



Japanese, South Korean, and Chinese Culture:

# BUT WHO AM I?

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Stuart R. Givens Memorial Fellowship



Growing up in Southern California surrounded by minority cultures, I am most comfortable with coming to better understand myself through the celebration of other's culture.

I discovered a love for Japan in middle school when I wrote and created a Japanese character. Afraid of inappropriately portraying a culture and gender different from my own, I spent my free time researching and became obsessed with finding out about daily life in Japan and Japanese television shows. I resonated with this culture that so often emphasizes attention to detail and community, politeness, and diligence. It felt a lot like the values my parents instilled in me.

In high school, I stumbled upon k-pop and researched about life in Korea. Many English-teaching expats in Korea said that the programs setting up qualified English speakers in Korean schools had the best benefits, opening my eyes to career opportunities. But Korean culture is energetic, raw, and full of drinking, which doesn't match my personality like the quieter Japanese culture.

After I began studying at Bowling Green State University, I joined the community Global Village and began Japanese classes, both of which have made me realize that I tend to share values with the Asian exchange students. It has always been the Japanese exchange students whom I tend to share the most similarities with. This is particularly true of the Kansai region, with its rich history, commercialized port cities, and a dialect with jokes woven in. As someone who not only loves history but grew up in a teasing family, I could not have found a better fit.

Before I work towards becoming an English teacher in Japan, I will attend the 2018 Summer Program and then from fall 2018 until August 2019, I will study at Kobe College in Kansai. Between the summer program and Kobe College, I have to leave the country to get my student visa, and decided the best place is Seoul due to its proximity to Japan and influence on my career choices. I want to use this time to explore firsthand the Korean culture. There will also be a break in February and March 2019 so I can explore Kansai and Chūbu, Japan while staying with host families of previous BSGU exchange students. I propose to experience and observe historical and modern life in urban Seoul and in urban and suburban Japan to better understand what exactly about the cultures I connect so strongly with, so I may come to a better understanding of who I am as a person.

In Seoul, I will visit places of historical significance and modernized areas. Because Japan and Korea have had a tense history and because of urbanization, the Korean government has destroyed several sights indicating previous imperial Japan's control over Korea. In front of the Consulate of Japan remains the Comfort Women Statue, but at Gyeongbokgung Palace, where the Japanese Government-General Building once stood is now the Yeongjegyo Bridge; Naksan Park also reflects past relations with Japan. Incheon-dong, or "Little Tokyo," and Insa-dong show less tense influences and cultural exchange between Korea and Japan. Places showcasing modern versus ancient Korea include Gwanghwannum Square, Jogyesa Temple, Ihwa Mural Village, Changdeokgung Palace, and Seochon Village. In order to more fully immerse myself into the traditions of Korea and to be let into Gyeongbokgung Palace and Changdeokgung Palace without charge, I plan to rent a traditional Hanbok dress for a maximum of 2 days.

After I finish my self-discovery in Seoul, I will fly to Japan for studies until February and March when I stay with host families near Nagoya, Chūbu and Osaka, Kansai. The family near Nagoya maintains their Chinese roots. Witnessing the relationship between Korea and China

with Japan will give me other perspectives on Japan. It will also reveal what life is like in Japan with immigrant parents, which will be my future in Japan. The other family I will stay with is entirely Japanese, so I will come to know typical domestic household life in Japan.

While staying in Chūbu, I plan to take 4 days for my host sister to act as a guide and driver in Nagoya and Inuyama. She will be able to give me a non-sugarcoated version of life in Japan as I immerse into daily life and sites. Historical sites include Nagoya Castle; Meiji-mura Museum, the museum that seems frozen in the Meiji Era; Inuyama Castle; and Urakuen Garden with a teahouse and historical house. Modern sites include Oasis 21, Sunshine Sakae, and Osu, which attract all ages but especially my generation.

