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Paris and Kyoto

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As time passes, international exchange between different universities is increasing, and foreign students are becoming more commonly seen on campus. When I was a student on the 50s and 60s, we could not leave Japan freely and foreign countries were an unknown world. Today the world has become smaller. But the experience we get on the actual site of any foreign university makes us realize that a great distance exists between our university and universities abroad.

In 1959, I went to France for a few years on a French Government scholarship and studied at l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The main campus of this school is located on the old site of the convent of the Petits Augustins on the left river side (rive gauche) of the Seine near to the Louvre. I was received in one of the workshops traditionally called “ateliers extérieurs”. This atelier was under the supervision of two patron-architects, Edouard Albert, a well-known architect of the University of Jussieu (Université Paris 7), and Jean Hervé and it occupied the fifth floor of a building situated on rue Jacques Callot in a very popular area filled with cafés, boutiques, and galleries. It was set apart from the main campus area, where there were “ateliers intérieurs”. Teaching methods were an authoritarian apprenticeship system, based on the seniority of the patron professors, atelier master, senior pupils down to new comers. It was a complete and radical training to form a person as an architect in full sense of the word. There was no geographically defined campus for this school, and its real educational environment coincided with so-called “Quartier Latin”, a well known student district of the “rive gauche”. After the violent student revolt of May 1968, the architecture department separated from l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts and moved to the peripheral zones of Paris, and regrouped into eight “unités pédagogiques”, that is eight schools of architecture. The destination sites are each in the downtown center of diverse districts and they occupy mostly old buildings urgently rehabilitated. Most students and teachers from the atelier of Hervé-Albert went to 144, avenue de Flandre to establish the new school of architecture qualified as l'Unité Pédagogique n. 6, in the semi-industrial waste lands of 19th arrondissement of Paris, where originally there stood a church and two cemeteries. Not far away, the former location of a slaughterhouse and mills had been renovated. There is now the new vast modern urban park of la Villette. Nevertheless the district of Rue de Flandres still retains its popular atmosphere on the outskirts of Paris.

Without any geographically defined campus, all these newly established schools of architecture are located in isolated urban patches and function just as local urban facilities. Especially in the case of the architecture school of la Villette, the campus seems to function only as an educational meeting place between students, teachers, researchers, and architects. It probably represents an extreme example of a completely open school. The fact that the school site has a marvelous atmosphere gives a special character distinct from the neighboring quarter. In this environment, over the academic years, students often follow several advanced disciplines in different university institutions, such as history, archeology, geography, anthropology, sociology, town-planning, etc. in which some of them defend their doctoral thesis. This type of educational environment constitutes a kind of network all over the city and encompasses the daily life of students and teachers. It acts as another “Quartier Latin” at which all kinds of advanced university study and research takes palce.

The voluntary exchange of students and researchers between UP-6 and the Department of Architecture began about 1964 with financial aide from the Architectural Research Foundation (Kentiku-Kenkyû-Kyôkai). At that time after five years stay in Paris, I was employed as an assistant at Kyoto University. In March 1977, the official contract for an exchange of students between these two institutions was signed by Mr. Claude Thoret, the then-director of UP-6 and by Professor Ryôzô Tôei, dean of the Faculty of Engineering in Kyoto University. Every year the Japanese Ministry of Education is approached for scholarship funds. The purpose is to allow annual exchange of one student from Paris with one student from Kyoto. Until now, 23 students from the Department of Architecture went on to complete Masters or Doctorates. Sixteen students from Paris came to Kyoto University. The stay in Paris for Japanese students helped their advanced master or doctorate degrees. Some from UP-6 became teachers at UP-6 after obtaining their doctorate in Japan or in France and others continue to do research at CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), etc. Some researchers benefiting from this exchange actively published in international seminars. The main interests of French students are focused on the principles of traditional Japanese architecture and culture; modern and contemporary Japanese architecture, which are well known to them; or landscape and environmental design problems, popular areas of interest between Japan and France. Students from Kyoto University are generally interested in historical city formation in France, works of modern European architects, methodology of urbanism, and historical studies of French architecture.

