JAPAN AND THE BOMB: PERSPECTIVES FROM SOUTH ASIA

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JAPAN AND THE BOMB: PERSPECTIVES FROM SOUTH ASIA

by

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

This thesis analyzes the nuclear motivations of three states (Japan, India, and Pakistan) and asks whether Japan may acquire nuclear weapons moving forward. The analysis found that, for Japan, nuclear restraint stemmed from U.S. security guarantees, which supplemented a mercantilist national strategy. With Japan secure, the country could pursue an economic policy, which made nuclear acquisition costly and counterproductive. India's nuclear acquisition, on the other hand, was driven both by desire to acquire international status and underlying security concerns from two hostile, nuclear-armed neighbors: China and Pakistan. Lastly, Pakistan's nuclear acquisition was motivated by security concerns, namely a deep distrust and antagonism toward a conventionally superior India, which it viewed as an existential threat. Pakistan initially sought security through alliances; however, the failure of those alliances to assist Pakistan at critical junctures convinced Pakistan to acquire nuclear weapons to ensure its survival. The thesis concludes that reducing a state's proclivity for nuclear acquisition requires addressing security concerns and grievances related to status and economic well-being. Thus, while it is unlikely Japan will consider nuclear acquisition in the near term, the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance is an essential component to ensuring that Japan's nuclear motivations remain weak.

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JAPAN AND THE BOMB: PERSPECTIVES FROM SOUTH ASIA

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requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION AND FINDINGS

In 1968, four years after China conducted its first atomic bomb test, Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato announced Japan would forgo the acquisition of nuclear weapons.[1] In the fifty-years since, Japan has maintained a non-nuclear stance underpinned by its Three Non-Nuclear Principles: that Japan will neither possess nor manufacture nuclear weapons nor permit them on their territory. As recently as 2013, Japan's National Security Strategy under Prime Minster Shinzo Abe reiterated Japan's "responsibility" to help, "realize a 'world free of nuclear weapons.'"[2] Japan is a member of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and supports non-proliferation regimes worldwide.[3]

To the casual observer, Japan's nuclear restraint makes sense given its unique identity as the only state to have first-hand experience with the devastation from an attack from atomic weapons. Yet, while this may help explain some portion of Japan's restraint, it is not nearly the full picture. Japan has on several occasions considered nuclear breakout. Far from a settled outcome, Japan's nuclear restraint stemmed from a variety of international and domestic factors that shaped Japan's non-nuclear outcome and its contemporary identity.

A rapidly changing and insecure regional and global environment has been the backdrop to Japan reconsidering its nuclear stance. Japan's first weighed the issue following an atomic test by China's in 1964 and again following the collapse of the Soviet Union; these were periods in which Japan worried the United States might withdraw its

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[1] Masaru Tamamoto, "The Emperor's New Clothes: Can Japan Live Without the Bomb?" *World Policy Journal* 26, no. 3 (October 1, 2009): 67.

[2] Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *National Security Strategy 2013* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013), https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/ page1we_000081.html.

[3] Maria Rost Rublee, "The Nuclear Threshold States: Challenges and Opportunities Posed by Brazil and Japan," *The Nonproliferation Review* 17, no. 1 (March 1, 2010): 56–59.

security guarantees.[4] Today, the security and political environment in Asia is again rapidly changing. In 2017, China's military spending was 6 times larger than Japan's. By 2040, estimates are that China's military spending could surpass that of the United States.[5] The projections suggests a shifting center of power away from North America and Europe towards Asia. While China's rise has been, thus far a peaceful one, one academic has noted that China's "assertive regional behavior" and multiple territorial disputes could lead an informed observer to "conclude that China does not seek an egalitarian international commons in the Asia-Pacific but rather some form of Chinese-led hierarchy or hegemony."[6] A combination of a revisionist China, a growing gap in military capability and the relative decline of the United States as a powerful security guarantor could force Japan to reconsider its non-nuclear stance. Within this context, the following thesis seeks to understand which factors are most important in shaping nuclear motivations and consequently are most likely to cause Japan to seek nuclear weapons moving forward.

While differing in significance, scholars have determined several important variables that help predict proliferation outcomes. Drawing from the work of Scott Sagan and Jacques Hymans, this thesis organizes these variables into three main categories: international structural, domestic politics, and norms model.[7] These categories allow for a systematic approach to evaluating the variables offered by proliferation scholars and will be applied to three case studies: Japan, India, and Pakistan. Since South Asia and Japan share a number of important variables within these categories, this thesis will conclude by contrasting the impact of each variable to help determine which variable(s) are most predictive for proliferation outcomes.

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[4] Richard J. Samuels and James L. Schoff, "Japan's Nuclear Hedge: Beyond 'Allergy' and Breakout," *Political Science Quarterly* 130, no. 3 (September 2015): 477.

[5] "The Military Balance," *Economist*¸ March 8, 2013, https://www.economist.com/ china/2014/ 03/15/ at-the-double.

[6] Paul Kapur, "India's Relationships with the United States and China: Thinking through the Strategic Triangle," in *The New Great Game: China and South and Central Asia in the Era of Reform*, edited by Thomas Finar (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 55.

[7] For more, see Jacques Hymans, "No Cause for Panic: Key Lessons from the Political Science Literature on Nuclear Proliferation," *International Journal* 69, no. 1 (March 2014): 85–93.; Scott Sagan, "Why do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter, 1997): 54–86.

India and Pakistan are included in this thesis' analysis since they share several important similarities with Japan. First Japan, like India, sought to establish a reputation as a non-proliferating state influenced by a legacy of pacifism with meaningful domestic opposition to nuclear acquisition. India professed to sharing strong norms against nuclear weapons acquisition as leader of the non-aligned movement.[8] India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, "opposed the development of nuclear weapons" a conviction that, "stemmed from the Gandhian legacy of the Indian nationalist movement."[9] Yet, despite pacifist protestations, India ultimately decided to acquire a nuclear weapon.

Second, India, Pakistan and Japan all maintained civilian nuclear energy sectors prior to nuclear breakout. India and Pakistan maintained a non-military nuclear power program for nearly several decades before transitioning to a weaponizing enterprise.[10] Similarly, Japan maintained a civilian nuclear program with adequate technology and fuel to develop a bomb if the political will existed.[11] This thesis will explore whether the availability of the necessary technology and resources promoted or dissuaded their respective decisions on nuclear breakout.

Third, Pakistan, India and Japan maintain enduring rivalries with regional adversaries that include ongoing territorial disputes.[12] Japanese rivals include North Korea and China. India is engaged in competition against China and Pakistan. And for Pakistan, India remains the singular focus of its ire. This thesis will explore why Japan, Pakistan and India responded differently—by forgoing or acquiring nuclear weapons, to serious security concerns.

Four, both Pakistan and India shared Japan's concerns with material inadequacy against an enduring rival. China possesses a quantitative and qualitative military advantage

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[8] Sumit Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II—The Prospects and Sources of New Delhi's Nuclear Weapons Program," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (Spring 1999): 148–177.

[9] Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 148.

[10] Ganguly, 150.

[11] Jacques E.C. Hymens, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb," *International Security* 36, no. 2 (March 2011): 163.

[12] Kapur, "India's Relationships with the United States and China," 56.

over India and Japan despite efforts to maintain parity.[13] Pakistan remains focused on the threat posed by a much stronger India. In both cases, South Asian states perceived nuclear weapons as an opportunity to compensate for material shortfalls and balance against a stronger adversary.[14] Japan, by comparison, has not yet responded in a similar fashion despite current trends.

Five, prestige, the role of myth-makers and alliance politics have also played a powerful role in shaping nuclear decisions in these countries. Unlike Japan, India and Pakistan's nuclear breakouts were driven forward and legitimized by policy entrepreneurs or myth makers.[15] These individuals played on preexisting grievances amongst the population and elites to foster support for weaponization by forming narratives that painted nuclear weapons acquisition as a symbolic restoration of lost pride and dignity. Finally, for South Asia and Japan nuclear decisions have been strongly influenced by a perception of security assurances or abandonment by alliance partners at important moments.

Overall, the thesis finds that of the above factors, security concerns as well as a desire for status and prestige associated with nuclear acquisition were the primary drivers of nuclear motivation in each of the three case studies. All three states faced near continuous security challenges in the post war era and sought security guarantees from major powers to balance against their respective threats. India and Pakistan each briefly secured security assurances; however, they were found to be either inadequate or limited. Only the U.S.-Japan alliance has remained durable, buoyed by the reliability and credibility of U.S. commitment. The strength of the relationship has been essential in ensuring Japan's nuclear abstinence.

In addition, all three state entered the post war period in an impoverished condition with little influence in the international system. Yet, by the end of the Cold War only Japan could point to substantial economic development and commensurate improvements in

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[13] Kapur, 55

[14] Kapur, 55

[15] Samina Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program: Turning Points and Nuclear Choices," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (April 1, 1999): 179.

influence and status. India, and to a lesser extent Pakistan, seeking to improve their international position, were willing to take the risk of acquiring nuclear weapons to satisfy their own wounded sense of pride and ensure the world could not ignore them. Nuclear weapons are a powerful symbol of status and in the absence of other tools, South Asia viewed their acquisition as a shortcut to receiving their proper role at the proverbial international table. The thesis finds that if status quo conditions preside and the United States continues to provide for Japanese nuclear deterrence, it is unlikely Japan will follow South Asia's path. However, if U.S. security commitments are withdrawn and certain economic conditions in Japan prevail, the possibility of a Japan acquiring the bomb cannot be discounted.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

In a broad sense, understanding why states acquire or forgo the acquisition of nuclear weapons is an important topic for forming effective counter proliferation policy. For Asia, the qualitative and quantitative expansion of India, China and North Korea's nuclear weapons programs has the potential to pose a security dilemma for non-nuclear states. Moreover, by some measures, Japan is a state of relative decline. An aging and shrinking population, a stagnant economy and fiscal challenges will impede Japan's ability to keep pace with Chinese military and economic growth.[16] Faced with China's growing advantages in conventional strength and a regional nuclear arms race, Japan and other states like it may seek to compensate for increasing insecurity by acquiring nuclear weapons.

Thankfully, for non-proliferation advocates, security considerations are not necessarily the only or even most important factor in a state's decision to acquire nuclear weapons. Japan's non-proliferation decision in the 1960s demonstrates that other considerations, including norms and domestic institutions can raise the costs of nuclear

16 Ikenna Ugboaja, "Missing Manpower: How Japan's Dwindling Population Impedes Remilitarization," *Harvard International Review* 38, no. 2 (April 1, 2017): 16–18.

acquisition and deter potential would-be proliferators. The success of the U.S.-Japan relationships illustrates how alliances can help mitigate security concerns.[17]

Nuclear forbearance may arise from other variables as well. In Japan, domestic leaders relied on economic expansion driven by open markets to sustain electoral advantages and be dissuaded by the costs of nuclear acquisition.[18] In other cases, like Pakistan, nuclear mythmakers nurtured a wounded sense of national pride and inflated national security concerns to influence the states proliferation decision.[19] Identifying and weighing the importance of these variables is essential to finding policy solutions.

As the United States continues to increase its investments in the Asian-Pacific to deter aggression and ensure stability, decision-makers must be able to recognize and prioritize which variables best predict proliferation outcomes. The ability to predict outcome and isolate the causal variables creates opportunities for deterrence and influencing state security perceptions. For example, policymakers may seek to lower tariff barriers in order to further open a state's economy or seek to persuade states to join international institutions to help solidify norms and shape state preferences. In other cases, policy-makers may pause before withdrawing security guarantees or the provision of aid.

For the region, Japan's status as a non-proliferator and regional leader make its nuclear fortunes particularly significant. The Japanese acquisition of a nuclear weapon could portend a region-wide security dilemma and precipitate equivalent responses from similarly situated states like South Korea and Taiwan. In addition, the acquisition of a nuclear weapon would provide a significant blow to non-proliferation movement and provide a signal that the United States it no longer a reliable security guarantor. In an era of budget constraints and domestic pressures for the United States to retreat from its

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[17] Matthew Fuhrmann and Todd S Sechser, "Signaling Alliance Commitments: Hand-Tying and Sunk Costs in Extended Nuclear Deterrence," *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 4 (October 2014): 919.

[18] Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 68.

[19] MS Bell, "Examining Explanations for Nuclear Proliferation," *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (September 2016): 520.

security alliances abroad, it is essential policymakers understand potential downstream impacts particularly to those states- like Japan that depend on United States security.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nuclear weapons proliferation theory seeks to both explain and predict the spread of nuclear weapons. Scholars examining the question of proliferation have established a diversity of theories which help predict proliferation events. The following literature review will examine the academic literature on proliferation theory and the variables that impact a state's propensity to acquire nuclear weapons. The structure of the proliferation review below will first group theories into two broad groupings: "demand-side" analyses and "supply-side analyses."[20] The demand-side analyses are further divided three types of analyses: international structure, domestic political and norms model. Following a discussion of the broad literature on nuclear proliferation, the review will evaluate existing proliferation literature on the three case studies offered in the thesis: Japan, India, and Pakistan.

1. Supply-Side Analyses

Jacques Hymans, helpfully divides proliferation theories into two broad groupings: "demand-side" analyses and "supply-side analyses."[21] These two groupings can be described in the following way: demand side analyses ask, "Under what conditions would state X decide to try to build a nuclear arsenal?" while supply side analyses ask, if state X were to try to build a nuclear arsenal, how does the availability of requisite resources impact its goal? Examples of supply side literature includes two recent papers by Fuhrmann relevant to the Japan and India cases discussed here. The first, *Civilian Nuclear Cooperation and the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* argues for a, "causal connection between peaceful nuclear cooperation and proliferation…that civilian nuclear assistance over time increases the likelihood that states will initiate nuclear weapons programs."[22]

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[20] Hymans, "No Cause for Panic," 86–88.

[21] Hymans, 86.

[22] Christoph Bluth et al., "Civilian Nuclear Cooperation and the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," *International Security* 35, no. 1 (2010): 184.

Further, in *Almost Nuclear: Introducing the Nuclear Latency dataset*, Fuhrmann and Tkach suggest, "the capacity to build nuclear weapons…provide deterrence benefits...usually associate[d] with possessing a nuclear arsenal."[23] Both of these studies are relevant given that Japan and India developed a civilian nuclear capability prior to considering nuclear breakout.

2. International Structural Analyses

International structural analyses emphasize the role of the international system on a state decision to acquire or forgo nuclear weapons. The first variable within this category of analyses is security motivations. This notion is related to the realist theory in international relations which says that, "States exist in a condition of anarchy. Self-help is the principle of action…and the most important way in which states help themselves is by providing for their own security."[24] Because of the anarchic structure of the international system, states are driven towards nuclear weapons as the ultimate insurance policy against external threats. The decision to acquire nuclear weapons, as Epstein explains in "Why States Go-And Don't Go-Nuclear," is based on "a leader's perceptions of the international environment and on their assessments of the best way to achieve national objectives in that environment."[25] Epstein offers that countries seeking military superiority, to offset a hostile nuclear power, or achieve greater military independence might develop nuclear weapons capability.[26] Thus, counter-proliferation requires satisfying the security concerns of potential proliferators through security guarantees or the provision of conventional arms.[27]

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[23] Matthew Fuhrmann and Benjamin Tkach, "Almost Nuclear: Introducing the Nuclear Latency Dataset," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 4 (September 2015): 443.

[24] Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate*, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013), 4–5.

[25] William Epstein, "Why States Go—And Don't Go—Nuclear," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 430*, no. 1 (March 1977): 17.

[26] Epstein, "Why States Go—And Don't Go—Nuclear," 18.

[27] Epstein, "21.

In *Power versus Prudence: Why Nations Forgo Nuclear Weapons*, Paul further develops Epstein's realist theory but with some nuance. By the early 1990s, Epstein's realist security argument had been unable to predict the large numbers of states deciding to forgo nuclear acquisition. In response, Paul developed the view that, "a nation could do without a nuclear weapon if its leadership perceives that nuclear acquisition would generate intense negative security externalities or costs for others."[28] Thus, states in varying levels of conflictual environments will weigh the negative security externality of nuclear acquisition differently. For example, Paul offers India as a state in a high-conflict environment in which, "states engage in enduring rivalries and protracted conflict…that face nuclear enemies or do not have a great power protector."[29] When these variables align states are much more likely to go nuclear. Paul's finding is consistent with John Deutsch's earlier findings in "The New Nuclear Threat" which argues that states tend to seek nuclear weapons only when security cannot be met through alternative means. Without such threats, states tend to willingly remain non-nuclear.[30]

The second international factor that scholars have argued shape whether a state acquires nuclear weapons is alliance politics. The main thrust underlying this determinant is the central role of alliances and security commitments in predicting proliferation outcomes. Reiter argues in "Security Commitments and Nuclear Proliferation" that, "in a threatening environment, third party security commitments can reduce a state's fear of abandonment…and its motive for acquiring nuclear weapons."[31] However, Reiter notes that states are unlikely to accept certain security commitments if it, "increase [s] risks of entrapment…[or] the possibility that the threatened state will be dragged into a war."[32] Contrasting the impact of security concerns with the impact of a strong alliance in "Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test," Singh and Way note that

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[28] T.V. Paul, *Power versus Prudence: Why Nations Forgo Nuclear Weapons* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 4.

[29] Paul, *Power versus Prudence*, 126.

[30] John Deutsch, "The New Nuclear Threat," *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 4 (October 1, 1992): 120.

[31] Dan Reiter, "Security Commitments and Nuclear Proliferation," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10, no. 1 (January 2014): 61.

[32] Reiter, "Security Commitments and Nuclear Proliferation," 61.

"Participating in enduring rivalries or taking part in more frequent militarized disputes strongly increase the chances a state will pursue nuclear arms, but credible support from a great-power ally dampens the temptation."[33] Bleek and Lorber add, "consistent with policymakers' conventional wisdom, security guarantees significantly reduce proliferation proclivity among their recipients."[34] Fuhrmann and Sechser came to the same conclusion using quantitative analysis in "Signaling Alliance Commitments: Hand-Tying and Sunk Costs in Extended Nuclear Deterrence" noting that "formal alliances with nuclear states appear to carry significant deterrence benefits."[35]

Further studies of alliance politics have looked at specific characteristics of the alliance relationship such as the strength of the nuclear-armed ally and the nature of their protection. Reiter finds strong evidence that foreign deployed nuclear weapons and alliances tend to deter proliferation; however, there is no evidence foreign deployed troops have the same effect. Monteiro and Debs considered the relative strength of an ally protecting a weak state and found that, "a weak state is likely to acquire nuclear weapons only when it possesses a powerful ally that is neither willing to offer reliable future protection nor able to issue consequential threat of immediate abandonment."[36] Consequently, proliferation occurs when a weak state's ally can shield them from a preventative strike, but is unable to provide future guarantees nor abandon the weak state as it pursues nuclear weapons.[37]

What about when a weaker ally does achieve nuclear breakout—how does the strong state respond? In "Force or Friendship? Explaining Great Power Nonproliferation Policy," Kroenig concludes that there is some evidence that states tend to favor proliferation by allies over enemies. States oppose the spread of weapons to non-allies over

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[33] Sonali Singh and Christopher Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 2004): 859.

