

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

DIJ Social Science Study Group



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The Rise of China and Changes in Japan's Identity Construction

The rapid economic rise and increasing integration of China in international organizations are changing China's influence on the international community and subsequently the perception of China by other states. As Japan is the current economic leader in the Asia-Pacific region, its reaction to China's rise is of particular interest.

Following the Normalization Treaty in 1972 and the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978 Japan and China started well in developing good relations. But after the end of the Cold War - when the "Rise of China" coincided with Japan entering its "Lost Decade" - the relations deteriorated rapidly and finally hit rock bottom in 2005.

Through a qualitative and quantitative analysis of speeches, MOFA documents and parliamentary debates on Japan's China policy, I try to explore changes in Japan's identity construction towards China.

I hypothesize 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 construction, and will further cause changes in the setting of priorities pertaining to Japan's foreign policy interests towards China.

KAI SCHULZE studied Political Sciences and Japanese Studies at Georg-August-University in Göttingen/Germany and Chiba University/Japan. He received his Master Degree in 2007. In April 2008 he entered the Institute of East Asian Studies (INEAST) at the University Duisburg-Essen as a PhD student. From July 2009 to April 2010 he conducts his field research at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) as a Research Fellow.

The presentation will be given in English. The DIJ Social Science Study Group is a forum for young scholars and Ph.D. candidates in the field of Social Sciences organized by Maren Godzik, Barbara Holthus and Ralph Lützel. All are welcome to attend, but registration (holthus@dijtokyo.org) is appreciated.

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