

SHIPS, SECURITY, AND SYMBOLS:
A CONSTRUCTIVIST EXPLANATION OF SOUTH KOREA'S NAVAL BUILD-UP

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Dr. Jack S. Levy

My project asks what brought about a South Korea's naval construction drive called the "Blue Water Navy (BWN)" initiative, and how the initiative lasted for an extended period (1995-2010). During the BWN period, South Korea saw an unprecedented growth of the size and capability of the navy. I test plausible explanations that build on different perspectives including the realist model, the bureaucratic/organizational politics model, the domestic politics model, and the sociological institutionalist (SI) model. Relying on the SI model as the main analytic framework, I offer a constructivist explanation of the origin and continuation of the BWN initiative. At the same time, I take an eclectic position in that I understand that there is no single factor that can provide explanations for the phenomena. I employ process tracing, content analysis (of speeches and statements made by political leaders and newspapers), elite interviews (including former top security advisers to presidents, former ministers of government organizations, naval leaders, Professors, and representatives of civic organizations), and a public survey.

I argue that the BWN initiative came along as the Republic of Korea (ROK) navy was defining the organizational identity and the way it serves the nation. Previously, the ROK navy was considered a ‘fast-boat navy’ whose primary role was to defend South Korea’s coasts from North Korean infiltrations. This view about the role of the navy started to change as the navy defined promoting national interest and international standing as part of the organizational essence in the 1980s. Particularly, naval leaders became vocal about the necessity for the navy to play a leading role in defending and representing national interest in and outside the East Asian region. Concurrently, the South Korean people increasingly viewed their nation as a sovereign, legitimate, and equal member of the international community in the 1990s. This internationally oriented image of South Korea represented a departure from the old national identity that was defined in terms of rivalry with North Korea. I argue that the BWN initiative well resonated among political leaders and the people mainly because people shared the new image or identity of their nation, and they associated it with the meanings of the blue water navy.

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Levy was tremendously helpful; he was always prompt in responding to my questions and providing useful comments on my chapters. He provided clear guidance from the research design phase until I finish the concluding chapter of my dissertation. I cannot over-emphasize how critical his guidance and tips were to my completing the program successfully within a limited time.

I was also lucky that I had the great committee members such as Dr. Roy Licklikder, Dr. Jan Kubik, and Dr. Edward Rhodes. Dr. Licklider provided me with insightful and practical thoughts about not only based on IR theories but also from the perspective of military policy. Particularly, I thank Dr. Licklider for his comments on my research design with regard to the areas that I should look deeper. I am so grateful to Dr. Kubik because I developed my idea about how to integrate cultural factors into my project while I took his seminar course about political culture. At the beginning stage of my research, Dr. Kubik provided encouragement by welcoming my idea about studying a security-related IR topic through a cultural perspective. I also learned from him how we should go about studying culture, which would be an invaluable intellectual asset to my research in the future, too. In fact, this project was born as a result of my independent study with Dr. Edward Rhodes before he went to George Mason University as Dean of the School of Public Policy. Dr. Rhodes provided a lot of useful comments particularly when I was developing different hypotheses related to this project. In spite of the best efforts by the chair and members of my committee, my project may contain errors and I am fully responsible for the faults.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

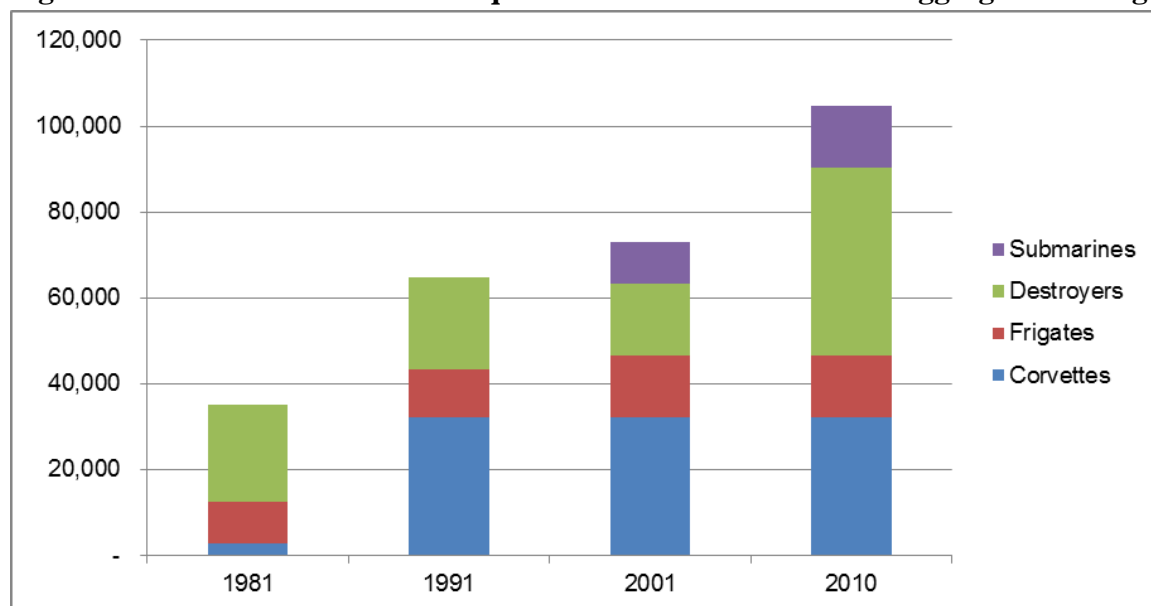
One officer would raise a glass and propose a toast saying “to the sea.” Then, the rest of the crowd would respond by chanting “to the world.” This has been the most common scene at the end of official and unofficial navy occasions since the mid-1990s through the 2000s. The slogan “to the sea, to the world” represents the Blue Water Navy (BWN) initiative of the Republic of Korea (ROK) navy that was launched in 1995 and lasted for about fifteen years until Republic of Korea Ship (ROKS) *Cheonan* (PCC-772) was sunk by North Korea’s torpedo attack in March 2010. During the fifteen years, South Korea saw an unprecedented growth of the size and capability of the navy. Although it may not constitute a phenomenon significant enough to draw international attention, some attentive observers would find the pace of South Korea’s naval growth quite surprising. For example, Michael McCrabb, the strategic planner for the Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity at Naval Air Station Pensacola, calls such rapid modernization of the ROK navy force structure “nothing short of extraordinary.”¹

These changes to the ROK navy constitute an interesting social phenomenon to be explained particularly given the facts that institutions are often believed to be resistant to change, and that the military is one of the largest state institutions. Until the 1990s, the largest ships that South Korea built were 1,500 ton *Ulsan* class frigates. Although South Korea operated destroyers of approximately 2,400 ton displacement, these were old second-hand ships that the U.S. Navy operated in the 1950s and 1960s, decommissioned,

¹ Michael H. McCrabb, "From Presence to Powerhouse." *Proceedings*, March 2011: pp. 54-59.

and transferred to South Korea. The main forces of the ROK navy consisted of small sized fast attack crafts and coastal patrol ships. However, a lot of changes occurred to the force structure in the 2000s. For example, the *Sejong the Great* class destroyers (7,600 tons) with Aegis capability and other large ships began joining the ROK navy fleet.² Figure 1.1 demonstrates that South Korea concentrated on acquiring large and sophisticated ships such as destroyers and submarines in the 1990s and 2000s.

Figure 1.1 South Korea's Naval Acquisition from 1981 to 2010 in Aggregate Tonnage



Source: Jane's Fighting Ships³

² The Aegis programs grew out of an "Advanced Surface Missile System (ASMS)" of the U.S. Department of Defense in the 1960s based on the need of providing air defense for aircraft carriers and carrier-born aircrafts. Aegis represents an integrated system of a Command and Decision element and a Weapons Control element. Versatile capabilities of Aegis cruisers or destroyers include missile defense, Anti-Air Warfare, Anti-Surface Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Anti-Ground Warfare, and Electronic Warfare. An Aegis platform is known to be able to engage about 900 surface and air targets simultaneously and enemy missiles launched from 1,000km away. For the detailed information, see Norman Friedman. *Network-Centric Warfare: How Navies Learned to Fight Smarter Through Three World Wars*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2009. pp. 98-100. See also Minseok Kim, Uk Yang, and Yongwon Yu. *Sinui Bangpae Ijiseu Daeyanghae-gunui Shidaereul Yeolda (Aegis, a Shield of a God, Opened the era of the Blue Water Navy)*. Seoul: Planet Media, 2008.

³ John Moore. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1981-82*. London and New York: Jane's Publishing Company

It is also interesting to think about why politicians allowed the navy to spend a lot of tax money on building big sized combat ships rather than others especially given the nature of the external threats from North Korea which might point to a different kind of navy to help deal with those threats. In fact, there are not many countries operating large sized naval ships. For example, as of 2008, there were only twenty-nine countries in the world that operate combat ships over 3,000 tons and South Korea was one of them.⁴ The sheer tonnages of naval ships do not necessarily tell us everything about the states and the navies that operate them. However, building and maintaining large combat ships requires a certain degree of national commitment considering the cost. Moreover, some states choose not to build such large ships even when they can. For example, the Swedish navy operates submarines and small, modern fast attack crafts instead of large ocean-going combatants.

My project asks what brought about the new naval initiative of South Korea and what made it endure for an extended period. In searching for answers to these questions, I test plausible explanations that build on different perspectives. There are three leading perspectives that may provide explanations for changes in military policy: the realist model, the bureaucratic/organizational politics model, and the domestic politics model. The realist perspectives would provide the most straightforward explanations given the widely held nature of the military as a major tool of power politics. According to the realist

Ltd., 1981. Richard Sharpe. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1991-92*. Frome and London: Jane's Information Group, 1991. Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2001-2002*. Coulsdon, UK: Jane's Information Group, 2001. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2010-2011*. Virginia: Jane's Information Group Inc. , 2010.

⁴ They include Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (Note that the counting only includes main combat ships such as cruisers, destroyers, and frigates.) I referred to Jane's Fighting Ships for the data. See Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane's Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

perspectives, military policy and weapon systems can be best understood as states' effort to defend and enhance national interest based on rational calculation and available resources in response to external stimuli. In contrast, the bureaucratic politics model and the domestic politics model try to understand decisions on military policy and weapons acquisition as outcomes of competitive relations among different organizations or domestic groups who would try to advance parochial interests of their own groups.

These models develop their analyses based on a rational actor assumption - either implicitly or explicitly - that the primary goal of agents is the maximization of utility narrowly defined in terms of material or political power. While this rationalist assumption serves as a foundation for parsimonious analytic framework, it prevents us from understanding social phenomena resulted from human motivations other than self-interest. Moreover, these models rarely incorporate social contexts into their analyses.⁵ Most importantly, some of hypotheses that I develop based on these models are not well supported by empirical evidence.

Relying on the sociological institutionalist (SI) perspective, I offer a constructivist explanation for the origin and continuation of the BWN initiative. I assume that human behaviors are not simply guided by the principle of self-interest; rather, they are guided by cultural elements such as institutions, identity, and norms.⁶ They are viewed largely as meaning making activities. At the same time, the SI approach highlights the evolution and diffusion of norms and institutional practices in transnational organizational fields and

⁵ Note that there are rationalist works that try to incorporate social contexts. In his seminal work *Honor, Symbols and War*, O'Neill demonstrates that the strategies of rational actors in games are not only influenced by those of other actors, but also shaped by cultural elements such as institutions. See Barry O'Neill. *Honor, Symbols, and War*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999.

⁶ From the sociological institutionalist perspectives, there is no sharp conceptual distinction

their global effect.⁷ In my model, agents are conscious of appropriateness not only based on identities of the organization and nation they belong to but also what other states do in the international community.

I argue that one cannot explain the BWN initiative and related phenomena without understanding changes in the ROK navy's organizational identity and the meanings of the navy that are closely associated with national identity of South Korea. Prior to the BWN initiative, the main mission of the ROK navy was chasing North Korean spy boats within territorial waters. However, naval officers started to emphasize that the navy should be a central service that promotes broader national interests and foreign policy objectives instead of inter-Korea security relations. This change occurred as the South Korean people increasingly viewed their nation as a sovereign and legitimate member of the international community. The internationally oriented identity of South Korea represented a departure from its old identity that was defined in terms of the rivalry with North Korea. Meanwhile, the navy's initiative for building ocean-going ships was reinforced by its increasing engagements with advanced foreign navies in which naval officers would experience strong pressure toward the development in their professional field. I also argue that the BWN initiative well resonated among political leaders and the people mainly because people shared the new image or identity of their nation and they associated it with the meanings of the blue water navy.

I take an eclectic position in that I do not completely reject other perspectives that emphasize different dimensions of human behaviors such as self-interest and organizational dynamics. However, I argue that the SI perspectives provide conditions on which

between institutions and culture. I elaborate this point in Chapter 2.

⁷ Theo Farrell. "World Culture and Military Power." *Security Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2005: pp.

these other factors play out. In other words, those elements would take effect through cultural elements. The effect of an external threat would differ depending on how much the threat is relevant to the newly defined identity and missions of the navy that is closely linked to the new national identity and broader national interest of South Korea. For example, Japan's claims to *Dokdo* Island are more likely to strengthen the BWN drive than military conflicts with North Korea because Japan's claims constitutes a challenge to South Korea's identity as an independent modern state in the world polity while North Korea's provocations do not. Similarly, the concerns about economic interests, defending sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) using own naval power for example, would not have a direct influence on the outcomes involving the BWN initiative. Rather, they would become important as political leaders and the people increasingly emphasize what South Korea should be able to do as a sovereign and equally respected state in the international community.

In 1996, Katzenstein et al. published *The Culture of National Security*.⁸ Authors in the volume argued that cultural elements such as identity, norm, and institution have causal impacts even on issues related to national security. My study contributes to this line of research program. Factors like strategic calculation for political goals and external threats are definitely important to national defense policymaking. However, they are not the only factors that can bring about changes to a nation's defense policy behavior. Moreover, it may be that the strategic calculations work within the established institutional boundary. In other words, the decisions about how to conduct national security may be made within the boundary that existing institutions define. In this regard, Keegan observes that culture

448-488. p. 450.

⁸ Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New

is a “prime determinant of the nature of warfare.”⁹ Indeed, the way military affairs take place has been influenced by internationally established norms.

For example, the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) such as chemical and nuclear weapons has become unacceptable in international politics.¹⁰ If a state wants to be considered a legitimate and respected member of the international community, it would stay away from those taboos. Suchman and Eyre argue that states can build advanced military organizations and weapon systems because those militaries and high technology weapons symbolize modernity and sovereignty.¹¹ As such, norms and identity may influence a state’s decision about what kind of military or weapon systems it would maintain as well as how it would fight. I am particularly interested in learning a fine-grained mechanism through which such cultural factors influence societal agents and the agents contribute to institutional changes using available cultural resources.

My project will make a unique contribution to the field of political science for a couple of reasons. First, it serves as an empirical study testing different theories in International Relations using a case of a middle power state. Mostly, theories in IR are tested using the cases of great powers. Thus, my study can serve as an opportunity to test how well those theories can be applied to a case of a middle power state like South Korea. Second, there has been little work to take an in-depth look at the ROK navy case in the field. As South Korea’s fast economic development has attracted a lot of attention in the field, the naval

York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

⁹ John Keegan. *A History of Warfare*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1993. p. 387.

¹⁰ Richard Price and Nina Tannenwald. "Norms and Deterrence: The Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboos." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, by Peter J. Katzenstein, pp. 114-152. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

¹¹ Mark C. Suchman and Dana P. Eyre. "Military Procurement as Rational Myth: Notes on the Social Construction of Weapons Proliferation." *Sociological Forum*, Vol.7, No.1, Special Issue: *Needed Sociological Research on Issues of War and Peace*, Mar., 1992: pp. 137-161.

construction that South Korea performed during the last two decades makes an interesting case. It is more interesting to think about the fact that, if we exclude great powers and traditional naval powers, South Korea is one of a few countries that make their own naval ships and maintain a modern fleet with ocean-going ships. My work is the first thorough analysis of South Korea's naval development using different perspectives and theories in political science.

The organization of the work is as follows. In Chapter 2, I discuss different theoretical positions about state's weapons acquisition. According to the different positions, I generate hypotheses that will be tested in the following chapters. The different explanations include the realist model, bureaucratic/organizational politics model, the domestic politics model, and the sociological institutionalist model. Chapter 3 examines to what degree realist factors explain the phenomena. I look at the effects of different independent variables including external threats, international structure, economic interests, and increased economic/technological capacities. In Chapter 4, I test explanatory power of the bureaucratic politics perspectives. I investigate the possibility that the BWN initiative was motivated by the parochial interest of the ROK navy or that it was implemented as a result of institutional changes that favored the navy's positions in the relations with central political institutions or other military services. Chapter 5 examines whether the BWN initiative the consequence of the domestic characteristics of South Korea that encourages innovations from the bottom. I also look at the possibility that the initiative resulted from some kind of political coalitions among domestic actors such as the navy, civilian leadership and industries.

In chapters 6 and 7, I offer my eclectic explanations that build on the sociological institutionalist perspectives. Chapter 6 explains how the BWN initiative came about and what consequences it created. Chapter 7 explains how and why the initiative could continue for an extended period. Chapter 8 is a concluding chapter where I summarize the results of my analyses. I also provide my thoughts about the implications of my cultural explanation for other cases and the direction of future studies. In the Epilogue, I briefly look at how the factors that explained the initiation and continuation of the initiative play out in the phenomena related to the fall of the initiative.

As an additional note, the Romanization System promulgated by the National Institute of the Korean Language is used throughout the dissertation.¹² The only exceptions are well-known names of national leaders such as Syngman Rhee, Park Chung Hee, Chun Doo Hwan, Roh Tae Woo, Kim Dae Jung, and Roh Moo Hyun.

¹² The principles of the Romanization System are available on the website of the National Institute of the Korean Language at <http://www.korean.go.kr/eng/roman/roman.jsp>.

Chapter 2 Competing Theories and Research Design

Chapter 2 presents different theoretical positions about state's weapons acquisition. Based on the different positions, I generate hypotheses that will be tested throughout the following chapters. The different theoretical positions include the realist, bureaucratic/organizational politics, domestic politics, and sociological institutionalist models. I observe that, although each of these models provides useful insights, no single model can explain the entire story. I argue that an accurate analysis of the origin and continuation (and possibly the end) of the BWN initiative requires an eclectic position that is complemented by perspectives of different models. In this eclectic endeavor, I employ the sociological institutionalist model as the central analytical framework. Following the theoretical discussions, I present the research design of the study.

Competing Theories

The Realist Models

Realist explanations for the new initiative by the ROK navy emphasize national interests in security and economic gain, structural change in international system, and changes in South Korea's economic and technological capacities. From the realist perspectives, states are rational unitary actors responding to external stimuli in the anarchical international political system.¹³ States are treated as black boxes and they are assumed to behave based on strategic calculations under the constraint of limited

¹³ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. Boston, New York:

resources. Therefore, a change in a state's military posture can be viewed as a rational policy choice of the state seeking to defend or promote its national interest in response to an external stimulation. In the realist world, therefore, there is no weapon or military policy "without a cause" based on concerns about national interest.¹⁴

There are different kinds of realisms depending on what they emphasize. It would be useful to briefly examine what the general features of the different variations of realism before discussing specific hypotheses. Classical realists such as Morgenthau emphasize that the pursuit of interest defined in terms of power is the basic characteristic of politics, either domestic or international politics, and that human nature is an important factor in defining such characteristic.¹⁵ On the other hand, Waltzian neorealism or structural realism emphasizes the structural characteristics of the anarchical international system. Instead of power, neorealism highlights that security is the major concern of states because there is no central authority to mediate conflicts and competitive relations among the states in the anarchical international system. Moreover, in anarchy, there is security dilemma, where the states pursuing their own security may end up creating less secure conditions or conflict spirals. One state's efforts for its defense (military buildup, for example) may be perceived by another state as a threat. These dynamics can create arms race between the two and aggravate security situations for both. As such, the structural characteristics of anarchy can create a situation in which states are pushed toward conflict situations or war inadvertently.¹⁶

McGraw-Hill, 1979.

¹⁴ I borrowed the phrase from the title of Farrell's work. See Theo Farrell, *Weapons Without a Cause: The Politics of Weapons Acquisition in the United States*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

¹⁵ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*.

¹⁶ Robert Jervis. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton

There are two more variations of structural realism: offensive realism and defensive realism. Both draw on the assumption of anarchy. However, the difference lies in their assumptions about the degree of influence that the anarchical system has on states' security behaviors. In offensive realism, the influence of anarchy is quite compelling. Mearsheimer argues that states (especially great powers) always seek to maximize their power because the surest way for security is to become the strongest power (hegemon) in the system.¹⁷ As in classical realism, power is considered the end, not the means, in offensive realism. Building on Waltz, Mearsheimer argues that the structural variables including anarchy and the distribution of power are the main factors that shape international politics. For example, a multipolar is more war-prone than bipolar one because it leaves more room for greater dyadic conflicts, imbalances of power, and miscalculations.

On the other hand, defensive realism argues that the influence of anarchy can be alleviated to a certain degree if states seek security rather than expansion. It also believes that defensive military weapons can be distinguished from offensive ones so that states can reduce the adverse effect of security dilemma by maintaining defensive postures.¹⁸ Different from Waltzian and offensive realism, defensive realism emphasizes the "fine-grained structure of power" that includes the offense-defense balance, impacts of technology and geography.¹⁹ According to Evera, the determinants of the offense-defense balance include non-system variables such as military technology and doctrine,

University Press, 1976. p. 67.

¹⁷ John J. Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2001.

¹⁸ Robert Jervis. "Cooperation Under Security Dilemma." *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2, January, 1978: pp. 167-214.

¹⁹ Stephen Van Evera. *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.

geography, and regime type.²⁰ As such, defensive realism is not a pure structural model because it acknowledges the role of domestic level variables.

Neoclassical realism serves as another example that departs from the pure structural perspectives. Neoclassical realism is different from other realisms in that it acknowledges that states are the most important actors but do not understand them as unitary actors. Neoclassical realism also accepts the role of anarchy in international relations. However, anarchy works indirectly as a permissive cause rather than an independent cause that directly determines state behaviors. Structural pressures must be translated through unit level variables such as domestic political structure and leaders' perception.²¹ Leaders make foreign policy decisions based on the assessment of international environment including other states' intention and relative power. On the other hand, those leaders are subject to domestic constraints, which may lead them to bargain with other domestic actors.²²

The first realist explanation hypothesizes that the change in South Korea's naval policy and the growth of the navy were South Korea's strategic response to external threats in dyadic relations with neighboring countries. According to Waltz, there are two possible measures for states in seeking their own survival: external balancing and internal balancing.²³ The former represents the formation of military alliances against a rising potentially aggressive power. The latter involves the enhancement of own capability such

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Gideon Rose. "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy." *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1, October, 1998. p. 152.

²² Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro. *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. pp. 25-26.

²³ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. 1979. p. 118.

as increasing economic capability, reinforcing military strength, and developing new strategies. Realists also emphasize that the erosion of relative capability of a state is considered critical to the probability of survival of the state.²⁴

Posen employs the logic behind the dynamics involved in external and internal balancing as the foundation of main arguments in his study of military doctrines of Germany, Britain, and France in the inter-war period.²⁵ Posen argues that civilian intervention is the key source of the innovation in military doctrine. However, whether or not civilian politicians would proactively intervene in military affairs can be predicted by the patterns of balancing behavior. For example, Posen observes that states without allies in a multipolar system would be likely to rely on internal balancing. Government officials and politicians in these states would pay a lot of attention to increasing the states' own military capabilities, which may lead to doctrinal innovation. According to Posen, the diplomatic isolation led to more innovative doctrines of Germany in the late interwar period and those of Israel in general than their competitors.²⁶

From this perspective, the change in South Korea's naval policy and force posture can be viewed as internal balancing for the enhancement of military capability. The question is, then, against what South Korea would balance. The balance of threat theory as opposed to the balance of power theory appears to fit to the case in point. For the balance of power theory, material power is the single most important element in predicting states'

²⁴ Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism." In *Controversies in International Relations Theory: Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge*, by Charles W. Kegley, Jr. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995. p.161.

²⁵ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 233.

behaviors.²⁷ For example, Waltz argues that states tend to flock to a weaker side because it is “the stronger side that threatens them.”²⁸ Moreover, such balancing against the stronger side is safer because bandwagoning (by allying with the stronger side) makes the destiny of a bandwagoning state subject to the stronger power. Although the theory has been widely used in international politics, it does not seem to provide a proper analytic framework for the post-Cold War security relations in East Asia. The balance of power theory would predict that neighboring countries around China would balance against rising China particularly given its fast growing economic and military power in the region. However, as David Kang argues, countries in Asia including Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN countries have not shown serious signs of flocking together against China.²⁹

On the other hand, the balance of threat theory predicts that states balance against perceived threats rather than just material power.³⁰ According to Stephen Walt, multiple factors such as the power, proximity, offensive capability, and offensive intention can generate threat.³¹ Among other things, Walt emphasizes the importance of offensive intention. Given the facts that Seoul is within the range of 12,000 North Korean artillery tubes, that North Korea has engaged in on-again, off-again military provocations against South Korea, and that North Korea has often issued threatening rhetoric against South Korea through its state-controlled media, it is not difficult to see that South Korea would perceive North Korea as the most serious threat to its national security. Alternatively,

²⁷ There are many different versions of balance of power theory. For the discussion about general characteristics and differences among them, see Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson. *Causes of War*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. pp. 38-43.

²⁸ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. 1979. p. 127.

²⁹ David C. Kang. "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks." *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 4, Spring, 2003: pp. 57-85.

³⁰ Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

³¹ *Ibid.* pp. 21-26.

South Korea may have identified new threatening factors from other states in the region. This is a plausible scenario given increasing power projection capabilities of neighboring countries like China and Japan as well as occasionally erupting territorial disputes between South Korea and Japan over an island called *Dokdo*.³²

If we look at the change in South Korea's naval posture within the context of military confrontation between two Koreas, deterrence theory also may lend a theoretical rationale behind the phenomenon. According to deterrence theory, a state's security is at risk if the adversary is led to believe that the state is weak in resolve and capability.³³ The theory maintains that strong military capability and coercive strategies would maintain the peace by generating deterrence against an adversary. From South Korea's perspective, a strong naval fleet would generate deterrence against North Korea's military provocation because, geographically, South Korea is surrounded by water and the strong navy would provide defense against North Korea's potential attacks on South Korea's flanks. Based on theoretical perspectives discussed so far, I generate the first realist hypothesis as follows;

HR 1. The BWN initiative was South Korea's state level response to perceived military threats from North Korea or neighboring countries.

For this hypothesis to be a plausible argument, one should be able to find external factors that South Korea may have perceived as security threats. Such factors would include changes in force structures including the acquisition of new weapon systems that occurred in North Korea or neighboring countries. Particularly, changes in naval postures would be clear evidence. Alternatively, the implementation of aggressive foreign policies

³² The island is known as "*Takeshima*" in Japan.

³³ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton

or demonstration of aggressive intentions by those countries may constitute security threats to South Korea. In case that South Korea's perception matters, instead of objectively existing military threats, one can look into political leaders' speeches or statements for any evidence indicating that those leaders called for building a greater navy based on the perceived threats from North Korea or neighboring countries. Official documents stating the government's official positions such as defense white papers may be also useful resources.

While the first realist hypothesis involves external threats primarily in dyadic relations, the second realist explanation emphasizes the effects of system level variables on state behavior. According to Waltzian neorealism, states are differentiated not by their characteristics but by the difference in power represented by material capability.³⁴ More importantly, state behaviors are influenced by structural pressure of the international political system. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union had to make significant commitment to defending their small power allies. As deterrence theory suggests, any reduced commitment of one side would have signaled its weakness in resolve and capability, which would have been taken into consideration by the other side in later interactions.³⁵ These dynamics emerge mainly because of structural characteristics of anarchy regardless of individual states' intentions.³⁶

From this structural perspective, the end of the Cold War may have created a different security environment than that of the Cold War where the United States reassessed the

University Press, 1976. p. 58.

³⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. 1979. p. 97.

³⁵ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. p. 58.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 67.

level of defense commitment to the Korean Peninsula because of the disappearance of intensive great power rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. In turn, because of the possible reduction of defense commitment by the United States, South Korea may have decided to strengthen its own defense posture by building a more capable naval fleet than it used to maintain. Whether or not there was a real adjustment of defense commitment by the United States to the Korean Peninsula after the Cold War is an empirical question to be examined. A more relevant factor may be the sense of insecurity that South Korea may have perceived from potential changes in the defense posture of the United States in East Asia. This is plausible given the facts that any suggestions by the U.S. government about reducing the number of troops stationing in South Korea created strong oppositions and concerns about national security, particularly among political leaders, military officers, and intellectuals, in South Korea.

Alternatively, the phenomena related to the BWN initiative may be viewed in the context of great power's ability to manage small power allies. According to Waltz, great powers conduct a certain degree of "managing" over small and medium powers in the system.³⁷ In managing those powers, alliance can be a useful tool. Schroeder argues that alliances can be best understood as "general tools for management and control" in international relations although he does not ignore other functions of alliance such as capability-aggregation.³⁸ He demonstrates that all alliances formed in the European system from 1815 to 1945 served as "pacts of restraint" that contributed to avoiding war

³⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. p. 205.

³⁸ Paul W. Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management." In *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe*, by Paul W. Schroeder, pp. 195-222. New York: Palgrave, 2004. Edited by David Wetzel, Robert Jervis, and Jack S. Levy. p. 221.

among the member states.³⁹ Similarly, Rothstein points out that a great power may use alliance with a small power in order to restrain the small power from adventurous actions.⁴⁰

The defense treaty between the United States and South Korea can be understood in this regard because President Eisenhower reluctantly signed the defense treaty as a way of restraining South Korea from taking a unilateral military action against North Korea after the Korean War.⁴¹

Waltzian neorealism implies that the fundamental factor that determines great powers' ability to influence other states' behaviors and dynamics among those states in the system is the distribution of power. For example, a bipolar system provides two great powers with a more stable structural ground where they can manage their respective sphere of influence than a multipolar system does.⁴² The less stable the system, the harder it is for a great power to manage dynamics operating within the system. Therefore, the great power would somewhat lose its leverage over its small power alliances, which used to serve as a tool to manage a certain level of regional stability. As a result, the small/medium powers may increase internal balancing efforts as a way of maximizing their security in the anarchical system.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 198.

⁴⁰ Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968. p. 50.

⁴¹ Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008.

⁴² Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979, pp. 204-205. Note that there are different views about stability of the international system. For example, different from Waltz and Mearsheimer, Morgenthau argues that the decrease in the number of great power makes the system unstable. According to Morgenthau, a multipolar system has a greater degree of flexibility and uncertainty because it can create a greater number of possible combinations of countries in forming alliances. This flexibility and uncertainty tends to restrain the nations from going too far in the desire for power. On the other hand, in a bipolar system, small allies of two great powers are too weak to influence the power dynamics in the system. Such a bipolar system is unstable because it lacks the restraining effect derived from the flexibility and uncertainty that a multipolar system has. See Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*. Chapter 21.

From this point of view, South Korea may not have been able to successfully implement the BWN initiative under the structural pressure of the Cold War bipolar system. The United States would probably have tried to restrain such a military expansion for fear of provoking North Korea and its great power patron, the Soviet Union. One cannot automatically assume that the incentive for the United States to manage its small/medium power allies completely disappeared with the termination of the bipolar system because the United States may still prefer to keep the level of military power of its allies manageable for the regional stability. Moreover, China has emerged as a regional power, and it maintains close relations with North Korea. A military conflict between the two Koreas may draw the United States and China into an unwanted conflict, which would remind U.S. policy makers of the memory of the Korean War. However, given the facts that tensions among countries in East Asia after the end of the Cold War were eased, and that South Korea even normalized its diplomatic relations with the former patrons of North Korea, China and Russia, one may assume that the United States' concern about the growth in military power of its small/medium power allies must have been more salient during the Cold War period than the post-Cold War era. I state the second realist hypothesis as follows:

HR 2. The BWN initiative was South Korea's state level response to either (1) the reduction of defense commitment of the United States to South Korea (or South Korea's perception of it) or (2) decreased leverage of the United States over South Korea's weapons acquisition policy.

Evidence that would lend support to this hypothesis would include changes in security policy of the United States toward the East Asian region in the 1990s that may have been

seen as decreased defense commitment to the region. For the case where the South Korean people overreacted to any changes in foreign policy of the United States, one may search for such indications through the examination of newspapers and statements by political leaders in the time period. With regard to the leverage of the United States over South Korea in terms of restraining weapons acquisition, if the prediction by the neorealist structural argument is correct, one should find that the sources of South Korea's weapons acquisition were less diverse during the Cold War than the post-Cold War period because of the stronger leverage of the United States over its small power ally in the Cold War bipolar system.

The phenomena related to the BWN initiative may be explained by a more straightforward motivation based on material interest. Economic motives such as the desire for fertile lands, material resources, and trade routes have often been central causes of political struggles among states in history.⁴³ It follows that states can mobilize military means in order to protect their economic interests. For example, according to Paul Kennedy, one of the most important rationales behind England's policy to establish and strengthen the Royal Navy as a national policy instrument in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was to enhance national wealth by protecting growing overseas commerce and colonies.⁴⁴ Meconis and Wallace point out that increasing economic importance of maritime affairs that involve maritime resources and the protection of trade routes was a key cause that led to the enhancement in the size and quality of the South

⁴³ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981. p. 68.

⁴⁴ Paul M. Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

Korean navy in the 1990s.⁴⁵ Indeed, given the facts that South Korea is heavily dependent on foreign oil, and that a large portion of its economy is sustained by trade with foreign countries, South Korea's investment on naval power may have been motivated by the national need to protect transit routes of raw materials and products between South Korea and other countries all over the world. In this context, South Korea may have recognized the necessity to have ocean-going naval vessels in preparation for possible conflicts over maritime resources in international waters in the future.

Alternatively, the naval development may have been the consequences of the growth of South Korea's economic capacity and corresponding technological advancement. It seems to be a plausible argument that economic growth and technological advancement of a state can provide favorable conditions for military buildup and modernization. Gilpin's theory provides a useful theoretical insight for understanding the relationship between a state's economic capacity and defense capability. Concerning interests and objectives of states, Gilpin argues that states would not place disproportionate emphasis on either national security or social welfare because the pursuit of one would result in the sacrifice of the other.⁴⁶ Rather, states try to find an optimum point of combination of both objectives based on cost and national income. More importantly, as states have more wealth and power, they would choose a greater bundle of national security and welfare objectives.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Charles A. Meconis and Michael D. Wallace. *East Asian Naval Weapons Acquisitions in the 1990s: Causes, Consequences, and Responses*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2000. pp. 87-108.

⁴⁶ Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*. 1981. p. 20.

⁴⁷ Gilpin explains this point based on the concept of indifference curves. Each indifference curve represents the magnitude of combined national objectives (national security and welfare) that states value. As economic capacity of a state expand, an indifference curve for the state shifts outwardly. For details, see Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*. 1981. p. 21.

This theory of Gilpin implies that wealthier states are more likely to invest in acquiring advanced weapon systems than those with less economic capacity.

Horowitz also provides useful insights on the relationship between the prospect for military innovations and economic factors.⁴⁸ He asks under what conditions states are likely to successfully adopt military innovations. Two variables are critical: financial intensity and organizational capital.⁴⁹ The former is particularly relevant to the current discussion. According to Horowitz, financial intensity means the “particular resource mobilization requirements involved in attempting to adopt a major military innovation.”⁵⁰ Horowitz argues that, as the financial intensity required for an innovation increase, the probability of adopting the innovation decreases. In other words, states are less likely to implement an innovation as the cost per unit of the weapon system associated with the innovation increases and there are fewer commercial applications. The implication is that wealthier states are in a better position than poorer states to afford military innovations that require high financial intensity.

South Korea has achieved miraculous economic development since the end of the Korean War. As Gilpin would predict, this economic growth may have led the South Korean government to a greater bundle of national security and welfare objectives and to invest greater national resources to military acquisition. At the same time, given the fact that the development of ocean-going naval ships should require medium to high financial intensity, the economic capacity may have been an important factor that facilitated the

⁴⁸ Michael C. Horowitz, *The Diffusion of Military Power: Causes and Consequences for International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

⁴⁹ Organization capital represents the capacity to allow organizations to change in response to changes in the underlying environment (changes in the nature of warfare for militaries). According to Horowitz, if an innovation requires big scale organizational changes in recruiting, training, and military doctrines, the innovation is unlikely to be adopted by many states. See Ibid. pp. 32-39.

decision for the acquisition of the expensive naval weapon systems in the South Korean government as Horowitz would predict. Moreover, the existing commercial ship-building technologies of South Korea's shipbuilding companies may have served as another facilitator in the naval development. Hypotheses based on economic interest and capacity can be put as follows:

HR 3. The BWN initiative reflects (1) shifts in South Korea's economic/trade interests or the (2) growth of South Korea's economic and technological capacities.

If economic interest in trading brought about South Korea's initiative for the naval development, one should be able to see a change in the volume of South Korea's trade with foreign countries that had occurred before the BWN initiative was launched. With regard to the possibility that South Korea's economic growth led to the naval development, one can examine to what extent South Korea's growth in GDP has been translated to military expenditures. For this task, the comparison between the growth rate of South Korea's GDP and that of defense budget would provide useful information. If there is a positive relationship between the two variables, one may conclude that South Korea's economic growth served as one of the factors that provided conditions for the establishment of the new naval policy and the growth of the ROK navy.

So far, I have presented realist perspectives that may provide explanations for South Korea's naval development. In the realist hypotheses, states are treated as unitary actors. They are also assumed to be rational in that they would choose options that maximize their

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 31.

national interests.⁵¹ Although these realist assumptions help make sense of complicated phenomena in international politics in a parsimonious way, they do not provide insights in exploring what happens inside of governmental organizations where real policy decisions are made. By relying on the realist perspectives only, we may lose sight of organizational interests and dynamics that can influence policy decisions. Now, I turn to the bureaucratic/organizational politics explanations.

The Bureaucratic/organizational Politics Models

Unlike the realist model, the bureaucratic/organizational model does not assume that a state works as a unitary rational actor. Rather, it emphasizes that a policy decision in a government reflects the results of competitive games continuously occurring among different players in the government.⁵² In *Essence of Decision*, Allison and Zelikow provide two decision making models related to organizational dynamics within the U.S. government on the brink of the Cuban missile crisis, which they call Model II (organizational behavior) and Model III (governmental politics) respectively.⁵³ The two models serve as alternative models of decision making that contrast with Model I which is a rational unitary model.

In Model III, policy decisions are made as results of continuous bargaining among different bureaucrats. Career officials are assumed to represent parochial interests of their

⁵¹ Note that Kenneth Waltz takes a slightly different position than other realists with regard to the rational state assumption. He argues that states imitate the successful examples of other states such as military innovations. Those who fail in imitating the successful practices would die out in the system. In other words, the anarchical international system creates competitive dynamics in which state *socialize* and imitate successful ways of behavior for their survival. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979, p. 127.

⁵² Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, Second Edition*. New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 1999. p. 255.

own organizations. They have different sets of preferences over policy issues which are closely linked to those of the organizations they belong to. In Allison's and Zelikow's term, "where you stand depends on where you sit."⁵⁴ Thus, policy decisions are not so much the product of consistent strategic calculations by unitary rational actors as the resultants of the "pulling and hauling" among the players who represent organizational interests.⁵⁵ In this regard, Halperin argues that it would be misleading to study state's goals in international relations because individuals who actually run the government bureaucracy focus on their positions and privileges shaped by their membership in the organizations.⁵⁶

Model II emphasizes slightly different dimensions involved in organizational politics. Model II views a decision made by an organization as an output that has been made through the implementation of pre-established routines. Instead of trying to find a way to maximize utility, organizations engage in "satisficing" in that they simply execute one of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which are best suitable for addressing problems they face.⁵⁷ In this sense, the "best explanation of an organization's behavior at t is $t-1$."⁵⁸ This tendency is partly due to the nature of organization. The operation of organizations requires a lot of individuals and coordination among them. It also needs to cope with uncertainty in achieving organizational objectives. Routines like the SOPs not only provide effective ways to cope with these complexities, but also define identities of the

⁵³ Allison and Zelikow. *Essence of Decision*.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 307.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 255.

⁵⁶ Morton H. Halperin and Arnold Kanter. "The Bureaucratic Perspective: A Preliminary Framework." In *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, by Morton H. Halperin and Arnold Kanter, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1974. p.3.

⁵⁷ "Satisficing" can be viewed as selecting an alternative that is good enough rather than a best. James G. March, *A Primer on Decision: How Decisions Happen*. New York: Free Press, 1994. pp. 18-23.

⁵⁸ Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*. p. 175.

organization members.⁵⁹ Because of these characteristics and dynamics, organizations are often believed to be resistant to changes. For example, Posen argues that innovative changes in military doctrine are rare because they would result in costly changes in institutionalized SOPs.⁶⁰

What is interesting about the bureaucratic/organizational model is that the actors' behaviors are not solely governed by the consideration of exogenously defined interest. Rather, their behaviors are defined by organizational identities and norms. Agents are assumed to behave based on the logic of appropriateness rather than the logic of consequence. According to the logic of consequence, an individual follows a rational procedure to make a decision in which they conduct calculations about alternative options, the probabilities of each alternative's occurrence, and the value of each alternative to the decision making individual.⁶¹ On the other hand, the logic of appropriateness leads to decision making processes in which an individual considers the situation s/he faces, identities of the individual and organization s/he represents, and the rules defining the behaviors of the individual and the organization in the situation.⁶² This logic makes the agents in organizations struggle over defining and protecting the "essence" of the organizations.⁶³ At the same time, the nature of the agents makes the model compatible with the sociological institutionalist model that I elaborate later in this chapter.

⁵⁹ James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: The Free Press, 1989. p. 24.

⁶⁰ Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*. p. 54.

⁶¹ James G. March, *A Primer on Decision: How Decisions Happen*. New York: Free Press, 1994. p. 2-3.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 58.

⁶³ Halperin defines that the organizational essence as "the view held by the dominant group in the organization of what the missions and capabilities should be." See Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974. With the assistance of Priscilla Clapp and Arnold Kanter. p. 28.

Previous studies have found that the effects of bureaucratic politics are quite prominent in military affairs involving weapons acquisition.⁶⁴ Farrell demonstrates that decisions about military policy and weapons acquisition can be made regardless of considerations of strategic need or cost-effectiveness.⁶⁵ He points out institutional influence along with strategic and budgetary considerations as one of the most outstanding factors in explaining weapons program of the U.S. military. According to one of his findings, the U.S. Navy supported the A-12 navy bomber program on two grounds. On the one hand, the carrier-based power projection was recognized as one of essential missions for the Navy. On the other hand, the Navy desired to possess their own stealth bombers as advanced as new Air Force bombers like the B-2 bomber and the advanced tactical fighter.⁶⁶ Halperin observes that the primary concern of military officers in the decision about new weapons acquisition program or new missions was not national interest. Rather, officers supported the programs that would enhance the organizational essence of their service and tried to avoid programs that were considered not essential to their services.⁶⁷ Brown's study on the U.S. bomber acquisition programs in the post-war period finds that parochial interest of the Air Force in tandem with strategic consideration can best explain the practices and results of procurement of bombers.⁶⁸

The considerable influence of military services on weapons acquisition is partly due to the fact that each service can consistently pursue its own list of favorite programs while elected executives and top officials in the defense ministry come and go. Moreover,

⁶⁴ Those studies often do not make a significant distinction between Model II and Model III defined by Allison and Zelikow.

⁶⁵ Farrell, *Weapons without a Cause*. 1997. p. 13.

⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 67-93.

⁶⁷ Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*. p. 28.

⁶⁸ Michael E. Brown, *Flying Blind: the Politics of the US Strategic Bomber*. Ithaca, New York:

services can manipulate the pace of weapons development and procurement so that their favorite programs are not easily cancelled by civilian authorities.⁶⁹ Indeed, as Allison and Morris predict, the military services and subunits, instead of a single state authority, may be the most influential actors in the process of weapons acquisition.⁷⁰

The pursuit of favorite acquisition programs by each military service would lead each service to seek greater resources and autonomy. In turn, this would create inter-service rivalry for greater influence over not only other services but also central political institutions such as the government and legislature since the budget shares are determined through the coordination among services and approval by the government institutions. From this perspective of the bureaucratic/organizational model, South Korea's BWN initiative may have been driven by parochial interest of the navy instead of security needs based on external threats or as a result of increased aggregated national capability. From the navy's point of view, the acquisition of advanced ocean-going vessels would mean that the navy's weapons acquisition program may take priority over those of other services, which would allow it to enjoy greater budget and autonomy to pursue its "own" activities.⁷¹ It also means that the standing of the navy relative to those of other services may be elevated because the navy would play a greater part in national defense with the advanced weapons.

Cornell University Press, 1992.

⁶⁹ One example is the concurrent procurement strategy. A way of carrying out concurrent procurement is to start producing a weapon system before the development phase of the weapon completes. This practice makes it difficult to cancel the acquisition of the weapon system because of sunk costs. For more explanation, see Brown, *Flying Blind*, 1992, p. 25. See also Farrell, *Weapons without a Cause*, 1997, p. 86.

⁷⁰ Graham T. Allison, and Morris A. Frederic. "Armaments and Arms Control: Exploring the Determinants of Military Weapons." In *Arms, Defense Policy, and Arms Control*, by Franklin A. Long and George W. Rathjens. New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1976. p. 123.

⁷¹ Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*. p. 40.

Alternatively, given the fact that the implementation of the BWN initiative can be viewed as quite a successful result for the navy, the new naval initiative may be a result of changes in organizational structures or the balance of power in the government in the navy's favor. For example, the navy may have had an improved position in the relations with the Administration or the National Assembly. Another possibility is that opinions of the navy may have been accepted well at the Ministry of Defense level because of an enhanced position of the navy relative to other services. I state hypotheses based on the bureaucratic/organizational politics model as follows:

HB. The BWN initiative was motivated by the parochial interest of the navy for greater autonomy/budgets and implemented as a result of institutional changes that favored the navy's positions in the relations with central political institutions or other military services.

For this hypothesis to be a plausible argument, one should be able to find some corroborating evidence about the motivations for the BWN initiative. One of the useful methods to find evidence would be process-tracing based on interviews with naval officers who had firsthand experiences related to the initiative. In order to examine whether the initiative was facilitated by an improved institutional position of the navy, the comparison of budget shares among three military services would be a useful measure. As budget shares are the products of organizational competitions among different services, they serve as indicators demonstrating changes in influences that the services have on the budget allocation processes. Another possible test is to examine to what degree each military service is represented in policymaking in central government institutions such as the Ministry of National Defense (MDN), the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and the Office of the

President. The number of representatives from each service in those central organizations can serve as an indicator for bureaucratic influence of each military service on the policy making procedures in those institutions. The relative significance of jobs that members of each service perform in those organizations may also be a useful indicator. For example, if officers who are in charge of decision-making nodes in hierarchy are mainly from a particular service, it is likely that general interest and position of the particular service is better represented in policy outcomes than those of other services.

The Domestic Politics Models⁷²

The domestic politics models highlight the role and relations of domestic actors in explaining foreign policy outcomes. They assume that the state has only limited autonomy in policymaking. In fact, the relative strength of state vis-à-vis society serves as an important variable for some scholars in explaining different foreign policy outcomes.⁷³ Other scholars put more emphasis on parochial interests of domestic actors. They emphasize that domestic groups, particularly those with access to government, can influence government for their parochial interests.⁷⁴ Those domestic groups seek to maximize their leverage over government policy through coalition building. In this section, I discuss the domestic factors that may provide explanations for South Korea's naval development. They include the nature of state-society relationship and coalition building based on domestic actors' concerns about their parochial interests.

⁷² Note that my domestic politics models include the role of state and societal level variables.

⁷³ Matthew Evangelista. *Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988.

⁷⁴ David Skidmore and Valerie M. Hudson. *The Limits of State Autonomy: Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.

Relying on the theme of state-society relationship, Evangelista provides a systemic comparative study of military innovations in the United States and the Soviet Union. Evangelista observes that the relative strengths of state and society are the key factors to understanding the different processes of acquiring new weapon systems in the two countries: the United States is characterized as weak state and strong society while the Soviet Union as strong state and weak society.⁷⁵ In the United States, the processes of weapons innovation feature decentralized research and development (R & D) processes that encourage low-level initiatives and the free exchange of information, which lead to frequent and successful innovative outcomes. Thus, what drives military innovation is ‘internal pressure’ rather than external stimuli. On the other hand, those of the Soviet Union inhibit innovation because of the highly centralized R & D processes and excessive secrecy that deprive low level officers and scientists of incentives and information for creative endeavors.

A noteworthy systemic effort in Evangelista’s case study is that he establishes five stages in the weapons innovation processes that are distinctive in the United States and the Soviet Union.⁷⁶ For example, in the United States, innovations normally begin with the initiatives of scientists who support military applications of new technologies. The consensus about the ideas would be built among military officers and scientists. These actors would try to promote the new applications among military services, government, and Congress. In this process, external threats are often used for justifying the production of the new weapon systems. Then, the decision for the mass production comes at the last stage when the military obtains congressional endorsement.

⁷⁵ Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race*. p. 25.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 52.

On the other hand, the early stages of weapons innovation in the Soviet Union are characterized with constrained low-level initiatives because of weapons programs that are already prioritized by the state authority. An innovation begins only after high level bureaucrats start reassessing the priority often as a reactive action to external stimuli (for example, a new weapon system acquired by its rival state, the United State). Then, an all-out effort to mobilize for the innovation would start as the leadership sets the new program as a new priority. Evangelista finds that the distinctive patterns of multiple stages in the United States and the Soviet Union are quite generalizable over many cases of weapons programs such as nuclear submarines, ballistic missiles, jet-interceptor aircrafts, and tactical nuclear weapons.

Evangelista's explanation about the origins of the different patterns in the two countries resembles historical institutionalist arguments in that Evangelista attributes the difference to the sequence of institutional developments. He argues that the Soviet Union's centralized system is related to the fact that the Soviet Union faced more advanced Western rivals when it was lagging behind them not only in industrialization but also in the ability to train and maintain scientists, and that, accordingly it had to catch up with those advanced states rapidly.⁷⁷

There is another relevant domestic politics model that emphasizes parochial interests of domestic actors and their potential coalitions. Theories of the military-industrial complex are an example of such models that are particularly relevant to military policy.

⁷⁷ Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race*. pp. 22-49. For historical institutionalism, see Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. Taylor. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies*, XLIV, 1996: 936-957. See also Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol. "Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science." in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, by Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner, pp. 693-721. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2002.

According to Slater and Nardin, the military-industrial complex (MIC) has been used by different scholars with slightly different conceptualizations.⁷⁸ The different concepts include the MIC as a ruling class, a power elite, a bureaucracy, or a loose coalition. According to the last conceptualization, the MIC consists of a loose coalition of elite groups with common interests in high levels of military spending and build-ups. Industries are interested in profits while political and military leaders in maintaining power through those militarized policies.⁷⁹

Slater and Nardin maintain a critical view about the usefulness of the concepts of MIC as an analytic framework. First, they correctly argue that understanding the MIC as a coherent societal group is erroneous because it is extremely difficult to define the members who belong to the group. For example, the line between members and non-members become blurry once we start thinking about all the associated personnel with military and industries including union members, veteran groups, researchers, engineers, and so on. Second, Slater and Nardin point out that the literature on the MIC often assume that the MIC is powerful and influential enough to steer the directions of foreign policy of a state without demonstrating the causal effects that the MIC has on the policy outcomes. The desires for economic interests or power of certain societal groups do not necessarily lead to desired results that the groups wish to achieve. More importantly, the difficulties in

⁷⁸ Jerome Slater and Terry Nardin. "The Concept of a Military-Industrial Complex." In *Testing the Theory of the Military-Industrial Complex*, by Steven Ed. Rosen. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973. p. 29.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 32. Theories of the military-industrial complex have elements of Marxist/Leninist theories in that they emphasize the role of private economic interests of defense industries in foreign policy decision making. The Marxist-Leninist theories of imperialism attribute the causes of international conflicts to the characteristics of capitalist economic system and the parochial interests of the capitalist class. For an overview of the Marxist-Leninist theories of international conflicts, see Bernard Semmel, ed. *Marxism and the Science of War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

employing the concepts of MIC for the academic purpose may be associated with the fact that the term ‘military-industrial complex’ became popular in the context of partisan controversy related to disenchantment of American foreign and military policies such as in the case of the Vietnam War.⁸⁰

As Slater and Nardin argue, societal groups may not be powerful enough to effectively influence the outcomes of state foreign policy. In this regard, some models propose that domestic actors often seek to maximize their influence and interests through coalition-building. Snyder highlights the coalition-building dimension of domestic politics in explaining the phenomena of imperial expansion (overexpansion). According to Snyder, key domestic groups such as military, bureaucrats, industrialists, and traders can engage in cartelized politics by forging coalitions through logrolling practices for their parochial interests, which lead to expansionist policies.⁸¹ Germany before the World War I serves as an example. Junker landowners had an incentive to influence state for implementing protectionist policies against Russia’s grain, which can antagonize Russia. The navy and heavy industry supported the naval expansion, which can antagonize Britain. Snyder maintains that none of these elite groups individually had enough political leverage to assert their parochial agenda against state policies that are defined based on broader national interests. Those groups managed to get what they wanted through logrolling,

⁸⁰ Slater and Nardin. "The Concept of a Military-Industrial Complex." p. 29. Slater and Nardin also point out that the concepts of the MIC became popular in association with developments in recent American history such as a growing military establishment and the related economic, bureaucratic, political interests, and the increasing military participation in foreign policy making. Ibid. p. 28.

⁸¹ According to Snyder, the domestic groups sometimes resort to “strategic myths” in order to justify the expansionist policies. For example, they may exaggerate hostilities of other states, historical injustices that other states committed, strategic/economic value of empire, and/or the likelihood that other states would back down in the face of confrontation. Snyder also argues that the produced policies by the coalition among domestic groups tend to be more expansionist than an individual group would prefer or the state can afford with available resources. See Jack Snyder, *Myth of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University

supporting each other's policy agenda. However, the coalition between Junkers and the navy/heavy industry, which is known as the 'iron and rye' coalition, led to Germany's diplomatic encirclement antagonizing both Russia and Britain.⁸²

In a similar manner, Lobell observes that security policies of Britain (1889-1939) were shaped by competing politics between two interest blocs: internationalists and economic nationalists.⁸³ During the period, the internationalists who believed in the principle of Laissez-fair and less military spending for the long-term fiscal strength pushed for policies of alliance/collective security and rapprochement. On the other hand, the economic nationalists such as conservative bureaucrats, military, and others who had interest in protectionist trade policies emphasized the necessity of military superiority over its rivals and channeled a great amount of national resources to military build-ups including the implementation of conscription.

The idea of a loose coalition between industries and political/military elites may be useful for the explanation of the growth of the ROK navy given South Korea's growing defense industry, and that many retired naval officers have been recruited by big shipbuilding companies. Looking through the prism of the domestic coalitional politics model, shipbuilding industries in South Korea like Hyundai and Daewoo are the most likely organizations that may have tried to influence the South Korean government for a bigger navy because almost all prominent naval ships including Korean style destroyers (KDX-I, II, and III), a big deck amphibious ship, and submarines have been built by those domestic shipbuilders.

Press, 1991.

⁸² Snyder, *Myth of Empire*. pp. 98-99.

⁸³ Steven E. Lobell, "Politics and National Security: The Battle for Britain." *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 21. No. 4., Winter 2004: pp. 269-286.

The ROK navy may have had support from politicians outside of the navy who shared common interest in the growth of the navy. In his study on the naval policies in East Asian countries, Heginbotham suggests that emerging navalism in countries like China, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea was the consequences of support from reformist liberal politicians.⁸⁴ It is a plausible argument since the ROK navy experienced the unprecedented growth in size and capability during the liberal presidencies like the Kim Dae Jung and the Roh Moo Hyun administrations. Alternatively, we may think about a possible coalition between the navy and retired naval officers who became politicians or high ranking government officials. Those officials may have supported policies that were favorable to the growth of the navy.⁸⁵ The hypothesis based on the domestic politics models may be put in the following way:

HD. The BWN initiative was the consequence of the domestic characteristics of South Korea that encourages innovations from the bottom or that of political coalitions among domestic actors such as the navy, civilian leadership and industries.

The emphasis on the relative strengths of state and society may not be so useful for the current project because this project constitutes a single case study about South Korea's naval development. I may employ a within-unit comparison of different time periods (for example, those in the periods before and after the BWN initiative began). Even in such a case, measuring and comparing the relative strengths of state and society would be extremely difficult. However, the insights that we learn from Evangelista's study can be

⁸⁴ Eric Heginbotham, "The Fall and Rise of Navies in East Asia: Military Organizations, Domestic Politics, and Grand Strategy." *International Security*, Vol. 27, No.2, Autumn, 2002: pp. 86-125.

⁸⁵ One should note that the officials may have not been motivated by parochial interests in this case. They may have helped the navy just because they were the members of the naval community or because they came to believe that the development of the navy is in South Korea's national interest

used as reference when I trace processes involved in the naval development. Since Evangelista's study implies that the initiatives by low level officials and scientists and a relatively weak control of state over weapons acquisition provide somewhat favorable conditions for military innovation, I can check whether there were such elements in the ROK navy case.

Searching for evidence for political coalitions based on parochial interests would be also a difficult task that requires an insider's view. Such evidence may include any indications that shipbuilding industries have lobbied either the government or the navy to obtain contracts for building advanced naval ships. Interviews with insiders of the navy, industries, and government may provide useful information for such investigation. A complementary measure would be the examination on the characteristics of South Korea's weapons acquisition procedure because it would help estimate to what degree the acquisition system is vulnerable to the influences of lobby or politics.

So far, I have presented three plausible models that may explain the phenomena related to South Korea's naval development based on the BWN initiative: the realist model, the bureaucratic/organizational politics model, and the domestic politics model. Although these models provide useful insights, most of them overlook the role of cultural factors in understanding social phenomena.⁸⁶ The concern about self-interest and calculations based on material incentives such as military and economic capabilities are definitely important motivations behind social behavior. However, they are by no means the only motivations. We must take into account the case where actors behave according to what they think about themselves or what other people do in society. Those actors also may engage in certain

after serving in the navy.

⁸⁶ As I have discussed, the bureaucratic/organizational politics model has some common ground

activities because they are meaningful to them. Now, I turn to the sociological institutionalist explanation, which I employ as the main analytic framework for this project.

The Sociological Institutional Model

As a constructivist approach, the sociological institutionalist (SI) model focuses on the evolution and diffusion of norms and institutional practices in transnational organizational fields and their worldwide effect.⁸⁷ According to the sociological institutionalist definitions, institutions include not only formally promulgated rules, standard operating procedures, and norms, but also symbols, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the “frames of meaning” guiding human behavior.⁸⁸ These institutions serve as important cultural factors that guide human action. Particularly, the SI approach emphasizes the *socially constructed meanings* of practices or objects. For example, Eyre and Suchman demonstrate that states can build advanced military organizations and weapon systems because those militaries and high technology weapons symbolize modernity and sovereignty.⁸⁹ In other words, states associate *the meaning* of the advanced militaries and weapons with their states’ modern and sovereign status. In the remainder of this section, I present theoretical premises of the SI model with concentrations on the nature of agents and the role of world culture. Based on these

with cultural approaches.

⁸⁷ Theo Farrell, "World Culture and Military Power." *Security Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2005: pp. 448-488. p. 450.

⁸⁸ Cited in Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5, 1996: 936-957. p. 947.

⁸⁹ Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in the World Politics*, by Peter J. Katzenstein, pp. 79-113. New York: Columbia University

premises, I generate hypotheses that may explain the mechanisms behind the implementation of the BWN initiative.

Most of all, the SI model understands the nature of human behavior in terms of a sociological mode rather than an economic mode. According to Coleman's distinctions, economic models assume that agents act independently with independent goals.⁹⁰ Their main concern is self-interest and the principle of action is the maximization of utility. In sociological models, however, agents' behaviors are defined and understood in the context of social interaction. They are guided by institutions such as "norms, rules, and obligations."⁹¹ The primary principle of action in this mode is appropriateness. March and Olsen observe that "political actors associate certain actions with certain situations by rules of appropriateness."⁹² Again, the appropriateness is defined within the context of the political and social system and it is transmitted through social interaction.⁹³ Thus, from the SI perspective, a social practice can be adopted not necessarily because they facilitate efficiency or interest, but because they are considered appropriate or legitimate.

In a similar manner, states are not assumed as rational actors that try to maximize materially defined national interests and that are concerned primarily about relative gains over other states. However, it does not mean that they do not care about national interests. Rather, the SI model understands that states define their own national interests based on

Press, 1996.

⁹⁰ James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94 Supplement, 1988: pp. 95-96. Coleman's classification of human action is similar to that of James March that I discussed in the bureaucratic/organizational politics section. March makes a distinction between the logic of consequence and the logic of appropriateness. See March, *A Primer on Decision*.

⁹¹ Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." p. 95.

⁹² James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3, Sep., 1984: pp. 741.

⁹³ Ibid.

their identities and social contexts.⁹⁴ According to Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein, identity is an important variable whose change may lead to variations even in the national security interests or security policies.⁹⁵ The term ‘identity’ is used here as “mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other.”⁹⁶ Identity is recognized through social interaction in relation to others.⁹⁷ Thus, depending on how people, particularly political elites, perceive their states in relations to others, states’ security behaviors may change. This point is well reflected in Wendt’s argument that “Five hundred British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the US than five North Korean ones.”⁹⁸ Similarly, Risse-Kappen argues that democratic states do not go to war each other because of collectively held identities that define who we are vis-à-vis others (i.e. nondemocratic states).⁹⁹ The collective identity stipulates appropriate behaviors toward states that are believed as “us” and “others.” The shared identity among democratic states also helps create what Deutsch calls a “pluralistic security community” based on the democratic culture and norms of mutual consultation and accommodation.¹⁰⁰ According to Risse-Kappen, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an example of such

⁹⁴ Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. p. 2.

⁹⁵ Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein. "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, by Peter J. Ed. Katzenstein, pp. 33-75. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p.59.

⁹⁷ Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2, Jun.1994; pp. 384-396.

⁹⁸ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999. p. 255.

⁹⁹ Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Collective Identity in a Democratic Community: The Case of NATO." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, by Peter J. Katzenstein. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

¹⁰⁰ Karl W. Deutsch et al. *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

community built on the shared identity that perceived the United States and European allies as “we” and the Soviet Union as “others.”¹⁰¹

An exemplary work built on the identity thesis that is probably more relevant to my project is provided by Edward Rhodes’ cultural account for the changes in American foreign policy in the 1890s. Rhodes argues that one of the main reasons that the United States started building a new navy was because of the changes in “beliefs about the nature of the state and the state’s relationship to the outside world.”¹⁰² The social and political changes that American underwent at that time period involved new social imperatives to integrate the South and numerous immigrants with cultural diversity into the American society. These changes required a new image of state and common national identity. The state was increasingly viewed as a central institution to social identity that embodies the American nation. At the same time, the state had to have capability to represent the American people against external others rather than becoming strong in domestic control. According to Rhodes, “the construction of a new navy in the 1890s reflected the construction of new beliefs which could serve these fundamental cultural and cognitive functions.”¹⁰³

Another distinctive feature of the SI approach is its perspective on the role of world culture and the way modern nation-states respond to it. Since ‘culture’ can be an ambiguous and controversial terminology, a clarification is necessary before I move on to the discussion of world culture. The SI approach in this project relies on the semiotic approach to political culture. The semiotic approach assumes *homo symbolicus* within the

¹⁰¹ Risse-Kappen, “Collective Identity in a Democratic Community.”

¹⁰² Edward Rhodes. "Sea Change: Interest-Based VS. Cultural-Cognitive Accounts of Strategic Choice in the 1890s." *Security Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Summer, 1996: pp. 73-124. p. 110.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p. 74.

domain of *homo sociologicus* in that it understands individuals' behaviors as guided by cultural scenarios or scripts that are encoded in symbols, discourse, and rituals.¹⁰⁴ The semiotic approach of political culture views human behaviors as meaning making activities. According to Gamson's conceptualization, political culture is defined as "the meaning systems that are culturally available for talking, writing, and thinking about political objects: the myths and metaphors, the language and idea elements, the frames, ideologies, values, and condensing symbols"¹⁰⁵ Thus, the actors deploy cultural symbols and practices available to them to make sense of the world and deal with problems at hand. In this sense, culture serves as a "tool kit" in that it provides a repertoire of strategies of action or scenarios.¹⁰⁶ As Swidler observes, culture works not by affecting the actors' values or ends but by defining the means.¹⁰⁷ From this perspective, culture can be considered resources rather than constraints which make it possible for the actors to utilize those cultural tools even for strategic reasons.¹⁰⁸ It is also notable that, given the broad definition

¹⁰⁴ Myron Aronoff and Jan Kubik. *Anthropology and Political Science: A Convergent Approach*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012. Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁵ Cited in Aronoff and Kubik, *Anthropology and Political Science*. See also William A. Gamson. "Political Discourse and Collective Action." In *International Social Movement Research, Volume 1, From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures*, by Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney Tarrow, pp. 219-44. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988. p. 220.

¹⁰⁶ Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 51, No. 2, Apr., 1986: pp. 273-286.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ A different approach that contrasts with the semiotic approach is the psycho-social approach. The psycho-social approach conceptualizes political culture in terms of the aggregate distribution of psychological orientations or attitudes about politics within a population. For an exemplary work based on this approach, see Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture: The Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963. Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, Issue 4, Dec., 1988: pp. 1203-1230. According to Johnson, psycho-social approach that conceptualizes culture as some kind of aggregated attitudes or fixated orientations deprives us of the role of intentional agents in explaining social phenomena because it assumes individuals who only passively internalize cultural imperatives. See James Johnson, "Conceptual Problems as Obstacles to Progress in Political Science." *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2003:

of institutions by sociological institutionalists that I put at the beginning of this section, the conceptual divide becomes blurry between culture and institutions.¹⁰⁹

From this perspective, world culture serves as a tool kit providing a repertoire of appropriate norms and behaviors for modern nation-states. According to McNeely's definition, world culture is "a framework of definitions, rules, and principles that are institutionalized at the world level and, by implication, are held to be applicable throughout the world."¹¹⁰ Therefore, once a social practice or a model of structure is ensconced at the world cultural level, it becomes difficult and costly for states not to adopt it. One of resultant phenomena that the SI model emphasizes is isomorphism. A good example of such phenomena is that there are widely accepted conventions across the world for the proper organizational form of the modern state.¹¹¹ Thomas and Meyer point out that contents and responsibilities under the state's jurisdiction are strikingly isomorphic among different modern nation-states.¹¹² Other studies have found empirical evidence demonstrating trends toward homogeneities in institutions such as education systems and welfare systems among different modern nation-states.¹¹³

The effects of world culture have also been observed in military affairs. Based on a case study of the Irish Army, Farrell demonstrates that world culture provided the "basic

pp. 87-115.

¹⁰⁹ Hall and Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." p. 947-948.

¹¹⁰ Connie L. McNeely, *Constructing the Nation-State: International Organization and Prescriptive Action*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995. p. 17.

¹¹¹ George M. Thomas and John W. Meyer. "Regime Change and State Power in an Intensifying World-State-System." In *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual*, by George M. Thomas, John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez and John Boli, pp. 92-110. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1987.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Francisco O. Ramirez and John Boli. "Global Patterns of Educational Institutionalization.", Thomas, George M. and Pat Lauderdale, "World Polity Sources of National Welfare and Land Reform" in *Institutional Structure* by George M. Thomas et al. 1987.

templates for military organization and operations.”¹¹⁴ Farrell argues that the Western style military force structures for conventional warfare have become the norm for modern states around the world.¹¹⁵ He observes that Ireland was not in a position to pursue a conventional army that required a large budget in the face of the potential British re-invasion right before the World War II. Moreover, the intelligence branch strongly recommended a force structure and readiness for guerrilla warfare based on an experience of Ireland’s independence from Britain where guerrilla operations were successfully employed against the British army. Despite the budget constraint and lessons learned from the successful employment of guerrilla warfare, the Irish military officers pushed hard for building a conventional army whose structures are modeled after the British. According to Farrell, this was because of “professional norms of conventional warfare.”¹¹⁶

The SI approach takes note of the fact that world culture not only serves as the source of legitimacy of state behaviors but also creates competitive dynamics among states. It understands the world as a large political cultural system in which “world level cultural and organizational directives for development and progress press all countries toward common objectives, forms, and practices.”¹¹⁷ The idea of pressure toward progress and development is based on Weber’s observation on rationalization and bureaucratization.¹¹⁸ Once a society begins to be rationally organized through bureaucracy, the process starts to take on its own life.

¹¹⁴ Farrell, “World Culture and Military Power.”

¹¹⁵ For example, 160 states (out of 191 members of the United Nation) maintain standing military forces and 146 states have the Western style tri-service structure (with the army, the navy, and the air force). Ibid. p. 462.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p. 466.

¹¹⁷ McNeely, *Constructing the Nation-State*. 1995. p.1.

¹¹⁸ Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich), Vol. 2. Berkely: Univerity of California Press, 1978. pp. 956-989.

The SI approach also recognizes that the rise of modern states is the most noteworthy phenomenon that has given unitary character to the nations as a central political authority. Because of this character, the modern nation-state has become the only legitimate authority that can officially mobilize a collective identity and cultural loyalty from the citizen. Further, states have the obligation to come up with collective purposes and organize national efforts to achieve them on behalf of their citizens. In the modern world polity, collective purposes usually mean national goals that represent “progress” such as economic growth, welfare systems, individual development, and technological advancement.¹¹⁹ As state-directed development efforts for progress at the world level create competitive dynamics among different states, internal support for their own states from domestic actors would also emerge. As Meyer points out, “Elites (military, political, intellectual) and sectors of the population subscribe to the goal of competitive progress in the world.”¹²⁰ Indeed, one can easily observe people, particularly leaders in different sectors, compare their states with others in the hope that their state has systems as advanced as others’ or that at least their state has what other states have.

However, one should note that the world cultural system is not assumed to operate as a “single dominating dynamic” across various societal sectors. As Eyre and Suchman does, the SI approach in this project relies on Giddens’ model of the world system.¹²¹ According to Giddens, the existence of the modern world system pressing nation-states toward progress does not necessarily mean that there is “a single dominating dynamic in its

¹¹⁹ McNeely, *Constructing the Nation-State*. 1995. p. 19.

¹²⁰ John W. Meyer, "The World Polity and the Authority of the Nation-State." In *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual*, by M. George Thomas, John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez and John Boli. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publication, 1987. p. 59.

¹²¹ Eyre and Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons." pp. 94-95.

development or that the ‘whole’ somehow has primacy over the ‘parts’.”¹²² Rather, Giddens conceptualizes the world system as being made up of several subsystems such as a “global information system,” a “nation-state system,” a “world capitalist economy,” and a “world military order.”¹²³ This characterization of the world system provides a better picture of how the real world operates. Although the state is considered an official authority to conduct society-wide rationalization of a modern nation-state, professionals who are engaging in rationalization of different sectors in the society experience the world cultural pressure in terms of progress in their own sectors rather than overall society-wide progress. It is naval officers who would feel the world naval order and pressing needs for advanced combat ships if many other countries already possess them.

