

(General Discussion) Towards New Ways of Exhibiting "Africa"

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Session 3 (General Discussion)

Towards New Ways of Exhibiting “Africa”

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YOSHIDA

We have had presentations as to two topics and we would like to further discuss them. I will be coordinating this session along with Mr. Kawaguchi.

As you know, we have been dealing with the representation of African art and cultures in countries outside of Africa. Now we are going to focus on exhibitions in Africa.

We'd like to have five speakers comment on the situation. Benjamin Menyah, Ayudeji Adewunmi, Godfried Mahachi, David Koloane, and Elisabeth Orchardson. Time is quite limited, so please keep your talks to five minutes. I'd like to ask Mr. Menyah to start.

MENYAH

Greetings from Ghana!

There are two types of visual arts that coexist in Ghana: Indigenous, by indigenous artists who learned by apprenticeship, and contemporary, practiced by educated people in various institutions.

The indigenous arts include woodcarvings, which mirror Ghana's spiritual outlook and are indispensable for its social life. Clay and cement portraits are also made, which are placed on military shrines and tombs to ensure power and continued existence

of the deceased. Metal casting is also done, ceremonial implements are cast in gold, silver and brass. Handmade pottery is made primarily by women except ritual pots that are exclusively made by men. Woven fabric is made with traditional looms and sewn together by hand into large cloths. Printed cloths are made by stamps with motifs of significant meaning. Beadwork is done using gold, glass, and rock beads. It is more common in Northern Ghana and has Islamic influences. Basketry is done using grass in the North, canes, bamboo, or leaves in the forests and its techniques include weaving, coiling, braiding, and plating. Picture making is also done and it originates from pre-historic art. Its motifs are symbolic and are applied to tombs, shrines, flags and fishing canoes to ensure protection and fertility. Also, body art, its clarification and tattooing of the cheeks and arms determine ethnicity, family clan and reincarnation. Tattooing is done during puberty, religious rights and festive occasions.

The contemporary arts include the 1939–56 period in which artists became more nationalistic; 1960–70 enhancing the president's image of African

personality, to fight against colonialism; 1980s artists allied together; 1990–2000 art societies dormant.

Our societies should strengthen their education in order to attract professionalism, promote sub regional expositions, and emancipate society from poverty.

YOSHIDA

Thank you very much. From Nigeria, we have Mr. Adewunmi.

ADEWUNMI

Nigeria is the largest black nation in the world with a population of 120 million. It is comprised of more than 200 nationalities living in an area of about 24,000 square kilometers.

Contemporary Nigerian art began in the early 20th century by Onabulu.

Art institutions, or schools per se, exist and exhibit influence on the art and culture. A lot of art activities revolve around the art schools in Nigeria, so many art scholars and prominent contemporary artists prefer to operate in the academic environments. Recently a new nationalistic consciousness has been introduced by a crop of students at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (formerly Nigeria College of Arts and Science, NCAST) to the contemporary art scene. Art schools have remained a forum to propagate the African artistic ideals and have been to some extent instrumental in the revolution against Euro-American ideology. The Nigerian art schools have served as good pedestals for purposeful outgrowth.

Dozens of galleries, museums and art centers are spread around the country, with 60% of these in the city of Lagos. Nigerian art has always been the victim of these policies of these institutions, fueled by tourist money.

Art cooperatives derive from professional, ideological and extra-artistic needs. They began with the start of the Oshogobo School in the 50's. The art cooperatives have development problems, though their impact is palpable.

Even in an economically and politically challenging environment, Nigerian art is open to intercultural dialogues, especially as globalism moves on.

YOSHIDA

Thank you very much. Next, I would like to ask Mr. Mahachi from Zimbabwe to speak.

MAHACHI

Zimbabwe – the country name – means large houses of stone. So the name, Zimbabwe, derived from the use of stone in most of Zimbabwe's cultural pursuits. In 1997–98, an exhibition "Legacies in Stone: Zimbabwe Past and Present" was mounted and run in Belgium by the Royal Museum for Central Africa. The legacies of stone that this exhibition covered included Zimbabwe's prehistoric folk art, which is between 1300–3000 years old. This art is found throughout the country and it is estimated that we have over 30,000 such sites with 10,000 already recorded and an estimated 20,000 still to be

recorded. It was shown that stone has had artistic influence in the country.

