

# Kyoto Prefectural International Center



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## Special Story on page 3:

### Bonds between Kyoto and Hungaria through literature

Read this new edition to learn how Károlyi Orsolya got into classical Japanese and made an interesting discovery about Japanese songs and poems.

## Corner of Kyoto prefecture, from Maia Hall

### Let's talk about cultural and language differences with students!

Last month, I had the opportunity to visit Momoyama Junior High School Attached to Kyoto University of Education to talk about the UK and Germany. A Kyoto Prefecture Friendship Ambassador from Fiji and I were placed in a classroom of eleven returnee students – Japanese students who have spent time living abroad and then moving back to Japan – to talk about our individual countries, listen to their presentations, and then have an informal chat with them about anything they wanted.

The topics I presented were “Food and Drink in Scotland” and “Christmas in Germany” – the students’ reaction to photos of people enjoying deep-fried Mars Bars in Edinburgh and the scary Christmas demon Krampus in Germany was priceless!

We then all sat in a circle and discussed in both Japanese and English the differences

and similarities between Japanese, Scottish, German and Fijian culture and society. The conversation moved to what it is like to grow up in different countries, to come back to your home country, and how it can be hard at times to find your place in multiple communities. As I also moved around as a child, it was interesting to hear the perspective of Japanese students going through the same thing now.

The students asked many insightful questions and told lots of great stories throughout the day, but I was particularly touched to hear how passionately they spoke of the importance of

multiculturalism, open-mindedness, and facilitating integration in an increasingly globalized society. I left Momoyama Junior High School knowing that there is a small army of internationally-minded young people there who will no doubt grow up to continue connecting Japan with the rest of the world.



## Tsinghua Xinhua program participants at the Center

12 Chinese students came at KPIC for a meeting with the administrator Mr. Mita, the director Mr. Iseki and Ms. Ji, in charge of helping international students. The 12 participants are members of the Tsinghua Xinhua program, which was established by Tsinghua University, China, and which is aiming at “finding young volunteers with volunteerism and some essential qualities, and leading the development of public culture in colleges”. Because the training

program includes oversea practices, they decided to learn more about our organization in Japan!

First Mr. Iseki answered to their questions about the foundation of KPIC, the evolution through the years and the vision we have. Then the discussion went on about our activities (Japanese classes, disaster prevention, and support for international students) and the challenges we face. Finally

Mr. Mita, with his deep knowledge of China, evoked the relations between NGO, private companies and government.

Lin Huan, who helped with interpretation during the meeting, sent us his thoughts about KPIC: “I have appreciated you and your colleagues for your work of helping so many foreigners. I still remembered how I was unbacked when I came to Japan at the first time. Your work is really

valuable and worth considering the great socially useful activities. If possible I also want to take part in voluntary activities in the future.”



## Farewell, KPIC!

### Greetings from Martin Baer, Coordinator for International relations

## This isn't a goodbye!

Martin from KPIC here! I will embark on a new career project at the end of March. More than one year and a half have passed since I arrived in Kyoto full of energy thanks to the JET program. This wasn't the first time for me working and living in Japan but this was the first time in Kyoto Prefecture...and I really enjoyed it!

There is a lot of things I will remember. I was involved in many interesting projects, such as furthering the cooperation between Kyoto and France through economic development, academic or cultural exchange. For example, I had to help a team of French high school judokas to find schools in Kyoto ready to train together, guide them through the city and interpret for them. Another day I had to translate documents and interpret for Kyoto Prefecture Governor Mr. Yamada and the French ambassador in Japan. I also have wonderful memories of

creating ties between international and local residents through Field Trip programs across the whole of Kyoto Prefecture, breaking down stereotypes, fostering mutual interest and understanding, and contributing to local areas.

Moreover, school visits were a truly meaningful work as I could feel my direct contribution to global education and internationalization of Japanese schools. I got to visit elementary, junior and high schools and do presentations of my country, games, introduce French or English. Sometimes I was introduced to Japanese

traditional culture or students talked to me about their daily life at school. I learned a lot from them and from the feedbacks I got in-class or during free talks at the end of my visits, I can proudly say that they have learned a lot as well! I have received so many gifts from them, be it beautiful origamis, thank you letters or just their smiles all along the time we spent together.

Now, all that remains for me to do it to say a big thank to all my colleagues at the Center and the Prefectural office and express my gratitude to all the people, volunteers or students, that I met during my short time here. Merci beaucoup!



## Special Story by Károlyi Orsolya

(Károlyi is a 2nd year Phd student at Doshisha University and involved in many cross-cultural activities as a Kyoto Prefecture Friendship Ambassador since 2016)



“I have been studying classical Japanese poetry, waka, in Kyoto for about three years, but it was back in Hungary when I first discovered them. I was in my first year of Masters study, struggling with the grammar of classical Japanese, but still in love with its beautiful, ancient sound. My professor brought in the Hyakunin Isshu (100 poems by 100 poets) to our class, so that with them we could study classical grammar easier. I fell in love with these short poems instantly. For a long time, whenever someone asked me, what it was I loved about waka, I would answer: "It's just so fascinating, how they can express so many emotions in such a short 5-7-5-7-7 poem." I was fond of poetry since I was a child, and grew up reading a lot by Hungarian poets. They have much longer poems than those of the Heian period. Let's see an example from Endre Ady, translated by Adam Makkai.

