

JSPS Stockholm Newsletter

English Edition Vol. 21



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Flourishing SUOMI in Move

By Director Hideo Akutsu, JSPS Stockholm Office

A tram is deliberately running through elegant buildings. It is a popular scene in a European city with a long history. However, the buildings along the track of the tramline in Helsinki of Finland are too early to claim historical heritage. Finland is a relatively new nation in Europe and has unique culture. The Finns call themselves Suomi. Their language belongs to Uralic and is completely different from other languages of the northern European countries except Estonia. They managed to establish their own nation only in 1917. Although Saami people in the Arctic Circle still keep their original life style, Finns have been Europeanized in terms of the religion and life style. Through marriage they now look like typical Nordic people with blue eyes and blond hairs. But they have not been absorbed in to Aryans but kept their own language and racial consciousness. After the independence, they established a multi-cultural country. Not only the names of tram stations but also all signs are written in Finnish and Swedish. There are even educational institutions teaching in Swedish. In Lapland, Saami is the major language. Major religions are Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, and Finnish Orthodox Church. Standing in the Senate Square in front of the Lutheran Cathedral is a statue of Russian Emperor, Alexander II.

The newly born Finland Republic unfortunately came across a series of wars. However, the determination of the people to develop their own country could let them overcome the troubles and led the country to the industrially advanced frontier. The key element to have made it possible must be the education. They set up many schools, where education was provided to all kids with the emphasis on bringing up the bottom line. This educational system worked well in raising the cultural and knowledge level of the whole nation. Thus, Finland became one of the top group members in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted by OECD. Furthermore, improved higher educational institutions such as colleges and universities provided the society with a lot of workers and researchers with high levels of scientific and technological knowledge. According to "State of Scientific Research" published by the Academy of Finland, the number of researchers per total employment in Finland was more than twice of the OECD average in 2008. The number of scientific articles per capita in Finland was also close to twice of the OECD average. The policy to power up the knowledge of the people made it possible to set up technologically advanced industries such as Nokia. Although the department of mobile phone of Nokia was sold to Microsoft, Finland is still on the fourth in overall and on the top in research personnel according to the Bloomberg Innovation Index published in 2015. Flourished in Finland in these decades were not only science and technology, but also culture. Tove Jansson known by Moomin Troll, a Nobel Prize laureate in Literature Frans Eemil Sillanpää, a composer Jean Sibelius, an architect Alvar Aalto, and others impressed the world by their cultural activities. After a long hardship, Suomi is now enjoying an exciting era.

Helsinki University was founded 375 years ago. It has far longer history than Finland Republic, which is expecting its



centennial anniversary next year. From its foundation, Helsinki University has been the academic and cultural center, producing many talented people serving to Suomi. It has a prestigious reputation with its relatively long history in the Nordic area and its high quality of achievement. However, the rector Prof. Jukka Kola expressed serious concerns on the current state of the Finnish higher education and research in his anniversary speech on March 26, 2015. Since the emerging nations such as China and South Korea are also making great progresses in higher education and research fields, Finland cannot rest on the current success to stay in the advanced group. According to him, the mission of the university is not only to educate its students to serve their country and humanity, but also to make their country and the world at large a better place in which to live. For that purpose, they have to further improve the quality of research, teaching, and learning. They have to recruit excellent researchers and students not only from Finland, but also from all over the world. They should also consider establishing areas of higher education and seek cooperation across borders. This fits to the recommendations of the Academy of Finland described in "State of Scientific Research 2014". As to the international cooperation, there was an encouraging move. Prof. Olli Kallioniemi at Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland was appointed to the director of Science for Life Laboratory, a major national project in Sweden, from July 1, 2015. This appointment will further strengthen the bridge in science between Finland and Sweden.

KVA-JSPS Seminar Held with Prof. Yuichi Ikuhara

Since 2009, JSPS has together with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA) organized seminars with Japanese lecturers. The first seminar of the KVA-JSPS seminar series in FY2015 was held on July 17 at Linköping University, Linköping, with invited speaker Prof. Yuichi Ikuhara, the University of Tokyo.

The theme of Prof. Ikuhara's lecture was "Atom-Resolved STEM Characterization of Grain Boundaries and Properties in Oxides".

