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Northeast Asia and the Avoidance of a Nuclear Arms Race

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Northeast Asia and the Avoidance of a Nuclear Arms Race

by

Samuel Fogleman

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Science
in
Political Science

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Abstract

Since the end of the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979, Northeast Asia and its comprising countries have avoided international conflict as well as any regional set has done over the past few decades. The absence of nuclear weapons among Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, in particular, is striking, given their technological and scientific capabilities. Though each of those countries has come close at times to developing their own nuclear weapons, one factor or another contributed to the failure of those upstart programs. The United States has played a significant role in all of them. Still, other factors remain.

The purpose of this thesis is to determine in detail what caused the lack of a nuclear arms race in northeast Asia, beyond the American angle, as far as could be done. Existential threats exist to each country involved in the study, theoretically and tactically. Additionally, what causes an outlier like North Korea, which has boldly moved forward with nuclear weapons development? An important work by Scott Sagan is utilized in the thesis to assist with developing some far-reaching conclusions, with great importance to other parts of the world, beyond northeast Asia. Other literature can assist with those conclusions, as well.

The framework of this thesis will be to intermingle a somewhat amended version of Sagan's nuclear proliferation rationalizations with historical analyses to draft some region-specific conclusions about why northeast Asia has not had a nuclear arms race. Processes going on between countries, within countries, and among countries,

militarily, culturally, and economically, play such important roles that none can be discarded. The economic power centered on the capitalist core of northeast Asia can show how nuclear weapons acquisition is no longer among the things necessary to gain international respect or even security.

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1. Introduction and Theory

The East Asia region provides many examples of countries that either possess nuclear weapons or the capability to construct weapons of mass destruction. However, in recent decades, the Asia-Pacific, initially a very violent and unstable part of the world, has calmed down substantially and conventional warfare is not imminent. Nuclear war's chances seem even more remote in the region, providing a contrast to other parts of the continent. With the exception of North Korea (and perhaps not even there), direct warfare with other countries is not among the goals of the countries in the region that seek prosperity. The People's Republic of China, the area's longest possessor of nuclear weapons, having completed its first successful test of the weapon in 1964, is a threat to its neighbors economically, not militarily. Where China may go or not go with its nuclear weapons is a major issue in the Asia-Pacific at this point, and also shines as an example of nuclear restraint from a country that had been demonized by its adversaries, both capitalist and communist. Japan, the only country to ever suffer from the direct tactical use of atomic weapons on a civilian population, has been remarkably insistent up to the present in restraining any development of nuclear weapons on the islands. In that case, it is similar to Israel, where the know-how is certainly present, but the governments of the two countries obviously perceive an interest in keeping their potential under wraps. The politics of Japan's public relations concealment of its nuclear capabilities will be an important

facet of this paper, because it is politically and economically vital for Japan to hold back on making weapons of mass destruction.

Somewhat different from the cases of China and Japan, where nuclear weapons are very unambiguous subjects, the East Asian upstarts of South Korea and Taiwan have had different occasions where nuclear weapons were worked on to an extent, but the United States in particular managed to dissuade the two countries from going further with their experimentation. Given the incentives of staying on the good side of the Americans in the post-World War II era, it is interesting to explore the issue of the nuclear question in the current era, in which American global leadership could be ending in a very real way, thanks to the American recession that began in 2007, whose effects still linger. Though a substantial American military presence in South Korea remains and the United States still makes billions of American dollars worth of weapons sales to the Republic of China, the defense ministries of the two countries may find it more necessary to take further control of their own nuclear destinies in the coming decades with the receding American sphere of influence that is almost sure to come about sooner or later.

North Korea, one of the most destitute countries on the planet, is an issue unto itself, due to its predictability in behaving unpredictably. A de facto client state of mainland China, North Korea has played a strange game with its benefactors and adversaries. The Six-Party Talks involving the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, Russia, and China, have arrived at varying results over the years, with North Korea promising one thing on occasion and delivering something else. Its nuclear weapons

capability is certainly an issue that has permeated the military and security discourse of the region in recent years, with missile tests that have flown directly over the Japanese islands, testing the resolve in standing still of the Japanese. The Korean Peninsula is a showcase for being something of the middle of the rope in the dangerous game of tug-of-war between the American-led capitalist world and the now-Chinese-led de jure Communist world. Without China's assistance, the regime of Kim Jong-Il in North Korea would almost certainly collapse, so the calculus of the Chinese in propping up Kim and his blooming weapons program is an interesting case of seeing how far he could take them on their ride toward a regional catastrophe. Or, is no catastrophe imminent at all, and it is just another North Korean game of garnering resources from a frightened West?

Last but not least, the United States shall play an important role in this project because of its leadership in the region, particularly in the case of weapons. As with practically any geopolitical study relating to the last six decades or so, the United States might hold the keys to some very enlightening points as to why things are as they stand in East Asia.

The examples that I have set forth for examination in this project will serve to bring us some conclusions about the direction that the nuclear-capable East Asian region is heading and the reasons that we have yet to see a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia¹. The subtleties involved in the region are stark, due to the capability being so widely

¹ Another important player in the region is the Russian Federation, comprising a great deal of the land area of the Asian continent, one of the earliest nuclear powers with very little international capital to spare since the fall of the Soviet Union. However, its nuclear weapons remain, and a degree of deference has to be paid to it by many in the region for fear of overly insulting a former superpower.

viable, but bluster is not common from the governments in the area. The restraint shown by some of the countries in the area that could probably arrive at the answers of how to develop these weapons in a relatively short period of time also serve as something of an example of how willing a country could be to give up nuclear weapons, if a reasonable amount of security could be guaranteed in some other way.

In the end, East Asia may serve as something of a model for how countries could live in a nuclear reality without there being an imminent danger of a nuclear holocaust wiping out a large portion of the territory's population. Differently from the late-20th century cases of India and Pakistan racing each other to the nuclear brink and fortunately stopping just short of their actual use, the historical adversaries of East Asia (they have all come to blows with any combination of the countries at some point or other within the last few centuries, practically) have not allowed the significant presence of nuclear weapons in their realms to present a true danger. Even with the waning power of the United States on the horizon, Japan does not seem to be making any great moves to enlarge its defense force or radically alter its constitution to make possible offensive war maneuvers. Many other parts of the world could take a lesson from how many East Asian countries are conducting their military and nuclear business.

This paper shall be split up into several different parts. A great deal of it will be essentially an historical analysis, because the events of the past will serve to show why the situation is such, and also to provide insight into where East Asia might be heading in terms of its potential nuclear stockpiles from one country or another. Following

upon that section, another major focus of the paper shall be to examine the present situation related to diplomatic relations between the de facto and aspiring nuclear states of the region. The violent history of the region for the past several centuries reached an abrupt stopping point at the end of the Korean War (not including participation in one form or another by some of these states in the Vietnam War and its aftermath in Southeast Asia in the 1970s and 1980s). The several conflicts between China and Japan, the occupation of Korea and Taiwan by the Japanese, and the Korean War seem like distant memories, with the violent paradigm having been successfully overcome, for the most part². The insidious and potentially threatening presence of nuclear weapons and an abundance of nuclear power in East Asia might lead one unfamiliar with the case to be wary of the direction the region is headed, as far as potential situations of conflict. However, once one is familiarized with the situation of the Asia-Pacific, one might find hope in the human capacity to hold back from going too far toward the brink of destruction and utter disaster.

Main Arguments

I argue that there are a few major reasons why there has not been an East Asian nuclear arms race. Any one of them would be insufficient by itself. Northeast Asia has been of a central sort of a focus for the United States since the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan were all under the American sphere of influence during that period, and still are, so American

² North Korea remains a notable exception.

security guarantees have been vital for those countries to ultimately be nuclear weapon-free. Another reason is that the three countries are very trade-dependent at the same time that they have been export-oriented economies since they have entered economic modernity. Therefore, an action as internationally controversial and potentially threatening as developing a workable nuclear weapons program would be disruptive to those goals of maintaining such vital trade relationships. Branching out from that factor, the acquisition of wealth, both for the individual and for the country as a whole, became an objective of the utmost importance socially in all three of those countries. The regional obsession with such capitalistic cornerstones created a corporatist environment that found nuclear weapons ultimately unnecessary and potentially harmful to the needs of good business. Materialism of that caliber arguably eroded away and damaged many of the better traits of the cultures of those countries, but it nullified the military dangers of possessing nuclear weapons. A third explanatory factor for the non-nuclear-weaponization of Northeast Asia has been that the legal nuclear weapon holder of the region, China, has been terrified the last few decades of severe disruptions to the reigning harmony of the area since the end of the Sino-Vietnamese War. Economic reforms that got underway during the tenure of Deng Xiaoping gave China new goals of business dominance, participation in the global economy, and the cessation of Maoist extremism the likes of which was seen in the Great Leap Forward and the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Along with those reforms came a China that appeared ever less likely to embark on overseas military campaigns. Since the end of the Sino-Vietnamese War in the late 1970s, China has

shown little to no interest in participating in such an activity ever again. Naturally, Japan, South Korea, and especially Taiwan appear more at ease with a China of that sort, and feel less threatened, lowering the likelihood of generating a nuclear deterrent for the purpose of threatening the world's most populous country. Another reason for the lack of an East Asian nuclear arms race has been that none of the three countries primarily mentioned in these factors have done it, or else it is likely the others would. The fifth reason I would like to emphasize here is that of blind luck, pure and simple. As will be explained later, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have all dabbled in nuclear weapons technologies, and South Korea even kept experimentation going into the 1990s, long after the economy had taken off into the stratosphere. Such incidents show that the economic explanation cannot handle everything that this paper proposes to explain.

The birth of the nuclear weapon was a harbinger of many things for the late 20th century and onward. The United States, as the first country to successfully test and use the forerunner of the modern nuclear weapon, became the world leader in many different areas in the post-World War II period, especially in economic and military affairs. The potential ownership of nuclear weapons set off a global arms race that became so pervasive that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty became necessary, which named the United States, the Soviet Union, Communist China, Great Britain, and France, as the sole rightful owners of nuclear weapons. In the time since, it has become obvious that nuclear weapons and at least their potential construction have become much more broadly available.

The two combined circumstances of outright nuclear weapons ownership, de facto nuclear weapons ownership, and potential nuclear weapons ownership and technological know-how is arguably nowhere more widespread regionally than in the Asia-Pacific locale. Therefore, it is an important case to understand in order to exemplify the potential obsolescence of nuclear weapons in the modern age. Rather than garnering more respect through the possession of nuclear weapons, it is now perhaps an era in which even the ownership of nuclear weapons (and in particular, gloating over the potential fact of such ownership, such as with the case of North Korea) brings a state ever closer to pariah status, even with countries like Japan that had a great deal of international respect to begin with, given their postwar economic performance and relative international responsibility and restraint.

The contrast between what East Asia used to be (a violent political abyss) and what East Asia is now (a relatively calm economic engine) provides an insight into both the ways in which nuclear weapons can bring about peace through the nullification of potential warfare and also how nuclear weapons no longer can serve any practical or even impractical purpose. Though their methods are very different, the cases of China and Japan can play the roles of the established historical powers, South Korea and Taiwan are something of the unexpected showcases, and North Korea serves as the unfortunate outlier. Nuclear weapons play a significant part in each case, and are also the catalysts for how these countries interact with each other.

Review of Other Proliferation Literature

In order to find other ways that scholars have gone about searching for rationalizations or causal factors for nuclear weapons development, it shall be necessary to consult some of the other literature on the subject. Though my paper is fairly reliant on and a bit derivative of Scott Sagan's 1990s article that will be discussed in detail in the next section, the "family" of nuclear proliferation academic specialists appears to be relatively small. Again, a hope for a meaningful contribution from this paper is not totally unbelievable, thanks to the relative emptiness within the field. With the explanations of the articles given below, the reader can see other ways that specialists in the field have endeavored to locate the meanings and causes of the possession of nuclear weapons, starting with their development and construction.

The search for such answers is of crucial importance because of the very real ability of nuclear weapons to destroy much of the life on Earth, and certainly the entirety of humankind if used with enough force and numbers. As I believe Sagan would agree, another useful aspect of the literature review given below is to show other methods and answers than those that I have gathered for this paper. Given the multicausality issue that Sagan employs in his 1990s article, many of these answers do not exclude any others. It is very difficult to go outside of the range of case-specific issues, but I believe that many shown below do just that.

Continuing on with a discussion of some of the proliferation literature that is available since the publishing of Sagan's somewhat qualitative article discussed in the next section of this paper, there is an important exploration of the likelihood of nuclear

weapons proliferation that uses regression analysis to determine the willingness and opportunity of a nation to do such a thing. The article, “Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation,” was done by Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke in 2007, and it also comes to some important conclusions from their mathematical computations, just as Sagan comes to some important qualitative conclusions. Their answers that are particularly relevant to northeast Asia are these: “nuclear defenders (such as the United States per this paper) do discourage a deepening of nuclear proliferation among protégés, but there is not much difference between states possessing or lacking nuclear defenders in terms of the likelihood of having a nuclear weapons program...(2007: 186).” By that assessment, these states have not been atypical in going forward to the extent they did, even with the United States guaranteeing their safety. That much can be put to rest. The following statement can also show the global randomness of something like the North Korean nuclear weapons program: “Pariah states are neither more likely to initiate nuclear weapons programs nor to possess nuclear weapons (2007: 186).” Therefore, that program can be explained by the particular goals of the Kim regime in power there. The authors also find that there is little to no difference between democratic or autocratic regimes in developing a nuclear weapons program, and that the NPT only encourages modest adherence to a non-nuclear weapons norm. These particular findings do not really fall out of sync with what I have found in the particular region under study here.

There are more important foundations in proliferation studies that have to do with the resoluteness of nuclear powers in dispute situations. In a logit analysis provided

by Michael Horowitz, we find that there is more information available that is relevant to the situation of the three major northeast Asian democracies. Horowitz found that “new nuclear states (such as North Korea) appear the most ‘risky’ from the perspective of low-level militarized disputes (such as the official continuation of the halted Korean War)... (2009: 250),” whereas: “...nuclear defenders (such as the United States and China) learn over time to differentiate those challenges worth pursuing and those not worth the effort. The nuclear card cannot be played every time...(2009: 250).” The findings speak to the occasional irrelevance and immaturity inherent to various nuclear weapons programs, which can go a long way in explaining another reason why some states in northeast Asia have decided to forego the obligation of constructing them.

Lending some credence to the undertaking that I am trying to accomplish here, there are further articles that lament the relative desolation in the literary understanding of nuclear weapons proliferation. Therefore, regional case studies like mine might still have some validity. Alexander Montgomery and Scott Sagan state: “...it would be helpful to know...whether uranium enrichment or plutonium reprocessing were more commonly abused by covert proliferators, including states that started weapons programs and did not complete them (such as South Korea and Taiwan)...The articles on the consequences of proliferation also point to the need for further research (2009: 322).” Though South Korea and Taiwan never got the chance to abuse such materials per se, they certainly marked a sign of danger that the Americans were not willing to risk.

The dependability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is something that is worthy of questioning, and the investigation of the honesty of the signatories to that treaty is a valid aspect with which to bring into my discussion here. Matthew Fuhrmann's 2009 study is primarily an investigation into whether or not nuclear weapons development is a danger that stems from supposedly civilian nuclear projects. Though some of the cases I describe later in this paper had nuclear weapons programs disguised to an extent as civilian programs, nuclear power for peaceful use and actual nuclear bomb programs remained fairly distinct. One of the most relevant parts of Fuhrmann's article for this thesis is the good faith efforts of those legal states possessing nuclear weapons under the treaty. Contrary to some that Fuhrmann mentions (2009: 203), the case of northeast Asia generally seems to show that, with difficulty, the United States has done pretty well in keeping its allies from creating their own nuclear bombs. Credit must be given where it is due. The United States kept an extreme focus on the economic development of its client states in northeast Asia, and denuclearizing them still remains a priority for the Americans.

There is a dialogue in nuclear proliferation literature that is willing to name names as to why proliferation occurs and is a danger to the extent that exists. Marianne Hanson names the United States and its vast nuclear arsenal as one of the primary political obstacles to halting proliferation globally. By not working actively and more intensively to diminish its supplies, the United States, she argues, is not an effective party to non-proliferation discussions (Hanson 2002: 372). However, the three

countries examined in this paper might be good for the United States' image in that respect, since they are all allies of the Americans.

One of the important aspects of the proliferation literature is the number of variables explored as far as why states attempt to create their own nuclear weapons. Sonali Singh and Christopher Way find some evidence for economic interdependence having an effect on foregoing on a nuclear weapons program in some countries (Singh et al. 2004: 882). Indeed, that shall be one of my definitive answers in this paper. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, being essentially helpless in a hypothetically autarkic system, require a great deal of trade. Becoming more threatening through the development of their own nuclear weapons is too great of a risk for them to go all the way. None of the three countries can afford to have the international community back off from the lines of commerce, or they would be destroyed as modern nations. Perhaps no answer can go further in explaining the lack of a northeast Asian nuclear arms race.

The recent era provides a studier of nuclear weapons proliferation with a viewpoint advocating the idea that states continue to seek nuclear weapons technology because of the political power that it can bring them in the international arena. Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal write: "When states face nuclear opponents, the cost of all-out, unrestrained war is certainly going to be prodigious. At the same time, the probability of such unrestricted war decreases when an actor faces a state with nuclear weapons (Beardsley et al. 2009: 280)." Therefore, with the countries that have acquired nuclear weapons to a significant degree, we see a probable shift further away from the

possibility of warfare. A country like North Korea may be trying to take advantage of the likelihood of that theory by making its own nuclear weapons. The authors also find that nuclear weapons provide countries leverage in addition to prestige, and are useful in coercing other countries toward their will, so it will be only natural that countries will seek the bombs. This represents a definite supply-side argument for the acquisition of nuclear weapons. I take some issue with it, based on my investigation of northeast Asia, but it is pessimistically correct, in principle. I do agree with them that states that hold nuclear weapons can attract greater attention and respect from the rest of the world IN SOME RESPECTS, but I am qualitatively unconvinced with the extent of that coercive power. Money appears to me to call many more of the shots.

With the exception of Sagan's 1990s article mentioned in this section and discussed in the next, the other papers mentioned are all from within the last decade. This is necessary so as not to become too extraneous, given that the nuclear proliferation literature is constantly evolving as global contexts change. Going too far back requires too much adjustment in interpreting them. The question of nuclear proliferators is constantly in flux, and what is remarkable about the three civil rights countries in northeast Asia is that they have been willing to take a technological step backward in the military sense with their weapons of mass destruction capabilities in order that their economy may become more efficient and modernized.

As far as generating something of a framework for my own paper here, I believe that Sagan's mid-1990s article will be the most useful. With that piece, one can see how he has become such an acknowledged authority on the subject, and the foresight

with which the article is written is impressive enough, not to mention the oft-cited quality of it by other proliferation scholars. As with my own conclusions about northeast Asia's generally nuclear weapon-free qualities, each of Sagan's nuclear-or-non-nuclear factors does not work alone. Rather, they require an understanding of all to explain them.

Northeast Asia and Nuclear Proliferation

What I am intending to bring to the discussion here is that each case of the major states at play in northeast Asia have their own concerns related to developing nuclear weapons programs. Given some of the nuclear proliferation literature available, differing rationales are somewhat hit-or-miss in this particular region (no pun intended). As Scott Sagan points out in his mid-1990s article "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb," the conventional wisdom on this topic appears to be that of a distinct security threat acting as an excuse to create a program when no other alternatives are readily available (1996-97: 54). Sagan's message there is completely compatible with my argument, since the three major civil rights states under the magnifying glass in this paper (Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) have had at least stated alternatives from the United States, their most devoted and highly-invested ally (which also has the world's most powerful military). Yet, all three countries have at least dabbled in nuclear weapons projects during the Cold War and occasionally afterwards. Sagan's article appears to be some of the best and most succinct scholarship on the proliferation problem, and is a good way of

framing different reasons why states proliferate in such a fashion. Sagan breaks up the motivation for nuclear weapons projects into three parts: 1) a security model, in which nuclear weapons are used as distinct deterrents to an enemy's nuclear attack or the threat of war; 2) a domestic politics model, in which nuclear weapons programs are used to rally support in a country for the regime; and, 3) a norms model, in which a nuclear weapons program is created to gain a nation prestige in comparison to all other nations, particularly those that have nuclear weapons.

