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THESIS

THE ROLE OF CHINA IN KOREAN UNIFICATION

by

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June 2003

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THE ROLE OF CHINA IN KOREAN UNIFICATION

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

China and Korea have had relations for more than two thousand years. During that period, China greatly influenced Korea. However, as a result of China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895 and the Japanese annexation of Korea from 1910 to 1945, the influence of China over Korea began to wane and was then lost. Meanwhile, while the People's Republic of China (PRC) was the Republic of Korea (ROK)'s primary enemy state, and the United States became the ROK's only military alliance state, particularly due to their intervention in the Korean War in the Cold War era, the PRC, coupled with the United States, has become one of the most important partnership countries of the ROK in terms of security and economy on the Korean peninsula in the post-Cold War era. More importantly, the PRC is the only state which enjoys good relations with the two Koreas. Under these circumstances, the ROK's amicable relations with the PRC and the United States must be extremely important factors for Korean reconciliation and the reunification process. This thesis mainly examines Korea's historical relations with China and the United States, anticipates the role of China in Korean unification, and offers policy recommendations.

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Finally, I am looking forward to seeing a date for the realization of a peaceful Korean reunification. As a result, I really hope a unified Korea's people live in freedom and peace under democracy on a unified Korean peninsula, and a unified Korea becomes most prosperous and powerful.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of my thesis, titled ‘The Role of China in Korean Unification’, is to provide those who work for the Republic of Korea (ROK) government, particularly the Ministry of Unification of the ROK with policy recommendations regarding China’s role in Korean unification in order to help them make a more cohesive and balanced policy toward the PRC in favor of a South Korea-led, reasonable and peaceful unification on the Korean peninsula. Despite the contemporary emphasis as this thesis is being completed (May 2003) upon North Korea’s nuclear policies and their importance for inter-Korean relations, the purpose of this thesis is to assess the broader context of China’s role in the inter-Korean relationship that will lead to Korean reunification.

B. IMPORTANCE

Historically, China has had great influence over Korea for about 2,000 years in the past, thanks to sharing a border. As a result, on the one hand, Korean dynasties benefited considerably from Chinese dynasties; on the other hand, Korean dynasties suffered extremely from Chinese dynasties. However, after the Chinese were defeated by the Japanese in the Sino-Japanese War from 1894 to 1895, the influence of China over Korea began to wane and was then completely lost when Japan forcibly annexed Korea in 1910.

Meanwhile, right after the defeat of Japan in the Second World War that ended in August 1945, Korea became partitioned into two Koreas by the United States and the Soviet Union for the purpose of eliminating the remaining Japanese troops on the Korean peninsula. While the Republic of Korea (ROK) was established under democracy below the 38th parallel on the Korean peninsula in August 1948, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) was created under communism above the line on September of the same year. To make matters worse, the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was declared by Mao Zedong, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s

paramount leader in October 1949. After that, the PRC began to have a great impact on the Korean peninsula through the Chinese intervention in the Korean War on the side of the DPRK in 1950.

At 04:00 a.m. on June 25, 1950, the Korean War began. While fifteen member nations of the United Nations, especially the United States, helped South Korea by preventing her from becoming a communist country, the PRC sent volunteers to North Korea and the Soviet Union also helped both North Korea and China with her weapons, fuel, food, medicines and military supplies for making the Korean peninsula a communist country. Since the armistice agreement was signed between the United Nations, the DPRK, and the PRC at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953, Korea has been divided into two Koreas, North and South Korea for about fifty years. During that period, the PRC and the Soviet Union became the two main benefactors for North Korea.

However, the collapse of the communist bloc in the early 1990s and then the end of the Cold War era actually had a great impact all over the world, particularly on the PRC and the Russian Federation or the former Soviet Union. As a result, in the PRC, for example, “the only ideology of the Chinese leadership today is: ‘To get rich is glorious.’ China’s leaders cannot deliver on that ideology without the billions of dollars in foreign investment that pours into China each year.”¹ In case of Russia today, “the Russians have eliminated central planning, communist ideology and the Commissars...”²

In the context of the unification of Germany in October 1990, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and changes of the PRC in the present era, we can anticipate that Korean unification will come true. In this point of view, if Korean unification will sooner or later take place on the Korean peninsula, it is time that we have to think of which country has a great impact on North Korea, how she can do that and why she has to do it for Korean unification.

¹ Thomas L. Friedman. The Lexus and the Olive Tree. New York: Anchor Books, 2000. p. 259.

² Ibid., p. 415.

First, I would like to take a look at the relations between the PRC and the two Koreas. As a result of the PRC's huge aid to the DPRK throughout the Korean War, the PRC has had long and friendly blood ties--the so-called "lips and teeth" relations--with the DPRK from then on.

China remains a substantial aid donor to North Korea, although this assistance diminished sharply in the early 1990s. It has again increased in the latter half of the 1990s.³

In the Cold War era, on the other hand, relations between the PRC and South Korea had been under the situation that "the two adversaries employed policies of containment, non-dialogue, and non-recognition against one another."⁴ Especially after the advent of the post-Cold War era in the early 1990s, however, the PRC has enjoyed increasingly growing economic and diplomatic relations with the ROK since 1992 when the PRC and ROK established normalization because the PRC changed its policy toward the Korean peninsula from a one-Korea policy to a two-Korea policy in accordance with a Chinese national policy shift from ideology to pragmatism that started in the late 1970s right after the death of Mao Zedong. In addition, "Chinese wariness persists over various Seoul-centered unification scenarios and the U.S. role that might be entailed under various circumstances."⁵ Under this circumstance, for instance, the ROK President Kim Dae Jung and the DPRK Leader Kim Jung Il could sit around the table to take the first step toward Korean unification with the PRC's help at the two Koreas' summit talk in Pyongyang in June 2000 due to the PRC's good relations with both North and South Korea.

Second, however, was how Russian influence on North Korea changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991.

Moscow became progressively more marginalized in its peninsular role. Indeed, given the substantial (and growing) ROK economic interactions with China, Russia is no longer able to compete credibly with its neighbor for the attention of the South. Russia feels excluded from policy developments on the peninsula in a number of realms: the KEDO process

³ Jonathan D. Pollack and Chung Min Lee. Preparing for Korean Unification: Scenarios and Implications. Washington, D.C.: RAND's Arroyo Center, 1999. p. 9.

⁴ Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross. Engaging China: The Management of An Emerging Power. New York, NY: Routledge, 1999. p. 32.

⁵ Jonathan D. Pollack and Chung Min Lee (1999), p. 14.

had blocked possible Russian reactor sales to the North; Moscow (as well as Tokyo) has no seat at the four-party talks; and Russia's economic and security linkages with the North have clearly diminished.⁶

On the other hand, though, since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States has become a more influential power over Korean affairs. Nevertheless, although the United States has maintained strong ties with the ROK for more than half a century after the U.S. intervention in the Korean War, it has no friendly ties with the DPRK.

In the context of the dynamic changes of relations among them, especially

Among the four powers [the PRC, the United States, Russia, and Japan], China is the only country that currently has good relations with both North and South Korea. This gives China the responsibility to play a more important role in further promoting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.⁷

Therefore, it is the PRC that must be able to play a key role as an intermediary among the ROK, the DPRK, and the U.S. in Korean unification. At this point, the PRC must be an extremely important factor for the security of Northeast Asia as well as Korean unification. In order to achieve peaceful Korean unification, the PRC also must make every endeavor, in a constructive way, to make the DPRK open to the world as well as to change its ideological and bellicose-oriented policy into a pragmatic and amicable one.

Even though the roles of such powerful countries as the United States, the Russian Federation or former the Soviet Union, and Japan on the Korean peninsula have been important enough to have a great influence in the Korean affairs throughout Korean modern history, this paper will be focused on the PRC's role in Korean unification.

C. MAJOR QUESTIONS AND ARGUMENT

The major question in my thesis is: what kinds of roles can China or the People's Republic of China (PRC) play in Korean unification? To find the best answer to the main question, in addition, sub-questions following the major question are as follows:

⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

⁷ Chen Qimao. "The Role of the Greater Powers in the Process of Korean Reunification." Korean Unification. Amos A. Jordan. (Ed.) Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1993. p. 78.

- Why is it expected that China will play a key role in Korean unification?
- What roles did China play throughout Korea's history in the past?
- Are China's relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) constructive in Korean unification?
- Are China's views on Korean unification affirmative or negative?

Each of the sub-questions has something relevant to do with a major question in each chapter. These sub-questions will be examined and analyzed in each chapter as well.

With regard to my thesis, it is the conventional wisdom on my topic that China or the PRC “[doesn't] seek big changes in the political or military status quo”⁸ on the Korean peninsula. Because it is believed that the PRC views (or has viewed) the DPRK as “a buffer state”⁹ as well as an ideologically important ally, it is estimated that China continues to support the DPRK regime's survival while benefiting economically by improving its relations with the ROK and the United States, and attaining greater influence on Korean affairs by promoting as much stability as possible through its good relations with two Koreas on the Korean peninsula.

However, my argument in this thesis is that China will play a great role in Korean unification. Throughout Korean history, although Korean dynasties suffered from Chinese dynasties from time to time due to sharing a border, Korean dynasties could keep peace with China and import advanced civilization from China, and also develop their own creative culture through tributary relations. China played a role as a patron for the development of Korea's political and cultural civilization throughout Korean history until 1910. That is why today most Koreans feel more familiar and comfortable with the Chinese than any other foreign people. Although it is common sense that we regard both the Soviet Union and China as two major benefactors for North Korea, as mentioned earlier, China has become a more substantial aid donor to the North than the Russian Federation has been since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. China has

⁸ Robert G. Sutter. Chinese Policy Priorities and Their Implication for the United States. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000. p. 104.

⁹ Denny Roy. China's Foreign Relations. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998. p. 208.

maintained good relations with North Korea in particular since the Korean War and at the same time with South Korea since the establishment of full diplomatic relations in 1992.

China's good relations with the two Koreas imply that it is able to play an important role as a main intermediary among the ROK, the DPRK, and the United States, which are all decisive states in Korean unification.

In addition, when we think economic and political changes or reforms within China will be conducive to those within North Korea, China can play a role as the main driving force for helping North Korea follow China's reforms as well as help create a peaceful and South Korea-led unification as well. Because China has no choice but to acquiesce to a South Korean-led peaceful unification when considering the present situation, particularly economic disparity between the two Koreas and because China is able to gain benefits from a unified Korea, China's views on Korean unification issue will be affirmative.

To support and prove my argument, I will examine and analyze China's historical relations with Korea. In addition, I will depend largely on the discourse on Korean affairs produced by politicians, journalists, and analysts within the PRC as well as Korea specialists outside China. Through such primary sources and the secondary literature, I will indirectly access both the PRC's views on Korean unification and its roles in reunification on the Korean peninsula.

D. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Chapter I or introduction, first of all, I raised the main research question and then a series of sub-questions that will provide answers to the main question as well. I explained the conventional wisdom on my thesis topic that China or the PRC does not seek big changes in the political or military status quo on the Korean peninsula and then argued that my research would contradict such conventional wisdom. In addition, I explained China's importance in Korean unification. In other words, I stated why it is expected that China or the PRC will play a key role in Korean unification.

To examine, analyze, and prove my main argument, Chapter II will chronologically in descending order of Korean dynasties describe the historical relationship between China and Korea from the first relations between two countries in a state-to-state status from around 108 B.C. to 1948 when Korea was partitioned into the two Koreas, the Republic of Korea (the ROK or South Korea) and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (the DPRK or North Korea). At the end of this chapter, I will assess what role China played throughout Korean history until 1948, and what was China's impact on Korea until then.

Chapter III will probe the relations between the two Koreas and the PRC in the Cold War era (from 1948 when the ROK and the DPRK were founded through 1949 when the PRC was established until 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed). This will focus on the ROK-U.S., the PRC-DPRK, and the PRC-ROK bilateral relations, particularly in terms of military and economic security among them.

In Chapter IV, the relations between the two Koreas and the PRC will be probed in the fields of military and economic security during the period of the post-Cold War world from the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 to the present. First, in this chapter, the ROK-U.S., the PRC-DPRK, and the PRC-ROK bilateral relationship trends will be examined. Second, both the PRC's and the ROK's approach to multilateralism will be explained. Finally, the PRC's and the ROK's attitudes toward multilateralism for their respective unification will be examined at the end of this chapter.

In Chapter V, the PRC's views on Korean unification will be examined and analyzed in the light of ideology, economy, great powers dynamics, and territorial and ethnic Korean issues. At the end of this chapter, an overall assessment of the PRC's views on Korean reunification will be offered and then I will assess whether China's views on the issue are affirmative or negative.

Finally, my conclusion for this thesis will be presented in Chapter VI. The last chapter will anticipate China's role in Korean unification in the future. In addition, I will create policy recommendations related to the PRC's role in reunification on the Korean peninsula for those who work for the Republic of Korea (ROK) government, particularly the Ministry of Unification of the ROK.

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II. THE HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KOREA AND CHINA

The Korean peninsula has played a geographically and strategically important role in East Asia, as the bridge or gateway between the Eurasian Continent and the Pacific Ocean because the geographical position of the Korean peninsula is located in the midst of powerful countries such as China, Russia and Japan in Northeast Asia. Historically, China and Mongolia conspired to invade Japan by way of Korea, but they failed in their attempts in the 13th century. Conversely, Japan also invaded China and Russia through Korea, called Chosun at that time creating the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905, in both of which Japan and Russia were eager to attain an influential power over the Korean peninsula. The Korean War started in 1950 escalating the Cold War tensions between the superpowers. Due to the geo-strategically important position of the Korean peninsula in East Asia, Korea has been largely under the historically difficult situation like a Korean proverb, ‘shrimp between whales’ or ‘the conflicts between whales break a shrimp’s back.’

Korea shares its long border with China north of the Korean peninsula. Korean dynasties, on the one hand, experienced and had to overcome numerous invasions, political interferences and status as a vassal of Chinese dynasties, especially in parts of a 519 year long Yi dynasty. Due to its morphological proximity to China, on the other hand, this was advantageous for Korea in taking advantage of developments in the fields of politics, economy, society, and culture from China. For example, Koreans suffered from the Mongol invasion in the 13th century and the Ching dynasty’s interference during the Yi dynasty, both of which were from Mongols and Manchus who were only two foreign rulers of China and later became sinicized throughout the Chinese history, whereas Korean dynasties could unify Korea with the Tang dynasty’s help in the 7th century as well as repel the Japanese forces with the Ming dynasty’s assistance in the 16th century.

Korea's relations with China lasted for about two thousand years, however, they began to wane after the Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, and officially ended after Korea was forcibly annexed by Japan in August 1910. Nevertheless, the relations between the two countries continued unofficially until the liberation of Korea from Japan in 1945 and its legal partition into two Koreas in 1948.

In this chapter, the relations between Sino-Korean dynasties will be chronologically researched from around the 4th century B.C. (unfortunately, though there is no written history about the origin of Korea, it is definitely around the 4th century B.C. that Old Choson as a federation of walled town states existed and began to have its first relations with China) until 1948 when Korea was partitioned into two Koreas. The roles China played throughout Korea's history until 1948 will be assessed.

A. FIRST RELATIONS (*CIRCA* FOURTH CENTURY B.C.)

It is important that we know when the foundation of a Korean state occurred for the first time. If we find it, we can more easily acknowledge the first relationship between the two countries, Korea and China. Therefore, first I will look at the origins of a Korean state, when the first contact between them appeared, what it was like, and what role it played.

Generally speaking, almost all Koreans believe that Korea has more than 5,000 years of history. One of the most important reasons for their belief is due to the myth of Tangun, a founder of the first Korean state, who supposedly founded it in 2333 B.C. Additionally, some historians assert that

between 6000 B.C. and 4000 B.C. [the new stone age on the Korean peninsula] a group of people migrated into the Korean peninsula from Central Asia and the Altaic mountain region. These people were of the Neolithic Age. The Neolithic people are thought to be the direct ancestors of Korean people.¹⁰

We, however, cannot accept the first reason as a basis of the first Korean state because it is just a pure myth. In addition, the second reason is not acceptable because, even though they are in fact Koreans' direct forefathers, there is no historical evidence about whether

¹⁰ History of Korea Prehistoric to AD. 1910. April 17, 2002.
[http://www.indiana.edu/~easc/pages/easc/curriculum/korea/1995/general/hand6_1.htm].

they, ‘a group of people’, organized a kind of society, that is, as states or not. It is, however, definite that human beings existed on the Korean peninsula even much earlier than 7,000 ~ 8,000 years ago according to excavations found at Paleolithic sites. Furthermore, generally the Shang dynasty is regarded as not only China’s, but also East Asia’s first state (a traditional date: 1766 B.C.) authenticated by archaeology and history.

The Bronze Age on the Korean peninsula is an important factor in terms of the conception of a state. The Bronze Age lasted approximately from the 9th century B.C. until the 4th century B.C.. During the period of the Bronze Age, rice agriculture as well as cultivation of rice had been introduced from China into Korea, and the changes of their lives into an agrarian society caused them to settle in one place and create a society or a burgeoning state. Archaeologists have excavated the evidence that the Bronze Age people built earthen forts and lived in walled towns.¹¹ Out of these ambiances, Old Choson was founded as a state. Unfortunately there is no explicitly historical proof of Old Choson, nevertheless, “what can be demonstrated with evidence is that [Old] Choson was an amalgamation of Walled Town states; tribal states of agricultural peoples that demonstrated the first glimpses of political cohesion.”¹²

By the fourth century B.C., ... a number of small states on the peninsula had survived long enough to come to the attention of China, and the most illustrious was Old Choson...Choson prospered into a civilization based on bronze culture and a political federation of many walled towns, which (judging from Chinese accounts) was formidable to the point of arrogance. Composed of a horse-riding people who deployed bronze weapons, Choson extended its influence to the north, taking most of the Liaotung basin.¹³

No one doubts these walled town states which were created during the Bronze Age were the origins of Korean states with a primitive political culture. In the late fourth century, Old Choson’s expansion into the northern areas provoked the powerful Chinese state of Yen (1122-255 B.C.) to push Old Choson back south of the Chongchon River near present day Anju city in the northwest area of North Korea. The Yen state was

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² History of Korea Main Page: Early History (Through 313 C.E.). April 20, 2002. [<http://loki.stockton.edu/~gilmorew/consorti/Ideasia.htm>].

¹³ Bruce Cumings. Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History. New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997, pp. 25 - 26.

defeated by the Chin empire between 230-221 B.C. and then the Chin fell to the Han dynasty in 206 B.C. Meanwhile, Wiman, a leader of refugees from China during the vicissitudes of Chin and Han, usurped the kingship of Old Choson King Chun between 194-180 B.C., but Wiman Choson was conquered in 108 B.C. by the Han. After that, the Han dynasty established 'four commanderies' in the area as far north as one third of the Korean peninsula to exert control over Korea.¹⁴

Four commanderies consisted of Nangnang, Jinburn, Imdoon, and Hyendo (Lo-lang, Chen-fan, Lin-tun, and Hsuan-tu in Chinese). The Han dynasty sent a viceroy there respectively to govern. They, however, did not directly rule over them but allowed Wiman Choson people to govern themselves. Jinburn, Imdoon and Hyendo were abolished by 75 B.C. because of resistance by the Wiman Choson people, and Nangnang lasted until 313 A.D. when it was abandoned to Koguryo, a local Korean tribal state in the north.¹⁵ Even during that period, some of the indigenous people took titles such as the magistrate of a district or king, and proceeded to take a step toward an independent country. At that time, the main roles of Chinese commanderies were as follows:

Lo-lang (Nangnang in Korean) at Pyongyang, the Old Choson capital, continued to exercise a vague sort of suzerainty over the whole of Korea. Lo-lang...remained a rich outpost of Chinese civilization for four centuries... The historic role of the Chinese commanderies in Korea was much like that of the contemporary Roman colonies in Britain...they [the later Korean kingdoms] derived much of their higher culture from contacts with these outposts of Chinese civilization.¹⁶

By 43 A.D., Rome occupied Britain and the Roman colony of Britannia was established and governed by a governor. Eventually, many Celtic Britons become 'Romanized' through Roman civilized culture, while others continued to rebel until the

¹⁴ Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, Edward W. Wagner. Korea Old and New A History. Seoul, Korea: Ilchokak, 1990. pp. 12-13.

¹⁵ Young Woo Han. Uri Yeoksa (Our History). Seoul: Kyeong Se Won, 2001. pp. 72-73.

¹⁶ John K Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer and Albert M. Craig. "Early Korea: The Emergence of a Chinese Type of State." East Asia: Tradition and Transformation/ Revised Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989. p. 279.

fifth century A.D.¹⁷ In a similar manner, Lo-lang played a key role in “a great center of Sino-Korean statecraft, art, industry (including the mining of iron ore), and commerce.”¹⁸

B. THREE KINGDOMS AND THE UNIFIED SILLA (THE FIRST CENTURY-918)

After the collapse of Chinese commanderies in 313 A.D., three native kingdoms (Koguryo, Paekche and Silla) emulated each other in order to have an influence over the Korean peninsula, even though they had already existed during the period of Chinese commanderies. Although Kaya and three federations of Mahan, Chinhan and Pyonhan existed along with three kingdoms, I will not emphasize Kaya and the three federations, which were respectively organized by a number of tribes and remained during the first three centuries A.D., because each of them had small territory in the southern portion of the peninsula, few relationships with China and little importance in Korean history compared to the contemporary three kingdoms. In this section, I will probe into what relationship they had with China in their competition and development? What kinds of benefits did they get from China? And what role did China play in the unification of Silla in 668 A.D.?

1. Koguryo

Koguryo had emerged in south-western Manchuria around 37 B.C. Koguryo had periodically fought with China in southern Manchuria during the period of the Chinese commanderies, deprived China of the controlling power over Lo-lang, and eventually caused China to end the Lo-lang commandery in 313 A.D. Although Koguryo suffered from the frequent warfare with Northern China during the period against the Chinese commanderies, that hardship made Koguryo the most powerful state--surpassing Paekche--after repelling the Chinese commanderies.

¹⁷ S. Kemmer. *Chronology of Event in the History of English*. May 28, 2002, [<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/Words/chron.html>].

¹⁸ Bruce Cumings (1997), pp. 26 - 27.

From the fourth century,

Koguryo also maintained tributary relations with whichever was the chief state in North China, and in the fifth century it added relations with the successor dynasties in South China. Thus it was able to import Chinese culture directly from its source.¹⁹

As a result, it was from China that Buddhism in 372 A.D, the Confucian classics, and Chinese type of law code were introduced to Koguryo. Particularly after moving the capital in 427 A.D. from Kungnae near the Yalu River to Pyongyang, ‘the former headquarters of the Lo-lang commandery’, Koguryo applied Chinese style ‘agricultural taxes’, ‘corvee labor’, and ‘bureaucratic government’ for its own government so that it could prosper more and more. “It also developed a more Sinicized form of government, with complex hierarchies of bureaucratic officials and organized garrisons of soldiers ruling over the subject peoples.” After that, it enjoyed a status as the most powerful kingdom on the Korean peninsula for about two centuries from the 5th to 7th century.²⁰

2. Paekche

Paekche was organized about 18 B.C. in the southwest portion of the Korean peninsula, and it became the first to build a strong military state while Koguryo was weakened by--and suffered from--incessant wars with China. As Koguryo grew, however, Paekche was becoming so weak that she had to form an alliance with Southern China and later Silla in order to defend itself from Koguryo’s invasions. As mentioned, Paekche initially came to power over the peninsula, but it gave way to Koguryo later. What is the reason? As seen above, Koguryo was able to prosper after importing and developing Chinese systems, whereas Paekche was completely blocked geographically by Koguryo from contacts with North China.

Cut off from North China by Koguryo, it maintained close maritime contact with the dynasties of South China [especially with the southern Chinese dynasty of Eastern Chin] and usually recognized their suzerainty. Many cultural elements came to Paekche from South China.²¹

¹⁹ Fairbank. Reischauer. Craig. (1989), p. 282.

²⁰ Edwin O. Reischauer and John K. Fairbank. East Asia: The Great Tradition (A History of East Asian Civilization Volume One). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960. pp. 406-408.

²¹ Ibid., p. 408.

However, there were many more limitations and difficulties in maintaining the relations of Paekche with China by sea than by land, compared to the geographical proximity to China of Koguryo. Thus those problems later forced Paekche to ally with Japan and even Silla to fight against Koguryo. Apart from it, we can easily find the cultural influence of China over Paekche and Japan through the fact that Paekche introduced Buddhism and Chinese civilization to Japan, helped Japanese enjoy the highly developed Chinese culture, and had a great influence on the development of Japanese culture at that time.

Nevertheless, although “Paekche was a centralized, aristocratic state blending Chinese and indigenous influence,”²² it was conquered by Silla in the 7th century because of not receiving the full support from their subject people.

3. Silla and The Unified Silla

Silla, in the southeast of the peninsula, was founded earliest among the three kingdoms in approximately 57 B.C., but it began a status as the weakest and most backward state among them during the three kingdom period. Because, just as Paekche was geographically isolated in the southwestern corner of the peninsula, Silla was located in the corner area of the southeastern coast. Silla had so little opportunity to have contact with China that it was the least influenced by Chinese civilization among them.

