

# LETTER

**GraSPP**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

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## Guest Speaker Seminar

# Tourism Policy in Japan – Making Japan an Attractive Destination

Akari Oba, Year 2, International Public Policy Course

The inaugural Guest Speaker Seminar on "International Transportation Policy" was held at Tuesday July 5th and hosted a lecture by Akihiko Tamura, Commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency. As "International Transportation Policy" was part of the interdepartmental STIG program, it was attended not only by students from GraSPP but also students from a variety of disciplines, including engineering. The Guest Speaker Seminars are open to students from all faculties and graduate schools at the University of Tokyo; the hall was all but full up by the time the lecture commenced, along with the presence of some unfamiliar faces.

Professor Masafumi Shukuri, the moderator for "International Transportation Policy," introduced Mr. Tamura by speaking briefly about his career. This was followed by the lecture, which lasted for about 60 minutes. Mr. Tamura looked back at past tourism policy in Japan and presented the core philosophy, namely that tourism represents an important growth industry in a country that is facing shrinking domestic demand due to an aging population and low birth rate. He described strategic government initiatives such as loosening visa requirements, more duty free stores, and faster border processing, quoting total foreign visitor numbers reaching 19 million as one of the outcomes of this work. In the second half of the lecture, he noted that while the number of tourists visiting Japan continues to rise, problems include potential issues with accommodation shortages, tourist numbers being concentrated in particular regions, a lack of tourism industry personnel with business acumen, and the decline of regional Japan, which is being accompanied by a reduction in public transportation services and tourist sites becoming less attractive. He closed his presentation by asking the audience what form future tourism policy should take in Japan given the situation he had just outlined.

Of particular interest was how this topic of tourism policy served in a way to summarize previous lectures, something that Professor Shukuri noted beforehand. In previous lectures, we have studied transportation policy from a wide range of considerations, including field trips, covering the construction and operation of airports, the structure of the transportation industry, and the provision of the railway network. The revelation was that one of the aspects of tourism policy is how it represents an application of transportation policy encompassing numerous elements along the lines of encouraging people to visit from overseas, mainly by air, their being able to get around efficiently while they are here, and for it to be a pleasant experience.

The lecture was followed by a discussion with the audience for about 30 minutes. With the hosting of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games a few years away, tourism is a topic of high interest among students and discussion flowed freely. The subject matter of questions covered a wide range, from "hard" issues of technology, such as providing infrastructure for cashless transactions and public Wi-Fi, through to "soft" issues such as catering to Muslim dietary requirements, training people to work in the tourism industry, and English language education.

The discussion also included a statement from Haruhisa Takeuchi, a former ambassador to Singapore and is currently a visiting professor at GraSPP. While the Japan Tourism Agency has oversight of tourism policy, embassies are at the front line of its implementation. Professor Takeuchi provided a greater depth of insight by offering some comments with regard to practical requirements and promotional activities that were drawn from his first-hand experience. I am always reminded that a feature of "International Transportation Policy" is that it is possible to tackle problems from a variety of angles due to students from different specialties having an interest in common topics that cover a wide range of factors in regard to transportation policy and to technology, economics, and policy. This lecture being open to public provided me with both new perspectives and intellectual stimulation.



No. 14

Murmurs and Musings

# Drawing Out Untapped Potential of Students by Bringing Real-World Policy Issues into the Classroom

Professor Katsuyuki Meguro



A year has just flown by since I was appointed Professor at GraSPP last summer. My work here has involved teaching courses that deal with financial systems and regulation from a global perspective, drawing on my policy-practicing experience in the public sector.

One of the courses I gave during this past SIS2 semester (summer semester) was “Case Study: FSB’s Global Financial Policy-Making”. Focusing on the activities of the Financial Stability Board (FSB), an international body that has been in a central position in the world-wide financial regulatory framework since the global financial crisis, the seminar-format course was started as an ambitious initiative to study FSB’s policy making and implementation processes, using published FSB documents as a resource and assigning students to give presentations on each policy topic. It has fortunately turned out, I believe, to have been a productive course, with eager seminar participants jointly covering a wide range of different policy topics.

