

Professor Akira Inaba  
Research Center for Molecular Thermodynamics  
Graduate School of Science  
Osaka University  
Toyonaka, Osaka 560-0043  
Japan

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Bearbeiter: Christoph Meingast  
Telefon: +49 7247 82-2188  
Fax: +49 7247 82-4624  
E-Mail: Meingast@ifp.fzk.de

Dear Akira,

As my second stay at the *Research Center for Molecular Thermodynamics* from September – October 2007 is quickly approaching the end, I would like take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to you and to Osaka University for making this visit possible. I also want to thank you and the organizers of *The 43 rd Japanese Conference on Calorimetry and Thermal Analysis* for the opportunity to attend and for the invitation to give a talk at this interesting conference in Sapporo. During the conference it was a great pleasure to see Prof. Takasuke Matsuo again, to chat with Prof. Michio Sorai in German and to meet Prof. H. Suga. The facts that this was the 43 rd conference of this kind and that some of the founding people attended speak strongly for the continuity of your research, and I think that you will continue on in this strong tradition as the newly elected leader of this community. Since most of the talks at the meeting were held in Japanese (which I, unfortunately, do not understand), it was interesting for me to just observe the process of your scientific presentations. There was ample time for discussion after each talk, which made a strong impression on me. Unfortunately, at most conferences nowadays there is barely time for even one or two short questions. I was also very impressed by Oscar Comacho's talk, which he held in, what appeared to me, perfect Japanese. I want to also take this opportunity to thank Daisuke Takajo, Hal Suzuki, Kazumasa Shimada, and Toshikazu Maruoka for organizing the sightseeing in Hokkaido, which allowed us to explore the beautiful crater lake at Shikotsu National park and the picturesque town of Otaru. They evenly split up the

driving responsibility of the rental car, and in turn everyone got some good driving practice.



Welcome party with plenty of Chinese food at the laboratory.

My time in Osaka was used primarily for writing up the results on the heat capacity data on YBCO obtained during my last visit. During the last two years, my colleagues, Rolf Heid and Klaus-Peter Bohnen back in Karlsruhe have invested a lot of effort to study YBCO using first-principle LDA (local density approximation) calculations, from which a quite accurate phonon specific heat can be obtained. This in turn allows one to extract the oxygen ordering and electronic specific heat contributions from the experimental data. I think that these results nicely demonstrate the synergetic effect of combining high-quality measurements with state-of-the-art theory. Together with Hal Suzuki we also started to investigate the limits of the heat capacity measurements of the PPMS system, especially with respect to very sharp critical and/or first-order transitions. You had the excellent idea of looking at KDP, which has an extremely sharp specific heat anomaly at the ferroelectric phase transition, and is thus well suited for this kind of test.

During my last visit my family and I got to see some of the important cultural sights in the Kansai area. This time I visited Himeji castle in Himeji and Kinkakuji temple in Kyoto, both of which are World Heritage sites. Although quite crowded, I think one can get a good impres-

sion of the cultural heritage of this country by visiting these impressive sights. Because I like to go swimming once in a while, I joined the TIPNESS fitness center near Ishibashi, which turned out to be quite a 'cultural' event in itself.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of your lab and your wife Kiyoko for the great hospitality they provided during my stay. I really enjoyed the welcome party and farewell party with home-grown grilled sweet potatoes, and would like to thank all the students, especially Toshikazu Maruoka and Kazumasa Shimada, for the organization of these memorable events. Special thanks go to Hal Suzuki for often joining me for lunch at the campus cafeteria and for explaining Japanese customs etc..

I wish you and the *Research Center for Molecular Thermodynamics* lots of scientific success, and I hope that you have the chance to visit us in Karlsruhe in the near future.

With warm wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christoph Meingast". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christoph" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Meingast".

Christoph Meingast