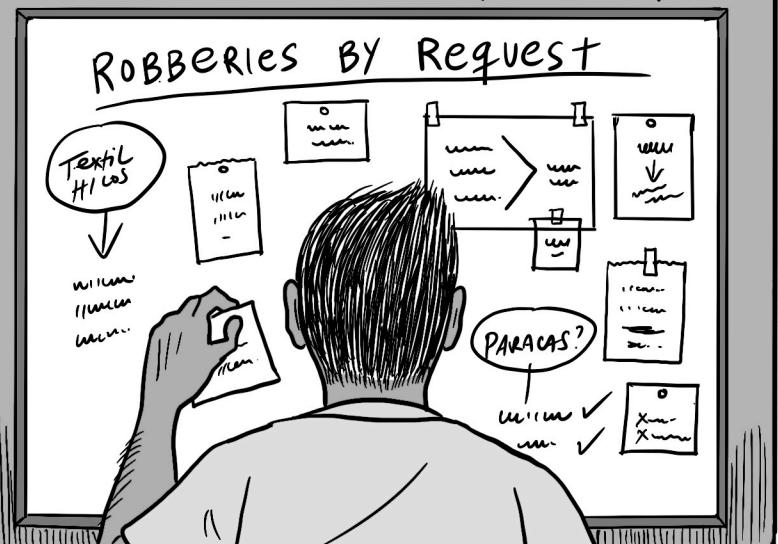
I started by interviewing specialists of Peruvian cultural heritage.



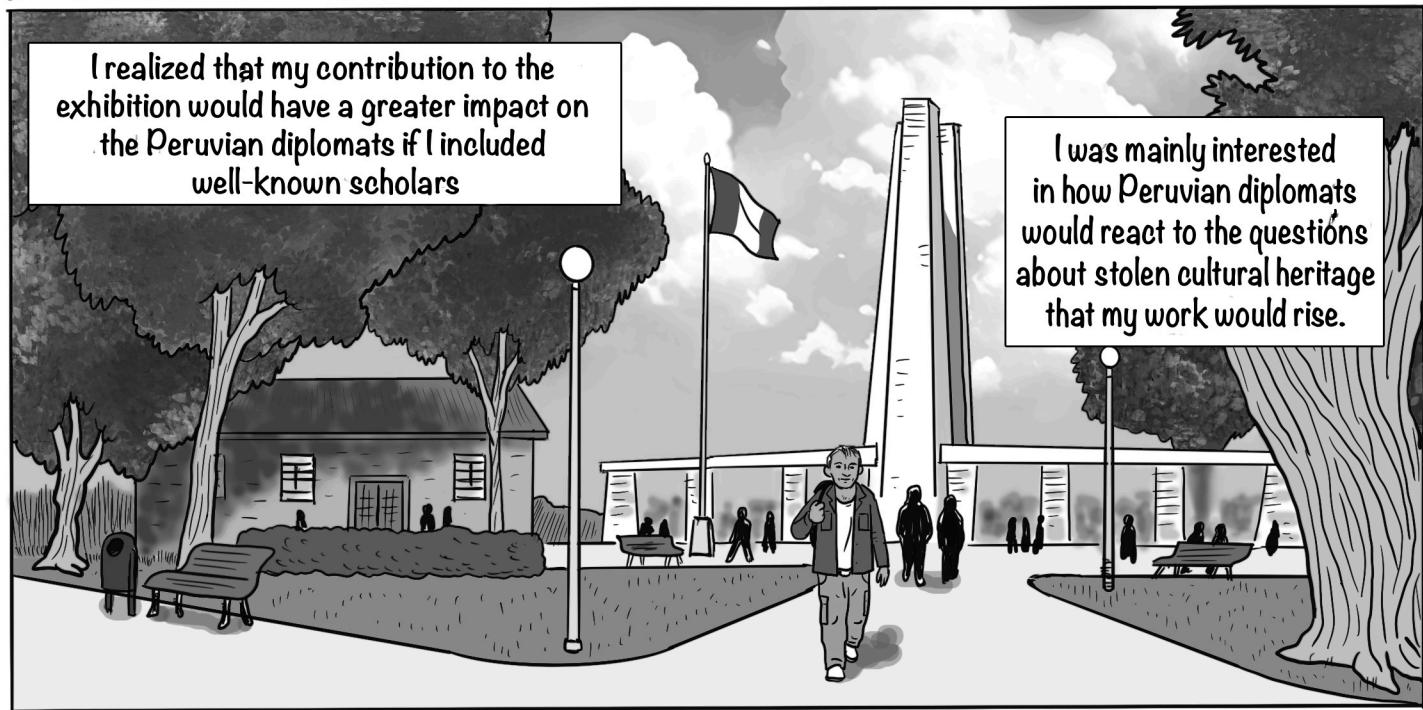
Robberies by Request are common when it comes to cultural heritage, and is connected to well-organized mafias with internal contacts.



About 4000 objects have been stolen from peruvian museums over the years to then appear in trustworthy museums in the Western world.

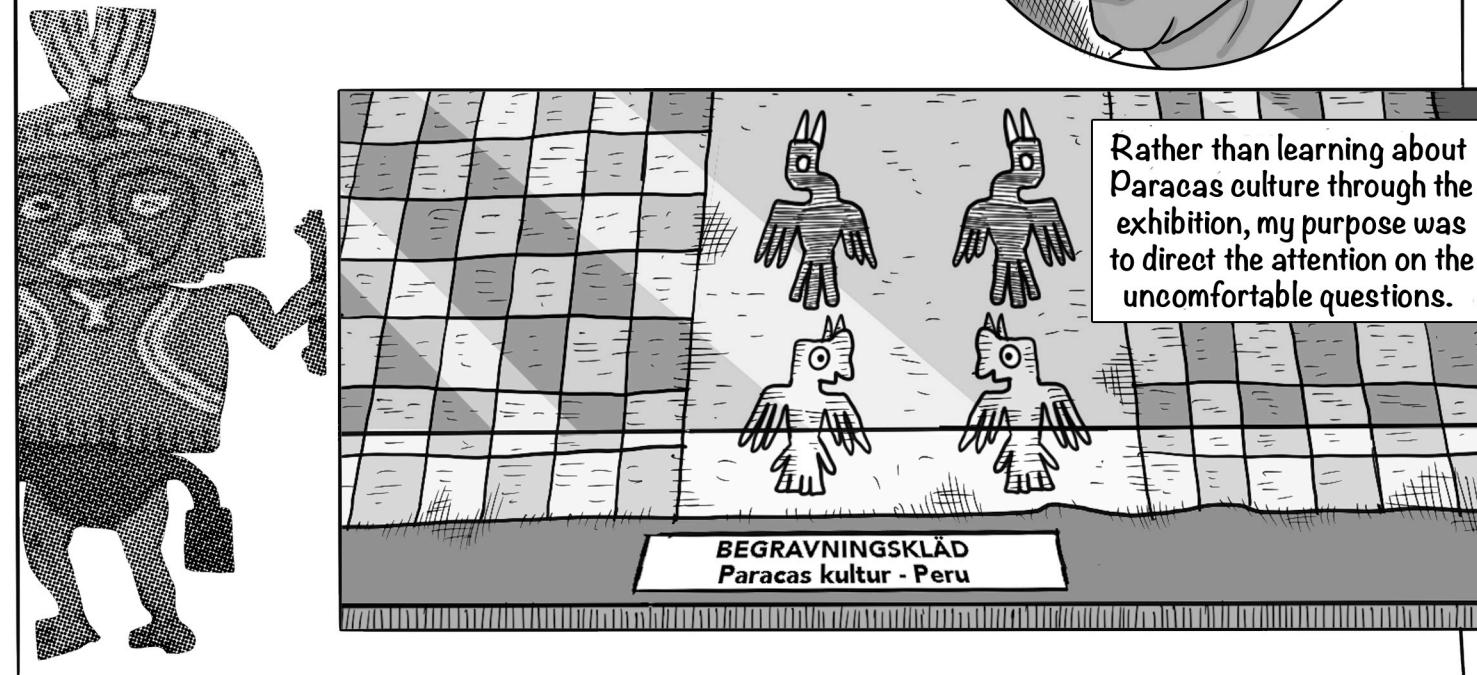
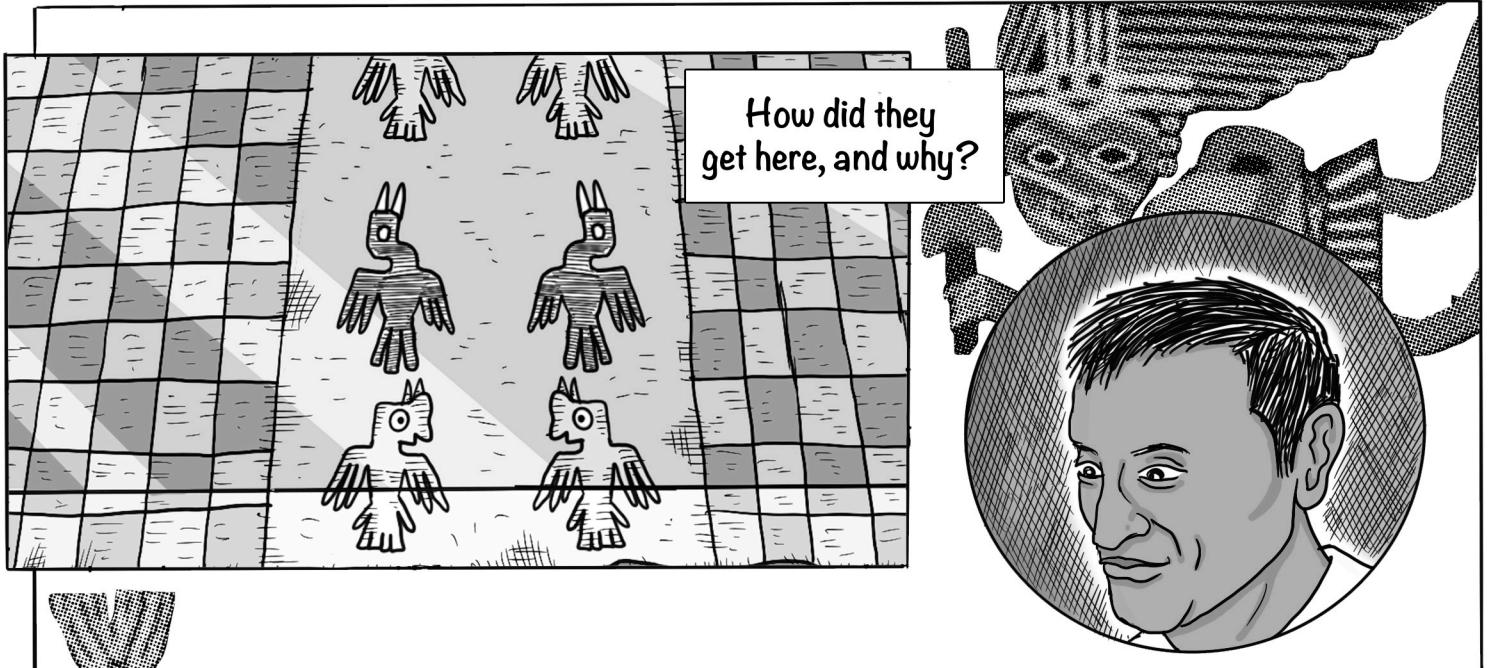
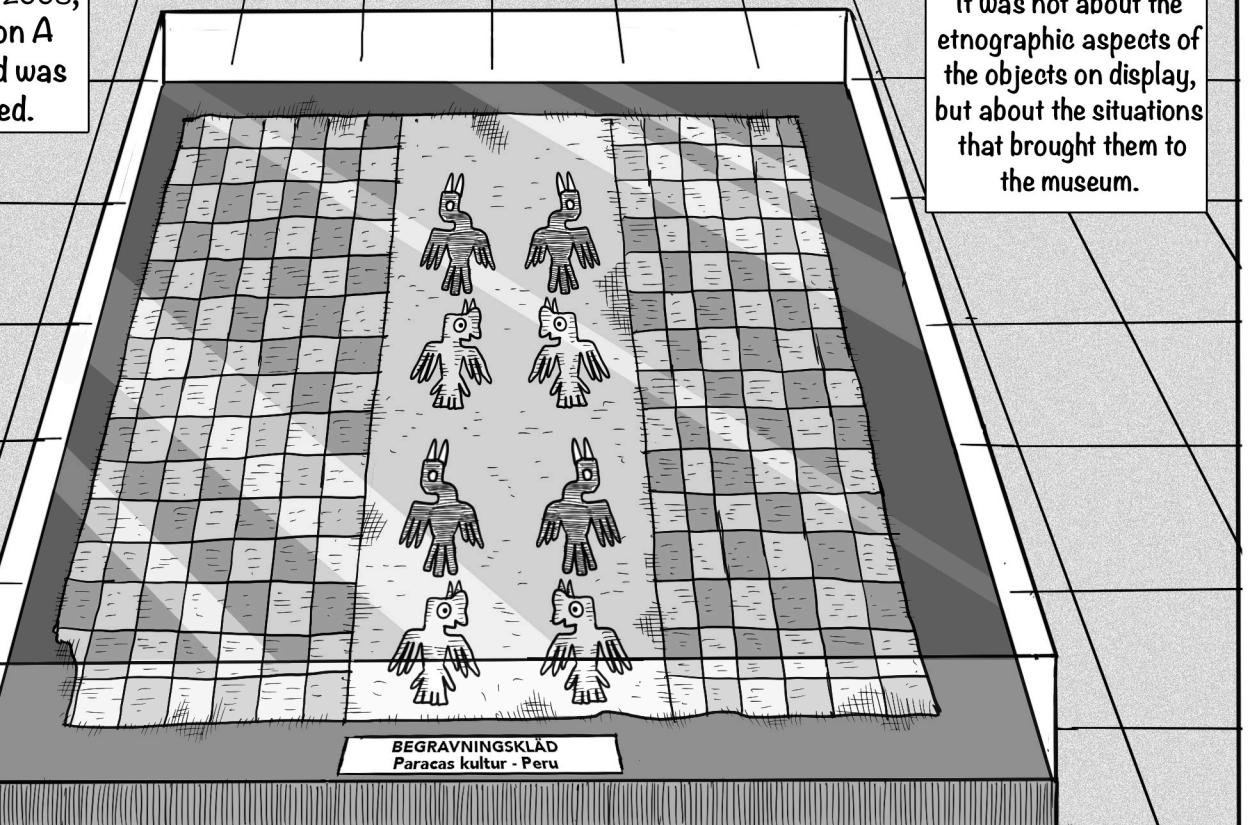


