

**11th International Conference
of the European Association for Japanese Studies**

Vienna, August 31- September 03, 2005

Conference Report

Introduction

It would be usual to begin a report on an EAJS conference by referring to the opening ceremony, but this 11th conference was unusual in being preceded by several events connected with it. The chronological account below will therefore begin with Monday, 29 August. This conference was the largest EAJS conference so far, attracting some seven hundred participants. It was blessed by good weather throughout, which meant that the area outside the main conference building, generously provided with benches, became a forum where groups of conference participants could be seen at all times deep in conversation. The blue EAJS flag with its specially designed conference logo fluttered proudly above us and student assistants in blue T-shirts efficiently provided everything a conference-goer might need, including a massive supply of water donated by one of our sponsors. The conference benefited greatly from the generosity of a number of sponsors. The main conference sponsor was the Japan Foundation, and the Graduate Workshop and concert were sponsored by the Toshiba International Foundation.

Monday, 29 August, saw the start of the EAJS Graduate Workshop, organised by Harald Fuess. Attended by sixteen graduates, who were all advised individually by senior scholars, the workshop was a great success. There is a report on the Workshop later in this Bulletin.

During the morning of Wednesday, 31 August, there were two special pre-conference presentations, by Professors Sasaki Mizue and Emmerich Simoncsics respectively, and a workshop on research facilities at Nichibunken

given by some members of its staff, headed by Professor Shirahata Yôzaburô. Conference registration began at 9.00am on that morning and proceeded smoothly.

The Opening Ceremony for this 11th EAJS Conference took place in the Hörsaalzentrum from 2.30pm. Sepp Linhart, the Conference Organiser, opened the proceedings by welcoming everyone to Vienna. He reminded everyone of the long history of Japanese studies at the University of Vienna and in particular the University's relationship with EAJS in its very early days. The President of the University of Vienna, Professor Georg Winkler, then spoke of the great antiquity of the university. He spoke also of the efforts of the Association of European Universities (of which he was President) to encourage the EU to increase the proportion of its GDP devoted to higher education. The Japanese Ambassador to Austria, Mr Umezu Itaru, in his words of greeting commented on the spread of Japanese popular culture and language teaching in Europe. Mr Komatsu Jun'etsu of the Japan Foundation emphasised the desire of the Foundation to gain an accurate and detailed view of the state of Japanese studies throughout Europe. He hoped all EAJS members would cooperate in providing information through surveys. Brian Powell, President of EAJS, referred to some of the cultural links between Japan and Austria and then introduced the keynote speaker Professor Yokoyama Toshio, Vice-President of Kyoto University.

Professor Yokoyama had entitled his lecture: 'Even a Sardine's Head ... : Stable but not stagnant pre-industrial Japan.' Explaining the humour in this old Japanese proverb, Professor Yokoyama described the quality of civility that pervaded pre-industrial Japanese society, mediated by the Setsuyôshû and Ozatsusho, and concluded by introducing Nakai Hiroshi, one of its last exemplars.

After Sepp Linhart had thanked Professor Yokoyama and closed the proceedings the conference immediately got down to work with the opening parallel sessions. The day was completed by a welcome reception in the magnificent Kleiner Festsaal in the University main building.

The next two days and part of Saturday morning were devoted to the parallel sessions of the eight subject sections of the conference. Well over 360 papers were read at this conference and all convenors later reported positively on the activities of their sections (see section reports below). A special presentation, the fourth of the conference, on caricatures of *ukiyo-e* was given on Saturday morning by Noriko Brandl, Nora Gesellmann and Sepp Linhart.

To supplement this intensive academic programme several cultural events took place during the conference. The University's Grosser Festsaal was the venue for a lively concert of Western popular songs about Japan performed by students from the classical operetta class at the Konservatorium Wien under the direction of Wolfgang Dosch and accompanied by Fujiwara Harumichi. There was a guided tour of the Siebold Collection in the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) and Tatsumura Kôhō gave a presentation on his textile art. Throughout the conference representations of *sumô* in vivid colour painted by Mischa Reska urged us on to greater efforts.

The Conference ended with the General Meeting and a brief Closing Ceremony. The minutes of the General Meeting can be found elsewhere in this Bulletin. Before the meeting started we remembered five stalwarts of EAJS who had passed away since the last conference: Fosco Maraini, Jan van Bremen, Wieslav Kotanski, John Crump and Keiko Kockum.

