

Editor's Note: After the essay, readers can examine the simulation prep sheet Professor McKee uses in her course, two country studies Berea College student groups wrote as part of the simulation assignment, and three student reflection papers class members wrote after the simulation's conclusion.

Modeling Asia: An East China Sea Simulation

By Lauren McKee

Tensions in the East China Sea have risen dramatically in the last decade between China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and a number of Southeast Asian countries. This conflict has been driven primarily by territorial contestations over islands each country claims as their own, for example, the Senkakau/Diaoyu Islands the Japanese and Chinese both claim. Add to the fray growing nationalist sentiments in many East Asian countries, a United States tied to Japan by treaty, unintentional military clashes around the disputed islands both by sea and air, and the potential for hydrocarbon resources in the East and South China Seas. Though these islands have only been a minor irritant in Sino–East Asian relations, concerns about China's growing military power and the future of security in the region have escalated regional tensions and created a flashpoint for future conflict.

Teaching foreign policy requires guiding students to see political situations from multiple perspectives. An understanding of historical contexts, trade relations, military power, goals of administrations, and domestic politics is crucial to explaining current foreign relations and being able to predict possible conflict or cooperation. The creation of successful foreign policy doesn't lend itself to easy solutions or conclusions, and students can better grasp this difficulty by vicariously experiencing the processes of foreign policymaking. In order to create this kind of application-based learning experience, I developed a foreign policy crisis simulation that has become a key component of my US–East Asian Foreign Policy course. The simulation has garnered positive feedback from students of the course and has become a selling point for students enrolling in the class. What follows is an introduction to the simulation, which, though designed for undergraduate students, could easily be adapted for high school students as well. Though I will discuss the semester-long course with the simulation added, it has also been condensed for a four-week daily summer course.

The Scaffolding

Any simulation can be broken down into three main stages: preparation work, simulation, and debriefing. The first step in any preparatory work is to establish what you want students to learn from the engagement. Specific learning goals for this simulation were to demonstrate the decision-making challenges that arise in a political crisis; to demonstrate the role that history, culture, and (mis)trust play in contemporary regional interactions; and to demonstrate how conflicting interests can complicate peace negotiations, all within the context of relations specifically between China, Japan, North and South Korea, and Taiwan.

These learning goals were all considered when creating preparatory assignments. Students are first randomly sorted into country groups that they will represent over the course of the class. Their roles are then even further specialized, with group members working on economics, domestic politics, military issues, and foreign relations. The beginning pace of the class is organized into roughly one-week units on each country. For each country, I give an introductory lecture on the history of regional and US relations. Students then teach one class session on the current politics of their country. I work with the different groups on first establishing the learning goals of their lesson and then deciding how they will work toward these goals. They are encouraged to be creative in devoting the class time to both content and application. For example, groups spend the first part of the two-hour class period dividing the lecture among themselves according to their area of specialization. The second half of their class period is devoted to testing the country knowledge from the lecture by playing Jeopardy and Bingo, or completing crossword puzzles the students designed themselves. Though students initially find the task of filling a two-hour class period daunting, it is an important step since teaching a topic requires a more in-depth understanding than simple comprehension. This assignment helps familiarize them with the “expert role” they will play later in the simulations, and, for other students in the class, the sharing of

knowledge about every country helps prevent students from becoming immersed only in their assigned country while sacrificing learning about the other countries.

Students quickly assume their expert roles for their particular countries. As they become more familiar with their country's history, they develop a level of emotional engagement that is difficult to duplicate through more conventional didactic or even small group instructional techniques. Their knowledge of World War II is often limited to an American lens, with many believing the conflict began with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. As they learn Japanese expansion began long before 1941, they also come to see that the legacy of this decades-old conflict continues to inform relations between and among East Asian countries.

After working as a class through the introductory lectures and current political contexts for each country, each group is then tasked with creating a portfolio for their country. The first document that goes into these portfolios establishes their assigned country's national goals. Students work together in class, sharing information about their areas of specialization with their teammates, as I circulate and guide conversations about how countries determine their national interests and how to further them. This assignment encourages students to engage analytically and go beyond the national media's interpretation of a country's actions to try to better understand why a country may choose to act the way it does. For example, China's actions in the East China Sea are often portrayed by US media in terms of how they may negatively affect America's national and regional interests in the East China Sea, rather than how China's expansion of military assets could be interpreted as the rational actions of a rising power. Once students understand that the fundamental goal of any country is to further its national interests, they begin to interpret those actions as being more rational. This also pushes students to understand domestic political considerations and to understand how the varying governments in the region have different considerations. For example, domestic public opinion and approval matter more in Japan than in North Korea, and governmental decisions are bound to varying degrees by these particular political considerations. Students also begin to understand that while countries have regional and even international aspirations, political leaders in each nation may have differing incentive structures. For example, the China team realizes that the legitimacy of their regime is strongly tied to economic performance, whereas in Taiwan, legitimacy comes from elections. The summary of national goals is a collaborative one-page writing assignment.

Students also complete a country brief that goes into their group country portfolio. Each student is responsible for writing their own specialized sections, editing the sections together, and writing an executive summary for the brief. The brief is divided into sections that mirror students' areas of specialization, which students write and are graded on individually. Each team member is required to read every section and then work with other team members outside of class to edit the brief together and craft the executive summary, which requires the group to be analytical about how all the parts of their knowledge fit together. For example, if students are writing about the Chinese economy, that particular section will first report China's GDP, GDP per capita, economic growth over time, and levels of economic development based upon urban/rural and geographic differences. They are also required to interpret this information and state what China's growing economic strength means for the leadership's domestic political legitimacy and why it may make their neighbors less likely to trust them as their military strength grows simultaneously. Each section of the brief should be roughly five well-researched pages, and the executive summary is limited to one page. While they are initially glad to hear the writing is relatively short, they soon find it difficult to condense the information they have learned into its most vital components. This space limitation forces them to sift through all they have learned to focus on the crucial information about their area. I review and grade the portfolios before posting them to our online class platform, Moodle, for other groups to use as a study resource for the simulation. I grade each student in the group individually on the sections of the portfolio they produce relative to their assigned expertise. This practice helps mitigate the negative effects of group work (though it also provides an opportunity to talk about free-riding!). In further preparation for the simulation, each student in the course reads every country portfolio and is quizzed on the content.

After these preparatory assignments are completed and students have a foundation for modeling their country's behavioral norms and anticipating behavioral norms of other actors, a pre-simulation briefing reminds students of a couple of things: First, there is a range of realistic behavior for each state, and their goal is to stay within that range. This stipulation is necessary to prevent the groups from introducing unlikely behavior into the simulation. Just like in any other role-playing theater, it's important to be realistic. Second, students also always want to know how they "win." I discourage this type of

language because it risks trivializing the event into just a game, but tell students that their objective in the simulation is to move closer to the national goals they established and advance their country's interests. I also encourage students to think about countries, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), etc., outside the immediate region. I have teaching assistants and upper-level students prepped and on hand to take the roles of other countries and organizations, like the United States, the United Nations, or ASEAN countries.

Simulating a Crisis

In a regular fifteen-week semester, I reserve two weeks for the simulation and debriefing (that's four two-hour class periods, in my case). The simulation begins with a briefing I conduct that introduces the crisis scenario. For this simulation, I tell them that China has moved five destroyers into the Taiwan Strait and off the coast of the contested islands with Japan. These are all the details that are provided. Recently, I rented a Giant Traveling Map of Asia from the National Geographic Society to use with this simulation. The twenty-four-by-thirty-six-foot map is placed on the floor, and students can stand and move place markers around on the map. I find the map useful for helping students visualize the geography of the area where the crisis is unfolding and leading them to a better understanding of the geopolitics of the region. I use place markers to indicate the positioning of the Chinese ships, American military forces, shipping routes, and Air Defense Identification Zones.

The first move of the simulation is for each country group to meet and write a document to add to their portfolio that discusses two issues: first, why this action signifies a potential crisis, and second, how countries could use this crisis as an opportunity to further their pre-established national interests. For example, the Japan team may see this as an opportunity to test the resolve behind the US–Japan Security Treaty or for the Shinzō Abe administration to domestically justify a revision of Article 9 of the Constitution. How the action of the simulation unfolds is up to them, though action in the past has followed fairly predictable patterns. Countries call on and confer with their various allies. Japan and Taiwan (the two states that view their sovereignty as under threat) jointly call for a security summit (sometimes hosted by South Korea) and invite all countries to attend in order to first attempt a diplomatically negotiated end to the crisis. This summit typically ends without resolution, as students begin to realize that each country pursuing its own interests means a quick and easy resolution will be difficult. By this point, students have learned the stages of conflict escalation and then may proceed to consider economic sanctions or will call on the United Nations for a resolution condemning China's actions. After discussing these next steps, they realize that sanctions will take time to work (if they ever do) and that the United Nations cannot formally condemn the actions of a Security Council member. As they work through possible actions and reactions, they are reminded that the longer the crisis takes to resolve and the longer the Chinese ships remain where they are, the more likely accidental interaction between fishing and/or transport ships becomes and the likelihood for unintentional conflict increases.

