



## The Future of Liberalism

### *Japan, France and Germany in global context*

**Venue:** DIJ, Tokyo, with online access

**Dates:** June 7-9, 2022

**Languages:** English/Japanese (June 7), English (June 8 and 9);  
video recordings with Japanese subtitles

**Organizers:** German Institute for Japanese Studies,  
Institut français de recherche sur le Japon,  
The Nippon Institute of Research Advanced

The evolution of human societies can be seen to be supported by the rise of dominant narratives - religions or political ideologies, which in turn reflect the technological regimes of the times (Y. N. Harari in *Homo Deus*, T. Piketty in *Capital and Ideology*). Technology changes not only our means of production; it influences how we interact with our environment, how we perceive ourselves and our place in the world and what we consider as “good” or “bad”. The present revolutions in information technology and bioscience seem to contradict the basic assumptions of liberalism. Platform monopolies, fake news, and surveillance capitalism equally undermine liberal institutions.

The present pandemic has also dramatically questioned the liberal foundations of public policies and governance in democratic regimes. The restrictive policy measures adopted in the fight against Covid-19 have produced “illiberal” outcomes similar to the stances taken by populist political parties. High-level constraints impact individual liberties, responsibility, social cohesion and/or social control, but also free trade, competitiveness and market regulation. How far are citizens prepared to accept trade-offs between civil liberties and public guarantees regarding health, environment, and safety? How are these constraints dealt with in so-called “liberal” or neoliberal” democratic countries?

The above issue is of central and essential concern for Japan and Europe and their relationships with neighbors and major partners. Taking into consideration growing pressure from a more competitive environment, Japan and Europe need to redefine their understanding of core values with regard to economic, social and individual rights to redirect their relationships not only at an intellectual and discursive level, e.g. science and “soft-power”, but also in practical terms such as national and international policies.

Rather than falling into the trap of cultural and civilizational determinism, this symposium aims to stress sociopolitical, philosophical, and economic logics at work in the process of changes in production and exchange caused by the transformation of technological regimes and the ongoing global crisis. In doing so, we also intend to shed renewed light on the reception and the evolution of the liberal ideology in Asia and Europe, especially in Japan, France, and Germany.

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**Tentative programme**

**June 7 / 5 pm - 8 pm (Tokyo)**

- 5:00-5:15 Introduction by the organizers
- 5:15-6:15 Keynote speech: Thomas Piketty on Capital and Ideology**
- 6:15-7:00 Round table with Thomas Piketty (EHESS), Lisa Herzog (University Groningen) and Shigeki Uno (University of Tokyo)
- 7:00-7:45 General discussion
- 7:45-8:00 Concluding remarks

**June 8 / 4 pm – 8 pm (Tokyo)**

- 4:00-5:30 Liberalism(s)/Neoliberalism(s): concepts, theories, debates (I)**
- Serge Audier (Sorbonne Paris 4)
  - Hashimoto Tsutomu (Hokkaido University)
  - Yufei Zhou (Teikyo University)
- 5:30-5:45 Break
- 5:45-7:15 Liberalism(s)/Neoliberalism(s): concepts, theories, debates (II)**
- Shinji Nohara (University of Tokyo)
  - Valérie Charolles (Institut Mines-Télécom Business School, EHESS/CNRS)
  - Nikita Dhawan (TU Dresden)
- 7:15-8:00 Discussion

**June 9 / 4 pm – 8 pm (Tokyo)**

- 4:00-5:30 Technology and capitalism**
- Franz Waldenberger (German Institute for Japanese Studies)
  - Cedric Durand (Univ. de Genève) / Mathieu Montalban (univ. de Bordeaux)
  - Saori Shibata (Sheffield University)
- 5:30-5:45 Break
- 5:45-7:15 Technology, Digitalization and Ethics of Responsibility**
- Joanna Bryson (Hertie School)
  - Vanessa Nurock (UNESCO)
  - Yuko Harayama (RIKEN)
- 7:15-8:30 Concluding remarks**