With my old man's wrinkled hand,  
with my old man's squinting eyes,  
let me hold your lovely hand,  
let me guard your lovely eyes.

It is just the first four lines, it goes on to continue for three more quatrains. This poem was addressed to the poet's much younger wife, and you can really feel his affection towards her. I grew up with these kind of poems, so I started to study Japanese poems with the same mindset. Now let's see an example of a waka love poem:

It was only because you said  
you would come right away  
that I have waited  
these long months, till even  
the wan morning moon has come out.

The translation is the work of Joshua S. Mostow, a professor of the University of British Columbia. You can sense the sorrow of one, who is waiting and waiting for a lover, who is not coming. In Heian Japan, girls of the court couldn't simply go on dates, they had to wait for their lover to come to them, so it is a really sad story, waiting in vain for a lover who is not coming. But wait a minute! Take a look at the poet! It's Monk Sose, who was definitely not a girl. I realized after I began my studies in Japan, that it was really common to write poems on different topics to what you were experiencing, like waiting on love, for example. If your topic is waiting on love, it doesn't matter if you are not actually in love, or even a girl who is waiting. You imagine yourself in the place of that person, and write a poem, be it a court lady or a monk. For myself, who grew up thinking that a love poem is something where you write your actual feelings, yours alone and not others, it was quite a shocking discovery. I felt that these poems were not honest.

Now let's take a big leap forward in time, and consider the author for some modern singer's lyrics. Kyary Pamyu Pamyu's songs, for example. We can discover, that her supercute songs are all written by a male. Not so different from a Heian-monk, who is writing a love poem from the viewpoint of a girl, right? It may be important, to make honest poems with ones own feelings, and I feel I still prefer those such ones. But perhaps writing about something you are not personally feeling is actually more difficult, and calls for a lot of knowledge, so I began to admire these poems also. And if I think about it, that they were written with the same method as contemporary pop songs, I feel that the Heian period is not actually that far away from us as it may first seem.”



# INFORMATION FROM KPIC

## 1 At KPIC, we recruit a native person who can translate from Japanese to Filipino.

**Requirements** Japanese skills must be equivalent to the JLPT 2 or higher  
- To have a permanent access to your email

If you are interested, please see the following web page for more details.  
<https://www.kpic.or.jp/about/recruit.html>

## 2 Group discussions about job hunting for international students.

Several sessions for international students looking for a job in Japan will be organized. It will consist of a seminar about adopting a winning strategy following by a lecture about the basics of finding a job. More information will be available soon on our website.

### Kyoto Prefecture CIRs common blog

<http://tabunkakyoto.wordpress.com/>



For more information, please refer to

Web <http://www.kpic.or.jp/english/>

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## COUNSELING SERVICES for Kyoto's International Residents

### 1 Support Desk for International Students

Our counseling staff will give you information and advice for daily life, preparation for jobs, contacts with graduates working in Japan, etc. This service is free of charge.

- **Consultation days and hours** : Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 10:00-17:00
- **Languages** : Interpretation in English, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Spanish and Portuguese available. Reservation required for interpretation.
- **Email** : [counsel@kpic.or.jp](mailto:counsel@kpic.or.jp) ■ **TEL** : 075-342-0088

### 2 Visa consultation

An expert can respond to your visa-related questions including those about changing or renewing your status of residence. Please make a reservation at least one week in advance by Web form or Fax.

- Date** : Fourth Sunday of every month, 13:00-16:00 (30 minutes/person)
- Fee** : Free of charge.
- Details** : <http://www.kpic.or.jp/english/residents/consul.html>
- <http://www.kpic.or.jp/english/residents/consul.html>

## COUNSELING Q&A for Kyoto's International Residents

### Q

I am a foreign student and I will be a fourth year from next April. I don't know in which **gyōkai** (sector of activity) belongs the job I want to do.

### A

Gyōkai in Japanese refer to a classification of industries by activity content. For example: manufacturing, trading, distribution, retail and others. The first step for choosing the company you would like to work for is to understand its sector of activity and the company itself. First, you should look for information about sector of activities and what companies are related to each of them. Then, try to figure out what kind of jobs are involved and see if it could be something you would like to do.

Doing so, you will find which sector of activity and what kind of company you are interested in. You will also be able to provide very detailed and persuasive answers when having a job interview or writing entry sheets. Finally, it will give you the opportunity to think about your career path and your values and see if they match well together.

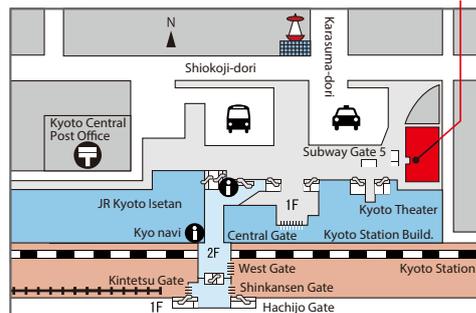


## Living Info by Email

We send email messages full of useful living information twice a month. Please send your choice of language (English, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese or Japanese in the hiragana syllabary) to:  
[living-e@kpic.or.jp](mailto:living-e@kpic.or.jp)



### Access information



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Open hours : 10:00-18:00  
Closed : 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, national holidays, 12/29-1/3



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