

# Co-operation

Newsletter for the Minpaku Seminar  
on Museology  
**2001**

International Cooperation Committee on Museology  
National Museum of Ethnology

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# Preface

The National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) has organized two-week long International Cooperation Seminar on Museology every year since 1994. The seminars aim is to foster understanding of our museum's activities, concept and present situation, as well as to exchange views and experience in museology among participants. The seminar is closely associated with a half-year training course on Museum Management Technology (Collection, Conservation, Exhibition) held by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Trainees of the JICA course and foreign research visitors at Minpaku participate in the Minpaku seminar. The total number of participants since 1994 is nearly seventy.

In this past year, we established a network for all seminar participants. The network is not however limited to our participants but is open to anyone working at a museum or related institution who is interested in museology. We published this newsletter to share recent news from participants. Though our network is still small, we hope that a number of cooperative projects will be planned and carried out through the network.

This newsletter Co-operation 2001 includes two essays. The first essay On The Bridge between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries by Tsuneyuki Morita, Leader of the International Cooperation Committee on Museology asks the question What is the purpose of museums in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? The second essay Workshop on Museum Practices in Vietnam by Naoko Sonoda, reports the details of a workshop in Vietnam that took place under the joint auspices of the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology and Minpaku. The workshop was held at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, from March 4-8, 2000.

Finally, we would like to thank Mr. Yoichi Banjo and Ms. Shinon Kumazaki of the International Cooperation Section, Research Cooperation Division of Minpaku for their assistance and Ms. Yuka Sato for coordination.

May, 2001

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International Cooperation Committee on Museology

# On the Bridge between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries

Tsuneyuki Morita

Professor,

National Museum of Ethnology

It is so hard to isolate an image of The Museum from that of a space to store and/or display excellent works of art or valuable historic objects. Since the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the first modern museum was born in London, no change in this image has occurred. We Japanese often use the expression for the Museum, which means a material to be old, dirty and no longer valuable. I myself have to take care not to be a man for the Museum. Some days ago I found this listing in the Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary (1976): museum piece: an object suitable for exhibition in a museum; also transfer sense (usually, with derogatory sense). Everyone seems to suppose something similar.

Now, the 21<sup>st</sup> century has just begun. What should be the aim of museums of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? I personally believe that a concept different from the classic museum should be introduced and would like to propose two ideas.

Not only in the industrially developed countries but also throughout the world, great changes in life style have occurred during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The numbers of people without electricity, for example, is sure to decrease year by year and with the introduction of electricity come TV, wireless telephones, and numerous electric tools in our daily lives. Even the computer is no longer considered special technology in most countries.

Ethnologists call a set of tacit understandings living in our life culture. Each group of people, both big and small, has their own tacit promises. In many places in Asia, people live on rice and most would claim boiled or steamed rice as the word for staple food. This is one example of tacit understandings among most East and Southeast Asian peoples. When we observe well-cooked rice mixed with sugar and milk, used as an European dessert, some of us find an indefinable foreignness. The manner of cooking and taking rice are also a part of culture. Half a century ago, almost all Japanese kitchens, similar to those in other Asian countries, had special ranges and iron pots only for preparing rice, although today electric rice cookers are common in every home. Some Japanese in their thirties or younger have never seen a classic rice-range. To cook rice over a flame is hard work. I have no intention of denying the convenience of automatic electrical appliances. However, a failure in the electric supply would now result in the inability to cook rice. Some years ago, I had this actual experience.

I now live in Kobe, which was hit by a severe earthquake in early 1995. Fortunately, my own house received little damage, though about 250,000 houses were fully or partially destroyed and 450,000 families lost their houses in the catastrophe. The victims had to find temporary shelter and wait for public assistance. The city government and others distributed necessary food and other materials although the social confusion following the severe earthquake resulted in the insufficient distribution of materials. Some people had to spend more than three days without food. During the day, they could go to their homes to pick up the minimum necessary materials, including rice and cooking pots, although it was still dangerous. Minimally sufficient quantities of water were also

available. However, no fire was possible. Because modern cooking tools have introduced the electric switch and families without smokers have no longer matches and lighters to start a fire. Furthermore, without saws or hatchets, which are no longer necessary in modern urban life, they could not prepare firewood from the broken house materials. Some youths are ignorant of the way to prepare a wood fire, and in extreme cases even of the necessity of wood. As a result this lack of knowledge obliged them to go hungry and to wait for food distribution. This is a result of modern, industrially developed civilization.

Just after the Second World War, we Japanese, in particular inhabitants of big cities and their suburbs, were confronted by severe starvation and ate all kinds of edible plants to keep off hunger. Only the knowledge of edible plants and appropriate processing methods allowed survival under the worst conditions. At that time, few electrical tools other than lamps and radios were found in every home, and civil gas service rarely existed. Archaeologists say that such a life style is little different, in principal, from that of the early fourth century. This means more than a millennium and a half of consistency in our life style. During the centuries, we have experienced so many circumstances and accumulated a huge stock of knowledge to be richer and more comfortable. Even a poor life at present should be better than that of a millennium ago. We should remember that these differences are realized by an accumulation of more than ten centuries of our ancestors' experiences.

Is it really beneficial to give up this huge accumulation of resourcefulness, which has come from the experiences of our ancestors and ourselves, in return for momentary conveniences? During long days and years, we have repeatedly restored various tools and/or remade similar shapes of objects. That is the living history of hand making and also the best conservation method of experiences. However, actual industrial society shows signs of such a long tradition decomposing fundamentally. Always hand made should be the mother of machine made.

I do not deny that the museum is a social institution equipped to conserve and to display valuable antiquities and aesthetic works of arts. In addition to this, museums in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be reconsidered institutions to hand down the accumulated knowledge of human beings, particularly knowledge closely related with material culture. Conservation of the cultures of ethnic minorities is also necessary. However, we should introduce the new perspective that this necessity is not due to the scarcity value of a minority but to the accumulated result of error and success composed within a certain specific environment.

