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Japanese Literature
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As a student of Japanese literature, studying at Shizuoka University under the MEXT Research Scholarship has given me the chance to gain an understanding of Japanese culture and literature that can only be gained from being in Japan with the right academic and financial support. Furthermore, this opportunity has helped me to develop connections with professors and other students in my field, given me the time and means to travel both for my own research and in order to attend conferences, and also connected me with personalized guidance from an attentive and enthusiastic advising professor.

Adjusting to life at the university was made easy for me thanks not only my advisor, but also with the help I received from the personal tutor who was assigned to me. She helped me with everything from taking care of business at city hall to introducing me to the works of many current Japanese authors. She was always willing to make herself available to help me whenever I needed help with things like homework assignments or finding a doctor's office to go to, and she also provided me with a great deal of help when it came to editing the essay I would eventually publish in a journal.



Getting to attend classes and work with other students at a Japanese university taught me about the different ways in which Japan and the U.S. approach literary research and writing. Since the success of all research I conduct on Japanese literature in the future will surely be dependent upon collaboration with Japanese scholars, this type of knowledge could not be more crucial for our communication. Participating in a weekly discussion group with Japanese graduate students was one of my favorite parts of attending Shizudai, as it allowed me to not only form close bonds with other future researchers in my field, but also to learn about and understand both Japanese literature and culture from the sort of in-depth point of view that is rare to come by in non-natives.

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The scholarship also gave me the means to travel in order to attend conferences where I listened to talks from and got to converse with writers and professors of Japanese literature. Meeting and talking with Nori Nakagami, a writer and the daughter of Kenji Nakagami, was a particularly valuable experience for me. In addition to that, the novel which I researched most closely during my time at Shizudai is set in Kyoto, and I was able to visit the city several times in order to better understand the setting and the role it played in the novel. These visits inspired new insights and perspectives into the novel which I could not have gained without having the chance to explore the setting in person.

Overall, this has been an invaluable experience for me in terms of what it has done for my future studies and career, and I cannot recommend it enough for anyone else studying any aspect of Japan.