

Kazumi Okamoto

Academic Culture: An Analytical Framework for Understanding Academic Work

A Case Study about the
Social Science Academe in Japan

BEYOND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Edited by Michael Kuhn, Hebe Vessuri, Shujiro Yazawa

ISSN 2364-8775

- 1 *Michael Kuhn, Shujiro Yazawa (eds.)*
Theories about and Strategies against Hegemonic Social Sciences
ISBN 978-3-8382-0586-1

- 2 *Michael Kuhn*
How the Social Sciences Think about the World's Social
Outline of a Critique
ISBN 978-3-8382-0892-3

- 3 *Michael Kuhn, Hebe Vessuri (eds.)*
The Global Social Sciences
—Under and Beyond European Universalism
ISBN 978-3-8382-0893-0

- 4 *Michael Kuhn, Hebe Vessuri (eds.)*
Contributions to Alternative Concepts of Knowledge
ISBN 978-3-8382-0894-7

- 5 *Kazumi Okamoto*
Academic Culture: An Analytical Framework
for Understanding Academic Work
A Case Study about the Social Science Academe in Japan
ISBN 978-3-8382-0937-1

Kazumi Okamoto

**ACADEMIC CULTURE:
AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR
UNDERSTANDING ACADEMIC WORK**

A Case Study about the
Social Science Academe in Japan

ibidem-Verlag
Stuttgart

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

The Dissertation is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

∞

Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem, säurefreiem Papier
Printed on acid-free paper

ISSN 2364-8775

ISBN-13: 978-3-8382-0937-1

© *ibidem*-Verlag
Stuttgart 2016

Alle Rechte vorbehalten

Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Dies gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und elektronische Speicherformen sowie die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electrical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

Printed in the EU

Acknowledgements

On the completion of this long and exciting intellectual journey, I must mention names of some people without whom I could not have done this all.

First of all, my greatest gratitude goes to Prof. Dr. Martin Fischer, who kindly accepted me as a doctoral researcher under his supervision. The fact that this dissertation written in English by a person who has had no German academic background is finally completed certainly proves the main point of this dissertation: Knowledge generation activities have no national borders. Without the help of Prof. Dr. Fischer, this project would have never existed. I should also be very much grateful that Prof. Shujiro Yazawa agreed to take the position of the second reviewer of this dissertation, despite of a quite short notice which was given by me. Conversations with him in Japan inspired me to move forward during the project period.

There are colleagues around the world who participated in a series of World Social Sciences and Humanities Network (World SSH Net) Thinkshop meetings. Their thoughts and discussions motivated me to write this dissertation, especially because their academic concerns are also closely related to academic dialogues for knowledge generation in various international contexts. I hope that my piece of work would be able to contribute to ongoing discussions of international knowledge generation practices. Further, I must express my gratitude to the organizers of the above-mentioned academic meetings and of other academic conferences in which I had great opportunities to present some parts of my doctoral project. Participation in such events gave me chances to refine and reconsider my work.

Needless to say, this work would not have been completed without help and support from people who kindly offer their participation in the empirical part of this study in Japan. Despite of the novelty of the study, the research participants tried to understand the essence of the study, and they provided really valuable comments and thoughts. The narratives of their working life as academics will certainly be contributions not only to this study but also to future studies I am going to continue. Thank you so much.

Since the empirical study was carried out in Japan, I expected some financial difficulties at the beginning of the project. In this respect, my sincere gratitude goes to The Konosuke Matsushita Memorial Foundation, Japan, for funding this project. Most of the cost which the empirical study required to be fulfilled was covered by the fund from this funding organization. Without their support, I might have had to give up some empirical parts, therefore, they played an essential role to make this study as it is.

I should not forget people who helped me achieve the final form of this dissertation. The invaluable comments from and the stimulating discussions throughout these four years with Michael Kuhn surely improved the contents of the dissertation a lot. Besides, Jack Rummel helped to make my humble English that has a strong influence of the Japanese language more sound academic English as a language editor. There are other people who provided me rather critical views about what I wrote. I should also appreciate their contesting comments and views, because they made me realize that those contesting views were exactly the main point that I tried to tackle through the dissertation. No matter how positive or negative the comments were, all the comments which reached me were good food for developing my thought.

