

# E-Vision

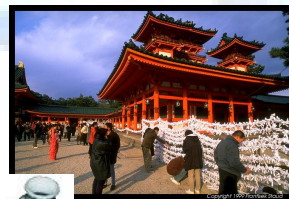
*Official Bulletin of the EGPSEE-SU*

Vol. 3 No. 2

WINTER 2005



*The Filipino Christmas  
and  
The Japanese New Year*



*...and a lot more!  
EGPSEE-SU activities  
Interview  
The More You Know...  
Travel Diary*



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**Editorial**

*The beautiful yellow leaves of ginkgo trees in the campus have already gone, and remaining black trunks and branches of the trees are telling us the coming of the bitterly cold winter of Hokkaido. But the activity of EGPSEE-SU never knows to cool down! Eleven students in April and twelve more in October joined the program. Also, more and more students and staffs outside EGPSEE are getting involved in its activities.*

*This 5th issue of E-Vision provides you not only with a brief look at the recent events in and around EGPSEE, but also the interesting, exciting and sometimes thought-provoking articles delivered by family and friends of EGPSEE. In addition to the regular sections such as 'Interview' and 'International Pages', Christmas and New Year lifestyles in a couple of countries are featured especially for this festive season. At the same time, the 'Interview' section has Ms. Ito from the academic affairs office as the interviewee.*

*We thank all those who gave a helping hand in the course of publishing this issue: Prof. Fujii and the EGPSEE-SU president Dhanny who kindly provided messages, students and Mrs. Werawan who enriched the E-vision a lot with their articles, Ms. Ito who gave her willing agreement with the interview and all those who supported E-Vision and EGPSEE.*

*We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year!!*

*The Editorial Board*

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## Table of Contents

|  |         |  |         |
|--|---------|--|---------|
| <b><i>Editorial</i></b>                            | Page 1  | <b><i>International Page</i></b>       |         |
|  |         | The Potato                             |         |
|  |         | - Pepe Rodrigo Herrera Salgado         |         |
|  |         |  | Page 12 |
| <b><i>Messages</i></b>                             |         | <b><i>Interview</i></b>                |         |
| From the EGPSEE Head                               | Page 3  | For Your Eyes Only                     |         |
| From EGPSEE-SU President                           | Page 4  | - Arshad Baharudin & Nirajan Shiwakoti |         |
|  |         |  | Page 13 |
| <b><i>Projects and Activities of EGPSEE-SU</i></b> |         | <b><i>Travel Diary</i></b>             |         |
| - Hiroe Hara                                       | Page 5  | Internship in Germany                  |         |
|  |         | - Aileen Parra Huelgas                 |         |
|  |         |  | Page 15 |
| <b><i>Featured Articles</i></b>                    |         | <b><i>Food Corner</i></b>              |         |
| Ang Paskong Pinoy Pagdiriwang at Tradisyon         |         | Tough Guy's Favourite Restaurant       |         |
| - Richard Diaz Alorro                              | Page 7  |  | Page 16 |
|  |         | <b><i>Voice of New Students</i></b>    |         |
| The Japanese New Year                              |         | Life is Good in Sapporo                |         |
| - Masashi Matsumura                                | Page 9  | - Chukwuemeka Peter Asiegbu            |         |
|  |         |  | Page 17 |
| <b><i>The More You Know</i></b>                    |         | <b><i>The New Students</i></b>         |         |
| Have You Ever Got a Stomachache?                   |         |  | Page 18 |
| - Thithiwat May & Akinobu Ito                      | Page 10 | <b><i>The Graduates</i></b>            |         |
|  |         |  | Page 20 |
| <b><i>Article</i></b>                              |         | <b><i>Puzzle</i></b>                   |         |
| Thousand Days in My Life                           |         |  | Page 22 |
| - Werawan Manakul                                  | Page 11 |  |         |



# Message

From the EGPSEE Head



My wife and I bought new cellular phones. Now I can enjoy my TV phone even outside Japan. My wife can watch and record TV programs anywhere without a television. The prices for the dream machines were both 0 yen. The progress in high-technology is incredible. On the other hand, in the 21st century, numerous people were killed by such natural disasters as the tsunami in Southeast Asia, the hurricane which attacked New Orleans and the earthquake in Pakistan. Don't you think something wrong?

Of course, information technology is one of the important elements in infrastructure and it supports rescue activities and reconstructions. For example, cellular phones, if there is an access to the battery charger, are very useful in an emergency. High-tech robots can find buried people just as clever rescue dogs from France do. However, is high-technology only so important against natural disasters? What about the system which predicts the possibility of a tsunami when an earthquake occurs to warn the public in real time, the structures which minimize tsunami or seismic damage and large scale evacuation centres? There are many themes that relate to natural disasters in EGPSEE. I suppose some of you are doing research on these themes. They should be from academic points of view. However, I don't want them to pursue only high-technology or virtual things. Don't forget "real technology".

Anyway, it is a great pleasure for us to welcome 12 new students from all over the world in this October intake. I would like to say to the new students, except for the Russian girl, "Be prepared for the snow!".

*Yoshiaki FUJII*  
*Head of EGPSEE (2005-2007)*

# Message

From the EGPSEE-SU President



This semester EGPSEE again celebrated the graduation of 12 great students. I would like to say thank you for your participation and wish you good luck for your career and life in the future. EGPSEE also have twelve newcomers. To the new students, welcome to Sapporo and enjoy the life, natural beauty and kindness of people in Sapporo. We will be expecting a great contribution from all of you, no less than our previous graduates.

In the last semester, new EGPSEE-SU officers were elected for 2005-2006 period. I also would like to forward my gratitude for all your work to make EGPSEE a better place for socialization and information-sharing. Many activities have been held like sports day and our trip to Chubetsu dam. These events would not have been realized without you, EGPSEE supervisor Mrs. Werawan, and others. Being an international program here in Japan, EGPSEE may seem "foreign" to Japanese students at first. Nevertheless, this feeling has faded away from last semester, with the enrolment of many Japanese students. As a matter of fact, many of our activities last semester were able to be organized thanks mainly to the Japanese students. Again, we would like to thank you for your active participations. It is great that we have such a global student community here in EGPSEE with Japanese students as contributing participants.