While staying with the Japanese family in Kumatori, Kansai, I will explore Osaka, Kyoto, and Nara. I will travel with my other host sister, driver and tour guide. Historical sites in Osaka include Sumiyoshi Taisha Shrine, Daisen Kofun, and Hozenji Yokocho the historical alleyway in bustling Dotonbori. Modern sites of Osaka include Dotonbori, Kuromon Ichiba, Amerikamura, and Shinsekai; these attract everyone but particularly my generation. Next I will set aside time from my domestic life in Kumatori to visit the ancient capital Kyoto. Historical sites include Ginkakuji Temple, Testsugaku no machi, Nazenji Temple, Kiyomizu Temple, Shosei-en Garden, the preserved streets of Saga Torrimoto, and Tenryuji Temple. Semi-modern, popular sites of Kyoto include Gion Corner (the Geisha district come nightfall) and Sagano Bamboo Forest. Finally, I will visit another ancient capital of Japan: Nara. Sites will include Todaiji Temple, Nara Park, Kasuga-taishi Shrine and Forest, and Yoshikien Garden. At some point, when my host family is free, we plan to go to a Hanshin Tigers vs. Yomuri Giants, two of the most competitive rivals in Japan, game in Nishinomiya. Baseball is a very popular in Japan, unique in each team's ōendan (cheering squad) and its ability to bring together all ages. At some point I will also have bought a yukata for immersion in the historical sites and culture.

As someone who has loved both art and Asian culture since middle school, I plan to produce a journal of my photography and writings of finding myself through historic and modern cultures. Both forms of art will be used to reflect Korean, Chinese, and especially Japanese culture.

Thank you for taking them time to ruminate on my proposal.

**Total Cost:****\$6,359.00**

Locations	Total Costs
Seoul, South Korea	\$2,324
Nagoya, Japan	\$298
Osaka, Japan	\$170
Kyoto, Japan	\$278
Nara, Japan	\$174
Nishinomiya, Japan	\$50
Miscellaneous/Incidental	\$3,065

**Total: 10 Days in Seoul, South Korea (July and/or August 2018)****\$2,324.00**

Items	Cost (USD)
<b>Food Subtotal: 300000KRW*</b>	<b>\$282.00</b>
30000KRW/dayx10day = 300000KRW	
<b>Accommodation Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
based on estimated averages of AirBnB for \$100/night = \$100x10days	
<b>Transportation Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$982.00</b>
Estimated cost of roundtrip flight between Japan and Seoul = \$900	
Bus rides: estimated average of 2500KRWxtwice/day = 5000KRWx10days = 50000KRW = \$47	
Subway rides: estimated average of 1350KRWx10days = 13500KRW = \$13	
Between airport and Seoul Station (9000KRWx2 = 18000KRW = \$17)+ between station and AirBnB nearby consulate (2500KRWx2 = 5000KRW = \$5) = \$22	
<b>Activities' Fees Subtotal: 74000KRW</b>	<b>\$60.00</b>
Comfort Women Statue at the Embassy of Japan = 0KRW	
Gwanghwamum Square = 0KRW	
Jogyesa Temple = 0KRW	
Insadong District = 0KRW	
Ihwa Mural Village = 0KRW	
Naksan Park = 0KRW	
Changdeokgung Palace (with Biwon/Huwon garden and Jongmyo Shrine): 11000KRW (or 0KRW with Hanbok experience)	
Gyeongbokgung Palace (with Yeongjegyo Bridge): 3000KRW (or 0KRW with Hanbok experience)	
Seochon Village = 0KRW	
Inchon-dong "Little Tokyo" = 0KRW	
24-hour Hanbok rental to make trips to select historical sites free, including palaces, and to experience traditional Korean garb while exploring historical sites in modern Seoul: 30000KRWx2 = 60000KRW	

\*KRW = Korean won (currency in South Korea)

Total: 4 Days in Nagoya, Japan (February and/or March 2019)

\$298.00		
Items		Cost (USD)
<b>Food Subtotal: ¥16000**</b>		<b>\$150</b>
¥4000/dayx4days = ¥16000		
<b>Transportation Subtotal: ¥11400</b>		<b>\$108</b>
Estimated public transportation (subway and bus rides) for myself OR gas reimbursement: ¥600(within Nagoya) +¥3000(roundtrip between Nagoya and host family's house) = ¥3600x2 = ¥7200		
Day pass to select sites by public transportation: ¥800x4days = ¥3200		
Meiji-mura: ¥1000		
<b>Activities' Fees Subtotal: ¥4250</b>		<b>\$40</b>
Nagoya Castle = ¥500		
Oasis 21 & Sunshine Sakae = ¥500		
Osu = ¥0		
Meiji-mura Museum = ¥1700		
Inuyama Castle = ¥550		
Urakuen Garden (with Joan Teahouse and Kyu Shodenin Shoin House) = ¥1000		
<b>Accommodation Subtotal: ¥0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
Host family		

\*\*¥ = JPY = Japanese Yen (currency in Japan)

Total: 2 Days in Osaka, Japan (February and/or March 2019)

