



AGST Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2020



Featured in this issue:

- International Collaborative Courses at the GSE
“Sustainable Industry Development”, “Comparative Development Studies “ and more
- Kyoto Univ./ Strasbourg Univ./Heidelberg Univ.
Joint Student Workshops 2020 at the GSL
- Joint Graduate Workshop with the University of Göttingen at the GSA
- AGST Spotlight Interview
Prof. Sandra Schaal, Strasbourg University, France



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Faculty of Law and Faculty of Economics East Bldg., Kyoto University



The course entitled “Sustainable Industry Development”, taught by Mr. Edward Clarence-Smith, gave students updated knowledge about sustainable development in today’s industries. The course was delivered in a series of seven lectures over two weeks.



The course started with the Industrial Revolution, showing the relationship between economic development and environmental protection and how “the Earth does not have infinite regenerative capacity with the increasing demand from human.” In every lecture, Mr. Clarence-Smith would give detailed data and examples to explain environmental issues that different countries would confront, and the kinds of responsibility that should be

taken from companies, governments, consumers, giving students a space to understand these problems from their own experience and knowledge. At the end of every lecture, Mr. Clarence-Smith gave students time to raise questions to clarify something or ask for more information about something that they were particularly interested in.

Combined with the work experience as senior advisor to intergovernmental institutions and the private sector to promote green industry, Mr. Clarence-Smith shared his knowledge and experiences from his work over the last few decades, which helped students have a deeper understanding about sustainable development from a practical point of view. At the end of this course, Mr. Clarence-Smith gave students a “homework for the rest of their life”, which encouraged students to minimize their ecological footprint. The principles of sustainable development will continue for the rest of the students’ lives. It does not end up with the end of this course.

Ting Wang

Master ‘s student, Graduate School of Economics

Comparative Development Studies

by **Prof. Raymond Jussaume Jr.**
Michigan State University

& **Prof. Maria Fonte**
The American University of Rome

Last semester’s “Comparative Development Studies” course, which was offered through the Graduate School of Economics and Transcultural Studies, was led by two visiting scholars: Prof. Raymond Jussaume from Michigan State University, USA, and Prof. Maria Fonte from the American University in Rome, Italy. The following is a summary of what topics were covered and what kinds of activities took place during the course.

Prof. Jussaume, who led the first half of the course, focused on a wide variety of themes related to sustainable development, which enabled participants from different disciplines to share their understanding about sustainability. In the first session, Prof. Jussaume asked each participant to write down their own understanding about sustainable development on paper and then he collected the answers. Later, he asked them to reflect on their perspectives after taking all the sessions. Issues like the relationship between agency and structure, and wicked problems, were discussed in this session. In the second session, several participants were invited to participate in a role play exercise with Prof. Jussaume. The role play was about how to plan the infrastructure of a city and what should be prioritized. Students played roles which corresponded with their own specialties, like the minister of environmental protection, the minister of transportation, etc. This game deepened participants’ understanding about top-down and bottom-up development. In the session three and four, issues like the purpose of development, and the stages of development of nations were discussed. Prof. Jussaume also referred to several theories to deepen the discussion, such as modernization theory, dependency theory, world systems theory and measurement theory. In the last session, Prof. Jussaume asked students to share their opinions about the textbook of this class and let each participant to re-consider their initial understanding about sustainable development.



In the sessions led by Prof. Fonte, she offered students an opportunity to discuss different frameworks for analyzing the current ‘turn’ and transition in rural development and the global agro-food economy. Two questions Prof. Fonte asked students to consider during the four sessions were: “What is wrong with the current agro-food system?” and “What is the future food system we would like to aim at?” The articles that students were asked to review offered different theoretical perspectives on how to make an agro-food economy that is sustainable and socially just. Prof. Fonte began the first class with the clarification of some key concepts such as modernization, agriculture, rural and rurality, sustainable food systems and then introduced students to recent themes in the development of agriculture and rurality. The topics discussed by Prof. Fonte in the subsequent classes were the roles of consumers toward sustainable diets, how to conceptualize transitions to sustainability, and democratising food. Working in small groups, students summarized the main topics, key arguments from two or three assigned readings for each class. In addition, through highlighting how authors’ arguments relate to each other from the readings, students generated connections, contrasts, and comparisons. Students prepared some reflections and questions to be discussed in each class as well. The course stimulated student participation and discussion in order to develop a comparative perspective at a global level on these topics.



