

sulted in an exceptionally low level of consumers' trust in these governmental institutions. To sum up, these presentations showed how societal developments such as migration, as well as dwindling assurance due to bad performance, mismanagement or controversial behavior lead to an increasing trust challenge for Japanese society.

The consequences of deteriorating trust were the other main focus of presentations. For example, Jeffrey Broadbent concluded that in the Japanese labor policy field, the vertical structure of closed groupism with vertical social control and low level of generalized trust as core elements results in the rejection of innovation. Consistently, all three speakers of the third panel on economic developments – Franz Waldenberger, Saori Katada, and Richard Katz – revealed high economic costs as a consequence of the low levels of trust. For instance, corporations that stick to a well-established stakeholder system of long-term relations lack the ability to fully trust actors outside this system. This comes at the expense of innovation aimed at internationalization, growth and legal adjustment. In their presentation on the nuclear energy sector, Alexandra Sakaki and Kerstin Lukner showed that even though the government took far reaching reforms in terms of oversight institutions and safety standards after the Fukushima catastrophe, once public trust has been lost, it proves hard to be reestablished, therefore placing a long-lasting obstacle to government action.

In sum, it became clear that trust has an enabling nature, whereas mistrust places high obstacles to cope with changes and challenges to actors at the societal, economic, political or individual level. This fits Yamagishi's depiction of general trust as encouraging risk taking and thus opening up new opportunities for action.

Tarina Greyling, Simone Kopietz, Kerstin Lukner, Alexandra Sakaki

## Exploring Culture and Behavior by Economic and Psychological Experiments

Association for Cross-Cultural Experimental Economic Research (ACCER), IN-EAST Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, 25.–26. November 2014

The 5th ACCER workshop on “Exploring Culture and Behavior by Economic and Psychological Experiments” was hosted by the DFG Research Training Group 1613 “Risk and East Asia” and the IN-EAST School of Advanced Studies at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

While experimental methods are well-established in the fields of social and cultural psychology for several decades already, experimental economic research only recently integrated as a distinguished discipline. As only few behavioral economists engage in cross-cultural comparisons of decision making processes so far, the ACCER workshop series represents a unique platform for an interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge and cooperation.

The workshop consisted of two keynote lectures, nine contributed paper presentations and eight poster presentations. The first keynote lecture was given by Professor Toshio Yamagishi (Hitotsubashi University, Japan) under the title “Cultural Differences in Beliefs and Preferences.” He introduced the concept of so-called behavioral default strategies that are automatically used in order to adapt to rules and norms that exist in our social environment. During his lecture, Professor Yamagishi presented the results from a number of his publications that impressively demonstrate the importance of cultural differences not only in behavior, but especially in the beliefs and preferences that are responsible for our actions. The second keynote lecture was given by Professor Simon Gächter (University of Nottingham, UK) on “The Rule of Law and Efficient Cooperation across Cultures.” As one of the most renowned ex-



perimental economists Professor Gächter plays an important role in popularizing the young discipline of cross-cultural economics. In the workshop he presented the results from a large-scale international experiment on cooperation behavior. Thereby he encouraged the audience to always keep the big picture in mind also while engaging in what he calls “close-up” cross-country research.

The nine contributed papers covered a wide range of topics. Experiments were conducted in a variety of countries like India, China, Indonesia, and Japan, investigating research questions about (amongst others) leadership behavior, overconfidence, trust, and cooperation. All talks motivated lively discussions which also extended to the coffee breaks and the collective dinner. Participants in the poster sessions had a chance to introduce their work in progress in short 5-minutes presentations on the first day of the workshop, while an extended poster session was scheduled for the second day.

Overall this 5 ACCER workshop provided an up-to-date overview on state of the art cross-cultural experimental research in economics and social psychology. The invited keynote lectures by two of the most distinguished researchers on the field particularly contributed to a great value added for all participating scientists.

The Association for Cross-Cultural Experimental Economic Research was founded by a group of researchers who are engaged in cross-cultural and inter-cultural empirical research in economics primarily by applying experimental methodology. By establishing a network of scholars working in this field, ACCER aims at encouraging and supporting a lively academic exchange to enhance intercultural understanding and deal with intercultural differences. For more information on ACCER visit [www.accer.org](http://www.accer.org).

Kai Duttle

## **Chinas politisches System. Gerüstet für das 21. Jahrhundert?**

Trierer China-Gespräche, MERICS Berlin, 10. Dezember 2014

Der Smog in Peking ist oft so dicht, dass man kaum die Häuser auf der anderen Straßenseite erkennen kann. Gleichzeitig drängt China mit seinen Reformbemühungen an die Spitze der weltweiten Umweltbewegung. Professor Michael Jäckel, Präsident der Universität Trier, wies gleich zu Beginn der Konferenz auf diesen Widerspruch in China hin – einen von vielen, die Chinas politischen Alltag prägen.

Erstmals fanden die Trierer China Gespräche am MERICS statt, gemeinsam veranstaltet mit der Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, der Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik und dem Alumniverein der Politikwissenschaft der Universität Trier. Knapp 100 Gäste kamen zu der Konferenz unter dem Titel „Chinas politisches System. Gerüstet für das 21. Jahrhundert?“ Sechs Referenten beleuchteten diese Frage aus ganz unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln.

Professor Thomas Heberer von der Universität Duisburg-Essen widmete sich der Frage nach dem Steuerungspotenzial des politischen Systems in China. Zentrale These: Der chinesische Staat übe zwar soziale Kontrolle aus, sei zugleich jedoch äußerst lernfähig. Eine Fähigkeit, die ihn in die Lage versetze, sich schnell und teils auch unbürokratisch an neue Bedingungen anzupassen. Insgesamt erhalte der Staat einen Großteil seiner Legitimität durch die positiven Entwicklungen, die die Partei in Gang setze: verbesserte Lebensbedingungen, Stabilität und ein Gefühl von Nationalstolz. Ein Haupthindernis für die Steuerungsfähigkeit Chinas stellten aber der moralische Verfall und die auch im Volk weit verbreitete Korruption dar.