The Closing Ceremony began with the President thanking Sepp Linhart and all his team for organising a magnificent conference. The long standing ovation that ensued was richly deserved. The new President, Viktoria Eschbach-Szabo, noted a certain gender shift in the upper echelons of EAJS and reiterated the importance of the Association in the contemporary world. The organiser of the 12th EAJS Conference, Maria Chiara Migliore, said she would be waiting for everyone at Lecce, the beautiful medieval city where the conference would be held. Sepp Linhart invited all present to a post-conference reception and closed the proceedings.

October 2005

Brian Powell

Sectional reports:

1. [Urban and Environmental Studies](#)
2. [Linguistics and Language Teaching](#) (not available)
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Reports of the Section Convenors

Section 1: Urban and Environmental Studies

Convenors: Dr. Thomas Feldhoff, Dr. Natacha Aveline

Japan's Aging Society and its problems and implications for future urban development

The 11th International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS) took place August 31 to September 3, 2005 at the University of Vienna (Austria). The organizers were the European Association for Japanese Studies and the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna. The Urban and Environmental Studies Section, in particular, dealt with "Japan's Aging Society and its problems and implications for future urban development".

The traditional Japanese "urban development model" is currently undergoing a dramatic change. Large cities have been so far continuously expanding under the pressure of a strong inflow of migrants from the countryside and soaring land prices. They are now experiencing an adverse move, with bad demographic prospects and sluggish land markets. According to official forecasts, elderly aged over 65, who accounted for 8 % of the population in the 1970s, will reach the proportion of 25 % in 2020. This rapid aging of society is expected to be more pronounced in urban areas, as rural zones have already faced a dramatic demographic decline over the past decades.

In Tokyo, the fall in land prices, combined with the redevelopment of large parcels formerly occupied by railway facilities in Eastern areas, is re-orienting the population flow from the suburbs to the center since the mid-1990s. Tokyo is thus enjoying again an inflow of migrants, after having experienced a continuous demographic outflow to the benefit of its suburbs over a period of about 35 years. However, this trend is likely to change by 2010, as a population outflow of 20 % is being forecasted for the period 2010 to 2050.

This rapidly aging of society, in a context of decreasing land values, has strong implications in terms of urban development and urban policy. Scholars of

related disciplines such as architecture, economics, geography, politics, sociology and urban studies participated in nine sessions, and 20 presentations were grouped according to related topics such as

- Comparative Perspectives and Changing Planning Paradigms
- Citizen Participation and Civic Engagement
- Shrinking Cities
- Urban Transportation

The organizers are very grateful that experts from many countries including Japan, France, Great Britain, the United States and Germany were our speakers and that Professor Oe Moriyuki from Keiô University had kindly accepted to be our keynote speaker. He is an outstanding expert on population and urban studies and gave a very stimulating presentation on the main topic of our section.

As it was scientifically successful and fruitful work, a socially enjoyable conference and a very pleasant stay in Vienna, we look very much forward to our next gathering in 2008.

For further information, please contact the section convenors: Dr. Natacha Aveline <natacha.aveline@ens-lyon.fr> and Dr. Thomas Feldhoff <thomas.feldhoff@uni-due.de>.

Natacha Aveline

Thomas Feldhoff

Section 2: Linguistics and Language Teaching

Convenors: Prof. Romuald Huszcza, Prof. André Włodarczyk

No report available.

Section 3: Literature

– *Modern Literature* –

Convenors: Prof. Reiko Abe-Auestad, Prof. Anne Bayard-Sakai

As it was in Warsaw for the 2003 Conference, the Literature section in Vienna was split in two. That allowed us to have more than thirty presentations focused on modern literature covering a broad range of subjects, running from Meiji understanding of literary genres to the more recent works of *zainichi* italics female writers.

The section included three panels, all of them dealing with the way literature was involved in the outcome of imperialism during the pre-war and the WWII period. Such a phenomenon shows clearly that the EAJIS Conference is a precise mirror of what is going on in the field of Japanese Literature studies all over the world; if this trend could be reinforced in the coming conferences, it would become one of the major topics, both from a methodological point of view and from the perspective of the number of scholars working in that field. In that sense, it may be quite significant that there were fewer papers based on a gender approach than in former Conferences – though we should wait for the next venue to see if this evolution is to be confirmed.

