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# MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter

## Special Theme: Totem Poles

On June 24, 2020, a 9.85-meter-tall totem pole was raised at Minpaku, as part of a project to commemorate the Museum's 50th anniversary in 2024. Figures of an eagle, *Sisiutl* (legendary double-headed sea serpent), grizzly bear, and salmon are carved on this red cedar pole. It is the work of Bill Henderson, a master carver of the Kwakwaka'wakw living in Campbell River, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and his fellow carvers, Junior, Greg, and Johnathan Henderson.

In 2020, humanity faced a major crisis: the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Japanese government declared a state of emergency on April 7, 2020, which continued until May 25. Museums across Japan began to reopen with restrictions after the state of emergency was lifted, and as the first wave of COVID-19 subsided. Minpaku was closed from February 28 to June 17, 2020. On June 18, the Museum reopened with restrictions, and the new pole was raised on June 24, providing a welcome symbol of continuity and rejuvenation for the Museum.

The articles in this issue explain the nature and significance of totem poles, the modern history of their production, and the symbolic meanings of animals and other creatures carved on them among Northwest Coast People in Canada. (KISHIGAMI Nobuhiro, theme editor)

## A totem pole of Northwest Coast People in Canada

**KISHIGAMI Nobuhiro**

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The collective term "Northwest Coast People" refers to Indigenous peoples living along Pacific coastal areas from southern Alaska to the western coast of Canada and around California state in the United States. They include 13 Indigenous groups such as the Tlingit (now called "Klinkit"), Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakwaka'wakw, Coast Salish, Nuu-Chah-Nulth, and Makah, with a current total population of approximately 170,000 in Canada.

The relatively warm and rainy coastal region has abundant forest and fishery resources due to the North Pacific and Alaska Currents. The archetype of current culture among Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast is thought to have developed approximately 2,500 years ago. This culture is regarded as exceptional as permanent residence developed together with complex social organization and ritual despite a hunting and fishing way of life. Franz Boas, known as the "father of American anthropology," conducted research in northern Vancouver Island in collaboration with a Tlingit-English Canadian, George Hunt, and wrote the ethnography of Kwakwaka'wakw. This work led to Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast becoming very well-known in the academic circles of cultural anthropology.

The eye-catching splendor of

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\* "Potlatch" in English is a term borrowed from Chinook jargon, and refers to a rich ceremonial feast where gifts are presented by the host as a display of wealth or to raise social prestige. Totems are animals, plants or other things that serve as emblems of a family, clan or other group. Poles with such emblems carved on them are "totem poles".

Northwest Coast culture can be regarded as a result of the fur trade. Trading the fur of sea otters and other animals with Westerners brought the Northwest Coast peoples vast wealth from approximately the 1780s to the first half of the 1800s. Using this wealth, they began to hold increasingly large rituals accompanied by feasts such as potlatches.\* These became more frequent during the first half of the 19th century and numerous ritual items such as wooden masks and rattles were produced. People learned to use iron axes, saws, chisels, and knives that were newly obtained through trade with Westerners and Russians, and this allowed them to create larger totem poles,\* canoes, and long houses. Red cedar poles engraved with human and animal figures are called totem poles, and range in size from about the height of a person to more than ten meters.



New totem pole at Minpaku, raised in 2020. (Saito, 2021)

In terms of function, totem poles can be classified as house posts, house frontal poles, grave markers, mortuary posts, territorial markers, welcome figures, and shame poles. Internal house posts are often pillars that support the roof. A house frontal pole is also called an entrance pole, and is a large totem pole erected at the center of the front wall of a house. Some actually have a hole for a door and serve as the entrance.

A memorial pole is a totem pole raised by the chief of a clan consisting of several extended families or an extended family to memorialize a deceased parent, grandparent, or ancestor or to commemorate a special event. Totem poles related to the deceased are grave markers and mortuary posts. A grave marker is a memorial pole at a grave. A mortuary post is a totem pole that also supports a coffin at top, which in fact holds a deceased person. Other types of totem pole include territorial markers to indicate specific spaces occupied/owned by extended families in various regions, welcome figures that welcome visitors from outside a village, and shame poles that urge people to return a favor to a specific chief or his extended family or fulfill the duty of holding a potlatch.

Totem poles of all these types have figures of people, animals, and imaginary creatures carved on them. Particularly common motifs are clan and/or family crests such as the thunderbird (an imaginary monster bird), *Sisiutl* (a legendary double-headed sea serpent), raven, eagle, wolf, killer whale, bear, beaver, frog, salmon, Pacific halibut and so on. These animals and imaginary creatures are regarded as clan or family ancestors or special beings that helped the ancestors. They are passed down through generations as crests of each clan and/or extended family.

The Canadian government banned potlatch rituals between 1885 and 1951 as part of its cultural assimilation policy for Indigenous peoples. Producing totem poles for potlatches was therefore suspended. When the movement to restore traditional culture began in the 1950s, however, production resumed under the guidance of Mungo Martin (chief of the Kwakwaka'wakw) and others. Universities and public museums in the Province of British Columbia supported the resumption and restoration activities. Totem poles, then, became spiritual symbols of the peoples that represent their modern culture.

Contemporary Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast raise totem poles to commemorate their parents and grandparents, the opening or reconstruction of local schools, hospitals, town halls, and band offices (the council

offices of each Indigenous group), and donate them to sister cities and neighboring Indigenous groups to display friendship. They also create totem poles based on requests by domestic and overseas museums and galleries and individual collectors. Totem poles are exhibited at the American Museum of Natural History (New York), the Canadian Museum of History (suburbs of Ottawa), the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver), and many other museums of natural history and ethnology around the world.

Making totem poles is an important income source for Indigenous artists (master carvers), and the overall production of totem poles, canoes, masks, and other works of art is now a key industry (alongside fishing, forestry, and tourism) for Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast of Canada.



Totem poles in the Exhibition Hall, carved by Norman Tait (left), Richard Hunt (center), and Tony Hunt (right). Carved in 1976. (Minpaku, n.d.)

## Potlatch and totem pole under colonial control in Canada

TACHIKAWA Akihito

*Mie University*

Massive and colorful totem poles standing tall in the centers of large cities such as Vancouver and Victoria on the Pacific coast of Canada are important tourist attractions, drawing visitors from far distant areas. An elder says, however, that totem poles of the past were not so large and colorful as they are today, with edges simply painted in one color of black or dark green. Originally, a totem pole was carved as a post for a house, a grave column to remember a deceased person, or as a memorial to symbolize an event. According to the elder quoted above, the most numerous totem poles were those built as decorative posts for houses. These likely stood only about three meters tall with plain colors, and would have been sufficient for peoples' purposes in the past. Not until the latter half of the 18th century did Indigenous peoples establish close contact with Europeans: from then they started carving totem poles as tall as ten meters and started decorating

them colorfully. The effects of contact with Europeans can be divided broadly between technical and physical influences, and political and economic influences.

