

Ebene der Staatschefs seit 1949 – wertete Tang als Präzedenzfall und möglichen Anknüpfungspunkt eines zukünftigen Treffens Xis mit Taiwans neuer Präsidentin Tsai.

Sven Bernhard Gareis, Deputy Dean des George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, beschrieb in seinem Vortrag zu aktuellen und vergangenen chinesischen Wahrnehmungen taiwanischer Wahlergebnisse Chinas Reaktion auf den Machtwechsel in Taiwan im Verhältnis zu den militärischen Drohgebärden in den Jahren 1995/1996 als vergleichsweise zurückhaltend (Moderation: P. Christian Hauswedell, Vorsitzender der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Asienkunde, Hamburg). Nicht zuletzt aufgrund des amerikanischen Einflusses auf Taiwan sei zunächst Stabilität in der Taiwanstraße zu erwarten, jedoch bleibe offen, wie lange der Status quo noch fortgeschrieben werden könne. Kontrovers wurde daraufhin diskutiert, ob der „Konsens von 1992“ tatsächlich weiterhin die Verkehrsregeln der sino-taiwanischen Beziehungen bestimme oder ob Tsai zukünftig außenpolitisch deutlich konfrontativer auftreten werde.

Hierauf stellte Martin Wagener unterschiedliche Perspektiven zur asymmetrischen Kriegführung der taiwanischen Streitkräfte dar (Moderation: Manfred Bohr, BAKS). Die *porcupine strategy* zum gezielten Aufbau asymmetrischer Verteidigungsfähigkeiten mache Taiwan zu einem schwer verdaulichen Invasionsopfer. Ziel sei, zu rüsten, um nicht kämpfen zu müssen. Dem könnte auch der Einsatz weitreichender Boden-Boden-Raketen gegen das Festland dienen, um den Preis für eine chinesische Invasion in die Höhe zu treiben. In Anbetracht der begrenzten Durchhaltefähigkeit Taiwans gehe es gleichwohl nur um eine Verzögerung bis zum Eintreffen eines US-Entsatzes. Unklar bleibe, ob die Volksbefreiungsarmee tatsächlich die notwendige psychologische Robustheit zur Durchführung einer derartigen Mission besitze und ob in Anbetracht der langjährigen Ein-Kind-Politik Chinas und der zu erwartenden Opferzahlen eine solche Militäraktion innenpolitisch durchzuhalten wäre.

Im Anschluss stellten Dirk Schmidt von der Universität Trier und Günther Schmid als ehemaliger Professor der Hochschule des Bundes für öffentliche Verwaltung schlaglichtartig einige Gedanken zu etwaigen Zukunftsmodellen für die Taiwanstraße vor (Moderation: Gunter Schubert, Univ. Tübingen). Neben einer möglichen Annäherung durch ökonomische Integration und den Abschluss eines Friedensvertrages wurde ebenso die Hongkong-Lösung als größtmögliche Autonomie Taiwans unter nomineller Zugehörigkeit zu Festlandchina vorgestellt. Zu anregenden Diskussionen führte die Annahme, eine Gewaltverzichtsinterpretation der chinesischen Regierung am Beispiel der überwundenen innerdeutschen Teilung könne positive Auswirkungen auf die Taiwanfrage haben.

Letztlich bestand Einigkeit unter den Teilnehmenden, dass die unterschiedliche Auslegung der Souveränitätsfrage den derzeitigen Status quo bedeutet und dieser als gesichtswahrender Konsens seine stabilisierende Wirkung entfaltet. Der Umgang Tsais mit diesem stillen Übereinkommen werde maßgeblich beeinflussen, ob sich die sino-taiwanischen Beziehungen in einer Eskalationsspirale verlieren oder weiterhin von Stabilität geprägt sein werden.

Kevin Kälker

## **Activism in Contemporary Japan: New Ideas, Players and Arenas?**

University of Zurich, Zurich, November 5–7, 2015

Japan's voluntary sector is multifaceted and dynamic, and the incorporation of NPOs saw quite a boom in the late 1990s after new legislation was passed. At the same time, small niches of subcultural activism developed, enriching Japan's stagnant protest scene with new tactics. Despite all this, the absence of large-scale confrontational public demonstrations and

citizen protest movements — or: lack of media coverage thereof — has led to the impression of a virtually “invisible” civil society in Japan.

The “triple disaster” of March 2011 came as a turning point for the valuation of civic activism in Japan: new citizen groups formed and large-scale anti-nuclear demonstrations emerged. These movements evolved to include further controversial issues, e. g. the planned “re-interpretation” of Article 9; younger activists from the SEALDs student groups entered the scene, enriching it with fresh protest tactics.

