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Tadao Umesao's Ecological View of History

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National Museum of Ethnology

The birth of an ecological perspective

It was February of 1957 when Tadao Umesao published his 'Introduction: An ecological view of civilizations' in the magazine *Chuokoron**. This was an essay rich in original content. Its primary focus was the historical development of Eurasia, or, in other words, the Old World. Using a historical perspective rooted in ecology, Umesao divided Eurasia into two regions, which he labeled the primary and secondary regions. The primary region included eastern (Japan) and the western (Western Europe) edges of Eurasia. The secondary region consisted of virtually all of Eurasia between these two extremes.

In Umesao's opinion, the primary region had developed historically through internally driven succession. In this region we find temperate zones located in the middle latitudes, regions blessed with ample rainfall and highly productive soils. In the primary region, "Conditions were good for comfortable growth. Societies in this region could repeatedly shed their skins to become what they are today." In the primary region, a variety of phenomena appear in parallel. Feudal systems are formed, a bourgeois revolution occurs, sophisticated capitalist systems are constructed.

As examples of parallel phenomena in the secondary region, Umesao points to large, totalitarian empires (Russian, Ottoman, Mogul, Qing). In these empires we see a recurring pattern of destruction and conquest. Here, in most cases, the engine of history is external forces. Succession is externally instead of internally driven.

Umesao's ecological perspective grew out of his fieldwork. In 1955, at the age of 35, he studied the Moghul tribe in Afghanistan as a member of the Kyoto University Scientific Expedition to the Karakorum and Hindukush.

Umesao then drove across Pakistan and India with two American scholars. During this trip, Umesao discovered the land between the oceans and came face to face with the vastness of the Hindu and Muslim worlds. He experienced directly a world neither Eastern nor Western. It was from the seed planted by this discovery that the ideas expounded in 'an ecological view of history' developed.

The comparative study of civilizations

Following the publication of 'An ecological view of history', Umesao continued to actively pursue the comparative study of civilizations. He began with more fieldwork. From 1957 to 1958, Umesao conducted research in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos as head of the first Osaka City University research expedition to Southeast Asia. From 1961 to 1962, he conducted research in Thailand, Laos, Burma (now Myanmar), East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and Nepal. His goal in this research was to discover parallels in the historical development of Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe.

In 1967, he conducted research in France, Spain, and Portugal. In 1969, he extended his research to Italy and Yugoslavia. Through this research, he solidified the foundations of the approach first set out in 'an ecological view of history'. Comparative research on the development of civilizations spans



Tadao Umesao at his office in 1980

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immense scholarly as well as geographic regions. Among them, the comparative study of religion and the ecology of religion deserve particular attention. Umesao introduced theory from epidemiology to the comparative study of religion and suggested treating religion as a form of spiritual epidemic.

It was from this perspective that Umesao examined parallel phenomena in the spread of Christianity and Buddhism, noting that Buddhism spread primarily to the East, while Christianity spread primarily to the West.

Starting in 1983, Umesao organized seventeen symposia on the study of civilization. He was the keynote speaker at each of these symposia. Symposium themes varied widely, including Japanese civilization in the modern world, cities and urbanization, political structures, economic structures, knowledge and education, religion, language and writing, households, tourism, technology, recreation, social theory, transport, information and communication, alcoholic beverages, nation-states, and collections. This diversity of themes indicates the

breadth of discussion at these symposia, and, at the same time, the breadth of Umesao's own interests.

The scholarly world of Tadao Umesao

The majority of Umesao's articles and essays were published between 1989 and 1994 in *Umesao Tadao Chosakushu* (The Collected Writings of Umesao Tadao). Comprising 22 volumes averaging 621 pages each, plus one additional volume, it is a massive publication. It is hard to imagine a single researcher producing a larger volume of writing in one lifetime.

Volume one, *The Age of Exploration*, includes records of Umesao's early field trips to Mt. Baekdu on the border between China and North Korea, the Daxinganling Mountains in China, and Yakushima in Japan.

Volume two, *Mongol Research*, focuses primarily on the results of the work conducted while he was attached to the Xibei Yanjiusuo (Northwest Research Institute) in Zhangjiakou (now part of China's Hebei Province). These articles are not only important as a contemporary record of Mongol pastoralists, they also mark the start of serious fieldwork on pastoralists by Japanese anthropologists.

Volume three, *Ecological Research*, contains his research on Daxinganling Mountains fish, and articles published in zoological journals. It also contains his 1961 dissertation, *Dobutsu no shakaiteki kansho* (The social interactions of animals) (in Japanese, Kyoto University). This dissertation is an example of quantitative research on animal behavior in which he used probability theory to analyze observations of the group behavior of tadpoles. The purpose of this research was to find behavioral rules to explain the movements of domesticated herd animals on the Mongolian steppes.

Volume four, *Countries of the 'Medient'* (between Occident and Orient), is focused on results from the fieldwork Umesao conducted in 1955 as a member of the Kyoto University Scientific Expedition to the Karakorum and Hindukush. As described above, it was this fieldwork that gave birth to the ideas incorporated in 'An ecological view of history'.

Volume six, *Eyes on Asia*, primarily chronicles work done as a member of the Osaka City University research expedition to Southeast Asia. To conduct fieldwork related to his theory of comparative civilizations, Umesao traveled on foot through several Southeast Asian countries.

Volume seven, *In Search of Japan*, contains Umesao's essays related to

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Japanese civilization. In all of these articles, we see him trying to position Japan from a comparative civilizations perspective.

Volume eight, *Research in Africa*, focuses on his 1963–1964 research among the Dadoga people of Tanzania. Here we find a detailed ethnography of the Dadoga.

Volume twenty, *Global Experience*, contains travel journals and notes from trips to China, along the Silk Road, Europe, South and North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Included are raw notes on his experiences as an Esperantist and learner of local languages.

Besides these nine volumes, the other thirteen in *Umesao Tadao Chosakushu* also can be said, in a broad sense, to be products of Umesao's fieldwork.

The distinctive features at the heart of Umesao's scholarship were three: persistence, boundary-crossing, and discovery. Umesao pursued topics ranging from comparative civilization

and comparative religion to women's studies, information industries, technologies for intellectual production, and cultural development — for periods that sometimes spanned decades. His persistence was incredible. At the same time, he never confined himself to a single academic specialty but was constantly crossing boundaries between existing disciplines. His discovery of the countries between the ocean and his analysis of religion using theory from epidemiology are only two examples of an extraordinary ability to see what others had missed. Together these three elements comprised a powerful structure for the scholarly world of Tadao Umesao.

*An English translation of the book-length version of this essay has been published: Tadao Umesao (2003), *An Ecological View of History: Japanese Civilization in the World Context*. Translated by Beth Cary and edited by Harumi Befu. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.

The Museum as a Non-profit Information Industry

Nobuyuki Hata

National Museum of Ethnology

Dr Tadao Umesao made enormous contributions to Japan's academic environment by working tirelessly throughout his life to conceive and bring into being numerous research institutes and museums. His greatest achievements, however, were to envision, bring into being, and manage the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) with great energy, agility, and skill. His creation and management of Minpaku, as its first Director-General, was not only a tremendous contribution to the development of ethnology and anthropology in Japan. It was also a singular and shining moment in the history of Japanese museums, from which subsequent generations can learn a great deal.

When national museums in Japan started being built, they were modeled after European and American museums. Each museum became a 'treasure house' for the collection and display of traditional Japanese arts and crafts. Tadao Umesao rejected this 'treasure house' model. What he

created at Minpaku is, instead, a people's museum designed for a new era. During the museum-building boom of the 1980s, his vision became the model that newer museums emulated.

New approaches to exhibitions

As to why and how, in the course of establishing Minpaku, Umesao rejected the established 'treasure house' model and envisioned a museum based on new ideas, Umesao himself had this to say in his autobiography *Koui to Mousou*.

The majority of museums put objects on display in glass cases, as if they were treasures to be worshipped. At Minpaku, however, our aim is to foster understanding the cultures of other peoples, not to display treasures to the masses. That is why I decided that we would not enclose objects in glass cases but leave them exposed when on display.

The objects are displayed in a way that allows people to touch as well as

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see them. It is not impossible that they might make off with them. Some expressed the view that if we left the exhibits unenclosed, they would promptly disappear. But I had faith in the good sense of the Japanese citizenry. I bet on the theory of innate human goodness.

