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## Bangladeshにおける在来豚と人に関する初期的 民族誌報告

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## A Preliminary Ethnological Report about Native Pigs and Humans in Bangladesh

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe the outline of nomadic native pig herding, especially focusing on seasonal differences in grazing land use and sources of fodder in relation to nomadic pig husbandry. The seasonal change in feeding resources was as follows. During the dry season, a wild plant like taro was the most important feeding resource for nomadic pig husbandry. During the rainy season, earthworms were used as fodder. And also Ikeya, one of the project researchers observed pigs being kept in rubbish disposal areas for a few months, near the main road of the city.

### Introduction

Research on the interaction between pigs and humans has mainly focused on house pigs which were managed by the keepers in the sedentary settlements (UMBERTO A. *et al.* 2007). Nakai discussed changes in pig consumption in a northern Thailand mountain village that was under the influence of Christianity (NAKAI 2009). It is also well-known that native pigs are living in Bangladesh and Nepal and other areas of South Asia (KUROSAWA 1995). These researchers observed pig groups subsisting along roadsides or near the town for short periods. They clarified that these pigs were of an old genetic type found on the Eurasia continent (KUROSAWA 1995). But, as there are no ethnological studies of nomadic native pigs, it is not clear if these pig groups are nomadic or semi-nomadic in either study area. Nobody the researchers spoke to know who kept these pigs, in what way they were cared and controlled and moreover, for what purpose they were being kept. We have a lot of studies about the animal husbandry with the exception of such pigs in Bangladesh (IKEYA 2006).

Below we make a preliminary report about nomadic native pigs and humans in Bangladesh. We describe seasonal differences in grazing land use and fodder resources in relation to nomadic pig husbandry. Bangladesh is located in the south central region of the Eurasian continent. In the study area under investigation, pigs are seasonally nomadic during the times that their owners seek grazing land and fodder for them. In the lower area

of the Ganges (Padma) and Brahmaputra (Jamuna) rivers, we can find a high human population density and a tropical monsoonal climate. In this area, people conduct different types of cultivation depending on river flood conditions during the dry and rainy seasons. After harvesting crops, they keep cows and goats and pigs in the fields.

### **Materials and Methods**

To investigate the actual conditions of this type of this nomadic pig husbandry, Ikeya conducted ethnological field research during the dry season (in December of 2007, and in February of 2008) and the rainy season (in July and August of 2008). First, Ikeya looked for nomadic pig herds in the Dhaka area, Tangail District and Gazipur District in Bangladesh. Then, I followed the herds and observed their feeding and routes of movement. I also conducted interviews with some herders assisted by a translator (English-Bengali).

### **Results and Discussion**

The following section describes the daily routine of nomadic pig husbandry. In the morning, pig keepers depart from their camp, which they will return to in the evening (Photo 1). While stewarding their pigs, they diligently prevent the pigs from entering cultivated fields. Each herd included approximately 100 to 200 pigs. The herd occupied a wide area while searching food in the open fields. By calling the pigs, the keepers could reduce the area that the animals occupied; that is to say the pigs paid attention to the commands of their handlers.

Below the route of movement for the pigs and the seasonal change in land use is discussed. Pig groups were moved in each season, and this depended on the availability of feeding resources. In the rainy season (June to September), pigs could live near flooded rivers. In a year with large scale flooding, I was told that the pigs are kept in the forest (Kurosawa personal communication), where in they can eat the roots of trees. During the dry season, pigs are kept in cultivated fields after harvesting. By digging in the soil, pigs could eat some plants that were considered noxious weeds by the farmers. Pigs could also eat the rice grains that remained in the paddy field after harvesting (Photo 2). However, when farmers began using a field for wheat and maize, the pigs had to be moved to other places.

The seasonal change in feeding resources were as follows. During the dry season, wild plants like taro were the most important feeding resource enabling nomadic pig husbandry. Crops were also used. During the rainy season, earthworms were used as fodder. Ikeya observed cases of pigs kept in rubbish disposal areas for a few months, near the main road of the city (Photo 3). In this case, two keepers made a camp and cared for their pigs. The rubbish site was always supplied with kitchen refuse from the city, and pigs were keen to eat this. In February 2008, two handlers were keeping their pigs in the same refuse area. However, in August 2008, they lost this resource as a local government office prohibited use of the land as a rubbish dump. Ikeya could not obtain any information on how they cared for their pigs after that.

Finally, we compare this nomadic native pig herding in Bangladesh with the nomadic camel herding among the pastoral Raika people in Northwestern India (IKEYA 2005). In this comparison we point out the similarity of there being, male herders without a family unit in state of migration, and similarities in land use after harvest time being used by grazing animals.

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Photo 1 Native pigs group called “wild boar type” in Bangladesh Bengal Delta (photoed by Ikeya, Dec. 2007)



Photo 2 Pig grazing in the rice field after harvests (photoed by Ikeya, Dec. 2007)



Photo 3 Pig grazing in a refuse area (photoed by Ikeya, Feb. 2008)

Nomadic pig husbandry depends on the seasonal use of natural resources and on less-seasonal kitchen refuse when available. The significance of this case study, for relationships between pigs and humans in Eurasia, will be explored further in the near future.

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本研究は、Bangladeshにおける在来豚の移動牧畜の概観を、放牧地や餌となる資源の季節変化に焦点を当てて記述することをねらいとした。その結果、以下の点が明らかになった。牧夫は、雨季と乾季に応じて放牧地を頻繁に変えていく。乾季には、タロのような野生植物が餌資源として最も重要な一つであり、雨季にはミミズなども利用されていた。それと同時に、季節とは関係なしに、都市郊外の幹線道路沿いに面するゴミ捨て場が放牧地として不可欠なものであった。