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**A SHORT HISTORY OF ACADEMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN NIIGATA  
UNIVERSITY AND KSAEL**

At the end of March 2009 I retired from Niigata University where I had worked for 27 years. As I served as a de facto liaison officer of the Niigata University for international cooperation with KSAEL for a long time, here I would like to describe the history of the academic cooperation between Niigata University (NU) and Khabarovsk State Academy of Economics and Law (KSAEL). It is 1991 that Niigata University's Faculty of Economics began its international academic cooperation in earnest. Till then its activity in this area had been very inactive and there was no cooperation with Universities or research institutes in Russia (the USSR at that time). With the beginning of Perestroika, however, most of Japanese people began to perceive that positive changes were occurring in the USSR. Around 1988 so-called 'Japan Sea Rim

Economic Area' fever emerged among people on the coast of the Japan Sea and they showed increasing interest in the Russian Far East. In 1989 the Association for Japan Sea Rim Studies of the Niigata University was established by interested researchers across faculties. In December 1990 several members of the association with Professor Takeshi Shibuya (Faculty of Law) as the chief made a study tour to Northeastern Provinces of China, Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. In March 1991 Dr. Pyotr Konevskih, Rector of the Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy (at that time), visited Niigata University's Faculty of Economics and proposed us academic cooperation. The Memorandum of Understanding on Academic Cooperation between both institutions was signed by Rector Pyotr Konevskih and Professor Tadashi

Isayama, Dean of our Faculty at that time. Starting with this, our Faculty extended its international academic cooperation and concluded agreements with several institutions such as Faculty of Business as well as Department of Economics of the University of Alberta in Canada (1991), Kangwon National University's College of Business Administration in South Korea (1996), Bristol University's Faculty of Social Sciences in the UK (1996), etc. As chairman of the committee for educational affairs (a de facto Dean's aide) in 1991 and as chairman of the committee for international academic cooperation from April 1992 through March 1998 I undertook most of the task of external relations of our Faculty.

The basic principle of NU's international academic cooperation during the period that I worked was as follows: Voluntary international academic cooperation by individual professors at a faculty should precede inter-faculties' official cooperation. If international cooperation at a faculty level develops and comes to involve more than two faculties, then agreement on academic cooperation at university level can be concluded. In this regard, NU does not adopt decision-making on a top-down method [1].

When NU concludes an agreement at University level, the decision is based on a consensus method. Without prior consent by the University Council, even President of Niigata University is not allowed to sign any agreement on academic cooperation. NU is a comprehensive university consisting of Faculties of Humanities, Economics, Law, Natural Sciences, Agriculture, Engineering, Education, Medicine and Dentistry as well as the University's hospital, Research Institute for Brain, Research Center for Natural Hazards and Disaster Recovery, etc. The top management of NU regards KSAEL as a giant college consisting of several economy-related faculties, consequently entrusts the cooperation with KSAEL to our Faculty. In December 1997 KSAEL and our Faculty agreed to promote the Memorandum of Understanding to Agreement [2]. At that time KSAEL requested me to make it a University-level agreement. However, I had to decline the request because I judged that even if our Faculty tried to make it a University-level agreement Faculties in the area of natural sciences would not be interested in cooperation with KSAEL and our Faculty would not be able to get consent by the University Council.

