Committee resolution on April 20, 2018, as “an important process for the worldwide disarmament.” However, the above similarity between North Korea and China will be dismissed by the “illicit nuclear aspirant” theory, because China’s nuclear development eventually became lawful under the NPT.

Other nuclear proliferators such as Israel, which never signed the NPT, would also be excluded from comparative analysis based on this book’s view because the authors stressed that the North Korea and Iran commonly signed the NPT as the reason for selecting their cases for comparison. Nevertheless, why do the compared countries that are proliferating nuclear weapons have to be at least onetime signatories of the NPT? The frequent combination of “North Korea and Iran in US strategic thinking” (pages 2–7) also does not constitute enough of a reason to classify the two nuclear proliferators into one category, excluding others. The concept of categorizing proliferators should depend on objective analysis rather than political discourse, even if the relevance of such an objective could be defined based on a tendency of “U.S. strategic thinking.”

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Bibliography

Nye, J. S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 48–50. New York: Public Affairs, 2004.
Sagan, S. “Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb.” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996): 54–86. doi:10.2307/2539273.
Watanabe, T. “Without Incentives: North Korea’s Response to Denuclearization.” *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security* 18 (2017): 110–111.
Watanabe, T. “The Panmunjom Declaration for North Korea: Nuclear Weaponry, Alignment and Regime Competition.” *NIDS Commentary* no. 74 (June 6, 2018)

Takeshi Watanabe

*National Institute for Defense Studies, Tokyo, Japan*

© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

https://doi.org/10.1080/24761028.2018.1558717

**Taiwan wo meguru Anzen Hosho [Taiwan’s security: issues and prospects]**, edited by Jun Yasuda and Rira Momma, Tokyo, Keio Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2016, 244 pp., JPY4, 104 (hardback), ISBN 978-4-7664-2316-7

This book brings together leading Japanese experts on China’s national security to analyze diplomatic, military, domestic, and strategic aspects of Taiwan’s security environment as well as possible future scenarios. Whereas scholarly publications that treat Taiwan’s security as a minor issue related to China’s national security are in abundance, books that put Taiwan’s security at the center are rare.

---

"This point overlaps with the following article: Watanabe, “The Panmunjom Declaration for North Korea.”

"This review was originally published in *Chugoku Kenkyu Geppo* 71, no. 6 (2016): 41–42.
Taiwan is an island located off the coast of mainland China at the junction of the East China Sea and the South China Sea. Although it is a place of a great importance for Japan’s sea-line security, Taiwan’s security has not been at the center of scholarly discussion. It was Shigeo Hiramatsu’s “The Taiwan Problem” (published in 2005) that helped me realize the geopolitical and strategic significance of Taiwan.\(^2\) In the 12 years that have passed since its publication, China’s security environment has undergone a substantial change, and the issue of the Japan–Taiwan security relations needs to be at last addressed in earnest.

Although the reader’s first impression is that this book does not directly address the issue of the Japan–Taiwan security relations, the implicit centrality of the above topic can be felt throughout the pages.

1. **Outline of the book**

The book consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 (“Taiwan and the Dynamics of International Politics”) describes the shifting Japan–U.S.–China–Taiwan military balance and presents mid-term scenarios for Taiwan’s security. Chapter 2 (“The Relationship between Politics and Military Strategy”) gives a general overview of the interrelationship between the political situation and military trends under successive presidents, while Chapter 3 (“Taiwan’s Military Strategy”), based on the national defense reports, offers an in-depth analysis of the island’s military strategy. In Chapter 4 (“The U.S. and Taiwan’s Conflicting Views on Maintaining the status quo”), the author examines the centrality of the U.S.–Taiwan relations to the island’s national security. Chapter 5 (“China’s Taiwan Policy”) investigates changes in China’s military strategy and rise of Chinese military might after the introduction of “reform and opening-up” policy. In Chapter 6 (“The Reorganization of China’s Airspace Management”), the author takes up the seemingly unrelated issue of the reorganization of China’s air traffic management to clarify how it actually impacts Taiwan’s security. Chapter 7 (“Japan–Taiwan Relations in the Year 2030 from the Vantage Point of National Security”) attempts to envisage the future of Japan–Taiwan relations under three possible scenarios, namely (1) Taiwan–China unification, (2) the continuation of the status quo, and (3) Taiwan’s independence, as well as two sets of variables: (A1) China as an authoritarian regime or (A2) China’s democratization, and (B1) policy of hostility toward Japan or (B2) China’s friendly relations with Japan.

2. **The “nonexistent” Japan–Taiwan security relations**

Only in Chapter 7 (which deals with long-term scenarios for Japan–Taiwan relations) has an attempt been made to directly address the issue of Japan–Taiwan security ties. In my opinion, this is not to avoid discussing the current state of Japan–Taiwan security relations, but to acknowledge the fact that official (i.e., state to state) Japan–Taiwan relations are nonexistent. Since the Sino–Japanese Normalization of 1972, Japan has been committed to a “one-China” policy, such that Japan no longer recognizes the Republic of China (ROC) as the official government of China. As stated in the “Joint Communique of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People’s Republic of China”, Japan recognizes the People’s Republic of China (PRC) government as the sole legal government of China, while maintaining nongovernmental, working-level relations with Taiwan. Throughout 40 years, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has dispatched envoys at the rank of Director (課長) or Deputy Director General (審議官) to visit Taiwan. For economic talks, the Director General (局長) has also participated in

\(^2\)Hiramatsu, S. *Taiwan Mondai: Chugoku to Beikoku no Gunjiteki Kakushitsu* [The Taiwan Problem: The Sino-American Military Feud]. Tokyo: Keisoshobo, 2005.
these negotiations. However, to discuss security issues, the Ministry of Defense has never sent anyone at the rank of Director (or above).