The works-in-progress presented within the individual papers were quite diverse. As the topics came closer to present times, the preeminence of the novel appeared more obviously. If we consider that the Conference papers serve as a barometer of what is currently studied, we may say that in the next Conferences, new insights on contemporary poetry, for instance, or theatre would be welcome, along with the continuation of inquiries on the “presentness” of the novel – if such a distinction based on literary genres is still pertinent.

On the whole, most of the presentations were very pleasant to listen to. Though we do not have space to comment on individual papers here, let’s say that we have had some brilliant papers, revealing the personal involvement of scholars in their subject. And it should also be mentioned that very young scholars

showed up this year and some with remarkably good papers, which is definitely heartwarming when literature and literary studies are said to be stalling.

(Reiko Abe Auestad was unable to attend the conference because of a family tragedy and Anne Bayard-Sakai alone is responsible for the report).

Anne Bayard-Sakai

– Pre-Modern Literature –

Convenor: Prof. Maria Chiara Migliore

The Pre-modern Literature section has seen the participation of thirty-eight speakers from Europe, Japan, United States and China, making the section very dense and stimulating questions and discussion. The papers treated a wide range of subjects from the Nara to the Edo period, the *Genji monogatari* and its influence in later epochs still being a preferred theme by Japanese as well as Western scholars. As remarked also in the Modern Literature section, we had no papers dealing with gender studies, but some contributions on Japanese literature in Chinese witnessed the growing interest for Chinese and Japanese comparative studies.

Maria Chiara Migliore

Section 4: Visual and Performing Arts

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Stanca Scholz-Cionca, Dr. Sonja Servomaa

Crossing Borders in Visual and Performing Arts

We had the pleasure to welcome in our section two keynote speakers: Torigoe Bunzô, prof. emer. from Waseda University and chairman of Japan's Bunraku Society, talked in front of about 60 hearers about the present situation of the Bunraku art, which was recently designated by the UNESCO as intangible world cultural heritage. This speech allowed unusual insights into the problems involved in the transmission and regeneration of a classical Japanese stage art.

A second keynote talk was given by Hirata Oriza, the well known dramatist, stage director, and prominent media figure, who recommended himself as an excellent ambassador of his country in international exchange. Moreover, Oriza gave a second talk on the last day of the conference, providing an original lecture on recent developments within the Japanese theatre.

The overall subject – border crossing between genres, cultures, disciplines – inspired several outstanding papers that advanced new scholarly approaches of the topics involved. The two parallel subsections hosted 54 papers attended by varying numbers of hearers (fluctuating between 15 and 60).

The section included six panels pertaining to aspects of modernization and syncretism as border crossing phenomena: there were two panels on the modernization of Nô, one on border crossing between Kabuki and the visual arts; one panel on popular culture (present and past); one on religious syncretism and the arts, and, last but not least, one on international stagings of contemporary Japanese drama.

One remarkable feature of both the panels and the individual papers was the vanishing of traditional divides between past and present, art and society, high and popular culture, the visual and the performing arts. Transdisciplinary approaches brought to the fore new research methods and generated lively discussion, which often continued during breaks and after the sessions.

Many papers were accompanied with illustrations needing modern technical

equipment. This was excellently provided by the organizers. The only problem seemed to be the constraint of time, as many presenters wanted to speak longer than the time allotted to them, leaving thus too little time for discussion.

Stanca Scholz-Cionca

Sonja Servomaa

Section 5: Anthropology and Sociology

Convenors: Dr. Brigitte Steger, Dr. Ingrid Getreuer-Kargl

Section 5, organized by the Japan Anthropology Workshop (JAWS), met for two very intensive days about the topic "Time & Memory"; sixty years after the end of World War II, an anthropological approach to these questions proved to be fruitful. Academic presentations were organized in whole-day panels – "Making, Consuming & Recording Memory" (panel organizer/chair: Rupert Cox) and "The Nation in Uniform (panel organizer/chair: Elise Edwards)" – as well as 90 minute sessions on: Outfit and Deportment; Time & Memory of Migrants and Minorities; Social and Civil Movements; Work-styles and Life-styles; Communication and Identity; Time in Everyday Life; Exhibiting Japan; In and Out of Sleep Mode; Anthropological Approaches to Literature. These brought together 45 speakers and 9 session chairs as well as audiences of between 20 to 80 persons per session. They provoked interesting discussions, and several publications based on the sessions are planned. Some of the sessions became the starting points of further research cooperations.