Although it is rather indirect to this project, there have been some organizational cooperations. The World SSH Net as the main place of my academic activities provided me a lot of opportunities for academic interactions and observations of international academic activities with its network members who are located around the world. The International Federation of Social Science Organizations (IFSSO) also gave me the opportunity of encounters with academics from various parts of the world, and through the annual conferences of the Japan Society for Multicultural Relations I had valuable opportunities to meet academics in Japan, which allowed me to casually observe how academics in Japan interacted with each other on academic events. I am also thankful to the Center for Glocal Studies at Seijo University, Tokyo, for giving me time for presentations twice during the doctoral project period.

There must be more anonymous people who inspired, helped, and encouraged me during these years, but my final big thanks should go to my friends and family members, above all, lovable Lena and Chika. Without their voiceless but firm encouragement, I could not have achieved the completion of this project.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Acknowledgements | 5 |
| 1. Introduction | 9 |
| 1.1 Background of the Study | 9 |
| 1.2 Rationale of the Study | 14 |
| 2. Research Question..... | 23 |
| 2.1 Grounds for the Research Question | 23 |
| 2.2 Setting the Research Question: Components of Academic Culture | 23 |
| 2.3 Relationship between Academic Culture and International Academic Activities / Collaborations..... | 26 |
| 3. Literature Review | 31 |
| 3.1 The Discourse about How to Measure International Collaborations | 33 |
| 3.2 The Discourse about the International Structure of Knowledge Production in SSH | 42 |
| 3.3 Science Policies in Japan on Internationalization | 44 |
| 4. Conceptual Framework towards Constructing Academic Culture | 51 |
| 4.1 Holliday's "Small Cultures" | 52 |
| 4.2 Application of "Small Cultures" to the Construction of Academic Culture | 57 |
| 4.3 Epistemic Culture: Culture in Science with No National Boundaries..... | 62 |
| 4.4 SSH Academics in Japan as a Pilot Case | 68 |
| 4.5 Construct of Academic Culture | 72 |
| 4.6 Academic Culture and International Collaborations | 81 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5. Methodological Operationalization | 85 |
| 5.1 Research Design | 86 |
| 5.2 Research Methods | 95 |
| 5.3 Ethical Consideration for the Empirical Research | 125 |
| 5.4 Data Analysis Method: Grounded Theory (GT) | 127 |
| 6. Findings of the Case Study | 145 |
| 6.1 Academic Environment | 145 |
| 6.2 Academic Practices | 185 |
| 7. Discussion of the Case Study | 211 |
| 7.1 Japanese Universities and Higher Education Policies in Japan | 211 |
| 7.2 Self-Perception of Academics in Japan | 221 |
| 7.3 Academic Knowledge: For What? | 238 |
| 7.4 Towards International Collaborations | 248 |
| 8. Discussion of the Concept of Academic Culture in the Light of the Case Study | 267 |
| 8.1 Relevance of the Implemented Research Methods | 269 |
| 8.2 Scrutinizing the Construct of Academic Culture | 273 |
| 8.3 Contribution of Academic Culture towards Future Academic Debates on International Collaboration in SSH | 275 |
| 9. Concluding Remarks | 279 |
| 9.1 What Is Achieved in This Study? | 279 |
| 9.2 For Future Studies | 284 |
| 10. References | 291 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Internationalization has long been a challenging topic in fields of social sciences and humanities (hereafter SSH) not only in advanced countries but also in developing countries.¹ Over the past several decades, interactions among academics, such as co-authoring books and journal articles, participating in international conferences and meetings, taking sabbatical leaves or study visits in a foreign country, and planning and organizing international research projects, have increased. One of the reasons why academics, regardless where they are based, have been drawn into more international academic activities can certainly be the phenomenon of globalization in the world system.

Although there has been a great number of debates about globalization, it seems that there is no consensus on what globalization is, and scholars and critics see globalization in various ways and from various points of views (Al-Rodhan and Stoudmann, 2006). Therefore, what I briefly explain here about globalization might not satisfy all readers' view on it. Nevertheless, since it is crucial to understand globalization in order to understand the above-mentioned international academic activities and / or internationalization of SSH, I will summarise what globalization is, according to what I read from some literature on this topic.

