

General Exchange Program

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I'm an exchange student from China and greatly honored to receive JASSO scholarship from Oct.2014 to Mar.2015. As majoring in the Japanese language and culture, I have taken a variety of courses concerning these fields during my stay in Kyoto University. In order to learn something more about Japanese literature, I started to read *Manyousyu*, one of the oldest collections of Japanese poetry, which is quite difficult for a beginner like me to grasp its connotations in the graphic descriptions about natural scenes. Thanks to my supervisor's help, I have gradually learned how to appreciate ancient poems and Japanese concept and judgment towards beauty. I also attended a modern literature course concerning *Heart* by Natsume Soseki, which is a tragic story but reveals vividly the Japanese people's value in the aspect of life and death. To acquire more knowledge about ancient Japan, I registered for "Japanese History and Culture IB" offered by Faculty of Integrated Human Studies. In this class we were guided to visit a series of remains in the Heian period, which is also the first time that I have got a close-up observation on a spot of archaeological excavation. By attending these courses, I have got a further understanding about the diverse aspects of Japan.

Life as an exchange student is far more fascinating than I expected. I desire to experience Japanese life and culture as much as I can. During the first month after I coming here, I was lucky enough to get a chance to appreciate the traditional opera of Noh, which was quite challenging for foreigners. I also attended a practice of Zazen (座禅) at Kenninji Temple, from which I deeply felt a lot about the differences between Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. From some native students I have also learned the etiquette when visiting a shrine, and I'm strongly touched and impressed by the intimate relationship between everyday life and religions. Moreover, I have learned through my personal practice the essence of a Japanese tea ceremony in Nishijin Area. In these activities I witness in person the Japanese people's conscientiousness in carrying on their traditional culture. Besides, I have also joined in my spare time a kendo society, which not only enriches my life here, but also helps me make friends with whom we share a common interest. To be honest, I wouldn't have got so many great opportunities to cultivate and improve myself if I failed to come to Kyoto University.

As I have been always eager to know more about Japanese history and culture since I entered university, I wish that I would become a researcher in this academic world in the future. Before I came here, I was quite at loss about which academic realm appropriates for me to pursue. Now, thanks to my studying at Kyoto University, I have had a clearer picture in my mind. I hope to devote myself to studying Japanese historical geography and urban planning. With peculiarly fortunate, Kyoto City is the pioneer in these fields and has its abundant historical resources. I will value my chance and the precious time as an exchange student in Kyoto University, and I will keep starved for knowledge forever so that I can make my dream come true.