Sagan's mid-1990s paper on proliferation motivations was an attempt to better convey why states would press forward with nuclear weapons programs (or why certain states would relent from nuclear weapons production attempts). The paper has withstood the test of time impressively, not least for the reason that the author worked so intensively to show particular examples for each of the three proliferation models. Much of Sagan's frustration with previous works on proliferation rationalizations had to do with his (justified) assumption that the security model in and of itself was too much of a simplistic argument on behalf of realism. Certainly, Sagan does not discard the security model completely in his presumptions of how states could go about developing these massively destructive bombs, but he finds it inherently limited, and therefore "inadequate (85)." Sagan mentions: "...an all too common intellectual strategy in the literature is to observe a nuclear weapons decision and then work backwards, attempting to find the national security threat that 'must' have caused the decision (63)." Sagan finds that the balance of power search motif inherent to realist thought is all too pervasive in the assumptions of the security model, with the constant

“proliferation begets proliferation” ideology. Though he cites many examples of where the security model is apt and applicable, such as the rationale for the Soviet Union to acquire nuclear weapons technology in the wake of the American detonations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the Chinese rationale following the threat to Shanghai during the Korean War as well as the dissolution of Sino-Soviet relations, he feels that it simply falls short in explaining a great many other cases, and therefore the conventional wisdom that the model has come to occupy is in great need of revision and addition.

Sagan finds that with the security model, nuclear weapons development restraint is only caused by the absence of an external security threat, hence the cases of South Africa in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union and the relinquishments by Argentina and Brazil in the wake of their findings of the lack of threats provided by one another. Additionally, the security model finds that the Non-Proliferation Treaty only serves as a way for non-nuclear states to hold one another in check. Given the rather cynical view of collective human nature that realism depends upon, the security model is really no different, and finds that states are constantly trying to deter one another from one grievance or another. Also, with the end of the Cold War, American efforts toward nonproliferation in other countries are going to become ever more fruitless, given the constant perceived incentives for states to build nuclear weapons to counter each other in an ever more multi-polar world.

Again to emphasize, Sagan does not completely discard the security model. He thinks it works in plenty of cases. He just finds that it does not go far enough to be as

universally considered as it seems to be. Therefore, he finds that there is a need to describe the inner workings of governments in their decision-making processes.

The domestic politics model indicates that nuclear weapons development is merely a means to an end, meaning to say that they are simply tools of politicians and bureaucrats working to sway one base or another, or to provide further funding for a certain department. Sagan lays out the framework a bit in this excerpt:

“...bureaucratic actors are not seen as passive recipients of top-down political decisions; instead, they create the conditions that favor weapons acquisition by encouraging extreme perceptions of foreign threats, promoting supportive politicians, and actively lobbying for increased defense spending (64).” The public also plays a major role in the domestic politics model, given that in many cases politicians are answerable to a kind of general will of the people. In essence, this model is all about what is going on inside of a country, not outside of it.

Sagan highlights the example of the Indian acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1974 as a case of the domestic politics model being fairly convincing. The defeat of India in the 1962 Sino-Indian War would have been assessed by the security model as a reasonable rationale for developing the bomb. However, India backed down at that time, in spite of probable capability, and ultimately did not try to build the bomb after the successful 1964 Chinese nuclear test, nor did India endeavor to rally any nuclear support from either part of the bipolar world of the time, in the domestic interests of remaining without alignment. The real maneuvers came with the lobbying of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the early 1970s. Within the evidence, Sagan finds that

domestic factors were far more integral to the ultimate decision than international ones. He describes how defense and foreign affairs officials, military services, the Defense Minister, and the Foreign Minister were not intensively consulted on what such a nuclear test would mean for their work. Rather, the test was simultaneous with a definite down period for the Gandhi administration. Political fracturing and infighting, a bad recession, and major riots throughout the country all weighed heavily on the mind of the prime minister. Therefore, Sagan rightfully finds it fairly persuasive that these factors played a role in her decision to green-light the explosion. The domestic political incentives, particularly in terms of public opinion, allowed her gamble to pay off.

To add to the evidence for the domestic politics model in general, Sagan uses the example of South Africa's nuclear weapons program, which was voluntarily given up by the government of F.W. de Klerk, just prior to the dissolution of the Apartheid system. The nuclear program there had been built up arguably to satisfy the interests of the massive South African mining industry, which was looking to gain international clout for its expertise and technical accomplishments. According to Sagan's reasonable logic, it seems that de Klerk, upon his 1989 election, chose to dismantle the nuclear weapons that South Africa had in order to prevent the oncoming African National Congress (ANC) from possessing nuclear weapons. This is undoubtedly to be considered a domestic political concern.

The domestic politics model implies that economic costs or benefits of forging ahead with nuclear weapons program weigh heavily on the minds of governmental

actors in certain countries. The fear of a backlash, be it from corporate or mass public sources, can shift the opinion of policymakers in one direction or another. Potential adherence to the NPT can also push domestic actors toward certain measures. The domestic politics model pushes the security model to a secondary position, and Sagan appears to find much to like about the domestic model.

Finally, the norms model that Sagan employs focuses on the importance of global understanding and agreement on certain nuclear weapons policies. Sagan writes: “The sociologists’ arguments (related to normative symbolism) highlight the possibility that nuclear weapons programs serve symbolic functions reflecting leaders’ perceptions of appropriate and modern behavior (75).” Sagan highlights the NPT as a way that world leaders have expressed their opinions in terms of the emerging norm that the NPT comprises. He also goes further back in history, using the ultimate global abolition of legalized slavery as an example of how a norm came into being.

The examples of France and Ukraine are paired against one another to show how times can change, leaving different norms in place to send different countries on divergent paths. In the few decades following World War II, the French leadership saw that global norms demanded that France had to develop the bomb in order to maintain international respect (particularly after its temporary land conquest by Nazi Germany), given that others of the great powers had developed nuclear weapons. This example represents something of an opposing understanding to what the East Asian states under examination in this paper have come to agree upon. However, France did develop the bomb successfully, and became a legal holder of them under the NPT.

In Ukraine, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there was a large stockpile of nuclear bombs left over from the old regime. Rather than keep them, which would have been its prerogative to an extent, the parliament there decided to give them up. By that time, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, nonproliferation had come into being as something of a global obsession and a generally recognized norm. By that time, the NPT was a widely accepted structure that Ukraine, as a relatively new member of the burgeoning community of nations, was obligated to follow. Like South Africa from another situation, it still stands as a fairly rare example of a country simply giving up the bomb.

Sagan's paper is all about multicausality. He does not discredit in particular any of the three models that he lays out, even the security model. His framework shows that there are constantly different explanations of nuclear weapons proliferation, or lack thereof. The relative desolation within existing political science literature to stretch beyond the security model is also a reason for why he embarked on such a journey. The norms model in particular seems clearly to be one that he wished to highlight in particular, to be sure.

Sagan's framework given in his paper will be an integral aspect of the theoretical portions of this paper, given that they have applications to the countries under study here. However, given that the three main countries studied for this paper have not developed nuclear weapons, one could say that the rationalizations given by Sagan in each of the three models requires a certain degree of flipping. Indeed, what I am endeavoring to do here, in part, is to take this project in the direction of expanding

what Sagan says, which is, in effect, that there is more work to be done to discern why states can avoid nuclear developments, and how norms in particular are somewhat fluid. As will be shown later, a non-nuclear prestige norm has apparently emerged in northeast Asia, enabling Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan to latch onto that prestige in order to enhance their international status and good name, whereas an outlier like North Korea has only hurt itself in terms of international politics by developing nuclear weapons capabilities.

International relations theory is crucial to this paper, and how it fits in with Sagan's three models that are somewhat modified here. The security model fits in quite nicely with realism, as has been already mentioned. As Kenneth Waltz states, "Each state arrives at policies and decides on actions according to its own internal processes, but its decisions are shaped by the very presence of other states as well as by interactions with them (1979: 65)." The security model is inherently related to the assumption that the balance of power and the maintenance of security for each state affect the development of nuclear weapons. Undoubtedly, at times, it is true, and Sagan concedes this.

The domestic politics model set forth by Sagan hearkens toward many of the principles of liberalist international relations theory. The case of Japan, in particular, which will be discussed shortly, shows how domestic actors, in that case highlighting the general public, can have a major stake in maintaining a good reputation, especially given the importance to the country of a healthy financial structure. As we will see, the cooperation among most of the northeast Asian countries along financial lines has

had a direct effect on nuclear weapons policy. Robert Keohane writes: “As long as a continuing series of issues is expected to arise in the future, and as long as actors monitor each other’s behavior and discount the values of agreements on the basis of past compliance, having a good reputation is valuable even to the egoist whose role in collective activity is so small that she would bear few of the costs of her own malefactions (1984: 105).” A good reputation is of critical importance to Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, since they are all terribly poor in terms of natural resources. However, their export-oriented economies have flourished, and a good reputation is everything to them at this point. International cooperation on their part, particularly with the rising power of China, a former enemy of all of them, is of the utmost importance. In many cases in northeast Asia, the domestic politics factor bleeds into the norms factor, in which the three sets of general publics of the countries have the common understanding of remaining nuclear weapon-free. Given the democratic leanings, particularly of late, of all three of them, nuclear weapons would certainly be more on the table than they are if the general publics were demanding them. They most definitively are not.

The norms model inevitably leads to a comparison with constructivism in international relations theory. Mutual understandings based on historical developments as well as popularized ideas comprise a great deal of what Sagan is getting at with his norms model. John Gerard Ruggie writes: “There can be no mutually comprehensible conduct of international relations, constructivists hold, without mutually recognized constitutive rules resting on collective intentionality

(1998: 879).” This also ties in with the idea of a non-nuclear prestige in northeast Asia. It is a shared understanding among most of the countries mentioned in this paper. Norms rely on being followed by many actors, if not most, so therefore the constructivist notion that a great deal of international behavior rests on mutual understandings among nations perfectly fits.

The research design for this paper will focus on matching up intensive historical analyses with my applications of the developments within that structure to my flipping maneuver of Sagan’s three models. Along with that, my five points given in my reasoning above for how the northeast Asian democracies have remained nuclear weapon-free over the long-term can be matched up with the flipped Sagan models to truly find a concrete understanding of how this tremendous accomplishment has been done. Additionally, the contribution of this paper is to not only connect the flipped Sagan models to international relations theories like the ones mentioned above, but also to come to some real-world conclusions about how such a powerful region as this one in northeast Asia can relent from seeking even greater potential power. The findings here are especially crucial because of the number of people that live in the region, who would be within range of many potentially-built tactical devices like the ones that we can hope will forever be avoided, namely the nuclear weapons that will be under heavy discussion throughout this paper.

By using reversed versions of Sagan’s three nuclear proliferation models (the reversed versions themselves being among the factors that Sagan concedes within his very framework in the article) in northeast Asia specifically, important answers can be

located as to how nuclear weapons and their sheer potential ferocity, terrifying in scope, has essentially frightened an entire region into a sustained period of relatively unparalleled peace, particularly for that part of the world. It can be hoped that such a lesson can be applied to other parts of the world that remain far more volatile.

However, northeast Asia's general natural resource poverty remains something of an ever-present outlying factor throughout this paper. For example, at this point, the Middle East could not empathize very well with the northeast Asian example because of the still resilient oil reserves that are found in that region. Northeast Asia never had such a luxury, or such a curse, however one wishes to frame the situation.

A further point on Sagan's paper and its role in this paper is this: if one is going to borrow, one might as well borrow from the best. Though the article is about 13 years old, I believe that one would be hard-pressed to find a better set-up in order to prompt one to find some concrete answers to nuclear proliferation or the lack thereof. It was an effort of imagination, which was my intention with this paper, as well. By reversing the framework that he employs to show how, theoretically, all three northeast Asian democracies failed to gain nuclear weapons (or succeeded in avoiding them), the historical analyses make more sense and can be understood in a more holistic way. As will be shown, it was often a close call, but, with nuclear weapons, answers such as the ones found in this project are better when they are barely right than when they are terribly wrong.

Sagan's Applications to Northeast Asia

The most compelling of these in regard to northeast Asia are the security model mixed with the domestic politics model (the latter of which is working in reverse in these cases). The reasons that these current civil rights states were earlier motivated to begin work on nuclear weapons are almost certainly linked to a lack of faith in the American nuclear commitment to them. As will be discussed briefly in the Japan section of this paper, Charles de Gaulle, longtime president of France following World War II, is mentioned in Sagan's article as disbelieving America's claim to protect France from a Soviet missile attack, particularly after the Russians developed a second-strike capability (Sagan 1996-97: 76). Just as de Gaulle questioned an American response to a Soviet nuclear attack on Paris, so the Japanese, South Koreans, and Taiwanese, might dread similar circumstances regarding Tokyo, Seoul, and Taipei, respectively. Though the Americans have ultimately been successful in persuading these East Asian democracies that American pressure will contribute to their lasting security from the existential threats that face them from overseas, long-term implications are difficult to foresee, given that the United States is undoubtedly slipping from global hegemony in terms of military prowess, and North Korea now has nuclear weapons, which presents an increase to the threat level to all three countries discussed, but particularly to Japan, longtime rival of the Communist state. Up to the present, however, the United States has secured the region, with the political cooperation of its three client states that are intensively studied in this paper. Therefore, the security alternative that would be implied in such realist thinking has

been supplied by the policies of the United States, freeing the northeast Asian countries under scrutiny from developing their own nuclear weapons. There is not an absence of a threat to any of the three countries, certainly, but the United States has effectively canceled it out up to this point. The future is another issue.

The intermingling of the domestic politics model of Sagan's argument works in the reverse way in East Asia by way of the financial sector. Sagan mentions the fact that Argentina did not develop a nuclear weapons program following its defeat to the British in the Falklands War in 1982 (1996-97: 71). Normally, one might think that the domestic model would portend that pressure from the public would increase the likelihood of the government prioritizing such a program. On the contrary, the fact that following the conflict the country was liberalized followed a pattern of public sentiment against such weapons, decreasing the likelihood greatly. Similarities to that reversal exist in these countries, since they have all grown more left-wing since nuclear weapons were really on the table. The democratization of South Korea and Taiwan in particular have been beneficial in keeping nuclear weapons off the table for the time being. Additionally, Sagan mentions another trait that is important in understanding why the Northeast Asian states have remained relatively nuclear weapon-free, using Argentina as an example from which they can relate: "... (the emergence of governments) supported by coalitions of actors – such as banks, export-oriented firms, and state monetary agencies – who value unimpeded access to international markets and oppose economically unproductive defense and energy enterprises (1996-97: 71)." With the emergence of Northeast Asia, and with the group

of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in particular, as one of the cores of global commerce and finance, the simultaneity of that occurrence together with the abandonment of nuclear weapons development (for the most part) is difficult to dismiss.

The domestic model that Sagan puts forth is also in need of some revision in Asia, given that there are very few parallels between the South African case (given the relative lack of interracial disputes domestically in these societies) or the Indian case, since the nuclear weapons issue has been summarily rejected. Therefore, this paper has something to add, in that respect.

Sagan's norms model, though useful in global terms, does not have a great deal of relevance in northeast Asia without being flipped (like Ukraine, but in a less outspoken and publicized way), since the at least spoken norm in the region has been related to a lack of nuclear weapons, or at least the claim against it. The covertness of development or discussion of that development that has been seen in the region speaks to how unacceptable it is in governmental discourse in Asia (with the exception of China, since they have been granted the legal right to possess the bombs). However, one could see Sagan's viewpoint as far as the norms model as accurate as to why these three particular northeast Asian countries have not developed the bomb ultimately. This is because it seems that a different norm has taken over in east Asia, where China is seen as the sole rightful owner of the weapons. North Korea has violated those norms with its recent nuclear weapons developments. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are adhering to them, with American pressure.

2. The Case of Japan

Japan is a crucial case for understanding the context of nuclear weapons armaments in the East Asia region due to its large population and economic size and due to its relatively recent military history. Japan's difficult relations with its neighbors continue to present the island country with a variety of diplomatic problems, especially when it comes to the issue of nuclear arms. As one of the primary Axis powers from World War II, the conflict that particularly encouraged the development of weapons of mass destruction, and as the only national victim in military history of an atomic attack, Japan naturally has a tenuous relationship with the issue of nuclear weapons.

In order for it to become clear how the issue of Japanese nuclear technology would attract attention from Japan's East Asian neighbors, it shall be necessary to explain briefly many of the historical instances where relations among Japan and its neighbors went astray. During its imperial period following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan embarked on its first major war against China in the first Sino-Japanese War, which began in 1895. Japan's victory in that war increased its confidence in its ability to be an imperial power to rival those of Western Europe and North America.

In 1910, Japan annexed the Korean Peninsula, which lasted until 1945 at the end of World War II. Japan's brutal occupation of Korea continues to be a diplomatic burden between even Japan and South Korea, which would otherwise probably be a natural alliance, given the apparent goals and general ideologies of the two nations. Japan even enforced conscription on many Koreans during World War II, and took

advantage of Korean “comfort women” during the war for its fighting men. The eventual victory of the United States and the Soviet Union over Japan at the end of World War II finally freed the Koreans of Japanese domination of their territory.

The Second Sino-Japanese War began in 1937, basically beginning World War II in the process. Fighting on Chinese territory, Japan exacted a tremendous amount of destruction before finally being totally driven off the Asian mainland in 1945 with the combination of Chinese and Soviet forces on the ground and American forces from the east. This war had a much different ending for China than the first major conflict with Japan, but lingering hatred still causes there to be diplomatic issues between the two countries at the same time that there is a great deal of economic interdependence. Taiwan, now a de facto independent state from mainland China (due to the Republic of China government holed out on the island), was also a Japanese colony during much of the first half of the 20th century, until the end of World War II.

Japan finally lost all of its conquered territories at the end of World War II, after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which followed relentless and brutal American firebombing campaigns on all of its major cities, such as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Kobe. Having been directly responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people in Asia, it is easy to see how Japan still encounters problems in its relations with other nations in Asia, thanks to its military exploits following its reconsolidation as a single state. Simultaneously, as the only victim of a nuclear attack, Japan now regularly faces issues of redefining how it views nuclear weapons and nuclear power in general. Technologically, Japan

maintains the capability to produce nuclear weapons if it became a national priority. The global community would potentially have many different interpretations of the meaning of Japan possessing nuclear weapons, if it was to be discussed out in the open.

Japanese Nuclear Explorations

Even during the early days of the Cold War, Japanese authorities began to quietly explore the country's nuclear weapons options. Though the United States had carried out a relatively friendly occupation of the country following their adversarial relationship during World War II, Japan did not want to solely rely on the United States forever for its security. Particularly in light of its recent conflicts with China, Japan's eye was locked almost squarely on its newly-Communist regional rival following the fall of the Kuomintang government on the mainland in 1949. Michael J. Green and Katsuhisa Furukawa write: "Ironically, it was not only the Chinese nuclear test that prompted thinking about nuclear weapons in Japan but also the beginning of negotiations to establish the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Japanese officials feared would lock Japan into second tier status in the international system...(Green et al. 2008: 349)." However, given the experience at the end of World War II, the Japanese public remains resiliently anti-nuclear in their opinions. Green and Furukawa also write: "Public opinion polls show that even after North Korea's (2006) nuclear test approximately 80 percent of Japanese do not want their country to acquire nuclear weapons...(Green et al. 2008: 347)." However, one may be left to wonder

how that public opinion would shift if China were not such a close economic partner and if the United States were not the ever-present ally looking over their shoulder.

One of the problems the Japanese are facing is the evolving security relationship in the East Asia region. Though the Korean War has been essentially over since 1953, the North Korean regime cannot seem to rid itself of the memory of Japanese atrocities committed in their territory during the occupation of the pre-World War II age. The North Korean missile tests of the 1990s and 2000s have strained the Japanese ability to rely on security provided by the Americans. Therefore, difficult choices may have to be made in the future to redefine the Japanese military's overall role.

Similarly to the absolute renunciation of Germany toward all aspects of the Nazi regime in that country, the Japanese continue to rebuke offensive military operations, perhaps to rid themselves of a reputation that is a long time in dying. However, given the potentially aggressive nature of the East Asian region and its corresponding parts, it is difficult to imagine that that would be possible without the American security umbrella. The American security umbrella is also an arrangement that has benefited the United States' economic goals in East Asia, essentially oriented to making Japan the anti-communist figurehead of a modern Asia oriented toward American-style capitalism. The American security umbrella enabled Japan to rid itself of its wartime past in part because Japan was no longer responsible for its own security. The following is an excerpt that draws a connection between Japan and Germany along the lines of a lack of nuclear weapons development in spite of economies that were more

than capable of producing them: "...Germany, like its erstwhile Axis ally Japan, has become powerful because of its economic might rather than its military might, and its renunciation of nuclear weapons may even have reinforced its prestige (Mueller 2010: 107)." It seems apparent that that outcome was only possible via a United States that was so desperate and determined to thwart the expansion of influence of the Soviet Union that it was willing to prevent anyone from taking revenge on the country that had fought with and killed so many. Over the next few decades after the end of World War II, Japan's eventual economic inferiors of the United Kingdom, France, and communist China went on to produce their own nuclear weapons. Japan was in the hands of the United States military at a time when no one else could imagine adequately rivaling that particular fighting force.

