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### **Focus**

#### The Context of World History



During one of my history lectures a student commented, "Professor, your stories are interesting," leaving me somewhat puzzled. The focus of the lecture was Mongolian history. While it would be great if the student found Mongolian history captivating, I'm left with mixed feelings if their interest was more in my storytelling than

in the historical content. As a researcher, my desire is for students to discover the inherent fascination within history itself. However, if their interest is more tied to my narrative style than the historical substance, then the allure of history becomes linked to me.

It might sound obvious, but I'm not just presenting historical events as they occurred; I'm organizing and narrating my understanding and interpretation of these events. To put it in extreme terms, the events themselves are mere raw materials, and history is the narrative I've crafted using these materials. This raises the question: is my understanding or interpretation "correct"? Achieving a complete and "accurate" description of historical events is impossible because the primary sources historians grapple with are interpretations of events by someone, not the events themselves. In essence, I am adding my interpretation to someone else's interpretation. Therefore, the "correctness" of historical awareness is more about "legitimacy" than "accuracy." So, what determines the presence of "legitimacy"? It lies in fulfilling the meaning of the era and place to which I belong. Consequently, even if we live in the same era, the meaning of history discussed varies based on our respective locations. Many issues in historical awareness originate from this discrepancy.

Is it possible to have an awareness that transcends a specific era and place? In recent years, there has been much discussion in the field of history about how to describe world history. If I were to describe world history, it would require not only extensive knowledge spanning the globe but also positioning my place of residence in the world. In other words, the "legitimacy" of narrating world history lies in the fact that I am a global citizen. Modern historical studies once placed historians in a position of a transcendent "god." However, this proved untenable. Although laws of human development were once rigorously debated, the schema of development turned out to be a product of local European cultures. The current debate surrounding "world history" seems to be linked to the era of "globalization." The truistic term "global world" signifies a world where people worldwide are interconnected like a network. Its history might resemble an exchange history where no centralization or development is presumed. However, since historians can no longer stand in the position of "gods," it feels like the time is approaching when questions will be asked about the role of historians as "global citizens" narrating this "world history" and the context in which they position themselves. (Hiroki Oka)

### **Recent Events**

### Insights Into Human History in the Eurasian Stone Age Recent Developments in Archaeology, Palaeoanthropology, and Genetics

From late September to early October 2022, we held an international symposium (September 27-29) and two international workshops (September 30, October 4) at TOKYO ELECTRON House of Creativity. Initially planned for May 2022, as previously introduced in Newsletter No. 91, these events were postponed due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Tohoku University, aiming to contribute to solving common challenges in human society, has established the "Tohoku Forum for Creativity (TFC)" as an intellectual community, providing support for various programs.

This event was realized as part of the Thematic Program 2022, supported by the TFC. One aim of the Thematic Program is to host international symposiums and workshops to which leading researchers are invited from around the world, thereby fostering indepth discussions to advance and develop research in their respective fields. Another aim of the Thematic Program is to contribute to the development of young researchers in Japan.

The theme I proposed and that was adopted for this Thematic Program is "Insights into Human History in the Eurasian Stone Age: Recent Developments in Archaeology, Palaeoanthropology, and Genetics." The aim is to interdisciplinarily discuss the latest achievements in archaeology, palaeoanthropology, and genetics concerning the human history of the Eurasian Stone Age. The international symposium comprised four sessions discussing the diffusion, hybridization, and extinction of archaic humans in Northeast Asia, the emergence of *Homo sapiens* and their spread to Western and Eastern Eurasia, and the diffusion of *Homo sapiens* to the Japanese archipelago and the historical cultural and genetic exchanges with surrounding regions. Detailed information about the program is available on the TFC website (https://www.tfc. tohoku.ac.jp/program/2164.html).

In this Thematic Program, as indicated by the title, researchers from the fields of archaeology, palaeoanthropology, and genetics presented their work. The results from each field intertwined organically, yielding discussions that surpassed our expectations. The symposium featured lively Q&A sessions, and discussions exchanged during breaks and social events hinted at the emergence of future collaborative research. Many participating researchers expressed delight and enjoyment at the opportunity to focus on the theme, hear presentations from researchers in all three fields, and engage in in-depth discussions. Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed this week-long event.

