Dear young men and women, colleagues, and friends:

My name is ARAKI Hitoshi, and I am a longtime member of this conference. I am recording the history of the Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference on Geography to mark its eleventh anniversary.

Up to the First Conference in 2006 at Beijing

I was in Beijing in September of 2005 to work on my research and to visit my old friend, Chai Yanwei, who studied at the desk next to me in graduate school at Hiroshima University. In 2005, he taught at Peking University and was chair of the Young Geographers Committee of the Geographical Society of China (GSC). The year 2006 was an anniversary year for the Young Geographers Committee, and he was planning an anniversary event, the Sino-Japan-Korean Symposium of Young Geographers. I was interested in the event and we went to the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) to meet Zhang Guoyou, the Secretary General of GSC.

We hit it off because, even though we, as Japanese and Chinese geographers, had all previously attended Western academic conferences and could have met each other there, we had no prior opportunities to meet each other outside of Western conferences. At Western conferences, we Eastern geographers were likely to be in subordinate academic positions because they were West-centered meetings. Maybe it was a language difference, but some Eastern geographers played important parts in the Western conference. Yes, they might have overcome many obstacles to become key players in the Western context, but unless one was a key player and a fluent English speaker, one would not have easy academic exchange across cultural borders. There were geographers who had a common awareness of geographical issues in neighboring countries, but not in Western countries. If we could bring together these neighbors, we could invigorate our academic exchange. In other words, current international conferences that are West-oriented can be considered Western Leagues. We wanted a conference that was an Eastern League.

After returning to Japan in 2006, I asked MURAYAMA Yuji, Professor at Tsukuba University and chair of the exchange committee of the Association of Japanese Geographers (AJG), for help with the event. My friend CHAI also directly asked him after my contact with him.

That is how the Sino-Japan-Korean Symposium of Young Geographers came to be held at Beijing Normal University (BNU) on September 16 to 19, 2006. The participants from Japan were ABE Yasuhisa (Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University), IWAMA Nobuyuki (graduate student at Tsukuba University), WANG Dai (graduate student at Dokkyo University), KOMAKI Nobuhiko (graduate student at Tsukuba University), SASAKI Midori (graduate student at Tsukuba University), TAKAHASHI Kentaro (Komazawa University), TANAKA Koichi (graduate student at Tsukuba University), ZHAO Yaolong (graduate student at Tsukuba University), DU Guoqing (Rikkyo University), MURAYAMA Yuji (Tsukuba University), MOTOKI Masatoshi (graduate student at Rissyo University), and me. During the organizing process of Japanese delegates, Professor MURAYAMA played an important part by encouraging his students to attend the conference. These young participants would become the key players who organized the second conference.

After registering at BNU Lanhui Hotel on September 15, the Sino-Japan-Korean Symposium of Young Geographers began on the morning of September 16 in BNU’s Art Building. The opening ceremony and plenary lecture were in the morning and the young geographers’ sessions were in the afternoon. In the evening, a welcome reception was held at the Lanhui Hotel. Continuous sessions were held on September 17, and a scientific excursion occurred in Beijing’s suburbs on September 18. At
the plenary session, JEONG Hwan-Yeong of Kongju National University gave a presentation from the Korean perspective and I, ARAKI, did so from the Japanese perspective. In addition, there were two Chinese speakers, DAI Yongjiu of Beijing Normal University and HE Canfei of Peking University. During the two days of sessions, 26 presentations were given according to the abstract book (The abstract books of the conference are shown in Photo 1). In addition, at the dinner party, KOMAKI performed martial arts, which was a type of Japanese Kung Fu. It is one of my pleasantest memories of the conference, and he also performed at the second conference in Kumamoto and the eighth conference in Fukuoka.

This conference was reported on in *Acta Geographia Sinica* 62(1), p. 101, a GSC journal in China and in the Korean Geographical Society (KGS) newsletter no. 91 by LEE Seung-Ho of Konkuk University in Korea, who currently is the president of KGS (for 2017).

**Up to the Second Conference in 2007 at Kumamoto**

The Sino-Japan-Korean Symposium of Young Geographers was held as an anniversary event of the Young Geographer Committee, but we spontaneously discussed the unconfirmed second conference during the informal party at the BNU conference. The second conference was needed. We Asian geographers needed it and we discussed it there.