Technical and physical influences include, above all, the availability of iron tools. These facilitated each task and helped to accelerate all production processes. It is also clear that paint brought by Europeans enabled production of totem poles with brighter and more diverse colors.

During the first half of the 19th century, production of totem poles reached its peak. Entering the second half of the century, political and economic influences led to a new function for totem poles. They started being made to display the authority of the host holding ceremonial potlatch feasts.

In the late 19th century, the most significant influence reaching Indigenous communities on the Pacific coast of Canada was the

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Hereditary chief Harold Sewid at a potlatch opening ceremony (OHMINE Minami, 2009)



introduction of capitalistic economic relations. Indigenous people became actively engaged in the commercial salmon fishery, one of various modern industries established in the region. This led to some changes in Indigenous communities. Indigenous society originally had a hierarchy of three strata, including nobles, commoners, and slaves. Some commoners subsequently became wealthy through the modern industry and became, as it were, “parvenus”. These parvenus displayed their power by establishing a new rank to raise their social status and using this status to practice a ceremony called a potlatch, which was previously allowed only for nobles. Nobles then attempted to hold potlatches of a larger scale to compete against the parvenus. At this stage, numerous totem poles were carved to decorate the potlatches.

This renaissance of the Indigenous people, however, was short-lived. The Canadian government of the era attempted to prohibit the practice of their traditional culture to raise their living standard to a level equivalent to that of the Europeans. The government regarded potlatches as a particular problem. Potlatches were ceremonies to celebrate turning points in people’s lives, and were intended as “rite of passage” to begin with. Just as we hold weddings and funerals in Japan today, Indigenous people of the Pacific Coast of Canada hold wedding potlatches and funeral potlatches. This, in itself, presented no special problem. However, the expenses to hold such events

skyrocketed when the nobles and “parvenus” competed to hold larger events. Purportedly, they would often spend all the hard-earned money on a single potlatch. This behavior was cast and criticized as extravagance by the government, and potlatches were consequently prohibited in 1885. The production of totem poles, which had close ties with potlatches, decreased accordingly.

This Anti-Potlatch Law was rescinded in 1951 after remaining in force for nearly 70 years. Many people presumably did not hold potlatches or make totem poles during that era. A period of 70 years can be expected to affect three generations. Interruption for such a long time could understandably lead to obsolescence of the tradition. In reality, however, neither potlatches nor totem pole production became obsolete; they were instead passed down continuously across several generations to the present day. The continuation of these traditions is attributable particularly to the Kwakwaka’wakw, a group in the Northwest Coast who resisted the government.

Even while the Anti-Potlatch Law was in effect, the Kwakwaka’wakw continued to practice potlatches until 1922 despite having members arrested repeatedly. An arrest of more than 70 members in 1922 caused a decrease in the practice of potlatches and totem pole production even in this group. It is evident, however, that some artists continued to create totem poles even when they knew that it was illegal. Only the

Kwakwaka'wakw, therefore, were able to resume potlatches and totem pole production immediately when the Anti-Potlatch Law was rescinded in 1951. Other groups faced difficulty in initiating the restoration of the traditional culture despite their enthusiasm. Sam Henderson from Campbell River was one who had survived hardship. He carved many totem poles in the town during the latter half of the 20th century and nurtured skilled artists, including his son, Bill, who would become well-known in later years.

Some of the Kwakwaka'wakw people led movements for cultural restoration along the entire Pacific coast. Chief Mungo Martin was a representative figure of such popular efforts. He not

only held the first legal potlatch in 1953 after abolition of the Anti-Potlatch Law, he also took charge of projects to restore old totem poles at the request of the University of British Columbia and the Royal British Columbia Museum. Young artists with high aspirations, not only from the Kwakwaka'wakw but also from other ethnic groups, became disciples of Chief Mungo Martin. They included people who later became globally-renowned artists such as the Hunt family from the Kwakwaka'wakw, Bill Reid from the Haida, and Tim Paul from the Nuu-chah-nulth. These disciples and their disciples have become master carvers. Today, they are passing down their techniques and expertise to young artists in their respective lands.

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## Motifs of totem poles

### SAITO Reiko

*National Museum of Ethnology*

Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America built complex hierarchical societies despite being hunter-gatherer-fishers. The basic social unit was a *hit* in Tlingit (Klinkit) language, referring to the "house" owned by a wealthy person, in which multiple related families lived together. Social structures varied among regions and groups. Members of the Tlingit in the north, for instance, belonged to one of two groups called moieties (according to their maternal kin group) and had to marry a member of the other moiety. The two moieties, named raven or eagle (or wolf), were divided into clans. The Tlingit were estimated to have had 60–70 clans overall, each with some "houses". Clans and houses owned an area of land, where they practiced fishing and gathering and retained rights to use the land (territories). They also had privileges to possess specific names and crests.

A large "house" had 50–60 members. The house crest was portrayed at the front of a traditional dwelling. A "house" was the basic unit of production activities. The head of a house would direct the activities of its members and the management of products. During winter, members of some "houses" would gather and settle down in a village and during summer they would stay at fishing camps. The head of the household who had the greatest wealth and highest reputation would often become the village chief.

*Totems* Peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast believed that all animals have supernatural powers according to species and can take the form of humans. Their myths recall times when animals spoke a human language and acted like humans. Spirits of animals were believed to be immortal, to be reborn after death. According to their understanding, humans gain life thanks to the goodwill of "people who used to be animals". Many taboos and customs related to hunting and fishing were means for maintaining good relationships with animals. This worldview was shared with other hunter-gatherers in the northern region.

People believed that specific plants, animals and natural phenomena had special connections with their ancestors. The plants, animals and natural phenomena were totems on which the names and crests of moieties, clans, houses, and secret societies were based. Popular motifs of totems include ravens, eagles, wolves, killer whales, bears, and other animals. Mythical creatures such as Thunderbirds, celestial bodies such as the sun and moon, and plants (albeit in a small number), were also depicted in crests drawn or carved on houses, canoes, utensils for rituals, clothing, and other objects.

*Totem poles* Carvings on totem poles were based on myths and oral tradition and symbolized the continuity of ancestral genealogies, groups, and

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other aspects of life and society. Types of totem pole included an entrance pole placed in front of a house, a house post placed inside a house, a mortuary pole, and an independent pole standing away from a house or grave. Some independent poles were taller than ten meters, and displayed multiple crests carved to commemorate events associated with the pole builders, or other individuals and groups related to the pole.

