

German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ)

## DIJ Social Science Study Group

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Sarah Tanke, Sciences Po Paris (Center for International Studies)

# Evolution and Transformations of Japan's Multilateral Diplomacy

From a purely geopolitical point of view in international relations theory, Japan could focus on its bilateral relations with the United States to ensure its national security and neglect multilateral diplomacy. However, Japan shows a remarkably active behavior in multilateral arenas, such as the United Nations: as the second largest financial contributor to the United Nations regular budget, as the most frequently elected non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, and in its commitment to particular issues such as Human Security (Shin'yo 2017).

Since geopolitical reasoning cannot sufficiently explain Japan's international actions and multilateral commitment, this research aims for a more eclectic approach by adopting a constructivist perspective. Taking into account recognition, identity, norms and other social factors contributes to a better understanding of Japanese multilateral diplomacy (Kratochwil 2011). The research project looks back at 60 years of Japanese UN membership. Of particular interest are the notions that are central to Japanese diplomacy and their interpretation by Japanese actors, constructing a certain image of Japan and its diplomacy. These include concepts such as peace, prosperity and security, as well as their transformations since Japan joined the UN in 1956. The presentation will provide an overview of the current state of my research, with first preliminary results from my fieldwork in Japan including interviews and archival work.

**Sarah Tanke** is a PhD student in political science/international relations at Sciences Po Paris (CERI: Center for International Studies) and currently a PhD fellow at the DIJ Tokyo. She obtained an M.A. in Japanese Studies (University of Hamburg) and in political science (Sciences Po Paris) after being a Carlo Schmid fellow at the United Nations Development Program. She has published *Une diplomatie du respect: le Japon et le multilatéralisme*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2017.

All are welcome to attend, **but registration ([ganseforth@dijtokyo.org](mailto:ganseforth@dijtokyo.org)) is appreciated.**

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is organized by  
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