I realized that my contribution to the exhibition would have a greater impact on the Peruvian diplomats if I included well-known scholars



In september 2008, the exhibition A Stolen World was inaugurated.

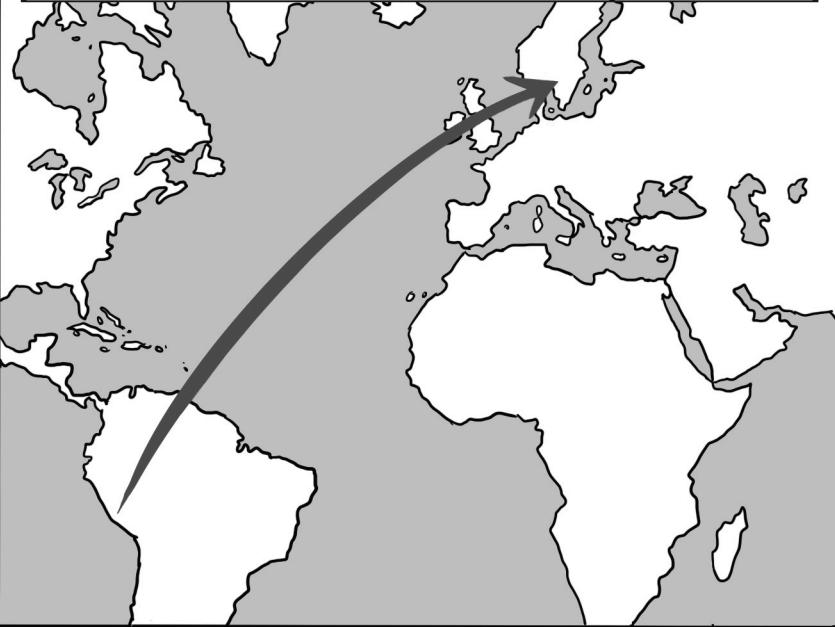
It was not about the ethnographic aspects of the objects on display, but about the situations that brought them to the museum.



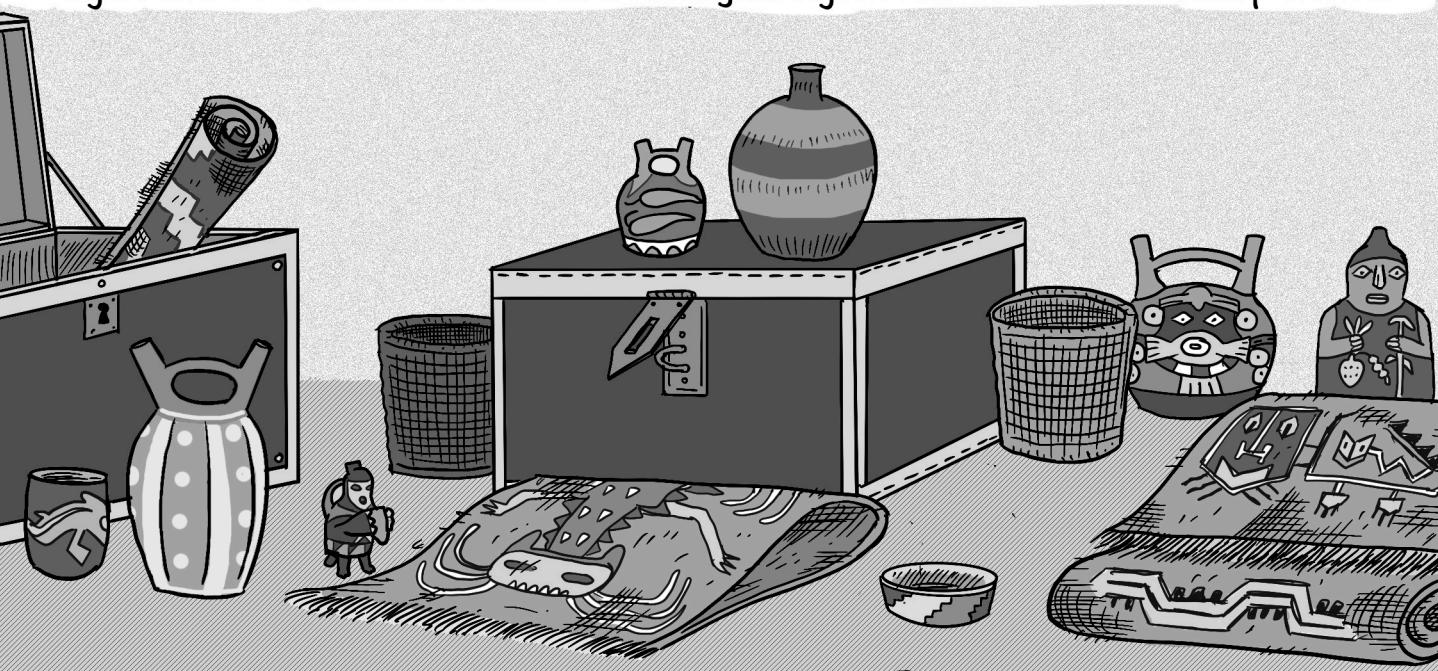
How did the textiles get to Sweden? In december 1931, a Swedish consul shipped...



... two boxes containing around 50 ceramic objects, 10 baskets and around 20 textile fragments...



...just after Peru had declared that all archaeological objects must be documented and protected.



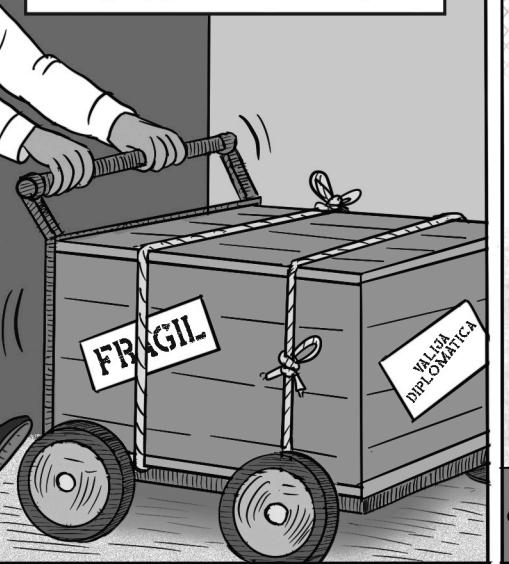
Between 1931 and 1935, the Swedish consul Sven Karel sent objects from the Paracas culture to his homeland on at least three occasions.



