

Germany and Japan - Partners for the Challenges of the Future

Dr. Clemens von GOETZE

Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Japan

Germany and Japan can look back on a longstanding close partnership: last year we celebrated the 160th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, which date back to the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation concluded in 1861 by the then Kingdom of Prussia and the Empire of Japan. From its first beginnings in the field of trade, our relations have developed intensively and broadly to political, economic, scientific, social and cultural fields over the past decades.

Our two countries share a partnership of values as constitutional states and liberal democracies. The diversity of our societies is represented in our parliamentary political systems. At the international level, we both believe that a rules-based international order is the foundation for any form of interstate interaction. As active members of the G7, the G20, the United Nations or other international forums, we are committed to this goal, to freedom, the rule of law and democracy, as well as to global disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Germany is chairing the G7 this year and Japan next year – we are working hard to advance issues central to the major industrialized nations across the board and to pass the baton smoothly. Japan and Germany also support reform of the United Nations Security Council as part of the G4.

In Germany and in Japan, we are convinced that the human rights standards agreed upon by the international community are universal values: They

are to be respected by every state and non-state actor, and their violation can never be an ostensibly internal matter of an individual state.

The rules- and values-based international order is under pressure as it has not been for a long time. With its brutal war of aggression in Ukraine, Russia is challenging the international community in a way never seen before. This turning point in history is bringing us and our partners worldwide with whom we share the same values closer together: we will stand decisively against Russian aggression. Together with the G7 partners, Germany and Japan have reacted resolutely and cohesively to this Russian aggression and imposed severe sanctions.

In other areas too, although mostly without direct physical violence, many rules and standards whose observance we had taken for granted are now being openly questioned in some cases. In other cases, decisions of international courts are disregarded, as in the case of the decision of the international arbitral tribunal in The Hague on territorial claims in the South China Sea. We must counteract the disregard and erosion of established international rules in the interests of the stability and prosperity of our countries. In doing so, we want to work with like-minded partners within the framework of our networks and partnerships.

Germany put this in concrete terms in the Indo-Pacific Guidelines published a year and a half ago. The visit of the German frigate “Bayern” to Japan and its subsequent participation in moni-



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toring the UN sanctions imposed on North Korea was one of the steps taken to implement our guidelines. Between our approaches and plans on the one hand and the Japanese concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific, we quickly find great overlaps and numerous parallels.

Exchanges at the political level are very close and diverse: there are currently over fifty regular bilateral consultations

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between high-ranking government representatives of our two countries. Economic relations are also very intense: the bilateral trade volume was 44.6 billion euros immediately before the pandemic in 2019 and then dropped to 38.8 billion euros in the pandemic year 2020. Germany exported goods worth 17.4 billion euros to Japan and, conversely, imported a volume worth 21.4 billion euros from Japan to Germany. Currently, about 450 German companies are present in Japan, throughout very different sectors of the economy. Conversely, around 1800 Japanese companies are active in Germany.

Our societies are facing similar challenges: demographic change, environmental and climate protection, energy transition, digital transformation, to name just a few. New technologies, disruptive innovations and artificial intelligence offer us opportunities to meet these challenges. Wherever we can, we should join forces as major technology nations to jointly develop suitable and appropriate solutions.

The German-Japanese Energy Partnership, for example, serves this purpose. With the involvement of government, science and the private sector, we are discussing suitable ways to make our economies CO₂-neutral in order to preserve and protect our planet for future generations. In the field of economic security, one of the focal points of the new Japanese government, we also maintain a growing exchange on issues of data security, critical infrastructure protection, supply chain security or export controls for dual-use goods.

Numerous city partnerships and the activities of the German-Japanese and Japanese-German societies – some 50 each in Germany and Japan – repeatedly bear witness to our lively cooperation at all levels of society. I very much hope that these partnerships can soon be filled with life again through lively reciprocal visits, which has been impossible for such a long time due to the pandemic, but should urgently be resumed.

In addition to our Goethe Institutes in Tōkyō and Osaka/Kyōto, the offices of the political foundations, the German Academic Exchange Service, the German House of Science and Innovation in Tōkyō, the East Asia Society, the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tōkyō and many others, the Japanese-German Center Berlin is a supporting pillar of our bilateral cooperation in the fields of politics, science, education and culture.

The Japanese-German Center Berlin provides us with an excellent framework to discuss all the issues of common interest between Japan and Germany that have been raised and to work out solutions. As with other institutions, communication suffers from the lack of opportunity to meet in person. For a meeting center like the JDZB this is naturally a very special burden. All the more reason to appreciate how the center continues its work energetically and successfully, even under the current difficult conditions. I look forward to many more events at the JDZB throughout this year.

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The JDZB is planning a conference on “Artificial Intelligence and the Human – Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Science and Fiction” from May 11 to 13, 2022 in collaboration with the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society (HIIG) and Waseda University. Below is an interview with Dr. Thomas Christian BÄCHLE, Head of the Research Program “The Evolution of Digital Society” at HIIG, and Dr. NAGAI Yukie, Project Professor at the International Research Center for Neurointelligence at the University of Tōkyō.

