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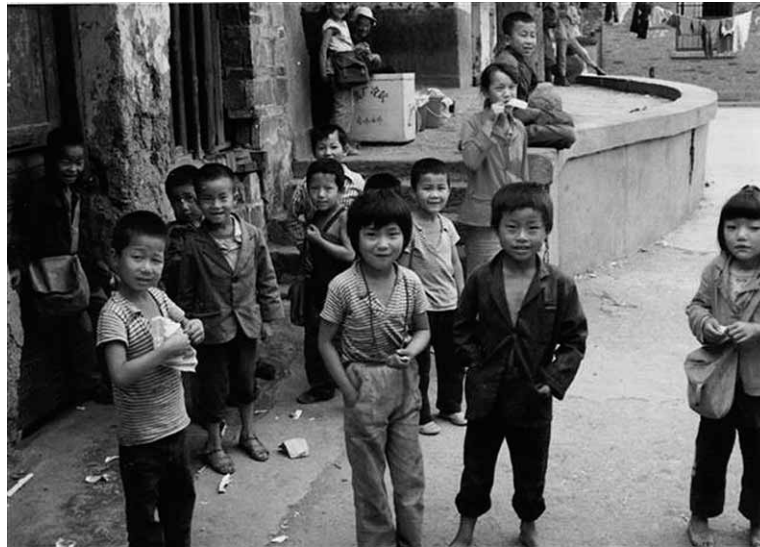
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Land and Population Policies and the Sex Imbalance in Rural China

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Newspaper headlines, journal articles and books have called attention to the enormous shortage of girls and women in China. Because China's population is so large, its efforts to address this growing problem are of great interest to all concerned with human rights and development. As the 2000 census results demonstrated, the imbalance rose to an alarming level of 120 male children per 100 female children (age 0 to 4) for the nation as a whole, with even higher imbalances in many rural areas.



School children in rural China

Henan Province, where I have conducted fieldwork, has one of the greatest imbalances. For children aged 1–4 there are 136 boys for every 100 girls, much higher than the normal birth sex ratio of about 105 boys per 100 girls. In fact, almost a third (56) of Henan's 175 districts report 140 or more boys for every 100 girls in that age group, and only 4 districts reported normal ratios of 106 or fewer boys per 100 girls.

China has a long history of discrimination against daughters resulting in female infanticide and excess female child mortality (mortality arising from neglect or maltreatment). It is commonly thought that this was primarily due to poverty but historical demographers have shown that it occurred in all social classes. Indeed, during the Mao years while China remained poor, birth sex ratios were close to normal and excess female child mortality declined.

During the post Mao reforms, China has experienced enormous changes leading to rapid development, modernization, increased prosperity and reduction of poverty. This makes it hard to explain the sex imbalance as simply a product of traditional attitudes or of economic deprivation. To what extent does the widespread prejudice against girls relate to China's contemporary social and economic policies and practices?

The shortage of girls is most acute in rural areas. Urban populations

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Bossen's early research focused on gender systems in the Mayan, Hispanic, rural, and urban sectors of Guatemala. More recently, she has examined gender and development in rural China with field research in Henan and Yunnan Provinces.

also practice discrimination against daughters, or reject unborn daughters by seeking abortions, but the demographic evidence suggests that rural populations are much more adamant in their demand for a son. Because rural areas are seen as the repository of tradition, these gender imbalances are often chalked up to the revival or persistence of traditional attitudes toward women as well as the persistence of patriarchal institutions: patriliney and patrilocal marriage.

Three related explanations have frequently been proposed for the persistence of son preference. One is that the traditional cultural emphasis on having a son to continue the family line remains in force among rural populations, where lineages and lineage rituals are being revived. Another is that sons are needed for heavy (i.e., masculine) labor on the farm. A third is that filial sons are needed for old age support. In contrast, it is often held that daughters do not continue the family line (because they marry out and join another family), they do not perform heavy farm labor, and they are not required or expected to support their parents in old age — doing so would bring shame to their parents and would be seen as disloyalty by their husband's parents. Variations of these explanations have been repeated by many scholars as well as by villagers themselves, who often cite proverbs about the importance of sons, and the waste involved in raising daughters.

Each of these reasons is open to some doubt. First, women are the major component of the farm labor force across China today. They are capable of performing field labor or hiring laborers, and often do so when their husbands migrate to outside work. Today, the 'heaviness' of much agricultural labor that was once performed by men with draft animals or hand tools is being displaced by agricultural machinery, not just tractors for plowing, but modern, Japanese-made combines for harvesting. This suggests that the arguments about male 'heavy' labor should hold less now than in the past. Second, sons are not always filial; they do not always remain in the village to provide support for their parents. Increasingly, both sons and daughters migrate to find work in towns and cities. Daughters as well as sons send money back to their parents. Why, then, are sons considered uniquely necessary to support their parents in old age? Some parents are beginning to express doubt that sons are the best investment for old age care.

