

Significance of Hosting an International Academic Conference in Japan

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The article is a report on the 15th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Comparative Psychology (ISCP) held in Awaji Island, Hyogo in May 19-21, 2010, the first convention of this kind hosted in Japan. Academic and social influences of the meeting upon Japanese researchers and relevant psychological areas are discussed on the basis of reviewing the formation of the program committee, process of program arrangements and an operation of the three-day's convention. A couple of quite impressive presentations among lots of eye-opening ones and the remarks made by distinguished guests endorse the significance of the present ISCP meeting.

Key Words: comparative psychology, international meeting, Japanese younger researchers

I Introduction

The International Society for Comparative Psychology (ISCP) was founded in 1980 and held its first meeting in 1983 in Toronto, Canada. Since then, fourteen academic meetings were held biennially until the year of 2008. The purpose of the ISCP is to promote the comparative study of behavior in human and nonhuman animals, to sponsor a biennial meeting, and to publish the scientific journal, the International Journal of Comparative Psychology (IJCP). The ISCP is an affiliate of the International Union of Psychological Sciences.

The last two meetings were held in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2006 and Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2008, respectively. The venues of a meeting cover five continents including North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Australia. At the Operations Committee Meeting held on the October 8, one day before the 2008 Buenos Aires meeting began, Shogo Sakata, who was one of the members of Operations Committee made a presentation to host the fifteenth meeting in Japan in 2010. This was unanimously approved by the Operations Committee and then by the General Business meeting held on October 11, 2008. This was the moment to start the preparation for the 15th Biennial Scientific Meeting of the ISCP in Japan.

II Program Committee

As the Chair of the Program Committee, the author sent an invitation letter dated as of December 26, 2008 to join the committee to the following members, Shogo Sakata (as the Program co-Chair, Hiroshima University, Japan), Mauricio R. Papini (President of the ISCP, Texas Christian University, USA), Aaron Blaisdell (President-elect of the ISCP, University of California-Los Angeles, USA), Kazuo Fujita (Kyoto University, Japan), and Kouji Urushihara (as the abstracts manager, Health Sciences University of Hokkaido, Japan). All accepted the invitation and thus the Program Committee was formed officially by early January, 2009.

III Program Framework

The scientific program consists of five categories; Oral presentations, Poster presentations, Symposia (invited and proposed ones), Invited conferences, Keynote address, and Presidential address. In addition, some social events were planned and included in the program in order to facilitate academic communication among the participants. Under the name of Program Chair of the 2010 ISCP meeting, we sent an invitation letter electronically to the nominees of speakers for Keynote Address, Invited Conferences, and those of organizers for Invited Symposia. They responded favorably and sent us an OK reply quickly, thus the skeleton of the 2010 program was almost fixed by the middle of March, 2009.

IV Publicity

One of the most important things to host an international meeting should be publicity. We took advantage of mainly the three communication resources. One is so-called "CP" list which covers the members from Division 6 of American Psychological Association (Experimental and Comparative Psychology) and also those who ever participated in an ISCP meeting. Another source is Japanese Society for Animal Psychology (JPA) which embraces four hundred regular members. The third one is our society's website.

Starting on early February of 2009, we posted e-mail messages about the outline and current progress of the meeting through both the CP list and the JPA mailing lists four times until the beginning of February of 2010, with a title of First, Second, Third or Fourth Announcement.

Posting a homepage on an internet will be the most common way of publicity. The preliminary version of homepage was posted and linked to the ISCP website on April 15, 2009, followed by repetitive renewal of the contents. The homepage includes welcome messages from the chair of the program and the meeting, members of program committee, due dates of an abstract submission for the prospective participants who wish to present a paper, an outline of scheduled lectures and symposium talks, social events, and information about registration and accommodation. We, of course, made the website homepage

accessible to the on-site registration as other similar academic meetings adopted.

V Scientific Program

As a tradition of the society, we call for papers relevant to the following topics.