We were determined to hold this event in person. Since some presenters from China were unable to travel to Japan, and there were presenters who couldn't come in person due to various reasons, we decided to hold the symposium and workshops as hybrid events. Preparing for an in-person international symposium and workshop amid measures against COVID-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, soaring fuel costs, and rapid yen depreciation presented challenges. However, the discussions that ensued during breaks after Q&A sessions and the informal exchanges of opinions during social events would not have been possible if the event was not held in person. This event reaffirmed the significance of holding conferences in person.

Coincidentally, during this event, ancient DNA researcher Svante Pääbo was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (although he initially agreed to give a keynote speech, the event's rescheduling from May to the end of September prevented his attendance). The recognition of the importance of human evolution research in addressing common challenges faced by human society underscores the crucial role this field will play in the future. This Thematic Program, focusing on the complex history of *Homo sapiens* with Denisovans and Neanderthals in Northeast Asia, highlighted the region's extreme importance in human evolution research.

Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to Satoshi Chiba, Director of Center for Northeast Asian Studies (CNEAS), and the administrative staff of CNEAS for their tremendous support in organizing this Thematic Program. **(Katsuhiro Sano)** 



Group photo of in-person participants at the International Symposium

## **Recent Events**

### Sukagawa in the Edo Period as Seen in the Naito-ke Monjo (Naito family documents) Themed Exhibition at Sukagawa City Museum

Since 2019, we have been conducting collaborative historical document research on locally transmitted materials with the Sukagawa City Museum. The results have been presented as a themed exhibition at the museum every autumn. The 2022 exhibition, titled "Sukagawa in the Edo Period as Seen in the Naito-ke Monjo (Naito family documents)," was held at the Sukagawa City Museum in Sukagawa City, Fukushima Prefecture from October 25 to November 27, 2022. It offered an insightful exploration into the history of Sukagawa, which flourished as a post town along the Oshu Kaido during the Edo period. The



Sukagawa City Museum Exhibition Room

exhibition showcases administrative documents, letters, account books, as well as artistic materials such as portraits.

The Naito family, with roots that trace back to samurai in Ise Province (present-day Mie Prefecture), relocated to Sukagawa town at the end of the Warring States period. They achieved success in commerce and were appointed to the position of "daikankayaku" (civil administration officer) by the feudal lord (Shirakawa Clan) during the Edo period. The successive heads of the Naito family, with such roots, dedicated their efforts to protecting the lives of townspeople. They actively provided relief during famines, established funds such as child care allowances, and made significant contributions to the local community. Sukagawa town has been recognized for its character as a "self-governing city" that does not rely on the lord for administrative management, and this exhibition provides a detailed explanation of its specific features.

For those interested, we recommend exploring "Fumi No Mori Bessatsu No. 7," a supplementary booklet distributed during

the exhibition period. It's available as a PDF on the Uehiro Historical Resources Research Division website (in Japanese). You can access it at https://uehiro-tohoku.net/survey/survey01. (Kenichiro Aratake)



## **Recent Events**

### Cultural Conflicts and Well-being in East Eurasia Annual Meeting for 2022 of East Eurasian Studies (EES) Project

The first annual meeting of the EES project, themed "Cultural Conflicts and Well-being in East Eurasia," was held at the Tokyo Shigaku Kaikan on January 21, 2023. EES was launched with the aim of understanding the influence of East Eurasia, encompassing the vast nations of China and Russia, on the global world from the perspectives of cultural conflicts and wellbeing. This inaugural general meeting was held to confirm the overall direction of the project and discuss the interaction among cooperating members.

The meeting consisted of four sections: Keynote Speech, Branch Directors Panel, Presentations by Members from Each Branch, and Exchange of Ideas on Inter-branch Collaborative Activities. In the Keynote Speech, Professor Hiroki Takakura, the project representative from Tohoku University, presented on the topic "Cultural Conflicts and Well-being in East Eurasia." He discussed the overall purpose and goals of the project and reported on the possibilities of regional studies that can be envisioned within the framework of East Eurasia.