The belief that sons are necessary to continue the family line draws on traditional ideology, and is hard to measure. Is it only the post-Mao revival of Confucian teaching, and moral obligation to the ancestors that induce parents to insist on sons and abort so many daughters? China's scarcity of women is likely to pose problems for the marriage of these sons in the future. Why do so many rural families still insist on a son?

China's descent groups remain devoutly patrilineal, refusing to view their sons and daughters as equals, disinheriting daughters and requiring them to move out at marriage. The family line is important because the lineage is important. Despite the attempts of the Communist revolution to eliminate lineage and clan groups, they are returning. Why is it that China retains exclusive, one-sided descent groups? The reasons daughters are not allowed to 'continue the line' are rarely identified beyond their roots in patrilineal ideology.

To what extent do current government policies and institutions contribute to the insistence on raising a son at the expense of daughters? Two important political and economic changes in the reform period have a bearing on villagers' decisions about sons and daughters: the family planning policy and the land tenure system.

It is widely known that China's family planning policy restricts urban couples to one child, and rural couples to two children. Rural couples that keep trying for a son after two chances face a range of heavy penalties, so they have an incentive to practice sex selection and abort a girl if they want to try again for a boy. This policy is widely criticized and resented by the rural populations who do their best to evade the regulations until they have one or two sons. Tighter enforcement of the birth control policy as well as greater access to early sex detection technology (ultrasound machines) have been linked to declining births of daughters as parents increasingly make their choice during pregnancy (Bossen 2002).

The second reason for reviving the insistence on sons is the changing system of land ownership. De-collectivization in the 1980s meant that land tenure shifted from collectives back to individual households who were allowed to contract the use of the land and farm it themselves. One important consideration is how much security of land tenure do individuals and households actually have, given that they have been subject to many

policy shifts in the past. Another consideration is how land rights can be defended from other villages, other villagers, and powerful outside groups, whether state or private. Here, unfortunately, the local powers of the state appear to be fairly weak, inconsistent and ineffectual, encouraging villagers in some regions to revive the institutions that they had used to defend themselves in the past: the lineages.

In attempting to understand the relationship of lineage, land rights, and missing girls, it is important to remember that sex imbalances within China vary. This regional variation needs to be better understood and is an area where anthropologists can make an important contribution. A starting place is the land holding system and the reliance on the lineage as the effective defense of land rights. The effectiveness of the state in upholding and securing land rights is very much doubted by villagers concerned about land as the source of their economic security. In much of rural China, the rule of 'might makes right' still applies in disputes between village families, between villages, and with the state. In many ways, the lineage appears to villagers as a definitive and stable institution assigning loyalties and creating unity in the defense of land. A bilateral descent system creates networks rather than cells, and is more

useful in areas where the rule of law is better established.

In attempting to reverse the trend of the last two decades of larger and larger deficits of girls, the Chinese government is adopting a variety of measures. One is positive propaganda concerning the value of the girl child. Last year on my visit to China both Beijing and rural Henan had numerous large posters proclaiming the value of girls. Other measures include the prohibition of ultrasound tests and abortions for sex selection. In one area, abortions after 14 weeks of pregnancy have been outlawed. In other regions, the government is experimenting with granting subsidies or pensions to rural families that had only one child or two girls. Even if the problem of imbalanced sex ratios is resolved in the near future, China still faces a whole generation of adults with a serious shortage of women.

Reference

Bossen, Laurel. 2002. *Chinese Women and Rural Development: Sixty Years of Change in Lu Village, Yunnan*. Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield. The Chinese translation (by Hu Yukun) of this work was published in 2005 as *Zhongguo funu yu nongcun fazhan: yunnan Lucun liushi nian de bianqian* (Jiangsu Remin Chubanshe).

Symbolic Values of the Cola Nut in Mali

Bréhima Kassibo

Human Sciences Institute of Bamako, Mali

The cola is the fruit of the colatier (*Cola acuminata*, family Sterculiaceae), a tree with dark green leaves and yellowish white flowers. The tree originated in Africa, and is now naturalized in southern and central America, the Caribbean, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia. For a very long time it has been used by the people of western and central Africa. In West Africa and especially Mali, it was introduced in the thirteenth century by Mande-speaking traders (Mande *diula*) who settled on the border of the main zones of cola production (Kong and Bondugu in Ivory Coast). Mali was the cradle of the Mande cultural area which includes countries that belonged to the ancient empire of Mali founded by Mande emperor Sundiata Keita in 1236. The empire

extended from the Atlantic Ocean to Sahara desert and included current Mali, Mauritania, Guinea, Gambia, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. The Mande *diula* integrated cola into a circle of trans-saharian trade that was also based on gold, salt, cotton fabrics, and slaves. This trade connected the forest belt of western Africa with the Sahel and North Africa. The Ivory Coast remains the principal provider of cola nut for Mali, with a local production estimated at 35,000 tons per year.

Sahelian people consume great quantities of cola nuts. The part used is the seed, which is separated into two distinct parts for consumption. The chewed nut serves as an aphrodisiac, digestive, muscle tonic, and stimulant of the nervous system.

