

AASP Conference 2011

Towards Social Harmony: A New Mission of Asian Social Psychology

The 9th Biennial Conference of Asian Association of Social Psychology took place at Yunnan Convention Resort, Kunming, China, from July 28 to 31, 2011. The conference focused on "Towards Social Harmony: A New Mission of Asian Social Psychology", gave priority to a healthy dialogue between Asian cultural traditions and globalization, and emphasized the dynamics of peaceful interaction among different cultures, society and social groups.



The Conference's Opening Ceremony

The conference attracted over 1,000 submissions. A total number of 827 delegates from 24 Asian countries/regions and beyond attended; amongst them, there were 490 students participants. The largest delegation came from Mainland China with 398, this was followed by 117 from Indonesia, 69 from Japan, and 52 from South Korea. It was the AASP's largest ever biennial conference, and the largest conference of social psychology ever held in China, signifying the significant expansion of AASP and the potential growth of social psychology in Asia.

Attendees had more than 130 academic sessions of lively discussion and debate. There were 5 keynote speeches: "Unpackaging the elusive situation for social

psychology: AASP's especial task” by Michael Harris Bond (Hong Kong SAR, China), “Applying dynamic constructivist model: Culture, brain, and social harmony” by Ying-yi Hong(Singapore), “Social groups as a basis for explanations: How ordinary perceivers make sense of other people's behavior” by Minoru Karasawa (Japan), “Culture and happiness: What we know & what needs to be known more” by Eunkook M. Suh(South Korea), “An Empirical study of English learning attitude and motivation of ethnic minority university undergraduates from Yunnan Province, China” by Yichuan Yuan (China).

Kwok Leung, James H. Liu, Fanny Cheung and Ronald Fischer, in cooperation with Wiley-Blackwell, presented the publishing seminar "From constructing a paper to constructing a research program” on 29 July 2011. The panel provided a wealth of practical advice on getting research published. In addition to these, there were also 12 invited speeches, 1 roundtable discussion, a series of symposiums, regular oral sessions and poster sessions. Scholars in Asia and around the world were brought together to present their research, discuss the contributions of Asian social psychology to global knowledge, and strengthen academic and personal networks for future collaboration. The intellectual climate of the conference got along with the elegance, excitement and diversity of the Yunnan’s ethnic cultures. The conference also attracted such world leading publishers as Wiley-Blackwell, Springer and McGraw-Hill for exhibition.



Volunteers on the conference

The AASP Annual General Meeting held on 31 July 2011 saw the election of a new executive. Jianxin Zhang took up his role as the AASP President, with Uichol Kim

becoming the Past President, and James Liu was elected as the President Elect. Jiro Takai was elected as Secretary-General, and Yukiko Muramoto was elected as Treasurer. Also at the AGM, on behalf of the organizers of the 2013 AASP Conference, Faturachman of University of Gadjadara made a presentation and invitation to the 10th AASP Conference to be held in Jogjakarta, Indonesia (a link to this can be found online at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/cacr/aasp-site/aasp/>)

One of the most moving moments of the conference was the announcement of the winners of various AASP awards on the Closing Ceremony. Ching Wan (Singapore) and Keiko Ishii (Japan) won the Michael Harris Bond Award. Saurabh Maheshwari (India) won the K S Yang Travel Award. Fraide Ganotice (Philippines) and Tuhina Mukherjee (India) won the Park Jung-heun and Jung Tae-gon Young Scholar Awards. The winners of the Misumi Award were “Folk theory of social change” (2009) by Yoshihisa Kashima, Paul Bain, Nick Haslam, Kim Peters, Simon Laham, Jennifer Whelan, Brock Bastian, Stephen Loughnan, Leah Kaufmann and Julian Fernando, and “Essentialist theory of ‘hybrids’: From animal kinds to ethnic categories and race”(2010) by Wolfgang Wagner, Nicole Kronberger, Motohiko Nagata, Ragini Sen, Peter Holtz and Fátima Flores Palacios.

Prior to the conference the 3rd Asian Summer School was held at the Yunnan Normal University, Kunming, China during 24 – 28 July, 2011. The Summer School had a galaxy of Professors: Ramadhar Singh, Noraini Noor, Sik Hung Ng, Ying Yi Hong and Chi-Yue Chiu. 53 students (47 from Mainland China, 2 from the Philippines, 1 from Australia, 1 from Hong Kong SAR China, 1 from Japan and 1 from Indonesia) attended the school. Benefitting from the professors’ advices, the students broadened their academic visions beyond the confines of their own nationalities, and made admirable progress in building their research capabilities. Furthermore, the Summer School enhanced the mutual understanding, inclusiveness, friendship, and cooperation amongst next generation of Asian social psychologists.

Needless to say, the AASP 2011 conference was a successfully grand academic gathering for social psychologists and students in Asia and beyond. Meanwhile, we are all looking forward to another successful AASP conference to be held at Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 20-23 August, 2013.

Li Liu

School of Psychology, Beijing Normal University, China