

Interdisciplinary Japanese Studies On Site

ヘイト・スピーチ (*heito supīchi*)



The term “hate speech” has recently gained questionable prominence, even making it onto the shortlist for the Word of the Year 2013. The term came

into sudden prominence as a result of aggressive anti-Korean demonstrations in “Korean towns” in Japan, such as Shin-Ōkubo and Tsuruhashi. Demonstrators shout slogans like “Good Koreans or bad Koreans, kill them all”. Organized by the *Zaitokukai* (Association of Citizens against Special Privileges of Resident Koreans), the demonstrators use hate speech to voice their anger at what they perceive as Japanese society’s “pampering of undeserving resident aliens”, as well as provocations by Japan’s neighbouring country, e.g. the visit by former South Korean president Lee Myun-bak to the

disputed Liancourt Rocks. While many European countries have outlawed hate speech, Japan – like the US – permits such protests, irrespective of their racist nature, on freedom of speech grounds. Against this backdrop, there has been a debate about the pro and contra of restricting these expressions. On February 6–7, 2014, the DIJ hosted an international workshop bringing together 10 experts in disciplines such as law, history, sociology and political science to examine and put into perspective this new phenomenon. *C.W.*

The bioethical view on happiness

At the beginning and the end of life, sentiments of happiness and unhappiness become especially obvious. Nowadays, medicine makes it technically possible to influence the beginning (reproductive medicine) as well as the end of human life (organ donation). A new DIJ research project analyses the relationship between organ transplantations and happiness from a bioethical point of view.

In Japan, the concept of bioethics reached the wider public in the 1960s during the discussion on brain death, organ donation and organ transplantation. Organ donation and organ transplantation still occupy centre stage in Japanese bioethical discussions even after the organ transplant law was revised in 2010. In Germany, the revision of the respective law in 2012 was accompanied by a controversial public debate.

This project focuses on the public discourse surrounding organ donation in Japan and Germany from the standpoint of comparative culture in order to examine the influence of social conditions on the decision-making process regarding organ donation and organ transplantation. Among important factors in this process are financing options afforded by social insurance systems and legal

regulations concerning the medical care available to patients. Religious and other cultural considerations can also have an impact. In addition, the subjective feelings of people concerned (patients and their families) and experts involved (physicians, nurses, and others) deserve particular attention: what role do emotions and ideas of life satisfaction, experiences of happiness and unhappiness, feelings of guilt, pressure to justify one’s decisions as well as perceptions of power and powerlessness play?

This research builds upon the findings and remaining open questions resulting from the study conducted by the research group “Culture-transcending Bioethics. Conditions, Prospects, and Challenges” (2002–2007), which was funded by the DFG (German Research Foundation), and in which Miki Aoyama-Olschina took part as a research fellow. Based on comparative cultural studies by Jens Schlieter, a scholar of bioethics and religious studies, this project seeks to examine the bioethical discourse after the revision of organ transplant laws in Germany and Japan. From a humanities perspective it will not only contribute to the field of happiness research but also to the bioethical discussion concerning cultural diversity and the relation between universalism and relativism.

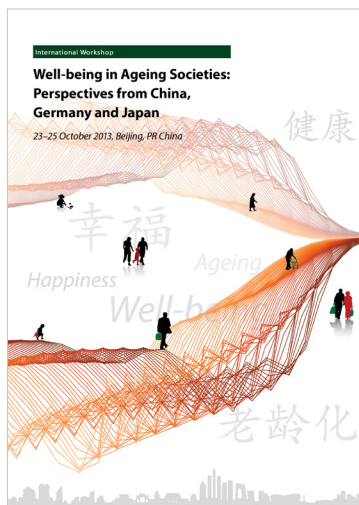
Obituary

The DIJ is sad to announce the death of Professor Christian Kirchner, who passed away on January 17, 2014, in Berlin. For many years, Professor Kirchner has been a pillar of support for our work. From 2003–2011, he served as a member of the institute’s scientific advisory board, which he headed from 2006. He taught us how to take institutions seriously without taking them too seriously. His kindly sense of humour will be sorely missed. *F.C.*



◀ **Dr. des. Miki Aoyama-Olschina**, philosopher, heads the project “Happiness and unhappiness in bioethical questions: Decision making for organ donation and organ transplantation in Germany and in Japan.”
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Well-being in ageing societies



► Further details and documents for download:
http://www.dijtokyo.org/events/well-being_in_ageing_societies

Three countries, China, Germany and Japan, were in the spotlight during a workshop jointly organized by the DIJ, the Institute of Population and Labor Economics (IPLE) at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS, Beijing) and the German Centre of Gerontology (DZA, Berlin) on October 23–25, 2013, and supported by the Stiftung Mercator Foundation. The aim of the workshop, entitled “Well-being in Ageing Societies: Perspectives from China, Germany and Japan,” was to identify a future research agenda about well-being in ageing societies.

