

### **The Impact of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Discussing Germany and Japan**

**November 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, German Cultural Center, Tokyo**

#### **Objectives**

Recently, the issue of *societal impact* has become the subject of intense debate and discussion in the world of academic research. Although a number of different terms are used – examples from the Japanese context include “output”, “innovation” or “societal needs” – the trend is clear. With rising frequency, and more and more in line with tangible incentive structures, academic researchers are asked to justify their use of public resources for research activities in relation to their utility for society. This demand is not restricted to those conducting the research. Departmental and university administrators, science policy advocates, ministries and governments, all are expected to demonstrate the *societal impact* of research funding allocations.

To thematise these discussions is not to discredit them. The expectation that the use of public funds be well justified is legitimate, and it is certainly not absurd to expect that such justifications be framed in the vocabulary of usefulness. Moreover, many of the challenges we face today have global proportions and their solution will depend on the contributions of basic, relevant – and useful – academic research.

Yet the discourse of impact calls for careful analysis and discussion, especially in relation to how to measure impact. The symposium raises three points for discussion. Firstly, the terms typically used in the discourse of societal impact are highly theory-sensitive. Apart from background assumptions regarding what constitutes a good society, their meanings depend on theories of how research findings filter into society and become causally effective. These implicit understandings deserve to be made explicit and discussed. Secondly, today's advocates of societal impact have rarely attempted to refute the Humboldtian claim that academia is most useful as a whole when its day to day operations are not required to follow considerations of application. In light of the substantial prima-facie evidence in its favour, this claim, which was shared by the founders of many modern universities and continues to play an important role in how universities view themselves, should not be rejected without careful discussion and attention to empirical reality. Thirdly, the diffusion of demands for societal

impact has brought about real-world consequences which, themselves, call for normative appraisal. To highlight just one such consequence, the humanities and social sciences have come under significant pressure. Arguably, they face structural hurdles in demonstrating their societal impact in the kind of language typically used in debates over public resources.

There is a certain irony to the last dimension: the disciplines, which are most relevant to the analysis and discussion of the discourse of societal impact seem to have the hardest time adapting to it. Still, the humanities and social sciences are neither inactive nor uninterested, and this Japanese-German symposium will employ the unique potential of these disciplines to address the desiderates outlined above. Bringing Japanese and German academics into dialogue on this issue is especially important because while the discourse of impact is similar in both countries, it is embedded in very different intellectual and institutional settings and received by academic researchers in very different ways. By exchanging analyses and arguments and thus enriching public discourse about societal impact, the symposium aims to address neglected dimensions of the societal impact of the humanities and social sciences.

### **Participants**

- Representatives of research funding organizations from Japan and Germany
- Research policy advocates from Japan and Germany
- Representatives of various relevant disciplines of the humanities and social sciences from Japan and Germany

**Part II: Social Science Workshop**  
***Social Science Contributions to Contemporary Social and Political Changes  
in Germany and Japan***  
**(German Cultural Center)**

**Workshop Coordinators:**

Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Professor, Freie Universität Berlin) and Karen Shire (Professor,  
University of Duisburg-Essen and Ochanomizu University)

