

## Conference Report 1

### *The 66th Annual Congress of The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion in Tokyo*

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The annual congress of the Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion was held, with more than 2500 participants, on June 10th-11th at University of Tokyo, where a lush green environment offers a little oasis in the middle of busy Tokyo. The theme of this congress was “Japanese acupuncture, proud to present to the world, — a progress to establish ‘Tokyo declaration’”. Tokyo declaration was once written in 2011 to specify the advantages of Japanese acupuncture at the annual congress, which was mostly cut down due to the Great East Japan Earthquake. This time, with the scientific evidences, this congress was aimed to verify and reaffirm the characteristics of Japanese acupuncture.



The opening ceremony was held in Yasuda auditorium, a historically famous building in the university. In the opening remarks, the chair of the committee, Mr. Soji Toriyabe described that this congress was meant for investing the efficacy of acupuncture with “scientific perspective”, which turned out to exceed our expectations.



### **The congress president’s speech**

2-day congress started with the speech by Mr. Takayosi Ogawa, the adviser of the Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion, following the opening ceremony, which seized the audience’s avid attention with expectations. The topic of the speech was Oriental medicine versus Western medicine — Which medicine is more of a root treatment? —. Mr. Ogawa started with questioning regarded the realities and problems of the current medical system in Japan, where excellence of western medical doctors with high technologies proliferated though weighing now heavily on Japanese finance and aging society, and distressing patients with side effects. He highlighted the efficacy of oriental medicine discussing its holistic consideration, relative inexpensiveness, and safety to support that oriental medicine is more of a root treatment in that sense, and guided the audience to expect the main discussion about the future of acupuncture held in the following day.

### **Keynote speech**

Keynote speech was presented by Tadashi Hisamitsu, the chair of Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion. He focused on physiological mechanisms of acupuncture treatment and its latest progression. He specifically presented his marked studies that prove clinical conditions on

traditional medicine. One of his basic studies found that acupuncture promotes blood flow in the cerebral cortex locally by activating the brain cholinergic neurons, decreased function of which can be due to aging. His scientific approaches to support acupuncture treatment with physiological mechanism will surely be a key to further studies for many acupuncturists in Japan.

### **Symposium**

Symposium offered 4 different topics;

1. Current states and tasks for acupuncture treatment on refractory nervous system diseases
2. Cancer treatment and acupuncture —current state and development on acupuncture treatment for cancer patients, what we can do for cancer patients and their family
3. Do you utilize palpation in the practice? — Scientific views of palpation, one of the noted characteristics of Japanese acupuncture
4. How we can develop our clinical studies regarding acupuncture —as a real medicine, and to study acupuncture scientifically

The symposiasts raised some issues in each session and discussed the importance of acupuncture as an intervention in the medical field. One of the symposiasts mentioned that MDs specialized in nervous system have well understandings on acupuncture that the acupuncturists are welcomed in the hospital settings. Although, the fact that acupuncture is used for treating refractory nervous system is not yet widely known, thus, the publicity is needed. In the discussion, the symposiasts emphasized the needs for predefined scores to create guidelines of acupuncture intervention, compilation of case studies and high quality RCTs to verify the efficacy of acupuncture. Symposium 4 was presented to specifically give lectures in relation to those needs, case study compilation, high quality RCTs and meta-analysis.

On top of the current states and issues, the importance of palpation, one of the noted characteristics of Japanese acupuncture, was highlighted in the symposium 3.

There is an objective data on scientific effects of palpation that induces secretion of hormones in the brain. Before all, we should not disregard the fact that hands-on treatment creates satisfactions on patients that is clinically significant and beyond science.

### **Seminar**

Seminar was one of the most popular sessions in this congress, attracted large crowds of people. The theme of the seminar was a current state of acupuncture treatment for pregnant women, where discussed acupuncture treatment for pregnant women with minor complaints, from morning sickness to skin conditions, and the roles and possibilities on acupuncture treatment for each trimester. Many male acupuncturists showed their much interests in the topic and engaged in active discussions.

### **Special lectures**

Special lectures were the latest topics given by specialists from each area of the study.

1. Physical symptoms on neurological disease by Prof. Nobuhito Saito, Director of University of Tokyo Hospital.
2. Individual variation and variation of gene expression by Asso.Prof. Hironao Numabe from Tokyo Medical University Hospital
3. Neurologic regenerative medicine on iPS cell technology and application of the study by Prof. Hideyuki Okano.

After the talks, Prof. Furukawa, a member of House of Councilors, Mr. Ogawa, Prof. Kawakita from Meiji University of Integrative Medicine, and Mrs. Kitagawa from Kyorindo clinic joined the main discussion, presented with the theme of “Incoming of health care, future of acupuncture”. Acupuncturists’

current concern against the latest development of western medicine and technologies was raised that those medicine becomes a fear to the traditional medicines. In the discussion, the panelists all agreed that the importance of acupuncture complementing the western medicine, working with Kampo medicine, supporting patients' self-decision, and further involving to nursing care, to become a chosen medicine. In order to accomplish those goals, there is an urgent need for acupuncture to be supported scientifically.

### **Oral presentations and poster presentations**

The theme of the presentations was diverse, many case reports related to nervous system, cancer patients and nursing care, and fertility treatment and pregnancy.

Several of them were studies from Korea, and other international topics were also presented. Each venue was packed with full of people.

Poster presentations were also diverse with interesting topics. Ones that caught the eye were studies trying to verify traditional/classical theories scientifically.

There are many other special lectures and presentations offered in a two-day congress with packed schedules, though hopping between each venue was unexpectedly time consuming.

A rapid advance in medical technologies such as iPS technology or genetic treatment reaches almost to the "God's field", which may become a threat to the traditional medicines. That is what Mrs. Kitagawa shared her thoughts to the audience.

Prof. Okano reassured the audience saying the development of high-technologies must not exclude the others but just to support people's lives. Also, in the discussion, there was an opinion that if acupuncture is scientifically proved, data can be optimized for AI technology. As such, bright future would come to oriental medicine field.

First and foremost, there is an urgent need for acupuncture to establish the scientific evidences, starting with case gathering, then studying high quality RCTs. This congress clearly highlighted the strong needs for those requirements, in that sense, this congress would be a progress to the Tokyo declaration.