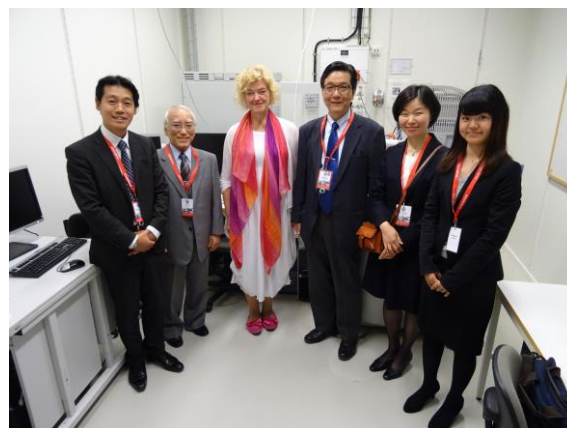
Prof. Ikuhara also participated in the European

Workshop on Advanced In Situ TEM/STEM, held July 20-23 at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, where he delivered the lecture "Grain Boundary Atomic Structures and In Situ TEM observation of Dislocation/GB Interaction".

The seminar and workshop was a success with over 100 students and researchers participating, with speakers and participants engaging in a lively exchange of views and ideas.



Prof. Yuichi Ikuhara, the University of Tokyo.



From left to right: Dr. Toshiaki Tanigaki, Director Hideo Akutsu, Prof. Eva Olsson, Prof. Yuichi Ikuhara, Deputy Director Yuriko Kawakubo, and International Program Associate Michiko Murakami.

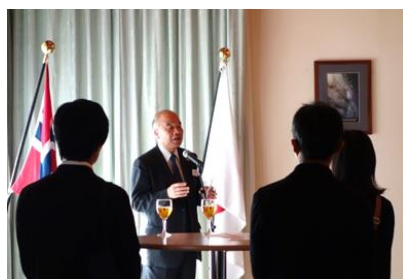
The 1st Network Meeting for Japanese Researchers in Norway Held in Oslo

On September 4, the 1st Network Meeting for Japanese Researchers in Norway was held in Oslo at the Ambassador's Residence. The meeting was co-organized by the Embassy of Japan in Norway and JSPS Stockholm Office, for the purpose of promoting friendships and research collaboration between Japanese researchers working in Norway.

H.E. Ambassador Toshio Kunikata offered opening remarks and greetings were given by Director Hideo Akutsu, JSPS Stockholm Office. Deputy Director Yuriko Kawakubo, JSPS Stockholm Office, explained the way to

support networking. Following the introductory session, the 13 attending Japanese researchers from Norwegian universities and research institutions, gave each a brief self-introduction and happily exchanged information on research and life in Norway.

After the meeting, participants have expressed opinions such as how getting acquainted and exchanging views with other Japanese researchers active in Norway was a meaningful, and stimulating experience.



H.E. Ambassador Toshio Kunikata giving opening remarks.



Participants mingling.



SAC Activity Seminar “Japanese Ethics and Technology” Held at Uppsala University



Organizer Dr. Thomas Lennerfors, Uppsala University.

On September 2-3, the Sweden Alumni Club (SAC) Activity Seminar “Japanese Ethics and Technology” was held at the Ångström Laboratory, Uppsala University. The seminar was organized by SAC member Dr. Thomas Lennerfors, Senior lecturer and Assoc. Prof. at the Department of Engineering Sciences, Industrial Engineering & Management, Uppsala University.

The purpose of the seminar was to create an inclusive forum for a cross-cultural exchange between scholars interested in exploring the relevance of Japanese ethics for understanding ethical issues of technology, with particular focus on the effect of the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Organizer Dr. Lennerfors opened the seminar and introduced Prof. Marika Edoff, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Technology and Science. Prof. Edoff gave a brief introduction to Uppsala University, mentioning its nine faculties, international collaboration, and the prioritized research areas within the Faculty of Science and Technology.



Keynote speaker Dr. Takashi Majima, Senshu University.

Director Hideo Akutsu introduced the activities of JSPS Stockholm Office and the various JSPS programs, encouraging young researchers to apply. A participant of the JSPS Summer Program in 2014, Dr. Petter B. Forsberg of Uppsala University, shared his experience as a JSPS fellow in Japan.

The seminar’s keynote speech was given by Dr. Takashi Majima, School of Business Administration, Senshu University. Dr. Majima’s lecture was titled “From ‘Green’ to ‘Smart’: The impact of Fukushima on ‘Green IT’ in Japan”.

Prof. Saeko Kimura, Tsuda College, Dr. Yasuo Deguchi, Kyoto University, and other speakers from the University of Tokyo, Toyo University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Linköping University and Uppsala University presented over the two days, all engaged in fruitful discussions with the attending students and researchers.



Symposium on "Human Brown Adipose Tissue and Obesity"

Masayuki Saito, Professor emeritus, Hokkaido University



Prof. Emer. Masayuki Saito, Hokkaido University, in lecture.

On June 2, 2015, a symposium on "Human brown adipose tissue and obesity", organized by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Stockholm University, Hokkaido University and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA), was held in the Linneus hall of KVA. Here I report a summary of the symposium.

