

DECADE OF PEACE IN EAST ASIA

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Since the end of Cambodian War in 1990 there has been no war between nations in East Asia, including both Southeast Asia and North-east Asia.² East Asia is one of the few regions in the world enjoying so long a period of peace since the Cold War. This phenomenon has aroused scholars' interest in researching the cause of that peace, and they hope to apply their understanding to maintaining the current peace of East Asia. With an approach of nuclear deterrence in asymmetric power structure, this paper discusses what factors created the peace of East Asia and how to prevent the current North Korean nuclear crisis from bringing about war.

Explanations for the Peace of East Asia

Since the late 1990s, there have been three major approaches to understanding the peace of East Asia: the geographic balance of power, interactions of the partnerships among major powers and complexity of national interests. The three approaches provide enlightening analysis of the peace of East Asia, but also bear defects.

The Geographic Balance of Power

Believing in geopolitics, some scholars argue that the United States does not play a dominating role in East Asian security despite being the world's only superpower. Thus an equilibrium power structure has formed among major powers in East Asia and this equilibrium structure has maintained the peace in this region.³ Some scholars believe that the post-

Cold War peace of East Asia resulted from the geographic balance of power between China and the United States. China protected the peace among the continental states, while the United States kept the peace among the oceanic countries.⁴ Continental countries such as North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Burma, and even Russia placed their security reliance on China, while oceanic countries such as Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, and Taiwan rely on US protection.⁵ Although China and the United States scrambled for spheres of influence in North Korea and Taiwan, none of them had vital interests in those areas, hence, they both wanted to maintain the status quo.⁶ The approach of the geographic balance of power provides an enlightenment that the specific geopolitics of East Asia prevents the United States from resorting to war in security conflicts there, as it did in Middle East, Europe, and Africa.

Despite its enlightening analysis, the approach of geographic balance of power has a defect in its premise. The approach bases its arguments on the premise of a Sino-US balance of power, yet this premise is very questionable and cannot be supported by either statistics of the countries' respective strengths or the strategic relations among the powers in the post-Cold War period.

First, the strengths of China and the United States have never been equal in any sense since the end of the Cold War, when China's comprehensive strength was not only inferior to that of the United States but also much smaller than Japan's. In 1991, China's GDP was 1,958 billion RMB (about US\$365 billion), about 6.4% of the US GDP of \$5,671.8 billion and about 12% of Japan's GDP of \$3,046.8 billion that year.⁷ The US "New Economy" of the following ten years offset the rapid growth of the Chinese economy. In 2000, Chinese GDP reached 8,940.4 billion RMB (about \$1,090.3 billion), about 11% of the United States' that year (\$9,965.7 billions).⁸ The Chinese GDP would only be 22% of the United States' even in terms of purchasing power parity, which doubles the value of RMB.

Militarily, not only is the Chinese navy no match for that of the United States, but the China's army is also inferior to the US Army.⁹ Although China can purchase military equipment from Russia, the world's second largest military power, they are not military allies. Thus, a bipolar balance of power no longer existed in East Asia after the Cold War.

Second, even if we suppose China's comprehensive strengths in geographic terms caught up with those of the United States in East Asia at the beginning of this century, this still cannot explain the post-Cold War peace in East Asia.

Third, the history of East Asia does not support the argument that the balanced strengths between China and the United States can prevent limited conventional wars in East Asia. During the Cold War, the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union did prevent them from attacking each other directly in this region, but it failed to prevent wars between their allies or wars between one of them and the allies of the other, such as the Korean War in the 1950s.¹⁰ Hence, even if a balance of power existed between China and the United States after the Cold War, we would still not be sure it had the function of preventing limited conventional wars in this region.

Interactions of Partnerships between Major Powers

Scholars of this approach hold that the peace of East Asia is due to the fact that the major powers established many partnerships among them in this region. After the Cold War, major powers adopted a strategy of establishing partnerships to gain a favorable position in future regional multi-polarity. In 1992, the United States and Russia claimed that they would work together for "friendship and partnership." In 1994, China and Russia built up "a constructive partnership." In 1997, China and the United States stated that they aimed at establishing "a constructive strategic partnership." In the same year, Japan and Russia established "a mutual trust partnership." In 1998, China and Japan claimed to devote efforts to "a friendly co-operative partnership." The goal of establishing partnerships is "to avoid hostility and confrontation; to advocate mutual coordination and cooperation; to respect each other equally and gain mutual benefit; and not to aim against or harm a third country." Thus, interactions of those partnerships "have promoted dialogues, reduced confrontations, strengthened cooperation between nations and benefited the regional peace and stability."¹¹ The approach of interactions of partnerships is helpful to distinguishing the different characters of a partnership and an alliance. The Sino-Russian strategic relationship is a partnership that differs from the US-Japan alliance in nature. The differ-

ence between partnership and alliance indicated that the configuration of power in East Asia is by no means a bipolar one.

