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EAST ASIA AND THE UNITED STATES—RECENT IMPROVEMENTS AND OUTLOOK*

Robert Sutter

East Asia remains beset by numerous difficult issues ranging from regional hot spots in the Taiwan Strait and the Korean peninsula, to economic difficulties in Japan and broader policy drift in Indonesia. The region is full of strategic uncertainty and economic and political change. The results include pervasive hedging by regional powers; most governments are using more diversified diplomacy, military preparations and other means to insure their particular interests will be safeguarded, especially in case the regional situation should change for the worse. While generally recognizing the need to conform to international economic norms, East Asian governments also seek to block or slow perceived adverse consequences of economic globalization, seen as supported by the United States, and they seek greater cooperation with similarly affected governments in and outside the region. Politically, regional governments are inclined to oppose the US and other outside pressure for political rights and democracy that come at the expense of national sovereignty and stability. Trends in the region and US policy

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toward the region also are likely to be affected by major turmoil caused by such imminent dangers as another large-scale terrorist attack on America, a war possibly involving nuclear weapons between India and Pakistan, escalating Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or a US military attack against Iraq. US economic power could decline with the turndown in the US stock market and the weakening of the dollar. Despite these challenges, this article argues that recent US policy has served to reinforce the US position as the region's preferred security guarantor and economic partner. Other circumstances, notably the US-led war on terrorism and the preoccupation of East Asian leaders with domestic issues, have strengthened the US leading position in East Asia and allowed for a generally positive outlook in US-East Asian relations for the rest of the Bush administration.

American relations with East Asia at the start of the 21st century are heavily influenced by the policies and actions of government leaders on both sides of the Pacific. How well the US government policies and behavior mesh with the priorities and actions of counterparts in East Asia will go far toward determining whether the course of American relations with the region will be smooth or difficult.¹

¹ The Council on Foreign Relations has completed reviews of the US relations with key parts of East Asia and the Pacific, notably Korea and Southeast Asia, and those reports are available at <http://www.cfr.org>. A good review on Northeast Asia and the US is Catherin Dalpino and Bates Gill, eds., *Brookings Northeast Asian Survey 2000-2001*, Washington, Brookings, 2001. A comprehensive assessment giving both American and Asian views on America's role in East and Southeast Asia is contained in *America's Role in Asia: American Views and American Role in Asia: Asian Views*, sponsored by the Asia Foundation in 2001 and available on <http://www.asiafoundation.org>.

East Asian Regional Dynamics

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War coincided with a marked upswing in East Asian economic power and political assertiveness. Though dampened by setbacks during the Asian economic crisis later in the 1990s, regional initiatives and leadership continue, mainly through national governments. Government leaders generally have endeavored to meet growing popular demands for greater economic development and nationalistic respect through balanced nation-building strategies that place a premium on encouraging economic growth beneficial to broad segments of their societies. Most tend to eschew radical ideologies and to emphasize conventional nationalism. Military power develops in tandem with economic power, but few regimes have emphasized the former at the expense of the latter in the face of international opposition and domestic pressures for more effective development of overall national power (North Korea and Burma are exceptions).

Key Determinants

Five main determinants affect the recent policy environment in East Asia relevant to U.S. interests and policy:

- Reactions to changes in major regional power relationships. These changes include China's rising power, Japan's continued economic stagnation and political weakness, and Indonesia's weakness and leadership drift.
- The change in relations between North and South Korea.
- Regional concern to sustain economic growth amid growing challenges of economic globalization
- Challenges posed by the freer flow of information; and

- Regional concern over U.S. security, economic, and political policies and objectives, including perceived U.S. unilateralism and pressures, and U.S. intentions to stay involved in the region.²

With the exception of the Korean factor, these determinants are not new, though all have become stronger in recent years. They have led to more fluid security and power relationships in East Asia than at any time since the Cold War, and have strengthened the priority regional governments generally give to effectively managing economic and political challenges. Their relative importance depends on circumstances and the priorities of regional leaders. Security determinants are of particular importance on those occasions—like the thaw in North-South Korean relations during 2000 or the 1996 U.S.-China military face-off over Taiwan—when regional leaders have focused on the evolving balance of power in East Asia.³ Globalization and the information revolution are of key importance when regional leaders face economic crises or social-political instability brought on by these forces.⁴ Taken together, the determinants provide impetus for greater activism by East Asian governments to foster their interests in an increasingly challenging and fluid environment.

2 This assessment was influenced notably by the discussion in *East Asia and the United States: Current Status and Five-Year Outlook*, Washington DC, US National Intelligence Council, Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>. See in particular the paper in the report by Robert Manning, “The Perils of Being Number 1: East Asian Trends and US Policies to 2025,” *East Asia and the US: Current Status and Five-Year Outlook*, Washington DC, US National Intelligence Council, Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>, pp. 83-94.

3 Sheldon Simon, ed., *The Many Faces of Asian Security*, New York, Rowman and Littlefield, 2001, pp. 1-14. Aaron Friedberg, “Introduction,” in Richard Ellings and Aaron Friedberg, eds., *Strategic Asia, Power and Purpose, 2001-2002*. Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001, pp. 1-26.

4 Samuel Kim, “East Asia and Globalization: Challenges and Response” in Samuel Kim, ed., *East Asia and Globalization* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 1-30.

Trends in Regional Dynamics

Security Initiatives and “Hedging.” All regional powers are continuing “hedging”—using more diversified diplomacy, military preparations and other means to insure that their particular security interests will be safeguarded, especially in case the regional situation should change for the worse. All powers want generally positive relations with the United States, but seek diversified ties to enhance their security options. They continue to differ on a strong U.S. regional security presence, with China notably encouraging a gradual weakening of the U.S. position as it seeks expanded regional influence, while most others back a strong U.S. presence. They are divided over US missile defense plans and offer mixed support to the US anti-terrorism campaign.

China strives to develop ties with Russia and others useful in countering U.S. power and possible U.S. pressure against it. China continues to rely strongly on Russian arms and technical support to modernize its military in preparation for possible contingencies involving the United States in the Taiwan area.⁵ Various reports show Chinese and Japanese leaders remain deeply suspicious of the other side’s intentions. China opposes the strengthening of the U.S.-Japan alliance and U.S.-Japanese efforts to develop theater missile defenses. China has tried to work with the six-member Shanghai Cooperation Organization to restrict US influence in Central Asia, but has been forced by the imperative of the US-led anti-terrorism campaign to support US military actions there.⁶

5 *East Asian Strategic Review 2001* (Tokyo: The National Institute for Defense Studies, 2001), pp. 187-202. Christopher McNally and Charles Morrison, eds., *Asia Pacific Security Outlook 2001* (New York: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2001), pp. 50-60. Lowell Dittmer, “The Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership,” *Journal of Contemporary China*, 10:28, pp. 399-413.

6 Bruce Gilley, “The Region Takes Sides,” *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 27, 2001.

Economic and other ties bind Japan and China, but historical, territorial, and strategic differences will continue and may worsen. Japanese leaders are more determined to try to solidify the U.S. alliance while handling security issues more independently.⁷ Though strongly supporting the U.S. alliance, Japan also prepares for possible serious difficulty in the U.S. security relationship as a result of a major incident involving U.S. bases, or a military crisis in East Asia (e.g., the Taiwan Strait) involving U.S. forces in Japan. It pursues some initiatives internally and overseas that are designed to insure Japanese interests without direct reference to the U.S. alliance.

South Korea strives to diversify contacts to protect its interests in dealing with North Korea and other powers concerned with the peninsula.⁸ Based on its U.S. alliance, it increasingly moves on its own to improve relations with North Korea, China, Japan, and Russia to safeguard its interests on the Korean peninsula. North Korea focused on ties with the United States in the 1990s but now seeks improved relations with a variety of powers and gave new priority to North-South Korean dialogue at the time of the Pyongyang summit in June 2000.⁹ Southeast Asian countries seek improved security relations with Japan, India, and others as they face China's growing power and influence in the area. The major flanking powers—Russia and India—

7 Susumu Awanohara, "Japanese Attitudes and Approaches Toward US Policies and Pressure in the Region," in *East Asia and the United States: Current Trends and Five-Year Outlook* (Washington, DC, U.S. National Intelligence Council), Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>, pp. 9-20.

8 Scott Snyder, "US-ROK Relations: Trends at the Opening of the 21st Century," in *East Asia and the United States: Current Trends and Five-Year Outlook* (Washington, DC, U.S. National Intelligence Council), Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>, pp. 37-44.

9 Nicholas Eberstadt, "Korea," in Richard Ellings and Aaron Friedberg eds., *Strategic Asia, Power and Purpose, 2001-2002* Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001, pp. 129-172. *North Korea's Engagement: Perspectives, Outlook, and Implications*, Washington, D.C., US National Intelligence Council, conference report CR 2001-01, May 2001, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>, pp. 3-6.

use diplomacy, military exchanges, sales and other interaction to heighten their respective influence in regional security affairs. They remain open to East Asian powers interested in using contacts with Moscow and New Delhi to hedge against negative contingencies. Their influence remains constrained by geography, economic limitations, and more pressing policy priorities, and their policies often are contradictory to each other.¹⁰

Economic and Political Trends. While generally recognizing the need to conform to international economic norms, East Asian governments seek to block or slow perceived adverse consequences of economic globalization by greater cooperation with similarly affected governments in and outside the region in existing organizations like ASEAN, APEC, and WTO, and in emerging regional and broader groupings, notably the ASEAN plus Three.¹¹ National rivalries and other regional differences are less of an obstacle than in the past to East Asian multilateral economic cooperation. These rivalries and differences remain more of an obstacle to multilateral cooperation over more sensitive security issues, however. Opinion polling, focus groups, and other reports indicate that government transparency and accountability, the free flow of information, democracy, and an open society are generally supported by many Asians. But reporting also shows that regional governments continue to strongly oppose the US and other outside pressure for political rights and democracy that come at the expense of national sovereignty and stability. There was little regret in the region when the United States lost its seat on the UN Human

10 Rajan Menon, "Russia," and Ashley Tellis, "South Asia," in Richard Ellings and Aaron Friedberg, eds., *Strategic Asia: Power and Purpose, 2001-2002*, Seattle, Washington, National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001, pp. 173-222, 223-268.

11 Marcus Noland, "Economic Interests, Values, and Policies" in *East Asia and the United States: Current Trends and Five-Year Outlook*, Washington, DC, U.S. National Intelligence Council, Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>, pp. 73-82.

Rights Commission in 2001.

Challenges for US Policy

These regional trends and developments pose challenges for US policy.¹² Heading the list are security dilemmas regarding regional hot spots like Taiwan and Korea. The US support for Taiwan can be particularly difficult to manage because of the strong regional sensitivities to avoid antagonizing China on this volatile issue, and the strong US domestic pressures supportive of Taiwan and critical of China. The US policy toward Korea needs to take account of South Korea's forward leaning policy toward North Korea and Japan's more reserved policy, as well as the strong inclination in the Bush administration to slow the pace of US engagement with the North pending actions by Pyongyang. Meanwhile, the US domestically driven effort to pursue missile defense at home and abroad antagonizes China and others and worries US friends and associates concerned about preserving regional peace and stability.

The US policy has particular difficulty dealing with regional instability. Thus, the rocky transition from authoritarianism in Indonesia has seen US leaders posture in various ways but with little meaningful impact. If serious decay and instability were to emerge, as many predict, in North Korea or China, serious consequences for the region and for US interests would ensue and US leaders probably would have great difficulty developing plans to deal with the consequences.¹³

The changing regional power alignments and developments on the

Korean peninsula are among factors complicating US alliance relations. Though the Bush administration is giving high priority to alliance ties with Japan, South Korea, and others, the fact remains that the publics and elites in these countries have deeply ambivalent feelings about aspects of the alliance relations, notably the large US troop presence in Japan and South Korea. Crimes committed by US troops, other incidents, or significant easing of North-South Korean relations are among factors that could give rise to pressures in Japan and South Korea for adjustments in the US troop presence and other aspects of the alliance relationship. Meanwhile, regional governments have welcomed Russia's more active role in regional security affairs even though it has worked at times against US policy and interests.¹⁴

The US policy makers also face broad pressure in the United States to pursue vigorous free market policies and to seek to spread democracy and improved human rights practices abroad. This often does not mesh smoothly with East Asian leaders trying to control the disruptive consequences of economic globalization, the free flow of information, and perceived political challenges to stability. Bridging this divide is likely to continue to pose a major challenge for US policy.¹⁵

Improvements in US-East Asian Relations

Policy changes by the George W. Bush administration and changes in the US-East Asian relations following the September 11, 2001 attacks on America on balance have improved the US position in the region and have helped to establish a basis for generally positive prospects for

12 *America's Role In Asia: American Views* (San Francisco: The Asia Foundation, 2001), pp.12-19.

13 *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue with non-government experts*. Washington: US National Intelligence Council, Report NIC 2000-02, December 2000. <http://www.odci.gov/nic> p. 63.

14 *America's Role in Asia: American Views* (San Francisco: The Asia Foundation, 2001), pp. 12-14, 27-28, 31-33.

15 "Introduction" in *East Asia and the United States: Current Status and Five-Year Outlook* (Washington: US National Intelligence Council), Conference Report CR 2000-02, September 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/nic>. pp. 3-6.

the next few years.¹⁶

The Bush administration has continued to emphasize the broad common ground with leaders in East Asia, seeking to maintain a strong US security presence in the region and seeking to develop close economic ties with the United States. The administration entered office with key foreign and defense policy officials (e.g. Richard Cheney, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld) who were well experienced in international politics and US foreign policy. They tended to follow a pragmatic and deliberative style of decision-making under President Bush's leadership that made it more difficult for extreme positions favored by some in the administration to gain support in the face of broader considerations of the US national interest. Top-level expertise on Asia was weak, but the deputy secretaries in both the State and Defense Departments headed a strong policy team with keen awareness of East Asian issues.¹⁷

The administration leaders placed much more emphasis on national power than on global trends such as economic globalization emphasized by the Clinton administration in pursuing US policy goals. They set out to pursue US objectives in East Asia by enhancing US power and influence. They relied on continued strong US military and economic power, and strong relations with key regional allies, notably Japan but also South Korea and Australia. They also were successful in making significant early gains in improving US relations with the two major flanking powers, Russia and India. They maintained a mixed view of China, and developed an approach that markedly downgraded the US attention devoted to China in comparison to the top priority given to China during the second term of the Clinton

16 Among useful chronicles of US policy and behavior toward East Asia and the Pacific, see the quarterly reviews in *Comparative Connections* (Honolulu: CSIS Pacific Forum), <http://www.csis.org/pacfor>.

17 Murray Hiebert, *The Bush Presidency: Implications for Asia* (New York: The Asia Society, Asian Update, January 2001), pp. 5-9.

administration.

Relations with Japan received top US priority—a contrast with the perceived neglect of relations with Japan during the second Clinton administration when China received highest priority in the region. The US focus has been on developing a closer security alliance relationship along the lines set forth in a report directed by now Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage that was issued prior to the 2000 US presidential election. Though clearly concerned about continued stagnant economic conditions in Japan, the Bush administration eschewed strong public criticism, determined to work closely wherever possible with its key East Asian ally.¹⁸

Unsure whether rising China would be friend or foe, the administration followed a policy emphasizing a desire to develop areas of cooperation in trade, foreign investment and other matters, while showing a firm stance regarding areas of disagreement, notably Taiwan, China's continued proliferation of WMD and related technologies, and human rights. The enhanced PLA buildup opposite Taiwan saw strong public US countermoves designed to deter the PLA from military action. The balance of US policy—supporting closer economic ties and deterring military pressure—seemed to fit well with key US domestic constituencies, as US business interests appeared satisfied with the economic opening while the firm US stance on Taiwan and other areas of disagreement met with approval by the broad range of US opinion skeptical of China seen in the Congress, the media, and important US domestic interest groups.

The administration saw no strong need to show progress in US relations with China and thus avoided negotiations seeking concessions from China that in turn would involve concessions from the United States. It seemed prepared to deal with perceived negative trends in China's behavior through US military countermoves, sanctions, and

18 *Ibid.*

criticism. It was open to broadening common ground, and was interested in high-level interaction with Chinese leaders, but improving the substance of relations was largely contingent on China's behavior.¹⁹

The Bush administration policy on Korea was conflicted. Reflecting strongly held views by many in the administration, headed by the President, that the Clinton policy of engagement with North Korea was misguided, the Bush administration adopted a much tougher public profile toward North Korea, notably including North Korea among the three states noted in the president's reference to the "axis of evil" in his January 2002 State of the Union message. This tough stance worked against the administration's concurrent efforts to solidify relations with its key ally in South Korea, where President Kim Dae Jung pursued a decidedly one-sided engagement policy toward North Korea. Endeavoring to pursue both paths—toughness toward the North and support for the South—proved difficult throughout the Bush administration and resulted in repeated awkwardness during high-level US-South Korean meetings.²⁰

Southeast Asia initially was a low priority for the Bush administration as it had been for the Clinton administration. A closer US involvement was held in check by continued political instability in key regional states, generally poor economic prospects, and longstanding human rights concerns.

East Asia and the Pacific figured secondarily in US priorities after September 11, 2001. There was an up tick in US attention to anti-terrorist activities in Southeast Asia, notably the Philippines. The administration's appeared pleased with the cooperation from Japan and other allies; Chinese cooperation appeared more reserved, and

19 See quarterly reviews of US-China relations by Bonnie Glaser in *Comparative Connections*, <http://www.csis.org/pacfor>.

20 See quarterly reviews of US-Korean relations in *Comparative Connections*, <http://www.csis.org/pacfor>.

Indonesia and Malaysian leaders showed differences with the US military campaign in Afghanistan. A US preoccupation with the anti-terrorist efforts also had the effect of muting the US domestic debate over policy issues in East Asia, especially policy toward China. Those issues now appeared much less important given the intense US preoccupation with anti-terrorism. As a result, Bush administration officials met with less US domestic resistance to and interference with their approach to China, while domestic criticism of the administration's tougher stance on North Korea was not a serious impediment for administration leaders.

Prospects

East Asia remains beset by numerous difficult issues ranging from regional hot spots in the Taiwan Strait and the Korean peninsula, to economic difficulties in Japan and broader policy drift in Indonesia. Trends in the region and US policy toward the region also are likely to be affected by major turmoil caused by such imminent dangers as another large-scale terrorist attack on America, a war possibly involving nuclear weapons between India and Pakistan, escalating Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or a US military attack against Iraq. The US economic power could decline with the turndown in the US stock market and the weakening of the dollar. Nonetheless, several recent trends and developments in East Asia and in US policy toward the region suggest that US interests and influence are likely to be well served by what appears to be a generally smooth course for US-regional relations for the next few years. In particular:

- Both sides of the Pacific continue to put a high value on the US security commitment and military presence in East Asia. The United States seeks greater economic opportunity and openness, and regional leaders continue to view the United States as their preferred

economic partner.

- Bush administration initiatives and particularly developments after September 11, 2001 have added to earlier trends to enhance the US preeminent power position in the region. The US position appears to belie predictions in earlier decades of an inevitable US decline, as the United States today is more powerful and influential in East Asia and the Pacific than at any time since the defeat of Japan in World War II.
- East Asia powers, including stagnating Japan and such rising powers as China are domestically preoccupied and are likely to remain so for some time to come. Focused on internal issues, they seek support from the United States and other powers, and do not seek difficulties in their foreign relations.
- East Asian nations, headed by the leading regional powers Japan and China, are actively maneuvering and hedging, seeking new and more multifaceted arrangements to secure their interests in the uncertain regional environment. They sometimes will cooperate together in broader arrangements like ASEAN Plus Three that may appear to be detrimental to US interests. But they also remain deeply suspicious of one another, indicating that any significant cooperation seriously detrimental to US interests remains unlikely.
- US policy makers have done an increasingly better job in managing the often strong US domestic pressures that drive US policy in extreme directions detrimental to a sound and balanced approach to East Asia and the Pacific. President Clinton's engagement policy toward China in his second term was a vast improvement over and much more coherent than the policy in his first term that appeared driven by competing US domestic interests. President Bush's policy is better suited to mainstream US opinion regarding China and has the added advantage of avoiding the need for significant US concessions toward China on sensitive issues like Taiwan that seriously exacerbate the US domestic debate about China policy. President Bush's attention to Japan eased Japanese anxieties caused by the Clinton administration's emphasis on China and its tough public criticism of Japan's economic policies, avoiding US domestic contro-

versy over this policy area. Finally, the Bush administration's tougher stance toward North Korea can be seen to be balanced to some degree by opinion in the administration and more broadly in the Congress, the media, and among US experts and opinion leaders warning of dire consequences of excessive US pressure on the North Korean regime.

NORTHEAST ASIAN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND ALTERNATIVE KOREAN FUTURES: AN EARLY 21ST CENTURY APPRAISAL

Richard Chadwick

This essay focuses on an evaluation of current trends and policy contingencies in Northeast Asian international politics, with a particular concern for the people and governance of Korea. The scope of the essay is relatively large-scale and long-term, so that policies and prospects can be comparatively discussed and evaluated in a framework that acknowledges their significance for the Korean people. Several themes recur throughout: the need for leadership with vision and purpose, the need for better integration of social-psychological principles into foreign policy decision making analysis, and the use of new decision-aiding technologies coupled with deep historical knowledge. In reviewing recent policies and trends for this essay, as well as some of the voluminous analytic literature on the politics of this region, it struck me that such considerations were often only implicit in the arguments made for various policies and trends. Thus, a secondary purpose to this essay is to make a small effort at striking something of balance between these more enduring themes and analysis of specific, Northeast Asia present policy exigencies. Each theme is developed in terms of contemporary theory, current history, and policy.

Among those examined are “offensive realism,” “power transitions,” and “hawk engagement” in the context of economic, financial and military systems’ globalization.

I. Leadership

In many leaders’ lives there comes a time when they court disaster if they do not take seriously the refinement of their visions of distant, alternative futures. What seems idealistic and visionary, unrealistic and counter-intuitive today can in the end be the vision that, in its implementation, yields the fruits of stability, prosperity and peace. Since the Peace of Westphalia, for instance, visions of autonomy through interdependence in international regimes have typically gone hand in hand with increased national well being and power for their adherents; yet at their inception these visions of autonomy through interdependence seemed to be merely a passing fantasy.¹ Let us review for a moment some of the key events that have shaped the modern era and which illustrate this point.

Consider the European Union today, a living realization of just such an incongruity; in its inception it was considered unrealistic, a romanticism, certainly unrealistic and even delusional. Similarly, just a few short centuries ago the vision of a United States of America arising

1 It is sometimes important to define one’s terms. The distinction between autonomy and interdependence is between self-governance and mutual dependency or relevance. Logically, some degree of autonomy is entailed in the characterizing of relations as interdependent. Since the Peace of Westphalia there has been tacit recognition of both autonomy and interdependence as unavoidable if not always acceptable in international affairs. The idea that autonomy is somehow inversely related to interdependence is too often tacitly accepted; in an era of globalization this is in my judgment a dangerous, counterfactual presupposition.

from thirteen widely different, mutually distrustful and sometimes hostile colonies, seemed just as incongruous. In its inception, the vision of a united India freed from colonial rule, democratic and even prosperous, seemed to be the dream of a madman, sometimes even to Gandhi’s closest followers.

Similarly, Mao’s vision of an independent and communist China seemed to the Soviet regime’s leaders both theoretically impossible and politically intractable, at least until the late 1940s. A generation later, it seemed just as unlikely that Deng Xiaoping would adopt a vision, much less succeed, to change China from an economic recluse, poor and poorly managed but independent, to what promises today to become one of the world’s great economic powers. There was a price to pay for this transformation to economic power, namely *increased* interdependence and *accommodation* to the world’s largest financial and trade regime, a thoroughly capitalist system controlled by China’s former colonizers and incarnated in the WTO and a renovated IMF and World Bank system. Yet it was a price that Deng believed in the end would strengthen China, and of course, he proved to be correct.

Visions of democratic transformations in Japan, South Korea and West Germany were thought by many to be impossibly unrealistic, given their political histories and cultures. The spontaneous reuniting of Germany, the spontaneous collapse of the USSR and the rise of an emergent Russian democracy were each situated similarly in contemporaneous minds.

Each of these transformations was led, guided or supported by leaders with visions of what was desirable and possible, not visions based on projections of likely outcomes given the drift of then current trends.²

2 Some might suggest that this is a “constructivist” interpretation. Walt characterizes this position as follows: “Whereas realism and liberalism tend to focus on material factors such as power or trade, constructivist approaches emphasize the impact of ideas,” (Stephen M. Walt, “International relations: one world, many theories,”

None of these leaders had it easy; mortal enemies plagued each in their lifetimes and sometimes resulted in their assassination. Such comprehensive, even radical change in the thinking of leaders and leadership groups is rare, as are the desperate conditions which when sustained typically increase their likelihood. For instance, dozens of leaders over two generations turned Europe from a centuries long path of colonial expansion and internecine warfare punctuated by unstable periods of power balances and economic ruin, to a union resembling the American colonies' Articles of Confederation period following its Revolutionary War. Similarly, dozens of leaders forged the American colonies from the late 18th to early 19th centuries into a nation bound together in part by mutual fear of common European enemies who sought to tear it apart for two more generations through the American Civil War. Japanese leaders struggled in the aftermath of the devastation of World War II and subsequent depression to create a new vision for their country, sometimes supported by and sometimes despite American hegemony.

