

ASIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE JAPAN

1997 INAUGURAL MEETING

The inaugural meeting of the Asian Studies Conference Japan was held in October 1997 at Sophia University, Ichigaya Campus. The meeting was opened by Professor Linda Grove, Faculty of Comparative Culture, Sophia University. Below are panel abstracts and the titles of papers presented at the conference. A short business meeting followed the academic presentations.

PANEL ABSTRACTS

I. Cultures of Capitalist Institutions in Contemporary Asian Economies For well over a decade capitalist economies in Asia have been the fastest growing in the global system. Standard cultural accounts attribute their operation to a priori assumptions concerning the cultural heritage of Asian societies such as Confucianism and Asian values that are said to ensure discipline and cooperation. The papers on this panel eschew the Orientalist assumption inherent in such accounts. Instead they draw on ethnographic fieldwork to examine how such capitalist institutions as legitimacy, labor, and entrepreneurship are (re)produced through historically contingent interactions of states, social practices, and discourses in specific economies.

Cultures of Capitalist Institutions in Contemporary Asian Economies

- The State and Legitimation of Commerce in Vietnam, Shaun Malarney, International Christian University
- Discursive Shifts and the Contradictions of Capitalist Practice: Meritocracy and Individualism in Japanese High Schools, David Slater, Sophia University
- From Pre-Communist Bourgeoisie to Post-Communist Entrepreneurship: The Social Reproduction of Chinese Business Families, David Wank, Sophia University

Discussant, Maruyama Makoto, Tokyo University

II. States and Empires: Reconstructions of Asian History in the Twentieth Century This panel seeks to locate historiography in history. It looks at the ways in which the enterprises of nation-building and empire-building have influenced the writing of history in twentieth-century Asia. Focusing on the experience of the colonizers, the colonized, and those who experienced colonialism only indirectly, the papers suggest ways in which national histories and traditions have been constructed and re-constructed to serve contemporary needs and interests. The

panel highlights these shifting constructions of history and explores the political implications of current attempts to write post-Orientalist histories of Asia.

Nations and Empires: Reconstructions of Asian History in the Twentieth Century

- Time, Timelessness, and Space in Asian National Histories, Prasenjit Duara, University of Chicago
- The King' Manpower: Politics and the Construction of History in Early 20th Century Siam, Koizumi Junko, Tokyo

University of Foreign Studies

- The Politics of Memory: Plastic Confucianism and the Reinvention of Patriarchy in Singapore, John Clammer, Sophia University

Discussant, Dru Gladney, University of Hawaii

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