Obesity is recognized as one of the causes of lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. Obesity is the state of excessive accumulation of body fat in white adipose tissue. In mammals including humans, there is another type of adipose tissue called brown adipose tissue (BAT), which is a site of sympathetically activated non-shivering thermogenesis during cold exposure and after spontaneous hyperphagia, thereby controlling whole-body energy expenditure and body fatness. This specific thermogenic organ has currently drawn increasing attention as a therapeutic target to treat human obesity and related metabolic disorders. This is because of several remarkable advancements in the field of BAT research over a last decade. Particularly, being against the conventional view that BAT is of minute amounts and plays negligible roles in adult humans, using a radionuclide imaging technique we have revealed the presence of considerable amounts of BAT in adult humans. As Prof. Barbara Cannon, the president of KVA, is one of the leading scientists in the field of BAT research, it is quite timely for us to have an opportunity for mutual exchange of current research results and ideas among our and her groups and also other scientists.

There were about sixty attendants from Sweden and also from some European countries. Japanese were I and Dr. Takeshi Yoneshiro (Hokkaido University), two postdoctoral fellows staying in Karolinska Institute, and some staffs of the JSPS Stockholm office. Following a greeting of Prof. Cannon, Prof. Nedergaard (Stockholm University, Sweden) outlined a brief history of human BAT research. Then, I made a one-hour talk about my 30-year research activity on brown adipose tissue in small rodents, dogs and humans. Moreover, ten excellent presentations were made by active young scientists including Dr. van Marken Lichtenbelt (Maastricht University, The Netherlands), Dr. Virtanen (Turku University, Finland), and Prof. Cannon's colleagues. In particular, it was interesting that a new method for evaluating human BAT by MRI was developed and that some critical factors controlling BAT activity were identified, all of which have a great impact on the BAT research.

After the symposium, Prof. Cannon guided us to show a room for the Nobel Prize selection meeting, and invited all participants to a dinner party, where Prof. Seiji Morimoto, ambassador of Japan, also joined. It was a fruitful and friendly time to exchange our mutual interests with delicious foods and wine. I assure that this symposium would further promote the academic exchange and cooperation between Japan and Sweden. I sincerely thank all staffs of JSPS for their kind support.



Seminar venue, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

June

3 Visit by Dr. Hitoshi Takahashi, Science for Life Laboratory (SciLifeLab), Karolinska Institutet

Visiting Researcher Dr. Hitoshi Takahashi visited JSPS Stockholm Office. He informed of his current research and new appointment at the Science for Life Laboratory in Stockholm. Director Hideo Akutsu informed Dr. Takahashi of the activities of JSPS Stockholm Office, JSPS Programs and the network of Japanese researchers in Sweden.



8 Visit by Prof. Takuji Nakamura, National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR)

Prof. Takuji Nakamura, Vice-Director General, National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR), was visiting Sweden on the occasion of the European Incoherent Scatter Scientific Association (EISCAT)* meeting in Stockholm on June 9. Prof. Nakamura visited JSPS Stockholm Office and informed that the International EISCAT Symposium is an annual event, and it will be held in South Africa this year.

Prof. Nakamura further explained the international exchange agreements and collaboration NIPR conducts with Nordic countries. Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Yuriko Kawakubo informed Prof.

Nakamura of the activities of JSPS Stockholm Office and the aim to strengthen the collaboration with Norway.

*EISCAT is funded and operated by research institutes and research councils of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, and Germany. EISCAT conducts research on the lower, middle and upper atmosphere and ionosphere using the incoherent scatter radar technique.

17 Meeting at the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA)

Director Akutsu, Deputy Director Kawakubo, and International Program Associate Ryoko Hirose, met with Dr. Björn O. Nilsson, President, the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA). Dr. Nilsson informed on the Academy's activities and the Academy's participation in the Almedalen Week*.

After the informative meeting with Dr. Nilsson, the staff of JSPS Stockholm Office attended the preparatory meeting of the IVA-JSPS Seminar series. Participating in the meeting were Dr. Johan Weigelt, Secretary to the Academy and Executive Vice President, IVA, Dr. Maria Dollhopf, International Coordinator, IVA, Mr. Edvard Fleetwood, Secretary General, Sweden-Japan Foundation, and Mr. Masafumi Sato, First Secretary, the Embassy of Japan. Topics discussed were the invited speakers from Japan and details of the two seminars to be held in FY2015.



*Almedalen Week is an annual political forum held at the island of Gotland, Sweden. Politicians and representatives from non-governmental organizations participate in the forum to debate politics and current social issues by holding speeches and seminars.