In the past, I have chosen to play the role of the United States for two main reasons. First, I prefer in this course for students to learn more about Asian countries than about the US, with which they are likely already more familiar. Second, since the US is tied to Japan through treaty and has a large military presence in South Korea, the decisions it makes in this simulation are a crucial piece of information in the East Asian countries' decision-making process. Because of American global involvement and reliance on China for trade, its reaction to these events may differ depending on a variety of current circumstances. To date, I have chosen to play the US as quick to condemn but slow to militarily intervene, even when pressed by its allies. This behavior reflects, at least in the Barack Obama years, the prevailing Japanese doubt about the extent of America's commitment to coming to their aid in a military crisis, given its ties to China through trade. This stance has worked well in the past and has centered the action on decisions of East Asian countries rather than on decisions the US makes regarding the crisis.

As the simulation unfolds, to demonstrate the concept of two-level games (that foreign policy is always happening within consideration of domestic politics and vice versa), groups are presented with "challenges." These challenges are designed to introduce an extra level of complexity and can include the following: an upcoming election in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea; conflicting citizen protests in various parts of their countries against both military engagement and China's perceived territorial aggression; a call from the United Nations for a quick and peaceful resolution; negative national and

international media coverage; or a buildup of Russian forces near the Sakhalin Islands. I have my teaching assistant distribute these challenges as students are working through the crisis to increase tension for resolution. The final challenge is the same for all countries—oil shipments to Northeast Asia from the Persian Gulf have ceased until the crisis is resolved, which intensifies the time constraints of the crisis, given all the countries involved rely on those resources to fuel their economies and their militaries.

How and when the simulation concludes is largely up to the students. There may or may not be a show of force. There may be a negotiation that makes all countries somewhat happy. There may be some countries that gain a great deal and some that lose a great deal. The conclusion ends when the immediate crisis is resolved, though students realize that the short-term solution doesn't necessarily mean the conflict is entirely resolved. The other way the simulation could end is in all-out war, but (luckily) that has never happened. This gives me an opportunity to ask them in the debriefing why they thought war was not an option they wanted to pursue.

Debriefing

The conclusion of any simulation should include a debriefing period during which students learn the decision-making processes of other groups in order to make connections between the simulation and the theoretical concepts of the course. I ask students to write a two-page reflective essay in which they discuss the process of decision-making in their groups and the outcomes of their decisions. They also consider what information was missing when making their decisions and which decisions they would change (if any) given an iteration of the simulation. They also write about whether the individual personalities of students in their group affected outcomes in their group. Debriefing involves “talking about the experiences, analyzing them, evaluating them, and integrating them into one’s cognitive and conscious base.”¹ The debriefing takes some skill in guiding students toward connecting their experience in the simulation with the conclusions you want them to make that will satisfy the activity’s learning objectives; luckily, there are simulation designers who have written extensively and helpfully about debriefing, particularly with the use of journals.²

Once students have completed their reflective essays, we discuss their essays together as a class. They often learn of secret alliances that formed, plans that were hatched, or other information that may have changed the calculations of their decisions had they been aware of it. During the simulation, students are free to move between a couple of classrooms and choose what actions will be revealed or hidden from other groups, such as high-level state meetings. This demonstrates that there is never perfect information in any crisis decision-making context, and that can alter the rational behavior of actors. We also review each group’s general and crisis-specific goals, and discuss which country was most successful in furthering its national interests through the crisis. Students are quick to realize that while short-term goals may have been achieved, such as resolving the crisis without armed conflict or by repelling China’s aggression, there are long-term consequences that can come from this interaction, specifically an erosion of trust. Many teams report they would predict increasing anti-Chinese rhetoric and support for increased security measures in their countries.

The grading challenges of this simulation have largely been mitigated by dividing the students and teams into specialty areas and grading the parts of assignments individually. Though group work can be challenging for instructors to grade and for students to engage in, the creative outcomes and critical thinking that are a result of the simulation experience are worth the challenges. Simulations can offer students a hands-on learning experience about any region of the world, but incorporating a simulation into a course about Asia will offer students the kind of interactive opportunity to learn about this part of the world they may not have outside of your classroom. Like any teaching method, there is a learning curve to designing simulations, as well as challenges to consider in the planning and implementation stages. The potential learning benefits of a simulation, however, are worth the effort.³

Readings on Simulation Design:

Loggins, Julie A. “Simulating the Foreign Policy Decision-Making Process in the Undergraduate Classroom.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 42, no. 2 (2009): 401–407.

Grummel, John. “Using Simulation to Teach Decision-Making within the Policy Process.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36, no. 4 (2003): 787–789.

Kahn, Melvin A., and Kathleen M. Perez. "The Game of Politics Simulation: An Exploratory Study." *Journal of Political Science Education* 5, no. 4 (2009): 332–349.

"Thematic Issue: Simulations in Political Science." *Journal of Political Science Education* 9, no. 2 (2013).

Young, Joseph K. "Simulating Two-Level Negotiations." *International Studies Perspectives* 7, no. 1 (2006): 77–82.

Simulation Supplements:

Statecraft (<https://ir.statecraftsim.com/>) is an online game that has teams of students run fictional countries in a world facing terrorism, resource shortages, and climate change. In addition to negotiating with other states, students face two sets of domestic policy challenges: the various interest groups in the country who clamor for particular projects and actions, and the dynamic of working with teammates responsible for different aspects of policymaking. There is an individual cost to each student.

The National Geographic Society rents Giant Traveling Maps to schools at the rate of \$600 per two weeks (price as of June 2016). I used the giant map of Asia during the simulation and found it useful for helping students visualize geography and territories. The kit comes with other materials and instructions for geography games to play using the map as well. Visit <https://www.berea.edu/news/mapping-foreign-policy/> for more information on using this map in simulations.

General Resources to Build Student Portfolios:

Foreign Policy Magazine, <http://foreignpolicy.com/> (requires subscription, but most college libraries subscribe)

Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/> (requires subscription, but most college libraries subscribe)

Global Asia Forum, <https://www.globalasia.org/> (requires subscription)

Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.cfr.org/> (open access)

CIA World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> (open access to numerous country profiles)

Nation Master, <http://www.nationmaster.com/> (open access, statistical data)

The World Bank, <http://www.worldbank.org/> (open access, self-reported country information)

The Diplomat, <http://thediplomat.com/> (open-access information on the Asia Pacific)

Readings and Resources on Japan:

Auslin, Michael. "Japan's New Realism: Abe Gets Tough." *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2016.

Lind, Jennifer. "The Perils of Apology: What Japan Shouldn't Learn from Germany." *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2013.

Lipscy, Philip. "Who is East Asia's Voldemort?" *Al Jazeera America*, March 26, 2014.

Nye, Joseph. "Japan's Robust Self-Defense Is Good for Asia." *Foreign Policy*, August 2014.

Japan Focus: The Asia-Pacific Journal, <http://apjif.org/>.

The Japan Times, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/> (Japanese news outlet published in English)

Readings and Resources on China:

"China's Maritime Disputes." Council on Foreign Relations *InfoGuide* Presentation. <https://tinyurl.com/yc5lggpx>.

"It Is Time for American to Consider Accommodation with China." *Foreign Policy* China File, June 2015.

"Is the China Model Better than Democracy?" *Foreign Policy* China File, October 2015.

MacMillan, Margaret. *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World*. New York, Random House: 2008.

McCoy, Robert. "Deconstructing the Senkaku-Diaoyu Dispute." *Global Asia Forum*, January 2016.

The China Daily, <http://www.chinadaily.com/> (open access news in English)

Readings and Resources on Taiwan:

Cronen, Patrick M., and Phoebe Benich. "Taiwan's Great Recalibration." *Foreign Policy*, January 2016.

Michal, Roberge, and Youkyung Lee. “China-Taiwan Relations: CFR Backgrounders.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, <https://tinyurl.com/7z2o8b8>.

“The Diaoyutai Islands—Sovereign Territory of the People’s Republic of China.” *Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, <https://tinyurl.com/y9u6bcyq>.

Readings and resources on North and South Korea:

Blumenthal, David. “Five Issues That Will Decide the Future of the US-South Korean Relationship.” *Foreign Policy*, October 2015.

Chunshan, Mu. “Why China–North Korean Relations Can’t be Broken.” *The Diplomat*, March 10, 2016.

Demick, Barbara. *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*. New York, Spigel and Grau: 2006.

Hill, Fiona, and Bobo Lo. “Putin’s Pivot.” *Foreign Affairs*, July 31, 2013.