**Tuesday Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>**

<p><b>Tuesday Nov. 14 15:15</b></p>	<p><b>Sociology Panel</b>  <b>“Social Institutional Change and Social Inequalities”</b>  Chaired by Karen Shire (Professor, University of Duisburg-Essen  and Ochanomizu University)</p> <p>Twenty-five years ago, Germany and Japan stood as world models of high economic growth combined with relatively low social inequalities, especially in comparison to the Anglophone countries. Sets of similar social institutions in Germany and Japan were recognized as generating relatively high social integration through investments in education, efficient school-to-work transitions, employment and social protections, and support for the expansion of a middle-class lifestyle to the industrial workforce. Most of these social institutions have since undergone fundamental transformations, evident in rising class-, but also gender-based inequalities and experiences of social exclusion. Traditional groups of skilled factory and white collar administrative male workers are still relatively protected, while the non-regular employed in both countries, now covering over a third of the workforce, face reduced social security and few chances for social mobility.</p> <p>Equal opportunities for women’s employment have advanced during the same time period to upset conservative gender relations, yet women in both countries are more likely to be employed in temporary and part-time jobs than are men with the same educational achievements. Moreover, social policies continue to assume a traditional division of domestic labour, meaning that working mothers, while better educated and more often employed, still experience an employment gap, a penalty in economic and social security compared to working fathers, and severe limits to career mobility.</p> <p>The panel addresses dimensions of class, occupational, employment, educational, generational, and gender inequalities in the context of transformation in employment and family institutions in Germany and Japan, also in broader regional and international comparison.</p>	<p>German Cultural Center</p>
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	<p>Shin Arita (Professor, The University of Tokyo)  Werner Eichhorst (Coordinator of the Section Labour Market and Social Policy in Europe at the Institute of Labour Economics (IZA))  Sigeto Tanaka (Professor, Tohoku University)  Pia Schober (Professor, University of Tübingen)</p> <p>Discussants:  Ute Klammer (Director, The Institute for Work, Skills and Training IAQ, Professor, University of Duisburg-Essen)  Jun Imai (Professor, Hokkaido University)</p>	
17:00	<b>Break</b>	German Cultural Center
<b>Tuesday Nov. 14 17:30</b>	<p><b>Political Science Panel  “Challenges to Democratic Governance”</b></p> <p>Chaired by Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Professor, Freie Universität Berlin)</p> <p>Both postwar Germany and Japan were among the first previously authoritarian countries perceived as achieving democratic governance, economic growth and social policies meant to mitigate the effects of market dynamics on society. Since the end of the Cold War, accelerating globalization is calling into question established institutions and their abilities to deliver social stability, distribute wealth and generate opportunities for the new generation. Neoliberal policy solutions, implemented since the 1990s in both countries, and demographic change have added to the pressure on established institutions. By the 2000s, outsider parties, regionally or nationally, with a preference for anti-globalist and nationalist rhetoric and charismatic leaders have emerged and challenged the established political parties, which in turn have started to develop some of these tendencies in an effort to stop losing votes. At the same time, we also observe in both countries a rise of new citizens’ movements, both on the left and right of the political spectrum.</p> <p>This panel focuses primarily on the political dimensions of globalization, demographic change and increasing social inequality in Germany and Japan. The aim of the panel is to analyze comparatively trends in voting behavior and voter turnout as well as strategies developed by political parties, both new and established and by social movements. Through a dialogue between German and Japanese researchers, the panel strives to identify similarities and differences in political responses to challenges for democratic governance both at the elite level and in society.</p> <p>Armin Schäfer (Professor, Osnabrück University)</p>	German Cultural Center

	<p>Masaki Taniguchi (Professor, The University of Tokyo)  Philip Manow (Professor, University of Bremen)  Mari Miura (Professor, Sophia University)</p> <p>Discussants:  Kenneth Mori McElwain (Professor, The University of Tokyo)  Gabriele Vogt (Professor, Universität Hamburg)</p>	
20:00	<b>Dinner</b>	Details t.b.d.
<b>Wednesday Nov. 15<sup>th</sup></b>		
<b>Wednesday  Nov. 15  9:00</b>	<p><b>Cross-Disciplinary Panel</b>  <b>“New Directions in Transnational Studies: Regional Institutions, Identities and Communities”</b>  Chaired by Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (Professor, Bielefeld University)</p> <p>Transnational processes, regionalization and their impact on global institutions, as well as individual citizen’s perceptions of and attachments to identities and communities beyond the nation-state are the subjects of the third panel. In political science, the established study of international relations has gradually opened over the past twenty years, from its focus on the inter-state system and political-military alliances, to the role of private, non-governmental and international organizations above and between nation-states, and processes of supra-national regional integration. With the decline of US hegemony and its return to nationalistic protectionism, the diffusion of norms and the initiative for cooperation has become more multidirectional, with interactions between Europe and Asia as well as newly established connections between Asia and Africa or Asia and Latin America moving to the forefront of efforts to address global challenges like climate change, refugee crises and terrorism.</p> <p>The implicit equivalence of society and nation-state in sociology has also undergone a fundamental rethinking through research on cross-border social ties, pluri-locality and competing theories of the world society. Transnational processes reverberate in social life and the economy, through the increasing mobility of individuals in work and leisure, changing the nature of migration. The free mobility of labor is deliberately institutionalized in the EU, and Germany has the highest number of incoming citizens from other EU member states. Also in Japan, despite immigration restrictions, cross-border exchanges are intensifying through policies to increase foreign students and attract skilled labor in new economic partnerships.</p>	German Cultural Center

	<p>Throughout their development, but especially most recently, transnationalization processes give rise to counter-movements and political tensions, evident in the resurgence of nationalistic and protectionist movements. The social inequalities discussed in Panel 1, and the challenges to democratic governance presented in Panel 2 provide evidence of a widening gulf between those well integrated into cross-border social and political life, and those who fear and experience disadvantage from the erosion of national protections.</p> <p>Hirohisa Takenoshita (Professor, Keio University) Jan Delhey (Professor, Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg) Tanja Börzel (Professor, Freie Universität Berlin)</p> <p>Discussants: Kaori Hayashi (Professor, The University of Tokyo) Franz Waldenberger (Professor, LMU Munich, Director, German Institute of Japanese Studies DIJ)</p>	
11:00	<p><b>Special Event</b> <b>Introduction to the Data Archive at the Institute of Social Science, The University of Tokyo</b> Hiroshi Ishida (Professor, The University of Tokyo)</p>	
12:00	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>	
13:00-15:00	<p><b>Final Discussion</b></p>	
Afternoon	<p><b>Possibility for a cultural excursion and joint dinner on Wednesday afternoon</b></p>	