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KIT is actively promoting a stimulating, international environment for Japanese and foreign students

FURUYAMA, Masao

Vice-Director of the International Exchange Center
Vice-President

This year in April, the Kyoto Institute of Technology will undergo its biggest reformation since the university was founded. In November 2004, we redefined our academic philosophy to be: 'Questing for useful knowledge in science, shaping the creative mind through the arts, and teaching leading-edge technologies in engineering.' Through this new philosophy, based on an integrated six-year undergraduate-graduate program, with the aim of producing graduates that are ideally suited to working in international situations, we hope to provide our students with highly specialized technological knowledge. As part of this new philosophy, we hope to attract more international students to KIT to expand our existing worldwide network.

Last year, as preparation for this major transformation, we started promoting a unified program for creating critical international specialists. Students participating in this program are sent to KIT sister universities in other countries and given the opportunity to apply their knowledge in local contexts, while learning practical, international communication skills. International exchange is being promoted to not only KIT students but teachers and administrative staff members. To promote the internationalization at our entire campus, we believe that a departure from a Japan-centric education paradigm is essential. This will lead to the creation of a stimulating, globally-oriented atmosphere that will have great benefits for both Japanese and foreign students.

A comprehensive overhaul of the curriculum is a key aspect of the university's internationalization. To produce a higher level of practical language education, our English classes will be taught by native speakers. Successful entrance to graduate studies at KIT will be based, in part, on TOEFL and TOEIC scores. We have also doubled the number of Chinese classes since Japanese students are getting interested in Chinese. These are just some of the ways KIT is approaching the challenges of international language education.

We are also actively focusing our attention on previously unexplored areas such as Kyoto's world famous expertise in traditional handicrafts. We feel there is a lot to be gained by scientifically analyzing the underlying fundamentals of these traditions. In particular, we hope that KIT's international students will benefit from learning more about Kyoto's unique cultural aspects.

As part of its promotion of international education, KIT hosts an exchange party twice a year, in summer and winter, to give Japanese and international students a chance to meet and communicate. For the annual February exchange event, organized by the president of KIT, we invite guests from embassies and consulates, and teachers and students from KIT affiliated universities. We will also continue KIT's popular international student excursions to Japanese factories and cultural sites.

Finally, we would like to ask our readers for more information about international KIT alumni associations. We have heard about such associations but in many instances do not have any specific information. If you are a member of one of these associations or know of one in your home country please let us know. Many KIT teachers would be very interested in joining such groups. I would be very pleased to see a continued expansion of KIT's international network.



At the First Student Study Tour
in August 2005



At the Year-end Party
in December 2005

International Exchange from the Perspective of Student Education

HAGIWARA, Yoshimichi

Professor
Division of Control of Transport Phenomena
Department of Mechanical and System Engineering
Faculty of Engineering and Design



In our lab, we are doing research on mechanical and system engineering, especially related to the control of transport phenomena. We are actively cultivating language skills and an international perspective through the research process and in our daily conversations. Right now, we have 9 undergraduates and 11 graduate students actively working on research projects that range from heat transfer enhancement by using micro-bubbles, new-type heat exchanger, the drag reduction of water flow by polymer additives. The mechanism of friction drag reduction in dolphins.

We have 2 foreign students in our lab. One is from China and is in his senior year. The other is a graduate student from Thailand. The Chinese student has good Japanese ability and the Thai student uses both Japanese and English to communicate. The Thai student and I always speak in English. Some Japanese people encourage foreign students to learn Japanese, but I don't think so. Studies on mechanical engineering have been done mostly in Western countries and English is a highly analytical language. Therefore, a good knowledge of English is essential for research. Students also have chances to attend international conferences and present their work in English. For all of these reasons, I encourage the use of English in daily communication and scientific discussion.

I also think it is very important for students to study abroad to improve their English and broaden their international understanding. One of our research members is now studying in a graduate school in the U.S. I have also studied abroad. Because of my experience, I try very hard to prepare my students for their international studies. As part of that preparation, I recommend all of my students to use the

internet to find researchers in other countries working in similar areas. Beyond the world of research, students also need to learn as much as they can about the culture, lifestyle and people of the country they are planning to study in. Whenever possible I tell my students to visit that country in advance to learn about the local environment. This is also true of students who come to Japan to study or do research.