Youping Liu and Yang Lu

Master ‘s students, Graduate School of Economics

The course entitled “Quantitative Research Method ” taught by Prof. Chengfang Liu brought students with abundant knowledge, by providing various econometric tools and research designs through a series of lectures in two weeks.

The course started with a set of questions, for example, “Do conditional cash transfers affect behavior?”, “Has the family planning policy affected intergenerational mobility?”. It then introduced academic tools of research design, with a special focus on causal effects. In each lecture, Prof. Liu gave students detailed data and examples to explain randomized experiments and help them explore a range of quasi-experimental approaches. Each topic covered first the identifying assumptions required to make a causal effect, and second determining what exactly can be interpreted from the results. These training would be very useful for students to resolve their own research problems.



Moreover, Prof. Liu encouraged students to raise questions during the discussion, which created active and relaxed atmosphere. The course would help students to understand and learn from various readings, problem sets and referee report requirements, which is a very worthy practice on how to use Stata and to understand quantitative research method.

Furthermore, the course provided clear explanation on the strengths and weaknesses of various quasi-experimental strategies relative to experimental approaches and structural approaches. For the students who are going to apply quantitative method in their thesis, this course was very elaborate.

Ting Wang
Master's student, Graduate School of Economics

Historical Approaches to Business and Economics B

by Dr. Susie J. Pak
St. John's University

Between March 2, 2020 and March 6, 2020, Dr. Susie Pak, Associate Professor of St. John's University, New York, taught the course “Historical Approaches to Business and Economics B” at the Graduate School Economics, Kyoto University.

Dr. Pak was invited by the Graduate School of Economics Professor Takafumi Kurosawa under the International Collaborative Courses for 2019 Spring/Summer program. Five graduate students, including a participant from Glasgow University, attended this intensive course.

This year, Dr. Pak taught the course with the theme “Analyzing Social and Economic Networks: An Introduction to Historical Research Methods.” She introduced students to key literature and issues in studying society and culture as drivers of economic change.

During the course, Dr. Pak also described the various research tools, methodologies and resources she used to write her book, *Gentlemen Bankers: The World of J.P. Morgan*, and she guided students through theoretical frameworks that could be used in historical analysis. The course also included practicum on historical research methods and trends used by researchers to create and interpret datasets on social and economic networks.

Apart from the lectures, Dr. Pak conducted in-class discussions and exercises on digital technologies such as Google Earth Pro, ABBY FineScanner, and online archival resource sites including the digital collection of the Library of Congress, Hathitrust.org, Ancestry.com, and the Spatial History Project by Stanford University. These resources open possibilities to visualize data in innovative ways and provide new interpretations to historical data.

In the final day of class, students gave short presentations on their respective thesis projects. Students also gained constructive feedback from Dr. Pak and from each other on ways to improve their presentation skills, as well as ideas and methodologies for future research. Students were also required to write a final paper on how class readings, lectures and discussions would be incorporated into their thesis projects based on discussions held in class.

Despite concerns of the COVID-19 outbreak happening globally, the students enjoyed learning from Dr. Pak, and have come away with new and interesting insights on historical research.

Yen Nie Yong
Doctoral student, Graduate School of Economics



AGST Top Global Course

It is a pleasure to announce that two students completed the AGST Top Global Course on March 23, 2020. They come from the Graduate School of Letters and the Graduate School of Agriculture. This brings the total number of students that have completed the programme to 22 since it was launched in March 2017. More information about this programme can be found [here](#).



For the first time in 2015, the Graduate School of Letters sent a group of graduate students to its partner universities in [Strasbourg](#) and [Heidelberg](#), where they met fellow students and learned about study opportunities and research environments in Europe. After this one-week trip, quite a number of these students embarked on longer exchanges to France and Germany. At home in Kyoto, they spread the word about their experiences and encouraged younger students to follow in their footsteps.

With an eye on the establishment of the [Division of the Joint Degree Master of Arts in Transcultural Studies \(JDTS\)](#) in 2017, a collaborative degree program of Kyoto University and the [Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies \(HCTS\)](#), the Strasbourg-Heidelberg excursion shifted its focus on the above-mentioned “younger students,” namely BA students in their second and third year. They were to gain the opportunity to learn about exchange possibilities to partners in Europe in general, and about options of learning Transcultural Studies in particular. Considering the language requirements for related study programs, this would also offer them the time to practice and improve their English.