This view of the world cultural system goes hand in hand with an emerging world order that Anne-Marie Slaughter envisioned. The new world order is characterized with “global spanning networks” of governmental and nongovernmental institutions.¹²⁴ People like bureaucrats, bankers, and businesspeople share their professional concerns with those in the same field in different states. As a result, they not only tend to cooperate with each other for a common enterprise, but also try to utilize knowledge of international and foreign decisions in dealing with similar issues of their own. With regard to the latter, Slaughter argues that invoking examples of other states is an effort to gain legitimacy by connecting themselves to a larger community. According to Slaughter, in this kind of

¹²² Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence: Volume Two of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*. Berkely and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985. p. 276.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Anne-Marie Slaughter. "The Real New World Order." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5, Sep.-Oct., 1997: pp. 183-197. p. 195.

world order, even the militaries network with their counterparts in different states as widely as bankers.¹²⁵

The professional networks in turn serve as sources of isomorphism through which new practices or models diffuse.¹²⁶ Neorealism also predicts isomorphism based on socialization and emulation among state actors in the international system. Waltz argues that the fate of states depends on how they respond to what others do. "Contending states imitate the military innovations contrived by the country of greatest capability and ingenuity."¹²⁷ If they fail in imitating the capability and ingenuity, they would die out. Thus, the implication is that the practices of only victorious states in war would be emulated by other states as good models.

However, the SI approach proposes a slightly different mechanism of isomorphism. As I have discussed earlier, the SI approach acknowledges competitive dynamics among states. However, it puts more emphasis on the processes of isomorphism that results from the "diffusion and internationalization of cultural models that legitimate organization and action."¹²⁸ Such process is reflected in Eyre and Suchman's arguments about the symbolic meanings of advanced weapon systems. According to Eyre and Suchman, once a modern weapon system becomes recognized as part of the definition of being a modern state in the world culture, states that perceive themselves as modern states or aspire to be seen as modern states are likely to try to acquire that weapon system.¹²⁹ In this process, the

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 196.

¹²⁶ Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." In *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, by Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio eds., pp. 63-82. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991. p. 71.

¹²⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 127.

¹²⁸ Farrell, "World Culture and Military Power." p. 455.

¹²⁹ Mark C. Suchman and Dana P. Eyre. "Military Procurement as Rational Myth: Notes on the

primary concern is how other modern states behave and whether the possession of the weapon is *meaningful* according to the international standard. States try to behave in legitimate ways that are acknowledged and observed by other states in the world society.

It should be noted that, however, as Eyre and Suchman suggest, that social objects have different degrees of symbolic significance that is institutionalized in world culture. The following quote expresses the essence of their idea:

“Within the modern world system, where sovereignty, modernity, and independence are the essence of our ideas about the nation-state, some weapons might reasonably be seen as highly institutionalized (or symbolically significant, e.g., supersonic aircraft), while others are less so (e.g., trucks, small arms). A given weapon’s symbolic significance is dependent on the degree to which it is linked to cultural ideas and images of the nation-state; highly technological, visible, unique weapons are more effective at symbolizing independence than are mundane, unremarkable weapons.”¹³⁰

From this point of view, the symbolic significance of the navy has been widely recognized and institutionalized at the world cultural level. The navy has traditional symbolic meaning representing national status such as sovereignty and national power in the international politics.¹³¹ One can easily find elements showing the symbolic meaning of the navy in various literatures. In a biography of Theodore Roosevelt, Brands documents the president’s remarks revealing that his intention for sending out the Great White Fleet to the world was motivated by domestic politics. “My [Roosevelt’s] prime purpose was to impress the American people, and this purpose was fully achieved.”¹³² Indeed, the magnificent image of warships is impressive enough to make observers proud that their country has those kinds of great warships. In explaining the rise of navalism in

Social Construction of Weapons Proliferation." *Sociological Forum*, Vol.7, No.1, Special Issue: Needed Sociological Research on Issues of War and Peace, Mar., 1992: pp. 137-161.

¹³⁰ Eyre and Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons. p. 96.

¹³¹ Ken Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*. New York: Crane, Russak & Company Inc., 1977. p. 35.

America between 1882 and 1893, Shulman argues that the navalism prevailed because of society-wide preference to “bigness and heroism” that symbolized American society.¹³³

As another example, Rüger provides explanations on the symbolic and cultural role of the naval fleet played out to the public in accounting for the background of the development of the Australian navy at the beginning of the twentieth century. He argues that spectacular naval ceremonies in public such as fleet reviews, fleet visits, launching and commissioning ceremonies of battleships in the imperial age were intended for both domestic and international audiences as means of not only the show of force but also the projection of national identity.¹³⁴ This symbolic meaning related to battleships in the imperial age is echoed by other authors. For example, Howard observes that the battleships were symbols of national pride and power because they represented the technological advancement of the nation and its ability to reach worldwide with destructive firepower.¹³⁵

One should also note that the navy is an institution closely connected to a specific world system. Navies in the world operate at sea where physical borders do not exist. While each unit of warship in international waters represents the state, it is part of the world naval community, which makes it possible to predict homogeneity among different navies in terms of operating procedures and symbolic rituals. Eyre and Suchman rightly point out that, while designs and symbols of army uniforms vary throughout the world,

¹³² H.W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic*. New York: BasicBooks, 1997.

¹³³ Mark Russell Shulman, *Navalism and Emerging of American Sea Power, 1882-1893*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1995.

¹³⁴ Jan Rüger, "The Last Word in Outward Splendour: The Cult of the Navy and the Imperial Age." In *The Navy and the Nation: The Influence of the Navy on Modern Australia*, by David Stevens and John Reeve, Crows Nest NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005. pp. 48-65.

¹³⁵ Michael Howard, "War and the Nation-State." *Daedalus* 108, 1979. p. 104. Cited in Eyre and Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons." p. 97.

those of the navy exhibit remarkable isomorphism.¹³⁶ This is partly because navies are more susceptible to world culture than armies which are dominantly influenced by local cultures. At the same time, the fact that most navies modeled after the British Royal Navy gives more explanatory power to the SI perspectives.

So far, I have presented the theoretical premises of the SI approach. Particularly, I highlighted the nature of agent behavior and the role of world culture. Now, I can apply the SI perspectives to the case of the ROK navy. Based on the discussions about how the world cultural system works associated with professional networks, it is likely that the naval officers are the ones who started the BWN initiative. The naval officers are the ones who would feel pressing needs for progress in South Korea's navy. Most of all, they are the most important professionals who operate the weapon systems. More importantly, they are the ones who are closely connected to the world naval order and maintain the networks through various occasions such as combined exercises and conferences with foreign navies.

However, agents (naval officers) in the SI models are not the ones who passively absorb the influence of world culture. Critiques point out that the SI approach tends to view world culture as "marching effortlessly and facelessly across the globe."¹³⁷ Farrell tries to address this problem by highlighting actors as "strategic users of culture" in his study about the Irish Army.¹³⁸ However, he also relies too much on the norm-based argument and fails to demonstrate why the Irish Army officers adopted the norms of

¹³⁶ Eyre and Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons" Fn. 47, p. 98.

¹³⁷ Martha Finnemore. "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism." *International Organization*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1996: pp. 325-347. p. 339.

conventional warfare. In this regard, I emphasize the role of identity. As I discussed earlier, agents in the SI models are assumed to behave in appropriate ways based on their identities. As elites in society who belong to an organization and “subscribe to the goal of competitive progress” of their nation in the world, naval leaders are likely to be attentive to how their organization contributes to their nation.¹³⁹ Then, the beliefs about what the ROK navy is or does and what kind of nation the navy is serving are critical to naval leaders’ decisions. Accordingly, I hypothesize that the navy led the BWN initiative, and that the new initiative reflects changes in the ways that naval leaders view their organization and nation in terms of the roles and identities.

The acquisition of weapon systems requires an endorsement from the National Assembly as well as policy decisions by the Administration. Therefore, the fact that the ROK navy was able to start building ocean-going combat ships tells us that the acquisition programs had a certain degree of support from political leaders and the people. Government officials and politicians do not really feel what naval officers feel from their experiences on the ground. This implies that it may be difficult to persuade civilian politicians to spend tax money on building expensive ships instead of other kinds of economical ships unless the politicians see the relationship between an ocean-going navy and the nation. I hypothesize that political leaders somehow must have internalized the meanings of the navy that are associated with their nation at some point. At the same time, as the SI model predicts, they must have been sensitive to what other modern states were doing with regard to the naval acquisition.

¹³⁸ Farrell, "World Culture and Military Power."

¹³⁹ Meyer. "The World Polity and the Authority of the Nation-State." p. 59.

As the idea of the BWN initiative gained support from political leaders, and as the idea and the debate about it became public, the BWN initiative must have gained support also from the public. In this process of gaining support from political leaders and the public, the beliefs about the identity of their nation and associated meanings of an advanced navy have played a key role in maintaining the policy momentum for fifteen years. The identity-based explanation looks particularly plausible given the fact that the naval policy change came at the time of South Korea's heightened nation-wide initiative for globalization. South Korea launched a state-led globalization initiative in the 1990s. The globalization initiative by South Korea meant more than freer trade. It was a manifestation of national will declaring that South Korea as a sovereign modern state would mobilize national efforts to be more internationalized and competitive in all domains including economy, diplomacy, national security, and culture. Samuel Kim argues that South Korea's initiative for globalization represents the enactment of South Korea's national identity not only as a newly industrial country but also as a newly democratized country.¹⁴⁰

The focus of the debate here is not so much on South Korea's newly constituted national identity as on the effects of South Korea's recognition of an institutionalized object (the navy) in the process of constructing new national identity on the change in naval policy. If political leaders and people begin to perceive their country in the world in a new light, and if those people come to believe that the growth of the navy is one of appropriate behaviors based on the new identity of their nation, they are likely to support building a bigger navy. In this respect, South Korea's new naval policy may symbolize the national resolution of South Korea as a sovereign and modern state for becoming closely

¹⁴⁰ For Korea's globalization and a shift in national identity, see Samuel S. Kim, *Korea's Globalization*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

connected to the world system in the new world order after the Cold War. In other words, a world class advanced naval fleet may serve as a vehicle that contributes to the construction of a new national identity and helps to project this identity into the world. I summarize the hypotheses that serve as mechanisms for the implementation of the BWN initiative as follows:

HS 1. The ROK navy launched the BWN initiative in the process that the navy redefined its identity in terms of how it would serve the nation given a newly forming national identity of South Korea as a more sovereign and equal member of the international community.

HS 2. The rationale for a bigger naval fleet has resonated among political leaders because the leaders associated the bigger navy mainly with national identity and international standing of South Korea.

HS 3. Frequent appearances of issues related to the navy on the media (launching ceremonies, participation in multi-national operations, etc) have made the idea of a bigger navy popular among the public in association with national pride and international standing of South Korea.

Eclectic Approach

I do not argue that the SI model explains all the phenomena related to the ROK navy's BWN initiative including those in the processes of the beginning, implementation, and termination. Instead, I argue that an eclectic approach is necessary for accurate explanations of the phenomena. This position involves trade-offs in comparison with more parsimonious paradigm oriented explanations. Shared paradigms (Kuhn) or research programs (Lakatos) help scholars work in a disciplined and focused way by providing them with the "same rules and standards for scientific practice"¹⁴¹ At the same time, paradigms

¹⁴¹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago

serve as analytical frameworks which help researchers produce parsimonious and elegant theories. Indeed, established paradigms in the international relations (IR) field have contributed to our understanding of subject matters by generating parsimonious explanations based on somewhat simplified assumptions. Waltzian neorealism is a good example. Waltz argues that “[t]heory isolates one realm from all others in order to deal with it intellectually.”¹⁴² He also argues that the usefulness of a theory is evaluated by the “explanatory and predictive powers” of the theory. For Waltz, such theories are the ones that provide “patterns” of state behaviors at the international level rather than details of every event.

However, one should note that an overemphasis on parsimony may compromise explanatory power of a theory. For example, neorealism ignores potentially important roles of causal factors related to agents and institutions. A simple rationalist assumption may “reduce complex human interactions to rigid, almost mechanical abstractions.”¹⁴³ Another downside of the paradigm-oriented research practice is that too much stress on paradigms and parsimony may prevent students of IR from asking about important empirical questions. Kuhn explicitly admits that a paradigm can insulate a research community from socially significant issues if those issues cannot be put in terms of the “conceptual and instrumental tools” that the paradigm provides.¹⁴⁴

In fact, the trend in IR shows that researchers have moved away from paradigm-centric research in pursuit of fine-grained causal mechanisms. For example, realists have relaxed

Press, 1962. p. 11. For the concept of “research program,” see Imre Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes.” In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, by Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave. New York, London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

¹⁴² Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. p. 8.

¹⁴³ Robert C. North and Matthew Willard. “The Convergence Effect: challenge to parsimony.” *International Organization*, Vol. 37. No. 2, Spring 1983. p. 340.

the-state-as-unitary-actor assumption and looked at individual and domestic level variables for more precise explanations of international politics. As I previously mentioned, defensive realism departs from Waltzian neorealism by emphasizing the “fine-grained structure of power” that considers the impacts of technology and offense-defense balance.¹⁴⁵ Neoclassical realism maintains that international structural pressures must be translated through unit level variables such as domestic political structure and leaders’ perception.¹⁴⁶ Some scholars take a critical position by pointing out that the realist paradigm has degenerated because it has lost its core feature by borrowing explanatory variables from the liberal and constructivist paradigms.¹⁴⁷ However, those endeavors have obviously answered more questions, not less, which has contributed to the accumulation of knowledge. They have solved such problems that Waltzian neorealism alone would not have been able to do. Both explanatory power and parsimony are important criteria for building a good theory. However, as Evera argues, the principle of parsimony can be relaxed if we can better explain the world by doing so.¹⁴⁸

The virtues of analytic eclecticism have long been acknowledged in the IR field. One such example includes Elman and Elman’s edited volume *Progress in International Relations Theory* published in 2003.¹⁴⁹ In this volume, several scholars including Andrew Moravcsik, Stephen Walker, and Andrew Bennett suggest that Laudan’s theory of

¹⁴⁴ Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. p. 37.

¹⁴⁵ Evera, *Causes of War*. p. 7.

¹⁴⁶ Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy.” p. 152. For in-depth discussions about neoclassical realism and exemplary works, see Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro eds, *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik. “Is Anybody Still a Realist? .” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Autumn, 1999: pp. 5-55.

¹⁴⁸ Stephen Van Evera. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997. p. 19.

¹⁴⁹ Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman. *Progress in International Relations Theory: Apprais-*

scientific growth, as opposed to that of Lakatos, may provide us with useful criteria for thinking about progress in the contemporary IR field. According to Laudan, the primary goal of science is problem-solving. With regard to employing a theory or research tradition, Laudan maintains that “the choice of one tradition over its rivals is a progressive (and thus a rational) choice precisely to the extent that the chosen tradition is a better problem solver than its rivals.”¹⁵⁰ Thus, a researcher who belongs to one research tradition may employ theories of another tradition as long as it is useful to solving problems. This Laudan’s view may be a useful alternative to the Kuhnian or Lakatosian perspectives on scientific growth because it is conducive to the collaboration among different research traditions (or analytic eclecticism). Recently, Sil and Katzenstein more explicitly called for analytic eclecticism in studying world politics.¹⁵¹ The authors observe that there are significant areas of convergence across major paradigms in the IR field and, thereby, great potential for cross-paradigm complementarity. They also provide extensive reviews of literatures in security, political economy, and global governance that employed different eclectic approaches.

In employing eclectic approaches, I find the discussion about complementarity by Jepperson et al. particularly useful for my project.¹⁵² According to the authors, one way of thinking about complementarity among different perspectives is “stage complementarity” in which different perspectives provide explanations for different phases of a causal

ing the Field. Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2003.

¹⁵⁰ Larry Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems: Toward a Theory of Scientific Growth*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1977. p. 109.

¹⁵¹ Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein. *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

¹⁵² Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein. "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security." p. 70.

process.¹⁵³ For example, Barnett argues that threat perceptions played a role in shaping the patterns of inter-state relations and alliance formation in the Middle East since around 1950. However, the threat perceptions provide only a partial explanation for the entire causal chain because they are, in turn, shaped based on the Arab states' collective identities and corresponding norms.¹⁵⁴

Another way of thinking about complementarity is nesting.¹⁵⁵ In this approach, one perspective provides conditions for another. This form of complementarity is close to my approach in this project because I assume that the SI or constructivist perspective provides conditions for other perspectives. Particularly, my project highlights complementarity between the realist and the SI approaches. I predict that realist elements such as external threats and consideration of economic interests would influence the processes in which the BWN initiative was implemented. However, I hypothesize that the effects would not be direct. Rather, those elements would take effect through cultural factors. The effect of an external threat would differ depending on how much the threat is relevant to the newly defined identity and missions of the navy that is closely linked to broader national interests (rather than dealing only with North Korean spy boats).

To some extent, I also employ stage complementarity. In testing four different approaches (the realist, bureaucratic/organizational politics, domestic politics, and sociological institutionalist models) to the explanation of the phenomena related to the BWN initiative, I do not seek to reject those perspectives. Instead, I try to identify to what degree and how each perspective contributes to the initiation and continuation of the BWN

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

¹⁵⁵ Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein. "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security." p. 70.

initiative. Solingen's work serves as an example of such an approach.¹⁵⁶ Her study asks why some states have chosen to have nuclear weapons and others have renounced them. While Solingen emphasizes that the domestic incentives for political survival of leaders or regimes were the critical factor for the security policy decisions, she does not completely reject insights from alternative perspectives including neorealism, neoliberalism, and constructivism. Indeed, the phenomena in international relations such as weapons acquisition involve numerous players and complex mechanisms. They may be influenced by interplay between domestic and international politics. At the same time, as Allison and Zelikow argue, the "glasses one wears magnify one set of factors rather than another."¹⁵⁷ One perspective may provide evidence that another overlooks. In order to accurately explain what brought about the changes with regard to the ROK navy, we need insights from more than a single perspective.

Research Design

This project is a single case study about South Korea's naval development. In this sense, the study may be viewed as an ideographic case study whose purpose is to "describe, explain, interpret, and/or understand a single case as an end itself" rather than only as a means toward broader theoretical generalizations.¹⁵⁸ According to Levy, focusing only on developing generalizable theories and leave the task of explaining individual cases to historians undercuts the potential contributions social scientists can make. Explaining a single historical event may constitute a valuable contribution to the accumulation of

¹⁵⁶ Etel Solingen. *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

¹⁵⁷ Allison and Zelikow. *Essence of Decision*. p. 387.

¹⁵⁸ Jack S. Levy, "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference." *Conflict Management*

scientific knowledge especially if the study is guided by a well-established conceptual framework that emphasizes some theoretically specified dimensions of reality.¹⁵⁹ From this perspective, this study has value of its own.

However, I argue that this project means more than an ideographic case study. According to Gerring's definition, a case study is an in-depth study of a phenomenon for the purpose of understanding a broader class that the phenomenon stands for.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, George and Bennett understand a case as an "instance of a class of events."¹⁶¹ Clearly, this project constitutes a study about weapons acquisition. Particularly, it belongs to the class of events where cultural factors have important effects on decisions and behaviors involving national security.¹⁶²

This project also constitutes a case study based on the most/least likely design. Relying on Eckstein, Levy argues that crucial case studies based on most/least-likely designs can serve as useful tools for theory testing.¹⁶³ If a case is least likely to be consistent with what a theory predicts and most likely to support alternative theories and if evidence support our theory of interest, then the validity of the theory is increased. On the other hand, if a case is most likely to support the theory and if evidence is not consistent with theory's predictions, then it weakens the theory significantly. Given South Korea's security situation in which it faces grave military threats from North Korea, a military buildup by South Korea would be

and Peace Science, Vol. 25, 2008, p. 4.

¹⁵⁹ Levy calls this kind of endeavor theory-guided case studies. See Levy, "Case Studies," p. 4.

¹⁶⁰ John Gerring. "The Case Study: What It Is and What It Does." In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, by Charles Boix and Susan C. Stokes, pp. 90-122. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. p. 96.

¹⁶¹ Alexander L. George, and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005. p. 17.

¹⁶² For the works dealing with the influence of cultural factors on national security, see Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*. Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff eds, *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2002.

the most likely case for the realist perspectives and the least likely case for the cultural explanations like the SI perspectives. If the study finds evidence supporting the SI perspectives, the generalizability of my main arguments is increased.

I mainly rely on qualitative analyses that focus on three different levels: the navy, political leaders and the public. I analyze how cultural factors such as identities and the meanings of advanced naval ships had effects on different societal actors in South Korea. Particularly, my focus is to see how those cultural factors facilitated the processes in which the different actors came to believe in the necessity of a greater naval fleet. Although the diffusion of a certain meaning in a community is not a process that occurs in a highly coherent manner, a meaning making activity is observable through practices such as language and symbols.¹⁶⁴ In this respect, speeches and statements of political leaders can be considered manifested sources of political culture that contains meanings and values that the politicians hold on to.

For the navy level analysis, I rely on content analysis and process-tracing. I analyze the content of presidential speeches at graduation ceremonies of three military academies including the army, the air force, and the navy. These speeches serve as valuable sources for my project because they demonstrate identities of the service branches. Throughout the speeches, presidents as Commanders-in-Chief of the military would try to deliver encouraging remarks to each service by describing the service with the most essential characteristics of the service because the ceremonies stand for official recognition of cadets as new leaders of each service. Accordingly, the speeches tend to contain ample remarks suggesting the image and role identity of each military service that are *expected* in

¹⁶³ Levy, "Case Studies," p. 12.

¹⁶⁴ Wedeen, "Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science."

the conduct of national defense by the national leaders and the South Korean people. Furthermore, the speeches are written by the Presidential office with close consultation with each service, which implies that they are likely to contain how each service views the service itself and how it desires to be seen by others. Thus, one can treat the presidential speeches at military academies as fair sources of identities of each service that contain the perspectives both from the service and the national leaders.

Through the content analysis of the presidential speeches, I examine whether there are any substantial differences in terms of how presidents depicted the image of the navy before and after the new naval initiative was launched in 1995. I also look at whether there are substantial differences between the image of the navy that presidents depict and those of other services. For example, if the results of content analysis show that presidents associate South Korea's internationalization with the role of the navy more than those of other services, it would give us a foundation for the SI model.

I also employ process-tracing using primary and secondary sources. I interviewed a number of admirals who used to lead the navy. One important figure is Admiral An Byeongtae, former Chief of Naval Operations, who initiated the BWN drive. Interviews with the admirals provided me with important information about the motivations for the initiative and responses from in and outside the navy. For such information, military publications and journal articles written by naval officers and professors who used to be at the center of the design and promotion of the BWN initiative also served as valuable sources.

For the political level analysis, I conduct content analysis of statements made by Assembly members. Particularly, I analyze statements made by lawmakers of the National

Defense Committee of the ROK National Assembly at annual inspections from 1995 to 2009. Through the content analysis, I examine to what degree the lawmakers supported the idea of the ROK navy's having greater naval capability under the slogan of the blue water navy. I also compare the contents with those of the pre-1995 period in order to see whether there was any change in the politicians' statements regarding the naval development between before and after the BWN initiative was launched in 1995. If there are indications demonstrating that the lawmakers gave support for the BWN initiative, I try to identify the politicians' motivations. By identifying the causes for the support, we will be able to see to what degree the statements reflect elements that are predicted by sociological institutionalist accounts vis-à-vis those of other alternative models such as the realist model. For example, if a politician argues that South Korea needs a bigger naval fleet because s/he considers it appropriate given South Korea's elevated national status in the international community, this supports the SI model. On the other hand, if the politician does so mainly because of perceived threats, it would corroborate a realist hypothesis.

I rely on content analysis and public survey for analyzing to what degree and how the idea of the BWN initiative has resonated at the public level of the South Korean society. First, I examine news reports containing the phrase "the blue water navy" from South Korea's major daily newspapers. In order to trace the spread of the idea in public, I analyze in what contexts the specific phrase was used. As Deborah Welch Larson argues, newspapers are "essential for establishing context."¹⁶⁵ The analysis of newspapers can tell us different opinions about the new naval initiative generally held in the South Korean

¹⁶⁵ Deborah Welch Larson, "Sources and Methods in Cold War History: The Need for a New Theory-Based Archival Approach." In *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations*, by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman eds, pp. 327-350. Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2001. p. 345.

society. It also provides information about what kinds of events have served as mediums for promoting the new initiative at the public level.

For similar reasons, I employ a public survey. Using the survey method, I can get more information about people's impression about the ROK navy and their personal opinions about the necessity of the construction of ocean-going ships. The results of the survey would also tell us to what degree the meanings and images of the navy associated with the nation operated at the public level. It should be noted, however, that the survey will be treated as an additional measure in my project because of its limitations. Most of all, the sample is not representative of the random population. I conducted the survey through the internet. I requested the representative of a civic organization called the Korean Defense Network (KDN) to post my survey questionnaire on the KDN website so that people voluntarily participate in the survey.

On the other hand, the survey results from this group may be more meaningful than those from a randomly selected sample. The discussion about military related issues requires some level of interest and knowledge on the subject matter. If a randomly selected person does not have any knowledge about naval ships, we cannot expect any meaningful responses from the individual. Moreover, the survey conducted on the KDN members may constitute a strong test against my cultural explanation of South Korea's naval construction. The KDN members are the ones who believe that they have quite good knowledge on military affairs and equipment. Those who have good knowledge on military equipment tend to understand the acquisition of weapons in terms of the functions and strategic/tactical values that the weapons would bring about. They are less likely to express their opinions suggesting that they are influenced by presumably non-practical factors such as

national identity and pride even though they had, in fact, observed some influence from those elements. If I see some influence of cultural factors from their responses, it may serve as a fair ground for the SI arguments.

Still, the KDN is a group that support strong national defense of South Korea. We cannot ignore the possibility that the KDN members can be extremely patriotic so that their views tend to reflect symbolic and emotional elements associated with their love for the nation more than other people. With these pros and cons in mind, I report the results of the survey as they are. However, they are treated as additional information about support from the public for the BWN initiative.

Chapter 3 The Realist Explanations

This chapter examines to what degree the realist perspectives provide explanations for South Korea's initiative to construct an ocean-going navy since the 1990s. The realist models assume that states are rational unitary actors trying to survive in the anarchical international system. Foreign policy decisions reflect strategic calculations made under the constraint of limited resources to maximize national interest that are often defined in terms of national security and economic wealth. Thus, a change in a state's military posture can be viewed as a rational policy choice of a state seeking to defend or promote its national interest in response to external stimuli.

I test three hypotheses that I developed in the previous chapter. The three hypotheses involve the influences of three independent variables: external threat (or perception of it), changes in U.S. defense commitment to or U.S. leverage over South Korea (due to a structural change in the international political system), and changes in South Korea's economic interest or economic/technological capacities. The chapter consists of three sections. Each section contains summaries and detailed analyses related to each hypothesis. In general, I observe that, although some of the realist perspectives are useful particularly in explaining South Korea's naval constructions in the past, they fell short of providing accurate explanations for the naval buildups since the 1990s. At the end of the chapter, I propose an eclectic way to look at the phenomenon as an effort to set the stage for the later chapters.

External Threat

The first realist explanation (HR1) hypothesizes that the BWN initiative was South Korea's state level response to perceived military threats from North Korea or neighboring countries. In testing the hypothesis, I first review whether there were any significant changes in military postures of North Korea or other neighboring countries. I also examine whether those countries employed particularly aggressive defense policies that may have stimulated South Korea's naval buildup. Finally, I look at South Korea's positions toward those countries in order to check for the possibility that threat perceptions, as opposed to real threats, influenced South Korea's foreign policy behaviors. For the neighboring countries, I look at China and Japan as most likely cases where external threats might have been involved partly because of the geographic proximity.¹⁶⁶

I argue that given the trends in North Korea's weapons acquisition and military posture, it is difficult to view South Korea's construction of ocean-going ships a strategic response to North Korean military threat although some of North Korea's military capabilities are better addressed with the large advanced naval ships. China and Japan have expanded its naval power together with increasingly expanded defense perimeters. However, I observe that it is also problematic to understand South Korea's naval buildups since the 1990s as a response to the naval powers of China and Japan. While these neighboring great powers have always had superior naval capabilities to South Korea, South Korea had never reacted to the already existed gaps in naval power before the 1990s. At the same time, I find that

¹⁶⁶ According to Walt, geographical proximity is one of the important elements that can create threat. See Stephen M. Walt. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power." *International*

South Korea's foreign policy positions toward those countries were not notably aggressive during the BWN initiative period.

North Korea

The most likely military threat of North Korea that might have stimulated South Korea's BWN initiative in the 1990s would involve the posture or changes of the North Korean navy or a change in it that happened in the similar period. As an effort to find out such evidence, I start with looking at what kind of navy North Korea has maintained and when its major force construction took place. First of all, the North Korean navy is categorized as a coastal navy that focuses on access-denial capabilities. In this sense, North Korea's naval posture resembles that of land powers like China and the Soviet Union in the past. According to Robert S. Ross, while maritime powers like the United States have internal security with minimal threats across the borders from neighboring countries and easy access to the sea, land powers often face threats from bordering countries on land.¹⁶⁷ Because of the major security threats on land, land powers need to maintain large armies while using limited resources to build small and cost-effective navies with access-denial capabilities. The access-denial capabilities provide the employing countries with "a maritime deterrent and the capability to impose significant wartime costs on a maritime power."¹⁶⁸ For the geostrategic imperatives, the Soviet Union focused on building submarines and small ships to challenge the U.S. carrier based fleet operations near the Soviet coasts during the Cold War era.

Security, Vol. 9, No. 4, Spring 1985.

¹⁶⁷ Robert S. Ross. "China's Naval Nationalism Sources, Prospects, and the U.S. Response." *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Fall 2009: pp. 46-81. p. 48.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 49.

For such access-denial capabilities, the North Korean navy relies on submarines and fast attack crafts which are relatively inexpensive compared to major surface ships. The only main combatants that do not belong to these categories are two *Najin* class frigates (1,500 tons) and one *Soho* class frigate (1,600 tons).¹⁶⁹ Submarines, however small and old they are, can give significant damages to high value units like aircraft carriers. Fast attack crafts of just around 200 tons or less can maneuver at a high speed and conduct deadly attacks on large ships using surface-to-surface missiles or torpedoes.

While these capabilities make the North Korean navy an effective access-denial force, they do not serve as a rationale for South Korea to build large and expensive ocean-going ships that may easily fall victims of those small North Korean ships in wartime. Considering the period in which the force construction of the North Korean navy occurred, there was little possibility that South Korea identified any new threats from the North Korean navy in the 1990s. North Korea's major acquisitions of naval weapons happened in the 1960s through the 1980s. For example, North Korea maintained eighteen *Romeo* class submarines as of 1992. Based on the models of six *Romeo* class submarines that were transferred from China between 1973 and 1975, North Korea domestically built twelve more of the same class submarines beginning from 1975 throughout the 1980s. Four *Whiskey* class submarines that it maintains are all transferred from the Soviet Union between 1960 and 1974.¹⁷⁰ Most fast attack crafts such as *OSA I* class and *Komar* class missile boats were transferred from the Soviet Union throughout the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Richard Sharpe. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1991-92*. Frome and London: Jane's Information Group, 1991.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 350.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 350-352.

Two *Najin* class frigates were domestically built in 1973 and 1975 and a *Soho* class frigate was constructed in 1983.¹⁷²

The trends in North Korea's naval acquisition are understandable considering North Korea's foreign relations and domestic situations. From the point of foreign relations, North Korea could not expect as much assistance from the two great power allies, Russia and China, in the 1990s as in the Cold War era. In 1990, the Soviet Union required North Korea to pay for Soviet oil and natural gas in hard currency only at prevailing world prices.¹⁷³ Since 1992, Russia has provided only limited technological assistance to North Korea and demanded that North Korea pay world prices for arms sales instead of friendship prices, which North Korea has found difficult to accomplish.¹⁷⁴ To make matters worse, Moscow in 1993 insisted that North Korea should repay loans amounting to 3.5 billion dollars provided over the past four decades.¹⁷⁵ China also declared in 1991 that only cash payments at world prices would be accepted for all transactions with North Korea including oil, which had previously been provided at 50 percent of world prices.¹⁷⁶ Chinese arms sales to North Korea significantly decreased to less than 50 million dollars in the first half of the 1990s from more than 1 billion dollars in the 1980s.

Domestic situations were characterized with aggravating economy and social unrest. The total output of North Korea's agricultural and industrial sectors fell by almost 50 percent between 1992 and 1996.¹⁷⁷ Estimates of North Korean GDP indicate the same

¹⁷² Ibid. p. 350.

¹⁷³ Jane Shapiro Zacek, "Russia in North Korean Foreign Policy" in Samuel S. Kim ed., *North Korean Foreign Relations* (Hong Kong: Oxford University, 1998). p. 81.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 77.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 84.

¹⁷⁶ Marcus Noland, *Avoiding the Apocalypse: The Future of the Two Koreas*, (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2000). p. 99.

¹⁷⁷ According to the data that North Korea had submitted to the IMF, the total output in 1992 was

amount of economic shrinkage in this period.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the exacerbation of North Korea's chronic food shortages by successive flooding and droughts between 1995 and 1997 aggravated social unrest. A special report of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on North Korea's famine concluded that 2 to 3 million people died of starvation and hunger-related illnesses during the period of 1994-1998.¹⁷⁹ This food shortage produced the wide spread internal migrations across North Korea during the period 1995-1998 and the surge of North Korean refugees into China at that time. On top of these problems, the North Korean regime had an urgent task of consolidating Kim Jeong Il's leadership because of the sudden death of the nation's founding father Kim Il Sung in 1994.

These hardships in foreign relations and internal problems do not serve as favorable conditions for the construction of major conventional weapons like naval ships. Professor Lee Minryong argues that, due to the economic crisis in the 1990s, North Korea had reduced the quantitative reinforcement of conventional weapons such as tanks and guns and mainly focused on research and development activities for strategic weapons like midget submarines, AN-2 aircrafts, ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction.¹⁸⁰ This argument is confirmed by the United State military authority. According to the 2000 United States Forces of Korea report to Congress on Military situation on the Korean Peninsula, "Realizing they cannot match Combined Forces Command's technologically advanced war-fighting capabilities, the North's leadership focuses on developing

20,875 million dollars and it declined to 10,588 million dollars in 1996. For the details, see Noland, *Avoiding the Apocalypse*. p. 69.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 81.

¹⁷⁹ Andrew Natsios, The Politics of Famine in North Korea in *United States Institute of Peace Special Report*, (Washington:1999), pp. 1-6. Access www.usip.org.

¹⁸⁰ Minryong Lee, *Kim Jong Il Chejeui Bukhangundae Haebu (Analysis on the North Korean*

asymmetrical capabilities such as ballistic missiles, special operation forces, and weapons of mass destruction designed to preclude alliance force options and offset our conventional military superiority.”¹⁸¹ The only significant naval weapons program of North Korea in the 1990s and 2000s is the construction of Sango class submarines.¹⁸²

Note that, while it is difficult to ascribe South Korea’s acquisition of ocean-going ships to North Korean naval threats, some types of naval weapons that the ROK navy acquired before the BWN initiative were mainly to address threats from the North Korean navy. For example, South Korea’s acquisition of fast attack crafts in the 1970’s can be explained by the threat-based model. Until the beginning of the 1970’s, South Korea did not have proper naval forces to effectively engage the North Korean navy that consisted of a large number of fast attack crafts armed with torpedoes or surface-to-surface missiles.¹⁸³ As of 1970, the ROK navy was relying on second-hand ships that had been transferred from the U.S. Navy. The old ships include three destroyers (DDs), one destroyer escort (DE), six high-speed transports (APDs) and twenty four landing ships.¹⁸⁴ These ships were hardly efficient in coping with North Korea’s agile fast boats armed with powerful weapons. On top of that, those medium to large ships of the ROK navy could become easy targets for North Korea’s fast attack crafts. For example, an Israeli destroyer Eilat (1,710 tons) was sunk by three Styx missiles launched by an Egyptian Komar class missile boat

military under the Kim Jong Il regime), (Seoul: Hwang Geum AI, 2004). p. 54.

¹⁸¹ 2000 Report to Congress: Military Situation on the Korean Peninsula, September 12, 2000.

¹⁸² According to Jane’s Fighting Ships, the production of one or two Sango class submarines per year continues in the 2000s. See Stephen Saunders. *Jane’s Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane’s Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008. p. 445.

¹⁸³ According to Jane’s Fighting Ships 1972-73, as of 1972, North Korea operated 8 ex-Soviet OSA class (165 tons) and 6 ex-Soviet Komar class (75 tons) missile boats. It also operated 40 ex-Soviet P-4 class torpedo boats. See Raymond V.B. Blackman ed. *Jane’s Fighting Ships 1972-73*. Huddersfield, England: Netherwood Dalton & Co. LTD, 1972.

¹⁸⁴ I counted the number based on the information in Jane’s Fighting Ships 1980-81. See John Moore ed. *Jane’s Fighting Ships*. London: Jane’s Publishing Company, 1980.

(75 tons) in the 1967 Six Day War.¹⁸⁵ Another kind of threat that North Korea posed at that time was frequent infiltrations of North Korean agent boats into the South Korean territorial waters. The second-hand destroyers, the fastest ships that the ROK navy was operating, were not fit to chase fast North Korean agent boats because the agent boats could speed up to over 35 knots promptly while the boiler-powered destroyers needed time to produce enough steam pressure to reach 35 knots, their maximum speed.

At the end of the 1960s, a consensus emerged among political leaders (including the President) and the navy that South Korea should build fast attack crafts in order to counter the capabilities of North Korea's missile boats and effectively engage high speed agent boats.¹⁸⁶ This is how the ROK navy started to acquire fast attack crafts such as guided missile boats and coastal patrol crafts. One of the central acquisition programs was multi-mission guided missile boats (Patrol Ship Multi-Mission or PSMM) called *Paek Ku* (ex-US Asheville class). After the ROK navy received the first boat (*Paek Ku* 51 or ex-USS Benicia, PG 96) from the U.S. Navy in 1972, the U.S. government made a decision to transfer shipbuilding technology for the fast attack crafts to a South Korean shipbuilder at the South Korean government's request.¹⁸⁷ As a result, out of total 8 units of the *Paek Ku* program, four units were built by Tacoma Boatbuilding Company of the United States between 1975 and 1976 and the rest four were built by Korea Tacoma International

¹⁸⁵ The Israeli destroyer Eilat is known as the first large warship that was sunk by a surface-to-surface guided missile. See Anthony Bruce and William Cogar. *An Encyclopedia of Naval History*. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1998. p. 124.

¹⁸⁶ At that time, even the people voluntarily made donations for building ships that can counter the North Korean navy's capabilities. Accordingly, the South Korean government allocated part of the people's donations to the construction of 70 ton class coastal patrol boats. Because the money for the first boat was from students' donation, the patrol boat program was called "Haksangho or Schoolboy." See Hyocheol Kim et al. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. Seoul: Jiseongsa, 2006. p. 442. For the decision by President Park Jeong Hee, Oh Woncheol, "Oh Wonchel Column: Jungjin Gongeopgukul Hyankhayeo (Toward a Midium-level Industrialized Country)," September 19, 2006 at <http://www.newstown.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=35729>.

between 1976 and 1977. This division of labor reflected urgent need for expediting the program because of recurrent North Korean provocations.¹⁸⁷ This weapons acquisition in the 1970s fits perfectly the threat-based realist model because the acquisition of the weapon system was a state-level decision that was made based on North Korean threats.

As such, while a realist explanation based on North Korean threats can explain some naval weapons acquisitions, it does not do the same for South Korea's efforts for the construction of an ocean going navy initiated in the 1990s. Still, we should examine the possibility that the types of North Korean military provocations rendered ocean-going advanced ships more effective countermeasures than small coastal ships that the ROK navy had been operating. However, it is also difficult to find evidence supporting this view because North Korea's provocations in the late 1980s and 1990s did not have much influence on the direction of the ROK navy's force construction in the 1990s and 2000s. Since the ROK navy's coastal defense capabilities improved due to the acquisition of different kinds of combat ships such as corvettes and frigates over the 1970s and 1980s, the number of North Korean agents' infiltration by surface boats significantly decreased. Instead, North Korea employed different types of provocations. For example, a *Sang-O* class North Korean submarine with commandos on an espionage mission was captured near *Kangnung* in the east coast of South Korea in September 1996. A North Korean midget submarine was captured after it had been found entangled in fishing nets in the east coast of South Korea in June 1998.

As another type of provocation, the North Korean patrol boats increasingly crossed the Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the West Sea partly with an intention to neutralize the

¹⁸⁷ Kim et al. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. p. 444.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 445.

NLL, which has been served as a maritime border between the two Koreas since the United Nations Command established it in August 1953 as a limit line for its maritime and air patrols. Although North Korea started to claim that the NLL is null and void in 1973 because it was unilaterally established by the United Nations Command, it intensified the effort in the 1990s using naval provocations.¹⁸⁹ For example, North Korean patrol boats intentionally violated and crossed the NLL into the South Korean waters thirty-seven times between 1994 and 1997.¹⁹⁰ The violations amounted to thirty-five times in 1998 alone.¹⁹¹ These frequent violations of the maritime border by North Korean naval vessels led to clashes between the two navies such as the First and Second *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battles in 1999 and 2002. In both occasions, North Korea's violations were met with South Korea's strong warnings and noncompliance of North Korea finally led to the loss of crew members and ships on both sides.

These provocations by North Korean submarines and patrol ships constituted substantial military threats to South Korea. Nonetheless, these North Korean provocations do not point to the necessity for ocean-going naval ships. Rather, they were threats that can be dealt with through enhancing coastal defense and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. The ROK navy did make a lot of efforts in order to enhance its defense posture against North Korean submarines. After North Korean submarine infiltrations in 1996 and 1998, the ROK navy undertook major revisions in how to fight North Korean underwater threats. Considering that North Korean submarines operate along the South Korean coast lines and they often bottom in order to insert special operations forces, the navy intensified searching

¹⁸⁹ For the detailed information about the NLL, see the official website of Institute of Unification Education at <http://www.uniedu.go.kr/uniedu/MainHome.do?cmd=indexMain>.

¹⁹⁰ Hannah Fischer. *North Korean Provocative Actions, 1950-2007*. CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Updated April 20, 2007. p. 19.

operations around most likely bottoming spots that the navy intelligence estimated.¹⁹² It also increased the frequency of maritime patrol by aircrafts like P-3Cs and Lynx helicopters.¹⁹³ The navy even employed nontraditional ways to detect bottomed submarines on the coasts.¹⁹⁴ For example, coastal patrol crafts started to employ fish detectors because small bottomed submarines cannot be easily detected by the regular Sound Navigation and Ranging (SONAR) systems. Troll fishing boats were also employed as so called auxiliary anti-submarine forces. As a mid-term plan, the ROK navy planned to install underwater surveillance systems on the coastal areas.¹⁹⁵

Still, these were operational or tactical level changes that do not necessarily require changes in the core characteristics of the navy from a coastal navy to an ocean-going navy. The efforts to address North Korean threats did not distract the navy from transforming the ROK navy into an ocean-going navy. The priority was the construction of advanced ocean-going surface ships. Concerning this focus of the navy, Assemblyman An Dongseon suggested in the 1999 National Assembly inspection on the navy that the enhancement of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities including ASW aircrafts should be prioritized over the acquisition of large surface ships such as the Korean Destroyer Experimental (KDX) programs given North Korean underwater threats.¹⁹⁶ Indeed, maritime patrol aircrafts like P-3C equipped with different kinds of sonobuoys,

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² National Assembly Secretariat, *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1998 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1998. p. 23.

¹⁹³ Appendix to *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1998 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p.18.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat, *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1999 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1999. p. 9.

onboard underwater monitoring systems, and torpedoes can make one of the most effective submarine hunters. Probably, one of the typical examples showing this strategic response to submarine threats would be prioritizing the acquisition of a lot of such capable aircrafts. For example, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) pursued a huge fleet of one hundred P-3Cs as an effort to address submarine threats from the Soviet Union during the Cold War period.¹⁹⁷

Another most effective weapon system for ASW operations is submarines. This is so partly because of the submarine's versatility including underwater detection, forward reconnaissance and strike capabilities. Submarines make very effective ASW platforms partly because modern submarines are equipped with better SONAR systems than surface ASW ships. Moreover, by being underwater, submarines operate in a quieter environment than surface ships, which is a great advantage in detecting underwater movements. Submarines can serve as the best early warning platforms for enemy submarines' deployment because they can monitor enemy submarine activities near their bases. On top of that, submarines of certain capacity can conduct a precise attack on enemy's critical nodes as a retaliatory measure in case that the enemy makes a military provocation. In this way, submarines can be used as a deterrence measure at the strategic level. Despite these merits of maritime patrol aircraft and submarine in dealing with North Korean threats, the acquisition of these weapon systems was not prioritized.

Another way of responding rationally to North Korea's submarine threats would be to increase mine warfare capability, which was not prioritized by South Korea. One of the most formidable threats of submarines comes from the fact that they can effectively

¹⁹⁷ Euan Graham. *Japan's Sea Lane Security, 1940-2004: A Matter of Life and Death?*. New York: Routledge, 2006. p. 145.

blockade the Sea lines of Communications (SLOCs) through mine laying operations, which would prevent military and commercial ships from accessing the mined areas until they are cleared. For example, China may deploy its numerous submarines in the case that Taiwan declares independence in order to blockade the areas around Taiwan not only to disrupt the SLOCs for Taiwan's survival but also to deny access by the U.S. naval forces.¹⁹⁸ In response to such submarine threats to the SLOCs, Japan has maintained a sizeable minesweeping forces including air mine countermeasures such as ten MH-53Es and over thirty mine sweeping/hunting ships.¹⁹⁹ In contrast, as of 2008, South Korea maintains nine mine sweeping/hunting ships without air countermeasures.²⁰⁰ The blockades by North Korean submarines are existing threats. They make even more serious and realistic threats considering the damages and difficulties that the U.S. naval forces experienced in operations in Wonsan area and the Korean peninsula in general during the Korean War because of North Korean mines.²⁰¹ However, as with ASW assets such as P-3Cs and submarines, minesweeping capability was less emphasized during the BWN period.

Note that, however, the ROK navy did not ignore North Korean submarine threats. Although the construction of ocean-going ships was not entirely about addressing North Korean submarine threats, advanced ASW capabilities were part of the large ships' desired

¹⁹⁸ John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai. *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994. pp. 226-229.

¹⁹⁹ MH-53Es are helicopters equipped with minesweeping equipment. Japan is replacing MH-53Es with MCH-101s, which are more modern models. See Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane's Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

²⁰⁰ *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*.

²⁰¹ For the detailed documentation of naval operations during the Korean War, see Malcolm W. Cagle and Frank A. Manson. *The Sea War in Korea*. Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1957.

characteristics that the ROK navy started to design in the 1980s. Admiral Kim Cheolwu, who served as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) of the ROK navy from 1991 to 1993, testified at the 1991 National Assembly Inspection on the navy that the Korean Destroyer programs were not mainly designed for countering North Korea's fast attack crafts. Instead, they were designed to not only protect our SLOCs from enemy submarines, but also deter unforeseen threats in the future.²⁰²

Indeed, underwater threats that North Korean submarines pose can be better dealt with larger ocean-going ships than smaller ships like frigates (1,500 tons) and corvettes (1,200 tons). The ROK navy has relied on these small ships since the 1980s. Although one of the main characteristics of the smaller surface combatants is ASW, these smaller ships cannot surpass larger ships in terms of their ASW capabilities partly because of the sheer size. Larger ships have a better chance in underwater detection than smaller ships because they can accommodate multiple sensors including SONAR systems with greater capacity than those of small ships. For example, newly built destroyers under the BWN initiative operate integrated ASW suites that consist of a Towed Array Sonar (TASS), a hull-mounted Sonar, and ASW helicopters while the ROK navy's older ASW ships are equipped with only hull-mounted Sonars. Given the fact that North Korea has maintained a huge fleet of submarines, and that those submarines can effectively threaten the SLOCs in wartime, the ocean-going ships with the advanced underwater detection capabilities would be important game changers in ASW operations. Still, advanced ASW capabilities cannot be the decisive factor that explains why the ROK navy had to acquire tremendously

²⁰² National Assembly Secretariat, *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1991 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1991. p. 20.

expensive multipurpose ships like Aegis destroyers and big-deck landing ships which can serve as helicopter carriers.

Although addressing North Korean military threats was definitely not an original motivation for the BWN initiative, some capabilities of the advanced ocean-going ships may justify the continuation of building those advanced ships because of their effects in coping with North Korean threats particularly in wartime. For example, the Aegis destroyers that the ROK navy started to operate in 2008 as part of the BWN initiative can serve as effective countermeasures against different types of military threats that North Korea poses.

Aegis destroyers are particularly effective platforms to track and intercept ballistic missiles from North Korea. As I have mentioned above, North Korea has focused on developing asymmetric capabilities including the Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMDs) and ballistic missiles since the 1990s. North Korea has demonstrated its continuous efforts in developing missile technology by conducting test-fires of different types of ballistic missiles in 1998 (*Taepodong-I*), 2006 (*Nodong* and *Taepodong-II*), and 2009 (*Taepodong-II*).²⁰³ Given this trend, the ROK navy's maintaining Aegis capability makes perfect sense. This is more so when the missile threat is combined with the fact that North Korea has been pursuing a nuclear power status. Indeed, the Aegis destroyer program (KDX-III) was often understood by members of the Defense Committee of the National Assembly as a tool to address the North Korean ballistic missile threat. After North Korea test-fired seven ballistic missiles on July 4, 2006 and conducted its first underground nuclear test on October 9, 2006, Assemblyman Kim Haksong urged for the early construction of the first

²⁰³ Nodong is single-staged missile with the range of 1,300km. Taepodong-I is two-staged missile with the range of 1,800km. Taepodong-II is three-staged intercontinental ballistic missile with the

Aegis destroyer.²⁰⁴ ROKS *Sejong the Great* (DDG-991), the first Aegis destroyer of the ROK navy, demonstrated the capability by successfully tracking the flight of North Korea's Taepodong-II ballistic missile launched in *Musudanli* in 2009.²⁰⁵

So far, I have argued that while North Korean threat factors including the naval posture and the types of North Korean threats may have served as rationales for the ROK navy's maintaining ocean-going ships to some degree because of the accompanying advanced combat capabilities, they were not the factors that explain why the ROK navy started the initiative. Can it be the case that South Korean leaders' perception about North Korea and foreign policy toward it was conducive to the construction of a bigger navy? For example, South Korean leaders during the BWN period may have perceived North Korea as more threatening than previous leaders did. However, this is not a very likely scenario.

The two administrations during the BWN period are characterized by reconciliatory policies toward North Korea. The Kim Dae Jung administration is well known as the "Sunshine Policy" toward North Korea. The Roh Moo Hyeon administration even dropped the designation of North Korea as *Jujeok* (a principle enemy) in the 2004 Defense White Paper. Accordingly, the two administrations somewhat toned down the military threat dimension of North Korea. For example, during the Sunshine Policy period in the Kim Dae Jung administration, North Korea's hostile military provocations have never ceased: North Korea test-fired a *Daepodong* missile over Japan in 1998 and it provoked the

range of over 5,000km.

²⁰⁴ National Assembly Secretariat, *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2006 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2006. p. 18.

²⁰⁵ Sangho Yun. "Rocket Balsa Ganghaeng / Cheot Tuip Sejongdaewangham, Rocket Gwedochojeok Seonggong (The North Fired the Missile / ROKS Sejong the Great Successfully

First and Second *Yonpyong Sea Battles* in the West Sea in 1999 and 2002 respectively. In the latter conflict, a South Korean patrol boat was completely destroyed and sank because of a North Korea's surprise attack. Five crew members were found dead and eighteen were missing. Nevertheless, while President Bush and Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi expressed their concerns about the prospect of the Sunshine Policy, President Kim Dae Jung said that he would maintain the policy in the hope that his good will would be reciprocated by North Korean leader Kim Jeong Il.²⁰⁶

Indeed, the Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyeon administrations made enormous efforts not to provoke North Korea which would create unfavorable results for the peace processes; the Kim Dae Jung administration announced in 1999 that it would not join the U.S. Missile Defense program while the United States was increasingly emphasizing missile threats from North Korea as a national security matter; in 2006, the Roh Moo Hyeon administration refused to join the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) which would call upon the ROK navy to stop and inspect North Korean ships that are suspicious of transferring materials involving the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).²⁰⁷ Given the strong emphases on reconciliation, it is unlikely that the administrations had unusually outstanding threat perceptions about North Korea.

Tracked the Missile as her First Mission)." *Donga Ilbo*, April 6, 2009.

²⁰⁶ Gyeonghwan Jeong. *Kim Dae Jung Jeongkwon Daebukjeongchaekui Pyeongga (The Assessment of the Kim Dae Jung Administration's Policy toward North Korea)*. Busan: Ikyeong Press, 2008. p. 155.

²⁰⁷ Michael A. Fletcher. "Bush Fails to Persuade S. Korea on Sanctions: Roh Vows to Help Block N. Korean Nuclear Exports." *Washington Post*, November 19, 2006. The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is a multinational nonproliferation cooperation commenced by President George W. Bush in Krakow, Poland, on May 31st, 2003. Participating countries are called upon "to join in committing to undertake effective measures, either alone or in concert with other states, for interdicting the transfer or transport of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern." See State Department, Statement of Interdiction Principles, agreed at Paris, September 4, 2003.

Some people suggest that South Korea could build ocean-going ships because of these reconciliatory policies toward North Korea in which North Korea was not seen as an enemy.²⁰⁸ This view is often related to the increased prospect for unification. The argument is that if the two Koreas are reconciled and unified, South Korea does not need to acquire weapons that are employed in addressing North Korean threats. Therefore, because of the perception of reduced threat from North Korea, South Korea could build ocean-going ships which did not have implications for North Korean naval threats.

However, this line of argument is problematic for several reasons. Most of all, this view builds on some strong assumptions. First, it assumes that the ocean-going naval ships that the ROK navy had been building were not designed for coping with North Korean military threats. In other words, fighting North Korean threats was not incorporated into the designs of ocean-going ships, which is far from the fact. As I explained above, while the newly built large ships are not mainly for addressing North Korean small sized fast attack crafts, they are designed to better engage other kinds of threats such as those from underwater and air. They are even better protected from fast attack crafts armed with surface-to-surface missiles because of the Close-In-Weapon Systems that automatically detect and destroy inbound missiles, which old combat ships do not have.

Another assumption is that the reconciliatory position of the South Korean government was well translated into military affairs between the two Koreas. If the reconciliatory atmosphere and perception that North Korea is not a significant military threat at the political level were influential enough to change the ROK navy's force posture, it is probable that there was similar changes in the general military posture such as initiatives for arms reduction. However, there have been no visible measures or

²⁰⁸ I learned about this view while I was interviewing scholars and military officers.

agreements in conventional arms reduction between the two Koreas although they have intermittently discussed it since the armistice.²⁰⁹ As I mentioned above, North Korean military provocations continued in spite of South Korea's Sunshine Policy. In the midst of peaceful gestures between the two Koreas including the summits in 2000 and 2007, the members of the ROK navy were struggling at sea in order to stop North Korean patrol boats' crossing into the South Korean waters. Naval leaders who experienced those incidents at sea testify that they ran grave risks defending the South Korean waters because of the instructions based on the reconciliatory policy. According to Rear Admiral Park Jeongseong who led the ROK navy units in the First *Yeongpyoung Sea Battle* in 1999 as the commander of the Second Fleet, the ROK navy crew members fought as if they were fighting with their hands tied because they were told not to fire guns at North Korean patrol ships until the North Korean patrol boats fired at them.²¹⁰ That is why the ROK navy patrol ships had to rely on primitive tactics such as ramming against the North Korean ships as an effort to push the North Korean ships away from the South Korean waters in spite of the fact that the ROK navy ships were equipped with more modernized and advanced guns than those of the North Korean navy. As such, real military tensions have never subsided between the two Koreas even when the South Korean government was employing reconciliatory policies toward North Korea.

²⁰⁹ Yonghae Hyeon. "Hanbando Pyeonghwacheje Guchukgwa Gunbitongje Jeongchaek (Establishing the peace system on the Korean peninsula and arms control policy)." In *Gukbang-jeongchaekui Irongwa Shiljae (Theory and Reality of Defense Policy)*, by Yeonggu Cha and Byeongmu Hwang. Seoul: Oruem, 2004. p. 346.

²¹⁰ Jeongho Lee. "Park Jeongseong Haegun Yebiyeok Sojang "Yeonpyeonghaejeon, Haetbyeot jeongchaek Ttaemune Waegok" (Retired Admiral Park Jeongseong, "The Yeonpyeong Sea Battle, Falsely Represented Because of the Sunshine Policy")." *Financial News* (www.fnnews.com), June 16, 2009.

Moreover, the reconciliatory policies do not necessarily mean that South Korea loosened its military readiness against North Korea. They also do not imply that the political leaders downplayed the importance of defense posture against North Korea. In all presidents' speeches for military academies commencements, the first emphasis is placed on the ROK military's defense posture against North Korea. In the discussions about national security at the National Assembly, North Korean military threats are one of the most frequently debated issues.²¹¹ Most important, no naval leaders have deemphasized the significance of the ROK navy's capability to address North Korean threats.

The idea about unification or expectation for it is also difficult to be considered a basis for the construction of an ocean-going navy. There was a wide spread speculation in and outside South Korea about North Korea's collapse and imminent unification through South Korea's absorbing the North in the 1990s partly because of North Korea's economic crisis and social unrest. For example, the 1994 Agreed Framework (AF) between the United States and North Korea stipulates the provision of two light water reactors and heavy fuel oil (500,000 tons annually) to North Korea on the condition that North Korea dismantles the graphite-moderated reactors and remain in the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).²¹² However, according to Selig Harrison, the Agreed Framework was signed on the assumption among many officials in the Clinton Administration and members of Congress that North Korea would collapse and be absorbed by South Korea before the provisions of the AF would need to be carried out.²¹³

²¹¹ For example, the ROK navy's preparedness against the North Korean navy is the second most frequently discussed topic next to the BWN related one at the National Assembly Inspections on the navy between 1995 and 2009. I present this in more detail in chapter 7.

²¹² For the details, see Agreed Framework between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Accessed at <http://www.kedo.org/pdfs/AgreedFramework.pdf>.

²¹³ Selig S. Harrison. *Korean Endgame: A Strategy For Reunification and U.S. Disengagement*.

Contrary to the expectation for the North's collapse, North Korea muddled through. In fact, as Han S. Park argues, North Korea has never succumbed or acknowledged defeat in competing with South Korea for "system legitimacy" on the Korean peninsula.²¹⁴ According to Park, even when the two Koreas had a historical summit meeting in *Pyeongyang* in 2000, North Korea tried to maintain an upper hand in relation with South Korea by insisting on the summit's taking the format of Kim Jeong Il's accepting the South Korean leader's request without any obligation for the North Korean leader's reciprocal visit to Seoul, which symbolically implied that the central venue of unification is *Pyeongyang*.²¹⁵ Indeed, the speculation about unification through the North's collapse was based on some unrealistic and simplistic assumptions that North Korea would implode peacefully without causing any military conflicts with South Korea, and that its one million troops (including the leaders) would do nothing or somehow disappear.²¹⁶ This wishful thinking cannot be the ground on which strategic calculations involving a rational state's naval force posture. Even if it did influence the calculations of naval and political leaders, the fleeting hopes for North Korea's collapse that evaporated quickly cannot explain the construction of ocean-going ships throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The Korean unification would be, and should be, a long process requiring a tremendous amount of coordination and confidence building between the two Koreas whose time frame goes beyond that of a long term military acquisition plan if the Koreans want to minimize adverse side effects.

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002. p. xvii.

²¹⁴ Han S. Park. "The Nature and Evolution of the Inter-Korean Legitimacy War." In *Korean Security Dynamics In Transition*, by Kyung-Ae Park and Dalchoong Kim eds. New York: Palgrave, 2001. p. 12.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Samuel S. Kim. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. New York: Cambridge University

What is more problematic from the realist point of view is that the argument cannot explain properly why and how reduced threat from North Korea and increased expectation for unification would lead to South Korea's military buildups (large naval ships). The most straightforward explanation based on the realist position would bring in another threat factor which South Korea presumably would have better addressed with large ocean-going naval ships. In other words, South Korea might have newly identified neighboring countries with ocean-going navies as threats. To examine whether it is a plausible scenario, I turn to the next section.

Neighboring Countries: China and Japan

From the realist perspectives, South Korea's BWN initiative which began in the 1990s may be explained as an internal balancing against growth in naval capabilities of neighboring countries like China and Japan. Indeed, there are some changes that may provide support to the realist position. For example, there were significant qualitative and quantitative improvements in the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in the 1980s. According to Table 3.1, the total number of submarines increased to 110 in 1985 from 88 in 1980. A *Xia* class strategic ballistic missile submarine was launched in this period. During the same period, the number of main surface combatants was almost doubled from 27 in 1980 to 49 in 1985.

Table 3.1 Main Combat Ships of the PLAN, 1974-2010²¹⁷

Type			Class / Displacement (tons)		Years						
					1974	1980	1985	1990	1995	2001	2005
Submarines	Ex-Soviet M-V	350	1								
	Ex-Soviet S-I	840	3	1							
	SS Whiskey	1,030	21	20	15	15					
	SS Romeo	1,475	24	62	87	84	30	31	21		
	SSB Golf	2,350	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	SS Ming	1,584	1	2	2	6	10	20	20	19	
	SSN Han		1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	
	SSG Wuhan (mod-R)	1,650			1	1	1	1	1		
	SSBN Xia	8,000			1	1	1	1	1	1	
	SSK Kilo	2,325					1	4	5	12	
	SSG Song	1,700						2	9	13	
	SSN Shang (093)	6,000							2	2	
	SSG Yuan									4	
	SSBN Jin	8,000								2	
Sub total			52	88	110	112	49	65	64	57	
Main Surface Combat-ants	Destroy-ers	Anshan (Ex-Sov. Gordy)	1,660	4	4	4	4				
		Luda-I/II class DDG	3,250	6	7	15	15	15	15	12	10
		Luda III DDG	3,250					1	1	4	4
		Luhu DDG	4,200					1	2	2	2
		Sovremenny DDG	7,940						2	3	4
		Luhai DDG	6,000						1	1	1
		Luyang	7,000							2	2
		Luyang II	7,000							2	2
		Luzhou	7,000								2
	Frigates	Chengdu (Ex-sov. Riga)	1,240	4	4	4	4	1			
		Jiang Nan	1,150	5	5	5	5	1			
		Jiiang Dong (FFG)	1,570	1	2	2	2				
		Jianghu I (FFG)	1,674		5	19	26	25	27	27	25
		Jianghu II FFGH	1,550					1	1	1	1
		Jiangwei I (FFG)	2,250					4	4	4	4
		Jianghu III ,IV FFG	1,924					3	3	3	3
		Jiangwei II (FFG)	2,250						6	8	10
		Jiangkai	3,500							2	2
		Jiangkai II	3,500								6
		Sub total			20	27	49	56	52	62	71
Other Large Ships											
Amphibious assault	LPD Yuzhao	17,600									1

²¹⁷ I created the table based on information from various volumes of *Jane's Fighting Ships* as follows: John Moore. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1974-75*. Huddersfield, UK: Netherwood Dalton & Co. Ltd, 1974. John Moore. *Jane's Fighting Ships*. London: Jane's Publishing Company, 1980. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1985-86*. London and New York: Jane's Publishing Company Ltd, 1985. Richard Sharpe. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1990-91*. Coulsdon, UK: Jane's Information Group, 1990. Richard Sharpe. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995-96*. Frome and London: Butler and Tanner Ltd, 1995. Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2001-2002*. Coulsdon, UK: Jane's Information Group, 2001. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2005-2006*. Coulsdon, UK: Jane's Information Group, 2005. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2010-2011*. Virginia: Jane's Information Group Inc. , 2010.

The qualitative enhancements have become more significant in the 1990s as China has pursued power projection capabilities together with its traditional access-denial capabilities. China started to purchase advanced weapon systems from Russia including *Kilo* class submarines and *Sovremenny* class guided missile destroyers. The *Kilo* class submarines are known as much quieter diesel-electric attack submarines than those China used to operate such as *Romeo* and *Whiskey* classes. China also launched various new domestic programs in the 1990s including *Luhu* class guided missile destroyers and *Jiangwei* and *Jianghu* classes guided missile frigates. The PLAN's Anti-Air Warfare capability was also enhanced by acquiring *Luzhou* class destroyers in the 2000s.

The capabilities of the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) were also enhanced in the similar period. Table 3.2 shows that the number of main surface ships grew from 48 in 1980 to 58 in 1990. In the same period, the number of submarine increased by 2. However, the force enhancements in the JMSDF were not so much quantitative as qualitative. While the subtotals of submarines and surface ships do not show dramatic increases over the periods listed in the table, it continuously launched new programs with modernized functions. For example, *Harushio* class submarines which started to be launched in 1990 are slightly larger and have improved capabilities in noise reduction, underwater detection, and communication compared to the previous model, *Yuushio* class submarines.²¹⁸ There were also improvements in ocean-going capabilities of the JMSDF. Japan's focus in naval weapons acquisition has been placed more on large ocean-going ships rather than smaller ships since the 1990s; the newly built surface combatants since the 1990s are mainly destroyers with displacements over 4,000 tons and

²¹⁸ Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane's Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008. p. 408.

landing ships over 8,000 tons. Moreover, sophisticated combat capabilities such as air defense and Command and Control capabilities were significantly enhanced by acquiring *Kongo* class Aegis destroyers.

Table 3.2 Main Combat Ships of the JMSDF, 1975-2010²¹⁹

Type		Class / Displacement (tons)		Years								
				1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2001	2005	2010	
Submarines		Oyashio (SS511)	1,100	1								
		Hayashio (SS521)	750	4								
		Ooshio (SS561)	1,650	5	5	1						
		Uzushio (SS566)	1,850	5	7	7	4					
		Yuushio (SS573)	2,200		1	6	10	10	6	3		
		Harushio (SS583)	2,450				1	6	7	7	6	
		Oyashio (SS590)	2,700						4	8	11	
		Souryu (SS501)	2,900								2	
		Sub total		15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
Main Surface Combatants	Destroyers	Harukaze (DD101)	1,700	2	2							
		Ayanami (DD103)	1,700	7	7	7						
		Murasame (DD107)	1,800	3	3							
		Yamagumo (DD113)	2,150	5	6	6	6	3	1	1		
		Minegumo (DD116)	2,150	3	3	3	3	3				
		Akizuki (DD161)	2,350	2	2	1						
		Amatsukaze (DD163)	3,050	1	1	1	1	1				
		Takatsuki (DD164)	3,050	4	4	4	4	4	2			
		Haruna (DD141)	4,700	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
		Tachikaze (DD168)	3,900		2	3	3	3	3	3	1	
		Shirane (DD143)	5,250		1	2	2	2	2	2	2	
		Asagiri (DD 151)	3,500				7	8	8	6	6	
		Hatakaze (DDG171)	4,600				2	2	2	2	2	
		Hatsuyuki (DD122)	2,950			7	12	12	11	11	11	
		Kongo (DDG173)	7,250					2	4	4	4	
		Murasame (DD 101)	4,550						7	9	9	
		Takanami (DD110)	4,650							4	5	
		Atago (DDG177)	7,700								2	
	Frigates	Asahi (DE262)	1,250	2								
		Akebono (DE 201)	1,060	1								
		Ikazuchi (DE202)	1,070	2								
		Isuzu (DE211)	1,490	4	4	4						
		Chikugo (DE215)	1,470	9	11	11	11	11	1			
		Ishikari (DE226)	1,290			1	1	1	1	1		
		Yubari (DE227)	1,470			2	2	2	2	2	2	
		Abukuma (DE229)	2,050				2	6	6	6	6	
	Sub total			47	48	54	58	62	52	53	51	
	Other Large Ships											
	Amphibious	Oosumi (LST 4001)	8,900							1	3	3
Helicopter Carrier	Hyuga (DDH 181)	13,500									1	

²¹⁹ I created the table based on information from various volumes of *Jane's Fighting Ships*. For the detailed references, see footnote 212.

Capability is not the only factor that matters to neighboring countries leading to internal balancing behaviors. According to Walt, 'offensive intention' is also an important element that can generate threats.²²⁰ As an effort to assess whether China and Japan demonstrated particularly aggressive intentions, I examined defense policies or military doctrines that guided the modernizations in naval capabilities because they can serve as rationales behind why they acquired the specific types of weapon systems.

The upgrades in China's naval forces in the late 1980s and 1990s partly resulted from the evolution of its military doctrines. One of the major factors that brought about the changes in military doctrines was a leadership change. Under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the PLAN solely relied on the access-denial strategy because of Mao's emphasis on land warfare that centers on the 'People's War' concept in national defense. In this concept, naval warfare was considered part of the land campaign whose primary missions are guerrilla-style attacks that would inflict damage to invaders from the sea and support ground operations in the coastal areas.²²¹ This is one of the reasons why China prioritized the acquisition of submarines and small fast attack crafts from the early years. Besides this doctrinal guideline, Lewis and Litai ascribe such Chinese naval force structure of the early years to the lack of wherewithal for building modern naval ships.²²² This continentally oriented naval strategy and force structure were maintained during the period in which China perceived threats from the United States in the 1950s and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s.

²²⁰ Stephen M. Walt. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power." *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Spring 1985.

²²¹ John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai. *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994. pp. 219-230.

²²² Ibid. p. 220.

As Deng Xiaoping became the new leader, the focus of naval strategy shifted toward offshore defense in the 1980s although the coastal defense remained a critical mission of the PLAN. There was little possibility for two great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to launch a major (nuclear) attack on China because they were preoccupied with each other. Local conflicts such as those with Taiwan or territorial conflicts in the South China Sea became more salient. The nature of threats came to involve a lot of uncertainty which required a higher level of readiness in peacetime.²²³ Deng Xiaoping emphasized the modernization of the PLAN to make it a slimmer force with improved maneuverability and firepower to better deal with different types of local conflicts.²²⁴ Some analysts assess that the construction of a modern navy based on up-to-date technology became an even more urgent task as the PLA leadership observed the swift victory of U.S.-led coalition forces in the 1991 Operation Desert Storm.²²⁵ Meanwhile, a sea-power minded naval leader like Liu Huaqing in the 1980s accelerated the expansion of strategic orientation of the PLAN from coastal defense to blue water defense capability. The extended concept of the PLAN's area of operation that was established in the late 1980s is represented by the concept of a "multilayered defense perimeter" whose exterior defense perimeter encompasses the sea area bounded by so-called the first chain of islands that consist of the Japanese home islands, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Borneo.²²⁶

²²³ Paul H. B. Godwin. "Military Technology and Doctrine in Chinese Military Planning: Compensating for Obsolescence." In *Military Capacity and the Risk of War: China, India, Pakistan and Iran*, by Eric Arnett ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. p. 42.

²²⁴ Bates Gill and Taeho Kim. *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad: A Quest for "Superb and Secret Weapons"*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. p. 35.

²²⁵ For example, see Di Hua. "Threat Perception and Military Planning in China: Domestic Instability and the Importance of Prestige." In *Military Capacity and the Risk of War*. pp. 32-33.

²²⁶ The multilayered defense concept includes the exterior defense perimeter (the first chain of

In the case of Japan, the naval acquisitions in the late 1980s and 1990s can be understood as “part of a relatively long-established strategy” rather than as changes as Desmond Ball correctly points out.²²⁷ In fact, the Japanese case needs a little bit more detailed explanations than China because Japan makes a unique case. Japan has maintained one of the most modernized naval fleets in the world in spite of the fact that Japan had once renounced ‘a sovereign right’ to maintain armed forces with the promulgation of the post-war constitution in 1946 under the United States’ occupation. This changed in the early 1950 as the United States requested Japan to rearm because of the security situations in Northeast Asia where the United States faced the expansion of communist influence such as the Soviet Union’s military buildups, communization in China, and North Korea’s invasion of South Korea.²²⁸ However, the then Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida rejected the idea of Japan’s major rearmament. Besides the institutional constraint by the Constitution, he had a strong position about Japan’s security policy (known as the *Yoshida* doctrine) that Japan should rely on the United States for national defense while it focuses on economic development although he agreed to establish a Self Defense Forces (SDF) to support U.S. efforts.²²⁹ As a result, the SDFs including the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self Defense Forces were established along with the Defense Agency in 1954.

islands), the middle defense perimeter (150 nm perimeter from the China’s coast), and the interior defense perimeter (60 nm perimeter from the coast). For the details, see Lewis and Litai. *China's Strategic Seapower*. pp. 229-230.

