

# みんなくりポジトリ

国立民族学博物館学術情報リポジトリ National Museum of Ethnology

## Museums and the Anthropological Imagination : Positioning the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka on its Fortieth Anniversary

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資料 Research Resources

**Museums and the Anthropological Imagination:  
Positioning the National Museum of Ethnology,  
Osaka on its Fortieth Anniversary<sup>†</sup>**

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ミュージアムと人類学的想像力  
——開館40周年に際して国立民族学博物館を位置づける——

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Despite the phenomenal growth in the construction of new museums and the emergence of distinctive museological perspectives, Asia remains marginalised or ignored within most Western museological histories and surveys. I would like, in a modest way, for this essay to promote an overdue and deeper dialogue between North American, European and Asian museologies by situating the development of one extraordinary institution, Japan's National Museum of Ethnology (MINPAKU), within the wider international configuration of ethnographic museums and their varied relationships to specific schools of anthropological thought. MINPAKU has long established working relationships with many Asian, North American and European museums and research institutes (Mori 2014; Sonoda 2016), but the origi-

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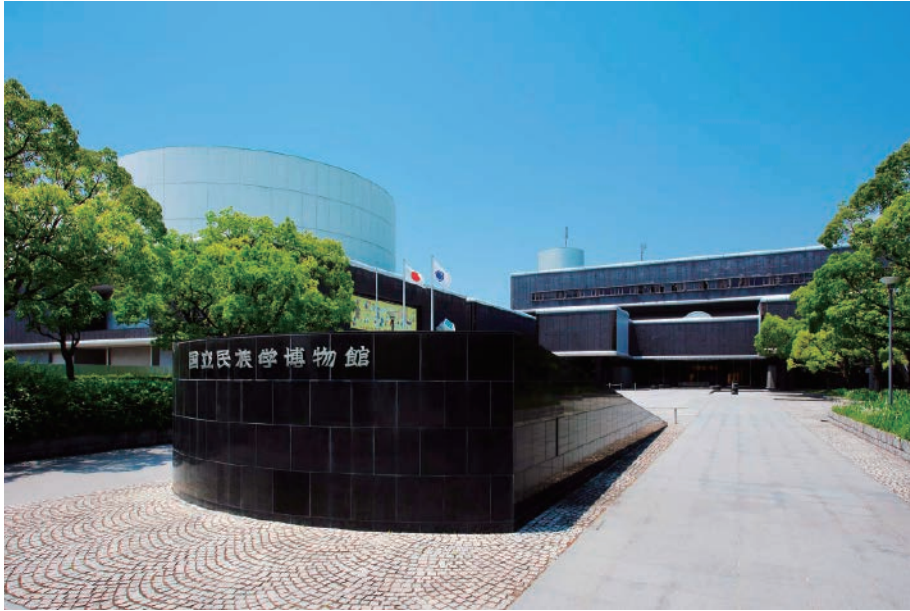
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nality of some of the exhibitions that emerged from these and other research and curatorial projects has not received the scholarly attention they deserve. To better appreciate MINPAKU's significance within a global history of museums, this essay will focus on three distinctive relationships. The first and second parts of the essay will sketch the growth and iterate some of the problems inherent in the varied relationships between American, British, French and German museums and the respective anthropological schools with which they have been closely allied; while the third part draws comparisons between the intellectual trajectories of Western museums and those cultivated by MINPAKU during its first forty years of creative scholarship. Attention will be focused especially on the Museum's relationship to the 1970 Osaka international exposition, and the protagonists who bridged the two organizations. Further research may find that this small group of influential scholars, critics, designers and writers, bestowed a still greater intellectual and creative legacy on the Museum than is generally recognized. The short fourth part of the essay will present the implications of the two different approaches to anthropology identified earlier and the urgent choices and commitments that face not only MINPAKU but all ethnographic/ethnological museums. My essay is intended to provide a tentative road map that helps connect part of MINPAKU's own development to the different histories, contradictory epistemologies, and related problematics facing museums elsewhere. Although this is an admittedly cursory review, I nevertheless hope that the panorama presented in these pages might stimulate additional research and debate on a museum described by its first director-general, the distinguished anthropologist Tadao Umesao, as 'avant-garde'. (Photo 1)

## 1 Scientific Anthropology and the Birth of Ethnographic Museums

Perusing the US museumscape between 1920–1950s, Tschopik and Collier (1954) noted the deep divide between academic anthropology and the mainly classificatory displays that continued to dominate that country's major anthropological museums. To make museums again relevant for anthropology, the authors recommended they become essentially resource centres focused on documenting disappearing cultures, compiling and managing photographic, filmic and audio archives, and providing the public spaces and media through which to disseminate knowledge of anthropology to the widest possible public. Disquiet over the state of anthropological museums was not restricted to the United States and was raised again, six years later by the Dutch anthropologist H.H. Frese in his excellent but sadly often forgotten work, *Anthropology and the Public: The Role of Museums* (1960). Frese argued like Tschopik and Collier that the public could not be expected to show interest in the discipline unless the objects on display, ripped from their original cultural background, were not re-contextualized and related back to the



**Photo 1** The Exterior of MINPAKU  
(Source: National Museum of Ethnology)

lived experiences of the peoples who had made and used them. The contribution most remembered however, in this debate on the state of ethnographic displays in the mid-twentieth century, is that by William Sturtevant, the then curator of North American collections at the Smithsonian Institution, who pointedly challenged his readers with the unapologetic title; *Does Anthropology Need Museums?* (1969). The dissatisfaction felt by Western anthropologists against museums widened and rumbled on through the 1970s added to by deep-seated criticism from Indigenous peoples and additionally in the United Kingdom, the attention of social historians who bemoaned the exclusion of working class history and ethnic minority communities who protested their absence from the country's national historical, social and cultural narratives. In 1992, I undertook a survey of British ethnographic museums and exhibitions and found that everywhere, with the exception of the Museum of Mankind in London, displays were hopelessly outdated, prejudiced and sometimes outright racist (Shelton 1992). All were based on anthropological paradigms that lagged 10–30 years behind the then current disciplinary narratives. What then had happened to ethnographic displays that, after reaching their peak of popularity at the beginning of the twentieth century, had made them by the 1970s become generally regarded as shabby, dull and even offensive? I am going to suggest that despite the frequent criticisms and challenges promulgated by anthropologists, the fault was

not only with museums but with anthropology itself. The debate as to whether anthropology needs museums ought, I would suggest, be reframed to enquire whether museums need anthropology and if so what kind of anthropology is it that they most need?

Since its nineteenth century foundation, anthropology has struggled with a double identity derived from its encapsulation of two contradictory and exclusionary premises that have led to divergent and fundamentally contradictory interests and objectives. In the first of these premises, drawing on the assumptions and methodologies established by August Comte in his *Le Course de Philosophie Positive* (1896[1830–1842]) and iterated in Herbert Spencer's *A System of Synthetic Philosophy* (2013[1876]), early anthropology strove to become a science. Challenging its positivist aspiration stood the work of Marcel Mauss, who as a student of Émile Durkheim had inherited the Enlightenment tradition, beginning with Rousseau's disquisition on the nature of society and the idea of the social contract, which underpins the classic Durkheimian notion of social structure and the contrast between mechanical and organic solidarity. This line of intellectual enquiry was pursued by Mauss in his seminal work, the *Essai sur le don* ([1925], *The Gift* 1966), which aligned him with this distinguished tradition and established him as one of the founders of anthropological humanism.

