

Global Study Program

Collaborative Learning Abroad

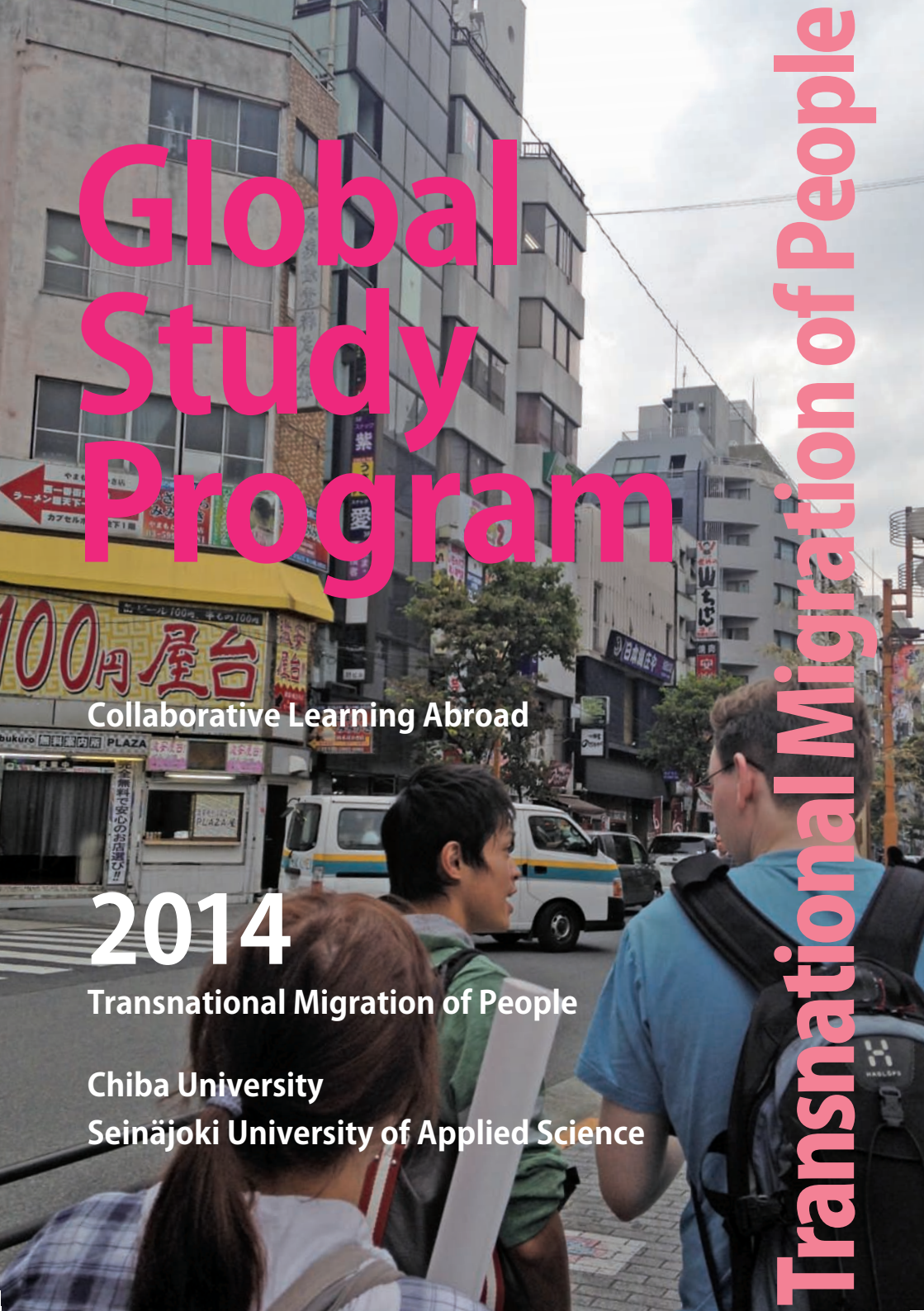
2014

Transnational Migration of People

Chiba University

Seinäjoki University of Applied Science

Transnational Migration of People





Overview of the Course

Transnational movements of people are one of the notable features of the contemporary world. This course examined the ongoing global processes that foster border-crossing mobility of people, the consequences at the individual, community, and national level, and the challenges that migrants face. The main component of this course was a case study of transnational migration of people observed in the greater Tokyo area. Students of Seinäjoki University of Applied Science (Seinäjoki UAS) and Chiba University (Chiba-U) examined 1) how particular patterns of transnational migration of people have emerged in the contemporary world, 2) where different groups of transnational migrants reside in various areas, and 3) how different or similar are migrants' experiences of living in the greater Tokyo area. This course was coordinated by Hiroki Igarashi (Chiba-U).