### Chronological Table Developments in Cooperation between Niigata University and KSAEL

March 1991	Dr. Pyotr Konevskih, Rector of Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy at that time, visited Niigata University's Faculty of Economics and signed Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation with Professor Tadashi Isayama, Dean of Economics Faculty at that time.
October 1991	Three Professors (Tamaki, Koyama and Yamanouchi) at Niigata University's Faculty of Economics as well as Mr. Toshiaki Hara (Niigata Econo-Social Research Center) and Professor Shoji Matsumoto (Nagaoka University of Technology and Sciences) visited Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy and make surveys. Professor Yoshio Tamaki, Deputy Dean, signed Memorandum of Understanding which prescribed an international symposium to be held in Niigata the next year.
May 1992	Professor Yoji Koyama visited Khabarovsk and Vladivostok to prepare the international symposium. He gave lectures at Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy.
August 1992	International Symposium "Russian Far East and Niigata: Next Step – to Consider Economic Cooperation and Joint Ventures –" was held in Niigata on August 24-25. Professor V. G. Mysnik, Associate Professor N. L. Shlyk, Associate Professor S. Tretiak, Vice-Rector, and Dr. Oleg Buntov from Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy, Dr. N. N. Mikheeva, Deputy Director of the Economic Research Institute, the Far Eastern Division of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Professor L. S. Puzirevsky, Rector, and Associate Professor N. D. Latysheva, Vice-Rector, from Far Eastern Institute of Commerce participated in the symposium.
May 1994	International Symposium was held by Khabarovsk Institute of National Economy. Professor Yoji Koyama and Associate Professor Tsuneo Nagayama from NU, four people from Niigata Sangyo University, and three people from Kangwon National University (South Korea) participated in the symposium.
May 1995	International Conference was held by Kangwon National University's College of Business Administration in Chungchon. Professor Yoji Koyama and Professor Takao Taniura from NU, Rector Pyotr Konevskih and several other people from Khabarovsk State Academy of National Economy, Dr Pavel Minakir, Director of the Economic Research Institute, the Far Eastern Division of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and two professors from Niigata Sangyo University participated in the conference.
May 1996	International Symposium "Socio-Economic Problems of the Development of the Far East of Russia in the Framework of the Pacific Rim Countries" was held by KSAEL in Khabarovsk. Professor Yoji Koyama from NU, two professors from Niigata Sangyo University, and President and two professors from Kangwon National University participated in the symposium.
July 1996 June 1997	International Symposium "Economic Cooperation in Northeast Asia in the Era of Pacific Rim" was held by Niigata University's Faculty of Economics. Associate Professor Lidia Kornienko, Vice-Rector, and an interpreter from KSAEL participated in the symposium. In addition, two professors from the University of Alberta (Canada), a professor from Portland State University (USA) and two professors from the University of Oregon (USA), a professor from Mexico, and a professor from Kangwon National University (South Korea) participated in it.  International Conference "Directions for Practical Cooperation in the East-Sea Rim Economic Sphere in the 21st Century" was held by Kangwon National University. Professor Yoji Koyama and Professor Teruyasu Nishizawa from NU participated in the conference. Some professors

December 1999	from KSAEL and Niigata Sangyo University also participated in it. Mrs. Tatyana Malovichko, Head of International Relations Office of KSAEL, visited Japan and met Professor Takashi Fujii, Dean of Niigata University's Faculty of Economics, and reached agreement on the publication of papers in other side's bulletin.
May 2000	Professor Yoji Koyama and Professor Toshihisa Suzuki participated in the celebration of the 30th anniversary of KSAEL. Rector and an interpreter from Niigata Sangyo University and many people from other foreign Universities also participated in it. Professor Yoji Koyama was awarded a title of Honorary Professor of KSAEL.
December 2000	Three professors from KSAEL visited Niigata University's Faculty of Economics to investigate contents and education methods of economics in Japan and audited lectures.
November 2008	Professor Koyama participated in the celebration of the 55th anniversary of Faculty of Commerce at KSAEL and made a presentation at the international conference "Regional Market of Goods and Services: Innovative Technology and Organization of Businesses". He also gave lectures at Faculty of International Economic Relations.
October 2009	Rector Vladimir Likhobabin and Mrs. Tatyana Malovichko from KSAEL participated in the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Niigata University.
May 2010	Professor Koyama participated in the celebration of the 40th anniversary of KSAEL and made lectures at Faculty of International Economic Relations.

When Professor Toshihisa Suzuki, Chairman of the Committee for International Academic Cooperation at that time, and I met Rector Likhobabin and Mrs. Malovichko in May 2000, we discussed more in detail the point, i.e. the exchange of papers, which Dean Fujii and Mrs. Malovichko agreed on in the previous year. In autumn 2000 our Faculty began to accept two papers almost every year from KSAEL. I never checked the contents but simply checked forms of papers and published them in our Faculty's *Annual Report* [3]. From our Faculty only I contributed papers to *Vestnik* of KSAEL from time to time.

NU has accepted two students and a young teacher from KSAEL. They all came here as research students of our Faculty to learn Japanese and then studied at the graduate

school. Having finished undergraduate program of KSAEL, Yulia Lamasheva studied both Master program and Ph.D. program of NU's graduate school. Tatyana Tarasova studied Ph.D. program here. Elena Shadrina came to Niigata in September 2001 as a student of Obuchi Scholarship and stayed here for a year. After a few years she came to Niigata again to study Ph.D. program. They were very excellent and received scholarship of the Japanese government [4]. Although Kandidat is regarded equal to Ph.D. in Russia and both Tatyana Tarasova and Elena Shadrina already had the title of Kandidat (In addition, Ms. Shadrina was Associate Professor at KSAEL), they dared to study Ph.D. program of NU's Graduate School. All of them started their studies in Japan from learning basic

Japanese. These facts show how eager they are for better research conditions. Under my supervision they studied enthusiastically and successfully defended their Ph.D. dissertations. It is my pleasant memory that I had opportunities to study with such excellent and beautiful Russian ladies.