Let me succinctly trace these two contradictory and mutually antagonistic genealogies. Comte and Spencer in the nineteenth century claimed to have discovered the basic law underlying social evolution. For Comte, the law of the three stages espoused a mechanistic linear and cumulative concept of history that progressed according to its own internal logic. All societies, according to Comte, evolved through three periods: the theological stage, further divided into the age of fetishism, the most primitive expression of religion; an intermediary polytheism, followed by a third and final stage, monotheism. In the first stage of intellectual evolution, creation is attributed to divine agency. In contrast, the second stage equates to, what Comte termed, the metaphysical period in which the belief in a visible god is succeeded by the belief in an abstract, deterministic god or force that exerts itself over events and conditions. The final stage, the culmination of evolutionary development, is the scientific age where the world is understood and knowledge accumulated through scientific methods based on experimentation, observation and comparison that provide the matrices for the establishment of universal systems of natural and social classification. Although Spencer disagreed with Comte, believing that individual laws would be reducible to one universal law, their systems shared close similarities. Comte believed the scientific age would be led by the concrete sciences, mathematics and astronomy. Although sociology, 'the queen of the sciences', would be the last to mature, it would, so they believed, bring the greatest benefit in perfecting human society, which in the case of Spencer included the application of social engineering. Of course, both these systems were based on

faith that the force behind social evolution was essentially benign and progressive — an odd remnant of eighteenth century deism, which believed in an intrinsically munificent universe whose evolution would inevitably improve humankind and bring it greater happiness and contentment. Spencer's theory and the promise of its concrete social application received massive acclaim, making it perhaps the first social philosophy to be embraced globally. Cultural evolutionism also provided the matrix which gave rise to British and American anthropology. Spencer and Comte's theory led to a second generation of scholars, including Sir John Lubbock, John McLennan, Henry Maine, Henry Morgan, Augustus Pitt-Rivers, Charles Staniland Wake, Henry Balfour, and Edward Tylor, who applied evolutionary ideas to all those topics that would later coalesce to establish anthropology as an independent discipline: the family and kinship, comparative jurisprudence, social structure, material culture, and religion. Moreover, Comte and Spencer's systems influenced the Danish antiquarian Christian Jürgensen Thomsen, who using material culture established the early chronology for Paleolithic cultures based on their successive use of stone, bronze, and iron. Early anthropology in Britain, the United States and Denmark was thus founded on the adoption of evolutionary science.

In the United States, during the nineteenth century, enthusiasm for cultural evolution was undiminished. Otis Mason and John Wesley Powell dominated US ethnographic museums and museology, tirelessly advocating for the arrangement of objects into series and scales ordered; technologically, from the simplest to the most complex; artistically, from the most abstract to the most naturalistic; chronologically, from the earliest to the most recent, and intellectually from fetishes to machines — creating a line of evolutionary logic that produced the categories by which the world's cultures were hierarchically classified and laid out for public inspection. This period, 1840–1900, has been called anthropology's museum age (Stocking 1987), and it was towards these collections arranged by early evolutionists, the abandoned detritus of the discipline's first attempt to achieve scientific status, that later generations of anthropologists, writing from newly opened university departments and research centres, aimed their withering criticism.

A different anthropology emerged in France in the late nineteenth century, which although sometimes with evolutionary undercurrents, owed more to Rousseau, as mentioned earlier, and his work on the social foundations of society than to mechanistic and reductive concepts of history. Émile Durkheim's writings came to represent an awkward confluence between the scientific methodology espoused by Comte and the mutually contradictory aspects of neo-Kantianism and near mystical, transcendentalist thought. While rejecting his evolutionary orientation, Durkheim enthusiastically embraced Comte's scientific method based on observation, comparison, experimentation and data quantification, which formed the core of his masterful work, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1982[1895]). Two years later he reaffirmed this perspective in *Suicide* (1951[1897]). Durkheim also

accepted Spencer's exposition of the organic analogy which called for an holistic approach to a broad field of social facts and the examination of their mutual interactions as a necessary precondition to their interpretation. But elsewhere, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912) and *Primitive Classification* (1903), coauthored with Mauss, Durkheim depended on decidedly non-scientific factors to provide coherence to his argument. This is illustrated in the well-known quote from *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*:

The collective conscience is the highest form of psychic life. Since it is the consciousness of the consciousness's.... At the same time that it sees from above, it sees farther; at every moment of time it embraces all known reality; that is why it alone can furnish the mind with the moulds which are applicable to the totality of things and which makes it possible to think about them. (Durkheim 1912: 445)

Although in the *Rules*, as in *Suicide*, Durkheim claims that sociology can only emerge after it has adopted the scientific method and purged the remnants of metaphysics, his concept of the collective consciousness, as is widely recognized, depends precisely on metaphysical presuppositions. More specifically, Durkheim repeatedly insists that it is the collective consciousness — the set of common morals, values, and beliefs shared by a specific community — although inaccessible to observation and therefore empirical verifiable existence, that creates the inter-subjective bonds that keep society intact. It is this uneasy tension between the positivistic scientific approach and the unsubstantiated, metaphysical concepts of collective sentiments, which eventually drives a wedge through his work and creates the conditions for an alternate anthropology to emerge. Moreover, because his work was caught between science and non-empiricist epistemology, Durkheim can be regarded as a founder of a different non-deterministic kind of anthropology, which is based on the comparative study of ideas and closely allied to the work of the French Annales School of history, especially its later interest in the history of mentalities, and the approaches pioneered by art historians like Henri Focillon. This alternate school of anthropology is most clearly represented by the work of Mauss and his close collaborators, Henri Hubert, Robert Hertz, Henri Beuchat and Maurice Halbwachs who, among others like Maurice Leenhardt, established anthropology as a comparative history of ideas from which general sociological principles and correlations might be abstracted. Time, memory, space, the sacralisation of the gift, sacrifice, the body and bodily techniques, all provided the themes for the essays and books that emerged from this school. Mauss and the *Année Sociologique* were crucial in the development of a humanistic and critical anthropology that gave the discipline a powerful lens through which to understand, compare and critique the societies which fell under its introspection.

At this point, I am going to retrace our journey back across the Atlantic to bring another school and one anthropologist in particular into our mapping of this alternate disciplinary genealogy. By the first decades of the twentieth century, Franz Boas and his students, including Alfred Kroeber, Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Underhill and Margaret Mead, successfully shifted the focus of American anthropology away from vain attempts to promulgate universal laws to studies that sought to describe how societies internally functioned as discrete coherent social worlds. The Boasian shift ruptured the previous hierarchical classification of societies, enabling communities to be compared independent of any universal logos that the evolutionists had insisted necessarily determined their form and existence. The effective refutation of transcendental natural laws in favour of Boas' relativist perspective had by the mid-twentieth century, increased anthropology's viability and its ability to provide critical perspectives on industrialized societies. Founder of the 'value orientations method', Clyde Kluckhohn wrote a prize-winning though massively long book, *Mirror for Man: The Relation of Anthropology to Modern Life* (1949). He began his work by noting: "Anthropology holds up a great mirror to man and lets him look at himself in his infinite variety." Kluckhohn's publication was, following Boas, one of the first works to argue that cultural relativism when applied to the comparative study of social relations, actions, ecologies, ideas, values or even time, stripped them of their essentialised meanings and questioned their socially sanctioned authority. Anthropology for Kluckhohn held the radical potential to de-legitimate the social conventions, sureties, utilitarianism and the competitive and alienating work ethic that maintained Western societies. Combining Kluckhohn's hyper-relativism with the work of Mauss and the *Année Sociologique*, which demonstrated the limitations of western categories and techniques, gave anthropology a revolutionary edge capable of de-privileging and challenging the authority of any singular way of seeing or living in the world. Most exponents of evolutionary anthropology, as well as many writers for the *Année Sociologique*, agreed that politics should be divorced from scholarly practice, but neither was able to restrain the wider political and social implications of their respective positions. While evolutionism was once mobilized to legitimate the colonial tutelage of 'simpler' types of societies by more complex ones, Mauss' and Kluckhohn's cultural relativism led to an anthropology that ultimately grew to provide part of the intellectual reasoning behind the social rebellions of the 1960s and 1970s. In the United States, the intellectual potential of Boas' and Kluckhohn's formulation of reflexivity spurred an upsurge in the development of humanistic based anthropological practices, which influenced the work of later scholars, including Paul Rabinow, Marshall Sahlins, George Marcus, James Clifford, Michael Fischer, Michael Taussig, Lila Abu-Lughod and Roy Wagner, who have created a new disciplinary orthodoxy whose potential for rethinking ethnographic museums is still only slowly being realized.

