

Kidnapping Politics in East Asia

Richard J. Samuels

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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The East Asia Institute
909 Sampoong B/D, 310-68 Euljiro 4-ga
Jung-gu, Seoul 100-786
Republic of Korea
Tel 82 2 2277 1683
Fax 82 2 2277 1684



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Introduction

Despite-- or perhaps due to-- the enormous impact of Kenneth Waltz's *Man, the State, and War* and *Theory of International Politics*, it has long been *de rigueur* for students of world politics to question-- or at least to nibble at-- the strictest structural assumptions of his brand of realism. Even scholars who accept Waltz's ideas about relative power as the primary driver of and constraint on state action in an anarchic world have sought explanations for the strategic behavior of nation states that more fully incorporate political dynamics and choice. Locating explanations for foreign policy behavior below the level of the international system has become a holy grail in the study of world politics.¹

In this essay I will briefly review this search, focusing primarily on scholarship aimed at explaining the "capture" of foreign policy by domestic groups. After a discussion of the metaphorical kidnapping of bodies politic, I will turn to the literal version-- the actual kidnapping of domestic nationals by foreign powers. After noting briefly how political entrepreneurs from antiquity to modern times have constructed "captivity narratives" to advance their interests, I will use the cases of North Korean abductions of Japanese and South Korean nationals to illuminate how captivity narratives can be differentially constructed and deployed under similar structural conditions. This paired comparison offers a particularly clear window on the mechanisms involved in political capture. Foreign assaults on co-nationals in Japan seemed to cut so close to the core of national identity and to the essence of national sovereignty that in the hands of skilled political operatives, they could trigger powerful emotions enabling once marginal groups to engineer state policy. These



same assaults in South Korea were handled differently by equally skilled actors with contrary interests. I thus will reject the common privileging of either international or domestic structures in the analysis of foreign policy outcomes and argue for renewed attention to political entrepreneurship and agency-based explanations for political behavior.

Capturing Foreign Policy

The most influential and sustained early alternative to Waltzian realism focused on bureaucratic politics.² Allison and others who studied organizations and bureaucrats argued that foreign policy behavior can be traced to the parochial interests of policy-makers-- particularly the executive branch. Individuals battle for their organization's interests against "stove-piped" competitors in the same government. National policy emerges from conflict and bargaining among often quite contrary perspectives, as well as from deeply engrained standard operating procedures within different organizational cultures. Interests were endogenous to the model, and so interest groups had little to do with policy choice. These models largely ignored the public, focusing instead on the capture of policy by one group of policy elites over another.³

But interest group politics and mass publics have never been far from the debate over how to study foreign policy and grand strategy in democratic polities. The most closely studied domains have been trade and foreign economic policies. Scholars have shown that democracies tend to have lower tariffs than autocracies, that they trade more, and that they are more likely to conclude liberalizing trade agreements.⁴ Endogenous tariff theorists start with actor preferences based on purported interests and evaluate how political institutions systematically constrain or facilitate political organization to advocate for turning those preferences into policy.⁵ Others have shown democratic institutions to have perverse effects on trade and investment because politicians are likely to "sell" protection to domestic capital and labor.⁶ Still other approaches emphasize the domestic sources of foreign policy behavior by focusing on how regimes can improve policy coordination by facilitating the flow of information to overcome the prisoner's dilemma.⁷

The "two level game," a formal version of the widely held intuition that diplomacy is intermediated by domestic political contestation and bargaining, is probably the most widely cited model linking international and domestic politics.⁸



Here, a chief executive must negotiate an international agreement not only with other states but also with the potential domestic opposition-- both inside and outside the state apparatus. Putnam's original model spawned an entire industry of studies, some of which focus on trade policy, while others have focused on everything from agency vetoes to intervention in the domestic politics of other states.⁹ Scholarship on the influence of ethnic- or religious-based interest groups builds upon the same intuition about domestic capture or veto of foreign policy.¹⁰

While many alternatives to structural realism focus on group dynamics and interest formation below the level of a unified national executive (Waltz's black-boxed "second image") some bore deeply into the motives and capacities of individuals (Waltz's "first image").¹¹ Some borrow heavily from psychology and build upon Robert Jervis' work on perception and misperception.¹² Here the sources of foreign policy behavior are located in the minds of individual decision-makers, minds latticed with beliefs and biases about politics and world affairs that filter and distort the intentions and capabilities of potential adversaries.¹³ Other scholars focus on the interests of leaders rather than the interests of states. For them, the chief executive may act on different incentives than "national interest" might dictate, a situation not unlike the "principal-agent" problem in rational choice theory.¹⁴ This perspective is reflected in decades of theorizing on diversionary war-- a presumption that leaders may welcome crises to secure their positions at home, rather than to further a national interest.¹⁵

Constructivist approaches to international relations take this critique further, by emphasizing the importance of ideas-- including beliefs about the world, norms of appropriate behavior, and actor identities-- for explaining international behavior.¹⁶ On these accounts, neither the structure of the international system nor the distribution of domestic power can adequately explain national policies. Constructivists insist that world politics is about more than the distribution of material power under anarchy and point out that domestic politics is in constant flux over which values ought to be maximized-- e.g., prestige, autonomy, power, or wealth, *inter alia*. Consequently, their analysis is directed toward ideas as independent forces, ideological conflict within states, the ability of leaders to construct and channel preferences, and the capacity of groups to command and control policy agendas by reframing national identities.¹⁷

Bureaucratic, liberal and constructivist alternatives notwithstanding, many scholars accept the Waltzian fundamentals-- viz., anarchy, balances of power, rationality, etc.-- and incorporate domestic politics to enhance the theory's predictive



power. Recognizing that frictionless, unitary decision-making is uncharacteristic of most polities, these “neoclassical realists” loosen some of the more restrictive assumptions of structural realism and insist that states will act as rational maximizers of security or power on the international level only to the extent that they can contain domestic political entropy.¹⁸ Since democratic politics are notoriously unruly and domestic political interventions are common, great powers often either overreach or under-mobilize.¹⁹

Snyder’s explanation of how parochial interests can “highjack” foreign policy is a particularly relevant account of this dynamic for the purposes of the present inquiry. This approach builds upon a long tradition in comparative politics-- including assumptions about state capacity and the distribution of interests.²⁰ Integrating the notion of “capture” with the structure of domestic and international politics more systematically than either the lobbying literature or endogenous trade theory, Snyder uses Olson and others to argue that groups favoring muscular foreign policies often enjoy advantages in “organizational persuasiveness”-- motivational advantages, control of information resources, and close ties to the state-- which enable them to capture national policy.²¹ Groups in society with expansionist interests, he argues, tend to be more compact and concentrated than their opponents. In a cartelized polity, this provides institutional advantages that enable them to “propagate the myth of security through expansion in the guise of the general interest of society.”²² Armed with a persuasive idea and fortified by cartelized power, they can kidnap politics. Snyder suggests further that the system may become so rigid-- either through logrolling or cognitive dissonance-- that actors may misinterpret or ignore information pointing to overextension and end up with policies that harm the very interest groups that promoted them.

