

### Being a JSPS fellow in Japan







- »Life in a Japanese lab
- >Tsukuba
- Life in Japan
- Tips for a fellowship in Japan



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#### Why I went to Japan?



- Particle physics is a fundamental science
   => for a post-doc outside Europe, the choice was
   North America or Japan.
- North America was the easy solution...
- There are a few famous Japanese in particle physics: Yukawa, Kobayashi, Maskawa,...
- KEK is one of the leading labs in the field. => I spent 2 years working at KEK as a JSPS fellow
- Before the start of my fellowship I was a bit worried of spending 2 years in an unknown country...



#### Life in a Japanese lab



• Science is the same, computers are the same, publications are similar...

#### • But:

- you must remove your shoes
   before entering some buildings,
- most discussions take place in Japanese,
- teamwork is very important,
- everything is clean,
- there is very little support staff...
- Many opportunities to get involved with interesting research!



### Support staff



#### in a Japanese lab

- KEK has a budget similar to other international particle physics labs, but the workforce is 2/3 smaller than in its competitors.
  - =>You must maintain your computer yourself
- Japanese researcher work in close partnership with the industry very early
  - => even prototypes and small components are ordered from the local industry
  - => Technology transfer happens more easily and smoothly than elsewhere... (we should learn from this!)







- City located 1 hour away from Tokyo with many National Research lab...
- Japanese "silicon valley"
- Many foreign post-docs
   (5% of the population is non-japanese)
- City built from scratch in the 1970s
  => wide roads, "big houses", limited public transportations...
- Atypical for Japan but a very nice city...
- As in all Japanese cities, houses have no street number but an "area number".





#### Life in Japan

- Are all the gaijins (foreigners) lost in translation?
- Are there any maps in english?
- Is there anything else than fish to eat?
- What to visit in Japan?









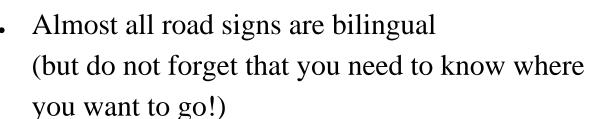
#### English in Japan

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- Most Japanese are not "fluent" in english
   => Researchers do speak english,
   support staff or contractors often do not.
- Rule in my group: if 2 foreign persons are present the discussion takes place in english, else in Japanese.



- Japanese are very kind, if you are lost they will find a way to help you even if they do not understand you
- SPAM emails, adverts are also in Japanese







### The Japanese language





- Very different from Indo-European languages
- 4 writings: Kanji (chinese characters), Hiragana (phonetic alphabet for Japanese words), Katakana (phonetic alphabet for Foreign words) and "romanji" (for brand names,...).
- Structures and grammar are very different
   => learning Japanese is a good opportunity to think about your own language



#### Food in Japan

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- Eating meat was uncommon in Japan before last century.
- Japan being an island, you can find sea food everywhere.
- Sushi is probably one of the most famous Japanese dish.
- Many chinese dishes have been imported and adapted.
- "Western food" is available in many places, but you may not recognize it as "western".
- Vegetarian beware: different cultures have different understanding of being a vegetarian!
- You can find standard western food if needed but if you are curious, you will discover a lot of interesting dishes!











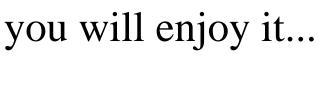
#### Food in Japan (2)



- Food can look/sound strange:
  - fermented soy beans (natto)
  - raw fish, dry fish
  - octopus, urchins, eel, ...



- Have ever drunk the water in which you had boiled noodles?
- But if you are ready to give it a try,









# Travelling around Japan



• From Hokkaido to Kyushu Japan has a lot of interesting places!















Nicolas Delerue, University of Oxford http://www-pnp.physics.ox.ac.uk/~delerue/



#### Japanese culture







Nicolas Delerue, University of Oxford http://www-pnp.physics.ox.ac.uk/~delerue/







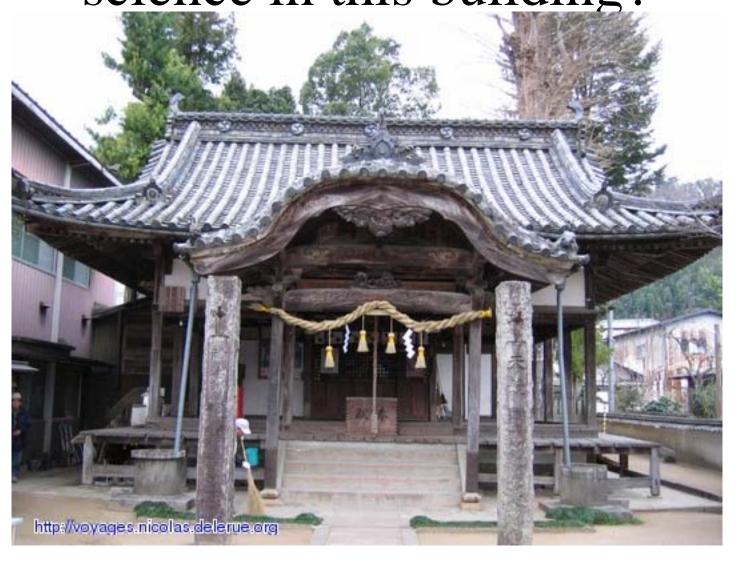


JSPS presentation meeting, 23 XI 2006



## Would you expect to do science in this building?







#### Yes!





#### Japan is full of unexpected surprises!



### Tips for a fellowship in Japan



- Learn Japanese.
  - You can survive without, but your experience will be much more rewarding if you speak/read a bit of Japanese.
- Buy shoes that you can remove easily!
- Be open-minded.

  Japan is culturally very different and Japanese people are very kind and tolerant but thing will not be like "at home".
- Beware, after 2 years you may want to stay in Japan for longer...



#### Looking at my experience...



- Going to Japan was a good choice, and I would do it again
- I should have learned Japanese before
- Many opportunities both in my work and outside
- I did not face any big difficulties due to the cultural difference
- Went back to Japan 8 times in the past 2 years!

  Still collaborating closely with my host researcher and I got a grant from the Daiwa foundation to further our collaboration.
- I took more than 10 000 pictures while in Japan: http://pictures.nicolas.delerue.org/japan/