The approach of interaction of partnerships noticed the positive side of partnership but it has difficulties illustrating the correlation between partnerships and regional peace. First, the trend of establishing partnerships is not inconsistent with the change of security situation in East Asia. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of partnerships between major powers has increased continuously. During the same period the security situation in this region has not improved continuously, but showed an N-shape.

In the early 1990s, the collapse of the Soviet Union reduced security tensions among major powers in East Asia but that security detente deteriorated in the middle of the 1990s. In 1996 several security conflicts happened between major powers. China and the United States were involved in a military confrontation in the Taiwan Straits. Japan and China adopted antagonistic policy toward each other on the issue of the Diaoyu Islands. The US-Japan alliance strengthened their cooperation to contain China. The US national missile defense (NMD) policy aggravated security conflicts between China and the United States, Russia and the United States, and China and Japan. These strategic tensions were not mitigated until the events of September 11, 2001.¹²

Second, the goal of establishing partnerships is to avoid military conflicts, but it cannot ensure the absence of security dilemmas. A strategic partnership may also increase the fear of a third party. When China and Russia established a strategic consultative partnership in 1996, reinforcing their military co-operation, it increased US worries about Russia's arms sale to China. The United States felt that Russia's military technology made China more threatening to East Asian security. Even in 2002, when China supported the US counter-terrorism war in Afghanistan, *The National Security Strategy of the United States* still said that China (with the purchase of advanced military capabilities) would threaten its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific area.¹³

Complexity of National Interests in the Post-Cold War Era

Some scholars think that the national interests of East Asian countries became so complicated and their interests so tangled with each other

that the countries were constrained from protecting their security interests with military instruments. For the sake of other interests, countries related to East Asia had to take a very cautious policy on security conflicts, and that was why the peace of East Asia existed for so long.¹⁴ One scholar has argued that Japan, China, the United States, and Russia formed six bilateral relationships and four trilateral relationships, which complicated their strategic interests and created mutual constraints on their security policies that made the peace in East Asia stable.¹⁵ The approach of complexity of national interests is similar to the theories of complex interdependence or the multi-polarization theories. The latter two approaches demonstrate possible security co-operation from the angle of power relations, while the former is based on an analysis of interest relations.¹⁶ The approach of complexity of national interests reminds us that the peace of East Asia resulted from an integration of several elements, and one-factor explanation cannot provide a comprehensive understanding of it.

Along with its analytical advantage, the approach of complexity of national interests also faces the problem how to measure the complexity of interest relations and how to illustrate the coalition between interest complexity and the peace of East Asia. The relations of national interests are complicated in nature and have never been simple. How can we know that the interest relations among the major powers are more complicated after the Cold War than before? If we take radical changes of major power relations as criterion to judge complexity of interest relations, we will find that the interest relations between the major powers were not less complicated in the periods of 1945–1955, 1959–1970, and 1987–1991 than those after 1991.

During the period of 1945–1955, the strategic confrontation between Japan and the alliance of the US-China-Soviet Union changed into one between the China-Soviet alliance and the US-Japan alliance. During the period of 1959–1972, China and the Soviet Union turned their relationship from one of allies to one of enemies, while China and the United States became strategic partners in 1971 after years of confrontation. In 1972, China and Japan established formal diplomatic relations after years of hostility. The period of 1987–1991 also witnessed dramatic changes of major power relations. In 1987, the U.S and the Soviet Union signed the START I treaty and fostered détente between

them. China and the Soviet Union ended hostility and normalized their relations in 1989. The same year, the Tiananmen Square events turned the United States from China's ally to an opponent and also damaged Sino-Japanese relations.

The collapse of the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1991 ended the bi-polar structure in East Asia.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the complicated interest relations between the major powers in the above three periods could not prevent the Korean War, the Vietnam War or the Cambodian War.

Nuclear Deterrence in Asymmetric Power Structure

The above section implies that we need to employ those variables appearing after the Cold War to explain the post-Cold War peace in East Asia; moreover, these variables should be provable. With that criterion in mind, one can find three factors related to the current peace of East Asia. The first is nuclear deterrence between major nations in an asymmetric power structure. The second is the post-Cold War security cooperation of ASEAN countries. The third is the peaceful unification policy adopted by South Korea after the Cold War. Among the three, the nuclear deterrence in asymmetric power structure (NDAPS) is the fundamental one serving as the base for other two factors to function.

