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An Overseas Postdoctoral Experience: or There and Back Again

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It is possible for a U.S. citizen to gain a PhD in Hobbit-like fashion, never adventuring outside his or her home state, let alone outside the country. This is the story of one such Hobbitish PhD who found himself with the opportunity to have his first postdoctoral experience in north-east Japan, took it, and what happened after. The tale will include the following: my postdoc hunting experience and decision making process as a grad student (such as it was); my experience overseas; my experience finding a faculty position; and whatever lessons I can draw from this for graduate students preparing for the postdoc search today.