In this paper I propose to illustrate a three-way process of recovering the past, which hopefully will take place in the city of Geneva, with the opening of the Museo Etnografico Castello D’Albertis, planned for 2004. Donated with the castle to the municipality in the 1920’s this collection of artefacts from Luigi Maria D’Albertis’ expeditions along the Fly River has never been available to the public. The first process of recovery will be that of bringing it to public attention. The question - one hundred years on - is how to stage this exhibition, with what representational aims. Its location within the reconstructed museum/home of Luigi Maria’s cousin Enrico (also navigator and explorer) suggests contextualising it within a discourse on the figure of 18th Century collectors, rather than displaying the artefacts as material instantiations of Fly culture. The proposal is to juxtapose the objects with passages from D’Albertis’ memoirs, and with oral history accounts on that ‘first encounter’ recorded along the Fly. The second and third things recovered being: awareness that there are two sides to the activity of collection and the historical, not absolute, meaning of the objects collected.