

JSPS Invitation Fellowship Short Report (300-500 words) for JSPS London website “Fellows’ Experience”

Professor Sin Yi Cheung, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University

Host: Professor Hiroshi Ishida, Institute of Social Science, the University of Tokyo

I was very privileged to have received a short-term JSPS Invitation Fellowship to visit the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS) at the University of Tokyo during the autumn (Oct-Dec) 2017. I was warmly welcomed by my host Professor Hiroshi Ishida, and the administrative staff at the ISS. As a sociologist, my research focuses on different forms of social inequalities and immigrant integration, particularly among refugees. Through delivering lectures and attending conferences and research seminars, I met with many Japanese scholars who share similar research interests on social stratification, migration, sociology of education and labour market inequalities. Among others I find the work on Nikkei Brazilians and Chinese immigrants in Japan by Prof Hirohisa Takenoshita at Keio and Prof Gracia Liu-Farrer at Waseda most impressive. I also find various exchange and conversations with other researchers intellectually stimulating (e.g. Professors Yoshimichi Sato and Kikuko Nagayoshi at Tohoku University and Shin Arita at the ISS). Professor Kazuo Seiyama, Deputy Director of JSPS, is actually a fellow sociologist who also specialises in social stratification. I had the privilege to hear him present twice: at the impact conference at the German Research Foundation (DFG) in November, and again at the Social Stratification and Mobility conference in December at Todai. I was much inspired by his insight in the opportunities and challenges for social stratification research in general and in Japan. I was also impressed with the Data Archive at the ISS, the availability of high quality survey data is essential to the pursuit of methodologically rigorous social science research. To this end, I continue to explore data comparability with Japanese colleagues and the potential of comparative research in the near future.

My short stay in Japan was intellectually rewarding and memorable. Academically, not only have I connected with the wider research network of social stratification and mobility and migration researchers, I have also made some very good friends. Japan is a fascinating and exciting place to be with so much culture from traditional to contemporary; magnificent scenery from mountains, lakes to onsens. The autumn colours in U Tokyo alone was breathtaking. I now know why the logo of Todai is made up of ginkgo leaves. I had a busy time sampling the wide range of superb quality Japanese food and sake. Despite being the most populated city on earth, Tokyo is an easy city to see on two wheels. Do sign up the bike sharing scheme: <http://docomo-cycle.jp/minato/en/#price>.

Photos attached on next page



Research Seminar at Tohoku University, Sendai



Stunning autumn colours in U Tokyo