Dr. Bréhima Kassibo currently leads a scientific research program on new institutional changes in West African countries and teaches at the University of Bamako. His main research fields have been natural resource management (fisheries and forests), international migration of Malians, and new institutional changes (democratization and decentralization) in West Africa. From September 2004 to April 2005 he visited Minpaku for research on the anthropology of development and politics.



A marriage ceremony
in Bamako (Mali)

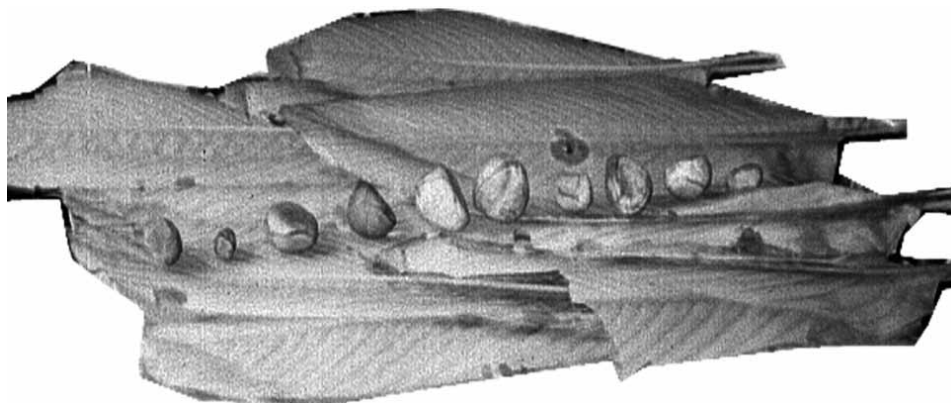
In addition to all its physical virtues, cola plays a significant symbolic role in Mali during the principal events of social, cultural and religious life: baptism, marriage, and religious rites (worship and divination for example).

One week after birth, the naming of a newborn marks an essential stage in his or her integration into society. At the baptism ceremony, cola nuts are distributed to all assistants, after blessings have been given to the newborn in a communion of hearts and spirits. This event is also an occasion for consolidation of matrimonial rapport because the parents of the mother of the baby receive close attention (praise) and receive more cola than other participants.

The cola is present from the beginning to end of the marriage ceremony, which has several stages. An initial marriage request is carried by an emissary who is generally a man of a caste called *nyamakala*, and the

request is sent by the parents of the applicant to the family of the woman coveted. This emissary is known as *furu sen tigi*, literally the 'owner of the feet of marriage'. The request is accompanied by an offering of ten cola nuts (*muso gnini woro*, the cola of marriage demand) to a relation on the woman's father's side. The emissary and relation consult each other and may ask for the opinion of the woman concerned. Acceptance of the ten nuts indicates assent, while rejection means refusal.

If the ten nuts are accepted, then the next stage of engagement requires a handing-over of 60 colas (*lablali woro*). From this moment, the betrothed woman is placed officially at the disposal of the family of her husband to be. His family then deals with most of the subsequent marriage arrangements. The family of promised woman indicates the various formalities required, in particular payment of a dowry which is officially fixed in Mali as 10,000 CFA (2,000 yen) for a girl, and 5,000 CFA for a woman who has been married previously. The wedding trousseau of the future bride varies considerably from one family to another, according to the bride's social standing and the specific rules usually applied by each ethnic group involved. A community of women made up of the mothers of the betrothed meets to fix the amount of expenditure required for the trousseau. This group (*denbaw*) includes women of the same generation as the mother (her



The symbolic cola in Mali

near friends and relations) and also her sisters, cousins, and others.

The family of the applicant can always negotiate a reduction in expenditures by sending the emissary to male representatives of the other family. On the day of assembly of the women (*worotla*: sharing the cola of engagement), the contents of the cola baskets are distributed together with other articles required, and a moderate money sum (500 CFA or more). The date of marriage is fixed by mutual agreement between the two families.

On the future groom's side, there is an obligation to greet all the parents and near relatives of the future bride, according to a list given to him. The greetings are accompanied by the handing-over of ten cola nuts and 500–1,000 CFA per person. This customary greeting is called *buran foli*.

Moslem families in Mali have an obligation to celebrate the marriage with an iman (Mohammedan priest). The end of the ceremony is marked by a distribution of cola to all members of the audience within the mosque enclosure.

After celebrating the marriage, the husband is required to return once a year to the parents of his wife, to show his respect for them. This renewal of the *buran foli* consolidates the relationship between the two families.

In divination rituals, marine shells (cowries) and geomancy (divination by sand) involve a broad use of cola nuts as offerings to entreat the divine spirits, seek protection from enemies, and reverse the course of an unfavourable destiny. In these systems of divination, cola has become central to a symbolic system that is applied according to the events of social life. The system involves a range of names or categories based on the form and colour of the nuts. Particular types of nut are required for particular offerings:

yèlè woro 'the cola that laughs' — a white nut with a slit the middle; this type symbolizes purity and happiness, and used to support fulfilment of the wish of a customer or patient, and to do good.
dimito woro or *murudama woro* 'the cola

that suffers (*dimito*)' a nut that carries 'the scar of the knife (*muruda*)' which 'wounded it' during extraction of the seed from shell; this type is used to inflict suffering on an enemy, or to avenge an offence.

nam nolo — displays distinct red and white colours.

marasa woro — displays an indistinct mixture of red and white colours.

kolo woro — has the colour and shape of a shea nut.

soku woro — a cola that 'resembles the pointed tail of a horse'.