Soon we are going to start our winter semester. I believe we are going to get busy with research and the preparation for the winter, especially if it is your first time. Yet, I hope you can continue to participate in our activities.

Finally, I wish you all the best for your studies and lives!

*Dhannyanto Anggawidjaja*  
*President of EGPSEE-SU (2005)*

## Projects and Activities of EGPSEE-SU

By Hiroe Hara\*



### Welcome Party

With the coming of the slow thaw in Sapporo, we took 11 new students (one doctoral and 10 master) in EGPSEE family. One was from Nepal and the others were the Japanese.

All enjoyed the games and food arranged by the brand-new EGPSEE-SU officers and volunteers. May and Hiroshi together hosted the proceeding of the party, and brought a lot of fun to audience.

April

8  
14

summer semester starts



May

24

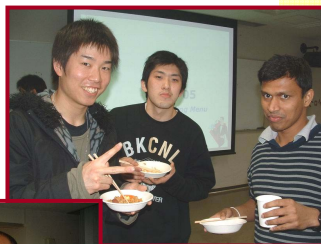


### 2<sup>nd</sup> Elympic

It was on the very fine day that 2<sup>nd</sup> Elmpic was held. We played soccer and a couple of games unique to Indonesia and Japan.

Our cheer leading team specially organized and trained for this event performed their perfectly matched dance!!

June



July

28



### Field Trip

This year, We visited Tobetsu dam and the tunnel construction site. We had a detailed explanation at each site and deepened our understanding.

Also, we deepened our understanding of each other through this trip.



summer semester ends

August

18  
19







Sept 1

*Graduation Party*

People often have mixed feeling at a graduation party: glad but sad to say good-bye to friends.

This September, 6 doctoral and 6 master graduated from EGPSEE. We had a very good time together, eating delicious food and reminiscing the days at Hokudai.

26

Oct 7

*Graduation Ceremony*



11

Nov

*Welcome Party*

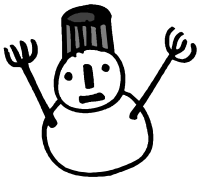
Separation with some friends was followed by new meetings in October. We took 12 more students ( 5 doctoral, 6 master and one research student) in our family.

Games, food and talks helped us, and we become friends in a not so long time.



winter semester starts

Dec



*Bonenkai*

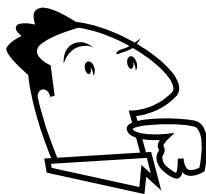
16



27

winter break begins

What's next???



We hope that we will have more of you and your friends in the next event!!



\*Laboratory of Water Quality Control Engineering



## ANG PASKONG PINOY: Pagdiriwang at Tradisyon

The Filipino Christmas: Celebration and Traditions

By Richard Diaz Alorro\*



When I was still young, like most Filipino kids do, I dreamed of waking up one Christmas morning with snowflakes by my window, playing with snowballs, and making snowman. I was 6 years old then. Now 25, I've simply grown too old for tales of knights and kings, so to say, my childhood fantasy is about to come true. Yes, I'll wake up on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December with snow by my window. I'll be excited and probably take photos of it. But, in spite of the excitement and the many good things that Japan could offer me this Christmas, there is still a longing in my heart. I can't help it but I will surely miss the way Christmas is celebrated in the Philippines.

The Philippines is the only Asian country where Christians predominate. Around 80% of the Filipinos are Roman Catholic. Christmas, therefore, is an extremely important and valued holiday for most Filipinos. It is the time for remembering and rejoicing on the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also a time for family, for sharing, for giving, and a time for food, fun, and friendship. The Filipino Christmas celebration is probably the longest and merriest in the world. It begins as early as September and ends as late as the end of January. As soon as the BER months start (SeptemBER, OctoBER), strains of Christmas songs can be heard everywhere. Malls and houses begin to display Christmas decorations and showcase colorful lights. The Christmas spirit dominates the air. Various events are happening within the BER months, which are simply indicators of how near Christmas already is. It seems that Filipinos cannot wait for Christmas to come. The wonderful climate, lovely landscape, multitude culinary delights, and above all the affectionate people with true devotion to family and faith, make the Philippine Christmas celebration incomparable. It is a mixture of Western and native Filipino traditions. Santa Claus, the Christmas tree, sending Christmas cards, and singing Christmas carols have all been inherited from the cultures of the West. However, they have all been adapted to fit the nature and personality of the Filipino people.

There is no winter or snow in the Philippines at Christmas time. Thus, playing snowballs and making snowman are also unlikely to ever happen. There are also very few pine trees. But the Filipinos found a way to include these Christmas icons through dummy snowman and the Christmas tree mostly of plastic, sometimes of paper or twigs. Although Santa Claus is visible in displays and believed by most Filipino children to exist, he rarely comes bearing gifts. But Filipino children still hang their socks and stockings in the hope that Santa Claus would come in the middle of the night and fulfill their wishes, ending up to find that it was their parents who put gifts in their socks when they grow up.



Even without snow or pine trees, there's no doubt it is Christmas in the Philippines. Filipino Christmas decorations are abundant and beautiful. The Filipinos enjoy decorating their homes not only with star lanterns but also with all sorts of Christmas decors. Most Filipinos think that decorating their homes for the Christmas holidays is a necessity. The following are the traditions that make a Filipino Christmas. Christmas in the Philippines is above all religious celebrations. It officially starts on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December. This is when the Filipinos begin attending *Misa de Gallo*, which is Spanish for "Mass of the Rooster". *Misa de Gallo* is a mass celebrated for nine days until Christmas Eve. It is also commonly called

*Simbang Gabi* in Tagalog, which means "Night Mass", because it starts at four o'clock in the morning. It is said that this tradition was introduced by the Spanish friars to allow farmers to hear mass before going to the fields early in the morning.