My second point concerns the relationship between museum activities and tourism. Some museum buildings and/or collections are famous sightseeing spots, such as the Louvre in Paris, the British Museum in London, and the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. However, these are the product of an unusually strong authority in a past age, and the new creation of this type of museum is not possible today. On the other hand, now it is not so difficult to find an airport in a location, which would have once been considered frontier and to visit almost every interesting spot in the world. Nowadays it is possible for a tourist to travel to places where only explorers traveled formerly. Many curious persons are interested in visiting unknown locations. While past explorers were required to investigate the area more carefully to protect themselves, tourists today get information with little effort. Modern and safe transportation and hostels fill the gap. It is natural that more information on a location invites more intellectual curiosity, but unfortunately this type of tourist information is often insufficient. One reason is language.

Due to the dominance of European and/or American powers since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, some European languages, such as English, French, German, Russian and others, are dominant while others, including our Asian ones, are subordinate, with no regard for the language distribution and number of speakers. The difference causes us inconvenience in verbal communication. Most of us require the assistance of an interpreter or translator to understand other regional languages. Compared with the verbal or phonetic language, museum display has the advantage of visual presentation. Suitable display method should be able to offer more information to the regional foreigners.

A person with ordinary vision can easily identify differences of color whereas a person with impaired vision may have difficulties and a blind person cannot distinguish colors at all. In contrast, a delicate difference of surface texture is often negligible to the eye of the former and easily distinguishable by touch to the latter. When an acute-angled equilateral triangle is drawn at the bottom center of a paper, for example, we identify it as a railway track or road, however a person who born blind would tactilely identify the shape as a simple triangle. No railway track is narrower in width in the far distance. Perspective is the visual expectation among persons with normal vision. Japanese and Thai use different verbal languages. However those who can identify a three-dimensional cube from an image drawn in perspective use another common visual language. Regrettably we are apt to force his unconscious usage of perspective blind persons who should have another language system because most of us are unaware of the existence of visual language. I know well that we still have a very poor systematic grammar of our visual language. We use it only according to experimental facts and, therefore, it is neither easy to explain to others nor to translate into language for the blind.

One of the best ways to activate mutual global communication should be to first show, by a simple method, our own region and culture to the others. Completion of a visual language grammar as a major common language will be required for the purpose. In the near future a new age should come when the museum will find an important function in representing ourselves to others who have different languages and customs. We know much preparation is necessary before this occurs. Hoping that such a date comes soon, I wish to close this short essay.

(The above text was partially revised from a paper read for the occasion of the JICA Museum Course Follow Up Mission Seminar 2000 in Bangkok, held at the Royal Princess Hotel, Bangkok, on February 8, 2000.)

# Workshop on Museum Practices in Vietnam

Naoko Sonoda  
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Summer is coming and is time to prepare for the next International Cooperation Seminar on Museology. As a customary event in the past few years, our museum (the National Museum of Ethnology or Minpaku) has held the International Cooperation Seminar on Museology in autumn, in conjunction with the half-year training course on Museum Management Technology (Collection, Conservation and Exhibition) coordinated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

In addition to the participants of the JICA course, foreign research visitors at Minpaku may join the International Cooperation Seminar on Museology if they wish. So far, we have had participants from Australia, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam, and Zambia. These countries are quite different from Japan, in terms of lifestyle, climate condition, cultural background and other aspects. I wondered how these participants were doing in their home towns after they had taken the JICA course, including the International Cooperation Seminar on Museology at Minpaku for two weeks. How much, in their own countries, could they apply the knowledge and information that they acquired in Japan? I was also eager to know the actual circumstances in their countries. Then, I happened to have the opportunity to join the Workshop on Museum Practices at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology.

## Workshop on Museum Practices in Vietnam

The Workshop on Museum Practices took place under the joint auspices of the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology and Minpaku. The necessary funding was granted by the Asian Center of the Japan Foundation. The workshop was held at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, from March 4-8, 2000. This museum has strong ties with museums in Europe, especially with le Musée de l'Homme in France. Minpaku has also been closely related to the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, even before this museum was open to the public in 1997, thanks to Professors Shigeharu Tanabe and Katsumi Tamura.

The total number of participants in the Vietnam workshop was 27 including staff from the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology and other national institutions in Hanoi such as the Vietnam Army Museum, the Vietnam Women's Museum, the Vietnam Revolution Museum, the Vietnam History Museum and the Vietnam Culture Museum.

As lecturers from Japan, Professors Yoshio Okuno from the Nara Prefectural Museum of Folklore, and Tsuneyuki Morita, Kazuyoshi Ohtsuka and myself from Minpaku attended this workshop.

In this workshop, lecture topics were expected, concerning for instance, exhibitions on ethnology (especially on the culture of minorities), management of open air museums, and

conservation of museum objects. The workshop was scheduled for five days, but as we needed interpreters for Vietnamese <sup>(1)</sup>, we could actually use only half of the time. If all the participants pursued the same program, we would not have enough time to treat each topic in detail. Therefore, after discussion with Dr. Nguyen, Director-General of the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, we decided to divide the participants into two groups in some cases: the Exhibition group of Professors Ohtsuka and Okuno and, the Conservation group of Professor Morita and myself.

Day 1	Morning	: Visit to the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology
	Afternoon	: Opening ceremony
Day 2	Morning	: Exhibition of culture by Kazuyoshi Ohtsuka
	Afternoon	: Exhibition issues by Kazuyoshi Ohtsuka and Yoshio Okuno (Exhibition group)
		Handling of museum objects by Tsuneyuki Morita and Naoko Sonoda (Conservation group)
Day 3	Morning	: Summary of the previous days discussion Intermediate Q & A session
	Afternoon	: Exhibition at a museum by Kazuyoshi Ohtsuka and Yoshio Okuno (Exhibition group)
		The museum environment by Tsuneyuki Morita and Naoko Sonoda (Conservation group)
Day 4	Morning	: Conservation of museum objects by Tsuneyuki Morita
	Afternoon	: Q & A session Closing ceremony
Day 5	Visits to the Vietnam Army Museum and the Air Force Museum	

#### The Conservation Group

The participants of this group were mostly young women. They were actually working in museums either in technical management of storage areas or for conservation and/or restoration of artifacts. On the other hand, people assisting the Exhibition group were relatively older. Some of them were in charge of museum management, and the others were researchers responsible for exhibitions. There were few people between these two generations, and this fact might reflect the history of this country. And, as conservation science is a relatively new field in Vietnam, young people tend to get involved in this domain.