How do cultural representations of artificial intelligence (AI) and the actual conceptual and technical advancement of AI influence each other?

In fact, these two areas cannot be so clearly distinguished from each other. At the beginning of a technical development there is always an idea, or at least a rough idea, of what function, what benefit or – more generally speaking – what meaning a technology has or should have.

Especially in the case of developments that people like to call “revolutionary,” i.e., those that are supposed to be categorically new, references can quickly be made to cultural texts that have anticipated certain technologies. These concepts, developed and tried out in fiction, so to speak, are translated into scientific innovations, research and development goals. They also take their inspiration from popular

Dear Readers!

33 years ago, the first issue of the “jdz echo” was published to fulfill the “long cherished wish of our committee members and friends” to “report on our activities and planning” with a “newsletter” (issue 1/May 1989). Then as now, we would like to inform you about our offerings, communicate the outcome of discussions, show possibilities for exchange and allow you to participate in current Japanese-German developments. In the meantime, however, completely different, digital communication channels have become available. In the future, we will therefore reproduce our familiar columns from the “jdz echo” in the blog “ECHO+” on our website.

Although you are holding the last printed edition of our magazine in your hands, you will of course continue to hear from us, e.g. via our e-mail newsletter. We also invite you to connect with us on social media – on Facebook, Instagram and, from now on, LinkedIn. See you soon!

Dr. Julia MÜNCH (JDZB Secretary General)
and
KIYOTA Tokiko (Deputy Secretary General)



culture, such as comics, film, television. At the same time, however, the aspects discussed in politics, journalism, religion or ethics about possible future scenarios are also part of the imaginaries that exist around a technology.

How do these imaginary and cultural representations of AI in turn affect political and social

discourses about AI – for example in Japan and in Germany?

They have the important social function of making hopes, opportunities or dangers associated with AI visibly and understandably for as many people as possible. The crucial thing here is to open up a space for debate. Imaginations therefore not only influence research and development, but also guide political decisions, journalistic reporting and public opinion. They are thus not mere entertainment, but always an essential and formative part of the reality of technologies.

This is especially true for AI, because the technology associated with it is imagined as an intelligence similar to humans but at the same time independent and autonomous from them, equal or even superior to us. This naturally stimulates the imagination, in a broad spectrum from cooperation to competition, from AI as the solution to all our problems to the feared demise of humanity. In the country-specific view, imaginations can of course not be understood independently of certain larger discourses and interests. The so-called “Japanese Robot Culture”, for example, not only corresponds to the self-image of many developers and companies. The Japanese government has deliberately used this buzzword as political branding, which is sup-

posed to be useful for the business location. In Europe, it is readily adopted: What can we learn from the Japanese? What developments in Japan should we be wary of? After lectures on robots in Japan, I am often asked whether we should delegate nursing work to the cold, emotionless machine, as is supposed to be the case in Japan. This is a demarcation gesture and fulfills a rhetorical function. Robots in Japan – they are then something special for Japanese and Europeans, and for both sides it serves its purpose.

In your research, you compare Japanese and European concepts of human-like robots. How is “humanity” in AI defined in the respective discourses, or are there apparent significant conceptual differences?

In comparative research, you have to be very careful not to tell stories about the exotic country in the Far East, especially when you look at these phenomena with European eyes. It is popular, for example, to always use Shintoism to describe the Japanese relationship to technical artifacts: for the Japanese, everything is animate, so it doesn't make much difference whether it is a robot or a human being. This simplistic view is a bit simplistic. Of course, there are very specific contexts in the history of ideas and different patterns in

dealing with robots can be recognized. In addition to the imaginaries about robots, this also becomes clear in the interaction with them. A developer once told me that it makes a difference to whom he presents his robots. While people from Japan mainly enjoy interacting with the machine, Europeans want to prove to the robot and its developer as quickly as possible that the machine is not really intelligent after all, that it has no consciousness, feels nothing, etc. This reflex certainly has to do with a European understanding of robots and of how humans are conceived, namely as rational, sentient, indivisible but also special individuals with autonomy and unique consciousness. Many fears and uncertainties formulated in Europe probably also stem from this particular conception of humans. If you like, the Japanese attitude is more inclusive, less focused on the uniqueness of the human being.

These many levels of meaning are a great challenge for research: What does AI mean in different cultures? Which interpretations are launched specifically, and for whom do which images of AI serve which purpose? It is enormously difficult to distinguish this without constructing cultural differences oneself.

You conduct research in the field of neuro-intelligence on cognition in robots – and in humans. What exactly is the subject of your research?

My research aims at understanding the development principles of human cognitive function using a computational approach and thus designing a support system for those with developmental impairment. Humans acquire cognitive abilities in the first few years of life, but it is unclear how the brain and body implement them. In contrast to AI, human intelligence is open ended and acquires multiple cognitive abilities cooperatively and continuously, producing individual and group diversity. In experiments using a neural circuit model mimicking the human brain in a humanoid robot, I have been able to verify the neural network underlying this continuity and diversity of cognitive function. Such research, which until now has rather been empirical, can also be used to support people with developmental impairment.

