

Collection and Database of Costume and Clothing of National Museum of Ethnology

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This presentation describes 2 points concerning the collection and database of costume and clothing. The first is the collection of clothing specimens in the National Museum of Ethnology (known as Minpaku), and the second is the database of the clothes and clothing culture "Minpaku Costume Database".

I) Collection of the clothing specimens

Minpaku, which is a research museum, possesses the characteristic clothing specimens collected mainly by the following four methods:

1. Collected by field workers from a scientific point of view.

It is the feature of the research museum that the field workers collect the clothing specimens, including detailed information on each specimen, directly from the people in every area of the world.

(For example)

1976-1993 Clothing in the Philippines was collected.

2. Collected with the support of the specialized organizations in the target country with the cooperation of the governments.

(For example)

1979-1985 Chinese ethnic-minority clothing was collected.

3. Collected from the acquisition of the sales information on the clothing specimens.

(For example)

1979 The specimen basket purchased from an Indian museum (U.S.A.).

1979 The specimen basket purchased from H.B. Elly's lap collection.

1992 The specimens, including clothing, purchased from Segawa's collection (Taiwan).

4. Donation of clothing collections.

(For example)

1992 Some specimens from Segawa's collection.

2005 Chiyo Tanaka's collection (Various areas around the world).

II) The database of clothes and clothing culture “Minpaku Costume Database”.

This database consists of three sub databases—<Clothing specimens>, <Documents of costumes>, and the <Digital chronology of costume from 1868 to 1945 in Japan>, and releases about 220,000 pieces of information on characters, images and document images.

The <Clothing specimens> including the above-mentioned collections is built for the purpose of verifying “global diffusion of the traditional European type dress”. The <Documents of costumes> is built for the purpose of collection and analysis of the reference data, concerning the culture of clothing including the human body and fashion. The <Digital chronology of costume from 1868 to 1945 in Japan> makes up the epoch when kimono culture and western-style-of-dress culture struggled the most, and shows the acculturation by time series.