Meanwhile, Koguryo defeated several attacks launched by the short-lived Sui dynasty that united China in 589 and lasted only about thirty years, and its victories finally had a decisive impact on the collapse of the Sui dynasty in the early 7th century. When the Tang dynasty that succeeded the Sui dynasty tried to make several expeditions to Koguryo, Koguryo successfully repelled Tang’s ambitions in 647, 648, and 655. After Tang’s failure of attacks on Koguryo, Silla had a chance to make an alliance with the Tang dynasty, whose main purpose was not helping the unification of the peninsula under Silla, but defeating Koguryo, and then exerting control over it. It became the main reason

²² Bruce Cumings (1997), p. 27.

that the Tang dynasty created the alliance with Silla. With the assistance of Tang, Silla eventually defeated Paekche in 660 and then Koguryo in 668 A.D., which finally unified Korea.²³

By that time “the Tang policy toward the Korean peninsula was...much the same as that toward other peoples bordering China. Conquest was to be followed, if possible, by assimilation.”²⁴ Therefore, after unification of the three kingdoms by Silla with Tang’s aid, Tang “moved to establish administrative control over the entire peninsula. The land of the former kingdom of Paekche was divided into five governorships, with a Chinese military commander...[Tang] also attempted to subsume Silla within the sphere of new administration for the peninsula.”²⁵ However, Silla enforced its military power against this Chinese attempt aimed at ruling over the whole country since 671, and Silla’s stubborn resistance and victories in wars with Tang forces drove Chinese out of the peninsula at last. Nevertheless, the Chinese continued to insist on the former Koguryo and Paekche territories as part of their rights until 736, but “they at last formally acknowledged that all the territory south of the Paesu (Taedong River) belonged to the independent kingdom of Silla” in return for Silla accepting its status as a tributary but autonomous state.²⁶

After that, Silla was able to directly contact and import Chinese political, economic, and cultural systems from the Tang dynasty by annual embassies, Buddhist monks and students who were sent to China to observe the tributary relations. “Through all this period increasing trade and cultural exchanges with the Tang were having a profound influence on every aspect of life.”²⁷ Silla adopted Confucian learning, a civil service exam, housing, land-holding, land registers and tax system, Zen Buddhism,

²³ Chong-sik Lee. “Chapter 1. Historical Setting.” South Korea: A Country Study. Andrea Matles Savada and William Shaw (Ed.). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992, p. 7.

²⁴ Woo-keun Han. The History of Korea. Kyung-shik Lee (Trans.) and Grafton K. Mintz (Ed.) Honolulu, Hawaii: An East-West Center Book, 1980. p. 83.

²⁵ Geoff Simons. KOREA: The Search for Sovereignty. New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1995. pp. 87-88.

²⁶ Woo-keun Han (1980), p. 85.

²⁷ Roger Tennant. A History of Korea. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996. p. 63.

Buddhist art, local place names, personal names and division of the country in the Chinese style. Silla became a “replica” of the Tang in miniature but retained a clear sense of its separate identity as Silla (e.g., metal art, bone ranks and *idu* writing system).²⁸

Although the Chinese were expelled from the peninsula by Silla in 676, their strong cultural impact remained. The Chinese stylistic and artistic influences beyond Buddhism were profound.²⁹

C. KORYO DYNASTY (918-1392)

As the aristocrats in the late unified Silla era continued to live extravagantly, falling to corruption, the burdens of the commoners grew heavier, and their morale increasingly declined. General Wang Kon united the commoners and founded the new dynasty of Koryo (918-1392). From the beginning, in terms of its relations with Chinese and non-Chinese dynasties, the Koryo dynasty was able to take political and cultural advantages of a unified Silla and Chinese dynasty in many aspects. However, since its founding, it had--at the same time--suffered from tricky and intricate relations with such non-Chinese dynasties as the Khitan Liao dynasty, the Chin dynasty under the Jurchen of Manchuria, and the Mongol Empire in the late Koryo period. In this section, I will assess Koryo’s relations with Chinese and non-Chinese dynasties and in particular the influence of the Mongol rule over Koryo.

To establish a centralized government soon after the establishment of Koryo, the Koryo dynasty set up a political institution with “three central boards” in the Tang and Sung style (i.e., a Bureau of Military Affairs, the traditional Six Ministries, and a host of lesser administrative organs), and a central government school for teaching Confucian texts, and adopted a Chinese-style civil service examination system.³⁰ In addition, trade between the Koryo and Sung dynasties also flourished as well--ranging from jewelry, textiles, and china to books and ginseng. Throughout the process, the Koryo dynasty was highly successful because the Koryo dynasty was easily able to take advantage of developed civilization from both a unified Silla and China, and to establish a centralized

²⁸ Edwin O. Reischauer and John K. Fairbank (1960), pp. 411-412.

²⁹ David I. Steinberg. The Republic of Korea: Economic Transformation and Social Change. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1989. p. 26.

³⁰ Fairbank. Reischauer. Craig. (1989), pp. 292-293.

government. Therefore, “the relationship between the two countries [Koryo and Sung dynasty] rested on a peaceful foundation of cultural and economic exchange, and this was precisely in conformity with the desires of the Koryo aristocracy.”³¹

However, the relations between the Koryo and Sung dynasties began to shrink after the Sung dynasty was invaded by Khitans that, after then, began to call their own country Liao in 947, especially after Koryo refused Sung’s proposal when the Sung dynasty asked for Koryo to attack the Khitan and Jurchen at the same time. Since Koryo was frequently threatened by the Khitan and Jurchen, both of which were located northwest and northeast of Koryo respectively, it built a thousand *li* long wall (about a 300-mile long wall), called *Chullijangsung* (in Korean) ranging from the mouth of the Yalu River to the present day city of Yonpo in North Korea over twelve years in order to defend the northern frontiers against the Khitan and Jurchen. As the 300-mile long wall suggests, Koryo had conflicts with and suffered from such non-Chinese dynasties as the Khitan and Jurchen dynasties, and later the Mongol empire during the greater part of the Koryo dynasty period.

First, conflicts between Koryo and the Khitan resulted in three large-scale attacks of the Khitan on Koryo, in addition to several small-scale attacks from 993 to 1018. In the first invasion, Koryo was able to avert a crisis through peace talks between the Khitan general Hsiao and Koryo general So Hui. In the second invasion, the Khitans occupied Kaesong, the capital of Koryo, but withdrew without gaining any special advantage excepting homage to the Khitan emperor. In the third one, the 100,000 Khitan forces were all but annihilated by Koryo general Kang Kamchan and then peaceful relations between the two countries were maintained.³² Secondly, no sooner did Koryo set up a peaceful relationship with the Khitan than it became involved in serious trouble with the Chin succeeded by the Jurchen, named Akuta in 1115. At first the Jurchen admired Koryo because of Koryo’s advanced culture but such a situation changed within a milieu in which Koryo was at a disadvantage. Chin not only invaded and devastated the Khitan Liao dynasty in 1125 but also captured the Sung capital at Kaifeng in 1127. Then Chin

³¹ Ki-baik Lee. *A New History of Korea*. Edward W. Wagner and Edward J. Shultz (Trans.). Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984. p. 128.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

put increased pressure on Koryo as well, and finally demanded that Koryo accept a suzerain-subject relationship with it. Eventually, Yi Cha-gyom--who was a father-in-law of the then king and held sway over power at the time--assented to Chin's demands. Although Koryo's general Yun Kwan fiercely resisted against incessant attacks of the Jurchen and occupied some parts of their territory, Koryo eventually became a tributary to the Chin dynasty because of some Koryo aristocrats' ambitions for power.³³ From the early 13th century, thirdly, the Koryo-Mongol relations began for the purpose of subduing the Khitan forces. "The Mongols," however, "conquered Chin in 1215 and chased the diehard Liao refugees into the territory of Koryo, which was consequently plagued by consecutive Mongol invasions."³⁴ The Mongol empire invaded Koryo six times between the 1230's and 1250's. Among them, in the first invasion of 1231, the Mongols crushed the Koryo forces and then seized the Koryo capital at Kaesong. As a result, the Mongol military governors became stationed in the peninsula whereas the Koryo court and officials fled to Kangwha Island in 1232. In the invasion of 1254, countless people were killed and more than 200,000 Koryo people were captured by the Mongol troops. Koryo was eventually conquered by the Mongols in 1258, in spite of the 40-year fight of Koryo people against the Mongols' invasions. Koryo kings were forced to intermarry with Mongol princesses. After that, finally, Koryo fell into "a Mongol vassal state." In fact, the ruling of the Mongol-Yuan empire in China over Koryo did not come to end until the Ming dynasty was founded in 1368.³⁵

³³ Carter J. Eckert. Ki-baik Lee. Young Ick Lew. Michael Robinson and Edward W. Wagner. (1990), pp. 77-78.

³⁴ History of the Koryo Dynasty. May 31, 2002. [<http://www.geochang-joongang.hs.kr/WINDOW/window/win00042.htm>].

The Khitan Liao dynasty was conquered by Chin in 1125, but a remnant of the Khitan Liao dynasty fled westward and some of them into the Korean peninsula. They, however, were quelled by the Mongols in the early 1200s.

³⁵ Geoff Simons (1995), pp. 96-97. It is said that the Mongols who have lived on the steppe, or inland were afraid of waters. Therefore, the Koryo court and officials fled to Kangwha Island in order to resist the Mongol invasion in 1232 when the Mongols invaded Koryo. When the Mongols tried to invade Japan in 1274 and 1281, they depended completely on the Korean ability of shipbuilding and navigation, though their attempts eventually failed. See Korea and East Asia: The Story of a Phoenix by Kenneth B. Lee (1997, pp. 73-74).

Overcoming hardships from the Khitans, Jurchens, and Mongols throughout Koryo history, “Koryo managed to hang on to independence and self-rule by whatever means possible, using on some occasions military force, at other times, diplomacy.”³⁶ Although incessant foreign invasions forced Koryo to, after all, accept the suzerainty of them and the destruction of its cities--including arts, buildings and treasures, the Koryo people never became sinicized either like the three kingdoms or a unified Silla. By contrast, China was ruled twice by such foreign people as the Mongol Yuan in the 13th century and the Manchu Ching dynasty during 250 years after the mid-17th century, but these foreign conquerors became easily and well sinicized each time due to the superiority of Chinese developed institutions and cultural systems. Instead, Korean people recreated the developed Chinese institutions and cultures within their own new creations. For example, Koryo people developed wooden block printing into wooden type printing and then invented the world’s first movable metal type on record in 1234. In addition, they printed in 1251 the Great Tae-jang-kyong (Great Collections of Buddhist Scriptures) with about 80,000 wooden plates, the so-called Koryo Tripitaka, in order to spiritually and religiously overcome foreign invasions. Especially, the conquest of the Mongols over Koryo had two important contrary influences. During the period of Mongol rule, the commoners suffered from economic hardships and the upper classes were at the same time politically and spiritually oppressed. Koryo, on the other hand, transformed such difficult situations into good chances more open to cultural and technological influences from abroad than any other times. The use of gunpowder and cotton, astronomical and mathematical knowledge, and Neo-Confucian philosophy were introduced to Koryo in spite of the warring period.

D. YI DYNASTY (1392-1910)

While the Mongol empire began to perish in the second half of the 14th century in China proper, the Ming dynasty succeeded it from 1368 until 1644. On the Korean peninsula, Yi Song-gye, the most powerful pro-Ming general of Koryo, finally overthrew the corrupt and inept Koryo dynasty and then founded the new dynasty. During the Yi dynasty era, both the Chinese Ming and then the Ching dynasty greatly influenced

³⁶ Kenneth B. Lee. Korea and East Asia: The Story of a Phoenix. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1997. p. 58.

Choson. In the late 19th century, however, tangled conflicts of interests over the Korean peninsula between China and Japan resulted in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895. As a result of the Chinese defeat, the historical relations between Korea and China began to wane and officially ended at last in 1910 when Japan forcibly annexed Korea. The Yi dynasty's relations with both the Ming and Ching dynasties as well as the two Chinese dynasties' impact on Choson will be examined in this section.

The relations of the Yi dynasty with the Ming dynasty occurred from the beginning of the Yi dynasty. Soon after Yi Song-gye usurped the throne of the Koryo dynasty in 1392, he set up a tributary relationship with the Ming dynasty, requested a name for his new dynasty from the Ming emperor Hung Wu, received the name of Choson, and appointed Confucianism as a ruling ideology unlike the Koryo dynasty that emphasized Buddhism. In addition, the Yi dynasty adopted the Chinese-style examination system for its bureaucracy, which was "closely patterned on those of China, and the subject matter consisted almost entirely of the Chinese classics, histories, and belles-lettres."³⁷ Unfortunately, however, Confucianism played a key role on making the relations between them such a suzerain-subject relationship as "Confucian doctrines of hierarchy in the Choson dynasty...informed a foreign policy known as 'serving the great' (*sadae*), that great thing being China - and not just China, but China of the Ming."³⁸

Meanwhile, because the Choson court refused the Japanese proposal that the Koreans attack the Ming dynasty together with them or give a free passage to them, Toyotomi Hideyoshi whose ambition was to attack the Ming dynasty through the Korean peninsula invaded Korea with about 150,000 Japanese possessing firearms in the spring of 1592. When the Japanese forces took Seoul within two weeks after the onset of the Japanese invasion, the king and court were forced by the Japanese troops to move toward Uiju on the Yalu River.³⁹ In the face of the Japanese fierce attacks launched from both the sea and land, admiral Yi Sun-shin who invented "the world's first ironclad ships", called *Geobukseon* (turtle-shaped battle ship) in Korean, defeated Japanese naval forces composed of about 250 ships in the sea warfare. With the aid of about 50,000 troops who

³⁷ Edwin O. Reischauer and John K. Fairbank (1960), p. 431.

³⁸ Bruce Cumings (1997), p. 54.

³⁹ Woo-keun Han (1980), pp. 270-271.

the Ming dynasty dispatched, the Choson dynasty was finally able to repel the Japanese invasions via land warfare as well.⁴⁰ The Imjin War, lasted from 1592 to 1598, but the Japanese invasion was an unmitigated disaster for Korea. As the Japanese “covered our whole eight provinces and ravaged them...seized our three capitals and desecrated two royal tombs...burned our ancestral temple and other sacred places,”⁴¹ the central government of Choson was weakened and the life of its people deteriorated, causing destruction of its cultural treasures and monuments as well as agriculture. In addition, “Hideyoshi’s invasions of Korea also speeded the political and military disintegration of Ming China, which was soon to be tested by new invasions from the north [or the Manchu state].”⁴²

Between the late 16th and early 17th centuries, meanwhile, Nurhachi first united the Jurchen tribes, and then consolidated both the Mongols and Chinese, and finally founded the Manchu state. Thereafter, Abahai, Nurhachi’s son, invaded Choson in 1627 and 1637, and named his dynasty the Ching in 1636. As a result of these invasions, the Yi dynasty established tributary relations with the Manchu or Ching dynasty in 1637 and maintained them until 1910. Among historically significant events in the relations between them are the contacts of the Koreans with Western civilization and the Sino-Japanese War.

First, in the 17th century, the Koreans had a chance to have contact with the Jesuit scholars, Christian missionaries, and Western science through the correspondence of the Korean tribute missions to Peking. Maps of Europe, for example, works on Catholicism, Christianity, Western sciences, geography, and astronomy in Chinese translation, and Dutch Weltevree’s knowledge of cannon casting were introduced into Choson by them between the late 16th and the 17th century.⁴³ The flow of Western scientific ideas and knowledge into Choson gave rise to a vigorous intellectual movement, the so-called

⁴⁰ David I. Steinberg (1989), p. 33.

⁴¹ Hulbert’s History of Korea: Volume 2. Clarence Norwood Weems (Ed.) New York: Hillary House Publishers LTD., 1962. p. 43.

⁴² Marius B. Jansen. “Foreign Relations.” The Making of Modern Japan. Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001. p. 68.

⁴³ William E. Henthorn. A History of Korea. New York, New York: The Free Press, 1971. pp. 196-197.

Sirhak (Western Learning or Pragmatic Learning), on the peninsula. *Sirhak* scholars, who were eager for administrative and economic reform as well as Western science and technology, were pioneers to “rationalize the civil service examination system, the foundation of the bureaucracy...[and] to build up industry, technology, and commerce.”⁴⁴ Even though it had been transmitted to Choson by the Koreans through the relations of tribute missions between Korea and China and later was suppressed by factions against it, it paradoxically continued to raise “the growing awareness of Korea as a separate entity from China” in late Choson society.⁴⁵

Second, the coup led by pro-Japan reformers in 1884 caused a clash between the Chinese and Japanese soldiers. In order to avoid such a clash, “at the Li-Ito Convention (1885), the Japanese proposed that both Japanese and Chinese troops withdraw from Korea; and that each side would inform the other if it decided to send troops to the peninsula.”⁴⁶ Subsequently the Treaty of Tientsin including these stipulations was signed in the same year between the Chinese statesman Li Hung-chang and the Japanese Prime Minister Ito Hirobumi. “In 1894,” however, “when the outbreak of a domestic rebellion [called the Tonghak Movement] threatened the Korean king, both China and Japan seized the opportunity to send troops to protect the royal family.”⁴⁷ After all this, in July of 1894, the Sino-Japanese War began with the Japanese declaration of war on China. During the Sino-Japanese War, the Korean people participating in the Tonghak Movement for a while succeeded in attacking the Japanese forces and supply bases, but the Japanese soldiers brutally suppressed the Tonghak Movement around January 1895. The Sino-Japanese War ended with a complete Japanese victory over the Chinese in the spring of 1895 as well. As a result of Japan’s victory over China, the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed between Li Hung-chang and Ito Hirobumi, similar to the Treaty of Tientsin. Not to mention both the cession of Taiwan and opening of more ports to Japan, through the Treaty of Shimonoseki, “Japan obtained from China the Liaotung Peninsula, Formosa, the Pescadores [Islands], and an indemnity of twenty thousand gold

⁴⁴ David I. Steinberg (1989), p. 34.

⁴⁵ Fairbank. Reischauer. Craig. (1989), p. 320.

⁴⁶ Geoff Simons (1995), p. 115.

⁴⁷ Jonathan D. Spence. “New Tensions in the Late Qing.” The Search for Modern China/ Second Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999. pp. 220-221.

taels.”⁴⁸ In addition, the treaty “was to serve as the springboard for a new round of imperialist advances that seriously threatened Chinese sovereignty.”⁴⁹ The terms of the treaty “were disastrous for China ... China had to recognize ‘the full and complete independence and autonomy of Korea,’ which, under the circumstances, effectively made Korea a Japanese protectorate.”⁵⁰

After its defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, the Ching dynasty tried to make some reforms such as the Tongzhi Restoration, the Self-Strengthening, and the Hundred Days movements. However, the failure of these reforms led the provincial armies’ leaders not to obey the Ching dynasty, which could not control them well. Eventually, the growth of political and military regionalism made the 1911 revolution and political fragmentation possible, so that the Ching dynasty finally collapsed in 1911. “The uprising of October 10, 1911, which led to the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC) on January 1, 1912, was the culmination of a protracted ideological, political, and military struggle in China and internationally.”⁵¹ Soon after the Sino-Japanese War, meanwhile, the conflicts between Russia and Japan continued to mount because of each’s interests in Manchuria and Korea. Eventually the Russo-Japanese War began in 1904 when Japan attacked Port Arthur in Manchuria first, and Japan defeated Russia in both land warfare and especially naval battles. It ended in 1905 with the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth.⁵² Thereafter, obtaining supremacy on the Korean peninsula through the treaty, Japan forcibly annexed Korea in August of 1910. In other words, the relations between Korea and China officially ended at last as soon as the Yi dynasty of 519 years was over in 1910.

E. JAPANESE ANNEXATION AND THE TWO KOREAS (1910-1948)

The relations between Korea and China that lasted for about 2,000 years and Chinese long-lasting influence over the Korean peninsula began to wane after the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War during 1894-1895. Such relations were officially

⁴⁸ Takashi Hatada. “The Intrusion of the Great Powers.” A History of Korea. Santa Barbara, CA: American Bibliographical Center-Clio Press, 1969. p. 104.

⁴⁹ Marius B. Jansen (2001), pp. 432-433.

⁵⁰ Jonathan D. Spence (1999), p. 222.

⁵¹ George T. Yu. “The 1911 Revolution: Past, Present, and Future.” Asian Survey. Vol. XXXI, No. 10, October 1991, pp. 895-896.

⁵² Marius B. Jansen (2001), pp. 438-440.

ended at a time when Japan forcibly annexed Korea in 1910. During the Japanese annexation period from 1910 to 1945, it was thought that it was unlikely to sustain the relations between Koreans and China under the Japanese protectorate to Korea. Nevertheless, even though the Sino-Korean relations were very thin and rare, they continued to exist.

In order to avoid the Japanese repression soon after the 1919 March 1st Independence Movement that occurred throughout the Korean peninsula against Japanese colonialism, the Korean independence fighters moved to China proper.

The Chinese at that time, more than a decade before the Wanpaoshan incident, appeared to be sympathetic to independence movements and well disposed to the Koreans. Thus it was that the Shanghai Korean community finally decided to set up the Korean Provisional Government, a nationalist government in exile.⁵³

Thus, the Korean provisional government was established in Shanghai, China on April 13, 1919 at last to fight against the Japanese colonial forces and then ultimately to regain independence from Japan.⁵⁴

In fact, China or the Republic of China (ROC) harbored “the Korean independence fighters during the Japanese colonial period and [provided] support to the Korean provisional government established in Shanghai and later moved to Chungking during the period of the Sino-Japanese War [in the late 1930s].”⁵⁵ After moving to Chungking, “the provisional capital of the Chinese Nationalist government,” the Korean provisional government

organized the Korean independence army with the financial support of the Chinese government...Although the Korean force was small in China, together with the Chinese army it waged a determined fight against the Japanese for the independence of Korea.⁵⁶

⁵³ Geoff Simons (1995), p. 136.

⁵⁴ The Korean Provisional Government. August 5, 2002. [<http://www.dalgu.net/55815/w-19.htm>].

⁵⁵ Bae-ho Han. “The Current Korean Political Situation and Korea-China Relations.” The Korean Journal of International Studies. Vol. 29, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2002, p. 55.

⁵⁶ Bong-youn Choy. Korea: A History. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1971. pp. 189-190.

During World War II, in addition, the Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek advocated that Korea be granted independence after the war at the Cairo conference in December of 1943.

After the Allies, especially the U.S., victory over the Japanese troops in World War Two in August 1945, however, the United States and the Soviet Union began increasing their influence on the Korean peninsula by having their troops stationed in Korea under the name of eliminating the remaining Japanese troops on the peninsula. Consequently two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, which had just substituted for the Japanese influence after the long-lasting role of China in Korea, blocked the Chinese second bid on the peninsula. As a result of the escalation of the Cold War between the two superpowers during the second half of the 1940s, unfortunately, Korea was partitioned into two Koreas: the ROK was officially founded on August 15, 1948 under the United States' patronage through a U.N.-backed vote, whereas the DPRK was proclaimed on September 9, 1948 under that of the Soviet Union. Just as the two Koreas did in 1948, in addition, China would have the same fate as the two Koreas a year later.

F. SUMMARY: CHINA'S IMPACT ON KOREA UNTIL 1948

Although the first relations of Korea with China in the status of a state-to-a state bond originated from China's four commanderies, a sort of colony, influence over the Korean peninsula in about 108 B.C., Chinese did not directly rule over the commanderies. Besides, even though Korean people had autonomous rights to some large extent during that period, they--especially the Koguryo people--never gave up attempts at struggling with China to achieve independence and their endeavors finally brought the Chinese commanderies to an end in 313 A.D. However, it was definitely through the era of Chinese commanderies in Korea that the Koreans were also able to have contact with Chinese developed civilization including iron culture, such as Britons enjoyed Roman culture in the ancient times. This generative power helped to create three native kingdoms and later the unification of the three kingdoms by Silla.

After repelling the Chinese commanderies, Koguryo established tributary relations with the neighboring Chinese. The reason is because Koguryo needed Chinese advanced civilization to acquire such things as religious, political and cultural systems, so that it would prosper and defend itself from powerful neighbors' invasions, and attain unification. To obtain them from China, it was indispensable that Koguryo had relations with such powerful Chinese neighbors. During the three kingdoms period, Paekche and Silla strived to create an alliance with a Chinese dynasty for the same reasons as Koguryo. Through such processes, they naturally accepted a whole slew of Chinese cultural innovations and each of them also tried to take the best advantage of those innovations for becoming the most powerful country among them.

When Tang generals tried to hold sway over the whole Korean peninsula right after Silla unified the three kingdoms in 668 with the Tang dynasty's aid, a unified Silla repelled their ambition through war. Nevertheless, Silla set up a tributary but autonomous relationship with the Tang dynasty in order to maintain amicable relations, and at the same time, to import Chinese developed political, economic, and cultural systems, and eventually to become prosperous.