“South Korea–Japan Relations.” *The Diplomat*, <http://thediplomat.com/tag/japan-south-korea-relations/>.

NOTES

1. L. C. Lederman, “Debriefing: A Critical Reexamination of the Postexperience Analytical Process with Implications for its Effective Use,” *Simulation & Gaming* 15, no. 4 (1984): 415–431.

2. See C. F. Petranek, et al., “Three Levels of Learning in Simulations: Participating, Debriefing, and Journal Writing,” *Simulation & Gaming* 23, no. 2 (1992): 174–185; C. F. Petranek, “A Maturation in Experiential Learning: Principles of Simulations and Gaming,” *Simulation & Gaming* 25, no. 4 (1994): 513–523; C. F. Petranek, “Written Debriefing: The Next Vital Step in Learning with Simulations,” *Simulation & Gaming* 31, no. 1 (2000): 108–118.

3. Special thanks to Berea College student AnaMarie Lukaitis, who helped with this article.

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PSC/AST 186: Simulation Prep Sheet

Simulations are interactive events in which it is the environment that is simulated...but the behavior is real.

Purposes of the simulation:

1. Model the challenges to real-life policy decision-making
2. Arrive at solutions to transnational problems that you may not have otherwise realized.

How to prepare:

1. Read the other country briefs. Know your allies'/enemies' weaknesses and strengths. Know your relationships. Know what you can reasonably ask of other countries and know your own domestic situation.
2. Solidify and be aware of your country's goals.
3. Bring your laptop to class next week
4. Read the news on E Asia over the weekend.

Simulation FAQs:

1. Can you "win"? (What would winning look like?)

The way you "win," though I discourage using that term, is by moving closer to your country's goals you established at the beginning of the course. You should also consider the sometimes contradictory short-term gains/losses and long-term gains/losses. No country will officially "win," but you will be asked to reflect on how your country fared in the simulation compared to the national goals you wanted to accomplish.

2. How will we be graded? (What does our best performance look like so that we get a good grade AND the simulation is the best it can be?)
 - a. on your knowledge of your country's goals and capabilities
 - b. on your knowledge of other countries' goals and capabilities
 - c. on your ability to make decisions based on this information, decisions that reflect actual options that are available to a country and in the realm of possibility
 - d. on your ability to work together as a team
 - e. on the reflection piece you will provide on Monday, Nov. 17

Directions for reflection piece:

After the simulation is over, each group member will provide a reflection piece of roughly 1,500-2,000 words in which you will offer a critical analysis of your experience in the simulation

exercise. You won't need to use any outside sources for this short piece; rather, it is based on your individual experience in the simulation. Some questions you *could* answer include:

1. How did you establish your country's goals?
2. What were the challenges of reaching those goals as the simulation progressed?
3. What decisions did you make as a group that you felt weren't "perfect" decisions?
4. Which decisions did you make that you were particularly proud of or to which your knowledge especially contributed?
5. What were the challenges of working in a group and how would you better approach group work in the future?
6. What did you learn from the simulation that you think you otherwise would not have learned?
7. To what extent was your group able to achieve the goals you established in the beginning?
8. To what extent do you think simulation events model the real challenges to FP decision-making?

Again, these are just suggestive prompts, not eight questions you **MUST** address. You can choose from or add to these as you see fit for your reflection.

3. What if we get "stuck" in the simulation and don't know what to do?

A: Don't get stuck. Keep up. Do your best. Make the best decisions you can with the information you have.

Japan Country Brief

Student 1: Domestic Politics

Student 2: Military and Foreign Politics

Student 3: Economics

Japan: Executive Summary

- The foreign policy of Japan is influenced most by the leader. However, public opinion also plays a large role in setting constraints on the actions of the government.
- Shinzo Abe, current prime minister, is more nationalistic than most of his predecessors. This has caused tensions with many of Japan's neighbors. Recently, the Diet's passing of new security laws allowing collective security and talk of revising Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution has increased the suspicions of many of Japan's regional neighbors.
- Japan's greatest security ally is the United States, though, especially in the last decade, Japan's doubts about America's commitment to defend Japan as a part of the Mutual Cooperation and Security Agreement have increased.
- Japan is increasingly modernizing and expanding the military capabilities of its Self Defense Force. It is focusing on balancing China in the region, which is increasing its military expenditures.
- Japan is focused on improving relations in the region with all of its neighbors. Japan is also reaching beyond the United States and its immediate neighbors to gain other allies.
- Japan has experienced 20 years of an economic downfall due to the asset price bubble that occurred in 1990.
- Japan still follows a loose mercantilist economic system in which exports are maximized and imports are limited. "Abenomics" hopes to bring back the economic prosperity of the 1960s-'80s.

Section I: Domestic Politics

Government

Parliamentary System

Japan has a parliamentary system. A parliamentary system is one in which the executive and legislative branches are combined into one body. Japan's legislature is known as the Diet. It is made up of two houses: the House of Councilors and the House of Representatives.¹ In a parliamentary system, the chief executive (Prime Minister) and his or her cabinet members are also elected legislators. The leader of the majority party or majority coalition becomes the democratically-elected Prime Minister. Unlike presidential systems such as the US, where normally Presidents serve four-year terms, if the Prime Minister loses a majority of support in the House of Representatives, he or she normally resigns. Most of the process of forming foreign policy is done by the Prime Minister and his cabinet. It should be noted that there is a higher amount of accountability for decisions than in the US; if a Prime Minister makes an unpopular

¹ (Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook Japan)

decision or policy, he is more likely to lose his power immediately.² This is explored in more detail later.

Current Parties

Japan contains many political parties, but most are small and only hold a small number of seats in the Diet. Though these parties are important and can be especially important in forming coalitions, for the purpose of this paper I will focus on the parties that have been the most popular. There are two parties that have ruled in Japan in recent history: the Liberal Democratic Party and the Democratic Party of Japan.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) controlled the government almost exclusively from 1955 to 2009. The LDP is generally described as center-right. They do not have an overarching philosophy, just that they are more conservative than the left parties. Some of the basic goals of the party have been rapid economic growth, friendly policies toward the US, creating a more efficient government, and bureaucracy.³ These policies are evident in Shinzo Abe's Abenomics and Junichiro Koizumi's privatization of the postal service. The fact that the LDP has been more policy than ideology oriented has likely led to their ability to adapt and retain power. The continuous control led many to question the level of democracy that was present in Japan.⁴ Some measures of democracy are based on the country's ability to peacefully transition power from one party to another.⁵ Japan had not faced this obstacle. It looked as if Japan was under one-party rule, which is not democratic. This changed in 2009 when the LDP was defeated in an election by the Democratic Party of Japan.

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won the majority from 2009 to 2012. The leader of the party, who became prime minister, was Yukio Hatoyama. The economy was not doing well, largely due to the US economic crash in 2008, which often makes the party in power unpopular. The DPJ capitalized on the unpopularity of the LDP by making the economy and economic revitalization a key issue. Hatoyama also campaigned on shutting down the Marine Corps Air Station in Okinawa. He later found that this was not possible and his inability to deliver led to his resignation. The DPJ went through several prime ministers in their short time in power. During the DPJ's time in power, they were plagued with many disasters that were handled poorly. For example, they were expected to handle an earthquake, tsunami, and the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Due to their inability to handle natural disasters to the standard of the public, they lost

² (Masuyama and Nyblade 250)

³ (Dolan and Worden)

⁴ (Krauss and Pekkanen 5)

⁵ (Bunce and Binenkorb 9)

the faith of the public and ended up losing to the LDP in 2012.⁶ The inability of DJP to lead the country brings up the questions of whether the people have a true choice in elections.

Leadership

Japan's leader tends to be very powerful, in the sense that what he sets out to do is usually easy to get passed in the legislature. Since the prime minister is the leader of the majority party, they have a majority to pass the program they want as long as everyone votes consistently with party. This is in contrast to a president in the US, for example, whose Congress might be controlled by another party. Since the prime minister enjoys a majority, their plan usually passes. The people expect them to deliver on their campaign promises. This also means the prime minister is more accountable to the people because he cannot blame the Diet (legislature) or the system for his inability to follow through. This also means that unpopular decisions are more likely to lead to resignation. Responsibility is not diluted. The Foreign Affairs Council in the Diet does influence decisions through research and recommendations.⁷ There are influences, namely public opinion, corporations, and councils, on foreign policy other than the leader, but the leader and his cabinet are very important. Because of the characteristics of the system, the leader becomes paramount. For the purpose of this paper, I will focus on Shinzo Abe, the current prime minister of Japan.