Waking up every early morning for *Misa de Gallo* is considered as a sacrifice for Christ. In order to wake up people in the community, the town band may play carols an hour before mass or the church may play carols on

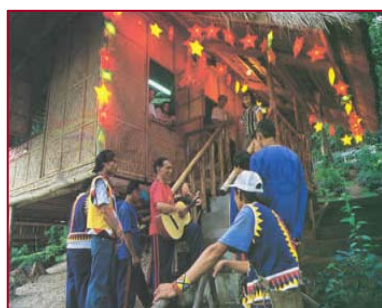


a loud speaker system. Most Filipinos start the *Simbang Gabi* with a prayer request in their hearts and a determination to finish the *Simbang Gabi* without any absent. There is a belief that, if the 9 morning masses are completed, their prayer requests will be granted.

This tradition is being held on the night of December 24. This is a reenactment of the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter. A young couple dressed as Joseph and a pregnant Mary wanders along the streets, knocking at the doors of houses, asking the occupants if they have room for them. The couple, as depicted in the Scripture, is unable to find a house willing to take them in and so take refuge in the church instead. The "*panunuluyan*" ends right before the *Misa de Aguinaldo* begins.

The *Misa de Aguinaldo* is a midnight mass on Christmas Eve (December 24). It means "Gift Mass" and usually starts at 10:00 o'clock in the evening immediately after the *panunuluyan*. Young and old Filipinos go to churches dressed in their Sunday's best. It is a sacred tradition for every member of the family to be present in the mass. During this mass, the birth of Jesus Christ is celebrated and the crowd sings "*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*", to rejoice in the coming of Christ.

*Noche Buena* is the family dinner immediately after the "*Misa de Aguinaldo*" on Christmas Eve. It is meant to be a sumptuous feast: fruits, ham and cheese (specifically *Queso de Bola*), native dishes such as *lechon* (roasted pig), *pansit*, *puto*, *leche flan*, *menudo*, *embutido*, rice cakes, and *lumpia*. There are also abounding San Miguel beer, wine and liquor, which make the celebration of Christmas indeed intoxicating. After the dinner, family members gather around the Christmas tree for gift-giving. The Christmas Eve gathering provides an opportunity for a reunion of immediate and distant family members, friends, and former classmates. Family members who work or live abroad usually return home for this occasion or, if not, make a long distance call to their families in the Philippines. The main purposes of the event are promoting unity within the family, having a chance to get together and celebrating the season.



Music is an integral part of Filipino way of life. A rich compilation of songs for various occasions and seasons is present. Christmas is celebrated from the simplest to the grandest of music. Aside from playing Christmas songs, Filipinos are also fond of caroling. It was adopted from the West and became the tradition cherished by the Filipinos. People gather together: friends, officemates, church groups, choirs, students and even street kids.



They knock on the doors of every home to sing Christmas carols, bringing good cheers and wishes for happy holidays. In return, the home gives coins or a few pesos, or even some

The most famous Christmas symbol in the Philippines is the *parol*. It is a handmade, star-shaped lantern used to decorate homes, churches, schools, streets and stores. The *parol* is usually made of bamboo sticks, tied to form a star skeleton and on which a colored paper or cellophane is pasted. At present, *parols* of various shapes and materials can be seen. It symbolizes the star of Bethlehem that guided the Three Wise Men to the new-born Jesus. Competitions on the biggest, brightest and the most beautiful *parol* are also being held during the season.

The Filipino Christmas season ends with the Feast of the Three Wise Men (The Three Kings) or the Epiphany. This is celebrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January or on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of January. All Christmas trees and decorations are detached and kept until the next Christmas season.

In spite of the materialism, extravagance, commercialism and exhaustion, the Filipino Christians try to preserve the true meaning of Christmas. The church always reminds and empowers its people of the real spirit of the celebration. The center of Christmas celebration is Jesus Christ, the greatest demonstration of God's love to us. No matter how simple and meek the celebration is, as long as there is thanksgiving and joy in our hearts, Christmas will always be a memorable one. I will spend my Christmas and New Year away from my family for the first time. There will be neither *lechon* nor *puto-bumbong*. I will not wake up as early as 4:00 a.m. to attend the *misa de gallo*. I'll have my first taste of Japan's Christmas celebration: an entirely new environment, a new experience and a different celebration. But no matter how far I am from my family, Christmas will always be Christmas to me. We won't be together this Christmas but we will always be one by heart.

A holy Christmas and a prosperous new year to all!

*\*Laboratory of Mineral Processing and Resources Recycling*



## The Japanese New Year

By Masashi Matsumura\*

New Year is the most important event for Japanese. We spend several days in preparing for this event. We clean the whole house and make special ornaments (Kagamimochi and Kadomatsu) and foods (Osechiryori). On the New Year's Eve, we eat Japanese noodles (Toshikoshisoba) and toll a bell (Jyoyanokane). Then, on the New Year's day, we go to Shinto Shrine (Hatsumoude) and enjoy New Year's cards and Osechiryori.

### *New Year' Eve*

December 31st is New Year's Eve. We have a custom of eating Japanese noodles (Toshikoshisoba) on that day. We eat it to finish off this year, wishing that we will live long and thin as noodles.

At midnight, we go to a temple near our houses, and listen to Jyoyanokane. It is the tolling of temple bells. The temple bells are stroked one hundred and eight times. This has a religious meaning. In Buddhism, it is said that humans have 108 kinds of our worldly desires. By tolling the temple bell, they are driven away.



### *New Year' Day*

New Year's Day is considered to be one of the most important days in Japan. We exchange New Year's cards called Nengajo on the day. We send New Year's cards to friends, relatives and colleagues to exchange formal greetings. Also, some people express their New Year's resolutions on them.

On the New Year's Day, we go to Shinto Shrines. It is called Hatsumoude. We are in our best dress and we pray for good luck and happiness for the year. We also visit our relatives and friends to exchange New Year's greetings face to face. At that time, children are given a gift of money from their parents or relatives. It is called Otoshidama. It is customary in Japan that parents and relatives give a small sum of money as a New Year's present to young children.



At our, or relatives' house, we eat Osechiryori. Osechiryori is specially prepared as New Year's food, beautifully arranged in lacquer boxes. It contains colorful vegetables, fish, black beans and so on. The foods that make up Osechiryori can be prepared in advance and then left out in a cool area for a few days, in case they are spoiled. Usually, foods are placed in compartmentalized lacquer boxes that are stacked in layers. We enjoy our food twice, first by looking at it, and second by eating it.