²²⁷ Desmond Ball. "Arms and Affluence: Military Acquisitions in the Asia-Pacific Region." *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 3, Winter, 1993-1994: pp. 78-112. p. 83.

²²⁸ William L. Scully and Guy M. Hicks. *Japanese Defense Policy*. Washington D.C.: Heritage Foundation, May 1981.

²²⁹ Mike M. Mochizuki. "Japan's Search for Strategy." *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Winter, 1983-1984: pp. 152-179. p. 153.

Since the establishment, Japan has constructed and modernized the JMSDF in a relatively consistent manner. The force construction and modernization in the early years were conducted based on a series of four Defense Buildup Plans including the 1958-60, 1962-66, 1967-71, and 1972-76 programs.²³⁰ Then, Japan established a doctrine known as the National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) that defines the “standard defense force concept” in 1976.²³¹ The central idea of the force concept is that Japan should maintain military forces even in peace time that are strong enough to deter small scale military aggressions up to a certain level although it would rely on the United States-Japan defense alliance for large-scale attacks.²³² The naval force level that the NDPO laid out includes 16 submarines and about 60 surface ships with ASW capability. This doctrine well explains the force level reflected in Table 3.2 and the gradual increase of surface ships over the 1980s and 1990s. According to Hughes and Fukushima, the establishment of the NDPO was a part of an effort to strengthen the U.S.-Japan bilateral security relations by explicitly seeking U.S. support for its national defense and sharing the defense burden of the United States at the same time.²³³

Indeed, while the U.S.-Japan alliance has remained as the core of national security of Japan, the role of Japan has gradually grown. According to Graham’s study, there was increasing pressure for burden-sharing from the United States’ defense circle in the late 1960s and the 1970s.²³⁴ During these periods, the United States observed indications of

²³⁰ Scully and Hicks, *Japanese Defense Policy*.

²³¹ Mochizuki. "Japan's Search for Strategy." *International Security*. p. 154.

²³² Ibid. pp. 154-156.

²³³ Christopher W. Hughes, and Akiko Fukushima. "U.S.-Japan Security Relations: Toward Bilateralism Plus?" In *Beyond Bilateralism: U.S.-Japan Relations in the New Asia-Pacific*, by Ellis S. Krauss and T. J. Pempel. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004. p. 65.

²³⁴ Euan Graham. *Japan's Sea Lane Security, 1940-2004: A Matter of Life and Death?*. New York: Routledge, 2006. pp. 122-149.

growing Soviet naval activities in the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions.²³⁵ There were also increased reactive deployments of carrier battle groups to different regions from the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean in response to various international crises such as the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and the Iran-Iraq War in 1980. As part of the solutions to the overstretching of the U.S. Navy resources, particularly those of the Seventh Fleet stationed in Japan, which may weaken its defense capability for the Western Pacific, the United States looked to Japan. The priority in burden-sharing was naval cooperation with concentration on sea lane defense that requires the JMSDF of improving ASW and air defense capabilities.²³⁶ The JMSDF's role in defending sea lanes jointly with the U.S. Navy is stipulated in the *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation* (hereafter, the Guidelines) signed in 1978.

By the 1980s, the concept of division of labor was established between Japan and the United States: Japan provides defense for sea lanes around Japan through the ASW and minesweeping operations while the United States conducts offensive operations. Japan's commitment to such missions was represented by Prime Minister Suzuki's pledge in 1980 that Japan will defend its sea routes out to 1,000 NM. This was the first time in post-war Japan that a national leader suggested the employment of the JMSDF for the protection of sea lane beyond the Japanese territorial waters.²³⁷ The policy of 1,000 NM sea lane defense was succeeded by the following Prime Minister Nakasone. The concept referred to Japan's sea control roughly in the areas from east of the Philippines to west of Guam including its capabilities to blockade the Soya (La Perouse), Tsugaru, and Korea (Tsushima) straits against Soviet submarines and to provide air defense over Japan and part

²³⁵ Ibid. p. 126.

²³⁶ Ibid. p. 127.

of the East Sea (Sea of Japan) against Soviet aircrafts.²³⁸ It was against this backdrop that Japan increased the pace in modernization of weapon systems for those missions and adjusted the force level including the acquisition of sixteen submarines, one hundred P-3Cs, twelve MH-53 minesweeping helicopters, and four Aegis destroyers in the 1980s. Among them, Aegis destroyers served as multi-mission platforms for both the ASW operations and air defense that would provide protection for U.S. carriers that would come for the purpose of defending Japan in wartime.²³⁹

The role of the JMSDF was even further expanded through the revision of the Guidelines in 1997 through 1999. The revised Guideline states that the SDFs have “primary” responsibility for the defense of sea lanes including major ports and straits in and around Japan. It also stipulates that the SDFs provide rear area support to the U.S. forces such as logistic support, enforcement of sanctions, maritime surveillance, mine sweeping not only in the Japanese territorial waters but also in the international waters around Japan.²⁴⁰

So far, I have briefly examined naval weapons acquisitions and the evolutions of military doctrines of China and Japan in the 1980s and 1990s. There were quite noticeable naval weapons acquisitions in both countries. At the same time, the developments in doctrines indicate that the perimeters for the two countries’ national defense gradually expanded. Although China and Japan did not show particularly offensive intentions, the increases in military capabilities and expansions of their defense perimeters might have

²³⁷ Ibid. p. 135.

²³⁸ Ibid. p. 133.

²³⁹ M. J. Green. "Despite Aegis, Japan Still Will Depend on U.S. Navy." *Defense News*, August 13, 1990: p. 8.

²⁴⁰ The Guidelines For Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation. See the website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/guideline2.html>.

been viewed as alarming to South Korea. These developments would have looked even more alarming given the geographical proximities between South Korea and the two powers. For example, the Korean peninsula falls into the extended defense perimeters of both China and Japan. The fact that Japan had military might and intention to effectively blockade the East Sea (or Sea of Japan) in contingencies such as the Soviet Union's military activities must have been a disturbing factor to South Korea's national security.

Considering the naval developments in China and Japan in the 1980s and 1990s, it is probable that South Korea's initiative to build ocean-going ships in the 1990s was South Korea's internal balancing against the increasing naval power of the neighboring countries. This hypothesis looks even more plausible given the alarmist views about growing naval weapons acquisitions of Asian countries in the 1990s that depicted them as sort of arms races, an anomalous phenomenon in the post-Cold War era.²⁴¹ In fact, there were some outside observers who suggested South Korea's naval buildup as a reaction to Japan's growing military power. For example, Meconis and Wallace explain the developments in the ROK navy within the context of a rivalry with Japan.²⁴² They define South Korea and Japan as a rivalry based on a few historical facts that Japan invaded Korea in the sixteenth century, and that the imperial Japan occupied Korea in the twentieth century. According to the authors, "the growing capability of the JMSDF during the 1990s has been a major factor affecting South Korea's Navy."²⁴³

However, there are several problems with this explanation. Most of all, the view that understands South Korea's naval buildup as part of rivalry dynamics with Japan is

²⁴¹ For example, see *The Economist*. "Asia's Arms Race: Gearing Up." February 20, 1993.

²⁴² Charles A. Meconis and Michael D. Wallace. *East Asian Naval Weapons Acquisitions in the 1990s: Causes, Consequences, and Responses*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2000.

²⁴³ Ibid. p. 99.

conceptually incorrect. According to Thompson's minimum requirements for the conceptualization of an interstate rivalry, the dyad should have a rough symmetry in capability, constitute threatening competitors, and identify each other as an enemy.²⁴⁴ The South Korea-Japan relations do not satisfy these requirements. They do not identify each other as enemies or threats; both of them are close allies of the United States. Particularly, there is a huge asymmetry in capability. Japan once was a maritime power that operated battleships like *Yamato* with displacement of 46,000 tons and fleet aircraft carriers. Based on the naval power, Japan won the Russo-Japanese War and challenged the U.S. Navy in the Pacific War. Although the Japanese navy ships were mostly destroyed in World War II and ultimately demobilized after Japan surrendered to the Allied forces, Japan had technology and industrial basis to restart the construction of new naval ships in the 1950s. Between 1954 and 1957, Japan had programs to build eleven frigates of 1,700 tons, one submarine of 1,000 tons, six minesweepers, and other miscellaneous ships.²⁴⁵ It would be easy to see how far the ROK navy is behind the JMSDF given the facts that South Korea started to build its first 1,500 ton-frigate and 1,200 ton-submarine in 1980 and 1994 respectively.

Indeed, if naval capabilities of neighboring countries were what had stimulated South Korea's naval buildups, the same factor cannot explain why South Korea did not respond earlier to the pre-existing superiority of the PLAN and JMSDF forces. As Table 3.1 shows, China maintained 20 main surface combatants and 52 submarines including a *Han* class nuclear propulsion submarine and a *Golf* class ballistic missile submarine by 1974. Some

²⁴⁴ William R. Thompson and David Dreyer. *Handbook of Interstate Rivalries, 1494-2010*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2011.

²⁴⁵ Raymond V.B. Blackman. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1956-57*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc, 1956.

analyst argues that the naval weapons of the PLAN in the 1970s and 1980s were so obsolete that their qualities were comparable to those of the United States in the 1950s.²⁴⁶ However, the forces of the PLAN still constitute quite a sizeable and advanced navy compared to the small navy that South Korea had at that time. The PLAN also achieved increased sea-based nuclear deterrence capability by succeeding in test-firing a ballistic missile from the *Golf* class submarine in 1982.²⁴⁷ As of 1975, Japan has also established certain level of naval power including 15 submarines and 47 major surface combatants (destroyers and frigates). At that time, South Korea just started to build small patrol crafts.

One may argue that the growth of power projection or ocean-going capabilities of the PLAN and JMSDF instead of general preexisting superiority may have been a new threatening factor to South Korea. Even so, the same problem lingers. For example, among the 15 submarines and 47 surface combatants that the JMSDF maintained in 1975, 10 submarines are over 1,600 tons and 7 destroyers are over 3,000 tons, which can be roughly considered ocean-going. In fact, beginning with the construction of *Amatsukaze* class guided missile destroyer (3,050 tons) in 1965, Japan has continuously acquired ocean-going ships. In contrast, it was not until 1998 that South Korea started to operate a 3,000 ton class destroyer. As another example, the JMSDF proposed to acquire Aegis destroyers in 1987 and the first unit (JDS *Kongo*, DDG 173) was commissioned in 1993. For South Korea, it was the 2001-2005 Mid-term Defense Plan that incorporated the construction of Aegis destroyers and the first unit (ROKS *Sejong the Great*, DDG 991) was commissioned in 2008. In order to make a case based on the capabilities as threats, one

²⁴⁶ David G. Muller, Jr., *China as a Maritime Power*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983. p. 159.

²⁴⁷ Lewis and Litai. *China's Strategic Seapower*. p. 73.

should be able to explain why South Korea did not seek similar capabilities to those of neighboring countries earlier.

There is another important problem in explaining South Korea's construction of an ocean-going navy as a strategic reaction to growing ocean-going naval capabilities of neighboring countries: the construction of an ocean-going navy was not the best strategic response. If power projection capabilities of neighboring countries had constituted real threats to South Korea's survival including territorial integrity, a rational policy decision would have been building a navy with access-denial capabilities that center on submarines and small sized fast attack crafts because they would be the most cost-efficient measures. As I discussed earlier, North Korea maintains such a navy. One of the reasons that China maintained a navy whose major components were submarines and fast attack crafts up to the 1970s was to address sea-born threats from the United States and the Soviet Union with limited resources.²⁴⁸ Submarines can effectively disrupt enemy forces' attempts to invade the territory either by attacking high value units like aircraft carriers and large destroyers or resupplies through the sea. However, South Korea's BWN initiative was better represented by large surface ships rather than submarines although submarine construction programs were part of it.

The positions of the South Korean government in the late 1980s and 1990s hardly reveal 'perceived threats' from the neighboring countries' military capabilities or intentions. The Defense White Papers do note the modernizations of China's and Japan's militaries and increases in their power projection capabilities. However, they maintain very measured tones in describing those developments. The 1990 Defense White Paper notes that there is a possibility that Japan becomes a significant military power that may

partly substitute the role of the United States in the region.²⁴⁹ Although this document observes that the change would serve as a new variable that influences the defense policies of regional countries and security cooperation among them, the Paper does not describe the change as a threat or security concern. This position of the South Korean government contrasts with those of China and Japan toward each other because China and Japan clearly identify each other's military buildup as security concerns.²⁵⁰ The general positions of the South Korean government and central military authorities were such that they were conscious about maintaining friendly diplomatic relations with regional countries. For example, in 1997, the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff announced that it decided to downsize a new naval construction plan established as part of the BWN plan because the original plan may cause diplomatic problems with neighboring countries.²⁵¹

Indeed, it is unlikely that South Korea has developed a bigger navy as an effort to counter military capabilities of the neighboring great powers when it tried to establish and expand diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation with them. As a result of a proactive diplomatic initiative following the end of the Cold War which is known as *Nordpolitik* by the Roh Tae Woo administration, South Korea achieved normalization with China in 1992 in spite of China's traditional close ties with North Korea. Since then, economic exchanges between the two countries have expanded at an enormously fast pace.

²⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 220.

²⁴⁹ Ministry of National Defense. *Defense White Paper 1990*. Seoul: Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 1990. pp. 66-67.

²⁵⁰ Graham. *Japan's Sea Lane Security*. pp. 210-220. This point is also observed by Samuel Kim. For example, Kim argues that "Security discourse in South Korea distinctly avoids painting the rising China as a menace. The ROK's Defense White Paper generally devotes four to five pages to briefly outlining China's military modernization and ROK-PRC military exchanges, showing no trace of security concern." See Samuel S. Kim. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. p. 74.

²⁵¹ Jonghun Lee. "Daeyanghaegun Jeollyak Jaegeomto (Reconsidering the Blue Water Navy Strategy)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, March 26, 1997.

As of 1996, South Korea became China's third biggest trading partner and China became the biggest investing market for South Korea.²⁵² Exchanges in the security field began in 1999 when South Korean defense minister, Jo Seongtae visited China, which was returned by Chinese defense minister General Chi Haotian's visit to South Korea in 2000.²⁵³ Since 1999, the two countries have annually sent officers to each other's military education programs. Particularly, the two countries paved the way for broader military cooperation with exchanging port visits by each other's navy ships: the ROK navy ships with midshipmen made a port call to China in 2001 and a Chinese naval ship visited South Korea in 2002.²⁵⁴ All in all, South Korea's official position with regard to the relations with China is represented by phrases like "cooperative partnership" (since 1998), "comprehensive cooperative relationship" (since 2000), and "comprehensive cooperative partnership" (since 2003).²⁵⁵

Although Japanese harsh colonization of Korea has left strong negative effects on the relations between Korea and Japan in modern history, the relations between South Korea and Japan can hardly be described as rivalry or threatening enemies. Victor Cha even calls the relations during the Cold War era a 'quasi-alliance.'²⁵⁶ South Korea and Japan have normalized the relations in 1965 by signing the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. The two governments also had domestic incentives for

²⁵² Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *1997 Defense White Paper*. Seoul: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Republic of Korea, 1997. pp. 165-166.

²⁵³ Ministry of National Defense. *1998-2002 Gukbang Jeongchaek (Defense Policy)*. Seoul: Ministry of National Defense, the Republic of Korea, 2002. p. 87.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *2004 Diplomatic White Paper*. Seoul: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, 2004. p. 208. See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *2003 Diplomatic White Paper*. Seoul: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, 2003.

²⁵⁶ Victor D. Cha. *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999.

normalization: South Korea would benefit from Japan's advanced technology and capital for economic development while Japan would gain a close exporting market.²⁵⁷ The United States supported the normalization between the two particularly because of the security situations in Asia including the onset of the Vietnam War.²⁵⁸

Since then, the two countries have expanded economic and security cooperation and exchanges. As of 2010, Japan became the second largest trading partner to South Korea only next to China while South Korea was the third largest trading partner to Japan.²⁵⁹ Japan and South Korea have held annual defense minister level talks since 1994. Since the ROK navy ships visited Japan in 1994 for the first time, the two countries have exchanged port calls. The ROK military and the SDF started to send officers to each other's military education programs in 2000 and 2002 respectively.²⁶⁰ Since the 1998 Joint Declaration by President Kim Dae Jung and Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi which is dubbed a "New Japan-Republic of Korea Partnership towards the Twenty-First Century," the ROK navy and the JMSDF have held combined salvage and rescue exercises almost every year. Besides the bilateral exercise, the ROK navy and the JMSDF have been participants of multilateral combined naval exercises such as the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) and the Pacific Reach. The communication channels for security issues have been also diversified through the establishment of talks at different levels including the navy-to-navy talk since 1999. As repeatedly confirmed at the national leaders' and defense ministers' talks

²⁵⁷ Samuel S. Kim. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. pp. 187-188.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. According to MacDonald, President John F. Kennedy wrote letters to leaders of South Korea and Japan that expressed the U.S. position hoping for the normalization of the two countries. See Donald Stone MacDonald. *U.S.-Korean Relations from Liberation to Self-Reliance: The Twenty-Year Record*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992. pp. 127-135.

²⁵⁹ *2010 Diplomatic White Paper*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea. p. 143.

between the two countries, the positions of the South Korean government and military toward Japan are characterized with the complementary and cooperative relations for the regional and world peace.²⁶¹

In this section, I have argued that North Korean threat was not the driving factor for South Korea's BWN initiative. With regard to China and Japan, I have demonstrated that China and Japan have increased power projection capabilities overseas and defense perimeters for their national defense, which might have been alarming to South Korea. Nevertheless, I have argued that there are some problems in understanding the BWN initiative in the 1990s as a result of South Korea's regarding those developments in China and Japan as military threats. For example, South Korea had lived without an ocean-going navy while China and Japan had long maintained sizeable and advanced navies even before the 1990s. Moreover, South Korea should have built cost-efficient access-denial capabilities, instead of expensive ocean-going naval ships, if the naval powers of the neighbors had been truly threatening to its survival. I have also demonstrated that South Korea's official positions toward the neighbors were better characterized as cooperative rather than confrontational or being threatened. Now, I turn to the next hypothesis for examining the effects of the system level factors that may have influenced South Korea's naval buildups.

²⁶⁰ 1998-2002 *Gukbang Jeongchaek (Defense Policy)*. p. 86.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

System level factors: U.S. commitment and leverage

The second realist explanation (HR2) hypothesizes that the BWN initiative was South Korea's state level response to either (1) the reduction of defense commitment of the United States to South Korea (or South Korea's perception of it) or (2) decreased leverage of the United States over South Korea's weapons acquisition policy after the end of the Cold War bipolar system. I start with briefly examining whether or not there were any changes in the United States' foreign policy at around the end of the Cold War that implied a decrease in its defense commitment to South Korea. Then, I examine to what degree the changes, if there were any, had affected South Korea's naval weapons acquisitions. Lastly, I examine to what degree South Korea's naval weapons acquisition was influenced by the United States' foreign policy and whether or not there was a significant difference in the influence before and after the end of the Cold War.

I first note that the system level variable (polarity) does not well explain the alliance behaviors of the United States and South Korea.²⁶² I find that there were adjustments of the U.S. military posture in the Asia-Pacific region following the end of the Cold War. However, I observe that the drawdowns of U.S. troops in the region at the end of the Cold War were not significant enough to be viewed as 'decreased commitment.' At the same time, South Korea's response was also different from those in the past, which was characterized with severe sense of insecurity followed by rapidly increased efforts for

²⁶² Note that there is no consensus among realists about the characteristics of the international systems with different types of polarity. For example, Morgenthau argues that a multipolar system is more stable, that is less war-prone, than a bipolar system. See Hans J. Morgenthau. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963. Chapter 21. On the other hand, Waltz argues that bipolarity provides the most stable system. See Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. pp. 204-205. Moreover, empirical evidence with regard to the stability of multipolar and bipolar systems is mixed. For further discussion about polarity, see Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson. *Causes*

internal military buildups in response to changes in the posture of U.S. forward deployed forces. I also maintain that the effect of U.S. leverage on South Korea's weapons acquisition was not so significant in implementing the BWN initiative.

The international system in the 1990s is characterized with the end of the Cold War bipolar system and beginning of a uni-polar system with predominance of the United States. During the Cold War, relatively easy identification of friend and foe provided clear guidelines for states' security policies. The rivalry between the two great powers armed heavily with nuclear weapons created firm deterrence against each other. Moreover, the stability of international system during the Cold War was maintained partly by the two great powers' management of their own spheres of influence. South Korea may be regarded as a country that benefitted from the stable system based on deterrence and management by great powers because it could channel available national resources to economic development during the Cold War era.

While tension derived from the great power rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union disappeared with the end of the Cold War, uncertainty about the future U.S. commitment in East Asia became a sensitive national security concern for many Asian countries. Desmond Ball argues that the uncertainty about U.S. presence in the region was one of the factors that explain the growth of military spending in Asian countries in the 1990s.²⁶³ This is quite a plausible argument given the fact that some attentive scholars and naval officers in South Korea used the possible drawdown of U.S. military presence in Asia as one of the rationales for supporting the construction of an ocean-going navy. For

of War. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. pp. 31-34.

²⁶³ Ball. "Arms and Affluence."

example, Admiral Jeong Hoseop argued in an article published in 1998 that South Korea needs its own naval power partly because it cannot expect the same security assurance from the United States in the post-Cold War environment in which the United States was cutting down the force level and conflicts between regional countries instead of major war were becoming more salient.²⁶⁴ Indeed, there were some reductions in the number of U.S. forward deployed naval units in the Asia-Pacific region following the end of the Cold War although the degree of reduction was not so significant. For example, the U.S. Pacific Fleet in 1989 maintained 7 aircraft carriers (CV/CVNs), 2 battle ships (BBs), 22 cruisers (CG/CGNs), 29 destroyers (DD/DDGs), 8 nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBN), 37 attack submarines (SSNs), and 3 guided missile submarines (SSGNs). On the other hand, the force level in 1997 was adjusted to 6 CV/CVNs, 29 CG/CGNs, 17 DD/DDGs, 7 SSBNs, 27 SSNs, and 5 SSGNs.²⁶⁵

The argument about the decrease of U.S. military presence was sometimes presented with the consequences that the reduced U.S. influence in Asia would bring about. One of the consequences from the realist perspectives would be contentious relationships between regional countries seeking to be regional hegemons. Professor Lee Chun-geun suggests that the diminishing influence of U.S. naval forces creates the conditions for regional powers such as China and Japan to increase their own naval power.²⁶⁶ The increased naval powers of neighboring countries, in turn, may be unfavorable to South Korea's interest. According to Mearsheimer, the ultimate goal of great powers is to become a regional

²⁶⁴ Hoseop Jeong. "Hangukui Haeyanganbo: Geu Myeotgaji Geunwonjeok Nanje (The Maritime Security of South Korea: Fundamental Problems)." *Strategy 21*, Summer, 1998 Vol. 1: pp.7-35.

²⁶⁵ The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 1989-1990*. London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989. The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 1997/98*. London: Oxford University Press, 1997.

²⁶⁶ Chun-geun Lee. "Hanguk Haegunnyeok Junggangui Noli (The Logics for the Growth of South

hegemon, the most powerful state in the regional system, because that is the best way to ensure their survival in the anarchical international system.²⁶⁷ In this regard, great powers seek power maximization. It follows that China and Japan, two great powers in Northeast Asia, would try to maximize their power and influence as they observe the demise of the Soviet Union and anticipate decreasing influence of an offshore balancer such as the United States. The growth of naval power projection capabilities of China and Japan that I have presented in the previous section may be viewed as evidence supporting this offensive realist perspective although understanding accurate mechanisms behind the naval buildups requires a closer look at each case.

The question is what changes occurred in the posture of U.S. forward deployed forces in Asia in the 1990s. As the Cold War rivalry ended, the United States conducted a review on the proper force level in the Asia-Pacific region with a view to decrease the level of troops stationed overseas. Such effort was partly driven by the prospects for the reductions in defense budget and pressures from Congress to cut the size of forward deployed troops. Particularly, the U.S. Congress passed the Nunn-Warner Amendment to the 1989 Defense Appropriation Bill, which mandated troop cuts in East Asia.²⁶⁸ As a result, a review known as *A Strategic Framework for the Asia Pacific Rim* (Strategic Framework, hereafter) came out in 1990 under the supervision of then Defense Secretary Richard Cheney. The Framework notes that military threats from the Soviet Union decreased while economic and military capacities of Asian allies increased, and that these changes help create conditions in which Asian allies like Japan and South Korea “assume greater

Korea's Naval Power)." *Strategy 21, Vol. 1*, 1998: pp. 59-84.

²⁶⁷ John J. Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2001.

²⁶⁸ For the related discussions in the U.S. Congress, see Senator Sam Nunn's speech in *Congressional Record 101st Congress (1989-1990)*. Cloture Motion (Senate - July 31, 1989). p.

responsibility for their own defense” and, by doing so, “contribute more directly to the stability of the region.”²⁶⁹ The Framework laid out a three-phase reduction and restructuring plan for forward deployed U.S. forces with the concentration on ground and air forces in South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines. Accordingly, U.S. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney and ROK Minister of National Defense Lee Jong Koo confirmed the first phase of the plan that cuts U.S. forces in Korea by 5,000 ground force personnel and 2,000 Air Force personnel at the twenty-second Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in November 1990.²⁷⁰ The drawdown of 7,000 personnel was completed by December 1992, which made the total size of U.S. troops in South Korea 37,400 personnel.

Thus, the end of the Cold War provided a permissive structural condition for the United States to drawdown the troop level in Asian allies including South Korea in the 1990s. This troop cut in turn might have been perceived as decreasing defense commitment of the United States by the South Korean government, which prompted it to pursue greater military capability, including a greater navy. This is a plausible scenario given the fact that any discussions about U.S. troop cuts in the past arouse the sense of insecurity and were met with strong oppositions in South Korea. Victor Cha ascribes such reactions by the South Koreans to ‘fear of abandonment.’²⁷¹ Glenn Snyder observes that abandonment in alliance politics may take place in the form of the formal cancellation of alliance commitments, the failure to fulfill alliance commitments, or the failure to provide

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²⁶⁹ Department of Defense. "A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking Toward the 21st Century." Report to Congress, Washington, D.C., 1990. p. 2.

²⁷⁰ Joint Communique, 22nd Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting. Washington, D.C., November 15, 1990.

²⁷¹ Victor D. Cha. *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The United States-Korea-Japan Security*

diplomatic support in a dispute.²⁷² Abandonment would lead to a significant reduction of expectation of support on the abandoned party. According to Mandelbaum, the weaker party in alliance is more likely to suffer the fear of abandonment than the stronger party.²⁷³

When it comes to South Korea, the fear of abandonment by the United States has been salient particularly because the fear realized into a real war launched by North Korea in 1950. Prior to 1950, the United States completed the troop withdrawal except personnel for a military advisory organization called the Korea Military Advisory Group (KMAG). According to Kissinger, for American leaders at that time, South Korea was generally considered outside the United States' defense perimeter.²⁷⁴ For example, the speech by Secretary of State Dean Acheson before the National Press Club on January 12, 1950 did not include South Korea and Taiwan within the U.S. defense perimeter which run "from the Aleutians to Japan and the Ryukyu Islands and then to the Philippines."²⁷⁵ MacDonald correctly points out that those signs of the withdrawal of U.S. defense commitment together with South Korea's military weaknesses invited North Korea's all-out attack on South Korea in June 1950.²⁷⁶

However, there are theoretical and empirical problems in explaining South Korea's construction of a bigger navy only with the U.S. factor as a system level variable. Theoretically, the polarity, a system level factor, cannot explain variations in state

Triangle. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999.

²⁷² Glenn H. Snyder. *Alliance Politics*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997. p. 182.

²⁷³ Michael Mandelbaum. *The Fate of Nations: The Search for National Security in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988. p. 101. See also Michael Mandelbaum. *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics Before and After Hiroshima*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. pp. 151-152.

²⁷⁴ Henry Kissinger. *Diplomacy*. New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 1994. p. 475.

²⁷⁵ Chae-Jin Lee. *A Troubled Peace: U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. p. 25.

²⁷⁶ MacDonald. *U.S.-Korean Relations from Liberation to Self-Reliance*. p. 44.

behaviors that occurred in the international system of the same polarity. One of the major criticisms about Waltz's structural realism is that Waltz tries to explain variations of international relations involving war and peace with anarchy, which is a constant.²⁷⁷ If the end of the bipolarity led to decreased U.S. commitment (represented by the reduced troop level) to South Korea, it is expected to see that the United States always demonstrated strong commitment to South Korea because of the structural pressure of the bipolarity during the Cold War era. This is not necessarily true considering the alliance relations between the United States and South Korea during the Cold War.

Empirically, the level of U.S. defense commitment fluctuated throughout different administrations during the Cold War. For example, the Nixon administration called for allies to take up the primary responsibility of national defense against communism while it limited the role of the United States to assisting the allies.²⁷⁸ As part of the new foreign policy, the Nixon administration conducted troop reductions including the Seventh Infantry Division and three Air Force squadrons from the U.S. forces in South Korea, which added up to approximately 20,000 troops.²⁷⁹ According to the National Security Decision Memorandum 48 delivered from the National Security Council to the Secretary of Defense and other relevant organizations, even further withdrawals could have been considered when the ROK forces deployed to Vietnam return.²⁸⁰ On the contrary, the Ford administration made it clear that the United States had strong commitment to South

²⁷⁷ For an example of critiques about Waltz, see John Gerard Ruggie. "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis." *World Politics*, Vol. 35. No. 2, January, 1983.

²⁷⁸ Richard Nixon. *United States Foreign Policy for the 1970s: Building for Peace: A Report by President Richard Nixon to the Congress February 25, 1971*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971.

²⁷⁹ National Security Council. "National Security Decision Memorandum 48." Washington, D.C. , March 20, 1970. See also Cha. *Alignment Despite Antagonism*. p. 62.

Korea's national security. Then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stated that the President strongly reaffirmed U.S. security commitment to South Korea, and that North Korea would be making a mistake if it questioned the validity of the commitment.²⁸¹

The Carter administration shifted the policy in the opposite direction by announcing that the United States would completely withdraw the U.S. ground forces stationed in South Korea over a four to five year period.²⁸² This announcement was made in spite of oppositions from U.S. military commanders in the United States and South Korea. The plan was suspended and ended up with the withdrawal of a combat battalion (about 3,000 troops) in 1978 because of a new intelligence assessment indicating that North Korea's military strength was significantly greater than that of South Korea. Nevertheless, the suspension of the withdrawal and following reassuring efforts could not alleviate South Korea's fear of abandonment.²⁸³ This situation changed again as the Reagan administration reaffirmed its commitment to South Korea based on its 'peace through strength' slogan and strong anti-communist policy.

Although the polarity of the international system may not necessarily explain the variations in alliance behaviors of the United States and South Korea, the indications of decreased U.S. defense commitment had clear effects on South Korea's security behaviors, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. That is, as the realists would predict, the decreases in external sources of security almost always led to increases in internal balancing activities. As the intentions of the Nixon administration about the troop withdrawals became clear, the Park Chung Hee administration initiated developing secret nuclear weapons

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ *Department of State Bulletin*. June 2, 1975. p. 734.

²⁸² Lee. *A Troubled Peace*. pp. 81-95.

²⁸³ Cha. *Alignment Despite Antagonism*. p. 149-152.

capabilities.²⁸⁴ President Park also ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to establish plans to develop military strategy and construct conventional weapons for autonomous national defense.²⁸⁵ He emphasized that the weapons should be domestically built except for highly sophisticated ones, such as fighter aircrafts and missiles. Accordingly, the ROK JCS established the “National Defense Eight Year Plan (1974-1981)” and received the presidential approval on February 25, 1974.²⁸⁶ This was South Korea’s first independent conventional force modernization plan, which is known as the *Yulgok* Project.²⁸⁷

As part of the *Yulgok* project, the ROK navy started to acquire fast attack crafts known as the PKM series in 1976.²⁸⁸ The PKMs are mid-size (148 tons) fast attack boats armed with guns and rockets that were mainly designed to deter North Korean provocations on the maritime borders and counter infiltrations by North Korean agent boats in rear areas. Following a Presidential order in July 1975, the ROK navy also started efforts to domestically build Korean style destroyers that would replace old second-hand destroyers that had been transferred from the U.S. Navy.²⁸⁹ The Korean style destroyers were later re-classified as the *Ulsan* class guided missile frigates (FFG).²⁹⁰

²⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 67.

²⁸⁵ Ministry of National Defense. *Yulgoksaebui Eojewa Oneul Geurigo Naeil (The Past, the Future, and Today of the Yulgok Project)*. Seoul: Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 1994. p. 22.

²⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 23.

²⁸⁷ Yulgok is the pen name of Yi I. Yi I is a Korean scholar and politician in Joseon Dynasty in the sixteenth century. He is known for his prescient policy recommendation for national defense, which was not seriously accepted by the King and other politicians at that time. In ten years from his recommendation, there were large scale Japanese invasions of Korea.

²⁸⁸ The PKMs were designed by Korea Shipbuilding Co. Ltd (later Hanjin Heavy Industries) in 1976. The total 105 PKMs were built by Korea Shipbuilding and Korea Tacoma between 1977 and 1993. See Hyocheol Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. Seoul: Jiseongsa, 2006. pp. 445-6. See also the ROK navy official website at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.jsp?menu=3&smenu=1&ssmenu=8.

²⁸⁹ The ROK navy official website at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.jsp?menu=3&smenu=1&ssmenu=5.

²⁹⁰ The *Ulsan* class frigates are armed with guns (76mm, 30~40mm), surface-to-surface guided

The United States' decision to withdraw from Vietnam in 1975 aggravated South Korea's fear of abandonment because it signaled unreliability of defense commitment by the great power ally. The Park administration created a law to collect a defense tax in 1975. The collected tax money was used as financial resources for implementing and reinforcing the *Yulgok* project until the tax law was abolished in December 1990.²⁹¹

The Carter administration's announcement of troop withdrawal also led to South Korea's increased internal balancing. The original eight-year *Yulgok* project was extended into the 1980s; the first extension includes the 1981-1985 period and the second extension covers the 1986-1990 period. During these periods, the construction of the PKMs and FFGs continued. The construction of other ships was also actively pursued. For example, the first Korean style coastal patrol ship (Corvette or PCC) was laid down in 1981.²⁹² Coastal mine hunting ships (MHCs) were constructed beginning in 1984. The construction of logistic support ships and amphibious landing ships began at the end of the 1980s.

As such, to some degree, the U.S. factor provides explanations for South Korea's internal balancing for the enhancement of its defense capabilities. However, it is difficult to understand South Korea's effort to construct an ocean-going navy as such an internal

missiles (Harpoons), and ASW capabilities. The displacement is 1,400 tons (2,180 or 2,300 tons when fully loaded). The first ship was designed by Hyundai Heavy Industries with the assistance of an American naval architecture firm, John J. McMullen Associates, Incorporated (JJMA). The designing was done by 1978 and the first ship was launched in 1980. Until 1992, 9 Ulsan class frigates were built by Hyundai Heavy Industries, Korea Shipbuilding, Korea Tacoma, and Daewoo Heavy Industries. For the characteristics, I referred to *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. For the history related to the construction of the ships, See Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. p. 449.

²⁹¹ *Yulgoksaebui Eojewa Oneul Geurigo Naeil (The Past, the Future, and Today of the Yulgok Project)*. pp. 25-27.

²⁹² PCCs are coastal patrol ships with the approximate displacement of 1,200 tons. They are equipped with guns (76 or 30-40 mm), surface-to-surface guided missiles (Exocet or Harpoon), and ASW capabilities. Up to 1993, 28 units were built by Hyundai Heavy Industries, Daewoo Heavy Industries, Korea Shipbuilding, and Korea Tacoma. See *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. For the history related to the construction of the ships, See also Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*.

balancing in response to the decrease of external source of national security. Most of all, there was less of such knee jerk reaction by the South Korean government to the Strategic Framework that laid out U.S. troop reduction plans in the 1990s. Probably, one of the contributing factors to the change would be the institutionalization of a combined military command structure. After the Carter administration's plan to withdraw troops from South Korea was cancelled because of the new intelligence about North Korea's military strength, the United States and South Korea established the Combined Forces Command (CFC) in November 1978. The unified command headed by a U.S. general has not just provided an efficient command and control structure that would boost military readiness and combat capability. It has also served for South Korea as a mechanism that generates a "sense of sharing operational responsibilities with their American counterparts."²⁹³

In fact, South Korea's position facing the prospect for U.S. troop reductions in the 1990s was quite different from that in the past. South Korea started to become increasingly proactive in taking responsibility of its own defense. For example, Roh Tae Woo, a then presidential candidate, pledged to pursue the transfer of the operational control (OPCON) for the ROK military from the United States to South Korea in 1987 during the presidential campaign.²⁹⁴ A U.S. military general in South Korea has retained and exercised the OPCON since Syngman Rhee, the first president of the ROK, handed over the authority to General MacArthur, the Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command on July 14, 1950 during the Korean War.²⁹⁵ Because the Roh Tae Woo administration started

pp. 451-452.

²⁹³ Lee, *A Troubled Peace*, p. 90.

²⁹⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, "*Jeonshi Jakjeontongjegwon Baro Algi, (Knowing Correctly About War-time Operational Control)*" ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff official website, access at <http://www.jcs.mil.kr/main.html>.

²⁹⁵ On July 14, 1950, after the Korean War broke out, President Syngman Rhee wrote a letter

coordination with the U.S. counterparts for the OPCON transfer at the end of 1980s, the main theme of the 1990 Strategic Framework that demonstrated U.S. expectation for Asian allies' assuming greater security responsibility must not have been extremely surprising to the South Korean government. As a result of South Korea's initiative, the United States agreed at the 24th SCM in 1992 to transfer the peacetime OPCON to the ROK Chairman of JCS no later than December 1994.²⁹⁶

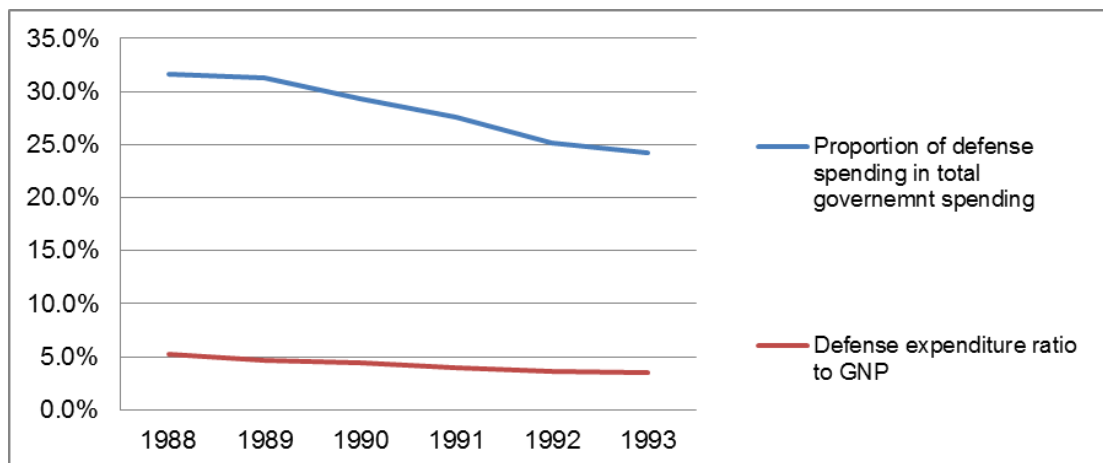
To some degree, South Korea's proactive position in national defense was coincided with U.S. foreign policy preference at that time because the United States also envisioned the gradual transition of South Korea to a leading role in its own national defense. As Chae-Jin Lee observes, with the 1990 Strategic Framework, the United States encouraged South Korea to take greater financial responsibility for its national defense not only to offset the consequences caused by U.S. troop reductions but also to increase its share of the costs for maintaining and operating the remaining U.S. forces in South Korea.²⁹⁷ From the realist point of view, and based on South Korea's responses to U.S. troop reductions in the

assigning "command authority over all land, sea and air forces of the Republic of Korea during the period of the continuation of the present state of hostilities" to General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command (CINCUNC) and, on July 16, the U.S. ambassador to South Korea replied to the letter saying that CINCUNC would accept the request. For the context of President Syngman Rhee's letter, see James P. Finley, *The US Military Experience in Korea, 1871-1982: In the Vanguard of ROK-US Relations*, (USFK/EUSA Headquarters, 1983), p. 59.

²⁹⁶ *Joint Communique, Twenty-Fourth Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting*. Washington, D.C., October 8, 1992. Note that the Commander, Combined Forces Command in Korea still has wartime OPCON and a certain level of peacetime OPCON over the ROK military forces based on the Combined Delegated Authority (CODA) from the ROK CJCS. CODA includes ROK-US combined crisis management, operation planning for wartime, ROK-US military doctrine development, planning and executing combined exercises/trainings, combined intelligence management for Indication & Warning, and ensuring C4I interoperability. For the details, see Jaechol Kim, "Jeonshi Jakjeon Tongjegwonui Hangukgun Hwanwongwa Hanbando Pyonghwa (Wartime OPCON Transfer to the ROK Military and Peace on the Korean Peninsula)," *Hanguk Dongbuka Nonchong*, Vol.38, 2006. p. 182. With regard to the wartime OPCON transfer, the United States and South Korea have been working together in order to complete the transition by 2015.

past, the South Korean government might have used the encouragement from the United States as an excuse to increase its size of defense budget in order to improve its military capability that was still short of being capable of autonomous national defense against North Korea's military. The South Korean government did agree to gradually increase its cost sharing for operating U.S. forces in South Korea up to one third of the total costs by 1995 at the 23rd SCM in 1991.²⁹⁸ However, there was no significant increase in defense budget in the 1990s. Figure 3.1 demonstrates that the proportion of defense expenditure in government spending continuously decreased from the end of the 1980s into the 1990s. The ratio of defense spending to the Gross National Products (GNP) also decreased over the same period. Based on these trends, it is unlikely that the South Korean government took extra measures to increase its military hardware because of the sense of insecurity derived from the potential withdrawal of U.S. defense commitment in the 1990s.

Figure 3.1 South Korea's Defense spending in comparison with government spending and GNP, 1998-1993



Source: Ministry of National Defense, Defense White Paper, 1993-1994, p. 153.

²⁹⁷ Lee, *A Troubled Peace: U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas*, p. 134.

²⁹⁸ *Joint Communiqué, Twenty-Third Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting*. Seoul, November 22, 1991.

In fact, U.S. foreign policy toward South Korea following the end of the Cold War cannot be characterized with decreased defense commitment. During the Nixon and Carter administrations, what intensified South Korea's fear of abandonment were the worries that any level of troop reduction may ultimately lead to the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea. However, while the 1990 Strategic Framework by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) laid out the plans to scale down the level of forward deployed troops and encourage South Korea to take greater responsibility and costs for national defense, it also emphasized that the United States would continue to be committed to the strategy of "forward presence in Asia."²⁹⁹ Senator Sam Nunn, who chaired the Armed Service Committee and raised the necessity to reassess U.S. strategy in Asia in 1989, particularly stressed that the troop reductions in South Korea should be partial and gradual. According to his speech, although the reassessment would lead to a restructuring of U.S. forces in South Korea, "it should not lead to the total withdrawal of United States troops; it should be gradual in its implementation; and it should be in close consultation with the South Korean Government."³⁰⁰ Indeed, as emphasized in this speech, the two governments quickly suspended the implementation of phase II reductions of the Strategic Framework in 1991 after mutual consultations because of growing concerns about North Korean nuclear weapons programs.³⁰¹

Most important, the United States made another important review on its post-Cold War strategy in East Asia soon. The *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region* (Security Strategy, hereafter) conducted by Joseph Nye, the then Assistant

²⁹⁹ A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking Toward the 21st Century.

³⁰⁰ Senator Sam Nunn's speech in *Congressional Record 101st Congress (1989-1990)*. Cloture Motion (Senate - July 31, 1989). p. S9126.

³⁰¹ *Joint Communique, Twenty-Third Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting*. Seoul,

Secretary of Defense, came out in 1995 and superseded previously conducted reviews on U.S. strategy in East Asia. Acknowledging America's "permanent interest in the security of the Asia-Pacific region," the 1995 Security Strategy declared that, with the current level of 100,000 U.S. forward deployed personnel under the Pacific Command, "Post-Cold War reductions in United States forces in the Asia-Pacific have essentially leveled off."³⁰² While it upholds the principle of shifting the position of the United States from a leading to a supporting role in the defense alliance with South Korea, the Security Strategy clearly demonstrated the United States' intention to maintain the alliance with South Korea "even after the North Korean threat passes" and fulfill its alliance commitment to South Korea even if U.S. forces are engaged in "a major regional contingency elsewhere in the world."³⁰³

Thus, the United States' foreign policies and South Korea's responses at the end of the Cold War do not support the ideas that the end of the bipolar system provided a condition for the United States to reduce its defense commitment to its allies, and that the reduced commitment by the United States led South Korea to intensify military buildups including the BWN initiative in the 1990s. Then, can it be the case where the U.S. influence in restraining the allies decreased with the end of the Cold War bipolar system, and the decreased influence contributed to South Korea's construction of an ocean-going navy? Kenneth Waltz argues that great powers do a certain degree of 'managing' in international relations.³⁰⁴ In doing so, as Paul Schroeder observes, alliances can be used for the purpose

November 22, 1991.

³⁰² Department of Defense. *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*. Washington, D.C. : Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, February 1995. p. 2.

³⁰³ *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*. p. 10, p. 25.

³⁰⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. p. 205.

of managing and controlling alliance member states.³⁰⁵ The United States established a bilateral defense treaty with South Korea not because of strategic interest in South Korea but for the purpose of restraining South Korea from launching unilateral military actions against North Korea after the armistice of the Korean War. Given this fact, the Cold War bipolar system may have served as a structural factor that made the great power's restraint on a small power ally more effective.

The mutual defense treaty between the United States and South Korea has well served both as restraint to South Korea and deterrence against North Korea during the Cold War. However, one cannot automatically attribute the restraint and deterrence to the bipolar system during the Cold War because the defense alliance produced the same effects in the post-Cold War period. Moreover, whether or not U.S. leverage over South Korea's military buildups, particularly naval buildup, during the Cold War was greater than in the post-Cold War era is an empirical question.

The United States certainly exercised certain level of restraining power on South Korea in terms of both its foreign policy behaviors and military capability. For example, a group of North Korean special force attempted to infiltrate the Blue House (President's residence) almost successfully for the purpose of killing President Park Chung Hee and his family on January 21, 1968. In two days from the failed raid, North Korea illegally seized USS *Pueblo*, a U.S. naval intelligence ship, which was conducting intelligence gathering operations in the international waters. In response to these North Korean aggressions, President Park Chung Hee strongly urged that the United States and South Korea should

³⁰⁵ Paul W. Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management." In *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe*, by Paul W. Schroeder, pp. 195-222. New York: Palgrave, 2004. Edited by David Wetzel, Robert Jervis, and Jack S. Levy.

take punitive actions against North Korea.³⁰⁶ According to a telegram to the Department of State by then U.S. Ambassador Porter, President Park even suggested that, if the negotiation with North Korea for the matters of USS *Pueblo* goes unsatisfactorily, the United States and South Korea should “strike North Korean naval ships along east coast after first neutralizing North Korean air power.”³⁰⁷ However, such intentions of President Park in favor of military options did not materialize because of continuous pressure from the Johnson administration.³⁰⁸

The U.S. influence also worked in terms of restraining South Korea’s military capability. In 1978, the Park Chung Hee administration successfully developed South Korea’s first guided missile, NHK-I or *Baekgom* (White Bear) with the range of about 160 km modeled after U.S. Nike-Hercules missiles. In response, the Carter administration checked South Korea’s missile capability by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1979 which banned South Korea from building missiles with a range of greater than 180 km.³⁰⁹ In the midst of growing tensions related to North Korea’s nuclear weapons programs in the 1990s, South Korea sought to abrogate the 1979 MOU in order to expand

³⁰⁶ President Park Chung Hee delivered such intention through a letter to President Johnson on February 5, 1968. See Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. "Letter From President Pak to President Johnson." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XXIX, Part 1, Korea, Document 155*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 5, 1968.

³⁰⁷ Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. "Telegram From the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XXIX, Part 1, Korea, Document 145*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, January 24, 1968.

³⁰⁸ According to records, President Park and other government officials including the Minister of Defense at that time expressed strong dissatisfaction about the U.S. position restraining them from taking punitive actions for North Korea’s unprovoked aggressions. See Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. "Notes of Meeting." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XXIX, Part 1, Korea, Document 213*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, January 23, 1968.

³⁰⁹ The approximate distance between Seoul (South Korea) and Pyongyang (North Korea) is 180 km. For the background of South Korea’s missile programs, see Dinshaw Mistry. *Containing Missile Proliferation: Strategic Technology, Security Regimes, and International Cooperation in Arms Control*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003. p. 90-97.

its missile range. After numerous rounds of talks between 1995 and 2001, the United States and South Korea agreed that the United States endorsed South Korea's admission to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).³¹⁰ By joining the Regime in 2001, while South Korea could do away with the restriction by the 1979 MOU, its missile capability became subject to another restrictions of 300 km range and 500 kg payload.

The episode about South Korea's nuclear weapons program serves as another example of U.S. restraining South Korea's military capability. South Korea began its secret nuclear weapons program in the early 1970s at the direction of President Park Chung Hee. The core of the program was a reprocessing plant to produce plutonium that South Korea decided to purchase from France.³¹¹ As the United States learned about the clandestine nuclear weapons program in 1974, it tried to stop it by influencing both the French and South Korean governments.³¹² The French government would not give up the opportunity to sell the reprocessing facility to South Korea. Eventually, President Park cancelled the deal with France after he received repeated persuasions and warnings from the U.S. government that South Korea's development of nuclear weapons would significantly jeopardize security and economic support from the United States.³¹³

Such restraints by the United States, however, should be understood not so much as limiting allies' military capabilities as in the context of maintaining regional stability. Particularly, facing North Korea's provocations including the raid on South Korea's president and the seizure of USS Pueblo in 1968, the Johnson administration had to be very

³¹⁰ Ibid. One of the advantages of joining the MTCR is that it allows cooperation among member states on space programs. However, it asks them to exercise restraints in exporting materials related to delivery systems and technologies for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

³¹¹ For the details about South Korea's quest for nuclear weapons, see Don Oberdorfer. *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1997. pp. 68-74.

³¹² Oberdorfer. *The Two Koreas*. pp. 72-73.

cautious before taking any action considering war situations in Vietnam. According to a letter from President Johnson to President Park, the U.S. government at that time viewed those provocations as part of North Korea's attempts to help its communist allies by escalating tension around the Korean peninsula and diverting U.S. attention from the campaign in Vietnam.³¹⁴ In such a situation, creating another war zone must have resulted in disastrous consequences in Northeast Asia. The United States tried to check South Korea's possession of nuclear weapons and delivery means because it was also understood as destabilizing to regional security. Then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger emphasized that South Korea's nuclear weapons capability would bring about "major destabilizing effect" particularly on its neighbors such as North Korea and Japan.³¹⁵

One should note that regional stability has been the focus of U.S. security policy toward East Asia regardless of the nature of the international system. The 1995 Security Strategy reconfirmed that maintaining regional stability is part of permanent national interest in the Asia Pacific region in the post-Cold War international relations.³¹⁶ The restraints placed on South Korea by the United States may be thought of as the imperatives of the Cold War bipolar system. The United States definitely tried to prevent the situations where its support to South Korea results in the Soviet Union's reinforcement of North Korea's capability.³¹⁷ However, it is doubtful that the United States would behave differently in the post-Cold War system given U.S. prevention of the escalation of a

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXIX, Part I, Korea, Document 151*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 4, 1968.

³¹⁵ Cited in Oberdorfer. *The Two Koreas*. p. 70.

³¹⁶ *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*. p. 5.

³¹⁷ For example, see Janne E. Nolan. *Military Industry in Taiwan and South Korea*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986. pp. 28-29.

conflict and proliferation of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Until the mid-2012, South Korea has been subject to the 300 km limit of missile range imposed by the MTCR.³¹⁸

Moreover, in pursuing the regional stability, the United States has not always restrained its allies' military capabilities. It also sought to maintain the balance among regional states by empowering its allies. For example, after the Korean War the United States encouraged Japan to rearm itself in spite of the fact that Japan once abolished the right to maintain armed forces based on the Peace Constitution. Similarly, the United States was attentive to the balance of military power on the Korean Peninsula during the Cold War (and beyond). This attentiveness to the balance is reflected in the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) established in 1976. The annual reporting by the executive branch to the Congress required by the AECA includes the "progress made under the program of the Republic of Korea to modernize its armed forces, the role of the United States in mutual security efforts in the Republic of Korea and the military balance" between North Korea and South Korea.³¹⁹

Another important thing is that U.S. leverage on South Korea's security policy was not as great as one may imagine even during the Cold War period. Oberdorfer notes that U.S. officials observed limited U.S. power to affect South Korean politics in the 1970s. He suggests that U.S. leverage has even more significantly decreased as South Korea grew out of an economic-aid recipient of the United States.³²⁰ Ambassador Gleysteen reported to

³¹⁸ In October 2012, South Korea and the United States reached an agreement that South Korea extend the 300 km range limit up to 800 km, which would enable South Korea to strike any missile launching sites in North Korea. Chico Harlan. "South Korea extends missile range under new deal with U.S." *The Washington Post*, October 7, 2012.

³¹⁹ Arms Export Control Act, Section 25(a)(9).

³²⁰ Oberdorfer. *The Two Koreas*. p. 110.

the State Department that South Korea of 1979 was not the Korea of the early 1960s when “we were able to bully the early Park regime into constitutional reform.”³²¹ These views are confirmed by a South Korean government official. According to Lee, Sang Ok, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, South Korea has been quite an assertive and proactive player in the alliance relations with the United States.³²² Minister Lee warns against conspiracy-based speculations about U.S.-South Korea relations that suggest the United States often engaged in meddling or manipulation of South Korean politics.³²³

Indeed, particularly when it comes to national defense, South Korean leaders proactively sought U.S. support for the modernization of the South Korean military and enhancement of U.S.-South Korea combined military preparedness. For example, in response to President Park’s vehement opposition to President Carter’s troop withdrawal plan in 1977, the Carter administration promised various compensatory measures including the provision of \$2 billion and supplementary Foreign Military Sales (FMS) credits in support of South Korea’s force construction plan. It also promised to transfer defense technology to support South Korea’s building self-sufficient defense industry.³²⁴ Andrew Pierre calls these dynamics ironical because, while South Korea has improved its economy and security thanks to the U.S. support since the end of the Korean War, the “price” for the benefits was an even greater transfer of advanced arms and technology.³²⁵

³²¹ Cited in Oberdorfer. *The Two Koreas*. p. 110.

³²² Cited in Sanghyeon Lee and Yunyeong Jo. "Migukui Segyejeollyakgwa Juhanmigun: 80 Nyeondae Mal Cheolgun Nonuiwa Hanbando Anboui Yeongyeseonge Gwanhan Gochal (The Global Strategy of the United States and the United States Forces in Korea)." *Hangukwoigyosanonchong*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2004: pp. 167-196. p. 187.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ For the details of U.S. compensatory measures, see *Joint Communique, Tenth Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting*. Seoul, July 26, 1977. See also Lee. *A Troubled Peace*. p. 88.

³²⁵ Andrew J. Pierre. *The Global Politics of Arms Sales*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982. pp. 211-2.

On the other hand, while South Korea depended on the United States for military modernization and deterrence against North Korea, the South Korean government consistently pursued autonomy in matters of national security in order to reduce the level of dependency. The South Korean government's efforts for autonomy in national defense started to be rigorous partly because President Park became suspicious about whether the United States was a reliable ally. He was not satisfied with the restraint that the United States exercised after the North Korean raid on his residence in 1968.³²⁶ The Nixon doctrine followed by the withdrawal of 20,000 troops from South Korea was also a major factor that contributed to President Park's resolution to build autonomous military capability. Based on U.S. financial aids, the Park administration launched the ambitious military modernization program called the *Yulgok* project. For the purpose of defense research and development, it established the Agency for Defense Development (ADD) in 1970 which played the central role in developing various weapons programs including guided missiles and nuclear weapons. However, it was not that South Korea considered the role of U.S.-South Korea defense alliance insignificantly. Every South Korean administration has regarded the alliance as the core of its national defense. Olsen refers these security behaviors of South Korea as hedging that sought to "retain U.S. support and prepare for its loss" at the same time.³²⁷

There were some cases in which South Korea could not obtain weapon systems that it wanted from the United States. However, it was not because of government level decisions

³²⁶ For the responses from the South Korean government, see "Notes of Meeting." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XXIX, Part 1, Korea, Document 213*. See also Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. "Memorandum From Cyprus R. Vance to President Johnson." In *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XXIX, Part 1, Korea, Document 181*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 20, 1968.

³²⁷ Olsen. "Republic of Korea: The Peninsular Overachiever." p. 81.

of the United States for the purpose of restraining South Korea's military capability. Rather, it involved reluctance about the diffusion of advanced defense technology to South Korea and other third countries. This reluctance might have been viewed by some observers in South Korea as U.S. effort to put a limit on South Korea's conventional military capability.

For example, as a submarine acquisition plan materialized in 1986, South Korea explored the possibility that it build diesel submarines in a U.S. shipyard followed by construction in South Korea. According to Norman Polmer, it was a good offer for America because the construction of the submarines would have created jobs and prevented shipyards from staying idle particularly given the fact that numerous American shipyards were closed in the 1970s and 1980s.³²⁸ Some congressmen supported the deal. Companies like Todd Pacific, Bath Iron Works, and Lockheed Shipbuilding expressed interest in the construction program.³²⁹ However, the deal was not made because the U.S. nuclear submarine community vehemently opposed the plan on the ground that any construction of foreign submarines in U.S. shipyards may lead to loss of nuclear submarine technology to other countries.³³⁰ South Korea was not the only country that was turned down; Israel and Australia also approached the United States for the construction of diesel submarines almost simultaneously with South Korea only to be refused for the same reason. Considering the fact that South Korea then acquired submarines from Germany, the reluctance to release the technology in the U.S. military did not prevent South Korea from

³²⁸ Norman Polmer. "Back to the Future." *Proceedings Magazine*, Vol. 132/3/1, March March 2006.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid.

having submarines. Rather, it helped diversify the source of weapons acquisition for South Korea.

Table 3.3 Arms Exports to South Korea, 1968-1989

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Brazil													22									
France					7			2	3	3	6	4	8	4	4		7		7	1		
Germany (FRG)														2	2	7	6	26	26	20	25	46
Italy										5	5	5	5	10	12	17	5	34	24	2	22	114
Netherlands														14	11	33	22	43	49		10	57
Switzerland								14														
UK																		5		20	25	19
USA	344	295	82	273	398	270	371	723	491	1189	323	1404	1004	985	709	403	485	661	750	720	1128	1504
Total	344	295	82	273	405	270	371	738	493	1196	334	1412	1038	1014	738	460	525	769	857	763	1210	1740

*Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.*³³¹

Note: Figures are SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIV) expressed in US \$ million at constant (1990) prices (generated on July 14, 2012).

South Korea has diversified the source of sophisticated weapons although the United States has been the primary source. In the process of designing and constructing own ships from scratch, the ROK navy imported anti-ship missiles, radar systems, naval guns, and underwater sensors from other Western countries than the United States. Table 3.3 shows that, while the United States was the only source for South Korea's military equipment until 1971, countries like Italy, Netherlands, and France have become relatively continuous sources for weapons since the 1970s and 1980s. One of the major exports from Italy that starts in 1977 includes Oto Melara 40L70 and 76 mm Compact guns for the *Ulsan* class frigates that the ROK navy and Hyundai Shipbuilding designed and built. For the *Ulsan* class frigates, Netherlands provided sensor systems such as DA-05 air search radars and WM-20 fire control radars starting from 1981. Germany's exports from 1981 include Type 209 submarines, MTU engines for the submarines and corvettes, and SUT torpedoes for

the submarines. Additionally, the imports from France (\$ 7 millions) in 1972 represents eight MM-38 Exocet anti-ship missiles for fast attack crafts that the ROK navy built in order to counter North Korean maritime infiltration and kidnapping of South Korea fishing boats by North Korean naval ships.³³² The imports from France in the rest of 1970s and 1980s include more of MM-38 Exocet anti-ship missiles for corvettes and PA-6 diesel engines for a mine layer and logistic support ships.

The fact that South Korea was able to build its own combat ships relying on such diverse sources demonstrates that, although there was reluctance to release some defense technology, the U.S. government did not try to prevent its small power ally from pursuing own naval construction programs. Indeed, as Smaldone and McLaurin observe, the general position of the United States toward its allies' military industries has been to support "indigenous defense industries" and encourage "military self-sufficiency" as long as "these goals are consistent with sound and realistic military requirements and economic rationality."³³³ In the early 1970s, the U.S. government even exercised pressure on a U.S. firm (Cold Firearm Company) in order to help South Korea start its own defense industry by letting a South Korean company co-produce the M-16 rifles and munitions.³³⁴ In sum, the United States (the U.S. government) did not seek to systemically control South Korea's acquisition of conventional weapons even during the Cold War era. Thus, one cannot

³³¹ For the database, access <http://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>

³³² One of the first fast attack crafts armed with anti-ship missiles was KIST boats (later PKMM) whose designing was led by the Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST). The construction of the first unit was completed in the ROK Navy Shipyard in March 1972.

³³³ Joseph P. Smaldone and Ronald D. McLaurin. "Supplier Controls in U.S. Arms Transfer Policy." In *The Dilemma of Third World Defense Industries: Supplier Control or Recipient Autonomy?*, by Kwang-Il Baek, Ronald D. McLaurin and Chung-in Moon. Incheon and Boulder: Center for International Studies, Inha University and Westview Press, Inc., 1989. p. 110.

³³⁴ Olsen. "Republic of Korea: The Peninsular Overachiever." p. 81.

ascribe South Korea's construction of ocean-going ships to decreased restraining power of the United States in the post-Cold War international system.

So far, I have argued that either defense commitment or restraining by the United States to South Korea was not an important factor explaining South Korea's construction of an ocean-going navy since the 1990s. I have demonstrated that U.S. foreign policies toward South Korea during the Cold War do not necessarily represent stronger defense commitment than those in the post-Cold War system. While the United States conducted reviews on the posture of U.S. forward deployed forces and there was a slight decrease in the deployed force level at the end of the Cold War, these actions did not necessarily represent decreased defense commitment to Asian allies; the United States defined its presence in Asia as permanent national interest. At the same time, the South Korean government did not show intensified internal balancing behaviors such as increasing defense budgets or expediting military buildups at the beginning of the 1990s.

With regard to U.S. restraint in alliance relations with South Korea, there are cases where the United States applied diplomatic pressure in order to reign in South Korea's foreign policy behaviors in the past. However, U.S. leverage on South Korea's defense policy in general was neither dominant nor consistent even during the Cold War. Although there was reluctance in releasing some advanced defense technology in the United States, it is difficult to regard the reluctance as a systemic effort at the government level to put a limit on South Korea's military capability. Rather, the United States was supportive of South Korea's possessing capability to defend itself.

Economic Interest and Growth of Economic/Technological Capacities

The last realist explanation (HR3) hypothesizes that the BWN initiative came about because of (1) changes in South Korea's economic interest or (2) growth of South Korea's economic and technological capacities. The former position understands that South Korea constructed ocean-going naval ships because they are useful for protecting its economic interests coming from trade or maritime resources. Alternatively, the latter position hypothesizes that the construction of advanced naval ships was simply a consequence of South Korea's increased economic and technological capacities. In other words, South Korea did not construct such large ships earlier simply because it could not afford them or because it did not have the technologies. In order to test the former case, this section looks at whether there were changes in South Korea at around the time of the formation of the BWN initiative (at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s) that would have required an ocean-going navy as a means to protect economic interest such as an increase in trade or awareness of the importance of maritime resources. It also examines whether there was any government level initiative to build a bigger navy for the economic interest. With regard to the latter position, I examine to what degree South Korea's economic growth was translated into its defense budget and whether or not South Korea had already possessed technology to build ocean-going naval ships before the BWN initiative was formed.

I observe that the South Korean government was well aware of the growing importance of economic values of the sea. However, it did not associate the matter with military (naval) power. Moreover, a sharp increase in the contribution of South Korea's trade to its economy occurred in the 1970s while the BWN initiative came along in the

1990s, which makes it difficult to establish that South Korea needed the ocean-going ships because of the trade interest. I also demonstrate that, while South Korea's economic outputs has grown exponentially over the last thirty years, the economic growth have not been necessarily reflected in the defense expenditure for the same period; there is no positive relationship between the growth rates of South Korea's economy and its defense expenditure. Moreover, South Korea lacked technology to build advanced ocean-going ships at the time it launched the BWN initiative. Lastly, although economic growth and technological capacity were not the driving factors, I argue that they served as necessary (but not sufficient) conditions for South Korea's naval constructions since the 1990s.

The 1980s and 1990s are characterized as the periods in which maritime affairs were increasingly recognized as critical national interests. The economic interests derived from the seas to the nations and imperatives to defend them became more important with the emergence of an international regime called the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which was finalized in 1982 and came into effect in 1994. The UNCLOS defines the regulations regarding the uses of the oceans and the maritime resources including those for "navigational rights, territorial sea limits, economic jurisdiction, and legal status of resources on the seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction."³³⁵

Before the Convention came along, the oceans had long been considered as the 'common' to the world (except narrow sea areas surrounding a nation's coastline) since

³³⁵ Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (A Historical Perspective)*. The United Nations, Originally prepared for the International Year of the Ocean, 1998. Access at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_historical_perspective.htm#The United Nations.

Hugo Grotius put forth the principle of freedom of the seas in *Mare Liberum* published in 1609.³³⁶ After the Second World War, nations increasingly claimed their jurisdiction over extended waters and resources from them. For example, the United States declared that it has exclusive rights over the continental shelves around its coasts and all natural resources from them. Many other countries followed suit.³³⁷ These dynamics created potential for conflicts among coastal nations and tension between coastal nations and those trying to explore distant-waters for fish stocks and resources on the sea floor. Moreover, pollution spreading in the oceans also constituted a serious environmental problem. Observing these, Arvid Pardo, Malta's Ambassador to the United Nations proposed in 1967 to establish an international regime regulating the uses of the oceans. This was the origin of the UNCLOS.

Thus, the UNCLOS was proposed as a way of alleviating tension and competition among nations. However, another important dimension of it is the resultant 'territorialization' of the sea which may raise the necessity for strong naval forces. Ken Booth argues that, although the utility of maintaining a great number of large warships in general would decrease with the end of the Cold War, "maintaining order over claimed sea space will be an important function for all coastal states" which requires certain level of naval power.³³⁸

The UNCLOS defines the limits of sea areas within which a coastal nation exercises

³³⁶ The distinction between territorial seas and high seas emerged in the 17th century. At this time, 3 Nautical Miles (NM) from the coastline was normally claimed as the outer boundary of territorial waters partly because the range of guns at that time was 3 NM. See Hyeonsu Kim. *Haeyang-beopchonglon (Introduction to International Maritime Law)*. Seoul: Chongmok, 2010. p. 20. For the freedom of the sea principle, see Hugo Grotius. *Mare Liberum*. University of Michigan Library, 1916.

³³⁷ For the details, see Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (A Historical Perspective)*. The United Nations, Originally prepared for the International Year of the Ocean, 1998.

³³⁸ Ken Booth. "The Role of Navies in Peacetime: The Influence of Future History on Sea Power." In *Naval Power in the Pacific: Toward the Year 2000*, by Hugh Smith and Anthony Bergin, pp.

sovereignty. For example, article 56 of the convention recognizes sovereign rights of a state to exploit, develop, and conserve all living and non-living natural resources in the water, on the seabed, and in the subsoil within the sea area called the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which extends 200 nautical miles from its shore.³³⁹ Indeed, while clarifying the borderlines that exclude other nations' activities, the territorialized seas became part of state's concern and responsibility. As Harold Kearsley argues, sea boundaries enclose much more "sensitive national assets today than at any other time in history."³⁴⁰

Another post-Cold War national concern comes from increasing economic interdependence. Particularly, the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 meant the expansion of global trade. The expanded global trade rendered the safety of trade routes an important issue for national security and economic prosperity. As General Ervin Rokke, President of U.S. National Defense University, notes, the emphasis in national security has shifted from military to economic component.³⁴¹ Indeed, the volume of seaborne trade has increased since the end of the Cold War. For example, in 1985, the volume of international seaborne trade accounted for 3.4 billion tons. In two decades, this number more than doubled to 7 billion tons.³⁴² Approximately, 90 percent of the global trade has occurred through the oceans.³⁴³ The maintenance of trading routes or SLOCs became even more important given the emerging threats from non-state actors such

145-162. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993. p. 160.

³³⁹ Article 56, Part V in Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. The United Nations, 10 December 1982.

³⁴⁰ Harold J. Kearsley. *Maritime Power and the Twenty-first Century*. Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Co., 1992. p. 17.

³⁴¹ John H. Noer with David Gregory. *Chokepoints: Maritime Economic Concerns in South-east Asia*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press/Center for Naval Analyses, 1996. p. 1.

³⁴² The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Secretariat. *Review of Maritime Transport 2011*. New York and Geneva: The United Nations, 2011. p. 10.

³⁴³ For detail statistics, refer to the online resource called Shipping Facts operated by International Chamber of Shipping at <http://www.marisec.org/shippingfacts/worldtrade/index.php>.

as terrorist organizations and pirates, which is another characteristic of the post-Cold War international security environment. With regard to the growing importance of trade routes, the U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region in 1995 emphasizes that the maintenance of the SLOCs is in the interests of the United States and Asian countries.³⁴⁴

These factors including the new international regime and increasing global trade definitely provide the context in which a state, a rational actor, increases its naval power in order to protect its economic interest. However, one should be cautious in drawing conclusions about whether or not a specific state really behaved in the anticipated way, and how those contextual factors played out. Meconis and Wallace claim that increasing economic importance of maritime affairs that involve maritime resources and the protection of trade routes was a key cause that led to the enhancement in the size and quality of the South Korean navy in the 1990s.³⁴⁵ The authors support their view with the argument that South Korea assembled the SLOC Study Group that consists of experts in maritime affairs to examine the nation's role in the subject matter. These arguments suggest that the South Korean government saw the necessity for improving its navy because of economic concerns, and that the SLOC Study Group was convened as part of the government's initiative to examine maritime affairs which are critical to South Korea's economic prosperity. However, my research finds that these arguments are not accurate explanations of what really happened. Put succinctly, the South Korean government and many political leaders did not necessarily associate the role of the navy with national economic interests until the ROK navy proposed the idea about the blue water navy. Moreover, the SLOC Study Group was not assembled by "South Korea"; it began as part of

³⁴⁴ *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*. p. 7.

³⁴⁵ Meconis and Wallace. *East Asian Naval Weapons Acquisitions in the 1990s*. pp. 87-108.

international efforts to cope with security threats during the Cold War, which I will explain shortly.

The South Korean government appreciated the significance of maritime affairs to its national prosperity in the context of the changes in the post-Cold War world including the UNCLOS and expanded global trade. For example, the South Korean government created the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF) in 1996 in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 15135.³⁴⁶ The MOMAF served as a central government organization that incorporated all kinds of maritime affairs including shipping, fisheries, raw materials, environment, and policing that used to be taken care of by eight different government organizations until the current Lee Myeong Bak administration abolished it in 2008.³⁴⁷ Besides the traditional government managerial functions, the MOMAF promoted the importance of the sea for the future prosperity among the South Koreans. It also made efforts to help the people familiarized with ocean affairs through cultural products such as movies. The establishment of the MOMAF, thus, represented the national recognition of South Korea as a maritime nation. It also demonstrated a national resolution that the government would take the lead in boosting maritime industries and adapting to a 'new international maritime order.'³⁴⁸

However, the South Korean government fell short of considering the maritime initiatives in terms of military power; it did not take the lead in building a greater navy.