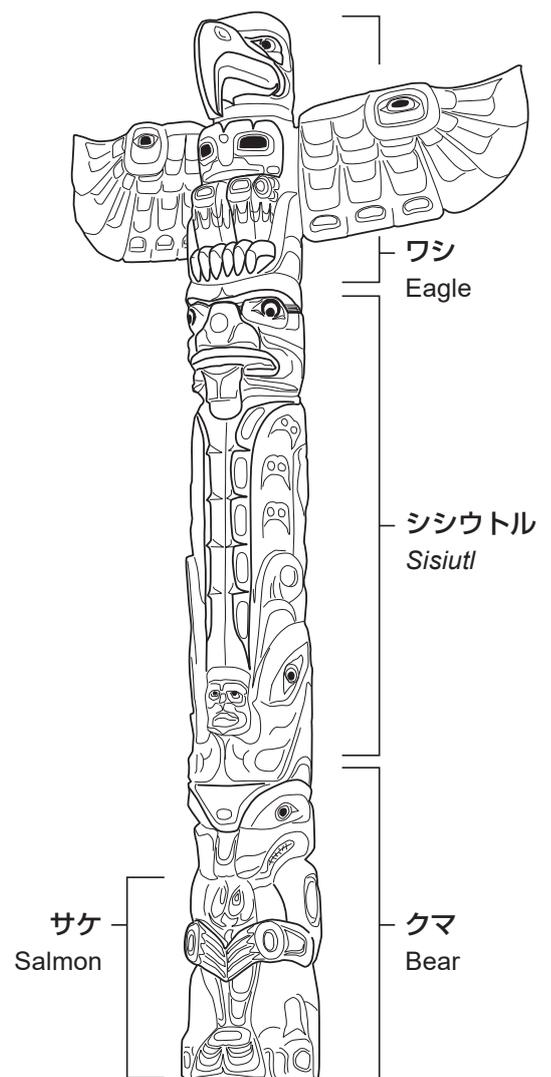
Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast occupied a large area from south to north, and their art varies from region to region. Broadly speaking, the Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Haida in the north carve each motif separately while clearly differentiating upper and lower sections of the poles, and either paint them in red and black or do not paint them at all, giving an impression of simple design. A central region group such as the Kwakwaka'wakw uses multiple motifs that are mutually intertwined, with large wings extending horizontally from the poles, and many colors such as green, white, and yellow in addition to red and black. These give an impression of vivid and complex designs. Art styles have changed over time, and also vary according to the objectives for making totem poles.

The stories and details depicted on totem poles are generally known only among people related to the poles. Nevertheless, the carved motifs have some characteristics that can be recognized by outsiders.

The totem poles exhibited at Minpaku can be explained as follows. First, the pole erected by the front gate in 2020 was created by Bill Henderson and other artists from the Kwakwaka'wakw. The eagle on top of this pole, with a large beak curving downward, is the crest of the Hendersons. The double-headed sea serpent, *Sisiutl* in the center, is a mythical creature often shown in Kwakwaka'wakw art. *Sisiutl* is purportedly capable of transforming itself into a canoe and other objects, so is depicted in numerous ways. The one on this pole has four faces—a large face on the top center, accompanied by a twin-face of *Sisiutl* on the bottom left and right, and an additional small face in between the two. At the bottom of the pole, a bear is holding a salmon. The bear's face is recognizable from its large ears, nostrils, and line of teeth. Its front paws appear to be skillful hands. It may symbolize a great power that watches over people. The city of Ishikari, Hokkaido, is a sister city of Campbell River where the Hendersons

live, and has a similar totem pole made in 1993 by Bill Henderson to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the sister-city agreement.

An older totem pole faces the new Henderson pole at Minpaku, and was built when the Museum opened in 1977 (see photo). This pole was carved by the brothers Tony and Richard Hunt, who are also Kwakwaka'wakw artists. The Thunderbird placed on top of the pole resembles an eagle. Something like a curled horn appears on the head. A killer whale with large dorsal fin, blowhole, and sharp teeth, looks downward. Below the killer whale is a beaver, with its prominent incisor teeth and a cross-hatched tail. At the bottom is a raven, with a thick, straight beak. The raven is the crest of the paternal side of the Hunt family.



Motifs of the new totem pole carved by Bill Henderson and others (Minpaku, 2020)

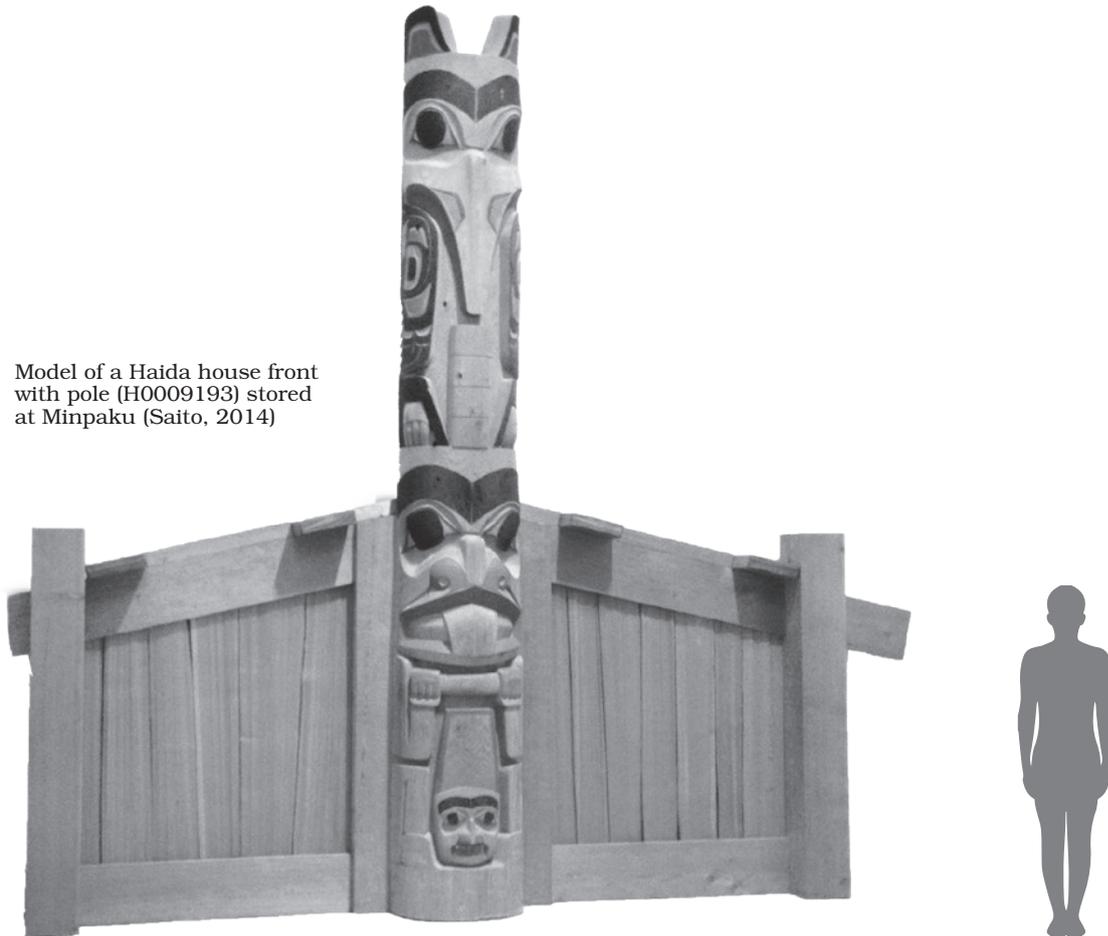


Old totem pole at Minpaku (Saito, 2017)

