



A BRIEF REPORT ON THE GSI WEEK:

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER SESSION

DATE OF EVENT: NOVEMBER 30, 2023

LOCATION: CENTER FOR AINU AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES, HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING: 30 (ONLINE PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED)

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Early Career Researcher Session

Introduction

- Fostering the Future of Indigenous Studies and Cultural Heritage Research -

On Thursday, November 30th the Early Career Researcher Session was held at the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies as a part of GSI Week 2023. This session was moderated by Professor Johan EDELHEIM of Hokkaido University and showcased five graduate students from around the globe, exploring a diverse array of topics that include tourism, cultural heritage, ethnography, and anthropology. The back-and-forth discussions that followed touched upon themes of sustainability, inclusivity, and social responsibility, signaling a collective dedication to scholarship beyond academia's confines. It not only propelled the individual researchers on their academic journey but set a precedent for the kind of scholarly engagement that nurtures collective growth, ensuring a future where academia thrives as an inclusive, ethical, and forward-focused space.



Schedule

1. "Commercialisation and over-commercialisation: dilemmas of Miao silverware craftsmen in Fenghuang, China"

Ms. Chujun WANG, Hokkaido University

2. "Community Involvement and Indigenous Inclusion in the Utilization of Archaeological Heritage In Hokkaido"

Ms. Amanda GOMES, Hokkaido University

3. "Indigenous Focused Cultural Heritage Management in Large Scale Development Impact Regions in Hokkaido and Okinawa, Japan"

Mr. Jordan BALLARD, Hokkaido University

4. "Lessons Learned from Ethnographic Fieldwork in Nibutani"

Mr. Michael J. IOANNIDES, University of California Santa Barbara

5. "Kidney function and inflammation biomarkers in the Amazonian Indigenous Shuar of Ecuador"

Ms. Hannah CANTRELL, University of Oregon

Abstracts

Ms. Chujun WANG, Hokkaido University

"Commercialisation and over-commercialisation: dilemmas of Miao silverware craftsmen in Fenghuang, China"

This presentation explained the role of the 'Other' in constructing its own tourism representations by focusing on the complex interactive practices between the Miao people and powerful tourism stakeholders. In this presentation, Ms. Wang utilized the critical realism paradigm to present the complexity of tourism representations at three layers of reality. An 'empirical layer' represents tangible actions, an 'actual layer' analyzes interactive relations embedded in discourses and material practices, and finally, explores more abstract generative mechanisms, a 'real layer'. Critical discourse analysis was used to analyze data. She found two tangible representations of local Miao peoples: "custodians of their ancestral land" and "displayers of Miao tradition". These tourism representations are shaped by interactive practices. On one hand, there are powerful stakeholders' practices focused on pursuing traditional exoticism. On the other hand, there are local Miao villagers' own actions aimed at achieving a better life in their homeland. Strong land attachment, and cultural identification stemming from Miao values, empower local Miao peoples to react to powerful tourism stakeholders and construct a tourism reality that benefits themselves. The outcomes of Miao peoples' strategies used during the process of interactive practices and intrinsic values embedded in the generative mechanisms not only support the studies that emphasize the role of local ethnic peoples' subjectivity in shaping their own representations but also act as positive examples of self-representation in tourism practices for ethnic minorities in other locations

Ms. Amanda GOMES, Hokkaido University

"Community Involvement and Indigenous Inclusion in the Utilization of Archaeological Heritage In Hokkaido"

This presentation explored the complex interplay between archaeological outreach and community involvement through an ethnographic study of archaeological heritage managers in the region to understand the strategies and challenges faced working within an Indigenous context in Japan. Using ethnographic methods, Ms. Gomes delved into the experiences and perspectives of heritage managers who serve as intermediaries between the past and local communities, including the Ainu. This presentation considered the intricate decision-making processes and challenges heritage managers face, illuminating the delicate balance between preservation, utilization, community involvement, and Indigenous rights. Moreover, it discussed the recognition of the Ainu as active partners in the production and dissemination of knowledge of the past and explores inclusive

approaches to the utilization of local archaeological resources that acknowledge the connection of the Ainu to their heritage. This presentation provided insights into the utilization of buried cultural properties to engage local communities and underscores the multifaceted responsibilities of heritage managers in safeguarding and promoting the region's cultural heritage. It called for a more inclusive and respectful approach to heritage management that incorporates Indigenous voices and rights while preserving the past for future generations, fostering collaboration, mutual understanding, and cultural sustainability in the region.