This course was a collaborative learning program for students from these two universities. Midway through the course, Seinäjoki UAS and Chiba-U students were divided into 6 groups (4-5 students). They worked together by participating in a series of lectures, field research and workshop-based sessions, and engaged in the main course project—The Migration Experience Project.

This class began with a review of the empirical understanding of the mechanisms of transnational migration in the contemporary world, including Finland and Japan. The case of Finland was introduced by Prof. Anna Saarera (Seinäjoki UAS). Then, students gained basic knowledge and learned techniques on how to conduct qualitative research—what to observe, how to observe and how to summarize the data. Next, students went to several field research sites where they could observe phenomena of transnational migration of people in the greater Tokyo area, reflect on their observation and analysis, and deepen their understanding of the field research sites and people living there. These field research sites are Roppongi (See page 6), Shin-Ōkubo (6), Nishi-Kasai (6), Ikebukuro (7), Tsrumi (7), Hirō(7), and Tokyo Camii in Yoyogi-Uehara(8). In the middle of the course, Prof. Tomoko Fukuda (Chiba-U) gave us a lecture on Muslim tradition and communities in Japan.

As a final project, each group of students interviewed a transnational migrant in Japan (9). Students connected the interviewee's migration experience with the findings from their field research and information from the mini-reports produced by Chiba-U students.



Schedule

Day 1
Sep 20th Arrival of Seinäjoki UAS Students and orientation

Day 2
Sep 21st Lectures 1 & 2, students' presentations and welcome party

Day 3
Sep 22nd Japanese language course and sightseeing

Day 4
Sep 23rd Lecture 3, workshop 1 and field research 1

Day 5
Sep 24th Workshop 2, lecture 4 and field research 2

Day 6
Sep 25th Field research 3 (Tokyo Camii) and 4

Day 7
Sep 26th Workshop 3, midterm reports and workshop 4

Day 8
Sep 27th Field research for final presentation

Day 9
Sep 28th Group work day

Day 10
Sep 29th Final project presentation, workshop 5, closing, and farewell party

Day 11
Sep 30th Departure of Seinäjoki UAS students

Participants

Chiba University

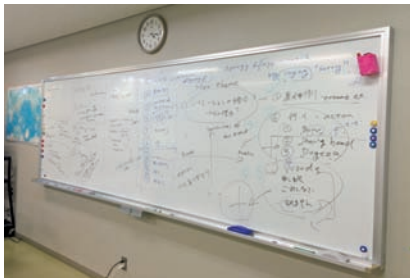
Ayana Okubo
Kyoka Chiba
Masashi Hiraki
Mayo Suzuki
Narumi Ishikawa
Nozomi Kanai
Ryusuke Shimizu
Sara Shiina
Takanatsu Mori
Takumi Nakazato
Tomoko Numata
Yoko Harano



Seinäjoki University of Applied Science

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Hannu-Pekka Piiparinen
Hilkka Ingrid Perttunen
Iina Pilvi Pirita Öörni-Sorvari
Joni Tommi Mikael Vähäniemi
Jonna Eveliina Kuninkainen
Jonna Heli Marjaana Katajamäki
Niina Riikka Majamäki
Piatta Gloria Jukarainen
Sini Elina Majapuro
Toni Antti Oskari Jämsä
Veli-Jussi Ala-Riihimäki
Ville Juhani Vierimaa





Pre-course education sessions: In order to fully benefit from the course held in late September, Chiba-U students participated in pre-course education sessions, which lasted four consecutive days during the summer vacation. They were divided into 3 groups and engaged in four activities—1) introducing classmates to Seinäjoki UAS students through a group Facebook page, 2) reading and discussing on how the phenomenon of migration of people can be understood in relation to the historical transformation of nation states, 3) making an individual mini-presentation on a selected topic

on migration issues in Japan and making a list of English vocabulary relevant to the course contents, and 4) making a group presentation on Japanese culture. The details of the course content will be explained in the following page. Seinäjoki UAS also carried out pre-course education sessions before coming to Chiba-U. They took a Japanese language course, learned about Chiba-U and Japan in general, became familiar with safety issues including Dengue fever protection tips, and introduced participating students from Seinäjoki UAS on the group Facebook page.