The person in charge of the conservation division was Ms. Mai. She has been of great help to us in many practical circumstances: visit to storage rooms and the preparation of objects for practical exercises in a seminar room and in exhibition galleries.



The storage room was situated on the ground floor, at the back of a courtyard. Air conditioning was working from 7:00 am to 6:30 pm. The temperature was set at 22 °C; however, there were wide fluctuations in temperature depending on the season. Relative humidity would be around 70%, even with dehumidifiers. Participants in the JICA course often complained about high temperatures and high humidity in their countries. Here also, in Vietnam, we encountered these same climate conditions.

The session on Handling of Museum Objects was conducted in a seminar room, using actual objects from their collection. In Minpaku, we have our own checking system, with a checklist specially made for our purposes <sup>(2)</sup>. First we identify what the object is made of. Then, we check the conservation condition of each material that composes this object. We see each object, not for its intrinsic value, but as an assemblage of materials. The basis of this way of thinking seemed to be understood by the participants. They requested a translation of our checklist into Vietnamese. Our checklist was originally intended to note the degree of degradation of ethnobiological objects. It is not THE checklist. Each museum, according to the type of collection, can make its own checklist using our method as a starting point. For that reason, they needed Minpaku's checklist translated into Vietnamese.

As part of a practical exercise in exhibition galleries, we took one showcase as an example. We asked them if there were any problems in terms of conservation and if there were some ways to improve the condition or to solve the problems. People working for the same museum gathered naturally, and several groups were formed. They discussed this issue for a while. Then, one person from each group reported their findings. For the rest of the time, we had a free discussion, and in that way, all problems were raised and solved. Sometimes it was difficult to discover a solution alone, but, as the proverb says two heads are better than one, and finally they all came up with good solutions through discussions with their colleagues.

### Question and Answer Session

Questions raised during break time or the Question and Answer sessions from the participants of the Conservation group had the same focus. Participants sought direct solutions to each problem that they were encountering; for example, how to conserve and/or restore rubber ties, metal objects, leather, textiles, straw objects, precision instrument like a telescope or camera, and film materials. There was also a question regarding vinyl maps, used by the U.S. army during the Vietnam War, which were about to melt. Other problems concerned the control of molds, insects and bacteria.

A very concrete solution to each problem was expected, such as this can be solved by using this material and this method. However, regarding conservation and restoration, there is no miracle cure-all. We try to find an appropriate solution for each case through careful observation and tests. We therefore suggested how to approach each problem, and to which points we have to pay attention. The important thing is to improve the museum environment and at the same time to ameliorate the storing system and conditions.

In conservation and restoration, especially since the 1990s, the importance of preventive conservation has been recognized. Here, preventive conservation is used in the same way as preventive medicine. We need to take care of ourselves in our daily life to maintain good health. In this way, we can avoid undergoing medical treatment (restoration) due to disease (deterioration). We

should be very careful in doing restoration work, because through the intervention we add something new to the object. This is the reason why it is so important to improve conservation conditions in museums, including exhibition galleries and storage areas.

#### In Future

After this workshop in Vietnam, I have thought over the International Cooperation Seminar on Museology at Minpaku as well as the Museum Management Technology (Collection, Conservation and Exhibition) course of JICA.

Participants of the seminar or of the course are all different. Some are directly concerned in museum activities. Others are in important positions like administrators or director-generals. They all come to Japan with their own experiences and information from their own viewpoints. Everyone claims that bilateral relationships are more important than one-way training. How can we do this in practice? One idea is to produce together a manual that covers real needs. The majority of books or references on conservation science are written by American or European researchers. Taking only the example of climate conditions, it is easy to understand that the conditions in the participants' countries are quite different from those of the United States or European countries, located in the temperate or subfrigid zones. Most of the participants must deal with high temperatures and high humidity. Others complain about high temperatures and low humidity. And they also have to consider strong sunshine. When we consider the actual climate or other conditions in Asia or in Africa, methods or systems developed in the United States or in Europe cannot always be applied automatically. This manual, to be ideal, should cover all the activities in museums, and we should propose solutions with the situations of the interested countries taken into account: what could we do with a minimum system, trained personnel and capital? Moreover, the manual should be written in their own languages. The manual is worthwhile only if it is really used on the spot.

One of the remaining problems concerns participants after the training course. Some of them wish to take more advanced courses in Japan. However, at the moment, we are not prepared to meet their requests. As the Museum Management Technology (Collection, Conservation and Exhibition) course became, one of the general courses of JICA in 1999, we expect an increase in applicants for advanced courses. The issue can not be tackled only within Minpaku. It is necessary to have cooperation between related institutions and to organize an appropriate system in Japan.

Our big challenge is the creation of a network. The staff of Minpaku has been and is involved in international cooperation projects on museum activities from several standpoints. For instance, Professors Morita and Tanabe had already been at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology as advisers even before this workshop. In addition, with the JICA course as a turning point, we now have close cooperative links with museums in Bhutan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar and the Solomon Islands. Under these circumstances, a network has been developed among the participants of the seminar at Minpaku, with Professor Tamura as the leader. A newsletter named Co-Operation has been distributed not only to the participants of the seminar but also to overseas researchers who are interested in museum activities.

There are so many other international cooperation projects on museum activities in which Japan or other countries are involved. Each project has its own network. If stronger ties were made between these networks, a real international network would be created, which would facilitate the

mutual exchange of knowledge, information and experience.