The last decade or two have been strange times for the leadership and overall population of Japan. I would argue that this is due to it being an odd generational period, given that there have still been plenty of people in Japan and around the world that are old enough to remember living through World War II to an extent, but the percentage of that GI generation still in power in office has been dwindling all the time. It appears that, stemming from that, many scholars of the topic are arguing in favor of the idea that Japan is moving ever further toward its nationalistic past. One could reason from that, if it were true, that nuclear weapons would be relatively near on the horizon for Japan. Peter Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara speak to some of these sentiments. They write: "...in May 2002, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda hinted to reporters that, if shifts in the international situation and public

opinion occur, Japan could reconsider its ban on nuclear weapons....this more threatening view seems to suggest that there is ample reason to bemoan the stubborn ignorance with which U.S. policy makers and media continue to deny obvious historical parallels between contemporary Japan and Japan of the 1930s (Katzenstein et al. 2004: 169).” If the remarkably good behavior of postwar Japan has been essentially a ruse on the international community, American global influence has not dwindled to the point where the Japanese would not have to wait for many more years before making their move. Also, China is not what it was during World War II and before. Sheila Smith cites a statement by Ichiro Ozawa from 2002 discussing Japan’s intentions toward an increasingly powerful China: “(Ozawa) noted that it would be easy for Japan to produce nuclear weapons, and suggested that there was enough plutonium at Japan’s nuclear plants to generate thousands of nuclear warheads (Smith 2003: 4).” At the time, Ozawa was discussing how the Japanese people would react to a more assertive and potentially aggressive China, so, obviously, many found it unsettling when he made this statement.

On the other hand, North Korea, perpetually starved for attention, may be the single biggest motivator for Japan to think about amplifying its security capabilities. Though the Japanese Defense Forces are superior to the North Korean military, weapons of mass destruction remain among the biggest bargaining chips in existence. Reactions of Japan’s current allies to any further developments along the lines of nuclear weapons development would be an important indicator of the potential intentions of the Japanese in gaining such materiel. South Korea is particularly important for the

study of modern Japanese diplomacy, due to the countries' similar political methodologies paired with their antagonistic histories toward one another.

Loyalty to the Non-Nuclear Oath

A problem that Japan has encountered in its military alliance with the United States has been the potential hypocrisy to be noted stemming from Japan's Non-Nuclear Principles. Though Japan has apparently not produced or possessed any nuclear weapons, the idea that it has not allowed nuclear weapons onto its islands is something of a farce. Given its military bases throughout Japan and their strategic importance for the United States, the Americans have certainly carried nuclear weapons into Japan. Given the remarkably close relationship between the United States and Japan, one might even ambiguously think of Japan as a de facto nuclear weapons state since it has militarily been so synonymous with the United States, in much the same way that NATO has been so reliant on the United States to protect Western Europe, particularly during the Cold War. For matters of rhetoric, the Japanese should most likely be concerned with how the Non-Nuclear Principles are viewed internationally, since they form so much of the crux of Japan's anti-nuclear weapons sentiments.

From the Indian perspective, there was some backlash toward Japan given Japan's sanctions placed on India (as well as Pakistan) after the South Asian country went nuclear in the late 1990s. Purnendra Jain addresses the issue of Japan's perceived anti-nuclear hypocrisy in his article entitled "India's Calculus of Japan's Foreign Policy in Asia:" "Japanese leaders claim that Japan is firmly committed to nuclear

non-proliferation, but Japan itself finds shelter under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Japan also blatantly disregards its non-nuclear principles by allowing U.S. ships with nuclear facilities to visit Japanese ports (Jain 2002: 227).” Jain addresses Japan fairly harshly in that segment, and it is perhaps understandable. Still, Japan’s nuclear dilemma is particularly acute, given the surroundings. Does Japan not require that nuclear threat or shield from the United States for the sake of deterrence? Are China and North Korea not actual threats? It is difficult to find alternatives to what Japan has allowed. As well, the United States may have a different viewpoint than Japan if Japan were to request the cessation of the movement of those nuclear facilities within its territorial waters or at its ports.

Japan has had a history of its own questions related to the American commitment to its protection (or at least its retaliation) from nuclear attacks. Nobumasa Akiyama cites some important developments during the Cold War that shook some Japanese on the issue of how far the American retaliatory shield could potentially extend circumstantially. Akiyama writes: “France chose to leave NATO as it questioned the credibility of the nuclear umbrella. If the Soviet Union attacked Paris with nuclear weapons, France questioned whether the United States would sacrifice New York for Paris, which had already been destroyed. Would the United States risk New York and Washington DC for an already destroyed Tokyo (Akiyama 2003: 86)?” Given the example of France, Japan was left in something of a quandary, not that it had as much international political leeway as France to do such a thing, at least at the time. France had, after all, not been one of the Axis aggressors of World War II, so the world had

less to fear in the 1960s from a more militarily autonomous France than it might have had from a Japan that did the same thing. Therefore, in my assessment, that would not have been politically feasible for Japan to do, though France's methodology is also something I find understandable. The steadfastness of America's commitment to Paris might have appeared somewhat dubious. However, in the article by Green and Furukawa, it is mentioned that France played a large role as a model for a Japanese plan of action as far as its alliance with the United States. They write: "(Prime Minister Hayako) Ikeda was...encouraged to think about nuclear weapons by French President Charles de Gaulle, who criticized Japan's dependence on the United States...,and in subsequent discussions with the German chancellor, who was contemplating his nation's options...(Green et al. 2008: 349)." Ever the ally at arm's length (perhaps with good reason, from their perspective), France was not the greatest advocate for the United States. Still, de Gaulle was not successful in persuading the Japanese to create their own nuclear program, though he did have a point. With changes occurring in China and the Koreas, Japan became something of a foreign policy tool for the United States, and this continues today. Germany, too, relented in any pursuit of nuclear arms, in spite of its technological capability and know-how.

The changing and growing threats of the current century will undoubtedly continue to shape the context of whatever new international environment in which Japan found itself later. Therefore, it may be a petty exercise to speculate too much on what could happen as far as Japan is concerned if such and such a thing were to hypothetically occur. One thing that can certainly be given a lot of focus and definite interest is what

the reaction would be if Japan were to acquire or develop nuclear weapons. Andrew Oros writes: "...it is not clear even to Japanese (or foreign) military strategists, and certainly not to Japanese voters, how a nuclear weapons Japan will create a safer environment in the future. As one noted columnist has written: 'The shock waves of a Japanese acquisition of nuclear arms would ripple out to the rest of Asia and would be so strong that Japanese efforts to exert diplomatic influence would be set back a half century (Oros 2003: 60).'" Perhaps from that statement, which is fairly compelling, we can glean the notion that was echoed earlier, which is that Japan's postwar prestige that was meticulously developed by government and business leaders was built on a foundation of newfound de facto pacifism. By adopting a totally defense-only military stance (bringing briefcases to foreign settings rather than machine guns), Japan practically managed to match Germany in regaining the trust of the global community after incidents that might have seemed to nullify any potential for that at an earlier time. Japan's occasional political silence on the issue of wartime atrocities were the only things that kept Japan from Germany's status of apparent near-total forgiveness by the international community following World War II.

For circumstances to shift enough to where Japan started to actively seek the possibility of its own possession of nuclear weapons, it might be that that columnist is correct in that Japan may as well not bother. It might be better for Japan to risk becoming a martyr state rather than to certainly endeavor to become a pariah nation, violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty so boldly that it claims to currently uphold and respect. The enduring nature of the global memory of World War II is

potent. Fighting on the losing side of that conflict that ended 65 years ago has left Japan with very few reasonable options diplomatically when it comes to nuclear-based weaponry.

The Japanese public remains the greatest obstacle to the development of nuclear weapons by the state. The realist strategy indicated by the Japanese government of the postwar era (Shuja 2006: 2) highlights how Japan is governed only by what is deemed by those in power to be best for Japan. Also, given that Japan is a relatively old democracy, the public does have a significant effect on the direction taken by its government (a lesson learned perhaps painfully by the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party during last year's elections). The long-standing presence of the United States military in Japan cannot be explained away by sheer inertia. Not only has the United States had plenty to gain in maintaining its global influence by stationing itself in a far-off land like Japan, but the Japanese have had something to gain, as well, by allowing the United States to remain there while enduring relatively little fuss. Sharif Shuja mentions that relationship. He writes: "In the absence of a domestic political consensus for a new assertive foreign policy, and in the face of the reluctance of Japan's neighbors to accept a major military power as well as a more active independent Japanese security role, the alliance with the United States will very likely remain the best security strategy for Japan, provided that the US continues its engagement in Asia (Shuja 2006: 30)." The modern Japan can be seen, therefore, as the result of global peer pressure. In its efforts to cast off the stigma produced by its World War II errors, Japan has worked very carefully for decades to seem like a

responsible global citizen, and, for the most part, it has worked. Many of Japan's diplomatic problems in the modern era are the results of what Japan did during its imperial period. The final sentence in the above quotation also opens the door to thinking about what Japan might have to do when the very real consequence of American actions of late, such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, force the United States to rely less on its armaments in Japan. The United States may then face the time when Japan will have to be nearly solely responsible for its own security. The USS Japan may not be an option for the United States for too much longer. That is not due to anything the Japanese have done or will do, but to the economic and military mismanagement of those in power in the United States.

Japan's Probable Answer

A further point emphasizes that which has already been stated thus far in this paper, which is that Japan remains an unlikely nuclear power. That further point is this: Japan, as a country that is not wealthy in terms of natural resources, has become a developed, industrialized nation thanks in part to its postwar international pacifism (at least as far as the behaviors of its own troops). Its delicate diplomacy, paired with remarkable and uncommon social emphases on education and human capital, have made Japan what it is today. If Japan were to develop nuclear weapons of its own, all of that would be threatened. The solid reputation that Japan still maintains would be in serious jeopardy. The resource threat that Japan would face is outlined in an article by Mataka Kamiya: "The country imports nearly 80 percent of its total energy

requirements and almost 100 percent of its petroleum requirements. In fiscal 2000, Japan was self-sufficient for only 40 percent of its calories and 28 percent of its cereal grains. As an island nation, Japan depends on sea-lanes for imports and exports (Kamiya 2002: 67).” The development of Japan’s own nuclear weapons would, therefore, require an excuse from the Japanese that they had exhausted all other options. Given the international hostility that would arise against any country that created a situation where the global community would be in agreement that Japan would be justified in such a maneuver would also render such a move by the Japanese useless, given that it would be the responsibility of the rest of the world to condemn the wrongdoer.

The Japanese that launched the Asian and Pacific theaters of World War II failed in their mission to make Japan the most feared country in the world, but the Japan that emerged in the decades after the war’s conclusion succeeded mightily in making Japan one of the world’s most respected nations, thanks in part to its accrued economic power in spite of its lack of any globally-meaningful natural resources. Kamiya outlines three other important reasons that he believes Japan will never be interested in developing its own nuclear weapons: 1) the dangers of a northeast Asian arms race that would damage Japan’s international security in the short- and long-term; 2) the United States would become infuriated, endangering Japan’s relationship with its closest ally (Kamiya cites a 1990 quotation from Major General Henry Stackpole: “No one wants a rearmed, resurgent Japan....So we are a cap in the bottle, if you will.”); and 3) Japan would lose international respect for behaving essentially as another

power-hungry wealthy nation, canceling out the respect Japan has earned for not going nuclear in spite of its obvious capability (Kamiya 2002: 69). Some of the sentiments mentioned in those rationales for why Japan will not seek nuclear weapons anytime soon are echoes of what this paper is really all about, which is why Japan's postwar nice-guy image would be severely jeopardized even by seeking nuclear weapons for solely defensive and last-resort purposes.

The events of World War II perhaps doomed Japan's potential as a nuclear weapons power indefinitely, but, as much of this paper is about, that may not be the entire story. Northeast Asia, given the volatility matched with its relative calm since the 1970s, appears to require very careful treading by its wealthier nations due to the fear that may easily be inspired among some of the less-economically powerful nations in the locale. Japan's nuclear weapons program, or its lack thereof, is basically equal to the capability of South Korea and Taiwan, countries that have been rightfully deemed innocent in the World War II context. Therefore, we can be positive that the Japanese are not merely held in check by the history of the 1940s. On the other hand, the contexts of each country in the region not pursuing nuclear weapons in spite of their ability to do so may be highly unique. Lacking a regional NATO-like network may prevent the wealthy democracies of northeast Asia from making themselves into parallels of the United Kingdom and France for western Europe (granted, France is no longer a NATO member, but its alliance with the UK is basically as solid as any military alliance in the world).

With Japan, the United States was also in a different situation than the one in Western Europe following World War II. The Americans were in a position to completely call the shots regarding Japan at the end of the war, whereas Nazi Germany had been savagely defeated by a large coalition on German soil. The Americans had annihilated forces on the Japanese homeland essentially by themselves, and from the air. Therefore, following the war, Japan became the United States' client state, enabling the Americans to provide that apparent nuclear umbrella. That provided a particularly national emphasis to that sort of special American protection that was more regional in nature in Western Europe. The wing of the United States remains a difficult thing for the Japanese to elude.

Again differently from Germany at the end of World War II, it was more rhetorically difficult for the Japanese people to escape their particular responsibility for the war. The Nazis reconstructed German society in such an overt fashion that the German people were able to be more openly remorseful thanks to the excuse that their nation had supposedly been hijacked by a gang of crooks and thugs (arguably true). The Japanese, on the other hand, were unmistakably the ones that had embarked on the conflict. The nation of Japan itself had marched across Asia and the Pacific, murdering, raping, and pillaging, beneath the country's imperial banner. The memories of that experience have been mercilessly nurtured in the minds of many in East Asia, causing continuing diplomatic problems for many Japanese eager to leave behind the crimes of their recent ancestors.

The Present Day

A factor that cannot be ignored (no matter how complicated it may make things for the writer of this paper with regard to Japan) are the recent elections and party changes that have occurred in the halls of power in both the United States and Japan. The year 2009 brought the inauguration of Barack Obama to the presidency of the United States, enabling a total Democratic Party takeover of the U.S. Congress from the Republican-led force of George W. Bush that had dominated much of the previous eight years, as well as the defeat of the Liberal Democratic Party in the Japanese elections that brought the Democratic Party of Japan into power after over five straight decades of LDP rule.

The DPJ appears to be somewhat different than its LDP predecessors in that it is less rhetorically hawkish. Hawkish is used as a relative term, given that the LDP could not actually be overtly hawkish, given the major diplomatic strides made by Japan under the LDP's watch and leadership. Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said after the DPJ takeover of parliament that countries that leave open the possibility of their first use of nuclear weapons have no right whatsoever to discuss nuclear nonproliferation. That represented something of a shift from the likes of Shinzo Abe, the LDP prime minister who advocated foreign policy harshness and historical revisionism. The current Japanese prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, has stated that the anti-nuclear weapons goals of the Obama Administration are perfectly in line with his party's ideology for Japan's anti-nuclear weapons future (Nishikawa 9/2/09). Another article offers a nuclear-oriented opinion of the meaning of the DPJ victory in

Japan last year: "...the DPJ's election sweep should hearten opponents of nuclear weapons, for it provides not only a symbolic victory for antinuclear forces but a potentially significant shift in the nuclear policy of a major nation (Wittner 9/5/09)." By electing a party into power that has very clear anti-nuclear principles, even at the risk of the American nuclear umbrella, the Japanese public has sent a very clear message of their ideals.

A problem of international legislation that would plague Japan if it were to develop nuclear weapons would be the entire issue of the Non-Proliferation Treaty itself. The following is an important quotation from former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba: "We (Japan) would not be able to obtain nuclear fuel....With dependency on nuclear power for about 40% of (our) electricity, we would experience a major decline in economic activities. Japan going nuclear would automatically mean the collapse of the NPT regime and there would be nuclear countries all around us (Takubo 2009: 18)." There, I believe that Ishiba hits on a particularly important diplomatic point, along with the certainties of the economic consequences brought about by a resource-poor country acquiring homemade nuclear weapons. That point is that Japan is undeniably a regional leader in terms of many areas, not the least of which are economics, highly-skilled labor, and education. Though Japan is guilty of many crimes of the past against its neighbors, the bitterness stemming from those injustices is paired with an admiration of the Japanese that is apparent among Asian countries such as South Korea and Taiwan. Japan's non-nuclear example over the past several

decades has served as a motivator for the Asian Tigers to match military peace with non-nuclear economic ferocity.

Similar to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have experienced incredible economic expansions since the ends of the conflicts in which their modern selves emerged (the Korean War and the Chinese Civil War, respectively) due to an intensively-educated workforce and export-oriented industrialization. Still, those exports were created not from homegrown materials entirely, but from the fashioning of imported materials into highly-valued technological commodities. With nuclear weapons entering into the mix, all that had been gained would be thrust into jeopardy.

The center-left ideologies of the Obama and DPJ leaderships probably make the two sides fairly well-suited to one another. The rise of China as the economic superpower of the Asian future is still being evaluated. The aggressiveness of North Korea is verified, but how to go about handling its assertiveness in keeping attention on itself remains an issue as far as the weapons needed to combat a further step toward war are concerned (mass destruction or conventional, essentially). However, as mentioned in the article by Takubo, the Republican Secretary of Defense under President Obama remains wary of changing the paradigm much at this point: “During an October 20 (,2009) meeting in Japan with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Okada told Gates that the Japanese government currently is examining the no-first-use issue and that he would like to discuss it with the United States. Gates responded that the flexibility of deterrence is necessary (Takubo 2009: 18).” Perhaps the evolution of

the Obama international security strategy will become more apparent with regard to Japan as time goes on. Major changes have not yet occurred.

Theoretical Implications of the Japan Situation

Applying Sagan's mid-1990s framework in particular to the case of Japan, there are arguments as to why developments in Japan have gone the way that they have from all three perspectives (security, domestic politics, and norms). Though Sagan does not find the security model for developing or not developing a nuclear weapons program particularly persuasive, I would argue otherwise in the case of Japan, to the extent that the United States, through its perhaps intentional entanglement with the Japanese economy after the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War (particularly when the Japanese economy began to emerge as a global financial force), provided Japan with a credible enough security guarantee that Japan decided that it did not require its own nuclear weapons to deter mainland China, and, more in the modern sense, North Korea. Out of the three countries I am looking at most intensively in this paper, I would argue that Japan is burdened with the most extreme of the existential threats given its cultural disconnection from China and North Korea, relative to Taiwan and South Korea, respectively. As the crown jewel of the American anti-communist alliance in Asia, particularly before the ascendance of South Korea and Taiwan as modern economies, the United States was willing to risk more of its military capital in order to ward away those that would otherwise threaten Japan. It is an open question whether or not the United States would be willing to sacrifice Los

Angeles to retaliate for an attack on Tokyo, given that Tokyo is so valuable economically to the Americans.

Sagan's domestic politics model is particularly crucial for understanding why the Japanese never seriously endeavored to develop nuclear weapons. The Japanese public has remained remarkably steadfast in its habitual rejection of the discussion of making the bombs. Quite differently than the Indian reaction of the 1970s that Sagan mentions (1996-97: 68), the Japanese public most likely would react in horror to the development of the Japanese government testing a nuclear device successfully. This is in no small way related to the continued emotional resonance that the mushroom cloud image plays on the Japanese community, given their unique experience with the bomb. Additionally, the financial rewards of abstaining from nuclear weapons in most ways (with the exception of occasionally having allowed the Americans onto their soil and into their ports with nuclear weapons in tow) has paid off quite well for Japan, granting it the unlikely post-World War II position of the world's second largest economy (in spite of having hardly any globally relevant natural resources).

The norms model, the approach that seems to have the most relevance to Sagan, works for Japan in something of a reversal from Sagan's proliferation concept of nuclear development. Unlike in de Gaulle's France, where the pursuit of the weapon played into the country's aspirations of achieving global importance once again (after having been temporarily conquered, then losing its overseas empire), East Asia has certainly developed its own norm of not possessing nuclear weapons (China, as a legal holder of the weapon due to the NPT). As one of the losing initiators of World War II,

Japan is even further socially prohibited by that non-development norm from producing the bomb. The symbolic significance that Sagan mentions when remarking on the French nuclear program of half-a-century ago is true in the French case, I would argue. In East Asia, the symbolic significance of the nuclear weapon amounts to that of a criminal act outside of the legal holders of the NPT. Additionally, the symbolic significance of the bomb to Japan is obvious to anyone with even a rudimentary understanding of the conclusion of World War II. Sagan is correct, though his findings require some specifications to East Asia when relating it to that region.

3. The South Korean Dilemma

The case of South Korea yields some major differences from Japan in terms of its nuclear weapons policy. Differently from Japan, South Korea was not guilty of beginning an imperial expansion during the 20th century. On the contrary, it was annexed by Japan in 1910 and suffered a brutal occupation that included the desecration of many cultural artifacts, as well as the conscription of its young men to fight for the Japanese cause during World War II. Therefore, the context remains somewhat different from that of Japan. However, the emphasis placed on the Korean Peninsula to remain nuclear weapons-free from a variety of different angles has put South Korea in much the same political box.