\$170.00		
Items		Cost (USD)
<b>Food Subtotal: ¥8000</b>		<b>\$75</b>
¥4000/dayx2days = ¥8000		
<b>Transportation Subtotal: ¥10000</b>		<b>\$95</b>
Public transportation (subway and bus rides) for myself OR gas reimbursement: ¥600x2days = ¥1200 +¥3000(roundtrip between Osaka and Kumatori) = ¥4200x2 = ¥8400		
Day pass to select sites by public transportation: ¥800x2days = ¥1600		
<b>Activities' Fees Subtotal: ¥0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
Sumiyoshi taisha = ¥0		
Daisen Kofun = ¥0		
Dotonbori (with Ebisu-bashi, Namba Walk, & more) = ¥0		
Hozenji & Hozenji Yokocho = ¥0		
Kuromon Ichiba = ¥0		
Amerikamura = ¥0		
Shinsekai = ¥0		
<b>Accommodation Subtotal: ¥0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
Host family		

Total: 3 Days in Kyoto, Japan (February and/or March 2019)

\$278.00		
Items		Cost (USD)
<b>Food Subtotal: ¥12000</b>		<b>\$113</b>
¥4000/dayx3days = ¥12000		
<b>Transportation Subtotal: ¥13800</b>		<b>\$130</b>
Bike rental: ¥1000/dayx3days = ¥3000		
One day pass to select sites by public transportation: ¥800x3days = ¥2400		
Public transportation (subway and bus rides) for myself OR gas reimbursement: ¥600x3days = ¥1800 +¥3000 (roundtrip between Kyoto and Kumatori) = ¥4800x2 = ¥8400		
<b>Activities' Fee Subtotal: ¥3600</b>		<b>\$35</b>
Ginkakuji = ¥500		
Tetsugaku no machi "Philosopher's Path" = ¥0		
Nanzenji Temple = ¥500		
Keage Incline = ¥0		
Gion Corner / Geisha district = ¥0		
Kiyomizu Temple = ¥300		
Shosei-en Garden (tea house, pond, sakura) = ¥500		
Sagano Bamboo Forest (with Okochi Sanso Villa) = ¥1000		
Saga Toriimoto preserved streets = ¥0		
Togetsukyo Bridge = ¥0		
Tenryuji Temple = ¥800		
<b>Accommodation Subtotal: ¥0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
Host family		

2 Days in Nara, Japan (February and/or March 2019)

\$174.00	
Items	Costs (USD)
Food Subtotal: ¥8000	\$75
¥4000/dayx2days = ¥8000	
Transportation Subtotal: ¥9600	\$90
Bike rental: ¥1000/dayx2days = ¥2000	
One day pass to select sites by public transportation: ¥800x2days = ¥1600	
Roundtrip between Nara and Kumatori (public transportation OR gas): ¥3000x2 = ¥6000	
Activites' Fees Subtotal: ¥900	\$9
Todaiji Temple (with the giant Buddha) = ¥500	
Nara Park = ¥150	
Kasuga-taishi Shrine (with Kasuga Primeval Forest) = ¥0	
Yoshikien Garden = ¥250	
Accomodation Subtotal:	\$0
Host family	

1 Day in Nishinomiya, Japan

\$50.00	
Items	Costs (USD)
Transportation Subtotal (public OR gas): ¥1010	10
Public transportation (subway and bus rides) for myself OR gas reimbursement: ¥1010	
Activities Subtotal: ¥4200	40
Hanshin Tigers vs. Yomiuri Giants game at Hanshin Koshien Stadium: ticket for 1B Alps seats or Right Field seats: ¥2700 + ¥1500 for food = ¥4200	
Accomodation Subtotal:	0
Host family	

Miscellaneous/Incidental (July/August 2018 and February and March 2019)

\$3,065.00	
Items	Costs (USD)
Gifts for the 2 families who will house me (a Japanese cultural custom) = \$50/family =	\$100
Journals for writings and photography	\$20
Inexpensive kimono, or yukata	\$50
Groceries to make Japanese dishes for myself during the week while not traveling: average monthly food expense for cooking at home with plant-based/vegetarian diet: ¥35000/monthx2months=¥70000=	\$650
Round trip flight to/from Japan and Los Angeles (LAX)	\$1,900
Incidentals/emergency buffer \$5/day x (10 days in Seoul + 28 days in Feb. 2019 + 31 days in Mar. 2019) = 5(10+28+31) =	\$345