

Global COE in Search of Sustainable Humansphere in Asia and Africa 2007 Junior Researchers Research Initiatives

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1. Research title / area / name

Changes in the perceptions of resources of Lake Malawi fishers: a historical anthropological perspective. / Nkhata Bay District, Malawi /Setsuko NAKAYAMA (ASAFAS)

2. Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to combine archival resources with ethnographic data in order to map out the continuities and discontinuities in the perceptions of lake resources among Lakeside Tonga fishers of Malawi in partial response to British colonial intervention.

3. Major Findings

I have consulted missionary repositories in the United Kingdom. The materials found at the Special Collections Division at Edinburgh University Library are proving valuable in terms of quantity and quality of unpublished information regarding early Scottish missionary activities in Nyasaland / Malawi. Four microfilms and over 2,000 pages of material are currently under examination. A preliminary analysis reveals a high degree of collaboration between certain missionaries and Tonga agents in the documentation and translation between local language, history, customs, beliefs and biblical concepts. Some of the texts have been compiled by missionary-educated Tonga in the Tonga language. The treatments of these texts, i.e. their availability in translated or published forms and their respective media should unravel the filtering and compartmentalization process of information into different bodies of knowledge. The contents are being analyzed in order to reveal the patterns of continuities and discontinuities in fishery practices and beliefs.

4. Publication

Part of the preliminary findings will appear in the following journal article:

Nakayama, S. In print. City lights emblaze village fishing grounds: the re-imaginings of waterscape by Lake Malawi fishers. *Journal of Southern African Studies*.