<sup>(1)</sup> We would like to thank our interpreters, Mr. Kazuhiko Onishi and Mr. Yasuo Fukuda. Without their efforts, the seminar would not have been so successful.

<sup>(2)</sup> Tsuneyuki Mōri, Case Study: Materials and Disfiguration of Ethnographic Objects, *Senri Ethnological Studies*, No. 23, pp. 45-67, 1988.

(Notes)

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# Message Board

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## 1. Union of Myanmar

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The year of participation: 1994/1995

### Myanmar Necklaces (Beads) Exhibition

Myanmar people like to wear necklaces not only of gold or jewels but also of various kinds of stone beads and even artificial beads. So Myanmar people have possessed many kinds of beads throughout the long history of Myanmar. During August of 2000, the Myanmar National Museum held a temporary exhibition of beads, lasting 44 days and many Myanmar of different ages as well as foreigners came to see the exhibition.

Myanmar Necklaces (Beads) Exhibition was held as an activity of the Ministry of Culture. Three departments under the control of the Ministry of Culture, the Department of Culture Institute, the Fine Arts Department and the Archaeological Department cooperated to for this successful exhibition.

@ First, after forming the committee, members went to various parts of Myanmar to collect beads of different periods and different areas. For example, the Director-General of the Department of Cultural Institute tried to collect the beads of Chin nationalities in Chin State, a mountainous region, rather difficult in transportation. In Chin State, there are different groups of Chin tribes and they live separately in villages. For this reason, the Director-General collected the beads and necklaces by borrowing the family heritage of different Chins through the cooperation of the State authority and with the help of the curator of the Chin State Cultural Museum. The Director of the National Museum also went around Bagan District and borrowed beads and took photographs of the places the ancient beads were found. One of the Directors of the Archaeological Department went to Chaungtha Beach, very near to the Ayeyarwaddy Delta region and Patheingyi city and shot video of the process of making shell necklaces. This director purchased various kinds of shell necklaces and shells that Myanmar use for necklaces and other decorations.

The Director of the Library and Museum research section, under the Department of Cultural Institute, went to the central part of Myanmar and took video on the process of making fossil wood beads in many shapes and designs.

Other cultural museums of States and Divisions also collected the beads of Myanmar ethnic groups by borrowing or by purchasing. Because of the announcement on Myanmar newspaper and television, private bead collectors

and owners were interested in the exhibition and cooperated in many other ways as well as lending their beads. They tried to support the exhibition by exhibiting in interesting ways and donated money to print the brochure (pamphlet). And some people who own the strange, beautiful and rare necklaces shared their wonderful feelings about their beads with many other people by lending them for the exhibition.

After collecting, the staffs of the National Museum and State museums tried to make an attractive exhibition. We divided the beads and necklaces section by section. Firstly, we started with the stone age beads and bronze age beads. Secondly came the Pyu Period beads made of gold, carnelian, agate, quartz and chalcedony of the 1<sup>st</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Thirdly, beads of the Bagan Period of the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. are displayed. After then Konebaung Period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D. bead necklaces are shown. The next section comprises beads of various nationalities of Myanmar, especially Shan, Kachin, Kayah, Kayah, Rakhine and Chin. Shan State is very wide and many minority groups live in this mountainous region apart from the Shan majority group. In the exhibition we chose the traditional necklaces of the Ahakha and Lahta groups which had been rarely shown. In Rakhine State, among the various groups, necklaces of the Myittha and Kamet groups were chosen because of their rareness and the difficulty of getting a chance to see them. After this are the necklaces of Kachin, Kayah and Padaung. In the exhibition, beads of Chin State are especially exhibited.

The second to last section contains the various shell necklaces of Myanmar and the last section is modern necklaces from all over Myanmar. The special section shows the beads of fossil wood from the middle part of Myanmar. So, there are 8 sections in the exhibition hall. Although we wanted to exhibit more beads, the

hall is rather narrow and the area is limited.

We, the museum staff thought carefully how to beautifully decorate each section differently, so we used antiques for support in the historic sections. We used natural dried flowers, bamboo, leaves and daily utensils made of bamboo in the section of national races. Other interesting objects like sculpture, pottery and glassware are used in the modern beads section.

In the exhibition hall we showed not only the beads and supporting materials, but also used a map to show where the beads were found, as well as explanation plate in Myanmar and English. For example, for the Chin traditional necklaces of (16) kinds. The explanations read:

Ng Maw use as necklaces in Min tat and Kanpak let. Big amber beads. Usually three or four necklaces are combined as one set. Beads are in various colours but only one colour beads are also used in this kind.

Sakhi hapaak khi is made of barking deer canines. At least (30) male barking deer, 60 canines for one necklaces. Only the brave, skillful hunter can hold the Sakhi hapaak khi. Cho race ladies wear as the honourable symbol of skillful hunting and courage of their fathers or husbands.

As above, there are 16 kinds of Chin bead necklaces.

In the exhibition, 44 kinds of necklaces were shown, totalling 493 necklaces and 125 beads. But during the exhibition period the total number of necklaces & beads increased because of private collectors.

#### Kinds of Beads on Exhibit

Stone age	-stone beads
	-terra-cotta
	-shell
Bronze age	-stone beads
Pyu period	-fossil wood, gold, smoky quartz

	-amethyst, amber,
	camelian
	-spinel, quartz, agate
	-black tourmaline, paste,
	glass, chaledony
Bagan period	-terra-cotta
	-paste
	-glass
	-amethyst
	-quartz
Konebaung period	-amber
Present Age	-jade
	-quartz
	-amber
	-apis-lazuli
	-camelian
	-agate
	-pearl
	-shell
	-mother of pearl
	-teak wood
	-ivory
	-yam bead
	-padauk wood
	-yin-dak wood
	-bamboo
	-coconut
	-kyeik seed
	-yway seed
	-ahwaiyar seed
	-toddy palm leaf
	-corypha palm leaf
	-elephant bone
	-cow bone
	-cowrie
	-glass
	-plastic
National races	-kyeik seed
	-coral
	-cowrie
	-bamboo
	-fossil wood

-agate
-amber
-quartz
-barking deer canine
-shell
-plastic
-paste
-monkey skull
-boar canine
-barking deer horn
-terra-cotta
-brass
-silver coin

A total of 6972 adults, 11528 children (local) and 249 foreigners came to see the exhibition. We recorded the exhibition by taking photographs and videos. Visitors could buy a videotape about Myanmar necklaces. Beads and accessory shops opened in front of the exhibition hall.

