



Corporate Social Responsibility – Perspectives on Japan and Germany

By Verena Blechinger-Talcott

Corporate Social Responsibility has become a major aspect in corporate strategic planning in recent years. Globalization and the related integration of international markets have brought new opportunities for business, but also confronted states and societies with challenges for social stability. Threatened by the potential relocation of industries to other countries, states face increasing difficulties to fulfil their role as creators and enforcers of rules and as providers of public goods. At the same time, citizens' protests against economic summit meetings illustrate that society has become increasingly critical of the activities of multinational corporations. Consequently, state actors, faced by shrinking tax income and increasing public debt, are reaching out to businesses to jointly contribute to society in public-private partnerships. At the same time, to counter criticism by state and civil society, but also to distinguish themselves from competitors, firms invest in activities that demonstrate their commitment to social stability and sustainable development.

Originally most frequently associated with Anglo-American multinational corporations, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is now being implemented by firms all over the globe. In contrast to traditional philanthropic activities or efforts to cooperate with local communities in the context of corporate citizenship, CSR integrates firms' core economic activities with environmental and social standards.

While significant research has been conducted about CSR in liberal market economies such as the United States and the United Kingdom, and discussion is ongoing about CSR in Western Europe, East Asian economies have only recently been included into the discussion.

On December 14, 2006, the Japanese-German Center Berlin and the Institute of East Asian Studies at Freie Universität Berlin (Research Area „Japanese Politics and Political Economy“, Prof. Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott) jointly took up this question at an international workshop on CSR policies by German and Japanese firms. As strongly export-driven economies, both Germany and Japan are playing a central role in today's globalized economy. German and Japanese corporations are key players in world markets and strongly influence development in newly globalizing markets in East Asia and Eastern Europe. Analyzing CSR activities by German and Japanese firms can thus provide new insights in current business strategies in Europe and beyond. Moreover, a comparison of Japanese and German CSR activities also has theoretical relevance: Germany and Japan are coordinated market economies with strong stakeholder influence and, despite efforts towards deregulation, a stricter regulatory environment than the U.S. or the UK. A comparative study of CSR in Germany and Japan therefore helps us understand the opportunities and challenges related with the transfer of a concept from one institutional setting to another.

How does the institutional environment affect the way in which CSR is conceived and implemented? What role does tradition, such as corporate philanthropy, play in today's CSR activities? What are the similarities and differences in the understanding and implementation of corporate social responsibility in Germany and Japan? What is the role of stakeholders in the development of CSR policies? These questions brought together speakers and participants from academia, business, politics, and civil society: Prof. Dr. Joachim Schwalbach (Humboldt University, Berlin), Dr. Holger Backhaus-Maul (Martin-Luther-University, Halle-Wittenberg), Tanja Castor (BASF AG), Prof. Dr. Tanimoto Kanji (Hitotsubashi University, Tōkyō), Dr. Fukukawa Kyōko (Bradford School of Management, Bradford), and Masaru Arai (Daiwa Asset Management Co) were presenters. Prof. Dr. André Habisch (Catholic University Eichstaett-Ingolstadt) gave the keynote speech, and Prof. Dr. Cornelia Storz (Goethe University, Frankfurt) and Prof. Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Freie Universität Berlin) served as discussants. Rupert Graf

CONTENT

CSR	1-2
Conference Reports	2-8
Visit by Mrs. Abe	9
JDZB Youth Exchange	10
Preview of Events 2007	11-12

Strachwitz (Humboldt University, Berlin) and Dr. Michael Bürsch (Member of Parliament) joined the workshop for the final panel discussion.

The workshop discussions pointed out the following similarities and differences in Japanese and German approaches to CSR. It became clear that CSR has become a key aspect of corporate strategy in Germany and Japan. While both countries have a long tradition in philanthropic activities, CSR activities of German and Japanese firms still have, partly due to insufficient communication, low visibility relative to their Anglo-American counterparts. In both countries, firms' CSR activities are driven by investors. Consumers both in Japan and Germany are increasingly aware of firms' environmental and social records, and securities' firms are producing related rankings. CSR activities are therefore not only seen as part of firms' public relations strategies, but are increasingly instruments of strategic management as a means to gain a competitive advantage. In both countries, recent discourses about CSR have led to discussions about the role of firms not only as economic actors, but as embedded parts of society.

The key differences between both countries were seen in firms' approaches towards CSR. While German firms see CSR as a strategic and competitive tool, Japanese firms are rather focussing on compliance with state regulations and international standards. Therefore Japanese firms often see CSR not as a chance to generate more business, but as a means to minimize risks (by complying with standards). Consequently, Japanese CSR activities are often directed towards compliance with standards set by ISO regulations. Similarly, while German firms are sceptical about movements towards the standardization of CSR, Japanese firms and business associations are more welcoming towards such efforts. Differences also become obvious in the size of firms involved in CSR activities:



while in Germany, both multinational and small- and medium-sized companies are actively involved in CSR, in Japan, CSR is mostly limited to large multinational firms. Finally, employees play a leading role in CSR in German firms, while in Japan, management designs CSR strategies.

