



A report from the 2018 Conference
EU-Japan Future Partnership:
Ready for the “Big Bang”?
June 8-9, 2018, Stockholm



This year marked the ten year anniversary of the European Japan Advanced Research Network (EJARN). Its annual conference was organized by the European Institute of Japanese Studies at Stockholm School of Economics, the place where activities were initiated. The first five years the annual conferences were organized in Stockholm but after that we started rotating to various places in Europe such as Paris, Trondheim, Pavia, Warwick and Frankfurt.

The conference was held on June 8-9. Besides the 10 year anniversary of EJARN, 2018 also marked the celebration of 150 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Sweden so there were several reasons to celebrate!



Pictured above (L-R) Dr. Lars Ågren, Professor Marie Söderberg, H. E. Mr. Jun Yamazaki

Welcome remarks were given by Professor Marie Söderberg, Director of the European Institute of Japanese Studies and Chairperson, European Japan Advanced Research Network. The organizers welcomed a group of distinguished guests and keynote speakers, comprised of leading scholars as well as European and Japanese officials. The Japanese Ambassador in Stockholm H. E. Mr. Jun Yamazaki also gave some welcome remarks and so did Dr. Lars Ågren, Senior Executive President of Stockholm School of Economics.

As it was the 150 years celebration of Japanese- Swedish Diplomatic Relations we started the first day with a panel on **Japanese diplomacy and Swedish – Japanese diplomatic relations**. Dr. Bert Edström, Institute for Security and Development Policy presented a paper titled *“Taking Off from Point Zero: Swedish-Japanese Diplomatic Relations, 1945-2000”* and Professor Yoshihide Soyea from Keio University continued with an expose of Japanese diplomacy under the 1990. Moderator and discussion leader of this panel was Professor Linus Hagström from the Swedish Defence University.



Pictured above (L-R) Professor Yoshihide Soyea, Professor Linus Hagström, Dr. Bert Edström



Pictured below (L-R) Dr. Patricia A. Nelson, Professor Marie Söderberg, Professor Axel Berkofsky

The rest of the panels during the first day was dedicated to various aspect of Europe-Japan relations. The second panel **Economy, politics and implications of Brexit for EU-Japan relations** was chaired by Marie Söderberg. It featured two speakers Professor Axel Berkofsky, University of Pavia and Dr. Patricia Nelson, European Institute of Japanese Studies, SSE. Professor Berkofsky's paper concerned the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and Dr. Patricia Nelson's the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Discussants were Dr. Paul O'Shea from Lund University as well as Professor Claes Alvstam from Gothenburg University.

In the third panel we opened up to a bigger audience as this was conducted in a format of the Stockholm Seminar on Japan and a number of new participants from not only the academic world but also decision makers as well as business people joined. The format was a round table chaired by Professor Berkofsky addressing the question **EU-Japan Partnership: Ready for the “Big Bang”?** Participants were Mr. Seiichiro Taguchi, Director, European Policy Division, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Roland Honekamp, European External Action Service (EEAS), Mr. Tommy Kullberg, Honorary Chairman, European Business Council in Japan and Mr. Mikael Anzén, Head of the section for WTO and EU’s external trade, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Pictured above (L-R) Mr. Mikael Anzén, Mr. Seiichiro Taguchi, Professor Axel Berkofsky, Mr. Roland Honekamp, Mr. Tommy Kullberg

The fourth panel **Japan in a global context** chaired by Björn Jerdén, Swedish Institute of International Affairs had two speakers Dr. Irina Angelescu, Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) and Dr. Bostjan Bertalanic from Josai University. Dr. Angelescu’s paper was titled *“Brexit, a Catalyst for Closer EU-Japan Relations?”*. Adjunct Professor Erik Lagerlöf, Stockholm School of Economics acted as a discussant. Dr. Bertalanic’s paper was titled *“Opportunities and Challenges for V4+Japan Relations in the Post-Brexit EU”*. Dr. Richard Nakamura, University of Gothenburg acted as discussant.



