

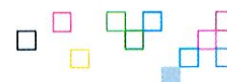
**PhD Dissertation Review****Author: Takaharu Uesugi****„Changes of Japanese Defense Policy and its Social Perception.
At the Turn of the 20th and 21st Century”****Wrocław 2019, pp. 285****1. General description**

The thesis is composed of four chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The objectives were defined in introduction. First to analyze changes of Japanese national security policy and strategy, their determinants and consequences as well as how Japanese leaders perceive recent threats. Second to analyze, how Japanese society perceive eventual changes in the Japanese national security policy, strategy and Self Defense Force and what factors cause them (pp.11-12).

The impressive part of the dissertation is bibliography (45 pages). The thesis is written on 285 pages all together. The introduction was well organized, divided into six parts: research motivation, problem, methodology, theory, limitation and structure of the thesis. The author has studied and quoted an appropriate number of bibliographic sources. It is the evidence of good knowledge and good orientation to the problem discussed in the thesis.

The word processing of the thesis is adequate. The use of different fonts and structure of the text is proper and help reader comprehend text.

The thesis fulfils the formal requests on a satisfactory level.



2. The topicality and validity of the thesis

The chosen subject is valid and topical. For many years Japan has relied on its alliance with the United States, however recently Tokyo's approach to military power is being tested. First by China. Second by North Korea and its nuclear program. Third Russia and its military presence in and around Japanese airspace and territorial waters. There is no doubt that threat perception assumes a larger role in shaping decisions about Japan's defense needs. Prime Minister Abe seems to be one of the most hawkish postwar leader. He reenergized Japan's debate over its postwar constitution, introduced security policy reforms and raised defense spending. Few weeks ago, Sheila A. Smith (Senior Fellow for Japan Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations) published her book titled "*Japan Rearmed. The Politics of Military Power*", Harvard University Press 2019. She argues that Japan is not only responding to above mentioned threats but also reevaluating its dependence on the United States. This only confirms that the topic of thesis is current and relevant in the context of up-to-date research in political science.

3. Aims and methods of the thesis

The aims and methods are identified in the introduction as are the research questions and hypothesis. The author correctly formulated the research tasks and set two hypotheses. He declared the use historical approach and later proposed several research methods: historical method, legal and institutional analysis, comparative analysis and decision making analysis. That means that author used not only historical approach in his dissertation. Mr. Takaharu Uesugi based his analysis on several theoretical approaches – neorealism, constructivism, institutionalism. The title of the thesis suggested that author also would use



quantitative methods to analysis “social perception of the Japanese national security policy”.

4. Detailed assessment

The title of the thesis is “*Changes of Japanese Defense Policy...*” but in the structure the author used different term – “*Japanese national security policy and strategy*”. However, the author explained that in the introduction saying that “Japanese defense policy” is equivalent to phrase “national security policy”. But in my opinion the structure should be coherent with the title, otherwise it is a bit confusing.

I have also some comments to the structure. In my opinion the chapter 4 should not be the last one. The author analyzes in it recent threats to Japan like Russian Federation activity, People’s Republic of China assertiveness, situation on Korean Peninsula, or terrorism. All of them are important contemporary determinants of changes of Japanese national security policy. They set the scene for those changes. So, they should be analyzed earlier not in the end. The same as some parts from chapter two, when the author presented and analyzed determinants of changes in Japan defense policy (political situation in the Middle East, especially during the Gulf War (p. 112-113, North Korea activity (p. 115) etc.), in my opinion should be presented earlier. The author tried to analyze those determinants by dividing them into internal (e.g. natural disaster, analyzed in chapter 3) and external (some in chapter 2 and others in chapter 4). This makes the whole narrative a bit chaotic.

In first chapter the author presented Japan profile and focused on its unique features like geographical location, culture, history. Geographical location is very important however the author should also describe and analyze state geopolitical location which in my opinion is very important to understand what stands behind Japanese defense policy. Then the author analyzed so called “national character”.



He focused on cultural determinates of Japanese defense policy. However the author unnecessarily quoted David Matsumo having access to the original Geert Hofstede finding (p. 51). I think that this part of work should be better analyze. I suggest that the author should investigate Japanese national culture using six dimensions proposed by G. Hofstede: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence. This will give a better understanding why Japan and its society prefer to avoid conflicts with others and keep harmony.

The author had then investigated chronological changes of perspective of threats in Japan. This part was very well discus.

In second chapter the author investigated evolution of Japanese national defense policy and strategy as well as Japan defense capability. Firstly, he focused on post war constitution and how this document influences Japanese policy. Essential is Article Nine and its interpretation. This part was well investigated. The author showed different interpretations from the radical pacifistic one to the interpretation that permits possession of military and use of force (p.84). It is important to remember that Japan's leaders interpreted the 1947 constitution to allow for self-defense, later codified in the law that set forth the mission and organizing principles of Japan's postwar military so called Self-Defense Force (SDF) in 1954. Secondly, the author introduced directions of the Japanese national security policy and changes of role and position of the SDF after the IIWW and later he introduced recent changes. What missing is a deepened analyzes of the specific of SDFs, their organization, recruitment and management.

Thirdly, the author presented resent directions of the Japan defense policy.

In third chapter Mr. Takaharu Uesugi focused on social perception in Japan regarding militarization. He based his research on public survey available in internet or other publications. This helped him to show general tendency in



Japanese society. The analysis has been enriched by number of figures, tables and pictures. The author discussed the role of education as very influential factor in social views and conscious. Though I don't understand why the author discussed social perception in subchapter titled "Ideological confrontation..." (p. 134). Nevertheless, the author portrayed there the whole picture of Japanese society sometimes by showing its ambivalent position toward militarization. However, we can see some gradual changes in this matter.

In last chapter the author discussed recent threats to Japan's security and how they determinate changes in Japan's defense policy. Starting from relations with Russia, the People's Republic of China later by analyzing situation at Korean Peninsula, and relations with both Koreas. In the last part the author very shortly discussed problem of international vs. domestic terrorism. In my opinion that part totally doesn't fit in this chapter and the whole chapter will be more adequate at the beginning of the analysis.

The forecast for the future of Japanese defense/security policy would be an enriching element.

At the end of dissertation, the general conclusions of the completed research were described. The conclusions confirmed that the declared objective of the work was successfully finished.

There are several mistakes or ambiguities which occurred to me. I already mentioned some and there are others, such as:

It should be Qing not Ching dynasty (e.g. p. 67)

Cold War Era is too journalistic (e.g. p. 107). In literature we used Cold War.

Xi Jinping instead Xi Jing Ping (p. 200)

Chicken dilemma not "chicken race" (p. 203)



There are also some remarks which occurred to me and need to be explained in more details:

1. How the author views the future role of the United States in deter aggression against Japan? Should Japan need them any longer?
2. How the author would describe Japanese strategic culture? Can we observe any change? And if yes what are the main drivers and obstacles?

To sum up, despite some critical remarks, I would like to emphasize that the topic discussed in the thesis is extremely current, and therefore has a high cognitive value. The author presented the results of his research in an interesting and competent way. The same he proved his ability to think independently and critically. In my opinion, the reviewed thesis fulfills requirements posed on theses aimed for obtaining a PhD degree. This thesis is ready to be defended orally, in front of respective committee by the statutes in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland.



Lublin, April 29th 2019

