

Name	Ilse LENZ	City / Country of the Home Organization Bochum, Germany
Title of Research	Feminism and Political Change in Japan and Western Welfare States in Comparative Perspective	
【Home Organization & Title】 Faculty of Social Science, Ruhr-University Bochum Professor for Sociology (Gender/Social Structure)		
【Invitation Period】 October 5, 2009 ~ December 5, 2009		
【Counterpart at Kyoto University】 Prof. Kimio Ito (Graduate School of Letters)		
<p>【Title of Lecture】 Feminism and Political Change in Japan and Western Welfare States in Comparative Perspective</p> <p>【Seminar / Conference Presentation】</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation: 政策研究班・国際シンポジウム「格差社会ドイツにおけるジェンダー政策と家族政策」; Oct.19, 2009 at Faculty of Letters Main Bldg.; approx. 35 participants; organized by Kyoto University GCOE ● Presentation: Intersectionality in Theoretical and Empirical Perspective. Oct.23, 2009 at Hokusei Daigaku Sapporo ● Presentation: Women's Movements and the Welfare State in Comparative Perspective. Oct.24, 2009 at Hokusei Daigaku Sapporo ● Presentations: 1) Wellbeing in Feminisms and Gender Policies in Germany and Japan. 2) Gender and Elections in Germany 2009. Nov.4-5, 2009 workshop at the German Institute for Japanese Studies: The Pursuit of Happiness and Gender Policies. ● Presentation: The New Women's Movement and Gender Policies in Germany. Nov. 20, 2009 at Meiji Daigaku ● Discussion at Global COE Symposium "Family and Intimacy in Asia"; Nov.23, 2009 at Inamori Foundation Memorial Hall; 80 participants; organized by Kyoto University GCOE ● Presentation: Gender Policies in the Context of Neoliberalism. Dec. 2, 2009 at Ochanomizu Daigaku ● Presentation: 「変容する親密圏/公共圏」; Dec.5, 2009 at Faculty of Letters Main Bldg.; 103 participants; organized by Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University & Kyoto University GCOE 		

【Results/Achievements】

Education

The course I taught was about *Feminism and political change in Japan and Western welfare states in comparative perspective*. Students came i.e. from sociology of work, of gender, of urban sociology. We found a good way of communicating: I held a lecture in slow English and students could discuss and ask questions in English or Japanese.

The course analysed the interchanges between women's movements and gender policies in a comparative welfare state perspective. Two similar conservative welfare states, namely Germany and Japan, were selected and compared with the dissimilar case of Sweden, a social democratic welfare state. In the beginning we discussed basic concepts like the typology of the welfare state by Gøsta Esping-Andersen and the following debate on gender welfare regimes. The article of Jane Lewis and Gillian Pascall about diverse gender welfare regimes and equality politics provided an excellent groundwork for comparison. It was possible to relate to the Japanese gender welfare regime and thus to a familiar background and then to expand the horizon to diverse systems.

We also spent time and energy to discuss concepts and theories of women's movements in social movement research. This knowledge had to be discussed and opened up as it is not yet part of the 'academic canon' and was only known to a part of the students.

In the next step we concretised the relationship of gender policies and feminism by an in-depth look at some special issues. The students had articulated issues which interested them especially in the first session of the course and we debated them: 1. sexuality and health 2. city planning and architecture 3. gender equality in work and family 4. gender mainstreaming and diversity. Because they had proposed these topics they brought in experience and interest from their own background. The issues of gender policies could be brought closer to life experiences and independent individual critical reflection of the students.

Research

The COE for Reconstruction of the Intimate and Public Spheres in 21st Century Asia and the Department of Sociology were an ideal space for my research: I could meet and exchange with colleagues working in my main fields of interest which are gender, migration, social structure, social movements and politics in comparative gender welfare regimes. It is a rare occasion to have top researchers in these fields at one place as Prof. Ito and Prof. Ochiai on gender, Prof. Asato and Prof. Aoyama on migration and Prof. Tarohmaru on social structure. I want to thank these colleagues for advising me and cooperating in coming projects and publications.

1. The first project I am planning is about complex inequalities according to gender, class and migration in Germany and Japan. I was able to survey the rapidly growing literature on differences in society (格差社会) and to look at its mostly economic theoretical basis as well as to look at other theoretical groundings of research on complex inequalities in the Bourdieu tradition. Also I had the chance to discuss the merits of using the panel studies of the SSM and JGSS with and to contrast it with the Population Census.

I am aiming to submit a research proposal in Germany in this year on this topic in cooperation with colleagues at the Department of Sociology. A first article with the results of my stay has been finished for a book edited by leading members of the section on social structure and social inequality of the German Sociological Association: “Von der Mittelschichtgesellschaft zur Differenzgesellschaft? Zur Dynamik der neuen Mitte in Japan” (“From middle class society to differentiated society? The dynamics of the new middle strata in Japan”).

2. The second project is about feminism and gender politics in comparative welfare regime analysis. Together with Prof. Michiko Mae I will publish a source collection of the new women’s movement in Japan in 2010 for which I could collect further materials. Also a joint publication with Prof. Ochiai is in progress.

3. The third project is about conservative gender discourses and backlash in Japan and the USA. I also hope to develop a project proposal in cooperation with colleagues at the Department of Sociology.

Also I had the chance to present lectures at the COE and at other universities in Japan. The discussion gave me very valuable suggestions. I want to thank the colleagues and especially Prof. Ochiai for this wonderful chance to learn and develop my approaches and projects in this stimulating and innovative space!