22 JSPS Overseas Office Directors' Meeting Held in Tokyo

A Directors' Meeting was held in Tokyo for the Directors of the JSPS Overseas Offices. The Directors representing the 10 JSPS Overseas Offices in Washington (USA), San Francisco (USA), London (UK), Bonn (Germany), Strasbourg (France), Stockholm (Sweden), Beijing (China), Bangkok (Thailand), Cairo (Egypt) and Nairobi (Kenya), were all present to discuss and exchange views on topics such as international exchange and activities of each JSPS Overseas Office.

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Dinner Held in Honor of Prof. Shinya Yamanaka at the Ambassador's Residence

Director Akutsu attended the dinner held at H.E. Ambassador Seiji Morimoto's Residence, in honor of the Nobel Prize in Medicine 2012 Laureate, Prof. Shinya Yamanaka, Kyoto University. Prof. Yamanaka with wife and colleagues were visiting Sweden to participate in the annual meeting of International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR).

Dinner attendants included Prof. Christina Moberg, President, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA), Prof. Anders Hamsten, Vice-Chancellor, Karolinska Institutet, Dr. Jan-Olof Jacke, President, AstraZeneca, Dr. Katarina Bjelke, University Director, Uppsala University, and others. The scientific exchange between Japan and Sweden was discussed during the dinner.



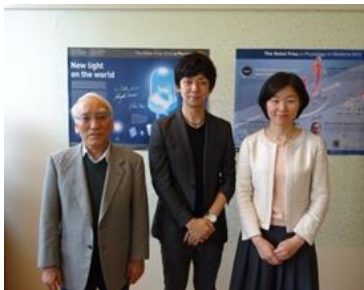
Photo: the Embassy of Japan in Sweden
http://www.se.emb-japan.go.jp/aktivitet_150624.html

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Visit by Prof. Yoriko Atomi, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology

Prof. Yoriko Atomi, Project Professor at the Faculty & Graduate School of Engineering, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, visited JSPS Stockholm Office.

Prof. Atomi introduced her research on cell to body and mind dynamics, and discussed the possibilities of research collaboration with Scandinavian researchers. Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo explained the outline of the JSPS programs.



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Visit by Mr. Ryu Yoshida, Nihon University

Mr. Ryu Yoshida, staff, Nihon University School of Dentistry, visited JSPS Stockholm Office. Mr. Yoshida introduced the university and its international exchange with universities in South Korea, China and Laos. Mr. Yoshida mentioned that the university is considering to expand its international exchange to universities in western countries as well. Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo explained the activities of JSPS Stockholm Office such as the supporting of seminars and symposia between Japanese and Nordic universities, and the various JSPS Programs.

July

2

Visit by Ms. Haruka Nakagawa and Mr. Hiroshi Kumabe, Waseda University

Ms. Haruka Nakagawa and Mr. Hiroshi Kumabe, Coordinator, of the International Office, International Affairs Division, Waseda University, visited JSPS Stockholm Office.

Ms. Nakagawa and Mr. Kumabe explained the concept of the university's strategy "Waseda Vision 150", a strategy aiming to attract top students from around the world, to conduct excellent research which contributes to society, to cultivate graduates into global leaders and more.

A discussion on the academic exchange and collaboration between Japan and Nordic countries was conducted, with Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo explaining the activities of JSPS Stockholm Office and JSPS Programs.



8

Meeting at the Estonian Academy of Sciences and Estonian Research Council

Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo visited Estonia for a meeting with the Estonian Academy of Sciences in Tallinn, and Estonian Research Council in Tartu.

At the Estonian Academy of Sciences, they met with Prof. Tarmo Soomere, President of the Academy, Prof. Margus Lopp, Secretary-General, and Ms. Anne Põitel, Foreign Relations Unit.

Next, Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo headed to Tartu for a lunch meeting with Dr. Ülle Must, Head of the Department of International Research Cooperation, the Estonian Research Council.

On both meetings, each party explained their respective institution, followed by discussions and an exchange of views on topics such as future collaboration between Japan and Estonia, and the possibilities of research funding.



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Dinner Meeting with Dr. Naoko Saito, Kyoto University

Dr. Naoko Saito, Assoc. Prof. at the Graduate School of Education, Kyoto University, and Visiting Fellow at Helsinki Collegium of Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, visited Sweden and met with Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo. Details of a symposium organized jointly by Kyoto University, COE "Reason and Religious Recognition Research" and Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies of University of Helsinki, and JSPS Stockholm Office were discussed.



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Visit by Dr. Stefan Noreén, Senior Adviser, Office of the President, the University of Tokyo

Dr. Stefan Noreén, Senior Adviser, Office of the President, the University of Tokyo, met with Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo. Dr. Noreén is also a Senior Adviser at RIKEN and to Sweden's Minister for Enterprise and Innovation.

Dr. Noreén explained the ongoing activities of the University of Tokyo. Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo shared information on upcoming and 2014's activities of JSPS Stockholm Office.