How are cognition in humans and in robots related? What surprising findings were you able to make in your research?

One result is the unified account of the

cognitive function development based on the theory of “predictive coding”. The brain is a “predictive machine” that combines bottom-up sensory signals with top-down prediction signals generated by the internal model acquired through experiences, seeking to minimize prediction error in these signals. I proposed that cognitive functions such as self-other cognition, imitation, and prosocial behavior are acquired through the prediction-error minimization process and demonstrated this in robot experiments using neural circuit models. I found that an imbalance in combining sensory and predictive signals is potentially the cause of the developmental impairment found in autism spectrum disorder, etc. These results show that two aspects of cognitive development, continuity and diversity, can be explained uniformly based on predictive coding theory, and have important implications for developmental (impairment) research.

How is the relationship between humans and robots evolving as technology advances?

By developing AI and robots that reproduce human cognitive functions, we can better understand human intelligence. The concept of neurodiversity was proposed in the



late 1990s, and the idea expanded of seeing developmental disorders as individuality that manifests as normal fluctuations in the neural architecture. It is difficult to evaluate what kind of individuality a person has, and even the cognitive characteristics of the self, especially in people with developmental impairment, are difficult to grasp. But, if robots can develop and learn like humans and reproduce and acquire human cognitive characteristics, human intelligence can be understood through the medium of robot intelligence. We hope that the development of such artificial intelligence technology will enable us to realize a symbiotic society that makes use of the individuality of people and robots.

How it all began... 33 years of "jdz echo" – from printed newsletter to electronic magazine ECHO+.

Michael NIEMANN, Head of Press and Public Relations at the JDZB

The Number One edition of "jdz echo" appeared in May 1989 with the headline "One year of full operations at the JDZB". The first Secretary General of the JDZB, Dr. Thilo Graf BROCKDORFF, announced that the new newsletter would be published quarterly and provide information on current and future activities. The lead article on page one was intended as a forum for JDZB committee members, with German and Japanese contributions alternating – and indeed it was the case that in the first five years after publication we were able to

After completing their terms of office, committee members bid farewell in the "echo" with retrospectives, such as FC Chair Dr. Wilfried GUTH, Deutsche Bank (No. 52, September 2000), Vice President DANIELMEYER (No. 63, June 2003), FC Vice Chair Prof. OSHIO Takashi (No. 84, September 2008), and President Ambassador (ret.) TAKASHIMA Yūshū (No. 111, June 2015).

Prominent members of the governments from both countries and Berlin have expressed their ideas and political thoughts as editorials in echo. For example, Ambassador KIMURA Keizō, then still in Bonn, on "Japan looks to the new Europe" (No. 4, June 1990), Vice Foreign Minister SAITO Kunihiko on "The JDZB and Japanese-European exchange" (No. 21, February 1994), State Secretary Dieter KASTRUP with "German-Japanese relations – dialogue and cooperation" (No. 24, August 1994). "Further Deepening of Japanese-German Relations" was advocated by Ambassador NAKANE Takeshi (No. 100, September 2012), while Peter PRÜGEL, Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific at the German Foreign Office wrote on "Shaping Our Future Together" (No. 101, December 2012).

Moreover, newly appointed ambassadors to the other country shared in the "echo" their thoughts on their new post, the host country, or German-Japanese relations in general: Ambassador Heinrich-Dietrich DIECKMANN with "First Impressions from Japan" (No. 26, December 1994), Ambassadors TAKASHIMA Yūshū (No. 62, March 2003) and YANAGI Hide-nao (No. 134, March 2021) with greetings on taking office, Ambassador Dr. Hans Carl von WERTHERN with "Japan – Remarks of a Newly Enthusiast" (No. 108, September 2014), as well as Ambassador Ina LEPEL "Japan Enthusiast" (No. 130, March 2020) and Dr. Clemens von GOETZE in this edition. Another noteworthy contribution was by Federal President Johannes RAU on "Tradition and Modernity: Living Together after September 11" (No. 60, September 2002).

In general, many contributions dealt with the JDZB and its role in German-Japanese relations. "Expectations for an intellectual meeting place" were formulated by Ambassador ARIMA Tatsuo (No. 25, October 1994) and "Expectations for the JDZB" by Ambassador TSUMORI Shigeru (No. 29, June 1995). "The Growing Role of the JDZB" was noted by Ambassador KUME Kunisada (No. 48, August 1999), "More tasks for German-Japanese relations" by Ambassador NOMURA Issei (No. 56, September 2001), and "Advocating for the further strengthening of German-Japanese Relations" by Ambassador

YAGI Takeshi (No. 115, June 2016). FC Chairman Prof. Bernhard SCHEUBLE (Merck) advocated "Learning from each other – networking with each other" (No. 73, December 2005), FC Chairman Gerhard WIESHEU (B. Metzler seel. Sohn & Co. Holding AG) advocated "Time for closer cooperation between Japan and Germany" (No. 129, December 2019), and State Secretary Miguel BERGER from the Federal Foreign Office hailed "160 years of German-Japanese friendship" (No. 135, June 2021).

