

This thesis deals with Japanese foreign and security policy through the optics of critical geopolitics, specifically the “geopolitics as culture” notion developed by Gearóid Ó Tuathail. Using this notion as an analytical framework, the development of Japan’s foreign and security policy from the establishment of a modern Japanese state till present days is analyzed, with three main concepts being addressed: (1) foreign policy traditions; (2) geopolitical and geostrategic discourses; (3) and strategic and geopolitical culture. For reasons of narrowing the topic down and applying the concept more consistently, one specific element of Japanese foreign and security policy is at the centre of attention: Japan’s “maritime identity”. The goal of the thesis is to identify and characterize Japan’s geopolitical imagination and attempt to determine if and how has this imagination been expressed in the country’s security policy with regard to the maritime identity.