Our research group will continue to accept foreign students and send Japanese students abroad. One day, I hope all of these students will find ways to interact on a global and their mutual research goals.



in the laboratory

The Beauty of Spring and Summer in the Old Capital

In the spring, as the waters of the Kamogawa River warm up, the Higashiyama mountains, on the east side of Kyoto, are often covered with mist. This is a sign that spring has arrived in Kyoto. Flower buds are everywhere and we sense that the severe days of winter are at an end. Then, day by day, blossoms of all colors and shapes begin to bloom and the fresh green leaves unfold to signal the beginning of summer. After the rainy days of June, July arrives and the sweet, familiar sounds of the Gion Festival fill the air.

Spring in Kyoto is a season of flowering beauty. First, the warm winds from the east fill with the sweet fragrance of plum blossoms. Then, the wondrous season of the cherry blossom begins. Kyoto is famous throughout Japan for hanami (cherry blossom viewing). Along the Path of Philosophy, and at Heian Shrine, Daigo Temple, Omuro, Arashiyama and countless other exquisite locations throughout the Old Capital people from all over Japan come to celebrate the fragile, often-short-lived beauty of sakura (cherry blossoms). After the sakura season, the flowers of the azalea and peony color the town with their bright pink, white and red flowers. Around the same time, the long mauve flowers of the wisteria vine tremble in the warm spring breezes, and, at the water's edge, the strong blue flowers of irises create a happy scene. And in the background, the

mountains of Kyoto light up with delicate shades of green as the first leaves of the year appear.

The Japanese summer begins in June with the rainy season and yet the natural surroundings continue to offer colorful gifts. June is the season of the hydrangea and their large, multi-blossom flowers appear as balls of light in the rain. The warm, wet weather also turns the rice fields into watery, green carpets that will mature to produce the golden rice of the autumn harvest.

As the rainy season comes to a close, the hot sun blazes down on the pavements of the city and the season of the Gion Festival begins. With the "kon chiki chin" sounds of the festival music ringing through the streets of the downtown area, people begin to anticipate the huge parade of festival floats on July 17th.

After weeks of intensely hot days, the Festival for the ancestry (the Bon Festival) is celebrated throughout Japan. On August 16th, at the end of the festival in Kyoto, the Gozan Okuribi fires are lit to guide the spirits back to their world. For many, the large Buddhist symbols burning on the hillsides of the city signal the end of the summer in the Old Capital. And soon the days begin to cool and the magnificent days of autumn begin.



Kyoto – Cairo.....Japan – Egypt Dialogue for future

"Back on its golden hinges, the gate of memory swings and my heart goes into the garden and walks with the olden things."

My heart dwells and finds its comfort, ease and happiness where memories of Kyoto flourish. It is the shaded fruitful place where the first seeds of my life objectives were springing up, watered with persistence, patience, devotion and exertion. Of course a strong plant needs a rich soil and that was the support, concern and guardianship provided by Professor Kimura. He was always there for me; applauding my efforts, acknowledging my successes and encouraging me in my pursuits. With his aid, burdens seem lighter and time is sweeter. He was behind me and my family urging us to carry on with firmness and confidence.

Kyoto, the oasis of my heart, witnessed my primary steps towards achieving various goals. We don't usually walk smooth paths or bear easy loads, but with some strength we can climb rocky roads and with some courage we can reach the hardest peaks and transform every stumbling block into a stepping stone. As such golden memories nourish our souls, fuel our brains and provide our hearts with impetus that propels me to draw bridges to revive old memories and create new ever blooming ones. My vivid dream is to draw fortified bridges

Dr. Eng. Ahmed EL-Salmawy

Culture Attaché
Embassy of Egypt, Tokyo



between Kyoto and Cairo. I believe that "nothing happens unless first a dream" and "if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams and endeavours to achieve them, he will meet with a success." When vivid dreams are repeated, they become goals.

As a cultural attaché and on behalf of my Egyptian government, I have a strong appeal to seek solid grounds on which mutual academic relationships on all levels can be maintained and carried out between KIT and Egyptian Universities. "Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) in Egypt", the first Japanese University in Cairo is finally on the horizon. It is taking the final procedures to be a well built bridge which will hopefully allow an ever flowing stream of beneficial correlations. It bids us all to team up to do whatever needed to facilitate such flow and specifically KIT to have a weighty presence.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Yoichiro Muraoka at Kagoshima University, Professor Hiroo Iwata at Kyoto University and Mr. Tsutomu Yoshii, Director of the International Planning Division at KIT for his pleasant character and thoughtful nature.

See you all in Cairo-----See you all in E-JUST soon!!