[34] Philipp C Bleek et al., "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 3 (April 2014): 429.

[35] Fuhrmann and Sechser, "Signaling Alliance Commitments," 919.

[36] Nuno P Monteiro, and Alexandre Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," *International Security* 39, no. 2 (2014): 10.

[37] Monteiro and Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," 10.

whom they "have the ability to project military power" since an adversaries acquisition acts to, "constrain their military freedom of action."[38] In other words, powerful states become dissatisfied when they lose their ability to intimidate weaker, adversarial states.

3. Domestic Politics Analyses

The second broad category of demand-side proliferation studies is the domestic politics analyses. This category focuses on, "the nuclear policy preferences of a particular constellation of political forces that hold state power at a given moment."[39] Scholars focus on several key determinants in this category, including: political economy, regime type, leader psychology, and bureaucratic politics. For political economy analyses, Solingen argues in "The Political Economy of Nuclear Restraint," and later in his book *Nuclear Logics*, that while "security considerations are [not] irrelevant to nuclear postures" determinants of proliferation strongly rest on the organization of the domestic regime.[40] State survival is important, but so is domestic political survival for elites. Leaders "interpret security through the prism of their own efforts to accumulate and retain power at home."[41] The imperative to sustain a broad coalition through economic growth steers policymakers to seek security policies that maintain open markets and free trade. Leaders measure their domestic and international strength in terms of national wealth and view the acquisition of nuclear weapons as counter to those aims since they are costly and undermine positive-sum relationships with other states.[42] Singh and Way's quantitative work similarly find that economic liberalization tends to reduce a state propensity to explore the acquisition of nuclear weapons.[43] Additionally, they find that states are most prone to acquire nuclear weapons when their gross domestic product per capita is increasing from a low level but

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[38] Matthew Kroenig, "Force or Friendship? Explaining Great Power Nonproliferation Policy," *Security Studies* 23, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 1.

[39] Hymans, "No Cause for Panic," 87.

[40] Etel Solingen, "The Political Economy of Nuclear Restraint," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994): 127.

[41] Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 52.

[42] Solingen, 52.

[43] Singh and Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation," 861.

still in the medium to low-income category. They note, "No country has ever gone nuclear when its GDP per capita was above the $11,000 threshold (1996 U.S. dollars)."[44]

Regime type and leadership are also key proliferation determinants in domestic politics analyses. The literature is mixed on whether authoritarian or democratic regimes make states more likely to acquire nuclear weapons. After disaggregating the various types of authoritarian regimes, Way and Weeks found that personalist dictatorships are, "substantially more likely to pursue nuclear weapons than other regime types."[45] In democracies, Perkovich argues, politicians may pander to nationalist hysteria.[46] For example in Pakistan, where "97 percent of Pakistani respondents supported the [1998] Pakistani nuclear tests," making it "politically impossible…to turn away from [further] nuclear testing and development."[47] Quantitative testing for the effects of democracy on proliferation are unclear. Singh and Way found that "Controlling for level of income and economic development, countries that score high on the democracy scale are more likely to acquire nuclear weapon." Overall though, the relationship between democracy and nuclear weapons pursuit was not particularly strong.[48]

In some instances, nuclear mythmakers including national leadership or scientists are critical in moving the country towards nuclear acquisition. Hymans argues for the centrality of a particular kind of leadership in determining proliferation outcomes. Using Prime Minister Atal Vajpayee and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as an example, Hymans argues that leaders are "unlikely to push for the bomb unless they hold an 'oppositional nationalist' conception of national identity," defined as "a combination of profound antagonism toward an external enemy with an equally profound sense of national self-

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[44] Singh and Way, 875.

[45] Christopher Way and Jessica L. P. Weeks, "Making it Personal: Regime Type and Nuclear Proliferation," *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 3 (July 2014): 705.

[46] George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1999), 404–424.

[47] Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 1 (February 2007): 170.

[48] Singh and Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation," 875.

esteem."[49] Similarly, Peter Lavoy shares Hyman's belief that individuals are important in shaping a state's proliferation decision. In "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation" Lavoy argues that key actors can act as myth makers that play on a nations sense of pride to reshape the national conversation regarding nuclear weapons.[50] In particular, Lavoy illustrates Indian nuclear physicist Homi Bhabha, arguing that his influence helped reshape the national myth; highlighting security or prestige shortcomings that legitimized and supported India's nascent nuclear program.[51]

The final determinant put forward under domestic political analyses is bureaucratic politics. Hyman's argues in "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb" that powerful bureaucratic agencies can play the part of "veto players" by providing "serious obstacles to major policy shifts" including the acquisition of nuclear weapons. Hyman tempers this argument somewhat—noting that a "major external shock" could still alter a countries nuclear policy (in this case Japan); however, in the absence of such a shock, veto players play an outsized role in raising the costs of nuclear breakout, thus determining proliferation outcomes.[52]

4. Norms Model Analyses

The third and final category of proliferation analyses is the norms model. The norms model focuses on "norms concerning weapons acquisition, seeing nuclear decisions as serving important symbolic functions—both shaping and reflecting a state's identity."[53] Rublee contends that, "as states become integrated into the international community, they grow more susceptible to socialization into the rules and styles of thinking of that community." Inclusion in nonproliferation regimes shape state norms and identity since their involvement signals their restraint which is, "both self-congratulating and self-

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[49] Hymans, "No Cause for Panic," 87.

[50] Peter R. Lavoy, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," *Security Studies* 2, no. 3–4 (June 1, 1993): 192–212.

[51] Zachary S. Davis and Benjamin Frankel, *The Proliferation Puzzle: Why Nuclear Weapons Spread and What Results* (London, England: F. Cass, 1993), 198.

[52] Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation," 188.

[53] Sagan, "Why do States Build Nuclear Weapons," 73.

fulfilling."[54] International agreements form normative and legal roadblocks thus raising the costs of potential proliferation.[55] In Japan, norms arose from grassroots horror arising from the bombings Nagasaki and Hiroshima which "mobilize [d] large public opposition to nuclear weapons."[56] Adherents to the this theory point to the NPT and popular support for non-proliferation as tangible markers of the norms that have developed around nuclear weapons.[57] Jo and Gartzke's work suggests this effect is measurable and argue that, "Membership in the NPT tends modestly to encourage states to maintain pledges of nonproliferation"[58]

The second important consideration under the norms analyses is the pursuit of prestige. This argument goes that, "States possessing [nuclear weapons] are given greater weight in the entire range of foreign policy matters. They are brought into more top level international discussions of all kinds, and their views are treated with greater respect."[59] This consideration is important especially for states attempting to "redress a perceived inferiority in the international hierarchy...[such as] former colonies that wish to achieve a status of equality with the former colonial powers."[60] States that hold perceptions of historic slights or indignities may attempt to symbolically redress their sense of inadequacy and grievance through nuclear acquisition.

5. Japan

Scholarship on the determinant of Japan's non-nuclear status most center on security concerns and alliance politics, political economy, domestic politics, and norms. Regarding security and alliance politics, Sheila Smith argues in "Japan's Future Strategic Options and the U.S.-Japan Alliance" that, despite historic and contemporary security

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54 Rublee, "The Nuclear Threshold States," 49.

55 Hymans, "No Cause for Panic," 87.

56 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics,* 66.

57 Hymans, "No Cause for Panic," 87.

58 Jo and Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," 186.

59 Epstein, "Why States Go—And Don't Go—Nuclear," 21.

60 Epstein, 22.

threats, the U.S.-Japan alliance has provided adequate security guarantees to Japan.[61] In *Nuclear Logics*, Etel agrees that the U.S.-Japan alliance is essential, but argues domestic considerations has been a more important determinant of Japan's nuclear decision. U.S. security guarantees, she argues, allowed Japan to engage in an export-led economic growth model that defined national strength in terms of national income.[62] This mercantilist understanding of security, pushed Japanese policymakers to avoid security decisions, like nuclear proliferation, that might endanger economic activities.

Some scholars have placed an emphasis on Japanese norms and domestic institutions. Rublee highlights Japan's legacy as an atomic victim and resultant "nuclear allergy" which has shaped public opinion and leadership preferences.[63] Japan's popular aversion to nuclear weapons, she argues, has led it towards embracing international regimes such as the NPT and the formation of its Three Non-Nuclear Principles. Others, including Hymans argue that Japanese maintains unique domestic institutional constraints including bureaucracies like the Atomic Energy Commission and laws which restrain nuclear breakout.[64] Akiyama in "The Socio-Political Roots of Japan's Non-nuclear Posture," combines the norms and domestic political argument, suggesting that Japan enshrined "anti-nuclear sentiment and the nuclear allergy phenomenon…in political institutions."[65]

6. India

Arguments for India's nuclear breakout cite several important variables. From a security perspective, the literature points to India's ongoing and enduring regional rivalries with China and Pakistan as a central determinant of proliferation. Epstein notes that "India…had been one of the strongest and most active proponents of non-proliferation in

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[61] Benjamin L. Self and Jeffrey W. Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option: Security, Politics, and Policy in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: The Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003), 1–25.

[62] Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, chapter 2.

[63] Rublee, "The Nuclear Threshold States," 56–59.

[64] Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 80.

[65] Self and Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option*, XXII.

the 1950s and early sixties…[until] China exploded its first atomic bomb."[66] Moreover, "ample evidence suggests…India's security misgivings [regarding China and Pakistan] did play an import role…in precipitating the nuclear tests of May 1998."[67] Hymans agrees that security concerns may have provided fuel, but oppositional nationalism within the BJP to Pakistan in particular by its leader, Prime Minister Atal Vaypayee, pushed India to acquire nuclear weapons.[68]

Other arguments center on domestic politics and the centrality of mythmakers in the Indian nuclear program. Sagan argues that if security concerns were central, India would have initiated a "crash weapons program" following the Chinese nuclear test, which it did not.[69] The 1974 Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) was likely conducted due domestic political concerns including the beleaguered status of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, rather than security concerns associated with the recent war against Pakistan and ongoing disputes with China.[70] The PNE was a prestige undertaking that allowed Ghandi to "boost the morale of the nuclear establishment and thrill the nation with a sense of prowess."[71] Thomas argues in *Whither Nuclear India* that the 1998 tests can be seen through a similar prism. The BJP, seeking to solidify their tenuous ruling coalition may have sought to use the nuclear test to, "induc [e] feelings of pride and patriotism."[72]

Other scholars point to the work of nuclear mythmakers within India that were influential in driving the nuclear weapons program forward. Perkovich and Ganguly highlight the work of Homi Bhabha, the father of India's nuclear program who, "wanted to establish himself and his nation at the apogee of modern scientific-technical

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66 Epstein, "Why States Go—And Don't Go—Nuclear," 19.

67 Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 173.

68 Jacques Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 202.

69 Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons," 65.

70 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 174.

71 Perkovich, 176.

72 D.R. SarDesai. and Raju Thomas, *Nuclear India in the Twenty-First Century* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrove-Macmillan, 2002), 7.

achievement."[73] Bhabha's work as an example a nuclear myth maker specialists that "influence[s] the process of policy making" and provides key interventions to "encourage and lobby" proliferation advocates.[74]

7. Pakistan

Pakistan's decision to acquire a nuclear weapon is associated with security concerns, alliance-politics, prestige, domestic politics, and the role of nuclear mythmakers. In *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*, Khan explains Pakistan perceives India as an "inveterately hostile" state that, "cannot be deterred conventionally."[75] The 1971 India-Pakistan War served as a national embarrassment to Pakistan and "reinforced Pakistan's hostility toward India and its perceptions of insecurity."[76] Moreover, the defeat demonstrated that the United States and, by extension alliance partners, could not be depended on as security guarantors. Khan notes that following the war Pakistan believed "outsiders would not assist them in confronting security threats, particularly during the periods of most pressing need."[77] These perceptions of insecurity were further exacerbated by perceptions of prestige and a persistent narrative that painted Pakistan as a victim of discrimination for its Muslim identity, subordinated by external forces and treated as inferior to India.[78]

Like India, literature on Pakistan's nuclear weapons program also highlights the role of important nuclear mythmakers in fostering the country's nuclear ambitions. One key example is Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto helped form the Pakistani national myth which, "emphasiz [ed] the country's insecurity and poor international standing; portraying [nuclear weapons acquisition; as the best corrective measure" and pushed for the

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[73] SarDesai and Thomas, *Nuclear India in the Twenty-First Century*, 10.

[74] Davis and Frankel, *The Proliferation Puzzle*, 201.

[75] Feroz Kahn, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 6.

[76] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 183.

[77] Kahn, *Eating Grass*, 9.

[78] Kahn, 10.

acquisition of a nuclear weapons as foreign minister in the 1960s and as a national leader in the 1970s.[79] His efforts "intertwined" Pakistani nationalism with the nuclear program and "his thinking on nuclear matters…[have] been institutionalized throughout the establishment."[80]

Overall, the scholarship on nuclear proliferation is robust; however, there is limited work to date on the impact of a rising China on Japanese nuclear weapons policy. Recent literature is mostly the result of a flood of interest in the subject following North Korea's declaration of nuclear capability in 2002. Much has changed over the nearly two decades and the subject demands a fresh look.

D. HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: Nuclear weapons policy is primarily determined by security concerns.

Variables from the domestic politics and norms model are overstated and alliances are helpful but not sufficient to satisfy security requirements. South Asia's experience suggests that enduring rivalries and perceptions of security vulnerability are of paramount importance. For Japan, the rise of China and the ongoing threat of North Korea's nuclear weapons programs will increasingly place Japan in a complex and tenuous security position, forcing Japan to re-evaluate its nuclear weapons policy.

In South Asia, Pakistan, India, and China undertook years of bloodletting in their contestation for territorial sovereignty. India, sandwiched between two nuclear armed states with which it has enduring rivalries, felt compelled to acquire nuclear weapons for security reasons. This decision was made despite domestic norms and institutions opposed to nuclear weapons acquisition. Similarly, Pakistan, driven by existential fear and material shortfalls sought a nuclear capability to counter Indian advantages in conventional capabilities.

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[79] Kahn, 5–7.

[80] Kahn, 7.

To test this hypothesis, I will examine when and under what circumstances previous considerations of nuclear weapons program began and were later nixed. What were the contemporary discussions from policymakers on security perceptions? Did discussions begin soon after an adversary displayed a new capability or military advantage? What is Japan's perception of the Chinese threat today? Has it changed and how similar or dissimilar is it today from other instances in which Japan considered nuclear breakout? How important or unimportant were security considerations in South Asia? Under what context were they more or less important? Proving this hypothesis will require a close correlation between security perceptions and acquisition or non-acquisition of nuclear weapons by the states examined here.

> **Hypothesis 2:** Nuclear weapons policy is determined by concerns over status and prestige.

This hypothesis claims that states are motivated by dissatisfaction regarding their status in the international hierarchy. States seeking to rectify their international and internal position can seek to acquire nuclear weapons in order to project strength and resolve. Put simply, poor and politically weak states can be ignored; however, states with nuclear weapons cannot. Japan, India and Pakistan each entered the post-World War II era impoverished and without much influence on world affairs. To what degree did status, particularly in the form of economic development factor into their calculus regarding nuclear weapons development?

To test this hypothesis, I will examine the political economy of each state and its impact on nuclear development. Do policymakers view nuclear weapons as a substitute inadequate economic growth and as a method to bolster their position in the international system? Japan enjoyed robust economic growth and interaction in the international economy. How central was its economic interconnectedness to its nuclear abstinence? India's economy, until recently, remained fairly autarkic and undeveloped. How did the relative gap in China and Japan's international influence vis-à-vis India incentivize India to seek a remedy to its perceived weakness? Finally, did Pakistan feel the need to acquire nuclear weapons to avenge its dignity in the face of two embarrassing military defeats against its arch-rival, India?

Hypothesis 3: Nuclear weapons policy is primarily determined by norms.

Japan holds the unique position of being the only state to have experience the horror or an atomic bombing. Moreover, following World War II, Japan denounced war as an instrument of national policy in settling disputes. As a consequence, popular opinion and elite consensus have developed an oppositional stance to nuclear weapons. While security considerations remain important, Japan is less willing to entertain nuclear weapons acquisition as a credible alternative to other security enhancing mechanisms. Likewise, Indian policymakers were the protégé of Ghandi and for many decades rejected nuclear weapons as a Western tool of oppression. As leader of a movement that had foresworn nuclear weapons (unaligned movement) did India felt ideologically constrained in its pursuit of nuclear weapons?

Testing this hypothesis will require an evaluation of popular opinion and elite perceptions. Important questions here include; does Japan hold a unique public opposition to nuclear acquisition? One solution to this question is to consider public opinion polling during the periods in which forming a nuclear weapons program was studied. Additionally, are Japanese officials constrained by the norms arising from their legacy in a way that Indian and Pakistani officials are not? What is the relationship between Indian and Japanese pacifism and how did they lead to differing outcomes? Here, statements from policy officials and internal deliberations will be helpful in providing evidence of whether Japanese officials have held markedly different approach to security concerns than their South Asian counterparts because of the Japanese public's nuclear allergy.

Hypothesis 4: Nuclear weapons policy is primarily determined by domestic institutions including its bureaucracy and legal restraints.

India, Pakistan and Japan are home to strong and independent bureaucracies that often push ahead of publicly elected officials in developing policy. In addition, Japan is constrained by legal provisions that limit its self-defense capabilities. Thus, despite security concerns that differ little substantively from South Asia, Japan is constrained by a resistant bureaucracy and legal roadblocks. Domestic institutions act as veto players that create barriers unique to Japan. By comparison, India's nuclear enterprise acted as a catalyst for

nuclear weapons development. Indian nuclear scientists always kept the program one step ahead of the policymakers, providing politicians with an easy option should they proceed with nuclear testing. Finally, did Pakistan's army leaders take control of the nuclear program and proceed forward without the consent of Pakistan's civilian leadership.

To test this hypothesis will require identifying moments in which the bureaucracy or legal constraints meaningfully impacted a policymaker's decision to further or slow nuclear acquisition. Important evidence would include circumstances in which policymakers sought nuclear acquisition but had their ambitions quelled by a slow-moving and deliberative institutional apparatus. Likewise, are there circumstances in which institutions pressed for nuclear advancement despite reluctance on the part of policymaker? By evaluating the impact and role of these organizations during periods of increased tension or crisis, we can evaluate their influence in determining proliferation outcomes.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis will seek to identify the proliferation variables that shape Japan's nuclear forbearance by examining the Japanese and South Asian cases and conducting a comparative analysis of their experiences. The Japan case study is intended to analyze the context in which Tokyo arrived at its current nuclear policy and the variables that likely constrain nuclear breakout today. The South Asian case studies will look to identify which variables moved India and Pakistan from decades of forbearance or ambiguity to unambiguous assertion. By isolating the factors that led to their respective forbearance or acquisition, I will attempt to understand and make predictions about Japan's nuclear program moving forward.

The Japanese case study will use historical analysis to understand the historical determinants of Japan's nuclear forbearance. The case study will seek to identify which of the variables described in the nuclear literature are most persuasive in explaining Japan's contemporary policy position. The chapter will proceed chronologically and discuss the three categories discussed in the first section of this chapter: international structure, domestic politics, and norms. This thesis will use a similar methodology in the case studies

for Pakistan and India. Each case study will consist of a historical analysis of each states progression towards nuclear acquisition, focusing on the three categories of analyses.