Three totem poles are also shown in the Main Building of Minpaku (see photo in first article). The pole on the left-hand side has carvings of a raven at the bottom and a giant holding a frog above. Frogs are also commonly depicted as crests. They have a wide mouth with thick lips and flexible legs, and no teeth, ears, or tail. The pole in the middle has carvings of a raven on the upper part and a bear holding a seal on the lower part. The pole on the right-hand side has carvings of an adult bear holding a halibut, a kind of the flatfish. A bear cub is above the head of the adult bear. All three totem poles were made in 1976 and were exhibited in 1977 for the opening of the museum exhibitions.

Other totem poles stored at the museum are replicas and models, including H0009193 (photo), which is taller than four meters. More than ten totem poles, including small ones, are stored at the museum. Some were shown in the Americas gallery of the Main Building at the time of the museum's opening, but were removed during renewals. They have subsequently been shown at special exhibitions and other events.

Model of a Haida house front with pole (H0009193) stored at Minpaku (Saito, 2014)



## Column

# Transformative research on accounting and anthropology: a new collaborative project

**Masayuki Deguchi**

*National Museum of Ethnology*

Masayuki Deguchi is Professor in the Department of Advanced Human Sciences at the National Museum of Ethnology. He specializes in the Nonprofit studies, and has experience as Commissioner, Public Interest Corporation Commission (an office similar to the Charity Commission in England and Wales). His publications include: (with Carolyn Cordery), "Charity registration and reporting: a cross-jurisdictional and theoretical analysis of regulatory impact", *Public Management Review* (2017); "Globalization, and Galapagos Syndrome: public interest corporations in Japan", *International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law* (2016) and (ed. with Henk Vinken, Yuko Nishimura and Bruce L. J. White), *Civic Engagement in Contemporary Japan* (2010).

Double-entry bookkeeping is a form of accounting that originated in Italy in the fifteenth century. It is a result of an evolutionary path from cash-basis to accrual-basis accounting, and from lot calculation to periodic profit-and-loss calculation. Along this evolutionary path, institutional improvements were based mainly on the accounting practices of for-profit firms. The need to make global accounting standards was an inevitable result of the globalization of the business sector. In response to this need, International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) have developed as global standards that transcend differences in corporate accounting in each country. "Convergence" or "adoption" between national and IFRS standards, have been topics of great interest among accountants. Since modernization, Japan has continued

to introduce international concepts and mechanisms, and has almost come to accept Western double-entry bookkeeping and accounting as general approaches.

In contrast to accounting research, cultural anthropology developed in a very different manner. Bronisław Malinowski, who accidentally stayed in the Trobriand Islands of Melanesia due to the outbreak of World War I, helped establish the fieldwork method of staying in one place for a long period of time, and cultural anthropology became the study the individual culture of a target people. Many anthropologists criticized Western-centric evolutionary thinking, and cultural anthropology has continued to point out the rationality and mystery within each culture. Fieldwork became so important that anthropologists who do not do fieldwork were laughed or scoffed at as



Okinawan *warazan* (straw calculation). It was also used for tax payment records. Collection of the National Museum of Ethnology (photographed by the author)

“armchair anthropologists”. Of course, some serious historian anthropologists and others have not relied on their own fieldwork, but in general, cultural anthropology is distinguished by its emphasis on the “field”.

Broadly speaking, accounting researchers and cultural anthropologists differ greatly in their methods and ways of thinking, and *inter alia*, their ways of thinking about globalization appear opposite. Their relationship is almost like that of distinct ethnic groups. With such academic separation or isolation, mutual learning was not possible. Furthermore, each academic discipline appeared to have no choice but to pursue academic precision, which inevitably leads to “protected” or narrow-scope research that is often criticized as a fault of academia.

At the National Museum of Ethnology, I have led a core research project “Cross-fertilization Between Accounting and Anthropology” and interdisciplinary research between accounting and anthropology on universality and individuality of culture (with a Grant-in-Aid for Challenging Research, Exploratory). Both aimed for transformative research on the Third Sector that responds to the criticism of academic walls by bringing together the approaches of accounting research and cultural anthropology, while recognising the intellectual interests inherent in each discipline. “Transformative research” is originally defined by the National Science Foundation in the USA as research leading to ideas, discoveries, or tools that radically change our understanding of an important existing scientific or engineering concept or educational practice or leads to the creation of a new paradigm or field of science, engineering, or education. Such research challenges current understanding or provides pathways to new frontiers. Although it may seem beneficial for research to be sheltered by academic walls, the wider harm of such confinement has been recognised for decades. I suspect that researchers feel “safe” when working within the established framework of a discipline. In order to break the disciplinary walls, I am developing a new “integrated methodology on a specific field” (IMOF), with which the present research has been carried out, although the methodology is still under development.

The results of our research project include an international symposium, “Laws, Accounting and Culture for Non-Profit Organizations in East Asia

Universality and Individuality” (August 28–29, 2020). The Symposium was held online because of the Covid-19 pandemic. A book, *Transforming the Study of Accounting and Anthropology* (scheduled to be published in January 2021, in Japanese) will be our main research product.