Now, both Korean governments struggle to forge new societies for themselves, one under the hegemony of the United States, one formerly under Russian hegemony. Each of the two Koreas has seen in the other their hated colonial legacy; each became mutual enemies driven by their fears of being conquered. Each, in a gross irony, came to fear in the other the very colonial domination they had experienced under Japan.

Today the Koreas' two leadership groups still struggle under their

Foreign Policy, Spring 1998, and can be found on the web through <http://home.pi.be/~lazone/>). The essence of my perspective was originally presented as part of an article on integration theory in 1970 and published in 1973, as "Steps toward a Probabilistic Systems Theory of Political Behavior, with Special Reference to Integration Theory," in Hayward R. Alker, Jr., Antoine Stoetzel, and Karl W. Deutsch, eds., *Mathematical Approaches to International Relations*, pp. 67-112; Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam, and presented at the 1970 Congress of the International Political Studies Association, Munich, West Germany.

memories of colonial rule, past and continuing hostilities, economic depression, and hegemonic influence to find a path to peace and prosperity without experiencing again the utter ruin of past generations. China's traditional relationship with Korea is again gradually reasserting itself, propelled by China's own rapid economic development, open doors to South Korean trade, the decline of Russian influence in North Korea, and by the mixed blessing of tens of thousands of impoverished and brutalized North Koreans fleeing across the border into the usually welcoming hands of Chinese Koreans despite China's vacillating policies.

In this macroeconomic and social upheaval, it would seem that North Korean leaders are tacitly coming to recognize that at least the economic aspects of North Korea's *juche* idea of self-reliance are inconsistent with modern economic interdependencies and political realities. Specifically, Hong Song-nam would appear to have signaled intentions to follow a path similar to Deng's.³ And while the USA has clearly removed its support for Kim Dae Jung's *rapprochement* with the North, opting for "hawk engagement,"⁴ both Koreas' leaderships appear to

3 *The People's Korea*, "SPA Approves New State Budget Featuring Technical Innovation and Modernization of Economy," (report on the SPA meeting of March 27, 2002), Web: http://www.korea-np.co.jp/pk/178th_issue/2002033004.htm. This was reported on by Sang-hun Choe, "N. Korea Seeks to End Fiscal Isolation," *The Washington Post*, March 28, 2002, Web: <http://www.washtimes.com/world/20020328-64372000.htm>. Hong's statements were interpreted as departing from the *juche* idea as applied to economics.

4 For an extended discussion of "hawk engagement," see Victor Cha, "Korea's Place in the Axis," *Foreign Affairs*, 81:3 (May-June, 2002). Earlier essays of his on this subject can be found: "Hawk Engagement: Bush Policy Toward North Korea," presented at the CSIS-KINU conference, Washington, D.C., June 21-22, 2001; "Hawk Engagement: Avoiding the Brink with North Korea," *PacNet Newsletter*, #05 February 1, 2002; and "Benign Neglect or Hawk Engagement?" Op-ed., *JoongAng Ilbo*, February 6, 2002. The essential idea is that the USA can view engagement policies not as a sign of weakness but as suggested in the last citation, to "build a coalition for punishment," make "threats to punish more credible," especially if backed by "robust defense capabilities."

see the need for constructive engagement as a first step towards reunification on mutually acceptable terms, although that seems as far off as the union of Germany did until the tearing down of the Berlin Wall by ordinary citizens on both sides. Thus it is that a persistent lack of common vision among Korean leaderships of what that future union might be based upon, coupled with the mutual, continual probing of China and the USA in what is describe by Mearsheimer as “offensive realism,”⁵ has created a stalemate, a kind of “local equilibrium” in what would otherwise be an unstable regional power balance. Neither the predominant powers in the region nor the Korean leaderships they influence, have found a path to stable peace and prosperity for the Korean people.⁶

Assuming for the moment that the above is a reasonably accurate assessment, specifically that the leaders of China, the USA, Russia, Japan, and the two Koreas, do not have sufficiently compatible visions of the future of Korea to sustain a dialog leading to stable peace, the question arises: why is this? While not addressing the litany of visions above which in large measure created our recent history, John Mearsheimer nevertheless offers a compelling theory through which we can understand this failure of vision as a function of the fears of leaders in an anarchic international environment. He contends that the aim of great powers is to “maximize their share of world power” because they “fear each other and compete for power as a result,” because “having dominant power is the best means to insure one’s own survival.”⁷ Further, he says that it is their lack of consensus to

5 John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (W.W. Norton, 2001).

6 For a discussion of four alternative future scenarios for North Korean economic and political conditions, see Marcus Noland, “The Future of North Korea,” *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, June 2002, Web availability: <http://www.iie.com/papers/noland0502.pdf>. For an earlier and more wide ranging discussion of alternative scenarios especially regarding reunification, see Jonathan D. Pollack and Chung Min Lee, *Preparing for Korean Unification: Scenarios and Implication*, RAND, 1999, Web availability: <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1040/>.

create some form of world government that tragically prevents them from avoiding competition and occasional hostilities. In the regional context of Korea, the disagreement among these governments is at bottom a question of which society should give up hope to project its power not over the Korean people *per se* but the Korean peninsula as a geographic location for either the further projection of power or to prevent such a use against them. Japan fought China and Russia for control of the Korean peninsula successfully, but refused to curb her ambitions and withdraw when it saw that the USA’s entry into World War II would in all likelihood lead to a devastating outcome.⁸ China then successfully fought off the European and American mercantilist interests in its homeland (Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao excepted) as well as the Japanese; but the USA was unwilling to give up its hope for a non-communist China, or at least a foothold on the Asian continent, so the Korean War was fought to an impasse that has lasted until this very day.

The above analysis focused primarily on the visions of leaders and leadership groups, viewed from the perspective of offensive realism. At least one or two other observations need to be added for a fuller picture. The Korean War was fought within the framework of collective security, not individual national interests *per se*. Unlike the two World Wars, a war between nations was never declared, and to this day, there is no victor. From Woodrow Wilson’s time to the present the belief that the means of modern warfare are unacceptably destructive, has changed the face of international relations by introducing myriad transnational and international institutions to provide alternative venues for political struggles among national interests, and opportunities to identify and cope with problems that could otherwise lead to

7 Mearsheimer, *op. cit.*, pp. xi-xiii, *passim*. Mearsheimer refers to his form of realist theory as “offensive realism” so I will follow his usage here to refer to his views in subsequent sections.

8 Mearsheimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-224, *passim*.

wars of desperation or accident.⁹ Many such institutions aid both Koreas in dealing with each other's existence; and the North has experienced and continues to experience considerable aid from them. If offensive realism is to make its case in the strongest of terms, it needs to take into account the dilemmas of modern "WMD" power in a transnational corporate and international organizational environment that creates interdependencies that must be managed cooperatively rather than competitively.

II. Social-psychological Theory and Rational Choice

Mearsheimer's claim that Japan's precipitating America's entry into World War II was rational in the context of "offensive realism." Japan's problem was not irrationality *per se* but the fact that Japan's choices were "between two repugnant alternatives:" either give up its empire without fighting the USA or risk losing its empire by losing a war with the USA.¹⁰ This may well be true. However, others have suggested that rationality is often severely constrained by factors which limit the perception of alternatives, distort priorities, shorten focus, and over-

9 It was precisely this hope for institutions that would enable clearer and more timely thinking that lay behind Lewis Fry Richardson's appeal for more "sufficiently strenuous intellectual and moral effort" to avoid arms races that would lead to economic destruction and precipitate wars of desperation. See Lewis Fry Richardson, *Arms and Insecurity: A Mathematical Study of the Causes of War* (Boxwood Press, 1960). It is also important to note that his theory envisioned "fear" in Mearsheimer's sense not as a consequence of the Westphalian system but as a function of a parameter defined as cooperation minus conflict, where cooperation referred to desirable international interactions and interdependencies such as trade, and conflict referred to violent domestic as well and international conflict. Fear increased as conflict came to exceed cooperation; thus fear was not an inevitable function of the anarchic structure of the international system but rather the failure of leaders to develop cooperative policies and institutions, domestically as well as internationally.

10 Mearsheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

simplify causal connections. Janis, for instance, proposes that leaders tend to substitute consensus seeking for critical thinking when alternatives imply moral compromise.¹¹ Stoessinger suggests more specifically that misperceptions of relative power are rooted in cultural biases, which stereotype and belittle enemies on ethnic, racial and religious grounds.¹² The point to such social-psychological interpretations is not to suggest that offensive realism or realist theory in general is incorrect, but rather that when leadership groups "fear each other and compete for power as a result" as Mearsheimer says, there are specific types of error to which they are chronically prone, and that there are specific prescriptive processes and thinking styles which can reduce the likelihood of those errors of judgment and miscalculation. Janis recommends a regime of critical thinking and analysis that emphasizes group openness, self-reflection, and repeated consideration of alternatives and priorities. Stoessinger emphasizes the need for human compassion and thinking about the needs of others, even your enemies. Heifetz focuses on prescriptions for improving leaders' thought processes and perceptions, for instance separating role from self.¹³ All of this is important in general to improve the quality of leaders' decision making.

In the present globalized trading and financial system, it has become not just desirable but critical that such improvements take place. The ongoing revolution in and distribution of new technologies has created what Tammen and others believe is a dangerous "power transition" window.¹⁴ Technology's impact on power transitions is believed to be great enough soon to challenge the stability of the

11 Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1973).

12 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go to War* (Bedford/St. Martin's 8th ed.), 2001.

13 Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Harvard University Press, 1994).

14 Ronald L. Tammen, Jacek Kugler, ed., Douglas Lemke, ed., Carole Alsharabati, and Brian Efir, *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21st Century* (Seven Bridges Press, 2000).

international distribution of power. Building on Organski's power transition theory, they describe a number of scenarios which represent new opportunities and problems for the major powers in Northeast Asia.¹⁵ The dangers inherent in such transitions are compounded by increases in the complexity and speed of change in power components. Shorter decision time, more severe threat to values, and increasingly unanticipated events are likely, and together create what Hermann¹⁶ characterized as a crisis decision-making environment.

If this analysis is correct, then major efforts should be made to improve the quality of decision making in the region. In the short-term, "hawk engagement" should be supplemented if not entirely replaced by concerted efforts to increase the venues through which information and concerns can be shared, e.g., academic fora involving all parties to disputes in the region, far more sharing of intelligence, frank diplomatic exchanges, efforts to develop cooperative relations in trade, finance and investment, and so on—all this in an effort to improve the information base on which decisions are made. Longer term, acculturating the next generation of leaders to the realities of globalization, and involving them in international dialogs, is essential. The aim of both short term and long term communication improvements is to reduce the risk of poor decisions that lead to unnecessary and expensive conflicts. Power transitions are known to be dangerous, and are known to irrationally inflame ambitions and fears. Visions of alternative futures become constrained by "worst scenario" fears.

For instance, it might be thought that since the Taepo Dong 2 test that North Korea is at least one step further along in being able to threaten the USA, and certainly Japan. But China has not provided critical technology for nuclear warheads, so even though North Korea may have a nuclear device or two, it has nothing useable. How much

15 Tammen et al., *op. cit.*, Chapter 7, *passim*.

16 Charles F. Hermann, "Some Consequences of Crisis which Limit the Viability of Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 8:1 (June 1963).

anxiety should this cause the USA, Japan, or for that matter, China or Russia? It is at this point of assessment that the problems Janis, Stoessinger and others raise become relevant. Credibility, putative intentions, and anticipated duration of policy commitments, are crucial judgments which depend as much on the vision of leaders and their assumptions about what is desirable and possible in their political environment, as on objective factors.

Another example comes from the provocative article written recently by Elizabeth Economy: "China is no longer a totalitarian state. It does not boast a revolutionary or expansionist ideology, does not operate under a command economy, does not seek to control every aspect of people's lives, and does not pose a threat to U.S. leadership in the world."¹⁷ She goes on to emphasize the need for constructive engagement across a wide spectrum of issues, such as the USA's current Taiwan policies: "intervention is divisive, provocative and unnecessary." Again, questions of judgment and assimilation of information would seem to be as important as objective factors.¹⁸

17 Elizabeth Economy, "Take a New Look at a Changing China," *International Herald Tribune*, April 30, 2002.

18 While Economy observes the inconsistencies between the facts about China and the present USA policies, she does not account for them. Such disconnects have long been recognized and theorized about. See for instance, Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," *World Politics*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (April 1968); reprinted in Falk and Kim, *THE WAR SYSTEM* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 465-490. Stoessinger, *op. cit.*, attributes them to stereotyping and cultural biases, Janis, *op. cit.*, to dysfunctional group dynamics. Most realists give such phenomena little attention, arguing simply that poor judgment (judgments not based on realist premises and accurate power assessments) will lead to failure.

III. Global Dynamics and the Korean Context

A great deal of analysis has been devoted to the Northeast Asian *problematique*¹⁹ in the last decade, but not entirely for reasons that are unique to the region. It is commonly understood that new biological, energy, and communication and transportation technologies have contributed to the reshaping of a *global* system that *cannot* survive in its present form, and that systemic change has been underway for many decades. Thus an appreciation of Northeast Asian politics requires that the dynamics of global, systemic change be thoroughly integrated into one's understanding of the region, and a new vision of what is desirable and possible be created that can contribute to the security and prosperity of these nations.

Northeast Asian politics partakes of a global system paradox. Thanks to "globalization," never have so many human beings throughout recorded history, *on average*, lived so long, been so well educated, had so much religious and political freedom, and been so safe from war and disease.²⁰ Yet paradoxically there is tremendous, destabilizing disparity in humanity's life conditions; for despite the averages, many people within and across societies suffer grinding poverty and fear for their lives, either because of the lack of basic necessities (food, potable water, shelter) and education, or for fear of violence at the hands of their neighbors or indeed their own governments.²¹ Further, there is

19 The term *problematique* was popularized in 1972 by its use in Donella Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth* (Potomac Associates, 1972), who reported on the first use of global modeling to examine alternative futures for the global economic and environmental systems, and draw implications for political and social change. For a brief history and evaluation of global modeling see my article, "Global Modeling: Origins, Assessment and Alternative Futures," *Simulation & Gaming*, 31, 2000.

20 For an excellent, affordable and reasonably user friendly global model outlining these trends and permitting a wide variety of scenario analysis, see Barry B. Hughes, *International Futures* (3rd edition), (Westview Press, 1999), Web availability: <http://du.edu/~bhughes/ifs.html>.

the haunting perception that amidst this cornucopia brought through technological progress, nuclear, biological and other "WMDs" (weapons of mass destruction) may either be or are likely soon to be in the hands of "rogue states" or even tiny groups of fanatics bent on destroying their imagined enemies. If that were not enough, according to the USA's National Intelligence Council, "...narco-traffickers, and organized criminals will take advantage of the new high-speed information environment...to compound their threat to stability and security around the world" perhaps with EMP (electro-magnetic pulse) "bombs" and cyber war software.²²

Nowhere is this paradox more evident than in the contrast between the two Koreas and their neighbors. While North Korea has been afflicted with almost a decade of floods and famine estimated to have reduced its GDP by half since 1993,²³ its neighbors, China and South Korea, have in recent years enjoyed increasing prosperity and often 6-7% growth rates, and occasionally even higher.

While one might think that this situation is unique historically, at least two scholars have recently noted some striking similarities between the modern epoch and the conditions facing central Europe *circa* 1648 AD, out of which period the modern state system emerged. In their recent book, *Exorcising the Ghost of Westphalia*, Kegley and

21 Rudolph Rummel has devoted much of his academic career to demonstrating the relationships between regime type and government's killing their own people. In fact, in the 20th century it was not the world wars and natural disasters that were the primary source of violent death, but rather government killing. See Rummel's website, <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/>.

22 United States National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Non-government Experts*. NIC 2000-02, December 2000, GPO stock number 041-015-00211-2, Web: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/global-trends2015/index.html>.

23 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US Dept. of State, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Korea, Democratic People's Republic of." March 4, 2002, Web: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/eap/8330.htm>.

Raymond present us with a checklist of these similarities. They note that both the 1648 period and the modern era were times of (a) international system change, (b) confusion and uncertainty in a broad spectrum of economic and social as well as political issues, (c) clashes of moral values and visions of global governance vs. national autonomy via sovereign independence, (d) the breaking up and reassembling of nation-states, (e) contested relations between church and state, (f) international refugee crises for persons due to wars and famine, (g) humanitarian intervention, (h) revolution in communications technology (then the printing press), and (i) easy movement of goods and ideas across borders.²⁴ They note that the same choices between anarchy and world order which were on the minds of the treaty signers at Westphalia, were also on the minds of leaders of modern states that faced the necessity for collective security after World War II and today in confronting the facts of globalization of trade, finance, investment, and communication. Kegley and Raymond's judgment is that the Westphalian system of autonomous states failed adequately to assure peace even in 1648 because it discounted morality in favor of a Hobbesian view of global politics; and that peace without justice was simply not a stable condition; and that the same holds true today.

What does this analysis imply for Northeast Asia? They propose moving by a series of policy steps from a global culture of mistrust to a culture of reciprocal trust, and from there to trust based on identity: "The most constructivist approach to building reciprocity-based trust is a firm-but-conciliatory strategy that communicates amicable intentions, rewards cooperation, and punishes exploitative behavior."²⁵

So far as I understand it, the Kegley-Raymond strategy of building reciprocal trust is diametrically opposed to the concept of "hawk engagement" *in intent*, but very *similar in practice*, at least in the early

24 Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Gregory A. Raymond, *Exorcising the Ghost of Westphalia: Building World Order in the New Millennium* (Prentice-Hall, 2002), pp. 2-3.

25 *Ibid.* pp. 212-215, *passim*.

stages, because in both cases one engages with one's putative enemy in reconciliatory gestures and initiatives. After a time, such a strategy would seem increasingly unrealistic if duplicitous intentions were uncovered, as those who propose "hawk engagement" suspect of North Korea. Yet the very same sort of mistrust characterized most parties to the original agreement creating the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community); the very idea that the chronically warring European states would form a Union, that Germany would reunite and be part of that Union, that the USSR would disintegrate, form a democracy and join NATO, that a communist-capitalism in China would open relations with a nominally independent but diplomatically isolated Taiwan, and so on, all seemed equally ludicrous just prior to their occurrences. In all cases, social and economic forces not under political control dominated these changes, and created conditions not that would necessarily lead to reciprocal trust, but which created the conditions under which leaders with vision could aim for establishing reciprocal trust through careful dialogs and cumulative successes at cooperation. In short, taking such steps and doing so successfully is what is important. But for such a strategy to last, the participants need to not lose their nerve and to keep their eye on the prize: establishing peace, security, and conditions that create prosperity.

The Koreans have an opportunity to realistically assess the trends in the region and to take actions that build reciprocal trust. They cannot expect support from the major powers, but neither need they fear significant opposition, for no major power in the region can opt for strong military or economic sanctions without incurring the risk of unacceptable costs. Their own power and fear of confrontation with their competitors prevents strong action; and the opportunity to "negotiate rather than fight"²⁶ will remain viable given the existing

26 The phrase is from Morton Kaplan's famous list of strategy rules in a balance of power system. See Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (Wiley, 1957). Reprinted by Krieger Publishing Company, 1975.

distribution of power. A few years ago (1999), I suggested a similar strategy in which the inducement to cooperation between the North and South Korean governments be specifically economic, namely, "South Korea will aim to promote peace by learning how, and then teaching others how, to produce quality products and services which people want at prices they are willing to pay, so that all may survive, be secure, be respected, and grow spiritually."²⁷ This strategy has worked very well for Japan since World War II, is working well for China and South Korea today. It is likely to work well for Russia, and has worked for some time throughout the European Union and of course, the USA. A much more detail program, in which this was a central component, was outlined a decade ago by Lee, who examined the evolving pattern of reconciliation in Europe that led to integration.²⁸ With its economy mismanaged, many of its people near starvation, and tens of thousands in its labor force fleeing to China for work, the North Korean government has little to look forward to. It has little prospect of renovating an obsolete economic infrastructure without external assistance. This is not a time for duplicity. It is a time for open doors and aid. "Hawk engagement" this may be at first, but if President Kim Dae Jung and his supporters prevail on the domestic Korean political scene, the result may surprise everyone, as usual.

27 Richard W. Chadwick, "Notes on The Cold War Structure in Korea: Can It Be Dissolved?" Prepared for the KINU International Symposium on "Thinking of Dissolving the Cold War Structure on the Korean Peninsula," April 8, 1999, Seoul, Korea.

28 Hun Kyung Lee, *North-South Korean Reunification Policies (1988-1991): Options, and Models*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1992.

CHALLENGES IN THE NEW NORTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES OF MD AND JAPANESE HISTORY

Yinhay Ahn

The September 11 terrorist attack on the United States marks a strategic turning point in the global security situation as well as in Northeast Asia. A look at what happened before September 11, 2001, will cast a light, though imperfect, to help think in advance about the new security picture.

It can be argued that the missile defense(MD) program of the US and the issue of Japan's attitude towards its colonial and wartime history past are the two core issues around which fault lines among major players have formed. MD forms a barrier between the US on the one hand, and China and North Korea on the other. Japan and Taiwan seem to be inclined to the US position, while South Korea appears to maintain calculated ambiguity somewhat sympathetic to the US position. The colonial history poses another fault line alienating Japan from China, South Korea, North Korea and Taiwan, which complicates American efforts to strengthen bilateral ties between US allies, Japan and South Korea.

MD and the history issue, vividly show how complicated it is to build a durable structure of cooperation in Northeast Asia. They also highlight the inherent impediments facing

each of the major players. But they do not represent all the unresolved issues, and the September 11th terrorist attack also adds yet another element to the dilemma. The upside is that the incident has brought Sino-US security relations closer. The downside is that it hardens the US perception of the North Korean regime.

It is still too early to predict how the overall balance sheet of the security equation following the incident will look like in the next couple of years. But it will affect the security environment of Northeast Asia in a very fundamental way.

I. Introduction

The September 11 terrorist attack on the United States marks a strategic turning point in the global security situation as well as in Northeast Asia. The incident, though extremely tragic, provides the United States with the ironic opportunity to enhance strategic cooperation with Russia and China, who share a common interest with the US in combating terrorism mainly due to their respective concerns in Chechnya and Xinjiang.

Trilateral entente among the three big powers is an unexpected development that would have been unimaginable before September 11, 2001. Controversies over the American missile defense plan and the EP-3 reconnaissance plane incident were considered prime examples to highlight the undercurrent of division and suspicion existing among three big powers.¹ The newly-found trilateral entente has the positive spill-over effect of silencing, at least temporarily, these issues that may

1 Gaye Christoffersen, "The Role of East Asia in Sino-American Relations," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLII, No. 3, May/June 2002, pp. 374-376.

otherwise adversely affect US-Russia and US-China relations. It is not clear at this point, though, whether and, if so, how long this entente together with its positive spillover effect will last.

For North Korea, the aftermath of the September 11 incident is not good news in many ways. With the advent of the Bush administration, Pyongyang stalled in its efforts for better relations with Washington, the most coveted goal of DPRK foreign policy. Instead it refocused on strengthening its back yard through summit diplomacy with Russia and China, as well as trying for niches in Europe and other parts of the world. North Korea may have pursued this policy with the hope of increasing pressure on the United States, but that was dashed by September 11 with the emergence of the US-Russia-China entente. As long as the anti-terrorist campaign remains the top priority of the US-led international community, issues relating to North Korea will be sidelined, and its ambivalence about the US-led anti-terrorist campaign will close the window of opportunity that would otherwise have been open to them for better relations with Washington.²

It is somewhat early to predict how the new security environment in Northeast Asia will look like following the conclusion of the US-led anti-terrorism campaign. It is clear that the terrorist attack and the US response have added uncertainty to the already volatile security environment in Northeast Asia.

In the meantime, a look at what happened before September 11, 2001, will cast a light, though imperfect, to help think in advance about the new security picture. The security situation here had already undergone significant adjustments, in particular the advent of a conservative administration in the United States, the rise of China, the conservative reorientation of Japan and the continuing volatility in potential hot spots such as North Korea and Taiwan.

2 Yinhay Ahn, "North Korea in 2001: at a Crossroads," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLII, No. 1, January/February 2002, pp. 46-55.

The world is paying special attention to the rapidly changing power relations surrounding the Korean peninsula. The United States has acted as the sole hegemonic power in the region. With the rise of China in the regional political/diplomatic, economic and military dynamics, however, Washington increasingly needs understanding, at least tacit, from China in devising any new regional order.³

Right after Bush's inauguration the US made a U-turn to the old conservative line that tries to secure national interest by means of strengthening military power. Such US policy is triggering concern not only from Northeast Asia but also from other regions of the world. Especially China, the only regional power that can compete with the US, has become highly sensitive over the US moves. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this paper is to examine the perspectives of the US, China, Japan and Korea on the impediments that could prevent the security environment in Northeast Asia from evolving in a stable manner.

A basic US strategy towards Northeast Asia is to extend its own military power and influence by expanding the Japanese military role in the region. Japan's neighbors are undoubtedly dubious about the expansion of Japanese military power, and recent moves by the rightist Koizumi cabinet aggravate such apprehension. The distortion of history textbooks and Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine have provoked strong reaction from Korea and China. Tokyo's right-wing, it is further worried, could lead to the much-feared rearmament of Japan. Japan's participation in the US missile defense (MD) program is also viewed with some skepticism, but Tokyo seems to be interested because such technological cooperation with the US through MD could boost Japanese defense capability. They may calculate that being on the American bandwagon could alleviate opposition from

3 Gaye Christoffersen, "The Role of East Asia in Sino-American Relations," pp. 374-396.

suspicious neighbors.