From the business world, for example, FC member Edzard REUTER (Chairman of the Board Daimler Benz), wrote on "Germany in Competition" (No.11, June 1992), FC member NAGAOKA Minoru (President Tōkyō Stock Exchange) followed with the article "The Japanese Securities Market" (No.15, February 1993). "The Japan Initiative of German Business" was presented by BDI President Hans-Olaf HENKEL (No. 35, October 1996), and "A German-Japanese Trade Union Initiative" by DGB Chairman Dieter SCHULTE (No. 37, February 1997) followed right behind.

The scientific community also had its say. On the Berlin side, the member of the Senate responsible for science was in charge of the JDZB. Accordingly, the Senator for Science and Research, Prof. Manfred EHRHARDT, first contributed to "On the Future of the JDZB" (No. 7, May 1991). Prof. Günter STOCK (Schering Ltd) wrote on "Berlin – City of Science, Partner of Japan" (No. 92, September 2010). "Science and Education in the Sign of Diversity: Topics for German-Japanese Dialogue" came from FC

JDZB-Echo

Mitteilungen des Japanisch-Deutschen Zentrums Berlin (JDZB)

Ausgabe 1 / Mai 89

Ein Jahr Vollbetrieb des JDZB

Mit dieser Erstausgabe von JDZB-Echo will das JAPANISCH-DEUTSCHE ZENTRUM BERLIN (JDZB) einem lang gefassten Wunsch unserer Gesamtleitenden und Freunde gerecht werden, nämlich über durchgeführte und geplante Aktivitäten zu berichten. JDZB-Echo wird vierteljährlich erscheinen und an Unternehmen und Institutionen verteilt werden, die Interesse an unserer Arbeit haben. JDZB-Echo wird auch über die Aktivitäten des Präsidiums des JDZB berichten und gilt gleichzeitig als Mitteilungsblatt dieses Vereins.

Die Stiftung JDZB wurde im Januar 1985 gegründet, nachdem die japanische und die deutsche Regierung 1983 vereinbart hatten, das Gelände der ehemaligen japanischen Botschaft in Berlin-Tiergarten wiederherzustellen und dort eine wissenschaftliche Begegnungsstätte einzurichten. Japan finanziert den Wiederaufbau seines Gebäudes, das Land Berlin stellt das Stiftungskapital, die laufenden Kosten werden zwischen der japanischen und der deutschen Seite geteilt. Zweck der Stiftung ist es, die deutsch-japanische und internationale Zusammenarbeit auf den Gebieten der Wissenschaft und Kultur und deren Zusammenhang mit dem Wirtschaftsleben zu fördern und zu vertiefen.

Das JDZB erfüllt seine Aufgaben in vielfältiger Weise. So werden z.B. Seminare, Kolloquien und Konferenzen in den Bereichen Wirtschaft, Politik und Gesellschaft sowie der Natur- und Ingenieurwissenschaften veranstaltet.

Die Zusammenarbeit und der Austausch von Wissenschaftlern beider Länder gefördert. Dokumentationen für die Veranstaltungen – in der Regel zweisprachig in Deutsch und Japanisch – erscheinen, die zusammengefasst sind, wenn möglich mit Fachkollegen, interessierten Institutionen zur Verfügung gestellt werden können.

Kurse zur Einführung in die japanische Sprache und zur Vorbereitung auf Japan angeboten, sowie Ausstellungen und andere Veranstaltungen durchgeführt. Die Aufgabenstellung ist gegenwarts- und zukunftsbezogen; die historische Dimension wird miteinbezogen, soweit sie für das Verständnis der gegenwertigen Zusammenhänge von Bedeutung ist.

JDZB-Echo No. 1 erscheint ein Jahr nach Beendigung unseres Gebäudes und der Aufnahme des Vollbetriebes im April 1988. In der Vorlaufphase 1985-88 hat das JDZB - vornehmlich in anderen Räumen und in Zusammenarbeit mit befreundeten Institutionen und Firmen - bereits einzelne Konferenzen durchgeführt; das Hauptziel dieser Veranstaltungen war es, Erfahrungen für unsere Arbeit zu sammeln. Auf dieser Grundlage haben wir abh. unsere Projektplanung und -durchführung systematisiert und den Finanzierungsbedarf angedeutet können. Im ersten Jahr unseres Vollbetriebes haben wir uns nicht nur bemüht, bereits eine Reihe von eigenen Projekten zu realisieren, sondern unser Haus auch einer möglichst großen Zahl von Berliner Bürgern und Vertretern des öffentlichen Lebens sowie aus der Wirtschaft in Berlin, Bonn, Frankfurt am Main und in Japan zu präsentieren.