The results of leaving the exhibits exposed have totally justified my faith. In twenty years, not a single item has disappeared. (Tadao Umesao, 1997, *Koui to Mousou* (Act and Delusion), in Japanese, Nihon Keizai Shimbun-sha)

As this quotation indicates, Umesao was determined, from the earliest stages of planning for the opening of Minpaku, to escape the constraints of the 'treasure house' model. Thus, he considered new and unprecedented forms of display. Two years before the museum was founded, its exploratory council presented a detailed plan to the Minister of Education, in which one whole chapter was devoted to the system by which the museum displays would be managed. The chapter included details of how exhibits would be planned, designed and changed. In the following year the task force in charge of preparations for the museum's opening published the following statement of the museum's distinctive features:

Concerning display equipment and technologies: The museum will develop and employ systems (automation, for example) based on new concepts to become a totally new and unprecedented type of research museum. ('Explanatory Material Concerning Operating Costs', 1973)

The 'Summary Report of Task Force Deliberations' (1974), in which Chapter 1 is dedicated to the topic of exhibits, presents the results of a detailed discussion of the exhibits as a whole. Here we see reference to a new concept, 'structured displays', that would become a distinctive feature of the museum's exhibits. Since the museum's purpose was to assist visitors in understanding other peoples and cultures, it was important that the exhibits be organized in a way that facilitates understanding of how the items included in displays are interrelated. In structured displays, the objects on display would be presented in environments and against backgrounds that would deepen understanding of their significance. Background images, panels providing explanations, and the items on display

would be presented as elements in wholes designed to make visible the structural relationships between them.

Background — object — development: together these terms form a pattern for how to structure displays. This concept, the structured display, was part of Umesao's thinking about unenclosed exhibits.

Umesao also articulated three criteria for Minpaku's exhibits. They should be (1) easy to understand, (2) accurate, and (3) beautiful. The first was based on the premise that since the museum would be open to the general public, the exhibits would have to be easy to understand. Exhibits filled with academic jargon known only to researchers and hard to understand for ordinary people were forbidden. At the same time, however, they could not be misleading. Thus, the second criterion that exhibits would present information with the accuracy that scholars insist on. To these two basic criteria, Umesao added a third, that exhibits must also be beautiful. This criterion reflects his aesthetic sensibility. He wanted exhibits to be beautiful, attractive spaces, to make them more appealing. Thus, 'beauty' was indispensable.

In the first of these criteria, that exhibits must be easy to understand, we can see Umesao's concern for the members of the general public who would visit and use the museum. Another example was his proposal to include a 'citizens' exhibit' corner. His concept was that ordinary citizens include individuals with all sorts of unusual collections, and they should, he believed, be given the opportunity to display them. Lack of an appropriate space has prevented this particular proposal from coming to fruition. Still, it shows us how Umesao conceived of the museum as a place for citizen participation.

The museum as an information service for citizens

Umesao introduced new thinking not only about the exhibits but in all aspects of the museum's operations. The 'Basic Concepts' that the exploratory council presented to the Minister of Education two years before the museum's establishment included among the museum's distinctive features 'the development and adoption of new thinking and new methods in management of the research system, other aspects of organizational structure, the facilities, and exhibition technologies'. The museum was to be an information center that took its information services seriously. The inclusion of these items highlighted his

desire for a new approach to management and the importance he assigned to providing information to the public.

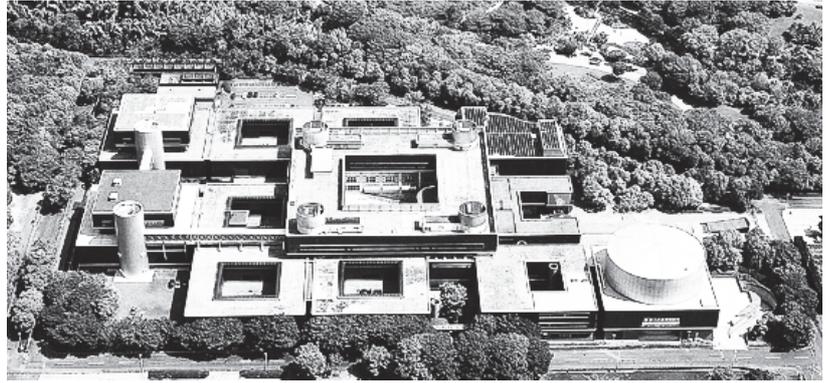
Umesao's thinking was rooted in his belief that while a museum is usually understood as a place for assemblages of objects and specimens, that conception leads too easily to misunderstanding. The museum does indeed collect things, but that is not all it does. Its most important collection is the information assembled in direct or indirect relation to the object collections. To Umesao, a primary task of any museum is to select from the vast collection and present the latest and most accurate knowledge available to its public.

As the discussion of exhibits described above clearly illustrates, Umesao's new thinking about museum management assigned high priority to the members of the public who visit and use it. At the core of his thinking was not only the desire to escape from the constraints imposed by thinking of a museum as a 'treasure house'. He was also acutely aware of how the museum's public, its target users, would be changing.

At the time the museum was founded, new universities were springing up in Japan. The percentage of students attending universities was rising sharply. Anticipating that Japan would become a highly educated mass society, Umesao foresaw a time in which members of this highly educated public would be visiting and using the museum. The most fundamental assumption in Umesao's thinking about the museum was that it would have to anticipate the needs of this public and provide its members with information of the highest quality.

He wanted to make the exhibition spaces as large as possible, to enable visitors to relax as they explored the exhibits. He also hoped to lay them out so that visitors would only explore one or two zones in a leisurely manner. To see all of the exhibits in all of the zones, they would have to return repeatedly. But exhibits alone would not be sufficient to foster that category of regular visitors. The museum would also have to give thought to providing a variety of other services.

Umesao's detailed proposals for information services to be provided to visitors include reference services, copy services, the provision of photographs, publications, guides, and docents. He also wanted to include a museum shop, bookstore, and restaurant — all quite rare in Japanese museums at the time.



An aerial photo of Minpaku

Facilities like this were not just rare: commercial activities associated with museum shops, for example, were regarded as incompatible with the treasure house tradition and the elevated educational goals of cultural institutions. Umesao foresaw, however, that after visiting the museum, visitors would also want to visit the museum shop and purchase souvenirs. He anticipated the museum market's potential. Now museum shops are commonplace throughout the museum world, and all museums invest considerable effort in them.

To a greater or lesser extent, everyone who visits a museum is looking for intellectual stimulation in the exhibits. The exhibits arouse their intellectual curiosity; they want to learn more. A bookshop dedicated to books related to the fields in which they are interested enables them to satisfy that curiosity. This was the reasoning behind Umesao's insistence that books should be offered by the museum shop.

Tadao Umesao thought of the museum as non-profit information industry. Setting up a museum as a private, profit-making business would be impossible. Thus, being non-profit was essential. Also, while museums might resemble the mass media offering information to a mass public, museums are actually the polar opposite of the mass media in how they provide that information. Instead of broadcasting information and making it available everywhere, museums are localized point sources of information, through which large numbers of the public pass. Like the mass media, museums serve a mass public, but this function is not intrinsic to a museum per se. It only arises from the social fact that large numbers of people visit the museum. Thus, Umesao argued, the museum might provide the ultimate example of small-scale, individualized media.

Umesao's Theory of Information Industry

Taku Iida

National Museum of Ethnology

The author is an associate professor at Minpaku. His recent research concerns the close relationships between Japanese popular anthropology and visual mass media; and the indigenous knowledge of fishing and woodcarving peoples in Madagascar. For both topics, he has used Umesao's work on information to develop ideas. He is the author of Know-how to Survive on the Coast: An Eco-Anthropological Study in a Madagascar Fishing Village (in Japanese, Sekaishisoshia, 2008). His recent publications include 'The community of bricolage practice: Appropriation of global flows among Vevo Fishermen in Madagascar' in Japanese Journal of Cultural Anthropology 75 (in Japanese, 2010).

⁽¹⁾*In various ways, Umesao's concerns preoccupy contemporary authors. Umesao observed, for example, that simultaneous global communication forced cities to function even at night, resulting in the 'disappearance of longitude'. This metaphor for distant people sharing time and space reminds us of Paul Virilio's time-space compression.*

Tadao Umesao, the founder of Minpaku, considered the museum a device for accumulating and producing various types of information. His unique theory of information (*joho*) not only supplied a basic concept for establishing Minpaku, but also provided a vision for the future of Japanese society, which is affluent in intellectual resources but poor in material ones. He even argued that, based on his information theory, a post-industrial society is the destiny for humans. His manifesto was published in a journal article entitled '*Joho sangyo ron*' (*Hoso Asahi* 104), or the theory of information industry, in 1963. Surprisingly, it preceded Alvin Toffler's *The Third Wave* by almost 20 years, and Daniel Bell's *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* by more than 10 years⁽¹⁾.

What does his information theory look like?

'*Joho sangyo ron*' begins with an analysis of the strange character of information as a commodity. Broadcast information for example, in the form of voice or images, itself has no shape or weight. Immediately after it is produced and distributed, it is usually forgotten and disappears unless it is copied or somehow further transmitted. Yet, people pay for this virtual commodity, and program sponsors pay to produce it. Information might have a certain kind of utility demanded by consumers, but it is very difficult to measure. Its value can be determined only through negotiation between seller(s) and buyer(s), not by the labor or material cost to produce it.