Nuclear Deterrence and Balances of Power

NDAPS refers to the mutual nuclear deterrence between two sides while their overall military strengths are not in the same class. NDAPS does not mean a gap of nuclear strategic capabilities between two states. Regardless of whether their nuclear capabilities are at the same level, as long as their overall military strengths are not at the same level, NDAPS exists between the two nuclear parties. For instance, Russia's nuclear capability remained in the same class as that of the United States after the Cold War, but its overall military strength was no longer so. Therefore, NDAPS existed between Russia and the United States. If two parties have similar overall military strengths but asymmetric nuclear capabilities, the situation will be an asymmetric nuclear deterrence in a balanced power structure, rather than NDAPS. The confrontation be-

tween the United States and the Soviet Union in the late 1940s and the early 1950s is a case of asymmetric nuclear deterrence.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 turned the bipolar balance of power into an asymmetric configuration in East Asia. From the end of World War II to the end of the Cold War, the overall military strengths of the United States and the Soviet Union had basically been in the same class. Their super military strengths formed a stable, balanced power structure in East Asia, thus China's withdrawal from the East Bloc in the late 1950s and its normalization of strategic relations with the United States in the early 1970s could not change the basic character of bipolar balance in East Asia. It was the collapse of the Soviet Union that made the United States the sole military superpower in East Asia, as well as the whole world.

In 1992, US defense expenses were \$282.6 billion, about 2.7 times of the sum of the defense expenses of all the East Asia countries combined (\$103 billion).¹⁸ Meanwhile, Japan, America's largest military ally in East Asia, became the country with the second-largest military expenditure in the world, spending about \$36.1 billion (4,551.8 billion Japanese yen) in 1991.¹⁹ By 2003, the United States had further consolidated its hegemonic position in East Asia. Although Russia and China have kept their positions as the second—and third-largest military powers after the Cold War, their general military strengths are not in the same class with the United States. Even if China and Russia formed an alliance, their combined military strengths could not balance the US-Japan alliance. Furthermore, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership differs from the US-Japan alliance in nature. The configuration of power in East Asia changed from balance to asymmetry after the Cold War, but the nuclear deterrence in this region remained unchanged. The United States, China, and Russia were nuclear powers and Japan had the US nuclear umbrella. Thus, NDAPS was formed.

The Functions of NDAPS

The mutual nuclear deterrence maintains peace by assumption that all parties involved in nuclear war will perish together and it is therefore meaningless to initiate a nuclear war. Thus, no party in a situation of mutual nuclear deterrence dares initiate a nuclear war or a conventional

war that may escalate to a nuclear one. Nevertheless, mutual nuclear deterrence does not necessarily prevent conventional wars that do not threaten to escalate to nuclear war—especially in areas where nuclear powers have no vital interest or where their nuclear threats lack credibility.²⁰ In a balanced power structure, the nuclear powers dare not launch nuclear attacks at the risk of facing a nuclear war. They may, however, launch conventional wars—especially proxy wars in a third country—for the sake of expanding security interests if there is no risk of nuclear disaster. In a balanced power structure, mutually deterred parties are not satisfied with their survival security. Based on ensured survival security, each tries to obtain equal security with the other. The existing study has observed that mutually deterred parties in a balanced power structure will feel safe only when they have superior military capability to the other. That is why nuclear deterrence in this situation cannot prevent them from launching conventional wars.²¹

The functions of nuclear deterrence in an asymmetric power structure have some overlap with those in balanced power configuration, but are not the same. In a balanced power configuration, the equal military capability makes neither of the two parties able to achieve the goal of absolute security, thus none of them seeks absolute security. Meanwhile, both of them will not be satisfied with a goal of survival security because of the higher utility of equal security than survival security. Therefore, the equal security becomes their security objectives. The game of prisoner's dilemma can effectively explain nuclear deterrence in a balanced power structure but it is unable to explain the interactions in the case of asymmetric power structure. In an asymmetric power structure, the mutually deterred parties are not equal in terms of overall power, thus they have different security objectives rather than the same. Namely, the strong side raises its goal from equal security to absolute security and the weak side lowers its goal from equal security to survival security as illustrated in Figure 1.