The second of the legacies relates to the buildings made of stone that took place in Zimbabwe in the second millennium A.D.. The country has many archaeological monuments made of stone. Apart from the use of stone in those archaeological monuments, stone was also used in that time period to craft various works of art. For example, the national symbol of the country derives from this period in the form of a bard as shown on a slide, the work being made out of soapstone. The stone walls of these settlements were generally very lavishly decorated in stone making them like pieces of art in themselves. The motifs found on those walls have been repeated in other items of material culture such as clothing, pottery, houses, and headdresses.

The third legacy is sculpturing in stone, which is very popular among artists in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, the artists have almost been submerged by the popular tourist industry. Popular tourism has suppressed some of the production of traditional works. Art can be found for sale along the major highways, making the whole country a sort of "gallery."

There is also a racial division in artwork in Zimbabwe largely due to the difficulty in obtaining materials and so forth. Most sculpturing is done by black artists, while white artists largely do paintings.

In terms of training, we have many art schools, and art is taught in primary

schools. We have three national art galleries which are fairly active and the national museums encourage the practice of art by holding art workshops for those people who are interested in crafting and to advance them into professional art. Thank you.

YOSHIDA

Thank you very much. Next presentation by Mr. David Koloane from South Africa.

KOLOANE

South Africa consists of 9 provinces and 11 languages, and still two distinct areas of white and black exist as a result of the years under apartheid. Separate residential areas exist with most of the infrastructure located in the white communities. Most white artists are educated while that is not the case among most of the black artists. Only a few have been educated. Both black and white artists operate at different levels. Resources and privileges are imbalanced in the society, which effects participation in the arts by racial groups. Some of the white artists can be sub-divided into several categories like flower painters, and Sunday art fair participants (mostly housewives and retirees). More professional practitioners are engaged in landscape, wildlife, still life, and portrait work. They operate in small suburban galleries as well as small art societies. The more ambitious and younger artists with international aspirations use more conceptual ideas as their subject, such as technology.

Black artists remain trapped in a vicious cycle of producing so-called African stereotypes for survival as a result of not having access to the art markets and galleries.

Johannesburg is the largest art market and boasts the two largest art galleries. Most well-known black and white artists work in these galleries.

We have the last category of rural-based practitioners who produce craftwork such as beadwork, ceramics, and traditional carvings. One black artist from this group, for example, has exhibited all over the world.

It should be noted here that the *Osaka Triennale* awarded the grand prize to two young South African artists, one black and the other white.

YOSHIDA

The last speaker, Ms. Orchardson, will report on Kenya.

ORCHARDSON

Written comments of mine are about two types of art in Kenya. I know you can access the Internet to get more information about my country. We are a former British colony, and a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-lingual country. Our official language is English and our national language is Swahili. Japanese is taught at one of our national universities. Like other countries, we have many categories of artists, but I have chosen just two distinct groups to show in my slides today. One is by professional artists who are usually alienated from the art

community as a result of poverty or other factors, and the other is the so-called naïve artist whose work is favored by tourists.

As you view these slides, I would like you to consider what images really do come to your mind when you think of Africa.

At least a few artists are now selling their work.

YOSHIDA

We have had the five reports. I apologize that you were only given five minutes in which to speak. But, we were able to see part of the diversity in Africa. As seen from Professor Orchardson's slide presentation, there does exist a gap between the image you have in mind and the actual scene in Kenya. With these samples in mind, we'd like to start the general discussion.

I invite three presentations based on the morning session by Ms. Arnoldi and the presentation by Ms. Nicodemus. The three panelists will make certain comments on these two presentations and after that they will talk about how African art should be presented. In addition, we'd like to ask them to give a proposal for further efforts. We will hear from Ms. Nagawa, Mr. Shimunchembu, and Dr. Sacko. We'd like to hear from Professor Nagawa first.