Ab April dieses Jahres haben wir, was die Nutzung des Gebäudes anbelangt, einen restriktiveren Weg eingeschlagen. Unser Wunsch ist es, das Gebäude "mit Leben zu erfüllen"; die Aktivitäten in unserem Hause müssen sich im Einklang mit unserem Stiftungszweck stehen. Außer für die eigenen Veranstaltungen des JDZB steht das Gebäude deutschen und japanischen Universitäten, wissenschaftlichen Instituten und Wirtschaftsverbänden - dem Senat und dem Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, dem japanischen Generalkonsulat, dem Japanischen Kulturinstitut Köln sowie den Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaften und schließlich den Mitgliedern des Präsidiums des JDZB zur Verfügung.

Dr. Thilo Graf Brockdorff
Generalsekretär des JDZB

Die Berliner Senatsrat für Wissenschaft und Forschung, Prof. Dr. Barbara Kroschel-Siel, am 29. März 1989 im JDZB anlässlich einer gemeinsamen Konferenz der Richtschicht bei neuen Informationsangeboten.

"Ich begrüße es außerordentlich, daß es gelungen ist, eine Einleitung zu schaffen, in der Japan, Deutsche und Europäer aber auch Vertreter anderer Nationen ein gemeinsames Nord und Süd im Rahmen wissenschaftlicher Konferenzen durchzuführen. Ich hoffe, daß diese Konferenzen, die von uns ausgetragen werden, zum Nutzen und Vorworte - was es denn beinahe - absolute."

attract almost two-thirds of the then members of the Foundation Council (FC) and Board of Executives to contribute. The first of these were President Ambassador (ret.) MIYAZAKI Hiromichi (Daichi Kanyō Bank) on "New Tasks for the JDZB" (No. 6, February 1991) and Vice President Prof. Hans Günter DANIELMEYER (Siemens AG) on "Perspectives for Exchange between Japan and Europe" (No. 2, September 1989). While the jdz echo ("echo") was initially published only in German and Japanese, an English-language edition was added starting with No. 9 (January 1992).

New presidents and secretaries general (SG) have always introduced themselves in the "echo" with greetings and reflections after taking office, such as President KIMURA Keizō (no. 36, December 1996), SG Volker KLEIN (no. 44, autumn 1998), SG Angelika VIETS (no. 61, December 2002), President KUME Kunisada (No. 64, September 2003), SG Dr. Friederike BOSSE (No. 77, December 2006), Ambassador NAKANE Takeshi (No. 124, September 2018), SG Claudia SCHMITZ (No. 125, December 2018), and most recently SG Dr. Julia MÜNCH. (No. 133, December 2020).



member Prof. Gesine FOLJANTY-JOST, University of Halle-Wittenberg (No. 114, March 2016).

In 1993, the German-Japanese Dialogue Forum (today: German-Japanese Forum GJF) was established, a non-governmental discussion

group of individuals from business, science, politics, culture and the media of both countries, which still meets alternately in Berlin and Tōkyō. They discuss various topics, and provide recommendations for German-Japanese relations to the heads of government of both countries. A report on the "First Meeting of the GJF in Bonn and Berlin" was in issue No. 16 of April 1993; since then, all meetings of the GJF have been covered in detail in echo, especially with guest contributions by GJF members and with photos on the first page, which often also documented the visit of the meeting participants to the respective heads of government.

A major topic were the visits of members of the Japanese Imperial Family, first and foremost "The visit of the Japanese Imperial Couple to the JDZB" (No. 19, September 1993), followed by "Japanese Prince and Princess at the JDZB" with Prince and Princess Akishino (No. 49, Fall 1999). Then in June 2011 it was a great honor



to have His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince Naruhito – today's Emperor – participate in and address a German-Japanese symposium on sustainable environmental, resource and disaster management at the JDZB (No. 96, September 2011).

Not only political but also cultural topics played a major role: FC member and Director of the Japanese Culture Institute Cologne (JKI) SHIMIZU Yōichi (No. 23, June 1994) commented on the "Promotion of Cultural Exchange in the New Countries", and SAKATO Masaru, Japan Foundation (No. 59, June 2002) described the "Changing Image of Japan and Future Cultural Exchange". "The Goethe Institute in East Asia" presented FC member and Secretary General of the Goethe Institute Johannes EBERT (No. 117, December 2016), "The Activities of the Japan Foundation in Germany" FC member and Presi-

dent of the Japan Foundation ANDŌ Hiroyasu (No. 128, September 2019). FC member and director of the Martin Gropius Building Gereon SIEVERNICH reflected on "Museums and Soft Power" (No. 119, June 2017).

The JDZB's move to Dahlem in March 1998 was covered in the "echo", from the laying of the foundation stone of the new JDZB building (number 39, June 1997) to the topping-out ceremony (No. 41, December 1997) to the inauguration (No. 43, Summer 1998 Summer) and the ceremonial handover of the outdoor facilities (No. 47, June 1990).