In the United Kingdom evolutionism, as a result of Durkheim's positivist



leanings, was by 1920 being superseded by functionalism and structural functionalism which transformed museum displays into evocations of static, mechanistic and harmoniously working social systems (Shelton 1992). However, Durkheim's influence was also felt through his and the work of the *Année Sociologique* on collective representations which between the 1960s–1980s became a focus of Oxford anthropology. Edward Evans-Pritchard, who followed Radcliffe-Brown as head of Oxford's Institute of Anthropology, had early-on encouraged his student, Ian Cunnison to translate Mauss's essay on the gift, which was first published in English in 1966. Evans-Pritchard's other colleagues, including Rodney Needham and Nick Allan, translated other works. Mauss' legacy, combined with the Institute's philosophical interests in rationality and rationalism (Evans-Pritchard 1976[1937]; Lienhardt 1961), systems of classification and anthropology's intellectual history (Needham 1979; 1984), plus the acknowledgement that the presence of anthropologists in the field disturbs the society under study (Ardener 2006[1989]), fed into the development of anthropological de-constructivism. Needham's work on kinship, religion and belief; Louis Dumont's on hierarchy and social classification; Franz Steiner's on taboo, and Mary Douglas' on moral categories and notions of purity, filth and transgression further demonstrated the radical potential of an anthropology unleashed from scientific pretension. Needham insisted that his students not only read anthropological monographs, but the writings of philosophers including Stuart Hampshire, Rom Harré and Ludwig Wittgenstein; the texts of art historians, such as Johan Huizinga and Michael Baxandall, and the novels of writers like Gustave Flaubert, Marcel Proust and Lawrence Durrell. He also encouraged them to develop an appreciation for architecture and music. Evans-Pritchard was resolute that the discipline of anthropology was not a science but an art, and a radical one at that, as practitioners urged the excavation and problematisation of the truth presuppositions inherent within the different epistemologies that underlie all knowledge systems with no exception to politics, morality or political correctness.

## 2 The Origins of Critical Anthropology and Museological Resistance

Inexplicably, these radical currents in anthropology had the least impact on museums. Kluckhohn, as far as I am aware, largely ignored the impressive ethnographic collections at the Peabody Museum at Harvard, his home university; Mauss uncritically dedicated a chapter of *his Manuel d'ethnographie* (1967[1926]) to the collection and classification of artifacts but didn't transgress into explicating their inherently radical potential for curators. Indeed, he supported Paul Rivet and Henri Riviere's application of comparative and monographic exhibition genres, as well as those that traced early transcontinental population movements at the Musée de l'Homme. At Oxford things were no better with de-constructivist anthropologists barricading themselves into the Institute of Anthropology on Banbury Road and

seldom setting foot into the nearby Pitt Rivers Museum, which had a distinguished, though no less isolationist, contingent of anthropologists and students all of its own. Not only did this potentially radical anthropology ignore museums, but museums ignored the implications of the new anthropology that had or was being born in different places in Europe and the United States. A clue to this mutual disinterest and sometimes repudiation, may be found in Edmund Leach's opposition to a 1980s government proposal to develop a school A-Level syllabus in anthropology. It was anthropology's radical potential that supposedly concerned Leach most, not least because of his fear that its inherent criticality might undermine confidence in the established frameworks of knowledge and society's core institutions. At any rate, in the United Kingdom and the United States, anthropology had already been re-institutionalized in the 1920s outside of museums in newly established university departments and centres. Leaving its collections behind, anthropology refocused itself on the study of social structure; a move that in the United Kingdom approximates to the publication of Radcliffe-Brown's *The Andaman Islanders: A Study in Social Anthropology* (1922). In this influential monograph, Radcliffe-Brown laid the foundation for what became the anthropology of art by incorporating a chapter on the social structural significance of Andaman tattooing into the main body of the text while consigning a description of the Islands' material culture to a long appendix. The textual separation of the visual and the material paralleled what was becoming the bisection of the anthropology of art and material culture studies, which of course coincided with anthropology's wider disciplinary reorganization and its abandonment of its collections (Shelton 2006a). In the United Kingdom, anthropology's reorientation caused disinterest in material culture, leaving collections under the supervision of archaeologists and geographers. Faced with responsibility for museum-based ethnographic collections, archaeologists often interpreted them, as best they could, using their own discipline's paradigms. Some simply ignored exhibitions altogether allowing existing displays to age and become stale and irrelevant to the public. The Pitt Rivers Museum at the University of Oxford after Henry Balfour's long directorship (1890–1939), simply fossilized its displays, until the 1980s when it made a virtue of its evolutionary exhibits by historicizing and 'artifacting' the whole of their exhibition galleries as representing 'a museum of museums.' During a similar, but more truncated time period, the Horniman Museum in London actively extolled cultural evolutionism, first through Alfred Cort Haddon who in 1901 became advisory curator, and in 1937 by appointing his student, L.W.G. Malcolm as the Museum's director. It was only after 1947 that its evolutionary focus changed due to the appointment of Otto Samson, a German emigré from Hamburg whose interest was in diffusionism. After Samson's retirement in 1965, the Horniman, like so many museums in the United Kingdom, including Brighton, Exeter, Birmingham and Manchester, turned its attention to structural functionalism as a 'modern' organizational model for re-arranging its dis-

play, which at the same time was losing credibility in the academy (Shelton 1992; 2006b). Warrington Museum was exceptional in retaining its evolutionary displays well into the 1980s. The British Museum (Museum of Mankind) remained outside of these general tendencies in its attitude to its ethnographic collections and exhibitions, preferring instead geographical, historical and thematic criteria for displays.

In the United States in the 1890s, after vociferous debates between Otis Mason and Franz Boas, cultural evolutionism lost its prominence as an organizing principle in favour of the culture area approach. The country's large museums remained active centres of research, focused on the American continent which was the centre of its geo-political interests. The American Museum of Natural History sponsored ethnographic and archaeological expeditions including Carl Lumholtz's investigations in northern Mexico (1891–1892) and Frederick Starr's two missions to southern Mexico (1896 and 1898). At the same time, the Museum supported Adolph Bandelier's similarly ground-breaking archaeological work in Peru and Bolivia (1892–1903), and also funded Marshall Saville's excavations at Mitla, Monte Alban and Xoxoctlán in Oaxaca, Mexico (1897–1904). In the north, it sponsored the hugely ambitious Jessup North Pacific Expedition to the Canadian Northwest, Alaska and Siberia (1897–1902) led by Franz Boas, and, closer to home, intensive field research and collecting were carried out, from 1905 to the outbreak of the Second World War, by Clark Wissler on the peoples of the Plains. Harvard's Peabody Museum supported no less than five expeditions in the 1890s to the Honduran archaeological site of Copán — an area that continued to hold its interest during much of its later history.

The 'museum age of anthropology' was also a period of intense rivalries. The Field Museum had been established from the huge collections assembled for Chicago's 1893 World Columbian Exposition by Boas and Frederick Ward Putnam and their team of nearly 100 researchers who collected ethnographic works and natural history specimens worldwide. Once having opened to the public, the Field Museum augmented its collections by sponsoring its own Pacific Northwest expedition led by William Holmes and James Amos Dorsey. The University of Pennsylvania Museum also launched its own expeditionary projects starting with Max Uhle's 1896 Peruvian expedition to build its holdings of South American antiquities, followed in 1899 by an expedition to Nippur (southeastern Iraq), which marked its long involvement in the Mediterranean and created in the process, the largest US university museum collection from that area. Although US museums suffered massively from the 1929 collapse of the Stock Exchange and the resulting depression, because of generous and well protected endowments, the rapid pace of collecting hardly slowed down, provisioning the displays that caused Tschopik and Collier such dismay in 1956, and led Sturtevant to question the relevance of museums to anthropology in 1969.