At the end of World War II, when the Korean Peninsula was split into spheres of influence related to both the capitalist and communist victors of the war, South Korea was placed into the hands of a military dictatorship. Due to the nature of the Japanese occupation, South Korea was far behind the technological development of countries such as the United States. It was a destitute and impoverished country, and that was only intensified by the Korean War of 1950-53. Still, as the centerpiece of one of the world's most critical Cold War dynamics and confrontations, South Korea was bound to have nuclear weapons on its mind from a relatively young age as an important actor on the world stage.

Again with different contexts, but with a similar outcome, there were tens of thousands of American troops stationed in South Korea following the conclusion of the Korean War, which returned the country to essentially status quo ante bellum. The

American influence was a progression that occurred frequently around the world during the Cold War, where a paternalistic relationship sprouted over the United States involving itself explicitly in the affairs of another country, whether that country desired it or not. In the case of South Korea, it became fairly clear that that attention was wanted, at least from the leadership. South Korea's military dictators and despots, like Syngman Rhee and Chung-hee Park, were more than happy to keep the Americans close at hand if it solidified their hold on power.

Dictatorship or Democracy, and the Bomb

From the beginning of the current state of affairs, either beginning with South Korea's official independence of 1948, or with the end of the Korean War stalemate in 1953, the context of South Korea's nuclear weapons program was destined to be inextricably linked to its overall policy regarding North Korea, the economically beleaguered national sibling that to this day remains ever separated from its rightful government in Seoul. If South Korea made the choice to develop its own nuclear weapons, free from the Americans that it had looking over its shoulder, which already itself openly possessed nuclear weapons, a fact the whole world had no choice but to accept, then there was always the risk that North Korea would have free political rein to do as it wished regarding nuclear weapons. There had been no indication from the states to which North Korea was a client (the Soviet Union and mainland China) that there would be stringent rules regarding the proliferation of the North.

Those in power in Seoul still face important choices related to how much political capital they are willing to send to the Kim dictatorship in Pyongyang by starting nuclear weapons-capable programs. The following shall be an attempt to explain the South Korean nuclear weapons context in terms of the history of the peninsula, as well as how more recent events from North Korea have affected the direction that South Korea might take if the North grows even more aggressive, and if the United States becomes an ever less reliable military ally and benefactor to the Seoul government with which it still has a mutual defense treaty.

As has been mentioned, it has not been until fairly recently in relative terms that South Korea has arguably had the technological capability to construct nuclear weapons, or even to consider the prospect of that. Still, the South Koreans exited the Korean War with the motivation to advance technologically and economically because of the constantly hovering threat from the aggressive communist world that was directly on their only land border. The following is an excerpt from the article entitled “South Korea’s Nuclear Surprise:” “It was commonly known that from 1968 to 1975 South Korea attempted to obtain both a plant to reprocess plutonium from spent fuel and intermediate-range missile delivery systems. After 1971, an organized South Korean effort to develop a bomb was orchestrated by the Weapons Exploitation Committee with presidential-level backing (Kang et al 2005: 42).” That quotation also reiterates something that has already been mentioned, which is that South Korea in no way carried the same stigma explicitly against nuclear weapons that Japan did, given Japan’s unique history with the use of weapons of mass destruction or its expansionist

policies which those atomic bombs were directed against. As a recovering victim of several international conflicts, South Korea probably felt exceptionally QUALIFIED politically to possess nuclear weapons.

Another important factor that contributed in terms of rhetoric to South Korea's nuclear programs was the military dictatorship that dominated the country at the time, led by Chung-hee Park. As the recipient of generous American favoritism, due to the anti-Communist-at-all-costs policies of the United States of the time, the dictator Park was able to justify such weapons policies both domestically and almost internationally. However, the program was ultimately thwarted due to American pressure. The United States had enough to worry about with the influence of not just North Korea, but its guides of the USSR and the People's Republic of China. The CIA was also terrified of other factors that might begin to occur if South Korea were to gain its own nuclear weapons: "(Donald) Gregg (the CIA station chief in Seoul at the time) had no doubt that Japan would have no choice but to develop nuclear weapons; South Korea, therefore, would never be allowed to possess them...(Funabashi 2007: 145)." Tensions still persisted enough between Japan and South Korea at the time to the extent that South Korean achievement in devising their own version of the weapon was synonymous with Japan striking down its non-nuclear principles.

The similarities in personnel between those that shut down the Park nuclear program in the 1970s and those that invaded Iraq under mistaken pretenses are striking: "(Donald) Rumsfeld, secretary of defense in the Gerald Ford

administration...visited Seoul to hand the ultimatum to the Park government, saying, ‘The United States will review the entire relationship with the Republic of Korea unless its abandons nuclear development (Funabashi 2007: 145).’” Park, the strongman that had led the way in bringing South Korea as rapidly as he could toward the position of being one of the famed Four Tigers of the East Asian economic new wave of the late 20th century, had met his international political limits with this diplomatic catastrophe. His embarrassment, however, did not signal the end of the program. However, if the United States had not disrupted the nuclear weapons program headed by President Park, the following is a description of what might have come to pass: “Today, many South Korean security experts and nuclear scientists, some of whom actually took part in President Park’s nuclear weapon program, do not hesitate to point out that had the program continued, South Korea could have accumulated enough weapon-grade plutonium to manufacture a couple of nuclear bombs by the mid-1980s...(Choi et al. 2008: 378).” The progress that South Korea apparently made anyway after Park seemed to convince the Americans that the development had ceased in 1975 was formidable, so it really speaks to the headway that had already been made that such a goal would have been reached about 25 years ago, if not for American diplomatic intervention.

False Promise

The signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1975 was hoped to be the conclusion by many of South Korean nuclear weapons intentions. As has been

discovered, it was not even close to that optimistic assessment. Throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s, up until South Korea's ratification of additional International Atomic Energy Administration protocols, South Korea embarked on a series of nuclear technology experiments that qualified the country as a viable proliferator of the kind of weapons technology that we are discussing here. Though the experiments were conducted over the course of a few decades, the progress made in enriching the uranium that would be needed to construct a modern nuclear weapons program were in place by 2000, when many of the objectionable activities of the South Korean government began to be brought into the limelight.

Many of the political problems involved in those kinds of activities had to do with the South's unique relationship with the United States. With the post-NPT ratification in 1975, it was shown that South Korea had continued uranium enrichment projects that began in 1979. The United States, being the foremost scolder of North Korean weapons policy, was put into an uncomfortable situation. The tenuous risks of international political hypocrisy were apparent, since how could the United States insist that North Korea remain faithful to its international obligations to respect such a weapons agreement while one of the United States' main allies was working actively to bring nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula through their domestic creation?

Aside from the political ramifications of the South Korean's work on nuclear weapons technology among inspection enforcement circles, there is a serious problem related to a missed chance to hold North Korea to its own obligations based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty to which it belonged at the time. Given the high probability

of a significant North Korean intelligence presence in South Korea (Kang et al. 2005: 40), one might wonder how much of the South Korean experiments motivated the North Koreans to up the ante on their own nuclear weapons development. South Korea here might also appear to be the political victim of the unique expectations the world places on keeping nuclear weapons off of the Korean Peninsula, from both sides and their benefactors. We can gather from the general timeline of South Korea's nuclear weapons development that it was simultaneous with South Korea's rapid transformation into a dynamic first-world economy. Having been caught with its hand in the cookie jar (greatly due to its own compliance with IAEA rules), South Korea might be seen as trying to have its cake and eat it, too. The Americans might also be seen as having been complicit with the South Korean nuclear ambitions: "During an IAEA inspection (in 2004), South Korean officials could not produce documentation or several scientists who were involved in the (uranium) work...That portrayal differs significantly from those offered by U.S. officials who have repeatedly praised South Korea for coming clean voluntarily and cooperating with the IAEA (Linzer 9/12/04)." Given the American commitment that continues to the military protection of South Korea, it seems puzzling that the South Koreans would be so insistent (albeit secretly) in pressing forward during that timeframe in the process of creating their own nuclear weapons. Perhaps breaking free of the U.S. influence was part of the set of factors, similar to the thoughts among those in the upper echelons of power in the Japanese government during the 1960s that wanted to avoid the prospect of living perpetually under the wing of the United States due to issues of warfare that had

occurred decades before. Additionally, moving ahead with a nuclear weapons program may have been a final step in attempting to reach modernity. In any case, it was once again found out, and the South Koreans had to admit their wrongdoing in breaking a variety of agreements, including with its allies.

Given the American situation in Iraq and Afghanistan and all of the distractions that those raging conflicts entail, the South Korean security definition is currently in a state of flux. The nuclear weapons issue, therefore, will also need to probably be reorganized. What, after all, do nuclear weapons mean in the Asia-Pacific? Choi and Park write: “The possibility of either a decision by South Korea to go nuclear or a regional nuclear arms race still seems remote, but neither can be ruled out completely. Unless timely and appropriate measures are taken, nonnuclear states in the region, including South Korea and Japan, may be compelled to consider their own nuclear options (Choi et al. 2008: 392).” The authors go on to mention that the American nuclear umbrella is essentially everything at this point, as far as the query of where things are headed in the region. Even in the modern drive toward peaceful uses of nuclear power, South Korea is still somewhat in the diplomatic doghouse because of past indiscretions. The following excerpt succinctly describes that: “Local scientists say research into reprocessing and uranium enrichment will help them upgrade and export home-grown nuclear reactors and technology. ‘Washington, however, is reluctant to allow reprocessing in South Korea because of its past ambitions on nuclear bombs,’ Baek Seung-oo of the Korea Institute for Defence Analyses told AFP (News of AP 3/8/10).” Therefore, we have an additional example of American pressure

being a block to an East Asian arms race, in addition to how the cloud of those past experiences still hangs over the South Korean nuclear program, even as far as peaceful purposes.

To get an idea of what South Korea might have been and still is up against, it will be necessary to examine and evaluate the nuclear programs of North Korea. North Korea, the archrival of South Korea since the Korean War and a primary opponent of the United States since the same conflict, has seemed to have doubled its efforts in recent years in constructing a viable nuclear weapons program. Arguably, this has been a response to the rhetoric put forward by the Bush Administration, including the declaration of North Korea as a member of the “axis of evil” in 2002. With the invasion of Iraq by the US-led Coalition of the Willing in 2003, it probably began to seem imperative to North Korea that it should indeed develop weapons of mass destruction, given that Iraq, having not possessed them, was successfully conquered, at least as far as the dissolution of the Saddam-led Ba’athist government was concerned. If North Korea was to remain safe from a government that presented itself as so aggressive and hawkish, then seeking nuclear weapons was probably what seemed like a good idea for solid defense, and as a deterrent.

Pairing the Bush Administration together with the South Korean government that had made a habit of concocting schemes to construct their own nuclear weapons, in spite of their signing of the non-proliferation treaty, North Korea had a very good case, relatively speaking, for embarking on a nuclear weapons-devising journey. However, it would be one thing if it had been a recent idea for the wild and

unpredictable Kim regime. As can be shown through history, North Korea has made its own habit of trying to put together the nuclear puzzle.

Theoretical Implications of the South Korea Situation

The theoretical applications of South Korea's nuclear weapons abstinence equal those of Japan. As with the two other case studies, South Korea's outside threat appears to be obvious, thanks to North Korea's aggressive rhetoric, but the capability of the North Koreans to conventionally oppose South Korea has become minimal over the last few decades. Again, the American guarantee rings true in the South Korean case, especially given that tens of thousands of American troops remain as part of the US Forces Korea (USFK), even when the American military has been terribly overstretched thanks to the other theaters of the War on Terrorism. Part of the Americans' prestige was granted to them through their treatment of the client states, which South Korea still arguably remains. South Korea's flirtation with developing a nuclear weapon has lingered until recently enough in the past that such a conclusion becomes somewhat difficult to uphold, but it barely justifies the idea. It has not been until the past decade that South Korea has truly ascended into the upper echelons of the global economic powerhouses, so it was originally somewhat different from the American defense of Japan. Holding off the communist world from the capitalist world in general was probably more important to the Americans politically than the actual defense of South Korea itself.

The domestic politics model of Sagan's paper is a bit more complicated in South Korea than in Japan. With the turnover in power of the last few years from the unification advocates to the more center-right pro-American hawks led by Lee Myung-Bak, South Korean voters have shown their idiosyncratic tendencies and fickle nature in relating to their North Korean brethren. The militarization of South Korea in response to the lingering North Korean threat is never really in question, but the nuclear weapons issue gives the public pause. This has only increased as the North Koreans have developed nuclear weapons. With the ability to build them if things truly went down the drain (and the North Koreans know that), the South Koreans are probably more inclined as a people to hold off. A great similarity to the Japanese domestic politics model is that of a natural resource-dry country relying on its export-oriented economic development. This requires a great deal of international cooperation, and building a nuclear bomb would threaten all of that. The South Korean monopolies, or chaebols, of Samsung, Hyundai, Daewoo, Kia, and LG Group, among a relatively few others, which control much of the country politically, socially, culturally, and economically, would have their bottom lines threatened by a democratic yet still corporatist government that developed a tactical nuclear device. The power of the investor is nowhere greater than in South Korea or in South Korean politics.

As with Japan, South Korea is subject to the reversal I maintain of Sagan's norms model. As part of the family of mature nations of northeast Asia, South Korea's international prestige would not be enhanced by its ownership of nuclear weapons.

With the potential dangers that surround South Korea, the dabbling that occurred in the country with nuclear weapons until 2000 must be amounted to the activities of fools and scientific thrill-seekers. The workings on nuclear weapons prior to the signing of the NPT in 1975 can be amounted to a reactionary non-democratic government that did not seek global prestige as much as it sought a regional defense mechanism to sustain itself and hold off a somewhat more advanced existential threat. In South Korea's modern democratic period, South Korea has gained prestige as the more responsible of the two Koreas through holding off on nuclear weapons of its own and leaving the security umbrella of that respect to the United States.

The North Korean Antithesis

North Korea's nuclear weapons efforts greatly predate those of South Korea. Arguably, the South Koreans were merely responding to the nuclear threat directly posed by North Korea for decades. The following is an excerpt that describes some of these developments: "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) began its nuclear effort as far back as the mid-1950s and was originally assisted by the Soviet Union, which helped establish an atomic energy research center in 1962, and China, which aided the North's uranium mining effort (Carpenter et al. 2004: 39)."

Therefore, the end of the Korean War basically ushered in the era of North Korea actively seeking nuclear weapons. Additionally, the superpowers of the Communist world, the USSR and China, were proactive in helping North Korea achieve that goal, at least for a time. Still, their assistance could not have been tireless, given that North

Korea never reached the level of nuclear weapons achievement that they did. These activities served as plenty of domestic political justification for those like Chung-hee Park to devise their own nuclear programs. In the end, the United States did show itself to be the more responsible of the respective benefactors in halting South Korea's nuclear program, at least once it became public knowledge.

North Korea became quite skillful at using diplomatic means in order to covertly secure assistance with nuclear weapons developments. The following is another excerpt that outlines some of the details surrounding this: "North Korea joined the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1974, giving the country's scientists access to technical assistance in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Over the years the DPRK constructed a 5-megawatt reactor and began building a 50-megawatt reactor at a complex at Yongbyon. North Korea even started construction on a 200-megawatt reactor in 1985 (Carpenter et al. 2004: 39-40)." This highlights the intensification of North Korea's efforts to construct new means of nuclear technology following the initial dissolution of the South Korean domestic nuclear weapons program that was enabled by the United States.

The real problems began just a bit later. North Korea made some promises it did not have any intention of keeping: "North Korea also signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1985. But even at that early date there were questions about the sincerity of Pyongyang's commitment. As Mohamed ElBaradei...notes, North Korea took seven years to sign the obligatory verification agreement with the IAEA, a process that takes most signatories about 18 months

(Carpenter et al. 2004: 40).” Therefore, there is a question of how much the signing of the NPT by North Korea was ever to be taken seriously. Given even the anti-diplomatic mayhem that has occurred with North Korea’s weapons program of the past few years, the country has proven itself untrustworthy at best when relying on it to keep its agreements that could be described as blackmail.

Korea Entangled

There are many different angles to consider when describing how the weapons development by the North Koreans could feed into potential development by the South Koreans. Given the reluctance of the Park government to continue working on nuclear weapons to the extent that they did in the 1970s, it is obvious that even a rather bold, militaristic dictatorship was not willing to sacrifice much of its economic future (which was being delivered to South Korea on a silver platter thanks to a Mutual Defense Treaty that ensured significant military protection from the greatest military power in the world) in order to gain nuclear weapons to match an adversary. Politically speaking, there are many questions that could be posed to South Korea as to why it would seek nuclear weapons, even when the United States has promised to stand by in the case of a Communist attack. Does South Korea not want to appear as a complacent, decadent locale, ripe for plunder by its Communist brethren? Some might argue so. With all of the close calls to a second Korean War breakout, South Korea might continue to be interested in all of the methods at its disposal to ensure that the North Koreans are fully aware of their economic and military inferiority.

Something that might be a well-known fact but which I will reiterate here anyway is that North Korea has not done itself any favors with the sheer lunacy with which it releases statements regarding its international opponents. In a way, the fact that North Korea doth protest too much might be seen as indicating that it is producing nuclear weapons when it claims that it does not. The following is a sample from the North Korean-published “Open Letter on Nuclear Arms Development in South Korea:”

“...the south Korean nuclear maniacs are working to build reprocessing facilities to extract more uranium....Having accumulated a large quantity of nuclear explosives, south Korea has practically developed nuclear arms. The promotion of an atomic reactor design in the 1980s was geared to obtaining technical data on atomic bombs from abroad (1992).” The wild assertions might have been predicated somewhat on the relatively recent overthrow of the military regime and paradigm that had dominated South Korean politics since its independence. Though South Korea was still working on nuclear weapons at the time, to an extent, the claims made by North Korea in terms of South Korea’s nuclear weapons readiness, as far as tactical and damage-inducing purposes, were questionable.

The influence of mainland China on North Korean policy and probabilities cannot be underestimated or understated. One could easily think that, without the assistance of China, North Korea’s ruling regime would fall and the country would plunge into even further chaos than the form of it in which it currently finds itself. If North Korea were to go fully nuclear, China might have its own political and security disaster on its hands: “(A) danger or indirect threat to China is that North Korean nuclearization

might induce Japan, South Korea, and even Taiwan to develop their own nuclear arms. China has not forgotten that in the past South Korea and Taiwan both have attempted to develop nuclear weapons. Also, although Japan has consistently taken a non-nuclear policy stance, if it were to go nuclear, that could drastically change the international environment in East Asia (Funabashi 2007: 301).” The balance of power in and of itself within the region would be thrown off entirely. The current paradigm would be brought to a complete and dramatic close. If North Korea were to confirm its ability and willingness to develop its own nuclear weapons, it might be difficult to blame South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan for abandoning their current non-nuclear policies. Their prosperity has been built in large part on their lack of nuclear weapons, but if all of that prosperity could then be obliterated by nuclear weapons from one of the most corrupt, crazed, and tenuous dictatorial regimes on the planet, the need for true deterrence and the assurance of the complete destruction of North Korea in the case of an attack on South Korea or Japan may become politically necessary for those countries.

North Korea’s gradual persistence related to issues of nuclear weapons proliferation is very well tied in to some of the objectives of this thesis. There is clearly a choice present in northeast Asia insofar as nuclear weapons are concerned, along with their relationship to an overall level of social and economic development. Whenever South Korea, on the other hand, got too far along in its nuclear development process, to the point where it was caught with its hand in the cookie jar, it would relent and back down, because South Korea was not willing to sacrifice the

gains that it had made in other areas simply so that it could own its own version of such advanced weapons. North Korea is an utter and destitute failure of a state. Ruled with an iron fist by Kim Jong-II, the elderly boy emperor, the country is on its knees financially due to rigorous and tough international sanctions, along with it being seen basically as a pariah state, with only mainland China present to correct some of its most severe transgressions (both in terms of international relations and the running of its domestic economy).

The Importance of Fate, Destiny, and Human Decisions

Enough time has gone by since the end of the Korean War that one might wonder what could have happened, if, at various points, North Korea had chosen to take options that were alternative to what it enacted. If the regime had made a choice (or if a revolution could have been staged), it seems possible that North Korea ultimately could have emerged from the Cold War frame of reference with a different perspective on the world, which would entail the world holding a different perspective of North Korea. South Korea was by no means as popular of a country internationally as it is now, due to its dictatorial and militaristic form of government, but it emerged from such an outdated style, and has become one of the most respected and economically prolific countries in the world, which is quite something, given what it was only a few decades ago.

Many might argue that North Korea has become locked into its role in the region as the poor, downtrodden figure that requires force in order to get anyone to pay much

attention to it. North Korea has been at odds with the United States almost longer than any other country in the world, and its survival might be seen as having depended on its steadfast political positioning. Gavan McCormack writes: “Nuclear weapons development had been seen as a means to two ends: security and the normalization of relations with the world. Without nuclear weapons North Korea was a poor and insignificant country; with them – perhaps only with them – it might command the attention of the United States and Japan (McCormack 2004: 153-154).” North Korea’s insistence on the development of nuclear weapons technology, in spite of its bogus agreements, signatures, and supposed ratifications, has only served to perpetuate its standing as a second- or even third-class nation. Its counterpart, South Korea, was smart enough in its governmental policies to recognize that it could develop nuclear weapons through a concerted effort on the part of its many qualified scientists and engineers, but it would lead to a great deal of international trouble. The price would have been too high, particularly for a country like South Korea that is so poor in natural resources, similar to Japan.

