

Tallinn 2011 Conference Report

The XIV International Conference of the EAJS took place in Tallinn University on 24-27 August, 2011, and was hitherto the biggest in the history of our organisation, welcoming more than 700 participants and accompanying persons from everywhere in Europe and all over the world. The conference took place in the centrally located campus of the Tallinn University, the hub of Japanese Studies in Estonia and the only university in the Baltics to offer our discipline on BA, MA and PhD levels.

After the opening ceremony and the welcoming addresses by the Rector of Tallinn University, professor Tiit Land, and HE Mr Hoshi Hideaki, Ambassador of Japan, the participants had the pleasure of listening to the keynote lecture by Prof Ueno Chizuko on the subject of social change in Japan in conjunction with the triple disasters that befell Japan on that same year.

The weather was favourable to us during the welcoming reception in and around the notable recent building of the Art Museum of Estonia (KuMu), a place to which many of the conference participants later returned to enjoy the exhibitions. Since Tallinn was the European Capital of Culture during that year, the whole city offered conference participants quite a lot of cultural events in addition to its usual medieval charm combined with all the modern comforts, starting with free internet almost everywhere.

The work of the conference was divided, as usual, between 11 sections and 3 additional subsections, with leading Japanese scholars as keynote speakers in each field. Members of the organising committee were pleased to note the almost completely positive feedback on their work and indeed did their best to solve all the small problems that were reported to them as quickly and efficiently as possible.

On the last day of the conference, the general assembly of members adopted several important changes to the EAJS constitution, following a heated debate, and elected two new honorary

members of the association, Prof Jacqueline Pigeot and Prof Augustin Berque, both from France. It was also decided to establish two new subsections for the next conference, namely philosophy and media studies.

In conjunction with the conference, a number of independently organised events were held, such as the roundtable organised by the Japan Foundation on the future of Japanese Studies in Europe, and the symposium of the International Research Centre for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken). An EAJS PhD workshop also took place just before the conference.

Rein Raud
EAJS President