

On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

Report in 2010

—Arabic, al-Diwan, Graden City, Egypt, Qasid, Jordan, 21 Dec. 2010 - 21 Mar.
2011—

Year of Enrollment: 2010

Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies

Haruka Endo

On My research theme and/or Language Training (about 400 words)

My research topic is the theory of Ibn ‘Arabi, an Islamic mystical philosopher who lived in 12-13th century. His theory is called “Oneness of Being” and its influence can still be observed throughout the Islamic world. Using this program, I went to Egypt to study Arabic in order to be able to read and understand what Ibn ‘Arabi preaches in his books. I was supposed to study at a language school in Cairo for three months. However, after one and a half month, the school was closed due to the anti-government demonstrations. As the demonstrations persisted, I was forced to leave Egypt for Jordan at the beginning of February. Around 2 weeks after arriving in Jordan, I found a language school in Amman and resumed my studies. Both in Egypt and Jordan, I studied 5 days a week, with each class lasting 2 to 3 hours. I chose the one-on-one teaching course so that I could improve my Arabic as much as possible. At the school in Egypt, I was taught standard Arabic along with a conversation textbook. Sometimes we also read short articles from newspapers and discussed their contents, and sometimes we listened to music and read poetry. The course was very flexible and the teacher was always trying to meet my educational demands. All the teachers and staff were very friendly and made me feel at home. On the other hand, the school in Jordan gave me the impression of being more systematic and organized, with more sophisticated and capable teachers. In these classes, the teacher gave me articles to read and discuss. We also did related exercises and I sometimes wrote my opinion about them in short essays.

Finally, in spite of a one-month class interruption, I believe that I have made the best use of this program to improve my Arabic. During my stay in Egypt and Jordan, I tried to expose myself to Arabic as much as possible. For example, I was always carrying a notebook to be able to write down any new words that people use. Also, I always asked people who can speak English not to speak it but to speak Arabic when talking to me. What I regret the most is that I did not have time to read books related to my own research topic with my teacher and that I failed to collect sources related to my research.