

2021 Ise and Japan Study Program Final Report

Despite of the global situation with COVID-19 and the challenges it brought to organization and implementation of Ise and Japan Study program 2021, I was lucky enough to become a part of it. This year the program was shortened for two weeks, and only graduate students currently residing in Japan were able to apply. I felt that having a smaller group of people was in fact, an advantage, because we all had a chance to bond during lectures, fieldwork, and free time in the evenings.

The faculty of Kogakkan University were very knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects, and their feelings were completely contagious. We had a variety of lectures about history, culture and social life of Ise, as well as more theoretical Shinto-related classes. I really liked the fact that first we heard the lecture on a certain topic, and then either on the same, or on the next day we would go for a fieldwork to see with our own eyes things that we have been studying in the classroom. The staff took great care of us, very attentive and welcoming. Two times we had a sudden change of the plans because of bad weather, and I feel like everything was handled very smoothly.

The tradition of Shikinen Sengu, a ritual reconstruction of all the shrines in Ise Jingu, that happens once every twenty years, left a big impression on me, especially after I learnt that even bridges on the territory of the 125 shrine complex is being rebuilt just next to the previous one. Another tradition that I found extremely interesting was the dispatch of the imperial princess to Ise as the representative of the Emperor, and who would serve there for several years by worshipping Amaterasu.

I am extremely grateful for this once in a lifetime opportunity provided by Kogakkan University and Ise City government. They took great care of us during these difficult times, and I believe many young researchers interested in Japanese culture would benefit immensely from the program.

2021年「伊勢」と日本スタディプログラム 最終レポート

今年の二週間のプログラムは、COVID-19による影響を受けて、現在日本に居住する外国人の大学院生や研究者のみが応募できるというものでした。参加人数も例年よりとても少なくなりましたが、幸運にも私がその一人になりました。

講義やフィールドスタディ、夜間の自由時間など、他の参加者の皆さんとも大いに絆を深める機会があって、とてもありがたく、有意義なプログラムになりました。皇學館大学の先生方はそれぞれご自身が研究している領域について非常に知識が深く、豊かで、その情熱を参加者全員が感じることができました。

伊勢の歴史、文化、社会、宗教など、さまざまな講義を午前中に受けてから、午後に見学に出掛けました。教室で学んだ内容を実際に目の当たりにすると、スムーズにかつより深く理解できました。式年遷宮の意味と斎王が果たした役割について、特に私に大きな印象を残し、興味を与えてくれました。

COVID-19による大変難しい時期にこのプログラムを開催された皇學館大学と伊勢市に、大変感謝しています。日本文化を専門とする研究者にとって、このプログラムは非常に最適で、有益であるといえます。

以上