

Humanities and Social Sciences



**Title of Project : Establishing a New Paradigm of Social/Human Sciences based on Relational Studies: in order to Overcome Contemporary Global Crisis**

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**【Purpose of the Research Project】**

Our research project aims to revitalize human and social science in order to solve today's global crisis.

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we have been witnessing unprecedented patterns of conflicts, clashes, and cross-border social and political networks that synchronize, interact and inter-relate. The emergence of the so-called "Islamic State" in Syria and Iraq in 2014 is a typical example with its influence now being felt over much of the world.

It is unfortunate that the existing academic paradigm has failed to provide a proper and comprehensive analytical framework to clarify the mechanism and solution to this unexpected crisis.

In order to tackle it, we need to introduce new perspectives in order to be able to analyze various factors that shed light on relational aspects not only within or among state actors but also within or among non-state actors such as trans-/ supra-/ sub-national and socio-cultural networks. Our purpose is to search for new interdisciplinary and cross-cutting academic approaches, combining various analytical methods in the human, social and natural sciences, so as to get a comprehensive grasp on this "new global crisis", find a way out, and pursue a future global society based on co-existence with diverse social, political, economic and cultural groups.

**【Content of the Research Project】**

Our research project consists of five research groups with two units for research management and planning.

Group B01 "Norms and Identity" deals with communal and traditional social identity. It focuses on the sometimes contradictory relationship between national identity and traditional social identity, which often has a trans-/ supra-/ sub-national nature. Group A01 "State and Institutionalization" deals with the persistence of the state system and focuses on how states survive against challenges from trans-/ supra-/ sub-national social groups. Group B02 "Cross-border Non-state Network" deals with relationships among non-state actors with cross-border vectors. It includes radical political movements and militant networks, which often

develop from a power vacuum in failed states. Group A02 "Political/Economic Regional Integration" analyzes relations among state-based regional unions and organizations, such as the EU, ASEAN, and APEC. It conducts research on how regional integration affects political and economic relationships among actors in a region. Group B03 "Civilizations and Global Networks" deals with globalization in various fields, such as the transfer of money, technology, and manpower, and the prevalence of social and political norms. It also sheds light on the impact of environmental change in the transformation of society.

The Research Management Units encourage and coordinate joint research and academic meetings among the five research groups, and plan international workshops at least once a year either in Japan or abroad.

**【Expected Research Achievements and Scientific Significance】**

This research project is mainly based on work in the field of Area Studies in Japan. Area Studies in post-WWII Japan, which developed differently from the same field in the Western academia, especially in the U.S., where the goal was sometimes research into the 'enemy' (such as the USSR) or some other form of contribution to government policy-making, has kept its distance from either of these approaches, and researchers have established their own modes of study on Asia and Africa. This research project may provide new approaches to Western-led international academic circles by introducing a new framework for understanding regions outside the West.

**【Key Words】**

Global Crisis  
Area Studies  
Relational Studies  
International Relations

**【Term of Project】** FY2016-2020

**【Budget Allocation】** 529,300 Thousand Yen

**【Homepage Address and Other Contact Information】**

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