In a Japanese alcove, we place Kagamimochi. It is two round rice cakes piled up, with an orange on the top. Some of these are presented with lobster and dried persimmon. The rice cake is shaped like a flat round mirror and that's the reason why it is called Kagamimochi. This meaning comes from Shinto. Kagami means mirror, and Mochi means rice cake. The mirror is a god's symbol. It has been generalized since the Muromachi period with the appearance of Japanese alcove.



During New Year's Day, streets look different. Many Japanese decorate the front door of shops, company buildings and houses with a pair of Kadomatsu during the New Year holidays. Kadomatsu is a decoration consisting of bamboo and pine branches symbolizing longevity and prosperity. It is said that this is the appropriate way to welcome gods.

Thus, New Year's Day is important for Japanese people. It is the time when not only New Year starts but also some religious acts and social relationships are deepened. So most Japanese people stop working, return to their family homes and stay with over. We value, are looking forward to and enjoy this period.

\*Laboratory of Structural Mechanics and Systems

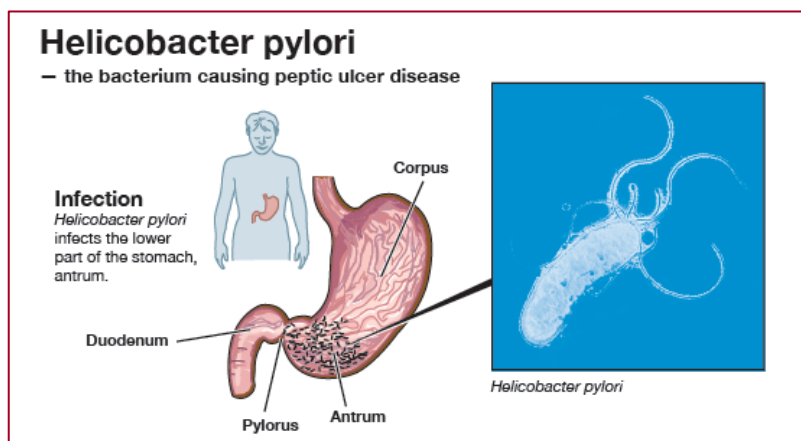
## Have you ever had a stomachache?

What is the reason?

You may say stress, food poisoning or anything else, but may be not....

*By Thithiwat MaY & Akinobu Ito\**

This article is relevant to the scientists who won the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine this year. You should know about it because 15% of humans have this symptom and this topic has been recognized as the "remarkable and unexpected discovery".



Until Warren and Marshall's finding in 1979, physicians had thought that an excess of stomach acid caused by stress ate away at the stomach lining and lead to ulcers. The treatments prescribed ranged from a bland diet to drugs that blocked stomach acid production to, finally, surgery. Then, while examining tissue samples from the stomachs of ulcer patients, Warren noticed the presence of spiral-shaped bacteria. No one expected that such organisms could withstand the harsh acidic conditions in the stomach (the pH in the stomach is 1.0-4.0). But these crafty microbes

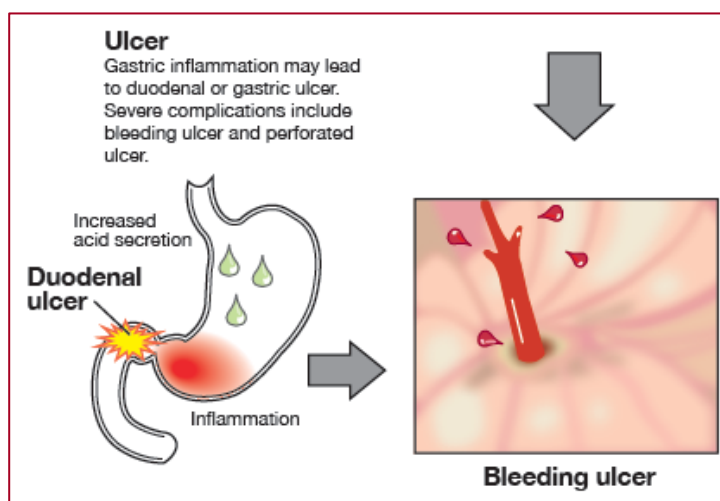
appeared to live under the thick mucus layer of the stomach lining and, in Warren's observations, suspiciously close to areas of inflammation. It took Warren, with the help of young trainee, Marshall, to finally cultivate the bacterium in the laboratory in 1982. The microbe was named *Helicobacter pylori*.

However, the clinical community was suspicious about their finding and it took a remarkable length of time for their discovery to become the mainstream. In the standard medical teaching at that time students learned that there were no bacteria in the gut because of extremely acidic habitat and everybody thought Warren and Marshall were mad to propose this project. In 1985, Marshall performed experiment on his body to prove that these bacteria caused gastric illness. He infected himself with this bacteria and he got stomach ulcer.

Nowadays, peptic ulcer is no longer a chronic or disabling disease. Researchers now know that about 50 percent of humans host the bacteria in their stomachs. Fortunately, not every person who has the microbe in residence will experience ulcers, but symptoms do occur in some 10 to 15 percent of those who do.

*H. pylori* creates problems, because it naturally releases chemicals that attract cells that induce stomach irritation. The organism is also a good swimmer and easily evades the stomach's muscle contractions, which work to flush out other contents. Without treatment, the bacteria can cause large ulcers and also predispose a person to stomach cancer.

Today, the most effective remedy for ulcers is a regimen of antibiotics. There is some debate that eradicating the bacteria could lead to other diseases. This discovery of the link between stomach disease and microbe suggests possibility that microbe cause other chronic inflammatory conditions such as ulcerative colitis, atherosclerosis and stomach cancer. Let's appreciate their discovery to improve the human welfare. For more details, please visit <http://nobelprize.org>.



