

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY ISSUE “LIFESTYLE AND SANITATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN CAMEROON”

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This supplementary issue brings together a collection of studies that explore the diverse and intricate ways of life among indigenous communities in Cameroon, with a particular focus on the Baka hunter-gatherers and neighboring groups. Each chapter delves into different aspects of their lives, from nutritional adaptations and educational environments to migration patterns, ethnic histories, and sanitation behaviors. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of how these communities adapt to their environments, maintain their cultural identities, and navigate the challenges posed by modernization and external influences.

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES IN THIS VOLUME

The first part consists of four studies based on the collaborative research projects led by Drs. **Hiroaki Sato** or **Hideaki Terashima** (see PREFACES) and authors' individual projects. The research achievements of Dr. Sato's team culminated in a special issue of African Study Monographs a decade ago (Sato 2014). Furthermore, members of the team led by Dr. Terashima, as part of the large-scale project titled “Replacement of Neanderthals by Modern Humans” (Akazawa et al. 2014), have contributed chapters to this special issue.

The first chapter, *Nutritional Status, Physical Activity, and Dietary Intake of Pygmy Hunter-Gatherers in a Forest Camp in Cameroon*, by **Taro Yamauchi**, **Koji Hayashi**, **Kyohei Kawamura** and **Hiroaki Sato** examines the feasibility of healthy survival on wild forest food resources alone. Through meticulous observation and analysis, the authors reveal that the Baka can maintain a balanced energy intake and expenditure, demonstrating their remarkable adaptability to both sedentary village life and nomadic forest existence.

In the second chapter, *Beyond School: The Forest as a Learning Environment for the Baka in Cameroon*, **Koji Sonoda** contrasts the forest as a dynamic learning space with the rigid structures of formal schooling. The forest emerges as a place where knowledge is acquired through experience and relationships, offering a contrast to the hierarchical and often alienating environment of schools.

The third chapter, *Residence Patterns of Hunter-Gatherers after Settlement based*

on *Individual Migration Histories*, by **Yujie Peng**, explores the migration and settlement patterns of the Baka. Peng highlights how social norms and interactions with outsiders have shaped their mobility and internal systems, shedding light on the complexities of their post-settlement lives.

Ryota Yamaguchi's chapter, *Ethnic Movements in the Cross-Border Region of Southeast Cameroon*, delves into the oral histories and ethnogenesis of the Bakwele people. By tracing their migrations and interactions with neighboring groups, Yamaguchi reveals how historical trajectories have influenced their current political and economic landscape.

The second part consists of three studies based on the global project addressing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) issues covering Global North (Japan) and South (Asia: Indonesia, India, Africa: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Zambia) led by Dr. **Taro Yamauchi** (Yamauchi et al. 2022) and its spinout project focused on hunter-gatherers dwelling in Cameroon (Yamauchi et al. 2023).

The fifth chapter, *What Motivates Toilet Use Among Indigenous Communities?* by **Akira Sai** and **Taro Yamauchi**, addresses the challenges and enablers of promoting hygiene behavior among the Baka. The study identifies key factors—such as distance, privacy, safety, and cultural identity—that influence the adoption of sanitation practices, offering valuable insights for future interventions.

In the sixth chapter, *Defecation Attitude and Influence of Toilet Construction Activities among the Baka of Southeastern Cameroon*, **Koji Hayashi** and **Takao Shimizu** examine the ambivalence surrounding toilet use among the Baka. Despite efforts to introduce modern sanitation practices, the authors find that traditional behaviors persist, underscoring the need for culturally sensitive approaches.

Finally, the seventh chapter, *Exploring Sanitation Challenges among Indigenous Hunter-Gatherers, Farmers, and Merchants in Cameroon* by **Joy Sambo**, **Rin Mifune**, **Sikopo Nyambe**, **Akira Sai** and **Taro Yamauchi** explores the unique challenges faced by indigenous women in managing menstruation. The study highlights the disparities in sanitation access and the resilience of traditional practices, emphasizing the importance of context-sensitive interventions.

Together, these chapters paint a vivid picture of the lives of indigenous communities in Cameroon, offering valuable insights into their resilience, adaptability, and the challenges they face in a rapidly changing world. This supplementary issue thereby contributes to a deeper understanding of these communities and informs policies and practices that respect and support their ways of life.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This collection of studies sought to deliver the dynamic culture and situations surrounding indigenous and its neighboring populations dwelling in Cameroon. Each study addressed unique and challenging topics through intensive fieldwork, which provide implications not only for fellow African researchers but also for a range of stakeholders (NGOs, policy makers, international organizations etc.), who strive to better understand and support marginalized populations that are often invisible, ostracized and understudied. Through this work, we endeavor to further

deepen our ongoing and future studies that delve into these dynamic populations and promote inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations among researchers and different sectors toward the development of African studies.

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