

Creating a Global Research Platform for Sustainable Humanosphere Research
Report on research accomplishments and overseas visit to collect research materials

1. Name: So Yamane
2. Trip dates: February 14 to 24 (11 days), 2014, 3. Destination:
Government College University (Lahore, Pakistan)
University of the Punjab (Lahore, Pakistan)
Bahauddin Zakariya University (Multan, Pakistan)
Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand)

4. Trip overview:

On this trip, with the overall goal of creating a global research platform for sustainable humanosphere research, I, along with Dr. Emiko Sunaga (Osaka University), who is currently dispatched overseas to conduct research related to this theme, worked together with prominent Pakistani research institutions to host an international seminar to present our research up to this point and to collect materials relevant to this research theme.

5. Trip Details

I departed Kansai International Airport on February 14 and arrived in Lahore Airport that same evening. The next day (the 15th), I met with Mr. Aurangzeb Haneef, a teaching fellow at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), at the hotel where I was staying. Mr. Haneef served as a counterpart to Ms. Emiko Sunaga and myself during a research presentation we made at an international conference on Islam hosted by LUMS in November of 2013. The purpose of the meeting was consultation related to the research presentation Mr. Haneef was scheduled to make at Kyoto University in March of this year.



The report author, teaching fellow Aurangzeb Haneef, and Ms. Sunaga



With Dr. Zahid

On the 16th, I met with Dr. Zahid Munir Amir of the University of the Punjab, at my hotel and at the professor's home. During the visit, we exchanged ideas related to scholarly exchange between Japan and Pakistan.

In addition, I visited the home of the proprietor of Sang-e-Meel Publications, Pakistan's largest bookstore. The day of my visit happened to coincide with the memorial marking the 40th day since the passing of the company's founder. The event was attended by many well-known Pakistani literati and researchers and turned out to be an unexpected reunion.

On the 17th, after stopping in at Sang-e-Meel Publications and purchasing several Urdu-language books, I visited Government College (GC) University. This is the institution where Ms. Sunaga is conducting research related to this research project. After making courtesy calls on the President of the university and the chairman of the Department of Urdu, Muhammad Haroon Qadir, I participated in a lunch meeting hosted by the university president, where I interacted with various researchers from the university. We are scheduled to invite two researchers from GC University to Osaka University to present seminars this year and discussed collaborative research in relation to those visits. In addition, I visited the Faculty of Oriental Learning in the University of the Punjab, where I managed to visit with Dr. Khwaja Muhammad Zakariya, former chairman of the Department of Urdu and former prof. Ikram Chughtai. I received a donation of several valuable books and documents from Dr. Chughtai.



Together with the President of GC University and others



With the President of GC University and researchers

On February 18, I departed Lahore and headed for Multan by overland route. The travel time was 5 hours. On the trip, I was joined by Anwaar Ahmad, who had previously stayed at Osaka University as a foreign instructor. Dr. Anwaar is the leading figure with regard to the issue of national language in Pakistan, having previously served consecutive terms as director of the National Authority of Languages. My interaction and exchange of ideas with Dr. Anwaar was extremely beneficial. Thanks to arrangements made by Dr. Anwaar, during the trip, we were able to visit the University School System private school located in Chichawatni, which was a unique opportunity to observe the private primary and secondary educational institution in a local city in Pakistan. In contrast to the public schools, which are free, the monthly tuition of private schools ranges between 1,500 and 2,000 rupees a month. Despite this high cost, the school has more than 1,000 students, providing instruction in both English and Urdu. I arrived in Multan that same evening, and attended a dinner party hosted by the chair of the Urdu Department of Bahauddin Zakariya University where I

was able to exchange ideas with researchers associated with the university.



Visiting a private school in Chichawatani



Visiting a public school in Multan

Early the next morning (19th), I visited the Government Muslim High School, the oldest public school in Multan. The school was established in 1941, before Pakistan gained independence, and provides instruction up to the tenth grade. It is a school whose first principal was Hindu and whose alumni include individuals who migrated to India just after India achieved independence, a Nobel laureate in physics, and numerous individuals that have become well-known in South Asia. I felt the visit to such a public school would contribute to the further development of good relations between Japan and Pakistan.