II. JAPAN AND THE BOMB

A common view used to explain Japan's aversion to nuclear weapons is a normative view associated with their experience as the only state to have experienced the horrors of an atomic bombing. In this telling, the shared experience of Nagasaki and Hiroshima created a Japanese identity as victims of atomic attack and helped develop Japan's "nuclear allergy."[81] Consequently, this identity has created an unusual aversion to nuclear weapons, which has been enshrined in norms and institutions like the Yoshida doctrine, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, Article IX of the Japanese Constitution and the Basic Law on Atomic Energy.[82] Proponents argue these rules have further created barriers to Japan acquiring a nuclear weapon.[83]

While this view holds some currency, it is insufficient to explain Japanese forbearance. Rather, the foundation of Japan's nuclear abstinence rests on the ongoing belief that the United States will provide for Japanese security. Anti-nuclear institutions and norms, the symbols of Japanese fidelity to nuclear abstinence, formed only *after* Japan had already received robust security guarantees from the United States in the early to mid-1960s. In fact, China's 1964 nuclear test strained Japan's relationship with the United States and intensified calls by conservative Japanese policymakers to explore acquiring nuclear weapons. However, U.S. assurances and signs of commitment reassured Japanese policymakers, influencing their decision to forego nuclear acquisition. While Japan has cultivated its image as a proponent of non-proliferation, its non-proliferation regime developed only after Japan's security was assured. Security remains the primary determinant of Japanese nuclear policy.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the normative argument for Japanese nuclear motivations. Here, I argue that in the aftermath of World

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[81] Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1994), 41.

[82] Rublee, "The Nuclear Threshold States."

[83] Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation."

War II the Japanese public's view toward nuclear weapons was actually fairly mixed. Key elements of Japan's political class viewed military expansion and nuclear acquisition as an opportunity to bolster Japanese international influence. Moreover, two key symbols of Japan's anti-nuclear consensus, the NPT and the Three Non-Nuclear Principles came to exist under contested circumstances and only after U.S.-security guarantees had been received.

The second section discusses the history of the U.S.-Japan alliance. This section is divided into three parts. The first part will discuss the length of time from the end of the Second World War until China's nuclear test (1945–1964). During this period Japan engaged in a contentious debate regarding the future of its national security policy. The outcome of this debate became known as the Yoshida Doctrine, a strategy of external balancing to help subsidize domestic economic growth. The second part analyzes the period after China's nuclear test (1964–1975) in which Japan seriously reconsidered its strategy of external balancing. The third part discusses the impact of Japanese law, particularly the Constitution in restraining Japanese nuclear motivations.

A. A CONTENTIOUS IDENTITY

Today, Japan is viewed across the world as a model non-proliferator. Japan works hard to maintain this image through leadership, financial and technical support for non-proliferation and by keeping the memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki alive.[84] From a leadership standpoint, Tokyo has created "spaces for discussions and negotiations so that common understandings can result in great progress [towards non-proliferation]."[85] Further, Japan has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to support non-proliferation and the disposal of nuclear waste. Japan supports the non-nuclear regime and like-minded organizations through both financial and technical support.[86] It keeps the memory of their experience of Nagasaki and Hiroshima alive through political statements, exhibitions, museums and the sponsoring of visits by outside groups including non-governmental

84 Rublee, "The Nuclear Threshold States," 57.

85 Rublee, 57.

86 Rublee, 58.

organizations, universities, and local governments.[87] Through laws, institutions and norms Japan has created a virtuous cycle that reinforces its position on nuclear weapons.

Despite Japan's model support for the international non-proliferation regime, the historical evidence suggests Japan is not singularly guided by the trauma of being an atomic victim. First, the Japanese public and policymakers are sensitive to security concerns. Support for nuclear weapons actually increases during periods of insecurity. Second, Japan adopted non-nuclear agreements only *after* national security concerns were addressed and within the context of political maneuvering. Rather than enthusiastically joining the non-proliferation regime, Japan cautiously weighed its options and ensured its security requirements were met. Only then did Japan enthusiastically adopt its role as a model non-proliferator.

The Japanese public has historically maintained a low level of public support for nuclear weapons.[88] However, the polling data suggests they nonetheless remain sensitive to security concerns. Nearly a decade following Hiroshima but prior to China's first nuclear test in 1964, public support for nuclear weapons was weak with only a quarter of Japanese supporting nuclear acquisition."[89] However, as security concerns increased following China's nuclear test, the Japanese public and its policymakers in particular had begun to envision the possibility of Japan becoming a nuclear armed state. By the end of the 1960s, "77 percent (of Japanese) predicted that Japan would have nuclear weapons by 2000."[90] A 1972 poll found that "only 45 percent of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) members thought Japan should absolutely not arm itself."[91] While numbers against nuclear weapons were significantly higher among other political parties including the Socialist and Communists, polls suggest opposition to nuclear weapons was neither universal nor absolute. In fact, one scholar has suggested that in the aftermath of China's nuclear test Japan felt a tangible

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87 Rublee, 59.

88 Anthony Difilippo, *Japan's Nuclear Disarmament Policy and the United States Security Umbrella*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2006), 68.

89 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 68.

90 Solingen, 66.

91 Solingen, 66.

sense of "growing 'nationalist pragmatism' that had overcome 'moral disgust' and increased the numbers of nuclear weapons advocates."[92] Another scholar, writing in the 1970s "estimated that a popular majority might have supported an LDP initiative for nuclear armament in the 1960s in the aftermath of China's nuclear test."[93] As Sino-Japanese relations improved through the '70s and '80s, the U.S.-Japanese relationship matured, and non-nuclear institutions further shaped Japanese identity, consequently, support for nuclear weapons fell again. By 2014, fully 80 percent of the Japanese public were reportedly opposed to Japan becoming a nuclear weapons state.[94] Today, Japan is firmly opposed to nuclear weapons; however, the evidence suggests these views are not fixed and sensitive to security conditions.

Advocates of the normative approach also point to Japan's membership in non-proliferation institutions and regimes. Japan, they say, is constrained by institutions that arose during the 60s and 70s and continue to shape domestic politics and public opinion. These institutions are the NPT, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles and the various regimes Japan has supported since adopting a non-nuclear stance. However, Japan's adoption of the NPT and establishment of its Three Non-Nuclear Principles was a decision born in contestation and pragmatic politicking.

The outcome of the NPT, as Etel Solingen points out, "was not preordained."[95] In fact, political opposition to the NPT's ratification was significant. Despite signing the NPT in 1970, ratification of the document would take an additional six years of political wrangling on the question of national security. The right wing of the LDP was particularly suspicious of the NPT. They noted China had yet to sign the agreement and felt unease that Japan might close the door on nuclear weapons, potentially making itself vulnerable to Chinese aggression. They also questioned the durability of U.S. security assurances and

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92 Solingen, 67.

93 Solingen, 66.

94 Mike Mochizuki, "Three Reasons Why Japan Will Likely Continue to Reject Nuclear Weapons," *Washington Post*, November 6, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/06/japan-is-likely-to- retain-its-non-nuclear-principles-heres-why/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ac57f564b556.

95 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 64.

wondered aloud whether the United States might abandon Japan at some point prior to the treaties 25-year renewal date.

To secure their support, in 1975, Japan's Foreign Minister was dispatched to the United States to seek categorical assurances that the United States would remain faithful to the alliance.[96] Despite receiving such assurances from the U.S., right wing elements nonetheless further sought to ease restrictions on the U.S. ability to surge nuclear assets into Japan should circumstances require. They understood that by ratifying the NPT Japan would entrench its non-nuclear position under Article 96 of the Constitution which requires Japan to abide by its international treaty obligations. NPT ratification would "unquestionably raise barriers to Japan's nuclearization" ensuring the political costs of future nuclear acquisition would be high.[97] Only after a "broad understanding" was reached that ensured the U.S. could surge nuclear assets did the Japanese right acquiesce to the NPT.[98]

Contestation of the NPT came not only from the right but also far-left Communist and Socialists elements.[99] Opponents on the far-left argued the NPT did not go far enough since it did not include a blanket ban on nuclear weapons. Moreover, some viewed the NPT as discriminatory since the majority of "legal" nuclear weapons were held by Western nations. Only following six years of debate between these competing factions, replete with compromises on both sides, did Japan ratify the NPT in June, 1976. For many Japanese officials, ratification of the NPT was viewed as "the moment at which the option of developing an indigenous nuclear deterrent was discarded."[100] However, closing the door on Japan's nuclear program was not simply an ideological commitment. Far from it, ratification was unlikely without a political understanding that Japan's security needs

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96 George Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty," *Asian Survey* 10, no. 9 (September 1, 1970): 13–15.

97 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 65.

98 Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty," 13–15.

99 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 65.

100 Llewelyn Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan," *International Security* 31, no. 4 (April 2007): 73.

would be met. The foundational measure of Japan's normative commitment to nuclear weapons rested on a promise of material assistance and an understanding that the United States would provide Japan with nuclear deterrence.

Passage of Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles resolution in November, 1971 was an equally contentious event. Prime Minister Sato, who shepherded the resolution through the Diet and would later receive a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts, admittedly did so for practical political reasons. Through the 1960s the Socialist opposition to the LDP had moderated their stance on economic issues while conservatives in the LDP had become more willing to offer social welfare programs. This consensus on economic policy moved the focus of political disputes into the arena of foreign policy. Progressives pursued electoral advantage by assuming the mantle of pacifism. In response, the LDP "nullified the progressive camp's strategy by snuggling-up to the pacifist line."[101] The political environment created conditions that made it advantageous for Prime Minister Sato to demonstrate his bone fides as a peaceful leader. Thus, in 1967 Sato released the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, adherence to Article 9 and the one percent ceiling on the defense budget.[102]

For Sato, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles—that Japan not possess nuclear weapons, not produce them nor permit entry of them into their country—provided not only a useful political optic but also deal-making leverage in negotiations over the return of Okinawa. Prime Minister Sato sought the return of Okinawa as an essential foreign policy goal. However, the United States had been using Okinawa to station strategic nuclear bombers. This represented a potential obstacle to any agreement since it would violate Sato's three principles if Okinawa returned to Japanese control. To counter this, Sato wrapped his original three principles into a four pillar resolution that included the original three principles within a broader 'Four-Pillars Nuclear Policy' framework that included: peaceful use of nuclear power, work towards global nuclear disarmament, relying on

[101] Self and Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option*, 83.

[102] Self and Thompson, 83.

extended United States nuclear deterrence, and support for the original three principles.[103] By packaging these various tenants, Sato allowed himself to achieve his goal of acquiring Okinawa without political fallout from reneging on his original Nuclear Principles. Privately though, Sato would privately call his initiatives "nonsense," privately wishing to leave the nuclear option open for Japan.[104]

The devastation of World War II and the trauma associated with being the only state to suffer an atomic bombing forged a Japanese identity deeply skeptical of nuclear weapons. Through international agreements and the establishment of normative political principles Japan has continued to sustain and consolidate this identity. And this identity has likely played a role in reducing Japan's nuclear ambitions, but much less than supposed. In fact, as Etel Solinger points out, popular opinion and normative constraints were probably the *result* of domestic political outcomes rather than the *cause* of them.[105] It is a mistake to believe Japan has remained abstinent in a vacuum. Prior to the passage of each normative milestone—the NPT and the Three Non-Nuclear Principles—Japanese leadership acknowledged the necessity of the United States material assistance in providing extended deterrence to Japan. In the following section we will discuss how and why the United States came to provide such assurances and the manner in which they did so.

B. SECURITY FIRST: INSTITUTIONS FOLLOW

1. The Emergence of Japan's External Balancing Strategy (1945–1964)

Japanese deliberations about acquiring a nuclear bomb stemmed from security concerns related to China's nuclear test in 1964. Japan perceived Communist China as a revisionist state that had demonstrated a willingness to use force to achieve its desired outcomes. In the decade prior to its nuclear test, China had gone to war in Korea, India, and Vietnam. Bearing the wounds of Japanese war-time imperialism, Japanese

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103 Self and Thompson, 84.

104 Samuels and Schoff, "Japan's Nuclear Hedge," 481; Yuri Kase, "The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization: An Insight into the 1968/70 Internal Report," *The Nonproliferation Review* (Summer 2001): 58–59.

105 Difilippo, *Japan's Nuclear Disarmament Policy*, chapter 3.

policymakers were nervous China might leverage its nuclear capability to resolve disputes with Japan. Thus, at the heart of Japan's post-war security debates was a central question: can Japan could rely on the United States for protection? If Japan could not trust America to provide adequate conventional and nuclear deterrence, it would need to more fully resource its own defense requirements. Consequently, in order to understand Japan's nuclear deliberation in the mid-1960s it is first helpful to understand how Japan first came to rely on the United States for its national defense.

Japan emerged from World War II into an environment defined by American occupation of Japan, a ravaged economy, and an uncertain international setting. As the Allied Occupation ended and in the midst of war on the Korean Peninsula in 1952, Japanese policymakers deliberated on the state of Japan's national security. Japan could either defend itself by expanding its own military capabilities or by seeking security guarantees from the United States. Japan's decision turned on two factors, internal Japanese politics and a regional post-war environment distrustful of Japanese militarization.

Mainstream Japanese political thinking in this period was split between three competing factions. The left's coalition largely consisted of pacifist who were suspicious of any military alliance and sought a policy of neutrality.[106] On the right, (later to become the LDP), factions split between revisionists and liberal interventionist. The revisionists believed Japan should be a "normal" nation with a strong military and conventional alliances. They called for Japan to become militarily autonomous and reject Article IX of the Constitution which renounces war and the maintenance of a regular military force.[107] The liberal internationalist by comparison, argued on behalf of Japan's business interests that rejecting U.S. assistance and pursuing military expansion would jeopardize Japan's opportunities in the international market. Instead, they argued, Japan should pursue a mercantilist strategy and continue to accept an "unequal alliance" with the United States that would act as a "shield behind which [Japan] could regenerate prosperity."[108] This

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[106] Kase, "The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization," 57.

[107] Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 30.

[108] Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 32.

strategy was known as the Yoshida Doctrine, so-called after a key proponent of the policy, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida.

The coalitional make-up of the conservatives assisted the liberal internationalist in winning its intra-party dispute. The conservative (pre-LDP) coalition of the 1950s included "big business and finance, farming interests, and small and medium-sized businesses under the umbrella of rapid growth, exports, and economic protectionism."[109] The imperative to cater to electoral supporters ensured the right's policies remained conducive to friendly external relations beneficial to an export strategy. This included the diversion of state funds away from sectors vulnerable to the export strategy and welfare programs towards military ventures that could slow economic growth. While a sizeable segment of the conservative party showed sympathy for remilitarization, their preferences were muted by political requirements that forced members to adopt measures more pacifist (and anti-nuclear) than many would have otherwise preferred.[110]

Strategic factors also shaped Japan's adoption of the Yoshida Doctrine. In the shadow of World War II, Japanese policymakers were keenly aware that China, the U.S. and the Soviet Union feared Japanese resurgence. Japanese militarism might be misinterpreted as expansionist, spark a regional arms race and undermine the U.S.-Japan relationship.[111] Poor, and rebuilding in the aftermath of war, Japan could ill afford to risk antagonizing its neighbors and alienating the United States.

The factors that motivated Japan to adopt the Yoshida Doctrine are essentially the same factors that influenced Japan to reject nuclear weapons. At its core, Japan's debate centered on whether its national defense strategy should consist of internal or external balancing. In the 1950s there existed real support within the Japanese right wing to acquire a domestic defense capability. However, pressure from abroad and domestic political conditions made such a position untenable and their desires were watered-down by intra-party preferences. Almost a decade later, Japan's debate over acquiring a nuclear weapon

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109 Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 70.

110 Solingen, 70.

111 Kase, "The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization," 60.

essentially became a debate over the continuing merits of the Yoshida Doctrine and its reliance on the United States to provide security guarantees. The result of the second debate and Japan's rejection of nuclear weapons would ultimately hinge on Japan's confidence in U.S. security guarantees.

2. The U.S. Commitment (1964–1975)

The foundations of the Yoshida Doctrine were shaken by the Chinese atomic tests in 1964. Chinese nuclear tests represented a meaningful threat to Japanese interest from a long-time regional rival. Prior to Chinese atomic testing, Japanese security requirements were fairly low and assurances from the United States were commensurate with those needs.[112] However, it was less clear whether the U.S. was willing to provide guarantees against the Chinese Communists. For Japan, the "presence of approximately 260,000 U.S. forces" in the 1950s "meant that little else needed to be done to demonstrate the strength of U.S. commitment."[113] This had allowed Japan to focus on domestic rebuilding efforts. Until 1960, Japan had not even ensured the United States had an "explicit [security] commitment...[which was] incorporated into the bilateral treaty."[114] Japan was so woefully unprepared for China's nuclear proliferation that its Basic National Defense Plan, released in 1957, contained "no reference to the advent of nuclear weapons." [115]

The initial response by Japanese leaders to Chinese proliferation was to respond in kind. Several months after the Chinese tests, U.S. intelligence warned President Lyndon Johnson that Japanese Prime Minister Sato Eisaku and his foreign minister were, "hot for proliferation."[116] Sato confirmed these reports and reportedly told United States officials that "if the Chicoms had nuclear weapons, the Japanese should have them [too]."[117]

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[112] Self and Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option*, 11.

[113] Self and Thompson, 13.

[114] Francis Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 88.

[115] Self and Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option*, 13.

[116] Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft*, 88.

[117] Gavin, 88.

U.S. intelligence estimated that, should Japan choose to acquire nuclear weapons they could "'test its first nuclear device as early as 1971' and produce 'as many as 100 nuclear-equipped Medium Range Ballistic Missiles/Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles by 1975."[118] In 1964, Japan had both the technology and resources to acquire nuclear weapons, and momentarily, it appeared they had the will to do so.

The potential for Japan to acquire nuclear weapons in response to China's nuclear test presented a challenge to the United States policy of non-proliferation and stoked fears of an Asian-Pacific arms race. Should Japan acquire nuclear weapons, other nuclear-states in challenging security environments might quickly follow suit. At the same moment as Japan—India, Israel, and Sweden all had "the technical ability to produce nuclear weapons" and were "considering whether or not to do so."[119] The risk of rapid worldwide proliferation had the potential to disrupt international stability, increase the risk of catastrophic conflict and undercut an emerging norm of non-proliferation. Should the United States tolerate proliferation by Japan, West Germany would "doubtlessly come to feel that it had accepted second-class status by not acquiring its own independent nuclear force."[120] The United States decided to act decisively to contain the fallout from the Chinese nuclear test and satisfy regional security concerns.

The Johnson administration moved quickly to assure the United States commitment to Asian security. Speaking to Japan and India directly in a speech President Johnson stated,

> The United States reaffirms its defense commitments in Asia. Even if Communist China should eventually develop an effective nuclear capability, that capability would have no effect on the readiness of the United States to respond to requests from Asian nations for help in dealing with Communist Chinese aggression. The United States will also not be diverted from its efforts to help the nations of Asia to defend themselves and to advance the welfare of their people.[121]

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[118] Gavin, 88.

