



Call for papers

Understanding inequalities: Multidisciplinary approaches and comparative perspectives

**First EHESS - ISS joint workshop
(11-12 July 2014, Institute of Social Science, Tokyo University)**

In the wake of neo-liberal ascendance since 1980s and accelerated economic globalization after the end of the Cold War, advanced countries have been commonly facing the problems of 'new inequality'. Whereas the agenda of combating social exclusion came to the fore in the EU and its member states, the 'Kakusa Shakai' (unequal society) discourse focusing on youth unemployment has widely attracted public attention in Japan.

In a sense human societies have always been heterogeneous and potentially divided along genders, generations, or between those with power and the ones without power. Market economy tends to enhance societal stratifications. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that human societies are founded on community values and produce counter movements for solidarity when societal integration is jeopardized, and that human agencies have kept on elaborating institutions in order to alleviate various kinds of inequalities.

During the *trente glorieuses* the advanced countries could enjoy a brief respite of reduced inequality thanks to historically unprecedented economic growth and institutional arrangements of welfare states. However, two Oil Shocks deprived the advanced countries of the favorable economic conditions and profound changes ensued both in the real and ideological worlds to generate problems of 'new inequalities'. Postwar Japan and France share many commonalities such as state led industrial

development, capitalist economy with the protected agricultural sector, political tensions and economic gaps between the metropolitan center and regional peripheries. Thus the two countries should have experienced problems of 'new inequalities' in ways similar to each other.

How are problems of 'new inequality' socially constructed and what are the realities in France and Japan? What are the political responses and institutional arrangements against these problems specific to both countries? What are the historical and cultural factors that render the responses different from each other? How should Japan and France cope with new inequalities in the future? Social scientists can tackle with the *problematique* in ways according to their own disciplinary traditions and past academic accumulations. Through synergetic comparisons from various social science perspectives, we could hopefully contribute to the deepening of our understandings on the new inequalities and to further widening of the scope for future research explorations.

We welcome any proposal that contributes to this research agenda. A limited number of grants will be available on the EHESS side to cover a part of the transportation and accommodation costs.

Deadline for the submission of abstracts (Max. 300 words): 31. December 2013

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