Perhaps North Korea’s chance to become a respected nation has passed, and they are forever fated to be a trouble for the world, including to their only real remaining ally, communist China. Not only are the Koreas a perfect contrast between capitalist and communist outcomes (with some particularly Korean traits working their way into both cases), but also what happens when generally responsible leaders (even when they appear to be dictators) make the right choices that lead their countries to the promised lands of international dignity and respect, or when their leaders instead

decide to persist in their aggressive tactics that only further alienate them from the international community. To emphasize this, another quote from McCormack is useful when comparing Japan and North Korea: "...two neighbor states, one a global economic superpower, the other bankrupt, isolated, and almost universally reviled (McCormack 2004: 121)." In my opinion, that kind of international reputation and state of affairs represents a failure in diplomatic effort from the leadership of the country. Many countries are poor, but the isolation and poor international opinion maintained by North Korea is fairly unique in the modern day. It is due to a sustained failure in the leadership of North Korea to recognize that its impetuosity and lack of compromise in its outward attitudes have led the world to writing it off. Even China has grown tired of North Korea's childish games, and even signed on to an anti-North Korea United Nations Security Council resolution in 2009.

Another problem that North Korea represents for those not wishing to employ a double standard in their judgments on nation-states is that it makes questionable decisions by the United States more politically convenient on the international stage. As mentioned by Nina Tannenwald, North Korea's missile programs have encouraged the United States to engage in wasteful projects: "Many domestic and foreign observers do not find the rogue state rationale for US missile defense sufficiently persuasive, since neither of the principal adversaries that missile defense supporters have in mind – North Korea and Iran – currently possesses the capability to attack the United States with ballistic missiles (Tannenwald 2007: 385)." However, as Tannenwald points out, the countries like North Korea that are deemed to be rogue

states play into the hands of the United States in perpetuating its role as the global policeman, since the United States has retained a sufficient amount of global political capital relative to North Korea that the United States could sink fairly low and still come out of the game ahead of the beleaguered North Koreans.

North Korea's bargaining power without nuclear weapons is further diminished due to its shoddy positioning of its armed forces relative to the forces that would be arrayed against it in the event of a conventional attack on South Korea. The economic realities of near-autarky are brought painfully to life in the case of North Korea: "Over the years, the conventional military balance on the peninsula has shifted against North Korea. US and South Korean forces have modernized and strengthened their military capabilities, while North Korea's forces suffer from economic deprivation, obsolete equipment, poor maintenance and inadequate training (Samore et al. 2007: 62-63)." While the North Korean military has grown increasingly pathetic over the decades since the height of the Cold War, when North Korea might have had a more distinct military advantage on the peninsula, the situation has brought to life the rationale for the continued quest for nuclear weaponry. What other bargaining chip is there? Through agreements and various other kinds of blackmail, North Korea can at least use the threat of further development of nuclear armaments to get some of its people (if only those in its military) some degree of the basic necessities of life.

The many misdeeds of North Korea, along with its aggressive episodes and lack of predictable behavior from its leaders, serve to show how South Korea received merely a few slaps on the wrist, metaphorically speaking, when its nuclear weapons

development activities were revealed to the world. South Korea might have been in a much more feasible position than many other countries in the world to try to justify why it was trying to construct such frightening weapons and technologies. North Korea has earned itself such a poor reputation not just from the countries it was formerly at war with, but from many of its current and previous military allies, that South Korea was somewhat let off the hook after it showed that it had indeed been working on nuclear weapons. Who could blame them? Of course, there were political issues with other countries in northeast Asia, along with its American benefactor, but North Korea seemed unwilling or unable to back down from its blustery talk about one day recapturing the entirety of the Korean Peninsula.

One thing that is easily noticed once one begins to study in detail the North Korean nuclear weapons program is that rarely does one encounter a nuclear program with such a great degree of ambiguity. Due to the fact that North Korea might be the most secretive and closed-off country in the entire world, it is supremely difficult, even for the mighty United States intelligence community, to determine exactly what is going on. North Korea goes to such lengths to keep track intensively of the few foreigners that are allowed into the country that a cigar could hardly be lit inside of North Korea without its leaders being aware of it. There have been very few chances for spies from South Korea, Japan, or the West to gain much information that could lead to anything constructive with North Korea. In the case of such espionage, South Korea is at a severe disadvantage due to its relatively open and liberal society. By granting itself the good international reputation that North Korea denied itself through its totalitarian

and despotic policies, South Korea has also opened itself to extreme risks of North Korean interference in its domestic activities, and that includes the burgeoning nuclear programs that it has gotten up and running every once in a while.

I hope that it has become obvious that by discussing North Korea in such detail that I am endeavoring to thereby describe South Korea's logic in going about the course that it has chosen over the last few decades. Even during its time of military rule, South Korea consistently made ultimate choices that led to the fortuitous state that the country finds itself in today. North Korea, South Korea's disgruntled permanent relative, made errors in collective judgment that have forced the country to remain in historical stasis. The context of North Korea's nuclear program is one of trying to find bargaining chips, whereas the context of South Korea's nuclear program is a mistake that could be corrected through dismantling the entire operation.

Sometimes Awkward Alliances

Other writers find some degree of fault in the traditional American interpretation of how dangerous North Korea is. Though the actual military challenges presented by an opponent like North Korea are not to be underestimated, it is relatively easy to understand how it might be in the best interest of the United States in the region (however cynical that assessment is) to keep North Korea handy as the ever-present bad guy. J.J. Suh writes: "...North Korea's material capabilities and intentions are embedded in discourses, and are seen and understood only in such discursive terms. The persistence of the 'threat' is then used to justify the continuation of the alliance

that had been ‘born in blood, forged in the crucible of war’ ... (Suh 2004: 161).” Suh’s argument presents an alternative viewpoint that may be important to consider when analyzing how dangerous North Korea might be. Since the country is so isolated and disconnected from most international interactions, assessments might oftentimes be based on the political convenience of those who have the greatest interest in seeing North Korea as a constant adversary. The alliance between the United States and South Korea has been very lucrative financially and politically for both parties. North Korea, obviously, has been the primary instrument for keeping that close relationship going. However, one thing that I would argue is that it is more important to focus on the primary objectives at hand with the alliance, as far as its purpose. Unfortunately, it seems practically inevitable that there are forces at work in both the United States and South Korea that would prefer that North Korea remain separated forever. A lot of money moves based on that assumption. North Korea has not done itself any favors by continually reinforcing a lot of the discursive assumptions that Suh mentions with its wild, rash, and unpredictable/inexplicable behavior.

The United States has remained remarkably hands-off with North Korea since the end of the Korean War, which, in a sense, might lend more credibility to the fact that North Korea might have something that the United States would be afraid of. Rather than the low-hanging fruit of the regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003, North Korea presents a real strategic challenge for the anti-North Korea allies in terms of thinking about a possible invasion. North Korea certainly has nuclear weapons of some kind, and preventing a response to the beginning of an allied strike would be a difficult thing

to achieve. It is more likely, though, that American allies would take most of the brunt of the retaliation rather than the Americans themselves. The following is an excerpt from the book *On Nuclear Terrorism*: “North Korea has poor relations with most of the world already, does not cooperate in securing its nuclear weapons and materials, and cannot retaliate against the United States in the same ways that Russia, or even Pakistan, can. Threatening to retaliate against North Korea should materials used in a nuclear attack be traced back to it would thus be relatively cost-free (Levi 2007: 131-132).” In referring to what actions the United States could take in deterring North Korea from bad behavior, Levi points out the leverage that the United States has in threatening North Korea in the case of North Korean-originating nuclear materials ending up being used in a nuclear terrorist attack. In the scenario that Levi portrays, the United States would accumulate additional political capital in a forum such as the UN Security Council because North Korea’s semi-allies of China and Russia would abandon it to an even greater degree. If the United States went on the offensive against North Korea, South Korea and Japan would have to absorb some of the blowback, but there would not be much that the North Koreans could do to ultimately respond. Because of these limitations, North Korea is always walking a fine line when playing the recent role of the international troublemaker.

North Korea’s continued existence will most likely be assured by its longtime benefactor, China, for quite some time. China has a variety of goals in mind when it determines its North Korean policy, most of which hover around pure nationalistic self-interest. If the Kim regime were to collapse in North Korea, China would have to

confront a bevy of problems. One of these is mentioned in the book *Blowback*: “China’s greatest worry has been that the Communist state in the North may collapse due to economic isolation and ideological irrelevance, thereby bringing about a unified, independent, and powerful new actor in northeast Asian politics, potentially the size of and as rich as the former West Germany and defended by a good army, possibly armed with nuclear weapons – not a development the Chinese would necessarily welcome (Johnson 2000: 136).” To back that point up, Johnson mentions that the United States, in the interest of disrupting Chinese goals, particularly at such a time of diplomatic awkwardness between China and the U.S., should do everything it can in order to bring about the reunification of the Korean Peninsula, whatever the form. Johnson also makes an important point for this paper (in order to show how the North Korean regime might continue to harbor its own bitterness about South Korean achievements of the last few decades, perpetuating negative relations), which is that North Korea, in terms of gross domestic product per capita, was superior to that of South Korea until at least 1975 (Johnson 2000: 119). That particular statistic can be used to emphasize the remarkable economic progress that South Korea has made since its capitalist expansion, and it is also fairly well tied in to the downfall of the Park regime and the ultimate drive toward the democratization of South Korea. The simultaneity of both developments seemed to present at the very least an interesting coincidence.

The issue of the relationship between China and North Korea is fairly dynamic, and probably much more so than the relationship between North Korea and the United

States, which has remained remarkably stable over the last 57 years. China, still North Korea's greatest and perhaps only real ally, has become frustrated as of late with the relentlessness with which North Korea is determined to remain in the past in terms of style (meanwhile, North Korea obviously yearns for much more modern weapons technology). As China has moved on from the Maoist paradigm quite successfully, North Korea seems locked into its Stalinist dictatorship, moving from one Kim to the next, each as bad and as untrustworthy as the other. The juxtaposition of China's dependence on the Kim regime for its own purposes with its continued frustration with North Korea's antics are mentioned in short in this excerpt: "China voted in favor of the UN Security Council's resolution against North Korea's nuclear test, but it has largely continued to provide economic assistance to North Korea, especially the oil supply that is indispensable to North Korea's military maintenance (Shi 2009: 176)." The author also includes quotations from the Chinese government in 2006 that described the nuclear testing actions of North Korea as "flagrant" and "brazen" (Shi 2009: 176). The calculus and limitations with which China regards North Korea are difficult to pin down precisely. In a way, they are somewhat similar to the United States, in which North Korea is momentarily soothed or wooed with resources, but when things again become inconvenient, North Korea has a pattern of lashing out, which can leave even its most reliable ally a little peeved, and it can create a cold feeling between the two.

The author of that excerpt, Shi, goes on to describe how, much in part thanks to China's ratification of the UN Security Council resolutions of late that have been

meant to punish North Korea for its variety of transgressions, North Korea has come to mistrust China to a large extent. This unprecedented, unparalleled isolation may make one wonder how sustainable the current path is for North Korea. China's relatively new and fruitful economic relationships with South Korea and Japan, the allies of the United States and the traditional adversaries of North Korea, have also caused relations between the two states to become strained, even in spite of the goals that China has in mind for the Kim regime (not the least of which is the prevention of the millions of refugees that would come pouring into China in the event of the collapse or destabilization of the Kim dictatorship).

A factor with which it is important to take note when discussing the relationship between the United States and its allies in northeast Asia is the transition in 2009 from the Bush Administration to the Obama Administration. The aggressive and abrupt hawkishness of the Bush Administration soured many of the United States' allies on the country's foreign policy, even when it came to the issue of North Korea. President Bush was so unpopular among even many of the traditional allies of the United States that North Korea did not get as much attention as it could or should have while the Bush Administration was asking for it, simply because the ambivalence toward the United States at the time was too strong. After the inauguration of Barack Obama, the world began to have a much more positive feeling toward American leadership because of the more subtle footprint to be left by American policymakers.

At close to the same time, the presidential position in South Korea shifted from the more dovish, Sunshine Policy-advocating Roh Moo-Hyun to the more hawkish and

pro-American Lee Myung-Bak. The Lee presidency in South Korea has seen much tougher stances by the South Koreans toward North Korea than during the appeasement years that began around 2000 with the (heartwarming though misguided) diplomatic efforts started by President Kim Dae-Jung, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize. It will be interesting and necessary to analyze how the foreign relations of the United States continue to unfold in northeast Asia, particularly because of the issue of North Korea, the one part of the world that has remained very much the same throughout the Cold War and even further onward.

Sagan's models of nuclear proliferation patterns become somewhat mysterious in the case of North Korea. Perhaps it is because of North Korea's rejection of the parameters of Sagan's nuclear excuses and justifications that it has become the pariah of the area, even to its major benefactor, mainland China. As far as Sagan's norms model in regard to North Korea, I would argue along these lines: North Korea's leaders have misread their own region's nuclear weapons context. They have adopted a de Gaulle style justification, where they believe that nuclear weapons ownership will add to their nation's grandeur. However, they have fallen short, given that greater prestige is obtained in northeast Asia through the lack of nuclear weapons development (with the exception of NPT-legal China), particularly when a country has the capacity to develop them (all the more politically impressive, perhaps). By forging ahead on such a dangerous and anachronistic path, North Korea has only given its opponents more reason to impose sanctions upon it and to find international cooperation through resolutions against it.

4. The Taiwan Strait and the Bomb

Taiwan is another major case of an Asian de facto country that has managed to sacrifice the prospects of its own nuclear weapons possession in the meantime in order to gain better international trust and respect, similar to Japan and South Korea. Constantly being claimed by the much larger Communist mainland, Taiwan might naturally be as likely a candidate as any for finding political justification for possessing nuclear weapons. That would be for their purpose as a deterrent against a mainland attack. However, with the exception of some dalliances in the direction of gaining nuclear weapons technology that the United States had to help scrap as projects, the Taiwanese have remained relatively firm toward their own non-nuclear policies and principles.

Having been led by a government that was on the losing side of the Chinese Civil War in the late 1940s, after China had been one of the successful Allies of World War II, the Republic of China on Taiwan was dominated by the Kuomintang party, led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek. Similarly to South Korea, Taiwan spent much of its early existence as its own de facto state under the firm hand of a dictator. As the Taiwanese economy grew ever more dynamic, the Kuomintang was able to take plenty of the credit for those developments, given that hardly any other entity had any kind of a legislative voice. Similarities could also be drawn to Japan, with Japan's one-party democracy that persisted remarkably until 2009, with the leadership of the LDP.

Being something of an Israel in east Asia, with mainland China playing the part of the Arab states of the Middle East, Taiwan lived under fire (and still does) from the

threat of a mainland Chinese invasion, in order that the communists could reclaim the island that they felt was rightfully theirs. Also, as with South Korea, Taiwan obviously feels a comradeship and shared history with the mainland, given that most on Taiwan are descended from mainlanders that fled there only several decades ago. For example, Sun Yat-Sen is viewed as a national hero both on the mainland and in Taiwan. Also demonstrated until the relatively recent economic explosion on the mainland are the benefits of relatively free market export-oriented economic policies that Taiwan carried out, compared with the numerous economic disasters that plagued Maoist China in the early years after their victory in the civil war. Like the two Koreas, capitalism won out in the direct comparison, at least for a time.

With its aversion toward Mao Zedong and the Communist developments that were occurring in China after the joint victory over Imperial Japan, the United States had a clear favorite in the dispute between the KMT and the Communists. Chiang Kai-Shek was no great standard-bearer for the democratic values that the United States often espouses internationally, but he was certainly no Communist, and therefore, in the early years of the Cold War, the United States really had no choice. Though it cannot be as open and explicit in its support of Taiwan, for reasons of diplomatic recognition and by being relatively polite to the mainland for economic reasons, the United States continues to lend Taiwan most of the support it needs at any given time to deter a Chinese invasion of the island. Unlike with South Korea, it would be unacceptable to the mainland Chinese for American forces to be stationed on Taiwan, but for most of the other things that occur between the United States and Taiwan, China is willing to

let them slide at the moment because it would have to absorb a tremendous amount of political heat if China grew any more bold about reclaiming Taiwan than it already has been.

The Bomb as Diplomatic Initiator

Since it is not acknowledged widely as its own state, Taiwan cannot necessarily be a party to many of the agreements that might internationally legislate such armaments as nuclear weapons and their proliferation. However, if Taiwan were to acquire nuclear weapons, the aftermath of that becoming public would certainly shake East Asia to the core, just as it would if Japan or South Korea were to become outright nuclear weapons-possessing states. Therefore, the United States, wishing to pursue much of the status quo in East Asia, since it has worked well for the United States in recent decades, would be willing to do a great deal in order to prevent Taiwan from going down that treacherous road. Particularly given that Taiwan's progenitor of mainland China was one of the original declaratory nuclear-weapons holding states and a member of the UN Security Council, in addition to the fact that mainland China still claims Taiwan as its own territory, the Republic of China has practically a zero-level of justification or leeway in developing any kind of nuclear weapons research program. That explains why the United States is terrified by the prospect of Taiwan becoming a nuclear weapons state, especially since the United States is so deeply indebted to China, given that it is the world's largest holder of American treasury bonds.

Taiwan must also be acknowledged for what it has gained by not becoming a nuclear weapons state. Like Japan and South Korea, Taiwan is very sparse in terms of natural resources. Therefore, it has had to rely on other factors in order to build its economy to the impressive per capita level that it occupies today. A highly-educated population has enabled Taiwan to become a very trade-dependent, and, by necessity due to that dependence, a fairly well-liked and popular country. If Taiwan were to become despised and reviled, and if it were also to violate a number of treaties, its economy would be shaken, since it does not possess a lot of the materials that are required to keep its economy moving.

Lately, Taiwan and mainland China have reached something of an equilibrium or stable point, in order that war has not increased in likelihood a great deal. This has been enhanced thanks to the Four No's of Taiwan's President Chen in 2000: "(1) not to call a referendum on changing the status quo in regard to Taiwan's independence; (2) not to write 'the two-state theory' or the concept of 'state-to-state relations' between the island and the mainland in the constitution; (3) not to seek to change Taiwan's name or flag; and (4) not to declare independence (Zagoria 2007: 12)."

Going back to the comparison that was made between North Korea and South Korea, in which South Korea has yielded much better international and economic results than North Korea has in the long-run due to its more pragmatic policy, Taiwan's government is well aware of the tenuous situation that it is always resting within. The mainland is its economic superior (if perhaps not yet its military superior), and also has something of a compelling claim to the island of Taiwan, so it is in Taiwan's best

interest to avoid amplifying too much nationalistic rhetoric on Taiwan, since that would force China's hand in trying to make a seizure of what it considers to be its own territory.

China's real hand is partially shown through its relatively calm acceptance of the American protection of Taiwan through a variety of security agreements and armaments deals. Though it cannot outright send American troops to defend Taiwan, risking a skirmish with Chinese troops in the process, the United States has sold Taiwan a great deal of American-manufactured military equipment. The high-tech armaments that Taiwan has received would put the mainland at a great deal of risk in the event of an invasion attempt. Not only would many Chinese ships be sunk and aircraft shot down, but much of the mainland would be in ruins due to Taiwanese missile strikes. When these American arms deals are publicized and discussed in the news media, China obviously harrumphs and expresses its displeasure, but it continues its trade relationship with the United States in much the same way that it has. American consumers still remain too valuable to China for China to want to risk its relationship with the United States any more than the Americans do. The status quo appears to be taking over, and the Obama presidency, though different from the Bush Administration in many ways, seems to be keeping the Taiwan policy essentially intact and uninterrupted from that era.

There are many things the United States is doing, in addition to discouraging the Taiwanese from embarking on creating their own nuclear weapons and armaments, in order to perpetuate the current state of affairs between the Chinese and the Taiwanese.

Donald Zagoria discusses some of these factors: “The United States, for its part, is now adeptly combining a policy of deterrence and reassurance for both China and Taiwan. U.S. policy is principally on target....The United States continues to tell both China and Taiwan that it opposes unilateral action by either side that seeks to change the status quo. In line with this position, the United States seeks to deter any use of force by China and any provocative action by Taiwan (Zagoria 2007: 12).” Zagoria also mentions how the United States is endeavoring to encourage and foster greater cultural and economic integration between the two sides of the Formosa Strait. He also points out a quotation from George W. Bush in 2001, which is important in emphasizing the real objective of American policy with regard to Taiwan that continues with President Obama: “(The United States will do) whatever it takes (to ensure Taiwan’s security).” The parallel with Israel is again echoed, since the United States often makes similar proclamations of its loyalty to its best friend in the Middle East region. Since the United States has backed up much of its pro-Taiwan rhetoric with calculable actions through its arms deals, the point is made about how important the United States has deemed Taiwan to be to the future of American power in East Asia. With many of the diplomatic setbacks of recent years endured by the United States, perhaps the Americans feel that they need to hang on dearly to any friends that they may still have.