Summing up, the workshop made clear that both German and Japanese firms differ from Anglo-American firms in their

approaches to CSR. Institutional characteristics of the German and Japanese political economies help explain the specific CSR strategies adopted by German and Japanese firms. Due to the institutional similarities between Germany and Japan, further comparative studies of activities open up numerous opportunities for research. Interesting questions for further research include the role of civil society and the chances and limitations of state influence

CONFERENCE "RESOURCE COMPETITION AND POWER BALANCE IN EAST ASIA"



Energy policy and the development in Northeast Asia are central topics of the German EU Council Presidency or in European-Japanese dialogue. A conference held on March 2, 2007, entitled "Resource Competition and Power Balance in East Asia - An EU-Japan Perspective" was co-organized by the JDZB together with the Japanese Foreign Ministry, the EU Council Presidency, the European Commission and the Fujitsu Research Institute (Tôkyô).

Symposium “Chernobyl 20 Years beyond – Scientific Evidence and Novel Therapy for Radiation-exposed Victims”, November 30, 2006

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the catastrophe of April 26, 1986, and even today more than five million people live in the vast contaminated areas surrounding Chernobyl. To date, approximately 5,000 children and youth have developed thyroid cancer which can be traced back to radiation exposure. In the history of humanity we are dealing with a completely new experience. And we continue to worry about the health of the people who were in the immediate vicinity and suffered severe radiation and the workers who were mobilized to decontaminate the area and contain the catastrophe. In the whirl of events, Japan remembers, as the only country victim to atomic

bombs, its own painful experiences and continues to offer those affected support and ongoing medical assistance. However, German institutions and NGOs are also involved in providing medical assistance and in common research projects. And still today Japan and Germany continue to provide the greatest medical care support in the region. As a joint project of the Japanese-German Center Berlin and the Nagasaki University 21st Century COE Program, a conference was held in Berlin on November 30, 2006, to which medical and health professionals from both countries, WHO specialists and others were invited to discuss the latest scientific findings, and the focus and priorities of future medical research. Concretely it is about surveying the situation of chronic exposure to radiation with low level doses and the analyses of their health

effects, whereby we still cannot draw any conclusions. On the basis of the next cancer research report on Chernobyl we must therefore analyze the causes and the effects as well as carefully observe therapy methods and procedures and their long-term effects.

Elizabeth Cardis from the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) outlined the WHO Radiation Program and the problems in Chernobyl. Her presentation was then followed by members of the University of Nagasaki (21st Century COE Program) speaking about Chernobyl research on location. German scientists then spoke on the cytogenesis and molecular biological analyses results with thyroid cancer, the current state and the future tasks of radioisotope therapy following thyroid cancer operations as well as the

WELCOMING ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL

In January this year I was appointed to the position of Deputy Secretary General and successor to Professor Ueda Kôji at the JDZB.

Since Japan has learnt much from Germany in its development into a modern nation-state at the end of the 19th century, both countries have close ties that bind them together. And the JDZB, established in 1985, continues to contribute toward furthering relations between Japan and Germany through its many and diverse activities; and it continues to promote bilateral exchanges of knowledge, skills and experiences through its work. I am very pleased to accept the challenges that I will encounter at the JDZB.

In April 2006 the JDZB and the Japan Foundation agreed to work closer together and to promote joint activities.

Within the framework of this agreement, I was dispatched from the Japan Founda-



tion to take up the position of Deputy Secretary General of the JDZB.

For several years now cultural exchange has occupied a central role in my career. At the Japan Foundation headquarters located in Tôkyô I was responsible for the coordination of support for Japan Studies in Europe as well as youth exchange with the USA. In the mid 1990s

I lived in Vienna for four years where I worked in the Embassy of Japan, and I was responsible for the cultural and scientific exchange with Austria and the Balkan countries. I think that these experiences will be very helpful for my work at the JDZB.

In the 21st century Japan and Germany must face many and increasingly international tasks. The JDZB as a place for encounters and as a platform for bilateral exchanges will continue to master these tasks with great engagement. As part of our future-oriented projects this includes last but not least its youth exchange programs for young people who are the multipliers for the future generation and thus continue to guarantee the sustainability of the work of the JDZB.