The Chinese view the MD with strong skepticism, fearing the American program will (1) rearm the Japanese military and ignite military competition in the region (2) lead to the military buildup of Taiwan and deteriorate the China-Taiwan relationship, and (3) destabilize regional peace and security. An arms race between the US and China, and between China and Japan will adversely affect the situation on the Korean peninsula which badly needs peace and stability to overcome its Cold War legacies.⁴

This paper examines the perspectives of US, Japan, China and the two Koreas regarding the MD program, and analyses how the issue affects security environment. It also discusses how Japanese distortion of school history textbooks and visits by Prime Minister Koizumi to the Yasukuni Shrine have had an impact on regional cooperation.

II. MD

1. US Position

The US, the largest nuclear power in the world, is initiating MD as a defense against attacks from rogue nations. Having gained the prestige of being the sole superpower in the post-Cold War era, the US is trying to extend its influence to design a new order in Northeast Asia. Although the Republican Party platform perceives China as a crucial nation in the security calculus of Northeast Asia, Japan, rather than China, is regarded as the US partner in the region.⁵ The Republican government deems China more as a strategic competitor than as a

4 Xiaoming Huang, "Managing Fluctuations in U.S.-China Relations," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XL, No. 2, March/April 2000, pp. 269-295.

5 Eerik K. Pratt, "Missile Defense Sponsors: Shifting Political Support for Strategic Defense after Reagan," *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2001, pp. 11-72.

strategic partner. Washington now seems to regard China as attempting to change the balance of regional power in a way favorable to itself. It is argued that Washington should try to induce changes within China by cultivating inter-dependence in economic area. The US should also maintain close cooperative relationship with Japan so that Tokyo could check the power and ambition of Beijing. Care should be taken to separate security matters from economic and commercial relations so that Chinese reform and opening policy can be sustained.

If China does not abide by the principle of peaceful resolution of issues related to Taiwan, Washington will, under Republican control, take appropriate measures to defend Taiwan.⁶ The Republican Party supports the reinforcement of Taiwanese security law, and despite strong Chinese opposition, the US seems insistent on carrying out an MD program that involves Taiwan.

President Bush emphasizes the need for implementation of foreign policy based on firm policy objectives and the priority of national interest, while avoiding isolationism or indiscreet military commitment. He termed his policy "Distinctly American Internationalism."⁷ Bush advocates the foreign policy of combining military power with the unity of allies, in short, peace by means of power. Albeit reckless usage, military power will be used when the probability of attaining the objective is high. The Republican government would take a firm measure against North Korea when Pyongyang is perceived to have "crossed the red line" and injured the vital US national interest.

2. China's Position

China sticks to its position of opposing any attempt that could

undermine its 'One China' policy. China, therefore, is strongly opposed to any US plan to include Taiwan in the MD program. China regards the plan as violating China's sovereignty, that the US is blocking the unification process of China, and argues that the US should remove North Korea from the black list of rogue nations and renounce the MD program for the sake of peace and security of Northeast Asia.⁸

Beijing's objection to the US MD program is based on its fear that (1) American intentions are to threaten the strategic balance and stability of the world, (2) the program will adversely affect international non-proliferation efforts and provoke arms race in Northeast Asia by inducing military build-up on the part of Taiwan and Japan, and (3) it will deteriorate China-Taiwan and China-Japan relationship.

In China's view, the underlying intention of the US MD program is to secure strategic advantage over China by nullifying its nuclear deterrence capability. Behind MD Beijing sees a US fear of China as "the most serious long-term challenge."⁹ China does not take the US rationale that MD is to defend the US from missile attacks by rogue nations as fully convincing, and views that the missile proliferation issue can be resolved by political and diplomatic means based on existing arms control regimes. China does welcome a sincere dialogue on MD between the United States and its allies and countries with a stake in the issue.

Chinese opposition to the US MD plan seems to be muted following the US withdrawal from the ABM treaty in June 2002. This weakened reaction of China reflects the two changing realities: 1) the emerging trend of Sino-US strategic entente for anti-terrorism following the

6 Chen Shui-bien is gradually raising the level of demands for independence, and China is watching closely. August 3, 2002.

7 Speech by Governor George W. Bush, on Foreign Policy, Ronald Reagan Presidential library, November 19, 1999.

8 Xiaosong Yi, "Dynamics of China's South Korea Policy: Assertive Nationalism, Beijing's Changing Strategic Evaluation of the U.S., and the North Korea Factor," *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 2000, pp. 71-102.

9 Andrew Scobell, "Crouching Korea, Hidden China: Bush Administration Policy toward Pyongyang and Beijing," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLII, No. 2, March/April, 2002, p. 343.

September 11th terrorist attack against the US; 2) the acquiescence to the US withdrawal from the ABM treaty by Russia, other party to the ABM treaty.

But, China's concern about the MD plan is not, completely gone, though muted. It remains very latent, and has the potential of resurfacing as a thorny issue in the Sino-US relations. The answer to these questions will depend on how the US addresses China's dual concern about the MD; 1) the possibility of China's strategic capability seriously undermined by MD; 2) another possibility of WMD arms race caused by Taiwan's participation in MD.

While the Chinese leadership is concerned with the world security situation and its relationship with the US, it falls short of renouncing the official line that peace and development are taking root, with multipolarism deepening and tension easing in the region. China is for constructing a new international order; based on the repackaged concept of "new security"¹⁰ developed during the period of 1996 to 1997 and the "five principles of co-existence" that Beijing adopted as its official position since the 1950s.

The Chinese leadership highlights three unchanged and three new concepts. The security specialists of China have consistently supported the three unchanged: (1) peace and development of international relations, (2) move to a multi-polar world and acceleration of economic globalization, and (3) easing of conflicts in the international community. The new concepts are: (1) proliferation of power politics and hege-

10 According to the address delivered by Jiang Zemin, the state premier, in March 1999 in Geneva, Swiss, regarding China's foreign policy, the "new security concept" comprises of four parts: 1) the focus of the new security concept should be mutual trust, reciprocity, equality and cooperation 2) the political foundation supporting world peace should be the five principles of coexistence and universally accepted norms that maintain international relations 3) economic background for world peace should be based on mutual cooperation and co-prosperity 4) the new security concept is a right approach for nations of equal status to resolve disputes by means of dialogue and compromise and thereby guarantee peace.

mony, 2) extension of military engagements, and (3) widening gap between the advanced and underdeveloped nations. The three new ones reflect an increasing worry that China feels over the US tendency towards unilateralism.

3. Korea's Position

With regard to the US MD plan, Korea takes a position of strategic ambivalence by expressing a reserved understanding on American intentions. It is difficult for Seoul to totally ignore Pyongyang's suspicion over MD, because North Korea is one of the rogue states from whose attack MD is supposed to defend. South Korea needs to take into account improved relations with North Korea together with China's position that opposes the project.

South Korea should be careful not to provoke North Korea, while having to satisfy both US and China who avow contradictory positions. In fact, unilateral foreign policies are hard to meet conflicting interests in and around the Korean peninsula, in the turbulent era of the twenty-first century. In order to satisfy or persuade both China and the US, Korea needs a sophisticated foreign policy. China makes straightforwardly clear that the US will be held responsible for the deterioration of the US-China relationship and the stalemate of the inter-Korean relationship. But joining the bandwagon of anti-US sentiments is not a wise choice for Seoul. South Korea will not be able to persuade the US through the argument that unilateral pressure against North Korea will arouse anti-US sentiments in Korea. Seoul should take the position that a souring relationship between US and China will weaken Seoul's role in Northeast Asia as well as undermine the national interests of both the United States and China.¹¹

11 Yinhay Ahn, "The Structural Dynamics of Sino-American Relations and the Korean Peninsula," *Conflict and Cooperation between China and the United States*, organized by the Korean Association of International Studies, August 24, 2002.

Korean people generally see reinforcement of Japanese military as undesirable to the security of Korea. Japan is perceived to be attempting to build up its military force under the American security umbrella. Distrust against Japan is traceable to its colonial rule. Korea's concern on Japan's getting on the bandwagon for the MD project together with the reluctance to pinpoint North Korea as one of the possible targets lies behind the Korean position of strategic ambiguity.

III. Distortion of Textbooks and Yasukuni Shrine Issue

1. *Japan's position*

With the end of the Cold War, Japan consciously began to reestablish its status as a "normal state" by eliminating the post-WWII political system imposed by the Allied Forces. From the early 1990s, movements have proliferated to search for Japanese identity as a response to prolonged economic depression, rise of unemployment and lack of political leadership. Conservative political forces and press have taken advantage of the situation to encourage nationalism, thus trying to revive conservatism in the country.

Under the circumstances, last year the Japanese government approved textbooks with a distorted and nationalistic version of history to be used in middle schools, and Prime Minister Koizumi paid a visit to the Yasukuni shrine on August 13, two days earlier than he had originally planned. At the visit he announced his "reflection on the past and [Japan's] anti-war commitment." Koizumi advanced the visit to the Shrine two days because of protest outside Japan, and he did seem to have made the visit to tame domestic politics. This year Koizumi and members of his cabinet also visited the shrine.

Demands for constitutional revision have been voiced in Japan since its legislation half a century earlier. Now, the revision of Article Nine

(Peace Article), has become an issue of now open debate, which had previously been regarded as taboo. The Constitution Investigation Committee set up by the Diet in February 2000 is expected to draft a revision in five years. However, public opinion favors cautious approach to the revision of the Article Nine. Given current distribution of seats in Diet, it seems very unlikely for the Diet to reach consensus over the revision in the near future.¹² Japan's neighbors want Japan to abide by the existing constitution and contribute to peace and stability of the region. They are worried that the right-wing movements in Japan might lead to a constitutional revision.

Because Japan regards the US-Japan alliance as the foundation of its defense and security policy, it is anticipated for Japan to consider plans in the future to gain recognition of the right to collective self-defense, readjustment of related laws to cope with situations outside Japan, joint participation in the MD, introduction of government satellite and air fuel supply system, for the sake of smooth functioning of the US-Japan security alliance.

2. *Chinese Response*

China has made clear demands to correct the distorted history about China in the Japanese textbooks and stop official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. State president Jiang Zemin in a meeting with former Prime Minister Nakasone requested special consideration of the Japanese government regarding the textbook issue (February 27, 2001). Foreign Minister Tang Jiashen held a press conference on March 5 asking for responsible measures on the part of the Japanese government and summoned the Japanese Ambassador in China to his office on

¹² Inside the ruling party, Nakasone, the former Prime Minister, Yamasaki Taku and Gamei is active in the revision of Article Nine. However, Nonaka, Gato and Gono group take the cautious stance.

April 4. At the meeting, he expressed strong discomfort and dissatisfaction over the official approval of the distorted textbooks and demanded measures to match words with deeds. The Chinese Foreign Minister also called Japanese Foreign Minister Tanaka to relay the message that China hopes the Japanese government to take necessary and firm measures so as to gain trust from the people of Asia (May 8, 2001).

The spokesman of Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed strong anger to the approval of the right-wing history textbooks and demanded the Japanese government to respond positively to the legitimated claims of the Asian countries (May 10, 2001).

The Chinese Foreign Ministry cancelled a high-level official visit to Japan as a sign of protest against the issue, and cancelled the Liaison Department Chair of the PRC Communist Party Dai Bingguo's visit to Japan slated for April as well as that of Chairman of the Standing Committee of People's Assembly Li Peng. The Ministry delivered a memorandum on May 16, 2001 pointing out the distorted parts of the history textbooks and demanding effective measures by the Japanese government.

In relative terms, one can say that while Korea paid more attention to the distorted history textbooks, China was more sensitive to Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine. Before the visit, China had warned the Japanese government that the Japan-China relationship would sour rapidly if the visit took place, regarding the visit as closely related to Japanese historical perceptions of its WWII-period government. Vice Foreign Minister Wang called the Japanese Ambassador on May 17 and demanded prudent response from Tokyo and repeated the demand during a May 24 Japan-China foreign ministerial meeting.

When Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to the Shrine seemed certain to take place, China through unofficial diplomatic routes demanded that Japan (1) have the visit be personal not official, and take place after August 15, (2) the Prime Minister announce publicly his reflection over

the past, and (3) to remove the names of first-degree war criminals from the list of enshrinement.

On August 13 immediately after Koizumi went to the Shrine, the Vice Foreign Minister Wang Guangya called Japanese Ambassador Anami to express opposition, and PRC Ambassador Woo Daiwei called on the Japanese Vice Foreign Minister to relay his strong protest. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the People's Assembly announced a statement on August 14 "expressing deep anger and demanding strict responsibility" on the part of the Japanese government.

To China the visit to Yasukuni Shrine more, than the textbooks, is seen to symbolically illustrate the revival of Japanese. The Chinese government seems to handle the distorted history textbook and the Yasukuni Shrine issues as a way to check the right-wing surge in Japan, so it will not push the issues too hard because there is more to gain in economic fields.¹³ Such perception has led to different responses by Korea and China to the visits by the officials of the Japanese Liberal Party. While President Kim Dae Jung rejected a meeting request, the State President Jiang Zemin, in accordance with China's pragmatic policy met the delegation and relayed stern protest of the Chinese people last year.

3. Korea's Response

Korea's position is that issues of the distorted history textbooks and the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine by the Japanese prime minister are completely unacceptable to the Korean people. Although the government responded relatively moderately at early stages, demands by political circles and public opinion led President Kim Dae Jung to take

¹³ Chinese Vice President Hu Jintao told a delegation of Japan's ruling coalition that peaceful ties between the two countries will benefit both sides and that if Japan and China follow the policy of looking toward the future by making history serve as a mirror, they can achieve a sustainable-friendship. August 5, 2001.

a hardliner on the issue.

Before the visit took place, the Seoul government demanded cancellation of Koizumi's visit to the Shrine. The Korean Ambassador to Japan demanded prudent response on the part of the Japanese government. The Director-General of Asia-Pacific Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conveyed Korea's apprehension over the visit.

On August 13, 2001, right after the visit the Korean Foreign Ministry expressed deep regret and demanded that Tokyo restrain future visits to the shrine. The Korean Vice Foreign Minister called the Japanese Ambassador to convey deep regret and demanded prudent action. Various diplomatic channels are used to express deep regret and to request future restraint. Pyongyang too reacted strongly to Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, and has been constantly drumming against the distorted history textbook issue as well.

The textbooks and the Yasukuni Shrine visits are seen as demonstrating lack of sincerity on the part of the Japanese government towards the neighboring countries, and a lack of objective historical perception. Revision of the Japanese constitution as well as reinforcement of the Self-defense Forces and the build up Japan's defense and security systems are feared to kindle an arms race and eventually lead to the decline of mutual trust among nations in the region. Therefore, discussions over the issues should proceed in a transparent manner and most importantly in the direction of securing the understanding of the neighboring countries.

IV. Impediments to Northeast Asian Cooperation

A closer look at the rapidly changing environment shows that the missile defense (MD) program and the issue of Japan's colonial past are the two core issues around which fault lines among major players have formed. MD forms a fault line between the US on the one hand, and

China and North Korea on the other. Japan and Taiwan seem to be inclined to the US position while South Korea appears to maintain calculated ambiguity, but in a manner somewhat sympathetic to the US position. China is concerned with MD not only from the perspective of global strategic competition with the US, but also due to the possible inclusion of Taiwan in the program.

Japan has often become a hostage to its own history involving the past military expansionism from the late 19th to the mid-20th Century. This issue recently came to the fore again due to the publication of middle school history textbooks containing distorted historical facts and the visit by the Japanese Prime Minister to the shrine commemorating war heroes including the war criminals indicted by the war tribunal of World War II. These issues are a stark reminder to most of Japan's neighbors of her expansionism and they are so sensitive as to significantly restrain bilateral relations with Japan. The colonial history poses another fault line alienating Japan from China, South Korea, North Korea and Taiwan which complicates American efforts to strengthen bilateral ties between US allies, Japan and South Korea.

MD and the issue of colonial and wartime history vividly show how complicated it is to build a durable structure of cooperation in Northeast Asia. They also highlight the inherent dilemmas facing each of the major players. The US, keen on reducing its security burden, wants Japan to increase her military role including participation in MD. But Tokyo's freedom of action in this regard is seriously constrained by lingering doubts about Japanese intentions, clouded by its past.

The US is implementing the MD program to reinforce its influence in the Northeast Asian region by enhancing the Japanese military role. Japan thinks that by taking advantage of the Bush administration's insistence on MD, it can achieve some technology transfer that will decisively enhance Japanese military capability. Military cooperation with the US is seen as an opportunity for military buildup with mini-

mal protest from neighboring countries. Although Japan has yet to announce its participation in the MD as strongly as it did with regard to the US theater missile defense (TMD) plan which was a precursor to MD, Tokyo seems inclined to the judge to participate in MD.

The Chinese position is quite ambivalent and seems to be in a dilemma. China wants to develop friendly relations with the US in many fields including trade, investment and management of security challenges such as North Korea and Taiwan.¹⁴ But the US insistence on MD, coupled with a possible Taiwanese role, seriously constrains the scope of security cooperation and exerts negative spillover to other areas. China is measuring whether Japanese autonomy in military affairs or cooperative security with the US is more threatening to China, and is vigilant against its autonomous military buildup commensurate with Japanese economic power. Reinforcement of the Japanese military power guided by the US assistance may be more tolerable, but Japan could easily gain leeway in case the US-China relationship were to sour in the future. Therefore, Beijing's perception is that the Japanese participation in MD is a threat to Chinese national security, and that Japanese military buildup should be prevented in any form.

In order to ameliorate the Chinese objections to the MD plan, the US is reportedly examining the possibility of allowing China to retain nuclear deterrence capability including experimental launch of missiles. The Democratic Party in the US is suspicious of the effectiveness of Bush administration's MD program by pointing out that the very idea of maintaining world peace through deterrence contradicts the international post-Cold War trend.

China, on the other hand, is warning that the US MD system will lead to reinforcing the nuclear capability of China. China warns of

increase in the number and improved accuracy of nuclear warheads in action, and development of nuclear devices, in order to nullify the effectiveness of the MD project. China does not think that the MD is intended to defend from nuclear attacks by North Korea and Iraq, as claimed by the US. In China's view, it is China that the US perceives as the real target. The evidence shows that it would take at least fifteen years for North Korea to develop a missile that could reach the US shores, and Pyongyang will not commit such suicidal act because it is well aware of the consequences of retaliation from the US.

Military specialists in China agree that the US hegemony will continue for at least ten more years. The 2002 Report of the US Department of Defense states that since China will rise as a great economic and military power, it will be inevitable for the focus of US military strategy to move to Asia. If the scenario is actualized, China will be a new frontier of confrontation. Arguments are made in China to consider signing a military alliance with India and strategic alliance with Russia, both of which possess nuclear weapons. Considering complicated and delicate relations with India and Russia, such alliances seem unlikely in the near future. In the short run, China will try to secure stability by maintaining its policy of cooperation with the great powers and establish peace in the Northeast Asian region based upon multinational security cooperation.

China's new security concept demands, on the one hand, fundamental changes in the management of the international community, while on the other hand advocating "equality" of international community, thus to weaken the US influence while enhancing its own status on the international scene.¹⁵ Such Chinese strategy contradicts the US strategy to sustain its sole hegemonic status in the region by relying upon military power. The US-China relationship might fall into

14 Yinhay Ahn, "Sino-US Relations and Taiwan After 9.11 Terrorist Attacks," Rikyo University, Tokyo, Japan, August 25, 2002.

15 Jia Quinnguo, "US and China Relations After Sept. 11: Time for Change," *China Internet Information Center*, 2002. <http://www.china.org.cn/english/26340.htm>.

a state of hegemonic dilemma.

The future of the US-China relationship, therefore, depends upon the possibility of reaching strategic compromise.¹⁶ If the two nations fail to resolve their contradictory objectives, their bilateral relations will deteriorate. President Bush seems determined to carry out the MD program even at the expense of nullifying the ABM treaty. China perceives that the deteriorating relationship with Washington will lead to the rearmament of Japan, which would pose a threat to China.

Japan needs to nurture good relations with her neighbors as a necessary condition to increase her international role including permanent membership at the United Nations Security Council. But Japan's insufficient break from past colonialism and war-making does not allow much movement in the security area. Given the domestic situation in Japan, it does not look easy for Japan's political leaders to take any bold steps on the history issues.

The distortion of history textbooks and the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine have made Japan's relationship with neighboring countries uncomfortable, but what makes it worse is right-wing conservatism in Japan. According to Professor Okonogi, there were opinions despising Korea. He pointed out that more efforts should be made to correct the distorted history textbooks rather than mere denunciation of the issue itself.¹⁷ In fact, Japan needs to collaborate with the US and Korea to check China's rising power. The textbook and the Yasukuni Shrine issues have to be seen within the context of Japan's domestic politics. China and Korea should demand more active measures on the part of Tokyo to resolve both textbook and the Yasukuni Shrine issues. In the future, Japan will play a role of checking China because

16 Eric A. Mcvador, "U.S.-China Relations: Implications for Northeast Asia in an Evolving Security Environment," *Conflict and Cooperation between China and the United States*, Organized by the Korean Association of International Studies, August 24, 2002

17 Masao Okonogi, Professor of Keio University, October 2001.

it does not want the expansion of Chinese military power in the region. Against this backdrop, the right-wing conservatism of Japan as expressed in the form of distortion of history textbooks and the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine will act as fundamental impediments to regional cooperation.

V. Conclusion

The US wants Japan to play the military backup in the region. Accordingly, if Japan actively participates in MD, Japan could be under the influence of the US and this would provide Washington with leverage over the Japanese military power and technology. On the part of Japan, participation in the MD project will remove the constraints of the peace constitution upon its military expansion. Korea is absolutely against any Japanese military power buildup with the implementation of MD program that exceeds the level of national self-defense. The US MD program is generating excessive worries in Korea and China against Japanese participation in the program.

Such worries are rooted in the historical perception of Japan and its lack of sensitivity to the neighboring countries. Since Korea and China are strongly protesting against the issues whenever problems arise, Japan's attitude towards its colonial and early 20th century wartime behavior represented by history textbooks and the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine remain as obstacles to regional cooperation.

Conflicts between South Korea and Japan are a weakening factor to the trilateral security cooperative system among the US, Japan and South Korea. The US could play a moderating role between Seoul and Tokyo because cooperative relationship between the two countries is the key to its Northeast Asian security strategy. But the task does not look easy, given the potential that the history issue could come alive like a ghost to haunt the future relationship. Korea-Japan relationship

has significantly improved following Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi's two visits to Korea, and exchange visits of President Kim Dae-jung and Prime Minister Koizumi on the occasion of the recent Korea/Japan FIFA World Cups. But, even during this period, Koizumi paid another visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and high school textbooks containing distorted historical facts were again published. This shows the volatility of the history issue.

The fault lines posed by MD and the history issue run the dual risk of weakening the strategic solidarity of the US-led alliance and increasing the strategic competition between the US and China. As for MD, it is particularly important to find a way out that is acceptable to all on how to de-link the North Korean missile problem and the Taiwan issue from MD. It is not clear whether and how we can do it at this stage, as concrete plans regarding MD are still not available. But I think there could be a way out. China and the US could do some strategic bargaining, for example, China can encourage North Korea to resolve its missile problem through negotiation with the US, and in return, the US can delay the participation of Taiwan in MD.

As for the history issue, Japan should take urgent action to suggest a formula acceptable to South Korea. Japan is now conducting a joint research with Korea on history issues and its own work on exploring the possibility of an alternative facility replacing the Yasukuni Shrine. The longer meaningful solution delayed, the harder it would be to retrieve damage to Japan-South Korea relations and the US-led alliance structure.

The overall situation in Northeast Asia is volatile due to the existence of different sets of dilemma facing each of the players in the region. MD and Japanese history are the two core issues highlighting the structural impediments blocking the development of an institutional mechanism for regional cooperation. But they do not represent all the unresolved issues—and the September 11 terrorist attack also adds yet another element to the dilemma.

The upside of the security impact is that the incident has brought Sino-US security relations closer. The downside is that it hardens the US perception of the North Korean regime. North Korea's track record of missile export is now viewed with greater alarm by US strategic planners; North Korean missiles ending up in terrorists' hands is one of the most horrible scenarios to them.

It is still too early to predict how the overall balance sheet of the security equation will look like in the next couple of years. But it will affect the security environment of Northeast Asia in a very fundamental way.

CHINA'S ROLE IN KOREAN REUNIFICATION: WHAT CAN CHINA DO?