In reality, Japan–Taiwan relations have undergone some big changes. First, as a result of Taiwan’s democratization, the Taiwanese and Japanese governments adhere to the same set of democratic values. Second, more than 6 million people travelled between Japan and Taiwan in 2016. As a result, the bilateral relationship has grown even closer. Third, there is the issue of China’s superpower aspiration and its military rise. Furthermore, in May 2016, the pro–“One China Principle” administration of Ma Ying-jeou (the Kuomintang Party) was replaced by the independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen (the Democratic Progressive Party). In addition, in November 2016, President Trump proclaimed his “America First” policy. Thus, as a result of China’s growing pressure on the Tsai Ing-wen administration, in tandem with the U.S. efforts to transfer the costs of its military presence overseas onto its allies, the regional security environment has changed. Consequently, the issue of Japan–Taiwan security ties has gained in significance.

In Chapter 7, the author points out that “Japan and Taiwan, taken together, have the military capability to deter China’s encroachment, thus their cooperation would play a key role in maintaining peace in East Asia”. Given recent developments in the region, the above argument sounds plausible. Further to this, the joint communiqué released after the Abe–Trump meeting on February 6th, 2016 stated that “the U.S.–Japan alliance remains a cornerstone of peace, prosperity and freedom in the Asia–Pacific region”. To my understanding, this means that the U.S.–Japan alliance guarantees stability in the region, not only with regard to the issue of Senkaku Islands, but also with regard to the Taiwan problem and the South China Sea.

3. The growing strategic significance of Japan–relations

In February 2017, the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) published a report on China’s security titled “Change in Continuity: The Dynamics of the China–Taiwan Relationship”. In the report (co-authored by one of the editors of this book) it is argued that strengthening Taiwan’s defense capacity would contribute to the regional stability in East Asia. Although the report has been written solely from the viewpoints of the individual researchers, we should bear in mind that the NIDS is an official think tank of the Japanese Ministry of Defense, thus this report (at least to some extent) reflects the Ministry’s position on Taiwan’s security as well as attesting to the growing significance of the Taiwan issue.

The above report met with strong protest by China. In particular, Beijing opposed the “state-like” status of Taiwan and requested suspension of the report’s publication. Clearly, from China’s standpoint, the issue of Japan–Taiwan security relations is an extremely sensitive one, thus the prospect of any form of Japan–Taiwan security cooperation is dim.

As explained in Chapter 5, although Beijing has never ruled out the use of military force as it seeks the reunification of Taiwan, until the year 2020 it will not have full offensive capabilities to carry out military operations. Until the 2000s, China was unable to launch a full-fledge landing operation, since then, however, the military balance across the Taiwan Strait has increasingly tilted toward China. In times of emergency, under the Taiwan Relations Act (1979), the U.S. might dispatch naval ships to the Taiwan Strait. Also, under the U.S.–Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, Japan would be obliged to support those operations.

Thus, with regard to the Japan–Taiwan ties, the NIDS Report and this book speak with one voice: in a veiled way in the NIDS Report and in a direct way in the book chapters, the growing significance of the Japan–Taiwan security relations is acknowledged.

---

3The National Institute for Defense Studies. Change and Continuity: The Dynamics of the China - Taiwan Relationship. Tokyo: The National Institute for Defense Studies, 2017.
In Chapter 7, the author makes bold predictions about the future of Japan–Taiwan relations. Under the unification scenario, with a government hostile toward Japan, Japan–Taiwan relations are likely to deteriorate. Given the current favorable state of Japan–Taiwan relations, such a scenario might be difficult to imagine, but we must remember that, under the Kuomintang authoritarian regime (1949–1996), the anti-Japanese sentiment was strong. Under the independence scenario, on the other hand, China is likely to be perceived as a main threat to Taiwan’s survival. If both Taiwan and Japan were to perceive China as a main threat, the Japan–Taiwan relations would be strengthened. This kind of scenario thinking is a necessary mental exercise, and Japan must be prepared to react swiftly to the unfolding reality.

Clearly, readers can get a comprehensive picture of China’s policy toward Taiwan and vice versa from this publication. However, with regard to Japan–Taiwan security relations, my overall impression is that the book does not fully incorporate Taiwan’s voices on the issues. During Li Tenghui’s tenure (1988–2000), an informal “Mingde Project” (明德專案) was initiated with a focus on the topic of U.S.–Japan–Taiwan security relations. During Chen Shuibian’s tenure (2000–2008), Japanese and Taiwanese scholars were able to exchange views via “Track 2 Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific.” Indeed, as pointed out by Shigeo Hiramatsu in 2004 during an international symposium on regional security, Japan and Taiwan “have no choice but to cooperate.” Thus, it is frequently the case that the Japanese side tends to overlook Taiwan’s position on security issues.

Will Japan–Taiwan security relations still be treated as taboo topic in the future? This book, written by leading Japanese experts on China’s national security, gives us a clue about the answer.

Eiichi Shiozawa
Kyodo News
shiozawa.eiichi@kyodonews.jp

© 2019 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License
(http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction
in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
https://doi.org/10.1080/24761028.2019.1583005