It is the same with written texts. Although people in Umesao's age believed that paper and ink are indispensable for publication, texts can actually be distributed in digital form, without paper or ink. This lack of material base implies that the value of a book is not proportionate to its weight or volume, which makes information a peculiar kind of commodity. Umesao argued, therefore, that information is nothing but a perceivable series of signs. He went farther to say that any stimulation to human sensory organs can be called 'information'.

Based on this definition, Umesao

included education and religion in the category of information industry, arguing that teachers and priests exchange their speech for money. This argument was sensational because, when it was published, teachers and priests were respected as sacred professions. However, Umesao didn't pull them down to the level of secular profession; rather, he found a general model of information price determination in how the priests work. The price of a donation to a priest is never fixed, but is determined by status of the priest and by that of the donor. Similarly, the price of information can be determined by the status of the producer (the writer, the editor, the designer, the publisher, etc.) and the consumer (readers or listeners). He called this model of price determination the 'donation model'.

Through his information theory, Umesao imagined the history of development of societies. During the primitive stages of human societies, relatively little information was exchanged — people were preoccupied with the search for food to fill their digestive systems. Later, as seen in the industrial revolution, people began to produce and exchange various tools and machines that extended the motor functions formerly carried out by their own muscle. Then in the final stages, people begin to exchange information to stimulate their nervous systems. This three-stage development can be described as change from agriculture to industry, and then to information industry. At the same time, it can be paraphrased with physiological and embryological terms: products of the first stages relate to digestive system of endoderm origin; the second to musculoskeletal system of mesoderm origin; and the third to nervous system of ectoderm origin. This is why Umesao regarded the information industry as an 'ectoderm industry'. The analogy was persuasive for Japanese citizens at the time, and Umesao's theory was soon popularized. It is no exaggeration to say his vision of a post-industrial economy was transplanted into Japanese governmental long-term planning.

In this context, how can we position

Minpaku, the museum produced by Umesao? In Japanese, museum is translated as *haku-butsu-kan*, which literally means 'building of various objects'. However, a museum collects and exhibits not only objects but also information that relates to them. Otherwise, visitors can learn nothing from the museum. So a museum should ideally be called *haku-jo-kan*, or a 'building of various types of information'; or *holo-theque* after *bibliothèque*. Umesao imagined the museum as an institution that supplies citizens with ideas, especially ideas of cultural diversity in Minpaku's case, to help create the future of human living. It followed that research staff at Minpaku were required to expand their knowledge as widely and deeply as possible. Umesao's basic idea still provides orientation for our colleagues' activities.

Umesao's information theory reflected his career as a biologist, as shown in the metonymy of information to ectoderm, while his interest in information is likely to derive from his career as a scientific explorer. In the 1950s and 1960s, when he was in his thirties and forties, he participated, as an anthropologist or biologist, in several overseas expeditions. Such expeditions were very rare for Japan, so soon after World War II. Countries he reached included Afghanistan (1955), Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (1957), Tanganyika or present Tanzania (1963), Spain (1967), Libya (1968), Italy, and Yugoslavia or present Montenegro (1969). He even planned expeditions as a climber to virgin peaks such as Manaslu (Nepal, 8,156m) and Hkakabo Razi (present Myanmar, 5,881m), though the plans were not realized. His footprints reach across the Old World continents.

Throughout the whole process of realizing expeditions, Umesao had to bring into order large volumes of information. At the stage of planning, he gathered as much information as possible to make the expedition successful. Then when the plan was carried into action, he recorded topography and people's life to inform Japanese citizens, while taking many pictures and collecting biological and material-culture samples. Finally, when the records were to be published, he



Umesao guiding Georgetown University professor H.A. Kissinger through Minpaku, in 1979

worked with editors and filmmakers to report the details of his expeditions to donors and supporters. In a word, he kept tackling information, and this fostered his unique information theory.

Another motif dominating Umesao's information theory is belief in the bright future of the developing post-industrial sector. In an article preceding '*Joho sangyo ron*', he described broadcast as an 'amateur industry' — the workers had very little special skill at that time, but their workplace was bright and far from a narrow or bureaucratic atmosphere. Such amateurism, according to Umesao, reflected the vast area to be pioneered on the one hand, and a shortage of human power on the other. The fresh air of an emerging sector would activate the workers, and keep their amateur motivation fresh.

This idea was not limited to Umesao's information theory; it is also found in his numerous articles on scientific expeditions, pioneering projects such as the world exposition, culture development among citizens, and so on. Finding new fields in the outer world, and enthusiasm in the inner, were Umesao's mutually-supporting motivations, to the last, to advance his mental exploration.

Umesao Sensei and I

Harumi Befu

Stanford University, USA

The author is professor emeritus at Stanford University. His recent research themes include transnational migrants in Japan, and recent publications include Hegemony of Homogeneity: Anthropological Analysis of Nihonjinron (Trans Pacific Press, 2001); (Editor) An Ecological View of History: Japanese Civilization in the World Context (Trans Pacific Press, 2003); Japan's Diversity Dilemmas: Ethnicity, Citizenship, and Education (co-edited with S.I. Lee and S. Murphy-Shigematsu, iUniverse, Inc., 2006).

It was one day in Tokyo in 1968, when the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences was held in Tokyo and Kyoto that I met Umesao Tadao sensei for the first time — in a bar along with his entourage. (I must confess, as with many others who have come into his life, Umesao sensei remains 'sensei' for me forever, at least in a formal setting. It is hard to use any other appellation for him and still keep the sense of respect he duly commands.) To me this meeting was a fortunate happenstance since I was planning to carry out fieldwork in Kyoto in a couple of years, and no one would be better suited to be my sponsor than he. I broached the subject gingerly, not knowing how he might react; but he instantly welcomed me to his fold and agreed to write a recommendation. It was thus that with his blessing I spent a year and a half in 1970–71 in Kyoto. He invited me in his two study groups, one in social anthropology and the other on the Japanese civilization. Both groups met periodically, and included luminaries in the Kansai area. They provided me with the first opportunity to get acquainted with the people and the state of the art in Japanese anthropology.

My next encounter with Umesao sensei came when he embarked on a fact-finding tour of North America and Europe in preparation for designing what became Minpaku. Sensei contacted me and asked me to accompany him to the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences located on the grounds of Stanford University, where he consulted its director on creating an appropriate research environment at Minpaku. I am glad that I had a small part in helping build this institution.

Along the way to Stanford on Interstate 280, I pointed to the Stanford Linear Accelerator, a 3.2 kilometer long atom-smashing laboratory. Sensei observed the long accelerator which ran under the freeway toward Santa Cruz Mountains, and sighed deeply, saying, "Limitation of space really constrains my creative thinking." He was deep in thought at that time on the design of the Museum to be built, and was lamenting the lack of adequate space

for a first-class museum. Yet, as we all know, what he built was indeed world-class.

During this leg of his trip, sensei wanted to meet Franz Schurmann, a professor of history and sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, only an hour and a half away from Stanford. Those readers who have read sensei's 'Chuyo no hakken' (in *Collected Works of Tadao Umesao* vol.4, Chuokoron-sha, 1990) might remember that in 1955, he traveled from Afghanistan to Pakistan with 'two Americans', one of whom was Schurmann.

I had known Professor Schurmann, as I took his course on China and Japan in 1959, and also served as the course grader. That summer, he invited me to go to Mexico with him on a vacation; but since I had already made another commitment, I regrettably had to decline his invitation. However, we kept up our relationship, and after I came to Stanford, we met from time to time. Thus when Umesao sensei wanted to meet Schurmann, I gladly called him and made an arrangement for dinner in San Francisco. Our group met Schurmann at a Chinese restaurant that he had designated. Schurmann was greeted by the restaurant owner; he ordered, in Cantonese, special dishes not on the menu, saying you don't get the best meal from the menu. Since Schurmann spoke flawless Japanese, we all had an enjoyable evening. Especially the two enjoyed recalling their days together in South Asia. Schurmann died a few months after sensei passed away.

My next episode with sensei came in 1978, when I applied for a Fulbright scholarship to spend a year at Minpaku. I had obtained sensei's permission to list his name as my recommender for a scholarship. The deadline for the scholarship application came and went, and the Fulbright office informed me that sensei's recommendation was not in. I wrote to him again asking him to expedite sending a recommendation — to no avail. I wrote, again. I could not think the author of so many works on *chiteki seisan* (intellectual production) would neglect this simple task. I began to have paranoia that perhaps sensei deep

inside did not want me at Minpaku after all. I worked up courage to write to Sasaki Komei sensei, number two man at the Museum, explaining my predicament. Almost instantly sensei's recommendation came and my scholarship was approved. When I thanked Sasaki sensei at the Museum the next year, he mused: Umesao sensei's theory in a book is one thing, his practice is entirely another.