³⁴⁶ Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. *Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries White Paper, 1996-2001*. Seoul: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Republic of Korea, 2001. p. 16.

³⁴⁷ The eight different organizations include the Fisheries Agency, the Maritime Transportation and Port Administration, the Science and Technology Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, and the Police Agency. For details, see *Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries White Paper, 1996-2001*. pp. 16-17.

According to Yu Jongha, the security adviser to President Kim Young Sam and former Foreign Minister, there was no policy initiative in the administration to increase South Korea's naval power although he notes that the atmosphere at that time might have been favorable to the argument for a strong navy.³⁴⁹ The positions of top military authorities including the Ministry of National Defense (MND) and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) at that time were such that the focus of naval operations for South Korea was coastal defense rather than open water operations particularly given the threats posed by potential North Korean infiltrations.³⁵⁰ Before the Korea Institute for Maritime Strategy (KIMS) was established in 1997, Jeong Uiseung, chairman of the board of the KIMS, tried to register the KIMS under the MND only to get rejected.³⁵¹ The establishment of the KIMS was possible because the MOMAF, not the MND, finally granted the corporation foundation for the institute. The founding purposes of the KIMS include promoting researches and policy recommendations for the nation's maritime/security strategy.³⁵² Given this, the refusal by the MND to endorse such an organization suggests that South Korea's interest in maritime affairs shown by the establishment of the MOMAF was not necessarily translated into military or security terms.

The SLOC Study Group was neither South Korea's initiative nor part of the emerging post-Cold War maritime security imperatives; it was a product of an international scholarly effort during the Cold War. Dr. Han Lih-wu, a scholar of Republic of China (ROC) and Chairman of the Asia and World Institute, proposed at a seminar held in Washington, D.C.

³⁴⁸ *Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries White Paper, 1996-2001*. p. 3.

³⁴⁹ Author's interview with Minister Yu Jongha, May 27, 2011.

³⁵⁰ For example, see Jonghun Lee. "Daeyanghaegun Jeollyak Jaegeomto (Reconsidering the Blue Water Navy Strategy)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, March 26, 1997.

³⁵¹ Author's interview with Professor Lee Chun-geun, May 21, 2011.

³⁵² See the official website of the KIMS at <http://www.kims.or.kr/e-inc.php?id=e-a02>.

in January 1980 to form international study groups that focus on SLOC security.³⁵³ The idea received support from other participants on the spot. As a result, SLOC Study Groups were set up in the United States, Japan, the ROC, and South Korea. Since the first conference in San Francisco in 1982, the international SLOC conference has taken place almost annually. The primary concern of the SLOC Study Groups was to forge international cooperation for the purpose of ensuring the security of the SLOCs in the Pacific which may be compromised by the growing Soviet Union's naval and air powers including submarines and Backfire bombers.³⁵⁴ Even the augmentation of the U.S. forces in case of war depends on the intact SLOCs which would allow access to the U.S. military bases in Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea.

The SLOC Study Group – Korea was founded on June 29, 1981. The key founding members are Dr. Min Gwan Shik (the first President of the Study Group and Chairman of the Asia Policy Institute) and advisors including Dr. Lee Han Gi (Chairman of the Board of Audit and Inspection and former law professor of Seoul National University) and Lee Maeng Gi (President, Korea Line Corporation and former Chief of Naval Operations).³⁵⁵ There was an effort by the members to establish the Study Group within the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS), which belongs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the Study Group finally settled in the Institute of East and West Studies (IEWS) of Yonsei University in 1985 partly because of the IFANS position that it was not

³⁵³ Malcolm J. Kennedy and Michael J. O'Connor eds. *Safely by Sea*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1990. p. xiii.

³⁵⁴ Michael O'Connor. "The Threat to Sea Lane Security." In *Safely by Sea*, p. 49-56.

³⁵⁵ Other key members include Professor Ham Byeong Chun (the Chairman of the Research Committee for the Study Group and former ambassador to the United States), Professor Dalchoong Kim (Yonsei University), and 27 experts in the field of international law, international relations, and military strategy. For the details, see The Sea Lanes of Communication Study Group - Korea. *The SLOC Study Group - Korea's 30th Anniversary*. Seoul: The Sea Lanes of Communication

appropriate for a government organization (IFANS) to manage a civilian academic activity.³⁵⁶ Since then, the Study Group started its activities within the IEWS under the leadership of Professor Kim Dalchoong. Particularly, the Study Group has developed cooperative relationship with the ROK navy since 1989; it co-hosted the International Sea Power Symposium in 1989; it has also joined the navy's initiative since 1992 by co-hosting the annual Navy Shipboard Conference. All in all, while the contributions by the SLOC Study Group – Korea to the development of maritime affairs in South Korea are invaluable, it is difficult to view the activities of the Study Group as a strategic initiative by the government. As Professor Kim Dalchoong notes, the Study Group started as “international, multi-party cooperation at the civilian level.”³⁵⁷

If one tries to explain South Korea's naval buildups since the 1990s with economic interest, s/he has to explain why South Korea did not pursue an ocean-going navy to protect its growing trade earlier. Assuming the South Korean government a rational actor, the calculation that the government would take into consideration would be how much international trade of South Korea contribute to its economy. As Figure 3.2 clearly shows, a notable increase occurred in 1973 when the percentage jumped to 60.5 % from 43.6% in the previous year. It was when South Korea started to broaden economic cooperation with foreign countries based on the shifted focus in export strategy from labor intensive light industries products in the 1960s to those of capital/technology oriented heavy industries.³⁵⁸ Since then, the trade remained at the 60 to 70% levels of the GDP in the 1970s and 1980s

Study Group - Korea, 2011. p. 10.

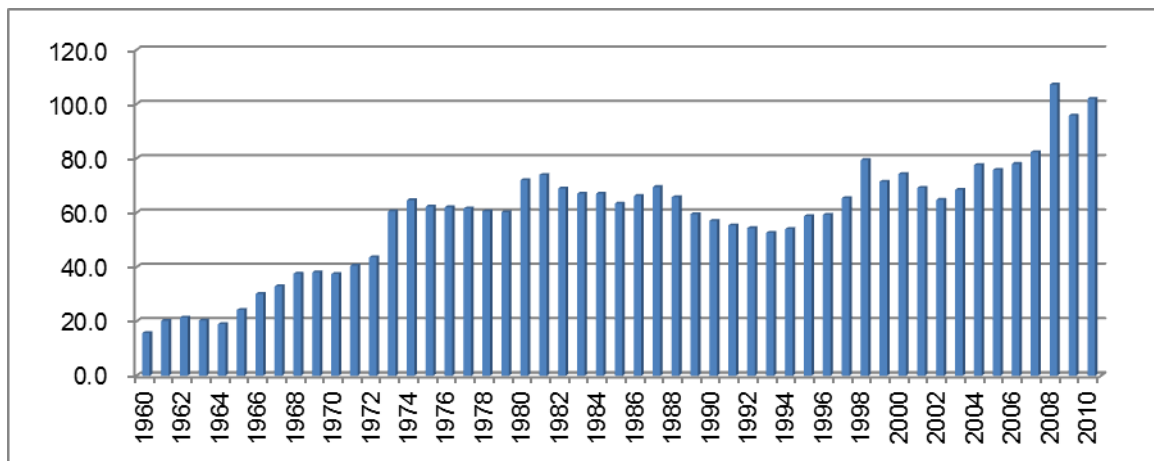
³⁵⁶ *The SLOC Study Group - Korea's 30th Anniversary*. p. 11.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 10.

³⁵⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *Hanguogoegyo 60 Nyeon, 1948-2008 (Diplomacy of the Republic of Korea in the Last 60 Years, 1948-2008)*. Seoul: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, 2009. p. 252.

until it went over 80% in 2007. In contrast, there were no significant increases at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s in which the BWN initiative came along; the proportions even decreased in the 1990s creating a dip among the yearly records. Indeed, as South Korea's export-oriented economic development programs under the strong leadership and sponsorship of the government successfully took off in the 1960s, its economy has heavily depended on foreign trade from the early stage of industrial development.³⁵⁹ These trends suggest that international trade has too long been a critical factor to South Korea's economy to be a newly recognized rationale for South Korea to build an ocean-going navy in the 1990s.

Figure 3.2 South Korean Trade in percent of GDP



Source: World Bank at www.worldbank.org (Data extracted on August 12, 2012)

Then, why did South Korea not attempt to build a navy that is capable of protecting its thriving trade from the 1960s and the early 1980s? As Edward Olsen observes, a possible answer may be found in South Korea's low-cost economic benefits that derived from the protection provided by the U.S. Navy. According to Olsen's observation, it was when

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

Seoul (like Tokyo) enjoyed the “freedom of the seas (secure sea-lanes) for its vital shipping in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, without directly helping to maintain that freedom.”³⁶⁰ Then, the problem is that this realist position based on economic interests cannot provide a reasonable explanation for why South Korea tried to spend extra money in building large expensive ships instead of continuing to enjoy the benefits of freeriding. For example, Oh, Woncheol, former advisor to President Park Chung Hee on economic policy who was in charge of economic development programs in the 1960s and 1970s, takes a strong position against South Korea’s constructing large ocean-going ships. According to Oh, South Korea can be likened to an unsinkable aircraft carrier so that land-based aircrafts can play important roles in defending the coasts from potential naval attacks from the sea.³⁶¹ Instead of building large ships, Oh argues that South Korea should strengthen coastal defense using weapons like anti-ship guided missiles. His arguments represent the access-denial strategy. They also reflect a typical rationalist position given his consideration of minimum costs and maximum effects in defense matters.

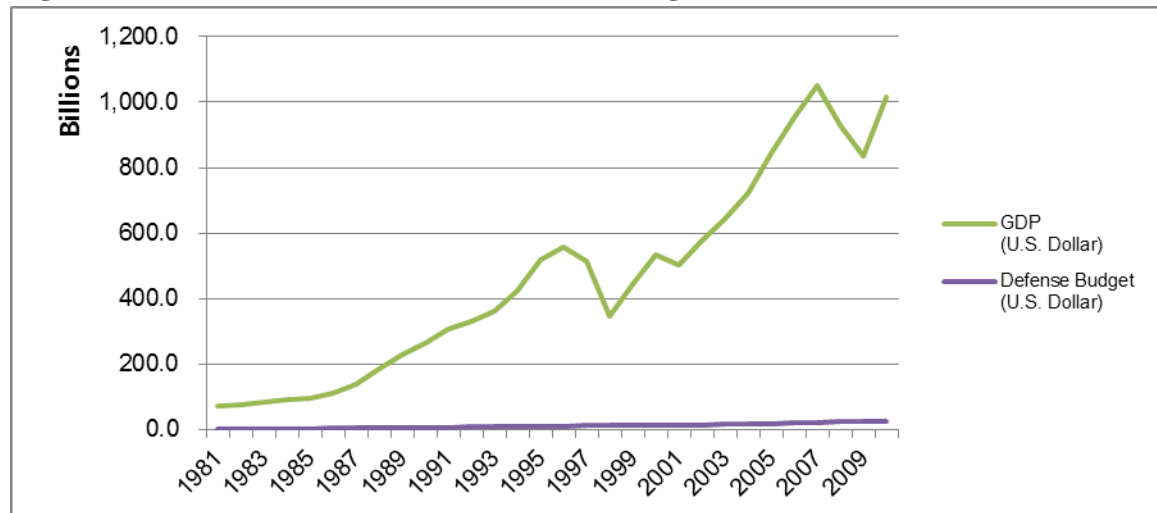
One may think of a simpler answer to the question why South Korea pursued ocean-going ships in the 1990s but not earlier: South Korea did so because it could not afford building large ships economically and technologically in the early years. The economic capacity argument assumes that the greater a state’s economic capacity, the larger amount of money the state is willing to spend on military buildup. In other words, it predicts that there is a positive relationship between a state’s economic capacity and defense expenditure. Alternatively, the technology argument would argue that South

³⁶⁰ Olsen. "Republic of Korea: The Peninsular Overachiever." p. 90.

³⁶¹ Woncheol Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5)*. Seoul: Kia Gyeongje Yeonguso, 1996. pp. 442-443.

Korea launched the construction programs of ocean-going ships in the 1990s simply because the technology became available by then.

Figure 3.3 South Korea's GDP and Defense Budget, 1981-2010



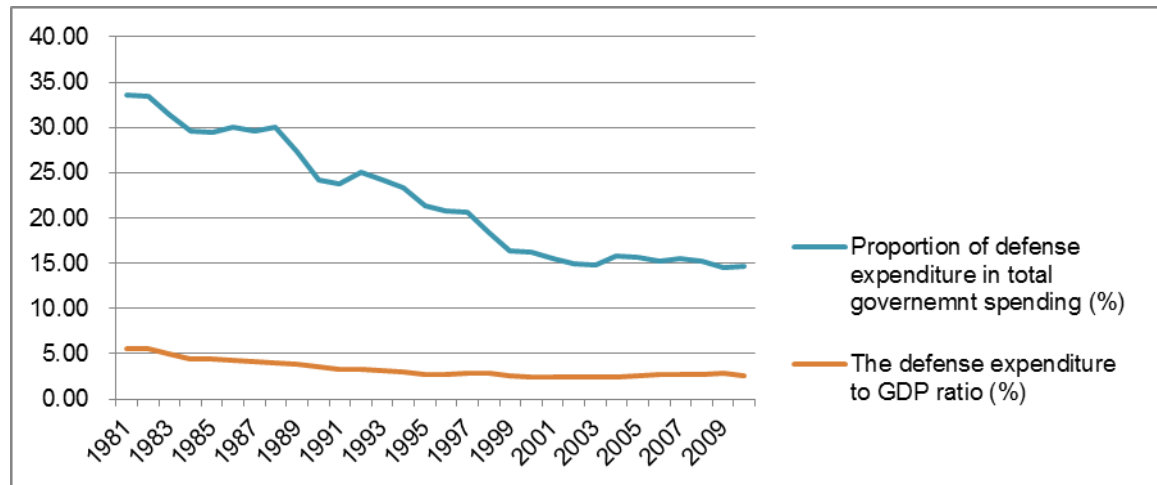
Source: World Bank at www.worldbank.org (Data extracted on August 12, 2012), *Defense White Paper 2010*.

Note: GDPs in current U.S. dollars as of August 7, 2012, Defense Budgets converted into U.S. dollars at an exchange rate of August 7, 2012 (1\$ = 1,128.7 won).

However, data simply do not support these views. To begin with, South Korea's economic capacity has not been necessarily translated into the size of defense budget over the last thirty years. Figure 3.3 shows the changes in the sizes of the GDP and defense budget of South Korea for the last thirty years. The graphs demonstrate that the GDPs have grown significantly despite a couple of downturns since 1981 while the defense budgets have not increased at a similar rate of the GDP growth. The correlation between the growth rates of the GDPs and the defense budgets is merely .219.³⁶² Indeed, one cannot blindly assume that a state would spend more money on defense just because it can afford. There are other studies demonstrating this point. For example, based on a study on five great powers including Germany, France, Russia, Japan, and the United States during the

period 1870 – 1939, Castillo et al. concluded that there is no statistical evidence for a positive relationship between economic growth and military expenditures.³⁶³

Figure 3.4 South Korea's defense expenditure in total government spending and its ratio to the GDP, 1981-2010



Source: Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper*, 2010. Appendix 20.

Probably, the weak relationship between the growth rates of the GDP and defense expenditure is partly due to the fact that the proportion of defense expenditure within the total government expenditure has generally decreased over the last thirty years as Figure 3.4 demonstrates. The defense expenditure used to take up almost one third of the total government spending in the 1980s. However, it gradually decreased over the 1990s and leveled off at a 15 % level in the 2000s. The defense expenditure to GDP ratio has reduced over the 1990s and it remained under 3% since 1994. These numbers are much smaller in comparison to other fast growing economies in Asia such as Singapore and Taiwan. For example, the defense expenditure to GDP ratios for Singapore and Taiwan in 1999 are

³⁶² For correlation, I employed the same data used in Figure 3.3.

³⁶³ Jasen Castillo, Julia Lowell, Ashley J. Tellis, Jorge Munoz, and Benjamin Zycher. *Military Expenditures and Economic Growth*. Santa Monica: Rand, 2001.

5.6% and 5.2% respectively while that of South Korea is 3%.³⁶⁴ This number looks even smaller when it is compared to 14.3% of North Korea in the same year. These trends and comparisons suggest that South Korea's increased economic wealth was not necessarily translated into military buildups and maintenance.

Similarly, South Korea's construction of advanced ocean-going ships was not the case where the technological development was the driving factor. In most cases, South Korea did not possess the technologies and know-how for building advanced ships until it made decisions to acquire those ships. For example, when South Korea decided to acquire attack submarines in the 1980s, it had to rely on the German government and defense industries. The contract was signed on the condition that the first unit of the total acquisition of 9 submarines (Type 209) would be designed by and built in a German shipbuilding company, Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW). At the same time, while the first unit was being built, the technologies for constructing and maintaining the 209 class submarines would be transferred to a South Korean company, Daewoo Heavy Industries, so that Daewoo can build the rest eight units in South Korea.³⁶⁵ During these processes of acquiring technologies and operations know-how, personnel from Daewoo and the ROK navy stayed in Germany. Although the construction plan was implemented successfully, the domestic production rate remained pretty low because of imported parts such as key combat systems and sensors; it was 24.2% for the first two submarines; and it went up to 36.3% for the last three.³⁶⁶ Even steel for the first six submarines' bodies were imported from Germany.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 2000*. London: Routledge, 2000. p. 299.

³⁶⁵ Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. p. 460.

³⁶⁶ The domestic production rate is calculated according to the following formula: (Total

The domestic production rates for surface combat ships are higher than those of submarines. For example, the rate for the *Gwanggaeto the Great* class destroyers (the KDX-I series, 3,000 tons) was 84%. While Daewoo conducted the designing, many important parts of the ships such as diesel engines, combat systems, and command and control systems were imported or produced with Western technologies under different offset conditions.³⁶⁸ Also, for the construction of the *Sejong the Great* class Aegis destroyers (KDX-III, 7,600 tons), Hyundai Heavy Industries, the contractor for the KDX-III, studied the structure of U.S. Aegis destroyers and closely consulted with the U.S. Navy and U.S. defense contractors such as the Lockheed Martin even from the designing phase.³⁶⁹ Thus, one cannot argue that South Korea started building ocean-going ships in the 1990s because associated technologies became available by then.

One should note that I do not dismiss the importance of economic and technological factors for military buildup. Although they were not the driving factors, they contributed to the naval buildups in the 1990s in an important way; they served as the wherewithal and conditions for the ambitious naval projects. In other words, they served as necessary but not sufficient conditions for the naval buildups in a sense that South Korea would not have been able to successfully construct the expensive and advanced naval ships without the

expenditure for a given unit – The amount paid in foreign currency / Total expenditure) × 100. For the details about the domestic production rates, see National Assembly Secretariat, National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. p. 5.

³⁶⁷ For the 7th, 8th, and 9th submarines, POSCO, a South Korean steel producing company formerly known as Pohang Iron and Steel Company, produced the special steel. See National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. p. 9.

³⁶⁸ For the detailed information, see National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. p. 21. For the definition of “offset,” refer to discussions in the beginning part of Chapter 5 (p.183).

³⁶⁹ See Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. p. 470. See also Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat, National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2003 Inspection on State

economic means and basic technological capacity to quickly absorb more advanced technologies for new weapon systems.

Indeed, South Korea had the technological grounds for launching the construction of ocean-going ships although it was a completely new experience. Since shipbuilding and shipping industries were designated as one of the key industries in the government's economic development plans in the 1970s, South Korea's shipbuilding industries have grown enough to be internationally recognized by the 1990s. The South Korean companies like Hyundai Heavy Industries, Samsung Heavy Industries, and Daewoo Shipbuilding and Maritime Engineering became world class shipbuilders. The percentage of the contracts that South Korean shipbuilders earned in 1995 exceeded 20% of the international ship manufacturing market.³⁷⁰ It went up to 42% in 2004.³⁷¹ Without the industrial foundation, South Korea would have never been able to launch the naval construction programs. In turn, South Korea would have had to purchase those large ships from other countries, which would have involved much more complicated, slower, and uncertain processes of weapons acquisition.

Besides the industrial foundation for commercial shipbuilding, South Korea has accumulated the know-how about designing and building naval ships. Although the domestic production of weaponry has been the general policy direction since the 1970s, the naval construction has been one of the most successful cases for South Korea's efforts toward the efforts for autonomous national defense.³⁷² For example, when President Park

Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. p. 6.

³⁷⁰ Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. p. 85.

³⁷¹ Ibid. p. 91.

³⁷² Chung-in Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." In *The Implications of Third World Military Industrialization: Sowing the Serpents' Teeth*, by James Everett Katz, pp. 241-266. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1986. p. 242.

Chung Hee ordered the ROK navy to come up with a plan to acquire Korean style destroyers in 1975, the answer to most people in and outside the navy at that time was to have a foreign company conduct the designing and Hyundai Heavy Industries build the ships because the ROK navy and South Korea shipbuilders alike have never built larger ships than fast attack crafts by that time. However, Admiral Eom Dojae (the then Head of Ship Construction Department at the Naval Headquarters), as the only navy personnel who studied ship engineering in the United States at that time, insisted that the navy should design the destroyers because it would not only save the government budget, but also help achieve technological self-reliance for the future purposes.³⁷³ The administration approved the idea. As a result, ROKS *Ulsan* (FF 951), the ever first major combat ship designed and built in South Korea, was launched in 1980. Since then, almost all new types of major combat ships (except the cases of 209 and 214 class submarines) have been designed and constructed domestically with joint efforts of the ROK navy Ship Construction Command and defense industries. Without the legacy of challenging and efforts to accumulate know-how, South Korea would have experienced much more difficulties in the construction of ocean-going ships in the 1990s and 2000s.

With regard to the importance of economic condition, Professor Paul Kennedy highlighted that a healthy economy was one of the “essential prerequisites” for the rise of the British navy in the nineteenth century.³⁷⁴ South Korea has been a well-known case for fast economic growth in Asia. As Figure 3.3 shows, the GDP in 1981 was 71 billion (U.S.) dollars. By 1995, it increased by more than 7 times to 517 billion dollars. This number

³⁷³ Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5)*. pp. 434-440.

³⁷⁴ Paul M. Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976. p. 147.

again doubled to over 1 trillion dollars by 2007. Nevertheless, spending limited budgets on the construction of large ships is not an easy decision for the government particularly because the high costs and related opportunity costs. An Aegis destroyer (approx. 1 billion dollars) is worth of three 214 class submarines, ten F-15K fighter jets, or one hundred twenty five K-2 Black Panther tanks.³⁷⁵ If South Korea's economy had been in a bad situation so that the government could not have afforded acquiring various weapon systems, the expensive naval ships would have been the first targets to do away with. This is not just a hypothetical scenario. Many Western countries including European countries and the United States have decided to cut defense budgets partly because of the European economic crises in the period of 2011-2012. Particularly, Italy even decided in 2012 to sell off or donate about one-third of its fleet (28 out of 88 surface ships and submarines) to other countries including the Philippines because of a steep defense budget cut.³⁷⁶ Indeed, although economic growth does not automatically lead to a state's military buildup, it is a necessary condition for sustaining major weapons acquisition programs such as large naval ships.

Summary of the Chapter and Transition toward the Eclectic Perspectives

This chapter examined to what degree the realist factors can provide explanations for South Korea's initiative to construct ocean-going naval ships since the 1990s. First, I find that South Korea's BWN initiative was not a response mainly to the developments in North Korea's military posture particularly given North Korea's lack of economic means to

³⁷⁵ Approximate unit prices of 214 class submarine, F-15K fighter jet, and K-2 Black Panther tank are known as 350 million, 100 million, and 8 million dollars respectively. See Yongwon Yu. "[Specialist Column] Cheomdanmugireul Jedaero Sseuryeomyeon (For the Proper Operation of High-Tech Weapon Systems)." *Chosun Ilbo*, August 17, 2008.

modernize its conventional weaponry. However, the North Korean threat may be a contributing factor that helped sustain the initiative because of the effectiveness of the ocean-going ships in addressing parts of North Korea's military threats, particularly those posed by asymmetric weapons such as submarines and ballistic missiles. With regard to the neighboring countries, I observe that both China and Japan have maintained sizeable navies, and that they have expanded their maritime defense perimeters over the 1980s and 1990s. Although these elements may have stimulated South Korea's naval buildup, there is no evidence showing that the South Korean government considered the two neighboring countries' naval power military threats to national security of South Korea. More importantly, viewing the BWN initiative as a response to the neighboring countries' naval capabilities is problematic because one has to explain why South Korea never showed the same response to the already existed superior naval powers of the two great power neighbors before the 1990s.

Second, I find it difficult to define the BWN initiative as an internal balancing to compensate decreased U.S. defense commitment after the end of the Cold War. The U.S. security policy toward the Asia-Pacific region in the 1990s cannot be characterized as 'decreased' commitment although there were some adjustments to the posture of forward deployed forces including a slight troop cut in Korea. The South Korean government did not respond to the changes sensitively as it used to do to the withdrawals of the U.S. troops. I have also argued that the U.S. leverage over South Korea's weapons acquisition cannot be an important factor because there has been no significant intentional effort by the U.S. government to put a limit on South Korea's conventional weapons. The United States restrained South Korea only when South Korea showed intentions to engage activities that

³⁷⁶ Tom Kington. "Italy Looks to Sell Used Ships, Vehicles." *Defense News*, June 4, 2012.

are harmful to regional stability such as military actions against North Korea and developing nuclear weapons and the delivery systems.

Lastly, I have demonstrated that economic interests, economic growth, and technological advancement were not the driving factors that resulted in South Korea's construction of large naval ships since the 1990s. However, I have argued that economic and technological capacities served as necessary conditions for successful implementation of the naval constructions.

In this chapter, I have examined the effects of different realist variables and demonstrated that the realist variables alone do not well explain the phenomena related to the BWN initiative. Now, as an effort to set the stage for my main theses in Chapters 6 and 7, I propose to invite a different perspective to better understand the phenomena. For example, I have tried to explain South Korea's relations with China and Japan in terms of military capabilities and aggressive intentions that may threaten each other's national security. In this case, incorporating the national identity factor help understand the dynamics that are less explicit or official but critical in relations among countries in Asia that I have mentioned in this chapter. Probably, the national identity politics that involve historical memories is the one of the salient dimensions with regard to the dynamics among China, Japan, and Korea. For example, their diplomatic relationships become complicated from time to time. Peoples in South Korea and China are not confident about how Japanese leaders think about the wrongdoings by the military of the imperial Japan. One of the problems that strained the relations of Japan with South Korea (and with China) in the 2000s was Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine

which is dedicated to the Japanese war dead including Class A war criminals from World War II. Governments of South Korea and China expressed a deep regret over the Prime Minister's visit to the shrine, which is considered a symbol of Japanese militarism.³⁷⁷

Tension between South Korea and Japan arise when there is a conflict in matters related to national identity involving the past. For example, many Korean women were sent to the battlefields as sex slaves (so called comfort women) for Japanese soldiers during World War II. The Japanese government has never made an official apology for the specific fact and refused to provide compensation to the victimized women. Moreover, some nationally approved junior high school textbooks in 2001 intentionally dropped mentioning about comfort women that the 1997 editions used to have. According to Nobukatsu Fujioka, the founder of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, they did so because such historical records may deprive Japanese students of pride and confidence in their country.³⁷⁸ It was not the first textbook problem involving the Japanese imperial past. In 1982, it was found that Japanese national history textbooks contained some distorted accounts about historical facts during the imperial period. Among them, what caused a diplomatic problem was the description of Korea's independence movement in March 1, 1919 as a "violent riot."³⁷⁹ Although the nationwide uprising was unsuccessfully ended because it was oppressed by Japanese forces, it represents the Koreans' indomitable national spirit expressed in a peaceful manner under the Japanese harsh colonial ruling. These Japanese efforts for the matters related to who they are can be

³⁷⁷ Howard W. French. "Koizumi's Visit to War Shrine Angers Japan's Neighbors." *The New York Times*, April 22, 2002.

³⁷⁸ Norimitsu Onish. "In Japan's New Texts, Lessons in Rising Nationalism." *New York Times*, April 17, 2005.

³⁷⁹ *Ilbon Yeoksagyoggwaseomunjeran Mueosinga (What is the Japanese History Textbook Problem?)* See the official website of Northeast Asian History Foundation at <http://www.history>

seen as justification, or even beautification, for their wrongdoings during the imperial period. Such behaviors constitute significant insults to the Koreans who suffered or were sacrificed in the processes of fighting for who they are. As such, the point of contestation between the two countries is not so much threats to national security as challenges to national identity and pride.

The national identity factor can be also important in the relations with the United States. Particularly, the effect of U.S. restraint on South Korea may depend heavily on how South Korea behaves from the beginning. If South Korea behaves peacefully in a way that it does not harm regional stability, there is no need for the United States to put pressure on South Korea. Indeed, South Korea's behaviors since the 1990s have been hardly aggressive toward North Korea or destabilizing to the region. South Korea declared no nuclear weapons policy in 1991. It has also increasingly relied on international institutions even for national security issues. For example, a South Korean naval ship, ROKS *Cheonan* (PCC-772) was sunk within the South Korean territorial water by a torpedo launched from North Korea's submarine in March 2010. South Korea tried to address the problem not by seeking a unilateral military retaliation but by turning to the United Nations for a collective measure endorsed by its member states. Moreover, the U.S. – South Korea alliance changed from a patron-client relationship to more like a partnership. For these changes, we may find the answers in how South Korea viewed its identity (a member or pariah of the international community) and how the United States and South Korea viewed each other.

South Korea's growing economic capacity can serve as not just a material condition for South Korea's naval buildups; it can also influence how the South Koreans view their nation. The recognition of South Korea's elevated economic status by its people,

particularly policy decision makers, can be an important factor especially when we make an assumption about the agents whose behaviors are based on norms and identity. In fact, there are some evidence pointing at the possibility that the consideration of identity may be a critical contributing factor to South Korea's construction of an ocean-going navy. For example, many politicians argue that the status of the ROK navy does not match that of South Korea represented by its economic performance including maritime related industries.³⁸⁰ They sometimes emphasize that South Korea has become a giving country while it used to be a receiving country.

Similarly, rather than economic interests per se, changes in the way that the South Koreans think about their nation may have shaped the decisions and behaviors of South Korean leaders. For example, Professor Lee Chun-geun provides poignant arguments about why South Korea needs a navy with ocean-going capability.³⁸¹ Although his position is based on the realist perspectives, his arguments build on the 'realization' that South Korea has become a significant trading country in the world. As I have demonstrated, the trading interests alone cannot explain South Korea's naval buildups since the 1990s. In the 1990s, the ROK navy and political leaders particularly became vocal about the necessity for South Korea's protecting the SLOCs which South Korea used to rely on the United States. As hinted by President Roh Tae Woo's initiative to take a primary responsibility for national defense by taking back the peacetime OPCON, South Korea may have become more conscious about what a sovereign nation should do. Given these changes and contexts, there is a possibility that South Korea tried to take up a new role given a newly recognized national identity (possibly as a sovereign state). This view

³⁸⁰ With regard to this point, I present the detailed evidence and analyses in Chapter 7.

³⁸¹ Lee. "Hanguk Haegunnyeok Junggangui Noli (The Logics for the Growth of South Korea's

may provide an answer to the question that the realist positions could not solve: why South Korea started building own SLOC defense capabilities instead of continuing to enjoy the benefits from freeriding, which has been provided by the United States.

Chapter 4 The Bureaucratic/organizational Politics Explanation

In this chapter, I look at South Korea's construction of ocean-going ships from the bureaucratic politics perspective. The bureaucratic politics explanation (HB) hypothesizes that the BWN initiative was motivated by the parochial interest of the ROK navy for greater autonomy or budgets, and that it was implemented as a result of institutional changes that favored the navy's positions in relation with central political institutions or other military services. These views are different from the realist positions in that they do not understand a state's policy decision as a product that reflects a rational calculation by a unitary actor (state). Instead, they understand them as the consequences of the "pulling and hauling" among the players who represent interests of organizations that they belong to.³⁸² In this sense, the policy positions held by government officials do not necessarily reflect their consideration of national interest. As Allison and Zelikow put it, "where you stand depends on where you sit."³⁸³

I first present the characteristics of the ROK military including the army-centric structure. Then I discuss bureaucratic dynamics involving organizational competition among different military services in the ROK military. Although there have been weapons acquisition cases characterized with organizational competition, I observe that the initiative for the construction of ocean-going ships lack such characteristics. I demonstrate that the navy was not allocated a significantly increased amount of resource since the BWN initiative was launched. I also show that the navy's institutional influence did not increase

³⁸² Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, Second Edition*. New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 1999. p. 255.

either. At the end of the chapter, I briefly discuss how the bureaucratic/organizational politics model can contribute to my eclectic position in explaining the phenomenon.

Before discussing the dynamics related to bureaucratic politics in South Korea's military organizations, it would be useful to understand the size and composition of South Korea's military. Since its establishment in 1948, the ROK military has maintained the Western type tri-service structure consisting of the army, the air force, and the navy.³⁸⁴ The marine corps belongs to the navy. One of the most distinct characteristics of the ROK military is its army-centric structure. The army maintains 560,000 active duty personnel while the air force and the navy have 64,000 and 68,000 respectively. The 68,000 navy personnel include 27,000 marines. Therefore, the number of navy personnel is 41,000. The ratio of the army to the air force to the navy is 13.7: 1.6: 1.

The structure of the ROK military is relatively highly army-centric in comparison with other militaries in the world. Table 4.1 shows the sizes of military services of selected countries and the army-navy and air force-navy ratios in their militaries. The countries in the table from top to bottom are listed in the order of the largest to the smallest in the army-navy ratio. The larger the ratio, the smaller the relative size of the navy is. Note that a detailed and systematic analysis of the table is beyond the scope of my current project.³⁸⁵ Instead, I make rough observations because my objective here is to simply show the army-navy ratio of the ROK military in comparison with other militaries.

³⁸³ Ibid. p. 307.

³⁸⁴ Accurately speaking, the air force was separated from the army in October 1949. For the history of the establishment of the ROK military, see Jeunggi Kim. *Hangukgunsasa (The History of ROK Military Affairs)*. Changwon, Kyoungnam: The Kyoungnam University Press, 2011. pp. 218-232.

³⁸⁵ For example, one can make different hypotheses about why some countries maintain large armies while others have large navies. One may think about the influence of different independent

Table 4.1 The Military Compositions of Selected Countries³⁸⁶

Countries	Army	Air Force	Navy	Army / Navy	Air / Navy
Syria	220,000	40,000	5,000	44.0	8.0
Yemen	60,000	3,000	1,700	35.3	1.8
Vietnam	412,000	30,000	3,000	31.7	2.3
Pakistan	550,000	45,000	22,000	25.0	2.0
Myanmar	375,000	15,000	16,000	23.4	0.9
North Korea	950,000	110,000	46,000	20.7	2.4
Iran	350,000	30,000	18,000	19.4	1.7
India	1,129,900	127,200	58,350	19.4	2.2
Egypt	340,000	30,000	18,500	18.4	1.6
UAE	44,000	4,500	2,500	17.6	1.8
Israel	133,000	34,000	9,500	14.0	3.6
South Korea	560,000	64,000	41,000	13.7	1.6
Turkey	402,000	60,000	48,600	8.3	1.2
Sri Lanka	117,900	28,000	15,000	7.9	1.9
Bangladesh	126,153	14,000	16,900	7.5	0.8
Germany	163,962	62,244	24,407	6.7	2.6
China	1,600,000	330,000	255,000	6.3	1.3
Romania	43,000	9,700	7,150	6.0	1.4
Oman	25,000	5,000	4,200	6.0	1.2
Poland	46,400	17,500	8,000	5.8	2.2
Malaysia	80,000	15,000	14,000	5.7	1.1
Singapore	50,000	13,500	9,000	5.6	1.5
Saudi Arabia	75,000	20,000	13,500	5.6	1.5
Indonesia	233,000	24,000	45,000	5.2	0.5
Greece	93,500	31,500	20,000	4.7	1.6
Taiwan	200,000	45,000	45,000	4.4	1.0
Spain	79,736	21,606	17,943	4.4	1.2
Philippines	80,000	16,000	24,000	3.3	0.7
Japan	138,400	34,760	42,400	3.3	0.8
Italy	108,300	42,935	34,000	3.2	1.3
Canada	34,775	19,922	11,025	3.2	1.8
France	134,000	57,600	43,995	3.0	1.3
UK	100,290	39,750	35,650	2.8	1.1
Thailand	190,000	46,000	69,860	2.7	0.7
Russia	360,000	160,000	142,000	2.5	1.1
Portugal	26,700	7,100	10,540	2.5	0.7
Netherlands	21,825	9,559	9,420	2.3	1.0
Norway	7,900	2,500	3,550	2.2	0.7
Australia	27,461	14,056	13,230	2.1	1.1
United States	662,232	334,342	335,822	2.0	1.0

Source: The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 2010*.³⁸⁷

Note: The numbers under Army/Navy and Air/Navy represent the ratios of the army and the air force to the navy when the size of the navy is assumed to be equal to 1.

variables such as threats, geography, commercial activities and/or combination of these.

³⁸⁶ I excluded the forces like Marine Corps, strategic force, and special force to simplify the quantitative comparisons among main conventional military services.

³⁸⁷ The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 2010*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Table 4.1 demonstrates that, although South Korea does not make the most extreme case, it can be definitely categorized as a country with a large army relative to other services. Most countries with the Army-Navy ratio over 10.0 in the table have faced relatively clear threats coming across the border. Particularly, countries like Syria, Vietnam, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran, India, Egypt, Israel, and South Korea can also be seen as those in rivalries.³⁸⁸ On the other hand, sea powers like the United States, England, and Japan have relatively low army-navy ratios, which suggest that their navies constitute relatively larger portions in the overall military structure than those with high ratios. From this point of view, South Korea does not constitute a particularly abnormal case because South Korea's main military threat comes across the border from the North, and South Korea has not been a sea power. On the other hand, countries surrounded by the sea or with lengthy coasts such as Canada, Australia, Norway, and Italy also have low army/navy ratios. This is the same for the Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, and the Philippines. Given the fact that South Korea is a peninsula country, the Army/Navy ratio can be viewed as relatively high compared to the countries with similar geographic conditions.

The army centric feature of the ROK military is demonstrated by not only the relative size, but also institutional influence of the army. It is noteworthy how systematically army leaders have advanced to leadership positions in the central national defense organizations. For example, the total number of individual who served as defense minister between 1948 and 2012 is forty-three. Among them, thirty-three are retired army officers. Particularly, many of them had served as the Army Chief of Staff before they became defense minister.

³⁸⁸ For rivalries, see William R. Thompson and David Dreyer. *Handbook of Interstate Rivalries, 1494-2010*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2011.

As another example, since the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) was established in 1954, there have been thirty-six chairmen so far. All the chairmen except one were army generals. The one exception was an Air force general. Besides the leadership positions, many important decision-making positions in the defense ministry that are responsible for policy making and resource distribution have been filled with army officers.³⁸⁹ Referring to these features of the ROK military, Professor Lee Seonho points out that the army dominant structure has been “institutionalized or conventionalized,” preventing balanced development of different military services.³⁹⁰

This dominant influence of the army renders bureaucratic competition an uphill battle for the air force and the navy. Particularly, the air force and the navy are anxious about the situation where their positions shrink even more in the national defense field. Meanwhile, the army seeks to maintain its position as the leading military organization. One can see these dynamics clearly when it comes to the developments related to national defense reforms. Since 1981, the ROK JCS had conducted studies about transforming the tri-service structure of the ROK military into an integrated military system partly for the efficient use of limited resources and also efficient command and control.³⁹¹ This movement toward an integrated military system was facilitated in 1988 by President Roh, Tae Woo’s initiative to reform the military in preparation for the military readiness after the transition of the (peacetime) OPCON from the U.S. to the ROK military authorities.³⁹²

³⁸⁹ Seonho Lee. "21 Segi Hanguk Haegunui Immuwa Haegunnyeok (The Missions of the ROK navy and naval power in the 21st Century)." *Je 4 Hoi Hamsang Toronhoi (The 4th Navy Shipboard Conference)*. Geryong: Haegun Bonbu(The ROK Navy Headquarters), 1995. pp. 338-388.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ For the detailed information, refer to the official website of the National Archives at <http://contents.archives.go.kr/next/content/listSubjectDescription.do?id=006275>.

³⁹² As a reminder, I explained in Chapter 3 about President Roh Tae Woo’s initiative to get the operation control authority of the ROK military back from the U.S. military.

The main theme of the reform was to enhance ‘jointness’ among different military services.³⁹³

The jointness was emphasized in the ROK military as one of key elements in future warfare particularly beginning from the 1990s. This has been also a trend in military doctrine in advanced Western countries particularly in the United States. For example, *Joint Vision 2010* issued by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1996 states that U.S. military’s efficiency in achieving goals with less costs and redundancy can be accomplished by employing different capabilities in a seamlessly integrated manner.³⁹⁴ It emphasizes that commanders in the future “must be able to visualize and create the ‘best fit’ of available forces needed to produce the immediate effects and achieve the desired results.”³⁹⁵ Note that the emphasis in joint operations here is about the art of employing two or more separate military services (the army, the navy, and the air force) for a given mission, not in collapsing the different services into a single integrated service and maintaining it as a ready-made solution.³⁹⁶ As General Deptula in the U.S. Air Force emphasizes, jointness is not the “equal or obligatory use of each service in every contingency or war”; it is the “use of the most effective force for a given situation.”³⁹⁷

Interestingly, however, in South Korea, the increasing importance of jointness in military operations accompanied a drive for establishing an integrated military system. A draft of so called the ‘818 Plan’ that the ROK JCS came up with following the order of

³⁹³ Joint “connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.” See *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Joint Publication 1-02)*. Joint Force Development (J-7), 8 November 2010 (Amended through 15 March 2012). p. 171.

³⁹⁴ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint Vision 2010*. Washington, D.C., 1996. pp. 8-9.

³⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 9.

³⁹⁶ For the concept of joint operations, see Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint Publication 3-0 Joint Operations*. Washington, D.C., 2011.

³⁹⁷ Brigadier General David A. Deptula. *Effects-Based Operations: Change in the Nature of*

President Roh Tae Woo for defense reforms included a plan to collapse the three military services into an integrated military system.³⁹⁸ From the perspectives of the navy and the air force, this initiative for integration means that their weak positions in defense matters would probably become even weaker in the future. Given the existing army centric structure, it was almost certain that the army would exercise an overall military command authority over other services in the integrated system. Accordingly, the navy and the air force strongly opposed the plan while the army supported it.³⁹⁹ The reform plan that was finalized in 1990 was a compromised one. As the navy and the air force wanted, the system remained the same (the current tri-service system). However, for the sake of 'jointness,' the military command authority that each service used to exercise came to belong to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Since then, the chief of each service of the ROK military (Army Chief of Staff, Air Force Chief of Staff, and Chief of Naval Operation) exercise only authorities related to the military administration.

Such bureaucratic dynamics have persisted after the reform; efforts to collapse three services into an integrated military system have continued at the JCS and MND while the air force and the navy have blocked the attempts. For example, the ROK JCS issued a publication about the concept of managing joint operations in the battlefield in 1997. However, it was not adopted as an official doctrine.⁴⁰⁰ According to Assemblyman Ha Kyeong-geun, the navy and the air force vehemently criticized about the publication at that

Warfare. Arlington, Virginia: Aerospace Education Foundation, 2001. p. 23.

³⁹⁸ Donghan Kim. "Hangukgun Gujogaepyeonjeongchaekui Gyeoljeongyoin Bunseok (Analysis on the determining factors for restructuring policy in the ROK military)." *Journal of the Korean Political Science Association*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 2009: pp. 351-377.

³⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 368.

⁴⁰⁰ Force Development Headquarters, ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Yukhaegong Jeollyeok Tonghapbaljeon Jeonturyeok Balhwi Geukdaehwa (Maximizing Warfighting Capabilities through the Army-Navy-Air Force Integrated Development)." *Gukbang Ilbo*, March 17, 2010.

time charging that the publication reflects an army-centered operation concept (implying that the concept treats other services as simply supporting services for the army).⁴⁰¹ These dynamics have also become clear when the Lee Myoung Bak administration pursued a defense reform in 2010. According to Assemblyman Park Jeonghun, the navy and the air force were suspicious of the army because they believed that recurring debates about slimming down the military make the army the best target for the downsizing because of its disproportionately large size.⁴⁰² Knowing this, the army would try to compensate the reduction and maintain the hegemonic power by integrating other services under its command authority.⁴⁰³

Given these dynamics and the navy's inferior position to the army (and within the military in general), it is plausible that the navy hoped to improve its relative position or autonomy by intentionally raising the necessity for new weapon systems that would make the navy eligible for a greater share of resources. Particularly, considering the fact that there were heated debates among defense reforms in the period of 1988-1990, and that the initiative to construct ocean-going ships began to form in 1990, the navy might have taken the moment of change as an opportunity to push for an institutional change and advance its organizational interest. In fact, there is a view that the initiative for ocean-going ships as a strategy to secure a greater share of defense budget.⁴⁰⁴ According to this view, ultimately, the navy and the air force employed the catch phrases like the 'blue water navy' and the 'space air force' as an effort to change the army centric structure of the ROK military.

⁴⁰¹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1997. p. 13.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ I learned about this view through interviews with former government officials. I do not provide

Despite the plausibility, I argue that it is difficult to explain South Korea's initiative to construct an ocean-going navy based on the navy's parochial interest. Most of all, there is little evidence supporting such a view. If bureaucratic politics played out as a significant factor in important policy decision making, it becomes somehow noticeable either by insiders or outside observers as demonstrated by the cases of defense reforms that I explained earlier. Particularly, when it comes to the acquisition of expensive and new weapons like ocean-going ships, the rationales for and background behind the acquisition are likely to become more visible than existing weapons programs because the acquisition has to undergo more thorough scrutiny by the administration, the National Assembly, the academia, and the media. Therefore, one can argue that there is a fair chance to distinguish the weapons programs involving organizational competition from those not involving them.

For example, recent developments related to the ROK military modernization clearly involve bureaucratic competitions. The previous administration (the Roh Moo Hyeon administration, 2003-2008) established the 'Defense Reform 2020' which envisioned the enhancement of sophisticated capabilities such as Command, Control, Computers, Communications, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) and those of the air force and the navy. When the administration was replaced by the current Lee Myoung Bak administration in 2008, army-led central military authorities like the MND and the JCS emphasized increasing threat of the North Korean conventional army (infantry) and came up with a new plan that highlighted the necessity for increasing army weapon systems instead of those of the navy and the air force.⁴⁰⁵ The administration disapproved

the specific sources in order to prevent unnecessary arguments among former officials.

⁴⁰⁵ Jongdae Kim. "Yukgun Mugi Doip Paekkwonjuie Haegonggun Banbalgwa Chungdol Simhwa

the plan partly because it is anachronistic to concentrate on building weapons for conventional ground forces like tanks and self-propelled guns when the significant threats of North Korea come increasingly from asymmetric weapons like ballistic missiles, WMDs, and possible instability of the regime. With the army's consistent efforts for almost a year, the administration reluctantly approved the plan. However, while signing the plan, President Lee took an ambiguous position about how the budget should be allocated. This ambiguity has led to heated competitions among the three military services over future weapons acquisition.⁴⁰⁶ According to Kim Jongdae, policy advisor to a former Minister of National Defense, it looked as if South Korea's most formidable rival in weapons acquisition is not North Korea but other military services sharing the same building, the *Gyeryongdae* (South Korea's Pentagon).⁴⁰⁷

In contrast, this kind of parochialism does not stand out in the process of my investigation of the rationales behind the initiative for the construction of a blue water navy since the 1990s. If the initiative that lasted over fifteen years had been motivated by the navy's parochial interest, it means that there was no single naval leader who defined the interest and the way it should be pursued differently during the fifteen years, which is far from the truth. Arguing for the necessity of ocean-going ships on the basis of future strategic need and South Korea's national standing, Admiral Song Yeongmu who served as Chief of Naval Operations between 2006 and 2008 suggests that it might have been better for acquiring ocean-going ships if the navy had kept a low profile instead of taking a bold

(Growing Opposition by the Navy and the Air Force to the Army's Hegemony in Weapons Acquisition, Aggravating Organizational Conflicts) ." *Jugandonga (Donga Weekly)*, June 11, 2012: pp. 20-21.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

move by launching the BWN initiative.⁴⁰⁸ According to him, the initiative attracted so much attention that it also created negative effects such as checks from other services. As such, naval leaders have different ideas about what is in the navy's interest although they shared the opinion about the necessity for ocean-going advanced ships. Then, how can one possibly understand the fifteen year-long consistent initiative as based on the 'interest' which may have been defined differently by different leaders?

Recalling the background and motives behind the initiative, the naval leaders that I have interviewed rarely mentioned the navy's parochial interest. Rather, they emphasized national elements such as national interest and national standing. It is possible that the leaders were giving me official answers because they are the ones who used to represent the navy. One way of testing whether the accounts reflect genuine beliefs about national interest would be to examine the general trends in modern military affairs and doctrines or strategic environment at that time. If the trends in modern warfare or strategic environment are not compatible with arguments for the importance of naval power, the leaders' accounts are likely to lose the genuine quality. For example, as Kim Jongdae suggests, the army's highlighting North Korea's infantry threat in the midst of growing threats of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles that I have presented earlier is most likely to reflect its effort to shift the focus of weapons acquisition from the navy and the air force to the army.⁴⁰⁹

In fact, the developments in modern military doctrines support the naval leaders' arguments about the necessity to improve naval capability for national interest. One of the

⁴⁰⁸ Author's interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

⁴⁰⁹ Kim. "Yukgun Mugi Doip Paekkwonjuuie Haegonggun Banbalgwa Chungdol Simhwa (Growing Opposition by the Navy and the Air Force to the Army's Hegemony in Weapons Acquisition, Aggravating Organizational Conflicts) ."

most noteworthy developments in modern (U.S.) military doctrines includes the emphasis on the idea of how force should be applied. This idea is represented by the concepts like Rapid Decisive Operations (RDO) along with Effects-Based Operations (EBO). A traditional way of conducting conventional war began with destructing enemy's defending forces before attacking the target of the highest priority. On the other hand, RDO avoids such attritional and sequential warfare and pursues 'parallel warfare' in which force is applied simultaneously against a set of critical systems that the enemy relies on for power or sustaining war. The examples of the critical systems would be leadership, power grids, communications and essential industries. In this type of parallel warfare, the goal is not the destruction of the enemy but the achievement of specific *effects* that create a positive political outcome with economic use of force.

Although this is not a new concept in the history of military strategy, the advancement and employment of Precision-Guided Missiles (PGMs) that can be launched from fighter aircrafts or naval ships served as an important enabler for the conduct of such rapid, decisive, and economic war.⁴¹⁰ The first war that these concepts were systemically applied was the 1991 Gulf War. According to general Deptula, the Gulf War "began with more targets in one day's attack plan than the total number of targets hit by the entire Eighth Air Force in all of 1942 and 1943."⁴¹¹ Those targets were taken out at the initial phase of war

⁴¹⁰ For example, Liddell Hart highlighted the effect dimension by advocating the "indirect approach" in war. He argued that one should not attack an adversary in a firm defense position; before attempting to engage directly, one should take measures to loosen or upsetting the enemy's defense. See B.H. Liddell Hart. *Strategy*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1954. A similar concept can be found in Sun-Tzu, ancient Chinese strategist. Sun-Tzu regarded the "highest excellence" in a battle as subduing the enemy "without fighting at all." According to Sun-Tzu, "the best military policy is to attack strategies; the next to attack alliances; the next to attack soldiers; and the worst to assault walled cities." See Sun-Tzu. *The Art of Warfare*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993. Translated, with an introduction and commentary, by Roger T. Ames. p. 111.

⁴¹¹ Brigadier General Deptula. *Effects-Based Operations*. p. 2.

by the naval and the air force elements including Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) from submarines and surface ships, carrier-borne aircrafts, special force operations, and stealth bombers like F-117s. This concept of operations was also applied to the beginning of the 2003 Iraq War. The surprise attack on Saddam began with the launch of thirty-nine TLAMs from the navy platforms.⁴¹² Except the occupation and reconstruction phases in the 2003 Iraq War, both wars in 1991 and 2003 demonstrated how a war can be waged efficiently with relatively little damage on the friendly forces. If the U.S. military had to fight Iraqi ground defense forces without neutralizing critical targets, the wars must have been much longer with uncertain results.

The change in doctrinal developments was also applied to the war plan of the US-ROK Combined Forces Command. Operations Plan 5027 (OPLAN 5027) that came out before 1998 used to be about stopping North Korea's invasion once it starts and pushing the North Korean troops back across the 38th parallel.⁴¹³ In this scenario, South Korea would have to bear the brunt of the initial attack from North Korea holding the line until the U.S. reinforcement forces arrive. In contrast, the 1998 version (OPLAN 5027-98) reflected offensive concept of operations. According to the revised OPLAN, the United States and South Korea can launch preemptive strikes against already picked prioritized targets in North Korea including air force bases and long-range artillery if intelligence showed clear signs that North Korea was in preparation for waging war.⁴¹⁴ Indeed, South Korea cannot afford waiting until North Korea launches an attack given the fact that half of the South Korean population lives in Seoul. Seoul would be devastated at the initial phase of the

⁴¹² Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor. *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2006. p. 175.

⁴¹³ For related information, access the website of Global Security at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oplan-5027.htm>.

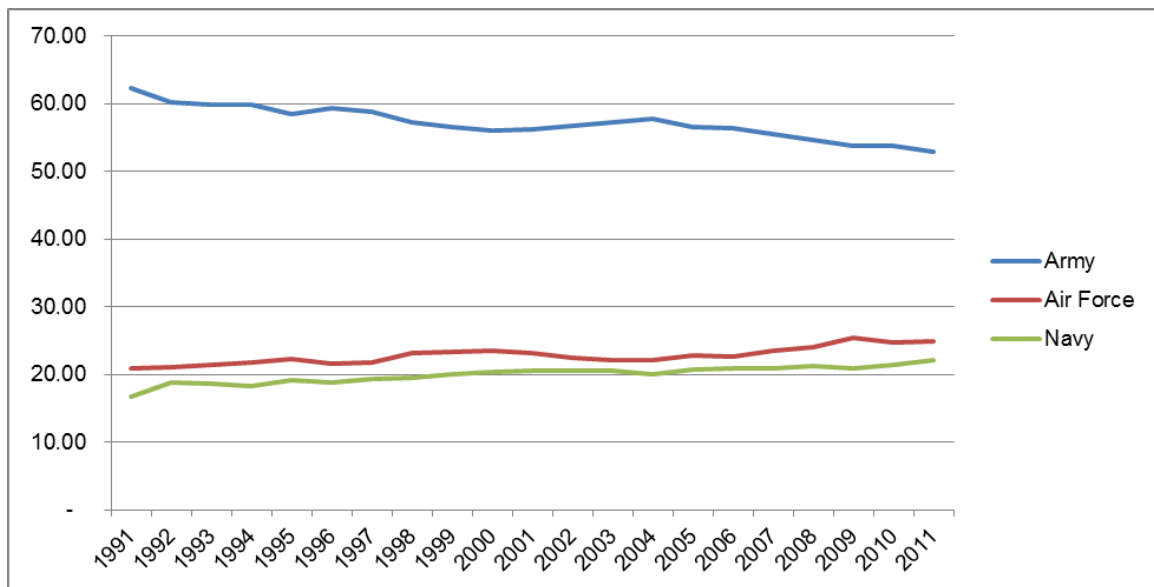
North Korean invasion. Again, in this type of war plan, the preemptive strikes would be conducted by platforms that can launch pinpoint attacks such as submarines, destroyers, aircraft carriers, and jet fighters.

I am not suggesting that the army has become not as important as the navy and the air force in modern warfare. My point is that the navy and the air force are as important as the army, and that the different components have different advantages in achieving a given strategic or tactical objective in a given phase of war. At the same time, it is difficult to explain South Korea's naval growth purely based on the organizational interest because the naval leaders' position calling for building large and versatile ships was timely from the military point of view given the changes in modern military doctrines that are relevant to the security situation on the Korean peninsula.

As I have hypothesized, it may be that the construction of ocean-going ships was possible because of a change in the relative organizational influence of the navy vis-à-vis that of other service branches. One of the indicators for the relative organizational power would be how much resource was allocated to different services. In this regard, I looked at the budget shares among the army, the air force, and the navy during the last two decades. Figure 4.1 shows the budget shares expressed in percentages of the sums of budgets for the three services.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

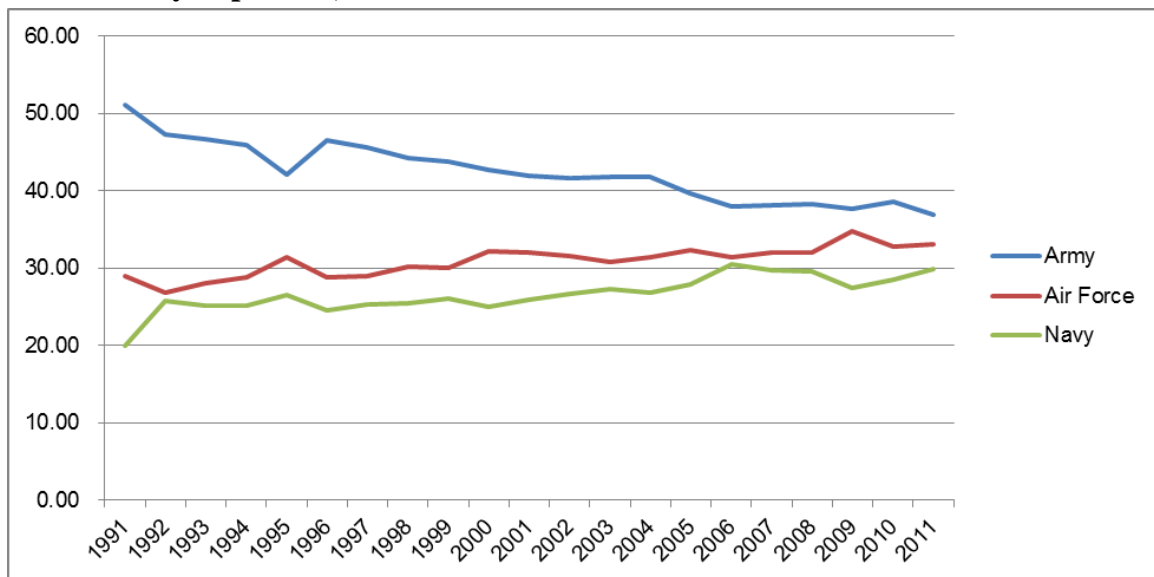
Figure 4.1 Budget Shares among the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy in percent, 1991-2011



Source: Korea Defense Budget Statistics, the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses (KIDA) at http://kida.re.kr/ja_statistic/index.htm.

Interestingly, there was no steep increase in the navy's budget share over the last two decades. On top of that, the navy was allocated the least amount of defense budget all the time. Although the army's share decreased and those of the air force and the navy increased in general, the army still enjoyed more than half of the entire budget for the three services. To some degree, the army's biggest share is understandable because the army is the biggest organization with the largest number of personnel and command to maintain. So, I compared the budget distribution among the three services for weapons acquisition only in Figure 4.2. Again, there was no sign of significant increase in the navy's budget share for weapons acquisition. A relatively noticeable increase occurred between 1991 (19.92%) and 1992 (25.75%). There has been no such increase since the BWN initiative was officially launched in 1995.

Figure 4.2 Budget Shares for Weapons Acquisition among the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy in percent, 1991-2011



Source: Korea Defense Budget Statistics, the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses (KIDA) at http://kida.re.kr/ja_statistic/index.htm.

One may argue that the navy has been generally successful in obtaining more and more budget by looking at how much the gap between the army and the navy in 1991 was narrowed by 2011 in Figure 4.2. Indeed, the navy's budget share has grown, which is a desirable development from the point of the balanced force construction among three services. However, one cannot automatically ascribe the narrowed gap to the growth of the navy's organizational influence. First, the navy's share has always been the lowest; it has never exceeded that of the air force. Second, the general increase in the budget share also happened in the air force suggesting that the change was not about the navy. The incremental growth in the navy's and the air force's shares are better explained by the continuous emphasis on the necessity for redressing the army-centric military structure and the construction of balanced military forces in South Korea's defense circle. In fact, the pace of change has been really slow given how strongly and frequently the change has been

called for by different assembly members; this topic has been brought up in the National Assembly Inspection on the Ministry of National Defense almost every year since the 1990s. This shows an aspect of the ‘stickiness’ of institutions and strong organizational influence of the army.

The slow increase in the navy’s budget share weakens the explanatory power of the bureaucratic politics perspectives. We can observe the slow increase or the pattern now with relative ease because we are looking at the data of the last twenty years in comparison. From the view point of a naval leader who was responsible for the organization in a specific year, the increase would have looked even smaller. If the navy had launched the BWN initiative as a strategy to get larger budget, how can leaders after leaders have continued to employ the same strategy knowing that the strategy did not have much effect?

The army’s persisting institutional influence (and little influence of the navy’s and air force’) becomes even clearer by looking at how many personnel from each service are placed at important positions involving policy decision making at the MND and the JCS. At the 1996 National Assembly Inspection on the Ministry of National Defense, Assemblyman Heo Daebeom pointed out that the decision making processes at the MND and JCS are badly structured for the balanced development of three services because most important positions and committees are filled with army personnel. According to his statement, out of nineteen officers of the bureau chief level or above at the MND, seventeen were from the army. Among seventy-four department heads or above, sixty-five positions were taken by army officers.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1996 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1996. p. 37.

The situation has not changed in more than a decade. The number of bureau chiefs at the MND in 2008 was twenty-two, among which seven were army generals and fifteen were civilians.⁴¹⁶ The number of positions filled with civilians grew partly because of continuous efforts for the reforms based on the principle of civilian control of the military. However, among the fifteen civilians, 'real' civilians were eight and the rest seven personnel were retired army generals.⁴¹⁷ According to Assemblyman Mun Heesang, many of the retired army generals who served as bureau chiefs at the MND took up the positions almost as soon as they had gotten out of the army.⁴¹⁸ As another example, the Joint Operations Headquarters at the JCS is the key organization to military operations at peacetime and wartime. There are seven staff organizations supporting the Headquarters with different functions including personnel, operations, planning, intelligence, logistics, communications, and engineering. As of 2009, all of them were headed by army officers except one; the chief of personnel was an air force officer.⁴¹⁹ As Assemblyman Yu Samnam argues, with this system or structure, the positions of the navy and the air force can be hardly represented in important decision making processes for defense policy and military operations.⁴²⁰

Indeed, the ROK navy has been able to pursue the construction of ocean-going ships slowly but consistently since the 1990s not because of an increase of budget or institutional

⁴¹⁶ Jo Seongshik. "'Lee Sanghui Gukbang' Leadership & Jeongchaek (Leadership and Policy of 'Defense Minister Lee Sanghui')." *Shindonga*, Vol. 589, October 1, 2008: pp. 180-199.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2008 Inspection on State Affairs (the Ministry of National Defense) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2008. pp. 33-34.

⁴¹⁹ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2009 Inspection on State Affairs (the Ministry of National Defense) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2009. p. 10.

⁴²⁰ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2000 Inspection on State Affairs (the Ministry of National Defense) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly,

influence. It was possible because the navy prioritized ocean-going main battle ships over other types of weapon systems, and the prioritization has been supported to some degree in the defense policy circle. For example, the ROK navy could have spent more money on improving mine sweeping capability or maritime air patrol capability instead of ocean-going capability.

Even the slow construction has not been without delays because of limited resource. Assemblyman Lee Sangdeuk points out that the navy obtained only 79% of the allocated budget for the navy reflected in the 1999-2003 Mid-term National Defense Plan.⁴²¹ It was partly because of other programs such as the purchase of Russian weapons (the administration-supported program), the production of T-50 trainer jets and the research/development of an Airborne Warning and Control System (the air force).⁴²² Such difficulty cut the number of planned weapons acquisition or delayed many important programs such as the first Aegis destroyer, the first multipurpose amphibious ship, 214 class submarines, and P-3C maritime patrol aircrafts.⁴²³ Despite the difficulty, according to a testimony by Admiral Moon Jeongil (Chief of Naval Operations, 2003-2005), the army leaders have praised the navy because it has been the most productive and efficient service creating the most tangible force construction results with limited budget. This view is shared by many other senior officers that I have interviewed.

Republic of Korea, 2000. p. 2.

⁴²¹ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2003 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2003. p. 9.

⁴²² Ibid. p. 34.

⁴²³ For the details, see Ibid. pp. 29-30.

Summary of the Chapter and Transition toward the Eclectic Perspectives

This chapter examined the explanatory power of the bureaucratic politics perspectives. I first demonstrated the army-centric characteristics of the ROK military. Then, I presented the dynamics among different services that involve organizational competition. I observe that there have been cases of weapons acquisition that are relevant to bureaucratic politics among the three services. However, I argue that the initiative for constructing an ocean-going navy since the 1990s cannot be explained by either the navy's pursuit of parochial interest or an elevated institutional position of the navy. First, there is little evidence to support those views. Moreover, the naval leaders' emphasis on the necessity for larger ships were timely given the changes in modern military doctrine, which makes it difficult to make an argument based on purely organizational interest. Second, the navy's budget share for weapons acquisition has not increased significantly over the period of the BWN initiative. Lastly, the navy's representation in central military organizations like the MND and JCS has not either been improved; most of the important positions related to policy decision making have been occupied by the army personnel.

What possibly can make naval leaders continue the BWN drive when there were no budgetary or institutional incentives for their organization? As in chapter 3, I briefly discuss about an alternative view related to the bureaucratic politics model. In fact, the members of an organization behave not always based on interest or rational calculations. To a great degree, they are influenced by dynamics deriving from the nature of organization. The operation of an organization requires a lot of different individuals and

coordination among them. Organizations need to cope with uncertainty in achieving their objectives. As a way of dealing with such complexity, people in an organization often follow routines. With regard to organizational routines, March and Olsen provide useful explanations:

“Routines make it possible to coordinate many simultaneous activities in a way that makes them mutually consistent. Routines help avoid conflicts; they provide codes of meaning that facilitate interpretation of ambiguous worlds... Routines embody collective and individual identities, interests, values, and world views, thus constraining the allocation of attention, standards of evaluation, priorities, perceptions, and resources.”⁴²⁴

In short, routines not only serve as the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that provide effective ways to cope with uncertainty and complexity involved in organizations, but also define identities of the organization members. Allison and Zelikow highlight these characteristics as the key elements of the organizational behavior Model (Model II) in *Essence of Decision*.⁴²⁵

This organizational behavior model is compatible with the sociological institutional model that I present in chapters 6 and 7. Both models assume that agents follow the logic of appropriateness rather than the logic of consequence. While the latter involves rational or strategic calculation for the optimal outcome, the former leads to decision making processes in which an individual considers identities of the individual and organization s/he represents, and the rules defining the behaviors of the individual and the organization in a situation.⁴²⁶ Indeed, rather than parochial interest of the navy, the ROK navy leaders

⁴²⁴ James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: The Free Press, 1989. p. 24.

⁴²⁵ Allison and Zelikow. *Essence of Decision*.

⁴²⁶ James G. March, *A Primer on Decision: How Decisions Happen*. New York: Free Press, 1994. p. 58.

may have pursued a bigger navy given their beliefs about the identity and role of the ROK navy in a specific historical moment or environment.

As I have discussed in Chapter 2, Allison and Zelikow make a distinction between the parochial interest-driven model (Model III) and the identity or norm-driven model (Model II).⁴²⁷ However, my position is that the two models should not be viewed in mutually exclusive terms although they emphasize different logics of organizational behavior. Rather, I understand the two models as different but coexisting dimensions of bureaucratic/organizational dynamics. Sometimes, a military service can make a decision based on its parochial interest vis-à-vis that of other services. Other times, the decision can be made based on the consideration of what the organization stands for or its organizational identity. Moreover, the organizational interest may be largely defined in terms of its organizational identity. For example, Halperin treats the organizational essence as an important element of organizational interest.⁴²⁸

In my view, which dimension stands out is an empirical question. The parochial interest dimension stands out particularly when an organization's interest is considered in relation to that of other organizations. As I have elaborated in this chapter, there is little evidence to support the idea that the BWN initiative involved the navy's consideration of parochial interest vis-à-vis that of the army, the air force or other government organizations. On the other hand, I have found some evidence demonstrating that the navy had struggled to define what it should do before it launched the BWN initiative. There is an interesting observation made by an American scholar about the ROK navy of the late 1980s. The

⁴²⁷ Allison and Zelikow. *Essence of Decision*.

⁴²⁸ Morton H. Halperin. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974. With the assistance of Priscilla Clapp and Arnold Kanter.

following quotation is an excerpt from Edward Olsen's work prepared for the Chief of Naval Operations of the U.S. Navy:

“Though ROK Navy personnel would never admit it (for reasons of their own national pride), they are very likely envious of what the MSDF now has, can do, and could develop if Tokyo had the desire. In short, the MSDF – even with a fairly limited strategic mandate and no formal ability to engage in collective security – has the wherewithal to do what the ROK Navy can only dream about. Rubbing this in still more, the MSDF's ASW and submarine capabilities are vital parts of the Northeast Asian SLOC defenses on which U.S.-R.O.K. security depend and of which the ROK Navy would like to become a greater part.”⁴²⁹

Olsen's observation highlights the concerns that the ROK navy personnel had about what their navy can do and, probably, what it should do. It also suggests that the roles and capabilities of advanced navies such as the JMSDF may have served as kind of models that the ROK navy can emulate (rather than military threat). This observation raises the necessity to look at the phenomena related to the BWN initiative not only from the perspective of organizational behavior involving struggles for defining the organizational identity, but also from the perspective of institutional development of the navy as a professional field. I develop this thesis in Chapters 6 and 7. Before that, I turn to the next chapter and test another explanation that treats the state as a non-unitary actor: the domestic politics model.

⁴²⁹ Edward A. Olsen. *Prospects For an Increased Naval Role For the Republic of Korea In Northeast Asian Security*. Prepared for Chief of Naval Operations (Plans, Policy and Operations), Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, March 1989. p. 46. MSDF stands for Maritime Self Defense Force of Japan.

Chapter 5 The Domestic Politics Explanation

This chapter examines the possibility that societal level variables influenced the initiative to construct an ocean-going navy. The domestic politics model hypothesizes that the BWN initiative was the consequence of the domestic characteristics of South Korea that encourages innovations from low level officers and scientists. Alternatively, it hypothesizes that the BWN initiative resulted from political coalitions among domestic actors such as the navy, civilian leadership and industries. The former hypothesis builds on Evangelista's work highlighting the strength of society relative to that of state as an important variable explaining foreign policy outcomes. The latter assumes that domestic actors and their coalition can influence the foreign policy of a government in pursuit of their parochial interests. From these perspectives, particularly the latter, the state has only limited autonomy in policymaking.

I argue that Evangelista's model is not applicable to the ROK navy case. Contrary to Evangelista's theory, the infrastructures and technological basis for naval construction were established during the period of strong state leadership. I also argue that the coalition model does not provide plausible explanations for the naval construction. With regard to the possibility of the navy-industry coalition, I demonstrate that major defense contractors do not have incentives to actively lobby the navy (or the military) partly because of the nature of weapons acquisition process and the navy's weak bureaucratic position in decision-making. They also lack economic incentives due to the small portion of defense sector in their entire business. I also demonstrate that the relationship between the govern-

ment and defense industries has a unique characteristic that creates dynamics that are different from what the military-industrial complex thesis predicts. Lastly, I demonstrate that there was no coalition politics playing out between the navy and political leaders.