In 1985 Professor Philippe Boudon, one of the leading theoreticians in UP-6, invited me to attend an international (Continued on Page 3)
木村 逸郎
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New York市の喧騒を離れて、Hudson川を約240km北に巡ると、New York州都のAlbany市がある。この近郊には、古いアメリカの伝統が残り、また京都のように多くの大学がある。その一つRPIは、米国最後の工業大学として175年的歴史を誇り、多くの人材を養成するものとして知られている。

さて、RPIは工業大学なので、工学部があるが、他の建築学部、人間学・社会系、経済学部と理学部がある。工学部には、以下に9学科を10センターがある。1）医学・生物工学、2）化学工学、3）土木・環境工学、4）決定科学・学術システム、5）電力工学、6）電気・計算機システム工学、7）材料工学、8）機械・航空工学・メカニクス、9）エネルギー・環境科学（以前の原子核工学）。また、センターには、多相流研究などトピックスを捉えたものが多い。京都大学（京大）とRPIの間で、以前から多くの教官や学生の交流があり、昭和62年には両大学の橋本英治攻の間で大学院特別コース学生間の協定が結ばれ、その後上記Block教授らの尽力により、平成7年には両工学部間の研究・教育協力協定が締結された。さらに同年に両大学間の授業料の権限の協定が結ばれ、文部省の承認も得られた。急速、京大は大学間修士課程の大学1名がRPIのエネルギー・環境科学専攻へ、RPIからは博士課程の学生がRPI工学部電気工学科へ留学した。

本年度で、最初の協定の期間（3年）が満了するので、さらに5年間が延長された。そして、これまで交流が盛況でなかった原因と対策について、現在Block教授とE-mailで討論中である。例年RPI側で、京大への留学希望を募る30人以上もの申し出があるが、まず日本語教育が十分なものであるため大半が断る。次に人数を絞り、もっぱら学の奨学金が当たらないため、総合1名も来られないことが多い。一方、京大側では、RPIへ留学したいという学生が少ないのが問題で、情報伝達の方法を工夫すべきであると反省しているが、もう少し留学支援体制が充実していれば宣伝しやすいことも事実である。米国とは異なり、21世紀に向けて学生の交流、どのように留学の意義は決して低下していない。パイプがかみそられなくなったように見えるのは残念である。

What is it like, to live in a foreign country like Japan? That’s what I am usually asked when I return to Germany. The answer is simple: it’s not so different from home. One is got his work, his salary, friends, hobbies etc., BUT...and then usually a long list follows, including all the apparent small differences compared with home. Things like ATU’s that take a "nap" during the night, the great variety in the meaning of the word ‘yes’, or just trains that really are on time, not to mention sales clerks who smile while saying ‘Welcome (Irasshaimase!)’ (In Germany, the customer has sometimes the status of a ‘disturbing event’). Of course, the biggest gap is the language. While one can more or less survive in Europe just by using English, it is unavoidable in Japan to learn the language, especially for those who are here for the long term. Just a little bit of Japanese goes far, an experience I especially learned during my first trip to Japan in 1995.

At that time, I was taking part in a student exchange program organized by the Department of Chemical Engineering, Kyoto University. I worked as a trainee at the R&D Center of Kuraray Co., a company located in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture. Though Kurashiki is a city of more than 400,000 inhabitants, it can be considered countryside. The first thing I noticed on my arrival was the near absence of any roman letters, therefore I worked on the Japanese alphabet and Kanji as well as some key sentences. The success was great: I didn’t mix up male and female toilets. I even could take a train without a second sketch with an explanation and therefore reached the level of a 2nd year elementary school pupil. By these experiences, the general assumption in Germany that one can survive with English everywhere was somehow reduced to a rumor. (I heard that one can experience the same in Paris as a tourist...)

So you might suppose nothing could surprise me when I came to Japan a second time. Well, I already experienced those ‘first impressions’ you get when arriving in Japan, taking the Haruka-Express to Kyoto and just looking outside the window. Also, I already had eaten most of the exotic food in Japan you are served when your host wants to check you out. As for me, raw octopus makes me hungry rather than makes me disgusted. But nevertheless, studying in Kyoto was far different from working in the countryside. First of all, there is the city itself. While I was living in Kurashiki, meeting a foreigner was quite a rare event, but here in Kyoto, there are comparably many foreigners of different origin. Moreover, due to the beautiful riverside of the Kamo and the very special interpretation of traffic rules in Kyoto, the atmosphere is more ‘Mediterranean’ compared with a mostly industrial town like Kurashiki. But the greatest difference is work itself.

