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Abstract

Japan zwischen Globalisierung und Isolation. Das Ende der kulturellen "Einsamkeit"?

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Japan's position in a rapidly globalizing world is frequently described as extremely problematic. Is the country forever condemned to a "secluded" lonesome existence between east and west, without genuine ties to her East Asian neighbors as well as to the western world, as it is argued for example by the influential American writer Samuel Huntington? Or has the time come for Japan's turning away from the west as the popular nationalistic Japanese politician Ishihara Shintarô declares? Nevertheless, at precise consideration, the present Japanese crisis situation seems not that hopeless, but offers new chances for a creative and active role for Japan to play internationally. An obviously changing and opening Japanese society can substantially contribute to a globalized, heterogeneous "world culture". The syncretism, dominating Japan's premodern intellectual history, provided a valid cultural pattern to include and integrate various cultural elements from the outside world. This authentic cultural model of Japan seems to be far better adapted to the demands of a "postmodern" globalizing world than the historically much younger idea of a culturally isolated and "homogeneous" Japan.