

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
PACIFIC RIM COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS
1980- 2000

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The idea for founding the Pacific Rim College of Psychiatrists stemmed from the mind of Professor Ching-piao Chien. During the 1978 World Psychiatric Association meeting in Hawaii, he proposed to establish a psychiatric organization that dealt specially with the unique problems existing in the Pacific Rim Region. The purpose was to bring together the leadership of academic psychiatry in the Pacific Rim countries to share research and educational information. Prior to this time, there was no formal organization where this could take place. Dr. Chien was selected as the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He invited Professor Joe Yamamoto and me to join him in finalizing his dream. Prof Yamamoto was past-president of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and I was Speaker of the Assembly of the APA. Within one year we were able to recruit fifty-six outstanding leaders to be the Founding Fellows from fourteen of the Pacific Rim countries.

The Pacific Rim College of Psychiatrists was founded in Manila on May 15, 1980 at the Philippine Plaza Hotel at the time of the 2nd Pacific Congress of Psychiatry meeting. At a small organizational meeting, the group of founding fellows discussed common problems and issues that needed to be confronted in their respective countries. Under the leadership of Professors Masahisa Nishizono, Kiyoshi Makita and Atsuyoshi Mora from Japan; Eng-Kung Yeh and Chu-Chang Chen from Taiwan; Chung Kwoon Lee and Luke Kim from Korea; Char-Nie Chien from Hong Kong; Joe Yamamoto, John Spiegel, AI Freedman, Mel Sabshin, Roy Menninger and Ching-piao Chien from the USA; and Baltazar Reyes from the Philippines along with many other founding fellows from Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Thailand the group voted to organize using the model of the American College of Psychiatrists. Professor Reyes was elected the first president.

Dr. Reyes wrote, "Our cultural diversity with attendant mental health problems could be the central focus of the organization which shall foster the exchange of ideas and communication we badly needed to further knowledge in our discipline. For me, the challenge was in making our diversity the unifying force in a collaboration that shall promote a better understanding of psychiatric disorders. The challenge was even more daunting because of the different levels of development of our respective health systems. I was given the honor of being the first president because at that time I was serving as the chairman of the organizing committee of the Second Pacific Congress while being President of the Philippine Psychiatric Association." At this meeting it was decided that for the first ten years, at least, all the scientific meetings should be held outside the USA to avoid the appearance of undue American influence in the organization.

The kind offer of the Taiwanese fellows to host the first scientific meeting of the group two years hence in Taipei led to the tradition of electing a President-elect who would agree to serve

as the organizer and chair of the next scientific program. Dr. Chti-chang Chen was elected President-elect. In his recollection of that meeting, Prof. Chen wrote: "At the time of PRCP's inauguration, there were no other countries willing to take the initiative to organize a biennial scientific meeting. Dr. Eng-kung Yeh and I boldly took on this heavy responsibility, which Dr. Chen-chin Hsu was later willing to share with us. Thus we eventually formed a three-member preparatory committee and proposed two main themes for the meeting: psychiatric education and mental health services, issues, dilemmas and perspectives."

The USA group, located conveniently at UCLA, formed the nucleus of the central office of the organization, with Professor Chien serving as the Secretary-General. He held this office for over twenty years, and without his outstanding contribution and vision it is unlikely that the organization could have enjoyed its considerable success and achievement in bringing together the psychiatric leaders of the Pacific Rim Countries. Dr. Yamamoto served as our Treasurer. Eric Yamamoto, Dr. Yamamoto's son and a lawyer in Los Angeles, served as our legal counsel. Mrs. Pasnau designed the logo for the college. I was elected to the board of directors. The organization was incorporated in California.

The First Scientific Meeting was held April 14-16, 1982 at the Grand Hotel in Taipei, Taiwan. The Society of Neurology and Psychiatry, ROC, The Department of Health, and the Pacific Cultural Foundation jointly sponsored it. There were at that time seventy-five founding fellows from nine countries and sixty-one participants in addition to sixteen spouses in attendance. The format of the meeting included many papers and discussion groups. The meeting and the setting were outstanding. Dr. Chen concluded: "The goal of fostering more intimate fellowship among colleagues and inciting closer international collaboration for the development of psychiatry in the Pacific Rim countries was achieved."