Today more than ever, Japan, Germany and China have to come to terms with economic and demographic shifts, as well as a change in society’s values. In the workshop, almost 40 researchers discussed how these social changes influence the well-being of the elderly in their particular cultural context.

potential in the ageing society. Clemens Tesch-Römer (Director DZA) argued that policies have to increasingly search for answers in developing the skills of older employees as well as the expansion of appropriate healthcare and social services. Herein also lies a core interest for China, said Zhenzhen Zheng (CASS), highlighting the importance of learning from the experiences of “already aged societies” like Germany and Japan.

The workshop approached the topic from different angles, namely sociologically, psychologically, economically, politically and technologically. All three countries have already taken political steps toward capitalising on the skills of their ageing societies. Apparently, all governments favour the idea of an “active ageing/age” to strengthen the so-called intergenerational dialogue. Jiehua Lu (Peking University) showed the numerous positive aspects connected with the “silver market” for China’s economy.



► Visit to the Zhongyi Aging Development Center, a Beijing-based think-tank that studies future ways of living for older people in China.

The multinational and interdisciplinary character of the workshop became immediately apparent in the opening panel. While Florian Coulmas (Director DIJ) pointed out differences and similarities between the three countries’ ageing societies, Ursula Lehr, former federal minister and chairwoman of the German National Association of Senior Citizens’ Organizations (BAGSO), underscored the need to focus more on the question of how the elderly can contribute to the development of society and how best to utilize their abilities and

According to Florian Kohlbacher (DIJ), however, there is still a large gap between the importance of the 50+ group in society and research into their consumer needs and behaviour.

All contributions identified different backgrounds to the problems in China, Germany and Japan, with similar effects and consequences for the elderly in the respective societies. One major conclusion of the workshop was that social and welfare policy plays a key role in dealing with implications of demographic change. *S.H.*

Silence in the class room

There are numerous clichés about the Japanese. Anniversary scholarship holder Eduard Stengler questioned one of them: discipline. For his project, he spent two months observing junior and senior high school classes at Seikei Gakuen.

What expectations did you have?

My initial expectation that the pupils are really disciplined was confirmed. They were really quiet and there were few disturbances. Later it became clear to me that during class only the teacher talks and oral contributions by pupils are quite unusual. Thus silence does not necessarily equate with discipline.



What did you particularly like about classes and school in Japan?

I really liked how the teachers reacted when disturbances occurred in class. Most of the time they ignored them, but when the teacher did react, it happened without a big scene. Also the cleanliness of the school impressed me.

What did you not like?

Teaching in Japan occurs through frontal instruction and everyone sits

at a single desk. This was sad. Only the English classes were different. Partly these classes were run by native English speakers and participation as well as group work was welcomed. For that the desks were moved together.

Was there anything else that attracted your attention?

Teachers have a high status, they are almost unassailable. They are dressed formally, which makes a respectable impression. The teacher-student relationship seems like one between manager and employee. One interesting aspect however is that, during breaks,

Japanese pupils are as relaxed and vivid as their German counterparts – contrary to the image of disciplined pupils that I had.

Is there something you will miss about Japan?

I will miss Tokyo quite a lot – I have really liked it here. I will miss the food, especially *gyūdon*, as well as the punctuality and modernity of Japanese trains. *D.P.*



► Impressions from school life.

◀ **Eduard Stengler**, student of French and Ethics (teaching degree for secondary schools) at Philipps University of Marburg, held a DIJ Anniversary Scholarship from August to October 2013.

Comparative study of insurance law

How insured risk and legal protection of weak parties is balanced in Japanese and German law is the subject of a doctoral research project at the DIJ.

Recent changes in private insurance law in Japan and Germany are similar in one respect: both countries reformed their regulations in 2007/2008, replacing the German Insurance Act of May 1908 and the Japanese Insurance Law Regulations of 1911, respectively. However, one difference is that in the event Japan codified its Insurance Law for the first time. These legislative changes are challenging for both the insurance industry and legislators. In addition to formal changes, the amendment focused on strengthening the rights of weak parties – i.e. the policyholders.

An insurance contract basically covers a particular risk, such as everyday damages

to property or life, illness or accident. The contract is determined by the contents of extensive insurance contract conditions – leaving prospective policyholders facing excessively many rules. Legal barriers and boundaries are essential in order to fight this imbalance of information and to increase the protection of policyholders.

The amendment process of the insurance law act in Japan has increasingly focused on the parallel developments in Germany as the fundamental legal principles of Japanese insurance law were based on German Law. This Ph.D. project deals with the period in which this amendment was developed and analyses from a comparative point of view to what extent the German legal principles have influenced reform in Japan. The study aims to close the gap in research concerning transfers in insurance law from Germany to Japan.

