



# Gender and Armed Forces: Internalisation of International Norms in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces

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# 博士学位論文

## 論文題目

Gender and Armed Forces: Internalisation of International  
Norms in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces

(ジェンダーと軍事組織：自衛隊による国際規範の内在化)

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## Abstract

Compliance with international norms relating to gender equality has become a requirement for a legitimate statehood. Although Japan has generally been criticized for lagging behind other developed democracies in this area, gender integration in Japan has steadily advanced even in such rigid and conservative sectors as the national security sector. Japan has adopted international norms relating to gender equality through its post-war Constitution of 1947, the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1985, and the institutionalisation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the late 1990s. Through participation in international peacekeeping operations and other multinational military missions, and entering into partnership agreement with NATO in 2014, Japan has adopted Women, Peace and Security agenda in its own security sector.

This study seeks to introduce a political science perspective in the scarce research about policies toward women in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF). It argues that factors influencing gender policies of the SDF are not limited to material considerations based on military needs nor on domestic normative context alone. Wider international normative context must not be disregarded when explicating the change of gender policies in the armed forces of Japan. Using *localisation* model of norm internalisation proposed by Acharya, this paper investigates mechanisms through which international norms relating to gender equality have influenced policy-making process in the SDF, and the features of the norm internalisation process. The analysis is based on Japanese and international written sources, both secondary and primary, interviews with relevant actors including the SDF officers, Japanese bureaucrats, politicians and representatives of civil society.

International gender equality norms were internalised in Japan through the process of norm localisation. The content of foreign norms (equal value of men and women, shared family responsibilities, work-life balance, human rights, anti-discrimination, prohibition of violence

against women, gender perspective) was adjusted to local normative priors through congruence processes of framing, grafting and pruning, preserving the domestic normative hierarchy. The paper reveals that the SDF have actively participated in the process of internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality within the organisation, borrowing needed elements from international gender equality norms, and contesting those elements that diverged from the identity, interests and preferences of the SDF and its leadership.

This study proposes to develop Acharya's norm localisation model through concepts of accumulation of enabling factors, norm sedimentation and "phasing out" of norms. Accumulation of enabling factors creates the possibility for local actors to adopt a foreign norm and facilitates localisation process. Norm sedimentation is a process through which local actors familiarise themselves with the content of new norms. Through repetitive use of new language, production of documentation, habitual compliance with new procedures and practices, actors on the level of organisation become acquainted with and used to new tasks, functions and institutions introduced for the purpose of compliance with the adopted norms. Through successful framing, grafting and pruning convergence between new norms and local normative priors can be achieved and entrenchment of a normative status quo avoided. Phasing out is the process through which habitual language, practices and procedures reflective of prior local norms comes into disuse, representing the process of norm displacement.

International norms relating to gender equality influence SDF policies indirectly, through compliance with Japanese government requirements, and directly through borrowing from international normative framework, through socialisation that enables learning, emulation and sharing of experiences with armed forces of other advanced democracies, and creation of shared identity with their peers.

To my mum who has encouraged and supported every dream I have had.

To my dad who has given me a dreamer's heart.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASDF	Air Self-Defence Forces
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women United Nations
CRSGBV	Conflict-Related Sex and Gender Based Violence
DSP	Democratic Social Party
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council United Nations
EEO Act	Equal Employment Opportunities Act
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment (US)
GHQ/SCAP	General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
GSDF	Ground Self-Defence Forces
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army
ILO	International Labour Organization
JDA	Japan Defence Agency
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JSP	Japanese Socialist Party
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MOD	Japan Ministry of Defence
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defence Forces
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDA	National Defence Academy of Japan
NPA	National Police Agency

PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
RIMPAC	Rim of Pacific Exercise
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SDF	Japanese Self-Defence Forces
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
USFJ	United States Forces Japan
WAC	Women Army Corps
WAF	Women in the Air Force
WPS	Women, Peace and Security