Evangelista argues that the United States was more successful in weapons innovation than the Soviet Union because of its features characterized as strong society and weak state that encouraged low-level initiatives and the free exchange of information. On the other hand, the centralized weapons development process of the Soviet Union was not conducive to innovation because it deprived low-level officers and scientists of incentives and information for creative activities.⁴³⁰ Although this model provides a unique insight in understanding different outcomes in weapons acquisition based on the relative strength of state vis-à-vis that of society, there are some problems in applying this model to the ROK navy case. Most of all, it is doubtful whether we can consider South Korea's naval construction an 'innovation.' Although the construction of ocean-going ships was a completely new policy initiative in the ROK navy, it hardly involved innovations in military affairs. Rather, it was closer to 'adopting' advanced Western style conventional weapon systems whose capabilities had already been proven. Accordingly, the focus was on 'accumulating' or 'learning' advanced technology and know-how through such weapons acquisition. One way of doing it was through contracts with foreign suppliers that included offset conditions that require transfer of technology to the buyer (South Korea or its defense contractors).

⁴³⁰ Matthew Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Offset is a practice in arms trade that refers to “a range of industrial or commercial compensation practices required as a condition of sale for military related exports.”⁴³¹ The offset condition has been included in production of a variety of parts of naval ships including gas turbines, anti-air guided missiles, propulsion systems, and combat control systems.⁴³² These efforts for technology accumulation turned out to be quite successful in that South Korea now can domestically produce somewhat sophisticated naval weapon systems such as torpedoes, guns, underwater detection systems, and guided missiles. Again, however, the efforts and productive results made so far were about ‘catching up’ rather than leading or making a technological breakthrough.

Moreover, as I have explained in detail in a previous chapter, the domestic production rates either for surface combatants or submarines that were built under the BWN initiative were not very high.⁴³³ Although the ships (except Type 209 and 214 submarines) were designed and built by concerted efforts by the ROK navy and domestic contractors, some critical parts like main combat systems were either imported or jointly built by foreign and domestic defense contractors. For example, the *Gwangaeto the Great* class (KDX-I) and the *Chungmugong Yi Soon Shin* class (KDX-II) destroyers employed Mk 7 Surface Ship Command System (SSCS) that was made by BAE systems, a British defense contractor,

⁴³¹ Stephanie Neuman. "Offsets in the International Arms Market." In *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1985*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1985. p. 35. Offset has become a widespread practice in arms trade because it satisfies both the economic interest of sellers and the desires of the buyers. Offset includes various types of agreements including co-production, licenced production, subcontractor production, overseas investment, countertrade, barter, counter-purchase, and buy-back. For the detailed information about these practices, see David J. Louscher and Anne Naylor Schwarz. "Patterns of Third World Military Technology Acquisition." In *The Dilemma of Third World Defense Industries: Supplier Control or Recipient Autonomy?*, by Kwang-Il Baek, Ronald D. McLaurin and Chung-in Moon, pp. 33-56. Inchon, South Korea: Center for International Studies, Inha University, 1989. pp. 40-41.

⁴³² National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1995. p. 21.

with a participation of a South Korean defense contractor, Samsung.⁴³⁴ The *Sejong the Great* class (KDX-III) destroyers were equipped with the Aegis combat systems provided by an American defense contractor, Lockheed Martin. The Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) points out South Korea's inability to produce such crucial parts as a critical problem of South Korea's defense industry.⁴³⁵

Another problem in applying Evangelista's model to South Korea involves the way South Korea's defense industry has developed. In fact, what happened in South Korea is quite contrary to what Evangelista would predict: strong leadership of the state was the key factor to the development of South Korea's defense industry.⁴³⁶ This is similar to the way South Korea made fast economic development under state leadership. This is so because establishing defense industries was part of the government-led economic development plans in the 1970s. As I have explained in Chapter 3, President Park Chung Hee felt an urgent need for building autonomous national defense capability including defense industries as he observed increasingly provocative behaviors of North Korea and growing fear of abandonment by the United States at the end of the 1960s. Following a presidential order, Oh, Woncheol, secretary to the President on economic policy and creator of South Korea's economic development plans, came up with a plan to establish defense industries in South Korea.⁴³⁷ The plan was the simultaneous construction of heavy industries and

⁴³³ For the detailed discussion about the domestic production rates, see Chapter 3 (p. 147).

⁴³⁴ Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane's Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008. pp. 452-454.

⁴³⁵ Defense Acquisition Program Administration. *Bangwisaupgaeron (Introduction to Defense Acquisition Program)*. Seoul: Defense Acquisition Program Administration, Republic of Korea, 2008. p. 357.

⁴³⁶ Professor Chung-in Moon also observes this point. See Chung-in Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." In *The Implications of Third World Military Industrialization: Sowing the Serpents' Teeth*, by James Everett Katz, pp. 241-266. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1986. p. 247.

⁴³⁷ For detailed accounts, see Woncheol Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjegeonseol: Engineering*

defense industries. The idea was that South Korea should have capacity to increase the production of weapons quickly if necessary by constructing heavy industries that would also contribute to South Korea's economic development in general.⁴³⁸ As Oh recalls, the development of South Korea's heavy industries was pursued as a supporting measure for the state-led development of defense industries.⁴³⁹

It is interesting to see how centralized the process of constructing defense industries in South Korea was. Key decisions were made within a small circle of top decision makers including President Park, his Chief of Staff, Oh Woncheol, and the director of Agency for Defense Development (ADD).⁴⁴⁰ As a central research and development organization that directly report to the President, the ADD was given authority to mobilize necessary help and resource from the military, industry, and academia. As part of this centralized scheme, contractors that would produce parts and assemble them were designated by the government. The government provided incentives to encourage industries' participation. The corporate incentives included "concessional financing to defense contractors four points below market rates; the provision of advance payment of up to 90 percent of the sales contracts; special provisions for excise and value-added tax credits; exemption from import tariffs; concession of plant sites; and finally the military draft exemption for skilled employees in the defense industry."⁴⁴¹ Partly because of these incentives, the number of South Korea's defense contractor increased from twenty-nine in 1972 to ninety-one in

Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5) . Seoul: Kia Gyeongje Yeonguso, 1996.

⁴³⁸ Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5).* p. 26.

⁴³⁹ Ibid. p. 76.

⁴⁴⁰ Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." p. 250. The fact is also confirmed by Oh's accounts in Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5).*

1981.⁴⁴² Meanwhile, public debates about these measures were prohibited for national security reasons. Professor Moon Chung-in argues that, although it was not without adverse economic side effects, the centralized decision making and secrecy insulated the defense industry sector from competing political debates contributing to the sector's expedited growth.⁴⁴³

The role of the government was also a driving force behind the construction of shipbuilding industries. With the government support, Hyundai Heavy Industries took the first step toward becoming a world class shipbuilder with the construction of large scale shipyards in *Ulsan* over the period of 1973-1974.⁴⁴⁴ Other major companies like Daewoo Heavy Industries and Samsung Heavy Industries also launched shipbuilding businesses in a similar manner. As a measure to systematically promote shipbuilding industries, the government even adopted a policy called the "Plan-based Shipbuilding System" in which the shipbuilders would produce ships with financial support from the government and the government would make sure the purchase of the products by already designated domestic consumers.⁴⁴⁵ Moreover, as mentioned above, there would be more incentives for those who would participate in defense projects. Probably, as Professor Moon Chung-in notes, the most attractive incentives were the guarantee of the survival of the companies through the government's purchase of the products and the pledge to rescue those in a difficult financial condition.⁴⁴⁶ For example, when Hyundai Heavy Industries suffered from the

⁴⁴¹ Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." p. 249.

⁴⁴² The data are from both Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjegeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5)*. p. 189 and Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." p. 249.

⁴⁴³ Ibid. p. 250

⁴⁴⁴ Hyocheol Kim. *Hangukui Bae (Ships of South Korea)*. Seoul: Jiseongsa, 2006. p. 69.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 73.

⁴⁴⁶ Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." p. 249.

significant decrease in export because of the 1973 Oil Crisis, the Park Chung Hee administration helped the company by encouraging its participation in the construction of naval ships (the *Ulsan* class guided missile frigates).⁴⁴⁷

One may argue that there might have been a change that loosened such state-centric development environment that contributed to the construction of an ocean-going navy. Democratization may be an example of such a change. However, South Korea's democratization happened too recently to be responsible for a change in the state-society relations that might have contributed to the construction of ocean-going ships. South Korea's democratization came along only at the end of the 1980s. This belongs to what Huntington called "the third wave" democratization that includes democratic transitions in Europe, Latin America, and Asia between 1974 and 1990.⁴⁴⁸ Given the well-known change-resistant nature of institutions, it is difficult to expect that such political change in the late 1980s immediately created an environment that would encourage low level initiatives, contributing to the construction of ocean-going ships in the 1990s.⁴⁴⁹ In fact, the state-supported practice in defense industries persisted well into the late 1980, which influenced weapons acquisitions in later days. For example, Daewoo Heavy Industries started off the submarine programs in 1987 with financial support (approx. 90 million dollars) from the government.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁷ Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach*, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5). p. 434.

⁴⁴⁸ Samuel P. Huntington. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

⁴⁴⁹ For the discussion about the stability and change of institutions, see James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen. "A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change." In *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, pp. 1-37. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

⁴⁵⁰ The financial support was used in preparation for starting the construction of submarines such as building facilities and educating personnel. See National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries)* by the

More importantly, suppose that democratic South Korea (since the 1990s) has become somehow characterized with weaker state and stronger society than nondemocratic South Korea (before the 1990). Still, the state-society relation theory cannot explain the case of South Korea's naval construction. In Chapter 3, I argued that South Korea's advanced shipbuilding technology and infrastructure served as one of necessary conditions for the implementation of the BWN initiative. In other words, without the technological and industrial foundations, South Korea would not have implemented the naval construction plans successfully. One should note that the technological and industrial grounds were established during the period of strong state leadership. This fact contradicts the assumption that weaker state of democratic South Korea created a condition conducive to the acquisition of ocean-going ships.

Then, can it be the case where the blue water navy drive was a consequence of some kind of coalition politics among domestic actors? From this point of view, ocean-going ships that the ROK navy acquired were not necessarily the products of strategic consideration based on the international security situation. Rather, they were simply the result of coalition politics among domestic actors such as the navy, politicians, and industries who would benefit from the construction of big naval ships.⁴⁵¹ This is also part of what the military-industrial complex thesis would predict. Probably, the most likely coalition that would have led to the hypothetically unnecessary naval construction would be the one between the ROK navy and shipbuilding defense contractors.

National Assembly. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1993. p. 6.

⁴⁵¹ For such a coalition model, see Jack Snyder. *Myth of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.

Although the navy-industry coalition may be a plausible scenario, the model is not useful in explaining the ROK navy case. One of the assumptions that this model makes is that the influence of shipbuilding industries backed up by the navy's policy decision would lead to weapons acquisition. However, there is little evidence showing that shipbuilding industries tried to influence the navy (or the government or the military in general) through activities like lobbying for the purpose of manipulating the direction of weapons acquisition. I admit that it is extremely difficult to detect such evidence even if there were such activities unless I investigate all defense contractors and officials who were involved in the weapons acquisition programs. As a proxy measure, I examine the characteristics of the weapons acquisition process in South Korea in order to find out how much it is prone to external influence and to what degree industries have incentive to lobby for naval contracts. According to Jeong Gwangwon, former member of the board of committee of Daewoo Shipbuilding & Maritime Engineering and former ROK navy officer with ship architecture specialty, there is no room for defense contractors to influence decision-making processes in weapons acquisition.⁴⁵² Kim Dongjin, former Minister of National Defense (1996-1998), expressed strong doubts about even the existence of the military-industrial complex in South Korea in his testimony before the National Assembly.⁴⁵³

From the perspective of the weapons acquisition process, it is not difficult to see why the navy-industry coalition is not a likely mechanism behind the BWN initiative related phenomena. The primary reason involves the structural characteristics of the weapons acquisition process particularly those of the 1990s. A demand for a weapon system is

⁴⁵² Author's interview with Jeong Gwangwon in Busan, May 26, 2011.

⁴⁵³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1996 Inspection on State Affairs (the Ministry of National Defense) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1996. p. 48.

initially raised by each service. However, the proposals by three services would have to undergo adjustments after they are submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Based on the result of the adjustments, the JCS issues the Joint Strategic Objective Plans (JSOP). The JSOP is one of the most important documents in military planning and it includes the weapons acquisition plans for the period of F (fiscal year) + 3 and F + 7.⁴⁵⁴ This document would develop into a Mid-term National Defense Plan, which is a ministry level plan. Thus, for a successful purchase of a weapon system, each service would first have to get the program reflected in the JSOP. This is where “pulling and hauling” bureaucratic dynamics stand out.

The problem is that the army is much more influential than the navy and the air force at the central decision making organizations like the JCS and MND. I explained in the previous chapter that the positions of the navy and the air force are not reflected in policy decision-makings as much as the army. This is so partly because most important decision making positions at such central organizations are filled with army personnel.⁴⁵⁵ Moreover, the repeatedly emphasized position of the JCS and MND in the 1990s (probably until now) was that South Korea needs a coastal navy as opposed to an ocean-going navy. Given the procedural characteristics and positions of different organizations in weapons acquisition, it is not an effective strategy for defense contractors to lobby the navy which is in such a weak bureaucratic position. Defense contractors are most likely to know about this very well.

Second, South Korea’s naval acquisition programs have not been diverse enough to render active lobbying a useful strategy among domestic shipbuilders. The ROK navy

⁴⁵⁴ Defense Acquisition Program Administration. *Bangwisaupgaeron (Introduction to Defense Acquisition Program)*. p. 60.

commissioned twenty-four ocean-going ships between 1993 and 2010, which means that it acquired approximately one large ship per year. Moreover, these ships were produced by only three contractors: Daewoo is responsible for the Type 209 submarines and KDX-I destroyer programs; Daewoo and Hyundai participated in the KDX-II and III programs; Hyundai built the Type 214 submarines; and Hanjin Heavy Industries built a multipurpose amphibious ship.

On top of the small number of demand and suppliers, the persistent practice in weapons acquisition characterized with strong state leadership reduces the likelihood of contractors' lobbying for their own programs. It seems that the principle of 'fair opportunity' among major companies in weapons production, instead of free competition among contractors, played out up until the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.⁴⁵⁶ For example, Daewoo lost and Samsung won in a bid for the fighter jet program in the mid-1980s. For this reason, Daewoo was in a fair position to ask President Chun Doo Hwan for the contract for the Type 209 submarine programs.⁴⁵⁷ Once one company was designated as the main contractor for a particular project, it is usually difficult for other companies to participate in the same or similar programs. Hyundai appealed its desire to become another defense contractor in submarine production to the administration, the defense ministry, and the navy of no avail for a long time.⁴⁵⁸ After continuous biddings, it finally obtained the contract for the second submarine project (Type 214) in 2000.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 18.

⁴⁵⁶ In the current system, the decision about which company becomes the final contractor of a military project is made based on open competitions among companies. For detailed information, see Ibid, pp. 175-179.

⁴⁵⁷ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (Daewoo Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1993. p. 8.

⁴⁵⁸ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection on*

Third, contractors do not have significant economic incentives to actively engage in lobbying for a naval project. They make small profits from defense related projects relative to commercial ones. For example, out of the total sales of Daewoo Heavy Industries in 1997, the navy projects account for only 4.5%.⁴⁶⁰ It was when Daewoo participated in multiple naval programs including those of KDX-I and Type 209 submarines. Similarly, the entire defense programs that Hyundai Heavy Industries produced in 2005 amount to only 3.2% out of the total sales.⁴⁶¹ Indeed, the major defense contractors like Daewoo and Hyundai are also world class exporters for commercial ships which are better sources for profits for those companies than naval projects. From the insider's view point, the only reasonable commercial incentive that makes industries engage in the navy projects is in increasing the probability to obtain contract from foreign countries in the future.⁴⁶² The shipbuilders who have experience in defense projects would be more competitive than those without such experience in the world arms market. For example, based on the submarine building technology that Daewoo accumulated through the ROK navy submarine programs, Daewoo obtained the contract for three modified Type 209 submarines from Indonesia in 2011.⁴⁶³

State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1997. p. 10.

⁴⁵⁹ Jinho Shin. "Hyundaijunggonggeop, Chagijamsuham Geonjoeopchero Gyeoljeong (Hyundai Heavy Industries, designated as the Contractor for the Next Submarine Programms)." *Segye Ilbo*, November 23, 2000.

⁴⁶⁰ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1999 Inspection on State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly.* The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1999. p. 8.

⁴⁶¹ The approximate total sale was 10 billion dollars while the approximate defense related sale was 320 million dollars. See National Assembly Secretariat, National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly. p. 3.

⁴⁶² National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1999 Inspection on State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly.* p. 6.

⁴⁶³ The three submarines are scheduled to be delivered to Indonesia by 2018. For further information, see Inho Yu. "Guksan Jamsuham Cheot Suchul... Daeujoseon, Indonesiawa 3 cheok

In fact, the domestic influence of defense industries on their own government is not as significant as the military-industrial complex thesis would predict. Most of all, the government is in a much more influential position than industries in a defense contract partly because of the nature of defense programs. Without exports, the government is the only buyer, which means that things do not work as in the commercial free market. The government has almost complete control over which products, how many of them, and when they should be manufactured and delivered. Peck and Scherer describe this as “nonmarket character of the weapons acquisition process”⁴⁶⁴ Worse, if the decisions on weapons acquisition frequently change or the government classifies such information as in South Korea, the situation becomes tougher for the industries because they cannot have a business strategy. Assemblyman Lim Bokjin points out that the combination of frequently changing demand in weapons procurement at the ministry level and the practice to keep the information from the public for national security reasons makes it difficult for defense contractors to prepare and invest for future defense production.⁴⁶⁵

Partly because of the fact that the government is the only major consumer, the defense industry field is characterized with a limited domestic market. The demand would not significantly increase unless the size of military has a dramatic increase. Moreover, a demand for a specific weapon would cease to exist once the product is delivered until the next modernization of the weapon. Professor Moon Chung-in argues that South Korean

11 eokbul Gyeyak (The First Export of Korea-built Submarines...Daewoo Shipbuilding & Maritime Engineering Obtained a \$1.1 billion Contract for 3 Submarines from Indonesia)." *Hankook Ilbo*, December 21, 2011.

⁴⁶⁴ Merton J. Peck and Frederic M. Scherer. *The Weapons Acquisition Process: An Economic Analysis*. Boston: Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1962. pp. 55-64.

⁴⁶⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1999 Inspection on State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly*. p. 6.

defense industries have suffered from the saturated domestic market already since the 1980s as South Korea gained some degree of self-sufficiency in conventional weaponry.⁴⁶⁶ Indeed, defense contractors have almost always had idle production facilities. For example, as of 2005, the average operation rate of defense sector of Hyundai Heavy Industries for the previous two decades is only 44.2% in spite of the fact that Hyundai is one of the biggest defense contractors in South Korea.⁴⁶⁷ Similarly, the defense industry of the United States has been characterized with consolidation and merger by better performing companies particularly since the end of the Cold War. According to Dombrowski et al, large shipyards including “Avondale, Bath Ironworks, Electric Boat, Ingalls, NASSCO, and Newport News Shipyards” used to be owned by six different companies until 1995. However, these shipyards are currently owned by only two companies: Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics.⁴⁶⁸

Facing the problems derived from the limited demand and market, the solution for defense industries is to find foreign markets. Since keeping defense industries in normal operation is also important to national defense, the government often plays a facilitating role in defense contractors’ foreign sales. For example, after the end of U.S. participation in the Vietnam War, the government demand for weapons rapidly declined in the United States. Defense companies started to seek sales outside the U.S. government. As a solution, the Department of Defense (DOD) encouraged the companies to participate in the

⁴⁶⁶ Moon. "South Korea: Between Security and Vulnerability." p. 255.

⁴⁶⁷ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (Hyundai Heavy Industries) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2005. p. 1.

⁴⁶⁸ For the details, see Peter J. Dombrowski, Eugene Gholz, and Andrew L. Ross. *Military Transformation and the Defense Industry after Next: The Defense Industrial Implications of Network-Centric Warfare*. Newport: Naval War College, 2002. pp. 32-33.

foreign military sales (FMS).⁴⁶⁹ According to Watts, the FMS spending by the DOD increased from 1.5 billion dollars in 1970 to approximately 12 billion dollars in 1975.⁴⁷⁰

Similarly, the South Korean government has continued to play a supporting role in transforming South Korea's labor intensive defense industries to technology-oriented ones as an effort to help its defense products gain an edge in the international arms market.⁴⁷¹ One of the telling signs is the establishment of the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) in 2006. As a government organization independent from the MND, the DAPA represents not only the government's policy to make the weapons acquisition procedure more transparent, efficient, and scientific for national defense, but also its will to play a managing and promoting role for South Korea's defense industry to enhance its competitiveness in the international market. Partly because of such an effort, South Korea has become the fifth largest arms supplier to developing nations in 2011.⁴⁷²

Again, these dynamics between the government and defense contractors are different from what the military-industrial complex (MIC) thesis would predict. Whereas theories of the MIC assume that the coalition between military elites and industries would lead to aggressive foreign policy and military buildup, the modern states do not seem to acquire

⁴⁶⁹ Barry D. Watts. *The US Defense Industrial Base: Past, Present and Future: Strategy for the Long Haul*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, 2008. p. 23.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid. According to the explanations by Department of Defense dictionary of military and associated Terms, foreign military sales (FMS) is "that portion of United States security assistance authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended. This assistance differs from the Military Assistance Program and the International Military Education and Training Program in that the recipient provides reimbursement for defense articles and services transferred." See *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Joint Publication 1-02)*. Joint Force Development (J-7), 8 November 2010 (Amended through 15 March 2012). p. 128.

⁴⁷¹ Defense Acquisition Program Administration. *Bangwisaupgaeron (Introduction to Defense Acquisition Program)*. p. 359.

⁴⁷² Richard F. Grimmett and Paul K. Kerr. *Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 2004-2011*. CRS Report for Congress (R42678), Congressional Research Service, August 24, 2012. p. 43.

weapons blindly. Rather, it looks like that the government and businesses cooperate with each other recognizing defense industries as an industrial field that would contribute to the state's economy.⁴⁷³ This relationship between the government and defense contractors make defense industry a unique industrial field outside the realm of international free trade. It is interesting to note that governments can legitimately subsidize defense companies even in the WTO system according to the security exceptions article.⁴⁷⁴

There were some corruption cases in South Korea's weapons acquisition history, which may be considered evidence demonstrating industries' influence on the military. One of the biggest incidents happened in 1993 when six high level officials including former defense ministers and chiefs of all armed services were prosecuted for receiving monetary rewards in return for selecting particular companies as defense suppliers.⁴⁷⁵ However, accurately speaking, these deals happened between the officials and arms dealers who played middlemen. Moreover, the corruption cases did not involve decisions about whether or not the military should acquire certain weapon systems such as ocean-going naval ships. Rather, they were about which subcontractors would supply parts for acquired weapon systems. For example, the prosecuted naval officer received money from an arms dealer for choosing a company for electronic parts for the KDX-I programs.⁴⁷⁶ The decision was not about whether the navy should construct the destroyers, but about what subcontractor would obtain the order from the navy for specific parts for the

⁴⁷³ This may contribute to the spread of conventional weapons internationally.

⁴⁷⁴ According to Article XXI (Security Exceptions), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, governments can take actions if the actions are considered necessary for their essential national security interests. For the texts, access

http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/analytic_index_e/gatt1994_08_e.htm#article21.

⁴⁷⁵ Gwangdeok Kim. "Yulgokbiri Gobal 6 In Hyeomui (Charges for the Six in Yulgok corruption)." *Hanguk Ilbo*, July 10, 1993.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

already decided weapons program. The most controversial case was the air force's decision between F-18 and F-16 that also involved ministry level decisions. These problems have disappeared as South Korea made continuous efforts to make the weapons acquisition procedures more transparent through the establishment of the independent organization like the DAPA and the reinforcement of inspection by the National Assembly. Again, the corruption cases do not represent examples in which industries can influence the direction of weapons acquisition.

Industries are not the only players who can arguably influence the weapons acquisition. The ROK navy might have been able to launch and implement the BWN initiative due to a coalition with political leaders who shared common interest in the growth of the navy. In this regard, Heginbotham suggests that emerging navalism in countries like China, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea was the consequence of support from reformist liberal politicians.⁴⁷⁷ This is a plausible explanation because the ROK navy saw an unprecedented growth in size and capability during the liberal presidencies like the Kim Dae Jung administration (1998-2003) and the Roh Moo Hyeon administration (2003-2008).

Relatedly, the relatively smooth implementation of the BWN initiative may be ascribed to preferences of the Presidents. Although this thesis involves an individual level analysis in foreign policy making, which does not belong to this chapter, I find that this is the best place to touch on this topic because of its relevance. An individual variable such as Presidents' policy preferences is a potentially important factor in foreign policy making in which the top decision makers may exert influence. The role of individual level variables

⁴⁷⁷ Eric Heginbotham, "The Fall and Rise of Navies in East Asia: Military Organizations, Domestic Politics, and Grand Strategy." *International Security*, Vol. 27, No.2, Autumn, 2002: pp. 86-125.

has been emphasized in international relations and foreign policy analysis particularly as part of a multilevel analysis. For example, according to Jervis, “domestic politics may dictate that a given event be made the occasion for a change in policy; bargaining within the bureaucracy may explain what options are presented to the national leaders; the decision-makers’ predisposition could account for the choice that was made.”⁴⁷⁸

However, there is no evidence to support these positions. First, Heginbotham’s argument related to the influence of support from liberal politicians is not based on an accurate observation. The ROK navy started to raise the necessity for ocean-going ships since the Roh Tae Woo administration (1988-1993). It launched the official BWN initiative during the Kim Young Sam administration (1993-1998). Both Presidents belonged to the conservative political camp. President Roh was even a retired army general nominated by the previous Chun Doo Hwan administration which is classified as the last non-democratic regime in South Korea. Therefore, we cannot establish a relationship between the BWN initiative and liberal presidents. Second, with regard to presidents’ preferences, none of the four presidents mentioned here were distinguished advocates of the navy. Most important, there has been no administration level initiative to build a bigger navy throughout history.⁴⁷⁹ If there had been variation in the degree of initiative to construct an ocean-going navy by different administrations, it would have been a ground to take a closer look at individual preferences of different presidents. All in all, it

⁴⁷⁸ Robert Jervis. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. p. 17. As another example, Levy and Thompson also emphasize the role of individual level variables in IR and foreign policy making as part of a multilevel analysis that includes systemic, societal, and individual level analyses. See Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson. *Causes of War*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. pp. 205-214.

⁴⁷⁹ Author’s interviews with former security advisors to President including Yu Jong Ha (former foreign minister) in May 27, 2011, Lim Seong Jun (former Ambassador to Canada) in May 31, 2011, and Lee Jong Seok (former minister of national unification) in June 2, 2011.

is difficult to argue that the BWN initiative was due to the navy's coalition with new political leadership or policy preferences of individual presidents.

There is a view that the ROK navy benefitted from the fact that retired Admiral Yun Gwang-ung served as defense minister between 2004 and 2006 during the Roh Moo Hyeon administration. It may be seen as an encouraging event for the navy because Minister Yun was the first naval officer who came to head the defense ministry since Admiral Son Wonil became the fifth defense minister in 1953. Between 2004 and 2006, there were major developments in transforming the ROK navy to an ocean-going navy such as the beginning of the first Aegis destroyer project by Hyundai, the launch of ROKS *Dokdo* (multipurpose amphibious ship), and the National Assembly's approval of budget for a new naval base on *Jeju* Island.

However, as I have already explained, the weapons acquisition plans are set up much earlier than their execution. The construction of those ships was planned in the 1990s, which means that there was no way for the minister to influence the construction plan. Moreover, it is not that only favorable events to the navy happened during that period. In fact, the construction plan for large class submarines (3,000 tons) was delayed by six years during his tenure, which was a major blow to the BWN initiative.⁴⁸⁰ According to my interview with Minister Yun, there was a small advantage for the navy that he heard about after his retirement from his position. Based on what he heard from other naval officers who used to work at the ministry, the procedure to go get the minister's approval of plans related to naval force construction was easier or smoother than before when the ministers

⁴⁸⁰ Chungshin Jeong. "3000t Geup Jamsuham Saeop 6 nyeon Yeongi (3,000 ton class submarine project delayed by 6 Years)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, December 7, 2006.

were retired army officers.⁴⁸¹ Other than this kind of dynamics at workplace, there was no substantial help from the minister that would enhance the navy's parochial interest.

Summary of the Chapter and Transition toward the Eclectic Perspectives

In this chapter, I have argued that the domestic politics models do not provide proper explanations for the ROK navy case. I have demonstrated that the construction of ocean-going ships was not the function of an open and strong society. It was partly a consequence of strong state leadership because South Korea established the necessary industrial infrastructure and shipbuilding technology during the state-led economic construction period particularly in the 1970s. I have also argued that there was no coalition politics playing out in the construction of an ocean-going navy. Partly because of the structural and procedural characteristics involved in the weapons acquisition process, it is difficult for defense contractors to manipulate the process. At the same time, contractors do not have incentive to actively lobby the navy given the navy's weak position at the central organizations, which are ultimate authorities of weapons acquisition. They do not have either economic incentive because of the small portion that defense sectors account for in their entire businesses. Lastly, I have argued that there was no political alliance involved in constructing an ocean-going navy.

Probably, the domestic politics explanation would be the least relevant one in my endeavor to extract some insights from each perspective. However, the discussions about domestic politics in this chapter also contain an important clue that points to the direction that I am heading with this project. Although there was no political alliance between the

⁴⁸¹ Author's interview with Minister Yun Gwang-ung, May 24, 2011.

navy and politicians, the longevity of the BWN initiative implies that the initiative must not have been strongly interfered by political leadership. I have pointed out in this chapter that the BWN initiative formed and lasted over the administrations with different political orientations, including conservatives and liberals. These facts suggest that the BWN initiative was embraced as a nonpartisan issue.

Then, what are some factors that might have helped a succeeding administration agree with the previous one with different political orientation? In fact, there is a theme that ran through different administrations including those of Presidents Roh Tae Woo, Kim Young Sam, and Kim Dae Jung during which the BWN initiative formed and took off: “to the world.” The clearest distinction in domestic politics that the Roh Tae Woo administration makes from the previous ones is that the administration represented a progress in democratization of South Korea partly because it was established through direct election by the people. Although the political change may not directly contribute to a change in military policy, the way political leaders and the people view their nation might have significantly changed, which in turn led to a change in South Korea’s defense policy behavior. According to President Roh Tae Woo’s memoir, he appreciated that his predecessors have established South Korea’s national wealth to some degree. At the same time, as his contribution to the nation, he had a strong desire to make South Korea an advanced country that plays important roles in the world or at least in Northeast Asia.⁴⁸² The account of the national leader together with the enduring theme “to the world” hints at the possibility that one of the factors that straddle different administrations and political orientations might have been a newly recognized image of the nation held by political

⁴⁸² Tae Woo Roh. *Rohtaewoo Hwoigorok: Sangkwon-Gukga, Minjuhwa, Naui Unmyeong (Roh Tae Woo Memoir: the first half volume-the State, Democratization, and my Destiny)*. Seoul:

leaders. In order to further develop this idea together with perspectives from previous chapters, now I turn to the next chapters for an eclectic explanation based on the sociological institutionalist explanations.

Chapter 6 An Eclectic Explanation based on the Sociological Institutional (SI)

Perspectives: The Formation of the Blue Water Navy Initiative

In chapters 6 and 7, I offer a cultural explanation for the origin and continuation of the BWN initiative in which I view human behaviors largely as meaning making activities. I take an eclectic position by employing the organizational behavior model (Allison's Model II) based on the sociological institutionalist (SI) approach. I observe that the two perspectives are compatible partly because of some important assumptions about human behavior that they share. Both perspectives emphasize that actors' behaviors are not solely governed by the consideration of utility maximization; rather, they follow the logic of appropriateness. Actors' behaviors are guided by cultural or institutional elements such as identities and norms.

On the other hand, the two perspectives provide different useful insights in explaining the case of South Korea's naval development. The organizational behavior model predicts that the members of an organization (naval officers in my case) make decisions based on the consideration of the situation they face and the identity of the organization they represent.⁴⁸³ This logic makes the naval officers attentive to defining and protecting the identity or essence of the organization. However, I observe that they define the organizational identity not in a vacuum. As the SI perspectives would maintain, military officers are elites in society who tend to subscribe to the goal of state-centered progress in

⁴⁸³ James G. March. *A Primer on Decision: How Decisions Happen*. New York: Free Press, 1994. p. 58.

the modern world polity.⁴⁸⁴ At the same time, they tend to be attentive to not only national interest but also status and roles of their nation in the world. Most importantly, military officers think about what kind of nation they are working for. Thus, the process of defining the organizational identity may be influenced by national identity that they and other elites in society hold. The effect would be more prominent particularly when the organizational identity supports the national identity in terms of what it does and what it stands for. Meanwhile, the development of the navy would be also influenced by its international engagements that facilitate the realization of self identity as well as diffusion of norms and institutional practices among international navies.

Relying on process-tracing, this chapter demonstrates how the initiative started and what consequences it has produced. I argue that one cannot explain the BWN initiative and related naval development in South Korea without understanding changes in the ROK navy's organizational essence and the meanings of the navy that are closely associated with national identity of South Korea. The changes occurred against the background that South Korea was increasingly viewed as a sovereign and legitimate member of the international community. In this process, as the SI approach would predict, the navy's initiative for building ocean-going ships was reinforced by its engagements with advanced foreign navies in which naval officers would experience strong pressure toward the development in their professional field. I also argue that the BWN initiative helped spread the meanings of ocean-going naval ships associated with the newly forming national identity of South Korea, which created favorable effects for naval weapons acquisition. To some degree, the

⁴⁸⁴ Note that the goal of state progress does not always coincide with organizational identity as the bureaucratic politics model would predict. This was pointed out by Professor Jack Levy.

BWN initiative represented visions for those in and outside the navy that are associated with South Korea's advancement to the world.

The initiative for building an ocean-going navy came about while the ROK navy was defining the organizational identity and the way it serves the nation. Until the initiative emerged, the main mission of the navy was defined mainly in terms of dealing with North Korean infiltration. This role was conducted as part of the military wide effort to defend South Korea from North Korea's attempts to subvert the South Korean government. Accordingly, the ROK navy focused on searching and attacking North Korean agent boats within territorial waters. As its main effort centered on littoral operations, the navy did not require large sized combat ships with ocean-going capability. Rather, small patrol crafts with great agility served the purpose better. According to Professor Lho Kyeongsoo, the status of the ROK navy at that time was a "fast-boat navy" that goes only after North Korean agent boats and plays an auxiliary role to the army.⁴⁸⁵

This limited role of the ROK navy was partly due to the division of labor that is defined by the Mutual Defense Treaty between the ROK and the U.S. militaries. At the time of making the decision for signing a mutual defense treaty with South Korea in 1953, the U.S. government was concerned about the case where South Korea resumes the war by a unilateral military action. South Korean President Syngman Rhee had insisted on ending the Korean War and achieving unification by conquering North Korea completely instead of establishing temporary peace by signing a truce with North Korea. As Syngnam Rhee was eager to have an official defense treaty with the United States, the Eisenhower

⁴⁸⁵ Kyeongsoo Lho. "21segi Hangukui Anbowa Haegunui Yeokhal (The Security of South Korea in the 21st Century and the Role of the Navy)." *Je 4 Hoi Hamsang Toronhoi (The 4th Navy*

administration used the treaty as a mechanism to refrain South Korea by making sure that South Korea does not have the authority and means to start a unilateral military action against North Korea.⁴⁸⁶ First, the Mutual Defense Treaty stipulates that a U.S. general who is in charge of the United Nations Command (UNC) in South Korea retains operational control (OPCON) of South Korea's military both for peacetime and wartime. Second, in the course of settling the details for the defense treaty, the position of the U.S. government about South Korea's force structure was such that South Korea focuses on building a normal army while maintaining minimal levels of the navy and the air force.⁴⁸⁷ The logic was that South Korea did not need to spend a large amount of its budget on expansive weapons because the U.S. Navy and Air Force would supplement South Korean forces in the case of war. These factors served as enduring systemic constraints not only on the structure and capability of the military but on the self-images and role identities that members of each military service have.

At around the end of the Cold War, there were some important changes to South Korea in terms of both its foreign relations and domestic politics that may have influenced the ways that the South Koreans view their nation. These changes were partly related to the influences of globalization that picked up the pace with the end of the Cold War.⁴⁸⁸ From the perspective of foreign relations, South Korea embarked rigorous efforts to become a

Conference). Geryong: Haegun Bonbu(The ROK Navy Headquarters), 1995. pp. 231-273.

⁴⁸⁶ Jeremy Pressman. *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

⁴⁸⁷ Jintae Seo. "Chamyeo Jeongbuui Kukbangaehyeok Seonkyeolkwaje (Prerequisites for the Participatory Government's Defense Reforms)." In *Hyeomnyeokjeok Jajukukbangkwa Kukbangaehyeok (Cooperative Self-reliant Defense Policy and Making Defense Reform Work)*, by Chung-in Moon, Kijeong Kim and Seonghun Yi. Seoul: Oreum, 2004. p. 265-266.

⁴⁸⁸ Although it is difficult to argue that the end of the Cold War caused globalization, scholars have observed that the phenomenon of globalization has picked up the pace with the end of the Cold War. For this point, see Joseph S. Nye. "Transnational Relations, Interdependence, and Globalization." In *Millennial Reflections on International Studies*, by Michael Brecher and Frank P.

more legitimate and competitive member of the international community at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. South Korea hosted the Olympic game in 1988, which was believed as a significant symbolic event; it was believed as a successful step for South Korea toward becoming a developed country that is recognized by the world community in the twenty first century. South Korea became an official member state of the United Nations in 1991. Moreover, it started reaching out to the world aggressively under the Roh Tae Woo administration's foreign policy initiative of *Nordpolitik* by seeking diplomatic relations with countries that used to belong to the communist bloc during the Cold War. As a simple indicator, the number of countries that have official diplomatic relations with South Korea increased from 140 in 1990 to 183 in 1999.⁴⁸⁹ Particularly, the normalization with Russia and China in 1990 and 1992 respectively was one of the greatest diplomatic achievements for South Korea and the most devastating blow to North Korea because those two great powers used to be patrons of North Korea during the Cold War period.

Indeed, as observed by literatures on 'status' in international relations, diplomatic recognitions of a state or the state's hosting international sports events serve as "status markers" that can concretize the state's international status.⁴⁹⁰ Larson et al. defines status as collective beliefs of a given state and others about the state's "ranking on valued attributes, such as wealth, coercive capabilities, culture, demographic position, socio-

Harvey. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002. p. 167.

⁴⁸⁹ ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Oekyo paekso 1990 [Diplomatic White Paper 1990, accessed at

http://www.mofat.go.kr/state/publication/whitepaper/1990/20071018/3635_file_1990_appendix.pdf], Oekyo paekso 2000 [Diplomatic White Paper 2000, accessed at

<http://www.mofat.go.kr/state/publication/whitepaper/index3.jsp?TabMenu=TabMenu3>]

⁴⁹⁰ Deborah Larson, T. V. Paul, and William Wohlforth. "Status and World Order." In *Status in World Politics*, by T. V. Paul, Deborah Larson and William Wohlforth (Forthcoming).

political organization, or diplomatic clout.”⁴⁹¹ According to the authors, the collective beliefs may be different from objective status or self-image. Moreover, when it comes to status in international relations, others’ perceptions and images of the given state would probably matter more because the state is primarily concerned about its status as defined by others.⁴⁹² However, the potential difference between self-image or objective status and others’ perceptions does not cause a significant problem for my research because I am mostly interested in self-image. Moreover, it is possible that the state starts to see itself differently expecting that others would see the state differently because of the status markers. In fact, my research finds out ample evidence in political leaders’ speeches and media reports of South Korea demonstrating that the “status markers” including widened diplomatic relations and hosting an international sports event were viewed as events through which the South Koreans started to see their nation in a new light. As Abdelal et al. correctly point out, speeches, political debates, and the media are “designed to evoke a sense of collective self.”⁴⁹³

There were also big changes in domestic politics. Kim Young Sam was elected in 1993 as the first civilian President in thirty years since Park Chung Hee became President through a military coup in 1963. This fact was perceived and presented as a great progress in democratization of South Korea and another proud achievement obtained through a concerted effort by the government and the people since the country made miraculous

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² Professor Jack Levy emphasizes the importance of perceptions and images that others hold in his discussion about the characteristics of the Great Powers. See Jack S. Levy. *War in the Modern Great Power System 1495-1975*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1983. p. 17.

⁴⁹³ Abdelal, Rawi, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott. "Identity as a Variable." In *Measuring Identity: A Guide For Social Scientists*, by Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston and Rose McDermott. New York: Cambridge University Press,

economic development and rose from the aftermath of the Korean War. Sovereignty in defense policy was also emerged as an important issue. In 1994, the peacetime (armistice) OPCON of the ROK military forces was transferred to the ROK Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) from the U.S. military authority.⁴⁹⁴ With these changes, the Kim Young Sam administration emphasized that the nation should mobilize all possible resources to create “New Korea.”⁴⁹⁵

The culminating point of such national aspiration is represented by President Kim Young Sam’s *segehwa* (globalization) initiative launched in 1995. *Segehwa* meant more than freer trade with foreign countries. The *segehwa* drive represented South Korea’s national resolution for the enhancement of all fields of society including politics, economy, and culture to reach the standards of advanced states.⁴⁹⁶ According to Samuel Kim, *segehwa* was “Kim Young Sam’s way of projecting and enacting a new Korean national identity and role conception, moving away from and beyond inter-Korean competition to the center of the action not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also in the world community.”⁴⁹⁷ The administration intentionally used the Korean phrase ‘*segehwa*’ without translating it into English (globalization) as a symbolic gesture of presenting Korea as it is to the world. Whether the *segehwa* policy really increased the level of globalization and capability of South Korea is controversial. However, national identity is

2009. p. 29.

⁴⁹⁴ Jaecheol Kim. "Jeonshi Jakjeon Tongjekwonui Hangukgun Hwanwongwa Hanbando Pyeong hwa (Wartime OPCON Transfer to the ROK Military and Peace on the Korean Peninsula)." *Hanguk Dongbuka Nonchong*, Vol. 38, 2006. p. 165.

⁴⁹⁵ Young Sam Kim. "Let Us All Look Outward and Forward (New Year's Message to the Nation, January 1, 1995)." In *Korea's Quest for Reform and Globalization: Selected Speeches of President Kim Young Sam*, by The Presidential Secretariat. Seoul: The Presidential Secretariat, The Republic of Korea, 1995.

⁴⁹⁶ Samuel S. Kim, *Korea's Globalization*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. p.3.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid. p.244.

about not so much an objective status as how its leaders and the people perceive the nation. In sum, a rising theme in the South Korean society from the end of the 1980s and up until the 1990s was South Korea's advancing *to the world*.

Against this backdrop, the ROK navy began to increasingly emphasize the navy's identity as a service that not only protect its nation from North Korean provocations but also works for broader national interests.⁴⁹⁸ It started to claim to become a leading service, instead of an auxiliary service, that proactively contributes to the promotion of national interest and national objectives in the coming era. I am not suggesting that the traditional mission of the navy related to North Korean threats is not about defending South Korea's national interest. It is definitely the most critical mission for South Korea's national security and, therefore, her interest. What I am arguing is that the newly emphasized identity of the navy involves not only defending national security from North Korean military threats, but also defending and representing South Korea's interest and national standing internationally through various missions such as protecting trade routes in international waters and military cooperation with foreign countries. In other words, international operations became part of the "*essence*" of the ROK navy. The navy's most popular slogan "to the sea, to the world" which was adopted in 1992 well reflects such new identity of the navy.⁴⁹⁹ Both the traditional missions and those based on newly defined

⁴⁹⁸ The identity (of an organization) that I employed here can be also conceptualized as "constitutive norms" that are often associated with role identities. In this conceptualization, according to Abdelal et al, norms associated with certain identities help to "define social meaning by establishing collective expectations and individual obligations" rather than "specifying the ends of action." See Rawi Abdelal et al. "Identity as a Variable." In *Measuring Identity: A Guide For Social Scientists*, by Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston and Rose McDermott. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. p. 21.

⁴⁹⁹ Interview with Admiral An Byeongtae, May 25, 2011.

identity are ultimately for the promotion of national interest of South Korea. What was about to change at that time was *how and with what means* the navy contribute to it.

Until the late 1970s, the primary instrument that the ROK navy preferred was clearly small ships for addressing North Korea's infiltrations. For example, when the ROK navy was building 1,500 ton *Ulsan* class frigates (then Korean style destroyers), Admiral Kim Jonggon, then Chief of Naval operations, appealed the necessity of building smaller ships to the administration in 1979. According to Oh Woncheol, the then advisor to President Park Chung Hee on economic policy (including defense industry), Admiral Kim told him that it would be better to have a lot of small ships than to have a small number of large ships to defend long coast lines of South Korea.⁵⁰⁰ This is how the acquisition of 1,000 ton corvettes started. These corvettes have been main forces of the ROK navy's coastal operations.⁵⁰¹ This anecdote illustrates how the ROK navy defined its organizational identity at that time.

Although the navy started to be assertive about its new organizational identity at the beginning of the 1990s, the identity change did not happen abruptly; it involved a gradual formation process from the 1980s. It was 1980 when the ROK navy stipulated the "Navy Objectives" in the Basic Navy Policy Instructions for the first time. The objectives at that time were to protect the seas that affect national interest by maintaining/strengthen naval power and securing command at sea. The navy made a major revision to it in 1983. According to the revised version, "the Republic of Korea navy is, as maritime forces for national defense, to deter war with autonomous naval power, to win wars by securing

⁵⁰⁰ Woncheol Oh. *Hangukhyeong Gyeongjeonseol: Engineering Approach, Je 5 Kwon (Korean-style Construction of Economy: Engineering Approach, Vol. 5)*. Seoul: Kia Gyeongje Yeonguso, 1996. p. 441.

⁵⁰¹ As of 2012, the ROK navy operates 27 corvettes. ROKS *Cheonan*, which was sunk by a North

command at sea, to promote national interest by protecting maritime resources, and enhance national standing through the show of national power.”⁵⁰² There was a final revision in 1993 in which wordings were slightly modified. As such, in theory, promoting national interest and national standing in international relations was part of core missions that the navy defined. However, as I will discuss shortly, the navy was not so assertive about its roles related to those missions in the 1980s. Moreover, according to Admiral Kang Yeong-o, former Commander of the Naval Education Command, the real roles that the ROK navy conducted at that time had little relevance to national level goals and interests, particularly in comparison with advanced navies such as those of the United States and England.⁵⁰³

So, the navy’s vocal emphasis on defending and representing the nation as its essential roles at around the end of the Cold War was part of the navy’s efforts to define the appropriate roles for the nation, particularly given the newly forming identity of South Korea: a nation whose leaders and the people increasingly view as a sovereign state that aims to be an international player in the twenty-first century. As I explained above, a nation-wide prominent theme at that time was ‘to the world.’ Although North Korea remains South Korea’s foreign policy priority, South Korea was expected to have increased engagement with other foreign countries and strong representation on the world stage. The South Korean people were beginning to see their nation in broader relations with various countries in the world. For example, the Roh Tae Woo administration’s

Korean torpedo attack in 2010 belongs to this class.

⁵⁰² It is interesting to note that the enhancement of national standing is part of the official organizational objectives. See the ROK navy official website at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.jsp?menu=1&smenu=5&ssmenu=4&sssmenu=1.

⁵⁰³ Yeong-o Kang. "Hangukhaegunui Yeokhaljeongui (Defining the Role of the Republic of Korea Navy)." *Strategy 21, Vol.1*, Summer, 1998: pp. 36-58.

Nordpolitik that started with the normalization with Russia in 1990 is an event indicative of such South Korea's new identity because it was considered the beginning of South Korea's all-round-diplomacy as opposed to half-diplomacy that had been limited to the Western or democratic countries during the Cold War period.⁵⁰⁴ For naval leaders who are familiar with how the navy can be employed for the nation, there was an imperative to be assertive about the necessity for new equipment that would provide the navy with capability to perform essential missions that it had been defining.

Halperin defines the organizational essence as “the view held by the dominant group in the organization of what the missions and capabilities should be.”⁵⁰⁵ My position is similar to Halperin's in that such organizational essence is very difficult to change once it is established in an organization. However, Halperin highlights the bureaucratic politics aspect in which actors can put the consideration of organizational essence even before that of national interest. In this regard, my position in explaining the ROK navy's development diverges from Halperin's because I observe that the ROK naval officers identified national interest with the organizational essence of the navy. Indeed, as Levy and Thompson argue, it is sometimes difficult to know whether an actor's preference reflects his/her concerns about organizational interests or whether it reflects his/her genuine beliefs that “what is best for the organization is best for the country.”⁵⁰⁶ The naval leaders truly believed that ocean-going capability is required not only because it is part of the organizational essence

⁵⁰⁴ A statement by Park, Cheoleon, former Minister of State for Political Affairs and assembly man who was at the center of the *Nordpolitik* in a documentary film “*Hanguk Hyeondaesa Jeungeon TV Jaseojeon* (TV Autobiography: Testimonies about Korean Modern History)” broadcast on KBS1, April 1, 2012.

⁵⁰⁵ Morton H. Halperin. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974. With the assistance of Priscilla Clapp and Arnold Kanter. p. 28.

⁵⁰⁶ Jack S. Levy, and William R. Thompson. *Causes of War*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. p. 164.

the navy has been defining, but also because it would make the navy perform appropriate roles for the interest and standing of the nation whose leaders increasingly viewed in a new light. With the BWN initiative, they were highlighting the facts that, although the importance of maritime power had been underappreciated until then in South Korea, the navy should be considered a useful instrument for national security, economic activities, and foreign policy for the New Korea, particularly given the growing importance of the seas as resources and routes that connect countries in a globalized world.⁵⁰⁷

Looking through the prism of the SI perspective, the voluntary initiative from the navy can be understood as internal support from elites in society who subscribe to the goal of state-led competitive progress in the modern world.⁵⁰⁸ As state-directed development efforts for progress at the world level create competitive dynamics among different states, internal support for their own states from domestic actors would also emerge. Many naval leaders and politicians supported their arguments about developing an ocean-going navy with the logics about how other countries have been competitively developing naval capabilities for the purpose of protecting their maritime interest.⁵⁰⁹ Admiral An Byeongtae who officially made the BWN initiative a naval policy in 1995 makes comments that are indicative of this point: “South Korea was aiming to become an advanced nation at that time. How could we (the navy) possibly support the nation’s vision with a bunch of small boats?”⁵¹⁰ Indeed, many attentive observers find that the initiative for the transformation

⁵⁰⁷ Hoseop Jeong. "HangukHaegungwa Daeyanghaeguneul Dulleossan Je Nonjaengui Bunseok gwa Saeroun Haeseok (The Analysis and New Interpretation of arguments about the ROK Navy and the Blue Water Navy)." *Hayangyeongunonchong*, Vol. 17, 1996. p. 325.

⁵⁰⁸ For the theoretical discussion of this point, see Chapter 2.

⁵⁰⁹ I demonstrate this point in the next chapter.

⁵¹⁰ Author’s interview with Admiral An Byeongtae on May 25, 2011.

of South Korea's naval force structure went hand in hand with South Korea's long term visions for the globalization.⁵¹¹

One may argue that the BWN initiative may simply represent an adjustment in required tasks for the navy from coastal defense against North Korea to internationally oriented missions. However, such an argument would look more plausible if the new tasks were given or approved by higher authorities in government such as the Ministry of National Defense (MND), the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), or the Administration. As I will explain in the next chapter, the BWN initiative was hardly accepted and established as an official policy at the level of those higher military authorities. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the navy was given a new kind of tasks when it had no proper equipment (i.e. ocean-going combat ships) or no plans to acquire them at the level of higher military authorities. For the ROK navy, to call for building bigger naval ships from scratch was an enormous commitment that required a lengthy and arduous process of fighting oppositions and government bureaucracies. More importantly there was no guarantee that the navy's push for building bigger ships that will represent national interest on the international stage would be successful. The navy would not have been able to make this commitment without a fundamental change in the way of understanding the *essence* of the organization.

Indeed, as Professor Lee Seonho points out, defining the identity of the organization was critical to the ROK navy.⁵¹² The ROK navy had preliminary plans to build big sized

⁵¹¹ For the arguments related to this point, see Jeong. "HangukHaegungwa Daeyanghaeguneul Dulleossan Je Nonjaengui Bunseokgwa Saeroun Haeseok (The Analysis and New Interpretation of arguments about the ROK Navy and the Blue Water Navy)." p. 307. See also Chun-geun Lee. "Hanguk Haegunnyeok Jeunggangui Noli (The Logics for the Growth of South Korea's Naval Power)." *Strategy 21, Vol. 1*, 1998. p. 61.

⁵¹² Seonho Lee. "21 Segi Hanguk Haegunui Immuwa Haegunnyeok (The Missions of the ROK navy and naval power in the 21st Century)." *Je 4 Hoi Hamsang Toronhoi (The 4th Navy Shipboard Conference)*. Geryong: Haegun Bonbu(The ROK Navy Headquarters), 1995. pp. 338-388.

naval ships even before the BWN initiative came along. According to Admiral An Byeongtae, (Chief of Naval Operations, 1995-1996) there were plans to build big ships such as Korean Destroyers Experimental (KDX)-1, II, and III when he was in charge of force construction plans between 1983 and 1986.⁵¹³ However, no one in the navy at that time thought about going for a blue water navy. The existing plans were part of the *Yulgok* Project that was implemented as a national military construction plan for autonomous defense capability since 1974.⁵¹⁴ Particularly, KDX-I (3,000 ton class) started as a force modernization plan to replace the old second-hand destroyers that the ROK navy received from the U.S. Navy in the 1960s. KDX-II was designed as a little bit bigger than KDX-I. There was no specific plan or design for KDX-III. There was no overarching theme that runs through the different weapons acquisition plans. Assemblyman Jeong Daecheol points out at the 1994 National Assembly inspection on the navy that the Joint Strategic Objective Plan (JSOP) submitted by the navy does not clearly reflect what kind of navy it intended to construct.⁵¹⁵ According to Professor Hwang Byeongmu at the National Defense University, “prior to modernizing weapon systems, defining the role of the navy should precede. However, the ROK navy had been trying to do it backward.”⁵¹⁶

From the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, the ROK navy started to make more rigorous efforts to make it clear in and outside the navy about what kind of navy it should be. A rough dividing point between the old and new identities of the navy is 1990. This

⁵¹³ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae on May 25, 2011. According to Admiral An, he was the officer in charge of the force construction plan in the 1980s.

⁵¹⁴ For the details about the *Yulgok* Project, see Chapter 3.

⁵¹⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1994 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1994. p. 23.

⁵¹⁶ Cited in Heunghwan Lee. "Hanguk haegun 'Banghyangta' neun Inneunga (Does the ROK Navy Ever Have a Rudder)." *Sisa Journal*, February 16, 1995.

was the time when the phrase “blue water navy” appeared in debates between the navy and politicians for the first time as an expression that described the future image of the ROK navy. More importantly from this time on, senior naval officers started to associate the ROK navy with the advancement of national interest and the prosperity of South Korea in the future. One can tell the obvious differences in the ways that the navy viewed itself between before and after 1990 by looking at introduction statements made by Chiefs of Naval Operations (CNOs) before the National Assembly. For example, in 1988 and 1989, Admiral Kim Jongho, then CNO of the ROK navy emphasized that the navy maintained perfect combat readiness (against potential North Korea’s military provocations) and created conditions in which the people can trust the military.⁵¹⁷ In contrast, in 1990, the main emphasis was placed on the fact that “the ROK navy is establishing the foundation to become a blue water navy that protects national interest and the freedom of maritime (economic) activities, and that plays a leading role in making South Korea a prosperous nation in the coming twenty-first century.”⁵¹⁸ As such, while the navy leader focused on emphasizing its missions related to North Korean military threat and domestic stability before 1990, the focus shifts to a broader concern about nation’s prosperity after 1990.

Another important factor related to year 1990 is the ROK navy’s participation in a multinational combined exercise called the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC). Before the National Assembly members, Admiral Kim Jongho proudly reports that the ROK navy

⁵¹⁷ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1988 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1988. pp. 1-2. National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1989 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1989. pp. 1-2.

⁵¹⁸ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1990 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1990. pp. 1-2.

participated in the RIMPAC exercise along with advanced navies for the first time and successfully demonstrated the ROK navy's capability in front of the international participants.⁵¹⁹ The RIMPAC exercise is the largest multinational naval exercise in the Pacific that has been conducted in and around the Hawaiian islands biennially since 1971 under the leadership of the U.S. Third Fleet.⁵²⁰ Various units and commanders of the Navy and marine from twenty-two countries participated in the 2012 PIMPAC.⁵²¹ The ROK navy was invited to participate in the exercise by Admiral James D. Watkins, then Chief of Naval Operations of the U.S. Navy, at the Navy Leadership Talk between the U.S. and the ROK navy in October 1982.⁵²² After a five year review period, the Ministry of National Defense (MND) sent two senior naval officers as observers to the exercise in July 1988 as a preparatory measure. The MND made a final decision to approve the participation of the ROK navy in November 1988 because it saw the navy's points that emphasized growing importance of securing Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) and military cooperation with advanced countries in the Pacific.⁵²³

Probably, the most widely acknowledged benefits for the ROK navy from participating in the exercise would be learning advanced tactics and knowledge related to more diverse naval operations than littoral operations. This was about the time when the ROK navy set out to become a navy that can defend and represent South Korea's national interest in international waters. Such navy's missions inevitably involve protecting trading routes or

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ For detail information, access <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/rimpac.htm>. See also Naval Operations Concept 2010, The United States Navy.

⁵²¹ For detailed information, see the website of the U.S. Pacific Command at <http://www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/2012/forces>.

⁵²² Kwangju Park. "Daeyanghaegun Seongjang Mitgeoreum/ Haegun, Hwantaepyeongyang Hunryeon Chamga Uimi (The Foundation for Growing into Blue Water Navy / The Meaning of the Navy's Participation in the RIMPAC Exercise)." *Segye Ilbo*, March 25, 1990: p. 13.

SLOCs in the open oceans. Since one of the main goals of the RIMPAC exercise is to enhance SLOC defense capabilities in the Pacific, the substance of the exercise perfectly matched the ROK navy's need.

However, from the SI point of view that emphasizes the diffusion of norms and institutional practices in transnational professional fields, there is a more important, maybe deeper, consequence of such an international exposure: it reinforced the formation process of the ROK navy's new identity. As Wendt argues, identity is recognized through social interaction in relation to others.⁵²⁴ By participating in such international event, members of the ROK navy reflect on the status of their own navy and the nation. This may involve mixed impressions. On the one hand, they may be stimulated by the relative backwardness of the ROK navy. Two South Korean navy ships were sent to the 1990 RIMPAC: ROKS *Seoul* and ROKS *Masan*. Although they were proudly touted as Korean-style destroyers at that time, they were in fact frigates with 1,500 ton displacement and no ocean-going capabilities, which have been used mainly for the purpose of anti-infiltration operations. Their operation capabilities were extremely limited in the ocean in comparison with other advanced countries' large combat ships (ranging from 4,000 to 9,000 tons). Those who observed and participated in the exercise expressed deep concerns about limited capability and incompatibility of the ROK navy ships with other international navies and emphasized the necessity for building ocean-going ships.⁵²⁵

⁵²³ Ibid.

⁵²⁴ Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2, Jun.1994: pp. 384-396. This dimension of identity is conceptualized as "relational comparisons" which highlights social and relational dimension of identity that is defined by the actors' relation or interaction with others. See Abdelal et al. "Identity as a Variable" In *Measuring Identity*. p. 23.

⁵²⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1989 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

On the other hand, by participating in such an international event, the members of the ROK navy start to perceive themselves as the ones who represent South Korea in the international naval community. At the same time, the participation implies that the ROK navy has become part of the international community. The ROK navy crew members are exposed to world naval culture. They observe common practices among international navies including up-to-date naval tactics and equipment as well as social events. They share current issues that international navies take seriously and exchange different views. Particularly, for naval officers who are well aware of the fact that the popular theme in South Korea was ‘going out to the world,’ advanced ocean-going ships of foreign navies that represented their own countries may have been viewed as some kind of norms that are internationally established. In this sense, those equipment and practices of advanced countries are cultural resources that serve as repertoire of actions for the ROK navy.⁵²⁶ As such, both by feeling frustrated because of the relative backwardness and being encouraged by the fact that the ROK navy is becoming part of international navy community, the international exposure has reinforced the process of identity formation of the ROK navy and the direction of force construction toward an ocean-going navy.

Since around 1990 up to 1994, the ROK navy’s newly forming identity and the direction of force transformation had become increasingly clearer. The expression “blue water navy” appeared in the public announcement for the first time. Admiral Kim Cheolwu argued in his inauguration as CNO in September 1991 that the ROK navy should go beyond North Korea-related missions, and that it should become a blue water navy

Korea, 1989. p. 20. See also National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1995. p. 18.

⁵²⁶ Ann Swidler. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review*, Vol.

which can defend our nation's free maritime activities from potential threats.⁵²⁷ Since then, he frequently used the term "blue water navy" in both public events and policy debates.⁵²⁸ The next CNO, Admiral Kim Hong-ryeol, associated the navy's role more closely with South Korea's national policy by using phrases like "the navy's missions demanded in our time," "the navy as an instrument of national policy," and the "blue water navy sailing out to the world."⁵²⁹

In this period, there were several important developments that paved the way to an official launch of the BWN initiative. To begin with, the ROK navy started to make efforts to open public debates about the appropriate roles and force structure of the navy in the coming decades. In doing so, the navy sought expert opinions from academia. Professor Han Yongseop at the National Defense University points out that the navy's reliance on academia was a smart and successful move because it made the debate about naval power introduced to the society through authoritative sources. At the same time, it minimized the possibility that the debate was misinterpreted as a move based on the navy's bureaucratic interest.⁵³⁰

Such efforts by the navy developed into more systematic and regular activities. The examples include the International Sea Power Symposium (ISPS) and the Navy Shipboard

51, No. 2, Apr., 1986: pp. 273-286.

⁵²⁷ Seoul Shinmun. "Haechamchongjang Yichiimshik (Change of Command of the Navy)." *Seoul Shinmun*, September 6, 1991: p. 2.

⁵²⁸ Donga Ilbo. "Haesasaeng Sunhanghullyeon Cheot Segyeilju (The First Around the World Cruising Train for the Navy Midshipmen)." *Donga Ilbo*, September 14, 1992: p. 21. See also National Assembly Secretariat, National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1992 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly. pp. 1-2.

⁵²⁹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1993. p. 2. National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1994 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1994. pp. 2-3.

⁵³⁰ Author's interview with Professor Han Yongseop, May 20, 2011.

Conference that the ROK navy has hosted annually since 1989 and 1992 respectively.⁵³¹ Particularly, the Navy Shipboard Conference is unique in that it always takes place on a real naval ship that maneuvers at sea. These activities included speakers and discussants not only from prestigious universities in and outside South Korea but also from international navies. For example, one of the speakers in the ISPS held in 1995 whose theme was 'Sea Power and the Future of South Korea in the Globalization Era' was Vice Admiral Archie R. Clemens, the Seventh Fleet Commander of the U.S. Navy. Admiral Clemens gave an encouraging speech for the future of South Korea and its navy by citing Mahan's theory and the growth of the U.S. Navy.⁵³² According to Professor Lee Chun-geun who participated in numerous such debates including the first Navy Conference, it was interesting to see that most scholars and journalists took supportive positions about South Korea's need for a navy with ocean-going ships at that time.⁵³³ Indeed, these navy-hosted activities served as venues for the exchange of ideas and seed beds for societal consensus on South Korea's naval development.

Another kind of important developments was, again, the ROK navy's international exposures. First, the ROK navy midshipmen conducted the first across-the-world cruise training in 1992. Since 1954, the ROK navy has annually conducted overseas cruise trainings for graduating midshipmen. Training in a given year normally has a regional focus in terms of the areas that the cruise training detachment sails around and visits. However, the 1992 training involved the most extensive traveling ever across the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Indian oceans including port visits of 14 different

⁵³¹ See the official website of the ROK navy at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.jsp?menu=1&smenu=5&ssmenu=5&sssmenu=10. (accessed on January 30, 2012)

⁵³² Dang Kim. "Hanguk Haegun 'Daeyang'euro Nagara (The ROK Navy, Sail out to the Oceans)." *Sisa Journal*, August 17, 1995.

countries.⁵³⁴ This across-the-world sailing was considered an epoch-making event at the time that symbolized South Korea's initiative for reaching out to the world.⁵³⁵

Second, the ROK navy ships paid a friendly visit to the port of Vladivostok in Russia in September 22, 1993 for the first time in return for Russian ships' visit to Busan, South Korea in the previous month. The exchange of port visits took place in commemoration of the normalization between Russia and South Korea in 1990. The port visit to Russia became particularly an attention-grabbing event because the navy invited a number of scholars and journalists. Such an event helped the navy share with the civilians all experiences in Russia including tours to various Russian navy ships and base facilities that were much more advanced than those of South Korea. So, the port visit served as another opportunity to create an environment for debates about the importance of having an ocean going navy.⁵³⁶ This was about the time when a couple of law makers started seriously expressing supportive opinions about transforming the ROK navy to an ocean going navy as I will explain in detail in the next chapter.⁵³⁷ What was more important, however, was that by sailing around the world and visiting foreign ports, the navy was conducting the kind of missions that it had emphasized since it set out to become a blue water navy. It was contributing to South Korea's foreign relations through military diplomacy. In spite of the fact that the biggest ships sent for the missions were domestically built small 1,500 ton

⁵³³ Author' interview with Professor Lee Chun-geun, May 21, 2011.

⁵³⁴ See the ROK navy official website at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.Jsp?Menu=5&smenu=3.

⁵³⁵ Kim Young Sam. *Presidential Speech at the 47th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, March 12, 1993. See also Byeongjun Ahn. "Guksanhowiham Gukjejeok Wiyonggwasi (Korea-made Frigates Internationally Demonstrate Grand Appearances)." *Seoul Shinmun*, October 12, 1992.

⁵³⁶ Junwu Ha. "Urigunham Cheoeum Russia Ganda (Our Naval Ships Vist Russia For the First Time)." *Donga Ilbo*, September 20, 1993: p. 2.

⁵³⁷ See National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*.

frigates, or perhaps *because of* that fact, those achievements in the beginning of the 1990s assured the ROK navy about what it should be doing for the nation and what it needed for the missions.⁵³⁸

While the idea about building an ocean going navy arose since the end of the 1980s, the ROK navy regards 1995 as the year in which it officially launched the Blue Water Navy initiative in public.⁵³⁹ First, the ROK navy presented its official position about the necessity for force transformation by publishing an unclassified booklet titled *The ROK Navy looking toward the 21st Century* in March 1995.⁵⁴⁰ Second, President Kim Young Sam emphasized in the commencement of the ROK Naval Academy that it was the time for the ROK navy to open the era of a blue water navy.⁵⁴¹ This was not the first time that a president mentioned about a blue water navy; President Roh Tae Woo mentioned it in the naval academy commencement of 1991. However, the president's remarks of 1995 had greater significance because the navy took them as a semi-official green light for pushing ahead the force construction initiative.⁵⁴² Moreover, since 1995, the phrase "blue water navy" has been emphasized by every president in every year's graduation ceremony of the naval academy until 2008 except 1998, which may imply that the initiative has gained some degree of momentum.

⁵³⁸ The ships that participated in the Across-the-world Cruise Training in 1992 were ROKS *Chungnam* (FF-953) and ROKS *Masan* (FF-955). The ships that entered Russia were ROKS *Cheonnam* (FF-957) and ROKS *Ulsan* (FF-951).

⁵³⁹ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1997. p. 27.

⁵⁴⁰ Seonggeol Kim. "Haegun 'Daeyanghaegunlon' Gongshik Jegi (The Navy Officially Proposes the Blue Water Navy Debate)." *The Hankyoreh*, March 7, 1995: p. 2.

⁵⁴¹ The speech delivered by President Kim Young Sam at the Commencement of the Naval Academy, March 24, 1995.

⁵⁴² For this position of the ROK navy, see Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 27.

The most critical event for the official launch of the BWN initiative is Admiral An Byeongtae's assuming the highest authority in the ROK navy, Chief of Naval Operation, in April 1995. Admiral An is the first navy leader who incorporated the blue water navy initiative into the navy policy objectives and announced it publicly. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, there were a great number of media reports about the BWN initiative right after this announcement. Admiral An proposed the goal in a specific and achievable manner; what Admiral An declared as one of the two main policy goals was "to prepare for the construction of a blue water navy for the future strategic environment."⁵⁴³ Previously, it was somewhat unclear about whether the phrase represented a real policy or a pure slogan, which may or may not have grounded in reality. The other main policy objective that Admiral An declared was "to maintain perfect military readiness for North Korean provocations." Thus, the traditional missions related to North Korea were not overlooked because of the emphasis on the blue water navy initiative. In fact, no naval leaders have ever deemphasized those traditional missions as part of the essence of the ROK navy.⁵⁴⁴

Then, what made Admiral An take such a bold action? Several contributing factors created a condition for the decision. First, Admiral An understood the organizational identity of the navy in terms of its relationship to the nation. According to Admiral An, what kind of navy we should build depends on the kind of national interest that the navy must defend.⁵⁴⁵ He admits that the ROK navy cannot and should not pursue the kinds of navies that great powers like the United States and Russia have. However, he also

⁵⁴³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1995. pp. 1-2.

⁵⁴⁴ This is an important point for the discussion of the termination of the blue water navy initiative in chapter 9 (Epilogue).

⁵⁴⁵ Cited in Yeong-o Kang. *Narawa Badaui Jollyak (National Strategy and Maritime Strategy)*.

emphasizes that the ROK navy should not remain as a coastal or regional navy in order to maintain national standing in a globalized world in the future where South Korea should be cooperating and, at the same time, competing with other advanced countries.⁵⁴⁶ These arguments clearly reveal the images of the nation and the ROK navy that he holds. He does not view South Korea's national standing as anything below those of other advanced countries. At the same time, he understands the navy as a major instrument in maintaining South Korea's national standing.⁵⁴⁷ As an interesting anecdote related to this point, Admiral An had a chance to propose a toast at a state dinner with President Kim Young Sam and numerous government officials. In doing this, he used the navy slogan "to the sea, to the world" wisely: "Since our national goal is to make South Korea an advanced country that goes out to the world, the ROK navy ships will serve as the vehicles for the global reach. I will say 'to the sea,' then all of you respond to it by saying 'to the world.'" It turned out to be a great hit. Since then, "to the sea, to the world" has been used as a toast remark in almost all official and unofficial navy occasions.⁵⁴⁸

Second, Admiral An had been personally involved in force construction projects including some preliminary efforts for the blue water navy initiative before he assumed the CNO. Given his career path and personal beliefs in naval power, it is not surprising to see him take such a bold blue water navy initiative. Admiral An once served as director of the Force Construction department in the Navy Headquarters. He is known as the one who made a recommendation to establish the annual Navy Shipboard Conference as a way to promote the idea about the importance of the navy and the sea for the advancement of

Seoul: Korea Institute for Maritime Strategy, 2007. p. 323.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁷ Note that it is not clear whether he is singling out 'national standing' as the primary reason for having an ocean going navy necessarily as opposed to national interest because he uses them both.

South Korea. At the second Navy Shipboard Conference in 1993, he even argued that the ROK navy should acquire strategic weapons such as aircraft carriers and nuclear propulsion submarines.⁵⁴⁹ When he was Commander, Republic of Korea Fleet (ROKFLT) as a vice admiral in rank, he was well known as a key designer of the blue water navy project and the ROK navy's globalization.⁵⁵⁰ Thus, he had been already at the center of the blue water navy initiative in the making.