If there is something one cannot escape from in a Japanese company, it is safety control, condensed in the slogan ‘Anzen Dai-chi’ - safety first. Of course, in most companies there are those safety measure rules like ‘Never put your hands...
in your pockets just in case you stumble! however, having a safety drill every morning was first for me. During roll call, we repeated the safety slogan in chorus while pointing with our index finger to the safety slogan. This safety drill was followed by a kind of road safety lecture. Everyday, a member of the office reported a ‘near miss’-story he had on his way to work in order to warn other members to take care at certain dangerous spots. (Actually, as far as I know, most work-related accidents in the chemical industry happen while commuting…) Of course, research in academia and in business is different in every country; however, the difference seems to be much greater in Japan. Except some basic rules like ‘Do not smoke in the experiential room!’ the rule, “No complainant, no defendant” is applied. The other main difference is the presentation of results. In my company, every member of the office had to report during each morning briefing what he had done and what he intended to do. Therefore, everybody knew what was going on in the other workgroups. After this briefing, another briefing, namely that of the working group, took place, sometimes followed by a discussion under four eyes…however, the pace at work was steady, or, that is how it appeared to me. At the university, on the other hand, the pace seems rapidly to increase when a thesis presentation comes closer; you better not ask one student to join a party just before the summer break or New Year (chukan happyo).

So is the author of this article disappointed from the work at a Japanese university? Different opinions and problems can emerge everywhere during an academic stay in Japan or in Germany, at a university or in a company. It’s good to see one’s stay in Japan as a challenge and to seize this opportunity and accept it. I did the later, and just extended my stay here at Kyoto University.

* 私が感じた日本と中国の“違い”

唐 軍

材料化学専攻 博士課程3年

日本の留学前に、十年以上中国の大学での生活を送った。中国の大学での生活は「life in the ivory tower」といわれているのに対して、日本の大学生活はどのようなものか、ずぶぶん想像をした。今、京都大学で三年間研究生活をしたが、京都大学の印象というものはどれも書けない命題だろう。普通の留学生活の一人として、自分の目で感じた両国の学生の考え方の違いについて書いてみようと思う。

まず、両国の学生の札幌と学問に対する認識の差について述べてみよう。日本の学生は学問に対しては gibt keine 時間がある。日本人にはあまり食べようもないような感じ。学生にして、日本の学生はいくら無茶な料理でも含め診てみる気持ちが強い。ところが面白いことに、学問においては関係が逆転する。日本の学生は好きな分野で好きな分野であるそれを理解しようと。それに比べて中国の学生は、自分が興味を持ってものに対しては深く探求するもので、そうでないものは見向きもしないという危険な選択をしている人多い。つまり、日本の学生の生業が“広さ”を注目するのに対して、中国の学生は“深さ”を注目するという傾向があるよう思う。

日本の大学の研究室では、先生なし先輩が具体的な研究手順を生かして細かく教えることが普通になっているようだ。言い換えれば、一種の伝統のようものですとも言えるかもしれない。だから、２、３人の切れ者が研究室にいれても問題なグループを作ることが出来る。一方、中国では“先生は困ったときの道しるべの存在であり、どうやって修行するかは自己次第である”という背からの方針を持っているために学生はほったらかしである。そのため自分達で勉強することになる。私はどちらとも言えないのだから。むしろどちらも必要だと思う。まず要求や指導に従って行動する習慣は人となりましたから、自分だけを研究に進めるイベントを持つことが出来なくなるような気がする。逆に自由放任だと勉強したことがすぐに忘れてしまう危険性もあるかもしれない。だから私は、“教育的な環境”と“積極的に学ぶ環境”に、及び“教員と博士ができる環境”のいずれもを求めていた。

長い歴史の中で、京都大学は科学のいくつかの分野における独創的で創造的な研究で勝負してきた。そんな環境の中で活躍してきた教授のことを日本に来て改めて感じた。また現在も科学的分野で京都大学はハイレベルを維持している。こんな環境にいる教授下で研究を出来る学生は本当に恥ずかしいと思う。しかし手厚い指導が受けられるのだから。前にも述べたが、中国では学生からあまり手厚い指導を受けることができないので、数少ない優秀な学生以外、たくさんの学生は研究の現場から落ち込んでいる。これは本当に残念で、大きな違いであろう。

