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Mapping ethnoscapes: South Asian studies in the new century

South Asia, since the 1990s, has plunged into the age which Arjun Appadurai vividly predicted in his publication 'Modernity at Large'. In this special issue, Minpaku researchers explore the scope of globalization in the South Asian world. They show how people in South Asia negotiate with globalization and incorporate this phenomenon into their everyday experience.

Transformation of a Dance Festival and the Reshaping of Locality

Minoru Mio
National Museum of Ethnology

Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai stated that the meaning of locality has changed dramatically in the contemporary world through the inter-related transformations of nation-states, human diasporas, and growth of electronic and virtual communities. The transformation of a goddess festival and its global spread are taken up here, and may suggest direction of change in meaning of locality in contemporary India.

The mother goddess festival is celebrated just after the monsoon season and is one of the main Hindu festivals all over South Asia. There are regional variations in how it is celebrated. In Gujarat, the western part of India, the main feature of the festival is the dedication of dance to the mother goddess. During the nine-day festival, people gather every night and dance around an earthen pot, named *garba*, which symbolizes the goddess.

This dance festival was previously a community event. The participants were exclusively community members from the village, or a neighborhood in the case of cities and towns. Subjects of songs for dance were in mainly praise of goddesses, and participants themselves used to sing these songs while dancing, though there were regional variations in choreography. People used to learn dances that were transmitted from one generation to another in the neighborhood community where they were born and raised. In other words, they took part in the festival of the community goddess through sharing a body experience and the local traditional dance with local songs. The goddess festival was a means of reproducing locality in the same way as a rite of passage.

The dandiya *dance at the mother goddess festival in Udaipur, Rajasthan (Mio, 2002)*

This festival began to change around the end of 1980s, just when the Indian economy began an approach run for economic take-off. A private club with urban, upper middle-class members, in Ahmadabad, the economic capital of Gujarat, organized a new

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dance event with professional singers and a music band during the mother goddess festival. In this event, any person who bought a ticket could take part in the dance. The singers and dancers were differentiated. And the professional singers appropriated popular film songs for the dance. Those who gathered to this event dressed up and enjoyed dancing to fashionable music.

The new dance event in the goddess festival season soon came to be imitated in other places. At more than 100 locations in Ahmadabad alone, and even in small towns all over Gujarat, this kind of dance event is now organized by various associations. The new events share several features: (i) those who buy tickets can participate in the event regardless of where they come from, (ii) songs for the dance are sometimes non-religious, popular film songs, (iii) the participants' costumes tend to become more and more flamboyant, and (iv) the events are often sponsored by local business corporations that provide luxurious prizes (even a new car or a ticket for overseas travel) for the best dancer or costume at the event. This form of festival is becoming particularly popular among the younger generation. The number of those who come only to see the event is also increasing. In the traditional neighborhood festival, passive participation was rare. Participants were expected to dance themselves. But in the new dance event, there appears to be a clear differentiation between the dancers and audience. Rapid spread of choreography is another feature of the new event. Some participants move from one event site to another every night, seeking fresh experiences. Following this movement of participants, the choreographies that were inherited within localities tend to intermingle with each other. The mother goddess festival in Gujarat has changed rapidly through the 1990s and the 2000s — from a neighborhood festival to an entertainment event where unfamiliar persons gather to seek amusement.

It is also remarkable that this dance event has been spreading rapidly to the other areas where people did not dance during the festival. In Rajasthan, just north of Gujarat, people have started holding dance events — even in rural towns and villages — over the last several years. Traditionally, the mother goddess festival in Rajasthan was centered on temples or shrines of goddesses, and spirit possessions and animal sacrifices patronized by local dominant castes were the climax. Through the spread of the dance events, earthen pots have become new objects of worship and places of festive activity have been shifted from temples and shrines to streets or public spaces where pots are kept. Animal sacrifices have become rare or are totally abandoned in some places. Most dance events are organized by young men's local voluntary associations, but participants at the events are not exclusively local. Like Gujarat's new-style festival, any person who buys a ticket can dance, especially in urban areas. Curiously, the way of dancing in Rajasthan is restricted to the so-called *dandiya* dance, in which partners facing each other slap the other's *dandiyas* 'short sticks held in both hands' rhythmically. The intermingling and standardization of choreography are remarkable tendencies in Gujarat, where many kinds of dancing are still preserved, and where the *dandiya* dance is just one of many. In Rajasthan, the tendency towards standardization is even more clear, and the *dandiya* dance is now perceived as the typical dance for the mother goddess festival.

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The dance festival now seems to be firmly established as an annual event in the northwestern Indian megalopolises, Delhi and Mumbai, and in the big cities of southern India, like Bangalore and Hyderabad. The event is also spreading abroad among overseas Indian communities in the UK, USA and elsewhere. Even in such distant places, the events are organized by voluntary associations as casual social parties, and people enjoy dancing the *dandiya* dance. Fashionable dance events fascinate the Indians of major world cities, and the standardized dance is becoming the typical Indian festival.

An active flow of people across regional and national borders is associated with economic development and the acceleration of information movement through electronic media. This has also contributed to the spread of the new festival style. Accompanying the global flow of people and information, the fashionable and exotic dance is circulating as a cultural sign of 'the Indian'. Hindu nationalist organizations also support this movement. Associations organizing the event are sometimes branches of the nationalist organizations, or the members of dance associations often have close relationships with nationalist movements. The Hindu nationalists are actively supporting this new festival event as the new 'tradition of Hindus'.

Collective dance often brings about a sense of unity among those who share its physical experience. In the traditional festival, the collective dance is a means for reaffirming a sense of community in the neighborhood and reproducing a form of locality that is based on neighborhood. In the case of the new dance festival, however, the dance becomes the medium for a different kind of locality which connects distant persons. The global uniformity of content in popular media allows unfamiliar persons to share the same body experience in a given place, for a brief moment. This experience contributes to the creation of a modern nation as an imagined community.

The spread of the new festival reflects the contemporary Indian society in which economic globalization and political-religious nationalism gain influence at the same time.

