

CALL FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS

1st AEARU Symposium on the Culture of Chinese Characters - The 17th Kyoto University International Symposium -

December 15 (Thu) – 16 (Fri), 2011
Clock Tower Centennial Hall, Kyoto University, Japan

Organized by Kyoto University

Kyoto University seeks PhD-level Students to participate in a poster session on the culture of Chinese characters being held during the symposium.

OPEN TO STUDENTS IN ANY FIELD OF STUDY

The symposium and poster session aim to discuss the topic of Chinese characters from a very diverse range of disciplinary perspectives. Accordingly, we welcome students with any disciplinary background: the humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, technology, medicine, the arts, or any other field.

Objective

The Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU) is an association of 17 leading research universities in the East Asian Region, which was founded in 1996 as a forum for academic exchange and cooperation. The AEARU Symposium on the Culture of Chinese Characters was proposed by Kyoto University president, Dr. Hiroshi Matsumoto, with the aim of examining the Chinese character writing system, which can be said to be a major cultural foundation of the East Asian region – the region in which all AEARU member institutions are located.

The symposium will take a detailed look at the way in which Chinese characters have been employed by a vast number of people during the course of their long history, as well as examine their continued use today, and consider the role that they will play in the future of the East Asian region.

Chinese characters were the driving force behind the development and expansion of Chinese civilization for thousands of years. From a very early period, surrounding countries received documents such as Confucian and Buddhist texts brought by emissaries from China, and advanced their own civilizations through the adaptation and adoption of the Chinese ideas contained therein.

Lacking a writing system of their own, the East Asian countries around China adapted Chinese characters as a method of writing their own languages. Various methods were employed to adapt the Chinese characters for use with the completely different language systems; however, the original literary writings of China were, until very recent times, recognized as the most orthodox written texts. Chinese characters were able to transcend the differences between the various languages and perform the role of an international writing system due to their ideographic nature. For example, regardless of their country, a person would understand that the character 山 meant “mountain,” even if they did not know its Chinese pronunciation.

Within this process of Chinese character-based cultural diffusion and development, we can find both the common, as well as the unique qualities of the various East Asian countries. There is no doubt that an examination of that process will provide us with valuable insights. This symposium does not aim to focus on Chinese characters as a mere writing system, but rather, as the word “culture” in the title suggests, it aims to examine the role of the characters in a wider sense: as an axis around which scholarship, science and the arts in East Asia revolve.

Purpose of the Poster Session

The symposium’s poster session aims to provide a platform for young scholars in relevant fields to present their research achievements and share information. The poster session will provide its participants with a valuable opportunity to meet, exchange views and build networks with peers and respected scholars in related and diverse fields.

Research presented in the session must be related to the main theme of Chinese characters, but can approach the topic from any disciplinary perspective: For example, the humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, technology, medicine, etc. – there are no restrictions with regard to the field of study.

Tentative Symposium Program

December 15th (Thursday) 2011

- 9:00 Registration
- 9:30 Opening
- 10:00 Session 1: Overview – the Culture of Chinese Characters in East Asia
- 12:30 Group Photo
- 13:00 Lunch and Poster Session
- 13:45 Session 2: Chinese Characters and Modernization Part 1: Translations
- 16:00 Coffee Break and Poster Session
- 16:30 Session 2: Chinese Characters and Modernization Part 2:
Traditional Scholarship – Cultural Inheritance and Conflict
- 19:00 Reception

December 16th (Friday) 2011

- 9:30 Chinese Characters in the Information Age
11:45 Lunch and Poster Session
13:30 Public Symposium: Chinese Characters and Education
13:30 Welcome Address
14:00 Keynote Speech
15:30 Break
15:45 Panel Discussion Session
17:05 Closing Speech

Funding Support

Funding support for travel and accommodation costs (for the period December 14–17) for one PhD-level student from the following AEARU member universities:

China

Fudan University
Nanjing University
Peking University
Tsinghua University, Beijing
University of Science and Technology of China

Hong Kong

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Korea

Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
Pohang University of Science and Technology
Seoul National University

Taiwan

Taiwan University
Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu

Japan

Tohoku University

Funding will be provided by AEARU and Kyoto University.

Please note that self-funded students from any AEARU member universities are also most welcome to participate in the poster session.

Application and Submission of Materials

Please send the following materials via e-mail by September 2, 2011.

- *All applicants: Completed “Application Form” (please use the attached file)
- *All applicants: Presenter’s CV (including photo)
- *Only for the applicants who require a visa to visit Japan: Completed “Visa Application Details” form (please use the attached file) and a copy of the 1st page of the applicant’s passport (the page including personal details and photo).

Important Dates

- *September 2, 2011: Deadline for submission of the above materials
- *September 30, 2011: Formal invitations to the workshop will be issued
- *December 15–16, 2011: 1st AEARU Symposium on the Culture of Chinese Characters

Contact

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For more details, please visit our website for the symposium <http://www.opir.kyoto-u.ac.jp/kanji2011>
(the website will open at the end of July, 2011)

General Participants

We also welcome all researchers and students with an interest in the culture of Chinese characters to attend and participate in the symposium. Please note that participation is not limited to persons from AEARU member universities. Scholars and students from other institutions are most welcome.

Those wishing to attend the symposium are requested to register at the website detailed above (with the exception of invited speakers or poster presenters)