Lasting for about 470 years after the collapse of unified Silla, the Koryo dynasty established a centralized government on the basis of Chinese political institutions, and flourished through the cultural and economic exchanges with the Chinese Sung dynasty. After the collapse of the Sung, however, Koryo suffered from such non-Chinese dynasties as Khitan and Jurchen dynasty, and the Mongol empire during a large part of Koryo. As a result, Koryo had no choice but to establish tributary relations with Chinese or non-Chinese dynasties vis-à-vis their incessant invasions. Nevertheless, although Koryo was severely threatened by economic suffering, and political and spiritual oppression, during the 110 year era of the Mongol conquest over Koreans after fights between Koryo and Mongol peoples for 40 years, the Koryo people never totally became sinicized--unlike the fact that such non-Chinese peoples as the Mongols and Manchus became very assimilated into the civilized Chinese cultures and systems and then sinicized. Instead, Koryo people,

resurrected themselves from destruction by neighboring states, and used adversity as a springboard to new heights of civilization. This was a recurring pattern in the history of Korea.⁵⁷

During the Yi dynasty, Choson established a tributary relationship with the Ming dynasty and later the Ching dynasty.

Unlike the Mongol Empire of Yuan China, Ming respected the independence of Korea and never interfered with Korean politics. They never violated each other's borders.⁵⁸

The amicable relations between the Ming and Yi dynasty was a main driving force to repel the Japanese forces when Japan invaded Korea in 1592. In addition, it contributed to Choson's ability to achieve cultural development and internal prosperity particularly under the ruling period of King Se Jong (1418-1450): e.g., the Hangeul or Korean alphabet was invented under the support of King Se Jong.

The Chinese hardly received a big welcome on the peninsula, however, at least after the Ming dynasty fell to the Manchus. Korea was indeed a tributary state to China, but it had not always been so.⁵⁹

Although the Ching dynasty's defeat in the Sino-Japanese war gave rise to the Japanese colonization of Korea during the next 36 years, China harbored the Korean provisional government during that period and the Korean independence fighters were able to achieve their independence at last in 1945.

Almost all dynasties of Korea had no choice but to establish tributary relations with those of China because Korean dynasties could not afford to continue to fight against incessant invasions of much more powerful neighbors: Yen, Han, Sui, Tang, Liao (Khitans), Chin (Jurchens), Mongol empire, and Ching (Manchus). As for Korean dynasties, the tributary relations did not mean a token of unconditional obedience to Chinese dynasties, but a token of peace, survival, prosperity, and, at times, a passage for Western civilization. In other words, in spite of the tributary relations between the Sino-Korean dynasties, "Korea was fully autonomous, free to maintain relations with any country so long as such relations did not conflict with its tributary obligations to

⁵⁷ Kenneth B. Lee (1997), p. 61.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 95.

⁵⁹ Bruce Cumings (1997), p. 90.

China.”⁶⁰ Korean dynasties could keep their peace with China, maintain the ability to import an advanced civilization from China, and also develop their own creative culture through such a tributary system.

The Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and Japanese annexation of Choson in 1910 resulted in the decline of the Chinese influence over the Korean peninsula, but the 1945 Allies’ victory over Japan in World War Two made the Sino-Korean relationships become entangled with the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War era.

⁶⁰ Studies on Korea: A Scholar’s Guide. Key-Hiuk Kim (Ed.) Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980. p. 9.

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III. THE TWO KOREAS AND THE PRC IN THE COLD WAR ERA

Throughout the United States' modern history in East Asia, "the basic East Asian policy structure of the United States has been consistent...for about a century and a half, from the open door policy toward China in the nineteenth century: to prevent the rise of any hegemonic power in the region."⁶¹ Especially since the Korean War armistice and the U.S.-ROK alliance in 1953, the ROK has maintained a bilateral security treaty only with the United States. In addition, because the U.S. main interest on the Korean peninsula has been to defend South Korean sovereignty against an attack by North Korea, Washington was enthusiastic about helping Seoul with economic and military assistance and Seoul had depended solely on U.S. aid until the mid-1960s. However, Seoul began relying on Japanese economic and technology aid after the 1965 ROK-Japan normalization in the face of Korean historical antagonism against Japan. Overcoming Seoul's dependence on Washington and Tokyo, throughout the Cold War era, "South Korea in the 1980s appeared to be joining Japan as an economic rival of the United States."⁶² Thus, "the basic character of bilateral relations between Seoul and Washington has been transformed from an asymmetrical dependence to a growing interdependence."⁶³

From the beginning of the Cold War in Asia, on the other hand, the PRC's bilateral relations with the DPRK and the Soviet Union stemmed mostly from security interests against the U.S.-ROK and U.S.-Japan alliances. After the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969 and the Sino-U.S. rapprochement in 1972, however, Beijing tried to woo Pyongyang to stand away from the Soviet Union as well as to maintain friendly relations with it because "China's basic interest during and after the cold war has been to make

⁶¹ David I. Steinberg. "The Dichotomy of Pride and Vulnerability." The Two Koreas and the United States: Issues of Peace, Security, and Economic Cooperation. Dong, Wonmo (Ed.) New York: The M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2000. p. 99.

⁶² Edward A. Olsen. U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988. p. 21.

⁶³ Byung Chul Koh. The Foreign Policy Systems of North and South Korea. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1984. p. 214.

certain that no other power ever again acquires a dominant position in the [Korean] peninsula.”⁶⁴ However, as relations between Beijing and Moscow fluctuated, it had a deep impact on the two countries’ bilateral relations with Pyongyang.

While the Cold War came close to the end, “as North Korea treads cautiously between Moscow and Beijing to retain its independence, South Korea is attempting to reduce its military and diplomatic dependence on the United States and its economic dependence on Japan.”⁶⁵ Above all, since Deng Xiaoping embarked upon an open door policy emphasizing Chinese modernization, especially economic development from the late 1970s on, the PRC-ROK relations have been growing remarkably. In this chapter, the main causes of the Cold War in Asia will be briefly assessed, and then Seoul-Washington, Beijing-Pyongyang, and Seoul-Beijing bilateral relations will be probed throughout the Cold War era.

A. THE MAIN CAUSES OF THE COLD WAR IN ASIA

After the end of World War Two in 1945, the United States--contemplating the Soviet Union’s efforts to spread Communism especially in Eastern Europe (e.g. in Turkey, Greece and Iran)--announced the Truman Doctrine in March of 1947, launched the Marshall Plan in 1948, and organized the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in mid-1949 on the European continent. In part this was in order to contain the Soviet Union’s power because both European recovery through the Marshall Plan and stable European security through NATO could contribute to U.S. national interests and expanding democracy, i.e., preventing communism from prevailing in Europe through the Truman Doctrine as well. In fact, these U.S. measures in Europe were well underway and were working effectively. In addition, when the Soviet Union’s blockade of West Berlin had taken place from June 1948 through May 1949, the United States was able to succeed in containing the Soviet Union’s power in Europe with a superiority of strategic arms such as a number of B-29 bombers and atomic bombs as well as the superiority of its economy. “Indeed, Stalin’s primary concern at this time was his vulnerability to the

⁶⁴ Selig S. Harrison. Korean Endgame: A Strategy for Reunification and U.S. Disengagement. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002. p. 311.

⁶⁵ Young Whan Kihl. Politics and Policies in Divided Korea: Regimes in Contest. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1984. p. 200.

West's nuclear advantage.”⁶⁶ However, the Soviet Union successfully tested its first atomic bomb in 1949, “which shattered the American monopoly on the weapon widely regarded as the principal deterrent against a Soviet attack.”⁶⁷ As a result of the Soviet Union's acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1949, it pushed the United States to take a step toward the drafting and promotion of NSC-68 and it also indirectly caused the Korean War in 1950 to take place in Asia.

To make matters worse, due to the United States' announcement of “the termination of all economic and military assistance to Chang Kai-shek”⁶⁸ in August 1949 in the wake of his government's corruption and inefficiency, Mao Zedong “with the aid of large stores of captured Japanese weapons turned over to him by the Russians as their occupation forces withdrew from Manchuria”⁶⁹ by the autumn of 1949 was eventually able to announce the founding of the PRC on October 1, 1949. Even though the Soviet Union did not regard Mao Zedong and the CCP as the legitimate leader and party in China throughout the Chinese civil war, it was “the establishment in October 1949 of the People's Republic of China, a Communist state comprising a quarter of the world's population that promptly became a military ally and economic beneficiary of the Soviet Union”⁷⁰ that changed Moscow's view. After Mao visited the Soviet Union at the end of 1949 and signed a thirty-year Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance with Stalin in February 1950, which “was directed at Japan and, implicitly, at the United States”⁷¹ their ties were strengthened. From then on, the United States had to confront the two largest communist countries in the world, the Soviet Union and the PRC at the same time in the cold war in Asia, particularly in the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Therefore, both the U.S. policy shift toward China in favor of the CCP, though not intended, and the establishment of the PRC in the second half of 1949 played a key role

⁶⁶ James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver. United States Foreign Policy and World Order. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1985. p. 95

⁶⁷ Steven W. Hook and John Spanier. American Foreign Policy Since World War II. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000. p. 79

⁶⁸ William R. Keylor. The Twentieth-Century World: An International History. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. p. 351

⁶⁹ James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver (1985), p. 55.

⁷⁰ William R. Keylor (2001), p. 348.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

in the proliferation of the cold war in Asia because if the Chinese Nationalist government had won in the Chinese civil war, it would be impossible that such a series of communist expansions in Asia as “China’s annexation of neighboring Tibet, a treaty of friendship between China and the Soviet Union, and the invasion of South Korea by communist North Korea” would take place.⁷²

In sum, the Cold War in Asia began to emerge in 1949 when the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established on October 1 and the Soviet Union tested its first nuclear bombs, and it resulted from the U.S. policy shift, i.e., disengagement toward the pro-democracy Chang Kai-sek government, and the Soviet Union’s ambitions of expanding communism by using the PRC as the bastion of that mission in Asia. Therefore, the Soviet Union’s acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1949 and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s victory over the Nationalist Party (Kuo Min Tang or KMT) in the Chinese civil war in the same year played a crucial role in the advent of the Cold War in Asia. These two big events resulted in “a permanent and fundamental alteration in the shape of international relations” as well as “an equally permanent and fundamental change in American policy.”⁷³

B. THE ROK’S BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

In 1882 a treaty establishing diplomatic relations between the United States and Korea (which was at the time known as “the Land of the Morning Calm” by the Western countries) was signed in Tientsin, with China “acting as intermediary.” More than twenty years later the Taft-Katsura agreement between the United States and Japan in 1905 enabled Japan to establish a Japanese protectorate in Korea. In return, Japan had to acquiesce in the United States’ acquisition of the Philippines.⁷⁴ As a part of the results, Koreans severely suffered psychologically and physically from the Japanese atrocities during the 36 years from 1910 to 1945. Meanwhile, during World War II, the allies considered the Korean issue at several conferences. President Roosevelt and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden agreed in March 1943 that an international trusteeship would be established in Korea after the end of the war under the United States, China and

⁷² Steven W. Hook and John Spanier (2000), p. 68.

⁷³ James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver (1985), p. 103

⁷⁴ Matthew B. Ridgway. The Korean War. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967. pp. 5-6.

Russia.⁷⁵ President Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and the Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek decided at the Cairo Conference in November 1943 that Korea shall become free and independent after the war.⁷⁶ It was determined at the Teheran Conference attended by Roosevelt, Churchill and the Soviet Union's leader Stalin in November 1943 that the Koreans would need "forty years" as a "period of apprenticeship before full independence might be attained."⁷⁷ Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin "reiterated the agreement previously reached in Cairo about the principle of Korea's independence" at the Potsdam Conference held in July 1945.⁷⁸

Soon after the Japanese unconditional surrender to the United States in August 1945, the provisions regarding Korea declared at the Cairo and Potsdam conferences immediately came into effect, but the United States and the Soviet Union (in return for the Soviet declaration of war on Japan just six days before Japan's surrender) reached an agreement that "Russian troops should occupy Korea north of the thirty-eighth parallel, while those of the United States should occupy the area south of it" in order to get rid of the remaining Japanese troops on the peninsula.⁷⁹ Contemporarily, the Cold War between the two superpowers was getting more intense. Unfortunately, as a result, Korea was partitioned into two Koreas under a respectively different ideology: the ROK was officially founded on August 15, 1948 under the United States' patronage, whereas the DPRK was proclaimed on September 9, 1948 under that of the Soviet Union.

After respective declarations of the two Koreas, meanwhile, "the last Soviet forces were withdrawn in March 1949 and the Americans...followed suit in June."⁸⁰ To make matters worse, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson's speech approved by

⁷⁵ Anthony Eden. The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: The Reckoning. Boston, Massachusetts.: Houghton Mifflin, 1965. p. 438.

⁷⁶ US Department of State. Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Paper, Conferences at Cairo and Teheran. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1961. pp. 399-404.

⁷⁷ Robert E. Sherwood. Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History. New York: Harper, 1948. p. 777.

⁷⁸ Sung-Po Chu. "Sino-Korean Relations: Retrospect and Prospect." Foreign Policy of the Republic of China on Taiwan: An Unorthodox Approach. Yu San Wang (Ed.) New York: Praeger, 1990. p. 65

⁷⁹ Woo-keun Han. The History of Korea. Grafton K. Mintz. (Ed.) Seoul: East-West Center Press, 1970. p. 498.

⁸⁰ Michael Yahuda. The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific, 1945-1995. London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 1997. p. 118.

President Truman was delivered at the National Press Club in January 1950, which excluded South Korea from the U.S. defense line in the Pacific area, stretching from the Aleutian Islands, through Japan, the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa), the Philippines to Australia and New Zealand. The 1949 U.S. troops withdrawal from the ROK and the subsequent Acheson speech instigated Kim Il Sung to consult with Stalin about his intention to invade South Korea and Kim eventually got permission and support from Stalin.⁸¹ As a result, the Korean War began in June 1950, in which the U.S. military casualties reached almost 140,000. However, the war contributed to the cementing of U.S.-ROK ties. About two months after General Harrison, for the United Nations, and General Nam Il, for the Chinese and North Koreans, signed the Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953,⁸² the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty was signed on October 1, 1953 and then entered into force from November 17, 1954. Since then, this treaty has been “the pillar of the ROK’s security and national strategy” as well as “an institutional guarantee for the USFK to be stationed in Korea to deter another war in the Korean peninsula, and [provide] a legal ground for the combined defense.”⁸³

Even though the number of the U.S. military personnel was remarkably and gradually reduced “from over 200,000 in 1954 to 73,000 in 1955, and were cut below 60,000 by 1960”, the U.S. government made every endeavor to rehabilitate the ROK ruined during the war period and to develop its military forces because it believed that “improved economic conditions and an enhanced sense of security would pay off in increased political stability and effectiveness.”⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the ROK’s major economic development was not begun until General Park Chung Hee came to power after a successful military coup led by him in 1961. The reasons that Park decided to wage a military coup to overthrow the civilian government were as follows: President Rhee Syng

⁸¹ Steven W. Hook and John Spanier (2000), p. 73.

⁸² Matthew B. Ridgway (1967), p. 225.

⁸³ The Ministry of National Defense (The Republic of Korea). ROK-US Alliance and USFK. The Office of the Deputy Minister for Policy, MND (Ed.) Yongsan-gu, Seoul: Oh Sung Planning & Printing, 2002. pp. 37-38.

⁸⁴ William J. Barnds. “The United States and the Korean Peninsula.” The Two Koreas in East Asian Affairs. William J. Barnds (Ed.) New York: New York University Press, 1976. pp. 172-173

Man's regime (1948-1960) did not dedicate its efforts to recover war-torn South Korea, instead, it depended heavily on the economic aid from the United Nations and especially the United States.

During the period 1953-1960 the United States provided approximately \$1.7 billion of aid to Korea. The United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency also provided \$122 million in aid, 70 percent of which was contributed to the United Nations by the United States.⁸⁵

President Rhee's personal autocracy and corruption (especially, the 1960 electoral depravity) led to South Korean demonstrations breaking out, which eventually forced President Rhee to resign. After President Rhee's resignation in 1960, the short-lived, inconsequential Yun Bo Sun administration (August 1960-May 1961) and the premiership of Chang Myon encouraged South Korean peoples' protests to take place as well. Eventually, under this unstable political situation, General Park Chung Hee led a military coup against a burgeoning government on May 16, 1961.

After his inauguration, President Park Chung Hee was anxiously willing to develop South Korea's economy and to upgrade its military defense capability, in order to obtain enhanced self-defense ability against North Korea. To achieve President Park's main purposes, the Basic Relations Treaty was signed between the ROK and Japan in June 1965 for the purposes of obtaining economic aid from Japan and reinforcing U.S. approval of his legitimacy as the ROK President, regardless of most of Koreans' opposition to normalization with Japan due to Korean historical animosity toward the Japanese. To this day the ROK and Japan remain averse to a bilateral defense treaty. In the mid-1960s, in addition, the Park government took the bold action of sending ROK troops as a close and friendly ally of Americans--as well as businessmen and civilian workers--to the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) or South Vietnam, and consequently about "312,000 South Korean troops were deployed to Vietnam" from the mid-1960s to 1973. As a result, "It is estimated that the United States paid more than \$ 10 billion for the South Korean troops, including \$ 3.16 billion in military assistance since 1966."⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Eul Yong Park. "Foreign Economic Policies and Economic Development." The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Korea. Youngnok Koo and Sung-joo Han. (Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. p. 109.

⁸⁶ Frank Baldwin. "Introduction." Without Parallel: The American-Korean Relationship Since 1945. Frank Baldwin (Ed.) New York: Pantheon Books, 1974. pp. 28-30.

President Park's 1965 decision to dispatch its troops to South Vietnam became part of the motivating power of the ROK's rapid economic development dubbed "the Miracle of the Han River." Just as the Korean War helped rehabilitate Japan defeated in World War Two, so did the Vietnam War further the development of the ROK economy devastated during the Korean War. It also helped to develop and elevate relations between the United States and the ROK because, at that time, the United States was seeking to gain international support for its war on behalf of South Vietnam struggling against communist North Vietnam. By then, in fact, the ROK had heavily counted on U.S. economic and military aid since 1953. For example, U.S. economic aid accounted for about "5% of South Korea's total gross national product" and its aid--including both economic and military aid--had provided "nearly 10% of South Korea's GNP" from 1954 to 1970.⁸⁷

Relations between the two countries became strained by virtue of an announcement of the Nixon doctrine (or the Guam doctrine) during the first half of the 1970s and due to the Carter administration's U.S. military pullout plan from the Korean peninsula during the second half of the decade. The tense U.S.-ROK relations urged the ROK and Japan to cooperate together due to the two countries' security concern vis-à-vis North Korea and about the U.S. troop withdrawal plan from the ROK. First, the Nixon doctrine, enunciated on Guam in July 1969, was a new security policy for the United States in Asia. "Henceforth," according to the doctrine, "its allies would be expected to do the bulk of the ground fighting while the Americans would contribute with their navy and air force from off-shore as well as with military supplies and military training."⁸⁸ This doctrine had a great impact particularly on two countries' security: South Vietnam and South Korea.

In line with the Nixon doctrine American military personnel in Asia were decreased from 727, 300 in January 1969 to 284, 000 by December 1971. The cuts were most evident in Vietnam.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Han Sungjoo. "South Korea and The United States: The Alliance Survives." *Asian Survey*. Vol. 20, No. 11, November 1980, p. 1076.

⁸⁸ Michael Yahuda (1997), p. 65.

⁸⁹ Victor D. Cha. *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999. p. 61.

As an aftermath of the doctrine, a joint communiqué between the ROK-U.S. governments regarding the U.S. withdrawal from the Korean peninsula was issued in February 1971 after, in July 1970, the U.S. government decided to withdraw some of its troops from the Korean peninsula. It concluded a reduction of twenty thousand U.S. troops resulting from “the deactivation of the American Seventh Infantry Division from the reserve position, removal of three Air Force squadrons, and the pullback of the Second Infantry Division from front-line positions along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).”⁹⁰ It also included the U.S. military assistance program at the value of \$1.5 billion that would last for five years “to modernize the ROK military and eventually facilitate the total withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea.”⁹¹ Second, President Carter’s pullout plan was released in 1977 after the fall of Saigon in April 1975. His plan’s main purpose was a complete U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea by 1982. Its details included the immediate pullout of one combat brigade (six thousand troops) of the Second Infantry Division by 1978; the withdrawal of a second brigade and all noncombat support personnel (nine thousand troops) by 1980; and the complete withdrawal of remaining personnel, U.S. headquarters, and nuclear weapons by 1982.⁹² In addition, it was strongly believed that President Carter whose administration emphasized human rights in U.S. policy linked problematic human rights issues under the Park regime (1961-1979) with his pullout plan. However, Carter eventually suspended his withdrawal plan in 1979 because of “a combination of congressional pressure, revised intelligence assessments of North Korea, and criticism from Asian allies.”⁹³ Seoul, in return, signed an agreement with Washington “to raise its defense burden to 6% of GNP” in June 1979.⁹⁴

In the late 1970s, relations between the two countries became cool due to the second coup led by General Chun Doo Hwan in December 1979. It was remarkably different from the first anti-government coup led by Park Chung Hee against a nine month old inept Yun Bo Sun government right after the 1960 resignation of corrupt

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 62.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 62.

⁹² Ibid., p. 145.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 146.

⁹⁴ Jong-Sup Lee and Uk Heo. “The U.S.-South Korea Alliance: Free-Riding or Bargaining?” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XLI, No. 5, September/October 2001, p. 823.

President Rhee Syng Man because the second one was an intra-military coup and then subsequently helped make General Chun the ROK President. However, during the 1980s, especially the period “in which Chun and Reagan overlapped ...South Korea’s confidence in the U.S. commitment to Korea...was at a new high, U.S.-R.O.K. economic ties blossomed so that U.S. economic and military aid were no longer necessary and were terminated [in 1979], and, for most of the period, U.S. tolerance for Seoul’s political excesses was great indeed.”⁹⁵

After the assassination of Park Chung Hee by Kim Jae Kyu, the then director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), on October 26, 1979 and an intra-military coup led by General Chun on December 12, 1979, the Kwangju Democratic Movement (*kwangju min ju hwa un dong*) took place, in which students and workers in Kwangju city made a feverishly fierce demonstration for real democracy and at the same time against a group of new military powers ruling over the ROK in the face of the President Choi Kyu Ha government (October 1979-August 1980). Nevertheless Chun came to power in August 1980 in the wake of the Kwangju atrocities in May 1980 through the process of ruthlessly and brutally quelling the movement. Under this circumstance, “Acceptance of the Chun Doo Hwan government by the South Korean people [could have] been enhanced by the extent to which the regime has been able to generate support from its key allies, the United States and Japan.”⁹⁶ At this point, because President Chun became one of the first heads of state to be invited by President Reagan to Washington on February 1981 after the conservative Ronald Regan took office in January 1981, the Chun government could receive extensive support from South Korean people as well as the U.S. leadership at last. In addition, the Reagan-Chun summit in 1981 proclaimed that “U.S. combat forces would remain indefinitely in Korea” and that the United States would resume “the previously suspended security consultative conferences (SCC) dialogue between defense departments” and would reinstitute the annual U.S.-ROK Team Spirit joint military exercises that were initiated in 1976.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Edward A. Olsen (1988), pp. 12-13.

⁹⁶ Young Whan Kihl (1984), p. 172.

⁹⁷ Victor D. Cha (1999), pp. 169-172.

In terms of U.S.-ROK trade in the 1980s, South Korea became a significant trading partner of the United States as a result of Park Chung Hee's enthusiasm for fostering export-oriented industries since 1962. The U.S.-ROK trade volume came to about \$32 billion in 1988 but "the size of the bilateral trade imbalance...rose to a near \$10 billion level in South Korea's favor in 1987."⁹⁸ As a result, trade frictions between Seoul and Washington ensued from the U.S. trade deficit, which caused the United States to take such strong actions as the U.S. Super 301 Clause as well as the U.S. coercive demand for opening up the ROK agricultural sector to reduce the trade deficit. Such U.S. actions became a main factor bringing about anti-Americanism in South Korea. "In the 1980s, because of the alleged American implications in the Kwangju incident and growing bilateral trade frictions, the rise of anti-Americanism in South Korea added a new dimension to the Seoul-Washington alliance."⁹⁹

In the meantime, Roh Tae Woo, Chun Doo Hwan's close friend and colleague in the ROK Military Academy, was selected as a new president in 1987 through the first direct presidential election by the South Korean people and succeeded Chun in 1988. As he emphasized his Northern Policy in the 1987 campaign pledges and his 1988 inaugural address, President Roh issued, on July 7, 1988, a declaration regarding the Northern policy known as the 'July 7 Declaration' that "South Korea will seek common prosperity with the North based on the concept of a single community and, while helping the North improve relations with friendly noncommunist nations, will try to normalise its own relations with China, the Soviet Union, and other communist countries."¹⁰⁰ Consequently, with the U.S. backing of President Roh Tae Woo's *Nordpolitik*, South Korea was able to establish diplomatic relation with Hungary in September 1988 during the Seoul Olympics period, and then with Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Mongolia by 1990. "The approval and support of Seoul's allies, especially the United States," in fact, "has been essential for South Korea to pursue its *Nordpolitik*

⁹⁸ Jin Park. "Political Change in South Korea: The Challenge of the Conservative Alliance." Asian Survey, Vol. XXX, No. 12, December 1990, p. 1164.