In the "Branch Directors Panel," Hiroki Takakura (Tohoku University Base), Ippei Shimamura (Vice President and Minpaku Branch Director), Hiroki Okada (Kobe University Branch Director), and Akihiro Iwashita (Hokkaido University Branch Director) each reported on the objectives and plans of their respective branches, and discussed the direction of interbranch collaboration and interaction.

Through this meeting, the overall direction of the project and the topics and progress of each branch were shared. Furthermore, individual reports by members from each branch and discussions on common issues such as well-being deepened the understanding of those in attendance. Our network was expanded through interactions with participants from various regions. (Alimtohte Shiho)



Members participating in the EES 2022 Annual Meeting

# **Recent Events**

### Navigating Between History and Memory Perspectives on Postwar Sino-Japanese Relations

On February 21, 2023, we had the honor of hosting Professor Guangtao Wang, Associate Professor at Fudan University's Japan Research Center and Research Fellow at Kyoto University's Graduate School of Law (Japan Foundation Fellow for Japanese Studies), for a public lecture presented in a hybrid format. The lecture was titled "Navigating Between History and Memory: Perspectives on Postwar Sino-Japanese Relations."

Professor Wang commenced the lecture by elucidating the intricate relationship between history and memory. He delved into the narratives surrounding postwar Sino-Japanese relations and explored their repercussions on the ongoing reconciliation efforts between Japan and China. The discourse unfolded with the aid of concrete examples. Emphasizing that history is a blend of memory and forgetfulness, Professor Wang highlighted that historical issues are not merely about past facts but are deeply rooted in the historical narratives crafted by involved parties up to the present. The lecture pinpointed the absence of shared memory points on history between Japan and China and the increasing prevalence of "discontinuity" over "continuity" in memory as significant obstacles hindering the harmonization of historical perspectives.

This lecture was thoughtfully conceived and executed as part

of the "Research with Social Impact" project (D2 Understanding Neighboring Countries), in which the Center for Northeast Asian Studies actively participates. The event drew a diverse audience from both within and beyond the university. An engaging Q&A session was held after the presentation. **(Yuanyuan Teng)** 



Poster of the lecture

# **Online Release**

### Honorary Professor Motoyuki Sato's Retirement Lecture and Interview with Honorary Professor Masahisa Segawa

In honor of the retirements of two CNEAS professors in the spring of 2023, a lecture and an interview celebrating their decades of research have been provided online.

Professor Sato's retirement lecture, titled "Engineering in Northeast Asian Studies: From Komochi Village Ruins to Ukrainian Landmines," was held as part of the Center for Northeast Asian Studies' public lecture series. The first half of the lecture began with a lecture-style explanation of electromagnetic theory, followed by discussions on the radar technology applications conducted by Professor Sato at the center.

Professor Segawa's interview, entitled "Cultural Anthropology Focused on Southern China," was published in "Jinsha Salon's 'Santaro no Komichi,' " which introduces the research achievements by researchers of the humanities and social science faculties at Tohoku University. Professor Hiroki Oka conducted the interview. The interview delves into the nature of cultural anthropology, which is Professor Segawa's specialty, and explores why he chose China as his research subject. Both the retirement lecture and the interview are currently available online, and we invite you to watch them.

(Akio Goto)

Professor Sato's Retirement Lecture: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7PCi2fr1PU



Professor Segawa's Interview: http://www.cneas.tohoku.ac.jp/jinsya/interview1/



# **Awards**

#### Professor Motoyuki Sato Named Recipient of 72nd (2022) Kahoku Culture Award

In January 2023, Professor Motoyuki Sato of our center received the 72nd (2022) Kahoku Culture Award. The Kahoku Culture Award is presented to individuals or groups who have made remarkable achievements in the academic, artistic, sports, industrial, and social activities sectors in Tohoku, contributing to the region's development.

Professor Sato, in collaboration with Kurihara City in Miyagi Prefecture, has been involved in monitoring and developing an early warning system using Ground-Based Synthetic Aperture Radar (GB-SAR) for the "Aratozawa Landslide" that occurred during the 2008 Iwate-Miyagi Nairiku Earthquake. GB-SAR enables precise measurement of the displacement of a wideranging landslide area, approximately 100 meters in height and 900 meters in width, with accuracy in the millimeter range. The system has been operational for over a decade, providing continuous monitoring and information to stakeholders around the clock.