I planned the second conference after I returned to Japan and sent a message on September 26, 2006, to CHAI Yanwei of Peking University, JEONG Hwan-Yeong of Kongju National University, Du Guwqing of Rissyo University, and MURAYAMA Yuji of Tsukuba University to offer the second conference. I asked YOKOYAMA Satoshi of Kumamoto University, who was on the staff of the organizing committee of the AJG biannual meeting, planned for Kumamoto University in 2007, for his help as the local organizer. Then, I e-mailed the Japanese participants of the first conference on December 6 to ask for their cooperation. In response, all expressed support. In that way, through their help as the organizing committee members, we launched the second conference.

We proceeded with the preparation via e-mails because the members lived in numerous regions of Japan and it was impossible to get together. YOKOYAMA in Kumamoto handled the venue and the hotel as the local organizer and I handled the website, invitations, editing the abstract book, and coordinating with the Korean and Chinese geographers. Other preparation, such as the souvenirs, photos, nametags, and fliers were shared among the committee members (Chairpersons and Secretary General of each conference are shown in Table 1). In particular, the conference logo was designed by KOMAKI and it was used for all of the conferences held in Japan after that. In July of that year, I joined the Second Global Conference on Economic Geography in Beijing and delivered our fliers. I had the opportunity to meet NAHM Kee-Bom of the University of Seoul. He was the chair of the academic exchange committee of KGS and I asked him to help with the next conference.

Thus, the Second Japan-Korea-China Symposium of Young Geographers was held on October 2 through
Registration was in the afternoon of the first day and the welcome ceremony was that evening. We had discussions at academic sessions on the second and third days and, in total, there were 30 oral presentations and 11 poster presentations. On the last day of the conference, we enjoyed a field trip to Kumamoto Castle, Mt. Aso, and a Suntory beer factory. The theme of the conference was “New Perspectives from Asia.” (Each theme of the conference and the presentation numbers are shown in Table 1.)

At this conference, I chaired a session on our direction and the position of the conference. First, I introduced the background of the conference, which was about the discussions that we had since the first conference as described above. It meant that we needed a platform or stage on which we could exchange our scientific results and deepen the interactions and friendships of geographers from Eastern countries. Agendas to realize these goals were continuously discussed. The first matter was the name of the conference. We used “Japan-Korea-China” in the end, but we considered alternatives, such as “East Asian,” “Asian,” “The Eastern,” and “Yellows.” We finally adopted “Japan-Korea-China” to be close to the actual situation. In any case, the important point was to avoid being Western, which has taken the leading position and center of modern science. It was meant to be a place for direct exchange among East Asian geographers, and it was not the same as the International Geographical Union (IGU) or the American Association of Geographers (AAG). The meaning of “young” was discussed as the second agenda item, and I offered my understanding of “young,” which was that it is not necessary to be a slave to existing customs, values, or ideas, along with the meaning of Japan-Korea-China, which means that it is not necessary to be Western-styled. We wanted our own style for our conference that was free from the existing values. It was my idea and I put it into the meaning of “young.”

Finally, we chose English as the working language. But, we have our own languages, and we are not native English speakers. In that sense, English was only one communication tool for us because it is not our culture.

Table 1. Ten years of Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference on Geography