The current prime minister of Japan was also prime minister in 2006-2007, when he resigned due to illness. His official reason was illness, though many speculate that it was due to his unpopularity. However, in 2012, with the DJP decreasing in popularity, the LDP regained a majority in the Diet and Abe became prime minister again. Abe is from a family often regarded as nationalists and belongs to the revisionist, nationalist organization *Nippon Kaigi*. His grandfather was a general in WWII and charged with war crimes, though he was not tried nor sentenced.⁸ This background likely contributes to Abe's nationalism and his desire to increase Japan's power and position in the world. Abe has also caused regional and international outrage with his unapologetic attitude toward WWII. Some leaders before Abe, namely Koizumi, also wanted to increase Japan's power; however, Abe has been more successful with this than most. The Diet recently passed a batch of Security Laws backed by Abe that would allow for collective defense and an enhanced role for the Self Defense Forces, among other defense-related policies. He has received international criticism, but also domestic criticism for these bills. The DPJ has criticized his aggressive manner, but while the DPJ was in power, the military expanded to protect islands from China and some islands were nationalized.⁹ Abe is also trying to form relationships with Japan's Asian neighbors, such as China, India, South Korea, and South East

⁶ (Yamaguchi)

⁷ ("Diet")

⁸ (Takahashi)

⁹ (Auslin)

Asia. Though his attempts to cooperate with China have not netted any gains, the attempt is significant.

Section II: Japanese Military and Foreign Policy

Japanese Military

The Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is the commander of the Japanese Self Defense Forces. The total number of personnel in their armed forces is 225, 377.¹⁰ They also maintain a reserve of 57,900. Their population has 43,930,753 citizens who are fit for military service. Their defense budget totals just over \$49 billion. For comparison, China spent \$131.57 Billion on defense for the same period.¹¹ There is also a significant permanent forward stationing of American troops in Japan, mostly at the Futenma base in Okinawa, but also throughout the country. This has been controversial, especially among Okinawans, and even moreso since the rape and murder of a young Okinawan girl by an American service person in 1995. Abe has recently pushed for and gotten new Security Laws, which will allow for collective defense. These capabilities allow Japan to help in defending allied nations' ships if they were to come under attack in the region.¹² This has the potential to start a broader arms race in the region as many of Japan's neighbors do not trust it under Abe's nationalist leadership.

These changes are in coordination with the efforts of the new government under Abe to increase Japanese military power. After WWII, Japan self-limited its military spending to less than 1 percent of its GDP. Since then, Japan had been spending less of a percentage year over year on defense spending since the early 2000s until the Abe government came to power in 2012. Abe pledged to reverse this if elected and has done just that. His proposal for military spending in fiscal year 2015 was \$53 billion; a 3.5 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. Japan is increasingly focusing on building up its military capabilities as well as allowing their forces to be used in offensive roles. They have set a goal of having an amphibious assault force created by 2019 that can fight for control of remote islands. This force is surely being created with the Senkaku Islands in mind. China and Japan have almost come into conflict over these islands multiple times recently. Japan maintains the stance that these increases in military spending are simply to help it defend itself in the event of an attack and fill in for a possible future United States decline in the region. Yosuke Isozaki, a security adviser to Prime Minister Abe, was recently quoted as saying, "Truth be told, the US can no longer afford to play the world's policeman." He went on to explain that for this reason, Japan must increase its capabilities so that it is not left without an effective defense in the case of the United States pulling back from the region.¹³

Japan has been working to balance China's military rise. With mounting escalations in the disputes over various islands in the region, Japan is increasingly preparing for the possibility

¹⁰ (Zimmerman)

¹¹ (Keck)

¹² ("Japan and the Limits of Military Power")

¹³ (MCN)

of a military conflict with China. Japan has worked with other nations in the region to stem the rising power of China. While the United States today is increasingly building a presence in the region, it is not expected to maintain that presence long term by other countries in the region. Japan is trying to play a key role in gathering a group of countries in the region to balance China.¹⁴ It has been discussed that Japan could lead the formation of an organization resembling the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in East Asia and exclude China since the organization's purpose would be to balance China.¹⁵

Japanese Foreign Policy

Japanese regional foreign policy has been mainly focused on balancing China. The Japanese government under Prime Minister Abe has been reaching out to countries in the region to try to build better relations. Japan has been specifically reaching out to South Korea and China. Abe has been trying to get a summit meeting with the leaders of both countries heading into the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, but has been refused by both. Japan's largest hurdle in working with its neighbors is itself. Abe has been stern in refusing to apologize for Japanese aggressions during World War II. In South Korea, President Park has expressed her concern that Japan has not apologized over the use of comfort women. She has stated that Prime Minister Abe must work to resolve this issue if relations between them are to improve. China has been unwilling to negotiate with Japan due to their ongoing tensions over ownership of the Senkaku Islands, which China calls the Diaoyu Islands. This, paired with their recent increase of military spending and new Security Laws, has made their neighbors nervous and unwilling to work closely with Japan.¹⁶

In a recent speech to the United Nations, Prime Minister Abe stressed that he wants better cooperation between countries of East Asia and denounced "war culture." This was a direct message to South Korea, China, and Taiwan that despite their military escalation, Japan has no interest in becoming aggressive in the region. The speech has not been taken seriously by those countries who do not trust Japan.¹⁷

Since Abe's return to power in 2012, he has wanted to improve relations with Russia. This has not happened due to the incursions into Ukraine and the shooting down of Malaysian Airline Flight 17 over Ukraine. Abe had hoped to resolve disputes over northern islands between Japan and Russia but these events have caused those hopes to dissipate. President Vladimir Putin of Russia was supposed to visit Tokyo in late 2014 but it is unlikely to happen due to a deterioration of their bilateral relations. Japan was hoping to use Russian natural resources to help spur its economy but has been forced into placing sanctions on Russia as a member of the

¹⁴ (Fackler)

¹⁵ (MCN)

¹⁶ (Sang-hun)

¹⁷ (Gladstone)

G7. Japan maintains a strong relationship with the United States and is unwilling to back down from its solidarity with the United States despite the benefits of increasing relations with Russia.¹⁸

However, Japan has improved relations with other countries in the region. Australia and Japan have become close allies since Abe came to power. Japanese officials have said that Australia and Japan are one another's most important defense partner behind the United States. This was said on the condition of anonymity by Japanese officials because officially, South Korea is Japan's second closest defense ally. Given the recent issues in Japanese relations with South Korea, they do not want this close relationship to come across as a slight of South Korea. Such an action could in turn cause South Korea to partner more closely with China. Japan has even established an Australian-Japan Defense Co-operation Office in the Japanese Ministry of Defense. Australia shares Japan's interest in containing China and has worked closely with Japan and the United States militarily as part of a regional effort to accomplish this containment.¹⁹

India has also become an increasingly important focus of Japanese foreign policy. Prime Minister Abe has been outspoken about trying to recruit India in a multinational effort to contain Chinese expansionism. Although India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stated that he supports these goals he has refused to expand further security cooperation with Japan past joint naval exercises. This can be seen as an attempt by India to not rock the boat in the region as they also rely on a close relationship with China. Prime Minister Modi is determined to not choose sides between Japan and China. Where India and Japan have been able to closely work together is in economic cooperation. Despite India not taking part in Abe's attempts to halt Chinese expansionism, as he sees it, the increased economic cooperation is a step in building closer relations between the two countries.²⁰

Based on the information provided above, Japan seems to be a state actor in transition. Japan used to be a passive actor from 1946 to the early 2000s but is now becoming more aggressive in the region, perhaps in response to a rising China. Not aggressive in a manner of looking for war but becoming more assertive in attaining their goals. Their main goal is to counter China's rise in the region and they have been active in doing so. All of their relations and interactions in the region come back to that key goal.

Section III: Japanese Economics

The Lost Decade

The Root Cause

In the 1980s Japan saw "miraculous" economic growth, much faster than any other country comparatively at the time. This was thanks to the asset price bubble, which created a large surge in asset prices, an increase in money supply and credit, and the expansion of economic activity

¹⁸ ("Japan-Russia Relations: Tokyo's Balancing Act.")

¹⁹ (Garnaut)

²⁰ (Harner)

for an extended period of time. But was this bubble good for the economy? Or was this excessive optimism the economy's downfall? In the early 1990s, the bubble that caused Japan's economy to flourish burst. This burst put Japan's economy into a full nosedive, nearly causing a total collapse and causing devastating repercussions that are still being felt today, over thirty years later. The asset price bubble burst was the main factor in Japan's collapse and has made Japan much weaker, economically speaking, than it ever has been.