- Evolution and development of behavior in all animal species
- Use of the comparative method for understanding behavioral processes
- History of comparative psychology
- Learning, memory, motivation, emotion in all species
- Neurobiology of behavior
- Brain, evolution and behavior
- Field studies of animal behavior
- Applied animal behavior
- Animal welfare
- Animal models of behavior

The final program for lectures and symposia was as follows;

Keynote address : Tetsuro Matsuzawa (Kyoto University, Japan)

(Cognitive Development in Chimpanzees)

Presidential address : Mauricio R. Papini (Texas Christian University, USA)

(Nothing Makes Sense in Neuroscience, except in the Light of Behavior: A Personal Testimony)

Invited conferences (1) : Warren H. Meck (Duke University, USA)

(Hippocampal-Striatal Interactions in the Temporal Control of Behavior)

Invited conferences (2) : William Timberlake (Indiana University, USA)

(Superstition in the Laboratory and Stereotypies in Zoos: A Behavior System Analysis)

Invited conferences (3) : Shigeru Watanabe (Keio University, Japan)

(Animal Aesthetics)

Symposium(1) Self Reflective Cognition

Chair: Kazuo Fujita (Kyoto University, Japan)

* James Anderson (University of Stirling, UK):

* Shintaro Funahashi (Kyoto University, Japan):

* Kazuhiro Goto (Keio University, Japan):

* Kazuo Fujita (Kyoto University, Japan):

* Satoshi Hirata (Hayashibara Great Ape Research Institute, Japan):

Symposium(2) Neural Mechanisms of Behavior: Recent Approaches in Behavioral Neuroscience

Chair: Yukio Ichitani (University of Tsukuba, Japan)

- * Masataka Watanabe (Tokyo Metropolitan Institute for Neuroscience, Japan):
- * Dai-ichiro Nakahara (Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Japan):
- * Yuji Tsutsui (Fukushima University, Japan):
- * Yukio Ichitani (University of Tsukuba, Japan):

Symposium(3) Reasoning and Learning in Nonhuman Animals

Chair: Aaron Blaisdell (University of California-Los Angeles, USA)

- * Kouji Urushihara (Health Sciences University of Hokkaido, Japan) :
- * Kosuke Sawa (Senshu University, Japan):
- * Björn Brembs (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany):
- * Masamichi Sakagami (Tamagawa University, Japan):

Symposium (4) Conditioned Taste Aversion in Rats

Chair: Kosuke Sawa (Senshu University, Japan)

- * Sadahiko Nakajima (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan):
- * Yoshio Iguchi (Kanazawa University, Japan):
- * Robert A. Boakes (University of Sydney, Australia):
- * Juan M. Rosas (University of Jaen, Spain):

Symposium (5) Comparative Hippocampus Functions

Chair: Shogo Sakata (Hiroshima University, Japan)

- * Takao Mukuda (Hiroshima University, Japan):
- * Isao Ito (Kyushu University, Japan):
- * Christina L. Williams (Duke University, USA):
- * Tetsumori Yamashima (Kanazawa University, Japan):
- * Satoshi Umeda (Keio University, Japan) :

Symposium (6) Understanding Animal Thinking

Chair: Robin A. Murphy (Oxford University, UK)

- * Aaron Blaisdell (University of California-Los Angeles, USA):
- * Andrew G. Baker (McGill University, Canada):
- * Robin A. Murphy (Oxford University, UK):

Symposium (7) Comparative Studies of Animal Communication

Chair: Stan Kuczaj (University of Southern Mississippi, USA)

- * Kathleen Dudzinski (Dolphin Communication Project, USA):
- * Hiroki Koda (Kyoto University, Japan):
- * Radhika Makecha (Stephen F. Austin State University, USA):
- * Tadamichi Morisaka (Kyoto University, Japan):
- * Kazuo Okanoya (Riken Brain Science Institute, Japan):

Symposium (8) Social Cognition in Nonhumans

Chair: Ikuma Adachi & Masaki Tomonaga (Kyoto University, Japan)

- * Stan Kuczaj (University of Southern Mississippi, USA):
- * Monique A. R. Udell (University of Florida, USA):
- * Thomas Bugnyar (University of Vienna, Austria):
- * Ikuma Adachi (Kyoto University, Japan):
- * Masaki Tomonaga (Kyoto University, Japan):