So, everyone liked the exhibition very much. Since the exhibition, the young ones in Yangon are wearing beads around their necks and also in their hand in fashionable ways.



## 2. Malaysia

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The year of participation: 1994/1995

## Activities

My new responsibilities are in public relation. Giving short briefings and talks to any of the visiting team comprising the members of the association, VIPs, school students and university students is my routine job. The talks cover the objectives, mission, and vision of the Sabah Museum to give visitors basic insight into the role of our museum before we guide through our exhibition. While in the gallery the visiting team is given further information.

My other business is to supervise the contribution of articles and any other information pertaining to the museum activities to be published in the local newspapers. Prior to this I was also given the task of producing information about our museum activities via radio and television.

Immediately after returning from Japan after attending the group-training course on museology in 1994/1995 organized by JICAM inaku, I was involved in preparations for the opening ceremony of our museum's Heritage Village.

In 1995, I supervised the setting up of the Information Centre of the Kharut Panoramic Mansion, which was built for the former rubber estate manager, German W.F.C. Asinont, during the British Era in Sabah.

In 1996, I supervised the construction and establishment of the Batu Tulug Agop site

museum in the eastern part of Sabah.

In 1996, I was involved in setting up the Sabah Museum permanent exhibition on Sabah's historical Time Tunnel, Technology on Sabah's Railway, Islamic Civilisation, Zoology and Technology of Broadcasting in Sabah.

From 1996 to 1999, I was involved in the preparation of several temporary exhibitions on Malaysian currency, exhibitions on youth, jar collection, astronomy, cannons, biodiversity, our culture, the pleasure of discovery, Ramadhan and Images of Kota Kinabalu, and several other mobile exhibitions.

In 1999, I supervised the setting up of the Information Centre of the Datuk Paduka Mat Saleh (a Bajau warrior who fought against the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). The location is in the interior of Sabah.

In 1999 I was a team leader of the research group seeking public opinion in the area of Sandakan, Sabah for a proposal to build a site museum in Sandakan. The results of the research will be a great help in implementing the proposal which will be funded by the federal government of Malaysia.

I am also a member of the video/research recording group in the joint research project of the Department of Cultural Institute and the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka and Toppan Printing Co. Ltd. Japan. The video shooting will cover among other things, the events related to the life of the people of my country (Sabah Malaysia), such as annual events, various scenes in rural and city lives to be used for audio-visual education for elementary and intermediate school children in Japan for their better understanding of foreign cultures and people. This programme might also be useful for our museum outreach programme in the future.

At the moment I am also a member of various committees. I am the secretary of the Exhibition Committee, the secretary of the

Acquisition Committee, and a committee member of the annual Sabah Festival celebration. Sabah Museum was the centre of the state level cultural activities held every year on May 15th. This celebration was held in conjunction with the Visit Sabah Year 2000 and the activities for the celebration included numerous cultural shows, handicraft demonstration, traditional games and competitions of various ethnic groups in Sabah which were held at the Sabah Museum Complex.

Apart from that I am also a member of the publication committee, a secretary of the training and induction course, a panel member of Sabah Museum Governmental Examination and Deputy Chairman of the research committee.

In June 2000, I was involved in organizing the International Biodiversity conference in the New Millennium held in Kota Kinabalu. I was the emcee for the panel and the combined session of the conference, which was attended by 150 participants from various countries.

For our outreach programme I am looking forward to organizing several traveling exhibition in the rural area in the field. Apart from the exhibition, I will be giving talks to the village people as well as school students in their respective area, and I am now preparing a lot of photo slides about the Sabah Museum to be used in my presentations. Introducing the museum's function will be very crucial as most of the communities living in the rural area, we believe, have never been to the museum before.

Apart from my museum's work I and several other officers, our director Mr. Joseph P. Guntavid, Deputy Director Mr. Sintong Geket and Conservator Mr. Anthony Chong are now involved in the Kota Kinabalu Centennial Time Capsule project to be constructed at Kota Kinabalu City sometime at the end of the year 2000.

Comments

The Museum Management Technology Group Training Course jointly organized by JICA and several other museums in Japan, especially The National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka from 26 September 1994 to 19 March 1995, has given me the opportunity to learn more about museum work and its vital role in the communities. The crucial aspects were the knowledge I gained from the museum experts in various museums in Osaka, Hyogo Prefecture, Kobe, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Tokyo, Nara and several other museums. I managed to visit around Osaka during my free time (Saturday and Sunday). All of them boosted my knowledge which will be a great help in my career and assist my routine job towards some improvement. Besides that I managed to learn some simple Japanese language.

The visit to several museums throughout the program initiated by JICA and Japan Foundation was very appropriate and should be carried on in future. The visit was not only to enjoy the beauties of Japan but the knowledge we acquired from various museums. I and every participant for sure are looking forward to adapting everything to the best of our abilities. The greatest problem is that our budget could not afford everything.

I was able to learn more new things through the tour programme to several famous museums throughout Japan, the lectures had given me more information and the practical training had given me the opportunities to travel alone and experience the true life style especially the autumn and winter session in Japan.

I was very glad to visit Japan in my lifetime and I feel proud to have been given another chance to visit Japan again 3 years later for another 2 weeks and to visit Mipaku once more under the sponsorship of the Japan Foundation. The second chance gave me another golden opportunities to learn more about museum work in Japan.



The Japan Foundation's programme also gave me the unforgettable opportunity to visit several museums around Okinawa as well as Ishigaki Island, the isolated small island the Taketomi and several other famous museums in Yokohama, and between Tokyo and Osaka.