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 2011 was the subject of several lead articles: For example, in Number 95, June 2011, "Frivolous ignorance: Japanese stoicism is not exotic. What is exotic is our ignorant view of a foreign culture" by Matthias NAß, a reprint from DIE ZEIT of March 24, 2011; "Impressions from a country between trauma and awakening" by MP Dr. Rolf MÜTZENICH (No. 97, December 2011), "One Year after the Great East Japan Earthquake – A Comparison of Energy Policies in Japan and Germany" by WAKISAKA Noriyuki, Asahi Shimbun (No. 98, March 2012) and "One Year after Fukushima" by Manfred HOFFMANN, Delegate of German Business in Japan (No. 99, June 2012).

Another topic was twinning: "20 years of twinning Berlin – Tōkyō" was celebrated by the Deputy Governor of Tōkyō, AKIYAMA Toshiyuki (No. 105, December 2013), "25 years of twinning Berlin – Tōkyō" by the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael MÜLLER (No. 126, March 2019).

Anniversaries of the JDZB Foundation were given special recognition. FC member and scientist SOTOBAYASHI Hideto made the start in No. 12 of August 1992 on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the JDZB with his article "The East and the West". SG Dr Thilo Graf BROCKDORFF followed with "13 Years JDZB – Review, Evaluation, Outlook" (No. 46, April 1999). SG Angelika VIETS celebrated "20 Years of the JDZB" (No. 70, March 2005), and "25 Years of the JDZB" was the contribution by Ambassador Volker STANZEL in Issue No. 90 of March 2010. Indeed, the anniversaries with great guest speakers generated special response. In 2010, for example, the keynote speech by former German Chancellor Helmut SCHMIDT on "Japan, Germany and their Neighbors" on the occasion of the JDZB's 25th anniversary, the speech by German Chancellor Dr. Angela MERKEL at a lecture event organized by the daily newspaper Asahi Shimbun and the JDZB in Tōkyō on the occasion of the JDZB's 30th anniversary, and the keynote speech by former German President Christian WULF "Friends help each other

– Germany and Japan" on the same occasion (No. 111, June 2015).

If you have noticed that certain Japanese names have appeared several times so far, this is no coincidence: Some ambassadors of Japan in Germany have accompanied the development of the JDZB after the end of their term of office as President of the Foundation, just as some directors of the Japanese Culture Institute Cologne have worked and continue to work at the JDZB as Deputy Secretary General after the end of their term of office.

For those who have now acquired a taste for



the magazine and would like to read more: the issues from No. 106 (March 2014) onwards can be downloaded as PDFs from our website. However, there are still printed copies of each issue of "jdzb echo" in all three languages in the archive, please contact pr@jdzb.de if you are interested. This issue, number 138, is the last printed issue of jdzb echo. In the future, you will find various articles from the Japanese-German context such as conference reports, interviews, and reports from the exchange programs in our blog ECHO+; the tradition of the prominent lead article will also be maintained in the form of contributions from the JDZB or from partners. However, there are still some technical requirements to be met – we ask for a little patience and hope to be able to present our contributions to you in an appealing form by the summer.

Finally, a personal note: The discontinuation of the print edition of the "jdzb echo" coincides with my departure from the JDZB. Since I helped shape the "jdzb echo" from start to finish as the responsible editor, I also look back somewhat wistfully on interesting and varied years. I wish the Foundation all the best for the future in the service of German-Japanese friendship.

Since its establishment in the mid-1980s, the JDZB has made it its mission to promote and deepen German-Japanese and international exchange at all levels of business, science, culture, society and politics. Against the backdrop of current developments and challenges, the JDZB is setting new accents in 2022 across its portfolio of offerings:

This year, for example, we will be focusing intensively on the megatrend of “**knowledge culture**,” which we will be examining from various perspectives across cultures and generations as part of a theme week.

In selecting topics for our diverse analog, digital and hybrid conferences and meetings, we are also guided by issues that are equally important to Japan and Germany, such as “**global responsibility**,” “**sustainability and the environment**,” “**digital transformation**,” “**state, economy, governance**” and “**demographic change**”. We already opened the year with several virtual panel discussions on the transformation of **communication** – with a view to cutting-edge technologies,

Our Focus 2022: Knowledge Culture!

The JDZB is setting new accents in 2022. One of our innovations this year is deliberately focusing on different perspectives on what we see as a relevant and forward-looking topic with respect to Japanese-German relations: the megatrend of knowledge culture. “The megatrend of knowledge culture is changing what and how we know [...], new forms of innovation, learning and research are emerging” writes Zukunftsinstitut GmbH on its website – this think tank considers knowledge culture to be one of twelve current global megatrends in trend and future research. In our understanding at the JDZB, the term encompasses a wide range of aspects around the meaning of knowledge, around the generation and transmission of knowledge, around teaching and learning in schools, in training as well as in the tertiary education sector, but also around lifelong learning – in professional life and in private initiatives, e.g. in social and political engagement. We expect a very fruitful exchange of the potentially very different Japanese and German perspectives.

