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CHINESE ARCTIC SCIENCE DIPLOMACY: CONCEPTUALIZING THE CHINESE DREAM, A HISTORICAL APPROACH FROM HARD POWER TO SOFT POWER

Rasmus Gjedssø Bertelsen (*UiT-The Arctic University of Norway, Norway*)

Xing Li (*Aalborg University, Denmark*)

Mette Højris Gregersen (*Aalborg University, Denmark*)

rasmus.bertelsen@uit.no

Xi Jinping has made "the Chinese Dream" the motto of his administration, as previous Chinese leaders had very important policy mottos as "peaceful rise" and "peaceful development". The Chinese Dream entails both national glory and individual prosperity. Here we will focus on the dream of Chinese national greatness in the context of Chinese Arctic policy. We will use China's ambitions to participate in Arctic political, economic and scientific affairs as a case of China's aspirations to be an accepted major power in politics, business and science.

Chinese Arctic statements have gone through a development of a history of more assertive unofficial statements (by Rear Admiral Yin Zhuo or Li Zhenfu) coexisting with and being replaced by a restrained official Chinese policy. China's desire to gain a seat at the Arctic table has, however, been clear and resulted in permanent observer status in the Arctic Council.

This paper will look at the use of soft power policy in China's Arctic policy through the case of science diplomacy. The paper will look at how China uses soft power in general and science diplomacy in particular to reach goals in Arctic affairs of access, participation and recognition as a legitimate stakeholder. We will look at top science as a marker of great power status. The paper will look at how China enters the Arctic through science, how China creates an image as a legitimate Arctic stakeholder through science, how China builds relations with Arctic nations and wider through science. Likewise, the paper will look at how Arctic nations works with Chinese Arctic science to accommodate and integrate China in the Arctic.

The paper inserts itself in the general International Relations debate on the rise and accommodation of China in the international system. The Arctic is a useful sub-region to study this rise and accommodation as the Arctic is dominated by status quo powers from the West and Russia. The case of science diplomacy gives the opportunity to explore a broader power concept in power transition and to explore transnational instruments in the management of the rise and accommodation of a new power.