

Annotation

This thesis is dealing with the effects of particular aspects of the British identity on the decision to modernize the Trident system, and therefore to maintain the United Kingdom's status of a nuclear weapon state. From theoretical point of view, the thesis operates with the notion of socially constructed identity of Great Britain that constitutes the perceptions and mindsets, which subsequently portray onto the contours of nuclear policy-making process and therefore shape its outcomes. It is argued that in this case, the constant reproduction of identity of Great Britain as a strong pivotal power is shaping the Britain's interest of pursuing the modernization of its nuclear deterrent. This concept is, in turn, incorporated into the official framework and reflected in British strategic documents and Government legitimizing postures. The socially constructed reality secures both Britain's identity and British nuclear weapons through the creation of common and opposing identities. This mechanism therefore functions as a constitutive principle of the meaning of Britain's nuclear deterrent. With this regard, the analysis also touches on the role of the external actors – the United States, France and NATO – in the process of constitution and reproduction of Britain's identity with relevance to nuclear weapons policy. The concluding part reconnects the theoretical framework with analytical findings and offers an insight onto the basis of British identity posture vis-à-vis nuclear weapons; and also provides a brief assessment of public discursive framework on the issue of modernization of Trident.