Satô Hiromi

system for emergency medical procedures for exposure to radiation. Yuri Demidchik from the Belarusian State Medical University in Minsk then presented an outline of detailed clinical data on thyroid cancer. This was followed by a discussion on the possibilities of developing new treatment methods through regenerati-

groups of people who received various levels of radiation must be observed separately. Of the 134 individuals who were exposed to strong radioactivity directly after the accident and who have acute radiation damage, 28 people died within three months. We are assuming that the number of people involved in re-

tigations regarding Chernobyl should be primarily directed at examining the population for breast cancer and examining assessments of breast cancer caused by exposure to radiation. Of continued importance is the long term examination of the already 5,000 thyroid cancer patients that are of child or youth age,



ve medicine and cytokine therapy during multiple organ failure due to high levels of radiation exposure. The report on therapy results of those suffering from peripheral arterial disease through transplants of bone marrow stem cells clearly reveals the future development of research in regenerative medicine. The research results of a total of eleven specialists were based in facts and are very significant. After lively discussions the participants were unanimous in the closing round of their support for urgent research projects of the future.

The health effects of Chernobyl vary according to the amount of radiation each person was exposed to and the form of contamination. For example,

moving the damage in the decontamination process and who were exposed to an average lifetime doses of radiation of 100 mSv (Milli-Sievert) in only two years following 1986 is approximately 240,000 people. In addition to the approximate 120,000 people living in Pripjat, Chernobyl and other locations surrounding the nuclear power plant facilities that were immediately evacuated after the accident, there are about 5 million people living in the border regions of Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine who continue to live in areas that are largely contaminated.

The conference participants came to the following conclusions: in the future, cancer epidemiological inves-

in particular monitoring and combating the causes of relapse, secondary cancer illnesses and other radiation risks with the group receiving radio-iodine therapy. Also desirable for the future is a careful assessment of the cancer risk of groups, such as those involved in the decontamination process that were exposed to relatively high levels of radioactivity. The cancer registers kept in many countries are indispensable for the so-called epidemiological investigation. Moreover, the development of molecular genetic epidemiological investigations is important for those networks of international joint research, e.g., the Chernobyl Tissue Bank (CTB). We assume that the analysis of radiation sensitivity and im-

munity can be established on the level of genes as a molecular-epidemiological investigation.

The Chernobyl Tissue Bank houses valuable tissue samples and information concerning patients and must continue to receive international support in the future. However, cooperative efforts with Belarus are at the moment not optimal; yet consensus was reached at the symposium that Japan and Germany should support these activities in the form of bilateral projects. The aid assistance for the many people living in moderately contaminated areas as well as medical activities in heavily contaminated areas should not be limited to just radiation problems. Rather, a new organization of the health system infrastructure in general is required. In this respect, the completion of telemedicine and me-

dical training by far-distance education linking together the universities and clinics as well as centers and regions is of great importance. To this end, not only must we promote the telemedicine projects currently being developed in the administrative areas of Gomel/Belarus, but also similar projects in the highly contaminated areas of the Ukraine and Russia. The IAEA and the WHO have developed together various programs for medical assistance after radiation accidents, but they still point out the necessity to promote further research in regenerative medicine for multiple organ failure in order to overcome the treatment limitations of patients with high level radiation exposure.

Following the papers, at the end of the symposium the participants voiced their agreement in regard to the importance of comprehensive ex-

aminations for the delayed emergence of cancer resulting from exposure to radiation. As a consequence of the accident at the Nuclear Power Plant of Chernobyl, radiation risks shall accompany those that were affected for the rest of their lives. In the five years remaining to the 25th anniversary of the catastrophe, the assessment of radiation risk and the evaluation of corresponding countermeasures will undoubtedly continue and bring about new insights.

Prof. Dr. Yamashita Shun'ichi
World Health Organization, Geneva
University of Nagasaki, Graduate School
of Biomedical Sciences

SYMPOSIUM "HOMOGENEITY VERSUS MULTICULTURALISM – IMMIGRATION IN JAPAN AND GERMANY"



On November 23, 2006, the JDZB held a symposium titled "Homogeneity versus Multiculturalism – Immigration in Japan and Germany". In cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the topics covered included "Demographic change and immigration", "Immigration – economic aspects" as well as "Challenges for policies of integration." The panel discussion "Integration or Assimilation?" was chaired by the journalist Christian Stahl. (seated from left to right) Prof. Yamawaki Keizō (Meiji University, Tōkyō), Nafiz Özbek (IG-Metall), Michael Roth (Member of the German Bundestag), and Yoshitomi Shizuyo (Multi-language Center FACIL).

Conference “Kokoro”, November 2-3, 2006

On November 2 to 3, 2006, the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB) held the International Symposium on ‘Kokoro’ in association with University of Tôkyô Centre for Philosophy (UTCP) and the Konishi Foundation for International Exchange. The conference was truly international as six speakers from Tôkyô, one from the United States, and three from Europe gathered together to discuss the Japanese concept of ‘kokoro’ from multiple perspectives.

