

The 4th Asia Future Conference Report

The 4th Asia Future Conference (AFC#4) was held from Friday, August 24th to Tuesday, August 28th at the K-Hotel in Seoul, Korea, with 379 registered participants from 21 countries. The overall theme of the conference was “Peace, Prosperity, and Dynamic Future.” In the aftermath of the Korean War, Korea achieved rapid economic development called the “Miracle on the Han River, owing to the day-to-day efforts of the Korean people and large assistance from overseas. Korea therefore has a good understanding of the pains and agony of developing. In this context, this conference hopes to contribute to the “peace, prosperity, and dynamic future” of Asia. We held keynote speeches and a symposium, roundtable discussions with invited speakers, as well as a large number of research paper presentations promoting international and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Participants from Asia as well as all over the world were scheduled to arrive on August 24th (Friday), and on the same day typhoon Soulik, Korea’s first typhoon in six years, was due to hit Seoul. A number of flights from Southeast Asia were cancelled, but as the typhoon’s path shifted to the east most of the participants were able to safely arrive on this day.

The conference kicked off on the following day, August 25th (Saturday), with two roundtable sessions as well as ten parallel panel sessions. The summaries of the roundtable sessions are below.

■ Roundtable Discussion A: “Dialogue of National Histories; Japan, China and Korea” (Grant: Tokyo Club) / Languages: Japanese/Chinese/Korean with simultaneous interpretation

This roundtable sought to bring about historical reconciliation and rebuild mutual trust in East Asia by establishing a stable and cooperative relationship. Dialogue is the first step to achieving this, and this roundtable attempts to do by discussing Japan’s “Japanese history,” China’s “Chinese history,” and Korea’s “Korean history.” This was the third meeting out of five, and took as its theme “East Asian International Relations in the 17th Century – From War to Stability.” In the final session, as part of Waseda University’s project to establish “Reconciliation Studies,” we looked back at the dialogues about history that had been had so far.



■ Roundtable Discussion B: “Tolerance and Reconciliation – Religious Approaches to Conflict Resolution” / Language: English

Despite the fact that confrontation and dispute arise out of political and economic factors, such disputes are often misunderstood as religious confrontations owing to how religion is tied to the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the community and the people who are in conflict with each other. Through looking at conflict resolution in Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, our panelists (which included individuals who have been involved in peacebuilding efforts as well as scholars) discussed “peace and resolution” and the role of religion and religious leaders in these efforts.

Following lunch, the opening ceremony took place at 2pm. Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Conference Chairperson, opened the conference, followed by a welcome address by Professor Jin Kyu Lee, Director of the Center for Future Human Resources, the co-host of the event, and congratulatory remarks by Mr. Yasumasa Nagamine, Japan Ambassador to Korea. .

This was followed by the keynote speeches and symposium on “AI, the Human Soul and the Future.” Professor Ji Hoon Jeong (Kyung Hee Cyber University) gave a talk entitled “AI of the Present, and Future,” and Professor Ki Hyun Kim (Seoul National University) spoke on “AI and the Human Soul.” Following these two keynote speeches, a discussion moderated by co-organizer Korean National Social Science Resource Council President Professor Chan Wook Park was held, in which Professor Eui Young Kim (President of the Korean Political Science Association), Professor Kwang Young Shin (President of Korean Sociological Association), Professor Yong Woo Lee (upcoming President of the Korean Geographical Society), Professor Huck Ju Kwon (upcoming President of Korean Association of International Development and Cooperation) and Professor Seok Woo Kim (President of Korean Association of International Studies) participated, and in which the influence of AI in society was discussed.

The event finished off with a jazz performance by HONA, a band which uses traditional Korean instruments in their performances. The event was attended by over 400 participants.

The AFC#4 program is available from the following link:
<http://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2018/conference-program/>

The day rounded off with the welcome party, held on the roof terrace under a sky made pleasantly clear from the typhoon which had come and gone, and was accompanied by jazz music until



late in the evening.

The second day of the conference (August 26th (Saturday)) started at 9am, with 12 parallel sessions. Taking into account both the previous day as well as the morning's sessions, there were 7 group presentations, 6 student sessions and 43 general sessions, making for a total of 224 papers presented. The Asia Future Conference aspires towards an international and interdisciplinary approach, and each session was arranged using topics such as "Peace", "Happiness", and "Innovation," which the presenters selected during the submission process. Although different from academic conferences in specific fields, this approach helped foster many rich and diverse discussions.

