

Welcome to Fukuoka!

This is the second time an annual meeting of the International Society for Psychophysics—a Fechner Day—has taken place in Japan, the first being the Fechner Day in Odaiba, Tokyo, in 2007. However, this is the first on Kyushu Island, of which Fukuoka is the political and economic center. Throughout history, Fukuoka and the surrounding neighborhood has played an important role in establishing international relations as well as educating students and monks.

In the middle of the first century, a diplomatic team of the small kingdom of *Na*, which was located in or near Fukuoka, visited the court of the Later Han Dynasty (25 A.D.–220) in China, and received a golden stamp (Fig. 1) as an imperial present. This golden stamp now belongs to the Fukuoka City Museum. It was lost for a long time, buried in a rice field, and was discovered in the 18th century. A local scholar, called Nanmei Kamei (1743–1814), identified it as the stamp described in a historical text. He was a great teacher, and one of his students, Tanso Hirose (1782–1856; Fig. 2), opened a school in Hita, an attractive city two hours by bus from Fukuoka. His school was the first educational institution in Japan that accepted students from any social class and any gender.

People in Fukuoka are open-minded, and the northern part of Kyushu has been an important area for the cultivation of academic freedom in Japan. Academic freedom was often combined with nice food and drinks.

We would like to make the present Fechner Day an enjoyable occasion. We have booked a large conference room for the first four days, and this will be a place for our close communication. We have to move to the basement of a neighboring building for the last day's proceedings, and I hope that participants will get accustomed to this neighborhood by then. There are many attractive places to eat and drink near the conference site, and prices are in many cases inexpensive. Keep in your mind that you never need a tip in Japan—at least during your stay.

We will try two things to make the present Fechner Day special. The poster symposia, with some snacks and drinks, will be ideal occasions to get acquainted with



Fig. 1. The golden stamp brought to Kyushu in 57 A.D. according to the literature. This stamp was discovered in Fukuoka in 1784. Photos courtesy of the Fukuoka City Museum.



Fig. 2. Tanso-sensei with me.

one another. Please, follow the chairperson's instructions at the beginning. There are keynote lectures and symposia showing how our place is connected to other places of the world. Since our place is psychologically—psychophysically?—far from any of the places in which previous Fechner Days have been organized, this will be a good opportunity for many participants to get an impression about what is happening here in Fukuoka and in other places connected to Fukuoka.

The organizing team members (members of all committees) are grateful to the executive board of the International Society for Psychophysics, previous Fechner Day organizers, and the Advisory Board for their advice and support. Many people worked for this occasion in many different ways, and I thank all of them heartily. Finally, the participants are thanked for making the occasion so exciting.

Please, have fun, and find and think a lot of interesting things in Fukuoka!

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