KAWAGUCHI

Ms. Nagawa studied at Goldsmith College in the U.K. to get her Masters Degree. When she was in London at the

October Gallery, she was engaged in exhibitions of contemporary art of Africa. Recently in Uganda, she has established a joint studio for the contemporary artists. So, Professor Nagawa, please.

NAGAWA

I'm not a professor yet, but thank you. Sorry for changing my paper you have seen, but some of those issues have already been covered.

I am delighted with the Smithsonian *African Voices* display and the long path it took to achieve as Ms. Arnoldi details. However, I would like to see it in order to successfully comment, criticize and take lessons from it. The latter wish would be harder to realize though. So I can only pose questions for now.

I respect the Extended Team approach. The only point I caution would be that most professionals have second hand information from publications, the media and the Internet. One needs people who go out to their field of expertise and collect first hand data.

I am happy to hear that the project was given six years of research and preparation unlike most such projects that are so hastily put on. However, I question how did this lapse of time affect the data collected at the start against what happened in the last year for instance. Any changes? Any effect? Was research done in the first year still relevant six years later? I am not certain of the time given to the research of *Seven Stories*, but perhaps with more time, they would have found a more suitable candidate within Uganda to

curate that story. Information about each other in Africa is hard to find. Lots of travel needs to be done by core organisers. A look at the limited number of publications like *Gallery* magazine in Harare would be useful.

I am assuming that finances at the Smithsonian are not an impediment to the progress of exhibition programmes. But, if any museum in Africa would like to mount a major display, then the budget constraints would strangle any desired activity. How can we take any lessons from the Smithsonian? Can we? Or should we take a whole different route altogether?

The museum structure itself has to be learned for an audience like Uganda's. As Everlyn Nicodemus says Art needs adapting to the audience. Having art as part of a social event rather than as a spectator event may be more suitable for some people. Mounting a show in the open for a few hours might be an answer like theatre, which is very popular in Uganda today. Why? Lessons for the visual arts lie in this answer. Maybe a mixing and not segregating of the arts is the answer. A meeting and merging of the pre-colonial and the modernism systems may also be crucial in creating a much sought after informed audience for art. When a Western form of education was introduced in Africa, the foreign markets and systems of art reception could not be expected to leave Africa alone to get on with it. Africa will dance to this tune, but we should start with the dances we know. How is culture lived now outside

of the museums and galleries? How can the newspapers, radio, television, local council administrators, food ceremonies, marriage, birth and death, commerce, leisure be more effectively used by the artist, curator, critic, academic in today's Africa?

Commissioning is yet another problem in the development of contemporary African art. When someone asks Tshibumba or Cheri Samba to produce a particular image, that image gets copied by others, devaluing both the image, the first artist to make it and the commissioning agent too. This then results in kitsch images created for the tourist and airport market. The Smithsonian by commissioning a coffin may inadvertently create a new desire in most American tourists to Africa for a coffin.

There is widespread prejudice in the West against professionally trained artists of Africa. A denial that a modern art does exist. This is fuelled, as Nicodemus rightly says, by exhibitions like *Magiciens de la Terre*, Paris, 1989. But Collectors would rather buy from artists in the bush, than from a professional who would have a lot of questions to ask of the buyers. For a collector with intentions of exhibiting their collection, it is easier to sell the image of Africa that is primitive than one with a sophisticated form of art production and dissemination, because the West already carries the former.

This throws us a challenge, we Africans with the professional ability to act, to find resources to alter and put

right the standing of Africa. Get the necessary funds which oil the wheels we travel on, start the publications, initiate the exhibitions, be collectors, however humble, if not, then aid the collectors. Why did *Africa 95* not travel back to Africa? Could some of us make that happen? Maybe it is unnecessary. But if thrown that net could we catch any fish with it?

Another crucial problem in Uganda at least, is the hoarding of information. People do not inform others of opportunities, of exhibitions, of collectors looking to buy work, of what they are doing and where they are showing, travelling or publishing. People fear to lose out to others, as resources are limited. I have no suggestions here but the mercy of the gods to alter and open practitioners' minds and widen their scope of thought.

