

CAMPUS ASIA IN SINGAPORE

Before participating in this Campus Asia Program, I had high expectations, but I was more anxious than hopeful. I was also nervous because I met other students from Waseda for the first time at the airport. Also, when I participated in a debate in Korea, where I studied abroad, I was overwhelmed by Korean people and had great difficulty conveying my opinions in Korean, so I was nervous about what would happen if the atmosphere deteriorated during this debate. In this journal, I will look back on the Asia Campus Program, which started with lots of such pressure.

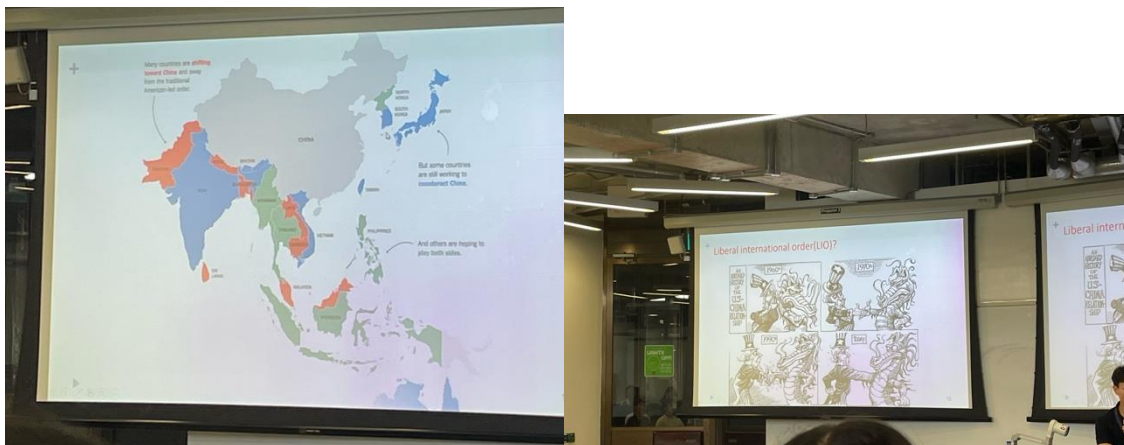
Day 1

After arriving early in the morning and checking in at the NTU dormitory, groups were assigned. In my group were two Waseda University students, two Peking University students, and about three Korea University students. Coincidentally, I was in the same group as a friend of mine who had come to Korea University from Peking University on this Campus Asia program when I studied at Korea University. We had a campus tour and a city tour of Singapore. In the campus tour, the HIVE building left the strongest impression on me.... It was a style of building that could not be seen at either Waseda or Korea University, and it blended in with nature. In the city tour, NTU students introduced tourist attractions in Singapore. During the city tour, we visited not only famous tourist attractions such as Marina Bay Sands, but also a traditional market that only local people know about. At that market, there was a wide variety of rice dishes that symbolized Singapore. NTU students guided us to a wedding costume store, where we actually experienced the traditional costumes of the Chinese people. There were also other students experiencing Malaysian traditional costumes. It was a wonderful experience to experience Singaporean traditions with students from Korea University and Peking University, as well as ourselves. I feel that the discussion session on the following day went smoothly because we were able to deepen our group interaction in this way.



Day 2

The second day started early in the morning with classes and discussions by the professors. I was most interested in the class on East Asian conflicts given by a professor from Korea University. I had heard of such classes on East Asian conflicts at Korea University, where I studied abroad, but they were lecture-based with no time for discussion. However, in this program, I had the opportunity to discuss with students from the four East Asian countries, which was a very stimulating experience. Our group mainly talked about the economic conflict between the U.S. and China, but it turned into a question-and-answer session because it was a rare opportunity to hear directly from Peking University students. After the discussion on the second day, my roommates and other Waseda students talked about the atmosphere of this discussion. I heard that some groups, like ours, proceeded peacefully, while others had heated discussions, and I felt a sense of stimulation that I could never have experienced in Japan.



Day 3

A tour called Social Innovation Heritage Tour was held. This tour made us realize the diversity of Singapore. We visited Chinatown, Arab Street, and Little India, which felt like a different country. Singapore is a multi-ethnic country and has an image of being tolerant of immigrants, but we learned about the background of the Little India incident and learned for the first time that there is also a discriminatory side to Singapore. After that, we had lunch among Japanese, Chinese, and Korean university students, and then it was time for free activities. I had planned to go sightseeing in the city with my friends from Waseda University, with whom I had been close before our departure, but we also decided to go sightseeing with people from a Korean university with whom we had become friends during our study tour in Singapore. While sightseeing together, we became interested in each other's culture, taught each other Japanese and Korean, and engaged in cultural exchange. I also have fond memories of taking a small cab with the seven of us on the way back to the dormitory.



Day 4

I had a good three days, but my health deteriorated after the afternoon of the previous day and I lost



all my voice. On this day I was supposed to give a presentation about my study abroad experience, but since I lost my voice, I had to have my script read in my place, which was very frustrating. In my presentation, I also described some of the difficulties I had encountered during my study abroad experience. Afterwards, I was very moved when a student from a Korean university whom I had befriended through this program told me that she would like to support exchange students from now on. We also exchanged opinions about the Campus Asia Program.

Throughout the above itinerary, everything was a valuable experience for me. In Korea, where I studied



abroad, there were opportunities for discussion, but many people had biased ideas and were not university students of the same generation. Also, the agenda was limited to various issues in Japan-Korea relations, so I think my perspective was narrow. However, through this program, I was able to deepen my understanding of each other through discussions and cultural exchange with university students who had similar interests to mine. I also felt that the lack of positivity I felt during my study abroad and this program is an issue for me, and I would like to improve it if I have the opportunity to discuss with others in the future.