Regardless of the ongoing contention with the EAJS board on the EAJS-JAWS joint-membership question, we adhere to the aims of the EAJS and tried to facilitate both a deepening of discussion within the disciplines and trans-disciplinary dialogue. The convenors put special emphasis on networking with other associations and sections. We invited the VSJF (Vereinigung sozialwissenschaftlicher Japanforschung, e.V.) to hold a half-day workshop on "Developing Intercultural Teaching Strategies" in different settings; this was organized by Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg with four speakers and about 20 participants. The section topic of memory coincided with the topic of the history section, for whose members we were happy to provide room and realized the closeness of the approaches in some of the sessions.

Another focus of our endeavours was the support and integration of early stage scholars. Before the conference, we brought together experienced scholars with graduate students. The elders acted as mentors, giving feedback on the papers beforehand and during the conference. A new format was the "Career

Development Forum”, a round-table discussion moderated by Ingrid Getreuer-Kargl, during which some 25 scholars in different stages of their career shared formal and informal knowledge of how job and scholarship selection committees work, revealing cultural differences and similarities throughout the world of Japanese Studies. Networking and informal talks were further facilitated by a JAWS lunch, by the disciplined scheduling of breaks, the convenient location and wonderful weather. We were happy to convene a very lively and successful meeting. A more detailed report will be published in the upcoming JAWS newsletter.

Brigitte Steger

Section 6: Economics, Economic and Social History

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Martin Hemmert, Prof. Dennis Tachiki

Beyond Developmental Capitalism: Political, Institutional and Technical Changes in Japan

The theme for the Economics and Economic History section of the EAJS conference was “Beyond Developmental Capitalism: Policy, Institutional and Technical Changes in Japan”. Professor Odagiri Hiroyuki gave the opening section keynote speech on the topic of “Harnessing the Potential of Science and Technology: The Changing Innovation System of Japan.” His remarks became the touchstone for the subsequent 14 sessions. Our section programme included three panels and approximately 35 individual paper presentations, which addressed the overall theme at various levels of analysis.

One group of contributions discussed the political, institutional and technical change in Japan broadly through historical studies, macro-economic models, or qualitative discussions of the changes in the Japanese society and economy. A second group of presentations was focused on the change in specific sub-systems (such as the employment system or the innovation system) or industries (such as banking, automobile, or pharmaceuticals). Finally, a third group of presenters specifically discussed the impact of globalization on Japanese institutions through foreign direct investment or tightened international competition.

A broad question raised in many presentations and discussions was whether Japan follows – or should follow – its own independent developmental path or whether it is subject to global convergence due to adaptation and globalization pressures. In short, is Japan moving beyond “developmental capitalism?” Speakers who were analyzing the changes from a broad, institutional perspective tended to apply the first view, whereas in many studies on the industry or sub-system level the second perspective was put forward. The section participants debated a number of scenarios emerging from the empirically rich presentations. One common question arising from our

discussion, however, was how much of what is happening in Japan today is similar and different from past milestones in its economic history—the "dépà vu all over again" question.

The turnout in the sessions of the Economics and Economic History Section was clearly higher than at previous EAJS conferences. More importantly, there was a good mix of senior scholars, practitioners and graduate students, leading to lively discussions on not only the future of Japan, but also how to study Japan (methodological and data source issues) and what are some interesting questions for further research. In some sessions, the number of participants exceeded the seating capacities in the rooms, indicating a rising interest of EAJS members into our Section. Due to the high quality of many presentations, we are planning to publish a few selected papers in a Special Issue of *Asian Business & Management*, an international peer-reviewed journal in the fields of economics and business, scheduled for early 2007.

On behalf of the Economics and Economic History section, we wish to extend our congratulations and appreciation to the local organizing committee and the EAJS Council for organizing a wonderful venue at the University of Vienna. We now have the pleasure to nominate Dr. Iris Wieczorek and Dr. Parissa Haghirian to the Council for co-convening the next section meeting at the 12th International Conference of the EAJS.