Since this time, I began to have close contact with Umesao sensei. From 1983, when the annual symposium series on Japanese civilization began under the auspices of the 'Taniguchi Foundation' (for short), sensei was kind enough to invite me, along with Josef Kreiner, as a permanent member of the series until it terminated. It was during this period, that I developed a deep appreciation of the greatness of this master whose encyclopedic knowledge and phenomenal memory was equaled by no one I knew. I was indeed fortunate to have had these opportunities to learn so much from him. No one has imparted to me so much knowledge and wisdom.

My close relationship did not end with the termination of the symposium series. Sensei was anxious to have an English translation of his classic *Bunmei no Seitai Shikan* (Chuokoron-sha, 1967). I, of course, was in full agreement that the book should be introduced to the English-language intellectual readership. I first approached Kegan Paul International (KPI), which at first expressed strong interest in publishing the book in its Japan series, with which Yoshio Sugimoto was associated. With Sugimoto's effort, KPI made a commitment to publish the translation.



Translated versions of *Bunmei no Seitai Shikan*

But soon afterwards, KPI reneged its promise despite our strenuous objections. Nothing would change its decision.

Meanwhile, Sugimoto himself was starting a publishing business specializing on social science works on Japan, and he agreed to publish the book. I was able to sign on Beth Cary, who grew up in Japan and had been active as a translator, to do the translation. I had retained her before to translate a volume in the Japanese civilization series and was impressed with the care and the accuracy of her work. I was pleased that she agreed to take on the task. The book was finally published in 2003 by Sugimoto's Trans Pacific Press as *An Ecological View of History*. I feel I have repaid one-ten thousandth of my debt to Umesao sensei.

Remembrances of Umesao Tadao Sensei

Josef Kreiner

University of Bonn, Germany

I do not remember exactly when I first met Umesao-sensei, neither the date nor even the year, but I clearly remember his culturedness, which deeply impressed me at our first meeting already. I had been studying in Tokyo under professors Eiichiro Ishida and Masao Oka, and had never felt the need to visit Kyoto University. But one cold winter morning, perhaps during my field research in Wakasa around the mid-1960s, I suddenly decided to pay a

visit to the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University and meet Umesao. It was before noon, and Umesao-sensei invited me for lunch. I thought that we might go out in the vicinity, but Umesao-sensei had brought with him his lunch-box and a table-cloth was put on his table. White linen napkins, porcelain dishes and, most notably, a bottle of French red wine were neatly arranged. But these were only formalities, our conversation

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was the really impressive part of the meeting. It began with Umesao-sensei's firm belief in the necessity for a common language for all mankind, and he seemed a little disappointed to hear that not every Viennese, born in the city of Zamenhof, is so fluent in Esperanto as the late Austrian president Franz Jonas, who had welcomed Umesao with a speech in that very language. On the other side, I was astounded by his arguments in favour of switching written Japanese to the alphabetical script, a disastrous vision to every learned Japanologist. We then went on to discuss European cultural history, Umesao-sensei's planned or already accomplished field research in France and Italy — all themes which had never been touched by the Tokyo-based ethnologists, and I gradually began to realise that his way of thinking was different, much broader and more encompassing than everything I had encountered up to that time. Looking back, I regret having to confess that I had then not yet read his decisive essay of 1957, the *Bunmei no Seitai Shikan Josetsu (Introduction: An Ecological View of Civilizations, 1995)*, and in fact did not read it until much later.

The second time we met was in the early 1970s. Umesao-sensei had already been appointed founding Director-General of the newly established Minpaku. He resided in a small office backstairs at the old brick-stone building of the Ministry of Education and Science at Kasumigaseki, and I was eager to learn about his ideas. Again, I was surprised to realise what an eminent political mind he had. Of course, the Minpaku he envisaged would not be just a 'museum of a museum' like many institutions of that age tended to be — it would be open, drawing and

absorbing the visitor into the cultures of the world, each of these described by its most characteristic traits — for instance the use of rice-straw in case of Japan (herein following Eizo Shibusawa's idea) and the masked 'Visiting Deities' of Shinobu Orikuchi. Yet, Minpaku would be even more than that: attached to the Museum, Umesao envisaged a grand-scale research department acting as a think-tank for the Japanese leadership in politics, economy and foreign relations. The following years indicated how important such an institution would have been for Japan, with the oil-crisis of the 1970s and the sudden change of the European map in the late 1980s. Umesao-sensei came quite close to his intended high-spirited goal under the premiership of Masao Ohira, but in the end he failed — perhaps because none of the great scholars in ethnology he had assembled at Minpaku in its hour of birth was ready to follow him in this direction. They rather drew him — together with some of his colleagues since the early field trips to Ponape or near Zhangjiakou, like Sasuke Nakao — into a grand-scale research project in pursuit of the origin of Japanese culture which later became known as the 'Shoyojurin-bunka ron' (Shining-leaf Culture).

But this line of studies and research was not what Umesao-sensei really wanted to achieve. Beginning around 1980, he began to focus all his energy to 'put the Japanese card into Max Weber's scheme (of modernisation)'. This was a direct line connected to his above mentioned essay. For this project he wanted Harumi Befu of Stanford and myself to join him. The proposal was made when I stepped into the end-of-year-party for 1981, at Minpaku, on my way from Tokyo down to Kyushu, and into his office at his request. In the



Participants at the Taniguchi symposium 'Japanese Civilization in the Modern World' (Minpaku, 1983). From left: Takeshi Moriya, Robert J. Smith, Josef Kreiner, Sepp Linhart, Tadao Umesao, Harumi Befu, Toshio Yokoyama, Hirochika Nakamaki and Naomichi Ishige

first instance I declined, saying that I did not believe in his way of reasoning, but he convinced me that for this very reason I might be able to contribute to a lively discussion in the series of the Taniguchi Symposia that ran for sixteen years. This gave me the chance to re-read his 1957-essay, and again I felt overwhelmed by his scholarship. The short essay was *in nuce* already at this early point in time, the pivotal answer to Arnold Toynbee, but also to the questions formulated by the series of Hakone-meetings on the problems of Japanese modernisation, as well as to Namio Egami's hypothesis of horse-riding conquerors etc.

In the midst of this cooperation, I had another decisive meeting with Umesao-sensei, decisive at least for me, again in his office at Minpaku. He invited me to join him and his staff at Minpaku — a position I had dreamed of since long, in fact since we had met at his preparatory office around 1970. I pondered on it for months to find a way to accept, but finally declined. A decision I have regretted time and again. Umesao-sensei accepted my rejection in a very noble manner, saying

that whatever my position in the future would be, he would consider me a 'Minpaku-man' and his 'soldier'. And this I am at my heart still today.

A week after that meeting, Umesao-sensei lost his eye-sight. And some months after, I was appointed by the German Government as Founding Director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo. Much of my success in that position I owe to the never-ceasing help from Umesao-sensei. We were able to hold two exhibitions (on Kaempfer and on Siebold) at Minpaku, and Umesao-sensei gave lectures at our Institute, of which I remember very well the talk at the Institute's five-year-celebration.

At a dinner in the summer of 1996, with a personal invitation by His Majesty The Tenno, Umesao-sensei and his wife joined me and my wife together with two other friends, to say good-bye. My later occasional visits to Umesao-sensei's office at Minpaku were all too few, a great regret for me today. In more than the usual way, he was my mentor, my *onshi*, as a scholar as well as a man.

Recollections

Kwang-Kyu Lee

Seoul National University, Korea

Professor Tadao Umesao was one of the great scholars of anthropology in Japan. Others such as Masao Oka and Eiichiro Ishida are honored as pioneers in anthropology in Japan, but the two who helped make Japanese anthropology internationally known are Chie Nakane and Tadao Umesao.

Umesao wrote many important books, but his most important work was in cultural ecology theory, giving us an overview of world history from an ecological perspective. Cultural ecological theory is a large academic theme, and Umesao stands as a model of the anthropologist who maintains a global perspective of civilization, while undertaking fieldwork in a small village.

As an anthropologist in Korea I am very happy and honored to recall knowing Umesao personally and learning from his academic works. On our first meeting in Osaka, I had a

strong impression that he was a real Japanese samurai in his attitude and behavior. On that occasion he asked many things about Korean anthropology. He wished to compare Korean culture history with that of other regions of Eurasia, and I sensed his deep understanding of Eurasian continental cultures. Later, I also had the strong impression that he was a man of warm heart, with sympathy for all aspects of life in detail. I imagine that he showed such an attitude in his fieldwork.

A few years ago, here in Korea, we organized a conference session on 'Historical Anthropology'. One specialist of Eurasian culture history presented Umesao's theory and ideas. Our conclusion at that time was that we would like to form a special group to study the work of Umesao, as a future goal for Korean anthropology.