The first such study and exchange program builds on a Memorandum of Understanding between the Graduate School of Letters, the Graduate School of Economics and the HCTS in Germany: Each year, five undergraduate or graduate students go to Heidelberg for six months or a whole year. Coming from various disciplines, such as European history or French literature, they study Transcultural Studies to integrate its theories and methods for research on border-crossing, cultural processes into their own scholarly fields. Heidelberg students – often but not always with a background in Japanese studies – similarly come to Kyoto for field research and the [Courses on Asian and Transcultural Studies](#) program, which offers classes in areas not taught at the HCTS.

Since 2018, five more students on each side annually cross the 12,909 km between Kyoto and Heidelberg to fulfil their one year in the JDTS at the partner institution. The JDTS is one of the very first such international collaborations, where students study and research at two world-leading universities to receive a degree jointly awarded by these institutions. Currently, the second cohort of students resides at the partner, while the third group on each side prepares for their stay abroad.

In both programs, the HCTS exchange and the JDTS, we find alumni of the Strasbourg-Heidelberg excursions. After their short trip to Europe, they feel encouraged to spend a semester or year in Heidelberg – where many already have friends waiting for them, when they arrive; friends they met during the workshops organised as part of the excursion. Other participants already know before enrolling at Kyoto University, that they want to take part in these workshops and seek to apply for the JDTS after their graduation.

Through these workshops, participating students deepen their understanding about the dynamics of transculturality and cultural exchange by studying various related phenomena, such as migration caused by nationalism, representations of peace and conflict in art and literature, or refugee entanglements. The purpose of this visit at the European partners and the two joined workshops asks students to engage with existing research but also to express their own thoughts in talks, followed by an exchange of ideas with fellow students concerning cultural negotiation and transculturation.

One pillar of the continued success of these workshops is Prof. [Sandra Schaal](#) at Strasbourg University, who received her PhD from Kyoto and is currently also a project professor at the [Asian Platform for Global Sustainability & Transcultural Studies \(AGST\)](#). This issue of the Newsletter also includes an in-depth interview with Prof. Schaal about her career but also the [joint workshops](#). This year, the workshops held in February engaged questions of gender, sexual minorities, consent, and related societal movements – a topic building on research interests of Prof. Schaal but also Prof. [Björn-Ole Kamm](#), who is accompanying the students from Kyoto each year. In Kyoto during a preparatory meeting, they were supported by one, if not the founder of Japanese masculinities studies, Prof. emeritus [Itō Kimio](#), who gave a lecture on gender sociology.



Workshop at Strasbourg University

In Strasbourg, the six undergraduate and two graduate students from Kyoto (one of which participated in this excursion himself in 2015) were joined by two JDTS students and discussed gender discrimination at universities or gender-connoted language with 20 MA students from the Japanese Studies Department. In Heidelberg, Prof. [Takahiro Yamamoto](#) also brought 20 MA students from the HCTS to a second workshop, including students who would enrol in the JDTS soon thereafter. While the event in France was held in Japanese, the workshop in Heidelberg was conducted in English.

The workshops are embedded in a rich program, which includes visits to institutes and libraries of the two partner universities but also the [Kyoto University European Center](#) located in the Old University Building in Heidelberg's romantic old town. In Strasbourg, students had a chance to learn about issues of human rights, the workings of pan-European institutions, and how 24 official languages are handled simultaneously by interpreters through a guided tour of the legislative branch of the European Union, the European Parliament. Lunch meetings and sightseeing together with students from the partner universities rounded off the visits with explorations of local culture and cuisine and a chance for the Kyoto group to learn about student life in Europe. The students prepared a video of this year's excursion, which can be accessed [here](#).

Considering the success of the workshops, the intensive exchange of ideas between students, and the many prolonged friendships resulting from these endeavours, all parties involved seek to continue with this tradition. In light of the current COVID-19 situation, however, a schedule for the 2021 workshops is still undecided. A call for applications will be released in the fall of 2020 and we highly recommend this exciting trip to Europe to all interested students in the second or third year of their bachelor studies.

