



DIJ Forum and Opening of the 13th Meeting of the German- Japanese Society for Social Sciences (GJSSS)

Trust and Risks in Changing Societies

Toshio Yamagishi, Hitotsubashi University/Hokkaido University

Jens Zinn, University of Melbourne

Thursday, 8 October 2015, 18.00 h – 20.00 h

Japan and Germany, just as other European and Asian societies, are undergoing rapid social, economic and cultural changes. These include demographic changes, economic and political instability, the erosion of traditional institutions, changes in communication, as well as effects of natural disasters. These developments are related to changes in norms and values, and come with an increasing number of alternatives for individual and social decision-making. With the number of choices also increases the risk of making a wrong decision. To remain capable of taking any action at all, individuals need to trust in others, in expert knowledge and in abstract institutions. Therefore, trust – as the social lubricant that keeps societies running, and risks – as the challenges faced by a given society, are topics central to the analysis of any social system. The DIJ is honored to welcome two internationally renowned experts on trust and risk as speakers to this DIJ Forum, which is presented together with the German-Japanese Society for Social Sciences.

As first speaker, **Toshio Yamagishi**, Adjunct Professor at Hitotsubashi University, and Professor Emeritus at Hokkaido University, will introduce his theory of trust, in which he especially analyzes cultural differences in the formation and constitution of trust. Professor Yamagishi holds a doctorate in sociology from the University of Washington. At Hokkaido University, he established the Center for Experimental Research in Social Sciences and functioned as its Inaugural Director. He has received numerous honors including eleven prizes from academic associations in psychology, the Nikkei Prize for Excellent Books in Economic Science (1999), a Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon (2004), and Japan's 2014 Person of Cultural Merits.

How modern societies experience and respond to pressing social, economic, natural and technological challenges will be addressed in the second keynote of **Jens Zinn**, Associate Professor in Sociology at the University of Melbourne. Professor Zinn is an expert in interdisciplinary risk research and has founded research networks within the International Sociological Association (2006) and European Sociological Association (2005). In 2015 the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation awarded him the prestigious Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel Award for his scholarly achievements. Most well-known publications are *Social theories of risk and uncertainty* with Blackwell (2008) and with P. Taylor-Gooby *Risk in social science* (2006) with Oxford University Press.

The event will take place at the DIJ. Admission is free; registration is required at forum@dijtokyo.org.

Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien German Institute for Japanese Studies
Jochi Kioizaka Bld. 2F, 7-1 Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0094
Tel: 03 3222 5198, Fax: 03 3222 5420