It is possible, however, that skilled political entrepreneurs armed with particularly powerful ideas might succeed in defining a national agenda even in more competitive and open democratic polities. After all, democracies are riddled with entry-points available for capture that are closed in more authoritarian regimes.²³ Politically motivated kidnapping-- the abduction of citizens by a hostile foreign power-- may itself be one such idea. For centuries-- and without regard for location-- political abductions have figured in the construction of national identities and in justifications both for aggression and conciliation. Some narrators have effectively capitalized on captivity to frame and highlight national weakness and the fecklessness of leaders. Others have spun out accounts of heroism to demonstrate national strength and visionary leadership. Either way, the manipulation of the captivity passion for



political ends often has been used to mobilize public sympathy to reorient national policies.²⁴

The question is whether this requires the structural conditions that Snyder posits, and if, as he proposes, more open democracies are apt to correct for the most extreme excesses.²⁵ While neo-classical realism directs us toward examining the mechanisms that exist in democracies that enable even weak and marginal groups to define the national interest and set the policy agenda, it remains bound to the structure of both the domestic and international orders. It is worth exploring the possibility that ideas about sovereignty (per the constructivist assumptions) and political entrepreneurship (per the liberal model) might have an independent capacity to empower groups to capture national policy. Let me turn then to one such idea-- captivity itself-- to examine the organizational mechanisms for policy capture in the cases of the abduction of Japanese and South Korean nationals by North Korean agents.²⁶

The Case of Japan

Japan's captivity narrative typically begins in November 1977 in Niigata, when a 13 year-old middle school student, Yokota Megumi, was heading home from badminton practice. After waving good-bye to her teammates, Megumi was grabbed off the street, trussed, stuffed into a Soviet military cargo bag, shoved into the rusting belly of a fishing trawler by North Korean agents and deposited in Pyongyang. Her tragedy has had no end: After isolation and reeducation, she taught Japanese at Kim Jong Il Political and Military University, married a South Korean abductee, and was reported to have committed suicide after a nervous breakdown in 1993. Her mother, Sakie, and father, Shigeru, both ordinary parents caught in an extraordinary vise of anxiety, became especially effective advocates for the abductees. Movies, anime, manga all made Megumi a cause célèbre, but her tale and her suffering was not limited to the Yokota household. She was only one of several dozen young people-- all either kidnapped by North Korean agents in the late 1970s or simply "missing." Some were snatched in Japan, others in Europe. In October 2002, Kim Jong Il famously admitted to Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō that freelancers within his government had abducted thirteen innocent Japanese youths, but the National Police Agency claims the correct number is 40, and activist groups are championing as many as 500 cases.



Each of these cases connects directly to the core institutions of Japanese politics and diplomacy: a) civil society, b) the political class, c) the media, and d) the state. They connect to civil society because, after failing to draw public attention to their plight on their own, the families of the abductees attracted support from civic groups dedicated to overthrow of North Korea.²⁷ The two most prominent such groups-- the *Sukūkai* (Rescue Association), a combined “support group and political action committee,” and the *Kazokukai* (Family Association)-- were set up in March 1997 by professional activists and came to have sizeable paid staffs with nearly one hundred branches across Japan.²⁸ Leaders of the Rescue Association and related civic groups have used the welfare of the abductees and their families to build a national megaphone for their cause. Their success is manifest in many ways, including the role they may have played in authoring legislation to deal with aid to the abductees’ families and to stiffen sanctions on North Korea-- both unprecedented for NGOs in Japan, where laws are written almost entirely by bureaucrats.

At first the families of abductees had trouble gaining public support. On one memorable occasion, the mother of one abductee stood at the Sukiyabashi intersection in Tokyo, possibly the world’s busiest crosswalk, for an hour and gathered only one signature for her petition to the government for assistance. Others were criticized for calling attention to themselves. Over time, though, the cause attracted support from civic groups dedicated to overthrow of the Kim dynasty in North Korea. These groups gained the confidence of grateful abductee families and came to orchestrate their politics by helping them establish their own association, by controlling their access to the media, and, by controlling their visits to North Korea. As Megumi’s father, Yokota Shigeru, explained about Satō Katsumi, the founder of the Rescue Association: “We know Satō is a right-winger, but we need all the help we can get from whomever we can get it from.”²⁹

The Rescue Association gave senior posts to conservative politicians and worked with them to use the abductee issue to derail normalization talks and shift the government’s overall approach to North Korea. Within two years, Prime Minister Obuchi declared the abductee issue to be “a matter of personal concern” and Japanese diplomats began meeting North Korean officials wearing the association’s blue ribbons as signs of solidarity and protest. On those occasions when the government did not respond as they wished, the Family and Rescue Associations orchestrated sit-ins at the prime minister’s office. At the height of their influence, the abductee groups were able to meet with any public official in Japan or in the United States-- including foreign ministers, prime ministers, the secretary of state, and the president.



In this way, the Japanese abductions illuminate larger dynamics within Japan's political class. Although it was a Communist Party staffer who first connected North Korea to the disappearances for the families in January 1988, the Socialist Party (JSP) had deeper connections to North Korea. Unfortunately for the families, however, the JSP refused to pursue the allegations and, rather than help secure the release of the abductees, party leaders actively covered up North Korean treachery. Members of the now defunct anti-communist Democratic Socialist Party, such as Araki Kazuhiro, became leading advocates of the abductee families.³⁰

But it was relations with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) that were most valuable for the families and, since the LDP was governing, more consequential for Japanese politics and diplomacy. Pragmatists who sought normalization with North Korea primarily as a way to enrich their own constituents and maintain power had dominated the LDP. But LDP hardliners rallied to the cause of the abductees, using them to highlight their concerns about national sovereignty, military debility, and regional security. Future Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, who had never been particularly active on the abductee issue, recognized an opportunity to seize power from the pragmatists. With the support of the parent of Arimoto Keiko, one of the abductees, he and several allies attacked the existing Diet member's League for Early Repatriation of Japanese Citizens Kidnapped by North Korea (*rachi giren*) as too conciliatory, and formed a more hawkish, suprapartisan group of legislators. This newer *rachi giren* rejected compromise on the abductions issue, called for investigations into the Korean-affiliated credit unions and an end to all cash transfers to the DPRK, and proposed legislation to prohibit Koreans residing in Japan from visiting North Korea. Abe thereupon also assumed an honorary post in the Rescue Association and stimulated considerable public agitation over the abductee issue in order to engineer an unlikely LDP victory in November 2003.³¹

As the revisionists consolidated power with the help of the abductee issue, the Japanese right became more prominent. One can see the involvement of the nationalist right in the abductee issue as evidence of the generally rightward drift in Japanese politics. Alternatively, one can see the reverse, a "mainstreaming" of the right, in which once marginal ideas have been embraced by the center. Knowing if the right is moving to the center or vice versa is important because those activists and politicians leading the abductee issue have also been active combatants in Japan's culture wars. The same leaders and groups have led the fight on such issues as elevation of the emperor, revision of the constitution, revising accepted interpretations of the Pacific War, revisiting the conclusions of the Tokyo War



Crimes Trial, confronting territorial disputes with Japan's neighbors, and enhancing Japan's national security through the acquisition of more modern weapons.

Public agitation over the abductee issue was abetted, if not created, by a media that awoke late to the issue. For decades, despite a drumbeat of reports in the conservative *Sankei Shimbun*, the mainstream media would not touch the issue, apparently fearing protests by associations of Korean residents and by the leftwing parties. Even after Kajiyama Seiroku, one of the most powerful LDP politicians of the day, testified in Diet in 1988 that there indeed may have been North Korean kidnappings, no major daily apart from the like-minded *Sankei* reported his testimony. Indeed, the rest of the (largely center-left) press ignored the issue for sixteen years, until after the institutional suicide of the Socialist Party and the detailed description of the scheme by a North Korean defector.