◀ **Dipl. Jur. Köksal Sahin, LL.M. (Cologne)**, is a doctoral candidate and research fellow at the Institute for Japanese Law, University of Hagen (FernUniversität in Hagen). From April 2013 to February 2014, he was a research fellow at the DIJ. koeksal.sahin@fernuni-hagen.de

Awards

Carola Hommerich

VSJF Award by the German Association for Social Science Research on Japan, best German-language essay in the social sciences by a young scholar 2011/12: "Neue Risiken, neues Selbstbild: Japan in verunsichernden Zeiten", in D. Chiavacci & I. Wiczorek (eds.): *Japan 2011. Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 259–294. Berlin: VSJF.

Torsten Weber

JaDe Award 2014 by the German Foundation for the Promotion of Japanese-German Culture and Science Relations (JaDe-Stiftung) for the dissertation *Embracing 'Asia': Japanese Asianism Discourse in a Transnational Setting, 1912–1933* (University of Heidelberg).

Chris Winkler

Excellent Poster Session Award (with Professor Naoko Taniguchi, Tokyo Institute of Technology) by the Japanese Association of Electoral Studies (JAES), Annual Conference 2013, for the poster presentation "Coding Japanese Party Manifestos in a Comparative Scheme".

Forthcoming events

Internationaler Workshop: "Improving the people's lot? Different conceptions of well-being between promises and reality" (Tokyo, VII/29–30/2014). Organizer: DIJ Tokyo, Japan. Supported by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Recent publications

Phoebe Stella Holdgrün:



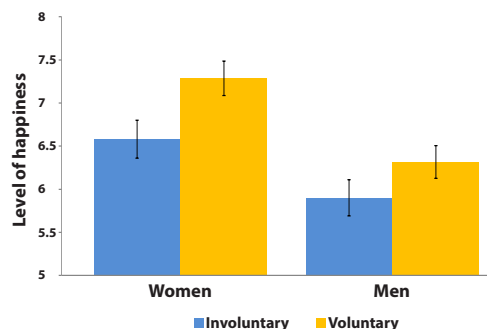
Gender equality. Implementierungsstrategien in japanischen Präfekturen (DIJ Monographs; 54). Munich: ludicium.

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<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/cj> (full-text open access).

Participation in neighbourhood associations

The DIJ conducted an online survey on participation in neighbourhood associations in September 2013. The survey (n=1660) shows that especially women report significantly different levels of happiness depending on whether they participate voluntarily or involuntarily. While women who participate involuntarily report an average happiness level of 6.6 points, the level of voluntarily participating women is a significant 0.7 points higher (measured on scale from 0 to 10). For men the difference is only 0.4 and is not statistically significant. *T.T.*



Note:

The error bars show the standard error of the coefficients. Here they indicate that the difference between voluntary and involuntary participation is statistically significant at the 5% level in the case of women.

Read for you

ISHII-KUNTZ Masako (2013):

"Ikumen" genshō no shakaigaku: Ikuji, kosodate sankā e no kibō o kanaeru tame ni [Sociology of Child Caring Men: In Search of Realizing Fathers' Involvement in Child Rearing]. Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 320 pages, 3,150 yen (ISBN 978-4-6230-6608-7).

Japan's boom in *ikumen* – men who actively participate in child rearing – continues. Ishii-Kuntz, one of Japan's most renowned family sociologists (Ochanomizu University) offers comprehensive information and research findings on Japanese fathers in international comparison. After an introduction tracing the historical, cultural, social and political background of the *ikumen* phenomenon, she presents the research methodologies of family sociology as well as the characteristics of *ikumen*. In the third part of the book, she analyses the sociological aspects of the relationships of *ikumen* with their family members, and then discusses the different manifestations of *ikumen*, such as househusbands, stepfathers and homosexual fathers. The last chapter provides practical implications of the research findings and recommendations for business and public policy. *F.K.*

Moving on

DIJ senior research fellow and sociologist Barbara Holthus took up her new post of assistant professor at the Department of East Asian Studies (Japanese Studies) at the University of Vienna on December 1, 2013. As a DIJ fellow since 2007, Holthus worked on several projects, all related to the DIJ's main research foci, including studies on childcare and work-life balance in low-fertility Japan, parental well-being in international comparison, and parent activists in social movement organizations against radiation after 3/11. Together with Wolfram Manzenreiter, she is coordinating the international conference "Deciphering the Social DNA of Happiness: Life Course Perspectives from Japan" (April 24–26, 2014, Vienna) to celebrate the new cooperation between the DIJ and the Department of East Asian Studies (Japanese Studies) at the University of Vienna. *P.H.*

The DIJ Newsletter is published twice a year, in German and English, and is also available for download as a full-text version from our website.

For a printed copy, please contact:
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