

Summary of the NASSS 2009

KAWASHIMA Masaki

NANZAN UNIVERSITY

The events of the Seminar were again held at Nanzan University and the Nanzan Seminar House from July 25th to 28th, 2009. We are quite sure that the three seminars so far have greatly enhanced the future relationship between the United States and Japan. After finishing all five seminars in two years time, we are also sure that not only our bilateral relationship, but also the global relationship of intercultural understandings will be definitely promoted through exchanging ideas among younger generations of “scholars” who participated in the graduate student seminars.

The annual theme of NASSS 2009 was “Americanism and Social Justice.” The four-day official programs were as follows: the two-day Professional Conference consisting of the Plenary Session on Saturday, July 25th and three-separated Sectional Discussions on Sunday, July 26th. The number of total participants in this part of NASSS was nearly 250.

The three Keynote Speakers were as follows: Dr. Marie Gottschalk, Professor of Political Science Department, University of Pennsylvania for the Politics and International Relations section; Dr. Eric L. Muller, Dan K. Moore Distinguished Professor in Jurisprudence and Ethics and Associate Dean for Faculty Development, the University of North Carolina School of Law at Chapel Hill for the History and Society section; and Dr. Werner Sollors, Henry B. and Anne M. Cabot Professor of English Literature and Professor of African and African American Studies, Harvard University for the Literature and Culture section.

After their presentations in the Plenary Session on July 25th which was presided by Professor Kihira Eisaku, Kyoto University, three Japanese distinguished scholars, Professor Furuya Jun, the University of Tokyo, Professor Ara Konomi, Ritsumeikan University, and Professor Sakai Keiko, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies took the role of commentators for the three keynote speeches. Professor Kihira contributed much to the smooth progress of the session and the three commentators gave appropriate remarks to each speaker that induced animated questions and answers from the floor. At the same time, the three keynote speakers joined in this lively discussion.

It is noteworthy to mention that nearly 250 audience members of the first-day Plenary Session is more than the number of participants of the past two NASSS sessions open to the public. This included not only pre-registered prominent researchers from all over Japan and from abroad, but also thanks to *Chunichi*

Shinbun's (*Chunichi* Newspaper) article which presented the NASSS program, many local enthusiastic people showed up to this session. We think that participation of local people will definitely contribute much to deepening their understanding on the Japan-U.S. relationship, which is one of the main objectives of NASSS.

The three-separated Section Conferences were held on the following day, July 26th. We invited three distinguished foreign scholars from Pacific-Asian countries as discussants for each of the three section conferences: from Korea, Dr. Kim Sung Ho, Yonsei University for the Politics and International section; from Pakistan, Dr. Rukhsana Qamber, Quaid-i-Azam University for the History and Society section; and from China, Dr. Qian Mansu, Institute of Foreign Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for the Literature and Culture section. The presenters, commentators, and MC's are as follows;

Morning Session

Politics and International Relations

Presenter: Yamagishi Takakazu, Nanzan University

Commentator: Sugita Yoneyuki, Osaka University

MC: John Creighton Campbell, University of Michigan

History and Society

Presenter: Kita Miyuki, the University of Kitakyushu

Commentator: Kurosaki Makoto, Kanda University of International Studies

MC: Rukhsana Qamber, Quaid-i-Azam University

Literature and Culture

Presenter: Okuda Akiyo, Keio University

Commentator: Qian Mansu, Institute of Foreign Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

MC: Mori Aoi, Hiroshima Jogakuin University

Afternoon Session

Politics and International Relations

Presenter: Honda Kazuhisa, Rikkyo University

Commentator: Morikawa Terukazu, Meijo University

MC: Kim Sung Ho, Yonsei University

History and Society

Presenter: Tanaka Kei, Tokyo Keizai University

Commentator: Suga Miya, Tokyo Gakugei University

MC: Hirobe Izumi, Meiji University

Literature and Culture

Presenter: Iida Kiyoshi, Miyagi National College of Technology

Commentator: Honjo Seiji, Hokkai Gakuen University

MC: Yamamoto Shin, Yokkaichi University

From the evening of Sunday, July 26th to the evening of Tuesday, July 28th,

the International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS) was held with the participation of 30 graduate students: half of them were Japanese students from distinguished universities in Japan, 12 from the United States, and one from China, Korea and Pakistan respectively. The two-day schedule in detail was as follows:

July 26 Evening: Orientation: lecture on the background and main targets of the NASSS, and the kick-off dinner party.

July 27 Morning: Plenary Session: Discussions first on “How to succeed in academic life”, and then on the assignments given by the three Keynote Speakers in advance.

Afternoon: Excursion to downtown Nagoya (Osu-kannon Temple), Inuyama Castle and Joan Tea House.

July 28 Morning and Afternoon: Three-separated Section Conferences on the review of current research projects of the participants.

Evening: Farewell Party and Final Free Discussion Time.

July 29 Morning: Departure

We would like to point out the fact that this year for the first time we adopted an open application system for selecting IGSS participants and as a result received more applications than the capacity. Thanks to this system, 30 selected graduate students, respectively 15 from Japan and 15 from abroad, showed excellent performance throughout IGSS compared to the past two years. Among other things, it is noteworthy that Japanese graduate students did very well. They did overcome the communicative disadvantage with their knowledge and extraordinary enthusiasm to discuss their projects with other students and professional researchers from the U.S. as well as other Pacific-rim countries.

We think that although we had to overcome hardships this year, too, our hard work to make this event happen is surely rewarded by the satisfactory remarks given by many of the participants, especially the joyful faces shown by the graduate students.

We cordially ask for your continuing support for the remaining two years of our five-year NASSS project.