I take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to all the museum personnel especially in Japan but not forgetting the Japanese representative in Malaysia and the government of Malaysia who rendered their every effort to assist me in improving my knowledge in order to carry on with my career. I'm looking forward to another opportunity to study more about museology.



### 3. Solomon Islands

Edward Wale
Conservator, Solomon Islands National Museum (Office address) P.O. Box 313, Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS
(Tel) ( +677) 22309 (Fax) ( +677) 23351
The year of participation: 1994/1995

I would like to acknowledge the receipt of the newly established cooperation newsletter for

the Minpaku Seminar on Museology 2000.

First of all, credit must be given to the members of the International Cooperation Committee on museology for the initiative to establish such a newsletter which I believe will provide information tools for former and present participants of the International Cooperation Seminar on Museology as well as a network for them and for their museum colleagues.

I think one very important aspect of such a newsletter is that it provides an avenue for former participants and those who might be interested in museum related issues to discuss and exchange views and ideas on important matters affecting their respective museums and cultural institutions. I hope that this newsletter will also promote friendship and communication amongst participants, the staff of Minpaku and others from museums and cultural institutions across Japan.

As one of the participants in the first International Cooperation Seminar on Museology in 1994, I fully support the concept and intentions of the newsletter. I do hope that other participants who have participated in previous seminars will appreciate the effort put forward by your hard working committee and will also support and contribute articles for this newly created newsletter.

It is interesting to note that all the participants who contributed to the first newsletter shared the same sentiment concerning what they learned from the seminar and the museum management course organized by JICA in collaboration with the National Museum of Ethnology and which benefited them in one way or another.

In my case, the seminar and the JICA course was an eye opener which has encouraged me to broaden my knowledge and given me insight into the technology and methodology the developed countries apply in their museums for the dissemination of heritage

information to their interested audiences.

On my return in 1996, I attended a workshop on Pest Control and Treatment in Museums held at the University of Canberra, Canberra, Australia. In 1997, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) organized by the Fiji Museum and held in Suva, Fiji. In 1998, I was invited to attend a course on Techniques in Preserving Heritage Collections held at the Tahiti Museum in Papeete, Tahiti.

All in all, the knowledge acquired from my training in Japan, especially at the National Museum of Ethnology, has given me confidence in my contributions in the professional and scientific workshops I mentioned above.

At present, the financial and ethnic crisis in our country has forced almost 80% of the public servants on to government workers nonpaid leave and we just stay at home monitoring the situation. As soon as the situation improves we should resume our duties. As soon as I resume duty, I will work on a rehabilitation plan for our collections and display which have suffered greatly from theft and inattention to the artifacts during the last five months or so.

I will update you on the situation at our museum and its collections as soon as I return to work.

With that much I remain.

## 4. Republic of Ghana

Alex Mensah
Chief Administrative assistant, Ghana Museums and Monuments
(Office address) Ghana Museums and Monuments P.O. Box GP 3343 Accra-Ghana, GHANA
(Tel) ( 233)21-221633
The year of participation: 1997/1998

After my arrival in Ghana and a whole month of concentrated excitement that yearned for the imparting of what I acquired in Japan, I decided to expose my office colleagues and other staff to what I learned. This was to prevent the innovations, improvements, etc. of my enhanced expertise from looking strange and creating confusion as I applied the new trends in museum management. Newly employed staff, students doing their National Service, and students on practical attachment are exposed to the modern trends in museum management technology.

I participated in other major projects. An exhibition was mounted at Sekondi, one of the cities in Ghana. I participated in this project as a member of the Technical Planning Committee. The project was undertaken by the Ghana Museums and Monuments, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana and the West African Museums Programme (WAMP) based in Dakar, Senegal. The project was the first step in the establishment of a Regional Museum in Sekondi.

I am conducting research to discover the extent of care of collections by curators etc. My research is aimed at establishing the degree of improvement in the handling of collections in the repositories. Suggestions for improvement will be given at the end of the research. I took part in the feasibility studies on the Slave Route Exhibition which are underway in Ghana by the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board.

## 5. Republic of Zambia

Liywalii Mushokabanjii
Keeper of Archaeology, Livingstone Museum
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(Home address)

54 Kabompo RD, Livingstone, ZAMBIA
The year of participation: 1999/2000

## Impressions on the Museum Management Technology Course for Japan International Cooperation Agency Participants

Is it possible you can travel to Japan? We have short-listed your name for a training course in Japan. The typical answer from many participants is an outright yes, of course sir. This is apparently the conversation in which usually government officials in charge of heritage institutions in developing countries invite their personnel to come and train in the Museum Management Technology course offered by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The first impression that strikes many participants is how much of the latest technology is applied in Japan and particularly in Japanese cultural institutions.

The Museum Management Technology course, normally offered over a space of six months, covers almost all the functional aspects of cultural institutions and their support units from collection of data through education to security of the cultural contents. The six weeks at the end of the course are usually reserved for individual training in specific fields of interest for each participant. The course intends to orient the participants to the functions of cultural institutions and their support units and to further their understanding in specific fields of interest. The objectives of the course are achieved by a series of lectures carried out at the Osaka Students International Centre (OSIC) and study trips based on observations and on sight lectures in museums and other cultural centers across Japan.

The intention of the Japanese Government to introduce this course was well timed and an appreciated contribution of human resource

development for many developing countries of the world. As well, the organization of the course is superb. However, a few remarks and observations can be made on the implementation of the course.

## Experience

Museology is a comparatively new field of study in many universities in the world and some developing countries may not have such a course offered in their education system. Hence Heritage Institutions in many of these countries have to employ staff with virtually no training in museology. How they work in museums and other cultural property institutions is something they have to learn while working. The point to note is that the JICA Museology course may be the only opportunity that such personnel have to formally learn museology. Therefore it is suggested here that the lectures should be broad enough to include theory as well as practical examples of the concepts under study. Such an approach will not only equip participants with experience but also help them perceive museology concepts to contribute to ideas at any theoretical forum. The lectures as noted above should be broad. For example Security In Museums as a subject for study may require identification of the various types of security available for both objects and humans that come into contact with museum facilities. This approach may cover areas such as accessioning, documentation, exhibition, publication, mechanical equipment, and outside organization as means of security. Another example is Museum Environment. This subject may answer issues pertaining to how other institutions in the society influence museums and other cultural centers operations as well as how space and specimens may be managed to prolong their lifespan. Likewise such an approach to the subject can particularly be understood if literature

references are given.