Prof. Chung Kwoon Lee agreed to organize the next scientific meeting and was elected President-elect.

The Second Scientific Meeting was held on May 15, 1984 at the Shilla Hotel in Seoul, Korea under the leadership of Prof Lee with the help of Dr. Luke Kim. This was a one-day meeting held in conjunction with the 3rd Pacific Congress of Psychiatry. I had the honor to represent the USA at the plenary session with a presentation on trends in public psychiatry in the USA. There were representatives from all the constituent countries on the panel. Dr. Makita was elected President-elect. Following this meeting, most of the members were able to attend a meeting of the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology at the invitation of then President Nishizono in Fukuoka. The tradition of joining the meeting of the College with other scientific meetings was established.

(You may recall that the political relationships between many of the participating countries were not completely resolved. For example, there was no representation from China or Viet Nam. Prof. Chien, who is fluent in Japanese, was criticized by one of his Korean colleagues for speaking Japanese to a colleague from Japan. He said, "Why are you speaking in the language of our enemy?")

The Third Scientific Meeting was held April 2-5, 1986 at the Keio Plaza Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. Eighty-four papers were presented. The proceedings, published in English, totaled 214 pages.

Over 300 participants from all over the world came to the meeting. As Dr. Makita wrote, "One of the ice-breaking events of this scientific meeting was the participation of Dr. Norman Sartorius representing the WHO. He came in not only by himself and his staff, but brought in three active participants from Hanoi and Beijing, endorsing the fact that there are no boundaries between countries with different social systems or ideologies in as much as the sciences are concerned." This event opened up the PRCP to members from China, who were to play a significant role in the future development of the College. We elected a board member from China, Dr. He Qin Yan. We elected Prof Char-Nie Chien to be our president-elect after he agreed to organize the next scientific meeting in Hong Kong.

This was an especially significant meeting for me because President Makita, who had trained as a child psychiatrist in the USA and I sang a rousing rendition of "When the Saints go Marching In" at the Farewell Banquet, which was one of the most special occasions in the history of the organization (not the singing, the food).

In May 1988, just as he was completing his tenure as our President, we learned that Professor Makita had died. As Professor Atsuyoshi Mori wrote in his beautiful eulogy, he passed away before he could see the proceedings of his meeting published. Dr. Mori wrote: "Despite our deep sadness due to the loss of a great leader, the members of the College would like to unite together to overcome our misfortune and continue the great heritage you have left for us."

The Fourth Scientific Meeting was held in Hong Kong at the Sheraton Hotel on December 4-9, 1988, and it was marked by the largest attendance to that date in our history. This was the meeting with the theme: Psychiatry - Challenges and Directions. Multiple sessions and workshops were held simultaneously on Transcultural Psychotherapy, Transcultural Pharmacotherapy, Culture-bound Syndromes and Psychiatric Education. At this meeting it was decided to hold the next scientific meeting in Bangkok, Thailand. Dr. Udom Laksanavicham was elected President-elect and agreed to organize a meeting in 1990.

In April 1990, Dr. Laksanavicharn wrote to the Secretary-General that the organizing committee was unable to complete its work due to unforeseen political and logistic problems. He resigned as President-elect. The Board of Directors met in Los Angeles in June and agreed to hold a meeting in Los Angeles in 1991. I was elected President-elect, and I worked with the APA to have the college meet as an affiliated event with the 1991 Institute on Hospital and Community Psychiatry of the APA. Dr. Harold Eist was the Chairman of that Program Committee.

The Fifth Scientific Meeting was held in Los Angeles, California at the Bonaventure Hotel from October 17-20, 1991. There were ten symposia on a variety of topics including Delivery of Mental Health Services to Asian-Americans, Psychotherapy for Asians, and Substance use Disorders. This was a small meeting in terms of attendance, but it attracted the interest and attention of the leadership of USA psychiatry including Drs. L.J. West, Milton Greenblatt, APA President Lawrence Hartmann, past president Carol Nadelson, and future president Harold Eist. This marked the expansion of members from the USA and Canada, and it strengthened the financial success of the PRCP. Drs. Mori and Yamamoto were given special awards for their contributions to the college.