The shipments of these items were accomplished through strategic negotiations between the consul and the museum board in Gothenburg.



The textiles were shipped off as personal belonging protected by diplomatic immunity.



I was fascinated by how the Swedish consul used his diplomatic privileges in the 1930s to smuggle Peruvian cultural heritage to his homeland.



It was amazing to take part in the exchange of letters between Karell and the museum board in Gothenburg.



Now it's about avoiding risks, because it is unthinkable to obtain an export permit

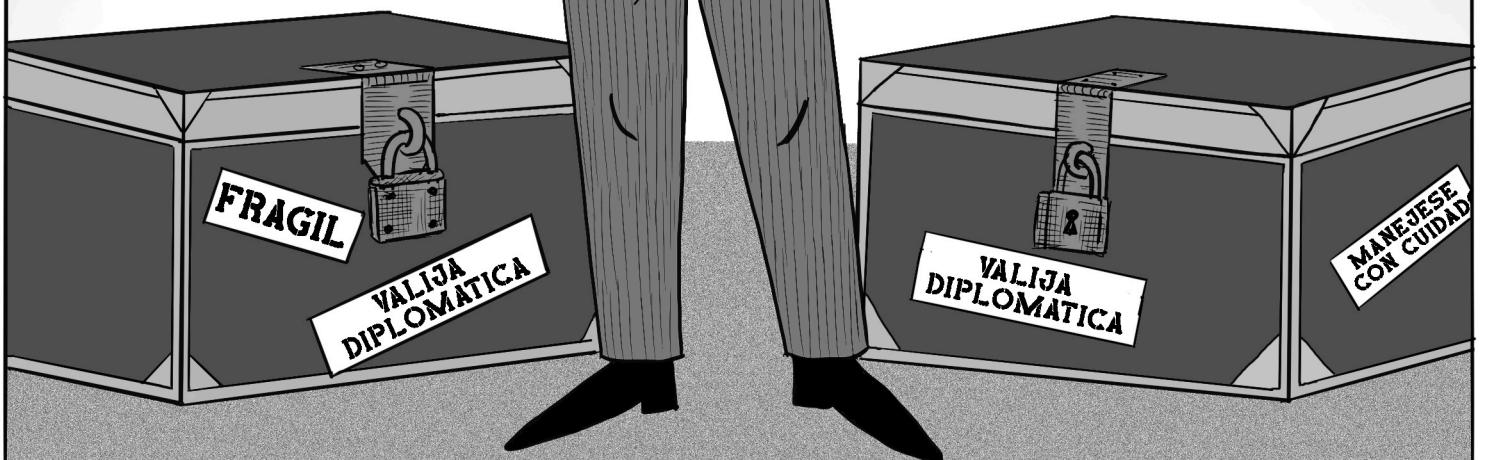
Letter from August 1931

Our collection of peruvian objects is becoming numerous...

Letter from June 1932

If any of the objects are to be exhibited and information about the donor is required, I hope we make an exception this time...

Letter from December 1932



I ask you to arrange with the customs office so that the bags pass unnoticed...

Letter from March 1933

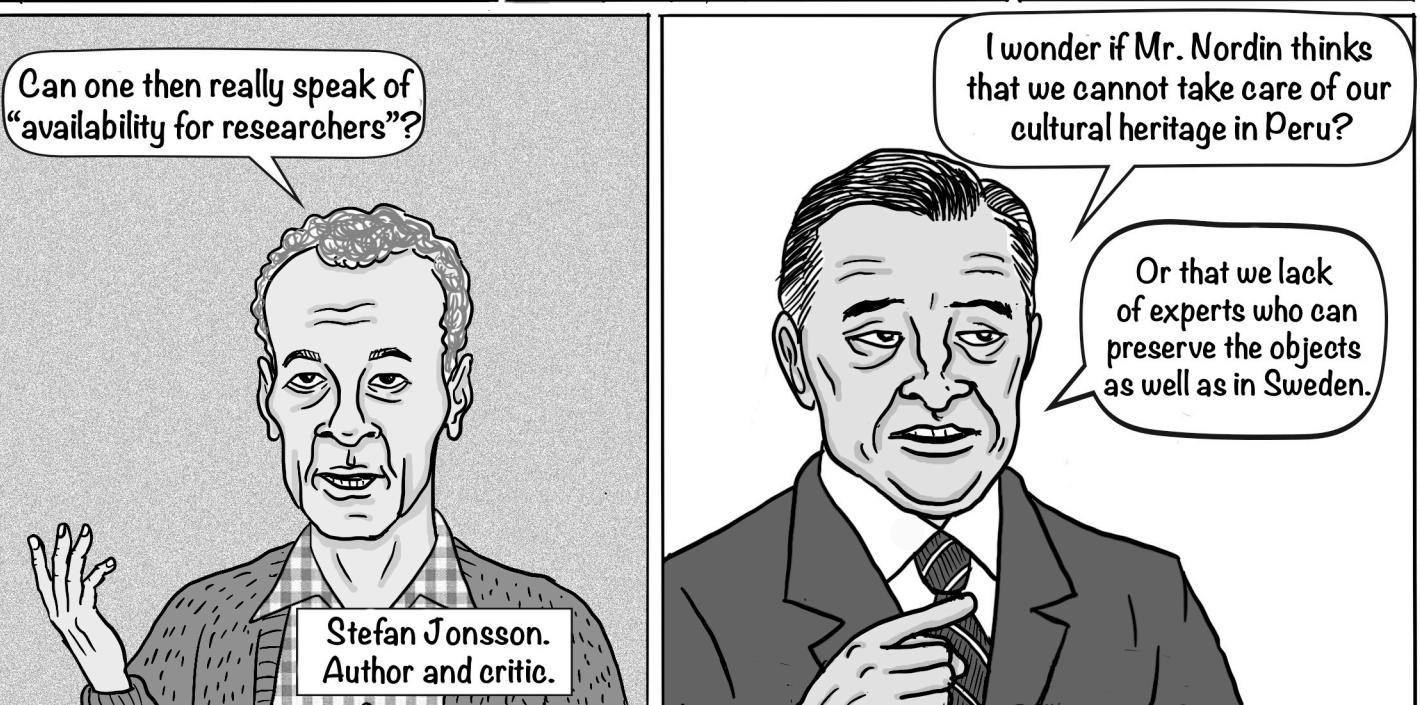
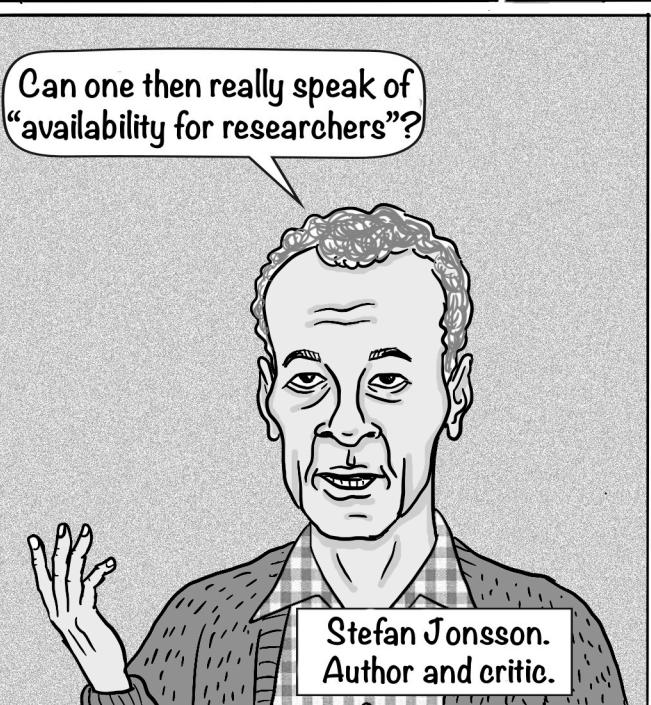
When the exhibition "A Stolen World" had been inaugurated suggested peruvian ambassador Gilbert Chauny to the Secretary of State that the Paracas collection should be demanded back via the Peruvian embassy in Sweden.

