

COMMUNICATIONS

Gangnam Style: Celebrating a 30th Anniversary and the 250th Gangnam Conference

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Even if they are not very familiar with Seoul, it can be expected that many plastic surgeons throughout the world have heard of the area of Seoul called Gangnam since the pop singer Psy released his musical hit ‘Gangnam style’ in 2012 [1,2].

However, Gangnam should be well-known to those who work in the field of plastic surgery for a more important reason. Over 300 board-certified plastic surgeons and more than 600 general practitioners are working in Gangnam-gu, a district south of the Han River. At Gangnam Severance Hospital, in the center of Gangnam-gu, a time-honored monthly meeting of plastic surgeons has been held since 1983. It is informally known as ‘The Gangnam Conference.’

Thus, for the last 30 years, every month, one or two surgeons have presented their own techniques. Surgical methods that are now popular and widely used were first presented at the Gangnam Conference. Just as the ‘Korean Wave’ of Korean pop culture has brought songs like Gangnam Style to an international audience, the Gangnam Conference has long been the birthplace of truly cutting-edge aesthetic surgery techniques now used throughout the world.

Some of the presenters write up and publish descriptions of their novel techniques. Others do not. However, since 2005, the meet-



Fig. 1. Photograph at the 246th Gangnam Conference.

ings have been relayed live over the internet to the cities of Daejeon, Daegu, Busan, and Gwangju, and thus any unpublished content is available from the videos taken at the meetings.

Recent meetings of the Gangnam Conference have averaged 200 to 300 surgeons (100 to 150 in Seoul with the remainder attending remotely from the other cities) (Fig. 1). This month marks an important milestone, the 250th meeting of the Gangnam Conference.

Like the Bloomsbury group [3] of English intellectuals who met regularly to advance the thought in their respective fields of expertise, it is my wish that the Gangnam Conference continues to serve as the equivalent meeting of the minds for plastic surgeons, a place where they can share their art and their intellect, contributing clinical advances that spread internationally like the hit song Gangnam Style.

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