Globalization is not necessarily a recent phenomenon. It has long existed in different ways. For instance, trading as a phenomenon of globalized economy, in which European merchants bought spices, silk, ivory, and other products that did not exist in Europe from the Middle East, Africa, India, China and other parts of Asia, has existed for hundreds of years. After such a trading period, gradually modern capitalism replaced earlier merchant

¹ There are different views about how and why each discipline classifies itself. Humanities, instead of human science, may be more common, since the notion of science would make some readers uncomfortable, because of that they, like Japanese academics in this study also point out, would have closer orientation to the natural science when they see the term "science."

capitalism as the organizing principle of international trade. Until the Second World War, some suzerain countries like the United Kingdom and France monopolized selling-buying activities with their colonies, which meant that these suzerains restricted the selling-buying activities within the suzerain-colony relation in order to exploit and monopolize the goods of their colonies. This peculiar type of capitalism was abolished in the post-war period as former colonies became independent nations, while another system, namely socialism, had already been introduced in the early twentieth century by the Soviet Union. Since after the end of the Cold War, structures and frameworks in which human life is organized have been dramatically unified towards capitalism all over the world, and thus people across the globe have started to use the same structures / frameworks to lead their lives with regard to economy, business, trade, politics, education, and other essential aspects of the human life. Simultaneously, scientific knowledge became one of the most important commodities (e.g. Gibbons & Wittrock, 1985) in order to create world-wide competitive goods in terms of both quality and price, and thus science also launched into the world market of knowledge under the capitalism system.

Using the same capitalistic structures has also brought numerous competitions to the world of science, because competition is a part of the nature of capitalism. Originally, the education system and academic activities of a country were nationally confined structures before globalization started influencing them. They still are, to some extent. However, when we look at the European Union (EU) countries' education reforms resulting from the Bologna Declaration in 1999 as an example, it is apparent that the higher education (HE) and academic traditions of individual countries were drastically changed, if not abandoned, in order to create a bigger education system for the EU countries. This reform was enacted to increase the mobility of students and academics so that the EU countries could strengthen their citizen's intellectual and / or professional ability, which would lead to a more competitive Europe not only in education but in economy (see EENEE and NESSE networks of experts, 2008). This reform of higher education in the EU countries is part and parcel of the internationalization policy in the region. The aim of this internationalization in the EU is obviously to increase the competitiveness of the region by unifying the education and

training system, based on the concepts of the knowledge-based economy. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) explained the connection between knowledge and economy as follows: "The term "*knowledge-based economy*" results from a fuller recognition of the role of knowledge and technology in economic growth. Knowledge, as embodied in human beings (as "*human capital*") and in technology, has always been central to economic development" (emphasis in original, OECD, 1996: 9). What we can conclude from the example of the EU higher education reform and the concept of knowledge-based economy is that knowledge is a means for economic growth in the context of world-wide competition. In order to strengthen the education and research sections in HE, where knowledge is strongly related to, the EU took an action to unify the member states' HE systems. Aiming to acquire world-wide competitiveness is a consequence of globalized capitalism as mentioned earlier. In the case of the EU, this goal is not contained within a single country, but similar attempts can be witnessed in any other individual countries of other global regions. Thus internationalization of HE and / or of academic activities is often seen as a part of governmental policy in a country to increase and enforce the presence of the country in the world in respect of economy.²

Needless to say, national and international institutions do not always overtly state that the internationalization of HE and academe is a means for a nation state's economic growth to be more competitive in the world. Rather, the internationalization of academic activities is often posited as a way to exchange and share different academic knowledge to advance knowledge. Indeed, as in the discussion on globalization, internationalization of HE and academic activities implies various interests, dependent on its

² Germany released a report on the governmental strategy for internationalization of science. There are various foci in the report to explain why German academe, higher education, and research fields should be more internationalized apart from economic foci. Nevertheless, it is obvious from the title of report, "Reinforcement of roles of Germany in the world knowledge-based society" (Botschaft von Japan in Deutschland, n.d. The title is translated by the author), that Germany attempts to indicate its presence by internationalizing German academe and higher education to the world. This report is found in Japanese: <http://www.de.emb-japan.go.jp/nihongo/kenkyusha/kokusaikasenryaku.pdf>

advocates' positions and viewpoints. These diverse interests seem to have caused scattered discussions, in which little substantial coherency and interrelationship can be found.

