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Obituary – Nachruf

by Univ.-Prof. em. Dr. rer. nat. Dietrich Albert, Graz, member of the JSPS Club

We bid farewell to our long-time member, Univ.-Professor em. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans-Joachim (Jochen) Kornadt, who passed away unexpectedly on April 24th 2023, at the age of 95 after a short serious illness.

After successfully completing his Diploma (1952) and Doctorate (1956) in Psychology at the University of Marburg/Lahn under Prof. Heinrich Dueker with minor subjects in Physiology (Prof. Herbert Hensel) and Sociology (Prof. Max Graf zu Solms), Dr. Kornadt was employed as a research assistant at the Psychiatric Clinic (Prof. Hanscarl Leuner) of the University of Marburg from 1956 to 1957. From 1957 to 1961 he was university assistant in the team of Prof. Wilhelm Karl Arnold at the University of Wuerzburg. During his time as Lecturer (from 1961) and Professor (from 1964) at the Comenius-Hochschule in Saarbruecken, Prof. Ernst Eduard Boesch (Saarland University) entrusted him in 1965 with the direction of a research group on the situation and development of the school system in Kenya and Uganda. This opened a new, lifelong, interdisciplinary field of research for Prof. Kornadt – the comparative cultural research! In 1968, he also was assigned as Vice-Director of the Institute for Research in Developing Countries, founded and directed by Prof. Boesch. Since fall 1968 until his retirement in 1995, he held the (newly created) chair of "Educational Psychology and Educational Science" at Saarland University. After a visit to Japan (1972), he condensed his versatile, cross-disciplinary, and cross-cultural research approaches into a research program, which he conducted from 1978 onwards with the support and cooperation of Prof. Gisela Trommsdorff Rheinisch-Westfaelische Technische Hochschule (RWTH) Aachen, University of Konstanz, also a member of the JSPS Club, continued until the time after his retirement. This included several research stays in Japan and Indonesia. For example, in 1979 he was awarded a Research Fellowship of the JSPS (and appointed Visiting Professor at Keio University, Tokyo). In Japan, his research was supported by the teams of Prof. Tamatsu Hayashi (Kyoto) and Prof. Yoshiharu Tachibana (Gifu) and in Switzerland by Klaus Foppa (Bern). The numerous scientific findings of this cross-cultural field research on the complex topic of development of aggressiveness, empathy and altruisms in different cultures have been documented in many impressive publications up to the present (see e.g. "Social Motives and their Development in Cultural Context". Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 5(3), 2015, website: <https://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1048>).

In 1988, Prof. Kornadt was awarded the Japanese-German Research Award (Preisträgerstipendium) for his commitment to German-Japanese academic relations by JSPS and the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung (AvH). In 1989, he founded the German-Japanese Society for Social Sciences (GJSSS) in Tokyo together with Prof. Gisela Trommsdorff and several social scientists from both countries, and he served as its first President until 2005 - and later as Honorary President.

Furthermore, in the fields of education policy, science policy and science planning, his activities in high-ranking committees have been highly esteemed. For instance, he has been member of the German Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat), President of the German Psychological Society (DGPs), Chairman of the Academic Advisory Board of the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo, Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Max-Planck-Institute for Psychological Research, and Chairman of the Wilhelm Wundt Society. After his retirement, he was Senate Representative for the establishment of the Faculty of Education at the re-established University of Erfurt, which awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 2009. In 2006, he was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit First Class (Bundesverdienstkreuz Erster Klasse) for his outstanding achievements.

In recent years, his unlimited spirit of inquiry and enthusiasm was directed to his own life in basic changes of sociopolitical contexts; unfortunately, Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans-Joachim Kornadt was not able to complete his memoirs due to the unexpected end of his life. His urn grave is located at the cemetery of the municipality of Forst/Weinstrasse, Germany.

We will always honor the memory of our member Jochen Kornadt as a researcher, scientist, an expert engaged in science policy, and as a colleague and friend committed to scientific exchange with Japan. Our sympathy goes especially to his wife Gisela Trommsdorff, as well as to his children and grandchildren.