[119] Gavin, 78.

[120] Gavin, 80.

[121] Gavin, 93.

Soon thereafter, President Johnson dispatched Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to provide explicit assurances to Prime Minister Sato "[that] the United States would immediately respond with nuclear weapons should China embark on war."[122] Increasingly, conventional military commitments within the region became linked with U.S. non-proliferation goals. United States policymakers worried that if the U.S. encountered, "stalemate or a setback" in the United States military intervention into Vietnam "the impulse in India and Japan to move toward some national form of deterrence would be enhanced."[123] United States involvement in Vietnam thus took on the role as a symbolic marker of the United States commitment to the region and its allies.

The United States provided Japan with a variety of assurances in the aftermath of Chinese nuclear testing which helped assuage concerns of abandonment. Namely, the U.S. affirmed previous agreements, high-level promises, and the ongoing presence of U.S. troop deployments on Japanese soil. In addition, the U.S. ensured its nuclear deterrent remained credible through nuclear weapons deployments and specific nuclear strategies. The United States reassured Japan by "embrac[ing] strategies that called for the early, massive use of atomic weapons."[124] They also left open the doors to a nuclear first use strategy in order to respond to numerically superior conventionally forces. Though this strategy was primarily centered on defending Europe against Soviet invasion, Japan appreciated its potential against Chinese aggression.[125]

The United States also maintained a visible and sizable arsenal that signaled credibility and commitment to Japanese security and regional stability. In the mid-1960s the United States had nearly 3,000 nuclear weapons in the Asia- Pacific including "1,200 on Okinawa, where United States strategic bombers were based."[126] Despite anxiety among the Japanese population to stationing nuclear assets on Japanese territory, United

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[122] Tamamoto, "The Emperor's New Clothes," 67.

[123] Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft*, 93.

[124] Gavin, 149.

[125] Gavin, 90–91.

[126] Samuels, and Schoff, "Japan's Nuclear Hedge," 477.

States warships during this period were routinely provided implicit if not explicit permission by the Japanese government to do so.[127] In 1970, the Japanese Director General of the Defense Agency Yasuhiro Nakasone reportedly informed U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Lair that "the U.S. could bring nuclear weapons into Japan in emergency situations."[128] These deployments provided not only reassurance of United States credibility to its allies but also a strong deterrence signal to its adversaries. Both the Soviet Union and China believed the United States had introduced nuclear weapons to bases and ships in Japan.

In spite of United States assurances, Prime Minister Sato nonetheless ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to undertake a study of Japan's nuclear option. The study, completed in 1969, confirmed the efficacy of U.S. non-proliferation efforts following China's nuclear test. The report found that although Japan had the ability to produce nuclear weapons, "the development of nuclear arms was not in the nation's interest."[129] The report provided three main arguments to support its conclusions. First, Japan's geography provided little strategic depth and thus "little advantage for land-based ballistic missile systems."[130] Second, Japanese nuclear acquisition would likely trigger an aggressive response from regional adversaries harboring fresh memories of Japanese World War II expansionist policies—thus exacerbating rather than alleviating Japan's security dilemma. Third, United States security guarantees were adequate to Japan's needs and would "deter aggression more effectively than any other option, including the nuclear one."[131]

Additional studies undertaken following the 1969 report reached similar conclusions and continued to emphasize the importance of the United States-alliance. A 1981 study noted that while Japan retained the resources necessary to develop a baseline

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[127] Difilippo. *Japan's Nuclear Disarmament Policy*, 45.

[128] Difilippo. 45.

[129] Difilippo. 46.

[130] Self and Thompson, *Japan's Nuclear Option*, 7.

[131] Self and Thompson, 7.

nuclear capability, more advanced weaponry would require U.S. and allied assistance. A 1995 study, undertaken in the aftermath of the Cold War, reflected Japan's continuing reliance on United States security and the emerging importance of normative commitments to non-proliferation. The report cautioned that nuclear Japanese acquisition would damage the U.S.-Japan security alliance, "critically damage the NPT," and "send a strong signal to other East Asian countries that Japan had embarked on a security path independent of the United States." [132]

The United States strong support to Japan following China atomic tests was a critical component to preventing Japanese proliferation. And the United States demonstrated its resolve by deploying the tools necessary to credibly provide defense. Japanese internal studies examining the cost and benefits of nuclear acquisition revealed the importance of U.S. support. The final section will explore how domestic political arrangements have acted to constrain or not constrain Japan's nuclear ambitions.

C. OTHER SUPPOSED CONSTRAINTS

An alternative explanation for Japan's decision not to adopt nuclear weapons is the impact of certain institutions in dampening nuclear motivations including the Basic Law on Atomic Energy and Article IX of the Japanese Constitution.[133] However, neither is likely to represent a formidable constraint should Japan pursue nuclear weapons. In periods of heightened security, Japan's political system has reshaped its jurisprudence to conform with national requirements. In periods of nuclear deliberation, there is little evidence to suggest domestic law or institutions have represented an important constraint to Japanese proliferation.

Article IX of the Japanese Constitution prohibits Japan from using war as a method to settle disputes. Yet, Article IX of Japan's Constitution has not dictated Japan's nuclear decision-making. Rather, it tends to act as a constraint only in-so-much as a particular administration construes it to be one. And often it is construed in such a manner as to ensure

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[132] Difilippo. *Japan's Nuclear Disarmament Policy*, 46.

[133] Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation," 188.

Japan can legitimately refuse a role in U.S. foreign policy adventures that are not in Japan's core interests. For example, Article IX was initially understood to prevent Japanese nuclear acquisition. However, by 1970 the Japan Defense Agency "formalized…[a new] interpretation in doctrine, stating that it is possible in a legal sense to possess a small-yield nuclear weapon without violating the Constitution."[134]

Article IX has not only been construed to allow Japan to acquire a nuclear weapon but, increasingly, to expand or constrain its military authorizations depending on the circumstances. The Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB), an executive institution, has historically provided legal interpretations of Article IX. In 1955, the CLB modestly interpreted the Constitution as allowing Japan to maintain a security as long as it was not in excess of the "minimum necessary level."[135] However, CLB interpretations of Article IX have evolved based on expanding security needs. Most recently, with tensions flaring between Japan, North Korea and China, the CLB generously expanded its interpretation to align with Prime Minister Abe's more expansive views of national defense to include the right to collective defense.[136] In many instances Article IX has been used to keep the U.S. at arm's length and shelter Japan from entrapment within the alliance. During American-led war in Vietnam and Korea, Japan repeatedly invoked Article IX as constraining their ability to contribute fighting forces. Far from a constraint, Article IX has shown itself to be a flexible instrument for Japan to dictate the terms of its alliance with the United States.

A second law, the Basic Law on Atomic Energy of 1955, is also alleged to be a constraint on Japanese nuclear ambitions. The law establishes that "the research, development, and utilization of atomic energy must be limited to peaceful purposes and carried out independently under democratic management."[137] Effectively, the law requires that any change to Japan's nuclear stance require a parliamentary vote. If Japan considered

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134 Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet)," 84.

135 Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 47.

136 "Abe Cites Need for Japan to Fully Exercise the Right to Collective Self-defense," *Japan Times*, March 1, 2016, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/01/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-cites-need-japan-fully-exercise-right-collective-self-defense/.s

137 Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet)," 88.

nuclear breakout, the law could act as a roadblock that, alongside the Atomic Energy Commission that enforces it, would deter policymakers from pursuing the nuclear option.[138]

While, the Basic Law on Atomic Energy could complicate Japanese nuclearization, there is little evidence it acted as a central factor motivating Japan's past decision making. Japanese cost/benefit studies have not included domestic laws or institutions including the Basic Law on Atomic Energy as a barrier to Japanese nuclearization in their analysis. While the analyses speak vaguely of negative domestic political consequences, there is no evidence domestic law has been considered a particularly acute constraint. In making their decision, Japanese nuclear cost/benefit analyses focused on broad concerns: fear of Chinese nuclear blackmail, international opprobrium, the potential for a regional arms race and harm to the U.S.-Japan alliance.[139] One can imagine a scenario in which a particularly aggressive Japanese Prime Minister undertakes the politically divisive decision to pursue nuclear weapons against the will of the Diet. In such a case, the Basic Law on Atomic Energy could act as a tool to constrain the Prime Minister and force the Prime Minister to confront the legislature in his pursuit of nuclear weapons. Otherwise, if the Prime Minister and the Diet are acting in harmony, there is no reason to believe the Diet would not overturn the law. It is more likely the law will act as a bellwether for Japan's larger view on nuclear acquisition than a constraint.

D. CONCLUSION

The period of Japan's potential nuclear breakout sheds light on the key factors that shaped Japan's nuclear restraint. Importantly, this analysis demonstrates that Japan's decision to exercise restraint was contested and the outcome not foreordained. Japan's contemporary identity as a non-nuclear state was formed by policy and institutions that were adopted not for ideological reasons, but rather, pragmatic political considerations that placed electoral survival and Japanese security at the fore. Japan's identity as a non-

[138] Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet)," 88.

[139] Kase, "The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization," 65–66.

nuclear, pacifist state was shaped in a security environment that has allowed Japan to maintain its pacifist identity while also receiving the benefits of nuclear deterrence. In an altered security environment, Japanese identity might be reshaped.

The strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance dissuaded Japan from acquiring nuclear weapons in the aftermath of China's nuclear testing in 1964 despite the motivation of its leadership to pursue the option. Having been assured of their safety, Japan codified their position in legal and normative institutions that simultaneously repudiated nuclear weapons while relying on the security provided by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The legacy of the '60s and '70s, including strong institutions and legal roadblocks have only served to increase the costs of any future nuclear breakout. However, Japan is no different from other states. Its nuclear restraint to-date is based on a deliberative process that places national security at the top of its decision-making.

Japan has enjoyed a continuous, credible and stable alliance with the U.S. with adequate provisions to mitigate concerns of entrapment or abandonment. In moments of heightened security concern Japan has continually judged the U.S. alliance to be an essential component to nuclear abstinence. While the door to proliferation remains open to Japan, the U.S. alliance has to-date obviated Japan's motivation to pursue a nuclear option.

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III. INDIA AND THE BOMB

India's decision to acquire nuclear weapons was an incremental and highly complex process. Multiple factors drove India's decision-making and those factors influenced India in different ways at different times. The following chapter is written chronologically and highlights three important periods in the development of India's nuclear weapons. In each period, India's nuclear decisions were influenced by international and domestic inputs that sometimes progressed and other times retarded progress towards nuclear acquisition.

The first section (1944–1974) explores the start of India's civilian nuclear program through its first nuclear test—a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974. This analysis finds that India's desire for international status, emerging regional security competition, and short-term political considerations propelled India to advance its nuclear program in the direction of acquiring a bomb. However, India's acquisition of nuclear weapons was limited by a sincere ideological aversion to the bomb, the rise of the international non-proliferation regime, and a reluctance to divert scarce national resources.

The second section (1974–1991) looks at India's period of nuclear ambiguity following the PNE. The chapter concludes the PNE temporarily satisfied India's nuclear ambitions and sent a message to the world of its technological prowess and latent capability. Further, Soviet security guarantees ensured Indian security concerns were met. With little incentive to incur international backlash from further testing and consumed with sectarian conflict and slow economic growth at home, India had little appetite to further advance its program.

The third section (1991–1998) discusses India motivation's for shedding its nuclear ambiguity following the end of the Cold War and finds they resulted from two equally important factors. First, are status and security concerns in the post-Cold War period. In the aftermath of the Cold War, India found itself in a highly unstable international environment. India faced a newly nuclear Pakistan and a growing Chinese threat without the support of its now defunct Soviet benefactor. Internally, India remained poor and politically weak and had begun to fall behind other regional actors. India sought nuclear

acquisition in part to deter its adversaries, but primarily as a status symbol that might bring the kind of international influence its economic and political power could not bring. Second, India no longer felt ideologically attached to nonproliferation. No longer the leader of the non-alignment movement and unleashed from the Gandhian traditions of its founding generation, India felt free to abandon its nuclear abstinence. In fact, influenced by the behavior of the great powers during the Cold War and their unwillingness to abandon nuclear weapons, India felt a moral impetus to take a seat at the nuclear table in order to have greater influence on the issue.

A. 1944–1974: THE ROAD TO AMBIGUITY

The early stages of India's nuclear program speak to its role as an important status symbol. Relatively well-funded, the program reflected the optimism of post-colonial India and Indian confidence in its ability to harness cutting edge technology to promote robust economic growth. Although the founders of India's nuclear establishment publicly claimed the program would not be used to develop weapons, the historical record suggests otherwise. The founders of India's nuclear program viewed Indian acquisition of the bomb as an inevitable if not desirable reflection of India's natural status as a great power. However, the vast majority of Indian policymakers and the public remained either skeptical or indifferent to India's nuclear program. Ideologically, a strategy non-alignment and a commitment to the Gandhian tradition of non-violence tempered Indian motivations. Moreover, India was a poor country with scant resources. A nuclear weapons program was viewed as a luxury reserved for wealthy states.

Despite these reservations, by the 1960s India could not ignore an increasingly dangerous regional security environment. Consecutive wars against China and Pakistan as well as China's nuclear tests necessitated a political response that would reassure the public of Indian security. Ultimately, India resolved to conduct a PNE judging it to be a solution that addressed India's security concerns without violating India's ideological commitments.

1. A Status Program

From its inception the Indian nuclear program was imbued with prestige and importance. Begun in 1944 with a grant provided by the Sir Dorab Tata Trust to a dynamic young physicist named Homi Bhabha, the program embodied the optimism of the new Indian state.[140] Bhabha and other advocates believed atomic energy held the promise of jump-starting Indian industrial development through a nearly endless supply of cheap and reliable energy.[141] Harnessing the atom would demonstrate Indian scientific prowess in a new, Western-dominated field of science and help shed the British legacy of constraining Indian industry.[142] India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru supported Bhabha's efforts and spearheaded the passage of the Atomic Energy Act of 1948 which formally established India's nuclear program.[143]

Early Indian leaders were fearful of the impact to civilian-military relations and "militarization" of Indian society.[144] This philosophical view influenced India's approach to nuclear policy and its foreign policy. Nehru and the Indian foreign policy establishment assumed a position of non-alignment in world politics and "spoke out vigorously against the growing nuclear arsenals of both superpowers."[145] A descendant of the, "Gandhian legacy of the Indian nationalist movement," Nehru viewed war and military spending as, "at best, a necessary evil."[146]

Nonetheless, Indian leaders were pragmatic realists and understood the security implications of a post-Nagasaki and Hiroshima world. Despite his ideological

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[140] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 16.

[141] This turned out to be a false view. Investment in India's nuclear program turned out to be expensive and diverted resources away from other economic drivers like infrastructure and infant industries. As this became clear, protection of India's civilian nuclear program became dependent on support for the military component. For more see: Raju G. C. Thomas and Amit Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security* (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner Publishers, 2000), 28.

[142] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 17.

[143] Perkovich, 18.

[144] Ganguly. "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 150.

[145] Ganguly, 151.

[146] Ganguly. 150.

underpinnings, Nehru recognized early the potential of India's nuclear program. As the Indian Parliament debated the passage of the 1948 Atomic Energy Act, Prime Minister Nehru clearly implied the program had the potential for future military application which necessitated high levels of secrecy over the program.[147] In a 1946 speech Nehru provided his beliefs frankly, "I have no doubt India will develop her scientific researches and I hope Indian scientists will use the atomic force for constructive purposes. But if India is threatened, she will inevitably try to defend herself by all means at her disposal."[148] Ultimately, Nehru confronted his uncertain views on the subject by generally speaking out against nuclear weapons while simultaneously looking the other way as his chief scientist, Bhabha, advanced the program towards weaponization.

The establishment of the 1954 Department of Atomic Energy provided Bhabha with the resources and bureaucratic freedom to advance the Indian program in ways he saw fit. With little oversight, Bhabha made plans for acquiring fission material and conducting analysis of nuclear weapons production. By the late 1950s Bhabha openly shared his belief that India should possess nuclear weapons and could produce them within eighteen months.[149] From the beginning, India's nuclear establishment was relatively well-funded, untethered from oversight, imbued with nationalist optimism, and built ready to transition into military production if and when a political decision occurred.

Generally speaking, until the mid-1960s nuclear non-proliferation concerns were not a central priority of policymakers in the U.S. and Canada. India took advantage of this period to aggressively expand its capabilities by reaching for tools from abroad. In 1960, India received its first fissile material when the Canadian-Indian Reactor, U.S. (CIRUS), imported from Canada, came online, creating an annual output of about 9–12kg of plutonium.[150] Early on, India operated the plant in such a way that it would produce ideal fissile material - plutonium from CIRUS would be used in Pokhran I, India's PNE over a

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147 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 18–21.

148 Perkovich, 14.

149 Perkovich, 14; Raju Thomas and Amit Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security* (Boulder: L. Rienner Publishers, 2000), 15.

150 Thomas and Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security*, 15.

decade later. Bhabha also used Cold War anxieties in furtherance of Indian aims by courting both Soviet and U.S. nuclear industries. Fearful of losing influence in the region, Bhabha extracted generous benefits from Western powers.[151] The U.S. Atoms for Peace program provided India with the technical know-how to produce a plutonium extraction plan and provided technical learning to 1,104 Indian scientists and engineers.[152]

At this time few safeguards or oversight programs existed to verify civilian nuclear infrastructure was not being repurposed for military use. While these early agreements included clauses that components were to be used for peaceful purposes, there was little to no enforcement. In one instance in 1956, Bhabha successfully lobbied the newly formed International Atomic Energy to weaken safeguards that may have complicated India's repurposing of fissile material.[153] And, to a large extent, Western intelligence sources were confident in Indian assurances. In 1958 the Central Intelligence Agency noted, "There are no indications of Indian interest to exploit the military application of nuclear energy."[154] By the time non-proliferation concerns became more urgent and restrictions put in place, India would have much of the knowledge and resources necessity to develop a nuclear capability. In sum, India's nuclear capability was furnished to a large extent by the same establishment that came to want to constrain it.

2. An Increasingly Fraught Security Environment

The early days of India's nuclear program tended to operate in a state disconnected from international relations. This is largely because the security challenges that would come to define Indian foreign policy would not fully mature until the 1960s. Early on, India mostly focused inward as the country sought to realize its post-colonial ambitions. What foreign policy ventures it undertook, however, reflected its ideological origins. Born from the seeds of non-violence and outside oppression, India applied its ideological beliefs to the international system, refusing to conform to the "colonial powers." Instead India sought

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151 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 37.

152 Perkovich, 28.

153 Perkovich, 28.

154 Thomas and Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security*, 17.

international influence as leader of the non-aligned movement—a grouping of states committed to neutrality in the Cold War conflict. Though both the Soviets and the United States made overtures to India, and provided aid, India stubbornly remained independent, rejecting any political requirements attached to such enticements.[155]

India's regional rivals, untethered by a policy of non-alignment were more comfortable seeking outside assistance to strengthen their military situation. Pakistan's attempts to claim territory in disputed Kashmir had been decisively repulsed in 1948, leaving a state too weak and unstable to confront India. To remedy its situation, Pakistan pursued a relationship with the United States under the guise of anti-communism and concluded a security agreement in 1953.[156] Although the U.S. security relationship would fail to secure Pakistan during its forthcoming conflict with India in 1965 and 1971, the security relationship poisoned the potential for a close ties between the United States and India. Indians would come to regard U.S. intentions in the region with distrust and the rejection of U.S. positions as an act of sovereignty.

