Mind the Gap: Stratification and Social Inequalities in Japan

Hibiya Park, Tokyo, New Year 2009: Around 500 laid-off temporary workers, who not only became unemployed but also homeless due to the recent financial crisis, spent the New Year’s holiday in a temporary tent village, established by volunteer groups and labor unions. This event, highly covered by the media, happened to be right in front of the noble Imperial Hotel – a pure coincidence, yet highly symbolic for the heated debate on growing social disparities in Japan.

Volume 22 of Japanstudien invites research papers from various disciplines, in order to cover diverse facets of the development to a more stratified society. Both empirical and discursive aspects are to be analyzed: What effects does Japan’s re-differentiation have on work, society, family, education, the economy, and politics? How is the concern about increasing inequalities to be assessed from a historical perspective, especially as regards the long-held self-perception of an all-middle class society? Which role does the media play in the discourse on kakusa shakai, how is the topic negotiated in art, literature, film, and television? In what ways are power relations between young and old and male and female effected? And how do the drastic demographic changes impact social inequalities?

Manuscripts should be about 5,000 – 8,000 words in length. Please submit an abstract of about 300 words and a brief bio-blurb (up to 100 words) by August 15, 2009 (editors: Barbara Holthus holthus@dijtokyo.org and Kristina Iwata-Weickgenannt iwata@dijtokyo.org). Accepted manuscripts (in English or German) should be submitted no later than November 30, 2009. Articles previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere cannot be accepted.

Furthermore, we also welcome articles on other topics (5,000 – 8,000 words) and reviews of current Japan-related publications (1,000 – 2,000 words).

All contributions will be peer-reviewed by external international reviewers.

Previous issues of Japanstudien – partially in full text – can be found on our homepage (http://www.dijtokyo.org/?page=publication_list.php&p_id=1).