Prof. Kobayashi Yasuo (UTCP) made the keynote speech. According to Prof. Kobayashi, *kokoro* is a root-word, analogous to *âme*, *esprit* or *coeur* in French or *Geist*, *Herz*, *Seele* or even *Dasein* in German. Deeply rooted in Japanese culture and tradition, it is polysemic, ambiguous and almost untranslatable. However, it also allows us at once to comprehend and question the world and our beings in the world; in a word, it enables us to ‘do’ philosophy. By exposing the root-word *kokoro* to ‘fresh air’ and ‘external light’ which, to all participants’ delight, the JDZB amply provided, the conferen-

ce aimed at opening a philosophical dialogue between the West and the East and planting a tree of ‘philosophia’ (which Prof Kobayashi glossed as ‘being open to knowing and understanding’) in the desert of thought.

The Morning Session on November the 2nd, entitled ‘Kokoro-Complex in East and West’, examined how Western equivalents of *kokoro* were transformed when grafted in the Oriental soil. Prof. Kuroski Masao (Tôkyô Women’s Christian University) and Prof Nakajima Takahiro (UTCP) discussed the impact of Aristotle’s *De anima* on Japan and China, respectively. Both Japanese and Chinese Buddhists made no distinction between human and animal souls. When Christian missionaries came to the East, they therefore had to emphasise the uniqueness and immortality of human souls as opposed to animal souls. This fuelled debates between Buddhists and Christians in both countries. According to Prof. Kuroski, early Japanese Christians (Kirishtans) added a chapter on the immortality of human *anima-kokoro* in their translation of Aristotle’s *De Anima*, suggesting man consists of body and *anima rationale* or immortal soul. This interest-

ing idea can be understood as a precursor to the modern “mind-body dualism” which was developed in the period of the early Christians in Japan. Prof. Nakajima outlined the “De-Anima” dispute that was led by the Chinese Buddhists. They asserted that humans would have an “association of souls” with the souls of animals and began a controversy with the Christians who insisted that the human soul be handled differently. In the most radical case this “association” occurs alongside a “reification” of the souls belonging to different genera. And even though they suffice themselves, a “becoming” (*devenir*) of the other has already occurred. Through the affirmation of possibilities of such a Deleuzian “demonic reality” the people are released from their current relationships and receive the “freedom of new relationships,” thereby opening up the possibility for change in the world itself. The Buddhism discussed by Nakajima is tumultuous and radical. Prof. Dr. Joël Thoroval (l’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris), on the other hand, elegantly explored how neo-Confucianism became post-Kantian through a modern Chinese philosopher’s, Mou



Zongsan's (deliberately misleading) interpretation of Kantian ethics.

After the lunch break, during which heated discussion on the morning session continued, the afternoon session on 'The Mind and Culture' began. It sought to understand or overcome rifts between East and West by using the word *kokoro* as a bridge concept. Thus, Prof. Dr. John Maraldo (University of North Florida) proposed an epistemology of *kokoro* through his readings and translation of

is formed. This turn, this swing of the wrist is *kokoro*. *Kokoro* changes the line into a circle, relieves the tension of the binary opposition into movement. The line as such does not disappear. Rather in both sessions the drafter has the feeling that this attention toward the line has not been lost as such; instead through the willing devotedness to the movement of the circle, a new horizon of thought has been opened that neither exists in Europe or Asia.

on the first day stimulated intense discussion on *kokoro* among the participants. *Kokoro* has multiple meanings, as the topics discussed – even beyond the confinement of the conference hall.

On the second day, the *Kokoro* Conference was opened to a public audience and consisted of special lectures delivered by Prof. Kobayashi Yasuo (UTCP) and Professor Emeritus Sakabe Megumi (University of Tōkyō). These lectures, curiously enough, sought the locus of *kokoro*



works of Nishimura Shigeki (1828–1902) and Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), eminent Japanese philosophers. 'Knowing by heart' as suggested by Prof. Maraldo is an interactive process in which 'we move towards things and see ourselves in them, forming one whole with them.' This reciprocity between the self and things may remind us of its Chinese counterpart as proposed by Prof. Nakajima. Prof. Takada Yasunari (UTCP) most eloquently and passionately expounded on the 'gap' between Western consciousness preoccupied with the sense of ending and Eastern sensibilities, notably those of Kuki Shuzo which intend to deconstruct Western identity with recourse to iterative process and contingency. This latter provides access to the 'heartbeat moment of the eternal present'. Is *kokoro* not a transference of notions that gives the separative, differentiative and taxonomical European way of thinking an opportunity to gather, round off and unify all of these? A straight line is a straight line until the end. However, when you make allowances for a hand drawing a line to swing in another direction then you draw an arch, a circle