Rhetorically, China has not been completely subdued in terms of accepting the security dynamics between the United States and Taiwan. The following excerpt makes clear the domestic politics within China that are at work on the Taiwan issue:

“...Chinese officials and government commentaries make clear their strong opposition to US efforts to support Taiwan and to foster political change in China, as well as key aspects of US alliances, security presence around China’s periphery and positions on salient international issues ranging from the military use of space to fostering democratic change (Sutter 2009: 202).” Part of the problem in China is that Taiwan is a very good way of igniting the more hawkish sensibilities of the population. Whenever nationalistic fervor is needed or would be useful, Taiwan is a perfectly suitable punching bag for the Chinese.

A Northeast Asian Pattern?

Moving forward into the specifics of the aspiring Taiwanese nuclear weapons program, one thing that is noticed when studying these subjects is how similar the timeframes are respectively between the South Korean and Taiwanese developments along these lines. Since South Korea and Taiwan have had such amazing economic ascendancies over the past few decades, perhaps it makes sense that their histories of the second half of the twentieth century and onward share some similarities. The two together became half of the famed Four Tigers of the Asia-Pacific region. I would argue that that fame would have been infamy if their nuclear programs had gone any further.

The beginnings of Taiwan’s nuclear program are difficult to pin down precisely, but the nuclear weapons achievements of mainland China in the 1960s are certainly seen as the primary motivators behind Taiwan’s aspirations. The following is from an

article that goes over the Taiwanese nuclear process: “Although the United States had pledged to defend Taiwan against a Chinese invasion and even stationed U.S. nuclear – or nuclear-capable – weapons on Taiwanese territory (withdrawn in 1974), Taiwan’s sense of security was badly shaken by China’s first nuclear test in October 1964. Cables sent to Washington from the U.S. embassy in Taipei reflect the near panic (Albright et al. 1998: 55).” Following those developments, a flurry of activity was set off in Taiwan over the next few decades, during the presidencies of both Chiang Kai-shek and his son who succeeded him upon his death.

Just as with the situation in South Korea, the dictatorship on Taiwan was prevented from ultimately producing nuclear weapons by its primary benefactor, the United States. The Americans, terrified of the rhetorical and political ramifications of one of its major allies in the region outwardly possessing nuclear weapons, definitely used a great deal of their international clout to prevent Taiwan from securing nuclear weapons. Much of this was probably due to poor timing for the Taiwanese, given that the 1970s saw the United States finally come around to accepting mainland China as the actual, true China. The above article gives an additional useful quote: “By the late 1980s, according to a U.S. official, the goal was preventing Taiwan from ‘getting even close (Albright et al. 1998: 60).” The military history of Taiwan is rather impressive, given that it seems that there were plenty in Taiwan that knew a great deal about how to go about making a nuclear weapon, but cooler heads often prevailed among them. It appears that Chiang Kai-shek wanted to have some kind of a major deterrent to use against China, but he failed to properly motivate those working for him to come

through as far as a nuclear weapon that was built. The following quote also shows how the Americans were able to exact their demands on the Taiwanese: “That Taiwan depended on the United States for its security made it possible for Washington to intervene repeatedly in Taipei’s nuclear affairs. Without that ‘unique’ relationship, demarches to the head of state would not have been quite so effective (Burr 8/9/07).” Once again, the Americans prove to be the most effective tool against the potential arms race. How resilient that would be today if Taiwan were equally motivated to build nuclear weapons still is a question.

There certainly remains in Taiwan plenty of expertise about how to build a nuclear weapon. It is through sheer concern with political, as well as military, security that Taiwan has relented from going further. Albright and Gay write: “...little hard information exists to make a reliable determination of how quickly Taiwan could build nuclear weapons. Although Taiwan never separated very much, if any, plutonium, U.S. technical specialists concede that Taiwan learned many important lessons about separating plutonium and turning it into metal. U.S. experts also worry that Taiwan learned a great deal about making a nuclear explosive (Albright et al. 1998: 60).” What we basically learn from that is that, if the international environment were to be altered enough, we would probably end up seeing a Taiwan that was armed with nuclear weapons. The problem for Taiwan strategically with nuclear weapons is that, since China would be its primary concern in all likelihood for their potential use, there would not be so much a problem of mutually-assured destruction as the assured destruction of Taiwan. Given the obvious size differences between the two states,

mainland China could certainly absorb a bevy of nuclear detonations compared to its ornery neighbor to the southeast.

Alternative viewpoints exist regarding the American reaction to the potential development of nuclear weapons by the Taiwanese. Perhaps it would have been better for regional security and the maintenance of the status quo if Taiwan had been left to its own self-serving devices: “For decades that island nation has faced the threatening prospect of a very hostile takeover by (nuclear-armed) mainland China, and by the late 1970s the United States was in the process of deciding to reduce its security guarantees, which would presumably make Taiwan more vulnerable....the problem is that, laboring under the sway of the proliferation fixation, policy toward Taiwan was fabricated in a knee-jerk fashion that precluded even the consideration of an obvious, and potentially productive, policy alternative (Mueller 2010: 118).” With that quotation, the author seems to argue that the United States at least should have taken some more time in analyzing what it would have meant for Taiwan to possess nuclear weapons. Given that, during the 1970s, China was in the throes of dealing with decades of Maoist economic mismanagement, the mainland would not have been in a real position to do anything about Taiwan developing many different kinds of technologies.

Threats of a Taiwan nuclear weapons program are also potentially damaging to political figures in Taiwan. For example, the 2008 elections that brought the KMT back into power are arguably the result of an accusation thrown at the leader of the Democratic Progressive Party by a KMT legislator. The following quotation describes

the dynamic: "...the allegations may have served to heighten fears about (DPP President) Chen's confrontational stance toward China, as well as to remind the international community of Taiwan's latent ability – if not intent – to produce nuclear weapons (Dougherty 2/08)." The beating that the DPP endured in that election after such provocative comments speaks to the antipathy that the Taiwanese public has toward nuclear weapons, another damper on the potential arms race.

Taiwan made the choice between being an economic giant and a military giant. It ultimately chose the economic side of the argument. Mueller writes: "...why (was Taiwan) receptive to American threats? ...it was because (Taiwan) had harnessed (itself) to – had put (its) highest priority on – a politically popular economic growth strategy that vitally depended on international trade and access. This made (Taiwan) not only susceptible to American blandishments but also wary of doing anything that might alienate international institutions or cause concern among commercial partners (Mueller 2010: 124)." There are benefits to both frames of perspective, but I would argue that the economic argument might make more sense, given that, even if the world were to go up in flames via a nuclear war, at least Taiwan would not be burdened with the potential blame of having started the conflict through its blatant ignoring of international proliferation law.

Taiwan has become one of East Asia's leaders in civil rights. Similar to South Korea, that occurred after decades of authoritarianism that left the common person in those countries perilously underrepresented. After 2000, in which Taiwan saw its first transition in political power away from General Chiang's KMT (Ho 2003: 683), the

new liberal democratic ideals showed their solidification within Taiwanese society through the advent of new political demonstrations and protests among much of Taiwan's traditional industries and projects, such as nuclear energy and development (Ho 2003). As has been seen with Japan, for example, it appears that the more educated a population is on average, in addition to the number of political and civil rights that the average citizen is afforded, the more likely it is that there will be at least a substantial proportion of the population that is less hawkish than they would have been otherwise. Now that Taiwan is essentially on American or Western European levels of democratic and civic idealism, it would have to take quite a dramatic shift in the international arena for it to come out of its anti-nuclear weapons paradigm of the current era.

Taiwanese Identity

As with South Korea, however, Taiwan has the problem that it is so historically and oftentimes genetically and ancestrally tied to the Chinese mainland. If China becomes more aggressive militarily and politically toward Taiwan as its economy continues to expand at the most rapid rate seen in recorded history, it will be up to the Taiwanese to decide how they want to fit into the mold of China's evolution, which, like it or not, they are a part of, since many of them are basically Chinese themselves. The problem for China, though, when arguing that they should be the beneficiaries of the ultimate and hypothetical absorption of Taiwan is that the reason why the Taiwanese are not eager to go back to being a part of mainland China is the same reason why the

Taiwanese ultimately decided not to proceed any further than they had with their nuclear weapons development. That reason is that with their economic power came further international respect and security through forces other than Taiwan's own weaponry. Rather, it was their popularity. Once that economic security was delivered, the people of Taiwan became more open to making their country more prosperous in democratic terms. Now that the paradigm has also shifted in Taiwan away from the constant presence of the KMT (though the KMT is still a major political force in Taiwanese politics), a one-party system like that found in mainland China is far from appealing to most of the people living on the island. One could easily wonder whether or not China could ever take Taiwan back through the force of arms without annihilating the island to an extent that would make it completely undesirable. I certainly find it difficult to believe that the people of Taiwan would be willing to surrender before the Chinese mainlanders suffered terrible penalties, in addition to the damage that would have to be done to Taiwan itself. A brief description of the technologies that Taiwan is currently working on to address those concerns follows: "In April 2007, upon completing its Han Kuang computer war games, Taiwan's Defense Ministry informed the American observers that Taiwan now has 'Tactical Shorebase Missiles for Fire Suppression' (TSMFS) with a range of up to 1,000 kilometers. The Ministry said that TSMFS is a passive system designed to counter an attack by China and only target the mainland's airports and missile batteries, not civilian installations...(Wang 2008: 422-423)." That scenario is not a

happy one, but it must be considered when dealing with the prospects of China ever taking the island back.

Similarly to Japan, the island of Taiwan has not been free of foreign nuclear weapons. The United States, as Taiwan's primary defender in the decades that followed its political separation from the mainland, had its own stockpile on the island: "Recently declassified material shows that from January 1958 to July 1974, the United States stored nuclear weapons on Taiwan. U.S. protection prevented a Chinese attack on Taiwan (Wang 2008: 409)." As the guarantors of Taiwanese security, to this day, the Taiwanese appear very reluctant to risk showing the Americans any form of rebuke or snub. Therefore, it makes sense that for much of the time that Taiwan was recognized by much of the international community, particularly the United States, as the legitimate government of China (as the ROC), the United States had free rein to bring nuclear weapons to rest on the island.

The real pressure for Taiwan in the modern era is that the United States is beginning to lose its foothold in certain parts of the world, East Asia being one of them, in the military sense, at least. Given that "the United States is mired in Iraq (Wang 2008: 409)," countries such as Taiwan are having to adjust to that reality that they are more on their own than they previously have been. Therefore, only time will tell the degree to which the Taiwanese work to appease the mainland Chinese or how much the rhetoric is amplified on their side of the Formosa Strait, given the boldness that they may likely have, given their large conventional weapon stockpile.

Theoretical Implications of the Taiwan Situation

As an offshoot via revolutionary war of what has become Asia's latest economic juggernaut, Taiwan's application to the security model mentioned by Sagan is valid. Sagan is correct in the assumption that the model could not be enough to describe the dynamics of why Taiwan has not developed the bomb. The American guarantee with Taiwan is probably a little more uncertain than with Japan or South Korea, since Taiwan is not universally accepted as its own state. China's global dominance in many senses requires the Americans holding back at least politically in a way that they do not have to with the other two countries under examination. However, in the era when mainland China successfully tested a nuclear bomb, Taiwan was still accepted as the entire country's legitimate government by the United States. Therefore, its client state status remained a little more convincing. The American deterrent went further than it did in the 1970s, when the mainland Chinese and Americans arrived at something of a rapprochement. The nuclear ambitions of Taiwan that went into the late 1980s were seen as a natural result of that diplomatic context. However, as China has made its ascendancy into the realm of international responsibility more apparent, as will be discussed later, Taiwan's security excuse has become somewhat more shaken. Still, Taiwan remains a point of contention for mainland China's Westphalian ideology that make it an outlier.

The domestic politics model of Sagan's in regard to Taiwan can be primarily seen through the needs of the financial sector. As a country with limited official access to foreign governments, the accumulation of investment capital is critical to the long-

term survival of the island of Taiwan as the steward landscape of the Republic of China government. With a very low potential for oil and natural gas production (CIA 2010: Taiwan/Economy) from its own territory, Taiwan requires good international relationships for its export-model to stay afloat. As with almost any democracy, domestic politics will rely greatly on the health of the economy, and with the relative happiness of investors toward the government currently in power. As with Japan and South Korea, nuclear weapons, particularly in an era like this one with greater economic cooperation with mainland China, would disrupt the gains that have been made through difficult diplomatic wrangling (particularly difficult in Taiwan's case through its lack of recognition by most of the industrialized world, thanks to the One China Policy). Exports have contributed to 70% of Taiwan's GDP growth (CIA 2010: Taiwan/Economy), causing domestic reverberations via any potential international disturbance, most likely ultimately causing an electoral drubbing for any party in power at the time that that would happen. The electoral spat between the two presidential opponents in Taiwan, with the perceived support for nuclear weapons development existing as a political liability, the domestic context against nuclear weapons in Taiwan is fairly clear. Nuclear weapons will not be supported anytime soon, given that "only a minority in Taiwan voice for such a capability (Kondapalli 2008: 53)." Only a true warmonger would take the risk, and the reverberations would be enormous.

The Sagan norms model in reverse regarding proliferation works as well with explaining Taiwan's nuclear weapons aversion of late as it does with Japan or South

Korea. By adhering to the northeast Asian norm of late of rejecting nuclear weapons development, Taiwan has added to its international prestige, maintaining sound relations and international popularity in spite of a general lack of recognition abroad. By contributing as well to the norm primarily fostered by China of keeping East Asia peaceful, Taiwan has done its regional duty. Through the aversion politically to the potential for nuclear weapons development in Taiwan, since the dismantling of the actual Taiwanese nuclear weapons program, Taiwan and its public's acceptance of the northeast Asian anti-nuclear weapon norm is apparent.

5. Existential Threats and Their Nullification

The joker card that both South Korea and Taiwan are holding that Japan does not that has gone a long way in preventing there from being a nuclear arms race in the Asia-Pacific is that their primary adversaries, respectively, cannot help but see an inextricable hereditary link with their opponent. Though South Korea and Taiwan are far from weak militarily, even if they were, it would be difficult for either mainland China or North Korea to justify overly harsh treatment, much less complete total warfare-induced destruction, toward the people of those countries to either the Chinese or the North Koreans. Though the passage of time has probably made many of the lingering ties seem fairly remote and distant, and that length of time having made these cat-and-mouse games of diplomacy and quasi-warfare seem like blood feuds, the main problem with going too far for any of these countries with the nuclear weapons issue is that they would unavoidably be destroying a part of themselves, by their own definitions. China claims Taiwan as a part of itself, while North Korea views itself as the rightful government of the entire Korean Peninsula. The fact that the South Koreans and Taiwanese are now perfectly capable of defending themselves for at least a lengthy amount of time does not change these feelings of familiarity within the two dynamics.

Japan, in relating to the nuclear arms race or lack thereof in East Asia, is at a bit more of a circumstantial disadvantage than South Korea and Taiwan when facing threats from a neighbor. None of Japan's neighbors feel any particular heritage link with Japan, and one of the big problems remaining from Japan's imperial conquests of

over half a century ago at least is that the Japanese themselves made such a huge deal out of separating themselves racially from other East Asians. That racial differentiation and championing of the Japanese by the Japanese during World War II and before is one of the factors that made Imperial Japan very similar to Nazi Germany. Though the two major Axis powers were very different in some ways, they were alike because they had similar ideas about their own respective racial superiority relative to those they were fighting or conquering. In the present day, Japan has no one else to turn to along the lines of their similar Japanese-ness or any other commonalities along those lines, whereas the Taiwanese are inherently Chinese and the South Koreans and North Koreans obviously share a Korean-ness. They are the same people, mostly the same ethnic group. Therefore, a scene from the 2002 James Bond film *Die Another Day* in which the primary North Korean villain says that “Japan is a bug waiting to be squashed (EON Productions 2002)” appears rather realistic, given the North Koreans’ feelings toward the Japanese, mainly left over from World War II and the occupation period that preceded it.

Though American pressure has obviously gone a long way in preventing the Japanese, South Koreans, and Taiwanese thus far from procuring their own permanent indigenous nuclear weapons stockpiles, it certainly cannot go the whole distance in explaining why these countries have been so remarkably abstinent from the nuclear fetishism that has afflicted other American allies, where American pressure has probably been relatively similar to the experiences of the American allies in the Asia-Pacific. Theoretically travel to the other side of Asia, and one will find that the

American allies of Israel and Pakistan do indeed possess nuclear weapons, even though they are not among the permanent members of the UN Security Council that are seen as the rightful and lawful owners of nuclear weapons.

Israel was created in 1948 as an explicitly Jewish state as a way for much of the world to try to make amends for the Holocaust by Nazi Germany. Given the explicit religious preference of the mandate that enabled Israel to justify itself to anyone, Israel became immediately politically separate from the primarily Arab countries that surrounded it, in both constitution and the general feeling. Also given the many international problems that placing a Jewish state in the heart of the Middle East in 1948 brought, the United States was somewhat more prevented in setting up too much of an obvious military presence in Israel than it was with Japan, which it had taken over following a large military conflict. Many of Israel's neighbors over the course of the past several decades have been even more explicit than some of Japan's traditional regional rivals in calling for Israel's total annihilation. Therefore, the nuclear weapons program that Israel has semi-covertly developed is more politically feasible for the Israelis than it ever could have been so far for the Japanese.

The nuclear weapons program of Pakistan contributed to much of the late 1990s nuclear nightmare, given that it occurred relatively soon after India became more brash about its own nuclear program. Similar to Israel, Pakistan's very existence as a separate state from the old British India is inherently rooted in its particular religious identity. Since in 1947 the Islamic and Hindu leaders of India decided that their peoples could not be counted on to coexist peacefully as fellow citizens, India and

Pakistan became split, but from much the same cloth. That has not prevented a great number of wars between the two countries since that time.

The religious elements at play in both the cases of Israel and Pakistan appear very much to differentiate the scenarios from those found in East Asia, even with Japan, because the financial element in East Asia seems to have overtaken almost everything else. Rather than risk certain valuable financial and business enterprises, the countries of East Asia, for the most part, have relented in their previous drives to acquire nuclear weapons. The costs involved in going any further with nuclear weapons development would be too painful to their bottom line. In Western Asia, those same business ventures were rendered impossible by religious hatred, so they were never as much of a factor.

China and Military Restraint

One of the countries in East Asia that has probably had the most to do with preventing a nuclear arms race from spiraling out of control in the region has been the People's Republic of China. One could certainly take issue with a number of Chinese foreign policy decisions since the inception of the current Chinese government in 1949, but being overly brash with its nuclear weapons since it first tested a nuclear bomb in 1964 has not been one of the sins perpetrated by the one-party state. Though China has often invited fear in its direction with certain potentially interpreted transgressions like its overtures toward its perceived rightful ownership of the island of Taiwan, it also does not take too much of an education regarding East Asian politics

to see how different decisions by the Communist semi-superpower of the region could have led to much more deadly disasters than there have been. Indeed, I would argue that much of the paranoia related to China comes from the formerly more openly imperialist powers that were responsible for so many of the ills that China suffered during the 19th and first half of the 20th century. To that point, Arpit Rajain writes: “Post 1949, there was a deep sense of vulnerability that pervaded Chinese thinking on security matters, which can be traced to the Chinese experience at the hands of Western nations and Japan in the 18th century. China in general, and Chinese strategic culture more specifically, was deeply affected by its experiences with almost all imperialist powers through the 19th and 20th centuries (Rajain 2005: 99).” Therefore, it is natural that countries like the former colonial powers in Western Europe, the United States, and Japan would not be terribly pleased with an assertive, economically aggressive, and militarily confident new China. That is nearly what we have arrived at in 2010.

Having destroyed much of Eastern China or exploited it during World War II, the Japanese would have had a great deal to fear from a China that was more keen on remembering in detail those past atrocities. Probably part of what has allowed Japan to abstain from developing nuclear weapons, or from being more insistent to the Americans for the diplomatic permission to proceed any further with such programs, has been the existence of a mainland China that, while certainly politically distinct from many of the brazenly capitalist countries that surround it (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, etc.), has appeared to be far more focused on financial

expansion since the death of Chairman Mao than on seeking military revenge for the wrongs that were committed against it during times of open warfare. Japan and mainland China are economically interconnected to a degree that many probably would have seen as impossible in the years following World War II. China becoming ever more low-key toward Japan in the years since the United States has minimized its military footprint in Japan has certainly given a big boost to the anti-nuclear persuasion in the political circles of Japan. A more rhetorically aggressive China would benefit the hawks in Japan that wished to develop an indigenous system of nuclear weaponry.