His personal experiences also reinforced his beliefs in the necessity of the ROK navy's ocean-going capability. As the SI perspectives predict, naval officers are the ones who experience strong pressure related to progresses in the professional field, and those experiences often involve international contacts. For example, when he was the Commander of the Second Fleet on the West coast in 1991, he received a report that a Chinese combat ship was approaching to an oil drilling area in the middle of the international water in the West Sea. Because the oil drilling was conducted by a foreign company hired by the South Korean government, the ROK navy had the responsibility for the security of the drilling activity. Admiral An (rear admiral at that time) realized that the best asset he could dispatch was a 1,500 ton frigate, which is much smaller than the 4,000 ton Chinese combatant at the scene. It was not the situation of hostile engagement between the two navies because the Chinese ship had not shown any aggressive intention. Moreover, the Chinese ship had the right to sail in the area because any vessel has the right of innocent passage in the international water. However, it was definitely the moment that

⁵⁴⁸ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae on May 25, 2011.

⁵⁴⁹ Seongil Hong. "Jungil Haegunlyeokjunggang Daeung Urido Hanggongmoham Piryo (We Need Aircraft Carrier in response to Naval Expansions of Neighboring Countries) ." *Segye Ilbo*, May 24, 1993: p. 22.

⁵⁵⁰ Junggun Lee. "Dajangseungjin Insabaegyeong (Backgrounds of Promotions to Generals/Admirals)." *Gyounghyang Shinmun*, March 26, 1995: p. 2.

the ROK navy should demonstrate its presence in the area. According to my interview with Admiral An, he strongly wished at that time that his fleet had had a combat ship of the equivalent size with the Chinese ship.⁵⁵¹ He emphasized that it was a matter of pride as a member of the ROK navy. So he responded to the situation by sending an S-2 aircraft to the scene instead of a surface ship to avoid an encounter, and thereby, comparison between surface ships of the two countries.

This anecdote demonstrates how important the ways the naval leader views his nation and organization that he belongs to. Suppose that he regarded South Korea as a small or inferior power as opposed to China, a great power. Moreover, imagine that he took it for granted that the ROK navy's main mission is to defend South Korea from North Korean spy boats, which makes the ROK navy's possession of small combat ships the perfect force structure. He felt ashamed because he believed that South Korea was an equally sovereign state, and that the navy should be able to represent its nation proudly in international settings. Again, identities stand out through social interactions.

Lastly, Admiral An had confidence in the ROK navy in terms of its ability to build and operate more sophisticated ships. According to his words, "based on the achievements that the ROK navy had made so far, the force transformation oriented to ocean-going capability was doable."⁵⁵² Indeed, although the main forces of the ROK navy were small combatants that are suitable for coastal operations, those ships were proudly designed and built by the navy and domestic shipbuilders. Therefore, the ROK navy has accumulated institutional and technological know-how for designing and building own naval ships. Moreover, it was the time that changes were taking place in the appearance of the ROK navy. The ROK

⁵⁵¹ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae, May 25, 2011.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

navy launched its first submarine, ROKS *Chang Bo Go* (SS-091), in 1992. By the time that Admiral An became the CNO, three submarines were delivered to the navy. On top of that, in 1995, the ROK navy started to operate P-3Cs, advanced Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) that it acquired from Lockheed Martin. Thus, the ROK navy was being equipped with so called ‘multi-dimensional’ capabilities including those of underwater and air operations, which is one of the characteristics of a modern navy.

With the official announcement of the initiative in 1995, the ROK navy defined the Blue Water Navy, which had been somewhat abstract until then. According to the definition, it is the navy with capabilities to protect national interests and support foreign policies in and outside regional sea areas.⁵⁵³ More specifically, the ROK navy should be able to influence the balance of naval power among regional countries, generate certain level of deterrence to protect its sovereignty, protect Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs), protect maritime activities for resources production, participate in multi-national security cooperation, and provide support to the U.N. Peacekeeping operations.

The desired capabilities suggest that the ROK navy tried to build a bigger navy not based on specific or imminent military threat, which is an important factor in realist IR theories. Rather, it seems that the navy was trying to become a normal navy that can protect the nation’s interest and sovereignty. More importantly, it was defining the participation in multi-national military cooperation and contribution to international peacekeeping activities as core capabilities that the ROK navy should have. According to Yu Samnam, former Minister of Marine Affairs and Fishery and CNO of the ROK navy, there was a consensus among retired naval admirals that South Korea has achieved certain

⁵⁵³ Jeong. "HangukHaegungwa Daeyanghaeguneul Duleossan Je Nonjaengui Bunseokgwa Saero un Haeseok (The Analysis and New Interpretation of arguments about the ROK Navy and the Blue

degree of economic power and international status, and that it should contribute to and participate in activities of the international community to the degree that is proportional to such improved status.⁵⁵⁴ Minister Yu also says that frequent combined operations with the units of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Japan reinforced the belief that the ROK navy should be capable enough to participate in combined operations with advanced countries like the United States and Japan. These thoughts of retired admirals were communicated to the navy and they were reflected in the concept of BWN force construction.⁵⁵⁵ This demonstrates part of the mechanisms behind the BWN initiative in which naval officers were concerned about appropriate roles of the ROK navy based on the national identity or image that they held. At the same time, as the SI perspectives predict, international engagements influenced the development in the professional field (the navy) in an important way.

With the official announcement, the ROK navy also made decisions about the specific designs for the ships to be newly acquired. KDX-II was decided to be multi-purpose destroyers with stealth capability whose ship-to-ground strike and air defense capabilities are significantly enhanced compared to those of KDX-I. As the KDX-III project, the navy decided to build 7,600 ton class Aegis destroyers that would provide theater air defense with standard missiles and the most advanced radar systems in the world. Submarines of about 3,000 ton displacement became part of the force construction plan. Particularly, big-deck amphibious landing ships that can launch vertical landing operations using rotary wing aircrafts were designed to play flexible roles because they can also support the Operations Other Than War (OOTW) such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Water Navy)." p. 312.

⁵⁵⁴ Author's interview with Minister Yu Samnam, May 31, 2011.

These elements would constitute mobile Task Groups which would serve as the backbone of the blue water capability of the ROK navy.⁵⁵⁶

Then, what differences did the BWN initiative make? In other words, what were the consequences from the initiative that were conducive to force construction or transformation? One of the most important consequences was that the BWN initiative established or made explicit the meanings of the naval forces that are closely associated with South Korea's national interest and national standing in the future. By employing the BWN slogan, naval leaders were imposing the special *meanings* to the ocean-going ships that the ROK navy had just started to build. The meanings could be easily shared by the people outside the navy because it had strong implications for the advancement of their nation. In other words, while the navy's initiative was a declaration of its organizational identity, it conveyed to the politicians and the people what the ocean-going naval ships meant to them. As the SI approach observes, the modern nation-state has become the only legitimate authority that can officially mobilize a collective identity and cultural loyalty from the citizen.⁵⁵⁷ Once a linkage between the nation and the navy was established, the development of the navy became part of the advancement of South Korea as one of essential elements. Particularly, the navy's international missions including military diplomacy and multinational cooperation matched perfectly with South Korea's national initiative that emphasized international engagement and recognition.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Jeong. "HangukHaegungwa Daeyanghaeguneul Duleossan Je Nonjaengui Bunseokgwa Saeroun Haeseok (The Analysis and New Interpretation of arguments about the ROK Navy and the Blue Water Navy)." p. 320.

⁵⁵⁷ Connie L. McNeely. *Constructing the Nation-State: International Organization and Prescriptive Action*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995. p. 19.

The meanings, however, are not necessarily created by the navy. The meanings of great naval ships associated with the status of a nation have been part of institutions established at the world cultural level. As I elaborated in chapter 2, it is not difficult to find such examples in history. Another way of making this argument is that, if they had been other military weapons such as tanks, trucks, or rifles, the same effects may not have happened. As Eyre and Suchman argue, some weapons are highly institutionalized while others are not in the modern world system in which “sovereignty, modernity, and independence are the essence of our ideas about the nation-state.”⁵⁵⁸ Indeed, port visits by naval ships symbolize friendly diplomatic relations between countries. It is very hard to imagine a visit by a fighter aircraft or an army tank to a foreign country as a diplomatic gesture. Thus, with the BWN initiative, the ROK navy deployed well established cultural tools intentionally and unintentionally.

In a sense, the phrase ‘blue water navy’ took on symbolic meanings that represent South Korea’s national standing and pride. The symbolic elements of the BWN initiative can be conceptualized as what O’Neill calls “value symbols.”⁵⁵⁹ According to O’Neill, a value symbol is characterized with affect and multiplicity of meaning.⁵⁶⁰ A value symbol has ‘affect’ in the sense that “people hold a strong attitude toward the ideas it represents.”⁵⁶¹ With regard to the multiplicity of meaning, O’Neill explains as follows:

“A value symbol unites various ideas under one cognitive entity, and thus creates a synergy among the emotions attached to each of them. A national flag represents its country in the geographical sense, as well as its history, culture, and institutions. When

⁵⁵⁸ Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in the World Politics*, by Peter J. Katzenstein, pp. 79-113. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. p. 96.

⁵⁵⁹ Barry O'Neill. *Honor, Symbols, and War*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. p. 7.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

these are united in the flag, the group's positive attitude toward each is augmented by the rest."⁵⁶²

Indeed, there is ample evidence demonstrating that the politicians and the people of South Korea, even the navy, attached many different ideas and emotions to the 'blue water navy' slogan and newly built ships. According to one editorial of a newspaper, the blue water navy slogan with the images of going out to the world and representing South Korea in the world made a deep impression on the people.⁵⁶³ The blue water navy initiative represented not only national security and interest, but also ideas and emotions related to South Korean-ness including South Korea's sovereignty, national pride, standing in the world and hopes for the future. If the ROK navy simply purchased advanced ships from a foreign contractor, these feelings might not have been attached to the foreign ships. For example, when ROKS *Gwanggaeto the Great*, the first Korean built destroyer (KDX-I), was launched in 1996, the ROK navy and the media proudly presented that the ship was designed and built by South Korea's own knowledge and technology, and that the launching was the first step toward a blue water navy.⁵⁶⁴ In fact, the US made destroyers that the new KDX series would replace were very reliable, capable, and sturdy ships that the ROK navy had been operating for about 30 years although they did not have modern capabilities such as Close-In Weapon Systems (CIWS) and Vertical Launching Systems (VLS) that the new Korean destroyer has. Moreover, the sheer size and displacement of the new Korean destroyer are not significantly greater than those of the old US

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Seongjin Park. "Gun Seullogeongwa 'Paiting' (Military Slogans and 'Fighting')." *The Kyung hyang Shinmun*, March 2, 2007: p. 29.

⁵⁶⁴ Cheol Mun. "Uri Gisullo Seolgejejak / Guchukham Gwanggaetodaewangham Jinsui Uimi (Designed and Built by our technology / The Meanings of the Launch of ROKS *Ganggaeto the Great*)." *Donga Ilbo*, October 29, 1996.

destroyers.⁵⁶⁵ However, those U.S. made ships were not associated with such meanings that the blue water navy initiative represented.

One should note, however, that by ‘symbolic meanings,’ I do not mean that the real utilities and functions of the navy were ignored. As I have discussed so far, the main rationale behind the ROK navy’s BWN initiative was to promote national interest, which is a practical reason. It was symbolic to the degree that naval leaders, politicians, and the people attached such ideas and emotions associated with the nation that I mentioned above to the naval forces. Sometimes, I observe politicians argue that South Korea needs naval power at least that is corresponding to her national power and standing.⁵⁶⁶ Alternatively, this kind of argument about force construction involves comparing with other countries whose economic capacities, for example, are smaller than or similar to that of South Korea but has greater naval forces. I regard that these arguments have symbolic elements because they treat the size of the navy or naval ships as a token of national power or standing.

One should also note that, by ‘symbolic,’ I do not imply any lack of professional insights on national security issues of politicians and commentators. As Barry O’Neill argues, symbolic politics are quite prominent in international relations.⁵⁶⁷ O’Neill argues that the deployment of the intermediate range nuclear missiles by the United States to West Germany in the 1980s was a symbolic response to the Soviet Union’s deployment of SS-20s near Europe that resulted from motives around national honor. According to O’Neill’s definition, honor involves several elements including caring about one’s known

⁵⁶⁵ For example, the displacement of ex-US Gearing class destroyers that the ROK navy operated is 2,425 tons and 3,470 tons when it is fully loaded. The fully loaded displacement of ROKS Kwanggaeto the Great is 3,800 tons. See Captain Richard Sharpe ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships*. Frome and London: Butler & Tanner Ltd., 1991-92. The ROK navy official website accessed at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_pds.jsp?menu=3&smenu=1&ssmenu=4.

⁵⁶⁶ I demonstrate this point with specific examples in the next chapter.

reputation for honor and a “Don’t tread on me or mine” (or my group) component.⁵⁶⁸ By putting the nuclear missiles in West Germany, the United States publically demonstrated the willingness to pay the costs to defend its allies (my group) in Europe. O’Neill further argues that nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union itself involved the symbolic meaning of nuclear weapons rather than substantial effects that the weapons would produce.

Similarly, the consideration of national standing by political leaders, the military, and the people should not be dismissed as something insignificant or improper in foreign policy debates. Lebow conceptualizes standing as the “position an actor occupies in a hierarchy.”⁵⁶⁹ Since it is a relational concept, concerns about standing can lead to competition. Standing is also understood as a means to achieve one of the most important goals for social actors: self-esteem.⁵⁷⁰ Lebow argues that affronts to self-esteem have been “at least as great a source of war as threats to material well-being or security.”⁵⁷¹ As Larson et al. show, status-seeking behaviors of great powers have significant implications for peace and conflicts in international relations.⁵⁷² Indeed, as Lebow points out, social actors’ concerns about self-esteem and standing are factors in international relations as important as their consideration of wealth and security.⁵⁷³

Another important consequence of the BWN initiative was that the initiative provided an overarching theme for different weapons acquisition programs over different leader-

⁵⁶⁷ O’Neill. *Honor, Symbols, and War*.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid. pp. 86-92.

⁵⁶⁹ Richard Ned Lebow. *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. p. 66.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 64.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid. p. 131.

⁵⁷² Larson et al. "Status and World Order."

⁵⁷³ Lebow. *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*. p. 16.

ships for an extended period. From the navy's perspective, it provided consistency and cumulative effects for weapons acquisition. It also facilitated communication between the navy and politicians whose support and approval are critical for a successful acquisition of a weapon system. According to Gray, a particular weapon program "should lend itself to truthful, simple explanation both at the level of "bumper sticker" assertion ("The B-2 Deters!"; "MX for Peace!" and the like), and under close legislative scrutiny on an issue such as why 20 rather than 15 bombers are more likely to provide the quantity and quality of strategic effectiveness required for the support of policy."⁵⁷⁴ For the ROK navy's case, the BWN initiative served as a clear basis for the force construction plans that made such planning easier. During the BWN era, the navy did not have to come up with new justifications for every different type of ships including KDX-II, KDX-III, and a big deck landing ship. They were all understood as steps to building a 'blue water navy.'

The weapons acquisition was not the only area that benefitted from the initiative. The BWN initiative provided a condition in which the ROK navy could pursue improvements in other areas, such as policies related to personnel resources and education/training. For example, even by the time the policy initiative was officially launched, the situation of the ROK navy was such that many ships were left idle tied to pier sides because of the lack of crew to operate them.⁵⁷⁵ In fact, this is another aspect demonstrating the position of the navy that used to be an auxiliary military force in national defense. The long overdue personnel shortage problem was partly solved in 1995 because President Kim Young Sam

⁵⁷⁴ Colin S. Gray. *Weapons Don't Make War: Policy, Strategy, and Military Technology*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993. p. 73.

⁵⁷⁵ National Assembly Secretariat, National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly. p.14.

approved the increase in the number of officers and petty officers by 2,500.⁵⁷⁶ There were important players who made this happen. First, Admiral An as the CNO of the ROK navy continuously and strongly appealed the necessity for the increase to the national authorities. Second, the then security adviser to the president and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yu Jongha understood Admiral An's point about the growing importance of the navy and played a critical role in getting attentions from the President and other top military authorities and forging a consensus among them.⁵⁷⁷ According to Admiral An, however, he could not have been able to appeal the matter to the national authorities effectively without the BWN initiative as a basis or justification.⁵⁷⁸ Indeed, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the BWN initiative was employed by many lawmakers in the National Assembly inspection on the navy where the politicians bring about issues related to not only force construction but also broader issues like education, logistics, and work environment.

Lastly, the 'Blue Water Navy, to the Sea, to the World!' became a new catch phrase for the members of the ROK navy to break with old mindsets. As I discussed earlier, the army-centered structure of the ROK military and its dependence on the U.S. military for naval operations had been basic assumptions for the ROK navy's missions and force structure. At peacetime, the navy's main mission was supporting the main effort of the

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid. One should note that the increase in the number of officers and petty officers (E-5 and above) came at the expense of the decrease in the number of the enlisted of E-4 level and below by 2,500. This was a measure to keep the total size of the naval man power intact. For the details, see National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly. p.33.

⁵⁷⁷ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae on May 25, 2011. Also author's interview with Minister Yu Jongha on May 27, 2011. According to Minister Yu's personal accounts, he highlighted that it was a waste of national resources to leave naval ships built on people's tax money idle instead of taking side with the navy by saying that the navy deserved more resources.

⁵⁷⁸ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae on May 25, 2011.

army in preventing North Korean infiltration. In case of war, the U.S. Navy would come for help. These ways of thinking persisted in and outside the navy while South Korea was trying to become a more active player in the international community. The announcement of the BWN policy served as a momentum to share concerns and visions of senior naval officers with the rest of the navy members. They were encouraged to have more ambitious visions about their roles in representing their nation on the international stage. Admiral An Byeongtae argues that one of the most valuable consequences from the policy initiative was the visions that all the members of the navy from the enlisted to midshipmen in the Naval Academy to top leaders of the navy came to explicitly share. Indeed, by the time when the initiative took effect, many newly commissioned officers at the naval academy graduations told reporters that they joined the navy because they wanted to be part of the blue water navy that contributes to the advancement of the nation in the twenty-first century.⁵⁷⁹ As Admiral Kim Hyeoksu correctly points out, one of the most important influences of the BWN initiative is that the ROK navy opened its eyes because of the BWN initiative.⁵⁸⁰

So far, I have discussed about how the BWN initiative emerged and became official. The initiative was a product of the navy's effort to define its appropriate roles for South Korea whose identity was increasingly seen as a sovereign and legitimate member of the international community. I also discussed what effects the initiative created for the force transformation of the ROK navy. The implementation of the initiative, however, was not

⁵⁷⁹ Jeongho Kim. "Haesa Cheot Yeojanggyo, Shingohabnida (The Commisioning Ceremony of The First Female Naval Officers)." *Hankook Ilbo*, March 12, 2003: p. 26. Seongjin Park. "Haesa 'Onui Sangdo' Oppaga Suseok Joreop (Commissioning Brother and Sister, the Brother became the Valedictorian)." *The Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 12, 2003: p. 12.

⁵⁸⁰ Hyeoksoo Kim. "Daeyanghaegun Heose Burinjeok Eobda (We have not indulged ourselves in the vanity of the blue water navy)." *Chosun Ilbo*, May 7, 2010.

so smooth. Particularly, the initiative was not seen favorably at higher authorities of national defense. In the next chapter, I demonstrate how the initiative persisted despite the difficulties, and how different factors influenced the course of the implementation of the BWN initiative.

Chapter 7 An Eclectic Explanation based on the Sociological Institutional (SI)

Perspectives: The Continuation of the Blue Water Navy Initiative

I have explained how the ROK navy launched the BWN initiative in the last chapter. In this chapter, I demonstrate how the initiative continued for an extended period in spite of the fact that the initiative was not established as an official defense policy. In doing so, I examine three different groups of societal actors including the navy, political leaders, and the public. I argue that the navy maintained the BWN initiative because the characteristics of an ocean-going navy have been established as the organizational essence. I also demonstrate that the BWN initiative well resonated among political leaders and the people because people shared the image or identity of their nation and they associated it with the meanings of the blue water navy. This chapter consists of three sections in which I analyze the three different groups: the navy, political leaders, and the public. The political leaders section consists of two subsections that analyze perceptions held by presidents and the National Assembly members.

As in the previous chapter, my position in explaining the continuation of the BWN initiative is eclectic. I observe the effects of the organizational behavior model that highlights the organizational essence while I maintain the SI perspectives as my basic theoretical assumptions. I also argue that the SI perspectives provide conditions in which realist elements such as external threats and economic interests would influence the processes in which the BWN initiative was implemented. In other words, those elements would take effect through cultural elements. The effect of an external threat would differ

depending on how much the threat is relevant to the newly defined identity. For example, Japanese claim on *Dokdo* Island would strengthen the BWN drive because the issue is relevant to not only defending national sovereignty but also South Korea's national identity as an independent nation. However, conflicts between North Korea and South Korea would have less significant impacts on the direction of the naval force construction because South Korea's national identity has been newly defined in terms of its relations with the world rather than rivalry with North Korea. Similarly, the concerns about economic interests such as defending sea lanes of communication would become salient as political leaders and the people increasingly recognize that a sovereign state should be concerned about defending their own SLOCs.

The Navy

While the BWN initiative was ambitiously launched in 1995, the take-off was not very smooth. According to Admiral An, his policy initiative was not welcomed by the MND and the army, the most influential military service in South Korea.⁵⁸¹ Particularly, the then Minister of National Defense did not view the BWN slogan favorably regardless of what the slogan exactly meant because it implied the growth of the ROK navy.⁵⁸² The downside of being vocal about the initiative and making it an official policy was that the ROK navy and the policy drive became clear targets for other services' criticisms and even derision. Admiral Song Yeongmu recalls that many army officers laughed at the idea of dreaming about transforming the ROK navy into a blue water navy when he worked as a staff

⁵⁸¹ Author's interview with Admiral An Byeongtae, May 25, 2011.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

member at the ROK JCS.⁵⁸³ Indeed, it may have sounded unrealistic to build a navy with ocean-going capabilities when the biggest ships that the ROK navy designed and operated were 1,500 ton frigates which made some foreign navy members call the ROK navy as a “cute navy” during a RIMPAC exercise.⁵⁸⁴

Japanese renewed claim to *Dokdo* (known as Takeshima in Japan and Liancourt Rocks in the West), an island which is located in between the Korean peninsula and the main islands of Japan and *de facto* occupied by South Korea, expedited the implementation of the navy’s force construction plan. Particularly, then Japanese Minister of Foreign affairs, Ikeda Yukihiro’s remarks that the island belongs to Japan at a press conference on February 9, 1996 created an explosion of anti-Japanese sentiment in South Korea.⁵⁸⁵ The Japanese government raised the issue in the process of ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which was adopted in December 1982 and came into force in November 1994.⁵⁸⁶ Particularly, article 56 of the convention recognizes sovereign rights of a state to exploit, develop, and conserve all living and non-living natural resources in the water, on the seabed, and in the subsoil within the sea area called the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which extends 200 nautical miles from its shore.⁵⁸⁷ Thus, for Japan, it makes a significant difference to her maritime jurisdiction and interest

⁵⁸³ Author’s interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu on May 23, 2011.

⁵⁸⁴ Yeongtak Han. “Hamdae Peoreideu (Fleet Parade).” *Segye Ilbo*, August 16, 1996: p. 5.

⁵⁸⁵ Gyeongtaek Min. “Dokdomangeon Bulyong-Danhodaechoe (No Tolerance and Determined Response to the Absurd Remark about Dokdo).” *Kookmin Ilbo*, February 10, 1996: p. 1.

⁵⁸⁶ For the background of the convention, see the United Nations website at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_historical_perspective.htm#The United Nations. See also Hyeonsu Kim. *Haeyangbeopchongron (The Law of the Sea)*. Seoul: Chongmok, 2010. p. 24.

⁵⁸⁷ Article 56, Part V in Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. The United Nations, 10 December 1982.

depending on whether *Dokdo* belongs to the Japanese territory or not because the EEZ extends from the shore of the state's territory.

The Japanese on-again, off-again claims to *Dokdo* directly challenge the Korean identity as an independent and sovereign nation because they automatically bring back to the Korean people the memory of Japanese imperial occupation of Korea. In fact, *Dokdo* was the first Korean territory that Japan annexed in 1905 as part of territorial expansion which ultimately led to the colonization of the entire Korean peninsula in 1910. Japan utilized *Dokdo* as a naval port and observation post during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905).⁵⁸⁸ However, the island was returned to South Korea when Japan declared an "unconditional surrender" to the Allied Powers. Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers Instruction (SCAPIN) 677, a memorandum delivered to the Imperial Japanese government, clearly excludes Liancourt Rocks (Take Island) from the Japanese territory.⁵⁸⁹ Thus, the Japanese claims to the island constitute complete negation or what George Hicks calls "historical amnesia" about the past associated with its imperial expansion and South Korea's independence from it.⁵⁹⁰ Indeed, as Henry Shinn argues, for the Koreans, "*Dokdo* is an integral part of the nation's identity and a symbol of their resistance to past Japanese oppression."⁵⁹¹

While the Korean people responded furiously to the Japanese claims to the island, the previous administrations tried not to make it a diplomatic problem. For example, South Korea and Japan normalized the diplomatic relations in 1965 partly because of mutual

⁵⁸⁸ Henry Shinn. "Overview." In *Insight into Dokdo: Historical, Political and Legal Perspective on Korea's Sovereignty*, by The Korea Herald and Hyun-jin Park. Seoul: Jimoondang, 2009. pp. 29-31.

⁵⁸⁹ General Headquarters of Supreme Commander for Allied Powers. "Governmental and Administrative Separation of Certain Outlying Areas from Japan." SCAPIN-677, 29 January 1946.

⁵⁹⁰ George L. Hicks. *Japan's War Memories: Amnesia or Concealment?* Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997.

benefits from economic ties and partly because of a nudge from the United States in the Cold War security environment.⁵⁹² The problem was that the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea was signed without articulating the territorial issue related to *Dokdo*. Many South Korean people took to the street protesting the treaty. In response, the Park Chung Hee administration quickly suppressed the people's movements and, as a result, many protesting college students were put in jail.⁵⁹³ According to Assemblyman Jeong Mongjun, the South Korean foreign ministry failed to show any protesting gestures in response to Japanese intentional show of force around *Dokdo* at the end of the 1980s.⁵⁹⁴

President Kim Young Sam took a stronger stance against the Japanese challenge in 1996 than his predecessors. The administration issued a public statement that it would maintain a determined position about the sovereignty issue. At the same time, it employed strong measures such as cancelling a pre-planned courtesy call to the President by Japanese politicians and constructing port facilities in *Dokdo* for an improved flow of logistic support to the island.⁵⁹⁵ President Kim even said that he would teach the Japanese a lesson.⁵⁹⁶ The Kim administration took a firm stance not because it ignored the diplomatic and economic relations with Japan. Rather, it was because of the growing salience of sovereignty and national identity to the leaderships of the modern nation-state that was

⁵⁹¹ Shinn. "Overview." In *Insight into Dokdo*. pp. 36.

⁵⁹² Samuel S. Kim. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. p. 188.

⁵⁹³ Shinn. "Overview." In *Insight into Dokdo*. pp. 33.

⁵⁹⁴ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1992 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1992. p. 11.

⁵⁹⁵ Min. "Dokdomangeon Bulyong·Danhodaecho (No Tolerance and Determined Response to the Absurd Remark about Dokdo)."

⁵⁹⁶ Author's interview with Minister Yu Jongha, May 27, 2011.

trying to create the “New Korea which will stand tall and proud on the center stage” of a globalized world.⁵⁹⁷ One of the five major objectives of globalization that the Kim administration put forth was Koreanization, which means that “Only when we maintain our national identity and uphold our intrinsic national spirit will we be able to successfully globalize.”⁵⁹⁸

Against this backdrop, President Kim Young Sam wanted a specific plan from the Minister of National Defense “to significantly reinforce the naval forces” in February 1996.⁵⁹⁹ As the ROK navy had already established a force construction plan to transform the ROK navy to an ocean-going navy, the presidential order was a great opportunity for the navy to get a direct approval from the highest authority of the plan that had not been so welcomed by the MND and JCS. Admiral An reported the “Naval Forces Enhancement Plan” that included Aegis destroyers, big-deck landing ships, and 3,000 ton-class submarines directly to the President and got a signature from the President on the plan in April 1996. This presidential approval dramatically increased the pace of force transformation of the ROK navy. The BWN related ocean-going ships had been included originally in the long term plan that would have been implemented after the 2002 ~ 2005 period, if ever implemented.⁶⁰⁰ With the presidential approval, the force construction

⁵⁹⁷ Kim Young Sam. "Together on the Road to a New Korea (Inaugural Address delivered on February 25, 1993)." In *Korea's Quest for Reform and Globalization: Selected Speeches of President Kim Young Sam*, by The Presidential Secretariat. Seoul: The Presidential Secretariat, The Republic of Korea, 1995. p. 6.

⁵⁹⁸ Kim Young Sam. "Outlining the Blueprint for Globalization (Remarks at a Meeting with Members of the Committee for Globalization Policy, January 25, 1995)." In *Korea's Quest for Reform and Globalization*. p. 273.

⁵⁹⁹ Yongwon Yu. "Daeyanghaegun 10yeonyeon Apdanggyeo...Haegun Jeollyeokjeungganggye hoek (Earlier Construction of a Blue Water Navy by 10 Years....The ROK Navy Reinforcement Plan)." *Chosun Ilbo*, May 23, 1996.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

started immediately, which made it an early implementation of the plan by approximately ten years.⁶⁰¹

Despite the expedited implementation, the BWN initiative fell short of being established as an official policy that is endorsed by the MND. One can observe this fact by looking at the Defense White Papers. The only Defense White Paper containing the term “Blue Water Navy” is the one issued in 1995.⁶⁰² It was probably because of the strong push from the navy under Admiral An’s leadership. As I already suggested, national defense authorities such as the MND and JCS were reluctant to recognize the navy’s initiative. Moreover, they continued to raise problems related to the BWN initiative. For example, the then Minister of National Defense, Kim Dongjin argued at a TV news program in March 1997 that the ROK navy did not need aircraft carriers referring to the light carriers that President Kim Young Sam approved.⁶⁰³ In the same month, the JCS issued an official statement that it decided to downsize the new naval construction plan based on the blue water navy logic. The primary reason it provided was that the original plan may cause diplomatic problems with neighboring countries. The secondary reason was that, given the infiltration incident by a North Korean submarine in September 1996, the focus of the ROK navy should be coastal operations instead of blue water operations.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰¹ With regard to the Presidential approval, it was known that some officials found it problematic because the navy’s force enhancement plan did not go through an established weapons acquisition procedure. See Ibid.

⁶⁰² Ministry of National Defense. *Defense Whitepaper 1995~1996*. Seoul: Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, October 1995. p. 95.

⁶⁰³ Yuseong Hwang. ““Daeyanghaegun Makneun Seryeok Nugunya”/An Haechamchongjang Yiimsa Pajang (Who dare try to Block the Blue Water Navy/ Shock waves from Admiral An's Change of Command remarks).” *Donga Ilbo*, April 3, 1997.

⁶⁰⁴ Jonghun Lee. “Daeyanghaegun Jeonryak Jaegemto (Reconsidering the Blue Water Navy Strategy).” *Munhwa Ilbo*, March 26, 1997.

Referring to the strong oppositions from national defense authorities, Admiral An deplored parochialism prevalent in the MND and JCS in the retirement speech that he made when he completed his job as the CNO of the ROK navy in April 1997.⁶⁰⁵ He argued that the blue water navy became a consensus forged by the state's will and the people's consent. It is reasonable that the MND and JCS with the ultimate responsibility for national security are concerned about immediate threats from North Korea. However, with regard to the potential diplomatic problems that the JCS raised as a reason to downsize the navy reinforcement plan, as one commentator argues, it is questionable whether it was a desirable foreign policy for a sovereign nation to maintain a "cute navy" while ignoring the *trend* in which other countries operate ocean-going ships to protect their maritime interests.⁶⁰⁶ As I will demonstrate shortly, it is hard to find perceptions or opinions that agree with such positions of the JCS from statements by politicians, articles on the media, and the people's opinions.

Despite the adverse circumstance in which the top national defense authorities rejected the BWN initiative as a national level official defense policy and even tried to re-orient the focus of the navy toward coastal missions, the navy's efforts to transform the force structure toward an ocean-going navy have continued. Although the navy failed to make the BWN initiative part of national level official defense policies, it had an imperative to build an ocean-going navy because it was not a simple policy whose direction can change because of oppositions from others. The BWN has become the organizational identity; it has become what the ROK navy is, what it does, and what it should be. In other words, it

⁶⁰⁵ Jeonghun Lee. "An Byeongtae Jeon Haegun Chammochongjang 'Bunnoui Jeonyeoksa' (A Speech of Resentment at the Retirement Ceremony by Former CNO Admiral An Byeongtae)." *Sisa Journal*, April 17, 1997.

⁶⁰⁶ Segye Ilbo. "Daeyanghaegun Geonseol Eodigatna (Saseol) (Where Did the Blue Water Navy

has become the essence of the ROK navy. Without this fundamental reason, the focus of the navy was highly likely to shift toward coastal operations because of the pressure from higher military authorities.

Indeed, while it may not have been an official policy, the BWN has been clearly the essence of the ROK navy since it was established. There is ample evidence indicating that the BWN has been the single outstanding essence of the ROK navy to the “dominant group” in the organization. For example, a survey that was conducted in 1995 shows that 44% of graduating midshipmen (newly commissioned naval officers) in the Naval Academy thought that the most urgent problem that the navy should solve was to acquire ocean-going ships that are suited for a blue water navy, and that 90% of them answered that the navy has the most potential to grow in the twenty-first century among three military services.⁶⁰⁷

To all the leaders of the ROK navy since Admiral An, the missions and capabilities related to the BWN initiative have been definitely the essence although the following leaders did not explicitly incorporate the construction of a blue water navy in the specific policy objectives as Admiral An did. The next CNO (1997~1999), Admiral Yu Samnam, pushed ahead the initiative even in a bad economic condition due to the Asian financial crisis. With strong will to succeed the BWN initiative, Admiral Yu got approval from President Kim Dae Jung for the specific programs such as the KDX-II and LPX (multipurpose landing ship) when the economic situation was such that those budgets could be used in supporting a lot of small and medium sized businesses because of the

Construction Go / Editorial)." *Segye Ilbo*, April 5, 1997: p. 3.

⁶⁰⁷ Jeonghun Kang. "Haegun Taepyeongyangsidae Daehyeonghamjeong Boyu Sigeup 44%/Haesa joreopsaeng Seolmun (44% of Graduates Think that the ROKN is in Urgent Need of Ocean-going Ships)." *Donga Ilbo*, March 25, 1995: p. 29.

Asian Financial Crisis.⁶⁰⁸ During his tenure, the ROK navy even hosted an international Fleet Review in which naval ships of variable sizes and characteristics from thirteen different countries participated and were observed by the Commander in Chief of the Republic of Korea (President Kim Dae Jung). Although the only modern sea-going ship that the ROK navy had at that time was newly launched ROKS *Gwanggaeto the Great* (DDH-971), it was a symbolic event that demonstrated the will of South Korea to open a maritime age and to be part of international security cooperation.⁶⁰⁹

Admiral Lee Su Yong (CNO, 1999~2001) made sure that the construction of a Strategic Mobile Task Group including Aegis class destroyers is incorporated in the 2001-2005 Med-term National Defense Program.⁶¹⁰ During his tenure, the ROK navy created a logo of the ROK navy designed after the shape of an aircraft carrier. This navy's effort is known as the first employment of the concept of Corporate Image (CI) of the marketing technique in the South Korean military.⁶¹¹ Since then, the carrier-shaped logo has been used as a symbol of the ROK navy. In reality, instead of a full-sized aircraft carrier for fleet operations, the ROK navy decided to acquire multipurpose big-deck landing ships that can carry a limited number of helicopters and conduct humanitarian missions. In fact, this was a smart decision given the huge amount of budget and man power for operating even one aircraft carrier. Referring to the Chinese effort to build and

⁶⁰⁸ According to Admiral Yu, President Kim was sympathetic to the BWN initiative. Author's interview with Minister (Admiral) Yu Samnam, May 31, 2011.

⁶⁰⁹ Deoksang Jeong. "Gukjegwanhamsik Jugwanhaneun Yusamnam Haegunchammochongjang / Navy CNO Yu Samnam Hosting International Fleet Review (Interview) ." *Hankook Ilbo*, October 10, 1998: p. 6.

⁶¹⁰ Yongwon Yu. "Gukbang Junggi Gyehoek Jubyeonguk Wihyeopkkaji Daebi Cheomdanjeol lyek Jeunggang (Reinforcement of Hi-Tech Military Forces Preparing for Potential threats from neighbors)." *Chosun Ilbo*, October 3, 2000.

⁶¹¹ Juseok Roh. "Haegun Symbol/Logo Nawatda (The Symbol/Logo of the Navy Created)." *Seoul Shinmun*, December 8, 2000: p. 28.

operate aircraft carriers, Robert S. Ross suggests that this kind of large scale naval construction may strain Chinese ability to address security matters involving interior borders on the land.⁶¹² On the other hand, Ross calls Japan's acquisition of an "effective and relatively inexpensive maritime helicopter platform (DDH-161 Hyuga Class)" rational.⁶¹³ Nevertheless, a navy spokesperson stated that the logo would help create unity in the navy and promote a consistent image of the navy to the public.⁶¹⁴ Indeed, the image of aircraft carrier in the logo symbolically represented the identity that the ROK navy holds to itself and in public as well as its vision for becoming a blue water navy.

The next CNO (2001~2003), Admiral Jang Jeong-gil, also regarded the construction of an ocean-going navy as a critical task. At the 2001 inspection by the National Defense Committee of the National Assembly, Admiral Jang testifies that "the ROK navy is mobilizing all possible resources and efforts to construct the blue water navy that would not only deter any potential threats to national security, but also enhance national interest in the ocean."⁶¹⁵ During his tenure, significant progress was made visible to the public. In May 2002, the ROK navy launched ROKS *Chungmugong Yi Soon Shin* (DDH-975), the first stealth destroyer (the KDX-II series) whose anti-air capabilities and other ocean-going capabilities have been significantly increased relative to those of the KDX-I series. By July in the same year, specifics about building the KDX-III series were materialized as the MND decides to give the contract for the Aegis system to Lockheed Martin.

⁶¹² Robert S. Ross. "China's Naval Nationalism Sources, Prospects, and the U.S. Response." *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Fall 2009: pp. 46-81. p. 58.

⁶¹³ Michael A. Glosny, Philip C. Saunders, and Robert S. Ross. "Debating China's Naval Nationalism." *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 2, Fall 2010: pp. 161-175. p. 173.

⁶¹⁴ Roh. "Haegun Symbol/Logo Nawatda." *Seoul Shinmun*.

⁶¹⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2001 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2001. p. 2.

Under the leadership of Admiral Mun Jeongil, (CNO, 2003~2005), the ROK navy not only continued the BWN initiative, but also refined the specific size of the blue water navy that it should construct. Rear admiral Song Yeongmu, then deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Planning and Management (N5/7) was at the center of developing the specific size and composition of the Korean style blue water navy. According to Admiral Song, the ROK navy decided that the Korean style blue water navy should have at least three (mobile) Task Groups that are composed of big-deck amphibious assault ships, Aegis destroyers (KDX-III), and KDX-II class destroyers.⁶¹⁶ The decision was based on the number of prioritized missions such as deterrence or pre-emptive offensives against North Korea, deterrence against unforeseen threats involved in relations with neighboring countries, and the protection of SLOCs.⁶¹⁷ The navy reported this plan at the Inspection on the navy by the National Defense Committee of the National Assembly in 2003.⁶¹⁸ The 2004 Inspection data reveals the position of the navy under Admiral Mun's leadership about the BWN initiative. In a written answer to a lawmaker's question asking about the meaning or rationale of the blue water navy initiative that the ROK navy has taken, the navy states that the BWN initiative is both a symbolic slogan and a real plan to transform the ROK navy from a regional navy to an ocean-going navy.⁶¹⁹

The next CNO, Admiral Nam Hae-il (2005~2006), also succeeded the BWN initiative. He clearly admits before the National Assembly that a blue water navy is ultimately what

⁶¹⁶ Author's interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

⁶¹⁷ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2005. p. 42.

⁶¹⁸ Author's interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

⁶¹⁹ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2005. p. 19.

the ROK navy should be.⁶²⁰ There were also some developments during his tenure. ROKS *Dokdo* (LPH-6111), multipurpose amphibious landing ship, was launched in July 2005. In the same year, the ROK navy particularly saw significant progress in materializing a plan to build a new naval base on *Jeju* island, a southern-most island of South Korea, because the budget was approved in the National Assembly. The Jeju naval base plan was initially proposed by the navy and adopted as a new force requirement at the JCS in 1993. It was part of the “Naval Forces Enhancement Plan” that Admiral An reported and President Kim Young Sam approved in April 1996. The plan was incorporated in the 2006-2010 Mid-term National Defense Program in 2004.⁶²¹ Accordingly, the navy started to undertake substantial work on the ground in 2005. There was also a setback during Admiral Nam’s tenure. The MND and JCS released the “National Defense Reform 2020” in September 2005 and the reform plan reflected only two navy mobile Task Groups instead of three Task Groups that the navy proposed during the previous CNO’s tenure. In a written statement for the 2005 National Assembly inspection, the navy stated that the reduction was mainly due to the consideration of possible force construction by 2020 based on the limited budgets, and that it would ultimately pursue total three Task Groups in the long run.⁶²²

The BWN initiative was also at the heart of the next leadership, Admiral Song Yeongmu (CNO, 2006~2008). As Admiral Song testified at the 2007 National Assembly inspection, the ROK navy saw “meaningful progress toward a blue water navy” in 2007

⁶²⁰ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2005. pp. 10-11.

⁶²¹ For the detailed history of the construction of the Jeju naval base, access the official ROK navy website at http://www.navy.mil.kr/sub_guide/navy_about.jsp?menu=8&smenu=1.

⁶²² Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005*

such as the delivery of ROKS *Dokdo*, the launches of ROKS *Sejong the Great* (Aegis destroyer), ROKS *Jeong Ji* (214-class submarine), ROKS *Yoon Young Ha* (guided missile patrol boat), and finally the beginning of the construction of a naval base in Jeju Island.⁶²³ In the same year, the navy successfully inserted a plan to build *Chang Bo Go*-III class submarines (of 3,000 ton displacement) to the National Defense program.⁶²⁴

Admiral Song made several significant contributions to the BWN initiative. He started to plan to send a ROK navy ship to participate in the international anti-piracy operations near Somalia.⁶²⁵ He also planned to host another international Fleet Review “for the purpose of establishing South Korea as a marine nation and extending cooperation among advanced sea power nations.”⁶²⁶ The results from both initiatives realized during the next leadership, Admiral Jeong Ok-geun (2008~2010). The navy reviewed and reported the necessity to participate in the international anti-piracy efforts to the MND and JCS and got it approved in 2008. Accordingly, starting from March 2009, the ROK navy has proudly made significant contributions to the international efforts. In October 2008, the ROK navy hosted for the second time an International Fleet Review in which ROKS *Sejong the Great* (DDG-991), the first Aegis destroyer with 7,600 ton displacement, served as the flagship for the sea parade observed by President Lee Myoung Bak.⁶²⁷ Given the fact that ROKS *Gwanggaeto the Great* (DDH-971), 3,000 ton destroyer was the biggest ship just ten years

Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly. p. 42.

⁶²³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2007 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2007. p. 2.

⁶²⁴ Sangho Yun. "3000t Geup Jungjamsuham Jeongwajeong Dokja Gaebal (3,000 ton Class Submarines to be Designed and Built Domestically)." *Donga Ilbo*, May 17, 2007.

⁶²⁵ Author's interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

⁶²⁶ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2007 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 4.

⁶²⁷ Jeongsu Yuk. "Gwanhamsik Gunsaoegyo (Military Diplomacy through Fleet Review)." *Donga Ilbo*, October 9, 2008.

ago, the 2008 Fleet Review with various ocean-going ships represented great achievements of the ROK navy that resulted from consistent force transformation efforts with firm beliefs in the BWN identity.

Besides consistent and focused efforts for the force transformation, the ROK navy continued to promote the ideas and images of the blue water navy as an instrument of foreign policy and international standing of the nation. One of the most interesting endeavors was that the navy resorted to a cultural element; the navy started to employ Admiral *Chang Bo Go* as a symbolic figure in Korean ancient history to draw analogies between his contributions and the desirable roles of the navy. It is known that Admiral *Chang Bo Go* of *Shilla* Dynasty (Korea of the ninth century) not only promoted trades with neighboring countries like *Tang* Dynasty (China) and Japan but also extended *Shilla*'s economic relations to the Arab world. Particularly, for trades with China and Japan, he protected trading routes and markets in those countries from pirates' attacks with strong naval power. He is also known as a very influential diplomat in his time. Since the ROK navy began the BWN initiative, it started to make efforts to appreciate Admiral Chang's achievements and use this figure as a symbol of the ROK navy spirit. The first ROK navy submarine (Type 209, ROKS *Chang Bo Go*) that was launched in 1993 was named after Admiral Chang. The ROK navy started the "Know-Chang-Bo-Go-Correctly" campaign in and outside the navy since 1996.

It is interesting to note how the ROK navy employed the new historic figure along with a traditional symbolic figure in representing the newly forming identity of the navy. Traditionally, Admiral *Yi Soon Shin* used to be the single most important role model and well established symbolic figure in the navy. Admiral *Yi Soon Shin* is a naval officer who

saved *Choseon* Dynasty (Korea of the 16th century) from the Japanese invasion with the world first iron clad combat ships called Turtle ships.⁶²⁸ Beginning from the 1990s, in which the ROK navy started to be assertive about its identity as a blue water navy, the two historic figures, Admiral *Yi Soon Shin* and *Chang Bo Go*, have appeared together in policy debates or leaders' speeches and writings. For example, presidential speeches at the naval academy graduation ceremonies up to 1993 employ only Admiral Yi as a symbolic figure. Those delivered since 1994 have always contained the two symbolic figures together. Rear admiral Mun Jeongil, deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Planning and Management (N5/7) testified before the National Assembly in 1999 that the distinguished features and contributions of Admiral *Yi Soon Shin* and Admiral *Chang Bo Go* have been established as the two most important naval spirits for the entire navy members to emulate.⁶²⁹ Indeed, while Admiral *Yi Soon Shin* stands for a nationalist figure that guarded the nation against foreign invasion, Admiral *Chang Bo Go* can be characterized as a pioneering internationalist figure who promoted national interest and standing through diplomacy as well as naval power.⁶³⁰

The navy's orientation toward the BWN was demonstrated to the society in different ways. For example, it continued to publish easy-to-read booklets about the importance of naval power for national prosperity such as *The ROK Navy looking toward the 21st Century*

⁶²⁸ Particularly, Admiral Yi has become a national hero who symbolizes national defense, military spirits, and patriotism for all the Korean people since former President Park Chung Hee promoted such features of the admiral in the 1960s and 1970s as an effort to imbue the South Korean people with the sense of national pride.

⁶²⁹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1999 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1999. p. 2.

⁶³⁰ Yeongjun Ham. "Chang Bo Go Baroalgi (Understanding Chang Bo Go Correctly)." *Chosun Ilbo*, May 21, 1996: p. 6.

published in 1995 and re-published in 1998.⁶³¹ The booklet lays out the values of the naval forces that serve as instruments for both national defense and foreign policy. It also introduces great images that depict how the units and weapon systems of other advanced modern navies look like. As another example, the Navy Band performed a fantasia titled “*Hwanghae* (The Yellow Sea)” on the Navy Day (11/11) of 2003 in memory of the crew members who died in the battle with North Korean patrol ships in the West Sea in June 2002. The navy spokesperson explained that the navy tried to express the ROK navy’s ambition represented by the blue water navy and memory of the fallen crew members at the same time.⁶³² As such, the BWN initiative has been well established across the navy as an organizational identity. Otherwise, the BWN message would not have been contained in the musical piece in memory of those who died in the battle, which was a great loss not only to the entire navy but also to the South Korean people. Indeed, the BWN has become the identity with which all men and women in the ROK navy dream, train, and fight.

With regard to the continuation of the BWN initiative by the navy, learning theory may provide an explanation that is alternative or complementary to my organizational identity thesis.⁶³³ Jack Levy defines learning as “a change of beliefs (or the degree of confidence in one’s beliefs) or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observation and interpretation of experience.”⁶³⁴ Although learning represents an analytic

⁶³¹ Haegun Bonbu. *21 Segireul Hyanghan Haegun (The ROK Navy Looking Toward the 21st Century)*. Nonsan: Haegun Bonbu (The Navy Headquarters), 1998.

⁶³² Cheolhi Lee. "Seohaegyajeon Jeonsaja Chumo Haegunhwansanggok 'Hwanghae' Choyeon / Navy Fantasia 'Hwanghae' First Performance in Memory of Fallen Crews in the West Sea Battle)." *Joongang Ilbo*, November 11, 2003.

⁶³³ I thank Professor Jack Levy for bringing up this point.

⁶³⁴ Jack S. Levy. "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield." *International Organization*, Vol. 48, No. 2, Spring, 1994. p. 283.

concept for cognitive changes at the individual level, individual learning also can bring about organizational learning in which “environmental feedback leads to individual learning, which leads to individual action to change organizational procedures, which leads to a change in organizational behavior.”⁶³⁵ A related hypothesis is that organizational learning results from experiences involving failure rather than success.⁶³⁶ As Levy points out, an implication is that failure in the past is likely to lead to policy change whereas successful past experience would contribute to policy continuity.⁶³⁷ In this regard, Posen argues that an important factor leading to major changes in military doctrine is the military’s failures in missions.⁶³⁸

From this point of view, the continuation of the BWN initiative by the navy may be viewed as a result of organizational learning. Since Admiral An Byeongtae officially launched the BWN initiative and started proactively promoting the navy’s role and image to the public, naval officers including prospective leaders might have observed increasing support for the navy’s initiative in the society. This positive effect might have been considered a policy success by the naval leaders, which contributed to the continuation of the BWN initiative. Alternatively, the learning effect might have played out together with other effects such as the characteristics of organizational behavior (consideration of organizational identity). Related to this point, Levy has called for an effort to understand learning processes as an integrated part of more comprehensive foreign policy theories

⁶³⁵ Levy. "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield." p. 288.

⁶³⁶ For the discussion about such characteristics of organizational learning, see Bo Hedberg. "How Organizations Learn and unlearn." In *Handbook of Organizational Design*, vol. 1, by Paul C. Nystrom and William H. Starbuck. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

⁶³⁷ Levy. "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield." p. 304.

⁶³⁸ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984. p. 57.

rather than as a separate model.⁶³⁹ In order to prove this point, I would have to look at whether there were changes in the individual naval leaders' beliefs before and after the launch of the BWN initiative.

However, there is an important problem in explaining the continuation of the BWN initiative using learning theory. As I have explained in Chapter 3 and as I will do it again in the next section, North Korea's military provocations continued during the BWN initiative period. Although the ROK navy successfully fended off some of North Korea's provocations, there have also been cases where it failed to prevent North Korea's attempts to infiltrate South Korea's waters. Nevertheless, the direction of the ROK navy's force construction has not significantly shifted from ocean-going capabilities. Then, the question is why naval leaders have not learned from the failures while learning only from the successful case (the BWN initiative). It becomes more puzzling given the immediate threat that North Korea's provocations pose to South Korea's national security and political repercussions from the failures in North Korea related operations. Although it remains to be analyzed more rigorously, the inability to account for this anomaly significantly weakens the potential role of learning theory in explaining the continuation of the BWN initiative.

Political Leaders

My research finds that politicians including the presidents and lawmakers have generally agreed that South Korea needs an ocean-going navy. Although they were not proactive enough to single out building a bigger navy as the most urgent priority in national security agenda, they provided encouragement and support to the BWN initiative. At the

⁶³⁹ Ibid. p. 312.

same time, there was no significant opposition from political leaders to the BWN initiative. With regard to support from political leaders, I hypothesize that the rationale for building an ocean-going naval fleet resonated with political leaders because the leaders associated the bigger navy with national identity and the international standing of South Korea. In other words, if the politicians had had different views about South Korea's identity or standing in the international community, they would have had much more diverse opinions about building an ocean-going navy. At the same time, if they had different views about the role or image of the navy related to the nation, they would not necessarily have supported the BWN initiative. In this section, I rely on the results of content analyses on presidential speeches and assembly members' statements in demonstrating my arguments.

Presidents

The BWN initiative developed and persisted for about fifteen years over three administrations whose policy objectives involve South Korea's ambitious sailing into the world. As I explained in the previous chapter, the Kim Young Sam administration's globalization policy was the most indicative sign of South Korea's newly enacted national identity that was defined not in terms with its rivalry with North Korea but in terms with its relations with the international community. The administration firmly believed that the "new Korea" should actively internationalize every aspect of life and enhance the nation's competitiveness in order to "compete efficiently and cooperate confidently with the rest of the world" as well as "make a vital contribution to global peace and progress."⁶⁴⁰

⁶⁴⁰ Young Sam Kim. "Reforms to Propel the Nation into Globalization (Remarks at the Beginning of the New Year's Press Conference, January 6, 1994)." In *Korea's Quest for Reform and Globalization: Selected Speeches of President Kim Young Sam*, by The President Secretariat. Seoul: The President Secretariat, The Republic of Korea, 1995. p. 131. Young Sam Kim. "Together

The national aspiration of becoming an advanced country as a respected and sovereign member of the international community was embraced by the following administrations of Kim Dae Jung(1998~2003) and Roh Moo Hyun(2003~2008). Although the Kim Dae Jung administration tried to reform political and economic practices that it inherited from the previous administrations, it continued the globalization drive and became even more rigorous about the efforts. The Kim Dae Jung administration highlighted the fact that the world was becoming closely connected through information technology, and that South Korea should pursue advancement through engaging with and going into the world in this globalized world.⁶⁴¹ President Kim Dae Jung is also known as a Nobel Peace Prize laureate for his peaceful approach toward North Korea with the Sunshine Policy. The Roh Moo Hyun administration aimed to make South Korea competent and influential enough to play a balancing role in keeping peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia.⁶⁴² For this national goal, President Roh emphasized cooperation with foreign countries and autonomy of South Korea at the same time. The rationale is that South Korea has to have capability to sustain and defend itself in order to maintain productive relations with allies and other countries. President Roh Moo Hyun requested the return of the wartime operational control (OPCON) authority of South Korean military to South Korea from the U.S. military authority. Accordingly, the Bush administration made a decision in 2006 to return the wartime OPCON to South Korea.⁶⁴³ Despite slightly different policy emphases, it is

on the Road to a New Korea (Inaugural Address delivered on February 25, 1993)." In *Korea's Quest for Reform and Globalization*. p. 6.

⁶⁴¹ Kim Dae Jung, *The 1999 New Year Speech*, January 1, 1999.

⁶⁴² Roh Moo Hyun, *Presidential Speech at the 40th Graduation Ceremony of the Korea Army Academy at Yeong-Cheon*, March 22, 2005.

⁶⁴³ The United States and the Republic of Korea governments have been working together on the transition of wartime OPCON since then. They aim to complete the transition by December 2015. See Joint Communique, the 43rd US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting, October 28, 2011.

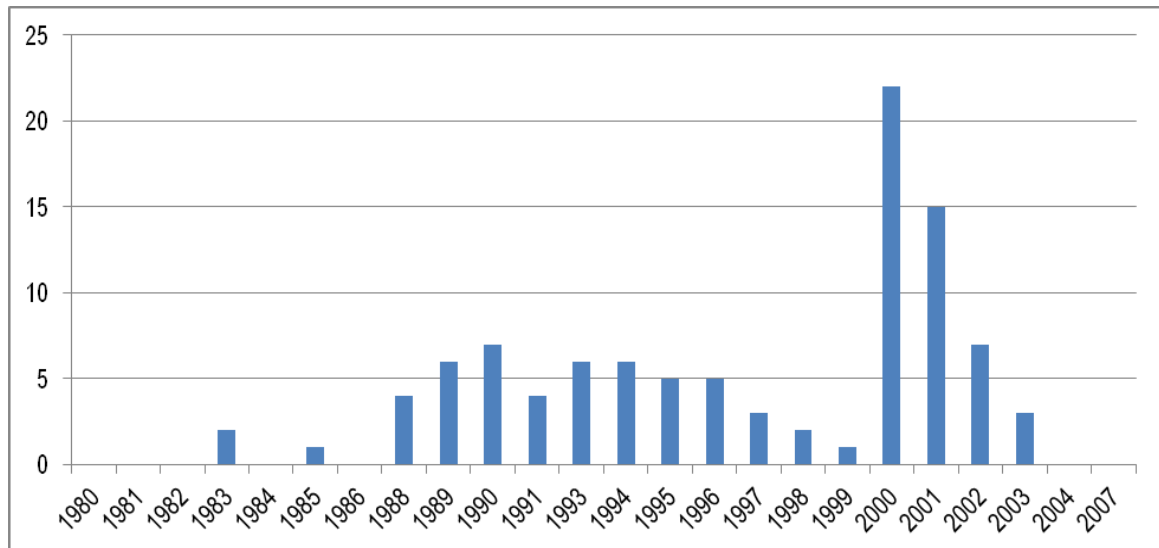
clear that the three administrations hoped to see South Korea capable enough to play a role in the international community as a more respected and equal member.

These national leaders' views about their nation are well reflected in Presidential speeches at graduation ceremonies of military academies. Presidential speeches at academy graduations are valuable sources because they tend to contain remarks suggesting the image and role identity of each military service that are expected in the conduct of national defense by the national leaders and the South Korean people. At the same time, since the speeches are written with close consultation with each service by the President's office, they can be treated as sources of identities of each service that contain both how the service views itself and how the national leaders view the service. Furthermore, as the speeches are meant to be delivered to future leaders of national defense, they tend to contain remarks related to important foreign policy issues and how the national leaders view their nation.

As shown in Figure 7.1, the words and phrases containing internationally oriented images of South Korea increased significantly from the end of the 1980s. The bars represent the frequencies of words and phrases that presidents used in describing the images of South Korea which are associated with the world or the international community at the Naval Academy graduation ceremonies.⁶⁴⁴ They include expressions suggesting South Korea's standing or activities in the world and South Korea's relations with other countries (except North Korea). Although it is hardly a comprehensive measure for how the leaders' view their nation, it is evident that they started to associate South Korea with the world more frequently from 1988 than before.

⁶⁴⁴ For content analysis, I employed the value analysis technique of Ralph K. White. See Ralph K. White, "Value Analysis: A Quantitative Method for describing Qualitative Data." *Journal of Social*

Figure 7.1 Internationally-oriented images of South Korea in presidential speeches at the Naval Academy graduation ceremonies, 1980-2007⁶⁴⁵



The difference in the focus of the speeches between those made before and after 1988 is clear. Before 1988, much stress is placed on South Korea's relation with North Korea. The national stability and growth are also emphasized. However, they are often emphasized in the context of rivalry with North Korea. For example, according to President Chun Doo Hwan's speech at the 1982 Naval Academy graduation ceremony, "I believe that the growth of our national power depends on our efforts for the accumulation of modernized political capacity based on the people's agreement, strong economy, and military power that assures deterrence to war.....As long as we continue to make these efforts rigorously, the power gap between North Korea and South Korea will keep increasing, which would ultimately discourage North Korea from resorting to adventurism

Psychology, 19:2, May, 1944. For the detailed methodology and analysis that I used, see Appendix.

⁶⁴⁵ Note that there are some missing years including 1987, 1992, 2005, and 2006. The speeches of the years were not available.

and confrontational postures.”⁶⁴⁶ The tones and emphases are quite consistent throughout the 1980s.

In contrast, Presidents increasingly emphasized South Korea’s elevated standing in the world or its international relations from 1988. For example, President Roh Tae Woo at the 1989 graduation highlighted that South Korea successfully hosted the 1988 Olympic Games after it rose from the aftermath of the Korean War, and that it was on the verge of becoming a developed country.⁶⁴⁷ President Kim Young Sam at the 1993 graduation proudly said that South Korea has become the twelfth largest trading country through the oceans that reach the world, and that ships with our national flag were cruising around the world.⁶⁴⁸ According to President Kim Dae Jung, “South Korea is able to rise as a pivotal country in the world in the twenty-first century..... South Korea is surrounded by great powers such as Japan, China, Russia, and the United States. This geopolitical situation could be a disadvantage in the past..... It is not anymore.....Now, we live in the age of free competition and cooperation among different countries regardless of whether they are great powers or small powers..... Those great powers surrounding us can serve as great markets for us.”⁶⁴⁹ Other phrases related to South Korea’s identity or image in this period described it as a country drawing international attention, a country advancing to the world through the Pacific Ocean, and the pivotal country in Northeast Asia or the Pacific era. Although speeches still maintain an emphasis on national security posture against North

⁶⁴⁶ Chun Doo Hwan. *Presidential Speech at the 36th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony* , April 9, 1982.

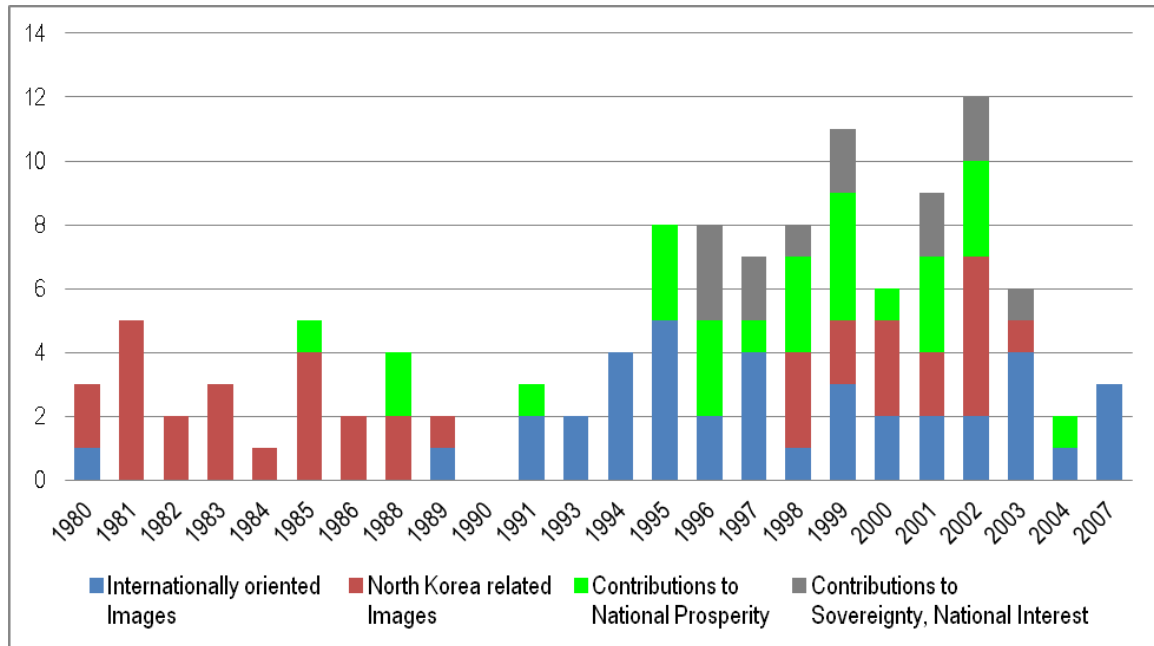
⁶⁴⁷ Roh Tae Woo. *Presidential Speech at the 43th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, April 7, 1989.

⁶⁴⁸ Kim Young Sam. *Presidential Speech at the 47th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony* , March 12, 1993.

⁶⁴⁹ Kim Dae Jung. *Presidential Speech at the 54th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, March 16, 2000.

Korea, Presidents used more time and space in talking about South Korea's relations with the world than its relations with North Korea.

Figure 7.2 Images of the Navy in the presidential speeches⁶⁵⁰



It is also interesting to observe how the image of the navy in the Presidential speeches changed over time. As Figure 7.2 demonstrates, the role of the navy was mostly associated with North Korea related missions and, accordingly, coastal operations before the late 1980s. Contrastingly, words and phrases describing the images or roles of the navy become much more diverse and richer in the 1990s and the 2000s. Presidents associated the ROK navy with missions that have implications for foreign policy. They regarded the navy as an organization that assures South Korea's national prosperity in the future. Particularly, in 1996, the role of the navy is associated with defending sovereignty of South

⁶⁵⁰ Speeches of 2005 and 2006 are missing because they were not available. For the detailed method of content analysis, see Section 1 in Appendix.

Korea for the first time. The sovereignty issue arose because of the Japanese claim to *Dokdo* in the period of 1995-1996, which I elaborated in the previous section.

Presidents' views about the navy that is associated with international relations and broad national interests are not compromised by the North Korea factor. The emphases on North Korea related missions of the ROK navy between 1998 and 2003 in Figure 7.2 can be attributed to the incidents involving North Korea's military provocations during that period. They include incidents where a North Korean submarine was aground in the East coast (June 1998), a North Korean semi-submersible was destroyed by joint operations by the ROK army, the navy and the air force (December 1998), North Korean patrol boats and torpedo boats were sunk or destroyed by the ROK navy's counterattacks after they crossed the Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the West sea (the first *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battle, June 1999), and a ROK navy patrol ship was sunk by surprise attacks from North Korean patrol ships, a retaliatory measure for the first *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battle (the second *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battle, June 2002). However, as shown in Figure 7.2, those emphases did not make the national leaders deemphasize the navy's images related to international relations, national prosperity, and sovereignty during that period.

The speeches delivered in the early and mid-1980s single out North Korea related operations as the primary missions for the ROK navy. What is interesting is that such an image of the navy was emphasized in spite of the fact that other values of the sea were appreciated, such as the importance of trade routes and underwater resources. The following quotations from President Chun Doo Hwan's speeches show the typical images and missions of the navy in the early and mid-1980s:

“The importance of economic aspects of the sea such as securing trade routes for oil import and cultivating maritime resources keeps growing as well as that of military

aspects. This is why other countries in the world try to define their own economic zones, expand their territorial waters, and reinforce their naval power. *Given this trend, the priority of our navy is the perfect defense of our coasts.* This is so because checking North Korea's maritime infiltration and protecting our territorial waters from it are equivalent to protecting our life line."⁶⁵¹

"The significance of the sea today is growing partly because of the growing demand for maritime transportation due to the expansion of international trade. Especially, for South Korea as a peninsula country, pulverizing North Korea's infiltration attempts over the sea is critical. This is why the navy's missions are so important."⁶⁵²

As shown in the quotations, the ROK navy's primary mission did not go beyond defending South Korea's coasts from North Korea's infiltration. Although the speeches acknowledge the international trends related to trades and securing resources, they do not have much implication for the ROK navy because the focus of the speeches remained on coastal operations. The first quotation highlights the fact that other countries are conscious about maritime economic activities and naval power. Then, the conclusion is that, "given the trend," the ROK navy should focus on North Korea's infiltration. In sum, the ROK navy used to be considered to have little to do with whatever happens outside the territorial waters. Probably, because of this kind of notion about the navy, President Chun Doo Hwan at the end of his tenure ordered the navy to reconsider the KDX program putting the entire Korean style destroyer program on the brink of cancellation.⁶⁵³

The images of the navy in the Presidential speeches in the late 1980s and later are contrastingly different from those of the 1980s. The presidents not only mention international implications of the navy. But also, their remarks are full of expressions

⁶⁵¹ Chun Doo Hwan. *Presidential Speech at the 35th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, April 9, 1981.

⁶⁵² Chun Doo Hwan. *Presidential Speech at the 37th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, April 2, 1983.

⁶⁵³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

suggesting hopes and encouragement for the nation and the navy in the future while describing the navy as a crucial element in supporting South Korea's interest and standing in the world. For example:

“The stage on which you perform your missions is getting bigger. This would require all of you of greater vision and capacity.....The diplomatic relations with neighboring countries will be closer. Activities for the military diplomacy such as port visits will become more frequent. There will be more chances of combined operations such as salvage operations in the international waters. The role of the navy will expand in the realm of multilateral security cooperation. In the twenty-first century in which you will become the leaders of the navy, the Pacific Ocean will be your arena. You should broaden your visions. You should possess ambitions to make the ROK navy an advanced navy.....”⁶⁵⁴

“As the shield protecting the seas of our nation and as a guide leading the nation to the center of the world through the seas, you should become one of the most capable navies in the world.”⁶⁵⁵

“We have become the largest ship exporter and a country with the seventh largest shipping in the world. The navy should provide proactive support for our nation to go out and maneuver the five Oceans without interruption and regain the glory that Korea had in the eras of Admiral Yi Soon Shin and Admiral Chang Bo Go.”⁶⁵⁶

From these speeches, one can clearly see that the Presidents view the ROK navy as an instrument of foreign policy whose role for the nation is becoming more and more important. Particularly, as the second quotation suggests, the image of the navy sailing out to the world through the sea well matches the then South Korea's explicit resolution to become internationalize or go out to the world. Of course, the presidential speeches emphasizing the navy's 'to-the-world' image in this period were made in the context of the

Korea, 1995. p. 52.

⁶⁵⁴ Kim Young Sam. *Presidential Speech at the 47th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, March 12, 1993.

⁶⁵⁵ Kim Young Sam. *Presidential Speech at the 49th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, March 24, 1995.

⁶⁵⁶ Kim Dae Jung. *Presidential Speech at the 54th Naval Academy Graduation Ceremony*, March 16, 2000.

leaders' supporting the construction of a blue water navy. Indeed, the national level imperative to engage with the world more actively and the image of the navy based on its unique characteristics served as a basis to make a strong case for the necessity of the force transformation. If the national leaders had not believed in the newly emerging national identity, and if it had not been the navy, whose advanced form (ocean-going navy) has international implications, the Presidential speeches would not have been able to make such a strong case for a blue water navy.

Then, to what degree can we attribute the support of the national leaders for the BWN initiative to the *unique* characteristics of the navy? In order to answer this question, I analyzed presidential speeches delivered at other military academies including the army and the air force. As an effort to hold the internationally oriented national image constant, I look at only the period after 1993 in which Presidents actively evoked such an image of South Korea.⁶⁵⁷ Interestingly, the content analyses of presidential speeches at three military academy graduation ceremonies demonstrate that the speeches reflect unique images of each service based on its characteristics. At the same time, they quite well reflect the essential capabilities that each service emphasizes.

⁶⁵⁷ Note that there are some missing data because the speeches of certain years are not available. For the navy, I analyzed the speeches made between 1993 and 2007. For the army, those between

Table 7.1 Images of the Navy in presidential speeches, 1993-2007⁶⁵⁸

category	Value Words/Phrases	scores
1	To the world, Navy's internationalization, Navy's engagement with the world	35
2	Improvement of naval forces (domestic shipbuilding, multidimensional forces)	25
3	Defending the nation (defending territorial waters)	24
4-1	Blue water navy (strategic Task Groups)	22
4-2	Contributing to national prosperity/glory and standing in the world	22
5-1	North Korea-related missions	16
5-2	Involving international security relations in Northeast Asia and the world	16
6	Defending nation's sovereignty and interest	13
7	Modernized, scientific, IT, high-tech	11
8	Contributing to international (security) cooperation and military diplomacy	7
9-1	Related to policy objectives, creating the new (unified, advanced) Korea	3
9-2	Strong navy, invincible navy, elite forces, the main body of elite/strong military	3
10	Navy as a symbol of national power	1

Table 7.2 Images of the Army in presidential speeches, 1993-2006⁶⁵⁹

category	Value Words/Phrases	scores
1	Military for the people, defending freedom/peace/democracy	31
2	Elite digital army, high-tech army, IT, future-oriented military	25
3	Strong army, invincible army, elite forces, the main body of the military	23
4-1	Main force to defend the nation	19
4-2	Contributing to world peace (e.g. UN peacekeeping operations)	19
5	Pillars of the nation, main actors in nation-building/peaceful unification	14
6	Army's internationalization, army of the world standard	11
7	N. Korea-related missions	4
8-1	Decisive role of the army in war	3
8-2	Revolution/rationalization of defense management	3
8-3	Autonomous national defense capability	3
8-4	Leading national development, guarding nation's future/glory	3
9-1	Defending national interest	1
9-2	Contributing to international cooperation	1
9-3	Integrated war fighting capability	1

1993 and 2006 were available. For the air force, those between 1993 and 2005 were available.

