

Report on Participation in [KUASU Short-term Research funded by JASSO](#)

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My stay in Kyoto University as a recipient of Kyoto University Asian studies Unit (KUASU) – JASSO program has provided me an incomparable opportunity to understand the society that has spawned the fiction of Murakami Haruki who is the subject of my dissertation. Under the support of the program I was able to meet some helpful scholars and was able to also access the university's library. The difference of carrying out my study here in Kyoto versus just proceeding with my study back home is that I can immediately contextualize aspects of Japanese culture that otherwise would have not easily surfaced due to the issues of translating the works of fiction of Murakami into English. My exposure in KyoDai and Kyoto in general allowed me to be more sensitive to the culture embedded in the Murakami texts. I know that my experience here would also be very valuable in my plan to design electives on Japanese literature (which I started doing at Ateneo de Manila University in 2010) and of course, it will help me to fulfill my requirements to complete my dissertation for the Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of the Philippines Diliman.

It is my goal to be a specialist in modern to contemporary Japanese literature. Unfortunately, there are no real specialists in this area from my country. I am hoping in the near future to come back to Japan to further my specialization. I am also planning to take my Japanese language study seriously in order to partake of this. Currently, my knowledge of Japanese is still very elementary. I am reading Murakami's works in English translation and it does limit my study. My country can learn so much not only from Japan's science and technology developments, but equally with its contributions to the study of the humanities, particularly literature. The study and understanding of Japanese literature in the Philippines is where I wish to make a contribution in the near future.

Kyoto as my academic setting while conducting research here is a truly invigorating setting fit for reflection on tough academic questions. The people here are easy-going and helpful. You do not need to look so far to see how tradition and the global co-exist in its midst. The serenity/ quiet of Kyoto is truly perfect for academic

study. The only problem I encountered here initially is finding a place to stay within my budget. As Kyoto is a sought after tourist destination, scholars with meager funding may find it challenging to find a place to stay even for a short-term stay. This is but the only challenge I had in my stay here, everything else was smooth-sailing and efficient. Truly the pros outnumber the cons in coming to Kyoto for research.

When I came in the KUASU program I expected to meet with scholars, have access to the library, and more importantly have time to write and reflect. The freedom that the KUASU program gave me to do this is worth noting. I had enough faculty and office support while being allowed to pursue my study. The culminating event of my stay here was the seminar lecture that I delivered during March 12. Although there were less than 10 attendees (it is the Spring Break at university) the lively discussion that ensued provided me with a lot of things to reflect on and incorporate in my study. I consider that experience very precious as a young scholar.