The same is true about discussions on international and / or interdisciplinary collaborations in SSH. Even the term *collaboration* seems to be very loosely defined (Kaz and Martin, 1997) and is used to express a broad range of academic activities from co-authoring articles to implementing a research project as project partners. Therefore, various people call various academic activities collaborations, and such so-called academic collaborations in SSH have rarely been investigated to examine how collaborations are organized and performed, what challenging aspects SSH academics tend to encounter, and why they attempt to collaborate with their counterparts.³ Rather, if one tries to find such a study, one tends to end up with finding reports that were published under or with the help and supervision of a political body or a nation state. A good example in the European context is the Monitoring European Trends in Social Sciences and Humanities (METRIS) project funded by the European Commission, which "aims to support the European Research Area (ERA) in the social sciences and the humanities by increasing awareness of the structures, resources and ways of functioning of different national systems in SSH and new developments in these systems. The aim is not only to support international collaboration in SSH but also to support national level research decisions in awareness of the broader European context" (METRIS website, n.d.). This project releases country-specific reports on 42 countries, in which the EU member states are 27, and non-EU countries are 15.⁴ Although a part of its aim is "to support international collaboration in SSH" (ibid.), the reports released by METRIS do not go beyond a description of science policy, the national funding system, and the nationally prioritised research theme in SSH of countries, which could be found in websites of ministries, science councils and funding organizations of respective countries. There is no doubt that such information and statistics are useful when one

³ Collective work in Kuhn and Romoe (2005) analyses modes of collaboration, methodological and conceptual challenges in carrying out cross-national research projects under the European Commission Framework Programme.

⁴ On the website, it states that this project covers 43 countries, but only 42 countries are found in the "countries" section on the website.

tries to see differences between countries and to compare different systems. Nevertheless, looking at differences is less helpful in overcoming these differences, because it is still an open question *how* SSH academics could then have fruitful international collaborations at more practical level of joint academic work with all those political differences.

As previously seen, international academic activities are considered from a nation state's perspective as part of national competition in the world of globalization. Therefore, a nation state or a regional politically united body like the EU is interested in collecting the above-mentioned information about other countries in order to be prepared to compete with them. However, they are not interested in ways in which such international activities are respectively organized and performed, what SSH academics, who are the main players of the activities, think about the activities, and why academics are interested in international collaborations. It is, in this sense, a very top-down approach to reflect on internationalizing countries' academe. As a result of this approach, the authorities such as the Ministry of Science / Education would be able to know a lot about their competitors' science policies, funding systems, and their current situations of HE and research fields, but would have little knowledge about or interest in the practices of international academic activities.

This is, however, not to blame this top-down approach in relation to internationalization of SSH in respective countries. The more important point here is why SSH academics as the main practitioners of the activities have not shown much interest in investigating what is happening to themselves under the internationalization policy in their own countries. Certainly, they must have been influenced under the internationalization policy to plan their middle- or long-term academic activities. Due to the internationalization policy, internationalization as a research topic has become a buzz word in fields of SSH, but is rarely investigating the international activities of academics. If we look at a study field of HE, we can find various topics relating to internationalization, such as concerns about international students (Chalmers & Volet, 1997; Thorstenson, 2001; Major, 2005), how to internationalize faculties (Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Knight, 2004), curriculum reforms to internationalize universities (Rizvi & Walsh, 1998; Leask, 2001; Haigh, 2002), international mobility of students and

/ or faculties (Teichler, 2004; Jöns, 2007; Kim, 2009; Teichler, 2009), and other numerous topics. However, international academic activities are rarely investigated, if not totally ignored, as if there was no problem to carry out international academic activities no matter where academics are located and work.

In reality, there have been sporadic attempts at discussions about how to internationalize SSH at more world-wide level. A typical example for such discussions is the World Social Science Report (2010), in which international collaborations in social sciences are widely discussed. Although it is a positive move that some academics do discuss international collaborations, such discussions do not yet go beyond the views on countries' competitions in social sciences. That is, discussions about which country's academics published how much, and which language is dominant as a publication language, and so on are often the main internationalization topics of these discourses. Of course, these form a part of internationalization issues in social sciences, and are relevant for discussions as well, but such ranking-orientated discussions about who is bigger than whom in the world are concerned with the competitiveness of a country in the globalized social science world and tend to pay little attention to what academics practically do and how this affects their joint work when they collaborate.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