I propose therefore, an approach to exhibiting that involves more than visual arts. One that is like a cultural festival where a multi-media approach is used. Involving art, music, photography, theatre, food, film, books and whatever else is relevant to a situation. An example of such an approach is the Peruvian exhibition mounted by the October Gallery in London in 2000. The artists were present as well as music, film, a book launch, and food.

With Japan I suggest we start on some common ground; a cultural event we both share; drumming, Taiko perhaps. Involve the performers, the instrument makers, craftsmen and

women, storytellers with relevance to the drumming ceremonies and visual artists. We would select venues with a capacity to hold and bridge the past and present, the familiar and the new, like the Uganda Museum. The same show would then be mounted in both countries. This would involve collaboration with individual arts professionals, institutions and organizations like the Japan International Co-operation Agency and the Japan Information and Cultural Centre in Nairobi. This study tour is the commencement of a fruitful research for this collaboration, and as a result I hope we will realize the vision of bringing art and society together which the artistic directors of Yokohama 2001 envision.

YOSHIDA

I don't think I should summarize such a wealth of content. Thank you very much, Ms. Nagawa.

From Zambia, we are very happy to have Mr. Shimunchembu. He graduated with a Master's Degree from Zambia University. He is currently a curator of the National Museum in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia.

I have been engaged in fieldwork in Zambia for the past two decades. Mr. Simunchembu has been involved with many joint projects internationally. I understand he will share with us his experience.

Mr. Simunchembu, please.

SIMUNCHEMBU

Thank you to the organizers for

allowing me to make a comment. I would like to comment on the Smithsonian's exhibition and African art and culture. I'm not an art historian. I'm a historian, so I'm looking at this clearly from a historical perspective.

It's important to consider the contemporary art of Africa, but it is also equally important to look at other factors that have helped shaped the continent. Most of the nations were formed in the 20th Century, starting out as colonies, later gaining freedom and establishing their own governments. This brought about an interaction of the West and Africa, but primarily a domination of Africa by the West. Perhaps one of the worst problems of this collision of cultures was an attempt to make Africans believe they had no culture of their own, or anything they did was worthless. This collision has caused a problem of identity and the authentic value of modern art. Without a sense of identity and the original touch, this art can not be discussed or compared to the art of other continents. There is a tendency to isolate ancient Egypt as the first source of African civilization. This relegates modern African art to mere images and objects without originality.

Culture is a key element in the development of societies, but the importance of art cannot be overlooked. Art acts like the "soul" of a society. It reflects the society and its originality.

We ask the question, "What should the concept of modern art in Africa be like?" African modern art seems to lack

the “soul” we just mentioned because it is cut off from its roots. Instead external influences control the modern art world in Africa. African artists copy the work from the West instead of gaining inspiration from sources inside Africa. African artists must master their African way of thinking as they are mastering computers and other modern technology. Thus technological achievements will be governed by philosophical knowledge that will preserve the African soul of modern art. There is a need for Western professionals who exhibit modern African art in their museums to work closely with curators from those countries to reduce the blurs that exist today. Also, they should try to be as objective as possible. The Extended Team in the *African Voices* exhibition was a good approach, but it is still important to use trained professionals who understand what is required of them.

The biggest problem of exhibiting Africa is clearly in choosing what to show from such a vast continent. There clearly needs to be more networking between professionals to enhance the way we plan, design and mount our exhibitions. Interaction between artists and professionals of various countries would be ideal allowing them to exchange their knowledge and experiences. One example of this is the collaboration between Zambia and Sweden that established a network of exchange between professionals and museums. Perhaps from this model, Africa and Japan could have similar exchanges in

the future.

I would like to now comment on the Smithsonian exhibition. It was a good idea to include as many professionals as possible and to state the objectives to the target group. As stated before, however, the main problem was choosing what to show from such a vast continent where more than a thousand languages still exist. The number of groups represented is far too low to be representative. The three African cultures of Mande, Akan and Congo appear more frequently and appear to be a bias among the Extended Team members.

