

Strategic Young Researcher Overseas Visit Program for Accelerating Brain Circulation

Dispatch Report

Year: 29 October 2013~21 March 2014

Place of fieldwork: Ethiopia

Name: Morie Kaneko

- 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

Progress has been made toward meeting all three of the objectives of this research project.

A) I gave a presentation at the 1st International Conference on Museums (November 1–3), organized by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, and by the ZAIRAICHI research group. B) I visited the Geta region (*wareda*) project site of the One Village One Product (JICA) movement to conduct extensive research on a Geta *waleda* (equal to region) that has been engaged in processing agricultural products. C) During the second half of November, I had a good discussion with the director of SORC&M about the museum exhibition. D) In the beginning of December, I conducted an extensive survey in the Southern Sudan on how the process of sharing and distributing local knowledge (*zairaichi*) is related to people's livelihood activities. E) From the end of December until the middle of March 2014, I assisted with SORC&M collections and did preliminary research on how city planning encourages local people to pay closer attention to the process of sharing and distributing local knowledge (*zairaichi*) when managing landscapes and indigenous plants, and processing ensete on the highland.

- Implications and impacts on future research

This research has achieved in terms of its three objectives before the end of this fiscal year. To achieve the first objective, I could further research how the Aari share and distribute local knowledge of crafts and other

livelihood activities, such as processing ensete. I need to pursue further inquiries to understand the concepts underpinning features of local knowledge, including crafts and livelihood activities. To address the second objective, this research could involve collaboration with the staff of SORC&M to create special exhibition. We could also increase collaborative work on the main exhibition in SORC&M. For the final objectives, I anticipate many opportunities to exchange ideas on museum and anthropological studies of material culture. I am already thinking about future possibilities for an international symposium during the last year of this program.

This visit made me consider the concrete research activities I need to undertake during the last year of the program in order to complete this research. Some issues will need to be overcome in order to achieve all of the research objectives. In relation to the first objectives, I need to propose the concept of two different features of local knowledge, such as crafts and other livelihood activities, as a contribution to the development of a sustainable human sphere in Asia and Africa. The second and third objectives are related to this issue. As for the concept of sharing and distributing local knowledge (*zairaichi*), I have had a paper accepted at an international conference of Ethnobiology in Buhtan.



Photo1 First International Conference of the Museum of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Prof. Ono gave a presentation in the conference.



Photo2 an Acholi men in South Sudan produces the part of storehouse for cereals



Photo3 Collecting material culture in a pastoralist community, called Kowegue, in Southwestern Ethiopia with the director of South Omo Research Center and Museum, Addis Ababa University.