First Congress: Asian Association of World Historians (AAWH)

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Bericht von: Patrick Manning, University of Pittsburgh

At the opening General Assembly, over 70 members adopted the statutes of the organization and elected officers, after reports from the international committee that founded the organization in Tianjin in May 2008. By all accounts the congress was a rousing success: more than 150 registrants from 11 countries attended 14 sessions including over 100 individual presentations.

Outstanding presentations from the opening plenary included Yoichi Kibata (Seijo University) on world history from a Japanese Perspective and Anthony Reid (National University of Singapore) on the historian's contemporary responsibility.

Among the many individual presentations at the conference, Bin Yang explored the long-term history of cowrie shells as currency in Eastern Eurasia, Thi Van Chi Dang presented on women's newspapers in colonial Vietnam, Lucio Silva on Europeans and slavery in sixteenth-century Asia, Momoka Maki analyzed Ethiopia in World War II, Giorgio Riello spoke on cotton textiles as a global commodity, and Alejandra Irigoin presented on American intermediation in China's silver trade. In other panels, Shinobu Ikeda led a session on representing women and the memory of Japanese imperial rule; Jie-hyun Lim organized a wide –ranging panel on science, technology, and the nation; and three high school teachers presented on the Meiji Restoration in world history.

At the concluding plenary session on teaching, outstanding presentations included that by Yang Biao (East China Normal University) on teaching a new world history curriculum in Shanghai; and Shiro Momoki on the Osaka University collaboration of teachers and professors for teaching world history.

Officers elected were Shingo Minamizuka (Hosei University), president; and board members Ahmed Abushouk (International Islamic University, Malaysia), Adapa Satyarayana (Osmania University), Ji-Hyung Cho (Ewha Woman's University), Patrick Manning (University of Pittsburgh), Anthony Reid (now moving to Australian National University), and Zhang Weiwei (Nankai University). Shigeru Akita (Oska University) was reappointed as executive secretary by the board.

The Japan-based organizing committee and conference staff, including faculty, postdocs, and graduate students, gained appreciation from all for the smoothness of Congress procedures. The next Congress will be in 2012 at Ewha Women's University, Seoul. Ji-Hyung Cho will become executive secretary and director of the next congress.

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