Then, after Prime Minister Koizumi visited Pyongyang and elicited the formal acknowledgement of the abductions in 2002, the media reversed itself and frothed into high dudgeon. Other issues palled and substantive policy debate about how to deal with North Korea ceased. It became impossible to question the motives of the families or of their advocates in civil society and the political class. One Diet member said that it'd be "political suicide" even to suggest that proliferation of nuclear weapons ought to be of equal or greater concern than the release of the abductees.³² At that point, the state media stepped in as well. In 2006, the government broadcaster NHK was instructed by the Prime Minister's Office to increase radio broadcasting of the issue. According to one senior broadcasting executive, the mention of any criticism of the way the issue was evolving was "like stepping on a religious icon."³³ An animated film, "Megumi," was made with public funds and distributed with a government produced documentary by consulates around the world. Credible evidence of a cover-up of the results of forensic testing of Megumi's ashes, published in the British journal *Nature*, was denied vigorously by the government and ignored thoroughly by the Japanese press.³⁴

The relationship of the media to the abductee issue and its contribution to this national convulsion raise important questions about political intimidation in Japan. Both the "nationalist left" and the "nationalist right" seem to have taken turns intimidating the media and politicians. While for decades, it had been impossible to criticize North Korea without being attacked by those who viewed Pyongyang as a progressive neighbor, it became open season on those who had been advocating normalization after 2002. Bullets were mailed to the Tokyo offices of the Korean residents' association (*Chōsen Sōren/Chongryun*) by a self identified "North Korea



Suppression Corps” and shots were fired at a Nagoya branch of a *Chōsen Sōren/Chongryun*-affiliated bank. A bomb was found at the home of the diplomat who had engineered the Pyongyang visit for Prime Minister Koizumi, a criminal act condoned publicly by the conservative governor of Tokyo. The home of a leading centrist politician, Nonaka Hiromu, was encircled by sound trucks, forcing him to disband the Japan-North Korea Friendship Association he had championed and convincing him to retire from politics. Meanwhile, abductees and their families were encouraged to draw swords in the culture wars. The mother of a returned abductee spoke at Diet hearing in favor of constitutional revision. Other Family Association members spoke out in favor of textbook revision and human rights in China--foundational issues on the nationalist right. Some went further and advocated the rounding up and expulsion of all North Korean residents of Japan.

The final domestic institution on which the abductee issue sheds considerable light is the state itself. The aging literature on the “administrative state” had always seemed apt vis-à-vis Japan.³⁵ Japanese bureaucrats had long been depicted as the best, brightest, most competent and most incorruptible products of an unassailably meritocratic system. The easy contrast was made to Japan’s dim, incompetent, and highly corruptible political class. Politicians, an inordinate number of whom have “inherited” their father’s seats, were cast as the “*botchan*” (princelings) to the bureaucrats’ philosopher kings. A succession of deeply troubling scandals and profound bungling-- including accidents at unregulated nuclear reactors, corruption of the nation’s blood supply while health officials golfed with pharmaceutical executives, and the loss of 50 million pension records-- has proved otherwise.

So has the abductee issue. Abductee families complained for years about officials’ “unhelpfulness,” “arrogance,” and “callousness.” Hasuike Toru, the elder brother of an abductee, insists that his fight was against both “the rogue nation [North Korea] and the incompetent nation [Japan].”³⁶ Fishermen had been reporting strange transmissions and odd vessels to the authorities since the mid-1970s. Nothing was done. Families of those who disappeared from European holidays or study tours were told repeatedly by diplomats that “young people often disappear into new lives in Europe.” When Terakoshi Tomoe, a char woman and mother of a suspected abductee, sought help from the Japanese police, they tossed away the letter she had received from him. The Foreign Ministry kept the issue quiet, it said, so as not to jeopardize the abductees. It is more likely, however, that they were afraid of jeopardizing the delicate process of normalization sought by LDP pragmatists then in



power. Once the revisionists consolidated power, the Japanese state danced to new music.

This music may finally have stopped-- and even if not, it is likely past its crescendo. There is a concern among those on the right that the election of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in August 2009 will lead to a softening in Japan's position on the abductee issue. Although the DPJ was forced by electoral pressures to fall in line with the LDP's tough position on North Korea after 2002, it earlier had favored normalization.³⁷ When they were back benchers in the Sakigake Party, Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio and Deputy Prime Minister Kan Naoto both went to Pyongyang as part of the Watanabe "rice" mission in 1995. Hatoyama had even signed a petition for the release of a former North Korean spy held in a South Korean jail who reportedly had been involved in Yokota Megumi's abduction.³⁸ Even earlier, DPJ representative Ishii Hajime, was the head of the advance team for the 1990 Kanemaru mission, "unofficial" normalization talks in which DPJ Secretary General Ozawa Ichiro also played a major role.³⁹ The hard line position indeed had been made precarious by the election: several of the most senior supporters of the abductee families-- including the late Nakagawa Shōichi, Sasakawa Takashi, and Nishimura Shingo-- lost their seats in the DPJ landslide.⁴⁰ Thus, immediately after the election, the *Sukūkai* organized rallies and leaders of the *Kazokukai* visited the prime minister.⁴¹ Mr. Hatoyama appointed the acting chair of the bipartisan Diet members association on the abductees' issue, Nakai Hiroshi, as chief of the National Public Safety Commission and asked him to look after the abductees. Hatoyama promised "efforts" to identify and return any remaining abductees, but he closed the Cabinet Office dedicated to the abductees' issue that had been established by national law under Abe's leadership.⁴² In October 2009, moreover, he signaled to Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak that his government would be comfortable with the abductee issue being pursued "in parallel" with the nuclear issue in the Six Party Talks. It seems that a softened position is gaining public support. In a November 2009 poll, abduction had declined to a distant second place in concerns of the Japanese public vis-à-vis North Korea. Now, for the first time in years, the DPRK's nuclear weapons capability is by a wide margin the number one concern of the Japanese public.⁴³

Thus, the Japanese captivity narrative also has international implications, initially and most directly, of course, related to normalization talks with North Korea.⁴⁴ If Kim Jong Il thought his 2002 acknowledgement and apology would grease the skids for economic aid and normalization, he seriously misjudged Japan's democratic



politics. He got, instead, a “tumult of emotions.”⁴⁵ Not only was the abductee issue used to consolidate the power of the LDP’s revisionist wing, but bilateral relations became much more fraught. The Japanese government revised its Foreign Exchange Control Law, banned the entry of the North Korean ferry to Japanese ports, and banned the return to Japan of any resident Koreans who might visit North Korea. Between 1991-2003, more than 600 books were published in Japan on North Korea, nearly all “virulently hostile.”⁴⁶ No Japanese government was going to proceed on normalization with North Korea while the Japanese public was being lathered into a collective rage by the media, conservative politicians, and groups in civil society with nationalist agendas.

This extended to the multilateral “6 Party Talks” on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The Japanese government insisted on the return of all abductees during these negotiations, a position that the other participants viewed as a distraction from the more important issue of nuclear proliferation.⁴⁷ The irony, of course, was that even though the Japanese government had been first to suggest the format, the 6 Party Talks proceeded without settlement of Japan’s primary concern-- under mostly Chinese leadership. Getting Japan back onto the same page as U.S., Chinese, South Korean, and Russian negotiators is now a central task for the Hatoyama government. The new prime minister acknowledged as much by focusing almost entirely on the nuclear issue in his first major speech at the General Assembly meeting in New York in September 2009 and by pledging to South Korean President Lee Myung-bak that his government would work on denuclearization of the north.⁴⁸

Nor have bilateral relations with South Korea been consistently healthy. Japan’s position on the abductee issue seems to have reinforced decades of distrust on the peninsula. Not surprisingly, public opinion in the ROK has been sympathetic to North Korean claims of Japanese “plunder” of the peninsula during thirty-five years of colonial rule between 1910-1945. The public has been reminded constantly of the abduction of millions Koreans during the occupation to work as slaves in Japan’s mines, factories, and military brothels. Former South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun linked Japan’s colonial atrocities to the current abduction issue and underlined this sense of hypocrisy: “Japan should put itself in Korea’s shoes and understand the anger of our people who suffered thousands and tens of thousands of times as much pain ...”⁴⁹ This mutual distrust was reflected in a new regional security architecture first proposed by Prime Minister Abe in 2007. His much ballyhooed “arc of freedom and prosperity,” promoted to unite the capitalist democracies in the region



(presumably to balance a rising China), included Australia, India, and the United States, but pointedly left out South Korea.