⁹⁹ Jin Park (Asian Survey, Vol. XXX, No. 12, December 1990), p. 1163.

¹⁰⁰ Kim Hak-Joon. "The Republic of Korea's Northern Policy: Origin, Development, and Prospects." Korea Under Roh Tae-woo: Democratisation, Northern Policy and Inter-Korean Relations. James Cotton (Ed.) Canberra ACT, Australia: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd., 1993. p. 258.

initiatives.”¹⁰¹ Above all, with Washington’s patronage, summit talks between President Roh and Mikhail Gorbachev could be held in San Francisco during Gorbachev’s state visit to the United States in June 1990. Finally it caused Moscow-Seoul formal relations to be established on September 30, 1990. Ironically, however, the increasing development of Seoul’s relations with Communist states, in particular the Soviet Union and the PRC, seems to cause its economic and security dependence on the United States to dwindle in the post-Cold War era.

C. THE PRC’S BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE DPRK

After overcoming more than a century of humiliation from the West and Japan since the Opium War in the 19th century and achieving the 1949 nation-wide victory over the Kuo Min Tang (KMT or the Nationalist Party) in a civil war lasting for several decades, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) cadres were able to completely achieve China’s sovereignty. Thereafter, the PRC was proclaimed by Mao Zedong on October 1, 1949 and set up diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level with the DPRK in the same year. Above all, on the other hand, the PRC--right after its establishment--needed economic aid and military technology from the Soviet Union to reconstruct and recover in the post-civil war period. China proper was heavily devastated during the civil war that had lasted since the 1920s and during the war with Japan. Soviet aid also was needed to unify with Taiwan--into which Generalissimo Chang Kai-shek’s government fled after the defeat of his Nationalist Party by Mao Zedong’s Chinese Communist Party--and for the purpose of integrating and stabilizing people’s opinions within the PRC. The PRC’s need for Soviet assistance, in other words, resulted from political instability and particularly economic hardship that had been getting worse during the several decades long fratricidal civil war. Therefore, less than six month after establishing the PRC, Mao Zedong “was persuaded to sign on February 14, 1950, a thirty-year Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance [with the Soviet Union] that was directed at Japan and, implicitly, at the United States.”¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Charles K. Armstrong. “South Korea’s ‘Northern Policy’.” *The Pacific Review*. Vol. 3, No 1, 1990, p. 43.

¹⁰² William R. Keylor (2001), pp. 351-352.

Although it is, in general, believed that this treaty between the PRC and the Soviet Union played a crucial role in the PRC's making a decision to enter the Korean War on the DPRK's side in early October of 1950, when UN forces crossed the 38th parallel and marched toward the Yalu, there are some other crucial factors. These include the PRC's physical security, especially with regard to the strategically and economically important Manchuria; the CCP leaders' intention to win a glorious victory in Korea in order to enhance communist control of China's state and society as well as to promote China's international prestige and influence; and a moral responsibility in terms of the Confucian point of view. The last factor resulted from the fact that "Many Korean patriots who had escaped to China during the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910-1945) participated in the civil war on the side of the Chinese communists, which the Chinese communists gratefully acknowledged."¹⁰³ In addition, when Lin Biao's communist forces in South Manchuria were defeated by Kuo Min Tang (the Nationalist Party) troops in late 1946 and then most of them fled into North Korea, Kim Il Sung helped them by providing camps until they returned to China. "Moreover, the Northeast Field Army (predecessor of the Fourth Field Army) [created just before the Korean War broke out] recruited thousands of soldiers of Korean nationality living in Northeast China, and most of these were subsequently transferred to the North Korean army."¹⁰⁴ When the U.S. military intervention in Korea and the U.S. Seventh Fleet's movement to the Taiwan Strait soon after the outbreak of the Korean War endangered Chinese security interests, Mao ordered the CCP's Central Military Commission (CMC) to establish the Northeast Border Defense Army (NEBDA) about two weeks after the onset of the war. "In mid-July [1950], in accordance with Mao's ideas of crisis management, the CCP leadership initiated the 'Great Movement to Resist America and Assist Korea,' starting to fit the entire country to a war orbit."¹⁰⁵ The PRC, encouraged by the Soviet Union, at last entered the Korean War with numerous and valuable manpower of the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV) when UN forces crossed the 38th parallel and marched toward the Yalu

¹⁰³ Ilpyong J. Kim. "China and The Two Koreas in the Post-Cold War World." Korea Observer. Vol. XXVI, No. 1, Spring 1995, p. 9.

¹⁰⁴ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai. Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993. p. 135.

¹⁰⁵ Chen Jian. China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. p. 218.

River in early October 1950. Although the PRC suffered numerous casualties in the Korean War, it could revive the Chinese pride humiliated by the Western powers and Japan during about 100 years in the international arena since the Opium War of 1840. It also could maintain and enhance the CCP's revolution in the domestic arena through the Korean War.

During the 1950s, the PRC and DPRK enjoyed the inseparable blood ties cemented during the Korean War in the face of Moscow's attempts to exert influence over both Beijing and Pyongyang in return for Soviet economic assistance to them. After the end of the Korean War, the PRC became a second benefactor for the DPRK compared to the Soviet Union in terms of capabilities for both economic and military technology assistance. China did this in spite of its severe casualties including around 152,000 deaths and about 230,000 wounded soldiers out of 1.35 million Chinese forces participating in the Korean War, a failure to unify Taiwan, and economically heavy losses valued at "about 10 billion yuan (equal to U.S. \$ 2.7 billion)" due to the war.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, although the PRC received economic aid from the Soviet Union to restore its ruined economy, because China's participation in the Korean War under the alliance with the Soviet Union separated China from most non-Communist countries politically and economically in the early 1950s, the PRC did not request to get money back from the DPRK for the cost of the war. Instead, it wrote off all Pyongyang's war debts to Beijing and assisted North Korea by providing aid for restoring the DPRK economy.

From the mid 1950s, an ideological dispute between Beijing and Moscow began growing due to a series of events: Beijing's disappointments over Moscow's insufficient aid to China; Moscow's pursuit of "peaceful coexistence with the West"; the Soviet uncooperative attitude toward the Sino-Indian dispute in 1959; Moscow's suspending atomic and economic assistance programs in 1959 and 1960; and Beijing's denunciation of "the Soviet Union's humiliating retreat" in the Cuban missile crisis in the early 1960s.¹⁰⁷ Just as relations between Beijing and Moscow began deteriorating from the mid 1950s, so did Pyongyang's relations with Moscow when the DPRK refused a Soviet

¹⁰⁶ Chen Jian. "Chinese Policy and the Korean War." The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research. Lester H. Brune. (Ed.) Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996. p. 202.

¹⁰⁷ William R. Keylor (2001), pp. 362-364.

attempt to “shape the North Korean economy to serve Soviet economic priorities” in 1956. Such a Soviet bid “led to North Korean efforts to attract Chinese aid as an offset to Soviet dependence,” and the Soviet military and economic aid to Pyongyang was suspended in 1962 (though it was resumed in 1965) when the DPRK denounced the Soviet Union as “revisionist” during the Cuban missile crisis as did the PRC.¹⁰⁸ While the Pyongyang-Moscow and Beijing-Moscow relations were getting cool, Pyongyang was indirectly improving relations with Beijing.

Meanwhile, when a military coup led by General Park Chung Hee took place on May 16, 1961, in South Korea, it caused Pyongyang to establish a security treaty with both Moscow and Beijing because of Kim Il Sung’s concerns about a likely attack on the North by the South. The Soviet Union signed a mutual defense treaty with the DPRK on July 6, 1961 and the PRC signed a mutual defense treaty with North Korea on July 11, 1961, three years after the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV)’ complete withdrawal from North Korea in 1958.

During the escalation of the tensions between Beijing and Moscow from the mid-1960s, the PRC tested its first atomic bomb in 1964 and its first hydrogen bomb in 1967 in spite of the Soviet unilateral cessation of an atomic assistance program to China in 1959. As the Sino-Soviet dispute grew more and more heated from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, both the Soviet Union and the PRC gave the DPRK economic and military assistance to a great extent to make the DPRK favorable to each side because the Chinese leaders regarded the DPRK as a strategic ally or a counterbalance against the Soviet Union and vice versa. Kim Il Sung enjoyed extracting assistance from both of them. “By 1976,” for example, “Soviet grants and loans to Pyongyang totaled \$1.53 billion, against \$967 million from China.”¹⁰⁹ In fact, the PRC had held a rigid one-Korea policy (that is, while Beijing maintained the traditional friendship and alliance with Pyongyang, it did not recognize the legitimacy of Seoul government) until the mid 1980s. This one-Korea policy of the PRC derived not only from the Chinese blood ties with North Korea through the Korean War, but also from their competition for influence over Pyongyang in the Sino-Soviet conflict, which was the main reason why the PRC had given a high priority

¹⁰⁸ Selig S. Harrison (2002), p. 333.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

for a couple of decades to the DPRK sharing a border with China. However, the Sino-Soviet border clashes at Damansky (Zhenbao) Island in the Ussuri River and the Xinjiang/Kazakhstan border in March 1969 in which at least 800 Chinese and 30 Russian soldiers were killed led the PRC to shift its national policy from an ideological approach to pragmatism in the 1970s. Recognizing their defeat in the 1969 armed conflict with the Soviet Union, the Chinese realized the Russian military power's superiority and needed a guarantor for its national security and economic development. At this point, "China hopes that U.S. power and influence will balance Soviet power and influence in the Pacific area."¹¹⁰

Under the circumstances, Zho Enlai's four modernizations program in the early 1970s, and Deng Xiaoping's reform and open-door policy from the late 1970s onward reflected well the Chinese national policy shift. In consequence of it, President Nixon's visit to China in February 1972 during which the Shanghai communiqué was issued played a great role in bringing détente into the Northeast Asia region. As a result, a joint communiqué between North and South Korea on July 4, 1972 proved to be only peace on paper as the then ROK Premier Kim Jong Pil mentioned when Pyongyang unilaterally annulled the Seoul-Pyongyang dialogue in 1973. However, the basic principles guiding unification through mutual cooperation and peaceful means still apply today. They also apply to the Sino-Japanese rapprochement at the Tanaka-Zhou summit in September 1972, the Sino-Japanese treaty of peace and friendship in August 1978, and the Sino-U.S. diplomatic normalization in January 1979 that ensued from Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972. "As the PRC improved its relations with the U.S. and Japan," therefore,

Beijing's hostility toward the ROK also decreased. Not only did the Chinese cease to see the ROK as an enemy, but also they began to recognize [Seoul as a good] trading partner and as a source of capital and high technology.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ John E. Endicott and William R. Heaton. The Politic of East Asia: China, Japan, Korea. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1978. p. 120.

¹¹¹ Parris H.Chang. "Beijing's Policy Toward Korea and PRC-ROK Normalization of Relation." The Changing Order in Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula. Manwoo Lee and Richard W. Mansbach. (Ed.) Seoul: IFES, Kyungnam University, 1993. p. 160.

Even though Beijing officially maintained a one-Korea policy all the time during the Cold War era, the PRC eventually began indirect trade with the ROK via Hong Kong since 1979.

From Moscow's point of view, the Sino-U.S. and Sino-Japan normalization raised the Soviet security concerns about a possible "two-front threat" from the United States and the PRC with atomic bombs. Coupled with these Soviet concerns, "there was thus a greater temptation in Moscow to cripple China before the seemingly inevitable confrontation with the United States or before Sino-American ties solidified into a full alliance."¹¹² It pushed Moscow to come closer to Pyongyang. After "Moscow decided in 1984 to prepare for the worst-case scenario of a military conflict with Beijing by strengthening its ties with Pyongyang," the first invitation for Kim Il Sung to visit Moscow in seventeen years and--thereafter--a huge Soviet military aid offer to Pyongyang took place. This aid included such "costly sophisticated equipment" as aircrafts (Mig-23, 29, and SU-25), missiles (Scud, SA-3, and AT-3), T-62 tanks and aid for building a helicopter factory that "pushed the grand total of Soviet cold war military aid to Pyongyang to \$ 11.2 billion."¹¹³ After Gorbachev came to power in March 1985, however, he "placed a high priority on improving relations with China and was willing to meet Beijing's demands regarding the three obstacles."¹¹⁴ In line with the renewal of the U.S.-Soviet détente during 1985-87, the PRC eventually reestablished normal relations with the Soviet Union in May 1989, about ten years after Beijing's abrogation in 1980 of a thirty-year Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance signed in 1950.

In the meantime, when the Tienanmen Democratic Movement took place in 1989, the Chinese leaders brutally quelled the people participating in the movement by using military troops and weapons of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This incident caused the West, especially the United States, to impose economic sanctions on Beijing.

¹¹² John W. Garver. Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, 1993. p. 99.

¹¹³ Selig S. Harrison (2002), p. 334.

¹¹⁴ John W. Garver. "The New Type of Sino- Soviet Relations." Asian Survey. Vol. 29, No. 12, December 1989, p. 1137. Three obstacles that Beijing demanded to Moscow at that time are as follows: "(1) Moscow must pressure Vietnam to withdraw its military forces from Cambodia; (2) Soviet forces must withdraw from Afghanistan; and (3) Moscow must withdraw militarily from Mongolia and substantially reduce its forces along the Sino-Soviet border." See John W. Garver (1993), p. 101.

“The primary goal of Chinese foreign policy after the Tienanmen massacre was to improve the international environment in China’s favor and bring back support for its economic reform.” To meet this goal, Beijing was “ready to establish or restore diplomatic relations with all nations, especially neighboring countries, regardless of historical hostility, differences in political systems and ideological bases.”¹¹⁵ During the late 1980s, while Moscow tried gradually to distance itself from Pyongyang and move closer to Seoul in order to gain economic aid from South Korea, Beijing strived to take a more equidistant posture toward Pyongyang and Seoul through trade and sports exchanges—including Beijing’s participation in the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, as did Moscow. Under these circumstances, Moscow eventually set up diplomatic relations with Seoul in September 1990. In fact, Moscow’s normalization with Seoul in 1990 paved the way for Beijing’s normalization with Seoul in 1992 and became a good excuse to explain the PRC’s normalization policy to Pyongyang. In terms of North Korea’s economic situation, “Pyongyang’s inability to repay its international debts incurred during the early 1970s caused a major embarrassment and left North Korea’s economy and trade in the doldrums.”¹¹⁶ After the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1990 and the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, the PRC thenceforth became a major benefactor for the DPRK because Pyongyang began to heavily rely on economic aid from Beijing more than before due to Russia’s withdrawal of economic assistance as well as its demand for hard currency in their trade with North Korea since 1991. Pyongyang, by that time, owed Moscow “a sum equivalent to US\$2 billion, and more than US\$500 million is due to China.”¹¹⁷ Beijing, however, has strived to “ease the economic burden of aid to Pyongyang, and the bilateral trade volume declined from \$562 million in 1989 to \$483 million in 1990.”¹¹⁸ As the

¹¹⁵ Hong Liu. “The Sino-South Korean Normalization: A Triangular Explanation.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXIII, No. 11, November 1993, p. 1093.

¹¹⁶ Chong-Sik Lee. “Political Change, Revolution, and the Dialogue in the Two Korea.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXIX, No. 11, November 1989, pp. 1036-1037.

¹¹⁷ Eugene Bazhanov and Natasha Bazhanov. “Soviet Views on North Korea: The Domestic Scene and Foreign Policy.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXI, No. 12, December 1991, p. 1134.

¹¹⁸ Jia Hao and Zhuang Qubing. “China’s Policy toward the Korean Peninsula.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXII, No. 12, December 1992, p. 1143.

The authors quoted it from State Bureau of Statistics: *Zhongguo Thngji Nianjian, 1991* (Statistical yearbook of China) (Beijing: Chinese Statistics Press), p. 620.

Cold War era came close to the end, under these circumstances, Pyongyang was regarded as a chronic economic burden to Beijing, whereas Seoul was seen by Beijing as a good trade partner.

D. THE PRC-ROK BILATERAL RELATIONS

Even though diplomatic normalization between the PRC and ROK was set up in 1992, the PRC, even before then, began to unofficially maintain a two-Koreas policy (that is, the PRC de facto recognized both South Korea and North Korea as legitimate governments on the Korean peninsula), thanks to Deng Xiaoping's reform policies and South Korea's unbelievably rapid economic development.

The first direct contact between the PRC and the ROK unexpectedly occurred in 1983. "China's policy of contacts with South Korea...began in May 1983 when the Chinese used the hijacking of a Chinese civilian aircraft to Seoul as an excuse for opening contacts."¹¹⁹ Right after this incident took place, the PRC dispatched a negotiation team consisting of 33 persons to Seoul.

As a result of their friendly but intense discussions, Shen [the head of the PRC's delegates] and Gong [assistant minister of foreign affairs] signed a nine-article memorandum on May 10, 1983. Because this document listed Gong as representing "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Republic of Korea," it implied China's tacit de facto acknowledgment...of South Korea's governmental authority.¹²⁰

Two years after this event, intergovernmental contacts between the two countries happened once again because, when a drifting PLA torpedo boat with two mutineers was towed to a nearby Korean harbor by a South Korean fishing boat, three PLA naval ships invaded the ROK's territorial waters. At the time, the South Korean government swiftly and fairly dealt with it, in the process of solving this affair. Therefore, the Chinese began to have affirmative feelings toward South Korea. After these two important incidents, a number of contacts and visits took place among the businessmen and politicians between the two countries in China proper and the international arena. A huge number of Chinese

¹¹⁹ Norman D. Levin. Evolving Chinese and Soviet Policies toward the Korean Peninsula. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1988. p. 2.

¹²⁰ Chae Jin Lee. China and Korea: Dynamic Relations. Stanford, CA: Hoover Press, 1996. pp. 106-107.

athletes, in particular, participated in both the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul. As a result, these two international games that were successfully hosted by South Koreans gave a positive impression to the Chinese.

Just before the commencement of the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, ROK President Roh Tae Woo's administration (1988-1992) launched its *Nordpolitik*, or Northern Policy. "Inspired by the West German *ostpolitik*, the policy called for the improvement of inter-Korean relations as well as South Korea's relations with other socialist powers in conformity with the principles of equality, respect, and mutual prosperity."¹²¹ As a result of this policy, the ROK could establish full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1990. In addition, "President Roh Tae Woo's *Nordpolitik*... wooed Chinese leaders to recognize the potential for exponential growth in ROK-PRC economic ties."¹²² Eventually, the PRC and the ROK agreed to exchange trade offices in 1990 and signed a trade agreement in 1991. Under the circumstances, Chinese Premier Li Peng successfully persuaded Kim Il Sung to enter the United Nations together with the ROK in order to make a good excuse for the coming normalization of China's relations with South Korea as well as to isolate Taiwan from the international arena through normalization with the ROK (because, at the time, the ROK was one of few countries in Asia that recognized the ROC as a legitimate Chinese government). Thus North Korea finally joined the United Nations with South Korea as separate members in September 1991. In addition, two important accords between North and South Korea, the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, Exchanges and Co-operation, came in effect in February 1992. These events became a main driving force for the establishment of PRC-ROK full diplomatic relations that would be eventually realized on August 24, 1992. *Nordpolitik*, in fact, played a key role in establishing normalization with the PRC as well as the Soviet Union.

¹²¹ Samuel S. Kim. "The Making of China's Korea Policy in the Era of Reform." The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000. David M. Lampton (Ed.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001. pp. 376-377.

¹²² Scott Snyder. "The Rise of U.S.-China Rivalry and Its Implications for the Korean Peninsula." Korean Security Dynamics in Transition. Kyung-Ae Park and Dalchoong Kim. New York: Palgrave, 2001. p.120.

Although the PRC-ROK full diplomatic relations were established in 1992, on the other hand, Beijing and Seoul started economic relations in 1979. Since the late 1970s, Deng Xiaoping had embarked on an open-door policy as well as spurred “the four modernizations--that is, the modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense.”¹²³ The main purpose of Deng Xiaoping’s reform policies was to achieve economic development or modernization, even though “among the goals of the Chinese revolution [reform policies] have been the achievement of territorial integrity, the development of national power, economic modernization, and the achievement of socialism.”¹²⁴ In order to achieve these goals, the PRC had already begun to diplomatically and economically interact with non-communist countries in the early 1970s. The motive for doing so was the 1969 border clash between the PRC and the Soviet Union. As a result of the military clash in 1969, the CCP’s high-rank leaders acknowledged that the modern technology, economy and military power of the Soviet Union were much more superior to those of the PRC, and regarded the Soviet Union as “China’s antagonistic contradiction”¹²⁵ as well because they were concerned about the Soviet Union’s predominance of military strength being able to do harm to the Chinese national interest. At this point, the PRC needed partners that could afford to help assure Chinese security as well as economic development that could help the modernization of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) for the purpose of confronting the Soviet Union’s troops. Such a trend, as mentioned above, played an important role in commencing economic relations between the PRC and the ROK in the late 1970s. Although the economic interaction between the PRC and the ROK was an indirect form of trade via a third nation, in fact, it resulted from such Chinese reform policies as the four modernizations policy, open-door policy, and so forth. From the beginning of the Sino-South Korean indirect trade, Hong Kong played an important role in the trade. Through such indirect trade via Hong Kong, the two countries began to trade in the volume of \$19 million in 1979 and two years later the volume increased to \$280 million. Although the

¹²³ Kenneth Lieberthal. Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, INC., 1995. p. 131. Premier Zhou Enlai for the first time called for comprehensive four modernizations at the Fourth National People’s Congress in January 1975.

¹²⁴ John E. Endicott and William R. Heaton (1978), p. 117.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

1981 volume constituted 0.34 % of total Chinese foreign trade, it was more than half that of the Sino-North Korean trade.¹²⁶ From the mid-1980s onward, the amount of Chinese trade with the ROK exceeded that of its trade with the DPRK at last. “In 1986, for example, bilateral commerce through Hong Kong increased seven percent to \$646 million...[this] figure exceeds by a substantial margin China’s bilateral trade with North Korea, which in 1986 totaled only \$515 million.”¹²⁷

After the ROK successfully hosted the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, the South Korean government sincerely provided China with advice about tourist industries and financial and technological assistance for the Beijing Asian Games in 1990. Deng’s reform policies, the increasing trade volume, and South Korea’s cordially favorable attitude toward China preparing for the Beijing Asian Games, in fact, had a great influence over the two countries agreement to exchange trade offices in 1990. After that, the PRC and the ROK could start direct trade and signed a trade agreement in 1991. From then on the PRC began to officially recognize South Korea’s government as an economic and diplomatic partner as well as the legal government of the ROK.

¹²⁶ Chae Jin Lee (1996), p. 144.

¹²⁷ Norman D. Levin (1988), p. 3.

IV. THE TWO KOREAS AND THE PRC IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

Throughout the Cold War period, South Korea was able to rehabilitate itself from the tragic trauma of the Korean War under the United States' economic and security aegis, and, in return, Seoul remained one of the most cordial allies for the United States in Northeast Asia as well as all Asia regions. "As the Cold War evolved during the Reagan years, South Korea played a steadfast role as a regional security partner for the United States"--it, for instance, had demonstrated its cooperation in the Vietnam War. "South Korea reinforced that role through its efforts on the foreign policy front to diversify its economic and geopolitical interdependence."¹²⁸ As a result of *Nordpolitik*, the most valuable of Seoul's foreign policy efforts in the late 1980s, Seoul could establish full diplomatic relations with many communist states in Eastern Europe and, above all, with Pyongyang's two most important allies, the Soviet Union in 1990 and the PRC in 1992. After that, while Pyongyang has felt itself more isolated from the world and sought to develop nuclear weapon systems to deal with Washington, Seoul has actively participated in multilateral organizations for maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

On the other hand, due to the Sino-U.S. normalization in 1979, the reestablishment of Sino-Soviet normalization in 1989, and particularly the end of the Cold War era after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, China has had no direct threats from a superpower since the early 1990s. Under these favorable circumstances, "China's national goals are peace, security, and stability (particularly in the Asia-Pacific region), comprehensive development, and reunification of Taiwan with the mainland."¹²⁹ In the post-Cold War era, "the main purpose of its new approach in foreign affairs is to provide a long-term peaceful and secure environment for China's modernization and a favorable condition for its reform and opening-up policy."¹³⁰ As a result, the CCP leaders

¹²⁸ Edward A. Olsen. "U.S.-ROK Security Treaty: Another Half Century?" The Korean Journal of International Studies. Vol. 29, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2002, p. 32.

¹²⁹ Walter N. Anderson. Overcoming Uncertainty: U.S.-China Strategic Relations in the 21st Century. Colorado Springs, Colo.: USAF Institute for National Security Studies, USAF Academy, 1999. p. 16.