### Study Trips

Basically in study trips trainees come into contact with cultural centers and their support units. The idea of study trips is a good approach in museology. It introduces participants to an on site experience. Participants are offered an opportunity to see actual implementation and performance of the concepts of different museums and site monuments. However, care must be taken in plans for study trips so that the intended objectives are attained without strain. The present nature of the study trips appears wrought with duplicate albeit very costly trips. It is my suggestion that study trips be limited to one on site experience trip for each concept introduced. For example if the subject is Open Air Museum one museum that represents all aspects of an open air museum may be chosen for the on site experience. Such an approach will not only eliminate monotony but also heavily reduce the cost of study trips.

### Literature References

Literature is a very important aspect of any training. The OSC library leaves much to be desired in terms of literature references for the museology course. Hence it is my suggestion as mentioned above that money saved on study trips could be invested in the acquisition of appropriate reading materials for the library. Alternatively, if the focus of the course is to produce trainers, then likewise appropriate books could be bought for participants future use.

Another point to note is that the experience of Japan is altogether different from that of developing countries. Generally speaking, developing countries are poverty-stricken, and agonized by budget cuts. Therefore every site experience, especially in specialized training must consider available options wherever

possible in view of the overwhelming poverty where modern facilities may not be acquired in a short time.

### Seminar

The seminar from the participant point of view is well timed. This is because toward the end of the course participants will have covered much of the course and it may be the right time to reevaluate and refreshen their understanding of ideas and the ways, issues are dealt with particularly in Japanese cultural institutions. But I think that this reevaluation can efficiently be realized if participants themselves are encouraged to actively participate in the seminar by way of presenting papers on museology topics of their own choice. In fact this will avail them an opportunity to discuss ideas based on their experiences in Japan. On the other hand, the other participants and lecturers in particular will have a chance to note how much museology participants have grasped from the course. I would like to further suggest that another seminar be conveyed before participants begin their lectures. Such a seminar must also actively involve all participants and lecturers should attend. This will enable lecturers to gauge how much the participants already know so that they can prepare lecture contents accordingly. The same can be said for daily lectures. It is important to clarify the relevance of the lecture to participants beforehand.

### Correspondence

To monitor the future performance of graduate participants, continued exchange of ideas through communication with host organizers should be established. I therefore would like to take this opportunity to encourage the idea of an annual magazine by the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) for continued communication with the participants. It is my

proposal that if possible the magazine reserve space for the participants to write about their projects and achievements after training.

## Conclusion

The concerns raised in this article were as a result of my participation in the JICA Museum by course. However, I was encouraged to note that many of my fellow participants shared similar concerns. I would like to thank Minpaku for publishing these observations. More importantly, it is my sincere hope that the concerns raised in this article will be useful in the future reorganization of the JICA Museum by course.

## 6. Kingdom of Nepal

Ganesh Man Gurung
Professor of Sociology, Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University
(Office address) National Museum, Chauouni, Kathmandu, NEPAL
(Home address) Triyarga Nager palika - 1 Udayapur, NEPAL
The year of participation: 1999/2000

According to the agreement between the Nepal National Ethnographic Museum (NEM), the National Museum of Ethnology, and the Toppan Printing Company, Mr. Yasushi Kobayashi donated a movie camera, forty cassettes, and money to the museum at a meeting held at the Kathmandu office on December 27, 1999. Mr. Makoto Minami, who is a Research Fellow at the National Museum of Ethnology located in Osaka, Japan, was also present at the meeting. On the same occasion, the chairman of the museum, Dr. Ganesh Man Gurung, and vice-chairman, Professor Som

Prasad Gauchan, stated that such cooperation would help better represent Nepalese culture to the world. In accordance to his agreement with the museum, cameraman Mr. Dhrub Basnet has videotaped various Nepali festivals, such as Lhosar, Bisket Jatra, Timal Jatra, Ghantakama, Negpanchami, Rishitarpan, Gai Jatra, Krishna Astami, Babuko Mukh Heme, Haritalka, and Panchami.

Next, the museum plans to videotape various parts of Nepalese daily life. The proposed themes include the daily lives of a porter, student, driver, local shaman, jobholder, mother, craftsman, and farmer. This film is expected to benefit both Nepalese and Japanese people. In addition to being shown in the museum, it will also be studied by Japanese school children. Based on this year's experiences, the museum will develop a plan to record various aspects of Nepalese lifestyle and culture. Plans to begin filming next year in various parts of the nation outside the Kathmandu valley. Surely, such type of work gives additional support for the establishment of National Ethnographic Museum in Nepal.



## 7. People's Republic of

China

Zan Shuqin
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(Tel) ( 86)431-8502476
The year of participation: 2000/2001

Changchun Geological Palace Museum of the Jilin University was founded in 1954. The exhibition area is 1,500 square meters, comprising seven divisions namely fossils, minerals, rocks, mineral deposits, gems and jade, appreciation stones, and special Dinosaur Hall. Currently there are more than 3,000 geological specimens on display, and another 20,000 or more in the storage.

From the time of establishment (1954), this museum had provided satisfactory services to both the professors and students in the teaching and learning of Geology. Three years ago (1997), this museum was opened to the public for viewing and the annual visitors are about 30,000. The museum plays an important role in promoting and educating the public in geoscience. At the end 1999, this museum was nominated as the National Base for Public Science Education by the National Association of Science and Technology of China.