After a consultation and interpretation, the geomancian or soothsayer suggests what type of cola the patient should give in offering. The types of cola that are most often required have acquired a certain commercial value compared to others. Thus *yèlè woro* costs 300 CFA (60 yen) per unit volume, *nam nolo* costs 500 CFA, *soku woro* 300 CFA, *kolo woro* 250 CFA, *marasa woro* 150 CFA, and the *murudama woro* 125 CFA.

Although the cola is an exotic fruit for inhabitants of the savanna, it has acquired a great importance in social life and has a certain user-friendliness. In the past, cola nuts were integrated perfectly into the socio-cultural system of values. Now, with the introduction of market economies in western Africa, the mercenary value of cola nut is gradually replacing its symbolic value. The ceremonies of marriage and baptism have become ostentatious in practice, with large monetary expenditures required. The soothsayers, lured by gains, substitute the cola nut offerings with expensive sacrifices of animals (sheep and oxen), according to the status of their customers. Because of climatic risks and regional socio-policies, the price of a cola basket sometimes fluctuates with a simple doubling of price in the market. This is an unquestionable cause of inflation in social expenditures. Fortunately, despite everything, the tradition still remains strong in the field of marriage, where the use of cola cannot be ignored.

Preludes to an Award

Robert Garfias

University of California, Irvine, USA

Robert Garfias is a Professor of anthropology at the University of California, Irvine. One of the most prominent ethnomusicologists today, Garfias has done field work in Japan including Okinawa, Burma, Romania, Turkey, Mexico and Central America, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. In May 2005, he received 'The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon', a prestigious award from the Japanese government for his life long contribution to the study and dissemination of Japanese culture.

My connection with Japan has grown stronger over time. Although for many years I was attracted to research and travel in many different cultures and countries, I found myself always returning to Japan. My first visit to Japan was in 1951. I was just out of high school and was employed as a musician on the one of the vast liners travelling across the Pacific. With virtually no previously knowledge of Japan or much of anything else at that time, I was nevertheless profoundly impressed with everything I saw from the simple furnishings in a tatami room to the streets and temples. Soon after returning to America I found a koto teacher and began a study of Yamada Ryu koto that lasted about five years. A few years later when I first heard a recording of Gagaku played by the court musicians of the Kunaisho Gagakubu I was deeply struck by the power of this music and before long had embarked on a long study that eventually led to my doctoral dissertation at UCLA in 1964. It is interesting that while I have met many Japanese people who did not know this music and many who did not like it, it has always been for me a very strong aesthetic experience.

During the three years that I was living and studying in Japan (1958–

1960), I learned much about the traditions and culture of Japan. Most days and nights were spent in the long slow process of learning the entire Gagaku repertoire and all of the instruments. I tried to learn as much about Japan as I could and did manage also to join an incense group. Because I was still in my mid-20s I often think that I was learning about life as well. After completing my doctoral research I was invited to join the faculty at the University of Washington where I was lucky to be invited to become a founding member of the Center of Asian Arts, a university study center with strong focus on Japan. After this I began doing research in many areas of the world: Burma, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Korea, the Philippines, Romania, Mexico and Central America and Turkey. In the 1980s I had the opportunity to return to Japan, this time to engage in the Afuso Ryu of the classical music of Okinawa and this led to an association with Okinawan culture that has lasted until now.

In 1999 I was invited to join the faculty of Minpaku as a visiting professor and I was kindly allowed to return in again in 2003. My association with Minpaku has been one of which I am very proud and honored. I regard Minpaku as one of the finest



Recipient after the ceremony in Tokyo (Photo by Marcy Garfias)



Robert Garfias (left) with his teacher Masataro Togi in front of the Music Department of the Imperial Household Agency (Tokyo, 1959/1960; photo by Shigeo Kishibe)

ethnological research institutions in the world. I say this knowing the Berlin Museum of Ethnology well, and having been a member of the Smithsonian Institution's governing council for six years. My time at Minpaku was always stimulating. I always relished the opportunity to drop in whenever I liked during the day to the magnificent exhibition galleries and to engage in intriguing conversations with a wide range of colleagues, on all subjects. In fact, the museums' exhibitions, my

colleagues there, and the virtually most complete library I have ever worked with made my time at Minpaku seem very close to my idea of heaven.

Now I find myself selected to receive a very high honor from the government of Japan. For this I am surprised and very pleased. I must also thank all the many friends at Minpaku for their kindness to me during my visits. My honor is in great measure a token of thanks to all of you for your sympathy and support.