¹³⁰ Qimao Chen. "New Approaches in China's Foreign Policy: The Post-Cold War Era." Asian Survey. Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, March 1993, p. 244.

have paid the largest attention to China's economic development among the Chinese national goals to attain its four modernizations. The main reason is because "Chinese leaders have concluded from the demise of the Soviet Union and Soviet communism that survival of the Chinese communist regime depends on rapid economic development."¹³¹ To achieve Beijing's major national interests, especially economic development but excluding the reunification issue and territorial disputes resolution, the PRC began to join and cooperate with multilateral organizations, but it has been clearly much more enthusiastic about bilateral rather than multilateral channels in the post-Cold War period.

In this section, first, bilateral trends between Beijing-Pyongyang, Washington-Seoul, and Beijing-Seoul will be examined, and then both Beijing and Seoul's approaches to multilateralism will be evaluated. Then, Beijing and Seoul's attitudes toward multilateralism for their respective unification will be briefly assessed at the end of this section.

A. BILATERAL TRENDS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

1. The ROK's Bilateral Relations with the United States

Seoul-Beijing bilateral relations have rapidly developed and have become increasingly interdependent since the post-Cold War era began and particularly after the 1992 PRC-ROK normalization. Nevertheless, as long as North Korea's tangible threat has persisted, South Korea has always been very dependent on bilateral relations with the United States in light of security and economy concerns, and has placed such relations between Seoul and Washington as the top priority since 1950. As South Korea's security and economic capabilities continue to grow, however, South Koreans "demand, based on the nation's increased strength, for a change in the U.S.-South Korea relationship from patron-client to [real] partners."¹³² Moreover, the recent differences of policy toward North Korea between the two governments and anti-Americanism or nationalism by South Koreans might have a deep impact on their future relations.

¹³¹ Bonnie S. Glaser. "China's Security Perceptions: Interest and Ambitions." *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, March 1993, p. 270.

¹³² Gi-Wook Shin. "South Korean Anti-Americanism: A Comparative Perspective." *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXVI, No. 8, August 1996, p. 802.

In terms of Seoul-Washington security relations, the United States has had, since the Korean War, an overwhelmingly huge influence over the security affairs of the Korean Peninsula. The main reason is not only because Washington is Seoul's sole military ally, but also because it "maintains approximately 37,000 troops in South Korea...[which consists of] the Second Infantry Division and Seventh Air Force, with three squadrons of F-16 fighters, one squadron of A-10, and OA-10 ground attack aircraft."¹³³ However, anti-Americanism has risen in South Korea due to such sensitive issues as the U.S. pressure to further open the Korean market since the late 1980s, the Agreed Framework process which was reached in Geneva on October 1994, the U.S. hawkish way of dealing with the ROK during the financial crisis of 1997-1998 (although Washington played a leading role in relieving Seoul from the crisis through the International Monetary Fund (IMF)), the two Koreas' summit in 2000, and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) revision¹³⁴ that was subjected to closer scrutiny after two middle schoolgirls' death by a U.S. armored tank in 2002. As a result of a series of such events, South Koreans recently called for the U.S. troops' withdrawal at last. As a response, a senior official at the U.S. Department of Defense said "the U.S. position [is] that it would withdraw its forces from Korea 'tomorrow' if that were what South Koreans wanted."¹³⁵ As US 8th Army Commander General Charles Campbell said, "state policies were not made on the basis of emotion but of national interest."¹³⁶ It is time for both Seoul and Washington to rethink such an important issue in light of national interests for the two states.

¹³³ Young Jeh Kim. "An Analysis of Korean-American Diplomatic Relations in 2001 and Beyond." Korea Observer. Vol. 32, No. 3, Autumn 2001, p. 342.

¹³⁴ It remains in South Koreans' hearts that they "were sidelined from negotiations [during the Agreed Framework process] that most directly concerned their national interests." Besides, South Koreans regards the current the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) as a unfair one in comparison with those of NATO-U.S. and Japan-U.S. especially in the light of SOFA articles regarding the U.S. military criminals, civil disputes, military facilities including land areas, domestic labor, customs and duties. Thus, they demand, "the existing SOFA should be revised along the lines of similar NATO-U.S. and Japan-U.S. agreements in order to ensure equal treatment." For details, see Scott Snyder. "A Framework for Achieving Reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula: Beyond the Geneva Agreement." Asian Survey. Vol. XXXV, No. 8, August 1995, p. 701. And also see Kim Sung-han. "South Korea-U.S. Relations: Concerns and Prospects." Korea Focus. Vol. 8, No. 6, November-December 2000, pp. 81-84.

¹³⁵ "U.S. Defense Aide Says 'Tripwire' Is Outmoded." Joongang Daily. March 19, 2003, Accessed in [<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200303/19/200303192307467579900090309031.html>].

¹³⁶ Kyung-bok Kwon. "US Ambassador Clarifies Remarks Made to CBS." The Chosun Ilbo. February 18, 2003, Accessed in [<http://srch.chosun.com/cgi-bin/english/search?CD=33554431&SH=1&FD=1&OP=3&q=anti-americanism>].

In the mid-1990s, in the light of ROK-U.S. economic relations, South Korea became the United States' eighth largest trading partner after Canada, Mexico, Japan, the U.K., Germany, Taiwan, and China--now, the seventh largest trading partner. The Washington-Seoul bilateral trade grew from \$37.7 billion in 1994 to \$67 billion in 2000 (the amount was important to South Korea when considering the indicator because the U.S.-Asian merchandise trade marked \$345 billion, whereas that between the United States and Europe reached \$227 billion in 1992).¹³⁷ As a result, South Korea remains the sixth largest importer of U.S. products and the United States is, for Seoul, the largest trading partner.¹³⁸ In fact, South Korea was able to become the 11th largest economy state in the early 2000s, after growing from one of the world's poorest agricultural countries in the 1950s under the military and economic auspices of the United States. However, after the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) began to expand free trade in 1989, U.S.-ROK conflicts over the openness of South Korea's agricultural market, as well as the U.S. efforts--economic pressure--to reduce trade deficits complicated the relationship. In addition, after overcoming the economic crisis of 1997-1998, South Koreans still have "dissatisfaction with perceived U.S. willingness to use crude, bare-knuckle leverage in its own economic self-interest at the expense of the economic interest of others."¹³⁹

"However, the real potential for policy disaccord between Seoul and Washington is...in the unduly tough and hard-line American policy towards North Korea."¹⁴⁰ In terms of policy toward Pyongyang, the U.S. policy of "inducing change in North Korea via subtle economic and diplomatic incentives is... rooted in Reagan-Shultz era 'smile diplomacy' [1983-1988] that ...had produced an effort by Washington to encourage an inter-Korean dialogue." And then, "the George H. W. Bush administration...produced the first U.S.-DPRK talks, held in Beijing". In addition, the Clinton administration followed

¹³⁷ Hang Yul Rhee. "New Dimensions of the Relationship Between Korea and the United States in the Age of Globalization." Korea Observer. Vol. XXXVII, No. 1, Spring 1996, pp. 1-2.

¹³⁸ Choi Hyuck. "Overview of Korea-U.S. Trade Relations." Korea Focus. Vol. 9, No. 5, September-October 2001, pp. 98-99.

¹³⁹ Scott Snyder. "New Challenges for U.S.-ROK Relations." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Spring 2000, p. 38.

¹⁴⁰ Hyun-Ik Hong. "Evolving U.S.-ROK-DPRK Relations and the Future of the ROK-U.S. Alliance." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXVI, No. 4, Winter 2002, p. 488.

the former Presidents' "sound policy line" toward North Korea¹⁴¹ in line with President Kim Dae Jung's "sunshine policy"—engagement policy toward North Korea—unlike the previous President Kim Young Sam. "Despite North Korea's initial post-September 11 efforts to disassociate...[Pyongyang] from the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon,"¹⁴² however, President George W. Bush in his State of the Union address in late January 2002 grouped Iran, Iraq and North Korea together as an "axis of evil."¹⁴³ This had a bad impact on the mood of Seoul-Pyongyang reconciliation on the Korean peninsula. In October 2002, Pyongyang admitted to having "a secret nuclear weapons programme" at last.¹⁴⁴ Some South Koreans were convinced that the present stalemate of inter-Korean reconciliation is "due primarily to President George W. Bush's hard-line stance toward North Korea."¹⁴⁵

Although PRC-ROK relations have grown remarkably and consequently have been so important since 1992, South Koreans should not downgrade the importance of the U.S.-ROK bilateral relationship. "On the basis of a durable alliance built on allegiances to democracy and the market economy, Korea and the U.S. should strive to develop a mature partnership in addition to effective policy coordination on North Korea."¹⁴⁶

2. The PRC'S Bilateral Relations with the DPRK

The repercussions of the Chinese democratic movement that occurred at Tiananmen Square in 1989 gave North Korea's leaders a negative impression of reforms in line with the West, especially the United States. In fact, the Tiananmen incident

¹⁴¹ Edward A. Olsen. "U.S. Policy Toward the Inter-Korean Dialogue." Korea Briefing 2000-2001: First Steps Toward Reconciliation and Reunification. Oh, Kongdan and Hassig, Ralph C. (Ed.) New York: the M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2002. pp. 176-177.

¹⁴² Edward A. Olsen. "'Axis of Evil': Impact on U.S.-Korean Relations." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXVI, No. 2, Summer 2002, p. 192.

¹⁴³ "Full text: State of the Union address." BBC. January 30, 2002. [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1790537.stm>].

¹⁴⁴ "Shock at N Korean nuclear 'admission.'" BBC. October 17, 2002. [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/2336061.stm>].

¹⁴⁵ Young-Ho Park. "U.S.-North Korea Relations and ROK-U.S. Policy Cooperation." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXVI, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 5.

¹⁴⁶ Sung-han Kim. "U.S. Policy toward the Korean Peninsula & ROK-U.S. Security Cooperation." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXV, No. 1, Spring 2001, p. 16.

“exacerbated the North’s hardline stance” toward openness to the world and “confirmed the Kims’ conviction that dabbling with reform, moderation...would court disaster” as would be proven in the case of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.¹⁴⁷ In addition, Seoul’s successful normalizations with Pyongyang’s two largest patrons, Moscow and Beijing, caused Kims’ regime to feel itself more isolated from the world. Due to the aftermath of these events, “Pyongyang realized its nuclear weapons program provided a strong card to play against the U.S. to achieve diplomatically its political, economic, and security objectives for the post-Cold War environment.”¹⁴⁸ Pyongyang’s nuclear policy coupled with its missiles program held Beijing partially at bay. The PRC, for instance, was embarrassed in the case of the nuclear crisis in 1993-1994, the *Taepodong* missile launch over Japan in 1998 and Pyongyang’s admission about restarting its nuclear program in 2002. As for Pyongyang, notwithstanding these tensions, Beijing is its most important benefactor in the security and economic fields in the post-Cold War period.

In terms of the PRC-DPRK security relationship, Beijing apparently has stopped supplying new arms to Pyongyang since the late 1980s. Additionally, after the deaths of Kim Il Sung on July 8, 1994 and Deng Xiaoping on February 19, 1997, the Beijing-Pyongyang security relations that were based on ideological solidarity as well as blood ties cemented during the Korean War at the expense of numerous Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV) considerably waned. Nevertheless, the PRC-DPRK relations--including military-to-military ties--have remained “cordial in the 1990s.” The main reason is because Beijing--unlike Moscow that revised the 1961 mutual security treaty and signed the new Russia-North Korean Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighborliness and Cooperation with Pyongyang on February 9, 2000 by erasing Article 1, which stipulates its automatic military intervention in case of a Second Korean War--has not revised the 1961 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance signed in 1961 with Pyongyang.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Daryl M. Plunk. “The Continuing Cold War in Korea and U.S. Policy toward the Peninsula in the 1990s.” The U.S.-South Korean Alliance: Time for a Change. Doug Bandow and Ted Galen Carpenter (Ed.) New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1992. p. 115.

¹⁴⁸ Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser. “Looking Across the Yalu: Chinese Assessments of North Korea.” Asian Survey. Vol. XXXV, No. 6, June 1995, p. 536.

On the economic front, PRC-DPRK trade relations steadily increased during the period from the 1950s until the 1970s—“North Korea’s per capita income was higher than South Korea’s as recently as the early 1970s”¹⁵⁰--but it began to decrease in the 1980s especially after the onset of Deng Xiaoping’s open door policy. In the 1990s its relations became so much worse that the total bilateral trade volume between Beijing and Pyongyang had gradually declined from “the peak level of nearly \$900 million in 1993...[to] a mere \$370 million in 1999, according to PRC statistics.”¹⁵¹ For reference, the size of Beijing-Seoul trade volume had increased from about \$9 billion in 1993 to \$25 billion in 1999. Nevertheless, China is today North Korea’s biggest trading partner.

Moreover, Pyongyang has suffered a severe economic crisis in the post-Cold War era because economic assistance--notably subsidizes from Beijing and particularly Moscow--were considerably reduced. Moscow reduced its petroleum trade with Pyongyang “from half a million tons in 1989 to 40,000 tons in 1991” and Beijing “maintained an average one hundred million tons per year in the period 1989 to 1996, but cut it by half thereafter.” Also North Korean food shortages became worse on account of the severe floods during the mid-1990s. “U.S. Census Bureau estimates suggested that about 1 million North Koreans died as a result of famine between 1994 and 1998”¹⁵² and Beijing’s food aid to Pyongyang “is estimated by aid agencies and foreign governments

¹⁴⁹ Daniel L. Byman and Roger Cliff. China’s Arms Sales: Motivation and Implications. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999. p. 17. In Article 1 of the 1961 mutual treaty between Pyongyang and Moscow, the DPRK and the Soviet Union agreed “to provide each other with military and other aid in a case of attack from any state or coalition of states, and will be in a position of war.” However, the new treaty signed in February 2000 “contains no article on a special relationship between the two states as was in the previous treaty.” For details, see Larisa Zabrovskaya. “The 1961 USSR-DPRK Treaty and Signing of a New Russia-North Korean Treaty.” Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXIV, No. 3, Fall 2000, pp. 440- 452.

¹⁵⁰ Yoo Seong Min. “Korea’s Economy in the 20th Century.” Korea Focus. Vol. 7, No. 6, November-December 1999, pp. 62-63.

¹⁵¹ Mel Gurtov. “Common Security in North Korea: Quest for a New Paradigm in Inter-Korean Relations.” Asian Survey. Vol. XLII, No. 3, May/June 2002, p. 401. The author quoted it from [http://www.moftec.gov.cn/moftec_cn/dsbgx/asia/cx-jmhzh.html].

¹⁵² Don Oberdorfer. The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History. Indianapolis: Basic Books, 2001. p. 408.

at 1 million tonnes of wheat and rice” per year.¹⁵³ Under this situation, “North Korea remains dependent on China’s supply of petroleum and food, an increasingly important factor given the former’s energy and food shortage.”¹⁵⁴

Kim Jong Il’s visits to China in May 2000, that was his first visit since 1983, and in January 2001 are regarded as Pyongyang’s attempts to enhance relations with Beijing for the purposes of overcoming its economic hardship as well as diplomatic isolation from the outside world. Mainly due to its security interest, Beijing has remained--and will likely continue--as the most active and substantial patron of Pyongyang since the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of the largest benefactors for North Korea along with the PRC.

3. The PRC-ROK Bilateral Relations

Steadily increasing economic interactions in trade and investment between Beijing and Seoul since the late 1970s, in fact, played an important role in establishing the normalization between Beijing and Seoul in 1992. In the context of it, “the 1992 Sino-South Korean normalization and the two countries’ fast-growing economic ties testify to the vicissitude of Cold War politics and the validity of China’s ongoing reform and open-door policy.”¹⁵⁵ Under the circumstances, the relations between the PRC and the ROK have evolved toward being more interdependent and constructive in the fields of security and economy.

In the post-Cold War era, Chinese policy toward Korea has been shifted to a policy pursuing stability on the Korean peninsula in order to further expand its national interests (i.e., to achieve economic development and the four modernizations, and to gain stature in the international community). For such interests, the PRC played a positive role in reducing the Seoul-Pyongyang tensions on the peninsula. Beijing, for instance, strived to support the 1992 Seoul-Pyongyang accords on denuclearization as well as to alleviate the 1993-1994 nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. In addition, “China not only provided the venue for preliminary contacts between North and South Korea, but also

¹⁵³ David Lague. “Beijing’s Tough Korea Call.” Far Eastern Economic Review. March 6, 2003, p. 13-14.

¹⁵⁴ Taeho Kim. “Beijing, Moscow and Pyongyang: Same Old Bed, Three Different Dreams.” Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXV, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 497.

¹⁵⁵ Taeho Kim. “A Testing Ground for China’s Power, Prosperity and Preferences: China’s Post-Cold-War Relation with the Korean Peninsula.” Pacifica Review. Volume 13, Number 1, February 2001, p. 31.

encouraged the summit event” for a successful two Koreas’ summit talk in Pyongyang in June 2000.¹⁵⁶ It becomes clear that prosperity and stability on the Korean peninsula can not be expected any more without constructive and peaceful help from the PRC.

In terms of PRC-ROK trade, the trade volume between them has steadily been growing since the establishment of the PRC-ROK full diplomatic relations. It is as follows:

Sino-ROK trade ballooned to \$6.4 billion in 1992, \$9 billion in 1993, \$11.6 billion in 1994, \$16.5 billion in 1995, \$20 billion in 1996, and \$23.7 billion in 1997. By 1997 it was almost three times larger than the Sino-Russian trade volume (\$7 billion), seven times the Russo-ROK trade volume (\$3 billion), and thirty-four times the Sino-North Korean trade volume (\$699 million).¹⁵⁷

Trade volume shrank during the period of the Asian Financial Crisis (1997-1998), but it bounced back after the rapid economic recovery of South Korea from the financial crisis in 1998, in part, due to the Chinese favorable attitude (not to devalue their own currency, Yuan). The size of the bilateral trade volume in 2001, reached \$31.49 billion, an amount that was approximately 5 times as much in 1992.¹⁵⁸ “In 2001,” the PRC “became Korea’s second largest trading partner...Korea has also become an important trading partner for China, following Japan, the U.S., and Hong Kong in recent years.”¹⁵⁹ The PRC’s entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in late 2001, in particular, would have a great impact on the ROK-PRC bilateral economic relations, which would boost the ROK-PRC trade and investment volume, enhance much more mutual economic interdependence between them, and ultimately help to keep peace, stability and prosperity on the Korean peninsula intact.

¹⁵⁶ Taeho Kim. “The Rise of China and Korea’s Strategic Outlook.” Korea Focus. May-June 2002, p. 86.

¹⁵⁷ Samuel S. Kim. “The Making of China’s Korea Policy in the Era of Reform.” The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000. David M. Lampton (Ed.) Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001. p. 387.

¹⁵⁸ KOTRA (Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency). The Trade Relations of the PRC with the ROK. August 28, 2002. [[KOTRA](#)].

¹⁵⁹ Choongyong Ahn. “Economic Relations between Korea and China: Current Conditions and Outlook.” The Korean Journal of International Studies. Vol. 29, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2002, p. 61.

B. THE PRC'S APPROACH TO MULTILATERALISM

During the Cold War era, “China viewed multilateral organizations as instruments of Western imperialism and refused to have any part of them.”¹⁶⁰ However, contemplating the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Beijing perceived the United States “as in an unprecedented strong position from which to impose a new world order based on American values, including human rights, democracy, and capitalism.”¹⁶¹ Against such a backdrop, Beijing leaders’ views on this in the post-Cold War period began to shift from being an instrument serving U.S. interests to “a mechanism to counter the U.S.’s bilateral military alliances around the Asia-Pacific and thus constrain [what the Chinese perceive as] American hegemony.”¹⁶²

The PRC became a member state of the United Nations (UN) in 1971 and then was selected as one of the five permanent UN Security Council members with the veto power in voting procedures--unlike non-permanent members. The Security Council’s core responsibility is to maintain the world’s peace as well as security. In the context of the Security Council’s main responsibility and the PRC’s retaining a veto power, the PRC’s position in the Security Council is important especially with regard to issues such as keeping peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. For instance, during the nuclear crisis of 1993-1994, during armed troops’ entry into the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) after a breach of the truce in 1996, and when an admission by Pyongyang about a “secret” nuclear program in 2002 occurred, China rejected hawkish resolutions recommended by the Security Council and strived to resolve those hot issues through peaceful dialogues.¹⁶³ In light of more interdependent relations between the Beijing and Seoul, Beijing is expected to play a great role in dealing with Korean issues in favor of peaceful resolution measures that Seoul, since Kim Dae Jung’s administration started, has sought when conflicts take place between Pyongyang and Seoul or Washington.

¹⁶⁰ Hongying Wang. “Multilateralism in Chinese Foreign Policy: The Limits of Socialization.” Asian Survey. Vol. XL, No. 3, May/June 2000, p. 481.

¹⁶¹ Bonnie S. Glaser (Asian Survey. Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, March 1993), p. 259.

¹⁶² Hongying Wang (Asian Survey. Vol. XL, No. 3, May/June 2000), p. 483.

¹⁶³ Chi Young Pak. “South Korea and the United Nations Security Council.” Korea Observer. Vol. XXVII, No. 2, Summer 1996, pp. 263-264.

In 1991, China became a participant in the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC), which was formed in 1989 for the purpose of economic interests “promoting greater economic liberalization...and also strengthening the position of the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the Uruguay Round.” In the meanwhile, “APEC did assume some significance for security regionalism” after it became “annual summit meetings of heads of government in 1993” as a fruit of the Clinton administration’s efforts.¹⁶⁴ Since then, China has participated in multilateral organizations in the region. At the APEC meeting in 2000, Chinese President Jiang Zemin emphasized “‘closer economic and technological ties between nations and regions’ constitute ‘a positive factor to promote world peace and stability.’”¹⁶⁵ However,

The Chinese government does not want APEC to develop into a multilateral security institution in the Asia Pacific region because Taiwan is a non-state member of APEC. Since China regards Taiwan as part of China, Beijing does not want to see other countries or multilateral institutions discuss security issues with Taiwan.¹⁶⁶

The ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) invited the PRC “to attend the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) as a guest, beginning in 1991.” It also invited China “at the Singapore AMM in July 1993 to [make Beijing] join the newly proposed ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to be held in Bangkok in 1994.”¹⁶⁷ So, the PRC became a member state of ARF formed in 1994 that aims to strengthen the multilateral security dialogue and cooperation in the region. By 1997, “China had become an active participant both in the ARF and the so-called ‘track two,’ or unofficial dialogue process that complements the official deliberations.”¹⁶⁸ Since then, China has strived to cooperate with the ASEAN countries in the fields of politics, security, trade, and so forth. However, Beijing is sensitive to the issue of the South China Sea and especially the

¹⁶⁴ Derek McDougall. “Asia-Pacific Security Regionalism: The Impact of Post-1997 Developments.” *Contemporary Security Policy*. Vol. 23, No. 2, August 2002, p. 116.

¹⁶⁵ Banning Garrett. “China Faces, Debates, the Contradiction of Globalization.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XLI, No. 3, May/June 2001, p. 409.

¹⁶⁶ *Asia Pacific Security Outlook 2002*. Christopher A. McNally and Charles E. Morrison (Ed.) Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2002. p. 60.

¹⁶⁷ Lee Lai To. “ASEAN-PRC Political and Security Cooperation: Problems, Proposal, and Prospects.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXIII, No. 11, November 1993, p. 1096.

¹⁶⁸ Rosemary Foot. “China in the ASEAN Regional Forum: Organizational Processes and Domestic Modes of Thought.” *Asian Survey*. Vol. XXXVIII, No. 5, May 1998, p. 426.

Taiwan issue. It does not want the two issues to be mediated in the ARF.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, “China has made it very clear that it is against ARF becoming a mechanism for conflict resolution in the region”¹⁷⁰ Besides, China has participated in ASEAN Plus Three (APT) summit meetings since 1997, when the first APT summit meeting was held—the ‘Three’ refers to the ROK, the PRC, and Japan. APT “emerged as an East Asian version of implicit security regionalism, taking its place alongside...[such] security regionalism [as APEC and the ASEAN Regional Forum].”¹⁷¹

In line with the joint proposal to the Four Party Talks by President Bill Clinton and President Kim Young Sam in 1996, China has been one of the four members--China, the U.S. and the two Koreas. Since the Four-Party Talks were launched in 1997 to negotiate a peace treaty on the Korean peninsula using multilateral security cooperation among them, Beijing chaired the second official session in March 1998 and has been actively “cooperative with the parties concerned for the purpose of ensuring the peace, stability and peaceful reunification” on the peninsula.¹⁷²

The PRC also is one of the member states in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), dubbed as the ‘Shanghai Six,’ which was launched in June 2001 as the result of a summit meeting among the presidents of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to enhance peace, stability, and prosperity among the countries.¹⁷³ This multilateral organization also aims “to strengthen mutual trust and friendly relations among member states, and encourages cooperation in a variety of fields ranging from culture and environmental protection to science and education.”¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ He Kai. “Looking Back and to the Future of China-ASEAN Relations.” *Beijing Review*, Vol. 41, No. 8, February 23-March 1, 1998, pp. 6-7. The PRC became “a consultant partner of ASEAN” in 1991. It, since then, had participated in post-ministerial conferences (PMCs). Finally, the PRC gained a status as “a full dialogue partner of ASEAN” in the PMC in 1996.