The asset bubble can be characterized in many ways, but for Japan it can be best characterized by three factors: a rapid rise in asset prices, the overheating of economic activity, and a large increase in money supply and credit. These assets rose in price starting in about 1982 and accelerated in growth from 1985 to 1986. However, this rise was only moderate, mainly due to the fact that this two year acceleration happened around the same time that the "endaka recession"²¹ occurred. Most still don't view these years as being part of the bubble period because in 1986 there was credit decline and the economy bottomed out in November of 1986. Most agree that 1987 was the beginning of the bubble period because this was when there was clear growth of the economy even though it was recovering to an extent. But for this writing, we will consider the bubble period being from 1987 to 1990 because of the rise in stock and land prices, economic activity, and money supply simultaneously.²²

The Causes Explained

First and foremost we must talk about the rise in asset prices. The most rapid rise at first were the stock prices. For example, Nikkei 225²³ began accelerating and rising in 1986 and peaked in 1989 at a substantial 38,915 yen from the original 12,598 yen. It stayed around this price, until August 1992, where it dropped to 14,309 yen. A 60 percent decrease in one month. The land prices fared no better, peaking at four times higher in 1990 than in 1985. But by 1999 the prices had dropped by 80 percent and then 1990 peak. Overall, Japan had a 452 percent increase in GDP during the 1986-1989 period. But in the 1990-1993 period, they had a staggering 159 percent GDP loss.²⁴

Secondly, the overheating of the economy²⁵ is to blame. Japan's economy was growing ridiculously fast, a rate that simply could not be sustained. The main cause behind such economic expansion was business fixed investment. This accounted for up to 20 percent of the national GDP. There was also a large increase in housing investment as well as the expenditure on consumer durables the part of the household sector. Over time, the economy met its breaking point and could no longer sustain itself. There was simply not enough of a supply to meet the large demand in the economy and this caused mass inflation.

²¹ The endaka recession was caused by an appreciation of yen.

²² Asset price bubbles can be defined in many ways, such as actual asset prices increasing more than expected from the calculations of a theoretical model.

²³ The stock market index for the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

²⁴ Bank of Japan Institute.

²⁵ Overheating of an economy occurs when its productive capacity is unable to keep pace with growing aggregate demand. It is generally characterized by an above-trend rate of economic growth, where growth is occurring at an unsustainable rate.

Lastly, there was money supply and credit. In 1986-1989, growth of money supply accelerated to around 10 percent annually. Growth of credit was more prominent than that of the money supply's growth. Bank borrowing was on the rise as well as financing from the capital market, which in turn raised stock prices even more. With so much borrowing and money being thrown around, you have to wonder, where is everyone getting this money? The supply can't be endless. In 1988-1989 a growth of 14 percent was recorded in the corporate and household sectors, which took up more money and needed more borrowing. Eventually, though, this money simply ran out.

What's Being Done to Recover

Stimulus Packages

One of the first things to be done was the institution of stimulus packages, which were grossly overstated in how much they could actually stimulate the economy, but they were somewhat effective. The 1995 package was actually able to give a 3.6 percent increase to the 1996 GDP, a full point more than what had been forecasted. But, unfortunately, that was the largest increase Japan would see out of any of the stimulus packages, mainly because of the contractionary policies implemented in 1996 and 1997. These were also not announced like the expansionary policies, because in the economy, people would not be happy about the slowing of the economy even more, and rightly so.

Fiscal Policy

Japan also attempted to adjust its fiscal policy. Economic leaders tried to inject money into the economy to stimulate spending by using deficit-increasing tax cuts, though this didn't work in an uncertain economy when the impetus was to save rather than spend. When the money was spent into the private sector, some of it was spent back and the other was part was saved by the private sector. In turn, the individuals receiving the money would spend only a portion of that and save the rest, so over time the money simply disappeared once again. This didn't allow Japan to use fiscal policy effectively because anytime they put money into the economy, the citizens were under the impression that the safest path was to save it because they may need it at a later point. They didn't realize that by not spending, they're encouraging others to not spend, so less and less money circulates as time goes on.

Abenomics

Luckily for Japan, the newest Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is making changes for the country and the economy for the better.²⁶ So far he has ended deflation, devalued the yen to increase exports, brought about price stability, and put the economy onto a full employment

²⁶ This was not his first election. He was elected in 2006, but stepped down later that year for "health reasons."

growth path. The initial evidence is very positive, but it simply hasn't been long enough to see if the plan will be effective or not. Another very important point about Abenomics is that it has successfully made the general population once again optimistic about the future of the country. Something that hadn't been felt in years. It is very important to understand and study Abenomics because of how well it has done thus far, and if it succeeds, there's no telling what it could mean for countries with failing economies in the future.

Now we must discuss what is perhaps the most important part of Abenomics—the three arrows. First is a very expansive monetary policy. Second, being fiscal stimulus backed by the very large supplementary budget. And last, which also will be the most difficult, is the long-term growth strategy. The package was much stronger than most anticipated, causing the stock market to rise sharply immediately, and weaken the yen. This also allowed the Bank of Japan to purchase more exchange traded funds and take on more credit risk. This signaled that they were willing to do almost anything to end deflation. Currently the state of Japan is getting better and looks brighter every day, but will this be sustained? Japan is recovering from a serious recession that nearly destroyed its economy. If it can successfully revitalize itself, this can mean very much for the rest of the world.

Japan's biggest import and export partners are the United States and China, though it is attempting to increase trade with Taiwan and South Korea as well. Japan is involved in multiple bilateral trade agreements with neighbors and in trading institutions such as the World Trade Organization and as an observing member of the Association of Southeast Asian Trading Nations. Despite its full integration into the global economy as an exporter, Japan still follows what some would label a mercantilist-like policy of limited imports. This has been a sticking point in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. Even so, Japan is pushing its exports such as vehicles and nuclear reactor technology as a means to economic prosperity and also as a way to increase cooperation and trust among its regional neighbors.

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China's National Goals

Student 1: Economic Policy

Student 2: Domestic Policy

Student 3: Military Policy

China's National Goals

Economy- (Student 1)

With respect to economy, this is largely a case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The People's Republic of China has seen unrivaled economic growth over the last decade and a half. Though the rate of growth has slowed in the past year, the economy has seen over 300 percent growth since the year 2000 (businessinsider.com, 2010). Partially because of government, however, the majority of the growth is in the private sector, with eight of the ten largest stocks in the Shanghai Stock Exchange government owned (marketcapitalizations.com, 2015). China's economic goal is to, in no uncertain terms, continue this growth and expansion into the future. According to MarketWatch (2009), the gross domestic product (GDP) of China could overtake that of the United States by as early as 2020.

This has created the stark contrast between rural China and the burgeoning urban demographic. Large swaths of what sustains the population are still based on production of goods and agriculture. Not surprisingly, over 80 percent of toys are made in China (National Geographic). What might be more surprising is that one of every two pigs in the world are located in China, with a larger pig population than the next forty-three pork producing countries combined (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 2010). Thus, despite the rapid economic growth of its markets, China has the ninety-first lowest GDP per capita in the world—with over 100,000,000 of its residents living on less than US \$1 per day (businessinsider.com) and over thirty million residents still living in caves.

Even still, China is the world's largest exporter of goods, and the second largest importer as well as more citizens move into the middle class and gain expandable income and an appetite for foreign goods. Moreover, there is an initiative in Chinese domestic policy that would see a switch from the agrarian life that many of its residents experience to a more urban setting. By 2025, China will have built enough skyscrapers to fill ten New York City sized cities, and moved

over 350 million of its residents into these urban areas by 2030 (McKinsey, 2009). To put that into perspective, this great migration will move a population greater than that of the United States into more urban settings over the next fifteen years. To this end, there is a huge economic investment in developing urban areas, inextricably intertwining the economy with domestic policy. This buttresses the standing notion that the ultimate goal of the Chinese is simply to become an economic superpower, and galvanize the rest of the region around its efforts.

This immense economic growth and urbanization have produced both positive and negative effects, which are discussed below in Domestic Policy. The most significant aspect of China's economy is that the regime's legitimacy is largely based on improving Chinese citizens' standards of living, and how the state deals with the economic deceleration of the past year will determine the Communist regime's future survival.

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Domestic Policy – (student 2)

As discussed in China's twelfth Five Year Plan (FYP), for Economic and Social Development, China's top priorities are to restructure the economy by supporting a new industry structure that adopts new measures and encourages developments in new energies consisting of biotechnology, energy conservation, and new materials. China's policy goals for this twelfth FYP is to focus on economic growth, maintain a stable economy, and improve living standards. Policies on Urban and Rural development look to increase urbanization by narrowing the income gap between urban and rural areas, which remains one of the top concerns. Policy goals on energy efficiency set to achieve two major energy targets by 2020: China will look to reduce carbon intensity by 40–45 percent of 2005 levels and increase the use of nonfossil energy to 15 percent of primary consumption (USCBC, 2010). Because China is already behind on its goal to reduce energy intensity, experts speculate that the country might have to strengthen its energy targets in the twelfth FYP to reach these long-term goals.