New Reproductive Technologies and the Indian Woman as Mother

Mizuho Matsuo
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"A growing number of women in Anand seek to offer their wombs for childless couples." "Giving birth becomes the latest job outsourced to India." These are headlines from newspapers reporting that more and more rural women in central Gujarat, India, are becoming surrogate mothers for infertile couples, including foreigners and NRI (Non-Residential Indians). They offer their wombs for nine months and deliver children on behalf of women who are not able to do this, in exchange for reward. Others may sell their eggs for *in vitro* fertilization (IVF).

There has been a big boom recently in visits to India for medical treatment in cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore. Infertility clinics are increasing and are now estimated to number more than 250. There are many advantages in coming to India: high-level medical services with cheaper cost (one-fifth or one-sixth compared to the USA), English-speaking doctors, no waiting lists, and a legal 'loophole'. India still does not have any legal or self-imposed regulations for the approval of reproductive technologies and surrogacy, so no treatment is illegal at the moment. Patients or customers who are living in countries where such treatments are prohibited are ready to travel to have children by surrogacy, or by using a donor egg or donor-fertilized egg. It is reported that Indian surrogate mothers are paid around 100,000 to 200,000 INR (Indian rupees, about 2,500 to 5,000 USD), in contrast to the 15,000 USD paid for surrogacy in the USA. For Indian surrogate mothers, the nine months of 'rental service' brings them more than fifteen years of salary working as farmers or servants.

Not only having children, but also the body and the supply of body parts are highly commercialized and

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commoditized in the present globalised world. Is this another example of exploitation of third world women? Or is it a natural meeting of supply and demand in the global market economy? Through this phenomenon, we can find a dual image of women as givers and takers, fertile and infertile.

In 1986, the first Indian 'test-tube' baby, *Harsha*, was born through the collaboration of ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) and KEM (King Edward Memorial) hospital in Mumbai. This was eight years after the world's first 'test-tube' baby was born in the UK. The news dominated headlines all over India. A medical doctor recalled how proud she was of this achievement. 'I was really excited hearing the news', said the director of an infertility clinic in Pune, an economically advanced city near Mumbai. She was a post-graduate medical student and began working in the field of gynaecology at that time. She was impressed by the news that such medical techniques had become available, even in a developing country such as India.

The acceptance of new reproductive techniques among medical experts suggests that their use is also accepted in Indian society generally. When I interviewed a female doctor at one of the leading infertility clinics, she insisted that one of the most challenging and interesting things in this field was to create human life artificially. Some gynaecologists were praising a mother who became surrogate and delivered a baby for her own daughter. A doctor said to me, 'Now, a grandmother can deliver a grandchild! What a great mother she is to do such a thing for her daughter'. This positive tendency in India differs from the situation in Japan and some European societies, where certain reproductive techniques are basically banned. It is likely that the positive attitude toward surrogacy partly comes from the desirable social image of Indian women as mothers and givers. The mother is a symbol of fertility and utilizing this ability for someone who is not fertile is never seen as negative. Therefore, doctors as well as surrogate mothers themselves explain surrogacy with a discourse of dedication and voluntarism. At the same time, infertility is regarded as a problem that should be avoided.

A grandmother holds her new grandson, Maharashtra (Matsuo, 2006)

Infertile women are generally seen as negative, inauspicious and pitiful in Indian society. They are sometimes refused permission to participate in rituals celebrating women's reproductive ability, such as marriage ceremonies, ceremonies for pregnant women, and naming ceremonies for babies. It is believed that infertile women have 'evil eyes', and mothers are not willing to let their children near them. In contrast, the *sumaṅgalī*, married women with a living husband and children (especially sons), are applaudable and auspicious like the goddess *Laxmī* who brings wealth and happiness to the house. This ideal image shows that women are strongly expected to be fertile and givers to the family and society. Lacking this ability is a transgression against the normative view of womanhood in Indian society. In these circumstances, it appears crucial for infertile women to overcome their problems in order to maintain and construct their social relationships as wives, daughters-in-law and mothers-to-be. Not only foreigners, but also rural Indian women are ready to travel for treatment in bigger cities nowadays. However, there are many differences and gaps in the treatments afforded and provided.

Maya's experience is a good example. She is a 36-year-old woman of the *Maratha-Kumbi* 'farmer' caste living in a village in Maharashtra. She still does not have children after twenty years of marriage. Two years after marrying, she started a 'journey' to have children. First, she went to a private doctor of homeopathy near her village. He gave her tablets to 'make irregular menstruation regular'. Then she visited a government rural hospital in the central village of the region to investigate the cause of her problem. She had undergone blood testing, sonogram diagnosis and curettage. After some years of visiting the rural hospital and taking tablets, she decided to go to a bigger hospital in Pune for

further investigation. Again she went through all investigations and paid more than double or three times the couple's monthly income for just one visit. It is not easy for a small-scale farmer to go to the hospital in the city at regular intervals. She suspended going to hospitals for a couple of years, because of economic and schedule problems. Finally she was advised to visit an infertility clinic in Mumbai where she had curettage and laparoscope surgery. Her sister-in-law reported the good reputation of the clinic, so she and her husband travelled to Mumbai as a last resort. 'Just imagine how far it is!' said Maya. They tried to visit Mumbai once a month, but soon they realized that it was impossible for them to continue. All her doctors told her that pregnancy would be 'possible (*hoīl*)', but after more than ten years of hospital visits, she totally gave up the hope of having a baby through medical treatments.

While infertility has obviously become medicalized, Maya never had access to the 'highly advanced' technologies that are available to middle-class or upper-class Indians and foreigners. All she could do was go through investigations and simple hormonal treatments instead. The structural disjuncture is apparent not only among women, but also within a local community. To quote Arjun Appadurai's 'Modernity at Large', "the new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which can no longer be understood in terms of existing centre-periphery models." Rural women are directly connected to the global economy when they are givers/sellers, but it is not the same when they become 'consumers'.

Letters from parents with new born babies colour the infertility clinic (Matsuo, 2006)

'Ethnic' Fashion in India

Yoshio Sugimoto
National Museum of Ethnology

After the economic liberalization in 1991 by the Narasimha Rao government of the Indian National Congress, India has experienced rapid economic development. Mega cities like Bombay (Mumbai), Delhi, and Calcutta (Kolkata) now have middle classes. The middle classes are said to be a growing power in India, with their number now estimated as 200 to 300 million, or 20 to 30% of the total population.