Ipyong Kim

This article is a new interpretation of Chinese foreign policy in general more specifically Chinese policy towards North Korea and its role in the Korean Unification. After discussing the dramatic changes that took place in China in 1978 during the transition from Maoism to Deng's reform program based on "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" which in turn brought about changes in North Korea's domestic and foreign policy this article analyses North Korea's adoption of Chinese model of development in the context of the Sino-Soviet disputes. For a quarter of a century after the Korean War, China adopted a rigid posture on Korean policy in the diplomatic, military, and economic fields. However, in the 1970s and 1980s China stepped up its economic aid and trade relations with North Korea. Moreover, the Chinese leaders visited North Korea and North Korean leader visited China more than 40 times and had summit meetings with many Chinese leaders which the indication of close relation between China and North Korea. When Kim Il Sung's 44-year rule was over, China expected that his successor would pursue a pragmatic and open-door foreign policy and improve inter-Korean relations. China invited Kim Jong Il to visit Beijing to attempt to convince the younger Kim

to accept the Chinese model of reform and open door policy. Kim Jong Il visited China three times and expressed his interest in China's model of economic development. The successful summit of the North-South Korean leaders on June 13-15, 2000 yielded a number of strategic implications for Chinese policy toward the two Koreas. China welcomed the inter-Korean summit. China may have influenced North Korea to open its doors to the outside world but it did not pave the road to reunification of the two Koreas since it is in China's interests to maintain the status quo of the two Koreas for the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula.

Most of the writings about China's relations with North Korea and its policy towards the Korean peninsula during the Cold War period focused on the issues of the Sino-DPRK friendship treaty, the alliance system, and security issues in the Sino-Soviet conflicts.¹ However, the end of the Cold War and the passing of North Korean leader Kim Il Sung from the political and diplomatic scene in 1994 ushered in some new interpretations of Chinese policy towards North Korea and its role in the Korean reunification.

In the 1990s North Korea decided to expand its contacts with the West, especially with the United States, Japan and South Korea, which was an indication of policy change from the hard line and isolationism. Domestically, North Korea launched economic and political reform and opened itself to the international economic and political arena. To expand foreign trade and also induce foreign investment in North Korea, the Pyongyang government established a free and special

¹ Koh Byung-chul, *The Foreign Policy Systems of North and South Korea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

economic zone in the Rajin and Sonbong area. In 1992 the North Korean leadership began high level meetings with the United States and Japan and signed with the South the Declaration of a Nuclear-free Korean peninsula. The DPRK became a member of the United Nations along with the Republic of Korea, abandoning its "One-Korea" policy in 1992.

Kim Jong Il began to consolidate power in the Korean Workers' Party as well as in military and government institutions in the 1990s, and ruled North Korea by the will of Kim Il Sung, who died in 1994. Thus, by 1997 Kim Jong Il consolidated his power and maintained domestic stability. However, nuclear and missile issues exploded when North Korea decided to withdraw from the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1993. After a series of negotiations on the nuclear and missile issues of 1993 and 1994, the United States and the DPRK concluded with the Agreed Framework at Geneva in 1994. North Korea also declared a moratorium on testing long-range missiles in September 1999.

The purpose of this paper is not necessarily to summarize other scholars' writings nor to reinterpret their analysis on the subject of Sino-North Korean relations but to speculate on what China can or cannot do to help the Koreans in their effort to achieve the goals of national unification. The main focus of this paper, therefore, is on the role of Chinese national interest in the process of formulating Korea policy, which may or may not be compatible with the aspirations of Koreans for national unification. It is therefore the thesis of this paper that national interest plays an important role in China's foreign policy-making with respect to the Korean peninsula and China's national interest changes when the international environment changes and the new international order emerges. Thus, the national interest of China may be incompatible with those of the two Koreas, which may lead to certain misunderstandings and conflicts. China and North and South Korea's common interest of peace and stability has become the most

important element in their foreign policy-making at the turn of millennium, placing the reunification issues of the two Koreas on the back-burner.

Political Changes and their Impact on Korea Policy

Ever since the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established on October 1, 1949, the Mao Zedong government upheld his ideology, "Maoism," as the guiding principle during three decades of revolutionary struggle for the eradication of feudalism, imperialism, and legacies of Guomintang nationalism. After the three decades of rigid and repressive rule by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) it was inevitable that the successors of the Mao Zedong leadership changed the CCP's domestic and foreign policies. Deng Xiaoping took over the CCP leadership and successfully purged the attempts of Hua Guofeng and the Gang of Four to persist in the Maoist ideology and continue Mao's radical policies. He was thus able to introduce a new policy of reform to the Chinese political and economic system and open the door to the outside world, which constituted a 180-degree turnaround in Chinese foreign policy.

The dramatic changes that took place in China in 1978 during the transition from Maoism to Deng's reform program based on "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" in turn brought about changes in North Korea's domestic and foreign policies.

When the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was established on September 9, 1948, it adopted the Soviet model of socialism and followed Soviet-style foreign policy in the 1950s within the context of the Cold War. North Korea shifted its policy during the Sino-Soviet conflicts in the 1950s, however, emulating the Chinese style of leadership structure and accepting the Chinese model of development policy to meet economic requirements, the analysis of which had

been presented by many North Korean specialists in the West.²

North Korea's rejection of the revisionist model of the Soviet Union resulted in an independent policy of Kimilsungism with Korean characteristics in the post-Korean War years of the 1950s and 1960s. This is commonly known as the policy of self-reliance based on Kim's Juche ideology, similar to the Maoist model of development. The North Korean leadership thus implemented the hard line policy of three great revolutions—the ideological revolution, the cultural revolution, and the technological revolution—in order to resolve the economic problems that North Korea encountered during the period of Sino-Soviet disputes over the Communist ideology. This policy was in many respects a compromise that assigned an important role to ideology on the one hand, but on the other hand upheld expertise, the issue of which was debated in China during the height of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s and early 1970s.³ The changes in the policy of economic development in the 1980s caused political changes in China, which in turn brought about changes in China's policy toward North and South Korea in the 1990s. Thus, China convinced North Korean leaders to abandon their one-Korea policy and join the United Nations along with South Korea in 1991, and China was thus able to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea, the result of which was a dramatic change in Chinese policy from the one-Korea policy that upheld North Korea as the only legitimate government in the Korean peninsula to the two-Korea policy that recognized the reality of two Koreas in the peninsula.

North Korea relied heavily on its close allies, China and the Soviet Union, for economic and security assistance during the Cold War era.

2 "North Korea Between Moscow and Peking" in Ilpyong J. Kim, *Communist Politics in North Korea* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), pp. 93-115.

3 Ilpyong J. Kim, "Reform in North Korea," Jane Shapiro Zacek and Ilpyong J. Kim, eds., *Reform and Transformation in Communist Systems: Comparative Perspectives* (New York: Paragon House, 1991).

The establishment of diplomatic relations between China and South Korea, however, changed the configuration of power relations in the Korean peninsula. It was China that dispatched armed forces to fight in the Korean War in October 1950, when North Korea was on the verge of collapse and being overwhelmed by the United Nations' forces under the direction of the U. S. Army. China also prevented the U. N. Security Council from taking sanctions against North Korea when the North declared its withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in March 1993. The North Korea-China Friendship Treaty, a virtual security pact concluded in July 1961, was designed to enable China to offer military assistance to the DPRK; it is still in effect.

For a quarter of a century after the Korean War, the PRC adopted a rigid posture on Korean policy in the diplomatic, military, and economic fields. During the post-Korean War period, Beijing provided Pyongyang with generous grants and loans and engaged in bilateral trade. China was the major donor of economic and technical assistance to North Korea during the post-Korean War reconstruction of its country. When Kim Il Sung led an eight-member delegation to China in November 1953, the two governments signed an agreement on economic and cultural cooperation, stipulating that both sides "shall extend to each other all possible economic and technical aid, carry out the necessary economic and technical cooperation and endeavor to promote cultural exchanges between the two countries." The PRC provided a grant of 800 million yuan to restore North Korea's war-torn country. North Korean leader Kim Il Sung was thus able to negotiate successfully to receive in 1976 an estimated \$967 million in grants and loans from China.⁴

North Korea's trade with the PRC accounted for 20 percent of its total foreign trade throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Since North Korea

4 Lee, Chae-Jin, *China and Korea: Dynamic Relations*. Stanford (CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1996).

does not produce a single drop of oil, its major import item from China was crude oil. The China-Korea Friendship Pipeline, which was completed by joint efforts in January 1976, transported oil from Daqing to North Korea. When Premier Hua Guofeng visited North Korea in 1978, China agreed to increase its annual oil export by one million metric tons at the "friendship price" (\$4.50 per barrel). It then sent engineers and technicians to construct oil refineries, petrochemical plants, and other related industries in North Korea. The PRC also signed long-term trade agreements for the periods of 1982-86 and 1987-91, which helped the DPRK's Third Seven-Year Economic Development Plan (1987-93). Pyongyang and Beijing held numerous economic meetings and formed agreements in a variety of fields such as trade, hydroelectric power, navigation, railways, civil aviation, communication, publications, educational exchanges, public health, and science and technology. A large number of North Korean students, scientists, technicians, bureaucrats, and other professional personnel including military staff officers visited China each year and studied at Chinese universities and research institutes, or initiated scientific and technical exchange programs with their Chinese counterparts.⁵

North Korean leader Kim Il Sung visited China more than 40 times and had summit meetings with many Chinese leaders, including Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping and other successive leaders. The Chinese leaders also reciprocated those visits to Pyongyang to consolidate diplomatic and security relations between the two countries. When Kim Il Sung died in July 1994, Deng Xiaoping extended condolences to the Korean Workers' Party Central Committee and expressed his "deep grief" at the loss of a "close comrade in arms." China also recognized Kim Jong Il as the new supreme leader in North Korea to assist in the smooth transition of power. When Kim Il Sung's 44-year rule was over, China expected that his successor would pursue a

5 *Ibid.*

pragmatic and open-door foreign policy and improve inter-Korean relations. However, Kim Jong Il was not able to meet the expectations of the Chinese leadership, and China invited Kim Jong Il to visit Beijing to attempt to convince Kim to accept the Chinese model of reform and open door policy.

Kim Jong Il visited China in January 15-20, 2001—his third visit, the others occurring in June 1983 and May 29-31, 2000. During his previous visit he met with the top leaders of the PRC and expressed his interest in China's model of economic development. During his January 15-20, 2001 visit, Kim toured the Pudong industrial complex in Shanghai, inspecting the \$1.5 billion Buick plant and other flagship Sino-foreign joint ventures such as NEC's \$1.2 billion semiconductor foundry in Shangjiang High Tech Park. He also participated in summit meetings with the Chinese leader Jiang Zemin in Beijing on January 20, 2001. Kim was obviously impressed by the economic achievements China had made following its adoption of reform and an open door policy.⁶

Chinese leader Jiang Zemin also visited North Korea from September 3-5, 2001, accompanied by over 100 various officials from the PRC government, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the military and economic sectors. Jiang's aides included Zeng Qinghong, head of the CCP Organization Department; Qian Qichen, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of the State Council of the PRC; Zeng Peiyan of the State Development Planning Commission; and top members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The summit conference between Jiang Zemin and Kim Jong Il took place in Pyongyang. The DPRK and the PRC have gained full momentum in making various levels of exchanges since the DPRK- PRC summit talks in Pyongyang. However, some observers of North Korea doubted the Chinese commitment of massive economic assistance, since China was more interested in

6 Ilpyong J. Kim, *Historical Dictionary of North Korea*. Lanham (MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002) (forthcoming).

helping the North Korean leaders to learn from the experiences of Chinese reform and economic development.

This was Jiang Zemin's second visit to North Korea since his visit in March 1990, when he was the General Secretary of the CCP. Strains and stresses had developed in PRC-DPRK relations following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the PRC and the Republic of Korea (ROK) in August 1992, and the formerly high numbers of visits have been greatly reduced. Western observers of North Korea asserted that China established diplomatic relations with the ROK to serve its economic and trade interests as well as to encourage North Korea to break away from her economic and trade dependency upon China, which also encouraged North Korea to diversify its diplomatic relations with other countries such as Japan and the United States as well as to improve its relations with South Korea.⁷

The diplomatic normalization between the PRC and the ROK removed political barriers and brought about a "great leap forward" in bilateral economic cooperation between the two independent countries. The trade volume increased from \$5.81 billion in 1991 to \$8.22 billion in 1992, \$9.08 billion in 1993, \$11.66 billion in 1994, \$16.54 billion in 1995, \$19.92 billion in 1996, \$23.60 billion in 1997, and \$25 billion in 1999.⁸

Moreover, the ROK's investment in China also increased dramatically after the normalization of diplomatic relations. From 1993 to 1996, the ROK invested more funds in China than in any other country, and the total amount of ROK investment in 1996 reached \$1.36 billion, which accounted for 20% of the ROK's overseas investments. Ever since the normalization of diplomatic relations, the ROK has been one of the major investing countries in China. The economies of China and South Korea are complementary and still have great potential for

7 *The Korea Herald*, March 16, 1998.

8 Zhang Xiaoming, "China's Relations with the Korean Peninsula: A Chinese View," *The Korea Observer*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Winter 2001, pp. 481-500.

further economic cooperation in the future. The continued development of economic cooperation serves the interests of China's modernization drive and of security in East Asia and, more specifically, of the national security of the two Koreas.⁹

The reciprocal visits between Kim Jong Il and Jiang Zemin restored close friendly relations between the two allies in the latter half of the 1990s. By recognizing the reality of the two legitimate governments of North and South Korea in the Korean peninsula, China was in a better position to encourage North Korea to accept China's two-Koreas policy and also to help North Korea pursue a more self-reliant policy in economic and trade relations with other nations instead of depending solely upon China for its economic assistance, which was the characteristic feature of their bilateral relations during the Cold War era.

China's policy toward the two Koreas since 1992 has been to deter North Korea's military adventurism as well as to counter interventions from South Korea in alliance with foreign powers such as the United States and Japan. The Chinese leadership declared publicly that China would not support a North Korean attack on the South and revealed its intention that it would not tolerate any peninsular threat to China's national security. If North Korea were to initiate an armed conflict in the Korean peninsula, China would not honor its security treaty with the DPRK. However, if North Korea were attacked and invaded by the South or its allies, China would not stand idly by, but would send in troops to protect the security of its ally as stipulated in the Sino-DPRK treaty. China still values the Sino-North Korean security treaty in the post-Cold War era for several reasons: the treaty has helped to prevent war on the Korean peninsula and maintain the military balance in the region; despite China's economic and security burden, the treaty serves

9 For missile negotiation between the U. S. and the DPRK, see Leon V. Sigal, *Disarming Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998) and also see his "Cooperative Security in Korea," in *Great Decisions 2002* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 2002).

as leverage for China to maintain a channel of communication with the North Korean leadership during crisis situations; in competing with such major powers as the United States and Japan, China can use the treaty as a means to retain continued influence in Pyongyang; and finally, the treaty would discourage radical factions in South Korea, the United States and Japan from military intervention in the event of a civil war in North Korea.

Nuclear and Missile Issues

China continues to maintain its military and security relations with North Korea during the height of nuclear and missile crises. Therefore, President George W. Bush called on China to convince the DPRK to have dialogue with the United States to resolve the security issues of the Korean peninsula when he visited South Korea for summit meetings with President Kim Dae Jung in March 2002. President Bush denounced North Korea as an axis of evil along with Iran and Iraq when he delivered his State of the Union message in February 2002.

The history of nuclear development in the DPRK is 50 years old. North Korean scientists began theoretical study of nuclear energy in the early 1950s, when they started their practical training in the Soviet Union. They were interested in studying electronic physics, radiochemistry, high-energy physics, and other subjects. The training of North Korean specialists in the Soviet Union was carried out in the interests of the peaceful use of atomic energy. Soviet-North Korean agreements signed in this connection specifically stressed the peaceful nature of bilateral cooperation in the development of nuclear energy.

Other North Korean scientists received their training in Japan, East Germany, and West Germany, and some underwent practical training at Chinese nuclear centers as well. The scientific and experimental infrastructure in the nuclear field was built with Soviet technical assis-

tance. Soviet technicians took part in the construction of the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon, 92 kilometers north of Pyongyang, which was suspected of having produced sufficient plutonium to make two or three nuclear bombs. The Geneva Agreed Framework of 1994 froze the nuclear program in Yongbyon. Thus, on October 21, 1994, representatives of the United States and the DPRK signed an agreed framework for resolving the nuclear issue after a series of negotiations.

North Korea also developed missiles. Rodong Missile No. 1 is a ballistic missile with a maximum firing range of 1,000-1,300 kilometers, developed by North Korea and based on the Soviet Scud-B. North Korea test-fired it in May 1993 in Hwadae County, North Hamgyong Province. North Korea is reported to have the capability of producing 100 missiles per year. They are usually called Scud-Ds. In November 1997, the South Korean defense minister said North Korea began to develop the Rodong No. 1 missile in 1988 and test-fired it once in 1990 and again in 1993. The North Korean army is likely to be armed with the missile in the 21st century. However, subsequent to negotiations with the United States in 1997 and 1998, North Korea has frozen its missile test and production until 2003.¹⁰

China continues to be involved in the security issues of North Korea even after the freeze of nuclear and missile development. At the time China and South Korea normalized diplomatic relations in August 1992, China and North Korea maintained frequent and high-level military contacts with each other. Several high-ranking Chinese officials, including defense minister Chi Haotien and Commander of the Shenyang Military Region in June 1994, foreign minister Qian Qichen in May 1993, politburo member Hu Jintao (who is successor designate to Jiang Zemin as secretary general of the CCP) in July 1993, visited Pyongyang and consolidated bilateral relations. At the time of the U.S.-

10 Bermudez, Jr. Joseph, *A History of Ballistic Missile Development in the DPRK*, Center for Nonproliferation Studies (Montrey Institute of International Studies, November 1999), pp. 29-30.

DPRK negotiations at Geneva for the Agreed Framework, several senior PLA officers, including the regional commander and political commissars, visited Beijing to assure the security of North Korea after the freeze of nuclear and missile development.

Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan visited Pyongyang in October 1999 to discuss the issue of bilateral relations with North Korea, which had become strained following the normalization of diplomatic relations with South Korea. North Korean Foreign Minister Paik Nam Sun paid a return visit to Beijing to strengthen PRC-DPRK relations in view of growing concern on the part of China about U.S.-DPRK negotiations on missile development. It was reported that China assisted North Korea's missile designers and engineers of the Rodong missile program with professional training and, possibly, technological exchanges throughout the 1990s. North Korea received considerable assistance from the Chinese Academy of Launch Technology in designing the Kwangmyong 1 satellite. Such technical assistance, according to Joseph Bermudez Jr. helped North Korea to develop the Kwangmyong 2 satellite project and would eventually extend to other satellites, including a crude reconnaissance satellite.¹¹

The U. S. policy also shifted from undermining North Korea to cooperating with South Korea to end the nuclear weapons and long-range missile-related activities of the DPRK, which was crystallized in former secretary of defense William Perry's review process. In the past, U.S. policy toward North Korea had been to enhance the collapse of, or encourage the DPRK to implement the reform program in, its political and economic system. The U.S. subsequently changed its policy, expecting the DPRK to accept the policy of ending nuclear weapon and long-range missile development that also served the interests of China, the foreign policy objective of which was peace and stability in the

11 "DPRK media call Kim Jong Il's visit to the PRC fruitful," in FBIS-CHI-2002-0602. "China Supports Reunification of the Korean Peninsula," *Beijing Review*, June 12, 2000.

Korean peninsula so that it might successfully execute its own reform and open door policies. Thus, China was willing to cooperate with the U. S. to halt nuclear and missile-related activities in North Korea so long as the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula was assured.

Thus, China's balancing act in dealing with the North Korea's nuclear and missile issues was compatible with U. S. interest in 1993-94. China encountered a policy dilemma between the desire to deter U. S. coercive strategy toward the DPRK on the one hand, and on the other hand the desire to advise the North Korean government to take a flexible response toward U. S. approaches. China and the U. S. shared a common security interest that a nuclear weapon-free North Korea would contribute to the stability and peace in East Asia in general and more specifically in the Korean peninsula. China was thus able to encourage both North Korea and the U. S. to open a dialogue instead of pursuing drastic measures of confrontation so that the nuclear issues might be resolved peacefully, the outcome of which was the Agreed Framework at Geneva in 1994.

North-South Korean Summit and China Policy

The successful summit of the North-South Korean leaders on June 13-15, 2000 yielded a number of strategic implications for Chinese policy toward the two Koreas. First of all, the inter-Korean summit served the common interest of China and North Korea to restore their political and economic relationship, which had been strained following the Chinese-South Korean normalization of diplomatic relations in 1992. Kim Jong Il, Chairman of the North Korean Defense Commission, paid an unofficial visit to the PRC from May 29-31, 2000, to consult with the Chinese leadership prior to the summit. Jiang Zemin and Kim Jong Il agreed that the two nations would inevitably "strengthen ties in the best interests of both countries at the time when international

situations are complicated and in flux" and that "the ties will also be conducive to peace and stability in the region and world." It was reported that Jiang spoke highly of Kim's visit to China, stressing that it was of great significance for the deepening of understanding, trust, friendship and cooperation between the two parties and countries. Moreover, after the talks, the two leaders agreed that meetings between the leaders of the Korean Workers' Party and the Chinese Communist Party, as well as between the leaders of the two countries, should continue.

What did Jiang Zeming advise Kim Jong Il to do during their talks? Whether the five-point agreement was leaked deliberately or speculated upon by the analysts in Beijing, it is quite plausible that Jiang proposed a five-point proposal, which was accepted by Kim Jong Il for implementation. The five points of the proposal were that (1) the two sides' leaders should hold regular meetings for information exchange and policy consultation; (2) it is necessary for North Korea to pursue multi-faceted diplomacy with all countries in the world in order to counter its image of being reclusive and hard-lined in the international community; (3) the DPRK should implement economic reforms to overcome its economic difficulties and place economic reconstruction on the priority list; (4) North Korea should improve diplomatic relations with the U. S., Japan, and Western countries and normalize diplomatic relations with the United States; and finally (5) the two sides should seize the opportunity to resolve the urgent need for capital and technology by improving North-South relations, which the Kim Dae Jung government has put forward in the form of engagement policy ever since it was inaugurated. It is plausible that Jiang persuaded Kim Jong Il to accept South Korea's proposal to improve inter-Korean relations by pledging South Korean capital and technology to aid North Korea's economic recovery. The subsequent policy of North Korea moved to implement economic reform, about which Kim Jong Il had some reservations, and accept economic assistance from South Korea.

However, Kim Jong Il was more interested in the economic reform process in China, since he expressed openly that China was able to achieve greatly by its economic reform and opening to the outside world, thus achieving comprehensive national power and improving its international power status. During his stay, Kim visited for the first time since his 1982 China visit the Legend Group, a computer giant in China that has captured 23 percent of China's computer market. It was reported that Kim even asked China to advise North Korea on suitable locations for industrial parks for medium and small enterprises. Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji suggested Haeju for an Industrial park, and North Korea seems to have accepted the suggestion: Haeju might attract 850 medium and small enterprises and may expect export earnings of more than U. S. \$206 billion annually.¹²

China welcomed the inter-Korean summit, the results of which was very successful. Chinese President Jiang Zeming wrote two congratulatory messages to the two leaders of North and South Korea, in which he suggested that China take a balanced approach to and maintain influence with both sides respectively. A commentator in the *Beijing Review* applauded several positive implications of the North and South Korean summit, which has advanced peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, which in turn serves the best interests of China. North Korea has thus moved away from ideology-based foreign policy to a more pragmatic policy, which was the main characteristic of China's reform and open door policy in the 1980s.

Convergence of Chinese and North Korean Interest

It was during the height of the Cold War years that the ideological interests of China and North Korea became compatible, which brought

about a close alliance. However, the dramatic changes in the international environment in the post-Cold War world ushered in differences in Chinese and North Korean interests. Chinese interest focused on economic reform and the opening of its doors to the outside world, which brought about the normalization of relations with the United States, while North Korea maintained hostility toward the U. S. and opted for the reunification of the two Koreas by expelling U. S. troops from South Korea. North Korea advocated the withdrawal of U. S. troops from Korea as a precondition for the reunification of the two Koreas, whereas Deng Xiaoping of China was willing to accommodate the presence of U. S. troops in Korea as long as the peace and stability was maintained and continued to serve the interests of the PRC.

During the reform era of Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and Jiang Zemin, Chinese policy toward North Korea was ambivalent despite North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's frequent visits to China and willingness to serve the ideological interest of China. China was lukewarm in endorsing the succession Kim Il Sung to his father as the top leader of the DPRK when the younger Kim was designated at the Sixth Congress of the Korean Workers' Party in 1980. In June 1982, Kim Jong Il made an unofficial trip to China to impress Chinese leaders, including Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and others, and attempted to learn from the Chinese experience of reform and open door policy. North Korean leaders at that time attempted to portray Kim Jong Il as Deng Xiaoping of North Korea. Kim was physically short like Deng and also possessed Deng's very dynamic and outgoing personality. However, the question lay in Kim's ability to introduce the reform and open door policy in North Korea in the same ways in which Deng had introduced them in China in 1978. It was too early to introduce such a drastic change in the very conservative and Confucian society of North Korea, and the younger Kim had even confessed to a South Korean actress that "if we open our society and carry out the reform our system will collapse" in the 1980s.

12 Xinhua: "More on Kim Jong Il Visits," FBIS-CHI-2000-0601.

However, dramatic changes in the international environment in the 1990s, when South Korea normalized diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1990 followed by the two Koreas' membership in 1991 and the Chinese normalization of diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992, coupled with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of the communist system in East Europe, forced the North Korean leadership to recognize and adapt to the changing international environment in order to sustain its own system. The process of accommodation to the changing international environment provided Kim Jong Il the opportunity to consolidate his own power in North Korea by 1997 and launch a new constitution to revamp North Korea's economic and political systems.

