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PREFACE

This volume presents the proceedings of the ninth Taniguchi International Symposium (Division of Ethnology), organized by the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, and supported by the Senri Foundation, with a generous grant from the Taniguchi Foundation. It was held from 2 to 9 December, 1985, at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, and at Kyuze-so, Otsu.

Museums objects are essential for the study of material culture. Conservation, as a supporting science, plays a significant role in this study, since objects must be preserved for study, research, exhibition and education, both for present and future generations. The future of cultures depends on understanding how they developed. Thus by preserving the artifacts of cultures we ensure the future.

All kinds of materials used in daily life are now considered artifacts of material culture. They include extremely large objects, such as houses or ships, as well as small ones, such as fishing hooks or a single grain of rice. The materials of which artifacts are made also vary; from solid stone and hard wood to very fragile dried leaves or raw food, for example. Further, some objects were made for use just in a certain ceremony, after which they were discarded or destroyed. Other objects demonstrate the way in which they were used; a smear of fat in a box indicates what was stored there, or a groove in a wooden artifact may indicate how it was used. Even if an artifact has the same form and construction materials as a similar one from a different culture, both objects may not be used in the same way. In such cases the inside spots or stain colors, for example, may reveal important details. All of these aspects and many others have to be preserved for the study of material culture, which means that many approaches are required for conserving the objects that comprise it. Recent developments in ethnology and material culture, and the renovation of ethnographic museums, as a reflection of new trends, have placed a heavy burden on ethnographic conservators. Ethnographic conservation must develop both to meet new challenges and elucidate its own methodology.

Studies in conservation science commenced early this century, particularly in the field of artistic works and historical artifacts. And the majority of conservators work in these fields. In contrast, the development of ethnographic or folk artifacts conservation has occurred relatively recently. Although there are still few conservators working with ethnographic collections, the growth in the number of ethnographic or folk museums has been remarkable, particularly in Japan.

Reflecting the newness of such studies, it is claimed that more than 70 percent of the publications on ethnographic conservation concern difficult treatments, and that the others propose solutions, including the results of experiments. This volume reflects also that general trend.

Four main subjects were discussed at the Symposium: the ethics or principles of ethnographic conservation; treatment; conservation problems in ethnographic
(or folk) open-air museums including eco-museums; and the training of specialists.

Rose's contribution demonstrates the need to comprehend cultures anthropologically when treating artifacts, and that by Morita demonstrates some of the various sources of difficulties encountered in treating ethnographic materials, such as complex materials, the need to respect marks of usage, and the like. Daimaru's contribution also appeals to ethnographic conservators to respect the ethnic aesthetics marked on an artifact, by taking as an example the aesthetic value of creases on the Japanese *kimono*.

Consideration of such factors requires the closer cooperation between ethnographic conservators and cultural anthropologists. Some 25 years ago, in the field of artistic conservation, a close relationship was seriously emphasized among restorers of paintings, conservation scientists and art historians. The discussions centered on the poor historical and scientific knowledge of restorers and on the lack of a suitable language for communication among these three types of specialists, as well as on the destructive intervention of some art historians, who expected to obtain only information of interest to them. A similar situation seems to exist nowadays in the field of ethnographic conservation.

Both Pearson and Masuzawa, as is well known in the field of conservation, are historical-archaeological-metal conservators who, in more recent years, have extended their interests to include ethnographic artifacts. Pearson, as an active conservation instructor, describes an application of general methods of metal conservation to ethnographic artifacts. Masuzawa's brief report describes his experiments on desalination using a sesquicarbonate solution, a classical but valuable method because it is less dangerous than others and is suitable for mass treatments, such as for ethnographic artifacts. The problems set forth in Walston's report require serious discussion, because ethnographic artifacts are made and used under particular local environmental conditions, which pose special problems for transportation, display and storage.

Two reports on Japanese open-air museums, by Mino and Fukumoto, provide general information on museum problems and activities. Nevertheless, they stimulated an interesting discussion during the Symposium. Open-air museums that display houses from around the world represent a new trend in museums. As such they demand an urgent enlargement of the conservation horizon. Experiments on the effect of frost shattering on stone are reported by Miura. These reveal the causes of the phenomena, as well as its possible geographical distribution in Japan. This poses a serious problem in selecting locations for new open-air museums.

Two papers on staff training, those by Sugisita and Odgaard, highlight the contemporary dilemma of there being few specialists in ethnographic conservation at a time when interests in ethnographic materials are increasing rapidly. The provision of specialized training is an urgent subject. However, its status is still either uncertain or even unacknowledged in some countries. Information exchange is seen as one method of promoting development in this field.
We wish to acknowledge with gratitude the Taniguchi Foundation, especially President Toyosaburo Taniguchi for his personal interest, whose kind help made possible our most fruitful discussions. We also wish to express our gratitude to the Organizing Committee of the Symposium, of which the Chairman was Tadao Umesao (Director-General of the National Museum of Ethnology [NME]), and the other members of which were Takuji Takemura (Director, First Research Department, NME), Komei Sasaki (Director, Second Research Department, NME), Mikiharu Ito (Director, Third Research Department, NME), Kyuzo Kato (Former Director, Fourth Research Department, NME), Hisatsugu Sugimoto (Director, Fifth Research Department, NME), Akio Hata (Secretary-General, NME), and Eiko Yuasa (President, Senri Foundation). We also thank, in particular, the members of Executive Committee: Yoshinobu Kotani, Yasuhiro Omori, Shinobu Yoshimoto of the Research Departments, and Osamu Mizuguchi (Administrative Officer), all of the National Museum of Ethnology, and Hidejiro Uji (Director, Cultural Activities Section, Senri Foundation). Our thanks also due to Hiroko Suzumura (Manager) and Masako Osawa (Assistant) of the Senri Foundation, who patiently supported the secretariat of the Symposium.

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and
Colin Pearson