From Figure 1, we can see that when two sides choose the goal of equal security (A1, B1), they gain equally. The strong side, however, will not be satisfied with equal security when it has a large degree of military superiority and will therefore seek absolute security (B2). If the weak side persists in pursuing equal security (A1) in such a situation, it is choosing an unachievable objective because equal security is beyond

FIGURE 1
Security Goals in NDAPS

		Strong Party	
		Equal security (B1)	Absolute security (B2)
Weak Party	Equal security (A1)	3 3	0 4
	Survival security (A2)	2 2	1 4

its capability. Thus, the weak side will lower its security objective from equal security to survival security (A2) and seek to ensure its survival by means of low-cost nuclear arms. When the weak side chooses survival security (A2), the strong side has no reason to choose equal security (B1), because that means the strong side also lowers its goal to survival security, which has even lower utility than equal security. We know that no party will be satisfied with survival security in a balanced power structure, let alone the strong side in an asymmetric power structure. The strong will insist on absolute security (B2). Therefore, their security goals of A2 and B2 compose the Nash equilibrium of NDAPS in the lower right box of the matrix.

The selection of security goals in NDAPS means that the weak side gives up the strategy to enlarge its security interests through proxy wars, and only the strong side is left to that strategy. Due to the power gap, the weak side is neither able to seek equal security through proxy war nor able to enlarge its security interests by engaging in conflicts among or with the small countries. Facing the disparity with the strong party in terms of overall strength, the weak side will adopt a strategy of protecting its survival security. Meanwhile, the weak side actually increases its tolerance of the military expansion of the strong. When the weak side gives up the goal of equal security, it means the weak side does not enter an arms race against the strong and the danger of proxy wars also decreases. Nevertheless, the tolerance of the weak is limited. When the military expansion of the strong party directly threatens the weak party's survival security, the weak party will resort to nuclear deterrence. Concerning the nuclear deterrence from the weak side, the strong side will carry out limited expansion rather than unlimited one. That means the strong party will avoid those war targets that pose threats to the survival security of the weak party.

The Role of NDAPS in East Asian Security

In order to understand the role of NDAPS in East Asian security, we need to examine its effects on every type of bilateral security relationship in East Asia. According to their military strengths, the East Asian countries can be categorized into three groups: superpower (the United States), major powers (China, Russia, Japan) and secondary powers (the rest of East Asian countries). According to their strategic relationships, these powers can be divided into two types: those having common security interests and those having conflicting security interests. Thus, we have five types of countries and twelve kinds of bilateral security relations in East Asia. Common security interests per se can effectively explain the peace between countries sharing common security interests. Therefore, this research will not target the peace relations between military allies, such as those of US-Japan and US-ROK. This article tries to explain how the peace is maintained between countries with conflicting security interests. There are only five of these kinds of peace relations in East Asia.

NDAPS has the function of maintaining peace between the superpower and major powers in East Asia. Both China and Russia are weak in comparison with the United States in NDAPS after the Cold War. According to the principle of NDAPS, their security goal was to protect their survival security. Thus they adopted defensive security strategies. Meanwhile, the United States' security objective is to achieve absolute security in East Asia. Therefore, it looks for military expansion. China and Russia took a tolerant attitude toward the US military expansion as long as that expansion did not threaten their survival security directly.

After the Cold War, Russia withdrew its military presence from East Asia. In 1992, it closed its Mongolian military base. Russia reduced its troops in the Cam-Ranh Bay base in Vietnam to 500 in the early 1990s, and the remaining troops all went home when the lease of this base was ended in 2000.²² Russia even tolerated the United States' decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in order to develop and deploy an anti-missile defense system—only orally criticizing that decision.²³

Except for the military confrontation over the Taiwan issue in 1996, China has tolerated US military expansion in East Asia since the end of

TABLE 1
Types of Peace Relations between Conflicting Countries
in East Asia

Peace Relations	Cases
Superpower - Major power	US-China US-Russia
Major power - Major power	China-Japan Russia-Japan China-Russia
Major power - Secondary power	China-Vietnam China-Philippines Japan-DPRK
Minor power - Secondary power	DPRK-ROK between ASEAN states
Superpower - Secondary power	US -DPRK US-Burma US-Malaysia

Cold War. China also took a very moderate attitude toward the United States withdrawal from the ABM Treaty even though China's nuclear capability faced more threat from it than Russia's. In 2003, when China may have been concerned by possible US intentions to attack North Korean nuclear facilities, it hardly even mediated between the United States and North Korea, and made no military gesture to constrain the United States.²⁴

The Taiwan issue is quite different from the North Korean nuclear issue. China perceives Taiwan's independence may bring about the collapse of China, similar to the way the Soviet Union collapsed following the independence of Baltic States in 1991. The Sino-U.S military confrontation in 1996 in the Taiwan Straits made the United States realize that China regarded Taiwanese separatism as a threat to its survival security. In order to avoid military clashes with China, the United States restrains its support for Taiwan's independence to some extent. It is not just the Clinton administration that follows the One China policy. Even