[MORE ON ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS AFTER DECEMBER 2009 RESEARCH VISIT]

For its part, the United States, that never silent partner in domestic Japanese politics, has been mostly unhelpful on the abductee issue. Although President Bush met with Megumi's parents in White House April 2006, although U.S. Embassy officials met with the *Kazokukai* regularly, and although Secretary of State Clinton met with them in her February 2009 visit to Japan, the U.S. government would not allow domestic Japanese politics to interfere with its larger strategic concern--proliferation of WMD on and from the peninsula. On several occasions, in fact, the abductee issue served to drive a wedge in US-Japan relations. Prime Minister Koizumi visited Pyongyang in 2002, despite White House objections. Tanaka Hitoshi, the chief architect of that visit, writes in his memoirs that the overture had the understanding of Deputy Secretary of State Armitage, but was opposed by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney.⁵⁰ He is also reported to have declared, "We don't have to ask the U.S. for approval every time we come up with a foreign policy initiative. We are not a protectorate of the United States."⁵¹ That may be so, but when the U.S. government removed North Korea from its list of "state sponsors of terrorism" in late 2008, it limited Japan's leverage on North Korea and generated serious and widespread anxiety in Japan about the quality of the American commitment to Japanese security and the future of the alliance.

The prominence of the captivity narrative on Japan's official agenda invites questions about the alliance and about the region's security architecture going forward. Capture of the abductee issue by the right in Japan gave reason to expect support for a further strengthening of the Japanese military and a further weakening of Tokyo's diplomacy. For some activists, after all, this was the whole point. Hostility with North Korea justified Japan's military buildup and the removal of existing constraints on its use of force. The new government, operating with a more pliant public, claims to have other important priorities. Hence, it is also important to determine if Japan's elevation of the abduction issue and its increasing muscularity created long term difficulties with its Chinese and South Korean neighbors, or if the recent shift to a more Asia-oriented government will open new opportunities for Japanese diplomacy.



[MORE ON THIS AFTER DECEMBER 2009 RESEARCH VISIT]

The Case of South Korea

(THIS SECTION AND THE CONCLUSION ARE UNFINISHED-- TO BE REVISED AFTER DECEMBER 2009 RESEARCH VISIT)

Many of the fundamentals of the South Korean story are remarkably similar to the Japanese one, though they have been painted from a much more chaotic palette. The Red Cross reports that more than 7,000 South Koreans citizens were abducted during the Korean War and all but 337 had died by 2002.⁵² The Korean War Abductees Family Union (KWAFU) claims the number is much higher. On its reading of a 1952 document, 83,000 South Korean citizens, many of them soldiers, found themselves on the wrong side of the DMZ at the end of the war.⁵³ The wartime abductions have been traced to a 1946 memorandum penned by Kim Il Sung, entitled: "On Transporting Intellectuals from South Korea" and to one in 1950 from the Kangwon Province Home Affairs Bureau labeled: "On the Cooperative Project Concerning the Transfer of Seoul Citizens." Following the guidelines therein, North Korean soldiers visited private homes seeking specific individuals-- primarily intellectuals, journalists, public officials, and students-- for relocation in the north. While the North's target of 500,000 was more than ambitious, thousands of Seoul residents were snatched and transferred to northern mines and farms, particularly in the early months of the war.⁵⁴ In 2009, the government estimated 560 South Korean POWs were still alive in the north.⁵⁵

The numbers of abductions subsided after the war, but were never eliminated. A steady stream of abductions is recorded for the entire period from 1953 to the present. The Korean Institute for National Unification reports that nearly 4,000 ROK citizens-- including five high school students and a school teacher visiting Norway-- have been abducted to North Korea since the armistice in 1953 "partly because North Korea may have found their knowledge and manpower useful."⁵⁶ Most of the postwar abductees were fishermen, but sailors, students, and passengers aboard a high-jacked KAL flight were also kidnapped. Like their Japanese counterparts, South Korean high school students were swept off beaches by North Korean agents in the late 1970s. Some 500 of the post-armistice abductees are believed to remain alive and in



detention across the 38th parallel today.⁵⁷ Some of these abductees have been used to train North Korean agents at the Center for Revolutionizing South Korea, a Potemkin-like replica of the ROK for graduates of the Kim Il Sung Political Military College. Others have broadcast propaganda to the South.⁵⁸ North Korea denies holding any South Korean nationals against their will, though it has from time to time responded positively to calls for resolution of the status of missing persons.⁵⁹

As in Japan, the abductees' families organized NGOs to press their case to the government and became more assertive after forming working alliances with broader, more ideological groups. And, as in the Japanese case, these groups became particularly active at the time of a potentially historic change in international affairs-- in this case the June 2000 Kim Dae-Jung/Kim Jong Il "Sunshine" summit.⁶⁰ And, as in the Japanese case, the return home of an abductee-- Lee Jae-geun escaped from North Korea that same month-- attracted considerable media attention.

However, South Korea's multiple civic associations were more fractured than Japan's and had more limited political impact. The KWAFU was established in 1953, as the successor to the "Family Association for Korean War Abducted Persons" ("Family Association") that was organized in September 1951, during the war. **[KWAFU DATE AWAITS CONFIRMATION]** After the armistice, the Family Association appealed to the Red Cross, which compiled a list of more than 7,000 persons. Failing to achieve its goals, the Family Association disbanded in June 1960.⁶¹ After a period of general quiescence on the abductee issue, several new groups appeared: the "Families of Abducted and Detained in North Korea" (FADN) was formed by seven abductee families in February 2000, but an "Abductees' Family Union" (AFU) preferring a more aggressive political agenda, split away soon thereafter. In November 2000, the "Family Group for the Korean War Abducted Persons" was established. After it changed its name to the KWAFU in September 2001, it compiled a list of nearly 95,000 abductees.⁶² A "Citizen's Coalition for Human Rights of Abductees and North Korean Refugees" (CHNK) was organized formally in March 2001.⁶³ In July 2009, seven South Koreans who had been kidnapped and held for decades by North Korea formed the Returned Abductees' Committee to raise awareness of the issue. One leader, Go Myung Seob, spent 29 years in North Korea after being kidnapped from a fishing boat in 1975 along with 32 other men. Other leaders include the aforementioned Lee Jae Geun, the first abductee to escape and return to the south as well as three North Korean defectors who refused to be identified.⁶⁴



[NEED TO CONFIRM THE NAMES/DATES/ACRONYMS OF EACH GROUP]

For most of the past fifty years, however, these groups achieved very little. As the KWAFU confides: the abductee issue in South Korea “is difficult to publicize.”⁶⁵ Because abductees were not distinguished from defectors, they were considered security risks by the South Korean government. Hence, their families were subjected to various forms of discrimination in the workplace and in education. Until 1989, they were barred from government jobs-- most notably from entrance to the military academy-- and were subject to government surveillance.⁶⁶ Not only had they lost their loved ones, but now they were treated as potential spies for the North and punished officially.⁶⁷ The Red Crosses proceeded only occasionally to resolve the status of those missing after the chaos of the war. The South Korean government raised the issue intermittently with the North, but never used the issue as the sine qua non for normalization as did the government of Japan. To the contrary, with the DPRK refusing to acknowledge holding POWs or abductees, the South Korean government turned to what it considered a “more realistic” term: “separated” families.⁶⁸ But even then, progress was limited. Although there have been dozens of escapes and defections, only nineteen families had been temporarily reunited by 2004 by policy, and as late as 2009, the DPRK continues to refuse to discuss the abduction issue. The government has found ways to pay lip service to the abductee groups, but has never let them gain the upper hand in the policy process.