It was clear that the college had grown in its reputation for excellence and its contribution to the development of psychiatry in the Pacific Rim. It also marked the growing importance of Chinese psychiatry. One of the highlights of the social program included a visit to the concert by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra with Kyung-Wha Chung playing the Brahms Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra. Outgoing President Chen noted that although he was the shortest president of the college, he had served longer than any predecessor, and though I was the tallest, I would have served shorter than any predecessor. Dr. Yan was elected President-elect. Dr. Shen Yu Cun was elected to the Board of Directors.

For the first twelve years of the college, all secretarial and administrative expenses for the college were donated by the UCLA Department of Psychiatry under the chairmanship of Dr. West. Upon his retirement as chair and the retirement from UCLA of my administrative assistant, Mrs. Celia Brown, there was no commitment to continue this support. In 1992 a Long Range Planning Committee under the leadership of Dr. Menninger addressed the need for a Central Office for the college. This need was highlighted by the return to Taiwan of Dr. Chien coupled with the retirement of Mrs. Brown, who had undertaken all of the arrangements for the Fifth Scientific Meeting without any compensation for her time spent. The Long Range Planning Committee recommended hiring a part time Executive Director. Mrs. Brown was willing to come out of retirement to spend part of her time in coordinating the efforts of the Secretary-General, the Treasurer, the President, and the Membership Chairman. UCLA continued to supply the office space, supplies, postage, and general support for the college. This arrangement was terminated when the College moved to Australia in 1990.

We are very grateful to Mrs. Brown and to the UCLA Department of Psychiatry for so many years of support and encouragement.

The Sixth Scientific Meeting was held in Shanghai, China at the Qianhe Hotel on April 15-18, 1993. This meeting attracted 85 delegates from around the world including Japan, Taiwan, USA, Sweden, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, South Korea, and Hong Kong as well as 91 delegates from China. The Chinese group included psychiatrists from all over the country. The meeting was one of the first international psychiatric meetings held in modern China. Once again, Dr. Sartorius from WHO addressed the group. This meeting marked a major expansion in membership. Forty-five new fellows were admitted to membership, largely due to the efforts of Dr. Hajime Kazamatsuri in Japan. This meeting was also extended by an optional visit to Beijing and a symposium organized by Dr. Shen and the Beijing Institute of Mental Health. Prof. Nishizono was voted President-elect.

The Seventh Scientific Meeting was held in Fukuoka, Japan at the ACROS Fukuoka on October 24-27, 1995. This meeting marked a major achievement for the College in terms of international attendance, prestige, and budget of well over \$200,000.00. Prof. Nishizono and his staff organized a truly outstanding program and social program. Dr. Tsung-Yi Lin, Norman Sartorius, and Melvin Sabshin participated in the meeting, along with 50 psychiatrists from China and several hundred guests from Japan. Over 150 papers, three special lectures, and eight plenary sessions were held. In his opening address to the College, Prof. Nishizono stated: "The greatest asset mankind has reached in this century and should hand over to the next century is human rights and scientific technology. If man acts in pursuit of happiness, these two assets may work as a common principle, transcending the differences in nationality and social system." In this

extensive and thoughtful keynote address he demonstrated why he became an international leader of his profession. The Proceedings of the meeting were published in English in the December 1998 Supplement to Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences Journal of 379 pages.

In honor of Founding Fellow Melvin Sabshin's pending retirement as Medical Director of APA, it was decided to hold the Eighth Scientific Meeting in San Diego at the time of the APA meeting there in 1997 to honor his achievements. Dr. Roy Menninger agreed to organize the meeting and was elected President-elect.

