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Preface

The Monbusho International Symposium, “Foraging and Post-Foraging Societies: History, Politics and the Future”, which formed the 8th International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies (CHAGS 8), was held at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan on 26 through 30 October, 1998.

In this conference, more than 200 researchers from around the world presented papers and discussed a wide range of issues on modern hunter-gatherers. The conference was made up of twenty one sessions, with the main themes being territory and land rights, indigenous education, resource sharing, images, historical relations between hunter-gatherers and agriculturists, identity, tourism, knowledge-transmission, archaeology and history, resource management, demography, indigenous knowledge, gender, symbols and rituals, the Ainu people, ethnicity, global economy, and development. Further, associated sessions of CHAGS were held in Aomori (October 21-25) and Hokkaido (October 30-31) to discuss social-political variation and changes in hunter-gatherer societies, trapping and hunting in Northern Eurasia, hunter-gatherers in different environments, and Sannai-Maruyama Jomon archaeology.

Through a series of presentations and discussions during the conference, we realized how historically and regionally diverse were the life ways of those we call “hunter-gatherer” and how hunter-gatherers have adapted in the age of economic globalization. Although we do not believe that we have reached a final conclusion on the future of hunter-gatherer studies, we do believe that the conference raised important and interesting problems for further research and discussion.

This volume is part of the results of the Osaka conference. The papers in it are principally from the sessions on “Hunting Culture and Mining Knowledge” and “Foragers and Post-foragers in the Global Economy”. We hope that this publication will contribute to further development of the study on these topics and to contemporary hunter-gatherer studies in general.

As the program co-chairs of the conference, we thank the following organizations for supporting the conference financially and in other ways: Aomori Prefectural Government, Aomori City Office, Commemorative Association for the Japan World Exposition (1970), Daido Insurance Company, Historical Museum of Hokkaido, Hokkaido Ethnological Society, Hokkaido Newspaper Company, Monbusho (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport), Kayano Museum of Ainu Culture, National Museum of Ethnology, Nibutani Ainu Cultural Museum, Sannai-maruyama Exhibition Hall, Senri Cultural Foundation, Shiraoi Ainu Museum, To-o Nip-po Newspaper Company, UCC Coffee Museum, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

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