Cultural anthropologists have asserted theoretical objections to the intrusion of corporate values into universities, and have applied critical thought to evolutionary social models and globalization. The phrase “audit culture” is used to describe and criticize the social condition in which academic activities are subjected to corporate-style procedures for certification and accountability. A group of researchers, including Marilyn Strathern, Cris Shore, and Susan Wright, has advocated development of an “Anthropology of Policy”. They have defined “fields” that are conceptual, not geographical, spaces and attempt to apply anthropological methods to policy research. Strathern has cited the book *Audit Society: Rituals of Verification* by the accounting researcher Michael Power, and regards it as a pillar of the new field; clearly Strathern was affected by accounting! As an accounting researcher, Power attempted to explore the implications of phenomena beyond the realm of accounting by demonstrating that an “Audit Explosion” was occurring in the UK community, following the incorporation of UK universities in the 1990s, entrustment of their management to Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), and changes in public policies for evaluating universities. Power was influenced by anthropology, as can be seen by his use of the phrase “Rituals of Verification”, originally used by the anthropologist Mary Douglas. There was thus some (though slight) exchange between anthropologists and accountants in the UK during this period of drastic change in public policy. In a time of



Research team discussing financial materials of a nonprofit organization (Friends of Te Papa, New Zealand) that assists in fund-raising for the museum.

institutional change, people cannot easily escape from customs associated with the old system, and there will be *de facto* a “cultural delay” (that is, even if the system has changed, people’s cultural changes will be delayed). In Japanese society, we can see a similar historical sequence, though the time frame is different: National universities have been incorporated, and there is now a major chorus for more and more evaluation. Power’s “Audit Explosion” has reached all areas of research and education in Japan, including the processes for certification and accreditation.

How has the fashion for business approaches affected accounting in the not-for-profit or “third” sector of society? This was the main field or area for our project. In Japan, the legal persons recognized in the non-profit sector differ among schools, human service organizations, hospitals, associations, and foundations, and the related accounting standards diverge. This diversity of accounting standards is not seen in other countries, yet certified public accountants in Japan are trained only within the scope of for-profit accounting. This often creates major problems for accounting analysis and interpretation. In our project, the situations in Japan and other countries were studied jointly by accounting

researchers and anthropologists. Particular studies ranged from ancient accounting notation, pre-modern Okinawan tax records, hyperinflation in Zimbabwe, and Papua New Guinean shell currency to IFRS and the globalization of modern accounting.

Three major achievements were generated by the transformative research project: (i) New accounting postulates have emerged from our understanding of past practices, and could be a topic for discussion in accounting over the next few years. (ii) When we seek to understand the basics of accounting as a human activity, it becomes clear that relationships between culture and civilization must be considered. This need to consider wider context will serve as a guide for future research and will have a major impact on the integration of research areas and specific study settings. (iii) When viewing the nonprofit world, the new term of “businesscentrism” (a term parallel to “ethnocentrism”) helps us to understand the confusion or conflict created by imposing business standards and culture on organisations that are not profit-seeking businesses. This could be a key term for future study of the third, non-profit sector of society, separate from the government sector and for-profit sector.

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## Remembering Jane Cobbi

Hirochika Nakamaki

*National Museum of Ethnology*

Dr Jane Cobbi, a former Invited Professor of Minpaku, passed away in Paris on August 6, 2020. An obituary appeared in *Le Monde* on Tuesday, September 15, as follows:

Jane Cobbi, docteur ethnologue, chargée de recherche émérite au CNRS, directrice du programme Japon à la FMSH, présidente de l’association Maison de Kiso...

She first studied Japanese language, literature and philosophy, then turned her eyes to ethnology, ethnobotany, and structural anthropology (taught by Claude Lévi-Strauss). In 1968 she enrolled at Tokyo University, under the guidance of Tadashi Fukutake, sociologist of rural Japan, who introduced her to a folklorist, Masashige Mukaiyama. He in turn recommended that she carry out fieldwork in Kiso, Nagano Prefecture,

where she learned the weaving of hemp cloth among other things. In 1981 she received her doctoral degree in ethnology at Paris University X (Nanterre), and in the following year joined the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS).

Dr Cobbi served as visiting professor at various Japanese research institutes including the Institute for Research in Humanities (Kyoto University), the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, and Minpaku. During her stay at Minpaku from 1993 to 1996 she collaborated with Naomichi Ishige and Yasuyuki Kurita, in particular, for studies of material culture and culinary culture in Japan. This was also part of a four-year project of CNRS, which was later published as *Tables d’hier, tables d’ailleurs: Histoire et ethnologie du repas* (co-edited with J-L. Flandrin; Odile Jacob, 1999). At Minpaku she spoke about Japanese material culture,



Jane Cobbi at the JAWS meeting in Minpaku, March 12, 1999, with N. Ishige (right) and H. Nakamaki (left) (Secretariat, JAWS 12, 1999)

focusing on *shoku*, *shokki*, *shokumotsu* and *shinmotsu* on October 12, 1994 (see *Minpaku Tsūshin*, 67: 62–63). Her other publications include:

*Le végétal dans la vie japonaise: L'utilisation alimentaire de plantes sauvages dans un village de montagne, Kaida-mura*, Publications Orientalistes de France, Paris, 1978.

*Forme et discours au Japon* (avec J.L. Gault et al.), Groupe franco-japonais du Champ Freudien, Archives de Psychanalyse, Paris, Ed. Eolia, 1992, 70 p.

*Pratiques et représentations sociales des Japonais*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1993, 224 p.

*Sentir: Pour une anthropologie des odeurs* (avec R. Dulau), Paris, L'Harmattan, Collection Eurasie, 2004, 283p.

Personally, I was most inspired by her article entitled “Karatō no kami to amatō no hotoke” (Deities of alcohol and Buddhas of sweets) in Wakimoto, Tsuneya and Keiichi Yanagawa (eds.) *Gendai Shūkyōgaku* 3, Tokyo University Press, 1992, pp. 37–50. This type of binary juxtaposition was apparently influenced by the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss.

When the Japan Anthropology Workshop (JAWS) meeting was held at Minpaku in 1999, she organized a panel entitled “Mono kara mita nihon bunka” (Japanese culture seen from materials).

In Autumn, 2017, she was awarded The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, in recognition of her contributions to disseminating Japanese culture and promoting the understanding of Japan in France. Special reference was made to her roles as President of the Association of “Maison de Kiso” and former Director of

the Japan programme at the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (FMSH).

*Maison de Kiso* was the house where Jane learned hemp weaving, and the owner had donated this house to her to be displayed in France. The huge effort needed to move the house from Kiso to Paris was undertaken with the support of many people including Tadao Umesao, first Director-General of Minpaku, and the science fiction novelist Sakyo Komatsu. *Maison de Kiso* was temporarily displayed at the Musée de l'Homme during 2007–2009, and was then moved to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, Bois de Boulogne in 2010.

In Paris, she collaborated in several Minpaku projects, including studies of Japanese collections in Europe (especially at the Musée de l'Homme) and an international symposium at FMHS. Personally, I am grateful for her kindness when she took me to the National Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions (ATP). It was located in Bois de Boulogne then, and I was able to borrow some old calendars from before, during and after the French Revolution. The calendars were displayed in a Special Exhibition at Minpaku, *Ethnic Cultures Abroad: People Moving, Cultures Mixing* (1999–2000).

Jane Cobbi had many friends at Minpaku and elsewhere in Japan. It is really a great sadness not to be able to meet such a charming and sympathetic *parisienne* again.



