

Waseda University Doctoral Student Network (WUDSN) Seminar Series

Japan and China in Globalizing East Asia: Explaining Change in International Relations

PRESENTATION 1:

THE RISE OF CHINA AND CHANGES IN JAPAN'S IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

The rapid economical rise and the increasing integration of China in international organizations are changing China's influence on the international community as well as the perception of China by other states. Primarily the reaction of Japan appears to be of particular interest due to its position as current economic leader of the region. This paper sets out to explore changes in Japan's identity construction towards China that are arguably caused by these aforementioned developments.

Understanding International Relations as social relations this paper argues that identity provides a basis for structuring priorities and thus is important for articulating the interests of social actors. Assuming that identities are highly multidimensional, three factors are important when exploring identity constructions: the "self" (carrier of the identity), the "other" (the social environment), and the historical context. Although identities are consolidated during the process of distinction between the 'self' and the 'other', they are not irrevocably fixed but modifiable as a result of changes of these factors.

Against this theoretical backdrop, this research argues that the rapid rise of China has profoundly changed Japan's social environment and has initiated a new historical context in which Japan's foreign policy identity towards China is being constructed. This transformation has led to changes in parts of Japan's identity, and will further cause changes in the setting of priorities pertaining to Japan's foreign policy interests towards China.

Short Biography

Kai Schulze studied Political Science and Japanese Studies at the Georgia-Augusta-University in Göttingen from October 2001 to October 2007. In 2005 he successfully applied for a scholarship of the Monbukagakusho and studied at Chiba University, Japan, from October 2005 to October 2006. After his return to Germany, he graduated in October 2007. His master thesis was about the discussion on the transformation of Japan into a "normal country" and the influence of the planned revision of Article IX of the Japanese Constitution on this discussion. He joined the Institute of East Asian Studies (INEAST) at Duisburg-Essen University in Germany as a PhD candidate in April 2008. The working title of his dissertation is: "The Construction of Japanese National Identity and its Impact on the Japanese Foreign Policy towards China". He is currently based at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo to conduct his data collection.

PRESENTATION 2:

THE NEXUS BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION IN JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NORTHEAST ASIAN REGION

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Abstract

Mostly limited to questions of traditional security, Japan-China relations are often characterized as the result of a power shift, contentions about history or conflicting identities. However, since the 1990s, processes of globalization are dramatically changing and complicating the socio-economic environment in East Asia. It is thus necessary to analyze regional and bilateral relations comprehensively. The concept of security, defined in sociological terms by McSweeney (1999) and Camilleri (2000) provides a useful theoretical framework to capture these dynamics. By taking environmental security as example, the paper analyzes the development of cooperation at the diplomatic level, within the frameworks of the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meetings (TEMM) and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP). It argues that despite several significant shortcomings, cooperation in the environmental security sphere is conducive to the improvement of interstate relations and the building of

political trust as it contributes to the improvement of mutual images by raising the awareness of commonalities rather than differences between Japan and China.

Short Biography

Since April 2008, Christian Wirth is a Research Fellow at the Global Institute for Asian Regional Integration (GIARI) and PhD Candidate at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) at Waseda University. Before coming to Tokyo he was working for the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport of Switzerland. In 2006 and 2007 Chris studied Chinese at Tsinghua University in Beijing. He graduated with a Master of International Affairs from the Australian National University (ANU) in 2005 and obtained a Master of Law from the University of St. Gallen (HSG) in 2001. His research interests focus on the political and security challenges to contemporary Northeast Asian societies. Chris is recipient of a Swiss National Science Foundation scholarship for young researchers.

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