From our point of view, transformation pro-

cesses are particularly exciting:

but also to interpersonal aspects. As part of the cultural program, we plan to increasingly attract young artists to the JDZB through “**Open Stage**” initiatives. In the future we will regularly open our building with its **exhibitions** and the Japanese-German “**Info Lounge**” (previously: “**Library**”) outside of the usual hours for interested parties (starting in May, for example, on every first Monday of the month also as part of an #**OpenMonday** into the evening hours). In addition, we will send young people on **interactive “discovery tours**” in various cities in Japan and Germany at the same time and then share their experiences with you digitally.

Our online courses (currently mainly **calligraphy and Japanese lessons**) are particularly well received by professionals and people outside of Berlin, which fortunately greatly increases our reach. We therefore plan to expand this offering even further after the pandemic.

The current travel restrictions are probably the biggest hurdle for the implementation of **exchange programs**.

cesses are particularly exciting: How does the selection and absorption of knowledge change in the face of the digital flood of information? How do we consume knowledge, how can we deal with the complexity that comes with it? Can we do this at all – or is the world becoming dumber rather than smarter? Are we facing an unfolding of creative potential through new opportunities – or is our standard of knowledge leveling down along with our attention span between WhatsApp and Instagram? One aspect of knowledge culture that we deal with time and again, especially at the JDZB itself, is the exchange of knowledge across countries and cultures – this is part of our foundation mission. This experience is particularly important for young people. The JDZB creates opportunities for this within the framework of its exchange programs, for example for young experts or young volunteers. We want to turn our spotlight on this as well and use selected examples to provide media coverage of how international knowledge exchange between Japanese and German young people can be experienced. Digitization and artificial intelligence are opening up entirely

new worlds of knowledge. Information and communication technologies contribute to a new kind of knowledge transfer. An international exchange of managers and experts from Japan, France and Germany will therefore focus on digital learning. This includes, for example, the upgrading of classrooms with digital technology – which was repeatedly criticized as inadequate, especially during the pandemic in Germany – offers of virtual reality or augmented reality in learning, but also playful aspects (“gamification”), which can be integrated into learning and facilitate it.

Although not an adequate alternative, virtual formats will again serve as a useful supplement to face-to-face offerings this year. We are particularly grateful for the creative commitment of our alumni. In order to fully develop our potential, we will consciously open our doors to widen our future reach to even more people who would like to actively contribute to the shaping of Japanese-German relations: With this in mind, we are specifically looking for **synergies with partners**. We are also currently working on a **co-working concept**, under which you will be able to make use of our common spaces and our postal address for a fixed monthly fee. Informal **networking salons** are also being planned!

To keep you up to date with our plans, we continue to develop our **website** with its blog, our **newsletter** offering and our social media presence. Please follow us on **Facebook**, **Instagram** and, as of now, **LinkedIn**.

Dr. Julia MÜNCH
JDZB Secretary General

A special focus on “knowledge culture” will be shared organizationally by the entire JDZB and will not be fixed to certain formats. We want to develop creative synergies by bringing closer together conferences for executives, cultural offerings and youth exchanges. Let us find out together, from Japanese and German perspectives and beyond, how we can learn even better from and with each other in the future.

JDZB Focus 2022, September 12-16, 2022!

Dr. Phoebe Stelle HOLDGRÜN
Head of Project Management

CONFERENCES

Symposium: Artificial Intelligence and the Human – Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Science and Fiction

C: Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society (HIIG), Berlin; Waseda University, Tōkyō
Date: 11-13 May 2022

Annual Conference JSPS Club: Bioeconomics

C: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Bonn Office
Date: 20-21 May 2022

Symposium: Decarbonisation and Digitalisation

C: German Economic Institute, Cologne; Fujitsu, Tōkyō

Date: 1-2 June 2022, in Tōkyō

Symposium: Aging and Caregiving in German and Japanese Communities

C: German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tōkyō; Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Tōkyō Office
Date: 9 June 2022, in Tōkyō

Symposium: Artificial Intelligence in Law. Opportunities and Risks.

C: German-Japanese Association of Jurists. V. (DJJV); Waseda University, Tōkyō; German Federal Bar Association, Berlin; German House of Science and Innovation (DWHI), Tōkyō.
Date: 10 June 2022, in Tōkyō

Symposium: Attractive for Immigrants? Japan and Germany in Comparison

C: University of Duisburg-Essen
Date: 24 June 2022

COURSES

All Japanese language courses will continue to be held online. In case of new registration, the registration form can be ordered at fse-kikawa@jdz.de

Calligraphy courses are being held in person at the JDZB as well as online.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

- Junior Experts Exchange Program
- German-Japanese Young Leaders Forum
- Youth Group Leaders Exchange Program
- Study Program for Youth Work Specialists
- Exchange Program for Young Employees
- JDZB SCIENCEYOUTH PROGRAM

