

Why I am interested in the Japanese culture

My story of love for the Japanese culture began likely as many other stories, but when I look back at it, it seems simply incredible to me what a single country 9000km away from Germany can do to a life that was near death.

It all began in my childhood when I first played Final Fantasy 7 on the PlayStation. Back then it was only a little interest about Japan itself and not especially Japanese culture but as time goes by, I started to read manga and watched late at night the few German-dubbed anime on public TV. Later, in middle and high school, I watched anime with German subtitles and began to work with different fan groups to subtitle them myself, to make anime more popular in Germany when they were only aired very rarely on music channels. I did it with passion, grabbing every little bit that crossed my way and finally found myself without noticing absorbed in Japanese culture that was so different from the German one. It was my dream to visit Japan as soon as possible and to work there as an IT specialist. But when I look back at it, it seems to me that this was simply a little corner in my heart at that time, maybe sadly nothing more than a hobby.

After high school I moved quieted a bit away from my hometown to find love, job training at an IT company and new friends. My fascination about Japan still prevailed but I stopped to make subtitles and involving me in Japanese movements for anime and manga which were pretty active for some time. It was a part of my life where my focus switched from youth to adulthood, pushing past hobbies aside to gain more room for a financial fundament for the future. But then, one simple day changed my whole life.

It was a few days before my 23 birthday and I was working normally as every day at work, when suddenly my heart beating faster and faster, then abruptly stopped. The next thing I remember was waking up in the intensive care unit in hospital where I was told that I lied there for about 9 days in artificial coma. Luckily enough I recovered relatively fast within one month where I passed through multiple medical check-ups to find the cause of what exactly happened to me. In between I thought many, many hours over my life and that this accident that no one could foresee have ended it within one blink of a second. This was the point where I realized that all what I have done so far was only preparation for a good future of mine and not enjoying the here and now. My dream of visiting Japan and working there was up to this point simply a wish and nothing more than that. But now I realized that dreams and wishes aren't there to be only dreamt of. There around to be fulfilled, to be lived out. It was that day in my hospital bed where I made up my mind to do these things I only dreamt of. At that time I found a website from a man who is in a quiet similar situation as I'm was. He has a severe illness and doesn't know how long he will lives, but opposed to this he is living his dream of bringing Japanese culture to anyone around the world and enjoying every part of it. I thing I owe that man a great deal of the enthusiasm that drives my forward to live my dream as he is.

After I got released from the hospital I searched for a speech course for Japanese beginners in my town and joined one with a friend of mine. Finally this year I started to study computer science and planning a term abroad in Japan to work towards my dream of working there.

As I write this text I'm still amazed how a single country, a single culture and a single man living his dream that far away can change a person to start not only dreaming of but beginning to live his wish that he has since childhood but that was forgotten in the flow of time.

It's my dream to visit this country that changed me and it's my dream to fascinate other people of that culture so that many more people begin to not only dream of the land of the rising sun.