

BACHELOR THESIS EVALUATION: THESIS OPPONENT

Thesis topic: Pacifism to Preparedness: Game Theory Insights into Japan's Military Development

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Advisor: Dagmar Kusá

Opponent: Adam Bence Balazs

Study program: Political Science, Liberal Arts

Evaluation contains objective and critical analysis of a bachelor thesis proposal. Evaluation should be considered by the following criteria:

Criteria for the evaluation of the final thesis	Max. points	Points given by evaluator
1. Methodological aspect (Logical frame, process of inquiry, topic specification, how realistic are set goals and how adequate are proposed working methods)	10	8
2. Sources of domestic and foreign literature, familiarity with relevant literature	15	9
3. Formatting and style	15	14
4. Scope and proportionality of content	5	4
5. Systematic approach	15	14
6. Evaluation of achieved results	40	35
Total	100	84

Final evaluation: A (90-100 points), B (80-89 points), C (70-79 points), D (60-69 points), E (50-59 points), Fx(<49 points)

Evaluation, comments, recommendations:

The thesis is well-structured and written. The methodology is clear and the student acknowledges its limitations in an honest and pre-cautious fashion. The topic is highly relevant. Defence and security are not only priorities to reconsider in Europe but also in a country like Japan where, like in Europe, the postwar period is bitterly over. The Japanese case puts the most pressing contemporary challenges in Europe in an original perspective: the postwar mentality ('never again'), the Russian neighbour and the emergence of China as a superpower are challenges shared by distant allies within the Global West. A better understanding of the Japanese case allows renewed reflection on the European situation. The Indo-Pacific is the heart of global geopolitics. It is crucial to raise awareness about this distant yet immense area in European countries that lack historical experiences in the Indo-Pacific. Distance is a more than relative notion in the age of globalization and digitalization. The student could have strengthened her exploration with the use of a map to provide the reader with a sense of scale and show that Japan's interests go well beyond the country's direct neighbourhood. The combination of game theory and interviews with experts is well-balanced. The student does not lose sight of geopolitical realities through the use of game theory. However, the historical background would have deserved an additional paragraph or two: the adjective 'historical' is used for the postwar period, i.e., the medium-term background of the unfolding events. The student acknowledges her limited access to Japanese literature yet could have had a look at longer-term processes and better locate the short couple of decades we call, in Japan and Europe, the 'postwar period.' I am sure the student will provide the required additional information during her defence.

Questions for the author (relevant to the content of the Thesis):

1. What lessons can Europe learn from the Japanese case and dilemma regarding the return of geopolitics?
2. How would you describe the global importance of the Indo-Pacific region?
3. Who might be most worried about Japanese (re)militarization? Who appreciates this process?

In Bratislava, on: 3/5/24 (date)

Signature of evaluator: B. Bialy