| Year | Date        | Main venue             | City            | Chairperson              | Secretary general | Number of presentation* | Theme                                      |
|------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Sep. 16–19  | Beijing Normal University | Beijing       | ZHANG Guoyou            | CHAI Yanwei       | 26                     | New Perspective from Asia                  |
| 2    | Oct. 2–5    | Kumamoto University    | Kumamoto       | YOKOYAMA Satoshi (local organizer) |                   | 30+11                  | East Asian View on Global Integration      |
| 3    | Oct. 8–11   | Cheongju University    | Cheongju       | KIM Hak-Hoon            | NHAM Kee-Bom      | 60+14                  |                                            |
| 4    | Dec. 9–12   | Sun Yat-Sen University | Guangzhou      | BAO Jigang               | LI Zhigang        | 62                     | The Post-crisis East Asian Geography: Challenge and Outlook |
| 5    | Nov. 7–10   | Tohoku University      | Sendai         | HINO Masateru           | YAMAMOTO Kenta    | 70+31                  | Green Society on East Asia: A Geographical Contribution |
| 6    | Nov. 6–9    | Seoul National University | Seoul        | CHOO Sungjae           | JUNG Sung Hoon    | 49+20                  | New Horizons of the East Asian Cooperation |
| 7    | Aug. 3–6    | North East Normal University | Changchun   | ZHANG Guoyou and XIU Chunliang | CAO Guangzhong and WANG Xiangdong | 88+24                  | Harmonical Home in East Asia               |
| 8    | Jul. 31–Aug 4 | Kyushu University     | Fukuoka        | TAKAGI Akihiko         | KONNO Ena and NORITO Takashi | 65+25                  | One Asia/Thousand Asians: Toward the Establishment of New Crossroad |
| 9    | Jun. 6–9    | Pusan Youth Hostel ARPINA | Pusan        | LEE Kang-Won           | PARK Sun          | 101+34                 | The local Bridging the Global              |
| 10   | Oct. 9–12   | East China Normal University | Shanghai   | YU Lizhong co-char; ZHANG Guoyou and LIU Min | JI Minhe, WANG Jun, XIA Habin and LI Xiang | 96+33                  | Urbanizing Asia: Diversity versus Globalization |
| 11   | Sep. 11–14  | Hotel New Otani Inn    | Sapporo        | YAMADA Harumichi       | SASAKI Toru       | 111+30                 | Frontiers of Asian Geography: Talking about the Decade, Creating our future with Young Spirits |

* Depending on the abstract books.
So, do not hesitate to use poor English. Speaking fluent English is not important to us. Communication is important to us, so simple English is good for us. In this way, we exchanged opinions. Actually, I wrote down, “working language is non-native English” on the webpage of the second conference. However, fluent English was not always better, and we offered the idea that large conferences are not always better and that quality is more important than quantity. Also, traditional conference styles or academic societies are not always better. It was a little bit radical, but we did not want to be slaves to customs, values, or ideas, and we wanted new ideas. GSC reported on the conference in its newsletter (2007: 5) in three pages that included photos.

**Up to the Third Conference in 2008 at Cheongju**

At the third conference, LEE Min-Boo, president of KGS, and NAHM Kee-Bom, chair of the KGS academic exchange committee, were important. President LEE was the head Korean delegate of the second conference in Kumamoto, and he was interested in and positive about the third conference slated for somewhere in Korea in 2008. After the second conference, Korean geographers, headed by President LEE, developed concrete plans for the third conference and selected Cheongju University as the venue and KIM Hak-Hoon, professor of Cheongju University and a participant at the first conference in Beijing, as the local organizer. In February of 2008, I visited Seoul, the Korean conference headquarters of the conference, to meet with LEE, NAHAM, JEONG, and KIM. We discussed the third conference and cooperation among the three countries.

Then, at the end of March, LEE and NAHM visited Japan for the biannual meeting of AJG at Dokkyo University. They spoke at the executive meeting and the convivial AJG party to promote the third conference in Korea. After the party, I reserved a small room in a restaurant and invited these two Koreans via WANG Dai, a graduate student at Dokkyo University and a participant at the first conference in Beijing, as the local organizer. In February of 2008, I visited Seoul, the Korean conference headquarters of the conference, to meet with LEE, NAHAM, JEONG, and KIM. We discussed the third conference and cooperation among the three countries.

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The name of the conference for the first and the second meeting was “Sino-Japan-Korean Symposium of Young Geographers” and “Second Japan-Korea-China Symposium of Young Geographers,” but it was changed to “Third Korea-China-Japan Joint Conference on Geography.” The reason for this was that there was a strong view among the Korean geographers who did not want to limit the participation to young geographers. Since the second conference, we had been discussing the word “young” as not young in age, but that it could include “young-minded” geographers. Actually the word “young” was not used and we follow this after this conference.

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At this conference, YAMAMOTO Kenta, a graduate student at Tohoku University who was a participant at the second conference in Kumamoto, joined with his friends from Tohoku University to comprise the main body of the young Japanese participants. I introduced them at the next conference held in Japan (in 2010) and asked for their cooperation, even though we were not well acquainted. This was motivated by HINO Masateru, professor at Tohoku University, who had been interested in the conference since the second conference. In this way, the plan for the fifth conference at Tohoku University was initiated.