The omission of ancient civilizations is of great concern. The *Wealth in Africa* section is misrepresented. To pick a mask and graduation gown does not show the wealth of Africa that also contains, gold, copper, iron, and palm oil.

The struggle for freedom could have been supplemented with objects abundant in many African countries. Using film is not enough.

A chronological approach would have been better, to show the link between Africa and the Americas, including the triangular slave trade.

The exhibition does not seem to have a storyline, and can therefore be tough to follow. A storyline would help to categorize the sub themes.

A double entrance-exit seems to confuse people more at the Smithsonian. And let's not forget the visually impaired.

We should strive together to promote art and integrate it in our community life.

KAWAGUCHI

I'd like to summarize several points. A country without art is a country without a soul. Copying Western countries' systems or history does not discover the African art, roots and culture. We need philosophy in order to recover and restore African art and culture. We need objectivity and trained professionals to get information to visitors. *Seven Stories* in 1995 was a step in the right direction to achieving this.

Mr. Simunchembu highlighted the collaboration between professionals and museums in Zambia and Sweden. This established a network to exchange knowledge and experiences. This can serve as a model for African countries to do something with Japan.

Regarding the Smithsonian, African voices were represented primarily by the cultures of Mande, Akan and Congo as they reflected the ancestry of the team members, but perhaps they were over-represented. African-Americans may not truly represent Africa. We have to see Africans through the lenses of Africans.

YOSHIDA

Next we'll hear from the Malian panelist, Dr. Sacko. He was born in Mali. He attended a university in China and graduated from Kyoto University's Graduate School. As a result, he speaks fluent Chinese and Japanese. He's involved in ambassadorship between Kyoto and foreign countries as well as helping foreign nationals living in Japan.

SACKO

Thank you. Most of my comments have been presented by what others have said, so I'll start with a short story about a recent happening.

I just got back from a trip to Mali with an NHK crew to Africa in search of what to focus on for the topic of a documentary "What is Africa?" The director told me that the media try to help the "weak" to express themselves. If that is true, why don't we ask the weak about what they want to express?

We had a very Japanese schedule – very tight. In one week we were scheduled to take footage in four cities. How many people targeted by that program will see it? Why don't we try to spread it out more for greater public education?

I appreciate the opportunity to come here and speak at this symposium. I'm going to discuss Africa, meaning Sub-Saharan Africa. I'm not working at a museum or an art museum, neither am I a curator or an artist. However, I am an architect and I think I can share with you about living space.

I wonder why we can't just show Africa as it is. We have to ask ourselves why we don't do this. African artists do not really express themselves to other Africans. They would rather explain themselves to the world's people outside Africa.

Despite what is often said, Africans are not necessarily culture-ignorant or poor. Perhaps they (we) just don't feel a strong need to show their (our) own cultures. They have their own ways of

thinking or senses of value to express their own cultures. For example, in Mali, during one festival, masks are used only one time. In the West, this might seem to be a waste as these masks might be a kind of heirloom to be passed from one generation to the next in their countries. However, in Mali, they would rather use it as an opportunity to pass on the method of mask making and the meaning of the mask.

Also, many museums in Africa are established with the assistance of Western countries. What is being exhibited there is targeting the foreign visitors to those countries.

Since coming to Japan, I often see children going to the museum to learn about their own history or culture. I never visited a museum in Mali. I went to a museum for the first time here after being asked what my own culture is like. Even in Africa in elementary school we were not taught about our culture.

I propose a short-term and long-term view in exhibitions. In the short-term, we need to represent Africa in a chronological manner or a regional manner. I'm uncertain whether the real Africa can be found by short-term visitors to the continent. During my trip with the NHK journalists to Mali, I was very skeptical whether they can see the real Africa or not. Collaboration is necessary and this symposium is the first step to accomplishing this. African curators and local research people working on an exhibition have to collaborate

throughout the whole process. We have to have exhibits in Africa. That's the short-term.

