

PII Internship Report by Yuqi Jasmine Li
Hokkoku Shimbun

This year, I found myself sweating the summer days away at *Hokkoku Shimbun* (北國新聞), a Kanazawa-based newspaper company that claims one of the largest readerships in the Hokuriku Area. My time there, working under the Society Section (社会部), included some of the most challenging, but also some of the most cherished moments of my life. I was able to come face-to-face with the behemoth that is Japanese culture, not only when I was out doing fieldwork, but in the office as well. Looking back now, I can say with confidence that not only have I improved my practical skills of reading, writing, and speaking, but have also grown as an admirer and scholar of Japanese language and culture.

The average day for me started at ten in the morning. I would begin by heading over to the televisions, underneath which would be a time-table that listed the day's events, along with the journalists that are to cover them. Usually, two of the journalists' would be tagged with a "+J," signifying "and Jasmine." Those would be the *sempai* (先輩) that would be guiding me for the day. If the event wasn't for another few hours, I took a copy of that day's *Hokkoku Shimbun*, and read at my desk, marking down words and phrases that I either did not understand, or otherwise caught my attention. Eventually, though, my *sempai* would call to me, and slinging my camera on my shoulder, I would jog out after them.

The Society Section was careful to choose events that they believed I would find interesting—events that they thought pulsed with the vitality of Japanese and, more specifically, Kanazawa's culture. During my two months there, I watched *ikebana* artists preparing for an exhibition; walked around a *ryōtei* (料亭), a form of traditional Japanese restaurant; and paraded through the streets of Noto, carrying a large festival lantern during the *Abare-matsuri* (あばれ祭り). Some days, if a *sempai* were able to squeeze a few extra hours out of his or her schedule, he or she would offer to take me anywhere I wanted to go. It was on these days that I, a lover of literature and philosophy, was given tours around the memorial museums of the *San-Bungou* (三文豪), otherwise known as the Three Great Literary Masters of Kanazawa, as well as that of the famous Zen philosopher, D.T. Suzuki. On location, I observed the interviews conducted by my *sempai*, while taking pictures and notes of my own. Often, I was also encouraged to ask questions.

After I returned to the office, I would sit at my desk and write down my reflections about one of the events I went to that day. Though these were not always published, my *sempai* never failed to read my reports over for me and give me advice about grammar, structure, and content. On days it was decided my article could be published, it would then be handed up to the "Desk," or editors, and I would sit there, chewing at my nails, waiting for judgment to be passed. Sometimes, the verdict asked me to add in a simple clarification or take out a sentence or two; at other times, I was asked to rewrite almost the entire report.

As the weeks went by, I was encouraged more and more to strike out and write articles on my own. I would find a topic that interested me, and then go visit the necessary sources (always with a *sempai* in tow), conduct the necessary interviews, and finally write the actual report. My

biggest article took root when I went with a *sempai* to a mock-wedding that she was covering. There, the bride and groom exchanged wedding rings made from *mizuhiki* (水引), a traditional craft from Kanazawa. Intrigued by the blend of Western and Eastern culture, I visited a shop, locally famous for *mizuhiki* wares, and learned about the meaning and history of the art. The finished article was an amalgam of my first impressions, newfound knowledge, and final reflections.

But, in the end, some of the most rewarding experiences of the summer took place within the office, rather than outside of it. Learning about writing, about Kanazawa, about Japan from my *sempai*, sitting side-by-side with them in an authentic work environment—these moments shine just as brightly as the lanterns that wavered through the streets of Noto on the night of the *Abare-matsuri*. I recommend this internship to students who not only wish to learn about the language and culture of Japan, but want to become part of it. As cliché as this sounds, it really is an experience like no other.

日本の「和」に熱く

目の前の大きな背中が、キリコの重さから私を守り続けてくれた。約8日、1人にもなるキリコを町の人たちと、きりさつと光る広い海まで運んだ。

海に向かってやっつけて私を、町の人たちは、あたたかく迎え入れてくれた。初めて出会ったのに、心まで熱くなった。これこそが、日本の「和」だ。

ジャスミン・リー本社研修記者

能登町ではお祭りが始まった7月4日は、私が生まれたアメリカでは、ちょうど独立記念日のフェスティバルが開かれている。アメリカで最も大きい祭りだ。

独立記念日は、アメリカ人の信仰を表現するような記念日だと思う。アメリカ人が重んじるのは自分や自身の能力、つまり「独立」だ。独立は人を強くするが、孤独を感じさせもする。「上町若連中」と書かれた法被をもらったとき、心の底から感動した。連中は仲間という意味だからだ。漁港前で神輿が燃えるのを見て、神様に「能登の人々を見守ってください」と祈った。炎と能登のあたたかさを感じた。すっくと心に残って離れないだろう。



キリコを担ぐジャスミンさん
＝能登町宇出津

北國新聞：2014/07/06

「金沢」と「東京」組み合わせ

北國新聞社編集局で研修中のジャスミン・リーさん(19)「米・南カリフォルニア大」が、白山総合車両所の一般公開取材し「和の未来」をコンセプトにした新型車両への思いを語った。

私が住んでいるロサンゼルスには、鉄道がほとんどない。代わりに、高速道路がいたるところに走り、私は大学へ通う時、いつも狭い車で1時間、一人の時間を過ごす。

金沢で暮らすようになって2週間。新しい新幹線を見て最新技術と伝統的な美を組み合わせさせたデザインに驚き、この車両には「東京と金沢が表現されている」と感じた。東京はモダンである一方、金沢はまろやかに古い屋敷が残り、部屋を伝統工芸で飾っている。この両面が新幹線車両に表れている。

今の技術と昔の価値を、織り交ぜるのは、日本の一つの特徴だ。基盤現代的な東京から伝統的な金沢まで、日本人も外国人もこの特別な「和の未来」を満喫できることを楽しみにしている。

最高級車両「N700S」のシートに試したジャスミン研修記者



ジャスミン・リー本社研修記者

北國新聞：2014/06/23