Indian aloofness and disregard for foreign affairs would be punished harshly by its other neighbor, China. Relations between Communist China and India began warmly enough and included reciprocal state visits in 1954 but relations gradually declined over disagreements over territorial claims and Indian support to the Dalai Lama. China's desire to aggressively exercise its claims of national sovereignty culminated in the 1962 Sino-Indian War. A brief conflict, Chinese attacks into contested border areas caught the Indian military off-guard and they were force to retreat from the border in defeat. Having made its case, China declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew from Indian Territory.[157]

India's defeat by China led to a reappraisal of its foreign policy relationships and military preparedness. Internally, India drastically increased it defense expenditures. The following year's defense budget nearly doubled and India developed a five-year plan that

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155 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 41.

156 Perkovich, 47–48.

157 Perkovich, 45–46.

envisioned a massive increase in military spending.[158] Though India nominally maintained its policy of non-alignment, it courted assistance from the great powers to counter Chinese aggression. Unsatisfied with Pakistan's efforts to combat communism, the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations were eager to repair relations with India by offering expansive military aid and ordering the USS *Enterprise* to the Indian Ocean in a show of support.[159] The Soviet Union, fixated on the simultaneously occurring Cuban Missile Crisis ignored Indian calls for assistance in an effort to ensure Chinese support should the situation in Cuba escalate. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the war, the Soviet Union agreed to provide India with military hardware.[160] The Sino-Indian War forced India to reconsider its national defense. This included reconsidering its strict ideological commitment to non-alignment and the state of its material defenses.

3. China Conducts its Test and India Pursues Security Guarantees

In 1964, two events occurred that created an inflection point in India's relationship to the bomb. First, the death of Prime Minister Nehru and his replacement by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri brought to prominence by a political coalition seeking to block the nomination of other, more assertive rivals. Shastri held less political influence and proved himself a reactionary head of state.[161] The loss of a strong and experienced executive with a weaker and credentialed replacement helps explain India's tepid response to a second important event that year, China's nuclear test.

Initial Indian reactions to China's nuclear test were not particularly forceful. Though Shastri denounced the tests as a "shock and danger to world peace," Indian attention was divided between two other contemporary events—Khruschev's fall from power and widespread domestic food shortages.[162] In India's press, some downplayed China's test, pointing out that fundamentally China's conventional forces remained the

[158] Perkovich, 46.

[159] Perkovich, 45.

[160] Perkovich, 62.

[161] Perkovich, 63.

[162] Perkovich, 66.

primary threat since China maintained a limited nuclear arsenal, primitive nuclear devices, and limited delivery capabilities.[163] Shastri, an advocate of Indian nuclear abstinence agreed and stood by India's position of abstinence.

Yet, the ramifications for India were clear, China could now "subject a non-nuclear India to periodic blackmail [and] weaken its people's spirit of resistance."[164] A growing class of pro-bomb advocates saw an opportunity to move India in a new direction and seized the moment. One politician, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, shed any pretense and called for Indian to acquire a nuclear weapon.[165] Similarly, Bhabha took the airwaves eight days following China's test and made a thinly veiled case for India to acquire nuclear weapons. He noted that nuclear acquisition would offset Chinese conventional superiority, provide a cheap substitute to military expansion, and be accomplished in 18 months.[166]

A figure in high regard, Bhabha's speech created strong political pressure on Shastri to reconsider the nuclear option. Already weak and besieged on all sides by a food crisis and calls for a strong response to China, Shastri sought a compromise that would satisfy the pro-bomb advocates while maintaining India's international commitments to nuclear abstinence. Bhabha offered Shastri a possible solution in a plan the United States had offered internationally in the late 1950s. The plan called for the use of nuclear weapons to conduct large scale excavations which they called peaceful nuclear explosions (PNE).[167] Though fundamentally indistinguishable from a nuclear bomb, a PNE would satisfy pro-bomb advocates while nominally maintaining India's "no bomb" policy. Seeking a political win, Shistri agreed to allow Bhabha to prepare for a PNE, a major step towards developing a nuclear weapon. Though Shistri agreed to the PNE, it is not clear the extent to which

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163 Perkovich, 78.

164 Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 152–153.

165 Forefather of the Bharatiya Janata Party—the party in power during India's 1998 nuclear test; Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II,"153.

166 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb,* 71.

167 Perkovich, 85.

Shastri or others outside the nuclear complex understood the implications of the decision.[168]

In the wake of the Chinese atomic tests, Shastri had listened to President Lyndon Johnson's affirmation of U.S. commitment to Asia and also become interested in the possibility of a security guarantee. Shastri sought a solution that would help alleviate the bomb issue and address Indian security concerns. Although India remained committed to non-proliferation, it remained keenly aware of the risks Chinese proliferation presented and thus urgently sought an alliance with a major power that could provide security guarantees. Initially, India sought a security guarantee consistent with its non-aligned status. From 1964–1967, India pursued on several occasions a joint arrangement with the Soviet Union and the United States.[169] First at the United Nations Disarmament Conference in 1965–66, and later during visits to Moscow and Washington in 1967. Unfortunately, Indian efforts were met only with vague, unsatisfactory responses. Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union viewed a joint venture as unrealistic given the requirement for consultation prior to responding to any threat to India. Besides, if either side fell into disagreement the guarantee would be void.[170]

The U.S. had three reasons not to supply concrete guarantees and commitments to India. First, the Johnson administration was unwilling to commit the resources to underwrite the risks of a security guarantee. As the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union Llewellyn Thompson noted, "I would not like to see 100 million American lives places in escrow for renewed hostilities in Ladakh at some distant time when the Chinese might have reestablished an effective military alliance with the Soviet Union." Second, extending security guarantees to India threatened the credibility and meaningfulness of security guarantees elsewhere. U.S. policymakers were fearful of the impacts of offering blanket security guarantees to every state that might proliferate. Moreover, should the U.S. provide India, a non-aligned state with a guarantee, the benefits of a U.S. alliance would be

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[168] Perkovich, 84.

[169] Chiddick, "Indo-Soviet Relations, 1966–1971," *Millennium* 3, no. 1 (1974): 21.

[170] Chiddick, "Indo-Soviet Relations," 21–22.

undermined.[171] U.S. policymakers, whom had never afforded much priority to its South Asian foreign policy, were unwilling to provide the kind of commitments that would satisfy Indian security anxieties. Third, by the late 1960s Washington would begin to place a priority on Sino-U.S. ties and winding down the war in Vietnam. U.S. commitments in Asia were turning out to be unexpectedly costly and domestically unpopular.

The prospect of a security guarantee from the Soviet Union in the mid-1960s also seemed unlikely. Through the mid-1960s Soviet Union had undertaken a "dualist" policy towards Pakistan and India on the subcontinent, mediating conflict and combating American and Chinese influence.[172] However, by playing an important role in mediating the end of the Indo-Pakistani War at Tashkent in 1965, the Soviets had provided themselves diplomatic legitimacy in the region as an honest broker. In addition, both India and Pakistan benefited from Soviet arms sales and economic assistance. The Soviet dualist position was however, untenable. Soviet assistance to Pakistan, particularly in the form of arms sales irritated the Indians. At least for the time being, the Soviets were unwilling to provide a guarantee. Frustrated by its failure, India temporarily ended its search for a joint guarantee.

Following China's nuclear test and, in the following year, conflict with Pakistan, Western sources began to suspect India might decide to pursue a nuclear bomb to respond to its security challenges. By the mid-1960s U.S. intelligence agencies estimated, "India probably will detonate a nuclear device and proceed to develop nuclear weapons."[173] Yet, India remained conflicted and as NPT negotiations approached in 1967 India faced a difficult choice as to whether it should sign the document. On one hand, a decision not to sign the NPT risked harming relations between the two major powers and giving the impression they had rejected an emerging international consensus on nuclear proliferation. On the other hand, India had serious security concerns. India also had moral reasons to reject the NPT, pointing to the hypocritical unwillingness of the major powers to neither willingly disarm nor provide security guarantees to non-nuclear states. Ever conscious of

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171 Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft,* 89–90.

172 Chiddick, "Indo-Soviet Relations," 19–20.

173 Thomas and Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security,* 20.

status, India complained that this division would create a "nuclear apartheid" in which predominantly white states would enjoy the benefits of nuclear weapons.[174]

Other contemporary disputes also impacted Indian thinking in regards the NPT. Around this time the Johnson administration had persuaded India to undertake a series of liberalizing economic policies and used the provision of food aid to persuade Indian policymakers. Accepted under duress, Johnson's policies led to a severe devaluation of the Rupee and an increase in economic inequality. The failure of U.S. policies, the use of food of food aid as a coercive diplomatic, and the colonial undertones of the affair, left India with a bad taste and less willing to satisfy U.S. desires.[175] Indian annoyance with U.S. also had the effect of pushing India towards the Soviets. Having ridden to victory in 1967 with a promise to eliminate poverty, Indira Gandhi sought Soviet help in implementing her economic platform.[176] Indo-Soviet cooperation on economic policies would help create conditions for their security agreement.

In 1971, two important events impacted India's security situation. First, India won a resounding military victory against Pakistan. In the short term, India's victory secured it a dominant position on the sub-continent and demonstrated India's military superiority over Pakistan. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, in the long term India's victory over Pakistan, which resulted in the loss of East Pakistan, would motivate Pakistan to pursue a nuclear weapon. Second, India signed the Indo-Soviet "Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation" with the Soviet Union. For India, the treaty marked an end to their long sought security guarantee and an opportunity to engage and economic and military cooperation.[177]

For the Soviets, three major developments persuaded the Soviets to end their dualist policy and begin a much closer alliance with India. First, in March, a major border skirmish occurred at Amur-Ussuri along the Chinese and Russian border. The skirmish represented

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[174] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 143–145; Ganguly. "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 158.

[175] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 146.

[176] Perkovich, 146–147.

[177] Perkovich, 162.

a symbolically important moment in the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations and Soviet leaders increasingly viewed India as a potential balance against China. As evidence, the following May, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhev proposed Asian collective security aimed at South Asia that envisaged a relationship "backed by military aid from [the] outside, if requested."[178] Second, political turmoil in Pakistan led to the resignation of the pro-Soviet Ayub Khan, significantly reducing Soviet influence in Pakistan.[179] Third, Sino-U.S. detente had made the Soviets fearful of losing its presence in South Asia. The combination of these three elements: an increasingly fraught relationship with China, reduced influence in Pakistan and a fear of losing its influence in South Asia created fertile conditions for an Indo-Soviet partnership.

4. India Conducts its PNE

Following several years of development, India's nuclear establishment had advanced enough to successfully carry through on a PNE, it remained only a question of political authorization. Distracted by events at home, authorization was slow in coming but were assisted by Chinese thermonuclear and ballistic testing in the mid to late '60s which created fears in the Indian political system that China was advancing more rapidly than expected.[180] Yet, Indians remained skeptical of the benefits of moving forward with its nuclear capability. Public opinion polling from the period show that although most Indians had become comfortable with India acquiring a nuclear bomb, support dropped precipitously when such a capability was tied to a reduction in domestic funding.[181] And India would need to divert funding to sustain a nuclear weapons program. A study undertaken in the 1970s found that India could not afford a weapons program without significantly diverting resources from other investments.[182] Simply put, democratic India

[178] Chiddick, "Indo-Soviet Relations," 29–30.

[179] Chiddick, 30.

[180] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 157.

[181] Perkovich, 159.

[182] Perkovich, 159.

could not engage in a risky diversion of state resources without potentially drawing the ire of its citizens. Thus, nuclear weapons were viewed as a political risk.

Despite its reservations, India's conducted a PNE for the same reasons Shastri had started the process a decade prior. India felt a nuclear test would demonstrate to the world Indian technical prowess and status as a powerful state. The test would also send a message to its neighbors that India possessed at a minimum, a latent nuclear deterrent. Moreover, the peaceful nature of the test would ensure India could claim it had not violated the NPT.[183] In 1972, although it is unknown who provided it, political authorization for test preparations were given.

It is not entirely clear why Indira Gandhi chose May, 1974 to conduct the PNE. It is possibly due to domestic political considerations and pressure from the nuclear establishment.[184] Although Gandhi could point to victory in the 1971 War against Pakistan and some economic successes, by 1974 the Indian economy had fallen into distress. High inflation, unemployment, drought, food insecurity and corruption scandals plagued the country.[185] Although there is no direct evidence, it is plausible Gandhi authorized the test in order to change the prevailing political narrative and boost her popularity at home. India's nuclear establishment had certainly stepped up pressure on Gandhi to conduct the test. Motivated by the potential for significant budget cuts to the Indian nuclear program, its leaders had taken to making overly optimistic predictions about the potential ramifications of a test to Gandhi in the hopes that a successful nuclear test might reinvigorate the program and ensure funding.[186] For a time, Gandhi dragged her feet, wary of the risks and holding onto a sincere moral disgust with nuclear weapons. However, by 1974 she had relented and authorized the test. On 18 May 1974, conducted its first nuclear test at Pokhran, demonstrating India's capability to the world.

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183 Ganguly, "India's Pathway to Pokhran II," 159.

184 Ganguly, 160.

185 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb,* 168.

186 Perkovich, 177–188.

B. 1974–1991: INDIAN AMBIGUITY

The period following India's PNE until the end of the Cold War is a period of political stasis in Indian advancement towards nuclear weapons. Many outsiders, including India's scientific community naturally assumed India would continue nuclear weapons development following the PNE. However, the political blowback from the test reinforced to Indian politicians the risks of nuclear weapons development. Internationally, India remained constrained as leader of the non-aligned movement and continued to cast itself as ideologically opposed to the nuclear proliferation that defined great power competition. Internally, India remained a poor democracy with neither the resources nor political will to divert the scarce resources available towards a nuclear program. From a security perspective, India had demonstrated to regional rivals the technical proficiency to build a bomb. With Pakistan licking its wounds from its defeat in 1971 and insured against Chinese aggression by Soviet security guarantees, India felt comfortable maintaining an ambiguous nuclear stance.

At the same time, the seeds for India's eventual overt nuclear strategy can be also be traced back to this period. Domestic turmoil underpinned by ethnic and religious tension in the period began to weaken India in a way that would later open the door for more radical political elements to enter the political system. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan meanwhile, once again made South Asia a central battlefield in the Cold War bringing increasing arms spending and instability to the region. Pakistan, which had vowed "never again" in the aftermath of the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, exploited a renewed alliance with the United States to once again contest Indian hegemony and acquire a nuclear weapon.

1. The Aftermath of the PNE

The response to India's successful PNE was mixed. As had been hoped, Gandhi received an initial boost in popularity and lauded the accomplishment of the Indian nuclear establishment. Abroad, the response to India's nuclear test varied. The Soviets and French sent congratulations while Canada and Japan expressed regret and disappointment with India's decision. The United States under Kissinger's direction took a more neutral tone, fearful of further undermining relations between the two states. China, unwilling to validate

India, largely ignored the event. The most meaningful response came from Pakistan, which, stewing in the aftermath of its traumatizing defeat, vowed to acquire a nuclear weapon of its own.[187]

Any positive political outcomes that emanated from the PNE were eclipsed by events at home. Poor economic conditions and ethnic squabbles at home once again moved to the forefront of Indian political concerns. Although international opprobrium had been fairly restrained, India felt some measure of diplomatic blowback from its decision, particularly in the form of new restrictions on its ability to purchase and receive nuclear materials.[188] Rather than alleviate Gandhi's troubles, the nuclear test seemed to only add to her concerns. Thus, when India's nuclear establishment approached her about taking the next steps to further India's capabilities, Gandhi denied them saying, "No more. That's it."[189] India had accomplished its limited goals, and the political interest in the nuclear program, for the time being, dwindled.

In the aftermath of the test, domestic concerns consumed India's political energy. Economic and political instability continued to plague the country. The Carter administration further depressed India's motivations by prioritizing non-proliferation. Moreover, as leader of the non-aligned movement and proponent of the non-proliferation movement, India continued to feel morally obligated to maintain its ambiguity. Even India's nuclear establishment had incentives to slow the program as it had become increasingly concerned that advancing program might force it to share control with the military complex of India.[190] Yet, India could not entirely ignore the nuclear question. As the decade neared its end, it was becoming clear Pakistan was aggressively pursuing a nuclear weapons capability which meant, "We (India) might have to consider [acquiring nuclear weapons]."[191]

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[187] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 177–188.

[188] Perkovich, 186; Chiddick, "Indo-Soviet Relations," 32.

[189] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 192.

[190] Perkovich, 225.

[191] Perkovich, 220.

2. Security Challenges Return

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 brought disruption to South Asia and further eroded India's relationship with Pakistan. The Reagan administration, seeking to undermine the Soviet invasion, made the decision to provide enormous quantities of military and economic aid to Pakistan under the auspices that Pakistan support U.S. efforts against the Soviets. In addition, the Reagan administration showed a willingness to look the other way as Pakistan advanced its nuclear program. Worried by Pakistan's sudden influx of money, conventional arms and removal of constraints on its nuclear program, India considered its options against Pakistan. India even briefly considered preventative strikes against Pakistan's nuclear program; however, U.S. pressure, fear of escalation and political costs, particularly India's large Muslim population, made the option untenable.[192] Instead, India made the decision to maintain its conventional military advantage edge through massive increases in conventional military spending. From 1981–87 Indian military spending increased 142%.[193] In 1983, possibly in the wake of reporting which wrongly suggested an imminent nuclear test by Pakistan, India even briefly consider further nuclear tests; however, Prime Minister Gandhi scrapped these plans at the last minute.[194]

Despite Gandhi's restraint, relations between India and Pakistan remained strained. Renewed conflict over Kashmir and ethnic uprisings further inflamed rhetoric and posturing on both sides. In 1984, India's military conducted a particularly bloody and controversial operation against a Sikh uprising in Punjab. In the aftermath of the violence, Gandhi's Sikh bodyguards assassinated her in 1984. The loss of Gandhi represented the removal of a strong anti-nuclear bulwark in India. Her son, Rajiv maintained his mother's morale aversion to nuclear weapons but he did not possess her political instincts. India continued to experience political and domestic tumult as Rajiv's administration found itself

192 Perkovich, 241.

193 Perkovich, 231.

194 Perkovich, 229.

weakened by corruption and decay.[195] Chaos at home left little energy for Indian politics to seriously revisit the nuclear issue for the time being.