⁶⁵⁸ Speeches of 2005 and 2006 are missing because they are not available. The result represents analyses of speeches of 13 years.

⁶⁵⁹ Speeches of 2005 and 2007 are missing because they are not available. The result represents analyses of speeches of 13 years.

Table 7.3 Images of the Air Force in presidential speeches, 1993-2005⁶⁶⁰

category	Value Words/Phrases	scores
1	N. Korea-related missions (deterrence, immediate impact to national security)	26
2	Military of science, IT, high-tech, modernized, future-oriented military	23
3	Strong/invincible Air Force, elite forces, the main body of the military	17
4	Defending territorial airspace, air superiority	15
5	High-tech space technology, Aerospace force	13
6-1	Improvement of the Air Force (domestic aircraft designs)	12
6-2	Military for the people, defending freedom/peace/democracy	12
7	Decisive role of the air force in modern warfare	11
8-1	Air force's internationalization, air force of the world standard	9
8-2	Leading national development, guarding nation's future/glory	9
9	Military of economy, Maximum effects with minimum costs	6
10-1	Strategic air power including intelligence, early-warning, refueling in the air	5
10-2	Contributing to international cooperation (related to War on Terror)	5
11	Defending the nation and territory	2
12-1	Defending national interest	1
12-2	Autonomous national defense	1

There are several simple but important observations that we can make from the Tables. Most of all, the image related to international engagement or advancing to the world is most outstandingly associated with the navy: Table 7.1 shows that Category 1 earned the highest score (35) within the navy. According to Table 7.2 and 7.3, Presidents did not emphasize the internationalization of the army and the air force as frequently as they did in the navy: the scores are 11 in the army (Category 6) and 9 in the air force (Category 8-1). Another outstanding image associated with the role of the navy is defending national sovereignty and interest (Category 6). The navy's score for this image is 13 while the army and the air force were seldom associated with defending national sovereignty and interest; the score on 'defending national interest' for both services is 1. The navy is also most

⁶⁶⁰ Speeches of 2004, 2006, and 2007 are missing because they are not available. The result represents analyses of speeches of 12 years.

frequently associated with the nation's future in terms of national prosperity and South Korea's standing in the world (Category 4). The score of the navy for this image is 22 while those of the army and the air force are 3(Category 8-4) and 9 (Category 8-2) respectively.

In the previous chapter, I have argued that, with the BWN initiative, the newly built ocean-going ships took on certain meanings that are closely associated with the nation. The BWN initiative has become associated with not only national security and interest but also ideas and emotions related to Korean-ness such as the nation's sovereignty, pride, international standing and hopes for the future. I have also argued that the BWN initiative served as an overarching theme for weapons acquisition, which assured consistency over different administrations. Table 7.1 clearly reflects these points. Categories from 1 to 8 in Table 6.1 except Category 7 can be understood under the rubric of the BWN initiative. Even if we only count the images that started to be newly emphasized with the BWN initiative, that is, if we take out traditional missions of the navy such as Categories 3 (defending territorial waters) and 5-1 (North Korea-related missions), still seven categories are related to the BWN initiative.

Indeed, Presidents' speeches in the period reflect a consistent and prominent theme that may lend support to the construction of an ocean-going navy. Categories 2 and 4-1 in Table 7.1 are about force construction and they both scored high. In fact, Category 2 (Improvement of naval forces) could have been merged with Category 4-1 (Blue water navy) because the substances of category 2 such as "building multidimensional forces" represent part of the force construction plan that the BWN initiative was pursuing. I separated them in order to demonstrate the sheer frequency of the specific expression the

“blue water navy.” Other categories including categories 1 (International engagement), 4-2 (contributing to nation’s future), 5-2 (contributing to international security relations), 6 (defending sovereignty), and 8 (military diplomacy) are the elements that the navy considered the essence under the BWN initiative. At the same time, they can be understood as representing the meanings of the ocean-going ships to the civilian leaders who wanted to see a sovereign, competitive, and respected South Korea in international relations. To some degree, the images of the navy that are represented by these categories served as narratives about why South Korea needs an ocean-going navy.

There are routine expressions that Presidents used in representing the services. They include expressions like the “invincible navy,” the “elite air force,” and the “strong army.” Such expressions can be considered routine phrases because it is obvious that they are used simply for the purpose of encouraging the members and making them proud of their services. They are routine also because they can be used in describing any services. For example, “invincible” and “elite” were used for all the three services. On the other hand, the expressions like the blue water navy (the navy), the digital army (the army), and the aerospace force (the air force) represent important identities of the services. These words represent current and future characteristics of the organizations that the services and the national leaders view as essential. For the navy, the routine expressions were not used as frequently as in the cases of the army and the air force: the routine images earned 3 scores in the navy (Category 9-2 in Table 7.1) while they earned 23 in the army and 17 in the air force (Category 3 in both Table 7.2 and Table 7.3). This means that there was less space for the routine descriptions of the navy, and that the blue water navy theme was the single most representative image of the ROK navy to the national leaders.

The speeches for the army and the air force also contain the words that represent the core identities that the services were pursuing in that period. For the army, the ‘elite digital army’ and future-oriented ‘high-tech military’ are such images that are associated with the army’s force construction. Besides this force construction related images, the Presidents particularly placed emphases on the points that the military should exist for the people, that it should defend freedom and democracy (Category 1 in Table 7.2), and that the army is the pillar of the nation (Category 5 in Table 7.2). Presumably, the Presidents emphasized these points partly because they were conscious of the history of South Korea’s government-led nation-building and economic development as well as undemocratic practices carried out under the leaderships of the presidents who retired as army generals. Although the emphasis on high-tech future-oriented army matches the national leaders’ focuses on information technology and making South Korea an advanced nation in the world, it does not resonate in the leaders’ speeches as effectively as the blue water navy image does. Put differently, it does not provide any common elements that establish linkages between the army and the political leaders or the people that may make them enthusiastic about.

Similarly, it is difficult to find such effects in presidential speeches for the air force. Obviously, the air force is most frequently associated with North Korea-related missions (Category 1 in Table 7.3). It is understandable given South Korea’s security situation in which South Korea faces North Korea’s grave military threats at a short distance, which requires quick response by the air force in the case of war. Therefore, this image can be viewed in the context of the traditional concept of national defense. For the air force, becoming an “aerospace force” (Category 5 in Table 7.3) is the key identity phrase that is equivalent to the BWN initiative for the navy. However, the image of the air force as an

“aerospace force” does not effectively generate the ideas that the image stands for. It is not clear whether it is for national security, national interest, or prestige. Moreover, the space does not have rich meanings to South Korea as the sea does. The sea is clearly recognized in the speeches for the navy both as practical values such as underwater resources and trade routes and as a symbolic medium that connects South Korea to the world. It is difficult to find such values that the national leaders attach to the space in the speeches for the air force. Probably, the space may have been still a luxury to South Korea when it has not reached the world yet.

In sum, the images of the army and the air force did not have those elements associated with national identity that those of the navy had. I am not arguing that the meanings of the service associate with national identity are the necessary conditions for all military service’s weapons acquisition. What I try to demonstrate is that the national leaders had quite distinctive images and values about the ROK navy under the BWN initiative from those of the army and the air force, and that the images of the navy persisted over different administrations for an extended period. This consistent support for the BWN by the national leaders served as favorable conditions for the navy to continue the efforts to build an ocean-going navy.

One should note that, although the Presidents were supportive enough to approve the navy’s ambition to construct an ocean-going navy, they neither started the initiative nor take proactive measures for the naval development. For example, President Theodore Roosevelt played a major role in the development of the U.S. Navy in the 1900s including

the battleship program represented by USS *Delaware*.⁶⁶¹ South Korea's naval growth was not such a case.

President Kim Young Sam was the only president who used the executive power to expedite the construction of an ocean going navy. As I explained in the previous section, President Kim ordered the MND to make a specific plan to strengthen the ROK navy when Japan challenged South Korea's sovereignty by claiming the ownership of *Dokdo* in 1996. Because of this action by the President, the force construction plan based on the BWN initiative started ten years earlier than originally planned. However, it should not be viewed as a completely top-down influence on naval construction. Most of all, it was the navy that took the initiative in transforming the force structure from the end of the 1980s. As the navy had been vocal about a plan to build an ocean-going navy for several years, the President had known about such a plan; he had mentioned about building a blue water navy at the Naval Academy graduation ceremony in 1995.⁶⁶² According to the then security adviser to the President and former Foreign Minister, Yu Jongha, the general atmosphere of the administration at that time was sympathetic to the navy's initiative of building a bigger navy; there were growing concerns about own ability to protect SLOCs; sovereignty issues such as *Dokdo* and Chinese fishing boats violating South Korea's territorial waters became also salient. However, despite the conditions conducive to naval growth, Minister Yu confirms that there was no official policy initiative to strengthen the navy at the administration level.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶¹ Harold Sprout and Margaret Sprout. *The Rise of American Naval Power 1776-1918*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939. p. 250-280.

⁶⁶² Note that there is a possibility that, although the President made speeches about an ocean-going navy, he did not know about whether the navy had established specific plans for it.

⁶⁶³ Author's interview with Minister Yu Jongha, May 27, 2011.

Such initiative at the administration level was also absent in the Kim Dae Jung administration (1998-2003). According to the then security advisor to the President and former Ambassador to Canada, Lim Seongjun, President Kim Dae Jung was supportive of the navy's plans to build ocean-going ships.⁶⁶⁴ He admits that there was a view in the administration that South Korea's naval power was so weak in comparison with those of neighboring countries such as China and Japan. However, President Kim and officials in the administration did not have particular initiatives or plans to strengthen the navy.⁶⁶⁵ The same was true for the Roh Moo Hyeon administration (2003-2008). The then security advisor to the President and former Minister of Unification, Lee Jong Seok says that there was no particular enthusiasm about or opposition to the BWN initiative within the administration.⁶⁶⁶ However, according to Minister Lee, the navy's initiative to build an ocean-going navy was seen favorably in the administration because of several reasons.⁶⁶⁷ The Roh Moo Hyeon administration wanted South Korea to play a balancing role in Northeast Asia. The administration also thought that South Korea should have some level of deterrence capability against not only North Korea but also other unforeseen threats in the future. There was also a need to protect the SLOCs. Most importantly, it believed that South Korea should be able to do these things *as a sovereign nation state*.⁶⁶⁸

The most important thing to note is that the Presidents and the administrations approved or did not oppose the navy's initiative to build ocean-going ships because they regarded it as appropriate given the identity of their nation. Japan's claim to *Dokdo* began

⁶⁶⁴ Author's interview with Ambassador Lim Seongjun, May 31, 2011.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁶ Author's interview with Minister Lee Jongseok, June 2, 2011.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁸ Note that these are the missions that the ROK navy defined as its essence when it launched the BWN initiative in 1995.

soon after South Korea's independence from Japan. South Korea's naval power was always negligible compared to neighboring great powers. The SLOCs have been always critical to South Korea at least since it started to develop export-oriented economy in the 1960s. Nevertheless, South Korea had performed well without an ocean-going navy. Why couldn't the national leaders turn down or ignore the navy's proposal to build an ocean-going navy? It was because they viewed what the navy proposed as an appropriate behavior for a sovereign and internationally respected nation that they wanted to build. Therefore, how the leaders view their nation was the fundamental factor that led to their supportive positions about the construction of ocean-going ships.

There is an anecdote that illustrates this point. It was the time when President Roh Moo Hyeon was about to make a final decision about the KDX-III program (Aegis destroyers). Several key officials attended the meeting at the President's office including the members of National Security Council (NSC) and the navy representatives. President Roh pointed out that some people are raising doubts about whether it is a good idea to build these extremely expensive Aegis destroyers instead of building a lot of smaller ships at the same or lower cost. Rear admiral Song Yeongmu, the then deputy CNO for Planning and Management (N5/7) who was in charge of force construction planning, broke the silence. "Mr. President, it is understandable that people consider it an expensive program because one unit costs almost 1 trillion won (approx. 1 billion dollars). But, it is worth building them. This is the kind of weapon systems that elevate not only the standing of the navy but also our nation's international standing. Throughout history, we've been bullied around by great powers around us. However, today's South Korea is different from what it used to be. We (as an advanced or developed nation) should build *a navy that is becoming for an*

advanced nation. At the same time, this kind of weapon systems would create stronger deterrence effects against North Korea than small patrol ships do. You are making a historic decision, sir.”⁶⁶⁹

The admiral definitely talks about the effects or utilities that the weapon systems would bring about because he points out deterrence against external threats. The President also begins with a rationalist position by weighing the cost-effectiveness of building a small number of expensive and large ships vis-à-vis a large number of less expensive and small ships. However, what justifies the admiral’s arguments for new weapon systems is the idea that South Korea is not the same as before. He talks about what kind of weapon systems South Korea should acquire based on the changed national identity. His arguments suggest that South Korea should behave like a sovereign and advanced nation if South Korea wants to be considered so. Most important, the President was convinced by such arguments based on national identity. If the conversations had been all about functions of the weapon systems including pros and cons, other officials in the room might have expressed different opinions about the expensive Aegis destroyers vis-à-vis other kinds of smaller ships. What helped forge a consensus was the shared image of their nation held by the political and military leaders.

Throughout the section, I have demonstrated to what degree and why the Presidents supported the BWN initiative. I have argued that they had quite favorable positions toward the navy’s initiative although they were not enthusiastic enough to consider it a prioritized defense policy issue. I have also argued that the key to the Presidential support was the views about their nation they were leading. Then, what were the views held by other politicians about the BWN initiative? Given the power of the purse, it is important to look

⁶⁶⁹ Author’s interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

at lawmakers' views about the naval development. The next section examines to what degree the assembly members supported the BWN initiative and, if they did, for what reasons they did so.

The National Assembly Members

I examined the National Defense Committee minutes for the annual inspections on the navy by the National Assembly in order to learn to what degree the BWN initiative resonated among the assembly members and why it did so particularly during the 1995 to 2009 period. The materials are useful sources because committee members from different political parties would express their opinions about a broad range of topics related to policies and logistics issues, and would ask questions about them to the navy leaders. Then, the navy leaders would provide the lawmakers with corresponding answers under oaths. Therefore, the materials serve as sources of not only facts behind decision-making but also dynamics among politicians that may provide mechanisms behind the decisions. Relying on the content analyses of the minutes, this section demonstrates that the assembly members were quite enthusiastic about the BWN initiative during the period, and that the politicians' support for the initiative was mainly due to the views that they shared about their nation. Additionally, I demonstrate a sociological institutional dimension involved in the debates in which political actors try to make their arguments legitimate by resorting to examples of other countries.

The lawmakers did not have much interest in building an ocean-going navy from the beginning. The substances and tones of the inquiries from the politicians in the pre-BWN

period were completely different from those during the BWN era.⁶⁷⁰ First, there was a strong tendency that the politicians associated the role of the navy only with North Korea. Many statements reveal that the Cold War dynamics were still a dominating assumption in national security debates.⁶⁷¹ Even if the navy reports a plan about constructing new ships, many of them tried to view the plan in terms of the utility in coping with North Korean threats. For example, at the 1991 inspection, Assemblyman Jeong Daecheol asked a question with regard to the navy's plan to build new destroyers (KDX): "Is the KDX program based on accurate assessments about North Korea's naval capabilities? In other words, I am not sure about whether the KDX program which is for major scale surface warfare is a good force construction plan given the fact that the main forces of the North Korean navy are small sized fast crafts."⁶⁷² There is nothing wrong about the assemblyman's position to assess the utility of a weapon system in terms of the major military threat. What I am trying to emphasize here is how the role of the ROK navy was narrowly viewed among the politicians at that time.

The debates led by the lawmakers in the pre-BWN period were characterized not only with the narrowly defined role of the navy. The politicians in general did not have much interest in the long-term force construction plans. Put simply, the debates about force structure simply lack in this period. Debates focused on the procedural problems that raised concerns about the transparency of weapons acquisition programs that were

⁶⁷⁰ For the pre-BWN period, I looked at the National Defense Committee minutes from 1988 to 1994.

⁶⁷¹ For example, Assemblyman Jeong Ung makes a comment about South Korea's military posture with an assumption that the USSR and China were providing military equipment to North Korea. See National Assembly Secretariat, *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1988 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 6.

⁶⁷² National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1991 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

implemented as part of the *Yulgok* project. This probably has to do with illegal practices involved in weapons acquisitions in the course of implementing the project in the past.

Even among the small number of debates about the force structure of the navy, most of them are driven by the consideration of the limited resources. For example, with regard to the submarine acquisition plan at its initial phase, Assemblyman Cho Yunhyeong asked at the 1988 inspection whether the acquisition of submarines was necessary for the actual reinforcement of the ROK navy or the navy tried to have submarines because it makes the ROK navy look better as a real navy. He went on and argued that the budget for the submarines would be better spent if it was used for welfare of the navy and other services.⁶⁷³ As another example, Assemblyman Yun Taegyun responded negatively to the navy's report about a plan to build ocean-going capability at the 1992 inspection: "I don't think that we can ever have a so-called strategic Task Group or mobile fleet. Even if we try to build such a fleet, the required investments by the 2000s would involve an astronomical size of budget. Therefore, I think that it is wiser to make investments for our force construction with a concentration on coastal operations to deal with the North Korean navy rather than blue water operations."⁶⁷⁴ Ironically, the navy implemented all the programs that the assembly members viewed negatively including the submarine acquisition and the construction of a strategic Task Group by the 2000s even without a significant raise of the navy's budget. For many politicians at that time, an ocean-going navy was simply considered a luxury to South Korea.

Korea, 1991. p. 12.

⁶⁷³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1988 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1988. p. 8.

⁶⁷⁴ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1992 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

However, one should note that the politicians' negative positions toward building new ships do not simply represent their concerns about the limited budget. What is more important is that they are expressing their positions about the navy's force structure *given* their views on their nation. Many statements by the assembly members suggest that the politicians admit South Korea as a small country surrounded by great powers. Some comments even imply that the politicians were too conscious about other great powers' influences in diplomatic relations. For example, when the ROK navy's participation in the 1990 RIMPAC exercise was decided, some assembly members expressed their concerns about adverse effects that it might bring about on the South Korea's normalization processes with Russia and China; these countries had been reportedly criticizing the multinational naval exercise led by the U.S. Navy as part of containment policy against them.⁶⁷⁵ Such cautious position is understandable given the diplomatic significance of South Korea's normalizations with Russia and China, which were considered ground-breaking diplomatic achievements. However, the participation in the exercise was decided because of expected benefits such as learning advanced naval tactics and blue water operation capability. Moreover, there is no reason to worry about Russia's and China's positions about South Korea's autonomous decision about military drills with the United States which is a traditional ally. Probably, this kind of small-nation mindsets made them difficult to think about having a bigger navy even though the navy had talked about it for a couple of years.

Korea, 1992. p. 18.

⁶⁷⁵ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1988 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 4. See also Wonhong Kim. "Yeonanhaegun Talpi, Daeyangbangwi Cheotbal/ Hwantaepyeongyang Hapdonghullyeon Chamgau Uimi (Growing out of a Coastal Navy, First Step toward Defense in Blue Waters / The Meanings of the Participation in the RIMPAC Exercise)." *Seoul Shinmun*, March 25, 1990: p. 3.

Although the navy started to show its resolve to become a “blue water navy” as a central service in defending South Korea’s national interest from the 1990 National Assembly inspection, the language did not get much attention from assembly members for a couple of years. Not a single assemblyman used the expression or asked about what the navy meant by the blue water navy until 1993. From the 1993 inspection, the phrase “blue water navy” and its necessity that the ROK navy had tried to get across slowly started to catch on. Assemblyman Lee Handong praised the navy’s report about its vision for a blue water navy while he encourages the navy leaders to make every possible effort to turn the ROK navy into a navy suitable for Korea (ultimately unified Korea) that will play a pivotal role in the coming Pacific era.⁶⁷⁶ Assemblyman Hwang Myeongsu adopts the term “blue water navy” referring to the ROK navy’s future for the first time as an assembly member at the National Assembly inspections in the context that he assesses the significance of the first port visit to Russia by the ROK navy ships.⁶⁷⁷ He is sympathized with the navy’s position that the navy should go beyond its traditional mission (anti-infiltration operations against North Korean agents), and that it should also focus on missions that are related to broader national interest and sovereignty. Therefore, the starting point of the growing sympathy to the navy’s position was not the combat related dimension of the naval weapons. Rather, it was the navy’s emphasis on its roles for South Korea as a more prosperous and sovereign nation that plays a bigger role in international relations.

⁶⁷⁶ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1993. p. 12.

⁶⁷⁷ He states that “the port visit by the Korean made ships to Vladivostok represents an important role of the ROK navy in military diplomacy, an approach to the *blue water navy*, and an effective check against North Korea.” See National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1993 Inspection, p. 11.

A few lawmakers observed the necessity for changes in the navy or tried to understand what the naval leaders were saying with a plan to build expensive but advanced ships even in the pre-BWN period. However, the statements show that they were the ones who were particularly vocal about anticipated changes in their nation. Assemblyman Kwon Nogab at the 1988 inspection encouraged the navy leaders to think about implications of a series of national affairs occurred at that time such as South Korea's successful hosting of the 1988 Olympic games and the Roh Tae Woo administration's clear foreign policy position that broadens South Korea's diplomatic and economic relations.⁶⁷⁸ Referring to the navy's report about building new Korean style destroyers (KDXs), Assemblyman Kim Jung-gon states that "to me, the navy's plan represents a turning point for the development of both the navy and South Korea as we are looking toward the 2000s and preparing for the trend of globalization."⁶⁷⁹ As such, the difference between those who showed negative responses to the navy's plan to build bigger ships and those who showed positive responses lied in whether or not they thought about what kind of navy they should have in association with what kind of nation South Korea is or should be.

The atmosphere of the inspections becomes noticeably different from 1995. Many of the defense committee members started to talk about the BWN initiative. They even called for expediting the construction of a blue water navy. Put simply, the assembly members became enthusiastic supporters of the BWN initiative. Admiral Yu Samnam who served as an assembly member at the sixteenth National Assembly and the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fishery confirms that there was general support for the BWN initiative among

⁶⁷⁸ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1988 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 7.

⁶⁷⁹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1989 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

assembly members at that time.⁶⁸⁰ To what degree they have had interest in the construction of a blue water navy can be demonstrated by how often they discussed it. Table 7.4 is the summary of what kinds of questions and how often assembly members raised the questions at the inspections during the 1995-2009 period. I counted all questions during the period and put them into relevant categories.⁶⁸¹ As shown in category 2 in Table 7.4, the questions about the BWN initiative *with direct mentioning* the “blue water navy” or its equivalents such as “ocean-going capability” and “mobile task groups” constitute the second most frequently dealt issue during the period; they were asked 179 times out of total 1,397 questions during the period, which accounts for 12.8%.

On the other hand, the inquiries in opposition to the BWN initiative were asked only 31 times, which constitutes 2.2 % of the total inquiries (Category 11-1). What is more surprising is that 26 questions out of the 31 opposing questions were asked by a single assemblyman at a single inspection of 2005 drawing criticisms from fellow assembly members for running over the time limit. This is quite a negligible degree of opposition. There was only one occasion in which an assembly member asked about the navy’s intention to tone down the BWN initiative by rephrasing the slogan because it may sound too aggressive or assertive while expressing sympathy to the navy’s vision for the BWN (Category 28).

Korea, 1989. p. 9.

⁶⁸⁰ Author’s interview with Minister Yu Samnam, May 31, 2011.

Table 7.4 Questions at the Annual National Assembly Inspections, 1995-2009

Category	Topics	Freq.	%
1	Weapons acquisition programs / force construction	188	13.5
2	Calling for Blue water navy / ocean-going navy / mobile task groups	179	12.8
3	Military readiness for North Korea's provocations	142	10.2
4	Personnel management	114	8.2
5	Military welfare	79	5.7
6	Topics related to the Marine	72	5.2
7	Other policies in general	71	5.1
8	Naval base/facility management	58	4.2
9-1	South Korea's international standing, military cooperation/diplomacy	44	3.1
9-2	Civil-military operations	44	3.1
10-1	National sovereignty/ interest	32	2.3
10-2	Necessity to reinforce naval power (without direct mentioning of the BWN)	32	2.3
11-1	Opposition to the blue water navy oriented force construction	31	2.2
11-2	Modernization of weapon systems	31	2.2
12	Importance of protecting SLOCs or trade routes	30	2.1
13-1	Military training / education	21	1.5
13-2	Topics related to accidents	21	1.5
13-3	Military disciplines	21	1.5
14-1	Operation of forces	17	1.2
14-2	Logistics support / management	17	1.2
14-3	Necessity to enhance anti-Submarine warfare capabilities	17	1.2
15	Coastal defense	15	1.1
16	Readiness for wartime operations	14	1.0
17	Command and control systems (C4I)	13	0.9
18-1	Concepts of force construction	12	0.9
18-2	Military security	12	0.9
19	Repair / maintenance	11	0.8
20	Intelligence capability	10	0.7
21	Vision / direction of naval force construction	9	0.6
22-1	International relations / diplomatic issues	8	0.6
22-2	Importance of the navy	8	0.6
23	Medical support	7	0.5
24	Concept of operations (CONOPs) / Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs)	6	0.4
25	Public affairs / troop education	5	0.4
26	Application of Information Technology in military	3	0.2
27	Autonomous national defense ability	2	0.1
28	Opposition to the wording "blue water navy" (supporting the vision)	1	0.1
Total		1,397	100

⁶⁸¹ For more information about the analysis method, see Section 2, Appendix.

An important factor that contributed to the high score of the “blue water navy” is that the lawmakers brought up not only issues directly related to force construction but also other issues like personnel management, logistics, and education as part of the blue water navy discussion. To some degree, this is a natural consequence because, as the construction of a blue water navy means a major force transformation, there should follow other changes in the operations of the organization. For example, new education and training systems were necessary because more sophisticated equipment and weapon systems are acquired. The maintenance systems with greater capacities were needed because the navy would operate bigger ships.

However, what is interesting is that the phrase “blue water navy” is sometimes used in a way that the politicians interpreted it in a broader sense than simply as capability. In other words, the politicians sometimes employed the phrase as if they expect the ROK navy to become rationalized or modernized in all dimensions under the BWN initiative. Assemblyman Park Jin argues that the navy should provide fairer promotion opportunity to officers who went through education programs other than the Naval Academy such as the Officer Candidate School (OCS) and the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) in order to become a ‘true blue water navy.’⁶⁸² With this argument, the assemblyman may be talking about the personnel management dimension of the BWN project by emphasizing the importance of diverse personnel resources with different specialties because the officers who went through the OCS or the ROTC programs attended other colleges that may have programs that are more specialized than those of the Naval Academy. On the other hand, he is also highlighting fairness and transparency of the organization’s

⁶⁸² Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2005 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly,

promotion policy, which is not directly implied by the BWN initiative. This kind of expectations for changes in the navy indicates that the BWN initiative had been recognized also as a serious initiative for change or reform of core characteristics of the organization.⁶⁸³

One should note that there are inquiries or arguments that deal with the substances of the BWN initiative without directly mentioning the phrase “blue water navy.” For example, if an assembly member calls for the construction of the navy that can protect SLOCs or defend our sovereignty, s/he is obviously with the navy’s position although s/he did not use the expression in the specific statement or inquiry. Such categories with the BWN implications include 9-1 (South Korea’s international standing, military cooperation /diplomacy), 10-1 (National sovereignty/interest), and 12 (Importance of protecting SLOCs or trade routes) in addition to Category 2. If they are collapsed into one category, it turns into the single most outstanding topic during the period. I demonstrate the results of collapsing categories in Table 7.5.

As expected, the BWN related questions become the dominating topic making up 20.4 % of the total (Category 1 in Table 7.5). One of the second most frequently raised issues is North Korea related topic constituting 13.5 % (Category 2-2 in Table 7.5). For the purpose of fair comparison, I also collapsed North Korea related categories from Table 7.4 into one Category in Table 7.5. So, Category 2-2 in Table 7.5 includes Categories 14-3 (Necessity to enhance anti-submarine warfare capabilities), 15 (coastal defense), 16 (readiness for wartime operations), and 3 (military readiness for North Korea’s provocations) in

Republic of Korea, 2005. p. 7.

⁶⁸³ Note that I have argued that the BWN initiative represents a change in the navy’s organizational identity.

Table 7.4. Still, the North Korea related issues were dealt at the inspections almost 100 times less than the BWN related issues.

Table 7.5 The collapsed version of Table 7.4

Category	Topics	Freq.	%
1	Calling for Blue water navy / ocean-going navy / mobile task groups South Korea's international standing, military cooperation/diplomacy National sovereignty and interest, Importance of protecting SLOCs or trade routes	285	20.4
2-1	Weapons acquisition programs / force construction	188	13.5
2-2	Military readiness for North Korea's provocations Necessity to enhance anti-Submarine warfare capabilities Coastal defense, Readiness for wartime operations	188	13.5
3	Personnel management	114	8.2
4	Military welfare	79	5.7
5	Topics related to the Marine	72	5.2
6	Other policies in general	71	5.1
7	Naval base/facility management	58	4.2
8	Civil-military operations	44	3.1
9-1	Necessity to reinforce naval power (without direct mentioning of the BWN)	32	2.3
9-2	Opposition to the blue water navy oriented force construction Opposition to the wording "blue water navy" (supporting the substance)	32	2.3
10	Modernization of weapon systems	31	2.2
11-1	Military training / education	21	1.5
11-2	Topics related to accidents	21	1.5
11-3	Military disciplines	21	1.5
12-1	Operation of forces	17	1.2
12-2	Logistics support / management	17	1.2
13	Command and control systems (C4I)	13	0.9
14-1	Concepts of force construction	12	0.9
14-2	Military security	12	0.9
15	Repair / maintenance	11	0.8
16	Intelligence capability	10	0.7
17	Vision / direction of naval force construction	9	0.6
18-1	International relations / diplomatic issues	8	0.6
18-2	Importance of the navy	8	0.6
19	Medical support	7	0.5
20	Concept of operations (CONOPs) / Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs)	6	0.4
21	Public affairs / troop education	5	0.4
22	Application of Information Technology in military	3	0.2
23	Autonomous national defense ability	2	0.1
Total		1,397	100

One should take into consideration the fact that Category 2-1 (weapons acquisition programs / force construction) contains many questions about detailed acquisition procedures for KDX-II, III, strategic submarines, and LPX which are all parts of the BWN plan. If they are accounted, the gap between the BWN issues and North Korea related issues would significantly increase. Another thing that should be emphasized is that Category 9-2 in Table 7.5 represents a category that has all opposing positions to the BWN, in which I collapsed categories 11-1 and 28 in Table 7.4. Still, the numbers add up to 32 making up only 2.3% of the total number of inquiries. Given the fact that North Korea is the single most prominent military threat to South Korea, this comparative dominance of the BWN issues and the negligible degree of opposition demonstrate to what degree the BWN initiative resonated among the lawmakers.

The politicians' general support for the BWN initiative continued regardless of some major incidents that may have negatively affected their perceptions about building a blue water navy. For example, the 1997 Asian financial crisis could have served as an opportunity for lawmakers who used to have ambivalent positions about the BWN initiative to express concerns about the costs versus effectiveness of the major force constructions. However, there was no assembly member who raised this line of issues.

Similarly, North Korean military provocations may have had the assembly members reconsider their support for the blue water-oriented force construction plan. As I explained in the previous section, North Korean provocations occurred multiple times throughout the 1990s and the 2000s. In addition to the ones in 1998, 1999, and 2002 that I have already mentioned in the previous section, there was a major incident in 1996 where North Korean special force members infiltrated South Korea's East coast using a *Sango* class submarine.

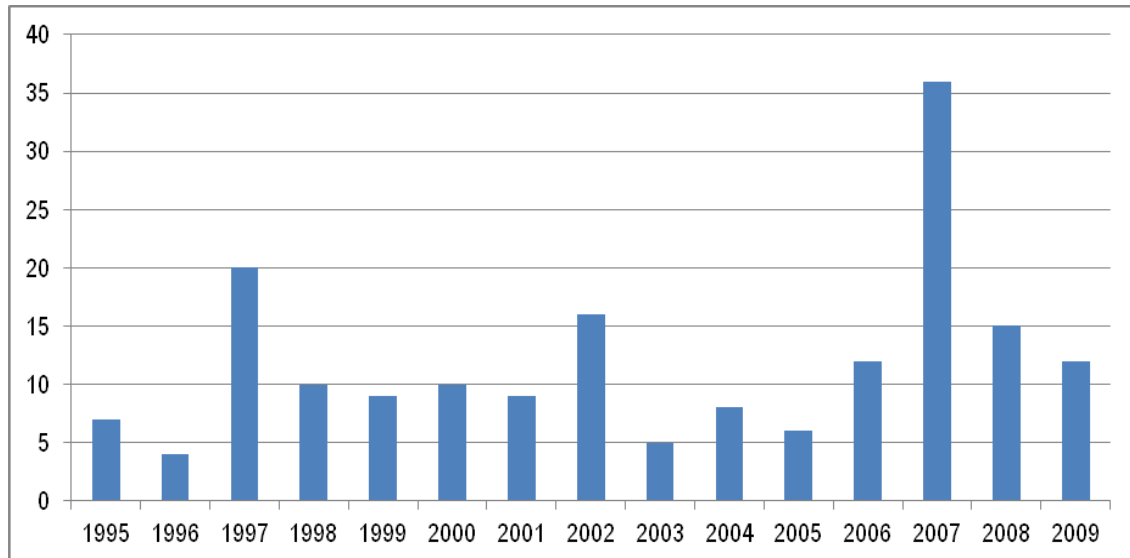
It took forty-nine days for the ROK government to capture or kill all the infiltrators.⁶⁸⁴ In response to these North Korean provocations, the MND and JCS usually emphasized what we need was coastal defense capabilities, not the blue water capabilities. After the 1996 North Korean submarine infiltration, the JCS announced that it would concentrate on coastal defense instead of blue water operations.⁶⁸⁵ After a successful operation against a North Korean semi-submersible in 1998, it was reported that a military official in JCS reemphasized the importance of enhancing the navy's coastal operation capabilities, not the blue water capabilities, particularly in the security situation where two Koreas are confronting each other.⁶⁸⁶ In contrast, although these provocations led to intense debates about how to prevent and effectively detect them in the future at the National Assembly Inspections, they did not create opinions that were particularly negative about the BWN initiative or that suggested any deviation from the BWN force construction. Figure 7.3 represents the sustaining support of the assembly members; it demonstrates how many questions or statements the assembly members made in favor of building the blue water navy every year.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸⁴ Kookmin Ilbo. "Gongbichimtuga Namgin Geot / Saseol (The Lessons learned from the North Korean Infiltration / Editorial)." *Kookmin Ilbo*, November 6, 1996.

⁶⁸⁵ Jonghun Lee. "Daeyanghaegun Jeollyak Jaegeomto (Reconsidering the Blue Water Navy Strategy)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, March 26, 1997.

⁶⁸⁶ Deoksang Jeong. "Buk Banjamsujeong Gyeokchim / Gukbangbu, Hapcham Pyojeong (North Korean Semi-submersible Destroyed / Positions of the MND and the JCS)." *Hankook Ilbo*, December 19, 1998.

⁶⁸⁷ Figure 7.3 simply shows the yearly distribution of category 2 in Table 7.4, which adds up to total

Figure 7.3 Yearly distribution of Category 2 in Table 7.4

Then, what were the rationales behind the assembly members' support for the BWN initiative? In order to get a sense of it, I looked at the supporting arguments for the inquiries and statements by the assembly members that called for building blue water navy capabilities. For this analysis, I analyzed only those associated with questions and statements that belong to Category 2 in Table 7.4. I simply counted the number of sentences that are used in support of a question or statement.⁶⁸⁸ Although this can be hardly an accurate way of weighing the magnitude of different motivations behind the beliefs of the assembly members in the BWN initiative, it can serve as a rough measure of how much spaces and time the assembly members were willing to allocate to a specific argument particularly when each assemblyman has time constraint. Table 7.6 shows the categorized lists of rationales behind the inquiries or arguments.

179 questions or statements calling for building the BWN.

Table 7.6 Rationales behind the support for the blue water navy, 1995-2009

	Rationales behind the support for the BWN	scores
1	Int'l trends/examples of how other countries pursue interest with naval power	101
2	Protection of national interest (SLOC, economic values of the sea, national prosperity)	85
3	Protection of sovereignty and the people in int'l environments, maritime rights	56
4	Support of foreign policy (deterrence, military diplomacy, security cooperation)	31
5	Potential threats from neighboring countries, great powers' pursuit of hegemony	22
6	National identity (consideration of elevated national standing/economic power)	20
7	Naval power as countering North Korea's threats	17
8	Role/identity of the navy (necessity to broaden its realm beyond North Korean threats)	6
9	Navy as an effective force to win the future war	5
10	Importance of the navy given the fact that South Korea is a peninsular country	3
11	Resorting to symbolic/heroic figures (Admirals Chang Bo Go and Yi Soon Shin)	1

In explaining and interpreting the table, I start with drawing attention to the national identity based arguments (the 6th rationale). Although the sheer number (20 times) is relatively small, this line of argument constitutes one of the fundamental differences from the pre-1995 debates. The pre-1995 inspections contain few statements that describe or recognize their nation. In fact, because of the nature of the debates, inquiries or statements at the National Assembly Inspections on military affairs tend to mainly consist of factual descriptions and explanations. Thus, there is little room for statements that may have symbolic effects such as those conjuring up national pride. Given this nature, 20 times of resorting to national identity based arguments represents some degree of significance.

The images of South Korea in the national identity based arguments suggest that the politicians had strong beliefs in and positive attitudes about South Korea as an advanced and respected country in the international community. As in Presidential speeches, 'to the

⁶⁸⁸ For the details about the content analysis, see Section 2, Appendix.

world' constitutes a central theme in assembly members' remarks in the period. The assembly members often recognize their nation as "a pivotal nation in the Pacific era," "a nation playing a balancing role in Northeast Asia," "an advanced nation in the twenty-first century," and "a nation contributing to the development in this history of human being." And the navy is recognized as an organization that should play a leading role for the nation. For example, Assemblyman Lim Bokjin describes the navy as "playing a central role in the rebirth (or rebuilding) of our nation."⁶⁸⁹ This is a critical remark because it indicates how the politician perceived his nation and the role of the navy at that time. The expression "rebirth of our nation" clearly suggests that there is certain change in the way he perceives his nation. At the same time, he associates the navy with the nation's advancement. The rationale is that a bigger navy is necessary for the born-again South Korea. The important thing here is that, if there is no recognition about the identity of the nation, he would not have been able to establish such an argument about the necessity for a blue water navy.

As shown in Table 7.6, the international trend was the rationale that the assembly members employed most frequently in making their cases for building an ocean-going navy. Many lawmakers used their inquiry times for emphasizing that other countries have bigger and more advanced navies, and that they are building more of those ships. They sometimes highlight numerical superiorities of the navies operated by neighboring countries such as China, Russia, and Japan. Other times, they emphasize the types of the ships they operate. The politicians expressed many concerns about the case where the ROK navy remains a coastal navy while other countries are building ocean-going navies. For example, after the MND made clear its position that South Korea does not need an

⁶⁸⁹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1998 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

aircraft carrier in 1997, Assemblyman Lim Bokjin stated at that year's inspection that he was worried about the case where South Korea becomes the only country without an aircraft carrier in Northeast Asia in several years.⁶⁹⁰

These examples of other navies, however, were brought up not as a scaremongering effort. There were not many lawmakers who perceived those examples as military threats; the scores for threat related categories are relatively low. For example, Rationale 5 (potential threats from neighboring countries) scored 22 points and Rationale 7 (threats from North Korea) earned 17 points in Table 6.6. Rather, the majority of politicians were emphasizing how other countries would use their navies for promoting their national interests such as protecting SLOCs.⁶⁹¹ This is better understood as the dynamics predicted by the SI approach in which societal elites in modern nation states support the goal of competitive progress in the world.⁶⁹² At the same time, this is an example of what Slaughter described as a legitimacy-seeking effort by connecting the ROK navy to the larger naval community.⁶⁹³

Indeed, to some degree, the expression 'blue water navy' was employed in a way that the politicians meant a navy that goes along with international standards or trends. As many as 99 out of the total 1,397 inquiries, which makes up 7%, at the National Assembly

Korea, 1998. p. 8.

⁶⁹⁰ Note that this is obviously a comment with exaggeration. I am citing it in order to show the example in which a politician expressed his concern about the consequences from South Korea's failure in catching up with international trends. See National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1997. p. 7.

⁶⁹¹ This view is shared by a journalist in Donga Ilbo. See Jaehong Kim. "Haegun Daeyangeuro Nundollinda/ 21segi Shingukbangjeongchaek Chujin (Navy, Turning Eyes toward the Oceans / Initiative for a New Defense Policy for the 21st Century)." *Donga Ilbo*, September 16, 1992.

⁶⁹² John W. Meyer. "The World Polity and the Authority of the Nation-State." In *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual*, by M. George Thomas, John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez and John Boli. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publication, 1987. p. 59.

⁶⁹³ Anne-Marie Slaughter. "The Real New World Order." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5,

Inspections between 1995 and 2009 contain arguments that explicitly point to what other countries, particularly advanced countries, do as examples for the ROK navy to emulate. They include arguments about various policies associated with the navy such as weapons acquisition, the command and control systems, intelligence capability, logistics support, the force composition, and personnel management. For example, Assemblywoman Lee Hisuk takes examples of other navies in urging the ROK navy to recruit more female crew.⁶⁹⁴ These arguments by political leaders show part of mechanisms that lead to institutional isomorphism around the world that the SI approach predicts.

The international trend arguments are often employed in conjunction with the national identity based arguments. In a sense, these arguments involve symbolic meanings that the navy represents in that the assembly members associated the characteristics of the navy with those of their nation. For example, the size of naval ships was considered an indicator of national power or standing. Many lawmakers point out that South Korea operates the navy that does not match other dimensions of the country such as economic power and other maritime industries. The following argument by Assemblyman Lee Yinje serves as a good example.

“South Korea has become recognized as a prominent maritime country with the greatest number of shipbuilding contracts, the twelfth largest trading volume, the ninth greatest number of commercial ships, and the eighth largest fishery industry in the world. In contrast, the current level of the South Korean navy is so negligible that neither can it be compared with neighboring countries and those with the similar economic size with South Korea, nor can function for the protection of the SLOCs.”⁶⁹⁵

Sep.-Oct., 1997: pp. 183-197.

⁶⁹⁴ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2003 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2003. p. 10.

⁶⁹⁵ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2001 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2001. p. 6.

In this argument, the assemblyman has the image of incomplete or imbalanced South Korea; the nation flourishes in many industrial and commercial areas while it lacks naval power significantly. The argument implies that South Korea would get closer to the status of the nation that he desires or expects by having a bigger navy that matches other national capacities. In other words, an ocean-going navy is a very important element for the national identity that he holds.

The second most frequent rationale for supporting the BWN initiative in Table 7.6 is the kind of arguments that emphasize national interest based on the recognition of the importance of the sea as the reservoir of underwater resources and trade routes for national prosperity. Particularly, the protection of SLOCs is considered the most critical point for building a blue water navy. The third rationale involves the protection of sovereignty of South Korea and the people. I discuss the second and third rationales together because they have a common element: although they involve different objects to protect (one is interest and the other is sovereignty), the arguments are based on the recognition of South Korea as a sovereign nation and the consideration of appropriate behaviors for a sovereign nation.

The arguments based on the necessity for protecting trade routes (Rationale 2 in Table 7.6) may look like a strong effect of material interest that the realist position would emphasize. However, note that I have demonstrated that there is no positive relationship between South Korea's growth in trade and the initiative to build ocean-going ships in Chapter 3. If the necessity for protecting SLOCs was raised during the time when South Korea's economy was becoming increasingly reliant on export in the 1970s, it would have been closer to concerns about material interest.

Instead, the arguments about SLOCs emphasize what South Korea should do as a sovereign country. For example, Assemblyman Kim Bokdong emphasizes that South Korea used to rely on the United States for the protection of SLOCs for raw materials, and that South Korea, from now on, should build an ocean-going navy that can protect its own economic interest as a sovereign nation.⁶⁹⁶ The argument implies that South Korea had not behaved in a way that a sovereign state was supposed to do. If this argument had been made in the context of decreasing U.S. defense commitment, it would have been understood as a realist argument that emphasizes a state's autonomous military capability to protect its own economic interest. However, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 3, there was no significant decrease in U.S. defense commitment to East Asia and particularly to alliances like South Korea and Japan after the end of the Cold War. South Korea could have continued to focus on coastal defense while relying on the United States for security in international waters. From these perspectives, the arguments about SLOCs represent the idea that South Korea should be able to defend its own interest because that is what a sovereign nation state is supposed to do as an equally respected member of the international community. Thus, having ocean-going capability was considered appropriate given the national identity of South Korea that the politicians held.

The emphasis on the identity of a sovereign state also applies to arguments about protecting sovereignty of South Korea and its people (Rationale 3 in Table 7.6). These arguments are often made in conjunction with arguments about the navy as a foreign policy instrument, which constitutes Rationale 4 in Table 7.6. The sovereignty protection arguments are mostly about issues involving the Japanese claim to *Dokdo* and the fleets of

⁶⁹⁶ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of

Chinese fishing vessels that frequently violated South Korea's territorial waters. For the politicians who represent the people who were oppressed by foreign countries, those attempts to infringe sovereignty constitute serious problems. Moreover, many lawmakers argue that South Korea has not been able to assert its position in diplomatic relations or protest against foreign countries' actions (particularly those of great powers) because it was a weak country. For example, Assemblyman Jeong Mongjun argues that the South Korean foreign ministry could not even show any protesting gestures in response to Japanese intentional show of force around *Dokdo* at the end of the 1980s.⁶⁹⁷ Assemblyman Lee Cheol deplored the fact that South Korea could not say anything in protest about the incident in 1983 where a fighter aircraft of the Soviet Union attacked Korean Airline 007 and all passengers on board were killed.⁶⁹⁸ However, South Korea is not, and should not, be such a weak country anymore. For the politicians, the blue water navy is one of the elements that represent South Korea's sovereignty in international relations and help South Korea grow out of the weak country status. In other words, the navy among other services is the one that can make the South Korean people stand tall on the international stage.⁶⁹⁹ In a sense, the blue water navy has a feature of a value symbol because the politicians show affect or a strong attitude toward national sovereignty that the navy represents.⁷⁰⁰

The arguments that belong to Rationale 4 in Table 7.6 indicate how much the assembly members care about South Korea's becoming an important member of the international

Korea, 1995. p. 54.

⁶⁹⁷ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1992 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 1992. p. 11.

⁶⁹⁸ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 50.

⁶⁹⁹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1995 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 51.

community. For this, the navy is recognized as a crucial element. On the one hand, the ROK navy's participation in international efforts was encouraged because it is a contribution to the international community. This is about an appropriate behavior given South Korea's national identity. Assemblyman Kim Gibae argues that South Korea needs certain level of naval power because its international role will expand as it becomes an advanced country in the twenty-first century.⁷⁰¹ Assemblyman Hong Junpyo support his argument about deploying a ROK naval ship to the Somalia region as part of multinational anti-piracy operations with the fact that countries like the United States, France, and Russia had already been participating in the international effort.⁷⁰² The practical reason for deploying a naval unit to the region is to protect South Korea's people and commercial shipping in the international water. At the same time, he is arguing that South Korea as a developed country should behave in an appropriate way as other advanced countries behave by making contributions to international security. On the other hand, the ROK navy's participation in international efforts is also encouraged because it was regarded as the representation of South Korea in the international community and, thereby, elevating its international standing. Assemblyman Heo Daebeom urged the navy to send more units to the RIMPAC exercise not only because the exercise is useful for our navy but also because the participation by the greater number of ships or aircrafts would enhance South Korea's international standing.⁷⁰³ Despite the slight difference, these statements clearly

⁷⁰⁰ Barry O'Neill. *Honor, Symbols, and War*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. p. 7.

⁷⁰¹ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1998 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 9.

⁷⁰² Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2008 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2008. p. 7.

⁷⁰³ National Defense Committee Minutes for the 1997 Inspection. p. 8.

suggest that the support for a bigger navy or blue water navy is based on the image or identity of the nation that the politicians hold.

In this section, I have demonstrated that there was a consensus and even enthusiasm for building an ocean-going navy among the assembly members. In fact, this general consensus in the National Assembly is a very rare phenomenon given the nature of politics in South Korea's National Assembly which is deeply divided between the conservatives and the liberals. There was no such division in the discussion about whether or not South Korea should pursue an ocean-going navy. The strong support may have been due to the consideration of the functions of an ocean-going navy. However, it cannot be purely functional calculations. Most of all, the BWN initiative was accepted by the politicians because they shared the ideas or images about what kind of nation South Korea is and should be. Without the internationally oriented South Korea's national identity or the 'to-the-world' imperative among the politicians, the navy's initiative for building bigger naval ships would definitely have not been accepted favorably by the politicians. Even though the construction of an ocean-going navy was for protecting South Korea's economic or diplomatic interest, the fundamental factor that made the politicians give support was their beliefs or norms that prescribe appropriate behaviors for a sovereign state.

Rather than the simple consideration of functions or interest, it is more accurate to say that the support for the BWN initiative was because of the meanings of an ocean-going navy to the politicians. The initiative struck a chord in that the majority of politicians clearly shared the ideas and emotions associated with South Korean-ness that the BWN initiative represented such as national sovereignty, pride, and international standing of

South Korea. Many politicians at the 2009 National Assembly Inspection strongly expressed how much they were proud of a series of successful anti-piracy operations conducted by ROKS *Munmu the Great* (DDH-976), the first South Korean naval ship deployed to the multinational anti-piracy effort in the sea areas around Somalia.⁷⁰⁴ The operations were praised because they saved many commercial ships, particularly those of South Korea, from the pirates. They were proud because this was the kind of a sovereign state's role for its people that the politicians had been thinking of. They were also proud because the participation of the ROK navy unit in the operations meant South Korea's representation in the international efforts to fight against the piracy.

At the 2009 Inspection, some politicians including Assemblyman Kim Jangsu, urged the navy to make a plan to build more ocean-going ships because such international operations would strain the navy's other operations such as defending security at home waters.⁷⁰⁵ This argument assumes that South Korea would make a long term and even greater commitment to the international efforts in the future because it will deprive the ROK navy of available ships for dealing with immediate threats in home waters. The opposite position would have been to ask for the termination of the commitment due to the lack of available forces. However, no politicians have made suggestions even close to such a position.⁷⁰⁶ This strong commitment to the international efforts stands for the politicians'

⁷⁰⁴ See, for example, statements by assemblymen An, Gyubaek, Lee, Jinsam, Kim, Jangsu, and Mun, Hisang at the 2009 Inspection. National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2009 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2009. p. 17, p. 25, p. 28, p. 31.

⁷⁰⁵ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2009 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 4.

⁷⁰⁶ Assemblyman Ryu Seungmin is the only one who expresses concerns about the potential lack of available forces defending home waters. However, he does not suggest the termination of the international commitment because of that. See National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2009 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 23.

beliefs about what South Korea should do given its identity as a sovereign, legitimate, and advanced state in international relations. As Assemblywoman Song Yeongseon argues, the blue water navy was not simply the navy's project; it was about South Korea's advancement to the world to the politicians.⁷⁰⁷

The Public

This section discusses to what degree and why the BWN initiative was supported by the public in South Korea's society. I find that the atmosphere in society was generally supportive of the initiative. Throughout the section, I demonstrate that the media played an important role in spreading the BWN initiative among the public, and that the public supported an ocean-going navy because they associated the status of the navy with South Korea's national identity and international standing. In these processes, I also demonstrate that the images of great naval ships were a contributing factor to the public support particularly at the beginning stage of the initiative.

For the analyses in this section, I first rely on major daily newspapers and interviews. Newspapers are particularly useful for "establishing context" that helps trace how the initiative was spread and gained support from the public.⁷⁰⁸ They also provide different views about the navy's new initiative held by opinion leaders and the public. As an additional measure, I also employed a public survey. I requested the representative of a

⁷⁰⁷ Appendix to National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2007 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2007. p. 9.

⁷⁰⁸ Deborah Welch Larson, "Sources and Methods in Cold War History: The Need for a New Theory-Based Archival Approach." In *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations*, by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman eds, pp. 327-350. Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2001. p. 345.

civic organization called the Korean Defense Network (KDN) to post my survey questionnaire on the KDN website so that people voluntarily participate in the survey.

There are some limitations involved in my survey method. As I explained in Chapter 2, the sample for this survey is not representative of the South Korean population. It was not randomly selected because the subscribers to the Korea Defense Network (KDN) website voluntarily participated in the survey. The KDN is a civic organization whose members have special interest in defense affairs. In fact, I have employed this survey method for two reasons. First, there is no guarantee that I can get meaningful responses from a truly random sample of people because answering questions about military related topics requires some level of knowledge and interest in the subject matter which many people do not have. Second, the survey conducted with the KDN members may be a strong test against my cultural explanation of South Korea's naval development. According to Shin Yingyun, the representative of the KDN, the KDN is an organization that consists of those who think that they have quite good knowledge on military affairs and equipment. He points out that the organization does not have particular political preferences because it only deals with military issues.⁷⁰⁹ I assumed that the people with good knowledge on military equipment tend to understand the acquisition of weapons in terms of the functions and strategic/tactical advantages that the weapons would bring about. They are less likely to express their opinions suggesting that they are influenced by presumably non-practical factors such as national identity and pride even though they were in fact influenced by those elements. Therefore, if I find some influence of such cultural factors from the responses by the KDN members, it would serve as a fair ground for the SI approach.

⁷⁰⁹ Author's interview with representative Shin Yingyun, May 24, 2011. He added that, if he has to define a political tendency of the organization, it would be the central slightly leaning toward the

However, it should be noted that the KDN members may have stronger patriotic attitudes than other people. Such attitudes may make them susceptible to symbolic and emotional factors that are associated with the nation. Then, the survey results may reflect biased opinions. With the limitations in mind, I report the results of the survey at the end of the chapter as additional information.

There is another limitation in my public level analysis. I hardly got access to the people who believe in arms reduction particularly for the purpose of trust building between two Koreas. However, I compensate this limitation to some degree by studying a variety of daily newspapers whose political positions differ. For this section, I looked at all reports and opinions in twelve different daily newspapers that contain the phrase “blue water navy.”⁷¹⁰ If the anti-military groups were serious enough about opposing the BWN initiative, I assume that the examination of those journal reports would have revealed some of their positions about the initiative.

The examination of various journal reports confirms that it was the navy that started the BWN initiative and that there were no pre-existing opinions about building an ocean-going navy in South Korean society. The phrase “blue water navy” appears in journal reports in 1990 for the first time, which coincides with the time the ROK navy started to be assertive about its organizational identity. Since the first appearance, the phrase continuously appeared in journal reports every year with some degree of fluctuation throughout the period of interest. This continuous appearance indicates that the BWN initiative has been

right.

⁷¹⁰ The twelve newspapers include *Hankook Ilbo*, *Joongang Ilbo*, *Gyeonghyang Ilbo*, *Munhwa Ilbo*, *Segye Ilbo*, *Seoul Shinmun*, *Donga Ilbo*, *Hangyeore Shinmun*, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Naeil Shinmun*, *Kookmin Ilbo*, and *Asia Today*. I intentionally exclude *Gukbang Ilbo* (National defense newspaper) that is published by the Ministry of National Defense because they are more likely to reflect the perspectives of the military (the navy).

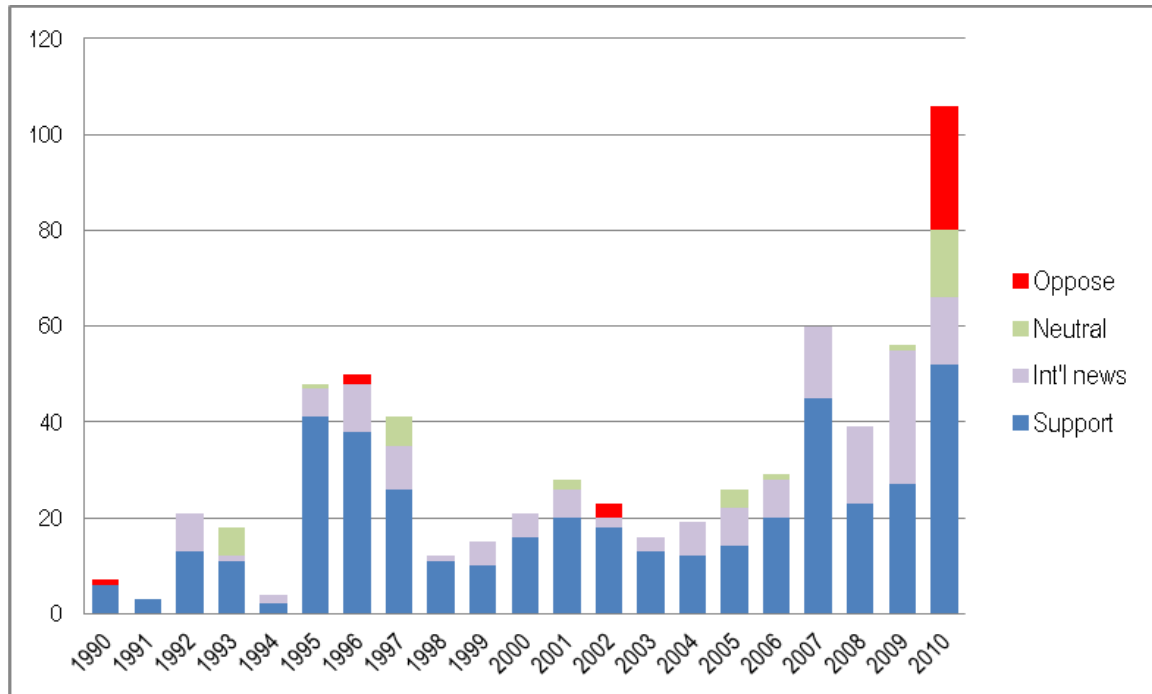
established as a topic that can attract some attention in society. From 1990 to 2010, there were 641 articles (including news reports and opinions) that contain the phrase ‘blue water navy’ in the twelve daily newspapers.

One of the most interesting phenomena related to the BWN initiative was that there was almost no strong opposition against the initiative. This is the impression that many attentive observers commonly received although they cannot exactly explain why it was so. According to Yu Yongwon, one of the leading journalists with specialty in military affairs, there was no opposing voices from the pacifist or anti-military groups even when the South Korean government decided to build Aegis destroyers whose unit cost amounts to 1 billion dollars.⁷¹¹ He recalls that the favorable atmosphere toward the BWN initiative was phenomenal. He added that many journalists also maintained favorable positions about the navy’s initiative to the extent that there was a saying that the BWN initiative would not have been as successful as it has been without strong support from journalists. Professor Lee Chun-geun has the same impression about this point. According to Professor Lee, although it was the navy that promotes the BWN initiative very effectively, the roles of journalists and news companies were very important because they reported supportive opinions about the initiative from a variety of opinion leaders such as professors and commentators.⁷¹² In fact, their impressions are not groundless given the data that I present below in Figure 7. 4.

⁷¹¹ Author’s interview with Yu Yongwon, May 29, 2011.

⁷¹² Author’s interview with Professor Lee Chun-geun, May 21, 2011.

Figure 7.4 The number of articles containing the phrase ‘blue water navy’



This figure reflects some facts about the spread of the BWN initiative in society. Each bar represents the number of articles containing the expression ‘blue water navy’ that appeared each year. As the graph shows, there are not many articles that contain negative opinions related to the BWN initiative until 2010 in which ROKS *Cheonan* (PCC-772) was sunk by a surprise torpedo attack by a North Korean submarine.⁷¹³ The peaks of supporting articles in 1995 and 1996 represent the effects of the official launch of the BWN drive by Admiral An Byeongtae. Another notable thing is that, as newspapers pay attention to the ROK navy’s BWN initiative, they started to report about naval buildups of other countries, particularly those of neighboring countries such as China and Japan, calling the buildups their efforts to build their blue water navies. This is what ‘international news’ represents in Figure 7.4.

The reports about other navies that began to appear in 1992 in Figure 7.4 constitute an interesting phenomenon given the fact that the neighboring great powers had long maintained much bigger and advanced fleets. Although an accurate analysis on why this is so is beyond the current project, I can make plausible hypotheses. First, it probably demonstrates that naval developments in general, either the ROK navy or foreign navies, had not constituted interesting or important issues in society before. Second, it might be viewed as kind of efforts to seek legitimacy or appropriateness that the SI approach predicts. I have argued in the previous section that the politicians cited many examples of foreign countries as an effort to seek legitimacy by connecting South Korea to a larger community. Similarly, journalists who had supportive positions about the BWN initiative may have looked at what other navies were doing and reported about it as an effort to make the initiative more legitimate. Alternatively, the BWN initiative could have been influential enough to turn on journalists' genuine interest about naval affairs in general so that they started to report news about world navies. The most important thing is that whatever the accurate cause is, this phenomenon serves as another reason that one cannot explain the ROK navy's BWN initiative based on the threat-based realist perspective. If naval powers of the neighboring countries and other foreign countries had been perceived as threats in South Korean society in general, there must have been commentators or journalists who mentioned about it much ahead of the BWN initiative came about, which I do not see from the extensive examination of newspapers.

As part of an effort to have better understanding about the substances of news articles, I looked at what kinds of news about the BWN initiative were reported in the newspapers

⁷¹³ I counted an article that contains any negative opinions as "opposition."

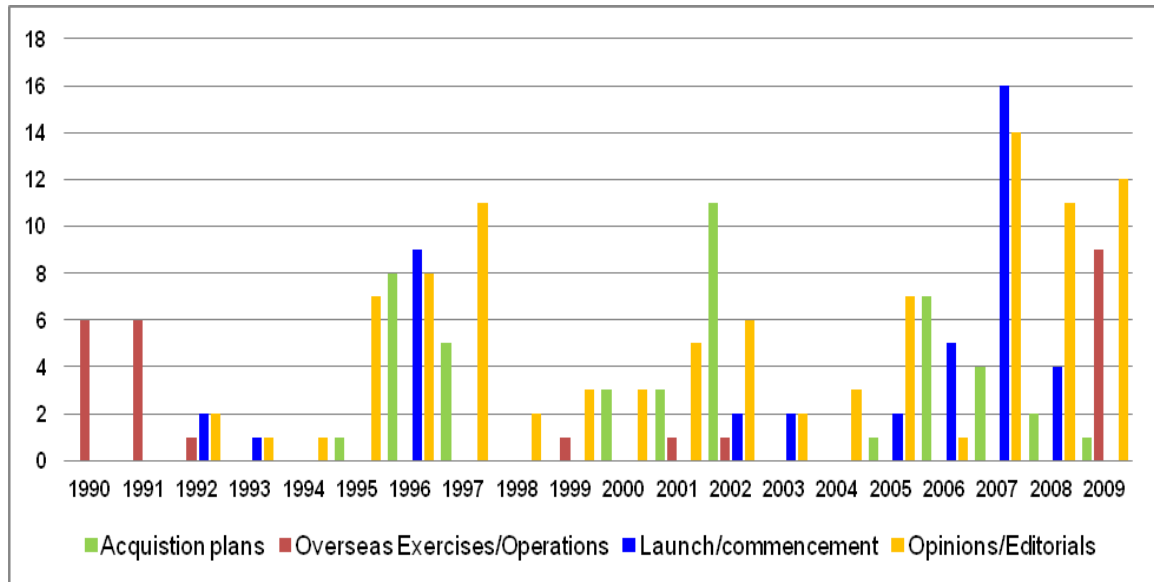
between 1990 and 2009.⁷¹⁴ Table 7.7 demonstrates various types of the articles and how many times they appeared in the newspapers. According to the table, opinions/editorials is the most frequently appeared type of articles followed by news about acquisition plan, launch/commencement of new ships, routine reports about the navy, and overseas exercises/operations. Based on this information, I looked at the yearly distributions of the top five articles during the period except the routine news about the navy.⁷¹⁵ The results are presented in Figure 7.5.

Table 7.7 The types/subjects of news articles, 1990-2009

No	Types/Subjects of News Articles	No. of Articles (%)
1	Opinions/Editorials	99 (25%)
2	Acquisition Plans	46 (12%)
3	Launch/Commencement of new ships	44 (11%)
4	Routine news related the navy	42 (11%)
5	Overseas exercises/operations	26 (7%)
6	National defense in general	24 (6%)
7	Presidential speeches	23 (6%)
8	News related to Naval Commanders (Change of command, etc)	20 (5%)
9	Others	19 (5%)
10	Naval commands (Facilities, bases, etc)	15 (4%)
10	National Assembly Inspections	15 (4%)
11	Navy events (Academic)	12 (3%)
12	International military events	6 (2%)
13	Commemorative events	4 (1%)
Total		395 (100%)

⁷¹⁴ I excluded 2010 because my main interest is to examine how the BWN initiative was maintained until the sinking of the ROK naval ship in March 2010. As Figure 7.4 demonstrates, there were a lot of news articles containing pros and cons about the BWN initiative after the incident.

⁷¹⁵ I excluded the routine navy news because they would not provide information as useful as articles about other subjects such as acquisition plans, launch/commencement, and overseas exercises/operations.

Figure 7.5 The yearly distribution of top articles, 1990-2009

There are several important points that one can read from this graph. First of all, the graph demonstrates that the phrase ‘blue water navy’ first appeared in newspapers in the context of reporting about overseas exercises in the beginning of the 1990s. More specifically, the articles were reports about the ROK navy’s participation in the RIMPAC exercises. The peak in 2009 represents reports about the deployment of a ROK navy ship to the Somalia area. Media reports proudly claimed the deployment as the beginning of the ROK navy’s BWN missions.

I have argued previously that the ROK navy took pride in the fact that it started participating in the exercise with other advanced navies, and that the international exposure served as the ROK navy’s socialization with international navies in the process of its formation of the new organizational identity. Similarly, the news articles about the events indicate that the navy’s participation in the international military exercise was also viewed as an epoch-making event from the perspectives of journalists or the publishers. As many

as six newspapers wrote about the “meanings” of the ROK navy’s participation in the RIMPAC exercise in 1990. Although they noted the straightforward benefits such as learning advanced naval tactics by the international exchanges, their emphases were also placed on much broader implications for South Korea’s international standing and the navy’s becoming an ocean-going navy. For example, according to a news article, “the participation in the RIMPAC exercise is meaningful in that it elevates South Korea’s status to that of a partner (with the rim of Pacific countries) and establishes the diplomatic basis on which South Korea can play a role in opening the coming Pacific era.”⁷¹⁶ Another article reported that “our navy is taking the first step, since the establishment of the navy, toward becoming a member of the navies of the Pacific Ocean by participating in the RIMPAC exercise along with navies of allies including the United States, Japan, Australia, and Canada.”⁷¹⁷ These articles clearly reveal that they perceive South Korea differently from it in the past as a country which aims to be a more active player and legitimate member in international relations, and that they appreciate the navy’s contribution to such a change.

As Figure 7.5 shows, the major events in which the newspapers discuss about the ‘blue water navy’ were reports about acquisition plans and launchings/commencements for new ships. Particularly, the effects of the latter were significant partly because of the visibility of the events. One can easily see the significance of those events by looking at the figures attending the ceremonies such as Presidents, Ministers of National Defense, and other

⁷¹⁶ Kwangju Park. "Daeyanghaegun Seongjang Mitgeoreum/ Haegun, Hwantaepyeongyang Hullyeon Chamga Uimi (The Foundation for Growing into Blue Water Navy / The Meaning of the Navy's Participation in the RIMPAC Exercise)." *Segye Ilbo*, March 25, 1990: p. 13.

⁷¹⁷ Wonhong Kim. "Yeonanhaegun Talpi, Daeyangbangwie Cheosbal/ Hwantaepyeongyang Hapdonghunryeon Chamgaui Uimi (Growth out of a Coastal Navy, First Step of Defense in Blue Water / The Meanings of the Participation in the RIMPAC Exercise)." *Seoul Shinmun*, March 25,

distinguished civilian and military officials. The news articles proudly reported that every launching ceremony marked the ROK navy's taking one more step closer to becoming a blue water navy. For example, the launch of ROKS *Gwanggaeto the Great* (DDH-971), the first destroyer of the KDX (the peak in 1996 in Figure 7.5) was presented as a meaningful event in that South Korea owned the first combat ship with the displacement over 3,000 tons, and that the ship was mainly designed and built domestically.⁷¹⁸ It was depicted as the first step toward an ocean-going navy. When ROKS *Sejong the Great* (DDG-991), a destroyer with Aegis capability, was launched in 2007 (the peak in 2007 in Figure 7.5), the ROK navy was viewed as starting to be an ocean-going navy that helps South Korea protect its sovereignty and interest in international waters. Particularly, many news articles highlighted the fact that South Korea becomes the third country in the world that owns an advanced Aegis ship with over 7,000 tons only after the United States and Japan.⁷¹⁹

These articles are not simply reporting the facts about the launching events. They clearly contain the 'affect' elements associated with the status of their nation. As Rüger rightly observes, launching ceremonies of great naval ships themselves can serve as symbolic events through which people feel greatness of the nation and the national identity is internationally proclaimed.⁷²⁰ Indeed, for South Korea whose navy began with second-hand ships as part of the U.S. foreign aid in the 1950s, the fact that South Korea built those

1990: p. 3.

⁷¹⁸ Yonghoe Song. "3,000 Tongeup Guksan Guchukhamsidae Yeollyeotda (The Age of 3,000 ton-class Destroyer Has Begun)." *Hankook Ilbo*, October 25, 1996: p. 6.

⁷¹⁹ For example, see Chungshin Jeong. "Sejongdaewangham Jinsu... Naenyeon Siljeonbaechi (The Launch of ROKS Sejong the Great...Entering into the Fleet Next Year)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, May 26, 2007: p. 2.

⁷²⁰ Jan Rüger, "'The Last Word in Outward Splendour': The Cult of the Navy and the Imperial Age." In *The Navy and the Nation: The Influence of the Navy on Modern Australia*, by David

world-class advanced naval combat ships with its own shipbuilding technology meant more than a material achievement or advancement.

As shown in Figure 7.5, opinions/editorials appear roughly around particular news such as weapons acquisition plans and launchings of new ships. Judging by these articles, there has been a great degree of support for the BWN initiative from opinion leaders and the people. Among ninety-nine opinions and editorials, only three articles contain negative or reserved opinions about the BWN. Two articles are counted as neutral because they discuss about some other issues but contain the phrase ‘blue water navy.’ The negative/reserved opinions were mainly made in the context of arguing for more focus on defense postures against North Korean provocations or more realistic defense planning given the limited resources of South Korea. Other than these, the rest ninety-four articles expressed very strong support for turning the ROK navy into an ocean-going navy.

