



Library Guidance Tour for International Students: Welcome to Tohoku University in Sendai!

Greetings, international students!

We're pleased to give you a recap of the recent library guidance and tour organized by the International Student Concierge at Tohoku University Main Library. On April 5th and 7th, we held the first library guidance and tour in Chinese and English languages respectively this semester. Since wearing masks became optional, we could see and engage with everyone more comfortably.

The International Student Concierge members started with a presentation that covered essential library information, such as navigating the library, using the online catalog, and accessing the many resources and services provided. They also highlighted support services including consultation service in various languages which is available at the international student concierge desk.



After the presentation, participants were divided into smaller groups for a more intimate tour of the library led by several concierge members. The tour showcased various sections of the library, including the flexible working area, reference desks, computer terminals, group study rooms, and quiet study area. Some members also kindly introduced their favorite “secret places” in the library.



This library guidance and tour are aiming at helping you familiarize yourself with the library's resources and services, setting you up for academic success as well as diverse experiences at Tohoku University.

We hope that you'll make the most of these offerings and enjoy your time in Sendai as you embark on your academic journey.

Reported by **Gong Liwei**

New Members!!

This section introduces new members of the International Student Concierge.

AiPing Zhao



Hello everyone, my name is AiPing Zhao. I come from northeastern China, which is very cold in winter.

I majored in Japanese during my undergraduate study and got my Bachelor's degrees from both Chinese and Japanese universities by participating in a double degree program of my university. Now I'm a 2nd-year Master's student at Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, Tohoku University. My research interests are American Civil War history and American literature.

This is my 5th year staying in Japan. Initially, I came to Japan to practice my oral Japanese and what's more, to see whether Japan is really the same as how it

is depicted in manga and anime. Later, I decided to pursue my Master's degree in Japan because I liked the study atmosphere in Japanese universities.

I love playing drums and it has always been my dream to start a band, being influenced by Japanese anime. Now I usually spend my spare time taking drum lessons and practicing. By the way, One OK Rock is one of my favorite bands. And I also love watching anime. Gintama is one of my favorites.

If you are interested in anime, drums, American history, or American literature, you are very welcomed to come to visit me at the International Student Concierge Desk. Looking forward to seeing you all in our Library!

Fernandez Caro Antonio



Hello everyone! My name is Antonio, but my friends call me Toni. I come from Andalusia, a region in the southern part of Spain, specifically from a town called Algeciras, located near the southernmost point of the Iberian Peninsula. My hometown is close to the Gibraltar, which belongs to England, and it is only a 30-mi-

nute ship ride away from Morocco. Portugal is also nearby, making the area rich in cultural diversity.

In Spain, I pursued a degree in Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Granada with a specialization in Asian languages, specifically Chinese and Japanese. As a student, I also had the opportunity to study in Japan twice as an exchange student. After finishing my studies, I completed a Master's degree in East Asia Studies at the University of Granada. Following this, I applied for the MEXT Scholarship and moved to Sendai to pursue a Master's course in Japanese Studies at Tohoku University.

During my spare time, I enjoy playing video games, reading, watching films, and hiking. The first videogame I played when I was a child was Sonic the Hedgehog 3 on my brother's Mega Drive. I was amazed by its fun gameplay, beautiful pixel graphics, and fantastic soundtrack in which even Michael Jackson was involved. It has been one of my favorite games and I still play it almost every year. I have already hiked to many beautiful mountains in Tohoku, like Mt. Bandai, Mt. Zao, and Mt. Hayachine. Actually, hiking is related to my research as I am currently investigating pilgrimages in Japan! I am especially interested in the Dewa Sanzan pilgrimage in Yamagata prefecture. This ancient route goes through the mountains of Haguro, Gassan, and Yudono, and it's related to the practices of shugendo religion. Also, the picture I chose for my introduction is from when I walked the Kumano Kodo trail in Wakayama prefecture during the past spring holidays.

Reader's Choice: What to Read Next?

This section introduces a 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!