China also plans to focus on improving social insurance, health care services, and education, which remain very important policy goals. China is reported to have 700 million people drinking contaminated water each year combined with the problem of overpopulation. The National Education Reform and Development Plan (2010) aims to boost Chinese investment into their education system to 4 percent of GDP (USCBC, 2010). As China also focuses on regional development, new policies will focus on generating rapid economic growth in underdeveloped regions in Central and Western China. The twelfth FYP Policy will seek to encourage more balanced growth between China's developed and underdeveloped areas.

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Military Policy (student 3)

The Chinese military is otherwise known as the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The military is a very small percent of the total population of China, composing about 0.18 percent of people in China. The army is a total of about 3.3 million soldiers. The military is mandatory for all men from ages 18 to 24 years old with a minimum of two years of committed service (CIA, 2016). Mandatory military service has not been enforced strongly by the Chinese government because of the increasing number of volunteers in the military. There are many goals that the PLA is setting for the next year.

The first goal for the military is to continue to increase national defense and continue to ensure peace among nations around the world. China has increased its national military budget by about 7 to 8 percent this year which is actually a decrease compared to previous years where there was a raise of about 10 to 12 percent (Hunt & Jiang, 2016). The PLA also wants to stay up-to-date on its national defense technology and protect its borders from nuclear, air, and ground strikes.

Another major goal is to extend the military with specific emphasis on the Navy. Extending the Chinese Navy is very important in navigating China's relationships with other countries that have a strong military and Navy. China would like to continue to build relationships with the United States and countries that have close connections with the United States, since they are currently the dominant military actor in East Asia. To begin extending its own naval predominance, China's naval ships are continuing to navigate to different points along

the Asian coastlines, Middle East, and African coastlines to increase alliances and continue development of anti-submarine defense around the country (Sullivan & Erickson, 2016).

The last main goal for the PLA is to focus on extending and increasing the capabilities of air security and air strike with Missile Forces units. The goal is to increase the amount and capacity of sea carriers and to increase air strike ability of both long and mid-range areas. The ultimate goal of the military is to become an increased force in the world and also show great home security for the people of China (Sullivan & Erickson, 2016).

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(Written from the perspective of a Chinese representative)

To sum things up, the ultimate goal of the People's Republic of China is to continue to secure China as a global superpower economically, lead a renaissance of technological advancement domestically, and defend its borders against any would-be attackers. We will use our economic success to continue funding a technologically advanced, superior military. To this point, the military goal is strictly defensive and in the interest of our allies, without any goal to

become an offensive or policing force in the near future. Neither regional nor international actors should see these increasing military expenditures as offensive. Our domestic policy would see substantial decreases in the wage gaps between our rural and urban populations, as we try to bring a plurality of our poorer citizens into the twenty-first century. We will also continue improving access to education and health care as well as begin enacting more environmentally sound industrial policies to ensure happy, healthy citizens. Our endeavors in technological advancement should create a groundswell that lifts every aspect of our society.

Simulation Reflection 1

South Korea

The Simulation

The simulation was a fantastic way to utilize all of the material learned in this class along with our own country knowledge. The crisis that we were simulating was that the People's Liberation Army (the name for China's military) moved ten of its twenty-five Destroyers into the Taiwan Strait and between the coasts of the Senkaku/Daioyu/Diaoyutai Islands. In the end, Taiwan and China came to a compromise, and they are going to put three ships of each country, Taiwan and China, into the Taiwan Strait. The hopes are high for future negotiations.

What were the challenges of making foreign policy during this simulation?

The hardest part about making foreign policy during this simulation was time. It is really hard to make foreign policy that might last for a while, in the time span of an hour. You have only a limited amount of time to make your move or take your position. It was a lot of pressure knowing that if we made the wrong decision, it would hurt us in the end.

It was also difficult trying to imagine where the other countries would go or how the other countries would react. It was like a huge game of chess where you had to imagine two or three moves ahead of you so you could avoid potential shows of force, war, etc. For example, in making alliances and connections, we had to think carefully about how other countries would react. We, being South Korea, would have to think about the potential repercussions of siding with China or Taiwan. If we sided with China, we would have to handle the wrath of a rather hawkish Taiwan, and maybe Japan. On the other hand, if we sided with Taiwan, we might risk trade being cut off with China and being stuck in a bad position.

The last thing that was difficult was staying realistic. You had to keep in account the past and the history of the relationships between certain countries. For example, it would have been highly unlikely for us to side with North Korea and take out China. This came into play when thinking about how the South Korean people would look at aligning with Japan and Taiwan. The people of South Korea still, somewhat, hold a grudge with Japan over its imperialist past. This would have had a huge effect with how South Korea dealt with it. Also, South Korea recognizes the People's Republic of China (China) instead of the Republic of China (Taiwan). This made diplomatically resolving the crisis difficult.

How close did you get to the country goals you established? Why do you think you were successful or not?

In the beginning, South Korea's main goal during the simulation was to stay out of anyone's way. We wanted to remain neutral for as long as possible because we did not feel the need to interfere with other countries' matters if it didn't directly involve us. We did not want to speak unless spoken to. However, in the case that we did become involved, we wanted to make small moves and align with countries we thought would come out victorious, so we could also receive the prizes of their victory.

In the end, however, we did align ourselves with other countries and made a security agreement, but we never physically moved our military, made any big moves, or were provoked in any way. The security agreement, entitled "DUSA" (The Democratic Union Security Agreement), was a security agreement between South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. In the event that China or North Korea attacked one of those countries, all countries would come to their aid. While we weren't provoked, I would say we accomplished some of our goal in the fact that we did

not make any large or rash moves in the area. In other words, while our tangible gains were small, at least we didn't lose any ground.

Which country was the most difficult to work with?

There were two countries that gave our country and everyone else a hard time: China and Taiwan. The Chinese's complete stubbornness to handle or agree upon anything but their way annoyed me and others. I understand that they were trying to be realistic and act like China would. They would not succumb to any of the possible treaties or possible options, until they got exactly what they wanted, or they would receive the greatest gain. Taiwan, on the other hand, was extremely pushy. I almost feared to go against the people of Taiwan. They took being hawkish and pushy to a whole new level. Of course, they were the country with the greatest potential to lose in this scenario, so their aggressiveness was understandable. They did everything they could in recruiting people to back up Taiwan, even going as far as to hop on tables. It was extremely weird, and they were pushy.

Which country became your closest ally?

Surprisingly, our closest ally was Japan. Japan was not really pushy and they had a lot of strong arguments. They came to us and told us what Japan could do for us, instead of immediately asking us for help. They had a good personality and made it very easy to get behind them. In the end, with a potentially established DUSA, Japan had compromised with us to not involve us unless they could not handle it themselves. I believed them, and we would have had their back had conflict escalated.

How did your country respond to the domestic challenges introduced during the simulation?

Our country responded to the domestic challenges, hopefully, in an effective manner. We had a challenge where the people were protesting the involvement of South Korea in the conflict between Taiwan, China, and Japan. The people were also attacking the Chinese embassies. In response to this challenge, we strongly urged the people involved in the first summit of regional countries to let South Korea host it. We were hoping, by hosting the summit for these countries, it would show the people the seriousness of the situation and maybe boost community support if the outcome was a full-out war.

Another domestic challenge we had was that while the other countries were fighting in the Taiwan Strait, the Middle East halted oil shipments to all countries in East Asia until the conflict was resolved. This really put a damper on all of the countries, because all of the oil shipments pass through the Taiwan Strait. We tried to overcome this barrier by trying to create alliances with Russia and North Korea. We thought Russia may pose a possible alternative for oil shipments, though they may have to go through or at least around North Korea. We were aware that creating a lasting alliance with North Korea might not be possible, but it was worth a shot. Russia, on the other hand, agreed to sell us oil— they just wanted business and more money for their economy. Turns out, however, North Korea was OK with giving us oil in exchange for nuclear energy. South Korea, feeling sympathetic for their general lack of electricity, gave in.

If you could change anything about your decision, what would you change and why?

If I could change one thing about South Korea's action during this simulation, it would have been that we got involved with security agreements and alliances sooner than I would have

liked. It was in our goals to stay neutral for as long as possible, but we didn't stay neutral for long, at least I didn't think so. We may have wanted to stay as neutral as possible, but I still would have liked to have done more strong persuading to get the outcome I wanted without entangling myself and South Korea as much as I did.

How do you feel about the outcome of the situation?

I am content with the outcome of the simulation. However, I would have liked a more definitive solution, such as China agreeing to move their ships elsewhere, or Taiwan sending a majority of their ships to combat the rising China. I also would have liked to see Japan get more involved in the strait, but that was a personal opinion, and impossible because of Article 9. It would have been a huge turning point in this battle. Finally, the crazy person in me would have wanted a war to break out, but the realist in me realizes that this occurrence would be not very realistic. Ultimately, even though the crisis ended, I don't think the disagreements between countries will end. This crisis may actually heighten tensions among East Asian countries and make conflict in the future more likely.

Ultimately, what did you learn about the nature of world politics and of East Asia?

