

談話室

## Impressions from a user at the Photon Factory

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Having spent more than one year in Japan and finished my third and probably last beam time in the Photon Factory (PF), I think this is a good time to have a look back and to make a resume.

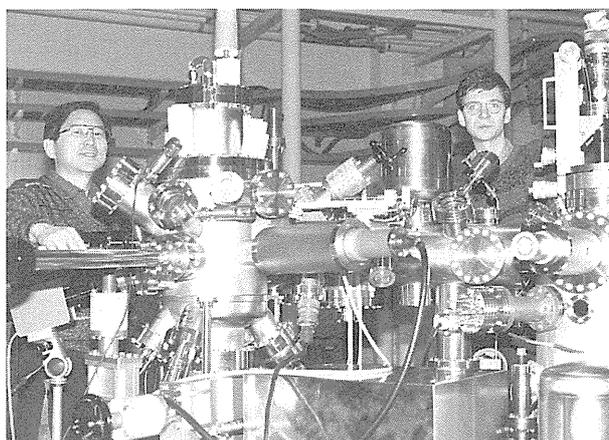
Before I came to Japan I had never worked in a synchrotron facility. I got my doctorate at the university of Hanover (Germany) where I did molecular beam epitaxy of semiconductors and metals on silicon surfaces. I was familiar with most of the analysis techniques of surface science and, most importantly, I was used to operating my own UHV system so that I could perform experiments whenever I wished.

After finishing my doctorate I applied for a post doc position in the NTT Laboratories. Then I received an offer from Dr. Masaharu Oshima from NTT to work in his Synchrotron Radiation Research Group as a post doc. This offer was attractive for several reasons: I could work with a synchrotron, which was so far new territory for me, and I could profit by the very good situation that NTT has its own beamline at the PF, so that all the usual restrictions like shortage of beam time would not apply. Furthermore, I could gain experience of the working style in a big company which I expected to be different from that in university. And last but not least, I would have the opportunity to experience life in Japan and to learn the language.

More than one year has passed since then, and my overall assessment of my time in Japan is very positive. Professionally, I have gained a lot of knowledge in several fields. First of all, of course, I have learned a lot about the handling and the usage of synchrotron radiation. It was especially pleasant to work in the PF since the ring was always very stable and the operation of the beamline was very user friendly. It was like "plug-and-play". In fact I had more trouble with the conventional X-ray source in our chamber than with the synchrotron radiation. These conditions enabled me to do a lot of nice

photoelectron spectroscopy experiments with ultra-violet light. Since some of my colleagues are working with soft X-rays, I also got some insight in the physics of X-ray absorption fine structure (XAFS) and X-ray standing wave (XSW). Very quickly I adapted to the new situation that I had to share the beamline and the UHV chamber with the other members of my group. Also beneficial was the financial power of NTT. Whenever there was some trouble with our equipment, we just called the relevant company, and so I could concentrate solely on my experiments. In total, my time in NTT was and continues to be very fruitful for my professional life.

If there is so much light, of course there are also some shadows. The conditions for work in Tsukuba are excellent, but this is not the case for life outside of work. Especially if one is used to the life in Tokyo (like me), it can be quite discouraging to stay at the PF. Since there is no effective public transport in Tsukuba, it is nearly impossible to leave the PF in the evening for dinner without owning a car. My colleagues did a great job driving me around, but I always was too dependent on them. The second problem was the accommodation in Tsukuba. I was not allowed to stay in the guest house of KEK, the



National Laboratory for High Energy Physics, to which the Photon Factory belongs. So I never had a satisfying accomodation when I stayed in Tsukuba.

I am describing this in detail because I hope that my criticisms help to improve the situation of researchers in the PF. But I don't want to finish my resume at this point, because the reader might get the impression that I did not enjoy my daily life in Japan.

The opposite is true. I greatly enjoy living in Tokyo, a very fascination townlively, interesting, crowded, with a lot of attractions especially in the evenings. I like travelling around in Japan, to meet the friendly people of this country, and I always feel safe and not alone. And if a good fairy asks me for one wish, my request is clear: Bring the Photon Factory to Shibuya!

## ちょっとひと息

### モンペリエ 2 - 酔っぱらい -

山口重雄さんと私がモンペリエの駅舎を出た時は、夜中の11時半をまわっていた。大学の寄宿舎に行くのに、タクシーを利用するのが、唯一の方法であるのは明かであった。何のあてもなく駅前広場のサークルの方に歩いて行った。反対側の舗道にタクシーという看板が立っていた。

「山口さん、あそこだ」

私達は急ぎ足で反対側に行き、タクシーという看板の下に立った。タクシーが私達の目の前を通過した。あっ、という間の出来事であった。数分待った。また、タクシーがやってきた。今度は用心のために、タクシーに向かって手をあげた。しかし、それも無視されて、タクシーは私達の目の前を通り過ぎた。こうなると、私達は、自分達が何かおかしいことをしているのではないかと、疑わざるを得なかった。

「変だなあ。でも、ここはどう見てもタクシーストップだよ。奴ら何故止らねえんだ」

「念のためもう一台待って見ようか」

そして、また、同じことが起こった。私達が間違っていることはもはや疑う余地がなかった。ここに来てから、もう15分程経っていた。中天の満月が、冷たく私達を見下ろしていた。二人はどちらからともなく、歩き出した。持っている荷物が大きかったので、なるべくなら、そうしたくはなかった。

一人の酔っぱらいが私達に近づいてきた。足元がおぼつかない様子であった。呂津のまわらない調子で私達にからんできた。

「パポパポ、ウーウー、ムニャムニャ」

私達は、フランス語を全く解さない。まして相手は完全に酔っている。その上、真夜中である。私達の自己防衛本能が働いて、彼を避けようとした。彼は執拗であった。

「ウームニャ、パポ？パポ、パポ？」

私達は無視してゆっくり歩き続けた。彼はある方向を指して、大声になって、言った。

「タクシー、ウジャウシャ！タクシー」

酔っぱらい氏は、私達がフランス語を解さぬのを悟って、最も肝心の単語のみを話した。

「石井さん。こりゃタクシー乗り場を教えてくれてるんだ、きっと」

彼の指差す方向の50mほど先に、それらしき場所が見えた。車が止って、人の出入りがあるようであった。親切な小父さんだったのだ。

私は、「どうも、どうも」のスタイルで手をあげて、言った。

「メッシー、メッシーボク」

フランスで口にした、最初のフランス語であった。酔っぱらい小父さんは

「ウイ、ウイ、ウイ」

と言ったようであった。私達は無事タクシーをつかまえ、大学の寄宿舎に向かった。

(石井武比古)