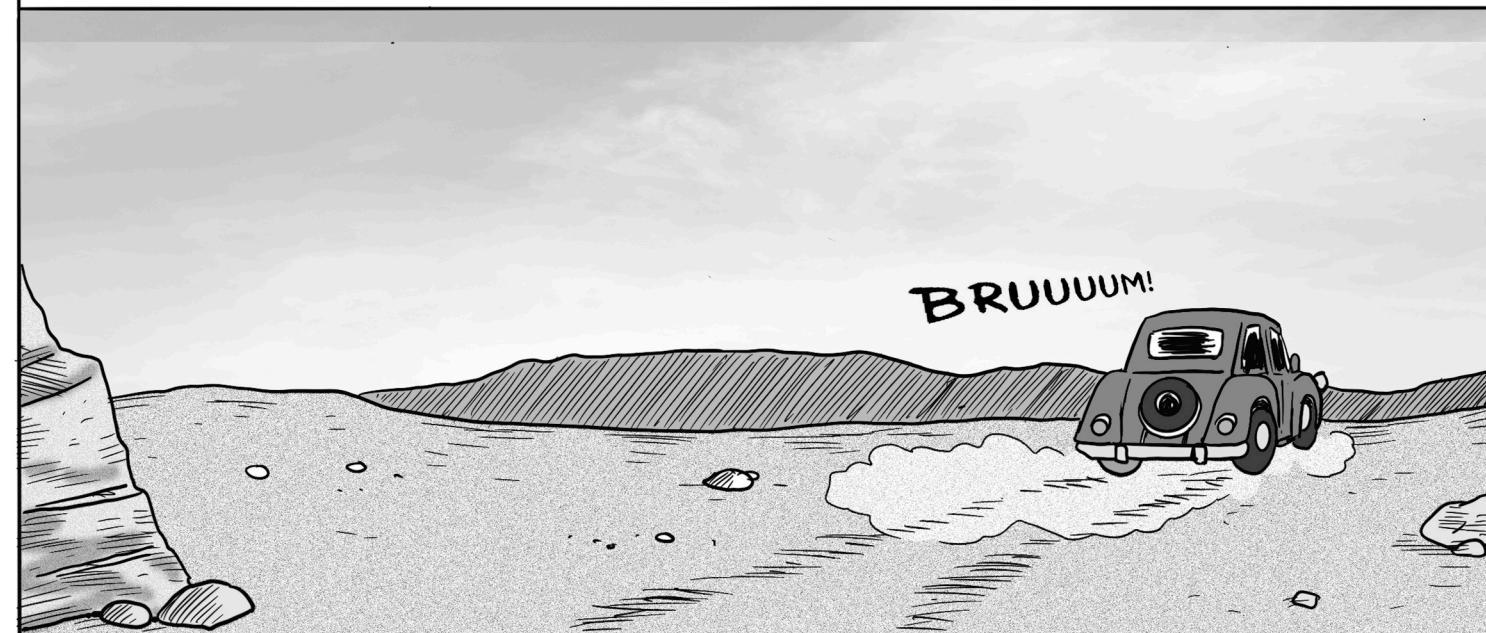
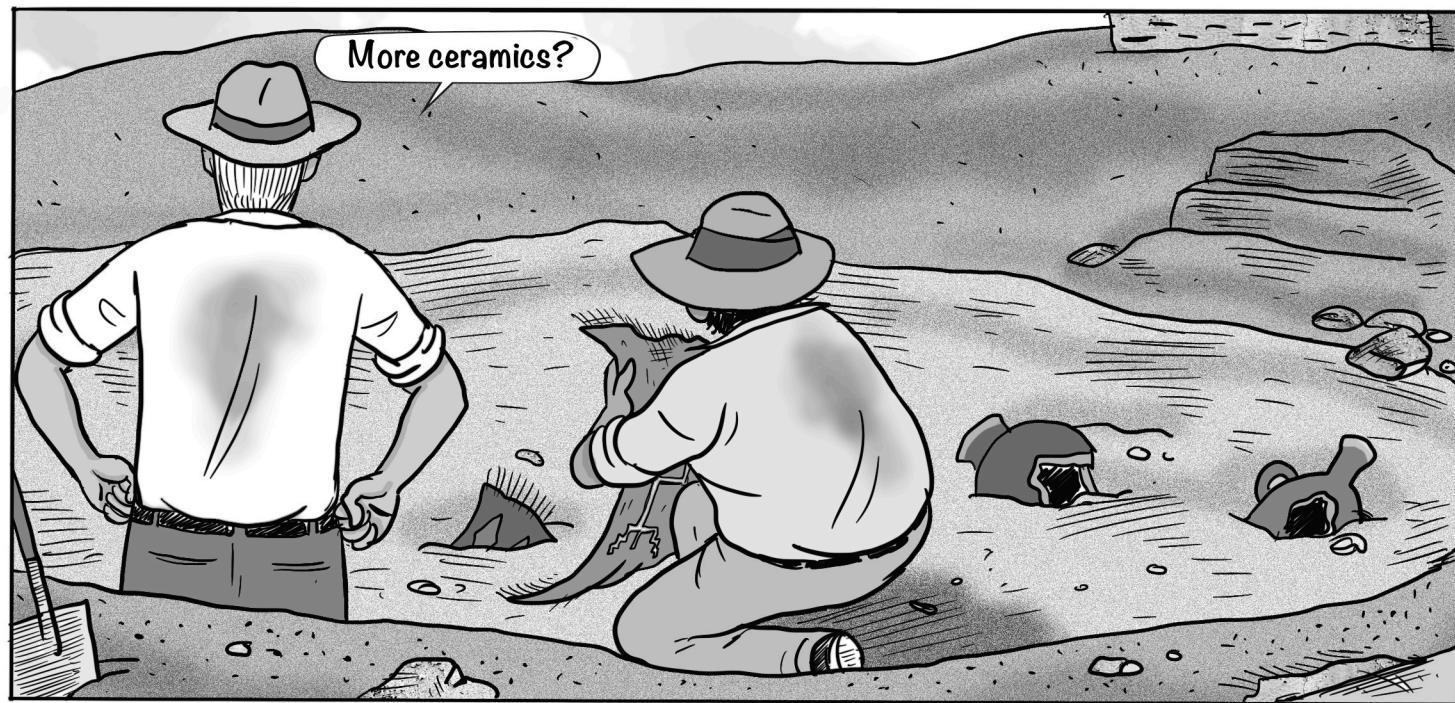
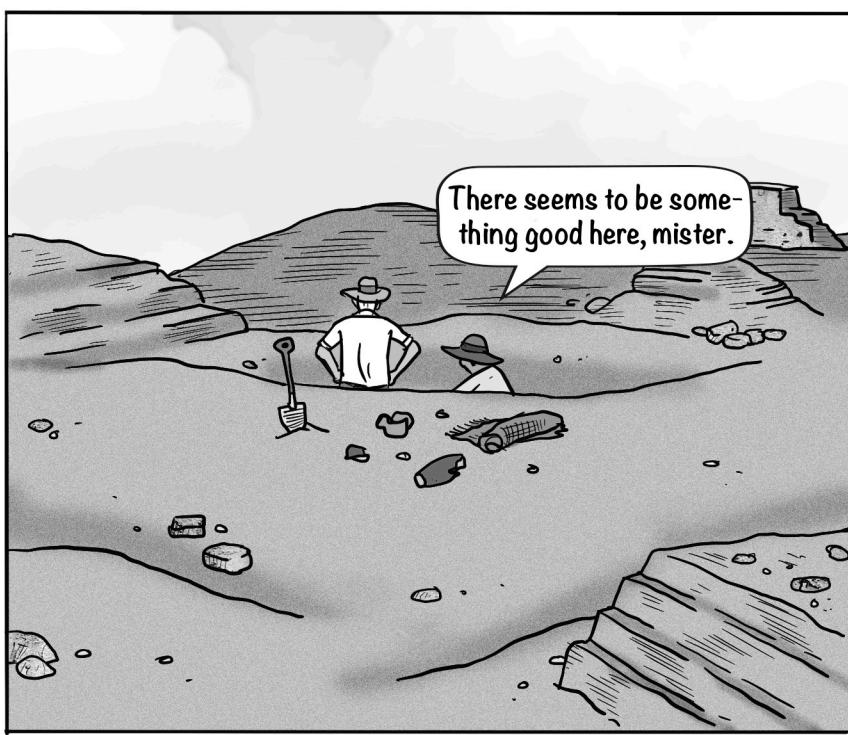
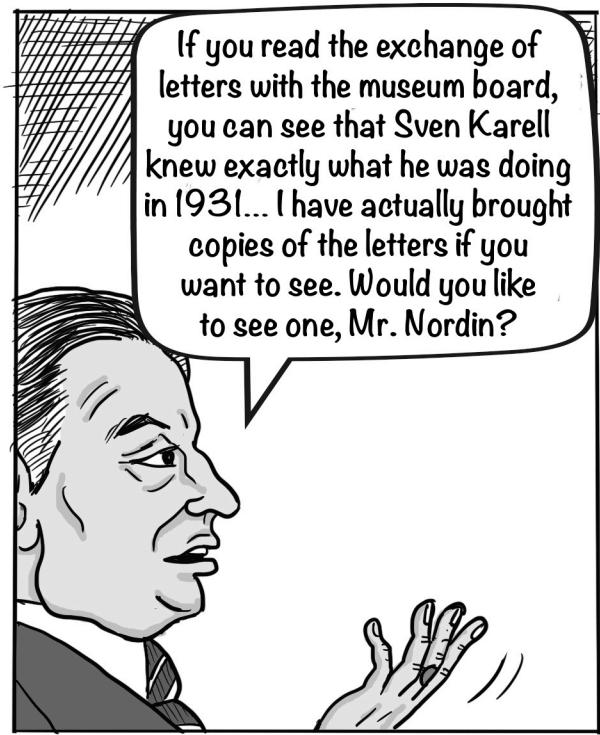