C: in cooperation with. Events in chronological order, preliminary planning as of March 2022, please verify each on the website. Venue is JDZB, if not stated otherwise. More information on the website: <https://jdz.de>

CULTURE PROJECTS

Exhibition: ‘Japan’s Wooden Heritage’, Photographs by FUJITSUKA Mitsumasa
On the occasion of the anniversary „160 years of friendship between Germany and Japan 2021/2022“ and within the Berlin-Tokyo town twinning

C: Japanese Culture Institute Cologne (The Japan Foundation); in cooperation with the Berlin Senate Chancellery and the Embassy of Japan
Venue: Berlin City Hall (Rotes Rathaus, Vorhalle)
Duration: 21 March to 29 April 2022
Open: Monday to Friday from 9:00 am until 6:00 pm, admission free

Photo left: Aizu Sazae-dō (“Top-Snail-Hall”) © FUJITSUKA Mitsumasa



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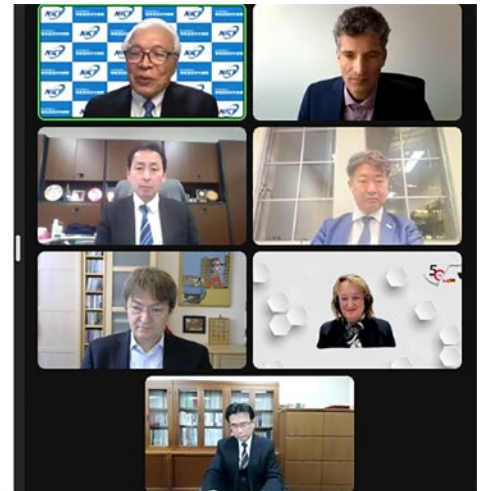
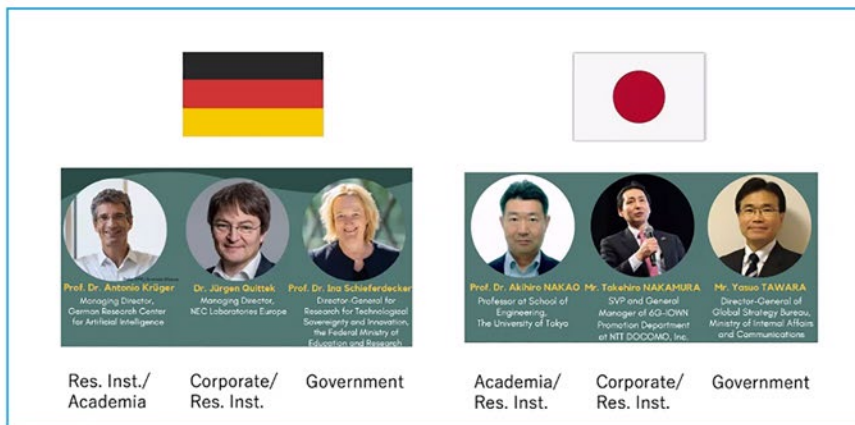
Info-Lounge
Open: Tuesday noon until 6 pm + Thursday 10 am until 4 pm



Exhibition “Theory of Everything” Installations, Prints and Collages by Kornelia HOFFMANN and YAMAMOTO Noriko – Opening on 16 June 2022, Duration: 17 June until 7 October 2022.

Picture left: Weltformel 01 © YAMAMOTO Noriko; Picture right: scent rubbing © Kornelia HOFFMANN / Photo © Lukas KLOSE

Open: Mon-Thu 10am - 0.30pm + 1pm - 5pm, Fri 10am - 0.30pm + 1pm - 3.30pm. Admission free. Starting in May, we have longer opening hours in the evening on every first Monday of the month (#OpenMonday).



Symposium “Future Communication Technologies: Beyond 5G and 6G – Opportunities for Japanese-German Collaboration”, held in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan in Germany was hosted virtually via the JDZB on 17 February 2022.

The keynote speaker was the President of the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), Dr. TOKUDA Hideyuki.



One year after the symposium “Crisis Communication” was held in February 2021, the JDZB continued its cooperation with the Japan Foundation with another focus on communication: a panel discussion on the “Future of Communication and Us” on 4 February 2022 hosted virtually by the JDZB – a Japanese-German roundtable discussion on social, philosophical and intercultural aspects of the present and future of communication.



Photo above: After the German-Japanese Young Leaders Forum 2020 had to be temporarily postponed several times, the “current” cohort “YLF2020+” has already met several times virtually as part of an “Interim Program” – the last time on 16 January 2022 for a joint “New Year’s celebration”! This cohort does not let itself be easily defeated and looks forward to meeting soon “in real life”!

Photo right: After 9 of the 16 participants who live in Germany already had the opportunity to meet “in real life” in Berlin on 2 October 2021, the 7 who live in Japan were finally able to meet “in real life” on 11 December 2021! The highlight of the day spent together was a joint visit to the “Tokyo Christmas Market” in Hibiya Park and one (or rather several) cup(s) of mulled wine!