*Maison de Kiso* at Musée de l'Homme, with a loom Jane Cobbi used to learn weaving (Nakamaki, 2007)

## Exhibition

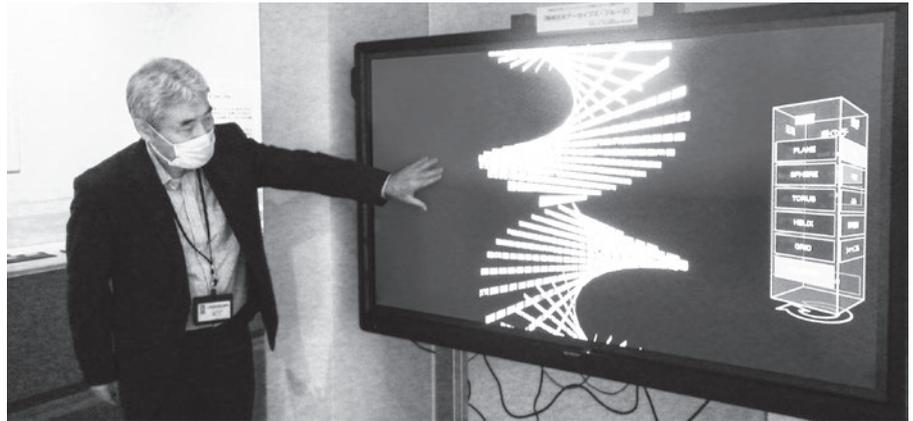
### UMESAO Tadao's 100th Anniversary: The Front-runner of Intellectual Production

Thematic Exhibition  
Sept. 3–Dec. 1, 2020

A good explorer is a good writer. This is true for Tadao Umesao (1920–2010), the founder of Minpaku. However, readers do not often see these two talents coming together, especially in Japan where academic expeditions were not common until the 1930s. In the thematic exhibition, we showed how Umesao recorded his observations in the field, and how he analyzed myriads of notes by arranging and standardizing them. Among many of his achievements as a field researcher, the exhibition focused especially on his expeditions to Mongolia, Afghanistan, and Mainland Southeast Asia.

However, showing Umesao's "intellectual production" is but one of our purposes. Another is to introduce the intellectual production of present Minpaku staff. In 2011, Minpaku held a special exhibition to review Umesao's works, eight months after his death. In the 2020 exhibition we did not repeat the review but tried to show our progress in the digitization of archives and improvements in our electric databases. This exhibition was initially led by Yuki Konagaya, the chief curator of the 2011 exhibition but, as she moved out for her new job with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Taku Iida succeeded her as a representative of Minpaku.

The exhibition had five sections. To introduce the exhibition, at the entrance to the first section, visitors were shown a large liquid crystal display. Zoom in on the flock of tiny white objects larking about on the screen, and they prove to be cards with photographs, sketches, fieldnotes, and other hand-written documents. If you select one of them, it expands to fill the whole screen and detailed information appears.



Umesao's digital archives in liquid crystal display (Minpaku, 2020)

This database was developed through collaboration of Minpaku and the National Institute of Informatics in order to let users enjoy random arrangements of the contents. In fact, juxtaposition was essential in Umesao's way of thinking: intellectual production, information industry, exploration to Europe, anthropo-electronical engineering . . . all of these phrases, used in the titles of Umesao's books or articles, were combinations of what seemed, at the time, to be mutually unrelated words.

In the first display case, we showed manuscripts and sketches in Umesao's own hand, from his teenage years. These revealed that he already practiced – more than thirty years before the publication – what he wrote about in his long-term best seller *Techniques of Intellectual Production*. The next case displayed manuscripts and materials that Umesao used when writing his popular book.

The following sections were dedicated to three expeditions that Umesao made in Asia. The second section focused on Mongolia in 1944–45, showing the equivalents of "photography" and "film" made by Umesao on paper with pencils: his hand-drawn sketches of pastoralists' utensils, and of a landscape with the movements of domestic animal herds at even time intervals. The third section was about the Kyoto University Scientific Expedition to Karakoram and Hindukush (Pakistan and Afghanistan) in 1955–56, the first significant

academic overseas expedition from Japan after the war. For this, the president of Kyoto University led a big committee to call for donations from private companies. The fourth section introduced the First Osaka City University Scientific Expedition to Southeast Asia (Thailand, Cambodia, South Vietnam, and Laos), in 1957–58. Here we displayed letters from correspondence with Tatsuo Kira, who worked as the general secretary of the expedition while remaining in Japan. Through these materials, visitors could understand how much time and effort were needed for a single expedition in this period.

The last section was a reading space with Umesao's collected works, provided by the publisher Chuokoron-Shinsha. There was also a copy of 100th reprinting of *The Techniques of Intellectual Production* exhibited with its golden paper belt, thanks to Iwanami Shoten, Publishers. On the walls, we put larger-than-life images of Umesao Archive staff preparing the publication of Umesao's collected works (which are now available only offline).

This exhibition was an opportunity for visitors to review Umesao's works, and also helped Minpaku staff understand what can be done over the next decade to make Umesao's archives more accessible for the general public. The exhibition is closed, but we still have many challenges to face.

Taku Iida  
National Museum of Ethnology

## Treasures of Indigenous Peoples

*Special Exhibition*  
Oct. 1–Dec. 15, 2020

In the special exhibition *Treasures of Indigenous Peoples*, we introduced the histories and current situations of Indigenous peoples together with global trends affecting their lives. Represented in this exhibition were Aboriginal Australians (Australia), Orang Asli (Malaysia), Tao (Taiwan), Adibasi (Nepal), Maya (Guatemala), San and Somali (Africa), Northwest Coast People (Canada), Sami (northern Europe), and Ainu (Japan). The organizers of this exhibition were NOBUTA Toshihiro, KUBO Masatoshi, NOBAYASHI Atsushi, MINAMI Makito, SUZUKI Motoi, IKEYA Kazunobu, KISHIGAMI Nobuhiro, SHOJI Hiroshi, SAITO Reiko, and KAWASE Itsushi in special collaboration with Rossella Ragazzi (Tromsø University Museum) and HONYA Yuko (Keio University).

There exist innumerable peoples (tribes or ethnic groups) in the world. Among them, certain groups began calling themselves “Indigenous Peoples” in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In this period, peoples whose territories had been forcibly colonized by European or North American

powers, in North and South America, Oceania, and other regions, began or expanded movements seeking recognition of the harm caused by colonization. They asked for reparations and the restoration or recognition of their rights. Participants in these movements included peoples then called “Indians” or “Indios” in North and South America, Aboriginal Australians, the Maori in New Zealand, and the Sami of Northern Europe. Over time, “Indigenous Peoples” has become established as a positive name or title shared by them all.

