

You can leave Hong Kong, but it will never leave you.

Nury Vittachi, Hong Kong: The City of Dreams

Upon landing in Hong Kong, I realised that the country would surpass any expectations I had previously formed. As the plane made its descent I was struck by the juxtaposition of the serene green mountains against the famous Hong Kong skyline. The diversity of the Hong Kong scenery is something which will remain with me forever; it was impossible to get bored of exploring the bustling city, rocky shorelines and everything in between.

The first week of the scholarship entailed marshalling Companies Judge Mr Justice Jonathan Harris, in the High Court. After a twelve-hour flight, four-hour sleep and seven-hour time difference, armed with the strongest possible coffee, I was ready to begin my first day. The first challenge I faced was surprisingly meteorological as opposed to legal ... I quickly realised that it was vital to learn how to complete a 20-minute walk, in a suit, in 37 degrees, without arriving at your destination looking like you had been dragged through a bush on your way.

Whilst marshalling, I was fortunate to observe a variety of hearings; ranging from five-minute winding up applications to a three-day hearing consisting of numerous disclosure and amendment applications. A highlight of the week was when I was invited into Mr Harris' chambers to discuss my opinions regarding what ought to be the correct outcome for a case we had heard. At the beginning of the discussion, it was clear that my views were in contradiction to Mr Harris'. However, confident in my analysis of the case, I proceeded to explain the rationale behind my views. The following morning Mr Harris gave judgment in line with my opinions. This gave me an excellent insight into the exhilarating experience of being a successful barrister, I felt proud of my oral advocacy skills in persuading a Companies Judge to consider an alternative perspective. Throughout my week of marshalling, I thoroughly enjoyed the ability to test my understanding of Company Law; whilst expanding my knowledge of a jurisdiction outside of the UK.

In a fitting end to my first week, I attended a Middle Temple event at The China Club. The event was hosted in The China Club's library dedicated to the art and culture of Hong Kong. The event was a success and I was afforded the opportunity to meet both students and barristers. Everyone was incredibly welcoming, not least a group of students who offered to take me out for a traditional Chinese dinner that evening. I hope that I will have the opportunity to reciprocate this with a traditional dinner at the Inn when the students visit London.

During the second week of the scholarship, I undertook a mini pupillage at Des Voeux Chambers. This was a very busy week, with a varied and comprehensive itinerary, this

afforded me the opportunity to experience all possible aspects of life at the Hong Kong Bar. I attended conferences, legal trials and spent time in Chambers reading through bundles to create a list of documents for discovery. I particularly enjoyed observing a case in the High Court involving the legitimacy of a Mareva Injunction which had been granted in April 2017. This case was especially interesting as it allowed me to observe how a Hong Kong Chinese Judge approached a case, in contrast to an English Judge. In my opinion, Hong Kong Chinese Judges focus largely upon expedience; for example, if they felt that Counsel was attempting to advance a submission which they were not convinced by, they would simply tell Counsel to offer a new point or sit down. Another case of interest was a Judicial Review of an outcome at a disciplinary hearing which convicted the Defendant (an Auditing Company) of an offence which they had not been tried of. This case broadened my horizons and allowed me to consider how Company and Public Law can interconnect and influence one another. This would be an area of practice which I would keen to explore in England. On the final day of my mini-pupillage I found myself in the Court of Final Appeal. Dwarfed by the nearby skyscrapers, the majestic neo-classical building holds its own. In my opinion, this was a perfect and poignant way to end my scholarship in Hong Kong.

Alongside the legal experiences, I was fortunate to have sufficient spare time to explore Hong Kong and the surrounding islands. My two favourite islands of Hong Kong were Cheung Chau and Lamma Island, both a short ferry ride yet simultaneously worlds apart from the hustle and bustle from Central Hong Kong. Whilst visiting these islands, I soon discovered the other “must-do” in Hong Kong was hiking.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my three-weeks in Hong Kong. My knowledge of Company Law was pushed to its limits and I had the opportunity to enhance both my written and oral communication skills. I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank John Scott SC for his generosity and kindness throughout the Scholarship. I had an amazing experience and I am confident that the time I spent in Hong Kong will shape my career at the Bar. I hope that my future practice allows me to undertake cases in Hong Kong and that I can once again experience the eclectic life of a Hong Kong Commercial Law Barrister.

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