The first day of the conference was concluded with the talks of Prof. Dr. Marion Heinz (Siegen University) and Prof. Kitagawa Sakiko (UTCP), both of whom were concerned with Heidegger though with a different focus and emphasis. Prof. Heinz considered a significant moment in Heidegger's thinking, especially his lecture from 1928 to 1929 addressed to a specific audience at one of the most precarious moments in German History. By re-examining this lecture, Prof. Heinz sought to unravel what caused Heidegger to turn away from traditional philosophy and, most importantly, what possibilities this diversion can suggest to us. In a sense, therefore, she touched on the very *kokoro* of Heidegger's philosophy. Prof. Kitagawa was perhaps the only speaker who addressed the question of contemporary issues such as terrorism and violence. The question was answered by way of comparison between Heidegger and Watsuji, both of whom reflected on ethical questions from an ontological standpoint. Their ethics intend to clarify the ontological sources of normativity. Ethics may therefore lead to *kokoro* as conscience. Each of the talks

in the Noh play or medieval Japanese drama. In "Aporia of *Kokoro*: The Passion of Being in the Noh Play", Prof. Kobayashi focused on *Higaki*⁽¹⁾, one of the most significant and noblest plays in the Noh tradition. This work consists of two scenes with two actors 'Shite' (protagonist)⁽²⁾ and a 'Waki' (supporting player)⁽³⁾, each of whom embodies a different aspect of *kokoro*. The *waki* (the monk) opens up a space of 'betweenness' by abandoning his *kokoro* and going beyond time, life and death; by becoming 'kokoro-less.' In this world of betweenness the *waki* meets the *shite* (the leading actor). The *shite*'s body is burnt out and yet her *kokoro* is retained and detained by a passion for the Other. She remains tied to a river where her passion flows while wishing to be liberated from it. This is, according to Prof. Kobayashi, the aporia of *kokoro*.

The last lecturer of the conference was, very aptly indeed, Prof. Dr. Sakabe Megumi, prominent philosopher and aesthetician versed in Western and Eastern traditions. Her paper, entitled 'Polyphonic Subject and the Transversality of Gen-

ders: Possession, Narrative and Femininity in the Japanese Cultural Tradition', reached for the heart or rather *kokoro* of Japanese culture and tradition in which Noh drama plays a significant role, covering a number of topics ranging from Manyōshū to Mishima Yukio (1925–1970). In Noh drama originating in necromancy, the spirits of the dead effect the transposition of *kokoro* and voice, thus revealing the double structure of the speaking subject. This duality of the subject also manifests itself as the 'far-removed eyes of the spirit' (Riken no ken)⁽⁴⁾ in which the actor spiritually merges with the dead; his inner self is externalised both as that of the audience and of the spirit. Such dualism internalised in the person of the actor can be further extended as the transversality of genders in Noh drama where male actors play female roles. This feminine-elegant style (taoyameburi)⁽⁵⁾ thus dominated Japanese culture until the eighteenth century when it was replaced with a masculine noble style (Masuaoburi)⁽⁶⁾. Since then it has become obsolete, except for a few abnormalities. Prof. Sakabe's deep and gentle voice penetrated the audience's *kokoro*, planting a seed of Japanese philosophy in German soil.

Dr. Yamamoto Kumiko
Lecturer, University of Tōkyō

Notes by the Translator

(1) Play by Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443)

(2) A story teller who appears with a mask and tells his story to Waki in the first part of the play.

(3) An intermediary who appears without a mask between the stage and the audience is often portrayed as an authority figure.

(4) "To see oneself from afar"; Zeami's concept of the objective observation of one's self.

(5) As representative in "Kokinwakashū" or in short "Kokinshū" ("Collection of old and new Japanese songs"), that were finished at the beginning of the 10th century.

(6) As representative in the Man'yōshū.

"Kids Lecture": The JDZB welcomes students with a new series of events

The JDZB is seeking to intensify its youth activities. For this reason it is organizing a series of events entitled "Kids Lecture" which aim to awaken and nurture the interest of young people for the JDZB and Japanese society.

What is the birthrate in Japan? Which country covers the largest area, Japan or Germany? How many Japanese people live in Germany, and how many Germans live in Japan? 80 students learning Japanese in years 8 to 11 were asked to try and answer these and other questions in a Japan quiz which was part of a first event of a new series called "Kids Lecture" held on January 26, 2007. The JDZB staff organized the quiz to test the young people's knowledge of Japan.

Students of the Gustav Heinemann School and the Canisius College in Berlin aged between 13 to 17-year olds were invited to attend the event. JDZB staff explained to them which opportunities they have to visit the far away country through the programs fostered by the JDZB. For example, with their class in

the program sponsored by Daimler-Chrysler through the Takenoko Fund, as young trainees within the framework of the German-Japanese Exchange Program for young employees or – if they volunteer in youth work – within the German-Japanese Youth Leaders' Exchange program.

