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## Come Sail Away

**Shinichi Nagata and the OTB Editors**

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference. *Robert Frost*

“The road less traveled by”—we here at the *OTB Forum* are anticipating a report on some of those roads by a globe-trotting former student of Tsukuba University, Mr. Shinichi Nagata. Since the spring of this year, Mr. Nagata has been traveling in Asia, the Subcontinent, Europe, and the Middle East, as shown on the map below. At the suggestion of the OTB editorial board, he has been blogging about his experiences using WordPress (<http://wordpress.org>) and mapping them using Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>). You are cordially invited to follow his travels as they unfold, and we eagerly anticipate hearing of his adventures in his own words in a future issue of the *OTB Forum*.

In the course of preparing this story, we’ve had to change his location three times! As of this writing (late October, 2010), he is in Lebanon, having just traveled through Syria (Figure 1 below) and then Cairo. At his pace, however, you should probably check his location via his blog at

<http://travelshin.wordpress.com/>



Figure 1. *At the Syrian border.*

In addition to the main blog page, Mr. Nagata has added a new feature titled “Chain of Smiles” that shows some of the smiling visages he has encountered in his travels. At present it includes smiles from Thailand, India, India, China, Hungary, Egypt, and

Turkey. Figure 2 is one of those images, and we highly recommend taking a look!



Figure 2. *A smiling boy in the mountains of Tibet.*

Perhaps you’re wondering where exactly he’s gone. Google Maps provide a wonderful tool to create one’s own map, and Mr. Nagata has created a remarkable record of his journey. For those new to Google Maps, this is one of the many Google applications in which users can actively participate. In this case, Mr. Nagata has created a map that shows his route as well as pictures and commentary at various points thereon (Figure 5). Clicking on a teardrop-shaped ‘marker’ will show the commentary for that particular point (Figure 3), and clicking on the route lines will show information about that respective leg of the journey. Of course, the viewer can zoom and use the map, satellite, or earth views; furthermore, in some areas Street View is also available.



Figure 3. The commentary for Putra Jaya.

A careful look at the figures will reveal that Mr. Nagata is using Google Maps in Japanese (e.g., the hyperlinks in Figure 3 are in Japanese). The mapmaker can choose his or her preferred language for such administrative functions, which means that even beginning students of a second or foreign language can address administrative tasks in their preferred (likely native) language. The same is true for Wordpress, the blogging software which Mr.

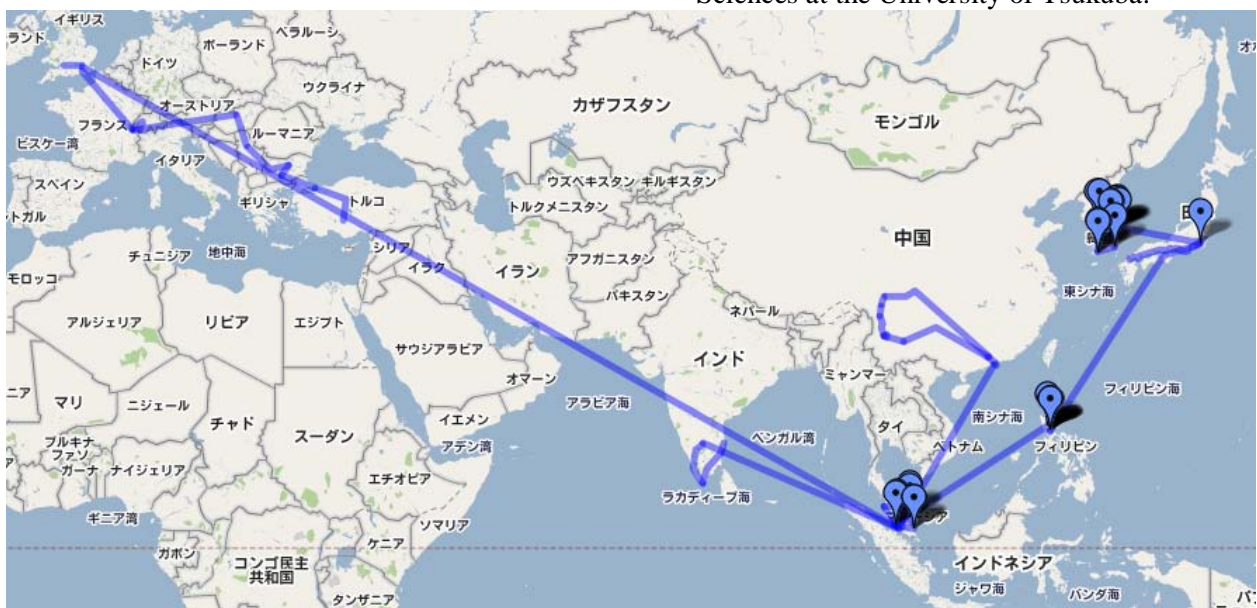


Figure 5. Mr. Nagata’s map of his journey.

Nagata uses.

His map is available in several places. One option is to search via Google for “Travel Shin – The World Trip.” Links to both his map and blog are on the *OTB Forum* publications page at

<http://www.otbforum.net/publications.html>

Finally, you can also find his map and blog at

[http://www.jimelwood.net/students/students\\_index.html](http://www.jimelwood.net/students/students_index.html)

On this page, you’ll need to click the ‘Where in the world is Shin?’ link (Figure 4) to view his map, and clicking the ‘Shinichi’s blog’ link will take you to his blog.

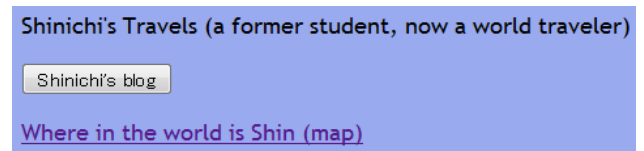


Figure 4. The map and blog links.

Although his roads are perhaps not in a yellow wood, we nonetheless invite the reader to follow Mr. Nagata’s journey as it unfolds, and we look forward to his story in a future issue (or issues) of the *OTB Forum*.

**About the author:** Shinichi Nagata is originally from Ibaraki, Japan, and during his college career he spent time working as a volunteer in Toronto. He graduated in 2009 from the Department of Disability Studies in the College of Human Sciences at the University of Tsukuba.