As outlined by the background of this study given above, there is a strong tendency for topics of internationalization and academic collaboration to be viewed and discussed from the point of view of a nation state, which is interested in winning a global competition. As long as the discourses including those among academics only discuss the issues from this perspective, neither any relevant analysis nor more individual perspectives of SSH academics nor how they perform their work can emerge, and consequently, the entire discussions focusing on this very political perspective will tend to be superficial regarding the practices of academic work. This is not to totally deny the wider / broader, nation state perspective to understanding internationalization of SSH, because, on one hand, this is obviously one of the topics that a great number of governments set up as a prioritized science policy nowadays, and

it seems quite natural that academics discuss the topic from the same or similar perspectives, granting that such perspectives are influential to their academic work. Nevertheless, on the other hand, it is surprising that there are few academic discussions emancipated from this very political view of internationalization of SSH by people who are most concerned with the topic, namely SSH academics. Compared with numerous studies on internationalization of HE and university students,⁵ the topic of internationalization of SSH which especially tries to understand and analyse current situations and conditions of SSH academics in relation to internationalization / international collaborations seems sparse. Even those who are interested in discussions of this topic tend to focus on rather country or regional-specific issues and emphasize how *our* science community would be more visible in the world or stronger than the science communities in other countries. Such discussions could only be, as they have already been, repetitive, and would not be able to reveal much more than where "*our country*" is situated in the SSH world ranking.

In order for the topic to evolve from different perspectives, it is crucial to establish other frameworks for and approaches to analyses what SSH academics currently experience in their work in the era of internationalization. There should be many different approaches / frameworks, dependent on researchers' own particular interests, and such approaches and frameworks should be explored in order to scrutinize and properly capture the current situation in which SSH academics are placed. By establishing new frameworks and approaches to more broadly discuss the issues, the discussions of the topic could, then, involve diverse directions and

⁵ A great number of academics, especially in the field of education, investigate detailed and individual cases of university students who study abroad, for instance, to understand difficulties of both students and teaching staff who have rarely encountered students with different styles of learning, communication, and other academic conventions. These studies seem to seek how to merge different education styles in a certain country setting. However, we should note that it is often discussed how teaching staff, who are often researchers themselves of such studies, could make foreign students accommodate more into their own education style and framework. In this sense, internationalization of students at universities could be deemed as adjusting the students to a country's education. Thus, strictly speaking, such studies could also be said that they are investigated from a country specific perspective.

perspectives as well as more depth in terms of non-political but genuine academic debates.

Currently, in the fields of SSH, a bibliometric approach to gauging internationality of SSH academics and respective countries' academe seems the main approach for discussing internationalization of SSH. This approach, originally an imitation of the Science Citation Index used by the natural sciences, not only indicates the world ranking of academics and of countries but also has sparked debates among academics about whether it is appropriate for benchmarking academic work in the fields of SSH. Considering the different nature of the natural sciences and SSH, it is understandable that SSH academics feel rather uncomfortable about being evaluated simply by the number of citations of their work in the limited number of academic journals. Therefore, there certainly is a call for another evaluation framework as well as the analytical framework for international activities of social science academics.

This study suggests a new approach based on a more individual level of SSH academics' working life in relation to mainly their research activities. To be more precise, this study attempts to listen to individual SSH academics' voices, regardless of their age, gender, status, and disciplines, about some selected aspects of their academic working life that could be considered relevant when discussing issues concerning internationalization even with different country settings. Since there is almost no other existing similar study with the similar intention to this study, the research framework of this study is new.

In constructing the research framework, first it is crucial that the study tries not to contain country-specific directions. As explained earlier, extracting country-specific aspects would simply result in a description highlighting a country's academic work as being different from that of other countries. What is aimed at in this study is not finding differences of academic work between countries, but trying to discover common backgrounds / settings / structures and conceptual aspects that are closely related to each other and influence academic research work in *any* countries. Of course, peculiarity of one country's HE system and of practices in each academic discipline do exist; however, if we imagine a situation in which academics from different countries / regions and from different disciplines carry out a research project together, we

would rather not think about peculiarities of each party but about how to finally reach a good, fruitful academic collaboration. In this sense, therefore, it would be better to focus on looking at aspects that could be shared among SSH academics, regardless where they come from.