This simulation has taught me a lot of information about the nature of world politics and East Asia. The country of North Korea was the prime example of how complicated diplomacy is and how states tend to look out for themselves first. North Korea had an abundance of backroom dealings with Japan, China, Taiwan, and South Korea. They had their backs covered and others did, too. They also lied to us about their uses of the nuclear energy they would have received if South Korea and North Korea aligned. Also, they lied to us about the oil pipeline that North

Korea and Russia agreed to run to us. They would have cut the oil off in a pinch. Through all of these shady things, North Korea was a brilliant strategist.

In terms of East Asia, I would compare them to Europe pre-World War II. They are very sensitive countries with complicated histories that are willing to fight over every wrongdoing. However, they also feel really strongly about their country, and they have a strong sense of nationalism. They have a history intertwining with each other that they sometimes let impact their present political decisions. This simulation also kind of proves the uneasiness of East Asia. There are still so many territories contested, such as the islands between South Korea and Japan, Japan and China, and China and lots of other Southeast Asian countries. There are still countries that want official independence and recognition, but they still don't have it yet, such as Taiwan.

In conclusion, this simulation was a great hands-on learning experience that really took the knowledge that we gained from each country, and it led us to apply this knowledge while making foreign policy. It was so much fun!

Simulation Reflection 2

Taiwan Team Member

CRISIS, COMPETITION, COOPERATION, & CONTEMPORARY RELATIONS

Every country has its weaknesses and strengths, and crisis occurs when a country portrays its military strength as a provocative show of force, suppressing other nations' capabilities. The majority of the crises that are happening around the world are because of the offensive show of power and the need of imposing its superior power on another nation. I think that this imposition of military, economic, or political strength is what causes problems and even causes insecurity among other nations. I agree to the quote "Strength invites challenge. Challenge invites conflict. Conflict breeds catastrophe." The US's actions to contain a rising China are a prime example. If China gets out of control and there are massive protests against China by other nations, it will put into practice the "brinkmanship" that we discussed in class that starts with diplomatic meetings, economic sanctions, show of force, breaking diplomatic ties, and then finally escalating to war.

In the simulation, the countries didn't go to war. The simulation crisis was centered around People's Liberation Army moving ten of its twenty-five destroyers into the Taiwan Strait and between the coasts of Senkaku Islands. This crisis stirred tension in Taiwan. China has always threatened Taiwan and demanded reunification. China doesn't acknowledge Taiwan's sovereignty. China even passed the Anti-Secession Law that asserts that PRC will use non-peaceful means against any emerging independent movements in Taiwan. The world suspects

China will begin to impose its military power as a tool to cause insecurity. The infamous history of it brutally annexing Tibet clearly sends an indication that China is known to be offensive. In addition, China even claims that Tibet has “always” been part of it despite the world knowing Tibet was an independent country that has a unique history, culture, language, and religion, etc. “China is built on lies,” the Dalai Lama once said. China blatantly claimed a part of India’s northeastern region that enraged Indian people. There were reports of the presence of Chinese troops around the region of the China-India border. This led to a border conflict between the two nations. Knowing this history was crucial in playing the part of Taiwan effectively.

The first day of the simulation started off with China repeatedly and adamantly asserting that the destroyers were purely defensive. However, given all the reasons above, it was strange that China was defending itself, but defending from who? China can be an aggressive nation and, to be honest, no country is going to attack China. Interestingly, China is one major country that has caused many border problems with neighboring countries like India, Pakistan, etc., where it is known today as contested regions. If China was defensive, why were the destroyers lurking in the Taiwan Strait? Unsure of what China’s purpose was, Taiwan took a covert route to meet with Japan and South Korea. Both nations agreed to form alliances with Taiwan and this agreement was signed through a back channel. As a result, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea formed a Democratic Union, a collective security force. Taiwan’s hawkish military representative wanted to annex part of China and go to war if necessary, whereas the more dovish members of our group said that it was not realistic. When setting the goals, Taiwan decided to seek help from the US by referring to the US-China Relations Act that states that the US will protect ROC from any attacks from PRC. I think that the reason why China was not able to invade or take over Taiwan’s

sovereignty is because of the presence of US superpower forces in East Asia. Taiwan has not been isolated from the international community due to international trade and other interests, unlike Tibet which in 1949.

Another goal of Taiwan's meeting was economically sanctioning China and increasing trade with our alliances. However, we questioned whether China would be immune to economic sanctions. Would it help other nations? Knowing China is a global economy, it would really hurt the sanctioner as well, and in addition, economic sanctions can take a long time to be effective, if ever. Interestingly, the US sanctioned China before and both their economies took a drastic downturn. One source mentioned that "Sanctions would have to hurt the people of the country, damage the economy, cause political pressure as the civilians would protest, and influence leadership." In brief, sanctions would hit the people and the regime. With that in mind, Taiwan turned its head away from the long process and decided to address the crisis that needed immediate action, and Taiwan looked for a way to make China remove all the destroyers from the strait.

At the first summit, there was no resolution. China didn't want to remove ships from the strait and kept insisting that they were there for defensive purposes. Taiwan didn't want any ships there as it increased tension domestically. The summit was dismissed with no apparent solution. Taiwan wanted to meet with China alone. That was when China revealed that it had stationed ships along the entire coast, not just the Taiwan Strait. For some reason, China's actions were strategically ambiguous. Since China would not come to a consensus with no ships at all, China made a deal that it would reduce the number of ships and draw them closer to their border. Taiwan was not very satisfied, and without any agreement, Taiwan called off the meeting.

Through the introduction of domestic challenges, Taiwan was made aware that there were protests inside Taiwan that were anti-China. Putting the pressure on Taiwan's leaders, we met with the other members of the democratic alliance. They also revealed that there were domestic protests in Japan, too, where people were protesting against Abe's new security bills and China's aggressive moves at the same time. Taiwan's alternative to make the country happy was initiating the "Go South policy," in which Taiwan gained support from other countries like Australia, India, Vietnam, Philippines, etc. One of the early suggestions that came in the group meeting was to put our own ships in and declare them defensive. It was rejected as one said that it would increase Taiwan's insecurity within borders. Even though this method may achieve short term relief, no one could guarantee the long-term situation. Inside the group, there were disagreements that hindered any progress. News came to our awareness that internal protests in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet were happening as other Chinese regions were pressuring China. I think that China was looking for rising tension in Taiwan so it could initiate any armed attack on Taiwan.

The second summit started with China deciding to move the ships closer to their mainland coastline, arguing that no countries should tell China what to do and what not to do within its own territorial waters. Taiwan having gained support from Japan, US, and other southeast countries agreed to China's deal on reducing the number of ships down to three. At the same time, Taiwan would also get to guard its coastline and strait with three ships. Moreover, trade would flow freely, especially the oil shipments. There was no show of force in the simulation, which would intimidate the opponent and escalate the simulation to violent confrontations.

I think that China will definitely attack and invade if Taiwan reacts aggressively to the destroyers' crisis because China is the hungry crouching tiger. As I mentioned earlier, it is the military presence of the US that has been deterring possibility of war in the Northeast Asian nations. Taiwan did the best it could to end the crisis for the purpose of short-term relief and peace. It had the right to defend itself; at the same time, it had to deal with the domestic upheavals against China. Taiwan decided to extend its relationship with other Asian nations like India, Pakistan via Tsai's "Go South" policy. It was wise of Taiwan to form diplomatic relations with other democratic countries. The formation of the Democratic Union heightened the security environment so that Taiwan feels safe in other nations' arms.

The challenges of making foreign policy during this simulation came when China was persistent throughout the simulation and it would not make any changes complaining that other nations didn't have the right to tell China what to do and what not to do with its own border. China kept on insisting that destroyers were stationed as purely a defensive act. The failure of the first summit held by Taiwan did not result in any resolution, which was a challenge in the first phase of simulation. Both China and Taiwan were not satisfying each other's demands. It is a realistic crisis because no country would easily give what the other country wants or give up what they do not want. South Korea was quite unpredictable knowing that it was negotiating with DUCA but was strategically ambiguous in terms of helping Taiwan. It decided to stay neutral.

In terms of goals, Taiwan came close except getting rid of all destroyers. Taiwan successfully formed alliances with other democratic countries and Japan became our closest ally as its interest was also protecting Senkaku Islands from China's destroyers. Taiwan got a collective security agreement signed and negotiated economic trade ties with Southeast Asian nations. Economic

sanctions on China were excluded. South Korea was neutral. It is true that some countries do not want to be opposing the great economic superpower of China, since they have much to lose. A country takes into consideration whether it is in their interest to get involved in the crisis or not. What does a country get in return? Each country weighs its pros and cons, then acts accordingly.

