



城西国際大学水田記念図書館

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Going Back to the Library

語学教育センター Angel Figueroa

Memories flooded me as I entered the university library. They were triggered by several simple actions. First, there was the electronic gate that swung open with a beep as I touched the sensor with my ID card. However mundane, it recalled the feeling I had when I was a student many years ago of crossing a threshold into a fairylike place of knowledge and learning for only selected members. Then there was my treading on the thick soft carpet, with pleasant sights of neatly displayed books on small tables, which acted as a delightful welcome. As the expanse of the first of three floors opened before me, with high columns of books interspersed by reading tables, I noticed how their chairs were snugly set in place. It was a warm and soothing sight, with a sense of inviting familiarity. From above, fluorescent lights cast a cool glow that made everything look sparkingly clean and precisely organized, setting a mood for quiet study and concentration for the scattered, lone students who were focused on their studies. I used to know this feeling all too well. All these sensations mingled with the heavy silence to at once loosen my shoulders, kindle a spark of focus on the task at hand, and to fortify myself against distractions. It felt so comfortable, but it was also surreal being back in a place that was once so familiar to me when I was a university student. I was reminded of the saying by the Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges – whom I had studied -- that paradise is a kind of library.

The one common motif in these memories involved books. I had grown up with books, but it was not just that I enjoyed reading so much. My earliest memories involved seeing my father reading books all the time, and it was not just his past time. There were books all over the house but also in his place of work, where I would visit sometimes after school. It came as no surprise to me that he actually worked with books. Books were everywhere, all the time, in his life. He was a university librarian, first as a cataloger then as a reference librarian.

I became familiar with the library setting from a young age. Between my father's workplace and local public libraries, I found delight immersing myself in many areas, such as in European comic albums, illustrated reference books, as well as 19th century Russian and 20th century British literature. Fantasy and science fiction novels also had their impact on me -- a natural escape for any teenager. Thus, before I had become a university student, I had already logged countless hours of library visits, and among my profound influences and budding expertise were the worlds of the Belgian journalist Tintin, European vintage stamps, Mayan hieroglyphs, the intriguing character insights of Dostoyevsky and Graham Greene, as well as the amazing worlds of JRR Tolkien and Iain M. Banks.

Then followed my life chapter as a university student, where my library visits housed my studies in history, Latin American literature, and linguistics.

Perhaps there are universal rules about a library regardless of country or setting: they are peaceful and soothing places which allow you to open your mind, focus deeply, and grow with ever more interconnected knowledge over time. (Yet of course the more you learn, the more you realise the vast amount of your unfamiliarity across a range of subjects).

The university library that I was entering now – as an assistant professor, not a student --- half a planet away from the libraries of my upbringing was not so different. There was a sense of home: a comfortable state of mind when time stood still.

How ironic it was then that I had not been visiting the library much since being hired a few years ago. One would think that I would have embraced such a familiar setting. But on the contrary, I had not. The reason soon became clear. Whenever I passed the library entrance and was reminded of my father, my childhood, my love of books, and my days as a university student, this in fact triggered a wall of bittersweet nostalgia stopping me from entering the library. What was the explanation? I suppose it involved the intensity of my experiences and recollections of my recently deceased father.

When there finally came a reason to visit the library, the nostalgia broke away to uncover what was like a delightful reunion. I learned of a journal article that was needed for my research, and it was only available via an academic database. While the visual cues from entering the library helped rekindle my fondness for the 'library experience', this was enhanced by what happened at the computer console where I input the search terms for the article. As it appeared on the screen, I copied the bibliographical data on a small bit of scrap paper. The sound of the pencil scrawling across the paper was like music to my ears. I showed it to a librarian who provided me with a PDF within minutes. I was grateful, thrilled, rejuvenated and looking forward to my next visit.

学生選書

皆さんが投票した資料を、絶賛展示中！

紀尾井町
キャンパス

昨年 10 月の選書委員募集から始まり、11 月の投票を経て、皆さんに選ばれた図書 108 冊、電子書籍 50 タイトル、DVD50 本を貸出しています（DVD は室内のみ）。話題の本や美しい絵画の本など、バラエティーに富んだラインナップです。選書委員が作成したイラストやコメントが満載のポップも必見ですので、ぜひ図書室にお立ち寄りください。



カリスマ書店員も顔負けの
アートな手作りポップ



◆東金キャンパス展示◆

「観て楽しい、読んで嬉しい映画・ドラマ原作」

東金キャンパスでは、映画やドラマの原作となった図書と、映像化作品のDVDを集めて展示しています。原作と映像の両方を味わうことで、新たな発見が生まれるかもしれません。



◆開館カレンダー◆

3月						
日	月	火	水	木	金	土
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

■ 開館 9:00~17:00

■ 休館

休館・開館時間は変更することがあります。詳細はホームページ/Xでご確認ください。