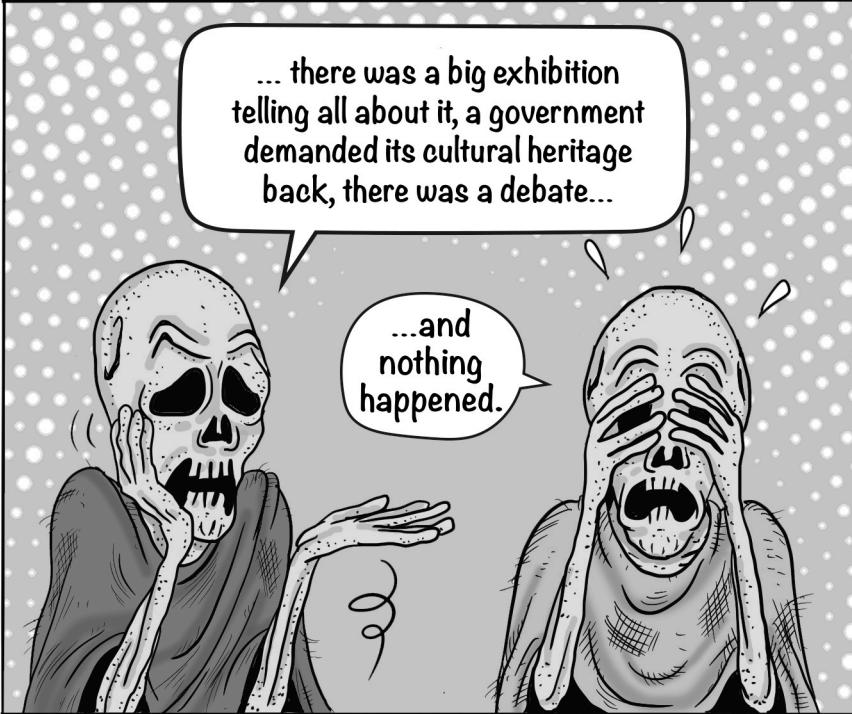
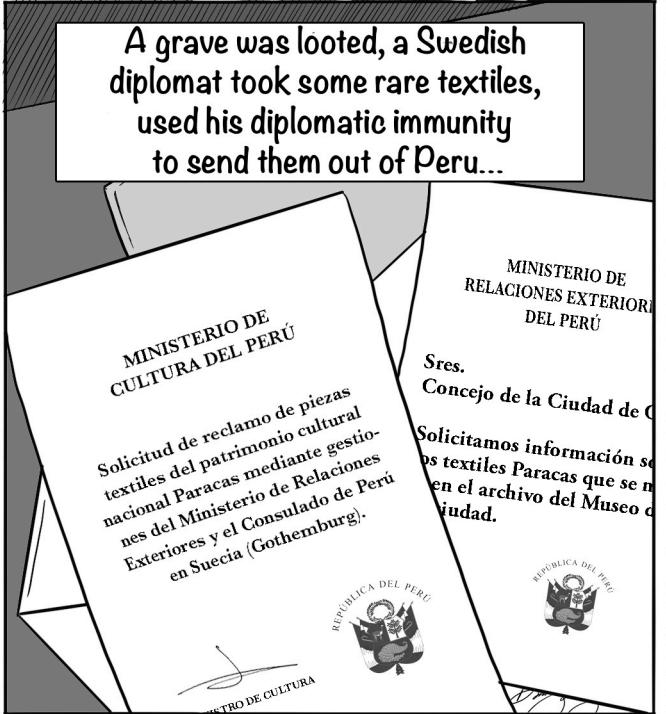
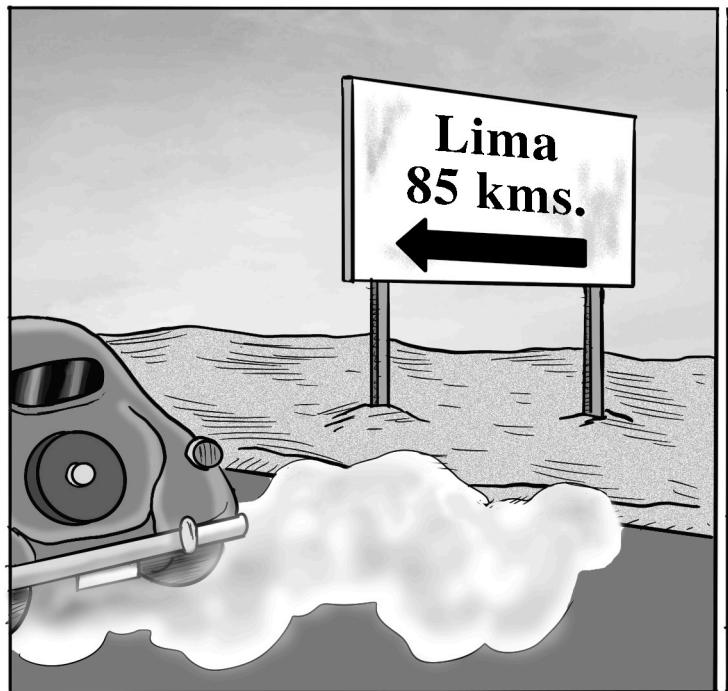
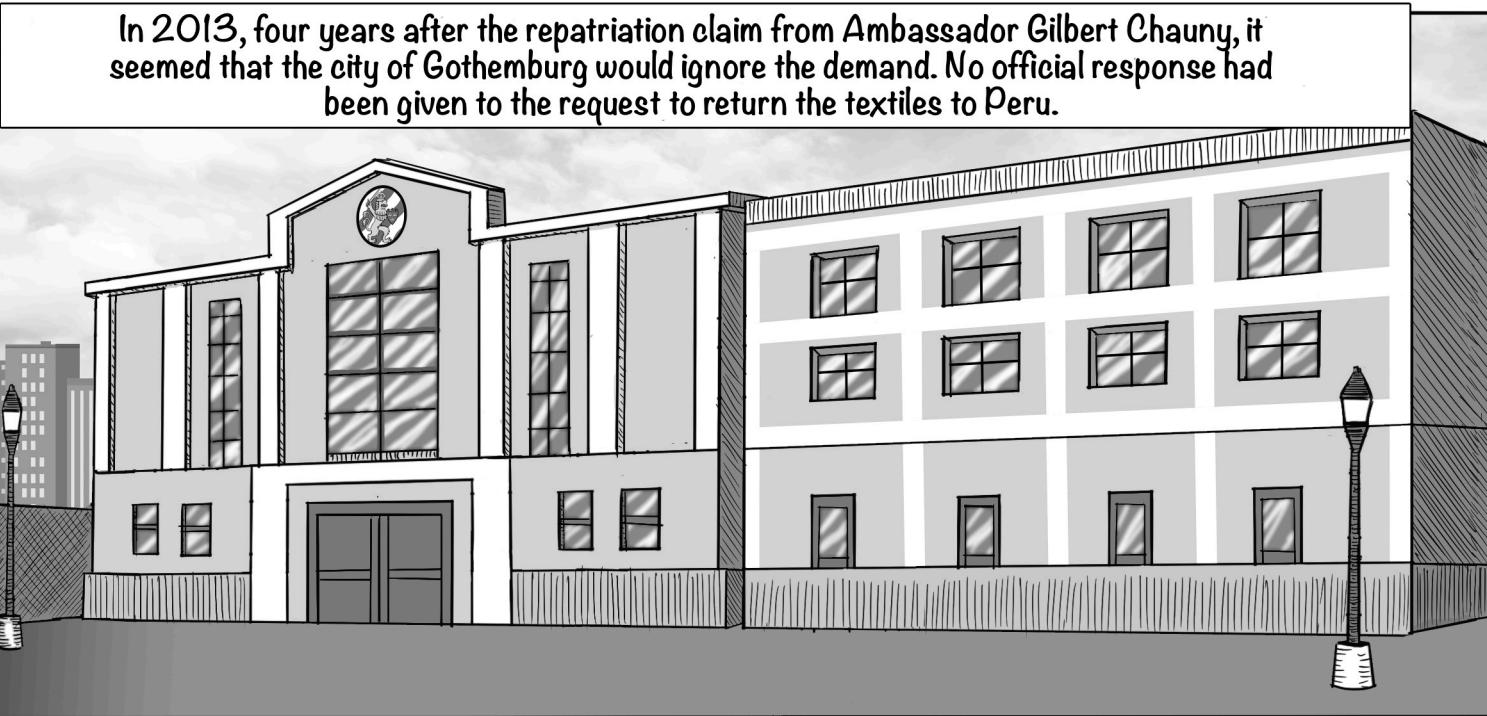
They take the textiles, smuggle them, and then they make an exhibition about how they did it?



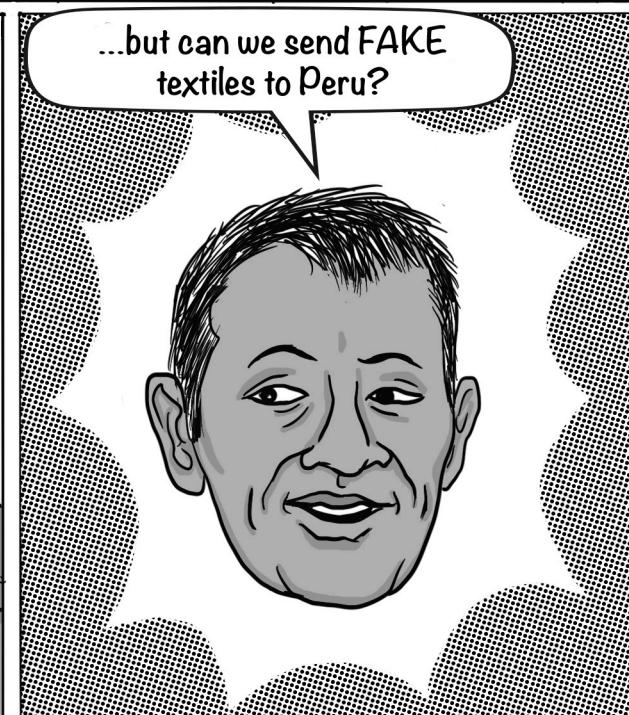
There is no single scientific article about the Paracas collection in Gothenburg.







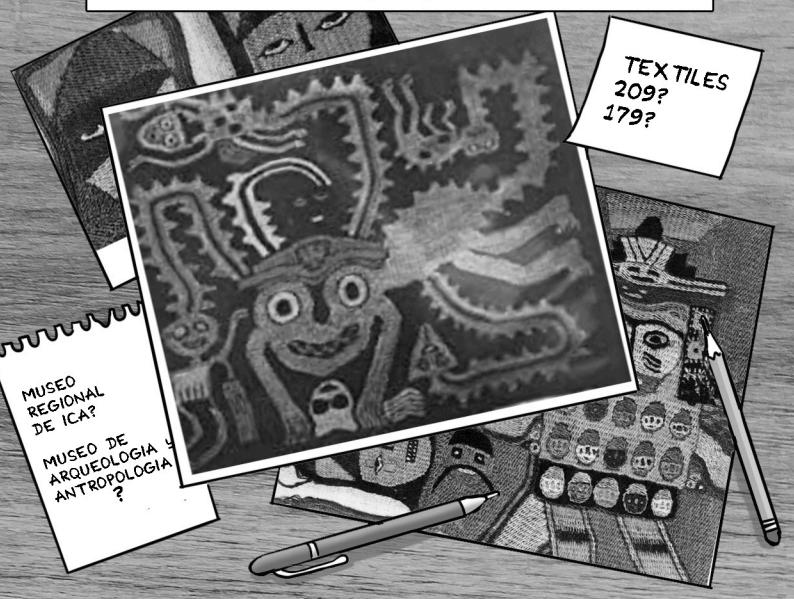
DIPLOMAT POUCH / DESTINATION GOTHENBURG - SWEDEN



The idea went from a delirious comment to an impulse with a specific challenge.



Can a Peruvian artist get Swedish textile workers to produce fake Peruvian textiles?



Could an artist use his access to resources in a Western country to turn textile workers into forgers of historical objects?



I would like to speak to Professor Ciszuk



Hi, Oscar. This is Lena Hammarlund, she will also help us.

Nice to meet you.