Many of the policy topics dealt with during the course are of a highly practical nature. A good example is the ongoing turmoil (at the time of writing in July) in European financial markets caused by the UK referendum result on Brexit in June, where specific factors affecting the markets include the suspension of redemptions by certain funds that invest in UK real estate and the conflict between the Italian government and EU over how to deal with the nonperforming loan problems in the Italian banking sector. These issues are actually closely related to FSB’s priority policy areas, namely, “shadow banking (and its liquidity risk)” and “effective resolution regimes for financial institutions (and use of public funds)”, respectively, both of which were covered during the course. Further developments in financial markets in the near future may reaffirm that FSB’s work on these issues has been effective, or uncover any new policy challenges.

One of the objectives of policy studies, I believe, is to develop analytical perspectives on real-world issues through learning theories and examining policy practices. I hope that I can play a part as a faculty member in assisting GraSPPers to cultivate such skills and make their way out in the real world.

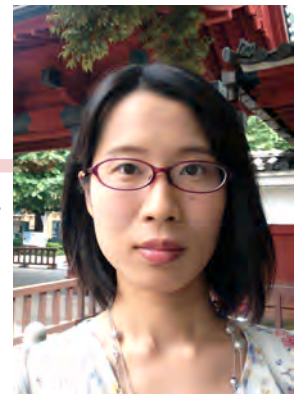
## GraSPP Course Report

## No.15 Report

**Nanako Cho, Year 1, Legal Policy Course**

**Course: Regional Politics B (Politics in Modern-day Middle East)**

**Instructor: Satoshi Ikeuchi**



Recent years have seen numerous Middle East stories appearing in the news, such as killings and other acts of terrorism by IS or aerial bombings in retaliation. Despite this, the Middle East had seemed to me a distant land, and for all that it appeared frequently in the news, I had only a poorly defined impression of the place. When I saw this course in the syllabus, it struck me as a valuable opportunity to study from an academic perspective, this part of the world that was attracting so much attention.

The course took the form of lectures and covered topics such as the background to the Arab Spring and how countries that appear to have similar political structures have followed separate paths due to their internal differences. While mention of the Middle East tends strongly to suggest the study of Islam, the course considers Middle Eastern societies in political and historical terms rather than from a religious perspective. The course also gave an explanation that drew on cultural background factors as to why it was that, whereas there is a shift toward democratic government in many countries around the world, so much of the Middle East remained under authoritarian regimes up until the Arab Spring. Every lecture offered new surprises as I learned about the history of the region that is so tied up with different political power relationships and was exposed to aspects of the Middle East that I had previously known nothing about. These included the fluidity of what is meant by “the Middle East”, the fact that there are significant differences between the nations of the region and there are no simple cooperative arrangements, the ways in which they have been used in an environment where major external powers such as Europe and America exert a strong influence, how the diversity of relationships between government and the military has had a large impact on political activity.

While information available to us about the Middle East increases, it is rare to get the opportunity to learn by delving so deeply into the politics of each nation. I would recommend this course to anyone who wants to deepen their understanding of the ever-turbulent Middle East.



# Student Interview

No. 23

**Tomohiro Kaneko**  
(Year 1, International Public Policy Course)

**—You were born in Fukuoka, went to university in Kobe, and came to Tokyo for graduate school.**

When I took the university entrance examination, my parents recommended I get out of Kyushu. So I went to the Faculty of Law at Kobe University. It was there that I developed an interest in international politics, and I spent a year as an exchange student at Leiden University in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a leader in the study of international law. Leiden University is the oldest university in the Netherlands and the first university in the world to teach Japanese studies. As the recruitment season was largely over by the time I returned to Japan, I sat and passed the entrance tests for GraSPP, thinking I would build up my specialist knowledge and put off looking for a job for two years.

While I haven't yet been here at GraSPP for very long (\* this interview took place in June) and am still finding my way, I have been surprised by how many classes are attended by large numbers of students. Apart from myself, everyone in Professor Nishizawa's class is a second year student, making me think for a moment that I had come to the wrong place

I have long had an interest in human rights, having had a part time job at the Osaka office of Save the Children Japan while I was a student at Kobe University, and I am currently doing internship two days a week at the Tokyo head office of Save the Children Japan, and gaining valuable experience doing advocacy work dealing with policy proposals for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Save the Children was originally established in the UK, and its founder Eglantyne Jebb penned the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924, a document that became a template for the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

My hope in due course is to work at an international agency, though I intend first to get a job in the private sector to build up my skills. I am thinking in terms of a consultancy where I can grow quickly and expect to have a large amount of discretion in my work. With the aim of starting as an intern, I have already made applications to a number of companies and am awaiting their reply.