In addition to Boas' influence, US museums shared other parallel develop-

ments and problems with their German counterparts in the first half of the twentieth century. In both countries, collections were accumulated through ‘scientific’ expeditions, which ensured their thorough documentation. The acquisition of collections in the United States and Germany was carried-out in highly competitive environments, and earlier on, in both countries, collecting activity, although following different intellectual paths, was motivated by common aspirations towards the compilation of a universal history. If the United States sought to accomplish its goal earlier on, through evolutionism, Germany chose to achieve the same result by gathering together objects ‘uncontaminated’ by Western influence to help trace the ancient path of the diffusion and spread of civilization. Collecting in both countries was motivated by municipal competition. In the United States, New York, Chicago, Washington and Philadelphia all vied to exhibit control over world history and position their own achievements at its pinnacle, while in Germany, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, and München competed to possess the most encyclopedic collections (Penny 2002). Competition and the urgency to collect ‘authentic’ non-Western influenced artifacts led to objects piling-up in museums at a much faster rate than they could be researched and documented. Under the concept *Völkergedanken* (folk ideas), traceable to Hegel and Herder’s *Volksgeist* (national spirit) and Humboldt’s *nationalcharakter*, Adolf Bastian, the director of the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde, had identified four distinct cultural areas, defined by their specific environmental conditions and independent historical evolution. The material culture of the regions and its successive adaptations was felt as crucial in providing evidence not only to explain the development of each region’s internal history, but to understand the relationship between them.

Before moving to discuss the current period, because of its conscious acknowledgement of periodic crises, consequent dynamism, and sheer contemporaneity, it is crucial we summarize the French tradition which evolved very differently from those national intellectual drifts already discussed. The history of *ethnologie* — the category used to distinguish social and cultural anthropology from physical anthropology termed simply *anthropologie* — remained intimately linked to the national collection for much longer than it did in the United Kingdom or post-unified Germany. Physical anthropology was adopted as a section of the Musée National de Histoire Naturelle in 1855, which led to the opening, in 1898, of the gallery organized by Ernest Hamy in the Musée de Anatomie Comparée. Earlier still, in 1879, ethnographic collections scattered in diverse museums had been brought together and displayed in the Musée du Trocadéro. Unlike elsewhere in Europe, from 1925–1928, an ethnological institute was created within the University of Paris. It was headed by Paul Rivet, Marcel Mauss, and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and closely linked to the renovation of the Trocadéro. Finally, the Trocadéro’s central Byzantine-style galleries were demolished and replaced, while the wings on both its sides were redesigned in neo-classical style. Renamed the Palais de Chaillot, the

building would mark one of the central axes of the site of the 1937 Paris International Exposition. This large space was able to accommodate both the anatomical collections of the Musée de anatomie comparatée and the former ethnographic collections from the Trocadéro. A year after the closure of the international exposition, one wing of the Palais de Chaillot was renamed the Musée de l'Homme. At the same time, on Rivet's insistence, the chair in *anthropologie* at the University of Paris, was broadened to include social and cultural anthropology, archaeology and linguistics. The Musée de l'Homme, through the Institut de l'ethnologie, became the single most important centre in Europe to pioneer the development of visual anthropology and keep alive the anthropology of art, even after the sub-field had lost its appeal almost everywhere else. Despite the closure of the Institut in 1968, research in social and cultural anthropology remained strong at the Musée de l'Homme, however, by 1980, its galleries and display cases appeared overstuffed, dilapidated and out dated. Although the ethnographic collections and academic discipline remained integrated within the same museum, as elsewhere, the spark of imagination capable of linking new directions in anthropology to the reinterpretation of material culture and museum displays failed to ignite.

Lived history is of course far more complex and finely grained than the outlines which I am sketching here. However, only by presenting a broad picture of these histories could we have travelled back one hundred and sixty years to give a flavour of the plurality of anthropologies and their distinct entwinements within the museum practices they stimulated. Each of the national and pan-national schools – cultural evolutionism, *völkergedanken*, structural functionalism, comparativism, and critical and semantic approaches, followed variations in the way they were expressed and coexisted with less dominant methods and interests, which they often ignored and indifferently subordinated under their general rubrics. Moreover, every dominant paradigm had potentially different political inflections. Cultural evolutionism was mediated through both a radical Marxist dialectic version and the deeply conservative deterministic assumptions prescribed by Spencer; structural functionalism and *Völkergedanken*, by identifying distinct internally consistent and coherent cultural entities, encouraged the illusion of the fragmentation of the lived world and its reduction to a static geo-political classification that has been mobilized in both support of nationalism and regional liberation movements. Comparativism supported potentially both a liberal non-hierarchical and relativistic multiculturalism as well as a conservative hierarchical version that shared most of the same objectives as cultural evolutionism. What I have generally clustered and referred to as critical and semantic approaches, in which I include the works of the *Année Sociologique*, anthropological de-constructivism, as well as more recent American anthropological approaches, exemplify the clearest discontinuity between the two anthropologies.

In Europe and North America, contemporary pockets of resistance against museological orthodoxies are today usually located in museums with close ties to

universities; in the practices of independent curators and in critical installations that occasionally interrupt the normative succession of temporary exhibition programs. The most persistent pockets of resistance include the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel; the Museo de Tenerife de Historia e Antropología; the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln; the Weltkulturen Museum, Frankfurt; the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), Berlin, as well as the now closed anthropological museums of the universities of Aberdeen in Scotland, and Coimbra in Portugal. Personalities, networks, and methodological predilections are important and in all the institutions listed above, resistance has been consistently mobilized and combatively led by directors and curators. Jacques Hainard, Roland Kaehr and Marc-Olivier Gonseth (2005) developed and applied the concept of the museology of rupture at Neuchâtel; whereas Fernando Estévez González at Tenerife and Nuno Porto at Coimbra both curated exhibitions that questioned the basis of Western classifications or radically interrogated the logic behind institutional remembering and forgetting; and Clémentine Deliss programmed exhibitions that blurred the distinction between art and artifact, and art history and anthropology during her tenure as director of the Weltkultur Museum in Frankfurt. In addition, Charles Hunt at the Marischal Museum in Aberdeen and Bernd Scherer in Berlin experimented in applying structuralist and Marxist methodologies to interdisciplinary-based exhibitions, while Klaus Schneider and Jutta Engelhard in Köln have mapped the positionality of museum-based knowledges across their different galleries. Other curators, like Mary Bouquet, Bruno Latour and Jette Sandahl, although working in varied institutions, shared common interests in problematizing museum work and promoting collaborative methodologies; creating a socially relevant museology, and using the museum media to make public complex political and philosophical issues. European, Asian and US art museums have opened themselves to artistic interventions including institutional critique which is closely aligned with similar issues raised by the museums we have just described (Shelton 2006b; 2013). Although varied, these practices have grown out of an alternative critical and humanistic anthropology whose development was traced in the first section of the essay. This has not been a coherent, chronological, or coordinated movement and might be better envisaged as a series of hybridised grafts; each related to different circumstances within distinct museums and the discipline at large, instead of the product of cumulative history.

What I shall call 'pocket museums', in reference to John Berger's concept of pockets of resistance (2001), have during the past twenty years in Europe been complemented by world culture museums: Rotterdam's Wereldmuseum; the Varldskulturmuseerna (Stockholm and Gothenburg); Weltmuseum Vienna; Museum Fünf Kontinente (Munch); and Musée des Confluences (Lyon). Like the smaller (often university) pocket museums, world culture museums are a hybrid response to the crises surrounding the purpose and ethical rights and obligations of institutions

holding ethnographic collections in a post-colonial world that intersects with a post-materialist anthropology. Often combining anthropology, sociology and cultural studies, world culture museums examine global transformations, global-local interactions including that between the northern and southern hemispheres, interstitiality, and the history and social and political contexts of collecting (Shelton 2016). Nevertheless, for the moment at least, there are also strong differences between world culture museums and pocket museums, especially in their attitude to dominant hegemonic discourses. While committed to being socially relevant, focused on contemporary trends and issues, and self-critical, world culture museums seldom threaten the West's basic epistemological positions, or undertake social and cultural criticism through promoting the sort of incredulity towards metanarratives found in pocket museums. Unique in this new European museumscape is the Musée du quai Branly. Born out of controversy and the political decision by Jacques Chirac to remove the ethnographic collections from the Musée de l'Homme and to refocus attention on their aesthetic qualities, the quai Branly, inadvertently perhaps, discloses two identities (Shelton 2009). The permanent galleries, which divide the collection by continent and cultures and, typology in the case of musical instruments, are designed to enhance the contemplation of the aesthetic qualities and technical ingenuity underlying the works it exhibits. Here the focus is on seeing. The temporary exhibitions and public programs are however, far more heterotopic, multisensorial and interdisciplinary. Some exhibitions are informed by contemporary anthropology like Philippe Descola's show on ontologies, *La Fabrique des images* (2010–2011), or by themes previously explored by Mauss (*Qu'est-ce qu'un corps?* [2006]). Others raise questions about machines, life, and the post-human condition (*Persona, Étrangement humain* [2016]); the specific work of an artist, anthropologist, or an anthropological school (*Génération Rivet* [2017–2018]), or perhaps more dubiously, fixing the position of the museum and its founder in a constructed intellectual history of France's fascination with primitivism (*Jacques Chirac ou le dialogue des cultures* [2016]), which culminated in re-naming the museum in his honour.