¹⁷⁰ Hongying Wang (*Asian Survey*, Vol. XL, No. 3, May/June 2000), p. 484.

¹⁷¹ Derek McDougall (*Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 23, No. 2, August 2002), p. 121.

¹⁷² Xiaoming Zhang. “China’s Relations with the Korean Peninsula: A Chinese View.” *Korea Observer*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 500.

¹⁷³ Christopher A. McNally and Charles E. Morrison (Ed.) (2002), p. 57.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

The PRC won in September 2001 final negotiations for its admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO)--the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT)'s successor--which was established in 1995. Because China's international trade volume was evaluated as the world's seventh rank in 2000, China's entry to the WTO will "have a major impact on world trade and investment, as well as its own economic development."¹⁷⁵ As a result of Beijing's admission to the WTO, "China will start formally...to integrate itself into the world capitalist economic and political system, the basic characteristics of which are market economics and democratic politics."¹⁷⁶

C. THE ROK'S APPROACH TO MULTILATERALISM

After the truce halting the Korean War in 1953, South Korea signed the Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States on October 1, 1953, which entered into force on November 17, 1954. During the Cold War era, since then, South Korea had become exclusively dependent in particular on the U.S. security and economic bilateral relations vis-à-vis North Korea's tangible threats. However, after the Sino-U.S. rapprochement in 1972 and the oil crisis in the 1970s, "South Korea...moved by the 1970s and 1980s into a more independent global economic network that foreshadowed broader multilateralism ...[but] it was clear that Seoul wanted to cultivate its bilateral ties with the United States as long as it feasibly could."¹⁷⁷ In 1988, in the meantime, President Roh's *Nordpolitik* became a main driving force of Seoul's enthusiasm for diverting from its heavy dependency on the U.S.-ROK bilateral relations toward multilateralism in the post-Cold War era. From mid-1994, President Kim Young Sam's administration (1993-1997) focused on five fundamentals as "Korea's New Diplomacy" for its foreign policy, namely, "globalism, diversification, multi-dimensionalism, regional cooperation, and future orientation."¹⁷⁸ After that, President Kim's administration "accelerated the

¹⁷⁵ Song Yoocheul and Cheong Inkyo. "Impact of China's Admission to the WTO." Korea Focus. Vol. 9, No. 6, November-December 2001, p. 103.

¹⁷⁶ Joseph Fewsmith. "The Political and Social Implications of China's Accession to the WTO." The China Quarterly. No. 167, September 2001, p. 584. The author cited the quote from Liu Junning's article, titled "Zhongguo jiaru WTO de zhengzhi yi." "

¹⁷⁷ Edward A. Olsen. "U.S.-Northeast Asian Security Relations: From Bilateralism to Multilateralism." The Major Powers of Northeast Asia: Seeking Peace and Security. Tae-Hwan Kwak and Edward A. Olsen. (Ed.) Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996. p. 136.

¹⁷⁸ Sung-joo Han. "Fundamentals of Korea's New Diplomacy: New Korea's Diplomacy toward the World and the Future." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XVII, No. 2, Summer 1993, p. 229.

emphasis on globalism as the cornerstone of its foreign policy...it represents Seoul's long-standing desire to diversify its interdependence, cultivating markets and friendly relations globally."¹⁷⁹ After the end of Kim Young Sam's presidency, President Kim Dae Jung's administration (1998-2002) launched the "new Constructive Engagement or Sunshine Policy," which "calls for a gradual opening up of the North [Korea] and confidence-building measures today that will hopefully pave the way for eventual reunification" through various multilateral organizations via favorable bilateral relations.¹⁸⁰

The forty-three years after the ROK was established in August 1948 through a general election under the supervision of the United Nations (UN) in May of the same year, it at last became a full member state of the UN simultaneously with the DPRK on September 17, 1991. In the process of Seoul's joining the UN, the PRC played an important role in persuading Pyongyang to accept its simultaneous entry with Seoul. South Korea, since then, has actively participated in UN activities. For instance, it has actively taken part in UN Peace-Keeping Operations (PKO) mainly by dispatching a military engineering unit, a medical service unit, etc. to such areas as Somalia, Angola, Jammu and Kashmir, East Timor and so forth.¹⁸¹ In addition, South Korea was qualified as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from 1996 until 1997. During the period, it had also vigorously participated in activities in the Security Council. Such activities helped enhance South Korea's political position in the international arena as well as to have other member countries understand its endeavors in the United Nations.

In 1991, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) agreed to support the Tumen River Area Development Programme suggested by states within this region "to establish an institutional mechanism for regional dialogue and further cooperation." Since its establishment, it has promoted "economic, environmental and technical

¹⁷⁹ Edward A. Olsen. (The Major Powers of Northeast Asia: Seeking Peace and Security, 1996), p. 140.

¹⁸⁰ Ralph A. Cossa. "The Agreed Framework/ KEDO and Four-Party Talks: Status/Prospects and Relationship to the ROK's Sunshine Policy." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXIII, No. 1, Spring 1999, p. 59. Sunshine Policy places emphasis on "three basic principles: First, we will not tolerate armed provocations of any kind; Second, we do not intend to absorb North Korea; and Third, we will actively promote exchange and cooperation between South and North Korea." See *Ibid.* p. 58.

¹⁸¹ Chi Young Pak. "Korea and the United Nations: The First 50 Years." Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XIX, No. 4, Winter 1995, p. 623.

cooperation” among the five member states--the two Koreas, China, Russia, and Mongolia. The member countries have actively participated in annual Vice Ministerial level-meetings in the Consultative Commission for the Development of the Tumen River Economic Development Area and Northeast Asia. It is strongly expected that the Tumen River Area Development Programme would “bring the member countries together on a sub-regional basis...to help Northeast Asia achieve peace and prosperity.”¹⁸²

South Korea strives to facilitate Asia-Pacific regional cooperation by supporting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) meetings—the ‘Three’ means South Korea, China, and Japan. When South Korea hosted the annual meeting of APEC in 1991, it helped mediate China’s participation in APEC, along with Taiwan and Hong Kong.¹⁸³ In fact, “APEC has evolved from a consultative forum into a central intergovernmental organization for policy coordination and cooperation.”¹⁸⁴ In addition, South Korea tries to assume an initiative role “in developing the ASEAN Plus Three into an East Asia summit and put forth the vision of an East Asia free-trade area.”¹⁸⁵ For instance, President Kim Dae-jung proposed an East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) for the purpose of increasing East Asian regional cooperation as well as convening a formal East Asian summit at the APT summit in Hanoi in December 1998. Besides, he proposed “a free-trade area that would include all APT members” at the 2001 meeting in Brunei.¹⁸⁶

The ARF was initiated in July 1994 by ASEAN, which was established in 1967.

At the non-governmental level, in addition, South Korea has proposed a North East Asia Security Dialogue (NEASED) and tried to promote NEASED track-II, in which “South Korea takes a gradual approach in pursuing multilateral security cooperation” in the region, and it also “places emphasis on building mutual confidence, which will help nurture the habits of regional consultation and establish the patterns of regional

¹⁸² The Tumen Programme. Accessed in [<http://www.tumenprogramme.org/tumen/programme/>].

¹⁸³ Jia Hao and Zhuang Qubing (Asian Survey. Vol. XXXII, No. 12, December 1992), p. 1147.

¹⁸⁴ Kook-Chin Kim. “Issues and Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region: A Plea for Korea-ASEAN Cooperation in the Pacific Era.” Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XX, No. 4, Winter 1996, p. 558.

¹⁸⁵ Christopher A. McNally and Charles E. Morrison (Ed.) (2002), p. 103.

¹⁸⁶ Richard Stubbs. “ASEAN PLUS THREE: Emerging East Asian Regionalism?” Asian Survey. Vol. XLII, No. 3, May/June 2002, pp. 443-444.

cooperation.”¹⁸⁷ When North Korea at last entered into ARF in July 2000, the South Korean government welcomed the DPRK’s admission to ARF as well as noting it “greatly value[s] the ARF for its positive role as the only multilateral security arrangement in the Pacific region.”¹⁸⁸ South Korea has also “urged Asian nations to support the rehabilitation of the inter-Korean peace process” in ARF, since North Korea’s entry into ARF.¹⁸⁹

The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) funded through financial support from South Korea, the United States, the European Union, Japan and other 9 countries was created in 1995 to implement the 1994 Agreed Framework signed between Washington and Pyongyang, under which Pyongyang agreed to freeze and ultimately renounce its suspected nuclear program in progress. In return, KEDO was to provide North Korea with heavy fuel oil and a modern nuclear power plant. Through its activities, KEDO contributed to a stronger international nuclear non-proliferation regime, while improving the prospects for lasting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond. From the beginning of KEDO, South Korea took a leading role as a member of KEDO’s Executive Board and “has had a direct role in KEDO’s decision-making process.”¹⁹⁰

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) that is held every two years was first held in Bangkok in March 1996 to check the U.S. dominance within APEC that limited the European Union (EU)’s role in Asia. ASEM’s primary objectives are “to improve mutual understanding and to accelerate ...economic and political cooperation” between Asia and Europe.¹⁹¹ When considering a divided Korea’s future, ASEM is full of meaning to

¹⁸⁷ Kook-Chin Kim (Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XX, No. 4, Winter 1996), p. 567.

¹⁸⁸ The ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. ARF: ASEAN Regional Forum. Accessed in [http://www.mofat.go.kr/en/for/e_for_view.mof].

¹⁸⁹ Christopher A. McNally and Charles E. Morrison (Ed.) (2002), p. 103.

¹⁹⁰ Ralph A. Cossa (Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXIII, No. 1, Spring 1999), p. 52. The main four clauses of the Agreed Framework that was signed in 1994 between North Korea and the United States are as follow: I. Both sides will cooperate to replace the DPRK’s graphite moderated reactors and related facilities with light-water reactor (LWR) power plants; II. The two sides will move toward full normalization of political and economic relations; III. Both sides will work together for peace and security on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula; and IV. Both sides will work together to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. See Ibid. p. 48.

¹⁹¹ Sahng-Gyoun Lee. “ASEM and Regionalism: A Korean Perspective.” Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXIII, No. 3, Fall 1999, p. 399.

South Korea because “it completes the tripolar relations between America, Europe, and Asia.” South Korea hosted the third ASEM summit meeting in Seoul in 2000 and is trying to “enhance its status as a facilitator country within the region.”¹⁹²

South Korea became a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in December 1996 and a year later it withdrew from the Group of 77, a negotiating organization that consists of the developing countries. Seoul’s entry to OECD “provides an additional forum for promoting commercial co-operation with EU member states. Furthermore, Korea’s growing status and responsibilities in East Asia enable it to play a potentially crucial role in assisting the EU lever in influence over the future path of Pacific affairs” and vice versa.¹⁹³

In 1996, then Presidents Kim Young Sam and Bill Clinton jointly proposed the Four-Power (or Party) Talks among the two Koreas, the PRC, and the United States for a peace process on the Korean peninsula in April 1996 during a summit meeting in Korea. Since 1997, the Four-Party Talks aimed at fulfilling the task to replace the existing truce with a formal peace treaty have been in progress. South Korea makes every endeavor to maintain stability on the peninsula and to attain a peace treaty--and then eventual unification.

D. THE PRC AND THE ROK’S ATTITUDES TOWARD MULTILATERALISM FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE UNIFICATION

China was able to rehabilitate its reputation from about 100 years of humiliation by the West--from the Opium War (1839-1842) until the 1949 establishment of the PRC --when the Chinese Peoples’ Volunteers repelled the U.S.-led U.N. forces from the territory of North Korea in the Korean War. During the Cold War era, although the PRC became one of the UN member states in 1971, it had regarded multilateral organizations as instruments of Western imperialism. In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War and the Soviet collapse in 1991, however, Beijing began having concerns about “U.S. and/or Japanese domination in such a [multilateral] bloc or organization” It also worried that “a

¹⁹² Lee Sahng-gyoun. “ASEM and a New World Order: Challenges and Prospects.” Korea Focus. Vol. 7, No. 5, September-October 1999, pp. 23-31.

¹⁹³ Christopher M. Dent. “Economic Exchange and Diplomacy in Korea-EU Relations.” Korea Observer. Vol. XXIX, No. 2, Summer 1998, p. 405.

collective security structure may hamper China's own ambitions in the region, including its handling of the Taiwan issue."¹⁹⁴ Against such a backdrop, the PRC's approach toward security multilateralism came from "the possibility of weakening U.S. bilateral ties with nations in the region, thereby enhancing its own regional influence" while keeping good relations with those states.¹⁹⁵ After 1993, under these circumstances, the PRC began taking "a positive stance toward multilateral security dialogues and institutions [such as ARF, the Four-Power Talks, SCO and so forth] in the Asia Pacific region"¹⁹⁶ because Beijing associates peace and stability in the region, especially on the Korean peninsula with its continued economic growth and advancement under the peaceful conditions created after the advent of the post-Cold War era. Nevertheless, while the PRC has tried to actively participate in economic and security multilateral institutions, it does not want such multilateral organizations to deal with agendas regarded as domestic issues by Beijing such as territorial disputes and especially the Taiwan issue. Beijing traditionally tends to prefer handling such important issues through bilateral negotiations rather than to try to settle them through multilateral means.

During the Cold War era, on the other hand, because South Korea was able to recover from ruins in the Korean War and then achieve remarkable economic and security growth under the aegis of the U.S.-ROK alliance, it had all the time been under the shadow of the ROK's unilateral dependency on the United States. As its international status was enhanced due to economic achievements from the mid-1960s onward, however, Seoul has strived to shift its relations with Washington from a "client-state status" to an "authentic partnership." Accordingly, South Koreans "appear genuinely enthusiastic about multilateralism in security and economic matters as a vehicle for the Korean people to achieve parity with their neighbors and external major powers interested in Korea, notably the United States."¹⁹⁷ Most importantly, Seoul has strived to

¹⁹⁴ Fei-Ling Wang. "Chinese Security Policy in Northeast Asia." The Major Powers of Northeast Asia: Seeking Peace and Security. Tae-Hwan Kwak and Edward A. Olsen (Ed.). Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996. p. 48.

¹⁹⁵ Young Whan Khil and Kongdan Oh. "From Bilateralism to Multilateralism in Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific." Korea Observer. Vol. XXV, No. 3, Autumn 1994, p. 408.

¹⁹⁶ Yu Xiaoqiu. "China." The New Security Agenda: A Global Survey. Paul B. Stares (Ed.). Tokyo & New York: Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998. p.205.

¹⁹⁷ Edward A. Olsen. (The Major Powers of Northeast Asia: Seeking Peace and Security, 1996), p. 143.

actively participate in--and, at times, take a leading position in--various multilateral organizations such as the UN, APT, ARF, APEC, OECD, ASEM, KEDO, the Four-Power Talks and so on in order to maintain reconciliation, stability and prosperity on the Korean peninsula, and to ultimately obtain Korean unification through peaceful processes. South Korea's people are convinced "that the foremost Korean contribution to regional and global security should come through the alleviation of tension on the Korean peninsula." To make Pyongyang open to the world, maintain peace and stability on the peninsula, and attain ultimate Korean reunification, "the South Korean government has sought to promote North Korea's engagement in multilateral regional activities."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ Christopher A. McNally and Charles E. Morrison (Ed.) (2002), p. 103.

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V. THE PRC'S VIEWS ON KOREAN UNIFICATION

It is the conventional wisdom on Beijing's views on Korean unification that the PRC prefers the status quo on the Korean peninsula. In addition, China would continue to offer its support for the DPRK regime's survival because the PRC would like to gain both economic benefit by improving its relations with the ROK and the United States and political leverage in the Korean affairs by maintaining its good relations with the two Koreas.¹⁹⁹ Thus, it is widely expected that "China has no interest in Korean unification, which would draw Seoul into a common border with China's massive population and formidable ground forces."²⁰⁰ However, since the end of Mao Zedong's era and the ensuing onset of Deng Xiaoping's era, the primary driving force in China's foreign policy priorities have been affected much more by its national interests than by any other factor. Besides, when considering the United States' economy and perceived military hegemony in world affairs, especially on the Korean peninsula, a deteriorating economic situation in North Korea and the enhanced position of South Korea in international affairs, such a context implies China's views on Korean unification are changing.

In terms of the PRC's views on Korean unification, several negative and affirmative expectations coexist. Within Beijing's views on the issue, the most likely estimated negative expectations are as follows:²⁰¹

- a unified Korea would remove the DPRK as China's critical buffer zone,
- Korean unification would diminish Beijing's leverage in Korean and world affairs, including its relations with the United States on these issues,
- Korean reunification could spew more refugees from the North into China's northeastern provinces [in the case of a sudden collapse of the North Korean regime], and
- a unified Korea could bring about possible territorial conflicts on China's border.

¹⁹⁹ Robert G. Sutter. Chinese Policy Priorities and Their Implications for the United States. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000. p. 104.

²⁰⁰ Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross. The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997. p. 97.

²⁰¹ Samuel S. Kim. "China, Japan, and Russia in Inter-Korean Relations." Korea Briefing 2000-2001: First Steps Toward Reconciliation and Reunification. Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig (Ed.) New York: the M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2002. p.130.

“From Beijing’s perspective,” on the other hand, “an eventual Korean reunification will have four major consequences for China.” Such likely affirmative expectations are as follows:²⁰²

- the emergence of a unified Korean peninsula will change the power structure in East Asia permanently,
- a unified Korea will become vital for China’s strategy to contain America in East Asia,
- a unified Korea will play a key role and become one of the most important partners in China’s economic development, and
- Korean unification will facilitate the eventual reunification between mainland China and Taiwan.

Against this background, in this section, the PRC’s views on Korean unification will be examined and analyzed in the light of ideology, economy, great powers dynamics, and territorial and ethnic Korean issues. These factors’ impact on each other also shall be assessed.

A. IDEOLOGY

The ideological blood ties between Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung’s generation were created and cemented during the Korean War period at the expense of the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV) and the Korean People’s Army (KPA) against the U.S.-led allies and were further developed during the Sino-Soviet disputes. However, ideological “lips and teeth” relations between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Worker’s Party of Korea (WPK) have increasingly waned over time, especially since China’s policy shift from Marxist ideology to market pragmatism by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s.

When Deng Xiaoping came to the power in the CCP in 1978 after Mao Zedong’s death in 1976, he “initially pursued his efforts along two major lines” for the purpose of making the country prosperous and strong: “loosening the ideological straitjacket” by eschewing Maoist egalitarianism and collectivism, and “creating a general sense of new opportunities to generate excitement and support” by improving the standard of living of

²⁰² Xiaoxiong Yi. “Ten Years of China-South Korea Relations and Beijing’s view on Korean Reunification.” *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol. XVI, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2002, p. 338. The author quoted the citation from Chen Fengjun and Wang Chuanjian. *Asian-Pacific Major Powers and Korean Peninsula*, pp. 1-14.

the populace.²⁰³ Deng created and exercised reforms and an open door policy. Since his reform policy was based on China's access to capitalist economies, Deng "virtually renounced Marxism-Leninism as China's economic model, instead giving greater play to market forces...and encouraging foreign trade with and investment in China."²⁰⁴ In addition, Deng especially emphasized a foreign policy that could enhance China's national interest, in particular its economic development by means of achieving the four modernizations. Deng's reforms had "contributed to the loss of ideology" and had "encouraged people to exercise initiative and make money, all of which made them less receptive to communist ideology."²⁰⁵ Because of Deng's reforms and open door policies the "ideas of Western democracy have been implemented and Chinese Communism has been diluted." Moreover, "The ideas of liberal democracy have consequently spread rapidly."²⁰⁶

Also Beijing viewed the DPRK as "a buffer state" against democratic capitalism-oriented states, especially, the United States and Japan, as well as an ideologically important ally. Such a notion had a great impact on Beijing's views on Korean unification. However, although China regards both the U.S.-ROK and the U.S.-Japan alliance as threats to itself, Beijing's concept of North Korea as a buffer zone against those two alliances has gradually been declining--particularly since normalization with both Japan and the United States in the 1970s. Instead, Beijing increasingly has regarded Pyongyang as "an economic burden" since the PRC became a main benefactor of the North Korean regime after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Kenneth Lieberthal. Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995. p. 129.

²⁰⁴ Denny Roy. China's Foreign Relations. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998. p. 33.

²⁰⁵ Kenneth Lieberthal (1995), p. 172.

²⁰⁶ Chan Yul Yoo. "The Survival Strategy of North Korea and a Road to the Unification of Korea." Contemporary Security Policy. Vol. 20, No. 2, August 1999, p. 55. The author quoted this contents from Chan-young Pang's *Kiroe Sun Chosun Minjoojui Inmin Konghwagook (Democratic People's Republic of Chosun at the Crossroads)*. Seoul: Pakyoungsa, 1995. pp. 191-211.

²⁰⁷ Denny Roy (1998), pp. 208, 210.

In such a milieu, even though “ideology played a significant role in determining Chinese foreign policy [toward Pyongyang] during the Mao era,”²⁰⁸ the primary driving force of Chinese foreign policy has been based on China’s national interests rather than on ideology--particularly since Deng Xiaoping strongly pushed a reform and open door policy.

Therefore, “ideological concerns and the legacy of the Korean War are allegedly secondary and fading factors in Chinese policy toward North Korea.” For instance, Jiang Zemin said at the 4th Plenary Session of the 14th CCP Central Committee (CCPCC) in 1994, “Our foreign policy must proceed from our country’s basic interests, and should ignore ideology.”²⁰⁹ In addition, “Most [Chinese] analysts insist that the emphasis is increasingly on state-to-state ties and that economics, national interest, and *realpolitik* are rapidly emerging as dominant factors determining China’s relationship with North Korea.”²¹⁰ Under these circumstances, moreover, most Chinese experts “insist that Beijing would not be concerned about the demise of a communist ally on its border through peaceful reunification under the Seoul regime [if it would not impede China’s national interests].”²¹¹

B. ECONOMY

The CCP’s cadres acknowledge the fact that “when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, it did so not by invasion, through military force, but implosion, through internal stress rooted in economic failure and elite disillusionment.”²¹² As an aftermath of the demise of the Soviet Union, “domestic political stability” has become “the top security priority” in Beijing, and “a stable and relaxed international security environment is indispensable to that goal.” The CCP’s leaders believe the former “rests on rapid

²⁰⁸ Robert G. Sutter (2000), p. 183.

²⁰⁹ Jen Hui-Wen. “Jiang Zemin Stresses Launching Diplomacy on All Sides.” Hsin Pao (Hong Kong). November 18, 1994, p. 33.

²¹⁰ Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser. “Looking Across the Yalu: Chinese Assessments of North Korea.” Asian Survey. Vol. XXXV, No. 6, June 1995, pp. 539-540.

²¹¹ Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser (Asian Survey. Vol. XXXV, No. 6, June 1995), p. 538.

²¹² Donald K. Emmerson. “Goldilocks’s Problem: Rethinking Security and Sovereignty in Asia.” The Many Faces of Asian Security. Sheldon W. Simon (Ed.) Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001. p. 93.

economic development”²¹³ in order to avoid the same fate of the Soviet Union as well as a second Tienanmen incident. It is asserted by some analysts “the PRC’s overwhelming concern [in Chinese foreign policy] is in promoting a peaceful environment for Chinese economic development.”²¹⁴ Thus, China’s continuous economic growth is most important to the future of both the CCP and the PRC. In addition, the main driving force of Chinese foreign policy is based on China’s key national interest--i.e., its economic growth.

In terms of Beijing-Pyongyang economic relations, the economically deteriorating situation in North Korea continues to impose on Beijing a number of refugees in China’s Northeastern provinces--a region crowded by ethnic Koreans and their developed industries as well as bearing economic burdens. In the event of a worst case scenario, it might bring about a Second Korean War and it might become the largest obstacle to China’s national interests, or achievement of the four modernizations. That is why Beijing is very interested in stability on the peninsula. Apart from this issue, although the PRC has successfully achieved steady, rapid, and remarkable economic development since Deng’s reform and open door policies, it has some serious problems. Among them are an income chasm among the Chinese people and serious unemployment issues. If those problems deteriorate continuously, it might become a main reason for a second Tienanmen incident or cause political instability that could lead minority ethnic peoples to undertake secession movements. For instance, as Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji stated during his visit to the United States in 1999, China’s leaders are “concerned about economic insecurity” in terms of “the 100 million unemployed workers and the 18 million unemployed urban workers.”²¹⁵

²¹³ Fei-Ling Wang. Tacit Acceptance and Watchful Eyes: Beijing’s Views about the U.S.-ROK Alliance. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1997. p. 2.

²¹⁴ Denny Roy (1998), p. 3.

²¹⁵ Leif Rosenberger. “The Changing Face of Economic Security in Asia.” The Many Faces of Asian Security. Sheldon W. Simon (Ed.) Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001. pp. 118-120.