Economic liberalization and the drastic change of lifestyle in Indian society, particularly in the middle classes, led to an explosion of consumer goods in the Indian market. The powerful 'new rich' have acquired conspicuous items such as imported cars, cell phones, internet access, satellite TVs and other signs of consumption. A forest of high-rise mega shopping malls can be found everywhere in the suburbs of metropolitan cities and in local cities. Even in small towns, middle classes have developed a lifestyle of consumption. Global popular culture is now in evidence throughout the country. An increasing number of shops or boutiques are offering popular designer-brand items that are 'ethnic' or imported. Here 'ethnic' fashion means what we call 'traditional' Indian costumes, such as *salwar kamizes*, *kurta-pyjamas*, *achikans*, and saris.

Sumati Nagrath has pointed out, "(t)here are serious political, social, and cultural implications that follow the labelling of a group as 'ethnic'" (Nagrath 2003). This phenomenon of 'turning the gaze on the "ethnic" other' has happened in most developing Asian countries. Although the term 'ethnic' in its original sense referred to the ethnic

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identity of a group, especially among Western observers, it has now come to imply "any mode of behavior or a material artifact that seems 'exotic' or primitive or merely 'non-western'".

The sari is the quintessential Indian female clothing. "Nothing identifies a woman as being Indian so strongly as the sari", although women also wear saris in many other South Asian countries. India's saris evolved out of a complex physical, historical and cultural environment that differs from region to region and community to community (Lynton 1995).

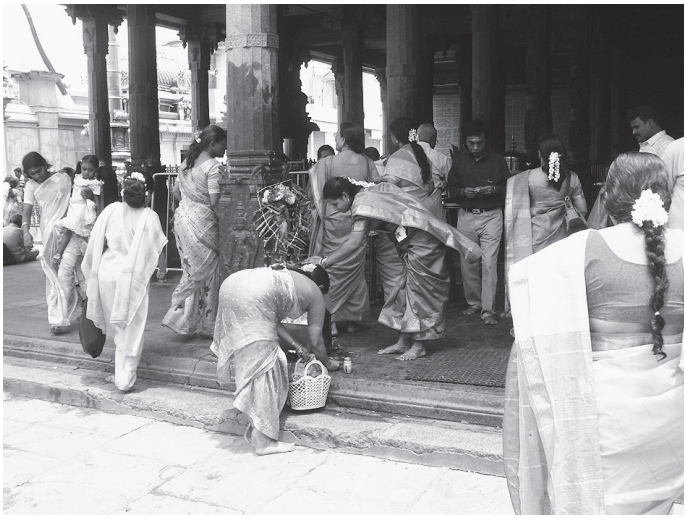
The sari is a length of cloth measuring from about four to eight meters by about 120 centimetres. The fabric is pleated at the waist and wound around to make the shape of a skirt or trousers, with the remaining few yards covering the upper half of the body. In 2003, there was a serious dispute about whether saris were fabrics or garments, concerning taxation problems.

Although characterized as unstitched cloth that merely drapes the body, the sari offers a dynamic fashion template in its form as a 'cloth-body'. "Unlike stitched garments that employ undifferentiated yardage, subsequently cut and tailored to conform to the body of wearer, the Indian sari is conceived as a garment even before it is woven or worn" (Kawlra 2005).

The history of the sari is obscure because historical records are lacking. However, we can safely assume that the overall South Asian phenomena of saris only began in the latter half of the 19th century under the influences of Indian nationalism. Modern sari styles were credited to Parsis in Bombay and the Tagore family in Calcutta in the 1880s.

As early as the 1870s, Jyotirindranath Tagore, brother of the Nobel Prize award winning poet Rabindranath Tagore, instigated one of the most valiant attempts to unite Indian dress with European dress without privileging one type over the other. He invented a national dress which combined both Indian and European features within a single garment. He felt that a change of clothing style could be a starting-point for political change. Unfortunately, Jyotirindranath's invention failed to fulfil either Indian or British notions of aesthetics. His brother, Rabindranath, similarly tried to invent a Hindu-Muslim mixed style. Ironically, the rather Hindu style of *dhoti* became the ultimate symbol of Swadeshi after the 1905 Bengal partition (Tarlo 1996).

Another important attempt to nationalize the sari as an Indian or South Asian phenomenon can be seen in popular paintings by Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906), who drew upper-class ladies as well as Hindu goddesses. Deeply inspired by the spectacular, Parsi (Parsee) Theatre that is the direct forerunner of cinema, Ravi Varma made Hindu goddesses wear saris from the 1880s. He mass-produced the paintings by lithographic print and mass-distributed them mainly in the sidewalk stalls and souvenir shops in front of



(above) Youngsters in Chennai (Sugimoto, 2007)
(below) Worshipping Gods at Kapaleeshwara, Chennai (Sugimoto, 2007)

Hindu temples.

The sari is often seen as an eternal and unchanging 'traditional' or 'ethnic' dress, but not only is its widespread popularity and standardisation of drape recent, but it is just as much subject to change in fashion as any other articles of clothing.

Dwyer noted that today's modern standardized dress style called *nivi*, with its clinging blouse, long petticoat and fine, sheer sari, is as modern as the movies. It was not until the stars of Bombay films started appearing in this dress that mainstream India became aware of it. The *choli* 'blouse' became popular at the end of the 19th century, and is now mandatory (Dwyer 2000).

Besides the sari, the *salwar kamiz* or Punjabi dress, originally a Muslim dress which became popular in north-west India, has also become a national — and even international — dress made popular by Princess Diana and designer Jemima Khan from the 1990s. It comprises the trinity of loose (*salwar*) or tight (*churidars*) trousers, a loose shirt (*kamiz*) and a scarf (*dupatta*). Compared to the sari, the *salwar kamiz* is easier to wear and is comfortable to move in. It has recently become the standard dress of college students, unmarried women, and working women.

Contemporary conceptions of non-Western fashion systems as traditional and unchanging fit the notions of 'other' described in Said's Orientalism. And the Indian dress system acquires the label of 'fashion industry' only through its adoption of Western norms and Western acceptability (Nagrath 2003). Even Indian designers have internalized the orientalized Western gaze, to create 'exotic' or 'ethnic' fashions at home in India.