In the long-term, we have to assist Africans to be aware of their own cultures, traditions, and histories. We have been influenced by Western culture in various ways since they are the ones primarily running the schools. We aren't being taught how to represent or express our own cultures and traditions. Also, it isn't highly evaluated. We don't need to educate through publications, necessarily, but at least make a space where expression of culture can be shown and seen. In Africa, there should be a proposal for a new way of exhibits.

In early September, I visited a university in Ohio. I saw the African exhibition and the African-American museum there. The exhibit showed how the audience interacts with the art. Perhaps this element can be picked up elsewhere, where interaction is wanted.

We can exhibit African art in Africa without being asked by Western people. African artists tend to think about the monetary value of their art, but the artistic value shouldn't be expressed in terms of money. This perception needs to change. I'm not an expert in art, but I know the problem of the current system if not sufficient. We need to do something right now.

KAWAGUCHI

Time is running out today, but I will summarize quickly.

To show African art, and Africa, as it

is, it's easy to say, but difficult to implement.

Dr. Sacko said that the African mentality might not include the need to show and learn about one's own culture. We need to consider the difference of feelings about one's own culture.

In addition he made two proposals about the short and long term perspectives on exhibitions. In the short-term, rather than just showing things side by side, we have to show the context. This has to be researched through collaboration among African curators and local people. The exhibitions abroad need to give feedback to Africa or hold exhibitions in Africa.

From the long-term view, we need to assist Africans in recognizing their own cultures, traditions, and histories. This concludes the proposal summary.

YOSHIDA

For the remaining time, we could touch on the issues that have been brought up again and again, which is whether art reflects a certain regional system or whether it comes from a universal consciousness. Whether it is possible to represent Africa as it is? Also, when will Africans be able to discuss the art of Africa by themselves within their continent?

For time's sake, let's leave out the discussion of the definition of art.

But let's take up the issue of whether art can be appreciated in a universal framework.

NICODEMUS

(In response to Dr. Sacko) An artist is a permanent rebel who won't be compromised and will always seek freedom of expression, individuality. You cannot order an artist what to do. It can be called total crap to hear what we can and can't, should and shouldn't, do.

ORCHARDSON

I've heard that nothing is happening in Africa. This is wrong. In Kenya, a lot is happening. We are there and active. Every year in Nairobi there is a large event with performance and food and exhibitions where any artist can submit work. There is a selection process as well since so much work is submitted. This has made a strong impression on people who are not even artists.

What we're saying is that a certain type of art has been alienated. We came here to battle for space for African contemporary art.

NAGAWA

The problem is not just that things are not happening, the problem is that we don't know they're happening. Next door in Uganda, we don't know that you have the festival every year. I think what is needed is dissemination. That is our problem.

IKWUEMESI

I think it's that we're not doing enough, not whether things are happening or not. The question that comes to mind in Africa when I see the Smithsonian Museum exhibition is

what have we done in Africa? What are the museum professionals in Africa doing? I have been to some museums in Nigeria and they are like dead ends. We need to show more from our own perspectives and in our own settings. We simply haven't done enough.

I would like to speak about art dissemination. Even in *Time* magazine recently one could read how African museums have played a role in the trafficking of African art and how certain museum officials are also to blame. We shouldn't just talk about who is to blame, we need to think about and discuss what else we can do for ourselves

In case I don't have another chance to speak, I'll ask now: How does this conference empower us to do more for ourselves as Africans?

YOSHIDA

Dr. Arnoldi, please.

ARNOLDI

I think there are other people with comments that are more relevant.

ADEWUNMI

We have limited funds. I have come with publication flyers. People just don't know.

SACKO

As Ms. Ishikawa said, we need an informed public. Maybe exhibitions are being organized, but we just don't know. But can you tell me if you've ever organized art education in

elementary school? I want to know.

In Mali, I was told by an artist that he sells his work for three times more, to foreigners, and was content to know that his work was going to Japan and could be seen by other Japanese buyers. The artist said that if he sold it to me, the price would be three times lower, and therefore he'd prefer to sell it to a non-African.

