

# Fragment of a Peruvian loincloth



- Date of production 1000–1476 AD
- Place of creation Peru, Nekropola Ancon
- Dimensions height: 115 cm, width: 35 cm
- ID no. MAK/AS/P.55
- Museum [Archaeological Museum in Kraków](#)
- Subjects [daily life](#), [clothing](#)
- Technique [sewing](#)
- Material [wool](#), [cotton](#)
- Object copyright Archaeological Museum in Kraków
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- Digitalisation RDW MIC, Małopolska's Virtual Museums project
- Tags [Władysław Kluger](#), [kolekcja](#), [tkanina](#), [2D](#), [domena publiczna](#), [Peru](#)

This is a fragment of a loincloth with applications in the form of sewn-in wheels and fringes. The fabric comes from Peru and is a part of Władysław Kluger's collection from 1876.

Elaborated by Krzysztof Babraj (Archaeological Museum in Kraków), © all rights reserved

## Władysław Kluger, collector of Peruvian antiquities

Since 2008, it has been possible to visit an exhibition of antiquities of Peruvian provenance at the Archaeological Museum of Kraków. The collection includes ceramic vessels (mainly of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic shape), as well as fabrics and other miscellaneous finds. We can admire these high-quality antiquarian objects, thanks to Władysław Kluger, who was a Polish engineer.

The future collector was born in Krakow on 16 January 1849, where he graduated with honours from the Technical Institute. In 1868, he continued his education in exile in Paris, first at the High School for post-uprising emigrants, then in the *École nationale des ponts et chaussées* (National Highways Institute), one of the French *grandes écoles*. He graduated from the latter with honours, receiving the title of civil engineer. In 1873, he received an offer to carry out engineering works in Peru from Edward Habich, an engineer operating in Peru, who had been educated at the Warsaw University of Technology and was a delegate of the Peruvian government, which Kluger accepted.

In 1874, Władysław Kluger arrived in Peru, where he stayed for six years. During that time, he designed and carried out construction projects with great commitment. His most significant contributions were, among many others: the construction of the highway connecting Peru and Bolivia, running through the Andes and along the coast of Lake Titicaca; building the prefecture office in Tacna; constructing iron walking bridges in Callao (where he also designed and supervised the construction of sewage systems), Ancón, and Huacho. Kluger's greatest accomplishment, which was also his largest project, was the construction of an irrigation channel which would divert the Maure River from the eastern and western mountainsides of the Andes, thanks to which the infertile Tacna department would be adequately irrigated. Unfortunately, the eventual fulfilment of the project was interrupted by the outbreak of war between Chile and the combined forces of Bolivia and Peru. However, the engineer presented his project in 1878, during the World Exhibition in Paris, where he acted as the government commissioner of Peru. Kluger was also constantly engaged in scientific activities, for which he swiftly earned appreciation. In 1876, he became head of the Department of Hydraulics and Faculty of Civil Engineering at the Lima University of Technology (*Escuela de Ingenieros Civiles y de Minas en Lima*); for some time, he also acted as its chancellor. He was active in scientific field, publishing, among others: *The lecture in hydraulics with the theory of water machines* (1873) and *The lecture in material strength and stability of buildings* (1877). In Poland, Władysław Kluger does not seem to have been sufficiently recognised—considering his achievements; whereas in Peru he was adequately honoured: in Lima, a monument was erected in his honour, and the Peruvian government sent a letter of thanks, stating that the Polish man “deserved the gratitude of the Peruvian nation”.

Engineering projects are not the only field that Kluger found interesting. Travelling around Peru and admiring its antiquities, he began to develop a passion for collecting and archaeology. In 1875, he went to the Cordillera, where he studied topographical conditions and assessed the possibility of road construction. The memoirs of his travels were published in 1877 in *Letters from Peru and Bolivia*. He participated as an amateur in excavations at a multicultural cemetery in Ancón (the central coast of Peru). This is where he acquired most of the artefacts in his collection. He purchased the rest of the items and steadily began to donate them to the Kraków Academy of Learning. In the 19th century, interest in antiques and archaeology in this field was only starting to develop, which gives us considerable certainty that the artefacts purchased at that time were not forgeries. In total, Kluger sent over 500 items to Poland, of which 277 artefacts have survived, including dishes, baskets, fabrics, weaving and sewing tools, tools, weapons, jewellery, mummies, bones, and numerous photographs of various monuments. Some of these can be admired at the Archaeological Museum of Krakow and selected ones may also be seen on our website. As a token of high regard, he was appointed a correspondent member of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics at the Academy of Learning.

In 1880, Władysław Kluger, due to advanced tuberculosis, decided to return to the country. While he was in Krakow, he was involved in the construction of the city's water supply system. His health deteriorated so much that he was forced to go to San Remo, where he was supposed to undergo treatment. He died in Italy, on 29 February 1884, at the age of just 35. His body was brought to the country and buried at the Rakowicki Cemetery in Kraków.

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