Symposium (9) What is Animal Intelligence? The Ability to Generate Novel Adaptive Behavior in Human Being and Nonhuman Animals

Chair: Tohru Moriyama (Shinshu University, Japan)

- * Tohru Moriyama (Shinshu University, Japan):
- * Masao Migita (Shiga University, Japan):
- * Shin Maruyama (National Institute of Information, Research Organization of Information Systems, Japan):
- * Nobuhiko Furuyama (National Institute of Information, Research Organization of Information Systems, Japan):

VI Nancy Innis Award

The society has an award for oral presentations. The purpose will be described as follows according to Gary Greenberg, who is one of the founding members of the society. The award is presented by the name of Nancy Innis, another founding member of the society, ISCP, the first and long time historian, and also the first associate editor of the journal, IJCP. Nancy Innis died unexpectedly in 2004, while traveling just prior to attending the 12th Biennial Scientific Meeting in Oviedo, Spain. Her presence at all of the meetings always assured the members of an interesting presentation on some historical topic and a great deal of good humor and fun. The society, thus, established the continuing award for the best student oral presentation to recognize and acknowledge her dedication to her students and her many contributions to the ISCP.

At the operations committee meeting held just before the start of a scientific program, three members were appointed as the jury for the nomination of the award recipient. The result was publicized at the commendation ceremony in the General Business Meeting scheduled at the last moment in the third day of the meeting. Certificate of award and a prize were given to the recipient, Gentaro Shishimi who was a doctoral student at University of Hawaii Manoa.

VII The Meeting

A gist of time schedule for the four-day program was as follows;

TUESDAY, MAY 18

18:00- Operations Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19 Reception Desk: 7:45-

8:30- Welcome and Opening Ceremony

9:00- Morning Sessions

12:40- Lunch

13:30- Afternoon Sessions

18:00- Ningyo Joruri Puppet Theater

18:45- Reception Party

20:30 End of Wednesday Program

THURSDAY, MAY 20 Reception Desk: 8:00-

8:30- Morning Sessions

12:25- Lunch

13:20- Afternoon Sessions

19:10- ISCP Banquet

21:10 End of Thursday Program

FRIDAY, MAY 21 Reception Desk: 8:00-

8:30- Morning Sessions

12:45- Lunch

13:30- Afternoon Sessions

19:10- ISCP General Business Meeting

20:00 End of Friday Program

The number of presentations amounted to 109 papers including poster presentations (44 papers). This figure was next to that of previous meeting held in Buenos Aires, where a total of 118 presentations including 68 poster papers were presented (14th ISCP Program, 2008). Registered participants were 135 from fifteen countries and area in the present meeting, compared to approximately 150 people in Buenos Aires meeting. Taking that previous meetings except for Buenos Aires meeting have been held with less than a total of 50 presentations and with about 50-60 registered participants into consideration (i.e., 13th ISCP Program, 2006), the present Japan meeting could be regarded as the second largest meeting in the history of the ISCP meetings.

VIII Scientific Impact of the Meeting

The author picked up two talks as those of the most impressive talks among lots of fascinating and eye-opening presentations. One was a keynote address given by Tetsuro Matsuzawa of Kyoto University. The other one was a talk by Tohru Moriyama of ShinshuUniversity.

(1) Matsuzawa's talk

He has been studying language and intelligence of chimpanzees for a long time in the laboratory and in the wild. He showed a lot of common features in human and chimpanzees and some differences between the two. In referring to a recent study which revealed that young chimpanzees outperform human adults in a memory task, he stressed that chimpanzees were less proficient at a variety of other cognitive tasks such as imitation, cross-modal matching, symmetry of symbols and referents, and one-to-one correspondence. He concluded his talk mentioning that chimpanzees did not possess humanlike capabilities for representation at an abstract level. Amongst the view that chimpanzees generally are almost almighty next to humans is becoming more popular, his cool analyses might have impressively appealed to the audience. In addition, he emphasized the importance of conservations of nature and the ecologically balanced human activities by introducing his observations on abrupt and also exacerbated environmental changes of chimpanzees' habitat at Bossau, Guinea, West Africa, where he has been studying the tool use in the wild chimpanzees since 1986.