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Tanizaki Junichirō is one of the most acclaimed writers of Modern Japanese literature. This author is particularly well-known for his bold descriptions of love and sexuality, and for the juxtaposition of “Western” fashions and Japanese tradition in his stories. In addition, this author's prose is relatively simple and direct when compared to other contemporary authors, which makes Tanizaki's works a good starting point to those wishing to get more familiar with Modern Japanese Literature.

Naomi (痴人の愛), written by Tanizaki between 1924-1925, is one of his most famous works, and definitely the novel that launched Tanizaki's name to the forefront as one of the greatest authors of his time. The book tells the story from the perspective of Kawai Jōji, a well-educated 30-something-years-old salaryman, and his fascination turned nearly to obsession with Naomi, a younger girl he deliberately picked from a café in Ginza with the intention of raising her as a proper wife to himself.

It soon becomes clear to the reader, however, that Naomi is a force to be reckoned with, and Kawai's wishes to make her into an ideal wife are nothing more than a delusion. He is constantly being manipulated by her wishes while believing he's the one manipulating her. It also becomes apparent that whatever naïveté Kawai projected onto Naomi in the beginning

is lost as she grows up while receiving the Western education he wished for her.

That can actually be seen as one of the central aspects of the story, as Kawai's relationship to Naomi is in many ways a metaphor for Japan's relation to the West in Tanizaki's time. Indeed, Kawai's character from the beginning shows a fascination with Western actresses as an idealized womanhood, and the first thing in Naomi that caught his eyes were both her name that sounds "foreign" and her looks that seemed "Eurasian". So, his decision to raise her as his wife, is also his desire to make her into what he believes is an educated Western lady. However, the novel suggests that being exposed to Western things might have been exactly what turned Naomi into the dominant figure in their relationship, which in turn leads to all the excesses and troubles in Kawai's life.

In that sense, through the protagonists' relationship, one could argue that, in the novel, Tanizaki was also exploring what it could mean for Japan to be fascinated by, and also to take up Western fashions without discernment. As the story progresses, the reader can follow how little by little Kawai's relationship with Naomi brings him further and further into a decadent lifestyle, not only distant from his ideal marriage dynamic he wished to build from the beginning, but also disruptive to all the other areas of his life that could have been deemed proper. And the most interesting element is that even though he realizes his illusions towards Naomi, his obsession with her is still strong enough to keep him under her influence.

The humor and irony that Tanizaki employs within the narrative to describe the coming and going of those two characters'

relationship make up for a guaranteed enjoyable reading experience, at the same time its exaggeration also shines a light on expectations and anxieties around gender roles and dynamics of that period. Naomi is seen, after all, as the epitome of a Modern Girl, a feminine representation tightly linked with Café Culture in the 1920's.

Naomi will certainly be a great read to most of those who enjoy an amusing, almost, but not quite exactly, love story, and to any of those curious about Modern Japanese Literature in general.

Book: *Naomi* (痴人の愛)