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Visit by Dr. Fumiko Kasuga, National Institute of Health Sciences, and Prof. Kensuke Fukushi, the University of Tokyo

Dr. Fumiko Kasuga, Director, Division of Safety Information on Drug, Food and Chemicals, National Institute of Health Sciences, and Prof. Kensuke Fukushi, Institutes for Advanced Study (UTIAS), Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science (IR3S), the University of Tokyo, visited JSPS Stockholm Office.

Dr. Kasuga and Prof. Fukushi visited Sweden for a meeting on Future Earth, a new global platform for sustainability research. They explained the Future Earth project, and Prof. Fukushi explained the ongoing activities of JSPS Core-to-Core program. Director Akutsu and Deputy Director Kawakubo introduced the international collaboration of JSPS and activities of JSPS Stockholm Office.



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Dinner Held in Honor of Prof. Kohei Miyazono at the Ambassador's Residence

Director Akutsu attended a dinner held for Prof. Kohei Miyazono, University of Tokyo, at H.E. Ambassador Seiji Morimoto's Residence.

Ambassador Morimoto, Prof. Carl-Henrik Heldin, Chairman, Board of the Nobel Foundation, Prof. Kerstin Tham, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Karolinska Institutet, Prof. Hans-Gustaf Ljunggren, Dean of Research, Karolinska Institutet, and others, participated in the dinner and discussed the academic exchange between Japan and Sweden.



Photo: the Embassy of Japan in Sweden

http://www.se.emb-japan.go.jp/aktivitet_150824.html

3. Reports (3) Alumni

ACF Activity Seminar on Future Diagnostics

Seiji Shibasaki, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Hyogo University of Health Sciences

In May, 2015, I have talked at the symposium "Future Diagnostics" which was held in Turku, Finland. The presentation title was "The recent challenges in red biotechnology - for accelerating the development of novel diagnostic tools and pharmaceuticals" and I introduced a direction of researches in developments of a diagnostic method or a preventive method using recent biotechnology.

At this moment, in addition to the development of treatments and biopharmaceuticals for cancers, brain diseases or heart diseases, advanced medical studies like regenerative medicine has been focused. On the other hand, infectious diseases have robbed many lives around the world because there is no effective longtime solution. For example, the world's three major infectious diseases, AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, the number of deaths due to them reaches to 8 million people per year. On the drug development for these infections, we can say the current situation is lagging behind to avoid the host immune system by pathogens. Further, because there is no effective treatment on diseases such as fungal diseases, for the elderly whose immunity is impaired, it has become a serious disease. Author and co-workers selected the candidiasis as a model of infection and worked on the development of technologies of effective prevention methods and diagnostic methods.

Candida albicans that causes candidiasis is an opportunistic pathogenic fungi, and mortality rate of this disease can reach to more than 50%. Lowering of immunity due to cancer or AIDS, will lead to multiple organ failure by the invasion of mycelial of *C. albicans*. As a problem in treatment with the existing antifungal agents, there are severe side effects, resistant microorganisms, or a lack of early diagnosis method. Therefore, in a different concept with conventional pharmaceutical development, we tried to develop drug substances that will contribute to "treatment, diagnosis and prevention" using the biotechnology. While focusing on "diagnosis" in this talk, I introduced the research results also on "prevention".

In the study, we focused secreted aspartic protease (Sap) of *C. albicans* which is a characteristic virulence factor. *C. albicans* has 10 kinds of pathogenic secretory protease (Sap1-10), it worked to avoid immune system and to destroy the epithelial tissue. We thought that pathogenic proteases might be able to develop early diagnosis of candidiasis.



Dr. Seiji Shibasaki, Hyogo University of Health Sciences, in lecture.