The violence inflicted on the Musée de l'Homme through the painful gestation of the quai Branly (Dupaigne 2006), necessitated the former museum to radically rethink itself, resulting in its third rebirth in 2015, when it declared itself to be an integrated institution combining ethnology, prehistory and physical anthropology centred on the three questions: who are we? where do we come from? and where are we going?. This interrogative approach has allowed the Musée de l'Homme to tackle big ontological questions about our physical, intellectual and social being and the plurality of the human consciousness; the historical questions of our origins, early intelligence, as deduced from rock art, and ways of livelihood; and futuristic questions about globalization, the distribution and limits of natural resources, and the transformation of humanity through the artificial world that increasingly impacts

it. In a sense, it has reinvented itself by adopting and turning in on itself a cultural anthropological perspective.

### 3 Scientific and Critical Anthropology in the History of MINPAKU

Founded in 1974 and opened to the public in 1977, the Japanese National Museum of Ethnology (MINPAKU) was the offspring of the Osaka 1970 International Exposition, in a similar way that Chicago's Field Museum was gestated by the 1893 World Columbian Exhibition and the Musée de l'Homme, was created by the 1937 Paris Exposition Universelle. The first world's fair in Asia, Expo '70 in Osaka was one of the most successful of its kind. It drew a record number of visitors and instead of an orthodox exhibition-based format, it embraced a more festive participatory approach (Gardiner 2011). Planning began informally in 1964 with the formation of the non-official: "Thinking the Expo" study group, which was led by Tadao Umesao, professor of anthropology at Kyoto University, and comprised of Hidetoshi Katō, a communication specialist and media theorist; Yūjirō Hayashi, an economist; Noboru Kawazoe, architectural critic, and Sakyō Komatsu, broadcaster and prominent science fiction writer. This small avant-garde group developed the exhibition's overall theme: 'Progress and Harmony for Mankind' and articulated its aspiration: to harness in one place the wisdom of all the world's peoples in order to stimulate new ideas. The formulation and application of a "relativistic, multi-polar humanism" (Gardiner 2011) discloses the exhibition's indebtedness to both anthropology and Kyoto University's Institution for Research in the Humanities and the vision of its co-director, Takeo Kuwahara. Although the theme and format were initially considered too abstract and removed from the planning of what essentially was an international trade show, the proposal was surprisingly readily accepted by the exposition's Central Planning Committee when Osaka's successful bid was confirmed. Master planning of the site was given to the architect Kenzo Tange. The artist Tarō Okamoto, who trained in Paris and fortuitously fell under the influence of Marcel Mauss, Picasso and the surrealists, was commissioned to design the Tower of the Sun; while Sakyō Komatsu, the science-fiction writer, was made responsible for its content. Together, they proposed assembling a worldwide collection of contemporary 'tribal' art. While Tarō Okamoto was working on the design and construction of what would become the exhibition's most iconic expression: the sixty-five-meter-high Tower of the Sun with golden face and outstretched arms; Sakyō, began work on its interior. The inside of what would become the circular puckered tower included a gallery in which the newly collected ethnographic works, consisting mainly of masks and figures reflecting Tarō's own interest in spiritual culture, would be moodily hung and dramatically lit in a shadowy, spectacular setting. (Photo 2)

The gallery opened into the tower's base from which arose a high branching





**Photo 2** Reproduction of the Original Ethnographic Display in the Tower of the Sun. 40th Anniversary Special Exhibition. A 'Tower of the Sun' Collection: Expo'70 Ethnological Mission. (March 2018, Shelton)



**Photo 3** Tower of the Sun (May 2018, Shelton)



**Photo 4** Interior the Tree of Life, Tower of the Sun 1970  
(Source: Institute of Esthetic Research)

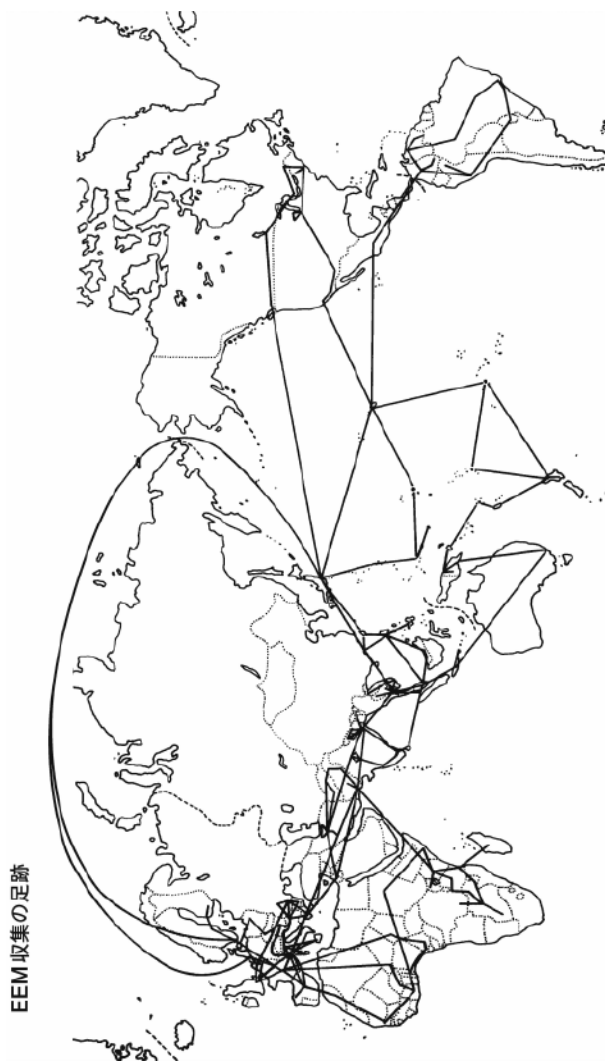
vine that reached upwards to its outstretched arms, encircled from bottom to top by a zigzag arrangement of escalators. Models of the earth's earliest sea creatures were assembled at the base and around the vine's lower branches; further up models of the different creatures that had successively inhabited the planet were represented; culminating in diminutive figures representing the first humans. (Photo 3 and 4)

With a budget of 62,468,500 yen, Tarō enlisted the help of his friend Umesao, who with Seiichi Izumi, professor of anthropology at Tokyo University, gathered together a team of twenty mainly young anthropologists who, from 1968–1969 criss-crossed the world collecting some 2,600 objects from all five continents (Yoshida 2001). (Photo 5)

Team members were or became prominent figures in the development of Japanese anthropology; these included Seiichi Izumi, who worked on building the Korean and South American collections; Junzo Kawata, who collected in West Africa and went on to translate Lévi-Strauss' writings into Japanese; Tamotsu Aoki, who made the Taiwanese and South-East Asian collections and Shuji Yoshida. There were also other important team members, who were sourcing material from around the globe: Tetsu Takahashi (South-East Asia); Ryuzo Takayama and Tsuyoshi Namigai (India and the Middle East); Toshihide Katayose (East Africa); Kazuhisa Eguchi (West Africa); Masaichi Nomura and Tatsuo Fujimoto (Europe); Hiroyasu Tomoeda and Yoshio Ōnuki (South America), Hiroaki Okada (North America); Naomichi Ishige and Masatake Matsubarta (Oceania), as well as Umesao who collected within Japan. Many of these outstanding individuals later became professors at MINPAKU, and were responsible for developing anthropology in Japan and mentoring a successive generation of students.