1.2.1 Culture and Academic Activities— National Culture or Academic Culture?

When a certain group of people from different parts of the world is investigated, the concept of intercultural communication study is commonly used to understand and analyse where difficulties in their activities originate from, and how people can avoid such difficulties and misunderstandings. For instance, studies about students studying abroad, in many cases in English-speaking countries, can be classified as a typical part of intercultural communication studies. Indeed, globalization has brought numerous encounters between students with diverse backgrounds in terms of nationality, style of education, and native language, as well as between international students, who are often referred to as Asian students, and teaching and / or administrative staff in higher education institutions (HEIs) (e.g. Cadman, 2000; Wong, 2004; Major, 2005; Andrade, 2006; Brown, 2008; Ryan & Viete, 2009). According to such studies, the aforementioned diverse backgrounds that each person carries into universities of English-speaking countries clash, and as a consequence, those who are involved in educational / academic activities tend to experience difficulties / challenges in academic activities. Such diversity is often accounted for and analysed by inherent qualities of national cultures such as collectivism versus individualism.⁶ When asking why Asian students perform poorly in Western HEIs and why it is difficult to teach Asian students in Western universities (Nisbett,

⁶ Although analyses heavily relying on inherency of national culture is mainstream, there are academics who question this type of analyses and disagree with stereotyping people simply by their national cultures. For instance, those who teach Asian students English language find it irrelevant to apply national cultural characteristics to analyse / understand learning styles and attitudes of Asian students (e.g. Littlewood, 1999; Guest, 2002; Stapleton, 2002). Thus, intercultural communication analyses based on national cultures is not the only way, by any means, to investigate interaction between people from different countries.

2005), researchers often focus on characteristics of national educational / academic culture in which critical thinking is seen as a construct of Western academic activities (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004; Nisbett, 2005; Durkin, 2008).

Similarly, studies of international corporations in regard to human resource management analyse intercultural issues by characteristics of national cultures and / or patterns of national communication styles (e.g., Goldman, 1992; Fink & Meierewert, 2004; Möller & Svahn, 2004; Peltokorpi, 2007; Scollon, Scollon, & Jones, 2011; Kim & Meyers, 2012; Kobayashi & Viswat, 2014). Geert Hofstede can be mentioned as one of the most prominent protagonists of this type of intercultural analysis in international business settings, and his work *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values* (1984) has been heavily quoted in intercultural studies. Based on surveys in forty countries, four dimensions that differ in each country culture, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism, and Masculinity (ibid.: 11), are revealed, and his findings are supposed to be "interpreted on behalf of policy makers in national but especially in international and multinational organizations who are confronted daily with the problems of collaboration of members of their staff carrying different culturally influenced mental programs" (ibid.: 12). This statement makes the exact point as the above-mentioned studies of international students, namely, that owing to cultural differences there are problems when different nationalities meet and interact each other.

Thus this approach to analysing such international / intercultural issues seems plausible, if one believes that difficulties in interactions between people from different origins occur only because of their different national cultures. Nevertheless, this approach does not seem always to match with the reality, at least not in the case of academic encounters. Previously, I implemented research investigating how Japanese SSH scholars deal with situations when they encounter disagreements from their foreign counterparts in international academic collaborations (Okamoto 2010a). This research was based on a hypothesis, which is widely studied and theorised in the field of intercultural study, that Japanese people have difficulties expressing opposition to others' opinions. The study particularly focused on theories of Hall's high and low context cultures (1976) and of Hofstede's five dimensions

of national cultural differences (1994). If these theories had been applicable to an analysis of the above situation that Japanese scholars could encounter, the outcome of the research would have been that Japanese SSH scholars had difficulties expressing opposed opinions to others in the international academic collaborations. However, in fact, the outcome was the reverse of the hypothesis. What is learnt from this study is that such intercultural theories are not necessarily appropriate for an analysis and for understanding *any* encounters between people from different countries. To a certain extent, intercultural theories might be useful to describe diverse national cultural inherency in general. Nevertheless, they seem only to aim at describing cultural and / or communication style differences, which could lead to nationally confined views that distinguish one national culture from another. At least, in my previous study, the communication style of Japanese SSH academics does not seem much different from other, particularly Western, academics. Therefore, it turned out that any total dependence on intercultural theories to investigate international academic activities of SSH academics should be avoided, because, as far as activities of SSH academics are concerned, they share academic practices and conventions across countries, and the so-called national culture does not play a great role to characterise their activities.