(2) Moriyama's talk

The other one was by Tohru Moriyama who presented his paper at one of the symposia, titled "What is animal intelligence? - Ability to generate novel adaptive behavior in human being and nonhuman animals -". His subjects were pill bugs (*Armadillidium vulgare*, Crustacea). The antennae of the subjects were extended by attaching artificial Teflon tubes and given an escape task from the experimenters to go down the stairs. He found that pill bugs could use the Teflon tubes as novel sensory organs in order to explore unfamiliar environment and therefore to enable them to escape the aversive situation efficiently. The result reminds us of the role of a walking stick usually used by the elderly and visually handicapped people.

Although the society's primary purpose is to promote the comparative study of behavior in human and nonhuman animals, there is little opportunity to discuss human (and nonhuman-animal's) welfare. In this sense, his study could be regarded as a breakthrough in applying the basic studies of comparative psychology to human well-being.

IX Social Impact and Final Comment

Masataka, Watanabe, who has been President of Japanese Society for Animal psychology (JSAP) and delivered an opening speech at the outset of the program, made remark on the present meeting, stating that he was impressed by that so many young Japanese researchers had presented their papers and some of them had involved actively and given their own opinions in English (personal communication, e-mail received on May 24). As a matter of fact, the Japanese accounted for about 60 % of all presenters and most of them were younger scientists. He even added that he would think about the possibility of an English presentation in a domestic meeting of the JSAP.

Jerry Hogan, who was President of the society from 2004 to 2006 and one of the

respectable comparative psychologists in Canadian academic societies, gave us a comment by e-mail after the meeting (personal communication, e-mail received on Jun 3). The author would like to reproduce his comment on the meeting with minor modification as follows,

“I do want to say that I found the conference extremely well organized, and that I was astounded by the range and quality of Japanese work in comparative psychology, I congratulate the organizing committee for arranging to have so many good Japanese scientists at the conference to present their work. I have been rather pessimistic about the health of our field over the past few decades, but I now feel confident that there is a bright future to look forward to” .

His remark would be symbolic of having described the effect of the present meeting and a perspective on the arena of comparative psychology in Japan. His comment might have come from the fact that so many younger Japanese researchers presented their data from the standpoint of “Comparative Cognition” , where a study of “intelligence” from the evolutionary perspective is a center part of the field, and therefore, lots of researchers from informational technology, robotics, engineering, neurophysiology, and brain sciences, undoubtedly including psychology proper have been fascinated by this interdisciplinary field. Relatively easy accessibility to the field should partly be attributed to the fact that diverse methodologies have been accepted widely, unlike traditional comparative psychology where limited paradigms and rigorous methodologies have been recommended to study conditioning, learning, motivation and behavior. New field is about to become a discipline. Comparative psychology is now expected to broaden the covering area of studies and to go hand in hand with comparative cognition, which might have ended up attracting much more young researchers in and outside of Japan.

*Author’s Note

A short report on the meeting has been published in AGENDA, Vol.41 (July), 2010 (in Japanese), which is a newsletter of Awaji Yumebutai International Conference Center.

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Website home-page of the International Society for Comparative Psychology and the International Journal of Comparative Psychology (<http://www.comparativepsychology.org>).

日本での国際学会開催の学術的意義

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本稿は、2010年5月19日から同21日まで、兵庫県淡路島の夢舞台国際会議場において開催された国際比較心理学会（ISCP）第15回大会に関する報告である。今大会は比較心理学分野の国際学会としては、初の日本開催の会議である。大会開催が与えたところの日本人研究者や関連の心理学領域に対する学術的および社会的影響について、プログラム委員会の構成、プログラム編成過程および構成、3日間にわたる学会本大会の運営の仕方に言及しつつ、省察的に論評した。大会では多くの耳目を集める発表がなされたが、その中でも学問的動向を先取りした発表および講演内容を述べ、大会開催の意義を強調した。さらに今大会に関して、元ISCP会長及び日本動物心理学会会長から寄せられた感想および今後の学会の展開についての肯定的な見解、加えて今大会が果たした日本人研究者へメッセージを紹介し、今大会実施の意義を考察した。

キーワード：比較心理学，国際学会，日本人若手研究者