Like so many of the world's earlier ethnographic museums, MINPAKU grew out of the Expo's interest in a wider concept of anthropology that included physical evolution and the relation between humankind and other creatures. Umesao became the Museum's first and longest serving director general. He broadened the foundation collection by charging its staff to carry out additional field collecting prior to the Museum's opening, which increased its collection by 15,000 works. These contemporary holdings were supplemented by acquisitions of older collections to give the Museum's galleries historical depth. Included among these were the 28,000 works representing Japanese popular culture, *mingu*, assembled by Keizō Shibusawa for his Attic Museum; the historical Ainu collection transferred from Tokyo Imperial University and the George Brown collection of New Ireland malanggan sculptures (Yoshida 2001). These latter acquisitions contributed enormously to making the Pacific, Japanese and Hokkaido halls into some of the most spectacular exhibits in the Museum; a significant and dramatic digression from staid European and North American museological practices that excluded their home cultures from their collecting policy and displays (Yoshida 2001).

Holding the directorship from 1977–1993 and afterwards serving as special



資料提供: 1973 EEM 民族学館蔵 民族学館蔵 (1969-1980) 図録より作成

**Photo 5** Ethnological Expeditions Sponsored by Expo'70  
(Source: One of the Exhibition Panels of Special Exhibition "A Tower of the Sun Collection", Modified from Umesao ed. 1973.)

advisor, Umesao encouraged the development of an important intellectual bridge between the museum's scientific team and the designers and thinkers behind Expo'70, especially Tarō Okamoto and Sakyō Komatsu, who remained his close friends. Umesao's own ethnographic position described in his major work, *An Ecological View of Civilization* (2003[1967]), refuted the established view of the Eurasian continent being divided between east and west, in favor of a three-fold division based on different ecological zones. He argued that central Asia, inhabited by a succession of impressive civilizations, had shaped the continent's eastern and western peripheries. The resulting marginalisation of both peripheries, along with their locations in similar ecological zones, had led to Western Europe and Japan's parallel but different historical developments. Because of the varied scientific and humanistic interests of its founder's generation and the shift required to transform the display from a spectacle into a museum exhibit, MINPAKU's presentation of its collections retains and exudes a healthy degree of epistemological incertitude. This ambiguity is visually expressed by its exterior, a functionally clad architecture, and the drama of its interior that presents the exhibition halls as so many cogs and gears of a machine invented for the creation of wonderment and originally for the suppression of time, and the virulence of an uncertain future. This museum time-machine entangled Sakyō Komatsu's science fiction and pessimistic futurology and Tarō's surrealist reveries with Umesao's historical and ecological version of anthropology.

The tension between the Museum as artistic and scientific expression is heightened by its theatrical black painted galleries and fixtures, devoid of all sunlight but lit dramatically by small, almost invisible spotlights. These galleries were previously more densely packed than they are today, creating a symphony of objects arranged by continent, geographical area and typology, reminiscent of the former displays at the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin. Neither of these two museums ever adopted the notion of diagnostic type objects, a concept developed to classify natural history specimens which was widely accepted in the Anglophone world. Instead, they preferred to show a range of objects within each typological category that reflected the spectrum of variation within the normative limits of culturally recognizable styles. Rather than reduce variation within a specific object category to an ideal type represented by one of its members, MINPAKU and Berlin dramatically highlighted the creativity and originality of different makers and the role of artefacts as expressions of unique, individual subjectivities. In both museums, large impressive objects were juxtaposed with configurations of smaller works, which in the case of the displays of Oceanic outriggers and canoes shows the suspiciously close influences that existed between the two museums. (Photo 6)

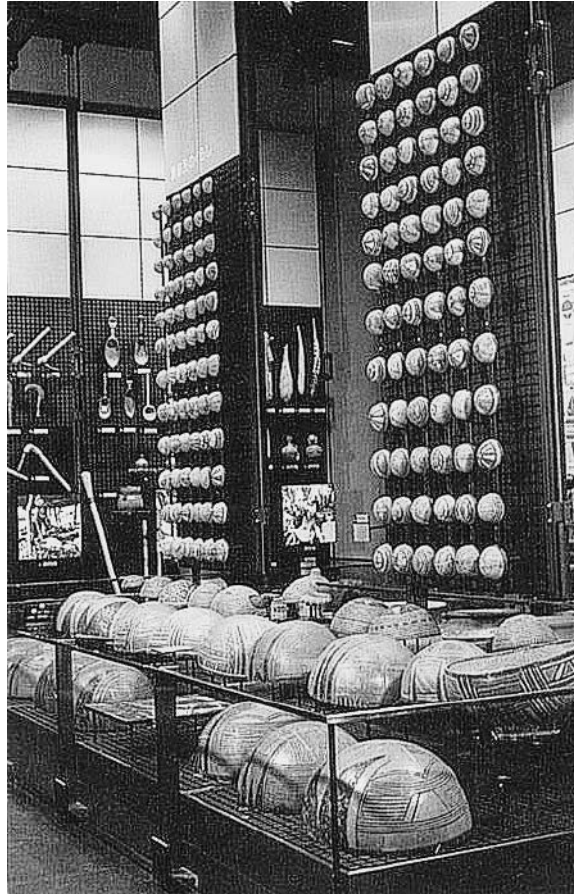
As a general principle, MINPAKU's galleries were each focused around at least one large object, which acted as an icon to identify the section's geographical focus: the stunning internally lit Neputa float and Yagorodon giant are icons for the

Japan Galleries; guardian figures and Kokdu for Korea. The Ka'aba shrine tapestry from Mecca displayed in a huge upright case at the entrance to the West Asia Gallery; the massive Parthasarathi float from India identifying the South Asian section; and the large French burnished copper still, around which the European collections were previously centred all served an iconic function. Serialization and the massing of objects not only showed variations in techniques but acted as a form of installation art with its own aesthetic, which through the precise use of light, made objects 'jump' out of their pitch black surrounds. Imagine the spectacle of seeing row after row of golden Cameroonian calabash vessels, set off against black surfaces (Photo 7); a dense, closely packed line of Javanese wayang golek puppets with their colourful batik garments; floor-to-ceiling displays of folk deity paintings (gutpan) from Korea; or humbler, but no less artfully arranged, Japanese sacred ropes and straw Knots (shimenawa, wajime, ebijime and kazarimusubi).

The illuminated sights continue: eighty Kokeshi dolls arranged by regional styles; Bihar fish traps or, from Hokkaido, Ainu 'tools for mountain work'. Neither did the exhibition galleries shy away from reproducing the interior of houses or the inside of market stalls, which, because they were so neatly arranged, and displayed



Photo 6 The Pacific Gallery (May 2018, Shelton)



**Photo 7** Display of Cameroonian calabashes, African Gallery  
(Source: National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka. 2004)

as if magically suspended in the black cube galleries, they never fell into the sad, ‘let’s pretend’ stereotypes that such simulations evoked in American and European museums. The massing of objects and their serialization around geographical, cultural and sometimes thematic classifications had the effect, I thought, of making each gallery appear like a cabinet of curiosities writ large, in which the sheer volume of objects, which occupied expansive swathes of vertical and horizontal space created both awe and intimacy. If this was the aesthetic style of the halls, their narratives were different. MINPAKU was and remains a museum devoted to dramatic spectacle as much as social science, not that these are incompatible approaches provided a distinction is drawn between exhibition genres and narratives.