Ritu Kumar began her career as a fashion designer from the late-1960s, and has dominated the field of India's fashion design for nearly four decades. Recently, the leading weekly magazine voted her as India's No.1 fashion designer ('Birds of Plume', *Outlook*, September 20, 2004). Inspired by the post-independence nationalist revival of Indian art and culture, particularly by the Crafts Movement led by Kamala Devi and Pupul Jayakar, in the 1960s she began to look towards surviving textile designs and techniques for her work in the field of fashion. Ritu Kumar was one of the first Indian fashion designers to blend traditional weaving techniques, fabric and embroidery with a modern perspective.

In 1994, Sushmita Sen was crowned as Miss Universe, and Aishwarya Rai as Miss World. Ritu Kumar provided them with Indian-taste dresses at the pageant, thus crowning herself as the leading designer of India. This was the golden moment of Indo-Western mixed fashion as well as India's beauty.

In the 1990s, the 'ethnic chic' fashions created by leading Indian designers targeted higher-class consumers, but since the beginning of the 21st century they have become popular among the new middle classes. Meanwhile, the sari has become more formal and gorgeous, and has gradually lost the status of a daily garment. Several leading sari retailers in T Nagar, a downtown commercial area of Chennai city, compete with each other to introduce new kinds of saris, such as the longest sari ever, reversible sari to be used in four ways, and detachable-*pallu* (end-piece of a sari) sari. In addition, the saris with *sequins* 'beads', *zardozis* 'embroidery', and other ornaments are preferred by designers.

In 2002, Ritu Kumar launched her prêt-à-porter line, The Ritu Kumar Label, for younger, more corporate women. However, she refuses to describe Indian clothes such as the sari and the *salwar-kamiz* as 'ethnic'. Ritu Kumar attempts to show how Western garments can be given an 'Indian' flavor, without exoticization or ethnicization of the Indian motifs. Nagrath has observed that a few Indian designers, such as Ritu Kumar and Rohit Bal, are now beginning a 'Counter-Orientalism' in Indian Fashion.

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Globalization and South Indian Music

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The music culture of South India is undergoing a major transformation with globalization as its backdrop. At first glance, Karnatak (South Indian classical) music today may appear vibrant and flourishing. The famous December music season in Chennai is attracting an ever-increasing number of people from other urban centers in India, and from foreign countries. Tours of Karnatak musicians overseas have also increased dramatically since the 1980s, and many have emigrated, returning to India only for performances. This movement of musicians has had a grave impact on music culture as a whole, and many musicians and patrons, especially of older generations, lament that its old charm and classicism are disappearing all too rapidly.

The large-scale movement of people is one of the tangible effects of globalization. The migration of Indian people and their settlement in North America and Europe has increased sharply since the 1960s. The US alone had more than 1.8 million people of Indian descent in 2000. The thirst for music of their homeland created opportunities for many Indian musicians to perform abroad. For such musicians, the increasing contact with the Western (and Westernized Indian) audiences has rattled the social hierarchy in music. While vocal music was not readily accessible without prior familiarity, the violin caught the attention of Western audiences for its unique holding position and playing technique, and the intricate rhythmic structure and virtuosity of percussionists received an enthusiastic reception. The accompanists often 'stole the show' from the vocalist, but they were expected to remain subservient to soloists. Such firsthand experiences led accompanists to reconsider their position in the musical and social hierarchy.

Such changes in awareness among classical musicians helped lead to the emergence of a new musical genre. A Chennai-based company started marketing a series of recordings labeled 'fusion' in 2000. The term refers primarily to a new genre of music in which the familiar compositions of Karnatak music are rendered by various combinations of Indian and Western instruments, with a synthesized accompaniment. While conservative musicians and patrons of Karnatak music may criticize fusion music as 'cheapening' or 'destroying' the age-old tradition, the commercial success of these recordings went well beyond even the expectation of their producers.

The biggest live event for fusion music has been the annual music festival at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai, one of the elite universities that trains IT

A fusion band at wedding reception in Chennai (Terada, 2006)

engineers for the global market. With generous funding from multinational corporations such as Sony and Levi's, the IIT festival has sponsored concerts by many prominent groups including the internationally famous *Shakti.* Led by British guitarist John McLaughlin, the group featured Indian musicians and introduced them to Western audiences. Their performance in Chennai also inspired many college students and young aspiring musicians in India, including some who later became fusion musicians. Today fusion music is rapidly replacing classical and film music as background sound in hotels, restaurants and shopping centers. Even diehard fans of classical music may discretely play fusion CDs (while driving their cars, for example).

The thrust behind producing fusion music is not only the music industry's desire to create a profitable genre for domestic and potentially foreign markets, but also the musicians' shifting motivations and varying responses to globalizing society. Most fusion musicians have strong backgrounds in classical music, and some even come from illustrious lineages. Normally, their privileged position would facilitate their bid to pursue a career in music. So, why do they risk their chances by playing the fusion music that conservative musicians and patrons harshly criticize?

Virtually all fusion musicians believe that classical music is too old-fashioned for young people, who are increasingly urban (and global) in life-style and sensibility. To attract them, they select familiar compositions from the classical repertoire (*Vatapi Ganapatim*, for example) and perform them with a medium to fast tempo, simple harmonization, and a mostly synthesized accompaniment. The best-selling fusion CDs, such as *Dream Journey* by saxophonist, Kadri Gopalnath, represent an old tradition in distinctly urban garb.

Other fusion musicians regard the image of classical music as too socially and religiously exclusive. Traditionally, South Indian music has been a devotional path through which composers have been deified by musicians and listners. The fusion musician Ghatam Karthick, for example, questions why such 'saint-composers' cannot be listened to simply as great composers. Exaggerated vocal interjections and facial expressions among musicians and listeners are used to express their intoxication with music, but have made the classical music circle more like a religious cult, thus alienating others. To create classical music without overt religious connotations, Karthick writes new songs based on the principles of classical music instead of arranging pre-existing classical masterpieces imbued with strong Hindu devotionalism.

Through his fusion music, Karthick also challenges social inequality and discrimination in music. Percussionists are long since deeply dissatisfied with the pyramid-like power structure in classical music, because they find themselves discriminated against in terms of performance fees and general treatment. He aims to raise the accompanists' status in classical music by becoming successful with his own instrumental ensemble.

