

Speech in Graduation Ceremony

Satoshi Inaba

I will begin my speech in English, and later I will switch to Japanese.

Congratulations on your graduation. Today, 289 SP1 students, 77 SP2 students, 11 double-degree SP4 students, 30 GSICCS master students, and 8 GSICCS PhD students are graduating. On behalf of the entire faculty, I am honored to extend our warm congratulations to all the students and their guardians.

Many Congratulations!

Today, three professors who will be retiring from Waseda with you are also attending the graduation ceremony. Professor Morita, Professor Pinnington, Professor Morikawa, thank you very much for your many years of dedicated service. Our school has been able to develop thanks to your efforts.

Thank you very much!

We wish you all continued success in your future endeavors.

Currently, the NHK morning drama "Bakebake" is being broadcast. Is anyone watching it? I look forward to watching it every morning.

The program "Bakebake" tells the story of Lafcadio Hearn (known in Japan as Koizumi Yakumo). Hearn spent one-third of his life in Europe, one-third in America, and one-third in Japan. He came to Japan in 1890 and, while working as an English teacher in Shimane Prefecture, he produced many works. Actually, Lafcadio Hearn had a connection with Waseda University, where he lectured on English literature for five months starting in April 1904. Sadly, he passed away in September 1904 at the young age of 54 due to a heart attack.

When I was still in elementary school, I remember reading stories such as "The Story of Mimi-Nashi-Hoichi" and "Yuki-Onna" from his book "Kwaidan" and feeling scary and awful. Learning that Lafcadio Hearn had written these stories was an even greater shock to me. Yet at the same time, I understood his words: " Humans are creatures who turn memories and experiences into stories, using them as aids to live by; thus, stories from around the world all share some similarities."

In another representative work, "Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan," he introduced various aspects of Japanese culture from the Matsue and Izumo regions. After reading it, Albert Einstein wanted to see for himself the beautiful Japan depicted by Lafcadio Hearn. This is the moment when Lafcadio Hearn's

wish to show the world Japan's true nature and virtues became a reality. Lafcadio Hearn believed in the power of "literature," the art of expressing emotion, and practiced his belief that publishing excellent books could "enlighten millions of people in the world."

By the way, do you all know the current motto of SILS?

"Sapere aude" is our school's motto.

This is a phrase by Horace, the ancient Roman poet, and was later introduced by the philosopher Kant in his book "What is Enlightenment?" As Lafcadio Hearn demonstrated through his literature, enlightening is an extremely difficult task. Especially, it has become even more difficult now because academic specialization has advanced significantly. I hope you will seek a wide range of expert opinions, think for yourself, and find your own answers.

Graduates of SILS have studied the liberal arts, while graduates of GSICCS have studied international communication. You have made continuous efforts to enlighten yourself. However, today does not mark the end of your learning. After this graduation ceremony, each of you must continue educating yourselves.

I have three pieces of advice.

The first one!

Meet a variety of people. Just as your encounters with various people during your university life have greatly changed you, continue to meet and discuss with various people. Think beyond the nation and society that confines us and contemplate, "If I were in the other person's shoes, I might have taken that course of action". I hope that all of you will not stick to your own opinions more than necessary. Cherish your encounters with various people and engage in lively discussions.

The second one!

Please continue reading books after graduation. Continue to read books to liberate yourself. The accumulated wisdom of humanity is carefully preserved within books, patiently anticipating our discovery as we turn the pages. In books, you can have conversations with people living abroad who are spatially distant from you, or with historical figures who are temporally distant from you.

The third one!

It is also necessary to continue writing in order to distribute your opinions. Through the many essay assignments and your graduation thesis, you have been trained to write your essays to successfully

deliver your thoughts. This is the most important way to send your ideas to society, and it is important for all of you to continue to train yourselves in the future. I encourage you to embark on the practice of writing, keeping in mind the concept of "writing to think and thinking to write."

We, the faculty, will continue to educate ourselves just as you do. We look forward to seeing you in the future. From today, Waseda will be your alma mater. Please come back to Waseda whenever you are troubled, happy, or in need. We are always on your side. We wish you all the best in your careers.

最後に、日本語で少しだけお話しさせていただきます。

保護者の皆様、お子様のご卒業おめでとうございます。学生たちは、われわれの学部でリベラルアーツを学びました。現在の複雑で予想困難、何が起こるか分からない時代を生きる中で、学生たちは、リベラルに（自由自在に）活躍できるアーツ（技）を身につけました。

学生たちは、これからそれぞれが選んだ道に進みます。各自、リベラルアーツとビジネス、リベラルアーツと法律、リベラルアーツと文学、リベラルアーツと自然科学など、それぞれの交差点に立ちます。すでにリベラルアーツを学んだ学生たちが社会で活躍することは確実です。お子様の今後の活躍を期待しててください。

本日は、誠におめでとうございます。

以上で、私のお祝いのスピーチを終えます。どうもありがとうございました。

Congratulations again.

Thank you very much!