

The development of nuclear weapons and their proliferation: A comparison of Iran and North Korea

Master Thesis

Author: **Martin Marek**

Supervisor: **PhDr. Vít Strátecký, M.Phil., Ph.D.**

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Abstract

The text deals with nuclear proliferation in the cases of Iran and North Korea. The motives of nuclear ambitions are examined using models of Scott D. Sagan and other selected theoretical concepts. Gradual analysis of exposed states in the perspective of historical development, national security, domestic politics and norms forms the basis for understanding the perception of nuclear weapons by these states and approach to them as to a mean to accomplish certain objectives. Subsequent comparison reveals both similarities and difference between examined states in the perspective of motives of nuclear proliferation and shows explanatory potential of each model, which is various, in given cases. The effort of ensuring national security seems to be the strongest motive in both examined cases. It is followed by domestic influences, whereas norms stand rather for additional factor. Nevertheless, variety in explanatory power of the models is apparent in the cases of Iran and North Korea, notably in relation with their limitations. Other factors, such as regime type or parallel development of other type of weapons of mass destruction, could also have partial influence. Long-lasting concerns about nuclear ambition of these two states show to be justified, but recent events suggest a tendency to different development.