At the end of the lecture the JDZB showed the Japanese movie "Our House" (Minna no ie) in the original version. However, and not to fully overtax the students, the movie was subtitled so that they could follow the dialog of the movie released in 2001, and which follows the story about building a Japanese house and the many problems and unusual but traditional rituals that accompany its construction. The series of events shall be continued.

Answers to the Japan Quiz are:

The Japanese rate of birth: 1.26 children; Japan covers a larger area, to be precise 377,887 km² (in comparison: Germany covers an area of 357,026 km²); 30,000 Japanese live in Germany, while only 5,000 Germans live in Japan.

Would you have known the answers?



Abe Akie, Japan's First Lady, meets with German youth at the JDZB

On Wednesday, January 10, 2007, Abe Akie met with 17 young Germans who have either visited Japan within the framework of various JDZB exchange programs, or who attended a summer school together with young Japanese. It had been her specific wish to meet with young people during her visit to Berlin. During a lunch hosted by the Japanisch-Deutsches Zentrum Berlin, Abe Akie, the spouse of the newly elected in September last year Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, was given the chance to do so.

"The difference between Japan and Germany are as great as the differences between Tōkyō and Ōsaka"

"Why did you go to Japan?" was the question Mrs Abe asked the exchange participants during dinner, followed by the question of what impressed the participants the most. "I was most impressed by our contact with the Japanese students and how warmly the host family welcomed me," commented Martina Jahn. The 27-year old student is a volunteer in youth work and in 2001 was given the opportunity to visit Japan within the framework of the youth leaders' exchange program. The program carried out by the JDZB is funded by the Children and Youth Plan of the German federal government and the Japanese Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

"As participants of the German-Japanese Exchange Program for Young Employee we visited many institutions such as a city government administrative office, a garden nursery, a home for the aged, and a kindergarten. I was really interested in how everything is organized there," Sascha Kummer, an employee of the Federal Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs, summarized his impressions of Japan. Mario Krebs, staff member of the German Federal Foreign Office and participant of the "Young Leaders'

Forum" that was held for the first time in 2006 in cooperation with the Robert Bosch Foundation, came to the surprising realization during the Forum's first meeting that the difference between Germans and Japanese would be as great as the difference between people from Tōkyō and the Kansai region around the metropolitans Kyōto and Ōsaka – which earned an appreciative laugh from Mrs Abe.



The request made by the young Germans: "We need more of these sorts of exchange programs"

Toward the end Mrs Abe wanted to know was there anything the participants wanted to remember. "For those of us who participated in the exchange program our encounters with Japanese people and the stay in the country leaves us with very positive memories for the rest of our lives. Which is why it would be great if in addition to bilateral meeting currently taking place at the political level between Chancellor Merkel and your husband, these sorts of exchange programs were kept to enable even more young people the opportunity to participate," was the request made by Sascha Kummer to the wife of the Japanese Prime Minister. "I am very pleased that there are young people in Germany too who are interested in Japan. And I will give a report to my husband and Mr Nakasone who helped established the JDZB foundation many years ago of

my visit and seek to further deepen bilateral Japanese-German relations at this level," as the First Lady commented toward the end of the lunch.

A First Lady after more than five years – an unusual Japanese woman

After more than five years Japan has with Abe Akie a First Lady again. And thus the Japanese media is focused on the 44 year-old woman. The Abes do not have

any children, but Mrs Abe is heavily involved with children and youth. She comes from a family business dynasty; her father Matsuzaki Akio was president of Morinaga & Co, a producer of confectionary. Mrs Abe worked as an announcer for a radio broadcaster in Shimonoseki, the home town of her husband; she is a great fan of South Korean television soaps, and has her own, personal blog in the internet – thus a Japanese woman quite distinctive even in her own country. And she also left quite an impression on the young people at the JDZB. "The next time you are in Japan for a longer visit, please contact me so we can arrange another meeting," was her request before Abe Akie continued with her program itinerary: a visit to a Berlin SOS Kinderdorf.

(Excerpt from a JDZB press release from January 10, 2007)



How does the system of vocational education work in Japan? What is the situation for young Japanese employees? Which social problems are hidden behind the terms NEET (not in employment, education or training) and FREETER (part-time, casual or temporary workers)? What do young people in Japan think about their future, their families, about love? These were a few of the topics examined by the German delegation of the "German-Japanese Youth Exchange Program for Young Employees" during their stay in Japan in November 2006. Their itinerary in Japan included visits to Tôkyô, Ôgaki und Gifu.