Subsequently, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il had three summit meetings — with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in a secret visit Beijing in late May, 2001; with South Korean President Kim Dae Jung in June, 2000; and with Russian President Vladimir Putin in July, 2001—and also received a series of diplomatic missions to Pyongyang, including those of U. S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian in October 2001, and a European Union delegation in November 2001, all of which influenced Kim Jong Il to think globally, following the diplomatic practice of Deng Xiaoping, who opened the Chinese door to the outside world.

It is the conclusion of this paper that China may have influenced North Korea to open its doors to the outside world but it did not pave the road to reunification of the two Koreas because it is in China's interests to maintain the status quo of the two Koreas for the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula.

INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS AFTER THE SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS: A RUSSIAN VIEW

Alexander Zhebin

Two years' period elapsed after the inter-Korean summit and signing of the Joint Declaration has confirmed that Korean settlement in the foreseeable future, too, will remain rather complex and inconsistent process which, apparently, will take rather long period of time. The positive tendencies which have appeared during this period have not yet got irreversible character. Moscow's position concerning the inter-Korean rapprochement and its possible results is determined by national interests of Russia which, certainly, will benefit from liquidation of the hot-spot right next to her Far Eastern region and from founding in the long term an unified Korea, capable to maintain relations of friendship, good neighbourhood and cooperation with Russia. At the same time there is no doubts, that Russia's priority task concerning realization of any unification scenarios remains maintenance of peace and stability on peninsula. The DPRK's unification formula which call for creation of a neutral non-aligned state on the peninsula looks, from the point of view of Russia's security interests, more attractive, rather than South Korean commitment to the American military presence even after unification of Korea. After the inter-Korean summit Russia

has shown with practical deeds that it is ready in every possible way to promote confidence, principles of peaceful co-existence, stable and all-round cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK on the basis of the Joint declaration and other inter-Korean agreements, and regularly, persistently works with all interested parties so that they act in the same way.

I. Introduction

“First time in history” - it looks like these words became the most frequently used when describing events on the Korean peninsula during the last two years. The central place among them belongs, no doubt about it, to the meeting of the highest authorities of the ROK and the DPRK in June of 2000, which was held for the first time since the both states made their appearance on the globe political map.

It seems that the decision to hold the summit was a product of realization, both in Seoul and in Pyongyang, of the fact that at the present stage all possibilities for achieving any tangible progress in inter-Korean relations by using the external factors - the U.S., China, Japan and Russia - had been exhausted. In these circumstances, Koreans tried to find their own way for a settlement of the Korean problems, utilizing for the purpose the growing Korean nationalism and understanding by both sides of the pan-Korean interests. In sum, the move was aimed to diminish the role of those “external factors” in the Korean affairs and to make the Great Powers to a greater degree to take into consideration the interests of Koreans.

The inter-Korean summit by upgrading the relations between the two Korean states on a qualitatively new level laid foundation for their normalization and for promoting a wide-range and sustainable bilateral cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK. A real perspective for

eradication of one of the oldest remnants of the “cold war” and a permanent “hot-spot” in the region has appeared.

At the same time, it was rather easy to note that the content of Joint Declaration signed by the leaders of the South and the North Korea, with the exception of acceptance of similarity of the unification programs of both sides and their agreement to continue the highest-level dialogue, looks like a abstract of agreements and understandings reached by two Koreas in one or another form during various inter-Korean contacts in 1970-1990s. Absolutely new and peculiar one was the only fact - this time the document was signed for the first time by supreme leaders of the ROK and the DPRK. That very circumstance, considering traditions of the Korean political culture, provided the following period of the inter-Korean dialogue with higher than ever dynamics and so far keeps it going.

II. Reasons for Rapprochement

There are still different views on the question whether Pyongyang’s decision to agree to hold the summit was a result of a drastic reevaluation of its unification strategy or just a tactical maneuver caused by circumstances and aimed at resolving the current problems, without bringing any substantial changes in the DPRK’s domestic and foreign policy. Just before and in the beginning of 2000, Pyongyang called the South Korean authorities “puppets” and “traitors which have no future.” North Korea refused a dialogue with the ROK under the pretext that the latter lacks independence because it was “occupied” by “the American imperialists’ troops.”¹ Both the ROK President personally and his policy for rapprochement and cooperation with the North were also objects for bitter attacks in the DPRK’s media.²

¹ *Rodong Shinmun*, December 25, 1999.

That made some Russian scholars to suppose that “Pyongyang’s consent to held talks are not resulted from changes in the North’ policy towards the South.”³

Both the summit as well as the events happened after him testify that the DPRK’s steps towards the recognition of the peninsula realities were forced and dictated mainly by a difficult economic situation and complicated international conditions.

Especially, by 2000 it became evident that the DPRK was not capable on its own, without attracting external resources, to cope with a protracted economic crisis. In the situation when previous support from Russia and China was not available any more, possibilities of receiving economic assistance from the West were unclear, the only real source of such assistance remains South Korea with its “sunshine policy” pursued by Kim Dae-jung.

Adding to that, the resumption of a dialogue with Seoul authorities was among main conditions set forth by the West for normalization of its own relations with the DPRK. The latter’s possibilities for maneuvering on the “field” became much less after the U.S., Japan and the ROK established the trilateral mechanism for coordinating their North Korean policy.

The last impulse in favor of shifting diplomatic offensive to the South seemingly was given to the DPRK by Kim Dae-jung’s Berlin Declaration in which economic assistance to the North was upgraded to the level of a state policy while promising to abide with principles of peaceful coexistence and not trying to absorb the North.

Sure, Pyongyang had no illusions about Seoul’s ulterior motives. Nevertheless, the DPRK decided to take the chance not only to receive economic benefits, but to achieve a political and diplomatic breakthrough at the “Western Front.” The point is, according to Pyongyang’s

2 *Rodong Shinmun*, December 24, 1999; January 31, 2000.

3 V. Tkachenko, “Possible Results of the North-South Korea summit: A View from Russia,” *Korus Forum*, No. 6, 2000, p. 73.

interpretation of the Joint Declaration (consolidation of Koreans in the North and in the South against “external forces”), that giving its consent to the summit, the DPRK counted on undermining the trilateral anti-North Korean alliance of Washington-Tokyo-Seoul.

North Korea also expected a drastic progress in normalization of the DPRK’s relations with the U.S. and with their allies. Besides that they planned to stir up competition among four Great Powers whose interests are directly intersected on the Korean peninsula. Pyongyang tried to obtain support from Russia and China in order to force the U.S. and Japan into giving additional concessions.

It is worth saying that North Korean maneuver proved to be rather precisely calculated. The very announcement on the forthcoming inter-Korean summit helped to create conditions for visits by Kim Jong-il to China in May 2000 and Russian President V. Putin to the DPRK in July 2000. Resumption of a political dialogue with two Great Powers - the DPRK’s neighbors brought about drastic strengthening not only Pyongyang’s standing vis-a-vis the U.S., Japan and the ROK, but Kim Jong-il personal position as a respectable statesman who are dealt with by the leaders of the world’s major powers.

Another foreign policy factor which prompted Pyongyang to resume a dialogue with Seoul was fear - proved to be not entirely ungrounded - of possible coming to power in the U.S. the Republicans who took much more tough attitude towards the DPRK than Clinton’s administration did.

Providing Kim Dae-jung with such a visible argument in favor of his “Sunshine Policy,” like the summit itself, Pyongyang expected that after the summit Seoul, in its turn, would begin to push the U.S. and Japan to make further steps towards the DPRK. In case of the Republican’s coming to power Kim Dae-jung’s personal involvement with engagement policy toward the DPRK, as it was foreseen by North Koreans, it happened to be a good counterbalance to Americans’ attempts to pursue a more tough policy towards the DPRK.

It is worth mentioning that these calculations proved to be exact to much degree. The Bush administration, in spite of continuation of the tough rhetoric against the DPRK and its leadership, was forced to adjust its hard-line approach taking into consideration of Kim Dae-jung's personal stakes in the "Sunshine Policy" as well as fears of cautious Japanese.

Inter-Korean summit obviously weakened the united anti-North Korean diplomatic alliance of the U.S.-Japan-South Korea. It actually, especially at an early stage, made Seoul to withdraw from the anti-North Korean triangle, moved to the background so-called "North Korean nuclear and missile problem" as the question of no real importance for normalization of relations between "compatriots" since Pyongyang always claimed that its missiles were entirely for deterrence of an aggression by the U.S. to prevent in Korea any scenario similar to those which took place in Iraq or Yugoslavia.⁴

Pyongyang's decision to resume the inter-Korean dialogue brought about for the DPRK a run of diplomatic recognition from the West. Since 2000, the DPRK established inter-state relations with 19 countries, and became a member of the ARF.

Chairman Kim Jong-il's active personal diplomacy which he began after the inter-Korean summit towards South Korea (meetings with politicians, business and media leaders, cultural figures) as well as the U.S. (meetings with M.Albright in Pyongyang which lasted altogether for 11 hours) was clearly aimed at "de-demonization" of his image both among South Koreans and world public opinion. One shouldn't exclude that this ad campaign had far more distant aim: to prevent in future in Korea repetition of the scenarios which were used by the West in Europe when dealing with some leaders of former socialist countries.

By the way, in the DPRK they gave the credit of holding the summit

⁴ *Rodong Shinmun*, September 18, 1999; *Minju Chosun*, January 31, 2001.

entirely to Kim Jong-il. And what is more, it is claimed, that by doing so he demonstrated his virtue as a pan-national leader therefore the country's unification can be achieved only under his guidance.⁵

III. Both Sides' Priorities and Tactics

The process of inter-Korean exchanges which started after the summit gave observers some ideas of priorities of both sides and tactics used by them to reach their goals.

For Pyongyang such priorities, as it had been expected, proved to be getting economic assistance and grants from the ROK. When it comes to other channels of inter-Korean relations, the North demonstrated far less interest in their development.

From the very start, the definite intention was visible in the North Korean tactics: that is to portrait the North's consent to fulfill its obligations under the agreements with Seoul like some kind of concession to a partner and on that basis to demand each time in return for it a certain "present." On the day of signing the agreement on holding the summit (May 18, 2000), the ROK began deliveries to the DPRK of 200,000 tons of fertilizers. Generally, positive outcomes of the 3rd round of ministerial-level talks in September 2000 were determined mostly by Seoul's decision to provide the North with 600,000 tons of grain. North Koreans' consent for a visit in April 2002 to Pyongyang of a special presidential envoy Lim Dong-won was also related to Seoul's promise to provide Pyongyang with 300,000 tons of grain and 200,000 tons of fertilizer, especially needed in spring.

There is one more specific feature in North Korean tactics employed in the sphere of inter-Korean contacts, especially in economic ties. Pyongyang undoubtedly strives to make them as closed for the public

⁵ *Rodong Shinmun*, December 15, 2000.

as possible, trying to confront any particular South Korean firm with all might of the North Korean state machine. That explains such “incomprehensible,” from view of South Koreans, Pyongyang’s lack of interest in resumption of the inter-Korean Economic Cooperation Committee’s activity.

Pyongyang, in return for South Korean economic injections, began limited and strictly controlled humanitarian contacts, simultaneously trying to extract from the exchanges a maximum propagandistic effect. Judging by commentaries in North Korean media, performances staged in the South by North Korean symphonic orchestra, circus and children ensemble convinced South Koreans of “flowering national culture” in the North and of course, of “greatness and wisdom” of the DPRK’s leader.⁶

The most essential concession to Seoul on the part of Pyongyang was probably consent after a 15-years break to resume contacts between members of the divided families. However, because of fear of penetration into the country “alien” to a local sample of “socialism” ideas, information and a way of life these meetings still have irregular, incidental character (the latest, 4th took place in April-May 2002 and previous one, the 3rd - in February 2001). Though the format of these meetings was a little bit expanded, they still remain carefully orchestrated and taking place under the vigilant control of special services events with the extremely limited participation (about 200 persons from each side). Meanwhile, according to the ROK’s official data, there are about 10 million members of the separated families in both parts of the country.

In March 2001 in Panmunjom, representatives of Red Cross Societies of the North and the South have made an exchange of 300 letters which were sent by members of the separated families to their relatives accordingly in the North and the South. Here again it was limited to

6 *Minju Chosun*, August 24, 29, 2000.

the single act. For a half-century, authorities of both sides can not agree upon allowing the citizens to meet, call and write freely each other.

As an “initial payment” for the consent to revive family reunions Seoul in September 2000 transferred to Pyongyang 68 persons who had served long terms of imprisonment in the ROK for activities in favor of the DPRK. Coming home of “unconverted” prisoners was used for unleashing the massed propaganda campaign supporting traditional theses of North Korean ideologists about “superiority” of the social order and the way of life existing in the DPRK comparing to those in the ROK.

At the same time, the DPRK categorically refuses to return to South Korea its POW, fishermen and other persons who, as Seoul asserts, forcibly are kept in the North.

There is an aspiration to use the agreements achieved by the parties in this or that area to impose one’s own will, to dictate to the partner, what he can do, and what - he shouldn’t. During trip to Pyongyang of heads of the ROK media (August, 5-12, 2000) an agreement which contains promises to abstain from mutual slander and to work for the benefit of consolidation and unification was signed. It was rather quickly found out, that North Koreans are inclined to use this document for punishment disagreeable to them press organs of the ROK by excluding them from covering of international events taking place in the DPRK (refusal to accredit correspondent of largest conservative newspaper “Chosun Ilbo” at negotiations of the Red Cross Societies at Mt. Geumgang and during M. Albright’s visit to the DPRK where besides Americans, over 20 Japanese and South Korean journalists, and also AFP correspondent have worked).

In North Korean tactics, the aspiration has appeared, evading from official contacts, to place emphasis on organizing formally rather amorphous conferences, symposiums, meetings of various representatives of the North and the South, who were selected, so to say, according to “professional” criteria.

Among such events of 2001 included the followings - meetings of religious believers (March) and workers of the North and the South for unification (May), conference of representatives of the public of the North, the South and from abroad on the occasion of first anniversary of signing of the Joint Declaration (June), a meeting of the public of two parts of the country on the occasion of Liberation Day (August).

The main contents of these forums - as it appears from coverage in North Korean media, became, as a rule, are three basic elements: the recognition and "glorification" of roles of the DPRK's leader as the national leader, a natural "center of rallying" and unity of all Koreans, support for the DPRK's initiatives for reunification of the country as most "fair and rational" proposals in this area, and at last, almost open appeal to nationalism, unity of overwhelming majority of all those in whose veins "the Korean blood" flows against "external forces" ostensibly "not wanting" unification, and "national traitors," who came to terms with those forces.⁷

One more characteristic feature of such forums was organized them far away from eyes not only the Korean public, but also foreigners and world media. They are held, as a rule, in the Mt. Geumgang closed from an autumn of 1998 for foreign diplomats, delegations and journalists visiting this country.

Pyongyang regularly ostracizes the most irreconcilable South Korean critics of the DPRK and its policy: ministers, politicians and even press organs. In particular, for "inexcusable antinational" statements on questions of observance of human rights in the DPRK, tourism in Mt. Geumgang, etc. the leader of South Korea's largest opposition party, the candidate at the forthcoming presidential elections Lee Hui-chang was listed in this category.⁸

Such attempts are quite often undertaken by North Koreans in

7 *Rodong Shinmun*, March 7, 25; May 7, 2001.

8 *Korea Central News Agency*, June 10, 2001.

order to take a pause at this or that direction of the inter-Korean dialogue.

ROK's Minister of National Defense Cho Song-tae was severely criticized in October 2000 for "powder-smelled" statements addressed toward the DPRK, increase of the military budget for 2001. In this connection, North Korea has openly called into question expediency of his arrival to the DPRK for participation in the 2-nd round of negotiations between heads of defense ministries scheduled for November 2000. Then, a stumbling-block for continuation of such meetings became definition the DPRK as South Korea's "main enemy" in the "White Paper" published by the ROK's defense ministry.

It looks like that Pyongyang is not going to hasten regular exchanges of people. Under pretext of presence ostensibly offensive for the DPRK and its political system attacks contained in interview of the President of the South's Red Cross Society to South Korean magazine *Volgan Chosun* the North's Red Cross has postponed the family reunion scheduled for November 2000 and threatened to boycott the Red Cross negotiations until the "perpetrator" of the incident keeps his position.⁹

The latest example of "punishment" of South Korean officials for objectionable to Pyongyang statements became suspension of some inter-Korean contacts scheduled for May 2002 after the "Washington Post" published the statements ostensibly made by the ROK Minister for Foreign Affairs about the DPRK (Seoul asserted that the American newspaper had distorted the minister's words).

One of the most evident relapses of Pyongyang's traditional policy of "united front" directed at legalization organizations and groups in the ROK sympathizing the DPRK was the invitation to the North for celebration of 55th anniversary of the WPK in October 2000 representatives of some political parties and organizations from the South which

9 *Pyongyang Radio*, November 3, 2000.

activity there officially is forbidden. In order not to give a pretext for a suspension of dialogue, Seoul had to allow a certain number of invited to go to the North, having forbidden them to be engaged there in political activity.

However, such bans proved to be ineffective. Active work by North Koreans with a number of members of the South Korean delegation invited to celebrate the 56th anniversary of Liberation of Korea in August 2001 has caused a political scandal in the ROK and even has resulted in resignation of the ROK's Minister of Unification.

South Korea's tactics are determined by the strong desire to open North Korean society and to persuade Pyongyang keep Kim Jong-il's promises to make a reciprocal trip to Seoul. The latter problem became some kind of an "idee - fixe" for the South Korean administration. It seems that realization of the second inter-Korean summit someone in Seoul would like to present as the main "fruit" and the culmination of Kim Dae-jung's rule in the field of inter-Korean relations, which would justify all costs of his "Sunshine Policy" for which he is criticized by opposition.

Pyongyang prefers to keep silence on the matter. From one side, North Korean media from time to time publishes enthusiastic "responses" by certain South Koreans who supposedly are ready to arrange the grand welcome to "commander Kim Jong-il" in Seoul. From another - North Koreans sharply criticized attempts of the forces "hostile to unification" to prevent this trip by filing judicial claims against Kim Jong-il and other "provocations."¹⁰

In June 2001, at a ceremonial meeting on the occasion of the first anniversary of signing of the Joint Declaration (the inter-Korean summit is mentioned much less often in the DPRK), Vice-Chairman of the Presidium of the SPA of the DPRK Jang Hyon-sob has declared that actions of opponents of unification in South Korea make it impos-

10 *Minju Chosun*, October 31, 2000; May 8, 2001.

sible to fulfill the provisions of the Declaration in time, thus letting know that under present conditions visit of the DPRK's leader to the ROK is impossible.¹¹

Nevertheless, the impression is created that North Koreans, from time to time, recover this theme and use it as a bait to provide complaisance of Seoul. Therefore, Kim Jong-il, despite numerous appeals from Kim Dae-jung to fix concrete date of the visit, so far has failed to do that, limiting his statements on the matter which he, from time to time, makes at meetings with foreign delegations (EU in May, 2001, with daughter Park Jong-hee - Park Guen-hae in May, 2002) by confirmation of his desire to make the trip.

Finally, in view of security problems and impossibility for the ROK government to prevent criticism of the North Korean leader and even probable protests in case of his arrival, the probability of such visit looks rather small. It seems that the only circumstance, preventing to hand over this theme "in archive," remains Kim Jong-il' signature under the promise to visit the South.

IV. Behind Disagreements

It looks like that behind these tactical maneuvers are hidden much more serious disagreements between the South and the North which one can list starting with an interpretation of the inter-Korean summit's Joint Declaration.

The DPRK, contrary to Seoul's statements that leaders of the South and the North have reached understanding as if the first item of the Declaration signed by them providing the independent decision of a problem of unification by joint efforts of the nation, does not exclude participation of "external forces" in settlement of this problem, and

11 *Rodong Shinmun*, June 15, 2001.

adheres to absolutely opposite point of view. Official statements and commentaries in media contain an appeal to repulse any attempts of intervention from the outside in process of reunification which represents an entirely “internal affair” of Korean nation. Pyongyang is sure that to solve all questions arising in this process by own forces, not leaning to anybody - this is a “nucleus” of the Joint Declaration.¹²

In the same formula, the demands to withdraw the US troops from South Korea have been hidden. On tactical reasons (“to make it more easier” for Kim Dae-jung right after the summit), North Koreans did not accent their position on the matter, though already on September 27, 2000. The ruling WPK’s newspaper “Rodong Shinmun” which South Koreans like so much to quote as an official North Korean media organ in the editorial commentary has confirmed that the DPRK still is going to realize this task.¹³

The summit has helped North Koreans to achieve what they without any particular success tried to achieve for many years: the problem of the U.S. military presence in the ROK and in Japan became a subject of hot discussions both in South Korea and in the U.S.

Another circumstance brings attention to itself in behavior of both Korean sides after the summit: visible absence of desire of both parties to work vigorously on expansion of a similarity of their unification programs fixed in the second item of the Joint Declaration. The success opens an opportunity for joint search of mutually acceptable forms of a united state. This recognition can be considered as one of the major political compromises reached by the sides since each of them till the moment had insisted on correctness of its own unification program and from a threshold rejected the partner’s proposals on the matter.

If there ever had been a mutual desire to look for the compromise, it was possible, for example, to create a joint working group which could

make the similarity more detailed and eliminate the remaining differences, thus giving both sides the route and time-table to the common goal - reunification of the country. On the contrary, a little bit stopped during the summit, North Korean propaganda machine again convinces with the double force Koreans both in the North and in the South that “three charters of unification,” “program for a great national consolidation,” and an idea of confederation put forward by the DPRK are the “most realistic and fair proposals” to achieve reunification.¹⁴

In turn, Seoul does not get tired to repeat that unification is possible only on the basis of model of the liberal democracy and the market economy, existing in the ROK.

The South is suspicious of the fact that Pyongyang makes efforts to promote Kim Jong-il as the national leader and continues to convince South Koreans that only this figure can bring the nation’s unification and prosperity. Right after the summit, he was presented by the DPRK media with a title of “the president of unification.”¹⁵

It was not left unnoticed in Seoul that the stream of “responses,” especially from anonymous South Koreans in the DPRK media has appreciably increased. They amicably assure readers of North Korean newspapers, TV-viewers and radio listeners that all people in the South as one aspire to study *juche* ideas, trust “commander Kim Jong-il as to the sky,” and are ready to follow him “as sunflowers turn to the sun,” cannot wait to begin to live in the prospering fatherland under his guidance.¹⁶

One of the most important elements of Pyongyang’s strategy proved to be using of a nationalist card. For these purposes the North put forward unprecedentedly “courageous” theses for the North Korean ideologists as if Kim Jong-il “first of all is a patriot, and after that a communist,” that he thinks “first of all of the nation’s destiny,

12 *Rodong Shinmun*, August 16, 2000; June 5, 2001

13 *Rodong Shinmun*, September 27, 2000.

14 *Rodong Shinmun*, October 9; December 14, 2000.

15 *Rodong Shinmun*, June 19, 2000.

16 See KCNA, May 11, 2000; *Rodong Shinmun*, October 16, 2000.

instead of ideas and ideals.”¹⁷

Pyongyang promotes strongly an idea that interests of the nation are more important than any class interests and ideas. Any class and social group cannot put their interests above national one. Simultaneously necessity is emphasized “to not ask about the past” those figures who, in opinion of Pyongyang, opposed unification earlier. The specified two postulates are declared to be basic principles on which it was offered to achieve national consolidation.¹⁸

Pyongyang came back to using the formulas about “the northern half of republic,” meaning that the ROK is still considered as part of the DPRK which was temporarily occupied by American troops. Certainly, from this point of view, the statements are quite “logical” that “unification in the essence means restoration of the sovereignty of the nation in the framework of the whole country” or otherwise liberation of South Korea from domination of “external forces.”¹⁹

North Korean politicians and the media still evade from comments and the concrete analysis of real processes in inter-Korean interaction. Publicly declaring aspiration to reconciliation and cooperation, the DPRK at the same time refrains from the publication of any positive information about South Korea (with exception of criticism by the ROK public of displays of the Japanese militarism), still keeps “an image of the enemy” for the South. North Korean media even have managed “to not notice” the fact of awarding President Kim Dae-jung with the Nobel Peace Prize.

The DPRK continues jamming South Korean TV and radio broadcasts both in Korean and foreign languages.

Among the most striking evidence on cooling the relations between the North and the South was resumption of criticism in South Korean foreign and internal policy in spring 2001, which practically had

17 *Rodong Shinmun*, October 26, 2000.

18 *Rodong Shinmun*, October 28, 2000.

19 *Rodong Shinmun*, October 25, 2000.

disappeared in the second half of 2000 after the inter-Korean summit.

Judging by statements of officials and the governmental media, the greatest irritation in Pyongyang is caused by the following elements of a course pursued by South Korean “rightist conservative forces” toward the DPRK:

- continuing coordination by Seoul in its policy toward the DPRK with USA and Japan, Pyongyang insists that, according to the Joint Declaration, Seoul is obliged to refuse support from “external forces” and to move to “rallying” Koreans, despite differences in ideology, ideals and social positions, on a nationalist basis of opposition to those forces which allegedly “are not interested” in unification of the country²⁰;
- anti-communism as the prevailing vector of South Korean political life, resulting in preserving the definition of the DPRK as the ROK’s “main enemy.” Under sharp criticisms are retaining of the State Security Law and a ban on activity in the ROK of any groups sympathizing with Pyongyang and left-wing organizations which North Korea often tries to use as its “fifth column” in the South;
- Seoul’s policy aimed at preservation of the US military presence in the South. Pyongyang considers such position as the main obstacle not only for unification, but also to “democratization” of South Korean society. The withdrawal of American troops from South Korea is also named a main condition for reduction of conventional armaments on the peninsula.²¹

V. September 11th attacks in the U.S. and the Korean Peninsula

September 11, 2001 events in the U.S. and American actions, which have followed them on international arena, inclusion by President

20 *Rodong Shinmun*, June 7, 2001.