Best Presentations were selected by two chairpersons in general and student sessions. The list of Best Presentations can be viewed at the link below:

http://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2018/files/List_of_AFC4_BEST_PRESENTATIONS.pdf

Best Papers were selected by the Academic Committee before the conference. Papers for which abstracts uploaded to the AFC online system by August 31st 2017 were eligible provided that a full paper was uploaded by February 28th 2018. 137 full papers were divided into 14 groups, and each paper was evaluated by 4 reviewers who were assigned to one group each. Reviewers were asked to evaluate each paper based on the following 5 criteria: (1) Is the theme of this paper in accordance with the AFC theme "Peace, Prosperity, and Dynamic Future"? (2) Is this paper perspicuous and persuasive? (3) Is this paper original and innovative? (4) Does this paper hold international aspects in some points? (5) Does this paper have an interdisciplinary approach? Each reviewer recommended two papers out of nine or ten in each group. After compiling the evaluations, 19 papers were selected as the Best Papers. The list of the Best Papers is available at the following link: http://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2018/files/List_of_AFC4_BEST_PAPERS.pdf

The closing party started at 6.30pm on the same day, and commenced with a piano recital. Following the conference report by AFC Chairperson Ms. Junko Imanishi, Professor Chan Wook Park, President of the Korean Social Science Research Council, gave a toast to commemorate the success of the conference. In the middle of the festivities, the awards ceremony was held, in which the Conference Chair, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, presented awards to the 19 recipients of the Best Paper as well as the 48 Best Presentation awardees. The party closed off with an announcement about the 5th Asia Future Conference which will be held in the Philippines. Following a video message by the Dean of the University of the Philippines Los Banos and



greetings from the organizing committee, participants from the Philippines came on stage to perform a fun-filled Filipino version of the Gangnam style dance, drawing participants into the festivities.

On Monday, August 27th, participants took part in organized study tours and excursions, which included a tour of traditional architecture in Seoul, downtown sightseeing, a study tour to Namhansanseong as well as a NANTA performance.

The 4th Asia Future Conference “Peace, Prosperity, and Dynamic Future” was hosted by the Atsumi International Foundation Sekiguchi Global Research Association (SGRA) and co-hosted by the Korean Social Science Research Council, Center for Human Resource Studies. It was supported by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Embassy of Japan in Korea, and Seoul Japan Club, and received a grant from the Tokyo Club. The AFC was held in collaboration with CISV Korea, Honjo International Scholarship Foundation, Doalltec Inc., Global BIM Inc., and was sponsored by POSCO E&C, HAEAHN Architecture, Inc., N.I. Steel Co. Ltd., Chugai Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd., Mitsubishi Corporation, Tokio Marine Holdings, Inc., Kokuyo co., Ltd., Kajima Road Co., Ltd., Taiko Trading Co., Ltd., Kajima Tatemono Sogo Kanri Co., Ltd., East Real Estate, Kajima Overseas Asia PTE Ltd., and Kajima Corporation.

The Organizing Committee and Academic Committee for this conference were organized by Atsumi fellows, who voluntarily took part in almost all aspects of the conference such as planning the forums, maintaining the homepages, selecting the best awards, and manning the reception. In particular, Atsumi fellows from Korea played a crucial role in translating, making visa arrangements, and coordinating the daily events.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the more than 400 participants who joined us, as well as to those who supported the holding of the conference and all of the volunteers who provided assistance in many ways and helped lead to the success of the 4th Asia Future Conference.

The Asia Future Conference is interdisciplinary at its core and encourages diverse approaches to global issues that are both mindful of the advancement of science, technology and business and also take into consideration issues of the environment, politics, education, the arts and culture. This conference is organized with likeminded institutions, in order to provide a venue for the exchange of knowledge, information, ideas, and culture, not only by SGRA members, but also by former foreign



students of Japan from various educational institutions throughout the world, by their own students and collaborators, and by anyone interested in Japan.

The 5th Asia Future Conference will be held in Manila, the Philippines, from January 9th (Thursday) to January 13th (Monday), 2020. We would like to ask for your continued support, cooperation and, most of all, your participation.

AFC#4 highlights

<http://www.aisf.or.jp/sgra/active/photo-gallery/2018/11344/>

AFC#4 photos shown during the closing party (movie)

https://youtu.be/vDAm7GD8I_g

AFC#5 flyer

<http://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2018/files/AFC5-Flyer2.pdf>

Junko Imanishi,
SGRA Chief Representative