The participants were given a chance to find out more about working and daily life in discussions and exchanges with young Japanese who work in various fields of employment. The young Germans were also given the opportunity to admire the beauty of famous Mt Fuji, as well as enjoy a relaxing dip in an Onsen (hot spring), spend a weekend with a Japanese family, and try the unfamiliar culinary challenges of natto (fermented soya beans) or raw fish. The delegation

returned to Germany full of impressions of another culture, but also reflecting on their own cultural background.

This program takes place each year with the Japanese-German Center Berlin organizing the German side and the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center responsible for the Japanese side. Funding is provided through the German Federal Government's Youth Plan and through the Japanese Ministry for Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology.

Study Program for Youth Work Specialists:

- German Delegation in Japan:
May 19–June 2, 2007 (Preparation Seminar in the JDZB: April 20–22)
- Japanese Delegation in Germany:
December 2–15, 2007

Exchange Program for Young Employees:

- German Delegation in Japan:
June 13–27, 2007 (Preparation Seminar in the JDZB: May 4–6, 2007)
- Japanese Delegation in Germany:
August 7–20, 2007

Youth Group Leaders Exchange Program:

- German Delegation in Japan:
August 8–22, 2007 (Preparation Seminar in the JDZB: July 6–7, 2007)
- Japanese Delegation in Germany:
October 23–November 5, 2007

Young Leaders Forum – Summer-school

C: Robert Bosch Foundation, Stuttgart
Date: August 26–September 5, 2007
in Japan

Junior Experts Exchange Program

C: German Federal Ministry for Education and Research; German Federal Ministry for Economics and Technology; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Tôkyô

Date: June 21–July 2, 2007,
Workshop at JDZB June 30, 2007

German-Japanese High School Student Exchange – Takenoko-Fonds

C: DaimlerChrysler AG, Stuttgart
Applications for 2007 still possible.

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE JDZB

The Society of Friends is a registered association residing in the JDZB. Its aim is to support the JDZB and its activities conceptually, financially and socially. For the selection and determination of concepts and projects of the JDZB and for their realisation, specialised work groups have been formed for the topics "Natural and Engineering Sciences". and "Economics and Politics". The Society of Friends invites companies and institutions, which are interested in German-Japanese cooperation, to become a member and help to work for the success of the JDZB.

Contact:

Dr. Gerwald F. Grahe, E-Mail: freundeskreis@jdz.de

EU/G8 PRESIDENCY, GLOBAL QUESTIONS**Conference: EU-Japan Cooperation in Science and Innovation**

C: European Japan Experts Association, University of Milano

Date: June 15, 2007, in Milano

VSJF Annual Meeting: Security in Japan – New Dimensions and Understandings

C: German Association for Social Science Research on Japan (VSJF)

Date: November 22–25, 2007

Conference: Civil Society and Political Decision-Making in the EU

C: The Japan Foundation, Tôkyô

Date: 4th Quarter 2007

RESOURCES AND ENERGY SECURITY**Conference: Central Asia (IV)**

C: German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin; Tôkyô; Keizai Kôhō Center, Tôkyô

Date: July 9, 2007, in Tôkyô

Conference: Ressource Efficiency and Factor X: Japan and Germany at the Forefront

C: Wuppertal Institute for Climate, the Environment, Energy

Date: Fall 2007

CITIES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTS**Symposium: Urbanization and Mega Cities in Asia**

C: German Association for Asian Studies, Hamburg; German Asia Pacific Business Association, Hamburg

Date: May 11–12, 2007

Symposium: Biodiversity and Sustainable Development in Japan and Europe

C: 21st Century of Excellence Program

“Biodiversity and Ecosystem Restoration”, University of Tôkyô

Date: Part I on July 5, 2007 in Berlin, Part II October 2–6, 2007, in Japan

Symposium: Shrinking Cities and Forgotten Territories

C: University of Dortmund; Institute for Behavioral Studies, Tôkyô

Date: 4th Quarter 2007

AGING SOCIETY**Symposium: In the Autumn of Life**

Date: November 28, 2007

STRUCTURAL REFORM AND INNOVATION**Panel Discussion: Privacy and Safety in the Global Information Society**

Date: April 18, 2007

Symposium: Convergent Media and Networks – New Business Chances and Economic Opportunities

C: Munich Group; Fraunhofer Institute for Open Systems of Communication (FOKUS, Berlin)

Date: April 18–20, 2007, in Berlin

Conference: Decentralization and Administrative Reform

C: University of Halle-Wittenberg; Waseda University, Tôkyô

Date: September 28–29, 2007, in Tôkyô

Symposium: Technology Roadmaps and the Transfer of Knowledge

C: German Federal Ministry for Education and Research; German Federal Ministry for Economics and Technology; Federation of German Industry, Berlin

Date: Fall 2007

GERMAN AND JAPANESE COMPANIES IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION**Symposium: How to cope with new and changing EU Regulation? Strategies by European and Japanese Companies**