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Exhibition

UMESAO Tadao: An Explorer for the Future

*Special Exhibition
March 10 – June 14, 2011*

The founding Director-General and Special Adviser at Minpaku, Dr Tadao Umesao, died last summer at the age of 90. A short obituary was placed in *MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter* No 31.

As that article noted, Umesao presented many original ideas based on his own explorations in the world. He wrote many articles to stimulate intellectual efforts in Japanese society, and to inform the world about Japan. Moreover he founded the museum and research institution called Minpaku.

To introduce his life and work, the special exhibition presents the archives created by him. The Umesao Archives include over 7,000 articles and works, over 35,000 photos, about 150 field notebooks and sketchbooks, over 10,000 files, and countless cards that he used as a substitute for notebooks. For this first exhibition of his archives, we chose about 500 objects.

For example, there are two notebooks in which he recorded climbing in the mountains near Kyoto, at the age of fifteen. Within just two months he filled up all pages in the two notebooks. His description was very thick and we can find the roots of his passion for fieldwork in these mountaineering efforts during his youth. He declared that the mountain is a 'scientific institution' that we can visit to get new knowledge — in the editor's postscript of a popular publication for fans of mountain climbing, which he was editing for the first time. He organized friends to join him in getting knowledge through fieldwork. Genius displayed itself even in childhood.

Umesao was not known as a music lover, yet there were many

music scores of bird song or wind blowing in his notebooks from the Daxing'anling mountains of northern China, in 1942. Through his notes we can understand that he really loved nature in the mountains.

Another example is a sketchbook in which he recorded his first exploration of Baekdu Mountain in Korea, at the age of twenty. From preparations, the Koreans he met first, scenery seen from the train window, to the sight of a passing town, he drew details of everything with consideration. His genius for drawing can be seen in this sketchbook, and in his records of several other journeys.

During an expedition in Inner Mongolia, from 1944 to 1945, his excellent skill as an ethnographer can also be seen, especially in 150 sketch-cards that he drew. Later, he became well known as an ethnographic photographer. In order to bring the sketch-cards, including maps, back to Japan safely, he included them in books of wild animal study that would be easily allowed to pass at border inspections.

Among the many books written by Umesao, a long best-seller was *The Art of Intellectual Production* (in Japanese, Iwanami Shoten, 1969). This book shares with readers the arts of producing knowledge. In the Umesao Archives, there are many friendly letters from readers who wished to communicate with the author. From these letters, we can appreciate the social impact among people in the reading public, who were so encouraged by his book. His words are very attractive and so easy to understand that many people accepted his approach to producing information.

Umesao's interest in simple,



A scene from the special exhibition

understandable language arose through the movement for the use of Roman letters for Japanese expression. In the 1940s, he devoted himself to the movements for Roman letters and Esperanto. For him, using Roman letters for Japanese language would allow us to keep our language as culture, while communicating more easily with others as a civilization. Esperanto was to be used for communication as equals. His practice with Roman letters brought him a new ability in writing. He chose words understandable for listening, without the need for the visual images provided by Chinese characters, and he made sentences shorter than before. There is much evidence of his self-training. One of the most interesting typescripts is his travel diary from Khyber Pass to Calcutta, in which *An Ecological View of History* (in Japanese, Chuokoron-sha, 1967; in English, Trans Pacific Press, 2003) was born.

Our Special Exhibition Hall has been filled with materials selected from the Umesao Archives; we can gain a sense of excitement from exploring inside the mind of Umesao, in a space filled with his words, images, and logical thinking.

Yuki Konagaya
Chief Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Conferences

Seikatsu Kaizen Undo (The Improvement of Living Movement): Its Impact and the Role of the Central State in Redefining Lifestyles in 20th and 21st Century Japan

*International Research
Forum
October 9 – 10, 2010*

This forum was organized by Minpaku and sponsored by the Centre de Recherches sur les Civilisations de l'Asie Orientale, Unité Mixte de Recherche (CRCAO-UMR), France. The 'Improvement of Living Movement' was a national project launched in 1920 by the Japanese government to modernize everyday material culture, at a time when the nation had just gained the rank of an international power and needed to offer the appearance of a modern nation. The aim of the symposium was to reconsider the concrete impact of the movement not only in the inter-war years, but also after the Second World War, and to study the role of central government policy in the forced Westernization of everyday material culture.

Part I, named 'Positioning of the Improvement of Living Movement in Social and Economic Policies: The Role of the State in Westernizing the Economy and the Common Society', was devoted to analysis of the political content and impact of the movement on the social (Kiyoshi Nakagawa, Doshisha University), and economic (Haruhito Takeda, University of Tokyo) contexts of the period.

Part II was entirely centered on analysis of 'The History, Organisational Structure, Theory, and Thought of the Improvement of Living Movement', mainly through the case of the Alliance for the Improvement of Living, run by the Ministry of Educational Affairs, and examples of various

other organizations, such as the *Bunka seikatsu kenkyukai*. Eisuke Hisai (Hiroshima University) analysed the history and achievements of the movement within the urban environment, while Kyoko Nomoto (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) studied its rural implications, and Kazue Inoue (Kagoshima University) the value of the policy as a model within Japanese colonies, especially Korea. The last two presenters spoke about the main actors of the Movement: women and progressive intellectuals. Shizuko Koyama (Kyoto University) described the effective role played by women, specifically housewives, in the implementation of the Movement's policies, and Izumi Kuroishi (Aoyama Gakuin University), the long and active contribution of architect Wajiro Kon.

The last part of the symposium was dedicated to analysis of the actual impact of the Movement on the development of material culture and its everyday use within three important cultural domains: clothing (Kayoko Fuma, Gifu University); food (Ayako Ehara, Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University); and daily life (Seizo Uchida, Kanagawa University).

Anne Gossot
Organizer
Bordeaux 3 University/CRCAO

Art, World, and Representation: Thinking from the Art of El Anatsui

*International Symposium
October 30 – 31, 2010*

The international symposium was held on the occasion of our special exhibition on El Anatsui, one of the greatest artists not only of Africa but of the contemporary world.

The first day of the symposium began with the projection of a film for the general public: 'Fold, Crumple, Crush: Art of El Anatsui'. This film by Susan Vogel (Columbia

University, USA) focused on the different artistic techniques stimulated by the cultural surroundings in which the artist works, and was followed by a discussion by three art historians: Sylvester Ogbechie (University of California, USA), Susan Vogel, and Tsutomu Mizusawa (Museum of Modern Art, Kanagawa).

The second day of the symposium, entitled 'Art, World, and Representation: Thinking from the Art of El Anatsui' aimed at enlarging the dialogue between art historians and anthropologists. There were five presentations: 'El Anatsui and Representation of Africa', by Ogbechie; 'Beyond Art: What El Anatsui Brings to Us', by Yukiya Kawaguchi (Minpaku); 'Pulling Together and Flying Apart: The Art of El Anatsui', by Vogel; 'Reference to the History: Dialogue between Artist and Historian', by Shoichiro Takezawa (Minpaku); and 'Bricolage: Towards a Scripture', by Shigemi Inaga (International Research Center for Japanese Studies).

When an exhibition at Minpaku was first proposed to El Anatsui, he was hesitant for fear of being considered not an artist but merely an artisan who fabricated goods for daily use. So, in the symposium, we were obliged to explain the advantages of holding the exhibition in an ethnological museum.

Which advantages? Firstly, an ethnological museum can focus on the interaction between artist and the historical and cultural context in which he or she works, while recognizing the creative abilities of the artist. Secondly, it enables us to relativize the notion of 'art' that has been elaborated in the West since the 19th century, in order to rethink the applicability of this notion to esthetic activities emanating from Africa. Finally, it allows us to understand the universality of the characteristics of Anatsui's artistic method (e.g., the reuse of abandoned materials such as bottle caps), by referring to the notion of 'bricolage' that is said to be fundamental to human culture.

The presentations made in this symposium will be published in the near future in Japanese.

Shoichiro Takezawa
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

The Arabian Nights and its Textual Tradition

*International Symposium
December 18 – 19, 2010*

Our symposium was a result of the research project, 'Studies on the History of the *Arabian Nights* and its Influence upon the Literary Genesis of Orientalism', and was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. In this symposium, we investigated the original form of the story collection in the Middle East by examining and arranging recovered manuscripts that lie scattered around the world. In particular, we compared the pre-Galland and post-Galland textual traditions, and the reciprocal influences of the literary development of so-called Orientalism on the textual formation of *the Arabian Nights*.