In 2013, Professor Sato developed the Array Ground Penetrating Radar (Array GPR) named "Yakumo" to efficiently conduct cultural asset surveys during the relocation of homes to higher ground after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The technology was used in tsunami victim search activities conducted in collaboration with prefectural police in Miyagi, Fukushima, and Iwate for several years.

The humanitarian landmine exploration system "ALIS (Advanced Landmine Detection System)," based on this ground penetrating radar technology, has been used in Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Colombia since 2018. Starting January 2023, landmine removal activities have commenced in Ukraine, with collaboration from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA. ALIS is expected to play a significant role in future landmine-affected countries.

These substantial contributions to society have been highly recognized, leading to Professor Sato's well-deserved award. (Ryuma Saito)



Training for the Humanitarian Landmine Exploration System "ALIS" (January 2023 in Cambodia)

# **New Staff and Visiting Scholars**

Visiting Scholar Yu-Ting Lee

Associate Professor

Kouhei Tamura

Anthropology, Digital humanities

Apr 2023 - present

Associate Professor, National Taiwan University Dec 2022 - Feb 2023 Literature



Visiting Scholar **Ria-Maria Adams** 

**Research Fellow** 

Hwana Park

Oct 2023 - present

Cultural anthropology

Research Fellow, University of Vienna Oct 2023 Social anthropology







Apr 2023 - present Modern Chinese history, Oral history



Research Fellow Lai Jin

Oct 2023 - present Mongolian history







## Visiting Scholar Charlotte Marchina

Associate Professor, Inalco University Nov 2023 - Feb 2024 Cultural anthropology



# Visiting Scholar Thomas E. Currie

Assistant Professor

**Minami** Nemoto

Apr 2023 - present

Japanese history

Professor, University of Exeter June 2023 - July 2023 Human behavioral ecology, Cultural evolution



Aug 2023 - present Earth history, Geochemistry

# Visiting Scholar Vasilii Shchepkin Senior Researcher, Russian Academy of Sciences

ences Nov 2023 - Dec 2023 Japanese history, International relations

## Visiting Scholar **Nataliia Kutafeva**

Associate Professor, Novosibirsk State University Nov 2023 - Feb 2024 Japanese linguistics





# **Publications**

#### The language of the following books is Japanese, unless otherwise noted.

### Northeast Asia Monograph Series

This commercially published series presents scholarly monographs in Northeast Asian regional studies aimed at specialists, general readers and university students.

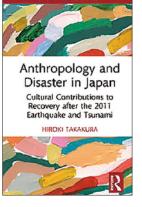
Masahisa Segawa, Hua Nan: The Cultural Diversity and Ethnicity of Guangdong and Hainan, South China, Fukyosha Publishing Inc., January 2023.



Sunhee Lee and Hiroki Takakura (eds), Life in the Disaster Aftermath: Disaster Humanities of Commemoration and Recovery, Shinsensha, March 2023.



Hiroki Takakura, Anthropology and Disaster in Japan: Cultural Contributions to Recovery after the 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami, Routledge, March 2023. (in English)



#### Northeast Asian Books

Northeast Asian Books are being published as a trial to introduce fundamental knowledge about nature, history, culture and society in Northeast Asia to general readers. They are the result of natural, social science and humanities research on environmental and societal problems. Center for Northeast Asian Studies (eds), *Nature and Culture in Northeast Asia volume 2*, Tohoku University Press. January 2023.



### Northeast Asian Studies

Northeast Asian Studies is an

annual academic journal for the purpose of contributing to the development of area studies and its related fields in Northeast Asia. Northeast Asian Studies vol. 27, February 2023.

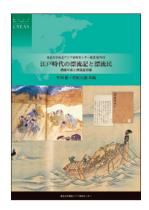
### **CNEAS Monograph Series**

Research results of CNEAS joint research projects, and individual projects, irregular publication (in house publications)

Masahisa Segawa, *Under the Ancestors' Glory*, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University Series No. 71, September 2022.

