

## EAST ASIAN JOURNAL

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### ABSTRACT

Astronomical research in Asian Pacific region has been growing rapidly in recent years. However, most important papers have been published in well established existing journals in US and Europe because we do not have high impact international journals in this region. I review the current trends of the local journals of East Asian countries and propose to establish a new regional journal by combining domestic journals.

### I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As far as I know, the first mention on the need for the Asian-pacific journal came out in 1996 during the preparation of the Sixth Asian-Pacific Meeting of the IAU held at Pusan National University. However, no serious discussion took place at this meeting. A few years later, I became a secretary of the Korean Astronomical Society (KAS) and was seriously interested in the regional journal because the Korean government began evaluating the domestic journals in order to raise the standards of the domestic publications. The Journal of the Korean Astronomical Society (JKAS) has been struggling to maintain high standard while the number of submitted papers has been slowly decreasing as the evaluation system of the researchers encouraged us to publish our in well established journals. One of the best ways for survival at such an environment seemed to be a creation of an international journal. Thus I took a poll among our society members about the future of the JKAS, but the opinion was almost equally divided: while some members agree to take a bold initiative for the formation of a new journal, some other members were seriously worried about the possibility of discontinuing JKAS. I also exchanged a series of e-mails with the editor of Astronomical Society of Australia (ASA) to seek a possibility of joint publication between KAS and ASA. Although we agreed that joint publication is a good idea, nothing actually happened since the our opinion was divided.

Another important discussion about the Asian-Pacific journal took place during the Seventh Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting of the IAU held in 2002 at Tokyo, Japan. The Scientific Organizing Committee asked me to lead the discussion on the regional journal during the business session. This session was attended by interested people who did not necessarily represent the opinions of their own countries or regions. Although the discussion was interesting, we could not reach any firm conclusion. We only agreed on the continuation of the effort of creating a regional journal.

This time, Prof. S. S. Hong, SOC chair of EAMA6, has kindly asked me to bring up this issue again during the Sixth EAMA meeting in Seoul. Here, I summarize

the discussion we had during this meeting.

### II. CURRENT SITUATION OF DOMESTIC JOURNALS

To my best knowledge, there are four domestic journals for astronomy and astrophysics in East Asian countries: The Chinese Journal of Astronomy and Astrophysics (ChJAA), Journal of Astrophysics and Astronomy (JAA, an Indian Journal), Journal of the Korean Astronomical Society (JKAS), and Publication of the Astronomical Society of Japan (PASJ). PASJ and JAA are listed in Science Citation Index (SCI), and ChJAA is listed in the SCI expanded edition (SCIE). However, JKAS is not listed in any of those indices. Table 1 summarizes some relevant data for those journals: the year of foundation, frequency of the publication, and latest impact factor defined by the Institute of Science Information (ISI) if available. As a reference, the impact factor of Astrophysical Journal in 2003 was 6.604.

The number of papers produced in the East Asian region has been growing at very high rate. However, I found somewhat disappointing trend in the number of papers published in the domestic journals in this region. PASJ has published several special issues on particular Japanese instruments such as Subaru and Nanten. If we do not count the papers on special issues, the number of published papers has been slowly decreasing. JKAS experiences similar trends: JKAS often publishes the conference proceedings and the number regular papers published per year has also been slowly decreasing since 2000. This appears also to be a case for JAA. Only ChJAA enjoys slow growth.

In summary, I think that the roles of domestic journals in East Asian region is becoming less important. The situation different for different journals. I briefly summarize the current situation of the domestic journals as follows:

- PASJ is the most successful journal in the region, but even Japanese astronomers appear to prefer to publish their works elsewhere. I have met several Japanese astronomers who want to have more

TABLE 1.  
DOMESTIC JOURNALS IN EAST ASIAN REGION

Journal Name	Founding Year	Frequency (year <sup>-1</sup> )	Impact Factor
ChJAA	2001	6	1.768
JAA	1980	4	0.264
JKAS	1968	4	N/A
PASJ	1949	6	2.312

ChJAA: Chinese Journal of Astronomy and Astrophysics

JAA: Journal of Astrophysics and Astronomy (India)

JKAS: Journal of the Korean Astronomical Society

PASJ: Publication of the Astronomical Society of Japan

influential Journal.

- ChJAA became a major journal in short time. The impact factor is reached a respectable level in less than 10 years. The number of published papers per year also increases steadily.
- JKAS publishes some interesting articles, but number of submitted papers is simply too small to maintain high standards. The biggest challenge at this time for JKAS is to be listed in SCI as soon as possible.
- JAA seems to be quite unstable. It has rather long history, and it is listed in SCI. However, the number of regular articles published per year has been significantly fluctuating, and the impact factor is disappointingly low.

### III. DO WE NEED A NEW JOURNAL?

The reason for the reduction of the number of papers published in domestic journals in East Asian region even though the research activities are booming seems to be clear. The researchers want to publish their works in more influential journals. Domestic Journals have limitations in number of papers and number of circulations. Maintaining the domestic journals is becoming more difficult.

It may be a difficult job to establish a high impact journal in a short amount of time even if we put our efforts together. However, there is a growing consensus among the astronomers in this region for a new regional journal to publish our works. We have witnessed the level of collaboration within this region is also increasing rapidly. The EAMA has played a very important role in this regard. The regional journal seems to be the natural place to publish articles resulting from regional collaboration.

### IV. TOWARD THE NEW JOURNAL

In order to realize a new journal, we have to make many important decisions. Therefore, I would like to suggest to form a Working Group to discuss all the issues related to it. The working group should be consist

of representatives of participating societies. I suggest that at least one of the representatives should be a chief editor (or equivalent) of the domestic journal. The WG studies the feasibility, and provisional decisions on the following issues:

- Launch a journal or not
- Define the nature of the journal
- Financial matters
- Detailed road map of producing a journal

As of June 22, 2005, there are representatives for this working group from seven countries/regions including Australia, China, India, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan. First face-to-face meeting of this Working Group will be held on July 26, 2005 during the Eighth Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting of the IAU at Bali, Indonesia. We hope that we can make some important progress in this meeting.