

## **AREA Research Workshop**

### **Rhetoric and Evidence of Leadership Aspirations in East Asia: Immaterial as well as material sources of leadership and implications for regional governance patterns**

Duisburg, Building SG, Room SG 183, Geibelstraße 41,

Wednesday, 6 November 2019, 11 h to 17 h

#### **Outline**

In East Asia, leadership matters. In the absence of strong regional multilateral institutions that allow for collective problem solving and regional governance, the evolving regional order is largely informed by the quest for regional leadership amongst regional as well as external actors. Especially when compared to the European process of regional integration, East Asian regional dynamics provide for an important research case in terms of governance and its impact on the construction of regional order.

Both China and Japan are engaged in strengthening and consolidating their role as major players (“leaders”) in the Asia-Pacific region, with implications also for the global, multilateral level. While this development has been going on for many years, a number of factors make it highly relevant to take a closer and fresh look: First, the unilateralism of the Trump administration in the US has accelerated the activities and reactions of state and non-state actors in the region, including new institutional configurations. Second, because of the time that has passed since China and Japan have intensified their activities, considerable evidence has become available to evaluate the outcome of their moves relative to the rhetorics. Third, aspiration for leadership is always shrouded in communication that may to some extent hide the true motives behind action.

The analysis of cognitive priors and rhetorics refers to the immaterial factors of regional leadership. However, it is also the resource-base, i.e. material factors like economic and technological power, military capabilities and geography that define the evolution of regional leadership in East Asia and related patterns of governance.

Several sub-topics are distinguished (see session titles below) to study the immaterial and material sources for regional leadership in East Asia and their implications for the shaping of the region in terms of patterns of governance.

## Programme

### **11:00 Opening remarks**

Sebastian Bersick and Werner Pascha

### **11:15 Session 1: Cognitive priors and rhetoric: focuses on the analysis of immaterial factors of regional leadership**

Xi Jinping's diplomatic references to historiographical and literary texts

*Jörg Plassen*

### **12:00 Session 2: National strategies: the country-focused analysis of regional leadership**

China's pursuit of leadership in global financial governance

*Jörn-Carsten Gottwald*

Japan's role in the East Asian region and beyond: Leader, innovator, follower?

*Werner Pascha*

### **13:00 Lunch break**

### **14:00 Session 3: Interaction, including the role of regional institutions: the multilateral-focused analysis of regional leadership**

Leadership and Connectivity: China, the European Union, and the Belt and Road Initiative

*Sebastian Bersick*

Redefining 'Leadership': Chinese Think Tank Debates on China's Global Strategy

*Nele Noesselt*

### **15:00 Coffee Break**

### **15:15 Session 4: The resource-base: focuses on the material factors of regional leadership in East Asia**

The Material Factors for China's Regional Leadership: The Case of the BRI

*Yuan Li*

### **16:00 Discussion: The way forward**

### **17:00 Closing**