

Report on the International Symposium/Workshop in Japanese Literary and Visual Studies
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The International Symposium/Workshop in Japanese Literary and Visual Studies, held on February 28–29, 2020, at Columbia University was among the most impressive symposiums I have attended in recent years.

I found the symposium to be a very enlightening experience in many ways. As is always the case with symposiums held jointly by Waseda and Columbia Universities, the topics discussed by the presenters were diverse, covering both modern and premodern periods, crossing the fields of literary and visual studies, and encompassing crucial issues in recent scholarship. The symposium broadened my perspective and gave me the opportunity to interact and exchange ideas with scholars, one that I would not otherwise have had. The atmosphere of the symposium was positive and engaging, which encouraged our active communication.

As someone who gave a presentation entitled: “Exploring the Language of Translation: Futabatei Shimei’s ‘Parent’s Heart,’ ‘The Depression Bug,’ and Literary Standards in the 1890s–1900s”, I found it challenging to keep to its 15-minute limit. This was, however, a good opportunity for me to learn to refine my writing, decide what kinds of information I should include or remove, and identify the right structure to convey my main points with fewer words. The comments and feedback I received from professors and colleagues were also enlightening, allowing me to consider the importance of presenting material with simplicity and clarity without sacrificing necessary substance. The knowledge and insights I gained from this symposium will help me further develop and strengthen my dissertation. I would like to thank everyone once again for their participation and invaluable suggestions.

It was also very refreshing to have an opportunity to talk with other students and presenters working in the field of modern Japanese literature from other universities and with various backgrounds. I would like to express my utmost gratitude to the organizers and everyone else who worked hard to create a friendly and inspiring environment for knowledge sharing, learning, lively discussion and networking on a global level. I look forward to the next opportunity to meet you all to share our work and learn from one another.