

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

DIJ Social Science Study Group



Wednesday, 19. October 2011, 18.30 h

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Are We in Control of Our Choices? Organ Donation in Japan and Germany

Today, most organ transplant surgeries have become routine procedures and transplantation is considered to be the best treatment option for many patients suffering from organ failure. Different political, legal and bioethical viewpoints on this operation had been exchanged mainly in the 1980s and 1990s, prior to the organ transplantation law, passed 1997 in both countries. However, fourteen years later the topic is still of socio-political relevance, due to a *lack* of donors. Even though anyone could register to be a potential donor, most do not. What could be seen as an explanation for this behavior? And is it that the more people would register, the more lives could be saved? In this context the mass media is playing an important role in shaping public discourse and opinion. Particularly people, who are not faced with this topic in everyday life, for they are not directly affected, base their attitudes almost exclusively on information received from the mass media.

Central questions in this talk will be: (1) Can we find a tenor created in the media? (2) Who are the actors and what patterns of interpretation appear? (3) Is there a discrepancy between hypothetical agreement to organ donation and actual action of donation in concrete cases? The research relies on articles in major newspapers from each country as sources.

Stefan Roesner studied Japanese Studies and Sociology at the University of Bonn and the University of Leipzig. Currently, he is a doctoral student at the University of Bonn

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is a forum for young scholars and Ph.D. candidates in the field of Social Sciences organized by Maren Godzik and Barbara Holthus.

All are welcome to attend, but registration (godzik@dijtokyo.org) is appreciated.

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