**The Fourth Conference in 2009 at Guangzhou**

Since this conference we moved into the second round. The venue of the fourth conference was Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou, China. The reasons for this selection relate to Dr. ZHU Hong, professor at Sun Yat-
Sen University, who participated at the second conference in Kumamoto and expressed a strong interest in hosting a conference in China. He moved to South China Normal University shortly after, and LI Zhigang of Sun Yat-Sen University and members of the GSC Young Geographers Committee organized the fourth conference. At this time, ZHAO Yaolong, a participant at the first conference and a committee member of the second conference, was working at South China Normal University. The preparation work for the fourth conference proceeded without major problems because it was in the second round. I visited Beijing in the November before the conference to discuss matters with CHAI at Peking University and ZHANG (GSC), but there were no big problems to discuss.

The conference began on the evening of December 9 and ended on December 12. We spent December 10 and 11 in academic sessions and the field trip was on December 12. At the opening ceremony, BAO Jigang, Vice-president of GSC, and CAI Yunlong, Professor at Peking University (China) gave welcome addresses, along with TANIUCHI Toru, President of AJG (Japan) and KWON Young-Woo, President of KGS (Korea). The theme of the conference was “The Post-Crisis East Asian Geography: Challenge and Outlook.” In addition to four keynote speakers, there were 62 presentations over two session days and 22 presentations in four Chinese-language sessions. The Chinese-language sessions were set up because the GSC Annual Meeting of Young Geographers Committee was held at the same venue and on the same dates as our conference (China-Japan-Korea Joint Conference on Geography). The field trip was a visit to Shamian Island, Beijing Road, Gaodi Street, and other parts of Guangzhou City.

Before the conference, WANG Dai, a participant at the first conference who had played an important part in meeting and providing support to the Chinese delegate at the second conference in Japan, got a job at the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research. After that, he had important roles in the serious matters of our meetings.

The Fifth Conference in 2010 at Sendai

The fifth conference was the second conference in Japan and was prepared by an organizing committee mainly comprised of young geographers from Tohoku University led by YAMAMOTO Kenta. The conference schedule was as follows. The registration and welcome reception were on November 7, academic sessions were on November 8 and 9, and the field trip to the Sendai Metropolitan Area and the farewell party were on November 10. The conference chair was professor HINO Masateru of Tohoku University and the Secretary General was YAMAMOTO Kenta of Kyushu International University. The theme was “Green Society in East Asia: A Geographical Contribution.” The number of oral presentations was 70 and there were 31 poster presentations with a keynote address by IKEYA Kazunobu of the National Museum of Ethnology.

At the welcome party, BAO Jigang, GSC Vice-president from China, mentioned “He” in his guest speech. Use of this word deserves a brief discussion. In Japan, the word “He” usually means homogeneity or conformity. But, the literal meaning is “and,” such as “sum” in a mathematical formula or “He” as the results of addition. It does not mean “the same,” and it means “a connection of different things.” There is an old term; which is “Wa wo motte totoshi to nasu”. It is not important to behave like everyone else, to do the same things, or to be the same. Instead, it is important to interact with persons of different positions. Persons in different positions, with different ways of thinking, different views, and from different countries can collaborate is the meaning of “He.” I did not know how the audience would take BAO’s use of “He,” but I accepted it as the premise of the word.

After this conference, we instituted the Young Geographers Award to encourage young geographers to make outstanding achievements. Seven young geographers from Korea, China, and Japan were selected as the winners through a screening process (Photo 2). The winners were invited to contribute to the Geographical Review of Japan Series B, an English-language journal of the Association of Japanese Geographers. Three papers were submitted and accepted by the editorial board through the regular peer review process. The titles are: “Structural Features of the East Asian Food Systems and Dynamics: Implications from a Case Study of Develop-and-Import Scheme of Umeshoshi” by NOROTO Takashi, “Location Types of Enterprise R & D Institutions in Shanghai” by LI Nana, and “Production of Local Childcare Culture in Okinawa and the Impact of Policy Change” by KUKIMOTO Mikoto et al. (Geographical Review of Japan Series B, 2012, 84, pp. 31–70).

