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*The Influence of Sub-state
Actors on National Security.
Using Military Bases
to Forge Autonomy,*
ed. Minori Takahashi

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Admittedly, security is a complex issue, which explains why there is no single definition in the relevant reference books and journals. Having said this, one can admit that it is a certain state or process that gives a sense of a lack of threat. Security is also an interdisciplinary concept, and this means that a number of disciplines – including sociology, political science, or legal sciences – deal with its analysis and research. One of its components is national security. On this account, it is clear to see there is no single definition of the concept. Academics agree that the state defends its internal values against external threats. The greater the skills in this area, the lower the risk of the occurrence of new unpredictable threatening incidents targeted at the state and its people.

The book has been published by Springer, a reputable international scientific publisher, in Switzerland in 2019 by Minori Takahashi, the editor. It is made up of eight sections, which can be referred to as chapters, written by numerous representatives of the Academia, as well as people who have a keen interest in security. The book has been written in English. The authors have focused on two main

issues: how to use military bases to forge autonomy, and how sub-state actors influence national security.

The reviewed book has 149 pages. In the first chapter, which is the introduction, an attempt has been made at explaining the issue at stake, i.e. the subject matter being scrutinised, and the characteristics of the ideas put forward by the individual authors. The content is concise and clear. Although the publication has been written by several authors at the same time, the individual chapters contain some common elements, such as: the abstract, the key words, the introduction, the text itself, the ending, the final conclusions, and the references.

The publication is primarily made up of book studies, research papers, documents, and Internet-based resources. There are no tables, diagrams, or charts. Including them would have significantly increased the overall value of the content, and, arguably, it would have been an interesting supplement for the reader as well. The reviewed book has two maps, but they have only been included at the introduction level, as they appear before the actual chapters. Therefore, one can assume that their purpose is merely to provide some references to the location of the subject matter at hand. The book clearly lacks a list of abbreviations, or an index of names. Having said this, for publications that do not exceed 150 pages, this is not required.

The first part, which serves as the Introduction, *The Influence of Sub-state Actors on National Security*, by Minori Takahashi, Ph.D. and Assistant Professor, affiliated at the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center and Arctic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Hokkaido, Japan, presents some information about the entire publication: the Thule Air Base in Greenland, the relationship between the big and powerful states and the smaller countries, the place for local actors (sub-national entities) to have an influence on higher-level actors (which has led to the formation of diplomacy on the national security level), the political relations between Greenland, Denmark, the US and Russia, and about Okinawa and Olongapo.

The second part – *Base Politics and the Hold-up Problem*, by Shinji Kawana Ph.D. and Associate Professor at the Institute for Liberal Arts, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan, explains the key notions of vulnerability, substitutability, urgency, specificity, and integration. It looks at the importance of the relations between local entities and the government. Indeed, the bigger they are, the more dependencies can be discerned; for example: financial and/or political – cf. the case of Olongapo City (a Filipino sub-state actor), which played a big role in the withdrawal of US military bases from the Philippines. After the destruction caused by the volcanic eruption in 1991, the Americans closed the base, and the area was transformed into the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

The chapter that follows is entitled *Greenland's Quest for Autonomy and the Political Dynamics Surrounding the Thule Air Base*, and it has also been written by Minori Takahashi. The author believes that the Thule air base will act as a node for objects and units; substitutability of the Thule base is low, but its urgency is high. This comes as no surprise, because thanks to its strategic location, Greenland offers the opportunity to control the operations held in the North Atlantic, and the flight path over the Arctic. This is why it is seen as a pivotal area for the security of several countries, including the US.

The follow-up of the considerations occurs in the next chapter titled *How Have the U.S. Interests in Greenland Changed?: Reconstructing the Perceived Value of Thule Air Base After the Cold War*, by Kousuke Saitou, Ph.D. and Associate Professor, affiliated at the Research Initiatives and Promotion Organisation, Yokohama National University, Kanagawa, Japan. The author pays particular attention to the end of the 1990s, when the US recognised the increased missile capabilities of North Korea and Iran, the so-called “rogue states”, which enhanced the significance of Thule Air Base. The author attempts to provide an answer to the question of how the US interests in Greenland have changed. During the Cold War, it was a part of the strategy for countering the Soviet Union. Nowadays, it is part of a missile defence-system or keep an eye on Russia’s policy and strategy in this region.

The next chapter – by Yu Koizumi, M.A. Researcher at The Institute for Future Engineering, Tokyo, Japan – completes the previous chapter and is entitled *Russia’s Military Build-Up in the Arctic: Russia’s Threat Perception and its Military Strategy in the Arctic Region*. It looks at Russia’s interest in the region – not only a merely military interest, but also the issue of natural resources based on a strategy geared towards securing nuclear deterrence.

The next part is entitled *Okinawa’s Search for Autonomy and Tokyo’s Commitment to the Japan-U.S. Alliance*, and it has been written by Shino Hateruma, M.A. and Ph.D. Candidate at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan. The author discusses the problem of Okinawa residents protesting against the US military presence, and indications of how the maintenance of the base affected the locals, the local economy, and the economy and politics. The manifestations were people’s voices expressed through direct democracy. Okinawa’s quest for autonomy stood in clear opposition to Japan’s interests, based on the desire to provide the US with access to the bases. The Japanese government is currently moving the US bases from the densely populated part of Okinawa.

The subsequent part – by Ayae Shimizu, Ph.D. Researcher at The Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, Japan – is entitled *The Political Dynamics and Impacts Surrounding Subic Naval Base in the Philippines*. The US maintained its military bases in the Philippines until 1992. One example of their negative impact is the Olongapo issue, whose inhabitants repeatedly protested against American bases and their negative influence in the region. Olongapo City was exposed to numerous accidents and crimes as a result of the presence of Subic Bay Naval Base. The author proves that the anti-base movements that occurred in Olongapo had an impact on the negotiations held between the US and the Philippines.

The final chapter, also by Minori Takahashi, serves as a conclusion, and it is called *The Political Choices of Sub-state Actors and the Politics Surrounding U.S. Military Base*. Here, the author states that all the statements and considerations put forward in the publication revolve around three main points: 1) the relationship between American policy and the host country – susceptibility to influence, and coping with the factor; 2) the correlation between autonomy and military bases - Greenland, Okinawa and Olongapo; and 3) the issues of political relations in the Arctic environment, including the influence of the Cold War period on current relations. The book also pinpoints the relationship between sub-state actors and

national security, pointing to the issue of how much the actions taken by smaller entities can influence government decisions.

The variety of issues that have come under scrutiny is extensive and shows how important individual stakeholders are for national security. Including all these research papers has an unquestionable effect on the nature and overall value of the book that is being offered to the reader. To sum up, the addressees of the publication are not only people interested in security issues, but also those who have a keen interest in a wide array of current issues related to the contemporary world. The book is a valuable supplementation to the publications that are already available on the Polish publishing market, thanks to the interesting materials and scientific insight it offers.

On the whole, the book can be a perfect source of knowledge not only for students of International Relations, but also for the people who want to expand their knowledge on how national security is shaped in different parts of the globe. The variety of the content that has been featured here encourages the readers not only to familiarise themselves with the whole publication, but also to go beyond and search for additional information on websites and in the books and papers listed in the relevant reference sections.