Fusion music in India is directed mostly to the domestic market, but some individuals, such as Rangaswamy Parthasarathy, a veteran producer and composer of Tamil films, sees its potential for export. Through his New York based company, he produces and distributes recordings of Indian music for Indians based in North America and others interested in Indian music, including Ilaiyaraja's *How To Name It* (1984), the most innovative (and controversial) experimentation prior to the emergence of fusion music. More recently, he produced *Resonance* by the Madras String Quartet in 2000. The recording has eight classical compositions arranged for string quartet, and merges Western and Indian traditions of classical music. The CD jacket juxtaposes four Western string instruments against the background of a huge Hindu temple. Such strategic juxtaposition was obviously meant to lure those in the West who are interested in Indian or world music.

Western music, popular or classical, has not spread widely in India in its original forms, but has greatly influenced Indian music. The incorporation of Western musical traditions was initiated in the early 19th century by courtly kings, such as Saraboji II (1798-1832) of Tanjavur, who were eager to learn Western culture, including music. Western instruments were first introduced to India for ceremonial and military bands, and were gradually adapted into local traditions. Many Western instruments have penetrated deeply into classical music, and an instrument like the violin has become so prevalent that some may think it is of Indian origin. Today, it is not rare to see a concert featuring a saxophone, clarinet, mandolin, or guitar.

The emergence of fusion music since

2000 is a recent manifestation of interest in Western culture, but also expresses ambivalence, and perhaps even insecurity, among musicians trained in classical music. While stressing the universality of their musical tradition, Karnatak musicians are concerned about the reception of their music outside of South India. Some have been found modifying their repertoire or manner of performance to ensure positive responses when touring abroad. Others proudly announce their successful collaboration with non-Indian musicians. A similar uncertainty looms behind the emergence of fusion music. Although classical music has always been supported by a relatively small group of patrons and fans, musicians today are concerned about the relevance of classical music to younger audiences.

The unexpected prominence of fusion music derives from the changing dynamics of classical music and the resulting ambivalence of its practitioners. The popularity of fusion music brings aspects of classical music to the wider public, but may significantly alter the social organization of the musicians who have sustained classical music.

Nepali Labor Emigration and its Implications

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National Museum of Ethnology

The author is associate professor at Minpaku. His recent research themes include transnational Nepali emigrants in Japan, India, Hong Kong, and the UK, ethnic activism, and the political transformation of Nepal. His recent publications include 'From Tika *to* Kata*?: Ethnic movements among the Magars in an age of globalization' in H. Ishii et al. (eds.)* Social Dynamics in Northern South Asia, Vol.1: Nepalis Inside and Outside Nepal *(New Delhi: Manohar 2007), and he is a co-editor of* Transnational Migration in East Asia: Japan in a Comparative Focus (Senri Ethnological Reports 77).

When I visited Nepal at the end of 2007 after an interval of one year, Kathmandu was animated with an unprecedented economic boom. The value of real-estate had jumped and the number of motorcycles and cars in the city was significantly greater, due to competing loans supplied by newly established banks. Department stores with expensive imported goods were mushrooming one after another. And they were flooded with upper and middle class Nepali families. This economic boom might be the recent effect of increasing numbers of tourists, whose number recovered to the level seen before the Maoist insurgency (1996–2006). In addition, there was a special economic demand from the stationing of UNMIN (United Nations Missions in Nepal). They brought enormous international funds and many staff into Nepal in order to restore peace after the cease-fire of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). However, a more crucial factor is the increase of labor emigration from among the middle and lower socio-economic classes. As foreign laborers in other countries, the emigrants have increased cash flow at home with their remittances. The effects have appeared widely in urban markets.

The number of labor emigrants was about 200,000 in 2007, not including the massive flow of people to India by land. The main destination of Nepali labor emigrants using airplanes are Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. This indicates an average of about 550 emigrants leaving from the airport at Kathmandu each day. The Malaysian government officially only opened their labor market to Nepal beginning in 2001, yet the number of Nepali labor emigrants in Malaysia reached about 190,000 by December 2005. This was the second largest number after that of Indonesian emigrants to Malaysia. The most popular destinations among Nepali labor emigrants changed recently from Malaysia to Qatar, reflecting the relatively low wages in Malaysia, and the construction boom in Qatar.

Since 1985, I have conducted research in a village of the Magar people. Labor emigration has also been important here. In 2000, a young man named Daniya visited Saudi Arabia for the first time from this village. Unfortunately, he returned home just three months later due to illness, even though he planned to stay there for two years. Although he could not earn more than his travel expenses, he could acquire knowledge of the 'outside world' through his experience of travel and working abroad. Such knowledge, though trivial for frequent travellers, includes the practical knowledge of medical checks, passports, visas, airplanes, monetary values and exchange rates, and so on. No one in his village had acquired such knowledge before. Since then, Daniya

has been pleased to guide young villagers and the neighbors who are hoping to work abroad. Now he is helping them to travel abroad, and working as an agent has become a side business, alongside agriculture. He visits Kathmandu with his young clients twice a month.

During my stay at Kathmandu, I met Daniya and one of his clients at a guest house near a new bus terminal. As soon as Daniya saw me, he began talking fast. "Yesterday, this young Magar boy failed to get on his airplane. But I could get him a seat on tonight's flight of Qatar Airlines, at the city office. There was an additional charge of cash equal to fifty dollars for reissuing a reservation." When Daniya saw the boy off at the gate of the airport the previous day, he had instructed the boy that he should line up at a Qatar Airline counter, where the trade mark of a 'deer' design is shown. However, the boy had somehow kept standing in the line of people for another airline with a flight bound for Delhi, and missed his flight for Doha.

I asked the boy, "Why didn't you ask someone in front of you if it was the line for Qatar Airlines?" Unabashed, he replied, "I asked the guy in front of me, as you are saying. He told me, 'Yes, indeed.' So he also missed the flight to Doha like me." I was sorry, but I couldn't help laughing. I said to Daniya, "This must be the first case for you." Daniya replied with a smile. "No, there have been six or seven similar cases, among the forty-six people I've sent abroad in the last six years." Then he made the boy write a letter to his father asking him to pay back to Daniya the cash equal to fifty dollars.

