

Strategic Young Researcher Overseas Visit Program for Accelerating Brain Circulation

Dispatch Report

Year: From March 2014 to March 2014

Place of visit: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Name: Oishi, Takanori

- Research background

Over the last decade, the penetration of the cash economy has been accelerated in various parts of the central African tropical forest. The forest dwellers of this region are experiencing drastic changes in their ecology (subsistence activities), culture, and society. The extent and nature of their contact with the outside world is, however, highly variable among different peoples.

- Research purpose and aim

This study aims to examine the impact of lifestyle changes, such as the diversification of subsistence activities and sedentarization, on local people's life history strategies by means of cross-cultural research between different Pygmy hunter-gatherers (the Baka of southeastern Cameroon and the Aka of the Central African Republic) and their neighbors (the Bakwele and the Ngandu) that encompass evolutionary and ethnographic approaches.

- Fieldwork results and achievements

I stayed one week at the Ethnoecology Laboratory of Environmental Science and Technology Institute (ICTA), which is directed by Dr. Victoria Reyes-García. Dr. Reyes-García is also the head of the Local Environmental Knowledge (LEK) research project (*The adaptive nature of culture. A cross-cultural analysis of the returns of Local Environmental Knowledge in three indigenous societies*, URL: <http://icta.uab.cat/Etnoecologia/LEK/>), which investigates the LEK among three indigenous populations in the humid tropics, including the Baka Pygmies of southeast Cameroon. LEK project's research site is located in the Lomie area which is adjacent to my research area. We exchanged information on research activities and discussed the possibility of collaborative research.

Dr. Victoria Reyes-García has studied the impact of the market economy on environmental knowledge and subsistence activities of the Tsimane Amerindians in Bolivia for many years. I was able to obtain a detailed protocol and advice on field experiments to evaluate people's time preference (cf. Godoy et al. 2004).

- Future research implications and impacts

I am going to work at another research institute (RIHN: Research Institute for Humanity and Nature) for the fiscal year 2014 so I am unable to continue with the Brain Circulation program. The new project that I will participate in, however, is theoretically related to the study that I have conducted under the framework of the Brain Circulation program. I would like to continue to develop the ideas that I developed during my overseas

visits of the last two years.



Photograph 1: Campus of Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB).



Photograph 2: Entrance of the Faculty of Science where the ethnoecology laboratory is located.



Photograph 3: Graffiti with the phrase: "Education is not a merchandise, but a right." Student association activities seem very active on the UAB campus.