An exhibition genre refers to the visual display style, while the narrative is the

subject which the text and the layout of objects communicates. There is no necessary correlation between exhibition genre and narrative as has too often been prescribed. Early evolutionary displays used a ‘bland’ genre, supposedly suggestive of neutrality; the Musée de l’Homme and the quai Branly applied an aesthetic genre; the first long-term displays at MINPAKU employed spectacle, which since 2000 with the beginning of its renewal project, has become complexly hybridized. The Africa, Europe and Oceania halls have all reduced the number of objects they currently display, creating more measured aesthetic displays that focus not only on massing but on individualized objects or their reconstructed assemblages. The older displays had specific narrative characteristics, many of which have remained:

1. Galleries still provide an overview of the material and visual culture of each of the world’s continents and, in the case of Asia, of the continent’s sub-regions, and for Japan, its cultural areas. The Museum, therefore, inflects different scales in its narration of the world, which nevertheless, taken together confirms MINPAKU to be an encyclopedic museum.
2. The permanent galleries trace continuities and disjunctures in the function of objects. In the case of Papua New Guinea and Japan, historical works are incorporated into displays to more effectively demonstrate changes and continuities in style, aesthetics or the function of material and visual culture over time.
3. The presentation of some object categories includes multiple versions, which as we have previously said, demonstrate the spectrum of admissible variation within an artistic community and the parameters of its aesthetic categories - the limits of communicable meaning before a ‘thing’s’ easy recognition becomes blurred.
4. Unlike most ethnographic museums, MINPAKU is a museum of the immediate past — cultural innovation, hybridity, the reuse of materials and objects for different purposes, and the globalized circulation of objects and images are highly visible. The incorporation of these ‘contaminated’ objects enables the Museum to illustrate a series of impressive cross-sections of distinctive categories of contemporary creativity. The African Hall, which displays Tchokwe and Chewa masks, from the late nineteenth century to the present, once included a Volkswagen van used in masquerade. Taken together, the Museum’s galleries present a unique series of panoramas of mid-to-late twentieth century material and visual culture from across the globe.
5. Religious, ritual, ornamental and utilitarian objects are displayed using identical clustering techniques, which equally focus the observer’s attention on all object



categories. Domestic utensils, agricultural implements or string knots when arranged in serialized rows, are made to create the same impact as figurative sculptures, masks and puppets. There is no hierarchy in the presentation of objects except that which may be imposed by the observer.

6. Special galleries on intangible culture, including language, music, contemporary issues, especially those related to difficult subjects, such as the relation between Korea and Japan and whaling, along with a uniquely comprehensive capsular audio and film area, which contextualises aspects of the material culture displays, brought or bring a further contemporary dimension to the museum and instill a sense of living cultural heritage throughout the building. These have recently been supplemented by sound and video presentations distributed throughout the building.
7. MINPAKU aimed and aims to provide visitors with multisensorial experiences. It is the only museum I know that places the vast majority of its collection on open display, uncased, and is unconcerned, for the most part, whether objects are touched, or not. Its video projections, mediatheque, and contemporary issues gallery introduce sound into the museum and in the latter case, invite interaction and public debate.
8. MINPAKU is not only a museum but a graduate research institute focused on ethnographic and museological research. This provides the potential for the museum to be self-reflexive and critical, and to combine research and publication with collecting and exhibition, giving it crucial advantages over museums without such responsibilities or research infrastructure. It not only increased its collection from 45,272 to 300,000 objects in just 40 years, but it has assembled one of the most comprehensive and multilingual ethnographic libraries in the world and established two major publication series.
9. MINPAKU has rightly refused to distinguish between folk or popular art and ethnographic works, thus relieving the former of the indeterminate status it is attributed in American and European museums. Folk and popular art are produced by and for complex industrialized or partly industrialized and service-based societies — notably those societies that were excluded from traditional ethnographic museum's collecting practices. MINPAKU has incorporated folk art as an inescapably valid category without which no coverage of Europe or Asia, and especially Japan, would have been possible.
10. Unlike American and European museums, MINPAKU includes its home culture within its displays. Japan is not missing like non-indigenous Europe or the United States are in their home museums. Japan is not edited out and displayed elsewhere

but shown using an identical exhibition genre as that employed for the rest of the world.

Although MINPAKU's earlier displays were critiqued and re-evaluated — no less by its own staff than those from outside — I can nevertheless, not emphasise enough their uniqueness and the Museum's pioneering attitude toward display at a time when everywhere else in the developed world, ethnographic museums were mired in political, methodological or existential crises. What MINPAKU shared with its sister museum in Berlin, apart from its adoption of the culture area approach, was a huge exhibition space that by displaying multiple examples of singular categories of objects, allowed visitors and itinerant curators to better understand creativity in cross-cultural perspective. The importance of moving beyond the idea of the ethnographic type object, which substituted a Western scientific model of an object's significance for the Indigenous sensibility or aesthetic category, was remarkable. Despite interesting earlier anthropological work on this issue, including the Royal Anthropological Institute's 1961 conference, *The Artist in Tribal Society*, and the work of Adrian Gerbrands, William Fagg, Anthony Forge and Gregory Bateson, creativity has been largely ignored by ethnographic museums. For cultural evolution and *Völkergedanken* approaches, artistic creativity and aesthetics were irrelevant, while structural functionalism assumed 'primitive art' was the product of a more or less slavish copying of its idealized expression whose importance lay in its reiteration of social relationships. Taking advantage of museum anthropology's lost opportunity, outside of MINPAKU and Berlin, it was art museums and the work of curators like Edmund Carpenter, Frederick Dockstader, and René d'Harnoncourt, who explored these challenges. It should also be remembered that language too was excluded from most museum exhibitions and when North American or European museums attempted to grasp difficult subjects such as acculturation in the Museum of Mankind's Amazonian exhibition, *Hidden Peoples of the Amazon* (1985), or the Royal Ontario Museum's cavalier treatment of British colonialism and collecting in *Into the Heart of Africa* (1989), they were quickly discouraged by the negative criticism their often-naïve approaches provoked.

Despite these strengths, which have largely been retained, MINPAKU began to rethink and renew its permanent displays between 2000–2017. The arrangement of collections by continent and sub-region has been retained, but within these divisions, older themes have been replaced by more contemporary and socially relevant subjects that depend partly on historical interpretation. The increased effects of globalization have also been acknowledged, and in the African section, individuals from different backgrounds tell their own stories through juxtapositions of objects they once used with short film sequences. In the African hall, woven and printed textiles evidence the effect of modernization and the wider circulation of patterns

and images from other parts of the world; the effect of food imports is demonstrated through the inclusion of a well-stocked stall, and café; while a barber's shop illustrates the cosmopolitan fashions of its customers through the names and pictures of different hair styles on offer. There are also sections on the slave trade, and on European colonization introduced through the display of colon figures from Côte d'Ivoire and Asafo flags from Ghana, but nothing on the effect of the contemporary world order, economic deregulation, free trade and the shift of power relations from Europe to Asia. Changes in the world's cultures brought about by industrialization and the expansion and rationalization of the nation-state are included. The European hall introduces the theme of industrialization by reproducing an early period interior of a bourgeois house, and a section on mass production and early ready-made garments (Mori 2014). Together with the Japan halls, this section introduces issues around multiculturalism, immigration, and integrationist policies. The iconic objects for this section now include the German house interior, painted crosses from Maramures, Romania, and Polish and Ukrainian icons and priestly attire. The America's Hall combines the north and the south of the continent under five themes: encounters, food, dress, prayer and creativity. Each theme juxtaposes different historic periods: the pre-Hispanic domestication of plants is displayed alongside a colonial period sugar press and contemporary powdered milk though the impact of genetically modified maize is missing; pre-Hispanic clothing is juxtaposed with contemporary Indigenous dress, while Indigenous hybrid religions are compared to doctrinal Catholicism. Modernity is introduced elsewhere too. The Japan halls have a section on 'Okinawa Lives', which show baseball shirts, a jukebox and instant food under such themes as Okinawa culture in transition and Occupied Okinawa. The Mongolian displays include a yurt with a solar panel and satellite dish, and in Africa, there is a yellow plastic container labelled 'Mama's cooking oil', which is protected in its own glass case. Both eclectic and hybrid, the galleries constitute highly heterotopic spaces, although the effects are not always immediately obvious because of the identical prior exhibition genre, which gives the illusion of continuity.