The conference reports by YAMAMOTO Kenta were published in English in the IGU E-Newsletter, Jan #23 pp. 21–24 and in the E-journal GEO of AJG, 6, pp. 33–37 as a Special Report in 2011. In addition, the discussion about the organizing and the conducting of the conference among the committee members at various locations in Japan was published in the journal in Japanese.
Komaki, N., Yoshida, K., and Yamamoto, K., 2011. Utility and challenge of cloud service for managing academic conference: From the experience of the 5th Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference on Geography. Geographical Space, 4(2), pp. 149–155. (in Japanese).

In the same year, ARAKI became the vice-chair of the AJG committee of academic exchange in charge of the Japan-Korea-China joint conference, and MATSUMOTO Jun of Tokyo Metropolitan University assumed the post of chair of the AJG committee. Since then to the present, I have been mediating between AJG and our conferences.

The Sixth Conference in 2011 at Seoul

The second round was wrapped up with the sixth conference held at Seoul University (SNU) in Seoul, Korea. Before this conference, I discussed the opportunity of the Third Global Conference on Economic Geography, June 28–July 2, at COEX in Seoul with NAHM and other Korean members, but there were no major pending matters. The sixth conference was held on November 6 through 9, 2011, at the SNU Hoam Faculty House. The theme was “New Horizons of the East Asian Cooperation.” CHOO Sungjae of Kyung Hee University chaired the conference, and JUNG Sung-Hoon of Kangwon National University was the Secretary General.

A serious opening ceremony was held in the evening of November 6 and academic sessions were conducted on November 7 and 8. According to the abstract book, there was a total of 49 oral presentations and 20 poster presentations. At the opening ceremony, after CHOO’s opening address and the welcome address of chairperson HUH Woo-Kung, Emeritus Professor of SNU, CHEN Fahu, Vice-president of GSC, took the platform and MATSUMOTO, chair of the AJG exchange committee, read a message from TABAYASHI Akira, President of AJG. In addition, ODA Takashi reported on the Great East Japan Earthquake that had occurred on March 11 of this year. During the field trip on November 9, we visited Kyongbokgung Palace, National Folk Museum of Korea, Namdaemun Market, and Namsangol Nanok Village.

At an informal and backstage meeting, someone complained about the positioning of the three countries’ geographical societies, the KGS, GSC, and AJG, in the conference. Someone pointed out that, when the President of KGS was in attendance, the presidents of GSC and AJG also should attend. That is a good idea in theory, but the sizes of the three societies are significantly different and the roles of the presidents also differ. It is also challenging for busy presidents to attend the conference every year.
Moreover, from the beginning, the conference was not organized by any of the established geographical societies; it was launched by individual geographers who were interested in it as volunteers. In this sense, a president’s address can be interpreted as a ritual greeting. We can understand the meaning of such ritual activities and the role of ceremonial posts, but it was preposterous argument that one denies the possible existence of geographers meeting for young generations by a reason of ritual problems. It confuses the natural order of things.

The Seventh Conference in 2012 at Changchun

At this point, the conference entered the third round. The venue was Northeast Normal University (NENU) in Changchun, China, and the theme was “Harmonical Home in East Asia.” ZHAN Guoyou of GSC and XIU Chunliang of NENU chaired the conference. CAO Guangzhou of the GSC Young Geographers Committee and WANG Xiandong of NENU served as joint Secretary Generals. The registration desk opened on the morning of August 3 and the opening ceremony was held on the morning of August 4. Academic sessions were scheduled in the afternoon of August 4 and all day on August 5. After five keynote speeches as the opening ceremony, we had 88 oral presentations and 24 posters, including Chinese-language sessions. After the sessions, the closing ceremony was held in the evening of August 5, and the next day, August 6, we had an all-day excursion around Changchun city.

The Eighth Conference in 2013 at Fukuoka

The eighth conference opened at Hakozaki campus of Kyushu University, Fukuoka, on July 31 and successfully ended in Kyoto on August 4, after two days of academic sessions and a two-day excursion. The conference theme was “One Asia/A Thousand Asias: Toward the Establishment of New Crossroads.” TAKAGI Akihiko, professor of Kyushu University, chaired the conference, and KONNO Ena of Tokyo University of Agriculture and NORITO Takashi of Kyoto University were joint Secretary Generals. The registration desk opened on the afternoon of July 31. The keynote speech was delivered by TSUTSUMI Kenji, professor of Osaka University, the evening before the welcome party. At the welcome party, YAGASAKI Noritaka, President of AJG, gave the welcome address and SON Il, President of KGS in Korea and YU Lizhong, professor of Shanghai New York University from China were the guest speakers. For entertainment at the party, TSUTSUMI, the keynote speaker, and KOMAKI provided a Kung Fu performance. Both were Shorinji Kempo players. There were 65 oral presentations and 25 poster presentations during the two days of sessions.