*\*Laboratory of Water Quality Control Engineering*

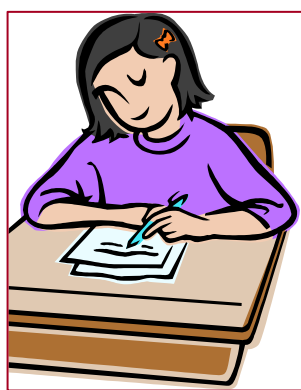


## A THOUSAND DAYS IN MY LIFE

By Werawan Manakul

When Hiroe asked if I could write something about my daily life that I found exciting, interesting or impressive for E-Vision, without any hesitation I said "Yes". I did not realize that it is not easy for a person who has lived over 19,000 days, so much has happened in her daily life, to identify what was and is still exciting, interesting or impressive. As a result, I decided to write about a fraction of my life.

I was fourteen when my mother decided that my sister and I should stay with her sister who lived in Malaysia (then, Malaya) and attend high school there. She believed that it would be better for us to have an English education early. At that time English was Malaysia's official language. It is difficult to imagine how, four decades ago, my mother who only had a minimum formal education could envision that English would play an important role in our society.



Life in Malaysia was quite challenging. At school, English which I studied as a second language in Thailand became a medium of instruction and Malay became the second language. I still remember how my classmates giggled or whispered among themselves when I could not understand the questions teachers asked me. Besides my inadequate conversational English ability, listening to Malaysian English was not easy. I had to adjust my ears to different accents since teachers had different origins. Fortunately it was not long before I became a "normal" student like my classmates. I guess it was because English had always been my favorite subject and Malay language was not complicated.

At home our neighbors on the right, whose native language was Cantonese, spoke to us in Hokkien – a Chinese dialect commonly used in Malaysia at that time. Our neighbors on the other side who were originally from Sri Lanka communicated with us in Malay. My aunt spoke little English but, like my mother, was fluent in Thai, Hokkien and Malay. My Chinese Malaysian uncle-in-law spoke Thai and Malay with some accent but was fluent in English and Chinese (both Mandarin and Hokkien). During our stay, he was our personal English tutor. Everyday, after school, we selected an article from that day's newspaper and read out in front of him. In selecting the article, we had to predict what questions we would likely get from him and prepare appropriate answers in our head.

My three cousins were already working and living somewhere else. What one of them left behind at his parents' home was a huge collection of English *manga*. Whenever I had time I would sit in the room with cabinets full of copies of *manga*. I slowly went through each one of them and referred to the dictionary when necessary. I loved reading those *manga*. I did not realize that what I enjoyed had, at the same time, improved my English ability.



That was 1/19 of my daily life more than 30 years ago. Because of my mother's vision and my aunt's and uncle's kindness, my sister and I had an opportunity not only to learn English but also to experience Malaysia's unique multi-cultural environment. Although my mother, aunt and uncle have all passed away, those 1,000 days they gave me left a lasting impact on my life.

\*EGPSEE program Officer

## THE POTATO

Where does Potato come from?

*By Pepe Rodrigo Herrera Salgado\**



The majority of the world population relies for their staple food on indigenous or cultivated varieties of four main crops: rice, wheat, maize, and potatoes.

Writing in the Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences, a team led by a USDA potato taxonomist stationed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has for the first time demonstrated a single origin in southern Peru for the cultivated potato. The scientists analyzed DNA markers in 261 wild and 98 cultivated potato varieties to assess whether the domestic potato arose from a single wild progenitor or whether it arose multiple times - and the results were clear, says David Spooner, the USDA research scientist who led the study. "In contrast to all prior hypotheses of multiple origins of the cultivated potato, we have identified a single origin from a broad area of southern Peru," says Spooner, who is also a UW-Madison professor of horticulture. "The multiple-origins theory was based in part on the broad distribution of potatoes from north to south across many different habitats, through morphological resemblance of different wild species to cultivated species, and through other data. Our DNA data, however, shows that in fact all cultivated potatoes can be traced back to a single origin in southern Peru."

The potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), a tuber that originated in the upper reaches of the Peruvian Andes, has served as a foodstuff for Man over the past 8,000 years. However, it was not until the Spaniards took potato samples to Europe in the sixteenth century that the tuber rose to become a universal foodstuff. In fact, slightly less than a century after the potato was brought over to the Old World, the potato was already massively consumed, and during the industrial revolution turned out to be a key energy source.

Down through the ages, the potato has been blamed for causing everything from lust to leprosy. Europeans at first sight thought that the potato was poisonous, a common accusation against members of the genus *Solanum*, which includes deadly nightshade and tomatoes (another new world food that was also considered poisonous when brought to Europe). Potatoes were not so popular, despite their reputation as an aphrodisiac. Shakespeare mentions them in this context in "The Merry Wives of Windsor". In the Andes, the Incas thought the potato made childbirth easier and used it to treat injuries. The Protestants in Northern Ireland and Scotland refused to plant potatoes, since they were not mentioned in the Bible. The Catholic Irish overcame this obstacle by sprinkling them with holy water. By the 1800s, the Irish had come to depend on the potato almost entirely. A fungus spread totally wiped out the crop in the 1840s, leading to the tragic and famous potato famine.

Marie Antoinette reportedly once wore a potato flower as a corsage. She decided to take a break from eating cake and so ate potatoes, and what the queen did was what everyone did, so the potato became fashionable and entered French cuisine and then, from France to the world.

During the last centuries the farming of potatoes has grown tremendously and it still continues growing, with potato production in developing countries expanding at an unprecedented rate. Annual production has grown from 30 million tonnes in the early 1960s to 85 million tonnes today. This popularity is hardly surprising. Potatoes yield twice the protein per acre of wheat, and provide more edible dry matter annually than the combined world output of fish and meat. Potatoes are virtually fat-free and contain a protein that is nearly the equivalent of milk, along with substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals. In addition, potatoes produce more nutritious food faster on less land than any other food crop.

The International Potato Center located in Peru maintains the largest gene-bank of potato and sweet-potato genetic resources in the world, including some 1,500 samples of about 100 wild species collected in eight Latin American countries and 3,800 traditional Andean cultivated potatoes. The germplasm is held in trust by the Center under the auspices of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and is available to plant breeders worldwide free upon request.

So it seems that the potato is finally getting the recognition that deserves.

