

Peking University & Yokohama National University Exchange Program

Short Stay (P2Y-short)

Duration: Feb 18th to 26th, 2012

Affiliation: Peking University, College of Engineering

Grade: Fourth

Name & Signature: Li Xiang (李翔)

Li Xiang

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## 1. Contents of the Program and My Impression of It

The program covers various aspects of Japanese culture and society, as well as the research and education in Yokohama National University (YNU). Thanks to so many different activities, I was able to have an overall understanding of Japan and Japanese University.

Generally speaking, the contents of the program can be classified into three groups: academic lectures, factory visits, and culture experience.

### *(1) Academic lectures*

The Peking University (PKU) students listened to several professors from YNU to introduce their own work. After the lecture, we were privileged to visit some of the professors' laboratories. The professors were from the Faculty of Engineering and the Research Institute of Environment and Informational Sciences at YNU. The following are two professors that left me deep impressions.

Prof. Araki from Mechanical Engineering introduced his work on fuel cell, a potential solution to the energy problem and also a very hot research topic in research years. Having worked on an undergraduate research program on using molecular dynamics, I personally have a direct feeling about the limit of pure computational study. I therefore was very impressed by Prof. Araki's research philosophy of integrating theory, experiment and computation. He is also a pioneer of interdisciplinary research, which will surely help him go further in cracking the problems involved in fuel cells.

Prof. Shiraishi, also from Mechanical Engineering, showed us his research in the area of cell mechanics, a relatively new branch of mechanics. Prof. Shiraishi himself was trained as a structural dynamist, so he also studies the dynamics of two-leg robotics and noise reduction. He showed us a home-built active noise control room, and a motorcycle whose noise control problem was under investigation. I was really surprised by the scope of his research.

From the lectures given by these professors, I was able to take a close look at the research done in YNU. Their research interests were very broad and aligned with most recent international trends. The faculty was young and energetic. All these are invaluable treasures for any university.

### *(2) Factory Visits*

Before I came to Japan, I have heard of Japan's global leadership in industry and advanced technology. The visits to Shiseido Kamakura Factory and Toyo Seikan Kaisha Yokohama Factory strengthened this impression; but more importantly, it told me the secrets of success of Japanese enterprises.

Shiseido is a famous Japanese cosmetics brand, and is a known-to-all brand in China. The factory places huge emphasis on satisfying customers' needs and high standard of its products. Before entering factory, we were asked

to wear a special clean suit and undergo a serious of cleaning processes. Through the windows we can see the production lines of Shiseido and all of them were really clean.

Toyo Seikan Kaisha is the No.1 manufacturer of cans and bottles in Japan. Similar to Shiseido, this factory also stressed the importance of cleanness. We need to put on a special suite before entering the factory. Three things in the factory impressed me deeply. The first thing was the automation of its production line. Most of the work was done by automated machines, and human intervention was needed only for operating these machines and inspecting the products. That was why a factory which produced hundreds of millions of cans and bottles hired a total of only 357 employees. The second thing was the corporation's effort on protection of the environment. By refining its production lines, the factory generated nearly zero wastes. Some recycled bottles were used to make other products such as shirts and ties. The third thing was the factory's awareness of the workers' warfare. By regularly sending its workers to physical examination and reducing the working hours in some extremely noising or dirty areas, the factory minimized the healthy cost of every worker.

In conclusion, Japanese corporations pay attention to every detail in the design and manufacture processes of their products. This results in a very high efficient production. They are also aware of their responsibility of environment protection. I think these factors are the keys to success for any enterprise, and of course Chinese corporations should learn from their Japanese counterparts.

### *(3) Culture Experience*

To help us better understand Japanese culture, Prof. Andrade gave a lecture to us on Japanese culture and society. She talked about the geographical features of Japan, the characteristics of Japanese people, Japanese culture, education and daily life. From her talk, we were able to know many customs and habits of Japanese. This kind of knowledge helped us a lot in our later communication with the Japanese. For example, in the beginning of this program, we were usually a little bit late for our appointment with Japanese students, which is common in China. In Prof. Andrade's lecture, we found that Japan is a punctual society. Therefore, in the days left, we paid attention to our punctuality and always arrived earlier than the meeting time. I think the mutual respect of each other's culture is the base for further cooperation and friendship.

Besides the lecture, we visited different places in Japan, both historical sites and modern cities. We went to the Kamakura area, the old capital of Japan. We went to the Enoshima Island and there was a shrine on the island. Later that day we went to see a temple and saw the huge Temple of Kamakura. From these two places we took a look at the two most popular religions in Japan - Shinto and Buddhism. We also visited numerous sites in Yokohama and Tokyo. I think the public facilities in these cities are high developed, making them a very convenient and clean place to live in. The train systems are very powerful and for most of the time we took the train instead of taking buses. Maybe this is reason that there were not so many traffic jams in Japan as in China.

## **2. My Motivation of Global Understanding Before and After the Program**

I have always been interested in global understanding, and that was why I chose to attend this program. I think global understanding is very important in this era of globalization. Business and economy are important reasons, because if you want to make more money you should sell your product overseas. At the same time, humans are facing great challenges today, such as climate warming, energy issues, and nuclear weapons. The solutions for these huge problems call for global cooperation. Therefore, it is my view that every college students

today need to have a chance to spend some time abroad, to see, to communicate and to learn.

Before this program, I have the chance to visit University of Toronto in Canada. So before going to Japan, I thought that the different between Japan and China, two countries in the east, would be much smaller than that between Canada and China. In some aspects this is true. For example, Chinese and Japanese have similar appearances, and they both use chopsticks and eat rice as the main food. There are even a lot of Chinese characters in Japanese language.

Nevertheless, I felt more like a foreigner in Japan than in Canada. One of the most important issues is language. Yes we can read some Chinese characters, but this is far from the ability to understand Japanese books, newspapers, or advertisements, not to mention speaking. In Canada, we can at least speak and read in English. Maybe because of the languages, the communication between China and Japan is far from enough.

After the finishing the exchange program to YNU, my thought that students should spend a spell of time overseas strengthened. I have learned a lot during the day in Japan, and it is my sincerely hope that every undergraduate in my university can have a chance to study abroad.

### **3. Interaction with YNU Students**

It is no doubt that the friendship between Chinese and Japanese students is the most precious gain in this short visit program. Although this program did not last long, students from these two countries had various opportunities to help each other, to communicate, and to make friends.

#### *(1) In Yokohama*

In Yokohama, we were much appreciated that every day there are some Japanese students accompanying us. They helped us a lot during stay in Japan. Here is a list of things that PKU and YNU students do together:

- A) visited the beautiful YNU campus;
- B) attended the lecture given by YNU professors and visited their laboratories;
- C) visited various tourist sites in Yokohama and Tokyo, including the Kamakura area, the city center and bay of Yokohama;
- D) visited some factories in Yokohama, including Shiseido Kamakura Factory and Toyo Seikan Yokohama factory;
- E) had meals in the cafeteria on the campus and the restaurant outside campus;

During the whole program, there was an atmosphere of openness and friendship among the students, and we took very chance to talk with each other and exchange our ideas. I exchanged my contact information with some of the YNU students, and we are going to keep in touch with each other in the days to come.

#### *(2) In Beijing*

Back Beijing, we attended the presentations given by YNU students introducing their research. We took them to our classes to have a feeling. We also took them to the cafeterias on our campus to have meals.