The resolution of the outcome achieved short-term peace in the region. Such an outcome is ideal yet not realistic. If any country solves problems like that, it will not lead to a show of force and war. There will be no conflict at all. However, we still see conflicts today. In the long run if we were to imagine the resolution of the simulation, countries will face this dilemma of security. The military presence of both conflicted countries might turn out to be provocative and cause preemptive war. It can somehow relate to constructivism that we discussed in class. The tensions as result of social construct and history of past interactions can shape the actions of the country. If both the countries have a bad history like Taiwan and China, it would influence the decisions that countries make and perhaps make them more aggressive. It is true that a country's memories shape its current affairs.

Ultimately, the nature of world politics and of East Asia is complicated. Going back to the starting thoughts, there will always be peace and no conflict when no country imposes its superiority and forces insecurity on other nations. In the phase of insecurity, a country acts in defense. This whole defense can result in a security dilemma, which might breed conflict. If a superpower only acts as a protector rather than a destroyer, the world today will be in a much better state and also if the international relations emphasize liberalism which state that conflict is avoidable by engaging in trading, diplomatic ties and international institutions like the UN and other international forums. On the contrary, the world today is a mix of realism, liberalism, and

constructivism. Realism asserts that conflict is cyclical. There will also be rivalry, territorial disputes, and fighting over resources between countries and it's true if one looks at conflicts in the world. There are still territorial conflicts, religious wars between countries, etc. Constructivism states that international relations are socially constructed by the history of a country's past interactions with other countries and one can look at Japan for the positive aspect of constructivism.

This simulation really was helpful. It not only made Taiwan evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and but also those of the other countries. Negotiations with other countries unveiled what the other countries wanted. It was putting into practice the country's policies in regards to the crisis. It also involved judging the actions of unpredictable states like North Korea. It was waiting and watching what the other countries were doing, also fulfilling its needs from countries like China and Russia. It was utilizing what we know of Taiwan and then using it to negotiate with other countries and that part was the most informative and helpful.

Simulation Reflection

North Korea played an interesting role when China put five of its destroyers off the coast of Taiwan. While we weren't hugely active on screen, we pulled many strings behind the scenes—particularly because we could lie. While it didn't happen, we tried to push things to war simply because we could benefit more; one of the good things about the sanctions was we weren't constrained to multiple trading partners. Our main alliance was with China, our only trading partner, but Russia proved to be a powerful ally after the agreement to install an oil pipeline on our land. It's funny how the two Communist countries and a former Communist country banded together even though the Cold War has been over for a while. Overall, I learned a lot about how interaction between these countries played out in real life, which ultimately is that no one agreed on anything until the international community starts putting pressure on states to come to an agreement—even if it's temporary.

It's difficult for a state as weak as North Korea to make foreign policy. It was pretty lucky for us that the oil agreement with Russia came through, since it was essentially the only carrot we could hope to have outside of war potential. If war was to break out, we would side with China and finally get to use the long-range missiles we've been testing. If it wasn't for the oil pipeline, carrying much-needed resources to South Korea, our only leverage would have been the nuke, which we wouldn't have dared use unless we had to. Not only would bigger, stronger countries nuke us back times ten, but we would certainly have no support from China despite them being our biggest ally. I honestly think this might be the case in North Korea in real life. They know that they'd be a sitting duck after they launched it because of Mutually Assured Destruction. Besides the oil issue, no one other than Russia, South Korea, and China wanted to talk to us.

Since we didn't have anything that other states wanted or that they didn't trust us, we weren't included in much above the table negotiation.

Beyond what we were involved in, it seemed that the main problem for states active in the conflict was that no one wanted to compromise. No one trusted that China was acting defensively and China wouldn't agree to Taiwan's demands. Given that China is such a powerful trade partner to have, no one would actually sanction them, so they felt very little pressure until the US stepped in.

In terms of goals, we were very successful, partially because we could be sneaky but mainly because our goals were simple. North Korea is a very slowly developing country, which means that its goal is essentially to thrive. While that is currently very difficult to do since it is heavily sanctioned, shady dealings thrive in times of conflict. That's why our first goal was to benefit from the desperation in any way we could by any means needed. This is why we first went knocking on China's door offering support if the worst happened. To this end, we hoped that we could also gain some advanced military technology from China if war broke out, and we hoped it would. Our final goal was to stay out of things as long as possible, which was very easy given no one thought we had any reason to be involved in the first place. Even with all the agreements with China, no one thought we were choosing sides because it was all done through back channeling. Even still, when we agreed to give South Korea oil over anyone else in exchange for nuclear refinement technology, no one suspected we were on China's side because it was realistic for us to lie. Thriving is essentially a simple goal that is very attainable given the right conditions and willingness to play dirty, as compared to other countries that have to consider international law and economic sanctions.

Since the government of North Korea has a monopoly over the media and heavily censors any information coming into the country, we were able to effectively turn this into a narrative that would confirm previous propaganda we've been feeding our people. We sent out announcements that the imperialist US was rallying together to attack China, and maybe even North Korea, and that the North Korean people had nothing to worry about because the leaders would protect them from harm. This perpetuated the anti-West narrative we need people to believe, that other countries (especially the evil US) are against Asian countries (especially North Korea) and most of our problems are because of them. The people of North Korea, of course, responded with unanimous support of defending North Korea against the Americans and the Japanese and even the South Koreans. Whether this unanimous support was genuine or was more a result of fears of being imprisoned in a forced labor camp doesn't really matter: the effect was the same.

Despite them being our only ally, China proved to be pretty difficult to work with. One might expect that the hardest country to deal with out of the three we talked to would be South Korea, but the hawkish approach they took to dealing with us made them relatively easy to lie to. I'm still pretty surprised that they agreed to give us nuclear refinement technology for "energy" and even believed the lie that Russia would control the flow of oil, which we planned to shut off if needed. However, China was pretty suspicious of us the whole time, and even had a few of their own tricks up their sleeves with a loose Russian alliance of their own. Despite them agreeing to take our help if we offered it, I don't think they would have ever offered weapon technology because if we did gain this advanced technology and tested it, China would be the country the international community would call on to make us stop. It ended up that we would suck up to

China by giving them info that we had gained from spying on other countries and they would say that they would support us and use us if they needed to. However, I question if we would have backed China, in the end. The reason that China wanted to use us as a weapon was to escape persecution for a first strike, but we caught on to that pretty quickly. The situation proved that it's hard to deal with a country that doesn't trust you and has its own interest in mind, and it was a good thing they didn't trust us because we were trying to steer them into World War III.

China's distrust for us was really our biggest issue. While we all had the same domestic challenge in that oil shipments had depleted, we really didn't have a hand in the oil trade so we didn't suffer. We mostly utilize coal that we mine domestically and import from China. The agreement with Russia really gave us a leg up early on with other countries so it was easy to benefit when trade started to suffer, particularly with South Korea. We were able to squeeze food aid and nuclear energy out of them. We didn't have any other domestic issues, but honestly it wouldn't have been too much of a problem if we did. It's easy to deal with your people when you're a brutal dictator and they have no means of fighting back.

If I could change any of our decisions, I would have been more hawkish. In a simulation where realism is a goal, I feel that it would have been realistic for North Korea to test some missiles at some point. While I understand that it made more sense to attempt to be more peaceful in our sneakiness, North Korea may not have. However, our group was too logical and wanted to avoid the outcomes of shows of power when we were gaining so much by trying to play every side. Other countries were worried how their decisions in the short term would affect their long-term trustworthiness, but not us. It's unlikely anything we did in the simulation would make other countries trust us less than they already do.

While I wish the outcome of the simulation had turned out more violent from a North Korean standpoint, on a personal level I'm glad the situation was diffused. It would have been fun to manipulate the countries into World War III and reap the benefits as a country—which would have made us the obvious winners. However, if a couple of college students were able to do it, then surely North Korea would be able to in real life. The simulation really demonstrated how easily war is avoided when more lucrative alternatives are taken. Yet, it also demonstrated how easily small countries with nothing to lose feed off of chaos, and as someone who has studied the unethical things North Korea does to its people, that's a scary concept. In this case, I'm glad the US and allies were able to strong arm China and Taiwan into a temporary compromise before a show of force could even come into play. Still, if this simulation was to play out longer, I'm not sure how long the agreement to have three ships from each side would last. I question if it's possible for any sort of agreement to be reached between Taiwan and China without some sort of war, but I suppose that is for time to tell.

In the end, I understood that states tended to be stubborn and at a standstill until trade was involved, but seeing it play out was pretty informative. It made the struggles that countries go through seem more real. It also put how the countries interact in perspective. While it was said multiple times in class, you really can't see how interaction between states is very much like basic human interaction until you do it. In our case, we were a terrible person and didn't have any real friends. Even the country who was supposed to be our friend, China, was really just using us. We were also able to see how while the UN is a neutral party, just providing a platform for countries to discuss issues can be very instrumental in avoiding war.