C: University of Munich, EU-Japan Center for Industrial Cooperation, Brussels

Date: June 2007, in Brussels

Conference: Strategies of German and Japanese Companies toward China

C: Economic Promotions Bureau Düsseldorf; Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Düsseldorf

Date: Fall 2007, in Düsseldorf

DIALOG OF CULTURES**8th German-Japanese Grantee Seminar**

C: German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD, Bonn)

Date: July 12–13, 2007

Symposium: Talking with and about Japan – 120 Years of Research on Japan at Berlin Universities

C: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences (BBAW)

Date: October 15, 2007, at the BBAW

Conference: Youth Culture in a Globalized World

C: Leipzig University

Date: Fall 2007

Symposium: Dialog of Civilizations

C: German Embassy, Tôkyô; French Embassy, Tôkyô

Date: 4th Quarter 2007, in Tôkyô

For more information please refer to:
www.jdzb.de --> Activities

NOTE

C: = in cooperation with
Venue: JDZB, if not stated otherwise.

EXHIBITIONS

Episography: Paintings and Computer Graphics by Shimomura Yutaka

Opening: April 27, 2007, 7 p.m.

Duration: until June 8, 2007

Streets and People in Berlin and Tôkyô**- Photos by Uchimura Kôsuke**

Opening: June 23, 2007, 7 p.m.

Duration: until September 28, 2007

JDZB OPEN DAY

on July 23, 2007

From 2 p.m.

Open House with Cultural Program

From 7 p.m.

Exhibition Opening / Jazz Concert

DAHLEM MUSIC EVENINGS (7.30 p.m.)**82nd:** Contemporary Music

Date: July 10, 2007

83rd: Contemp. Music (Y. H. Wylegala)

Date: Oktober 10, 2007

84th: Tango Evening with „Cantango“

Date: November 16, 2007

85th: Christmas Concert

Date: Dezember 14, 2007

The JDZB has a new internet homepage since January 2007 in which you are able to download the *jdzb echo* or subscribe to have it sent to your e-mail address after registering your details on the corresponding pages of our website. For those who cannot access our website, you may continue to receive the *jdzb echo* in its printed version.

NOTE

Conventional Chinese, Japanese and Korean proper name order is generally followed in all texts: family name first.

THE LIBRARY OF THE JDZB

The library possesses almost 10,000 volumes, of which approximately 60% are in Japanese. The emphasis lies on reference works such as encyclopedia, dictionaries, statistical data etc. In addition, textbooks and special literature on areas such as Japanese economics, politics, society and culture also make up the collection. The library is a reference library only; it is therefore not possible to lend out books. However, a photocopier is available for required literature. The library has the following opening hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10.00 am – 4.00 pm

For further information, please contact the Head of the Library Dr. Kuwabara.

Course	Date	Weekday	Time
Elementary 1a/b	23.10.2006–26.09.2007	Mon+Wed	17.30–19.30 hrs
Elementary 2	24.10.2006–27.09.2007	Tue+Thu	17.30–19.30 hrs
Intermediate 1	23.10.2006–26.09.2007	Mon+Wed	17.30–19.30 hrs
Intermediate 2	26.10.2006–27.09.2007	Tue+Thu	17.30–19.30 hrs
Advanced 1	23.10.2006–24.09.2007	Mon	17.30–19.30 hrs
Advanced 2	25.10.2006–26.09.2007	Wed	17.30–19.30 hrs
Work Group Translating	to be decided		17.30–20.30 hrs

(No courses on public holidays, Easter holidays from March 30 until April 15, 2007)

SPECIAL EVENT

Taiko Drums

C: German-Japanese Society Berlin

Date: September 18, 2007

Venue: Berlin City Hall

SPECIAL PROJECT**16th Meeting of the German-Japanese Forum**

C: Japan Center for International Exchange, Tôkyô

Date: October 2–3, 2007, in Tôkyô

LANGUAGE COURSES

Information on all new JDZB language courses and other Japanese language courses are in the brochure "Nihongo – Learning Japanese in Berlin", which is published every September and can be obtained from the JDZB.

jdzb echo

Published quarterly in
March – June – Sept. – Dec.

Publisher: Japanese-German Center
Berlin (JDZB)

Address:

Saargemünder Str. 2

D-14195 Berlin

Tel.: +49-30-839 07 0

Fax: +49-30-839 07 220

E-Mail: jdzb@jdzb.deURL: <http://www.jdzb.de>

Editor: Michael Niemann

Tel.: +49-30-839 07 186

E-Mail: mniemann@jdzb.de

The JDZB is located in Dahlem (ward of Steglitz-Zehlendorf) at the corner of Clayallee, vis-a-vis the station Oskar-Helene-Heim of subway line U 3.