

Karlsson 先生のインタビュースクリプト（その2）

Karlsson:

Well. Japanese society in general. There are many things that I think are really good. For example, I like the fact that people never fight in the street. It's because it's very safe. I can always leave my bike and any. . . probably nobody will steal it. It's safe and It's nice and I feel that I'm safe here and I like that. But I find it very hard to understand the collective society. Sweden is a very, very individualistic society. And the collective thinking is. . . I have tried hard to understand how you think when you think in the collective way. But it's very hard to understand fully when you're not, I think, when you didn't grow up with it. So that's been a little bit hard for me. But when it comes to the Japanese students, they are, all of my students are very, very nice and then always happy and very cheerful and sweet students. But I was a little bit shocked actually when I came here because the level, the level of the students and of the teaching and everything was very, very low compared to a Swedish university. It took me a couple of weeks to realize that I had to give homework; I had to tell students to study at home and to tell them what to study at home; otherwise nobody would do it. And then I'm not used to that. Teaching at university in Sweden, everybody's adults and everybody studies on their own. You never have to tell anybody to study because you know that. I know I have an exam I need to study I plan my own studying. And the teachers are only there to teach new thing or to guide me or to help me, but I am the student, I am the one who does the studying. But that seems to be different here. It's. . . even though my students are, most of them are over twenty, their age seems to be very low. They're very young. It could be a pretty good thing, but sometimes it's not so good. So that was surprising.

Interviewer:

Maybe, the students, they reflect the Japanese society in general because the. . . you know, we have this kind of unspoken rules to observe. We took. . . we take studying as a kind of burden or obligation, so most of us hate studying.

Karlsson:

That is so funny because here. . . . In Sweden we have a. . . our tax system is based on that we all pay lots of tax. Both on our salary and everything we buy, the tax is really high. But universities, because of that, that taxes pay for university, anybody can go to university for free. And here everybody's paying for university and paying lots of money. It's, yeah, for me it's very expensive, but still people don't study very hard. And, well, it's a little bit confusing for me. And then it was. . . of course I got used to it but to. . . at the beginning I was a little confused.

Interviewer:

Thank you. So, we have talked about many things so far but, before concluding, is there anything else you want to talk about? If you don't have anything, I'd like to ask you one more thing. Sweden is, in a way,

very, very famous in Japan because of its music or furniture, IKEA. Swedish pop music is very popular and they are called “Swedish Pop.” They are regarded as very fashionable. So, I’d like to ask you about the Swedish cultural aspects, especially music and. . . I’m interested in furniture. If you please, tell me something about. . . ?

Karlsson:

Swedish music? I think that it’s. . . it’s very easy to start a band in Sweden because almost every city has some kind of rooms that you can borrow for free if you are young. You can borrow rooms with all the equipment—drums and guitars and everything—and it’s a way of keeping young people out of trouble. And they have this system in almost all the Swedish cities, also in the countryside. So it’s very easy to start a band and to get some people together and to meet a couple of times every week and play music. And that I think is the reason why such a small country exports pretty much music. And it’s. . . I think the reason is that it’s very easy to. . . easy to start a band and I think it’s encouraged to work with music and that kind of thing. When it comes to furniture, I think Sweden has a long history of design and then furniture design. And the Swedish furniture used to be very expensive. And then usually the typical Swedish furniture is made in very light wood, the color is very light and then departments in Sweden are usually. . . the colors are light and not so much dark furniture. But then IKEA came and then IKEA made the furniture very cheap of course. So it’s the mixture of Swedish design but made cheap. So it’s special to me, IKEA is special. I am. . . I’d been here almost a year and a half when the first IKEA started in Kobe. And I went there and I was walking around in IKEA and I forgot that “Oh, I can’t speak Swedish in here.” It’s, even for me, it’s very Swedish. It’s such a Swedish environment that I forgot to speak Japanese.