

Abstract

In this thesis I explore the current trends of the Sino-Japanese bilateral relations as it appears through the lenses of the TPMC. The TPMC, short for Third-Party Market Cooperation, is a public-private-partnership initiative between China and other countries not part of the Belt and Road Initiative, and the cooperation with Japan aims at combining the relative advantages of the two economies in order to meet the infrastructure demand for a developing Southeast Asia. I argue that this partnership has the potential to lead to improvement to the bilateral relations between the two parties, according to the theory proposed by Press-Barnathan in 2006 and then elaborated further in 2009, consisting of three conditions regarding the domestic support for the peace process (in this case, the TPMC), the degree of economic disparity between the actors, and the presence of a third party that can facilitate the process; I then use elements of Critical Discourse Analysis to gauge the extent of this positive effect by examining how the construction of the partner has changed in the years after the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the partnership, by analysing how different discursive strategies in the creation of meaning are used, according to frameworks used by Lams (2017), and Hagström and Hanssen (2016). I finally compare the results to other parameters to understand whether this initiative is part of a steady trend of improvement, or not, and suggest new directions for research in the field.