From our Faculty Professor Toshihisa Suzuki, who is originally a Shakespearian but enthusiastic in international academic cooperation, stayed at KSAEL for 6 months from 2002 to 2003 in order to investigate teaching methods of English in Russia. In addition, an undergraduate student stayed at KSAEL for one year to learn Russian.

As can be seen from the chronological table, although there were exchanges of papers and acceptance of students, the academic cooperation between both institutions has been stagnating since 2001. There are several reasons: First, it became more difficult for NU to hold international conferences. i) From the late 1980s to mid 1990s there was 'Japan Sea Rim Economic Area' fever in Japan and we were able to rely on supports from enterprises and municipalities, etc. Now that the fever is over, we cannot rely on them so much. ii) In the early 1990 the Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA) was established in Niigata. Entrusting the planning to the ERINA, the Niigata prefectural government and the Niigata City authorities hold an international conference every year

with economic cooperation in Northeast Asia as a main subject. It is difficult for our Faculty to hold an international symposium with a similar subject. iii) In international conferences held in Europe English is used as an official language. In contrast, in the case of Northeast Asia translation (simultaneous or consecutive) is indispensable in international conferences, which are inevitably time-consuming and money-consuming. Discussions with the aid of interpreters tend to be ceremonial.

Second, on the side of our Faculty very few professors are engaged in Russia. Cooperation with Russia (not only with Russia but also international academic cooperation in general) depends on capability and willingness of individual professors.

Third, there is an organizational problem. Members of various committees at our Faculty are rotated every two years. Once a person who lacks experience and willingness of international cooperation happens to be nominated for chairman of the committee for international academic cooperation, the cooperation between both institutions does not proceed through the official route. In addition, from 1998 until recently Dean did not participate in the meeting of the committee of international academic cooperation because Dean was too busy. In the case of European universities, deans of faculties are taking initiatives in international academic cooperation with consideration of their faculties' development strategies. Compared with such cases, our Faculty's case has been regrettable.

Fourth, the circumstances in which national universities in Japan are situated should be mentioned. All national universities changed their status from a kind of branch of the Ministry of Education and Sciences to independent administrative legal persons in April 2004. It was decided that at the beginning the amount of money delivered from the government to each university was the same as that in previous year, but that the amount should be decreased by one percent every year. Each university is now encouraged to secure necessary research funds from outside on competition basis. Except several prestigious universities, most of national universities have little money at their disposal to use international academic cooperation.

I think that our Faculty should pursue academic cooperation with KSAEL not in a spectacular way (like a big-scale international conference) but soberly through exchanges of papers as well as exchanges of researchers and students. According to the latest information [5], Niigata prefectural government announced on August 31 that in order to promote cooperation with South Korea, Russia and China special rooms in charge of each country would be established within the international section of the prefectural government in the late September 2010. It would be advisable that NU should collaborate with the prefectural government. Associate Professor Mayu Michigami, my successor, took up her post in January 2010. She is a specialist of Russian Economy and eager to study the Russian Far East. I place my hope on her.

1. Recently I heard from Professor Yohshin Sugahara (Faculty of Economics) that about a year ago the basic principle was revised in a way. If it is necessary for our strategic consideration, President of the University is allowed to sign agreements without prior consent of the University Council.

2. The difference is that in the case of memorandum Dean can sign by his own decision, then, just report the fact later to the Professors' meeting (Faculty Council), while in the case of agreement, prior consent by the Professors' meeting is needed before Dean signs it.

3. In my view, papers in Vestnik are usually very short presumably due to a limit of space and papers sometimes lack enough substantiation (indication of sources, footnotes, references, etc.). Therefore, we proposed that a paper to be contributed to our Faculty's Annual Report should have 10 pages or more (up to 20 pages). I checked manuscripts, which were sent to me, from technical viewpoint.

4. I heard that the competition for scholarship of the Japanese government was so hard that the rate to be chosen was one out of about 50 applicants.

5. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, September 1, 2010 and Niigata Nippoh, September 1, 2010.