The following papers were presented: Margaret Sironval (former Chercheur, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France), 'Margins and Blanks in the Arabic Manuscript of *the Arabian Nights* of Antoine Galland'; Tetsuo Nishio (Minpaku), 'De-Orientalizing *the Arabian Nights*: Towards a Historical Reconstruction of the Wortley-Montague Manuscript'; Shizuka Nakamichi (Minpaku), 'Some Orthographic and Linguistic Characteristics of the Second Calcutta Edition: A Corpus-based Approach'; Kiyonori Nagasaki (University of Tokyo), 'Recent Issues of Text Database and *the Arabian Nights*'; Etsuko Aoyagi (University of Tsukuba), 'Strategies in *the Arabian Nights*'s Narration: Singular but Double and Multiplied Voice'; Akiko M. Sumi (Kyoto Notre Dame University), 'The Frame Story of *the Hundred and One Nights*: In Pursuit of Beauty and

Truth'; Jun'ichi Oda (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), 'Network Structure of the "Rewards/Punishments" System in the Motif-Index by Margaret Sironval'; Marion Chesnais (former Ingénieur d'études, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France), 'Diffusion in Japan of Archives Preserved by the Family of J.C. Mardrus, Author of *Livre des Mille Nuits et Une Nuit*'; Naoko Okamoto (Minpaku), Jun'ichi Oda and Tetsuo Nishio, 'Digitalization of the *Dr Mardrus Collection of the Arabian Nights* and Some Future Research Perspectives'; Nobuo Mizuno (Hyogo University of Teacher Education), 'On Umm Kulthūm: *Alf Laylah wa Laylah*'; Hideaki Sugita (University of Tokyo), 'Ali Baba in Modern Japan'; and Mounir Allouii (l'École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de la Réunion, France), 'On the Relations between the Comorian Tales and *the Arabian Nights*'.

Tetsuo Nishio
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Korean Network in East Asia: Trends and Practice

*International Symposium
December 26 – 27, 2010*

As we enter the 21st century, peoples of the world have been crossing paths while facing numerous problems. Koreans from the Korean peninsula have adapted themselves to their host societies in a remarkable spirit of cooperation yet, even if it appears that they have been subsumed into their host societies, they have not been fully integrated. At times, they have been the object of exclusion. Overseas Koreans are now living all across the world, though still centering on the East Asian region.

Among overseas Koreans who have migrated from South Korea since the 1980s, those in the USA, Oceania and Southeast Asia are mainly referred to as *Hanin*. In East Asia, the *hanin* (newcomers), coexist with old-comers who left the peninsula in previous generations.

In this symposium, we first

examined the trends of South Korean research on overseas Koreans. We then focused on East Asia (Japan, China, and Sakhalin) and also on the Southeast Asian case of Vietnam, and the situation in Australia. We then looked at how research trends on overseas Koreans in each of these areas are unfolding, and how their lives have been reported by young scholars and officials in each area. Local accounts have focused on such aspects of community life as the history and activities of *hanin* associations, relations with host societies, and relations between old-comers and newcomers.

We also discussed the development of local networks among overseas Korean, casting light on how overseas Koreans form these networks through relatives, acquaintances, religion, workplace, and in other ways.

Speakers: Soon-Hyung Yi (Seoul National University, Korea), Jeong-Ja Ko (Kobe University), Chengquan Piao (Minzi University of China), Xianhua Cui (Jilin University, China), Takanori Shimamura (Kwansei Gakuin University), Kwang-Min Kim (Korea NGO Center, Osaka), Hye-Kyung Nam (Sakhalin National University, Russia), Elvira Lim (Sakhalin National University, Russia), Hee-Seung Lee (Ideal Entertainment, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam), and Yang-Hoon Cho (The Korean Society of Sydney, Australia).

Commentators: Shimpei Ota (Minpaku), Jingxu Han (Seinan Gakuin University), Hiroki Okada (Kobe University), Aelia Lee (University of Tokyo), Sachiko Kawakami (Kyoto University of Foreign Studies), Fumiki Hayashi (Kanda University of International Studies), and Toshio Asakura (Minpaku).

Toshio Asakura
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

The Anthropology of Europe and its Extending Horizons

*International Workshop
January 29, 2011*

This workshop was the result of an Inter-University Research Project with the title of 'What It Means to be "Social": A Study of the Anthropology of Europe'. The project involved twelve Japanese scholars, and was conducted from October 2006 to March 2010. Most members of this project, and an additional five scholars from Japan and Europe, gathered at Minpaku to discuss perspectives and horizons of the anthropology of Europe. The members all shared interest in how people in contemporary Europe initiate social ties, and then hold, support, and extend them. How is the conceptual framework of society constituted in Europe? The advance of globalization has shifted the frameworks of our ways of living, and societies today need new conceptual frameworks. People must wonder how to imagine a society, or a community. This is why the turn of the century has seen an emerging scholarship in search of a new understanding of social formation. Our workshop was situated in this phase, and our principal aim was to seek a new epistemological approach to understanding social frameworks.

In the workshop, following the organizer's introduction, Jeremy Boissevain (Professor Emeritus, University of Amsterdam) read the keynote

speech entitled 'The Extending Horizons of Rural Malta: 1960–2010'. Then four scholars of the project group read their papers: 'An Anthropological Study of Charities: Social Activities and a Change of Community in the English Countryside' (Yuko Shioji, Hannan University), 'Analysis of *Le Sociel* from a Perspective of Individual: A Case Study of Patrimonialization in Galicia, Spain' (Hiroko Takenaka, Waseda University), 'Halfway Down to Solitude: Ageing as the Process of Engagement/Disengagement through Social Welfare in Finland' (Erika Takahashi, Minpaku), and 'The Morality of Illegal Practice: French Farmers' Conceptions of Globalization' (Osamu Nakagawa, Osaka University).

This was the first opportunity for researchers in Japan to hold an international workshop and to discuss the anthropological study of Europe in company with European colleagues. Since the 1980s, anthropological studies of Europe by Japanese scholars have continued steadily, following pioneer studies. They include some challenging ethnographical studies, but most have been published in Japanese, and remain unknown abroad. With this workshop, we began building a network of Japanese and European scholars to exchange information and opinions. Our workshop papers will be published in a volume of *Senri Ethnological Studies*.

Akiko Mori
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Human Rights and Support for Stateless People around the World: Japan's Role

*International Symposium
February 27, 2011*

Contemporary international relationships and international law have long considered the nation state as a basic social unit. We generally take it for granted that every individual has a nationality and enjoys civil rights. As a result, stateless individuals have attracted little attention, their fates remain unseen, and they are sometimes called the 'forgotten people'.

Without nationality, one may find it difficult to gain access to social welfare, medical and educational services, and employment. Stateless people also have difficulty in obtaining passports or travel documents, making the process to go abroad very complex. We have not had a common international procedural standard to cope with statelessness.

The international symposium 'Human Rights and Support for Stateless People around the World: Japan's Role' was held at Minpaku as part of a Core Research Project entitled 'Anthropology of Supporting: Constructing Global Reciprocity'. The symposium was held in cooperation with Stateless Network, the first non-government organization to assist stateless people in Japan (established in 2009), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the Japan Association for Migration Policy Studies (JAMPS). To discuss human rights and support systems for stateless people, we invited academic researchers, aid practitioners and civilians who support stateless people in a variety of fields, and a number of stateless people. Our aim was to highlight the basic problems of procedures to determine nationality and statelessness, and how these affect the lives of stateless people.



Workshop participants

The symposium began with a workshop titled 'On-the-ground Support for Stateless People: A Civil Approach'. During this, we exchanged information and examined the activities of NGOs supporting stateless people in Thailand and Japan. We also shared experiences in solving issues related to the legal status, housing, medical insurance, and employment of stateless people. Discussions extended to the role of civil society and how every individual can assist to protect the human rights of stateless people. In the afternoon, three keynote speakers and a panel focused on the situation of stateless people in France, Thailand and Japan. It became apparent that procedures to identify and protect stateless people in Japan are relatively underdeveloped, and violate human rights.

The symposium was attended by over 100 active participants, and concluded with an energized atmosphere. International collaboration to change the awareness of stateless people must be developed further, and continuous efforts are needed to advocate for the human rights of stateless people.

Chen Tien-shi
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Constructing 'Ordinary Life': Lessons from Peace Building Practices in Africa

*International Symposium
March 5 – 6, 2011*

This symposium was held as a part of Minpaku's Core Research Project 'Anthropology of Supporting: Constructing Global Reciprocity'. The major questions addressed were 1) how can we conceptualize the 'ordinary life' of conflict victims in Africa, such as refugees, internally displaced persons (hereafter IDPs), and returnees, and 2) how should we support them so that they can attain an 'ordinary life' in the process of

peace building? Since we anticipated diversity within 'ordinary life', and a corresponding diversity in support strategies, we invited twelve speakers to cover topics from different parts of Africa and adjacent regions.