Lectures: In the pre-course education sessions, we acquired basic notions underlying the theme of the course, transnational migration of people. We read texts and had lectures on nation, nationalism, migration, and what it means to be “Japanese” in order to understand these concepts. Then through discussions, we integrated knowledge acquired from the readings and lectures. (Narumi)

Mini-Reports: During the four-day pre-course education, we produce mini-reports touching on subjects such as ‘the number of foreigners residing in Japan,’ ‘highly-skilled migrants in Japan,’ ‘the distribution of foreign residents in Chiba prefecture,’ etc. This process deepened our understanding of foreign residents and gave us a good opportunity to do presentations using PowerPoint. (Ryusuke)

Presentation on Japanese Culture: In the pre-course education, we made presentations on Japanese culture. Group A talked about apology-making, for example, shaving one’s head. Group B discussed whether or not “herbivore men” (or *sōshokukei danshi*) are considered attractive, showing that the original definition of them is different. Group C talked about “B-grade food” (or *bi-kyū gurume*), revealing that it had contributed to the revitalization of local communities. (Mayo)





Welcome Party: We organized a welcome party on the second day for Seinäjoki UAS students. We prepared *temakizushi* (or hand-rolled sushi), miso soup, pizza, etc. and initiated a surprise dance! We also explained how to make *temakizushi* in English. It seemed that Seinäjoki UAS students found making *temakizushi* interesting. This party was a good opportunity for us to make friends with one another. (Takumi)



Sightseeing: On the third day, we spent some time sightseeing in the Asakusa and Odaiba areas. In Asakusa, we had *monjayaki* and *okonomiyaki* for lunch, which Seinäjoki UAS students found unique. As we had free time after lunch, we visited *Sensōji*, one of the most famous temples in Tokyo. While walking around the area, we were able to see/visit Tokyo Sky Tree. After Asakusa, we moved to the area of Odaiba by water-bus, which was a rare opportunity for many of us. As Odaiba is famous for high technology game shops, unique buildings and the Fuji TV station, we also enjoyed sightseeing there. Even after the third day, we made good use of our limited time for sightseeing. After our fieldwork activities were over in Tokyo area around 4 to 5 p.m., both Chiba-U and Seinäjoki UAS students went out for dinner and went shopping in Akihabara and Shibuya, and visited public baths. We particularly enjoyed *Karaoke*. (Yoko)





Roppongi: We went to Roppongi and noticed that this area is quite international. We found many foreign companies, embassies and restaurants in the area when doing our field research. We investigated more on this area later. Americans are the majority of foreign residents in the area. In addition, the percentage of registered foreign nationals in Minato-ku is about 7.7%, which is significantly higher than the national rate, 1.6%. (Ayana)

Shin-Ōkubo: Shin-Ōkubo is known as a Korean town. On one side of the train station, we found many Korean restaurants and K-pop goods shops. On the other side, there was a small Muslim town. Since we found temples for Muslims, we thought Shin-Ōkubo might be a residential area for them. We also found vegetable stores, 100-yen shops and halal food restaurants targeting foreign migrants. (Sara)



Nishi-Kasai: Nishi-Kasai is known as an Indian residential area in Tokyo. Our group went to this area twice. The first time, we went there to investigate the Indian presence, the stores they shop at and the buildings that they use. And, we went back to this area again to interview an Indian woman. We prepared many questions, and were able to learn a lot of things about her life and Nishi-Kasai as a town. (Takumi)





Ikebukuro: We visited Ikebukuro to observe a Chinese community during lunch hour. We found it interesting that the majority of people we saw were men, from 18 to 60, and that this area seemed segregated from the larger culture. It seems that the socioeconomic level of this area is lower than at other field research sites. For the final project, our group investigated several factors that make this area distinctive. (Tomoko)