I was very lucky to be invited by the Japan

International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to take part in the training course from August 2 to December 27, 2000. In the five month period, I visited and observed more than 40 wonderful museums throughout Japan and met about 60 professors and curators who gave lectures on museology (collection, conservation, exhibition, museum management, etc.). I attended the two week International Cooperation Seminar on museology at Minpaku (the National Museum of Ethnology), plus five weeks of special training at the Fukui Prefectural Dinosaur Museum, the Ritsumeikan University World Peace Museum, and Minpaku.

From this training course, I learned about the theory and technology of museum function and exchanged views and experiences with experts of museology.

When I return to my country, I will apply what I learned here to my work.

1. I will do my best to achieve an increase in the budget from our university for our museum and try to apply for more grants from government, companies and even abroad.
2. When our museum renews the permanent exhibition, I will make use of more advanced technology such as computers and audio-visual utilities; I will use as many new ways as possible to make the exhibition more interesting.
3. At the present, there are many fossils, minerals and appreciation stones on the Chinese markets, so we should explore opportunities to collect more specimens and to enlarge our storage.
4. In the future, our museum will hold a special exhibition closely associated with the people and environment. Possible themes of special exhibitions to be organized are mineral medicine, diamonds, resources and the environment, and earthquakes.

5. I will use the management experience I learned here to manage our museum in order to increase the efficiency of the museum work.
6. For the next year, our museum plans to establish international cooperation with Japanese specialists on dinosaurs. Work in this type of joint project will lead to excellent research results on Changchun dinosaurs.

My ambition is to make my museum one of the best in Changchun City and I hope my dream will come true.

# Program 2000

Date	Time	Subject	Teacher
Oct. 10 (Tue.)	10:00--10:30	Opening Ceremony Opening Remarks	Naomichi Ishige ( Director-General)
	10:30--12:00	Organization of the National Museum of Ethnology	Isao Hayashi
	13:00--16:00	Museum Tour	Makito Minami
	16:00--17:15	Official Visit to the Director- General	
	17:30--19:00	Welcome Party (at Museum Restaurant)	
Oct. 11 (Wed.)	10:00--16:00	The Museum Documentation	Masatoshi Kubo
Oct. 12 (Thu.)	10:00--16:00	From Acquisition to Display at National Museum of Ethnology	Ryoji Sasahara Yoshiaki Iijima
Oct. 13 (Fri.)	10:00--16:00	Object Inspection and Identification of Materials	Naoko Sonoda
Oct. 16 (Mon.)	10:00--16:00	The Museum Environment	Tsuneyuki Morita
Oct. 17 (Tue.)	10:00--16:00	Measurement and Technical Drawing of Object	Kazuyoshi Ohtsuka
Oct. 18 (Wed.)	10:00--16:00	Audio-Visual Materials in the Museum	Akira Suzumura
Oct. 19 (Thu.)	10:00--16:00	Photography ( Theory and Practice)	Hitoshi Tagami
Oct. 20 (Fri.)	10:00--12:30	Museum Lighting	Tsuneyuki Morita
	13:30--16:00	Overall Discussion	Chairperson : Katsumi Tamura
	16:15--16:45	Closing Ceremony Closing Remarks	Shigeharu Sugita ( Deputy Director-General)
	16:45--17:00	Group Photographing for Memory	



# Participants 2000

country	name	affiliation
Bhutan	<b>Deki Yangzom</b>	Senior Museum Assistant, National Museum Paro, Bhutan
Bulgaria	<b>Lyubava Alexandrova Georgieva</b>	Curator of Ancient History and Archaeology, National Museum of History
China	<b>Zan Shuqin</b>	Curator/Professor, Geological Palace Museum, Changchun University of Science and Technology
Malaysia	<b>Chau Mein Anthony Chong</b>	Curator/Conservator, Department of Sabah Museum
Myanmar	<b>U Than Win</b>	Deputy Director, National Museum, Department of Cultural Institute, Ministry of Culture, Union of Myanmar
Papua New Guinea	<b>Ezirifa Owaka</b>	Principal Curator, J. K. McCarthy Museum
Peru	<b>Luis Felipe Villacorta</b>	Sub-Director, Museo De Sitio, De Puruchuco, Instituto Nacional de Culutura
Saudi Arabia	<b>Abdul Rahman A. A. A. R. Al-Mansour</b>	Archaeologist, Deputy Ministry of Antiquities and Museums
China	<b>Deng Xiaohua</b>	Director, Institute of Anthropology, Xiamen University
China	<b>Li Xiaofen</b>	Instructor, Foreign Languages and Culture, Xiamen University
Finland	<b>Riikka Lansisalmi</b>	Part-time researcher of the programme for promotion of the core research institute, National Museum of Ethnology



# Participants by country

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
China						1	3	4
Korea			1			2		3
Mongolia	2					1		3
Cambodia				1				1
Indonesia			1	1				2
Laos	1	1				1		3
Malaysia	2	1					1	4
Myanmar	2			2			1	5
Singapore			1					1
Thailand	1	2			(1) *			3(1)
Vietnam		(4)	1	1				2(4)
Bhutan	1	(2)	1				1	3(2)
Maldives			1					1
Nepal						2		2
Pakistan					2			2
Saudi Arabia				1			1	2
Syria				1				1
Bulgaria							1	1
Finland							(1)	(1)
Macedonia					1			1
Cameroon				1				1
Ethiopia		1						1
Ghana			1	1				2
Kenya			1					1
Madagascar	1							1
Senegal				1				1
Tanzania				1	1			2
Zambia			1			1		2
Bolivia			1			1		2
Brazil		(1)						(1)
Chile					1			1
Guatemala				1	1			2
Peru		1				1	1	3
Australia		(1)						(1)
Papua New Guinea		1	1			1	1	4
Solomon Islands	1	1						2
Total	11	8(8)	11	12	6(1)	11	10(1)	69(10)

\*Numbers in parentheses are observers



The International Cooperation Seminar on Museology, 2000  
October 20, 2000 / National Museum of Ethnology



If you have any change of your affiliation or address, please fill in the following form and send it back by fax as soon as possible.

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message

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