Conferences

Indigenous Movements in Plural Societies: The Canadian Inuit and the Ainu of Japan

*International Symposium
January 13 – 15, 2005*

In April 2004, Minpaku adopted 'Plurality in Society and Culture' as a new major research theme. Under this rubric, we have started a study project titled 'Reconstructing Knowledge in the Field of Social Movements' under the leadership of Taeko Udagwa. The symposium 'Indigenous Movements in Plural Societies: The Canadian Inuit and the Ainu of Japan', was organized by Minpaku together with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science program 'New Research Initiatives in Humanities and Social Sciences'.

The objective of the symposium was to discuss how Inuit and Ainu people are engaging in their respective indigenous movements, to examine the relationship between both groups and the dominant societies with which they co-exist, and to consider the social and political impacts of the movements on their countries. Cultural and social activists as well as political leaders among the Inuit and Ainu, government officials of Japan and Canada, and researchers from Japan, the USA and Canada were invited to

present their perceptions of the current state of indigenous movements in Japan and Canada.

The Inuit and the Ainu are both indigenous minority groups whose territories lie within nation states. Also, increasing proportions of both groups have moved into large metropolises such as Montreal and Tokyo. While the Inuit have gained a significant number of indigenous rights and have become politically autonomous, the Ainu have achieved only the right to pursue their own cultural activities without having been granted rights to exploit local wildlife resources for hunting, fishing or any other purpose. Delegates learned that the gap between Inuit and Ainu rights are due to differences in indigenous policies of the

governments of Japan and Canada. Furthermore, the Inuit movement has been nationwide whereas the Ainu movement has been confined to Hokkaido alone. We concluded that the Ainu movement will only attract nationwide attention when there have been changes in the perceptions and knowledge of the Ainu within the dominant society.

The international gathering offered a fruitful occasion for all participants to exchange ideas and experiences. We believe that the dialogue generated by this kind of symposium can foster a repositioning of indigenous futures and help to create more convivial societies.

Nobuhiro Kishigami
Chief Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology



Urban indigenous women in the parade on Canada's aboriginal day (Montreal, 1996)

Possibilities and Problems for Visual Documentation of Traditional Performing Arts

*Workshop
February 21 – 24, 2005*

The workshop focused on the challenges and prospects for visual documentation of traditional performing arts in Southeast Asia and Japan. Such documentation is being taken in different corners of Southeast Asia for traditional performing arts that appear to be in a major transformation or on the verge of extinction. However, most efforts are taking place independently without any interaction. As a result, there are no common understandings about what should be recorded, and how to preserve, maintain and utilize recorded materials. In Japan, many efforts have been made to visually record the folk performing arts in various localities. However, not all of these precious records have been appropriately preserved, maintained and utilized. Japan could make a major contribution by sharing its own experiences with researchers in Southeast Asia. The workshop

was an occasion to explore together the most desirable way of making, preserving, maintaining and utilizing precious visual records.

At the beginning of the workshop, Shota Fukuoka (Minpaku) explained objectives of the workshop based on the ideas stated above. Yasuhiro Omori, a visual anthropologist at Minpaku, then discussed the need to consider audio-visual documentation over a longer time span. He argued for detailed documentation sufficient to reconstruct performing arts after a hundred years, and for selection of media that can last for very long periods. Yoshitaka Terada (Minpaku) and Ryoji Sasahara (Minpaku) then presented video programs produced by Minpaku under their supervision: *Eisa in Osaka* and *Production of Sanshin: Okinawa Island*.

The theme of the second day was preservation and documentation of traditional performing arts. Sasahara reviewed the process of how researchers of Japanese folklore had invented a way to document folk performing arts and how it still has great influence. Satoru Hyoki (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo)

discussed the process of audio-visual documentation of folk performing arts within the governmental system of protecting cultural properties. Akiko Takamatsu (Seitoku University) examined a preservation policy for the musical tradition of non-settled Scottish Travellers in the U.K. Misako Ohnuki (Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO) introduced their 'Data Bank of Traditional/Folk Performing Arts in Asia and the Pacific'.

Researchers from Southeast Asia introduced their documentation work on the third day. Nantawat Chatuthai (Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center) discussed documentation projects for research and education at his institution. Sam-Ang Sam (Pannasastra University/Royal University of Fine Arts) showed examples of visual documentation of Cambodian performing arts including the one on which Minpaku and Sam collaborated, and discussed general conditions surrounding those works. Rithaony Hutajulu (North Sumatra University) introduced archival work at several academic institutions in Indonesia and then discussed her own documentation project with Toba Batak people. Tan Sooi Beng (Universiti Sains Malaysia) compared video documentaries produced in Malaysia and argued that an informed 'authored' approach is for the best deeper interpretation in ethnographic film making.

On the fourth day, Akiko Odaka (Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music) reported the state of archiving and database development at the Koizumi Fumio Memorial Archives, and discussed challenges for archiving audio-visual materials. Osamu Yamaguti (Osaka University) and members of the RVMV (Research and Video Documentation for Minorities' Intangible Cultural Heritage in Vietnam), Motoshi Fujioka



Recording gong music at a funeral ceremony (Cambodia, 2005)

(video documentalist), Satomi Oshio (Miyagi University of Education), Hidechika Serizawa (Osaka University of Arts), Naoko Terauchi (Kobe University), Yoshihiko Tokumaru (University of the Air), and Tuneko Tukitani (Osaka University of Arts) reported their collaborative training program for performing arts documentation. They emphasized the collaborative nature of a program in which people from different disciplines from Vietnam and Japan learn from one another to develop the philosophy and methodology of documentation.