Martin Hemmert

Dennis Tachiki

Section 7: History, Politics and International Relations

Convenors: Dr. Sven Saaler, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schwentker

The section *History, Politics and International Relations* was organized under the rubric of *The Power of Memory*. Recent studies of historical sciences, politics and international relations in Japan have been increasingly affected by issues relating to *memory* – social or collective memory, national memory, minority as well as individual memories, local and regional memories, and the respective relationship of these different kinds of memories to each other. Especially since Pierre Nora's work on *lieux de mémoire* was translated into Japanese, the subject of collective memory has been broadly discussed also in Japan and Japanese studies. In a parallel development, research exploring the historical consciousness of the Japanese has surfaced due to persistent debates on history that have haunted postwar Japanese politics and society. There is a lively debate about the question of how the past is remembered in the present and what relevance these memories have in the framework of current politics and society, including, amongst others, the so-called history textbook controversy; discussions about the construction and funding of memorials and official visits to such memorials and debates about the Japanese way of cultural self-assertion.

Many of these topics were addressed in the 70 presentations of the section. Most of the 26 panels dealt with modern and contemporary discussions about memory and its political implications, such as the panels *Dangerous Traditions: The Perils of Re-Membering History in Contemporary Politics, Nationalism and Gender in Japanese and German Women's Magazines during WW II, Regional and Local Memories, or Institutions of Memory in Okinawa: Museums, Memorials, Festivals*. International Relations were also addressed, for example in a panel on *The Diplomacy of Memory*. But there was also a large number of panels dealing with premodern manifestations of historical memory, such as *Turbulence from a Distance: Reflecting (on) the Warring States and Historical Memories in and about Edo*. Due to the multidisciplinary character of the topic,

representations of memory in literature, movies and other popular media were also addressed.

There were few cancellations from the original programme drafted by the convenors, and consequently the chairs of the panels could welcome quite a large number of participants at most of the sessions. We felt that we had chosen a timely subject that attracted many members of our academic community. It was especially appreciated that not only the “big names” in Japanese Studies, but also a considerable number of young scholars took the opportunity to give presentations on their current research. Speakers came from 12 European countries, from Japan, South Korea, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and the Emirate of Dubai.

We do hope that the lively debates we had in Vienna will be a fresh stimulus for future research on the topic of “Memory in Japan”. Last, but not least, the convenors of this section would once again like to express their gratitude to Prof. Linhart and his team for providing an excellent organization and creating a wonderful atmosphere for this conference. Our special thanks go to the many students who throughout the panels gave a helping hand.

Sven Saaler

Section 8: Religion and History of Ideas

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Mark Blum, Prof. Dr. Galen Amstutz

The Religion and History of Ideas section of the 2005 EAJIS event had a most interesting and educational conference. Our theme was the Pure Land in its many forms, and there were 28 individual papers given, nearly all of which dealt directly with the pervasive nature of Pure Land Buddhist culture in some way. We began with an inspiring keynote address by Sueki Fumihiko, the chair in Japanese Buddhist Studies at Tokyo University, who painted a broad outline of how this form of belief came to be seen in so many aspects of Japanese history, its unique connection to Japanese notions of death and the afterlife, and its continued presence as a dynamic force in religious culture today. The papers represented a broad range of perspectives, from pilgrimage to the Kyoto school of modern Japanese philosophy to the burakumin liberation movement. We were also lucky to have fine contributions in the areas of art, literature, and institutional history, including ethical issues surrounding the Jodoshin sect of Pure Land Buddhism in the modern period.

The mood was very positive at the conclusion of the Conference. The participants were well aware that this particular theme generates enormous interest among Japanese scholars but in the West scholarship is still just beginning, and all felt it was rare to have had so many excellent papers in one conference on Pure Land Buddhism. One of the participants, Dr. Paul Swanson, is senior editor at the Japanese Journal of Religious Studies based in Nanzan University in Nagoya, and he invited the convenors to select approximately eight papers for publication in a special dual-issue of that journal next year. I am happy to report that the first stage of this publication process has been implemented, so we can expect to see the journal in print by late summer or early autumn of 2006, commemorating the religion and history of ideas papers given at the 2005 Vienna conference.

Mark L. Blum (Chief convenor)

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