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Kyoto Univ./ Strasbourg Univ./
Heidelberg Univ.
Joint Student Workshops 2020



European Parliament

Björn-Ole Kamm
Senior Lecturer, Graduate School of Letters

2020 Kyoto University & University of Göttingen Joint Graduate Workshop (2020/2/26-28)

The Division of Natural Resources Economics in the GSA successfully organized the 2020 Kyoto University & University of Göttingen Joint Graduate Workshop, themed “Towards a Sustainable Future of Food, Agriculture and Rural Society,” on 26-28 February 2020. This was the second joint workshop between the two universities, with the first one being held in Göttingen in December 2017. This time we received nine participants from the University of Göttingen: Prof. Claudia Neu, Chair Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development and eight graduate students (four Master’s and four doctoral) under Prof. Neu’s supervision.

The first day of the three-day workshop, February 26th, started with an hour-long campus tour followed by two lectures on agriculture and rural society in Japan mainly aimed at the participants from Göttingen. The first lecture, entitled “Agri-food World in Japan: Present and Future,” was given by Prof. Motoki Akitsu (GSA, Kyoto University), the key organizer of the workshop, where he provided an overview of the current situation of Japan’s food and agriculture. Then the second lecture, entitled “Hybridizing Rurality,” was given by a guest speaker, Dr. Kiyohiko Sakamoto, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Sociology, Ryukoku University. His lecture was intended to stimulate the participants to redefine what is “rural” today by focusing on the concept of “hybridity.”



The second day, February 27th, was devoted to research presentations by graduate students from the two universities. Seven postgraduate presentations were given, four by students from the University of Göttingen and three from Kyoto University. As can be seen from [Workshop Program and Abstracts](#), the topics of the presentations were rather diverse, ranging from “new economic geography” to “social places,” from teikei movement to women on farms, but analysis from a gender perspective was shared by many of the presentations. Following the session of postgraduate presentations, a get-together was held for the participants to get to know each other better and exchange ideas.

The third and final day, February 28th, was spent on a field trip to local food and agricultural sites in the cities of Uji and Kyoto, which was attended by 16 of the workshop participants.

The first site was the Kyoto Prefecture Tea Industry Research Institute located in Uji City, where the participants were given an overview of the history and specific features of tea cultivation and processing in Uji. This was followed by a visit to a farmers’ market named “Jinen & Ichiba” and then a visit to the Gekkeikan Sake Museum, both located in the Fushimi Ward of Kyoto City. The visit to the Sake Museum, which ended with a tasting of three different types of sake, helped the participants to learn the past and present of Japanese sake making.

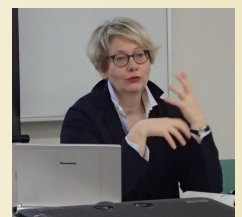
The outbreak of COVID-19 forced some last-minute changes to the program of the field trip. Overall, however, the workshop was a great success. It significantly helped the faculty and students of the two universities to better understand each other and further develop and deepen the collaborative relationship between them. It was agreed during the workshop that the next or third joint workshop would be held at the University of Göttingen in early December this year. It is to be hoped that the new coronavirus pandemic will be contained by then.



Makoto Kuroda
Assistant Teaching Staff, Graduate School of Agriculture

Report from GSA

In the fall/winter semester of AY 2019-2020, the Division of Natural Resource Economics in the GSA organized one international collaborative course (worth one credit) and one non-credit special seminar as part of the Japan Gateway: Kyoto University Top Global Program (JGP). The former, held on December 10-13, was an intensive lecture course, entitled “Rural Depopulation and Community Revitalization in East Asia: Issues and Directions,” given by Dr. Yu-Hua Chen from National Taiwan University. The latter was a JGP Special Seminar with Prof. Claudia Neu from the University of Göttingen, entitled “New Rurality? Reflection on Territoriality and Rural Life (Style).” The seminar was held on February 21, immediately preceding the joint graduate workshop outlined above.