ROBBERIES

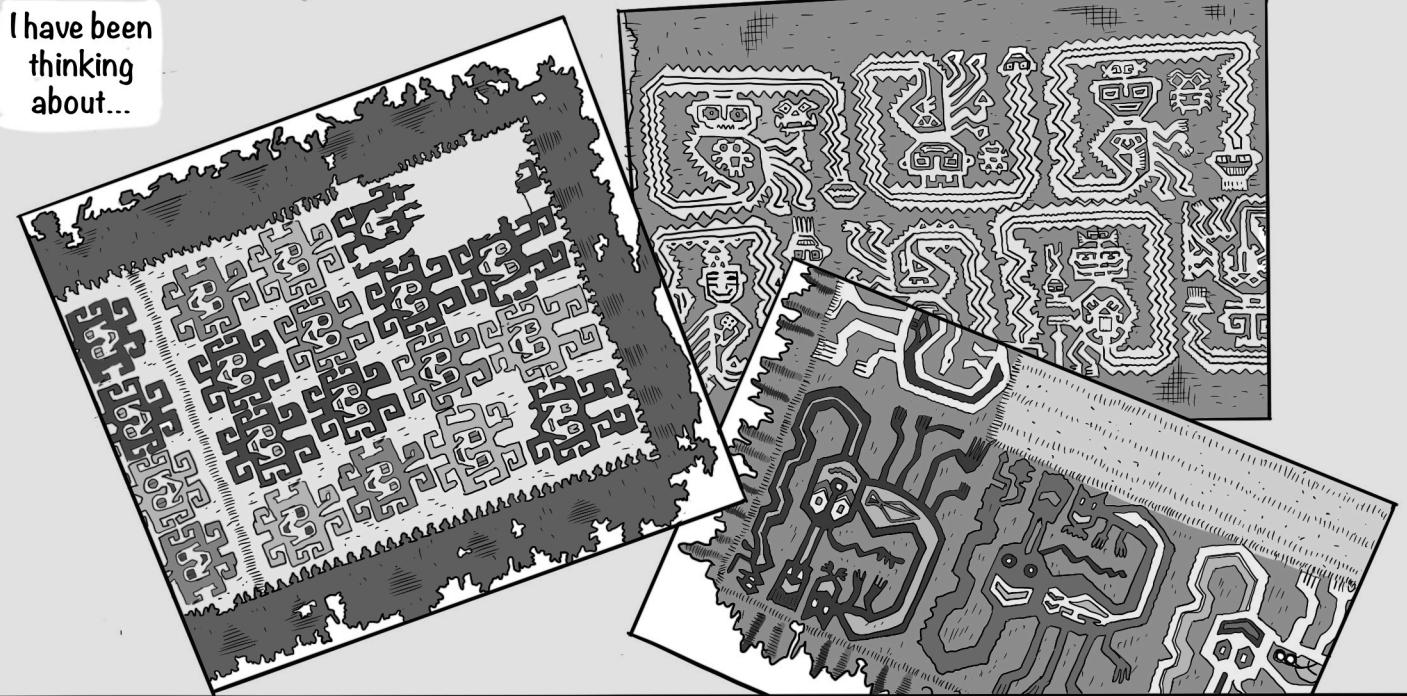
EXPERTOS EN HILADO ANTIGUO?
PROFESIONALES DEL TEJIDO?
MARTIN CISZUK INVESTIGADOR EN ARTE TEJIDO

I started my research with support from the Royal Academy of Arts.

Good afternoon, the University of Textiles in Borås?



I have been thinking about...



WEAVING EXPERTS?
TEXTILE WORKERS?

During my research for the exhibition "Robberies by Request" in 2008, I learned from the experts that the most valued object in the collection in Sweden is the mantle, Calendario, as it called in Peru.

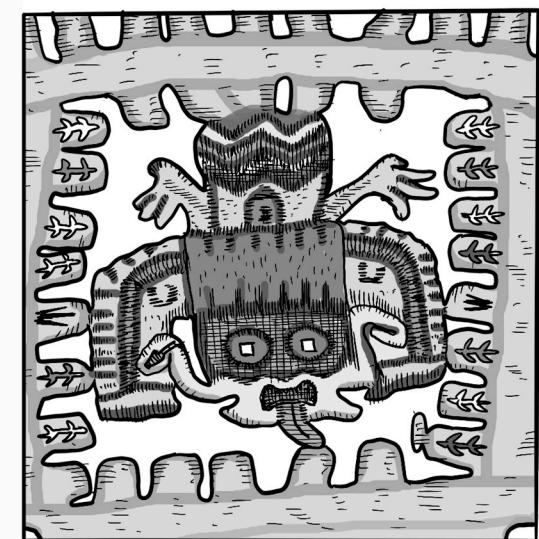


As you've planned it, it's impossible.. It would take several years and a much larger budget...

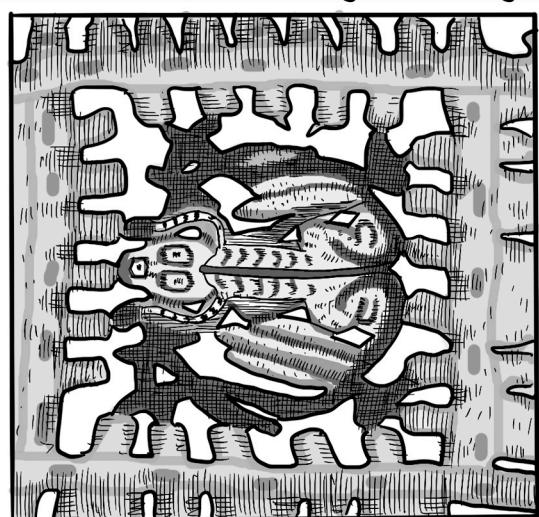
... to hire a skilled workforce. They would need to work in shifts; no one has the stamina or eyes to study and replicate weaving techniques all day.



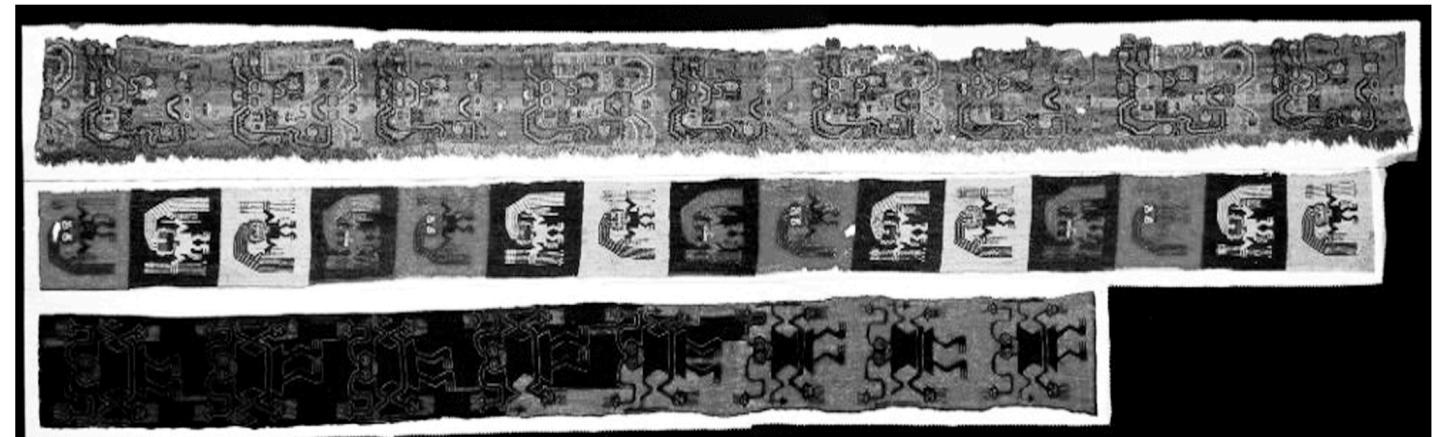
In Gothenburg it is called "Textile 179" or "Three-dimensional textile". A small piece, woven so intricately that it creates a three-dimensional effect.



According to Carmen Thays, director of the textile department at the National Museum of Archaeology, Anthropology and History of Peru, it is an agricultural calendar. It is considered one of the finest textiles in the world, owing to its sophisticated character design and its age.



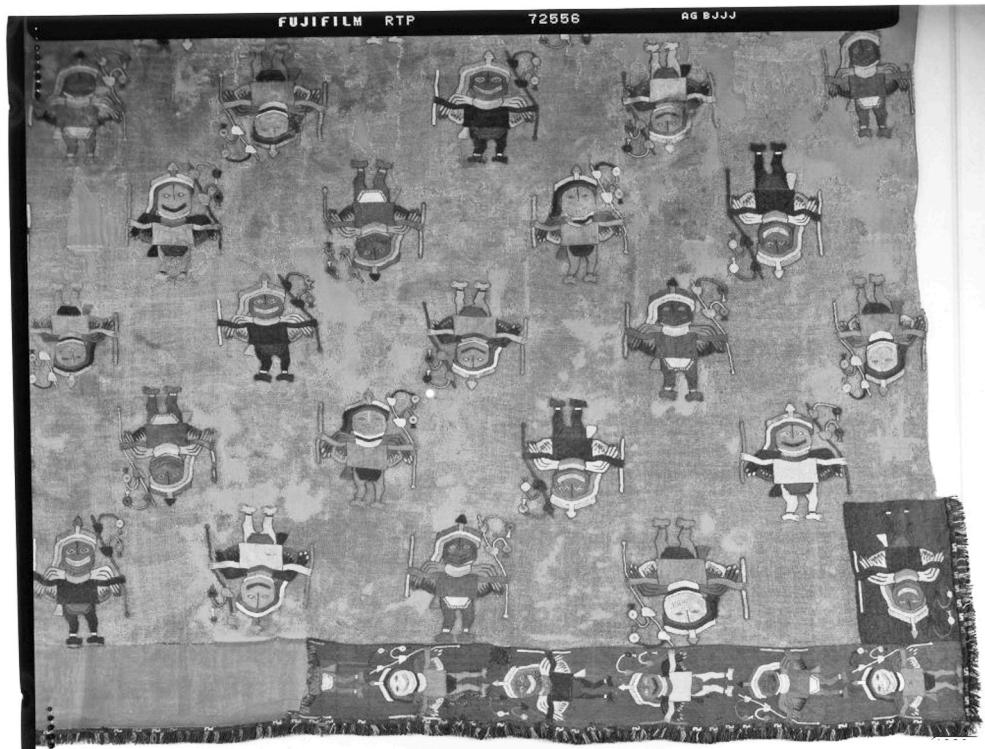
I needed to put together a work team. Martin Ciszuk helped me gather textile researchers and students.



First, I had to select different textiles because of the challenges that working with Textile 179 would have presented.

We chose Textiles 209 and 079. Textile 209 was large and damaged in several places. It had been repaired both in Peru and (most likely) in Sweden.

It was a textile that could tell the story of grave looting, smuggling, cultural heritage theft, and attempts at preservation.



And we succeeded. Recreating Textiles 209 and 079 took almost four years of constant negotiations and research. Thread was spun from alpaca wool, dyed, woven, embroidered, and assembled in various cities across Sweden.



About a dozen people participated in the production.

Between April and August 2017, I made a series of agreements with the Royal Academy of Arts in Stockholm (KKH), the Art Museum in Lima (MALLI) and Peruvian diplomats.

Would be possible to carry out diplomatic smuggling, but from Sweden to Peru?