(Reference: <http://news.cals.wisc.edu/>, <http://www.perutravels.net/peru-travel-guide/art-gastronomy-potato.htm>)



*\*Laboratory of Terrestrial Environment Engineering*

## For Your Eyes Only

The Top Secret E-vision Interrogation  
Subject: Itou-san!

*Interview by Arshad Baharudin\* and Nirajan Shiwakoti\*\**

Time: 1800 – In the early evening after official hours are complete

Setting: Secret back room of the administration office. The interview takes place over a low wooden table facing a blinded window that overlooks the engineering entrance hall. Itou-san, professionally dressed and somewhat nervous, faces her two interviewers codenamed ໄ້ໂໜ້ and アシヤ. They hesitantly begin conversing, speaking in a mix of English and Japanese, assisted by a trusty pink electronic dictionary. The following is a heavily edited summary of the top secret discussion, marked for the perusal of the E-vision Organization.

*For your eyes only!*

A: Sorry for making you take time out from your busy schedule Itou-san. As you know we'd like to interview for a piece in the E-vision magazine...

I: *No, not at all, just a little nervous, Hara-san said that the interview would be in Japanese?*

She looks hopeful...

A: Hohoho, I am afraid there must have been a little mistake...

Further small talk and banter ensues in a mix of English and Japanese as we get into a rhythm, speaking in a strange mix of Japanese and English.

A: So Itou-san, can you tell us a bit about yourself to start with? For example, your name, your family and so on?

I: *My name is Itou Fusae (伊藤房枝). Itou is my husband's name...*

S: Oh, so you are married??? Zannen... I had thought...

I: *Yes, I have been married for two years.*

A: Any, please continue with your self introduction!

I: *I come from Sapporo and I attended Ritsumeikan, a private university near Kyoto. I returned to work in Hokudai as it was near my home. I majored in Japanese Constitutional Law (wow!-ed) and I now work as an administration officer in the Hokkaido University Engineering Faculty. I enjoy reading and listening to music, and my hobbies include admiring and working with Japanese paper and earthenware.*

A: Very interesting indeed! And how did you get involved with EGPSEE? What do you think of the EGPSEE program and its activities?

I: *I am good friends with Mabuchi-san and Werawan-san. I think Werawan is very suteki – a very strong woman! EGPSEE is a great program and the standard of the students is very high. It is also a*



---

*great chance for the Japanese students to study and learn English. I find the EGPSEE activities to be very interesting and I always look forward to it.*

S: Any particular events that were particularly memorable? How about the cooking?

I: *Hmm... I was very moved by Iqbal's singing at the graduation party last autumn. As for the food, it's all very delicious but if I have to choose a favorite it was one of the Filipino dishes... 'adobo' I think it was called. The Thai food was also good!*

A: What of your hopes for yourself and EGPSEE?

I: *Hmm... Well if Mabuchi-san was not here I would worry very much as my English is not so good – 'itsumo gomenasai'. I want to speak English better, though. So I practice with Werawan-san. I also listen to English conversation practice tapes as well as Coldplay, one of my favorite bands.*

A: Perhaps this is also a great chance for the foreign students to improve their Japanese! Maybe next time Itou-san, you can submit to E-vision some simple Japanese poems or stories with an English translation. We can learn Japanese and you can practice your English!

Itou-san just nods.

A: Do you have any final words for the readers to round off the interview, Itou-san?

世界で活躍してください！少しでもあなたたちの研究勉強の手伝いができたらうれしいです！

Please liven up the world! It would give me great pleasure to help you all in your research studies in any way I can!



*\*Laboratory of Transportation and Traffic Systems Planning*

*\*\*Laboratory of Traffic Control and Safety Engineering*



## Internship in Germany

By Aileen Parra Huelgas\*

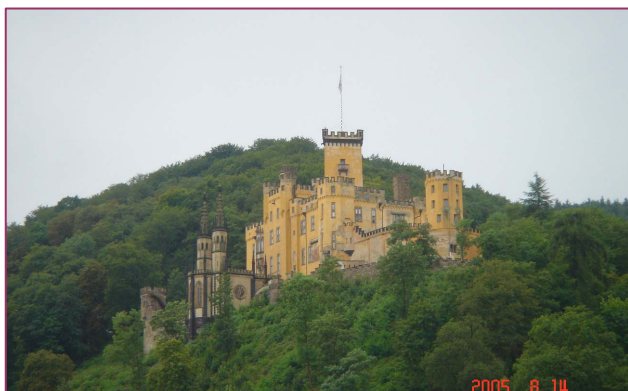
Last August 2005, I had a chance to take part in the internship program sponsored by CEED (Center of Excellence for Engineering Education), with the recommendation of my professor, Prof. Funamizu. The Internship Program. GTZ is a German aid agency whose work involves international cooperation for sustainable development. It is a technical support company that has offices worldwide and provides support in social, political, economic and ecological developments with the aim of improving people's living conditions. Its main office, where I stayed for 1 month working under ECOSAN project, is in Eschborn, Germany (near Frankfurt).

My one-month internship generally covers preparation of project and technical data sheets under the knowledge management and networking. Field visits on graywater treatment plants were also undertaken in SheratonArabella Hotel and in KfW Bankengruppe located in Frankfurt. Travel. One of the perks this internship program offered me is my weekend travels to the places within and outside Germany. As such, weekends are the most looked forward to after a 5-day toll of work.

*Frankfurt.* Home of the EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK----This city is considered to be the economic center of not just Germany, but the whole Europe. One of the main attractions in this area is the Romer, the center of economic exchange in the past. And now it's the area for festivities. Not so far is the river Main where people spend their summer by enjoying a cool beer or whatever drink there may be in a setting of a beer garden.



*Rhine River.* The Rhine River cruise which I took from Koblenz to Bingen showed me castles and villages along the stretch of the river. This made me imagine how wonderful it is to live in one of those castles with king and queen during the middle ages. These castles are all ruins but some are preserved for tourist attractions. Mostly are built on hilltops as defensive structures to protect their properties and inhabitants.