Today, travel expenses for legal foreign labor emigration, including miscellaneous expenses, come to about USD 2,900, regardless of the destination. Young villagers borrow this amount, then get unskilled jobs in foreign countries. They earn approximately USD 485 to USD 580 per month and usually stay abroad for two or three years. Daniya takes a commission of USD 97 to USD 194 per person. As the above case of missing a flight shows, the young villagers are, at first woefully ignorant of modern or urban systems. However, they gradually acquire knowledge of the 'outside world' through journeys and working experiences, like Daniya did, and come back to Nepal.

When we talk about foreign labor emigrants, we often pay attention only to the economic effect of their remittance. But labor emigration also offers villagers experience of the 'outside world' and opportunities to acquire knowledge. They may directly experience the world outside of Nepal without ever experiencing Kathmandu. For long-term human development in rural Nepal, the knowledge and experience gained abroad is more significant than the earning of short-lived cash.

Labor emigrants wearing matching caps of a manpower agent at Kathmandu airport, January 2008 (Minami, 2008)

Globalization has penetrated deeply into all corners of the world. I am very much impressed by the possibility of improving 'capability' among labor emigrants through their experience abroad. (Amartya Sen regards 'capability' as having substantive freedoms to choose a life one has reason to value.) In the example above, Daniya returned home as a cosmopolitan, who knew the world outside and acquired mobility, connections, and a network of information. This cultural capital allowed him to send many clients or followers abroad. An advantage of anthropological research on global migration lies in its ability to reveal the process of involvement of an individual or a local society in globalization.

During the Maoist insurgency, for ten years, it was said that young men went abroad in order to avoid getting recruited by the People's Liberation Army, while young women and children had no choice but to join the PLA. It is an ironic paradox that anti-capitalist and gender-neutral Maoist activism has accelerated capitalistic global labor emigration for males only, and it has consequently brought globalization to villages in Nepal. Now that the civil war is over, labor emigration will increase, not only among men but also among women. In the near future, we might witness a feminization of emigration from Nepal.

Exhibition

The Profound Earth: Ethnic Life and Crafts of China

Special Exhibition
March 13 – June 3, 2008

China is a multiethnic state. While its fifty-five ethnic minority groups account for only 8% of the country's vast population of 1.3 billion, each of them has been developing unique customs and arts of living since time immemorial. Inhabiting the peripheries of the Chinese civilization, these ethnic cultures have also taken shape through selective adoption of various elements of the *Han* Chinese culture. This special exhibition is designed to introduce China's diverse ethnic groups and their cultures, with a particular emphasis on Southwest China.

The first floor of the Special Exhibition Hall is dedicated to the *Zhuang*, the largest minority group in China with a population of 16 million. A life-sized reconstruction of a distinctive multi-storied stilt house (called *ganlan* in Chinese, the name for houses previously built on stilts) is the exhibition centerpiece.

The ground floor inside the house is used for keeping livestock such as water buffalos, pigs and hens, and for storing farming implements. The second floor is the living space for people.

The *Zhuang* traditional lifestyle shown is remarkable for its sustainable, resource-recycling aspects: the use of food-scraps to feed livestock, and the use of methane gas (biogas) produced by the excrement of humans and livestock, for lamps and a gas ring.

Han Chinese influences are apparent in several aspects of the building: an emphasis on the centerline connecting the front gate and the altar, the construction method, the use of Chinese characters, and in the design of furniture. We can also find the influences of modernization in the use of concrete building blocks for the outer walls, and household appliances such as lights, color television, a stereo, and a DVD recorder. This reproduction was modeled after an 18-year-old farm house that actually exists in a village in Jingxi, a county located in the west of Guangxi Autonomous Region.

Dance of ethnic minorities at the opening ceremony

Inside and around this house, the exhibition portrays scenes of the everyday world of the *Zhuang* people. The displays show annual events, a puppet show (*muouxi* in Chinese), and the periodic market.

The annual events shown are the *Chunjie* 'New Year's festival', the *San yue san* '3rd day of the 3rd lunar month, a singing festival or sweeping of the tomb of their ancestors', the *Zhongyuan jie* '14th or 15th day of the 7th lunar month, a festival of the dead' and *Zhongqiu jie* 'full-moon lantern

New Column

My Field of Dreams

If all practical restrictions magically vanished....

I am a botanist who approaches anthropology at walking speed across the fields where people grow fruit and vegetables. My 'field of dreams' is a place at the edge of forest where I can sit among wild plants, looking at them, and at the same time looking at their cultivated cousins nearby. The forest is a place where many others have been before, where nature has provided a nursery for human activities.

In my mind's eye, I often return to a childhood that has been a starting point for all my journeys. I return to my own nursery, a garden with a jungle at the far end, and chickens in their own house in the jungle. For this particular dream, I recently found a possible source in the edge of a forest in northern Myanmar. I was walking with an interpreter along a muddy cattle track between the forest and a large open area of rice ponds. On the slope below, between the forest and the fields, we found a man sitting next to a bamboo hut, constructing a long cylindrical fish-trap out of lengths of split bamboo.

With no obvious signs of surprise, he let us sit next to him and ask questions about the wild plants that interested me. He knew all about them — where to find them, when to go there to collect the fruit used to bait traps, and how to set the traps to catch wild chickens and other birds of jungle or field. Activities like these may have been the first steps that led to the domestication of chickens, and eventually to those chickens that I kept in my childhood.

Our informant was comfortable and confident in his vast knowledge of the local environment. As we spoke, the fish trap took shape in his hands — a miracle of skill with natural materials, and also a miracle of deadly purpose. The farmer is also a hunter. Now I dream of returning to that place and moment, to continue the

festival on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month'. The *muouxi* puppet show from Jingxi county is considered so valuable that local authorities have requested recognition of this show as an intangible cultural asset.

Meanwhile, the second-floor exhibition focuses on the *Miao*, *Yi*, *Bai*, *Naxi*, *Jingpo*, *Yao*, *Wa* and other ethnic minorities. Their unique and sophisticated crafts are presented in three sections titled 'Costume', 'Manufacturing' and 'Entertainment'. The 'Costume' section displays clothes and accessories for both sexes and different age groups. Exhibits include gorgeous silver accessories, the *Miao*'s ornately embroidered costume, and the outfit of mountain people engaged in slash-and-burn farming. The latter has a short skirt and pair of gaiters for leg protection. All of these artifacts epitomize the distinctive characteristics and sense of beauty of each ethnic minority. The 'Manufacturing' section emphasizes craftsmanship and artistic excellence by exhibiting silverware, lacquer ware, fabrics, embroideries, wooden works, bamboo works, metal works, toys and talismans. This section also reproduces a silverware workshop of the *Miao*, to show how their silver accessories are made. The 'Entertainment' section presents a *Dai hulusi* 'gourd flute', the *Miao lusheng* 'wind instrument with multiple bamboo pipes' and other traditional musical instruments such as wooden drums and bronze drums, as well as the *Dongba* script, and *Dongba* pictograms written by *Naxi* priests. By featuring the life and crafts of ethnic minorities in Southwest China, the special exhibition aims to demonstrate their cultural richness and diversity.