Mr. Jordan BALLARD, Hokkaido University

"Indigenous Focused Cultural Heritage Management in Large Scale Development Impact Regions in Hokkaido and Okinawa, Japan"

This presentation looked at methodologies used to conduct rescue archaeology and cultural heritage management during large-scale development projects on formerly indigenous lands in Japan and attempts to test their efficacy by utilizing a modified version of the Analytic Hierarchy Process that was first adapted by Dr. Te Kipa Kepa Brian Morgan in Aotearoa New Zealand, called the Mauri Model. This presentation compared cultural heritage management methods that work with local indigenous members of the Ainu and Ryukyuan communities during and after large-scale development projects and examined the influence of their culture on Japanese and American government-mandated assessments to see which produce better scientific and culturally sensitive outcomes. Methodologies examined include project planning, as well as how and who surveys and excavates sites, analyzes the artifacts, and curates heritage material. This model could be replicated in many other contexts involving majority/minority archaeological contexts.

Mr. Michael J. IOANNIDES, University of California Santa Barbara

"Lessons Learned from Ethnographic Fieldwork in Nibutani"

In this presentation, Mr. Ioannides reflected on his ongoing ethnographic fieldwork in Nibutani, Biratori-chō, which has been in progress since June, 2023. First, he introduced his research theme, which is centered on Ainu Indigenous rights and environmental justice and emphasizes the use of Indigenous research methodologies. Next, he presented some of the activities that he has participated in during his fieldwork, which included farm work, gathering wild plants, participating in Ainu language and embroidery classes, performing music for local townsfolk, and attending religious ceremonies and political gatherings. Finally, he discussed some of the lessons he has learned and the challenges he has faced during his fieldwork thus far.

Ms. Hannah CANTRELL, University of Oregon

"Kidney function and inflammation biomarkers in the Amazonian Indigenous Shuar of Ecuador"

This presentation investigated poor kidney function and its comorbidities in the forager horticulturalist Indigenous Shuar of Ecuador. The presence of comorbidities in any disease process increases the need for specialized care, which is limited to non-existent in remote places. Because comorbidities are associated with higher rates of disability and death, this puts remote communities at a higher risk of experiencing detrimental health outcomes. Poor kidney function is associated with an increased risk for systemic inflammation, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and anemia. Some risk factors for chronic kidney disease in Indigenous populations are high pathogen loads, low birthweight, and malnutrition. Here, Ms. Cantrell investigates kidney function, systemic inflammation, and other key factors influencing kidney function among Shuar. We incorporate dried blood spot and point-of-care device measurements and anthropometrics in this study of 128 Shuar participants aged 12-86 years. Alongside this research, she discussed the anthropologist and human biologist's roles and responsibilities in Indigenous global health research, specifically focusing on the Shuar Health and Life History Project. These included action items like increasing communication and facilitation between healthcare professionals, researchers, and individual Shuar participants and communities. She suggested that implementing field-friendly tools, like biomarkers and point-of-care devices, enhances individual and collective participation in the ownership of personal and community-wide health outcomes and treatment plans. Lastly, she urged that anthropologists and human biologists play an important role in the improvement of Indigenous global health and that we should be openly discussing, and publishing, the intricacies, difficulties, and successes of our field methods and research.

Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Professor Johan Edelheim of Hokkaido University for generously offering to moderate the event and fostering a supportive environment. We also greatly appreciate the GSI staff whose hard work and dedication were instrumental in bringing GSI Week to fruition. Additionally, we are grateful to all the presenters who shared their insights and research contributions, especially those who joined us online from other time zones. Finally, our sincere thanks to the symposium guests whose active involvement created a dynamic atmosphere. The encouraging dialogues and insightful questions played a pivotal role in cultivating a positive experience and motivating the presenters.