While enjoying the sceneries of these countries, inevitable misadventures and misfortunes accompanied me during these trips. Let me share with you some of these experiences. *Berlin.* How do I describe Berlin? It is the past, present and future rolled into one moment. If you look at its modern building and scratch beneath the surface, you will find some relic of the past. Just when I thought my trip would end well, my 2<sup>nd</sup> to the last ride in the train shocked my wits out. During ticket inspection, the inspector demanded me an explanation as to why my ticket was intended for children. Obviously, I will not pass

*Paris.* Eiffel Tower-the world renowned attraction which I used to look only in pictures before, but I had the chance to lay my eyes with. It is a very romantic place to go, and how I wish, at that moment, I had someone special with me. I spent my last two hours here before going back to Germany. During my short visit there, I was also able to visit the Louvre museum, where the famous painting of Mona Lisa is displayed. Furthermore, among the famous places I laid my eyes here in Paris include the Notredame Church and the Moulin Rouge viewed from the outside.



as one considering my built. After series of clarification, the inspector gave me two options: call an agency and justify this incident or pay 40 euros instant. This incident was ironic as I had availed for a discount ticket (1.6 euros less) since I am a student, but then I was fined with 40 euros. With this in mind, the first option seems to be practical at that time. Any lessons learned? Well, always ask someone if you are not sure as there is nothing to lose anyway.

*Impressions on Internship.* The whole internship program has offered me not only the opportunity to expand the horizons and avenues of knowledge in my field of interest but also the chance to see the other parts of the world. Economic status and culture spell out the difference between the developing (Philippines) and developed countries (Japan and Germany) especially in the field I am pursuing. GTZ staff, specifically ECOSAN, exposed me through their documented reports, papers and field trips about the current status, issues, and challenges faced in sanitation system. The relics and remnants of century and decade old infrastructures reflect the history of European countries, which are things I have learned during my primary and secondary schooling. These, among other things, made my internship worthy of my memory and experiences.

*\*Laboratory of Urban Water System Engineering*

## Tough Guy's Favorite Tempura Restaurant

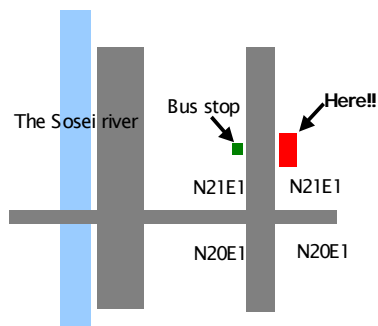
*By Takuma Shiozawa\**

Although the restaurant looks a little bit old, its tempura tastes like a shrimp of the heaven!! Go and taste it now! It would be a shame if you don't (laughing) .

I definitely recommend you guys to try ebi-tempura (shrimp-tempura) set. It costs only 800 yen. Please enjoy the Japanese traditional food, tempura. I'm sure it suits your taste.

Your friend, Tough Guy v(^ ^)v

Location : 北 2 1 条 東 1 丁目 (N21 E1)



*\*Laboratory of Environmental System Research*

## Life is Good in Sapporo

A long trip from Nigeria and a new life in Sapporo

By Chukwuemeka Peter Asiegbu\*

Hello, my name is Asiegbu, Chukwuemeka Peter. I am the first EGPSEE student from Nigeria. Asiegbu is my surname; Chukwuemeka is my traditional native name while Peter is my Christian name. My traditional native name "Chukwuemeka" means that "God is magnificent".

I was born in Enugu State, Nigeria and had all my initial education in English as it is the only official language in Nigeria. I did my undergraduate degree program in mechanical engineering at the University of Nigeria.

When I was leaving Nigeria for Japan, I was somewhat confused and worried as I had not traveled outside Nigeria before. All I knew was that I was traveling to Japan, and believed that things would be well for me over there. To make the matter worse, I had not traveled by air before and the international flight was my first time. So you can imagine how uncertain and worried I was. Besides, I did not even know how hospitable the Japanese would be and I had to take four flights to travel from Nigeria to Sapporo, Japan. I felt almost unable to make the long journey but I took it as a challenge.

I had a very long journey from Nigeria to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia; then, from Ethiopia to Bangkok in Thailand; from there to Tokyo and finally to Chitose where I met my tutor with his friends waiting to welcome me. So, I took four flights (three international and one domestic).



My tutor and his friends welcomed me warmly and took me to have light refreshment in Japanese style. So the first food I tasted in Japan was "sushi" (the famous raw fish). At first, I could not imagine and believe that people can eat raw fish but realized later that "sushi" is from special species of fish. Right now, I can eat "sushi" and think it is delicious.

Sapporo is a very nice place in the world for people to stay. The city is cool, well organized and quiet. Since my arrival in Sapporo, I have never seen people (the Japanese) being angry or annoyed in any way which is different from my country. People are always laughing and eager to help in Sapporo. Before coming to Japan, I thought that the Japanese would have some elements of racism but they are completely accommodating. In fact, the initial wonderful hospitable welcome I experienced contributed greatly to my adaptation here in Sapporo. But I must say that Sapporo is really very cold which is completely different from my country's climate. In Nigeria, there are only two seasons, dry and wet season. And the average temperature is 35° C. So, I first saw the real snow on 9th of September 2005 here. I also have to say that the cost of living is generally too high in Japan.

In conclusion, my life so far in Japan has been a good one and I look forward to having much more enjoyable moments in Sapporo.

\*Laboratory of Terrestrial Environment Engineering

## The New Students

We welcome twelve new students this October.