The first session, 'Involuntary Migrations and Human Security in Africa', introduced major issues in peace building practices. Case studies included resource conflict between returnees (original inhabitants) and IDPs (newcomers) in South Sudan, the significance of the transnational Somali diaspora and network (and remittances from this network) for vulnerable people in corrupted Somalia, voter registration as a critical basis for democracy in Ivory Coast, and the positive role of traditional and modern forms of civil society in post-war Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The second session, 'Post-conflict Experiences in Africa: From the Viewpoint of Local Community', reported ethnographic and historical accounts of refugees, local NGOs, and international NGOs. Angolan immigrants in Zambia and Somali refugees in Kenya show the robust agency with which immigrants and refugees can adapt to new environments. The post-conflict situation in Tigray province in Ethiopia demonstrates the central role of local NGOs as long-term intermediaries between international donors and local people. Peace building in the Acholi sub-region of Uganda suggests that debate on post-conflict policy, and especially the issue of 'traditional justice', reflects not necessarily local interests but the vulnerability of outside supporters, who tried to defend their own ideals of governance and peace.

The third and final session, 'Possibility of Sustainable Aid toward Post-conflict Communities' touched on peace



A shop selling mobile phones in Dadaab refugee camp of Kenya. Telecommunication is a vital tool for refugees (N. Naito, 2010)

building efforts in Africa by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japanese NGOs. JICA's general principle for peace building is to be a 'catalyst' among different stakeholders. It was reported, however, that at a project site in Saudi Arabia, JICA experts faced the so-called 'scapegoat problem': they were criticized by local actors with divergent interests. As for NGO actions, a single project can certainly have positive outcomes, as shown in the case of a job training scheme brought to post-genocide Rwanda by a Japanese NGO. Nevertheless, the experiences of seven NGOs participating in the South Sudan Program of the Japan Platform (a multi-stakeholder national coalition) show that it is still hard to scale up projects to have community-wide, region-wide, or nation-wide impact.

Through discussions in our two-day symposium, most participants came to agree that anthropologists can make an important contribution by identifying locally-available peace-building resources, and communicating about them to outside or international supporters.

Motoi Suzuki
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Whaling Cultures of the World: Past, Present, and Future

*International Symposium
March 11 – 13, 2011*

There are about eighty-five species of whale in the world, ranging from the blue whale of about thirty meters to a harbor porpoise of two meters or less in length. Human relationships with whales have several thousand years of history and vary regionally.

At the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972, a moratorium on commercial whaling was proposed for the first time. Since then, whales have become symbols of environmental protection. In 1982, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) decided on a moratorium on whaling. For several thousand years, humans hunted whales for food, fuel, and other raw materials. But they currently seldom engage in hunts of large whales except in the Arctic, Antarctic and some other oceans. As this history demonstrates, relationships between humans and whales have changed over time.

The aim of the three-day symposium was to discuss the past, present, and future of whaling cultures of the world, focusing on relationships between humans and whales. We examined several issues and cases of various whaling cultures. Our perspectives were inter-disciplinary, with an emphasis on anthropology, and covered topics such as 'whaling cultures in archeological and historical perspectives', 'aboriginal and local whaling', 'whaling in Japan', and the 'international politics of whaling'. Three speakers gave presentations on 'rethinking human relationships with whales', 'human perceptions of the cetacean in history', and 'aboriginal/indigenous subsistence whaling'. The symposium concluded with a panel discussion.

Several new insights were gained from the symposium. I

will mention four: (1) Whaling seems to have been conducted in not only western Japan but also the Hokkaido region since the Jomon period. (2) Because most indigenous groups now sell their catch, we have to reconsider relationships between indigenous subsistence whaling, commerciality, and the concept of indigenous subsistence whaling. (3) There is an aspect of 'protest business' in the activities by anti-whaling NGOs. (4) Domestic politics has influenced recent foreign policies such as anti-whaling decisions in Australia.

About twenty speakers and thirty observers participated in this symposium, from Denmark, the USA, Australia, Canada, and Japan. In this symposium, several issues were suggested for future study. Also, the basis for an international network of researchers of whaling and whale cultures was formed. Finally this symposium has convinced the participants that researchers of the humanities can contribute to solving contemporary whaling issues in the long run.

Nobuhiro Kishigami
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Audiovisual Ethnography of Gongs in Southeast Asia

*International Symposium
March 14 – 15, 2011*

This symposium was held as a part of the multi-year research project, 'A Study on Visual Ethnography of Performing Arts as Human Cultural Resource' (FY2010–2014), funded under the inter-institutional research program 'Comprehensive Research on Human Cultural Resources' by the National Institutes for the Humanities.

Our project focus is the potential of audiovisual ethnography as both a research method to investigate performing arts, and a way to connect people who do not otherwise have means or

opportunities to interact with each other. Questioning the conventional image of film as a finished and fixed product of the producer/director, we will recast film as a living and organic site that is always open to commentary and critique, with possibilities for change.

For this symposium, we chose gongs and gong music in Southeast Asia as a case study to gauge the dual potential. The gong is a musical instrument that is characteristic for the music culture of Southeast Asia. Yet its significance is not limited to music. Southeast Asian people often recognize the supernatural power of the gong and treasure it as an heirloom. Gongs are also traded as a commodity.

One of the themes of the music gallery renovated last year at Minpaku is gong cultures of Southeast Asia. Our display includes a wide variety of gong ensembles from different areas within the region. We have also produced several video programs on individual gong traditions. Based on these experiences, we plan to further develop the research model on gongs in Southeast Asia by documenting the dynamism of gong cultures via audiovisual ethnography. To help us, we invited several specialists in Southeast Asian music to discuss the subject.

Our presenters were Shota Fukuoka (Minpaku), Arsenio Nicolas (Mahasarakham University, Thailand), Phong T. Nguyen (Dao Tan International University Project, Vietnam), Eisuke Yanagisawa (Aoyama Gakuin University), I Made Kartawan (Indonesian Institute of Arts, Denpasar), Yoshitaka Terada (Minpaku), Endo Suanda (Indonesian Institute for Art Education), and Hideharu Umeda (Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts) (in order of presentation).

The symposium aimed to: (1) broaden understanding of gong culture from a comparative perspective, (2) find interactions between regions through production and distribution of gongs, and (3) discuss the use of audio-visual ethnography to document the dynamism of gong cultures. Thanks to the

long experience of the participants in Southeast Asian music, we found several clues to understanding interrelationships among gongs, gong music, and recent developments in music in Southeast Asia.

Shota Fukuoka
Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

Information

Awards

Yuriko Yamanaka (Department of Cultural Research) has recently received two prestigious awards for her exceptional academic contributions.

One of these is a JSPS Prize from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science for her comparative study of Alexander the Great's image across the Medieval Middle East. This prize is established in order to recognize and support young researchers with rich creativity and superlative research ability (March 3, 2011). Yamanaka also received a Japan Academy Medal from the Japan Academy. This award is to give formal recognition to outstanding young researchers, while encouraging them in their future work. Recipients of this medal are selected from among the annual recipients of the JSPS Prize of the year (March 3, 2011).

In memoriam

With regret we note the following:

Mutsuo Yamada, Professor Emeritus. Latin American history and urban studies. Minpaku 1995–2004; d. April 22, 2011.

New Staff

Teruo Sekimoto
Project Professor, Department of
Advanced Studies in Anthropology



Sekimoto, a former assistant professor in the formative years of Minpaku, in the 1970s, returns after thirty years at Hitotsubashi

and Tokyo Universities. His work centers on the anthropology of work, material culture, community and regional economy, and the politics of culture, in Indonesia, Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries. He is the author-editor of *Handicrafts in the Age of Global Economy: Indonesia and Japan* (University of Indonesia, 2003), *Handicrafts and Industrial Development in Southeast Asia* (University of Tokyo, 2000), *The Birth of National Cultures in Asia and Oceania* (in Japanese, Libroport, 1994) and other books. Currently at Minpaku, he is organizing a research project 'The Anthropological Study of Cloth and Humankind', which aims to build a new theoretical perspective on the interconnectedness of objects and humans through the ethnographic examination of cloth in human life.

Akiko Sugase

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Research



Sugase studied Arabic and Middle Eastern history, and the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, at Tokyo University for Foreign

Studies (BA and MA), and anthropology at the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, Minpaku, where she received her PhD in 2006. She has continued fieldwork intermittently in the West Bank and Galilee (Northern Palestine/Israel) since 1997. Her interest is centered on Arab Christian communities, and saint veneration shared among Muslims, Christians and Jews. She has published two books;

Arab Christians in Israel (in Japanese, Keisuisha, 2009), ethnography of Greek Catholic Christians living under the rule of Jewish authority, and *The Cross Shines Even Under the New Moon Sky: Christians in the Middle East* (in Japanese, Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2010), a general survey of Arab Christians in the Middle East and their lives.