This has long been the case. Whether operating from an authoritarian or from a democratic center, South Korean leaders have been able to ignore the demands of the abductee family associations with relative impunity. These civic groups did not exist before Korea’s turn to democracy in 1987, of course, but even the village-based groups of wives of the missing fishermen received no official recognition or assistance. By some accounts-- as in Japan prior to 1998-- the prospect of normalization and reconciliation prevented South Korean leaders from pressing the North for change in the abductee status quo even after the democratic transformation. Whereas, the pre-democratic ROK faced little pressure from public opinion, the democratic Korea was so keen on reconciliation and its “Sunshine Policy,” that it reportedly began to soft pedal the abductee issue for fear of running the talks off the rails. Arrington suggests that the families’ demands were “sidelined” because “the government was loath to risk ‘big losses [by upsetting the talks] for small gain [for the families of the abductees].”⁶⁹

In a country as vigorously democratic and as contested politically as the Republic of Korea has been since 1987, one might have expected a different outcome. And,



indeed, there were moments when the abductee issue flared into fuller view-- often fueled by negative comparisons with what are perceived as Japanese (and later, U.S.) "successes." The admission of the abductions and the apology by Kim Jong Il to Prime Minister Koizumi in October 2002 reopened the issue of North Korean kidnappings of South Korean citizens, "in a more explosive political and social form."⁷⁰ Two days after the October 2002 Pyongyang Declaration, FADN and KWAFU petitioned the South Korean government to put the abductee issue on the agenda for any future unification talks.⁷¹ ROK citizens resented that the Japanese received an apology and acknowledgment while they were stonewalled. According to Yonhap, "the issue became fodder for opposition parties and civic groups to pressure the government."⁷² Mirroring the demands of Japanese groups, some South Korean NGOs demanded that Seoul withhold all aid to Pyongyang until the abductee issue could be similarly rectified. Opposition presidential candidate, Lee Hoi-chang, "bashed the government," promising to do more to get Pyongyang to answer for the kidnappings.⁷³ One conservative editorial, reacting to the situation of an abducted fisherman, Im Guk-Jae, fairly shouts at the ROK government:

"When he was abducted, Im believed that his country would rescue him soon. He waited and waited, and for fifteen long years his country did nothing... Im is now presumed to be in a concentration camp. Cold political logic aside, has the government of the Republic of Korea ever had a shred of feeling for the man?"⁷⁴

Resentment of the ability of the Japanese and the US governments to succeed with Pyongyang continued to run high in South Korea-- this, despite the fact that Choi Woo-young, a founder of the FADN, explicitly acknowledges the Japanese *Kazokukai* as a model in the formation of his group in February 2000.⁷⁵ In April 2006, a newspaper editorialized that Seoul "should be ashamed" that Tokyo was doing its job for it on the abduction front.⁷⁶ In August 2009, former US President Bill Clinton traveled to Pyongyang to secure the release of two U.S. reporters who had been captured by North Korean soldiers after they entered DPRK territory. Abductee NGOs in the Republic of Korea had the same reaction to their release that counterpart groups in Japan had-- exasperation that American pressure worked and frustration with their own governments for their inability to secure the release of their own, longer suffering brethren.⁷⁷ The *Chosun Ilbo* frames the criticism of Seoul against the successes of Washington and Tokyo:



“The United States and Japan, quite unlike South Korea, never slacken the reins in demanding due protection of their own nationals from the North while squarely facing Pyongyang on its nuclear program ... The [ROK] government cannot even find the right words to bring its own citizens home when the North abducts them, yet it continues to give Pyongyang billions of dollars in food and fertilizer aid every year. That is what it calls dialogue.”⁷⁸

More recently, it editorialized:

“Officials from the previous two administrations sat down in hundreds of meetings with North Koreans but did not dare even to mention the issue ... If Seoul were to show the same resolve as the Japanese government, with the president or prime minister personally leading a committee focusing on the issue, the family members of POWs, abduction victims and other members of separated families could at least have some hope.”⁷⁹

But support for Japanese efforts has been mixed in South Korea. In August 2007, the Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Connected to North Korea (*Tokutei Shissōsha Mondai Chōsakai*), a particularly aggressive Japanese abductee group that had split from the Rescue Committee, attempted to release several balloons from South to North Korea with information about missing Japanese suspected of being in the DPRK. The effort was opposed by FADN, which claimed that such an attempt would adversely affect scheduled meetings of the Red Cross on the abductee and POW issues. On the other hand, the AFU has collaborated with the Japanese “Investigation Commission’s” balloon projects.

Following the Japanese model, some abductee groups sought and found common cause with more broadly based conservative and anti-communist groups in civil society. In both cases, it was the anti-communist right that occupied the high grounds on the human rights issue. While FADN and KWAFU have been generally apolitical, AFU has been highly mobilized, engaging in both legal and illegal activities, including protesting in front of the MOU minister’s home, harassing members of the victim recognition deliberation committee, and reportedly hiring agents to infiltrate North Korea.⁸⁰ AFU claims to have helped all eight of the escaped abductees reach South Korea. After sending balloons across the DMZ with the names of abductees and drawing strong protest from the DPRK in 2008, anti-communist NGOs including AFU sent North Korean banknotes and propaganda fliers aloft across the border in 2009. The South Korean government considered legal measures to block these acts, but reportedly was intimidated by the ability of such anti-communist NGOs as



“Fighters for a Free North Korea” in alliance with the AFU to mobilize conservative opinion.⁸¹ Unlike Japan, however, where the alliance of rightist and abductee family groups enjoyed broad support and led to significant policy changes, these actions were met with disinterest and even opprobrium from the general public, the government, and from other abductees/refugee organizations in South Korea. As noted above, even the eight abductees whom the AFU claims to have rescued formed their own civic group out of a concern that the AFU activism was counterproductive.

KWAFU has also been frustrated with the South Korean government, arguing that by acknowledging fewer than 500 abductees, the Seoul government has denied the existence of Korean War abductions. Angry at the government’s use of terms such as “missing persons” or “separated family members” rather than abductees, the KWAFU filed suit against the government in 2006.⁸² Lee Mi-il, the KWAFU leader, insisted that these people be called “what they are-- kidnapping victims.”⁸³ The FADN lost a similar suit in 2002 both in the lower court and on appeal.⁸⁴

These separate suits belie a more significant problem-- the wartime abductees’ organizations and the postwar ones never united under a single banner. The latter have been focused exclusively on compensation and the immediate return of their loved ones, whereas the former focus on confirmation of their relatives’ whereabouts and on family reunions.⁸⁵ Some 127,000 South Koreans have applied for cross-border family reunions, but fewer than 500 a year have participated in the limited number of meetings arranged to date.⁸⁶ In addition, the postwar groups have been openly unhappy that compensation was limited to the families of the wartime abductees. [NEED CITATION] Moreover, as noted above, ideological splits in the postwar groups and the inability of the right to monopolize the human rights agenda in South Korea have rendered the abductee issue a less powerful political tool in South Korea than it has been in Japan.

Thus, while fundamental elements of the abduction story are the same as in Japan, the South Korean political outcomes have, on balance, been quite different. I conclude, therefore, with an effort to explain why.



Conclusion

Comparison of the South Korean and Japanese captivity narratives offers a unique vantage point to assess political dynamics and institutional change in democratic states. Since both countries have the same powerful security partner (the United States) and since each faces an existential threat from the same hostile neighbor (North Korea), this comparison allows us to hold the international system relatively constant. By failing to prevent repeated violations of their sovereignty by North Korea and by failing to protect their citizens from harm, both states failed to perform adequately their most central functions in the international system.

Nor is there significant variation in domestic political structures. Both countries have competitive party systems, regular elections, a nominally vigorous media, and an active, open civil society that has enabled challenges by ordinary citizens and the media of the monopoly of elite actors to make and implement policy. Captivity is in both cases a compelling emotional issue, cutting to the heart of debates over how national identity and national interest are defined. In both South Korea and Japan, the return of some abductees enraged many, and in both countries abductee family groups became particularly active just before and after summit meeting between their national leaders and Kim Jong Il. Groups in civil society in both countries seized upon the human rights issue and attempted to use it to manipulate public sentiment and to reorder national policy priorities.

Despite these many common structural features, however, we observe very different outcomes in South Korea and Japan on the abductee issue. In Japan, the captivity narrative was used to open a window on the discontents and dysfunctions of contemporary democratic politics and public policy. The media, the political class, and the bureaucrats all shifted position on one of the most divisive and explosive issues in Japanese foreign and security policy. Emotional appeals married to state failures were used to trump more dispassionate calculations of national interest. As we have seen, there are no heroic, stalwart men in Japan's captivity narrative-- only feckless politicians, cowed journalists, inept bureaucrats, and emboldened civic leaders.⁸⁷ After a period in which Japanese politics and diplomacy was kidnapped by the nationalist right, we now observe the beginning of an adjustment toward the center with public support.