Probably, the strongest position expressed in journalism in support of the BWN initiative would be the responses to the MND’s and JCS’s decision to scrap the BWN policy and reorient the naval policy toward coastal operations in 1997 for fear of aggravating diplomatic relations with neighboring countries. The articles argued that the BWN initiative had been accepted by the people as an imperative for defending South Korea’s interest and sovereignty in the long run. They particularly emphasized the international trends with regard to naval developments. The following quotation is an exemplary article with such arguments:

That the top authorities in the JCS are considering downsizing the BWN plan because of potential diplomatic frictions with neighboring countries which it may bring about is a nonsense that we cannot even laugh about. China has been pursuing the

construction of a blue ocean fleet Japan has launched an 8,900 ton class multipurpose landing ship..... Even Thailand is about to own a light aircraft carrier. I'd like to ask whether or not ignoring such international trend is a wise move for a sovereign state as an effort to avoid diplomatic frictions.⁷²¹

The strong support for the BWN was also expressed through comments about the navy's activities related to international operations. I cannot overemphasize how strong the feelings of national pride many pieces of opinions/editorials expressed about the deployment of a ROK navy ship to the Somalia region in 2009 for the international anti-piracy operations. Professor Jeong Jongseop claimed in a column that the navy's deployment represented the first case where South Korea sent out a combat ship overseas as an effort to protect its own people, which is a basic responsibility of a sovereign nation-state (but not had been fulfilled well by the South Korean government until now).⁷²² He also emphasized that the ROK navy was contributing to the international security cooperation. Another editorial argues that these activities by the ROK navy including protecting its people in international waters and contributing to the international security cooperation would elevate the value of the "Korea brand."⁷²³

These articles' celebratory tones were not about the navy's achievement but what the ROK navy represents in the international community: the nation. They were proud because South Korea, not simply the navy, was doing what a sovereign state should be able to do. At the same time, they were proud because South Korea was fulfilling part of

⁷²¹ Segye Ilbo. "Daeyanghaegun Geonseol Eodigatna (Saseol) (Where Did the Blue Water Navy Construction Go / Editorial)." *Segye Ilbo*, April 5, 1997: p. 3.

⁷²² Jongseop Jeong. "Jeongjongseobui Nonhyeong Somallia Pabyeonggwa Gukmin Boho / Comments by Jeongjongseob, The Somalia Deployment and protecting the People." *Hankook Ilbo*, March 16, 2009: p. 34.

⁷²³ Munhwa Ilbo. "<Saseol> 'Korea brand' Gachi Nopil Cheonghaebudae Chulhang (<Editorial> Underway of the Cheonghae Command that will raise the Value of the Korea Brand)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, March 14, 2009: p. 23.

‘responsibility’ as a member of the international community.⁷²⁴ Interestingly, most articles regarded the participation in the anti-piracy operation as sort of an appropriate behavior given (improved) South Korea’s international standing. As President Lee Myoung Bak proclaimed, the deployment was an indicative of the fact that South Korea has moved from a receiving country to a giving country and from a following country to a leading country.⁷²⁵ It might be a small contribution relative to what other Western countries or great power countries have done for the world community. However, for the South Korean people, it was an important event that symbolized the national identity that they hold.

Evidently, there was enthusiasm among the normal South Korean people about building big naval ships with ocean-going capability. In response to the MND’s cutting down the budget for designing a light aircraft carrier, a reader wrote that South Korea should build light aircraft carriers for the construction of a blue water navy and the protection of SLOCs.⁷²⁶ Another reader commented about the navy’s plan to build modernized fast patrol boats with guided missiles and large caliber guns.⁷²⁷ This reader criticized that plan because fast patrol boats with such large weapons would not be able to maneuver efficiently. Instead, the reader argued that the money should be used in constructing ocean-going ships such as KDXs and light carriers that would be used in the missions like SLOC protection.

The support for the BWN initiative from normal citizens is also confirmed by other sources. For example, Assemblyman Kim Haksong, a member of the National Defense

⁷²⁴ Sangeun Park. "Gigo/ Munmudaewangham Pabyeong Hwansongsike Gaseo (Opinion/ Attending the Deployment Ceremony for ROKS *Munmu the Great*).*" Hankook Ilbo*, March 28, 2009.

⁷²⁵ Munhwa Ilbo. "<Saseol> 'Korea brand' Gachi Nopil Cheonghaebudae Chulhang (<Editorial> Underway of the Cheonghae Command that will raise the Value of the Korea Brand)."

⁷²⁶ Hwal Jo. "Chosun Ilboreul Ilkko (After reading Chosun Ilbo).*" Chosun Ilbo*, August 21, 1999.

Committee, introduced a petition that he had received from a group of civilians called the Korea Defense Network (KDN) at the 2007 National Assembly Inspection on the navy as evidence showing public support for acquiring more KDX-III class (Aegis) destroyers.⁷²⁸ The KDN petitioned for building one more Aegis destroyer because the navy's original plan of acquiring six Aegis destroyers was cut by half in the Roh Moo Hyun administration. The KDN filed the petition with signatures of fifty-thousand individuals that they collected in support of building more Aegis destroyers.⁷²⁹ Their main argument was that South Korea as a sovereign state needs a minimum level of deterrence that would not be dismissed by others, and that Aegis destroyers are effective tools for the purpose. They also argue that Aegis destroyers would be effective weapon systems to address North Korea's missile threats.

These support and interest from normal citizens indicate that the BWN initiative has reached the public level to some degree. Not many people think or talk about the navy in their normal lives. It takes special interest or chances to get familiarized with the topic in order to have (favorable) opinions about the navy. As I have demonstrated, there was no particular interest in naval power in South Korean society. In this respect, the BWN initiative was effective to the degree that it opened debates among the South Korean people about the navy's role for their nation as demonstrated by the readers' opinions and the petition to the National Assembly that I have introduced above. In fact, the enthusiasm for big naval ships has grown as the BWN related projects have materialized. In other words, the support at the public level increased as new ships came out in the 2000s and the people

⁷²⁷ Sugon Kim. "Uigyeon (Opinions)." *Chosun Ilbo*, August 8, 2002.

⁷²⁸ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2007 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2007. p. 32.

really see what ocean-going naval ships look like. According to the results of my survey, 199 out of 240 people said that they got to know about South Korea's naval development in the 2000s. 188 people said that they started to follow the news on the naval development after they had seen newly launched ships.

One evidence demonstrating people's fascination to the naval ships is the rise of online community in support of the ROK navy's development. Beginning from the end of the 1990s, civilians who had personal interest in defense matters started to make initial efforts to create websites that would be used as spaces for public debates and sharing information among people with common interest. Those activities have merged into two most influential websites featuring defense policy debates and military news: the Yu Yongwon's Military World (established in 2001) and the Power Korea (established in 2003). According to Yu Yongwon, one of the leading journalists with specialty in military affairs and creator of the website Yu Yongwon's Military World, he finds that the navy section always gets the most clicks among other services' sections although he does not keep the accurate records.⁷³⁰ The Power Korea has changed the name to the Korea Defense Network (KDN) later and the KDN has developed into an officially registered non-governmental organization with the fifth largest member (as of 2012) in South Korea.⁷³¹

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ Author's interview with Yu Yongwon, May 29, 2011.

⁷³¹ The KDN has contributed to the implementation of the BWN initiative in that it voluntarily served as a mediating organization between the ROK navy and people who live on the Jeju island, the southernmost island of South Korea, in 2005 when the islanders protested against the navy's plan to establish a naval base on the Jeju island as part of the BWN initiative. Partly due to efforts by the KDN, the dispute was settled because people understood that the naval base is critical to South Korea's ability to project naval power toward the oceans. These facts were confirmed by my interviews with the representative Shin Yingyun and Admiral Kim Seongchan, Chief of Naval Operations (2010-2011) who was responsible for the Jeju naval base project as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Planning and Management (N5/7) in 2005. For the KDN's organization rank, I referred to the following website: http://www.rankey.com/rank/rank_site_cate.php?cat1_id=9&cat2_id=104&cat3_id=608.

As advanced website services have become available in the 2000s, people created their own blogs featuring up-to-date military related news and fancy pictures of weapon systems.⁷³² According to my interview with Shin Yingyun, the representative of the KDN, the availability and spread of images of naval ships online definitely had enormous impacts on people's interest in naval weapon systems.⁷³³ As a former professional photographer, Shin was the one who visited different naval bases, took pictures of newly built ships with high quality cameras, and posted them on his website. Those high quality pictures had not been available to the people before because there were no such ships and taking pictures of military ships were not allowed for security reasons. Moreover, there was no such online community. According to Shin, after the navy found out that the pictures of naval ships were hot topics in online communities, the navy helped him take more pictures by opening the naval bases to him.⁷³⁴ Shin recalls that the critical event that triggered sensational responses from the bloggers and website visitors was the navy's opening of ROKS *Chungmoogong Yi Soon Shin* (DDH-975), the first series of KDX-II class destroyers, to the public in 2005.⁷³⁵ He stated that people who toured the ship were fascinated by the great look of the ship, and that they were excited about the KDX-III plan because they knew that KDX-IIIs (Aegis destroyers) are much more advanced class ships than KDX-IIs.

The people's excitement about ocean-going naval ships was partly due to the symbolic meanings that the great naval ships represent. The people associate the advanced naval ships with the image of their nation. They are impressed by the fact that their country has

⁷³² Although accurate statistics are not available, it is known that there were about 250 blogs featuring military affairs as of 2008 according to my interview with Shin Yingyun, the representative of the KDN, May 24, 2011.

⁷³³ Author's interview with Shin Yingyun, May 24, 2011.

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

those great naval ships. My survey results confirm this point to some degree: 175 people out of 240 answered that they felt proud of the fact their country has advanced naval combat ships after they toured or saw those ships through the media including internet.

People attach the meanings associated with the nation to the great naval ships because they are part of cultural repertoires. As Eyre and Suchman argue, some weapons are highly institutionalized while others are not in the modern world system in which “sovereignty, modernity, and independence are the essence of our ideas about the nation-state.”⁷³⁶ In other words, people perceive the naval ships differently from weapon systems of other services such as tanks and fighter jets. The overwhelming majority of respondents (232 out of 240 respondents) in my survey answered that the naval ships have symbolic meanings representing the nation that weapons of other military services do not have. While asked why they think so, 148 respondents said that it is so because of the characteristics of missions that the navy carries out. 136 people said that the navy’s symbolic status is due to the image of the naval ships cruising all over the world without physical borders. Other reasons include the symbolic meanings that the names of the naval ships have (132 respondents) and the fact that South Korea can build that kind of advanced ships (88 respondents). Lastly and most interestingly, as many as 55 people thought that the symbolic meaning of naval ships come from their magnificent appearances and the big sizes of those naval ships. These results clearly demonstrate that naval ships mean more than simple equipment for war fighting to the people.

⁷³⁶ Eyre, Dana P., and Mark C. Suchman. "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach." In *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in the World Politics*, by Peter J. Katzenstein, pp. 79-113. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. p. 96.

Indeed, people do not relate naval ships with direct military threats as much as realists would expect. Citing South Korea's deployment of a naval ship to the Somalia region as part of international efforts to fight piracy, one question of the survey asked if they would support continuous efforts to maintain South Korea's naval forces as modern and capable as those of other advanced navies, and what would be the rationales behind the support. Surprisingly, all 240 respondents said that they support for the advanced navy that can work with other advanced navies; nobody said that it is a wasting of tax money. With regard to the rationales, 209 people chose the answer that South Korea needs a capable navy comparable to those of neighboring countries in order to defend its sovereignty and security from potential conflicts in the future. 162 people said that a strong navy is necessary because it is directly related to survival and economic interests of the nation given the volume of trade and underwater resources that South Korea could benefit from the sea. Ninety-nine people believed that it is appropriate for South Korea to have an advanced naval fleet commensurate with its enhanced international standing as well as improved national power. Only one person said that naval power as strong as that of North Korea is enough for South Korea.

One interpretation that we can make of these results is that North Korean military threat is not a big part of the rationale people give in support of greater naval ships. This is partly because South Korea's national identity is not defined in terms of inter-Korea relations. Rather, they view their nation in terms of broader international relations. They want their nation participate in international activities and compete with advanced countries on the world stage. In doing so, an advanced naval fleet is an element that constitute the identity

of the kind of the nation that the people desire and, at the same time, a vehicle that project the national identity into the world.

As such, the BWN initiative was more than a naval strategy defined in the military term. To the people, it symbolizes South Korea's sovereignty, modernity, independence, national pride, and vision for the future. The KDN representative Shin Yingyun argues that the BWN initiative was successful because of the letter “大” (meaning great or big) which implies that the people were fascinated by the association of the greatness (or hope to be great) with their nation.⁷³⁷ I am not arguing that ocean-going naval ships have become one single representative icon for South Korea. The BWN initiative is only one dimension of many institutional developments in various professional fields that represent the modern nation statehood of South Korea, and that many people without particular interest may not know about. However, it is certain that the BWN initiative has become one of important social phenomena that obtained some degree of attention in the South Korean society. Two out of three major broadcasting stations in South Korea opened the first day of 2005 by reporting the Happy New Year news on TV from the naval ships and bases.⁷³⁸ This indicates that the BWN initiative was understood in the South Korea society as something that represents what a New Year's Day mean to the people such as hope, vision, resolution, etc. As Admiral An Byeongtae intended, the vision was the core element of the BWN initiative and it worked pretty well also among the public.

⁷³⁷ The Korean version of the phrase Blue Water Navy is *Daeyang Haegun* (대양해군), which can be put in Chinese letters “大洋海軍.” The first two letters together means blue waters or great (big) oceans and the first letter means “great or big.” Author's interview with Shin Yingyun on May 24, 2011.

⁷³⁸ Gyuyeop Mo. "Saehae Cheotnal Bangsong 3 sa Maein News...Haneulgwa Badaseo Saehaeinsa (New Year Day's News by the Three Major Broadcasting Companies...New Year's Greetings from

Throughout the chapter, I have demonstrated that the ROK navy leaderships maintained the BWN initiative for an extended period in spite of oppositions from higher national security authorities, and that it was mainly because the BWN related missions and capabilities have been established as organizational essence within the navy. I have also demonstrated that there have been significant support for the BWN initiative not only from political leaders such as the presidents and assembly members but also the media and the public, and that they supported the initiative because of the image or identity of their nation and the meanings of ocean-going ships associated with the national identity. However, the BWN initiative was put on the brink of termination when ROKS *Cheonan* (PCC-772) was sunk by a torpedo attack from a North Korean submarine in March 2010. In Epilogue, I show how my theoretical frameworks can explain the phenomena involved in the incident.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

My project set out to find out what brought about the Blue Water Navy (BWN) initiative in South Korea and what made the initiative persist for an extended period (1995-2010), which resulted in a major change to the ROK navy's force structure. Throughout chapters, I tested plausible explanations that build on different perspectives including the realist model, the bureaucratic/organizational politics model, the domestic politics model, and the sociological institutionalist (SI) model. I relied on the SI model as the main analytic framework. At the same time, I took an eclectic position in that I understand that there is no single factor that can provide explanations for the origin and continuation of the initiative. In this concluding chapter, I summarize findings from each chapter and the main arguments of the project. Then, I briefly discuss about the implications of my study for other cases and future research direction.

My research finds that the realist variables alone cannot explain the phenomena related to the BWN initiative; empirical evidence does not well support the explanations. The realist explanations hypothesized that the BWN initiative was South Korea's state level response to (1) external military threats such as North Korea or neighboring countries (China and Japan), (2) changes in U.S. defense commitment or U.S. leverage over South Korea, or (3) changes in South Korea's economic interest or its economic/technological capacities. First, the trends in North Korea's naval weapons acquisition and naval posture do not make the construction of ocean-going ships a strategic imperative for South Korea. North Korea did not have significant conventional naval weapons programs in the 1990s

except some submarine programs partly because of economic difficulties and deteriorated relations with former patrons such as Russia and China. Moreover, North Korea's naval forces that were mainly acquired between the 1960s and the 1980s are characterized with access-denial capabilities that rely on a large number of submarines and fast attack crafts. North Korea's growing asymmetric threats including ballistic missiles and submarine may be a contributing factor that helped continue the initiative because addressing the threats was part of rationales behind the construction of ocean-going ships. Still, the North Korean threats fall short of constituting the mechanisms behind the origin and continuation of the BWN initiative.

Naval power of China and Japan might have been viewed as potential threats to South Korea because these neighboring countries have continued to expand naval power projection capabilities and defense perimeters around their territories. However, this explanation is also problematic because the same factor cannot explain South Korea's behavior before the 1990s; South Korea has never asked for an ocean-going navy while China and Japan had always maintained superior naval power to South Korea before the 1990s. I also find that South Korea's foreign policy positions toward the neighboring countries were not noticeably aggressive during the BWN initiative period, which suggests that South Korea's naval growth was not likely to be a product of such aggressive foreign policy.

Second, it is also difficult to understand the BWN initiative as an internal balancing that resulted from decreased U.S. defense commitment to South Korea. Although there were some adjustments to the level of U.S. forward deployed troops in Asia following the end of the Cold War, they did not represent decreased commitment by the United States to

the region; the United States even defined the U.S. presence in Asia as permanent national interest in the 1990s. South Korea did not either respond to the adjustments with extreme fear of abandonment as it used to do to previous troop cuts. At that time, South Korea became even proactive in taking back the OPCON from the U.S. military authority suggesting that it has become more conscious about what a sovereign nation should do. I have also demonstrated that the implementation of the BWN initiative has little to do with decreased U.S. leverage over South Korea's foreign policy; there has been no significant intentional effort by the U.S. government to place a limit on South Korea's acquisition of conventional weapons.

Third, economic interest, economic growth, and technology were not the driving factors that produced the BWN initiative in the 1990s. If the BWN initiative had come along because of South Korea's growing interest in international trade, this same factor cannot explain why South Korea did not launch such an initiative to protect its growing trade earlier in the 1970s. During the 1970s, while South Korea's trade volume started to increase significantly, South Korea enjoyed free protection of shipping provided by the U.S. Navy. Particularly, the realist position cannot explain why South Korea tries to spend extra tax money on building large naval ships and take the responsibility of international operations when it can continue to enjoy the benefits of freeriding. It is also difficult to view that economic growth and technological advancement led to the initiative; there is no positive relation between South Korea's economic growth (GDP) and its defense expenditure over the last two decades; South Korea did not have some critical technologies for building advanced naval ships until the initiative was launched. However, I have

highlighted that increased economic and technological (industrial) capacities of South Korea served as necessary conditions to embark the major naval construction programs.

The bureaucratic/organizational politics model hypothesized that the BWN initiative was part of the ROK navy's effort for parochial interest or a consequence from the navy's improved position in the relations with central political institutions or other military services. My research finds no substantial evidence to support the hypotheses. Moreover, the naval leaders' call for ocean-going ships cannot be viewed as a purely interest-oriented argument because those weapon systems were necessary given the trend in modern military doctrine at that time that was closely related to the military operations on the Korean peninsula. Contrary to the hypothesis, the ROK navy's institutional position has never improved significantly during the BWN period in terms of the budget share and representation in central military organizations. Although the interest-based bureaucratic politics dynamics may not be the case, I note that another dimension of the bureaucratic/organizational politics model that emphasizes organizational behavior (based on the logic of appropriateness rather than the logic of consequence) is useful for my eclectic model.

I have argued that the hypotheses relying on the domestic politics model are unlikely cases. The model hypothesizes the BWN initiative came about because of South Korea's domestic characteristics that encourages innovations or as a consequence of political coalitions among societal actors such as the navy, politicians, and defense industries. The naval construction under the BWN initiative hardly constitutes an innovation. Moreover,

South Korea's industrial basis for naval construction was established during the period characterized with strong state leadership rather than strong society. With regard to the possibility of coalition politics leading to naval buildups, I have demonstrated that defense contractors do not have much incentive to actively lobby the navy given the nature of weapons acquisition process and the navy's relatively weak bureaucratic position in central military decision-making authorities. I have also explained that the relationship between a government and defense industries is characterized with unique dynamics that are quite different from what the military-industrial complex thesis would predict.

I have offered an eclectic explanation that relies on the Sociological Institutional (SI) approach as the main analytical framework and incorporates the role of other factors from the realist and bureaucratic/organizational politics approaches. Particularly, in explaining the origin of the BWN initiative, the organizational behavior model provides a valuable insight because it highlights the role of organizational members who struggle over defining and protecting the identity or essence of the organizations. Indeed, the BWN initiative came along as the ROK navy was defining the organizational identity and the way it serves the nation. Previously, the ROK navy was considered a 'fast-boat navy' whose primary role was to defend South Korea's coasts from North Korean infiltrations. This started to change as the navy defined promoting national interest and international standing as part of the organizational essence in the 1980s. Particularly, naval leaders became vocal about the necessity for the navy to play a leading role in defending and representing national interest in and outside the region as the people of South Korea increasingly viewed their nation as a sovereign, legitimate, and important member of the international community in the 1990s.

This internationally oriented image of South Korea represented a departure from the old national identity that used to be defined in terms of rivalry with North Korea.

As predicted by the SI perspectives that emphasize the diffusion of norm and institutional practices in transnational professional fields, the navy's newly forming organizational identity has been reinforced while the ROK navy had increased international exposures such as multinational naval exercises and port visits to foreign countries. The international exposures served as opportunities for members of the ROK navy not only to observe the backwardness of their own navy and necessity to modernize it but also to recognize the ROK navy as part of the international community and an instrument of South Korea's foreign policy. At the same time, the equipment and practices that they observe in such international exchanges constitute cultural resources that influence or even legitimate the organizational development of the ROK navy.

Although the ROK navy leaders started to use the phrase 'blue water navy' in 1990, the real drive for an ocean-going navy started as Admiral An Byeongtae made the BWN initiative an official naval policy in 1995. From then on, naval leaders employed the phrase 'blue water navy' as the slogan and future image of the ROK navy. While the BWN initiative was a declaration of newly forming organizational identity of the navy, it helped make explicit the meanings of the naval forces that are closely associated with South Korea's national interest and standing. By adopting the BWN slogan, the naval leaders imposed the special meanings to the ocean-going ships that the ROK navy just started to construct. The people outside the navy could easily share the meanings as it had strong implications for the advancement of their nation. In a sense, the phrase 'blue water navy' took on symbolic meanings that represent South Korea's standing and people's pride in

their nation. The BWN initiative provided consistency and cumulative effects for weapons acquisition by serving as an overarching theme for acquiring different weapon systems over an extended period. Most important, to the members of the ROK navy, the BWN brought about the visions that they can play greater roles in defending and representing their nation.

Although the BWN initiative was not adopted as a national level policy by the Ministry of National Defense, the initiative persisted in the navy because the characteristics of the navy envisioned by the BWN initiative have become the organizational identity. If the BWN initiative was a simple policy initiative instead of the navy's essential identity, it would have been most likely to vanish soon because of the reluctance to approve it by the central military authorities. Another reason that the navy could continue the BWN initiative was support from political leaders and the people of South Korea. Political leaders and the people supported the initiative because they associated an ocean-going navy with South Korea's national identity and international standing. My analyses of presidential speeches and statements by assembly members indicate that the political leaders used to think about the navy mainly in terms of its missions related to North Korea before the 1990s. However, since the 1990s, political leaders came to associate the navy with more diverse missions that have implications for South Korea's foreign policy, prosperity, and sovereignty. Particularly, the navy was increasingly understood as a medium that helps their nation go out to the world. Assembly members were also attentive to what other nations do in terms of employing naval forces in promoting national interest. From the analyses of newspapers and a survey, I find that the attitudes of opinion leaders and the people toward the BWN initiative have been quite supportive, and that the

construction of ocean-going ships were viewed as more than just a military issue; the attitudes clearly reflected ‘affect’ associated with the status of their nation.

My eclectic explanation predicts that the SI perspectives would provide conditions on which factors from other perspectives play out. That is, the other factors would take effect through cultural factors. The effect of an external threat would differ depending on how much the threat is relevant to the newly defined identity and missions of the navy that are associated with broader national interests and sovereignty (instead of narrowly defined North Korea-related missions). I have shown that military threats alone did not have much influence on how the BWN initiative developed. However, the navy’s force construction plans for the BWN started to materialize much earlier than originally planned because President Kim Young Sam wanted to have a specific plan to strengthen the navy following Japan’s claim to *Dokdo* in the period of 1995-1996. Japan’s claim to *Dokdo* constitutes a challenge to South Korea’s national identity rather than physical security given the facts that South Korea has had effective control of the island, and that Japan is unlikely to launch a military attack to take the island. The fact that Japan returned the island when South Korea became independent from Japan’s colonial rule following Japan’s defeat in the Second World War makes the Japanese claim to the island a serious challenge to South Korea’s national identity as an independent sovereign nation state.

Similarly, a material factor like economic interest played out through the consideration of identity and appropriateness. I have demonstrated that there is no positive relation between economic interest and the naval construction. On the other hand, one of the most frequently cited rationales behind the BWN initiative at the political leader’s and people’s levels since the 1990s is to protect trade routes, which South Korea has long relied on the

U.S. Navy. The South Koreans including politicians, the public, and the navy increasingly thought that South Korea should be able to defend its own SLOCs in spite of the fact that South Korea still has an option to benefit from protection provided by the United States. This call for capability to protect own economic activities represented not so much economic interest as concerns about what South Korea should do as a sovereign and equally respected member of the international community.

My study provides the mechanisms behind the specific case of South Korea's construction of ocean-going ships over the 1990s and 2000s. Differently put, I do not expect the same kind of mechanisms would work for other naval weapons programs in different periods. I have explained that the ways naval weapons were acquired in the 1970s and 1980s well fit to the realist perspectives because the main driving factor was North Korean threats and the state played the leading role in the beginning and implementing the programs. Similarly, South Korea's naval weapons acquisition in the future may be pursued through different mechanisms based on different logics. Indeed, as Fearon and Wendt suggest, there is no single logic that always defines people's behavior, either the logic of consequences or the logic of appropriateness.⁷³⁹ Sometimes, the former stands out. Other times, the latter does so. The two logics may interact and reinforce each other. In this regard, Fearon and Wendt called for an endeavor to study about under what conditions those logics can apply and how we define the division of labor between the two logics in explaining certain phenomenon rather than asking which logic is always right.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁹ James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View." In *Handbook of International Relations*, by Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons. London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2002. pp. 61-62.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 61.

Although my current study falls short of explicating such scope conditions, it takes the interaction between the two logics seriously and makes it explicit by taking an eclectic position.

Indeed, although my main position is constructivist, I do not disregard the role of other material factors. I emphasized that South Korea's economic and technological capacities served as necessary but not sufficient conditions for the continuing construction of ocean-going naval ships. Without such material capacities, the implementation of the BWN initiative is not likely to have happened. In my model, material and non-material factors interact with each other. For example, South Korea's growing economic capacity served as not only a material condition for naval construction but also how the South Koreans view their nation. I have demonstrated that many assembly members made their points supporting the BWN initiative by arguing that the status of the ROK navy (coastal navy) does not match that of South Korea given its economic performance including maritime related industries. Naval leaders did not view their nation merely as a small power in relation to other advanced or great power countries; they believed that their nation would have to cooperate and compete with other advanced countries in an increasingly globalized world in the future. Such recognition of the nation's image contributed to the construction of ocean-going ships. In turn, the people of South Korea feel proud and think of the image of their nation as they observe the constructed ocean-going ships.

I do not expect that this model always works for the cases of other countries' naval weapons acquisition. This is so partly because of the uniqueness of the South Korean case in terms of various conditions like security situations in the region and social context in which the BWN initiative took shape. For example, South Korea pursued such naval

construction during the peacetime without urgent threats. At the same time, it has faced enduring military confrontation with North Korea. North Korean threat has been part of the rationales behind the construction of advanced naval ships. The threat also served as a distant but contributing factor because it forced South Korea to build heavy industries and defense industries in the 1970s, which enabled the construction of ocean-going ships in the 1990s. Economic and political developments of South Korea also make it quite a unique case. So does State-led all-out effort for globalization. These unique features make it extremely difficult to compare with other countries and find out generalizable factors.

However, it is not impossible to think about some implications that my study may have for other cases. Most of all, as I have already argued, certain level of economic power and industrial basis are required in order to pursue a major naval weapons program such as ocean-going ships. The naval acquisition may involve arms import from foreign sources or domestic construction. Either way, it is a tremendously difficult enterprise to engage. Most of all, the unit price is more expensive than other conventional weapons. Moreover, multiple ships, instead of just one big naval ship, are required to make them function. Probably, domestic construction rather than import is more likely to involve the meanings of the navy associated with national identity. As I have explained previously, South Korea used to operate U.S. made destroyers. Although they were sturdy warships with great firepower, those ships were not associated with national image. On the other hand, ROKS *Gwanggaeto the Great* (DDH-971), the first Korea made destroyer, represented strong feelings such as national pride and hope for the future.

As another implication, the growing sense of sovereignty may be increasingly important factor for conventional weapons modernization in middle and small power

countries. For example, the increasingly visible tensions over small islands and reefs in the South China Sea that involve regional countries like Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, and China are not entirely about material interest such as underwater resources. The dynamics around the region may involve some balancing against rising China. However, one of the most important rationales that the regional countries do not back up in the disputes is sovereignty. The middle and small power countries in the region may pursue weapons modernization programs out of this concern. Recently, the United States has emphasized its presence in Asia more strongly than any time. It has continued combined exercises with the ASEAN countries. The regional countries would be likely to continue to upgrade the size and capability of their navies despite the U.S. naval presence if they consider that maintaining own sea lanes intact is what a sovereign state should do. They would also like to be partners, rather than dependents, of the United States who can contribute to the regional security.

Another implication is that the degree of connection to the world naval culture may be an important indicator for modern states' continuous efforts in updating conventional naval weapons. The 'connection' may be through participation in multinational maritime exercises or operations. I have mentioned in the introducing chapter that there are twenty-nine countries that operate naval ships over 3,000 tons in the world as of 2008. Interestingly, most of them have somehow participated in multinational naval exercises or operations such as the Rim of the Pacific, Baltic Operations, Bell Buoy, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, Aman-11, and anti-piracy operations off Somalia. These international naval activities serve as opportunities for the participants to learn about up-to-date instrument and tactics, which would influence modernization of their own

weapon systems. At the same time, through the opportunities, the participants represent their nations in the international community.

It is an empirical question which way the causal arrow flows. In other words, it is not certain whether countries that had already possessed large ocean-going ships come to participate in international naval activities or whether they acquire large ships in order to participate in such international efforts. Obviously, most great powers and Western advanced countries would belong to the former case because they have long maintained large naval fleets. Probably, one way of testing whether a country belongs to the latter case would be to look at whether or not there exist other clear reasons to maintain large naval ships such as external threat. If there were no other significant elements, the probability that the consideration of being a part of the international community influenced the naval weapons acquisition would increase. For example, South Africa does not face significant geostrategic threats that would require large naval ships. However, it acquired four advanced guided missile frigates (3,590 tons) and four Type-209 submarines (1,400 tons) from Germany since 2001.⁷⁴¹ At the same time, the South African navy is an active participant in multinational maritime exercises such as Bell Buoy and Good Hope.⁷⁴²

Again, this empirical question requires a closer look at the case to learn the accurate mechanisms behind the weapons acquisition. This would be the direction of my future study. With the current project, I have identified some important factors that may influence naval weapons acquisition. I can use these factors as guides in examining how and why other countries have built and maintain large naval ships. It would be also

⁷⁴¹ Stephen Saunders. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2008-2009*. Jane's Information Group: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

⁷⁴² For details, access the South African Navy website at http://www.navy.mil.za/SMC/2011_planned_exercises/2011_exercises.htm.

interesting to look at why some states, particularly coastal states, have not maintained large ocean-going ships when they have economic and technological capacities. As I have mentioned earlier, Sweden is a coastal state with advanced naval technology. Nevertheless, it operates naval ships exclusively for coastal operations. While conducting case studies, I would be able to establish some typologies according to the main factors and mechanisms that lead to or prevent the construction of large naval ships. Probably, this endeavor would be similar to what George and Bennett call “the structured focused comparison method” that involves the continuous processes in which theories guide empirical case studies, the theories are refined according to the outcomes of the case studies, and then the refined theories are again tested on other cases.⁷⁴³ The next case studies of mine would be guided by the hypotheses that I have developed in this study. As George and Bennett argue, this is one way that qualitative studies contribute to the accumulation of knowledge.

Throughout this project, I have emphasized the meanings of naval ships that are associated with national identity that the South Korean people hold as a crucial contributing factor that helped transforming the ROK navy’s force structure. One of the values of my project is that I captured the elements that many people in South Korea might have felt about the existence but not known exactly what they are or how to explain their effects. As I have mentioned in the main chapters, scholars and journalists noted that the BWN initiative attracted a lot of support in society but they could not explain why. Moreover, professionals and analysts may dismiss the role of such cultural factors in military affairs. Although such professionals may like to think about the subject matter

⁷⁴³ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005. pp. 67-72.

only from the perspective of existing threats and addressing them, I have shown that there are other important elements influencing the weapons acquisition. Particularly, in the South Korea's case, the construction of ocean-going ships would not have been possible without the meanings of the blue water navy associated with the image of their nation partly because of the institutional resistance represented by the dominant influence of the army and the lack of people's interest in naval affairs in general. To some degree, the construction of blue water oriented naval ships by South Korea was possible because the BWN initiative attracted people's attention and opened the public debate about the role of the navy for their nation.

Chapter 9 Epilogue: Implications of the Fall of the Blue Water Navy Initiative

The sinking of ROKS *Cheonan* (PCC-772) in 2010 brought about a major setback in the blue water navy drive. The ROK navy became reluctant to use the phrase “blue water navy” for the first time in fifteen years since its official launch in 1995. This additional chapter discusses about implications of the phenomena related to this fall of the BWN initiative. By doing so, it tries to look at how well my model also can explain the phenomena related to the fall of the BWN drive. In other words, if the same factors that explained the BWN drive play out in the phenomena involved in the fall of the initiative, the explanatory power of my model is confirmed. I briefly describe the background of the sinking of ROKS *Cheonan*. Then, I present my analyses of the consequences of the incident. Relying on the theoretical frameworks that I have already employed in explaining the initiation and continuation of the BWN initiative, I demonstrate that my eclectic model also provides good explanations for the phenomena involved in the fall of the initiative.

On the night of March 26, 2010, a South Korean naval patrol ship, ROKS *Cheonan* (PCC-772, 1,200 tons), was split into two pieces and sunk by a sudden underwater explosion in the vicinity of *Baengneong* Island in the West Sea of South Korea. Among one hundred four crew members, forty six were killed and the rest of them were rescued. In dealing with the mysterious event, the South Korean government formed a joint investigation team that consisted of military and civilian experts in related fields including

those from foreign countries like the United States, England, Sweden, and Australia. On May 20, the investigation team made an official announcement about the finding that a torpedo launched by a North Korean submarine caused the explosion. The conclusion was based on ample evidence including the shapes of damaged structure, explosive components that remained on the wreckage and statements by survivors.⁷⁴⁴ The clearest evidence was remnant torpedo parts with Korean letters that were found on the seabed around the area of incident. In brief, a North Korean submarine infiltrated the South Korean territorial waters and escaped without being detected after firing a torpedo at a South Korean naval ship on a routine patrol mission.⁷⁴⁵

Following the incident, many people expressed worries about South Korea's military readiness including the efficiency of command and control for quick responses to unexpected contingencies. Among other things, the most intensive debate was about whether South Korea's military has been attentive to immediate threat from the North. This question represented a suspicion that South Korea has lowered the guard against North Korea while paying much attention to potential or unforeseen future threat.⁷⁴⁶ Particularly, as the incident involved naval operations, the navy became the target that drew most criticisms. A well-known line that expressed a cynical criticism about the navy

⁷⁴⁴ Ministry of National Defense. *Defense White Paper 2010*. Seoul: Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 2010. pp. 256-264.

⁷⁴⁵ Although North Korea has never admitted the conclusion and there were opinions raising doubts about it (mostly those who believe in conspiracy theory), the official positions of South Korea and the United States defined it as a North Korean attack. For example, General Walter Sharp, Commander United Nations Command and United States-Republic of Korea Combined Forces Command, clearly defined the *Cheonan* incident as a North Korean provocation before the Senate Armed Services Committee in 2011. See General Walter L. Sharp. "Statement of General Walter L. Sharp, Commander, United Nations Command; Commander, United States-Republic of Korea Combined Forces Command; and Commander, United States Forces Korea Before the Senate Armed Services Committee." 12 April, 2011. p. 10.

⁷⁴⁶ For example, see Donga Ilbo. "[Saseol] Munminjeongbuwa Gunui Anbotaese Jeonmyeon Jaejeomgeomhara ([Editorial] An Overall review of Security Posture of the Civilian Admini-

at that time was that the ROK navy sank in its own backyard while it was looking at distant waters.⁷⁴⁷ The top military authorities responded to the situation by announcing measures that would bring about changes to the current defense posture. They emphasized the necessity to maintain conventional weapons that are small but efficient in fighting the North Korean military in small-scale conflicts instead of expensive high-tech military equipment that South Korea has pursued.⁷⁴⁸ Probably, these hastened announcements about a new direction of weapons acquisition were strongly influenced by the fact that its modern warship was destroyed by one of North Korean submarines that are known to be extremely dilapidated.

Against this backdrop, there was a report that the navy gave up the BWN initiative. Interestingly, out of twelve daily newspapers that I used as sources for this project, eight newspapers dealt the same story.⁷⁴⁹ However, these reports contained somewhat exaggerated or misleading elements because they were not clear about whether the withdrawal of the initiative was the naval leader's decision or based on his official order. Before the National Assembly, Admiral Kim Seongchan, the then Chief of Naval Operation, testified that there was no official order to stop using the phrase 'blue water

stration and the Military)." *Donga Ilbo*, April 17, 2010.

⁷⁴⁷ Minhyeok Park and Seungryeon Kim. "'Daeyanghaegun' Oechida Anbangseo Bukjamsuham Wihyeop Jikmyeon (Faced North Korean Submarine Threat in the Backyard while Pursuing a 'Blue Water Navy')." *Donga Ilbo*, April 21, 2010.

⁷⁴⁸ Seongjin Park. "Jeolyeok Ganghwa 'Geokkuro Ganeun Gun' Cheomdanhwa boda 'Jaeraesik Mujang' Jjogeuro Banghyang Jeonhwan Geomto ('The military going backward' in force reinforcement, mulling over a change in direction toward old fashioned weapons, not high-tech ones) ." *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 28, 2010.

⁷⁴⁹ For example, see Iseok Oh. "'Daeyanghaegun Kkum' Jamsi Jeopneunda (The Navy Temporarily Reserve the Blue Water Navy Dream)." *Seoul Shinmun*, September 16, 2010. Byeongjin Park. "Haegun 'Daeyanghaegun' Gitbal Naerinda (The Navy Draw Down the 'Blue Water Navy' Flag)." *Segye Ilbo*, September 16, 2010. Seongun Yu. "'Daeyanghaegun' Guho Geuman! (Stop using the catchphrase 'blue water navy')." *Donga Ilbo*, September 16, 2010.

navy.’⁷⁵⁰ According to my interview with Admiral Kim, he told the staff to avoid using the phrase ‘blue water navy’ in describing or promoting their organization (the navy) in public for the time being. He took such a measure because emphasizing the ocean-going function of the navy is not helpful for the navy when the importance of coastal defense is at the peak in the aftermath of the sinking of ROKS *Cheonan*.⁷⁵¹ On the other hand, Admiral Kim clearly stated that there was no change to the naval acquisition plans that included the construction of naval ships that are considered ocean-going.⁷⁵² Thus, from the perspective of the BWN initiative, the only change was the navy’s cautious position or reluctance to describe itself as a to-be blue water navy. Notwithstanding, since then, the initiative has not been the same as before.

I argue that my eclectic model can explain the phenomena involved in, seemingly, the fall of the BWN initiative. Note that I have built my arguments on the sociological institutionalist (SI) assumptions that emphasize norms and identities in understanding human behaviors. They also highlight the role of culture. With regard to the concept of culture, I have explained that I take the semiotic approach of political culture that understands human behaviors as meaning making activities.⁷⁵³ In this approach, culture serves as resources or tool kit in that agents deploy cultural symbols and practices available to them to make sense of the world and address problems at hand.

⁷⁵⁰ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2010 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. The National Assembly, Republic of Korea, 2010. p. 10.

⁷⁵¹ Author’s interview with Admiral Kim Seongchan, December 9, 2011.

⁷⁵² National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2010 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 13.

⁷⁵³ For detailed explanations, see Chapter 2.

I have argued that the BWN initiative came along while the ROK navy defined the essence or identity of the organization as a crucial instrument in defending and representing national interest not only around the Korean peninsula but also in the international environment. The formation of such organizational identity was facilitated as naval leaders were motivated by South Korea's internationally oriented new national identity instead of that of rivalry with North Korea, and as the ROK navy increasingly had international exposures. I have also argued that, by launching the BWN initiative, naval leaders made explicit the meanings of the naval forces that were closely associated with South Korea's national interest and national standing intentionally and unintentionally. To some degree, the phrase 'blue water navy' took on symbolic meanings that are strongly associated with South Korea's image that the people hold such as modernity, sovereignty, and independence. As another consequence, the BWN initiative served as an overarching theme in different naval weapons programs over an extended period, which facilitated the weapons acquisition process.

However, there is also a downside of the BWN initiative that was highlighted by the sinking of ROKS *Cheonan*; it was a wrong impression about the navy that people outside the navy may get from the phrase 'blue water navy.' The heated debates in the media after the incident clearly revealed that some people understand the BWN initiative as a complete shift of the navy's focus in national defense from North Korea related missions to internationally oriented ones. As the idea that the navy sank in its own backyard while it was looking at distant waters suggests, many analysts believed that the navy could not

prevent the *Cheonan* incident because it focused only on international operations or potential threats while ignoring immediate threat from North Korea.⁷⁵⁴

However, as I have repeatedly argued, the navy has never deemphasized military readiness against North Korea in the process of launching the BWN initiative. When Admiral An Byeongtae officially launched the initiative in 1995, the two policy goals were to “prepare for the construction of a blue water navy for the future strategic environment” and to “maintain perfect military readiness for North Korean provocations.” As Admiral Jeong, Hoseop writes, the blue water navy that the ROK navy pursued has been the navy with capabilities to protect national interests and support foreign policies *in and outside* the regional sea areas.⁷⁵⁵ According to the testimony by Admiral Kim Seongchan, the CNO at the time of the *Cheonan* incident, what is important is that the ROK navy should be able to operate anywhere, be it territorial waters or international waters, as long as national interest is at stake.⁷⁵⁶ Indeed, since the ROK navy established its organizational objectives in the 1980s, the core element that has remained unchanged is the navy’s identity as a defender of national interest. In sum, there is no suggestion that the ROK navy ignored threat from North Korea in the discussions about the naval policy or operations.

Admiral Kim Seongchan’s order to avoid using the phrase ‘blue water navy’ in public should be understood as an effort to minimize adverse effects from the erroneous understanding of the BWN initiative that ignored the navy’s emphasis on the readiness against North Korea. Because the phrase ‘blue water navy’ and associated meanings are

⁷⁵⁴ Park and Kim. ““Daeyanghaegun” Oechida Anbangseo Bukjamsuham Wihyeop Jikmyeon (Faced North Korean Submarine Threat in the Backyard while Pursuing a “Blue Water Navy”).”

⁷⁵⁵ Hoseop Jeong. “HangukHaegungwa Daeyanghaegunul Dulleossan Je Nonjaengui Bunseokgwa Saeroun Haeseok (The Analysis and New Interpretation of arguments about the ROK Navy and the Blue Water Navy).” *Hayangyeongunonchong*, Vol. 17, 1996. p. 312.

⁷⁵⁶ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2010 Inspection on*

cultural resources that naval leaders have deployed, and because the naval leaders have been aware of the effects that the cultural resources created, it was possible for them to stop using them. However, as the organizational behavior model (Allison's II) would predict, organizations tend to be resistant to changes. Because ocean-going ships have become part of the essence of the ROK navy, it is difficult for the navy to re-orient the direction of weapons acquisition to small coastal ships. Admiral Kim emphasized before the National Assembly that the plans to acquire more Aegis destroyers, the second big-deck multipurpose amphibious ship, and the next submarines (3,000 ton class) remain intact.⁷⁵⁷ If the BWN initiative was simply a policy without having been established as part of the navy's identity, the focus in force construction might have shifted toward coastal defense relatively easily in the aftermath of the *Cheonan* incident.

Probably, the realist approach would predict that South Korea reorient the naval posture to coastal operations as a response to the North Korean provocation because of its imminent threat. Learning theory would also predict the similar response because the sinking of a naval ship by a North Korean attack can be considered a serious failure in naval operations. On the other hand, my eclectic model would predict differently; it hypothesized that the effect of external threat would differ depending on how much the threat is relevant to the national identity. In other words, military threat from North Korea would have less significant effects on the direction of the naval construction because South Korea's identity has been defined in terms of its relations with the world rather than rivalry with North Korea. Indeed, the navy surely addressed the problem from the *Cheonan* incident through changes in how to operate available forces. For example, the ROK navy

State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly. p. 10.

⁷⁵⁷Ibid. p. 13.

reinforced trainings and patrols for anti-submarine operations in the West Sea including the employment of search and attack unit that consists of two patrol ships instead of maintaining the old way, area search by a single patrol ship.⁷⁵⁸ However, the navy has not reoriented the focus of force construction exclusively to coastal operations.

This unchanging focus on the acquisition of advanced ocean-going ships is partly because of a change in beliefs in how to fight North Korean threat that came along with the BWN initiative. One of the capabilities that the BWN initiative emphasized has been deterrence.⁷⁵⁹ As emphasized by Admiral Song Yeongmu, South Korea cannot and should not continue to let North Korea start small scale provocations and react to them over and over; it should be able to deter them before the provocations.⁷⁶⁰ Without resorting to unconventional measures, one of possible ways to deter North Korea would be to have precision strike capability to take out its critical nodes and the demonstration of willingness to use the ability as a retaliatory measure for a military provocation. As I have elaborated in Chapter 4, such precise strikes are often launched from modern naval and air platforms. From this perspective, what invited North Korea's surprise attack on ROKS *Cheonan* was not the blue water navy capability that the ROK navy had pursued as some analysts criticized; it was the lack of such capability and demonstrated intention to use it. In this regard, Professor Lee Chun-geun correctly points out that the *Cheonan* incident happened because of South Korea's failure in deterrence rather than the navy's failure in operations.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁸ Seokbeom Jang. "'Cheonanham' 6 Gaewol 'Haeguni Bakkwinda' (6 Months after the ROKS Cheonan, the Navy Changes)." *Munhwa Ilbo*, September 15, 2010.

⁷⁵⁹ For the detailed explanations of the capabilities that the BWN initiative pursued, see Chapter 6.

⁷⁶⁰ Author's interview with Admiral Song Yeongmu, May 23, 2011.

⁷⁶¹ Author's interview with Professor Lee Chun-geun, May 21, 2011.

The ROK military reportedly responded to the aftermath of the *Cheonan* incident by changing the direction in weapons acquisition from high-tech weapons that it used to pursue to old-fashioned ones that are similar to North Korea's.⁷⁶² Although it is not certain that it has been developed into a firm policy, the idea itself is fundamentally wrong for two reasons. First, the idea is based on a dichotomous assumption about the military posture of South Korea: the posture for North Korean threat and that for non-North Korean threat. This unnecessary and wasteful dichotomy leads to inefficiency in national security. The military posture should be constructed in a way that it can address all external threats to national security regardless of whether they are from North Korea or not. Admiral Kim Seongchan also confirmed that it is meaningless in the debates about naval force construction to distinguish a coastal navy and a blue water navy, and that the ROK navy pursues a balanced force construction.⁷⁶³

Second, the best way of fighting an adversary with outdated weapon systems is not necessarily to fight with the same outdated weapon systems. North Korea employs such weapons and tactics because it can only afford them. The U.S. military employs highly advanced weapon systems even when it fights terrorist organizations with primitive weapons. It does so because it is the best way to achieve political goals efficiently and quickly with the minimum level of collateral damage although it is not without accidents such as killings of civilians by drones. Thus, using high-tech systems such as precision munitions and advanced network systems is not only efficient and fast but also

⁷⁶² Seongjin Park. "Jeolyeok Ganghwa 'Geokkuro Ganeun Gun' Cheomdanhwa boda 'Jaeraesik Mujang' Jjogeuro Banghyang Jeonhwan Geomto ('The military going backward' in force reinforcement, mulling over a change in direction toward old fashioned weapons, not high-tech ones)." *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 28, 2010.

⁷⁶³ National Assembly Secretariat. *National Defense Committee Minutes for the 2010 Inspection on State Affairs (the ROK navy) by the National Assembly*. p. 11.

humanitarian. South Korea should have its principle about how to fight. The best way to address North Korean military threat is deterrence. If deterrence fails, it is the capability to swiftly suppress North Korea's intention and ability to wage war that can maintain peace in the region, not the outdated conventional weapons.

I would predict that it would be very difficult for the ROK navy to scrap the BWN related plans or adopt North Korean style access-denial naval posture characterized with midget submarines or fast attack crafts. In addition to the point that I made previously about the BWN having been part of the essence of the ROK navy, a modern ocean-going navy has become part of South Korea's identity as a modern, sovereign, and important player in the international community. As I have argued in Chapter 3, if survival or protection from external invasions or attacks is the ultimate and only rationale for South Korea in international relations, prioritizing the construction of a lot of submarines instead of expensive surface ships would be the best cost-effective measure because of their access-denial capabilities. However, this would not be the path that South Korea follows. As of 2012, at the height of potential territorial disputes with China and Japan, the navy aims to acquire three 7,600 ton Aegis destroyers, unknown number of 5,600 ton mini Aegis destroyers (KDX-IIA), twenty 2,300 ton frigates (FFX), and six 214 Type submarines and unknown number of 3,000 ton submarines.⁷⁶⁴ Obviously, ocean-going surface combatants constitute important programs of the acquisition.

Indeed, the various kinds of surface ships would be necessary for various missions that modern navies conduct. I have argued that the BWN identity was partly influenced by naval culture of advanced Western countries. Internationally, navies have not only

⁷⁶⁴ Sung-Ki Jung. "S. Korea Pursues Blue-Water Force: Braces for China, Japan Buildups." *Defense News*, April 16, 2012.

conducted military operations. They have also performed diplomatic functions representing their countries in the world.⁷⁶⁵ They have also served as enablers for employing countries in participating in international institutions through activities such as disaster reliefs and international security cooperation. As I have explained in previous chapters, these are part of the reasons why South Korea pursued an ocean-going navy. They may represent practical rationales that emphasize the navy's functions for national interest. However, the national interest is defined within norms and culture that has been established in the international community. Without this established culture, buying expensive naval ships for those reasons does not contribute to a state's foreign policy interest. If the South Korean people do not believe in such international norms, South Korea would not purchase expensive naval ships to promote national interest defined in accordance with such international norms. This is part of what I mean by an eclectic model where cultural elements establish perimeters for 'rational' realist factors.

The BWN initiative is not likely to fade out completely also from the perspective of support from outside the navy. There may be even the initiative's comeback in the near future. First, the fact that there were heated reports by the media speculating about the navy's termination of the BWN drive demonstrates that the BWN initiative was not an insignificant social phenomenon in the South Korea society. In response to the news reports, some lawmakers showed deep concerns about the possible termination of the BWN initiative at the 2010 National Assembly Inspection on the ROK navy. For example, Assemblyman Kim Jangsu argued that the ROK navy should not focus only on coastal operations, and that it should be able to conduct blue water operations such as SLOC

⁷⁶⁵ For different functions of the navy, see Ken Booth. *Navies and Foreign Policy*. New York: Crane, Russak & Company Inc., 1977. See also Harold J. Kearsley. *Maritime Power and the*

protection and international peace keeping operations. Assemblywoman Jeong Uihwa made sure that the ROK navy should be able to protect our maritime commercial activities anywhere in the world. As I have explained in Chapter 3, the U.S. Navy has generally performed the functions such as the protection of SLOC and commercial shipping. South Korea may be able to keep relying on the United States for those international scale operations. The reason why the lawmakers urged the ROK navy to have such capabilities is not that South Korea has no other options; they do so because they believe that they are the functions that South Korea should be able to perform as a sovereign modern state.

In fact, there have been signs for a slow comeback of the BWN initiative supported by the people, not led by the navy. Particularly, the calls for the continuation of the BWN drive peaked when a ROK navy destroyer (ROKS *Choi Young*, DDH 981) and a special force team on board successfully rescued twenty-one sailors on a South Korean commercial cargo ship Samho Jewelry which had been hijacked by pirates off the coast of Somalia on January 20, 2011.⁷⁶⁶ The proud feelings and excitement of the people expressed through the media were similar to those about victories in international sports games such as the Olympics or the World Cup. According to a news report, the enthusiasm about the blue water navy seemed to be higher among politicians than others.⁷⁶⁷ As of 2012, the navy also cautiously started to use, although it is very rare, the phrase ‘blue water navy’ again in public but in a modified form and in a measured manner: “the Korean Style Blue Water Navy.”⁷⁶⁸ Without the people’s association of the navy with the identity of

Twenty-first Century. Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Co., 1992.

⁷⁶⁶ BBC News. "South Korea rescues Samho Jewelry crew from pirates." January 21, 2011.

⁷⁶⁷ Seonggyu Hong and Iseok Oh. "Adenman Kwaegio Ihu / Jeongchigwon "Daeyanghaegun" Hanmoksori... Guneun "Sinjung" (After the Victory in the Gulf of Aden / "Blue Water Navy" One Voice from Political Circle... the Military stays "Cautious") ." *Seoul Shinmun*, January 26, 2011.

⁷⁶⁸ Hyeonseok Jeon. "Cheonanham Ihu Sarajyeosdeon 'Daeyanghaegun' Guho Jaesayong (The

their nation, there would not have been their support for the blue water navy. Without the people's support, the navy would not have tried to re-adopt the catchphrase. As I have predicted, North Korea's provocations ultimately did not influence the overall direction of naval force construction. Indeed, the BWN initiative was not simply about the functions; it was about the navy's organizational essence and the meanings of the navy to the people.

Comeback of the Catchphrase "Blue Water Navy" which Was Gone after ROKS *Cheonan*)." *Chosun Ilbo*, February 17, 2012.

Appendix

Content Analysis of Presidential Speeches

This section supplements my reporting about presidential speeches in the “Political Leaders” section in Chapter 7 by demonstrating how I conducted content analysis of presidential speeches. Among different content analysis methodologies, I employed value analysis technique provided by Ralph K. White. According to White, value-analysis is the “classification and counting of recurrent value-judgments.”⁷⁶⁹ This value analysis technique well serves my purpose because what I ultimately try to learn is what the national leaders value about the navy and other service branches. Because of the volume of the materials, showing the entire process including the analysis of all speeches would be tedious and unnecessary. Thus, I use a small number of examples and briefly demonstrate how I went about in analyzing them.

The process of analysis is quite simple. First, I go through all the speeches sentence by sentence. At the end of a sentence, I put what the sentence is about, which would constitute a ‘category.’ The examples of categories include the role of the navy, national identity, national security posture in general, etc. Within a sentence, I underline value-laden words or phrases. These value words belong to the category that is written at the end of the sentence. Then, I count the frequency of the value words or phrases in a given speech or statement. In calculating scores, the total score of each value word/phrase is equal to its frequency as I equally give one point to each count without weighting.

⁷⁶⁹ Ralph K. White, "Value Analysis: A Quantitative Method for describing Qualitative Data." *Journal of Social Psychology*, 19:2, May, 1944.

There may be different kinds of value words that belong to the same category. For example, in one speech, a sentence describing about the role of the navy may include value words related to North Korean infiltrations. In another speech, the statement about the role of the navy may contain value words associated with other missions such as the protection of trade routes. This way, one can observe variations of value words or phrases within the same category over time. In conducting analyses, I excluded the sentences that only contain routine ceremonial remarks such as greetings and acknowledgments. I lay out some examples of my analysis below.

- (1) 삼면이 바다로 둘러싸인 우리로서는 북한공산집단의 끊임없는 해상침투를 분쇄하는 일이 대단히 중요하며, 따라서 해군의 임무와 사명은 실로 막중하다고 하겠습니다. (해군의 역할/정체성)

For South Korea surrounded by the sea, it is extremely important to pulverize maritime infiltration attempts by the communist North Korea, and accordingly, so are the missions and responsibilities of our navy. (*The role/identity of the navy*)

[Excerpt from the 1983 speech at the Naval Academy]

- (2) 이제 우리는 약소민족의 굴레와 세계 변두리 나라로서의 서러움을 역사의 뒤안에 묻고, 다가오는 태평양 시대의 주역국가로 세계사의 전면에 나서고 있습니다. (국가 정체성/이미지)

Now, we are about to come out in the world history as one of leading countries in the coming Pacific Era leaving behind grief that we had as a small and weak nation in the periphery of the world. (*National identity/image*)

[Excerpt from the 1988 speech at the Naval Academy]

- (3) 조국의 바다를 지키는 방패로서, 바다를 통해 민족을 세계의 중심으로 이끄는 항도로서, 여러분은 세계 최고의 해군이 되어야 합니다. (해군의 역할/정체성)

As the shield protecting the seas of our nation and as a guide leading the nation to the center of the world through the sea, you should become one of the most capable navies in the world. (*The role/identity of the navy*)

[Excerpt from the 1995 speech at the Naval Academy]

The sentences in Korean language above are excerpts from the original speeches of three different years. I conducted analysis in Korean. I added English translations for the

purpose of explanation to readers. At the end of each sentence, I put what the sentence is about (category) in *Italic* within a parenthesis. As I have explained, I underlined value words or phrases in each sentence. Value words/phrases are almost equal to key words/phrases in a sentence. As one can easily notice, it is not that there are always many value words or phrases in one sentence as in sentence (3). Often, one sentence contains a single a value word/phrase as in the cases of sentences (1) and (2). The results of analysis above can be organized into a table as follows:

Table A.1 Example analysis of selected presidential remarks

Categories	Value Words/Phrases	1983	1988	1995
Role/Identity of the navy	Addressing threats from N. Korean infiltration	1		
	Defending the nation (territorial waters)			1
	Navy associated with the ‘world’			1
National Identity/Image	Leading nation in the Pacific Era		1	

As Table A.1 demonstrates, there can be different kinds of value words/phrase under the same category; there are three kinds of value phrases under the category “role/identity of the navy.” As I add more results of analysis from different years, new kinds of value words/phrase may appear although many of them appear repeatedly over time. This way, we can observe what kinds of value words/phrases and how frequently they have appeared in association with certain category over an extended period. For example, Figure 7.2 in Chapter 7 shows the changes in four kinds of value phrases associated with the identity or image of the navy between 1980 and 2007. The four value phrases represent the four most

frequently appeared phrases (except images related to territorial defense) out of the fourteen kinds of value phrases that I have identified.⁷⁷⁰

Note that a value word/phrase may come in different expressions while they represent similar meanings. For example, in describing the role/identity of the navy, whether it is ‘a leading force for our prosperity’ or ‘a force protecting our prosperity in the Pacific Era,’ they represent the same recognition about the navy: contribution to national prosperity. For this reason, I collapsed such similar expressions into one value word/phrase. In Table A.2, I laid out different expressions that each of the four value words/phrases in Figure 7.2 represents. The final results of analysis for a given category would look like Table A.3.

Table A.2 Value words/phrases in various expressions used in Figure 7.2

Value Words/phrases	Different expressions
Internationally oriented images of the navy	The ROK navy’s internationalization, to the world, maneuvering the five oceans and six continents, the Pacific Ocean as the venue for our (economic) activities, one of the maritime players in ancient East Asia, almost satisfying the international standards, the best in the world, demonstrated our superiority in the world, attracted the world’s attention, advanced navy, superb performances in multinational combined exercises
North Korea related images of the navy	Fend off infiltrations, defeat existing threats, mentioning about North Korean agents, conflicts with North Korean ships on the maritime borders, mentioning about North Korea’s naval capability, coastal defense
Contributions to national prosperity	Prosperity of our nation/state, mentioning about the navy’s supporting nation’s future, growth, and glory, a leading force for our prosperity, a force protecting our prosperity in the Pacific Era, the navy that help the nation rise as a maritime country, a leading role in the Pacific Era
Contributions to sovereignty, national interest	Defending sovereignty and national interest

⁷⁷⁰ Under the category of the navy’s image, territorial defense related value words are the third most frequently employed ones. I excluded them in Figure 7.2 in Chapter 7 because they have constantly appeared in almost all speeches, which means that they do not show us any changes over time. Another reason was to make figure 7.2 simple and presentable.

Analysis of Statements by National Assembly Members

This section provides explanations about how I analyzed the statements made by assembly members for the “Political Leaders” section in Chapter 7. I employed the National Defense Committee minutes for the annual inspections on the navy by the National Assembly between 1995 and 2009.⁷⁷¹ At each year’s inspection, eleven to nineteen committee members asked questions related to the navy. In analyzing them, I did not employ the same analysis methodology that I used in analyzing presidential speeches. Because different committee members discuss and inquire about a wide range of issues, examining all the statements including those without relevance to my subject matter is unnecessary. Instead, I looked at first what kind of issues and how often they have been brought up by the committee members. As an important purpose here is to examine to what degree the politicians have had interest in the BWN project, how often they discussed about the issue can be a reasonable measure and a good starting point for the task. Then, by studying the statements and questions related to the BWN initiative, I tried to learn different rationales behind their support for the naval construction. Again, it is almost impossible to present all the analysis processes because of the large volume. Thus, I demonstrate how I conducted analysis using a small number of examples. Figure A. 1 is a capture of one page from the 1997 minute, which I will use as an example text to be analyzed.

⁷⁷¹ The minutes are available on the website of the National Assembly at <http://likms.assembly.go.kr/record/index.html>.

Figure A. 1 Example Text from the 1997 National Defense Committee Minute

4 (1997年度國監・國防)

하를 드립니다.

질의를 하겠습니다.

大洋海軍 建設을 위해서 질의를 하겠습니다.

우리나라는 3면이 바다이고 해안선이 1만 2,000Km이며 도서가 3,200여개입니다. 또한 배타적 경제수역도 한반도 전체면적의 2.5배에 달하고 있습니다. 앞으로 육지자원의 고갈에 따라 未來資源의 寶庫인 바다의 관할권을 쟁취하기 위한 주변국가간의 분쟁은 표면화 될 것입니다. 94년 11월 16일 UN 海洋法協約 발효와 더불어 동북아 해역은 한·중·일의 영해, EEZ, 대륙붕 경계 획정, 도서영유권 문제 등으로 인하여 새로운 분쟁의 가능성이 높아지고 있고 이러한 상황에서 각국들이 영해수호는 물론 자국의 해양이익을 보호하기 위해 해군력을 증강시키고 있습니다.

中國은 남사군도문제 등 海洋權益이 국가전략적 차원에서 그 비중이 높아짐에 따라 원거리 작전수행 능력을 향상시키는데 중점을 두고 해군력을 증강시키고 있으며 2001년 이후에 항공모함을 확보하려 하고 日本은 원해의 도서영유권 분쟁 및 1,000해리 해상교통로 보호능력 확보를 위해 최첨단의 이지스급 구축함 및 항모개조 가능한 상륙함 확보 등을 추진하고 있으며 우리보다 국력이 못한 泰國도 금년도에 1만 1,500t급 항공모함을 확보하여 자국의 海上作戰能力을 크게 신장시켜 나가고 있는 등 동아시아 각국은 海軍力의 現代化를 적극 추진중에 있습니다.

우리나라는 수출입 물동량 중 99.8%가 해상수송을 통해 이루어지고 있으며 세계 교역시장에서 우리나라가 차지하는 비중이 점점 높아지고 있는 만큼 해상교통로 안전확보는 국가 번영의 초석으로서 이와같은 우리 바다를 보호하기 위해서는 해군력 증강이 필요할 것입니다.

大洋海軍으로 발전하기 위해 많은 노력을 하고 있는 것으로 본위원은 알고 있습니다. 현재의 한국 해군의 연안작전 위주의 군사력으로는 점차 증가하고 있는 대양에서의 해양활동을 보호할 수 없을 뿐 아니라 주변국들과의 해양분쟁이 발생했을 시 우리의 바다를 내어주는 결과를 초래할 것이 자명한 사실입니다.

현재 海軍이 추진하고 있는 大洋海軍 建設은 국가생존과 번영의 필수조건이며 미래에 있을 수 있는 전쟁에서 승리할 수 있는 필수불가결한 것이라고 말할 수 있습니다. 그러나 해군 함정을 건조하는데는 많은 예산과 시간이 필요하기 때문에 이

러움이 많은 것으로 본위원은 알고 있습니다. 따라서 이러한 해군사업을 원활히 추진하기 위해서는 전국민들이 海軍力 建設이 필요하다는 공감대가 형성되도록 범국가적인 이해가 요구되며 국민들의 이해를 촉진시켜야 할 것입니다.

이러한 관점에서 海軍參謀總長에게 大洋海軍 建設에 대해 질의하고자 합니다.

첫째, 대양해군건설을 목표로 하고 있는 海軍總長께서는 미래 안보환경을 고려해서 어느 정도 전력규모가 되어야 대양해군이라 할 수 있는지와 그 구비조건은 무엇입니까? (1)

둘째, 우리해군은 주변국의 해군력과 비교시 양적 질적으로 열세한 함정으로 구성되어 있다고 보는데 미래 안보환경 대비 주변국들에 대응할 수 있는 戰力增強 方法은 무엇입니까? (2)

셋째, 海軍力은 建設期間의 장기성, 장비의 고가성 및 다양성 등의 특성으로 말미암아 戰力增強에 많은 어려움이 있고 또한 해군의 소요 제가가 적극 수용되지 않는 등 예산확보에 문제가 있는 것 같은데 대양해군 건설을 위한 豫算 確保方案은 무엇이며 우리 國防委員들이 도와줄 것은 무엇입니까? (3)

넷째, 輕航母 建造問題가 국방부의 중·장기 전력증강계획에서 삭제되어 있는데 경항모의 필요성은 무엇이고 함정건조가 10년이상 소요된다고 볼 때 해군은 최소 언제부터 사업이 시작되어야 된다고 보는지? (4)

두번째는 北 潛水艦의 대비책인 對潛抑制 戰略과 관련해서 묻겠습니다.

美 海軍情報局의 북 잠수함 분석보고서 내용에 따르면 북한은 세계 제4위의 잠수함 전력을 보유하고 있는 것으로 나타났습니다. 100여척의 잠수함을 보유하고 있는 북한은 앞으로 더욱 잠수함 전력을 조직화해 도발을 감행해올 가능성이 높다고 볼 때 이에 대비한 적절한 전력확보가 절대적으로 필요하겠습니다.

北韓 潛水艦 戰力에 대비한 우리 海軍의 對應戰略과 관련하여 질의하겠습니다.

첫째, 對潛抑制戰力인 P3-C가 매뉴얼상으로 나타나 있는 작전반경과 실제 훈련에서 나타난 것과 차이가 있다고 하는데 그 이유는 무엇이고 차이는 얼마이며 제작사에게 그 원인에 대한 문제제기를 한 사실이 있는지 밝혀주기 바랍니다. 아울러 향후 해군에서 파악하고 있는 P3-C의 적절한 소요는 몇대라고 생각하는지 參謀總長의 답변을 바랍니다.

What I did first was to go through all the questions that the lawmakers asked and categorize them based on what kinds of topic they try to deal with. For example, the sentence within the first rectangle in the example text in Figure A.1 represents the beginning of the discussion about one specific topic; it is about the construction of a blue water navy. The second rectangle indicates another topic related to the anti-submarine readiness against North Korean submarine infiltration. So, the first and second topics represent one count for each separate topic. However, sometimes, the lawmakers ask multiple questions under one topic. The parenthesized numbers from one to four in the example text are different questions about the same topic (the construction of a blue water navy). I counted them as four times instead of one under the blue water navy category. Table 7.4 in Chapter 7 is a summarized (and simplified) presentation of what I did with Microsoft excel spreadsheet. As the Table 7.4 indicates, the total number of questions that I have identified is 1,397 questions and the questions were organized under 37 different categories.

After I have finished with the counting and categorizing the questions, I looked at only the category that represents support for the construction of a blue water navy in order to learn the rationales behind it. In weighing among different rationales, I simply counted the number of sentences that were used in making a specific point. For example, the paragraphs under the first rectangle in the example text in Figure A.1 are the objects of the analysis because they are statements supporting the construction of a blue water navy. The slanted bars under the first rectangle are separators between sentences. The first sentence tells about South Korea's geographic characteristics as a rationale for having an

ocean-going navy. Then, I would count it as one under the geographic characteristics rationale (Rationale 10 in Table 7.6 in Chapter 7). The second sentence is about economic value of the sea such as underwater resources. Then, I would count it accordingly (Rationale 2 in Table 7.6 in Chapter 7). I treated the sentences connected with ‘and’ as two separate sentences. The simple count of sentence is by no means an accurate measurement. However, given the fact that the politicians are allocated limited time, and that they have different agenda to address, how many space and time they are willing to use for a specific topic can be a rough measure of to what degree they consider the topic or rationale important.

Survey Questionnaire

1. When was the first time that you heard about any development in the South Korean navy through mass media or other means?
 - A. Before 2000
 - B. Between 2000 and 2005
 - C. Between 2006 and 2010
 - D. I have never heard about it

2. If news concerning the South Korean navy has ever drawn your attention, what was the news about?
 - A. Commissioning ceremonies of newly built ships
 - B. Overseas operations by the South Korean naval ships
 - C. Security issues related to North Korea
 - D. Security issues related to other countries than North Korea
 - E. I have never paid attention to the development of the South Korean navy

3. Have you heard of the “the Blue Water Navy” policy that the South Korean navy used to pursue? What was the impression that you received from the phrase?
 - A. Future oriented, hopeful
 - B. Belligerent, offensive
 - C. Wishful thinking, unrealistic
 - D. I have never heard of the term

4. Have you seen recently built advanced naval ships of the South Korean navy? If you have, through what channel have you seen them?

- A. Mass media (including internet news)
 - B. Some kind of special events
 - C. Tour to the naval base
 - D. Work experience in the navy
 - E. I have never seen recently developed naval ships
5. If you have seen those advanced naval ships of the South Korean navy through either media or other opportunity, what was your impression? You can choose more than one answer.
- A. I do not know because I have never seen them
 - B. As a South Korean people, I felt proud of the fact that South Korea has advanced naval ships
 - C. Once I saw naval ships of South Korea, I came to follow the news about naval force construction because of increased interest
 - D. I cannot understand why South Korea has to have such big combat ships (To build expensive naval ships is a waste of tax money)
 - E. I did not have any special impression
6. “Large naval ships are more strongly associated with symbolic meanings that represent the nation than other weapons such as tanks and fighter jets.” Do you agree to this claim? If so, what would be the factors that create such effects? You can choose more than one answer.
- A. I do not agree
 - B. The names of the ships which were named after symbolic figures or places such as national heroes and Dokdo
 - C. The characteristics of missions that the navy conducts
 - D. Magnificent visual image
 - E. The image of ships sailing toward the oceans without being constrained by physical borders
 - F. The fact that South Korea can build those advanced naval ships
7. You may have heard of the participation of the South Korean naval ships in multinational anti-piracy effort in the vicinity of Somalia and the successful operations conducted by those ships. Do you believe that South Korea should continue to make an effort to maintain the naval fleet that is capable of international level operations?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
8. What are the rationales behind your answer in question 7? You can choose up to two answers.
- A. Given the increased national capacity and expanded role in the international community, it is essential for South Korea to have an advanced naval fleet corresponding to its international status
 - B. Given increasing naval capabilities of neighboring countries, it is necessary for South Korea to have an advanced naval fleet corresponding to capabilities of the

neighboring countries in order to guarantee the nation security from potential disputes or unknown threats in the future even without imminent threats

- C. In order to guarantee national interest related to commercial shipping and marine resources in the international waters, it is necessary for South Korea to have an advanced naval fleet
- D. Given the gravest military threat comes from North Korea, it is proper for South Korea to have a naval fleet that is similar to the level of North Korea's naval capability
- E. Since it is nearly impossible for South Korea to match naval capabilities of neighboring great power countries, it would be wise for South Korea to rely on the United States for the naval and air capabilities as it had done before given the high costs for building naval and air powers

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