The case for the rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples in colonized countries was brought to the United Nations and other international bodies. In 1989, the International Labor Organization (ILO) adopted a treaty related to the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. The year 1993 was declared the *International Year of Indigenous Peoples* and the years 1995–2004 the *International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People*. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was issued in 2007. Alongside these events, the number of Indigenous Peoples participating in the movement increased. In the 1990s, a network of international NGOs supporting Indigenous Peoples

spread around the world: the Indigenous Peoples movement had achieved global scale.

Primarily in Asia and Africa, in the 1990s, Indigenous consciousness began to take root among ethnic groups who previously had not recognized themselves as Indigenous Peoples. Minority peoples with histories of cruel treatment by majority or dominant ethnic groups began to demand recognition of their distinct status and restoration of their rights. Not all of these groups, however, were granted the status of Indigenous Peoples. Primarily in Asia, some countries denied the existence of Indigenous Peoples, others refused to recognize groups other than those already designated as Indigenous Peoples, and some were reluctant to recognize certain tribes or groups as Indigenous Peoples.

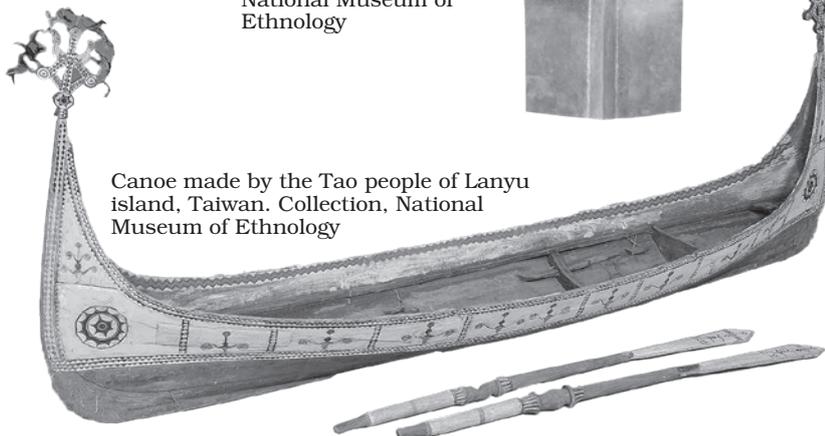
The treasures showcased in this exhibition are not gold and silver. We think that the “treasures” are more likely to be family and kin or close friends – or they may be seas, mountains, forests, or other aspects of the natural environment, or even the implements used in everyday life. They can be spirits or ancestors living in another world and celebrated in festivals and rituals, song and dance, art, or with pride concealed in human hearts. In every case, however, these treasures add warmth to everyday life.

In the twenty-first century, awareness of being Indigenous has become more widespread, and the numbers of people (and Peoples) participating in the Indigenous Peoples movement have increased. Paralleling the rise of this movement, we see movements to revive traditional culture. Interest in issues related to global environmental change have led to reassessment of Indigenous wisdom and ways of living in harmony with nature. Indigenous Peoples themselves have become actively involved in efforts to preserve the natural environment. Now, with the globalization of information, social networking services

Copper made by Gerry Marks of the Haida people, Northwest Coast, Canada. Collection, National Museum of Ethnology



Canoe made by the Tao people of Lanyu island, Taiwan. Collection, National Museum of Ethnology



(SNS) have become conduits through which Indigenous Peoples around the world can instantly share information and widen the circles of mutual support.

The difficulties that Indigenous Peoples face in today's world have not become less. There seems to be no end to those eager to take their land, invade their homes, and attack their livelihoods. Many Indigenous Peoples suffer discrimination and prejudice from majority populations. With the degradation of natural environments, many Indigenous Peoples feel anxious about their health and ways of living.

In the treasures displayed in this exhibition we see people expressing the strength and determination to continue living in the face of government and social oppression and discrimination. These are treasures in the best sense: emotional and spiritual anchors, sources of the pride that people feel in who they are. The greatest treasure of all may be hope itself.

NOBUTA Toshihiro  
*National Museum of Ethnology*



Exhibition display with foxtail millet, local dishes, and Sasaki Komei at table (center)

The Historia Terrace  
Itsukidani (venue)



### Slash-and-Burn Cultivation Viewed by SASAKI Komei: From Itsuki Mura to the World

*Temporary Exhibition,  
Kumamoto  
Oct. 3–Dec. 13, 2020*

The exhibition was held at Historia Terrace Itsukidani in Itsuki mura (village), Kumamoto Prefecture, Kyushu (photo), and was organized by the National Museum of Ethnology and Itsuki mura. The late SASAKI Komei, former Director-general and Professor of Minpaku, carried out field-

work in Itsuki mura, a remote mountain village in Kumamoto Prefecture, in the period 1958 to 1960. His photographs (about 40) of slash-and-burn cultivation and village life were shown together with agricultural tools and other materials that appeared in the photographs (photo). Exhibition visitors could see and learn about village life in the study period. Public seminars were held five times, with twelve invited speakers, and 193 participants.

IKEYA Kazunobu  
*National Museum of Ethnology*

## Conference

### The 9th Meeting of Signed and Spoken Language Linguistics (SSLL2020) and Introductory Lectures to Sign Language Research

*International Symposium and  
Workshop on Sign Language  
Linguistics  
September 25–October 2, 2020  
(On-demand lectures)  
October 4, 2020 (Live meetings)*

The Signed and Spoken Language Linguistics (SSLL) Conference series has been hosted at MINPAKU since 2011. The 9th meeting of the series was hosted this year completely

online due to the influence of COVID-19, with also some modifications to the contents.

This series originally started in the form of international symposia, where internationally known sign

language linguists were invited. The main purpose then was to provide opportunities in Japan for Japanese scholars to be exposed to the latest research results in sign language linguistics, which in Japan,

Staff members at work on-site. To accommodate interaction in two signed and two spoken languages, a special system was set up in Seminar Room 4 at Minpaku. Over the two days, 22 technicians attended to manage the webinar, PA system, and a screen switcher (Kikusawa, October 4, 2020)



falls behind the other scientific approaches to language and languages. After hosting four such meetings, in 2016, a decision was made to change the form to a conference-style, where presentations (both on stage and poster) were solicited from all over the world and reviewed. Those selected were presented on-site at Minpaku. This was because we started to have “regular” participants at the meetings and decided to make the event more sustainable. SSSL came to be known internationally, and more and more people started to plan to attend in the future.

To take this year’s SSSL completely online, the organizing committee was forced to redesign the contents and how it would be hosted. After considering various possibilities, the final decision was made to 1) include one invited lecturer from abroad and make no call for papers; 2) host a satellite seminar targeting a wide, non-sign-linguist audience in Japan. There were 343 SSSL participants and 329 satellite seminar participants online, and the whole event turned out to be quite a success.