Pictured above (L-R) Dr. Richard Nakamura, Dr. Bostjan Bertalanic, Dr. Björn Jerdén, Dr. Irina Angelescu, Adjunct Professor Erik Lagerlöf

In the evening the Japanese Ambassador H. E. Mr. Jun Yamazaki had invited all participants to a dinner at his home, the official residency of the Ambassador located in Djursholm a bit outside the city centre in Stockholm. The Swedish summer was at its best. Weather was fantastic and we could enjoy drinks on the terrace overlooking the Baltic Sea before entering and having the pleasure of enjoying a fantastic Japanese buffet.

Second day started by another panel **Japan in a global context** chaired by Dr. Paul O'Shea from Lund University. Dr. John Nilsson-Wright, Cambridge University presented the paper "*Identity, Populism and the Challenge to Order in East Asia*". Discussant was Dr. Irina Angelescu, Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA). Dr. Hana Umezawa, Jindal School of International Affairs presented "*Potential of EU-Japan-India Trilateral Cooperation*". Discussant was Dr. Bostjan Bertalanic from Josai University.



Pictured above (L-R) Dr. Hana Umezawa, Dr. Bostjan Bertalanic

Next panel **Japanese foreign policy** was chaired by Professor Yoshihide Soeya from Keio University. Dr. Paul O'Shea, Lund University presented "*Foreign Policy 'Failures' and 'Crises' in Japan*". Dr. Giulio Pugliese from Kings College London was the discussant. Dr. Karl Gustafsson and Professor Linus Hagström's paper was titled "*Long Live Pacifism! Narrative Power and Japan's Pacifist Model*". Discussant was Dr. John Nilsson-Wright, Cambridge University.



Pictured above (L-R) Dr. Karl Gustafsson,
Professor Linus Hagström



Pictured above Dr. Giulio Pugliese

The panel **Japanese economic statecraft and foreign policy** was chaired by Dr. Karl Gustafsson, Swedish Institute of International Affairs. Presenter of *“Japan’s Economic Statecraft and its Evolving Strategies towards China”* was Dr. Giulio Pugliese from Kings College London. Linus Hagström from Swedish Defence University acted as a discussant. Dr. Björn Jerdén, Swedish Institute of International Affairs presented *“Abandonment in Alliance Politics: Lessons from Japan-US Relations”*. Discussant was Professor Yoshihide Soyea, Keio University.



Pictured above (L-R) Dr. Karl Gustafsson, Dr. Björn Jerden, Professor Yoshihide Soyea

Swedish weather again turned out at its best and we all had lunch in a coffee shop on the hill behind the Stockholm School of Economics.



Lessons for democracy and development cooperation was the title of the first session after lunch. Dr. Guibourg Delamotte from Inalco presented her paper *“The Moritomo Gakuen Scandal: Lessons and Political Implications”* which was discussed by Marie Söderberg and Dr. Annette Skovsted Hansen, Aarhus University presented *“The ‘Exotic’ Like-minded: Japanese and Danish foreign aid practices, 1947-2017”* which was discussed by Axel Berkofsky. Chairperson for the session was Dr. André Asplund, European Institute of Japanese Studies.



Pictured above Dr. Annette Skovsted Hansen

Pictured below Dr. Guibourg Delamotte



Pictured above Dr. Scott Wilbur

Pictured below Dr. Dick Stegewerns



The last panel **Japanese economic issues** was chaired by Richard Nakamura. Dr. Scott Wilbur, EHESS presented *“The Political Economy of Zombie Firms: Evidence from SME in Japan”*. Discussant was Mr. Ji-Won Song, European Institute of Japanese Studies. Dr. Dick Stegewerns, University of Oslo & Nichibunken presented *“The Three Waves (and Ways) of Sake Appreciation in the West”* on which Scott Wilbur acted as a discussant.

The conference ended with an annual meeting for EJARN. A discussion was initiated on what EJARN could do together in the form of research as well as policy advice in connection with the Strategic as well as Economic Partnerships Agreements between EU and Japan. It was also decided that next year’s conference will be held in Paris June 8-9, 2019.



Conference participants at Stockholm School of Economics

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On behalf of the EJARN Executive Committee

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