President George W. Bush, who once pledged “whatever it takes to defend Taiwan,” also said in 2003 that US policy not to support Taiwan’s independence will not change in the future.²⁵

NDAPS has the function of maintaining peace between major powers in East Asia. China and Russia understand that the US-Japan alliance means war against Japan equals war against the United States. Being the weak side of NDAPS, China and Russia just want to protect their survival security, and they will not resort to military means to resolve security conflicts with Japan. They even tolerated Japan’s increasing involvement in international wars. After the Cold War, the United States was supportive of Japan playing more of a military role in East Asia, but it did not want Japan to possess nuclear weapons or pose a threat to the survival security of China and Russia. Japan may have suspected that the United States did not trust it, and knew that the US nuclear umbrella guaranteed Japan’s defense, not its military expansion.

Japan thus avoided threatening Chinese and Russian survival security when it increased military activities. Although Japan became eager to take back the Northern Territories from Russia after the Cold War, it still suggested that Russia maintain its administration on these islands after legislatively returning them to Japan.²⁶ Japan supported the decision to expand the defensive scope of the US-Japan alliance beyond Japanese territory, but it expressed unwillingness to get involved in the Taiwan issue as soon as China, concerned over Japanese involvement in potential military conflicts in the Taiwan Straits, expressed opposition to that expansion. Responding to Chinese opposition, Japan blurred the term of “surrounding areas” in the new guidelines of US-Japan Defensive Cooperation, explaining that term was not a “geographic concept” but one “depending on given situations”.²⁷

NDAPS has the function of preventing wars between major powers and secondary powers in East Asia. After the Cold War, the security conflicts between major powers and secondary powers in this region were mainly those between China and some ASEAN states, as well as between Japan and North Korea. The disputes between China and some ASEAN nations over the South China Sea waters and islands related to the security of the international sea routes. The US alliance with some ASEAN countries has several purposes. Two of them are to contain China and protect American shipping in this area. Hence, a military conflict

between China and an ASEAN state may have the risk of resulting in military conflicts between China and the United States.

China's policy toward ASEAN countries had several concerns, such as establishing a good neighborhood for its economy, preventing ASEAN states from supporting the US containment policy against China, and reducing the risk of military clashes with the United States in Southeast Asia. After years of conciliation, China and Vietnam reached agreements on boundaries in 1999, and on the division of the North Bay in 2002.²⁸ In the same year, China and ASEAN countries reached "Code of Conduct in the South China Sea" for the sake of avoiding military conflicts.²⁹ In 2003, China joined ASEAN's 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.³⁰

The conflicts between Japan and North Korea focus on North Korea's weapons of mass destruction. The North Korean test of medium-range missile in 1998 increased security tensions between them.³¹ Nevertheless, Japan's North Korean policy has to be subordinate to US strategic needs if Japan wants to keep its alliance solid. Without US agreement, Japan cannot use military force to deal with North Korea due to the nuclear deterrence from China and Russia. Therefore, Japan took a policy of supporting the United States, without being tougher than the United States, during the North Korean nuclear crises in 1994 and 2002. In 2002, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi even visited North Korea, which was the first time a Japanese prime minister visited North Korea since the end of World War II.³²

Two Complementary Variables to NDAPS

The previous section analyzed how NDAPS prevented wars in East Asia—between the superpower and major powers, between major powers as well as between major powers and secondary powers. However, NDAPS cannot explain the peace between secondary powers, or between the superpower and secondary powers. The security conflicts between secondary powers in East Asia are mainly on the Korean peninsula, and in ASEAN states, between countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, Thailand and Burma, and Thailand and Cambodia. After the Cold War, there was no danger for any war between secondary powers to escalate to nuclear war. China and Russia would not become involved in such

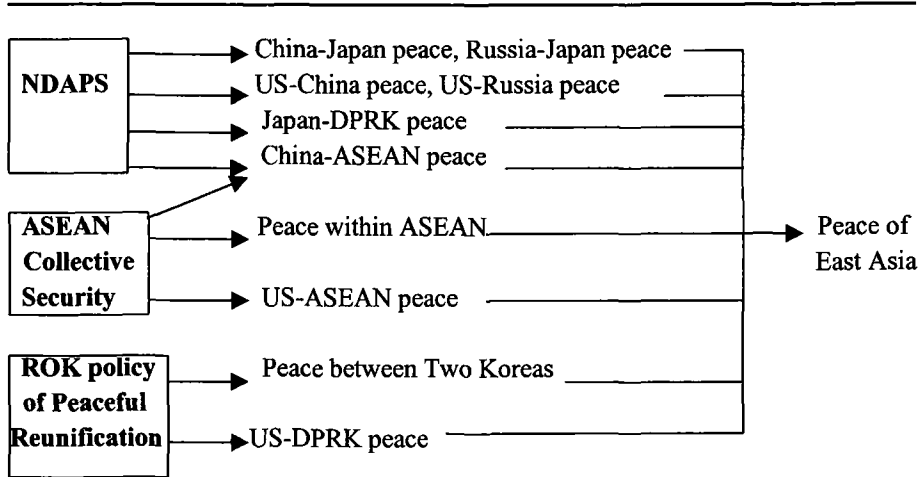
wars because of their weak positions in NDAPS, even when the United States became involved in them. Because of this reason, no war between the two Koreas was able to drag China or Russia to fight against the United States after the Cold War.