The Eighth Scientific Meeting was held in San Diego, California at the Wyndham Emerald Plaza Hotel, May 14-17, 1997. It was a smaller meeting by far than the Fukuoka meeting. One hundred and twenty-five members and guests attended it, and the format included some small discussion groups. Dr. Sabshin was honored, and the President of APA, Dr. Rodrigo Munoz, also a PRCP member, addressed the group. In his Keynote Address relating to PRCP and the future of our field, Dr. Menninger noted, "psychiatry is perhaps more challenged than ever before. In the USA, psychiatrists are simultaneously experiencing the rapid growth of new services, the explosion of new knowledge about the brain, professional fragmentation into ever-more separated subspecialties, unanticipated competition from other human service disciplines, and profound financial pressures that have altered patterns of practice, limited the scope and intensity of treatment, and affected the quality and power of the physician-patient relationship. The advent of so many competing pressures has provoked significant professional turmoil, forced a number of older psychiatrists into retirement, and discouraged entry of many promising younger physicians into the field." Dr. Menninger noted that the turmoil is affecting international psychiatry as well. He noted that the WHO concluded that mental illnesses would be among the new century's leading global causes of 'disease burden,' a concept defined as the number of years subtracted from a healthy life by disability and premature death. He proposed that the time had come for PRCP to take on a new mission, one that moved from academic to action, from intimate collegial relationships to planning strategy and achievement.

As the PRCP approached its 20th birthday, the Board began to contemplate the needed changes in its organization to meet the challenges articulated by Dr. Menninger. It had always been the goal of the founders that the PRCP would move its Central Office from the USA to one of the other Pacific Rim countries when it could do so without sacrificing the stability and security of its operation. With the retirement of Drs Chien and Yamamoto and my pending retirement, consideration of moving the central office to either Japan or Australia became a major planning task for the Board of Directors.

Dr. Kyu-Hang Lee was elected President-elect and agreed to organize the next meeting in Korea. In his first column in the Newsletter in the fall of 1997 he wrote: "The world is changing very fast in every aspect politically, economically and socio-culturally - as is our professional field with cumulating scientific knowledge. It is the right time for the Pacific Rim Countries to play an ever more important role in leading the rest of the world with abundant spiritual resources, with diverse cultural and philosophical backgrounds and with more than half of the human resources of the whole world. Psychiatry is no exception. For this reason, I believe that the psychiatrists in the College must be prepared to face the challenges for the next century. Receiving this challenging assignment of the College, I promise I will be an active President-

elect." Indeed he was, visiting as many countries as possible and developing a stimulating and thought provoking program for the meeting.

The Ninth Scientific Meeting was held at the Hotel Shilla in Seoul, Korea, October 3-6, 1999. Over 400 attendees were stimulated by the theme, "Challenges in a Changing World: New Directions for Psychiatry in the 21st Century." One of the highlights of the meeting was a plenary session entitled "When the Dream Comes True: A Study of the Psychiatric Aftermath of the Reunification of Korea." Dr. Lee wrote: I believe that this special symposium with important country-specific issues will enlighten us by examining natural human history filled with division and unification, separation and integration, personalization and generalization. Topics include psychosocial impacts, lessons from Germany and Vietnam, examinations from the perspectives of family separation and reunion, and also our role as psychiatrists for the unification of two Koreas."

At the Board of Directors meeting, the decision to transfer the Central Office of the College to Australia was made. Professor Bruce Singh was elected President-elect. Dr. Chien arranged to step-down as Secretary General after twenty years of service. Dr. Eng-Seong Tan from Australia became the new Secretary-General.

The Tenth Scientific Meeting was held in Melbourne, Australia in 2001. Professor Helen Chiu was elected President-elect. The Eleventh Scientific Meeting will be held at the Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel in Hong Kong October 27 - 30, 2003 (now postponed until 2004 due to SARS)

This brief history covers the first twenty years of the PRCP. With the transfer of the College to Australia the new millennium awaits future growth and development of Dr. Chien's dream. How well did we do in achieving Professor Ching-piao Chien's dream during the first twenty years? Perhaps President Kyu Hang Lee answered the question best at the conclusion of his Keynote Speech at the Ninth Scientific Meeting: "Isn't it wonderful that we can dream and can prepare for creating the dream that comes true. We psychiatrists are in a profession specializing in dreams, hearing the secret dreams from our patients' hearts, and furthermore, dreaming for the future of our profession, our life, and our family. Only those with faith in their dream and preparing for the day when the dream comes true will be able to bow in thanks when the dream is fulfilled. Now, let me ask you, what is your dream? Are you ready? Are you preparing for the day when your dream comes true? Let me close my speech by repeating Confucius' phrase, 'Friends from far away are visiting us, isn't it wonderful?'"

Los Angeles, May 14, 2003