

Annotation

This bachelor thesis offers a complex empirical evaluation of proactive pacifism in Japanese foreign policy in the last years of Prime Minister Abe's government. Proactive pacifism represents a great challenge to Japan's future direction. Scholars are debating whether Japan has radically changed in recent years under the Abe reforms and whether it abandons its policy of post-war pacifism, or whether it is only evolutionary development which is still strongly constrained by rooted social and cultural norms based on the pacifist constitution. For the needs of empirical analysis of proactive pacifism in Japanese foreign policy, three criteria have been established – 1) the legislative and the institutional criterion, 2) the militaristic criterion and 3) the social criterion. The institutional and the legislative criteria show significant change in the Japanese post-war development. Sending Japanese SDFs abroad is nothing new in the recent decades but exercising the right to collective self-defense is a major step. The use of weapons in foreign missions is for many authors a proof that Japan is abandoning its post-war pacifism. However, the militaristic and the social criteria showed that post-war pacifism still has a significant impact on political and foreign behavior. Japan is still far from being an active "normal" state, therefore the thesis proceeds to point towards the conclusion that proactive pacifism does not represent a major shift from the current course in foreign policy.