The Limits of NDAPS and Complementary Variables

NDAPS can not explain why the United States did not launch wars against secondary powers in East Asia after the Cold War. After the Cold War, China and Russia had no intention to become involved in any wars between the United States and a secondary power in East Asia. If the United States launched wars against North Korea, Burma, or Malaysia, there would be no danger of nuclear war. But during the same period, the United States did fight wars in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Central Asia, including the Gulf War in 1991, the Somali War in 1993, the War in Kosovo in 1999, the Afghan War in 2002 and the Iraq War in 2003. After the Cold War, the deterrence between NATO and Russia in Europe was also a situation of NDAPS, but it failed to prevent the War in Kosovo. That shows the impotence of NDAPS in preventing war between the superpower and secondary powers.

If NDAPS cannot explain the peace between secondary powers of East Asia, or the peace between the United States and the secondary powers, we should look for other factors related to these two types of peace. As we know, the lack of a necessary condition can prevent events from occurring. If peace is regarded as non-occurrence of war, we can examine the necessary factors for preventing that kind of war. According to this research, the collective security policy adopted by ASEAN and the peaceful reunification policy by South Korea are most relevant factors to these two types of peace. Their role in maintaining East Asian peace is based on NDAPS. As we analyzed above, there is no agent war in NDAPS. In this situation, the secondary powers can maintain peace among them as long as they are all members of the same collective security organization, or they all adopt a policy of peaceful settlement of disputes. Nevertheless, these two policies could not prevent nuclear powers from agent wars, if there were no nuclear deterrence between major powers. When the major powers fall into war, the secondary powers will be dragged in as allies of the major powers, and they can no longer continue their policy of collective security or peaceful settlement.

FIGURE 2
The Contribution of Key Factors to the Peace between
Countries with Security Conflicts in East Asia



The policy of collective security and peaceful settlement will prevent secondary powers of East Asia from providing military bases for major outside powers to launch ground wars against their neighbors in East Asia. That is very helpful for constraining outside power to wage war against a secondary power in East Asia. Besides that, collective security and peaceful settlement policy also help to constrain local major powers from launching wars against them.

ASEAN Collective Security Policy and South Korean Peaceful Unification Policy

In the post-Cold War NDAPS, ASEAN collective security policy maintained its internal peace. In 1976, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Singapore signed the “Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of Southeast Asia.” This document set up the principles of non-interference in domestic affairs and peaceful settlement of conflicts that ensured peace relations between members of this treaty.³³ Nevertheless, this document could not avoid wars between non-ASEAN countries of Southeast Asia during the Cold War. For example, Vietnam invaded Cambodia in the 1970s. After the Cold War, Russian and American troops

withdrew from Vietnam and the Philippines respectively, and left a military vacuum for ASEAN to dominate security issues in Southeast Asia.³⁴

In January 1992, a new strategy was adopted by the fourth summit of ASEAN to strengthen and enlarge its security cooperation with all Southeast Asian countries. It welcomed all Southeast Asian states to join the "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia" in order to expand ASEAN to all of Southeast Asia. ASEAN's strategy is to dominate regional security dialogue with major powers by taking advantage of the conflicts between major powers, and to reduce major powers' interference in regional security affairs by setting up a nuclear free zone in Southeast Asia.³⁵ After adopting the new collective security strategy, ASEAN accepted Vietnam and Laos as members of the "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia" in 1992. Within five years, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma had all joined ASEAN. In 1994, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was founded and ASEAN became the leader of regional security dialogue. In 1995, all five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council signed the "Treaty on Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone" and provided both positive and negative security guaranty to South East Asian countries.³⁶

The peace on the Korean Peninsula after the Cold War was maintained mostly by the South Korean policy of peaceful reunification in the situation of NDAPS in East Asia. At the end of the Cold War, the North Korean military strengths were far behind that of South Korea. Faced with the huge military disadvantage against the US-South Korean alliance, North Korea dared not initiate any war against the South. Thus the peace in Korean Peninsula can be maintained as long as South Korea does not want to achieve the reunification through war. Germany's peaceful reunification in 1990 encouraged South Korea to adopt a peaceful reunification policy.