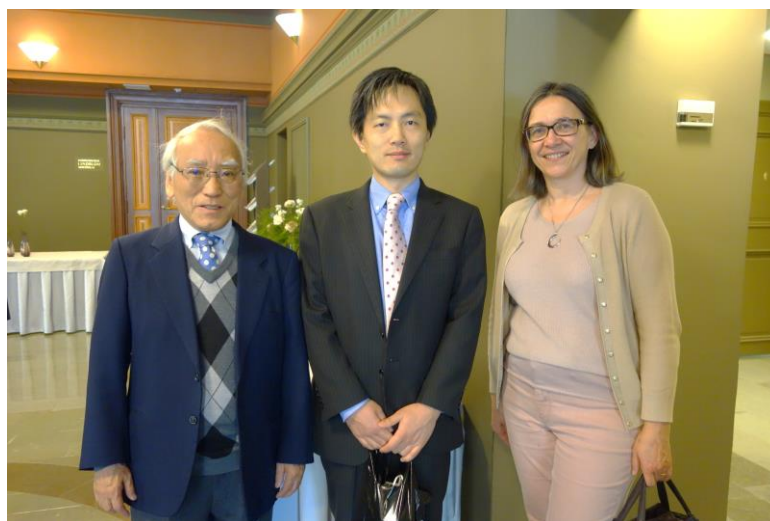


➡ We designed a diagnostic peptide which is fluorescent when Sap1-10 is working actively. Using a FRET-25Xaa library which consists of 475 kinds of peptide as a substrate, we have examined the substrate specificity systematically. Because pathogenic proteases Sap1-3 were important and we focused them, as a result, the most efficient cutting sequence was found as GFIKAFPK. Next, by placing the GFIKAFPK peptide between the fluorescent group and the quenching group, we have produced a molecule that emit fluoresces by cutting the *C. albicans* Sap isozymes. In fact, strong fluorescence has been observed when reacted with *C. albicans*. As the result of enzymatic analysis, the interaction of the peptide and Sap isozyme is weak, there is room to be optimized to the peptide sequence.

In the second half of the lecture, the creation of oral vaccine was introduced as a development of fundamental technology for the "prevention". So far, we have developed a technology to immobilized protein molecules on the surface of microbial cells, and it has been called "cell surface engineering" or "molecule display technology". We examined the cell surface display of the Enolase protein (Eno1p) as a model antigen to create oral vaccine.

In oral administration experiments in mice of cells presenting the Eno1p, survival rate after vaccination was observed. 70% of Eno1p displaying yeast administration group was lived at day 35 (the control group 0%) when inoculated with a lethal dose of *C. albicans*. In the future, display of another promising antigen candidate protein, or by optimizing the dose, the development of more effective oral vaccine will be progressed. In addition, as a creation method of simple oral vaccine, it is expected to develop as a technology that can be adapted to a variety of infectious diseases.

Finally, I am grateful to everyone of Turku University of Applied Sciences, University of Turku and JSPS.



From left to right: Director Hideo Akutsu, JSPS Stockholm Office, Dr. Seiji Shibasaki, Hyogo University of Health Sciences, and Dr. Kristiina Jokinen, University of Helsinki, Chair of JSPS Alumni Club in Finland.

Japanese National Holiday: Respect for the Aged Day



Photo: malias

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/malias/390282870/>

One great challenge Japan is currently facing, is the aging population and declining birthrate, with an estimated 26.6% of the country's population being aged 65 and over according to the population statistics from the Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

The Japanese holiday "Keirō no Hi" (敬老の日), "Respect for the Aged Day" in English, is a day to honor the elderly citizens, to express gratitude for their contributions to society and celebrate their longevity. It is celebrated on the 3rd Monday in September, and it is similar to the International Day of Older Persons, designated on October 1 by the United Nations General Assembly.

The Japanese holiday traces its origins back to 1947, when the first "Old Folks' Day" was celebrated on September 15 in a village located in the Hyogo prefecture. The popularity of the day spread nationwide and was declared a national holiday in 1966 by the Japanese government. It was held on September 15 until 2003, but has since been held on the 3rd Monday to create a three-day weekend.

There are no specific customs for celebration, however it is common to spend time with elder relatives, preparing food, and gifting some necessities. In some communities, volunteers distribute free lunches and commemorative gifts to the elderly residents. To pay respect for the elderly, "keirōkai" ceremonies may be held with local school children singing and dancing. Young school children make cards and gifts for their grandparents, and the Japanese media often focus on the elderly population and feature news on the oldest people in the country.

This year, "Keirō no Hi" will be celebrated on September 21.

Sources:

- <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/jinsui/tsuki/index.htm>
- <http://www.un.org/en/events/olderpersonsday/>
- http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/japan/respect_the_aged.php
- Japanese Aging Research Center (Japanese): <http://www.jarc.net/?p=1208>

Prof. Yoshinori Ohsumi, Tokyo Institute of Technology, and
Prof. Shimon Sakaguchi, Osaka University,
Awarded the Canada Gairdner International Award 2015



*Prof. Yoshinori Ohsumi,
Tokyo Institute of Technology.*



*Prof. Shimon Sakaguchi,
Osaka University.*

Prof. Yoshinori Ohsumi, Honorary Professor of the Frontier Research Center, Tokyo Institute of Technology, and Prof. Shimon Sakaguchi, Distinguished Professor at the World Premier International Research Initiative (WPI)-Immunology Frontier Research Center (IFReC), Osaka University, have both been awarded the Canada Gairdner International Award 2015.

