

International collaboration in space solar physics

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Before coming to ISAS on April, 2013, I had worked for the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan as an astronomer, and had been involved in 4 satellites, 2 balloons, and 2 sounding rocket experiments. I have been observing the sun with these missions in the past 30 years.

I started my career with hard X-ray and gamma ray instrumentation in 1970s in ISAS Hinotori solar satellite as a graduate student, then moving to the development of the soft X-ray telescope with NASA in 1980s for ISAS Yohkoh mission, proceeding to the visible light space telescope again developed with NASA from late 1990s for ISAS Hinode satellite. I had proposed the basic concepts of both the Yohkoh and the Hinode missions with my colleagues. Solar physics has been enjoying the golden age in the past 25 years with Yohkoh and Hinode. In particular, very successful Yohkoh changed the dim scenery of the discipline, and paved the way for series of space solar missions thereafter.

Yohkoh and GEOTAIL would be the first two missions for which NASA decided to work with Japan in a significant way. That happened as early as 1986. Missions such as Hinode, Suzaku, ASCA, GEOTAIL and Yohkoh were tremendous success affecting not only that disciplines but to all space science. International collaboration as a means to combine assets scattered in the world namely good people, technology and money has to be pursued ever more in this turbulent era for the sake of science. ISAS/JAXA is always seeing for collaboration with international partners for any ISAS/JAXA missions. We are also eager to participate in missions led by foreign agencies.

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