21 *Rodong Shinmun*, March 26, 2001.

Bush the DPRK into so-called “axis of evil “ exerted a negative effect on situation on the Korean peninsula.

The policy announced by Americans toward the DPRK and their practical actions demonstrated, both to the North and the South, that geopolitic ambitions of the U.S. are the main external factor destabilizing situations in Korea. It becomes more and more obvious that Washington’s aim is under any pretext to keep the dominant role on the peninsula, which is unique by its geo-political position being situated at the key strategic point bordering three world powers - Russia, China and Japan. The U.S. still considers all of them as main present or potential military-political or economic rivals. This explains the U.S. aspiration not to allow the inter-Korean dialogue make to much progress since normalization of situation on the peninsula and rapprochement of two Koreas inevitably would put under doubt expediency of the American military presence in the south of peninsula, and then in Northeast Asia.

Many Russians believe that American statements about “North Korean threat” are insolvent. Taking into consideration the existing balance of forces on the peninsula and in the world deliberate initiation of any large conflict by Pyongyang would be equivalent to an act of suicide. It is obvious that North Korea is not capable of waging a war without support from the outside. Such support is unthinkable now as well as for foreseeable future.

A particular indignation in Pyongyang, along with “axis of evil,” was caused by President Bush’s personal attacks against Kim Jong-il and by American president’s “slandering” the DPRK’s political system.²²

It looks like the Bush administration purposely provokes the DPRK’s leadership which announced a moratorium on missile tests for

²² The Statement of the DPRK Foreign Ministry Representative, KCNA, February 22, 2002.

the period of negotiations with the U.S. It is thought that existence of such plans cannot be dismissed, since, say, resumption of missile tests by the DPRK would create favorable conditions for the U.S. to resolve several major foreign policy problems at one stroke. The development used for the justification of military strikes against the DPRK would allow to speed up expansion American missile defense systems on national and regional levels to compel Japan to participate more actively in creation of such a system and in realization of other military-political plans of the U.S. in Northeast Asia, to muffle, even to remove at all, at least for a while, and provide disputes in South Korea and Japan concerning the American military presence in the region.

Under these circumstances, it is possible to expect that Pyongyang, despite its rigid rhetoric aimed at the US, will continue its tactics of maneuvering and even may try to restart negotiating process with Washington, mobilizing for the purpose of Russia and China’s good services, with aim of winning time for fulfillment of those military programs which, as North Koreans believe, will make risk of use of force against the DPRK unacceptable for any probable enemy.

Condemning the US intention “to intrude” the DPRK, the ruling WPK’s newspaper “Rodong Shinmun” noted that North Korea “produces rockets for self-defense” and has specified that under the circumstances Pyongyang “is compelled” to increase the efforts in this area.²³

In other words, the North has indicated clearly enough to Americans and to the rest of the world that it is out of question to expect from the DPRK suspension of a military component of its missile program for the time being. This “trump” will be reserved evidently for the future bargaining with the U.S.

If talks with Americans will not bring about desirable results, Pyongyang can try again, as trips to the North by Lim Dong-won and

²³ *Rodong Shinmun*, February 27, 2002.

Park Guen-ae demonstrated, to revive the inter-Korean dialogue, thus driving the wedge between Seoul and Washington in their approaches to North Korea.

Lessons of events in Iraq, on the Balkan, and in Afghanistan are likely to influence very much Pyongyang's behavior. North Koreans believe that they testify to inability of the United Nations and its Security Council, and the world community as a whole to prevent or to stop aggression of the U.S. and their allies against the sovereign states with regimes which are not suiting Washington showed unpreparedness of certain countries and groups of the states to render effective help to a victim of aggression.

The DPRK practically does not hide its disappointment with Russia and - to a lesser extent - China's positions concerning ongoing "anti-terrorist operation," organized and led by the U.S. One may notice that in parallel with declarative maxims about "friendship" with Russia and China semi-official North Korean media writes with obvious condemnation about "the big powers" which "have succumbed to the US demand that they should make clear which side to take," about "former advocates of multipolarization, [who] are busy currying a favor with the dominationists."²⁴

It is possible to assume that the Pentagon's plans on use of the nuclear weapon against seven states including the DPRK, which became known in the beginning of March 2002, will only strengthen North Korea's determination to increase efforts to attain a stronger defense posture. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK has warned about possible revision by Pyongyang of all agreements reached with the US before, letting thus know that North Koreans do not exclude demonstrative renewal of the missile tests and the nuclear program.²⁵

²⁴ *The Pyongyang Times*, December 15, 2001.

²⁵ The Statement of the DPRK Foreign Ministry Representative, KCNA, March 13, 2002.

VI. The Basic Conclusions

Two years' period elapsed after the inter-Korean summit and signing of the Joint Declaration has confirmed that Korean settlement in the foreseeable future, too, will remain rather complex and inconsistent process which, apparently will take rather long period. The positive tendencies which have appeared during this period have not yet got irreversible character.

The sides came to this date with rather limited number of sporadic official contacts, humanitarian and cultural exchanges, though growth of trade and economic cooperation is more formidable.

One of the reasons of such situation, perhaps is that political, economic and humanitarian exchanges revived and even a little bit promoted after the summit in comparison with 1980-1990s during the last century was not accompanied even by the minimal steps in the sphere of reduction of military confrontation between the North and the South, and by realization of confidence-building and arms control measures. Despite apparent diplomatic breakthrough, the ROK and the DPRK keep trying to increase the military potentials, doing so with ever-growing energy.

So far both sides failed to refrain from using tactics of sounding each other's positions by using force and getting on each other's nerves. Examples to that are continuation of practice of staging by the ROK together with the US the military maneuvers formally simulating "repelling of aggression" from the DPRK, and on the other hand - demonstrative passes of North Koreans ships through South Korean waters between the southern coast of the peninsula and Cheju island in June, 2001

Too high level of military threat (real or imagined), unacceptable for each of the sides, constitutes and will remain henceforth a serious brake for development of the inter-Korean relations.

Despite the North and the South's official statements in favor of uni-

fication, the facts testify that interests on preservation of the present ruling elite and political stability in both parts of Korea and also their military-political alliances with the third countries dominate and, in the foreseeable future, will keep a priority above Koreans' "unifying" aspirations.

Remaining distinctions in political systems, principles of functioning of the state bodies, subjects of economic activities and public organizations make apparently improbable development of wide-range cooperation, first of all exchanges of people between the DPRK and the ROK not only in the near future, but even in mid-term prospect.

The DPRK's approaches to unification, despite all their formal updating, keep all main principles laid down during Kim Il-sung's rule and still put as the ultimate goal achieving the country's reunification under Pyongyang's aegis.

The South Korean ruling class pursues similar purposes. Quite a lot of people in the ROK still dream of "awarding" Kim Jong-il and other members of North Korean leadership with the destiny of many members of the Political Bureau of the East Europe Communist Parties. The State Security Law, forbidding any non-authorized contacts with the DPRK and its citizens and even expression of sympathies to the North is still in force in the South. Certainly, does not promote establishment and expansion of mutual understanding and confidence.

In view of these circumstances, Pyongyang and Seoul can hardly avoid pauses and even steps back at various directions of dialogue. It is also unlikely that they will get rid of propaganda swoops against each other.

As recent developments in North Korea and the US relations have shown, the position of the great powers remains the essential factor influencing development of inter-Korean dialogue.

And even against this rather contradictory background more and more appreciable and significant, in my opinion the fact is that, despite relapses of mistrust and enmity, the relations between the South and

the North gradually find real material and institutional basis, get their own dynamics that eventually will prevent the ties from rolling back.²⁶

VII. Russia's Position

The Korean peninsula historically and geopolitically was always included into sphere of Russia's national interests which pursue maintenance of peace and stability in the areas located along the perimeter of her borders.

A Moscow's position concerning the inter-Korean rapprochement and its possible results is determined by national interests of Russia which certainly will benefit from liquidation of the hot-spot right next to her Far Eastern region and from founding in the long term an unified Korea, capable to maintain relations of friendship, good neighbourhood and cooperation with Russia.

At the same time, there is no doubts that Russia's priority task concerning realization of any unification scenarios remains maintenance of peace and stability on peninsula. The contents of Pyongyang 2000 and Moscow 2001 Declarations signed by President V. Putin and Chairman of National Defense Committee of the DPRK Kim Jong-il and also the Russian - Korean joint statement on results of V. Putin's visit to the Republic of Korea in February 2001 speak quite clearly to the effect.

It is also important for Moscow to ensure the maximal predictability of final results of unification process. High degree of uncertainty concerning character of foreign policy of the united Korea, its participation in the military-political alliances with other states and orientations of such alliances, compels Russia as well as other powers, while

²⁶ See *Sunshine Policy for Peace & Cooperation*, Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea, May 2002.

welcoming inter-Korean detente to take more cautious position toward prospects of unification.

For example, China is seemingly fears advancement of the US troops to almost 1400 kilometer-long Korean-Chinese border in a context of unresolved Taiwan problem, and Americans prospect to be compelled to put an end to the their military presence in Korea and Japan -occurrence of the strong competitor overwhelmed with aspiration to get a historical revenge for humiliations of the colonial past.

Russia hardly can welcome as a new neighbor a state with 70-million population which is under prevailing influence of the US and the more so with the American troops on its territory. It would be equivalent to occurrence near our east borders of Asian clone of the NATO under the cover of TMD. Some outstanding Russian experts consider that stationing of the US troops in South Korea is an anachronism of the period of "cold war."²⁷

The countries located next to the Korean peninsula are also worried of possible territorial claims by the united Korea to the neighboring states.

Generally for Russia, in view of its present capabilities, the real task is not to get prevailing positions in Korea, but to prevent such a situation when Korea would be placed under influence of another, especially unfriendly to Russia.²⁸

Since under present balance of forces in Northeast Asia and our economic power, one could not exclude development of events according to such scenario completely, existence of the DPRK as the friendly sovereign state which is carrying out a role of a certain buffer for geopolitic ambitions of the US in this region is favorable to Moscow in short and mid-term perspective.

27 V. I. Denisov, "Inter-Korean Settlement and Russia's Interests," Moscow, *International Affairs*, 2002, # 1, p. 59.

28 V. P. Tkachenko, *Korean Peninsula and Russia's Interests* (Moscow: Orient Literature Publishing House, 2000), p. 165.

In view of the factors specified above, the DPRK's unification formula which calls for creation of a neutral non-aligned state on the peninsula looks from the point of view of Russia's security interests more attractive rather than South Korean commitment to the American military presence even after unification of Korea.

"Russia understands that the Korean problem - one of the acute problems of the Asian region which demands unrelenting attention. The incident occurred on June 29 this year between military vessels of the DPRK and the ROK has resulted in lost lives from both sides, in particular, which testifies to it.

Recently, positive influence of the Russian policy on development of a situation on the Korean peninsula has appreciably increased. The Russian side is not imposing itself as an intermediary between Seoul and Pyongyang, but uses all opportunities to promote peace and dialogue between the North and the South. Moscow aspires to play on the peninsula a constructive, stabilizing role contradicting to nobody's interests.

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia Igor Ivanov's visits to Seoul and Pyongyang in July 2002 did not begin yet, but the world had already received news that Pyongyang had expressed readiness to renew contacts to Seoul and hold the next seventh inter-Korean ministerial-level meeting. Thus, a representative from the DPRK has expressed a regret concerning recent incident between naval boats of the North and the South in Yellow sea.

It is difficult to tell by what reason Pyongyang was guided more, having declared about its readiness to resume contacts with the South directly ahead of Ivanov's visit to Seoul and then to Pyongyang - aspiration to speed up process of normalization with the South or unwillingness to listen to the Russian minister's advice on this account. But, the fact remains that the conciliatory move was made before I. Ivanov's arrival to the Korean peninsula. In this connection, it is necessary to note that the Russian diplomacy managed to achieve a tangible success

in the settlement of one of problems facing to it - to promote actively removal of tension between the North and the South Korea and to renew contacts between the both sides for the sake of stabilization of situation on the peninsula.

While discussing the situation on the Korean peninsula I. Ivanov, both in Seoul and Pyongyang expressed Russia's firm conviction that there are no alternative to the inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation which became more active after signing the Joint declaration of the South and the North on June 15, 2000. Our South and North Korean partners have expressed interests in that Russia further plays an active role in assisting this dialogue. The letter of the Russian President V. Putin, which I. Ivanov transferred to the President of the Republic of Korea Kim Dae-jung, confirms readiness of Russia to fulfill this important and crucial role. In Russia's interests, the Korean peninsula becomes the "peninsula of peace, stability and prosperity." Russia is ready to render all assistance necessary to creation of favorable conditions for direct dialogue between Seoul and Pyongyang.²⁹

Stabilization of situation on the Korean peninsula completely suits interests of the Russian Federation. And in particular, a tension arising from time to time between Pyongyang and Seoul obviously does not promote realization of such joint economic projects as joining Russian Trans-Siberian Mainline with the Trans-Korean railways. As soon as the South and the North really will settle the problems related to joining the railways, the Russian side immediately will renew the efforts within the framework of the project. This project is important as well because, as V. Putin remarked, its "realization not only will open new opportunities for business cooperation and economic integration on the Euroasian continent but also will serve strengthening of trust, peace and security in the Asian - Pacific region."³⁰

29 On Russian President Vladimir Putin's Message to President Kim Dae-jung of the Republic of Korea, Publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, July 26, 2002, <http://president.kremlin.ru>.

Objectively, normalization of relations between the ROK and the DPRK can work in favor of development of trade and economic cooperation between the Russian Federation and both parts of Korea. It undoubtedly would create new favorable opportunities for economic development of the Russian Far East and for linking its economy to integration processes in the Asia-Pacific region. Besides, if this will be the case, a material basis will be upheld for strengthening Russian national interests including those in sphere of security on the Korean peninsula.

Russia also believes that a renewal of dialogue between the DPRK on one side, and the US and Japan on the other, suits interests of the inter-Korean settlement and therefore, Russia's own interests as well. One can hardly deny the fact that the meeting between North Korean foreign minister Baek Nam-sun and the US secretary of State Colin Powell during ASEAN conference in Brunei happened to be a reality thanks, not in the last turn, to Ivanov's mission to Seoul and Pyongyang."

During two years which have elapsed after the inter-Korean summit Russia has shown with practical deeds that it is ready in every possible way to promote confidence, principles of peaceful co-existence, stable and all-round cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK on the basis of the Joint declaration, and other inter-Korean agreements regularly with persistence and to work with all interested parties so that they act in the same way.

30 On Russian President Vladimir Putin's Welcome Address to Participants of "Korean-Russian Friendship Train-2002," Publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, July 29, 2002, <http://president.kremlin.ru>.

NGOs AND INTER-KOREAN SOCIO-CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION

Hanbum Cho

Now we are experiencing a major transition from 'Big Government' to 'Big Society.' NGOs are the main actors in 'Big Society.' If that transition is to be achieved in ways to serve the needs of the people, governments and individuals should assume a responsibility for strengthening institutional underpinnings of civil society. The situation applies to the Korean unification process. Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation are a very useful method to realize reconciliation between South and North Korea, and its activation through NGOs may contribute to unification process. This research focuses on the point that the activation of private sectors is necessary in inter-Korean relations, which show changes with the Sunshine Policy. Expanding inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation particularly in social and cultural areas will be a realistic way for promoting reconciliation between the two Koreas. Recovering national homogeneity between the two can also be achieved in social and cultural areas. In this vein, inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation should be expanded further. In addition, NGOs' participation in a field of unification and inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation should also be expanded. NGOs can be a trouble-solving

broker which can deal with issues difficult for the government. Exchanges and cooperation are tangible methods for rapprochement between the two Koreas. In particular, active inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation through the activities of NGOs can be conducive to consolidating a foundation for reunification and common social and cultural community in that it is based on a voluntary participation of civil society. This article analyzes inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation and role of NGOs. Recognizing the necessity of improving exchanges in private sectors, this study proposes a plan to encourage inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

I. Preface

Toward the end of the 1980s, the Cold War structure in the world was dismantled. Since then the political situation surrounding the Korean peninsula has been changing. The wave of reconciliation and cooperation between the two Koreas has acted as a force supporting the dismantlement of the Cold War structure on the Korean Peninsula. According to the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea, a policy based on peace and cooperation, the South has been seeking to expand dialogue, exchanges and cooperation so as to dissolve the distrust and animosity that have persisted for over half a century and improve inter-Korean relations by recovering national homogeneity.

And now inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation are perceived as a realistic way to improve inter-Korean relations. One of the targets of the present stage is confidence-building between South and North Korea through inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. And the participation of NGOs (Non-Governmental

Organizations) in expansion of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation has increased steadily.

It is a universal trend that the role of NGOs and their influence have been growing recently. Now NGOs in South Korea are required as a new inspector about the unification policy of the government. After when on the international level the Cold War structure dismantled and the democratization began to progress in South Korea, NGOs in the Korean unification field have been revived and begun to blossom. But, in spite of its recent blossom, many of the Korean NGOs are suffering from weak infra structure. NGOs in the unification field have not created an efficient relationship with government, and their financial base is very weak. And a self-regulating negotiation body for cooperation between NGOs has not been prepared.

Now the new perception of governance is forcing governments to look for help from other sectors of society, especially NGOs. NGOs can solve the problem that is difficult for government. Exchanges and cooperation are tangible methods for rapprochement between South and North Korea. In particular, active inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation through NGOs can be conducive to consolidating a foundation for reunification and common social and cultural community between the two Koreas, in that it is based on the voluntary participation of civil society. This article analyzes inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation and the role of NGOs. Recognizing the necessity of improving exchanges in the private sector, this study proposes a plan to encourage inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

II. NGOs in the field of Korean unification

NGOs stand for “Non-Governmental Organizations.” It means a private organization which works for the public good. NGOs were

organized spontaneously to solve problems that governmental organizations could not. Individuals and the all organizations that are not established by agreement with government can become NGOs' members. NGOs are any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Many NGOs have qualified for consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹ According to article 71 of the UN charter, the Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements are governed by ECOSOC resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968, which makes provision for NGOs to be placed in consultative status with ECOSOC. Nowadays, NGOs are often called 'the third sector' along with government and enterprise, or 'the fifth department' along with the legislature, the judiciary, the administration, and public opinion. And the number and scale of NGOs are increasing now.

The activities and forms of NGOs are various. Any organization such as international organization, domestic organization, voluntary organization, network, the service organization, the donation organization, the interest organization, the profession organization, local organization, and various organizations can be defined as NGOs.

There are many types of NGOs such as GONGOs (Governmental-Organized Non-governmental Organizations), QUANGOs (Quasi Non-Governmental Organizations), DONGOs (Donor-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations), and BONGOs (Business-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations).² Also, the term NGOs expresses a different meaning in each country. There are some coun-

1 The term NGOs was used first time by the UN in 1949. But NGOs acquired negotiation position with UN by ECOSOC Resolution 288 (X) in 1950 and revision of ECOSOC Resolution 1296 (XLIV) in 1968.

2 Kim Yeong Rae "Research on Globalization strategy of South Korean NGOs," *International Political Science Symposium*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 1997, p. 241.

tries that use the term 'Voluntary Organization.' Specially in case of the US, the term PVO (Private Voluntary Organization) or NPO (Non-Profit Organization) is often used. Also, the term VDO (Voluntary Development Organization) is used in southern Africa.³ In Japan, the term NPO is used wider than the term NGOs, and NGOs are perceived as part of NPO.⁴

Important factors which define the term NGOs are as follows: non-government, non-profit, formation based on spontaneity, clear regulation and so on.⁵ In the Korean language, there is some confusion between the term NGOs and civil organizations (shimin tanche). In the case of civil organizations, observance of rule of community, promotion of public good and voluntary participation of constituent, etc. are important as central factors of the organizations. On the whole, for civil organizations, private interest is more important than public interest. In case of NGOs, public interest is more important. But NGOs and civic groups are not divided definitively.

<Table 1> Division of civic groups and the NGOs

| Organization | Private Interest | Public Interest |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Civil organizations | A | B |
| NGOs | C | D |

A. Secondary area of civil organizations

B. Primary area of civil organizations

C. Primary area of NGOs

D. Secondary area of NGOs

Data: Seong Gyeong Ryung and Kim Ho Ki, *Supporting NGOs for expansion of citizen's campaign* (Seoul: Ministry of politics, 1997), p. 13.

3 Kim Chae Hyeong, *NGOs activity of OECD* (Seoul: KOICA, 1992), pp. 8-9.

4 Lee Myeon Yoo, *Research on NGOs in Japan* (Seoul, 1998), pp. 3-5.

5 L. M. Salamon and H. K. Anheier, *In search of non profit sector: The question of definitions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1992).

Social movements against authoritarian regimes in South Korea made the basis for NGOs revitalization.⁶ A turning point of the South Korean social movements against authoritarian regimes was July 1987. And from that time NGOs based on social movements have been strong.

There was no distinct division between anti-government movement and citizens' campaign, because of the similar goal of their organizations. But according to gradual development of democracy in Korea after 1987, divisions between the anti-government movement and citizens' campaign emerged. In the early time, the anti-government movement was more powerful than citizens' campaign but afterward the situation reversed itself. In the process of democratization, many types of NGOs have emerged in Korea, and they have tried to find new fields for their participation in society. For example, Citizens Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ),⁷ Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM),⁸ and People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)⁹ were founded at an early time in Korean NGOs

6 Han Bae Ho, "Political change and state-civic society relation," edited by Korean sociological society and Korean political society, *The state and civic society in Korea* (Seoul: Hanwool, 1992), p. 75.

7 The Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice(CCEJ) was formed in response to the unjust structure of Korean economic life. CCEJ was founded in 1989 by 500 some persons representing various walks of life: economics professors and other specialists, lawyers, housewives, students, young adults and business people. Their slogan, "Let's achieve economic justice through citizens' power," reflected their belief that the deep-rooted economic injustices could not be cured by government alone, but ultimately must be solved by the organized power of citizens. They founded CCEJ as a movement that would 1) be led by the ordinary citizens; 2) use legal and non-violent methods; 3) seek workable alternatives; 4) speak for the interests of all people regardless of economic standing; and 5) work to overcome greed and egoism in order to build a sharing society, <http://www.ccej.or.kr/engindex.html>.

8 KFEM, founded in 1993, has grown as one of the influential NGOs in Korea, with its 85,000 members and 47 local branches working on various types of environmental issues, <http://english.kfem.or.kr/aboutus/aboutus1.htm>.

9 People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) was founded in 1994 by

history. Now NGOs are participating in every issue of Korean society and have a powerful influence in policy making by government. Since their establishment, NGOs have been serving as a watchdog against abuse of power, environmental pollution and many other social, political, and economic issues and providing alternatives.

Civic movements in Korea have indeed played a great role in checking the administration and the parliament since the late 1980s, when the nation was in the process of democratization following the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Since then, more than 20,000 citizens' organizations were created and some of them have grown to be gigantic NGOs with nationwide networks, even showing a trend toward trying to resolve political, social and economic problems by force.¹⁰

Because the authoritarian military government prohibited citizens' participation in unification issues, NGOs to the late 1980s had very little involvement in the unification issues such as National Unification Conference. But in 1990s the number of NGOs involved in unification issues increased drastically. And NGOs were more professional. Promoting the Sunshine Policy was a very important turning point for NGOs in the unification issues. Therefore, with the promotion of the Sunshine Policy, NGOs participated in unification issues more actively.

About 3,899 organizations and ten thousand organizations including branches were collected to the List of Korean NGOs¹¹ published in 1997. But by the more strict standard only 730 among organizations that were collected to the List of Korean NGOs could be included in NGOs' category.¹² In the mid 1990s, the number of NGOs has increased

more than 200 members. PSPD is a civil organization dedicated to promote justice and human rights in Korean society through participation of the people, <http://pspd.org/pspd/main.html>.

10 *Korea Times*, 2001. 6. 18.

11 NGOs Times, *List of Korean NGOs* (Seoul: NGOs Times, 1997).

12 Kim Hyeok Rae, "Globalization and South Korea NGOs present condition," *Globalization and South Korea NGOs development way* (Seoul: Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice, 1997), p. 25.

to more than four times compared to the 1970s, and about half of them were founded after 1987. Korean NGOs have been developed not only on a quantitative level but also on a qualitative level. Now, NGOs are more professional and specific. And, NGOs are very active in every field of Korean society such as economic justice, environmental protection, and so on. NGOs that are developing very rapidly have a more powerful influence than in the past in Korea.¹³

Since citizens' participation in unification issues was allowed, the number of NGOs and their activity has been increasing. It is very difficult to count the exact number of NGOs related to unification issues. In 1994, Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ) found 250 organizations related to unification issues for research.¹⁴ After 1998, the Kim Dae-jung Administration has pushed for an Engagement Policy with North Korea to improve inter-Korean relations by promoting peace, reconciliation, and cooperation. According to the Engagement Policy with North Korea, the number of NGOs related to the unification movement has increased. At the end of 2001, 95 NGOs were registered by the Ministry of Unification (MOU).