Teiji Nomoto and The Nangou Komonjyo Reading Group, The Documents of Gotou Family Served as Syukuro (Senior Vassal) in Sendai Domain: History, Role, and Martial Arts, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University Series No. 72, January 2023.

Arata Hirakawa and Kazuo Takehara, Drifting Records and Drifting People in the Edo Period: Drifting Chronology and Drifting Catalog, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University, Series No. 73, September 2023.



#### **CNEAS** Reports

Nagayama, Y., T. A. Golovaneva, and Pronina, E. P. (eds.), Language and Life of Peoples of Kamchatka: Personal Histories and Memories. Volume 2, November 2022. (in Russsian)

#### Researcher's Initiative Publications

Shiji Yamashita and Tomoko Kanou (eds), Cultural heritage, Resilient tourism, and Disaster Risk Reduction, Shinyosha, September 2022. Alimtohte Shiho, Islam and Confucianism: The Civilization Fusion of "Hui Confucianism", Akashi shoten-Publishing, October 2022.

Masahisa Segawa, Huanan: Diversity and Ethnicity of Guangdong and Hainan, South China, Fukyosha, December 2022.

Yoko Takayama and Mutsumi Yamaguchi (eds), Norms and Models: Modernization and Globalization in Northeast Asia, Fukyosha, February 2023.

Masahisa Segawa, Parasol Tree in Autumn: Memories of my Forty Years as a Researcher, Fukyosha, February 2023.



Satoshi Chiba, *Invited Natural Enemy*, Misuzu Shobo, March 2023.

Satoshi Yokoyama, Sinya Konaka, Yoshimichi Yui, Masao Abeya, Izumi Morimoto and Yuko Mio (eds), *The earth and its people seen from the eyes of fieldworkers: Sixty topics for geography classes*, Kokon Shoin, March 2023.

John P. Ziker, Jenanne Ferguson and Vladimir Davydov (eds), *The Siberian World*, Routledge, March 2023. (in English)

Minami Nemoto, *Mourike: Hagihan*, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, June 2023.





# Letters

There is some unfathomable historical connection between Russia and Sendai. It was in the sea off the coast of Sendai where the first Russian ship to reach Japan appeared in 1739. Kudo Heisuke, who completed the first Japanese book about Russia in 1783, and Hayashi Shihei, who was the first Japanese to declare the danger from Russia in 1786, were both Sendai residents. And it was from Sendai that the Japanese vessel "Wakamiya-maru" set sail, which was then wrecked and carried away by the sea current to Russia in 1793. The four survivors from that vessel became the first Japanese to circumnavigate the globe, as, after crossing Russia from east to west, they were returned to Japan by the first Russian Round-the-World expedition. They later spurred the study of Russia by Sendai scholars such as Otsuki Gentaku and Shimura Hiroyuki.

Having realized such a historical connection during my first brief visit here in 2014, I was confident that Sendai would be the best place for my research on the history of Russian studies in early modern Japan and their influence on Tokugawa's foreign policy and intellectual life. Indeed, after joining the Center of Northeast Asian Studies of Tohoku University as a visiting associate professor ten years later, in November 2023, I discovered both the rich and rare materials at the University Library and the researchfriendly atmosphere of "Mori-no miyako", a huge city which is literally dissolved in the surrounding nature, where a hawk or an osprey is much easier to spot than a pigeon.

However, the real discovery of Sendai for me wasn't that. It was the people. When applied to the fellowship, I didn't know anyone neither in the CNEAS nor in Sendai. But as soon as my fellowship started, I was surrounded by attention and care from the very first step onto the land of Sendai. Initially I thought that Vasilii Shchepkin Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences

I would spend my two months at the CNEAS just collecting and copying materials for future research. However, my colleagues from the Uehiro Research Division of Historical Materials Study have managed to create such a research atmosphere around me that I spent all two months in incessant preparation for presentations of my research. And I am not complaining, for it organized and guided my work here,



and eventually led me to several new discoveries that I had not even expected.