以上は一人の留学生から見た感想である。すべてにおいて正しいと言えないと思う。しかしながら、多くの面で日本と中国の間の“違い”を感じたのは本当に。良くない違いはより良い方に変わっていきたいと、両方の大学を私は思う。

(Continued from Page 1)

Kyoto University, like most Japanese national universities, continues to have a clearly defined campus area surrounded by fences. Today the actuality is that the university organisation suffers from this system of campus land use, as well as a lack of sufficient campus area. What impression do foreign people get when they visit our spacially rigid campus secluded in the middle of Kyoto city? A sense of alienation is apparent, not only from a physical environmental problem but also to the sensibility and pragmatic aspect of its occupants.

A sudden change of atmosphere allows us to maintain human relations in a diverse manner. I clearly feel that the substantial essence of an international exchange is seeking young generations who keep Paris and Kyoto as their second home spread throughout the world.
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) is located to the northeast of Nairobi, 35km away from its downtown. The university originally started as Jomo Kenyatta College of Agriculture and Technology for diploma level education in the early 1980s after land was donated by the first president’s family. In conjunction with the Japanese Grant Aid Programme, buildings and equipment were provided.

In the late 1980s, it became a substituent college of Kenyatta University when B.S. level education was started, and maintained the support of the Japanese government. In 1993, it became the fifth independent national university after Nairobi, Moi, Kenyatta and Egerton, with a special emphasis on training more practical engineers necessary for the further development of Kenya.

The university is formed of the Faculties of Agriculture, Engineering, and Science; the Japanese government being solely responsible for the faculties of Agriculture and Engineering, and the department of Computer Science. The departments of Horticulture, Agricultural Engineering, Food Science and Post-harvest Technology make up one faculty while Civil Engineering, Architecture, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering make up the other. The diploma and B.Sc. graduates so far amount to 1200 and 563 respectively. JKUAT is becoming the most competitive university in Kenya, and this is owed to the continuous guidance of the support committee chaired over 20 years by Hirono Nakagawa, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, and the devotion of JICA experts. It is now considered to be the most successful JICA Technical Cooperation Project.

Although the organization of the university and its education system follow the British system due to Kenya’s history and this is owed to the continuous guidance of the supporting committee chaired over 20 years by Hirono Nakagawa, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, and the devotion of JICA experts. It is now considered to be the most successful JICA Technical Cooperation Project. The first time I visited JKUAT was in 1994 upon request of the Civil Engineering Department which needed an expert in structural engineering and testing technology. Since then, I have made five consecutive visits to organize the structural engineering group. However, promoting enthusiasm in teaching and research among the Kenyan academic staff is very difficult. The cost of living in Kenya is one-fifth of Japan; whereas the average salary is less than one-fifteenth. Therefore, most of the Kenyans including firm-employed engineers face a daily battle for survival which does not allow them to devote themselves to the development of their country. Kenyans people traditionally were pure and peaceful surrounded by all kinds of nature according to their legends until European culture was imposed on them. Kenyans still think that even though they are poor in material things, they are very rich in heart and spirit. However, colonization and capitalization which occurred after Independence have produced a lot of poverty and hunger, resulting in a lessening of harmony. The worst problem is wealth-concentration and the unfortunate desire to belong to high society by people who do not rise according to their own ability. This causes chaos, grudges, and bribery (kitu kidogo). In a related manner, many brilliant young students have difficulties in finance and in getting promoted, and only pursue high class scores without understanding basic principles. Lack of books and literature also limits students because quite a large number of their teachers are not capable of teaching the content of the syllabus. It is our responsibility to provide opportunities that allow young people to be exposed to all sources of information for accumulating knowledge and eventual promotion.

The life in Kenya offers Japanese a refreshing change physically and mentally as well as providing an exciting exposure to a unique culture completely different from those of Europe and Asia. Visits to African Heritage Sites also brings one to the heart of Africa which is fascinating, and makes international cooperation easier. On the other hand, many Kenyans have studied abroad in recent years and have been exposed to foreign cultures, which has encouraged them to work enthusiastically. I believe that this is the basis for mutual cooperation among people from different backgrounds. To this end, I hope the harmony between nature and life becomes a reality in the future just like it was back before, and that JKUAT may play a significant part in the development of the 21st century.

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Observation of the Campus

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