In 1991, Gen. Roh Tae Woo, then South Korea's president, issued a statement calling for a nuclear-free and peaceful Korean Peninsula.³⁷ By the end of that year, the two Koreas signed the "Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."³⁸ In 1993, Kim Young Sam, the new president of South Korea, proposed a discussion with Kim Jong Il in person on South-North peaceful reunification.³⁹ From then on, the peaceful reunification policy became a guideline of South Korean national defense strategy, which aimed to maintain the stability of the pen-

insula, prevent wars and reduce military tension.⁴⁰ In order to achieve peaceful reunification, South Korea gradually reformed its alliance with the United States from a joint system to a South Korean-dominated one, pushed for four-party dialogue on a peace agreement among China, the United States, and the two Koreas, and transferred to a defensive military system to gain North Korea's confidence.⁴¹ After coming to power, Kim Dae-Jung adopted "The Sunshine Policy" toward the North and dramatically improved the relations with the North. In 2000, he visited Pyongyang for the first summit between the two Koreans.⁴² At the opening ceremony of the Pusan 2002 Asian Games, the athletes of the two Koreas entered the stadium with the same flag.⁴³

According to a geographic analysis, it will be too difficult for the United States to wage war against a secondary power in East Asia if no country in this region allows the United States to use its military base for such a war. Observing the wars in which the United States has been involved since the end of the Cold War, we can see that one of the important conditions for the United States to launch a war is that at least one of the neighbors of the target country agrees to provide military bases for that war. Saudi Arabia provided military bases for the Gulf War, Djibouti for the Somali War, East European states for the war in Kosovo, Pakistan and Tajikistan for the Afghanistan War, and Kuwait for the Iraq War. In East Asia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore are American allies, but only Japan has agreed to let the United States use its bases for wars against its neighbors.

After the Cold War, ASEAN states adopted collective security policy against major powers' military interference in the domestic affairs of its members. In the early 1990s, the United States called for international sanctions on Burma for its violation of human rights at home, and opposed ASEAN giving Burma membership. Ignoring American objections, ASEAN not only opposed sanctions on Burma but also offered it observer status in 1995, and accepted it as a full member in 1997.⁴⁴ ASEAN states did not agree on sanctions against Burma, let alone support the United States in wars against their members. ASEAN's collective security policy not only protected Burma but also Malaysia, who had an anti-American government for a long time. ASEAN's collective security policy has not only constrained the United States from wars against its members, but has also constrained China. With ASEAN's

encouragement, China finally signed the "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of Southeast Asia" in 2003.⁴⁵

South Korea's peaceful reunification policy strongly constrained the United States from militarily attacking North Korea. In the post-Cold War period, the United States' main concern in removing North Korean nuclear capabilities was no longer China's traditional relations with the North Korea, but its alliance with the South Korea. South Korea's peaceful reunification policy aimed to prevent wars, not to win wars. Therefore, it has been against resorting to a military solution of the North Korean nuclear issue since the first crisis of 1994. At the end of 2002, North Korea withdrew from the 1994 framework agreement with the United States and resumed its nuclear program in 2003. Faced with a new nuclear crisis and the possible US military attack against North Korea, South Korea insisted on a peaceful resolution. South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun called President Bush and asked for close co-operation on the principle of peaceful settlement.⁴⁶ South Korean opposition to a military solution constrained the Bush administration in two aspects. First, it cannot wage ground battles without South Korean military bases. Second, it may drive South Korea to side with the North if it launches a war unilaterally.

Although Japan does not want to see war on Korean Peninsula, it has no clear policy opposing the United States using its bases to attack its neighbors. According to its policy of "surrounding events," it is very possible for Japan to provide bases for US troops for potential wars on the Korean Peninsula, or in the Taiwan Straits. Japan, however, has no land neighbors and its bases can hardly meet American needs for ground battles in East Asia.

Conclusion

Nuclear deterrence has similar functions in balanced power structure as in asymmetric configuration, but NDAPS can prevent proxy wars and constrain the weak side of NDAPS from waging war against non-nuclear states. In a balanced power structure, mutually deterred parties seek equal security, and they may go to war without danger of escalation to nuclear war. It is different in the situation of NDAPS. The mutually deterred parties do not strive for equal security in NDAPS. Instead, the weak

side aims at protecting its survival security and has no strategy to enlarge its security interests through agent war, or war against non-nuclear states.