A less offensively-oriented China has also benefited those in South Korea who do not wish to begin a South Korean nuclear weapons program. Though the South Koreans never perpetrated actions toward the Chinese like the Japanese did, the South Koreans and Chinese nonetheless were on opposing sides of the Korean War. That potentially rigorous history has been overcome, however, by a fairly mutually beneficial economic relationship. This has risked further isolation for North Korea, which, without China, could certainly plausibly have faded into historical-only status as a country without the assistance of mainland China.

One of the factors that has contributed to a more positive relationship between China and Japan over the last few years has been Japan's realization that times are changing to the extent where Japan is likely to no longer be the world's second largest economy within a very short period of time. Even the relatively hawkish and pro-revisionist, short-lived Shinzo Abe government in Japan took aim at improving

relations with China: “(The 2006 visit to China by Shinzo Abe) resulted in a pledge to move forward in China-Japan strategic relations and triggered a series of cooperative gestures aimed at declaring a new era of cooperation on North Korea, intellectual property rights, energy development, and the environment (Zhao 2009: 136).” Abe was quoted as saying that Japan “must build future-oriented and stable Japan-China relations,” highlighting how Japan is forced to kow-tow to China to an extent simultaneously with trying to maintain a degree of its honor, given that it has not fully apologized for the events that occurred between the two countries during World War II.

Abe’s predecessor in the Japanese prime ministerial position, Junichiro Koizumi, frequently invited rebuke from the East Asian region for his numerous visits to Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto shrine where many convicted war criminals from Japan’s imperial period have been turned into gods. Koizumi being no fool, he was well aware of the reaction that such visits would inspire, so it was a way for Japan to maintain some of its old ways of ignoring the damage that it had wrought on Asia during World War II, while at the same time Japan was having to adjust to a new China-centric Asia. Japan certainly remains a great distance away from the sort of Willy Brandt gesture in Warsaw during the 1970s, where the German chancellor got on his knees and begged for forgiveness for what Nazi Germany had committed around Europe during World War II.

As has already been mentioned in this thesis, North Korea’s rash and unpredictably wild behavior in relation to the international community has caused there to be a

definite rift between North Korea and communist China. There can be no denial of the fact that that rift has been caused by China's disappointment at its ally presenting such an idiosyncratic and chaotic problem. In order to define and frame why China might be experiencing such anger toward North Korea, besides the thankless attitude the North Koreans have shown toward the Chinese for their national survival, Yufan Hao puts it very well: "China needs a fairly long period of peace to develop its economy, solve its social problems, upgrade its industrial and defense capacity, and become strong enough to defend itself from external threats. For these purposes, Beijing needs to maintain internal political stability and harmony and a peaceful external environment (Hao 2009: 160)." What North Korea has been doing for practically its entire existence has contributed to the undermining of those goals for China. Following the reforms led by Deng in China after Mao's death, China has been working essentially 100% towards its big money aspirations, which is much of my answer to why there has not been an East Asian nuclear arms race. The coveting by the Chinese government of its dreams of financial supremacy have actually contributed, perhaps ironically, in the long run to a more peaceful East Asian regional environment.

With the exception of North Korea, China's security concerns toward other countries in the region (perhaps that is also ironic, since North Korea is its *de jure* ally) are fairly minimal at the moment. The United States, still the world's only superpower, remains both a major economic partner for China and a political opponent. China's dreadful human rights record provides the United States with

plenty of rhetorical ammunition, while the number of American treasury bonds possessed by the Chinese make it practically impossible for the Americans to do anything about it. However, the continued global supremacy of the United States military makes it second to none, even though it is seriously overstretched. The alliances maintained by the United States toward Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have helped to define for China what it is to make of those three players that this thesis has focused so intensively on. Additionally, since China's armed forces would be no match for the Americans' in the event of a hypothetical conventional conflict, China has had to find other routes toward regional supremacy, which is what was discussed in the preceding paragraphs, primarily that of economic craftiness. In that game, it is difficult to see how the Chinese have at least not played the Americans to at least a draw, if not an outright victory at the moment. Partly to this point, Chu Shulong and Rong Yu write: "Although China can devote increasing resources, it is unlikely to develop a large nuclear arsenal to compete with the United States or to dramatically alter its nuclear strategy. That would undermine its strategy of peaceful rise. Beijing does not seek to become a strong world military power on par with the United States (Chu et al. 2008: 161)." That point that China has made of not becoming overly ostentatious with its potential military power and its refusal to try to meet the United States militarily on its own terms has led in the long run to the global community having greater respect for China. It is historically impressive, given that China has as much right to bitterness as any country toward the former imperial powers, but it has caused a paradigm shift by not displaying too much rage.

China has also been granted great leverage in the global community with it being the only Asia-Pacific country on the United Nations Security Council. Russia is technically on the Asian Pacific coastline, but it is hard to see how the Moscow government is not more regionally aligned with Europe. With its security council seat, China has an almost unique role in being able to set the tone of rightful military enforcement. As a legal nuclear weapon possessor, China is also in a unique situation for East Asia. However, by not throwing too much of its weight around since its meteoric rise following the post-Mao reforms, China has also gained a fair deal of at least economic trust.

One issue that creates an unusual reaction from the Chinese government and its people is that of the Taiwan question. Given that the Chinese view Taiwan as their rightful possession and territory, temperatures run rather high when the subject is broached. The existence of Taiwan as a separate entity from the mainland, when it was previously an obvious historical possession, has created a continuously awkward situation not just for the two governments that border the Formosa Strait, but also for the relationship between the United States and mainland China. Zhidong Hao writes: “One thing is unlikely to change: China will not tolerate Taiwan’s independence and is prepared to go to war if necessary. This is true not only because of Taiwan’s strategic location but also because of Chinese nationalism (Hao 2009: 202).” Therefore, we have arrived at an example of Chinese nationalism continuing to bring the past into current de facto international relations, differently from China’s current relations with Japan and South Korea, for the most part. The split between the mainland and Taiwan

occurred in 1949, so most people in either place were not born during that time. Hao also includes an important quote from the American Department of Defense related to the Taiwan issue for the mainland Chinese: “Many Chinese strategists and analysts view Taiwan as occupying a critical geostrategic location whose control would enable the PLA (People’s Liberation Army) Navy to move its maritime defensive perimeter further seaward and improve Beijing’s ability to influence regional sea lines of communication. Alternatively, according to some observers, permanent separation of Taiwan from the mainland would constrain China’s ability to project power and provide the United States with a strategic foothold adjacent (to) China’s coastal economic centers (Hao 2009: 202-203).” Again, we have an example where perhaps China’s apparent emotional response to the island of Taiwan and its semi-separatist government is rooted in potentially pragmatic ideas. Given that mainland China does indeed have a fairly legitimate claim to the island, since the Chinese Communist Party is now acknowledged by the international community to be the rightful governing entity of China itself, Taiwan is in essence a part of China because it always had been until the split during the civil war.

The point in discussing this is that Taiwan represents the rare occasion where Chinese pragmatism is at least threatened through an emotional issue for much of China’s citizenry. The public discourse in mainland China about Taiwan is rooted in nationalism, and therefore an attitude of taking back Taiwan at all costs, such as a potential military confrontation with the United States, China’s superior in terms of

firepower, creates the kind of situation where China's possession of nuclear weapons starts to look a bit more dangerous.

Chinese emotions related to the issue of Taiwan are perhaps some of the main contributing factors to the American authorities being particularly terrified of Taiwan and the ROC government acquiring nuclear weapons. If Taiwan were to take such drastic measures to ensure its own security against a government that has the recognition of most of the global community as the one and only China, the situation could get very ugly very quickly. Additionally, as has been mentioned previously in this paper, the very fact that China asserts its sovereignty over Taiwan in terms of the discourse protects Taiwan from the risk of Chinese nuclear attack, even with the mainland Chinese nationalism appearing heated and dangerous. The Taiwanese will have to tread lightly in the coming years as American power is inevitably waning, in order that Chinese pragmatism will continue to triumph over the lesser parts of their national character, so that the Taiwanese can use the better parts of the Chinese to ensure their continued protection from excessive aggression. However, it is likely that many factors will have to shift in Chinese domestic politics in order for the Taiwanese, who have grown accustomed to democracy and other kinds of lifestyle choices, to accept being absorbed back into the Chinese system.

Following the detonation of China's first atomic bomb in 1964, Chinese officials stated that the mainland would follow a strict no-first-use policy. The defensive nature from the outset of the stated goals of China's nuclear weapons program obviously continue to be somewhat reassuring, given that even more dangerous would

be a country that was bold in its statements as well as in its actions. However, in 2005, when a PLA general stated that China should use nuclear weapons as a deterrent in the case of American intervention during a hypothetical future Chinese invasion of Taiwan (Zhang 2008: 164), panic, at least in some circles, ensued. The no-first-use policy that had been in action for over forty years was thrown into question.

Fortunately, the Chinese have not yet had a chance to show us one way or the other.

Still, the general's comments reflect what has already been stated here, and the main reason for China being as much of a nuclear weapons holder as it is: China is no match whatsoever for the United States in terms of conventional weapons, and the United States continues to reaffirm its commitment to the security of a sovereign Taiwan in a very open way via its arms deals. Zhang writes: "There are indeed strong incentives for China to consider such a change due to both its inability to overcome the vast conventional gap with the United States and the current modernization of Chinese strategic nuclear forces that will for the first time provide a secure second-strike capability (Zhang 2008: 170)." In a sense, the Chinese appear with these provocative and controversial statements to be attempting to call the Americans' bluff. How far will the United States go to protect Taiwan's current political status?

The answer appears to be pretty far, according to relatively recent history. In 1995 and 1996, the United States dispatched several ships to the Formosa Strait in response to China's provocative military maneuvers timed closely to Taiwanese elections, a signal of approaching independence declarations. Robert Ross writes: "On March 4 (1996) China announced that the PLA would conduct surface-to-surface missile tests

from March 8 to March 18. The target areas were waters just off the coast of Taiwan's two largest port cities, one of which was barely twenty miles from the northern port of Keelung....On March 7, despite vigorous and repeated discussions between U.S. and Chinese diplomats and U.S. advice that China not proceed with its missile tests, the PLA fired three M-9 missiles into target zones (Ross 2003: 243).”

However, given that no actual conflict came from such an incident, it is difficult to say to what extent it signals the American commitment at present. The Chinese were not in a position to really attack Taiwan, and they still are not, assuming they will not lose all sanity and try to use the nuclear option. Additionally, the United States has lost a great deal of its leverage toward China in the last 14 years or so since the Taiwan Strait incidents of that period during the Clinton Administration. Even then, the Chinese were willing to challenge the United States, or at least prod them into some kind of a reaction. Therefore, it makes sense that in recent years, the United States has tried much harder to foster a more cooperative and harmonious relationship across the Taiwan Strait.

China's relationship with South Korea since the de facto end of the Korean War in 1953 is a relatively brief history. Ren Xiao points out how the end of the Cold War brought many changes to East Asia, as it did to all parts of the world. China and South Korea established diplomatic relations in 1992, which contributed to even greater international isolation of North Korea (Ren 2007: 146-147). Such a move by China asserted its willingness to join the free world, to an extent, at least for the purpose of pursuing further commercial opportunities (which actually strongly aligns

mainland China with the goals of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan). North Korea being an economic flop since the end of authoritarian rule in South Korea, it has become less interesting for China even in that way to maintain it as a key ally. China being willing to recognize South Korea as a legitimate state showed how China, as a mature country, was willing to put a conflict behind it in order for the region to move forward.

In its recent relationships with the countries that have been the primary objects of discussion so far in this paper, China has shown how pragmatism and the requirements of good business decisions and goals have pushed China to be a relatively responsible regional owner of nuclear weapons and their corresponding technologies. China's business drive has also accelerated its general policy of promoting peace and stability in the surrounding region. After all, good business is difficult to compose in warring territories. Chaos is not in China's best interest in achieving those aims. Also highlighted by that drive toward the promotion of harmony in East Asia is the fact that China has shown its willingness to sacrifice many aspects of its often archaic relationship with North Korea. Given that North Korea is not a promoter of peace in East Asia, China should naturally split with it over a great many things. What support left for North Korea that China maintains appears to be manifested out of pure self-interest. China left no evidence that it was pleased with North Korea's nuclear weapons development accomplishments of recent years. Greed among the upper echelons of China's military-industrial complex seems to be the main cause of China's drives toward peace in the region, and the corresponding lack of an arms race initiated

by Chinese maneuvers. Though that greed comes with its own set of problems, it is rendered a relatively moot point in a security analysis. Whatever is required to minimize the risk of mass destruction and suffering is worth a great deal. China appears to be performing fairly well in its role to at least discourage nuclear weapons development in the Asia-Pacific region.

With all due credit to China for its reasonable efforts at keeping nuclear weapons development at relative bay in the Asia-Pacific, it has not been a perfect angel in that regard. On part of China's southern border is India, the country with the population size that is second only to China's in the world, and with an economy that is expanding nearly as quickly as China's. China and India also share a somewhat shaky history of their relations. Given the tenuousness of the relationship between China and India, China may occasionally seek methods of distraction for India, or containment programs. China's adherence to the nonproliferation treaty that it is a signatory of has been thrown into question by China's nuclear technology transfers to Pakistan, the traditional enemy of India since their simultaneous independence from Great Britain in 1947. For discontinuities in China's apparent nuclear technology policies, T.V. Paul explains it with the following statement, at least in part: "...China is reluctant to see any other states in East Asia acquire nuclear arms. Here, China seems to make a distinction between its immediate or most strategically vital region and less vital regions. South Asia and the Middle East are less vital to China than is East Asia (Paul 2005: 177)." With the mismatches in policy of China's nuclear technologies from region to region, we can start to see the way that China views East

Asia, the region nearest to China's major cities, primarily the cities that house the majority of China's government buildings and major industries. Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, to name a few, are all in the eastern sector of the country, and are some of the centers of China's majority Han population. Therefore, we get something of an ethnic aspect, potentially, to China's maintenance of an anti-nuclear weapons policy in East Asia, rather than in South Asia.

Through its Pakistan weapons policy, China shows that its interests in the maintenance of peace have their limits. Still, it shows that the Chinese government believes that China is a member of the community of nations in East Asia due to the fact that a more peaceful environment in East Asia means good business in China, while a potential disaster in South Asia is less drastic in that regard. However, within East Asia, China still seems to regard itself as a true representative of the community. The following is an excerpt describing a wing of thought in Chinese nationalist philosophy: "Sinocentrism, which seems to have remained extant in the guise of Chinese Communism, is historically grounded in Chinese thought as part of a cosmology that places China at the center of the universe, not as a nation-state in geopolitics but as a civilization state in geomoral politics (Kim et al. 2008)." Perhaps that also works to explain why China places such an emphasis on East Asia in its weapons of mass destruction policies, since the centerpieces of the Han people of the Chinese civilization are based in what many would understand to be East Asia, rather than the Western Asia that other parts of China could be seen to occupy.

All potential accusation of Chinese ethnocentricity and nationalism aside, some would argue that China is a part of an Asian power balance and understands it at the same time. If this balance of power were something that was continually both sought and guarded, it could mean good things for security in the region, primarily through the enforced and voluntary limitations on nuclear weapons possession. Jitsuo Tsuchiyama uses a quotation from Kenneth Waltz in his article “The US-Japan Alliance in Focus: “the actions and reactions of China, Japan, and South Korea, with or without American participation, are creating a new balance of power in East Asia, which is becoming part of the new balance of power in the world (Tsuchiyama 2008: 135).” Even as China is growing at a dramatic rate economically and in terms of its global political power as a result of its economic status (that itself being the result of deft economic strategy on the part of Chinese policymakers), it will inevitably be in a far different situation from the United States at the end of World War II (which saw the United States as the only great power that was relatively untouched). Even as it becomes the region’s #1, China will be very near to at least a few countries that have the economic capability to make their voices heard. The United States was never in that position. So, even as American influence in the region wanes (as it is almost sure to), China will have many other Asian voices to contend with, perhaps attracting some bitterness in the process.

Non-Military Necessities

Due to the shared nature and responsibility of Northeast Asian security that are understood among the more emotionally mature leaderships of the nations that we have been discussing, nuclear weapons development can be halted through the continued stabilization of the region through mutually beneficial economic alliances and partnerships. T.J. Pempel writes: "...Chinese and Taiwanese accession to the WTO early in 2002, combined with the unmistakable dependency on non-Asian markets by virtually all the major exporting countries of Asia, make it improbable that the region is working towards, or would want to work towards, regional isolation or autarky as a viable long-term strategy (Pempel 2008: 257-258)." Within that excerpt lies much of the point that has been made in this paper, which is also the distinction between North Korea and the other nations discussed. Embarking on a path of greater nuclear weapons ability has come with the promise of a much darker future for those countries that would step in that cesspool. China is the exception, since it developed nuclear weapons technology relatively early, has a UN Security Council seat, and is one of the accepted nuclear weapons-holding nations of the NPT. Since the expansion of wealth has been so thoroughly championed in East Asia, generally a globally competitive region, nuclear weapons accumulation has not been a well-received notion there. Joining global institutions such as the WTO that advocate policies generally favorable toward capitalistic ideas is a much more likely and acceptable track for such countries.

A particularly fascinating development for Japan, South Korea, and China has been their acceptance into the ASEAN+3 arrangement. The conspicuous exclusion of North Korea and Taiwan from the ASEAN community speaks to the timidities that still exist in the region (for very different reasons) toward those governments. However, the “+3” group have come to some interesting conclusions since their membership. Cesar de Prado writes: “While there is no public discussion about enacting a bold policy though which all people could freely travel, work and settle in Northeast Asia, the governments of Japan, mainland China and South Korea are nevertheless softly weaving bilateral ‘people’s exchanges’ into a more tripartite or trilateral regional space (de Prado 2008: 316).” The efforts that are remarked on involve various cultural and personnel exchanges among those countries that are meant to encourage the understanding of a more coherent Northeast Asian community, the lack thereof which has led to many disagreements and fights in the past. Such attempts at reconciliation and more enlightened viewpoints are perhaps the single best method of opposing greater nuclear weapons proliferation, and also something that has helped limit the probability of a new East Asian nuclear arms race.

Something that can be interpreted both as a benefit and a danger to the continued security, particularly in terms of limiting nuclear weapons development, of northeast Asia is the relentlessly Westphalian notion of sovereignty that is so revered among Chinese policymakers. Chinese insistence on maintaining the sovereignty of foreign governments has given other countries troubles in trying to unravel developments like the North Korean missile tests. However, China is not easily accused of attempting to

unduly influence too many other countries (another perhaps deft policy maneuver on the part of the Chinese). Having not gotten directly engaged in a foreign conflict since the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979, China also maintains a fair degree of credibility as a militarily peaceful county, at least as far as the internationally-related nature of the Chinese military.

With China's tremendous economic vitality to the global community, its input, when given, is a valued commodity to other policymakers in international institutions. However, China's reluctance to become too involved in the affairs of other nations can cause some trouble for others. Seiichiro Takagi writes: "...China's adamant adherence to the notion of sovereignty and the norm of non-interference in domestic affairs has constituted an almost insurmountable obstacle to institutional development of some regional security mechanisms. The most telling case, of course, is China's attempts to stall the development of the ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum) (as a security mechanism)... (Takagi 2008: 179)." The United States also used to be more of an isolationist and internationally reluctant power than it is in the modern era. Examples highlighting that fact are the durations of time that it took for the United States to join the Allied sides of both World War I and World War II. The largest conflicts in history had been going on for years before the United States joined, and in the case of World War II, it still took the Axis Powers declaring war on the United States first to get the Americans truly and totally involved. The mainland Chinese might still be undergoing a similar adjustment period. Still relatively unaccustomed to being looked to for international guidance and the authorization of certain international policies, the

Chinese might not want to be so much in the spotlight. If that is the case, the Chinese have a problem in that they are certainly seen as a fairly responsible member of the nuclear weapons-holding community. With that invaluable credential in their metaphorical resume, the mainland Chinese have nothing to look forward to but further pressure to grant their opinions on the domestic policies of countries such as North Korea and other nations that would attempt to develop their own nuclear weapons.

To conclude, there are several different explanations for why Northeast Asia managed fairly successfully to avoid a nuclear arms race. American intervention and promises of protection were a large factor, but as can be seen in the Middle East, that cannot explain everything. Especially in the modern era, where American hegemony is slipping, other solutions must be sought if the region is to remain as nuclear-weapons-free as it is. There have to be other incentives available to stay on track for peace³.

The argument that I make throughout this paper for the nuclear-free nature of the East Asia region, generally, is similar to an argument made by Etel Solingen where the author attempts to explain how East Asia has become so free of violence compared to the Middle East since the end of the Vietnam War. I basically have tried to add the nuclear weapons angle. Solingen writes: “Export-oriented models in East Asia improved conditions for democratization and incentives for external cooperation and stability, pivotal ingredients for economic growth, foreign investment, and electoral

³ Such as financial compensation in some way for compliance, or regional reputational rewards.

viability....East Asian models alleviated tensions, tamed militarization, and enhanced cooperation and mutual respect for sovereignty (Solingen 2007: 774).” Not only does that quote help to explain how Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan ultimately stayed away from nuclear weapons, but how North Korea can be so shunned as an outlier.