Our workshop was organized as part of 'Tradition and the Crossing of Borders: The Interaction between Staying Put and Crossing Over', a project commissioned by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Jses).

Shota Fukuoka
Convenor
National Museum of Ethnology

The Historical Role of Nomads in Eurasia

*International Symposium
March 19, 2005*

This symposium was organized in honor of Professor Masatake Matsubara, a distinguished Japanese anthropologist specializing in studies of nomads in Eurasia, on the occasion of his retirement from Minpaku in March. While spending more than 30 years engaged in field research on Eurasian nomadic peoples, from Turkey to the Mongolian plateau, Matsubara has endeavored to bring attention to the global and historical significance of nomads, a significance that has long been ignored by the academic community.

The symposium opened with the keynote speech delivered by Matsubara. Reflecting on his academic career, he pointed out three attractive features of nomadic societies: flexible social organization, public use of land, and high mobility. He proposed that pastoral nomadic

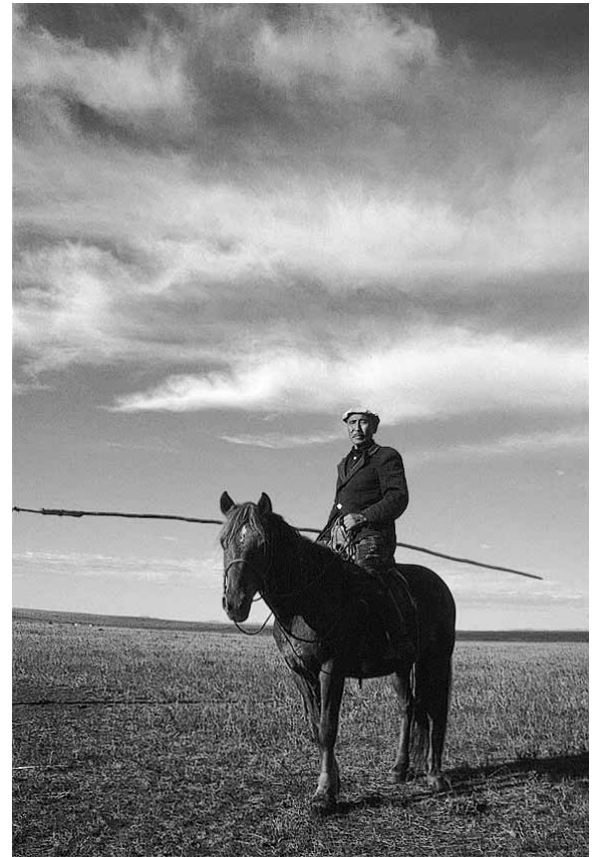
cultures offer hints for solutions to many problems that are confronting humankind in the 21st century.

After the keynote speech, Yuki Konagaya (Minpaku), the organizer and chair of the symposium, introduced five eminent scholars from various academic disciplines, all specialists on Eurasian nomadic peoples.

The first speaker, Toshio Hayashi (Soka University), an archaeologist, reviewed stone statues in Eurasia that are relics of past nomadic cultures. Nobuhiro Uno (Hiroshima Shudo University), a historian, analyzed the characteristics of kinship among Mongolian imperial families by using the classical

Levi-Straussian theory of female exchanges. Hiroshi Umemura (Chuo University) reported on the seasonal migration of nomadic Mongolian pastoralists on the Bayanbulag steppe of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Masami Hamada (Kobe University) analyzed the relationship between sedentary peoples in oasis cities and the nomadic peoples of Central Asia, in medieval times. His study throws light on the importance of negotiation and interdependency between nomads and oasis cities. The last speaker was Haiying Yang (Shizuoka University), an anthropologist, who surveyed recent Chinese attempts to reconsider the historical role of nomads.

Comments were offered by two visiting scholars, Mr Lkhagvasuren (General Secretary of the Mongolian Cultural Foundation) and Uradyn E. Bulag (City University of New York; and Minpaku). Our final discussion centered on Bulag's theoretical question, that is, how to reconcile two different



A Mongolian nomad

approaches to studying Eurasian nomads — ecological and political — which may produce fundamentally different images of nomads. The symposium ended with a general comment by Dr Batjargal, Mongolian Ambassador to Japan.

Ipei Shimamura
Coordinator,
National Museum of Ethnology

Religions, Secularism, and Public Sphere

*International Symposium
March 24, 2005*

The symposium focused on the need to revise the notion of public sphere, the need to clarify relations between public sphere and state, and the importance of the notion of identity when addressing cultural problems. It was planned as a part of a large research project 'Cultural Identity and Public Sphere,' which involves more than ninety Japanese scholars,



Conference speakers, from left: Masachi Osawa, Akira Usuki, and Talal Asad

specialized in fields such as anthropology, sociology, political studies, area studies, gender studies, cultural studies, and economics.