During the evening of August 1, after the sessions, there was a short field trip in Fukuoka city. The closing ceremony, moderated by TAKAGI, the conference chair, was in the afternoon of August 2, after the sessions, followed by a banquet dinner in the cafeteria of the Faculty of Engineering, Kyushu University. On August 3, we had an all-day excursion to Tagawa City (an old coal-mining area), Yahata Steel Works, and Kitakyushu Eco-Town. Last, we arrived at Shin-Moji Port after visiting Mojiko Retro District and boarded a cruise ship for the Seto Inland Sea. The next morning, after an all-night cruise, we disembarked at Kobe Port to go to Osaka for the planned optional tour. In Osaka, we visited the Korean town in Tsuruhashi area, the Expo ’70 Commemorative Park, and the National Museum of Ethnology. At the museum, we crossed paths with Prince Akishino, who was scheduled to give the congratulatory address at the opening ceremony of the IGU Kyoto Regional Conference on August 5 (see http://hgsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/PrinceAkishino_p001-003.pdf or Japanese Journal of Human Geography, 2013, 65(6)). This excursion ended in Kyoto in the late afternoon to link with the IGU Kyoto Regional Conference scheduled for August 4 to 9 at the Kyoto International Conference Center.

The details of this conference were reported by KONNO and NORITO in a report in the Special Issue on the Eighth Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference on Geography, Geographical Review of Japan series B 87 (https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/geogrevjapanb/87/1/87_870104/-pdf).

We also presented the Young Geographers Award at this conference. Three papers were selected through the screening process and the winners were announced during the closing ceremony on August 2. The winners were invited to submit their papers to Geographical Review of Japan Series B, which had previously been done for the fifth conference (held in Sendai). “Reverse of Good Practice in Forest Preservation: Household Economy of Alangan-Mangyan and Community-Based Forest Management Program in the Philippines” by SHIRAISHI Natsuko (graduate student at Kyoto University), “The Strategy of ‘Scale’ in Policy-Making Process: A Case Study of Eco-Town Project, Kitakyushu City” by YIN
Guanwen (graduate student at Kyushu University), “The Spatial Evolution of Population in Kazakhstan in the 21st Century” by Yeerken Wuzhati (Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, CAS), and others were published in *Geographical Review of Japan Series B*, 2014, 87 along with the report by NORITO and KONNO mentioned above.

**The Ninth Conference in 2014 at Pusan**

The last meeting of this round was held at the Busan Youth Hostel ARPINA in Busan, Korea, on July 6 through 9, 2014. The chair was LEE Kang-Won of Chuonbuk National University, the co-chair was KOO Dong-Hoe of Pusan National University (PNU), and the Secretary General was Dr. PARK Sun of PNU. The ninth conference opened on the evening of July 6 with a keynote speech by JEONG Huwan-yeong, head of the Korean delegate of the first conference in China, followed by a welcome party. At the party, SON Ill, President of KGS, gave a welcome speech and YANG Guishan, Vice-president of GSC, and YAGASAKI Noritaka, President of AJG, were guest speakers. There were 101 oral presentations and 34 poster presentations during two days of sessions held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (July 7 and 8). After the July 7 sessions, a city tour in Busan was planned and we were divided into two groups. One group visited downtown Busan, Jagalchi Fish Market, Yongdusan Park, and Bupyeong Market, and the other group enjoyed a Deep Culture and History Tour at Dongdosa Temple. The closing ceremony occurred after the sessions on August 8, and, after that ceremony, we attended a banquet dinner in the evening. On the last day (July 9), a field trip was planned for Gamcheon Culture Village, the Naval Academy, and Nakdong River Delta; however, a typhoon was approaching Busan and the plan was changed to Gyeongju.