The Museum's openness to experimentation is most clearly evidenced in its temporary exhibitions. *Images of Other Cultures* (1997–1998) applied a reflexive, comparative approach to the different visual and narrative historical models used to institutionalize and display ethnographic collections in museums in the United Kingdom, Japan, Africa and Oceania. The exhibition *Self and Other: Portraits from Asia and Europe* (2008) not only toured in Japan, but also across five Asian nations where, depending on the venue, works were changed and substituted to reflect local histories and differences in aesthetic schools and styles. Examining the varied and changing perceptions of Asians and of Europeans of each other and of themselves, the exhibition avoided focusing on the history of misrepresentation in favour of applying a dialectical method to better understand how mutual definition of 'I' and

‘Other’ become inevitably compromised through their different interactions. More recently, *The Power of Images* (2014) — far from being a simple re-run of MOMA’s *Primitivism in Modern Art* (1984), or the Centre Georges Pompidou’s *Magiciens de la Terre* (1989) — strove to identify universal themes that make intercultural understanding of the world’s diverse images possible. These three exhibitions, curated over seventeen years by Kenji Yoshida with different external partners by implicitly critiquing prevalent dualistic Western perspectives between the ‘self’ and the world, have problematized established interpretations of important aspects of visual culture. Exhibitions like the *Power of Images* did not reject difference but strove in addition, to identify cognitive similarities, independent of culture that are responsible for the way we construct and understand assemblages, portraits and images. All three exhibitions acknowledge that meaning frequently overflows the representations through which we try to contain and essentialize it. Meaning, they concede, has two edges to it: one grounded in those aspects that trigger universal recognition, and the other, which is hermetic and culturally specific. It is notable that these three exhibitions have been presented in both ethnological and art museums perhaps to better examine the effects of implanting them in supposedly polarized interpretive ecologies. Despite their elaborate scenography and impressive size in MINPAKU’s special exhibitions gallery, when exhibited at the National Art Centre (Tokyo), and elsewhere, *Self and Other. Portraits from Asia and Europe* and *The Power of Images*, like the other touring exhibitions, were essentially experimental installations where the relative autonomy and shifting relations between exhibition genre and narrative were manipulated to interrupt the programs of otherwise established and stabilized museums and art centres. Another of the Museum’s exhibition streams examines aspects of its own past: *The Attic Museum* (2013) commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Keizo Shibusawa, and was part of a wider research project to study the approximately 28,000 objects of his mingu collections, which had been transferred to the Museum. The current temporary exhibition *The Tower of the Sun Collection: Expo’ 70 Ethnological Mission* (2018) is based on similarly meticulous research on the Museum’s foundation collection, including its historical context, the different strategies and criteria employed in the acquisition of objects, the mapping of the collecting expeditions, the compilation of definitive lists of objects collected, and even a revealing breakdown of the budget spent on each area.

MINPAKU has never fallen neatly into Western constructions of the history of ethnographic museums. It has remixed critical and contemporary anthropological inflections from different schools to construct a more nuanced and open museum and museology of its own. Umesao called MINPAKU an avant-garde museum and provocatively described its collections as ‘trash’ which, unlike the ‘treasure’ of Japan’s other museums could be touched, used and even abused. The current director general, Yoshida sees the establishment of MINPAKU as an: “Attempt to

challenge the system and apparatus of museums in Japan” (2001: 100). Moreover, not only does Umesao’s critical stance against Japan’s established museums reverberate in Yoshida’s provocations against the separation between art and ethnographic museums, but both director generals appear to share a similar incredulity towards dualistic modes of thinking. This critical attitude, engendered by the rejection of dualism, has become a fundamental part of MINPAKU’s uniqueness. The history of MINPAKU lies outside the experience of most of the world’s other great ethnographic museums. Instead of having been limited by the supposed scientific descriptive narratives found in its permanent displays, MINPAKU by manipulating exhibition genres and shifting venues, it deftly escapes the narrow determinism that science has brought to many of its American counterparts. MINPAKU’s unique flair is the product of its late development, the questions posed by its research centre, the nature of its more recently acquired collections, plus an origin story that closely links it to Japanese surrealism, science fiction and futurology – a story and exhibition still waiting to be curated. Its internationalized and heterotopic expressions and perspectives makes its future development more open than that of many museums.

#### **4 Challenge and Change: MINPAKU and the ‘Anthropological Imagination’**

Until the mid 1970s, anthropology exercised a near monopoly over the study of culture, a term it believed to be essential to its claim to be a distinct and independent discipline. At the same time, in different parts of the world, anthropology was rocked by critiques, which not only questioned the veracity of its cultural focus but its fundamental viability. Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966), echoing widespread concerns in his Inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, bemoaned the passing of the small scale, often isolated societies on which anthropology had largely focused. In France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and in the United States, critics including Claude Meillassoux, Peter Pels, Oscar Salemink, Talal Asad, Gerald Berreman, and Kathleen Gough argued that the discipline had been instrumental in supporting colonial rule and perpetuating neo-colonial relations, undermining its claim to objectivity and political neutrality. More generally, there was growing unease about how anthropology, as a product of Western thought, could be expected to identify, never mind describe, the possible existence of non-Aristotelean logics, which might lie outside of it. In retrospect, these critiques and concerns were aimed at a concept of anthropology based on the prescription of difference. What is remarkable is that anthropology did change to refocus on cultural commonalities, gender, the political, economic and cultural relationships between and within societies, and narrative and discourse analysis, leaving the problematic nature of some anthropology and the secondary literature it had engendered to the emerging discipline of critical and cultural studies. This was the time when the humanities began to experience a major reorientation among its constituent disciplines. Art History largely abandoned

its focus on the formal and technical analyses and classification of art and the application of aesthetic criteria to its appreciation, and adopted an interest instead in its sociological and cultural contextualization and the application of critical analysis of the politics and economics of its production. The 'cultural turn' instigated the emergence of cultural geography, the history of mentalities, science and ideas, and post-colonial and Indigenous studies, which dislodged anthropology's complacent monopoly over the study of culture. Anthropology, after initial outrage, responded to this re-articulation of the humanities and social sciences in two ways. Discipline-based anthropology, particularly in North America, retreated even more into itself, weakly insisting that fieldwork and the approach to describing social phenomenon from bottom-up still provided it with a distinctive method and identity. Elsewhere, in Brazil, Europe and Quebec, anthropology embraced a wider concept of cultural analysis and re-focused itself on problems of epistemology, ontologies, the politics of knowledge production and the senses. It developed new interests in heritage, consumption, memorialization, and museums and collecting, and became more closely aligned with a broad cross-disciplinary spectrum of the previously mentioned newly emergent subjects. It became part of what I have called elsewhere a more inclusive 'anthropological imagination'.

Ethnographic, ethnological and anthropological museums have reached a critical juncture where much needed intellectual choices and commitments now need to be met. US museums seem to have chosen to take refuge in the old disciplinary approach, softened by gently advocating for the application of collaborative methodologies. Collaboration, however, requires acknowledgement of cultural pluralism and respect for different knowledge systems which is fundamentally incompatible with science's own epistemological presuppositions. World culture museums, pocket museums, among which I include the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology, have for the time being at least, chosen the alternative, open anthropological vision which has nourished the growth of other cultural disciplines and accepted a broad coalition of practice. The critical and humanistic anthropology, whose development, dissemination and coalescence I have in this lecture attempted to trace across three continents, has become part of a wider movement predicated on the extraordinary fecundity of the 'anthropological imagination'. It seems from this tentative review that some museums and anthropologies arrived at this point in their history together and will, like the ethnographic museums of Neuchâtel, Geneva, Tenerife and a few others, continue to develop this open and critical ecology. Others, those that have chosen the disciplinary route, are tightly linked to university departments, some of which are divided between the two versions of the discipline I have here described. However, while disciplinary, objectivity and neutrality, or different combinations of these, might persist in the short term, the contradiction between the scientific model and the different knowledge systems of those societies from which their collections were acquired, will

generate tensions that will be difficult to resolve. The ‘anthropological imagination’ composed by the broad spectrum of cultural disciplines, alternate knowledges and critical dialogue, offers nothing less than a new foundation for the humanities based on cultural diversity, epistemological and ontological pluralism and inter and intra-disciplinarity. Museums like MINPAKU can provide new platforms for the humanities: anthropology, history, classics, geography, art history, cultural studies, comparative religions and philosophy. The cross-fertilization among disciplines within a broad anthropological framework promises to deepen appreciation of their mutually interdependent relations. It will help overcome methodological isolation, generate new terrains of research and exhibitions, help formulate and create the apparatuses required to develop new perceptions of the world and its histories, like Umesao himself did, and provide criteria to re-articulate and outwardly open old established political and social relationships. Both the disciplinary and the imaginative tendencies within anthropology are present within MINPAKU’s exhibitions and research projects, as they are in many institutions elsewhere. Perhaps, MINPAKU’s fortieth anniversary is not a bad time to more fully discuss the possible amelioration of the divergent tendencies and together with colleagues from other disciplines, develop new, and robust joint aspirations that better acknowledge the conditions and challenges of anthropology’s second century.

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