Seoul, on the other hand, successfully redirected efforts of similar groups to determine the pace, shape and direction of its policy toward Pyongyang. Unlike in Japan, where public opinion convulsed into paroxysms of demand making and



finger-pointing, the South Korean public never rallied to the side of the abductees' families and has not supported the combined efforts of family groups with right wing NGOs. Although the majority of South Koreans agree that the POW/Abductees' issue should be resolved in near future, only a small minority (7%) consider this to be the most important issue in North South dialogue in 2008, or even a priority in South-North relations. Indeed, it is near the bottom of a long list in which the nuclear issue (29%), military tensions (28%), economic cooperation (16%), were far more important.⁸⁸ The relative indifference of the South Korean public should not be surprising, for the words 'POW' or 'abductees' were not even mentioned in any obtainable surveys before 2007.⁸⁹

These differences are reflected in policy. In contrast to Japan, where the Liberal Democrats used the abduction issue to coast to a major and unexpected victory in November 2003 and where a separate Cabinet Office was established on the issue with the prime minister as ex-officio chair, there was only minor policy adjustment on the abductee issue in South Korea. The ROK government-- whether authoritarian before 1987 or democratic since then-- conflated families separated by war with those separated by North Korean agents. It long refused even to use the term "abduction," and even after it began to do so, it refused to invoke it in negotiations with the DPRK. The National Assembly did not establish an Abductees Compensation and Assistance Review Committee until April 2007. Although more than 200 persons-- mostly fishermen-- received limited compensation (approx. US\$5,000), legislation introduced by the National Human Rights Commission aimed at securing an accurate survey of abductees, remains stalled in the National Assembly.⁹⁰ In short, unlike Tokyo, Seoul never allowed its primary focus on nuclear weapons and unification to be wrested toward the abductee issue.

These differences are all the more curious given South Korea's history of caustic political discourse, general characterizations of Korean public opinion as more volatile than Japanese public opinion, and the fact that the suffering of "separated families" is more widespread in Korea than in Japan. Why was the Japanese state more entangled by a mobilized citizenry than the South Korean state? Why were the less mobilized Japanese more agitated than the more politically experienced Koreans? Why did professional activists in Japan so effectively use civic groups to integrate once quite marginal ideas into the political mainstream, alter the balance of power in political discourse, delegitimize once robust institutions, and undermine Japanese diplomacy whereas their counterparts in South Korea failed to generate more than intermittent media attention to their cause? Why, in short, did the same politically



motivated abductions by the same enemy actor exert disproportionately powerful effects on the foreign policies of similar states under remarkably similar structural circumstances?

Snyder's model, as reviewed above, seems particularly appropriate in the Japanese case. After all, the abductee groups in civil society won national attention at about the same time that LDP revisionists consolidated power from LDP pragmatists.⁹¹ Power was newly "cartelized," making it possible for groups favoring an aggressive posture on the abductions to combine effectively with those favoring a more muscular security posture, and together effectively to shift-- Snyder would say "highjack"-- national policy. They clearly had the ear, at last, of national leaders. Logrolls and misperceptions ought to have been easier than ever.

Arrington provides the only other paired comparison of these two cases and attributes the differences to the nature of the new media and to the centralized power of the national executive. The transformation of the media, while undoubtedly a significant tool for activists, has proceeded apace in both countries and thus cannot explain the difference between South Korean and Japanese responses to the abduction issue. But the latter, what she refers to as changes in "the relative power of the executive" is plausible, especially when combined with Snyder's suggestion that the key to the highjacking of national policy rests in the extent to which foreign policy decision making can be cartelized by powerful interests. Arrington suggests that by 2000, the political class in both South Korea and Japan had come to dominate the career bureaucracy in matters of public policy.⁹² She argues that the shift in "the relative power of the executive" enabled Japanese and South Korean politicians to pursue their preferred paths vis-à-vis the abductees and North Korea. In Japan this meant a more hard line course than in the past-- i.e., a veering away from normalization in favor of sanctions and a military build-up. In South Korea, this meant the continued ability of presidents to ignore activists with impunity.

But these structural explanations are problematic for several reasons. First, the outcomes seem over-determined. We cannot know that ROK leaders insulated themselves from public demands by nature of their presidency because the public largely shrugged off the issue in South Korea. Likewise, in Japan until the 2000s, the preferences of the pragmatic wing of the LDP were consistent with those of the professional bureaucrats. Both wanted to probe the possibility of normalization with Pyongyang. Both the political leadership and the bureaucratic elite preferred to ignore the abductee issue. It was not until hard line LDP revisionists-- leaders with a demonstrated antipathy for North Korea-- consolidated power that the abductee issue



was elevated in the national discourse. These leaders did not depend on administrative reform for their empowerment as much as they depended upon their own electoral success. Regardless of structural factors, leaders in South Korea before and after 1987 and in Japan before and after the revisionist consolidation either embraced the abductee issue or chose not to do so consistent with their political preferences. Arrington acknowledges this in the South Korean case by noting that recent presidents have been “pro-engagement progressives,” adding that “their favored policy of engagement with North Korea has become a near-hegemonic policy idea in South Korea, meaning that the FADN’s demands for reciprocity from the North encountered fewer political supporters.”⁹³ But it is not just about progressives. It has been widely reported that Kim Dae Jung did not encourage or empower the abductee groups, but even the Lee government seems quite clear that efforts by NGOs to undermine DPRK authority are unwelcome. **[MORE HERE ON RESEARCH VISIT]**.

Second, if either the cartelization of interests or the centralization of executive authority is to explain South Korean and Japanese responses to the abductee issue, we should also observe change over time in each case. But there is no change in the South Korean case, despite the extraordinary shift from authoritarianism to democracy. Political preferences and the abductee issues have been aligned across that great structural divide. Before 1987, South Korean civil society was underdeveloped and, without elections, organized interests could be ignored by the state with impunity. But how can we explain this same outcome after competitive electoral institutions were established? That we observe marginal change in government policy on the abductee issue and only limited vulnerability to pressure from the abductee groups suggests the weakness of the groups at least as much as the structural insularity of the politicians. It is not reasonable to assume that the centralization of executive power-- or the cartelization of interests-- was the same after 1987 as it was before democratization. If structural change were a plausible explanation, we should be observing change-- and far more pressure on the executive.

There is more change in the Japanese case. As Snyder would expect, we did observe a “mainstreaming” of the right, and a closing of ranks around nationalist, if not expansionist, goals for a time. We also observed the cloaking of these ideas in the mantle of national interest. But now that the LDP has been routed and the “cartel” of revisionists and nationalist interest groups has been displaced, we should expect less hawkish policy toward the DPRK and a return to the “normalization” path, what Snyder refers to as a correction for excesses. At a minimum, we should expect the



abductee issue to become less determinative of Japanese foreign policy. And that is what we observe. By reforming the Abductee Office within the Cabinet and by telling Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak that Japan will pursue the proliferation issue “in parallel” with the abductee issue in the Six Party Talks, Prime Minister Hatoyama is shifting-- if not reversing-- the LDP position. But he is doing so in the context of efforts to make the DPJ politicians even more dominant over the bureaucracy than his LDP predecessors did. Thus, change in structure seems dependent upon change in preferences, and politicians seem to be animating both.

Thus, this is more than a story of successful and unsuccessful “mobilization” of (and “capture” by) interest groups in Japan and Korea. It is not a matter only of ‘cartelized’ interests. It is also a story of leadership. The ROK political class that was focused on improved relations with the DPRK, was determined to prevent human rights issues (including abductions) from interfering with their larger political agenda. In Japan, on the other hand, it is just as plausible that it was the rightist nationalists who consolidated power and mobilized these groups for their own anti-normalization agenda as it was a story of “capture” by civil society. When they were replaced, so were their priorities.