Shigeyuki Tsukada
Chief Organizer
National Museum of Ethnology

conversation, and to accept his invitation to visit some other places he knows, together, on foot. In this dream, the interpreter is also essential: I cannot learn the local language of every place I visit. My botanical subject has been carried by birds who have been free spirits, crossing natural and human boundaries all over Southeast Asia. To follow the plants, I will always need local interpreters and guides to navigate the cultivated and wild environments. The guides are usually people who have lived in one area for a long time. Through them, I can also learn some fragments of local history, and how particular cultivated and wild environments have been made and kept or lost.

My other dream is to somehow piece together these fragments of experience and history into something coherent — something that might be useful to others who wish to explore the jungle. At best, my publications will be like slash marks on the trees that mark a trail. Perhaps it is no accident that paper is made from the bark of trees.

Author with a 'flying taro' in a cloud forest on Mt. Popa, Myanmar

Peter J. Matthews
National Museum of Ethnology

Conference

Present Situation of Cultural Resources Among Ethnic Groups in Southeast China

International Symposium
March 13, 2008

Ethnic minorities in Southeast China have their own abundant cultural heritage. Their cultures, both tangible and intangible, have changed constantly and served various strategic purposes. For this international symposium, we invited four researchers, including museum directors, from Guangxi and Yunnan, Southwest China, who specialize in management, preservation and utilization of ethnic cultural resources and institutions. During the symposium, the Chinese scholars, together with fourteen participants in Japan, examined specific situations in each province or region. They discussed the development and present-day utilization of cultural resources by ethnic minorities in Southwest China, as well as challenges that need to be addressed in the years to come.

Three main subjects were discussed:
(i) The function and relationship of cultural resources among government, scholars and people — In eco-museums in Guangxi, what kind of cooperation in management has emerged among the three parties, and how was it established?
(ii) The use of cultural resources for tourism development and the production of merchandise in relation to today's economic

Present Situation of Cultural Resources among Ethnic Groups in Southeast China. International Symposium, March 13, 2008

globalization.
(iii) Approaches and responsibilities for continuous conservation of cultural resources in the face of today's modernization — Who has responsibility now, and what kind of system is suitable for allocating responsibility?

Our presenters and presentations from China were:

Qin Pu, Director of the Bureau of Cultural Relics, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regional government: 'Responsibility and obligation for continuous conservation of cultural resources of minority groups in developing modern societies: Practice of "construction of the eco-museum in Guangxi 1+10 program"'. Qin explained that an eco-museum is completely different from an archival museum. It should be based on an existing village, and a network among villagers, scholars and government is required. The eco-museum may also serve as a research center.

Li Qianbin, Director of Guizhou Museum: 'Analysis of the silver-decorated culture of the Miao people'. Li analyzed the production, classification, and functions of silver-decorated culture in central China, and recent changes in the silver decorations of the Miao.

Wu Weifeng, Director of the Museum of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region: 'Features and development of an outdoor exhibition of the Museum of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region'. Wu explained the social functions of the outdoor exhibition of his museum.

Xie Mohua, Director of Yunnan Nationalities Museum: 'Conservation of cultural diversity: Research and practice in Yunnan'. Xie showed traditional village culture and folklore, and explained that the Ethnic Culture Learning Pavilion, Ethnic Cultural and Ecological Village, and Ethnic Cultural and Ecological Museum, all have problems related to development and conservation.

Shigeyuki Tsukada
Convener
National Museum of Ethnology

Information

Awards

Five Minpaku researchers have recently been given prestigious awards for their exceptional academic and social contributions:

Nobuhiro Kishigami (Department of Advanced Studies in Anthropology) received a Canadian Prime Minister's Award for Publishing in recognition of his recent publication: *Canada Inuit no Shokubunka to Shakaihenka (Food Culture and Social Change of Canadian Inuit)* (In Japanese, Kyoto: Sekaishisosha 2007). This award, established by the Canadian government, is given to excellent publications concerning Canada in Japanese (April 2007).

Ritsuko Kikusawa (Department of Advanced Studies in Anthropology) received a JSPS Prize from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science for her diachronic studies of Austronesian languages and cultures. This prize is established in order to recognize and support young researchers with rich creativity and superlative research ability (March 3, 2008).

Musashi Tachikawa (Professor Emeritus) received a Medal with Purple Ribbon from the Japanese government for his life-long contribution to Indian and Buddhist studies. The Medal with Purple Ribbon is a prestigious award given to scholars and artists who have made a prominent contribution to science and art (April 29, 2008).

Mikiharu Itoh (Professor Emeritus) received a Kumagusu Minakata Award from the city of Tanabe where the scholar of folklore and natural history, Kumagusu Minakata (1867-1941), lived for close to forty years. The Kumagusu Minakata Award is given to scholars who have made a major contribution in the two fields in which Minakata specialized (May 10, 2008).

Shigeharu Tanabe (Professor Emeritus) received a JASCA Award from the Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology for his prominent contribution to anthropological studies. This award, established in 2005, is given to an anthropologist whose publications were most excellent during the last five years (May 31, 2008).

In memoriam

With regret we note the following:

Takuji Takemura, Professor Emeritus. Social anthropology,

China. Minpaku 1974-1994; d. January 28, 2008.

Paul Kazuhisa Eguchi, Professor Emeritus. Oral literature and material culture of the Fulfulde-speaking people, Cameroon. Minpaku 1974-2004; d. June 13, 2008.

New Staff

Norio Niwa
Assistant Professor, Center for Research Development

Niwa studied social anthropology at Tokyo Metropolitan University where he earned his PhD, and then worked as a research fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science at Hosei University. In his dissertation he examined the relationships between traditional culture and economic development among cooperative societies in the Republic of Fiji. One of his research interests is the ethno-history of Solomon islanders' communities in Fiji. He is now comparing recent political instability in various parts of Oceania and especially in Melanesia.