The Rewards of Studying at KIT

Lim Tae Hee

Division of Applied Science for Functionality
Graduate School of Science and Technology

I feel that my entire life has led me to where I am now. Sometimes, I feel that my life is a story that was written in advance. I think that all of our lives are pre-determined in many ways.

Ten years ago, I had my first encounter with Japan and the Japanese people. At that time I left my studies at my Korean university to study architecture at Kyoto University for a year. When I finished the year, I met people from the Kyoto Institute of Technology. Though KIT is not well known in Korea, I was very impressed with the free-thinking ways and enthusiastic energy of KIT people. However, even at that time I had no idea that I would develop a strong connection with KIT.

Shortly afterwards, I went back to Korea. I started working for a design company and lectured part-time at a university. In my work, I felt that I had acquired many new perspectives on the business of design from my studies in Japan. In particular, I decided to make it my life-long task to show people how different Korea and Japan are. To learn

more about these differences, I decided to return to Japan and study again. KIT naturally came to my mind as the ideal place to continue my studies. I feel that I came all this way in my life only to finally reach this point.

In retrospect, I had a number of reasons for making that choice. KIT has a superb educational environment, but more than that, the personal style of the university was even more impressive. The teachers were so kind and always took time to answer my many questions. And the university administrative staff was very warm and welcoming. In the process of finishing my thesis, I realized that my encounter with great people was the most precious aspect of my time in Japan. Of course, all students spend a lot of time studying alone but we also receive valuable support and insight from those around us. I feel that the positive and friendly people energy I got in Japan will stay with me forever. And in the future I really want to give that kind of support and enthusiasm to the people I meet through my work.



The Social Gathering Hosted by KIT President

KIT President EJIMA, Yoshimichi hosted the social gathering on February 22, 2006 at Hotel Nikko Princess Kyoto in order to promote mutual friendship among KIT international students, KIT international researchers, and people in and out of KIT. There was a large attendance of 203 at the event, 17 guests, 111 international students, 5 international visiting researchers, 18 Japanese students and 52 KIT faculty members. The guests were from foreign consulates in Japan, local governments in Kyoto, international scholarship foundations and supporting organizations, including the Consulate General of Italy in Osaka.

In his opening speech, Dr. EJIMA expressed his gratitude to the guests for the big support for KIT international students and gave words of cheer to international students. Italian Consul General, Mr. Stefano ZANINI made an address, and KIT Vice President KUNUGI, Shigeru, Director of International Exchange Center opened a buffet with a Japanese traditional toast "Kanpai".

This occasion provided attendees with an opportunity to talk each other, share information and deepen their friendship. Balinese traditional dance performed by an Indonesian student and songs by students from Vietnam, Malaysia and China were received big hands by the audience. All those involved had a good time and the two-hour gathering was closed with a greeting by KIT Vice President FURUYAMA, Masao.



The Second International Student Study Tour

This excursion took place on February 28th, 2006. Although it was a tight-scheduled day tour by bus, leaving at 8:30 in the morning and returning at 7:00 in the evening, all participants remarked it was enjoyable and satisfactory. Our three staff members of the International Planning Division, Mr. Shibata, Ms. Iwasa and Mr. Nagatake, accompanied 20 international students and 4 Japanese students.

There were two places to visit. One is Mori Seiki Co., Ltd. in Mie Prefecture and another is Shigaraki Tougei Mura (ceramic village) in Shiga Prefecture. Mori Seiki Co., Ltd. is globally flourishing and famous as a manufacturer of the machine tools to make parts of cars and airplanes. Moreover, Shigaraki Tougei Mura is one of the most famous places for ceramic industry that our university graduates have contributed to its development for a long time. In the village, the students who participated in the tour could learn the process of how industrial technology had developed from kiln to present high ceramic technology and also could gain the first-hand experience of Japanese traditional culture there. Although their studying specialties vary, this tour has been most successful. They seem to have been motivated further to their studies by experiencing the Japanese culture and visiting the practical field of production where studies at our university can be directly reflected.

International Planning Division

This division deals with all the administrative aspects of the International Exchange Center. Please feel free to contact us.

Join the KIT International Academic Exchange Club!

This club is a global network for international academic exchange. Its members include current and alumni international students, researchers, and members of KIT academic exchange partner institutions. The club was founded for KIT to contribute to academic development and promote science and technology in international society. For detailed membership information, please visit the International Planning Division website:

http://www.cis.kit.ac.jp/~gaku_k/english/index.html