I would like to express my gratitude to Tohoku University, CNEAS and all members of the Uehiro Research Division of Historical Materials Study, especially to my host professor Aratake Kenichiro and Dr. Cheng Yongchao, whose questions and interest in my research pointed me in the future directions of my work. I am very grateful to Prof. Takakura Hiroki for his hospitality and friendliness. I would also like to mention two people whose invisible presence was constantly felt during my stay in Sendai. They are Date Masamune and Sendai Shiro, the two poles of the city's history, with the former created this stunningly beautiful city, while the latter reflected the hospitality and kindness of its people.

I would be very happy if my short stay and research work at the CNEAS remains another invisible bridge connecting Russia and Sendai.

# Letters

Charlotte Marchina Inalco University (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations)

I am an anthropologist and Associate Professor in Mongolian Studies at Inalco University (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations) in Paris, and have come to CNEAS from November 2023 to January 2024. First of all, I am doubly grateful to CNEAS and Tohoku University for having postponed (and not cancelled) this fellowship originally planned during the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as for the exceptional nursery care offered on the campus, without which I would not have been able to work in such good conditions, while living with my son. The International Support Center and CNEAS staff also ensured a smooth installation, enabling me to settle quite quickly. I work on the relationship between herders, animals and the environment in Mongolia and Southern Siberia, and devoted my research time here to writing a book on human-animal relations, while also starting a new research project on the perception of climate change in this region. Being affiliated with the CNEAS enabled me to write in a most stimulating context, as I interacted daily with anthropologists as well as researchers from other disciplines working on Northeast Asia. On the other hand, just like I experienced serendipity during other fellowships abroad in the past, this fellowship gave me access to unexpected and fruitful theoretical and methodological insights, especially in anthropology of disasters, in connection with studies of the 3.11 disaster, thanks to my remarkable host researcher Takakura Hiroki, participation in the anthropology graduate seminar, and discussions with other CNEAS and IRIDES (International Institute of Disaster Science) colleagues.

# Editorial

#### **Editorial postscript**

Welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> volume of the CNEAS Bulletin. Through this Bulletin the Center works to connect with scholars of research related to Northeast Asia and highlight the activities of select faculty members. Faculty continued to highlight their research through numerous symposia and exhibitions in 2022 and 2023 with topics on the human condition spanning from the Stone Age ("Insights Into Human History in the Eurasian Stone Age: Recent Developments in Archaeology, Palaeoanthropology, and Genetics" led by Prof. Katsuhiro Sano), to the Edo Period ("Sukagawa City Museum Theme Exhibition "The Edo Period in Sukagawa as Seen in the Naito Family Documents" by Prof. Kenichiro Aratake), to today ("Culture Clash and Well-being in East Eurasia" by Assist. Prof. Alimtohte Shiho). Accolades found their way to CNEAS

The CNEAS Bulletin is published once a year by the Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University. The Bulletin promotes a continuing exchange of information with

Website: http://www2.cneas.tohoku.ac.jp/english/index.html Editor: Yuanyuan Teng Editorial panel: Alyne Delaney, Tatsuki Tsujimori, and Mitsu Hatakeyama ©Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University 2024.

These exchanges opened doors for me to approach natural disasters in Mongolia from a new perspective. In addition, the allocation of a research budget and working space also allowed me to strengthen cooperation with anthropologists from other Japanese institutions working on Mongolia, which is very precious. This fellowship came at a pivotal moment in my intellectual and



research career, and there is no doubt that my stay at CNEAS will play an important role in the successful completion of my projects and the development of current and new collaborations.



A Mongolian riding camel tied up on a herder's encampment during a snow storm (Central Mongolia, November 2012).

when Professor (now Emeritus) Motoyuki Sato was awarded the 72nd Kahoku Culture Award in 2022. In this issue we also invite Visiting Research Fellows Dr. Charlotta Marchina and Dr. Vasilii Shchepkin to present their experiences of their time at CNEAS. Recent global events continue to present CNEAS with challenges in hosting overseas guest researchers. Though the COVID-19 pandemic finally slowed enough to host international researchers again, the Center's Visiting Fellows Program was again impacted, this time by Russian's War on Ukraine, with CNEAS experiencing numerous challenges in hosting Russia-based colleagues. We look forward to a return to things operating more smoothly in the future.

former visiting scholars and others who related to the Northeast Asian Studies.