

International Symposium on “Urban Community Lives and Migrants’ Social Cohesion”

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An International Symposium, “Urban Community Lives and Migrants’ Social Cohesion,” was co-organized by the Rikkyo Institute for Global Urban Studies and Social and Population Research Centre, Monash University. It was the fourth collaborative event since the opening annual symposium in 2015. The symposium was held on the first day of the program, February 23rd at the Menzies Building, Monash University, Clayton. The second day, some research was planned and the Japanese crew visited the Saturday school.

As researchers, we have recently focused upon the “Social Cohesion,” as this has been a significant theme for sociological research around the world, including Australia, Canada and various European countries as well as international organizations, such as International Organization for Migration and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. However, the conception or research frame of “Social Cohesion” has not been commonly used in the Asian area. It is expected to become more widespread across the region.

The major concern of this symposium was immigrants and their social cohesion. When we look at the social cohesion of immigrants, the researchers generally take their account of immigrants’ relationships with the host population. In contemporary Japan, the government policies towards immigration have induced heated debate as the government started to change the Immigration Control Act at the direction of encouraging wider acceptance of foreign immigration. New categories for foreigners and their status in the community have been introduced. However, Japan’s central government has still not used the term, ‘*imin*’, which is fundamentally equivalent to the English term immigrant or emigrant. Some kinds of ‘migrants’ should be also included in *imin*, but the government policies relate to the introduction of a non-resident labor force. The category used by the government indicates that *imin* is fundamentally for ‘permanent settlers’, and thus the majority of foreigners, estimated to be about 2.5 million in Japan, are not included in the *imin* category. This interpretation differs from the category of the United Nations whose understanding includes those who stay for more than one year in foreign lands as migrants.

The following is the conference program. It consisted of two Sessions, at Menzies building

Monash University. The Opening Address was offered by Associate Professor Dharmalingam Arunachalam, Director, Social and Population Research Centre, Melbourne. Session I was chaired by Professor Tetsuo Mizukami from College of Sociology, Rikkyo University.

Dr. Ernest Healy, an affiliate of the Social and Population Research Centre, presented the first paper, "Volunteer Activities and Social Cohesion in Australian," comparing some locals and immigrants in terms of their involvement in volunteer activities.

The second paper, "Motivations of Bangladeshi Migrants to Japan," was presented by Professor Yoshiaki Edwin Noro from College of Sociology, Rikkyo University. He presented research data gathered from Bangladeshis who had experience of working in Japan.

The third paper was presented by Associate Professor Dharmalingam Arunachalam and Dr. Mitsuko Ono who is also an affiliate of the Social and Population Research Centre. In their paper, "Japanese People's Attitudes towards Immigrants," they analyzed the quantitative research data for comparing people's feeling to immigrants between Australia and Japan.

The last paper for First Session was "Japanese Movements and Concentration Patterns in Australian Metropolises," presented by Professor Tetsuo Mizukami, who showed the characteristics of Japanese population into some major Australian cities.

After the tea break, Dr. E. Healy chaired the Second Session, for open discussion on prospective collaborative research, all participants presenting their views. Then, Professor T. Mizukami, vice-director for the Rikkyo Institute for Global Urban Studies, offered a closing address. In the evening, all the participants and some guests enjoyed the farewell dinner on Lygon Street, well-known as an Italian community location in Melbourne.

The next day, February 24th, the Japanese party visited The Japanese Saturday College of Melbourne. This school run every Saturday on the premises of Sandringham East Primary School, opened in April 2011 in response to the needs of Japanese community. At that time, some expatriate business families were confronting difficulties in their school-age children's education. The School principal, Ms. Yukari Swan warmly welcomed the visitors and explained the school's current operation.

On 25th February, the Japanese party visited Ballarat which is the third largest city in



Photo 1 Sandringham East Primary School (Photograph was taken by Prof. Y. E. Noro on 24 February 2018)

Victoria, located about 100 kilometers from Melbourne. It is famous for the Victorian Gold Rush in the mid-19th century, and is the location of Sovereign Hill an open-air museum, displaying the Gold rush town, including goldfield, hotel, theatre, and transport carriages of that period.

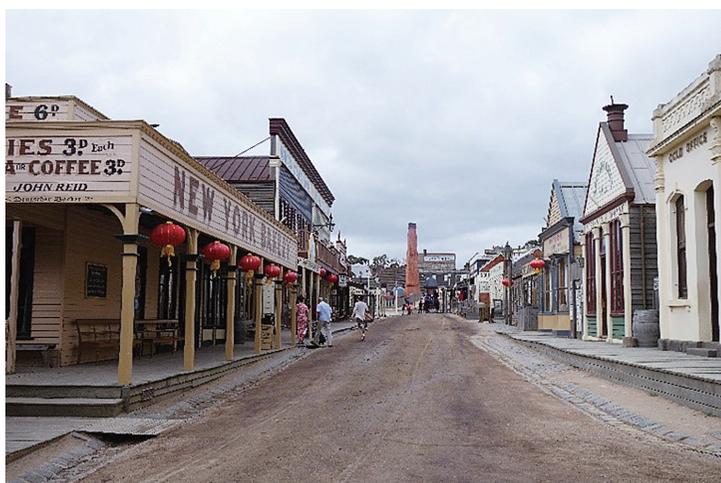


Photo 2 Sovereign Hill (Photograph was taken by Prof. Y. E. Noro on 25 February 2018)

