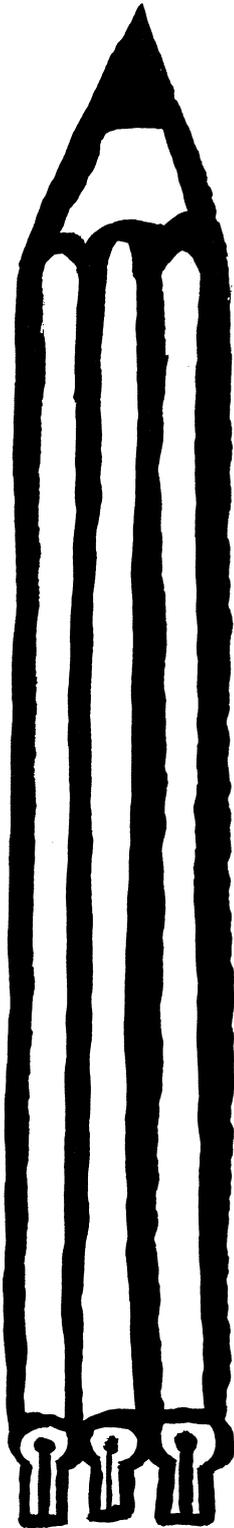


Dear Reader,

If you visit the BEATCS home page, you can see the number of downloads of the pdf file of each issue, which has been around five to six hundred times. There is also the Open Journal System rather than downloading the whole file, so I would assume roughly one thousand of our colleagues take a look at our BEATCS. This is not bad and BEATCS seems to be a good place to advertise your recent works. That is why we specifically promote submission of short abstracts (within 3 pages) of works that have been accepted and/or published very recently. I sent out a call-for-abstracts to a couple of mail lists and will continue this campaign. Why not considering having your abstracts on BEATCS?

We now have sort of important news in the Japanese academia, namely our government will profoundly change the system of funding our research, including selection rules. Currently there is a selection committee of a few people for each subject (for instance, "fundamental informatics") and we are requested to join approximately every 10 years. Once you are there, you will receive quite a few proposals (as many as 100 ones of more than 10 pages) and be requested to read and evaluate them just as you do for papers on easychair. So, you often have to read proposals which are somehow related but not exactly fit your field or it is something like you have to read Track-B proposals while your topics is Track A. I know there are pros and cons in this system: It is easy to rank all submissions by reading them at one time but



also easy to be biased due to the topic and the PI of each submission (of course researchers do know this system and they do their best to attract reviewers outside the community). It seems the government will introduce peer review at least in part, which is more popular internationally. Obviously this is important for us, especially for researchers who have been relatively successful for several reasons due to the system.

When I google-search a technical topic, I often encounter a chapter of a class note. They are usually concise and make a technical point directly, thus quite convenient to save time rather than reading original papers. Everybody knows that getting into the minds of as many students as possible in his/her class is not an easy job and class notes often include full of strategies for that. Therefore, when I ran into (thanks, Gerhard) the book with the title of "Twenty Lectures on Algorithmic Game Theory," it sounds very impressive. The author, Tim Roughgarden, accepted my request of introducing the book in BEATCS. Thank you very much. Many thanks also to Eric Allender who has just finished his editorship of ACM Transactions on Computation Theory, Luca Aceto for his another nice interview, to Column editors as usual, and to many others.

I have occasionally said that Kyoto is nice to visit from overseas, but I am now getting increasingly uncertain about this assertion. The reason is that we have had too many visitors recently. I am now understanding what it is like to live in sightseeing cities, like Paris, Rome and New York.

Kazuo Iwama, Kyoto
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