Prof. Ohsumi was one of the speakers of the Uppsala University – Tokyo Tech Symposium held in September 2014, organized by Tokyo Institute of Technology, Uppsala University and JSPS Stockholm Office. Prof. Ohsumi received the Canada Gairdner International Award 2015 “for pioneering the molecular elucidation of autophagy, an essential intracellular, degradation system and when disordered, is linked to many diseases including neurodegeneration, cancer, and infection.” Further, Prof. Ohsumi was awarded the 31st International Prize for Biology by the Committee on the International Prize for Biology of JSPS. Prof. Ohsumi was the first person to visually observe autophagy in yeast cells under starvation conditions, he clarified the genes involved and determined the detailed mechanism of autophagy.

Prof. Shimon Sakaguchi was one of the speakers at the Symposium Immunology and Infection Biology held in June 2014, organized by Osaka University, Karolinska Institutet and JSPS Stockholm Office. Prof. Sakaguchi is known for his discovery of regulatory T cells, and was awarded the Canada Gairdner International Award 2015 “for his discovery of regulatory T cells, characterization of their role in immunity and application to the treatment of autoimmune diseases and cancer”. Prof. Sakaguchi commented on his award, saying “that it is important to make use of this research to contribute to others, especially to the treatment of cancer and incurable diseases. I'd like to continue performing research in order to see the extent of the possibilities of permanent cures in the future”.

JSPS Stockholm Office would like to congratulate both Professors Ohsumi and Sakaguchi for their splendid research achievements!

Sources:

- The International Prize for Biology (JSPS)
http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-biol/02_pastrecipients_awardee2015.html
- Tokyo Institute of Technology
<http://www.titech.ac.jp/english/news/2015/030266.html>
- Osaka University
http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/news/topics/2015/03/20150326_01

Prof. Carl-Henrik Heldin Appointed New Chair of SciLifeLab

The Government of Sweden has appointed Carl-Henrik Heldin, Professor of Molecular Biology, Uppsala University, as the new Chair of the Board of Science for Life Laboratory* (SciLifeLab). Prof. Heldin will succeed the current chair Prof. Göran Sandberg from October 1, 2015.

Prof. Heldin is since 1986 the Branch Director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in Uppsala, and a member of several academic associations such as the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA), and the European Molecular Biology Organization to name a few. Prof. Heldin has also served as Vice President of the European Research Council until 2014, and is currently chairing the Board of the Nobel Foundation.

Prof. Heldin has participated in the JSPS Core-to-Core program and is a member of the JSPS Alumni Club in Sweden (SAC). JSPS Stockholm Office would like to congratulate Prof. Heldin on his new appointment.

*SciLifeLab is a Swedish national research center on molecular biosciences, focusing on health and environmental research, it is a collaboration between the four universities Karolinska Institutet, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm University and Uppsala University. The center is located in Stockholm and Uppsala, and it is open to all Swedish academic researchers.

Source:

<http://www.scilifelab.se/news/new-chair-for-scilifelab/>

Prof. Johan Rockström Awarded the 2015 International Cosmos Prize

Prof. Johan Rockström, Executive Director of Stockholm Resilience Centre and Professor in Environmental Sciences, Stockholm University, was awarded the 2015 International Cosmos Prize. Prof. Rockström was the lead author of a group of 29 internationally renowned scientists, publishing a paper presenting the concept of “planet boundaries”, an idea to identify the limits on human pressure on Earth in order to avoid environmental changes which would be disastrous for mankind. Prof. Rockström et. al. proposed that by identifying boundaries within which mankind could continue to develop and thrive for generations, it is possible to avoid the disastrous environmental changes. He also asserted the importance of understanding where the tipping point of such changes can be found.

The concept of planetary boundaries and its demonstration results have had great impact on environmental scientists as well as on the initiative of Future Earth, an international research platform to find new ways of accelerating sustainable development.

An Award Ceremony for Prof. Rockström will be held on November 5 in Osaka, Japan, where he shall be awarded a certificate of merit, a medallion and a monetary prize of 40 million yen.

*The International Cosmos Prize is an annual award presented by the Commemorative Foundation for the International Garden and Greenery Exposition (Expo'90 Foundation). The foundation was established 1991 in Japan as the continual commemoration of Flower Expo'90, an event dedicated to the theme “The Harmonious Coexistence of Nature and Mankind”. The Foundation aims to contribute and cultivate a healthy and enriched society through its activities.

Source:

• http://www.expo-cosmos.or.jp/main/cosmos/jyusyou/2015_e.html



Photo: M. Axelsson/Azote

5. Academic Information

Japan-Norway Science Week 2015

On May 27-28, the Japan-Norway Science Week was held for the third time in Tokyo. The event was organized by Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Royal Norwegian Embassy in Tokyo, Research Council of Norway (RCN), Innovation Norway and Norwegian Centre For International Cooperation in Education (SIU).

