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Keynote Presentation

Beyond Siebold and Kaempfer
Science Exchange between Japan and Germany from a Historical Perspective

Philipp Franz von Siebold und Engelbert Kaempfer are surely the vanguard of the Japanese- German science relations. But there were many others to come and make this exchange fruitful. Especially after the opening of Japan with the Meiji restoration in 1868, the country was eager to learn western science in its whole range. Therefore many scientists came to Japan to teach, but also many Japanese went abroad to study. After the base was laid out, the relation could grow to a true exchange.
Though we want to consider science here as institutionalized knowledge, one has to keep in mind, that this relations is made by individuals. Therefore, to illustrate the history of exchange between the two countries some individual researchers – Japanese and German – from the opening of Japan to the end of WW2 will be introduced. Another factor, one has to keep in mind is that science is always object to political and social circumstances. WW1 produced an interruption to the relations and led to a revival in the 1920s. In 1925 63 Japanese students were enrolled at German universities, 1931/32 there were 68. In the following years the numbers were declining. Whereas Japanese students in Germany studied a variety of subjects, German students in the 1930s in Japan were mostly Japanologists.
This talk aims to introduce as representatives for the development of Japanese-German relations in science individual researchers and there counterpart or students in the other country like Ernst Tiegel and Ôsawa Kenji, Erwin Bälz and Kitasato Shibusaburô, Ôuchi Hyôe and Emil Lederer or Tanaka Shôhei, who studied under Hermann Helmholtz and Carl Stumpf – just to name a few.

Chantal Weber *graduated from the University of Cologne; Master in Japanese Studies, Archeology and Art History. After working at the Computer Center, University of Freiburg, in the department of New Media and E-Learning, Dr. Weber did research at Daitô Bunka Daigaku, Tôkyô, for her PhD thesis, granted with a fellowship by the Japan Foundation. Returning to Germany she worked as program manager for Asian relations at the International Office, University of Freiburg, being director of the special summer program for Japanese students.*

From 2008 Dr. Weber became a research assistant at the East Asian Department, Japanese Studies, University of Cologne, were she was granted the PhD in 2011 with a thesis about “Cultural historical network analysis – the tea-master Kanamori Sôwa”. JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship from 2012-2014 at Kansai University, Ôsaka, with the research topic “The Culture of Incense in Japan”.
Currently Dr. Weber is a research assistant at East Asian Department, Japanese Studies, the University of Cologne and since 2015 board member of the JSPS-Club Germany.