Despite India's political stagnation, India's nuclear capabilities continued to progress. Though politically weak, Rajiv was personally fond of technology and felt comfortable pressing forward with India's high-end capabilities, particularly in the form of advanced guided munitions.[196] Similarly, India's nuclear establishment continued to press forward, as always, remaining one step ahead of the political class. The failure of India's nuclear program to provide India with sustained economic growth had led to Indian disenchantment nuclear power. Fearful of backlash, India's nuclear establishment began to view the sustainment of its community as tied to the viability of India's nuclear weapons program. Consequently, without urging, by 1988–90, the nuclear establishment reportedly had 12 nuclear weapons ready to be assembled and shipped to strike aircraft in the event of nuclear war against Pakistan.[197]

It also appeared the normative constraints against nuclear weapons had begun to wane as a new generation of military and political leaders began to enter service. This new generation of India leaders held different conception of India's place in the world. They had only known a world defined by nuclear weapons and viewed Indian efforts to recast the world as naive. Formative experiences like India's helplessness to counter the U.S. deployment of the USS *Enterprise* during the 1971 conflict confirmed the need for India to acquire tools that could would ensure Indian sovereignty.[198] Yet, despite Pakistan's provocative pursuit of a nuclear weapon and investment in conventional weapons, the military situation in India still did not necessitate the redirecting of limited national resources. Unlike Pakistan, Indian politicians remained accountable to resource pressures. For the time being, widespread poverty made bomb acquisition seem less important. Political survivability depended on strength and stability at home. And chaos ruled the day.

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[195] Perkovich, 288.

[196] Perkovich, 292.

[197] Perkovich, 293.

[198] Perkovich, 223.

Between 1989 and 1991 India experienced four different Prime Ministers, none sought the risk political risk nor distraction that would result from pursuing nuclear weapons.[199]

C. 1991–1998: A SHORTCUT TO GREAT POWER STATUS

India's final decision to abandon its nuclear ambiguity and adopt an overt nuclear stance was driven by security anxieties, declining of ideological and economic constraints, and concerns over India's status in the post-Cold War international system. By the 1990s, strategic competition with Pakistan and China had begun to accelerate. India's ambiguous nuclear stance that had served its security needs since 1974 was no longer sufficient in a world in which both Pakistan and China could field advanced delivery systems. Moreover, in the wake of the loss of the Soviet Union as its security patron, India could no longer count on the Soviet Union to subsidize India's strategic deficits.

Perhaps more important than what now drove India's program is what no longer constrained it. In the 1970s Gandhi felt constrained by India's political economy, India's international moral position and domestic political reluctance to acquire nuclear weapons. By the 1990s these constraints had largely been removed. Economic reforms had made resource diversion towards a nuclear weapons program less costly. Moreover, India's rejection of the international non-proliferation regime and the evolution of its ethical views towards nuclear weapons removed important normative constraints. A new generation of politicians less constrained by the traditions and morality of their forebears had begun to enter the political system with a different conception of how India should conduct itself in the post-Cold War era. Their beliefs were influenced by a sense that great powers, including the United States, had acted with disregard towards Indian interests. Nuclear acquisition in the post-Cold War era, particularly in the face of U.S. opposition and a fledgling economy, would ensure India would be self-assured and independent.

199 Perkovich, 317.

1. Insecurity in a New Era

The end of the Cold War marked a period of self-reflection and potential change in India. For almost forty years India had self-constrained from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Its Gandhian traditions and normative identity as a leader in the non-proliferation movement instilled in India duty to remain abstinent. Yet, the great powers had shown no such restraint and been unpunished for their actions. Despite promises to move toward eliminating their arsenal, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union made meaningful advances in the direction of disarmament. Rather, they had advanced and further ingrained their nuclear capabilities. India's neighbors had done the same. China had advanced its nuclear capabilities well beyond India and Pakistan had nearly acquired a capability of its own. In Pakistan's case, the United States had appeared to indulge or at least look the other way as Pakistan advanced.[200] For India, the moral argument and strategic against India acquiring nuclear weapons appeared increasingly weak.

Several other changes in the early 1990s also helped fuel the impetus for India to make its program overt. In 1991, India began economic reforms. Over the next several years, though India would remain poor overall, the economy improved to the point where India could better afford a nuclear program. Second, India had lost its Soviet patron. The loss of the Soviet Union represented the loss of "a critical counterweight to the Chinese threat…[and] support of a veto-wielding power in the United Nations on the critical question of Kashmir."[201] With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. remained the only state capable of providing security guarantees to India. However, the U.S. had been an unreliable partner to India, pulled away by competing interests in the region. Through the 1980s the United States had provided support and arms to the Pakistani regime in support of operations against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. More disappointing for India, the U.S. had shown reluctance to strong-arm Pakistani efforts to acquire a nuclear weapon.[202] India had sought to improve its relationship with the U.S. and had engaged in

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[200] Perkovich, 317.

[201] Perkovich, 167.

[202] Perkovich, 264.

"high technology links"—yet, successive U.S. administrations seemed torn between catering to Pakistani and Indian interests. In a revealing remark following Pakistan's nuclear test in 1998, the U.S. ambassador to India noted that "the U.S. had a special security relationship with Pakistan, too, and could not simply take India's 'side' on the issue."[203] Taken altogether, India felt the U.S. could not be counted on as a reliable partner to guarantee Indian security.

Third, the international community had begun revisiting the international non-proliferation regime looking to extend the NPT and implement the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). This would require India to make difficult and explicit decisions regarding its nuclear position. Perversely, international non-proliferation priorities in the aftermath of the Cold War helped motivate India's nuclear program. U.S. efforts to contain the spread of Soviet nuclear technology and prioritize non-proliferation pushed India to make a definitive decision on its nuclear position.

India's view on the NPT remained unchanged since the 1960s, the treaty was insulting to India's international status and a continuation of nuclear apartheid.[204] However, India's reasoning on the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was more complicated. The CTBT would act as a definite constraint on India's ability to conduct nuclear testing if it should decide to adapt a nuclear program in the future. India could reject the NPT while legitimately attesting itself to be against proliferation. The CTBT left no room for flexibility. The rejection of the CTBT would be an implicit admission that India believed it might acquire a nuclear bomb.

Indian debate over the CTBT was illustrative and demonstrated how much India's moral position on the bomb had changed. In the 1960s; India's believed the country should reject nuclear weapons since nuclear weapons were morally repugnant. By the 1990s, opinion had shifted, Indians increasingly believed the country had to acquire nuclear weapons in order to viewed as an international player and claim a seat at the nuclear table alongside other major powers. Only when India had a seat at the table could India enjoy

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[203] Perkovich, 412.

[204] Perkovich, 321.

the influence necessary to eventually eliminate nuclear weapons.[205] After some internal debate on the topic, India declined to sign the CTBT. The decision effectively ended India's morale position as a non-proliferator and marked the end to any remaining ideologically restraints on nuclear acquisition.[206]

Though by no means assured, by 1996 indicators pointed to an imminent Indian nuclear test. Unlike earlier decades, India's economy could support a nuclear weapons program. The nuclear establishment, once again looking for political support in the face of a fledgling civilian nuclear capability, had both the means and incentive to push for a military program. India had already taken international opprobrium for refusing to enter the international non-proliferation regime so it had little incentive to pay heed to its rules. Yet, overt testing still held risks for India's economy, which had increasingly become intertwined with international economy and dependent on international aid. It would take a more risk acceptant political actor to overcome this obstacle and finally break India' nuclear restraint.

2. Domestic Politics Light the Fuse

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was the first political party to openly advocate for India to adopt nuclear weapons as its political platform. A right-wing Hindu nationalist party, the BJP had briefly won control of Parliament in 1996. As Prime Minister, the party's leader, Atal Benari Vajpayee immediately authorized a nuclear test. Only the shortness of his initial tenure ensured the order was withdrawn.[207] In March, 1998, the BJP and Vajpayee returned to power. Although winning on a domestic policy platform, the party was politically weak and felt compelled to accomplish policies popular with its base to ensure it remained in power. However, to form a political coalition, the party had been forced to discard several policies popular with its base including revocation of Article 370 concerning Kashmir autonomy and destruction of mosques built upon temples sites.[208]

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[205] Thomas and Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security,* 18.

[206] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb,* 351.

[207] Perkovich, 353.

[208] Thomas and Gupta, *India's Nuclear Security,* 29.

This left the party with a single issue, nuclear weapons to demonstrate their fidelity to their political base. Vajpayee moved quickly to deliver.

Similar to previous Indian nuclear decision-making, India's nuclear test proceeded without any formal process or comprehensive study. Few outside the nuclear establishment or the Prime Ministers were aware of test preparations which helps explain the lack of cohesiveness in India's public statements following the test. As India made preparation at Pokhran, Pakistan conducted a test launch of a medium-range ballistic missile—the Ghauri that had the capability to place all major Indian cities at risk.[209] The test appeared to be a symbolic gesture in the wake of India's election and surprised many Indians that had under-estimated the capability of Pakistan's ballistic missile program. Regardless, the test provided ammunition to Vajpayee's decision.

Between May 11 and 13, 1998, India conducted five nuclear tests at Pokhran. Two weeks later, despite intense lobbying from the United States, Pakistan responded to India's test by conducting nuclear tests of its own. In the aftermath of the test Prime Minister Vajpayee cited security concerns, China in particular, for India's decision.[210] Politically, the test accomplished its intended goal helping to solidify the BJP's internal unity and providing a political boost. In May, polls show 91% of Indians supported the nuclear test.[211] However, like support for the PNE 24 years prior, support dwindled quickly. By October support fell to 44%.

Many were troubled by the BJP's decision. As one Member of Parliament pointed out, "The nuclear tests are a great achievement for India, no doubt, but we can't even supply ordinary drinking water and electrical power to the people of this country."[212] Internationally, India's decision was condemned almost universally and international sanction came quickly and harshly. Sanctions in May had led to the postponement of $1.17

209 Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 404.

210 Perkovich, 417.

211 Perkovich, 423.

212 Perkovich, 423.

billion in international lending. By June, the rupee's value and stock market had dropped markedly. In total, economic losses to India would be estimated at $2.5 billion.[213]

Yet, despite these costs, India's Hindu nationalist Prime Minister considered the test a success that demonstrated Indian strength and status. In the aftermath of the test, Prime Minister Vajpayee said,

> Millions of Indians have viewed this occasion as the beginning of the rise of a strong and self-confident India…. India has never considered military might as the ultimate measure of national strength. It is a necessary component of overall national strength. I would, therefore, say that the greatest meaning of the tests is that they have given India *shakti*,[214] they have given India strength, they have given India self-confidence.[215]

Vajpayee's comment must be understood within the context of Indian history. China and India had come from a relatively similar, impoverished state in the 1940s. Both shared a history of abuse from Western powers that formed a guiding narrative to help explain their relative poverty. Yet, by the 1990s it had become clear that China enjoyed superior economic strength to India. Similarly, other Asian states, especially Japan, had enjoyed robust economic growth and enjoyed corresponding influence on the worlds stage. Devoid of economic accomplishment and no longer able to credibly cast blame on the West, the Indian political system was ripe for a solution that could help rectify India's deficiencies. The BJP sought the nuclear test as an attempt to make the world notice India, a shortcut to prove itself an equal amongst its neighbors and the great powers.

D. CONCLUSION

In the long term, India's nuclear motivations were driven by status considerations and security concerns. India's believes itself to be a great power and desires the status bestowed by states possessing nuclear weapons. Influenced by a colonial legacy, India

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213 Perkovich, 437.

214 *Shakti* was also the name of the operation used for the nuclear test and the name of the bombs themselves.

215 Pabhu Chawla, "We Live in a World Where India Is Surrounded by Nuclear Weaponry: Atal Bihari Vajpayee," *India Today*, last modified March 20, 2013, https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/19980525-we-live-in-a-world-where-india-is-surrounded-by-nuclear-weaponry-atal-bihari-vajpayee-828210-1998-05-25.

harbors a sense of grievance towards an international regime that appears designed to constrain Indian ambitions to achieve its rightful place in the global hierarchy. In addition, India is engaged in strategic competition with two geographically linked, nuclear armed, enduring adversaries (China and Pakistan). Pakistan, though conventionally inferior, maintains an ongoing conflict over contested territory in Kashmir and subsidizes insurgency and instability within India. China maintains a sizeable material advantage, a robust nuclear establishment, and hegemonic aspirations in the region. In order to satisfy its security requirements India first engaged in a strategy of simultaneous internal and external balancing. India both sought external alliances for protection and advanced its nuclear program to hedge against risks. Over time however, sustained security concerns and the loss of a willing security provider drove India to transition to a more focused internal balancing strategy and investment in an overt nuclear weapons enterprise.

Domestic and normative considerations also helped shaped India's decision to acquire nuclear weapons. The Indian public and political class were initially opposed to nuclear weapons development, associating it with Western militarism and oppression. Over time however, Indian views evolved on the morality of nuclear acquisition. This evolution in thought was guided by both India's security environment and the establishment of the international non-proliferation regime, which came to be viewed as discriminatory. By the time of India's 1998 nuclear test, Indians had come to view nuclear acquisition as necessary to influence broader non-proliferation goals.

Other variables also tended to influence India's decision-making including the state of India's political economy, scientific establishment and internal politics. In making decisions regarding the development and fielding of nuclear weapons, India had to weigh the exorbitant costs of developing a nuclear infrastructure against investment in domestic economic development. In addition, there were significant costs associated with nuclear testing in terms of sanctions, loss of international financing and aid. The Indian scientific establishment provided a largely untethered, autarkic regime supported by broad array of Indian civil society as a source of nationalist pride. Initially established for civilian purposes the program came to be unwritten by results in military development and often helped drive political decision-making. Finally, the politics of the moment provided the

spark that would continually advance India's nuclear program. For both India's PNE and the 1998 test, short term political calculus made the bomb an attractive policy option as a symbolic gesture of solidarity at home and a message of strength abroad.

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IV. PAKISTAN AND THE BOMB

Most analysts agree Pakistan's nuclear program is an outgrowth of intractable security concerns. In the aftermath of multiple wars, territorial, religious, and historical disputes, Pakistan remains almost single-mindedly focused on defending itself from neighboring, India. Following the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, Pakistan judged it would never again have the capacity to compete conventionally against India and embarked on a nuclear program to balance against India's overwhelming material superiority. By possessing a nuclear weapon Pakistan believes it would avoid the kinds of crisis and humiliations it suffered at the hands of India in '65 and '71. Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons to counter what it perceived as a persistent, existential security threat.

This chapter adds to the security analysis by suggesting the tipping point both for Pakistan's *decision* and its *ability* to acquire nuclear weapons rests on the nature of its alliance politics. Pakistan pursued nuclear weapons after it came to view external alliances, in particular its security relationship with the United States, as insufficient in providing security against its enduring rival, India. Pakistan's external alliances, though viewed by Pakistan as inadequate at securing Pakistan's vital interest, increased the costs of a preventative attack that may have ended Pakistan's nascent nuclear program. Pakistan's experience is consistent with the broader findings of this thesis which finds that in highly contested security environments, states unable to externally balance against a conventionally superior adversary are highly likely to engage in internal balancing by acquiring nuclear weapons. The ability of the potential proliferator to fully establish its nuclear program is however, contingent on an external benefactor willing to offer some semblance of security that raises the costs of preventative attacks against the proliferator.

The chapter is broken into five parts. The first section will describe the nature of the India-Pakistan rivalry – how and why it formed. The second section will discuss the period prior to Pakistan's firm decision to pursue nuclear weapons. During this period Pakistan pursued nuclear technology for legitimately peaceful means and engaged in external balancing to satisfy its security requirements.

The second section will discuss Pakistan's disenchantment with its strategy of external balancing following two devastating defeats by the Indian military, the loss of East Pakistan and in the midst of India's atomic test. Though an incremental process, these traumas convinced Pakistani leadership that nuclear weapons were necessary to counter India's material advantages and ensure Pakistan would never again be vulnerable to Indian coercion.

Section three explores Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear weapons in the 1970s. Entering an era in which the norms surrounding proliferation were in flux, Pakistan encountered international resistance, which impeded its nuclear ambitions. Concurrently, the relative decline in Pakistan's strategic importance to the United States opened the door for the Carter administration to engage in punitive non-proliferation policy against Pakistan.

The final section discusses the dramatic change in Pakistan's strategic landscape following the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which helped insulate Pakistan's nuclear program. The 1980s were a critical period for Pakistan's nuclear program and also a period of extreme vulnerability. The United States renewed interest in Pakistan's strategic position assisted Pakistan's nuclear program in two ways. First, the Reagan administration, in a bid to maintain friendly relations with Pakistan in the fight against the Soviet Union, greatly reduced pressure on Pakistan to end its nuclear program. Second, U.S. engagement in Pakistan deterred preventative attacks against Pakistan's nuclear program, which may have halted or at the very least delayed Pakistan's nuclear acquisition.

A. THE PAKISTAN-INDIA RIVALRY

Before discussing Pakistan's nuclear acquisition, it is first important to establish that Pakistan and India are engaged in what T.V. Paul calls, an "enduring rivalry."[216] Enduring rivalries are zero-sum, protracted conflicts punctuated by multiple conflicts over a limited period of time.[217] The antagonistic relationship between Pakistan and India is

[216] T. V. Paul, "Why Has the India-Pakistan Rivalry Been So Enduring? Power Asymmetry and an Intractable Conflict," *Security Studies* 15, no. 4 (December 1, 2006): 602.

[217] Paul, "Why Has the India-Pakistan Rivalry Been So Enduring," 603.

based on a history of bloodshed, territorial, religious and ethnic tension, and for Pakistan, a sense of strategic vulnerability.

Pakistan was born into complex security environment: strategically vulnerable and without a strong sense of identity. The borders of newly created Pakistan were long and the depth of the country shallow making it challenging to defend and vulnerable to offensive action. The division of the country into a Western and Eastern wing (modern Bangladesh was previously East Pakistan) further complicated defense efforts. The British partition of the Raj into ethnic enclaves was hastily conceived and poorly executed. India came to be seen as the natural heir to the British Raj. Pakistan lacked a similarly robust foundational myth. Its chaotic birth and lack of identity created a sense of insecurity among its founding leadership as to whether the state could remain cohesive enough to survive.[218]

In addition, the nature of the partition further exacerbated tensions. Almost overnight the subcontinent was divided along religious lines into majority Muslim and Hindu states. Efforts to relocate resulted in chaos as millions of Muslim and Hindus were displaced and became refugees. The chaos quickly spiraled into violence and hundreds of thousands perished.[219] Within a year, Pakistani differences over the division of military and economic assets as well as territory deteriorated into open war in Kashmir in 1948.[220] The conflict set the tone for the Pakistani-India relationship. Pakistan views India's interference in the majority-Muslim states of Kashmir and Jammu as consistent with India's inability to respect Pakistan's core identity and interests in ruling the Muslim regions of the sub-continent.[221]

B. TRANSACTIONAL ALLIANCES

In the 1950s, the United States and Pakistan entered into an alliance based on divergent security concerns. The United States noted the strategic location of Pakistan on

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[218] Paul, 605–608.

[219] Paul, 607.

[220] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 180.

[221] Paul, "Why Has the India-Pakistan Rivalry Been So Enduring," 608.

the southern flank of the Soviet Union and sought to establish airbases to both threaten and spy against the Soviets.[222] Pakistan provided territory for U.S. airbases and provided some intelligence support to the U.S. effort. Pakistan by comparison, fearful of its tenuous strategic position, sought alliances to balance against a materially stronger India. In return for joining U.S. sponsored defense organizations,[223] Pakistan received robust financial and military assistance, military training programs, strategic assistance and, importantly, support within the UN on Pakistan's position on Kashmir.[224] While the alliance initially appeared to satisfy both sides, a resumption of conflict between India and Pakistan in the ensuing decade would test the limits of U.S. commitment and find it wanting.