A keynote speech 'Reflections on Laïcité' was given by distinguished anthropologist Talal Asad (the City University of New York). Referring to a polemic on the headscarves worn by young Muslim students in French public schools, he traced the ideological implications of secularism in France in relation to nation building, and also pointed out the need to revise the notion of public sphere so that it can touch people's identity and passions.

Subsequent contributions were: 'Beyond Boundaries: Rethinking "Arab Jews" in Religious, Ethnic and National Discourse in Israel' by Akira Usuki (Japan Center for Area Studies) and 'The Difficulty of the Public Sphere in Contemporary Society' by Masachi Osawa (Kyoto University). Usuki has tried to find in 'Arab-Jews' living in Israel a group that is intermediary between essentialized Arabs and essentialized Jews. Osawa spoke of the difficulty of making the public sphere effective in the modern capitalist world, where self-definition is so difficult because everything simulates everything else.

In the twenty-first century, the central and most crucial problems are cultural. Our project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the notion of public sphere as a

socio-cultural space open to anybody, when society is wrestling with cultural problems. We consider it imperative to reorganize cultural anthropology, making it not just a science of others' cultures, but also a discipline that is able to address 'our' cultural problems.

The cultural problems in question include the wars and inner wars that have been made under the name of cultural and/or ethnic differences, rejection of and the discrimination against immigrants who want to keep their cultural identity. The headscarves worn by young Muslim students in France, discussed by Talal Asad, is dividing France in two. During the most recent presidential election in the US homosexuality and abortion became major dividing issues.

Scholars such as Samuel Huntington say that these cultural problems will never be solved, because they are rooted in the very identity of people. According to this view, it is better to make efforts to administer rather than solve the cultural differences that underlie problems. What does it mean to administer cultural differences? If administering cultural differences implies control of their identity, people will resist administration strongly.

More sophisticated are scholars like Jürgen Habermas and Amartya Sen who say that the origins of these cultural problems are found in traditional and obstinate thinking. They suggest that the

problems can only be solved by progress in the public sphere and in human rights linked with secularism. However, the notion of public sphere advocated by Habermas ignores contributions of women, minorities, colored slaves, and immigrants. The capability approach proposed by Amartya Sen privileges personal freedom and equality (the basic elements of so-called human rights), values that do not always coexist easily with the community values that peoples have developed to organize living. To solve cultural problems, all our notions must be deconstructed and reconstructed before being applied in particular cases, as the symposium proved.

Our research project has ten branches: two on theoretical issues and eight others concerned with particular cultural problems, including: (1) dissolution and rehabilitation of community ties (2) gendered space and labor in the globalized world (3) incorporation and/or segregation of immigrants and minorities (4) inner wars and conflicts made in the name of cultural differences (5) transformations of identity and modes of communication as a result of innovation in media technology, (6) bio-politics carried out worldwide in the name of health policy, (7) possibilities and impossibilities for the activities of NGOs, and (8) clashes between local and international value systems, in the management of cultural heritage. The project tries to embrace many kinds of cultural problems, and to realize theoretical contributions to the handling of cultural problems.

Results of the symposium and related project research will be published by Sekai-Sisosha as a book entitled *Cultural Identity and Public Sphere* (in Japanese).

Shoichiro Takezawa
Convenor
National Museum of Ethnology

New Staff

Ritsuko Kikusawa

Associate Professor, Department of Advanced Studies in Anthropology



Kikusawa is a linguist specializing in the Austronesian languages. She studied at the University of Tokyo (MA, 1993) and

the University of Hawai'i (PhD 2000), followed by two years at the Australian National University as a JSPS post-doctoral research fellow (2000–2002). During her previous appointment at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (1995–2005), she conducted descriptive fieldwork in Fiji, the Philippines and Madagascar, and worked on some theoretical and comparative (historical) issues concerning morphosyntactic aspects of the Austronesian languages. Her recent publications include *Proto-Central Pacific Ergativity* (2002), 'A new view of the Proto-Oceanic pronominal system' (2003), and 'Did proto-Oceanians cultivate *Cyrtosperma taro*?' (2003).

Visiting Scholars

The following visitors have been sponsored by the National Museum of Ethnology:

Laurel Bossen

Associate Professor, McGill University, Canada

Bossen received her PhD in Social Anthropology from the State University of New York at Albany. She first worked at the University of Pittsburgh, USA, and has been at McGill University in Canada since 1984. Her early research



Her first monograph, *The Redivision of Labor: Women and Economic Choice in Four Guatemalan Communities* (1984) explored the economic and social impacts of development on these different sectors.

Her more recent research has shifted to Asia. She has examined gender and development in rural China and has conducted field research in villages of Henan and Yunnan Provinces. She is the author of *Chinese Women and Rural Development: Sixty Years of Change in Lu Village, Yunnan* (2002). At Minpaku, Bossen is examining the relationship between land and population controls in rural China.