So that is the problem. Obviously the government isn't funding the art world and this is an issue, but how to financially support the art world and bring it closer to the public are big problems that need to be dealt with.

ORCHARDSON

I would like to give the Kenyan example on education. I'm not talking about Africa. I'm talking about Kenya. In 1985, we had a new system of education, more North American and less European. At the same time, music and art and craft were made compulsory. Elite parents resisted. But the amount of interest that it has generated in the arts has been outstanding. Even unemployed people now sometimes turn to crafts for a living.

TAKEZAWA

We've heard many stories on Africa and African modern arts. But we've never heard a history of African modern arts told and authorized by Africans. Isn't it now a time to discuss by whom and how the art history of Africa can be created?

YOSHIDA

Ms. Mishima.

MISHIMA

Perhaps from a different perspective, this is my comment. After listening to discussions, representation of arts vs. representation of culture, those are different issues. In the latter, it's not possible to represent Africa all at once. Therefore, the selection of exhibits and how to exhibit them should be discussed further. The problem is the confusion over the definition of culture and scope. The representer and represented may have two different ideas. How can we make the gap converge between the represented and the representer?

NICODEMUS

Education is absolutely crucial and it should be part of the curriculum from primary schools on up, and it requires textbooks and so on. I would propose a board of international African art historians that could steer something, and perhaps this could be an issue for UNESCO. I wish a representative were here today. It's critical to pass on our legacies to the younger generation.

YOSHIDA

Even if you don't have a name card in front of you, please feel free to speak.

I think professor Eguchi would like to speak.

EGUCHI

What is "art" in local languages in

Africa? We don't have the abstract concepts of "arts" in some African languages.

YOSHIDA

Even Japanese acquired the term "arts" late in history. I don't think that Japanese people can talk about the arts and African can not. We can discuss art even without some of the abstract terms.

Ms. Nagawa.

NAGAWA

Even in Swahili, there is a word that covers it.

NICODEMUS

I would say that Swahili is the best natural Esperanto in history. It contains elements of African languages, of Persian as well as European words, and forty percent Arabic from the Middle East etc. That's why there exhibits the notion of art.

YOSHIDA

I'd like to talk forever, but we must finish soon. Before we close, I would like Mr. Kawaguchi to say a few words.

KAWAGUCHI

Africans have to be able to hold African exhibitions in Africa and Africans have to make an effort to accomplish this. Dr. Takezawa mentioned that Africans have to talk about their own histories. We talked about this in Tokyo as well. As Mr. Ikwuemesi also discussed then, we have to identify

what kind of history it is that we want to talk about. This is the next issue. Japan needs to consider this as well when talking about the modernization of Japan. We haven't found any solution to Japanese modernity.

YOSHIDA

We Japanese are not in a position to preach to Africans based on the prior experience in Japan as Mr. Kawaguchi mentioned. Who has the right to talk about art and culture? Africans have the primary right to talk about Africa, but unfortunately this hasn't been realized fully. We have to change this for the better in the future. In the past, curators have been able to talk about cultures other than their own with authority, but in the future we need to reverse this situation. We need to let the local people talk about their own cultures and art. For the first time, we are at the beginning of this process of moving forward.

In his comment, Dr. Takezawa mentioned that we are facing the end of the era of the ethnological museum. Of course, the previous epoch has come to an end. The name of the museum doesn't matter. What is important is that the museum can be the point of encounter between different cultures. We hope that this symposium will be an important step toward realizing these encounters between different cultures. Through international cooperation among museums in different countries, we can promote and facilitate people's understanding of cultures other than

their own.

Despite the terrorist attacks in the U.S., which changed my view about what the 21st century would be like, I'm happy that we could come together today with representatives from many countries and discuss issues freely at this symposium. I hope that this symposium has brought to light topics of interest, and will serve as the generator for debate as time goes on.

Thank you all very much. I will now conclude this session and symposium. I invite all to attend the reception afterward and to continue discussion there directly if you have something you weren't able to say in this session.

Thank you very much indeed for your cooperation and your participation.