On the other hand, “The increasing economic interdependence between China and the ROK is closely connected with China’s national security.”²¹⁶ “Given that foreign direct investment (FDI) has been a key factor in China’s economic growth over the past decade, Korea has been a significant contributor to the Chinese economy” since the establishment of the Sino-South Korea normalization in 1992. In fact, “China is now the number one recipient of Korean investment, pushing the U.S. down to second place for the first time.”²¹⁷ Moreover, “A large percent of Korean FDI has gone to China’s three northeastern provinces--Heilongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin--a region with a high concentration of state-owned heavy industries, many of them on the verge of financial bankruptcy.”²¹⁸ The primary reason that South Korea is enthusiastic about its FDI investments in those provinces is not only because of geographical proximity but also because of ethnic Koreans living in those three provinces.

When the two Koreas are unified under the Seoul government, it could become “a middle power” in the region in terms of geopolitical importance and on an economic scale. As Ming Liu argued, a unified Korea “would hold a respectable and possibly commanding position as a middle power: South Korea is an OECD member, the 13th largest trading power, the 11th GDP ranking, and the 30th per capita income ranking in the world.”²¹⁹ In addition, a unified Korea would be an “economic power house” because it would have a population of 78.2 million and its total GNP could reach \$990 billion in 2010 and grow to \$2 trillion by the year 2021.²²⁰ Under these circumstances, Korean unification “will provide great dividends to China with the removal of a source of tension and the opportunity for renewed commercial benefits.” In addition, “a unified diplomatic environment will free China from the difficulties of managing certain contingencies” from the divided two Koreas on the Korean peninsula. It is also expected that “the Tumen

²¹⁶ Zhang Xiaoming. “The Korean Peninsula and China’s National Security: Past, Present and Future.” *Asian Perspective*. Vol. 22, No. 3, 1998, p. 264.

²¹⁷ Seo Jee-Yeon. “Korea Relentless in Investing in China.” *The Korea Times*. August 16, 2002.

²¹⁸ Xiaoxiong Yi (*The Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol. XVI, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2002), p. 331. China’s three northeastern provinces, Heilongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin, are located just across the Tumen and the Yalu Rivers.

²¹⁹ Ming Liu. “An Obsessed Task: Prospects, Models, and Impact of Korean Unification.” *East Asia: An International Quarterly*. Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1999, p. 47.

²²⁰ Yang Bojiang, Qi Baoliang, Chen Yujie and Chang Zhirong. “Northeast Asia amid Korean Détente.” *Contemporary International Relations*. Vol. 11, No. 4, April 2001, pp. 11-12.

River Development Project and Northeast Asian economic cooperation will be facilitated following Korean unification.”²²¹ Moreover, the gradual and increasing development between the PRC and a unified Korea in light of their economic and social ties would contribute to enhancing China’s political stability in such economically important regions as China’s Northeastern provinces, which is an indispensable factor for its economic growth.

C. GREAT POWERS DYNAMICS

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union that had threatened China from its north, the PRC has enjoyed a stable security environment for maintaining its rapid economic growth. Within such a favorable milieu to the PRC, however, “an expansion of U.S. dominance or a Japanese military resurgence in Northeast Asia...would be viewed as a main security threat by Beijing”²²² because the “United States and Japan are the only two world-class players who could cause new security concerns for China in this region, by means of a dominant U.S. power pursuing ‘hegemonic’ policies there and an armed aggressive Japan.”²²³ For instance, it was reported at a major People’s Liberation’s Army (PLA) conference held in late 1993 to discuss primary security threats to Beijing that about 50 percent of the participants believed Japan would be “the primary threat in the next century”, and 40 percent of them regarded the United States as the second potential enemy, and the rest “believed it would be a resurgent Russia.”²²⁴

In light of the perceived U.S. hegemony in this region, just as Beijing believes that the United States tries to intervene in its internal affairs such as human rights, Taiwan issues and the Tienanmen incident, so does Seoul in the same way. For example, anti-Americanism has risen in South Korea because of such sensitive issues as U.S.

²²¹ Ming Liu (*East Asia: An International Quarterly*. Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1999), pp. 52-53.

²²² Fei-Ling Wang (*The Major Powers of Northeast Asia: Seeking Peace and Security*, edited by Tae-Hwan Kwak and Edward A. Olsen, 1996), p. 41.

²²³ Fei-Ling Wang (1997), p. 4. The United States has about 1.4 million military troops and its defense expenditure reaches \$250 billion. In addition, “the qualitative superiority of weaponry exhibited in the Gulf War has gained both the respect and admiration of most of the world.” In the economic front, the U.S. “GNP, the very foundation of its diplomatic finesse and military endeavour, amounts to a staggering 8 trillion dollars.” On the other hand, “Japanese economic capacity amounts to 60 per cent of that of the United States.” For details, refer to Chan Yul Yoo (1999), *op. cit.*, pp. 51-57.

²²⁴ Samuel S. Kim. *China’s Quest for Security in the Post-Cold War World*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1996. p. 11.

pressure on the Korean economy since the late 1980s, the 1994 Agreed Framework negotiation process, U.S. hawkish dealing with the ROK during the financial crisis of 1997-1998, the two Koreas' summit in 2000, and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) revision emanating from two middle school girls' death by a U.S. armored tank in 2002, etc. "In the balance-of-power game aimed at the Japanese and the Americans, both Koreas are generally considered to be in the same camp as the Chinese." Also, "Beijing believes that all three share victimization by America's annoying 'human rights' policies in Asia; Washington's notion of human rights, its advocates argue, is undesirable and offensive throughout the whole East Asian region."²²⁵

In terms of Japanese rearmament, a high security priority of Beijing is to prevent Japan from remilitarizing.²²⁶ Both the PRC and the ROK are worried that Japan "strives to expand the role of its Self-Defense Forces under the pretext not only of defending itself against such North Korean provocations as missile test-firing and infiltration of [North Korean] suspicious vessels, but also of helping the U.S. in its war against terrorism"²²⁷ as well as the U.S.-led theater missile defense (TMD) program that aims mainly or explicitly at North Korea and probably--or implicitly--at China and Russia. For most Chinese and Korean people, the Japanese atrocities toward their parents or grandparents' generations before and during the Pacific War cannot be forgettable and be forgiven in their minds. Today a strong anti-Japanese sentiment is still easily found in both China and Korea because of the distorted history books, comfort women scandal, Prime Ministers' Yaskuni Shrine ceremony controversy, and territorial claim issues that have occurred periodically in Japan. Due to the Japanese claim to Tokdo island in the East Sea of Korea, the Japanese atrocities during the 36 year-long colonization period,

²²⁵ Fei-Ling Wang (1997), p. 9. For details, see Hong Guoqi and Wang Xiaode. "Clinton's Asian-Pacific Policy is Thwarted by Cultural Factors." *Contemporary International Relations*. Vol. 5, No. 5, May 20, 1995, pp. 10-13.

²²⁶ Robert A. Manning. "Burdens of the Past, Dilemmas of the Future: Sino-Japanese Relations in the Emerging International System." *The Washington Quarterly*. Vol. 17, No. 1, Winter 1994, pp. 45-58.

²²⁷ Hyun-Ik Hong. "Evolving U.S.-ROK-DPRK Relations and the Future of the ROK-U.S. Alliance." *Korea and World Affairs*. Vol. XXVI, No. 4, Winter 2002, p. 491.

and Japan being a “quasi-nuclear power,”²²⁸ “it’s not surprising that the Korean people perceive Japan as more threatening”²²⁹ than any other country.

Against these backdrops, today, China’s South Korea policy is focused on the prevention of Seoul to “stand on the side of the United States or Japan” after Korean reunification.²³⁰ “China’s key national-security objective on the Korean peninsula is to have a friendly, stable Korea on its doorstep.”²³¹ When Korean unification comes true, it is strongly expected that a unified Korea could “become the region’s most sought-after ally as the largest, richest, and most powerful nation without ‘historical baggage’ of territorial ambitions.” Thus, “China would no doubt be eager to ensure that a unified nation was at least not hostile to Chinese interests; Japan and the United States could not afford a Korea that was tied too closely to China.”²³² Therefore, four major powers--the PRC, the United States, Russia and Japan--in the East Asian region “will have to re-consider Korea’s propensity as a large power, its policy positions and subtle influence, and even try to woo Korean support on certain controversial issues.”²³³ More importantly, because the very reason for the U.S. troops’ presence in the peninsula--since the establishment of the Korean War armistice agreement and the U.S.-ROK alliance in 1953--has been to defend South Korea’s sovereignty against an attack on South Korea by North Korea, a unified Korea might require a U.S. military withdrawal. After the U.S. withdrawal from a unified Korea (and if it happens, in Japan as well), it is possible that arm races among a unified Korea, China, Russia, and Japan would take place. When this scenario occurs, China and a unified Korea would tend to depend on each other,

²²⁸ Robert Dujarric argued “Once North Korea is defanged...South Korea will lose the main threat to its security. It is possible that...Koreans will then perceive Japan as a threat...Moreover, Japan is a ‘quasi-nuclear power’...because it has the technology and nuclear industry needed to build nuclear weapons and has space rocket technology that could be harnessed to produce ballistic missiles.” For details, refer to Robert Dujarric. “Korea after Unification: An Opportunity to Strengthen the Korean-American Partnership.” The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. XII, No. 1, Summer 2000, p. 55.

²²⁹ Hyun-Ik Hong (Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXVI, No. 4, Winter 2002), p. 491.

²³⁰ Chen Fengjun. “Chinese Experts Talk about the Situation on the Korean Peninsula.” Beijing Review. Vol. 43, No. 23, June 5, 2000, p. 17.

²³¹ Mel Gurtov. “Common Security in North Korea: Quest for a New Paradigm in Inter-Korean Relations.” Asian Survey. Vol. XLII, No. 3, May/June 2002, p. 399.

²³² Brian J. Barna. “An Economic Roadmap to Korean Reunification: Pitfalls and Prospects.” Asian Survey. Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3, March 1998, p. 291.

²³³ Ming Liu (East Asia: An International Quarterly. Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1999), p. 48.

regarding one another “as a counterweight to the increasing economic and military strength of Japan”²³⁴--when considering the two countries’ historical humiliations suffered at the hands of Japan especially since the Sino-Japanese War--and to the U.S military and economic hegemony in Northeast Asia.

Finally, the Korean peninsula has been historically and geopolitically important to China’s national security. This is unlikely to change. “To reduce America’s influence and, if possible, to exclude Japan from playing a leading role there, China will pursue a more proactive Korea policy”²³⁵ in favor of Korean unification.

D. TERRITORIAL AND ETHNIC KOREAN ISSUES

The PRC shares an 800 mile long border with Korea--whether it is the DPRK or a unified Korea in the future. When the two Koreas are unified, a unified Korea may rekindle the territorial issues that had been resolved by Zhou En-lai and Kim Il Sung in the early 1960s. A unified Korea may request China to reconsider “historical precedents, including the Second Border Survey and Demarcation carried out jointly by the Qing and Chosun Dynasties in 1887 or the China-Korea Tumen Border Treaty signed between the Qing Dynasty and Japan in 1909 in order to press their claim for full sovereignty over *Tianchi* (or Heaven Lake, *Chonji* in Korean).” More importantly, “Such territorial demands by a unified Korea may extend so far as to include the entire 42,700 square kilometer area of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region beyond the Yalu River, which is inhabited by over 0.85 million ethnic Koreans and 1.35 million of other nationalities.”²³⁶ Besides, among about two million ethnic Koreans in these provinces, “nearly half” live in the Yanbian Autonomous Region of Jinlin Province. “They have resisted cultural absorption by China and maintain a strong sense of Korean identity.” Above all, “The official language of government, education, and the media in Yanbian is Korean.”²³⁷ According to a recent study by the Hudson Institute, “The potential for the

²³⁴ Quansheng Zhao. “China and the Two Koreas.” The Two Koreas and the United States: Issues of Peace, Security, and Economic Cooperation. Wonmo Dong. (Ed.) New York: the M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2000. p.143.

²³⁵ Xiaoxiong Yi (The Korea Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. XII, No. 2, Winter 2000), p. 114.

²³⁶ Ming Liu (East Asia: An International Quarterly. Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1999), p. 52.

²³⁷ Selig S. Harrison. Korean Endgame: A Strategy for Reunification and U.S. Disengagement. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002. p. 317.

‘re-Koreanization’ of Chinese citizens of Korean descent, who are rediscovering their Korean heritage, is a problem for China.”²³⁸ It is strongly expected that their desires with regard to ‘re-Koreanization’ would become more prevalent after Korean unification that could facilitate a variety of economic and cultural exchanges between unified Koreans and ethnic Koreans in China living adjacent to a border due to geographical proximity.

In addition, there exists another likely territorial dispute over seabed petroleum deposits in the West Sea (called by the Koreans) or the Yellow Sea (named by the Chinese) after Korean unification. Beginning in the early 1970s, South Korea-led petroleum exploration in the West Sea brought about “jurisdictional conflicts with Beijing.” According to China’s argument, the disputes occurred because South Korea explored petroleum deposits in the sea area “without first reaching a boundary agreement” with China. However, this issue became suspended due to the gradual improvement of the PRC-South Korea relations since the 1980s.²³⁹

If such territorial issues would emerge after Korean reunification, it is expected that the two countries would settle them bilaterally and peacefully through negotiating processes. For example, despite “Beijing’s willingness to use force in 1974 and 1988 to expel Vietnamese encamped on various islands [in the South China Sea], and the occupation of Mischief Reef near the Philippines in early 1995,” the PRC subsequently has pursued “a more conciliatory approach.”²⁴⁰ In fact,

China’s consistent policy is to settle territorial disputes peacefully, through negotiation. China insists on its sovereignty over the Nansha Islands according to historical facts...but it also insists on solving its disputes with Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines peacefully.²⁴¹

²³⁸ Robert Dujarric. Korea: Security Pivot in Northeast Asia. Indianapolis: Hudson Institute, 1998. p. 66. During the Seoul Olympiad Games period in 1988, in fact, a number of ethnic Korean cheered not Chinese teams but Korean athletes.

²³⁹ Selig S. Harrison (2002), pp. 320-321.

²⁴⁰ David B. H. Denoon and Wendy Frieman. “China’s Security Strategy: The View from Beijing, ASEAN, and Washington.” Asian Survey. Vol. XXXVI, No. 4, April 1996, pp. 425-426.

²⁴¹ “In the South China Sea, China does have some serious disputes with Vietnam. Before 1974 Vietnam openly recognized China’s sovereignty over the Nansha (Spratly) and the Xinsha (Paracel) island, but after 1975 Vietnam denied its original statement and...occupied 29 islands and reefs, ignoring China’s protest.” However, as a result of China’s attempt to resolve territorial disputes peacefully through negotiations, a joint communiqué was signed after Chinese Premier Li Peng’s visit to Vietnam in 1993. For details, see Qimao Chen (Asian Survey. Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, March 1993), p. 247.

Therefore, although Korean unification may raise such problems as possible territorial disputes and ethnic Korean issues in northeastern China, Korean unification would put the relationship between China and a unified Korea into closer contacts. This could lead to interdependent cooperation in order to “deal with a number of bilateral issues (such as the Chinese-North Korean Border Treaty of 1962, common usage of the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, the status of ethnic Koreans in China, the protection of China’s vested economic interests in Northern Korea, the joint hydroelectric power plants, border trade, and repatriation of Korean refugees) in a conciliatory and constructive fashion.”²⁴²

E. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The bilateral relationship between China and South Korea has continued to improve and develop each other’s national interests in a constructive and productive way since their normalization in 1992. Over time, while the Chinese leadership generation during Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping’s era viewed North Korea as the most important ideological ally with blood ties, “the younger generation, many of whom were victimized in the Cultural Revolution, regard the personality cult around the Kims with a mixture of revulsion and derision.”²⁴³ In addition, although China had regarded North Korea as a strategic buffer state on the Korean peninsula, Beijing “would not be opposed to the unification of Korea if it occurs peacefully.”²⁴⁴ As Cheng Yujie, a Chinese scholar, stated, the Chinese “know that the two Koreas will have to be reunified sooner or later...The issue is not whether the two Koreas will reunify, but how and when.”²⁴⁵ From the past Cold War world to the present post-Cold War era “Beijing’s Korea policy has traveled the route from being a Pyongyang-only ‘one-Korea policy,’ to a de facto ‘two-Koreas policy,’ and then to a Seoul-centered ‘one-and-a-half-Koreas policy.’”²⁴⁶ Beijing has adopted a new policy toward the two Koreas, in which the PRC is “identifying

²⁴² Chae-Jin Lee. “Diplomacy after Unification: A Framework for Policy Choices in Korea.” Korea: Dynamics and Diplomacy and Unification. Byung Chul Koh. (Ed.) CA: CMC/KECK, 2001. p. 171.

²⁴³ Marcus Noland. Avoiding the Apocalypse: The Future of the Two Koreas. Washington, DC: The Institute for International Economics, 2000. p.373.

²⁴⁴ Selig S. Harrison (2002), p. 324.

²⁴⁵ Cheng Yujie. “An Update of the Current Situation on the Korean Peninsula.” Contemporary International Relations, July 2001, p. 51.

²⁴⁶ Xiaoxiong Yi (The Journal of East Asian Affairs. Vol. XVI, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2002), p. 351.

common strategic concern and promoting economic engagement” with the DPRK²⁴⁷ and at the same time “seeking common ground while reserving differences” with the ROK.²⁴⁸

Under these circumstances, “When Korean unification finally occurs, China surely would prefer that it occur gradually, without open conflict or a sudden exodus of refugees.”²⁴⁹ In addition, when considering the present substantial situations between North and South Korea--the huge economic disparity between the North and the South as well as the continuously spiraling down economic hardship in the North--Beijing acquiesces to the fact that it is much more possible to reach Korean unification under South Korea than under North Korea. “Although China prefers a status quo on the peninsula,” in other words, “Beijing knows that it has little choice but to accept a unified Korea under Seoul’s leadership. China, however, would not tolerate a unified Korea under America’s leadership.”²⁵⁰

After Korean unification, a unified Korea with a population of more than 70 million people sharing a border with China will attract Chinese in all fields, and vice versa, largely due to geographical proximity and cultural similarity. Each country will be a market for the other’s goods as well as a source of interdependence for advanced technologies and various investments, with others lack. As Chu Shulong, a research fellow of the Research Institute of Contemporary International Relations of China, argued,

The Korean reunification does good to us [i.e., the Chinese] in all aspects. The peaceful reunification will promote the reunification of China. At the same time, the Korean unification will also be beneficial to our economic development, since both Koreas are now among our greatest economic cooperative partners.

²⁴⁷ Xiaoxiong Yi. “A Neutralized Korea? The North-South Rapprochement and China’s Korea Policy.” *The Korea Journal of Defense Analysis*. Vol. XII, No. 2, Winter 2000, pp. 99-109.

²⁴⁸ Xiaoxiong Yi (*The Korea Journal of Defense Analysis*. Vol. XII, No. 2, Winter 2000), pp. 93-99. The author quoted it from “Jiang Zemin’s statement at the five permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations summit, September 7, 2000.”

²⁴⁹ Mel Gurtov (*Asian Survey*. Vol. XLII, No. 3, May/June 2002), p. 401.

²⁵⁰ Xiaoxiong Yi (*The Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol. XVI, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2002), p. 335.

Moreover, “China and Korea were not, are not, and will not become antagonistic nations. China has no reason to oppose to the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula.”²⁵¹ In addition, Chen Fengjun, Professor of the College of International Relations of Beijing University, asserted,

China supports the reunification of Korea, which is more advantageous than disadvantageous to China. From the view of security, Korean reunification will not undermine the strategic interest of our country...The improvement of inter-Korean relations and Korea’s peaceful reunification in the future will undoubtedly improve our surrounding security circumstances.²⁵²

In sum, Korean unification would enhance Chinese security by eliminating the possibility of a second Korean War on the Korean peninsula and by bringing about a gradual reduction of the U.S. military presence or ultimate withdrawal of the U.S. troops from a unified Korean peninsula. It might be able to reap economic benefits for China’s northeastern region through cooperation with a unified Korea in light of geographic proximity while eliminating the economic burden resulting from North Korea. It would make relations between China and a unified Korea much closer based on cooperation for each other’s national interests--especially in the fields of economics and security. It could make China and a unified Korea regard each other as a hedge state in the case of a possible Japanese rearmament or remilitarization based on its economic and military strength when the U.S. troops might withdraw from Korea and Japan. Therefore, the PRC’s views on Korean unification must be absolutely affirmative.

²⁵¹ Chen Fengjun (*Beijing Review*. Vol. 43, No. 23, June 5, 2000), p. 16.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. THE ROLE OF CHINA IN KOREAN UNIFICATION

Historically, the Korean peninsula has played a geographically and strategically important role in East Asia, as a gateway between the Eurasian Continent and the Pacific Ocean, in which powerful countries such as China, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan had--and have even today--struggled to attain influential power over the peninsula. Due to such a geo-strategically important position of the Korean peninsula in the region, on the one hand, Korea--like 'shrimp between whales'--had suffered from the competition over the peninsula among the great powers as well as Chinese dynasties. This was well proven through the three wars that occurred on the Korean peninsula: the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895, the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905, and the Korean War in 1950-1953 between the two Koreas but also including the superpowers--China, the United States and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Korea had considerably benefited from China in terms of Chinese developed political, economic, and cultural systems.

The relations between China and Korea have lasted more than two thousand years. Although their first relationship was initiated from China's four commanderies over the Korean peninsula, a sort of colony, the Korean people had autonomous rights to some large extent during that period and were also able to have contact with Chinese developed civilization. Additionally, even though almost all the dynasties of Korea established tributary relations with those of China, they could import an advanced civilization from China and then develop their own creative culture while keeping their peace with China through such a tributary system.

The Korean people have experienced both faces toward China throughout Korea history. They know well the fact that Korea was able to achieve the first unification by Silla in the seventh century and to repel the Japanese invasions of Korea in the sixteenth century with China's help. In addition, they appreciate the fact that China harbored and helped the Korean provisional government during the period of the Japanese colonization of Korea during the first half of the twentieth century and therefore the Korean

independence fighters were able to achieve their independence at last in 1945. On the other hand, South Koreans also acknowledge well the fact that Korea was not only threatened by China's clandestine conspiracy to hold sway over the whole Korean peninsula right after the first unification by Silla but also suffered from such non-Chinese dynasties as the Khitan and Jurchen dynasties and the Mongol empire during a large part of Koryo, and the Manchu Ching dynasty's intervention during the second half of the Yi dynasty. More importantly, it is the PRC's intervention into the Korean War that South Koreans regard as a major reason that Korea has maintained its separated status as the two Koreas since 1953.

In the Cold War era, the PRC was one of the ROK's primary enemy states in tandem with the Soviet Union on the side of the DPRK in the Korean War in light of ideology. However, it has become one of the most important partnership countries of South Korea in terms of security and economy on the Korean peninsula in the post-Cold War world, especially since 1992 when Beijing and Seoul signed the full diplomatic relations between the PRC and the ROK. In the post-Cold War era, maintaining security and stability on the Korean peninsula (until Korean unification will be achieved through a peaceful process between North and South Korea) became a crucially important driving force not only for the national interests of both the PRC and the ROK, but also for regional peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia as well as on the peninsula.

Under these circumstances, the ROK's amicable relations with the PRC, the DPRK and the United States must be extremely important factors for the security and prosperity of Northeast Asia as well as the Korean peninsula. Particularly among them, the PRC-ROK relationship has rapidly grown and constructively developed as a much more important factor for Korean reconciliation and reunification when considering the fact that the PRC is the only power having good relations with the ROK and the DPRK in the post-Cold War world. For instance, due to the PRC's help the two Koreas simultaneously entered into the United Nations in 1991, the United States and the DPRK signed the Agreed Framework in 1994 to solve the nuclear crisis of 1993-1994 caused by North Korea, and the ROK President Kim Dae Jung and the DPRK Leader Kim Jung Il could sit around the table to take the first step toward Korean reconciliation and unification at two Koreas' summit talk in Pyongyang in June 2000. In addition, it is

because of the PRC's advice or counsel that Kim Jong Il considers Chinese style reform policy in order to overcome economic difficulties and sustain his regime--as could be perceived during his several visits to China's developed areas in 2000-2001. In addition, unlike Beijing's past behavior toward affairs related to Pyongyang, the PRC's changing attitude toward the current nuclear crisis posed by North Korea implies that China would play a more critical role in inter-Korean reconciliation and unification processes as well as North Korea's reforms.²⁵³

As Beijing has shown in these processes, it is expected that the PRC will enhance its efforts to devote itself to helping the two Koreas achieve inter-Korean reconciliation and reunification in favor of maximizing China's national interests because Beijing's leadership fully understands that lingering instability--and a ensuing second Korean War --on the Korean peninsula would have a hugely negative impact on China's national interests. In particular, this would damage its continuous economic growth that is China's key national interest and is most crucial to the future of both the CCP and the PRC. To this end, therefore, it is expected that the PRC's role in Korean unification will be as follows: as a guarantor at the Four Power Talks to replace the 1953 armistice treaty with a permanent peace treaty conducive to reunification; as a main intermediary among the two Koreas and the United States to reduce tensions and facilitate reconciliation on the Korean peninsula; and as a main counselor to help North Korea follow China's reform policy to decrease the economic disparity between the North and the South and increase inter-Korean cooperation.