Author: Tanizaki Junichirō; translated by Anthony H. Chambers

Publisher: Tuttle

Language: English

ISBN: 0804815208

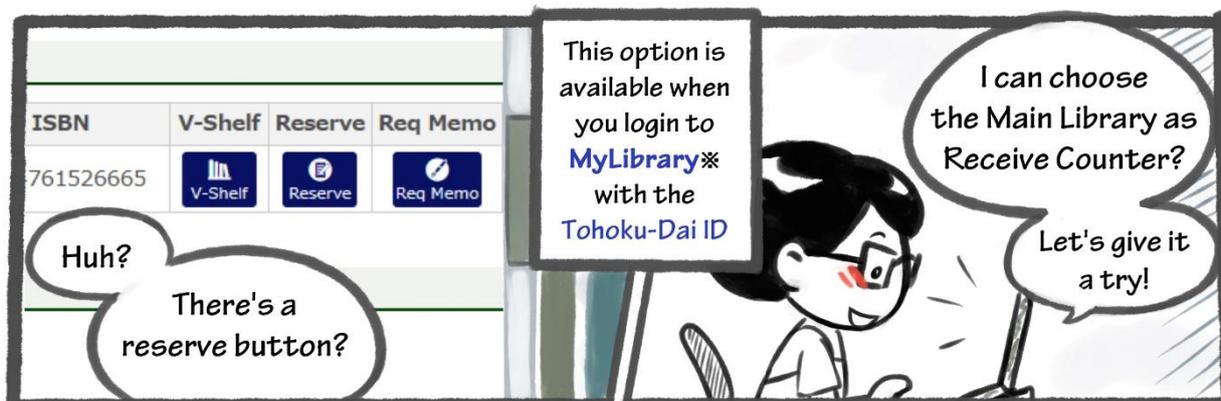
Location: Lib-Global-Forgn KH593/6

Written by Ana Maria Simplicio

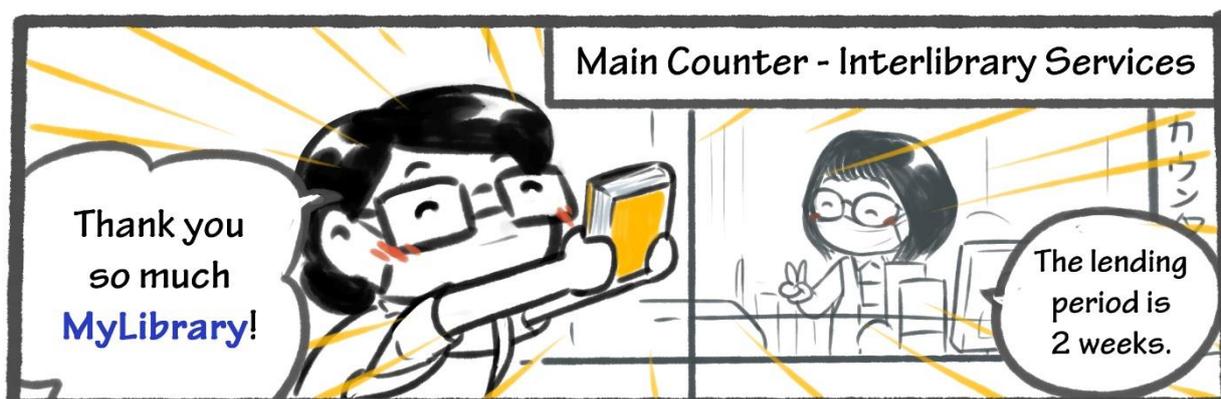
Manga Corner

At Manga Corner, you will see scenes frequently happened to students newly enrolled.

Hi! I am Andhika from Indonesia! I like reading and drawing manga, and I hope you enjoy my short manga.



※ MyLibrary is a personal online system for library users.



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 her teaching profession. Her hobby is cooking and writing. She believes that things happen for a reason and the reason is to be good.

Petrovikj Hristina

A graduate student from North Macedonia enrolled in the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies. She has many hobbies, some of which include: singing, journaling, travelling, reading, watching movies, and photography. She has lived in 3 different countries so far, travelled across Europe, and is hoping to embark on an Asian tour in the near future. Her secret dream is to be a member of a rock band, but since that has not come true yet, you can often find her in a karaoke booth instead!



Andhika Wijaya



A graduate student from Innovative Japanese Studies Major, who was born and raised in Jakarta, Indonesia. She never had seen snow before she came to Japan, so she's always going 'wakuwaku' when the snow is falling down even though she has to struggle a lot with the cold temperature. She loves drawing, reading comics, travelling to scenic places, enjoying nice music, singing at karaoke, and playing with cute animals. Please don't mind her if she makes strange noises when she saw a photo of cute animals. Aside of those, one of her major passion is enjoying food and making review notes about it.

If you feel unwell, even just a little, please do not come to the campus or to the library. Rest at home and get well soon.

How to reach us?

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