

Strategic Young Researcher Overseas Visit Program for Accelerating Brain Circulation

Dispatch Report

Year: 27 October 2012 ~ 15 November

Place of fieldwork: Ethiopia

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- Research background

People in Asia and Africa have invented many utensils and tools that are used on a daily basis to adapt to the natural environment, enhance social relationships in communities, and influence the outside world. This research contributes to the development of a sustainable human sphere in Asia and Africa by describing the process by which local knowledge (*ZAIRAICHI*) related specifically to the body and bodily techniques, the domain that is most vulnerable to changes in global conditions and social institutions, is shared and disseminated.

- Research purpose and aim

The focus of this research includes the following three components: 1) fieldwork in Southwestern Ethiopia; 2) academic collaboration with the South Omo Research Center and Museum (SORC&M) at Addis Ababa University as well as with local communities, such as the South Omo People's Ensete Research Center (SOPERC); and 3) academic exchanges related to the results of my research at international conferences. This year, I will focus on the second and third components.

- Results and achievements by fieldwork

From October 27 to November 15, 2012, I attended and presented my research results at the 18th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia. This event relates to the third component of my research. At this international conference, I gave a talk on the process by which local knowledge (*ZAIRAICHI*) contributes to the development of a sustainable human sphere in Africa. Because this conference was attended by many participants from different countries and different academic fields, such as Education, Development Studies, and so on, I was able to present key concepts and discuss research activities occurring in Southwestern Ethiopia. After the conference, I visited SORC&M to arrange for future collaborative research with the director and curator of this organization.

- Implications and impacts on future research

In the future, I plan to focus not only on the learning process among women potters but also on the impact of changes in the distribution of local knowledge (*ZAIRAICHI*) on the livelihood activities of local people. At the next conference, which will be in France, I plan to offer a talk on the waste of materials/objects that results from people's actions. Academic exchanges pertaining to both the learning process and the process by which waste is created in the application of local knowledge (*ZAIRAICHI*) will enable my research to contribute the development of a sustainable human sphere in Asia and Africa.



Photo1 Giving a presentation in the session



Photo2 International Conference of Ethiopian Studies was held in Dire Dawa in Eastern Ethiopia



Photo3 Keynote speech