²⁵³ "While the Chinese blamed intransigence on both sides [i.e., Pyongyang and Washington] for standoff" in the current nuclear crisis of North Korea, "for the first time they publicly criticized their longtime ally [i.e., North Korea] for renegeing on its prior agreement not to develop nuclear weapons." Besides, It is estimated by analysts that "China may supply enough food to feed one-fifth of North Korea's 22 million people and more than 70 percent of its fuel oil, a figure that may have increased since the United States halted oil shipments in the fall" of 2002. Under the circumstance, after North Korea test-fired missiles in February 2003, "China briefly cut off crucial oil supplies to North Korea...in an apparent bid to rein in" Pyongyang. For further details, see Elisabeth Rosenthal. "China Asserts It Has Worked To End Nuclear Crisis." New York Times. February 13, 2003, Accessed in [<http://ebird.dtic.mil/Feb2003/e20030213153961.html>] and Gady A. Epstein. "China Debates Greater Role In N. Korean Nuclear Crisis: Longtime Main Ally Wants Pyongyang to Forgo Arms." The Baltimore Sun. February 13, 2003, Accessed in [https://ca.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/ebird.cgi?doc_url=/Feb2003/s20030213154099.html]. Also, refer to "China Appears to Be Trying to Rein in North Korea." South China Morning Post. March 31, 2003, Accessed in [<http://scmp.com/>].

First, the PRC is anticipated to play a role as a guarantor at the Four Power Talks to replace the 1953 armistice treaty with a permanent peace treaty conducive to reunification. The U.S. forces stationed in South Korea for about a half-century would become the largest obstacle for a reconciliation and reunification process on the Korean peninsula. From Pyongyang's point of view, the U.S. troops operating within the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) and with the U.S. commander enjoying operational control in time of war on the peninsula would continue to lead "North Korea to regard the United States as its main enemy, necessitating a bilateral peace agreement with the United States in order to bring the war to an end." Coupled with the U.S. forces, in addition, the Military Armistice Commission and the U.N. Command's "continuance would be incompatible with a peace agreement and with the normalization of relations" between the United States and North Korea.²⁵⁴ In fact, because North Korea has spent "approximately 20-25 percent of North Korea's feeble gross domestic product" to maintain its more than one million conventional forces, "any policy leaving them intact will preclude hope for gradual economic reform in the North."²⁵⁵ In this context, as Edward A. Olsen suggested, "though the United States is averse to appeasement of North Korea, there are logical reasons to use incremental U.S. forces cuts in Korea as bargaining chips in the inter-Korean peace process." He also argued "It is entirely logical to trade off U.S. force cuts in South Korea for verifiable North Korean conventional-force demobilization and elimination of all its weapons of mass destruction."²⁵⁶ Under the circumstances, to make such a reconciliation and unification process operate

²⁵⁴ Turning Point in Korea: New Dangers and New Opportunities for the United States. Selig S. Harrison, Chairman. February 2003, pp. 23-24. This is the report of a Task Force on U.S. Korea policy co-sponsored by the Center for International Policy and the Center for East Asian Studies of the University of Chicago. The ROK-US CFC was established on Nov. 7, 1978 and "evolved from the multinational United Nations Command (UNC). The U.N. Command, which includes representatives from the United States, ROK, and 15 other countries, oversees the 1953 Armistice." As a result of the establishment of the ROK-US CFC, "operational control authority was transferred to the CFC commander, while the U.N. Command retained only the duty of maintaining the Armistice Agreement." In the meantime, "the peacetime operational control authority held by the commander-in-chief of the CFC over the Korean Armed Forces was transferred to the Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff" on Dec. 1, 1994. For further details, see Ralph A. Cossa. "The Role of U.S. Forces in a Unified Korea." International Journal of Korean Studies. Vol. V, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2001. pp. 120-122 and Lee Soo-Hyong. "Restructuring the Korea-U.S. Alliance." Korea Focus. Vol. 9, No. 2, March-April 2001. pp. 76-78.

²⁵⁵ Michael E. O'Hanlon. "A 'Master Plan' to Deal With North Korea." January 2003, Accessed in [<http://www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb114.htm>].

²⁵⁶ Edward A. Olsen. "Why Keep U.S. Forces in Korea?" Far Eastern Economic Review. February 20, 2003. p. 22.

smoothly and effectively, it is so important for the PRC to guarantee as a member country of the Four Power Talks a formal and permanent peace treaty--or a non-aggression agreement at North Korea's request--between Pyongyang and Washington that may help North Korea give up its current nuclear brinkmanship. This also would relieve it from its psychological burden imposed by the U.S. military threat as well as its economic burdens based on excessive defense expenditures, which would be conducive to induce North Korea to shift from its bellicose policy to a pragmatic one focusing on reforms while achieving the purpose of keeping North Korea from developing a serious nuclear program and maintaining weapons of mass destruction.

Second, the PRC is estimated to play a role as a main intermediary among North and South Korea and the United States to reduce tensions and facilitate reconciliation on the Korean peninsula. The North Korean regime "wants to solve its [severe] economic difficulties through interchanges with the international community,"²⁵⁷ especially with the United States especially after it suffered from famine as a result of the floods during the mid-1990s. In terms of its relations with Washington, Pyongyang has tightly held its positions "on ending the abnormal hostile and belligerent DPRK-US relations and seeking normalization of bilateral relations."²⁵⁸ However, "the Bush Administration is psychologically and diplomatically inclined to neglect and negate the principle of dialogue and talks" while, unlike other big powers, not backing South Korea's engagement policy toward North Korea.²⁵⁹ With regard to this issue "Beijing has expressed disappointment and unhappiness over the U.S. and Japanese decisions not to establish full diplomatic relations with Pyongyang--long after Moscow and Beijing recognized Seoul."²⁶⁰ Under these conditions, as the PRC played an intermediary role in accomplishing the South-North Basic Agreement in 1991, the Nuclear Agreed Framework (under which there obviously exists the item regarding U.S.-North Korean

²⁵⁷ Keun-sik Kim. "Inter-Korean Relations and the Future of the Sunshine Policy." The Journal of East Asian Affairs. Vol. XVI, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2002. p. 110.

²⁵⁸ Jiang Longfeng and Piao Yanhua. "Status Quo of and Prospects for Sino-North Korean Relations--on China's Strategy for the Korean Peninsula Issue." Changchun Dongbeiya Yanjiu. November 25, 2002. No. 4, pp. 21-28. Accessed in FBIS Document ID: CPP20030109000173.

²⁵⁹ Shi Yinhong (2003), p. A11.

²⁶⁰ Fei-Ling Wang. Tacit Acceptance and Watchful Eyes: Beijing's Views about the U.S.-ROK Alliance. Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1997. p. 15.

normalization) between Washington and Pyongyang in 1994, and the two Koreas' summit talks in Pyongyang in 2000, it is the PRC that must be able to play a key role as an intermediate actor among the two Koreas and the United States in the process of U.S.-North Korean normalization. If normalization between the United States and the North is established, there will be no reason for Pyongyang to persist in its nuclear program and consequently for the United States to develop the Theater Missile Defense system with Japan and Taiwan that South Korea refused, which aims at the DPRK as well as the PRC. More importantly, full diplomatic relations between Washington and Pyongyang could facilitate North Korea's access to the trade, investment, and technology of the United States and its allies. Such a repercussion would be beneficial to the PRC's national interests as well. Therefore, in addition to seeking a formal and permanent peace treaty between Washington and Pyongyang, the PRC is expected to actively play a role as a main intermediary among the two Koreas and the United States to persuade Washington to "begin to practically discharge the duty of obtaining normalization of political and economic relations with the DPRK" in order to make North Korea "to a large extent amend its [bellicose] behavior."²⁶¹

Third, the PRC is also expected to play a role as a main counselor to help North Korea follow China's reform policy to decrease the economic disparity between the North and the South and increase inter-Korean cooperation. "Encouraged by the success of their own pragmatic economic reforms," as early as around 1983, the PRC has "prodded Pyongyang to consider similar reforms."²⁶² However, the Tiananmen incident in 1989 and the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 that made the North Korean regime associate the main causes of these events with Beijing and Moscow's reform and opening up policies gave the North's leaders a negative impression of reforms involved with the West, particularly the United States. Pyongyang's leaders, in fact, are very concerned about a possible demise of their regime as a result of reform and opening up policies. However, the PRC's success at economic reforms could convince the North Korean regime of "the possibility of introducing reforms into centrally planned economies while

²⁶¹ Shi Yinhong. "How to Understand and Deal With the DPRK Nuclear Crisis." Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao. January 15, 2003. p. A11. Accessed in FBIS Document ID: CPP20030115000130.

²⁶² Daryl M. Plunk (The U.S.-South Korean Alliance: Time for a Change. Edited by Doug Bandow and Ted Galen Carpenter, 1992), p. 106.

maintaining regime stability for extended periods.”²⁶³ Especially, when considering that “Goldman Sachs estimates the cost of economic reconstruction of North Korea and overall Korean unification will be \$1 trillion,”²⁶⁴ it is a prerequisite for unification to streamline the worst economic structures of the North and reduce the current economic disparity between the two Koreas through North Korea’s reforms. During Kim Jong Il’s recent visits to China--in May 2000 and especially to GM and NEC factories in Shanghai in January 2001--he said, “the reform and opening up policy adopted by the CPC is correct.” It implied that he “would follow the example of China to push forward the DPRK’s reform and opening up.”²⁶⁵ North Korea tried to initiate these economic reforms in July 2002, but it “revealed a lack of the technical knowledge of past experience in other countries with similar problems necessary to make the reforms effective.”²⁶⁶ “It is here, in the field of economic cooperation and encouraging North Korea to embark on a Chinese path of economic reform, Beijing feels it has an enormous role to play.”²⁶⁷ However, although Kim Jong Il “has a favorable thinking to carry out reform...it won’t be easy for the military apparatus and high officials of North Korea to actively implement dear leader’s instruction.” Moreover, “their policy-orientation still remains in preparation for military confrontation rather than the external economic cooperation and opening policy.”²⁶⁸ Under the circumstance, the PRC’s role as a main counselor for the military apparatus and high officials in the DPRK with regard to Pyongyang’s reforms is needed to persuade them to forgo such a bellicose policy in their mind. If the North actively cooperates with the South and the West under the PRC’s counsel regarding reforms in the North, “the costs and burden emanating from the assumed unification would not go astronomical...and it would look more inviting for North Korean people to accept peaceful unification with Seoul.”²⁶⁹ In addition, “the economic cooperation will be

²⁶³ Marcus Noland. “The Future of North Korea’s Economic Reform.” The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. XIV, No. 2, Fall 2002, p. 89.

²⁶⁴ Leif Rosenberger (The Many Faces of Asian Security, 2001), p. 135.

²⁶⁵ Jiang Longfeng and Piao Yanhua (2002), pp. 21-28.

²⁶⁶ Selig S. Harrison (2003), p. 26.

²⁶⁷ Xiaoxiong Yi (The Korea Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. XII, No. 2, Winter 2000), p. 108.

²⁶⁸ Liu Ming (Korea Observer. Vol. 33, No. 1, Spring 2002), p. 99.

²⁶⁹ William Taylor and Abraham Kim. “Is Peaceful Unification Possible.” The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. IX, No. 1, Summer 1997, p. 53.

regarded by DPRK as less sensitive and risky but more beneficial than any other kind of cooperation, which certainly will facilitate mitigating the lingering mistrust between two Koreas, creating great possibility for other high-politics cooperation and integration in the future.”²⁷⁰ Incremental social, cultural, and economic exchanges between the South and the North--with the PRC’s successful experiences of opening up and reform policies as a role model--through the tourism business using both roads and railway, the mutual correspondence and the reunions among more than ten million separated families, and construction of infrastructure and industries in the North, help the two Koreas reduce the disparity and eliminate the heterogeneity created by severance of about a half century. Eventually this will enhance confidence building which must be conducive to the first step toward the inter-Korean reconciliation and reunification process. More importantly, “Beijing’s ultimate goal with regard to North Korea is de-escalation and reform; China strives to prevent the sudden collapse of Kim Jong Il’s regime, steer the North toward reform, and work for the peaceful reunification of the peninsula on the South’s terms, which might ultimately result in the withdrawal of US troops from Korea.”²⁷¹ Therefore, the PRC is also expected to actively play a key role as a main counselor to help North Korea follow China’s reform policy

In the context of these circumstances, finally, the relations between the PRC and the ROK must make every endeavor, in constructive ways, to make the DPRK open itself to the world as well as to change its bellicose policy into a pragmatic one in order to gain a firm groundwork for peaceful Korean unification. For the purposes of a permanent peace treaty and normalization between the United States and the DPRK, in addition, the PRC and the ROK must do their best to play a crucial role in shifting the United States’ hard-line policy toward North Korea into an engagement one in accord with that of the South Korean government as did President Clinton in his late presidency--needless to say fostering favorable international conditions--for North Korea’s systemic change.

²⁷⁰ Liu Ming. “The Inner and External Elements in the Course of Korean Unification.” Korea Observer. Vol. 33, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 96.

²⁷¹ “China’s Perspective on Northeast Asian Security.” This paper is a meeting summary for # 18 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which is prepared by Faith Hillis. Accessed in [<http://www.ceip.org>].

B. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

“A sudden and unexpected unification” through an abrupt demise of the North Korean regime “may precipitate tragic chaos” to the PRC as well as the two Koreas. Thus, “only a peaceful and gradual unification should be acceptable.”²⁷² To achieve such a reunification process, the two Koreas must establish and maintain amicable relations with neighboring powers that have had a huge impact on the Korean peninsula’s past and present fate—for they will exert considerable influence on its future fate. “Although the Korean peninsula is a place where the interest of the four great powers converge[s], the US and China will be the key players in any Korean unification process, in addition to the two Koreas themselves.”²⁷³ This is reinforced by considering the unavoidable fact that the United States has a half century-long alliance treaty with the ROK and the PRC is the only state having good relations with the two Koreas.

In this context, to bring about peace and the ultimate goal of the two Koreas, peaceful reunification, on the peninsula, first of all both North Korea and the United States should strive to improve their relations through giving up the North’s nuclear program and achieve normalization between Washington and Pyongyang in order to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula. At the same time, North Korea “has to pursue a reform process analogous to the Chinese experience in order to achieve convergence with the South.”²⁷⁴

For these purposes, I would like to offer policy recommendations for those who work for the ROK government, especially the Ministry of Unification of the ROK, in order to help them create a policy toward the PRC in favor of a South Korean-led, reasonable and peaceful unification on the Korean peninsula.

First, the ROK government should strive to reenergize the Four-Power Peace Talks. The Four-Power Talks initiated by the U.S. and ROK governments in 1996, which aim to achieve a formal and permanent peace treaty on the Korean peninsula are indispensable for the Korean peace process. However, the Four-Power Peace Talks have

²⁷² Keun-sik Kim (2002), p. 101.

²⁷³ Shiping Tang, “A Neutral Reunified Korea: A Chinese View.” *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol. XIII, No. 2, Fall/Winter 1999, p. 466.

²⁷⁴ Ming Liu (*East Asia: An International Quarterly*. Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1999), p. 45.

been deadlocked since August 1999, when North Korea refused to attend the talks. The ROK government should strive to induce North Korea to participate in the talks while reminding the North that the Four-Power Peace Talks “could be the best deal for North Korea, because (1) cross-recognition by the four major powers may be achieved through the four-party talks, (2) North Korea’s survival may be guaranteed by the international community, (3) South Korea’s positive economic assistance to the North could be promised, and (4) inter-Korean arms control agreement would further reduce the burden of North Korea’s defense expenditure.”²⁷⁵ At the same time, the ROK government also has to try to make both the PRC and the United States actively and constructively take part in the talks to bring about peace agreements between South and North Korea, North Korea and the United States, the United States and the PRC, and the PRC and South Korea in order to “legally end the Korean War” and make an amicable environment for the inter-Korean reconciliation and reunification process.²⁷⁶

Second, maintaining firm alliance relations with the United States, the ROK government must strive to persuade the U.S. administration to pursue an engagement policy toward the DPRK as did President Clinton. Above all, the ROK government should make every effort to induce the U.S. government to establish normalized relations with the DPRK regime. Because “refusal of the recognition of the North or containing the North makes no help to resolve the problems and peace establishment in the Korean Peninsula”²⁷⁷ and “allowing North Korea to undertake the production of fissile material and nuclear bombs would be a major setback for American security, for regional security, and for international security,”²⁷⁸ the U.S.-DPRK normalization process that would bring about a formal and permanent peace treaty between them is “a necessary step to ease

²⁷⁵ Tae-Hwan Kwak. “The Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Building Through the Four-Party Peace Talks: Re-evaluation and Policy Recommendations.” This paper was prepared for presentation at the 44th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Portland, Oregon during February 25-March 1, 2003, p. 7.

²⁷⁶ Tae-Hwan Kwak (2003), p. 14.

²⁷⁷ Zhang Yunling. “Peace and Security of Korean Peninsula and China’s Role.” Accessed in [http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28_yts/wordch-en/en-zyl/en-peace.htm].

²⁷⁸ William J. Perry. “Crisis on the Korean Peninsula: Implications for U.S. Policy in Northeast Asia.” p. 8. This paper was presented by William J. Perry at a Brookings Leadership Forum that was hosted by the Brookings Institution on January 24, 2003.

tension and to move to a real peace process in the Korean Peninsula.”²⁷⁹ North Korean leaders “still hold the military capability [that] is their last ace for bargaining, for dignity and for sovereignty.” “Only when they thought the U.S. takes a real benign policy towards them both in security and in its external relations can they consider negotiating with the U.S. on a peace treaty, involving conventional weapons as well as the destiny of American forces in the peninsula.”²⁸⁰ Therefore, to reduce North Korea’s military capability including its nuclear program, over one million conventional forces, and WMD, which the North’s leaders have regarded as legitimized by their dignity as well as their sovereignty, there is a good reason for the ROK government to induce the U.S. government to positively reconsider normalization with the DPRK, which the Pyongyang regime has requested from the U.S. government and persistently sought in order to assure its regime survival. At the same time, the ROK government also must try to alleviate anti-Americanism that has expanded in South Korea. As a result of a series of events mentioned in Chapter IV (see pp. 50-53), “the South Korean people are taking a more critical view on American policy towards North Korea.” The phenomenon “demonstrates that the growing sentiment of one Korea nation outruns [the] importance of [the] American-South Korean alliance in a sense.”²⁸¹ However, “Seoul has to maintain a friendly and mutually beneficial relationship with the U.S., not only for economic interests but also to serve strategic and reunification goals”²⁸² because “U.S. support for reunification, as well as for post-reunification reconstruction, will be indispensable.”²⁸³ “For Korea, the ties with the United States bind it politically and strategically to the network of developed economies that includes Japan, North America, and Europe. This arrangement, in return, makes possible profitable economic intercourse by keeping the peace and maintaining international institutions that foster economic growth.”²⁸⁴

²⁷⁹ Zhang Yunling. “Peace and Security of Korean Peninsula and China’s Role.” Accessed in [http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28_yts/wordch-en/en-zyl/en-peace.htm].

²⁸⁰ Liu Ming (Korea Observer. Vol. 33, No. 1, Spring 2002), p. 103.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

²⁸² Jae Ho Chung. “South Korea Between Eagle and Dragon: Perceptual Ambivalence and Strategic Dilemma.” Asian Survey. Vol. XLI, No. 5, September/October 2001, p. 778.

²⁸³ Jae Ho Chung (2001), p. 794.

²⁸⁴ Robert Dujarric. “Korea after Unification: An Opportunity to Strengthen the Korean-American Partnership.” The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. XII, No. 1, Summer 2000, p. 66.

Third, maintaining good relations with Beijing, the South Korean government should make every effort to persuade the PRC to “abandon its traditional passive posture in favor of a more active diplomatic role” and to induce it to “be more direct in warning North Korea that its [bellicose] actions threaten fundamental Chinese security [and economic] interests.” Since the Beijing-Seoul normalization in 1992, the PRC and the ROK have “consult[ed] with and support[ed] each other about strategy toward the DPRK. Both governments favor engagement with the North, a reformist North Korea, and eventual peaceful unification.”²⁸⁵ Moreover, “Less known to most Americans, in recent years China has become South Korea’s primary economic partner and frequent diplomatic asset regarding the inter-Korean relationship.”²⁸⁶ Although the PRC played a key role in making the two Koreas simultaneously enter the United Nations in 1991, resolving the nuclear crisis in 1994, and achieving the two Koreas’ summit in 2000, however, Beijing has shown somewhat passive attitudes in dealing with North Korean affairs in the international community. Such cautious Chinese attitudes toward North Korean issues would not help to sustain its security and economic interests and also could have a negative impact on enhancing amicable relations with the United States and South Korea. If North Korea attains a lot of nuclear weapons--as a result of Beijing’s passive attitudes toward North Korean issues--and uses them as a method to keep its regime from collapsing, it would heavily harm the national interests of both the PRC and the ROK. To prevent such a worst case from coming true, the ROK government should urge the PRC to take a much more positive and active role in dealing with North Korean issues. “Threatening to cut off...[Beijing’s oil and food] aid” to the North for the purpose of inducing North Korea to give up its nuclear program, inviting North Korea to begin reforms and opening up policies, and forcing North Korea to attend a negotiating table with the United States “would be risky, but might be the only way to head off even worse consequences” when considering China’s status as a primary donor of oil and food for the North.²⁸⁷ At the same time, as part of persuading the United States to utilize an

²⁸⁵ David Shambaugh. “China and the Korean Peninsula: Playing for the Long Term.” The Washington Quarterly. Spring 2003, p. 49.

²⁸⁶ Edward. A. Olsen. “China: The Great Korean Hope?” The Monterey Herald. January 12, 2003. p. F3.

²⁸⁷ Phillip C Saunders and Jing-dong Yuan. “Korea Crisis and Test Chinese Diplomacy.” Asia Times. January 8, 2003 accessed in [<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/EA08Dg03.html>].

engagement policy toward the DPRK, the ROK government should urge the PRC to induce the U.S. administration to normalize its relations with the North Korean regime and to sign a formal and permanent peace treaty with it in order to reduce tensions and to increase stability and prosperity in the Northeast Asian region as well as on the Korean peninsula.

Most importantly, the ROK government should never forget the importance of both the PRC and the United States in the inter-Korean reconciliation and reunification process. In other words, the South Korean government “must avoid making premature choices...That is, Seoul must maximize what it has, the security alliance with the U.S. and economic bilateralism with China, while minimizing any commitments on issues beyond its control.”²⁸⁸ In addition, the ROK government should not overlook the important point that the prospect of the future relationship between China and Korea, “to a great extent, would be decided by the political development within the peninsula and the relations among China, the United States, Japan and Russia, especially the bilateral relationship between China and the U.S.”²⁸⁹ The reason is because “continued confrontation between the U.S. and China will improve neither regional security nor the prospects for peaceful Korean unification,”²⁹⁰ the ROK government should make every effort to help the PRC and the United States develop and maintain Beijing-Washington good relations that would be conducive to the Korean reunification process.

Finally, if the two Koreas achieve a peaceful reunification with both the PRC and the United States’ aid under favorable circumstances suggested above, a unified Korea should strive to maintain good relations with the two countries. Any remaining U.S. troops presence on a unified Korean peninsula, above all, might become the hottest issue to the PRC. From the PRC’s point of view, the U.S. forces stationed in a unified Korea would be regarded as an anti-Chinese foothold as well as a primary impetus for instigating China to build a much stronger PLA that would necessitate increasing its defense expenditure. With regard to this important issue, a unified Korea and the United

²⁸⁸ Jae Ho Chung (2001), p. 795.

²⁸⁹ Xiaoming Zhang. “China’s Relations with the Korean Peninsula: A Chinese View.” Korea Observer. Vol. 32, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 490.

²⁹⁰ Taeho Kim. “Beijing, Moscow and Pyongyang: Same Old Bed, Three Different Dreams.” Korea and World Affairs. Vol. XXV, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 501.

States government have to bear in mind that they should try to give the PRC acceptable reasons for a U.S. troop presence on the Korean peninsula after unification, which would foster better relations between a unified Korea, China, Russia and Japan, restrain a severe arms race among them, and thus provide economic benefits to all of them. Another important issue regarding a unified Korea's relations with the PRC and the United States after Korean reunification would be both the PRC and the United States' postures toward a unified Korea. In other words, Beijing and Washington should not regard their relations with a unified Korea as a client state like Chinese dynasties did toward Korean dynasties with a tributary system and the U.S. government did toward the ROK government during the past several decades. Such negative postures toward a unified Korea would make a unified Korea lean toward other powers such as Russia and even Japan despite historically antagonistic relations as a hedge power against the PRC and the United States. The PRC and the United States should bear in mind that they should try to develop and enhance their relations with a unified Korea based on the concept of a real partnership that treats Korea respectfully and equally.

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