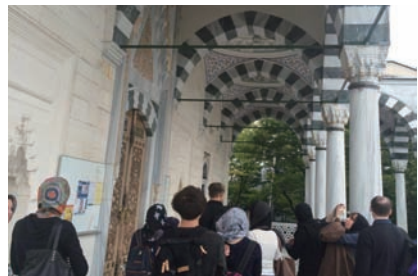
Tsurumi: Our group went to Tsurumi, which is known as a community for people from Latin America. It was a quiet neighborhood. At the beginning, we were confused because we couldn't see residents on the streets! We investigated Tsurumi further and learned that it is a part of an industrial area, and foreign residents are more likely to be away during daytime because they work in factories. (Masashi)

Hirō: Our group went to Hirō. While walking around the area, we saw a lot of foreigners. Also, we saw many signs written in English and were surprised that a supermarket sells not only Japanese food products but also a lot of foreign ones. Through this field research, we found that Hirō is a fascinating international town and that foreign residents must find living in the area very comfortable. (Kyoka)





Mosque: We went to Tokyo Camii, a famous mosque located in Yoyogi-Uehara, to know about Muslim communities. The beautiful architecture of the mosque impressed us. We learned that Muslims from various countries, such as Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia, etc. gather in the mosque. The guide told us that these Muslims believe each person is equal before their God. That's why they establish a close relationship with each other by calling each other 'brother' regardless of their nationality or race. To our surprise, even the difference between Sunni and Shia is trivial to them. On another day, our group interviewed a Saudi Arabian Muslim man, who works for a Japanese company. He talked to us about how he viewed the world and told us that the most important thing is to appreciate others' values above religious differences. (Takanatsu)





The migration experience project: In the middle of this program, we went to three different ethnic/international communities and a mosque in the greater Tokyo area for our field research. As a final project, each group went to interview a transnational migrant living in Tokyo. Based on our field research and interviews, we delivered a final presentation on transnational migrants' experiences living in the greater Tokyo area. Our field research experiences made us realize two things:

First, this opportunity pushed us to think about migration/immigration. Before this program began, most students had probably not thought about this issue seriously. Through this course, we directly learned and felt that this phenomenon was really happening in our life.

Second, this whole field research experience helped us become friends with group members of both universities. In order to make our field research and group project successful, we had to communicate and exchange our opinions actively. At first, we didn't talk so much because we were shy, but day by day, we came to talk and discuss more actively. (Nozomi)



Afterthoughts

I learned that what we need is not language skills, but the willingness to know each other. (Mayo)

This course is one of most interesting and intensive courses. The course subject is universal, so all students were able to relate to it well. (Toni)

I realized Japan might be changing as an immigration nation, and we have to be able to relate to various people. (Masashi)

This course was really convenient for me because I can't participate in a long-term exchange program. I worked with fantastic people in a well-structured course. (Sini)

My values changed by learning many things. I can challenge anything more positively than before. (Sara)

Through working together, I was able to know more about the Finnish people. I hope our friendship will last a long time. (Yoko)

I realized that the most important thing is not being afraid to express myself. A big thank you to my classmates!! (Tomoko)

I really enjoyed studying with GSP5 members. I am really glad that I participated in this course. (Takumi)

This class offers a great opportunity to get to know other students and learn about their culture through teamwork and a shared learning experience. (Iina)

GSP5 changed me. I became aware of what I lacked and was able to establish important bonds with others. (Nozomi)

I wanted to understand transnational migration more clearly. I really learned new things and had great experiences. (Narumi)

At first, I wasn't able to participate actively during group work. But, I was gradually able to communicate with my group members more. (Ayana)

Everything was an entirely new experience for me! This class became a special memory. Thank you! (Kyoka)

I have to say thank you to all the members in this program. These 11 days went by fast, but were so meaningful to me. (Takanatsu)

I learned not just about immigration, but also about working in a multicultural environment. Definitely one of the top experiences of my studies. (Ville)

It was nice to be able to participate in this program and make friends. So I want to say thank you to my classmates and teachers. (Ryusuke)