Ridhard Diaz ALORRO

Country: Philippines  
 Division: Solid Waste, Resources and Geoenvironmental Engineering  
 Program: Master  
 Supervisor: Prof. TSUNEKAWA



Chukwuemeka Peter ASIEGBU

Country: Nigeria  
 Division: Field Engineering for Environment  
 Program: Master  
 Supervisor: Prof. ASAKURA

Ali AWALUDIN

Country: Indonesia  
 Division: Built Environment  
 Program: Doctor  
 Supervisor: Prof. HAYASHIKAWA



Muhammad Aun BASHIR

Country: Pakistan  
 Division: Built Environment  
 Program: Master  
 Supervisor: Prof. UEDA

Pepe Rodrigo HERRERA SALGADO

Country: Peru  
 Division: Field Engineering for Environment  
 Program: Doctor  
 Supervisor: Prof. IGARASHI



Januar Fery IRAWAN

Country: Indonesia  
 Division: Engineering and Policy for Cold Regional Environment  
 Program: Master  
 Supervisor: Prof. SHIMIZU



Mohamed Omar MOHAMED

Country: Egypt  
Division: Built Environment  
Program: Doctor  
Supervisor: Prof. HAYASHIKAWA



Rengarasu Terrance MOHANARAJ

Country: Sri Lanka  
Division: Engineering and Policy for Cold Regional Environment  
Program: Master  
Supervisor: Prof. HAGIWARA

Warangkana SAENGSOY

Country: Thailand  
Division: Solid Waste, Resources and Geoenvironmental Engineering  
Program: Doctor  
Supervisor: Prof. NAWA



Raxchaya SHRESTHA

Country: Nepal  
Division: Architectural and Structural Design  
Program: Master  
Supervisor: Prof. KOBAYASHI

Gebeyehu Aragaw TSEGAW

Country: Ethiopia  
Division: Engineering and Policy for Cold Regional Environment  
Program: Doctor  
Supervisor: Prof. SHIMIZU



Elena Alexandrova MAKSIKOVA

Country: Russia  
Division: Engineering and Policy for Cold Regional Environment  
Program: Research student  
Supervisor: Prof. SHIMIZU

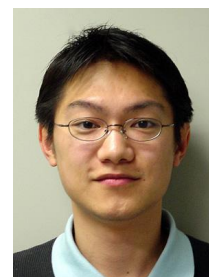
## The Graduates

We congratulate the twelve graduates.

### 7th Graduation, September 2005

Surajate Boonya-aroonnet

Country: Thailand  
 Division: Environment and Resources Engineering  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: Computation of Turbulence and Bed Morphology in Meandering Rivers

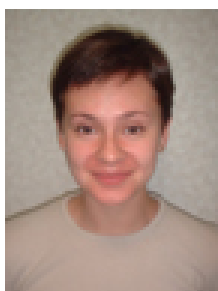


Rofiq Iqbal

Country: Indonesia  
 Division: Environment and Resources Engineering  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: The Conservation of Sarobetsu Mire: Restoration of Water Chemistry Regime and Its Relevance to Vegetation Succession

Jung Chang-Hwan

Country: Korea  
 Division: Solid Waste Resources Engineering  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: Flow Analysis of Metals in Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Management System



Olga Sergeevna Savichtcheva

Country: Russia  
 Division: Urban Engineering and Planning  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: Application of Bacteriodes spp. as Alternative Indicator of Fecal Pollution in Natural Waters

Pipat Termkhajornkit

Country: Thailand  
 Division: Structural and Geotechnical Engineering  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: Study on Hydration, Microstructure and Performance of Fly Ash-Cement Pastes



Sahaphol Timpong

Country: Thailand  
 Division: Structural and Geotechnical Engineering  
 Degree: Doctor of Philosophy  
 Thesis Title: Small Strain Shear Modulus Evaluation of Volcanic Coarse-grained Soils with Particle Breakage

**Alba Carolina Blanco Chaparro**

Country: Colombia  
Division: Urban Engineering and Planning  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Development of Land Readjustment in Japan and Its Possibilities of Application in Colombia



**Norov Jagvaral**

Country: Mongolia  
Division: Structural and Geotechnical Engineering  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Estimation Method for Interactive Behavior between Frost Soil and Chilled Gas Pipelines

**Ramil Garcia Mijares**

Country: Philippines  
Division: Structural and Geotechnical Engineering  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Deformation-Strength Characteristics of Crushable Volcanic Soils at Various Degrees of Saturation



**Nguyen Linh Vu**

Country: Vietnam  
Division: Urban Engineering and Planning  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Treatment of High Concentration of Pharmaceuticals in Urine by Ozonation Process

**Mehari Alemayehu Nigussie**

Country: Ethiopia  
Division: Urban Engineering and Planning  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Effects of Road Geometry and Weather Conditions on Head-on Collisions in Hokkaido



**Vasantha WICKRAMASINGHE**

Country: Sri Lanka  
Division: Urban Engineering and Planning  
Degree: Master of Engineering  
Thesis Title: Evaluation of the Current Trends and Prospects of Bus Transportation

## Puzzle

Four Dots make a Square: A 'moving' poem  
by Apollo Birch. TellMeAnEnigma

Once upon a time, in the world of 2D  
there were four dots named **A**, **B**, **C** and **E**  
The four dots stay put in its own corner  
and make sure its 'square' is really a square

So dot **A** stays four steps north of dot **B**  
and dot **C** stays four steps east of dot **B**  
While dot **C** stays four steps south of dot **E**  
and dot **A** stays four steps west of dot **E**

One day, they want its square to be bigger  
but two dots must stay in its position  
So only two can move from its location  
to double the area of the square

Which pair has to be moved and please show me  
how far the two can go in this 2D  
For this will be my poem's last stanza...  
Double the original square's area!

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The answer to last issue's puzzle (E-Vision vol.3 No.1)

Anag-rhyme I: Thirteen\*


If I tell you now about '**the earthquakes**',  
it's really an anagram of '**that queer shake**'.  
Then, would you believe me if I tell you,  
'bout the an'gram of '**eleven plus two**' ?

It's such a mathemat'cal beauty,  
Words and numbers are in such harmony.  
What's this an'gram and tell me if you're done,  
For it will be my last line – '**twelve plus one**' ?

\*Author's explanation: Mr. Apollo Birch. TellMeAnEnigma (his 'anagrammic pseudonym') was 'inspired' (one way of saying that he got bored of doing what he was supposed to be doing at that moment ) to write a poem and a riddle for this remarkable anagram: ELEVEN PLUS TWO = TWELVE PLUS ONE

The puzzle crafted in a poem was actually composed at one Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> (guess what month is that?). That is why (besides the other obvious and personal reasons) the title of this poem is  
Anag-rhyme I: Thirteen



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY  
  
**EGPSEE**  
STUDENT UNION