East meets west

Peter Nijkamp^{1,2}

Published online: 13 February 2017

© The Japan Section of the Regional Science Association International 2017

Regional science has already a long and respectable history. Its early roots can be found in Europe, witness seminal contributions by Von Thünen, Weber, Palander, and many others. Its real birth took place in the post-WW II period in the United States, thanks to the great intellectual efforts of Walter Isard, supported by many other scholars (Alonso, Beckmann, Czamanski, Tiebout, and dozens of other great intellectual leaders). Regional science has never adopted a narrow or local scientific perspective: geography is everywhere and distance frictions are everywhere! Consequently, there is no place on earth for which regional science is irrelevant. And, therefore, it is plausible that regional science has not only found a rich application field in Europe or America, but also in other continents like Australia and Africa. It is, thus, no wonder that regional science has found a fertile seedbed in several Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore, China, India, or Thailand, not to speak of more distant regions like Australia or New Zealand. The Asia-Pacific area is one of the natural homelands of regional science, strongly supported by the uninterrupted leadership of great Japanese scholars (in particular, Hirotada Kohno and Yoshiro Higano).

It is noteworthy that the Asia-Pacific Rim forms a natural habitat for new and fascinating regional science challenges. Clearly, there is an abundance of the almost eternal problems of regional (under) development and spatial disparities. However, there are also many other intriguing issues that have to be urgently addressed by regional science research, such as fast urbanisation phenomena (leading to megacities), large-scale environmental decay problems, unprecedented spatial-economic dynamics as a result of technological innovation and creativity, cross-border migration flows, severe problems of resource scarcity, and, last but not least,

✉ Peter Nijkamp
pnijkamp@hotmail.com

¹ Tinbergen Institute, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

² Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland

persistent problems of poverty and low socio-economic opportunities for many people.

Regional science in the Asia-Pacific Rim has never been a dismal or isolated science. It was always well connected to the Western world, and was able to attract the attention of many European and American regional scientists, as is demonstrated by the international character of PRSCO conferences. Regional science in the Asia-Pacific Rim has, indeed, many things to offer to the rest of the world. And, therefore, time has now come to stand on its own feet and to start an international peer-reviewed journal which may act as an academic publication vehicle for regional science research on the Asia-Pacific Rim or for advanced contributions published by scholars with an affinity to this region.

The newly established journal *Asia-Pacific Journal of Regional Science* offers a great opportunity for many scholars involved with regional research. With the support of Springer and the intellectual contributions by many regional science researchers from places all over the world, it will pave the road to a bright future of regional science in the Asia-Pacific Rim. I wish the new journal a great take-off and a safe landing in the regional science field.