

# 理学部見聞録

What brought you to RIGAKUBU?

第8回

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## How Dreams Come True!

I dreamed about Japan since I was 12 years old. That time I decided that I would study Japanese, and when I grow up, I will go to Japan.

But my passion began much earlier, when I first watched *Sailor Moon* (美少女戦士セーラームーン\*) and *Shaman King* (シャーマンキング\*) in Russian. Yes, as for many, my interest in Japan started from anime. The atmosphere and stories were so magical, traditional and modern Japan amazingly mixed with the life of ordinary school kids. And I realized that I wanted to understand the original language, I wanted to catch all the cultural and historical references.

In middle school, I had watched the anime *From the New World* (新世界より\*), and probably after that I became interested in biology. Knowing how technologically advanced Japan is, I thought that I could combine my two main hobbies. Thanks to the MEXT program, I managed to enter the School of

Science at the University of Tokyo as a research student.

My first day in Tokyo was crazy ... I do not remember it in detail, but everything was so colorful and noisy, and there were so many people around me! If my tutor had not picked me up at Narita International Airport, I am sure that I couldn't have gotten to my dorm. The Tokyo subway system is very complex compared to Saint Petersburg! Immediately after arrival, I went to the laboratory and talked with my supervisor, Professor Kazuo Emoto. He calmed me; I realized that I would definitely like this place.

During my studies in the lab, I also had the opportunity to travel around Japan. For example, I went to Okinawa to take the GRE Biology subject test. Emoto Laboratory allows me to keep a healthy work-life balance: I have enough time for experiments and my hobbies. The first place from my dreams where I got to go was the Ghibli Museum. It was really cool; I felt like a 12 year old girl again and even took a photo with the robot from *Castle in the Sky* (天空の城ラピュタ\*).

Later, during the winter holidays, my friends and I went to Kansai to see Nara's famous deer. And of course, I have to mention Japanese pet cafes! I like cats and rabbits, but my favorite animals are in hedgehog cafes.



Photo from Hedgehog Café HARRY.

### Profile

2019 - Present Research Student, School of Science, The University of Tokyo  
2014 - 2018 Bachelor's degree in Biology, Department of Cytology and Histology, Saint Petersburg State University



Photo with the robot from *Castle in the Sky* at the Ghibli Museum.

I like the atmosphere in my lab: everyone is caring and friendly, and they always answer my questions. Professors provide great opportunities to get acquainted with various topics; it allows me to grow as a scientist. I always wanted to study neurological diseases, and after long discussions with my supervisor, I decided to choose post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as my research topic. This problem is interesting and close to me: as a child, I was bitten by a stray dog. And now, every time I see a large barking dog, I feel discomfort. That is why I would like to understand the molecular mechanisms underlying PTSD.

I am grateful to the School of Science for the opportunity to meet and make friends with wonderful people from my laboratory who always help me in difficult times.

\*The Japanese title of the anime.