

[Japanese Arts History]

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I came to Kyoto University as a special research student, under the Departments of Letters. I was assigned to the division of Aesthetics and Arts History, where I acquired the knowledge regarding Japanese antiquity arts. The resources concerning Japanese Buddhism arts are relatively limited in Europe; hence, getting the empirical experiences of observing the statues was a high privilege. Moreover, akin to my interests in transcultural cooperation between arts institutions, I acquire more first-hand knowledge for the communications between museums in Japan and Europe. By tracing the exhibitions held by the Japanese government in Europe after the post-World War and examining the exchange between Japan and France in 1997 particularly, I also get deeper understanding of how the Japanese institutions worked that was different from other cultures.

I enjoyed the life in kyodai in general. Thanks to the tutor system, I was able to familiarize myself with the daunting logistics about living in Japan. On the other hand, there was a gap between the expectations of the professors and the students. For example, the professor sometimes could not provide research supports because of the limited expertise in the faculties or their tight schedule. Besides, the registration system of the department for the classes was inflexible; in consequence, the students had difficulties in choosing the courses they had interests in. To illustrate, the students with the status of 'special research student' are not allowed to collect credit points within Kyodai system and couldn't get a official transcript of the marks accordingly, given they did attend the courses and finish all the reports required.

Originally from the social science background, studying under the Arts History division helped me form abstract reasoning skills and stretches visual memorization, reaching my balance between the sense and the sensibility of perspectives. Learning about different cultures through their artwork was a way to immerse myself in the thoughts of the time period, allowing me to understand the Japanese worldview. Acquiring the visual literacy of Japan and this at the same time extended to my Japanese language learning. Because of the program, I was able to expand my ability to see, imagine and think in a way out of the box.

The kyodai experience was fruitful. I appreciated the beautiful city and nice people here in Kyoto, as well as the opportunity to improve my Japanese language during my stay. The capability of speaking Japanese undoubtedly can be beneficial to my future career to work in global companies and organizations. I see myself to actively devote in the communications industry (communications/media specialist, multilingual interpreters) that requires decent skills of interacting with people from various cultural backgrounds. Living in Kyoto, in this sense, allowed me to learn the authentic life styles and the proper etiquettes that will benefit the cooperation with Japanese people.

Overall, I enjoyed the time studying in kyodai and living in Kyoto city. Thanks to the programme, I had equipped higher ability to mediate between the people from different countries, in particular between Asian and European cultures. I believe the precious experiences here will be a substantial advantage for my future career in Europe.