NDAPS and Its Limitations

We should not ignore the limits of NDAPS function of maintaining peace in East Asia. Due to the fact that the weak side of NDAPS lacks the ability to constrain the strong side from military expansion, NDAPS cannot prevent war between the strong party of NDAPS and non-nuclear states. Besides, NDAPS does not function to prevent war between non-nuclear countries. There could be many ways to prevent these two types of wars in a situation of NDAPS. Two of them were discovered in this research. If all non-nuclear states join a regional collective security organization, they will not provide military bases for outside nuclear powers to wage war against their neighbors. Thus, it will make it very difficult for an outside nuclear power to carry out ground battles. It will be helpful in preventing war between an outside nuclear power and non-nuclear states of their region. NDAPS is an objective situation of East Asia. It serves as the basis for ASEAN's collective security policy and South Korea's peaceful reunification policy, which maintain regional peace. Without NDAPS, we cannot tell whether these policies work.

The Future of East Asian Peace

The post-Cold War peace of East Asia is based on NDAPS. NDAPS will be able to maintain the peace among China, the United States, Russia, and Japan for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, it may lose its relevance when the United States deploys a missile defense system around 2007, because the American missile defense system may be able to neutralize China's nuclear deterrence by that time. With its missile defense system, the United States will become more determined to become involved in a potential war in the Taiwan Straits. Encouraged by that situation, the secessionists in Taiwan may declare de jure independence, which may drag China and the United States into military clashes.

The South Korean policy of peaceful reunification is under the test of the nuclear crisis between the United States and North Korea. If

the United States decides to seek a military solution, it will force South Korea to choose between abandoning the goal of peaceful reunification and breaking their alliance. If South Korea gives up either of them, its current peaceful reunification policy will become meaningless. The bright side is ASEAN's collective security policy. Its function of maintaining the peace of Southeast Asia seems to be more solid after China's joining the "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of Southeast Asia."

If ASEAN collective security expands to all of East Asia, or every East Asian country adopts a policy of peaceful settlement of conflicts, as South Korea did toward North Korea, either of them can maintain the current peace of East Asia in the long term. However, it is impossible to see either of these scenarios happening for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, East Asia is under the threat of the North Korean nuclear crisis in the short term, and the Taiwan issue in the medium term. The former is more urgent than the latter and the latter is more severe than the former. According to this study, we should continue the six-party dialogue on the North Korean nuclear crisis. That will help South Korea to maintain its policy of peaceful resolution of the Korean issue and its alliance with the United States. Thus we can gain time for a peaceful solution and prevent war between the United States and North Korea. Regarding the threats of Taiwan issue, China and the United States need more negotiations on maintaining a strategic balance acceptable to both sides. Meanwhile, they need to develop a common understanding about the importance of maintaining the current status of Taiwan. In order to maintain the current peace of East Asia, China, and the United States need more conciliation and cooperation on regional security issues.

Notes

1. In this article "war" refers to a violent military action in a certain scale but not a military friction in a small scale whereas "peace" refers to a warless state but not a state with absolutely no military frictions.
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4. *Ibid.* pp.83-86.
5. *Ibid.* pp.111-114.

6. *Shijie Zhishi Nianjian (World Affairs Yearbook) 1992/1993* (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 1992), pp. 50, 136, & 707.
7. *Shijie Zhishi Nianjian (World Affairs Yearbook) 2001/2002* (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 2001), pp. 17 and 973.
8. "Meiguo Junshi Youshi Shiwuqianli (U.S. Military Superiority Unprecedented)," *Cankao Xiaoxi (Reference)*, May 6, 2003, p. 5.
9. The Korean War ended with returning to the 38th parallel. The Vietnam War ended in a U.S. failure. The two wars tested the strengths of the East Asia. The results of them showed the military balance in the area. In the Korean War, the Soviet Union supported China and North Korea to fight with the United States, which shaped the military balance at that time. During Vietnam War, although China and the Soviet Union were no longer allies, Vietnam could still get the support from both of them. So the military balance was maintained. The two wars were similar in terms of one nuclear power fighting against a non-nuclear country with support of a nuclear power, like the war the Soviet Union launched in Afghanistan in the 1980s. China in the 1950s, Korea and Vietnam were non-nuclear countries. They allied with a nuclear power but they did not have a nuclear umbrella guaranteed by treaty as Japan, European countries of NATO and East European countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization had. The facts that the Chinese soldiers in Vietnamese uniform provided the air defense for North Vietnam and that the Soviet air forces in Korean volunteer uniform provided air support to the Chinese and North Korean armies were the signs showing the nuclear power would provide military support but not be directly involved in order to make sure the wars would not be raised to nuclear ones.
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