Thus, in this study, nationally confined cultural aspects are considered as much less relevant in the investigation of SSH academics' work. Instead, it is assumed that SSH academics have their own 'professional culture'—I call it 'academic culture' in this study—which could influence their work.

1.2.2 Aims of the Study

Considering all aspects mentioned above, this study attempts to achieve the following aims:

First, it aims at creating a non-country specific approach, and rather looks at academic work as a common entity for academics in any country. If international academic activities are to be more encouraged and be increased, discussing the issue of internationalization only from a nation state's perspective would be less helpful in understanding the substance of such activities and in

evolving discussions and theorization on this topic.⁷ Often, science is considered as a means of reinforcing a nation state power in the world, and some academics seem to be dragged too much toward this political direction when they try to think of and discuss science, academe, and academic work in relation to internationalization. Certainly, such policy-relevant discussions are appreciated by some people who are very much interested in the position and power of a country in the world; however, on the other hand, scrutinizing the relevance of such policy-centred discussions for academics themselves is also important, because motivations for academic research can be more diverse than the ones which the existing discussions assume.⁸ Then, academic work is not necessarily seen as a country-specific activity but could be an activity which has more common settings, backgrounds, and structures broadly shared by academics around the world. This study has, therefore, no intention of comparing which country is higher / lower in any ranking systems, which country is more privileged than others, and so forth. This is rather a look at shared aspects of their academic work. In this study, these shared aspects would be called "academic culture," in order to replace nationally confined characteristics, which are often exploited to analyse and explain activities among people with different nationality. By excluding the above-mentioned political and intercultural discussions, this study can better focus on the structure and the contents of academic work, which seem to consequently influence debates of international academic activities, particularly of international collaborative knowledge generation practices. Thus this study is a starting point to build up a new approach to academic discussions on topics of

7 Nishihara understands that globalization since the 1990s is not only economic globalization but also globalization of society. He, as a sociologist, claims that a society should be perceived as a place for interaction between diverse people rather than considering a society as a framework of a nation state (2010: 17-18). I share his point of view that academic discussions should be emancipated from nationalistic perspectives when discussing globalization.

8 In a research project "Global SSH" funded by the European Commission, a questionnaire study was implemented in Russia, Belarus, China, and Japan to investigate SSH scholars' international academic activities. Regarding motivations for their international academic activities, respondents of the questionnaire raised "learning from others" and "intellectual curiosity" as their motivation most frequently (Kuhn & Okamoto, 2008).

academic work in relation to knowledge generation practices that is one of the core activities in international academic collaboration.

Second, emancipated from the existing country-specific approaches, this study attempts to examine academic work from more individual, scientific academics' perspectives. Since topics on internationalization of SSH have only been discussed and dealt from macro / nation states' perspectives, existing analyses have naturally been made from viewpoints of science policy of a country and / or perspectives of advocates with rather nationalistic views. Both of these are very keen on competitions that assay which country is bigger and powerful than others. Scientific academic work in practice has been ignored in the analyses from national perspectives, and therefore, what constitutes academic work that could impact international academic activities has never been clarified. Similar to the previous point, looking at more individual and scientific perspectives of academic work could develop a new approach to analyses of the aforementioned aspects in relation to international academic activities, and could shed some light on more detailed issues which are relevant for the discussion of the scientific aspects of internationalized academic work. As a result of the implementation of the new approach, this study could suggest new fields of study of academic work that would be closely related to knowledge generation practices that could form one of the central parts of international academic collaborations in SSH.

Since little interest in investigating the scientific contents of academic work in SSH has been indicated among academics so far, launching this new approach would be able to contribute to clarifying academic work at individual and scientific perspectives from scholars, to finding challenges which could not have been noticed by the existing approaches, and to advancing debates and academic knowledge on the topic.⁹ Moreover, it would make academic debates on the related issues broaden, deepen, and go

⁹ Some exceptions are the work in Kuhn and Remoe (2005), which exhibit in-depth investigations of SSH scholars who worked in research projects under the European Commission 4th and 5th Framework Programmes. Similarly, under the 6th Framework Programme, a project "Research Collaboration in the Social and Human Sciences between Europe, Russia, other CIS countries and China" (Global SSH) also investigated SSH researchers in relation to international collaborations.

beyond the existing national frameworks in science to discuss international academic work.