In the light of these latest developments, the scope and relevance of civic engagement in contemporary Japan must be re-evaluated. This conference brought together social and political scientists with media scholars, as well as Japanese activists involved in recent projects to critically discuss emerging issues and theoretical implications of contemporary Japanese activism.

The conference was opened by Prof. Patricia Steinhoff’s (University of Hawai’i) keynote speech, which addressed theoretical questions regarding the interplay between Japanese activism research and European and American perspectives. As her key argument, Steinhoff reminded us to not be content with applying Western thought to the Japanese context, but instead to strive to work on its cross-national applicability. The first panel began with Prof. Dr. Gesine Foljanty-Jost (Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg), who explored the role of the “citizen-as-activist” in Japan. She explained the paradigm shift from a vertical policy-making approach towards a “partnership approach” between citizens and local governments, which opened new opportunities for participation. However, both the lack of resources and restricted political opportunities create limitations in realizing political innovations. She was followed by Dr. Christian Dimmer (University of Tokyo), who presented a case study of Japan’s “First Collective House” Kankanmori in Tokyo, whose history can be traced back to the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s. He argued that — as an experiment with new forms of social relations — this project prefigures a more inclusive and sustainable future society. Prof. Dr. Gabriele Vogt (University of Hamburg) then presented her view on the lessons learnt from the emergence and failure of the Okinawa Reversion Movement. While marginal in terms of resources, this movement’s prevalent strength relied on innovative strategies of contentious action and was based on its strong movement identity, which was framed along a joint historical consciousness of the activists.

Prof. Dr. Simon Avenell (Australian National University) then presented his transnational perspective on Japanese environmental activism since the 1970s. He discussed the central role of intermediaries, so-called “rooted cosmopolitans”, who relayed information to local Japanese groups about movements abroad and helped to connect activists into transnational mobilizations. Prof. Dr. Fabian Schäfer (University Erlangen-Nuremberg) subsequently explored the chances and limitations of online social media in becoming alternative political spheres. Based on his case studies, he tentatively argued that within these newly developing online spheres lies the potential of forging alternative sites of digitally enhanced civic participation.

The third panel began with Prof. Dr. Carl Cassegård’s (University of Gothenburg) presentation on homeless activism in contemporary Japan. He specifically explored the meaning of space within these groups, arguing that access to alternative arenas, such as counter-spaces or no-man’s-lands, has been an important aspect in processes of empowerment. He was followed by Dr. Julia Obinger (University of Zurich / SOAS London), who shared insights into her ongoing project on political consumerism in Japan. By analysing changing roles and expressions of Japanese consumer citizens, she interprets political consumerism as an emergent form of

civic engagement. Prof. Dr. Apichai Shipper (Georgetown University) then compared immigrants' rights activism with xenophobic activism. He found that despite the obvious differences in their respective views, these groups did share a similar socio-economic background.

The fourth panel sought to bring together Japanese activists from various fields to share their first-hand experiences in current projects. The panel was chaired by Prof. Dr. Yoshitaka Mōri (Tokyo University of the Arts), and the participants were Ms. Shiraiishi Hajime (Journalist and Activist, Tokyo), Mr. Sakurada Kazuya (Media Activist and Lecturer, Osaka) and Mr. Narita Keisuke (Activist "Irregular Rhythm Asylum", Tokyo). Each participant briefly presented their projects, showcasing different facets of innovative forms of engagement. Both the panel and discussion were conducted in Japanese. The audience who used this unique opportunity to gain insights into the daily work of these activists engaged in a lively discussion.

The final panel started with Prof. Dr. Koichi Hasegawa (Tohoku University), who shared his theoretical work on "The Effects of 'Social Expectation' on the Development of Civil Society in Japan." He argued that the successful implementation of a 'social expectation' played the central role for creating a social flow towards non-profit organizational activities in Japan since the 1990s. Then, Ms. Ayaka Löschke, M.A. (University of Zurich) gave insights into her Ph.D. project on a national mothers' network, who began campaigning for radiation safety directly after 3/11. She showed how the focus of the network changed since 2011, suggesting that a shift occurred from the national level back towards the local level. In the closing paper, Dr. Robin O'Day (University of Tsukuba) presented preliminary findings on the network "Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy" (SEALDs) in Tokyo, discussing successes and challenges of this emerging group. Through his audio-visual presentation, which was based on interviews with activists, Dr. O'Day clarified how this group developed their particular way of contesting the Abe government.

Julia Obinger