The theme of the event this year was energy, with focus on “energy and environment”, which is one of the priority areas of cooperation between the two countries. Parallel sessions were held on the following topics: Offshore Wind, Hydrogen and Fuel cells, Energy, Environment and Society, Smart Energy Systems, Smart Energy Cities and Industries, and Carbon Capture and Storage.

The event was attended by about 350 researchers, business representatives and policymakers, of which approximately 70 came from Norway.

The event further strengthened and advanced the research collaboration between the two countries, leading to an agreement to co-fund cooperation on matching projects in both countries on environment-friendly energy systems.

Sources:

- http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Newsarticle/Active_collaboration_between_Japan_and_Norway/1254009229168?lang=en
- <http://injapan.no/energy2015/>

6. Notice

Upcoming Seminars and Symposia

September 21-23 Kyoto International Forum for Environment and Energy (KIFEE)

KIFEE was created by the universities in the Kyoto region to develop an international arena for strategic cooperation between universities working to develop a sustainable society. When a bilateral agreement was signed with Norway in May 2004, Norwegian universities were invited to participate in KIFEE, and the 8th KIFEE Symposium will be held as follows:

Date: September 21-23

Venue: Norwegian University of Technology (NTNU), Trondheim, Norway

URL: <http://www.ntnu.edu/web/kiffee/about-kiffee>

September 30, October 1-2 Lectures by Prof. Izumi Ohno in Stockholm

Prof. Izumi Ohno, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) will deliver lectures in Stockholm as follows:

1) Stockholm Seminar on Japan

Date: September 30, 15:00-16:30

Venue: Ohlinrummet, Stockholm School of Economics

Organizer: the European Institute of Japanese Studies (EIJIS) at Stockholm School of Economics, the Embassy of Japan, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm University, and JSPS Stockholm Office.

Title: “Development Cooperation in a Post-MDG Era: Can Japan effectively continue to contribute to global development?”

Speaker:

- Prof. Izumi Ohno, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Japan

Moderator:

- Prof. Marie Söderberg, Director of European Institute of Japanese Studies, Stockholm School of Economics

Discussant:

- Associate Professor Anders Olofsgård, Stockholm School of Economics

2) International Conference

Prof. Izumi Ohno and the Nordic academic experts will have detailed and in-depth discussions concerning the future of ODA.

Date: October 1-2

Venue: Ohlinrummet, Stockholm School of Economics

Organizer: the European Institute of Japanese Studies (EIJIS) at Stockholm School of Economics, Osaka University and JSPS Stockholm Office.

6. Notice

Title: Japanese and Nordic Development Cooperation in a Post-MDG Era

Speakers:

- Prof. Izumi Ohno, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)
- Akio Kagawa, Chief Representative, JICA UK Office
- Annika Sundén, Chief Economist, SIDA
- Annica Sohlström, Secretary General, Forum Syd
- Prof. Arne Bigsten, University of Gothenburg
- Prof. Marie Söderberg, Director of European Institute of Japanese Studies, Stockholm School of Economics and others.

October 7 Lithuania-Japan Joint Life Science Symposium

A joint symposium between Lithuania and Japan will be held to strengthen the international exchange and mutual understanding between the two countries.

Date: October 7 (Wednesday), 10:00-17:00

Venue: Ito International Research Center, the University of Tokyo (Hongo Campus), Japan

Organizer: Research Council of Lithuania, Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Japan, the University of Tokyo and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

For more information about participation, please contact Lithuanian_Japan_Symposium@pco-prime.com

October 15 Academic Links Between Finland and Japan

Together with the Hokkaido University Helsinki Office and JSPS Alumni Club in Finland (ACF), JSPS Stockholm Office will co-organize an seminar to gather Hokkaido University Alumni, JSPS Alumni and Japanese researchers in Finland.

The annual General Assembly for ACF members will be held prior to the event 14:30-15:45.

Date: October 15, Seminar 16:00-18:00, Reception 18:00-20:00

Venue: Unionkatu 34, University of Helsinki (Main Building, Old Side)

October 12-19 KVA-JSPS Seminar

Since 2009, JSPS has together with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA) organized seminars with Japanese speakers. The 2nd seminar in the FY2015 series will be held with invited speaker Prof. Hiroshi Imahori, Kyoto University.

Date and Venue:

- 12/10 KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- 15/10 Uppsala University
- 16/10 Chalmers University of Technology
- 19/10 Lund University

Speaker: Prof. Hiroshi Imahori, Graduate School of Engineering, Kyoto University, and others

November 3 IVA-JSPS Seminar

Date: November 3 (Tuesday)

Venue: The Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA)

Speakers:

- Prof. Hiroyuki Yano, Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere, Kyoto University
- Dr. Masayoshi Watanabe, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (METI)
- Prof. Lars Berglund, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, and others.

Please find more information on <http://www.jsps-sto.com/activities.aspx>

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