During those months I attended almost all the events which the Peruvian Embassy arranged.

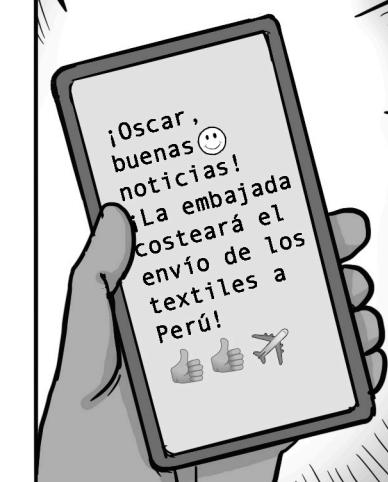
EMBAJADA
DE PERÚ

At one of these events, I met the cultural attaché Marinere Muñiz. I explained the scope of my project and the reason for sending the textiles through the Peruvian embassy.

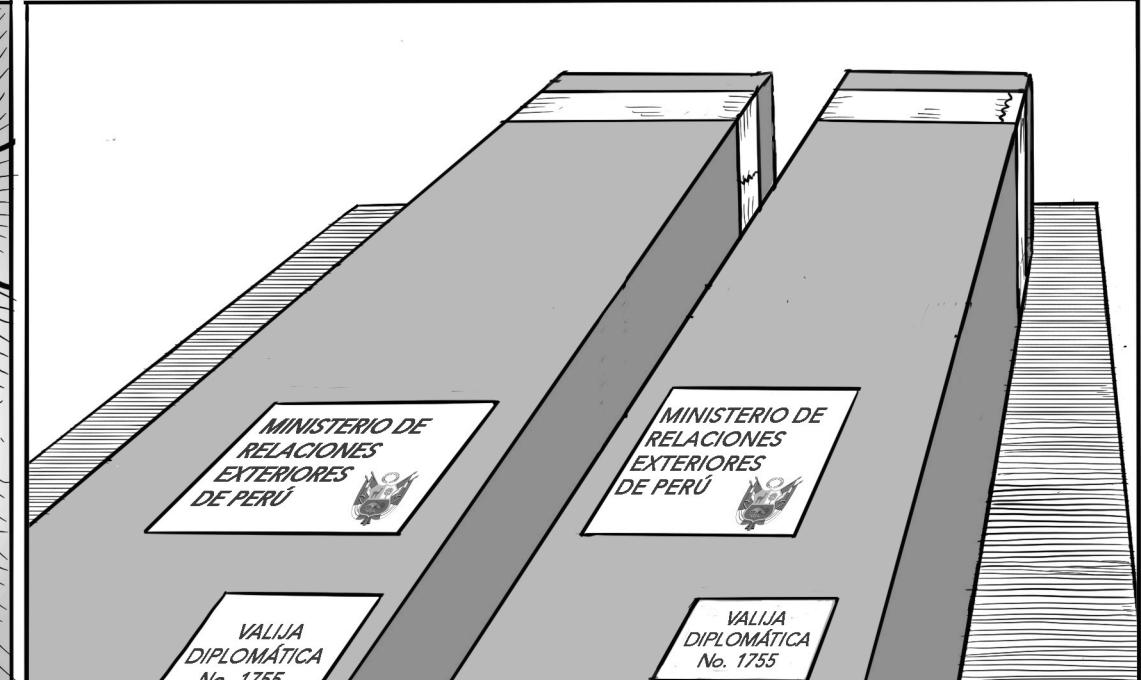
It's a brilliant initiative!

Let me see how we can help you!

At the end of August...

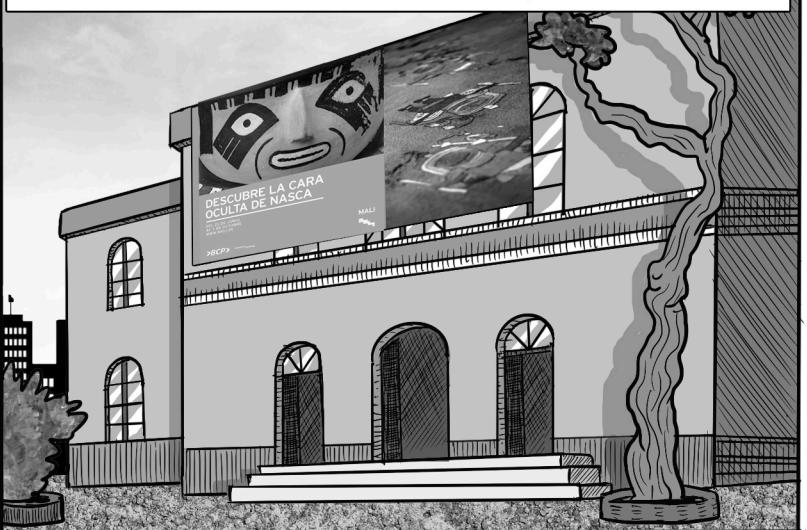


Good news, Oscar! The embassy will cover the cost of shipping!



DIPLOMAT POUCH CONTAINS OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS ONLY FROM THE PERUVIAN EMBASSY IN SWEDEN TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PERU!

The Art Museum of Lima (MALI) was preparing a major exhibition on Nazca culture. Three hundred objects from the Nazca region, which includes Paracas, were gathered.



The expectations for the exhibition were immense, and these were exactly the conditions I was looking for to present my project in Peru. Curator Sharon Lerner and I planned a display in response to the Nazca exhibit.



Cerro Colorado, Holy Friday 1931.

Boy, today has to be done with a lot of respect.

You come from the north and things are done faster there...



What if we were to recreate part of the World Culture Museum in MALI?

Huh?!



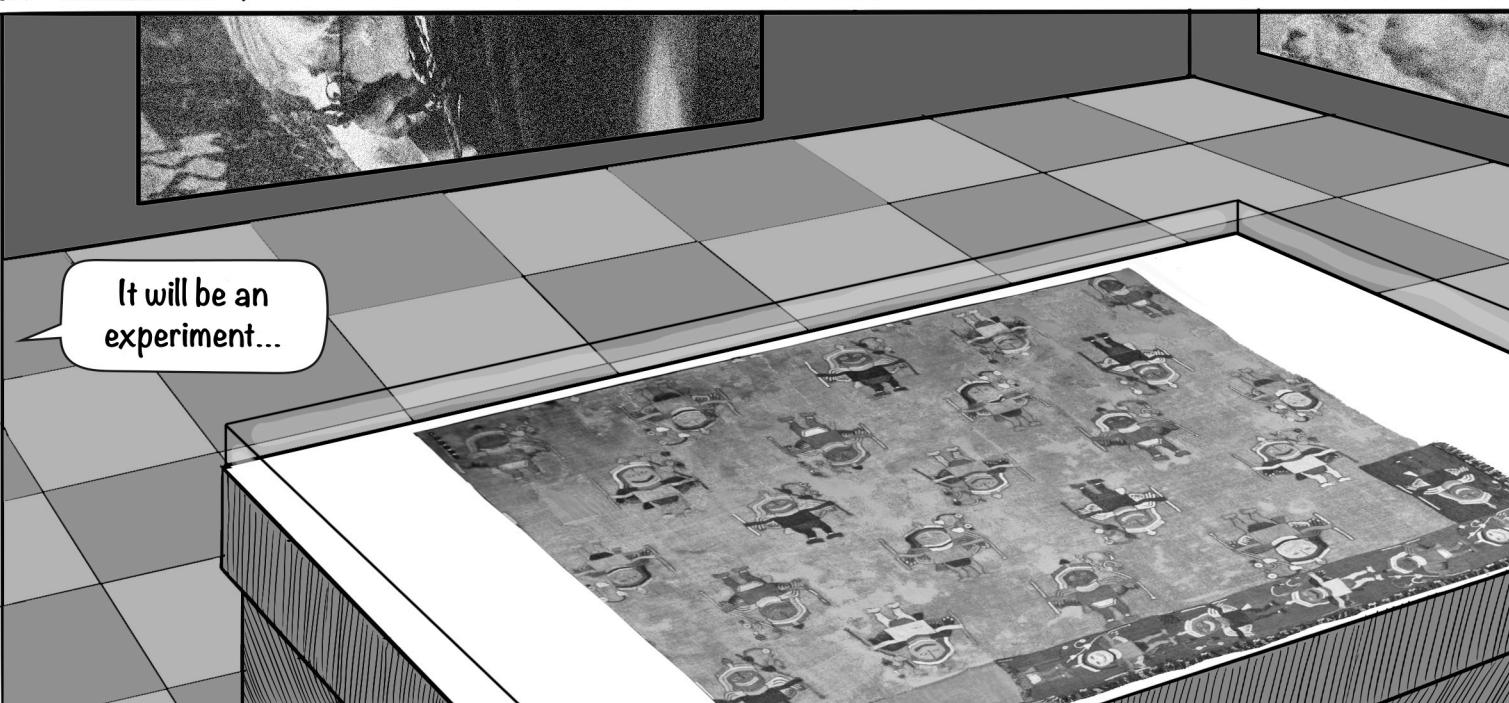
Give the audience the opportunity to experience how a Swedish museum presented Peruvian cultural heritage ten years ago.

Right in front of the Nazca exhibit...?

We'll copy the stands, and the decorations from the Gothenburg exhibition. We'll create a museum within a museum.



It will be an experiment...

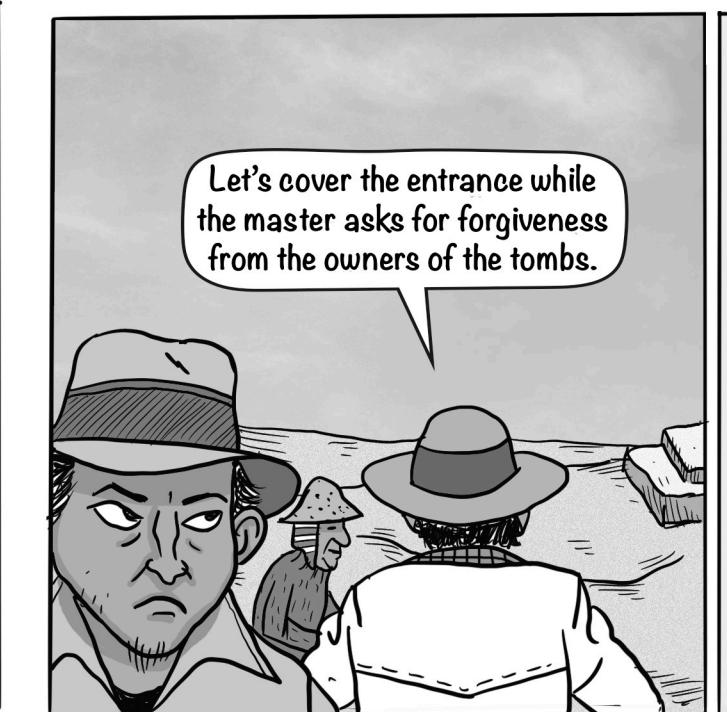


Two hours later...