The developmental state idea also mentioned by Solingen in her paper is an important trait that this paper has carried throughout most of the work, though it has not been explicitly mentioned. Though I firmly believe that there is a large degree of economic liberalism (if not neoliberalism) involved in the reasons for these countries staying away from the temptation of the possession of nuclear weapons, the developmental state idea that is very present in much of the literature on East Asian economic development, or “miracles,” can tell us a great deal about the priorities of these governments. Such priorities did not necessarily fall in line with creating nuclear armaments. The developmental state framework involves a high level of governmental involvement in the economy. Where the United States government, for example, has generally played a role of late in enforcing (sometimes to a degree leaving something to be desired) the assumed rules of the game in economic matters, East Asian developmental states like Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan created the rules of the game for their economies.

The military angle of the developmental state is directly related to the general security dynamic that the developmental states’ leaders in East Asia endeavored to bring their nations toward. Solingen writes: “East Asian leaders vigilantly steered states into macroeconomic stability and proper conditions for sustained export-led

growth. States thus developed into relatively supple, agile mechanisms connecting the domestic and global economies (Solingen 2007: 769).” It is difficult to deny that the incorporation of domestically produced and owned nuclear weapons would have thrown all of that into disarray. The fairly Confucian harmonization sought by many of the East Asian economies played well into the current dynamic of only China being a legitimate possessor of nuclear weapons in the region, with North Korea being the lone outlier against the respected paradigm. Referring again to East Asia’s developmental state economic successes, Solingen writes: “Export-led growth stymied demands for expansive military-industrial complexes or, at the very least, enabled compensatory transfers to the military.... The model’s success yielded more resources for military modernization without risking mainstay economic objectives or imposing Draconian guns-versus-butter tradeoffs (Solingen 2007: 770).” In her discussion of the East Asian success of governmental interference in the economy, Solingen shows us how the resource scarcity made it imperative for the governments to advocate intensive participation with other countries on economic grounds. Overtures and posturing along the lines of nuclear weapons development would have been the final nail in the coffin for the expansion of these economies into international territory. Solingen also mentions how education and technical expertise were used by the northeast Asian governments to perpetuate their involvement in the global economy. Additionally, we are provided with important figures that show how even during the heights of existential threats to countries like South Korea and Taiwan, military expenditures declined from the 1960s to the 2000s (Solingen 2007: 770). Contrary to

some opinions that might equate governmental involvement in the economy as some form of socialism or communistic totalitarianism, the East Asian version of the developmental state regime showed how the governments were more than willing to favor winners over losers in the private sector. The private sector was not an object with which the government viewed with hostility, either. The public and private sectors were very close allies.

An important factor in the success of the developmental state model appears to be the relative absence of domestically harvested natural resources. This again connects the developmental state model to a general part of my theory, which is that Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan lack the resources needed to undertake a hypothetical state of autarky. David Levi-Faur writes: "...all three are poor in natural resources and, thus, need to import most of their energy and raw materials (Levi-Faur 1998: 68)." That statement is in a comparison of Israel, South Korea, and Taiwan, all cases of the developmental state model. Levi-Faur also discusses how in these developmental state examples, the banks controlled the financial systems (Levi-Faur 1998: 71). The banks were controlled by the government. Therefore, the government was able to maintain almost complete autonomy and control over the capital inflows and outflows from their nations. By that token, if one accepts it, then the governments themselves become vulnerable to the potentially fickle nature of the international market. If these governments were to do something that was interpreted by global society or, perhaps most importantly, investors as stupid, they would be in a great deal of not just political, but also financial, trouble. The developmental state paid off for these three

northeast Asian economies examined in financial terms, but it had the reverse effect on their potential to have nuclear weapons for as long as that paradigm lasted (which it still does, I would argue).

In my opinion, in the developmental state model, which I think is actually fairly closely aligned with the liberalist argument made by Sagan in his domestic politics model, the government acts as something of the majority shareholder the way that would be the case in any corporation. In the developmental state case, however, the corporation is the nation, or the economy of the nation. Hugo Radice writes:

“At the heart of the DS (developmental state) thesis is the relationship between the state and the business sector, especially with regard to the direction and funding of industrial investment. In contrast to the conventionally polar models of liberal free-market capitalism and the state-socialist planned economy, the DS is seen as a distinctive political economy that combines elements of market and plan, linking a mixed economy to a political-ideological approach that combines authoritarian technocracy with a relatively egalitarian distribution of income and wealth. It is also assumed that development means industrialization and urbanization, following a path laid down by earlier successful developers (Radice 2008: 1154).”

One of the ways that we can understand such a thorough yet far-reaching statement regarding the developmental state in terms of the northeast Asian cases is by understand how, at least in my opinion, such an undertaking is mutually exclusive with nuclear weapons development in this particular region. North Korea can serve as proof of this from its outlier position. The success of the developmental state, regardless of what kind of government runs it (in the cases of at least South Korea and Taiwan for a while, the authoritarian variety), hinges on its international financial diplomacy. North Korea, essentially shunning such a maneuver, does not qualify as

an example of a developmental state not just because it has failed to make any meaningful provisions for its own citizenry, but has also failed to make any successful diplomatic overtures of any kind recently. Nuclear weapons development over the entire course of their creation is merely symptomatic of North Korea's own developmental state disqualification.

The pro-market ideology inherent in some ways to the developmental state model is also critical in understanding how that model laid to rest the notion of developing nuclear weapons, if only barely, in the developed nations of northeast Asia. There is a belief in the sanctity of the market within the developmental state process, but it adds an element of control that is sorely lacking from most truly laissez faire methodologies. Arvid Lukauskas writes the following about Japan and South Korea: "...their financial policy, although interventionist, was designed in ways that still submitted private and public financial actors to market discipline (Lukauskas 2002: 398)." Within the developmental state model, greed still rules to an extent because the government involved, albeit a public actor, does not explicitly favor one sector over the other, even its own. While bold corporatist decisions are perhaps favored for the potential gains that they may reap, the public sector leaves itself hamstrung in terms of the development of its own nuclear weapons because it introduces a very unstable element to a critical situation. The government in the developmental state model creates a situation of intentional vulnerability to global market forces because of the rewards that are possible financially within that model. By the same token, the government is free to favor the winners and losers of the market. Nuclear weapons,

before their development, were some of the losers of this equation. That equation may also be a point of contention with my overall thesis. Oftentimes throughout this paper, I have described the nuclear programs in particularly South Korea and Taiwan as being tenuously close to completion. The developmental state model seems to posit that nuclear weapons development of any kind (being a natural part of the hypothetical military-industrial complex of a country) would be off the table even under the most heavy-handed of the regimes led by Syngman Rhee, Park Chung-Hee, or Chiang Kai-Shek. However, given the history, the calls appear to be much too close to make such a claim, in my view. Further study would be warranted.

The social networks created in these northeast Asian societies through the developmental state model could also be looked at as an alternative explanation for the norms that have been created against nuclear weapons development, even as these authoritarian developmental states turned into full-fledged democracies. Because of how embedded such states become in the everyday lives of their citizenries, their anti-nuclear weapons methods as far as the market has been concerned have arguably become embedded in the psyches of the populace. Yoshimatsu Hidetaka writes: “In particular, the states work closely with sectors and trade associations to promote rapid industrialization. The intimate relationship facilitates information sharing for economic management and sectoral development, and guides capital channeling into favored industries (Hidetaka 2003: 104).” With the favorable employment levels generally seen in northeast Asian developmental states, oftentimes those

representatives within the associations are grateful for the methods carried on by the state, in spite of the authoritarianism that has been involved.

The developmental state concept might be seen as so wholly a part of the northeast Asian governmental schema that separating it from any other major policy, such as nuclear weapons development, would be foolish. The governments of northeast Asia are all rather strong. Japan appears to be the most hands-off, which only speaks to the strength carried by all of them, since it is still heavily involved. The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 was originally thought to be the death knell of the developmental state in the region, since it was partially the eruption brought about by the rampant cronyism that the model had inspired. Additionally, the relatively recent democratizations of some of these East Asian developmental states could easily have been assumed to have cast away the model during the recovery process. However, according to some authors, the developmental state came back equal to what it had been before, and was instrumental in the recovery process that was fairly speedy compared to the initial estimates. Of South Korea, Thomas Kalinowski writes: “Exports were crucial for the recovery by helping accumulate foreign currency reserves, but this cannot explain the restabilization of banks and financial markets. Here, the strong state, the second ‘traditional strength’ of the Korean developmental model, allowed the government to intervene directly in the financial markets in order to refinance and restructure the financial sector, as well as to socialize the costs of the crisis, unlike many other developing countries (Kalinowski 2008: 449).” Having been shaken so abruptly by the financial crisis, these developmental states had a

responsibility to intervene where the private sector (with too much public assistance) had failed so miserably.

Another explanation given for the continuation of the developmental state in the modern day can also go along with some of the main points of this paper, which is that nuclear weapons have been cast away in northeast Asia largely because of the overwhelming drive toward greater wealth and international respect through the accumulation of capital. Again of South Korea, Sook-Jong Lee and Taejoon Han write: "...Korea's developmental state goes on (after the financial crisis) because its goal remains the same: economic growth. And economic growth remains the single most important national objective because it is seen as a matter of survival, the best way to avoid all the crises it barely escaped time and again throughout its history (Lee et al. 2006: 323)." In my opinion, that conclusion could be linked to the foregoing of nuclear weapons development for all three of the northeast Asian current democracies under examination in this paper. Nuclear weapons are seen there as only exacerbating underlying antipathies that are not good for promoting continued prosperity, for any of the countries there. North Korea, being something of the opposite of a developmental state, at least in terms of the results, again has broken the crucial rule through its nuclear weapons development.

Along with import tariffs that are often seen as some of the major ways that states can make clear their developmental state model preferences, the case of Taiwan shows how economic liberalization and governmental intervention are not exclusive. Christopher Dent writes: "Whilst Taiwan's financial market regimes have gradually

opened up to foreign competition, so has the state's capacity to counteract the risks of international market volatility that potentially stems from the same financial openness (Dent 2003: 480-81)." Dent speaks of the institutionalization of the government in Taiwan determining the rules of the game within the domestic economy, ruling out some of the issues that can come through greater international cooperation.

Perhaps with regard to the NPT norm that had taken over, as mentioned by John Mueller, nuclear weapons may have ultimately been abandoned for Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, through the idolization of the successful Western economies. With nuclear weapons carrying with them the risk of stigmatizing a nation (the way that they have with the already ill-reputed North Korea), these countries could never ultimately justify possessing them. With the dollars or treasury bonds in hand, these countries saw those as more linked to their security than weapons of mass destruction ever could, for as long as the current financial system was as durable as it still remains.

China presents a difficult case as far as this study is concerned with reconciling the developmental state idea with that of not proceeding forward with nuclear weapons development. The nationalistic mobilization inherent to current Chinese economic strategy is very much like that of a developmental state model, and I would argue that it qualifies as such. Still, China has nuclear weapons, while the other developmental states in the region of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan do not. What is the explanation in terms of the developmental state? In my opinion, the successful 1964 Chinese nuclear test came at a time of overwhelming international threat to China,

both from the Western and Communist worlds, and it was also a time of cultural redefinition that had not been at all settled. China's current anti-nuclear weapons attitude that has become more apparent with its lack of approval for North Korea's nuclear weapons would seem to speak more toward hypocrisy if not for China's other harmonizing effects of late on the northeast Asian dynamic. Recent Chinese foreign policies have been aggressive, but not militarily so. Rather, the paradigm of the developmental state seems to be more suited to China in the present day because of its economic aggression as it becomes more a part of the international scene. If China never had gone all the way and developed its own nuclear weapons, would it do so now if given the opportunity? I would not be at all positive. In fact, I rather doubt it. I believe that its rationalization for not doing so would be much the same as what has been spoken of about Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in this paper.

China's current developmental state has certainly opened the door to a bolder version of the intermingling of the public and private sectors. Not having as much of a democratic voice to answer to as in the other three countries mentioned, the Chinese Communist Party is perhaps freer than in the other cases to forge partnerships with the corporate world. Perhaps because of that, China may now be the ultimate East Asian developmental state case. China's principles of wealth acquisition are now almost without parallel, far more advanced than any notions taking place during the time of Mao or the initial Chinese nuclear test.

The developmental state principle is not exactly an alternative to what I have been arguing in this paper for why northeast Asia has not experienced a nuclear arms race.

Rather, it is an addition, provided by many decades of scholarship from others, that accompanies, to a large extent, the economic side of my argument. Chalmers Johnson writes: "...a strategy involving state guidance of the economy, cartelization, and the strategic allocation of industrial finance may so come to dominate a social system that development itself becomes the main legitimating and organizing principle of society, replacing or displacing democratic representation, tradition, or any other set of political or cultural principles (Johnson 2000: 145)." Johnson's definition of the developmental state mentioned there is a wonderful summation for all of the developed northeast Asian economies discussed in this paper. Industrialization in terms of what could be globally respected became of such critical focus that it was lifted to practically the level of a mandatory state religion. Spearheaded by the government, in each case, the population had to be rallied to help bring about a capitalistic victory. In all three cases, and even in China, it ultimately worked to bring them into the industrial world. Nuclear weapons development was never to be a welcome part of that. The anti-nuclear weapons norm from the flipped Sagan argument is well represented with the developmental state model, as well.

Subduing the military, and by that token more militaristic impulses, the developmental state model indeed disrupted nuclear weapons development in the northeast Asian region, at least for the countries examined. Solingen frames it well: "...the need for macroeconomic stability and reduced state entrepreneurship limited military complexes and undermined the military's ability to develop independent resources, forcing it to evolve into more professional forces, less hostile to groups

underwriting outward-oriented growth (Solingen 2007: 771).” The issue of what developmental states mean for democracy is another issue, but Solingen does not appear to find it altogether disturbing, either, given that the higher standards of living brought about by the developmental state model actually are succeeding in perpetuating democracy in these countries due to higher life satisfaction. What can be said in the nuclear weapons context is that the developmental state created a need for such generous cooperation to and from the outside world that the development of nuclear weapons would have made the price too high to pay, even with the threats present that would be worrisome to national militaries. Therefore, this stands as an addition to my overall economic argument.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that even though Northeast Asia had a lot of the proper elements in place in order to avoid a nuclear arms race, it still was a very close call, in some instances. South Korea and Taiwan have had their relatively recent flirtations with nuclear weapons, in spite of fairly regular American oversight. Cooler heads had to prevail in order to call the thing off. Fortunately, a lot of the cooler heads were in China, perhaps the country in the region with the greatest ability to influence others, directly or indirectly, particularly with the decline of American power. The fairly region-wide appreciation of increased wealth cannot be understated as a cause of not wanting to become a nuclear-weapons-coveting pariah of a nation, either. The embarrassment of long-running and arduous warfare leading up to the end of the Vietnam War and the Sino-Vietnamese War seems to have shaken

Northeast Asia into a resilient mode of peacefulness and anti-nuclear-weapon sensibilities.

6. Conclusion

By walking through each case of the particular avoidance of nuclear weapons development in the three countries primarily put under the magnifying glass for this exploration, it is obvious that it has generally been a tenuous and perhaps unlikely path toward all three of them making the ultimate rejection, a rejection which, for the most part, seems resilient and unlikely to be undone anytime soon. The American pressure inherent to each of these three countries since the beginning of the Cold War and following can be applied to Sagan's security model, which serves very well as an explanation of the lack of development of nuclear weapons because of both that pressure and the American protection. Because of the financial gains to be made from the perpetuation of those security relationships (up until fairly recently, even for Taiwan), the United States was also acting mostly out of self-interest, again related to the realist explanation for the security model that Sagan at least half-heartedly appears to disdain or finds "inadequate." The American protection granted to these three countries enabled them to fortunately and ultimately find alternatives to developing their own nuclear weapons, even though some scientists and policymakers continued to believe otherwise, which is why some nuclear bomb programs got further along than was probably justified by the diplomatic and tactical evidence.

The dominance of a financial investment regime and understanding among the three natural resource-poor countries under study here I believe may be the most convincing reason of all why none of them ended up going nuclear. Given what the violation of the NPT would mean to the three countries in terms of disrupting the flow

of various kinds of capital into and out of their borders is unacceptable in each country examined. North Korea, being so damaged by decades of all kinds of mismanagement, is exempt from that particular conclusion of mine. They are too far gone. Domestic politics that rely on support from many sectors, not least of which is the financial industry, that would be decimated by disruptions to the export model that all three countries have adopted to bring about their economic success have kept the nuclear computation in check for the foreseeable future. The Indian model that Sagan presents in his discussion of the domestic aspects of nuclear weaponization serves as a perfect contrast to the interpretation of the nuclear potential of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. For the most part, with the exception of the political far right in each country, the public in each country could be relied upon to react to their government's successful nuclear test with at least sadness, but more likely rage. Thanks to their democratic systems, the incumbent party would probably get taken apart in the next election cycle.

The norms model presented by Sagan is worthy of much citation in this paper and for these countries because the ideology of nuclear weapons bringing about some degree of global prestige has been rejected in northeast Asia. Sagan indeed makes the norms model more agile by mentioning at the end of the article that "norms are sticky: individual and group beliefs about appropriate behavior change slowly, and over time norms can become rules embedded in political institutions. In the short run, therefore, norms can be a brake on nuclear chain reactions: in contrast to more pessimistic realist predictions that 'proliferation begets proliferation,' the norms model suggests that

such nuclear reactions to emerging security threats can be avoided or at least delayed because of normative constraints (1996-97: 84).” Northeast Asian nuclear weapons development is certainly constrained by a variety of norms that I have named, and Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have already taken remarkable risks in the extent to which they have previously ignored those norms already. North Korea is on the fringe continually because of its snubbing of these northeast Asian norms. China, as a staunch adherent to the northeast Asian peace norm of late, has helped to facilitate good behavior in northeast Asia in spite of its nuclear weapons possession, which the norm of the NPT has helped to perpetuate and make accepted. The norm of material acquisition has been more thoroughly encouraged in the region. Though China’s insistence on respecting the sovereignty of other countries has the capacity to frustrate countries such as the United States that want to take a harder line toward a country like North Korea, it has served the region well for the most part because peace is so much a part of what the Chinese government has championed. If the Chinese government were to abandon this posture, all of this will of course be threatened. By continually discouraging North Korea’s further nuclear weapons development, China has helped to send a message to Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan that it does not condone such behavior even from its allies, so a reprisal may be in order if any of them were to be politically diverted from their present courses. The three democracies examined have also served to perpetuate the anti-nuclear norm to one another by (often at the very last minute) holding off on creating their own nuclear weapons. Another kind of domino effect might be observed if any one of them breaks from this

norm, but it is doubtful that any of the three would want to be historically remembered as the party that violated these regional principles.

I advocate the demand-side of the nuclear proliferation argument. The supply per se in each of these countries has been sufficient to build the weapons, as far as the expertise present and these countries' obvious ability to procure various materials from otherwise unlikely sources. Their natural resource poorness has only served to activate other areas of their populations that are highly motivated to work collectively toward the ultimate perceived success of their nations. Fortunately for the safety of the entire world, each of the three countries has ultimately arrived at the conclusion that they simply cannot build or possess their own nuclear weapons. The demand, therefore, has dropped to almost nil. These developments are similar to the decisions made by Ukraine, South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil, which are mentioned by Sagan in his mid-1990s article as having foregone the duty and pleasure of building nuclear weapons after the ascendance of more democratic forces in those countries persuaded the populace and policymakers in the other direction, wisely. Those cases are not entirely dissimilar from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, where ever-more democratizing forces have also collaborated to take nuclear weapons development out of consideration.

The historical background of each of the three countries primarily studied for this paper has served to show how certain understandings, spoken or unspoken, have been reached in northeast Asia to maintain the peace and keep nuclear weapons off the table for the countries that want to be deemed responsible and worthy of global respect.

Oftentimes, it was a very close call, but it has been achieved. The relatively recent theories on nuclear proliferation provide us with a framework for understanding the likelihood of nuclear weapons development circumstances, though, as has been pointed out (by Sagan, amongst the others that were often the first to discuss certain policies in a more modern context), this paper will hopefully be useful for understanding how imprinted northeast Asian countries have become in their anti-nuclear weapon sentiments. An outlier like North Korea can serve to show how diplomatic and military foul-ups can cause painful realities down the line. By applying Sagan's nuclear weapons development models to some of my own conclusions related to why northeast Asia has not had a significant nuclear arms race, we can gain a better understanding of how a region can drift into its own particular framework of principles and policies. Thanks to its own versions of those principles and policies, northeast Asia has become safer than it would be otherwise from the dangers of nuclear weapons.

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