

「オーストリア発見」

そもそも私がこのセミナーに参加したのは、とても単純な理由からだった。ウィーンの人と友達になりたい。学問からはほど遠い動機だった。私が彼らと過ごした一週間で感じたのは、「リアルであることの妙」である。今回話し合われた両国の政治や社会の問題では、相手の国の抱える問題がそこに住む人間によってリアルに語られた。そこでの私たちの関係は、日本対オーストリアだった。その一方で、観光や食事等の自由時間では、同じものをリアルに体験し同じ立場にいた。同じ時と空間を共有していても、前者には隔たりがあり後者にはない。隔たりがあることにより、国も言葉も歴史も全く違う所に生きる、ということの意味を私は実感した。そして、隔たりがないことによって、生身の相手が見えてきて、自分が勝手に描いていたイメージや先入観の真実が見えてきた。最後に、一週間にわたり共に過ごしたオーストリア・日本両国の方々との人間関係は、何にもかえがたい大切なものとなったことは言うまでもないだろう。皆さん、ありがとう。

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A PERFECT MIX

Reflections on the Joint Seminar on Global Issues (Waseda University and University of Vienna)

Wien – Tokyo – Wien; Public University to Private University; political science, and sociology; culture to culture; german, english and japanese; students from here and there in discussion, in joint workshops and in joint leisure time activities – the first week of June 2003 did offer a mix of many elements for the participants from Waseda and Vienna University. Stress for the organizers paid off with an incredible chance for experience, a lot of exchange and loads of new impressions for all the participants.

But back to the first steps: it was October 2002 when the University of Vienna-team Gerlich and Klausser did start planning for next years seminar of Comparative Politics,

topic: Japan (the years before an evaluation series on small european states and a huge asian state took place). Looking for academic contacts they met Professor Mori, a highly interesting and motivated researcher from Waseda University, just busy with field studies in Vienna. In a range of meetings and discussions at various Wiener Kaffeehäuser the idea of a joint seminar, interesting and challenging for students of both sides, was shaped.

The joint approach was based on each other's curiosity to find out about "the others and each other". Workshop structure, discussion papers, joint group moderation should guarantee academic (nearly post-graduate) learning atmosphere and enable real discussion in a foreign language for all participants. Intercultural understanding had to be developed in the prep phase as well as during the workshops – and leisure time activities, be it coffee or sake, cakes or sushi, cultural sightseeing or shopping electronics, did quickly establish a friendly atmosphere, where discussion on formal as well as contact-making on informal level proved to be easy-going.

The result was astonishing: the mixture of well-measured ingredients did form a product that made all participants proud: we learned that a group is wiser than its individuals and that our countries face similar challenges on global level where we as young generation of social scientists can contribute a lot. Furthermore, we learned that joint activities are hard work, but rewarding as well as fun. And while all of us improved our english, our academic performance and our knowledge, we did find new friends and gained an extra of the most important stimulant for research and life: Curiosity and the desire for more.

So while this time students did meet, next years meeting will already take place between young academic friends: therefore this experience needs to be continued. Thank you from Vienna – and welcome to a new session in Vienna!

The European (austrian, italian, Danish) Group