



The Last Semester of a Graduate Student in Pandemic Time

I love studying in library for many reasons. It is spacious, quiet, and clean. It is also easily accessible to my lab and cafeteria. Most of my works are done in library until the last six months of my master course when we all faced the tough pandemic.

Starting from March, 2020 the risk of virus infection became higher. We, Tohoku University students are prohibited from coming to the university without any important reason. Classes and seminars are conducted online. Like other graduate students, my last semester was quite hectic with thesis writing.

This 2020 is even more unforgettable for us. No fun gatherings, no face to face meetings among colleagues and friends, no cherry blossom watching, no school, no eat outs, and NO LIBRARY days. In this article, I would love to share how I coped with those tough days while writing my thesis and preparing for my PhD entrance exam at the same time.

First, it was good for me for not having to go out. But after some weeks, I started feeling stressed and suffocated to work alone at home, struggling with thesis data day and night. Realizing that I was having both physical and mental

breakdown, I started doing stress relieving activities. I did jogging exercise every day. I took time to video call my family and friends more often. I contacted classmates and exchanged ideas and experiences about our theses. Among our friends, there was one line that we spoke to encourage ourselves, "*This too will pass.*" Yes, there came a time finally when I successfully submitted the thesis in time. And I did pass the PhD entrance exam too. I do believe that support of my beloveds, and the choice to stay strong and to be an optimist had brought me on the right track to my dreams so far.



Author's study table at home during lockdown



Author and her friends. Celebrating author's graduation.

As reported by Thiri Soe

New Members!!

Elena Fabbretti

Hello everyone! I am Elena. I came from a very small town in the center of Italy, surrounded by nature. I moved to Roma for studying Japanese Culture and Language at La Sapienza University, and there I got used to large city life. Living in Sendai means to me to become stronger in every situation (especially against cold season!). I am a first year PhD student from the Department of Innovative Japanese Studies. I like literature and art, and the influences among them between East and West culture. In spare moments, I like practicing hot yoga which helps me to relax from everyday routine. If you have some recommendations about museums or art exposition, please let me know!



Gan Wen Shuoh

Hello! I am Gan Wen Shuoh from Malaysia. Everyone calls me by my nickname, Joe. For your information, Malaysia consists of 3 main ethnic groups which are Malays, Chinese and Indians. I am a Malaysian Chinese. Therefore, I can speak Chinese, Malay and English. I have learnt Japanese language for three and a half years when I specialized in Japanese language and linguistics at university. After graduating from the university, I realized that I became interested to know more

about Japanese culture. Therefore, I made my choice to pursue my study at Tohoku University as a graduate student, specializing in cultural anthropology. I am currently doing a research on the culture of Japanese

chess, *shogi*. For your information, *shogi* is not just simply a board game but a game with plenty of interesting culture

within it. If you are also interested in playing *shogi*, come, let's have a duel!



Jin Yi

Hi! I am Jin from China. I was born and raised in Shanghai. I came to Tohoku University as an undergraduate student right after graduating from my high school. As far as I can see, Sendai is a very cozy city to live and to focus on studies. This is the reason I decided to do my master course here in Tohoku University. I am now doing bio-related research in the field of DNA nanotechnology at the Department of Robotics, School of Engineering. I hope that in the near future my research can support practical applications in the medical field. In my spare time, I enjoy going for walks in local parks. There, I can relax myself, and appreciate beautiful sceneries in all seasons. If you also enjoy walking around the city, see you around!



Li Luyun

Hello everyone! My name is Luyun Li from Chongqing China. Chongqing is one of the four municipalities under the direct administration of central government of the People's Republic of China. Chongqing is known for its spicy food. Its food is normally considered numbing because of the use of Sichuan pepper. Chongqing hot pot is one of the most representative cuisines of Chongqing.

Sendai is a very pleasant place to live. I really enjoy my life here. I expect to graduate next year, and I think I'll miss the life in Sendai when I go back to my home country. I like to interact with people which gives me a lot of new insights. I also like to run and swim. Doing sports helps me to relieve stress and forget my worries for a while. If you like sports too, let's do it together!



Yuan Xiaoling

Hello everyone! I am Xiaoling Yuan from Hunan Province of China. Hunan is a popular tourist destination featuring magnificent natural scenery in Zhangjiajie and ancient residential buildings in tranquil Fenghuang Ancient Town.

I came to Sendai to study about Education and I will be completing my master's degree next year. I have a passion to help others and I know that being a teacher is my calling. Through the experience in Tohoku University, I have learned to interact with a diverse group of people, which has increased my ability to interact with

others. I also had an opportunity to practice life skills like teamwork, communication and time management. I enjoy travelling, listening to music, riding a bike, and studying different languages. But in the winter, I prefer skiing and skating. If you have similar interests with me, please let me know!