AGST Spotlight Interview

Dr. Sandra Schaal

Associate Professor

Dr. Habil., Strasbourg University, France

In February 2020, the Graduate School of Letters sent a student delegation to its European partners, Strasbourg University in France and Heidelberg University in Germany. "Considering Gender and Sexual Minorities from a Transcultural Perspective" was the theme of the student delegation from Kyoto University this year. The general purpose of this visit and especially of two joined workshops, one at each partner, asks students to engage with academic background talks about gender, subject positions, and sexual minorities, followed by an exchange of ideas with fellow students. Dr. Schaal is one of the members of this program and a Project Professor of Japan Gateway: Kyoto University Top Global Program.

Q1: Please let us know how you became involved with Kyoto University.

Dr. Sandra Schaal : After my Maitrise (Master) in Japanese studies at INALCO (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations) in Paris, I applied for the MEXT Postgraduate Scholarship and came to Japan in Fall 1999 as a research student (kenkyūsei) at the Department of Sociology (Faculty of Letters) at Kyoto University. Aware that most of the primary and secondary sources I needed for my research on the 'Pitiful History of Women Workers' (jokō aishi) in prewar Japan were only available in Japan, I took the entrance examination to the PhD course in the same department in February 2001. I passed and began studying these women workers' voices -- i.e. silk reelers songs (itohiki uta) and oral testimonies of former female workers in silk reeling mills -- under the supervision of Prof. Emiko Ochiai. I got my PhD degree in 2006, went back to France and started working at the Department of Japanese Studies at the University of Strasbourg as a lecturer and then as an Associate professor -- but I kept strong ties with my former professors at Kyoto University. Since 2016, I am also a Project professor (tokunin kyōju 特任教授) of « The Asian Platform for Global Sustainability & Transcultural Studies (A.G.S.T.) » program (Japan Gateway: Kyoto University Top Global Program – J.P.G., Center for the Promotion of Interdisciplinary Education and Research).



Q2: What kind of academic and educational exchanges with Kyoto University are you taking care of?

Dr. Sandra Schaal : I helped set up an International cooperation agreement on graduate student exchange between Kyoto University (Graduate School of Letters) and the University of Strasbourg (Faculty of Languages/Department of Japanese Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Letters, Faculty of Historical Sciences), that was signed in 2018.

I am also taking care of a joint workshop held annually since 2015 at the University of Strasbourg: "Skills for Transcultural Studies II". The idea of this workshop in Strasbourg was initiated with Prof. Hirata Shōji, who was then the Dean of the Kyoto University Graduate School of Letters. I co-organize it with Björn-Ole Kamm, a senior lecturer and the coordinator of the joint degree "Master in Transcultural Studies" program at Kyoto and Heidelberg University.

Each year in February, the Kyoto University Graduate School of Letters sends a student delegation to its partners in Europe, Heidelberg University and the University of Strasbourg. As far as the University of Strasbourg is concerned, the Japanese students come together with researchers and fellow Master students of the Department of Japanese Studies to hold a one-day joint workshop about a given topic of historical and contemporary concern. Joint degree students currently studying in Heidelberg are also invited to join this workshop. The purpose is to engage with academic background talks by senior researchers and to exchange ideas with fellow students concerning cultural negotiation and transculturation. Japanese and French students acquire competence in writing, presenting, commenting and critiquing a paper that relates to the topic of the workshop: in practice, they are asked to prepare readings in English and to submit a script (in Japanese) and a PPT presentation file (in English). On the day of the workshop, they present their work and discuss it with the other students. In the previous years, topics included "Nationalism in the Era of Globalization" (2017), "Peace and Conflict in Asia and Europe" (2018), and "Environmental issues in Europe and Japan" (2019). Additionally, students also visit some local institutions (EU institutions), the Strasbourg National Library and museums to gain knowledge about the history of the University of Strasbourg, French and Germany history, as well as to learn about current affairs. More widely, we believe this allows students to deepen their understanding about the dynamics of transculturality and cultural exchange in and between Asia and Europe.



Q3: Please let us know a little bit about your future professional and academic perspective.

Dr. Sandra Schaal : I am currently finishing some editing work on a collective volume in French on body and gender in interwar Japan (the modan period) that will be released at the end of this year.

I also intend to continue and extend my research on gendered discourses and representations in modern and contemporary Japan -- notably on the representations of women in cartoons of the interwar period, on lesbianism and female transvestism in modern times, but also on the #MeToo movement, its variants and its consequences in Japan.

Björn-Ole Kamm
Senior Lecturer,
Graduate School of Letters