We are left then, with hoary questions about the privileging of structure-- and of ideas per se.⁹⁴ We have seen skilled political entrepreneurs armed with particularly powerful ideas succeed in defining a national agenda without regard for structural change. And we observe that their mobilizing idea itself-- as deeply emotional as it is-- was useful only when and where and if they chose to deploy it. The differences between Japan and South Korea on the abductee issue thus confound structural explanation-- at both the international and domestic levels-- as well as the notion of ideas as independent forces. They remind us that looking beneath the international system is not sufficient without incorporating agency and political choice in our analysis of politics and public policy. ■



ENDNOTES

- * I would like to thank the EAI Fellows Program on Peace, Governance, and Development in East Asia supported by The Henry Luce Foundation of New York and the Chang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange of Taipei for their generous support in providing resources for travel and research. Thanks to David Weinberg and Jonghyuk Chung for their research assistance and to Celeste Arrington, David Leheny, and TJ Pempel for comments on an earlier draft. This is the first paper in a larger project on comparative kidnappings that will include cases from South Korea, Japan, Israel, and the United States. Comments are welcome: samuels@mit.edu
- ¹ Waltz, 1959 emphasizes the systemic constraints on states and Waltz, 1979 elaborates the theory of structural realism. He famously insisted that structural realism was not a theory of foreign policy, a warning never widely accepted by scholars. By Fearon's count, more than one third of all articles published in *International Organization* from 1987-1996 were directed at leavening what he called "sparse" structural theory. See Fearon, 1998. For reviews that situate Waltzian realism in the larger international relations literature, see Evangelista, 1997, Moravcsik, 1997, Caporaso, 1997, Bueno de Mesquita, 2002, and Russett, 2003.
- ² Allison, 1969, as noted by Evangelista, 1997, p.204. See also Halperin, 1972, Posen, 1984, Sagan, 1993, and Rhodes, 1994. Krasner, 1972 suggests the US president can override organizational logics and Bendor and Hammond, 1992 attempt to specify Allison's assumptions about the availability and accuracy of information wielded by policy-makers.
- ³ Kingdon, 1984 was an important exception.
- ⁴ See Milner and Kubota, 2005 on tariffs, Bliss and Russett, 1998 on trade volume, and Mansfield et. al., 2002 on liberalization.
- ⁵ See Rogowski, 1987, Alt and Gilligan, 1994, Mansfield and Busch, 1995, Hiscox, 2002, and Fordham and McKeown, 2003.
- ⁶ Grossman and Helpman, 1994, Hiscox, 2002, Kono, 2006.
- ⁷ See, for example, Keohane, 1984 and Keohane, Robert O. and Helen V. Milner, eds., 1996. In his preface to the 2005 edition of *After Hegemony*, Robert Keohane acknowledges that a "major shortcoming" was the deliberate choice to "treat states as units, without taking into account variations in domestic politics or in the ideas prevailing within them", p. xiii. For more on the connection of international and domestic politics from the perspective of liberal internationalism, see Milner, 1997 and Ikenberry, 2001.
- ⁸ Putnam, 1988. Axelrod and Keohane, 1985, p.241 prefigure Putnam's two-level game, noting that "negotiations involve not merely bargaining between governments, but within societies as well."
- ⁹ See Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam, 1993, Ross, 2000, Bartlow, 2001, Pressman, 2007, Mo, 1995, Schoppa, 1993, Iida, 1993, Deets, 2009. For critiques of the model's simplifying assumptions, see Knopf, 1993 and Hill, 2003.
- ¹⁰ See Haney and Vanderbush, 1999, Smith, 2000, and Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007. Non-ethnic accounts of U.S. foreign policy capture include Trubowitz, 1992, Eichengreen, 2000, Narizny, 2003, Boix, 2000, and Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007. But examples are not limited to the U.S. case. See McFaul, 1997/8 on Russian foreign policy and Samuels, 2007 on Japanese grand strategy.



- ¹¹ Efforts to “bring the statesmen back in” include Byman and Pollack, 2001, Parsons, 2002, Shamir and Shikaki, 2005, and Pressman, 2007. Breslauer, 2002 and Samuels, 2003 focus on the capacity of constrained leaders to shift the balance of structural forces in the direction of their choosing.
- ¹² Jervis, 1976. See also Walt, 1987 on non-material components of threat.
- ¹³ Prominent applications include Lebow on crises, 1981, Larsen on containment, 1985, Snyder on militarism in World War I, 1984, and Levy on prospect theory, 1992. A socio-biological example is Johnson et al., 2006.
- ¹⁴ Bueno de Mesquita, 2002, Goemans, 2000, Downes and Rocke, 1995.
- ¹⁵ Levy, 1989 points to the “failure” of this theory to stand up to empirical test. Gelpi, 1997 finds that the diversionary hypothesis is much less likely to hold in autocracies than democracies because dictators are apt to find directly crushing domestic dissent more efficient than going to war with a neighbor. Pollins and Schweller, 1999 find only weak support and Foster and Palmer, 2006 reject the diversionary war hypothesis.
- ¹⁶ See Wendt, 1992 and Katzenstein, 1996.
- ¹⁷ On domestic ideological struggle over foreign affairs, see Parsons, 2002, Gaddis, 1982, Owen, 1994, McDougall, 1997, Mead, 2001, and Samuels, 2007. On non-material motivations, see Sagan, 1996/7. On norms, see Leheny, 2006 and Cortell and Davis, 2000.
- ¹⁸ Snyder, 1991, Rose, 1998, Schweller, 2004.
- ¹⁹ See Christensen, 1996 on China, Friedberg, 2000 on containment, and Snyder, 1991 on overexpansion. Fordham, 2009 explores the limits of neoclassical realism.
- ²⁰ See Olson, 1965, Wilson, 1980, Gourevitch, 1986, Katzenstein, 1977. Arrington, 2007 is an excellent review of the domestic policy capture literature using the same cases as in this essay.
- ²¹ Snyder, 1991 p.32.
- ²² Snyder, 1991, p.31.
- ²³ Van Evera, 2003.
- ²⁴ A review of the captivity narratives in comparative and historical perspectives is central to the larger project of which this is a part. They include narratives from antiquity, such as in the Book of Judges and the Rape of the Sabine Women, as well as the political use to which kidnappings by the Barbary corsairs were put in Britain and the United States. In the US case, the captivity narratives range from 17th century tales of the capture of settlers by native Americans, to the Perdicaris Incident that enable Teddy Roosevelt to secure the GOP nomination for president, and on to the POW/MIA issue of the 1970s, the Teheran hostage crisis of the 1980s, and most recently the fabricated “rape and capture” of Private Jessica Lynch in Iraq in 2003. For excellent account of the politicization of captivity in these and other cases, see Slotkin, 1973, Miller, 1997, Colley, 2002, and Faludi, 2007,
- ²⁵ Snyder, 1991, p.312.
- ²⁶ Arrington, 2007 uses these same cases as example of “victims’ organizations”-- advocacy groups comprising individuals who blame the state for the physical harm they or their family members suffered.
- ²⁷ The best work to date on this issue has been in English by Johnston, 2004; McCormack and Wada, 2006; and Arrington, 2007. For the families’ own story, see *Kitachōsen ni Ratchi Sareta Kazoku ni yoru Renrakukai*, ed., 2003 and Yokota, 2009. Sato, 2004 is an account for school children written by the leading *Sukūkai* activist.
- ²⁸ See Steinhoff, 2008.
- ²⁹ McNeill and Hippin, 2003. [GET PAGE #]



