

My Reflections on Radiation Chemistry in Japan

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My first visit to Japan was on a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science fellowship in 1996. This visit was to the laboratory of Professor Y. Katsumura of the Department of Quantum Engineering and Systems Science of the University of Tokyo. We had both been doing similar work with heavy ions and thought that we could exchange ideas and collaborate on some studies to be performed at Chiba. Of course, the experiments were successful and I thoroughly enjoyed learning about the facilities and radiation research in Japan. I had extensive discussions with Professor Katsumura on the status of research in Japan, the available facilities, and the funding outlook. The discussions were quite informative on the state of Radiation Chemistry in Japan and I have tried to keep up to date since this first visit.

Professor Katsumura was a most accommodating host and spent a great deal of time and effort to make sure that I visited many scientists and facilities in the course of this fellowship. My visits included three universities: Waseda University, Tokyo; Hokkaido University, Sapporo; and Osaka University, Osaka. In each of these universities a lecture was given, discussions with professors and graduate students occurred, and the research facilities examined. Several national laboratories were examined including: the Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute (JAERI), Takasaki; the National Laboratory for High Energy Physics, Tsukuba; the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research (RIKEN), Saitama; and the Heavy Ion Medical Accelerator in Chiba (HIMAC), Chiba. Several lectures were given during these visits and extensive discussions with the staff occurred. I was impressed with the quality of the science and I was just beginning to

understand the extensive commitment being made to the field of Radiation Chemistry in Japan.

I was able to attend an annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Radiation Chemistry in Tsukuba. This meeting turned out to be an interesting blend of basic and applied research. Such a mixture is rare in the United States. These interactions are highly invigorating and should be encouraged. The meeting was a unique opportunity to meet and make friends with many of the leading Japanese researchers in Radiation Chemistry. It was especially nice to see that many of the graduate students participated. A meeting like this is a valuable training and networking tool. I left Japan being very impressed with the number and quality of students involved in Radiation Chemistry. I have since been host to several undergraduate and graduate students as well as a few postdoctoral associates from Japan. They have all been well trained and performed to the highest standards. The professors and universities of Japan are to be congratulated for producing such accomplished students.

I have been able to participate in other long term visits to Japan to again be with Professor Katsumura as well as with Professor S. Tagawa at Osaka University and Professor K. Takahashi at Kanazawa University. Of course, I have attended several international conferences and visited many other laboratories over the past years. In every instance, the hospitality of my hosts has been overwhelming, but I also especially enjoyed seeing the facilities and speaking with the students. The best course for the Japanese Society of Radiation Chemistry is to continue to promote the excellent science being performed in the country and to advance the cause of the students. Another generation of prominent radiation chemists will soon end their productive careers and it will be up to the next generation to continue the excellent work within their country. I wish everyone well and continued success.

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