At the ninth conference’s business meeting, the following major agreements were summarized by the moderator, LEE Kang-Won:

1. High-quality papers presented at the ninth Korea-China-Japan Joint Conference on Geography can be selected and peer reviewed for publication in "Asian Geographers" in 2015. For the longer term, the conference and the journal (Asian Geographers) decided to collaborate on the development of a future academic agenda.

2. The official name of the next conference meeting was decided: “The Tenth China-Japan-Korea Joint Conference on Geography (The Annual Meeting of East Asian Geographers).”

3. The objective of the conference is to build academic networks, enhance cultural interactions, and contribute to longstanding sincere friendships.

These discussions are quite important to each conference and to the future of the conference. We shared a table with Dr. WANG Donggen of Hong Kong Baptist University, who was an editor of “Asian Geographer” published by Taylor & Francis Group on behalf of the Hong Kong Geographical Association. Various efforts are expected!

**The Tenth Conference in 2015 at Shanghai**

The most recent round began at East China Normal University (ECNU) in Shanghai, China, with the tenth conference, held on October 9 through 12, 2015. It formal name was “The 10th China-Japan-Korea Joint Conference on Geography and the First Asian Conference on Geography,” and it was the largest and the most ceremonial one to that point. At the opening ceremony on the first day (October 9), welcome addresses were given by nine geographers from seven countries: China, Japan, Korea, India, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. The speakers were representatives of the geographical society or the geographic organization of each country: GSC, AJG, KGS, Pakistan National Geographic Society, Azerbaijan Geographical Society, Kazakhstan National Geographic Society, Hong Kong Geographic Society, IGU, and the host university.

Following this big opening ceremony, we enjoyed a welcome dinner. The keynote session and the important speeches were given throughout the morning of October 10, such as the former Secretary General of IGU, President of AJG, Chair of GSC Commission of Economic Geography, vice-presidents of IGU, and the Director of the Center for Modern Chinese City Studies, ECNU. The general sessions were held in the afternoon of Oct 10 and morning of October 11, in which 96 oral presentations and 25 poster presentations were given, excluding 33 oral and eight poster presentations in Chinese-language sessions. In the evening of October 10, a Youth Gala was held that was an event developed by the ECNU students for all to enjoy their musical performances, dancing, and singing. The Japanese participants demonstrated some Japanese-style swordplay by MOTOKI and Japanese songs sung in Chinese by a chorus. The closing ceremony was held on the afternoon of October 11, after which a short optional city tour was conducted. October 12 was the day of the field trip and two routes were set up. Route A visited Dianshan Lake.
Water Protection Area and Historical Town Zhujiajiao, and Route B visited Lingan New Town and Yangshan Deep-Water Port.

It was definitely the largest conference, but there was a diversity of opinion about that. As a practical matter, we would spend one-half day on October 10 and one-half day on October 11 in general sessions, the shortest period for sessions in the conference's history. Although it was very difficult for us to evaluate that here, various efforts are expected, as mentioned before. This Shanghai meeting can be said as one kind of new approach to find a way. Young geographers, let's talk about that!

The Eleventh Conference in 2015 at Sapporo

The details of the eleventh conference are reported by SASAKI Toru, Secretary General of the conference, in this special issue. Please refer to that for specific information on the eleventh conference.

Conclusion

The Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference on Geography has been on a ten-year voyage. Today, we are standing at the forefront of the next decade. We should create a new future for this next stage of our voyage. I would be grateful if this manuscript were to contribute to that. But, this paper is also only the retrospective of a founder of the conference. We have many more things to consider than I can discuss here, and there will be more of them in the future. Some of us can write about that here and there.

Thank you for reading to the end.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank AJG, KGS, GSC, and the Japanese, Korean, and Chinese geographers who joined our conference. I also express my gratitude to the young staff who did the thankless jobs and worked behind the scenes of the conferences. Last, I acknowledge the Editorial Board of Geographical Review of Japan for publishing this manuscript.

This paper is based on a plenary lecture given at the eleventh conference of the Japan-Korea-China Joint Conference of Geography, Sapporo, Japan. Indeed, the numbers of presentations and the conference schedule described here were obtained from the abstract books of each conference; if there are any misunderstandings or confusions, please correct them.

Notes

1. “He” is 和 in Chinese character.
2. “Wa wo motte totoshi to nasu (以和為貴)” is a Japanese proverb.
| Name   | Chinese Name | English Name | Chinese Name | English Name |
|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
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