- ³⁰ Araki, who had worked with the Rescue Association, split off to establish his own “Investigative Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to North Korea.”
- ³¹ Abe, 2006, pp.44-6.
- ³² **CITATION NEEDED**
- ³³ Interview, Tokyo January 2009.
- ³⁴ Cyranoski, 2005.
- ³⁵ Tsuji, 1984.
- ³⁶ Hasuike, 2006, p.138.
- ³⁷ Hughes, 1999, p.171.
- ³⁸ *Japan Times*, 17 September 2009.
- ³⁹ Ha, 2008.
- ⁴⁰ Former prime minister Abe Shinzō was the only LDP Diet member to attend the first major rally organized by the *Sukūkai* after the election. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 8 September 2009
- ⁴¹ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 3 September 2009; *Mainichi Shimbun*, 11 September 2009; *Kyodo News*, 16 September 2009.
- ⁴² Hatoyama shifted responsibility for the abductee issue elsewhere within the Cabinet Office. *Asahi Shimbun*, 13 October 2009.
- ⁴³ **CITATION NEEDED**
- ⁴⁴ Tanaka, 2009.
- ⁴⁵ McCormack, 2002, p.4.
- ⁴⁶ McCormack and Wada, 2006, p.9.
- ⁴⁷ See International Crisis Group, ed., 2005 and Kim and Hammersmith, 2008.
- ⁴⁸ *Associated Press* 24 September 2009.
- ⁴⁹ Beal, 2005, p.343. See also Cumings, 2007.
- ⁵⁰ Tanaka, 2009, Chapter 3.
- ⁵¹ Funabashi, 2007, p.88.
- ⁵² *Yonhap*, 27 September 2002.
- ⁵³ *Yonhap*, 27 September 2002.
- ⁵⁴ Center for North Korean Human Rights Studies, Korea Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.19, 380-1.
- ⁵⁵ *Jong Ang Daily*, 29 September 2009.
- ⁵⁶ Korea Institute for Unification, ed., 2005, pp.313-5 and Appendix 1. The report presumes that abductees who were not deemed useful as teachers or guides for North Korean agents were sent to the North Korean gulag, p.317. The estimate of wartime abductees by Kim Myoung-ho, 2006 is slightly lower, and finds that only a small minority were soldiers. See also Shun Yul, 2002.
- ⁵⁷ Ministry of Unification, ed., 2005, p.100 and Center for North Korean Human Rights Studies, Korea Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.20, 384-385. **{NOTE: Need to confirm these numbers with Koo Byeong-sam at the MOU, per Arrington.}**
- ⁵⁸ Center for North Korean Human Rights Studies, Korea Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.391-5.
- ⁵⁹ Korea Institute for National Unification, 2009, p.384. In what was called an “exchange of dispersed persons” (emphasis added), the DPRK also released 19 foreign nationals after the armistice, though no South Koreans. *Ibid*, p.382. When the North Korean Red Cross finally responded to South



Korean calls for the return of abductees in 1957, it included a request for information on the status of more than 14,000 North Koreans it claimed were missing and held in the south. Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.382.

⁶⁰ Arrington, 2007, p.2.

⁶¹ Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.382

⁶² Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.383.

⁶³ Arrington, 2007 reports that the FADN, which she describes it as “docile, invisible, and less nationally unified”, p.5, is the Korean group that is most similar to the Japanese *Kazokukai*. Its website is at <http://www.rehome.or.kr/>. The KWAFU website is: <http://625.in/en/index.php>. The CHNK website is: <http://www.chnk21.org/kimsboard7/inc.php?inc=intro2#03/>. The website of The Association of Abductee Families' website is: <http://comebackhome.co.kr/home/home/best/>

⁶⁴ *Radio Free Asia*, 22 July 2009.

⁶⁵ Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, pp.384.

⁶⁶ **Need to reconfirm this.**

⁶⁷ Arrington, 2007, p.10.

⁶⁸ Ministry of Unification, 2005, p.101.

⁶⁹ Arrington, 2007, p.2. The interior quote is from a Korean language source.

⁷⁰ *Yonhap*, 27 September 2009.

⁷¹ *Yonhap*, 19 September 2002. AFU was also reportedly involved in this petitioning. Arrington, personal communication.

⁷² *Yonhap*, 19 September 2002.

⁷³ *Yonhap*, 19 September 2002.

⁷⁴ *Chosun Ilbo*, 23 February 2005.

⁷⁵ *Korea Herald* editorial cited by Arrington, 2007, p.12.

⁷⁶ Cited in Arrington, 2007, p.17.

⁷⁷ *Korea Times*, 7 August 2009. Of course, the two Americans released by the DPRK to Bill Clinton were not abductees. They had illegally crossed the border into North Korea.

⁷⁸ *Chosun Ilbo*, 23 February 2005.

⁷⁹ *Chosun Ilbo*, 16 October 2009.

⁸⁰ Arrington, 2007, p.14. According to Arrington (personal communication), AFU and FADN rarely cooperate. In July 2007 their animosity became national news when the AFU disrupted a public hearing and assaulted the leader of FADN.

⁸¹ Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, p.21. *Korea Times*, 16 February 2009.

⁸² *Yonhap Weekly North Korean Review*, 19 January 2006.

⁸³ *Yonhap*, 27 September 2002.

⁸⁴ Arrington, 2007, pp.15-16.

⁸⁵ There have been on again-off again “family reunions,” most recently in September 2009 when 97 southerners went to Mt. Kumgang to meet 229 separated family members living in the north. *Jong Ang Daily*, 29 September 2009.

⁸⁶ *Chosun Ilbo*, 16 October 2009.

⁸⁷ Today more Japanese regard their bureaucrats as untrustworthy than their politicians-- but each is distrusted by more than three-quarters of the population. *Tokyo Shimbun*, 14 June 2009.

⁸⁸ http://panel.gallup.co.kr/svcdb/condition_content.asp?objSN=19940701007



Accessed on 2009/09/11.

⁸⁹ Until 2001, the dispersed family issue was considered the top priority. It is possible that the abductees' issue was perceived as part of the dispersed family issue, but it seems that the South Korean public paid little attention to the issue of abduction until after the revelation of Japanese abductees. It is of some interest that, as in Japan, those who oppose the South-North dialogue show more interest in the abductee issue.

⁹⁰ Korean Institute for National Unification, ed., 2009, p.20, 400. **NOTE: Speak to Koo Byeong-sam to check these numbers. According to Arrington in private communication, the level set in the 2007 condolence money law (not officially compensation) was 45 million won (\$38,000) per family and more than 260 victims/ families have received money as of July 2009. A key point in discussing the 2007 law was to make the victim assistance more than the 10 million won given to crime victims. The AFU wanted a much higher amount of condolence money.**

⁹¹ Samuels, 2007.

⁹² Arrington, 2007, p.17, 21-2.

⁹³ Arrington, 2007, p.21-2.

⁹⁴ Samuels, 2003.

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Author's Biography

Richard J. Samuels

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Richard J. Samuels is Ford International Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for International Studies. He is also the Founding Director of the MIT Japan Program. In 2005 he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Professor Samuels served as Head of the MIT Department of Political Science between 1992-1997 and as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Japan of the National Research Council until 1996. From 2001-2007 was Chairman of the Japan-US Friendship Commission, an independent Federal grant-making agency that supports Japanese studies and policy-oriented research in the United States. Grants from the Fulbright Commission, the Abe Fellowship Fund, the National Science Foundation, and the Smith Richardson Foundation have supported a decade of field research in Japan.

Dr. Samuels' most recent book, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, was named one of the five finalists for the 2008 Lionel Gelber Prize for the best book in international affairs. His previous book, *Machiavelli's Children: Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan*, a comparative political and economic history of political leadership in Italy and Japan, won the 2003 Marraro Prize from the Society for Italian Historical Studies and the 2004 Jervis-Schroeder Prize for the best book in International History and Politics, awarded by the International History and Politics section of the American Political Science Association.

His 1994 study, "*Rich Nation, Strong Army*": *National Security and the Technological Transformation of Japan* won the 1996 John Whitney Hall Prize of the Association of Asian Studies and the 1996 Arisawa Memorial Prize of the Association of American University Presses. His book, *The Business of the Japanese State: Energy Markets in Comparative and Historical Perspective* received the Masayoshi Ohira Memorial Prize in 1988. In 1983, Princeton University Press published his *Politics of Regional Policy in Japan*.

His articles have appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *International Security*, *The Washington Quarterly*, *International Organization*, *The Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, *The National Interest*, *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, *Daedalus*, and other scholarly journals.

Dr. Samuels received his PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1980.

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- Young-Hwan Shin, the Executive Director of EAI Fellows Program
Tel. 82 2 2277 1683 (ext. 112) fellowships@eai.or.kr
- Typeset by Young-Hwan Shin