During the time government restricted civic participation in unification issues, NGOs were not active in the same issues. But NGOs could expand their role due to the democratization process of Korean society. And according to the change of North Korean policy after President Kim Dae Jung's inauguration, NGOs participation in unification field has also increased. And North Koreans' efforts for humanitarian aid from outside after 1990 have offered more chances to NGOs. Now many NGOs participate in humanitarian aid to North Korea.

13 Kim Yeong Rae, "Research on Globalization strategy of South Korean NGOs," *International Political Science Symposium*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 1997, pp. 251-253.

14 But about 170 organizations among 250 responded CCEJ's research. Unification Conference of CCEJ and The Dong-A IlBo, *The Korean NGOs which prepare unification* (Seoul: Unification Conference of CCEJ and The Dong-A IlBo, 1994), p. 5.

III. Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation

1. *The Sunshine Policy toward North Korea and Inter-Korean Socio-Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation*

Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation developed in close relation to the progress of the overall inter-Korean relationship. They were not promoted to a significant extent until the 1980s, when the two governments cautiously started to talk over their exchanges and cooperation. The two governments forged the Guidelines for Inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation in June 1989 and then, enacted and promulgated the Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation Act in August 1990. Invocation of this law implies that dialogues between the two finally have a lawful foundation and that anyone in the South can officially exchange and cooperate with North Korea in conformity with the legitimate procedures. Since the beginning of the 1990s, exchanges and cooperation have generally been growing. Even though the social and cultural exchanges and cooperation have shown slower progress as a whole than economic endeavors, there has recently appeared a tendency indicating their further development.

The South Korean government has, for the past four years, been promoting 'the Sunshine Policy' toward North Korea, a policy based on peace and cooperation. As a result, a historic inter-Korean summit meeting took place for the first time in 55 years. The objective of the sunshine policy is peace and improvement of inter-Korean relations through reconciliation and cooperation. This means that instead of striving to achieve unification right at this moment, the policy seeks to first establish peace and realize coexistence and cooperation between the two Koreas.

The people's government has set the following three principles on the implementation of its sunshine policy toward North Korea: first, no tolerance of any military provocation which can destroy peace; second,

exclusion of unification of the kind that one side is absorbed by the other; and third, active pursuit of reconciliation and cooperation.¹⁵ Based on these principles, exchanges and cooperation in social and cultural areas have been increased.

Through the sunshine policy toward North Korea, South Korea opened the door to institutionalization of various forms of exchanges and cooperation between the two Koreas. The termination of hostility between the two Koreas through developing mutual respect for each other's system and easing tension will eventually lead to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. It means the state of de facto unification. By promoting more contacts, exchanges and cooperation, the South has endeavored to move to a new stage in which the people of the South and North can travel freely back and forth between the two Koreas.

With the inauguration of the Kim Dae-jung administration in 1998, inter-Korean cooperation in the cultural and art areas was promoted more actively than under any other administration in the past. And the summit between two Koreas was a turning point for expansion of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.¹⁶

Since a permission for cooperation partnership was first issued to allow the formation of a unified Korean team to compete in the 1991 World Table Tennis Championship held in Chiba, Japan, a total of 30 organizations received cooperation partnership approvals in the social and cultural areas until the end of year 2001. Approvals for seven of

15 Ministry of unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), pp. 30-33.

16 The leaders of the South and the North, recognizing that the first meeting and the summit talks since the division of the country were of great significance in promoting mutual understanding, agreed on five clause in joint declaration. The fourth clause joint declaration is related to inter Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. The fourth clause is as follows: "the South and the North have agreed to consolidate mutual trust by promoting balanced development of the national economy through economic cooperation and by stimulating cooperation and exchanges in civic, cultural, sports, public health, environmental and all other fields." Ministry of unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), p. 55.

these organizations, including Sports Art and Korean Welfare Foundation, were issued in 1998 while permissions were issued to another seven, including Hyundai Asan and SN21 Enterprise, in 1999. In the year 2000, the permissions were issued to nine other organizations, including the Korean Cultural Network Research Center and Korean Culture Foundation. In the year 2001, the permissions were issued to four other organizations. Among them, 24 received approvals for cooperation projects.¹⁷

With the inauguration of the Kim Dae-jung administration in 1998, inter-Korean cooperation in the cultural and art areas has been increased. In May 1998, the Little Angels Art Troupe of Korean Culture Foundation performed in Pyongyang. The following October, along with South Korean musicians, the Hankyoreh Unification and Culture Foundation staff participated in a Yoon I-sang memorial concert held in Pyongyang. After that the two Koreas promoted follow-up performances and other cross visits in a wide range of musical genres, including classical, traditional Korean and popular songs, since the early 1999. KORECOM and SBS jointly sponsored the 2000 Peace and Friendship Concert in Pyongyang on December 5, 1999. On December 20, 1999 SN21 Enterprise and MBC sponsored the National Unification Concert, which featured a joint performance by popular singers from both South and North Korea.

A variety of bilateral events were held in commemoration of the first anniversary of the June 15, 2000 Inter-Korean Summit. The events included the performance in Pyongyang of a South Korean musical, *Chunhyang-jon*, a joint photography exhibition in Seoul and Pyongyang and a traditional costume exhibition in Pyongyang. A noteworthy event in the year 2000 was a long-term visit by a large group of North Korean performing artists. 102 members of the Pyongyang Student and Youth Art Troupe visited Seoul from May 24-30 at the invitation of

17 Ministry of unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), pp. 152-154.

Peace Motors and gave five public performances at the Seoul Arts Center to celebrate the upcoming inter-Korean summit. In addition, serving as the main sponsor, SN21 invited the Pyongyang Circus Troupe to Seoul. Consequently, 102 members of the North Korean circus troupe gave eleven rounds of public performances at the Jamsil Indoor Gymnasium from May 29-June 11. More than 130,000 South Koreans enjoyed their acrobatics. The significance of these performances lies in the fact that they were the first visits to Seoul by North Korean artists in ten years since an end-of-year traditional music concert for unification held in 1990.¹⁸ In August, 132 members of the North Korean National Symphony Orchestra visited Seoul from August 18-24 for a joint performance with South Korean counterparts to celebrate the 55th anniversary of national independence and June 15 Inter-Korean Joint Declaration. The North Korean artists gave a total of four joint performances at the KBS Symphony Hall and Seoul Arts Center with such world-famous South Korean musicians as Sumi Jo and Hanna Chang. Subsequently in December, 82 members of the Kumgangsan Opera Troupe of the Chongryun (The General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), a pro-North Korean organization in Japan, visited Seoul at the invitation of Korean Culture Foundation and gave four public performances at the Little Angels Arts Center from December 15-17.

18 North Korean visits were drastically increased in 2000. In one year, more than half the total number of North Koreans who had visited the South between 1989 and 1999 visited the South. The increase was mainly due to an expansion in social and cultural exchanges between the two Koreas. The number of North Koreans who have visited the South in the social and cultural area in 2000 on major occasions is as follows: 102 during the performance of Pyongyang Student and Youth Art Troupe from May 24-27, 102 during the performance of Pyongyang Circus Troupe from May 27-June 11, 151 during the first exchange of separated families from August 15-18 and 136 during the second exchange of separated families from November 30-December 2. Ministry of unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), pp. 110-112.

Exchanges in the athletic area showed no progress since the last time the two Koreas formed a unified Korean team to compete in the 1991 World Table Tennis Championship and World Junior Soccer Championship. The exchanges were finally resumed in 1999 and actively expanded thereafter. Hyundai Asan started to build an indoor sports complex in Pyongyang and the two Koreas had an inter-Korean basketball match to celebrate the opening of the sports center from September 28-29, 1999. This match was followed by the North Korean teams' return visit to Seoul from December 23-24. It was the first of its kind since a North Korean soccer team visited Seoul in 1991. In the year 2000, Wooinbang sponsored an auto rally in the Mt. Geumgang area from July 3-4. A total of 228 South Koreans and 47 vehicles participated in the rally. In addition, South and North Korean athletes marched together at the opening ceremony for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, thereby showing to the world a touching symbol of inter-Korean reconciliation. In 2001, sports exchanges also took place in a variety of settings, including an international race-car rally and a motorcycle tour, both held at Mt. Geumgang.

Cooperation in the media and journalism sectors was also brisk. The heads of South Korean newspapers and broadcasting networks visited the North in 2000 and reached an agreement on inter-Korean media exchanges. Half a dozen South Korean media companies were allowed to report firsthand from North Korea. In addition, the visit by Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson, a joint May Day celebration, a joint Great Debate on Unification, and other events were extensively covered by reporters from both sides. And Joint ventures in the media and press area began in 1997 with a permission for a cooperation partnership issued to the Unification Culture Research Center of Joong Ang Ilbo for a field survey and investigation of cultural remains in the North. When the permission for a cooperation project was issued in the next year, staff from the center visited North Korea three times to collect data on historic relics in the North. The Korean Cultural

Network Research Center of the Kyung Hyang Shinmun was issued a permission for a cooperation project in 1998.

Inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation have progressed more actively in the tourism area than any other area. Along with the historic Mt. Geumgang tourism project, which started on November 18, 1998, the two Koreas are currently discussing tours of the other places in North Korea.

And Religious leaders also took part in the growing number of inter-Korean exchanges. Christians from South and North Korea held a joint Easter service and Buddhists from both sides of the border held joint services in 2000. In addition, a variety of associations including unification-related organizations, farmers and workers, staged joint events in 2001 at Mt. Geumgang to mark the first anniversary of the Inter-Korean Summit and in celebration of the August 15 Liberation Day.¹⁹

Visits in the social and cultural areas have been increased. During the period from the announcement of the Basic Guideline for Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation on June 12, 1989 to the end of December 2001, the number of applications to visit the North submitted in the social and cultural areas was 360 from 2,888 applicants in total. Of these, 325 applications from 2,693 people were approved while 2,197 people made actual visits on 264 occasions not including Mt. Geumgang tourists. In the year 2001 alone, the number of applications to visit the North submitted in the social and cultural areas was 103 from 841 applicants in total. Of these, 94 applications from 775 people were approved while 701 people made actual visits in 84 occasions. The number of visits increased 4% from the previous year due to a substantial increase of visits in social and cultural areas.²⁰

Under the People's government, inter-Korean socio-cultural

19 Ministry of Unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), pp. 154-161.

20 Ministry of Unification, *White Paper on Korean Unification* (Seoul, 2002), pp. 102-112.

exchanges and cooperation have some distinctive features.

First, one of the most visible improvements in inter-Korean relations since the inauguration of President Kim Dae-Jung is the surge in socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation have been expanded due to the reconciliation and cooperation policy with North Korea.

Second, at the period of Cold War, inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation used to be staged in a third country such as China, Japan, Russia, and USA. But after the summit, inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation have started to be held within the Korean Peninsula including personnel visits.

Third, some problems have been raised on the process of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation such as the August 15 team's visit scandal²¹ and illegal use of North Korean copyright by the South.

Hence, it is necessary for both sides to ensure unconstrained social and cultural dialogues and cooperation, which should be understood as fundamental efforts to integrate the two separated societies and overcome their differences following national reunification. In this regard, dynamic cooperation with NGOs is essential and efforts should be made not only by NGOs themselves, but also by the government through various channels.

21 South Korean investigation authorities investigated South Korean delegates who allegedly made pro-North Korean remarks and activities during their recent visit to North Korea for joint inter-Korean Liberation Day celebrations. 16 among 337 South Korean delegates attended weeklong inter-Korean Liberation Day events 2001 received arrest warrants. Among them are five officials of the Pan-national Alliance for Reunification of the Fatherland, or Beomminnyeon. Some members of the South Korean delegation were reported to have praised the late North Korean President Kim Il-sung and National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong-il during their stay in the North, a violation of the National Security Law. And on August 17, professor Kang Jeong-gu of Dongguk University signed the guest book at Mangyongdae, the birthplace of the late North Korean leader Kim, generating controversy in South Korea, *The Korea Herald*, August 24, 2001.

2. Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation and role of NGOs

Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation should be understood as a basic long-term process for social integration between the two Koreas. Social and cultural areas mean the everyday world of life. The basis for social integration between the two Koreas can be achieved through inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. And NGOs must be perceived as main actors in civic society. In this sense, the role of NGOs in inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation should be interpreted more broadly. NGOs can make a contribution to build social infrastructure for unification and be a main actor in inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

For unification between the two Koreas, the most important point is creating national consensus. And NGOs can take the leading role for national consensus. NGOs must criticize the government's policy toward North Korea, but at the same time try to make a cooperative relationship with government. NGOs can be involved to a varying degree in many aspects of government's work for unification. In practice, NGOs in some unification fields, such as exchanges and cooperation in social and cultural areas, humanitarian aid, and human rights are every bit as lively, complex, diverse and influential as in environmental and social movements. For this reason, the role of NGOs in unification fields is so uncontroversial that the importance of NGOs-government cooperation is taken for granted by even government and officials.

Under the Cold War structure, the two Korean governments restricted NGOs' participation in the unification field, and NGOs could not play a meaningful role on both sides. The North did not permit thorough unification debates that departed from the government's official position. In fact, there is no evidence that in North Korea 'true' NGOs exist. In fact, all NGOs in North Korea are bureaucratic organi-

zations controlled by the government. In South Korea, participations in unification issues by NGOs were seriously restricted by authoritarian regimes. During this time, it was a very difficult task for NGOs to participate in the unification field against the government's official position.

But since 1998 specially after the summit between the two Koreas, the situation has changed. After the inauguration of Kim Dae Jung's administration, it has pushed for the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea to improve inter-Korean relations by promoting peace, reconciliation, and cooperation. According to the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea, inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation have been increased. And NGOs' participation in inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation and creating of national consensus have been increased.

Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation could not be controlled by politics. Now, with high expectations and the interest of the people, the government's unification policy can no longer ignore public sentiments. Now, Korean people have begun to express optimism about unification. And NGOs can be a main actor to people's sentiments. It is time for NGOs and government to cooperate. NGOs must influence a policy toward North Korea for peaceful progression of inter-Korean relations. The government will be able to develop a more effective unification policy by incorporating the views of NGOs critical to its policies. And the objectives of Sunshine Policy toward North Korea cannot be achieved only by some symbolic national event itself, and must be interpreted as a long-term process. NGOs must take a major role in dissolving distrust and animosity that have persisted for half a century between the two Koreas. NGOs can incorporate the views of the people: they must try to create a national consensus for Korean unification.

IV. Building supporting structure of NGOs for expansion of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation

1. Creating cooperative relation between NGOs and government

For a long time under the authoritarian national system in Korea, the government and the NGOs have sustained a relationship of unilateral control and unyielding criticism. Therefore, it is very significant to create a new relationship between them in which NGOs function as “a critical supporter.” To this end, a firm cooperative linkage between them should be built to assist prospective activities of the NGOs involved in reunification issues as well as inter-Korean dialogues and cooperation on the precondition that it will guarantee the autonomy and independence of the NGOs to pave the way for active socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

Now, the term governance is not only related to government but also to NGOs. The term governance is interpreted in a more broad sense than the past, and NGOs are accepted by the people as one axis of it. The new perception of governance is forcing governments to look for help from other sectors of society and means governments can no longer afford to see these other sectors solely as competitors or threats. Therefore, NGOs-government cooperation is needed now. It is a crucial role for NGOs to criticize government policy. But at the same time, NGOs must create a cooperative relation with government. NGOs’ work for society can be more effective through a cooperative relation with government. As we see in case of western society, NGOs have a cooperative relation with government. Government is also able to develop a more effective policy by having a cooperative relation with NGOs.

In Korea, during the Cold War period, the government was very sensitive about NGOs’ participation in government policy. As a result, government and NGOs have a very short history of cooperation. But

now government and NGOs are trying to create new cooperative relations. It is very important for NGOs to become a critical cooperator with government. NGOs could expand their activities for the mutual supplementation with government. By creating a national consensus for Korean unification and expansion of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation, it is very necessary to create a cooperative relation between NGOs and government.²² Government must support NGOs that are participating in inter-Korean socio-cultural cooperation. But if NGOs depend on only government support, NGOs cannot achieve their original goal. Through cooperation, NGOs and government can carry out their duty for society more effectively.

Now it is more effective for NGOs and government to share the role for expansion of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. Today, governance solely by a government seems no longer responsive. The model of shared governance is more effective where government and NGOs become partners to address and solve unification issues. Governments guarantee NGOs’ participation in planning, legislation, supervision and evaluation of government unification. And government is needed to participate in the programs in which NGOs have the initiative. Government must entrust areas to NGOs which NGOs can more effectively and efficiently perform. One of the possible ways for NGOs-government cooperation in unification issues is NGOs’ participation in the Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation Promotion Council. Through participation in the Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation Promotion Council, NGOs can influence government unification policy and government can hear voices from NGOs and civic society.

²² Cho Min, *Role of NGOs in the process of Korean unification* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 1999), pp. 20-24.

2. Financial support to NGOs

For the civil movement, which has shown a relatively rapid quantitative growth since the 1990s, financial problems are the most impending issue undermining its promotion with a long-term vision. As the same is true of the NGOs concerned with Korean reunification issues, the government should seek support measures in various ways to ensure their independence. The Government needs to consider providing endowment funding, or to increase the sources of such funding, as in the case of the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund Act. So far, the fund for inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation has been provided to very limited areas, but it is time that it should be spent to support the NGOs so that they can diversify and energize their cooperation projects. At the same time, a private fund should also be raised and a measure to spend it flexibly needs to be pursued in parallel with solving the financial problems. In this case, a consultative organization for the NGOs should be the main body for fund-raising as well as spending, as it is not desirable that a particular NGO manages the fund.

The routes to help the NGOs should be diversified as well, by learning and adapting the advanced nations' ways of financial support for the development of NGOs. Since it is troublesome to push through exchange and cooperation programs at the governmental level, sub-contracts which put up the NGOs in a representative capacity could be applied to the NGOs' assistance to the North as well as exchange and cooperation programs. Co-financing may be effective in that first, there are currently enormous differences in scales and actions among NGOs interested in inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation, and second, unilateral assistance provided by the government might intensify the dependence of the NGOs.²³

23 Cho Han Bum, *A plan to promote social and cultural exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North Korea through the NGOs* (Seoul: KINU, 1998), pp. 46-50.

Also, NGOs that want to participate in inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation must prepare more effective programs to receive governmental subsidies. But if NGOs are mainly dependent on subsidies from the government, the difficult position of NGOs can be aggravated. Therefore, it is necessary for NGOs to expand their self-financing ability.

3. Revision of legal and regulatory framework for NGOs

In order to rev up NGOs' actions in the exchange and cooperation field, it has also been claimed that some institutional revisions should be made, such as improvement of the approval system to contact North Koreans, simplification of procedures for exchange and cooperation led by civil organizations. The Government needs to provide more support not only fiscal but also legal and regulatory frameworks to NGOs participating in unification field.²⁴ If we want NGOs to play a greater and more constructive role for Korean unification, we need to begin by re-examining the existing laws and regulations.

After the economic crisis, the Korean government has come to recognize the advantages of liberalizing private business sectors as well as the importance of assuring appropriate supervision and strengthening banking systems. Deregulation, structural adjustment, and privatization are now widely accepted. But neither the government nor the agencies that advise and support them, has applied the same logic to NGOs. The Government needs to devote more attention to NGOs and ask such questions as: do the laws make clear provisions for NGOs? Is the ability for groups to organize a right protected by law or a privilege to be according at the government's discretion? How complicated, time consuming and arbitrary is the registration process? Does the tax code encourage or discourage contributions to NGOs pursuing public

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 52-54.

purposes of unification? Besides, the government must also modify regulations to allow NGOs to engage in revenue generating activities as long as the income is used for public purposes of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

Also, discounts of various public utility charges mean virtual support. Other methods should be developed as well, including tax breaks on several public services such as postal delivery, easing regulations for collecting contributions, tax breaks on business with a humanitarian purpose, and a device to rev up fund-raising campaign through an automatic response system.

4. Alliances and networks of NGOs

Korean NGOs' recent actions participating in the unification field have exposed numerous problems, with many of them sometimes resorting to activities that go beyond the law. One of the typical examples among them is the Liberation Day scandal by the South Korean delegation in North Korea in 2001. The NGOs in the unification field should honor a basic rule of law more strictly in order to win the public support. Because the Cold War structure on the Korean peninsula still has not been removed, unification issues are very sensitive and controversial for the people. Morality and non-partisan affiliation should be the basic values of NGOs. They should be reborn as civic movements for the citizens, by the citizens, and of the citizens.

Revitalization of exchanges and cooperation by private sectors as well as diversification of their channels might lead to excessive competition among NGOs and bring about certain side effects. It is therefore necessary to prevent such effects by organizing an independent consultation body, which would enable NGOs to exchange information and launch joint cooperation programs. Furthermore, it would help them maintain more effective cooperative ties with the government. At the same time, establishing civil consultation organizations should keep

pace with setting up a network system among NGOs combined with specialization according to each field. The Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KCRC), established in September 1998, can be evaluated as a crucial consultation body. It is also significant in that it was founded at a time when a consultation body or a central organization was desperately needed for inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation driven by the private sector. Therefore, KCRC should be managed as an authoritative and independent consultation body for reunification issues and exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North. A consultation organization for every technical field should be considered as well.

As most of the NGOs have their own area of specialization, social and cultural exchanges and cooperation projects should be implemented by NGOs with the most specialty and know-how. Furthermore, joint efforts with international NGOs will mollify a negative response from the North and raise the feasibility of success in North Korean business projects. Hence, NGOs engaged in social and cultural exchanges and cooperation between the two Koreas should tighten their ties and actively cooperate with international NGOs in every field.

Now it is necessary for NGOs to strengthen planning, management, and fund-raising capacities. Therefore, one of the important needs for NGOs I would like to stress is to build strategic alliances and networks of NGOs both within and across national boundaries. Networking can facilitate the exchanges of experience. Coalitions among governments, businesses, and NGOs can increase the impact of their programs. National associations of NGOs can also take a responsibility for self-government of the sector.²⁵

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-59.

V. Conclusion

Now, the role of Korean NGOs and participation in the unification field are augmented, and their activities which organize requests of civic society are promoted. I have tried to analyze a current situation of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation and the role of NGOs. And I have tried to suggest some of the major needs facing NGOs and what government can do to help. For creating peaceful progression in the South-North Korean relations, the role of NGOs must be expanded. And for the expansion of NGOs' role in Korean unification issues, the crucial starting point is to recognize the complex nature of Korean unification.

Expanding inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation especially in social and cultural areas is a realistic way for reconciliation of the two Koreas. The meaning of 'society' and 'culture' in the process of Korean unification is very important because recovering national homogeneity between the two can be achieved in social and cultural areas. For this reason, inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation must be expanded more than in the past. Also, NGOs' participation in the unification field and inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation must be expanded.

Now we are experiencing a major transition from 'Big Government' to 'Big Society.' NGOs are main actors in 'Big Society.' If that transition is to be achieved in ways that serves the needs of the people, governments and individuals must take a responsibility for strengthening institutional underpinnings of civil society. The situation is the same in the Korean unification process.

In short, ensuring the independence of NGOs is the most critical factor in promoting inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation. Not only efforts by NGOs themselves, but also minimizing government controls as well as a political community are indispensable conditions so as to protect NGOs' transparent actions. Only when such

conditions are met would revitalization of inter-Korean socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation through NGOs be evaluated as a significant and feasible method for reconciliation and cooperation between the South and the North.

AN ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS FORMS OF *JUCHE* IDEOLOGY IN COMPARISON WITH CHRISTIANITY

Philo Kim

It has become nowadays persuasive that North Korean society uniformed by *juche* ideology and worship for the Great Leader Kim Il Sung, contains sort of religious nature. It has developed *juche* ideology into a sort of world or personal view of life, and designated the birthplace of Kim Il Sung as sacred precincts. North Korean Workers' Party formulated the phrase of propaganda, "The great leader comrade Kim Il Sung shall be with us forever," so that it attempts to carve him an immortal being based upon *juche* theory of socio-political organism. Kim Il Sung has now been praised not only as a historical hero and national leader, but as an object of godly worship. The sacred worship for *juche* ideology and Kim Il Sung is expressed in various forms of behavior and rituals in North Korea. It was in post-socialism era that the religious characteristics became salient in North Korea. North Korea suffered from serious economic and military crisis at the times of the collapse of socialist countries in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, North Korea suffered an extreme food crisis followed by mass starvation. Nevertheless, people's discontent did not bring about any revolt in an extremely difficult situation, rather they were led to overcome the crisis by launching what so called "Arduous March." From

all of these phenomena, many think that North Korean society has now without doubt evolved into a sort of religious sect. In particular, visitors to North Korea or North Korean defectors often have often pointed out that the life style and values of North Korean people are very similar to those of Christianity. However, no systematic study has been performed regarding the issues of religious property or Christian similarities of North Korean society. In this sense, this study explores to compare *juche* ideology with Christian religious forms, and tries to examine religious characteristics soaked in North Korean society.