To see the contents of this and previous meetings, go to: [www.sillr.jp/ssll2020/index.html](http://www.sillr.jp/ssll2020/index.html), and [www.sillr.jp/ssll2020/ssllser.html](http://www.sillr.jp/ssll2020/ssllser.html).

To host the meetings online, many technical issues had to be overcome. A zoom webinar was made to accommodate windows showing a presenter, a shared screen, and depending on the setting, also multiple participants. It also had the function of switching between spoken languages, so hosting a meeting in multiple spoken languages was not a problem. However, in our SSSL meeting, we also needed to have two sign language interpreters simultaneously showing on part of the screen, as well as captioning (subtitles) of the spoken language used in the on-going presentation, when there is any. To overcome this, we had meetings with contracted technicians, to figure out how we could best deliver a multiple screened meeting in four languages (see

photo).

Minpaku will be hosting the 14th meeting of Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR14), September 27–30, 2022, with English and American, Japanese Sign Languages and International Sign as official languages. This is an international conference with about 300–400 participants from all over the world. Even if we assume that by then, on-site meetings will be safely hosted, considering the ease of participation for those who have certain conditions, it is likely that the future research related meetings will ideally be accessible both on-site and online. This year’s SSSL2020 proved that this is possible. We also learned what needs to be improved to host a large-scale conference with multiple signed languages online, technically and also in our preparation.

We believe that our experience this year will help us host the upcoming international conference both on-site and online, but do hope that more people can come to visit us in two year’s time, so that they can also enjoy our planned special exhibition on signed and spoken languages, entitled “*homō loquēns* ‘talking human’: Wonders of Language and Languages” (September 1–November 23, 2022), which will coincide with TISLR14.

KIKUSAWA Ritsuko  
*National Museum of Ethnology*

## Information

### Awards

#### Hideaki Suzuki

*Associate Professor,  
Department of Globalization  
and Humanity,  
National Museum of Ethnology*

Received the Daido Life Foundation Incentive Award for Area Studies (July 22, 2020) for his “comprehensive and dynamic study of mobility in the Western Indian Ocean World”. The award recognizes researchers who

have contributed to new developments in the field of area studies and who are expected to make further major progress. For his research, Suzuki has studied the literature of 13 countries and has conducted fieldwork in 27 countries.

### Retirements

After many years at Minpaku, the following staff member will retire in March 2021.

#### Masayuki Deguchi

*Professor, Third Sector  
research, civil society studies*

## New Staff

#### Tomoyuki Chaya

*Assistant Professor, Centre for  
South Asian Studies, National  
Museum of Ethnology and  
Research Fellow, Center for  
Transdisciplinary Innovation,  
National Institutes for the  
Humanities*



Tomoyuki Chaya specializes in South Asian Area Studies, focusing on education and the urban poor in contemporary India. His

primary interest is in the links between education and the transformation of urban squatters in Delhi. After receiving his PhD in 2017 from Kyoto University, he was a JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) Postdoctoral Research Fellow (2017–2018), then assistant professor at Obihiro Otani Junior College (2018–2019) and Matsumoto Junior College (2019–2020). He published *Life Chances Improved through Dependency: Human Development and “Democratization of Child Care” in Urban Slums in India* (in Japanese, Shumpusha Publishing, 2020). His recent research concerns how teenagers in Delhi squatters live after dropping out from or completing their secondary education.

**Yujin Kim**

Research Fellow, Center for Cultural Resource Studies



Kim specializes in Southeast Asian Area Studies and Popular Culture Studies, especially in relation to Indonesian popular music.

His doctoral research focused on interactions between urban politics and musical practices in Indonesia, particularly in Bandung, West Java. He is currently conducting research for archive activities at the Indonesian Music Museum in Malang, East Java. He studied at Doshisha University (2010–2014) and Kyoto University (2014–2020), and he received his PhD from Kyoto University in 2020. The title of his doctoral dissertation is “Independence of Cultural Practices and Their Corollary Dependence: Indonesian Democracy from the Perspective of the Popular Music Scene”. He recently published a book, *Burning Beyond Borders: Expression World of the Indonesian Musician* (Fukyosha 2020, in Japanese).

**Fumi Uehata**

Research Fellow, Department of Globalization and Humanity



Uehata studied musicology in the doctoral program at the Graduate School of Letters, Osaka University from 2014 to 2017. She was

also a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow

and Visiting Researcher at the National Museum of Ethnology. In March 2020 she received her PhD with the dissertation entitled “Cultural Practice in Serbian Turbo-folk Music as Representation of Ethnic Identities”. She specializes in the music of Serbia, and the wider regions of former Yugoslavia and the Balkans. Her central academic interest is the relationship between music and ethnic identity. She is currently researching the restructuring of ethnic identity through keyboard instruments in Serbia, and music related to Balkan diasporas in Western countries.

## Publications

Online at:  
[www.minpaku.ac.jp/publications](http://www.minpaku.ac.jp/publications)

### *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology 45*

**Issue 1:** S. Uda, “A Cormorant Fishing Technique and Its Subsistence Conditions in the Former Yugoslavia: A Case Study of Mandra Fishing on Dojran Lake, North Macedonia”; H. Kawai, “A New Trend of ‘Food Landscape’ in Anthropology and its Related Academic Fields”; J. Clifford, A. Ito, R. Saito, K. Yoshida, I. Hayashi & T. Iida, “International Symposium ‘Future of the Museum: An Anthropological Perspective’”.

### *TRAJECTORIA 2020 Vol. 1*

Special Theme – “An Approach of the Info-Forum Museum: To

Create a Source Community-driven Multivocal Museum Catalog”. A. Ito, “Introduction”; K. Hays-Gilpin, A. Ito and R. Breunig, “Decolonizing Museum Catalogs: Defining and Exploring the Problem”; C. C. Lamar and J. Enoté, “Demonstrational Lecture of the Collections Review Research” (Film directed by A. Ito); R. Boast, “Database as Collaborative Environment”; C. Colwell, “Collaboration is Only a Tool to Decolonize the Museum”.

Other topics – I. Murahashi, “Creatively Utilising the Encyclopaedia Cinematographica Film Project: Visual Repatriation of the Masakin”.

URL: [trajectoria.minpaku.ac.jp](http://trajectoria.minpaku.ac.jp)

## MINPAKU Anthropology Newsletter

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

Available online at:  
[www.minpaku.ac.jp/publications](http://www.minpaku.ac.jp/publications)

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## Forthcoming Exhibition



Special Exhibition

**Local cultures assisting disaster revitalization: 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake**

March 4–May 18, 2021  
National Museum of Ethnology,  
Osaka