Yoko Ueba
Assistant Professor, Research Center for Cultural Resources

Ueba studied ethno-arts and textiles at Osaka University of Arts. Her research focus is the handicrafts of pastoral people. Her first field work in the mid-1990s explored the embroidery and weaving of Rabari in India. Since the early 2000s, her research interest has shifted to ethnology and technology. Her PhD thesis title was 'Technical and social aspects of the handicrafts of Rabari people' (in Japanese, 2002). She has published a book, *Textiles and Rituals Among the Pastoral Rabari of India* (in Japanese, Kyoto: Showado 2006).

Visiting Scholars

Henk Vinken
Fellow ECCS, European Centre for Comparative Surveys, Germany

Vinken is a sociologist (PhD 1997, Tilburg University, Netherlands) active in comparative research on cultures, values, and generations. In 2004 he co-edited the volume *Comparing Cultures* (Leiden: Brill Publishers). Recently he has published on the misfit of Western-origin values-survey concepts in East Asian comparative surveys. He has been a visiting scholar at several universities in Germany, the USA, and Japan. At Minpaku he is helping prepare a book on civic engagement in contemporary Japan. A part of this book will focus on emerging forms of engagement outside organizations. Such forms allow people to enjoy engagement without the strings attached to long-term commitments. Writing on this has led him to several places in Japan to interview those who resist consumerism by offering street performances, passing out flyers, creating shopping free zones, and more.

(November 1, 2007 – August 31, 2008)

Yang Guocai
Professor, School of the Humanities of Yunnan Nationalities University, China

Yang's research in ethnology and sociology is focused on

women and ethnic minorities in Yunnan and other provinces in southwestern China. She is a chief editor of the *Journal of Yunnan Nationalities University.*Yang studied sociology at the Department of Philosophy of Sichuan University and the Department of Philosophy at Xiangtan University. Her publications include: *Lifestyles of China's Minority Nationalities* (Lanzhou: Gansu Science and Technology Press, 1990), *Women of the Bai Nationality* (Kunming: Yunnan Education Press, 1995), and *The Traditional Ethics of the Bai Nationality and Modern Civilization* (Peking: China Modern Publishing House, 1999) (all in Chinese). She has also led many research projects.

(January 29 – September 2, 2008)

C. Krydz Ikwuemesi
Senior Lecturer, University of Nigeria, Nigeria

Ikwuemesi studied at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where he is now Senior Lecturer in painting and art theory. He is the initiator of art groups such as the Pan-African Circle of Artists (PACA) and the Art Republic. He has participated in workshops and creative residencies in Europe and America and is the Director of *Afrika Heritage* (the PACA Biennale) and *Overcoming Maps* (PACA's Study Tour of Africa). His ongoing exhibition/ research project (funded by Total Petroleum and Nigeria's National Gallery), '20th Century Art: A Story from Nigeria' will culminate in a major exhibition and publication in Nigeria in December 2008. Ikwuemesi has worked extensively on the traditional arts of the Igbo of

eastern Nigeria and now seeks to compare Igbo cosmology with Ainu culture. One of his forthcoming articles will compare Nigerian and Japanese contemporary art.

(February 1 – November 30, 2008)

Choi In-Tag
Professor, Dong-A University, Korea

Choi completed his BA with a major in Japanese studies at Keimyung University in Korea (Dae-Gu city) in 1985. After graduation, he went to Tokyo Metropolitan University for his MA and PhD in social anthropology. After teaching social anthropology at Miyazaki Municipal University, he returned to Korea in 2001 to teach Japanese language and culture at Dong-A University. In Japan, he has conducted research on island societies in Sugashima, Mie and Okinawa. Recently, he began comparing island and coastal societies in both Japan and Korea. His recent publications include 'A comparative study of the sparseness of rural population in Korea and Japan' (in Korean, 2005), 'Okumura Enshin's religious activity and Dong-In Lee when Korea ports opened' (in Korean, 2006), and 'The realm of folk customs in Okinawa, and the female principle' (in Korean, 2007).

(March 12, 2008 – February 10, 2009)

Publications

The following were published by the museum during the period from January to June 2008:

◊ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 32(2). Contents: T. Matsuyama, 'The 'Exhibition of Australian Aboriginal Art' of 1965 and its anthropological background', and K. Watanabe, 'Formation and reformation of grazing camps: Flexible relationships among the sheep herders of east Nepal'.

◊ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 32(3). Contents: A. Shimizu, 'Indigenous peoples, colonialism and "decolonisation": The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in international law', and M. Kaneko, 'A case study of interethnic marriage and *adat* (custom) in Pubian society, Lampung province, Indonesia'.

◊ *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 32(4). Contents: N. Kishigami, 'A cultural anthropological study of subsistence activities with special focus on indigenous hunting, fishing and gathering in the Arctic regions'; E. Fukui, 'The aged who "do not know the tradition": The present situation of the aged on Aneityum island, Vanuatu, and a critique of social constructionism', and H. Yang, '"Return of the Army in Triumph" by Badaraqu, Ordos, Yeke Juu league'.

◊ Terada, Y. (ed.) *Music and Society in South Asia: Perspectives from Japan*. Senri Ethnological Studies, No.71, 284pp., March 2008.

◊ Konagaya, Y., S. Bayaraa and I. Lkhagvasuren (eds.) *A.D. Simukov Works about Mongolia and for Mongolia vol. 3 (part 1)*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.74, 594 pp., *(part 2)*, Senri Ethnological Reports, No.75, 327pp., March 2008.

◊ Nagano, Y. and S.G. Karmay (eds.) *A Lexicon of Zhangzhung and Bonpo Terms*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.76, 323pp., March 2008.

◊ Yamashita, S., M. Minami, D.W. Haines, and J.S. Eades (eds.) *Transnational Migration in East Asia: Japan in a Comparative Focus*. Senri Ethnological Reports, No.77, 208pp., March 2008.

SELF and OTHER

Portraits from Asia and Europe

Asia and Europe Museums Network (ASEMUS) Travelling Exhibition

National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Sept. 11 – Nov. 25, 2008

MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter

The Newsletter is published 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.

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

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