I. Opening Remarks

It is a uniformly credible idea nowadays that the ideology of *juche* and worship for the Great Leader Kim Il Sung, by which North Korea is run, contain a sort of religious nature. North Korea has developed *juche* ideology into a sort of worldview or personal view of life, and designated the birthplace of Kim Il Sung as sacred grounds. On the third anniversary of Kim Il Sung's death North Korea proclaimed the so-called "*Juche* Era" which counts the year of 1912, the birth year of Kim Il Sung, as the first year, and enacted April 15, the birth day of Kim Il Sung, as the Day of the Sun. The North Korean Workers' Party formulated the following propaganda, "The Great Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung shall be with us forever," attempting to carve him into an immortal being based upon the *juche* theory of socio-political organism. Kim Il Sung has now been praised not only as a historical hero and national leader, but as an object of godly worship.

Worship of the *juche* ideology and Kim Il Sung as sacred is expressed in various forms of behavior and rituals in North Korea. All the people in North Korea hang portraits of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-

il in the best room in their houses and clean these photos every day. The people take good care of each portrait and statue related to Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il. Many people pay homage to the statue of Kim Il Sung in the early morning every day. They usually decorate with flowers and make a ceremonial bow to the portraits on the birthday of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il. They do the same rituals on New Year's Day.

It was in the post-socialism era that the religious characteristics became salient in North Korea. North Korea suffered from serious economic and military crises at the times of the collapse of the socialist countries in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, North Korea suffered an extreme food crisis followed by mass starvation. Nevertheless, people's discontent did not bring about any revolt even in such an extremely difficult situation. Rather they were led to overcome the crisis by launching the so-called "Arduous March." The former secretary of the North Korean Workers Party, Whang Jang Yup, pointed out correctly in his press conference in 1997 that "North Korea is currently suffering an economic crisis, but there is no danger for North Korea to collapse because it is well solidified politically." Through these phenomena, many think that North Korean society has now without doubt evolved into a sort of religious sect.

Most North Korean defectors realized North Korea had strong religious characteristics only after they did leave their society. It is very common for North Korean defectors in South Korea to feel uncomfortable when they say the name of Kim Il Sung without the lording word, "great leader" for many years. Some of them say, "Kim Il Sung shall not be forgotten forever in my heart," or "I shall not be completely free from Kim Il Sung until I die." It usually takes one to two years at the shortest to come out of the feeling of Kim Il Sung's godly authority even for the defectors who have converted to liberal democracy by deserting the North Korean system. One defector confessed from his experience that it is not possible for North Korean defectors to

overcome “Kim Il Sung” in their truest heart. This implies that Kim Il Sung is carved as an absolute god to the people in North Korea.

In particular, visitors to North Korea or North Korean defectors often have pointed out that the lifestyle and values of North Korean people are very similar to those of Christianity. Kim Hyun-hee, who was arrested for the terrorist act of blowing up a KAL airplane, confessed that she worshiped Kim Il Sung as God in North Korea, and that her life would be meaningless if the existence of Kim Il Sung were taken from her life, in the same way that Christians would be without God. She says that it is not an exaggeration to compare the relationship between Kim Il Sung and the people of North Korea to that of ‘God and men.’ When she read the bible she was surprised, saying “The bible is just like *juche* ideology. *Juche* ideology can be understood much faster after studying the bible. It is possible to put the name ‘Kim Il Sung’ instead of Jesus in the Bible.”¹ She mentioned that she was forced to memorize ten principles which are similar to the Ten Commandments; she performed weekly life-summation sessions just like Sunday worship service; and she learned the concept of unity of the Party, people, and the Great Leader, similar to the idea of trinity.

However, no systematic study has been performed regarding the issues of the religious properties of *Juche* or similarities with Christianity in North Korean society. In this sense, this study attempts to compare *juche* ideology with Christianity in its religious forms, and tries to examine religious characteristics saturated within North Korean society.

II. Religious Phenomena in Socialist Society and Religionization of *Juche* Ideology

A religion has at least three general characteristics; a worship for “the sacred,” performance of religious rituals, and maintenance of social community.² In other words, religious experience is always revealed through thought and ideology; it expresses itself through rituals and ceremonies well-framed with words and behaviors; and it takes the form of an organization or community in which acceptance of membership, occupancy of status, and division of roles are mandated.³ Despite differentiation in the degree of complexity and institutionalization of the three forms in each religion, it has to have all the three forms, that is, dogma which is a theory form, ritual which is a practical form, and community which is a social form, if it is to be called as religion.

In this sense, it is not a recent phenomenon to regard socialism itself as a kind of religion. Socialists and communists expelled religion in socialist society by accusing it to be the ‘opium of the people.’ Ironically, however, ideologies of socialism and communism occupied the same place instead where a religion once resided. Karl Marx himself believed that the positive values realized in a religion could be a guiding idea to reform human destiny.⁴ In this respect, socialism, which is a positive self-awareness of mankind, functions as a religion. The ideology contains religious characteristics in that it demands commitment to a political leader or ideology or any membership group.

Juche ideology has also consolidated its religious nature over time. It

1 Kap-jae Cho and Ho-seung Chung, *The God of Kim Hyun-hee* (Seoul: Kosikae, 1990), pp. 71, 103.

2 Joachim Bach, “Universal elements of religion,” Seung-hae Kim, ed., *Understanding of the Study on Religion* (Seoul: Boondo Press, 1986), pp. 115-141.

3 Kyung-whan Oh, *Sociology of Religion* (Seoul: Seokwangsa, 1990), p. 49.

4 Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd Edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), p. 93.

developed from the principles of independence and a revolutionary mass line in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Since 1967, when a personality cult campaign for Kim Il Sung was carried out nationwide, *juche* developed into a political discourse of a 'monolithic ideological system' to rationalize a theoretical system of dominant political leadership. This brought about "Kimilsungism" and a revolutionary attitude toward the great leader, emphasized beginning in the early 1970s. From the mid-1970s, socialist collective values and norms in social relations began to be stressed by the launching of 'the human remolding project,' which was aimed at revolutionary comradeship and obligation, collectivism and heroism. After the philosophical dimension of *juche* ideology was theorized in 1982, the man-centered *juche* philosophy was furthermore underlined. Then, in 1986, it developed into a socio-political organism theory coupled with the theory of the great leader and a collective social organization. Since the post-Cold War era, it emphasizes the concept of 'nation' and 'Chosun nationalism,' so that it theorizes the supremacy of 'our style of socialism' as different from other socialist system.

Juche ideology has been developing from a simple ideology to a religious belief. The religious dimension in *juche* ideology began to form with the advent of the theory of the great leader, and further intensified with advancement in its philosophical study.⁵ The crucial moment when *juche* ideology was transformed into a religious faith was, however, the time when the socio-political organism theory had been completed. The fact that socio-political life was separated from the physical aspect of human life decisively contributed to the evolution of *juche* ideology into a religion. The advent of spirit has become very important in the process of religious evolution because it transformed divided souls into a collective object which can be owned and

worshiped in turn by individuals.⁶ As it changed to the theory of the great leader, philosophy, and socio-political organism, *juche* ideology evolved into a religious belief.

III. Dogma and Belief System

Christian dogma and its belief system are outlined in systematic theology which includes theories of God, Man, Christology, Church, Salvation and eschatology.⁷ *Juche* ideology can be also explained by dividing it in the same way as mentioned above. First of all, *juche* ideology rejects the abstract concept of God transcending the realm of human experience because it is based upon the values of Materialism and the theory of evolution. Instead, the belief and confidence in the coming of the ultimate communism replaces the metaphysical God. Moreover, Kim Il Sung is regarded both as a mediator who realizes the absolute value, communism, on this earth as the Supreme Being, just as in Christianity metaphysical God is incarnated into a human being, Jesus. Kim Il Sung is not recognized exactly the same as God is in Christianity so far, but the possibility cannot be ruled out that in the future Kim Il Sung, who is now 'invisible' since his death, will secure a divine status like God in Christianity, if the theological aspect of *juche* ideology is further developed. After the 1980s it has been especially emphasized that Kim Jong-il possesses legitimacy and a divine nature as the 'son of the father.' Just as Jesus secured divinity to succeed and achieve the covenant between God and man in the Old Testament, Kim Jong-il is endowed with a divine authority to succeed and realize the great task achieved by his father.

5 Myung-sae Kim, "An Evaluation from Christian Perspective on Human Remolding Theory of Juche Ideology," Master's Thesis, Graduate School of Theology, Baptist Theological University, 1996, pp. 32-36.

6 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: The classic sociological study of primitive religion* (New York: Collier Books, 1961), pp. 309-333.

7 Louis Berkhof, translated by Soo-kyung Kwon and Sang-won Lee, *Systematic Theology* (Seoul: Christian Digest, 1998).

The monolithic ideological system and 'the great ten principles' in North Korea have something in common with Christian monotheism, demanding that believers serve only God, and this has even been stipulated in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments, which are indisputably accepted as God's words, provide the basic laws for all Christians to obey. Likewise, it is 'The Ten Great Principles to Consolidate the Monolithic Ideological System' that regulate and judge every word and action of the people in North Korea. In this context, it is understandable that the *juche* ideology exists in the sub-form of Kimilsungism stipulated as 'The Revolutionary Ideas of Comrade Kim Il Sung.' *Juche* ideology cannot be separated from Kim Il Sung and/or Kim Jong-il himself, who maintains an absolute divine position commanding stricter codes of behavior than Christianity.

Second, the nature of man is likely to be the most similar area that can be compared between *juche* ideology and Christianity. When Christianity focuses on man, leaving alone the theory of God, the Christian theory of man in the views of man and human life has marked common features with *juche* ideology. *Juche* ideology does not regard man as a sheer biological being, nor a unique characteristic according to the way individuals are organized, but as a special being which has a consciousness.⁸ It does not analyze man into a physical body and consciousness - rather it grasps him as a whole entity which retains the two simultaneously. However, the post-materialistic view of man has been theorized recently, so this view seems to be not shared by most of the ordinary people in North Korea, particular those of the older generation.

Third, the role of suryong, the great leader, is imperative to the dogma of *juche* ideology, just as the being of Jesus is indispensable in Christianity. It is said that it is necessary to have a suryong in *juche*

ideology who leads people and unites popular strength in order to achieve socialist revolution and construction.⁹ It espouses that the ordinary popular masses, including the working class, can succeed in revolution and construction only when they serve suryong and fight under his tested leadership. The necessity of suryong is said to be the revolutionary truth, which is the objective characteristics of revolutionary struggle and construction of a working class and is verified by the hundred year-long international communist movement. *Juche* ideology can be understood as the religion of suryong in the sense that suryong occupies the absolute position like God in Christianity.

Fourth, the notions of salvation and everlasting life in Christian belief can also be found in *juche* ideology. North Korea has kept a sort of myth that the suryong Kim Il Sung liberated and delivered their people from Japanese colonial rule. It is said that he delivered, through the anti-Japanese military struggle, the people of 'our nation Chosun' who were suffering under Japanese colonial oppression. *Juche* ideology endows people with not only a past deliverance, but also a future salvation, that is an everlasting life. It divides human life between the physical and the socio-political, and maintains the eternity of the socio-political life. The theory of a socio-political organism is the driving force in transforming the political ideology into a religious belief and a life-view in the sense that it deals with the life and death of individuals, something that had not been touched upon by Marxism-Leninism.¹⁰

Fifth, the collectivist principle of "one for all and all for one" in North Korea is consistent with the communitarian doctrines of Christian church. In the doctrines of Christianity the church, comprised of Christian believers, is expressed as 'the body of Jesus Christ,' so that man can exist only within the Christ's body, that is, within the body of

8 Kim Jong-il, "On the Need to Maintain Proper Perspective and Correct Understanding on *Juche* Philosophy," *Selective Works of Kim Jong-il*, Vol. 10 (Pyongyang: North Korean Worker's Party Press, 1997), pp. 296-304.

9 Social Science Publishing House, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (Pyongyang: Social Science Publishing House, 1985), p. 376.

10 Yong-kon Park and Wha-hyo Kim, *Introduction to Juche Ideology* (Tokyo: Koowe-olseobang, 1989), p. 257.

God's people. According to the theory of socio-political organism, the *suryong* Kim Il Sung is the brain of the body, the party is the blood vessels, and the people are individual parts of that body. *Suryong*, the party, and the people compose a trinity, a unified and indivisible whole. The theory of socio-political organism is identical with the well-known theory of body and parts stated by the apostle Paul.

Sixth, the Christian belief maintains that the present world is to be terminated and it will come to an end with a great calamity when Jesus' second coming happens: with the second coming of Jesus the entire resurrection takes place; it brings with it the Last Judgment; and 'the kingdom of God' is completed. Likewise, *juche* ideology espouses the ultimate victory of socialism and communism and the realization of a communist paradise on earth. These eschatological ideas help endure the current suffering while it gives us a hope for the coming of paradise some day and makes us anticipate the final triumph of the belief. North Korea teaches their people to overcome their current ordeals by anticipating the realization of communist society. In this regard *juche* ideology emphasizes the building of 'the strong and prosperous nation' which suggests the communist paradise, so that people should be patient during the present hardship. At the same time, it stresses that paradise has 'already' been realized on this earth, just the full-realization of the communist paradise is delayed. And also, just as Christianity stresses the fighting against the power of sin and Satan, *juche* ideology encourages a combat spirit to overthrow Satan's power, which is identified with capitalism and imperial power.

IV. Religious Rituals and Behavioral Norms

North Korea performs worship services of meeting and study in, what they call, 'Rooms for the Study of the Revolutionary Ideology of

Kim Il Sung,' which is like a church building in Christianity. It is said that the Study Room for the Revolutionary Ideology of Kim Il Sung is the place to learn the revolutionary ideology, *juche* ideology, and the high morality of Kim Il Sung, and that is established in all areas of people's lives such as the "Party, state departments, factories, enterprises, cooperative farms, education, culture and science departments, People's Army and security forces in North Korea."¹¹ It is estimated that there are about 450 thousand Study Rooms for the Revolutionary Ideology, including those held by administrative and industrial units and armies nationwide.¹² Various swearing-in ceremonies, meetings to deliver the letter of loyalty, and so forth, as well as study activities are held in the Study Room. The place is regarded as solemn and sacred location distinguished from ordinary or profane locations because the place is believed to be deeply related to Kim Il Sung.

Just as Christians hold weekly services and meetings such as Sunday service, Wednesday worship, early-morning prayer, Friday District meeting, quiet time meditation, and family worship, North Korea performs various weekly meetings and study sessions including weekly lifestyle summation review, Wednesday Lecture Meeting, Morning Reading Session, Monday study session, neighborhood units study session, all-night work, and early-morning worship. Through these systematic study sessions and meetings North Korea maintains faith in *juche* ideology. Among them, the lifestyle summation review which meet in every company and organization on Saturday, is the most important religious ritual in that it fulfills a sort of reflective religious ceremonial function.¹³

Lifestyle summation review is performed in every unit of the Juve-

11 Social Science Publishing House, *Dictionary of Politics* (Pyongyang: Social Science Publishing House, 1973), p. 156.

12 An interview with a defector, September 29, 2000.

13 Philo Kim, *Religious Nature of North Korean Society* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2000), pp. 113-124.

nile Corps, Youth League, Trade Union, Union of Farmers, Women's League, and the Party in all departments and organizations nationwide including factories, government, companies, schools, and the army. The lifestyle summation review is basically held in units of primary organizations. Usually, in the case of ordinary workers, it is held by work teams in companies or workshops. The summation is classified by period into daily, weekly, monthly, half-year, and yearly reviews. In summation review, the way it proceeds is like a church worship in that people first quote the words of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il, followed by self-criticism on the basis of the words. It is similar to a church sermon where a pastor first reads the words of Jesus from the Bible before he gives lessons about the people's daily lives based upon the words. Self-criticism is comparable to prayer to God with repentance and resolution, which is the root to maintain the religious nature in North Korean society, distinguishable from other socialist systems.

Just as Christians cherish the Bible, that is the words of Jesus, and try to find every direction of behavior from the Bible, North Koreans have the scripture of *juche* ideology, that is, the directions of Kim Il Sung and the words of Kim Jong-il, so that they think and behave based upon their directions and words. As a hymn is an important means to powerfully motivate Christian faith, praise songs for Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il are mobilized in formal and informal events in North Korea. Like in Christianity, where words of the Bible are quoted in daily conversation and academic literature, in North Korea it is the same. Words like 'consent' and 'proclamation,' which are requirements for religious rituals, are used; such religious words as 'grace,' 'love,' 'faith,' 'atonement,' 'salvation,' 'eternity,' and so forth are frequently used¹⁴; and buttons of Kim Il Sung's portraits are worn like a cross for Christians. All these phenomena reveal the religiosity contained in

juche ideology. And both Christianity and *juche* ideology have set kinds of formal and public procedures to admit new members.

V. Ethics and Organization of Community

Religion exists in the form of a community in which members have shared values, feelings of attachment, and social solidarity. *Juche* ideology devised norms of behavior, so-called 'guiding principles' which are suggested as practical guidelines. The fact that *juche* ideology attaches great importance to such practical values as morals and ethics shows a strong religious nature. It also has common points with Christianity in that both evaluate the moral traits of man by the standard of goodness and evilness. *Juche* ideology calls for various practical activities such as 'good-conduct campaigns' and 'movements for "modeling after"' and an emphasis on a practical movement which composes a crucial part of communist moral education, and is an important aspect of the religious inclination of *juche* ideology.¹⁵ Collectivism in North Korea is emphasized as a "mass line" in the area of political economy, and it gives full play to 'communist laudable customs' in social life. The practice of asceticism and abandoning material greed is a very similar religious ethic to Christianity. Christianity in North Korea, in fact, underlines the ethical and practical aspects of Christian belief rather than the theological dimension, revealing that religion is recognized as a moral community in North Korea.

Religious community varies depending upon how fervent is the faith to the absolute being or how strongly the social relation in the community is oriented to collectivism. The degree of religiosity of *juche*

14 Richard Tait, "Hidden Christian Doctrinal Concepts in North Korean Ruling Techniques," Master's Thesis, Graduate School of Public Policy, Sogang University, July 1994, pp. 47-57.

15 Myung-sae Kim, "An Evaluation from Christian Perspective on Human Remolding Theory of Juche Ideology," p. 36.

believers varies by individuals, and sub-contents of *juche* ideology are also recognized differently in intensity by individuals. The community of *juche* believers can be classified into four categories according the strength of their faith; a fanatic who “puts the demand of *juche* into practice,” those who have both faith and doubt, “sham” believers who are not able to speak a word without inserting words of “textbook” *juche* ideology; and the unbelievers who do not accept it at all. It is estimated that each category is composed of 25 percent of entire population.¹⁶ The *juche* community differs in the degree of faithfulness by class, strata, and generation.

It is the Organization and Guidance Department and Propaganda and Agitation Departments of the Korea Workers Party that correspond to the brain of society and control and manage the organizational life of *juche* community in North Korea. As the organization of priests and church community guide systematically the tasks of recruitment of priests, education of believers and mission, the Organization and Guidance Department and Propaganda and Agitation Department in the Party are in charge of education of *juche* ideology so as to manage study activities and indoctrination of the people through formal and informal channels. “*Juche*” in early childhood education and school education are systematically practiced in North Korea just as ‘Sunday School’ for children is an important part in Christian education. Adult education by organization and social status is stressed and the study materials for them are renewed every year. The Central Committee of the KWP runs special colleges to train expert cadres like seminaries in Christian religion. All of these organizational activities contribute to maintaining of identity of the *juche* community.

16 Philo Kim, *Religious Nature of North Korean Society*, pp. 157-161.

VI. Background of Facilitating Christian Religious Forms in *Juche* Ideology

Where does the Christian influence embedded in North Korean society come from? Many people speculate that it is because of the Christian family background of Kim Il Sung. It is very interesting that Kim Il Sung was born of and raised in a sincere Christian family. In this respect, it would be mostly likely that it is from Kim Il Sung’s Christian background that *juche* ideology retains Christian traits. Both his father Kim Hyung-jik and mother Kang Ban-suk were sincere Christian, and Kim Il Sung used to attend Sunday school regularly with his mother.¹⁷ In his middle school days, Kim Il Sung was actively involved in church activities when he was taken care of by Reverend Son Jong-do, and even led a students’ choir in Rev. Son’s church.¹⁸ From his father’s experience of Christian belief, Kim Il Sung received a great influence that is closely connected with the Anti-Japanese independence movement. From his mother he received religious influence strongly because he was raised with his mother’s family members like Kang Don-uk and Kang Yang-uk, both of whom were well-known Christians in Korea. Although Kim Il Sung did not have Christian faith, he surely had a far more profound knowledge about the content of the Bible and church activities compared to contemporary Koreans.

Kim Il Sung had a harsh and intense experience about Christianity when he was faced with systematic opposition from Christians in the process of power building after liberation. He appeared to have developed a negative attitude toward Christianity, in particular, in the process of the ‘Boycott of the Sunday Election’ and the Land Reform.¹⁹

17 Kim Il Sung, *With the Century*, Vol. 1 (Pyongyang: North Korean Worker’s Party Press, 1992), p. 104.

18 Kim Il Sung, *With the Century*, Vol. 2 (Pyongyang: North Korean Worker’s Party Press, 1992), p. 16.

19 Kim Il Sung, *Collective Works of Kim Il Sung*, Vol. 2 (Pyongyang: North Korean

While Kim Jong-il is well known for what he had done for religionization of *juche* ideology in the 1970s, few things are known about his experience in Christianity. However, it is a wild speculation that since he lost his mother in his young age, he was raised by relatives who probably had Christian a background. Although Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il are not Christian, they had personally experienced Christianity and so they received a stronger influence from it than ordinary Koreans. The ideas and values that Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il had were formed through their Christian family background, such as nationalism, priority in ideology and belief, the mission of 'evangelization', and the building of paradise that Kim Il Sung had, and priority in consciousness and morality that Kim Jong-il placed.

Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il had opportunities to contact the doctrines, admonitions, and way of life of Christianity quite frequently through their Christian family background, meetings with Christians and experiences of challenges by Christian churches. Based upon his Christian experience in his early days, Kim Il Sung was likely to utilize Christian ways intentionally while he was in his power. Although it was not intentional, their contact with Christianity would have powerfully influenced them in ruling and organizing North Korean society. Therefore, it is not difficult to draw the supposition that although they denied religion as being the "opium of the people" officially, Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il could learn ways of life, organizational principles and core dogma and lessons from their Christian experiences, and they then adapted these to their society. However, it is not easy to verify empirically how their Christian experience influenced and what concrete processes it was manifested in. It is furthermore difficult to prove whether the manifestation was intentional or unintentional.

It is not reasonable to conclude that the similarities with Christianity

that *juche* ideology holds through its religious forms is solely derived from the Christian background of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il. The similarities with Christianity that *juche* ideology seems to have are also have some sort of affinity to other Korean traditional religions like Confucianism, or to social changes like the Korean War. In particular, the nature of the religious state of North Korea could spread in a chaotic social environment such as the Korean War was. North Korea continued to maintain its authoritarian military culture by stimulating war experiences and crisis consciousness about war in its people. It is highly likely that the strong religious nature of North Korean society could have been expedited by critical social conditions like war in the same way that Christian religious forms seem to be interrelated with circumstances of drastic social change like war and revolution. It also helps to understand the similarity of *juche* ideology with Christianity in seeing that the theory of communism itself is more similar with the Christian religion than with any other. Kim Il Sung, who had learned the Bible and received a Christian education in Sunday school in his early years could easily theorize through an analogy to Exodus the 'liberation myth' that the fatherland was liberated and delivered from the oppression of Japanese colonial rule, and he could naturally utilize the Christian ideas of equality and paradise toward the building of an ideal communist society.

VII. Conclusion

Juche ideology is changing into a religion through continued and repeated religious activities in North Korea. Considering the importance of being and the role of suryong in it, *juche* ideology can be called the 'religion of suryong.' Since the religion of suryong has not yet been fully developed into a world religion like Christianity, however, it is still questionable whether it should be called as a religion or not. This is

Worker's Party, 1979), pp. 513-524; *Selective Works of Kim Il Sung*, Vol. 1 (Pyongyang: North Korean Worker's Party, 1967), pp. 249-250.

especially because the religion of suryong fundamentally differs from other world religion in the object and nature of worship. Nonetheless, the religion of suryong is strengthening in its religious color as it intensifies idolization and deification of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il. In this regard, *juche* ideology is no more a mere political ideology of state, but it occupies a position beyond political ideology, that is, the religion of suryong to worship unconditionally and deify Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-il.

It is highly probable that the religious characteristics of *juche* ideology in North Korea may bring about severe social conflict and psychological depression in the process of unification. Considering that worship of Kim Il Sung by North Korean people is just like that of Christians to God, North Korean people shall suffer psychological emptiness when they would be brought to live in a world without Kim Il Sung. These people, who think to live without Kim Il Sung is like a life without purpose, will surely need a religious faith to give meaning to their lives. In this process, therefore, we need to prepare to overcome this social conflict through utilizing various fields of medical science such as mental therapy, psychology, sociology, and counseling.

What is important here is how we can separate from *juche* ideology the worship of Kim Il Sung which has become the root of the religion of suryong while maintaining and developing communitarian life. During times when North Korea makes endeavors for the coexistence of the suryong worship and world religion, South Korea needs to make a realistic evaluation of Kim Il Sung and to develop a theological theory to countermeasure the suryong faith. We need to make great efforts in separating *juche* ideas from Kimilsungism in preparing rational critiques to advocate national liberation theory based on liberation theology while restraining the deification of Kim Il Sung. Moreover, the religious world should attempt ideological and cultural exploration all the more including intensive study of *juche* ideology in order to prepare for the era of unification.