Reiko Saito

Assistant Professor, Department of Cultural Research



Saito specializes in the material culture of indigenous peoples in the Arctic and Boreal areas: the Aynu in Japan, as

well as Northwest Coast Peoples and Inuit in North America. She is also concerned with images and indigenous representation in tourism, arts, and crafts. After graduating from Hokkaido University (BA), she worked as a curator at Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples. She organized the 21st–25th International Abashiri Symposium series (2006–2010), and produced many exhibitions concerning art, usage of plants, fur clothing, and other themes.

Atsunori Ito

Assistant Professor, Research Center for Cultural Resources



Ito specialized in social anthropology and Native American studies at the Graduate School of Social Sciences, Tokyo

Metropolitan University, where he received his PhD in 2011. Since 2003, he has conducted field research on indigenous intellectual property (traditional knowledge) issues among Hopi and Zuni tribes in Arizona and New Mexico, Southwestern

United States. In Japan, he has studied the marketing of fake and imitation art commodities; and has reviewed collections at Japanese museums. His research in Japan focused on items made by Native Americans. Recently, he has been developing the theoretical basis for collaborative management of indigenous intellectual properties with indigenous communities (Native Americans and Aynu for example).

Yoshie Sekine

Research Fellow, Research Center for Cultural Resources



After studying textiles at Joshibi University of Art and Design, Sekine learned methods for analyzing wood cell structure,

natural dyes, and other organic materials at the Department of Forest Science in the Faculty of Agriculture, at Utsunomiya University. She received her MA in cultural property from the Tokyo National University of the Arts, and her PhD on world heritage study at the University of Tsukuba. Through her research on cultural assets, she sensed the importance of comprehensive synthetic management for historical intangible cultural heritage, and for the relics of an ancient civilization.

Previous positions include lecturer, Department of Conservation for Cultural Properties at Tokyo National University of the Arts; curator at the Tokugawa Museum; Assistant Stagiaire at World Heritage Centre, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris; member of the Indonesia-Japan Governmental Technical Investigation Mission for the Rehabilitation of Earthquake-affected World Heritage Prambanan Site in Java; visiting researcher at Tochigi Prefectural Museum; and researcher at the Institute of Asian Cultures, Sophia University.

Visiting Scholars

Ichinkhorloo Lkhagvasuren

Professor, Mongolian University of Science and Technology, Mongolia



Ichinkhorloo Lkhagvasuren is a historian-ethnologist. After graduation from Moscow University, he began research at the Institute of

History of the Academy of Sciences of Mongolia. Since then, he has focused on the ethnology of Altai Uriankhains, one of many ethnic groups inhabiting valleys of the Altai mountains in western Mongolia. Also residing in this region are other Mongolian-speaking ethnicities such as Myangats, Torghuts, Zakhchins, Uulds, Durbets, Byaids, and Turkish-speaking ethnicities such as Kazakhs, Chantuuz (Uzbeks) and Soyods (Tuvsans). Among Altai Uriankhains, Lkhagvasuren gathered information on the history of their origins, material and spiritual cultures, literature, folk art, and handicrafts. Lkhagvasuren was a director of the Mongolian Museum of History in 1990–1995. During this time he was organizer for a series of exhibitions on Mongolian history and ethnology in the USA, Germany and Korea. He also helped organize the exhibition on 'Great Mongolia', at Minpaku, in 1998. Here, he will continue to study the ethnology of Altai Uriankhains, and will also explore historical issues from the socialist period in Mongolia.

(February 1, 2011 – January 31, 2012)

Alexander Adelaar

Principal Fellow, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne, Australia

Adelaar received his formal training in Indonesian studies and Austronesian linguistics at



Leiden University, Netherlands, where he defended his PhD in 1985. He lectured at Leiden (1985–1993) and Melbourne (1994–2009)

and spent extended periods at research centres in the USA, Australia, Germany, Taiwan and Belgium. His research interests are Austronesian historical and structural linguistics and he has been working on Malay, Malagasy (the language of Madagascar), the languages of Borneo, and Siraya, which is an extinct (or 'dormant' in politically correct terms) Formosan language once spoken in southwestern Taiwan. He recently finished a study of Siraya on the basis of a 17th century translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew. His book *Siraya. Retrieving the Phonology, Grammar and Lexicon of a Dead Formosan Language*, will be published in September 2011. He is currently working on the historical development of Malagasy.

(March 1, 2011 – February 29, 2012)

Nu Mra Zan

Deputy Director-General (Museums and Libraries), Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library, Ministry of Culture, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar



Nu Mra Zan obtained the Bachelor of education (B.Ed) degree from the Institute of Education and Master of Development Studies

(M.DevS) degree from the Institute of Economics, Yangon, Myanmar. After teaching and working as high school teacher and head of junior high school for eleven years in small cities of the coastal region, she moved to Sittway in 1985, where she began her museum

curator life at the Rakhine State Cultural Museum and Library. While there, she was able to study museology at Minpaku and attend the Museum Management Technology Course, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Osaka, for three months (1994/1995). After returning to Myanmar, she curated many exhibitions and established new museums in various fields. The theme of her research in Minpaku is museological studies for the development of ethnic cultures. She is a Rakhine, one of the eight main nationalities of Myanmar. Over 100 ethnic minorities live together in her country. During her visit, she aims to gather information from Japanese museums on the development of ethnic cultures. This is an area she has discussed at the International Museum Directors' Symposia held in Singapore, China and Indonesia. She has written various articles on Myanmar culture, ethnic cultures, and museum studies in *Myanmar Culture Magazines* (in the language of Myanmar).

(April 1 – June 30, 2011)

Publications

From January to June 2011, we published the following issues and articles:

Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology 35

Issue 2: T. Nobuta, 'The arrival of "civil society": An anthropological approach to indigenous movements in Malaysia'; T. Osugi, 'The "modernity" of the Cuban Revolution: A view from "unabashed" materialism'; M. Tanaka, 'Being Cuban is about being (im)mobile: Spatial imaginaries of Cubanness'; and H. Fujii, 'Process of "Asinaka" collections in Attic Museum'.
Issue 3: N. Kishigami, 'Recent trends in cultural anthropological studies on whaling'; A. Ito, 'Toward collaborative management of museum collections: The Native

American Zuni Museum's approach to the collection in the National Museum of Ethnology'; and M. Goto, 'Demarcation and recollection of collectivity in a Chuvash village, Russia'.

Issue 4: N. Niwa, 'Acquiring land rights through marriage practice: A case study of Solomon Islander communities on western Viti Levu, Republic of the Fiji Islands'; M. Tamori, 'Building of socio-musical identity in modern Hindustani music: Focusing on connection with caste-based census and *Nautch*-related issues in British India'; H. Suzuki, 'Phonetic analysis of dGudzung Tibetan The vernacular of Khams Tibetan spoken in the rGyalrong area'; J.A. Matisoff, 'Areal and universal issues in plant and animal nomenclature'; T. Gill, 'Contesting the streets: Shelter-resistant homeless men and encampments in Japan, America and Britain'; and J. Clifford, 'Repatriation and the second life of heritage: Return of the masks in Kodiak, Alaska'.

Senri Ethnological Reports

No.95: Bon brgya dge legs lhun grub rgya mtsho, S. Tsumagari, M. Tachikawa and Y. Nagano (eds.) *Bonpo Thangkas from Rebkong* (Bon Studies 13). 438pp.

No.96: Konagaya, Y. and I. Lkhagvasuren (interviewed), M. Rossabi (trans.), and M. Rossabi (ed. and compiled) *Socialist Devotees and Dissenters: Three Twentieth-Century Mongolian Leaders*. 298pp.

No.97: Matsumoto, H. (ed.) *An Anthropology of the Marine Environmental Conservation*. 337pp.

No.98: Terbish, U.L. and U.T. Chuluun-Erdene (eds.) *A Great Tibetan-Mongolian Lexicon*. (CD-version)

No.99: Takeuchi, T., B. Quessel, and Y. Nagano (eds.) *Research Notes on the Zhangzhung Language by Frederick W. Thomas at the British Library* (Bon Studies 14). 246pp.

Forthcoming Special Exhibition

Devotion to the Arts of Living Daily Life Among the Aynu of the Kurile, Sakhalin and Hokkaido Islands

Objects from the Late 19th – Early 20th Century Collections of Ethnological Museums in Germany and Japan

National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Oct. 6 – Dec. 6, 2011.
Produced by Minpaku

MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter

The Newsletter is published in June and December. 'Minpaku' is an abbreviation of the Japanese name for the National Museum of Ethnology (*Kokuritsu Minzokugaku Hakubutsukan*). The Newsletter promotes a continuing exchange of information with former visiting scholars and others who have been associated with the museum. The Newsletter also provides a forum for communication with a wider academic audience.

The Newsletter is available online at: www.minpaku.ac.jp/publication/newsletter

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