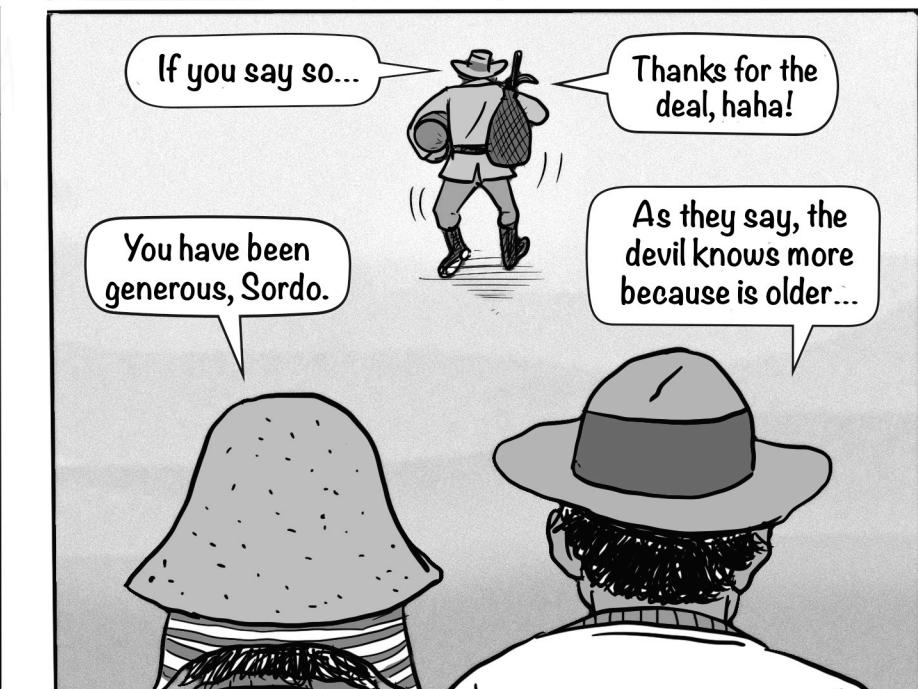


Hey, wait!





There is nothing here that would interest Karell.



You have been generous, Sordo.

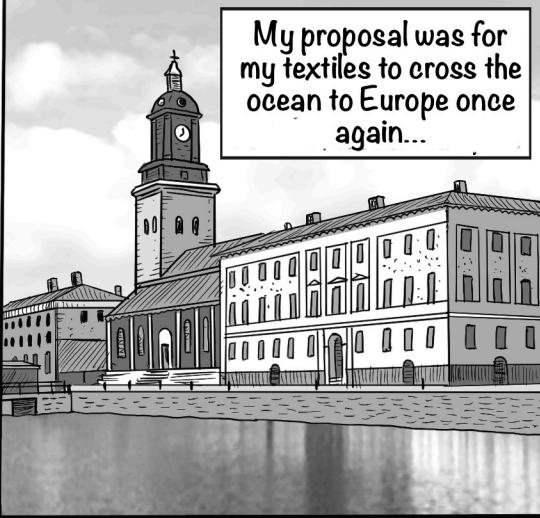
As they say, the devil knows more because is older...



The fact that Peru was celebrating 200 years of independence in 2021 was used as an argument in the repatriation request. We sold Sweden the famous "Bicentennial Exhibition" and that year the original Mantos Paracas were returned to Peru and declared a nation's treasure.



That same year, I was invited to participate in the Gothenburg Biennial. They were interested in my Paracas textile project.

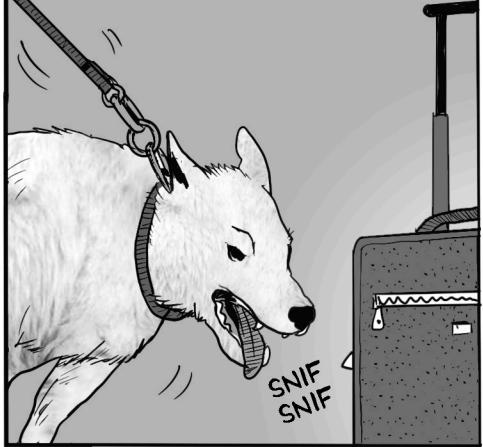


My proposal was for my textiles to cross the ocean to Europe once again...

I had tried to get replica certificates from the Ministry of Culture. I called and spoke to five different people.



I called the Ministry of Culture (MINCUL), and they told me they would send someone to verify the textiles. Meanwhile, I had to unpack the textiles that my father and I had worked so hard to pack...



You can Google my exhibition in Sweden. In fact, you're all invited!



They didn't have much of a sense of humour.



Each one told me something different and as always it was all extremely bureaucratic.



I decided to trust my luck.



I hope I don't get any troubles...

But...



What are these textiles you have there?

Do you have permits to take them out of the country?

Then, the official from MINCUL arrived.



And who wove these textiles?

They were made by Swedish textile workers.

Look, they are replicas, yes, but no one believes that they were made by a group of Swedish women.



Hang on, this guy replicates original fabrics in Sweden, then sends the imitations back to Peru through the Peruvian embassy...

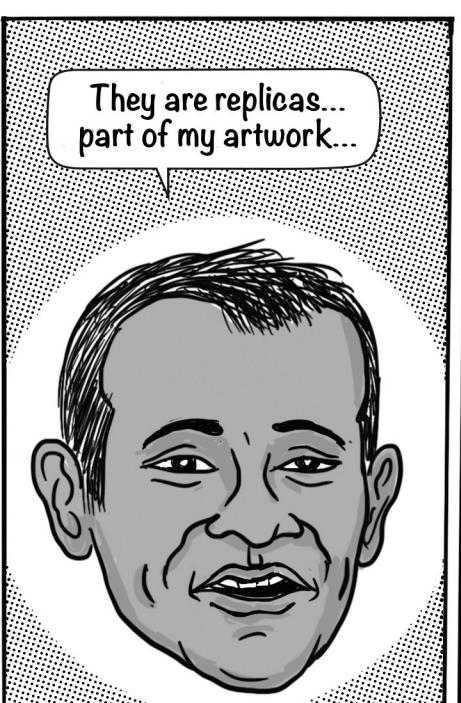


...and now, that he wants to return them to Sweden, the customs officials think they are originals??



Stop, I'm peeing myself!

They are replicas... part of my artwork...

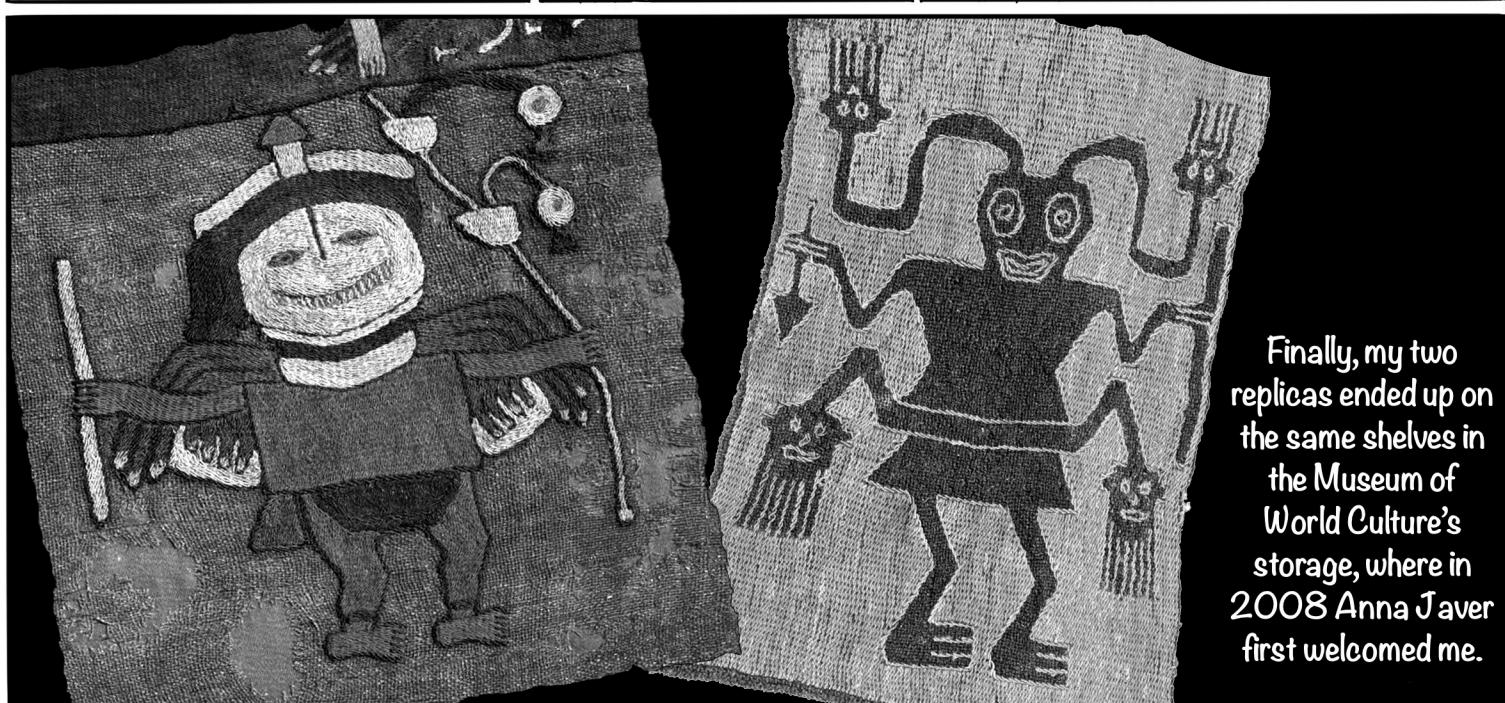


??



??

I will call the Ministry of Culture to clarify this.



Finally, my two replicas ended up on the same shelves in the Museum of World Culture's storage, where in 2008 Anna Javer first welcomed me.