Next, I visited Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) and participated in a social gathering of researchers and students in the Department of Urdu. Here, both Ms. Sunaga and I gave presentations on our research, followed by a Q & A session with the students. An account of this session was reported in the newspaper the following day. That evening, I participated in a dinner hosted by the BZU President where I was able to interact informally with various department heads. In addition, I was able to present an overview of this research project, which was well-received.



Socializing with the BZU president and researchers after the dinner party



The seminar at BZU



Ms. Sunaga's presentation



My presentation

On February 20, an international seminar titled “Pakistan research in Japan,” which was the primary objective of the current overseas trip, was held in the auditorium of the BZU Economics Department. In addition to Ms. Sunaga and myself, various Japanese researchers—Takashi Kurosaki (Professor, Hitotsubashi University), Hisaya Oda (Professor, Ritsumeikan University), Aeka Inoue (Professor, Shujitsu University), and Kazuyuki Murayama (Instructor, Wako University)—gave presentation on their research on Pakistan. Ms. Sunaga presented her research on religious identity of the Urdu language in South Asia based on an analysis of previous literature related to annotated editions of the Qur’an. I reported on research related to the identification of the Urdu language characteristics based on lexical decomposition of Urdu texts related to food culture published at the end of the 19th and in the early 20th centuries. Other presentations included a political analysis of Pakistan, an analysis of voting behavior during the 2013 Pakistani general elections, an empirical study of the migrant workers from rural areas of Pakistan, and a report on religious practices of islands located off the Balochistan coast. The seminar participants included the BZU president as well as BZU researchers and Najib Jamal of Bahawalpur Islamia University, among others. The seminar was a success in terms of being a forum for fostering collaborative research. Other participants included Toshie Awaya (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), Chihiro Koiso (Instructor, Osaka University) as well as other Japanese students currently studying in Pakistan (from Osaka University, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), bringing the total number of seminar participants to over 100. The seminar, which was reported by local newspapers and television stations, served as an effective means of publicizing the scholarly exchange related to the current project. That evening, I was invited to attend a dinner party hosted by the BZU Department of Urdu.



At the dinner party following the seminar



Newspaper article on the seminar



Newspaper article on the social gathering hosted by the BZU Department of Urdu

On my last day in Pakistan (February 21), I departed Multan at 8 a.m. and headed to Lahore by overland route. During lunchtime, I was able to meet with Muhammad Kamran, Head of the Department of Urdu, Faculty of Oriental Learning at the University of the Punjab. I am an alumnus of the University of the Punjab and Dr. Kamran, a graduate of the same University, was one year my junior in the graduate school. We were able to exchange ideas regarding future scholarly exchange. In the evening, I set about collecting more books and other documents. Just before leaving the country, I visited the home of Dr. Tabassum Kashmiri, a professor in the Department of Urdu at GC University, who provided me with several reprints of his research papers.

I departed Lahore in the evening of February 21st and arrived in Bangkok early the next morning (22nd). In Bangkok, I met with Dr. Surat Horachaikul, chair of the Department of South Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, and discussed on-going scholarly between Dr. Surat and myself. On the 23rd, I visited the Chulalongkorn University Press and purchased a number of publications recommended by Dr. Surat. I departed from the Survarnabhum International Airport in Bangkok on the morning of the 24th and arrived at Kansai International Airport that evening.

6. Achievement of research objectives and areas needing improvement

On this overseas trip, with the overall goal of developing connections to major research institutions in South Asia, I investigated the state of education and research in Pakistan by visiting not only the Government College University and the University of the Punjab in Lahore and the Bahauddin

Zakariya University in Multan but, also, even primary and secondary schools in Multan and in a nearby town. I attempted to maximize my interactions with researchers by setting up meetings during unscheduled slots in my itinerary. I see the fact that I was able to obtain agreements in principle regarding potential future collaboration in addition to reporting our respective research achievements as a major accomplishment. The seminar held at the Bahauddin Zakariya University, in particular, was a fruit of the scholarly exchange between Japanese and Pakistani researchers.

With regard to areas needing improvement, the biggest problem was the fact that meeting times would change all of sudden. While it is good that I was able to meet with all the researchers that I had planned to meet with prior to the trip and even a few more, in order to spend time with so many researchers over such a short period of time, it was very challenging allocating enough time for each meeting.

The areas needing improvement are all related to time constraints of the trip. Overall, however, I believe the trip was extremely valuable.