Zhang Sen

Hello, everyone! My name is Zhang Sen. I come from Hebei Province of China. I came to Sendai last year to pursue for the graduate course in Linguistics. I studied Japanese language and culture during my college life in China. By the way, the college is also called Tohoku University.

I had been in Japan for a year before I came to Sendai. I am very happy I could study here because I like Japanese culture, and Sendai is a big city for me (comparing to the city I lived), and also because Tohoku University is so excellent among Japan universities! It's interesting to live in different cities, I think, because we can see different sceneries, meet different people, and record these with a camera. As for the relaxation time, I like watching comedies, especially *Friends*. While I am living here, I made several friends, and I am also looking forward to making friends with you!



That's me! If you are also interested in Japanese culture, photography or comedy, or you have any questions about the library, please let me know!

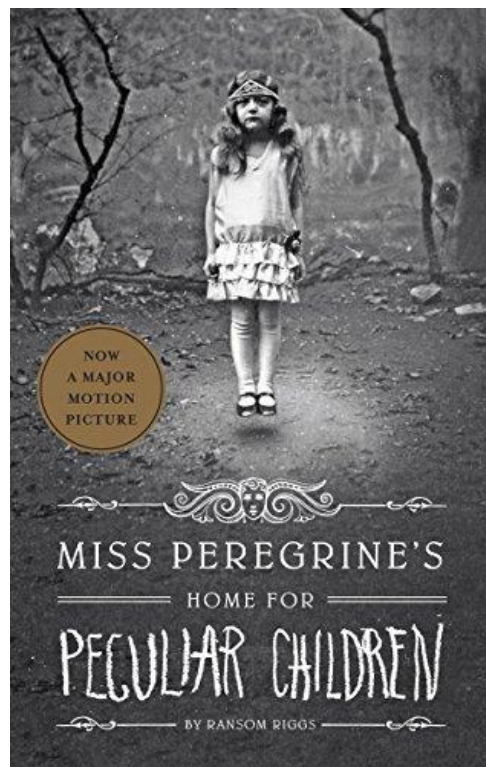
Reader's Choice: What to Read Next?

This section introduces a new book from our available selection at the Tohoku University Main Library. It is intended to pick your interest and fill your grey matter with intellect and emotion. Sit back and enjoy it!

Hello everyone! My name is Julio, from Brazil, and I am a graduate student at the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies. This time I want to recommend a very nice reading for your free time, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*.

As most of the kids, Jacob liked to hear old stories from his grandfather Portman. He would tell Jacob about adventures he had experienced, fantastic places he had been, and also stories about some special children with supernatural powers who lived in an orphanage in Wales. Unfortunately, while growing old, Jacob started to doubt his grandfather's "fairy tales". As no flying or invisible kids could exist, nor the horrifying monsters his grandpa claimed to have fought with in order to protect himself and the other kids at the orphanage could be real.

Because his grandfather experienced the World War II, a period when bad people doing monstrous things really existed, Jacob thought that maybe these stories were a way his grandpa found to cope with his memories of that horrible time. However, one day Jacob receives a frightening call from his grandfather and finds out that those "fairy tales" maybe were sadly more real than he expected.



Book: *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*

Author: Ransom Riggs

Publisher: Quirk Books

ISBN: 978-1-59474-603-1

Call N°: KS193/211

Location: LIB-Global-Forgn

本館グローバル留学生用

Reviewed by **Julio Nascimento**

Manga Corner

This corner is about things that happen in the library, especially when you are a new student at Tohoku University.

Hello! I am Marina from Brazil! I like drawing for fun, so I hope you have fun reading too!



Editors



Thiri Soe [Editor-in-Chief]

A language science student from the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies. She is from Myanmar, a land of Golden Pagodas, in South East Asia. Thiri is studying applied linguistics, seeking knowledge to benefit in her teaching profession. Her hobby is cooking and writing. She believes that things happen for a reason and the reason is to be good.

Gan Wen Shuoh

A graduate student of Cultural Anthropology from Malaysia, a country with multiple ethnics and cultures. He likes Japanese culture and especially loves Japanese chess (*Shogi*) and watching Japanese dramas. By setting "Choose what you like and like what you choose" as his life motto, he believes life can be difficult but when you try to accept it, it gives you rewards.



Marina Nascimento

A Brazilian graduate student from the Innovative Japanese Studies department. She enjoys drawing and reading comics as well as traveling around the world. Mari has been to 13 different countries and loves to talk about new places she would like to discover. If you want to become her friend just show her cat pictures, she will automatically love you!

If you feel unwell, even just a little, please do not come to the campus or the library. Keep warm and rest at home.

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