**—Please tell us about any lasting impressions you brought back from your time overseas**

I made a trip to Ecuador while I was in the Netherlands. I love

coffee so I thought I would immerse myself in a place full of coffee. I was told that I was able to spend time with coffee growers and work for a coffee-producing cooperative in Ecuador. My interest in international cooperation, with the problem of poverty being ever-present in coffee-producing nations, also brought me there. I was there for the harvest at a small-scale producer and also worked at a café. My total stay lasted about a month and a half. The coffee I drank in Ecuador was the best I have tasted in my life.

My love of coffee came about while at Kobe university when I got a job at a coffee chain where a friend of mine worked. I have a full set of coffee accessories at home including an espresso machine, so I can also enjoy my own espresso. I buy my beans from a privately run store that I trust. I don't like to buy from a chain franchise because you have no way of knowing when the beans were roasted.

Coffee is frequently a recipient of industrial aid. International bodies such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have recognized its potential as an industry and provide aid for coffee growing in Rwanda and other developing countries. Yukio Ikemoto, a professor at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia at the University of Tokyo who specializes in development economics, holds regular seminars called coffee salons where I have helped out. The subject of the next seminar is sustainable coffee and I have been asked to do some research. I expect coffee will always be a part of my life.

(interview and text by editor)





# STIG Public Lecture: "From New Lens Scenarios to Pathway to Net-Zero Emissions from Energy"



Wim Thomas, Chief Energy Adviser at Shell, gave a lecture on May 26. Mr. Thomas is an authority on energy and scenario planning and in April participated in a discussion with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda. The lecture, which dealt with scenario planning at Shell, was held as part of a STIG course entitled, "Case Study (Scenario Planning as a Means of Investigating the Policy Environment: Theory and Practice)". It was split into two parts, with the first half being an abstract discussion of the role of scenario planning and its methods, and the second half dealing with specifics such as scenarios developed by Shell and how they differ from the real world.

The first part began by posing the question: what is the role of scenario planning? Mr. Thomas started by introducing the phrase "There are known knowns" used by Donald Rumsfeld, a former US Secretary of Defense, pointing out that the purpose of scenario planning is about more than just predicting the future and includes identifying risks that are not currently recognized as such. This was followed by an explanation of techniques for scenario building.



This covered official-alternative scenarios that consider the subject's ideal future and the risks that could divert it toward alternative scenarios, and normative scenarios that consider the case when there is a goal that must be achieved and looks at the different paths to achieving it.

The second part began with a brief summary of the New Lens Scenarios developed by Shell. Prepared in 2013, these divide the future of the world into two broad scenarios: the Mountain scenario and the Ocean scenario. The Mountain scenario envisages governments and elites designing the future of the world and achieving slow but steady growth over the long term. In contrast, the Ocean scenario envisages rising calls from the numerically larger middle classes that act strongly on governments and give rise to rapid changes throughout society. In terms of economic growth, higher growth was predicted under the Ocean scenario. It was also predicted that the Ocean scenario would mean higher energy consumption, leading to greater global warming. However, with regard to keeping temperatures increase below two degrees above pre-industrial levels, which has been adopted as a global target, it will not be achieved even under the Mountain scenario with its comparatively lower energy consumption. How to deal with and overcome the gap between the scenarios developed by Shell and the normative objective of preventing global warming was a question that everyone attending the lecture would likely have given some thought. No clear-cut answers were forthcoming at the lecture, suggesting that they do not as yet exist. Nevertheless, I also felt that getting large numbers of people to recognize this gap and become aware of the problem was one of the purposes of scenario planning.

**(Isamu Komatsu, Year 2, Economic Policy Course)**

## TOPICS

### ● Giving to GraSPP ●

Please visit the website for details including how to donate. <http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/donation/>

### ● Homecoming Day ●

Homecoming Day will be held on Saturday October 15. GraSPP is planning to host lectures and informal conferences. All graduates are cordially invited to attend.

### Editor's Postscript

A graduate who was the subject of a student interview in this newsletter some years ago contacted me to inform me that he has quit corporate life to focus on working with children in the local community. Happiness won out over surprise. Making an effort to contribute as part of the community is another way to participate in public life. I would like to express my heartfelt support to graduates who demonstrate that they have taken on the principles of GraSPP. **(Editor)**

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