Through the early 1960s Pakistani faith in its alliance relationship with the United States dulled Pakistan's nuclear motivations. By all accounts the establishment of Pakistan's nuclear program in the 1950s under Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace program was for peaceful purposes. Pakistani scientists fearful of, "jeopardizing its interest of maximizing knowledge" engaged in a transparent and innocent program of indigenous nuclear energy development.[225] The Pakistani Army, the prime mover of Pakistan's politics, remained skeptical of nuclear weapons since it might act to reduce the army's budget and threaten foreign aid programs.[226] Pakistan's relationship with India was stable, its economy growing, and Pakistan felt confident in U.S. security assurances.

Not all elements of Pakistani leadership agreed. President Khan's Foreign Minister Zulfikar Bhutto, fearful of Indian conventional superiority and skeptical the U.S. would support Pakistani security requirements, urged the President to consider nuclear

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[222] Stephen Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," *Current History* 109, no. 726 (April 1, 2010): 138.

[223] Middle East Defense Organization, also known as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SATO)

[224] Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 139.

[225] Feroz Khan, "Nuclear Proliferation Motivations: Lessons from Pakistan," *The Nonproliferation Review* 13, no. 3 (November 1, 2006): 503.

[226] Khan, "Nuclear Proliferation Motivations." 505.

weapons.[227] President Khan rejected his advice. By seeking nuclear weapons Pakistan might sacrifice essential financial and military aid. Moreover, Pakistan felt "doubtful of India's ability to acquire nuclear technology."[228]

By the 1960s there were worrying signs that the United States may be an unreliable guarantor of Pakistan's security. In the 1962 Sino-Indian War, the United States backed India and offered aid to India despite Pakistan's protestations.[229] In 1965 when India and Pakistan resumed their conflict over the Kashmir region, rather than support Pakistani aims, the United States withdrew aid from both countries. The United States seemed not to understand Pakistan's core security concerns. India had begun to undermine Kashmir's autonomy and exercise great central governmental control, slowly absorbing the region as Indian territory. Pakistan felt its allies should do more to prevent India from changing the status quo and help resolve their disputes.[230] President Mohammed Ayub Khan reached out to his allies and recounted:

> We reasoned with the United States ... but we got no response. We could not even convince them that so long as relations between India and Pakistan remained what they were, there could be no stability or peace on the subcontinent. I think the British were more conscious of the need for bringing about an agreement between India and Pakistan, but they had little leverage in terms of economic or military influence. It was the United States alone that had the requisite influence but declined to exercise it.[231]

As part of its external balancing strategy during the 1950s and 1960s, Pakistan also sought closer ties with the People's Republic of China. Drawn together by a mutual rivalry towards India, the two countries deepened their relationship following the 1955 Bandung conference.[232] High level meetings over the next several years helped further shape the

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227 Feroz Khan, "Pakistan Nuclear Motives and Acquisition Strategy" (presentation, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, April 18, 2019), slide 9.

228 Khan, "Pakistan Nuclear Motives and Acquisition Strategy," slide 9.

229 Monteiro and Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," 34.

230 Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 35–36.

231 Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 35–36.

232 John W. Garver, *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 189.

Sino-Pakistan relationship. China agreed to look past the U.S.-Pakistan relationship while Pakistan agreed to remain on the sideline should China and the U.S. go to war.[233]

Similar to the U.S. relationship, Pakistan viewed its relationship with China as a deterrent against Indian aggression. However, China never explicitly agreed to a military alliance with Pakistan. Nevertheless, a deterioration in Sino-Indian relations during the early 1960s, which culminated in the 1962 Sino-Indian War, bolstered Pakistani hopes that China might intervene in any future conflict on the sub-continent. By 1963 this belief had developed to the point where Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, during a speech to the National Assembly, pointed out that, "[If] India were in her frustration to turn her guns against Pakistan…Pakistan would not be alone in that conflict…An attack by India on Pakistan involves the territorial integrity and security of the largest state in Asia (China)." Similarly, several months later President Ayub said, "If we are attacked…We assume that other Asiatic powers, especially China, would take notice of that."[234]

Chinese shows of support also appeared to have fortified Pakistan's confidence in confronting India prior to the 1965 Kashmir War. China reportedly participated in pre-war planning discussions with Pakistan and made several high level visits that seemed to bolster Pakistani confidence that China would intervene in the event India attacked China. There is also some evidence that China helped Pakistan prepare for the upcoming conflict by training guerilla fighters that would be dispatched to Kashmir.[235] By May, 1965, Pakistan's foreign secretary noted that, "in the event India attacked East Pakistan in response to a conflict over Kashmir, 'China would attack India.'"[236] Though China had made no explicit assurances, Pakistan felt emboldened enough by Chinese overtures enough to confront India in Kashmir.

By August 1965 the Kashmir War was underway and it had become clear Chinese support had not deterred India from pressing conventional attacks into Pakistani territory.

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[233] Garver, *Protracted Contest*, 191.

[234] Garver, 192–193.

[235] Garver, 197.

[236] Garver, 196.

In response to India's penetration into Pakistan, China prepared to counter India in both word and deed. China's Foreign Ministry intimated that China was, "ready to provide arms and troops to Pakistan if and when required." They delivered stinging rebukes of India's attack, calling India the aggressor and a "bully."[237] On the Indian border, China increased troops numbers and maneuver activity, preparing for military action. Though they remained on the sidelines at the moment, China gave explicit assurances to Pakistan that it would respond to an attack against East Pakistan by counterattacking India from the East and in the Himalayas.[238]

The United States eyed Chinese war preparations nervously and took steps to deter Chinese intervention. During U.S.-PRC ambassadorial talks in Warsaw, the U.S. informed the Chinese that Chinese threats of intervention would not be tolerated and could result in a retaliatory strike by the United States against China.[239] Pakistan's decision to accept a United Nations brokered ceasefire in mid-September obviated Chinese threats to intervene. Nonetheless, Pakistan felt buoyed by Chinese support. As Pakistan accepted the ceasefire President Ayub said of China, "The moral support which the Chinese government extended to us so willingly and so generously will forever remain enshrined in our hearts. We are grateful for this."[240] Though Chinese support did not deter Indian attacks into Pakistan, unlike the United States, China had responded quickly and forcefully to assure its ally. For the time being, Pakistan's strategy of external balancing seemed viable and intact.

C. PAKISTAN ALONE

The United States failure to intervene in 1965 disproportionately hurt Pakistan. Foreign Minister Bhutto, following the 1965 war exclaimed, "The decision [was] not an act of an ally and not even that of a neutral."[241] America's failure to respond to Pakistan's foreign policy concerns lent support to those skeptical of Pakistan's strategy of external

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[237] Garver, 199–200.

[238] Garver, 200.

[239] Garver, 202.

[240] Garver, 204.

[241] Monteiro and Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," 34.

balancing against Indian aggression. Western promises of support seemed hollow and Pakistan began to split into two competing groups on the question of nuclear acquisition. Feroz Khan in *Eating Grass*, discusses these two groups which he calls the Nuclear Enthusiasts and Nuclear Cautionists.

The Nuclear Enthusiasts believed Pakistan had reached a "now or never" moment that required Pakistan to act in order to secure its strategic interests. The enthusiasts, led by Bhutto deployed five points to support their argument, three of which were explicitly security based. First, Pakistan correctly suspected that China's atomic tests had galvanized India to pursue a nuclear capability. Second, the failure of the United States to adequately respond to Pakistan's security concerns vis-à-vis India had become increasingly clear. Third it was clear India's conventional advantage would only increase moving forward, further undermining Pakistan's negotiating position. Fourth, non-proliferation negotiations had commenced by the mid-1960s, and it had become increasingly clear that an international non-proliferation consensus would soon be reached making nuclear acquisition even costlier. Nuclear Enthusiasts hoped to acquire a weapon, or at least the technology to do so prior to the window closing. Fifth, the scientific benefits of pursuing nuclear weapons research in terms of "human capital and scientific infrastructure" were self-evident.[242]

The Nuclear Cautionists were not necessarily antinuclear, but believed Pakistan should exercise deliberate restraint, particularly in the aftermath of the disastrous 1965 war. Led by then President Ayub Khan, they supported their position with six arguments. First, the group felt Pakistan still benefited in its relationship with the United States and bore some responsibility for straining that relationship through its aggressive foreign policy. Second, Pakistan had enjoyed strong economic growth in part through access to international finance institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Pursuing nuclear weapons could place those relationships at risk. Third, pursuing nuclear weapons might have a counterproductive effect on Pakistan's security position by undermining aid and the transfer of military technology. This would only serve to further

[242] Khan, *Eating Grass*, 60–61.

widen any conventional military gap with India. Fourth, pursuit of nuclear weapons could undermine their participation in the Atoms for Peace program, which had supplied technology and technology to Pakistan. Fifth, Cautionists were skeptical of India's ability to build a bomb.[243] Finally, consistent with the times, they believed nuclear weapons were an enterprise monopolized by great powers. The impact of nuclear weapons on a smaller state had not been tested.[244]

The period between 1965 and 1971 formed a kind of stasis on the issue of nuclear acquisition. President Ayub Khan did not outright reject nuclear acquisition but opposed Bhutto's plans to expand Pakistan's nuclear infrastructure, further undermining their relationship. By 1966 the relationship had become untenable and Khan requested Bhutto resign as Foreign Minister.[245] Despite the failure of Nuclear Enthusiasts to expand Pakistan's physical infrastructure, it did prevail in preventing Pakistan from joining the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. India had made it clear it viewed the NPT as discriminatory and would not sign in light of China's position.[246] Pakistan, refused to join without India. Consequently, both refused to join. The nuclear debate over Pakistan's nuclear future was underway.

Two events would serve to radically alter Pakistan's strategic calculus and effectively end the nuclear debate in favor of the Nuclear Enthusiasts. First, China's 1964 atomic test, which China conducted after several instances of nuclear coercion from the United States and the Soviet Union.[247] The test set-off a chain reaction in the region as China's regional rivals reconsidered their security position in response to the test. Japan, decided against nuclear acquisition and accepted strong U.S. security guarantees and offers of extended deterrence. India, only two years out from their humiliating loss to the Chinese in the 1962 Sino-Indian War also sought security guarantees and considered expanding its

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[243] This feeling was mutual. Both sides were stridently dismissive of the other's nuclear capabilities.

[244] Khan, *Eating Grass*, 63–64.

[245] Khan, 64–66.

[246] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 183.

[247] Namely the 1954 Korean War Negotiations and the 1955 Taiwan Strait Crisis.

nuclear program. Both pursuits were eventually fruitful. India was initially frustrated in its effort to obtain a security assurance from either the United States or the Soviet Union. Neither state was keen to become involved in the subcontinent. However, the 1971 détente between China and the United States—an agreement facilitated by Pakistan—made the Soviet Union fearful of losing influence in the region. In this context an alliance with India would allow the Soviets to maintain their presence in the region and balance against the newly emerging Sino-U.S. nexus. Accordingly in August, 1971, the Soviet Union and India signed the 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation' which made clear that "attack on either party would automatically lead to joint consultations to remove the threat."[248] Concurrently, India advanced its nuclear program sufficiently to conduct its first atomic bomb test - euphemistically called a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974.

The second event that would tilt Pakistan towards nuclear acquisition was the 1971 India-Pakistan War. In the '71 war, Pakistan's greatest fears came to pass as ethnic turmoil in East Pakistan spiraled out of control and India prepared to intervene on behalf of the ethnic Bengalis. Faced with a crisis of national sovereignty and fearing an Indian invasion of East Pakistan, Pakistan struck first against India. In the ensuing conflict, Pakistan received no external support and suffered an embarrassing military defeat by India which resulted in the loss of Eastern Pakistan. These failures would represent an inflection point in Pakistani politics and an end to the strategy of external balancing.

Pakistan's allies, the United States and China did little to assist Pakistan during the 1971 War. For the United States, the reality of geo-politics had adjusted their calculus in regards to the region. A reduction in tensions with the Soviet Union and new forms of reconnaissance technology had reduced Pakistan's significance as an ally.[249] An expanding war in Vietnam left little opportunity for U.S. commitments elsewhere. Besides, the appearance of Pakistani aggressiveness in Kashmir fed a narrative that Pakistan's troubles were self-inflicted.[250] The U.S. remained a nominal partner to Pakistan; however,

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[248] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 65.

[249] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 182.

[250] Khan, "Pakistan Nuclear Motives and Acquisition Strategy," slide 9.

the geo-political factors had reduced the immediacy of the alliance for the U.S. The United States dispatched a carrier task force to the Bay of Bengal but declined to intervene and prevent East Pakistan from seceding.[251] By comparison, Pakistan felt that India had received, "moral and military support from its Soviet allies."[252] Pakistani fears had been realized, Indian aggression had created an existential crisis and alliance politics had failed to secure Pakistan.

China also failed to make any meaningful contribution to Pakistan's defense. China viewed Pakistan's political situation in East Pakistan as untenable and felt sincere sympathy for the Bengali's struggle for national liberation. Furthermore, China was hesitant to irritate India's new Soviet patron and possibly inviting strikes against Chinese territory.[253] Though China continued to provide political and economic assistance to Pakistan, China made clear early on that it would not intervene on Pakistan's behalf. Pakistan protested and even made public statements which implied China might be willing to retaliate against India provocations; however, India had observed China carefully, comparing its actions to those prior to war in '62 and '65 and arrived at the same conclusion, China would remain on the sidelines.[254]

In the midst of defeat in 1971, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became President of Pakistan and effectively ended the debate over whether Pakistan would seek nuclear weapons.[255] The failure of the Pakistan's allies to intervene on its behalf demonstrated to Pakistan the limits of security alliances. Pakistan could only depend on itself to provide for its security requirements. The arguments for nuclear forbearance seemed quaint and naïve; in the midst of national crisis, the Nuclear Enthusiasts won.

Upon assuming office in 1971, now President Bhutto undertook policies that reconfigured Pakistan's national politics and approach to nuclear acquisition. His first

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[251] Monteiro and Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," 35.

[252] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 183.

[253] Garver, *Protracted Contest*, 211; Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 67.

[254] Garver, *Protracted Contest*, 213.

[255] Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 139.

contribution was to shape the narrative of Pakistan's defeat. Rather than look inward and engage in self-reflection, Bhutto cast Pakistan's rage outward. Indian behavior was duplicitous. The United States had deceived and betrayed Pakistan after the country had sacrificed on the U.S. behalf against the Soviets. Bhutto entertained conspiracy theories regarding plots by its neighbors to dismember the state.[256] The 1971 war showed Pakistan, "made any further military ventures by Pakistan against India untenable" for the time being.[257] Bhutto helped reconstitute Pakistan's identity as a state that was Muslim toward a Muslim-state. This further served his narrative that Pakistan's military and developmental failures were not the result of leadership failures, but discrimination.[258] Dispensing with the United States, Bhutto ended Pakistan's commitment to U.S.-backed regional security organizations and adopted a policy of non-alignment.[259]

Bhutto's second contribution was to radically change the nature of Pakistan's nuclear program. Only a month after assuming office, Bhutto initiated a "crash program" intended to ensure Pakistan would, "never against be defeated...regardless of India's size and resource advantages."[260] From a political standpoint, Bhutto also recognized that the nuclear program, begun under civilian management, could offset the Pakistani Army's stranglehold over politics. The initial stage of development of Pakistan's program involved a more informal pursuit of resources and technology to establish a nuclear capability. In June, 1974, following India's "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion" (PNE), the pursuit of a weapon hastened. The Defense Committee of the Cabinet formally decided to commence nuclear acquisition.[261]

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256 Cohen, 139.

257 Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 72.

258 Khan, "Nuclear Proliferation Motivations: Lessons from Pakistan," 505.

259 Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 139.

260 Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer and George Perkovich, *To Join or Not to Join the Nuclear Club: How Nations Think About Nuclear Weapons: Two Middle East Case Studies* (Quantico, VA: Middle East Studies at the Marine Corps University, 2013), 23.

261 Khan, "Nuclear Proliferation Motivations," 503.

Over the next two decades' geo-strategic considerations would dictate the U.S response to Pakistan's nuclear program in a way that initially constrained, and later incubated its nascent capability. Through the 1970s Pakistan held little strategic relevance to the United States. Disenchanted by its experience in Vietnam and in détente with China, the United States had less incentive to appease Pakistan. To the United States, Pakistan's reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons had the potential to seriously destabilize South Asia and ignite a regional arms race. In an effort to slow or stop Pakistan's proliferation efforts, the United States undertook several actions to constrain their program.

Through the 1970s Pakistan scrambled to acquire the resources and know-how to build a nuclear weapon. Pakistan initially sought a Plutonium-based device spearheaded by the Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC). The acquisition of a French nuclear reprocessing plant was seen as critical to this effort. The Carter Administration, worried by an increase in nuclear proliferation, intervened to stop the acquisition of French reprocessing technology.[262] In 1976 the U.S. Congress passed the Symington amendment to the International Security Assistance and Export Control act, which denied U.S. military and economic assistance to "any country importing unsafeguarded enrichment of reprocessing technology."[263] Per the legislation, the Carter administration sanctioned Pakistan twice: in 1977 and 1979.[264] In addition, the U.S. Secretary of State even considered the merits of "covert action or an air strike against Kahuta," the site of Pakistan's Uranium Enrichment facility. However, further exploration of this idea was ended when details of the discussion were releases in the *New York Times*.[265]

While U.S. policies hampered Pakistan's progress towards a bomb, the program continued apace and moved increasingly into the shadows. Frustrated in its attempt to legally purchase a reprocessing plant to develop a plutonium-based device, Pakistan pursued a uranium-based device. In the mid-1970s, Bhutto established a concurrent

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[262] Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 142.

[263] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 184.

[264] Ahmed, 186.

[265] Khan, *Eating Grass*, 211.

program headed by Abdul Qadeer (AQ) Khan tasked with exploring the enrichment of Uranium. With little oversight, AQ Khan opened a system of clandestine networks to funnel centrifuge knowledge and technology back to Pakistan.[266] By the 1980s, AQ Khan's network included illicit technical assistance from China, which provided technical information and helped establishing an enrichment plant.[267] In later years the AQ Khan's network would become notorious for selling nuclear technology to authoritarian regimes; however, there is no disputing his efforts were essential in creating the conditions necessary for Pakistan to indigenously develop a uranium-based bomb.

D. SECURING PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

U.S.-Pakistani relations were again reconstituted in 1979 following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In the wake of the Soviet attack the United States reprioritized the significance of its partnership with Pakistan. In return for Pakistan's support in undermining Soviet actions in Afghanistan, the Reagan administration provided substantial aid while ignoring the ongoing expansion of Pakistan's weapons program.[268] In 1981, Pakistan accepted $3.2 billion in assistance and received a further economic and military assistance package in 1986.[269] Paying lip service to the cause of non-proliferation, Reagan's Secretary of State claimed the administration was providing conventional military arms in an attempt to ease Pakistan's security requirements and obviate their desire for the bomb.[270]

Yet, the administration ignored clear signs Pakistan's program had continued unabated. U.S. interlocutor General Vernon Walters "believed General Zia ul-Haq (Bhutto's successor) to be lying about nuclear weapons development.[271] Further

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266 Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 184.