(January 25 – June 25, 2005)

Brian Moeran

Professor of Culture and Communication, and Director, *Imagine.. Creative Industries Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark.*



After living in Japan for five years (1967–72), Moeran studied Japanese at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, before completing his PhD on folk art (*mingei*) potters of Onta, Japan, in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at SOAS (1980). In addition to his current position, he has held university appointments as Lecturer in Asian Anthropology (SOAS, 1981–86), Chair Professor of Japanese Studies (London University, 1986–1990),

focused on the comparison of gender systems in Mayan and Hispanic, as well as rural and urban, sectors of Guatemala.

Professor of Japanese Anthropology (London, 1991–1995), and Swire Professor of Japanese (University of Hong Kong, 1992–1998). He has published widely on different aspects of Japanese society and culture, including advertising, art, fashion, film, media, tourism, and women's magazine publishing. His latest book is *The Business of Ethnography* (2005). While at Minpaku, he will be completing a second fieldwork volume titled *Ethnography at Work* and embarking on an anthropological study of fragrance and smell.

(February 1, 2005 – January 31, 2006)

Ma Jianzhao

Professor, *Migration and Adaptation of Ethnic Groups in Guangdong, China*



Ma completed his BA on the history of ethnic groups at the Central University for Nationalities, Beijing, China, in 1983. Since then, he has

conducted research on religions at the Guangdong Institute of Religious Studies, and has been director of the institute since 1993. He is also a vice-president of the Chinese Association for Han Studies. His main research fields are (1) ethnic culture and relationships between ethnic groups in southern China, (2) the Hui in Guangdong and Hainan and Islamic history and culture, and (3) old literature concerning ethnic groups in Guangdong. He was a collaborator for *History of Ethnic Groups in Guangdong* (in Chinese) and an editor for *Gazetteer of Guangdong Province: Ethnic Groups, Formation and Transformation of the Hui Community in Guangzhou* (in Chinese), and *Historic Origin and Social Change of the Hui Community in Hainan* (in Chinese).

(March 16 – December 4, 2005)

Publications

The following were published by the museum during the period from December 2004 to May 2005:

◇ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 29(2). Contents: T. Nobuta, 'Life world of Kampung Durian Tawar: Hierarchy and household among the Orang Asli, Malaysia'; and A. Tachikawa, 'Socio-economic significance of salmon among the Aboriginal people of the northwest coast of Canada: A case study of contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw economic activities'.

◇ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 29(3). Contents: Y. Nagano, 'Negation particles of Gyarong language'; Y. Nagafuchi, 'Religion and proliferating pluralism of values: Negotiating the boundaries on Hinduism in Indonesia'; M. Kanetani, 'Tie-dyed cloth production as "handicraft": Dyers' adaptation to changes in demand for Indian textiles'; and Y. Sekiguchi, 'Using "assimilation" to resist the concept of "dying race": Strategies of Ainu spokespeople in the 1920s to 1930s'.

◇ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 29(4). Contents: M. Han, 'Memorial and deification of Mao Zedong: A case-study on the Sanlao shrine in northern Shanxi, China'; M. Kanetani, 'Kinship and affinity in a business network of Indian Muslims: the dyers' community of Gujarat'; P. J. Matthews and K. W. Naing, 'Notes on the provenance and providence of wildtype taros (*Colocasia esculenta*) in Myanmar'; Н. И. Рубан, 'История развития исследовательской деятельности музеев Дальнего Востока России и в 1920-х годах.'; and Л. В. Корнева, 'Из истории Гродековского музея (При мурского отдела Императорского Русского Географического общества в г. Хабаровске 1894 1917 гг.)'.

◇ Kishigami, N. and J. M. Savelle (eds.) *Indigenous Use*

and Management of Marine Resources. Senri Ethnological Studies, No.67, 455 pp., February 2005.

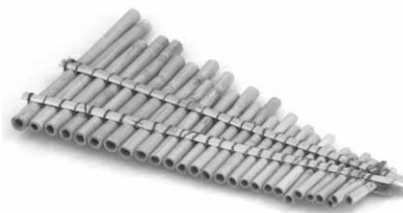
◇ Sonoda, N. (ed.) *National Museum of Ethnology International Symposium New Horizons in Paper Conservation*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.53, 111pp., December 2004.

◇ Kawaguchi, Y. and K. Yoshida (eds.) *SYMPOSIUM AFRICA 2001 Representing African Art and Cultures*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.54, 158pp., March 2005.

◇ Seki, Y. and H. Kimura (eds.) *Prof. Tatsuhiko Fujii Retirement Commemoration Symposium Historicity in the Andes -Past and Present of the Andean Studies in Japan-*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.55, 238pp., May 2005.

From the Archives

Bamboo pipe instruments are made in many parts of the world.



panpipes, Ecuador



panpipes, Papua New Guinea



Tungkungan, a bamboo pipe instrument with strings, Kalimantan, Borneo

MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter

The Newsletter is published bi-annually, in June and December. 'Minpaku' is a Japanese abbreviation for the National Museum of Ethnology. 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.

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

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