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Plenary lecture in The Twelfth International Heat Transfer Conference, Grenoble, 2002 ,  
by Professor Sung Tack Ro: “ Joseph Fourier: The Man and His Achievements”

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It was more than three years ago when Professor Ro presented the plenary lecture on Joseph Fourier for The 12th International Heat Transfer Conference in Grenoble, France, in August, 2002. I will introduce the lecture to the members of Heat Transfer Society of Japan. Since I meet him every year regularly and also occasionally without an appointment, I feel hesitation a little to write this preface now. But I should remind it before my memory is weaken. Then, I have asked the editor of this journal to introduce his impressive lecture here in this occasion when the next International Heat Transfer Conference is coming.

Every occasion when I meet him and chat on the Grenoble matter, he always says with the modest that he only collected data for Fourier. But, of course I do not believe it. Choice of the theme of the lecture and collection of the data for the lecture can not be made without high supervision or wisdom. The presentation or talk reflects the lecturer's humanity and his life. Since the Grenoble days, he, Professor Ro has changed for me not as a rival in a neighboring country but to one of the most respectable superior.

Professor Sung Tack Ro:

*(his photo space here)*

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was awarded degrees of B.S., M.S. and Ph.D from Seoul National University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Brown University, respectively. After the days of RA in Brown University he was promoted to a professor of Seoul National University in 1973. He engaged in research of thermodynamics and thermal engineering. He was the president of KSME in 1998. In this year he played as the secretary general for The 11th International Heat Transfer Conference, Kyongju, Korea. Since then he had been the president of the assembly for The International Heat Transfer Conference till the 12th conference. That is, Professor Ro was the president of The 12th International Heat Transfer Conference, and he presented the plenary lecture for the conference at 9:30-10:20 on August 19, 2002. When I spoke to him in the afternoon of the day before the conference to ask him “You are the president of this conference?”, then, he responded to me soon “I'm only a virtual president ...” This

is him, I felt, and I joined his lecture in the next morning.

His plenary lecture was on Fourier. He must have chosen the theme by considering the status of the international conference deeply, which was held in France after 32 years after the conference in Versailles. Fourier was born on 1768, and lived on the days of French revolution with Napoleon who was one year younger than Fourier. Napoleon loved the science. Fourier was, not favorably, but appointed as Prefect of the Rhone province. He constructed a highway from Grenoble to Turin.

In the 18-19th centuries, it was the time of “mathematization of sciences”. Great scientists of Lagrange, Laplace, Legendre, L. Carnot, Biot, Ampère, Poisson, S. Carnot, Euler and others lived in France. Fourier engaged not only in his mathematical or thermodynamics theories but in experimental works on heat and temperature. Fourier was great and so he was prized greatly and was also criticized. People of France were in a storm of the French revolution.

The talk of Professor Ro was excellent. He dealt with the great scientist of Fourier for discussion to consider Fourier's life, his professors and his colleagues. He considered the backgrounds for Napoleon and French revolution. Professor Ro talked on them in the place of France and to the scientists from the world with very nice humor. His attraction sense for the audience was wonderful.

On the other hand, the slides which he made for his talk were rather mild and calm toned. I will reproduce them in the following pages. In the light blue background of each page of the slides is a white flower vase -is it a Korean white ceramic?- with his comments by blue letters. But, for this journal I have ordered the printer to change the color of the blue letters to be black. I should ask Professor Ro to accept it.

In this occasion when I read through his sentences of the slides, then we were aware on that the impression of his talk we had felt in Grenoble is not transferred very directly. I think our nice impression for his talk was in his talk between the sentences of the slides which had been printed by the blue letters.

Now I think me lucky to have been attended his lecture in the very place of the opening ceremony of the Grenoble conference. The above was why I proposed to record the lecture by Professor Ro in this Journal of The Heat Transfer Society of Japan.

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