267 Ahmed, 186.

268 Ahmed, 187.

269 Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 140.

270 Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 187.

271 Sumit Ganguly, "The Pathological Alliance," *Current History* 113, no. 762 (April 1, 2014): 166.

intelligence suggested China had provided designs for a, "low-yield uranium device."[272] Congressional concerns regarding the Reagan administration's failure to hold Pakistan to account led to the passing of the Pressler amendment intended to end economic and military aid should Pakistan continue its nuclear program. Here again, the Reagan administration gave Pakistan a pass, certifying the nuclear program despite clear violations in the level of Uranium enrichment.[273]

Besides the provision of aid and implicit acceptance of Pakistan's nuclear program, the Reagan administration arguably deterred a preventative strike from India. On several occasions in the 1980s, India considered strikes against Pakistan's critical nuclear infrastructure that were never conducted. The first such threat occurred in 1981. On June 7, Israel successfully conducted a preventative strike against Iraq's nuclear program, destroying the Osirak nuclear power reactor. The operation was supported both politically and materially by the United States.[274] Concurrently, Pakistani intelligence received intelligence suggesting Israel and India were in the process of planning a similar strike against Pakistan's nuclear infrastructure. The strike plan was well developed and consisted of Israeli planes departing an India Air base in Jamnagar, refueling in north India and avoiding radar in the final approach towards Pakistan. In fact, preparations had advanced to the point in which Prime Minister Gandhi had accepted the plan in 1982; however, the United States intervened to prevent Israel and India from carrying it out.[275]

The United States also played a critical role in blocking another preventative strike in 1984. In October, Mrs. Gandhi acceded pressure from military officials to conduct a strike against Pakistan's nuclear infrastructure. Preparations for a potential strike however, were detected by U.S. intelligence and the United States ambassador issued a public statement that "[if] the United States sees any signs of an imminent Indian attack, Pakistan

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[272] Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 187.

[273] Ahmed, 187.

[274] Khan, *Eating Grass*, 212–213.

[275] Khan, 213.

would be notified."[276] It is unclear whether India would have ultimately carried out the planned strike since there were both politically and militarily risky.[277] The United States was keen on maintaining stability in the Pakistan-India relationship in order to keep Pakistan focused on operations in Afghanistan. Striking Pakistan would surely rouse U.S. ire. Furthermore, India had clearly lost the initiative and Pakistan had made preparations to meet any potential strike.[278]

In the end, India refrained from a preventative strike. By 1988, Pakistan claimed to have successfully assembled a nuclear device.[279] In 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. Once again relegating Pakistan to the lower tier of U.S. priorities, the Bush administration discovered Pakistan's nuclear program and used the Pressler Amendment to apply sanctions. As the Cold War ended, both India and Pakistan's patrons lost interest in the region and withdrew. In the ensuing vacuum, ongoing ethnic conflicts and newly formed Islamist groups from Pakistan inflamed tensions. In 1998, the newly elected Prime Minister, head of the conservative, Hindu-BJP party made the decision to conduct an overt nuclear test. Unwilling to allow India to have the last word, Pakistan ignored international condemnation and conducted several overt nuclear tests of its own.

E. CONCLUSION

Unlike India and Japan, the Pakistan nuclear case can be viewed almost entirely through the lens of security concerns. In this sense, the nature of their security situation is important. Pakistan views itself engaged in an enduring rivalry with a geographical neighbor and historical foe. Its animosity towards India is motivated by historical grievances and a deep sense of vulnerability stemming from humiliating defeats in multiple wars. Unwilling to negotiate a settlement in what it views as its rightful territory or to accede to Indian hegemony, Pakistan feels compelled to do whatever is necessary to counter India's aims.

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276 Khan, 220.

277 Monteiro and Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," 36–37.

278 Khan, *Eating Grass*, 220.

279 Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program," 188.

Within this context, Pakistan initially relied on external alliances to balance against India. However, both the U.S.-Pakistan and Sino-Pakistan relationships have always been at their core, transactional. Pakistan plays lip service to U.S priorities, but the purpose of the alliance has always to balance against their rival India.[280] For the United States, Pakistan represents a sometimes well-situated and malleable partner. The United States has never maintained interest in taking sides between India and Pakistan, much to Pakistan's chagrin. The failure of the alliance to fully commit to the others priorities plagues the relationship. Washington can never quite see "eye to eye with [Pakistan] on matters pertaining to its Indian nemesis" and Islamabad never sees past it.[281] This led to, as one analyst described, a "mutual delusion."[282] Similarly, China's robust support for Pakistan in the 1965 and equivocal support in 1971 speaks to a relationship shaped by changing strategic circumstances that did not necessarily prioritize Pakistan's needs.

In the absence of certainty regarding external security guarantees Pakistan sought to counter India through internal balancing. Nuclear acquisition seemed an obvious choice given India's large and growing conventional superiority and nuclear prowess. While the U.S. initially rejected and sought to stifle Pakistani progress, other geo-strategic considerations in Afghanistan prevailed and Pakistan was given room and protection to proceed with its nuclear program.

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280 Cohen, "How a Botched U.S. Alliance Fed Pakistan's Crisis," 139.

281 Ganguly, "The Pathological Alliance," 165.

282 Ganguly, 166.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. FINDINGS

Scott Sagan is correct when he suggested the causes of nuclear proliferation are not singular but multiple, the outcome of risk factors that combine to increase the probability of nuclear acquisition.[283] The case studies undertaken here suggest there are two central factors in determining proliferation outcomes. First, security concerns from an enduring adversary that credibly threatens a state's freedom of action. In all three cases, policymakers were motivated to consider nuclear weapons as a measure of protection against neighboring adversaries. Pakistan pursued a nuclear weapon in the wake of two humiliating military losses in 1965 and 1971 and an ever-widening gap in conventional capabilities thereafter. India came to believe that in any future conflict, particularly against China or Pakistan, the absence of a nuclear capability would make it vulnerable to coercion. Indian policymakers could hardly remain idle as Pakistan and China accelerated their nuclear programs. Japan also seriously considered acquiring nuclear weapons following in the aftermath of consternation over Chinese nuclear tests in 1964.

The case studies also found that although security concerns motivate nuclear ambitions, alliance-relationships can mitigate security concerns, thus reducing nuclear motivations. Japan enjoyed a continuous, credible and stable alliance with the U.S. with adequate provisions to mitigate concerns of entrapment or abandonment. In moments of heightened security concern Japan has continually judged the U.S. alliance to be an essential component to nuclear abstinence. India and Pakistan by comparison, enjoyed only limited guarantees and only temporarily. India earnestly sought and received reliable security assurances from the Soviet Union following China's atomic tests in 1964. Soviet assurances were an important in shaping India's decision to forgo nuclear weapons despite security concerns regarding China and Pakistan. However, the loss of the Soviet Union's security guarantees and the inability of the United States to provide Japan-like security guarantees once again made India singularly responsible for its security. For Pakistan, the

[283] Sagan, "Why do States Build Nuclear Weapons."

failure of both China and the United States to meaningfully intervene in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War demonstrated the ineffectiveness of relying on alliances to protect Pakistan's core security requirements. After 1971, Pakistan no longer viewed alliances as an end in itself (external balancing) but as a means to an end – to help finance a strategy of internal balancing through aid and technology transfers. Importantly, Pakistan's relationship with the United States likely protected its fragile nuclear program from preventative strikes emanating from India and Israel.

Second, the case studies demonstrate the importance of status in driving a state's nuclear motivations. India and Pakistan share the experience of colonial rule, which engendered a deep of distrust of Western intentions. The development of the non-proliferation regime in the late 1960s came to be viewed suspiciously as an institution that acted similarly to constraints on value-added technology during the British Raj. Pakistan's Muslim identity further exacerbates its sense of grievance, providing religious motivation to any perceived slights against Pakistan prerogatives. India, which sees itself as the natural regional hegemon, came to view the nuclear status quo as antithetical to its aims. To a generation of Indian leaders, the U.S. deployment of the USS *Enterprise* to the Bay of Bengal of 1971 demonstrated Indian powerlessness against nuclear-armed great powers. To be a great power, India would need a nuclear arsenal.

In the case of India and Pakistan the status associated with nuclear weapons also provided a symbol and measure of influence that helped paper over political and economic weakness. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, Japan, India, and Pakistan were impoverished and aspired to build a prosperous state. By the 1960s, South Asia and Japan's economic outcomes had diverged greatly. Starting in the late-1950s, Japanese policymakers began a massively successful government-led program to create economic growth and rebuild Japanese worldwide influence through economic strength.[284] Japan's rising material wealth and corresponding worldwide influence provided a strong argument to proponents of the Yoshida Doctrine and nuclear abstinence. Japanese policymakers saw

[284] For more on the institutional foundations of Japanese growth sees: Chalmers Johnson, "The Industrial Foundations of Japanese Industrial Policy," *California Management Review* 27, no. 4 (June 22, 1985): 59–69.

no need to destabilize a world-order that supported its domestic and strategic priorities through nuclear proliferation.

By comparison, South Asia was plagued by slow growth and economic mismanagement. As the Cold War ended, economic disparity had markedly increased between South Asia and other regional actors. India, though in the midst of reform, remained largely autarkic and poor. Pakistan had achieved even less and remained dependent on international aid to sustain itself. In a post-Cold War world where status and influence was principally derived from economic strength, South Asia had fallen behind. Disconnected from international markets and especially envious of the attention given to its fellow, highly populated neighbor China, India felt it had little to lose by disrupting the international system. India gambled that acquiring nuclear weapons would ensure the international community could not ignore them. Pakistan, in a similar position and never to be out-done by rival India, followed suit, despite enormous economic penalties in the form of lost aid and financial resources.

Finally, in all three cases, states viewed nuclear technology and a civilian nuclear power program as an important emerging technology that would help further economic development and advance science and technology research. Early on, the West subsidized their civilian nuclear programs under the “Atoms for Peace” program providing critical training, infrastructure, technology, and fuel. Thus by the mid-1960s, each state had a nuclear infrastructure which could be repurposed to support a nuclear weapons program. This analysis does not find that the existence of a nuclear program necessarily drives nuclear ambition. However, it is clear that the existence of a civilian nuclear infrastructure reduced the cost of pursuing a nuclear option making the option more readily available to policymakers.

B. POLICY LESSONS FROM SOUTH ASIA

Japan and South Asia’s experience provides two important lessons that should be considered by policymakers seeking to dissuade potential proliferators. The first is the role of security in motivating states to acquire nuclear weapons and second, the role of status and prestige.

Security concerns against an enduring rivalry are a leading indicator of potential proliferation. Security guarantees from a strong state can dampen those motivations. However, the nature of the security guarantees matter. Entrapment and abandonment are important considerations that can be mitigated through formal and informal institutions. Gestures that increase trust and reduce fear of abandonment matter and are important to establishing credibility. U.S. gestures of solidarity with Japan greatly reduce Japanese anxieties and signaled the seriousness of U.S. commitment to potential adversaries. By comparison, the failure of the U.S. alliance to secure Pakistan led it to pursue a strategy of internal balancing.

Security is a finite resource and there is no straightforward policy for solving proliferation issues. Providing support to one state may preclude providing support to another. American support to Japan following China's nuclear test undermined its ability to support India due to fears that U.S. credibility might suffer should it extend guarantees to allies and non-aligned states alike. Likewise, providing security assistance can also exacerbate security dilemmas rather than help mitigate them. The United States mercurial policies towards Pakistan and India engendered distrust from both. The Reagan administration's decision in the 1980s to increase conventional military aid to Pakistan in the belief that it could help counter the Soviets in Afghanistan while simultaneously reducing their nuclear ambitions only served to further Indian anxieties and increase instability in the region.

Based on the United States experience in South Asia, there are several dynamics the United States should consider regarding the reduction of security motivations. First, security guarantees must be consistent, clearly communicated, and credible. Pakistan initially assumed the United States would intervene on its behalf against India while the United States only intended to partner with Pakistan to counter the Soviets. The ambiguity and misalignment of views between the United States and Pakistan regarding the extent and purpose of security assistance greatly disillusioned Pakistan. Relatedly, unless the United States is willing to "go-all-in" to protect an ally's interests, U.S. security assistance may further rather than hinder proliferation aims. Again, the U.S. experience in Pakistan is instructive. By providing military aid and deterrence against Indian preventative strikes,

the United States actually helped Pakistan's proliferation aims. South Asia's experience indicates half-measures in the realm of security assistance can be counter-productive. Lastly, if the United States is willing to provide robust security guarantees, it should first judge the temperament of the state to which it is doing so. Providing security guarantees to a revisionist state might only serve to embolden their efforts to destabilize the status quo. Here again the Pakistan and Japan example remains starkest, Pakistan viewed U.S. aid and security guarantees as opportunity to arm itself and raise tensions with India. Japan, viewed the provision as an opportunity to focus on internal development.

A second lesson that can be gleaned is that the nature of nuclear weapons as a status symbol can motivate a state that perceives itself as lacking prestige and influence to view nuclear weapons as a remedy to its deficiencies. Policy that seeks to punish a potential proliferator by isolating it from the international system through sanction may result in the perverse outcome of ensuring the state has no political or economic stake in the international system, thus further reducing its incentive to maintain the status quo. Nuclear weapons could represent the only available leverage left available to an isolated state. Likewise, potential proliferators should be given a path to re-engage with the international community if it obeys international demands. Punishing regimes that forfeit nuclear weapons undermines the logic of a state forfeiting a nuclear program.

C. WILL JAPAN ACQUIRE NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

Moving forward, while it is unlikely that Japan will acquire nuclear weapons in the near term, it would be a mistake to assume that outcome is static as conditions evolve in the Asia-Pacific region. Today, Northeast Asia's security dynamic is evolving and uncertain for Japan. North Korea remains unpredictable, has nuclear weapons and appears to be advancing its ballistic missile program. China's growing material advantage and increasingly assertive foreign policy seems aimed at contesting Japanese territorial and sea-based claims which have increased Japanese security anxieties. Japan's relations with its regional partners also seem fraught. In a recent spat, South Korea decided to cancel a military intelligence-sharing pact with Japan that appeared to be a first step towards broader

military cooperation.[285] Even the U.S.-Japan relationship seems under pressure. Simultaneously, statements by the Trump administration questioning the utility of the U.S.-Japan alliance has created worry as to the credibility of U.S. security guarantees.[286] In addition to political statements, the credibility of U.S. deterrence has also been undermined by reductions in the U.S. nuclear stockpile, the failure to invest in its aging strategic infrastructure, and United States reticence to procure nuclear weapons, like the TLAM-N, tailored to Japan's circumstances.[287]

Today, the U.S.-Japan alliance remains strong and stable. However, the aforementioned trends are worrying. Japan abstained from nuclear weapons for two reasons. One, the U.S.-Japan alliance, which allayed Japanese security concerns and two, Japan's mercantilist strategy yielded Japan wealth, influence, and a stake in the international system. With security concerns allayed, Japanese policymakers judged nuclear acquisition as both unnecessary as a status symbol and counterproductive to international and regional stability.

A scenario in which Japan acquires nuclear weapons would probably require both a change in Japan's security and domestic political environment. However, in the absence of U.S. leadership it is not a foregone conclusion Japan will remain non-nuclear. In the near term, Japan faces serious economic difficulties arising from sluggish growth, debt obligations, and an aging populace.[288] Japan's Yoshida doctrine has always rested on the understanding that Japan would surrender a measure of defense capability to the United States in return for economic benefits. Since the 1950s, Japan's right wing has successfully marginalized its more militant members by pointing to the tangible economic benefits of

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285 Josh Smith and Hyonhee Shin, "Scrapped Intelligence Pact Draws United States into Deepening South Korea-Japan Dispute," *Reuters*, August 28, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-japan-usa/scrapped-intelligence-pact-draws-united-states-into-deepening-south-korea-japan-dispute-idUSKCN1VJ0J6.

286 Tamamoto. "The Emperor's New Clothes, 46.

287 Clark A. Murdock et al., Exploring the Nuclear Posture Implications of Extended Deterrence and Assurance (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009).

288 Robert J. Samuelson, "If you want a peek at the Future, try looking at Japan. You may not like what you see," *Washington Post.* June 12, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/japans-fate-could-be-everyone-elses-too/2019/06/12/de70af18-8d20-11e9-adf3-f70f78c156e8_story.html.

the Yoshida doctrine. The diminishment of the U.S. alliance alongside stagnating economic gains could upset the foundations of the political consensus underlying the doctrine. Similarly, while to-date Japanese mainstream politics have remained relatively free from the contemporary rise of right-wing populism, there are some indications Japanese right-wing nationalism is on the rise.[289] The dissolution of the Yoshida doctrine, relative decline in Japan's international position and frustration with conditions at home could create fertile conditions for a government to recast Japan's military strategy.

It is not farfetched to conceive of a scenario in which a right-wing Japanese politician comes to power under the banner of a more strident, aggressive national strategy. Espousing a narrative that cast blame for Japan's sagging fortunes abroad while fanning the flames of nationalism, Japan's nationalist government would begin to use benign terms like "normalization" to explain its re-writing of defense policies. Elements of Japan's right-wing have long believed Japan should possess a nuclear weapon that ensures Japanese defense and reflects Japan's status in the international system. In this new environment, politicians that had here-to-fore quietly held the belief Japan should possess a nuclear weapons program might be emboldened to make their positions known. A right-wing Japanese government could, like India's BJP, make the political calculation that acquiring a nuclear weapons capability would act as a strong political symbol at home and abroad of renewed Japanese strength and sovereignty.

There is nothing inevitable about Japan's current non-nuclear policy. In the aftermath of China' nuclear testing and without American security guarantees, Japan felt compelled to acquire or at least move closer to acquiring a nuclear weapon in the mid-1960s, and this sense of insecurity could compel Tokyo to think about pursuing nuclear weapons again if Japan though it lacked sufficient guarantees from the United States. There are few, if any, technical hurdles to Japan acquiring a bomb; Japan has only lacked the political will to do so. While Japan's position on nuclear weapons is multi-fold, the central pillar of its abstinence is the U.S.-Japan alliance. Japan's security environment remains

289 Johnny Harris and Tian Wang, "Japan's Rising Right-Wing Nationalism," *Vox*, June 1, 2017, https://www.vox.com/videos/2017/6/1/15727090/borders-japan-right-wing-nationalism.

complex and will remain so for the foreseeable future. China, Japan's enduring rival and chief reason for exploring the nuclear option in the 1960s, has only grown in relative strength and military capability. Japan has largely hedged against China's rising strength by leaning into its relationship with the United States. The United States should not take Japan's current strategy for granted. Political statements and gestures interpreted as undermining the strength of the alliance, particularly for short-term, electoral gain at home are counterproductive and damaging. Threatening abandonment in the hope of inducing Japan to contribute additional resources to national security undermines essential trust in the relationship. If the United States seeks to ensure Japanese does not acquire the bomb, it must remain committed to the U.S.-Japan alliance and continue to communicate its steadfast commitment to Japanese security.

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